

## Vision Quest Campaign

7,059 words

Gone be the metal knock if ever used here, and hello the eighty-year-old greeting enough to interrupt Agnes, zoned with her earbuds to a Tom Revel recording. It's hit or miss really. Analysts would agree. Sift through the musing for rare replay on a day when she wonders, does anyone know I'm here? Mild paranoia doesn't impress her healthy medical chart, just qualifies as curious hunch, or akin to a morning cup of coffee routine, "does something and doesn't bother me"—hunch just instinct passed down for anxiety radar, but overactivated then reminder there's no worry; unless the knocker is intelligence, and they think something's owed but there's nothing to share. Tom dropped two packages recently, one for them.

Tom claimed theirs had insight about a concerning terrorist circle, but Agnes is unsure whether he's serious after he joked once about playing spy at a restaurant. He's aware, joke around and you're the clown. He's not going to cease entertaining thought, some humorous, due to some not taking him seriously when it matters. Closer to heart, one's testament might be, "Laughter accepted, if my spirit were troubled, I would seriously feel better knowing Tom prayed for my peace." Those who wish to mock that are welcome many places but not in Tom's living room. There's no doubt he plays around; but he draws the line. He rejects the notion of an inner clown fooling him.

Agnes thinks, "Say he's serious about this one. The recipients can likely tell. I wonder why the concerning circle would eat at a place in Boston? They have other things to do." Agnes considers "better things to do" but if terrorism is involved you don't say "better things" when discussing their agenda. Their productivity generates more evil. It's in a dissatisfied diner's

occupational handbook at an imaginary international bistro with a menu listing governments ideally and really favorable to human rights; so the evil maker texts the Devil to say he feels like he doesn't fit in, that maybe the handbook should say other places, and the Devil says to keep busy trying to knock over salt shakers to bother people. Salt may symbolize purity and wisdom. Regarding the latter, a wise man once said, "To fear the Lord is to hate evil." Maybe evil heard fear is around but thought it's only in the Devil's domain. Table the thought near the salt.

Agnes stops the recording and opens the door, the inner white and outer blue in a relationship with low activity. What is it today? Let's see. Plaid coat though it's not that cold, shiny shoes like the outcome of a shoe shiner next to a newsstand in the early Modern era, and actually, that's quite the tie. That's new. Agnes thinks Mr. Asher is not shopping downtown and his friends and relatives are not sending him that. Don't stare, just glance again. It's silk and time to guess.

AGNES: Mr. Asher, pleasant presence of course. I'm sensing aerial of the Western Hemisphere, now North America, a little more and there's one of the nearly 200 countries. Now more. Southwest. More. One of fifty states. Hunch we're on to something. Show me a desert and behold. It's no hierophany, Mr. Asher. We're looking at yuccas. So when I ask do you like the Southwest, or continental area near it, it's not random. Just otherwise unexpressed, unmechanical detection.

*Asher looks at her. Agnes smiles.*

(cont'd) Amusing as it was, at least to me on break, do you like the Southwest?

ASHER: I seldom travel now. When I was younger, I could not sit still. Doctors explained because I did not exercise much, I had stored up energy, and my legs would shake

to release energy. Inactivity activated. With the energy I did expel, I traveled the best and worst of times, Ms. Agnes. Ventures included our Western states, mountains, deserts, plains, all that Manifest Destiny terrain. They said Asher, where to? I said polite to ask but I'll take the reins and guide us to New Mexico. Look around they did. Like they heard the siren of a ghost town. Onward we went. Taos and Santa Fe.

AGNES: I asked because of your tie.

ASHER: Catchy? I'm as sure about this as my updates to City Hall about community matters. Caught Ms. Agnes' eye.

AGNES: Glad you have the energy to dress well. Why the visit?

ASHER: To New Mexico or here?

AGNES: Here and now.

ASHER: May I take a seat? The legs. Younger too active, now too stiff.

*Agnes signals him to a couch. It was polite he asked though unnecessary. This is a workday and there are many recordings to go. These aren't sound curiosities produced by Nech. It's a range of experience but consistently time-consuming. Really, courtesy has its limits. Figure out the matter; know delegation is unlikely working alone; solve it; carry on.*

*Mr. Asher, comfortable and reading Agne's demeanor, gets to it.*

ASHER: I received a package without information except my name and address. No tracking. I wondered if someone dropped it off in the mail room and left. Surveillance showed the latest delivery people. They didn't deliver it. At least

that's according to those who supposedly viewed the footage. I have no reason to think the building management did not look. Soon I was authentically the older man. I am an older man. I mean when I talked to maintenance I lived up to the part with ease. I said I get confused when packages arrive without information. Do they know where it's from? This is peculiar. One of the two men asked if I'm Mr. Asher. I said yes. He said he knows the package. It was near the walkway to the park on the side of the building. Seeing the address, he brought it in.

