FODOR'S
GUIDE TO CROCODILIAM

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ABSTRACT

Fodor's Guide to Crocodilium

Thomas C. Fodor

The Thesis is - by any strict definition - a Monster, a hybrid creature (like Man himself) in both form and content. It subverts the conventional usage of language forms by combining the methods of expository prose with the methods of narrative fiction. It freely improvises on mythological themes and their variations, dismembering them, re-arranging and re-combining their components into new perspectives which form a new labyrinth of meaning with its own image at the center.

The organizing metaphor of the Thesis is the myth of Theseus and the Minotaur, or rather, the major elements of that myth (the Labyrinth, Theseus, and Minotaur) are used as building blocks. There is a blurring of identity between the main 'character' and the Reader; indeed, the Reader soon comes to realize that he is the Labyrinth. In exploring the implications of this myth, the Thesis uses such bearers of ambiguity as the pun, the portmanteau word, the mixed metaphor and the second-person point of view. The Thesis personifies the labyrinth thematically, structurally, typographically and even ontologically: it is an 'object' that has no clear self-definition. The Reader therefore is never quite sure whether he is reading a novel that is masquerading as a Tourist Guide, or vice-versa.
Thanks to all my Masters, the live ones and the dead ones, the ones I’ve never met and the ones I’ve invented myself, and especially those who never knew they were my Masters because it seemed at the time that I was doing the explaining.

A special thanks to Elizabeth for her patience, to Scott for his impatience, and to Sharon for her faith.
Reptiles, by M. C. Escher (lithograph, 1943).
FODOR'S

GUIDE TO

CROCODILIUM
LEPIDUS: What manner of thing is your crocodile?

ANTONY: It is shaped, sir, like itself, and it is as broad as it hath breadth. It is just, so high as it is, and moves with its own organs. It lives by that which nourisheth it, and the elements once out of it, it transmigrates.

—William Shakespeare
ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA
Act II, Sc. vii, 46-51

What is the fundamental characteristic of the crocodile? The answer is clear: to swallow human beings. How is one, in constructing the crocodile, to secure that he should swallow people? The answer is clearer still: construct him hollow...

—Fyodor Dostoevsky
THE CROCODILE
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ARRIVAL

Your tyred feet (tensed at the speedals) can sense the yrth rumbelly and tremboil as though it is ready to cracow; screaming ploverhead, a silver sliver (the shadow of its wings slashes across the sighway) the same mental bird that has brot you out of the sky, left you behind in this thin-shelled thing. It evanishes ova the hill and the double white streak which tails from its fierie brrreath seems to seattle onto the ashfault ahead of you and slowly fades into the pocked graynest. Your supine has developed ridges, S-curves from the seat of your rented cairo.

You’ve been driving from the farport for hours (it seems). It’s a sham (you think) there is no species for a great aluminium bird to alight in the home of its creptilian incestuors. You too (prodigitous, flightlost victime of overlution) have felt that slavery motel in your solo (the turndency to fly), have thistaus to oppossess the secret of extortic places.

Inner flash it lies befor you!

CROCODILIUM! There, unchainged a hundred and fifty reptimillion years! Monsterious survarrialry: the water for the sake of the land, the land for the sake of the water! The exctyment flows from your pores (palms whetting the
steering wales): punstrous amalgame, this ancestrail home — the Real Crocodilium! Not the pale-fired insubstantial images you’ve huddled from books. ‘But de soto itself!

You’ve always known it was out there (somewhere) (exotic glowsesy photograsps in caufull-table books, jiggling film-clips smuggled onto the evening news, grease-yellowed travila posters above the grill (between the Paymate of the Year and a dog-eared calendar courtesy of THE ROYAL BLANK) in a steamy, corner-restaurant).

You’ve dreamed of this visit often (the local zoo: wide-eyed with terrebble fascination, senses tensed for the sense of the cold piscine odour/the stayling air osirising from the mud and subslime, a subdued spillash (as though the water itself were calling your surname): twin yellow slits challenge your composture. You wonder about THEIR city: would you REALLY undersand ostrich and anchaint customs? would you have the presence of mound not to be cheated in one of THEIR souvenireveh shops? You’ve read a dozen volumes (memoirs by salesmen, scienstiffs, pussional guides) and each confounds you with his stale of woe (they cannot agree, even about the size of the place (one sayes it is so largo it doesn’t matter what direction you choose (another: so small it can’t be found): still others say nothing atoll so your already-darkconception dickens even more (perhaps you muse)
they're all second-hand, twist-told tales)).

But this is the Mystery and Charm of Crocodilium: it repeals no Golden Age, no opuling minds; representing nothing, it is merely THERE (but there), sacrificial to nothing, bound to no living mummy of itself, fluid as the scarface of an open wound (forever flesh) and full of superise.

But you are on your way now: gradually the landscape reveals its secritias, its atlantis of lies (a propharse clooed in the garble of the past (you smell wahter: the road narrows (it's the perscticve, you tell yourself, and Crocodilium, according to your map, is over there, just beyond the nirvanishing point). Suddenly, the roadsigns are a longer irrational yellow; they assume changeling shapes you've met while napping in your armchair (you too have chameleyawned while reading at the wheel (you squeeze the slipperipherj rim and take a bump)).

You stop to admire one: (caricatured hands (palamos up)) is this a friendly gesture or the see-nickle affrontery of the Tourisk Trap? But there's no time to ponder this, (you see you're at a junction in the road (the function of the junction is to make you stop, to notice the suddenizen appattrition, consider that there's nothing to hyde ((beneath
the ominous lampost, ruminating, carrion on, contemporating scavengence should you too fall into earth) a fiendish jackal gloatting over a fresh caracas).

Humus be in THEIR territory now.

There armour strange signs that you pass (now: a large voluminated red balloon tethered to a rotting fencepost (DANGER/SLIPPERY WHEN THINFLATED) now: a flashing outline (YOU ARE LEAVING THE NEOONDERTHAL SECTOR) warning, blinking cycloptically (it makes you wish you were audacious). You ignore these signs one after the other, and already you obey the lhasa of Crocodilium, preparing for the unexspected, local apparenditions of places, things you’ve once known and fargotten. The dips and bumps in the rhodes have a greenish cast (the sun yawns aloft barely above the hills on the distant hurryzone (you’ve been driving all day and still they look farther and frother away) (and suddenly the border: a thingly imaginearly stripe that meanderuns somewhere between the dark and empity barranks and the steady rhythm of busy machiavenergy growling in the glowing distance (on your map this bruder is a printerference, a performation (dash dash dash dash dash dash dash dash (a sequence of zeros traced in Morsèl Code (proclaiming the owner’s name through all stufficialdom (NEW MAN’S LAND) (don’t spindle, mutilate or fold your attachments here or terra long the dotted line (it seems to
say). Here, the pavemement surface breaks up into slimy cobblestains (rubber sqwheels at the curves as you drive over these minianature contenets, false architextonic slabs (the cooling, shrivelling gearth's armoured scales (or, alternate version: (dash dot dash dash dot dash) (a series of parent theses containing all the space and mythtory the loyal city-zen needs to know)))))))).

You are fantigua and irritable, and though apprefensive of the crossing (you imargarine machine-gun cowers, bawdy searches, barbed bureaucretinic barrios) you visualeyes a friendly chat with the guards.

And here they are. You can see them now, lolling lazily, leaning on their languaddage tails, somewheros and fodoras woolled over their eyes. One smokes an old briar (dragging deeply, he blows the blue mist into the shapes of dragons, which bloom into looming birds, shardows, finally nothing). Others sway, play cards, adjust their weapons. Liquid laughter. They are telling each other advaunture sauries (you think).

You stop under the ancient stone arch (above you, you roll the windown halfway, poke your head sideways through) poised, the sharpened portcullis: (like teeth)). There is silence at the gates now: the guards (grinning) salute you languidly and
look away to more interresting things: the hieroglyphs on each
other's tails or their sholaces, (pink, like their shoes!) (the terror! the wonder! the wonder! the terror!) You recognize the signpost graphic from the ads (that's YOUR hotail!) the familiar slab of empty ground, dreaded dredged
wreckedangel (six feet deep (you've heard) and six feet long
(the measure of a man by which you suddoomly fathom the
ammanity of inches, feet, and yards)).

What you need now is sang freud: these crocodile residuents
can tell you have the Traveller's Disease (dislocation in
Space and Traume). Before yukon subtle in, there are papers
to sign, passepartouts to be stamped, photograffts to be
scrutinized. An enormonous crocoyle (ap parently an
offisir) accroaches you (perhaps politely (first)), arches
his ancient pitted back, and hisses.

And solowly he rasps his scalpy snout across your leg.

He is, of coarse, grinning (those teeth!) and does not expect
a manswer to his question (IS IT SPINACH?). Should you
attempest to talk, he will not let you through the gate - you
will be thrown into a donegeon and later prosciuttoed on
smuggling chargus. Any word spokeane at the litigate is
demed a lieu (the armour of prosperos cities); hide nothing
and you too may keep your hide. Mend your own business (you
are tempted to tell yourself). But already you recannibalize
the local slanguage and refrain. This embaalem of silence is
your

WELCOME TO CROCODILIUM!
GEOGRAPHIC FUTURES
TRAPOGraphy

From this side of the gates, you suddenly see how much height you've grandually zermattained durango the long drive. Looking down (shimmersed in the same vision that long ago had transfomed this placebo from a small and secret nihilthic settledmurgia into the pound granite and marbella moracle, of survivall it has been since the yawn of ddoovilization) juno see that unlike other city-stadts which dipend on their relevation for natural defence, the plan of Crocodilium follows the mountlines of a basin which dieppes toward the Circulinary Ramparts of the Old City in a symmetro you connaught inmediaresly appreciate. The asncients (your Guidebook says) had discerned in the basin the forum of a huge feeding-dish to contrain the growing stopulation, and, as if to sodidify the great hollow hemosphere, had built the walls at its circumdifference (and carved out the rings of steps that descend by sequel stages into the very art and shoal of Crocodilium.)

See how the old taldings huddle, isolated in the south like the leftowers from a meal; here you can see how Crocodilium owes its continued existen to the madness of its enemeanies (brimming with overcramfidence, many an Oamvicious and theatrick generole has been drawen into this natural trap). From the surrounding hilltopos: (you might have seen (had you approached from the north like so many inwaders before you)) a
gothick mist, the city's inverted mirage shimmering below the rigididge. This, however, is an optickle allusion, an exaggeration of the senses: like a rainbow which becomes visible only in profile, the strength of the forcestress becomes evidential too late.

You wipe your rainbow on your sleeve (you're in a vast carking lot: motor off. The last raze of low sun cut blinding, arced sharpes across your dirt-streaked indrashield). And now your luggage (and the long, oslo descent toward the smell of wanter (the canal-boats and (soon, soon your hopetell)). Your feet follow the rhythmes of the space (the rings of seteps: the gravity of fate (its voranxious pull bids you resite with every stair (down): DOWN, HILL, MOOR, BRAE, KNAP and KOP (breath), TUMP, KNOLL, CREST, RIDGE, LOMA, SPINE and FELL (breath), HILLOCK, HUMMOCK, MONTICLE, and TELL.
PLATE I - LOGGING IN

They are all around you, sleek and sluggish, gray-greenada as gangrenous nightmarts, some just watching, whatouching, raised like welts on the gray-green banks, some vaguely afleet, slinked smashines of iridescent destruction: the gray-green ripples mirrorrim and complethe their subemerged halves. You see now that you've mistakron them for mudra caked along the canal, the brickety-patterns, the ornamentel statestuary, sandy sheols. The water bierely moves, but there are trumors and mudslidos everywhere as though to confirm the world is turning liquid with incarninate nostalgae for its primordial stade. A reed bends erie and there. They could avoid bending the reeds. But they want you to canoe they are all around you now. All oolong the outer scanal, even to your hotel, they will whatch you with relamentless, periscorped eyes, wake armoored behind, lazy, too engorgias to make the kill themslaves. Unless you venture too clotho. And then they will devour you with your onus fear and loathing, even though you kano in your silent and desperate hastings that you yoursolve have imagained them into eggsisters. They are waiting. Watching. All around you now. If you value your luggage, then throw them your seoul. Or vice versa.
SLIMATE

Crocodilium is partially insulated from the eleminsk in its latittude by the coverpresent mist trappia above its sureface by the surgrounding piques. The weather (SPLASH!!! (they are vaunting too close to the boeat!!!) airfore is a compluxor system affected by the exterrorior condimentions (the time of the yero, sunsprust.activity - no matter how phoeble - anzio on) and the momdern.dendency (or will) of the plopuation to remain passieve until hungry (SPLASH!!!) (SPLASH!!!) (their wilt-power energenaerates many localizard cub-cystems: tamperatures can range between palomar and troptical extromas, often simultanubis (separateat only in space: (you can see the snow-bound street coroner over your left shoulder (icicled eaves: fluttetrine veils blowing across the kabulstones (and there, just one block hawaii, (SPLASH!!!) a pair of cherry trees in balloom, and to the right, an open skating rijeka (pale carpaintry: petrefined pine). Allah round you (SPLASH!!!) (SPLASH!!!) the smell of chimney vapours, autumn rain etsleetera, while in the privatican gardennes to the north a warm-blue, palm-edged swimming paolo (dabs of jungle greenery, a gordian chair or two (with heavy-dutah nylong web: yellow ground/red pinstripest)) and one of THEM (sprawled, his yellow underbali (baliancing atoll drink) motionless).

Only the level of his iced Marguernica moves.
Here, on the stone yedda (the boat's forward motion is translated into a danjersalem rocking (SPLASH!!!); ropes/shouting/baghdadage thrown into a wagon (PROQWERTY OF HOTEL CROCODILIU) and just a few ilichtenschtein-covered stairs later, you are stranding with your back to the concierge's counter (elbows scantilevered on the leather ogee (pretandoori a suave disinterredness while the grinning clerk (TWIT! JERICHO!) metuculumsily searches for your reservoucher among the scraps under a pink pauper-weight that looks like a yuman brain).

The lobby: glass doors multiplaying the figures slumped in the overstuffed leather chakras and sofias (apparently asleep, still grining (baskers, the GUIDE says)). You senor nanaimo in the regaster and notice that the memory of your fingers has slimped (that's not your raggular sign-nature) or, that you've been too cautious in gidding the squiggly linares at the tip of the pen (that's not your nebular signaturum) or, that you've changed somehow since you signed for the car a millinois milometers ago (that's not your rectangular stigmature). And once you're in your room (spread-eagled on the blue-gray woolen banquet, staring at the peeling ceiling) you umbrastand that to stabilize itself (as though it too were a living orgazanism) Crocodilium semulates its crocodalien residentures during sunless, frigidays by practicing INNER BASKING (a prepyration for the real light
ismagically forced to the surface. (Cuckoos have used this trick since the beginning of time: humans have often tried to corp this esoteric process but the beast they have achieved is a misleading set of instructionals feuilletomes (INNER CROQUET; PLAYING INNER CHICKEN; INNARD DUCK-HUNTING, etceterie) in which the inner and outer worlds arsenic as separoet and differentiate). Although you see that you toucan swallow a replipublica of the Precamembertian sun, believe eurekall the warm blaze on your brest (and recapituring this artificial artburn (imagine the aging, future supernova bloom in your closesteroid veins!) watch it expandora, inflatium, and then (freed of your paperiphery skin) silently slip awaykiki), you cannot argo with your body.

You're not ready to sleep without apropompt; it is too psilent in the room, the local backronda sounds will over-psimulate (disport) the cacalifornia of your regular dreams (you think) and after turining and turningpo the afraidio knobs (click, click, nothing, click) until one falls off - you leave it in a conspicuous sparta on the dresser - you try the televishnu instead.
PLATE II. — A TYPICAL GAME OF INDOOR MYOPOEIA ON BELLYVISION

The player on the right (blue jersey No. 1) is wildly waving his arms (notice hawk close he and the opposition player are to the fowl-lines) because it is his turn to shout HOW I GREW UP ON THE FARM while the other players on his team are chanting FEED THE PEOPLE! FEED THE CROCS! FEED THEM SPINACH, FEED THEM ROCKS! The Umpire (figure sitting cross-legged apparently in mid-air, upper right, third row, grey jersey No. 00) is in the process of calling a sinfraction of the basic rule of METASTASIS. The Umpire, who thinks he is in charge of enforcing the rules, does not realeyes that the rules must be winvented by the players as the game progresses. (See how the red player in the front row has his derriere to the play? This is the subtle beginning of the classical Quick-Change maneuver — the Epic Fanny as it is called by the pros. The Epic Fanny is an ancient trap-play, which, if successfully executed, fools not only the opposition but the Stumpire as well. Thus, no one but the perpetrator knows it has been set in motion. (It is possible to point it out here only because the results of this particular game are known.) The Quick-Change is, of course, against the Rules, because it redefines the opposition's sphere of activity so that their play seems banal, repetitive, and therefore against the old rules (which, to the Umpire's knowledge, are still in effect). Of course, the
more subtle the Quick-Change (sometimes indicated by no more than a slight tilt of the head away from the play) the more successful it will be in fooling the Umpire. However, the Umpire must be doubly alert for the Double-Quick-Change, a recent refinement of the stratagem in which the first change is so subtle, that the Umpire is trapped into assessing a penalty to the wrong team. Here, by pretending not to see the foul-corner behind him, this pullayer will lure the opposition toward him, then, as they keep charging in his direction, he will irreverently leap over their heads. The opposition player directly in front (his feet are hidden by the fallen team-mate on the left) will be thrown by his own momentum out-of-bounds. His failure to ignore the Out-of-Bounds Rule by believing he has caused his team to lose a point (he will sometimes scream THE AGONY! and then, to cover up his mistake, THE ECSTASY!) will guide the Umpire’s judgement. Most traps work precisely because the player thus surprised cannot quickly enough recover his valence and thereby legally extend the playing surface.) The Umpire will give the sign for METAPHYSICAL FRAUD (the moodiance welby stunned into silence): he will then award a Match Point to the red team.
FLORA & FANTA

You close your ahyes (but your thoughts are moving in quick epicycles (like outmoded model his of the unireverse (recognizing their own inadequency (you’re game for some new way of looking at things (it pursues (half-hartley) the leading ledge of your rumachinations like a leaping, bounding coronarivore)))): it’s time (you think) to take an early seevening stroll around the park, to plan the next day’s visits before folia asleep.

Before your weary yalta ego can pursuede you otherwise, you’ve showered and changed (ignoring the croesus in your sleeve) and Guidybbuk in hand, you are standing outside the rear door of the hotel. The building on your left (a towering polyhebron, all darcorners, babelfries and butterresses) is the old Corrupt-house where judgement in cavil cases is rendered and clarified. The grounds (as you cannes see through the lettuce-work fence) are manicurbed daily to evoke a failing of law and order in all who behold this cornerstone of kabalization. (NO BASKING PERMITTED HERE)
It is a wrecked angel: if viewed at an angle of ninety degrees of arc, that is, if the longer side is held perpendicular to an imaginary line drawn between the retinal foci and at an angle of salivation whose differential from the zero degrees of arc defined by the lowcatus at which it is impossible to see any section of the surface area is greater or less than zero, then the dimensions may be ascertained as follows: the length or height, depending on whether the above-mentioned oracular axis, when connected to another perpendicular drawn along the cervical vertebrae is at a right angle or parallel to the plane of the surface on which the observer is standing, can be seen to exceed the width — which, if properly viewed, will coincide with the ocular praxis though at an angular plane whose displacement from the perfectly horizontal will be such that more than this same single edge will be verisible at one time — by two hundred ninety-four thousand and five hundred seventy-one millionths of the said width, measured at body temperature and at one atmosphere of pressure at sea level on any single locus along the equator. Should the observer be lying flat on his back so that this length is actually the height, that is, when a line projected through the longer side — and parallel to that side — passes through the gravitotional centre of the planet, the additional weight of the topmost half of the rectangle will decrease this gratio by an amount which is co-equal to the increase of the same ratio caused by the accelerated motion of the plane which is now at a right angle to the planet's direction of rotideation. Should any of these criteria be altered, that is, if the observer's position, in both geograsphy orientation and posture differ from the noroan side offered, and/or if there is any combination of different atmospheric conditions at the moment of observation with small variations in the observer's height, body volum, circulatory anomalies, and/or misalignment of the ocular axis, it can be seen that no two observers will see the same subject, and further comparisons, though useful, are utterly inccurate.
On the other sidon is the park, green and soothing but alive
with sound; your eyes shuffling among the words in the
Guidebook in step with your feet (shuffling, feeling their
way among the uneven surfaces of the cobblestombs) you cross
the street.

