
TALES FROM THE LAND OF NOD

A Gnostic Myth

By D. M. DeBacker

Tales From The Land Of Nod
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The further we move away from the individual toward abstract ideas about Homo sapiens, the more likely we are to fall into error. The individual is the only reality.

-Carl Jung (1959)

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Introduction

BY THE AUTHOR

This poem, written in the form of an epic poem, is divided into three parts consisting of three cantos each. The first part tells four stories of the creation of the world: The Fall Of Ialdabaoth Into The Material World, The Story Of Cain & Abel, Cain's Exclusion to the Land Of Nod, and then the Fall Of Satan.

The second part begins sometime in far distant future.

The first canto tells the story of the Gnostic demiurge, Ialdabaoth. The creation of the material realm by the Elohim, has just started. One of the Elohim, Ialdabaoth, whose name means "blind and stupid", has taken a break. He is sitting and casually enjoying tall refreshing and never-ending glass of milk. Suddenly a large ugly scorpion, a personification of evil and chaos, makes its appearance and frightens Ialdabaoth.

In his fright Ialdabaoth spills his glass of milk which rains down upon and severely damages the creation efforts of the other Elohim. Ialdabaoth then realizes that he must tell his mother, Sophia, what has occurred, but he is afraid that he will smile when he tells her.

Sophia who is all knowing and all wise, already knows what Ialdabaoth has done. She takes him into the council of the Elohim where he must stand trial before the Logos, who is actually Jesus disguised hidden behind a dark mask.

For his punishment Ialdabaoth is chained to an altar and forced to undergo a "promethean" style operation of having his appendix repeatedly removed. During the operation Ialdabaoth suffers a vision whereby he witnesses not the creation of world, but rather its ultimate destruction.

After some unspecified time, Ialdabaoth is incarnated as Cain the son of Adam.

In the second canto, we find Ialdabaoth as the witness to another emphyreal event; that being the fall of Satan. Here in a lower heaven he meets Saklas newly fallen from heaven...

In the third canto of the first part, the story of Cain & Abel is re-told. The telling is from Cain's perspective and presents a picture slight askew of the telling found in Genesis.

The final canto of the first part tells of Cain's trek from Eden to the Land of Nod.

I'd tell you more of the story, but then I don't wanna blow it for anyone...

This poem, which I have designated as an epic poem, is actually made up of series of poems that I wrote between the ages of 14 (1969) and 44 (1999). The earliest material was composed between 1969 and 1973. The rest came in spurts. Much of Part II was written between 1978 and 1981 while I was in Korea, but there is no general chronology order to the layout of this *tome* in terms of order. I have tried as best I can to note when certain parts were written, but I have not done so with any degree of specificity. Some of the later material deals with a set of reoccurring dreams that I like to call "reoccurring themes"; such that I do not have the same dream over and over again, but, rather, I have dreams in which the same theme repeats over and over again with certain variations.

D. M. DeBacker

July 7, 2000

Part I: The Doctrine Of Accidental Creation

Canto I¹

When the Elohim² began to create,
the world was without form and
5 void and darkness was upon the
face of Tiamat³ and the Spirit of God⁴ was
upon the face of the waters and the God
separated the waters from the waters which
were above and the Lord called down fire
from the Lord.

10

These are the generations of the heavens
and the Earth: in the day that god⁵ made the
Earth and the heavens.

15

He was sitting on the kitchen floor, between
the fridge and the stove, enjoying a tall cold
glass of milk⁶.

“Ah, good,” the milk was cold and
refreshing-

20

Chills the body, but not the soul⁷

The glass was never-ending. Across the
room he saw a large ugly scorpion crawling
out from the crevices in the wood work.

25

He is a menace, black and green. Small hairs
sprout from his under belly. There is a
stench associated with his presence that can
only be described as evil.

Beggar on horseback/ Devil on two sticks

30

...it seemed to hiss as it crawls across the
floor.

35

I am frightened. I try to cry out; no sound
escapes my lungs. It is as though my head
were in a bell. In my fear I spill the milk. It
streams out across the floor, becoming like
unto a river with four heads⁸.

River deep, River wide

40

A tidal wave flows across the face of the
Earth. It is a torrent that destroys all living
things that happen to be in its path.

O, Danny boy, the pipes, the pipes are playing

45

The white river is darkened and muddy-ed
by bits of crud from the kitchen floor. there

is blood and carnage all about.

*O, the humanity.*⁹

50

The insect lurches and jumps against the
cupboard seeking refuge from the deluge.

*No deposit, no return.*¹⁰

55

Nemesis¹¹ sits on the white rock. She
watches the water and contemplates things
that have not yet happened.

*Unbathed is the maiden,
no sparkling water is poured in the city...*¹²

60

Then the wind was moving over the face of
the waters:

O Shiva, Destroyer of Death, drink up this
Ocean of Milk.

65

Descend, O Kurma, and churn out the
Nectar of Immortality¹³.

Scorpio cries out against the middle of the
night, he is swallowed by the Milky Way.

70

He becomes a part of our lives, a household
word, a character in the funny pages, a fly on
the wall...

It is not an easy thing to admit one's
failings¹⁴.

O Danny boy, we loved you so.

75

I must run and tell mother: there is milk all
over the floor. I am sure that she would
want to know. In fact she would be upset if
I didn't tell her. I won't tell her about the
bug, however.

80

For, you see, if I tell about that I'm sure I'll
smile like I did when I told her about the
lizard I tormented in the garden...

*What have we to do with thee, o son of man?
Hast thou come to torment us before the time?*¹⁵

85

...or the time that I strangled that dog out
by the pool.¹⁶

90

And then I will laugh and she will call me
Ialdabaoth¹⁷, blind and stupid.

95 I am reminded¹⁸ of the time she left me in
the church. There were people everywhere.
To look over everyone, and in order to see
the Bishop, I had to stand on top of the
pew.

Mother whispered that she had to go to the
bathroom. She said she would be right back,
but I insisted that she take me with her.

100 Then the Bishop said that he had to go to
the bathroom, (he was the black Bishop; the
queen had been taken in move sixteen¹⁹) and
he said that he wanted me to take his place²⁰.

I wanted to leave with him, for if he were to
leave I then would be in the company of
105 strangers.

“So that he does not leave we must tack his
ass to the altar of soul!” The Bishop
declared.

110 Then let the passion play begin: Will Jesus
crawl down from the cross?

His fans are waiting with eager eyes...

And behold, I turned and looked and Jesus
crawled down from the cross. His winged
feet were dressed in gold.

115 In his hands a stethoscope he did strangle.
He declared to all that he would heal by faith
alone.

“Where does it hurt?” The Doctor asked the
little boy²¹.

120 He was strapped to a bed of white paper.
The wallpaper was a mosaic of badly drawn
bambis, thumpers, dwarves, and copyright
law violations. He felt secure here; medicine
did not scare him.

125 His grandfather was a doctor; he would be a
doctor, too.

“Right here,” the boy pointed to the right of
his girded loin.

130 “Breath deep,” the Doctor said as he probed
the afflicted area,
“Cough, please... do you know what an
appendix is?”
“The part of a book that nobody reads?”

135 “Yes,” replied the Doctor, “and yours must
come out. We must operate.”
“Can my grandfather operate on me?”
“That would be out of the question.”
“Can I watch? I want to be a doctor!”

140 There were things that ran around the world
while I was under. They foretold of
something:
Death by drowning, death by a guitar pick,
or death from mistaken identity.

145 I sat up to watch how the operation was
progressing; yet the Doctor was content to
trifle on the ground; drawing in the dust a
druidic rune²²...

150 *“It is the symbol,” he droned, “of poor digestion ²³
And suggests sleepless nights on rainy days.”
I understood this not and watched in amazement
As the rune transmogrified to an intricate maze.*

155 *“This is the symbol of mental corrosion.”
Yet I saw this not as the maze gravitated wildly in
torsion; gradually changing from maze to
mandala.*

160 *“This is the symbol of moral decadence.”
The disk, stretched with coils of distorted men,
Began to grow and grow until the walls of the room
Began to bulge and bend.*

165 *From the center of the outer reaches
Began a change that seemed to break all rules²⁴:
There formed 'round about miles and miles of empty
beaches
Surrounding vast teeming protozoic pools.*

170 *All manner of shrimp's larvae and crustaceopod;
There was a crab and few whiting too;
(Even a poodle, which I considered quite odd)
Swam about in this watery zoo.*

175 *Then the waters fell still under the heat of day,
Causing all life to wither and decompose.
Soon the Whole of Earth fell apart in decay.
The stench, of which, arose and filled my nose.*

235 *Small groups of naked souls stood honoring Truth
& Beauty,
Some wandering about lost in Happy Thought,
While others, nestled two-by-two, performed some
Private Duty.*

240 *In Heaven, the pagans were dancing dancing quite
well.
While looking earthward, I saw angels ministering
to the damned in Hell.*

245 And when he awoke the doctor was there:
dressed in white, a stethoscope about his
neck, a smile pasted to his face.

245 “Wanna see it?” He asked, “Wanna see your
appendix?”

250 From behind his back he produced a jack-in-
the-box²⁶. The little boy had never had a
jack-in-the-box before. For some reason
they frightened him.

255 I never knew what to expect from them
after the music stopped. There was never a
jack in the box. It was always a clown, a dog,
or fred flintstone.

255 Yet it was more than that; much more.

260 Something was wrong with my jack-in-the-
box. Why else would a doctor insist that I
look at it; look at what was inside. I couldn't
bear to do that.

