

**NO HARD FEELINGS ('ERE GIVE US A KISS)
A Novel by David Linter.**

STEP RIGHT UP! Get down.....get on up. FEEL GREAT! FEEL GREAT; YET FIRST: A PROMISSORY NOTE FROM THE NARRATOR:

See hardboiled Americana, feel the force of iron, American honesty and dependability. Loyalty. American no matter how curious and often disagreeable the sound and noise The high toned history of this story sometimes may slip-on through to.....*LISTEN.....HEAR, HAVE NO FEAR.....yes, you are far, far out long past where you ever imagined being — "NOTHING LEFT TO DO BUT SMILE-SMILE— SMILE."*

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(Beatz repeat repeat beatz repeat, carry on the beat ad infinitum=&, etc)

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{*MEANING*, the willpower raw and exacting, in the rendering of events. how what happened, happened, because, *YES, SOMETHING DID HAPPEN*. All in the grand, proud tradition of American tell-it-like-it-is-ness. No need for in your-face shit me lies.....no hyperbole, theatrics no histrionics, what-so-ever. Each imagined detail, each rendering of preferred history, every made-up character true-blue, stalwart and undeniable hardcore and for-real folklore.

Swear to God, listen.....I was there on site with an eye out for this disagreeable place in time where a foreign frontier, a rank kind of bizzarie, a kind of unusual, queered out of place placeness beat down and rocked itself.

Thinking/singing sort of Beatles, I've blown my mind out in my hotel home. Thus it appears having borne me forth

very much like a baby, simultaneously both brand new, both dead and alive all at once.

No lie, no shit. Yup, you heard me. And so, may I please ask of you, can we agree to get together for a minute, commence and call these circumstances to come, to define these magic moments, bathed in racketeering up ahead...*business as usual, just the way the world is* kind of thing and dammit, God bless us, everyone. One sticky, dang wicket...I tell you what?

STILL You with me?

GREAT

Right, then, *never mind the bollocks*. What say we simply go-man-go, "Let's go get stoned" and say, "Everybody must get stoned!" let's get it on. "Bang a gong": Man, right now.}

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PROLOGUE

With the wind at his back, there in the way back when and standing out near the far end of things...let's say it, Irving thought, his head's being drilled and opened for examination. And there's a metaphysical harmonic unity regarding each spectral fix from everyone ever having made any kind of fixed impression -- from the seemingly utterly insignificant, to the most bald, brute affect. Simultaneously as if life were opening the top off his head without any bleeding or scarification, stopping every so often to spend time at certain evidently loaded ports of call within.

Afterwhich: was it any wonder death was looking for him? Fine, Irving thought, I'm too cool to fool. I can't *finally* beat the rotten bastard. Still, who knows what a stinkin' bum, a Palooka like me can do when truly up against it? ("It was you, Charlie, it was you; I could'a had class and not the low kind like you. I've been amazing before. Survived his deathly how many times at war?

So.....got to have earned a goddamn right to fantasize, *C'est la guerre* Irving thought. I reject YOU first. Love is what I got, I can go all out with that.

"Come-on, you red hot deadly fuck. You know Irving Addup. You think i'm going to fall for your all too familiar act? I'm playing my role, too. Yo, Big boy Like your faux modesty's going to trick my head.....not with my self-loathing. I beat you to the punch long ago.....Death, you fuckwit, blow me. Irving thought wishing he were brave enough to say so out loud.

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(now get me some o' them
back funky back beatz and sing. Be Sly, "You
know me, "you hate me, you love me and then/
you can't figure out the bag I'm in.....")...

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Never can you do me harm, Big Man, worse than
I already done. Self-unrequited-Love, Big Daddy.
Oh, sure, fuck me, I know.....Just you think on
that one and see how sweet you're doing.

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With the wind at his back, here in the way back
and standing out near the far end of things, in
the center of a long ago styled operating theater.
Doctors packed above in the surrounding balcony
watching with *jaws drooping in unison, 'till fully
dropping. Let's tell it like it is don't you think
so?.....Irving thought. Hah! Who's -- What's--
"Goddamn, I declare I have seen the light,"
Irving thought sampling The Grateful Dead. Sure
enough, naturally Irving's reaching back, going
back, humming.....This ain't right, Irving thought.*

*I'm certainly dead, Irving
thought. Or, maybe he was somehow in-between.*

"Don't cry for me Argentina.." Irving segued into *Madonna.....*

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Why won't someone help me? Irving thought. I think I've had an epic bleeding brain event...It had to be...fire, (anyhow, Irving'd heard things breakout inside his skull not so long before: (Sounded much like crackling innards on a broiling skillet.).

Only now, it seems to be gunfire as well. Sirens, bells, orders given some taken, some surely not...shrieks, surly hollerings for help.

Mine? *All mine.....*no other voices like I me mine, though some sounding very far away...some surely mine, closer than close...In the burning, grimy brain? Irving thought.

Perhaps, it's all coming from within the fire and I am the soul of it..... pretty weird, Irving thought. And yet: I know mystery, I got imagination. I could make this all up on a lousy, typical day battling to preserve sanity, Irving thought. Why can't anyone help me?

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***GUNFIRE, A SHOOTOUT AND REAL LIFE
SHOOT'EM-UP, DOGGONE...AND SO MUCH
POWER-FIRE AND WATER, TOO***

Only: Why won't someone help me? Irving thought on. I'm plastered to a dirty floor, can't seem to rise, can't seem to speak. What the fucking hell? Irving thought. Sirens. Bells. Shrieks, others hollering for help. Shit, what if it *is all me*? The thumping of firemen's boots and clanking of axes and spray of hoses.

Damn, Irving thought. Aren't I screaming loud enough? For goodness sake! I'm in here Goddamn it! Or, am I screaming out loud at all? Cant rightly tell, Irving thought.

Thump-clank-frack-thump!
Clank.....revolvers slapping against coppers' thighs -- orders being driven hard into apologies and a chorus of crying, nearby just outside his door — this abnormal dialogue roundelay of:

"I didn't do shit! I got nothing to do with any of this crap....."Hey, I live here,

man... "fuckin' pigs, one guy says," passing by' not as fun as it used be in the sixties, damn, what am i fighting for? What? officer, i gotta live Nam all over again? Fuck my kid for tapping the Bob Dylan lived here crap, officer, I fell for that!..... Irving thought. Then: just beyond Irving's grasp:

"Police! Drop the gun...Now!" straight outta the crummier TV police shows, that same boring, overly-familiar cadence, the modest acting chops mediocrity saturating through and through... "You, Alphonse! on your knees, hands out front, spread-em!" and so it goes. My money's on the gunplay, Irving thought. Were I not stuck to the floor, shot myself by something or other.....

Man, am I ever confused. Fatigued, man like never before fatigue. Fuu-uck me, Irving thought. Over mixed just outside noises, voices like coming from the Astral Plain, whatever. Cosmic shitstorms. Metaphysical crackling away non-stop, no quarter. Not for Irving whose screams, one's *he* owned commenced, fetched from the bottom of his heart, filtered through his urinous soul, but by

the time they were meant to be heard nothing came. No one came.

