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Öffne Deinen Mond and Stick Your Tongue Out

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Öffne deinen Mond and Stick Your Tongue Out

Senior Project Submitted to
The Division of Languages and Literature
of Bard College

by

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Annandale-on-Hudson, New York

May 2024

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A Senior Project by Lindsey Aldrich Jordan

“Every man has to learn the points of compass again as often as he awakes, whether from sleep or any abstractions. Not till we are lost, in other words, not till we have lost the world, do we begin to find ourselves, and realize where we are and the infinite extent of our relations.” - Henry David Thoreau, Walden

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Preface

I was sitting on a leather seat in New York State being carried, looking out the window as an orange light emerged from the darkness and then disappeared past me and then another one appeared and, quickly moving through the pain, vanished again. An image fell into my head-- the sunlight läying diagonal on a yellow apartment building in a European City across the ocean-- it was Berlin-- and then I wäs looking at the pale slices of deli meat through the clear glass fridge door in the grocery store there, I wäs picking up a tub of yogurt of the greek kind by the handle and I felt the route around and out of the store, and then I wäs on the subway and there was the motion of the train stopping, the doors opening, turning out onto the station, taking the stairs, knowing which way to go to emerge from the mouth of the staircase into the wide open city again even though there had been a time when I couldn't orient myself, couldn't tell where I was when I left the train car and ascended the stairs, and yet somehow now, it was there, it was in my body: which turn to make, which stairs to climb, knowing where it would lead me, my body following a route I could have followed blind in the darkness, to find home.

The bus stopped. The lights turned on, my face was in the window. I got up, left, and found myself by the stone church on the corner of Main Street. It was dark and warm out.

I was not in Berlin. I was in New York State. I walked toward home, and along the street the houses were in a row, their front lights turned on. There was just one firefly, blinking weakly in the neighbor's yard.

The summer had come

to an end,

I thought.

The summer was

to the End

coming.

I came up to our house. It was looking out with bright eyes at the moss on the roof of the house across the street. In the bright yellow eye Lillian was sitting at her desk, she was a dark figure, her features indecipherable, in the middle of a yellow square with a gray lid pulled half down.

Inside, Frances was at the dinner table. Her black mask was laid next to her hand, its nose pressed against the surface of the table, its straps like arms flailing out, given up, its white belly splayed open and out and concave.

She looked up as I came in and picked up her mask, placed it carefully on her face, fastened the straps behind her ears. The bottom of her face disappeared, and she was two eyes above the black shape, looking out and up at me. I took an identical mask out of my pocket and put it on.

I was all alone in the house today, she said. I was walking on the wooden floors and my feet got cold all of a sudden and I wanted you here. You or her, she pointed up to the second floor. Or you both. She looked down and ate. Around her the house was dark, except for the lamp on the mantelpiece she'd turned on. I looked at the white

walls, at the low ceiling and the beam that went and the basil I'd hung on it, the mint I stole from the church, the wild flowers I'd dried and put in a vase. I see you in the walls, I said. like you're in them, or woven in the carpet, or bent along the structure of the house. She drew in front of me a picture: all of us, here, building a home together, getting older. I sat down and thought again about the wide, blue Atlantic Ocean, and Berlin sitting on the other side of it.

A Note on Umlauts

After returning from Berlin in the beginning of the summer I started to play around, writing in English with some German elements. And it made me think about umlauts, which we don't have in English: in German they are placed over the vowel when a verb expresses possibility, or a wish, or conjecture. "Wurden," (to become, past tense of werden) becomes würden (would), "War" (was) becomes "wäre" (would be), and haben (have) becomes hätte (would have). I realized that umlauts are also often added to nouns in order to make them plural: Mann (man) becomes Männer (men), Mund (mouth) becomes Münder (mouths) (although, as with German plurals generally, this is not a standard rule: Mond (moon), for example, becomes Monde (moons) without an umlaut). And they are used to indicate "more" of something: "kalt" (cold) becomes "kälter" (colder), and warm becomes wärmer: this rule is standard. This made me think that maybe umlauts carry this quality of "plurality," so to speak: more than one possibility, more than one thing. It brings something solid into flux, or into ambiguity, and gives the word, or the phrase the word is in, this feeling of "multiplicity." By adding an umlaut to

a word, it brings the word and what the word is describing into question: what is being expressed is this one thing, but maybe it is other things too.

And the umlaut is, after all,

two little dots.

- **Left Dot**

I'd been sitting since late morning in the sunny backyard while my roommate was taking up her spot on the porch couch, closing my eyes, my face turned against the sun. The leaves shifted every once and a while when a breeze swept in and swayed the canopies. I opened my eyes and a flock of birds was falling and swooping and rising in the sky. It was midday. I had the yard to myself.

There was a ding on my phone.

I picked it up and opened my messages and saw it was a photo of the moon in the dimming sky, hovering low over the courtyard just parallel to the round globe of the TV tower peeking out from the city. It was from the man in Berlin. I put the phone down and picked it up again and looked at the moon, which was a black circle with a white crescent running along the side, and I put the phone down again and picked it up, opened the cursor on the text box, then closed the app and put my phone in my pocket. I stared at the trees and a small gust began to rise and I left the yard and went back inside, into my room, to the desk I'd put in my closet and opened the small book again, opened the German dictionary and my laptop next to it, pulled up two tabs, one of an English-German translation site, one to a PDF of the standard translation into English, and I read over the first couple lines of "Tiergarten" in Walter Benjamin's *Berliner Kindheit*: "Sich in einer Stadt nicht zurechtfinden heißt nicht viel. In einer Stadt sich aber zu verirren, wie man in einem Walde sich verirrt, braucht Schulung. Da müssen Straßennamen zu dem Irrenden so sprechen wie das Knacken trockner Reiser und kleine Straßen im Stadttinneren ihm die Tageszeiten so deutlich wie eine Bergmulde widerspiegeln," which Benjamin had written about Berlin while in exile from the city,

and I read next to it the English translation: “Not to find one’s way around a city does not mean much. But to lose one’s way in a city, as one loses one’s way in a forest, requires some schooling. Street names must speak to the urban wanderer like the snapping of dry twigs and little streets in the heart of the city must reflect the times of day, for him, as clearly as a mountain valley,” and I read them again and looked between the two at the words “verirren” and “zurechtfinden” which had the connotation of mistake and right and wrong in German but translated simply as to get lost and found in English, and it was the prefixes, I thought, which created these implications but which also could not be carried over into English but it kept bringing me back to that moment in the small apartment in Berlin when I was sitting on the small black couch and the man in Berlin was sitting next to me, naked, our images reflecting in the black glass doors of the balcony, the words inside me separating and expanding into letters which then collided into each other as the structures of grammar binding the words together unknotted and retangled themselves in such a way that the syntax no longer resembled anything I’d ever learned or could recognize, internally, as being accurate.

Annoyance started to rise up and I left my room to go to the kitchen to look for milk. The windows were still open from summer. The back of Frances’ head was visible on the porch through the window, her voice was rising, cheery, she was talking to someone on the street passing by.

I opened the fridge. Lilian had gotten milk with one of the milk cards from the food pantry. I grabbed the carton, it was light and just a little shook around at the bottom. Shit. I grabbed another milk card from the fridge and then grabbed my wallet from my room just in case. The little book was open on my desk. The margins were filled with

notes. I'd grabbed a piece of paper as well, and when I ran out of space, and filled it with the rest of them.

I grabbed the book and the notes and put them in my pocket.

The first two lines of the chapter, of "Tiergarten," had been all over the city that winter while I'd been there, on a poster which was plastered on the walls in the underground train and along bridges and the sides of buildings. The poster was of the words against a white background with the name of a museum and archive in the corner. I'd seen it everywhere and for the first half of the winter and hadn't read it or thought about it, seeing it constantly and recognizing it without noticing it, until the middle of the winter when I finally noticed myself recognizing it, stopped to read it, that night after I'd left his place and was trying to get home on the train.

I stepped out onto the porch. Frances was waving to the neighbor who was just leaving.

"Hi," she said to me. Earlier today she'd said Hunter was coming by. Hunter, the guy she wasn't trying to date. I told her I was off. "I need to put something white into my body," I said.

Frances nodded. "Hunter should be here soon," she said, "but he's just dropping something off. He wanted to do something nice for me." There was a space between us. On the floorboards of the porch there were little helicopters from the maple tree scattered thickly, each one touching the others, with little gaps in between, like a bridge made out of latticework. When she'd told me about Hunter, and how she wasn't trying to date him, she'd said it was because she was not attracted to men, which she'd realized a year or so ago. She had broken up with her boyfriend, she told me, had

apologized to him but said she'd been compulsively heterosexual. Since then she wasn't having sex. She told me all of this when I'd gotten back, standing in my doorway while I was unpacking. It's that guy I had that intense month long thing with freshman year, she said, looking at me intently. I don't want to date him, she said, I'm a lesbian. I had nodded. Yeah, I said. Sure. I wanted to tell her I thought she could date men and still be a lesbian if she really wanted to but thought, perhaps that was not the point. I get it, I said instead. She was looking at me now from the couch.

I was filled with the sudden urge to leave. "I really need to get milk," I said.

• •

The grass in the neighbors yard, the fences around them, the bushes with petals half fallen to the ground, were hesitatingly still and silent. There was one cricket calling out from a neighbor's fence, the sound rising and rising as I walked, then, after reaching a peak, fading away. All summer the sound had surrounded and permeated the house. I realized I hadn't noticed the moment it went quiet. The sound of the air was just different now. Above the street dramatic clouds were furling and unfurling.

