THE NABOKOVIAN

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The Nabokovian serves to report and stimulate Nabokov scholarship and to create a link between Nabokov scholars, both in the USA and abroad.

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News

by Stephen Jan Parker

Featured in this issue is a fifteen-year index of *The Nabokovian*. Gene Barabtarlo once again volunteered to compile the information, as he had previously done for the ten-year index. His compilation should prove informative and useful. He noted some interesting statistics as a result of his work. TNAB has published in the past five years almost twice as many original works by VN as in the previous ten years (10 vs. 6). 141 authors have published in TNAB a total of 337 items; 216 in the first ten years, 121 in the next five. Gene suggests that these numbers can serve as a gauge of Nabokov scholarly activity in the past years. He notes, for example, that over the past five years, quantitatively, studies of *Ada* and *Lolita* have dropped 46% and 43% respectively, whereas *Pale Fire* and *The Gift* have gained as much (34% and 50%). Nonetheless, the Russian novels, including *The Gift*, lag very far behind the the English ones as objects of scholarly attention (with the exception of *LATH* and *Transparent Things*, which are almost ignored). For example, in the past five years there is not a single new contribution on *Despair*, *Mary*, or *King, Queen, Knave*.

Along with the Index, this largest ever issue of *The Nabokovian* carries our regular features -- News, Annotations, Annual Bibliography -- and the second installment of Brian Boyd's annotations of *ADA* with a forenote and afternote. Other items which were submitted for publication will appear in the spring issue.

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From the Curator of the Berg Collection:

When the Berg Collection acquired Vladimir Nabokov's papers it was estimated that it would take at least two years to catalog them. In the succeeding two years the Berg cataloger has processed a major portion of the archive--all the literary manuscripts--and we are happy to announce that this part of the archive is now available to researchers. The correspondence, proofs, and lepidoptera remain to be cataloged.

Inquiries about the available material may be addressed to the Curator, Berg Collection, New York Public Library, Fifth Avenue & 42nd Street, New York, N.Y. 10018. The hours of opening of the Berg Collection are: Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 a.m.-5:45 p.m.; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 a.m.-5:45 p.m.; closed Sundays, Mondays and holidays. Entrance to the Berg Collection is by a card of admission obtained in the Library's Special Collections Office, Room 316, which is open the same hours as the Berg Collection.

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INTERNATIONAL NABOKOV SOCIETY NEWS

The International Nabokov Society will again hold its annual meetings in conjunction with the AATSEEL and MLA conventions, this year in Toronto. At AATSEEL, on December 28, the topic will be "*Podvig/Glory*," chaired by Alexander Dunkel (Arizona) and Maxim Shrayer (Yale). Papers will be read by Galina DeRoeck (Arizona), Charles Nicol (Indiana State), and Guy Houk (Stetson). In two other sessions, papers on Nabokov will be delivered by Olga Meerson (Columbia) and Yana Hashamova (Illinois).

There will be two Society sessions at the MLA. The first (December 29,) will be a General Session chaired by John Burt Foster, Jr. (George Mason). Papers will be read by Christy Burns (William & Mary), John Lavignino (Brandeis), Antje Thole (Rice), and Jeanne

Ewert (Pennsylvania). The second session, "Nabokov and Religion?," on December 30, will be chaired by Galya Diment (Washington). Papers will be read by Christine Rydel (Grand Valley State), John Noble (California Baptist College), Samuel Schuman (North Carolina, Asheville) and Robbi Nester (UCAL, Irvine). A full report on these sessions and the annual Sociey business meeting will appear in the spring issue of *The Nabokovian*.

Elections for the office of Vice-President of the International Nabokov Society were conducted by Gennady Barabtarlo, President of the Society, and held in October and November by electronic and regular mail. Christine Rydel and D. Barton Johnson were the candidates. D. Barton Johnson was elected to a two-year term, 1994-1995, and presumably will then replace John Burt Foster, Jr. as President for the 1996-97 term. About one-half of all American members took part, with a few votes coming (by e-mail) from other continents (Europe, Asia, and Oceania).

Ellen Pifer (Univ. of Delaware) has been working with Susan Elizabeth Sweeney and John Burt Foster, Jr. on establishing the International Vladimir Nabokov Society's (IVNS) affiliation with the American Literature Association (ALA). To that end, an IVNS session was part of the annual meeting of ALA this past May. The topic was "Art and Knowledge in Nabokov's World: From Childhood to the Campus," chaired by Melvin Friedman (Wisconsin, Milwaukee). Papers read were "Nabokov on Campus: The Novel, The Intellectual, and the American University," Jim English (Pennsylvania); "Innocence and Experience Replayed," Ellen Pifer; and "*Lolita* in the Freshman English Class," Andrew Kaufman (John Jay College). The IVNS is now formally affiliated with ALA. Please note the following call for papers: any topic related to Nabokov and American Literature/Culture, for a session at the annual conference of the American Literature Association, to be held June 2-5, 1994, in

San Diego, California. Send 1-2 page abstracts (for 20-min. papers) to Ellen Pifer, English Dept., 204 Memorial Hall, University of Delaware, Newark, DE 19716.

Two sessions on Nabokov were held at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies (AAASS) in Honolulu, November 20-21, 1993. "Nabokov and the Question of Identity" was chaired by Peter Barta, with Vladimir Alexandrov and Alexander Dolinin as discussants. Papers read were Julian Connolly, "Who's Who in Humberland: Creation of Identity in *Lolita*"; David Larmour, "The Search for Heroic Identity in *Glory*"; Galya Diment, "The *Ulysses* Lectures: Was Nabokov an Apt Reader of Joyce?". The session "Nabokov as Reader: The Ethics of Intertextuality" was chaired by Nina Perlina, with Alexander Dolinin as discussant. Papers read were Andrew Drozd, "Nabokov and Chernyshevskii'"; Stephen Blackwell, "Modes of Reading: Nabokov and the Russian Tradition"; Charles Byrd, "Dostoevskii, *Lolita*, and the Anxiety of Influence." At another session, Gavriel Shapiro read the paper, "The Monogram 'Which However Had Not Quite Come Off' in VN."

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The first issue of *Nabokov Studies*, edited by D. Barton Johnson, was scheduled to appear in late November/early December. Subscriptions are $20.75 individuals and $30.75 institutions, and may be obtained from Charles Schlacks, Publisher, Dept. of Langs. 7 Lits., 153 Orson Spencer Hall, Univ. of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah 84112. The Nabokov Electronic Forum (NABOKV-L at listserv@ucsbvm.bitnet) will serve as a forum for the discussion of material that appears in the journal--as well as for any other matters related to Nabokov.

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New Publications

Gennady Barabtarlo. *Aerial View: Essays on Nabokov's Art and Metaphysics.* New York: Peter Lang.

Maurice Couturier, ed. *Nabokov: Autobiography, Biography and Fiction.* Special issue of *Cycnos* (Nice, France: Universite de Nice) 10, no. 1.

Maurice Couturier. *Nabokov ou la tyrannie de l'auteur.* Paris: Seuil, collection Poetique.

John Burt Foster, Jr. *Nabokov's Art of Memory and European Modernism.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Charles Nicol and Gennady Barabtarlo, eds. *A Small Alpine Form: Studies in Nabokov's Short Fiction.* New York: Garland.

Vladimir Nabokov et l'émigration. Special issue of *Cahiers de l'emigration russe, 2,* Paris:Institut d'Etudes Slaves.

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Our thanks to Ms. Paula Malone and Mr. Jason Merrill for their invaluable aid in the preparation of this issue.

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PLEASE NOTE: Subscription renewals are now due for 1994. Rates have not changed: check the inside cover of this issue. PLEASE, help us avoid the additional postage cost of renewal reminders by sending in your renewals now.

ANNOTATIONS TO *ADA*

2. Part 1, Chapter 2

by Brian Boyd

Thanks to those readers who responded with suggestions for improvements to the first batch of annotations, especially to Geraldine Chouard for her ample and prompt information about "Nicky and Pimpernella" (6.02, 6.22-23).

Several readers suggested that I add as motifs items such as "French literature" or "Russian literature" or "Tolstoy." I plan to include an index when the project appears in book form, to catch references that can be indexed (such as, in this chapter, allusions to Proust and Pushkin, Parmigianino and Poe) but that do not necessarily form a distinct motif. On the other hand the presence of a Chateaubriand or a Byron, explicit or implicit, seems to constitute a pointed motif, and will be signalled as such.

I wish to try out in this instalment the idea of including a general introduction to each chapter, or rather *two* introductions. The first places the chapter in the context of the novel as a whole. The second is placed *after* the annotations, and involves a level of reading beyond that of the annotations. Here I offer solutions to *Ada* that I think Nabokov has planted for the "very expert solver" (*SM* 291). Since he sees his work as affording the challenge of a good chess problem, and since he thinks there can be no surrogate for the excitement of individual discovery, it seems unsporting to offer these solutions to anyone who has not tried to solve the novel's problems on his or her own terms. If you do not wish to have *Ada*'s deeper surprises sprung, do not read the Afternotes.

Part 1, Chapter 2

Forenote:

Part 1 Chapter 2 is the central of the three chapters that form the novel's prologue. The prologue as a

whole explains the genealogical complications that lead to Van's and Ada's being raised in different families while in fact they are full brother and sister. The structural role of its second chapter is to explain how Demon can have made both Marina and Aqua pregnant in 1869, so that Marina's illegitimate child, Van, can be substituted for Aqua's aborted child, as hinted at in the herbarium scene in Part 1 Chapter 1 and confirmed in Part 1 Chapter 3.

The colorful account of Demon's affair with Marina, Demon's discovery of her infidelity, his duel with his rival, and their rapturous but reckless reconciliation, when "neither remembered to dupe procreation" (15) explain Van's conception. Demon's stipulation that Marina must drop her theatrical career if they are to marry, her angry flight, Aqua's taking over Marina's role as nurse to the wounded Demon, and his marrying her within two weeks, "out of spite and pity" (19) and in accord with the extraordinary pace and panache he has shown throughout the chapter (in winning Marina, in wounding his rival), explain the conception of Aqua's child. Note that for Nabokov's purposes Demon *must* marry Aqua within three weeks or so, before Marina discovers she is pregnant.

At another level, Van designs the chapter as a celebration of his father's affair with Marina (which after all resulted in both his and Ada's being born) and a prefiguring of his own love for Ada. There are no "bitter little embryos spying . . . . upon the love life of their parents" (*SM* 20) in *this* novel.

The chapter falls into two distinct parts: first, the magical start of Demon's and Marina's affair, and, second, its abrupt early end in a rage of jealousy. That prefigures the division between the two parts of Van's and Ada's early story, which fills the remainder of Part 1 of the novel: first, the even more magical beginning to Van's and Ada's love, at Ardis the First, and second, the flaring of jealousy throughout Ardis the Second, ending, as in Demon's case, with a duel.

Ada will present Van and Ada's love through a prism of novelistic parody: it is not for nothing that when Van approaches Ardis for the first time, he turns a corner and "the romantic mansion appeared on the gentle eminence of old novels" (35). *Ada* as a whole explores the relationship between art and life, between the sense of the novelty of love and its imitativeness, between romance as a human experience, the romance as a genre and romanticism as a tradition, and it explores the relationship between art and art and work and work. These themes spin into a dizzying vortex in Part 1 Chapter 2, where the art-saturated world of Marina the actress and Demon the art connoisseur set off what will appear by contrast the pristine and pure world of young Van and Ada.

There are two main ways Nabokov explores these relationships (art-life, romance-romance, art-art, work-work) in Part 1 Chapter 2: through the stage setting of the start of Demon's affair with Marina, and its relationship to the tradition of the novel, and through the pen-and-wash sketch of "Eve on the Clepsydrophone," and surprisingly enough *its* relationship to the tradition of the novel.