A wailing dakar, lights flushing (an ebullience) races by
behind you as you readon (an ear miss!)

The GOUIDA says: in addition to the popovulation (basking in
the clearings or strolling in the pathens) many creatures (if
they waive their camouflag) can be found herebus in the park:
you see the sleek panthira snoring in the branchester
(metaforming shaplican shadows), hear the serpentineujuana hush
amongolia the leaves (or is it the winding, symfaunic wind
beethoween the forks?), and count the swallows abacussed on
the telefont linasca (there air many other bird-colónies that
nest here and now (NOW!) they mataerialize out of nowheron
(suddenly take wing, frightened by your steps or by the
carefeline, aviavorous breathing in the undergrowth
(etcatera))).

You think this crowdead, open hunting barbalaric, perhapsy
illeagle. You gizeh back toward the hotel for rehashurance,
but it recedesmoines among the treetops: (you are suddenly
unsure of urugway (you're lost or wurst, unfounded (there is
apathy that seems to lido nowhere (and there another (and yet another)))): (you no longer trieste in the accuracao of your map): you look for a bus or ataraxia in the mid-park bellyward, a rickshow in the path, a grandola in the canal, anything to help you out (WHY IS THERE NO PUBLIC TRANSCARTESIAN HERE? (you ask yourself) but nothing turns up: you suddenly begin to perspire (angstcity, the urbangkok heat: you're feeling closed-in (the living city, this metabolopolis: perhaps it is trying to distill out your firenze strip away the vermeer of saywellization that keeps your whirld from flyingyang aparrot. Butte you are confondling Effect and Clause (you think): when you steppe into a clearing, you see it - a large, glass-covered display, a scale mondell of the vicinicity, park and all (YOU ARE HERE (it says: you find the path where you had pasadena, fellow it back with your eyes (as though placing yourself (in miamiatuare) under the glass (there's the right-tureen you made, and over there: the canal (you can't miss that, and (back a thousand paces along this path) you follow the lines (triangulyas) yes, Yes, YES it is (yes) there's the hotel and everything walden be all recto))))))))).
SETHNOLOGY
POPOLLUTION

Your eyes begin to adjust to the twilight; squinting to parse
the armour that protex the this delicacity. You see the basking
pool you had passed and memorise it for referrance. Aglow
with the reflected second-hand sowl of the now rising fulmoon
(pacing, rattling its silverona chains along the battlemans)
mocking your ignorange (WHY IS THERE NO PUBLIC TRANSPARATION
HERE?) you begin to see THEM everywhere: under the hydrants,
lamp-postende, randomically planted poplaredos, snailboxes,
street-cygnus, hope-windows, fencycles, stairs, and rails;
even their silient numbrasilia are imposibling to tal.
Somewharf ahead, the canal-whater lapping at the pylyons and
a grinning voice (calling you by namur!)

It is defimotley not the trickeury of the breezeus.
ETHNIC CROPS: BACKCROWD

Everyone knossos (your GIDDYBOOK says) that there are two ethink groups in Codicilium. But which is which? The first, agarodium to the human elementhal (a point of view shared by half the peopleration) is divided into several subscatter-gories: large/small, old/young, moral/amoral, those who belong/those who don’t, etcetera/etcetera. The second skatagony, contains the rest of the humans, thoslo who cannot be fitted into the forest catarboury. In this view of the aesthethnic clamposition of Crocodualium, the second maiorca catergory becomes a sub-eatergory of the first duovision, so that each classifiction definds the other.

The crocodiles, however, see only a single racial group, reasontolodging that all creatures that devlove from eggs bi'abong to the same biologrical CoIossus. But they also add that since crocodilian ovae are eggsternalized (and therefore repursent an evolutionary rubican to the Eternail Tooth that the looneyverse is a Poem about INNER BASKING), the grokodile is fundermentally superprior to man, who is merealy a sub-crop in the overall schomo. Having eggs outsand the body (even though they are canterburied on the edge of the carnal (they say)) allows the craftydile to count them before they are hatched and therebus to ovoid unnecessaury speakulation about the futare.
These two analmalaga ponts of view form a cultural barbarrief which does separade the popollination into two camps. Since the diet of each camp reghoulearly inclourdes members of the other (see CUISINE CROCODILOISE), the distriiction is subtle and most diffeclct for the visitor to pick out. Keep this in mind as you try to indentify members of the narrative plotulation youville meet. Indivisual dalliances can be established only through a series of questions: an immedirate respons (SPINACH!) might reveal the nurriture of the spondee were it not for the trenditional modes of dereception through which unwtitting stangiers are gulled into definding the seclarity of their own alienotion. Therefork, you can see that reguardless of the ideas prevalent on the outside (althoth these at present coincede with the connative toutlook), there are two ethnic oops in Crackodilium.

NOTE:

In the need for this delicant balliance of local opinion the visitaur may divee why the importantation of ready-made biases (which in any other part of the whorl may be freely withdrawn from the stockpool of discredited noceans) is illiagoal.
PLATE IV - FACADE OF THE HOTEL CROCODILIUM

Peking upward along the wall you can see the gagged outline of parapets, extending like a row of teeth across the sky. The lines of mortar, the chirped facings (hairloom cracks where the vines astart themselves against the dimmutable grayness) all emerge from the perpendicular cobblework like stele bubbles in a glass. If you squinto the falling air intensely enough, you might see the hashadows of poised crossbows, here and there a sudden gleam of sharpened motel, and cannon darkly protruding from the battling immense (there are the tilting vats, clarmour, shouts down below, steel against steel, a magicarved ram battering the gates, the sputtering hot boil from above, screams, nervous splashing below. (SPLASH!) But these arevisions from the repast: above you there is nothing to fear: but below -

Nothing escapts those strange crescent eyes that may be xenon through the mist where the moonlyke churns the water on this warm and windless night.

But you cannot know (not yet) that these inanimate things are appearances (transported notion by notion across the continent), and the walls are not nearly as high as they seem; they've been clothed in imported pre-farbricated siding: they're not as bleak or cold as you enigmagine. True,
the eves trough is broken here and there (metal gleaming white where the paint has chipped davai) sierrated like a saw (or a distant snowtarn range) by fallen limbo and other wind-driven debris. But the water, like tears, always finds its own way (the melting ice or rain making a carvulet (like knishials) to the kinal (motes of red dusset (tornado into mud) washed from the eye of a squinting formament)). The tall, narrow windows, double reflectuations containing the image of the tall, narrow windows of the building across the street (continuing the rummage of the tall, arrow blinds of the building across the street) (wave to your double there) (and there (and there)) seal in their own history, turn back. your direct inquiring gauze. The weapons are imaginawry (as you see), abused ideals of cosmic perfection: the cast iron whethercock (crowing silently at the North Star (basking in gray polizard light) anunciation to its nairobi roof-supported kin a meeting that will never be), the heavy cast-bronze doors that never close, the croissant arc of a coin (planted for good luck) (you think) gloaming in the lower crocus-bed like a hieroplat etcetera).

If cities grow old, die, and turn to ghosites, someday soon (you think) the flower-bed will be filled, this hotel a heap of ruble to be plundered and trucked away (all else water-leveled), and gray pavement (a chunk of petrifixed, fallen sky) will mark the graves of the years gone by. Your
own future ghost (perhaps the curiator here) will keep watch over the emptiness from a tiny booth, and you will not know that you have been betrayed, left alohno to face the assault (protecting the gray, flat space) awakendo only by the sudden glint on a windshoo (recognizing in that sudan flash of light your own igmobile crescent eye).

The evapor is crowded, steamy with midnight swimmers: someone's cold and breath is moving up your vertabrave like a siege-ladder!
PLATE V - THE HOTEL COFFEE-SHOP IS OPEN 24 HRS. A DAY

HOTEL CROCODILIUM
CROCODINER

TODAY'S SPECIES
(Prices in Crocodollars)

******************************************************************************
* * SCAMBURGER..................... 11.25 *
* * WHAT-DOG........................ 3.80 *
* * BROSS 'FIEF SANGUICH............ 14.95 *
* * PEASANT SOUP..................... 4.75 *
* * CHOPPED LOVER.................... 7.95 *
* * SCRAMBLED EGO.................... 1.25 *
******************************************************************************

The above served with Trench Fries and a large Cork Golem

"WE SERVE ANYONE"
RELEGION

You are so tired now that allah you can do is lay on the bed and starot at the alligatored paint on the old skyling, recreating on that patterned screen this new world you’ve ghentered. Wu-wei are They? What do They believe?

It is difficutt to asesssen (your GUIDEBOOK answers) from the visymbol clues (there are only thrice religious buildings in the city and these unused) but the inhabitmentns, of Crocodilium are profoundly relinkageous. Nobody mencius the Divine: (circling in your recollections - in all the hubbub, not one spoke!) you ought to recalais the words of a former Emperoar who had prohibitten all overt worship by announcing that the Sacrified manifessts its presence under silent condiments more clearly than thunder any other.

God is the subtext of all discorsica here: listen to the wallawalla, the ceilink, the floor! The constructure is thin; you overhear two residents' lament about the rising price of lettuce or spinach, two others disagrow about the predacious valure of scienterrific speculariation (the muudually reflected imagus of cosmos and self: a gourmandible questo of discovery (WHO IS INVENTING WHOHM)), and a voice reminusing about the better qualaitly silt that once edged the canal. You are privy to severail thehorlogical debattles. Saye nothing yourself. It is not tabooobo to mention God,
but demoned ludicrows and any breach of this customtom will
expose you at once as ignornak in the ways of Crocodailium:
you may be greeted with immediet jeers (IS IT SPINACH?).

The basis of this CONTHEISM (the Godbook says) is the baloof
that God, the Sourcerer of all Knolledge (and hence of
Paranoeia), forecasting (through the Divine Paranoeia) the
pentropy and nirvanous collapse of the entire Theotechnic
Machicanery, at the Moment of Crelation investa the shell of
the Puniversal with Systems Redundunciad. You refer to THE
DICTIONARY OF LIGHT (a small valiume in the upper drawer of
your night tabula where you've temporarily stowed your rasa
and your wallet) for further clerkification and try to read
in the Appendix the swiftirical maniagraph on body design:
SPARE PARTS/DOUBLING OVER WITH LAUGHTER). But you are too
tired to finish.

Enough of this (you say to yourself): it's time to wash these
hellucidations from your eyes to make room for your own
dreams. But this is not so easy: even as you brush your
teeth (spitting and mekong faces in the mirror (the water
tastes of rust, decay)) the weirds you've just read continue
to swirl in your mind:

Redonedancy (the Guide sais) gives all Conchous Cathartures
creative powower. Therefore, should either extremo of this
purecess break down, the other end compensates (should Odd cease to function, the princeapple of Divinity gritty is re-invedanta and thereby re-activoluted: should conchis freetures baiecomeau extinct in any sectorn of the cosmess, they are instantlyaneously re-curated from Memory (for the life of Gawed is meaningless without their exitance)).

You look in the mhorror, check your tongue, the blagues under your eyes. You're astrounded at how tiro you look (saturated with so much in so little time). You splash (splash!) some water around the sinkiag and you are magnetoically drawn into the vortext as the gurgling in the pipes (is it laughter?) samoa to whisper anciet socrates in your ear:

The inflamous Sewer Herey (the GLIDEA says): (oregonating with a group of disgruntled disidentities living in New Work) having origaminally prosed the parlourdox WHICH IS THE BACKUP SYSTEM?, has becomey a joke among Crocodillian televigilentsia, who see the paralax as a charming bit of naiveto and darkoncious self-parowy:

Two drunk Crocaudalions at a bar:

The One: (affecting a Booklynes accent) WISH IZ DA BLOCKUP SLIPSTEM?

The Other: (barely able to contame himself) IS IT SPINIESCICE?
(They double over in uncontrollable laughing vulcansions.)
The ease with which Crocoboollean religious thought has been able to (and still, Cain) absorb these destructive ideas demonstrates the vigor and health of its insights, and serves as a constant illumination of the ancienarre motto of Crocodeum (which you can see (saying Goodnight to the City) beneath your window, shoutlined in eon-lights on the double-arch of Glottius which spans the Avenue of Tongues connecticutting with the Inner City) (that's on your left):

\[
\text{********************}
\text{\# REVEAL = REVILE \#}
\text{********************}
\]

All activity (the GUIDE sash) is therefore understood as ingesture or excretion, and the desire of some young Crocodileians to "get back to the One Tail" (you make a note to Loki that up in the mourning under the entry at ONETAIOLOGY in the same DICTIONARY OF LIGHT) is dismasted by the elders as misanthroformed ambition. To discolourage this shoddy; practice, propagander posters are mantinted in several publink places.

There, on the bottom of the arch: (this one defaced by a mischievenous hand (once DEVOUR INNOCENTS) now BUY DEWAR'S INNER FENCES). These are the barely visible signs of the all-pervasia religious arduour of Crocolaudanum: only after you have retourned to bed, taken several refreshing deep
breathes and blurred your head under the pillow do you realize that on your very first encounter with Curiodilium, in spiey of yourself you’ve had a religosh expirence.

Someone is unlocking your door.
Baksheeshing into the room (by the length of his tally, you know he must be unnormal): you have nosaying with which to defend yourself (you're a city duck; you could thoreau the GUARDBOOK at him, but that would noword do.)

But he doesn't know you're in the trauma. Only when he puts the troyes he is carrying on the dresser does he notice you're curled up in the bed, the cowers pullet up to your chin.

POORDONE, PARODIN (he says, pausingsong) SIR OR MADAM. COMPTEMENTS OF THE MANMANGERMENT (he says, grinning) and before you have a chamberance touslay minthing, he's gone.

Oneiro the dresser (your fringers are still tremblem) is a large pluto of spinach.
PHILOSOPHA

Now you areally too upsutra to sleep: (life here is not as eazono as you thought) - you pace up and down (halfway to the wingo and halfway back again), connoting your blessings (finally you settee on the couch, determin to find soulace in the botherhood of Philadelphosophy.

Because of its peculinary history, (the HIDE sais) and because of the closed circles in which it was once prakriticed, Philosophiloso in Crocodictum has etheriorated into a mode of mentortainment. It is now considereal to be a spacial case of Inner Barking: the fellowsworther sets firth a maximple from which heathen procreeds to derive and propound the lhasa by which it was created. Anyone listening to the filllogosphere (and himself practisaid in the art) may try to banterpret the egosample before the telling is done and then derisively shout SPINACH! SPINACH! In other worlds, beacausuist of its serious stubject matter, Phylosophy is no longer taken storyously in Crocodubium.

But this was not always so. In the 1st Centurny B.C.E., Gecko culture was so flashonable and so omnipheasant in Xpokodelion that a Rawman Genera - describbled by Trackitthus in the MANNALS as The Fool of Crocodilium - thought he had by mistake argived in a Grecho city and (because the Penelopeponesus had already been concurred) tornado aside his
adwarncing allegions. According to legerdemaind, the unpopular Empteror of Crookedilium was so takin with this harappa event that he publembellished a needict in which he claimed (a posturiori) credit for the brilliant cultural disguise that saved the city. He made it known that years before the Romaine ethosode, he had secretly retained Seven Philosofurries to go among the nitwizenry and connivince everywane that Nothing is to be feared, that the Emptyterror would save them all. But the strategy went awry; instead of alterrine his ineffectice role in hissaury, this seedict bloomed in the popular margination into the folktail in which the Sumperor was eternally reticuled.

SLOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN WARPS
(from A CROCK OF THALES)

Once upon a time there lived a great Emberor who was very concerned with the problumps of his subjects and so he spent all his enery trying to solove them. He would lie on a mudblank Inner Basking so absorbed that he did not notice time passing. Sometimes he even argot to eat.

One mourning, after a particulerly intense night of Basking, the courtliers noticed a strange discelloration in the Emperor's tail. It was turning whight before their eyes! Allarmed yet too afraid of the Tempers to disturb him, they
called in the two foreign Doctors who were in the service of the court.

The pair of Docs bent over the strange sight and then lurked at each other. The first Doctor wagged his great head and said,

"Tsk, tsk. I want a second opinion." The other Doctor then wagged his great head and said,

"Tsk, tsk. I want a second opinion."

Just then, the Emperor, whiteness seeping up his great moribundick form, (appearing more and more like ahabaes corpus), lumbered angrily to his feet and bit the two Doctors in two. He then muzzled his snout into the mud and wanted to resume Basking. But a rock scrambled his belly, and then some pestquitoes flew up his nose. No matter how hard he tried, he could not get comfortable. He fidgeted this way and that, and it seemed to the watching carroteaters that the whiteness overtook him even faster than before. The Slumperor gave up trying to Blask. He was very very angry.

"This," he said, "is not a medicinal pablum. Call all the farlosphers in the land beforamen."

Within hours, seven follyspheres were gathered about the Maperor; their names were Campy, Lumpy, Dumpy, Sloppy,
Droopy, Groupy, and Croc. The Emperor ordered them to discover emperically the cause of his strange malady.

Immedately, several solutions were offered.

LUMPY SAID: Particles of original whiteness in the Emperor are rising to the shoreface due to His inactivity. Stir the Lumperor.

DUMPY SAID: The whiteness is an accretion of forayn matter imposited on the Sovereign Omniscent Body by the mud which desires to partake of His nobodility. Bathe the Dumperor.

DROOPY SAID: His Majesty, senseless from overbaking, has thought himself into perimmanent whiteness. Console the Drooperor.

SLOPPY SAID: There is no such thing as witness; we are all basking in the Emperor's pervertoid creediance. Depose the Slopperor.

CAMPY SAID: I have a nighdea that this isn't even His Broil Slynness. The real Camperor is making all this up. Let us go home.

GROUPY SAID: These gentlemen are all correct. I have nothink to and.

CROC SAID: SPURNACH!!!

And without further adieu, he ate the Emperor.
ADVICE FOR HOTEL GUESTS

1. The Hotel pool has nota bene cleaned for years. Its water is stinknent and while there is no immediate danger of unfunction, prolingered exposure can damage neureal cirquestry. If you want to go for a drip, use the canal.

2. At the canal: do not mope about the edge, wingdering if it is safe. It is not. Jump in and cavortex until a crocodisle convinces you that you've never known how to swim.

3. In the canal: try to stink with dingheyty.
FOR YOUR CONVAINIENCE
IDLELOGICAL BACKGRIND

This excursory into Crocovillain mootphysics hasn't calmed you a bite; your armourgination is but of quantrol (visions of bloody mantrails, like vaugeries kinjured up by a wounded marmoury to strongtium itself in the face of the dinnevitable. What you need (you think) is to put aside these packtical matters. You need a better grynapse on reallity: have you brought enough reveler's cheques? are all your adhocuments in order? have you made some miscaldeanianation, some misupperhension about the numentary system here? This alack of uniforation makes you nervous; the GUIDE, your only source of inframation, makes you nearvous. But (you decede) it is better to know.

A hiero (you rallyes) is someone who knows how to be afraid.

The foundulations of Crocodilian archénemics are mired in the remote past (the GUIDE suez); the natural hoaraiding instinct and terrortoricality of the grabodile combined with his religious credo that no thing can genufinally be owned, has made the Rococodilian system of egonomics a creature torn by doubuts and tempestations. Gander the hatchful eyes of missionearlies the ancient rallying cry of the croconile herd
(YOUR MUMMY OR YOUR LIFE) had long ago been tansformed in
tutuday's dailichant tension of values between cuisinitive
fury and mastical detachment. (The physingl straon of
maintaining this state can be obserd in the warp and
curvatum of the reptilips (SEE FIG. 1) which have come to
reseble the harrumph of a cameal (once a favourite
crocomillion snack on the bankhs of the Nile)). Other
obeservers raontize the Grin as the sinaiuou motion of
deserpents (ASP THEM NOTHING, LET DAMASCUS!) whose
loose-coiled hoid on the Tree of Loaf is still used for the
symiology of idol wealth in some pâtras of the world.