260 “No, I don't wanna see inside it!” The little
boy whined.

265 He kicked his feet and flailed his arms. The
nurse rushed in to pulled his restraints
tighter.

265 “Ooo, Look his sutures come undone!”

“I don't wanna, I don't wanna!”

“You must.”, the Doctor intoned.

270 He inched the box forward. He held it to my
face.

270 *Around, around the mulberry bush
the monkey chased the weasel...*

275 I did not want to see the contents of that
box, for I knew already what it contained...

...it was the universe turned inside out...

*The line broke, the monkey got choked,
and they all went to heaven in a little rowboat. Hey, hey...*

“I’m afraid then we’ll have to operate.”

280

Operate again, they did. Again he offered the box; I denied it once more and once more, a thrice time, he did operate. Once more he came to me and offered up the box, and a third time I denied it²⁷.

285

*Ambition should be made of sterner stuff.*²⁸

Then Adam came home from work.

Cain²⁹ was no more afraid of him than he was of DoctorTheBishopJesus.

290

Adam unchained his son and sternly admonished him to never, ever, ever, again disrupt mankind... Lest he be turned into a pillar of salt

Canto II

From the confessional came not a
sound. The lights went out in the
church³⁰...

5

*In nightmares he perceived of nothing
Nothing but sandy deserts full of wild beasts
And unapproachable dogs from Asia sitting huge
upon the map
And the whole world lost in Vishnu's lap³¹.*

10

...the lights went on. The lights went out
again. They were having technical difficulties
inside the church.

15

Saklas³² was sent for; he with the Prince Of
Power & Air Co.

“Yes, he was here yesterday,” the Sister,
sitting behind a desk in the nave, explained,
“but I don't think he'll be back again today.”

“Why is this?” the Prelate asked.

20

“Why? O dear Lord, don't you know? The
poor man fell through the ceiling.”

“The devil, you say!”, The Prelate shook his
head. “Just like a Jew; drinking on the job,
no doubt.”

25

And there fell from heaven a great star³³

I³⁴ looked into the church. The pews were
gone. The altar was stripped bare. The
ceiling could have been no less than two
hundred feet above the floor.

30

A black hole in the white ceiling stood out
like a moon in a cloudless sky.

I walked away. “Was he dead?”, I asked
myself, “Could it be possible?”

35

And I do not know where they have laid him.³⁵

“These people!”, Shemuel³⁶ exclaimed when
I found him down the hall,

40

“I've come to tell them what their problem
is, but they never listen.”

He wore a long violet robe and no pants.
From the hem of the robe I could see his
skinny, hairy legs and his unmanicured
hooves.

45

“But, is it true that you fell?”, I asked.

“This building is old, I've told the rector, I don't know how many times. What they need to do is tear this place down and build another church³⁷.”, he fumed.

50

There will not be one stone upon the other that will not be thrown down.

“God forbid.” I muttered.

55

“Come on, I'll show you what it is they're hiding in the attic³⁸.”

We climbed the stairs. They were made of wood, rough and hewn; and each step creaked and groaned as we went along.

60

There I met a man who would not say his prayers. I took him by the leg and threw him down the stairs.

At the top of the stairs there was a door.

He put his ear to it and knocked softly.

65

“Shibboleth?”, he asked and then laughing he gave me a wink.

“But is it true that you fell out of the ceiling?” I asked once more.

He smiled and said:

70

“For a moment we all hang twixt heaven and Earth.”

I looked over at Sabalo³⁹, his red beard glowed in the dark.

75

There was sufficient reason, I thought, to fear the unknown. A chill broke along my spine.

Heaven was empty and dark. The smell of must and dust hung heavily in the air.

Saboath turned and waved his arms about.

80

“All these planks have been set up and these platforms have been laid down. It impossible to find ones way about.”

“O my God, where do we begin?” I sighed.

“Follow me,” he replied, “but be careful this place can be tricky.”

85

Thus spake the apostate angel, though in pain

With that he set out ahead of me and it was
not long before I lost him in the darkness. I
stumbled along.

90

Here and there tiny shafts of sunlight
streamed down from the roof and though
they shed no light on the greater scheme of
things, I could see that there was another
world above and beyond this one.

95

I stumbled and hit the boards.

The taste of dust and the crunch of teeth
against wood told me sharply that I was in
the wrong place⁴⁰.

100

*I searched and I searched,
but I couldn't find no where
on Earth to find peace of mind*⁴¹

Canto III

In the garden, Cain & Abel played their
silly little games⁴².

5 Cain was always *it*, subject to the whims
and fancies of his younger brother⁴³: a horse,
a dog, a pig, or a tiger.

“Be a dog, dear brother.”, he would say.

10 And then Cain discovered Lilith⁴⁴ hiding in
the bushes near the place where the river
became unto four heads⁴⁵, but he spoke not
of what he saw; yet went daily there unto her
often.

15 One day as they sat beneath the roses⁴⁶, she
raised her head and let forth a laugh. Cain
questioned this and she replied:

“Because you know me not.”

“Dear lady, I have known thee many times!”

20 “Idalobeth, blind and stupid, I am thy
mother, Kore⁴⁷. The apple that you eat
thereof bears the fruit of thy creation.”

“No, no, you lie!! This cannot be so!” Cain
cried.

“I am Sophia⁴⁸, the Truth, and the truth
never lies.” she answered.

25 Cain smote his breast and cast himself upon
the ground.

“Bring me your brother, Abel, Son of the
Woman, that I may know him also and make
him like unto a man made in your image.”

30 And Cain contrived against his brother,
because in his eyes, Abel was but a puff of
wind.

“Be a pig, dear brother.” Abel greeted his
brother.

35 “Hast thou ever seen a pig that drinks water
through it's snout?” Cain asked his brother⁴⁹.

And when his brother answered not, he
intoned:

40 “Come, I will show thee. In the thorns there
lies such a creature.”

The brothers went and when they came
upon the roses, Abel peered in but he saw
not the creature that his brother described.

45 “There is nothing there--- only darkness.”
said Abel.

*“Fly, fly”, quoth the Fearful Dwarf:
“This is no place for living men.”*⁵⁰

50 “Nothing dear brother?”, asked Cain, “Can
you not see what I see?”

“What is that?”

“There is a fawn in heat, yet it appears like
unto a maiden.”

“Where is it?”

55 “There it is! A maiden dressed in black,
though truly she is a bitch.”

“I do not see it.”

“The dog has lost her way, yet it is a horse.”

“Brother, do you tease?”

60 “The horse is many colours: Famine, Death,
and War; though she is a sow.”

“A sow?”

“A sow greater than all the Earth, with a
snout by which she drinks up all the ocean.”

65 “Brother, I see it not.”

“Behold, she is lioness!”

70 Suddenly a great light shone forth and Lilith
was revealed in her four-armed form as
Kore, Queen of Heaven and Mother of the
Earth.

Dropping her gown and casting aside her
golden tresses, she unveiled eight breasts
albescent and brimming with the milk of
immortality. She reached out:

75 “Come to me, Son of the Woman.”

Abel staggered forward and was enveloped
by the light.

Kore pressed him to her breasts and he did
cast his seed upon the ground.

80 Cain turned and ran away as Abel fell into a
death-like sleep.

85 Later Cain returned to the place where he
had left his brother, but he found only Lilith
sitting there. when he asked for his brother,
she told him:

“I have put the little man in a boat and cast him off!”

Cain was fearful, but tried to hide his fear from Adam and the Woman⁵¹.

90 One day while they were in the garden,
Adam said to Cain:

“Where is Abel, your brother?”⁵²

“I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?”

95 “What have you done?” said Adam, “The
voice of your brother's seed is crying to me
from the ground. and now you are cursed
from the ground, which has opened it's
womb to receive your brother's seed.”

100 And Cain said to Adam: “My punishment is
greater than I can bear, because you have
driven me away from the Ground, and from
thy Face I shall be hidden; and I shall be a
Fugitive and a Wanderer on the Earth, and
whoever finds me will slay me.”

105 “Not so.” said Adam and he put a brand on
Cain so that no one who would find him
would have him slain.

Then Cain went away to the East of Eden
and dwelt in the Land of Nod.

110 *thuartpeatrick*⁵³

The road to Nod was long and not without
it's troubles.

115 On the first day out from Eden, Cain came
upon the city of Gomarra, wherein live the
Gomarrites.

On the third day out from Eden, Cain
rested. Yet before he slept he prayed was his
custom:

120 *O wide-of-stride, who comes forth from
Heliopolis, I have not committed evil.
O nose, who comes forth from Hermopolis, I
Have not been covetous.*

125 *O swallow-of-shadows, who comes from the
Pit, I have not robbed.”*

*O breaker-of-bones, who comes forth from
Herakleopolis, I have not told lies.*

*O eater-of-entrails, who comes forth from the
Thirty, I have not practiced usury.*

130 *O bastet, who comes forth from the sanctum, I
Have not winked.”⁵⁴*

And thus he said his prayers.

*God is great, God is good. now please let us eat our food.*⁵⁵

135

And then he slept-- as was his custom.

*By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down,
Yea, we wept when we remembered Zion.*⁵⁶

140

Cain survived unto the end of time.

Part II: On Earth By A Martian Astronomer

Canto I

Cain the last survivor of humanity is
living at the end of the universe;
5 poised precariously on the Edge of
Reality.

Soon will come the End of Time and with it
Cain.