Marina's role as an actress, and its inspiring Demon to swoop from the audience to possess her before the end of the first act, parodies the novelistic tradition of the theatre scene (see note 10.04-12.22), especially the kind of scene where the characters' feelings are inflamed by the on-stage action. Nabokov complicates matters further by establishing links between the on-stage and off-stage worlds: first through Demon's bet with the man sitting next to him in the theater, who seems to be the husband of the woman whose part Marina is playing on stage (see note 10.13-15), then through the name of "d'O." assigned to the male lead, which also becomes an abbreviated form of the "d'Onsky" whom Demon must soon confront as his rival for Marina in the off-stage world. He then complicates matters still further by making the play in which Marina acts a hilarious travesty of Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*, and an exploration of the betrayal of Pushkin in Chaikovsky's opera, and of the

pitfalls of translating from one medium to another, from page to stage or picture, or of translating from one language to another (see note 10.11-12.20 and other notes within that range).

One of the triumphs of this first scene in the chapter is Nabokov's combining narrative speed and romantic atmosphere with compound allusiveness and satiric grotesquerie. The same combination continues into the second half of the chapter.

Demon's role as an art collector provides the occasion for his discovering Marina's infidelity, which he had begun to suspect. He has acquired a pen-and wash sketch which he is confident must be by Parmigianino. An art expert, Baron d'Onsky, confirms the attribution, only to let slip that he too sees the resemblance between the naked Eve and Marina, called out of the bath to answer the phone, cupping it to her shoulder as she turns aside to talk to someone else. Demon remembers ringing her long-distance, calling her out of her bath, and her pretending no one else was there. He forces from Marina the truth of her infidelity, then chases d'Onsky across the Atlantic to challenge him to a duel.

Nabokov explores the relationship between art and life again not only through the relationship between the sketch (a fusion of several genuine Parmigianino works) and Marina, but also through an echo of Proust's Swann, who is also struck by the resemblance between Odette and an old master painting; through an echo of another passage in Proust where Marcel suggests that painters should imitate the exploration of timeless human attitudes in eighteenth-century genre painting by finding new possibilities in the modern world, such as "At the Telephone" (see 13.01-14.05n.); and through the painting of *The Bath of the Nymph* which Joyce associates with Molly's infidelity to Bloom in *Ulysses* (see 13.25n.)

The relationship with Proust is particularly significant. Part 1 Chapter 1 had ended with a long paragraph on the link between Proust's novel and Van's sense of the magic of his own family tree. Now in

Part 1 Chapter 2 Van pays homage to Proust by adapting the structure of *In Search of Lost Time* for his own novel.

In Proust, the passionate but tormented love of Swann, an art connoisseur, for Odette, something of an actress, though rather more a coquette, prefigures the passionate torments of the love between the narrator Marcel and Albertine, a generation later. In *Ada* Van and Nabokov take over the same structure, with the unexpected and parodic added complication that Demon and Marina are not only a generation older than Van and Ada, but also happen to be their parents.

Proust's *In Search of Lost Time* is one long meditation on the relationships between art and life. Nabokov compounds those relationships still further by making Van echo Proust's prologue structure, and within that, Swann's sense of the resemblance between Odette and an old master work, and within that, Marcel's sense of the possibilities of incorporating modern life into art in a painting like "At the Telephone."

But Part 1 Chapter 2 also could not be more unlike Proust. In place of Proust's meditative languor and torpid narrative speed, Nabokov hurtles the action along at a preposterous pace. And whereas in Proust the love between Swann and Odette, for all its strains, has an enchantment about it that rarely recurs in the protracted agonies of Marcel's love for Albertine, in *Ada* the contrast works the other way around. The brevity and the retrospective meaninglessness of Demon's affair with Marina contrasts sharply with the extraordinary durability--over eighty years!--of Van's and Ada's love. And whereas Demon's and Marina's affair takes place in a world supersaturated with art, Van's and Ada's evolves at Ardis, a parody of "the gentle eminence of old novels" but also a paradise, an Arcadia of green-and-gold naturalness, strikingly innocent, for all its incestuousness, by contrast with the artifice and the cynical sophistication of the world of Part 1 Chapter 2.

See also Boyd 1979:222-247 and Boyd, "L'Art et l'ardeur d'*Ada*," *Europe* (forthcoming).

Part 1 Chapter 2: Annotations

10.01: Marina's affair with Demon Veen started on . . . January 5, 1868: it continues until December 15, 1871 (252.19-20 and 6.10).

10.01-02: his, her, and Daniel Veen's birthday, January 5: and therefore also Aqua Durmanov's birthday. Nabokov compounds the twin motif by having twins Aqua and Marina marry their cousins Demon and Dan, respectively, who were both born on the same day as each other (though they are cousins, not twins) and six years to the day before their wives. In Nabokov's own life, January 5 was the birthday of both his sister Olga (1903-1978) and his wife, née Véra Slonim (1902-1991). MOTIFS: *twin; relation; Nabokov.*

10.02: January 5: "Epiphany Eve, or Twelfth Night, has a history of centuries of merry-making. Shakespeare's play *Twelfth Night* was specifically written for this celebration" (Ruth W. Gregory, *Anniversaries and Holidays*, 3rd.ed. [Chicago: American Library Assoc., 1975])

10.04-12.22: a parody of the theater scene that became a set-piece of the novel during the nineteenth century. The theater could simply be evoked as a setting, as it is brilliantly in *Eugène Onegin*. It could become the backdrop for a passionate scene, as in *Anna Karenin*, where Anna, distracted by her position as an adulteress, visits the opera in defiance of decorum only to suffer a humiliating public rebuff from the next box. Ardent glances could flash across the auditorium, as when Mr Guppy gapes hopelessly at the strange heroine of *Bleak House* (1852-1853), by Charles Dickens (1812-1870). A new passion could ignite into life at the theater, as when in Tolstoy's *War and Peace* (1869) Natasha at the opera succumbs to the attentions of Anatoly Kuragin. Perhaps the most famous example of all occurs in *Madame Bovary*

(1857), by Gustave Flaubert (1821-1880), when Emma under the influence of the passions depicted on stage finds herself ready to start an affair with Léon. Nabokov may also have known the story "Don Juan" (1812) by E. T. A. Hoffmann (1776-1822), in which a man watching *Don Giovanni* senses the actress playing Donna Anna in the seat beside him even as the performance continues on stage.

Nabokov alludes wryly to the whole tradition in the story "Usta k ustam" ("Lips to Lips"), written 1931, pub. 1956. A hopelessly untalented writer concocts a scenario in his novel which fuses all the ingredients of the tradition: theatre, beginning of an affair, correspondence between performance and "real-life" amour. When he sends his work to the editors of a magazine who hope to lure him into providing much-needed financial support, he fails to detect their irony at his clichés: "Some of the descriptions, such as for example that of the theater, in the very beginning, compete with analogous images in the works of our classical writers . . . ." (*RB* 56)

In a rarer kind of variant, the characters of the novel might not only be influenced by the action on stage, but might *be* the actors, so that their romantic connections mirror those within the play. In his Cornell lectures on Austen, Nabokov analysed with special fondness (*Lects* 30-38) the staging of the play in *Mansfield Park*, and the emotional complications it unleashes: "The whole play theme in *Mansfield Park* is an extraordinary achievement . . . . Artistic fate is arranging things so that the true relations between the novel's characters are going to be revealed through the relations of the characters in the play." (*Lects* 30, 35) MOTIF: *art-life; novel; actress.*

10.04-11.01: For an analysis of this sentence, see Boyd 1985:20-22.

10.05-07: makes the skill of mimicry seem, at least while the show lasts . . .: for Van's low opinion of the theater, see 425.16-23.

10.05-07: makes the skill of mimicry seem . . . worth even more than the price of such footlights as insomnia, fancy, arrogant art: rather obscurely

phrased, though the sense seems clear: "makes the skill of acting seem worth even more than the cost (not of the ticket, as one might expect, but) of the composition: the playwright's insomnia, creative imagination, and arrogant art." The last two words, with their alliteration and their attitude, seem to allude to the arrogance of the persona Nabokov cultivated in forewords and interviews in the 1960s, partly as a provocation, partly as protection against the intrusions of fame. Why "insomnia, fancy, arrogant art" should be "footlights," and why these "footlights" have a "price" that needs to be recouped, seem less than clear.

10.06: worth even more than the price of: cf. "well worth the price of" (449.08).

10.06: such footlights: "footlights" is a conventional synecdoche for the stage as a profession. Cf. "Turn off the footlights" (415.29)

10.08-13: *la Durmanska* . . . so dreamy, so lovely, so stirring: *la Durmanska,* Marina's stage name (from her surname, "Durmanov"), at least in "the great Scott's" publicity: reviewers still refer to her as "Durmanova" (427.22). She is playing the lead role, more or less Tatiana (though apparently misnamed "Lara": see 13.22-23 and n.) in an adaptation of Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin* (see 10.11-12.20 and n).

10.09: the great Scott, her impresario . . . seven thousand gold dollars: apart from another reference to him (as Scotty) on the next page (11.24), nothing is heard of him again. A bizarre personification of "great Scott," as a mild exclamation of surprise, apparently originating in honor of General Winfield Scott (1786-1866), the commanding general of the United States Army from 1841 to 1861, and a candidate for the US presidency in 1852. In 1848, in gratitude for his Mexican campaign of 1847, Congress ordered a gold medal to be struck in his honor.

Sir Walter Scott's *The Bride of Lammermoor* (1819) became the basis for Gaetano Donizetti's opera *Lucia di Lammermoor* (1835), at a performance of which Emma Bovary is inspired to begin her affair with Léon in the famous scene in *Madame Bovary* that is very much on

Nabokov's mind here (see 10.04-12.22n). Emma, who "se retrouvait dans les lectures de la jeunesse, en plein Walter Scott" ("found herself again in her youthful reading, deep in Walter Scott" [II.xxv]) is sighing and ready for passion even before Léon arrives.

Nabokov may have been aware that Sir Walter Scott's nickname was not "The Great Scott" but "The Great Unknown." Perhaps the concealed joke therefore is that despite all the great Scott's extravagant publicity, Marina remains almost unknown as an actress.

10.09-10: seven thousand gold dollars a week for publicity alone: a preposterous $364,000 a year, in 1868 dollars--worth how many millions today? MOTIF: *riches.*

10.10: for publicity alone: for Marina's desperate pursuit of publicity, by her own efforts if need be, see 427.20-24.

10.10: bonny bonus: "bonny" here because it is a fond Scotticism.

10.11-12.20: the start of the trashy ephemeron . . . based . . . on a famous Russian romance. . .: the description of the play makes it a parody of mistranslations and misadaptations of Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin* (see 3.01-04n and 3.04n2), as will become apparent. In describing it as "an *American* play" Nabokov may have in mind the 1963 American translation of *Eugene Onegin* by Walter Arndt, which he attacked in a review in the *New York Review of Books* (April 30, 1964); in describing it as a "*play*" he has as his target *Eugene Onegin*'s most notorious stage version, the 1879 opera by Petr Ilich Chaikovsky (1840-1893), libretto by Chaikovsky and S. K. Shilovsky, which Nabokov along with most literate Russians regarded as a travesty of Pushkin's novel in verse: "Chaykovsky's hideous and insulting libretto is not saved by a music whose cloying banalities have pursued me ever since I was a curly-haired boy in a velvet box." (*SO* 266; cf. also *NWL* 160-61) MOTIFS: *adaptation; translation.*

10.13-15: Demon . . . made a bet with his orchestra-seat neighbor, Prince N.: "Demon bets

Prince N. twenty-five rubles (a 'rose-red banknote,' [12:01]) that he can seduce Marina-Tatyana. In Pushkin 'Prince N.' is Tatyana's husband [*E O* VIII:xxi:6], so if we fuse the works Demon is betting the man whom he will enhorn." (Proffer 254) MOTIF: *art-life.*

10.13-14: Demon . . . made a bet: he is famous as a gambler: see 149.20-23, 588.12.