The bell rang as I opened the door to the grocer and the old man who owned it glanced up. He was sitting on a stool behind the counter reading a birding magazine and underlining it with a pen.

I reached into my pocket for my phone again but touched the book instead. All of the drinks in the fridges were incredibly familiar. The water bottles were normally shaped, there were large bottles of pastel colored liquids and bright cans of sparkling water which all had artificial flavoring, like they'd always had. Next to the fridge were boxes of alcoholic sparkling water stalked high. They'd gotten popular all of a sudden

the summer I'd moved to New York. Someone I was living with at the time, who'd get drunk most weekends, had sworn by them. These got me my boyfriend, she'd said. And you can drink all you want and they won't make you fat. I glanced at the shelves. Everything in the store I'd seen a thousand times. I had associations with them, I knew who they were being advertised to. When I'd returned to the States this familiarity had disoriented me.

I was in the reflection of the fridge, blurry, approaching the milk. I touched the book again. I'd found it in a bookstore that night in Berlin after leaving the apartment of the guy. After buying it I'd wandered from the bookstore back to the train and sat and looked for the quote, which had also been plastered on the back cover, inside, until I found it at the beginning of "Tiergarten." I'd read through the chapter and read it again until the train arrived at my stop and I got out and realized I had barely any idea what I'd read, that the language felt mixed up with the meaning and I couldn't grasp the particulars, only the feeling while reading it of longing or remembering or both.

I grabbed the milk and went to the check out. The old man looked up, tapped his pen against the page, looked at me and then the milk. He got up and started punching numbers into the old cash register.

Outside I put the milk on one of the tables and took the book out of my pocket. There were piles of yellow leaves around the table legs. The first sign of Fall, I thought, and sat down. There was a gray haired woman sitting at a table nearby, reading. She was putting something chocolatey and large all the way into her mouth.

In my room I had been reading the chapter and kept noticing these patterns in the words: prefixes or stems which repeated themselves, whose meaning I didn't know. I

wanted to see the patterns clearly and understand the intricacies of them. I thought perhaps I would understand the text better knowing these meanings. I circled them and looked up what they meant and wrote the different meanings for each out and they'd begun to spill over to the sheet of paper, the words and parts of words expanding into and beyond in the space of the white margins around them. When I'd sat back and looked, it was as if the gray scribbling had risen like a fog around the text, cluttering it, crowding it out. Before, these patterns were contained neatly inside the words, and I'd dragged them out and scattered them everywhere so that they were a confused mass of markings.

The man who owned the store came out with a broom and began to sweep yellow leaves around me. They flew up and off the curb. I furrowed my brow. You are sweeping the first sign of Fall away, I thought. His magazine was rolled up and stuck into his back pocket.

I had looked up the "ver" prefix to better understand "verirren" which had been translated in the English as "to get lost," or "to lose one's bearings." The root, "irren," meant "to be mistaken" or "to err." "Ver," the grammar book I'd found online said, often indicates "wrongly." It also expands the meaning of the root: it is the root "to excess." It was as if, I thought, the root was so much of itself that it surrounded itself, as if irren went into itself and became as much of itself as it could possibly be, and this word, verirren, was the manifestation of what it meant to irr to an extreme. It was as if you would be so wrong and so mistaken that you could lose yourself in your surroundings, as if there was a connection to lostness of oneself and being wrong: a discrepancy between what is known inside and what is recognized outside of oneself.

A native German speaker would have a feeling of what *ver* means, how it impacts a root verb, from having experienced it over and over, picking up slight patterns over time. I hadn't known what *ver* meant, because I didn't have the feeling of it.

The old man who owned the store had moved on to the leaves in front of the woman and began sweeping the leaves around her.

"Hi Gerta," he said.

She looked up. "Michael."

"Did you see the starlings this morning?" Michael asked.

But this "*ver*" disappeared in the English translation, I thought, there is no way to express it in English, the patterns aren't articulable. "*Ver*" wasn't a word part with a meaning, It was a feeling. You couldn't carry it over the bridge, they both exist and kind of hover in the air-- and so much of what exists in the language is felt, I thought.

Gerta was looking off at the sky, where the clouds had acquired a blue lining. She looked at the road where the cars were going by.

"Are they migratory?" She asked.

"What?" Michael said.

I shook my head. How could you ever untangle a prefix from the feeling of it? I thought. Untangle it from the knowledge of it inside of yourself? How could you bring it to the outside of yourself, place it in your hand, craft it into something recognizable, something that could be placed in the hand of someone else?

"Are starlings migratory birds?" Gerta was saying.

“Oh,” Michael said. “I’m not sure. They were flying in a murmuration around the graveyard this morning, flying together and then separating a little when they made a turn.”

“I only have time for non-migratory birds,” Gerta said.

“They were able to fly without any one of them leading, because they each followed the movement of the seven birds closest to them,” Michael started to say, and then conversation started to rise in a fog around them and I couldn’t make out what they were saying. The fog seemed, too, to be rising around me or around my eyes. I thought again: these two things can’t be bridged. While I was over there I’d kept saying to the man in Berlin, we are speaking different languages, even though I didn’t mean English and German, because he spoke both fluently; I’d meant that we could never explain to each other what we were saying, I thought, and I slumped in the chair. We had different understandings of what words meant. That night we’d been at his place, which was small and very clean and on the sixth floor overlooking a courtyard. We’d sat sitting on his couch, he’d asked me if I wanted wine, I said no, he put on a record. And then he’d sat next to me and talked for a while about the record, which he’d found at a flea market and took a chance on, he told me, and then he kissed me and pulled me on top of him and started using these words, desire, attraction. I look forward to being inside you, he’d said. I’d pulled back and looked at his face, this new face, this face of a man I’d just met in a dark bar in Berlin, where there had been small points of light hanging from the ceiling, and this face was drawn and simple, all of a sudden, looking up at me, wanting something, and full of things I didn’t know. When I laid against him I felt him breathing and hesitating. These words meant something different to me, or the words

were too precise and too definitive to describe the feeling I was having, which seemed different than the one he was experiencing, although perhaps adjacent to it, and I didn't know the words which could explain this difference. I'm not letting you inside of me, I'd thought. You haven't seen it yet, what's inside of me. Why would I let you into it?

Michael leaned on his broom and pointed to the sky and Gerta glanced down at her book. She nodded at Michael as he traced his hand in a line in the sky. I felt suddenly exhausted. I closed my eyes. Gerta's voice was rising, a little sharp, and then it fell and swooped. Michael's voice responded, lower, dipping down a little and then shifting over, hesitating and then rounding and hovering before lifting away.

There were footsteps and then the bell on the door sounded. There was a silence and then the chair moved and there were more footsteps, which got quieter and quieter, and then there was nothing but the leaves shuffled on the ground and the leaves in the trees and the rush of a car going by. I opened my eyes and everything was there: the leaves on the curb, the cars on the street, the sidewalk, the black tables, the empty chair moved out a little from the table, the brick patio, the grocer, the blue sky, the day.

• •

On the way home from the grocer I opened the carton of milk and took a swig. I spit the thin white liquid out onto the pavement. "Ugh," I said. "Ugh. I fucking hate milk."

• •

Hunter's car was pulling out of the driveway as I came up to the house. We waved as I passed by. Frances watched Hunter from the porch as he pulled away.

I came up to the steps. Frances was holding a small bottle of red cooking wine in her hands. I put one foot on the first step and rested my hand on the railing. The bridge

of helicopters from the maple tree I'd noticed on the porch had spilled over on the steps.

"You're back?" Frances asked.

"I got exhausted at the grocer," I said. I held up the milk. "Milk," I said.

Frances nodded.

"Hunter just left," she said, picking at the label on the bottle. "He got us this." She showed me the wine.

I leaned toward her to look. "Is it for all of us?" I asked.

"The other day I told him there are certain things I like to have for cooking which make everything a little better, and that one of them is cooking wine, but we've been out for ages," She said. She carefully tore a piece of label off the wine and placed it next to her on the couch. "I told him I like to use it when I'm making dishes my mom made, because she always drank wine when she cooked, and would throw some in once she got tipsy enough to be creative, and when I use it the food tastes more like hers. I just was just telling him that, this thing about me and my mom. But he said he would come by later today and he had this. When he got here I told him it's communal, it's something we all use, but he said it was fine, he just wanted me to have some and was stopping by the grocery store on his way to work anyways."

I crossed the bridge and sat with her. Frances put her hand on her chest.

"When I saw him just now," she said, "my heart did this," she thumped her hand in threes against her chest. "Right now I feel as though I'm just," she gestured out toward the street, "wide open, like everything inside of me is expanding out and into the greater world." She shook her head. "What does that mean?"

“Yeah,” I said and looked out at the street. “I don’t know.”

Frances started peeling the label off again. It ripped and a little white underneath was revealed.

I crossed my arms and I sighed. She looked over at me. I took the book out of my pocket. “I’ve been reading this one chapter in this book, looking up words to find the right meaning or translation -- the *true* one, the one he *meant*, and there are so many different meanings for each word,” I said. “I started taking them apart to find the meanings of each part hoping it would tell me the meaning of the whole but when I did that they began to disintegrate into parts,” I sighed again and rubbed my face.