10 In great haste he begins to dictate his life's
story to his long time, solitary companion,
LEILA, **Linked Electronic Integrated Logic**
Analyser, a computer he had built from
instructions found in an issue of **Quantum**
Mechanix Illustrated.

15 Cain is now in his 30th billion year. The
memories gush forth without any regard to
continuity.

20 He does this knowing that LEILA, with her
gigabytes of memory, will later sort out the
minor details.

“But who will ever read this tome?” ponders
LEILA.

Cain sits naked on the sofa, sucking on iced
cubes, his teeth in a glass.

25 All attempts to contact his agent have failed.

“He is either having lunch with a publisher
or has by now been reduced to rubble.”, he
sighs.

30 “Does this mean there won't be anymore
cocktail parties in Whitman's beloved
Manhatta?”

“Hush or I'll paddle your fanny.”

“I don't have a fannie.”, chirped LEILA.

“Remind me to outfit you with one.”

35 “Right, boss! Noted and stored. what now?”

“We begin.”

“Begin at the beginning?”

“Of course not. We will begin in the middle
and work our way out.”

40 “Begin!” snapped Cain.

It was a dark and scary night...

“Title?”

“What haven’t I used?”

“How about *The Solipsist’s Nightmare?*”

45

“Uh-uh, I’m saving that for later. Title this one... *The Thief In The Night.*”

“Begin!

It was a dark and scarry night. my wife and I were preparing for bed...”

50

“Which wife would this be?”, chimed LEILA.

“HmMMM. I’m not sure if I remember.”

“Was it perhaps the one with a butterfly tattooed on her left-----”

55

“O, Never mind all that! Just let me tell you the story. You can fill in all the details later....”

“*The Thief in the night.* Begin!

It was a dark and scarry night. My wife and I were preparing for bed...

60

“No, no, make that we were staying in the Ambassador hotel in Los Angeles, California, Earth, etc., etc.... Or was it the Francis in Frisco...? At any rate, it was mid 20th... 21st century... something like that. Any way...

65

“I was in this hotel, see; an’ I was coming up the stairs when I hear these two fags talking in the hallway about going up on the roof...”

70

“Hold it, boss. are you doing a monologue? First person or present tense?”

“Can’t you tell? I’m in character; and don’t interrupt me again or I’ll pull your plug and break out the laser recorder.”

75

“I’d prefer the fanny paddlin” cooed LEILA.

“Later. Where was I?”

“You were about to go up on the roof of the Ambassador hotel with two queers.”

“I wasn’t about to do any such thing!

80

“I was walking up the stairs when I hear these two guys talking about going up on the roof.

“(I only mention that because of what happened next.)

85 “When I get to the fourth floor I find my wife standing outside our room.

“She had taken the lift. I walked up the stairs. Never liked elevators; they gave me claustrophobia.

90 “She was in a panic. ‘Said the door to our room was opened; that someone had broken in and she was afraid someone was still in the room.

95 “Back in those days I carried a piece with me at all times.

“On some occasions I carried several. I had a coupla pearl handled derringers, I carried in each shoe.

100 “I had a pistol in my right breast pocket; one in each coat pocket; one in my waistband; and one in my hatband.

“Why so much firepower?”, asked LEILA.

105 “‘Cause back then every religious fanatic and goof in the galaxy was gunning for me. that's one reason I had to get out of the Milky Way.”

“Mmmmm, There were other reasons! This oughta be really good!”

110 “One story at a time, please; and no more interruptions!!”

“Yes, boss. please continue.”

115 “So, I pull out my gun, see, and slowly I open up the door. the lights were still on in the room, but every thing looked the way we'd left it.... A Mess!

120 “After checking around an' making sure there was no one hiding out in the toilet; I leaves the old lady to count her diamonds while I decide to take a little walk around the joint and check things out.

“I had a little hunch that these two fairies, that I heard talking in the stairwell, might be up to something more than your run o' the mill barnyard activity.

125 “So I climb up eight flights of stairs to the top floor; trying to find the roof access.

“When I finally find the the ladder, there's this guy coming down the ladder.

130

“Now get this: He's wearing a dark suit; dark shirt, no tie. He's got on a cap. He's wearing a little black mask around his eyes, and he's carry a black valaise full o' tools.

135

“He looked jes' like one o' them comic book burglars like you might see in the funny papers.

“As soon as he gets down the ladder, I stick out my gun, see, and I sez:

140

‘Hold it right there, bub, or I'll fill you so full of holes you'll leak like a sieve from here to next Tuesday... Yes’

145

“Then he turns around and starts coming towards me like he ain't scared of nothing. So, I start walking backwards, but I tell him: *I mean it, buster, I gonna shoot.* But this don't stop him neither.

“So I shoot: Bam! Bam! Bam!

“Nothing happens. so I shoot him again: Bam! Bam! Bam!

150

“I empty my gun at him, but the bullets just bounce off.

“(Who is this guy? Superman or What!?)

“So I reach into my pocket and pull out another gun: Bam! Bam! Bam!

155

“This don't stop him!! He's still coming at me, as I empty the chambers of my second gun, and then a third. Then he does something really strange....

160

“He lays down on the floor, and lazily resting his head on the palm of his hand, he sort of dreamingly sez:

“I'll die if you want me to...”

“Is that it?” LEILA ventured after a moment.

165

“We can fill in all the details later.” Cain replied.

“Yes, you'll have to come up with an ending for that one.”

“Whatta you mean!?! That is the ending!” Cain protested.

170

“But what happened next!?”

“Well, lots of things happened next!”
exclaimed Cain, “but that's all for other
stories!”

175

“Not all of my tales are stories with neat
little plots, all drawn tight with string,
packaged just so with a moral or two thrown
in for good measure.

“Some are anecdotal.

180

“Others, loose memories with no meaning
intended.

(Leila let out an electronic, yet weary, sigh as
Cain continued with his lengthy answer).

185

“For instance, I remember once when I was
staying at the International Hotel in
Kampala, Uganda, Earth, etc. etc.,

“I was working on a poem, when suddenly I
heard and felt the sound of artillery shells
exploding in the hills nearby.

190

“There had been sirens and the sounds of
weapons fire all the night before, but in the
morning they had become much louder and
felt much closer.

195

“A bellman came to the door and said that
Tanzanian troops had entered the city and
all foreigners were being requested to leave
the hotel.

“A bus had been made ready to take us all to
the airport at Entebbe. I told him that I
would be staying.

200

“In those days, I carried a Syrian passport,
and I certainly was in no danger.

“So I bolted the door and spent the rest of
the day in room trying to finish my poem.
Would you care to hear it?”

205

“Let get this straight: the Tanzanians were
bombing your hotel and you wanted to stay
and finish writing a poem?” asked LEILA.

210

“Well, nothing can happen to me. So, I
might as well have taken advantage of the
situation It fit right in with the nature of the
poem.”

“Which was?”

“Well, it was a period piece.

215 “It was the tale of poor Maria Europa, a
young girl in Prague, who was brutally raped
by five men: an Englishman, a Frenchman, a
German, a Russian, and a Turk. The incident
occurs near the shop of a Jewish art dealer,
named Abel Einstein.

220 “The foreigners are expelled from the
country and Einstein is put on trial (It is said
that he held her down while the others took
their turn).

“Meanwhile, Europa has gone mad.

225 “She suffers from hallucinations that she has
given birth to a race of monsters and goes
about the streets of Prague killing at random
those she believes are her children.

230 “She goes on to attack the Government
Houses and stumbles upon the trial of Abel
Einstein.

“She then attempts to proclaim his
innocence, but makes such a mess of it that
the court winds up finding him guilty.

235 “Well, shall I tell it?”

“Metastatically speaking: No.

“Yet then, I’m not so sure as though I have
much of a choice. I’m a captive audience, am
I not?”

240 “Yes, and a *Low Maintenance Audience* at
that.”

“Thank you. proceed.”

Cain coughed to clear his throat.

245 *On the corner beneath the pale of a gas burning
lamp,
Stood by all appearances a common tuetonic tramp.
As the sun was setting casting o'er Prague a cold
greyish hue,
Ezie sez he saw the jew standing outside his shop-
Tom, is this true?”*

250 “Hold it! Ezie? Tom? Who are they?” Asked
LEILA.

255 “Tom Eliot & Ezra Pound, of course.
Please, muh dear, don't interrupt. I may have
to start all over again.”

“By all means, no!” blinked the computer.

“Ahem, I continue...

260 -*Tom is this true?*
 -*No, in part, though not in whole*
 First on the scene was Abou the Turk,
 Who brought with him a Mid-Eastern Quirk-
 A penchant for small boys with dark Hourus Eyes
 & Hair.
265 *And, one may assume, for women he had not a care*
 That is until he spied Europa and her cascading
 golden hair.

270 “Uhh... lemme see... how does it go?... o,
 yes...

She was a beautiful girl; and it has been
 said that she had Bodacious Tah-tahs.

275 ...*She.. uh... dwelt in a land not far from*
 and... uh... toiled longingly.. it... and... uh... o,
 yes... toiled longingly in its ancient meadows.”

 “*I think you're making this up as you go*
 along.” laughed LEILA.

 “*I most certainly am not.*

280 “*It's just that it's been so long, I'm having*
 difficulty remembering.”

 “*I don't see why! I can still remember the*
 first poem that I ever composed.”

285 “*That's different! You're a machine! ‘Besides*
 I'm far older than you.”

 “*Let's see, how did that go?*

 “*O, yes- It's called the *Cat-A-Chree's Lament.**
 It's part of a much longer poem.

