

# LUDOVIC KRIVKOVA

*by Beau Hopkins*

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IN MEMORIAM LUDOVIC KRIVKOVA  
(1982-2015)

'composer and freelancer'

NIHIL MORITUR, OMNIA ALTERANT

*for solo and chorus*

I

---

Ah, Ludo...and it was going so well!  
You'd had your first Big Piece, a sort of *p'tite symphonie*  
dinned in the back of a pub (The Old Bell?)  
in Barnet. A start, at least. 'Aw-speeshussly

een-awspeeshuss,' you quipped, at the audience of eight.  
And then that scholarship to Prague – no, Tokyo –  
which you *almost* got, studying counterpoint  
with the guy on the cover of that Bach album you'd show

everyone. Josquin, Bach, Boulez – how you whooped your crew  
of serious corpses! We thought: pretentious, right?  
No. (Well, maybe.) It was just *so you*  
to navigate by avant-garde starlight

our dark contemporary. Vijay, Heidi, Zuckovski – we all knew  
you'd make it, probably. But your touchiness! that need  
to be treated like the Wandering Jew –  
cursed and sacred...(and cut, boy would *you* bleed...)

But no plush vision called. Just the bald truth:  
you were neglected, and depressed; and you worked hard.  
You wooed the Muses – in the teeth  
of their *ennui*. You lived on 'ideal crumbs'; you starved.

## II

Watch -: even a petrodollar-desert Jinn  
that sprouts on the shimmering plain,  
meeting arms dealers and Bedouin  
gets the gist of loss and gain;

and the stars, gleaming in dark pools,  
lavish their influence...on debit cards, junkmail, iPhones;  
on the Square Mile in all its canicules:  
on share price, same as bones;

but you, Ludo, – *mensch* – cushioned the pearl  
of a purer hope:  
a music to out-bid this bidden world;  
to purge abstraction (our currency) – *and* cope

with inattention's beep 'n' chime:  
music to seize, to *strike*, to...something-something  
(we forget that bit)  
the point is: no more kibbitzing on random shit –

now's an Age of Spirit: and, – like a new Baal Shem – you'd sing  
a revolution of the thing...  
(though – somewhere – lonely, a piano demurs  
'avec une tristesse rigoureuse').

On our 'featureless plateau' you'd teach us how to climb,  
working the era's metal (without fees)  
to forge rungs to eternity from time  
and redeem art's future, from Unilever, and Sotheby's...

But you slightly, uh, *misjudged* your spree...  
(your echt Polish-French intensity  
so 'charming' in our scoffing city,  
the global HQ of 'savage levity') –

for the Jinn's cashed in, for a high-performing loan  
– having enterprisingly scored  
immunity and guns off the House of Saud –  
one 'tuned, mirageous' lute, 'inlaid with shell and stone'.

## III

## HIS SITUATION

## TESTIMONIES

Och Ludovic...*well*, he was who he was. *Schlimalz*, as my Nan would say. He had this...*fixation* with technology. It was controlling us, all that stuff...warping us; all that stuff. And Lehman Brothers! Och, he would *not* shut up about Lehman Brothers...Goldman Sachs, Deutschebank, the whole global financial meshugganah. He used to call it '*our* World War I' – like, 'this is OUR World War I, Roxanna, don't you see, Roxanna?' Well, I didn't.

– ROXANNA ZELIG

His music was going to transform reality. Yeh. He really believed it. 'Listen,' he said, 'everything's about to change, – *again*.' Like, holding his finger in the air. I liked his accent though. Way he said 'again'. AG-en. I liked that hard G.

– BILLY KINCAID

Like, when he talked...he had this way, which was like...incredibly sophisticated and insightful, but also, like...really crude, at the same time. Like, you felt like, when he was pontificating on art and politics, getting more passionate and visionary, and stuff, there was like...I dunno how to describe it...when he was going on about the evil of capitalism, there was something, like, *sexual* about it.

– GABRIELLA DISS

Tenía nada, tenía todo. Tenía claves, en los manos, claves en los dedos, aún en la cabeza tenía claves. Amor, horror, le daban igual.

– GUSTAVO CRUZ

He was a proper c\*nt. I loved him.

– RONNIE OYSTER

## STROPHE: I

### *First chorus*

Wave after wave, of information  
 (the evolution of *speed* from *credit*)  
 pummeling the 'rational agent'  
 (reason's cut at the first self-edit);

Get Tech Savvy Or Get Left Behind  
 cry Beulah's daughters, of augmented bliss;  
 their tabloid 'imprecisions'  
 capitalised, for emphasis.

UPDATE: data 'the new Brent crude', to fuel  
 'the fourth industrial revolution';  
 nature a 'setting' for the tool:  
 sameyness? just speed's pollution.

### *Second chorus*

2008 – Lehman – our 'exuberance' exposed  
 roofless, in a wilderness of value...  
 sez Mystic Meg tapping 'er nose:  
 'oh the future's written – on an IOU'.

FCA (née FSA): 'Flows our greed gangastrogati...'  
 drowning the bardic seed;  
 those helots of 'the risk society'  
 where 400k per annum is 'chicken feed'.

'In '08 the *whole system* went into anaphylactic shock,'  
 quoth trader X (did *not* shaft LIBOR):  
 '...like lifting up a massive rock,  
 woodlice and beetles scuttle from the light – you saw

fraudsters scuttle to their holes, defaulters to bankruptcy...'  
 Though a trade wind still blows  
 the subprime stink of CDOs  
 from Lower Manhattan to the Tasman Sea.

*First chorus*

So, Ludo – cognomen MANIAC – you sought 'a reckoning'.

How? you asked (asking Fate...)  
how face the thing –  
our bankruptcy, or calculate

the cost to Being, when information's free?

(our screens like a new UV to grow  
a full decimalised ego  
in a compost of digitality...)

Wag Ludo...who called the West, 'a hewj REE-versing rubbish truck'  
scraping the neighbours' cars, which keeps  
(us detritivores driving it, who gobble the muck)  
demising, in beeps.

\* \* \*

*A scuffle takes place, off-stage...*

What is it?  
Oh shit,  
it's...

an INTIMATION OF THE ANTIMASQUE

SATYRS      Oi-oi! C'mon everybody, putcha hands together  
for the LUMPENRABBLE –  
it's us! (bringing *randy* weather...)

FAUNS      Here we are, with sport, porn, branded merch and viral celebrity...  
kitten .gifs too! – the 'aw *cute*'  
antimasque:  
                  oh we're just *gagging* to inspire  
with obscene gestures Pan's rude choir  
                  (though Ludo cleaved to Apollo's lute) –

SATYRS      The Lumpenrout, that's us –  
don't be afraid  
                  of our *busy* hands...

FAUNS      ...germs and bad breath! The irking class...oi-oi! agent  
of no change...Nutter-and-Crankariat  
meek tribe of  
the-FUCK-you-staring-at  
...EH???

                  Now SING it, chicken...

A LUNATICK HEN-DO

We'll be there soon...TRA-la-la  
cold-callers, toothless geezers,  
weirdos, pervs  
                  mouth-breathers  
we the thick  
and gross who lick  
dirty stuff,  
all those surfaces you'd rather not touch...  
                  the mad crew...  
Tra-la-LEE  
                  who don't have the decency to cover our mouths  
                  when we wetly cough on you

tra-la-LA  
we pissheads and piss-takers

with yellow teeth  
 pot-stirrers, shit-talkers, broken-home-makers  
     cranks who conspiracise  
     fabulous lies  
     wild worlds from our own wild eyes  
 boat-rockers, street-screamers,  
     mad-pamphlet-distributors  
 TRA-la-la  
     stalkers and gropers  
     friendless no-hopers  
         chancers, scammers,  
         phishers, spammers,  
         obsessive clickbaiters,  
         gullible deep-staters,  
 TRA-la-DA  
     comment-thread calumniators  
         and trolls and haters  
 and Tripadvisor-raters...

CHORUS LEADER Come on, enough of this.

FIRST NUTTER Not to your liking?

CHORUS LEADER I like a *gag* but...

SECOND NUTTER (*bringing his face very close, sniffing*) Your tastes?

CHORUS LEADER (*Backing off*) Restrained, and classical.  
 Yours?

SECOND NUTTER (*thinks*) More...tits-and-assical.

#### WILD MEN AND MISCELLANEOUS CRAPULENTS

We gibber & drool  
 we are Not Cool  
 we  
     the frighteningly-deranged whose  
         illnesses and psychoses  
         cannot be made sympathetic;  
 moist revolting spitters and wheezers  
 meth-heads, weed-heads, spray-you-sneezers  
     bus-shelter-pukers, Jesus-spielers  
         pant-sniffers, toilet-peekers  
 incoherent non-sequitur speakers,  
     littering, strewing cans

with our *tiny* attention-spans  
ubiquitous tats  
needle tracks  
and fake tans  
with our loud obnoxious dogs  
with our smelly cottages  
our attachment to chintz  
we buy the *fatty* mince  
we who stand on our tawdry dignities  
while thrusting our short-snuffing noses into  
the armpits and crevices of celebrities  
we awkwardly-horny  
wish-you-weren't-borny  
inappropriate joke-makers  
who disgust the educated.  
With our nits and lice  
with open mouths  
on buses loudly  
snouting into reeking kebabs  
slurping pot noodles, chomping Ginster's pasties,  
service station pies  
or a microwave roast  
ranting and splenetic  
with our crazy jerky gaits  
who crunch on polite silence with our toast.

CLASSY DRUNKS RA-TATA our Post-This Post-That era...oh  
we love it so, because it's so  
brutish; so sentimental;  
so 'amusing': (so *mental...*)  
RA-TATA TA-REEE...  
DANCE CHICKEN life's just a fourscore body-rental...

CHORUS LEADER Are they gone? Thank *Christ...*  
(oy, the smell!)  
All right everybody, back to your places.

*Second chorus*

'a sober business indeed'

Lehman...then Austerity –  
fomenting scarcity;  
then the Arab Spring;  
Africa immigrating

into bourgeois art:  
'Do some good,  
come and see our concerned faces'  
at the NT;  
@TheRoyalCourt –  
'What scourge for me-no-likey  
can this thespy monarchy afford false...whatsisface,  
some minister...  
LINE...?  
(who are the baddies today?)'

Private equity guy at Blackrock:  
'Listen, it's the 2010s,  
liquidity's in rout.  
The economy's like a burning building.  
Identify your value  
then grab what you can, and get the hell out.'

Is *your* demos  
(cometh the SIDEBAR AD)

SICK of all these  
quote unquote inevitable  
global-financial rapacities?  
Need a new -ism?  
Hmn?  
Yes...then why not try  
Whack-a-Mole Populism...!

'Dunno wot, I look aroun'...mates laid off...  
jus' feel a loh' ov vague,  
objectless rage.'  
Enter Nigel Farage.  
Exit  
the Liberal Technocratic Age.

\* \* \*

'Look at the EU. *Look at it...*' 'John...John...'!  
 'Doan' get me star'it...'!  
 'S'true the logo does  
     look like a target...'!

Now let's get some REACTION  
 to our Asymmetrical Match of the Day:  
 Atlético de Globalisation v.  
 Johnny Average FC  
 (in liquidation) –  
 M'sieur Shearer: Woss APPnin? Ah corl ut Sovrent'ee's SooFLAY...  
     rise o'th' NAYshun.  
 (+ wink emojis from Michel Barnier...)

Silicone Valley partners up  
 with Beijing.  
 And the headlines at WIRED are  
 rather gushing:

'TechNARLo'gee a PRAABlum?  
 C'maaaan.'  
 (Zuckerberg or someone)  
 'Ya jus' need *more* of it, ya'll see

and ya gonna git it anyway.' More  
 depthless 'connection'? *Check*. More job-eating automation? *Check*.  
 More AI?  
 (Someone join *these* dots –  
 'poesis and robots...')  
*check check check FIRST CLICK 'I AGREE FOREVER'*  
 And capturing the global supply  
 of semiconductors...

