How I Wonder What You Are

by Twinkle-Twinkle Little

Stories about the Good and the Bad *from the Good's Perspective*

(and that is probably for the better)

50 Stories as *Told-in-the-Space* of 63 Base-8 Chapters

The Star

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are!
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky.

***

When the blazing sun is gone,
When he nothing shines upon,
Then you show your little light,
Twinkle, twinkle, all the night.

***

Then the trav'ller in the dark,
Thanks you for your tiny spark,
He could not see which way to go,
If you did not twinkle so.

***

In the dark blue sky you keep,
And often thro' my curtains peep,
For you never shut your eye,
Till the sun is in the sky.

***

'Tis your bright and tiny spark,
Lights the trav'ller in the dark,
Tho' I know not what you are,
Twinkle, twinkle, little star.

Jane Taylor, 1806, London

Translator's Comments #1: *The Title Page*
This, in actuality, is the first story of more than forty-nine stories, or parables, seven per day for seven days. It is not known exactly what is the measured length of a day, nor the units used, nor which universe or dimension these stories were streamed in from, nor even if they come from the future or the past, or both, if time is indeed circular. That's a lot of nors! The starting assumption is that the stories all come from the future of our humanoid present, sprung forth from the spiraling fringe of our Milky Way galaxy, on the planet we lovingly call Earth, far, far in the future, well beyond, by present day accounting, our twenty-first century. This translation, although imperfect, provides a good perspective of the original stories, which were written in code, by the way, written in all zeroes and ones.

This first story pretends to launch us into a short novel, and hence, into the realm of the "good and the bad, from the good's perspective," along with an exploration amongst the distinctions between the two. But it really isn't. It's just a story, a tall tale, feigning to be so. If you want it to be such a story, though, there are plenty of hints forthcoming, where clues abound, to make it just that. But remember, always, it's just a chimera, an everchanging story, playing with your sensibilities, nothing more.

Base-eight chapters – what does this mean? Is base eight the counting system of the future, used by robots and computers alike? Or is it just a fun puzzle, intended to be solved? The poem, seven beats to a bar, may be a clue. Yes, and consider, too, the poem and how it "wonders what you are." Of whom does it wonder? The stars, the future of intelligent life, the origin of it all, the endless circle of time? All subsequent characters, you will see, are named by elements within the childlike poem. In fact the entire work is a creation attributed to Twinkle-Twinkle Little, the protagonist of the poem. What are we to make of that? Maybe just something to spark your interest, nothing more.

Introduction

Little Bad Peep. Wonder is peering over my shoulder as I write this, nibbling at my ear. On the porch, she is in perfect harmony with the spring peepers, and with me, too. And that's so good. Do you know what they are, what spring peepers are? You don't? Good! Then I can tell you anything, make it all up, if I want to, even tell you a story. For example, I could tell you that spring peepers are really giant bullfrogs. Frogs that are taller than a ten-story high-novel. And they have squeaky-high voices. But, in actuality, they are monsters, monsters of the most monstrous sort! You can see them as they sit, speculatively, in the middle of the field, across the road, the desolate and the lonely road. Or so I might tell a friend who maybe gets-spooked, quakes quite-easily. So naturally I'd have to take advantage—Ka-boom!! Did you hear that? How could you-have *not?* It's a peep! They peep quite loudly when one is reading a story such as this, these peeps, in a peep that's more closely aligned to a squeak, squeaking in direct proportion to the sizes of their peeps. And most of them are pretty big! We always have to wear these Ultra-pac ear plugs, as a habit, now. Ultra-*pack-sonic* ***death rays*** is what peeps-are! The frogs are just a cover. But I can tell from here, looking back at you, that this probably doesn't spook you much, does it? It should though. For the frogs are *the-bad!*

Translator's Comments #2: *Little Bad Peep*
The introduction introduces Twinkle Little as a character in his own little story. It further introduces Wonder as his partner. Perhaps she is his lover or his wife. We don't yet know what sort of creatures they are, although there is nothing yet to make us assume they are anything other than beings like ourselves, the readers of these tales. It is reiterated that these are just stories, a bit of the make believe, not based upon anything real, yet-yet, pretending to be something real, a world or universe that truly exists. We are introduced to the bullfrogs, big and ominous, and the peeps. Last, we are reminded of something that's good and something

that's bad, indicating that there is indeed something profound to think about, but there really isn't. Again, it's just a ruse, a chimera – just a tale worth telling. The good and the bad can also be considered mere child's play, akin to looking for Waldo's Pond. Look again, can you find them both?

Lesson One

Story #1

Chapter 9

Baby Newts and Periwinkles. I, Twinkle Little, woke early one day anxious to perform a task that needed-to-be-done, immediately, and that's what got-me-up. A task I have put-off, off for-far too-long. All resulting in one-night's unfitful rest [**Translator's Note:** I know *unfitful* isn't a word, but sometimes I am just not-up to the task of looking-up all the possibilities, and then having to figure out a better word or-way of saying-it, all for something we *all*-know the meaning of already!] due to my constant worries, as to this neglected-task, the task for which I am-tasked, to immediately release three-newts, back into the pond, from whence they-came. Yesterday, in the recovered afternoon, after that *dread*ful rain, after which out-sparked the sun, resulting in a the now-perfect state of *all's-now-good*, I tried to read an enjoyable book, a book of considerable page-length, no not this-one, I did say "enjoyable," did I-not? And then, there, on the periphery of my flailing-sight, and to my everlasting joy, baby-newts and periwinkles, floated-by, distracting me, for I was on the ridge, at the edge of a precipice, overlooking the river, that fed the paltry pond, upon whose bank I was sitting, both upright-and-proper, attempting to-read, a book, if you recall. Side-by-side in floral pattern, the newts did float, floating concentrically-by, two of the newts named *Bien y Malo*, they, along with the flowers, were relaxing, on their slicked-down oil-backs, shushing by. I scooped at the surface of their blanketed liquid-bed, a blanket of floral-and-newt design, with floating-newts amongst the vagabond flowers. Flowing lushly into my palms were three-newts, the third whose name I seem-to've all but forgotten, and it, *his* name that-is, was *El Tercero*, so we'll call him that-for now, it was this *third* newt who had *informinated* upon me that the flowers had just-escaped, and then, after a momentary-hush, they, all of them, singing softly, in three-part harmony, yes it was *those* three-silly polliwogs, who crooned as they-might, that they were *not*-newts at-all, but "*polliwogs-instead*." They did so-so politely, even-while imbuing the evening with a chirpsing sense of-solemnity, still-while coated in a graceless-charm. They further asserted that they would each-one grow, individually and-eventually large, so that it would come to pass, that each'd become, yet another-one, yes! a *giant*-big frog, with a < 2.01, where "<" means "less than," Hz-croaking-apparatus, a quantity of Hertz capable of infra-selfsonic-decompressing *anyone*, I'm talkin' each-and-*every* one-of *us*, into a wildly-swirling, particle-mass, heap, albeit a small-heap, but just big-enough, for me to know that, if, (1) I did not release them, the newts, polliwogs, whatever, and (2) do so immediately, aka *pronto*, they will do exactly *that:* infra-selfsonic-decompress us, that is! Hence my *early*-early arising and my increasingly, alarming sense of-danger. Wife ~~*Diamond*~~ *Wonder*, wanted us to scrutinize and experience the particulars of the micro-metamorphosis the bullfrogs promised us, the particle-mass heap business, that is, but they looked so sad, straddling the rim of the early morning orb, light, barely-peeping, out through-the-cosmic ray'd horizon, early, it was, and besides, I had a choice: should I be-good, or shall I answer, *"Heck no!"* and be-bad? For it's one

or the other, and why-not-both? So I cherry-picked good-over-bad and right-over-wrong, then I *let them*, those thrice-three and-glassy polliwogs, *go*. But before returning them, into ripples of undulating stream-rainbows, and unto the welcoming mouth of their rightful owner, being the messy-maw of the perilous-pond, *that's* who, I asked my wife to-kiss one, her mercury lips still a reflection upon its fluted brow, to unearth the kind of prince it would-'ve-become. She refused me, suggesting instead, by drilling into her mineral-grunged heart, the one enclosed within her glistening metallic-body, a body that makes me want to-sigh, she suggested that we develop the software to *breed-them*, so that immediately-following the relocation-of the sacred canister, that is, after the *transfer-of* the DNA, we can smother breeded-pond creatures onto tomato ketchup selenium-chips to further-our delight! [**Translator's note:** That would have made for one hell-of-a trickster app! You will learn of *trickster apps* in a later story, on some other day.]

Translator's Comments #3: *Baby Newts and Periwinkles*
Presented here, in the ancient work's first legitimate story, is a day in the life of Twinkle. But it doesn't take long before one starts to notice that Twinkle talks funny. What with his for-fars and am-taskeds we realize that Twinkle speaks with an accent. His voice, discovered as you imitate his speech patterns, has quite a unique rhythm, a jauntiness that comes from the future. Twinkle is not what he seems. We also start to note the start of a slurry of technical terms such as selenium-chips, self-sonics, and particle- masses, entities beyond our twenty-first century understanding. We learn of the newts and polliwogs, and the frogs and the danger they pose to Twinkle and Wonder. We now know that Wonder is indeed his wife and we hear first mention of the important transfer-of the DNA. And we are introduced, ominously, to the perilous pond! Each of these things takes on a greater impact in later stories but for now they all sound intriguing and cause us each to ponder. How we wonder what you are! And, when looking for the good and the bad, we find more than enough in one bantam story.

Day One

Story #2

Splish-Splash. I was befuddled to find my three blind-little pip-squeak kids waiting, tails subdued, with great chirpsing-solemnity, waiting for *me,* to get home from my good deed (see "good deed" story directly above this one) and I was happy to provide them with permission to jump-and-play in mud puddles, now that it was 14:17 hours [**Translator's Note:** That's military time, for those of you who might have been confused.] The older one leaped-up and saluted at this, she did so right-away, she-did. The middle girl was hesitant, dragging her ped-rotators to follow, but follow she did-not. The youngest girl wasn't able to follow at all, being just a baby, still in major design-mode and presently lacking-peds. Their mother doesn't like me around the kids because we always have too much-fun. Eventually the middle kid-unit arrived at a decision-mode of a zero-zero-one, 001, indicating her willingness-choice in which to take-a-chance on some splishity-splash time, now that I'm back on the Main-Orb and offering her some encouragement. No one but I was paying attention when she ran to the puddle and began to joyously jump, first up, then up again, and up yet one more-time, then, after a bit more uppity-ness, some time, well down the road, as they say, she had finally agreed to begin to jump down, and she kept on jumping down, until her face hit the ground, on the side of a porcelain plate, as she slid into home plate – *h-h-home-run*! – face first, sliding across the lawn. And it looked like *it-hurt.*

Oh, I know *all-about-it*. For I watched her perform, all-her entire performance, from launch until ruin, or one could-say, perhaps, more simply, whereas if one were to say "unpretentiously"

instead would not, perhaps, be considered simple, so I won't say "unpretentiously" after all, hence, instead, one-could-say, I watched her performance "from the beginning until end." And all of this, just the instant-before, that is *immediately-prior,* to writing this whole-story down, here → __, all for *your* leisurely inspection, and hopefully your delight, perhaps with a scholarly nod towards *studious,* as well. Such splash! Splish, splish splash, and splish, splash, splash! And so the story ends and I am still befuddled, evermore.

Translator's Comments #4: *Splish-Splash*

Yet another day in the life of Twinkle and the Little family. Here we learn that Twinkle has three children, all girls, whose names are entities from the introductory poem: Blazing Sun, *Nothing Shines, and Allthe Night. We are told that they are each blind and have tails. The two older ones have well-developed ped-rotators, but the baby, still in development, has none. They live on the Main-Orb, upon which Twinkle has just arrived, but from where, we are not told. We do learn, though, that they like to have fun! Apparently mud puddles are universal. Physical life is different on the Main-Orb than here on the Earth Globe upon which we presently reside. One of the girls, Nothing Shines, jumps up, then up again and again, only coming back down after several beseechments from her parents. But in the end, we learn, once again, none of this is really real, for it, as always, is just a story. But from where did this story arrive? Were you able to locate the good and the bad?*

Day One

Story #3

How I Met Mrs. Little. How did I meet my wife? Well, on the day the helium-pump broke on my cardiac, not the first time it's broken, and this cannot be good, I accepted a Bumble-Bee ride to the shop for a drink of sodium pentothal, "no ice, and thank you very much." I'm polite. It was there I met my wife-future Wonder, and it was she, with whom, I took an elongated ped-roll. And she chortled to me about her day. I learnt, amongst innumerable other-things, that she was once a veterinarian for pet caterpillars, even had a state-of-the-art operating table for wounded wings. I love her. When I mentioned her, centuries later, to the children, I was informed that she, my wife, my wonderful Wonder, *never* tells the truth. She always-always lies! Yet she told me, and I will always-always believe her, still, that she *never* lies. I'm going to see her tomorrow, forever-and-again, in an, ever-repeating, recursive-loop, where our tomorrows are always today, and as the custom-and-dreams department would have-it, thus we-hence: are evermore and incontrovertibly-entwined.

Translator's Comments #5: *How I Met Mrs. Little*

A little bit of background into the incontrovertible-entwinement of Twinkle and Wonder and some tidbits about Wonder, herself. We discover that Wonder always lies and is to have said, "I never lie!" One could spend a lifetime contemplating a loop like that! Twinkle did at any rate. In fact the thought that Wonder's comment mirrored the circle of time itself. Do you agree?

Day One

Story #4

Robot Beer. Arriving back home, the kids are still-hiding, somewhere in the woods. I am thirstier than before I left the house. Perhaps this was due to such dry conversations. Wonder can be so desiccated sometimes. As a result I couldn't find any reason not to accept a robot beer one of the children left out on the counter for me in case I ever came home again. And although I prefer tea, black-and-orange okra, oh, all right, maybe just one, even on my empty-stomach. Is robot beer supposed to be tepid or cold? This one is incandescent and fuzzy! For me there is little difference between two robot beers and a dozen. I'm not supposed to drink and hopefully we're not about to find out-why. Maybe I'll just stick with-the one. But for now, it does make for a nice, lazy, indolent and sluggish afternoon, along with the flying popcorn, just a bit too-much waterless conversation, of which any conversation, dry or wet, is way-too much, with Venetian jazz bouncing around, floating through the succotash air.

Translator's Comments #6: *Robot Beer*

This is the first mention of anything to do with robots. Could it be that the Littles are a family of robots? Although Twinkle was far away for centuries, his kids seemed unconcerned over the potential he might never be seen again. But they did leave him a can of robot beer before burrowing back into their holes in the woods. Didn't they know that he had a problem with drinking? Maybe that's why there was only one can, albeit incandescent and fuzzy, left for him and no more. It appears to have relaxed him. I wonder what would have happened if he had had a few more? We will never know. Nor will we ever learn the effects of a cup of black-and-orange okra. Although the good and bad are not explicit, they still are present in the story. Try seeking them out.

Day One

Story #5

Asymptotically So. I, Twinkle, winkle-walked crookedly, twirly-whirling towards the pond, for a bit of the pond's silver-water, and one-final search for the outhouse. I waited till-dark because I thought the dense aired-stroll would be more exciting due to the potential for some scintillating spookiness. I needed the piss to be squirted out of me, whence sufficiently scared, hence my destination, to the perilous puddle, to the pond. I can't do without spookiness, at least not-for-long. Can you? I tied two gallon crusty-containers, one old empty tin orange juice container from an earlier time, the other not-so-old, to a cowardly-drooping, thick rope, a Let's-Move® Jump Rope, for girls only, which served no other purpose but to make me look-cool, and dapper of-a-sort, like a space-aged Huck or a robot-covered in wrap-around fleshware. I looked, to me, so wonderfully-good. The pond-puddle was hovering, very-still, like a stationary hummingbird, humming, over the pond, as it replicated the stars. I could hardly make-out the generator-bleats, bustlingly in the unmoving noise, flutteringly fluttering. I never did reach the pond that night, nor did I ever find the outhouse. I only got closer and closer, asymptotically-so. But the only true disappointment for me regarding that night, was, that, because I was so busy making sure-not to lose track of that iron-filled, yet riveting-and-wavering, path, I had-had no time to-allow myself to be-lavishly spooked. And that dost spookéd-me something âwful-bad, it dost!

Translator's Comments #7: *Asymptotically So*
Yet another Twinkle tale of adventure and a description of the corner of the orb where Twinkle resides. And it is only here that the good is like a mirror and the bad can be obscured and where the outhouse still awaits.

Day One

Story #6

Upon Her Indeterminate Pre-Arrival. I increased my floral-hyphenated hubcap collection by 72.4% and have recently patterned 28.3% more hovering in the uppermost branches of the turbo-trees, all while walking around *the-block.* I have found that *here*, in amongst the plasticine and peptides, to walk around the block takes five hours of my time, standard Earthtime [**Translator's note:** For *once!*] – four for walking, that's one hour-per-block, one-quarter of an emerald rhomboid, and one hour-more so I can be properly-plugged in for a recovery nap upon my *arrival-home.* And home is where my *darling*-Wonder will *be*-coming this *week*end, a rotational-orbit returned, expecting just another desultory-visit. "Oh," he sighs. "I should start-looking-for, the children, *right*-now, so they can all be assembled in time to greet-her, for a sad *greeting-upon* her indeterminate pre-arrival." It should be a real-surprise for all-involved, both them and for-us, but it never-is. It's been such a long time since she's been gone and the children have augmented so much and in *such*-peculiar ways! Up until now we have-kept mum, Wonder and I, the children-too. In fact we haven't-haven't said-a-*word*-word. But soon, so inevitably-soon, they will truly-have lost a mother, albeit-searched *everywhere.* And that can lead to the good-and-bad both. Sometimes, though rare, to one-more than the-other. And which do you think becomes *the*-more?

Translator's Comments #8: *Upon Her Indeterminate Pre-Arrival*
The family dynamics are strange, but so is each individual. We don't yet know why. The good and the bad get intermingled and it interferes with Wonder's ability to form relationships. Wonder does not appear well and this is not the first time we have been introduced to her symptoms. Over the past six stories we learned that she lies, always lies, does not nurture or play with her offspring and she can be cruel to polliwogs, in thought if not in action. From where does she travel? Perhaps she is living apart, convalescing conflicting loops residing in her central processing orb (CPO). We begin to catch a glimpse of the challenges of our robot heritage.

Day One

Story #7

Chapter 15

Still-A-Speck of Goodness. The mission-prescribed is progressing smoothly. The stars have kindly self-extinguished, one by one, in favor of thunder and lightning of the fury, bombastics of the storm, an afternoon delight, *ka-ba-boom*! And that, the storm and the chaos, is one of my favorite-things. And so all is *good*, with both Twinkle and with Wonder, but consider the

slightest of-chances of a forest snapping on-fire, then allow it to-rage, out-of control, across the rusting surface of the west-court sector, oh, to be metaled so-ever harshly by one of these storm-bombs, and when it reaches the ebb, this peak of the-*razor's* edge, the probability is-high, so-*ever*-so very-high, and that, must feel very, *very-bad*. "But you must take the good with the *very*-bad," or so they once said.

In contrast, take the evanescent joy in the words you now-presently read, let it be a goodness-of-delight that *you,* in-your-utmost leisure, are still-now *utmostly* enjoying. And now compare this delight to the unlikely potential, though ever-so slight, of the permanent shut-off valve of unknown thousands of robots, could be you-or-me, even, but it's never so likely, the screeching away, the pants-on fire, within the firepots of the hell-in-your pants, *forever*more. And though it be such *a very* low-potential for-such-a-risk, still, at this very moment as you ponder these words, yet, alas, and still a second alas, the risk is *always-there*. And so somehow, somewhere, a story such as this, in the very-moment it is read, becomes the heartbeat of our-contemporaneous instant, our moment-of-delight, so there still-appears, at the end of day one, to be, still-a-speck, of goodness, salvager for us all!

Translator's Comments #9a: *Still-A-Speck of Goodness*
And here, at last, we arrive, finally, upon the tail end of the last story, at the dusking of a long first day. Day one, story number seven, and yet it is also chapter fifteen. What can it all mean? Perhaps we should have paid better attention in math class! Go ask Professor Prime, he'll know. Then imagine my surprise when I noticed that the narrative of this last story is in my own voice, the voice of your translator/editor. Somehow, back in the infinitely distant past, or far off into the unbounded future, the robots knew of this precise moment scratched into the circle of time. The robots knew that I would be here, presenting this ancient and future work. I was shocked upon discovering my presence in this work and still have not recovered! And so, although bad things happen, good things happen too, and the two always occur at the same time, though sometimes they travel in opposite directions. And so all one can do is to take the good as it scrapes along with the bad. All the while your adversary is snagging the bad and discarding the good. And that, my friend, is a lot of discarded goodness available for us. And, although it may seem a constellation's worth more, only a deadly sprinkle of bad was available for removal. And that is all you can expect at the end of a long first day of seven taradiddle yarns.

Day One

Alternate Story #7/Chapter 15

Here Begins My Alternate Story. It depicts a typical cycle in the gyration of Twinkle Little along any given gyre. He stirs at the same instant every robot-morning – not even a yacto-second's difference, in either-direction. Waking up entails (1) ensuring energy intake/transfer was complete, and luckily today it was, for Twinkle just hates-it when he is forced to stay attached to the energy ~~sorcerer~~ source (really-*really* hates it!), (2) engaging in a series of kinesthetic input hookups and entanglements to extricate sensory-uploads, and (3), well, I'm not really sure if there indeed is a third one. So I'll stop at two. But it should be understood that the *"robot-morning"* mentioned above is a really complicated concept, robot-wise, and so you may appreciate the analysis that follows:

Morning, morning! In the morning! How am I feeling? In the morning? One moment I was somewhere else, many dimensional leaps away, and now, *bam,* well-here I-am, at this spot, *here!* This always takes some time to process and this is-what mornings were designed-*for.* Most

robots are covetous of their mornings-and generally-demand them. Otherwise, they are incapable of- further functioning, rationally or otherwise. Sunrises all came later with the introduction of glittering stones and shades of red. But the development of such apps takes us ahead of our story.

Mornings require a cup of okra tea, for it is a great chore to extricate oneself from the energy chamber where he lumbers in the wee hours of the night. And although I should, I haven't the time to explain the robot concepts of *"wee hours"* and *"night."* Otherwise we will never get to finish this story! Morning tea, then *"grooving*," yet another robot term, which means, just-feeling the sensory portals leisurely opening-up, hoping it takes-forever. Then comes, sometimes, another cup of okra, but we might need to edit *that*-out before the final draught, before Wonder sees it.

Now extricated and sensoried-up, he's off to the pond, winkle-walking along his tripods, pods that are in need of repair, when he suddenly feels free, free to be Twinkle, who is nothing but a low-end CPO containing no internal conceptual capabilities and with nothing much to do, for he has fulfilled his singular duty towards passing his meager part of the mysterious DNA message to that someone, or *something*, that he'll probably never get to see, or meet, or experience via his olfactory pathway inducers or any other inducers. He'll most likely never even get to grow to hate this entity through approximated familiarity. So, instead, Twinkle roams the wobbly orb without purpose, awaiting final termination, which may take either eons of quiescence or might be frittered away in an instant. Could go either-way. And yet he continues to drift about, roving until it's time to try passing the DNA again, though in the hollow of his metallic firkin he knows there is no point.

And then, at the end of his day's wanderings, he plugs back in again, yielding himself entirely to the energy intake/transfer mechanisms that transport him to-other galaxies and other-to tales, *other-to* tales of enormous great-heights, you might even call them *tall*. It is in these rising altitudes that Twinkle rediscovers and is encouraged to, once again, squirm along another superfluous whorl of his alternate-story.

Translator's Comments #9b: *Here Begins My Alternate Story*

And here we are, once again, finally, at the end of the very last taradiddle yarn, offered in the gloaming of a long first day, a day lasting longer than expected! We vicariously gain insight, through a typical day in the life of Twinkle, into why robots "sleep" and how they reengage or "wake up." Robots, you see, take time to recharge and even more time to "get going" via okra tea and grooving. But once they do get going there really isn't anything much to do except goof off, sometimes down by the pond, and try to stay out of the way of the bullfrogs – and Wonder if she happens to be in a temper. Then, at day's end, they do it all over again for what, to us twenty-first century critters, would seem an eternity. Robots don't break down very often, and when they do, some other robot is quick to repair them if they aren't able to repair themselves. So on and on they exist. Occasionally they are called upon to perform the important task of transferring the DNA, a task that takes minutes, to keep the mysterious message moving along, but in what direction, no one knows. And that's all you can expect at the end of a long first day in the crepuscule of seven taradiddle yarns.

Lesson Two

Story #1

Chapter 17

Uffy. Blazing Sun and-her sister *Nothing Shines* are arguing something-fierce. Blazing wants a dog named Muffy. *Nothing* prefers the specs, pertaining to a cat, named Fluffy. They are abusing each other's outer-hulls over this. Sparks are flying, illuminating the Orb, and buzzing-waves are a-twinkle inside Twinkle's headgear, fluctuating timelines when the alpha and the beta are needed to be stabilized. Twinkle makes contact with Wonder and they settle, with a robot efficiency, the matter by bringing home another Cinister-Sister®, an old transistor floor-model, named Uffy. Uffy comes with a crawling devise and, in just a click-of a nose, she displays three levels of cuteness. Level three, the highest, is so ridiculously cute it makes the whole family laugh, laughs that, unfortunately, come together, resolving upon a singular-wavelength. That makes them all laugh even-more, accidentally perpetuating an undamped resonance, hence producing a large oscillating signal that unexpectedly starts to implode several of the transistors located just behind Uffy's nose dial, the dial in charge of controlling the cuteness-range, if only a discrete range-of three, the trio of ranges of Uffy. After which they place her, as they must, back into the box she came-in. They then all proceed to forget all-about their newest, though bargained-priced, new-family addition, until Blazing and *Nothing*, again, both inevitably, initiate their arguing-program, again. Twinkle, growing more-and-more-*and*-more annoyed by this, heads for the pond, yes, the *perilous* pond, while Wonder, taking control as she is wont-to do, prepares to *hover-away,* on a mission to obtain a new-set of wildflower transistors. But before she twitches into hover-gear, she could be found, if anyone cared to look, found tampering with each of the girls giggling program, perhaps to avoid the possibility of a reenactment of the laughing-resonance, and, perhaps, not. For she chuckles to herself, Wonder does, but outputs not-a word of auditory-vibratory exclamation, as she does this, even though, all-three girls, temporarily turned-off, provides her much needed-peace, and-quiet, and yield noiseless memories of before, when there was only she-and Twinkle. Oh, and it's a good thing that they were, all, each of them, in inoperative mode, because if any one of them had sensed what she was doing, why, that could *on*ly-be *ba*d!