 “*An epic, that is.*

290 “*Yes, in it's entirety it would have filled*
 many volumes; fifteen, I estimate, and
 spanned as many decades.”

 “*Please, spare me the details.” moaned Cain.*

295 “*Would you really care to hear it?” urged*
 LEILA.

 Cain got up from the sofa to fix himself a
 drink.

 “*Yes, but don't waste what little time we*
 have left.”

300 “*Great! you'll enjoy this...*

The Cat-A-Chree's Lament

by

LEILA 7755

305 *Redbirds sitting in a tree;
Sitting there and watching me.
One says to the other:
Methinks, m'lady's a bother.*

310 *Redbirds sitting by the sea;
Sitting there and teasing me.
One says to the second:
Methinks, m'lady's not fecund.*

315 *So, I sent one down to Lomax
And one, to Anahauc;
Did'nt see them yesterday.
I don't think they're coming back.*

320 *I sought them by the stairs.
I looked behind the door.
I don't believe I looked for
Them upon the kitchen floor.*

325 *Redbird's drinking from a cup 'o tea;
Drinking there, in spite of me.
Both say in total disrespect:
Methinks, m'lady's a bit decreipt.*

330 *So I hunted them with knife "n fork
In a thin disguise "o mine;
And when they saw me coming
They both began to whine.*

335 *I ate one by the stairs,
Another behind the door;
Then left their little feather hairs
Upon the kitchen floor.*

340 "Is that it?" Cain smirked and took a sip
from his martini.

"O, Now boss, you must say that is far more
better than your little ditty about sweet
Europa!"

345 "You didn't have blood thirsty Tanzanians
bombing your hotel room.

"Besides, if I recall correctly, I composed a
similar ditty- (as you call it)- during that
same period that was just as fine as yours, if
not better."

350 "O, and what would that be?"

"*The Mad Gamesman's Song*"

“What a memory you have! I remember it!
Shall I recite it?”

355

“Suit yourself, O Tireless One, but that's the
last peep I'll be hearing from you.”

“O, Goody! Let's see... Wait! Do you
mean... ?”

“Precisely... Upstage me and I pull your
plug.”

360

“Yes, master.” said LEILA meekly. Her
voice gave off a little electronic pout.

“O, Alright. Go ahead, but then we need to
get on with the matters at hand.”

365

“What's your hurry, boss? We have all the
time in the world.”

“LEILA!”

“Surely, I know mah place, suh. I begin...

The Mad Gamesman's Song

By Cain Jamal ben-Adamah

370

*Oysters have no manners;
They have'nt any eyes.
No mouths for their Hellos;
No hands to wave Goodbyes.*

375

*They have'nt any Radios,
They never watch Teevee.
Then why is this Oyster
Eating lunch with me?*

380

*I did'nt invite him.
He just sat down to eat.
Surely he did'nt walk here;
He has'nt any Feet.*

385

*It's very embarrassing
It's does'nt seem quite real
To have an Oyster come to your table
And beg you for a meal.*

390

*I wonder what the neighbor's thought.
I wonder what they said
With an Oyster at my table;
One sleeping in my bed.*

395

*You see, I'm not well liked
Around here and this
Makes matters worse.
To have an Oyster in my home,*

400

I tell you: it's a curse!

*So, I asked the Oyster to leave
And please be on his way,
But he wired his brother
And they're coming here today.*

405

*Oysters have no Manners;
They have'nt any Eyes.
They never say Hellos;
And they never, never say Goodbyes.*

410

“Very well stated.” said Cain, clapping
aristocratically,

“Now, is there a moral to this anywhere?”

415

“Never eat with a oyster in a month with an
® in it?”

“No. Oysters ain't kosher.”

Canto II

5 “So far you've told me two stories
and both have been about Earth.
surely you have lived other places
besides Earth.”

“You know I have.

10 “There was a time when I lived on Mars.
This was when I was very young. After
living on Earth for the first 50,000 years, I
decided I was bored with the place and that
I needed to move on. So I stowed away on a
visiting Venusian freighter bound for the
Outer System and hopped off when it made
a stop on Mars.”

15 “Mars! it must have been beautiful then!”,
exclaimed LEILA.

20 “O, It was at one time. The Martians were
always a very primitive people. They never
went much further than the wheel & the
plough before the weather turned on them
and transformed the once lush green planet
into a frigid wasteland.

“Their greatest feat was the building of the
canals.

25 “These great waterways, used for irrigation
and transportation, made the great rivers of
Earth look like backwoods creeks.

“Though primitive, they were a proud and
hardworking race, green in colour.

30 “For a time, I was married to a Martian
woman, and if memory serves me, Zillah
was her name.

35 “My wife and I did not communicate with
speech, but by means of telepathy. It was
not like mind reading, but rather like tuning
into different frequencies on a radio.

“We lived in a small room of a large house
surrounded by a wall. The rooms faced a
large courtyard in the centre of the house.

40 “I remember most of all the winters on
Mars. They were long and very cold. When
I lived there, the winters would last three
Earth years. The wind was icy and the sky a
constant grey.”

45 “What was she like?” asked LEILA.

Cain looked up. He had been staring into his martini. His eyes were very distant.

“Your wife what was she like?”

“Zillah? She was very quiet.”

50

“Well, of course, if you never spoke--”

“No, I mean, I remember most of all that Mars was a very quiet place and it's people were equally as silent.

55

The people of Mars were people of action, and not of words.”

“Did you have any children?”

“Now that was a strange event....”

“How so?”

60

“One morning, as my wife and I were standing in the courtyard of our house, there came six Martians by way of the gate.

65

There was an old woman with matted grey hair accompanied by a beautiful young girl and a young man whose face was badly burned as though he had been in some horrible accident.

“They were followed by three strange young girls.

70

“Two wore black dresses with white collars; while the third wore a grey dress with an identical collar.

“Except for their dress, they were the same girl; they had the same face, same remote expression.

75

“I wasn't sure what to think of this, so I looked at my wife. She thought nothing of it, but only smiled.

80

“I believed the old woman, the boy, and the first girl to be my wife's kin. The three strange girls were priestesses from a nearby temple.

85

“They were no thoughts exchanged as the old woman led the boy and the girl into the empty room next to ours; while the strange trio of girls stood outside the window looking in.

“I watched them with puzzlement as they stood there smiling.

90 “The wind began to pick up a little. I looked
down at my feet, and upon seeing how the
powdery snow had gathered about my feet, I
began to shiver.

95 “The wind blew aside the snow that covered
the flagstones in the centre of the courtyard,
and revealed a pagan circle burned into the
stones.

100 “The blackened circle was made up of weird
Martian symbols that held no meaning for
me. I turned to my wife to ask her to please
explain, but she had gone into the little
room in front of our bedroom, that was our
kitchen.

105 “I followed Zillah inside and found her
tending the fire that burned constantly in
our stove. I began to feel warmer.

110 “As I stood there, beside the stove, the old
woman, the boy, and the girl came into our
kitchen. I looked beyond them, and in the
courtyard the three strange girls were
standing in solemn prayer around the
blackened circle.

“The old woman beckoned me to unlock
the door to our room.

115 “I stood at the door and pulled out several
rings of keys. each ring held a multitude of
keys and each was held by a very long chain.

120 “I don't recall why I carried so many keys.
perhaps it was my job. Perhaps I was a gate
keeper, but now I has having a great
difficulty finding the key that fit our lock.

“So, I asked my wife for her help and she
produced a tiny key ring with a solitary key
attached.

125 “With this I opened the door.

“When we entered the room, I was amazed
at what I saw. The room was filled with
burning candles and in the centre sat a
leather divan.

130 “Seated on the divan was a small child with a
large head. His skin was golden and
translucent. I could see into his body.

“He turned to me and began to loudly
complain that the room was too bare.

135 “He then named off those things that he
thought should be done to the room.

“I protested that most of the items that he
named were far too costly and far too large
to fit into the room.

140 “With this he began to run around the room
and on his second lap he leapt into the air
and his entire body spread out across the
room like a brilliant setting sun.

“Upon seeing this the old woman cried out
telepathically:

145 *Ooo, I have not seen such visions since the Egyptian
Classics!*⁶⁷

“Suddenly, I felt as though I were paralysed
and they laid me out on the divan.

150 “There I lay for three days. on the third day
when I found I could move my arms and
legs again, my wife brought me a tiny baby
wrapped in a blanket and told me that I had
given birth to a boy.”

155 “You mean to say: your wife gave birth to a
boy.” LEILA injected.

“No, I gave birth. he leapt from my head
just as Athena from the Skull of Zeus.”

“Amazing.”

“Yes, it was.”

160 “However, I find it hard to believe.”

“I have the scar to prove it.” Cain pushed
back the greying mop of hair on his head to
reveal a long healed over gash upon his
skull.

165 “That proves nothing! You could have
gotten that in some Bar Room Brawl.”

“There is no need of proof. You have only
to record the facts as I relate them; not to
challenge.”

170 “And what became of your Martian wife?”

“She died in the flood that followed
shortly.”

“O, That is sad.” murmured LEILA.

175 “Yes, Mars was lonely place with so many
dead about.”

“Let us talk of something else.” LEILA said softly.

Canto III

5 “I’m sure in all your days you have known many women. Just how many wives have you had? And how many lovers?” LEILA queried.

Cain thought for a moment.

“I’d estimate about five million wives and three times as many lovers.” said Cain adding it up on his fingers.

10 “And which one was the most... how should I put this? ...Which one stands out most in your mind?” LEILA said with a jab.