Paramount Leader Xi Jinping IS  
 Michael Caine  
 in...  
 THE TAIWAN JOB –  
 'Hang on a minnit, comrades  
     ah've goh' a greah' idear...'

*First chorus*

Like woodlice to a rotted log  
'the situation' attracts  
utopians of all stripes;  
with a noble contempt for brass tacks

dreaming into megaphones:  
'mental workers' in *ardent* white tux;  
campus-grass-fed rhapsodes screaming  
of infinite love, among eunuchs.

The Ideal seeks (ie funds) music in the key  
of blurbs, ads, PR speech:  
'accessible and uplifting' melody  
for Dame Britannia, the deaf ol' bitch;

stuff for lifts: IP for tuning  
'job creators' to floor 33;  
like caramel-tan Dick Fuld crooning  
lullabies, of fineless solvency.

## STROPHE: II

INTRODUCING

### THE LIBERAL-TECHNOCRATIC-OLIGARCHICAL GYPSY KLEZMER ORCHESTRA!

*'The Lagardians of the Galaxy'*

**Hank Paulson, Accordion; Alistair Darling, Flugelhorn; Wen Jiabao, Clarinet; José Manuel Barroso, Violin; Abdullah bin Abdullaziz Al Saud, Tuba; Wolfgang Schäuble, Alto sax; Carlos Slim, Guitar; Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Bass; Mario Draghi, Trombone; Rebekah 'Abyssinian Maid' Wade, Hammer dulcimer; Yang Huiyan, Drums**

**Christine Lagarde, Lead vocals; The Ural Mountain Billionaire Choir, Backing vocals**

*'Lehman Brothers Is Falling Down'*

to the old Yiddish tune 'Mayn shtele Belz'

CHRISTINE LAGARDE

*Oy oy oy, Lehman, mayn shtetel Lehman,  
mayn heymele,  
vu ikh hob mayn kindsershe yorn farbrakht...*

OLEG DERIPASKA

Ach you failed, who were Too Big To Fail.  
Oye veh!  
And the aftermath –  
belief in 'society'  
takes an absolute bath.

Oracular data: the Great Recession was  
'a 7-sigma event';  
the heat death of the universe  
'a more likely precedent'.

ALISHER USMANOV

Ye Auld Dialectick has decayed;  
 now we 'progress'  
 at the whims  
 of 'inevitable systems'

globalised for 'best practice':  
 socialise the risk,  
 privatise the happiness.  
 Tranche-packaged subprime? *Relaaaax...*

VIKTOR RASHNIKOV

What can't be disposed of though  
 insolvent (actually *and* conceptually)...?  
 Global Mega-debt Finance,  
 apparently.

Transnational currency circuits,  
 networked efficiencies...  
 each blip of selfhood blurs out in the slipstream  
 of every other's  
 private velocities.

And the liberal-technocratic gospel  
 of Total Inevitability –  
 read it? 'Yeah.' Read the small print? 'Lessee...'  
 ...inequality...volatility...

ROMAN ABRAMOVIC

Tech monopolists take their liens  
 on the bovine populace;  
 subtilised hooves scraping at touchscreens –  
*our* minds are *their* ad-space.

O Lady of Atomised Connection, gather us  
 in a thousand thousand BT-FONs;  
 at wifi's shrine we  
 shall propitiate your digital icons.

ANDREY MELNICHENKO

By nudges we're instructed

to cherish a blank;  
while the future depreciates  
on the asset sheet of Deutschebank.

Forget 'informed views':  
find your outrage and your anger  
packaged for you, by 'the news'  
(and your apathy, and languor).

VLADIMIR POTANIN

'Great art, autotelic? Just meet demand,'  
say target-audience-pleasing  
funding bodies, that command  
the obvious to sing.

(Eh guys? Remember – how Ludo described  
contemporary music?  
... 'the sound of dogs licking'.  
All taste, all insight clanned and tribed –  
'lots of pricks, and no one kicking'.)

ALEXEY KUZMICHEV

Now Beauty, Truth, Eternity  
are no-gos.  
Agape and Eros mingle in the  
crowds of emoticons and logos.

And Theory what about jealous Theory  
can Theory wreck  
the marriage of  
Big Autocracy, Big Tech?

Poor Theory, squawking in theory-ese  
deconstructively; parroting  
platitudes of  
naughty NAUGHTY binaries!

BORIS BEREZHOVSKY

But attention perists.  
Like geology,

its silence endures.  
 Love and tenderness are stonily  
 present in it; a slow human soil  
 that endures  
 below our sociopolitical  
 pesticides and manures.

GENNADY TIMCHENKO

Here's the thing: we have nothing to confess.  
 Nothing. We can't  
 curse or bless,  
 for we've nothing to confess;

having no ethics, only blind rage  
 (an ethic of the .gif, or shared image)  
 we destroy our way towards righteousness  
 and name destruction righteous rage.

MIKHAIL FRIDMAN

Our perception is a prose  
 of fabulous surfaces;  
 but with spirit, we acknowledge – and compose  
 the harsh poetry of what is.

Follow us, the freilich tune  
 #defunctivemusic  
 Have your say –  
 email: christine@endoftheworld.co.uk

ENSEMBLE

Where oh where have all the *facts* gone?  
 (Are they, too,  
 property of Goldman Sachs now?)

We atoms miss or clash  
 in one vast sphere  
 composed of anxious speculation  
 a thin cognitive air (though saturate with information)  
 breathing terror and desire

into total visibility.

Know what I mean?  
 (Ablated our metaphoricity)  
 I mean we're now 100% literal (check the ingredients...)  
 so literal it's obscene.

In our  
 hyper-archived, content-generating  
 age, amid the  
 megrims, of our mishegoss  
 where can we find  
 simplicity and tenderness?

When mere opinions replace  
 charity and sacrifice,  
 where can we find  
 true fire, true ice...?

(Come on up Rupe!...)

Striving to pierce to the centre of life  
 we find it  
 hiding, in a fog...  
 there the heart of being feels  
 spelled against us, magically protected...  
 we're repelled, by an amulet  
 of HR guff, and hype, and ads, and bullshit.  
 (O the mystery of life!)

In our  
 (what did Ludo call it?)  
 'hyperenergetic, go-nowhere  
 hamster-wheel civilisation...  
 where the best truth is untrue'  
 we chase power,  
 sex  
 blind sensation

or synthesise The New.  
 Like a hardcase dominatrix  
 \*\*\*cool theme tune\*\*\*

at an aircraft carrier's controls  
 we're like  
 BITCH SEE, BITCH DO.  
 'Hey!  
 ...big nautical obstacle –

*fuck you.*

To all the haters  
bulk-freighters

in international shipping:

YOU are von Trapp family

*I am Maria*

and this is ...*The Sound of Whipping...*'

or something like that.

Ready Rupe?

\* \* \* *Guest Singers* \* \* \*

RUPERT MURDOCH

Heh heh, bit emBEErassed here...

Here goes...*(coughs)*

When first ah came t'he Yoo-kay  
Ah remember  
they called me 'one o' them Ozzie runts.'  
An' I thawt then (as we orl think nair) –  
*hair* did there git to be SO minny cunts?

O'right, gimme a beat there...thetsit –

This to emulation's zillion kids:  
what did I tell ya? We can track your views  
through GPS – trust me, they're *all*  
satellite-friendly. So quick, for Gawd's sake  
clear your search history, MUMMY'S COMING  
(oop pardon!). Done it again. DIRTY  
OLD MAN – sounds like an undiscovered  
ditch-loving wildflower, seeding itself  
in shady places, '*prostrate rather than climbing*,  
hairless to sparsely hairy, with tiny flowers  
on well-spaced, *drooping stalks*. Foliage  
said to be foul-smelling.'

So I'm compromised.  
Others aren't – eh Ludo? What do you  
expect? *Are* you expecting? Whatever  
else you do, CELEBRATE – that's an order.  
And seeing as *nox est perpetua*  
*una dormienda*, ah reckon I need a  
more exSIDE-ing jinDAH – gonna transition

to a pregnant phrasing, grander more  
 Shakespearean. Yeh baby! *Murdoch*  
*shall sleep no more...* How's this  
 for a headline? RUPE KID EXCLUSIVE  
 SHE/HER MEDIA USURPER UP THE McDUFF!

SHEIKH SAUD BIN MOHAMMED AL THANI

Can't you hear 'em calling you?  
 Can't hear you 'em?

Those are your hopes calling, lyring you  
 like caged animals  
 ...the sand gazelle, and Spix macaw...  
 Arabian oryx, maybe more...  
 (oh your hopes, inspiring you...)

stuck and wailing  
 penned and failing

in our Miserabilist Zoo.

So WHAT to do? – I don't know what do.  
 I feel like the Lady of Shallot...  
 (an art lover, but  
 concubined by OECD stats) –  
 our Belle Dame Sans Merci  
 is oil-price volatility:  
 and she  
 hath undone  
 pale kings, pale warriors  
 ...pale auditors...pale beaurocrats,  
 pale democracies...autocracies  
 (...pale everyone.)  
 'It's the age we're livin in baby...'

ENSEMBLE

An age which  
 maybe is, maybe only seems  
 so haggard and paranoid below  
 its selfie smile and facecreams...

an age of contraction, retreat, disintegration,

shelter-seeking, fragmentation,  
terror;  
wild, passionate hopes, passionate error –

and desperation for faith...  
'I'd like to shop at *Purpose & Belonging*  
but can only afford  
Lottery Mentalities  
(a poundstore)'.

Something, anything...  
not just the corporate-sponsored creed of  
'Feel good? DO that shit'  
(ie Chaos + Nivea) –  
litigate reality: 'don't like it? SUE that shit.'

Insecure and craving;  
shit jobs or joblessness, high rents, impossible house prices;  
endless money-saving  
tips; tips for every crisis.

An age of intellectual backpedaling; disavowal; spiritual bulimia; the vast warring-insect Spectacle, of social media.

LAGARDE

What then – what can we do? With *these* minds? so attuned  
to systems, rather than discrete experience?  
(systems, networks, the *series...*)

Think  
our way out? Think a new world, with new systems? No, we don't  
'think' anymore, we plot the matrices  
of risk and consequence  
like actuaries...  
(no one seriously

*imagines the*  
future any more...)  
And there's no opt-out (though there is  
an opt-out fee)  
we stand here  
subscribed to  
all the debris...

But could we compute  
our terror as we do risk...? Conceive an image to express  
our immense  
innocence in nothingness,  
our awe and horror before  
those systems to which  
we feel so subject  
before which  
we stand mute...  
helpless, passive, complicit...  
maybe then...  
(terror...risk...)  
maybe then we could cancel  
our direct debit to  
the whole pay-per-view grotesque...

A MEMBER OF THE AUDIENCE

What a buncha whingers...

### STROPHE: III

#### *THE GANTSEH MEGILLAH*

'Whatever you say it is, it isn't.'  
 – *Alfred Korzybski*



'Not gonna lie...'

The cabbie glances over his shoulder –

'Bein a Jew

I tell ya, with one 'and...' (raises hand)

'yer tryner fend off all the bastards, and with the other,' (raises the other)  
 'yer tryner *create...*'

In Golders Green it's raining, and a chassid boy is running

late for his violin lesson  
 case banging at his side  
 meagre sidelocks jangling  
 free hand clamped on his *kippah*  
 (new shoes're too big for him...)

Does *he* hear

Hear O Israel –

the one untillated voice crying in the wilderness...

(can *you* hear?)

one voice, and it advertised

'one passionate soul' (pre-owned)

    crying BUY IT NOW

(or: 3d 4hr left to bid)

Hear O Israel

    and what *Ludo* was hearing (in's mind...)

went a little *something*,

like this:

    O ferment of pulchritudes! Hearing: O  
     immense, O plosive harmonies!

