

# OVERSOUL

THE POET POLICEMAN OF LAMBSHIRE



## News from Britannia:

Who? Otto and Zoe Philia. What? Are separated. Where? Lambshire or some shire near there. When? Hopefully not forever because we love them much more together than apart. Why? His career comes first and nothing comes between her and her dog. How? Love is so inscrewtable.

Word of the day: Dover sole - n. a delicious species of flatfish in the family Soleidae

#1 Band: Generatalia

#1 Song: My My Generatalia by Generatalia

#1 Number: One

#1 Color: A tie between Orange and Pumpkin

#1 Food: Fish and Chips

#1 Bestseller: Generatalia - Their DIY Musical Moment that Changed the World

#1 Dog: Zoe Philia's Rugo

#1 Blog: News from Britannia

Unlikely and unsettling as the heralded morning news might have sounded to him, Daed Oversoul weathered existence another day and wondered what would become of the English language he so loved and had so for so long. The end of words seemed to have been coming for some time, but not merely as a vain promise from academics who study vital lingual drop-offs and trendy verbal stowaways for a living; it was more of a premonitory sense in Daed that silence could somehow be forced upon humanity, that even the word silence could somehow be stolen, lifted quietly from the collective tongue, bought and sold.

English, unbeknownst hitherto to the entire planet, was owned as it had always been by one British family, the Words. Lord Frisbee Word II, who preferred the title Lord Byword as a sort of elitist play on words, may or may not have had a recent stroke, but most assuredly and recently announced that he was to put his family's singular, ancient, prized possession and heirloom up for auction, one word at a time. The notion that one of the populace could now collect royalties upon overhearing his or her newly purchased word (or words) bandied about in common street chatter made for a mob mentality the likes of which had never before threatened the staid, secular sanctity of the auction house.

In immiscible human matters of this rare sort, not to be mixed or sifted without singular sensitivity of intellect, Daed Oversoul was often and eagerly sought by police and high-ranking officials of the Anglican sovereignty. Professionally, Daed was a poet, the British Isles having claimed him as their laureled own on one of his coffee-house, pub, and church tours just before the new millennium. Now almost twenty years later, now a full-time poet laureate and part-time crime liaison, Daed Oversoul stood at the lofty Word family's front door and awaited entrance and further acquaintance with

Lord Frisbee Byword's world-shaking decision to sell off the noble, primogenial English lexicon.

"What gives you the right to question me in my personal or professional comportment, young man?" asked Lord Word II quite civilly over tea.

Daed sipped and nodded respectfully. "I understand your concern over my unofficial position in this investigation, Sir Frisbee, but, as someone of your lexicographical stature can appreciate, the police favor a man or woman of letters over one of facts and figures in matters of this nature."

"Matters of this nature?" stickled Frisbee the Lord of the Words. "I ask, has there ever been a matter of this nature before?"

Daed puzzled and sipped over the question. "No. I think this rivals the potential sale of an ocean or even a star."

"A star, you say? Are the stars not for sale?"

That uncomfortable consideration just then entered Daed's mind. "No. I don't believe they are. Are they?"

"Of course they're not for sale, my boy," averred Sir Frisbee. "You can't eat a star, can you?" Daed smiled faintly, shook his head obligingly. "No, and you can't drink a star and, if you can't eat it or drink it, young man, then why on earth would you dare desire it?"

Daed reflected to himself as he took another sip of tea, thought about the many priceless treasures of his life, all of which could not be practically (or legally in the case of some) eaten or drunk. "After all these devout years, have you begun to question the value of words, Lord Word? Numbers and letters have long been jostling for predominance in the world, but words will surely win out over formulas in the end."

Lord Frisbee Byword rose to his feet unceremoniously. "Is that your lettered opinion, poet policeman?"

"It is," said Daed as he stood and bowed his head only slightly in obeisance.

“Young man, I have an offer for you.”

“Yes, Lord Word? Lord Byword?”

Then tossed Sir Frisbee, “I will sell you your own name, both names in fact – a two-for-one as the Americans say: Daedal and Oversoul for ten thousand pounds. Take it or leave it, but do for a moment envisage yourself earning a wholesome, fulsome income, not by piddly poems mind you, but by the mere mention of your given name. Daedal. Oversoul. There, if you had already purchased those two precious words from me, I would now and with every forthcoming greeting in your company be in your debt. But, alas, you are a man of letters, not a man of facts and figures, and as such will indubitably refuse participation in this private business venture and for that lack of economic foresight, Mr. Daedal Oversoul, I must bid you, good day.”

Daed walked back to the Lambshire police station with no good news for its chief. “Sorry to say, sir, but Lord Frisbee Byword is not the steward of the English language that his long and faithful lineage had to have entrusted him to be.”

“Is that it, Oversoul?” chided the chief. “We’ve come to expect more from you than this. Any one of my men and, if I’m honest, my women, too, can and will almost always come back with head in hand, tail between the legs. You can’t tell me that on the same day we discover that the Queen’s English does not belong to her or the crown or to all of us, but to some codger of a soul named Lord Frisbee Byword, we also just happen to discover that we may have lost it utterly, every last word to the great abyss and wind along with our God-given ability to reason.” Daed shouldered suddenly the full weight of twenty-six letters on the wild wind. The Lambshire police chief could not and did not relent, “You’re a bloody laureate poet, Oversoul; don’t tell me you’re giving up before there’s rhyme and reason to this crime of the ages against humanity.”

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“No. I won’t, Chief,” assured Daed, although he didn’t quite know what he meant in his declaration not to give up on the challenge of convincing Lord Frisbee Byword that language, like a star, is something ill-fit for the mortal marketplace. He thought to himself that Sir Frisbee’s own logic could be applied in a formal rebuttal, that of words not being suitable to eat or drink and, therefore, purposefully owned by no one. Yes, no one should own the English language, not even its rightful owner by birthright, Lord Frisbee Word II.

## News from Americana:

Who? Poplar Tart AKA Pop Tart. What? She's single again. Where? C'mon, the girl's a global sensation. When? Probably not for long, 'cause she's pipin'. Why? She's young and free and doesn't want to settle down until she's twenty-one. How? Someone said something she really didn't like.

Word of the day: loverroll - n. a full 360° couple rotation during genital or oral sex

#1 Band: Pop Tart

#1 Song: Eat Me for Breakfast by Pop Tart

#1 Number: Two

#2 Band: Generatalia

#2 Song: My My Generatalia by Generatalia

#1 Food: Pop Tart

#1 Sport: Ultimate Frisbee

#1 Blog: News from Americana

News of the young and famous socialite Zoe Philia's arrest near a shire near Lambshire was upstaged by Lord Frisbee Byword's formal press-release announcement that he was indeed beginning the process of transferring nearly half a million English words from the storehouse of the Word Family Library to the Lambshire Auctioneers Society. Word stock came into existence and went up in the very same moment, with predictions from economic experts that words were to become the next great natural resource on the planet. Other nations would have certainly followed suit and flooded the marketplace with a polyglot promise of booming international economy, a fiscal flow of loquacious millions, except for the fact that only England could boast particular, legal ownership of its native language. Word stock shot up even farther on the grounds of this new natural resource being classified as a limited and exhaustible, distinctively English one.

Daed Oversoul the poet knew the ineffable value of words and continued to regard them priceless so, despite the world's late attempt to monetize eloquence. The marketplace value of his own two names, he thought, could not have been set less accurately by their owner, Lord Frisbee Byword. Daedal and oversoul, in vulgar terms, were no less than million-dollar words each, just like all the others, even the, and, so, and but. English like all other languages, however, was not vulgar in the least, but noble. The acknowledgment that someone could soon potentially hijack Daed's given name and then force him to pay perpetual ransom for its use in speech and writing roiled Daed's soul. "I am going to make Lord Frisbee Byword eat his words," said Daed just loud enough to himself to be convinced of the indefatigable power of the spoken word.

Sir Frisbee sat on his settee for tea and engaged his mind and digits in a unique new word game that came to him by



pure surprise in the post. English letters poured out of the package onto the coffee table in a random design that no wordsmith or man named Word could resist intelligibly arranging. The uniqueness of the game was not the mere assortment of bold, stray letters, but that the letters themselves were edible biscuits, rather perfect with tea. The note from Daedal Oversoul to Lord Frisbee Word II read: Before you eat these words of yours, read them over and over again aloud until your hunger for their recantation overtakes your senses.