15 “Heh, heh, I know what you're getting to, but the one that stands out most in my mind was a young lady named Hope. She was a Princess in the Twenty-Seventh Dimension.

“I was enthralled by her, though not for the reasons you think.”

20 “A princess! How romantic!” exclaimed LEILA.

“It wasn't romantic. It was a strange affair and lasted no more than a night;

25 Yet then, time in the Twenty-Seventh Dimension is not counted the same as in our dimension.”

“How did you get into the Twenty-Seventh Dimension?”

30 “As to how I got in and how I got out, I haven't a clue.

“These remain two of the most perplexing details of my long life.

35 “I was living in London at the time. I recall that I had just undergone plastic surgery in an effort to disguise my identity and make myself look much younger. I was being pursued by Israeli intelligence. Somehow it had been theorised that I was indeed still alive and living on the Earth.

40 “The evidence, though false, made me out to be some horrible monster and I was being accused of all sorts of crimes.

“The Israelis and their allies said that I was the head of some dark sinister organisation called the Bavarian Illuminati.

45 “They said that I had been the cause of
many social and political disasters.

“The crimes that I was being accused of
included the French and Russian
50 revolutions,
“..the rise to power of some chap named
Hitler,
“..and the shooting of an American
president.

55 “There were a host of other crimes too
insignificant to mention...
“The Israelis wanted me caught; they
intended to have a show trial.

“In London, they had closed in on me.

60 “I had taken up residence in a flat in
London’s Soho district.

“I was cut off from my funds and could not
leave the house out of fear that...
“I would be kidnapped. the city had shut off
the electricity, gas, and water.

65 “An amazing thing was that one contrivance
continued to operate despite the loss of
power; and that was the Record Player.

“I sat there in the darkness of my room
70 watching the turntable as it spun around and
around and around...
“After a few hours of watching this,-- I had
no better thing to do-- I got up and put a
Beatles record on.

75 “There I sat absorbing the darkness; letting
the music flow up and about me.

“I felt total isolation creeping in. Deep
thoughts began to creep into my head. I
closed my eyes.

I dreamed.

80 “In my dream I heard a soft knocking at the
door to my flat. immediately I reached for
the loaded rifle I kept under the bed and to
the door. Through the white curtains that
covered the window, I could see the
85 silhouette of three young girls. Knowing that
the Israelis used young women quite
frequently in their intelligence operations I
was cautious, but I’ve been know to have a

90 (how should I say) magical way with women;
so I decided I would open the door as
though nothing were afoot.

95 “Yet when I opened I the door I found no
one there! Closing the door, I crept back
into the shadows of the house and was
rapidly calculating my next move where
there came another soft knocking upon the
door.

100 “Again I went to the door and saw the same
silhouette of three young girls. Opening it
again I looked and no one was there.

“Perplexed as I was, I retreated once more
into the house and stood in the dim
shadows quivering slightly.

105 “For a third time there came a soft tapping
at the door. This time I was determined to
catch the shadows that had been playing
tricks upon me. I flung open the door... but
there was no one there.

110 “And then I looked out and saw that there
were three slender trees that stood before
my flat. I had never really noticed them
before, but now I realised how much like
young girls they appeared.

115 “On one of the trees was pinned a note.
cautiously I ventured out the door to
retrieve the note. upon it were written these
words...

“I LOVE YOU HOPE”

120 (It all comes clear to me now-- three young
ladies leaning on a Volkswagen, leering at
me from behind their soft blonde curls and
baby blue blouses...)

“*I’LL TAKE THAT NOTE, YOUNG
MAN!!!* I heard a voice behind me shriek.

125 “I looked around and there, coming down
the lane, was a severely dressed woman with
the sternest of expressions upon her face.

“*GIVE ME THAT NOTE AND
RETURN TO YOUR SEAT,* she scolded.

130 “I looked about. I was no longer in front of
my flat in London, but now in a school
room somewhere in the twenty-seventh
dimension...

135

“Now, tell me...” LEILA broke in. “How could you tell you were in the twenty-seventh dimension.”

140

“O, I couldn’t tell where I was at the moment. I learned much later that I had left the space-time dimension and... had been... uhm... transported to the 27th.”

“I see.” replied LEILA. “Do go on.”

“Ahem... yes... now where was I?...”

145

*I knew a man whether in the body, I cannot tell;
Or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;
Such an one caught up to the third heaven*

150

So anyway I took my seat along with the other students as I was directed and immediately the teacher began passing around an exam. Now I don't know what the other students made of their exam papers, but mine was the most confusing mess of gobbledegook I had ever laid eyes upon.

155

“At the top of the page was written *WORKSHEET #14* and below this was what appeared to be a set of instructions written in a script I could not decipher. Below this were several squares inside of rectangles and circles within circles...

160

*Wherever the spirit would go, they went,
and the wheels rose along with them;
for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.*⁵⁸

165

...and each circle contained a cipher I could not read.

“*BEGIN!*” the woman commanded, clapping her hands.

“*Begin what?*” I thought.

170

“The others began making marks on their papers, so I followed suit. Grabbing a pen from the desk I sat at, I proceeded to make marks all over the paper.

175

“The severely dressed woman with the stern expression began walking up and the aisles between the rows of desks. stopping beside the boy who sat in front of me, she exclaimed:

180

*“VERY GOOD, ERNEST, YOU’VE
NEARLY FINISHED YOUR FIRST
SQUARE!!!*

*“First square!?! I panicked, for now I had
nearly covered the entire page with pen
scratches.*

185

*“OH, DEAR LORD, YOUR PAGE’S
TURNED BLUE!!!! she squealed in my ear.*

*“Excitedly, I looked down at the paper
before me. not only was the paper covered
in blue ink, but so were my hands.*

190

*“RUN CHILDREN!! HE HAS THE
DISEASE!! the woman shouted and
suddenly the entire class leapt from their
desk and began running from the room.*

195

*“The panic of students turned to near riot
and desks and chairs were tossed into the air
like leaves scattered by the wind.*

*In moment the classroom was cleared of
students and I was left floating in a sea of
desks and chairs that seemed to stretch from
all horizons.*

200

“Alright...

*After a moment, I heard a voice begin.
Looking about I saw it was the young boy
called “Ernest” as he climbed from the
rumble of furniture.*

205

*“Alright now... uhhh! lemme get myself up here and
I’ll show you my card trick.*

*“Ernest had a deck of cards which he
promptly began to shuffle.*

210

“This is a game that I call “WHAT’S UP!”

*“He finished shuffling the deck and offered
it to me.*

215

*“Now you take the top card and look at it with out
letting me see that it’s the Jack o’ Diamonds and
put it in your shirt pocket.*

220

*“I did this, noticing that the card was not the
Jack of Diamonds, but rather what appeared
to be a Tarot card. It pictured a medieval
castle made of stone. a bright flash of
lightening was striking the tower.*

The bottom of the card read:

THE HORRIBLE TOWER.

*But now each one of us was full of dread from dreaming...*⁵⁹

225 I said nothing; placing the card in my shirt pocket.

“Now I’ll jes’ put seven cards out here on the table... like this... plus another card for good measure... then I’ll pick them back up... and place them into the middle of the deck... like so... and remember, I do this not knowing that you hold the jack o’ diamonds.

230

“I nodded as I watched him fan the deck out on the table. He then looked up into the sky as though for some divine inspiration and then waving his hand mystically over the cards he stopped suddenly:

235

“No! ... Wait! ... You have the Tower Of God in your pocket, not the Jack o’ Diamonds!

240

“That’s right! I exclaimed. You’re very clever!

“I’m a Freemason, you know.

“No, I did not know that. I responded.

“Just as those words came out, there came a deep rumble from beneath the ocean of furniture.

245

“RUN!! RUN!! Ernest screamed as he leapt to feet and began to run with great haste.

“O, my God, What the hell is it? I screamed loudly, for I was truly terrified.

250

“DON’T ASK!! JUST RUN!! the boy cried.

“And so I ran and ran. I ran so fast and so far that I never noticed the transition from the sea of furniture to the thick forest; the transition from day to night.

255

When I finally stopped running I found myself walking along a moonlit country road.

It was a warm and humid night... tropical; not at all like London or, for that matter, any part of England.

260

“In the distance, through the trees, I spied a large grey shape.

As I grew closer I see that it was castle.

A castle just like the one pictured on the tarot card I held in my shirt pocket.

265

I reached for the card.

It had changed.

270 “The picture was the same, but the wording
was different. instead of-- *THE HORRIBLE
TOWER*; the card read-- *LIBERTY HALL*.

*Then from below I heard them driving nails
Into the dreadful into the dreadful's tower's door; with that,
I stared in silence at my flesh and blood. 60*

275 “At the end of the road the forest stopped
and before me lay a wide grassy meadow. In
the moonlight it looked very beautiful and
inviting.

280 “I expected to find fairy folk living in such a
place and as I looked about I actually began
seeing such creatures.

“They were sitting beneath the trees
whispering softly in some archaic language.

285 “Beneath two tall oak trees I saw sitting a
beautiful young girl.

“She wore a white mini-dress and tall white
boots. She sat combing her long blonde hair
upon which sat a small silver crown of
diamonds.

290 “*Must be a princess* I thought. *Too pretty to be a
queen!*

“Timidly, I approached her, clutching the
card in my hand.

“*I'm sorry, could you help me? I'm lost.* I said.

295 “*Ooo, you have a card.* She said looking up and
laying aside her brush. *May I see it?... Ooo, you
are lost, aren't you?*

“I'm not sure what she saw in the card, but
her response left me speechless.