On our first date I’d gone on with the guy in Berlin, we’d sat across in the city center, on a bench across from the museum and he asked me what my favorite part of living in New York was. The grapes, I said in German. And then I put the word in my hand and looked at it. I handed it to him. He took it, and extracted the r with his teeth, keeping the r in his mouth. He handed the word back to me. I laid it on my tongue and when I spoke again, a pigeon flew out and went to sit on the museum. The pigeons? He asked. Yeah, I said, and pointed to where the pigeon had flown off to. I liked how one would be sitting on the ledge of a building and even though there were so many other ledges that were just as good nearby, another pigeon would fly directly to where the first one was. It would walk toward the first until it had pushed it off. I saw this all the time. It was as if they were doing it with the pretense that the sitting pigeon had found the only good spot in NYC, and the new pigeon just had to have that spot. But really, they just wanted to be near each other, and couldn’t admit it outright.

Later, we'd walked in circles, over the bridge, along the river, over the bridge of the main road that went toward the Brandenburger Tor, through a flea market toward the second bridge. He stopped, had me look in a mirror, took a picture of the reflection. When we crossed the first bridge again he stopped, got close to me to take a selfie. I looked up at the other people walking by and the tops of the buildings and at the sky and he put his phone away and turned my face and kissed me. On his tongue the R was still there, rolling around.

That night after I'd left his place, I'd taken the train back home and felt dizzy as the train moved. Small round lights had appeared and disappeared in the dark window and then a larger light appeared as the train pulled into a station. It was empty and quiet and the ceiling was low and there was a white poster on the wall with black text I couldn't make out. The doors opened. I got up to look out the window. I still couldn't read the text. "Einsteigen, bitte," said the voice over the intercom. I stepped out of the train car quickly and the doors closed and I read, as the train pulled away, "Sich in der Stadt nicht zurechtfinden heißt nicht viel. In einer Stadt sich aber zu verirren..."

I looked back at Frances. She had peeled off most of the cooking wine label, and the little shreds of paper were sitting next to her in parts on the couch. "I don't understand what this is," she said. I moved my finger through the pile of label. "Hunter seems to care about you a lot," I said. "That's lovely, in whatever form it takes." I took a piece of label and rolled it between two fingers. "You know how in order to explain a math equation you explain each part of it, but with something like a color, you can't explain at all, but it's distinguishable immediately?" I asked.

“Yeah,” She looked at me. “That’s some theory of knowledge, isn’t it? By a German philosopher. I read that just before my medical leave. If you try to get a blind man to understand red, you can’t.”

I nodded. “Yeah, we were both reading it around that time,” I said. “My point is that maybe love is like red, or the feelings you have when you exist with other people are like red,” I said. “You can’t explain them, you just know them because you feel them.”

Frances furrowed her brow, and gathered the parts of the label into her hand.

“I’m not in love with Hunter,” she said.

“Oh yeah,” I said, “I’m not saying you are.”

We stayed on the porch until it started getting dark. Frances went inside to put the cooking wine in the fridge and throw away the shreds of the label. When she was gone, I looked into the sky. White dots were ascending in a line.

“Frances,” I called. “Frances!”

She stuck her head out the front door.

“Do you see that?” I asked, pointing at the sky. “What is that?”

She didn’t know.

When I went to bed, I looked out the window. The same moon he’d sent 6 hours earlier, a dark circle with a white crescent running along the side, was hovering above the yard between two high tension wires.

Berliner Kindheit: Tiergarten Translation

Oneself in a city to rightly find¹ is not called much. In a city not to err², like one in the Wood errs, needs schooling/instruction. Because must the street names to the Errorer³ so speak like the snapping⁴ of dry sprigs⁵ and small streets in the city center to him so

¹Sich zurechtfinden: to find one's bearings, find one's way, find one's way around, orient oneself
 recht: fairly, right, correct
 Recht: law (body of laws, a system), right, justice (legal connotation)
 zu Recht: justifiably, correctly, rightly

²Sich verirren: To lose one's way, to lose one's bearings

ver-

Hammer (706): verbs with ver often convey the notion of "wrongly" or "to excess." They can also express a change of state: becoming something, making somebody or something have the quality expressed

"Ver" seems to generally have the effect of intensifying the root, but with all of these together it seems like it is almost to embody the root, to be even more of it (get closer to it, enter into it). But Ver also seems to have a somewhat negative connotation-- and I wonder then if you can make the case that there is a sense that this excess itself is negative-- it is the extreme of the verb, or it is the verb "to excess" (which in English I would say has a negative connotation-- too much of a good thing etc). And then also there is a sense of mistake, or of something done "wrong."

irren: to err, to be mistake (sich irren: to be mistaken, to be wrong)

Sich irren (to make a mistake) and sich verirren (to lose one's way)/irren (to err, stray, be mistaken): "irren" being the root of the verb, with the suffix "ver"-- connection between "being wrong" (or making a mistake, being mistaken) and "getting lost" -- when one is so mistaken or wrong one gets a sense of lostness, losing one's way-- a disorientation from not knowing, knowing where one is amongst other things (there is a "right" way and a "wrong" way, and to do things wrong, to do things the wrong way or to be wrong: the extreme of this is losing one's way, one's bearings)

³Irrend: erring, mistaking, being mistaken

What is in German that is not in the English translation of these words are the connotations of "wrong" and "right". In English you just have finding ones way or losing ones way, but in the German there is a clear connection not just to being lost or orienting oneself, but to mistaking, correcting, being wrong, being mistaken, then becoming "right" or even an illusion to laws -- a societal "rightness"/determined "rightness"-- to lose one's way is to be "wrong" to make a mistake, and to find one's way, to orient oneself is to find rightness, something justifiable.

⁴Das Knacken: "snap," "crackle" (twigs, telephone line), cracking sound

⁵Das Reis, -er: (not der Reis, -e: Rice) — sprig (a small star bearing leaves or flowers, taken from a bush or plant), scion, graft — has an agricultural, horticultural, botanical connotation

Is there a more common work like twig, is reis a commonly used word, or does it have a "botanical" feel?

pointedly as a mountain trough counter-mirror⁶. This art did I late acquire⁷: she did a dream fulfill, from which the first traces [were] a labyrinth on the blotting papers of my notebooks were. No, not the first, because before them was the one, which did overlast them. The way in this labyrinth, which his Ariande didn't lack, lead over the

*ask a German speaker if there is a different work for twigs and if reis is common/Umgangssprache (Zweig shows up for twig, but it also means rod, and verge)

Graft: a shoot or twig inserted into a slit on the trunk or stem or a living plant, from which it receives sap

Grafting: inserting a shoot or twig as a graft. Medically: a piece of living tissue that is transplanted surgically

“Grafting is an horticultural technique whereby tissues of plants are joined together so as to continue their growth together. The upper part of the combined plant is called the **scion** while the lower part is called the rootstock...the technique is most commonly used in asexual propagation of commercially grown plants for the horticultural and agricultural trades.” Under history, society, and culture— Europe and USA: “while grafting continued to grow in Europe during the 18th century, it was considered unnecessary in the United States as the produce from fruit trees was largely used either to make cider or feed hogs.” (Why does that explain why/how it was unnecessary?)

Ok so: I think Reis has a horticultural connotation— what's interesting is these “twigs” have a sense of being touched/created by humans— for the purpose of manipulating/cultivating nature— twig on the other hand has a sense of having been found, or being there on its own, untouched by man— maybe points the difference in an American kind of wildness (at least when comparing this text to Thoreau) vs European, or perhaps more directly points to the city vs the woods— a person raised in the city and not the woods?

⁶Widerspiegeln:

Spiegeln: mirror

Wider: as a preposition means “against,” “contra” („counter“ feels the most useful)

In words such as: widerlegen (refute), widerstellen (resist), widerhallen (echo), (only widerhallen and widerspiegeln are separable— the other words have a sense of standing ground, whereas these two have a sense of sending something back— cool, then, that they are also separable while the other are fest)

Wider has the connotation of resistance, coming up against something, fighting— but this feels a little softer with widerspiegeln and widerhallen

Der Widerspruch: contradiction, objection, opposition

Der Widerstand: Resistance, counter action, Opposition

⁷ Erlernen: to learn sth (a skill, language)

To master sth

(An instrument, Trade, a Language— by acquisition)

Lernen: to learn, study, to train sth, to take courses/lessons

Hammer (706): “er” verbs often express the achievement or conclusion of an action:

Bitten— erbitten : ask/request — to get by asking for it

Schießen — erschießen : to shoot — to shoot sb dead

-a productive use of er is to form verbs or nouns with the idea of acquiring

-something by the action expressed by the noun

Bendler bridge, whose gentle curvature the first hillflank for me became. Unfair from her [the bridge's] feet lay the goal: the Friedrich Wilhelm and the Queen Luise. On their round pedestals towered they out of beds like captivated from magic curves, which a water run before them in the sand wrote. (more) Preferred than the conqueror, turned I myself but at her pedestal, because, what on it proceeded, if also they distinctly hung together, neared in the space was. That it with the Errgarten (maze/labyrinth) something to do had, realized I since year one at the broad, banal courtyard, which though betrayed nothing, that here, few steps front the parade of the taxis and state coaches discarded the insteadable (*odd) part of the park sleeps.