AGNES: Surveillance would have shown maintenance bringing it in.

ASHER: That's my fault. I asked management to look at the latest deliveries. They likely moved past footage until they got to the delivery drivers. I didn't specify to look at anyone carrying any box into the building. If they did see the maintenance worker with one, not interesting.

AGNES: What did inspection reveal?

ASHER: Do you mean what did I find when I opened it?

AGNES: God. No safety measures?

ASHER: I'll tell you what. And it's not exchange the tie for a bolo. All with ears to hear, listen. I mean humans in this room. That's you and me. I've heard Tom at times and times build up, and the verbal structure will show when I say this. When you bring God into it, I feel like we're talking about more than a box. He's omniscient. He knows what's in the box. I feel like if there were danger, I would have a sense of uneasiness, uneasiness that might lead to protection, protection that might save, and saving is the joy of a mental scrapbook. Or can be. Once you

see the pitched tent of the sun, you get to save it, and it's yours to keep. I felt the unease about the drop location, but as for the box itself, that gut feel was not there. And you know, Ms. Agnes, gut feels are oft unappreciated. I can't take credit for that gem. Some attribute it to a sage in an enchanted reality between creation and now while many denied the existence of such a place. So, with security on my side, so much I need not play the bravery card, unless I'm showing saving traits due to the amazing scrapbook, I opened the box. Ms. Agnes, as for why am I here and why now, do you know what was in it?

*Agnes waits.*

(cont'd) A silk tie with yuccas from New Mexico. Do you know what the note said? "Thanks." I don't even know what the thanks is for. Thanks for sensitivity about the mail situation? Thanks for being alive? As for taste, I'm not sure if you like mine or Tom's. Where is he?

AGNES: He's in Maine. I'll tell him you stopped by. I'll leave the tie between you.

*Asher exits. Agnes returns to listening. This recording is Tom acting as if a frustrated art director. He imagines the producers did not go for his idea to have a honey bear container used conceptually in a Revelation scene from one of his stories. Agnes knows some might find the content troubling. It's not presentable for a targeted audience; it's just intellectual property.*

*It's a mix of revelatory imagery and imagination. Love prevails and evil is ultimately destroyed. In that effort, all is fine. The doctor character is brought in for the scene. There's an example. An uninformed analyst might say, "This man thinks doctors are evil." That's not true. In the context of the scene, it makes sense. Agnes knows misunderstanding is part of the terrain, and while*

*burdensome at times, explanation helps. Making voice recordings thinking it's intellectual property and anything can be said without organized abuse due to misunderstanding is naïve.*

TOM:           There's nothing out there about the bear. We were going to stage a scene of a pregnant woman in white linen giving birth to Jesus, whose eyes look like fire, and the doctor is Satan trying to devour the baby. In the background there's rushing water from a standpipe and the priest is on the white floor, palm branch in one hand, dealing with God fear, afraid of Jesus like John was at first in Revelation. Projected on the wall: "Here I Am. Love." Like the Great I Am is saying hello. We're going to add a bear to the scene, but instead of a honey bear bought at a grocery, a mascot. He's reaching down to help the priest. To make it more spiritual, across the floor is some blood, barley, and seven golden lampstands. No blood on Mary. Seven stars, a blood moon, and a rainbow are on the ceiling. Beside Mary, grapes in a bowl. An iron scepter is on the wall, the way some display weapons. Incense, but all still visible. A white horse is near Mary, Jesus, the priest, and Satan. If we film it, we'll have harp and trumpet music. The photograph behind the bed shows a lion, ox, man, eagle, and larger than all a slaughtered lamb. Jasper and other crystals are around. In one corner, an ark; in the other, a manger.

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**EXT. SKI RESORT - DAY**

*The chair lift arrives at the Maine mountain. ALYO and JEN, strangers, find themselves beside each other. Shortly after ascent, the lift stops. They aren't concerned, but the silence presses until Alyo misreads her sense of humor.*

ALYO: I think my manners are better with married women. I recognize boundaries.