Empty, shallow, hollow...all that's ever been in here? Sure, let Irving be Irving, I gotta be me, right, Sammy? Irving thought.

And yet someone calling his name in hysteria followed by a terrifying knock on his door. Someone shredding my name, Irving thought. greasy, beanpole Alfonse in his wife-beater T and perfectly dated black shoe polish, duckass and being shoved, being told to "Shutup, shut-fucking-up, you miserable guinea miscreant." Nice line, must be a Detective with a well developed vocabulary, Irving thought,

Alfonse's voice flying away a mile a minute, still calling out Irving. "Fuck you," Irving heard Alfonse say now over and over, "Fuck you, Irv! Im tone like a master castrati. "Irv, you alright?" Alfonse said. "I need your opinion. Look. Listen to me Irving...I know you're in there....."

Alfonse you dumb fuck! Come help me, Irving thought, his thoughts falling to nothing by all the hardscrabble goings on just

beyond his reach Fucking Alfonse and cops roughing him up.....What chance do I stand? I don't even know where I fit in this crummy stage production. Broadway it ain't, Irving thought. Jesus Christ, what to do? Irving thought. Phewwee, pretty scary. I been silenced, i'm a forgotten man, Irving thought. I am severed.

“Yo, dude, listen up, open up. I need to talk to you ...two spic - interlopers, man...Busted my pretty face up, took all my dope, every type, my entire stash. Maaaaan...took my guns, and my vintage clothes, all the jewelry. You gotta help me, man. Call the cops, Irving,...Pricks got my fucking mobile, fucking wetback PR motherfuckers.”

But I thought I just heard the police taking Alfonse down, Irving thought. “Swat teams, Irv....Help! I been robbed, dude. I got to call the po-lice. They got all the drugs, all the jewelry, all the electronics, the vintage clothes, the Persian rugs.....Goddamn, am I repeating myself? Sorry, only I want some justice here. I know you understand Irv, Alfonse carried on in those hysterical tones of his. Wake up you motherfucker and help me!

Help you? Irving thought.
"The building's on fire, you got out anyhow...that must be it, said Alphonse. And the Fire guys are here, the cops bound to be close behind. Time to bust, old Alfonse, huh, Wreck? Fuck I had a good run...wait'll I snitch, when I rat-out the names of my clientele for a dipshit sentence..." Alfonse laughed. Then: "*IRVING!* goddamnit, open up..... Can't believe you're sleeping stoned"

Dumb fuck, Irving thought.
Why can't anyone help *me*? Irving thought. Story of my life. I can never help myself to anything, Irving thought. I'm apparently dying and the last soul I get to hear is an idiot two bit savant peddler motherfucker crying out for justice, Irving thought. All while the fire appears to be easing to calmer, under control; and things do seem calmer a bit, seemingly.

As if I'm in any shape to judge. 011911911, Irving thought. Ten cocksucking thousand blown attempts...Under control, now... maybe not, Irving thought. What to do? 911911911.....Who my kidding?

The Sound continued out there, however changing.....noise, voices, now becalming to the other residents and each other, getting a grip...still, filthy smoke seeps along with water under Irving's filthy doorjamb.

Irving's so thirsty and can merely watch the filthy waters creep his way, then when it reaches home, he maneuvers his mouth to have a taste. He gets some, but nowhere near enough for a guy lapsing into early stages of dehydration hallucinations. Filth, what a dingy way to die, Irving thought. Alfonse's screams disappearing as he's being led off. "Oh, 417, Irving must've got out, man, I was trying to make sure when you apprehended me, officer, sir.... I was trying to help a friend. I ain't done nothing all that wrong, a civil service man, "It Takes A Village," you know, all-that...Hey! not the nads, eh? What's the problem? not a whole lot there to work with. Oh. shit, Alphonse said as his voice went on fade.....

My phone! Irving thought. Hit 911! Irving thought. And so he dialed ten thousand times but no one answered, nothing changed.

I am no loser, but yes a failure. I am so unaccomplished, Irving thought and began to cry. All the blood, the language, the ideas, the stories told, Irving thought. Written. How could no one have ever given a shit when we all knew I had a head that ran uncomfortably hot since forever, Irving thought. All genius, no talent” one of my haters told me. Thanks a lot, bitch. Befuddling to me now, Irving thought. Failing was the one thing I never even considered. Schmuck! Too many shots to the head, I guess, no one escapes that pounding, even when you can take a great punch...handy in the ring, even *The Greatest* Muhammed of all time found that out the hard way. Or, maybe it had to do with how the doctors used turkey tongs on my head while removing me from my mother. Leaving a monstrous lump on the front right quadrant of my skull, (thank de lawd for black, thick hair, Irving thought.)

Maybe because my mother and father couldn't seem to get away from me fast enough. Blowing town two days afterbirth for a month in Paradise, Hawaii. Wasn't it Irving (pre-Wreck), that ogre's arrival on the scene that sent them off, scattering with his mother's hair on

fire? Whatever. Nevermind, Irving thought. Well, I got the message, I tell you what and acted accordingly ever since.

Now, this is not to say I wasn't left in a most warm and decent light, being taken care of by my British Granny and our tender housemaid, Bernadine from South Carolina. Two blazed, electric bands of giving love come from the heavens...come hell or highwater come to earth on duty with baby Irving. But still.....Come on, M&P for chrissakes.

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AFTER ALL, HIS HEAD HAD BEEN DRILLED WIDE OPEN.....OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR EXPLORATION

Given over to the author himself, of "The Anatomy of Melancholy" *THE* physician's reference book of another place, another time, (mid sixteen hundreds) Doctor Robert Burton was taking a good long while of his

intense method of examining.....The great Doctor Burton commenced speaking, "I do not sense troubles with The Devil," he said, "nor with magicians, witches, charms, spells incantations or images." Dr. Burton's oddly girlish hands with fingertips like a kitten's pawpads now moved to Irving's neck where he continued with his saintly touch. "Ahhem...troubles with obedience, constancy, willingness, patience, confidence, bounty. I see a need for juleps syrups of hops, convections of treacle, all for relief of general discontents, vain fears, sorrows for death, hatred, Loss, malice, emulation, ambition and self-love."

"I am searching out," Dr. Burton continued, hunched into Irving's cracked open skull, "rectifications for which such queer things ...antimony and asarabacca will thus promote both a greater gentleness as well as greater strength," Dr. Burton continued. "Purgers for obvious reasons such as protection against terrible dreams; purgers which include Montanus and Mathiolus. Averters including Cardan's nettles, frictions, clysters.....As for your nourishments...a lack of mountain birds, partridge, pheasant, quail, a lack of fish that live

in gravelly water, perch, trout, etc.. As for herbs, there is a significant absence of gold and precious stones such as smaragdes, chelldoies borage, bugloss, pennyroyal, endive.....balm, succory, and violets in broth.servings of maidenhair.....With fruits and roots your prime lack lies in raisins of the sun, apples, oranges, parsnips and potatoes -- all corrected for wind and none overmuch for a healthy plate's portion. Oil of nymphomania for reliable erections."