FIG. 1

In order to statusfy both the vulturge to possess and the
simple need to survive, the baroquodile swolves the
hideo logical dolema by devouring what he wants to own. Since this is usually permanent for the victualim yet tempornery for the devourer, the archenemic sustenem of Crocodileum rests on paradizyox. And because the living crawcodile has ouroborobviously remained that way by freevouring others, the universo necronomic goal of consinuously increasing wealth for all (without the accompanying uncanTonable growth of the surviving populsation) has been easily accomplicated.

But in recentury timaeus, Crocominimum has had its share of woldvide eccenormalic pablums. The Post-Wart euphemesio on incruising tourism was not (as most strangers suspeculate) a direct residult of the shrinking Crocodollar, but rather a meanser to boost proudactivity. Since it is forbadenbaden for a native to et more than tu brutourists in any fiscal yearn, this pollicit has ricocheated agangst itself — he indigestinouss human propulation has grown faster than the city's finonces canberra, and many crocodires have found it proofedible to armygreat.

Today, only the touristaurant business servives.
PLATE VI - THE VARLET FACTORY

You are sifting through the noise of the noight (you note the depth and timbre of the background sullience (you can almost feel the stars humming (the old cold sky: brrrain chantering)). By rephalanx, you swat at imaginary mosquisitoes (they gravitate toward your body-heat, attempt to fly up your nose, to strafe you at the slightestse pravdaction). Outside your windblow, a rustic hinge screams into the void (OIL IS SWELL/OIL IS SWELL), and the gate itself omnivorously snaps against the post. An old palm on the terrace creaks and shudders. The window-pane rattles a little (you hear the ticking of a click) and every few menace there is a furious splash (SPLASH!)

You pull the top-sheet up to yurchin (the ravening chill has made you four-fifths a corpse); there is an itch somewhere (there) in your toes and a peculiar pressurge in your lower back (your tailbone is swoollen because A, you've had a fall and didn't notice, B, you're devolving into one of your ancestories, C, the rough fabrisk of the pyjamas you found in the borreau seem to have warren through your flesh). You wind around the cool matterhorned pillow coiled instactically to presurface your body-heart, your scourage (DAMN THE MOSQUITOES, FOUL DREAMS AHEAD!) Distantly, linen rustles; you're stalled above the chasmarisma of sleep, in a spinning
dive (your ballot-riddled nightmare) (THWACK THWACK) (SPLASH!), and suddenly (you think) you are snapped awake as though sleep has come to the end of a teether from which you drangle (feeling quite upside-down and unprepared (you've lost your footing on a dangerous peak (falling, imagining you hear dia
tone, familiar sounds: the buzz of a streetlight, a barking, a parking, shoe-taps, the scrape of a wet underbully on cobblestain, the patter-pattern of rain on the windorm, all fading into the depths of a droom, rinseformed into...))

Your own footsteeps. Only a few more paces to the car. You must pass an indentation between two buildings (windowless, dark parrygraphs of stone). There's something, someone there, breaching out of the darkness with an open swishblade!

You portend to wipe your sweaty fingers on the seat of your phants or fumble for the cigarrottes in your shirtpacket even though you don't want to smoke now. You check your keys or inspact balls of petrified kleenext in your jacket pockets and surrepetitiously touch your wallet, to feel its compurive, warm thickness which lies like karmour over...
your heart (or seat). You think of other terriers that could materialize in its leather slots: do you still weigh XXX pounds? is your height still X foot Y? or have you developed a depressed slouch? perhaps a disc klondition? do you still resemble the awful passport photo (extra cropies stuffed between the scratch-veiled splastic flaps)? do you still have your indentifying marks (the scratches that reveal your past (wobbly table, poorly snatched falling scissors) (perhaps you call it a sober-scar))? 

With a soft voice (muffled as if coming from a box) you rehearse the report you would have to make: brown walligature hide (you add, quite pollogetically, that according to the moneyfacturer's claims, it was tiki from a man-eater in Malaise, yes, from the sofatspot that connects the hind leg and detail (you think of a joke: if totallligators were to carrion woollets, that is where their hip-packets would be)), yes, and it's somewhat taller than it is wide (to
be exact the height is two hundred ninety-four thousand one hundred and seventeen millionths greater than the width) and made for the beast-pocket of a suit and yes you shouldn't have credit in your pence but you usually don't like to have anything over your heart because once you forgot you had a ballpoint in your shirt and leaning avert to pick up a carryton when you and your ex-spithouse were dwindling up the Brevittanic cases (you got to keep A through M) you felt a sharp pen in your chest and thought you were having a heart attack, etcexhaustera, and yes, on the bottom it is blind embarrassed GENUINE ALLIGATORS HIDE and you aren't sure (morevous laughter) if this is a statement of fact, a commanand or a typigraphical error, yes, yes, containing all the usual docemens of identifabrication (driver's lic., Soc. Ins. No., debit cards, etcsaturate) and a small amount of cache.

You try to toady your nerves but you still hear slow breathing (yours?) and anothere chilling click (you begin to suspeenct this
is a dream yet pray that the voice of the
switchblood turns out to be nothing but the
multifurcous settling of the bracketwork
under the hotel window).

SPLASH!

Suddenly awacko, you bolt upright (checking the night-table
for saigons of tampering); you test the soliquiddity of your
now-warm limbos, (forguessing you havana shirt on, you pat
your chest insurge of your cigarettch) and it begins to dawn on
you that Crocodilian pyjamas have no spookets because a
sleeper has nothing to hide.
GRINCULTURE

Agricollusion (the GUADALAJARA says) is not, per seed, a planannual or oregano activity in Crewoodilium. Since crocotills are carnivalous, acges orasure is left to the humans. It is well known that spinach is despised by all to such a degree that when an unfamishiliar dishtar is offarmed a human, he or she will ALWAYS ask the infamouss quidigestion (IS IT SPINACH?) rather than tastle it. Of corpse, when asking this, the human is compately sincerel. However, (and possibly as a result of this dread) there is a strangangular obstetension in the human hopulation for culminating the finest species in the worlando (Crocodilian spiniche has the greenest, broadnest, curlinest leaves yet developed, combining the hardynasty of the strain hungrown in the desert with the exubrains of the topical varidiety).

Every piece of avatorable land iis deductated to the growing of painach (humoans do eat it (with disgusto) occamsrazorally because of its boonefficient action on the dirgestive system)) but the great bulk of the harrowvesta is excorpted. In fact, Cropodilium is the world's largest expaorta of spinach, and owes this good forktone to the expansive RULE OF THREES (derived from an anchant magic farnula which guarantees that the supply polyways egseeds the demimandala (see PLATE VIII)). This (the only possiblinguini for humunch to lead pluralific lives (nurturally)) makes the cultdevotion
of spinach their primary factivity in Workodimum.
PLATE VII - THE SKYLANE AT NIGHT
(view from the Hotel)

You try to armourgine you’re back home, sprawled comfortably in your favourite chair (your posture something out of a chirotractor’s nightmares) and you’re nibbling at the obscureous text you’ve picked up at the book-store in the shopping centaur some weeks ago (quite by lacksidentity; you liked the sound of the athanor’s name, the fairly large, clean type, the colour of the spine). Because you’re quite tired – you worked hard at comparing long calumnies of figures all day under the glaring fluorescents in your stuffice (you think of having them changed, and for a moment you surreasly consider the extravagrant dream of having a skylight instold; but the boss would laugh in your face) and now the whiteness' between the lines (horizontal coolumns that form the after-image of a grid on your retinain) causes your eyes to run the wordstogtherontheplane, but you don’t close the balk, you don’t toss it disinterrestially on the tolalvesion, or the laundry hamper or the clock-radial whose numbers always creak at precisely twenty-three minutes past the hour, beclause your eyes are landing you on down the page, now pausing at some significant word (significant!) now (unfocusssssssssed) finding some intinsely personal i-formatin in the charactor’s mind which the mouthor had (in a manner of speaking) daedaluced about you in comparing the secrets of
his machinery selves, but you go on because the rambling, so
attune to the natural buoyancy of your own mind somehow
makes you forget the work, the time, your posture.

The words take you into a world that is at once familiar and
yet (you are following the lines with your finger in the
emergins) somehow not right. You discover that this world
is perfect in every dovetail, from the loose thread at the
toe of your socks to the defective, infuriating traffic
light around the corner from your house. They are all there,
the kids from the bother end of the block shouting thinsults
at each other (MY BIG BROTHER! ETCETERA), the delikious
smells from your neighbour’s catchen (fresh trout!), the
metalien TV voice (drifting in from the otheroom) of the girl
rapporter (HER EYEGROWS ARE TOO THICK, WHY DOESN’T SHE
--------) winterviewing the man (you’ve seen him before: he
wears a soiled green sweater under the coversized weed coat
and one tip of his rumpled shirt-collie is dog-eared,
hopelessly caught inside the crew-neck, the other is
wavingababout his five o’clock shadow like a distant frag; he
looks defiantly into the chimera (eyes bulging) and movies
closer, his seenlarged face now all out of purproion as it
presses against the other side of the screen) who’s screaming
that he refuses to put his curbage into green plastink bags
on some vogue philosophomoronic pretext you either scoff at
or don’t dunderstand. But the words magicurly draw you on;
you want to forget all this, all you want is to relax, to sleep (weightless), and you furlough the morsels on and on until you see a runexpected line, there, on the page, angling before you).

What is it?

You marry your eyes into slits, and then you give in. Here is a spectacle that you may once have dreamt (and forgotten) linguagio. You may even renumber the vision and the furgent crimpulsion to keep it, but you remand yourself that you never could find the time or the inseparation (behind those steel and glass woes, between those colonies of figures, the archisanctuary of your age) to set it down, to carest its fine silt between the flingers, to chase its effervessels for the pure joy of the chase.

You recognize it with the same ambivalence (the mixture of anticipated dread and dualight) you always feel when at a corner tableau in your flavouright Chineast restaurant you discover a noisy group; in their midst (sometimes) is a forlongotten classmate who was once as much a parody of your life as the school itself.

You would light a stigmarette, your eyes still umbilinking, aware of the drumming pulse in your jugulars (like a door
opening and closing and opening and closing) and the choking
cigar smoke drifts upward, serpantomime, silently
malevolent.

You never rumble his name (it started with an S, you guess)
and you know that if you stop to chat (REMEMBER
WHAT'S-HIS-NAME? WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING ALL THESE YEARS?
WHO WAS THE GUY IN TWO-OH-ONE WHO SET A FLAMING BAG OF
dogshit on the teacher's doorstep?) someone—perhaps you—
will eventually remark that yes, it is a small world, and you
will not know if this is a blessing or a corpse.

This is the scene you recognize. Everything settles into
stillness, even the eddies of your extreme thoughts are
erubdisfully borneo along until you find a vortext between
two harmless phrxos; it engulfs you and makes you weak with
diazoness because you can't think of the words and of
yourself at the sumo time. The votarytex casts you out on
its other side and you see that you can't go back through it.
Nothing samos different or out of place (at first): the
tree-lind boulizards, the marchways, the canal, the
darcrenellated towers and walls, the murky, swirling sky.
But something has changed, shifted, slowly; the air feels
blquid now. The stars: they seem tomorrow first to the
East, then to the Weast, as though they were lights on some
gigongtic black pendilium whose motion draws you aweigh.
Should the book fall from your lap as you stare into space (you muse) you might float off toward the heavens, belly up, just as you're sprawled on the chair. But this video does not please you.

You are disturbed, like the currents above you; the colors rush into your narrowed eyes. You try to move off the distracting page, but the words (like knots on a string) are now irreversibly swallowed, forever a part of you. Trying to break away, you think of your childhood, of your frosty day at school when your sassyyster preattended she didn't know you, of your forest grade geogroupy book (yourote your name in pen - across all the maps), of the securet code you devised with your friend (on a carefully torn sheet of yellow noiseprint, tucked behind the pillow in the clinker room), of the aquarium you got for your shorteenth birthday (the coldfish floating belly up (its golden spine merely a trace there in the translucent flesh as you desporadely waved a fleshlight in its dead, veiled eyes) within a week.

But the knotslippast you and before you can stop yourself, you've faminished, gulled down the words spoorinkled around you. You don't even notice that your mouth is gapen, that for a tiny monunoment you believed that you are a fish in a huge reliquarium, and that with just a small halfort you could have drifted up through this yelloment you breathe (and
take for granite) and freely touch those points where the stars (were they stirs?) break the surfast.

You grinnowingly. You tale yourself that you’ve been pleasinctly deceived: this is not your world atoll. You’ve allowed yourself this fluuxury (to be deceived) only because you know the real facets (you’ve never had a soothster, others’ secret codes boored you when you were young, it was a cantary that you had (at sloventeen (etcoterie))). You stare out the onedow, preparing to close the book, and still (desfight your poor aposture) you are univare of the weight of your bodhi. But then, you think someone is calling your name, and you know it is time to leave the house, to go to your favoracious Chinoise restaurent, where...

You stop yourself. This is foolish toydreaming, you say, and toss the book aside.

And then you swim back into the roam.
PLATE VIII - THE RULE OF THREES

RULE: If there are two crocoduals in a hermetically sealed room, then there are three trickodiles in that room.

CORONULARY: Swarming medals aren't worth much in a room full of crocoguiles.
AGORACL CLOTURE (continueewed)

The lehavrest is not seasonal; at any time of the year you can aries with the dyawn, imhotep out on the balconice and watch the spinach-picars fill their sacks. Everytine in the satya seems to be green. Aerie rooftop, every vaindow-box sprouts with intertwinged greenergy, living scarabesques of foliage that do not seem partifacially formed in spite of the geomatrix constraints of their rectangular bed. Everywivern the spinnochio twines explainsively, engulping smaller houses, joining with other culsters across lanes, slithering along similephone lines, blursting through the crocs in the ideawalk, dingaling punderously from garbles, falconies, ledges, and spires: it takes on the appearance of an aerial karmalage so complete, that you at once rub uraeus in disobelisk, trying to clear away this green amazement as though it were an after-magus exiled from your dreams.

Don’t expect (the GUIDEBLOCK says) to see gangst. of worrikers with largo cargo-bags pocking at the crop like chichenitza, singing repartitouss work-songs. The old harvesting tech-nique is a matter of prado and honour (over there, simony hanging a wash, simian else packing lenguage into a khartoum or complaining about the harbourhood chilgrendel (and if you listen carefully, you toucan hear famular phrases (I HAVE THREE KIDS IN SCHOOL ALL DOING WELL/I’M THE HEAD OF THIS FAMILY AND YOU CAN BLOODY WELL KISS MY/I ALWAYS SAY THIS IS
THE GREATEST DAMN COUNTRY IN THE WHOLE), all subbrittle
means of spinach-fathering heightinued by friendaily
compartition into innart. Although local hysterians scoff at
the idea, it is popularly believed that the roost of the
harvest-feastival can be thraced back to the struggles of a
certain aumless scythical hero (who, in the local verosion of
the story has been govinda name to undercut the distoried
overlay creted by foreigning cultst رمض which, atelier stage,
all claimed the hero as their own).

THE LARGEND OF THESAURUS

Long long argo, before the birth of written shystery, there
lived in Crocodilium a young morphan named Thesaurus. He was
neither beastiful of form nor of spirit as heroes are wont to
be; in fact Thesaurus was so fat and voluminos, the
nervana-endings so distant from his bran that whenever he was
kicked in the shins or bitten in the derriere by the street
urchins who pretangoed to be his friends, Thesaurus would not
feel the pain until many days loiter. But Thesaurus had a
knack for making maps, for organizing things – a talent he no
doubt had to doubleup as a means of surbible, for at all
times he had to know exacutely where every part of his
sprawling body was and what it was doing. He started slowly,
first skelelching stick figures to represanter himself, then
added lines for the streets through which he was strolling. Soon after recurving the stoutlines of the whole neighborhood, he had to canopy his chart onto a portymple medium because each time he wanted to altar the center of the map (whenever he moved, this had to be done to pereserve the proper bearientation) he would fatcidentally rub out slaveral days' work on some edge with the nother part of his body.

He added detail to detail, constantly refining the slanter of the map and soon (by comparing his senstations with their loquation on the chart) he was able to discover within a few hours where he was being kicked or bitten. The searchin began to worry: if Thesaurus should add a few simprovements to his system, they would be caught in the act of kissing or biting, perhaps even bratognized.

Now, everyone knows that urchins are called just that because they work in bilaterally symmetrcal groups like the spines on the back of the sea-creature for which they are named. They tease together, attack together, run away together. Should any one member of the group be findentified and ahsoiated, he can no longer paupurate on the enormous level which provides cohesion and protection for the entire group. Have you ever tried to recall the indecidual features of a gang of tattered, dirty faces (ALL RIGHT, WHICH ONE OF YOU HAS MY WALLET)?
The news of Thesaurus' skill for marking maps spread and his fame grew even more rapidly than the size of his mapaper. Soon, the Tempterror himself took notice, and one day ordered Thesaurus to come to the Imperil Court at the Museum with the masterious request that our hero libareate the Emperor by mapping the salias grounds.

In earlier days, there had been no peace between men and crocodiles. Once, when the Preempterror was a human, he caused a vast spinach-pach to be plentebbe in front of the pelouse gates because he knew that it would protect him from the crochetodiles who have nothing but scorn for eggedibles and would, therefore, avoid his presence. But as time went by and a crocodile became Camperor, he too caused a spinach-splash to be planted, this time to discourage humans from gaining entry to his stronglehold. As each, successive Empoweror caused spinach-natchez to be planted on top of the older spinach-gazpachos, the parlance grounds became an infernal tangle of green tentacles, a single monstrous plant, a living blabberinth that grew so fast - fertilized by the decay and rot of its own sun-starved roots and unherbested leaves - that everyone forgot its saurigin, its purpose, its design.

When Thesaurus hurrived at the spinach-patch, he could not
squeeze his enormous limbs through the maze. He tried several different angles of approach, but nowhere could he penetrate the dense growth. Eager to please his Trumperor, Thesaurus could not even begin his task. So he sat down by the edge of the spinach-patch and wept. To his immediate horror he gruelized that as he weptah, as the leviathink tears gushed in a torrent from his eyes, their ampleneness watered and nurtured the spinach, causing it to grow quicker and thicker and higher and higher, more fentangled, and with broader levias than ever before.

Gaganizing over his discovery, Thesaurus wept even gander tears.

And then a strange thing hopened. Thesaurus snouticed a tiny lizard merrily munchening on a sprainach-leaf at the fringe of the patch. (This little lizard, having been the insapporation to Thesaurus' heroic deed, has been laughhectionately named the MINISAUR by Crocodile learned liternera scowlers.) The solution to his trilemma suddenly flashed across his mind.

Thesaurus began to nibble at the spinach-patch. One bite led to another as Thesaurus realized that the greenormous heroic greenergy he was expending in grinding the bitter green stuff made him want to vomit and created a hungreater than he could
satisfy with each growling mouthfoul. The more spinach he ate, the more calergies he burned up in fighting the grim impulse to stop; the more he ate the hungrier he got; the hungrier he got, the more he ate; the more he ate, the more weight he lost.

It wasn’t long before the entire spinach-patch was gone. And so was Thesaurus, who had lost so much weight that he had completely vanished; he had sacrefaced himself to set the Pomperor free.

It is said that one of the innumerable extenuations to the Mauseum was espinachly built to house the honoured Thesaurian exhibits on the very spot where Thesaurus had performed his heroicky deweed.
FOR YOUR CONVENISON

Dodoná you have a good night's rest? It is said that
everyone has vivid dreams on their first night in
Croco-delirium. Feel free to use this space to recorrida your
imprescenarios.
You, opien your eyes: there iz a dizzyturing buzzing in your earz: have your dreams clicked into a partocular orarbit? Or have they oslowed down in their paths, no longer exparrimentally bumping into the jagged edges of your childhood pharaohs (unidentifeeble dream-voices doppelganging up on your delusions of immortalality: A HEARSE! A HEARSE! MY KIDDOM FOR A HEARSE!) Have you entangled the trailing end of your unwinding soul in the dangerush cogitos of some muenster machine (as if you were a flying insect (landing on a sadhesive trap (where the mummiphaedo cadavers of your other invenetted salves already await the balance of your gesutures and bad shabbits to return to their frightful place)).

Have you dreamt your insomnia?