10.16: *cabinet reculé*: In his commentary to *Eugene Onegin*, Nabokov explains an allusion to the sentimental novel *Julie, ou la Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761) by Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) by summarising the novel, noting at one point: "Saint-Preux, however, succumbs [to drink] again in Paris, where, not realizing that his companions have led him to a brothel (as he writes Julie in detail), he mistakes white wine for water and when he regains his senses is amazed to find himself 'dans un cabinet reculé, entre les bras d'une de ces créatures'" ("in a back room, in the arms of one of these creatures"; Pt.II, Letter xxvi, cited in *EO* II,340). Nabokov implicitly contrasts Saint-Preux's lack of responsibility for his predicament with Demon's knowing and savoring the situation he has so deliberately set up.

10.20: proceeded to possess her: The deliberateness continues at 11.14-15: "proceeded to win the wager."

10.20-11.12: between two scenes (Chapter Three and Four of the martyred novel) . . .: Chapter Three of *Eugene Onegin* shows romantically-inclined Tatiana obsessed--under the influence of her reading--with Eugene, whom she has met only once. Overnight, she composes an ardent letter to him, and we see her as dawn nears: "Her poor head shoulderward she has inclined; / her light chemise has slid down from her charming shoulder. / But now already the moonbeam's / radiance fades." (III.xxxii.5-9) She asks her nurse to take the letter to Eugene. The adaptation ends the scene here, and Demon takes advantage of the scene break to "possess" Marina.

Pushkin's Chapter Three concludes with Tatiana's alarm that evening as she hears Eugene's arrival, in response to receiving her letter, and her flight through

the park, past the peasant maidens singing as they pick berries. When Eugene catches up with her, Pushkin playfully breaks off the scene, only to resume it in Chapter Four when Eugene, as Nabokov sums it up, "lectures poor Tatiana on youthful indiscretion and lack of self-control." (*EO* I, 38)

The division here therefore corresponds not to Pushkin but to Chaikovsky's opera, in which Act I Scene 2 is the letter scene and Act I Scene 3 opens with the berry-picking chorus and the meeting between Tatiana and Onegin. Demon conquers Marina before the first act is over.

11.01: martyred novel: MOTIF: martyr.

11.02-12: undressed . . . heaving breasts: As Proffer 254 points out, "The 'flimsy' nightgown comes from Nabokov's description of Tatyana in a 'flimsy shift' as he comments on Pushkin's drawing by a draft of [III:xxxii; *EO* II,, 396] while the parodic violence and heaving breasts and quill pen are taken from Nabokov's contrasting description of a comical illustration of the same scene by Alexander Notbek." "Tat'iana pishet pis'mo" ("Tatiana writes a letter") drawn by Notbek, engraved by Zbruev, appeared in *Nevskii Al'manakh*, January 1829, and is reproduced in A. L. Slonimski, ed., *A. S. Pushkin v izobrazitel'nom iskusstve* (Leningrad: Orgiz-Izogiz, 1937), p. 65. Nabokov's verbal picture does not so much borrow from Notbek's atrociously inept image as deliberately outdo it (as at 460.01-461.09 Van explicitly tries to outdo a Toulouse-Lautrec poster that the scene before him evokes). Cf. also 11.07-08n, 11.12n.

MOTIF: *adaptation; art-life; woman in picture.*

11.03-04: flimsy and fetching nightgown: Marina's attire makes Demon's lovemaking all the easier. Cf. "that luminous frock nearly as flimsy as a nightgown. . . . she resembled the young soprano Maria Kuznetsova in the letter scene in Tschchaikow's opera *Onegin and Olga*." (158.03-06)

11.05: Baron d'O.: The name "d'O" belonged to a genuine French noble family from Normandy. Here "d'O." serves as another index of the garbling of

Pushkin's "Onegin," yet it also echoes Tatiana's coyness to her nurse: "Well, send your grandson quietly / with this note to O . . . to that . . . / to the neighbor." (III.xxxiv.6-8) At the same time, it bizarrely prefigures the Baron d'Onsky who will feature later in the chapter (13.05) and will actually be referred to as "Baron d'O." (13.19). The "Baron d'O." of the play presumably kills his best friend in a duel, if the play follows even the broad outlines of *Eugene Onegin*; the Baron d'Onsky/d'O. of the novel will die from a wound inflicted in a duel by Demon (14.25-15.12); and the name absurdly evokes that of Baron d'Anthes (1812-1895), who in 1837 would kill Pushkin in a duel. Cf. also "the Don" (489.24, 500.25: Don Juan, with a dash of Don Quixote) of *Don Juan's Last Fling*. MOTIF: *d'O.*

11.05-07: an old nurse in Eskimo boots. Upon the infinitely wise countrywoman's suggestion, she goose-penned: The Eskimo boots are a misguided attempt to costume Tatiana's nurse, a Russian. Nabokov here also burlesques the traditions that Pushkin's own nurse's tales prompted him to write some of his narrative verse (see *EO* II, 361-62, 452-53).

11.06-07: goose-penned: wrote with a quill pen.

11.08: a love letter: MOTIF: *letters.*

11.07-08: from the edge of her bed, on a side table with cabriole legs: *cabriole*: W2: "A form of leg which curves outward from the structure which it supports, and then descends in a tapering reverse curve, terminating in an ornamental foot." In his illustration (cf. 11.02-12n), Notbek wrongly places Tatiana on a chair, to write at what Nabokov calls "a very formal-looking table" (*EO* II, 178) that looks too heavy for the ancient nurse to budge when Tatiana bids her "move up the table" (III.xxi.6)

11.12: heaving breasts: If Marina's voluptuousness is not quite Pushkin, it is far nearer the "charming shoulder" (III.xxxii.7) of Pushkin's Tatiana than is the bare breast that Notbek's torpid miss points straight at the viewer.

11.13: old Eskimo: so called because of her (inappropriate) boots (see 11.05-07n.). Cf. "Kim (short

for Yakim) Eskimosoff" (430.04) in another Antiterran stage travesty of a Russian classic, "Chekhov's *Four Sisters*" (427.04).

11.17-21: the tropical moonlight . . . especially vulnerable to the tickle of Demon's moustache: Very similar to the effect, from the other side of the footlights, of the stage world on Emma Bovary's emotions in *Madame Bovary*, II.xv: "la poésie du rôle . . . l'envahissait. . . . --Est-ce que cela vous amuse? dit-il en se penchant sur elle de si près, que la pointe de sa moustache lui effleura la joue" ("the poetry of the role . . . was sweeping her away. . . . 'Are you enjoying this?' he said, leaning over her so close that the end of his moustache brushed her cheek").

11.23-25: ballet company . . . Russians . . . from Belokonsk: Cf. "The Lyaskan [Antiterran for Alaskan] ballet." (236.02-03)

11.25: Belokonsk, Western Estoty: *Darkbloom*: "the Russian twin of 'Whitehorse' (city in N. W. Canada)." Whitehorse is the capital of Yukon Territory; its name, translated literally into Russian, would be *beliy kon'*, but Nabokov chooses the combinative form *belo-* and the adjective for horse, *konskiy*, to provide the name in the form such a town might have had in Russia. Cf. 22.04. MOTIF: *konsk*.

11.25-34: In a splendid orchard . . . howlers: not only burlesques the cheap, incongruous and irrelevant effects producers often take such pains to arrange ("bringing the Russians all the way in two sleeping cars from Belokonsk") but specifically parodies misadaptations, mistranslations and misproductions of *Eugene Onegin* and other Russian classics. See following nn.

11.26: several merry young gardeners . . . raspberries: In Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin* there are no men present during the peasant girls' berry-picking song. Nor are there in Chaikovsky's I.iii, but in the first scene of his opera, he takes the example of the berry-picking song as permission to introduce a gratuitous and jarringly out of place peasant song and dance. In this, men do take part; and the line "*Tut i shol proshol detina / Slovno yagoda-malina*" ("Along

came a hefty lad, like a raspberry") offers a partial explanation for the gardeners in Marina's play "popping raspberries into their mouths." MOTIF: *adaptation*.

11.27: Georgian tribesmen . . . popping raspberries: *Darkbloom*: "Raspberries, ribbon [11.33]: allusions to ludicrous blunders in Lowell's versions of Mandelshtam's poems (in the N. Y. Review [of Books], 23 December 1965)." For Nabokov and Lowell, see 3.04n2. Lowell translated the last two lines of Mandelshtam's famous November 1933 anti-Stalin epigram ("My zhivem, pod soboiu ne chuia strany," "We live, feeling no land beneath us") for which the poet was arrested: "After each death, he is like a Georgian tribesman, / putting a raspberry into his mouth." The lines read: "Chto ni kazn' u nego, --to malina / I shirokaia grud' osetina." As is usual in Mandelshtam, the sense is highly compacted and elliptical, but the lines mean literally: "Whatever the execution, it's a raspberry / And the broad chest of an Ossete." Stalin, a Georgian, admired Georgian folklore and here seems to be imagining the sweet raspberry taste of each execution and puffing out his chest as if it proves himself once again a Georgian hero. MOTIF: *translation*.

11.28-29: servant girls in sharovars (somebody had goofed--the word "samovars": *sharovary* are wide trousers; a *samovar* of course is the urn Russians use to boil water for tea, perhaps meant to be introduced for local color--it is a cliché of Russianness--despite its irrelevance to this scene, only for it to have been garbled into *sharovary*.

Nabokov's friend Iosif Gessen reports in his autobiography some of the gaffes in Berlin productions of *Eugene Onegin*: serf girls gathering berries in snow-white stockings and lacquered slippers (*Gody izgnaniya* [Paris: YMCA, 1981], p. 85).

Sharovary may also evoke the French "charivari" (discordant music), a word used in the opera chapter of *Madame Bovary*, and even another famous garbling, "Charbovari" (Charles Bovary's mumbled version of

his name, taken up as a mocking chorus by his classmates in the opening chapter of Flaubert's novel).

11.30-31: plucking marshmallows and peanuts from the branches of fruit trees: ridicules the ignorance of or indifference to nature often displayed by translators. The marshmallow is a herb (*Althaea officinalis*), as well as the familiar confection which derives its name from it (and in an earlier form was made from the root of the marshmallow) and which here the muddledheadedness of the producer has transformed into a kind of fruit. Peanuts, of course, grow on bushes, but the nuts develop in pods underground.

For examples of Nabokov's care over the translation of natural terms, see *EO* III, 9-13; for his exasperation at the carelessness of others, see *EO* II, 286-87. In his critique of Walter Arndt's translation of *Eugene Onegin*, he points out that "*Vishen'e* is simply 'cherries' (with which the girls pelt the eavesdropper in their song in Chapter Three) and not 'cherry twigs' and 'branches' with which Arndt makes them beat away the intruder." (*SO* 237-38)

Notice that in this version the berry-picking song seems to have disappeared--as of course it does not in Chaikovsky. MOTIF: *translation.*

11.33: kurva or "ribbon boule": see Darkbloom at 11.27n. Lowell translated Mandelshtam's phrase *kurvu-Moskvu* ("Moscow the Whore") as "Moscow's ribbon of boulevards" in his translation of the poem "Net, ne spriatat'sia mne ot velikoi mury" ("No, I won't hide behind the great nonsense") (written April 1931). Mandelshtam's "a ia ne risknu, / U kogo pod perchatkoi ne khvatit tepla, / Chtob ob'ekhat' vsiu kurvu-Moskvu" ("but I won't chance it, / There's not enough warmth inside my glove / To ride around the whole of Moscow the whore") becomes in Lowell's version: "I am not afraid-- / who has enough heat behind his gloves to hold the reins, / and ride around Moscow's ribbon of boulevards?" (*New York Review of Books*, 23 December 1965, p. 5). MOTIF: *translation.*

12.01: light-loined: note the chance echo of "light of my life, fire of my loins" in the first line of *Lolita.*

12.01: rose-red banknote: value, twenty-five rubles.