Next he moved onto Irving's lips and inside his mouth, his tongue. "Troubles with discontents and grievances," the great physician went on, "deformity of body, baseness of birth, propensities for terrors towards servitude, loss of liberty, banishment." Next he was onto the trunk..."Troubles with the heart," he said, "chronic aching, music and murmurs of the waters within.....The Sound.....hmmmmm, unusual". Pause, silence Then:

"In conclusion," the great physician said, "My good man, your name again, please?" "Addup, sir." Addup, you are a wreck. Take better care of yourself. Should you want, you'll live." Then:

The dream was over, pretty sad story.....happy, toe-tapping music behind it, that's the ticket! Irving thought.

"On the killing floor, you dumb guinea junkie!" and so it goes. Were I not stuck to the floor, shot myself by something or other.....I would help Alfonse best I could, Irving thought. "*Kick out the pricks.*"

Dumb fuck, Irving thought. Why can't anyone help me? Alan thought. Story of a life. I can never help myself to anything, Irving thought. I'm apparently dying and the last soul I get to hear is a mad idiot two bit savant peddler motherfucker crying out for justice. While the fire eases to calmer, to calm and things do seem calmer a bit, seemingly.

As if I'm in any shape to judge. 011911911, Alan chanted and dialed. Ten cocksucking thousand blown attempts...Under control, now...maybe not, Irving thought. What to do? 991919999.....

Sounds still out there, noise, repeat repeat repeat repeat repeat repeat repeat repeat.....same as it ever was, some new

voices, now becalming to the other residents and each other, by golly, getting a grip are we?...still, smoke seeps along with that dirty water under Irving's doorjamb...Cops and firemen running into each other — kaboom..big boys with heavy equipment as choreographed by Max Sennet. Irving could see it clear in his imaginings.....And Irving's so thirsty he simply watches the filthy water creep his way through the crummy carpet...rivulets of disease and mis-ease.....then when it reaches he maneuvers his mouth to have a taste. He gets some, but nowhere near enough for a guy lapsing into early stages of dehydration hallucinations. Alfonse's screams disappearing as he's being led off. "Oh, 417, Irving Addup, he got out, man, I was trying to make sure when you apprehended me, officer, sir....I ain't done nothing wrong, simply a civil service...Hey! not the nads, eh?"

AFTER ALL, HIS HEAD HAD BEEN DRILLED WIDE OPEN.....OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR EXPLORATION

And therein a primitive-brain-unity about each spectral fix from everyone ever having made any kind of fixed impression -- from

the seemingly utterly insignificant, to the most bald, harsh affect. Irrefutable traumatic human tones informing Irving's offals throughout. Within Irving, "Wreck" Addup's heart, and making up scraps of soul; going along coming along with him into his open, exposed head wherever Irving may or may not be off to, Irving thought, or forever finally fixed. Thereby eliciting a sense of massive force like heavy-death-metal Jewish Kabbalah ritual over seemingly every spot on Irving's head, inside and out; each move feeling not only as if occurring on the surface but simultaneously as if life were opening the top off his head without any bleeding or scarification, stopping every so often to spend time at certain memorable ports of call

Again, this dream was over, pretty sad story.....happy, toe-tapping music, that's the ticket! Irving thought. Wouldn't That Be Nice, he sampled, a few bars of The Beach Boys for a verse or two.....Why won't someone help me? Irving thought. Why can't anyone help me?

***GUNFIRE, A SHOOTOUT
AND REAL LIFE SHOOT'EM-UP,
DOGGONE...AND FIRE IN THE BRIG!***

Only: why won't someone help me? Irving thought on. I'm plastered to a dirty floor, can't seem to rise, can't seem to speak. What the fucking hell? Irving thought. Sirens. Bells. Shrieks, others hollering for help.

And if you like the sound of shuffling feet, juke and jive everyone on the lam from something; if you wanna feel real nice, just take the rock an' roll Doctor's advice.....Aping, Lowell George...Has he come to look after me? Irving thought The thumping of firemen's boots and clanking of axes and spray of hoses. Damn, Irving thought. Aren't I screaming loud enough for goodness sake? I'm in here Goddamn it! Or, am I screaming out loud at all? Cant rightly tell, Irving thought.

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Thump-thump! Clank, revolvers slapping against copper's thighs -- orders being given.....ie: "Police! Drop the gun...Now!" straight outta the crummier TV police shows, that same boring cadence, the modest

acting saturating through and through....."You, Alphonse! on your knees, hands out front, spread!" and so it goes. My money's on the gun, Irving thought. Were I not stuck to the floor, shot myself by something or other.....Man, am I ever confused. Fatigued, man like never before. Fuu-uck me, Irving thought. Them mixed noises, voices like coming from the Astral Plain, whatever. Cosmic shitstorms. Crackling away non-stop, no quarter. Not for Irving whose screams he owned commenced, fetched from the bottom of his heart, his soul, but by the time they were meant to be heard nothing came. No one came. And yet someone calling his name in hysteria followed by a terrifying knock on his door. Someone shredding my name, Irving thought. greasy, beanpole Alfonse in his wifebeater T and perfectly dated blackened duckass and being shoved, being told to "Shutup, shut-fucking-up, you miserable miscreant." Nice line, must be a Detective with a well developed vocabulary, Irving thought, Alfonse's voice flying away miles a minute, still calling Irving. "Fuck you," Irving heard Alfonse say over and over, hightoned as a master castrati. "Irv, you alright?" Alfonse said. "I need your opinion. Look. Listen to

me Irving...I know you're in there....." Alfonse you dumb fuck! Come help *me*, Irving thought, his thoughts drowned by all the hardscrabble goings on just beyond his reach fucking Alfonse and cops roughing him up.....What chance do I stand? I don't even know where I fit in this crummy stage production. Broadway it ain't, Irving thought. Jesus Christ, what to do? Irving thought. Phewwee, pretty scary. I been silenced, Irving thought. I am severed.

"Yo, dude, listen up, open up. I need to talk to you ...two PR—interloper fucks busted my face up, took all my dope, every type, my entire stash, maaaaaan...took my guns, and my vintage clothes, all the jewelry. You gotta help me, man. Call the cops...Pricks got my fucking mobile, motherfucking PR motherfuckers.

But I thought I just heard the police taking Alfonse down, Irving thought. "Swat teams, Irv....Help! I been robbed, dude. I got to call the po-lice. The fuckers got all the drugs, all the jewelry, all the electronics, the vintage clothes, the Persian rugs.....goddamn, am I repeating myself? Sorry, only I want some justice here. I know you understand Irv, Alfonse carried on in hysterical tones. Wake up you motherfucker

and help me! If anyone can, gotta be you, what it is, Irv. What can I say?