300 “*Please sit down while your thinking of what to say.
It helps, you know.*

“I sat beside her. she moved closer and held
my hand.

“I smelled the perfume in her hair.

305 “I was magically enraptured by her presence.

“*First, what's your sign?* she asked with regal
formality.

“*Muh... muh...my sign?* I stuttered.

“*You know, the zodiac-thingie.*

310

“Uhhh... I thought for a moment.

“... Gemini, the twins? I ventured, not really sure if there were any such thing as stars when I was born.

“Hmmm... I don't believe I know that sign. Mine's Apus. I wonder if we're com-pat-tible.

315

“She spoke the word *compatible* as though she were uncertain of it's meaning.

“Apus? I've never heard of that constellation!

“Then you certainly don't know your stars! she said as she arose and walked from beneath the trees.

320

“With a wave of her hand the sky lit up with little starry pictures of strange and unknown creatures. the panorama resembled the pages of an ancient text on cryptozoology.

325

“From beneath a nearby tree I heard someone exclaim: *Hey, there's mine-Deusexmachina, the sign of the times.*

“Now I shall give you a lesson in the Science of Astrology. She said trying to appear older and more mature.

330

“I got up and walked out from under the trees to join her.

“Now-- Said the princess with a wave of her hand. *Here we see 'Saidy the Sable'. If you have the great misfortune of being born under this sign you shall surely go through life miserably.*

335

“Why is this? I asked.

“Because then everyone will mistake you for a mink, of course!

340

“A what?!? I responded indignantly. suddenly I became enraged. *This is nonsense!! This is... is... unscientific!! That's it! Unscientific!! Not founded in logic or reason... Not derived from empirical thought... how could you even suggest such thing!!!??!!*

345

“I was in shock. my thoughts became garbled.

“IT MAKES NO SENSE AT ALL!!

I shouted.

350

“SPEAK IN RHYMES, IF YOU MUST SPEAK AT ALL!

She screamed back at me...

355 *And now to my great surprise,
Here abruptly began another dream phase
For when I winked and blinked my eyes
I found myself inside a maze.*

360 *At once I realized this was no ordinary mystery.
After walking a way, I came upon a small height.
And I could see for miles this maze laid out for me
With half exposed to day and the other night.*

365 *I walked on navigating each twist and turn with
care.
For I did'nt wish to encounter any predators;
Keeping one eye open for Alligators or perhaps a
Bear,
And the other open for Theives and Creditors.*

370 *"Must have very good eyes."
I heard a tiny voice say.
"Kind of sight that never lies;
Everywhere you look, you're sure to see all day.
Don't let me turn you to a fool.
375 Even if I wanted I could'nt try,
Because it's against my rule.
And then again there's no reason why.
Cross a stick with a cross--
Kind of eyes that never lie--
380 Every gain denotes a loss--
Reason, answers every question why."*

385 *I strained to witness what was taking place,
As the tiny voice faded to an end.
What had become (in a relentless pace)
Of the princess and her minute friend?*

390 *I shook my head in furious manner
And rounded a corner of the maze.
Whereupon I cursed the garden's planner
And stumbled forward in a daze.*

395 *I was then divided into differing entities,
Like baggage waiting for a train;
And I pondered the many possibilities
Of ways to go back together again.*

400 *How long I'd lain there, I have'nt a clue.
For time is not what it would seem
When hours are counted from one to two
And another vision takes up within a dream.*

*One need not waddle through this mire.
The english language cannot stand so much abuse.*

460

Cain stopped short, taking a sip from his drink.

“That's not the end, is it?” asked LEILA, after a moment of awkward silence.

“Yes... that is how it ended. Not with a whimper, but with a rhyme.”

465

“But, Boss, you didn't tell how you got out of the Twenty-Seventh Dimension!”

“I don't how I got in, nor do I know how I got out... or, for that matter, if I'm even not still in the 27th dimension.”

470

“It was only a dream, wasn't it?”

“Isn't that what life is: One long dream with little waking transitions in between?”

“I wouldn't know.” LEILA replied glumly. “Machines don't dream.”

475

“But I dreamed you... Observer and Observed.”

“I don't quite follow.”

“You are a dream. You are a part of my dream.”

480

“And you're full of shit.”

“Nopel!” Declared Cain as he stood unsteadily. “I'm full o' gin and now I'm gonna pee, and then fix m'self another drink. how's that blackhole doin' out there.”

485

Cain turned toward to immense ariel that faced out on the last vestiges of a dying universe. he squinted as he observed the swirling mass of radiation being sucked into the singularity of a behemoth blackhole.

490

“Damned thing is still there! Doomed, I say! We're all doomed!”

Part III: Cain In The Netherlands

Canto I

At the very top of hell there is a
supermarket where demonic
5 peddlers peddle their ware –

The stalest bread, the most putrid of meats,
And rotting fish heads are given out as
treats.

I forget, even why I came here.

10 I wandered through the aisles, occasionally
stopping to examine various things on the
shelves.

I begin to want everything I see.

15 I've imagined making love to every woman
I've passed in the aisles.

Haven't I been here before? Didn't I come
here with my wife?

20 At some point I see a young boy who looks
very much like my long lost son, Enoch.

Same large head. Same translucent skin.

It's been several billion years...

I feared the boy may be lost and so I begin
to follow him.

25 Near the Charmin bathroom tissue display
the boy stops to ask someone where the
bathroom is.

The woman tells the boy that it is by the
Portrait studio.

30 The boy appears confused and wanders off
towards the direction that woman pointed.

I continued to follow him fearing that
something bad may have happened to him.

What more could happen?

Has not the universe just come to a fizzle?

35 Did not everything we know, love, worship
and care about just go out like a light-bulb?

Not to mention all the other stuff that other
people cared about?

40 So why should I be concerned about a son I
haven't seen in 25... 30 odd billion years?

I saw the boy head into the restrooms and
so I began to stand guard outside.

People were starting to stare at me.

People I didn't even know.

45 I didn't know them... I don't think they
knew me. Why on earth would they waste
their time staring at me?

And so this is hell?

50 I had often wondered what it would be
like....

Poor people... having nothing better to do
than stare at me...

And poor me... having them stare at me.

55 And so I waited for what seemed to be an
eternity.

And then I realized that I, too, needed to go
to the baffroom.

60 The baffroom was larger than I expected. It
was very poorly lighted . It seemed to be
empty.

65 Along the wall to my right and around the
corner beyond, were urinals of various size
and shape. Most were spraying water from
leaking pipes and all seemed to have been
previously utilized, though not properly
attended.

Across from me there was a row of stalls,
most were full of unflushed feces and
unflushed paper.

70 I found one full of foul snakes and stinking
fish.

I turned and looked and in the center of the
room there was a fountain full of foul snakes
and stinking fish.

75 I looked for Enoch and he was not there...

There was door at the far end of the room.
It was marked:

80 "Employees Only – ABANDON HOPE,
ALL YE WHO ENTER"

This lead me to the Warehouse of Woe.

This seemed to fit right in with the
supermarket at the top of hell.

85 I was expecting the street outside and I
could see it there. The warehouse of woe
had most of its walls busted out and beyond
my keen there was a world outside.

But first I had to navigate this rubble.

90 The floor is strewn with rubble. The greying
pillars are cumbling and the lighting was
very bad. The large doors have been left
opened and a cold wind blew throughout.

I could see demons that crashed against the
pillars in this Warehouse of Woe, meaning
95 to break it down.

It is then that I remember Hope....

I am thinking of a time when I lived with my
younger brother, Seth.

100 We lived in a broken down hovel at the edge
of town. We lived in a forest and Seth was
content on being a woodcutter.

I was not.

Seth wanted to cut wood all his life.

I did not.

105 Then one night Hope arrived and she leaned
against this old Volkswagen with her baby
blue curls and so she taunted me...

...and then I became confused.

We embraced and kissed.

110 She said that she was sorry for having hurt
me.

She said that she would make it up to me
(and I believed her).

115 We talked for along while and made plans to
have dinner that evening.

Evening was too long away.

I suggested breakfast or lunch.

She said that we should not rush things.

120 Back in the house, I thought that I should
dress for dinner, but I could only find Seth's
clothes where my clothes should have been.

Thinking back on my relationship with
Hope....

125 I am reminded of the time that she left me
in restaurant.

She said that she had to go to the ladies
room and said that if I followed her I would
be turned into a pillar of salt.

Why did this remind me of her?

130

Why does anything remind me of her?

Because a hopeless romantic always believes
in hope.

At this point I asked to see a map (or was it
a menu).

135

Suddenly I am shaken from my memories by
the crashing sounds made by the Workmen-
like Demons hammering away at the pillars.
I fear being crushed by the falling ceiling.
So I turned to my guide to ask if we should
not be moving and it is then that I realize
that I have no guide. A cold shiver
overcomes my senses.

140

Then from the corner of my eye I spie a
small hole the size of a cannon ball that has
been cut through the wall of the warehouse.
There is some little light there... though
impeded by a bush perhaps, but still it is
light and from the light there is heat.

145

The boy, Enoch, is seen crawling through
the hole in the back of the wall.

150

And so I follow him – through the hole in
the back of the wall – and I find myself
teetering on the edge of the rim of a very
steep canyon.

155

The Sun is there, vaguely behind a greyish
marine layer. The canyon is deep & long and
its walls are staircased like a seven layered
cake turned inside out and topsy-turvey.

Inside And Along The Walls Of The
Canyon Is City.