*Jen doesn't feel like looking at him.*

JEN: With unmarried women, fewer manners and boundaries?

ALYO: I misspoke.

JEN: I don't think so. I think you revealed an unpleasant side of yourself and now you backtrack.

ALYO: Are you married?

*Her expression shows surprise at his directness.*

JEN: Why?

ALYO: Because if you are my manners are heightened.

JEN: I'm not.

*Her tone is nearly curt. His eyebrows raise.*

ALYO: I wonder if it's attitude?

JEN: Mine?

ALYO: There's no link between whether I'm pleasant or not and the levity or gravity of your relations.

*She rolls her eyes. They could end the conversation, but there's no telling how long they'll be there. Curiosity about the lift matter is undercurrent while they manage the relation they've created, one certainly not lovely. It seems they would rather engage further to resolve the mess.*

JEN: Gravity is the right word for you to use when referring to a committed relationship.

ALYO: I don't follow.

JEN: She might wake up in the grave.

*Alyo knows it's a punch and wants to investigate.*

ALYO: So, perhaps a dose of etymology humor, plus dark humor joined with my joking about your attitude we've already discussed, that it's due to your relationship status or its absence. You've added an insult rooted in I guess your perception that I can't have a committed relationship because the woman might worry how she'll feel upon waking? At least she wakes. She didn't die due to my company. Or if she did, it's a miracle she's resurrected. I got to witness.

JEN: You talk too much.

ALYO: That I respect, the candor. Sincerity looks good on you.

JEN: Polite, and it didn't require me to change my marital status.

ALYO: Provided we don't have to wait for emergency crews, or even if, would you like coffee with me?

JEN: Are you going to exhaust me carrying on?

ALYO: Why the push to darkness? We can keep it light. I rarely read anymore, except reading about reading. A.I. supported.

JEN: What's a book you haven't read recently, but you've asked A.I. about?

ALYO: Erich Fromm's *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*.

*The lift is moving. It doesn't affect the exchange underway.*

JEN: Dark.

ALYO: Maybe I nailed something you like. But get this. His bestseller was *The Art of Loving*, the antidote to the destructiveness. Same man. Maybe awareness or, more deeply, understanding of the darkness helps to better appreciate the light?

*Jen smiles then either suppresses it or her straight face returns without effort. Alyo has not paid much attention. What gets him are the following words delivered as if it's matter-of-fact generalized philosophy and wavelengths of existence are for her to say it.*

JEN: Light is nice.

*She means it, and Alyo knows it. And he wonders from what gravity she's emerged.*

ALYO: Coffee is a yes?

*Jen smiles. Whatever about suppression or straight face is from what now seems some time ago.*

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## **INT. COFFEEHOUSE - DAY**

*They're at a table in the semi-crowded Maine ski lodge.*

JEN: You accepted as true when I said you talk too much.

ALYO: It seems accurate. Not all the time, but enough.

JEN: I want to do something now.

*He sips, patient.*

JEN: I'm curious about your last rabbit hole.

*Alyo smiles.*

ALYO: I started with Elvis performing “You Gave Me a Mountain” in Hawaii, visited Egypt where I listened to Coptic, then explored Optina Monastery near Kozelsk, Russia. I wondered if the CIA World Factbook would shed light on Lithuanian monasteries, and the photograph shows 100,000 crosses on a hill. I saw Lykke Li near a food truck in parking lot in Germany, read the lyrics of Robert Hunter, and listened to Agnes Obel. I find it lovely. Same thing with Neko Case performing “Calling Cards” in Copenhagen a decade ago. It's nostalgic of sorts. For a film break, Jill arrived at the station in Sergio Leone's *Once Upon a Time in the West* to meet her Irish husband with a dream, but he's dead. She's fleeing her past. In New Orleans she had a reputation as a prostitute, but she's cleaned up, and we see her dressed nicely to meet Brett McBain. Her life is about to change heading out west, and it's changing even more in the unsettled terrain, now alone. The camera movement reflects that, from her expressions to slowly rise over the train station to heightened music to show the town that Jill goes into before the majestic landscape. The significant situation packs in 8 minutes. My nightcap was Leon Bridges singing “The River” where sins flow down the Jordan. I started to doze to

the Staves in a St. Louis radio station in June 2016 performing “America.” It’s mellow but she expresses that she’s happy to accept what she creates.