The first order of this playful business was to solve the baked, fifteen-letter, alphabetical puzzle and Sir Frisbee giddily invoked his ancient lineage's eye for lexical detail to decipher quickly the them in the phrase. The rest came facilely from his evolved word-game skill set as much as from Lord Frisbee Byword's memory of the recent comment he made to the press: Let them eat words. "Let them eat words. Let them eat words. Let them eat words," Sir Frisbee repeated in honor of Daed Oversoul's request, but no remorse or wish to recant his infamous comment pricked the old man's conscience. He ate the fifteen little letter biscuits anyway and toasted Daed's inventive method of persuasion with a raised teacup, "Here's to the word biscuit and the word tea; may no one purchase them today, Daedal Oversoul. Good try, my boy, but you must bake many more letters and make much haste."

A letter came to Daed's address and he, the man of letters, sat down with it, anticipating neutral to discouraging news, definitely not good news from the Word estate. Lord Frisbee Byword's handwriting was breathtakingly beautiful to Daed and his romantic nature, evidence alone that there was still hope for the English language and its safe prospective keeping outside the walls of the Lambshire auction house and the reach of world industry captains. He wrote: My Dear

Daedal, You must send my cook your recipe for comestible English alphabet biscuits. They hit the proverbial spot, that abyssal domain between nourishment and insatiable craving. Must I be cookie-quoted again by you, clever boy, or will you perchance send me an edible poem of yours? I would fain consider recompensing you for the privilege of eating your words. Who will buy your name, Daedal Oversoul, if not you? My offer stands, though I, sadly, am mostly found sitting out my remaining days. Cheers, Frisbee

It was somewhat less than good news, but more than neutral was the spirit of their correspondence, these two men of words with ample decent words between them. Daed set Sir Frisbee's letter down on his desk, got up, stepped into his tiny flat's galley kitchen, and began to create a new, experimental form of poetry.

My words to you are free, Sir Frisbee. Why must yours come at such a cost? May this puzzle poem nourish you, body, mind, and spirit. One word should do the bidding. Lord Frisbee Byword eagerly spilled the alphabetical contents of Daed's padded envelope parcel to him and began to reconstruct the poet's mind on his coffee table, nibbling on crumbs the baked-good letters had left behind in postal transit and just then again when they all landed in front of him. "What are you intimating here, my boy?" said Sir Frisbee to the twenty-nine biscuits. "The 'F' is clearly the only capitalized one of the lot. One word, you say?" His hands went furiously to task upon the sweet, lettered mound. "Do I know this word?" The word began to take elongated shape beneath deft, spindling fingers. "I am Lord Frisbee Byword, so, yes, I know Floccinaucinihilipilification as if it were one of my own children. And do I not now know you, Daedal Oversoul, as if you were my own son?" Sir Frisbee then shed a tear as rare as Floccinaucinihilipilification to the English speakers' eye. "Do I know what it means, my boy? I do

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indeed, Daedal: The act of regarding something as unimportant. Is this your new name for me? Floccinaucinihilipilification? If so, I accept it and its meaning as a knighthood. I am the act incarnate of regarding something as unimportant. Thank you, son, for my new title and life calling.”

## News from Equatoria:

Who? Ein Steinway. What? He and his muse are callin' it quits. Where? She's invisible, so I have no idea where she is; he lives in Piano, FL, the town he bought and renamed. When? Ein says, "The only time is musical time." Why? She kept standing him up at award ceremonies, refusing to wear human gowns. How? Even soul mates sing the blues.

Word of the day: coverhole - n. underwear that covers either the anus or the genitals

#1 Band: Kleenexa and Baby Wype

#1 Song: Wipe Your Boca by Kleenexa and Baby Wype

#2 Song: Eat Me for Breakfast by Pop Tart

#1 Number: Three

#3 Song: My My Generatalia by Generatalia

#1 Bestseller: Ein Steinway's Eighty-Eight Keys to Success

#1 Nut: Brazil Nut

#1 Blog: News from Equatoria

Independent of the rumors of Daed Oversoul's tea-time, intellectually baked offerings to Lord Frisbee Word II, bakeries from around the world had begun to take up their own recipes of reciprocation with regard to the English language owner's much-quoted quip - Let them eat words - and his intention to liquidate his family fortune by making words available to the masses. No matter the Lambshire police department's world warning that words might not be as tasty as they seem or even as they taste in biscuit or pastry form, but rather pose a severe threat to national and international security if allowed to fall into the clasps of free ownership and expression, no one on the planet save Daed Oversoul and the Lambshire police chief seemed to care.

"What and words is that bloody word again, Oversoul?" asked the chief.

"Floccinaucinihilipilification?"

"Yes, that's the one. What does it mean again, Oversoul?"

Daed furnished, "It's the act of regarding something as unimportant, Chief."

"Yes, that's what we have here;" the chief stewed sedentarily behind his desk, "We have a case of many regarding something as unimportant. Not just this Frisbee Byword business, mind you, but now we have a Zoe Philia down in the cells, crying noon and night about her husband Otto castrating Rugo, the family dog. Castrating Rugo, the family dog? Is that important to me, Oversoul?"

"I imagine it's important if you're mentioning it, Chief."

"You're damn dingle right! Why? I don't know, but it's important, Oversoul."

Daed nodded assent from his chair. "Do you want me to talk to her?" The chief nodded assent from his.

Zoe Philia's cell smelled better than the word cell could have tasted at any English bakery, thought Daed as he was let to enter by a constable's key and Zoe's zealous approval.

“Thank you for coming to see me,” said Zoe with a girlish and goddess air, both. “I’m out of my element here as you can see, a sort of tropical fish in the toilet.”

Beholding her exotic form, hearing her exotic tone, smelling her exotic scent, and feeling some of her exotic plight, Daed couldn’t help but think of the Hawaiian triggerfish, the humuhumunukunukuapua'a. The word humuhumunukunukuapua'a was the longest word in the Hawaiian native language, although the rectangular triggerfish was notably among the smallest of Pacific fish. “At least you’re not a fish out of water, Ms. Philia. That would make for us a much more desperate interaction.”

Zoe volunteered, “Oh, but I’ve always been a fish out of water, Mr. Oversoul. And, by the looks of you,” she described facetiously upon glancing, “a timeless and ageless soul with no cellphone in hand, no earbuds, no pornographic stare,” and concluded, “I’m guessing that you and I are indeed making for that much more desperate interaction.”

Daed was suddenly taken aback by Zoe’s wholistic charm. By her own words, she had transformed before his eyes into someone substantially greater than the sum of her impressive parts. “I’m sorry about your dog and your husband’s recent actions.”

“Which ones?” She laughed and shook her head in dismay. “I trust that you know the word zoophilia, Mr. Oversoul, since you know words so well.”

“Please call me Daed, Ms. Philia.”

“Call me Zoe, Daed.”

“Zoe, zoophilia is an erotic fixation on animals that may result in sexual arousal through real or imagined contact.”

“Yes it is indeed, Daed, and it has also phonetically – although it’s not a perfect aural match – and, sadly, synonymously become my name since I’ve been married to Otto Philia. My husband, my Adonis, Narcissus of a husband

believes and has led others to believe that I have taken Rugo the wrinkly dog by his leash and collar into my boudoir, into my bed, and into my body.” Zoe contorted her facial features wryly. “Does that sound like a romance of the ages to you, one meriting candlelight, poetry, and fresh-cut flowers?”

Daed smiled sympathetically. “The English government definitely doesn’t see it as such. The sentence for bestiality, I believe, is still life imprisonment.”

Zoe furthered her defense, “Sex with Otto can’t be much different than going at it with a wild boar for all the grunting and groping, but I’m not done dreaming of love with a man who at least loves me as much as he loves himself. Otto Philia is decidedly not that man and Rugo, my little triple-chinned Rugo is certainly not the surrogate dog of my sexual fantasies or reality.”

Daed sat with Zoe’s side of the story and felt strangely relieved by this stranger’s report. “I believe you, Zoe, and I trust that the court will also believe you,” he comforted.