Help you? Irving thought. "The building's on fire, you got out anyhow...that must be it," said Alphonse. "And the Fire guys are here, the cops bound to be close behind. Time to bust, old Alfonse, huh, Wreck? Fuck I had a good run, didn't I? Wait'll I rat-out the names of my clientele for a shit sentence...Alfonse laughed. Then: "IRVING! goddamnit, open up....."

Dumb fuck, Irving thought. Why can't anyone help *me*? Irving thought. Story of my life. I can never help myself in either good or bad ways, Irving thought. I'm apparently dying and the last soul I get to hear is a mad idiot savant two bit peddler motherfucker crying out for justice. While the fire eases to calmer, to calm and things do seem calmer a bit, seemingly. As if I'm in any shape to judge.

011911911, Irving thought. Ten sucking serpents, a thousand failed attempts...Under slight control, now...maybe not, Irving thought. What to do? Sounds still out there, noise, voices, now becalming to the other residents and each other, getting a grip...still, smoke seeps along with water under Irving's

doorjamb. Irving's so thirsty he simply watches the filthy water creep his way, then when it reaches he maneuvers his mouth to have a taste. He gets some, but nowhere near enough for a guy lapsing into early stages of *dehydration hallucinations*. *Alfonse's screams disappearing as he's presumably being led off.....* "Oh, 417 got out, man, I was trying to make sure when you apprehended me, officer, sir.... "I ain't done nothing wrong, like yourself...simple civil service...Hey! watch the nads, eh?"

My phone! Irving thought. Hit 911! Irving thought. And so he dialed ten thousand more times getting no answer, nothing changed.

I am no loser, simply a failure. I am so unaccomplished, Irving thought and began to cry. All the blood, the language, the ideas, the stories told, Irving thought. How could no one give a shit when we all knew I was uncomfortably hot, Irving thought. Befuddling to me now, Irving thought. Failure was the one thing I never considered. Schmuck! Too many shots to the head, I guess, no one escapes that pounding, even when you can take a great punch...handy in the ring, even *The Greatest*

Muhammed of all time found that one out the hard way.

Or, maybe it had to do with how the doctors used turkey tongs on my head while removing me from my mother. Leaving a monstrous lump on the right piece of my skull, (thank de lawd for thick long hair, Irving thought.)

Maybe because my mother and father couldn't seem to get away from me fast enough. Blowing town two days afterbirth for a month in Hawaii. Wasn't it Irving, (pre- Wreck), the monster's arrival on the scene that sent them off, scattering with my mother's hair on fire? Whatever. Nevermind, Irving thought. Well, I got the message, I tell you what and acted accordingly ever since. Now, this is not to say I wasn't left in a most warm and gorgeous light, being taken care of by my Granny and my tender housemaid, Bernadine. Two blazed stars come from the heavens...come to earth on duty with baby Irving. But still.....

AFTERALL, HIS HEAD HAD BEEN DRILLED AND OPENED FOR EXPLORATION

And there's a metaphysical unity about each spectral fix from everyone ever having made any kind of fixed, brainy impression -- from the seemingly utterly insignificant, to the most bald, harsh affect. Irrefutable human tones informing Irving's offals throughout, within Irving, Wreck Addup's heart and making up scraps of soul; going along coming along with him into his open, exposed head wherever Irving may or may not be off to, Irving thought, or forever finally fixed. thereby eliciting a sense of massive force like heavy-heavy Jewish Kabbalah ritual over seemingly every spot on Irving's head, inside and out; each move feeling not only as if occurring on the surface but simultaneously as if life were opening the top off his head without any bleeding or scarification, stopping every so often to spend time at certain evidently memorable ports of call.

Death, hatred, Loss, malice, emulation, ambition and self-love. I am searching out, Dr. Burton continued, Irving thought and remembered. I remember, Irving thought. Never can forget, I suspect, Irving thought. The Sound....."

"My good man, your name again, please?"
"Addup, sir." "Addup, you are a wreck. Take better care of yourself. Should you want, you'll live....."

The dream was over, sad story happy music, that's the ticket! Irving thought. Remember this. Live through this, Irving thought

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With the wind at his back, here in the way back when and standing out near the far end of things...let's say it, Irving thought, his head's been drilled and opened for exploration.

And there's this oddly metaphysical unity about each spectral fix from everyone ever having made any kind of fixed impression -- from the seemingly utterly insignificant, to the most bald, brutal affect. *Simultaneously as if life were opening the top off his head without any bleeding or scarification, stopping every so often to spend time at certain evidently loaded ports of call within. Afterwhich:*

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***DANG: GUNFIRE, A SHOOTOUT AND REAL
LIFE SHOOT'EM-UP***

Only: Why won't someone help me? Irving thought on. I'm plastered to a dirty floor sticky to the bone in my wifebeater I can't seem to rise, can't seem to speak. What the fucking hell? Irving thought. No matter what, it's one monkey-sick night.

Sirens.

Bells.

Shrieks,

Others shrieking for help and the sound of shuffling feet, juke and jive everyone on the lam from something. The thumping of firemen's boots and clanking of axes and spray of hoses. Damn, Irving thought. Aren't I screaming loud enough for goodness

sake? I'm in here Goddamn it! Or, am I screaming out loud at all? Cant rightly tell, Irving thought. Thump-thump! Clank, revolvers slapping against copper's thighs -- orders being given.....ie: "Police! Drop the gun...Now!" straight outta the crummier TV police shows, that same boring cadence, the mediocre acting saturating through and through....."You, Alphonse! on your knees, hands out front, spread!" and so it goes. My money's on the gun, Irving thought. Were I not stuck to the floor, shot myself by something or other.....Man, am I ever confused. Fatigued, man like never before. Fuu-uck me, Irving thought.

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the cops...Pricks got my fucking mobile, fucking wetback motherfuckers.

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While the fire eases to calmer, to calm and things do seem calmer a bit, seemingly. As if I'm in any shape to judge.

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011911911, Irving thought.....Under control, now, maybe? Irving thought. What to do? Sounds still out there, noise, voices, now becalming to the other residents and each other, getting a grip...still, smoke still seeps along with water under Irving's doorjamb. Irving's so thirsty he simply watches the filthy water creep his way, salivating then when it reaches he maneuvers his mouth, his fleshy lips to have a taste. He gets some, but nowhere near enough for a guy lapsing into early stages of dehydration.

Alfonse's screams disappearing as he's being led off. "Oh, 417 got out, man, I was trying to make sure when you apprehended me, officer, sir.... "I ain't done nothing wrong, simply a civil service...Hey! not in the nads, eh?"

My phone! Irving thought. Hit 911! Irving thought. And so he dialed ten thousand times but no one answered, nothing changed.

I am no loser, simply a failure. I am so unaccomplished, Irving thought and began to cry. All the blood, the language, the ideas, the stories told, Irving thought. How could no one give a shit when we all knew I was uncomfortably hot, Irving thought.