    O raucous human symphony, heimisch joys  
     resonant-with-the-soul pearls

...amid the pig grunts.

The cabbie:

    Look a' this: see this...

    Charedi Mum? Let's count th'kids...all fifty ovvum?

    Gotta luvvem.

Gotta slow dahn for them...  
 Bless 'er 'eart.

Hear O Israel  
 'The Lord our God the Lord is  
 One', but many and many are  
 'all these other people,  
 who *are* these other people,  
 I don't recognise harf uvvem...'  
 sd Reuben G at The Gentrified Emirates (née Asburton Grove) while Colin got the pints

Who we talkin abou'

Talkin abou' Ludo

Who?

'Accrin'ton Stanleh? Oo'er theiy? EXAK-LEH'  
 Ludovic?

'Yes I remember, when he spoke, I always heard church bells  
 in the distance...

'Ludo...?

that was jus' the sound of his bollocks knockin' together...'

'since the question of how  
 to unify our disintegrated lives  
 in music  
 has exercised many a contemporary composer,  
 to say nothing of  
 schizophrenics and other  
 deranged minds...'

'Nah – nah, ya got it all wrong  
 in a proper Yiddische story the hero doesn't *learn* anything  
 there's no

'horizon of grace'

he just headbutts the same wall  
 again...and again – '

'Huh? *Meshugge...*

was he meshugge? As meshugge as it gets, mate –  
 guy was off his chump.'

Question: can I drive an *electric* car on Shabbat?

Keren Weiss:

There's no way in  
 Gehenna I'm schlepping all the way to  
 Hendon shul for

Jacob's aufruf, I don't care whose  
 nebbi überfrum son he is.

(Cue: *another* classic Weiss-Zukovsky broigus...)

'you know he actually searched on ebay for  
 beauty, truth, *teshuvah*  
 Kabbalistic exegesis of October weather on the Balls Pond Road/

the human question (*meinheitlich*)  
 of realising a spiritual community  
 through wristbands  
 like Diogenes avec keyboard  
 while Rabbi Hillel had another  
 bath 'for the glory of G-d'  
 Rabbi Scholem coded his clickbait golem  
 and then...  
 then to Bloom's for chopped liver and latkes.  
 proper loco hombre  
 (priiity big ego on'm)  
 circa 2011-2014  
 but when he spoke I'd get all  
 tingly, like when I hear 'em blowing the shofar on Rash Hashanah...  
 ('bollocks knowing together')  
 his soul percussing through the universe  
 'like one of those corporate desk-toys'  
 one voice, tingling,  
 though Golders Green, Archway, down Seven Sisters  
 a goodly Hasid seeing G-d in the sunlit raindrops  
 flashing outside the Afro barbers on Wood Green,  
 the Turkish supermarket  
 'crawlin with Tottenham fans'  
 and his rants veering  
 from *presto* to *molto vivace*  
 and the rest of the time  
 just adagio depressiveness.  
 (2d 4hr left to bid)  
 one voice currently  
 'failing to contribute to our GDP.'

λ

So – *shalom*, Ludo: let's refocus you for a moment  
 in your bare-bulb digs  
 (borough of Haringey...)  
 Busy at the Great Work (Great Uncompromising Work)  
 tearing *strips* off creation  
 in your bedsit-shared-kitchen situation.  
 Wearing your overcoat though  
 it's 20 degrees.  
 Sockless, in trainers  
 your black locks jiggling slightly (your nervy foot jiggling)

face scrunched up in concentration while your hand (left hand)  
quills Beethoven filigree

onto loose sheets of economy printer paper with a Bic biro.

(Huge pile in the corner...)

Your auditor? *Eternity*. Who, patiently...  
amid a reek of  
BO, antique fagsmoke, spongy beer-spilled carpet  
(some Janacek poking  
from one tinny speaker...the babbling brook –  
a flush 'murmurs' in the communal toilet...)  
while outside  
someone's yelling in Turkish, someone else (woman) yelling back in  
Greek  
(...is that Greek?)  
someone *shlurping* the dregs of a fluorescent blue Co-op slushy...  
(Israelis, Eritreans, Malaysians...)  
*Shalom.*

Now you shine Ludo  
through our time's broken constellations  
in one choir joining the other  
dissociated C-grade asters...

When Omar said:

'I YEARN for the zombie apocalypse. I'll be that silent mysterious one who roams between the last stranded human communities. No gun; I'll pack a samurai sword and tough-as-shit, magazine-fed crossbow.

I'll be sad and powerful. I'll protect a little orphan girl. We'll drive a retrofit armour-plated Dodge pickup, and give each other 'the look' before each big showdown. The undead will slide into chunks before my expert and disciplined slashing.'

we said:                   OK.

'But I  
danced on the waves, lighter than a  
champaign cork, more blessed  
blessed than any fresh morn, though I  
nudged, on occasion, an old fishbitten corpse, (how huge and heavy that old  
anchor was!) and each broken wave  
brought me nearer the sea's clean heart  
an pic n' mix  
an hamantaschen, the briny turmoil the colour of ambergris  
slid inside my soul,  
washing my decks sheer of vomit and dread,

I became a marvel for children - '  
 bing, peep  
 peep ping  
 popolob popolob hhnnnnn...  
 splash!

You know they picked up Maisie on junction 14 of the M11 (the shikse)

    dressed like a pixie, curtseying to  
 the traffic, quoting Sylvia Plath...

'I said to the girl do you want to play Connect 4?'

Big bloke, holding a cane, breathing heavily Do you, he said, have any...idea, he said, (in Uxbridge this) how hard it is...trying to speak...when you've got...twenty-six voices...

    talking...in your head?

Victor wrote quickly in his diary:

have just come back into a consultation room  
 where I recently changed my shoes:  
 am suddenly able to smell myself: disturbing  
 encounter with my own olfactory echo...

Money is extremely sticky (Mr Morgan)

    and the wind rubs litter down the kerb

I'm amazed that I've been able to make money right now, the market's terrible. But money's sticky...

    Cam: Northern Line? I've forgotten the horror of it.

My mind does me a favour sometimes.

In the Edmonton Weatherspoon's, Frank Flood is saying

'Paddy woan git ouwtta bed for less'n 20 youro n'our

    they're all complaynin bou' EEMEEgration  
 but Paddy's been roun' the worl,

    now he woan get outta bed

    and unemployment benefit at two-fiftee-tree a mont'...'

and Dan

#GobbyShite #UnlikeHisMissus

at the King's Head Dan said

    Francis called me, he called me,  
 really excited, he'd been stopped by the police as he matched the description  
 of a rape suspect,  
 that woz in Ken'ish Taaan

and district judge Wharton at the possession hearing:

    'You paid how much for the mattress?'

    '400'

'400? That's a lot for a single mattress'

    's'dgood kwal'ee mattress...'

    I Sirithan Natharinwianu....

'and the carpet how much for the carpet?'

    good kwal'ee carpet, rubberised underlay

next on the list: Adeleykun v Persons Unknown

    I understand the Nigerian landlords of Woolwich have been hit

particularly hard by the credit crunch...  
 West African landlords in general?  
 And this fantastic little polsky sklep on Seven Sisters  
 where they do that dried sausage  
 by the classified there's a sign

We Valve Your Opinion  
 and in Dalston the graffiti said  
 Welcome to the Adhocracy  
 Cunts Work Better Together

the smell of fried plaintain and patties outside the Edgware job centre  
 Jermaine:  
 texted me: I cut n' pasted 'em to make this:  
 Y'know I just wanted to be one with everything, in-  
 timate with everything, and everyone, be a part of everyone, one life, *connected*...  
 I went to Ilford and Gravesend  
 to be one with everything  
 I went to Uxbridge Harrow and  
 Snaresbrook

to be one with everything  
 I went to Walworth...  
 Elephant & Castle I went

to Ealing Bow Clerkenwell outside Frank's diner...  
 Ringtone: crazy frog  
 Guy in a Man U cap on the no. 259:

the bailiff? at me daw-er? bluddy 'eck

Pete in the Crown:  
 I know it's gross, but I've got to tell someone...  
 What?

How *well* I'm shitting at the moment.  
 Each day it's like my Joan of Arc moment.  
 Joan of Arc...

Afterwards I feel sinless,  
 inspired, like I could lead an army...  
 'The English are still basically pagans. Theirs is a binge culture.'  
 Craig before HHJ Wharton at Inner London Crown Court  
 said:  
 'ass right yer onner 'ee come at me with that machete  
 like th'bloke in Revenge o'th'Sith whirlin lightsabres...  
 I prakly shat mesel'

(GBH charge)  
 'Do you mean to say, Mr Catchpole, you feared for your life?'  
 'ass right yer onner, prakly shat mesel' fearin fummey life.'

Richard after his accident believes insects are laying eggs in his eyes...  
 and the last time Jo-Jo Mergl had one of her episodes  
 she:

walked round Stepney wearing this sort of hessian bag; (lot of god talk):  
 stood singing outside Wormwood Scrubs  
 shaved her head; got a tattoo (orchids); bought  
 maybe 15 pairs of shoes (one pair M Blahnik, two sizes too big);  
 and a Nissan hatchback, on credit.

Anyway she's better now. She's out o'th'unit.

See this heart?

Now ashy and damp, fate-quenched;  
 it once prolonged the Winter stars...  
 stoned Autumn away  
 while a soul ticked among the dry leaves...

When Ludo

that was when he was living in Barnet

With Brian

that was when he was living in Archway,  
 stood by the jerk chicken van outside the Seventh Day Adventist Church  
 (goat curry) en face the Nag's Head  
 the sweet lady's catchphrase

DOZ it PARSE me test?

Brian showed his oyster card

the Victoria line is an absolute

JOY

nothing beats the 29 bus. Nothing.

Ludo could always be found  
 ...Archway, Holloway, and Seven Sisters:  
 at Mangal 2, off the Kingsland Road  
 on Fridays, usually;  
 BYO, their adana kebabs + grilled chillis fit for the seraphim;  
 'the North circular helps me think'.

I mean, you said it yourself, we're living in a time

(in The Grenadier that time)

of 'tottul EEN-AIRSHA'

and we saw it happen before our eyes  
 in our own lifetimes we've experienced

the extinction of the future -

it was you who said

stasis is our daily bread.

Ludo could always be found  
 ...at The Swimmer or The Angel  
 or the Grafton Arms  
 or at Big Red  
 for 2-4-1 Sambuccas; or the Crown and Sugar Loaf, by Ludgate Hill.  
 At that vietnamese on Whitecross Street

where Vijay said  
 All I ever hear is car alarms  
 (wanted a music based on those car alarms);

Oh and  
 of contemporary aesthetics you kept highly-critical track  
 over pale ale at  
 at The Faltering Fullback,  
 Finchley Road area.

Korean BBQ by Centrepoint:  
 'I was on the Manningtree job  
 Benny called me up  
 'ee said, yev goh'a stop drinking with Len, yuv broken 'im;  
 he's here, stood up leanin against, the duct-pipe he's sposed to be bracket'in,  
 fast asleep, *upright.*'

Gabriella, Pearl and Isobel  
 Kate and Fen  
 in P's kitchenette, with mugs of rosé...  
 Listen  
 What I can't stand is  
 a wet arty man.

Go on, you like hooooligans.  
 You said it, not me  
 handymen, rough trade  
 men with troll hands.

Ludo could always be found...  
 with fiery chastising  
 breath  
 which we received through  
 that coin-op laundromat smell that clung to you.  
 ranting, rankling your clay feathers  
 (that M&S overcoat you wore in all weathers...)

Whadju say Charlie? You'll deal with the irreversible 'logic' of globalisation how?  
 Kill it off it with your kebab breath?  
 'Sure.' And the banks?  
 'I'll death-stare them to death.'



'As a comPOZer...I 'ave unYUshul sensyBEElitty...  
 That's right you were a composer - why do we keep forgetting?  
 But what did you compose?  
 Nothing.

