

PARACALYPSE: Fragment 3 *

(from *FRAGMENTS FROM MU: A Sequel*)

I pick myself up
off the floor,
and understand that
I am in a large cavern;
Shadows are shooting
across the ceiling and walls
in uneven bursts, flashing
erratically all around me.

Gradually I notice a Sound
in the distance, like the snapping
of fingers, irregular yet persistent;
it seems to trigger new flights
of Shadow over the rock face.

There is a second entrance at
the far side of the cavern,
opposite the crevice where
the Metal bars block the way
and a White mist still lingers.

The percussive Sound continues
as I walk across the cavern,
but its echo diminishes
as I enter a second, smaller
chamber, in which the surrounding stone
conspires to dampen Sound—
like the Bering Wall
in Ipod's Minoan Mall.

Despite the muffled Sound,

* “Either we use our ‘speed’ for World Completion or allow its material analogy to be used by the Druid Specter to fuel the fires of ‘Star Wars.’” (John Clarke, *From Feathers to Iron*)

“Human laughter began somewhere. Perhaps not with Neanderthal Man; but Lascaux Man laughed, of that we may be sure.” (George Bataille, *Lascaux*)

The reference herein to the book of the Apocalypse (17:1 – 22:21) functions within a narrative space suggested by the topography of the Chauvet Cave, the famed Paleolithic site discovered in 1994.

with each new pulse the Shadows
scurry across the cavern's surface.

The percussive Sound that stirs
the Shadows becomes louder
as I reach a wooden barricade
with a Turnstile in it, toward
the end of the second chamber.

Beyond the Turnstile the cavern splits
into two terminal chambers.

The Sound seems to issue
from the cave on the left,
but it appears empty;
the cave on the right
turns at the end.

I figure that the rock formations
are diverting the Sound and creating
an illusion, like the Lithophones
at the Battle of Narratives
in Glaucon's Rest-of-World Story.

So I go through the Turnstile,
down to the end of
the cave on the right.

There, in an alcove
off to the side, I find
a Wishing Well,
at the bottom of which
sits a man covered in dirt,
with beads around his neck
and long knotted hair.

He has both legs wrapped
behind the back of his head.

The Sound is coming
from the two wooden blocks
that he holds in his hands:
a Blue block in the form
of a square peg

in one hand,
and, in the other,
a Red block
with a round hole in it.

I recognize the Neanderthal
described in Shaman's Bestiary.

He is knocking
the two blocks together,
trying to fit one
into the other—
thereby producing the Sound
that is causing the Shadows
to scatter.

The Neanderthal is in a Trance
and does not see me.

He shows signs of stress:
he is drooling,
his lips are trembling,
and, as he mumbles to himself,
he seems torn between
laughing one moment
and crying the next.

As if my unseen presence
were a new factor adding
to his problem, his agitation increases:
he shouts in anger and frustration,
then breaks into wild laughter,
knocking the wooden blocks together
with renewed effort, while his body
trembles more and more violently
and the sweat pours over him.

Then I detect a strange odor,
and I see that smoke
is rising from his nose,
that his skin is shining,
changing Color.

Before I know what is happening
his entire body Ignites.

As I step back from
the Flames, the Neanderthal's
Spontaneous Combustion
produces a Pillar of Fire
that reaches the ceiling
and lights up the entire cavern
behind me, dispelling all the Shadows.

In the brilliant light
of the Pillar of Fire,
which emits an intense,
streaming Sound,
the cave walls reveal
Multi-Colored Paintings,
the largest and foremost
of which represent four
constellations:
The Bull of Heaven,
The Ram, The Big Lion
and The Centaurian Archer.

Yet the constellations are not
accurately represented; they form
a spiral on the ceiling and
spread outward onto the walls,
where disparate constellations
from other parts of the Heavens
are reproduced in different sizes,
and are grouped with them:
The Bull with The Megaloceros,
The Unicorn, The Chimera
and The Sphinx; nearby, The Ram
with The Sea Serpent, The Griffin,
The Gorgon and The Satyr;
further out, The Big Lion
beside The Phoenix, The Mermaid,
The Gargoyle and The Golem;
and beyond, with The Centaurian Archer,
The Werewolf, The Elephant Man,
The Hunter and The Princess-
in-Chains.