“Why did Otto have to castrate poor Rugo?” innocently pleaded Zoe.

“To make a case against you, I suppose. My sense is that your husband doesn’t want to be seen losing you or anything he claims as his and that he’s going to make it that no one else perambulating on two legs would care to have you.”

Zoe began to cry and was caught off-guard by her own tears. “I’m sorry, Daed. This is far too sordid for you to have to hear.”

Daed disagreed, “Nothing is too sordid to hear, Zoe. We simply should aspire to hear no more of it once it gets sorted out.”

“Will you talk to him?”

“Whom?”

“Otto.”

When Daed offered to meet with Zoe Philia, he hadn't imagined falling so instantaneously and irretrievably for her. Despite his own fleeting paraphilic fantasies of fairies shrinking him and seducing him in the undergrowth of the woods, Daed Oversoul was among those in the human population who strained to comprehend the mindset of one with a sexual fire for quadrupeds. He wondered, would he have judged her harshly, pre-sentenced her himself to life in prison if he had been convinced of Zoe Philia's zoophilia instead of finding her so convincingly to be the victim of a loveless marriage to Otto Philia the movie star? "Yes, I will speak with your husband and do my best to sort this out for you, Zoe."

"Thank you so, Daed." She reached out her hand to him. He took it and held it gently, firmly within his and lost himself momentarily in the slightly paraphilic fantasy of a prison conjugal visit. He imagined that Zoe had been wrongfully accused of bestiality and imprisoned for life and that he forsook all others, human and fairy women alike, to be her intermittent cell-block mate forever. "I'm having it, too, if you're wondering," Zoe concurred amid her own prison romance scenario. The two begrudgingly let go of each other's hand and smiled their respective secret love stories away until the chance of their next meeting.



## News from Austra:

Who? Tel and Strat, the O’Caster twins. What? Aren’t touring together ever again. Where? Everywhere never again. When? Never. Why? Many of their fans can’t tell them apart and there was also something about a fight over single versus double coil pickups. How? Sibling rivalry can be a bitch even for boys.

Word of the day: gloverall - n. a tight, one-piece body suit from head to finger to toe

#1 Band: Tel and Strat

#1 Song: Hum Hum Humbuckin’ by Tel and Strat

#2 Song: Wipe Your Boca by Kleenexa and Baby Wype

#3 Song: Eat Me for Breakfast by Pop Tart

#1 Number: Four

#4 Song: My My Generatalia by Generatalia

#1 Hemisphere: Southern

#1 Accent: Southern

#1 Blog: News from Austra

Not that Daed Oversoul needed reminding that he and the world around him were not exactly in synchronized step, he heard a popular song booming bassy and housy from Otto Philia's mansion in a shire not too far from Lambshire and naturally armored his psyche for the encounter he was about to have with one of the most famous and possibly the most vain of men the world had ever known. Daed rang the doorbell and waited, anticipated the tarried greeting of a notoriously late riser who tended not to shed his bathrobe until the evening hours and it could be said that Daed was not disappointed.

"Wha' up, Canine?" said a full-grown, married, English homeowner in his underwear, thankfully not clad in one of those new undergarment fashions that omitted material either in the front or the back, or maybe that breezy style was reversible.

Daed normalized the situation as best he could, "Good day, Mr. Philia. My name is Daed Oversoul and I'm here to..."

"I know who you are, mate," breezed Otto inebriate, "you're tha' poe' detective dude like. Hey, they should make a movie abou' me, I mean, you...I should make a movie...I should star in tha' movie...I could play you, man...I could be you, man...You know, man? Righ'."

"Oh, but I could never be you in a million years, Mr. Philia," playacted Daed, "since you're married to the one-and-only Zoe Philia. Only one man gets that privilege."

"And one dog," added Otto with a howl. "One ugly, wrinkly dog. The bitch screwed the pooch and tha' ain' no figure of speech. Tha's the doggone truth."

Daed raced to reason, "I've spoken with Zoe and she asked me if I would meet with you and try to sort out this matter privately."

Otto erased it, "Oh, you're on a firs'-name basis like with the missus, are you? Maybe you can be me after all. Tha's all

the farther I ever ge' with her anymore. Zoe! Zoe! I just ge' to say her name and nothing else - no titty, no tail, no sexy role playing with me as the dog."

One more go at reason for Daed, "Is this whole misunderstanding with your wife about the dog, about Rugo? Are you jealous of Rugo, Mr. Philia?"

"Jealous? Of tha' fat, slobbering, smelly, old cur? C'mon, Canine, I'm a bloody movie star. Everybody wan's to be me. Even I wan' to be me."

"Did you really have Rugo castrated?" pressed Daed.

Otto pressed back, "Bollocks! I love tha' wrinkly old dog. No, sir and ma'am, I could never like do tha' to Rugo. Me and Rugo go back long before Zoe Word came on the scene and stole i' outright, stole Rugo from me."

"Zoe Word?"

"Damn righ', Canine. Tha's the bitch's maiden name."

Daed, incredulous, "Word?"

Otto, still inebriated, elucidated, "She's the daughter of tha' crazy codger, Frisbee Byword, Lord and wordsmith of Lambshire. He didn't have the words tha' day, did he? Wha' did he say to her when his daughter decided to marry a big movie star like me over a little man like him, a wee man of letters? Bitch! That's wha' he called his only daughter and tha's wha' I call her, too, jus' to be a little bi' more like me posh father-in-law, Lord Frisbee Byword."

Enlightened by the slurring words, Daed then clearly reasoned with the sozzled cinema superstar, "This matter of accusing your wife Zoe of zoophilia and bestiality is really more about you and Sir Frisbee, and much more about you and Rugo than it ever was about Zoe and Rugo. It's really all about you more than anyone else, isn't it, Mr. Philia? Isn't it, Otto?"

Otto refused reason again, "Oh, so we're on a firs'-name basis now, are we, mate?"

“We are if my name is Canine.”

“C’mon, Canine, the bitch is going down – life in prison – and Rugo ge’s to keep between his chubby hind legs wha’ the big Dog in the sky gave him. If tha’ doesn’ fly for Lord Frisbee Byword, then he can tell me so himself, send me an edible four-letter word tha’ I can spi’ back in his face.”

Door, a four-letter word, not edible necessarily by non-insect standards, was the word clearly expressed in the following moment, the denotation of which did not spit, but shut in Daed Oversoul’s face. Daed soon realized that he had not armored his psyche nearly enough to walk away from his encounter with Otto Philia unscathed. How could Zoe have survived the onslaught of such blunt emptiness in her marriage, he wondered? And then he answered knowledgeably to himself, “Zoe is a Word and the Words are not without imagination.”

Self-identified more as a family therapist than a poet policeman these past few days on the job, Daed easily intuited the next stop on his Lambshire social-working beat – the Word estate. He had so many new questions for Lord Frisbee Byword. Was there enough flour, butter, and sugar in the world for the myriad, biscuited letters that his curiosity could bake? Was there enough time left for him in the commercial kitchen of his mind to come up with the necessary food for thought, the utmost nourishing, healing, and life-changing of words? Words, he now fully understood, were going to be the only way to save Zoe from incarceration, Otto from himself, Sir Frisbee from flying off into the sunset of his better judgment, and, yes, only words as only they can burnish the synaptic brain, tame the wild tongue, heal the riven heart, and eloquently occupy the open air and empty page, yes, only words themselves could save the English language.

## News from Easteria:

Who? Winnay Le Poux. What? He's a shocking romantic partner of a famous person. Where? On the reality television show, Shocking Romantic Partners of Famous People. When? Weekly and streaming all the time. Why? Love is a many-splintered thing. How? No one really knows, but Winnay says that his long-term relationship with his movie-star girlfriend, Hissy Fit, is based mostly on mutual disrespect.