Well OK - a bit.  
 Couple of sonatas, that thing 'for five cellos' that odd Steve Reich-like concerto  
 'for cellos, accordion and fists'...  
 But what people had to understand -  
 the main thing was - you weren't one of these  
 and here you'd cough and spit  
*popular artists*  
 ones who *please*  
 not for you all that lachrymose prize-winning bullshit -

Our 'tottul een-air-SHA...'!  
 'I always thought he seemed more...  
 often more *verklempt* than *sturm und drang*.'  
 No mobile - 'Ludo your Mum rang' -  
 with the *chutzpah*, unkempt aura  
 and haggard wit of a ghetto schnorrer...  
 calling yourself, only half  
 joking (did you have EMET in royal blue  
 tattooed on your calf?)  
 'the Ahasuerus of N11'...right. So were you  
 ill, delirious?

No. Though you pronounced it Are-You-Serious  
 even we thought so, sometimes.

Maybe we ribbed you, a bit,  
 you meant most of it  
 as the poet 'means' the rhymes;  
 you 'the aleph and tav'  
 of Crystal Kebab, or the Eritrean place  
 of Wood Green, the great Rav  
 with donner meat stains, on his face.

Boy you had a *look* -  
 the way you'd talk about your 'scrapes with rapture'  
 with your eyeballs out on stalks like  
 the wolf in that Tex Avery  
 cartoon, or Wile E Coyote or X or other prodigal of close-shavery...

That look -  
 like John said, have you noticed the way he sort of  
 hacks the air when he talks?

The way you'd hack and slice the air  
 (or his 'passionate hair'?)  
 and that thing you did, knuckling at your eyebrow  
 rubbing it  
 like there was a microchip planted in there  
 that you were trying to switch off.

That look -  
 'an artist has no choice'  
 & the girls loved (some of them), for a while  
 your pained, your meticulous smile  
 & pizzicato voice  
 your hyperintense Ecclesiastes-meets-Heine-meets-Dowland act  
 (like Sauron, you were Lord of Eye Contact)  
 until...well,  
 your 'reality is hell'  
 spiel got a bit much.

Anguish was your bailiwick,  
 paranoia your demesne.

Self-pity...  
 'after Tom got mugged in London Fields? No chance...  
 ask someone else to'  
 to...to what? At the Edmonton Weatherspoon's where Keith  
 looked around, then said  
 'This is where Keats' dad died I think'  
 and you cared - got furious - about *everything*  
 the *tiniest* things

( the list of ingredients on a packet of Quavers  
 palm oil? SULPHATES?!!! )  
 got you furious...

Jez: I have absolutely NO FAITH in you,  
 no faith...I'm appalled by this  
 (the dog had shat, name was Kerry)

But it must have been tiring  
 living as if under perpetual siege:  
 always anticipating  
 some criticism, some slight, some assault  
 paranoia...fear...

o enemies o everywhere...

see things, hear voices: a vision of a breathing map...

John: I just feel...I really do...something stopping me from doing something terrible...  
 be thou damned Faust for  
 the government, the media, thy boss, thy  
 landlord, the  
 banks, the BBC, arts bodies, the IMF

were all directing their efforts towards  
suppressing the

Last Dissident City of... you.

True about you?

Little bit?

No one was attacking...how could they? No one knew about you...

Mens rea was lacking.

O the pickle that the West is in;

your poor everyman

indentured to huge overbearing yet

invisible forces;

glo-fi and technology

occluding the soul, the inner life where

the new gravity

the new sin

tastes of antimetaphysical sauces...

You thought:

Belief and attachment

to the something divine inhering

in our being meant

a whole entire LIFE

spent wandering, forlorn, amid superabundance

like a beggar in the Westfield Centre

or an oligarch's wife.

'half of creativity

is a good filing system

the right stationary.'

We still remember

the BO or

coin-op laundromat smell that clung to you.

¶

Dearest Darling,

I'm remembering you

You loved : talking, drinking

: hasidism, kabbalism, mysticism

- : stationary esp Pilot pens
- : Pilot mechanical pencils
- : banh mi baguettes
- : Poland's independence narrative
- : coitus
- : dogs
- : conflict

we the undersigned hereby (the executors of the estate of L. Krivkova)

witness attest & covenant

that Ludo hated:

- 1) neoliberalism
- 2) cheapness & tawdriness (all kinds esp metaphorical)
- 3) utilitarian art (all kinds)
- 4) perfectibilarian philosophy (all kinds)
- 5) postmodern flattening
- 6) redaction of spirit
- 7) cynical-ironical-nihilistic glibness and mocking
- 8) tech idolatry
- 9) abolition of universals
- 10) rich cunts and hypocrites etc etc

Nebbishy?

'Mewzik eez a KUNstant BOOL marr-ket'

you claimed; which was...

well, strange, seeing

you were so bearish about being.

You dug for halleluiyahs, shining roots  
 but clawed open only the black spring  
 of your own spleen. You *hated* mediocrity, *hated* hackwork  
 but your own work came to nothing.

To you success / success to you  
 (or: the lack)

'a few claps, a few pence'  
 was like God's mystical absence -

affirming by negation  
 your gruelling rogation  
 through random flatshares,  
 random landlords  
 crappy jobs and unpaid rents.

When Omar said:

'The inner life resembles a Honda ad



# y

Rabbi Baer of Radoshitz: to know God, to be a good Hasid?

There is no one way.

The maggid of Zlotchov to a curious Hasid:

There is no one way.

Do what hasn't been done

fulfil God in thine own particularity

not fulfilling thine own particularity

delays the Messiah.

'Look you're supposed to daven mincha before sunset,  
but take it easy on people who daven mincha after sunset,  
at least until Tzeis Hakochavim...'

'So apparently two hasidic 7 y.o.s were almost molested  
WHAT on EARTH were two hasidic 7 y.o.s doing out on the street at 9pm? WHERE on  
EARTH were the parents?  
They should be locked up. I'll bet you anything you like the father wears Rabeinu Taams  
gatches and the mother wears a kupke till her nose...also I wanna ask...'

He renews the work of creation each day.

'I'll tell you what the parents were doing...  
baking kugel, sowing a goblon, knippink tzitzes, klobing hasidism,  
that's what they were doing...'

He renews the work of creation each day.

'We all do it. We have some big argument. Suddenly we realise it's time to daven mincha. We  
get up to daven. Suddenly we're thinking 'OHO so now you're gonna pretend you're a pious jew  
and daven to Hashem like NOTHING just happened? You think Hashem wants to hear from a  
hypocritical nudnik like YOU?'

Rabbi Bunam: seek peace in your own place.

R. Hanokh: there was this one really stupid bloke...a real *klutz*...

He renews the work of creation each day.

In the hour of man's departure neither silver nor gold  
nor precious stones nor pearls, nor employment rights  
accompany him;  
only Torah and good works...

He renews the work of creation each day.

Only Torah...

Where thou walkest it shall lead thee,  
 when thou liest down it shall watch over thee,  
 and when thou wakest, early, unslept, thy mind all void,  
 despairing, hearing the beeping rubbish truck, and a neighbour's suckley coughing,  
 thy heart a hunk of halfcooked meat,  
 it shall talk thee a pep, and gee thee up.

Rabbi Yaakov Yitzhah of Pzhysha:  
 after Moses came the Judges  
 after the Judges came the Prophets  
 after the Prophets the men of the Great Assembly came  
 after them the Tannaim and Amorain, after them the Exhorters  
 when these too failed, then the Zaddikim arose  
 and when the Zaddikim failed  
 we've got this ridiculous mishegoss we call the present  
 what will we do?

'It was PURIM MADNESS  
 we'd all brought tambourines for blotting out Haman's name  
 during the megillah reading every time the chazzan said Haman's name  
 everyone rattled their groggers booed and hissed and  
 the rabbi was dressed as Dennis Bergkamp  
 afterwards the chazzan said we'd enact the rest of the story  
 as an West end musical with motown tunes...  
 we all went to bed with the taste of hamanteshcen in our mouths.'

ג

When Omar said:  
 'No shortcuts boychik, gimme the gantseh megillah...'

When Omar said:  
 'I don't know what's coming next, but whatever it is  
 its theme tune will be 'volatility'...'  
 Whatever's coming next...

When Omar said:  
 We now maintain

'monuments of unageing intellect'  
like pets...

Like Mandy's guinea pigs in their feculent straw  
(one had goitre?)  
What were their names again?  
'Wriggle,'  
and the other one?  
'Loiter.'

And  
for the denied, abolished yet imminent new age  
what portends (hmn?) what presages  
Old Moore's Almanac, popular rage  
'you have 666 new messages...'

#### LEARN TO TWERK

or:

Have YOU had an accident at work?  
- It's like I tell my Scorpio friends...  
- 100 Olympic pools every day  
- Goodwood might be won by 12st 3lb riding a 3-year old  
- Working from home I can make £159/hr you can too  
- I used to be broke and depressed that was before I tried SALT MAGICKE  
- Quick abs INSTANT ABS  
- Get Huge Thighs...teeth repair...Melt your belly fat...Quick abs...predict pea-soupers  
- 'Good news for Bad Poopers...'

Ludo could always be found...  
In your room, motionless as a trompe l'oeil  
like Satie's austerity  
hammock, piano and pissbucket  
*pour le gentilhomme d'Arceuil...*

And the things you'd sometimes do Ludo!  
drunk, screaming 'hit me! hit me!'  
(with ketchup on your cheek)  
at Karl, then tossing his violin in the river  
outside the Prospect of Whitby...

or proposing to women you'd only met twice  
(did that to Pearl and Beatrice)  
disrupting that recital at Wigmore Hall  
'LAKrymose *bull*-sheet,  
*bull*-sheet all'  
or grabbing the burger flipper and accusing  
Luke of being a - whatdju call him?

'fucking...artistically  
 tangential prick'  
 at Maya's family barbeque in Hackney Wick.

True there is much bullshit -  
 much publicity  
 for brand Invictus  
 whose CEO, the Absolute  
 grinning, winks  
 (such benevolent eyes!)  
 above a botox rictus...

But you were always  
 'I serve because I love'...  
 your dark head shone, it would seem  
 with a halo of immortality  
 or was it hairgel...  
 (Brylcream?)  
 an exterminating angel  
 précisément coiffé d'arc-en-ciel...  
 (some kind of ether-based styling wax?)

As Divorced Dave said  
 'like Hitchcock used to appear in his films, so I  
 appear in my life - glimpsed yet  
 somehow in charge...'

Or Oyster Farm Katie  
 (we think it was Oyster Farm Katie)  
 who said  
 time, life whatever  
 (sun-drowsed, wine-drowsed)  
 is something you move through flicking and browsing  
 section by section;  
 & yet it's *all* autobiography  
 and all *fiction...*

'It's like what I tell my Taurus friends...'  
 Your eyes - inky.  
 Yes we're going down; time is a long staircase  
 and we're the slinky  
 but the bottom will come...  
 BOOM BOOM  
 sooner than we thinky...

As the teeming city, so the universe, is.

So from your friends and family  
 society, reality  
 you'd often sense  
 this vast, and courteous indifference.

'If you've got it, *sell...*'  
 But you didn't.  
 'We only say I love you when our work is going well..'

## ¶

K rivkova, broke, in's bare-bulb digs  
 R idicules his contemporaries  
 I nvites the Muses to his much-composing  
 V enerates the dead, of his own proposing  
 K eeps ranting at friends, paranoia's fool  
 O pts out of society, for being 'too cruel'  
 V eers wildly between his mental disorders  
 A nd dies unknown, unheard, unattended by mourners.