12.04: as she ran . . . meeting with Baron O.: This follows *EO* III.xxxviii-xli (especially III.x1.6-7: "in her breast there's the same quivering, / nor ceases the glow of her cheeks") and IV.vii-xxiii, or in Chaikovsky's opera, the remainder of I.iii.

12.04: flushed and flustered: Cf. "Flushed and flustered" Lucette (267.20).

12.05: sitting ovation: a play on "standing ovation." The producer's prodigious labors have impressed no one.

12.06: transfigurants: MOTIF: *transfigure.*

12.07: Lyaskŝa Antiterra's Alaska (from the transliteration of the Russian, "Alyaska"), which Russia sold to the United States in 1867. Cf. 3.15n and *SO* 61, where Nabokov, asked what scenes he would like to have filmed, replied: "The Russians leaving Alaska, delighted with the deal. Shot of a seal applauding."

12.07: Iveria: Perhaps a combination of Iberia, an ancient country in the Transcaucasia (the eastern part of present-day Georgia), the French *hiver* (winter), and Siberia, rather than the Iberian peninsula (Spain and Portugal).

12.07: Baron O.: notice that Baron d'O. has momentarily dropped the *particule.* He will be d'O. again at 12.17.

12.08: all spurs and green tails: Nabokov comments on *EO* III.xli.4-6, "straight before her, / eyes blazing, Eugene / stood, similar to some dread shade": "Tatiana sees Onegin as a demonic character in a Gothic novel or Byronic romance" (*EO* II, 410).

12.09-11: the wonder of that brief abyss of absolute reality between two bogus fulgurations of fabricated life: not inappropriate for Epiphany Eve, Demon's sense of wonder at the hyperreality of love will be echoed in himself at 251.09-13, by Van and Ada at 70.19-71.26 and 220.28-221.06, and by Greg Erminin at 454.29-30. For the contrast between the heightened reality of love and a banal backdrop, see also *TT* 30: "The commonplaces he and she had exchanged blazed

with authenticity when placed for display against the forced guffaws in the bogus bar."

12.11: Without waiting for the end of the scene: like Onegin in *EO* I.xxii: "Still amors, devils, serpents / on the stage caper and make noise / . . . / and yet Onegin has already left."

12.12-13: the snowflakes star-spangling his top hat: evokes the poster and cartoon image of Uncle Sam, the United States personified, in top hat decorated with the stars and stripes (cf. 3.21) of the "star-spangled banner" (the United States flag). Curiously from here to the end of the paragraph the action seems much closer to a stylized St. Petersburg than its ostensible setting in Manhattan (the Antiterran name for New York). Cf. Onegin on the way *to* dinner and the theater in St. Petersburg: "With frostdust silvers / his beaver collar" (*EO* I.xvi.3-4).

12.15-16: the last-act ballet of Caucasian generals and metamorphosed Cinderellas: Chapter 8, the last chapter of *Eugene Onegin*, features a ball. As the curtain rises for Act III of Chaikovsky's opera, a Polonaise begins, to mark the ball. It "is played through in its entirety with plenty of action but no singing, and a stage production requires presentation in something like ballet form" (Earl of Harewood, ed., *Kobbé's Complete Opera Book* [London: Bodley Head, 1987], p. 735). At the ball, Onegin meets Prince N., a general, whom he discovers to be Tatiana's husband. She therefore is the "metamorphosed Cinderella," the spurned provincial girl who has now become a princess and a star of St. Petersburg society. MOTIF: *Cinderella; fairy tale.*

12.17: Baron d'O.: MOTIF: *d'O.*

12.19-20: holding the glass slipper that his fickle lady had left him when eluding his belated advances: The glass slipper continues the Cinderella image, but owes nothing to Pushkin. Or almost nothing: Onegin does indeed make "belated advances" to Tatiana, which she eludes, and he is as it were left holding the glass slipper. After condescendingly lecturing her when he receives her passionate letter, he barely thinks of her again until returning to St. Petersburg

after three and a half years of travel. Only when he sees her transformed into a princess, a married woman, and coldly aloof, does Onegin now suddenly find the thought of Tatiana all-consuming. He sends her a letter as passionate as hers to him, and after months of gloom at receiving no reply, suddenly rushes to renew his suit. He falls at her feet. Tatiana, who has been rereading his letter when he bursts in, is hardly "fickle": she explains that she still loves him, but is married to another, and "to him I shall be faithful all my life." She leaves the room, Eugene stands in surprise, and Prince N. appears, at which point Pushkin breaks off his tale. In Chaikovsky's opera, this is Act 3 Scene 7. Cf. the discussion of Cinderella's glass slipper in *Pnin* 158. MOTIF: *Cinderella; slipper; fairy tale.*

12.22: slipped into Demon's arms and swan-sleigh: The "swan-sleigh" may suggest Chaikovsky's ballet "Swan Lake" (1877). It certainly confirms the image of a stylized nineteenth-century St. Petersburg.

Demon's affair with Marina may also evoke another St. Petersburg romance. The poet Alexander Blok, an idol of Nabokov's youth, declared his love for the actress Natalia Volokhova after calling on her dressing room. "Blok made her his daemonic and unattainable Snow Maiden, transformed their romance into a masquerade of balls and parties and sleigh-rides, of fizzing wine and swirling snow." (Avril Pyman, ed., *Alexander Blok: Selected Poems* [Oxford: Pergamon, 1972], p. 33.)

12.23: They reveled, and traveled, and they quarreled: Cf. "He traveled, he studied, he taught" (449.01, and see n. for Flaubert echoes).

12.24: By the following winter he began to suspect: By at least February 1869 (see 16.08). Cf. the slow growth of Van's suspicions at Ardis the Second, and their sudden confirmation (285-298).

12.28-13.01: unclicked out of its special flat case . . . the additional appeal of recalling Marina: Cf. "Demon's twofold hobby was collecting old masters and young mistresses" (4.26-27).

12.30-13.05: an unknown product of Parmigianino's tender art . . .: Giralomo Francesco Maria Mazzuoli (1503-1540), known as Parmigianino. The "small pen-and-wash" that Demon has found fuses three genuine Parmigianino works, the frescoes of Adam and of Eve in the church of Santa Maria della Steccata in Parma, which Parmigianino worked on between 1531 and 1539, and especially a small (9 x 3.3cm) preparatory sketch for the figure of Adam, in pen and brown ink and wash, now in the Uffizi (inventory no. 1982^{F}). Adam's posture in the sketch corresponds exactly to the position this passage describes- someone sitting sideways on a support, with a peach-like apple cupped in his hand, and with a strikingly raised shoulder, a posture uncannily congruent with that of a person "perched on the arm of a chair," muffling the mouthpiece of a telephone and talking to someone else.

Nabokov could have seen the Uffizi sketch of Adam and the Steccata frescoes of Adam and Eve together in Sydney J. Freeberg, *Parmigianino: His Works in Painting*, Cambridge, Mass., 1950, figures 108c, 100 and 101 respectively. For further information, see Boyd 1979:241-43. MOTIF: *Adam; Eve; woman in picture.*

12.33: a convolvulus-garlanded support: this detail from a real Parmigianino sketch will be echoed by an imagined Italian Renaissance "Forbidden Masterpiece" painting at 141.10-11: "thus a tendril climber coils around a column.... " See also 13.06n, 13.06-07n.

13.01-14.05: recalling Marina . . . muffled the receiver . . . 'Eve on the Clepsydrophone': Proust pervades *Ada*, especially in connection with jealousy, and especially in this chapter (see forenote). In this Parmigianino sketch that is about to arouse Demon's jealousy, Nabokov pays a curious double tribute to Proust.

Demon's affair with Marina prefigures Van's love for Ada a generation later, as Swann's jealous love for Odette in Proust prefigures Marcel's tormented love for Albertine, also a generation later. Like Demon,

Swann is an art connoisseur, and he sees Odette in terms of an Italian Renaissance fresco: "elle frappa Swann par sa ressemblance avec cette figure de Zéphora, la fille de Jéthro, qu'on voit dans une fresque de la chapelle Sixtine" ("she struck Swann by her resemblance to the face of Zephora, Jethro's daughter, seen in a fresco in the Sistine Chapel" (Pleiade ed., I, 222). The fresco is by Botticelli.

Behind the drawing and the way it brings to Demon's mind the image of Marina on the phone stands another passage from "La Prisonnière." Marcel tries to ring Andrée, but the line is busy: "En attendant qu'elle eût achevé sa communication, je me demandais comment, puisque tant de peintres cherchent à renouveler les portraits féminins du XVIIIe siècle où l'ingénieuse mise en scène est un prétexte aux expressions de l'attente, de la bouderie, de l'intérêt, de la rêverie, comment aucun de nos modernes Boucher . . . ne peignit, au lieu de 'La Lettre', du 'Clavecin' etc., cette scène qui pourrait s'appeler: 'Devant le téléphone', et où naîtrait si spontanément sur les lévres de l'écouteuse un sourire d'autant plus vrai qu'il sait n'être pas vu" (III, 99-100: "Waiting for her to finish her call, I wondered why, since so many painters are trying to revive the female portraiture of the eighteenth century in which the ingenious setting is a pretext for expressions of waiting, sulking, interest, or revery, why none of our modern Bouchers . . . paints, instead of 'The Letter,' or 'The Harpsichord,' a scene that could be called: 'At the telephone,' where a smile would come to life on the lips of the woman listening that would be all the truer because unaware of being seen"). Nabokov gleefully appropriates Marcel's suggestion and executes his proposal, not by inventing a modern painting but by turning to an impeccably pre-telephonic old master. MOTIF: *art-life.*

13.04-05: the baths voice drowned her whisper: Cf. "Bathwater (or shower) was too much of a Caliban to speak distinctly." (24.02-03) MOTIF: *water-speech.*

13.05: Baron d'Onsky: as D. Barton Johnson suggests, the name fuses the two heroes of *Eugene Onegin*, Onegin and Lensky ("Nabokov's *Ada* and

Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*," *Slavic and East European Journal*, XV [1971], 319). MOTIF: *d'O.*

13.06: that raised shoulder: cf. Ada's "raised ivory shoulder" (140.32) in the Forbidden Masterpiece painting referred to in 12.33n.

13.06-07: certain vermiculated effects of delicate vegetation: cf. "a crescent eaten out of a vine leaf by a sphingid larva" (141.13-14) in the same Forbidden Masterpiece.

13.14: Skonky: Cf. "Aunt Beloskunski-Belokonski.... a vulgar old skunk" (519-20). MOTIF: *konsk.*

13.17: *en connaissance de cause:* *Darkbloom*: "knowing what it was all about (Fr.)." In other words, being able to savor the attribution of the sketch to Parmigianino.

13.19: d'O.: his name has become identical with that of the hero of Marina's play. MOTIF: *d'O.; art-life.*

13.20-25: wondered if the rather banal resemblance . . . should be, or would be, commented upon. It was not: but d'Onsky does comment on it to someone else: see 14.04-11.

13.21: that Edenic young girl: MOTIF: *Eden.*

13.21-24: actress . . . critic: MOTIF: *actress.*

13.22-23: "Eugene and Lara" or "Lenore Raven": "Eugene and Lara" seems to be the adaptation of *Eugene Onegin* that we have watched with Demon. "Lara" fuses the two Larina girls, Tatiana and her sister Olga (as "d'Onsky," on a different plane, fuses Onegin and Lensky), with a glance at Lara, the heroine of *Dr. Zhivago* (1958) by Leonid Pasternak (1890-1960), a novel that will provide a major motif later in *Ada*. Cf. the equally absurd distortion of Pushkin's and Chaikovsky's title in "Tshchaikow's opera *Onegin and Olga*" (158.06)

"Lenore Raven" blends two famous poems by Edgar Allan Poe, "Lenore" (1831) and "The Raven" (1845).

