

World View

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To obtain a partial solution, the scientist must collect the unordered facts available and make them coherent and understandable by creative thought.

(A. Einstein & Leopold Infeld: *The Evolution of Physics*)

+ the way it is at Ludlow's Smokers' Palace just happens to be the way it is for much of the world, the first world, the second world, the parallel worlds, how small they are, perspective, phenomenon of depth of field, along the line of sight, worlds and world power perish in the distance, ditto the whole shebang, someday, murder is already global, pervasive, part of every inhabited world we've got, next step is universal, then we'll need something else, how, even so we wonder, imagine, call its occurrence mystery of the week, of the hour in which crime is solved on a screen, wonders to behold, bigger life, but of course not bigger than, cold cases, cold blood, sometimes something crystallizes, fresh pair of eyes on the scene, digital eyes, lab analyses, can't have too much justice, must have Miranda, must have Ernesto Miranda's movie of the week, what's taking so long, trouble on his record since 1954, early in his life, on par for destiny, his world an open book, a police blotter, a docket number, in some of his head shots, he looks like Al Franken, has the right to, his first conviction in eighth grade, remained committed, remained incarcerated until the end of 1972, at the start of 1976, he was murdered during a card game at La Amapola Bar, knifed, the blood emblem of a poppy appeared on his shirt, una amapola, the petals unfolded in a liquid moment, un momento liquido, claro, claro, how clear the path that opened, Ernesto's killer got away, the lone suspect read his Miranda slumped over a chair then fled, perhaps to Mexico, where he may have died, he did die one way or another some place or another, there are many establishments of amapola: hotels, schools, resorts, sheet music, wine, galleries, bou-

tiques, Ernesto Miranda is coincidental, a form of pollination, he may have been double-crossed in La Amapola, he may have been a rapist, his wife testified that he said he was, Mrs. Miranda, as few public appearances of her as Mrs. Columbo, few pictures of women surface in a search for Miranda as surname, many beautiful women appear in a search for la amapola, pictures a man would take with him to prison, paintings a man would paint in prison, there are many double flowered varieties of poppy, the Shirley poppy is the poppy of Flanders Field, where poppies grow, where poppies fail, where poppies grow, Belgian graves, the first war of the world, so many poppies, there is a poppy umbrella, all death fits under it, Miranda protected, poppies aren't the flower of tango, poppies aren't the state flower of any state in the union, not like the forget-me-not, not like the mock orange, the pua aloalo, not like Montana's bitterroot, even so, the Shirley poppy is not narcotic, it doesn't explain why I am one of many lovers of Columbo, CSI, I go to bed with the complete first season, whether I'm under the cover or on top: exposé, expecting to have a throat slit, my own red river to flow, I know it can, I've heard that before, seen that before, and I love it, red waterfall on the way down, as if powered by a V8 engine, red cesspool when the carrion crow comes with his cohort—Papi, I regret only that red blood cells aren't shaped like rubies, ok—blood is what might be lasting, its evidence is like stone that tries so hard before it crumbles, admires cookies, there's a chance blood can't be removed completely from stone, masonry, linoleum, cashmere, headstones—bring on the luminol—something in blood wants to be pulsar, even around bleach, chlorine: that is a halogen, a salt-former, definitely of the earth, orthorhombic crystal structure, normal blood is ninety percent water, freezes with crystals, is definitely sensitive to its own gravity, the squeamish can't stand the sight of their own, some make sure to kill themselves without spilling any, just stick their heads in an oven, the closed car running in a closed garage, fumes, apparitions of stretched poppies, muy delicados, some just close their eyes and pull the trigger, sometimes on a revolver with a real ivory handle, barrel against the temple, smooth cold touch for an instant, sometimes the syringe is deliberately lethal, a diabetic has had much practice with the orange plunger, scaled way down from TNT detonations to make trains go through mountains, detonations that can flatten things, even them out like Flanders Fields, like Belgium's gently rolling central landscape, Belgium is about the size of Maryland, Flanders Field holds two, three, four Antietams, just swallow pills as one might swallow drug packets to transport them, the job of the gut, just jump from five or more stories, we all tell them not to jump, assumption, life is worth living, dive in, from bridges, so many variations of swan dive usually not appreciated for the tuck style, for the lack of splash head first on concrete where some of the blood will be as permanent, I love memories, I have scratched only the surface of options, but that scratch takes such a long time to heal, that it essentially doesn't, and invites infection that sometimes