## ANTISTROPHE

AN IMPROVISED RECITATIVE  
 in the form of  
 HORATIAN ODE  
 between  
 MARK LAWRENSON & ALAN HANSEN

in response to a question from our caller  
 Matty, 38, from Dumfries:

*'Lads, d'ya reckon the 2008 global financial crisis, austerity etc, and all that followed, can help explain Everton's poor form so far this season?'*

*Lawrenson*

Let's reimagine our contraries  
 on their undialectical knees,  
 shaking, as in a trance,  
 from Syria to France;

now antinomies have made peace;  
 and now asymmetries police  
 the borderless schism  
 of neoliberalism:

being-in-common, like common ground  
 flogged to developers, who found  
 'parcel – divide – fragment'  
 would yield a higher rent;

unity priced out, our common cares  
 obsolete, like the soul, that stares  
 with gorgeous defunct eyes  
 (like chloroformed butterflies.)

And now our spiritless and giddy  
 zeitgeist, stuck in the meat of the body,  
 twines in one, with one twist,  
 cynic and idealist.

*Hansen*

In '08, history – crashed: unwitty  
carnival of rage and pity;  
now the embers glow  
in an unbeauteous show:

Miss Austerity with wee tits –  
'Check out *these* reduced deficits!'  
No saturated fats  
for small-state technocrats

who get their kicks (*and* their pricks)  
from Buñuelian statistics;  
proving the Moral Law  
with a feel-good proxy war

somewhere, in the Arab countries  
(and later reject their refugees,  
drowning in those shitty  
junks, off Greece and Italy);

while business with our ally sheiks  
continues, with quarterly peaks –  
(shoeless, mumbling their knees  
in bulletproof humvees.)

History – has gone to the wall, and we  
forage, raging, in the debris,  
where a fresh Ideal emerges  
with strong destructive urges.

#### *Lawrenson*

Now law and equity are trending  
down; plutocratic rule-bending  
up. 'Why...do the one  
per cent get the *whole* bun?'

Justice, fairness, accountability?  
'Sure. But if I snore, wake me.'  
'Your CEO – he's where?'  
'Skiing sir, Val d'Isère.'

There's no security, no *shalom*  
if there's no justice in Zion:  
just *weltschmerz*, lots,...and lots

of Jaegermeister shots.

And 'taking the pulse of a nation'  
ready for defibrillation?  
So far, Labour's tardier  
than Tory tachycardia.

*Hansen*

But what of us, who just can't face  
'the political marketplace'?  
    where preachers of 'identity'  
    sacralise their Me;  
  
where corporations use the cant  
of 'social justice' as deodorant –  
    as if a tweet, not action  
    had moral traction;  
  
who'd make no e-Eden; who'd NUH-AH  
the i-clergy of the Genius Bar:  
    neo-luddites who annoy  
    our technologists of joy;  
  
who'd not just *critique*, but create  
a new life, and live a new fate  
    by a new human law  
    based on *Now*; who'd do more  
  
than chafe, and shake a meta-fist  
(like a good post-structuralist)  
    at the oh-dear state of sin  
    that capital is in.  
  
(For it's delicate silk, 'integrity';  
(though a high-yield commodity) –  
    and Ludo took, but tore it,  
    thus, got *bupkes* for it.)

*Lawrenson*

We demand the real, but can't refute  
its oversupplied substitute:  
    our fantasies, on cue,

technology makes 'true';

and by a short-cut through the flesh  
makes the actual taste waterish:  
we inhabit an Ideal  
which, of itself is cynical.

*Hansen*

That itchy feeling of the age  
mounts, a huge energy of rage:  
now jangled, unmusically  
we hear – allegorically –

time's mutilated clavier, where  
Finance and Sovereignty play, a pair  
of forearm amputees  
stumping at the keys.

*Lawrenson*

'But there you are'...'No point crying  
over spilt milk' (though Kurds are dying).  
So spiders swarm the whey.  
Do we – what...leave it be?

\* \* \*

*Chris Kamara*

That answer your question?

*Matty from Dumfries*

Cheers lads.

## EPODE

### *Chorus*

So stumbling, we came of age – in an age  
of tapering cognition;  
of TINA, Fukuyama, AI, leverage;  
in a bottleneck of vision;

but music flows, linking all the dim, felt streams  
leaking from eternity;  
through the interstitial half-is, half-seems  
that rises, silently

## IV

## KADDISH

THE FRIERN BARNET AMATEUR DRAMATIC SOCIETY PRESENTS

**A ROUNDTABLE OF MISERABLE COMFORTERS**

*being a reenactment of the Book of Job*

STARRING

LUDO'S MATES

JOB'S COMPANIONS

<i>Zbigniew Cynkutis of Bounds Green</i>	<i>as</i>	<i>Eliphaz the Temanite</i>
<i>Agata Wisniewski of Seven Sisters Road</i>	<i>as</i>	<i>Bildad the Shuhite</i>
<i>Moishe Lutnick of Hendon</i>	<i>as</i>	<i>Zophar the Naamathite</i>
<i>Angharad Thomas of Archway</i>	<i>as</i>	<i>Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite</i>

*Eliphaz*

So music kept you 'in manna and quails' –  
 sure; while earning a crust  
 in men's tailoring at the Brent Cross Debenhams's.  
 Scorn then, and mock – when all else fails.

*Bildad*

Honestly, wha'd'you expect?  
 Grave, subdued amens; *naches!* – pats on the back  
 from your glorious, ignored dead?  
 Now? In our 24/7 dopamine-led counterattack

on memory, and faith, and rigorous taste – all the old  
 redoubts of magnificence?  
 Even you never rolled  
 with a wardrobe ethics 'of resistance' –

with your dissonant, unintelligible, moany

music with a Michelin star;  
 'you know mate, we don't always want *foie gras*,  
 sometimes just...ketchup macaroni.'

*Zophar*

Look I'll admit, I never got into your whole  
 contrarian, frustrated-artist thing.  
 So what if I 'traffic in bias' a bit, and troll  
 your shtick of 'savage innocence', o martyred king...?

That...*that's* what you sought: innocence – in your bare  
 ruined choirs: innocence, *in* life, *on* earth:  
 like a meme: 'innocence' everywhere;  
 you – the reprobate, aborted child of dearth.

*Bildad*

Ah yes...such was your Tragic Vision™:  
 picture it: your life...like a Caravaggio  
 with the candles all blown out –  
 ...obscure...oddly compelling?...can't see shit.

Yeah, yeah, 'the cynic's carping voice' –  
 so crudely, easily precise.  
 'Ch-rooth?' (you spat once), 'an ARRtist 'as nur choice';  
 ...with your balls clamped in Beauty's vice.

*Eliphaz*

In our baulked wilderness, you cried – you advertised  
 your Anti-Bullshit Spiritual Republic  
 of Noumenon-Seekers; a nation  
 exclusive to your righteous, unremunerated indignation...

where 'the soul holds presidency'. Sounds like a no-brainer.  
 Not this weird idea  
 of the soul crammed away in the body  
 like a Nike shoebox in a Maersk container.

*Bildad*

From Krakow...then Marseille, you came to London. Why?  
 Following a girl. *Selah*.  
 She left. You followed others; they left.  
 Several women, lots of cry.

*Zophar*

You ended up like your...semi-unhinged poet friends  
 Cruz, and Luisa da Souza;  
 a gormless pigeon in Leicester Square...  
 wandering the crowds 'en soledad confusa'

or plying your piano with your human wishes  
 in the Bounds Green house you shared  
 with croupiers and couriers, the weird  
 lisping lap-dancer ('THee you later') who'd never do her dishes –

*Eliphaz*

Difficult?...ooh yes. I wish I could say, 'but, *brilliant...*'  
 When you entered that diseased ecstasy...  
 dybbuk-gripped, frothing with psychotic rant –  
 ...it was *scary*.

Everything had to be so *meaningful* –  
 (exhausting...): life was all  
 one epic MMA cage match with the Angel at Beth-El:  
 you as Jacob – fight name: ISRA-EEEL!!!

*Zophar*

Yeah you 'stood out'. You marred the weave –  
 you were that one awkward stitch, a fleck  
 of spirit in our spiritless fabric  
 (...your being fragrant with *eau de prick*).

*Bildad*

Your soul...pined for sacrifice...and charity;  
 but you wished upon truculent stars,  
 chasing passion's brief eternity  
 from random girls, in bubble-tea bars.

*Zophar*

Remember your favourite line, which you...god, *always* quoted?  
 'maxima de nihilo nascitur historia' –  
 so smug, as if *you* wrote it  
 (us thinking: great, *another* bloody aporia.)

*Eliphaz*

You were: devotion...intensity...imagination –  
 'who in the aggregate are called Jerusalem...'  
 And you liked squash. Those squeaking trainers  
 you said, were how our voices sound, to the seraphim.

The final movement of *Le Quatuor pour la Fin du Temps*  
 should've been your ringtone...  
 you feasted, then gnawed  
 on that bassoon solo, its 'plaint of lean bone'.

'L'abîme, c'est le temps...' (*basta! arrête...*)  
 '...avec ses tristesses, ses lassitudes'  
 (HUT 27) – but where was *your* hut vingt-sept  
 to visit and be visited, like Buxtehude...?

London was all dark satanic...utility bills –  
 dark love that stitches  
 death to death, and mortars tomb to tomb...  
 parleying with the void, on Gymbox treadmills.

*Bildad*

I remember hearing you, fingers aflow  
 '*sine ira et studio*'  
 in New Cross, plinking the *gnossiennes*  
 in a corner of Khalid's ketamine-and-coke den...

or in your bedsit, smoking (with hacking cough)  
 babbling of *Shekinah...Sephirot...En Sof*  
 in a full soul  
 -and-body-soak, of Tramadol,

with your disheveled music sheets covering  
 your Absolute Favourite Thing –  
 your George Foreman Lean Mean  
 Fat-Reducing Grilling Machine...

'Jerusalem? Jerusalem is HERE –'  
 in that little room, a tawdry 'everywhere'...  
 the awed music of the Western Wall  
 here...and your mind 'a spiritual Wigmore Hall'.

Temple Mount...on the Balls Pond Road?  
 The Magribi Quarter, the Haram...

all the sacrificial grain owed  
to God, and His saints, lay in Golders Green...filling up a psalm.

In London IS Eretz Yisrael  
you'd tell us, repeatedly (you'd yell)  
Nazareth – by tube; Galilee by car  
'...it is the heart, the heart blows the shofar...'

*Zophar*

Perhaps you *were* a saint: a strange saint; forlorn...  
unjewish, underjewish, uberjewish jew –  
the mere fact of being born  
you swore, had shafted – no, *martyred* you.

Where did you belong? Angel-wrestler, avatar  
of tzedek; in a thousand pieces  
torn? The ancestry of others – oh in fine fettle  
unlike your mother's fathers in the shtetl...

In the voided recesses of your mind  
annihilation lurked.  
What *was* a Jew? 'A being that worked  
by precipices...' (where the Abyss was poorly signed).

Survey them now – your embargoed hopes;  
you strangled them all – to bless.  
Seeking the sunrise of a mighty YES  
you walked in a mizzling rain of chilly *nopes*.

*A Voice of Dust and Worms*

All this in this,  
 our po-faced resentful England  
 roaming, *fabissener*  
 estranged from her daemon.

To this:

Shalom Aleichem...

yes, reciting the Shema; calm, at peace  
 lighting the candles for Shabbat  
 (glory...in everything...in the small things...  
 triumph is humble)  
 or reading  
 in a low & joyous voice  
 the scroll of Esther, on Purim...

On this day...

passing the Matzos, tearing off hunks of chullah  
 On the table: latkes, *gefilte*, chicken liver  
 'on this day Moses delivered us...'  
 Israel is manumitted.

And

(to the sound of dogs licking...?) you  
 Ludo – trying to ply your holy trade  
 a tzaddik of 'the sweet note'  
 healing, uplifting  
 in a void; odd  
 carping voices; inertia; yawns filling out  
 an overcoat...  
 'go on, keep plateauing for God'...

*The Stones of Darkness*

But you belonged, – the man,  
 you were him:  
 exalted among the Hasidim;  
 & in your life, and vision stood  
 justified, and raised  
 the whole Talmud.