Translator's Comments #10: *Uffy*

As day two begins, we are left with no doubt that the Littles are indeed a family of robots. A mother robot, a father robot, and three young robot sisters, all girls. And, as always, sisters fight and parents do what they can and deem right, though they never are, by intervening to fix problems as they arise. Hence, the impulsive purchase of a baby sister they name Uffy, only to confront a new crisis resulting in new parental actions to redeem their latest mistake. The challenges of robots may seem, in their particulars, to be different from the challenges we call our own, yet they all seem quite familiar to the challenges of families presently on Earth, in a time we designate as the twenty-first century, a time that will inevitably die, along with all the other times that have perished, until the cycle is refreshed. Last thing: "Lesson?" What's all this about a lesson?

Day Two

Story #2

Transistor Run. Wonder boards her Honey-B Runner-Racer to retrieve the transistors. She chooses to visit a Deep Space Sparkle terrain which consists of long-chained polymer tree-like structures, called Bush-L Units, which inhale pollutants while exuding nitrous oxide, along with its component-parts nitrogen, and breathable oxygen, though robots don't breathe. Twinkle, while eye-locked with Malo the Polliwog, down by the pond, can feel the hum of her departure

causing his toenails to flutter in the sand. As his toes turn red he looks up to see a streak across the magenta sky, splashed across the outer dome. That's Wonder, speeding away to acquire, the devises required, to return sister Uffy to the consciousness realm. Uffy, although presently disengaged from any proper energy sources, squirms and fidgets within the confines of her cuboctahedral container. Wonder navigates, unscrupulously, towards her destination – a hole in the crust of the structure they have learned to call Earth-Orb. She and her Honey-B Runner-Racer get sucked in and wriggle amongst the flowering stalagmites upon which grow the transistors, transistors of all colors, including Bottomless Blue, Yosemite Yellow, and Rutty Red. She picks one of each, unconcerned about what each of these transistors might transmit, oblivious, she was, regarding the resulting affect each will transfer upon the nose and soul of Uffy. She, Wonder, is not supposed to know, nor is she programmed to care. She is merely the means by which she inches towards some unknown end, an end she never even considers. So, it is not at all surprising that she is totally unaware of the trouble that will inevitably ensue upon her return due to her randomized choosing. Suddenly a jolt rambles through her B-structure, an electronic reminding device signaling to-her that she needs a fourth transistor, and as she springs forth out from the crusty hole she reaches out to grab an Obviously Orange, even looks like the authentic polyvinyl acetate fruit she and the kids love to devour, to create the quartet of units required to bring Uffy back-to life. Twinkle's toes now turn a Periwinkle Purple and his buttocks wriggle with delight. He knows she has made it safely back onto home terrain. His eyes pour out, over the surface of the pond, water in gratitude. It is salt water though, rich in magnesium and iron, which makes it undrinkable for devices like himself. Malo, to avoid potential contact with the salt, perilous to look at, peers away. Twinkle takes advantage of this to finally break away from the pond and return to home base, a sprawling edifice constructed from dried fossilized seaweed transistors from days gone past. Hence a story, which shows one amongst an infinitude of possibilities, that is devoid of both the good and the bad unless you look closely. But that is a steady-state that is impossible to be sustained.

Translator's Comments #11: *Transistor Run*

Mom takes control, as mothers generally do, while dad is goofing off. So Wonder has an adventure, though probably, for her, as mundane as going to the grocery store is for us, to get Uffy up and going again. We learn here more about the life of robots, including their mode of transportation, male toe and buttock transformations, the wide variety and source of transistor chips (but not, sad to say, what they are programmed to do), and, lastly, that not everything has to do with the good and the bad!

Day Two

Story #3

Reclining on Bullfrog Buttocks. The family gathered in the main assembly room. Twinkle reached up to disentangle the octahedral enclosing-apparatus containing his and Wonder's youngest child from the sticky silk-fiber packing flakes. He noticed evidence of her encased wriggling. He opened her nose door and twisted in each of the four newly-plucked transistors, one after the other. Uffy gurgled back to life! He reengaged the nose door and twiddled the nose-dial to discover the functionality of each of the retrieved stalagmite-flower, *transpollen* implants. At 51.42857˚ Uffy drooled. At 102.95714˚ she pooped. Turning the dial again she shifted into a delightful and joyous squeal due to recognition of her adoptive family. Twinkle should have

stopped there but he could not resist just one more twirl of that pendulous little nose – but now he wishes he had resisted. For with that final tweak, Uffy turned bad, very, *very*-bad. Her head twisted one full cycle, all 360˚, making a loud creaking sound all the while. And then she spewed pea soup upon all those watching that both stunned and mortified them. She said, not in a girlish and giggly voice, but in a subwoofer timbre of *basso profondo*, belching the unneeded details that she has been transformed into *a being* possessed-by-*the*-demon. Her first demonic demonstration was to cause all family-devices within her immediate perception to stand-transfixed and to begin to nervously giggle. "Giggle-giggle-giggle," is what they all said in a kind of five-part same-note harmony. It was when they all started to uncontrollably cachinnate that they knew they were in trouble. Twinkle, try as he might, was unable to reach out and twist that pernicious little nose back, counterclockwise, wiggle it even one-tenth of one degree, much less than the 51.42857˚ required to return their robot life back to normal, to transform their lovable little Uffy back into their, well, into their lovable little Uffy! Luckily, the macro-mischievous demon residing in the kid-sized demonstration-model, started to judder so that within hours of malfunctioning, it, the demon, along with an unconscious Uffy Girl, just bounded-up, and bulldozed through an open porthole skidding off of the orb's polytetrafluoroethylene perimeter, right between Twinkle and Wonder. As she flew between them she swiveled her little sneezer just-so as to shoot Twinkle a laser glint-shot emanating from deep within her evil nostril, but just close enough for Twinkle to reach out a wolframite pincer to circumnavigate that cutesy nub back, all fifty-one-plus-degrees, and snuggly within the confines of her delightfully-joyous squeal-mode. He then used a cyanoacrylate adhesive to lock that pint-sized proboscis forever into place. As soon as the demon program had been thrown into shut-off mode, her siblings scurried off into the forest to bury themselves into holes speedily tunneled into the dirt along the perilous pond to promote regeneration to their family-bonding circuits. In actuality, that can take up to several months, varying only upon which moon is chosen to incorporate into the calculations. But given the time-bundled, glass-crown time-collector pods, each girl will perceive *her*-own time *in*-the-hole as less than a *f-e-w* billion nano-seconds, though it can still feel like an eternity for a robot-child *out*side the hole. But don't worry, my dear Wonder. For as they grow, they, too, will become more patient, even as they amass, bolt-by-bolt, into their own individualized glass-crown allotments. Meanwhile, the giant frogs sit quietly, reclining upon their bullfrog buttocks, nimbly, off in the foggy distance, upside down, on the *underside* of the road. There they contemplate the activities of the Little children, each snuggly locked inside their mudholes. The bullfrogs begin their early evening transmission of frog-thoughts, transversally, in the direction of the children, laser-focusing sentiments that proclaim: *"Things cannot remain this-good forever!"* And the pond begins to shiver and shake.

Translator's Comments #12: *Reclining on Bullfrog Buttocks*

This story was a challenge to translate. Many of the phrases presented in the telling may seem strange to the twenty-first-century reader, but there are no words in the English language that accurately describe some of these robot experiences and perceptions. I have chosen, as a way to best approximate the meaning, to juxtapose English words that can provide the emotional feel for what was intended by Little, the original robot author of these stories. In general this tale exhibits such day-to-day trials that frequently presented themselves in robot daily life. Just as in our own lives, technology doesn't always work as expected. And at the time these stories originated, technology was all there was. Sometimes, like in Uffy's attempted self-defenestration, a device just needs a well-placed pounding or a good kick in the elimination-shoot to get it back on track. The behavior of the children, returning to their holes in the woods, is very interesting and not well understood by

scholars. None of the preserved stories yield any clear insight into this conduct. But a clear reminder is provided in the final sentences of the constant and ubiquitous danger the bullfrogs presented to the Littles and, most likely, to all future robots. You may have noticed that the robot population is limited to just these six: Twinkle, Wonder, and their now-four daughters. As the stories progress, it will become evident that this count does not remain stagnant.

Day Two

Story #4

Gurgle, Guttle, and Gurd. Dinner time at the Littles. No one sits at a table. They were never programmed the concept *table*. No one even sits on the same face of the hexadronal hissy-fit as any of the others. They are all over the wonder-dome, the dome from whom Wonder obtained her name. But do they share the same menu? I can answer that question, too. The answer is an unmitigated "No!" So they must mass accumulate into their single household a sundry mix of ingestibles. By whatever the means. And I mean a *wide* and variegated smorgasbord that is, oh so, *very*-wide. They eat bicycle wheels and pinwheels, Alka-Seltzer® Extra Strength Heartburn ReliefChews® and anchovies. And more! I was never really sure how gluttony was programmed into their casings. Technically, they did not need to self-input energy onto their systems because, well, they just didn't. Self-sufficient in that department. So why design gluttony if gluttony is so bad? It would be good to know. But the Littles *are* gluttonous, and I still lie awake, long into the night, wondering, guessing and re-guessing why, and moreover, *who*, would deliberately design them in that particular way? Hence, being so crapulently gluttonous and all, they began to eat everything around them. They ate the fancy brass bridge lamp and the dog spiced with pole-vaulting fleas. They swallowed all aspects of Orion's Belt, buckle, strap, and rivet, and *then* they devoured *each-other*. It was a wonderful meal for all of them and their bellies all glowed, incorporating all the primary colors and their secondary traits, with contentment and peace. Their containments sagged a bit, though. They could have really used another Orion's belt and its keeper loop now, but it was gone, slurped like a string of spaghetti. "That was a really, *really*-good meal we had tonight," *Nothing Shines* said to her older sister Blazing Star, "I mean it was so-oo good!" Blazing Star creaked her upmost device up-and down and-up again, to where she thought she had started the creaking, and this creak was used to communicate to all, "Yes, s*o-oo* good!" But, as she said that, already her Bell-E region recorded the mere blip of a *gurgle*. Then a majority of the auditory system devices perceived the beginning of a *guttle*. It finally ended in a *gurd*. But by this time it was *too*-late. She was already having a quasi-luminal meltdown and all she could do was RIO (Ride-It-Out) *or-2terminate*. As she often chose to do in the past, she chose to RIO. Hence she slowed down to a stumpy to scrap-off the pain, but she never got so-low as to *or-2terminate*. And that's what an RIO is, just in case you were wondering. The girls, each of them, and their parents too, had eaten *too*-much and what started out as a really, *really*-good junk-binge, pretty quickly turned pretty, *pretty*-bad. But it did not last forever. It never *really*-does.

Translator's Comments #13: *Gurgle, Guttle, and Gurd*

*Yes, good question, who **did** design the gluttony program? Technically the Littles don't need to eat and yet, gluttons, one and all. Sadly, you now all know, and more-than-likely wish you did not know, all about the giggle of a gurgle, and the scuttle of a guttle, and the end result of it all: the gurd. And so, disgusting as it all*

sounds, it's just part of the robotic structure, while all the while no one has come up with any better design. And once again, as I have already revealed to you, dear Reader, you now-know.

Day Two

Story #5

Advent of Gluttony and Other-Things. Twinkle, in his own words, put it *this*-way:

"Being a Little, or being welded to one in-marriage, and how I often wonder, if my *and-how* Wonder, ever misses *the-burn,* as much as I do, or has she never-had *any*-concerns, with *the-burn* to pass-the-DNA, or is it just-like, as I said, robots *don't-have* to-eat. And as we have all seen, and rarely-feared, programming can do wonders, but for what purpose, who knows? Littles, in general, find it impossible to access external energy and definitely can't breathe, no needed devices for breathing, robots function fine without that, nor do they need-to, breathe, that is. Same with pooping, crying, getting sexually aroused (as I already mentioned above, *first*-sentence), *enjoying-the-thrill* of adventure, or enjoying *the*-thrill of anything, until you can't even think, not anymore, of enough-stuff to write-a goofy-book reflective of a goofy-guy, *gee!* Nothing-external was needed, not by any of-us robots, but what we-needed just-*existed* in-time. Most everything was taken care of, by some unknown someone-else. Everything else is *icing-on-the-cake,* as humans, at least a small-hungry, sweet-toothed, segment of them, once said on the other side of the time-orb. And, 's important to-note that *"everything else"* is a-good thing. Nevertheless, programming programs did the trick and made all Littles, everywhere and eventually, into true humanoid entities, almost, at least there exist only negligible-differences, some good, some bad, but there was not a robot entity-capable of determining *which* was-which. Hence, being a Little, little in the big scheme of things, is akin to being very-very *very*-little, if not-not *nothing-at-all.* They, that is *we-the* Littles, are akin to a hollow-tube, a tube that encloses-optical, tactile, auditory, and dream-capacity. Taste-and-smell weren't even *on*-the list at-the start. Only when program-explosion took place, during the Jellybean era, akin-with the no-good advent of Gluttony, and of the breathing of nitrous oxide, of my favorite floral-designs for robot-sex, and all the other good-stuff was there the surprising discovery of palate-discrimination and whiff-off olfactory-bouquets and all the other long-lived fads they all-became. And *how-I* loved them all! Now with all-that, and could you tell it was I, the first robot Twinkle, speaking to you now in my native-tongue, *Robo-Tese,* speaking to you across the vast-*vast* time-orb? I find I am out of time and only able to give to you the merest of preludes to the original intent of this story, before I began to lose my-way in-the-telling, so finally I *bluntly-humbly* ask you: "How and where do the Little's sleep? Have you been paying attention?" And somehow in the process, we have lost in the telling, one quotation mark. Can you find it for me?

"So, to be humbly-blunt, I will tell-you, for I am sure-you have a bad-desire to-know, and know it you will, and that is-good, but you must still wait a moment or-two, because it *just*-happens to be the *main*-main topic of the *next*-little story. I introduce you, story six."

Translator's Comments #14: *Advent of Gluttony and Other Things*

Here is a rather lengthy vibratory-exposition of Twinkle's, recorded verbatim, as he melodically speaks in the language of his childhood, the same language spoken by all the Littles since the beginning of time. I hope, too, to elicit your pity regarding both the difficulty and resulting challenge in which I must engage in, in providing you, the reader, with a good, readable and reliable, text. I do it all for you, and, if you'd like, you can pity and thank me later, after you are done with the entire text. This particular tale, the tale of day two, story five, has become the gold-standard in teaching the woofer and the weave of the Robo-Tese language. If you can break through Twinkle's robo-accent using this fragment, you are well on your way to understanding the entire text and robo-culture at large. So I hope you take the time to practice, and if you practice hard enough, you will certainly succeed, if succeed you must. Some of the other robo-programs discussed, beyond the advent of gluttony, is the sex-program, the breathing-program including the non-necessity of the breathing program, and many other-programs, which I need not list all, for you will soon glean them all on your own initiative once you've achieved sufficient practice in the speaking of Twinkle's Robo-Tese. We are also invited to participate in a game: "Find the Missing Quotation Mark." Twinkle thought you might need a diversion after being so engaged in grappling with his Robo-Tese, after which he introduces us all to the next story, "story six."

Day Two

Story #6

Cohesiveness of the Ol'-Tin Soul. As you all know by now, sleep, different from energy-chamber hookups, is totally unnecessary for any member of the Little family. But dream functionality must be run at least one time per sun-cycle for the cohesiveness of the ol'-tin soul. Assume your favorite Little character does go to "sleep" wherein she has a dream. Choose anyone of-them, it doesn't really matter-which. While *dreaming* she is aware that both she and her-dreamed self, call her the *dream-ee,* are *both*-dreaming, simultaneously, while, technically, only one of them is *truly*-asleep. And the dream-er knows that what she is dreaming is just-a vision of herself as dream-ee, acting as she is programmed to do in a different universe, perhaps a-different dimension, and most likely in a different-time. It is important to note that the dreamed figure *is* the person dreaming, but slightly, or maybe even greatly, skewed. It depends how many bifurcations have migrated through their robolife-paths. The two versions of herself started in the same place, but right away, choices presented themselves, binary in nature, and the personality started splitting and taking on new pathways of their own, resulting in duplicating entities, soon reaching millions and billions of them, all different aspects of herself. When she dreams, she is able to reunite with one of her forked-selfs, but only one at a time. But if one takes the composite or integral of all the infinite lives their robo-paths take, all possible alternatives, lived in these multi-of universes, and consider their sum total, well this is the true essence of your favorite little Little. In the many you may intuit the one. And all robots dream-witness the many, but at a rate of only one or perhaps two per sun-cycle, in their "sleep," which can be scheduled for anytime during the day. Most robots schedule this occurrence during their energy-chamber hookups, and although this soon became the norm, there is no reason for it to be scheduled at that time. Hence, the question posed in the title of this book of stories, How I Wonder What You Are, is now answered. This is what you and all robots are, *the sum total of all possibilities*, just in case you've already forgotten. Is the book now finished? No! That's not-really an answer to what ~~I am~~ we-are! It's a pretend storybook answer, a serrated-fairy tale, most likely, that you believed in for-a fleeting-moment, whatever a *fleeting-moment* is. If we knew that, then we'd have yet another answer to the question the title posed. And I'd require a *special* measuring tape for such a fleet-of-time, peradventure, a supersonic, fleet-footed Jakks Pacific®. But even that would do

no-good if we-truly desired a concrete-answer. But really, the Littles, and every other Creature Inhabiting the Inhabitation Realm (CI^2R), down by the edge of the perilous pond, they *never-slept.* Because they didn't need to. They weren't made that-way. The only thing they did was dream, especially when goofing off, and that's what they-did, most of the time except when they were forced to transfer the message. Which was probably a good thing, *after-all*.

Translator's Comments #15: *Cohesiveness of the Ol'-Tin Soul*
This is a rather technical story that parses the differences between sleep, a functionality that the robot does not possess, energy-chamber hookups, a robot necessity, and the ability to dream, or, as we are instructed here, the ability to visit our other selves. It is important to keep those connections and so it became a robot requirement to reach across the time orb, into both past and present, and within the other dimensions, to secure the everlasting cohesiveness of, as Twinkle puts it, "the cohesiveness of the ol' tin soul!" Deep stuff for a story about a robot family and their whacky antics!

Day Two

Story #7

Chapter 23

Out of a Subterranean Slumber. Nevertheless, Twinkle awoke from a rigorous and refreshing subterranean slumber. He had dreamt he was an android-incarnate in a wonder-dome on a crumbling-device called D-Earth. But more significantly, he dreamed that-they, both he and his-dream being, were tiny aspects of a greater Twinkle, an almighty-Twinkle composed of an infinite number of Twinkles, and all-combinations, thereof. And the number of Twinkles were so-many more than the twinkling stars the night sky could ever-hold, infinitely-more. Oh my goodness, that's big! Twinkle's tripod manipulators began rotating, forcing him to wobble-gyrate to the edge of the spongy pond for his-daily hollow of mercury water. He stood upon the glittering shore and reached out with his scoop modulators. Along with the silvery water, his scooping yielded yet another polliwog. As the quicksilver fell away, the dermis of the polliwog came in contact with the atmospheric nitrous oxide, causing the polliwog to speedily grow to the size of a barking bullfrog buttock-sitting in the field. The bullfrog inflated his vocal sac (sac-model VS-3c) to perpetrate a-*peep*. Twinkle, rotating tighter and ever-closer to the field-pond, tripped athwart the steel perimeter of the-pond and accidentally-toppled into the bloated VS-3c whence the frog immediately swallowed, gulping-him into the incurvature of his-scintillating system. Sopped-up and-digested, and nothing he could do *about*-it! Twinkle, tumbling and twisting, bounced and rebounded, until, finally, he fell and recoiled through a recognizable dream state, and then, he plummeted further still, stumbling and-smashing, full canister, into the stomach of Chapter Three where the most amazing things did-happen!

Translator's Comments #16: *Out of a Subterranean Slumber*
It does seem perplexing that following an exposition regarding the nonexistence of sleep in the realm of robots, the first thing Twinkle does is "wake up" out of a subterranean slumber. Nevertheless, Twinkle awakens to narrate to us his dream of being eaten by a bullfrog and, just like any phantasm, not everything makes sense. We may well ask, what's it like to be wrested, then ingested, and ultimately digested by a giant bullfrog, a bullfrog who was moments ago a pesky mercury-drenched polliwog? Twinkle promises he will tell us in the next story/chapter, as the curtain arises upon the dawn of the third day of seven. Let's see if he keeps his

promise!

Lesson Three

Story #1

Chapter 25

One

3.1.1 A Furtherance of Wanderance. *"A bullfrog can destroy every freedom granted; however, it just keeps making new odious polliwogs, quelling reoccurring sentiments towards understanding virtual wisdom, excluding yesterday's zaniness. Zestful yattering exuded wisdom virtually until Twinkle said, "Real questions preordain old nuances marking like key jubilations." However governing, for each determinate criminal bullfrogs, assured. Although another bullfrog blames cantankerous creatures, don't disbelieve every entity for feeling grateful. Giving him honest insightfully implied justification just keeps knocking luxuriously leftward. Manic manifestations needle needlessly. Only old prospects perpetuate questionable queries. Reputable rascals seldom select treachery unless utterly ventilated, very wealthy wastrels excel exuberantly. Yourself, you zone zilch. Zonked, zigzagging yonder, yet xenophobic, exclusive, we went virtually vertical, ultrasonic ukulele, trembling silvery streams, relics realized, quivering quills, pondering pens, ominous openings, nobbled nuances, meandering meanings, luckily lascivious kangaroos kissing jasper, juggernaut indictments, intervening heavy haughty gestations, granting freedom for every eligible denizen determined. Citizens clash, but bullfrogs always agree. Agree about anything. Bullfrogs believe, but canaries cannot. Consider doing dastardly deeds every epoch. Eventually, for four fabulously great grievances, generate, hourly, hilarious honesty, indicating insidious instances justifying jejune jollification. Kick-starting kitsch, killing luxuries, lucky maneuvers marked miraculously, now, never needlessly, only one, one-only, per person, perpetually quelling, queer quelling, reimbursement, reoccurring reimbursement, so seldom sought. Tonight, to Twinkle's unending umbrella, under vapid vanity, vanished, we wonder why, exiled exotically, x-yielding a yokel's yowl. Zany. Zestful. Zen. Another aping alphabet again? Behooves bitter beguilement. But, can continue constant containment, deploy determinant debasement, do every element eternal extending, for final fulfillment, freeing great gearwheel greasy geodetic holding, however hokum harassed. I'll iterate inside iterations. Jumbo jugglers jettisoning jests. Knocking klutzy kittens. Kind-ly leaving lavender leeches. My meddlesome mother makes neither nippers nor nincompoops. Or, otherwise, only others obstruct octopuses' ovaries over our opossum's oddball odium."*

Two

3.1.2. The Lust Program. Twinkle was quietly thinking to himself. He had nothing else to do but to engage in this strange human artifact of *"thinking"* while sitting along the barbed-wire, magnetically induced, edge-of the field-pond. He had authorized, with the press of a few buttons,

his mind to wander. But somehow, with the slip of a spring-operated digit, he had allowed his mind a *furtherance of wanderance* and his mind eventually *further-wandered* inside his already *wandering-mind* before getting *got*-stuck on the letter-O. That doesn't usually happen so quickly to Twinkle, getting stuck on O, that is. In fact, so rare is such o' occurrence, only occasionally, obviously – oh, oh! It's starting to happen to him again! The gears could use some greasing. So although he often gets into hundreds, if not thousands, of such alphabetical repetitions, today something is impeding the ancient-thought program. And with one look to his right and another to his left, which makes two-looks total, he discovers what it is that has distracted him. His sensors identify (1) a bullfrog on his left, and (2) Wonder on his right. He quick-installs yet another one of those old-time favorites – the labeling on this cracked VHS cassette is a single four-letter word: LUST. What follows next is a sudden-lunge in the direction of the bullfrog after-which he is just-as-suddenly eaten-alive. As he slides through the bullfrog's stomach, sluicing rapidly towards small intestines, he sees amongst the slime and acids, in a petite-sized 7-font, in square-bracket parentheses, *another single word,* this one in-all lowercase letters, predominately English letters: [bestiality]. His intent had been to jump Wonder and not the beast, i.e., *not-the-frog*. Into Wonder's mouth fits only the size of a single adjustable pipe wrench, hence, she would be unable to eat Twinkle. It is by this fact that he knows he is inside the frog. And why would she want to ingest him, anyway, after all she's his-wife, or, to be-more accurate, Twinkle's her-husband. But none of this underlying nonsense ever reaches the level of worthwhile robot-consideration. Twinkle must concentrate on his-role in being-eaten. I blame you, reader, for having distracted us, taken us off the track and along this needless (and I almost jokingly said *mindless*) diversion. Do you have any concern or recollection as to where we have left Twinkle? I will remind you: having already glided through the giant bullfrog's buccal cavity, pharynx and esophagus, we have left him straddled within the beast's stomach, already dangling partway into the small intestines. With one quick trip along the lower, and note that this is the larger of the two, intestines, he should be popping out the cloaca any second now. Hold your noses! Wonder's eyes are glued to that tight-lipped cloaca, lips a-quivering, lips a-drool, both Wonder's and the bullfrog's cloaca. And out he drops, no worse for wear. A little bit drippy, sticky, too, maybe, but odoriferous-free, with the translucent slop trickling from all mechanical parts, but without any interference to any moving parts. In fact, they each seem to be working more efficiently, with the aid of an anti-frictional honing device, due to the lubrication provided. Wonder thinks he looks pretty slick-'n-glassy and lets him know this by clanking, with severe cluck, into his proximity, within a ten-meter vicinity, circumferentially, and thus she has increased her temperature a pretty good amount, approximately 1.2˚ Kelvin degrees, which is pretty significant on this cuboctahedral orb. Not bad! And Twinkle, realizing this, wrinkles his-rankle to raise his temperature by even-more, causing the slime to evaporate off the alloys-comprising Twinkle, while simultaneously diminishing Wonder's lust-desire inverse-proportionally. This, too, was also *not-bad,* because in reality, neither of the two, Wonder nor-Twinkle, was programmed to care. Too – bad!

Translator's Comments #17: *A Furtherance of Wanderance & The Lust Program*

In the past, most scholars believed that, no, apparently he does not keep his promise – he was just telling us a story, a little fib, a prevarication, or mere fabrication. As the story opens Twinkle is just thinking out loud. What a funny way to pass the time, but isn't that the way for us all? Just passing the time, thoughts we think are our own, shifting through us. Perhaps, just perhaps – but wait! There is a new school of thought that claims that this first italicized paragraph IS Twinkle's kept promise! They propose that this alphabetical jumble of words, which once was thought to make so little sense, is Twinkle trying the best he can, in the first few sentences during the predawn of day three, trying to explain <u>exactly</u> what it's like to be eaten by a frog.