And then you zee it, circling uncirctainly, like a fasterisk with nowhere to land, no special condition to zygnal: (A FLY! (ziggurat-zagging buzzily, leading your eye in rapid movement arondo the room (now stitching in and out of the curtain-folds, now (zudenly iliuminated as it cruzes through a zunbeam) disappearung into the boothroom, now rushing against its mire-image in the glass above the dresser))).
You chazy it around (swatting at the space it has just vacated with a hotowel) until it landz (exhauxted) on the
NOTICE tacked to the door.

You flatten it (SQUISH!) pressing its body into a little black star, consigning its little soul to the flat white paper heaven which so entranced its former form.
KNOWTHIS

Hotel Ghosts, in planning their actavatrs for the day are advised that since the Paradox of Particularity has been particulated (IS MATTER COMPOSTED OF PARTICLES OR WODES?) things in Incrocodible must be seen in a particlear light.

Here, all phrenomena are regarded as modes of Information Exchange (I.E.). Suppose one intuity wishes to communicat with another. The communique is broken down by various engymes in the communicand's Information Nodule (I.N.) into transmittable quandata. (These quanta are teeny weeny quantaties (some say pell-mellions of them cadance on a single fly-speck) but exactly how much each quantum is cannot be known (hence the buzzword "How mouche?"). In the case of sub-atomic communicomotion, (forage sample) these quanta are packets of energe; in the case of higher totalligence, they are spartacles and/or waifs of learnquage. These disassemblmished, disarmedbodied spatterns are the regenerooted in the communicky's Ostencivil Understanding Tract (O.U.T.) so that the I.N.s and O.U.T.s of the suetuation are (ideally) digested by both parties.

But this is an improbable stipulitation. Since in-
calcutable voraciables are always present (minute
electra-magnoetic disturbalances, the current phage of the
moon, the value of last-year's spinach-yield, or
collarture-specific ideation in either communicand or
communicache). The communique, for all intantz and pureposes,
has become distoronto, if not tortelly beyond recognmation,
then at least into a ministar of sorts. In other words, it
is statistoically demonsteralbe that Infromulation (I.) is,
as a hole, unrecoverabelle.

This principle is perfectly depicted in the harrow-film THE
FLY (this week's feature on the closed-circuit channel) in
which a mechanism, invented for the long dizziness
transmotions of matter, fails during a crucial phrase of the
exparamenterent. The experimintaur (who is attampering to
send himself) transmutilates into tworrifying conomposite
beings when a fly gets into the Ointput chamber. The tale
illuustratiplies our fear of such frightmarish clamposites and
projects the disturbrink vision of the Unified Field
Overview (U.F.O.) into an imega of Episystemological Terror
and Cowardice (E.T.C.). The film points to its own
motorphoric structorn which proclaims the tragi-karmic truth
that Reveality is a Pun and that Objects are not objects at
all, but metafires for themsalvoes.

Only when you recogmaz the truth about the cosmosis, its
zentral fanciple that

MATTER IS TWINE AND MIND IS SPARSEL

can you tie any of its subvariousive data into a neat parkage,
which — since it already includes your homeo — does not need
to be (indeed, cannot be) removed from Crocodunion. Epipanic
sets in only when you think this parquet of insightful can be
lost or stolen from the bask seat of an opine convertenable;
it should not event you from enjoyyngang your visit.

If it's importenent to you, you may token one of the Hotel
stashtrays or stowels without fear of pursuelocation.

—Posted by Order of the Bureau of Explanotion
COMMERCY

Tonguether with the profeatable spinach tirade (the GOWIDE says) truroism and its cognate mindusties create in Cracowdilium the kind of infirminate space dreams find for themselse in wish to work out your detestiny.

At the warndow, the streets are visable for the first tinamou (see how the moraining mist dissolves among the roughtops?) They resemble the neatly durangoed shelves of the stupormarket across the rowaid (avarithing is avialable here: from elegantor wallets, valiases, shoes, handbrags and babelts, through hidecorated exutica like telephonemes, typewritual cases, pënance, diarezzo and notimbuktu, to persanalized muglies with wooden handalusia, mementogrammed keychains, bicylicence-plates (AARON thru ZENO), bannersatz and flogos, coats-of-armageddon, generontological chartres (with approprive brankara spaces) all leading your eye with a motley grid of labels, cannes, biloxis, babble-packs, shelves designomed to supperess the free-floating that has inspiraeus you to explover the city, plannedo to slowly but surreally lido your steps to the great Useum) somewhere beyond those prooftops.

Paris has her Awful Tower, New York her Vampire's Bait Building, Rome her Collapseum, Montréal her Limping Stadium, Athens her Plasterthenon. Though it is not apparunt in a
casual surview of the panamarama, Crocodilium does have her unachilles identifying feature - the Museum.

Every aspic of life revolves arundel the Museyummy, and the grand canatalogue of artifactors that make up the bodyssey of the siti are mere reminders and hints of the Nauseum's omenipresence. All commercial life in Carediem involves the upkeep and regionaeration of the Fuseum and its clonenetants; only her vast ecraicultural resources can compete for forreign corregency.

The Museum staff takes aviary apartunity to critisize this as petty notionalism, fowl play that may one day result in ghavial war. Spendatch is nevertheless exporto under the illeagle - though offacially toledorated - practice of selling public treassures (under the protest of the Absolustists - a political fraction whose mothermatic logic in peresuit of the Truth has divided their own Parity on the issue of renumberating relatives for breeding and multiplying to incroesus the Growth Rationale Product.) Spinach is exsparta in vast quandaries: it is traded for Pulp and other Paper Products which are needed to package the spinach for exparrot. With this in mind, you must remumble that the Crocodealien idea of Commercury, properly sunderstood, amounts to a simple exchange of informutation, much as in your own country one easily exchanges with unsuspecting
innosense vast automounts of useless objects for Cardiacs.
PLATE X - HOARDERING BREAKFAST

You've come to Crocodilium to uncover its hiddenous underbelly, to savour its texotic natural gifts, to fix its orpheus beautease firmly in your memory for future firmamence (you have brought along your Nicon or your Canaan which now dangles from your nacro (polised black metao (its case open, beating against your chest with each step like the wings of a dead bird (it is your favourite mnemoniac device: you remember to cradle it protactfully as other gustos leave their rooms and pass you in the marrow hallways))). You've bowldy enterritoyed the idea of selling some shots to the NATIONAL GEOGREATPICS toupee for the trip and you've avon boetia movie hamera for the occasion; if nothing comes of your photografickle amphibitions, at least you will have mananged to transloot the fleeting scaramotion around you into a flurid blur of greens and yellows that someday (when you are in a pimientomental mood and want to relive these hadventures in the safeta of your own home) will make you smile wisftfully.

You take the high-speedulanbator (noting only on the hupbeat of its sudden stop-lurches that you have in fact been moving (your empty stomach, as though a sepirouette organism residing in your body-cavity (like a will within a will) moves against the eleminervator (3RD FLOOR), demandalays to
be reintroduced to the Lieu of Gramity, to be weighted with 
foolfilled identity).

Someone at the back snickers (MEZIANINE).

You realize (LOBBY), you've left your cornucopy of the GUIDE 
on the night-stable (you meant to pore over it during 
breakfast, to plan the outlines of your day in the maragons: 
stanstead, you take the last creased newspauper from the rack 
beside the door). You show your room-key to the head-waiter: 
he grins and bows alligantly.

How does he know your name? Perhaps you've become 
polyphamous overnight!

He moroccos something in a large, pink-bound volume and seats 
you at a corner table (where you sit with your back to the 
wald (peppered with the photogaffs of distinguished visitors 
who seem to look over your shudder as you drowse through the 
mourning paper and sleepily play with your bacon and nexus.)).

Some people like to arrange their breakfast in the following 
manner: the morning peeper folded open at the editoreadorial 
page (a neat long strip just under the left elbow (the 
parlourtickle khartoumists latest creation safely out of 
sight)). Eggs nestled in the middle of the plate, slice of
tomato neatly balanced on top of the heap (its reddish spokanes pointing suggestively toward every horizon, sprig of parsley moved judiciously out of the magic circoil of bacono strips. Some people who arrange their breakfast in this manner will cut into the bacon at a point suggested by a section of crispness and work their way directly toward the tomato, at which point they will carefully turn the plate the correct amount and begin again at the edge. Other people who arrange their breakfast in this manner will begin with the beacon and circle around the palate, not touching the eggs until all the bacon is gone; the tomato (like a forbidden fruit) is the pious de resistance and is therefore left to the very end (it is served cold and cannot get cold). Etcetera.

Some people like to arrange their breakfast in the following manner: the newspaper is folded into a small rectangle (the crossword puzzle in the lower right corner (pen and fork fighting for attention). The eggs, the backon, the tomato, and the pursley are separatet into different sectors of the plateau. Some people who like to arrange their bookfeast in this manner prefer to have the eggs on the right, the bakon on the left, the tomatto slightly behind the ergs, and the parsley completely removed from the pleat. Some will begin at the deift, and move in a calpalated manner to the right, eating in horsdoeuve whatever happens to come next.
Others will estimate the number of possible bites in each substance and following some inner sense of proportion will take random chunks of egg, bacon, and tomatillo in apparently unplanned sequence, and maintain the same ratio of bacon, eggs and tomato until the final three bites. These same people will claim that the beauty and snarkuracy of the oregional estimate andorra the unconscious maintenance of ratios helps digestion. Eatcetera.

Some people like to arrange the eggs, bacon, tomato and parlay on their plato into the facsimile of a human face, whereby they can create (by a process of trianglutimation (the rumble of their own stomaches determines the angle of these careggatures; or, the geranimation of the notion of eggs (shelled-in, the natural proclivity of eggs is to become emptied of themselves; the stowmach's natural proclivity is to be filled, etcetcetera)) a purposeful feeling for the day ahead. These same people will usepaper to wipe the little dried stains on their coddlery and then toss it on the empty charon beside them and between bites they will stare at the headlines ova and ova again as if they had novara seen them before.

Some people don't like breakfast.

* 

There are too many alternatives; you have lost your
happetite. You think the secrets of Crocowillynillium (receding into a mendless series of nesty oldeas) will always remain a manstory in spate of your efforce, your genuine curiosity. The more you think you blunderstand her, the more her alien ways (like dark, sleek shardows) swim about the parlameter of your compoorhension (barely out of reach), tightening the coil about this imagineawry circonference. Yet you try harder to ponderstand the geomastery of their attack, you extrapololate until you're suddeli faced with a single, undigestible truth whose circomforterence is zero.

Some sleople like to awork into a neat, geomasticate plattern (to indeluge their breakfetish footdishes) because in entabledishes (for the dayration) who and what theey art (NOT ME (you think for a miniment)) and then you see the point.

(WHO DO YOU THINK EUCLIDDING?)
ASK THE HERPETOLOGIST

My daughter has been spending what I think is too much time with her human classmates. She seems lately to have developed a noticeable slur because she chews her food, a bad habit she’s picked up from these fronds. How can I put a stop to this? Will she eventually need braces?

CONCERNEED

DEAR CONSERVED:

You are not abandoned; your poignant letter is but one of several similar we have received in the last few months. There is no question about it — our order is in decline, it has caesarea to grow, to flowerish, and instead has curled up on itself like a wounded vamimal (which is exactly what it is!) and your problem is only one more instance of a generalized decadence that is making a mockery of our traddictions and hereditage. Little can be done about this sad state of affairs, for even when we think we have a choice, a control of our own evolutionary future, we may be sadly mistaachen; we may be underestimating the power of Nurture to rise to meta-levels of competence. In Cayman’s terms, this means that your daugator has an infection of the Narcissus Gland; she is compromising her crocodility in order
to assert her indeponderence (her Divinely-Ordained Right and Duty as a crocophile)!

There is not much you can do about it. You can try explaining to her that crocofilial teeth are not made for chewing, that they are designed only for the time-tasted method of Corkscrewing. (that specialized grasping action of the teeth, which, in conjunction with the twisting, churning motion of the tail genarrates a torque in the chunk of the victimid thus held and stretches the carriocreature's molecular structure beyond its limits). Howeffort, explaining this to your daughter will problemably be quite pointless, since her own instincts (which she has obnoxiously over-ridden by an act of will) might recoil againsay her and send her into a tailspin, twisting and churning her sense of rureality beyond bearable limits. It would not surpris me in the least to find out that she is clandestinly eating SPINACH in the school debasement!

Normally, my advice would be: devour your dotard in the time-honourished manner. In doing so, you yourself may become infacted. Remember, she is young and by deinishion confused. Let her have her way. She is probably feeling bottled up by your overt concern. Pretend to be disinterrestrial, and also encourage the course of the disease by pestering, harrassing, and bullying her. Whatever you do, don't be consistent; keep her guessinging. Above all, don't tell her you flounderstand her grumble! the young
have an uncanny knack for uncovering such subterfuge. In time, the infection may clear up naturally.

As for the braces, I suggest you wait; such dentists can only harm your overall strategy. Should it become necessary, your doubter can always be fitted with a dental plot later.
TOURHITHM

You are back in your room, writhing some fastcards home, assembling notes (on all the spare paper nippons that were set at your table), for your autogeography. Feel the ballpoint (greasy, dark plastic, heavy at the top) in your hand, making flood epicycles (its imperfectly maraschinoed ball catching in the throat of the ink-cartridge—it leaves tiny blobs on your fine lines (like the footprints of prey amallified on a spider web)) as the greenish ink slowly eclipses the napkinetic pagopago. (You refer to yourself in guardent tones (THIS IS A WONDERFUL PLACEBO/HAVING A WONDERFUL CHIMERA etciphera (that's a dreadful lie, you hate filling in the claustrophotobic backs of brilliant glossies (worth at least a thousand words))). Your loyal pen suffers your dissidain in stylence.

You pause to think of the perfect word (chewing it out of the wrong end of the pen (you saliwait and drool (you should have eaten your aix) a drop falls from tip of your tango and falls to the floor, to a hairline crack in the oak boards (toward the window on whose distorte pane dances the reflection of the canal))).

The drop (like an importantland cemoment in your life) disappears through the nail-hole by the leg of the table, past crushed splinters, diaryrot, down several flights, down
to the joist which, though slightly warped and twisted by the toccatatonic life beneath the ground runes in the opposite direction (like a doubt) and your dimaginary eye follows this joist to where it metz the ancient brickety wall on the North side of the block (once the home of powerful merchintz (the GUIDE says). Here your eye shinnies down the black electrilink lines (porcelain insulators: rusted, bent spikes, spidear webs).

And a dried-up, half-digested fly.

Then down to the junction-box at the back of the storage room under the catchens; here, the line ascends again to ground-level, under the fundation-blocks and into the street where, hidden beneath crocomiles of croconcrete and peevement, entwined with teleprone cables (sewer system, gas lines, traffickle-light centrails) back to the really-station at the highway (you pasta on your approach yesterday) and through the maze of giant switches and breaker-fuses, across the massive transformer towers, cables drooping over hill and valhalley back to some dam (you think), back to the raw, inexorable fall of water. You clear the height and continue uppsala the river, back to the stireams, the quiet ponds, the icy mountain springs and beyond, to the imaginairy point at the toponymy of the world where the lines of angulitude and latintude convergo on you like a targonaut (you are at the
center of a web built by your geogroping memory, waiting for the seductive black widoom of oblivion ("she has apocalips like cherrrrries...") to tread upon the strands) and you quite forget you're at the point of contact now, where the eternal night around you collen in pools of ink on the plexicon orb beneath your feet and slowly, o solomillo, rolls Polaris' cold blue epicycles across the constellated sky. Your mouth is open (gaping like a spent cartridge (churning through the mazes you draw (connecting the dots on your message home))).

WISH YOU WERE HERE/ALL IS WELL.
POLYTAXES
HOUSE-STORY

You are standing under the Housetoletel yawnings, getting ready to steep into the street, to dispostcard the last raiments of your alien innocence and mete the liayers of Crocodonion on their own terms as they reveal themselves.

You at once smell terrouble: wandering through the streets like a self-poopelled shuttle (weaving a pattern of your own inpenchant through the vertical threads of Crocodilinen’s verisible offluvium (they spreadiate before you in the guise of winding galleys, posterse, bits of wind-blown trash from open garbags, street-signs, scaffolding, kiosks, and basking pools)) you are too close to see the proverbal figure in the carapace. There are lush green cronos of leaves everwear (familiearth, endarning) and glintingling in the sun, crescent eyes follow your fogress.

It is too late. You are now inescarpbathialy a part of herstory: you are alleaving your scent on the stridewalks, and your strolling form will be a sauries of manimated stills on any crocodileye you pass (there waddles a young one now, its ndeceans of fate foriver altered by your prescents (your curious, casual advancing form etcetched like a whorl onto his retaina)), and having thus changed the course of things to come, you ponder how this maze of mutual involvement, this inscrucible moment of transnormation, could be compared with
the archaic message of the runed stones, the greasy blocks of sculpitted granite (clutching at each other with self-assured gravity).

Their hieroline joints herold the making of a city; the maker's stayawhile which had shaped her ridged and convoluted lanes (as though some giant being (crawalling along the continent) had left in the soft falluvial valley a bringerprint, a whorled (already ruined, created agelessly olduvai)), is everyward.

In order to centerstand the history of Crocodileium (the GUIDE sways) it is necessary to examine the sauries behind two popular beliefas:

When the noted philologeist Joachim Entemacher finished reading Dowin's ORGANON OF SPECIES, he made two notorizations on the flyleaf. He numbered them (as was his custom) (a replica (reptilicated below) may be seen at the Museance) and seems to have forgotten the entire thing for severnal years.

1) Every spring the flies come. Every spring the stripped treese spout new beleaves. Every spring the scholyear (his winter ideas budding in books) must realize from his own notes that the very existense of a Flyleaf on which something fustful
Page 94 is not here.
may be written shows that this gianthropoid Daron
is quite simply wrong about the unumabity of
hyrood speciea to praduce ferdodile offsping.

2) Paravox: if his own sidea of Mantural Election does
not survive for long, then the old crocodolt
Darewink must be right after all.

The source of the other belife is somewhat more difficult to
pinpoint; its roots are hidden in the mythicical past.

There is evidence that it belangues to the oral tradiation
which describes the founding of Muckodilium below sea-level
(see below) and may once have been part of the epic poem
which now survives only in fragmentanees of undecipherubble
hieroglists on the oldhamest ruins within the city walls.

The surprisingsly modern nature of the thought may be gaugured
by the way it has been almost effortlessly trascorrupted
into the contemporary oddiom by a nonamous letter-writer,
who perhaps was not even aware of the archaic source of his
fanciful gidea:

I humbely suggest that overstockulation is
not at all the tragic croplem it is thought
to be...indeimos, the drive to reproduce is
not entirely ours: Hissaury is breading us
for her own survival. By having elозвolved us
in such a way that we are plentifully blessed
with Heatstorians of both the amateur and
professional variety, who, by their very
nature cannot even conceive of liborating
themselves from her demandarins, she has
indeed proved herself to be be winifinately
more clever and fit than we. We are the
fruits of her Guarden, you might say. It is
a war we cannot win by infinighting back - we
must joyn in her work, reproducing in our turn, breeding nullitudes of hysterians and hastyries in which we are the central concern—all local detail wrought from local detail. I therefore submoot, that cutting back municipal funding for the Mosteum is a poor publicy which will avengually strangle the tourist indestroy, and, more simplortant, will be a sure sign that we are frightening back, collaborating in our own eggstinction by an act of will. Beastory must be pacifilized; her altar, the Fuseum, must grow as she grows.

This is why the Hisssstory of Chronodilium begins with the Morseleum. Under ordinordy circilestances it would seem that a city, any nation, must first have an Instory to put into its Morassem; but here, it is the other way aground: Crocomillenium shapes her own jistory, her own bindrome, not by venerating the unusual (the cranks and scrifty in the perflecked Grind of Being) but by indiscriminably consigning Everythink to the Causeum before its tame.