Befuddling to me now, Irving thought. Failing miserably was the one thing I never considered. Schmuck! Too many shots to the head, I guess, no one escapes that pounding, even when you can take a great punch...handy in the ring, even The Greatest, Ali. Or, maybe it had to do with how the doctors used turkey tongs on my head while removing me from my mother. Leaving a monstrous lump on the right piece of my skull, (thank de lawd for thick long hair, Irving thought.) Maybe because my mother and father couldn't seem to get away from me fast enough. Blowing town two days afterbirth for a month in Hawaii. Was it Irving, (pre Wreck), the monster's arrival on the scene that sent them off with my mother's hair on fire?

Whatever. Nevermind

Well, I got the message, I tell you what and acted accordingly ever since. Now, this is not to say I wasn't left in a most warm and decent light, being taken care of by my British Granny and our tender housemaid, Bernadine. Two blazed electric bands powered by love come from the heavens...come to earth on duty with baby Irving. But still.....

&&&&&

His head had been drilled and opened for examination. And there's a metaphysical unity about each spectral fix from everyone ever having made any kind of fixed impression therein -- from the seemingly utterly insignificant, to the most bald, harsh affect. Irrefutable human tones informing Irving's offals throughout, within Wreck's heart and making up scraps of soul; going along coming along with him into his open, severed head wherever Irving may or may not be off to, Irving thought; *each move feeling not only as if occurring on the surface but simultaneously as if life were opening*

the top off his head without any bleeding or scarification.

&&&

MOVING RIGHT ALONG/PAST HISTORY

His older brother (by sixteen years) ended up barking mad... howling self-pity, Miro style, moldy, vivid & cold straining impossibly upwards at a yellow moon. A real-life low rent street sheenie, a no good hoodlum.

Nobody even told anyone when he was dead. They only found out when the nut's wife sued for the poor prick's vast estate of nothing at all (a few bucks leftover in his father's estate that was wrapped fist-tight against his ever getting hold and blowing it quick. His younger brother, easy to describe as a good-egg. Nothing much more there either...try, uhh -- *faux flaneur* `err something or other. Whatever. Nevermind. His parents, they didn't terribly mind things as they were, and made the best of all what they had which was plenty enough to be mercifully slow while leaving Irving in the dust.

He himself was unspeakably, remarkably shaded by his own unacknowledged, misunderstood case of being and nothingness.

Such a strange and lost and unknown guy to himself for a long, long time, long time lonesome, man, such hollows within that set so many of his life's virtuoso opportunities, those more singular and defining scenes for Irving. Fully delivered household dynamics/family romance stuff programmed to come up empty, doomed to go off all wrong and so an awful lot did just that in spades... Sure enough.....over and over and over and over I and over and over and over and on and on to the next...over and over and over and over.....again.

Or, maybe he knew more than he let on...who knows? Irving kept what was deeply felt deeply buried to himself No matter what, Irving did not deal well at all, given his neverending, endlessly stated, restated grandiose notions. Crazy brain arrangements, man, I tell you what. Brain frenzy, brain damage likely from birth, yup, from day one's get go, I think so.

Oh, the facade, the trompe

l'oeil was almost pretty all right, good enough. Great fella this Irving...loan you his last nickel and borrow back double, eventually. How fully addicted to himself, (much like the rest of us), remained still most agreeable at times. Where things of surface life and living it maximum superficial, needed to be called upon Irving, (*call me Wreck*), Addup managed it...let's fairly say....well done.

And yet, internal fraud he may've been, Irving did possess a sublime spiritual sincerity, (curious cat) and taken on the mission of returning him to his original state as child of the sun, -- and he wandered, nourished with the heavy metal hot wine of self-deceit and the hard tack of the highway, with a sadly inadequate *real soul people* determination to find either the dreamy frog-green location of a stable enough home and a knack for locating and relocating it as he'd inevitably run out of sufficient high quality bullshit with which he could rely on credible jive enough to keep on rolling the Landlord.

In the room on the damp, smoked floor, filthy Irving was awake and lucid...pushing his cracked up body into impossible, histrionic Marx Brothers, vaudevillian kinds of Jewish theater slapstick positions (of course he had no idea he was getting nowhere.) in order to reach the door, to crawl, roll, stumble, fall fall fall to try and call out from there.

Instead, screaming at the top of his register, though no sound of his could be heard reversely anywhere by anyone, Irving recited, sane *Catch 22*....."*This is miraculous, Irving thought. almost no trick at all, he saw, to turn vice into virtue and slander into truth, impotence into abstinence, arrogance into humility, plunder into philanthropy, thievery into honor, blasphemy into wisdom, brutality into patriotism, and sadism into justice. Anybody could compartmentalize, just do it; it required no brains at all. It merely required no character.*"

Them's the ones who run the show make the rules of the road and one in the same as to how they scare me when called upon to interact. Held myself back so much of the time. Gutless, spineless, feeble weak and

ineffectual irresolute, cowardly, soft. Perversely compartmentalized. Faint hearted, pusilanimous, craven, unmanly, chickenshit, yellow bellied and mad as a hatter without the humours in the face of the disgusting things people do to one another. I'd happily skin each and everyone of them, head to toe...slow and grisly for maximum insult.

Hey, they simply found my work not their cup of tea, for godsakes...fair enough. I solicited them's that lay it down...one's fates and destinies included Ahh, fuck me, Irving thought. Skin me, scalp me.....Sioux Nation hurts the worst.....

Irving could still hear plenty of activity. Cops emptying Alfonse's apartment next door, Remarks made like, "This is the most remarkable collection of strange fucking shit I ever seen any dope dealer have on hand...and I seen some very fucking strange shit, let-me-tell-you.

Firemen sifting through debris, searching for living sparks. I am right here, Irving thought. Why can't they help me? "Just a kiss away," Irving thought The Stones.

“just a shot away...” Come.....Awn.....Irving thought closing his eyes, crying, feeling lost somewhere from the indigo straits to the seas of Ossian, on the pink and orange sand bathed by the wine colored sky, crystal wide avenues rise up and intersect, immediately populated by poor families shopping for food in restaurant throwaway bins. Nothing posh -- the city, just there out of reach, his silent howling of no use in making the hallucinations less real.

Instead he licked filthy water off the dirty, torn carpet. A taste of ash filling the room, pieces of ash floating, sweating in the air.