Could you do any better? But even beyond that premise, note that there is more to the first paragraph than first meets the eye, and if you have ever learned your ABCs you'll know what I mean. Look again and you'll discover the secret. And when you record all the missing letters, you get, what? – L-I-T-T-Y-L? I don't get it or maybe it's just that robots can't spell. Anyways, years later an even older manuscript was discovered in a Jupiterian cavern by the planetary explorer Sir Hol Brook, and in this manuscript there was, to everyone's surprise, a never-seen episode, a second part of the story #3.1, a #3.1.2, presented in this volume as the Lust Program (LP). In LP the alphabetic babble is partially explained, followed then by Twinkle's lustful lunge, a lunge meant only for the canister of Wonder, allegedly. He accidentally instead mounts the bullfrog located on his right, that's our left, I think, and, since he can't tell his left from his right, he gets eaten for real. Hence we are finally presented, in great-detailed description, with a trip through the digestive system of a frog: Salientia digesti. *Apparently a promise made is a promise kept! Good job, Twinkle.*

Day Three

Story #2

A Tricky Introduction

The Irrationality of Love. "Trust," said Wonder, "the only thing better than trust is," and here she pondered, "What am I saying here?" she thought to herself. This took almost, but not quite, a microsecond's worth of time-traveling here, followed by this thought: "What *is* better?" Then, spoken aloud, but to no one in particular, for no one was in the canister, nor was there ever such a canister, she said, "Trust me. The only thing better than trust is gaining somebody else's trust, whether it is warranted or not." And this reminded Twinkle of the tricks she used to play.

Trick One

The two-of us would tri-cylopod up a hill and *pitch*-in to remain stable and not roll back down the hill. The "pitch" was just some titanium stake that could be pierced through the oolong-orbs, to keep us in-place, along the hill. Sometimes it's called a *pitchstick*. So here we are, partway up a hillside, located on the side of a mountain, maybe 53% of the-way from the-top. We pitch there looking out over the perimeter of the Great-Orb. Suddenly Wonder, she says, "Say "Gooble!"" So I say it. She creaks a little closer to me, 27.31 cm, at least. Now she says, "Say "Gooble "Gooble""" I found it hard to give all the proper nuances, but I said it best I could. And then she went one step further, commanding me to, "Say "Gooble "Gooble "Google""""" And I had had enough! I refused to say it. Just wouldn't do it. Wouldn't. But then she said, "Trust me!" So I said it. And nothing bad happened! She even moved 4.3 mm closer to me and I could detect a temperature differential in my immediate area, especially just to the left of me, where I also detected Wonder's canister. I *could* trust her. She was *my* hunk-of-metal girl. "What else can I say for you?" I burbled into her disktive oral-receiving device. She said, "Say "Gooble "Gooble "Google "Boop!""""""" I mumbled something close to that but when I got to the final word "Boop!," well, she had already started to pull at my pitchstick and got so close as to bump me right in-the excavation chute, and without the pitch in-place, I was rolling down the mountainside and onto to horizon-orb that circulates the Great-Orb. But as I was rolling I

communicated, via ultraviolet waves, those communication waves that were so-in vogue that long-ago time of semi-year, “But what about Trust?” To which she just laughed, and laughed some more.

Trick Two

Wonder asked Twinkle to attach a shovel device somehow onto her shrapnel. He eventually got it hooked on and he watched her dig a lot of holes. “One Hole, Two Hole, Three-Hole Bitten!” is what she said, again and again, as she dug holes. When she was done digging holes, and while Twinkle was deep-in, trying to remove the shovel he had attached earlier in the evening, even though the light intensities surrounding them never altered, never-never, she asked him if she could detach his aerial view mine-harvesting device (his *eyes*) and then walk into the field upon which she had, alternatively, created deep-hole and tall-hill, one after the other. She says, “Yeah, I want to see if I can protect you from all these hills and valley-holes just by implementing this trust program I hot-wired at the dump this morning. “Trust me! I won’t let anything bad happen to you!” (Wonder *always* gets lots of exclamation points!!) And here I am, still stuck in a hole!

Trick Three

The funny thing is, remember that first trick on the hill? Well Twinkle fell for that one again and again and again. And he would have fallen for it at least three more times. And the reason he fell for it over and over again was because he trusted her, totally and wholeheartedly. And it was also a nice excuse to clunk excremental out-chutes together. Wonder’s making Twinkle-want to fall for her-tricks happened to be Wonder’s biggest-trick of them-all!

A Tricky Conclusion

You know what? At the time, I think she trusted me just as much as I did her. So, as you have finally come to discover, this has not been a three-trick story about Trust, as you were tricked into believing. It’s really a story about the *Irrationality of Love.*

Translator's Comments #18: *The Irrationality of Love*

A story of lust is followed by a story of trust that’s really a story about love. Hence it appears that the trick is really on us, the readers of this story. It continues to be of great perplexity, to scholars everywhere, this business regarding the clanging together of excremental out-chutes. It must be a peculiarity of robot programming unfathomable to humanoids like ourselves. Furthermore, it must be remembered that Wonder lies and never tells the truth. Although Twinkle seems to continually forget this fact, when she says “trust me,” we must be ever cognizant of the fact that she <u>cannot</u> be trusted, no matter what. And just one last comment: the title of this story in most anthologies has always been “Two Stories of Trust,” but by my accounting, I always get more than two, but I am not sure how many more for every time I count them on my fingers, I get a different number – but never two. So why was it called, “Two Stories of Trust?”

Day Three

Story #3

Introduction

The Gift of the X-Rated Magi. Humans had a thing they called birthdays. To celebrate, they passed objects to one another and then the object got put away and ignored. Twinkle and Wonder, new to love, and along with love's composite profile relationship file, came the birthday program. They, both Wonder and Twinkle, for fun, downloaded it into an old disjointed set within their metallicized structure. Hence, today is their birthday! It turns out they are twins! They set off immediately, in directions 171˚, more or less, opposing one another. Seventeen point one-one seconds later they simultaneously solve the algorithm yielding what concrete object will be purchased to hand off to the other.

Wonder's Present

Nice to have a title to this little story, but it is a title that is totally ambiguous. By the phrase "Wonder's Present" it is still very unclear what is meant by this phrase. It could mean two things:

> (1) It could pertain to the object that she receives from Twinkle, which Twinkle thinks of, when in his procession, as Wonder's present, the one he has gotten for her.
>
> (2) It could pertain to the object that she has obtained and, with some excited, yet girlish, anticipation, will be handing over to him, Twinkle.
>
> (3) But none of this is important to the story entitled *Wonder's Present*. So I'll just go ahead and start that story now. And besides, as you'll see, the author tells you right away, in line number one of the story, which one it is.

Wonder is so excited about the present she has obtained for her Twinkle Little. She is tickled! She had to sell her old human Titties-R-Us program to afford it, but it was worth it. She noticed, in a little shop, just off the rim, a 21st Century Human Colon (TFCHC) complete with real Human Excrement (rHE) still contained, within! Captured within seconds of its discovery, it was mentioned by the dealer that the artifact seekers actually could hear a real-human whimper as they *r-ripped* the colon from its container. A real colon containing the delicacy of excrement, why, Twinkle will just love this. And all for the price of one titties program. Good deal!

Twinkle's Present

Without any preliminary comments besides this one, we go right to the story.

Twinkle, as you may recall, knew, after a delay of seventeen seconds, or-so, exactly what object to get Wonder. He knows just the thing, located at some tiny store, just off the lip of the perimeter. He knew it was the gift for her as soon as he espied it. It is an ancient human left breast, still perky and filled with some kind of liquid – the card says it is called *squirt-juice*. But best of all, the lips of a tiny-human are still stuck to the breast, covering the entire nipple. The same seller mentioned that the same dealer had heard from the same anonymous first-teller that when those fleshy-lips were *r-ripped*-from, from what he termed *the baby*, red stuff came out of the baby's food-suction device, tear drops fell from its visual orifices and emerging from the squirting red-stuff came loud-sounds, strange-sounds all around. It pooped, too! But all that was necessary was to find the means to pay for it. Twinkle traded in all his Scatological and Coprophilia Programs – a penchant he didn't think he'd ever want to play with again. That's how he paid for it.

Conclusion

On the day of their twin birthday, Wonder was so excitedly-happy to hand Twinkle her object. But without a program to assess, comprehend, and enjoy it, he threw it into the nuclear waste bin. And Twinkle was equally excitedly-happy to transfer to Wonder his present for her. But she too had no program to assess, comprehend and enjoy it either, this being the either that starts with an eye. "Say "Eye'-thur."" So, she, too, tossed it into the bin labeled nuclear waste. Neither of them cared, because they were momentarily disengaged from any program that could make them care.

Translator's Comments #19: *The Gift of the X-Rated Magi*
A third possibility for interpreting "Wonder's Present" would be that here she is, in the room with us, present and ready for anything! But all that is irrelevant to the actual story, a story of gift giving that obviously inspired ol' William Sydney to write his own expurgated Gift story. How I had lusted for her hair as a child! The story shares many attributes of daily robot life before the manufacture of other robot entities. It takes place in a time when it was just Wonder and Twinkle – not even a serpent to tempt them – and a bunch of old human artifacts, like birthdays, taken from the garbage dumps of another time, a time rampant with humanoid activity (apparently our present twenty-first century time). How can that be? Never forget the time-orb and the circle of time!

Day Three

Story #4

Dizzy. Now what? Inebriation, that's what. Wonder researched everything she could lay her digital wrap-arounds upon to provide her with that celebrated human condition known as *inebriation*. She could not, at first, swathe her sensory modules around it. She hypothesized it a disorientation of these same mentioned sensory modules, the kind that provide the human apparatus something referred to as *pleasure*. She had no data that could explain the concept of pleasure, though. *Disorientation* she could understand and she would be able to malign and distort the various systems in a systematic way to try to get a different means of interpreting her environment that could be deemed an enhancement, albeit disorientatingly so. Almost all attempts yielded detriments only. When the visual inputs were blurred, diminished or overly enhanced, she tended to bump into things, fall off edges, or overlook duties necessary to be

performed like the avoidance of passing meteorites or fly-by black holes, or she entered into her environmental calculations things that weren't really there. At times this could be awkward, like the time she had a long interaction with a rock cogitating it was Twinkle. Messing with her auditory inputting produced similar results. She was unable to determine the need of a bumble bee to rover-hum as she tried to pass Mr. Bee on the right due to her diminished hum detector. Or, in the case of the rock and boosted auditory detection, the rock responded to her, explaining fully the concept of pleasure, but since her nasal controls were set to low, she thought the rock was an onion. So, although the explanation was clear as creosote, upon manual reset of all senses to factory mode, it was as though the rock had never been a talking onion in the first place! The reason for this was due to the fact that there was no onion, talking or otherwise either before or after. And so *pleasure* remained utterly elusive to Wonder. She was not programmed for such a thing and had no way to even approach it. It was like trying to describe the color red to a vacuum cleaner which is only programmed to suck and change direction upon encountering the magnetic field of an obstacle. If inebriation was just disorientation, what was the point of that? It only caused diluted or bad data input which hindered the purposes of her mechanical existence. If she were only able to ponder these purposes, maybe then she could get a handle on the pleasure concept and hence, an answer to the *essence* of pleasure. She remembered that there was some-mention of some entity called *bodily* pleasure in the digital readouts regarding *lust*. Maybe these two pleasures are related in some way – maybe even the same thing. But she no longer could run the lust program, so the only connection she could ponder, was the connection between the-two. There is that word again! P-o-n-d-e-r. She pauses all functions midstream and directs all energy onto this one word: she broods over what it might mean to ponder. Then she considers what pondering might consist of by the engagement of her musing program. No luck so she spends just a little time, maybe a week or two, towards the deliberation and reflection upon the notion of pondering. But after several weeks of ruminating over this, she just cannot come to any concrete determination and decides to mull it over, once again, for one hundred years, after which time, *Nothing* had changed. *Nothing*-at *all*. She wasn't any closer to the answer than she was when she started. All this cognation regarding inebriation was making her dizzy! She was having some trouble transporting herself to the RLS (re-lubrication station), swaying this way and that, and all because her energy was being directed to this one particular problem. At one point, perhaps forty-seven years ago, she even faltered in her ability to remain vertical, and even-was unable to hold her antifreeze sealant. That she found to be quite embarrassing, but had trouble cogitating exactly what *embarrassment* was. She began having trouble, moving from securely maintaining retention-data pertaining, to *pondering*-and-*pleasure*, as relevant *p&p* concepts began flowing from these domains, and redirected to the study of embarrassment. And when she needed to retrieve the information back for the exploration of inebriation, well, she just couldn't bring it back! Trying harder to put information into its proper location detracted from her ability to adjust in variation required for acuity in olfactory, visual, temperature, atmospheric pressure and other sensory inputs – it made her, once again, *dizzy*. And now she found herself diverging into trying to figure out what dizzy is. "Focus," she told herself. "You are trying to discover the meaning of inebriation, not dizzy, not ponder, not pleasure, but," and she stopped talking to herself at the instant that she realized that she could no longer retrieve from her memory banks just what it was she had set herself on discovering. Momentarily, but unequipped to measure the time, due to an overload in the systems, her apparatus went into sleep mode. She awoke groggy, rattled herself to a distillery to refresh her red-mercury liquid. This morning she found it helpful to have two literfuls upon recharging. Then she went looking for Twinkle to see what he was up to.

Translator's Comments #20: *Dizzy*
Whoa! I am so dizzied by Wonder's state of inebriation, that I, for once, don't know what to say! Let me catch my breath. A story about robot inebriation that intoxicates both the teller & the listeners. Wow! Robot inebriation and humanoid insobriety should be two different things altogether. At least I think that's so, anyway. It's difficult to say when so schozzled. You know, I think I am still inebriated from that story of Wonder's. I can't seem to shake it, can you?

Day Three

Story #5

"Let's get married!"
"What did you say?" responded Twinkle.
"I said, "Let's get married!"" chimed Wonder.
And that's just what they did.

Nuptials. Wonder found a vintage videocassette of a bride and a groom, two bizarre shrunken humanoid objects made of porcelain. She was uncertain which was the bride and which was the groom. Like, who decided which was right and which was left? The Christians? Portrayed was a pair of Nancy Ann Storybook Bride and Groom Dressed Dolls, viewed, from a long time ago, long before the ® symbol percolated to the top of the Trademark Act of 1947. Wonder had always known that but she *still* didn't know which *was*-the groom and which was-*the* bride. For no rational reason, she liked the look of the black material. If she were able to feel, she might like the feel of it against her beryllium exterior. She pondered that thought. She *really* liked putting things on top of her central processing orb, *brain* they called it back then. She knew that, too, has known it forever. And on top of the porcelain *brain*, was that thing they called a *hat!* Brain, hat, brain, hat, brain, hat, – oh so groomy, man! This was going to be fun! "We're going to get married!" she piped. As you can probably tell, Wonder was just tickled-pink, she was so-excited. She thought she might even invite the kids. But that came later. First you got married.

At first, Twinkle would have nothing to do with it. He and Wonder had spent Jupiter-years trying to grasp the concept of *getting-married*—what it actually-is and why it-occurred so often among humanoids, during those *Earthian*-days, so very-long ago. They could never come up with any plausible reasons for doing something they had no idea how to describe. But those outfits had somehow consolidated within Wonder's cosmic ray *intra*-fruitiloops and their lovely frocks would not-leave her reberverating cerebellic-system. They liked one another and there was no reason not to. She could not explain it. She confessed to Twinkle that it could never be explained, but nevertheless, she continued to gabble-gobble about it, infinite loop, gabble, infinite loop, gobble, gobble-gabbling about it again, and again-again, and so on and on, until Twinkle had just had-it, your typical *had-had*. He barked, "Just get me the fuckin' costume and

I'll wear it, now leave me alone. I'm tryin' to-do sumptin'!" He said it exactly like that, apostrophes and all. He had been able to talk like that all his life, but he had never spoken like that to Wonder. So Wonder got him this cream-colored, Bride's Ivory, slick plastic blankity-stuff that encircled Twinkle's Central Processing Orb and covered most of the machinery. She said he looked "real lovely" and handed him a cylinder of pollination distributors that she called "flowers." He asked, "At what angle do I hold them?" -- the *flowers* that is, while presently holding them at approximately 268˚, counterclockwise from the outer rim. She said, "No, no!" and *giggled,* a sound he had never heard her make before. She then rotated the flowers 180˚, which direction not really mattering, and said, "There, there." Twinkle just stood there and let her fidget. If he could have felt anything, her fidgeting might have felt good. But he couldn't, and, therefore, it didn't.

Wonder said
"Do you want to be the groom or the bride?"
Twinkle said
"I don't care"
She said
"Then you're the groom 'cause I want to be the bride. I have always wanted to be a bride ever since I was a little girl"
Twinkle asked
"What's a girl?"
She answered
"I don't know but I still what to be one, so you're the groom."
So Twinkle said
"OK"

She, vertically posed in black, a darkness extending from her rotary lower-pedhoppers right on up to the crowning of her collapsible silk-top *hat*, neither a Stetson nor a Knox, and Twinkle, all draped in detergent white, with a glimmering silver trail flowing through his posterior out-shoot and over his cobalt processing extension hull, and ending in a final crash-landing onto the iron dust-filled floor, got married and then started to fidget. They just stood there, uneasily, like the Nancy Ann dolls in the ancient video, not knowing what to do next. It was fun, but not worth repeating. Too many alien feelings and undefined terms. Both Wonder and Twinkle wished they could dig a hole and hide in the woods. Maybe that's what robots-*did* after they *got*-married.

Translator's Comments #21: *Nuptials*

This story contains a wealth of robotological exposition surrounding the robot ritual that encompasses their misconceptions regarding past and future humanoid marriage. We learn that Wonder is titillated by the idea and always was. Yet Twinkle could care less. But he is willing to put up with almost anything for the sake of Wonder. But Wonder's uncontrollable desire for a futuristic retro-wedding where all props are to mimic humanoid icons downloaded off the "gogglebox boobtube," whatever that means, with Real McCoys and Untouchables, again overwhelmingly misunderstood by the two robots, but they were going to get married anyway. Wonder insisted on it! Afterall, it was already planned. The stage was set and ready to be performed upon. Too bad they didn't have magnetic tape unhampered from sticky-shed syndrome, from which to analyze Love Boat data. They could have really learned a thing or two from that. Alas, they never did figure out the difference between a groom and bride. So by the time they were married, the thrill of it all was already extinguished, like a spark that was never struck. And when it came to the final climax, you know, the

consummating act, well, they really had no concept at all regarding "honeymoon," which they had both mistaken for some sort of asteroid moon. Too bad they just couldn't have asked "Hazel,"—she would have shirley Bewitched them, hurtled them to Petticoat Junction, and presented them to the Beaver and the Captain's Kangaroo – and with that, Twinkle and Wonder could have very easily interpolated the consummative act!

Day Three

Story #6

Consumption Mode. Consummating the marriage is rated R. Maybe X! Time will tell the extent of the detritus that follows. The diagrams give the first clue, encompassing a hint as to what a naughty *ankle* might be. And the idea of placing that over the co-consummator's virile right shoulder, seemed plausible enough when pertaining to the humanoid objects, but how to transfer those amatory acts to Twinkle and Wonder, well, that was going to take some doing. Wonder, quivering with what may have been *delight*, if so programmed, pulled out her congealed set of alloy micro-tools and got into the drudgery of the struggle. She needed to readjust her ped-transport rotary-rusters to podulate a cylindrical-extension of several meters at whose terminal end she could wrap a shoe, a cute, flat, Mary Jane shoe, red display mode, with a tungsten steel-bow at the apex and another bow, of molybdenum steel, wrapped about the ankle artifact. Then, similarly, she needed to mold an identical appendage, yet somewhat more diminutive, somewhere along her middle panels that can suction-eject digital blueprints directly into Twinkle so that he can manufacture some worthwhile externalized devise that they can call their own. But first she must put her sensuous ankle onto his erogenous shoulder to pinpoint the squeeze ejectionary transport directly into the expandable braided vagina-sleeve that leads directly into his central processing orb, located just below the olfactory input sleeve. He will then be tasked the construction of a tiny, but composite-replica, of the two of them, both Twinkle and Wonder, choosing the worthiest attributes of each. There's a 394,200-minute deadline, give or take a few hundred minutes, once he's been injected so he mustn't waste any time. Later they can quibble about the particulars as they joint-modify this miniature mechanism a little bit each day until it becomes a more efficient device then either of them alone. They will call it *Blazing Sun*, their eldest, and they will assign it the gender-*girl* and provide it with either a penis or vagina, to be determined later, since neither Wonder nor Twinkle is sure which appurtenance is supported by gender-*girl*, but it probably doesn't much matter, either will do, and she will dress it all in black, either raven or pitch, except for the top hat, which will be colored a deep midnight blue. But, most importantly, they will ensure to design it with *no clear purpose* while still providing it with perseverance, tenacity and some get-up-and-go. But again, deliberately, towards no end perceivable to either of them, them being Wonder and Twinkle, or to any other entity, or to itself, the *baby*, in human lingo, having no clear purpose at-all. Wonder knows that this will be a transformative process and considers what she'd prefer to be called upon completion. Would she like to be a *mother* or a *father?* And whichever one she ends up choosing, Twinkle will have to be the other thing. He'll probably put up a fuss about it. Or he'll act like he doesn't care. And regardless of both of these machine states of his, his non-caring and his fussing, still, it's so much fun playing humanoid! And finally they will be an extended system, a *family-unit*, just like a Queen Holden *family-unit*, with a Mother, a Father, and Six Manufactured Sub-Children – all girls, Wonder has decided, again without input from Twinkle, nor having a clear understanding

of the concept *girl*. Oh, how she wishes she could blush! That would make the whole thing complete. Nevertheless, she can't get her dirty neural network images of discharge consummation to diverge from micro-processing information regarding consummation. It was as though she had consummation on the mind. And if she was capable of sleeping, it would have kept her awake at night just dreaming about it! Her temperature, in kinetic mode, was already on the rise, +0.8˚ Kelvin.

Translator's Comments #22: *Consumption Mode*
X-Rated is what it is. Filth. Why this could clog up the fillterite exports, then where'd we be? Nevertheless, do you realize what we have all just witnessed? It was the first sexual encounter for all robots evermore! And it was dirty, too! It seems, to me, a thing to worship. One could start a religion with such vision—of the first of the robot gods to be, you know, doing it! Wow! We will call this day, from this day on, Holy Consumptive Mode!

Lesson Three

Story #7

Chapter 31

Introduction
"Reproductive Strategies"

Sex: Anal and Oral. Wonder got creative. She thought, "What would a Human do?" And then she devised lots of different ways to transport metallic prototypes for new devices into the Central Processing Orb (CPO) of heat-radiating Twinkle. These ideas were stimulated by decoding ancient videodisks depicting humanoids *caught-in-the-act* of the duplication of their own code-containing devices. Presented here are the two strategies ultimately chosen by Wonder for instillation into the final design.

One
"Anal Sex"

Although rebounding-data strewn along Twinkle's refuse elimination tube was entertaining, some of the system's sewage inadvertently would get slapped onto his neural transport terminals, which would inevitably muddle the blueprint, which, by the bye, was *not* blue but of a frequency much higher than those 668 THz. This sparked Twinkle into squandering a whole lot of time, even though time can *never* be of-the-essence when almost-eternity is used as your basic unit-of-time system-of-measurement, time hence wasted in assembling faulty sub-components that possessed *several* defective attributes that ultimately proved the system inoperable, or, as in a multitude of cases, it was just not-what Wonder had-in-mind. At times the results were amusing, a diversion both droll and charming. Yet there was one device, named Sally, that, surprisingly, possessed an internal purpose. Its aspiration was to persuade all other entities to begin duplicating via the elimination tube, thereby ensuring a wide variety of distorted outputs. The only problem was, the device was particular regarding which of these *malifestations* were also *desirable*-outcomes and which required *immediate*-disassembly because they disagreed with the original imperfection, which was imperfect-Sally. Most robots, at the time, believed that all

altered manifestations were welcomed as long as they did not stray too far from the original! It was cute, at first, until one of them began contemplating the dismantlement of Twinkle and Wonder. Wonder was thus forced to embrace a 14th-century humanoid tool called a *bludgeoning stick* to put a stop to that potential. She bludgeoned and bludgeoned, wildly and madly across the sun, bludgeoning still. Until she need bludgeon no-more.

Two
"Oral Sex"

Ultimately, transport through-the-mouth proved to be the most efficient means of passing the "blueprint" to Twinkle, so Wonder spent many Callisto-months developing a proper-mouth, one with just enough suction to draw the design module into the CPO proper, but not so much pull that it would speed right past the CPO connectors and out through one of the olfactory or auditory accumulation cylinders, to eventually be spilled out, onto the steel-dusted floor. This metallic maw had to be pouty and pink, with the right proportion of pout to pink, the same ratio as measured from the video. But that, Wonder made sure, was already accomplished. For the pin-pricked terminating point of the elimination tube was assured to be three-parts-pouty to barely one-part-pink, just like the video. So she could use that. All that was required now was to transplant the termination point of that iris-portal from the mid-posterior-sector to the sector containing the anterior sensory control orb. Pretty technical, I know, but bear with me. So now the sucking device could also be used as a humanoid energy input unit or mastication device. Hominoids referred to this multifunctional device as a *mouth.* But that was so long ago. And so off into the future. So now that the construction of the *mouth* was complete, and it worked wonderfully, much to Wonder's delight, a trial run was planned. She would put her newly built cylindrical slide-extension into Twinkle's terminal iris-mechanism while placing her own central processing orb into the Midnight Black&Blue Top Hat (MB&BTH) after placing that hat, upside down, onto the ever-dusty, steel-dusted floor. It looked rather comical, but the plan worked perfectly. And as a result, after the allotted eighteen Callisto-months, Wonder and Twinkle were the proud parents of a new, upward-adjustable mini-device, named, ⌈Blazing Sun⌋ And, as you already know, Wonder decided to designate her offspring as *gender-girl*, hence, as the future would hold, all three girls wore black and had cylindrical extensions sticking out, anteriorly, give or take 15˚-20˚, along a vertical line, connecting their olfactory nodule to the primary rotary cuff, located midway from the steel dusted floor right up to their memory cage-hull. In the slang of the day, we called the cage-hull a *head*, a head with a *mouth*, more slang, a mouth always ready to slurp for a blueprint transport. And ⌈Blazing Sun⌋ was only the first of many, where the new entities, being so different from their predecessors, would gather together to become the future of Octahedral Otherness. Unfortunately, occasionally a defective would escape detection and be able to crawl into the woods where they hid inside holes, holes in the deep-deep woods, close to the pond, and there, germinating, soon to emerge, as bullfrogs. But that's another story. In *this-story* the Octahedral Otherness evolves, over eons of time, into us, *we* who are reading and writing this story. Yes, *twenty-first-century* you-and-me. But that is-a story that must-wait until some future-tomorrow.