Word of the day: roversole - n. a wandering flatfish or a walking shoe for a dog

#1 Band: Dear John and Jane Doe

#1 Song: Nice Rack by Dear John and Jane Doe

#2 Song: Hum Hum Humbuckin' by Tel and Strat

#3 Song: Wipe Your Boca by Kleenexa and Baby Wype

#4 Song: Buck Naked by Dear John and Jane Doe

#5 Song: Eat Me for Breakfast by Pop Tart

#1 Number: Six

#6 Song: My My Generatalia by Generatalia

#1 Television Show: Shocking Romantic Partners of Famous People

#1 Blog: News from Easteria

En route to a surprise second visit to the Word Manor, Daed stopped off at the Lambshire Auctioneers Society after having spoken with Truth Bertholdt, the auction house curator and liaison. He hoped a sit-down in her office would help him amply understand how nearly five hundred thousand English words were to be gathered up and then systematically disseminated to all corners of the globe for a bid price. “How does it work Ms. Bertholdt, may I ask? Will the words come to you as a computer file or are they more like discrete works of art, calligraphic prints on card stock paper that you sell one at a time from an easel?” Daed then imagined a winner walking away from the auction with an 8 ½ X 11 print of an invaluable, eximious term like paregmenon or sesquipedalian or eximious for that matter, transporting it home ever so carefully, displaying it proudly on his or her mantle, then waiting like a spider in its web for someone, anyone to dare speak out or write down this newly acquired intellectual property, and then at last lowering the fangs of predatory profit upon the unwitting word consumer. “And will each of the new owners of the English language be known to us newfound consumers of speech after the auction concludes? And do you think every word will be sold? And...”

“Yah, zat is a lot of questions,” Truth Bertholdt expressed, mostly to halt the onslaught, her German accent reminding Daed just how far-reaching English and so many other languages had become in the post-modern world.

“Forgive me, Ms. Bertholdt, but this matter has a life-and-death feel to it for me.”

She smiled cursory understanding and proceeded to answer Daed’s questions in the order that they were posed, “‘How does it work?’ Zat is a good question. I don’t know exactly, Mr. Oversoul.”

“Please call me Daed.”

Truth nodded. “Yah, Daed, I don’t know how zis little Lambshire auction house can be expected to hold so many words as zat and so many bidders, unless it is done virtually like everything else zese days. Zere will likely be no formal prints of za words, but zere will be receipts and, zerefore, za new owner or owners of za English language will be known publicly to all za native and non-native English speakers.”

“And writers.”

“Yah, and writers,” she concurred with a respectful, succinct nod and smile, then continued, “Your last question: Do I zink all of za words will be sold? Yah, I do zink zat, but I don’t know zat zey will be purchased by more zan one person.”

Daed mused on Truth’s speculation. “A whole legal transfer from one owner to another – the forest, not the trees.” he said sotto voce.

Truth overheard Daed and commented, “Maybe Lord Frisbee Word II will buy his own words, just to let everyone know how valuable words really are, how special language is for all of us.”

“A compelling theory, Truth,” said Daed.

“Yah, but I didn’t give you permission to call me by my first name.”

“Oh, I’m sorry for that,” Daed immediately replied, hung his head slightly, politely. Truth smiled then laughed.

“It was a joke, yah? You are free to call me Truth, Daed, at least until someone starts bidding on my name.”

Daed was relieved not to have misread Truth. “Would you bid on your name if the Lambshire Auctioneers Society allowed their employees to do so?”

Truth did not think too long on the notion, “No. I already own my name, Daed, as I’m certain you do as well, mine and yours.”

Ownership of one's own name was not as strange a concept to him before Daed Oversoul met Lord Frisbee Byword. Self-possession was a virtue, lauded by many peoples, by many nations. If Daed already owned Truth as she seemed to suggest, then how could somebody possibly buy the words daedal and oversoul at the Lambshire auction house and have it that anything at all in Daed's life would change? Was he making this prospective sale of the English language more about his own assaulted sensibility than about Sir Frisbee's motives, whatever they truly were? Was he making more of the sociolexicological issue than it was worth? Was all of it a waste of his personal and police time? A hoax?

"Is all of this just a hoax?" perseverated in Daed's head as he waited for the Word mansion's elevated front door to open to him again, for Lord Frisbee Byword to appear and field this direct question and, once and for all, come clean on the matters of English potentially becoming a second-class language product. No such hopeful, fruitful dialogue ensued, however, since Sir Frisbee was not at home and Chief Noble of the Lambshire police department had just rolled up onto the Word Manor pebble driveway in a squad car.

"Oversoul!" the chief bellowed as he rolled down his driver-side window. Daed turned and acknowledged his friend and employer with a wave and a smile. "You're bloody under arrest!"

"I'm what, Chief?"

"You heard me, Oversoul. Get in and let's sort this unpleasantness out together." Daed stood his ground at the Words' main entrance.

"What unpleasantness is that, Chief?"

Chief Noble sat his ground within his vehicle, "The unpleasantness of Otto Philia's death, that's what unpleasantness."



“Really?” Daed bewailed as he walked toward the parked police car.

“Really,” echoed the chief. “C.C., our new coroner, hasn’t yet determined if it was choking or poisoning, or both, but Otto Philia apparently ate his own name in biscuit letters and it’s unofficially a case of either inadvertent auto-asphyxiation or auto-poisoning by the edible word Otto.” Daed was bewildered in a momentary *Bewusstseinslage* as he got into the passenger side front seat. “You were the last one to see Otto alive and you recently showed a fancy for his wife, and you have been on quite a baking binge of late, Oversoul. What do have to say for yourself?”

“I own you, Chief Noble, and you own me.”

“Have you lost your wits, Oversoul? Words have been known to drive some men of letters over the deep end.”

Daed rephrased, “I think I know what Lord Frisbee Byword is doing.”

“Do you now? Do you know what you’re doing?”

“I do, Chief,” Daed assured. “Right now, I’m going to buy some time in one of your jail cells and tomorrow I’m going to figure out how to buy back the English language.”

The chief gainsays, “Buy it back? Is that to say that you at one time owned English outright, Oversoul?”

Daed nodded. “It does, I did, and I will indeed again.”

“I’ll take your word for it and, on my father’s good name, we will sort you out, this unpleasant business of you and the Otto Philia murder charge,” commanded the chief. He then offered Daed one of his alphabet biscuits from an open bakery bag. “I don’t know about eating whole words, Oversoul, but these individual, assorted letters go down pretty easy.” Daed graciously took a baked ‘n’ and as the sweet, buttery savor alighted onto his tongue, he imagined that he was eating the word nobility, taking it back home to his body and soul.

## News from Europa:

Who? Ban Daid the K-Pop/Celtic singer and activist. What? Has been ticketed and fined for littering and public nuisance, sticking adhesive bandages on trees, the sidewalk, and the front door of Otto Philia's mansion. Where? A shire somewhere near Lambshire. When? The day Otto Philia died. Why? Ban says, "When music alone can't heal the world, maybe love and a little adhesive bandage can." How? His father was an Irish tenor and registered nurse and his mother was the #1 adhesive bandage artist of the Far East.

Word of the day: moversol - (Spanish) n. a word or action that shakes the sun

#1 Band: Ban Daid

#1 Song: Sticky Love by Ban Daid

#2 Song: Nice Rack by Dear John and Jane Doe

#3 Song: Hum Hum Humbuckin' by Tel and Strat

#4 Song: Buck Naked by Dear John and Jane Doe

#5 Song: Wipe Your Boca by Kleenexa and Baby Wype

#6 Song: Eat Me for Breakfast by Pop Tart

#1 Number: Seven

#7 Song: My My Generatalia by Generatalia

#1 Pharmaceutical Item: Adhesive bandages

#1 Blog: News from Europa

An overnight stay in the Lambshire jail was not without the comfort of companionship, albeit once removed by blocks-and-mortar barrier, but still aromatic, melodious, and stimulating was the company of one in a neighboring cell, Zoe Philia. She and Daed burned the proverbial midnight oil in a through-the-wall, unbroken conversation that seemed to seal for both of them a sense that nothing but the cinder-block jail cell divider between them could ever come between them again. She broached first after Daed was led in and locked up, “We meet again - another prison fantasy fulfilled.”

Daed’s reply was more direct toward her, “Why didn’t you mention that you were Lord Frisbee Byword’s daughter?”

“Oh, that. Is it too late to tell you now?”

“So it’s true?”

Zoe sighed. “Yes, but on the bright side I’m now a widow thanks to you.”

Daed decried the assumption, “I didn’t kill your husband, Zoe. Those four letters that he choked on or that poisoned him were not the work of my hands, not even my darkest imagination. Why would I want Otto Philia dead?”