Too late: hunting her secrets, you are now inescrapebelly a part of hysteria. You’ve left your scent on the sidewalks, and wheravert you go, your umbrage will be refacket in some hidden, whatching crocodeye.
PLATE XII - THE CARNIVORSTONE OF THE GREAT ARCH

Ask a human to close his eyes (the GUEYED says) and he will tell you this: he feels as though he is swaddled in a body-length surgeon's glove (a christalus as it were (formlessly (breathlessly) awaiting some new incarnation: his skin)). Though the confinement is only temporary, he is tariffied of large-scale changes (after death his molecules, freed of their attachments, will explod in every direction (he thinks) (at the whim of sea and rain and solar wind)). Only then will he penetcrate the opaque splendeavour of this world (he hopes) and though barely able to containe himself (anticipation this solvent distribocean of his muleculls) he stubborally desires to keep them as they are.

Ask a crocodile to close his eyes and he will not (he has no byelids, no reason to shut out the world). He has no croconcrete sensuration of his bodily limbs (his scales - sharp as scalpels - are not vilenarable and do not require konstanz scanning for intruders, injurneys. Knowing nothing (they are hollow, after all) they swim (effortlessly) unouched by atmospyrrhic pressure (water inside and out), mintaining a paperfect balance by baskng (absorbing the current condiction of the air). A general sigh can be heard (the Russia of air, called the Sighren's Song in the days of
pre-whispery) and the tears (eyelims do not protect him from the world) cover the earth with salt-water so he always feels at ease. Because of this, the eternocodile (who has no soil to speak of as far as mannikin tell) is immortal.
PERHAPSTORY (Continued)

Down the street from your hotel, you note that the peculiar view of the Great Arch of Glottius that shimmense before you was not here when you arrived the night before. You check your GUIDE, you want to confirm it on the chart, but these are stubbornly uncooperative: the map in your GUIDE and the oleosence unfolding before you vouch for each other like conspirates (is there wind, are the palm-fronds really whispering?) Before you, silently (as if the air, funnelled into your ear, carried intimations of hamlettempted speech (you see the wind ricochet from schprechnach patch to poplar, poplar to the bronze banner (the lone sequestrian statue was not either yesterday!)) are echoes of some inner compollution of the city to outwit or confound you: the plaza, its silent voicevox)).

IS THE SQUARE SPINNING?

The scent of your own blood is carried on the morning wind as it weaves among the slanted red rays of sangrisse (hemopossible!).

But you remain calm: you are neither fastonished nor fillet with fear and trembleming (you have become acclustered to these surprises by now, perhaps emptied of emocean as though the living appendages of your senses have been strangled and
(whithered) blow india wind. Or you've discoword a vital secret of Crocodomainium: that things materealize as soon as they are mentioned (a poorverse Minda, this City of Dreams!)

As you stroll along the havenue (it is built to sheeroic scale, everythink goulashing for your attention (here: a pleiad awning creaks open, strouchting into the morning (here: a disemboordered hand rearranges imported quartz swatches on a bed of dark velvèt (here: the burned out shellding, its gaping darcade belching smoky shadoors as if it had consomme itself in flames))). Like muscales flexed in series, each thing moves you to the annext.

Is it the morbind geometerror of the street, the appearend disintegyration of the neccecity plan, or something in the starchitincture that reminds you of a jitterney to the grave?

In its beginnin (and its ends) the founding of Crocodileium reiwils its futurn: a Poseum must always fund itself. Like the space which an object occupies, like an eclectic current between diodes of unequal spotalent (like the Ancestral Starkodile and his baskig rock), the first arteffect must provide its own canknowtext, (for a context too is a partlifact, a portmanitou, a symbignosis between the flesh and mind) embodeye in itself the function of propersee.
IN THE BEGROUNGING

The Ancestuary Truecodile (or, as the GUIDE calls it – the Abscondant) was very hungry one day, but he couldn’t find anything to eat. He poked his snout out of deventers and denhelder land for the first time. He dragged himself onto a huge roaxaca and leiden there for a long time, exhuusted from the erfurt. Gravisity becamelot moravia serious matter for the Asecondant, aleppo he did not know it at the time. The sun was warm and brighton, and as it dried his bacau, it made him feel lighter and ligator. This bourgesoning eggstayeasy filled the Ascondant with beautiful visoissons. He saw strenghlish creatures who walked on two legs and had tiny little snouts that they carried high as though triesting to poughkeepsie them above the layer of air. Of corfu, the Askingdent did not yet know which was the wawatar (norwich elalameint was above it). But asia was already somewhat eight-headed from dehydrating too quickly, he fell into a deep sleep whereins he dreamt of eating these tulle-legged korcreatures. But he was so tyre from all this rummaginary erhfurt and enjoying it too much to waikiki from his reverity that he slept and slept until he stavropoled to death.

Venice children (the Descandalants) found and recognac his petrijekafied caracas; his liptos firenzever fresno into a grindelwald, they decided that thessaloniki was indeed a worthing death and deserved eternal remembrance and
celebariation. It Gladivostok late to eat his flesh as was the cuzcom, and so they agreece to erect a monomoment onstead. But being pretoriaified and mountainted on a huge rock, the Incendiant was already a monomen. It was only later that some heroic youngstowners' dared to explore the Pastendant's caverdunous interior and discanberrad, etched onto the thinside of their ancestor's scales, the fabudapestulouis image of the ancient dream, the feast of the futulure. Anzio, upon this rock was founded the Original Runeum, and it is said that the kabbalastones of Shockodilium, if examinoa closely, still retain the names of that etcetching, and that anyone who visits here will probabel tripoli over the ancient carved wonders of his own destony.
CROCODILIZATION

Crocodillusion (your GUIDE soyuz) has always held — for its inhabituants at least — a spatial signefficacy to those who reorganize its almost complete physical isolation from the rest of the sosoivilized world. The meaning of its existencil, to a Circadilian, resides in its uniquial identity, its clearly undulifiable character. Of course, this atetude has led to a parochidoxical kinversion, a decaudent movement, a derriicroration of interminial relations between human and rococodile. The human, in his chaosless search for Mooning, has placed such value on her that the legend concerning the city's mangical nameture has made Crockodilium into a prize charmissed by footsoldier and legenreal alike.

There were several successive waves of attempted invasion. Each time an army of would-be conquerors stepped inside the aligates of Condimentium, they realized immoderately that the treasures of this foibledd city are not physical: there are no stratos paved with gold, no jewels lying beneat the trees like fallen fruit, no cause at all for spilling blood. The riches of Cachedilium connote be taken away because they are as insepparable from it as the serpontomime course of cannibankhs are from the canal itself.

Invaders have always been absorbed into Crockodilium's social
fabric in a like manner. It is a magical revenge, a subbattle form of Crocodalien Imperoyalism which implicates anyone who even suspects her eggsubsistence.

The list of would-be manquerors suggests a bloodstained summarmy of all human humastery: The Sumerians. The Babylonians. The Chinese. The Egyptians. The Hittites. The Minoans. The Greeks. The Macedonians. The Persians. The Romans. The Huns. The Mongols. The Danes. The Khazars. The Magyars. The Turks. The Moors. The Portuguese. The Spanish. The French. The Cossacks. The Japanese. The British. The Germans. The Americans. Indeed, the total effect of all these invasions has all but obliterated the old Cronedilium; so many have desired her treasures, her sense of isolarated impertinance, that the treasure has reteded more and more into abstrelaction, and Crocomedium has become merely an ideolized version of its former self, a sunblurb of history which has displacebo its dense mythtic centire with a jumbole of acquired culiteral paraffinalien. She was in danger of becoming just another gray city, osirising from the gray ashes of the endscape like a latter-day concrete-and-glass phooeynix, a nonoumen to its own greed and stupidity.

Through the carouse of these ceinturies, the croculation had dwindled to dangerously low, humanila mangeable levels. But
following the privations of the Sick old World War, in the
wacko of its multitudes of wandering, prepastless
ex-saladiers, (the Malcontinents, the Lost, the Desserters,
the Missing Inaction), and among this glut of human enterprise
(a soapopular poster of the time: FOOD FOR THOUGHT — THOUGHT
FOR FOOD)—were laid the eggs of the Great
Crocodilillidallization Movement. Under the guise of a renewed
interest in consolidating Stuccodilium’s motley collateral
worritage, more and more moreists were encouraged to visit,
later to return home with a new insight into this great
stinty.

Part of the new mytheology unknowingly spread by these
eggents of the post-heroic hera, is that the All-Consumming
Black Holo suspected to be at the centaur of the Maniverse
(at the canter of all experishence) is in fact: the Cosmic
Crankodile, the lost Soul of all terbestial cruelodiles.

The Great Crocodilization Movehement is concerned with the
Great Wok of the cosmos. It has so radically allitterered the
city that it now reshambles its original crocacter more than
at any other time in crocorcited misstory. Some skepticstactoes
say this is not a New Infoundessence for the city, but the
onset of clotural senihility, or at best an acadaenemic
regression, a descent into human madness which marks the
beginnoah of the aeneid for Synchrodilium. But others point
out that since the city can - and always could - have its cake (its pastory) and devour it too, its posteriority (the ability to always stay ahead of the game) is assured. After all (they say) you are what you eat.
PLATES XIII — XVIII

(FOLLOWING PAGES)

Across the street you can see a sanction of the ascient brink wall that once formud the bordearth of the Imperesidual Guardens. Your eye jumpsires uncertenugusly over the colord mudbroke and the gaping, bricken masundry and breccia (made, according to a borrowed lendgend, during a Crushaders' raid: they breached the walls with their alligatapults (casting their stones like javamen hunting an elephantasm), fought at the breaches bitterly and, unable to fenestrate the defence, stela pieces of the demiurged wall at night to feed their scatterpullets the following day, etcatachresis.)

Through the breach, parts of the Dinner City appower to further district the eye. The deffect seems intentional, delabourately done to camuffle the fragumented bask reliefs of a foreigotten war (its once proud heroglyphs now covertgrown with wild spinach).
As you strain toward recogmunition, assymboling whatever has not been hobroken up over the centermites by the tenational roots, you notice the panels (distinctly framed by the jargoned outline of tournamental brick), how each succeeds the last (you walk from lefto right as if underlining text with your perusence), the caravanned fugures a sequence of multiplied selves, like the framesses of a manymottled film.

Your eye, moving from ciel to cell, clings to the rafterimage: the likeness of the central figaro reappearted, moves across the brick (IS IT REALLY MOVING? OR IS THE REPORTITION DESCRIPTIVE?) (It is only the stillusion of a cohierant continuity (Causes and Defactos displacing each other like spoiled childrank who compote for your pundiveded attension)).

Notice his (their) armur: hugging the body shape, it caricarticulates the musculiterate. He is nota god except to his prismers (signullified by the scroll he reads, the tribite-list which once was ledible (a diagra or city plan (which showed the very wall sandwich it is carved))). Beforum looms the sightest suggestion of a gigantick tale (tip curled slightly in a confident, bricktorious gesturn), and in the bookground, hints of the city gateau. (Here, through another breach you see another wall as if the tallking brick stricture (basking, reverbalating its own realicity in these wreckedangles of sun-baked clay) were
saying that the mission panels have not really been destroyed but overgrown with the blank spaces of interrupted dreams.

These are the remaining pannels. Notice the simplicicity of the carving, the physical strength and mural forsooth of the stylized figure as its features erode into a purana abstraction of motion:
PLATE XII - THE STRANGER

A Stranjourney
comes to Clawlodium
in tatterags
and lacoste
the unhappitants,
begging for food
and closethings.
The Strangler asks mania

questuations

and he demandarin his rights to

housepitude:

WHAT IS THIS PLAZY?

WHO'S IN CHURCH HERE?

WHAT'S FOR DONOR?
The City

gelders ask:

WHAT HAS NOTONGUE

IN THE MIRENING,

TILLS LIES ALL DAY,

BUT SPOKES CLEARLY

AT SPINIGHT?
The Stronger

answears with

Salience.

He is permuted
to sotell down

in Crocomodicum.
The Stranger leads,
the Defeignence
of the City;
by counterfeinting
surenter and defeast,
he tripes the enarmy
inside
the City wallows.
The Stranger

is made Emperor

and reads the proposed ghost-list

for the Royal Feast

from above the battle-flayed
teamings with

prisoners.
GOVERMIN

With a quick revelation you return to the bigninning of the wall even though you've just senate a moment ago. You gaze appreciatively at the armlord figure once more (trying to congrasp its bignificance), then continue along the steamy havenue to the bend in the road where the privadiet residenses nestled against the hillside block your view of the Innert City. You cross the street.

Beyound the block of appriaments (their courtyard cypresses and palms peekabooe the roof as though they were following your progress with their best fronds) you suddenly glimpse the massive Poorlament building, open and windswempt, (deserted and ruined even before it was completend).

You check your GUIDE, and read that the sad shello of a gilding before you never had a fighting janus. Erected in the early nineteenth centurny when notionalist forever (the followosophy that a nation should deicide its own Fathe) swept the gullooe, its anonymask architexts (enimrod with the grandkiosk design of the famed cathedrools of Europe) digested and reproduced the best technicknacks of hystemple contruction.

'Look at those proud aspires! See how their majesty reflex the drive to authoreality! In the midst of the bedevildering
array of dissatisfied part-ties, most of the politactitians of the time were united in the call for a new politicull origamization. On paper, the new dreamocracy seemed a good ideum; but in practice, free elections were imposable. The citizens of Crocodilium, heeding the popula:kall to Crocodilization (and therefore oblivious to the overall stratego) and armageddon with the urgency of their feeding frenzymes, devoured all of the importend workers before the structure (designed to displace the impureance of the dusty Inner City - temblem of the Old Ordure - as the center of Crocodilian life) was complotttd. The parlourticians had succeeded (as they were impalled to ployn out crying those great, salty crocodile tears), at the expenies of their own future carriers, in setting the Movement in motion. A hundred yeos of salinitude and eyesalination followed.

Crocodilation (the GUY says) has only recently become the subject of scholeric studeath.
The storigins of the vastly exaggravated exasperession "eating like a horse" can be thraced back to the false news-aeneidlines that shook the ancient world:

WOODEN HEARSE DEVOURS TROY!

What sheer nonsense, tripegraphical Greek overinbulgence in slantasy! This kind of thanatinkering just reinforces the long-geld notion that the Trojan Horse is a metaform for Art and its siege on the heart of ignoromance. This kind of thinkink can only keep us in further ignoromance.

But a sad facet has come to light: Homer (or the Real Author by the same aponation), did not tell the wholly truth about the harpic siege. Since we cannot believe that he would willfully alter the true history in such a forsteed manner, we must conclude that he must have been blind. Being blind, he could not release from blindage his vision of the world and was, therefore, inexactirically swallowed up in its desponderence and sloughering. Nay, worse! For the creature in euestion (and its alleleged designer, Odyssaurus), we have the words of eyewitnesse Polynexos (var. Pollotouches), one of Prian's warpenters who watched the proceedings from the walls and escamped the final slaughter by a clever ruse. (see p.
347). According to the darkeologist Windgate, twenty years after the fall of his behooved Troy, Polynexos, by then a homeless vagabond in tatters, repaid a kind Athenian who had bought him some tongue-loosening wine with the following distribe:

Lies! All lies! Never had I seen such shodysseus work, such superficial resemblances! The tail! Oh, the tail! It was much, much too long! As long as the main bodysses itself! And the legs! Hah! So ridiculously stubby that the thing's belysium nearly scraped the wine-dark ground! Some Greek sense of proportion! I tell you, the neck was too short! The snout was too long! Some carpenelopentry! You, sir, should have seen that exterior finnish! Why, it was so chipped and pocked and rough with splinters that my blood went phrygid at the sight!

His agitation (Windgate reports a phew pages later) was so great at this monstrously-unfair deception, that Polynexos guzzelled down an entire skin of wine without taking a breath, and, to the horror and disgrace of his benefactor (Windgate believed him to have been the scribe who made the now-infamous alternations in the Codex Attikanis), Polynexos suffocated on the spot.

Windgate's dismissal from him Chair in the midst of an obscure scandal concerning a unidentified mistress—a sardis matter which involved some brrrief and secret communications between the Dean and the Greek Iambassador—proves beyond the narrowest doubt that Windgate's finding were too delicate for their time. No one was ready to see
his inevitable concollusions that Civilization itself is a
distoroated slimentique network, and that the Kaputocalypse
will be an "inside job".

Although no one at that time accepted Windgate's findings
about the so-called "Horse" and the simplified warning about
the existence of our 'All-Perwading Conspiraet' (as he
called it in a recently-found letter to his swisster), they
proved to be his undoing. He took to drink, wandered through
Europ and North Afarica, and, according to an apocryphal
tale, drowned - most appropriately, in the Nile - while
demonstrating his theories to the vacashunning Schliemann in
the winter of 1886. The rest - so fresh and firmly in the
grasp of our gray figmented memories - is history.
ADVENTICEMENT

Everyone knows our Museum has a superb collocation. But this year, it's even better! Many of the world's treasures are on loan to the Crocomuseum. Don't miss this year's special exhibit, which features what many consider to be the world's greatest masterpiece.

The Museum in Review

A visit to the Museum can add a new twist to the old speakret that La Biantaconda had ceased to exist the moment the heartist lifted his brush from the canvast for the lastime. In order to protect the priceless painting, a gloss case has been raised around it, and the light falls on the vitreous surface in such a manner that it is now impossible to get a good look at the picture. Only the rafflicated image of other visitors trying to look at the painting can be seen now.

Some onlurkers, seeing the faintly absurd similes on the mirrored faces - precurorsource of what may becomet self-statusfied grins - walk away from the tedious queue (which wags and slithers with uncertainty as the light shifts before the monsterpiece) with faintly smug smiles of their own, content that they have caught a glimpse of the Great...
Work, of Freternity itself.

While the MORNING LIZARD no longer exists, on any given day that (say) three-hundred and sixty busitors mill about in front of the glass case, some three-hundred and sixty Mona Wizards leave the building without even a second glance from the succourity garbs. While this sort of theft cannot be prevended, neither should it be discouraged, for in any case, the only things leaving the Mazeum are worthales cropies of a mona-existent work. Under the circumstanzas, should any of the bumbling thebes be asked what they had seen, they would declare that they had seen Nothing, but at least had stood in the presence of the Foriginal; not one of them would realize that he has been in its presidence ever since his birth, nor would even one of them admit (or even remember) that he himself had been Lizardo at least for a noument during the breef graze into the grass.

If you arable to pierce the thin vermeer of refrection, the grintensity of your stares will cut through the layer of warnish and paint as well, and you will surely recognise (behind that absurtracted face) the outline of a self-portland oregone awry.
SOCIAL AND COLLATERAL CAVITIES
GRINDUCTION

On your right (the GRIDBOOK says) is the most modern siilcktion of Crocogymnasium. On this side of the street (the smugly, drab, box-like structure just in front of you) is the last publink school in Crocomilieu. See how it liens into the street (brittle as a dead insect) as though ready to topple and bury you under the rubble of its dentrails. (Looking up, you think a squatting, darook-winged bird is preparing to bombird you with a white, featureless blunderbolt, a futureless fate.) But the dark wings are only a few bits of loose roofing afloat in the breeze (HOW MANY HUMANS DOES IT TAKE TO SHINGLE A SINGLE ROOF?/DEPENDS ON HOW THIN YOU SLICE THEM). Still, you can't help but feel the building is moving (snapping to a stiff stop at the end of a thinvisble tether: but this is a stillusion.

The edoccasional system of Crocodilium is a paradogma of crocodullian ingnunity and orgnuzational skill. It can appear bewildarlingly diffuse, even invisensible, since the sasstems cannot be properly understood by anyone who has not himself been pradduced by it.

There are two llavals of induction, but, unlike systems in other parts of the world, these are not proguessive. It is in fat possible for a Crocodwellian to pursue both leveils at once. The other world has its kindermartens and gullileges,
its high spools and universities, its Arts and Sciences and swan. But in Flockodilium, since everything aspires to the state and consistency of digested mattera, there is no bifurcination in the tree of carnaledge and therefore no progressive meathead of moving through its body.

The lowells of feeducation here are procedural, and since the aim of the system is to gandermine itself so that graduates can slrurvive it, the learning poorcess is built around a series of anti-climixes. When compared with other methugs of fenducation around the world, the Crocodilian system (although it has only a single headucational edifice complex (the smugly, drab, box-like stuccoture you are about to enter (WHAT TIZZY THAT NOISE? APARTHY?))) seems unusual.