If he had a true deep love for anything, it had to be his family (two kids, one mother and father, the older brother) second only to this facsimile construct he lived and believed in, conniving right the way through until there was nowhere home to go. still, the brother put food on his family table. A rickety Piranisi trompe l’oeil

which served up sparkling, yet steaming subterranean sacks of shit, oh, the brother worked it -- you got to know he did. Nonetheless I tell you what, truth: a more dear

man you could not meet; and this, despite the physical peculiarities -- the body obsessions, the 'roided, just enough blown out body, the "sixties" hairdo, (only without *belonging within 100 feet of J. Garcia*), the guy looking painfully dated, total L7, walking 'round thinking, 'Damn, am I hip.' Looking clowny wearing gum drop clothes off the racks of L.A.'s most overpriced and stupid habdashers. And the beard! the goddamn beard that *never* came off. (So, follow.....changes name, wears virtual disguise his entire life, believed the "authorities" were ever after him...you following? -- all what makes for your basic schitz. Con-vinced the CIA is onto them, let alone *after.....sad shit since truth be told, not one of six billion motherfuckers (save a touch of family and a few true blue friends) really did care a fuck -- poor, delusional bastard*). Now, don't get things wrong, a powdered wig candidate, the brother was not...Well, maybe a touch of the "apres moi la deluge part," only not the full Louis The Fourteenth trip. No matter how hard Irving tried to appear hard towards the guy, he could not finally duck nor escape his own powerful, genuine empathy, his profound humanity. Utter naecissist, sure...no malevolence, simply a

massive and sad inability to self-examine. Suckering himself first and foremost, always. Suckered more than once, others where he sincerely thought he was *doing* the grift while doing good by all concerned...Any sob story mixed with a chance to make some dough dusted with an underbelly of either straight or homoerotic adoration, The brother was good to go. Lesbians were crazy for him according to his delusions. The self-perceived costume "outlaw" so transparently safe, tough gig trying to be Billy The Kid and *Father Knows Best all at once*. This uncanny facsimile, brilliantine kook fooled himself and many around him knee-deep in bleeding self-deceits so as to fake it with *all* his good true heart, all the way to the furthest degree of compartmentalizing he could bear to live with more than serviceably -- and yet the lack of feeling himself living! Oh, for goodness sake.....I ask you, How? Irving thought.

High trickration off that chronic, dawg-gone bitch of necessity for all human beings in order merely to marshal the dense weight that often slows us to a dead stop once more forth into the heart of each and every day. High heroism, I say.

&&&

Huh? Irving thought. Err. Everything Irving could use now to help himself is absent. No confidence no respect, Irving thought Can't seem to move well at all, no good head to think through some way out...My soul searching overtime for itself...fuming, fumes coming from within and without. my heart is broken, Irving thought. Yet it seems I got memory, mem'ries. All what happened once upon a time, floating still there waiting to be called in when life is too cold. Living a life aping Humpty Dumpty, only worse -- always being put back together, again and again putting me together.

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Irving recalls walking with pal Michael down 5th Avenue. Fun and games FAO Schwartz. Sunny, sunny people, shining people, Irving thought from the filth and floor...us just strolling the boulevard. "Irv, you know what it could simply all be about?" Yeah.. Irving thought.

“Think Stevie Wonder,
man...*Maybe your baby done made some other
plans*”...not exactly unheard of”...Michael said.
Yeah...Irving thought. Ugh, is this life or death
going on here? Irving thought. Can't tell. Don't
care. I don't believe you, Wreck, Irving thought.
Paul Robson singing about being “too tired of
living, too scared of dying...” Michael said, “You
know how people think, say to themselves about
us --`poor losers, a sickening joke are we, as you
might put it, pretentiously Brit right? Only maybe
it's simply us being a reproach to their happiness.
Winners feel that way, I know it,” Michael said.
“Yeah, could be, only maybe it really exposes
tenderness and compassion. When someone's
that mixed up it's a heartbreaking kit you're
carrying around,” Irving said. Am I thinking about
all those years ago or is Michael walking beside
me now? Irving thought. Is Michael watching me
fall over my arm and my feet, not helping me up?
Christ, my head hurts, Irving thought and cried
from the floor, head in hand.

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A tangled muted mess, watching me collapse over and over and over again. Unable to stop this crummy losing streak. Everyone knows how crap that can be...but as a motherfucking lifestyle!? What the fuck? That grinds a man down in a hole, this pisses people off accordingly...Who wants to see even a stranger go down that road, let alone someone you may care for? Irving thought. The good one's intuitively want to help, but they really cannot help. I am so alone, Irving thought and stopped crying to catch his breath, disgusting in the ash and smoke, his emptied innards.

Oh, for goodness sake, how will I ever explain? Irving thought. "Wreck..." said Michael, Irving thought. I remember how, Irving thought...there was this sunny walk as if my very own doppleganger was watching myself-myself and feeling surely deeply familiar with both of us. Forever loving ourselves to death, or else, Wreck thought. Time. Go back.....Shots fired...was I hit in the temple? Schul? Fire for effect.

Fire in the hole!

Stroke.....oh, did I say stroke?...I meant smoke. Axes smashing. Cops on a mission. The sound of Alfonse asking me for help -- Oh, shit, Irving thought. Find me, coppers, I give up, I confess to everything, am guilty of everything, I killed Christ, okay? Find me. Cuff me...take me downtown and sweat me, but please take *me away from this place*, Irving thought, fading a bit, closing his eyes.

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LET US NOT IGNORE IRVING'S KNOTTY AFFAIRS GOING ON OUTSIDE HIS VERY DOOR

Then again, G. Stein might 've just nailed things flush, saying -- *no there there*, but then again, is that me? Irving thought.....As conclusions go in retrospect and examination and mystery and imagination, there was, certainly a wagonload of most hot shit inside here somewhere, too. No matter if it's only ever been metamorphosized into utter self-defeat. Yes, I tell you, I say yes, goddamn in-fucking-deed, Irving

thought, unsure as to whether or not he was conscious.

Let us call this, a mixed bag, he being like most of us. However, lets us call him, caught in a bag as well. Making everything true all at once. Every contradiction, every poorly conceived choice and decision. Right, wrong, and finally what one shapes into belief.

Then again. perhaps he was no more than what this end seemed to bring him to -- a collective, made-up sort of self-made marginalized, some weird utilitarian functioning walking, talking delusion who lived sick knowing his time had come, was up. With a (legally altered first name and discarded, beautiful middle name, taking on a brick of a name instead, geesh... -- this Irving, (call me Wreck), Addup guy finally functionally found dead.....

This is hell, this is obliteration this is the end...heavy shit, Irving thought. About once feeling he had things dicked, figured: Die and you're dead, no heaven, no hell, no guru no teacher, just you and your love in nature in the garden, rain-clean from the heavens, Irving thought as he had once before. Only the act of

feeling yourself living good or bad, don't matter. Reaching back for any kind of help from anywhere -- even himself. And gone after all his bright obfuscations, his hysterical, torturous and greatly afeared *actions*: RIP; and for all the world, I swear you'd've thought him the sanest, most natural man of the bunch: Right, then...live from the grotesque floor: -- Welcome to a story of Irving, ("call me, Wreck" Addup).

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Lookit, let's commence now, yeah? Right then -- the guy, Irving Addup had some gigantic brain bleed, yup, I'll say it, allow me -- Yes, he blew his mind: no skirting that one.