To my dismay, however,
I have no frame of reference,

no Revelation to guide me
at this Dead End.

I head back toward
the other terminal chamber,
when suddenly I hear
the Pillar of Fire sputtering.

I turn to see it dwindle
and go out.

Despite the absence of Fire
the Paintings are still there,
as luminous as before,
as if projected from a light
within the rock;
but at the same time,
faintly, almost imperceptibly,
a man's distant laughter
begins to echo in the cave...

*It carried me away
in the Spirit into the wilderness.*

Picking up my lead from
the Player's Guide to Endtimes
—The Star Passage Fragment(s)—
I head again toward
the other chamber.

The Turnstile in the barricade nearby
has started revolving on its own,
leading inward, as if channeling
the direction of my movement,
and bringing the laughter closer.

In the second terminal chamber,
the largest and most prominent
constellation is The Godfather,
who is looking down from
the ceiling with his hands opened
to four large constellations
on the walls: The Sea Goat
and The Twins on one side,

The Winged Virgin and
The Scales on the other.

As in the first cave,
the dominant constellations
are misrepresented next to others
of varying size; moreover,
some are superimposed
and share common features,
or overlap.

Then I notice that The Godfather
is connected with both The Twins
on the left and The Scales
on the right
by way of The Charioteer,
which is contained within
The Godfather's torso:
to the left, The Charioteer
is connected to The Twins
through a cluster that spans
The Winged Horse, The Druids
and The Confidence Man;
on the right, it rejoins
The Scales across The Dragon,
The Troll and The Game Players
of Titan.

It is in this arc overseen
by The Godfather—extending
from The Twins to The Scales
by way of The Charioteer—
together with the overlapping constellations
of The Hunter and The Prophet,
below The Godfather's left hand,
and The Emperor and The Skywalker
above his right hand,
that I retrace the larger outline
of The White Humvee
encrypted in the whole,
and come to a Revelation:
The Godfather sits
in The White Humvee.

*Behold he that sat upon it
was called Faithful and true...*

*There are many Crowns
upon his head; and he has
a name written, that no one
knows, but for himself.*

Almost at once,
observing the constellations
of The Winged Virgin
and The Sea Goat,
I discover the outline
of The First Lady,
in a cluster that runs
from the Virgin's Wings
to the Horns
on the Goat's head,
by way of The Vampire,
The Revelator and The Adept;
in the larger picture,
The First Lady is sitting astride
The Beast of Peace,
which is configured across her midsection
by The Adversary, The Joculator
and The Alien.

*She is seated on many waters
upon a Red-Colored Beast having
seven heads and ten Horns...
And the woman was arrayed
in Red and Pink, and decked
with precious stones and pearls,
and upon her forehead
was a name written—
MYSTERY, WASHINSON THE GREAT,
MOTHER OF ALL THE EARTH...*

The Sound of the laughter
has now increased,
and as I look behind me
I see the Turnstile moving
in the other direction.

I go back
and slip through the Turnstile
into the middle cavern.

As before, Sound is quieted
and loses its echo, although
I can still hear the laughter;
like the terminal chambers,
this one is covered with signs
left by the Pillar of Fire.

Here, however, there are only
Abstrakt symbols, hundreds
of them, beginning with
The Cutting Edge on the ceiling,
near the Turnstile, a glyph which
I recognize as the First Gate
in Raytheon's Double-Perimeter Fence:
there comes a sharp Sword...

My assumption is that
the Second Gate
will be represented by the glyph
of The Kinetic Energy Rod...
the Rod of Iron...

But again I cannot make sense
of the signs:
while a group of dots suggests
Visible Light Cells or Blinking Stars
in a Suppression Cloud,
an adjacent series of notches points
to Brilliant Pebbles or Microwave Pills
from a Repulsion Field.