Works of art in *Ada* often reflect with an uncanny and comically cooperative zeal the unfolding plot of the novel itself. The title "Eugene and Lara," by highlighting the coupling of hero and heroine, indicates the amatory link Demon is about to discover

between d'Onsky/d'O. and the Marina who played d'O.'s lover in her play. "Lenore Raven," on the other hand, seems to link Demon (known as "Raven Veen") with Marina playing the role of Lenore, the woman just lost in both of Poe's poems. MOTIF: *art-life.*

13.23-24: both painfully panned by a "disgustingly incorruptible" young critic: offered a bribe, undoubtedly, by Demon, who "bribed a series of green-room attendants" (10.15-16) for his first access to Marina, and generally likes to exercise the power of the purse (a trait Van shares). Later he will also try to "push" Ada's acting career (cf. 481.10-11).

13.25-29: such nymphs . . . hatter: syntax runs on and sense becomes too liquid here, because Demon is a little drunk, because he is obsessed with the image of Marina in the bath and the reflection of that mental image in Parmigianino's pen-and-wash, because that prefigures the entanglement of Marina and Aqua's fate in Demon's life ("the similarities of young bodies of water," perhaps with an undercurrent of the Russian expression "as alike as two drops of water"), and because the mirrors and the doubling of images multiply as Demon, musing over Marina and the Parmigianino, makes his way past "double-talk mirrors" to the cloakroom where he and d'Onsky nearly receive each other's hats. Demon always acts, talks and thinks at high speed, especially under the influence of drink or drugs (see 433.31-439.03). MOTIF: *water, water-speech.*

13.25: such nymphs: In view of the picture that for Demon conjures up first an image of Marina as a "nymph" called from her bath and then a little later a stab of jealousy at her infidelity, it seems relevant that in Chapter 4 of *Ulysses*, Bloom associates Molly with a picture of the *Bath of the Nymph* over their bed, just after the novel's first mention of Blazes Boylan, when Molly's casual disclosure that he will visit later in the day makes Bloom rightly suspect that Boylan may become Molly's lover. *The Bath of the Nymph* develops into a motif throughout Joyce's novel. Every year in his Cornell courses Nabokov would read the passage introducing both Boylan and the *Bath of the Nymph:*

"You will enjoy the wonderfully artistic pages, one of the greatest passages in all literature, when Bloom brings Molly her breakfast. How beautifully the man writes!

--Who was the letter from? he asked.

Bold hand. Marion.

--O, Boylan, she said. He's bringing the programme....

The *Bath of the Nymph* over the bed.... Not unlike her with her hair down." (*Lects* 306-07)

13.26-27: the similarities of young bodies of water are but murmurs of natural innocence: In view of the picture of Eve which watery Marina echoes, there seems an allusion to the famous image of Eve's innocence in *Paradise Lost*, when she recounts first catching sight of her own reflection in water: "Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound / Of waters issued from a cave and spread / Into a liquid plain, then stood unmoved / Pure as the expanse of heaven; I thither went / With unexperienced thought . . /. . / As I bent down to look, just opposite, / A shape within the watery gleam appeared / Bending to look on me, I started back, / It started back, but pleased I soon returned.... " (IV.453-63)

13.27: murmurs of natural innocence: a little later, Demon will recall to Marina what she had said to him when he rang her long distance and got her out of her bath: "you said you were in Eve's state, hold the line, let me put on a *penyuar*." (16.15-16)

13.27: bodies of water: cf. "body of water" (5.10-11).

13.28: double-talk: The "double-talk" reflects not only the mirrors but Demon's suspicion that Marina may have been unfaithful. Cf. also "Mixed metaphors and doubletalk became all three Veens, the children of Venus" (410.09-10, another occasion when Veens drink too much and become entangled).

13.28: that's my hat: that we have slipped into the stream of Demon's consciousness somewhere in the course of this sentence now becomes all but explicit.

13.28-29: we have the same London hatter: and, as it turns out, the same lover.

13.31: Bohemian lady: see 13.33n.

13.32: desired his recommendation for a job: she gets the job (15.11-12). Demon is used to the world of the "prof push" (164.02, and see also 13.23-24n.).

13.33: Glass Fish-and-Flower department in a Boston museum: stylized version of the Ware Collection of Glass Flowers at the Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology (where Nabokov was a researcher from 1941 to 1948). Bobbie Ann Mason notes: "The Glass Flowers are extraordinarily life-like glass models of flowering plants, principally orchids and tropical flowers. The models were created by a pair of Bohemian brothers, artists and naturalists of the nineteenth century--Leopold and Rudolph Blashka. Their skill in glass modelling remains a professional secret which died with them, and the glass models which they created are found only at Harvard. One of the prominent features of the collection is a group of models which illustrate the role of insects in the pollination of orchids." (Mason 87)

14.03: furs: MOTIF: *furs.*

14.03: *dackel*: colloquial German for "dachshund." See the same animal, presumably, at 252.03. The Nabokovs' successive generations of *dackels* feature in *SM*.

14.04-15: Curious how that appalling actress resembles 'Eve . . . '. . . confessed: The combination of a woman resembling Eve, jealousy and Demon may recall Anna Karenin's jealousy of Vronsky (an emotion she calls her *d'iavol*, her "demon" or "devil"): "A tebe dostavliaet udovol'stvie smotret' na Terezu v kostiume Evy . . . Opiat', op'iat' d'iavol!--skazal Vronskii" ("'But you enjoy seeing Thérèse dressed as Eve.' 'Again and again, that demon!' Vronsky said.") (IV.iii)

14.04-05: Curious how that appalling actress resembles Eve on the Clepsydrophone'. . .: MOTIF: *actress; woman in picture; Eve.*

14.04: Eve: Cf. "you said you were in Eve's state, hold the line" (16.15-16).

14.05: Clepsydrophone: a "clepsydra" is a water clock; W2 explains its derivation from Greek *kleptein* (conceal) and *hydor* (water). In view of Marina's

concealing the fact of her lover when Demon calls (16.15-16), the etymology seems pointed (nowhere else are "dorophones" called "clepsydrophones"). Cf. "we shall presently dispose of 'flowing' time, water-clock time, water-closet time" (539.27-28); "clepsydras" (544.08). MOTIF: *dorophone, technology.*

14.06-11: It is anything but famous.... friend of his?: Since d'Onsky was the first to confirm the attribution of the sketch, it must have been he who saw the resemblance between Parmigianino's naked Eve and Marina "on the clepsydrophone" on the very occasion Demon now recalls. This is not a particularly difficult inference, but rapid deductive skill runs in the family (cf. 8.15-9.05).

14.12: Friend of his: the Bohemian lady may well be lying: she marries d'Onsky this same year (see 15.10-12).

14.15-16: a physical wreck: Marina is definitely lying: see 14.25.

14.16: a spiritual Samurai: amusing, but why, and what does it mean? Amusing because of the discrepancy between "a physical wreck and a spiritual X" (one might expect something like "saint," in contrast with "wreck," or "penitent," in parallel, but "Samurai" seems so specific and so unexpected it shatters the symmetry). Since a samurai is a member of Japan's feudal warrior elite, it is bizarrely unclear what "a spiritual Samurai" might be, and why this particular lie should have popped out of Marina's mouth, apart from the supposition that Demon would not bother to chase d'Onsky all the way to Japan, especially if he had renounced women (if that is an implication of "spiritual Samurai") and had become an expert swordsman (an implication, if it is one, that Demon soon puts to the test).

14.18-19: Vatican, a Roman spa: the Vatican City as we know it seems not to exist on Antiterra.

14.18: Aardvark, Massa: *Darkbloom:* "apparently, a university town in New England." Harvard University, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Calling Harvard "Aardvaark" is "a very old joke" (Rivers & Walker, 264) (though does Nabokov compound the joke

to make his phrase sound like a slave's "Hard work, master"?)

14.21-23: decrepit but indestructible Gamaliel . . . idealistic President's: *Darkbloom:* "Gamaliel: a much more fortunate statesman than our W. G. Harding."

According to (mistaken) tradition, the biblical Gamaliel was president of the Sanhedrin. He was certainly one of its leaders and as a "doctor of the law, held in reputation among all the people," he advised his fellow-members not to put to death St. Peter and the Apostles (Acts 5.34-41).

Warren Gamaliel Harding (1865-1923), President of the United States, 1921-1923, had the end of his administration marred by the Teapot Dome oil reserve scandal. Though not personally implicated, he had appointed men who were. The discovery of their corruption broke his spirit, and unlike Antiterra's "indestructible Gamaliel," he died after only two years in office.

Harding was in fact voted to the presidency on a wave of reaction against the idealism of his predecessor, Woodrow Wilson (1856-1924, president 1913-21), who as a professor of jurisprudence resembled Gamaliel much more than Harding did in everything but name.

14.21-24: doing his best to forbid duels in the Western Hemisphere--a canard or an idealistic President's instant-coffee caprice, for nothing was to come of it . . .: Though Woodrow Wilson had been a prime shaper of the Covenant of the League of Nations, Harding led the United States to reject signing the League Covenant. He did however call an international conference on arms limitation that met in Washington in 1921-1922. An "instant-coffee caprice": one that takes no longer to prepare, and is no more genuine than, instant coffee? An echo of the Teapot Dome scandal (14.21-23n.)? MOTIF: *duel.*

14.24: petroloplane: In his autobiography Nabokov recalls that his favorite tutor, "Lenski" (Filip Zelenski), who tried to make his fortune buying up inventions, purchased "the blueprint of what he called an 'electroplane,' which looked like an old Blériot but

had--and here I quote him again--a 'voltaic' motor." (*SM* 169) On Antiterra, with electricity banned (see 17.01-10 and n.), airplanes would of course need to be "petroloplanes."

Since a "Laputa" is a "freight airplane" (556.02), and since *la puta* is Spanish for "the whore" (as well as the name of the flying island Gulliver encounters: see 556.02n), the near-"trollop" in "petroloplane" may not be entirely accidental. Leo Tolstoy wrote to Turgenev in 1857 that "the railroad is to travel as the whore is to love," an attitude reflected in *Anna Karenin* (see Gary R. Jahn, "The Image of the Railroad in Anna Karenina," *Slavic and East European Journal*, 25 [1981], 1-10). Nabokov, who had had one unhappy flight in 1920, had not flown since, at the time of writing *Ada*, feeling little better about airplanes than Tolstoy about railroads, he had crossed the Atlantic several times in the last decade by ocean liner. He overcame his aversion to flying somewhat in the 1970s. MOTIF: *technology*.

14.25: looking very fit: see 14.15-16.

14.26-27: Gunter's Bookshop . . . English shopkeeper: writing to Edmund Wilson from Nice in 1961, Nabokov reported: "I speak French with a cornbelt accent and buy daily the New York Herald at Gunn's bookshop" (February 27, 1961, VNA).

14.28-15.07: back-slapped . . . groin: MOTIF: *duel*.

14.31-32: a certain amount of good blood (Polish and Irish--a kind of American "Gory Mary" in barroom parliance): "good blood" rather than the "bad blood" (in the sense of "antagonism") expected in this context, because of Baron d'Onsky's and Baron (588.11) Demon Veen's aristocratic heritage. D'Onsky turns out to be Polish; Demon is "of ancient Anglo-Irish ancestry" (4.17). "Gory Mary": a Bloody Mary (vodka and tomato juice), "gory" (bloody) because of the duel, "Mary" because both Poland and Ireland are Roman Catholic? Demon receives a wound that will leave a scar for decades (252.04-05) and d'Onsky comes off still worse.