JEN: If only the napkin were a therapy bill. Were you describing browsing or did one lead to the next? For instance, you said Elvis and next was Egypt.

ALYO: They relate. I spared details. Graceland is in Memphis, named for Memphis, Egypt, capital of the Old Kingdom. More coffee?

JEN: Tea.

ALYO: I was prepared to interpret your “yes” or “no” as indication less about your wish for coffee but rather as whether you want to spend more time with me. I was going to feel good hearing “yes.” I guess tea substitutes for coffee.

JEN: On the lift you were direct, and you shared a lot when answering what was meant to be a light question. Now instead of asking if I want to stay longer, you reveal you’re dynamic by changing tactics, playing a mind game in asking me about coffee but too tethered to truth to keep from sharing your strategy. I said I’ll have tea; you’re still here. I was waiting to say “thanks” once you get back.

ALYO: I see. I’ll return with your coffee substitute. Your turn with cyber tales. I won’t charge.

JEN: It’s not a substitute. Tea is a separate thing.

*As he leaves, Jen checks the time on her phone. Maybe she’s short on time; maybe she just likes to know. Even though it’s tea, Alyo is sure she’ll stay.*

*She looks up Jill in Once Upon a Time in the West. First, to see what she looks like. “Does a woman with baggage determined to improve her lot in life, even if it requires handling situations alone at times, look good? He said she’s cleaned up in this train station scene. It seemed like he meant improvement in her character, such as moral qualities, or does he literally mean she looks better? Are those related? As character strengthens, your looks goes up? Jill wouldn’t be fine looking all the time. She has to get her hands dirty. She’s in the West.”*

*Alyo sets down her tea. Does the concept of substitution quietly influence her communication? Rather than say “Thanks,” Jen nonverbally says it with a slight bow. She puts her palms together and leans for a moment. It’s not a performance. Alyo figures it’s subtlety and might have happened whether or not he observed it. She slightly smiled earlier that light is nice and again when he asked her here. This is similar yet different. It’s expression with more motion.*

JEN: I can’t believe we haven’t introduced ourselves by name.

ALYO: I figured we would.

JEN: I’m Jennifer. Jen.

*When he doesn’t volunteer, she asks.*

What’s yours?

ALYO: Alyo. Short for Alyosha.

JEN: Do you say it “Al yo” with two syllables?

ALYO: Some do. Some say my real name.

JEN: As in Alyosha?

ALYO: Tom Revel.

JEN: Why Alyo? Is it a codename?

ALYO: It's my spiritual name.

JEN: Are we in a ghost story?

ALYO: Are you able to process the supernatural?

JEN: Question the question, Rhetoric Tom. Does my ability or lack thereof to process the supernatural affect the status of our reality?

ALYO: Analyst Jen. Some analysts struggle when faith is involved.

JEN: Is your faith able to handle the supernatural?

ALYO: I think the Big Bang is smaller than a grain of sand to the Lord. It's amazing He even cares about us. But He does. I try to trust the Lord. At times I'm in the way. Then something happens, and I appreciate existence. It's a relief to believe there is higher order. The highest, that is supreme.

JEN: I'm processing what you're saying because supreme order, which is above all the things perceived as chaos, is part of and out of this world.

ALYO: Notable perspective. I'll tell you about a real conversation that was out of this world. I was with my friend Nech recently, a music producer, and a woman asked him for insight. I get what he means. I've actually asked if I could record him before and analyzed what I thought was nonsense. It makes sense. Sometimes a few mental acrobatics are involved, but it's there.

JEN: What type of name is Nech?

ALYO: He says it's derived from "Anechoic" and shows his music production business card. I don't think he's done that, but it's amusing.

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### INT. NECH'S STUDIO - DAY

*It's quiet for this studio, at least with souls attentive. Tom, dining with NECH, sips his lemon water when journalist CRUA with her red-dyed blonde hair and a designer pouch of youthful curiosity, present for forgotten reasons, eyeing Nech, removes the hush.*

CRUA: I heard about an illustration of an alien visiting earth and seeing a gramophone. It's interested yet perplexed at how the instrument can speak to his alien soul. Then the alien meets the composer. Insight regarding?