On Simchas Torah, on the Days of Awe  
 your soul &  
 you shook –

(needing a tanner, meditate Gehenna)  
 to contemplate the Shoah  
 detail by  
 terrifying detail; your mind &  
 body trembling, gouged on its hook.

(specters of Antiochus –  
 prefer Belshazzar's pride  
 & numbered hairs.)

Now where's  
 Ludo? in kippah and prayer shawl  
 forearm tourniqueted  
 with tefillin, who cried  
 'Accept this shiggaion...'  
 Lord let Israel be justified.  
 (Absalom's corpse  
 wet with David's tears...)

*The Voice of the Shadow of Death*

Aleichem Shalom –  
 'Ach Rabbi Hillel, gif me Torah while I stand  
 on one ffoot...'  
 while you  
 drew up your own mitzvot  
 – 613 fresh-minted commandments  
 (a One-Man Sannhedrin: Ludo,  
 your own Midrashic Philatelic Bureau)  
 in perpetual *din Torah* with yourself...  
 alone at night  
 reading the Hillel psalms  
 under your breath  
 (at night)  
 missing rents...

But now you stand beside  
 the Tannaim? The Great  
 Maggid, Dov Baer  
 Rabbi Pinhas, of Koretz  
 Poland's pride  
 & in his joy and in his love  
 (glory in the small things)  
 Menahem Mendel of Vibetsk, his prayer...

*Elihu*

1

Who  
 Who teaches the stones? Who teaches them? Who teaches the soil, and the leaves?  
 Who teaches them?  
 When the stones clench and fold  
 under the mountain, their force and compaction  
 praise God.

When the soil yields, and the leaves fall, the purpose of  
 their urging and  
 tumble is to praise God; so they praise God.  
 Praise God, is all I say. Praise God.

Glory to the name of God, I say  
 Sacred is the name of God  
 Sacred is the wisdom of God  
 and the mercy of God is sacred  
 and sacred is each man and woman, for God dwells in each man and woman.  
 So give glory to the name of God  
 give glory  
 give glory to everything; glory to now; give glory to the small things  
 give glory

Where light and truth  
 are the signifiers of His Law  
 perfectly intelligible  
 where ease and peace  
 are the signified of His Law

For light is in his power, & the source of light  
 & black holes are in his power  
 and the nebulae, and the dew is in his power  
 who commanded the morning to be, and the dayspring, and the softness of evening  
 who commanded the clouds  
 that they garment the earth

Who pours spite on the flatterers  
 and panderers & glib answerers  
 Who pours spite on the cynics, and sneering companions  
 Who upholds the passionate  
 And you, who are you  
 but who are you, jabbering of His justice? –  
 Who questions His justice?

What do you know of justice, who quibbles and haggles with God?

(As if God dawdled in your mart?)

What do you know of justice  
in your shadeless monotonous  
solstice of self?

What do you know  
who roam muttering your habitus of rapture & squalor?  
What do you know  
grubbing there in transcendence & obscenity?

When your most passionate feelings are inspired  
by news feeds, film music  
and dislikeable statistics?  
A justice of online petitions  
A justice of clicks, slogans, earnest posturing  
of private like and dislike, greedy of public event  
a gourmandising on national & international affairs –  
spitting out what you won't relish?  
(As if God and the earth  
and man & woman awed in God  
were matters you could choose  
to accept or  
reject?)

And what of the poor, and the miserable  
who you never think of?  
The junkies, infanticides and scrapheap humans  
meth-addicts, cokeheads, alcoholics  
who you never think of?  
The humiliated,  
the bankrupt and perpetually-broke  
the crap-with-money, who buy widescreen smart tvs instead of  
decent food, for their children  
the schizophrenics and the sectioned mad  
the crippled and braindead  
the tetraplegics and  
unloveable disabled  
and their oppressed, harassed, unsupported carers  
who often wish their charges dead?

While self-interest disarticulates our due tenderness  
breaking and tearing our  
total social tenderness  
while the City and the bond markets & the children of pride  
annihilate our livelihoods

for the callous indifference of High Ones  
 dressed up as 'responsible concern'  
 they must live their brusque lives as if on the run  
 building their lives on quicksand  
 where housing and job and relationships  
 and their soul & the soul's affections  
 are transient and brittle, and precarious,  
 and their children receive only  
 the dregs of education, dregs of health, dregs of hope, dregs of  
 opportunities;  
 to be psychotic and dislocated  
 to be depressed and reduced, rootless and  
 criminally inclined  
 practically their destiny;  
 addict parents, low-skill low-IQ unemployed, children in care  
 and the foster parents who can't handle  
 them, or anything anymore –  
 like post-car-accident people who can't focus or  
 work, or concentrate on anything anymore,  
 who just drift...  
 & the mockers and the cynics and  
 self-certified righteous  
 writing in their blogs and broadsheets  
 deride their hopes and patronise their joys;  
 so the good and the selfless  
 all the truly simple ones  
 and the passionate and spirited  
 suffer, while the ruthless and dull and  
 callous prosper, while the rip-off merchants and the  
 monopolists and their cartels  
 cut their throats  
 and the beaurocrats and planners-by-statistics  
 crush the soul out of them,  
 persuading them to collaborate in their own reification  
 while Big Tech tears them open  
 to visit their spirit for a billboard  
 to shine ads on the core of their soul.....

While oligarchs are chauffeured over the bones of the poor  
 what do you know of justice?

2

Praise God, is all I say: praise His ways  
 for His incident ways & small moves are beautiful.  
 They are serene

even to utter peace.  
 They're like the lips of a lover  
     pressed close for whispering  
     a bit of rubbish  
     you'll remember for ever  
 like the awkward words  
     of a child inspired to express  
     love, feeling only the word,  
 delighting in the reaction  
     like an infant tottering who  
 falls against your legs  
     for support, and looks smiling up.

The ways of God are tender and  
 intimate with immensity  
 like the swiftness and softness of the kora  
 played by Ballaké Sissoko  
 & the djemba  
 chanting among the river reeds.

They are like the resistless voice of your lover  
 and the close, and tender body of your lover  
 who sits with you to listen  
 music you've never heard  
 inspiring you to hear something truly for the first time  
 making you think & feel slightly differently about things

a lover who surpasses your attention; maturing it,  
 making everything taste different  
 who draws it to the small things  
 strong, supple, undulant  
 like the arms of your lover.

God is the vision that comes to the epileptic before the fit  
 or the junkie's body braced as  
 the tropper's nick drops, and the  
     hit kicks in.

3

For here is the Lord, at the evening meal  
 on Shabbat  
 the Lord and his angels enter the house  
 on Shabbat  
     as at Mamre, for milk and meat, with Abraham.

For here is the Lord  
 as a daughter strikes a match, and leans to light the candles  
 and the kindness and warmth  
 shows suddenly by candlelight  
 and the loaves  
 and the six covered loaves of chullah  
 braided bread  
 of many folded arms.

For here is the Lord  
 in candlelight shining in faces and eyes  
 in the softness and aspirations of the words  
 of the kiddush  
 sanctifying the wine  
 in the sweets smells reaching everyone's  
 impatient nostrils  
 in the strange lightness in everyone  
 that bubble-feeling, in the heart  
 which is simply  
 holiness, made heimisch

And the holding of hands for blessing and prayer  
 and children peeping at the dishes  
 their mouths watering  
 hardly listening to the strange words  
 of blessing and prayer, or the table songs, zemirot

for here are the matzos balls, in soup, baked chicken  
 succulent gefilte  
 here in the candlelight  
 roast brisket  
 Here is the Lord  
 in mother's hands and father's hands and sister's hands  
 and brother's and cousin's and grandparents' hands  
 in the kugel and eggs, and brownies and  
 the slow sipping of wine...  
 Here is the Lord

4

Now talk of death  
 How death  
 and the shadow of death  
 brushes, gently, all our days.

There's never a day  
 no, not one  
 free from the shadow of death. The thing is tenderly at hand  
 always.

Destruction  
 waits for us, hopes for us; it lurks in suddenness;  
 it passes inches from us, regularly.  
 Destruction  
 like the early darkness of winter  
 clearing out the light, eager  
 and clotting the windows  
 of the bright house  
 the windowlight standing there in the eyed darkness.

Annihilation  
 waits for us, eager, surrounding us  
 it keeps our living close  
 it passes inches from us, like a car on a  
 country road, at night  
 the blinding headlights  
 bursting pass  
 in omen, leaving heavy silence, in the night.

You asked  
 Where was God  
 Where was God  
 at the children's destruction?  
 (crematorium no. 4)

You were answered  
 Blessed be the name of the Holy One

You asked  
 Where was God  
 in the death-camps?  
 (at Birkenau, at selection-time  
 ...the smell of burning flesh, and hair)

You were answered  
 Blessed by the name of the Holy One

Clarified and sanctified be God's great name throughout the world  
 – He made everything  
 to His own liking.

May He establish His Kingdom in your lifetime

What a sight

& with the life of the entire House of Israel

swiftly, and soon

Blessed and praised

and honoured and glorified...and exalted...and extolled  
adored, lauded, cherished, raised

be the name of the Holy One

now and for all eternity

be the name of the Holy One

blessing beyond blessing

of the Holy One

and peace upon peace

of the Holy One

the Holy One

let us all praise the Holy One

and may the Holy One

treat us in peace

make peace for all of us

and for all Israel

5

No, you weren't at rest

in that damp bedroom; neither were you quiet –  
but trouble came.

Now honour the Holy One

...but trouble came; on your restless spirit  
trouble grew, quietly, like lichen.

Like mould or lichen

Now glorify the Holy One

We know – everything. We understand.

Now glorify the Holy One. That's all that's left.

After all the searching and questioning

all the questing and suffering

after all the pain

This is all that's left:

Honour the Holy One

Honour the Holy One, honour

brother and sister in the Holy One

cherish brother and sister in the Holy One

cherish thy days, and the earth, in the Holy One

That is all, that is all.

*The Morning Stars*

O dauntless clay! Your fire raged  
    earthwards & everywhere;  
with the fury of  
a baited bear  
    that squanders its terror  
on the small space of stepping where it paces  
    ruinously caged.  
You sought freedom  
    disciplined and fair  
        running, till your hair  
flew out behind you –  
sating  
    an appetite for the infinite  
    (where you couldn't sit  
        and rest)  
but where you always found the  
        Law, waiting.

## V

## AN EVENING OF CLAIRVOYANCE WITH JOHNNY HICCOX

*East Coast Suite, Holiday Inn, Norwich, 28 October 2018, 7.48 p.m.*

...shrill YARKshur twang, halogen-catching earstuds, wrist alump  
 with a fat Tag Heuer...and ridge of highlit hair  
 rising in a shallow mohawk  
 ...tanned, V-neck, blazer –  
 the psychic gabbles like an auctioneer:

'O'right ahm gettin a black n tan spaniel YEAH – duz a black n tan spaniel...  
 annywon?...CumMON...  
 yes luv, YOU luv...yer noddin...a black n tan...? Go on –  
 ...'oo? Yer anty? Anty had a black n tan...  
 woz her name Liz? Anty Liz...?  
 Betsy. Anty Betsy had a black n tan? yeah YEAH  
 Luv I need yer ter konce-entrance.yeah luv?...Ah've godear...  
 Ah've godda date...'

...mostly women in their 40s and 50s. Recognise  
 Dior, Chanel, Estée Lauder  
 radiant dyed hair  
 toilette atwinkle on black merino turtlenecks  
 lipless chatter of bracelets, gleaming rims  
 of Chardonnay and Bailey's  
 vulnerable dewy cheeks

'October 10th yeah YEAH  
 Jus nod yer head luv, ah dont need yer life story,  
 nod yer head. October 10th...  
 That was yer...whose? – yer Dad's birthday...?  
 Your Mum's. Anty Betsy...she were yer Mum's sister yeah YEAH  
 Anty Betsy 'oo hadda black n tan called  
 Rocco, yeah, or Puddles...  
 Rocky! thassit (jus nod yer head) –  
 And yer Mum passed didn't she luv. When did she pass?  
 Last year. She were quite poorly weren't she luv?  
 She were in pain weren't she luv? Yeah?  
 An it were so hard, weren't it luv, yeah?...  
 Fer both of ya, yeah? Well I can tell yer luv  
 she's 'ere with us now. Yer Mum's 'ere with us now.  
 She's got a message for ya luv.