14.34-15.01: an amusing Douglas d'Artagnan arrangement: *The New York Times* verdict on Douglas

Fairbanks (1883-1939) in *The Three Musketeers* (1921), directed by Fred Niblo (1874-1948), was this: "He never fences one man if there are six to fence instead, he never leaves a room by the door if there is a window or a roof handy, he never walks around any object (including human beings) if he can jump over them; he scales walls at a bound, carries prostrate damsels over roofs, hurls men one upon another, rides no horse save at a gallop, responds to the call of gallantry at the drop of a hat, and in general makes himself an incomparable D'Artagnan." (August 29, 1921)

Cf. the duel Van imagines with Andrey Vinelander: "He insulted Van on the mauve-painted porch of a Douglas hotel.... the duel.... Both fell" (531.18-25)

15.02-03: charming Monsieur de Pastrouil: Significance unknown.

15.03: Colonel St. Alin, a scoundrel: a play on the name of Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin (1879-1953), whose name does not usually suggest saintliness. Whether or not Stalin exists on Antiterra is a moot point: see S82.19-20.

15.04-06: not "of his wounds" . . . but of a gangrenous afterthought . . .: Cf. *RLSK* 6-7: "Nor is it exact ... that his father was killed in the duel.... he was steadily recovering from the bullet-wound in his chest, when--a full month later--he contracted a cold with which his half-healed lung could not cope."

15.06-07: the least of them, possibly self-inflicted, a sting in the groin: Given Demon's attempt to castrate him (16.18-19), the "self-inflicted" seems to be Van's partisan slur.

15.10: married in 1869: as Demon himself will do: see 19.09-11.

15.11-12: now keeper of Glass Biota at the local museum: Demon has influence (cf. 13.31-32). Despite her husband's wound (or because of her infidelity?) she manages to give d'Onsky a son: see 523.02-04.

15.13-15: a few days after the duel . . . neither remembered to dupe procreation: Marina arrives in late March 1869. A late March-early April conception

means that she is exactly on term with Van, born January 1, 1870.

15.14: villa Armina: cf. 8.02. MOTIF: *Marina.*

15.16: *interesnoe polozhenie* (interesting condition): The literal translation is accurate, but the idiomatic sense is glossed in *Darkbloom*: "family way."

15.19-23: (Van, I trust your taste .... crossed out lightly in her latest wavering hand.): The first explicit evidence of Van as the book's narrator, and of a *terminus a quo* for his and Ada's deaths. We know now he must live to be at least 95, and she to be 93. We can presume that Ada at least will live slightly longer, since her writing hand has weakened since the first 1965 marginalium. For the final details, see 567.01-03 and 587.03-588.04. We also discover the process of successive revisions explained further at 587.18-23.

16.19-20: are we *quite sure* we should keep reverting so *zestfully* to that wicked world which after all may have existed only oneirologically: Presumably, Terra (see Pt. 1 Ch. 3)? Ada has her own private set of values, but where is the allusion to "that wicked world" that has upset her? Is it simply the word "anguished" in "these anguished notes" (15.17)?

15.26-28: on the condition she dropped her theatrical "career" .... He denounced the mediocrity of her gift: Van will have a similar distaste for Ada's acting (425.14-16). MOTIF: *actress.*

15.29-30: By April 10 it was Aqua who was nursing him: they will marry on April 23 (4.14-16); Demon always hurtles through life.

15.31-32: "Lucile" . . . Ladore: perhaps named after Chateaubriand's beloved sister Lucile, especially in view of the Chateaubriandesque resonances of Ladore: "My sister, do you still recall / The blue Ladore and Ardis Hall"?/ Don't you remember any more / That castle bathed by the Ladore? // *Ma soeur, te souvient-il encore / Du chateau que baignait la Dore?"* (138.01-06) The entanglement of the two sisters' fates seems to implicate Chateaubriand for the first time. MOTIF: *actress; Chateaubriand.*

15.33-16.25: MOTIF: *letters.*

15.33: Adieu. Perhaps it is better thus: in fact Marina's and Demon's affair will resume and continue until 1871: see 4.18-19, 25.32-26.25 and 252.19-20.

16.01-04: whatever bliss might have attended our married life . . . one image I shall not forget and will not forgive: Having decided for this reason that he can never marry Marina, he quickly marries Aqua (a week after this letter) "out of spite and pity" (19.12).

16.03-23: one image I shall not forget . . . image repeated in two men's minds: Van too will be obsessed by an image--like this, an imagined, rather than a remembered, visual image--of Ada, after he storms away from Ada and Ardis in a jealous rage (296.30-298.09).

16.05: gone to Boston to see an old aunt--a cliché, but the truth for the nonce: examples? Cf. a similar cliché in *Lolita* 29: "In the summer of 1939 *mon oncle d'Amérique* died bequeathing me an annual income of a few thousand dollars.... "

16.07: Lolita, Texas: *Darkbloom:* "this town exists, or, rather, existed, for it has been renamed, I believe, after the appearance of the notorious novel." In fact the little town of Lolita, Jackson County, half-way between Corpus Christi and Houston, still exists under that name.

The consequence of Demon's discovery of Marina's infidelity will be his marriage to Aqua; the consequence of *Aqua's* discovery of Demon's repeated infidelities will be her madness and suicide, which she prepares for by accumulating pills, as Humbert had accumulated pills for Lolita. Cf. "a plump purple pill reminding her, she had to laugh, of those with which the little gypsy enchantress in the Spanish tale (dear to Ladore schoolgirls) puts to sleep all the sportsmen and their bloodhounds at the opening of the hunting season." (27.32-28.03 and n.) MOTIF: *Lolita.*

16.08: Early one February morning: Cf. "By the following winter he began to suspect." (12.24)

16.11: I, Demon: cf. "I, Van." (567.01)

16.11: Demon, rattling my crumpled wings: Demon remains more human than his namesake in

Lermontov's poem, who really *does* have wings, and whom Demon evokes here. MOTIF: *Demon's wings.*

16.12: dorophone: the Antiterran equivalent of the telephone, a hydraulic telephone. Cf. 309.29-30. MOTIF: *dorophone.*

16.15: in Eve's state: naked. Cf. "Eve on the Clepsydrophone." (14.04-05) MOTIF: *Eve.*

16.16: *penyuar*: *Darkbloom:* "Russ., peignoir."

16.17-19: the man . . . castrate him): d'Onsky. MOTIF: *duel.*

16.19-21: Now *that* is the sketch made by a young artist . . .: MOTIF: *woman in picture.*

16.20: young artist in Parma, in the sixteenth century, for the fresco: Parmigianino: see 12.30-13.05n. The finished Adam and Eve are in fact in monochrome fresco.

16.22: the apple of terrible knowledge: the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which God forbids Adam and Eve to eat, but which first Eve, then Adam, eats, ushering in the Fall of Man (Genesis 2.16-3.24). The fruit is conventionally thought of and depicted as an apple. MOTIF: *tree of knowledge.*

16.22-23: image repeated in two men's minds: Demon's, d'Onsky's (cf. 13.07-27).

16.23-25: Your runaway maid . . . in a brothel . . . mercury: She has been found, presumably, by Demon, a great frequenter of brothels. Blanche, the maid at Ardis, over whom Demon casts his appraising eye, will also "run away" (292, 298) on the day Van leaves Ada and Ardis after a similar unforgettable image imprinted by jealousy, and she too will be found to have venereal disease. For Demon's relations with female domestic staff, see 150.27-29, 374.27. MOTIF: *brothel; runaway maid; venereal disease.*

16.25: mercury: used in the treatment of syphilis until 1909. Cf. 132.11 (where mercury is recommended for the virginal Verger's psoriasis), and 241.19, where Demon complains that the Ardis servants "are not Mercuries." MOTIF: *mercury.*

Afternote:

In Part 1 Chapter 2 Van celebrates his own love for Ada by celebrating the romance of its prefigurement by Demon's love for Marina. But Nabokov has other designs: the chapter also prefigures Lucette's death, the consequence of Van's and Ada's love.

Demon's rushing from the auditorium to make love to the Marina he has just seen on stage anticipates Van's rushing from *Don Juan's Last Fling* on the night of Lucette's death as soon as he sees Ada appear as an actress on screen. Tearing himself away from the cinema and the mood of sexual excitement Lucette has established in him, he masturbates twice to drain himself of any further sexual susceptibility, as he projects "upon the screen of his paroxysm" (490) an image of Ada. Lucette, sure that she now can never succeed in seducing Van, takes her own life.

To reinforce the link between I.ii and III.v, Nabokov makes the movie in which Ada stars another travesty of another famous tale (actually, two tales, *Don Quixote* and the Don Juan story, especially in Pushkin's version, *The Stone Guest*), and links the corruption of Onegin into "d'O." with the decay of Don Quixote and Don Juan into the muddled "Don."

Van cuts abruptly from the scene of Demon's first making love to Marina to Demon's discovering her infidelity in order to prefigure the disjunction between the harmony of Ardis the First and the justified suspicions of Ardis the Second. But again, Nabokov also has Lucette in mind.

Marina's resemblance to a drawing of Eve is the first example of a theme of women in pictures that culminates in the scene of Lucette at the bar of the Divan Japonais (a scene that replicates a Toulouse-Lautrec poster and a Barton and Guestier wine advertisement that itself copies the poster), when she first conceives of her desperate final attempt to win Van, and in Ada's "coming into the picture" on the night of Lucette's death a week later. For more on the picture motif and its bearing on Lucette, see Boyd 1985: 109-123.

There is still another level of significance to explore in Part 1 Chapter 2. We first glimpse Marina playing the part of Tatiana writing her letter to Onegin (or in this version, perhaps "Lara" writing to "Eugene d'O.n?); the chapter ends with Demon writing a letter to Marina that rules out their ever marrying. A theme of letters pervades *Ada*, and its foveal focus is the letter that Lucette writes to Van before joining him on the *Tobakoff*, that he receives only after her suicide, and that ends with a poem about communication between a ghost and a mortal. This theme links with the "Letters from Terra" theme in the novel, which also involves communication between this world and a possible "Next World," and with a theme of messages somehow made through water, as in Marina's "clepsydrophone," her water-powered telephone. As I suggest (Boyd 1985:178-212, 223-228, Boyd 1991:555-61, and Boyd, "*Ada*," in Vladimir Alexandrov, ed., *Vladimir Nabokov: A Reference Guide* [New York: Garland, forthcoming]) the novel seems to suggest that Lucette somehow communicates to Van from the beyond, from her watery grave, somehow inspires him to write the account of his life with Ada, somehow resolves the relationship between art and life by confirming an art beyond and behind life.

But as usual Nabokov ensures that readers cannot jump to these general conclusions without immersing themselves in the complex artistry of the particular.

ANNOTATIONS & QUERIES

by Charles Nicol

[Material for this section should be sent to Charles Nicol, English Department, Indiana State University, Terre Haute, IN 47809. Deadlines for submission are March 1 for the Spring issue and September 1 for the Fall. Unless specifically stated otherwise, references to Nabokov's works will be to the most recent hardcover U.S. editions.]

WHEELS IN THE LOW SUN

In the first chapter of *Speak, Memory* Nabokov compares the cosmos with human consciousness: "how small the cosmos . . . how paltry and puny in comparison to human consciousness, to a single individual recollection, and its expression in words!" As an example of such a recollection he mentions the view he had from a train, riding through the night, of "a handful of fabulous lights that beckoned to me." The train calls subsequently at chapters 3, 4, 5, 7, 10 and 12 before reaching its philosophical destination in the final chapter, where Nabokov meditates on "the phylogenetic aspects of the passion male children have for things on wheels, particularly railway trains." The rotation of wheels leads to onward movement, producing "the miraculous paradox of smooth round objects conquering space." As Nabokov uses the word "space" instead of "distance," one might suppose that the "fabulous lights," although apparently belonging to an almost hidden village, are not to be discriminated from stars.