NECH: Facing truthdraw. Lack of go first because aliens obviously the artists aren't. (*dry laugh*). But to interject imagination into the hypo real seed, say at entrance the artist hasn't eyed the equipment or blue map lines, unlikely but notch the entertain, plus humanizing the alien crisscross, when session starts, spiritual rush. I'd be lacking if no go assertion I waved. For happen of sorts, sound engineers know, and with the know dial up the transference loop pulse. Standard uptick. But even then, programming delivers its plugs. Rhythms devicified, word on the abstract. Human, sure. Who's pushing that to obscure? I really doubt the traction, if so. But don't weigh it to the nay. AI has its way. Methodological assertion, my fronting, perspective delivered nonetheless. Modern as term may be scores aged, so getty on with contemporary say. Could an alien explore the gramophone, find

our human stage play? I'm not pushing the stone. The illustration resonation?  
Around it, flotation, I do. But feedback, sure, to it giveth I try. As for alien human  
compatible shakes, scripted bit it and or word captured. Jot if delight, maybe  
strategy card a nibble. Onward to the stacks. Reference for sure, bliss, a pos-pos  
amidst playback.

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### Odorperp

Tom Revel enters The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd near Mozart's Coffee Roasters on Lake Austin where he used to converse with a female friend from San Antonio. He checks his Hamilton watch that he received as a gift years before, places the CIA envelope beneath the cloth on the Eucharist table at the front of the sanctuary, and prays at a pew that knowledge of Odorperp is useful. As he returns to his house in the Tarrytown neighborhood, he notices a white man and black woman wearing gray shirts and black slacks. It's not the uniforms that stand out. It's their guns in broad daylight. Tom Revel knows it's intimidation, but he's done nothing wrong. The man crosses his arms and glares.

The police have several cars at his house. A truck in the alley is towing his black Toyota. He approaches the female officer in charge and says the alley is 50 percent his, the other half the neighbor's. She ignores him. He asks if he may move it even though he does not need to legally.

She says, "No. You may not." They proceed to illegally impound his vehicle. He notices at least the fence by his front porch is there. He's watched them run and kick it over a few times.

Tom enters his house through his garage studio. He sees the empty dish of dog food. It belongs to Creation, the name Tom gave to the peaceful pit bull adopted from Austin Pets Alive. He needs to buy food.

Once the police leave with his seized property, Tom walks to Randalls. While getting the dog food, two men walk by. He has not seen them before. They are shady and plain clothed. Maybe undercover, maybe in communication with the two armed people who watched him or the police, or maybe connected directly to Odorperp.

One man in his fifties says, “We work for the CIA.” Tom knows they don’t. He figures they are trying to cause paranoia about his recent writing or making fun of him because they don’t respect one of the two independent Intelligence Community organizations, the other being the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

When Tom arrives back home, the fence is now kicked over. Taped to his front door are legal papers written by Zei falsely accusing him. He’s sure it’s a great example of the violation of Commandment IX, and he’s sure it’s retaliation for him sharing knowledge about the noxious, unreported fuming of the Philbrook Museum of Art in Tulsa, OK, the smell from hell, years later encountered in a separate region of the United States. He enters and opens the dog food. He pours it and sits at the long wooden table. Hanging above it taped to the wooden chandelier are pages of lyrics he’s written so he can sing them while he plays his Martin Dreadnought. He flips through the legal papers from Zeig and pauses at an amateur Photoshopped image.

Tom picks up his digital voice recorder and says, “This time Zeig has a doctored photo of me wearing a No Soliciting sign and holding a knife. It looks like I’m on a porch, and it’s from the perspective of a doorbell camera.”

He looks at his trained dog eating. “Creation, you know it’s about money. That’s often the case.” He knows if the neighbors can suggest he’s dangerous, which he’s not unless it’s about raising awareness of Odorperp’s connection to terrorism, they can try to claim he owes money to the police and one house of neighbors for their false claim of “anguish” for his presence in the neighborhood, even though he's lived there longer than them. What can Tom expect? APD will follow him as usual when he walks Creation. It’s a heavy officer who parked in the alley one night and said, “I will be here every single night,” referring to parking on private property. The man has started to park at the nearest intersection during daytime.

Tom realizes it’s an absurd scenario. There is no behavior that he needs to change. For example, “When I’m followed walking my dog, are they trying to say I should not do that? My dog training books and others encourage it, and the veterinarian says my pet is healthy. I stopped by Austin Pets Alive, and they are glad adoption is a positive experience.”

Meanwhile, at the church a sharp woman looks around to see if anyone is there. She goes to the cloth at the Eucharist table and retrieves the envelope. She walks out of the church and says, “Got it.” In her earpiece an officer asks if the two people in the unusual uniforms were still around. She says no.