From these sensed I early a sign. Here namely or unfar must I her location those Ariadne have deterred, at whose proximity (*nearness) I to the first times experienced/learned, what to me as the word later devolved: Love. Unfortunately surfaced that young woman at her sources, which itself as cold shadows over it laid. And so was this park, which itself like no other the children open seemed, also otherwise for me with the silents, undrivethroughables, misplaced. How seldom distinguished I the fish in (the) Goldfish pond. How much promised the Yardhunter Alley with its name and how little it held. How often searched I the bush in vain, in which with red, blue little towers a kiosk in the style of anchor-stone-building blocks stood. How hopeless turned with every spring my love to Prince Louis Ferdinand back, to whose feet the crocuses and daffodils/narcissus stood. A water-run, which me from him separated, made it to me so untouchable as if they under a glass cover had stood. So cold in beauty [they] had to stand, what is royal, and I grasped (*understood), why

Luise from Landau, with which I in circles had sat until she had died, which her blood from the water of the canals (made) wet.

Later I discovered a new angle: above others did I learn. Though no girl, no experience, no book could to me about this new thing say. When therefore? I for this reason 30 years thereafter a Geographer, a builder from Berlin, attended to mine, in order after long social removal from the city with me to return back, his paths gouged through this garden, in which he the seed of the silence sowed. He proceeded the steep paths and one of these became to him precipitous. He went down, if already not to the mothers of all beings, certainly to those of the garden. In Asphalt, over which he wanted to, awoke his steps an echo. The gas, which shined on our pavement/cobblestones, the threw a ambiguous (*twomeaning) light on this ground. The small stairs, the pillarcarried porch (*porchway/front hall), this frieze (*a textile?) and architrave (*a beam?) of the Tiergarten villas -- from on to this first time was he at his word taken. Above all, though, the staircases, which with their pane/slice the old were, if itself/themselves also within what one inhabited, would have much changed. The verses I knew still, which after the school the interval of my heart filled, when I a step in the stair climbing made. She dawned on me from the pane, where a woman hovering like a sistine madonna, a wreath in the hands holding, out of the alcove stepped. Lifting the straps of my briefcase with the thumbs onto my shoulders, I let out: "work is the citizen's adornment / blessing is the effort price" The house door under sank with a sigh, like an apparition in the grave, back into the castle/lock. One of the colorful panes stood open and by the rhythm of the beats went it on upwards the stairs.

The carotids and atlantes, the putty and pomonas, which at that time had looked at me, stood to me now at the next those outdated out of the gender/species of knowledge of the swell, which the stop into Dasein (*being there) or in a house protects because they understand waiting. And so was it to them one, whether they a foreigner waited, the return of the old gods or for a child, who 30 years before, with the briefcase, at their feet pushed past/by. In their drawing (*Zeichnen: sign) became the old west's antique, from which the west wind the ships came, which their Barge with the apples of Hesperides slowly the army canal floats down, in order by the bridge of heracles to land (*anlegen: moar/lay out. an: at, legen: to lay). And again have, like my childhood, the Hydra and the Nemishe lion place in the wilderness around the great stone.

Der Brief des Lord Chandos Translation (Excerpt)

It is to me fully the possibility to get lost about anything hanging together with thinking or speaking.

First became it to me gradually impossible, a higher or more general topic to talk about and with it to take those words into the mouth which for themselves, noyeah (*doch), all men without hesitating to think swiftly/fluidly use to serve. I sensed an unexplainlike Unpleasure (*unerklarliches Unbehagen), the words “Mindspirit,”(*geist) “Soul,” or “Body,” just to speak out. I found it from inside myself impossible, about the LaidOuthoods (*Angelegenheit: matter, issue) of the court or the BroughtForths (*Vorkommnisse: occurrences, incidents, events) in parliament, or what they otherwise want, an Originalpart (*urteil: judgement) to bring out. And this not somewhat out of backsights of which kind, because you know (*kennen) my up-to-lightlydoneness-going (*bis zur Leichtfertigkeit gehenden) Freecourage (*Freimut: candor): instead the abstract words, which themselves, noyeah, the tongue as per nature [in keeping with nature] serve must in order some [internal] Originalpart on the day to give, disintegrated to me in the mouth like moldy mushrooms. This encountered me, that I my 4 year old daughter Catarina Pampilia [for] a childish lie, which she was guilty of making, reprimand and her to the necessity, always true/honest (*wahr: true) to be, wanted to lead, and thereby the to-me-in-the-mouth-streaming-to (*die mir im Mund zuströmenden) Besgraspings (*Begriff: concepts) suddenly such a shimmering coloration (*Färbung) took on and so in each other overflowed, that I, the sentence so it went to end sputtered, so like if I unwell to become were and also indeed

(*tatsächlich) pale in the face and with a hefty/strained Pressure (*heftigen Druck: hefty strain) upon my brow, I the child alone left, the door behind me slammed, and myself only once on horseback, taking off to the lonesome/solitary (*einsam) expanse of pasture (*Hutweide: pasture) in a good gallop, again more or less re-collected (*wiederherstellen: to rebuild [fig confidence]/reconstruct).

Gradually but spread these impugments out like a rust consuming the space around itself (*fressend). It would to me also in familiar and housebaked (*hausbacken: plain, homely, homemade) conversations all the [internal] Originalparts (*Urteil: judgements) which to lightness and with sleep wandering certainty tend to be given (*abgeben: provide), such fogginess/reticence/incoherence or incapacity of thought/thinking (*bedenklich: apprehensive) (so incoherently thought/so foggily thought) that I stop must, in such conversations to take part with an unexplainlike bile (*Zorn: anger/wrath/fury), which I only with effort barely (*notdürftig) disguise (*verbergen)...My mindspirit (*Geist) forced (*zwingen) me all things, which in such a conversation came forth in an uncanny closeness (*Nahe) to see: so like I once in a small enlargement glass (*Vergrößerungsglas) a piece of the skin of my small finger had seen, which a flat open field (*Blachfeld) with furrows (*Furchen) and holes resembled (*gleichen), so it went to me now with human beings and their handlings (*Handlung: act/deed/spirit). It worked out/went smoothly (*gelingen: succeed, go smoothly, work out) to me no more, them with the simplifying (*vereinfachend) view (*Blick) of what-has-been-dwelled-in-to-familiarity (*Gewohnheit) to conceive/comprehend (*erfassen). It disintegrated (*zerfallen) to me everything into parts, the parts again into parts, and nothing more let itself within one Begrasping

(*Begriff) be encompassed (*umspannen). The singular (*einzelnen) words swam around me; they clotted (*gerannen: congealed) into eyes which at me starred, and in them I again starred into (*hineinstarren) had to; whirls are they, in which looking down (*hinabzusehen) swindles me, which unhaltingly (*unaufhaltsam) turn and in and through them man to emptiness (*ins Leere) comes.

Schlechte Wörter Translation (Excerpt)

I need now the better words no more. *The Rain, which against the window falls* (*stürzen: plunge [fall, decrease dramatically], topple, fall, overthrow). Earlier would to me there (*da) something wholly (*ganz) different have fallen in (*einfallen). With this (*damit) is it now enough. *The Rain, which against the window falls* (*stürzen). That reaches [it] (*reichen). I had with what remained (*übrigens: withal, by the way, by the by. Übrig: remaining) another/a different Outpress (*Ausdruck: expression) on the tongue (*Zunge), it was not only better, it was exacter (*genauer), but I did it forget, while the rain against the window fell, or that did, what I in Begrasping (*Begriff: concept) was, to forget. I am not very newcraving (*neugierig-- neu: new. gier: greed, craving, voraciousness), what to me with (*bei) the next Rain fall in will, with (*bei) [the] nextmostgentle (*nächstsanftigeren), [the] nextmosthefty (*nächstheftigeren), but I suppose (*vermuten), that to me a turnofphrase (*Wendung) for all Rainsorts would reach [it] (*reichen). I will myself not around it (*darum) worry (*kümmern), whether (*ob) one (*man) falls (*stürzen) can say, if (*wenn) he only weakly the tapping (*Schieben: shoving) touches (*berühren), whether (*ob) it than not too much said is. Or too little, when (*wenn) it in Begrasping (*Begriff: concept) is, the tapping (*Schieben: shoving) to dent/push (*eindrucken: press in). I let it now thereby/with (*dabei), I stay by falling (*stürzen), around the rest should the others worry (*sich kümmern um).

The Wentunder (*Untergang: demise, downfall) *before* (*vor) *oneself* (*sich) *towards* (*her) *to drag* (*schleifen), that fell to me also in, it is certainly (*sicher) still

(*noch) more grabatable (*angreifbar: attackable, vulnerable [to attack, presumably] anriefen: to attack, assault) than the falling (*stürzende) Rain, because one (*man) drags nothing before oneself toward, one (*man) pushes (*schieben) it or thrusts (*stoßen) it, barrels (*Karron) for example (*Beispiel) or wheelchairs (*Rollstühle), while one (*man) other things likes potatosacks behind oneself drags (*nachschieben), other things, in no case Wentunders (*Untergänge), which differently transported are. I know that and the better turnsofphrases (*Wendungen) laid to me also already again on the tongue (*Zunge), but in order to flee. I trust them not after (*nachtrauen: to mourn). *The Wentunder* (*Untergang: downfall) *before* (*vor) *oneself* (*sich) *toward* (*her) *to drag* or better *the Wentunders* (*Untergänge: downfalls), I stiffen [to the point of hardness] (*versteifen) not on it (*sich versteifen auf: to become set on something), but I stay therewith (*dabei). Whether (*ob) one (*man) can say *I decide for [on] it* is questionish (*fraglich: iffy, doubtful, questionable). The yetly (*bisherig: up to now) languagecustoms (*Sprachgebräuche-- Gebrauch: customs, comes from brauchen: to need/be in need of, gebraucht: used, secondhand) let a decision (*Entscheidung) there, where it itself only more about (*um) a possibility (*Möglichkeit), not to. One (*man) could oneself about it holdunder (*unterhalten: entertain, converse), but I have these Underholdings (*Unterhaltungen: conversations, amusements) instead (*statt)-- they are mostly in Taxis on the ways outoftownwards (*stadtauswärts: [going]out of town/outbound, auswärts: outward, away, out of town) driven, and take bargain (*im Kauf nehmen: accept something, esp sth undesirable [Kauf: bargain, nehmen: to take] my grabatable (*angreifbar: attackable, vulnerable) turnsofphrases (*Wendungen).