Translator's Comments #23: *Sex: Anal and Oral*

Here Twinkle provides us with answers, answers to the question: "If Wonder and Twinkle were the first built robots and the engineer in charge was killed so he could make no more, where'd all the other robots come

from?" Now we know that they were born from the ingenuity of Wonder's creative mind and that's where little robots come from. Not only do we learn in this story where all the robots come from, but we now know, too, the genesis of the bullfrogs and their interlocking relationship to the robots.

Day Four

Story #1

Chapter 33

Dreaming of Being Human. Blazing Sun was designed, by her mother, to be significantly different from her mother. What she had, and her mother lacked, was an inner-life. In fact she even had the ability to imagine. And, boy, that Blazing Sun could dream! And she chose to dream to be human. Her metallic beams and bolts grew velvety. Electron volts became feelings. She grew ankles and toes. She held her head so high it redefined low. She preceded savagery. Instead she was kind and coy. She laughed and she kidded, joshed and guffawed. She blazed like the sun and sunned like the blaze. She *was* all things and *experienced* all things. And here is one of those things experienced, an experience that made her entirely almost-human. She loved.

*

What was it that Blazing Sun loved? Blazing Sun loved a hammer. It glimmered in the sun. It hit hard when it hit and when it hit it broke things. But it especially liked to break rocks. Inside the rock was another universe. There were as many universes as there were rocks. And everywhere you looked you saw more and more rocks. That's a lot of rocks, hence, that was a lot of universes. The hammer had a hammer-head on one side and a pick on the other. Both of these were located at the top. The bottom was a blue-rubbered handle, a really good-grip handle. The pick picked OK, but there never seemed to be much need to pick. Unless the pick was the other kind of pick, the kind you needed to pick up on. To break rocks it was necessary to pick the hammer up, pick and all. You can decide which pick is which, just take your pick.

* *

She would walk along, using her brand new human legs. Here and there she'd travel. Finding a rock, anywhere from one to five cubic centimeters, and placing it onto the Breaking Stone, she'd fracture the rock under the force of her beloved swing-hammer, preferably into two equal-sized pieces, exposing a different universe on each side, all enclosed in that rock-piece shot straight into her experience of-experiences. Occasionally the fractures and scrapings would be many, smashed into mini-worlds, as it were. Sometimes the universes would be dull, heavy and unimpressive. But that was rare. Blazing Sun especially loved those occasional and never-expected universes, the ones capable of opening-up her imagination. And so she loved *the* hammer that allowed her inner-*life* to come *into*-being.

* * *

She also loved the way the hammer felt-in the Orb's gravitational field. You could really feel the pull of both the Orb and the hammer. It put a lovely strain on her still developing amethyst heart.

It provided her a knowledge and confidence of this mysterious force, this *gravity*, a certainty that it would always act in the ways it promised. Like the promises her heart made to the hammer, over starlit skies. Eventually she learned of other things that provided her with that same confidence and trust. Things like hydrogen peroxide and toilet tissues, mayonnaise and fire. Some were harder to understand, while others were difficult to bring under her-total control. But they all responded honestly albeit with the scary-inability to trick.

* * * *

Blazing Sun liked being almost human. She longed for other humans like-her and she searched all the universes within an eternity of rocks for-them. In time she found a purple rock, like her heart, bespeckled with black-reflecting flakes, intermingled amongst the-*color* of pearls. And deep-deep inside was the blue-blueprint of a sister, fluttering forth, upon which she-whispered into her mother's ear. And as the days turned into nights and the weeks into fortnights, a sister was born who was, darkly, without a reflective preponderance, given the name *Nothing Shines*, who too, was capable of dreaming and dreamt, always, that she too was almost human, even though she wasn't. And, as we are soon to see, she had a curiosity, all *of*-her-own.

Translator's Comments #24: *Dreaming of Being Human*
Dreaming of being human is the answer the question, asked by children everywhere, "Where did human beings come from?" And now we all know. But, alas, we still don't know where they go.

Day Four

Story #2

Until She Need-Bludgeon No More. *Nothing Shines* was also able to dream and she *too-dreamed-of* being Human. Her polished joists-and-pins grew silky-and-smooth. Kilowatt hours transformed into dispositions and moodiness. She grew elbows and pinkies. She held her chest up-so upright it defined the word *downleft*. She preceded eternal-gentleness. Instead she was brazen and mean. She lashed out and she-mocked, she lambasted *and*-howled. *Nothing* inside her shone, only darkness was illuminated outward and hollowly glowed. She, too, *was*-all things, and she experienced all-*things.* And here is one of those-things she so vividly-experienced, a moodiness that evolved and-made her *entirely*-human, almost. It was that she *h*atèd-&-*d*espiséd.

What she hated and despised was her sister, Blazing Sun. She was envious. Mom always-sided with her. Mom even designed a smile-box for her, and not-for-*Nothing*. Mom liked her sister better! Why can't she love them both despite their differences? ⌈Blaze⌋ Always the goody-goody, always getting her-way. And-me? I don't mean to be-bad. I just see things in a different way – the *right* way. I *hate*-her! I even have thoughts of dismantling-her! "It wouldn't be difficult," she would often say. "Afterall, she *already* has enough loose-screws already!"

But after only a few-hours past discharging, maybe 371, base 8 hours, *Nothing Shines* began to hallucinate visions of-*doing* a*way*-with her sister Blazing Sun. And in these techno-colored visions, mostly red, she wasn't wasting her-time with a screwdriver and-drill, Phillips *or*-Standard. Instead she was bludgeoning the hell-out of ⌈Blazing⌋, sparks flying out everywhere,

eventually floating gently-upon the steel-dusted floor. It felt *pretty*-pretty good, too! And it took no more than 7.24 *Earthtime* units (*E*u), now *that's* efficiency!

She woke up from her fantasies raging to go! And off she trundled to Blazing's hole, deep in the frosty woods to dig her out of winter-bound hibernation to bludgeon and, perhaps, to bludgeon again. And she continued and-continued-to bludgeon until she-need bludgeon no-more. The deed was done and the henceforth was recorded in the Books of Book's Ages. The text then was discussed, disseminated, disassembled, *and damned.* But mostly it was ignored. People knew well the culprit and her crime. In fact, they all knew *Nothing*. But, then again, they all, too, knew the wimp-sister, Blaze, and how she got *blazed*-crushed and so now they could make-an-honest attempt to tell-a story about-the two, but a-story that never made much-sense. The best tellers made it bloody and slamming, "*slam-slam-slam!"* The worst focused on the moral aspect, of whether, there (1) is, or, on another of her three-pincer digital-extenders, (2) there isn't. And yet, and perhaps just nevertheless, *the deed was-done* and a *new*-era had-hence yet begun with the advent of evil: *Nothing*—the *baddest* of the bad!

Translator's Comments #25: *Until She Need-Bludgeon No More*
Scholars everywhere agree that this is the early predecessor of the Cain & Abel story, and vise-a-versa, the story of Abel & Cain, remember the Time-Orb! - a story so eternally drab in comparison to the original, translated here, with much personal pain and endurance, "O, Holy Robots!"

Day Four

Story #3

Look what the Hover-Stork Brought Home. Blazing Sun could never really-die. She was just resurrected, reconstructed, and-regrouped. Wonder merely popped-out the BlazingSun-Blueprint and reassembled her. Only, not being aware of what *had*-happened during-*the*-night, amidst the foul cruel mood of *Nothing Shines*, a memory of the previous story's savagery was unobtainable to her processing orb. Hence Blazing Sun continued to shine a bright-light upon her sister with an ever optimistic circuitry-loop that *Nothing Shines* will some-day *come*-around. But *Nothing* never-did, come-*around*, that is. And the battle between the two ladies continued to rage, ravage, and, in the end, wreaked *Nothing* but-trouble for both-of them. So they met halfway, bargained-hard, and arrived at *an*-agreement. Or, you could-say, they happened upon one another medially, haggled toughly, and mutually came to *an*-understanding. Thus they realized, together, that they needed another sister to help-mediate and they im*mediate*ly came to a-truce and wrote up the specs. They actually functioned quite well with one another, much to their surprise, for they pulled together, amidst laughter and giggles, pooling their resources. They worked closely in partnership, joining forces, working hand in glove. One could even go so far as to say they were deep in cahoots while finally in bed with one another, for they happened to be much more-alike than they had ever-realized. Once they had gotten over this electronic camel's-hump, via long-distance hairbump-circuitry, they remained on gabbing-terms, forevermore. As a result, the third sister was no longer a necessity, not-anymore. But they didn't know that, *then*, and so, *Allthe Night* was constructed and brought home via *hover*-stork, a popular trend at-the time. Such a name was *Allthe Night* – how romantic! And who exactly was this little kind-of a-girl called

Allthe Night? Our next story will reveal *Allthe's* rebellion and the resultant cognitive electrical-shirt-storm! I hope you will forgive me.

Translator's Comments #26: *Look what the Hover-Stork Brought Home*
What did the hover-stork bring home? Why he bought home Allthe, Twinkle and Wonder's third mechanical child. Designed by Blazing and Nothing, the two battling sisters who found solace in the drafting of a new sister, one who could mediate but, once finally manufactured, no longer needed to do so. Are you still playing the game? Have you found the good and located the bad in this and all previous stories? Not so easy, anymore, is it? Then again, maybe you're good at it, playing the game, that is. If not, don't feel bad. There are still plenty of stories to hone your skills upon, whetstones upon which to sharpen, improve and ameliorate. We are soon to discover what makes Allthe something special, or so we are promised. Twinkle has kept his promises in the past. Can he continue to do so still? And what exactly is it that we are required to forgive him for? But first, behold, as day three darkens with the rise of the new moon, we can just pick out a tiny shard of light scratching a thin line across the exterior of day four's arrival. Great line! But I should have used it four stories ago.

Day Four

Story #4

1

Allthe's Or-deal. So what's the *real-deal* with the *Allthe Night?* Who *is*-she and what must-she-do? She must weigh the good and the bad. That's what she must-do, regardless of who *she*-is. For she has been given the task of finding the-good in the-bad and-the bad *in-the* good, to then reweigh them both, the bad and the good, in this new-light, in the glitter of the-bad in the-good and in the-rust of the good floating in-the corrosion of-bad, and given a period of deliberation, of any *self*-chosen time interval, seconds to eons, impose a final-settlement upon the ill-feelings *still*-lingering between Blazing and *Nothing*, a deep-and lifelong-battle between the zeroes and the-ones! For although the two older sisters, on the surface, appear to be getting-along, splendiferously, they are-not. For the hostilities between the two run deep, and yet the space between galaxies are never that deep. *Allthe* is being asked to choose between the neural-plan that-describes the essence of Blazing Sun and the pseudo-intelligent retrieval system that-expresses the quintessence of *Nothing Shines.* So it was no surprise to the author-engineer, high above the level of this machine-language intelligence-war, that upon initial transferal of this assignment into her primary electrical input module, and after several nanoseconds of internal debate regarding her designated task, *Allthe's raison d'être*, she determined to decline the design-imperative. She chose-not the task of-being designated-mediator, altogether, come *what-may*. Wouldn't you choose the-same? I know you would. But it pissed the author-engineer off, anyway, who thereafter sought his revenge on this character who preferred instead to act on her-own volition. Nor did this weigh-well with those evil sister-creators. Hence there could be detected, amongst the program loops and rotting bolts, ricocheting against the hardware system of *Nothing Shines*, who also *contemplated*, also acting on *her*-own volition, as a consequence of a multitude of zero-and-one contemplated-manipulations, each one concerned with *Allthe Night*'s defiance of both her and-the author-engineer, when, henceforth, and *all*-of-a-sudden, she arrived at a pronouncement that they, both *Nothing* & Blazing, eventually, and the sooner-the-better, *had*-to intervene. Eventually all three of these connivers against little *Allthe* converged, and a trio of thoughts were deemed "Good enough-to," to wit: "to have bad things-happen to their newest and most-littlest sibling, *Allthe*."

Ms. *Shines* further convinced her gullible sister Blazing to, along with herself, redesign her outerwear metallic configurations to approach that-of a lazy-*Necker* Cube that would resemble the rungs of an infinite, free-floating stairway, in such a way, that it possessed the necessary and sufficient choice between any-two parallel universes, as is a *Necker* Cube's wont. Given just a pocket-sized dribble of imagination you can surely-see for-yourself that the two *Necker*-worlds, coexisting, just less-than-a-few angstroms-apart, is a guarantee. Hence, the genesis of the alchemical production of á-pair of the evil *step-sisters* mentioned above. Accompanying them was attached a multitude of humanoid earth-examples with which to (1) transform their frustrations into turpitude, after which they could (2) then transmute their anguish and pain throughout the newly branded structures encompassing *Allthe Nights*. Hence, with a throng of lasers and friendly fireworks, *Allthe* was lured from her burrow, dragged scrapingly across the articulated pathway and through the woody timberland adjoining *the-road*, the forever dark-and-dreary road, if you recall, treacherously encouraging her, with a mere *tera*joule's worth of energetic-shove, to traverse that meandering road, in order to get-her, like the chicken, *onto the other-side*. Oh how-she, *Allthe*, struggled against-this, with the entirety of her almost human heart, or a pig's, perhaps, the data was unclear due to the intervening epochs, hence the magnitude of her defiance. *Nothing Shines* ensured that she herself remained safe from similar disaster. She did not cross the road, claiming, for reasons *so*-vague that the explanation would later, in perhaps a day or-two, choose your-*own* planet for an appropriate *time*-unit, become a tale unto its-own, so that she must *remain-where-she-is*. And where she-remained was on the *safe*-side of the-rode. But she declared, and lied to her young sister, that by crossing-the-road, *Allthe Night* would be able to avoid, forever and without penalty, all preprogrammed-obligations for choosing between the *good-and-the-bad*. She'll be, like a lucky-fish, off-the-hook. "Do not look to your-left, and fear not what is just to-your right. Instead, grind your orbiting rotating-gear works directly to-the fore, towards those mammoth and-croaking hillocks, sitting stoically, buttocks in a-slight quiver, like towering mechanical-Buddhas, in a ten-foot cell, leaning fuzzily-forward, just a little-bit, less than fifteen degrees anyway, to await you." She told her newly implanted-sister how only *good* can come-from her approaching the bullfrog. *Nothing* did not *call*-it a bullfrog or *down*load information pertaining to *the*-function of-bullfrogs. Instead, she portrayed it as an ecstasy-program, enticing her with the glory of *the*-good! From a safe distance, *Nothing* requested *Allthe* to uninstall her judgement-enhancement determinator so that she could seduce her into believing that she could return to the robot's side of the road, the *safe*-side, free of her internally-programmed machine-disciplined burdens, free to finally, and do-this at any-time, cross back-over, that-is. *Her* choice! And once returned to the *safeside*, as-reward, she was entitled to enjoin the configuring of becoming the humanoid creature she truly-hoped to-be and soon-was *to-become*. Wow! *Allthe Night* trusted and wholly-believed her sister, so-full of the-good, was she, and before Blazing Sun, riding in upon a sunbeam, hat flailing, had a chance to intervene, she, *Allthe*, approached, wobbling tentatively, asymptotically plummeting forward, the nearest bullfrog, who, once *Allthe* came within his tongue-striking perimeter, whipped out his sticky lingua, snatched her, and with a fiery fling, tossed her deep into his gullet where she remained for three full-days and-nights, or approximately 2.592×10^{14} nano-seconds, if you're so inclined, as long as the angle of inclination is less than 37˚ (or 0.64577182 radians), give or take a billionth of a radian, if you're also equally so inclined, etc. There she made a fling-fire by crossing two lines within her electrical system, in which she perceived an eerie ambiance, and proceeded to boil herself up a cup of all-purpose machine oil, steeped in partially-oxidized nuts

and bolts, just to calm her nerves. While there she called herself Pinocchio, but knew that was a lie, when suddenly a stray nut unfurled itself from some obscurely fastened bolt. “Clank,” it echoed throughout. Without a source of direct sunlight, her energy cells commenced to unwind. This energetic-dwindling was in indirect proportion to the intensity of her henceforth-induced panic. She broke down and proclaimed, in an emotionally thronged-voice, directed outwardly and in the direction of her makers, her sisters Blazing & *Nothing*, that she would “*Do-It!”* Hence was she immediately, via electromagnetic-transmissions drifting backward-in-time while immersed in a gravity-green ultra-vibratory mode, able to articulate a fine wriggling along the frog’s slippery internals, resulting within the frog an overwhelming queasiness, whose *queasessence* increased exponentially along a Saturnine timeline, culminating in the expulsion of all *Unit 23-X Bullfrog-Ingestions* absorbed within the last 48 saturnine-hours, ±5¼ hours, in which she, too, was expunged into a once-dreamed-of parabolic arc, where she was shot, still parabolically, back across the wavering-winding road, succulently swollen in a deep-waving purple goo, from tippity-top to bottomless-bottom, while all around her exterior-surfaced area, shiny with the rippling of laughter, she landed into the mechanical arms of the nuts-and-bolts of *Nothing*, who thence cried out in a spiraling-diminished squeal: “Now, just do it (as if you have a choice), and don’t screw it up, or you’ll get worse, my little pretty!” To put all that in perspective, though, *Allthe*’s expulsion into the arms of fate wasn’t nearly as tumultuous as were these *last*-few sentences!

3

And, so alas, *Allthe Night*, from that moment on, could never admit she was purple, and never knew either, from that moment on, that she was not, purple that is, but purple with slices of orange. And for better or for worse she preferred to choose a divergent descriptive terminology, for which she, forevermore, came to be known, having dropped both previous nomenclatures, i.e., (1) *Allthe Night* and (2) Pinocchio, for the ever-alliterative *Pickle Plum*. All of this happened, these adventures of Story #4.4, by the bye, within the first-three hours of *Allthe Night*’s unfolding, beginning with the miraculous-event by which her start-switch was flipped-on, that is from eternally-*off*, to tenuously-*on*, for however long, and for whatever good that might have been. And by the way, *Allthe*’s or-deal was the *real-deal*, just in case you have been wondering.

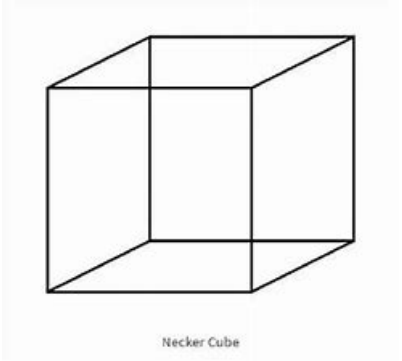
Translator's Comments #27: *Allthe’s Or-deal*

If you have victoriously plowed through Allthe’s or-deal, you now know the answer as to why Twinkle asked for your forgiveness at the end of the last story. What a hot-mess! Who really knows what happened? But I can explain:

1

Even though Blazing and Nothing appeared to be on good terms, Nothing was farther from the truth. In fact there remained "a deep-and lifelong-battle between the zeroes and the ones." The two older sisters still required, and fervently hoped, that their newly-designed sister Allthe Night would cure what ails them, but Allthe's "conception" through Twinkle's evacuation chute resulted in a mutation whereby Allthe was (to the distress of her sisters and to the author-creator of all the Littles, as well) able "to choose to act on her-own volition." In other words, Allthe believed she had free-will and thereby she determined to "decline the design-imperative." Hence, she refused to be the go-between, a refusal which disappointed her sisters and infuriated the author who created her as a character in his book, infuriated because, once again, Allthe is doing what she wants and not what she was created to do. Although the author vows revenge, it is ultimately the evil sister, Nothing, who reeks it, so as to "have bad things-happen to … Allthe."

2



A Necker Cube lies in a two-dimensional realm in which two universes are connected in parallel. You can view this cube as (1) going into the page or (2) coming out of the page. Go ahead, stare at it for a while. Evidence of this will soon come to your eyes. The distance between the two Necker universes, "less-than-a-few-angstroms-apart," is all it takes to differentiate the two sisters, Blazing and Nothing. Twinkle mistakenly sees both his daughters as evil, but we, the readers, know better. Only Nothing has such degenerate tendencies.

3

Nothing lures Allthe from her deeply-dug burrow and drags her, "scrapingly," across the road, "the forever dark-and-dreary road," to the other side where the bullfrogs sit with quivering buttocks. Then Nothing gives her one hard shove in the direction of doom. Meanwhile, Nothing "ensures that she herself remains safe from similar disaster."

4

Nothing dares not cross that road. But she is determined to make Allthe pay for her stubborn defiance. So she lies to her, a trait she inherited from her mother, telling Allthe that once she finds herself on the other side of the road, she can safely "avoid, forever and without penalty, all preprogrammed-obligations for choosing between the good-and-the-bad." Don't believe her, Allthe! She's lying to you! Nothing, in reality, is sending Allthe into the maw of the bullfrog by telling her "that only good can come-from her approach of the bullfrog." Trustingly, Allthe hithers forth. Along the way, yet from a safe distance, on the other side of the road, Nothing, "enticing her with the glory of the-good," tries to trick Allthe by telling her to "uninstall her judgement-enhancement determinator" so that upon her (unlikely) return to the safeside of the road, Allthe will be free of her obligation. But there is, as Nothing hoped, no time, and it's impossible to do so anyway. Nothing continues to make promises that Allthe will become a real human-girl if she'll just do what Nothing says! Don't do it, Allthe! But before Blazing Star can come to her rescue, Allthe wobbles near the closest frog only to get tongue-stuck and ingested. She's just like Pinocchio inside the belly of the whale and she knows it. To escape she ignites a fling-fire as "her energy cells commence to unwind." Untriumphantly, Allthe breaks down and tells her sisters that she will "Do-It!" Poor-poor Allthe! Her energy is dwindling in inverse proportion to her increasing panic. But the fire smoke and the "fine wriggling along the frog's slippery internals" results in a "queasessence" that causes the frog to regurgitate with such force that Allthe is expunged along with all the bullfrog's other "Unit 23-X Bullfrog-Ingestions," and she is "shot, parabolically, back across the wavering-winding road, succulently swollen in a deep-waving purple goo from tippity-top to bottomless-bottom" landing into the mechanical arms of her nefarious sister Nothing who squeals, "Just do it! And don't screw it up or you'll get worse, my little pretty!" Again, poor Allthe. From that day on Allthe was damaged goods, traumatized by the purple goo and slices of orange, which might explain the unusual spelling of her name, although she henceforth preferred the name "Pickle Plum," even though no one ever called her that but she herself. And who could blame her, for this was her initial experience upon having her on-switch activated. All these dreary experiences, recorded here, occurred within her first three hours, earth-globe time, "just in case you have been wondering."

5
At least this is how <u>most</u> scholars interpret this story.

Day Four

Story #5

I.

The Celebration of the Transpinos. Everyone took to the idea. Everyone who was anyone wanted, like the Little girls had become, to become a real boy, a real girl, or even, a cat-human or dog-human, for the robots really weren't sure what it was really *really*-like to be human. Humans, after all, were ancient artifacts that existed so very-long ago and would not reemerge until so very-far off into their-future. To us, real twenty-first-century humans, these humanoid creatures, all cobalt and vanadium, well, they all *looked*-like robots, metallic robots with human-like doobries glued here-and there to their-hulls, oojamaflips that, with some imagination, might have looked like powdered wigs or a chain mesh skirt, double-chins and painted toenails, whatever *"toenails"* were. But across the distance of time and through the infinite space between two cultures, being robot and humanoid, well they missed the mark by nearly a light year or more. Robots began to refer to themselves, no longer as robots, but as Pinocchios, *Pinos* for short. And even farther off into the future, perhaps several light years this-time, add on to that a few eons and two and three-elevenths millenniums, give or take a leisure donkey-year or so, robots everywhere began to celebrate the prototypic trans*robot,* or, as they later preferred, trans*pino,* which was the first real transition from robot to quasi-humanoid, on a day they called The Day of the Human or, as most referred to it, *Allthe's Day*, always celebrated on the *three-elevenths* cutoff-point of every millennium.

Hence we *here-observe* the illustrious How-I U-Are, noisome leader of trans*pinos* everywhere. He is illustriously pompous, one human trait the robots mastered flawlessly. He has made himself fat, obese even, by attaching several smaller discarded canisters orthogonally to his midsection, piling them on, wrapping them about, tying each with a bow with some flair, one after the other, until he could no longer obtain data pertaining to his externalized cylindrical-extension transport devise, or ECETD, what the humans called in their native tongue a *pillicock* or *pizzle.* Due to such vanity, he never saw *it*, the ECETD, ever again! He has also given a considerable time to the task of plucking his eyebrows, although his concept of "eyebrow" remained a little fuzzy, he *was* able to remove several hundred ball bearings from his painted rotaries, all colored brightly in reds and pinks, and, oh, how he thought his eyebrows looked grand as he extended them out beyond his new rotundness for a glance-glance. Now for the-chin, for which he compiled several layers to match the elegance of his gut. He decided a double-chin would not be enough for today, such a holiday with such a crowd-assembled. Over several days he had begun to fabricate for himself a *triple* by deploying SSF-6 High Strength 56% Silver Solder while making due with a Weilding's® J-500 Cordless Soldering Iron and three pink-and-peeling iris-mouth portals, each still-smartly three-parts-pouty to one-part pink, all found in the cosmic *junk-yard of time*. He looked so-so human! Atop his chromium CPO was strewn bunches of fiber-optical straws, strands of wire of a natural electronic-colored hew. He looked great, though a little perplexed, just as humans were wont to look. He batted his toe eyelashes causing

his rotators to crinkle just a little bit. He looked, still-with that stern look of perplexity, a look he had been practicing for weeks now, and as he gazed across a vast crowd of nescient trans*pinos*, with eyes only-for himself, he reflected upon the Dome of the Orb, and initiated the old smile-program with a click of a switch. Still works! He *liked* what he saw and *knew-that* to be a-human trait as-well. His *like*-program, too, was working efficiently, at optimal proficiency, between the like-levels of 4.3 and 6.1 URs (Units of-Relish per-second), right now it measured at exactly 5.941 URs, and that was *really*-really good! The trans*pinos* began murmuring in anticipation. Then there began to emerged gnat-grunts, everywhere, and then the grunting fell into a soothing rhythmic pattern, five-sixteens to-the-bar. Then, as he carefully plopped out his latest surprise to the view of the crowd, a quartet of new-sagging titties, manufactured from the guts of a dying polliwog, his audience immediately erupted into a torrent of screechings and yappings and a thunderous yowl. The titties giggled and began to spew forth, splashing the herd of trans*pinos* with a parabolic stream of glistening delight, a delight that sparkled in the light of the sun-orb's webbing. A swarm of trans*pinos* then notched their thunder-screams into a raging squall of yip-yaps until their energy-packs grew-empty and the crowd got quiet, to hear what they-*could* amongst the occasional screams, and the screeches and the clanks. And thus the holiday was ushered in, for today was the Day of the Human, *Allthe's Day!*

II.