Attempts to pass into or to join the universe are often encountered in Nabokov's work. He compares his novels written under the Sirin pseudonym to "windows giving upon a contiguous world . . . a rolling corollary, the shadow of a train of thought" in *Speak,*

Memory (288), where--immediately after the paradox of wheels conquering space--he conceives of the dimension beyond human thought as "a special Space":

> . . . if, in the spiral unwinding of things, space warps into something akin to time, and time, in its turn, warps into something akin to thought, then, surely, another dimension follows--a special Space maybe, not the old one, we trust, unless spirals become vicious circles again. (301)

The old one, however, can serve as an approximation of the new one, and offer a palpable way to take cognizance of it. "Our solar system emerged from a spiral nebula," Nabokov says, and he--or his circular creation Krug--ridicules the Dutch astronomer and cosmologist De Sitter (1872-1934), who made an estimation of its size and mass, thus assuming that the universe is finite (*Bend Sinister* 156). Several of Nabokov's protagonists try to enter the cosmos by simply stepping out of those windows into the continguous world. When Luzhin "got through the window" at the end of *The Defense* and let go, "he saw exactly what kind of eternity was obligingly and inexorably spread out for him." In *Invitation to a Beheading* (eighth chapter, eighth day of confinement), Cincinnatus recalls the schoolday on which he "had learned how to make letters," when he "stepped straight from the window sill on to the elastic air" and saw himself "standing transfixed in mid-air . . . three aerial paces" from the window he had left (97). Even more aspiring is the son in "Signs and Symbols" who, according to an envious fellow patient, had learned to fly. In *Speak, Memory* Nabokov discusses this urge to fly away: "innermost in man is the spiritual pleasure derivable from the possibility of outtugging and outrunning gravity, of overwhelming or re-enacting the earth's pull" (301--immediately before the paradox of wheels and space). "To escape its gravity," he writes in "Lance," "means to transcend the grave." The image of flying away is often found in poetry, dating back at

least to one of Horace's Odes: "Earth shall not keep me from the skies, / I'll pierce the smoke of towns, / And, soaring far aloft, despise / Their envy and their frowns" (quoted by E.C. Everard Owen, ed. of Lord Byron's *Childe Harold* [London: Edward Arnold, 1897], 187, in a note to a parallel passage). Nabokov's poetry shows two instances: in "The Paris Poem" (*Poems and Problems*) and in "The Ski Jump" (see Brian Boyd, *The Russian Years* 254).

In modern times airplanes do empower men to fly, if only to a certain extent, as Kinbote's father, King Alfin, experienced when he failed to make a "vertical loop." The plane seen by Shade in line 528 is far more successful, having reached Hesperus, as the ancient Greeks called the evening star Venus. In "Time and Ebb" it is said that the late Professor Alexander Ivanchenko had detected animal life, "hesperozoa," in the humid valley of the planet Venus--viable presumably only at sunset, as the name Hesperides would suggest (Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths*, I [London: Penguin, 1960], 129). (In that story a Dr. de Sutton warns against playing with kites or toy balloons; his name resembles De Sitter as well as Sutton, the father of Mrs. Starr, president of Sybil Shade's club. The danger de Sutton sees in reconnoitering the universe by means of simple toys is probably aroused by a misapprehension comparable to De Sitter's assessment of the cosmos.) "Time and Ebb" ends in a panegyric of planes: "great flying machines" are compared with a flock of swans "of a species never determined by science" which passes "from the unknown into the unknown."

It is far easier to communicate with the cosmos by exposing oneself to the signals which radiate from it, such as moonbeams and sunrays. In this respect the passage in which Fyodor visits the Grunewald "forest" is interesting. The passage ends when he arrives, after a fortnight of swimming, "on the other shore" (*Gift* 348). All kinds of birds, insects, animals are mentioned as being part of this "primeval paradise" as

are flowers, trees, grasses and stone. Among the very few man-made things Fyodor notices are a high-flying plane and a bicycle. The scene, however, is dominated by the sun, the presence of which is mentioned no less than twenty times. Fyodor describes how he himself felt contingent on the sun, how he "was translated into the sun." It seems probable that this experience is the source of "the sense of oneness with sun and stone" related in *Speak, Memory* (139). The cosmos and its heavenly bodies seem to be significant substitutes for the "special Space," the dimension of eternal life.

Equally seminal is the figure eight, which when turned on its side becomes the symbol for infinity, or eternity. The occurrence of "eights" has been noticed frequently (Pekka Tammi, *Problems of Nabokov's Poetics* 211-12; Priscilla Meyer, *Find What the Sailor Has Hidden* 203). The infinity-sign pattern of the puddle in *Bend Sinister* is noted by Brian Boyd in *The American Years* (105); see also D. Barton Johnson, *Worlds in Regression* 194-96, and Vladimir Alexandrov, *Nabokov's Otherworld* 110-12, 122-25. In addition, the number eight is associated with the rainbow, itself a symbol of transcendence in Nabokov. Thus *Pale Fire* introduces the minor character Iris Acht: *iris* is Greek for *rainbow*; *acht* is German and Dutch for *eight*--neatly echoing Krug's speculations in *Bend Sinister*: "we shall imagine then a prism or prison where rainbows are but octaves of ethereal vibrations" (171). The figure eight, consisting of two connected circles, also resembles a bicycle, a frequent vehicle in Nabokov's novels. In *The Gift* (329) as well as in *Invitation to a Beheading* (99) a tricycle is mentioned, which raises the question whether there are monocycles as well. (A cosmological tricycle is present in *Pale Fire* on the dramatic evening of 21 July, the day the moon was at syzygy.) The unicycle, being used only in circuses, is not a real candidate, but Nabokov allotted much consequence to wheelbarrows. In the low sun, a wheelbarrow and its shadow also produce a figure eight, a fact unmentioned at Fyodor and Zina's moment of liberation when in "the low sun"

"a porter's long shadow" is seen "pushing the shadow of a barrow" (*Gift* 371). This same shadow is implied by the "empty barrow" trundling up the lane in the last line of Shade's poem, as a butterfly "wheels in the low sun" five lines earlier. Invigorated by the sun, the wheel becomes an immortal eight, in accordance with the phylogeny Nabokov surmised in "things on wheels." In *Pale Fire* the shadow does for the circle what Shade's art does for Kinbote, it tenders a claim to immortality. This is prefigured in the comment to line 143: Shade showed Kinbote a clockwork toy, "all bent and broken," made up of a wheelbarrow and a boy "consisting of two more or less fused profiles." As I argue in "Fanning the Poet's Fire" (*RLT* 24: 239-67), uniting of the characters is an important theme of *Pale Fire*, and it is most likely that the fusing of the profiles is all that is needed to make Kinbote think that "the rustic clockwork shall work again."

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THE TREE WITH HEART-SHAPED LEAVES IN *PNIN*

In Chapter Six of *Pnin*, as part of the description of the house Pnin has just rented, at the beginning of what is to be his last semester at Waindell, we read: "And a tall deciduous tree, which Pnin, a birch-lime-willow-aspen-poplar-oak man, was unable to identify, cast its large, heart-shaped, rust-colored leaves and Indian-summer shadows upon the wooden steps . . ." (145). In his commentary to this passage, Gennadi Barabtarlo tentatively identifies the tree as a mulberry, and, apparently in support of this surmise, cites a passage in *Ada*: "The tree is most probably one of the genus *Morus*. Cf. *Ada*: `. . . a princely paulownia ("mulberry tree!" snorted Ada) . . . was shedding generously its heart-shaped dark green leaves . . .' (522)" (*Phantom of Fact: A Guide to Nabokov's* Pnin 229). The mulberry, to be sure, has heart-shaped leaves that can be described as large (in comparison to, say, a locust or elm), but the problem with adducing the *Ada* passage is

that the tree that is shedding heart-shaped leaves there, the paulownia, is not of the genus *Morus*, but of the genus *Paulownia*. This particular tree is probably the most familiar species of the genus, the Royal Paulownia (*Paulownia tomentosa* or *imperialis*, also sometimes called Princess or Empress tree), which was named in honor of the tsarevna Anna "Paulowna" (1795-1865), daughter of Paul I and sister of Alexander I (and, by virtue of her 1816 marriage to William II, Queen of the Netherlands--hence, apparently, the strange spelling of her patronymic), as Ada had pedantically explained to Van twenty-one years earlier (43). Nabokov's choice epithet, "princely," not only characterizes this handsome tree but alludes both to the common names and to the tree's namesake (the more precise "princessly" would be too precious, and "regal" would relinquish the alliteration). A somewhat fuller citation from *Ada* reads as follows: "A boxwood-lined path, presided over by a nostalgic-looking sempervirent sequoia (which American visitors mistook for a `Lebanese cedar'--if they remarked it at all) took them to the absurdly misnamed rue du Mûrier, where a princely paulownia (`mulberry tree!' snorted Ada), [etc.]." Ada, we will recall, is a knowledgeable amateur botanist, and being scient also in insects, would be particularly familiar with mulberries. So her "snort" is aimed not at the innocent tree, as might be assumed by the reader not aware (as I was not before pursuing the issue--perhaps this is what Barabtarlo intended *his* reader to do?) that a paulownia is not a mulberry, but at whoever misnamed this street in "Mont Roux."

In any case, I believe that Pnin's tree is neither a mulberry nor a paulownia, but still another tree with heart-shaped leaves, the catalpa. As mentioned above, the leaf of the mulberry is not small, but the much larger leaves of the paulownia and catalpa are among their most striking features. Most tree guides comment on the similarity between these two trees, and the Paulownia genus "has been placed" (Thomas S. Elias, *The Complete Trees of North America*) in the

same family (Bignonia) as catalpa, though Elias himself, and all the other tree guides I consulted, place it in the closely related Figwort or Foxglove family (Scrophulariaceae). Elias gives up to 5.5 inches for the leaf of the black mulberry, which, however, is not a particularly tall tree, and moreover, apparently is not hardy in upstate New York (where Barabtarlo convincingly places Waindell: *Phantom* 60). The leaf of the taller American native red mulberry, whose range does reach this far north, is only 3-4 inches (Elias), while the paulownia leaf is up to 12 inches long, and that of the catalpa up to 10 (Southern Catalpa, *Catalpa bignonioides*) or 12 (Northern or Western Catalpa, *speciosa*) inches, or more. Going, then, by size of leaf as well as shape, the tree in question might be either catalpa or paulownia, but the paulownia, like the black mulberry, is not hardy in upstate New York.

Besides the botanical arguments, there is also, it seems to me, a literary reason for preferring the catalpa identification, namely, that it fits better with one of the novel's main themes, that of Pnin's status as exile. The catalpa is a tree closely associated with America, while the various species of mulberry are much more widely spread around the world; thus the catalpa is the more appropriate tree to be unfamiliar to Pnin the immigrant, with his exile's psychology of living in his past and to a great extent in isolation from his present physical environment. Pnin is not especially observant, as Barabtarlo emphasizes (*Phantom* 119, 207), and recognizes only the flora he knew during his Russian youth, such as the six trees listed in the passage under discussion, or the ubiquitous pines of Chapter Five, or the lilacs that also grow by his new abode ("Lilacs--those Russian garden graces, to whose springtime splendor . . . my poor Pnin greatly looked forward--crowded . . . along one wall of the house" [145]). I intend to develop this topic further, along with some other aspects of the tree motif, in an article in progress.

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PNIN REVISITED, OR WHAT'S IN THE NAME(S)

1. The Protagonist's Name.

The protagonist's name, which is, indeed, quite uncommon, has been interpreted to mean various things: anything from Russian *pen'* ("stump"), because "many American characters in the book stumble over it" (Barabtarlo, *Phantom of Fact* 57) to English *pain* ("It is no accident that the book's risible name . . . almost spells `pain'" (Boyd, *The American Years* 272).