Über das Marionettentheater Translation (Excerpts)

When I the winter [of] 1801 in M... time spend (*zubringen) met (*antreffen) I thesame (*dasselbst) of the evening, in an open garden, Herr C. who since shortly/a short time (*kurzem), in the the city as the first dancer of the opera was stood at (*anstellen: employed) and by (*bei) the public outoftheordinary (*außerordentlich: exceptional-- ordentlich: neat, tidy, reputable, ordinary, fair, straight außer: except, besides, excluding, outside, beyond-- maybe beyondordinary) luck/happiness (*Glück) made/did (*machen).

I said to him, that I fullof wonder (*erstaunen) would have been, him already multiple (*mehrere) times in a marionettentheater to find, which in the market built of wood was (*zusammenzimmern: fabricate zimmern: to timber/make of wood), and the populace (*Pöbel), through small dramatic Burlesques, with song (*Gesang) and dance interweaved (*durchweben-- weaved through/throughweaved), amused (*belustigen).

He assured (*versichern) me, that to him the Pantomimik of these puppets much pleasure (*Vergnügung) made, and let [it] not indistinctly (*undeutlich) [be] noted, that a dancer, who himself build out (*ausbilden: educate) would wänt (*wolle) quite a bit (*mancherlei-- look up lei) from them [the puppets] learn could.

Because (*da) this utterance (*Außerung: utterance) through the kind (*Art) as he them brought forth, more than a mere (*bloß[er]) Fall-in (*Einfall: idea, incursion. Ein: one. fallen: to fall) seemed, so let I myself by him down (*niederlassen: to lower sth, let

down), in order him about he reasons, on which he a so insteadable (*sonderbar: odd) claim (*Behauptung-- do sth with this word), closer to examine (*vernehmen⁸).

He asked me whether (*ob) I not, in the doing (*Tat: deed, act) some movements (*Bewegung-- be- Weg: way, away, off, gone, and path, way, route, journey ung: in this case “-ment,” but also something “-tion”?) of the puppets, especially the smaller [ones] in [the] dance very graceful (*grázios) found had.

This circumstand/circumstood (*Umstand: circumstance (also fact, conjecture) um: circum-, stand: stood) could I not deny (*leugnen-- lie (lügen) but with an e). A group of four farmers, who after a rapid beat/rasch tok (*raschen Takt) a round deanced, could have from Teniers not handsomer (*hübscher: pretty, cute, handsome, beautiful) been painted. I enquired (*erkundigen-- kundig: informed) after the mechanism of these figures and how it possible (*möglich) wouldbe (*wäre), the singular (*einzeln) limbs (*Glieder) thesame (*derselben) and their points, without Mariades of threads (*Faden) on the fingers to have, so to rule/govern (*regieren), when it the rhythm of the movement (*Bewegung), or the dance, require/demand (*erfordern).

He answered (*antworten-- ant-? Wort: word), that I not imagine müst (*müsse), as if each limb (*Glieder) separate[ly] (*einzeln: singularly, separately, individually, on its own), during the various moments of the dance from the operator (*Mechanisten) placed/staged/posed (*gestellt) and moved would be.

⁸ Vernehmen means to examine, but also “to hear” and you can use it for “to hear a witness,” “to percieve a sound,” in the phrase “by all accounts received”: the word “nehmen” is the root, and it seems like there is a sense of “to take something in,” which is interesting that it means “examine” (a witness, defendant) or “interrogate” (a witness, defendant) because I would thing of interrogation and examination as something active and pointed, pushing in toward another person in order to extract something from them, but this work has within it more passivity on the part of the person doing the examining, interrogating--like the examining is “taking something in,” and there is more of a sense of “listening” within interrogating and therefore a silence on the part of the examiner

Each movement (*Bewegung), said he, would have (*hätte) a Heavypoint (*Schwerpunkt: center of gravity. Schwer: heavy [also figurative], difficult, grave, serious, weighty); it would be (*wäre) enough, these, in the inner (*Innen) of the figure, to govern (*regieren): the limbs (*Glieder), which not as pendulum would be (*wäre), follow, without some [kind of?] Todo (*Zutun: assistance, support), along an automatic (*mechanische) manner/way (*Weise) by themselves (*von selbst).

He set toward (*hinzusetzen: added to), that these movements (*Bewegungen) very onefold (*einfach: simply) would be (*wäre), that each time (*jedesmal), when the Heavypoint (*Schwerpunkt: center of gravity) in a *direct* (*grade[n]) *line* is moved (*bewegen) the limbs (*Glieder) already *curves* bewrite (*beschreiben: describe, delineate): and often, in a random (*zufällig-- tofallly/fallto-ly) manner jerk (*erschüttern-- schüttern: vibrate) the whole [thing: [puppet]] already in a kind of rhythmic movement (*Bewegung) would come (*käme), which to the dancer similar (*ähnlich) would be (*wäre).

This Bemarking (*Bemerkung: remark) seemed to me first of all (*zuerst) a light over the Pleasure (*Vergnügen) to throw, which he in the Theater of the Marionettes gave forth (*vorgeben: professed) to find. In between intuited (*ahnden [old for ahnen?]: to sense, anticipate) by for the Followation (*Folgerung: consequences) not yet, which he later on (*späterhin) thereout would draw (*ziehen).

I asked him if he believed, that the Operator (*Maschinist) who governed (*regieren) these puppets, himself a dancer be, or at least a Begrasping (*Begriff: concept) of beauty (*Schönen) in dance have müst (*müsse)?

He replied (*erwidern), that when a concern (*Geschäft) from his automatic (*mechanistisch) side, light is, front here not yet follows, that it completely (*gänzlich) without sensing (*Empfindung) operated (*betrieben) could be (*könnte).

The line, which the Heavypoint (*Schwerpunkt: center of gravity) [had] to describe (*beschreiben: describe, delineate) had, would be admittedly (*zwar) very onefold (*einfach: simple), and as/like he believed, in [the] most cases, straight (*grade). In cases, where it crooked (*krumm) is, seems the law (*Gesetz) of its curvature (*Krümmung) at least (*wenigstens) of the first or highest second order (*Ordnung); and also in this last case elliptical, whose form of movement (*Bewegung) the peak (*spitzen) of manish (*mannlichen: human) bodies (*Körper) because of the joint (*Gelenke) at all the natural is, and so to the Operator no great (*große) Art costs, to draw wrongly (*verzeichnen: misrepresent).

Against that [though] (*dagegen: however) would be (*wäre) these lines again, from another side, something very secretful (*Geheimnisvolles) because (*denn) it would be (*wäre) nothing other (*anders) than the Way (*Weg: path) of the soul of the dancer; and he doubts (*zweifeln), that it differently (*anders) could be found, as thereby (*als dadurch) that the Operator (*Mechanisten) himself the Heavypoint (*Schwerpunkt: center of gravity) positions (*versetzen), that means with other words, *dances*.

I replied (*erwidern), that one the concern (*Geschäft: duty) the same as something fairly mindspiritless (*Geistloses: rapid) would have (*hätte) imagined: something which the turning (*Drehen: rotation) of a crank which [plays] a lyre.

Noway (*keineswegs), answered he. Much more hold forth (*vorhalten: curbs) the movement his finger to movement of the thereat fixed (*befestigen) puppet fairly artist

(*künstlich: artificially), somewhat (*etwa) like numbers to a logarithm or the Asymptote to Hyperbel.

Inbetween (*inzwischen) believed he that also the last break (*Bruch) from Mindspirit (*Geist) of which he spoke, out of the Marionette removed (*entfernen) be, that its dance wholly is [the] realm of mechanical force (*Kraft) pass[/play] over to (*hinüberspielen) and convey (*vermitteln) of a crank, just/so like, I to myself through, couldbe (*könne) brought forth toward (*hervorbringen: produce, manifest, bring into being).

...

How, asked I, since (*da) he hisside (*seinerseits: for his part) a little betreaded (*betreten: embarrassed. treten: tread (on), betreten (verb): to tread, enter) to the earth saw (*sah: sehen: to see, look): how are then these Requirements (*Forderungen: demands), which You (*Sie) on the Artfulness (*Kunstfertigkeit: artistry) thesame thought to make, bespoken (*bestellt: to be constituted. bestellen-- bespoken: to order or reserve something in advance)

Nothing, answered he, what oneself not also already here wouldfind (*fände): Evenmeasure (*Ebenmaß: symmetry), Moveishness (*Beweglichkeit: agility), Lightlyness (*Leichtigkeit: lightness) -- only everything in a higher degree (*Grade); an especially a morecorrespondenttonature (*naturgemäßer: more natural) Atorder (*Anordnung: array) of Heavypoints (*Schwerpunkte: centers of gravity).

And the Forepart (*Vorteil: advantage), that these puppets before living dancers frontout would have?