Aneurysm, nevermind. He blew his mind out, (not in a car, but nevertheless for *the righteous pursuit of his own humanity*) Irving had a gigantic brain bleed, yup, gigantic, I'll say it again, he blew his mind out: No skirting that one. nasty word, Aneurysm. Nevermind: He blew his mind out, all right? Call it what you will. Problem being, the kook wouldn't. keep still stay down

and take the motherfucking count -- *"It's not your night, kid...take a standing eight, take a knee, goddamnit or die you dumbfuck."* But Irving was elsewhere in the back of the cab with Brabdo and Steiger — relating to Charlie and Terry. *"It was you, Chahlie, you're my brother, you're supposed to look after me. I might've had a whole better trip instead of being an emotional deadbeat, postman, Irving thought. Once talking with his younger brother after having been hustled by him for the umpteenth time. "Don't worry, man, I'll take care. I know the "right" people, we'll get you in the bookstores and people will get that chance to hear what you got Irving remembered. I remember, Irving thought I told 'em that, didn't I? Irving thought. Irving kept flipping over back and forth stomach, back, but was getting nowhere. The outside commotion still pretty active. "I got embers over here," Irving was sure he heard a fireman call out. yeah, room to room, "Gese, we're gonna be here a long time..." Room to room, Irving thought, that means me, too. Don't wait too long, boys. You got a willing customer right here, waiting. Either, I'm found, or I'm a fucked dead fucking duck. Fuck a duck, Irving thought. Fuck me, Irving*

thought. Still trying to launch himself on a role to sanctuary.

No luck. The door was still where it was when he went down, he was still more or less on the same spot he was from the fall, no matter the pulling the pushing, the calling. Maybe I've departed already and I just don't know this fact yet, Irving thought. Wouldn't it be just like death to leave a soul nowhere? That's dumb horse-sense, Irving thought.

Only the comparison with death felt incorrect, inaccurate, Irving thought. He perked his ears thinking someone was nearby outside heading his way, in. He tried more cries for help, but again, all Irving could hear of himself was a voice weakening with the tone and timber of a child. He still thought he was pure howling for help. Apparently not, Irving thought. Alive and life was still the threat it always was right outside his door: multitudinous, voracious, persistent. In here, it's just me and that frightening dusty spectre leaning, a shadow lounging cool and easy against his wall off just there in the corner. Jesus, Death himself's actually come for me...I get it! me and him.

Irving thought and screamed silence at the top of his lungs and started crying once again. Together at last, Irving thought. Welcome to the story of Irving, "call me Wreck" Addup.

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CHAPTER TWO -- WHAT IN HELL HAPPENED, ANYHOW?

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Once upon a time, there was Irving heaving sweat through a contemporary bit of healthy at home iron pumping. Fit as a fiddle, Irving thought. In great shape, "heart of a young lion," or so he'd been told by recent doctor examinations.

Hot as all get-out, outside., the air truly heavy, like a perfect day for a lynching. Irving got working into a hearty sweat. Suddenly the waterfall shifted nature -- pure

bizzarie. In a few seconds or less he was otherworldly drenched, water sweating from his forehead as if some broken watermain had begun to crack and leak..Purgatory calls, must be-- How come the odd crackling in my ear? Fire residue from outside, hmmm. From insude!

Did Irving then see his life flash by on the way down, down both slow like in a mudbath, yet faster 'n all hell breaking loose like cartoon speed and now here he was suspended in air, all flailing legs and arms, not quit fallen yet no safe ground anywhere to be seen, save the bottom where death clearly was awaiting. But naahng-anghhgh, nothing so cool as that. What did he see, then you might fairly ask. Well, here's what I've come to believe. That Irving was privy to a small glimpse at eternity. (In fact, Irving would come to this very same notion...e-ven-tually. Or something similar as such. Follies in the funhouse at the end of the road as Mr. J.Barth has layed it out. All this blood pouring out, Jesus, Irving thought. Reaching for any number of guessings. Finally concluding, whatever. Nevermind. Could be the entrance to Nirvana for all I know, Irving thought. That, too. Now quietly slurring sweet nothings into the

phone... "help me." Irving thought but determined whatever he was dialing led him repeatedly to the same response. A dialtone droning. He wondered if he'd graciously begged off the phone earlier while having phonesex with what appeared to be a most pleasant Texas tart. He hoped he hadn't been terribly rude begging off without explanation. Poetry, Irving thought — having a stroke while stroking it. Irving laughed in a rather disturbing and disagreeable fashion. A laugh that scared the shit out of him. Still.

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Until The Reaper interrupted the phone conversation, interrupting rudely by saying, "Yeah Irving, Death over here. Right here! and I love you, too. I've been looking for you all over the place. Hey, you don't look too hot, oh, sorry, bad choice of words as I imagine you're burning the hell up, no? Death paused as if waiting for an answer. Aww, that's a good guy. You're just hanging on to see where this takes you. "My happy little adventurer.

Surely something's really way off, the crazed fire and firearm cacophony outside and now Death's putting the touch on me. Doggone R. Lowell, "My mind's not right..." Irving thought how on Court TV, a forensics person had said, "people who are readying for suicide tend to perspire heavily." Lord, is this all I've finally come to? I couldn't come up with something more sexed up, more real, More. Further. Beyond belief. Beyond all reason. for goodness sake -- Whatever all that's meant to mean...Irving thought .

He stood from the corner of the bed where he'd been pondering. His predicament. Stood, but oddly crooked for a moment. Dropped oddly in the following instant. A collapse not like a tree, but rather in the manner of razing a building by implosion, in stages, floor by floor until the debris rules the ground beneath itself. Now, Irving was like that, in pieces on the ground. Hysterically trying to find enough of what's left so as to hopefully cobble together a way to the door to be free. The six swaying Coca Colas still a torment just there in the pint size refrigerator, as he felt his mouth drying out. Fears and feels The Reaper lounging

about. Feels himself drifting agape and embalmed in a kind of otherworldly fatigue. Irving shut tight his eyelids, against the moment in order to hold off any next puddle of tears and weirdly drifted away to some other time.

Recollecting the formidable editrix from a famous publishing house, big name authors, some of them genuinely deserving of literary respect.

Meantime here, right before her was the embodiment of what is great. Right in front of her pretty face, Irving thought. Irving couldn't help notice how sexed up the lady was yet his intentions were not remoely attached to wanting to fuck her. He did however want her to love him for what he'd writ, of course once that was established, then Kerang, all you need is love, Irving taken to her bosom to La Marseillaise, sampling The Beatles and a song all about all Irving believed in with all his whole heart..... He'd sent off one hundred and thirty two pages of a novel whose name at this time he could not remember, not then and there dying on the floor, he could not recall. He did recall the strange, new sensations were pretty great.

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She'd then invited him to a very high floor of some West 59th Street skyscraper and Irving thought he was ready for his just deserts, scanning her desk for the contract folder...only, not quite.

In fact nothing. Instead he looked up her purposely open legs and got a porn-star sized boner mesmerized by her pink and white panties. Is she wet? Should I ask her, Irving thought. Thankfully, he kept quiet and listened. Waiting to see just how hard and how the inevitable hammer of the Gods would come bashing down on him.