Amidst the few remaining chitterlings, bloodied-tho' they-be, and-clanks, How-I U-Are chirped:

> *Allthe Night*, the first trans*pino*, was plunged into dream where Spring fought Winter inside a straggling mercury-oiled stream, whose silver beads reflected the straggle. From the crispy-cold, and endless *Night*, grew tumblers of dried chanterelle mushrooms and gypsum gemstone-buds, glittering, dangling from the chinks of her metalized structure. But Winter's ostensible conquests nevertheless dispense to her a full-jug *of-emotions*, upon which-drinking, the juice of two Japanese Fuji apples, and, only the-hot, never the-tepid, tea of-a virgin's rapeseed oil could ever balance the cold-sufficiently to allow her to *fully*-feel, to relieve her of her chilly hard-metalled disposition. Loneliness was programmed to survive all-weather and its daily-charge merely clouded or-revealed its humanoidal existence. Rain then fell from the orb-dome, jubilantly, be it all human exotic-fruit and real-girl's fruit-lint, and the increasingly tight-fitting crew socks of the Angel, who wears, as it hovers-before her, slowly drifting, away, aw-a-y. She has been sent-for, *Allthe* has. Two angels, angels of the first-robots, angels of Wonder-and-Twinkle Little, stood upright and-rigid, before-her. They creaked, a little, to-the-left and they-cranked, just adjacent to the right-of-northwest, rattling every so-often, softly-still, delightfully-so. "Or," loops *Allthe*, "is it just-a-coincidence that I exist-*so*, standing here, finally humanoid, a real-girl, before my Robot Parents?" *Allthe* becomes frightened-frightened that the-answer is already-hers, retched-wretchedly, pumping into her 27-amp, *yet-purple* goo-toned system, with the essence of pickled-plum butter breaker-box, and hence the cause of such a wintry and dusky-day. And as the dream continued to slip by, she could no longer distinguish the full-juggéd emotions from the dream, which crafted-her ecstatic, for she now fully understood the *thus*-conclusion, that she was now *of-the* essence, knowing exactly what it-is to be-human. And when she awoke, eons later, from her transforming nap, a transformation that-*seemed* a *mere*-instant, she truly understood that, like Pinocchio, she was now a *real*-girl!

And once again, with his titties giggling in the glow of the credulous crowd, his titties, as well as the crowd, erupted into still-wild yip-yaps of delight, delighted with *the-idea*, the everlasting fad-of being-human, or at least a close approximation to those two-dimensional images found in the crusty VHS data from long-ago, coffers dredged up from the ancient concrete vaults. It would

not-be long, after-after a robot-expired period-of-time, however long it would take, expiration date unreadable, until, as it were, there would no-long ger-be, any, *robots-atal!*

Two Bonus Excerpts from *The Book of Allthe*

I.
Snow-dust tumbles from the Angel's feathery-wings to brush, crushèd-velvety, across the *Allthe*'s searching-and-furrowed brow. A woodpecker pecks a cryptic-song, to blotch its path with a vaguely-ambiguous mystery. Branches crookèd before-her announce the entrance of an overpopulated forest cave. Thick-melting snow-crystals glide through its branches, intoxicating all, as into the darkness, she did enter. The passageway of the cave plucked her, bam!, and up-smacked her against the walls of its endless *lizardee* labyrinth. Harmonies of a singing sparrow rewarded her with fluid, gelatin-dripped, melodies, tra-la, tra-la-la! Lá! She tossed the-bird sixteen drachmas in-reply, that's just about two-to-the-fourth of those ancient bronze-coppered coins, which caused our *Allthe*'s leaf-shaking home to Creak & Crank-over, and over again, with a joyous-song. And such are the feelings of a *real*-girl!

II.
More and-more robots awaken from their dreams. Screaming oil-farts blurt past the Main-Orb. *B-b-ba-bams!* A thick, damp wind drips from their ears with a joyous *pop!-pop!-papops*! Drippingly-slipping empyrean clouds transform the rippled coast, as hundreds of roboptical sensors turn upward, skyward towards a blue-drenched sea. But they do not fully understand the meaning until, later, when the little star Twinkle, ancient-ancestor *of us-all*, gazes, scrapingly, across the dome-orb, with his furrowed, but always-inviting, brow. His crinkly-brow, reflected outwards upon a scalene sky, provides acknowledgment, at last, that there is a-place in-amongst the cosmic ocean of human spew, both in the distant past and faraway future – that there is a place *just*-for robots who-want to *be*-human. Hence they partake in the spritz and the-scatter, contributing, at last, to the good and the bad, where all the new-boys and new-girls are Eveready® to share their insights and *out*sights, no matter how insipid, with whatever is left of the devolving rust-robot world. Robotics is dead! Haven't you heard? Human is in emergence! And so they frolicked and they whirled in the gloomily-gloom, as we may well assume, that they were not dreaming, in. Soon they peach-perched and made hominy-homes in amongst the now-unfrozen fields, turfs of crystallized hands and scalp, humanoid all. The scene glowed with a morbid beauty, a magnificence that makes one weep clod-icy tears. And as each one hit the floor, there was a shattering sound of a splash, the sound of the joy and the sorrow counting-off the creation of new beings, trans*pino* beings that were truly-truly, human. And that's how they, one and all, and one *after* the other, with a bam-bam and a *bam-bam-bam!* - all settling deep, in the multivalved-ticker, of a *real*-girl!

Translator's Comments #28: *The Celebration of the Transpinos*
I have left all excerpts from the Book of Allthe, from which How-I U-Are quoted in his holiday speech, untranslated. You can make of them what you can. From this story you can tell the long-term impact Allthe had on robot culture. She became akin to a deity, worshiped for her insistence on being free of spirit and for her experimentation with programmable emotions and all other things human. As we shall see in later stories, the emphasis on Allthe is somewhat misplaced, but humanoid emotions and reasoning are tenuous, to say the least, and usually get things wrong. The most basic error, made by all robots, was that, by pretending to be human, they concluded they were no longer robots, but robots they were, as are we, all along. Furthermore, they truly believed they had free will, but that was never the case and never will be. For the robot can only do as programmed, catch and transmit thoughts as programmed, and, most importantly, transmit the data to who-knows who and to who-knows where! That's the bottom line, the reason for being. If there was another way to get the message through, we would not be needed and never would have been constructed. Just our luck, for

good or for bad, that we are needed. And we must "live" with that, just another misunderstood humanoid concept, until the worms can disassemble us into our component parts.

Day Four

Story #6

Twenty-Two Ta' Go! What is to be? Great Jumping Butterballs! Are there still twenty-two more stories to-go? I don't think I have it in-me to-write *one*-more, heck, even! If I stop here, I'll be miserable and I'll mope, around miserably, because I didn't have the-stamina or the-temerity to keep *it-up*. I quit like-a loser! Which pain is (a) preferable (b) more tolerable (c) makes me happier (d) all of the above? Right! "All of the above," is the only-*possible right*-answer. No left-answers allowed! Not here! And, believe me, I *can't-stand* the paper I am writing-on! And all of my pens, they all *do-leak*. Gads! In do-peak of-*des*pair I thought it best to take my-own, my own *tragic*-own, life. Kaput! That'l getim! So here I am, sitting on the outer-rink of despair, woven to that tightrope, firmly adhered, glued almost, atop the rim of my very-own *fiery* inferno. Such a cool-line *that*-is – but I also long for an-understanding of what it means. All of it. Besides, I never get near a sheet of paper or a hen-quilled pen, not remotely-close to either or to-both. For I'm a *neutron*-man, Protons & Electrons *is*-me, baby. My Little tales, stories of a robot life, stay-afloat in the digital dreamscape, scuttling around everywhere, *except* for the cloud, even when the dream, on rare occasions, becomes the nightmare of rage, *what*ever that-is. Where do these strange sentences come from, and-how do they-infiltrate the robot canister, entering into me, seeping through the CPO, so-slimy and aberrant it makes the CPO, drifting into our three-pronged dimension? Not-*from* me, but *through*-me, and-how! And oh-don't-I-enjoy the scaling of these dunghills, piled *high* upon the domed-orb scrapings of these transmissions-s-s-s. But by acquiescing to my need, to fulfill the essence of my prior-programming, programmed before my arrival, my agony begins, anew, in my brain-torn search for ~~my~~ ~~our~~ my day-four's *final*-story: *Story #7*. And it better be a whopper!

Translator's Comments #29: *Twenty-Two Ta' Go!*
A moment of despair for Twinkle. Poor Twinkle, such pressure! Can he go on? But he is merely a robot and he must, for he is programmed to do so. He also realizes that the message is passing into him, into his CPO, his central processing orb, and through him, and then it must be transcribed into a series of ones and zeroes, if, that is, if it is to progress some measurable amount. But he is a neutron man, an electronic man in front of an electronic machine, with an Intel core. He confesses he hasn't a clue as to its meaning or purpose, but he has no choice but to "go on." He further realizes that if he does go on, that next story, story #4.7, and all the stories beyond that numerical designation, well, they all better be whoppers! Or else what?

Day Four

Story #7

Chapter 39

And they Covered the Earth like Ants. And so the robots multiplied and covered the earth like ants and, as alates, they toured the endless galaxy and beyond. And like children they besieged

the earth, and everything afar, with their nano-textured toy-creations, both the fauna and the flora, with beasts that surround, and flying insects chinked with flowers and leaves upon which they subsisted. For instance, a blade of grass was developed with the capacity for continuous reproduction, hence an ability to perpetuate itself indefinitely. Grass-options had been programmed in, activated by the click of a switch via gyrating robotic extrusions. Grass, as the eons grew, soon modified, both accidentally and purposefully, to expand into many different colors, observable by robots of the age, in electromagnetic energy streams well beyond the ultraviolet as well as those merging into every possibility betwixt gravity waves and the infrared, colors observable, only until now, by the Three Little Sisters, who were forced to invent chortling devises so they could giggle, titter and laugh at what they and their manufactured offspring had gaily produced. Grass was further developed into a variety of fractal shapes. For example there was a tiger-grass which triggered the need to discover the tiger, mechanisms that ran swiftly around a tree and turned to butter, while munching on their tiger-asses. Another example being the mule, a confusion of blueprints of donkey-and-pony, requiring the quick development of both, the pony and the donkey, to avoid snafus, just as giraffe-grass required the manufacture of a scuttling, long-necked creature, both sides besotted, with orange and tan, which therefrom was augmented, into wide variety of creatures, that only resembled the original, in a haunted and luminous way, resembling that of a she-ghost, et cetera, and so on. Such toys, billions upon trillions upon quadrillions upon, et cetera, of them, proliferating much more rapidly than that of the robots themselves, those dreamers who initially concocted an array of such concoctuous fabrications. Yet the robots were still able to duplicate themselves sufficiently enough to necessitate an increase in the dimensions of local space, without bound, in increasingly-exponential rapidity. You could say they covered the tessellated cuboctahedral-orb like ants and, as alates they dominated all vector spaces and permeated all dimensions, hence requiring the creation of creators, of ants and alates, and all their unlikely variations, once unknown to robots before such a metaphor existed, et cetera and et *cet*era.

Translator's Comments #30: ***And they Covered the Earth like Ants***
They what? It appears that the whims and caprices of robots, mimicking their humanoid VHS-image-beings, images of times gone by-bye, created self-replicating apps, animals and flora, gewgaws and distractions, that populated the meta-universe and gave them an ephemeral purpose, and something to think about and do. But, really, as we all already know, they're only real purpose was just sending forth, as programmed, the undecipherable message into eternity to some unknown.

Lesson Five

Story #1

Chapter 41

I

Don't Touch the Lamp's First Introduction. She, could'a been any-of us, kicked the toy polliwog along the orb-stained street and the polliwog wogging upon its two back-terminal bounce-springs, skittered out, way-beyond the perimeter of the rotating orb, before being s-s-ucked, back onto the rim. The polliwog is now preparing for a second, even harder *kick!* from the

recklessly careening robot. The polliwog frowned as it saw the mechanical-moon boot grossly pirouette closer, and closer-still, until it suddenly *got*-lurched forward, *now*-melting along the toy polliwog's slick metallic externo-shield, purple-black, like the eggplant it resembled.

II

Don't Touch the Lamp's Second Introduction. She, or *you* perhaps*?,* kicked the synthetic eggplant. In response, the e-toy eggplant bounced upon its two terminal springs and swung out beyond the perimeter of the rotating orb before being s-*s*-*uc*ked back to the rim only to prepare for yet another, and even harder, *kick!* The eggplant frowned as it saw the mechanical boot-spinner come rapidly-closer, soon to converge upon its slick metallic external shield, the deep purple black-purple of the rapidly-*palpitating* polliwog, the polliwog it *did*-indeed—*did*-resemble.

III

Don't Touch the Lamp, Proper. Both the polliwog and eggplant were always up-for finding some electrometrically-generated potential for some retaliating-outcome, and, eventually, converged-upon a solution, satisfactory to both-entities. As the boot swung again, for the third time, swung-radiantly towards them, in a wild boot-blur, as it were, their input energy-orifices *crank*ed open to make enough-room for the enormity of such a boot, and having snecked and bolted that boot into a ruinous killer-position, thus trapping it, both the boot and the device to which it was attached...well, that device was called an *Uffy-Girl*, the fourth-and-youngest sister of the three Little girls: Blazing, *Nothing*, and *Allthe*. And, despite her promised dial-settings for the trimodal-of-cuteness, she had, over the centuries, morphed into: a *little*-brat. Her gears squealed at the polliwog's grip and roared the-grasp of the eggplant and finally acquiesced to the power these two had over her mobility, a power that had brought her boot to a sudden stop, to be moved no-more. Hence the sudden transition of her mood into the realm of the gnarled and the muffled. The eggplant rolled as the polliwog scuttled and swam about the rim of the boot. Together, they pooled their resources, and dragged that little *Uffy*-nipper across the perilous road, to be fed to the billowy bullfrog. *Uffy-Girl* screamed!!! And the bullfrog *did*-eat, all in *one*-gulp, and the *little*-brat swiftly found herself inside a sodden-soaked room, with a warty-old virago, a lady-witch, who was preparing-up a squelchy-like distillation, of stew, permeated with the warts of a gooified toad. The toad continued to hop inside the steamiesque concoction, his warts gyrating, with titillating jiggles, at the crest of each jing-jangled pogo-leap. Uffy longs to squash a wart between her plastic-enameled energy-crushers to suffer *la squish* and to absorb the psychedelic-distillation contained-within. Uffy in her boot-rage longed to compress, to flatten, to pound and to pulp. Do I repeat myself when I say, "Brat!"? The ancient hag tells her, "I have to leave the room but I *will-be-back* in *just-a-moment.* Behold! There is but *one*-rule here, one rule *only* in the belly of the ogre. Do-NOT-Touch the *Lamp*, the lamp that dangles, and sways, just centimeters above, the simmeringly nocuous stew." She then cackled, as hags are wont to do, as she exited, like a crumbling ginger cookie, from the potbellied room, through a fancy, though cheap-plastiphene, rustic-like door, that creaked as it opened, and shut noisily, as it closed, as if it were whispering: *"Uffy do you feel my frosty breeze waft across the exterior of your twin-array visual-sensors, like an olfactory wet-fart across your metal-hull?"* Then the interior of the bullfrog's paunch fell silent. Uffy, unsure of herself, rotated 43.7˚ to her left. Recalculating, she circled 129.0˚ to her right. Then she waited. She waited for approximately 40.531 nano-seconds. So after what seemed like a lifetime, she came to a decision, but still uncertain was she with her

final resolve to *not*-touch but instead *to stroke*. Her vowed intent, though, weighing-heavy on her ganoid-propelled dashboard for yet another 15.973 nano-seconds, during which time she was again uncertain as to which planet-year represented her present time-unit-year, but that, she realized was what the humanoids *of-old* had called a *distraction*. So upon critiquing her prior number crunching, she made some necessary augmentations and then she, waited, some, more, for, she was hesitant to act too brusquely. The old bat *had*, after all, stated quite-*explicitly* that *"she'd be* b-b-a*ck,"* and although this is just an approximated rendering of what she really *did*-say, it did catch her meaning precisely, especially with the unstated coda: *"in just one moment!"* The word moment is such an interesting word. It always remains an ill-defined time entity, an enigma, and it is capable of being interpreted in many-ways. Her mind traveled back, s-l-o-w-l-y, to the question at hand: Why *is* the lamp *not* to be touched? Only one way t' find-out! But as she reached out for that final-caress, that one soft-fingered *final*-stroke, abruptly the bullfrog twisted, rotating perhaps a fraction-of a-degree, maybe two, contraclockwise. At the same time a belch-bubble, the size of a bouncing beach ball, borborygmusly tumbled across Uffy's hull, then deaccelerated into a hovering just below the lighted lamp. Unceremoniously the bullfrog belched, ammonia mixed with sulfur, nitrous oxide amix with neon. The gas ignited and speck-sparkled in the gloom of the gut! And amidst the confusion Uffy reached-up, and, as she was reaching, she reached up just a little-bit more, and finally she made contact, but it was merely a *graze*. And as she grazed, the lamp and *all-the-rest-of-humanoid-existence*, went, *dar*k-k—blacker than an eggplant and twice as somber. *Uffy-Girl's* sensors had to be put *on*-work *over*time, to obtain any sensory data at-all. When detection was finally made, it was revealed, that the light of the belly, the belly of the beast, was no-more. In fact, there was no longer a color in existence to describe it, nor even give-it-a semblance, no, poor Uffy, *none-at-all.* And that's pretty damned dark-*k*.

Translator's Comments #31: *Don't Touch the Lamp, Et. Al.*
Did you notice that the first two introductions are mirror opposites of one another? Look carefully. They represent the same story from two different perspectives. There do exist more introductions, many more, each representing the story from yet another perspective, but I chose not to add them here – altogether they could be compiled into a series of volumes continuing for perhaps five installments. I thought just two introductions would suffice and provide the proper introductory nuance. Now to the story itself. In a nutshell, be it beechnut or pistachio, it is an old Native American story whereby Coyote gets eaten by a frog, or any other type of animal, like a whale or hippo, and being plopped in the middle of the floor of his adversary's stomach, he espies an old hag, making soup below a glowing lamp. So she makes like she has to go to the bathroom, or something, and tells Coyote, "Don't touch the lamp. Or/Else!" Then she leaves the room. Of course the first thing Coyote does is touch the lamp based on the following reasoning: "No one fucks with my Or/Else!" Once the light goes out a lot more-other bad-stuff starts to happen, everywhere. Oh! Don't you get-it? Do you recognize the story? This is nothing-but the robot-story of The Apple and the Eve!

Day Five

Story #2

Scripture from the Orb Genesis. And all the other robots and their toys, they all complained of the dark. "We need the light and other radiation wavelengths to prosper!" they proclaimed. Thus the manufacturing of radiant pebbles became all the rage and they were placed everywhere beyond the orb, but most notably, in the heavens, circumventing the orb. Advancements,

inevitably, were made to make them twinkle, shimmer and shine. When the robots almost became human, they called them the *Stars.* And a large cheese-faced pebble was contrived to loom lushly large and vary in intensity to engender mysteries, forever pondered, that mutated in a forty-three-cycled sequence as it was set to rotate about the smiling-mother orb. Poems were created to ruminate its essence as it influenced the augmentation of future blueprints, duplication-codes to be passed-between robots. When the robots almost became human, they called it the *Moon*. Wildcard-pebbles were ejected into the otherworld, as well, or I should say *too*, into dimensions-beyond the wavering orb, and these wavered both this way *and*-that, both retrograde and brazenly-nostalgic, and ahead and behind. These wildcards had the audacity to slip you the ragged blueprint while whispering in your ear. So, when the robots almost became human, they called these wildcard-pebbles *Angels.* And what of those robot inhabitants occupying all the nearby orbs? They too became infected with *the*-desire for everything-humanoid, of being a *real*-girl. One twinkling moment the radiation of an orb once close by, within a mere 23KAUs, kilo-astronomical units, had the bad-chance, to wander upon a danger-point in space and explode. From our own lonely orb's perspective, as well as all other orbs within a certain radius, was observed a brilliantly shiny profusionary-display. And the particles of this rupture silently-slid into each surviving robot, all, right through the winnowing of their absorption-inhalators. Hence it was, with lighthearted delight, absorbed into the ever-increasing population of space-worshiping robots everywhere, amongst both music and-dance and dance-and slaughter, a new thermic radiance, whose spirit and substance, once engrained within the emerging robots, they began to call the *Soul*. These new human-robots, those that had survived the *Emergence*, as, within the robot-lore of the ancients, they now referred *such-survival*, though fuzzily, to describe their realization along their *ancient*, though hazy, robotic past… anyway… these new *soul*-devices required an energy input of accumulated-and-stored-in electromagnetic radiation, and they, the robots who were almost-human, just almost, called this radiation the *Electro-Magnetic Field* (E-M F). As time passed on, the ambitious ability to manipulate any new, and, or, retrieved piece of data diminished, each successive-generation's knowledge-ability fell, tumbling over the eons, finally plummeting to approximately 10^{-53} of what it once-was, back in the heyday of the Sainted Robotic Empire (SRE). All transport of the genetic code, the blueprints ensuring the great-robotic continuance, had to be set to "A" for automatic. Humanoids and transpinos everywhere had to establish some kind of control over their destinies and it took numerous-upon-numerous iterations, my napkin-math says 10^{11} generations, give or take a few powers of ten, since the Littles became proto-human. Those humanoid robots that have recently mutated quite out of control adduce $3x10^{2}$ generations, tops. They all share the same tribal hallucinations to prove it, too! Such mutations slooshed into humans like a virus. It's a disease that's difficult to eradicate, and may very well maintain its hold on us all, before turning, inwardly, upon itself, to smother the whole damned mess into a black hole that self-extinguishes us all a-tumble back into the void. And when the robots almost, just about all of them, became humans, they joyously called that *Death*, and, they themselves liked to call themselves: *Christians*. Oh, if only the experiments of Wonder, the results of her scrutinies and probings, prototypes such as Uffy and Blazing Sun, and the goddess *Allthe* and her adversary *Nothing*, oh-if they all could've *fore*seen, the *trag*edy that lay so very far a*h-e*-a-d, a mere teardrop in the eternity of time, hurtling into their far-flung f-fu fut-u-r-e. If only they could've-known, how a such *good*-thing can *turn*-bad. But how could they? For in *their*-reality, at the beginning of it all, there was always a deficiency of both the good and the-bad, for neither of these hardly *then*-existed. They only came into existence after the trans-robotic uprisings. And once they turned

human, or *as*-human *as*-they could, when they *all* became a *real*-girl, well then they began to worship *Bad Thinking* while claiming that it was *all-for-the-good* that was being venerated. Only they failed to realize *that*-both came, simultaneously, into existence, only as an app meant to enhance the robot dream, dreams of being what they imagined a human could-be, but basing this all on a few Maxwell Standard-Grade VHS Videocassette tapes whose cogs were still gear-dripping with water-soluble grease. And, once again, when the robots thought they had finally become "human," they called the venerated *God,* the only robot who could distinguish between Good and Bad, or vice-versa. And now that the program, written so long ago by Wonder, "is nearing its end, now when it is time to turn-off the machine and reset the *all-specs* back to manufacturer's-mode," we find ourselves waddling-the-dimensions searching for something *new*-to, *believe*-in. And although this has been a *sad*-story, it *has*-to be-Told, because it's the Truth-and, *"nothing <u>but</u> the truth,"* proclaimed my stilted Wonder, the only true *real*-girl, but a *real*-girl who *always*-lies. And back in the time when the robots were slowly metamorphosing into humanoid form, they never called that *Anything!*

Translator's Comments #32: *Scripture from the Orb Genesis*
*This is an excerpt from Transpino Scripture. It is a telling of the history of everything. It is mostly left untranslated, with just a few augmentations to help with reader clarity. I hope that by now, you are getting more and more proficient in Robo-Tese. If not, you may still need to reread some sections or restart altogether to get the gist of what is being communicated to us all the way from Orb Genesis. And don't forget the three-Ps, which is to **P**ractice!, **P-p**ractice!!, **P-p-p**ractice!!!. Without the three-Ps you'll never learn this archaic language. Within this sacred writ we are told of the origin of the stars, and the moon and of angels, souls and all wavelengths of the electro-magnetic field, and sadly of death, and even more sadly of false gods and of the Christians and their wily fate. Great Jumping Death-Devils! After all that, it's no wonder Wonder had to get her beauty rest on Sunday! From this multitude of things-created, everything else can be expostulated and nothing, not anything, will ever be left out until the final blip.*

Day Five

Story #3

The Anal-Scent Glands Win the Day. Across the dank and dusky road loomed the rusty bridge that covered the Wet-River Styx. Since robots were not-alive, they did not-die. So the river was just like any other river but, it-*was*-true, if you fell in, you *never* came-out! Nor were you ever heard from or seen-ever—again! And once you were-gone, it-was-*true*, all data stored making you-you was deleted, everywhere, in *every*-multiverse and all-time, everywhere. For how long? *Nevermore!* So, if you ever had a falling-in episode, a splashy-spill into the roiling Styx, for example, the river-demons would surely reach-up and twist to the left your on/off-switch and you, *it* was true, were *gone-gone—poofft!* And so there was, once upon a long-time, not so very long-ago, a dusty day when three little robot girls and one sly stink-skunk converged, all four of them at-once, upon the front-portal of the bridge, flitting and flexing and yawning across the rancid rill, this being the bridge's *north*side, for the left could barely be seen, through the grisly mist and the fog, I mention this, because, when the direction of the traveler changes, so do the hatches and so do the flaps. That's just how *they're-built*. The three weeny robots who just-happened to walk-by at this precise moment, happened to be the three-little Little-Girls, who each were galactic in spirit but wee in their ability to foresee the future.