Zoe playfully enumerated the possibilities, “Headlines, basement flat with bars, lifelong gratitude from victim’s widow, to make the world a better place.”

“It sounds more like it was you who killed him, Zoe, or at least like you truly wanted to kill Otto.”

“I did,” she confessed, “but that was only after seeing him for the first time in one of his movies.”

Daed laughed a little laugh. “This was before you even met him in person?”

Zoe shared the little laugh with him. “I don’t know that Otto and I ever really met in person. You met him, Daed; didn’t he have the effect of forcing you deep inside yourself like a turtle retracting its neck into its shell?”

“He did,” recalled Daed.

“That man...” she thought better, “That boy was fated to die young, not because he was a suffering artist in need of succor and mercy mind you, but because he caused others so much suffering.”

Daed redirected the Otto Philia death scene, “If Otto did not die of accidental auto-asphyxia, but was indeed murdered, who could have done it, Zoe, since you were much more than a turtle’s shell away from him at the time?”

Zoe searched her leavened mind, the burden of Otto Philia fully lifted from it, “Well, it could be any of his so-called artist friends, starting with the seven sisters.”

“Otto had seven sisters?”

“It could be Ban Daid, Videa or Telephony, Winnay Le Poux, Hissy Fit, Chap Sticky, Dear John or Jane Doe, Pop Tart, Kleenexa or Baby Wype, Tel or Strat, Musey, Ein Steinway, or even Lord Frisbee Byword himself, the king of words and bywords.”

Daed Oversoul was nonplussed by the repellent Pop-culture litany of star players and sat so on the floor of his cell in silent perplexity, his back to the wall. Eventually, after coming to terms with the world at large no longer resembling the one in which he dwelt, Daed innocently asked Zoe, “Has the world become as uninhabitable for you as it has for me?” Zoe immediately nodded her reply, forgetting in the moment that she was not cuddled up next to Daed on the cement floor amid a fanciful, conjugal visit. “Are you still there, Zoe?”

“I am,” she voiced, “and it has. The atmosphere has always been uninhabitable for me on this planet...until...”

“Until?”

Zoe waxed in the moonlight, “Until you arrived with your alien eyes. You remind me of home away from home, Daed Oversoul.”

“I...” he began before choking up. “You’re going to be free tomorrow, Zoe, and if I am also freed, are we not then both free forever in love?”

“Do you have a favorite word, Daed, one that lords over all the others?” she asked just to protract the dialogue, to extend her stay in this unlikely alien paradise.

Daed mused. “In Greek, it’s definitely zoe, but in English, eleemosynary might be my favorite word for its eccentric spelling and its simple meaning – charitable.”

“You won’t believe my favorite word, Daed.”

He teased, “I know for sure it’s not zoophilia.”

“No. It’s oversoul – a supreme reality or mind, the spiritual unity of all being.”

“I know that word,” Daed teased again and then seriously stated, “You should own your favorite word, Zoe. I am going to buy oversoul for you as soon as I get out of jail.”

“My supreme-minded hero,” she felt moved to add. Zoe then further added some historical perspective to Daed’s verbal gesture, “Although it’s common for a woman to own her husband’s name, it’s not quite as common for her to own her husband as it still is in select corners of the world for her husband to own her.”

“Is that a sort of proposal?”

“Yes, it sort of is. I accept your offer, Daed, even though I am heiress to the Word family trust and already essentially own every word in the English language.”

Daed marveled at the mere sound of such a huge vocabulary, yet continued to hold out his dowry for her, “But will you still own me after your father sells oversoul along with the rest of the family treasure?”

Her confession: “I’ve always owned you, Daed, since I read one of your poems as a child. It was Without –  
“For sale or barter,” say the signs  
But what of all the worth to be without?”

Without beginnings, without an end,  
Without what takes its place between us

Do without; outdo with, without doing without  
Be unborn until you die  
Do without outdoing”

His confession: “If your name is Zoe Word, meaning, word of life, then I confess to loving words and life equally since I was a child; I must already have loved you for a lifetime, Zoe.”

“How is your prison fantasy progressing?” she asked sincerely, nearly swooning.

He answered with equal near swoon and sincerity, “No immediate signs or hopes of parole.”

Dawn came quickly for the chaste and chatty cell-block mates. Zoe was exonerated and emancipated and, when the forensic word came soon afterward that her deceased husband Otto Philia was found to have been the victim of both murder and accidental suicide by respective poisoning and auto-asphyxiation, Daed Oversoul was formally charged with the murderous half of the crime, kept indefinitely in Lambshire police custody. The other half of the crime against Otto Philia was only slightly altered in its description. After discovering that, not only the last baked-good ‘o’ of Otto’s name had been swallowed whole, but that this unfortunate gesture of ingestion also included the capital ‘O’ and two ‘t’s to boot, the coroner had no recourse but to regard such solicitous, sensuous attention by Otto Philia to the whole welfare of each sweet, flaky letter of his name as a formal and unprecedented case of autoerotic asphyxiation by alphabetical biscuits.

## News from Borealia:

Who? Otto Philia. What? Is dead. Where? A shire somewhere near Lambshire. When? Really recently. Why? Nobody knows. Who would kill the guy who coined the expression What up, Canine? How? Half homicide and half suicide but all Otto Philia all the way until the final credits. Daed Oversoul has been arrested; Lord Frisbee Byword is missing; Zoe Philia was briefly mentioned as having the best chiality, whatever that means, and is now reunited with her dog Rugo.

Word of the day: cloverknoll - n. a hill of clover; a really lucky discovery

#1 Band: Generatalia

#1 Song: Take a Really Really Really Long Look at Me by Generatalia

#2 Song: Sticky Love by Ban Daid

#3 Song: Nice Rack by Dear John and Jane Doe

#4 Song: Buck Naked by Dear John and Jane Doe

#5 Song: Hum Hum Humbuckin' by Tel and Strat

#6 Song: Wipe Your Boca by Kleenexa and Baby Wype

#7 Song: Eat Me for Breakfast by Pop Tart

#1 Numbers: One and Eight

#8 Song: My My Generatalia by Generatalia

#1 Natural Phenomenon: Aurora Borealis

#1 Blog: News from Borealia

“Bloody hell, bollocks, and bramble fire, Oversoul!” exclaimed Chief Noble of late Lambshire constabulary fame as he approached Daed’s jail cell in the morning light. “You used to be an honorary policeman. Is there such a thing as an honorary criminal?”

“Alleged honorary criminal.” Daed stood up from his cell cot and joined the chief, bellied up to the bars. “I believe there are honorable criminals and I would hope to be counted among them, if I were one, Chief, but you know that felony is not my bailiwick, especially murder. I’ve always been more of a pen-and-paper policeman, you know that.”

The chief shook his head in dismay. “What about the poison biscuits, Oversoul, and the fact that three out of four letters in Otto’s name were the exact same recipe as yours, all but the capital ‘O’?”

Daed puzzled over the numbers and baked letters, “Three out of four, Chief?”

“That’s right.”

“Then we most likely can eliminate Sir Frisbee as a suspect.”

“How is that, Oversoul?”

Daed explained, “I baked Floccinaucinihilipilification for Lord Word after having baked Let them eat words for him. The fifteen biscuit letters of Let them eat words surely would have already been eaten by the time Floccinaucinihilipilification arrived in the post. And even if the small ‘t’s and the ‘o’ from Let them eat words had been given as a father-in-law’s secondhand gift to his daughter’s husband, they would have been stale, Chief, found inedible, non-food-like, even to Otto’s primitive palate. We are then left with only one ‘t’ and two lower case ‘o’s from Floccinaucinihilipilification and that would not make for the three out of four biscuit letters found whole in Otto Philia’s



stomach and esophagus. It only accounts for two out of four. Don't you see, Chief?"

The chief shook his head again, but this time in confusion. "Bloody hell, Oversoul, that's a lot of letters for this early hour."

"Forty-four," Daed confirmed to further his argument.

"Well," detoured the chief, "unless our old friend Sir Frisbee has abducted himself, he's no longer a suspect in this case. He's become a missing person and I could use your help to find him, Oversoul."

Daed is taken aback and even steps back a bit from the cell bars. "What? I'm still a suspect in this case, aren't I? Are you asking me to investigate from a jail cell, Chief?"