spreads like wildfire, the other name of untreated aids and syphilis, I don't have that in me, not that need, not that desperation, not that curiosity, I have other need, other desperation, other curiosity that no one asks about, even those who know I'm on extended leave of absence, which some just see as bonus, probably undeserved, many think they'd like to be handicapped just long enough to get some deserved time off from work, to partake briefly of joys of disability, genuine new ways of seeing, hearing, moving, in addition to the sloughing of responsibility, the unearned paychecks, the unemployment compensation, my great-uncle's muscles degenerate slowly, nothing seems to be happening, just like immortality that can be well imagined, he just sits there, as long as he's strapped in, about to star in a time-lapse movie at the cellular level where his beautiful still might be less distinguishable from other beautiful, he might even have been able to swallow a nano-probe when his tongue had function a month ago, how he whispers, without glossal dexterity it's so hard for him to lie well that he is well, food sits in his mouth, a mashed potato mouth guard, only a fist can push it down, he can't raise his own, his wife never thought of that kind of intimacy, but the sympathy, the more the better, reduced fees in light of how much has been paid for this status, imagine the collateral, for years the landlord—who was not without sickness—did not demand reasonable rent, and the bank account grew oh so flabby, a match for his muscles, for his jelly, these are fat times, more history now than ever before, my killer lives off reserves till the lean times make him needy, then kill feast, there's a lean time somewhere in the world at any time, expected, even encouraged, I flaunt my work as victim-in-waiting, this daily walking, this itinerant exaggeration of getting nothing done prompts no concern, garners no inquiry, ask me what I'm doing, what I'm up to, surely I must seem a candidate for intervention, what about me is saying mind your own business, keep your distance, no trespassing, what about me seems so worthy of respect and protection through isolation, through neglect, quarantine, what about me is making me so negligible, after so many days of this, after I am just calendar, the passing of night into day, one too many sunrises, one too many sunsets, one too many poppies, after being such a part of morning glory, such a part of morning misery when that is what dawns, after accepting that I do what I do without bothering anyone, without requiring that anyone change their own succeeding habits, not even that the would-be killer not kill, the would-be rapist not rape, the would-be rescuer—that's me—not rescue, after so many days of my being exactly where I've established that I should be, doing exactly what I should be doing, because of consistency rivaling the consistency of the everlasting, I'm background, one of those fractions of a second that you don't notice, don't grasp, but you know they've happened, I tell you I'm dead now, good as dead already, this fraction of a second affects nothing when it stops dead, all slack picked up by the next fraction, raindrops sliding so quickly through their positions in the rainbow

that it's not broken even though the rainbow's not a thing at all, pure perception, I'm backdrop not hard on eyes, just those with a certain sensitivity, certain bias, the walking keeps me in shape, the shape of what my killer will definitely get around to killing, maybe has gotten around to it while you weren't looking, rubbing your eyes, the dust, the smoke, the grit, it's hard to take how I make it perfect for him, my death his way, he spells it out, I comply to the letter, such compliance is my talent, of course I might have preferred another, that's what it means to have choices, the ability not to be satisfied, the ability to make the wrong choice, to second-guess, I choose this death, I invoke preference for the sake of those who will be disgusted by the lack of respect I'm showing for the gift of life, who choose to call my blasphemous rejection of sanctity a blasphemous rejection of sanctity, as if I don't understand poppies, can't count on me to count them, but I just don't see how respect will make me any less susceptible to dying, and for me, this is a good death, poppies grow in it, when I am a blossom, when I give off perfume that rises above stench because it is lighter, and works for me in place of the soul in case I don't really have one, how widely I have opened, my petals folded back like hands completing their praying, look at this poppy, what it left of me, I am definitely in the best position for annihilation, as a scent, I am definitely in the best position for wide dissipation, across the sky like an invisible contrail banner, there I go, a release ultimo, my killer can still hear his Miranda, it will not be overpowered by the scent, my great-uncle still smells the dogwood, my great-uncle can still smell the myrtle, if my killer has killed me tonight in a back alley that conceals my death till who knows when, and nobody notices a disruption in the routine of morning, it is because of the perfume of my dead body, the myrtle at the top, the peak, like a star of stench, when the poppy umbrella is used like a bellows, it just blows me away =