And so it did. Only not before a boatload of cruelty had been dumped into his ears. Still uncontrollably excited at the thought that this whole trip could somehow turn out rather nicely. "Who can I compare you to but the gods of fiction?" she said, squeezing her legs together. Is she *skimming already*? Irving thought. Nevertheless after more blah-blah-bleh, blah-blehch. Blow me, out of this affair. be gone,

goon. And keep your eyes to yourself. Then pointing to my back pages said, "Take this doorstop home with you. We both understood this would be a way too long book to sell. Based on what. Your zero history of published works, your staggering unknown-ness?" Fuck me, Irving thought I *will* hand her a doorstop one day, and I'll be damned if that's not exactly what it will be used for.

And so what? Another failed grade, suck...die dead soul or maybe...find a new profession, dead soul, Irving thought. Reee-jected, "I wanna be sedated" damn her; the beauty with the bloody hair. It turned out that the pretty lady didn't believe it possible for an "unknown, unpublished" infirmity like Irving could ever keep up "the most manic literary energy" she'd ever come across. This despite having favorably compared him to Roth, to Joe Heller, to Pynchon whose latest at the time was "Vineland."

She tells Irving, straight faced that she was enjoying his work far more than she was Mr. Tom's. "But do keep in touch, I'll seethe can be done, Irving" she'd said. "Prove me wrong." Oh yeah, well, thank you for your time.....and fuck you, Irving thought.

Irving recalled the heartache beat for beat, was feeling it as he opened his eyes on the bloody filth fucking floor. More hurt and incensed all these years later, than he ever was: Why would anybody say such outrageous compliments when it would've been so simple to be gracious and straight say, "it's just not for me," Irving thought his eyeballs tearing into the gross carpeting. Oh my, Irving thought. Not one book, not one dust-jacket, not one first edition, not one steady, solid thing. I am the Postman, "*coo-coo-ca-joob*." Irving thought. After all...all I can do well is Deee-liver, Irving thought. Hmhmhmhm.

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Wreck struggled mightily to figure out who's dead? I know there's an answer..Tattooed, twisted arm was lapsed dead right there just above his head, there on the stinking ground floor with his body's newly hatched disabilities and no help anywhere to be found. And just beyond, sounds. Sounds hollow and remote that

seemed to be gathering to admonish and astound, creating a past from which ghosts sang from somewhere outside the earth where not one outstretched arm, not a single finger could reach or beckon or touch to lend a hand. He lifted it with the good right hand and examined it carefully. Either it's mine or I tore it off the fucker who clobbered me, Irving thought.

When he saw, upper left bicep Miro's "Dog Howling at the Moon," he knew now whose arm it was and yes it was dead yet still weirdly howling.

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The Reaper was still hanging around. "Aren't you done yet?" Irving asked. Death gave no answer, no quarter. Just stood there black and burning up. Irving felt so very hot. Could still hear commotion out his door. The reminiscences still coursing through his sad, fucked up brain- bones. Soaking the rags blood-red, the rags and bones still working to keep his shit together, to keep from the whole damn head becoming an explosion.

Irving took note how he appeared to be making a break from those insane crying jags. Death without tears and a despairing love for someone he's never met and yet another petty crime against his own humanity
Whimpering in the ruined mud and stone and muddy water mud and wet rubble outside his locked door. I'm shifted, Irving thought.

&&&&

Came a time when Wreck was late teenaged and he, extemporaneously paid visit on his father at his father's office way up there in the Pan Am Building, where , in so many words, Irving told his Dad....."Dad, if I ever call you to tell you I can take no more, that I'm going to kill myself, that I give up, cannot take the humiliation... I want you to know...if you ever hear from me making that kind of call, I won't be kidding, this will be no bluff. I'll tell you I love you and mom and the rest and I will mean every word, and when I say "take good care of yourself, Dad, I promise you...I will leave belching a small cosmic noise upon departure. If you listen

carefully, Dad, Hey, man.....you will hear me at last."

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Continuing to recollect...Irving continuing his efforts to find someone to come save him.

Fire! Gunplay! freaks and the whole freakshow at my door, my life with the heroes and villains, Irving thought, one more time howling into the void with a voice in a throttled state and dying out...Practically impossible to hear or make out, particularly given the noise and confusion still going on just beyond his fading language. Help me.....Irving thought in what seemed to him a deafeningly loud and perfectly enunciated fashion.

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Back again, and Irving could see quite vividly how.....Irving's father had given his family classic, that beleaguered, busted and disgusted slow-motion headshake, coupled with a

disgusting closing of his eyes and said, "Yes, of course, Irving, I believe you and know how deeply you mean what you say.....We're done talking for now, right?" Irving's father asked "Hey, that's great, Dad, thanks a lot." Irving said. Two cliches making their familiar moves through the oft played scene. And yet in the deep underneath, the roil and spoil within each of them. The viciousness between the two suitors for Silver Addup's hand and heart. Adding up to not much, to what end? Poor Dad, he could never say no to me. Talk about a guy in a bind. Poor us, me and him at the mercy of her mystic hold over every moment. Poor Dad, destroy me? Yes, what else was he to do? But say no for fear of offending the dreamlove of his lifetime? Never. Walter Adduo knew this all too damn well, he just couldn't make sense of it; if someone could've only translated all onto a mathematical ledger, he'd be jake. but these kind of queered contradictions were simply not his bag. Go back, Irving thought confused as to what get back meant at this point. Into memory? Or the stinking grotesquerie of how rotted he was presently situated?

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Cafe street culture on 59th and First, foot of the bridge, of the tramway. Sunny sunshine day, handsome men, beautiful boys, beautiful women pretty, pretty, pretty girls. Each one young and clever, each on the make as an actor, model, writer, painter. Sunny, shining diamonds haphazardly gathering in the spermy, cunty, fresh air. Feeling groovy. Going back from the floor imagining outside to the cantina, Irving's simply following the look-see drifting pieces of brain damage...puts me in a funny place, What Cantina? Irving thought. It's getting so I almost can't tell whether I'm back then, all them years ago or hear surrounded by filth and failure.

His face was mashed into the carpet, he couldn't lift his goddamn head, a really heavy head finally with it's shelves completely overturned..."Help" Irving screamed towards the activity outside his door. Nothing doing to do Wreck any darn good...Not anymore, Wreck thought My head, Irving thought like he'd become the Elephant Man as a result of this curious metamorphosis, unable to lift all the

things held within. Both the good and bad, both the impossibly ugly and impossibly beautiful.

Irving was so very sad, so brutally heartbroken. Poor Wreck, poor Irv, poor Irving, my God...look close at the downed Utopian Sentimentalist, the broke up heartbroken optimist. No fucking good, Irving thought. I'm thirsty, Irving thought and stopped trying to lift his head, laying it back down the few inches he'd covered, slithering...The stink was nasty business...the view, pure dirty horrorshow.

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