You wanna know what she's sayin luv?  
 She's sayin...she wants yer to know  
 she's *so* proud o'yer, luv. So proud. Thass o'right...take yer time.  
 If anyone – whenever yer tearin' up, jus take yer time...  
 has anyone – there ya go, luv, havva tishoo – thank ya darlin...  
 now luv, yer Mum's here, she wants yer to know  
 she's not in pain anymore...yeah,  
 she's not sufferin anymore...  
 thassit...take yer time...  
 But you know luv, she wants yer to know  
 she were *so* pleased with the funeral...really *chuffed*.  
 It all went off jus right, didn't it luv. The service, the flowers, the kay-erin'  
 she were so pleased...the savouries...it were all  
 exactly 'ow she would've liked it.  
 And ya know luv, I don't need to tell yer  
 she could be quite particular couldn't she luv  
 wasn't afraid to speak 'er mind was she luv  
 wasn't one to suffer fools tenderly was she luv...  
 could be quite a force, yer Mum, couldn't she  
 like to have her own way, didn't she,  
 coz she were quite an active lady wasn't she,  
 she was do-er, wasn't she, liked to have everything  
 just so.  
 Well she wants yer to know  
 she's back in 'er old routine –  
 jus how she likes it, yeah? How she always liked it, yeah...  
 Yeah? Can yer nod for me luv?  
 Thass right. Yer welcome luv. Back in her old routine.  
 And one more thing luv, she wants yer to know...  
 cuz yer Dad, he...he passed a while back dint 'ee,  
 yeah? Well she wants yer to know  
 she's 'ere with yer Dad, they're both 'ere with us now  
 OK luv, she's back with yer Dad, OK luv  
 And she wants yer know  
 don't worry, she's still KEEPIN 'IM IN CHECK!"

*(Wild laughter.)*

'Now there's sumwon else...I'm gettin sumwon else...  
 I'm 'earin music – this one,  
 'ee loved 'is music. November...hang on...  
 November 4th – November 4th  
 meen anythin to annywon? November 4th...  
 wossis name...his's name's Loo-dovic...  
 'ee's sayin...'ees gorran AX-ent...'ees sayin  
 'ee kin hear all this music...luvly music...gorgeous...

an ees saying...ees saying summint about birds...  
ow ee loves birds...summinit about...masses...birds...masses...  
masses o'birds...summint about that...  
Loo-dovic annyone?...Loo-dovic meen anythin to annywone?  
No? Loo-dovic...?  
No?  
Less move on... '

## VI

## ANECDOTES &amp; EFFECTS

## I DIDO THUZIELL, JAZZLADY

For about two years I literally *chased* Ornette Coleman and his trio round the States. New York, Chicago...  
 New Orleans, St Louis...Baltimore, I followed him everywhere.  
 I'd have done *anything* to catch a gig.  
 I must have driven about, I dunno, 5,000 miles?  
 (I even dragged my son with me...)

I saw Boulez and George Benjamin in this restaurant once.  
 (Two of them sat at this table for three...I thought: who's the other place for?)

I thought about going to Orkney to see Max. I saw Wayne Shorter a few times at Ronnie Scott's.  
 Never rated Brubeck.

My favourite? probably Mari Pariah.  
 She was very sweet, quite eccentric  
 (her earrings...  
 and the way she let her hands sort dangle from her wrists  
 - you don't expect that of a pianist...)  
 and she brought these little presents for my son.

Who? Oh yes, he came to see me. Ludovic?  
 Fiery character. Very passionate - but  
 I dunno, bit...humourless?  
 Very intense. For some reason he made me think of Rutger Hauer in *Blade Runner*. - Dunno why.  
 (That sort of odd, flat, *defunct* tone of voice...)

He loved Coleman. Oh yeah. We talked the trio, the grammar of impro, all the variations on 4/4 time... things like that. Oh yeah. And he *loved* kora players. You know, music from Mali. Loved it. The djembe, the kora...

I remember now! - when he first came to see me he'd just bought a crêpe. He liked crêpes -

you know, those savoury ones. He had it with him.

What else? He had these dark eyes. Strong and dark.  
For some reason I thought of  
those old Silk Cut ads - dunno why.  
And he had all these...odd ideas.  
Music could alter your DNA - reshape  
history, stop time...things like that.  
I just nodded. Poor boy - he seemed a bit desperate. Shame.

## II RABBI ZVI NEUMAN, SOUTH TOTTENHAM SYNAGOGUE

We spoke a few times.

Young man, very thin; pale; very intense. Scruffy hair.  
Came to see me on Kol Nidre a few times.

He was...I don't want to say *obsessed* -  
but he certainly had very  
firm beliefs.

And all these *unusual* leanings -  
lot of occult stuff. Gurdjieff, Eliphas Levi. Weird stuff.  
Other stuff from the 60s. New age-y stuff.

He struck me - can I say this? -  
as a slightly benighted spirit.  
Perhaps that's unkind. He was very intelligent,  
though crabbed.

I will say this though:  
he really meant it. All of it. Everything he said. You could tell.  
Even all that esoteric stuff. You could tell.

Yes, incredibly passionate.  
Hard to say about what, exactly. Seemed to be - about everything.  
Maybe that was it - he was just passionate about *everything*.  
He asked me some good questions -  
very good questions...very persistent questions...

Very interested in African Jews. All that lost tribe of Israel stuff.  
All that King-Solomon's-City-in-Zimbabwe stuff.

'What did I think of Kanye West?'  
Oddly, he often spoke about Kanye West.  
He seemed to feel some kind of *personal* connection to him.

## III THE AGENT

*'quod petitur poena est'*

I said:

I don't care how you do it, just win a prize.  
It's the only way people'll pay attention.

People are busy.

They don't have time to brew up finely calibrated  
aesthetic judgments weighed to the last gramme.  
The thing's more like Cash n Carry -  
if they think you're worth it, they'll buy in bulk.

I said:

It's about helping people use time.

Once you've persuaded people you're worth their time  
then you can waste their time  
by being obstreperously difficult...

## IV YOUR STARS WITH AMANDA SMALLBONE

*newspaper clippings, kept in an A4 document wallet*

LEO FOR WEEKLY READINGS CALL 09061 877 166  
JUL 23 - AUG 23 80p per minute + ACCESS CHARGE

Despite any offers for loans or credit, which could be enticing, having sobering Saturn in reverse encourages you to handle financial matters conservatively. This aspect can be very useful for purchasing big ticket items too, Leo. Do read reviews before you buy. Call for more news...

FOR WEEKLY READINGS CALL 09061 877 166  
80p per minute + ACCESS CHARGE

Getting a relationship issue out into the open could be helpful if it's been on your mind for a while. With the illuminating Sun in an intense zone, handling this in the right way may be crucial to the future of a friendship or romantic bond troubled by misunderstandings. Call for more news...

FOR WEEKLY READINGS CALL 09061 877 166  
80p per minute + ACCESS CHARGE

An edgy and emotional focus may see you giving up on a difficult situation. Think again though, for with powerful Pluto aspects to go through, a solution might be within reach. With a can-do attitude you may turn a worrying issue into one that fills you with satisfaction. Call for more news....

## V TIRED OF SEARCHING? LET LOVE FIND YOU!

*newspaper clippings, found pressed in a notebook*

RITA, 30s, tactile attractive blonde, trending slim, with GSOH looking for TLC. Loves travel, cinema, music, WLTM sane happy male to share social fun, nights in/out, and cultural outings. Age/looks unimportant. Must be solvent. TEL NO: 0906 515 3900 BOX NO: 437198.

DEBBIE, 33, dark-haired passionate classy female, green eyes, good fitness, looking for punctual intelligent solvent male to enjoy long walks, meals out, good music, and possible LTR. Genuine replies only pls. TEL NO: 0903 488 1677 BOX NO: 842200.

MEENA, younglooking Saggitarius divorcée, music-lover, bubbly, good-old-fashioned romantic. Enjoys not-overdemanding walks, animals, and cosy evenings. Seeks honest stable male, 35-70, for genuine friendship, maybe more. Bring some excitement back into my life! TEL NO: 0904 777 1435 BOX NO: 764521.

## VI EXES

TATIANA KOZACHENKO

You mean David the Psalmist 2.0?  
 I'm teasing.  
 My nickname for him was The Lord God of Exaggeration.  
 Snappy, eh? Like him. (A real snapping turtle.)

I'm a Pisces, so it was never going to work.  
 He smoked too much - week, skunk...  
 'Sweete Thames, runne softly till I end my Bong...'  
 Ho-ho. He was seriously paranoid.

Everywhere he woke was the wrong side of the bed.  
 'Oh my *kod*...' he'd say, 'oh my *kod*...'!  
 '...you *kot* to have faith.'  
 I'd say: 'You are Shiva the Bringer of Death Breath.'

Still, I dunno, there was something  
 marvelous, I think, about his...*delusions*, shall we say?  
 The way he acted like  
 his 500-per-month-plus-bills bedsit was basically Bayreuth.

'Good morning, Mr Intense-About-God...'!  
 We were pretty good together.  
 You're so *goyische*,  
 he'd say. I'd say, And you're bloody annoyish, boyish.

Oh he said crazy things.  
 'How can you NOT like Byrd's masses?'  
 - he *actually* got upset.  
 '...how can you NOT like plainchant?' (ol' D the Psalmist...)

Said all music was like dogs  
 chewing bones, heavy greedy breathing, licking bones, or something...  
 'cept his of course.  
 He played me some once. I remember *long* pauses.

Oh, that time he broke Karl's violin,  
 oh it was horrible.  
 When he started screaming at Luke, at Maya's BBQ...  
 It was like a scene in *The Shining*.

As a lover? Passionate. But, as a woman...like

sometimes less is definitely more...  
 Sometimes it was like he was trying to lick his way  
 to the southern hemisphere...

SANDEEP RAGHAVEN

I wouldn't say that eternity is something I really *get*.  
 History's a flux, you know?  
 Time is a flux.  
 Everything changes, you know?

He was very kind. We weren't together long.  
 (I got a job in Mumbai.)  
 Just...very kind. A gentleman -  
 he had no money, but he was very generous to the beggars.

DAHLIA SHAUGNESSY

He answered my ad. Love is blind!  
 The first time he proposed  
 I thought, 'Here we go. Another one.'  
 But I could tell he wasn't *utterly* unhinged.

He said, 'A man is a living sacrifice.'  
 He said, 'I want to sacrifice myself to you.'  
 I said, 'That's very nice,  
 but it's been three dates, let's just see how it goes.'

JO-JO MERGL

I saw him at synagogue occasionally.  
 He'd sit alone, at the back, mumbling.  
 He always wore this big black overcoat.  
 That was it, really.

## VII FROM AMADOU YOUSSEF DIOP

*email saved as pdf to desktop*

*(translated from the French)*

Dear Professor Krivkova,

Are you a Professor? Your letter (I should say email, but will not perhaps) was so full of wisdom, I have to wonder. I'm very surprised in London they know so much about the *kora*! Are you in London today? Are they playing the *kora*? Perhaps you can hear the *djembe* in Trafalgar Square? Perhaps they are playing the *balafong* in Piccadilly Circus? I am full of wonder.