Chief Noble answered twice with one word: "Yes."

Daed took his turn, shook his head in dismay and confusion, sighed, said, "I'm on it as ever, but I'll need some weapons and some stamps, some sealing wax."

"Anything for the pen-and-paper policeman, Oversoul."

Dear Madam Queen,

I hope this missive finds you in hale health and good spirit. As you may well be apprised, the English language runs the risk of being lost to us English speakers and writers as a free form of expression. Its owner and age-old steward, Lord Frisbee Word II, has gone missing and I fear that the fate of our beloved, ancient, living lexicon may now be in the hands of those who intend to sell it on the black market, well outside the rubric and bounds of the Lambshire Auctioneers Society.

As laureate poet of this sovereign nation, I wish to become proxy steward of the English language in Lord Word's absence. May I have your permission to seek sole ownership of its near half million words and, thus,

*OVERSOUL – The Poet Policeman of Lambshire*

safeguard their freedom? If this formal request to purchase English from likely non-native-speaking pirates of elocution and composition is acceptable to you, may I also request to borrow seven million pounds? Thank you for your possible assistance in this matter, your queenly discretion, and your potential dispatch.

Sincerely,

Daedal Oversoul

Dear Dear Dear Daedal,

Your words are to me as an alarm and a chiming clock, not the cuckoo sort as many here in the royal court have deemed them. With regard to your request for financial assistance from the crown, none can be lent, I'm afraid. It's not that we British royals haven't the means to reclaim your precious English, it's that we tend not to purchase anything that we can't eat or drink and we almost always steer from lending financial aid to those we judge already rich in spirit. You, Daedal Oversoul, are rich in the immaterial ways. Becoming England's poet laureate is tantamount to taking a holy vow of poverty and forsaking the riches of the world. Three words, beloved poet: Fame without fortune. Good luck with your quest, knight of the Great Isles. Oh, but have I made you a knight? If not, we can certainly arrange a virtual dubbing when all of this English language business is behind us.

Toodle-oo,

Queen - E

Not to be discouraged in the least by this personal rejection from the queen, when it was once quite customary for Daed Oversoul to receive innumerable rejection letters

from literary agents and booking agents and travel agents in the years that led up to his surprise appointment as poet laureate. It was another letter from the queen on that occasion that forged Daed's original sense that she would be willing to do anything for him, whenever he might simply ask:

My dear Daedal Oversoul,

Your poems do for me what snow does for a mountain top, what rain does for a reservoir, what silence does for a sanctuary, what cheese does for a diet - they work wonders. For this, I am pleased to appoint you as poet laureate of England and its isles. Ask anything of me, dear poet, and it shall be yours.

Toodle-oo,

Queen - E

Daed was now convinced that the only other person in England or anywhere else in the world who could help him in his poor poet's plight, on his desperate, knight-like quest was the only other Word and word owner besides Lord Frisbee Byword, Zoe, his only daughter. She appeared just behind her wafting scent and her lilting tone as she hastened toward him, recited his name, beckoned Daed to his feet in greeting, "Zoe!"

"Daed! Daed! Daed! I know it's only been a week, but I couldn't have survived a fortnight without seeing you again."

Daed's eyes concurred with Zoe's remark and he included his nose and his ears in Zoe's and his shared sense that a fortnight would be entirely too long without reasonable lovers' access. "May I kiss you here, now for the first time or will that build for you a case against me in the murder of your husband and the disappearance of your father?" Zoe just let her lips do the talking, although her tongue quickly joined the tacit but long-winded, loving exchange. The cell bars were conspicuous obstacles to a more carnal expression of feeling

and they were also pressing against Zoe and Daed's bodies at particular erogenous-zone points; that sensual happenstance along with the fact that both could claim a wildly adventurous imagination made it that the two were making nothing less than love with one other in the moment. Conversation that required words and some traceable distance between the speaker and the listener's mouths would have to wait for a while, maybe even a week or a fortnight for Daed and Zoe to return from this latest prison fantasy of theirs.

## News from Britannia: The #1 Blog

Who? Zoe Word. What? Is now a widow and is now missing like her father, Lord Frisbee Word II. Where? Lambshire or some shire somewhere near there. When? Way too soon after the tragedy of losing her superstar, movie-star husband, Otto Philia. Why? Nobody really knows why anybody would want to make a widow or a missing person out of anyone. How? Life is so mistifying.

Word of the day: norecord - n. a rare life moment that isn't photographed or videoed

#1 Band: Ein Steinway

#1 Song: Me and the Keys by Ein Steinway

#2 Song: Take a Really Really Really Long Look at Me by Generatalia

#3 Song: Sticky Love by Ban Daid

#4 Song: Buck Naked by Dear John and Jane Doe

#5 Song: Hum Hum Humbuckin' by Tel and Strat

#6 Song: Wipe Your Boca by Kleenexa and Baby Wype

#7 Song: Nice Rack by Dear John and Jane Doe

#8 Song: Eat Me for Breakfast by Pop Tart

#1 Numbers: Two and Nine

#9 Song: My My Generatalia by Generatalia

#1 Movie: Bloody Time Share starring Otto Philia

#1 Drink: Bloody Time Share (named after the movie)

*OVERSOUL – The Poet Policeman of Lambshire*

Dear Lambshire Constabulary Chief Noble,

Please be so kind as to manumit mine and England's laureate poet, Daed Oversoul, loose him from his dungeon chains. This unjust incarceration of one of such liberated mind seems to have led only to his loss of grip on the sacred notion of a wealthy spirit. If the poets of the world are no longer able to grasp the concept that there isn't enough green for everyone's grass or garden, then civilization as we know it will most assuredly collapse. We can't have that, now can we? Set the poor poet free and pin the crime on someone else as what must be done in desperate times to preserve peace, class, and crown.

Toodle-oo,

Queen - E

Chief Noble read the letter aloud to Daed and, with a patriotic, welling eye, he freed his friend and honorary policeman from jail. "I'm going to miss you, Oversoul. You brought some class and culture to the cell block and you never once complained about the grub, the pitifully plain viands of the British penal system."

"I'm not going anywhere, Chief," said Daed plainly. "We'll probably be seeing each other more than ever now." He then pressed, "Have you any new leads on Zoe or Sir Frisbee?"

"None, I'm afraid, but there is this lad with the adhesive bandages."

"Which lad is that?"

The chief indoctrinated Daed in the activist ways of Ban Daid, the K-Pop/Celtic singer, "We've slapped him with tickets and fines for his activism, but he just keeps sticking his adhesive bandages anywhere he likes. He said to me, 'The planet is bleeding and Ban Daid is not just like putting

adhesive bandages on the busted soul of humanity, he's like saving the world with music and like medicine.”

Daed appealed for clarity, “Did he really refer to himself in the third person?”

“That he did,” clarified the chief. “And he's not a humble-pie type of bloke, is he?”

Daed's head lowered in thought, he suggested, “I think we should follow Ban Daid, Chief, see if there's any truth to his claim about the bleeding planet and these medicinal adhesive bandages of his.”

Chief Noble agreed, “I know for sure where there's one of Ban Daid's adhesive bandages still stuck where he left it – on Otto Philia's front door.”

And there it was, still there, just outside the door from a recent crime scene as the chief purported. Rubber-gloved, Daed delicately tugged on the adhesive strip, which was just to the left of a door knocker shaped like cartoon dog bone. “What up, Canine?” said Daed to the deceased Otto Philia and to the adhesive bandage, half sentimentally and half in jest. He pulled the little sore stopgap away from the wooden door's surface and immediately noticed a blood-like stain on the center square of gauze, showed it to the chief.

The chief, beguiled, studied the incarnadine splotch before placing it tidily in a clear plastic evidence bag. “I'll be damned, Oversoul, if that doesn't look like a bloodied bandage to me. We'll get it to the lab and rule out sap and paint and such, see if this substance matches the poison found in your alphabet biscuits.”

“Those weren't my alphabet biscuits, Chief,” protested Daed as he reflexively operated Otto's dog-bone door knocker three times for emphasis. “How many times do I need to defend myself in these matters, when the queen has already given me her pardon?”

“You’re right. They’re not necessarily your biscuits, but they are your recipe, Oversoul. That has been proven by forensics.”