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## Untitledine

The Gothic sign for Untitledine shows halfway down the brick alley. The interior is not Gothic except the off-white menus with type consistent with the sign. It’s more like a display of club leather with the curiosity of green glass library lamps challenging the dimness, but there’s no

reason for the lamps due to candles, small on the tables and larger in cupboards by primitive clay displays showing healers seeking kindness, or at least less viciousness, from powers that be, and based on the stance of healers, such power is might exchanged only with itself and any perceived kind gesture is for interpretation as maybe divine grace or a softening outreach to human psyche in a moment of heightened awareness about existence. Maybe the green lamps are only decorative? Except scratch that like a Nech record. A suited man, dressed nicer than his companion for good or ill, holds his menu near the shade as if investigating ingredients, as if coded words themselves, will provide insight into dark recesses of Odorperp action, still not fully known except by might to which the healers submit.

Tom stands in a short hall near a privacy call booth and the bathroom. On the glass is his reflection and a visual of lava bursting through ice. He enters the booth and says into his digital recorder a dose of the So Much More series.

“A patient and doctor are in a room. The patient says, ‘I feel frustrated when a person tells someone they feel good and the other replies, “I hear you, and I appreciate your willingness to explore the diverse, dynamic spectrum of feelings, emotions, moods, sensations, sensitivities, ups and downs that accompany the interaction of thoughts, feelings, and behavior on the cognitive behavioral triangle and your ability to recognize and synthesize the spectrum and assess that what you now feel, in your present reality as you understand it, is just that, a feeling and feelings are not isolated in a vacuum of experiences but are interactive, and feelings are sometimes liberated, or can be, from the restrains our brains often place on ourselves, like boxing in freedom, causing in some cases at times unnecessary burden and hardship like a weight upon the shoulders and when not confronted and overcome can cause insecurity that brings with it anxiety, which manifests itself physically at times as elevated blood pressure, moist palms,

tremors, frequent effort to relieve oneself even when it's not needed, and that's not to say insecurity and anxiety are due simply to inability to overcome a hardship, past or present, or concern about experiencing the source of whatever it is again, because it's more involved, So Much More, but for purposes now in what is hopefully a comfortable environment and maybe one you can mentally carry with you, a place conducive to accessing and recognizing the natural and nurturing influences that contribute to your being, and in this moment you have mustered the courage and strength and will power to not merely share but reveal in the form of a nutshell of self-expression that you are—upon intuitive analysis of yourself akin to the reception of a comfortable gut punch—feeling good.” Then the doctor says, ‘Perhaps it’s more than necessary to say.’”

Tom returns to the table, passing the suited man and his companion, and sits across from Jen. She’s visiting. Introductions in Maine were successful. He may have knowledge of the typography on the brick alley sign and the off-white menus. He may feel the leather in the room without needing to touch it, but he touches it anyway. He may even know the right utterance to hum around a campfire of primitive healers calling upon the spirits to grace the healers’ collective affirmation of the exchange between the great beyond and now if only now included the look of Jen that Tom is starting to like a drip of joy more.

But what Tom does not know is when Agnes listens to the latest So Much More installment, she will think maybe he wants her to make a health appointment where he met Nech, and Agnes will call and learn that a medical file is no more for Tom Revel, and they will learn through intelligence channels that at times demonstrate an unpublicized, effective way of finding out even when finding out seems a no-go, that the file was ordered gone at the directive of Odorperp, years into a campaign that makes police corruption near the Colorado River look mild

in comparison, far down the chain from the organizers manufacturing and distributing the smell from hell, not limited to unreported incidents, perhaps directed by the tall man with a circus cloak and white casts, shuffling along Beacon Street in Greater Boston one spring day, perhaps a peculiar crony of the Man with a Sword in Minnesota, two people strange compared to the interpretation of clandestinized blood-drenched information in a hut with knowledge gained thanks to Untraceable Offering, a potion not on the menu at Untitledine but perhaps at the international bistro if you can ghostwrite on a napkin a secret poem to receive the menu most patrons don't know about, a poem to quietly slip to an ambassador of taste sensitive to peaceful priorities, the kind documented in an envelope one with security interests might slip under a Eucharist cloth before prayer and Creation care, exactly as Tom did years before Mr. Asher talks to Agnes about yuccas on his tie, a gift from Tom for Asher sharing how devotion and reflection led him to discover a spiritual plane where there is a box of truth in which repeated on scrolls of love is Selah, a word Tom imagines sung while floating down the river with the tree of life on either side.