Most critics agree, however, that Pnin probably owes his name to the late eighteenth-century Russian publicist and minor poet Ivan Petrovich Pnin, an illegitimate son of Price P.N. Repnin (it was a common practice for illegitimate children to inherit only a part of their fathers' last names). Interestingly enough, while Nabokov himself never suggested that a connection exists between the protagonist of his novel and Ivan Pnin, Nabokov's sister did. Soon after one of the chapters of *Pnin* was published in the *New Yorker* in 1955 ("Pnin's Day," 23 April), Elena Sikorskaia wrote to her brother: "*Ia vstretilas' s milym, ocharovatel'nym Pninym tol'ko na milutu i teper' i mechtaiu o novoi vstreche s nim. Kstati: Ivan Petrovich Pnin (1773-1805) byl, kazhetsia, horoshim poetom*" (*Perepiska s sestroi* 82) ("I met with sweet and charming Pnin only for a minute and now I cannot wait to meet with him again. By the way: Ivan Petrovich Pnin [1773-1805] was, apparently, a good poet").

But while critics generally agree on the origins of Timofey Pnin's name, they often differ as to Nabokov's reasons for such a linkage. Julian Connolly, for example, suggested that Nabokov may have wanted to emphasize that Timofey Pnin, not unlike his real-life namesake, is both dispossessed (in this case not of his

father but of his fatherland) and noble (if not in origin then in spirit) ("A Note on the Name `Pnin,'" *VNRN* 6 [Spring 1981]: 32-33). Andrew Field drew a connection between Ivan and Timofey in a different way by linking the title of Ivan Pnin's most famous work, *The Wail of Innocence* (*Vopl' nevinnosti, otvergaemoi zakonami*, 1801) to Timofey Pnin's innocent nature and penchant for wailing (*Nabokov: His Life in Art* 139). Gennadi Barabtarlo, on the other hand, doubts that themes of illegitimacy, innocence, dispossession or nobility have anything to do with the name-borrowing, since he believes that Nabokov often used real names merely to provide, in Nabokov's own words, "a definite, specific historical frame" (*Phantom of Fact* 204).

Barabtarlo also goes on to suggest that "since Ivan Pnin is the only known bearer of that name and does not seem to have been married, Timofey Pnin's origin is doubly fictitious" (56). However, this statement is factually inaccurate: Ivan Pnin did, in fact, marry and procreate. His son, Petr Ivanovich Pnin, was born in 1803, became a minor artist, spent several years studying in Italy, and is said to have died of cholera in Naples in 1837. This information can be found in a 1950 book published in Russia which, as I am going to show presently, may have played an important role in the creation of Nabokov's novel and can possibly even shed some light on why Ivan and Timofey Pnin came to be related through the means of Nabokov's fiction.

The book is Vladimir Orlov's *Russkie prosvetiteli 1790-1800-kh godov* (Russian Enlighteners, 1790s-1800s), and it focuses on several minor men of letters of the post-Radishchev era. In a chapter devoted to Ivan Pnin (63-177), Orlov provides a rather detailed biographical sketch of Pnin and discusses, among other things, Pnin's illegitimate birth and the practice of truncating last names when given to children born out of wedlock. The year it came out, the book was purchased by many American university libraries, among them Harvard, where Nabokov was doing his

research while on leave from Cornell during the winter and spring of 1953 (Cornell apparently did not purchase Orlov's book either in 1950 or in 1953, when a second edition came out). While I can only speculate about Nabokov's discovery of Orlov's book at Harvard--Widener's records are apparently both incomplete and, as of last year, confidential--there are several reasons why the possibility seems very likely.

To begin with, it was a highly logical book for Nabokov to consult. He was at the time working on his commentary to *Evgenii Onegin*. While at Harvard, where he went with the specific purpose of further research for his commentary, he looked at a great number of books connected with the period immediately preceding Pushkin and with the authors (Radishchev among them) who could have affected Pushkin's body of knowledge and his political sensibilities. Nabokov's extensive research at Harvard is confirmed by a number of letters he sent to his friends, among them a letter to Henry Allen Moe written in March of 1953: "I have devoted two months to research at the Widener Library for my `Eugene Onegin', and have found more fascinating material than I expected" (*Selected Letters* 135).

The chronology of Nabokov's library research and the first appearance of Nabokov's famous protagonist is extremely suggestive. Several days after he finished his work at Widener, Nabokov left for Arizona and Oregon where, between catching butterflies, he wrote a short story about a Russian Professor by the name of Pnin (see Boyd 225). He sent the story to the *New Yorker* at the end of July and it was published in the issue of November 28.

If Orlov's book did make its way to Nabokov at Harvard, as I strongly suspect it did, it was probably instrumental in furnishing Nabokov not only with a name for his character but also with the relevant information about the real-life Pnin. Thus he could learn (if he did not know before) that Ivan was an illegitimate son of Prince Repnin (that Nabokov was

familiar with the link between the two names becomes quite obvious when one encounters "Dr. Olga Repnin" in *Look at the Harlequins!*) and that he, in turn, had a son. The latter may have indeed been of some importance. Barabtarlo is quite right when he alludes to Nabokov's craving for a "definite, specific historical frame," and Ivan's son could in many ways provide this "frame" since he could have children (Orlov does not specify whether he did or did not), grandchildren and great-grandchildren all the way up to Timofey's father, Dr. Pavel Pnin, "an eye specialist of considerable repute [who] had once had the honor of treating Leo Tolstoy for a case of conjunctivitis" (*Pnin* 21).

But even more important is the book's title--*Russkie prosvetiteli* (Russian Enlighteners)--insofar as it may actually suggest one of the reasons for why Nabokov's protagonist is linked to the other Pnin. If we characterize Ivan Pnin not as a minor publicist or a minor poet but as a minor "Russian Enlightener," then his relationship to Timofey Pnin becomes quite straightforward, for what is Pnin if not a minor *russkii prosvetitel'* of American students? And how truly Nabokovian to parody not only existent people but also existent titles!

On a lighter and even more speculative note, Nabokov's experience at Widener may have affected not only the name of his protagonist but also the name of the college where Pnin teaches. While Cremona, where Timofey gives a lecture at the beginning of the book, sounds somewhat recognizable since it evokes a name of at least one actual small college, Pomona, Pnin's Waindell bears an oddly uncharacteristic name, save for the suffix "ell" which the fictional college probably inherited from its real-life prototype, Nabokov's very own Cornell. But if we attach this Cornellesque suffix to the stem of the name of the Harvard library we get *Widen-ell* which is quite a close likeness to *Waind-ell*. This is, of course, pure speculation, but, knowing Nabokov's love for games of

this sort, one can easily assume that it would not be all that unlike Nabokov to try to immortalize the name of the library where he found *his* Pnin in the name of the college where the readers were destined to find *theirs*.

2. The Narrator's Name

In his introduction to the English translation of *Dar*, Nabokov characteristically warned his readers against dangers of confusing real-life authors and their fictionalized second selves and narrators. "I am not," he wrote, "and never was, Fyodor Godunov-Cherdyntsev . . ., I never wooed Zina Mertz, and never worried about the poet Koncheyev . . ." He also, obviously, never consulted Pnin's father about his infected eye, never slept with Liza Bogolepov, and never was privy to Cockerell's Pnin impersonation.

And yet the narrator's identification with the author of *Pnin* is unusually close. We do learn, for example, that, like Nabokov himself, V.N. is Vladimir Vladimovich, that he was born in St. Petersburg in the spring of 1899, that he lived on Morskaya ulitsa and attended a liberal gymnasium. Further, Nabokov himself appeared to have encouraged the blurring of the lines between his authorial and fictionalized selves. "At the end of the novel," he explained in one letter to Pascal Covici, "I, V.N., arrive in person to Waindell College to lecture on Russian literature . . .," an explanation repeated in a later letter: "It is an absolute necessity for me . . . to introduce `myself' in Ch. 7" (*Selected Letters* 143, 178).

As a result, many critics tend to follow what they think is Nabokov's lead and to identify the narrator of *Pnin* simply as Nabokov. "Aristocratic, poised, successful in love and work," writes Boyd, "narrator Nabokov could not be less like poor awkward Pnin" (Boyd 277). Likewise, Charles Nicol, while acknowledging the existence of the so-called "purists" who may think otherwise, maintains that the narrator's name should be the same as the author's

("Pnin's History" in Roth, *Critical Essays on Vladimir Nabokov* 103).

Yet it was not accidental, it seems to me, that in a letter to the editor cited above Nabokov did put quotation marks around "myself." The narrator in *Pnin* is of course largely autobiographical--but so is Fyodor in *Dar*. "I was as arrogant as I was shy," the narrator says at one point, reminiscing about his past meetings with Timofey Pnin (*Pnin* 178). But what we get in the book is only the narrator's "arrogant" side, Nabokov's own superegotistic "public" image which was often created by those (mostly other émigrés) who, being accustomed to Pnin-like failures, mythologized his success.

Yet Nabokov himself probably knew better than that. Opposite as the figures of Pnin and the narrator appear in the novel, Nabokov is closer to Pnin than many critics are willing to admit. After all, Pnin's reflections on Russian literature--like his comments on *Anna Karenina*--and his attacks on Freudianism are often taken almost verbatim from Nabokov's own lectures. "As a matter of fact," writes one of Nabokov's former students, "he was considered a kind of Pnin-figure" (Ross Wetzsteon, "Nabokov as Teacher" in *Nabokov: Criticism, Reminiscences, Translations and Tributes*, ed. Alfred Appel and Charles Newman 246). And Marc Szeftel, Nabokov's longtime colleague at Cornell who was in all likelihood the most immediate prototype for Nabokov's protagonist, found at least "some of Nabokov's own features in Pnin--like his total lack of natural teeth" (Szeftel, unpublished diaries).

In "The Double Pnin," Ambrose Gordon introduced what I consider a very useful paradigm for Pnin's character: Pnin as the Exile and Pnin as the Alien (*Nabokov: The Man and His Work*, ed. L. S. Dembo 144-56). "Funny Pnin" is the eternal Alien, a pathetic foreigner with faulty English and premature dentures whom Cockerells of this world crave to ridicule. "Sad

Pnin" is the eternal Exile, a Leopold Bloom-like figure, who can be poignant, dignified, and in the long run, superior to those who are on more familiar terms with the world around them.

Interestingly enough, as late as 1954 Nabokov still fully intended to close his novel with Pnin's demise. "Poor Pnin dies," he explained to a potential publisher, "with everything unsettled and uncompleted, including the book Pnin had been writing all his life" (*Selected Letters* 143). As he was fleshing out his initial design, it was probably the discovery of this dignified "Exile" part in Pnin--and of the awkward "Alien" part of himself--that made him change the ending. And for that alone we run a risk of huge oversimplification when we choose to call the narrator Vladimir Nabokov.

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VIII. Miscellaneous

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The International Vladimir Nabokov Society

THE NABOKOVIAN

1978-1993

Index
I-XXX

Compiled by Gene Barabtarlo

The *Index* updates the previous one published in *The Nabokovian XXI*. It lists items that have appeared in all the thirty issues (the first dozen was published as *The Vladimir Nabokov Research Newsletter*), except for the regular features (general and specific information, lists of new VN publications supplied by the late Mrs. Vladimir Nabokov, research news, etc.) that appear in the Editor's report. I have extracted from the editorials, and listed separately, bibliographical information and reports on scholarly meetings.

Entries within sections B and C are arranged alphabetically; section D, thematically; the rest, chronologically, as are all items within an entry. Roman numerals refer to the issue number, arabic, to page number. To save space, the year of publication is omitted, but since **TNAB** comes out semi-annually (in spring and autumn), and since the first issue was published in the autumn of 1978, the time of publication of any given issue can be easily determined.

Adopted abbreviations and symbols:

"VN" or **"N."**, for Nabokov's name;

<abs>, for an abstract of a delivered paper or dissertation;

COF, for corrections of Andrew Field's Bibiliography (1973).

The ampersand following a page number in section C indicates that N's work in question is dwelled upon but briefly. I did sift survey articles for essential references to specific VN works. References in this section are given to the page or pages on which the work is mentioned.

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D. *BIBLIOGRAPHY*

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PLEASE NOTE: Subscription renewals are now due for 1994. Rates have not changed: check the inside cover of this issue.