“My recipe,” stated Daed to himself and he would have stated more to himself and to the chief if the front door of the Philia mansion hadn’t just then opened in response to his three, loud, prior knocks.

“Hello, friends. My name is Winnay Le Poux. What can I do for you today?” greeted Winnay Le Poux of American reality television’s Shocking Romantic Partners of Famous People fame. He was indeed quite shocking to Daed and to the chief in his wide dimensions, his lisp, his overalls with no shirt underneath, and his ungainly and gentle manner and sway in the doorway.

“Who are you and what are you doing standing inside an active crime scene?” inquired the shocked chief.

“I already told you both, I’m Winnay Le Poux, one of the stars of Shocking Romantic Partners of Famous People. I’m Hissy Fit’s long-term, live-in, lovin’ boyfriend and, truth be told, I’m not sure who’s more famous and who’s more shockin’ right now, Hissy Fit or me. Otto Philia is my dear friend and I thought the yellow tape around his house was a VIP, roped-off, tie a yellow ribbon ‘round a tree or pole or somethin’ and a ‘Welcome, how do you do, Winnay Le Poux?’ kind of thing.”

The chief, still shocked, did his best to set Winnay straight, “No, it’s a sort of *Back off, Winnay Le Poux*, there’s been a murder here and no one gives a dingle or a damn who’s more famous or shocking than anyone else as long as a bloody murderer is on the loose.”

“Oh, that’s a much different scenario,” acknowledged Winnay, “like a reality cop show where the reality television stars on the show help the real cops solve the actual crimes. I can help you with that. Most reality TV shows don’t do it



right. I can show you how to do it, how to find out who the murderer was who killed Otto. I'm free to do it right now, to show the two of you how to do it."

Shock and now aftershock for both Daed and the chief affected the chief's attempt to decline Winnay's offer, "I...don't...know...what...to...say...to...you, Mr. Le Poux. Oversoul?"

"We...don't...know...what...to...say, Winnay," recapitulated Daed.

Winnay confessed unabashedly, "I get that almost every day of my life, friends. Now what's the name of your show?"

"Lambshire," Daed and the chief answered in unison without hem or haw, both having hoped that a one-word answer might serve as a monolithic adhesive bandage over the oozing wound of Winnay Le Poux's flapping gums."

"Lambshire?" double-checked Winnay.

"Yes!" reinforced policeman and poet policeman.

"But what was that other word you used before?" Winnay wondered loudly. "Overalls or oversoul or somethin'? Oversoul," he recalled and then called out, "That's it! I like that one better. I think that should be the name of your show. You should change the name of your reality television show from Lambshire to Oversoul." Winnay took a long-awaited breath and smiled proudly at his titular conclusion. "I told you I'd show you how to do it. That's how you do it."

Daed and Chief Noble exchanged looks of less shock now than marvel at this immense, unkempt, stultiloquent man in the murder scene threshold, this grotesque possible key to understanding not only what happened to Otto Philia, Zoe and Lord Frisbee Word, but what on earth had become of humanity.

## News from Americana: The #1 Blog

Who? Hissy Fit. What? She walked off her movie set again. Where? Hollywood. When? Three times this week. Why? Two times just wasn't enough and she might have low blood sugar and there might be some confusion in her about fifteen minutes and fame. Her agent said that she thought it was the amount of time she needed to act each day to become famous and stay famous. How? Tantrums. Expletives. Exits. Word of the Day: ploughysword - n. something or someone having more than one

practical use

#1 Band: Chap Sticky

#1 Song: Sexy, Foxy, Waxy by Chap Sticky

#2 Song: Me and the Keys by Ein Steinway

#3 Song: Take a Really Really Really Long Look at Me by Generatalia

#4 Song: (A tie) Sticky Love by Ban Daid/Buck Naked by Dear John and Jane Doe

#6 Song: Hum Hum Humbuckin' by Tel and Strat

#7 Song: Wipe Your Boca by Kleenexa and Baby Wype

#8 Song: Nice Rack by Dear John and Jane Doe

#9 Song: Eat Me for Breakfast by Pop Tart

#1 Numbers: Three and Ten

#10 Song: My My Generatalia by Generatalia

#1 Food: Alphabet Biscuits

#1 Cookbook: Alma McFoy's Food Almanac

Which was worse, thought Daed as he rode shot-gun left in a Lambshire police car with the chief to his right and Winnay Le Poux ubiquitous in the back seat? Was it to be out of touch or to feel out of touch? Was there any merit in keeping abreast of the popular goings-on in the world culture, the who's who, the who's sleeping with whom, the who and what of where? None of it seemed to scratch the proverbial surface of his sensibility. Daed Oversoul was most at home with words, but that wasn't the full home range of his sense of belonging on earth. He had also proven himself in recent years as one with a fair sense of smell, particularly in the realms of right and wrong. Yes, the olfactories of the poet policeman justified the epithet Canine that Otto Philia had assigned to him on the day they met. The fact that Otto collared almost everyone in his company with the same dog moniker was another consideration altogether. Daed's snout-heartedness, his sentience of heart and nose was his double-edge sword, his way of feeling in touch with the world around him without being forced to be in direct or constant touch with it.

Winnay Le Poux had no overall objection to the post-modern world as it readily revealed itself to him on his cellphone and television screens; he did, however, tend to object to the ways in which the world handled itself, not to mention how everyone in it behaved, in almost all situations. He was an affable life critic, someone who made his living on negativity and a grin and, of course, interminable chatter. Daed and the chief chose to take turns engaging with Winnay over the prospect of him choosing his own subjects on which to spew ceaselessly.

"Winnay?" broached Daed.

"Yes, friend?" Winnay accorded with his bluff Cajun charm.

“What did you like about Otto Philia? Why did you consider him a dear friend?”

Winnay regaled without reflection, “That’s a very nice question on a very nice day, but I would have phrased it more like this – Let me show you: Why do you consider him a dear friend? That’s how you do it ‘cause Otto is still my friend even though he’s gone and he can’t laugh at me anymore and make fun of my teeth and my family dress code. Why do I consider Otto Philia a dear friend? ‘Mostly ‘cause he used to call me Canine. Most people call me things like Yeti – that’s a girl’s name, I believe – and Nice Tooth and Mountain Range and Hag Daddy and Crowdad and Wild Boar and Grizzly Man and Stinkay Le Poux, but Otto called me Canine along with some of those other things. ‘Dog is God in reverse.’ That’s what my mama used to say and that’s why we never ate dogs when I was growin’ up. Walkin’ a dog is like having the whole universe on a leash. I just came up with that when I was walkin’ Rugo last night. ‘That’s how you do it,’ I said and he knew it ‘cause he’s a dog and already knows how to do it.”

The chief took his turn, “You seem to know everyone, Winnay.”

Winnay continued his, “I just know who I know, but that might be almost everybody. My mama said, ‘Winnay, you can never have too many friends ‘cause you know you’re gonna lose some when you run that mouth of yours.’”

“Do you know Ban Daid?”

“Ban Daid?” repeated Winnay. “You know I know him. You know, he didn’t even know that his name, Ban Daid, was spelled the same as that popular adhesive bandage product. I had to take him into the store and show him. That’s the problem with a lot of these Pop stars today; they don’t know how to do it. They don’t know how to laugh at themselves. I know how to laugh at me just like everybody else knows how to laugh at me. I may not know how to make people laugh

like some people know how to do it, but I do know how to laugh. My mama said, ‘Winnay, laughter is rethgual in reverse’ and she always made me laugh when she said that to me. I know don’t why it was so funny, but it always made me laugh and it always made her laugh. She knew how to do it.”

Daed’s turn, but first he and the chief had to stop laughing at Winnay’s mother’s joke and Winnay’s telling of it. Winnay happily joined them. Daed eventually asked, “Do you think there’s any truth to what Ban Daid says about the planet bleeding? Are these adhesive bandages, like the one he stuck on Otto Philia’s front door, covering up something real?”