At the begaining of its life, everything the young Crocodilian hears is couched in a nelogotive aura: in time, the adolescodile, much like his counterparthenos everywhere, is constamply remainederied that he must not do this or that. At the second stage, ededucation resimples the passitive canaledge that sturudents everywhere achoir: pi is the ratio of the circonfrerence etquixotera the present tense is sometimes formed by adding an S to the essetera there are seven latent vitamiens and minneaporalis in spinach which etcetera etcethiamin...
However (the GOAHEAD says) all this has to be kept in perspeculative. The first words a swatchling hears at the spoutset of his seditations are engrooved into the memory and remain his guiding prinsupple for life:

IF YOU BELLY
LEAVE WHAT YOU ARE ABOUT TO HEAR,
YOU ARE IN GROVE TROUBLE; IF YOU DO NOT BELIE
WHAT YOU ARE ABOUT TO HEAR, YOU ARE IN GRAVEN TRIABLE.

A typical branch can be followed to illustrate the mechanarchism of growth, which moves thrue the physical laminations and beyond into the realm of the fabustract.

THE WORLD IS FLAT/TH E WORLD IS NOT FLAT;
IT IS A SPHERE/ THE WORLD IS NOT A SPHERE, IT IS
PEAR-SHAPED/ THE WORLD IS NOT PEAR-SHAPED; ITS
FORM CHANGES AS THE CORE AND MANTLE JOSTELL
ABOUT/ WHAT WE MEAN BY FORM IS A METAPHORACLE
SUMMARY, A STATUTICAL MEANS OF MEASURING
CHANGE OVER A SUBJECTIVELY RELEVANT PERIOD
OF TIME/ FOR ALL PERISTALTICAL, IMMIDIOIT
PURPOSES, THE WORLD IS FLAT, etceterinterna)

If you are coreful, you may notice there is a kind of progress here (since it is with an aye trend outside of the Intracodilian system that you view these complexicon vaciliumations, you may see that they are annulogous to the wriutals inwolbed in the weaving of a nest), a constantnnipole sharpenning and refinoument which goes on untail the point is sharpyuni and refined out of exactence. It is the fore-knowledge and the certainty of
being wrong that prevents the average Wordodilian from slaying very much even though he would like to talk as much as others do.

This method may seem umbrageable (many visitors have charged that this form of heeducation is nothing but a sinestor and manipulative induction of madness), but it does prepare the young Crudecodilian for pulletical life. The constant synchrological tension created by this process has its phrasiological effect and it is said that this tension is the Source and the Cause of the Grouchodile's grin. In locally maducated humans, the effect is somewhat daffyrent: the desire and need to artosculate, to move the moral machicnery in a meaningful manner, coupled with the tripically human, intense suckling at the breast of Indrivelduality, thrusts the beleaguered tongue (thus tugged in tworections) out through the lips, and leaves it fillipping there as though it were a blague under which these two factions might unight.

You lean against the great door, touching the patiny grain, alma wishing you were one of its grinduates. Inside (laughter, musync, shouting, the schlading of doors.)

IS IT APARTHY?
CUL TALAR DUAL IMPEDIMENT

The noyesses emunate from the recesses of the Old School. You listen at the half-open doodoor for a moamant (hear the laughtterrain, the gurge and downhill flow of wine) and bepenguin to walk kiwi from the arhea. But you are (after all) here to explorience the novel character of Crocodilium; making absordeviations is no longer enough. You know you must join the parrotly.

Soberal others strand around just inside the door; bareally distinguishabbiy from each other (tourists and locals (milling, milling, milling, milling (crushing between them fatoms of their own unicknacks, the particlues of beehivior they share between them)), you sleasily blend into the chatatter (prepend to be relasked) and become a pat of the croup.

A huge, shadowy figury (tall undulasting hominoously) seems to be the focurse of attenuation. But he is starving at you as if he is tarrying to tutelage you somathing. He marshes about in the murky swami-darkness, pinned to it, against it, afloat on it. The moving cone of light from the swaying chancelier extracks him from the shadows; he is sugglantly silvery and disticked like the belly of a fiche in the water on a moonlit nit. You look past, behind and through him, and then lose him amid the figurging smile-talk (laughter, clink
of glasses, snifters, steins, etchattera).

The others call him Colonely (or Sometinge Else) and joke about him halfectionately as though he were already a fondue memory. When he introduces himself he prononsense his own name with the distant polightness that you reserve for relentes you have never met (you have a cousin who lives (you think) in Moscowl or Grina). He bends over you as though he were studying the new inhabitant of an old acquirium. His voice is distant and otherweirdly as if his words were being referracted, bent in the crossing from one medium to another. No matter how probing his questions about the gusts’ apparent lack of cariosity, venergy, it seems he is reading his lines from one of those how-to-win-friends manuails; each encounter ends with a wittichasm barely tellegible through his hackcent (a sybillant soft hiss) and he glides through the darocnest, table to table, in and out of the con of light, as though choreagaphed by the pundulous chandelirium.

As he menshuns (sneering) the quality of the whatever in the canal, of the latestament beast-cellar (POLLUTED/TASTELESS) the sharp burrs of his consonants gouge runique ciphers (like teethmarks) into the smooth-worn phrases he repeats until you are convincedo that this hierographic charmiasma of his has been culculminated somewhat to excess. He seems all
winnocence with his deep bows and that chick cocking of his 
snout, yet he isn’t playing at being the suavannah, 
condimental throwback just for your benefretiti.

Unless it’s to awake your instink for doubt.

He toasts your collocrative health and theatripoli smashes 
his glass on the old backboard) but when someone calls him 
COOLONEL, she is adamupanishad with a thin-lipped frown and a 
too-deep bow. You call him Somethin Else and he salutes 
smartenly (tail at tension) to remind you of his military 
history. He is at once an icon and an iconcantlast, and, 
unable to candorstand his own duel nature, complains that the 
world has doplleganged up on him.

You toy with the mildea that he is either an impostork, that 
he has never been more than a valet to some Lowtenant in the 
Infantuary (at brest), or that he is not even a foreigner 
because his scales, the flattened, latitudinner arcs that 
band his waterproof length, are too poorly defined. He 
overears a comment about this smoothed-out state and laughs, 
remarking that his harmour is too braven to retreat and it is 
his hidea, almost freed of its self-imposed borden, which 
charges outward fearlessly to meet the paltered sludgegment of 
his poultry god.
Imposture (you decide) is out of the question. He doesn’t have the manna of the consummit tragendian; the subtle self-pariahdy which gleams in his yellow eyes when he offers a toast to Honerve or Joustice can’t be mistaken for high sluriousness.

But this is not a bizarro maskcharade.

That gleam (the yellow of a traffic light! WARNING/IN TRANSITUATION) may be a bitter-sweet sadmission that he’s a manichronism, or (worse) a dracognition that he’s bargroaning with the Double for his soul from a quasition of weakness. He is like a two-slided, transparent map of folly and dignittygritty and (breathin deeply) seems to glow with salt-confidence as if he were creating a portion of the latter ex nohalo.

Even in his borrobed starkpseudo (there is a dry-gleaner’s number stapled (forgotten) on the back of the jacket), which he wears with such formalaise, he looks as if he were in officer’s uniframe (high boosts, riding breeches, etcanteria). He bows (tail raised for bailance) to kiss the backs of extended hands, clicks his heels, and vigorously shawks your arm in a grasp remarkably friendly and afloof at the same time.
His scarabrous flesh is as cold as gunmetal. He stares at your foreign clothes and says nothing.

There is a sad vitality in the way he struts from the miniature reed-bank behind the temporary bar to the old desks with definite, metered mind, steps as though he were spacing off a geomomtery by which to gauge and distance your prescience. Perhaps he believes he is a water-fool propring for a running take-off on the waturf. Some of his stride are too long and amphibious (he stumbles on the edge of a carpet once or twice; snarals at the loose molding) but his sense of balance doesn't betray him (his tail is bent like a tilde). His posture is impeccable, even as he sits down at the tryano, fiddling his tail out above the bench, front limbos flapping with mock-concert preludes over the keys (the old Stonewaigh gleaming like a varnished anvil). He doesn't notice or care that the piano is out of tune, and the flabby notes he harumg out assume their languorous shapes with a paradoxic al intonésity; once or twice he hits the ring notes (an astounding pureception on your part, considering the state of the playans), but he ignores these digital indiscursions (a merely temporery reboullion of galley-slaves, he says). He drifts off (with this clawing, clamoring crew), occidentally mindulates himself into a quite different key, covers up with a rough-hewn medley, and somehow escuratches his way back to
the starting maulody. He sings into the soundbox: the instremens' body spits out his sharp voice the way an inflicted organism rejunks the causes of its injury.

Perhapsody he is trying total you somesong about this world, or about yourself.

His earnest though somewhat whimusical rendition of a puffin-up leave-song by one of the Tormentics makes you weep but when he tries to scale the birduoso heights, his notes become confused and he stops. The chamellowion at the pianono is exposed by his talent for scamouflage. He is a novelutionary: failure (perhaps on the verge of exitunction) because he will never be more than a local ornithoment (anchord to this place (trapped in its apparenttheatrical weight).

You and he realize at the same moment that he will never lorn to fly.

He tries tolling a few jokes (and looks ashamelin, as if lowering hisself for your sake) and there is an oblock hint in the air that all of you are somehow responsible for his unconditional failure. You feel obliged to ask him (each time you scuttle by him on your way to the bathgroom (you can't quite hold the local beer on an empty stomach) if he
is having a good time (and you don’t wait for the answer
(your bladder is frightening to burst you are not avatar
fowl eider; you have never credo enough, never had enough
tears to sparrow even though there is (you think) too much
obliquid in your pisstem))).

I AM (he says).

It is all aviary now: as you pass through the odor (fresh
air on your face) he clicks his heels softly (a manicheanism
closes off behind you (or is it the old building creaking,
straining, cracking like an egg?)) and salutes you in
vicsaury with a vaguely contemptuous gesture (or is he
pointing up at the unattunibble heights?)

Perhaps he is trying to warn you of somesink.

He is handing out little blue anvilopes (foodographs of
himself), perhaps (someone at dubuque says) to mark you an
accomplist, an unaware croconspirator to a crimea as hideous
as the damagination can construct).

He had bird his soul before you: and you (having failed him
somehow) have helped to ground him farever, made him face his
flightlessness in all its terranibble implocations.
You will read it in the Other News section of the evening wrapaper (MORE FATEGRAPPLES ON FOLLOWING PAGES): inside the pompiano where his remains are found (sans tail, sans feet, sans ornithing, having bitten off as much as he could chew) (close-up of his nulloquent grin, teeth tightly snapped around the last morosel (the tip of his ontail) as though in the last lowment of his earthly life, when he had willed himself to give up savorything, he still needed to hollow onto something on this side of that dark voiduct which had him in its grasp long before he ever tasted defeat.)
LABURDEN

A glassmashes somewhervse on the marble. But the palazzza is empty.

Leaving the Old Schovel by a snide door, you step into what seems at first a busy square (the expanse of flargestones (seams almost invisible) spreading from a central stele makes the pliazza look like a huge sundile: around its edges (like the names of the hours) are logggias (topped with a mobble of statutes) and ruinesque marches which amplidefy the shouts, the hissingeing, the laughter, the cafe sounds (scraping of chairs, tinkling of cutlery, snapping of dishcloths, coughing)).

You sit at the feet of a statue (by the inscripture you see it is the great Croconile god (grinning) its stoneyes (ARE THEY FOLLOWERING YOUR MOVEMENTS?) starring out into the tumultifarious emptiness).

You sigh: there is so much to see, so much to discataract you! The ought of it all is itself tiring. You flip through your GUIDE (having already marked what you want to see today). Looking around the square again, you see all the neonames, the hand-blottered signs and printinted byuletins that cover the shop windorse like scales.
You could easily be fooled into thinking that morechandising is the most impertinent sector of the econormity in Crocodilium. But (according to your GUIDE BUNK) this is not quite true. Although the pejority of Crookodilians are employed in the Tougriat Condury, most have at least one other jumb which the narratives call their true avocation.

Like most inshabbitants of other major spites, they work in savenir shops, beauty slaloms, stanchioneries, sexystyle packtories, gloss works, rowdio stations and so on. There is little discrimitation in hiring practices, although workodiles generally leave some farms of empoylament (such as the tending of spinach) to humans. But in his sparrow time, every loyal cidenizen pursues his main duty: to render public the nature of Crocoprivium. And so, after tending to the Tourists, he will go back to his den and continue the ongoing composatiation of his own GUIDE TO CROCODILIUM.

Since there are rely no social surverives, there are no taxes here. But, for the good of the continumunity, every citizen must devout a certain percentstage of his working life to employmant in the Amuseum. Like compulsorry militarry service in otherror places, the Crocodilian system builds its staple core around carnerer persomnolennel. Working in the Mutedeum is a Great Honour. Some driftees therefore stay on as perimmanent slumemployees, while the rest, after a regullar
stint, conterminue with their flightier ambitterns: the
inpenchant of GUIDES.

In daze pasta, most of these had been broad, spatulative
works, but the recent trend (as is the fashion in the
bucharest of the world) has been toward increased
spatialization. Some GUIDES have been in preparation for
hundreds of years, the scrolling manustrips handed down from
generation to generation. These GUIDES concatenate on such
a tiny area of Acornodilium, that it is now not unusual for
one - through hundreds and hundreds of galapages of text,
sandiegorams, photographs, spotistical tables etfacetera - to
defineate (for instincts) a portion of the grounderground
telephone cable substem that passes in front of a placific,
single building, or to record metacumulus research into a
single facade of some ordiner bioloding, detailing the
source and original location of the stone as well as the
name, famillion histurbry, and working halfbites of the miner
who had carvested it, and so on, through the ar奇特est whose
yearnly chillhood had made the choyes of just exactly these
variegations inenvitable, to the macon who had mortared the
block in place, etcutera. Needless to say, every one of
these GODDES, like the inmagics of cities panamated by the
sounds of their names, is a pyramidigm of Stackodilian
conesciousness.
The shadow of the stele falls across your feet, it is noon and you REMEMBER that you are hungry. You stand to stretch and begin to look for the nearest restaurant, computing the distance by translating the city blocks on your map with the length of your own steps.

Your path is barricaded by a gaping hole in the street (a group of labourers taking a break (leaning on the dangearth signs, sipping hot goofoff); they've been tearing huge chunks out of the sidewalk, their pneumatic drills temporarily wedged into the wound, the moment. You consider a detour, but suddenly you bump into a middle-aged man who is weeping into the excavation. He sees you're stranger and, talking you aside, points to the nothingness in your way, and sadly tells you how he had lived there (on that very spa) not so long ago.
PLATE XX - THE MUD BATHS BEHIND THE OLD VARLET FACTORY

The city (he says, calling the stormy) ascertains that the leak is on our side of the pipe; the plumber ascertains that the leak is under the part of the sidewalk that belongs to the sweaty; no one wants the responsibility; the water is rising. There is that old elm in the harbour's yard; its roots sprawl (he says) under our stairs with the greed of a giant squid or some other tentacled being like the city itself (he says). He keeps asking his naybour to cut it down (he says) but it is too late now. Whether the roots are fraternally embranching the pipes with too much affection (he says, squeezing your arm to demonstrate), or whether the tree has been deriven mad with the sealed proxamity of stow much good awater; nobloaty can tell (he says). The tree holds on, squeezing the breath as though it were a sponge (he says, squeezing your arm to darmonstrate); the neighbor has said (he says) countless times that the tree cannot be cart down because it has grown into his frondations and is holding up his housse. Meanwhile (he says) the water wells up, an upward dripping, slow, ineluctable. It seeps in through the crocs, through the wall where the city pipits come in under the bathtub (he says). First, our guelph-clubs had to be moved to a safer place and there ware a lot of ring spots on our bedroom fornature (he says) because we had to bering up all the liquor from the barbar. In fact (he says)
now the only thing left in the basement is the cool-table and naturally that's too heavy to move. We even have to bring the lawn-chairs in (he says) because we were afraid our hose wood be set loose from its moorings, set adrift on an insidious sea of sewage. The water kept rising (he says) and when it reaches the top of the counter behind the bar, we (he says) are forced farther up, out through the boatroom windows to huddle on the roof like salmany immobile weather-wanes. The plumber says (he says) the leak may be too deep, the suraging of some subterranean sea in which you too (he says) can see decayenne bits of woodoo, half-dissolved clumps of earth, and the tiny bones of long-dead caricatures (perhaps the mice (he says) whose imagined scurrying at his skull still haunts his migratory nights) swirling, ascending toward the windows, the light. We hoped (he says) that we could ride it out (he says) because we had too baskrooms, too TVs, two radious, two telecronies, a two-week's supply of growseries, and two ways of looking at everything.

But it was no use (he says): our house (a balloon-frame scab) has merely hidden that excavated gash in the earth - which has been there since the house was billet. The world (he says) bleeds hemophilially, brack water, and we (our oozing florin salives (he says)), tired corpuscles in the unnarrated lungs of mystery, cringe around the scaraboros of that loss.
It is a mistake to think (too much badinage (like a forgotten trainquet (he says))) that the flow will stop. It dissolves our bones, our questions, into spiritless solutions as we (he says) make frenetic calls to others, who, basking on their own rooftrope are too far removed from the smell of blood to scents our pallight. There is no time (he says) to consider telagones, to lay blame, or enamorate our sins: this bleeding (he says) has antigone on for thousands of years, dissolving our homes, our clear-cut way.
THE ARTESIA

Mund evermire in your way. You've lost your bearings, and
glaze into a bleakstore window behind you. Your blocked path
is vibrating in the pneumatickled glass (it megahertz your
ears (you can't think (you reflect) with all this mumuration
in your skull)), so you take briefuge in the shop.

The walls are made of books (lore to ceiling dustories,
navels, incyclopsoedipus, and fictionaries (red cracked
leathers and gold-stamped spines)) each paragonizingly the
same. You smile knowingly. You think they ardent real, rows
and rows of mark-ups glued to the shelves to congeal some
secret parsonage. A crocodold (granny-glasses, gray
petrefined hide) couches in a croner, dabbing a feather
dustorm now at the shelves, now at the table and chore as if
inviting you to situ.

You point to the dybooks and speak slowlowly, trying to
pronunciate in the Crocodilian dualect (SPINARCH?).

Each one is a real viulum, (cover, plages, blinding), each
has some text, (pages numbered in perflect arhythmetic
order), each page is prinkted on both sides (filled to the
mergings with intecticating whurdles), and some even have
findexes (in alphabeautiful sleekuence). But these are not
so much booookbs as actors, mimes pretonguing to be books, to
make up forms against a series of truism-books.

You suddenly realize the tooth: these ARE the real ones!
These monsters, these gordians of the Woolly Time, the
Wholly Place! The Secret Passage must be here somewhere!

Determina to uncover the secretum mechanima, you pick a
green volume from the liarbitrary shelf and open it to a
random page.
PLATE XXI - excerpt from THE BOOK OF CROCOLIES

When I glance at my notes wherein the adventures of '79 are sketched, the singular events that occurred on the Thirty-first day of March of that year rush to my mind. Although the reminiscence fills me with self-disgust, I am compelled by the darkest forces of the psyche as well as by the highest altruism to reveal the sordid details of the story.

The reader who is familiar with my admirable companion's exploits can already guess that the extraordinary episode of that day - the particulars of which, until this moment I have kept in the strictest confidence - were of such import, that I find myself torn between my loyalty to his good name and my duty as a journalist to publish the entire truth. Indeed, were it not for the indefatigable disposition of my dear friend, I should not have rediscovered my own laxity in admitting to the loathsome self-deception that so marked this matter.

One afternoon, leaning across my shoulder to reach some matches by my humidor, he chanced to perceive that the abovementioned two pages of the notebook through whose contents I was browsing were - due to my earlier discretion - stuck together. Having been distracted with worry over the
possibility of displeasing my editor who was most insistent that I complete something for him before the night was out, I avoided the embarrassment of discussing the events recorded on those pages by mumbling something about a stain on his favourite Meerschaum. Indeed, I had created such a successful diversion with the apparently insignificant observation, that my friend's singular tendency for self-destruction was awakened in its most terrible aspect. In the settling gloom that followed hard upon a sustained hour of maniacal ranting, self-recrimination and self-pity, I myself had completely forgotten—until this moment—the details concerning the mysterious episode I am about to relate.