In my village (speaking now of Mali), we play below the baobab tree. The people come and listen. My birth name means Having-Trouble-With-Drought. There was a lot of drought when I was born. Since I began going to Bamako to play concerts there, and Dakar, and Paris, and other cities, the people in my village call me He-Goes-to-Make-a-Soft-Noise-in-a-Loud-Place. Perhaps one day I will come to London and I can show you how to play *kora*.

You asked me about my 'influences'. The greatest, still, is Allah, of course. After that, my Father, and my Mother (who was an excellent singer, especially of bird songs). After that, perhaps the gentle sounds of my village: the birds, the wind, also the sound of children singing, as they return home from school, holding hands. My friends too: Ballaké Sissoko (we were at lycée together), Youssuf Diabaté, the singer Jamila Keita; all these and many others have helped me.

You also wanted some words from me? To make our music we often need words. These are the soul's ripples, are they not? Then please, let me give you these little waves:

*Many miles, mountains, and many seas  
separate him from me,  
who invents praises here in Mali, who plays kora here in Mali  
for Ludovic Krivkova of Bounds Green, North London capital of England.*

*I do not know much about him  
but he is not a stranger to me.  
For his message I am grateful.  
I give thanks to Allah for a new friend.*

*Perhaps one day he will come,  
he will come to my village in Mali,  
Ludovic Krivkova of Bounds Green, North London capital of England.  
We will talk and play together  
talk, eat, and make music together.  
I will take him to the baobab tree*

*show him the cooking pot of Fatouma Diop  
 and show him the wagtail's nest  
 across the river, near the sacred grove  
 where the lion roars and the dog turns for its prey.*

*Who cries this  
 Who cries that two villages are too far apart?  
 Who leans on Allah treads down all obstacles  
 all roads  
 many miles, mountains, and many seas.*

*If I knew his adversaries, I would curse them,  
 but I do not know much about him,  
 though I give thanks to Allah for a new friend,  
 Ludovic Krivkova of North London,  
 writer-to-me-by-email,  
 curious man, questioning man,  
 man of passion and strong words, interested in the kora.*

*One day he will come  
 I will meet my friend  
 we will make music together  
 by the baobab tree, in the sacred grove  
 new friend smelling the beans being cooked  
 hearing birdsong and singing  
 by the baobab tree, at twilight.*

Your friend,

Amadou Y. Diop

## VIII GOLDBERG'S WITTY DITTY

email from: reubengoldberg247@hotmail.com  
sent to: lpdkrivkova2@gmail.com

subject title: SET THIS SHIT TO MUSIC

A Jew at birth, a Jew at suck,  
all history is a Jew's hard luck.  
A Jew at 12, a Jew at 1  
a Jew at 4, a Jew at none;  
a Jew at work, a Jew at play,  
every hour I'm a Jew today.  
And when I sigh, what sighs sighs  
a Jewish soul, with Jewish breath  
and when I die, what dies dies  
a simple and a humble Jewish death.

\* \* \* bury me in Bushey baby! \* \* \*

## IX THE TWO SHITS

- I like to call us the Two Shits.
- We'll blow you to bits...
- With our semtex wits.
- Thanks...
- With uppercuts and bitch-slaps...wet spanks...
- In our verbal S&M dungeon...
- What rhymes with dungeon?
- Mungeon, kungeon...
- Luncheon!
- Hmmn...*ish*.
- Make a wish!
- (ETC)

\*

- Did we know Ludo?
- Ol' Ludo, ol' Ludo K.
- Yeah we knew Ludo.
- Alas poor Ludo, I knew him...not-very-well.
- He was a fizzler-outer.
- He was surprisingly knowledgeable about dog breeds.
- He looked like Jamie Vardy put through the fat app.
- Ludo? Ludo wasn't fat. Who are you talkin about?
- Gimme a shout-out...
- For who?
- I need to *go*.
- We all go, sometime.
- Ask not for *poo* the bell tolls...
- It tolls for *pee*.

\*

- Once he told me that, spiritually, I was the equivalent of a nappy-wearing tetraplegic.
- TAY-TRA-PLEE-JEEK.
- You can't do his accent.
- Remember him screaming 'HOW CAN YOU NOT LIKE LIGETI?'
- 'How can you NOT like Byrd's masses?'
- 'How can you NOT like Schoenberg, Webern...'
- Gregorian plainchant...
- Korean pansori, Sami yoiking...
- Indian raga scales...
- He was obsessed with Malian music.
- 'How can you NOT like Malian music?...the kora, balafong...'

- And so on.
- Japanese drumming...
- He acted like...what did he act like?
- Like a masterless samurai.
- He acted like a masterless samurai, a ronin.
- A Zatoichi.
- A Zatoichi of contemporary classical music.
- Ha!
- Except he was a nobody.
- He didn't care.
- He gaveth zero fucks.
- He was a no-fuck-giver.
- Sausage and liver...
- Uncooked and all aquiver!
- BOOM shaka-laka.

\*

- What do we have?
- AnecDOs and anecDONTs.
- Remember that time in The Prospect Of Whitby?
- You mean The Reliance?
- Was it? It was at last orders...
- Yeah, he'd argued with Mikel.
- Yeah, then what'd they do?
- They started playing pooh sticks with Karin's recorders.
- AnecDONT sirrah.
- Big time. She was *mucho* narked.

\*

- What kind of fags do Jewish mothers smoke?
- *Gefilte*.
- BOOM. One of his.
- He wasn't totally humourless.
- Was that the same pub where he came out of the toilet holding the bog roll?
- Thassit.
- Holding the bog roll he says, 'Who wants to read *Leaves of Arse*?
- '...by Walt Shitman.'

\*

- He had this eerie look.
- Like Damien from The Omen.
- *Loved* to argue.
- He VOS ADDICK-TED TO ARK-YUMENT.

- Dialectically very Graeco-Roman.
- A mufti of divinity.
- Indeed.
- Caliph Ludo Al-Rashid.
- He gambled in God's sacred casino.
- I'll see your nunc dimittis.
- And raise you a missa brevis.
- Climb Ben Nevis.
- Ante is a sanctus.
- Max bet's a cantus firmus.
- Buttock-us firmus.
- Squeaky bum time. Pay up!
- Yo, let's *gel*.

\*

- What's Deleuze and Guattari's favourite video game?
- What?
- Guess.
- ...Legend of Zelda?
- No.
- I got it. 'A Thousand Halos'.
- No.
- The Sims? Half-Life? That dancing one you do in the arcades?
- Nope.
- What then?
- I dunno.
- Ah, a *factual*.
- Every little helps.
- I've been Tangoed.
- Remember Kia-Ora?
- Wake up in de MOR-nin WANT-in me break-FAST...
- That was Vitalite!
- It's gude, but ut's not th'one (Catchphrase...).
- Remember the pepperami ads?
- 'It's a bit an animal'.
- Remember SUNPAT?
- Fun-pat sun-pat, our son Pat.
- P-p-p pick up a Penguin.
- Join - Our - Club!
- Remember Butterkist at the films?
- Butterkist Butterkist Ra-Ra-Ra.
- The ad where the guy's teenage daughter's pregnant...
- Allied Dunbar?
- 'There may be truh-bull a-HEAD'...
- I bet they prefer X-Box to Nintendo though.

– True.

\*

– In his mind, he was Prometheus, to others...Mr Blobby.  
 – Ludo?  
 – He trod the line between man and God...  
 – Which, it turns out, is a punchline.  
 – Holepunch.  
 – He is now a hole punched in the scroll of life.  
 – That American film-trailer voice: 'HE was a cop on the *edge*...'  
 – What a lej.  
 – 'HE was a pretentious avant-gARRD composer...on the *edge*...'  
 – She was...who was she?  
 – 'SHE was a WURLD with *one shot* at redemption...'

\*

– He liked going on about particles.  
 – Loved particles.  
 – 'We're all sexualised particles'.  
 – Subatomic.  
 – Gin and tonic.  
 – Beethoven's Particle Symphony.  
 – 'England's favourite melody'...The Quark Ascending.  
 – The Vegan Symphony, by Ralph Quorn Williams.  
 – He smelt of BO.  
 – Who?  
 – Ludo.  
 – So do you. You *stink*.

\*

– After he proposed – I can't remember to who...  
 – Pearl?  
 – One of his *impulse brides*, he did this bizarre shit...  
 – Oh yes, at the cashpoint.  
 – She'd said no, and he went to a cashpoint...  
 – Got out a hundred quid...  
 – Yeah, and just gave it to this tramp.  
 – Was that that dinner at *Pizza Express*?  
 – No, that was another time.  
 – When he had that huge argument with Luke?  
 – Yeah.  
 – And they almost started glassing each other?  
 – All over someone called Messy Iron.

- Luke called him 'that organist' who wrote the theme tune to The Clangers.
- Yeah, that was another time.
- What time are you talking about?
- The time he proposed.
- *Which* time? He proposed lots of times.

\*

- Who a FTSE 100 CEO's favourite composer?
- Who?
- John Taverner.
- What Taverner?
- The Protecting Corporate Veil.
- How droll.
- On a roll!!
- Ludo had a good one.
- What?
- We were over in Finsbury Park and everyone was lying in the grass, sunbathing while staring at their screens...
- Yeah?
- Ludo nudges me and says 'l'Apres midi d'un iPhone!'
- *Pretty* good.

\*

- He had a few issues in that department.
- What department.
- As Pep would say, 'ee 'ass a GROYn problem.'
- The bedroom's boo-ifful game?
- Making the beast with two right-backs.
- I didn't know that.
- I believe he had certain set-piece issues.
- Not the full Eiffel?
- *Non.*
- Maybe that's why he was so obsessed with Don Draper in Mad Men.
- Why?
- You know he'd make up little songs about Don, little humouresques.
- Flanders & Don.
- Part of the punster community.
- KUH-MEWNITTY.
- UN THUS KUH-MEWNITTY...
- Anyone says the word 'community' I hear Ian Paisley's voice...
- UN THUS KUH-MEWNITTY...
- WE BULLEEV IN IN'ER-NESSUN STRYEFF...
- Oh dear.
- He was procrastinator.

- Ludo?
- Spending months on a few notes.
- Spending a few notes per month.
- His George Foreman grilling machine?
- Thees compo-ssishun ASS to be PURRfect.
- Get out of here.
- There goes luddite Ludo!
- Ye but where?
- *Exit pursued by Macbook Air.*

## X FROM PEARL DISS

*pdf of an email, saved to his desktop*

Ludo,

You are the most honourable, most passionate person I know. That makes you sound very old-fashioned, but I like old-fashioned; I'm old-fashioned. People joke you're from another era. I think it's the opposite. Everything about you, I feel, intimates the future. It's true you're quite an against-y person. But a lot of hidden things, I think, things we don't, any more, talk about, or praise, or even recognise, are carried in you, I think. You make them real, as they are.

You know what's coming.

I don't, I can't love you. Despite everything. I can't apologise either. For a long time, I was scared that, beside from what I feel for my family, I don't love anyone. I resisted it; I fudged things. I kept things vague, on purpose. But they're not vague, any more, for me. I'm not fudging anything, any more.

Would it console you, if I said, now, that if I could love anyone, it would be you? I almost hate myself for offering such a thought. Such a bitter thought! 'Transcendently bitter,' as you would say. Even though it's true. Please take it simply, as I mean it simply (though maybe I don't know what I mean).

Go on, Ludo, and live. You *will* be great. I know it. If I have any faith, it's in you. I feel strange, writing that. But I know you'll understand. You've always understood. You've always taken my words, in the sense they deserve to be understood, and must be understood, months from now, years from now, whatever I might mean, at the moment. Make your music, darling. Make with it light, with the dawn in you, (find the dawn in you), as well as your familiar midnight. I'll be listening.

Pearl

## VII

---

**HIS EPITAPH**

*for ukulele*

Stop and wave, who pass this way  
Here lies one Ludo K  
He might be dead, but he's OK

He's where he belongs, yodeling the light  
Of Zion, a nice eccentric Israelite,  
(O VI-ta-LITE)...and now – good night!