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## **INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY**

Soon a run-of-the-mill appointment but Tom follows through on the medicines. Report all is well, get the scripts, carry on. That's the case now except his attention is distracted, and it's not unique. Most people would be distracted, health conditions aside. A man in his mid-40s is drumming his fingers in what may be high-quality variation of Ginger Baker's drum solo "Toad." It's too good for anybody modestly skilled at drums. This is beyond expected. Tom is absorbed and trying not to express fascination with the peculiarity. He doesn't want to interrupt

this man, but with the thumpity-thumps in equations of tempo that mathematicians may appreciate, he's at it and; then he pauses, turns to Tom Revel and says, "Badosey effective. The thump a go-go. Tap the success, tempo done, more than rare."

He smiles. Tom has several capacities as a creative; now it requires the hat of Analyst. Is this drummer irrational? Maybe. It's the waiting room of the psychiatry office. But there's just something to it, Tom thinks. "He got here. He must have logic, enough to get to the appointment. If he were brought in by a caretaker, maybe another matter. No one in this office is required to be here. So, let me think..."

Let the analysis begin. "Here's a man adept enough to get here. He smiled, so there's some emotion. It's not like a straight faced man made me uncomfortable. I'm not bothered. He's also got exceptional rhythmic skills. There's order to the chaos. Someone less skilled at drumming could not pull that off. Definitely involved with music, probably at a professional level. I'm going with music industry on this one. At least for now. Table the thought. Hypothetically, a music professional is here voluntarily and passing time with great timing. Okay, that's established. That's what I'm saying is going on. But what about the language. Peculiar for sure. What did he say? 'Badosey effective?' That's the first thing this man says to me? What is 'Badosey'? There's no way, assuming he's rational, he would think I would understand that. He smiled after his statement, so he finds it amusing, at least to himself. That's interesting. Maybe the Badosey is sonic. It's as if onomatopoeia, but I don't know what sound it's imitating. He may hear sounds all day long, for all I know. In a studio somewhere? There are too many possibilities. I'll go with that though. A "yes, and" for analytical progress.

"He's made a sound reference. Now I'm sure he's in the music industry. His amusement, upon exceptional drumming, is to make a sound that imitates maybe instrumental deliverance.

Ok. So after ‘Badosey’ the sound he says ‘effective.’ I think it was a question, but he’s not expecting an answer. He continued to talk. Was it rhetorical? The ‘effective’ may be asking ‘Does the sound Badosey work?’—like is it a good sound—effective meaning efficient for whatever the production moment? In this line of thought, the ‘thump a go-go’ is like saying the thumping, perhaps a reference to the drumming, is a go-go, where go-go is a take on “It’s a go” that an executive may say upon approval, like in a board room upon reviewing options for the potentially successful campaign, ‘Definitely let’s do it. It’s a go,’ like a surefire strategy, its effect to be revealed to all and blow the awareness of witnesses of such matter that experience allows.

“ So this music executive, exceptional at drumming, is like on the work clock now, except he’s not working by the clock. He’s in the waiting room, thinking about sound. Is he an audiophile? Maybe, but that’s not why he’s here. That doesn’t need healthcare attention. His humor is to ask me rhetorically if the sound is effective, a sound maybe from the studio where he works, so into music that he’s thinking about it while waiting for the doctor. The sound is likely effective for whatever production he’s focused on. ‘Tap the success’ regards tapping, which the drumming with fingers is about and also the phrase ‘tap the success’ where ‘tap’ is like tap into, or connect with a resource. If that’s the case, ‘tap’ is a pun, simultaneously referencing drumming and the meaning of connection, here connecting with success.”

Tom realizes the doctor must be running behind. It happens. This waiting room moment is definitely entertaining, at least in thought. “Now, I wonder about that last part. The ‘tempo done, more than rare.’ Tempo done is pretty clear. Music man likes the tempo; he’s ready to move on to the next sound task. At last, ‘more than rare’? Encountering this man is more than rare, Tom laughs to himself. Then he returns to analysis. ‘More than rare’ qualifies the ‘done’. What is a context where ‘more than rare’ and ‘done’ are used?”

Tom lets that sink in, riddle his mind. “Got it,” Tom says aloud.