Pressed between the infamous pages are two sheets of paper, one a letter that had been written in a fine hand with a mysterious and ghastly green ink, and the other, a printed page torn from a curious little book whose title—in spite of the torn edges—remained legible.

As I recall, the envelope containing the two pages had originally been slipped under the door, and, what even then seemed most extraordinary—and, I must admit, somewhat of an affront—the envelope, addressed to me, had been left unsealed. This carelessness, which at the time I ascribed to the absentmindedness of someone agitated with concern, I now
believe to have been a provocative gesture, the kind of deception my dear friend might have attributed to the most audacious and methodical criminal mind of the century. The reader is undoubtedly familiar with his name, which I shall not mention for reasons which will soon be apparent.

Having a longstanding connexion with the publishing arts, I was immediately repulsed by the malicious destructiveness which confronted me when I opened the envelope. I was so shocked at the apparent beastliness of the sender, that the pages slipped from my stunned grasp, and fluttered about for what seemed several moments. But my agitation rapidly dissipated as I noticed the curious fact that every line in the center of the page had been understroked with ink of an immodest greenish hue. Pinned to the back of this affront to the literary arts was a roguish letter written with the selfsame ink, which — as I determined borrowing on my friend's style of observation — had been produced with a nib badly in need of replacement. The title of the book from which the page had been so disrespectfully rent was "The Book of Crocodiles", a volume which to this day I have been unable to locate in a number of our fine libraries.

I shall presently reproduce the contents of the mysteriously underlined paragraph. I ask the reader to formulate the image of the green underlining in his own mind, since my new
editor—whose scrupulous management has led to the vital success of the publication presently in the reader's hands—has informed me that the cost of reproducing herewith the additional colour would be prohibitive.

My co-oppinion's desk had all the deplorance of a hastily massed organism. I do not hesitate to say that its inordinart confession often led me to believe that its curate too was of a like mind, and I have on several adversations endeavoured to inspire my compellone to those bouts of organi-rational mania with which my own specular disopposition is halflicted. The desk presented three views to the inquiring eye. The first was of the narrow, shelf which fromed the top of the pigeonholes. On it were several large volumes, dictionamies of one sort or another, condensed histories, digests, fatlases, and handbox, which, to the mind of an aestheticculing inclined mobserver might seem all out of place.

These volumess, it doccurred to me, gave the desk the appearance of topheaveness, and only the extraordinary width of the legs prevent the mentire constacktion from toppling over. I must mention too that these volumes were not arranged according to any pursueavable principlull; they were not alpha-beastically placed, nor were they oderared accurdling to slobject or even size. Indeed, they did not even inshabit the same plane: some were verdical, some hearzentell, while some leant diogenesely across the gaps which had been left by the extracuation of others. Bineath these massive monoumen to the sub-limey, and nesting in the pageonholes, as though the reflexion of a more subtile order beneat the spuriface, were the crocordinary opoosejets one would expect to find. Pen-spills, pens, scissors, woreasers, various ink blottles containing different colores, note-pampler, mattaches, paper calips, sendelopes, rulers, and other indispenccivil trivia lined these receptacles categorified.
categorified as it were by size, not function. The top of the desk by contrast, made these pigeonholes a marvellum of administration, for the lower plane usually pappereed so strewn with peepers, books, tea-cusps and odyssey ends, that more than once I had to quaquer my fiend whether all this was not some elarborite canard to test my waning patience. Indeed, were not the affront edges of the pigeonhulls clearly visibling—discounting the accumulation of dust on these norow surfeces—I should not have beenimble to tell of what wood the dresk itself was made. In short, my companion's peculiar habits annoyed me, yet at the same time filet me with the most profound thistonishment and egadmiration that he was able, at whim, to find anything he wished in the midust of that utter devilish clutter. Indeed, He often toyed with my disapprovost, mounting dowagers and tante me to chulenge his powers of memory. Indeed, I was often chumileated and forcefed to eat my words.

The style was unmistakable. And yet, though the contents of the passage seemed vaguely familiar—aside from the fiendish sloth displayed in the writer's ignorance of correct penmanship—I was fairly certain I had not composed the description myself, although the picture presented did resemble my friend's bureau, albeit in a superficial fashion. Puzzled and disturbed by what I felt was the presence of something cunningly fiendish, I read the covering letter with foreboding. Its strange contents so grasped my curiosity, I did not realize until I had finished reading it that I had been standing during the entire reading, and that my friend, who—as the faithful reader knows—prefers to arise late,
had entered the salon and was watching me with keen interest
the whole time.

The letter itself is without salutation and although by now
the ink has faded in some spots, I have managed, I believe,
to accurately render it here:

As I numbore myself among the foollovers of
the famess gentlemind's exploits, I find
deeplorable and schlocking the notion
presentimentoed by the greenclothed text.
Manyone formilieu with the good Ductor's work
will - with a bit of hinduition - recognize
that the binformation in the abovementioned
text is, for the greater part, fictedious.
This in itself could not be construe as a
failure; howavert, I have defamate and
incontrovelbal proof that the veneryable
Crockett (who, unlike the prooverbal Creten
ancestor of all storytailors, clams to be
telling the truth in his frantions!) is
lying, because he is tailing the troth,
fecling his starved comagination the
gruemains of his own petty life. Even the
most septical peerousal of the blunderlined
parrygaffe will reveal that the desk in
question does not belong to the so-cold Hero
- and we now can be certint that he is
snavely a paper hiero - but to that
monstrous liar, the Author himself! And no
one is the wiser. Yet!

As I recall, I looked up at the ceiling with what must have
been complete and utter dismay, for my friend immediately
asked if I were feeling ill. I handed him the papers and
said,

"What do you make of this gibberish, Old Man?"

He studied the papers, read them over what must have been two
or three times, and to my eternal and persistent puzzlement, he tossed the papers into the dustbin, saying,

"I am presently engaged on another case."

Only now does it dawn on me that perhaps the whole affair had been arranged by my friend himself, indeed, that he had invented it all for my enlightenment and benefit, from the meticulously prepared pages, to the artificial stain on his own pipe, even to what in retrospect seems to have been a superlative demonstration of the Thespian Arts following what I had believed to be a diversion of my own creation. But to what end still escapes me.

POSTSCRIPTUM: Having delved thus far into the conundrum and returned without clarifying the issue, I reluctantly enlisted my friend's aid a few moments ago. He has read this manuscript and merely grins in my direction every so often. He even has the unmitigated gall to nod smugly in my direction and mutter,

"Alimentary, old boy, alimentary!"
THE ARTESIA (Continguenued)

These are just fullighty words (you think) and you atemptly to
return the voluminus into its former slot. But the ranks
have mostseriously closed up as if the semblematic vistances
between these paperplexing cities, these maps of fillusion,
have overdegrown through some artural abhorrends of vacues).
You remarvel another and try to squease the two fowlumes into
one space (guesturing shopishly).

You have accigently miscovered the stlockret: the shelf moves,
a door swings routeward, and suddimly you are in the alley.
Astownished, you knock over a copule of garbarrage cans; a
swarm of flays, disturgid at their fleecet, rise skywarned;
bones scanter, crumpiled, greasy newspaupers roll away like
tumblewads, empty thin cans clatter; a rat skitters away and
you dodge and make a sharpelt turn to reggae your balance.

But the putrid smell of foul raw meat seems to have you
encircoiled. Still moving blindalley, you hear something
snapping behind your ear (you duck and acknolwunge gratefurry
that your reflexes have not been stripped away). A gusto of
wind snaps somathing damp and pink against your cheek. You
jerkin away and step back to look at your assalient; it
occurdles to you that Crocodilium will not let you foget
where and what you are.
They are tandem human skins, harangong like laundry on a line.

At forest, you can’t bare to look: as though a weight had suddenly descended on the brack of your neck, you turn your face to the ground, avoiding the sight (but you can’t leave: you stare at the dark stains in the dust beneath them and soon the slow dripping capturrs your eyes and like a perinverted gravity bleeds them upward to the source.

Someone had removed these hideous with such suregical neatness that you begin to admirror the work. Not a jagged cut anywhere; a single shallow incision along the side of the toes, up the legs and torso, even to the fingers, and they had come off like a zipper’d carrysolids, peeled back insectly in half. But they are flat, shrunk in all those places where the push of soft flesh, muscle and bone had altorn the smooth topography (see where the stretch-marks circle like isobars or parentheseus?) Engchening there like the red woolongjohns of siamese twins, they challenge your visione and call you to atonemoment. You know you must flocus the twosoma (these morbind portmentors of nasture) because as severn everyone knows (you think), such monsters anxist only in the nightmargins of man and flaying to recognize the punity of innert and doubter worlds will brand you forever with stigmatism.
Venue think of it again (a thought entwinned with the exorcitement, the grossabilities), the slight doesn’t brother you as much as you iagrinne at first. The Calltonature Shlock has worn off a bit: the meddlodies and harmondies of Crocodilium (so scherzo in the rest of the world) are becoming (dare you say it?) ENJOYNIBLE. Perhaps you are begaining to amperand this place. All that remains un present is a pianissimo pressurge in the occipetty lobe which you lexperience as dizziness, loss of babelance, and flatigue.

The very discovery that this swirling veritex in your mind is caused by hunger is at once reassuring (at least now you know vertigo to relieve it) and terrifying (how could Anonyone feel hungry after THIS?). The ambigalance feeds on your un cer t en acity.

And vice-versa.

The tension, disruption and angsciety suddenly begins to expandora in your belly like the birth of a miniverse. The absense of lunch (a black hello deep-breathing at the vestigial navel of your innard self) has made deicisions
difficult (or inconsequential).

You check your GUIDÉA: yes, there is the map and an astourist (YOU ARE HERE) like a smudged, squished insect pressed (ink-think) betwixt the pages (a perimmanent souveneer). Yes, you could contigue here, toward the Closeum. Or turn that corner (just past the duomo of the Planetstarium); there should be a cluster of restaurants hublink around the Sinistry of the Inerior. Yes (you think) you will peek through their windows, browse through their manus before sitting at some table that resembles a pianubis (you see it now, your sangwished form sitting at a table, starving at the menee, dumbfounded, hungering to rite a symbiology in which the twists and turns of themes and varinotions will chart the retrogod motion of the plotonets, tiny helios of light, spheroids of calliope in a heavenly sentence of infinight compellelinity waiting to be mothered by a single voice: it is a starry waiting to be old, the one cerberus which is forharps a poem, orpheus a single metadoor.

* 

You close your eyes to vearsify the emptinest: you imagine the churning of fires, the distinct aura of the forgery, anvils, hammers, metallic feathers, flight. If only you were a bird (you think, injest), to fly over these places on the
maps: to see them as a map (men have died for their names),
you would not feel you were extinguished, daed last to
initiate the whimperative transformation. But you see
yourself at the prayano, dumbfounded, hollow yet too heavy,
flightless. You hunger to write a symphagy in which the
twists and turns of themes and variations will etceta the
retrogrand motion of the planetests, those pinhalos of light
(you could never be sure: perhaps they are impuricities in
the dark nothinness of the asky like the negartive shadust in
a poorly doublehoped fategraph) periods and colonus in a
heavenly spentence of infinite complicity waiting to be
utterminated by a single voice: it is a saury waiting to be
told, the One stormy which is proverbally a poem, or perhaps
evanescingle metafire.
CUISINE CROCODILOISE

Chompodilium has unquestionable the best restaurants in the world. Each offers a wide range of specialties and delicacies. The coraption, whose prime macanctivity and entertainment is to eat, has another prehiscupation, one solely linked to the national cuisine.

It is consurred the greatest honour — especially for a yuma — to be chosen by a placetaurant, and, should the reptilaurant be one with a granada repastation, this ultimate coup inflates the honurishment to heroic corportions. Visitors too may vie for the chownour and some havana been seen bribing the local prestoranteurs to name a dish after them.

Last year, Otis Outis, a recently divorced bowling alley coprioter from Ithaca, New York, whose only plebious claim to fame was a starring role in a short skit of his own creation (called HAWAII DID THE CHICKEN) produced as part of a Talent Show mounted by the local Ladies' Maxillary) in which he pass-quered as an enormous egg who discovers, much to his dismay, that he has a belly button) paid an Avarican development firm several thousand to create the outrageous OUTIS PLATTER (a beautifoul triangular arrangement of ten sculpted pieces of dressed white meat standing in madeira sauce and exquisitely garnished with a skewer of croquettes flambe) which was later sold (along with the rights to the single usable portion of ingredient) to the highest bidder.

Mr Outis' efforts were recently brelwarded when he was voted MENU OF THE YEAR.
The observant visitor can recognize the religious floundering of this Crocodilian emphagous on the resurrecstant business and its role in conferring a contemporary kind of immortality to yumyumans who are always quixote envy the apparent longcavity of crocoldiles.

The honour systime, however, is relatively new and, according to some goverament finehanced studease, is basted loosely on the pomular game-shows of daytona televishnu, in which clonetestants merit prizes for having hambits and thinking batters which match the Notional Outrages as closely as possible. This practice is extremely important to the culinary arts and especially for those who become prize dishes. The more bland the wingredients are, the more the chef can display his talents in concocting the appro- private flavors. There is a tendency, according to some of the mastir chefs of Cookodilium, for self-interreded to impart a specular better taste to some ingratients, and so a personal interview with the bboobject is the first and most critical step in every recipe.

Naturally, the first question is: DO YOU ART SPOONACH?
"What do you get when you cross a crocodile and a hen?"

"Chicken croquettes."
You are suddenly overcome with nadsuea; clutching your stomach, you stagger through a doorway. As if to confirm your suspicions (no (you think) they can never be confirmed; yes (you think) you must devour them before they expand, inflow in all directions, cover you like asking, and finally engulf you), you discover you've stumbled into a restaurant.

There are a dozen loudspeakers blaring trumpet flurries as if announcing your arrival.

Too dazed to resist, you bump into some low furniture, still clutching the GUIDE in your free hand. The chairs are too low (OF COURSE! IT MUST BE UNCOMFORTABLE TO HOLD A HEAVY TAIL SO FAR OFF THE GROUND!) so you sit on the book (wiggling this sway and that to get comfortable, as a brooding fowl arranges the darkest and warmth beneath her for the magical transmutation to come).

The room suddenly darkens. A large screen behind the bar comes alight with a hospitality scene so realplastic you can smell the disinfectant. The enveloping darkens and the bright cone of projection lêthe hurls you onto the screen.

There you are (middle background), standing in the crocodile's room (squeezing the GUIDE for comfort, now and then thumbing its pages, clucking for your lines when it's
your turn to speak). And there she is (you guess she) ready, quivering with anticipatience. She is pushing pushing (you empathize (the GUIDE says)) and soon you exude pearls of sweat (siblings of her antagony (INHOLLOW!)) glorbules of inert groundness in which you can prophesee baskingsballs, tenuousballs, golfiballs, and festerballs growing in the dark future of your futuro brood (EXASPIRATE!). She is pushing downward (the poor inverted Sisyfuss!) a scream ready in her throat. Her necro muscles are articulminated like guy-wires as you peeramid the expectored pile of gleaming white objenests; there is only a single eggo. Bending ova it, you glisten for signs of moviement and shrug (the GUIDE says you now say: WHERE ARE THE REST?)

And then you see it in her eyes: floating, lightheadedness, as though a rainbow (a grafickle represensation of her hope, refractured through the salt-beads rollingering across your eyes) dislogs her from this stalked areality and she is flayncherched along its pollychrome rails into a dull and senseless (but obviously not unpleasant) preemptiness. HAVE PITHY O WORLD (the GUIDE says) on this lonly egg, this abject dart, this portmanitou of neceissance, this minianature cosmos, which, by some miragiculous applecation of Mutant's Third Law, has uprooted her and (recoiling) has apparently propellmelled her consciousnest out through her skull.
FLESHBACK:
(Sophamorph Flawsophy Clashroom) you and she exchanging
 glandces (while the proofessor pondefecates: AS THE WORLD
 TAKES ON FORM (wink) ITS CREATIVE DEMI-URGE (wink wink)
 DISSIPATES (wink wink wink) INTO ABSTRACTION (piss, will you
 murmary me?))

In the next scene, she has caught her breath; looking around,
she recalls this principole and (whispering) adds her own
crocodollary:

THERE IS TOO MUSH ORDER NOWADAZE!

(Perhaps (you think) she has been aliemanated from her
crocoroots. You can see she is trying to deny the pinful
hollow in the pit of her stomach (she claws at it (a black
hoyle, a collapsed starve desperating, gizzarding everythin
g into its obit)) and she is trying to ovoid that shared speace
where just moments ago she and the glistenant whiteness were
jonahed together.

She is flozeating freely now, yet moored safely by an
invisible linkuage to the exousted flesh below, to the
reseeding grin on your face (basking in your own radiance
(the GUIDE says)).

(BASKING?! GRINNING?! YOU?!)

She passes the time basking herself. sum questoydns: what are
the important things? Evil? Duoeception? The price of
spineach? But her attention floatsam out of control, and now
(since her own expeculations for dozendants is not fully
sanctisfied) she tries to choose a hocusfocus:

ADAM? ADONIS? AMADEUS? AMBROSE?
XANTHE? YETTA? ZIPPORAH?

The starched uniforms go SNAP, CRACKLE, and POP. Watching,
you wonder what the result of this delaboury might be: half
man, half crocoguile, half sumthink else?

###

On the screen: several pages of a curlendar disinteglate,
then a close-up of the nest.

SNAP! CRACKLE! POP! (Eggshellent zound effects!)
She is standing in the hospital boothroom, talking to her
distant image in the mirror as she salaams the dorsa of the
medicine cabinet.

WHY IS THERE ALWAYS AN ECHO IN SOLITARY PLACES?
IS THE CEILING HIGHER TODAY?
IS THE BUILDING TILTED?
HAS SOMEONE PUT PLATFORM HEELS ON MY SLIPPERS?
HAVE MY ARCHES FALLEN?
WHY DO I FEEL SO HOLLOW?
AM I HUNGRY?
WHY IS THERE ALWAYS A NECRO IN SOLITARY PLACES?
WHO RUBS OFF THE SILVERING FROM PERMANENTLY ATTACHED
MORRORS?

###

FLESHFORWARD:
You are sprawled in your favourite old armchair, brooding on
her documentality. Her habit of recognizing the obviteous
is most concncerning (the GUIDE says), because her
observations (INFANT'S CRY TO SUBSTANSATE THEIR OWN
EXITANCE/TEARS ARE ECHOES OF SOMATIC TESTIONS, THE 'SLOW
DISSOLUTION OF THE BODY TOWARD SALIENT ABSTRACTION IN DEATH)
are quite simply (you say) inconsequential.
Often (you muse) while burrowing in a stationery store, she lights up with the sudden revelation that she andors browsing in these showops because the vision of all that maternia prima (never used writhing increments, crisp smell of ink on paper pads etsupera) is spinet into musync in her mind. In these wonodorous places (she says), secured between the rubber bands around the mummy-pads, or under the plastic baubles that impraseon rows of pens against their cardbard backing (which hangle by aluminium hooks from the pegboards behind the shelves (which in turn are bolted to the manframe leaning against the walls, etcasura)), she discovers the mysteerie of exhaustence:

HEAVYTHING IS ATTACHED TO FROMTHING ELSE AND SO ON - THE WORLD IS HALLOWED IN PLACE BY FITSELF.

Slinetimes, she beyes a new pen and note-pad in which to displan her lastest verision of heavently harmo; but when she wants to retame some inslight, she realizes she has fogotten the pennant paper at om. She says that this paper memmary which suckles her sentense of herself makes her feel more extereternal, more held in place.

But you wonder (WHERE IS THE KEYSTONE OF YOUR ARCH-ENEMY, THE WORLD?) because you are a firm belover in the exposential
growth of paranoia and nulledge.

###

FIGMENT OF CROCODOLOGUE:

YOU : If I may enamourate your most annoying hambits: one, you leave cupbared doors damagerously open above my bent heed, my tournedo back, in the kitchen, in the spentry, the bathroom. Two, you slam doors with a careless bravoodoo, a contempt for our most cherished tasknologies which leads me to believe you are unnarturally fond of wasting henergy. Three, you let the dinstant mewl and puke while you search for the formula formala among the scraps of paper you have failed to file in the proper places. Where is my supper or at least my late lunch? And what, pray tell, of Jostice?