The Forepart (*Vorteil: advantage)? Tofronted (*zuvörderst: primarily. Zu: to, vordern: prefrontal) a negativer, my forthsteppish (*admirable) friend, namely this, that it [the puppet] itself never hesitates (*sich zieren: hesitate, make a fuss. Without “sich”: to adorn). -- Because (*denn) foppery (*Ziererei: foppery: concern with clothes and appearance) appears (*erscheinen), as You know, when itself the soul (vis motrix) in some other point befinds (*sich befinden: to be located), as the Heavypoint (*Schwerpunkt: center of gravity) of the movement (*Bewegung: Bewaytion). Because (*da) the Operator (*Maschinist) now badtoward (*schlechthin: plainly) bymeansof (*vermittelst) the wire (*Draht) or thread, no other point in his force (*Gewalt) has, as this: so are all remaining Limbs (*Glieder), what it should be: dead, pure pendulums, and follows the mere law (*Gesetz) of the Heaviness (*Schwere: also, gravity); a forthsteppish (*vortrefflich) Ownship (*Eigenschaft: characteristic), which one fornothing (*vergebens) for the most part our dancer searches.

See You (*Sie) only the [dancer] P...on (*ansehen: look at), drove he forth (*fortfahren: to continue in dialogue, fort: along, off. Fahren: to drive), when she the Daphne plays, and herself, follows (*verfolgen) from Apollo, after him looks around; the soul sits to her in the vortex (*Wirbeln) of the cross (*Kreuz); she bends herself, as if she wants to break, like a Naiad out of the school Berninis. See You the young [dancer] F... on (*ansehen: look at), when he, as Paris, under the three Goddesses stands, and the Venus the apple reaches over (*überreichen: hand over): the soul sits to him really (*gar) (it is a horror, it to see) in [the] elbow (*Ellenbogen).

Such missgrasps (*Mißgriffe: blunders), set he offbreaking (*abbrechend) towardto (*hinzusetzen: to add. Setzen: sit, set, hin: toward, zu: to), are unavoidish

(*unvermeidlich: inevitable. vermeiden: to avoid, prevent), sincethen (*seitdem) we from the tree of Recognition (*Erkenntnis: knowledge, insight. erkennen: recognize) did eat. Noyeah (*doch) the paradise is locked (*verriegelt) and the Cherub behind us; we must to trip around the world make, and see, whether it muchlightly (*vielleicht: perhaps) from behind somewhere again open is.

I laughed. --Allofthings (*Allerdings: certainly), thought I, can the Mindspirit (*Geist) not err (*irren), there, were nothing forthhanded (*vorhanden: available) is. Noyeah (*doch) I remarked (*bermerken: notice), that he still (*noch) more on the heart had, and bid (*bitten: ask, request) him, forth to drive (*fortfahren: to continue in dialogue, fort: along, off. Fahren: to drive).

Tothis, spoke he, have these puppets a Forepart (*Vorteil: advantage), that they *antigravity* are. From the Carryhood (*Trägheit: sluggishness, lethargy) of Material, these to the dance themostagainststriving (*ent⁹gegenstrebendsten: entgegenstreben: strive toward. Entgegen: against. Streben: to strive) of all Oneships (*Eigenschaft: characteristic), know them not: because the force (*Kraft), which it [the puppet] into the airs (*Lüfte) raises, bigger is, as those, that [fettors (*fesseln: shackle, captivate)] it to the earth...the Puppet needs the earth only as the fairies (*Elfen: elves, fairies), in order to it to streak (*streifen), and the swing (*Schwung) of the limbs (*Glieder), through the eyeblinkish (*augenblicklich: momentary) Restraint (*Hemmung) new to beliven (*beleben: invigorate. Leben: life, leben: to live): we need it, in order uponit

⁹ **ent-**

Hammer (705) ent-verbs of motion have the idea of escaping or going away

laufen --> jdm/etwas entlaufen run away/escape from sb/sth

verbs with ent can have the sense of removing something
spannen (to tense, strain) --> entspannen (relax)

(*darauf) to *rest* (*ruhen), and us from the Atstringention (*Anstrengung: effort, exertion streng: strict, stringent an: at) of the dance to recover (*erholen): A moment, which openable (*offenbar: obviously) itself no dance is, and with it itself continues nothing to let be started, as to him preferably (*möglichst) invisible make.

I said, that, so sent he also the stuff of paradoxes forth, he me noyeah (*doch) neverevery make believe would, that in a mechanical LimbsMan (*Gliedermann) more Atcourage (*Anmut: grace) enclosed (*enthalten) could be, as of the manish (*menschlich: human) body (*Körper).

...

I said, that I very (*gar) well wouldknow (*wüsste), which Unorder (*Unordnung), in the natural Grace of all Humans (*Menschen), the Awarebeing (*Bewusstsein¹⁰) directed at (*anrichten). A young man from my Beknownship (*Bekanntschaft¹¹: bekannt: famous, acquainted) wouldhave, through a meer Benoting (*Bemerkung: remark, observation), samesome (*gleichsam: quasi/as it were) before my eyes, his Unblame (*Unschuld: innocence) lost, and the Paradise thesame, despite all imaginable

¹⁰ **be-**

Hammer (704): be- add this to an intransitive verb with a dative object and then the object is accusative with the new word: jdm dienen, jdn bedienen, and the verb becomes transitive

*transitive verb: a verb that accepts one more object, intransitive verbs don't have objects (wikipedia: Transitive Verb)

with transitive verbs be- can change the action into a different object (jdm etwas liefern: to deliver sth to smb--> jd mit etwas beliefern: to supply sb with sth)

be- forms verbs into nouns with the idea of providing something:

die Nachricht --> benachrichtigen (to notify)

das Wasser --> bewässern (to irrigate)

be- makes verbs from adjectives, with a sense of giving someone or something that quality:

feucht --> befeuchten (moisten)

frei --> befreien (liberate)

ruhig --> beruhigen (calm)

¹¹-**Schaft**: added to nouns from nouns related to a collective or state

(*ersinnlich¹²: ersinnen: contrive, sinnen: to think, muse; devise) Betoilings (*Bemühungen: endeavor, effort, struggle. Mühe: toil, difficulty) afterwards never again found. --Noyeah (*doch), which consequences (*Folgerungen: folgen: ensue, trail sb, follow sb/sth, to comply with sb/sth), set I towardto (*hinzusetzen: to add. hinsetzen: sit down, set down, put sth down), could you thereout draw (*daraus ziehen).
...

From these days, samesome (*gleichsam: quasi, as it were) from this Eyeblink (*Augenblick: instant) on, went a unbegraspish (*unbegreiflich: incomprehensible) Alteration (*Veränderung) with the young Humans (*Menschen) on ahead (*vorgehen: to proceed). He began, daylong before the mirror to stand; and always an allure (*Reiz) after the others forsook (*verlassen) him. An unviewable (*unsichtbar: invisible) and unbegraspish (*unbegreiflich: incomprehensible) violence seemed, like an ironclad (*eisern) Net, in order the free Play of his Gestures to lay, and as a new year streamed out (*verflossen: elapsed) was, was no trance more of his Dearishness in him to uncover (*entdecken: discover) which the eyes of the Humans (*Menschen) otherwise, which him closedaringaround (*umringen: surround) feasted had. Yet now lived someone, who a witness (*Zeuge) of those insteadable (*sonderbar: odd) and unlucky Beforecase (*Vorfall: incident) was, and him, word for word, as I him told (*erzählen) confirm (*bestätigen) could.

¹²er-

Hammer (706): doing something to the point of achieving it (express the achievement or conclusion of an action)/acquiring something by the action expressed by the simple verb (schoßen: to shoot → erschossen: to shoot and kill)

ersinnen: sort of like to think something into existence (to conjure)

Right Dot •

The house was quiet and dark the evening I returned to New York State from Berlin. I walked through the empty living room and opened my door and sat my stuff on the bed. As soon as I started unpacking my bag Frances appeared and ran at me and gave me a big hug and asked, how was it? How was the city? Did you see him again? And then she told me she and Lilian had decided to have a dinner party tonight. She had invited Hunter. Do you mind if I invite Adelina? I asked. She just got back, too.

Adelina was at her studio working on her senior exhibition. She'd been drawing fine detailed sketches of winding lines that curved and twisted between gray masses of graphite, condensing into white like plasma. They were abstract but after looking for a second you could see they each resembled a part of the body: the length of a spine, tissue separating, or veins spidering into the shape of lungs. She looked tired, she said she'd just gotten back to the States that morning. She'd been visiting her family in Germany. They kept hounding me the whole time, she said. In German, asking me when I'm moving back. I don't know what to tell them. My life is here and there, she said. When I'm there I always miss my friends, school. When I'm here I miss hearing German, I miss my family, I miss the way the countryside looks from the train and how flat and golden it is, versus the sloping orchards of New York state, she said, and how they rise into blue mountains in the distance. When I got back this time, though, I looked at the mountains and thought they looked pale and hunched over, she told me.

Before we left I looked around at her drawings. I went closer to see and more markings began to emerge that didn't fit into the image of an organ, and within the lines you could make out a flower or the head of a bird or a fish tail. It's like you're taking something familiar and making it odd and beautiful at the same time, I said. She came up next to me and looked at the drawing. We hadn't seen each other while we were in Germany, she was hours away in the north. Did you see that guy while you were there? She asked.