He’s not talking to anyone. It’s like his insides are delighted at the realization that his analysis may be spot on. Cooking. The temperature of a steak perhaps? You cook it and ‘rare’ and ‘done’ like ‘well done’ are used. “Sound executive over here is sharing with me that music is on his mind, and the music is high quality, professional grade, and the temperature of this matter attended, as if it were meal preparation, is cooked more than rare.” Perhaps the analysis is well done.

The door opens. It’s not the assistant. It’s the doctor, the man himself. All this talk of time, tempo and so forth-- it’s time to talk to the doctor, only there’s not much going on today. Tom feels good. What’s he going to tell the doctor? That should take a few moments. “I feel good.” What will happen? The appointment is blocked for a half hour. Maybe he gets a dose of psychology talk about the significance of feeling good. Isn’t that annoying? You tell the therapist you feel good, be-on-my-way sort of thing, but you’re there; it’s voluntary but you’re paying for the time block.

As Tom walks to the door, he pauses a moment and says to the music man, “Hi, I’m Tom. Great drumming.”

The man stops his finger tapping and thumbs up for thanks. “I’m Nech.”

Perhaps Nech has insight about Selah? Mr. Asher would enjoy hearing that. Some sounds bring joy like Selah and Amen.

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**INT. UNTITLEDINE - NIGHT**

Tom eyes one woman with a man down the bar. “Now I’ve seen her spirit or glimpses of her occasional joy reflected on the patrons at the bistro,” he thinks, referring to creative content. But Tom is attentive to Jen’s friend. He points to her glass. Message received. What concoction?

DALA, woman aged 34, possible indie artist mostly educated by following up on various questions that have registered on her curiosity docket, adjusts her posture. Tom, taking a break from his Alyosha capacity, has committed heart for Jen, but he still wants to know Dala’s story, or what fragments you can piece together from what may be momentary interaction.

Jen has not much discussed her female friends, and Tom gets the notion that Jen and this woman aren’t too close. He hasn’t heard of her, or if Jen has spoken of her, only in passing. Say he forgot her mention. No need to get tough on himself. Information floods in a contemporary age with truth perhaps in the plural overlapping, or so some think, while miners of a fortress of ‘that’s how it is’ ever search. Info overload. At least that part of the reflection may hold. Return to here and now, the meantime having ticked brief.

DALA:       The potion is sensitivity to twisted emotion, maybe self-inflicted, dosed with effort to better perceive.

TOM:        Does it deliver?

DALA:       Merely mocktail sugar that Dala likes.

TOM:        My detective skills say you’re Dala.

DALA:       Maybe Jen told you. Maybe she didn’t. I know I did. If Jen did tell you my name and you forget now, twice the shame.

*Jen smiles. She did speak of her friend to Tom before. He may not have heard. He was focused on photographing a container of honey shaped as a bear saying the content is sweet as a scroll and she’ll see. He was conceptualizing.*

TOM: I've been burdened by more before. Proof of resilience is presence in Untitledine sharing friendly words while contemplating a step beyond the weight of conscience.

*Dala laughs.*

DALA: Sounds good, but maybe sound exceeds sense. Beyond weight sounds ethereal. Does confession take you there? The shame—gone. There's still conscience but the weight no more. Your step would not return to ground unless something happens in that space, and then one wonders why? I wonder why.

Jen shares with Tom that she and Dala met at hiking grounds in Maine. Jen likes mindful activity and nature. Dala likes her seasonal job contributing to trail maintenance. She hums melodies for later composition sketches. She's in the Boston area to perform at a venue outside the city and will walk green spaces. Tom warms up to the idea of introducing Dala and Nech and figures at least she may learn of Crua. That could lead to favorable coverage of her music by a journalist. But when Tom glances down the bar the lady, she connects her eyes to his, quick enough to go undetected by the man beside her. She subtly shakes her head. Tom reads her nonverbal warning. Is she a guardian or trying to cause mild unease? If Dala isn't safe company, even with spiritual talk, and she and Jen are friends, what about Jen? He's ready if he's informed that she's been wearing a listening device in her ear canal for a while, deep enough to go unseen, and under the influence of Odorperp. But he hasn't been notified until now. Why? Maybe interceptors of Odorperp communication have been analyzing what Jen hears when she's with Tom and what she says? Tom values trust, and his most trustworthy relation is with Hidden Manna to whom Tom will express his concerns before his cycle of dreams, replete with an army of angels.