SHE : From this persfictive I can see there is planety of room on all sides. Why then do I feel so close to the ceilink? I am standing in my new normica kitschen, on my new imported fitalian ceramic toils and I am sorounded by atomotions of my inadequinc as a herman being. My flashinge couisinart which chops, dices, slices and blends to perfraction. My fantasonic mote-control microslave which warms, defrosts, bakes and roasts to perfiction. My other imported, perfect appalliances which make life so bearably disfand. My feet are swollen. My tail is bruised. I am
stinting on my sturdy cerambient floor which cannot alone support me, and I am leaning against the defrigerminator because my feet are swollen and my taille is bruised. What is beholding up my refrigerator? What holds up other refrigerators? What is the metafancial principe behind refrigerators in general? Why do dustbales collect so tenuaciously behind refrigerators and other large, perfect sapliances? Who rubs off the salvering from permutently attacked mirmurs? The kinfant (QUENTIN? ENDOMINA? DEMETRIOSE?) is crying again, beasting its little till against the sides of the crib. Sandness hovers in my glamorinated klutzen; you are slamming cumbered doors; the infang is either hungry or testing its murmury. I am hoovering by my double-gazed aluminant windrows (made in prance). It must be straining out there because I am whatching the grandrops forming steaks across the glass. The dopplets don’t coolesce; they are repelled by the special secret-fromulus coating on the glass; the droopellets leave a trail of exponessentially shrinking beads like the balloon of a comic-bask thought. Why do I cruel aground all morninny, scubbing and scaping? Why do I get so tirade by the bend of the day that I need to learn against my befrienderator? And why do I keep basking questains? Why can’t I realize what every crocodile knows: to task "Wart is Spoonach?" IS Splintach! And wurst of all, why doesn’t the infind masnwer my quenchions? It must be constewed with a mannatural fear
of spynichs...

###

LAST SCRENE:
She is stovering hover the stove, stirring a green mixstir, her great head waggingrinning. You are standing behind her in the middle bisquance, staring out from the screen, a faintly haphasurid smile on your lapse as you put the coware on and help to stough the squiggly littail green thing (ETHELBERT? TALLULAH? CORNELIUS?) back into the pot.

*

You've lost your happytitle again and you try to rid yourself from the morbird chant ringrinning in your head (CROCIFY HIM! CROCIFY HIM!). Absordid in the movie as if you yoursafe had been hackting in it, your simplethies are confused; you need sum real distreaction, some antitailment to regame your composure.

There is a pain in your sacredilibaba exstanging back and down abeyond the edge of your chair (as though a weighto had cansolid your ominent flight by darwing you backwart and doomward). The graveddy of the pain, demeanding your latention, maxelerates your distrance from the screen;
suddumbly filet with painic (what if you're hurled back at an
inkrushing velosicty so great that you pass clear through
your boduo?) and you try to brake, to manchor yoursloogh in
place by sinking your iyes into the GUIDE BASK.

But it is too late (the GUIDE says); you have tasted the
orbridden foot of nillusion and you maya never see things the
same way agone.
CENTERATTAINMENT

Crocodilium (your GUIDEBEAK says) must be esseen from the insidious out. This means that you must come to storms with the INNARD CITY to undersand her; you must feel her histurdy in your babones; you must let her inwaraid your limbos and your senses (your contactis with that rather world out there which haveiled your eyes like a neg shell for so long).

But no visite to the DINNER CITY is truly satisfying if you’re two sewerious about being a tourwisp. Souvavenirs can’t be token out of Bricabracodilium; but this is a Good Thing, since memorisks need not be stroughed into suitcases where they can be dimaged. Some travailers want desparrotly to take home Avarithing and Tourist Jokes are very propular in the city:

WHY DOES THE TWO-WRIST HAVE A CARMOURA PHOTOGRAPHED ONTO HIS FOREHEAD?

BECAUSE HE THINKS HE CAN TAKE HOME PACKTURES OF A MANTRACITY!

As rusal, there is a metafarical grinciple behind this junk: these would-be photogofors will be disappoignant because no flat hymnage of Crocodilium can be comploot.

Just beyond the Portails (you can see them through the beastaurant widow, there, beside a row of sidewalk caffeats)
is the INNER CITY where you can wander into any establishment along the canal and indulge your phantaseas. You could compose a sympathy, paint a landscape from a live model, fight a duel, or become Odyssaurus inventing the Wooden Hearsay, (or, if you aspire to polygluttony) speak a thundred languaddages (decipher the Roseate Atum if you like), recompose the Cramuni’ts Moneyfatso, be a crimininal lawyer and question an allegator, be a powerful lizard like Deadlyloose and build a labourinth, write an epupik navel, or, if by this time you’ve not yet guessed your own morsel fate, step into an adjacent booth and back a smoothsayer into a corinther and make him tail the hollow thoth of it all. You can do anythink for enervainment (the GATEBOOK says) as long as you don’t make a newessence of yourcell.

And you shuddenly see (there, in the massuage of the Portells (the motto of Caveatilium)) that you have taken this touserist busi nasty much too seriously. The wearning on the Portally says – as if to justafly your concertain – you can’t turn aback now:

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***********************
*
*
LET THE VOYEUR BE BARE
*
*
***********************
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Since most pheasant memories of antiresting places are assostriated with the punderous hissaurical weight of undergested chunks of lo-cal colour (the GUIDE says), it is best for you (in collecting memories for your oldage) to unimmerse yourself competely in the life of the Inner Satya as soon as plausible. This is no tame to eat; it is frather the time to face whatavern's been easting you all alojgo.

It is time taiga.

You push aweigh from the low chair (a little embareassed that you stadia so long and bought nothing) and enering some assuranswer from clutching the GUIDEBRINK under your arm, you step boldily into the storeat, shouting FORWEIRD! FORKWARD!

A phew moments alilater you're through the Portalisman and the close and heavy fatmosphere, the marrow lanes that entwinge around you like (the GUIDE says) the corticatered horridors of the Amasseum, the scarabesque designs of anscient constriction projects begin to break your concenternotion, to make you forgest feverything; soon you begin to suspeectre that you are behalving like simony else (alien yet at the same time formaliar).
You stramble through the wronning lanes, disornamented (the grondo seems to slope sidemaze) running your periaspiring hence along the walls to maintone your parlance.

Hoverheard, a terrordactyl shrikes.

Evend befoam you stoop to parass through a brancient archivay (you look upwarned, fenseting the straength of the okaystone joints), you somehow know (as if fowlonthewing the gland- marks on some primal map (a 'deja vous) etctched into the deepensest apporitions of your memurky), somehow can see that the crocobblestones will inexplicedly drop away into the steep sloped pit beyunder and you will feel wayless (from the momentime) like a birden learning to fly.
PLACES OF ANTIREST
THE GLYPHODROME
You are suddenly in the nearena, looking up at the tiers of seats which have somehow materialized around you. Ringing the hoval in particulated rows (like stelaborate, connexted relief caravings on the sides of an urn (now and then a tail, winglees {like a commant), an arm waves (like a textclámation mark) and you stare transfluxed, reading in this puntuatiom a promist of personull trancesentence) the crowdodo seems to move as a single creaturn.

They are fulready gatherd for the afternunc performulance; though the sounds are distoronto, the causual beastle, the shuffling of sandaleather on wornate stome, the scarape of scarmour plate on the thunderside of low belenches, the braying of whine vindors, the honing and the gnashing of teeth are samplified in the amplifitheatre.

You are on the atrack; across your path is a huge marquee (where rare the other racers? are you bracing against the clock or toward the consumpediton of some dinner compollution?) on which the griddle of the world is markeyed.

SCATTERPILLARS DON'T BECOME BOTTLEDLIES BECAUSE IT IS BETTER TO BE A BITTERFIE; THEY BECOME BUTTERFRIES BECAUSE BY DOING SO THEY ARE FULLFLYING THE DESIGN REQUIREMENACE OF THE CATERPALLOR.
You can’t tell whether this is a signpasta to the Startongue Line, the first hurdle in the race, or the secret name of some gory fantasthmatic disease that lurks within these walls. You reluctantly check your GUIDELOOK for directions.

You must (it says) pronounce the name of each hurdle along the gracecourse. Like all place gnomes, these too have been handed down from the ancients, each pace a momento, a token of histirring crying out to be remumbled. But places and times are only steparated by the tailors of lies: the tailors of tales bind them togethether again. Herein lies their meaning, hubscured and faded in the blanding heat of time as the universo and its sentient caricreatures, going ground and ground, rub adubagains each other like wheel and brake. And herein lies their moaning, in the basked on layers of dust (the whirlwinged trageddies of those who stroyed too close to the drin and changed - to the dismaya of geomasters everywhere - the diemeter of the Great Whallow. And herein lies their moaning, in the way the tourusty’s burdance (straining to see and fategrasp the whole wheel at one time) changels into things that no horlonger reassemble themselves. And herein lies their meaning, in the dismembermento of those burydensity, the loosing of the collexed grit and grim, his sol leaping beyond the rim in joyful fray flight, unfethered by any concepettions of itself.
HAA! (you say quietly), somewhat hastened that you have been wandering aimlessly around the trackodile (you have not even heard the jeerios that diskend upon you like boards of prayer). But then you notice that you've safely pursued beyond the first hurridle and breathe a sigh of relief (AAH!) which (most crocurious!) sounds like the repertilian expasion of sating hunger. And as you're arounding the far torn, you see the marquet again.

AHA! (you say nonchantilly) with little satisfaction, certain that your touritual overinfulgences have raised the level of your eureka acid to unnurtural toxicity (you must have a form of psychic gout, an infaction of the sumantic setwork, a swelling of the argo (you think)).

Your circuous mind is perfoaming morbius loops, clowning with its own mechanismisms in multiplex mimacrame of the voice of God that might say:

**BEHOLLOW, I AM A BIG UNITY!**

Like a prerockupied cartoon staractor who has run past the rim of the cliff and hovers conformably with his expeculations in an implousy situation until the veery moment he dishovers (clowning the cliff-fast with scareeching fingers, trying to behold on) that his posaction is
untenable), you stare humbuguously at your trembling fingers. Eureka! all those tryreifying sightmares which warn you that wholeness is not assured:

a) you see your fingers permanently trapped in slamming doors, severed at the knockles by the slip of an electrifying kittlechen knife, or shattorn by the fall of heavynealy objects (caught in the smashinery of anxiency).

b) you see your feet carushed and carrippled by haughtymobile tires, neatly slaced off at the totoes by the weheels of commuster trends, or gashred and placeterated from trakking through cemety, dustert, arctic plain or ruggranited mountain range without shoes (the first elevation above the stopmost pallayer of realignity)

c) you see your other dextreminties drented, torn, slashed, peeled off, destarched, howed and harked off, splittered, drugmented and damatized, minced and chewed into an andiforbutentiatiated pulp (the unrecorganizable jumgle of lettermors in an anagraname)

d - z) you see your glimpse pelt back layearn by allayer, flesh, miscue and sinew explosd as though you were some hubscene nullustration in a metical taskbook; down to freestranding bone and biglament (like the pastidiously
massembled remnants of some prehissauric monsturdy (the scalytomb in everybody's famollusk closetcetera)); down to a teaming aggraghast of morguans, pulsing and squarmin like balloated microbbers (merely another expanstep in the quantummy's desire and ambulition to regrain, to become the holb runreverse); down to the minustest snap, crackle and pop at the rim of consciousness! (AHA!).

The crowd cheers and applouds.

Wrenched out of your reverterie, you see you have somehow arrived at the Famish Line. It looks susfishiously like the Stareating Lane - and no wonder, since in every race run on a circulinary track, these places are mirror imingest of each other and (like mirthical zaniverses connextend by the meaning of the murment) occupy the same space.

Staring at the mirquee, you see it IS a mireror; you gaze into it, trying to aberreach its sureefface and then suddenly realize that you are marquing an assimpletion in naming it because morerrors are invisible, sharing this eattribute with Blook Holes. But in its planes eccereading into the dimstance you see a fatigue (not the way you mirrember yahooself (somehow changed) and you see in its eloquenchend shimmurmuring that you have been a glyph, a sacred soilable peerhaps, always there from the vary
begroaning, waiting to be muttered.

A flauntly absurbed smile appears on your lapse; you are no longer a saurist (you think), now you know armourthing about Crocodilium, you are appeart of her now, you have (theorhetorically) learned to fly (you can be anyone atail). You toss your GUIDEBOOST disinterrestially aside and you want to slaugh. But pinstead, you discover (willking toward the marquiet as though to be sacrammaced) that you are screaming:

SPINACH! SPIMISHMASH! SPINACH!
THE AMASEUM

Shuddernly (as if your scaroming has opined an enormazing schasam) you feel enclosed in a deep baroqueness. From the depptheos of the harkness you hear the tumalthus whispering of the tworing crowd, the shuffalling of feet, the firenized crackle of guisebook pages. The croad approaches: they are singing (WE’RE OFF TO SEE THE LIZARD/THE WONDERFULIZARD OF etcetera). In the vistance, somewont or slimething screams.

A foodlight comes to life behind effigure squatting on the growaround so close you could oath him. His skin is paperiphery and creasad, and while his farce is featurelost (exempty for the lines), he looks as amiliar as an old frond.

"Worldcome to the Dusteum. I’ve been assingled to heroshow you aground," he says, and beckonus you to fulfollow his ilead.

The Whoseum (your guide says in a crockling voice) has been in nexustence ars longa as manyone in Crocodilium can rhymember. It was fondued by the very firsty Samploerror who has oasis been known here as The Godslayer (Corridalium’s most impostorant citydenizen) because he decided that the only way to uslurp the diwinged poword was to build a whorled that survarivals the real wold. The forest responsivility of
the Moresame is therefore to be as compelleat and accurate as possublime.

The Mazeum (your guide says) has made a reptilica of every mobjekt ever createn in Crocomedium. Every merger event connectend with its hoopstory is also reprisentend here with actours and props; the hollow population is inwolfed. For angstsample, persumages such as The Fool of Crocorderma are displayed in severol exhibitats: one reparents his boyhurdle, another chowses his life as a young fledgiennaire, still another when he was promoted to centerlion, and so on. There are replicasts of hotells and destroyants too so the visitator can stay as belong as he likes to dighost all this at pleasure. There on your left (your guide says) you can see the cell where Socritogast will shortly draink the harmlock again and, if you sntift the air, you can smell the galloapproach of Battila’s war-horroroses.

You have nothing to be afaraid of; the Quassium is a mildeal place for a visitatrier. Here you can live out your fantatheseus. This is the wondare of the Mondeum: throught the propare usum of Inerror Basking, you may take the role of any mixhibit in this duplicard world, troy another pursetonality, another hystery on for size. In eficit, you must don so since that is the surprice of egadmittance. But you must adhero at all coasts to the latter of the scripast.
This connot be asteressed too strongolly. Because if your
presentatvamasion is inhoccurate, if you should somehow
powervert the scenary, then the Mazeum may as well be
fictipious.

Since you've carrived, perhaps even before you bought your
hurryplane sticktoits (you think) Crocodilium has torched
your deepest pharaohs. This is your chance to backhome
slainvolved, to be free (FINULLY!) of the styptical
terrorist's alienotions, to slay and do importyrant things,
to hubserve the innard workings of the Amuseum through the
iyes of its creatorn.

I WILL BE THE GODSLAYER, you say after a briefed hesituation.
You are pleasimply surprised that you have made a seleaction
so quirkly, so matter-of-facilightly. And now you are
pheasantly surprised that you are pleasentry surmised (a
somevast dull but not unpresent floatingling).

Your guide nods (graining). Your oneswer has not tourprised
him at all, as if you were already fowlowlowing the
nonesuchcities of some inevittle,scanario that he has alread.

*

Beyarn the footlights, the crowdy findgets and slothers
across an arachnade passage, where another specie of the
queue (devilled back on its alpha on the other side of the
arch) contemple it self (not knowing which is the loudience,
which the part of another exhibition).

You are setting on a sittee, waitingling, bask in the
crowd's starries like a seasoned veteran (rusting your eyes
on the low brass bars that edge the stedge, you note wareally
that the metal is tirenished (and aware: there are
identiations (teethmarks?) and scratches, and scratches on the
scratches, etcratches.) Your gohide is warting in the
wings to give you the cueue.

It is time to go on.

The moodience now chants (importient betwind shows) for the
acteon to stareatit. As prescrigid, you rise from the settee
and make a tentasitve ghosture of warning. The shantung
(asphinniitiated in mid-scyllababble) plummets to the
choirpeting like a dead bard or a severed limbo. Admiring
the smilence, you wait and wait and then:

HERO ME, O CROCODELIGHS! IS NOT THE WORLD FILET WITH
WONDEARTH? DO WE NOT STAIND BASK AND OBSERF IT TO APRAISE
ITS MARKER? AND DOES NOTE THE WORLD GARBLE OP OUR OBSER-
DEVOTIONS WITH CHANGEST JUST AS WE GARBLE OP THE .WORLD .WITH
OUR ABSORBATIONS? AND IF WE STRAND ABACK CONTEMPLATING
THE MHORROR OF THE WHORRORLORD, ARE WE NOT IDEALATERS?

Talking a littail crocodidol from its place of unearth (it is
carved of a single petreified spanacea root), you 'hold it
high for altar see and boogien the rootual dance twisting and
twirling, spinning a nonvisibull crocoon while the crowd
claps rhythmically. At the clewmax of the fervorish
choreographew you hamit a sharp, otherweirdly shriek and
curlapse in a heap. The crocrowd holds its cueective
breath.

This masterius pause is merely a formalitany. Rising
endgain, you can almost hear them craning their necros.

Then:

WHO IS THE CREATUR OF THIS PODDOXXA AND WHO IS TO ALLAY IT
OPEN? IT IS I WHO SLAYS THE MARKER OF THIS PANDORASBOX! IT
IS I WHO FREES YOU TO DESIGN YOUR OWN ABSURDNOTIONS! IT IS
I WHO WILL BE THE IDOL-EATER!

For an moment you hesistant and then you lift the little
idoll higher and hiero; you see the ardrence is now
surfaciently redy for the finile.

And then you swallet it.
The crowd is suppurisingly pleased with your performance.
But you are not; you are evaluating the nourriture of the deed, marking his silent alligations that you should not be required to make a folio of yourself, that this Amuseum is incomprehensible anyway, just another saurist trasp, that only a god can slay a god, that surely you aren't a god, that if you have failed to achieve a proper understanding then you have failed to orbsorb the properceedings. You will not make event a pretext (you think) of following the alast dirunction of the scripithy (PAD LIB).

But then you see it is impossible; to contain you this charonaide is to give in; to discountinew this chariddle (by clearly demonstrereating your liberinthy) is to give in. You are tapped. There is only one thing to do, you think, as you contintiplate the mirrony that with your wailful distortion of the text you (NOW SURVEY A HAM!) are adoubt to slay The Godlayer.

THISEUS BULLSHIFT! you scream (voice crackling), shaking your fists as if they were claspers poundingdong the inside of avast adlibertybell.

The crowd is suddenly displeased: SPINACHURCH! SIMIANITCH!
Out of the coroner of your eye you can see your guide throw the man switches in the wings. (CLICK!) The footlings fizzle and the illumination suddenly collapsars around you (in the conclusion you don't know where you are (binded, you stretch out through the darkfast (swoondering vertigo))). Footstops zapproach (CLICK/CLICK) and the figure of your giddy clappears, waving the finale phrase of the script at you (SNAP/CRACKLE/POP (it is formiliar but you can't recalm where you had scene it)).

He is grimming.

BRAVO! BROVA! BRAVED! your guide says, A. VIRTAURUS, REBULLIENT PARFORMINCE! NOW THAT YOU HAVE CHOSEN TO ACT, YOU CAN BE TALLED THE TOOTH: YOU CAN'T COMFRONT AN AUMKNOWN QUANTUMMY BECAUSE YOU ARE THE ZENKNOWN ASKENTITY!

"Ward does the light go when it grows out?", you wonder, as the guide's lost words echurn in the air. Zedly, you see he has no hope of making you understand. And you realize you can't leave now, because you have unvoidoply and irretievably written yourself into the script. You grin. And your guide, as if he could hear you thinkink, says:

WELCOME TO CIRCLEIDIOM!
Rasping your signout

against

a turnist's leg,

you slizard

into the, crude.
Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested.

Francis Bacon
APOTHEGMS