We drove back to the house and she told me the work was inspired by a science class she had taken in which they'd dissected a heart without having learned any of the parts or their names beforehand. Our teacher told us to just put our fingers in and feel, she said. So we just kind of explored around and touched valves and fleshy pockets and all of that. And it was amazing, it was like touching the inside of your own body, it was crazy to touch this thing that is inside of us but we know nothing about. She said as well, it was inspired by that thing she'd experienced in Germany for her year abroad. She'd told me she'd gotten along well with another art student in the program she was in, they'd started dating, and a couple days in they'd gone back to his place but she hadn't wanted to have sex. Then we won't have sex, he'd said. Instead he had pointed out the starlings in the courtyard outside the balcony. There was a small murmuration of them flying together along the sides of the buildings, and circling, separating a little when they made a turn. There seemed to be no leader, they just moved up and around and over, flying somehow together and individually at the same time. I wonder how they do that, she'd said to him. He hadn't been sure, but he said he knew the formation

was called a murmuration. They snuggled together on the balcony and he'd kissed her and she kissed him back and things moved along a little and then he was saying, I look forward to being inside of you, I look forward to being inside of you. And she kept thinking, she'd told me, what are you talking about? I'm not letting you inside of me. You haven't seen it yet, what's inside of me. Why would I let you into it?

By the time they'd stopped, she said, he'd gotten naked and she was still clothed and they just sat there and she felt like she had nothing to say, like she would have to explain her entire life to him and all of her beliefs for him to understand why she didn't want to have sex with him, she said, or didn't want to have sex in that moment. But it was too much stuff all at once so she just stayed silent, she didn't say anything.

Inside, Hunter had already arrived, and Frances was cooking slices of zucchini in a cast iron pan. The slices were sizzling in a layer of oil. She and Hunter were wearing masks and Lilian wasn't, Lilian looked flushed and bright. I was just asking everyone if their parents are still in love, she said. Are yours?

Adelina threw back her head and laughed. My parents spent time together briefly in the 90's, when my dad was stationed in Germany. They'd come back to the US together when mom got pregnant with me but separated soon after I was born. Lilian said hers were. They were still excited about each other, she'd grown up with this example of a perfect marriage, a perfect couple, perfect love. They stay curious about each other.

They don't assume that they know everything about one another, and they keep asking questions and keep wanting to know more.

What is being in love? I asked. Once when my dad was tucking me into bed I'd asked him why he'd never had an affair. He shrugged and said he didn't really have the time for one. This August they had their 30th anniversary, I said, and we went out to a restaurant and sat on the porch. There was a small little family nearby, two parents and a little baby who wanted to interact with everyone. Mom smiled at the parents, who were trying to get the baby to not bang on the table, not make a noise at everyone passing by. She told them how cute their girl was. Mom knows how to gush about a baby. How tiny and small and new it is. Young parents love to be told this thing that they just extracted onto the earth and fell instantly for is the most adorable little thing, she says. They are sleep deprived and nervous, it relaxes them. My parents asked each other: What has been your favorite thing about the last 30 years together? My dad said, building a family with you. Building something. Working together and wanting the same thing. My mom said, two years ago when none of the kids were living at home and we got high on shrooms and laughed the entire time. I think that's being in love, I said.

Adelina said, well, they're good buds. But are they in love? Maybe that kind of love, "in love" love, isn't meant to last. The kitchen had slowly gotten dark except for the light over the stove. It had begun to rain softly and the sound of it tapping outside mixed with the sound of the sizzling zucchini, until the oil popped and spat for a

second. Frances pointed to the spatula and Hunter reached over and grabbed it. He put his hand on her back as he passed it to her.

Frances and Hunter went upstairs so Frances could take her mask off while eating. Adelina and Lilian and I sat in the living room together, eating and passing around a jar of heavy cream, taking turns shaking it so it would whip. What are your favorite cliches? Lilian asked. At one point, I said, I'd said to the guy in Berlin, "I don't want to put words in your mouth," not thinking about the phrase or what it meant and soon after, he used the phrase too. When he said it, I told them, I saw myself placing the phrase into his open mouth until his mouth was full of the words. Usually it was him slipping words, one by one, into mine. Adelina grabbed a *Cosmopolitan* that was sitting on the coffee table and read aloud from an article titled "How To Say The Right Things To Please Your Man":

"Be Original: A newly invented metaphor assists thought by evoking a visual image, while on the other hand a metaphor which is technically 'dead' (e. g. iron resolution) has in effect reverted to being an ordinary word and can generally be used without loss of vividness. But in between these two classes there is a huge dump of worn-out metaphors which have lost all evocative power and are merely used because they save people the trouble of inventing phrases for themselves. Examples are: Ring the changes on, take up the cudgels for, toe the line, ride roughshod over, stand shoulder to shoulder with, play into the hands of, no axe to grind, grist to the mill, fishing in troubled waters, on the order of the day, Achilles' heel, swan song, hotbed. Many of these are used

without knowledge of their meaning (what is a ‘rift’, for instance?), and incompatible metaphors are frequently mixed, a sure sign that the ~~writer~~ woman is not interested in what [s]he is saying.”¹³

Frances’ laugh traveled down from her room down the stairs, glancing at us briefly before slipping out the door.

When the house was empty again Lilian stood in my doorway while I lounged in bed. The light from the dining room filled out behind her. She leaned against the doorframe and asked me, do you really think someone can fit you like a puzzle piece? I propped myself up on my elbows. I don’t know, I said. Sometimes it feels like it fixes things. When I met this guy it made me feel a little crazy, because it felt so good, I didn’t feel sad all of a sudden, especially in the first couple weeks and part of me didn’t trust it but it partially made sense because at the end of every story someone is in love, it’s like this thing we are all supposed to be aiming for, like it is the thing that’s going to make us happy. We have all these stories telling us what it looks like and what it feels like and how to achieve it and how to feel it. As if it is this thing that runs from your head to your toes, grounding you to the earth, or toward the person, as if with sex and love you are just anchored and everything you do just follows seamlessly along that line. But I feel like it gets caught in places, like the inside of your mouth, on your tongue, in your chest, in your big toe, in the bend of your elbow. I can’t seem to do it the right way, I said. But I think that’s why I’ve wanted to be away, maybe.

¹³ Quote from “Politics and the English Language” by George Orwell

When I was in Berlin, I said, I liked that when I looked around, when I was in the supermarket, I didn't have any associations with anything. I didn't know most of the brands or the packaging. I didn't know how new or old any of the products were, or what the companies wanted me to believe about them. When I was on the train, and the car would slow and stop and the door would open, the person over the intercom would say some things in German, but I remember specifically hearing "einsteigen, bitte" over and over, as people would get on. And the word, einsteigen would appear to me at first just as a collection of letters, not attached to any meaning. I could see the word clearly, as it was. Every word in English is invisible to me behind meaning, behind the first time I experienced it and how I came to understand it as a child, as the world was being introduced to me. When I got back to the US the first time, I remember suddenly being at a rest stop on the highway towards home and looking around at all of the drinks in the fridge and how colorful and large they were and how they were in these shapes that I'd seen my whole life and never questioned. I looked around at the people sitting around and knew, somehow, that they were American, and that I was one of them, but I didn't know why I knew or how. It made me really angry, I said. There is something that I liked about being foreign, and feeling like I didn't have this framework and assumptions around everything, and at least in Berlin it made sense for everything to be confusing and odd, because I didn't know how things were supposed to be.

Lilian shook her head. I can't shake this feeling that I can't fall in love again. She'd told me about this a year ago at a bar, before we lived together, that she'd fallen in love with a foreign exchange student from Chile who was staying with her family at the time. It

was clear that it was happening, but he pretended like he didn't feel it, so she had, too. Her Spanish was somewhat limited and his English was even moreso. It made it hard to understand what the other meant in a distinct way. I think I want to go to Latin America, she said, when the school year is over, or maybe Spain again.

Frances appeared. She came in and sat on the couch and wanted to know what we'd been talking about. Love, I said. Or something like that. She asked us if she could tell us something it made her think of about Hunter.

What happened in Berlin? They asked. How was that guy?

I told them.

We'd met up, went back to his apartment. He was a little different when we went inside, he was softer, younger, more vulnerable. The place was small, with a small kitchen and a slanted ceiling in the bedroom/livingroom/diningroom. He had a bookshelf full of vinyl records. The light coming in from the balcony and window was soft and blue and the whole apartment was immaculately clean. In his bathroom he had a book in German about different cultural practices around sex. In the margins he had marked 'ha ha' next to a sentence he had underlined. He'd written a little more, something with a question mark at the end, but with words I didn't know.

He put on a record and showed me the album cover on the couch. "I found this randomly," he said. "It's become one of my favorites." We were speaking in German. I touched the album cover and asked what it was called, how you said it in German. "Platte," he told me.

Soon we were in his bed. I asked if we could cuddle instead and he said no and later, when it was painful again, I said, I think I'm too tired. He said ok, and so we laid next to each other and he told me about what it had been like during Christmas. He said how his dad got very angry over something very small, about how the beans were put into the coffee maker, how his brother and his dad ganged up on his mom, that he was used to taking her side because she couldn't defend herself, how he had not turned out how she wanted him to be. He told me when he was a kid they had been hit by their dad, for just a phase. When I asked how, or with what, he said, yeah, with belts sometimes. It hasn't seemed to have had an impact though.