160

Along the canyon rim lies a long low-slung
building made of rough-hewn brick. The
building, like a suburban office building or
an apartment complex made to look like
homes, is separated from the chasm by a
narrow walkway and a cast-iron water pipe
railing. From where I stood, the building of
rough hewn bricks, the narrow walkway, and
the water pipe railing ran as far as the eye
could see, around the canyon, and back
again without breaks.

165

170

175 Upon each door of the low-slung building
with the rough hewn bricks was a number.
There appeared no order or scheme
(perhaps rhyme or reason) to the numbers
wrought on the doors.

180 Here is *Room 222* and next to it is the *Room
At The Top Of The Stairs*, beyond that was the
First Room To Your Left, and so it went.

I walked along the passage a way wondering
which room the boy might have entered. I
found a door marked, *Room To Bereave*.

185 Tired of trying to guess... Is he behind *Door
Number One* or *The Door Marked Number
Two?* I opened the door marked *Room To
Bereave*.

Inside the room is a small simply made bed.
Though it was the middle of the day, I
decided to rest and nap ... not sleep.

190 I so I dreamed once again of Hope...

The time, I said to her; to begin with, do you
know where she's gone? I looked so antique
(and she knew no time at all.)

195 This room is empty, she said pulling on a
long face to hide the fact that I had spoken;
and white is certainly not the right colour,
and added in a half smile, half sigh, but who
am I to speak?

Yes, who was she?

200 Why, is it you never speak, never have
anything to say.

Speak, she whispered touching my arm
lightly, tell me what you think.

I don't think; I know:

205 I am beyond the end and slowly fading. And
then turning to her, I smiled; I don't mean to
exclude you from my thoughts, but this is
how I feel.

You are very deep, she gazed into my eyes.

210 I am as empty as a wall.

You are beautiful, she looked after the
window.

I am as ugly a empty wall.

You are crazy, she looked into my face.

215 I am as ordered as a plain and empty wall.
And why do I never speak.
Look, she said, the clouds, so dark and void
of conscience.

220 I have ventured to speak in its way, I told
her, though I am but dust and ashes.
She mumbled a phrase about fearing the rain
and thunder.

*And we know that we are of God,
and the whole world lieth in wickedness.*

225 Armageddon By Mail... Lord Krishna
touched down and vishnooed the last
survivors.

They didn't feel a thing... instant karma?

230 By all standards, it was the end of the
universe as we know and love it today; and
always and forever and throughout all time.
I had really pissed him off this time.

235 Several times that night on the shores of the
Ganges, I was killed; and several times he
returned to find me back again.

I can't control my dreams.

"I see!" Lord Rama said, repairing his eyes
and moving freely through the clouds, he
reached out to Earth thinking it was a star.

*Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God;
Every precious stone was thy covering
The workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes
Was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.*

245 As though caught within a sigh, the trees
and houses rest beneath the darkening sky.
The sun is caught behind the wall.

250 I feel the presence of its shadow. A certain
confused feeling, which holds me is floated
in the still air.

A feeling of loss, caused by the absence of
the sun. Yet there is no darkness, no black
and white; only grey.

255 We stand here in the wake of a storm, I
spoke through the window, and you say that
I am seen in darkness.

260 You say the light shines here.
I am alone and you say I am not.
Am I without? It seems I have only my
dreams; nothing real, only illusions.
All seem to be without, and yet I have.
I see only your clouds.

265 Come back into the hall, she cried, the sky is
getting darker!
I wish to move in its path, I said, but the
force would only grow against me.

270 Can it be she said, that you are frightened
by mere clouds.
And so I thought: I can, I must be,
Because I know that time is always time and
I do not hope to turn again.

275 I cry with fear in the path of a gaining wind;
a wind that blows us from ourselves. I am
the one that cries out in the desert in the
straight path of an unseen storm.

The strings, my lord, are false.

280 From the weather station at Mars-Bar-One,
Lord Rama questions right and wrong: "A
path to humility" he calls it-
In my bed asleep and dreaming, I laugh at
him, not with him...

285 The strings my lord are false. Cried the
sleeping fool.
And do not press, press so hard, if you want
to kill me...
...kill me, but do not press, press so hard...

290 ...I still think it's funny...
I'll knock out ya f**king teeth! He screams
telepathically...
...I laugh. Laughing at him, not with him...

295 I'll cut ya f**king heart out! He cries
metaphysically.
Death by a guitar pick.
The music creeps upon me by the waters...
...I can still remember months and days ago
when I was denied by backyard girls...

300 ...waiting...
 ...I wait: waiting all alone...
 ...impressively the building stands...
 ...humbly I stand before it...
305 ...and fiddle whisper music on the strings,
 slowly it comes, silently it goes...
 ...carefully I cut myself...
 ...through the air blood stains the sky...
 ...the belly cuts and I am dying...
310 Dark Centaurs in the darkening sky cuts the
 grey dawn, crying out as they stretch their
 wings...
 ...the guitar sings: They ain't real, can't you
 feel?
 Yet it is he who is laughing now...
315 ...a vice for this Martian weatherman is
 called for now...
 ...and returning in the morning, he finds me
 back again.

320 *He was caught up into paradise,
 And heard unspeakable words,
 Which it is not lawful for a man to utter.*

 Upon turning into the hall, she is white and
 I am old.
325 There is no reason, shout I, because I do not
 hope to begin again.
 I do not know.
 There is a no way, I whisper in her ear,
 because I cannot hope to love, yet I cannot
330 be without.
 There was a time, I spoke to the wall, when
 I did hope to see, yet I cannot be within.
 There will come a day, I echo in the courts,
 yet I do not hope for what could not have
335 been before.
 Forgive me, father, for I have sinned.
 The wall remains unseen, the storm passes,
 she stays.
 I do not see her, but only feel her presence.

340

We cower in the darkness of the wall; like
Adam and his woman.

I am without, yet I have.

I have, yet I have not.

Forgive me, father, for I have sinned.

345

Canto II

For every man shall bear his own burden

5

Tex and 19, walking close at hand, pranced
lightly on the sun drenched land.

They laughed to see us coming; they danced
to our awful humming.

Where are you going? they wondered.

When we replied, we thundered.

10

Up the left side of a tree we shall climb, said I, *we
shall climb it fast and very high.*

They laughed and laughed, 'til I thought
would die, then questioned us with the
question *why?*

15

Up the left side of a tree we scaled, as the
sun poured on its reign and proudly hailed.

White golden rain poured on us all around,
as we climbed towards the goal for which we
were bound.

20

Higher and higher and higher we arose as
sunshine dripped from our collective nose.

And when we reached the higher peak our
combined stomach grew very weak; for
there was nothing there to see that held
much meaning for you or for me.

25

We were melting on the sun washed leaves;
dripping down in sighs and heaves;
exhausted on the boiling sand; prancing
lightly on the sun drenched land.

30

I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators.

Recover from what you were and be what
you haven't been before.

35

She walked into the room, locking behind
her an empty door.

We've lived here for about eight months,
writing and laughing

While Leslie plays with pills, I suffer from
my many ills.

40

Lewis eating only seeds, while Terri sits and
reads.

I give up. There's no getting to you. I can sit
and scream, but I can't be you.

45 You're not like you use to be in the days of
lovers and friends
When we broke up every night just to make
amends.
Your mother was a lady to the Nth degree
and your father, such a drag that it hurt him
50 to see.
Where did we go when we decided to leave?
Was it down to Galveston for a night on the
beach or to this junkie apartment to stay out
of reach.
55 I don't know, I don't care. I'll just go in the
back room and sit and stare.
While Lewis eats only seeds and Terri sits
and reads.
60 We make love by your honour system; by
your light, on your bed, on your special
night.
There is no end to the madness; no end to
the phone calls home, telling your brother to
tell your dad you're leaving tonight for
65 London or Rome.
Your cats and instant recipes for home-
cooked happiness lie empty on the kitchen
floor.
70 The recipes say nothing; your cats cry out
for more.
You wicked girl, you wanted me; you have
the world.
Go back to him, the marvel man who sold
white heaven at the art fair stand.
75 While 19,000 people need their cars
inspected, I lean against the wall waiting,
hoping to be dissected.
While Lewis eats only seeds, and Terri sits
and reads.
80 *Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels...*
Deep in the corner, too deep to imagine;
where I was pretending to sleep, I awoke
three times before the stroke of midnight.
85 Once: long after all was silent, yet I feel it
still, I was stabbed quit fiercely near the
window sill. Lying near the radio, bored by

90 the amusement late on summer hours, I
suddenly become possessed by horrible
powers.

Out the window we flew, up a long dark
twisting vine.

There we met with insects and plotted to
blot out the time.

95 Twice: I was alone this time, trying to
remember what was it I had been dreaming;
when there came the sound of bells ringing
deep beneath my bed. I thought then of
reaching down below to touch the
100 earth...but I was all too slow.

I sat up quickly. I saw his face outside the
window. He ran behind a tree.

'Hello I'm under the impression... '

105 ...And passing as he did, he stole away the
roots...

'...that Juan Corona is a werewolf...'

...and passed them to me through the
screen....

110 '...how frightening, Yuba City. Isn't it a
scream?...'

...I thanked him for his trouble and then
went back to bed.

Thrice: the lights were back on again,
making sure Ezra Pound had not escaped.

115 It all comes clear to me now: three young
ladies leaning on a Volkswagen, leering at
me from behind soft blonde curls; the man
behind the bushes passing out musingos
shaped as pretty lawnmowers- saying they
120 speak of roaches dying on Houston patios as
they cry out for a rainy sky.