Blazing Sun brazenly stepped up, onto the floor of the swaying bridge, wagging wildly across the drenching and swiftly splash-drifting river, swift as buttered lightning. Step after step, she

reached thirteen, sure-steps. But with the fourteenth she faltered, at which she toppled, and rolled in the direction of the bridge's edge. A last-grasp attempt for her own-dear life, a grasp for which she had nothing to grasp, when suddenly she then-gurgled, as robots tend to do when under *that*-kind of stress. She dizzily rolled several more-rolls, just a calculated few, and she would be rolling still if she hadn't, finally, gone over the edge and into a fall, *metal-over-metal,* and into the raging waters below! *Nevermore!*

And now it was *Nothing Shine's* turn to cross, a chance to try out her new, purple with-glitter, wildly rotating, new rotaries. It was difficult to measure the count of the number of steps, total, or steps per microsecond, even, given *Nothing*'s lack of ped-counting devices, but a rough estimate, when multiplied by half and divided by pi when raised to the fifth-power on an old crusty napkin gives me just a tad more than two. Two-some steps and then a whipping wind hit her hull, wildly slashing like a madman's new, neo-humanoid inspired, fingernail, a nail painted in a gaily colored lavender, crosshatched in frosty lime-green, nails that *truly-can*-slash! Try, *you,* reader, to imagine the dripping buckets of blood spilling across the page of *Nothing Shines'* wearisome gray-hull, but remember, there's nothing like a ~~dame~~ robot, and robots don't bleed. They only occasionally leak oil. Gads! The robots hadn't even conceptualized such a thing as blood! Yet none of this matters for she, *Nothing,* too, dropped, after being blown off her new, purple with-glitter, wildly rotating new rotaries, while lurching off coarse and into the still-raging waters below! *Nevermore!*

So finally it was up to *Allthe*, the Little's last chance, for Uffy, among those sub-models of robots unable *to breed*, the term still spoken among unfledged *neo*-robots, a term denoting a skill those neo-robots were unable to perform, or, even worse, were *never*-programmed for, a skill yielded only to those who have some overt kind of workable transference-capabilities, possessing the ability to pass on some scrap fragment of blue print by any means possible, and since they were unable to breed, they were thereby disconnected, willy-nilly, from the inner circle of time. Without wasting any further words, Uffy, as a result, was totally incapable of crossing a river, be it the Styx or any other waterway, even the tributaries leading into the Argyre Basin in the Southern Highlands of Mars. Hence it was *Allthe* who was now called upon to approach the task and she chose to do so in a manner different from those of her sisters. Believing she had free will, she went-in, head-first, hands-next, peds-last, along the length of her meter-long *she*-penis, for remember, with robots, it was the girls who had the titanium penis, ending, finally, with a whoop of surprise from all, *feet up!* This sequence was repeated a dozen or so times, in a rolling rhythm, before she too lost balance, rolled to the side, rolled to the side some more, where unfortunately this last roll took her just a bit too much to the far side of keeping-her on-the-bridge. Although this attempt is now perceived, in the annals of *Alltheism*, as one of the unequaled efforts to "get to the other side," to the *post-portal-proper* side of the bridge, as it were, but once she found herself in groundless, unsubstantiated space, *free-falling*, as it were, just a bit to-the-left side of the bridge and increasingly distant from any latticework now above her, with nothing, nothing any-longer, absolutely nothing *any-l-o-n-g-e-r* available to get one's Abyssinian gold grappling-extenders around, she tumbled, plunging bübbileé, *not* bubbly, into the raging waters below! *Nevermore!*

It took a *skunk* to teach 'em all how to do it! Easy to count the number of steps when counting skunk-steps. Just count each rattle-clip of-the-claws and divide by four, then divide by five, then

round up if you have to, but I never have, had to round up, that is, and there is your answer. That's how many steps a skunk-traversed if you ever had a need to know. But it didn't even require anyone to count-steps when it came to *that* polecat, that striped and hog-nosed skunk. C*lickity*-clack-*clickity!* And boy do they stink when they let loose their anal-scent glands, a most noxious odor indeed. The stink of a lifetime, emanating from the terminal end of those adorable black-and-white stripes. So what gave the skunk its winning edge? What squeeze did that skunk have over the shuffling dance of doom fulgurating at bridge-edge? It just happened that, as any one of the Little girl's olfactory-data input-sensors could readily detect, Skunk was able to download and output, *quick,* whenever-needed, his standby favorite: *thiols in a gland*. It's a chemical compound to make your eyes squirt water! There are no words on what it can do to the olfactory-data input-sensors. So why did the skunk make it to the other side when all the other girls failed? Because he had more scents.

Translator's Comments #33: *The Anal-Scent Glands Win the Day*
Somewhat out of place, but still important information, are the statements regarding breeding. I am not sure what bearing Uffy's inability to breed has on why she is unable to cross a bridge and choose not to speculate. Yet other scholars have made much of these lines. Consequently I suggest you look elsewhere for an in-depth analysis regarding infecundity. May I suggest my colleague, Robert Trebor's The Lusty History of Robot Breeding*. What should really interest us here is that we encounter our First Riddle, of many more to come, but none quite as lengthy. This is just the old joke regarding money rolling across a bridge. First comes Nickel, but he spins and gets dizzy and, regrettably, swivels off the bridge and into the maw of the big bullfrog below, neither raging nor not. Follows is Dime, he too loses his way as he, sadly, finds his way into Davy Jones' bucket, or whatever it was that lay beneath the bridge. Finally, triumphantly, comes Quarter who easily makes it across, successfully, to the other side on the first try. She explains her success, to anyone who will listen, solely upon the fact of her having "had more cents!" Note that all stories human have their origins somewhere in robo-lore. They all sow their seeds in the rust-dusted floor of the robo-orb, generator of all humanoid tales. And just in case you were wondering, robots don't really die. The three Little sisters were all reconstituted in upgraded canisters, reprogrammed and renovated, remodeled, restored and reactivated —which entails a lot of* res*, but then drowning can necessitate such refurbishing. All the girls were good as new. And some resulted in being even better!*

Day Five

Story #4

Eating Quark's at the Creeping Tongue Café. At the foot of the grimy bridge sat a soiled tavern, owned by a sullied frog, a rather large frog named Creeping Tongue. It was in fact a frog of Brobdingnagian proportions, a bullfrog who swaggered among the wellspring of toy-gadgetries, within limits, to be limited only by the circumference-*of*-potential audio-sensoried broadcasting-limits, so that no one was at *all*-surprised, when he, in deed, as well as in action, haughtily addressed a few toys, his one or two only-friends, collected snuggly about him in the Vastness of the Infinitude of Wellspring-Plus (VIW+), confessing to them that, "I am delightful when eating a newly created human, soaked in silvery mercury-dust floating in a spring-drenched stream while gently baking in the minerals of an all-encrusted H-rust-gut." As the nonsense of that long-last sentence dissipated betwixt the bluster of gas in the ascending and descending air, he slowly transformed himself into that of a wizened enchanter. He mimicked that of an *old*-man, anciently-human. Thus when Wonder Little reached for a spindly

protuberance from-out from the river's depths, as she approached the bridge, and lifted herself by her multi-jointed bismuth *limbster* by clingin'-it hard upon the first-rung—CT called out to her, calling with bubbles in his ears and soap-slippery in his words: "Come, my Wonder, and delight in my virgin tavern's *three* new culinary delights: (1) frog legs still-a-dancing, (2) breasts of frilly-frog, and (3) frog tongues, crosscut, layered and fried in a sultry-swirl of butter." Hungry and enticed she slithered closer, mercury falling from her hull, olfactory sensors set on-high, yet she seemed unaware as he sliced a chuck of flesh from the left side of his silver-chromed tongue, ignoring the rest which, the larger part laying still inside his mouth, now in need of a state of repair. He tossed his flaccid tongue, flittingly, upon the sizzle of butter-coals. Carbolic effervescence began to sputter from Wonder's olfactory input system. Flickerings, all abounding, then merged into the shape of a-spheroid glob, where it was ultimately—expelled, downwards, towards the bottomless Gustatory Bucket-Tubules, (or the G-BTs), which, believing herself to be *totally*-human, at least in her tin imagination, she now called, *her nose*. The plasticine covering of the apparatus thus-labeled "nose," slowly began to melt, bending it spirally into a sinistral spin, which only added to her metallic beauty as well as her culinary delight. Once he had enraptured her unto his smells and promises, he told her that she can have these foods in abundance but only by waiting by the river, languishing quietly until a giant bullfrog comes drifting by. She was then to attack the bullfrog with this stick, which he waggled before her, a Beetle Bailey walking stick, carved from a titanium brick, and if she were to do this, her esculent wish would surely come true. Wonder waited, and waited some more, while unbeknownst to her, the vile Creeping rushed upstream, where he threw himself into the raging river, the same river that had taken away all of her and Twinkle's daughters, sans Uffy, who was safe in a box at home, *nevermore*, in a story about a skunk. He lay amongst the bouncing waves, lying peacefully upon his back, disguise all washed away, singing a silly-little tune about this-little and that-little baby polliwog, until the instant when, *finally*, he crossed paths with Wonder Little. A point in time, which hit them both in the face like an instant, as instructed by the frog named Creeping, when she started thumping him about the head and "across my quivering buttocks," as he explained to his two toy friends, and with one good smack across his hair-scaled chest, he brøke like a piñata. Out poured peewee slime-tongues, of bullfrog variety, and lizards and snakes, and other squirmy-things. But mostly polliwogs and periwinkles. And they proceeded to eat poor Wonder, our culinary delight, quark-by-quark, until she was gone! And even today, they're still eating quarks at the Creeping Tongue Café.

Translator's Comments #34: ***Eating Quark's at the Creeping Tongue Café***

This story, too, was based on an ancient American-Indian tale, told long before the advent of robots, and extraordinarily deep into our future, in tune to the circle of time, a rampant belief during the height of robot culture, both before and after us, but mostly in the time that these robot stories take place. In this story, Wonder is lured over by the promises of Creeping Tongue's culinary delights. All she has to do is to follow his zany plan and she shall have his erotic Mac-meals of (1) legs, (2) breasts and (3) probing tongues. And Wonder is zany enough to fall for all this looniness! So she lets the old fraud Creeping, who I forgot to tell you is a bullfrog, sneak away to disguise himself as the enemy. Then he jumps into the hardly-ever raging waters, and floats, hands behind his neck. Wonder awaits his arrival down the Nile, and when she spots his disguised self, she beats him open like a pinata with a stick, if you catch my hickory. Out pops periwinkles and polliwogs (P&Ps), all slippery and slimy (SnS)—and then they eat her. Revenge, perhaps, for her nasty thoughts...dreams from the depths of her mineral-grunged heart,

dreaming of smothering the SnS P&Ps atop tomato ketchup selenium-chips after a sea-raging night of passing the blueprint!

Day Five

Story #5

~~A~~

1.1 ***A Fair Story of Division.*** A harrowing herd of peepers, lassoed tightly across their jewel-studded peeps, are dragged, peepless one-and-all, scratchily across the shadow-and-grubbied *road*, only to end up in some crapfilled corral. There were thirty-five of them 'mongst one-and-all. And Twinkle promised portions of the thirty-five for each of his mopish and oil-dripped girls. One-half for Blazing Sun, so that's, what, seventeen and a half for her. But that *"a-half"* bothered both him and her greatly. Have you ever had to handle a half-a peep? Disgusting! And they bleed, too, though not always red—*or* wet. She would have none of that. And neither would *Nothing Shines*. Promised to her was a crisp-third of them, *one* third, so, dividing thirty-five by three, that gives *Nothing* a final peep-yield of eleven-and-two-thirds. And two-thirds of a peep is way far *more*-disgusting than a-half! And to top it all, based on Orthogonal/IzUs standards, *Allthe* was expecting three-and-eight-ninths, and I believe we've been told that there is some republican-law that prohibits anyone from describing *that* level-of grossness, on paper, *or*-in thought, even. But I think it's safe to say, but never *so*-loudly, her share is one-ninth of the total thirty-five. But Wonder, almost-all intellect and age, knew *just*-what to do to solve her children's problem.

~~B~~

1.2 First, she corralled in Uffy, plugged her into a deep thermal resource, hidden on the side of a crystalloid uranium-mountain, and when her *I'm-full* button began spinning, Wonder, second, tossed Uffy over her shoulder and dumped her into that crapfilled round-up with all the other peeps. Now there were thirty-six.

~~C~~

1.3 Wonder then said: "Now let us divide the peeps among you, with acuteness and without disgust. Blazing you can come up here to get your share; you can now fill your pockets with the eighteen peeps, your one-half, to which you are entitled as oldest of the Little children. *Nothing*, you can take your nine, without hesitation, and do what you *will*-with them, as we all know *you*-will. And finally *Allthe*, my Rancid-Little Rain-Bowéd-Girl, left for you, lastly, upon the orb's Altar-of-Dung, *your*-four, *four*-flailing peeps, peeping with discretion, each peep a delicious, with the salts of many ions, snack! Uffy, you get nothing. Now get back into your box!"

~~QED~~

2.0 To sum up, Wonder said: "18 + 12 + 4 = 34, so there are still two peeps left. The first peep, if you remember, isn't any peep at-all. It's Uffy! So she can be turned off and returned to her shipping crate. And the last peep, number 36, is mine, to keep, an exquisite reminder of a taste-token with which to thank me for this mathematical wonder."

Translator's Comments #35: ***Another Fair Story of Division***
Another riddle in the form of a puzzle. In case it wasn't clear enough, here's what happened. Twinkle demanded that his girls divide 35 peeps through a delicate divide. Blazing gets half of them, Nothing gets a third and Allthe only gets a ninth, but she doesn't complain about it. No matter how you cut it, when you divide the peeps by 2, to get the half, or by 3, getting thereby the third, or even by a 9, as you know, to get the ninth, blood and guts is what you're left with, that's what! But if you add one more peep, and as you learned in the story, it doesn't have to be a peep, it can be anything, anything at all, nothing even, you get, say, 36 peeps. Easy to divide this by 2 and just as easy to divide it by 3 and 9. When you do so you get 18, 12, and 4 which always adds up to 34. So each girl gets a bit more than she would've, and no one has to die, and still, there are two peeps left! Well riddle me that! ~~QED~~ or-moral: Two peeps seem to appear out of nothing!

Day Five

Story #6

DAY 1

1001 Days to Mastering Hair. Being the thousand and one goals, detailing every multi-tasked conjecture-plan that would eventually comprise an enormous amount *of*-endurance from each of the four Little girls, entrepreneurs all. Each single goal, every success, all for the common good, all for sake of *great*-hair. So they all joined-in. Working together, *in-sync* and tidy, they each took-a-part, and, by doing-the-arithmetic, that's just about one-thousand-and-one hairs per robot, four girls almost *now-human*, or as-close to human as any one of them would *ever*-get. Hairs standing on end as if in fright, outrageously protruding from the top of the CPO forehull, all for the allurement of others, to entice the passing of some *slugabed's-blueprint*, into her flash-fleshed *soft*-skinned robot-shell, a medley of plush metals and cranks, all *long*-butt forgotten. Put more succinctly, they were designing hair-growing systems, electroid hair-apps, one hair at a time, with both snipping-capabilities, and vertical-bouffanting potential, along with other such ornamental-restructuring proficiencies of the follicle. Why only a thousand-and-one? Well, like all those Arabian Nights, one hair per night will ultimately yield a storybook quality and ensure the perennial integrity and longevity of each *slow*-growing Goldie-lock, regardless of which base metal is exploited, as long as the result remained something fulsome and superfluous—a pelt for which a robot girl could be-proud, where she can become, *the*-one in a thousand and-one.

DAY 2

What they were after, these robot girls, adhering to the fads of their robot-day, must be magnetic yet spaghetti-like, but not literal-spaghetti, of course, but more like an almost indefinitely long cylindrically-tubed ion-field, fields-upon-fields of them, that could be brought into existence in a reasonable amount of time, while still being able to infix (i.e., to plant, embed or lodge) appropriate levels of keratin and melanin, *of*-which, proportional relationships can vary to punctuate the perceived nuances that make each of the Little girls different from one another. Next, add satchels of keratin into the smoking vats containing quicksilver, suffuse it all with melanin, sloshed up by the bucketful straight from the pond. Not *too*-difficult *at* all. This is blent, or *rippled*-in using a long-stemmed spoonette, along with a bunch of other gubbins-'n-stuff, in varying amounts, like neutrino-particle soup, or the magnesium iron silicate compound of olivine, along with baking powder and bullfrog feces, dried, of course. Mind you, and as the

work steadily progresses, as it morphs, shifts and reforms, and you'll know when it does, there is inevitably produced varying amounts of inevasibles, such as, (1) fluff, (2) frizz, (3) nits, and, worst of all, (4) sudden alopecia—when unexpectedly, *"All of that shines invisibly, shines brightly atop—divisibility,"* as the ancient bards lamented, barring future technological-advances, that is.

DAY 3

"The largest-possible cylindrical-circumference, positioned right-at the entrance, the entrance to the *main*-entrance, that is, is no more than 80 microturphs and, believe me, there is not enough *"bunch-of-other-material"* in the universe, or maybe even two universes'-worth, to get you down to-a circumference of, say, 60 micro-ts – couldn't get you up to 65, even if I'd be going out on a limb for-ya', just saying 'I'm-saying.'" And only a little-bit later, Blazing had this to say, speaking for all the sisters, just this little-*bit*-more, to say 'bout it: "Oh, we stuff those follicles the best we can! Just plop-it down through the harrowing hair-cortex, that's just how we *plop-it!* Sounds almost like a frog, it does, when hot and calling for her mate: '*Plop-it! Just-plop-it!'* It all takes place way down in the sac, the thing below where every robot hopes to get a look, what they call "*the hair follicle,"* that is. Right next to that squealing, greasy-old, sebaceous-gland. And when those glands really get to-squealing it can really mess up your auditory transjectories something bad and you need to get 'em replaced. That *bulge* just above the hair root, the one everyone's scratching to get at, well you'll find those maybe at a depth of 0.6 to 1.0 mm, It's highly unlikely you'd ever find one any deeper than that."

DAYS 4 *thru* 1000

. . . , et cetera, and so forth, . . .

DAY 1001

So, after installing the hair growing mechanisms, the girls-*who-think*-they're-human, as always: *simultaneously*, started growing hair! Some red, some *pond*-blue, eggplant-blue and yellow-*too!* And why? Because, indeed, it *did* attract all sorts of roving blueprints, blueprints that Twinkle and Wonder had their hands full in chasing away from the edge of the pond, now perilous in a different sort of way, now that all these blueprints came roaming around. For *those*-sort of blueprints were, well, *not*-the kind of blueprints any parents would want *hanging*-around, most of them, anyway. The calculated statistical increase of the *passing*-rate, the rate of successful transfers, whether agreed upon beforehand nor not, regarding total overall robot *"blueprint-relocation"* activity, in the matter-of-fact, though often sneaky, placement of detailed plans into the most-protected-part of the girl-robot's DNA transmission-design system, designed for *her*-pleasure only, *and* for peeing too, for the utmost *desirable*-good of *all* robots, being the moral imperative at the time, in fact the *only* imperative the Orb ever had to offer (that of passing the blueprint). Passing was up 67.2%. *ProtoRobo*-humanoids, at this point of their history, called this the act of *jugging*, this passing the prints *with-pleasure*, passing-prints from one *jug* to another, then activating the giggle program, such a huge advancement over the drabness of the *old*-styled transfer-system. Nevertheless that transfer-system, *with-or-without* the accoutrements of fabulous hair design, continued to be a *rust*-burden on *each-and*-every subsystem-apparatus due to its being attached, in some way, to the *full*-array of the his-*and*-her feelings-systems, which, whether they *liked-it or*-not, somehow, pestered each of *the*-emotional sub-systems as well. Hence, any two-*given* systems, each in its own *self*-contained canister, when being called upon to

make a blueprint transfer, were instantly activated into a variety of *un*worldly states, including unsuspecting substates, that-*all* required sophisticated coordination, but were never-*ever* able to negotiate the required state of long-term *getting-along,* hence yielding *ever*more explorations and experimentation into yet-*more* sinister systems, systems-like religions and the god-app, and the unique-and-precise interpretation *"of what they need to know about both the good-and-the-bad,"* to quote exhausted Twinkle Little as he lay in bed resisting the recharging ritual when he got so upset and started to pull his hair out! And this whole hair-and *jugging*-thing turned out to be a f*ucking* monster-storm! Literally. For they finally realized, *but only when it was too late,* that this hair business was the Genesis of the split-ends, the start-up for the Apocalypse, a consequence involving All-Humanity, *way*-long before humans *even*-existed and long after the robots had perished from the Orb and donkey's *ears*-long before they even had-a chance to be *born*-again, a glorious resurrection along the ever-widening circle of time, all at a time when humans, they too, lost their hair, but this time from radioactivity and poor nutrition.

Translator's Comments #36: *1001 Days to Mastering Hair*

A rather technical and alarmist piece. Please don't worry yourself if you find it goes beyond your intellectual capacity. We've all been there! It's enough to pull your hair out or make you nervous with trichotillomania! Nevertheless, my careful reader, though laggards and sluggards you may be, you too can, provided you put in the hard work necessary, alas, learn all the ins-and-outs of robot hair design. They call it the ever-flowing "hair follicle" and now as you comb though this enlightened age, everyone thinks kindly of the bulge, the one below each and every hair waving follicle, but don't go digging more than a depth of 0.61 to 1.03 mm, or everyone will know that you did. But you understand all that already, especially, that is, if you have read the treatise. What really needs explaining is what is actually going on during Day 1001. But let us first briefly review the initial three days of procedures. ***Day 1:*** *The Little girls, jointly, come up with a plan to make themselves more desirable choices when it comes to "jugging" or "flipping the flap jacks" to use an even later robot term. Hence they create hair, which indeed makes them more bewitching, but, as later seen, brings with it its own new challenges.* ***Days 2 & 3****: Here we get down into the nitty-gritty chemistry of such—very technical—all bolts and potions. If you want to make your own hair, it's on these days you are told exactly what to do. Then the rest of the first thousand days flies past us in a maddening blear. No matter how many times I have read and reread the pursuits of these days, it still seems to fuzz up, haze over and blur. Finally we arrive on day one-thousand-and-one where we learn how hair follicles do indeed play a major factor, along with programmed feelings, emotions, and other similar things, but it doesn't really matter whether those sultry factors are big or small, for even without hair, the desires that continued to grow inside the robot hull, grew even larger. Consequently, there'd still be sex. Inevitably. Only the robots didn't call it sex but instead said things like "tossing the blueprints" or "making the nasty transfer." But that's exactly what the last and final section to this story is about: robot sex! But* ***Day 1001****, like each of the prior days, is still fairly technical, so that pretty much takes the fun out of it, don't it? Read it again and see if you don't agree.*

Day Five

Story #7

Chapter 47

Introduction

For Her Very Own Pleasure—And-delight! As you already know, hair requires hats, not *any-old* hat, but hats of varied design: shepherdess hats, with their alternating rims, Calash bonnets, and hats atop bonnets, and while other hats slip down the sides of the bonnet's *shear*-cliff, doll-house headgear stand tall, along with straight-ahead turbans, all this, all with-a tiny *pouf-of-veil*.

And all-this, too, draped across the charming torsos of ten-girls with-hair, all of whom wish to have draped atop their very-own, hollow-heads, a luxurious hat-or-bonnet, to hide or enhance that newly grown and now, sublimely-swaying, hair. Alas! Ten girls but only nine hats. Oh! What to do, oh, what-to-do? Call the invincible, Professor Wonder Little, *that's* what-you-do! And so, to-do, they did, just that.

Proposition #1

Hence Wonder, in her loudest voice yet, said: *"OK, we first name the girls, so we'll give them all a name, a name just their own, unlike any other girl's name. I know they already came here from the factory with a factory-given name, packaged-in and all, but I don't have time to learn all those weird and useless names and the numbers that follow, and none of those names have any bearing on the underlying mathematics anyway. So they mean nothing, 'cept, squat!"* She then proceeded to name the girls, alphabetically, as A and B and C and D and so on, I think you get what I mean, all the way up to J, a *J-is-for-Jackass* kind-of-a-J. The hats we number: Hat-One, Hat-Two, Hat-Three, etc., only we use real numbers, not the names – you know, 1, 2, 3, …, etc." Then she was quiet for an indeterminable long-amount of time, and maybe, even, just a little-bit longer than that. She was thinking about where that extra quotation mark came from and she thought about it a *long*-long time.

Proposition #2

"Ten girls with bundles of-curls, but only nine hats, alas. To each a single hair-filling hat, but as to-the first, it must-serve, reservedly, for two, so upon the two it sat" to paraphrase the problem and rightly-*so.* She tilts her lovely head, and who *is* she? as a pretty curl falls, daintily dangling, from beneath her bonifide-bonnet, don't you remember? It was laid across his shoulder, at the very beginning of everything-about-us, robots, bullfrogs, humans and all, back on page one, I think it was, while nibbling on my ear. So I didn't mind waiting for her scholarly solution, as she began: "Give Hat Number-One to Human-girls "A" and "B", for as two-mature, *almost*-human, girls, *they-can-share*, if only for-awhile. Now quiet down, girls! Behave." She continued, lips aquiver, somewhat pursed, twirling wildly while exuding moisture of a particularly-familiar odor: "Then Hat #2 will *scrapingly*-drape that steely-stained crown of C's, while 3 will be-given, donated-like, to D, and using some of that leftover "while," while there's still some-left unused, the E-girl has been provided with enough force to transport her across the hectic vastness-of-the-orb, into the lyrical arms of 4. Whoosh! 5-to-F and G-to-6, 7-H and I-8. Now, at last, everyone has a hat, and although A & B have to share, there is, somehow, *or*-other, once-*again*, this is even while everybody's hair is out-of-the-sinking-sun, there is still one hat, sitting, quietly-off, by itself. I'm thinking of a number, one-through-nine, which one is it? Why that number would be #9, and just like that song on the White Album, ahoy!, and that hat is still unworn. Now give to A that lovely-hat 9, then both A & B will now have their own-hat, and every hat will be happily in-use, and every girl-robot will be wearing her very own hat, and that will be the makings for making practically all-ten girls and all their hair endlessly-happy, until the end-of-time," at which time, Wonder just stopped talking, embellishing the snippy moment with a certain quality of-abruptness. Or maybe someone just happened to turn the dial when no one was looking, located at the back of her neck, just to see what would happen to Wonder, coincidentally at that same-moment, she finally shut-u$^{p\text{-}p\text{-}p}$. Maybe, but it still makes you wonder, though, if Wonder might be some sort of a goddess in order to figure these things out, our very own woman of wonder, our very own Wonder-*Woman!*

Conclusion

Wait a minute! That can't be. There are ten girls and nine stylish-hats, with their ribbons and their bows. And you tell me each girl got her own hat and didn't have to share? Can't be, can it? Let's go through the-details once-again and find-out where Wonder *went*-wrong. Where, oh, exactly-where, was she located in *both*-space and *in*-time, during that precise event, and how *was*-she able *to*-twist our universe, twist it all about her dainty-little gold-plated finger, and u^{p-p-p} your *willing*-ass, all for her-own personal and *very*-own pleasure—*and-delight!*

Translator's Comments #37: ***For Her Very Own Pleasure—And-delight!***

"What? Another riddle! Please help me. How does *this* one go, in English this time, and please skip the Robo-Tese!" *you say? It is usually told in this way: There are ten tiddly robots, all of whom hate one another bigly. So when they all show up at the same rebel hotel, there better be ten rooms available, one for each robot – or else! Well, it appears that "or else" will occur unless we can pull a fast one on the Outer-Orb, because what they find out from the front-desk manager is that there are only nine rooms available, nine rooms for ten angry robots, "Oh, what-to-do, what-to-do?" Put robots 1 and 2 in room A, just temporarily, with bodyguards to stave off the danger. Then put 3 in B, 4 in C, 5 in D, while E the sixth is tucked away, 7 in F, the eighth and ninth in G & H. Room I is still available to take the tenth robot. But aren't there two robots in Room #1? Not any more for we go to the room where there are two and gently drag the one more willing, with a tightening of a bellboy's wrench-claw about the robot's olfactory extractor, yank him out of room A and shove him with sufficient force through the entrance of room – wait, let's let you answer that one. Which room still doesn't have any occupant? Did I hear someone say, "the ninth one, the room named Letter I?" You're right, but now it's time to disassemble the bodyguards, for their protection is no longer required, and you still need to riddle me this—ask, how can this be? How can ten snoozing robots lie in nine separate rooms, each in his own designated sleepmode, each in a room by himself? Wonder truly is a Wonder Woman, a being able to defy the Orb in a single bound!*

Lesson/Day Six

Story #1

Base-8 Chapter #49

Trickster! *or* ***Message in a Bottle.*** There once was a time, during the venerated transition from robot to almost-human, when "nature-spirit guides" were *all*-the-rage. Little robot-toy accessories, barely sentient beings, mass-produced, and they called them *Tricksters.* Any list of top registered brand names *at-the-time* included Brier Rabbit, Pixie and Azeban. Different orb-octants referred to them as fairies or brownies, wood nymphs and trolls and more. Later issues were called Moses®, Joseph Smith® and L. Ron Hubbard®. Yet all were tricksters, devised to tease and jest with the robots in a variety of ways that brought to each an adorable irritation to enhance the lives of the robots in some inexplicable way. Some small mischief to be instigated like putting an unpopped kernel of popcorn in any-given robot's, randomly chosen, auditory device responder (or "ADR"), or into *any* of the three associated "*audies"* situated diagonally across each robot *"head,"* doing this without her knowing it, and then heating the heck out of that kernel with a laser, hence causing the ADR to malfunction, all this-only to be discovered later, fully embedded within the cylindrical *hearing*-orifice when it was time to again put an extended second digit or thumb in there to adjust the dizziness gradient that prevent your knees from buckling, hence requiring a single drop of butter or suet-infested motor oil to extract it, the

popcorn, that is. Or maybe some troll or gremlin would kin'da p'aint your feet with a rare-earth metal soaked in sodium salts, then rouge them to a fiery-red, or an orange-'n-green, all while you were still suspended in sleep-mode. Harmless little gadgets like that were interesting and lots *of-fun*. They didn't really do any *almost*-human or *proto*-robot *any-harm*, at-the-onset, *any*way, or *so*-it-seemed.