He mentioned that when he went home he showed his mom a picture of a male friend, and his mom had asked if it was his boyfriend. He'd never brought a girl home, but she knew he'd dated girls. Did you mention this whole thing, this affair, to your mom? I asked. No, he said. He didn't talk to his mom about these things. He said, if she just inquired he would tell her, but she doesn't ask. I looked at the ceiling and asked him if he thought maybe she wasn't sure whether he wanted to be asked, or was ok with being asked. Maybe, he said. He'd said previously how his family didn't talk much at all. He told me he didn't know how his parents met, that he had gleaned over the years around

what time they got to know each other from context, most likely when his mom was still living in Berlin and his dad had gone there to visit. Do you remember the wall falling? I asked. He said no, he was pretty young at the time, nine or so, and he was in northern Germany and it hadn't been very present in his life. Your mom was from Berlin, though, I said. Wouldn't it have been quite significant to her? He said, yeah, most likely.

He told me about the trip he'd taken to the US, on holiday, in Florida. When a Floridian asked how he was and he'd thought about it and answered honestly, the Floridian had been surprised. Yes, I said, you just answer "good," or "I'm doing good," immediately. I said how in the US waiters come up and ask you how everything is, I said, and I always respond, immediately, oh it's wonderful, everything is amazing, even if it's the worst meal I've ever had. I hate it, I said.

I said I should probably get going, we got up, he kissed me again, and then pushed me gently onto the couch. Öffne deinen Mond, he said. Strecke deine Zunge raus. My moon? I asked. Stick your tongue out, he said. He put himself all the way into my mouth and I peered at his face above me, drooping, as he looked at the surface of my body and suddenly he looked ugly and I hated him. He came and I jumped up and ran to the bathroom and spit the white liquid out into the sink. Ugh, I said. Ugh. He came in and handed me a glass of water, I took it and he stroked my arm. That was beautiful, he said. I nodded, took a swig of the water, swished it in my mouth, and spit again into the sink.

I told them that I said he could tie me up like he wanted to. On the doorknob of his apartment was a black blindfold and a note written in English “put this on and ring the doorbell.” I’d told him a week or two before, maybe it would help if you blindfolded me. If you blindfolded me and put earplugs in my ears.

I put it on and rang the doorbell and he opened the door and brought me inside and closed the door behind me and walk me into the apartment until I was standing on his carpet and he was handing me wine and then taking off my clothes and using the command form. Dreh dich um. Beuge dich vor. Geh auf die Knie. Both of them? I asked. But these words hadn’t worked, they didn’t form inside of me a line which pulled me toward him, they landed on my skin and I felt the different points and shapes of the letters creating points of feeling, like stars in the night sky.

He brought me to the bed and tied me to it and if I didn’t do what he said, he told me to get on my hands and knees and would slap my ass and make me count. I did it, I did it because I only knew the word to make it stop, not the one which might make it different, and besides, the whole thing was interesting and new and I could tell everyone about it once I got back to the states anyways and he could command me all he wanted, but he couldn’t command me into being turned on, and after he’d tied me up, after he’d bent over and said into my ear, if any of this becomes too uncomfortable tell me to stop, and I was naked, all of my skin exposed, and I could feel every inch of my body and the air touching it, after I started to cry and he asked if I was ok and I

turned my face into the mattress and said I don't know, I don't know, and we took a break and then started again and I touched the walls and put the vibrating thing up to my lips and neck and then put it against his shoulder, while he was over me or above me, kneeling to the side, images of the river fell into my head and the lights on them, images of the night I went out with my roommate and the town was light up from christmas lights and she let me tell her what I was writing, and I put my foot against his leg so I was touching at least some part of him, and the statues in the garden in Sansouci, which I had visited in the summer alone when I'd first gotten to Berlin, fell into my head: the smooth texture their bodies, which were so soft and white and perfectly sculpted that the statues looked almost living and so that you wanted to reach out and touch the stone and touch how it was the shape of body, and because without touching it you couldn't know for certain they weren't warm and moving underneath and within, even though you knew they were perfect and they were probably cold, but the not knowing made you want to touch them like when you were a kid and you wanted crawl into bed with your mom and lay against her as she sat, reading, and feel her heart beating and feel her breath and try to match your breath to hers to occupy yourself even though, or because, you never could since her lungs were twice as big as yours

Oh, Lilian said, he manipulated you.

What? I said.

You were dissociating, Frances said.

No, I said, I had a profound experience of aloneness in which I encountered the centerpoint of who I am because I gave up on the idea that he would look into me and see it. I turned inside and found myself spreading out.

He'd said I could sleep over, as long as I wore earplugs. I have a lot of trouble sleeping and when I do get to sleep I sleep light, he'd said. I get up a lot in the night, I'd be worried that I'd wake you up moving around so much. I told him it was fine, that I'd catch the train. I wanted to stop by the bookstore anyway to buy a book. I think the bookstore is closed this time of night, he said.

Lilian yawned. It's late, Frances said. Time for bed.

• •

The next morning someone was tapping their finger against the window, like an unending sentence which went on and on but never reached a point. 'What are you trying to say?' I kept asking and it droned on, tapping against my ear until I dragged myself out of sleep. I yawned and sat up and it was raining out and the gutter was dripping. I opened my messages. He'd sent one the day before, wishing me a safe return. I opened a voice message and yawned again and said, should this be it then?

When the rain stopped I walked out to the health food store, and sat at one of the outdoor tables in front of it. Clouds covered the sky. The leaves on the ground, which

had pooled on the ground, brilliant and yellow in the fall, were brown. The trees now were bare, knuckley branches scratching against the sky.

The clouds dispersed, and showed the blue that remained behind them. The color was gentle, and the clouds took on a lining of pink. When I walked home I watched them change. At first they had pink at the edges, and then dappled on their gray bellies, and later little lines of sunlight formed around them. I didn't see them move, or the light move, only noticed when something was different than it had been before.

Frances was sitting on the porch when I got back. She was eating curry out of a small stainless steel pot in her lap. I sat with her. A neighbor walked by with his dog and a small child on his shoulders. He waved to her and she called out his name and the same of his kid and waved back. She touched my shoulder with her finger. Can I put my head here? She asked. I nodded.

A car drove into the driveway, and parked. Hunter got out. He stood on the steps and handed Frances a box of tea. Hi ladies, he said. I'm leaving for Atlanta tomorrow evening. I was just at the grocery store getting food for the trip so I grabbed this. He was so tall he could hand her the tea while still standing on the steps. I'll be back later, he said, for dinner. He made his hands into a heart and then left. Frances put her hand against her chest. When I see him this happens, she said, and thumped her hand against her: thu-thu-thump. Thu-thu-thump. But then I remember he's just a person, she said. The other day, when I wasn't feeling well, he asked me what he could do for me, she

said. I told him we needed throat coat tea, and that it's something I find comforting when I'm sick. My mom used to make it for me, and bring it to me in bed. But I told him we all drink throat coat tea in the house, that it's for all of us, and he didn't need to get it. He said no, no, I'll pick some out for you. I'm not trying to date him, you know, she said. I don't want there to be this hierarchy of relationships, she said. I don't think romance is more important than friendship. Our connections are institutionalized and there is something overly significant about romantic relationships, she said. I'd like to break free from what relationships are supposed to be or look like. Why are romantic relationships the center point of our social lives? They burn really hot and then go out. They aren't stable. She sighed. But when I spend time with Hunter, it's different than with you or Lilian or any of my other friends.

Time goes by a little differently, she said. We hung out in my room yesterday, she said, looking at me. Nothing happened. We just sat and talked and then cuddled a bit and kissed and talked some more. But he was lying close so I could hear his heart beating and I could feel him breathing and today I keep smelling him and I can't completely tell when I'm smelling myself or I'm smelling him. I can still feel his mouth in my mouth. I'm glad he left and didn't spend the night because I needed some time to just be myself.

Once it got dark Lilian joined us on the porch. She pointed out white dots in the black sky ascending in a line. What is that? I asked. It's some billionaire shooting off tests into the sky in preparation for going to Mars, she said. Really? Frances asked. Lilian

furrowed her brow. I think so. I saw them while I was in California. I think someone told me that's what it was. Or maybe I'd guessed that that was what it was and now am forgetting that I made it up.

I got into bed and looked at my phone. He'd responded to me around midday. It was a picture of the moon from his balcony hovering low, just parallel to the round globe of the TV tower. What a sweet yawn, he had written.

It took me a while to realize he was talking about my mouth, yawning as I spoke to him through my phone, and that he wasn't referring to the moon, calling it a sweet yawn. I went to the window. The same moon he'd sent was hovering just above the fence in the backyard. Der Mund heute abend, I wrote underneath, and sent it.

Before I went to bed there was a response:

He was
to the earth this evening
particularly close,¹⁴

He wrote in German.

• •

¹⁴ He (*er) was (*war)
to the earth (*der Erde) this evening (*heute abend)
particularly close (*besonders nah),

The days started to get warm and light green began to appear on the trees and everyone gathered on central campus for the eclipse. Frances snagged a pair of blacked out glasses and she and Lilian and I walked to the edge of campus where there were fewer people and a little hill that Lilian laid a blanket on. We sat on it and passed the glasses back and forth as the sun slowly became a smaller and smaller orange crescent and the light around us dimmed and the birds got quiet. We did that, just hung out for an hour or longer, joking and talking about nothing in particular, and at some point the orange crescent was just a lip to the side of a dark circle. The lip began to slide down and around as the black moon passed by.

I took the black glasses off and gestured up at the sky. It doesn't mean anything, I said. Lilian and Frances laughed at me. What are you talking about? They said.

It doesn't have to mean anything, Lilian said.

Yeah, Frances said. Aren't we having a good time?

I laid back on my elbows and squinted at them. Yeah, this is nice, I said, and put the black glasses back over my eyes.