Lines drawn out of holes
function as Cheyenne Flechettes
or Aleutian Air Spikes; parallel lines
constitute a Floating Platform or
Infrared Near Field; triangles,
rectangles and quadrilateral grids
refer to the Hyperspectral Image
of a Multi-Layered Shield
or Threat Detector.

The association of ovals,
whorls, spirals and Red disks with
the Claviforms and Penniforms of Boing,
like the Niké Lighting Bolts cutting

across the Techniforms of Norad,
can be read as the Flexible
Membrane of a High-Energy Array
or the Grand Electric Light Signature
of a ProSpace Pulse.

At the end of the cavern,
instead of The Kinetic
Energy Rod, I find the glyph
of The Rod Bundle,
which would mark the closure
of the Double Gate according to
Viacomcas: as I step beyond it,
the laughter becomes much louder,
frenetic, while overhead the entire dome
of the big cavern, through which
I first entered, presents an elaborate
network of signs.

What has also changed is that
spread out on the ground
before me—
like a new threshold or limit
marking the entrance
to the main cavern—
lie the bones of the Neanderthal,
which I recognize
from the string of beads
around the neck.

Standing behind the boundary
drawn by the Neanderthal's
skeleton, while the laughter
keeps getting louder, I look up
at the decorated ceiling and identify
two large configurations:
The Superman... *having the key
of the bottomless pit and
a great chain in his hand...*
and The Holy Ghost in
The Doomsday Machine.

The Superman and The Holy Ghost
in the Doomsday Machine

intersect at the ceiling's center,
across The Water Bearer,
who pours water into The Machine
and onto The Ghost.

The Superman spans half the ceiling:
his brain is contained
within The Water Jar,
and is formed by the constellations
of The One-Eyed Triangle,
The Horned Vulva
and The Flaming Crown.

The whole head and the shoulders
emerge from The Dancing Sorcerer,
The Three Brothers, The Helicoid Body
and The Tax Collector,
while the rest of The Superman
is outlined along a dense cluster
that includes The Celestial Bandit,
The Comforter, The Saboteur,
The Yin Phallus, The Yang Phallus,
The Trash Master and The Chosen.

The Holy Ghost in
The Doomsday Machine
is more hidden.

The Holy Ghost itself seems
to fall, or bridge the gap,
between The River of Darkness and
The Pharaoh in The Pi Hut...
between The Door of Percipience
and Îsîs under The Decision Tree...
between Gog and Magog and
The Pink "Sweat and Tears"
of Prince Floyd.

By contrast, The Doomsday Machine
becomes manifest in the convergence
between two groups of constellations:
on one side, The United Technologies
of The Argo—The Keel,
The Compass, The Stern, The Sail—
and, on the other side,
The MasterCard to The Broken

World Axis, at the margins
of which lie The Green Box
and The Iron Cage, The Lyre,
The Swarmbot and The Full Spectrum
Probe, The Naacal Stampo
and The Archaen Furnace,
The Smagardine Table of Android
the Giant, and The Analog Clock.

The laughter is at a frenzied
pitch, echoing throughout the cavern.

I start to hear,
behind the laughter,
the Voices of the constellations
speaking to each other
in a rumble of disconnected words
and phrases that make no sense
to me, like the Conversations
in Tati's Last Stand.

Backing away from the bones
of the Neanderthal, I return
to the middle cavern—but instead
of becoming subdued, this time
the Sound stays just as loud.

In terror, I wonder
if the Wishing Well
in the terminal chamber,
since the Pillar of Fire's extinction,
is now a bottomless Abyss—
and whether the Voices
and the mad laughter
are trapped inside my head...

Having at last stepped across
the threshold of the Neanderthal's
bones, I write from here,
just past the skeleton,
beyond the Double Gate of Paracalypse,
where the Player's Guide to Endtimes
breaks off with a curse.

Near my point of entry on
the other side of the chamber,
as in a cavernous God's House
where Gotham has tumbled again
into Self-Division and bad luck,
the White mist hides
the two bars in the crevice.

Is this the Trick
in the Game of *wi'n'loo'zz*:
like a Magickal Child
lost in the past, *The Fool*
falls into place at the end,
where it finds you?