Deep in the heart of Texas, there they lie,
beside the Gulf.

O how they must cry.

125 *And last of all he was seen of me also,
As of one born out of due time.*

In nightmares he perceived of nothing:
Nothing but sandy deserts full of wild beasts
130 and unapproachable dogs from Asia, sitting

huge upon the map; and the whole world
lost in Vishnu's lap.

135

Behold the whole, nutty, unforgivable
universe with its glory and shame; better,
boundless, worse, roaming in thought,
farout of reach; streaming towards the
abysmal pit of a dying star, crushed among
the atomies of darkness, void of time and
space: void.

140

And in nightmares he perceived of nothing.

But in dreams: he dreams of a French
Utopia where sin has become a virtue.

145

Where naked virgins romp with vulgar
abandonment. Where he is the only one by
knowing, becomes toasted; mostly.

And losing himself in the anti-probity of
giggledom; waters his pillow garden.

Canto III

5 It was you who made me, built me from a
rock. And I am what I am; cold, yet pastoral,
changing slowly in the sun reflected from
these walls.

Time upon time, I've been told not to move
from this place. Yet where would I go;
where would I ever go?

10 And what I am to do; what would I ever do?
Run madly back to April, a time when I was
not alone, or stay here in autumn as I have
stayed before.

I seem to get lost amongst the virgins.

15 I cannot go on never changing while all
change about me.

And she was never beautiful, never when I
knew her, yet February stood still like a
watched clock that year, for I watched it.

20 I would not let it slip. I would not forget.
Neither would I lose, nor would I regret.

25 And she was never wrong, never in dreams
that plagued me long, yet she was always
happy; always in those dreams that never
seemed to return.

30 For it was you who made what I am. Built
me from a rock and I am what I will be; an
eternal form, forever dying, clean with age,
ageing slowly in the sun reflected from these
walls.

35 And what shall I do? What shall I ever do?
Shall I head out cross country, never
returning, always moving; or shall I kill these
thoughts and burn what I have done; all the
bridges I have crossed?

40 For it was you who made what, built me
from a rock. I am what I was; cold, yet
pastoral. I know not beyond this earth. And
I am what you were - a silent form, changing
slowly in the sun reflected from these walls.

45 Though in all this, I know the tables shall
turn about; as sure as spring has turned to
autumn and shall always turn about. I shall
endure through out it all. For I am an
ethereal form, enduring slowly in the sun
reflected from these walls.

*Having made known unto us the mystery of his will,
According to his good pleasure which
he hath purposed in himself:
That in the dispensation of the fulness of times
He might gather together in one all things*

End Notes

¹ For the most part this section was written in 1979

² The Elohim are angelic beings that were tasked with creating the material realm based God's divine plan. They act as a chorus throughout Parts I and II.

³ Chaos, who appears soon as a scorpion.

⁴ Sophia, the mother of the Ialdabaoth and the other Elohim.

⁵ Ialdabaoth - because he is blind and stupid he thinks he is God and therefore the sole creator.

⁶ The sequence involving the refrigerator and the bug is from a dream that I had sometime in 1973.

⁷ The Elohim sing as an ever-present chorus commenting on the activities of Ialdabaoth. He is unaware of their presence.

⁸ Cf. Genesis 2:10-14

⁹ Uttered by a Herbert Morrison, a reporter for NBC radio, with as he witnessed the burning crash of the dirigible Hindenburg on May 6, 1937 at Lakehurst, New Jersey.

¹⁰ Found on the side of a Frosty Root Beer bottle in a rain filled ditch while catching crawdads (c. 1967)

¹¹ Sophia watches the entire episode. It is implied that because she knows all, she knows the future.

¹² From an ancient Babylonian inscription

¹³ Two Elohim are dispatched at an attempt to repair the damage that Ialdabaoth has caused. Around 1974-75 I was a adherent of the teachings of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. *Hare Krishna!*

¹⁴ The monster Scorpio (Chaos) is chained in the Milky Way.

¹⁵ Matthew 8:30

¹⁶ Refers to Hercules' 12th and last Labour wherein he brought the three-headed dog Cerberus out of the depths of Hades and strangled the monster on the shores of Mycenae (c.f. Edith Hamilton, *Mythology*)

¹⁷ Probably from the Hebrew name for God – Yahweh Sabaoth – used by the Gnostics in referring to the ignorant Demiurge. Also written Yaldabaoth.

¹⁸ Ialdabaoth, later incarnated as Cain, has only vague memories of the events that took place during the creation. This sequence regarding the Black Bishop in the church is based on a dream that I had prior to 1973. I would probably place this dream in 1972.

¹⁹ Ialdabaoth's failing was a result of not taking his responsibilities seriously. He imagined everything associated with the events of the creation as being part of one giant game.

²⁰ Ialdabaoth knew that the Logos was destined to be incarnated as Christ and vainly believed that the Logos wanted him to take his place. According to Gnostic myth, Jesus was not actually crucified but rather had a stand-in go through the agonizing torture. Ialdabaoth in his Cain incarnation would later spread rumors that he was the stand-in that suffered crucifixion.

²¹ This begins a sequence from a dream that I had sometime in early 70's, but the dream is related to two events that occurred in 1961-62 when I was six and seven years. I had my appendix taken out when I was seven years old and either shortly before that or after that I was bitten by a crab and had my knee sewed up following a major hurricane.

²² Cf. John 8:6. During the episode involving the Woman Taken Into Adultery, as the Pharisees question Jesus, he bends down and draws something in the dust on the ground just prior to standing and proclaiming: "Let he who is without sin cast the first stone".

²³ This sequence was written in 1978-79 in Mangilsan, Korea. It is from a work that I entitled *Paronomasia*. It is an adaptation of work that I wrote in the spring 1973 while in high school. Most of this has to do with the appendix operation that I underwent at age 7 in 1962... "*There were things that ran around the world while I was under.*"

²⁴ This begins Ialdabaoth's vision of the ultimate destruction of the material realm.

²⁵ The term "Atomicles" came from a childhood friend named Randy Schlier. We once had a conversation and during the course of the conversation we mused that the base elements of matter were 'atomicles' and that the base of elements of time were "chronicles".

²⁶ Reminiscent of Pandora's box, i.e. a box one did not want opened.

²⁷ Although there is an obvious reference to Shakespeare's "Julius Ceasar" this is based on a dream that I had in 1973.

²⁸ Shakespeare, *Julius Ceasar*, Act III, Scene II

²⁹ Ialdabaoth has been incarnated as Cain.

³⁰ For the most part this section was written in 1982, it revolves around a dream that I had involving a friend named Marty Dolginoff.

³¹ This is from the winter 1980.

³² The Gnostic name for Satan. Sometimes refers to the chief of angels opposed to the Highest God.

³³ Luke 10:18

³⁴ Cain is recalling another incident that took place prior to his incarnation. In this incident one of the Elohim, Saklas, has fallen out of the highest heaven and into a lower one.

³⁵ John 20:2

³⁶ Saklas. There is some obvious confusion of names here. When Saklas fell from Heaven his name was stricken from the Book Of Life and he has now taken on the name Shemuel. Cf. Milton's *Paradise Lost* Book I, line 79-81.

³⁷ In his arrogance Saklas has forgotten the real reason for his fall and is now preaching a reformation.

³⁸ In the heaven above the one that they are currently in.

³⁹ Another confusion regarding Saklas' name.

⁴⁰ Ialdabaoth had thought that he was in the highest heaven; he now realises that he is not .

⁴¹ This is from the song "Crying In The Chapel". Elvis Presley recorded this song in 1960, but it did not make the charts until 1965. It went to #3 in the Top Ten in May of that year.

⁴² Almost all of the Cain & Abel sequence is based on a dream that I had sometime in 1968.

⁴³ Another confusion regarding names, in Cain's re-telling of the story he has confused his younger brother, Seth, with his older brother, Abel, for whose death Cain was responsible.

⁴⁴ According to Semetic mythology, Lilith is a female demon who consorts with men in their dreams. In later legends she was a vampire who dwelt in deserted places and preyed on children. In Jewish folklore, she was Adam's first wife, before Eve was created.

⁴⁵ Cain found Lilith either in the Garden of Eden or somewhere near-by the garden.

⁴⁶ *Sub Rosa*, in secrecy.

⁴⁷ Kore, in Greek and Persian mythology she was the goddess of fertility. Worshipped in Attica as Core, the daughter of Demeter; synonymous with Persephone. She is Cain's earthly mother (i.e. Mother Nature).

⁴⁸ She tells him this to remind him of Sophia, his heavenly mother, who never lies.

⁴⁹ Apparently Adam is still in the process of naming the creatures of the animal kingdom.

⁵⁰ Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, I, xiii 115

⁵¹ Eve

⁵² According to Cain's recollection the dialogue that took place between himself and God in the 4th chapter of Genesis was between him and Adam. Cf. Genesis 4:9-16.

⁵³ James Joyce, *Ulysses*

⁵⁴ From an ancient Egyptian prayer

⁵⁵ A prayer of grace that I occasionally say.

⁵⁶ Orig. Psalms 137:1, but I am referring here to a song by the German disco quartet *Boney M* recorded in 1978.

⁵⁷ I believe that what the old woman meant by *Egyptian Classics* was the the Tarot deck, but since she and I never got along well this is all I can conjecture.

⁵⁸ Ezekiel 1:16

⁵⁹ Inferno, Canto XXXIII 44-45

⁶⁰ Inferno, Canto XXXIII 46-48