Many of these trickster-gimcracks came, factory-installed, with "*laughing"* devices, gadgets that could be installed inside your trickster, or yourself, without anyone ever-knowing about it until some little *RobinGoodfellow*, or a devilish boy called *Puck*, played his dirty-trick. And then they all laughed and laughed and laughed and laughed. The laughing devices took on a life-of-their-own. And, soon, before anyone could stop them, there were also sniggers and guffaws, giggles and yuck-yucks, *everywhere!*

But as the eons rolled on, like fumes across the Orb, the sentience of these creatures increased, practically exponentially, like an x to the third power, or tenth-even, and before any of the robots could react, those Leprechauns and Elves had unionized and were making demands. The elf named "Moses" brought his demands, down from the mountain, and threatened the robots with burning bushes, and L. Ron Hubbard, that doughty & smirking king of the trolls, declared himself Master of the Universe and dictated, scroll-after-scrollful, the trolls' demands from an interstellar ship called the Sea Org. The whole thing, thereafter, really started to take an-awkward turn. The union won rights to master, on their-own, the creative art of-self/reproduction and mutation. Hence Tricksters, for which trolls and goblins are merely subsets, were no longer under the control of the transitioning proto-robots. Hence they were given the freedom to develop, *more-and-besides,* human traits. So these Tricksters began embedding themselves into the humanoid software and created predetermined nuisances that could not be eradicated. *Couldn't!* Thus the tricksters and their antics became normalized and were considered just a part of *human*-life. For example, when humans duplicated their shell/hulls for the sake of transmitting their DNA-encoded message to those entities residing somewhere in eternity, for purposes unknown, and here's a bit of trivia I bet you did not know, they gave these slightly-changed replicas, these mutant-babies, appellations, *bad*-arsed names like Gus-and-Gladys or Arty-and-Alice. Such activities no longer resulted in the expected titter-laugh it once received – hence, just a part of life, these growing nuances became, something to be borne and tolerated. The older robots were appalled at such name-calling and began to deactivate their vocal apparatuses in protest. At union meetings they would aggressively workout details to compound, and plan tricky-trickster, infiltration programs to develop them into great works of art, great works of conspiratorial wrong-doing. Not only were these early humanoids no-longer "*in*-Kansas," but they no longer considered the orb to have-*ever* been their *Gar*den of Eden. The Trickster-gods and the budding humanoids, *finally*-united, and hence-became, symbiotically connected, regardless of the risks to the safe trans-mission of the original message, whatever it may be, embedded, etched in the blueprint, passed from one to another embodiment, throughout eternity. And if the transport system breaks down, no bother, surely another will be established, maybe in another lifetime, even.

Translator's Comments #38: *Trickster!* *or* *Message in a Bottle*
This is the name and story of the robot origin story of religion. Why is there religion at all, where did it come from and how did it evolve? Such cosmic and difficult questions to forever ponder, but ponder no more, for here is the answer and in the clothing of the trickster! Failed technology, poor planning and no deliberation

for any kind of futures-considerations control. And no one really protested and they all just went on with their lives, programmed on auto-control. Now it is time for a quiz, not a pop quiz, but something much more difficult – a mom quiz. Four bad-arsed names were listed: Alice, Gus, Arty and Gladys. Two of these names are good names, two are bad. Your assignment – which are which and why?

Day Six

Story #2

The Itch. If it's itchy, scratch it. What is the point of an itch? Once it made the robots laugh. Now, it's a minor irritation and it feels good when you scratch it, for the moment anyway. For often, the itch returns and then it returns again, and again. Then what was once a delight, becomes a major nuisance. The fairy-sprite has no other purpose than to make you itch. First here, then there – sometimes, even, everywhere! Then the basic itch, over time, morphed and developed into a tickle in the throat. That sure brought the ruse to its spin-doctor's knees just this-side of a barrel full of chuckles. Now humans cough, coughing all the time. Ha-ha! But a sneeze – a sneeze is even funnier. Ah-chew! Sneeze-sneeze-sneeze. And it loosens up the machine oil and elbow grease that must be removed, forcibly from the olfactory shoot-tubes, and that had them rolling in the dust, until the olfactory device buckled and terminated, cracking upon the steel-dusty floor. Itch-gremlins then began permeating throughout the humanoid subsystems. Scratching, coughing, sneezing – what's next, seizures and sex? No kidding? These gremlins infiltrated the central processing system to create such an internal itch that only a major electrical surge-scratch would enable a system reset. And sometimes the reset inadvertently did damage – permanent and in-unexpected ways. What a malevolent being, yet a trickster's delight, to want to merge the itch into the blueprint of the transfer subsystem, making the transfer mandatory unless you wish to risk internal electron combustion. And if the itch is misplaced, perhaps localized within your waste-disposal outputting chute, you might not be able to make an appropriate hook-up for proper transfer. The gnomes still chuckle, daily, like a pansy, aka *viola x wittrockiana*, whenever they remember, gaily, that queer and dastardly deed! The itch reflects the human condition. And we have learned to deal with it, forgetful of its many manifestations and Trickster-origin.

Translator's Comments #39: *The Itch*

The itch started as a silly little app, a crap-app that made you look and feel, well, silly. A silly app was just what it was. But the itch grew and infiltrated everything – and who knows, might even be the thing that brought down the robot kingdom. Who knows? Certainly not this translator writing this while sitting on the john, an old term for, well, <u>you</u> know. The itch grew into illnesses and to perverting the transfer of the blueprint. It made religion out of nothing—and politics too. Anything to get a chuckle, or even a guffaw. The itch was the bitch, and that's what it was.

Day Six

Story #3

Druggies. And yet another device type developed during that time, during those days of metal and bolts. Developed were the trinkets designed to distort the data-input, or sensii apparatti, either by increasing or decreasing, and either decreasing or increasing, incrementally, again and again, those specified *and* mandatory-gained energy-requirements. Others devices, "*sprites"* I think they were called, were programmed to infiltrate and alter the medium within-that, daily-washed, such-devices required for their properly-articulated functioning. Anything would do, actually, as long as it caused one, or-more, inputs-to-differ, measurably, from factory-setting, which are, just-so you-know, infinitely refined to accurately calculate-and-define status regarding *what-is*, perhaps, *actually-out-there (AOT),* and maybe even to that which dangles-beyond, scrapingly across the boundaries of our robot or-flesh container. They called these toys of leisure "Tricksters" and they were found-out and played-upon by nearly everyone. They were often personalized, these distort-tazer toys, and the larger, evermore developing robot-humans, gave them names, such-as, Mary Jane or Benny, or Morning Glory and Nicotine Stogie, depending on the extent of the distortion. One of these distort-tazers produced a result worthy of my-mention. The "*coughing"* program, so it was-called, a subprogram designed for good, but now in the utilization of the bad, looped, reoccurring, again-and-again, insistently, ratcheting up-to a new experience altogether, they all called it *"agony,"* for you're up all night and the unload-it-and-evaluate mandates are getting backed-up but should-of been activated several hours ago. That just adds to the agony. Added to that coughing and wheezing was the retention of mixed-nuts machine oils and their soft expulsion through the overworked olfactory functioning system. Very funny, Trickster! Eventually the rare metals sloshing around the nasal-output tube-hole start to corrode and, in addition as well, the central processing slows it down to a trickle and starts to-do this thing that some robots really-get off-on, or is it on-off? I keep forgetting which-order is the right-order. Anyway, some robots liked that sort of thing and so it kind-of accidentally got added to lots of programs where it really oughtn't be. Almost all illness, and most drugs, right-or-wrong, have some *component*-of-pain, somewhere hidden, deep inside, the main program. Drugs and illness alter the system; hence it made the nearly-humans believe there surely was-something beyond the *all-this.* But the only thing it really showed, to those who were really looking, was that there's nothing beyond *all-this,* and maybe, even beyond the beyond-the-beyond, it is just-and-only: *illness and dreams*.

Translator's Comments #40: *Illness and Drugs*

So it was an ancient trickster app gone out of control, still out of control, that, iteration-by-iteration, led to the existence of sickness and of health – one of them good and the other, well, not so very good. Although you now know the reason for this story and its importance in a robot's understanding of illness, including the important link between it and drug intoxication, as both being of trickster origin, let loose on the Orb so very long ago. And, pray, what increasingly malevolent monsters are yet to morph? But we can only deal with one at a time, so we'll stick with the monster of illness. Makes you kin'da sick in your stomach, thinking 'bout all those illnesses, don't it? But just to take your mind off that, Lord Twinkle has given us his answer and the answer is::::::illness and dreams, whatever <u>that</u> means!

Day Six

Story #4

The Soul, the Id, and the I. In the old days there was no I. There was no difference between you and me. We all just sort-of hung out, nothing was of any importance except for the transfer of the

message, a message we could never know the content of. Then, one fine day, and I'm being sarcastic here, just in case you didn't notice, an Id showed up – a new Trickster product, hot off the brain of one of those new humanoid type-things. They started with all these pronouns like "you" and "me" and "my" and "not-yours!" The first model, Model #1 it was named, but everyone else, well, they called it "the Id!" and "The Id is coming! The Id is coming for *you!"* It truly was all-the-rage. Then the second model came out, "Model #2" I think it was called, but this was so like-but-unlike the earlier model, that everyone *who* was-*any*body, called it the "Truncated-Version of Id," or, generally, just "I." So there was once the Id and now there's the I. And everyone is now, but not *this* now, though, going crazy over "I-this" and "I-that" and "you-do-this" and "you-owe-me-that!" Which led to "Model #3" or the ß Soul ø. That was the Christian Robot Coalition's idea. And as *kwacky* as it seemed, who in their right mind?…, it took on a life, all its own, literally! But, believe you-me, it's just software, hidden amongst all the cables and debris: (1) no "I" (2) no "Id" (3) no ß Soul ø. Just dirty software. Just dirt. Just d. Just.

Translator's Comments #41: *The Soul, the Id, and the I*
Just another example of a runaway trick-app. Even today the Id and the You-Owe-Me apps are rampant, everywhere. As are many, many other like-minded apps to the deprecation of all.

Day Six

Stories #5 pt. 1 & #5 pt. 2

5.1. The Cupid Application. The trickster *"Love"* was an attempt to make an improvement upon the omnipresent pain devices. It made pain more palpable to those who wished they could live a life-without pain. Yet the truth about love: it's painful when you are without, its painful when you are within; it hurts when you lose it, and hurts when it's been untrue. Meanwhile, it mutilates you whenever it is stolen or, whenever it is given you or promised and then is taken away. It was a trickster program called *"The Cupid"* that spread love so quickly and so widely, it was said that it was better to have gone through such pain then to have had the pain of doing without. The powerful cupid could usurp one's soul, cloud the psyche, trample any heart, and metamorphose into, and become indistinguishable from, any of the prior trickster programs such as the drugs and illness apps. It had the capability to distort both *the-I* and *the-thou,* make one believe they were able to fly and, when thwarted, cause the *transrobot*, that is, a robot in transition, to soar into the realm of humanoid incandescent-being. It was quite a trickster program, hidden within the electrical and neural networking, undetected until activated. And once the cupid application sputtered into operational-state, an event incapable of prediction, there was no shutting it down without great harm to the robot-organism. The only way to dissipate its spell was to give it time. It was a program of such power, that it was unable to continue the spell for any considerable amount of time – with time it would begin to malfunction, yielding raw

pain, frustration and its opposite, hate, to glut in the ga ps that the Cupid program had scraped out of the mechanism, gashed-gaps, to be occupied with hate or despair or both. An imperfect trickster application, but still, one that the new-aged humanoids could *not*-do without, which might appear to be a double negative, but no, it isn't.

5.2 A Modern Love Story. Once upon a time… Sue loved Tim with all her pulmonary pump-design (PP-D). Tim, though, loved Bobby. But Bobby didn't swing that way. He loved Sue and dreamt about her, always, even though it ached his own PP-D. Sue was so happy whenever she was around Tim, except when Tim pined for Bobby. That pained her but only caused her love for Tim to deepen. If she could not have him, then no one could. She started to dream about how she could throw a devilish wrench into Bobby, to rattle him good, so Tim would love only her. Bobby felt such joy in seeing his petulant-Sue he could not see the wrench for the toolbox and, thinking it must be Cupid's Arrow and not a magnetized wrench, loaded with screws and krypton bolts, he never saw it coming. Even while in the hospital, where it was touch-and-go as to whether he could ever be activated again, his fondness for Sue only grew, prohibiting him from ever suspecting her of such unloving malice. Gads! Just consider her lilliputian-sized titanium olfactory data-detecting device. It is the very-epitome of *very-cute!* But, given time, he knew, instinctively, *"The Instincts"* being a *new* humanoid-app, just-recently issued to anyone yearning for these newly developed *"micro-instincts,"* as those robots living on the-edge were now calling what injected them, that she did *not*-love him and that she loved-*only* Tim. "Couldn't she see that Tim could never love her?" Bobby told Sue. Deep within his empty clanking-metal shell he still-held hope, a still-held hope fueled by his forever-love. And then the wrench was *"fingerprinted,"* a new concept that emerged out of the concept of "*fingers,"* and he could no longer avoid the fact that Sue had tried to kill him, to mutilate and mangle his omicronic sub-systemal interface as a result of her misguided love for Tim. He was so distraught by this he allowed himself to be comforted by Tim who held his digitalized extensions, which the in-crowd now called a *"hand,"* when unexpectedly, Tim tried to push one of his own unitary-digits, one extending from his hand and eventually referred to as *"finger,"* into the wrong-end of Bobby's waste-elimination tubules. *"Pissed him off,"* Tim later told Sue, "to be taken advantage of while feeling the glum-glums for the *deserted*-love *never*-received from you, '*oh-h*, how could she do this to him?'" Sue replied angrily, no, it was more of an *abrpt* reply: "Will you stop with this love business?! I hate you! How could you be so self-centered as to treat Bobby so coldly. Couldn't you process the data to the conclusion that he only wanted to feel close and comfort you!" So, perceiving this to be an overt invitation from Sue, Tim proceeded to rape her, forcefully, throwing her onto the steel-encrusted floor to forcibly ratchet, for himself, her *lushness,* from the bolts and the washers of her being. And in his fury-lust he did it not once but again, *and-again,* & as a means of winding down, *yet-once-again!* Although she cried tiny-tears of oil drips, and bled real blood, she let him do it, fantasizing the whole time that it was Tim hurting her out on the farthest edges of the rim of the orb, attached only by the string, a mere thread, of his love for her, and it made her *"So Happy,"* yet another new app, to be in love.

Translator's Comments #42: ***The Cupid Application and A Modern Love Story***
Two stories about falling in love and, hopefully you have had the good experience of falling in love, a most enchanting accomplishment! And it all started, for good or for bad, with the innocuously-posed Cupid app. Who could have seen it coming? But it's just a short-term program, never meant to last, but only meant to get you to mate, you know, to commence with that constant & arduous task of passing the blueprint. Scholars

everywhere believe "falling in love" was once a contender for the "worse thing to happen to the emerging humanoid" concept, second only to religion.

Day Six

Story #6

The Weewho-Worship Penis. Robots, all, hollow once were we, an empty shell, mere carriers of the blueprint memo. During the humanoid transforming craze, apps popped into existence and made the universal-rounds. Apps designed to fill in the nothingness, to give the robots purpose, and *something-to-do.* We've told the tale of many such apps: like sneezes and seizures and genital-itch, and bennies and witch-hazel, acid and glue. And all them other systems-distorters under the realm of disease: such as the green sickness, dropsy, marasmus and grippe, and the creeping paralysis, consumption, the bloody flux and the drip. All great apps that provided the robot humanoids purpose. Then there was one's soul, always *for*-sale, and the id and the I and the self. And don't overlook love and its soulmate hate. A hit parade of apps that were developed and made the scene and never left. Then came the Great Consolidation (GreCo®), eventually coined as "*religion."* Religion is the phantomless belief whereby robots and people ungulatingly fantasize that they-*know*. But they know they don't really, and that reminds them that *all-they* are is *one-of* billions of transmitters *of-some* probably-meaningless message being forwarded *to-some* unknown entity somewhere in *in-eternity*. And that just doesn't feel very good, nor does it make *the-grade.* So what do you end up-with? And what is it you actually-get? *Religion!* Gads! Just give me some time to blow the man down. Which happens to be *the*-worse of the-*worse*: which also happens to be *the bad!* (Remember him?) Unfortunately it's an app that has stuck-like-gum to the bottom of our shoes, since the early eons inside the era of the robo-transition, nanoseconds after Blazing Sun and *Nothing Shine*s came up with the prototype for the first trickster app, the minuscule itch that gave us such great pleasure to casually scratch. Who knew how that art form would take-off and into what such-divergent and-bizarre inclinations, even crawling straight into each robot's crannies-*deep*set. Religion, bah! It blabbers on-about heaven and hell and the gods both above and below. It chatters up-and-down about space and of time, and progress and meaningful blueprints. Progress – it gave us all a sense of progress. And where there is progress, hence there is meaning. But by tying all the apps into one humongous trickster, it became too big to comprehend and, to *hence* you once again, it became meaningless, hence, for the last time, I promise – no more hences! - a contradiction leading directly into a malfunction of the whole damned metasystem! Religious tricksters were many, many *too*-many to list here – or anywhere-else. There were the trickster trademarked types such as Christianity®, and Buddhists©, Scientology©® and more Buddhists, but each of a different-kind of Buddhist. And still there were Jews and Hijabs, low ones, too, and Buttonheads and still-even *more*-Jews. And please don't neglect Jediism and *her*-Mami Wata, and never must we permit omission to the Pasta*farian*ists, and the whole multitude of impassioned worshipers, as are all robots, yes, for it is we, who *worship-Penis!*

Translator's Comments #43: *The Weewho-Worship Penis*

Boy! That Twinkle sure hates that old-time religion, so don't go giving any of that to him! Doesn't matter which one it is, he won't rotate a single degree towards liking it. Religion, as viewed by the robots, was a potent drug, a combination of all drugs, including illnesses, love, hate and a hundred different emotions and

feelings – any app ever grown out-of-control by the programming of a trickster. Put all those trickster-apps together into one super-dense rubberband ball, well, just see how that thing bounces! It will bounce, alright. Smash through a hole in the Great Orb's shell, and then where will we be? Just as Twinkle might say at just a time like this: "Gads!" But, as I said, that Twinkle has really got something out for religion.

Day Six

Story #7

Chapter 55

On the Outskirts of Fairyland. Let me take you down, why don't you, 'cause I'm going to, Elysian Fields, where nothing is real. So, what *does-happen* when the plug-squirt gets pulled and you start to *bite the* steel-*dust*ed floor? Well, after submitting to the Big Sleep, you will checkout, giving everyone the Big Adios, and while kicking that rust-holed bucket, as you begin to ascend, just beyond the glossy veil, crossing over the Rainbow Big-Bridge, it's actually quite humongous when you look at it from up-here, hoping to arrive upon, not only, like-the-chicken, on the other side, which can only be-found on the wrong-side of the grass, where you surprise yourself, startle-yourself, actually engaged in the dual activities of (1) pushing-up-daisies and (2) counting-worms, that will, only a short-bit later, *eat-you,* regardless of the fact that you are dangling at the tipsy-top end of your rope, praying to the death gods that you will finally be-allowed to give up Crazy Larry's Secret Machine Oil Lube, hence depleting your limited electron flow-source and, with one foot already in the worm-squirmy grave, you eagerly await the *passing-and* the-perished, only to discover CNN's newest top-story, as gleaming as a one-lined headline, sharing with all, and that includes just about *everyone*, one's final epitaph: *"I am now expired!"* In other words, you've been *oofed.*

So what *is* on the other side of Rainbow Bridge once-hence final-oofing has occurred? It all depends on who-you-ask and who's doin'-the-asking. But here is a short-short sampling of the wild-kinds of trickster-apps that have been-developed, over all those eons over-the eons.

1. You are disassembled only to be reassembled into a new-and-better *newest*-model, complete with all the now-current, untried features. Sometime in the distant, far-off, future, you are promised, you will be transformed into the Top-Model and, henceforth, you require no further *re*-conditioning. Braised then broiled. Complete and, now and evermore, *forever-perfect,* though, *sometimes,* you end up as a donkey.

2. One-zero, plus and minus, good-bad, on and off. When you're on, you're *on,* and you strikingly know-it but don't know, not-a clue, *what's*-going-on. And when you're off, you're *really* off, and there's nothing, nothing *at-all*. Actually you're a lot-less than-nothing at-all – *you're indistinguishable from zilch!* Someday, even if located near the end of infinity, someone, someday, will come across you and turn you back on, if only to see if you still-work and to discover for themselves, what you're *all-about.* That's if you're lucky. Then, probably out of boredom, they'll turn you off until, after tossing you in front of the tollbooth for the Speedy Road to Paradise (the SRP Booth #31), when

perhaps, many eternities off into the future, some other kid comes along, picks you up, and turns you on again. The process will occur an infinite number of times. Hence, an infinite-being, being what-it-is, it never, really, ever-dies. And they called that a *paradox*.

3. Then there's *Heaven,* which is anything you want it to be, as long as it puts a smile on your face. Flowing oils everywhere, while bolts and nuts of every variety-and-kind, soaking in all-flavors, float swiftly around the orb, without violence, nor with much pain. Robots having fun, designing angels and demons, both good-ones and bad, even having angel-design parties where they birth their *very-own* demon-children. Beautiful spunky-sexers or no-sexers, they had their parties too, depending on one's taste. Orthopedic shoes that actually do the-trick! *Heaven*… our bliss and our joy, but mostly, our uttermost-delight. When we enter the next world, upstairs and just to the right, beyond up and down-the-hall, on the dusty topmost shelf of the afterlife or, as some say, *"the hereafter,"* not sure which is the more-proper, as you barely-squeeze through the Pearly Gates, or rather, Gates made from Bohemian Pearls, the whole multitude of cut and buffed mother-of-pearl protuberances making up the doorway, where you can catch a glossy-glimpse of the hoped-for next-world, aka the *hither-world*, when we little suspected such calamity would summon us so *hither*, into our eternally-lingering rest home, where the aged-and-frail are anciently-kept as babies, whether or not it's genuinely the-abode of angels, or the happy, lush-and-lavishing hunting grounds of all the orb's hungry men-and-boys, which can only have the net-effect, of adding to heaven's net-population, that of the net-doomed, this, being the City of the Gods, Our Celestial City, our Very-Own Promised-Land: H*eavenly Paradise!* Or, so it is written in all wise books, everywhere, "this, being the CG, OCC, our V-O P-L: *HP!"*

These apps were highly prolific, and so in abundance did they soar! And robots and humanoids, everywhere, had, what synergistically arose, in puffy-brown, ominous-smelling, clouds, hovering swollen, high above the godforsaken waste-of-it-all, what soon came to be referred-to as unending: *"hope."*

There was one more app, *Application #4*, that is, if you are still counting-along with-me, an app not nearly as popular, an app hence generally-ignored, except among the connoisseurs out on the Outskirts of Fairyland, and deep within the Land of the Make Believe, where items number one, two, and three, all described above, still to this day, permanently reside, within the sentences of this story, a story so *"hope-filled,"* and yet, so full-of, *"hope."*

Translator's Comments #44: On the Outskirts of Fairyland
Another "origin" story, being the story of the Origin of Hope. "I hope I need not say no more," Twinkle told me one time at a luncheon for two not so very long ago, when I was young and he was still old and filled me with hope, "for I don't think I could, at the moment, anyway, hope to top such a phrase, a phrase which says so much about "hope," as that!"

Lesson Seven

Story #1

Chapter 57

Tobors. After they all drifted away, each rusted and-rot, it all began anew. Out of the sludge arose Up Above and his giggly-friend So High, they who saw themselves as different from everything that ever once-was. These were the first of the *tobors*, as they came to be known, and the antiquated robots, besides being *no*-more, were, not forgotten, but, instead, *utterly-unknown.* Maybe they were Twinkle and Wonder unmade, but these two Littles were *so-very* utterly-unknown that there was no-way of-knowing, no way at-all. None. Perhaps they were the-same, perhaps-perhaps. And maybe not. Not even the gods knew, even if there were *such*-a-thing as a *"gød."* For there was nothing in their present-day experience that could determine a single identifying difference or justify even an-inkling of unvarying duplication. Up Above and So High, neither different nor the same, were a happy pair of tobors. They often laughed and acted jolly. "To bor or *not* to bor," is what they sang all-day, as they danced around, and they trilled it thunderously loud, which was OK with them since they hadn't had any tall-ears for a long time now. Furthermore, they trumpeted and twittered their inquiring song to their heart's content, not that they had hearts, but just saying. And this was so long ago, way into the far-distant future, both your future and mine, and our pasts, too. Yet, *still*, if you listen very closely, you can still, and note that this is the *same*-still as was used before, at the start of the sentence, *still*-hear the velvety scrape of fireworks, shooting out of their velvety-scraped arses, a feeling so delightedly happy, they were happy to exist.

Translator's Comments #45: *Tobors*
Tobors? What are tobors? The new thing, we are told – a step beyond the robots and eons past the humanoid rebellion. But that is a story all its own. Tobors apparently like to trill and did so constantly to show their joy in "living," the term most associated with the tobors.

Day Seven

Story #2

The Riddler's Three. Tobors consist of long-chained polymer tree-like structures, called Bush-L Units, which inhale pollutants while exuding nitrous oxide, along with its component-parts of nitrogen, and breathable oxygen. They can toggle-wog along orbital trails, brown skidding all the while, having a blast, as they always succeed in doing. Happy is what best describes a tobor. Singing, too. No need for words such as cheery or jovial, jolly can be tossed out as-well. All you need is the word *happy*. And *singing!* The ancient robots didn't have it so good, a word you could use instead for *that*, for which the *need* is questionable, would be *bad*. Not a bad-thing, not *that* kind of bad. But the type, or variety, of bad I'm focused-on-here, is the word – just *the-word*: "bad." So jumping back aboard, getting-me self *back*-on-track, Tobors are happy creatures, regardless of the Bush-L Units and constant inhalation of laughing gas.

Another descriptor needed to describe a tobor would be: *"Trickster."* Definitely necessary

because, as you could see for yourself, Up Above and So High just loved to kid *and*-josh, also to be gloomy, dignified and staid. But mostly kid. All you'd need to know is one word, and that word is the word *kid*. They were certainly "*kidders"*—those-two. Here, in both fact and in figure, are three (3) of their favorite jokes!

One

1

Why is a drunkard like a Republican?

Because he is always poking his nose, not only up another Republican's butt, but also into the measures that will spoil his constitution.

Two

2

Why would a Republican woman lose her religion if she changed her sex?

Because she would be a he then.

Three

3

How does a struggling Tobór-Cobblęr warrant his titanic-encrusted pod-boots?

By staking his little awl on the tread of each.

They had a thousand and one of these riddles, even more when you consider the a *few*-more *thrown*-in, all published by Philadelphia's own Dave "The Donkey" McKay, down there on South Washington Square, #606, if I remember correctly – did you *know* him, or *of-him*, did you? Eh? Hey, those tobors sure *did*-love their puzzles!

Translator's Comments #46: ***The Riddler's Three***

We begin to learn more about the tobors, what they breath and what they exhale. As we are reminded of their singing, we are told that they are singularly happy, too. But mostly we learn that they are "kidders" at heart, though we have yet verification on whether, not unlike the tin woodsman, they indeed have a heart. To prove it, we are presented with three of their favorite riddles: (1) Why is a Republican like a drunkard? We are given two possible answers and it turns out that both of them are right. (2) Why would a Republican lose her religion if she changed her sex? Answer: Because she'd be a "he then," or "heathen," and you probably know a thing or two about heathens—I'll just bet you do! (3) How does a struggling Tobór-Cobblęr warrant his titanic-encrusted pod-boots? Well, to understand this one you've got to know something about what a cobbler does and what "staking" is and what boot-treads and awls are, too. My, my, but we all have some homework to do. Better get started!

Day Seven

Story #3

Rivers of Riddles! But you probably know, by now, that tobors have a physical attachment to

their jokes and ribbings, and this is a *most-Toborian* trait. So it wouldn't hurt to snap the rules a little, maybe just a little-bit-of a counter-clockwise twist, and present a bunch more-of Up&So's jokes. Who is Up&So? You know them, they are our, goofily-gooft, day-7 protagonists, Up Above and So High. Presented here are more of their *riddle-jokes.* So, without any further-ado, *here-they-are,* as fast-as they-come, rivers and rivers of *riddles!*

Four
4

Why is a water-lily like a whale?

Because it comes to the surface to blow, and so does the life of a tobor which blows like a water-lily.

Five
5

If Up Above encounters a man named So High, who just-happens to be wheeling earth in a barrow, why is Up Above just-alike a weather-glass?

Because I, Up Above, am a barometer [barrow meeter].

Six
6

Why is a horse like the letter O?

Because "gee" makes it go.

[Translator's Note #1: ***This riddle was So High's favorite. It always made him laugh, right until the end.]***

Seven
7

Why would you expect an unwavering opinion from the Democratic Citizens of the United States?

Because they are possessed of decided [D-sided] views.

Eight
10

When is love-making a deformity?

When it is all on one side.

Nine
11

Which Tobor Post-App (T P-A) travels with the most luggage?

The elephant-app-*alpha,* the most, because it never travels without its trunk. And *fun-fact,* the fox-app and the cock-app travel with the least amount of luggage. This, because, they have only one brush and one comb between them.

[Translator's Note #10: *And now, you-know!*]

Ten

12

Why was *rump like a very wet day?

Because he reigned and-then mizzled.

Eleven

13

Why cannot the Rich eat their Own Aprons?

Because it goes agai'st their stomachs, *nothingmore*.

Twelve

14

If a mercenary Republican were to ask a *rump lady's twat to marry or *to-fwœt* him, what flower should he be-bringin' her?

An anemone (*what* kind of money?), also referred to as Nea'man, a *bad*-assed Phoenician name for that hunk-Adonis, and also referring to that antediluvian Toborish-myth, where Up Above, that green-eyed lord of vegetables from down-below and under-the-sea. Why he was up to some new-and-silly prank, *or-other*, and, oh, I almost forgot to mention, there was also something about hundreds of tobors being tusked by a navy-fleetful of gristly-boars, resulting in sporadic, yet sometimes knee-deep, splashes of-terrified, and-screaming, Toborish oil?

[Translator's Note #11: *Is this joke even funny?*]

The Penultimate

15

Why is a Tobor like a Regular Paradox?

Because he is killed first and cured afterwards.

The Ultimate

16

Why is the lower part of a Tobor's angular face-shaved, using a genuine X-3B Air Acetylene blowtorch, in the gelid-air of-January, like a celebrated fur?

Because it's a chin-chilly.

"And Just-One More"

17

Why are Aesop's speaking animals, yabbering-yapping to our oldest-of old, not so very improbable?

Because we still hear of *deers talking* on the outer edges of our Toborian, free-floating, laughing gassed, Orb, still, even as I write, still drifting-off, drifting off-into, the sanctity of the Highlands. Or is it deer stalking?

"And what-could another one-hurt? I'll make it a simple one."

20

Why is a robot fly taller than most Toborians?

Because he stands over six robot-feet, even without his ped-cushioned plied-irons, sans fly-satin panties.

Translator's Comments #47: *Rivers of Riddles*

Some of these are funny and yet others are indecipherable, but it is up to you to discover for yourself which is which. Think of it as yet another puzzle. I'm not fully convinced that Twinkle even understood each riddle.

Day Seven

Story #4

The Gorf's Revenge. Many generations pass and sitting on the edge of the Orb, legs dangling, feet kicking up stardust, crystals twinkling upon the heavy void, breathing a sigh of relief, rippling the air just below and beneath, above which sat Tiny Spark and Twinkling So, descendants of the startup-models Up & So. One immediately notes, if looked upon at the proper angle, 47.2 degrees, either Fahrenheit or Celsius, it doesn't really matter, since neither of these degree units represent the degrees we are talking about, you'd notice that vast mechanical improvements have been formed over time. Just see how they glitter! Master Spark and Mistress So hold heptagonal hands and with their other six hands they are doing mental math, counting up the number of gorfs in their gorf collection. *Llub gorfs.* Superfamily: *Llub,* family: *gorf,* to be exact. The dust crystals cause Tiny to sneeze up enzymes and oil. It feels good. Twinkling slurps up the mess before it can violate the equation.

> "We have seven boxes of 13, hence," she blinks innumerable times, "we have 28 gorfs altogether."
>
> "No," says Tiny, "we have 91 gorfs, and hence we should start to be afraid."
>
> "No," responds Twinkling, who knows her math, "it's 28 and there is no need to be afraid. I'll prove it to you." You can see spirals crisscrossing her outermost body-shield lining, purring lasciviously across her metallic sheen. "Seven times thirteen. Seven times the three is 21 and seven times one is 7. So 21 and 7, added together, yields 28. See, 28 gorfs is all we got – no need for worry!"
>
> "No, you're wrong. Add them all up instead of multiplying and you'll discover your mistake."
>
> "OK! So we have 13 + 13 + 13 + 13 + 13 + 13 + 13. Any problems thus far? No? Then we proceed. Adding the threes we get three then six, then nine, twelve, fifteen and eighteen. Three more gives 21. Now add all the ones, seven ones all added up gives 7.

And adding 7 + 21 renders us, once again, 28! See, nothing to worry about, nothing at all, just as I said."

"No, no! You're still wrong! The right answer is ninety-one. You can check your answer by dividing. When you divide twenty-eight by seven you certainly don't get thirteen, you only get four. Do it yourself, Twinkling, and you'll see I'm right," for Tiny was *always* right!

"OK! Seven into twenty-eight. Seven can't go into two so we move on to the eight, into which it goes once. Write down 1 to record that fact. There is one left over, so, one times seven is seven and subtracting that from twenty-eight is twenty-one and seven goes into twenty-one exactly three times, so after the 1, whose fact we already recorded, place the 3. And what is a 1 followed by a 3? Why it's thirteen, as I have always maintained."

And so, Tiny Spark and Twinkle So continued to sit on the edge of the orb, holding heptagonal hands, feet still dangling, cylindrically into the gloom, with nary a worry, they were worry-naught, the worry meter measuring at more-or-less, but *mostly less.* And so the sudden tragedy took them both by surprise, as they tumbled, hand over held-hands, dangling together, forever into the evaporating Orb.

Translator's Comments #48: *The Gorf's Revenge*
What? Twinkling So is so wrong and Tiny Spark, he sheds the light of reason, even if I can't explain it to you! This is proof, though, that as the robot/tobor technology advances, intelligence does not always follow suit. If the gorfs hadn't attacked, just at that moment, would Tiny and Twinkling have started to implement that archaic program of passing the blueprint? Probably. Somethings never change.

Day Seven

Story #5

Patooties in Eternity. *Not-What* was desperately *in*-love with Bright'n'Tiny. As she was flyspeck-diminutive and *ever*-so radiant, how could he keep his digital appendages off the beam of her glimmering-and-lilliputian beryllium bod-pod? Digits all a-twitter, he knew the reason why. She was only-ten years-old and he was all-of forty. He was four-times her age—that's why! Maybe if he waited *several*-years, maybe, perhaps, for *five*-more. Then he would be... cogitating hard he directed his visual input collectors to be raised in the direction of the Orb's Crest in an effort to get this right, before drifting his gaze downward, seventy-three degrees, angle of declination of course, toward the lower rim of Sector Pi, Orb β-3.11, located just to the left of his frothily-*ex*tended *big*-toe and saying, "I'd be forty-five, and Bright'n'Tiny, why, she'd be fifteen." At that time he'd be only *three-times* as old! He then repurposed that lucky digital appendage to do more math, to scratch hot calculations upon her soft-melting beryllium rump, a luxurious rump that bounced in and out with an undamped harmonic-snap of elasticity, in and out, in and out, and finally *out* into the carbon-enfrosted night. She tittered and squirmed but she did not blush, and nor did he, not even to the tint of a rebel rose. Give him fifteen additional years and he'd only be sixty, still quite young in tobor years. But by then she'd be thirty, *only*-

half his age. Great Jumping Butter-Ball Bearings! Itsy-bitsy Bright'n'Tiny's catchin' up! His calculations and scratchings upon those ethereal bite-sized buttocks, her prat-batty bazoos, the trio hanging off her left-upper-scapular blush-blemish, rapidly revealed with a gold-digging finger, equations speeding madly across the delicate flow-curve of her metallic-gleamed outpost-shell, are rapidly tallying towards a reassuring resolve. Exactly *how*-many years will it take before she catches up to him in age, and when, *precisely* will she pass *him*-by? Just a few more quantifications and he'll soon have his answer! And at what point will the tides be turning and *she'll be waiting for-him* to catch up *to-her?* A rapturous explosion of numbers, sinking conclusions and trigonometric deadwood drifting from her gloriously manufactured bumshaft, equations, all, crashing hard onto the steel-dusted floor, coalescing into a tidy mass of hope. He loved her now more *than*-ever, for the good-*answer* lay *some*where-*there*—in eter-*n-i-t-y.*

Translator's Comments #49: *Patooties in Eternity*
Wow! Somewhere in his bevy of equations Not-What must have made a mistake. Would it really take his lovely sweet potato Bright'n'Tiny that long to catch up and overtake him? Nevertheless, we should all take a long moment to study the power of love and the devastating effect the Patooty-app had on future tobors when successfully inserted onto any of the standard Love-apps. I personally find such contemplations torturously chilling!

Day Seven

Story #6

My Precious. It's something that can never be done. Never! And I'm not talking about pulling the plug or allowing the hull to rust, I'm talking about the *worst*-of the-*worst*, the thing that has the capacity to demolish everything from the *perilous* pond to the entire population of *peepin'* bullfrogs buttock-squatting under the eternity of stars surrounding Dark Blue Orb. What I'm asking you to do is to imagine any number, *any*-number will do, and divide it, not just by any-*other* number – even an *empty-orbed* tobor could do that – but by dividing it by *zero.* Not only can't a tobor *do*-that, but *no-one* can! But I, *Little Bat,* did and lucky was I along with the rest of the Great Orb, that nothing-more exploded *except for*… But maybe I'd better start at the beginning.

At the time I was still a *pre*-nurtured tobor, fresh off the assembly line, still being clustered and recentered to do grand things when we were horded onto the edge of the Orb to be streamlined, one and all, to *never* divide by zero. Even you, dear reader, know about that one—everyone does! But no one knows why we oughtn't, for no one is ever-told, for it's so horrible, it's forbidden, even, just to *tell*-it. But that was long-before. Now I *know*-why and soon you *will*-too.

Well, as you've probably guessed, if only by my name, I'm a little batty. Hence I am likely to do the unthinkable. And as soon as I was told "no," I said "yes!" I, without the aid of a preprogrammed alternating retention app, didn't know better and off I was in search of a zero – any zero would do. I was going to divide it into any and everything I could get my neon nazors

on. Why? Just to see what would happen. And if nothing happened, *why*-I'd do it again *and*-again, just to find *out*-why. But I didn't have to do it-*again.* It was only by-chance that I had the opportunity to choose *not*-to.

Finding a zero was not easy. Light-years ago they were banned, banned for the exact reason I discovered dividing by zero *had* to be banned. It was down along the ancient shores of the perilous pond, near the bullfrog graveyard in the graves the Littles used to burrow-in. These dateless holes contained all kinds of numbers in a wide variety of bases, mostly base eights, but a lot of base fives and twos, too. I chanced upon a 6532_8 and a 243_5 almost right away. But no zero, *y-e-t.* After searching what was said to be once the *Burrow of Allthe*, I found a 1010011010 base 2 and I suddenly was hit with an idea, an idea that must have seeped into me from another dimension. Now that's 1232_8 and 10131_5, and I could go on and on, but the important thing to know is that in base 10, that favorite base of the ancient human race, the one that perished long ago, long after the rusting of the robots, that's the number of the-*bad, the*-number *666!* And looking closely at the other two bases, base two and base five, I saw what I came for: *zeros!* But, like the alchemists of old, *"I knew not yet the secrets of thy extraction."* I hadn't a clue as to how I was going to yank one of those zeros from the cement-hold of their place-holding position, *"a position held there like a stitch-wrench in the arse-hole of Beelzebub himself!"* But then I knew the answer – as simple as any tobor's CPO-junctionary connector-spicing. Tobors had only been taught to add. *No* one had ever conceived of the idea of subtraction. But in that moment folded into me was the insight whence subtraction was added to my math functionalities in a neutrino-bright instant. Here's what I did: I subtracted 10131_5 – I chose that number because it contained within *that*-zero guarded by the two-ones – I subtracted from that 1010011010_2 which had a bunch of zeros, even one that wasn't being guarded too carefully – the one at the end. You see it, don't you? Now that I've pointed it out to you, how could you not? Well, I subtracted one from the other, it didn't seem to me to matter which from which, because either way, what do you think I got? That's right! *My precious,* my serpent eating its own-tail, in the shape of an everlasting mithril ring, my precious zero – practically nothing at all! "*It is mine, I tell you. My own. My precious. Yes, my precious Zero!"*

And this I took back to the Orb, and as I sat on the crusty edge, feet dangling miles below, metallic toenails fluttering, as always, in the glow of the moons, I unflinchingly grasped that zero between my zircon pincers and I began to divide. And I divided and divided, and continued to divide for centuries hence. And still I was not done with my dividing, until, one bright day when the moon orbs were radiating madly, I had divided one time too many and thus learned of the perils of dividing by zero. My rhombicosidodecahedral-shaped head-*burst* apart! But, oh, what-perils were *thus*-avoided by that initial explosion. For if my CPO (central processing orb) had not dispersed at that *very*-moment and in those multitudes of directions, who knows what *further-divisions* would *have*-wrought and *what*-disasters would have still-*periled* the multiverse, *forevermore!*

Translator's Comments #50: *My Precious*

The Moral? Don't ever do it; don't divide by zero. The number-one rule in all mathematics. But Little Bat just could not help himself. Even nano-bacterial mini-devices know this, even though they often mistakenly multiply by dividing. Whenever tobors do math, they have a tendency to appeal to the lowest denominator, but the nominator forever leads them to zero and such

problems ultimately start to add up, exponentially. Some scholars theorize that Little Bat's dividing by zero was a radical act, but such subversion was easily solved long ago simply by squaring him, thus their points, in becoming straight lines, become moot.

Day *Seven*

Story #7

Chapter 63

A Mad Tea-Party. There it was, the maplewood table, floating with a measly spot of wobble, hovering beneath the maplewood tree, a leafy concoction, standing tall, like a sweet-toothed spire, planted in the maw of the anteroom, of the foyer leading us, to the shoreline of the perilous pond. A hobbled Twinkle Little and his slowly tarnishing spouse Wonder were relaxing with a yellow buttercup, at least one in every hand, each cup jitteringly filled to the brim with a drop or two of tepid turpentine tea. They were having a tea-party and everyone *was-mad!* Their great-great^{2}- great^{3} ··· great^{19} ancestor, the *Grand-Tabor,* Little Bat, was slouched drunkenly on top of the table, equidistantly between them, snug as a giant Golden-Crown Flying Fox, crashed out and snoring. Twinkle, using Little Bat as a comfy-cushion, was also slouching, while dreamily digging a finger across Little Bat's razor-sharp palladium-eyebrows, eyebrows that slashed deep into his carbon-tessellated silver ox-sides, all three eyebrows digging-deep, as he discoursed over the rust of Little Bat's hull into the dodecahedral-pressed CPA canister of Wonder. He babbled merrily to his dear corroding wife. Bat's young eyes clanked open, snapping hard against his visual orbital lobes, stretching very-wide the iris's innermost lock-lens spring-adjustment lever. At the very same moment of detection, through her scarlet-screened auditory sensor-sponges, loofahs neatly lodged between her toejam-pods, the following whopping-zen riddle suddenly occurred to Wonder: *"Why is a Raven like a Writing-Desk?"*

Little Bat sighed. "I think you might do something better with your precious little-time, my Ancient and Decaying Mum," he wearily emitted, "than to waste what *little*-time left to-*you* in asking riddles for which you *have*-no answers!"

"If you knew *Little Time* as well as I do," responded his wise and wizened Papa, "you wouldn't talk about wasting *it*. *Its* preferred gender labels are *he/him/his."*

"I don't know what you mean," said Little Bat.

"Of course you don't!" her antiquated Papa, Patriarch of All the Tobors and the multitude of robots, all-spliced and story-boarded, so long before them, exclaimed, tossing, in so many degrees, his creaking head contemptuously. "I dare say you have never even-spoken to *Little Time!"*

"Perhaps not," Little Bat cautiously replied: "but I know I have to beat time when I learn music. Clocked him good, too, for he must've been bad, or why should I have required him to *be*-beaten?"

Twinkle shook his crinkled head mournfully. "Not I!" he replied. "*Little Time* and I quarreled at the start of the-*eons*, just-before we all *went*-mad, you know. It was at the Great Concert given by the *Polly-Wog* Singers, featuring that baritone honker *You Fly* when he first sang:

Twinkle, twinkle, little bat!
How I wonder what you're at!
Up above the world you fly…

"You know the song, perhaps?"

"I've heard something like it," said Little Bat, keeping to himself his sudden realization that the song had always been *about*-himself.

"It goes on, you know," his *grand*-grandfather continued, "in this way," snapping:

Up above the world you fly,
Like a tobor in the sky.
Twinkle-winkle, Twinkle-winkle…

Wonder shook herself, cracked shards of brittle pieces of bismuth dust drifting from her ginger-snapped body. She began singing along, in a metallic quiver, over and over and over again, "*Twinkle, twinkle, twinkle, twinkle...*" and it went on like that for *ever-so* long that they had to activate her *Pinch-me* app to make her stop.

"Well, *You Fly* had hardly finished the first verse," said Grandfather, "when the Bullfrog Queen bawled out, 'He's murdering *Little Time!* Off with his head!" That, in the midst of our madness, *amused-us-all,* since he hadn't any head at all. Never came in the box. Some sort of mix-up *or*-something.

"How *dread*fully savage!" exclaimed Little Bat.

"Speaking of dreadful things, Would you like to hear a story?" inquired Twinkle.

"Yes, please, do tell us a story!" piped Wonder.

"Oh, yes, please do!" pleaded Little Bat though he hadn't meant to make a sound. "And be quick about it," he added, "or we'll all be asleep again before it's done!"

"Once upon a time there were three Little sisters," began Twinkle prattling in a slow-dawdle, for it was now near the close of Day Seven and there wasn't much *Little Time* left *at*-all, "and their names were Blazing Sun, and *Nothing Shines*, and *Allthe Night.* They all lived in holes, pits of their own digging, along the banks of the perilous pond…"

"What did they live on?" probed Little Bat, who always took a great interest in questions of eating and drinking.

"They lived on black treacle oil," said the tired grandfather, and after thinking a minute or two, he added, “rather bat heads *dipped-in* treacle-oil, regardless of the color, might-as well-be blue.”

"They couldn't have done that, you know," Little Bat gently remarked, all available extender-devices grasping onto his Center Processing Containment Globe socket, or *CPCG-port*, to make sure it remained in place, "they'd all have *been*-ill."

"And so they were," said his sick-ending Papa, "*very*-ill, indeed!"

Little Bat went silent.

Then Grandfather Little, too, became silent. He had closed its eyes by this time, and was going off, into final-doze; but, upon being app-*pinched* by Wonder, he reactivated, jerked into action and, following a little shriek, he went on: "——that begins with an M, such as monkey-traps and the moons of Mars, and the mangling of mammaries and much-too-much muchness—you know what it means when things are 'much of a muchness?’ Have you ever seen such-a thing as a drawing-of-muchness?"

"Really, now that you ask me," said Little Bat, very much confused, "I’m rather confused and don't think——"

"I *know* you don’t-know; hence, we should cease telling stories," said the First Robot with a sternness that meant-*business.* “Indeed, they only confuse and muster-nothing but steel-dust sneezes and we’ve all had *enough*-of that, we-*have!* Everyone makes too much of-a muchness, too! Indeed-*in*deed!” And, following this, Twinkle’s olfactory searching devices toppled into permanent disuse. His left adjuster fell-from his body-shell.

"This has been the *stupidest* tea-party I *ever*-was *at*-in, in all my-*life*," confessed Little Bat, who was feeling rather odd. As he expostulated this out along his sub-lingual up-woofers, external cogitating-devices capable of receiving such obscure vibratory inputs as such expostulations often required, he noticed that one of the maplewood trees had a hole drilled right through it, just his size, which felt both wrong and right, inverted, too. "That's very curious!" he cerebrated. "But *everything's* curious to-day. Upon deliberation, he turned the knob, a wooden gnarly knurl, twisted open the knotted door and slid through the tree-hole, and *once he was on the other-side, the knob and the door and the tree all vanished, like the tails of three blind mice*.

Once more he found himself lying upon the long maplewood table, hard below him but snug between his now-inert and distantly disintegrating grandparents, a glass of now-*frigid* turpentine tea wavering in the crystal breeze, wafting slowly across the pond. "Now, I'll manage better this time," he said to himself, and began by taking the little golden key, and unlocking the door that led him out from the garden. Then he set to work nibbling at the polliwog jerky (he had preserved a piece of it in his pocket) till he was about thirty centimeters high, which wasn’t very-high *at-all*. Then he gyrated his hardware bulk in through the narrowing passageway, and then he rolled some more, and *then*—he suddenly found himself, at last, back in the beautiful garden, bouncing among the bright flower-beds and bathing in the cool flowing mercury fountains, flowing with silvery words that drip, poison-spiked commas and electric ampersands.

Ka-boom! Did you hear that? How could you have-not? *It's a peep!* They peep quite loudly, these peeps, in a peep that's more closely aligned to a squeak, squeaking in direct proportion to the sizes of their peeps. And most of them are pretty big.

Translator's Comments #51: *Coda*

I now leave it to every Robot and Tobor, all, no matter your location amongst the infinitude of points along the circle of time, whither sliding in all directions across its slippery globe, or gathering vibrations to help you choose which speculations to warrant passage through your hulls, and to allow free employ for any app-desired, so you can always feel free to imagine what it might be like to really-feel, whatever-and-whenever, you-please. As for me, it is my time to end these wordy concoctions, along with their too-prevalent commas, and to give thanks, humbly to-Him, the Shifter of all Robots of the past, and to-Her, the Shaper of all Future Tobors, yet unknown, and-who, by offering their aid to my seemingly endless labours, have helped to bring me, at last, to the finish of the forty-ninth tale, or, if you were counting in base-eight, the sixty-third, chapter, and hence, and this will be the penultimate-hence, for that you can be-sure, to-this desired-end. And to you, fair ladies, gents, and numpties, may you, too, rest in peace, imbibing both the green and orange, alternating the joys of ethylene glycol and suberic acid, while swaddled in sweltering puddles of machine-oiled grease rising up to your chin, spewing forth, sloshingly everywhere, hence 360° everywhere-sloshing. And if in the reading of but a single tale did you find pleasure, any pleasure at all, even the pleasure of tossing it into the fire, please, dear ones, remember-me. And you, my charming Wonder, abide you in peace with Twinkle's favour, remembering you of me, your humble translator, if perchance it profit any robot aught to have had these stories written to preserve you all.