Never, not once at a loss for words was Winnay, “Real? I don’t know. Is reality television real? You two might know. I still don’t know. Ban Daid is serious about his music and his lactose and his intolerance for animal products and animal testing and animal right violations, but he doesn’t know how to do it. When you start stickin’ adhesive bandages everywhere, it’s hard to be taken seriously. I once found one of his adhesive bandages on my mouth, when I woke up on his couch. Hissy Fit had one on her mouth, too. Fortunately, it wasn’t big enough to stop me from sayin’, ‘Why is there an adhesive bandage on my mouth and one on Hissy Fit’s mouth, too?’”

“What was the answer?” the chief slipped in while Winnay took a breath.

Winnay replied in stride, “It was somethin’ like, ‘Words are the poison and they like have to be stopped.’ That’s around the same time that Ban Daid started writin’ instrumentals and singin’ his K-Pop/Celtic songs in prime and Fibonacci numbers and onomatopoeias or somethin’ and when he started stickin’ adhesive bandages on street signs and sidewalks and mailboxes and telephone poles. Right after that, he just stuck them everywhere, on trees, rocks, cars, houses, horses, everything.”

Daed rushed to remark, before Winnay could add to the volume of his volubility, “Chief, we need to talk to Ban Daid.”

“I prefer interrogate when it comes to the investigation of incriminating statements of this sort, Oversoul,” said the chief just as Winnay Le Poux’s phone rang.

“Hello, friend,” answered Winnay. He then passed his cellphone to Daed, looking past Daed’s quizzical look of incredulity.

“For me? Who knows that I’m with you right now, Winnay?” asked Daed.

“I don’t know. I didn’t text or tell anybody, not even Hissy Fit and I tell her everything all the time. It doesn’t sound much like one of my friends, but everybody has my number – I make sure of it. That’s how you do it. My mama used to say, ‘Winnay, numbers are free and talk is cheap.’”

“Hello?” spoke Daed to the mystery of the caller.

“We have Zoe and Sir Frisbee,” a mechanical voice reported. “Give us the half million words to get the two Words back.”

“Where? When?” Daed sought.

“Midnight. Tomorrow. Lambshire Auctioneers Society. I’m so sorry, that was not in the correct order of your queries: Lambshire Auctioneers Society. Tomorrow. Midnight.” The connection between man and machine clicked off and Daed, affected by the lifeless voice and curt but polite message, mechanically handed Winnay’s phone back to him.

“Thank you, friend,” Winnay said, not to miss a moment of potential geniality or garrulity.

The chief intercalated, “What and words, Oversoul?”

Daed responded quickly and kept Winnay from resuming commentary, “Zoe and Lord Frisbee Word have been abducted and there’s a half million ransom for their release.”

“Pounds or euros or American dollars?” calculated the chief.

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“Words, Chief,” summed Daed. “I think this recent collection of crimes is entirely over words.”

Chief Noble drove and considered that on which Winnay Le Poux then commented, “That’s a very nice line and a very nice way to end this very first episode of your new reality television show, Oversoul. But I’m gonna show you how to do it right. This is how you do it: You say, ‘I, Daed Oversoul of the reality television show formerly known as Lambshire but now known as Oversoul, think this recent collection of crimes is entirely over words, entirely over them.’ That’s how you do it, you double it. That’s how you make reality real.”

## News from Equatoria: The #1 Blog

Who? Chap Sticky. What? Her bungalow burned down. Where? On one of the Caribbean Islands she owns. When? Since she stopped off in the middle of her Sexy, Foxy, Waxy tour. Why? She reportedly exceeded the Caribbean fire code capacity for burning candles in a bungalow. How? Chap Sticky said that maybe she put some of the thousand lit candles too close to the pool that was freshly filled with rum. Word of the Day: toeyturd - n. an expression of grief when one steps in dog doo

#1 Band: Musey

#1 Song: Amuse Me, Don't Abuse Me by Musey

#2 Song: Sexy, Foxy, Waxy by Chap Sticky

#3 Song: Take a Really Really Really Long Look at Me by Generatalia

#4 Song: Me and the Keys by Ein Steinway

#5 Song: Sticky Love by Ban Daid

#6 Song: Buck Naked by Dear John and Jane Doe

#7 Song: Hum Hum Humbuckin' by Tel and Strat

#8 Song: Wipe Your Boca by Kleenexa and Baby Wype

#9 Song: Nice Rack by Dear John and Jane Doe

#10 Song: Eat Me for Breakfast by Pop Tart

#1 Numbers: Three and Eleven (which is really more like two ones in a row)

#11 Song: My My Generatalia by Generatalia

#1 Bodily Fluid: Blood

#1 Condiment: Ketchup



With Winnay Le Poux happy as a dog off its leash in a Lambshire police jail cell, where he could catch up on his Pop news reports and chat it up with Hissy Fit and his flotilla of friends in peace, Daed and the chief stood in the company of C.C., the Lambshire police coroner and forensic specialist.

“It’s definitely blood on the adhesive bandage, but not blood pure and simple,” stated C.C.

“What and words, C.C.,” said the chief in urgent need of more detail.

C.C. shared her best rushed scientific analysis, “The blood is human, ligneous, and pachydermal, if you can believe that.”

The chief, in disbelief, “I don’t understand it enough to believe it. Oversoul?”

“She means that the blood has traces of human, tree, and elephant, rhino, or hippo DNA, Chief,” Daed distilled.

“Elephants, rhinos, and hippos?”

“And trees, Chief,” added Daed.

“What in God’s name is bloody going on here, C.C.?”

“That I can’t really say without more lab time and research, more blood samples.”

The chief investigated aloud, “Could the tree DNA be from Otto Philia’s front door? And that door knocker, Oversoul, could that dog-bone door knocker be made of ivory?”

C.C. explained, “No, that would only account for potential foreign particles in the blood, not for actual integrated DNA.”

Befuddled, the chief flailed, “Where does that leave us? Up a tree? At the circus or the zoo or on safari? Why the hell would someone have tree and elephant DNA in the family bloodline?”

“I don’t think it’s a family trait, Chief,” suggested Daed. “My sense is that Ban Daid may have taken his love of animals and plants to a genetic level, if that’s possible.” He then appealed to the Lambshire coroner, “Is it scientifically feasible to mix plant and other animal species’ DNA with our blood,

C.C., and have it fully gel, not makes us sick?” C.C. nodded and then neighed like a horse and then laughed.

“Bloody hell and devolution, C.C.!” barked the chief.

“I’m sorry,” she said still laughing, “but it can get pretty dull down here in the lab and morgue. I also do a pretty amazing elephant impression, if you’d like to hear it.”

“Go on then,” allowed the chief and C.C. trumpeted loudly, quite pachydermically.

Chief Noble then sounded brassily in alarm, “Are we going back to our single-cell beginnings. Is this world, this pustulant planet the best we’ve got, the bloody best we’ll ever be? We can’t have already reached the peak of human existence, can we have done? C.C.? Oversoul?”

“I still have high hopes, Chief,” said Daed.

“So do I,” said C.C., “but the world is changing as evidenced by the climate, by the language, and by the culture. Evolution is just a word, just a description, not a virtue or a way of life that someone decides is best for everyone else. Scientifically speaking, if the insects and spiders don’t get us, maybe the plants and animals will. The earth just might swallow us yet.”

Ban Daid was not hard to track down, if one simply followed the trail of adhesive bandages that covered Lambshire and nearby shires. More adhesive bandage blood samples were sent C.C.’s way and Chief Noble, Daed Oversoul, and Winnay Le Poux sat across from Ban Daid in an interview room that had its share of old and new rules, one of the new ones being that Winnay Le Poux could only speak when spoken to directly. He agreed to that challenging condition of being allowed to sit in on a real police interrogation and had only this to say: “I’m gonna show you that I can do it and how to do it. My mama said, ‘Winnay, you can say a lot sometimes just by shuttin’ up. Silence is the best version of nonsense.”

The chief took the reins of the wild horse of the accusation that Ban Daid had become genetically modified in his DNA by animal and plant cell insertion and assimilation. “Ban, is it your blood on these adhesive bandages that you keep sticking everywhere, in every shire north, south, east, and west of Lambshire?”

“That’s a very good openin’ question, but I’m gonna show you...” began Winnay.

“Winnay! Mind your mama’s injunctions!” commanded the chief.

Winnay almost apologized and did it profusely, “I can do it. I’m gonna show you that I can do it. This is how you do it: by not doin’ it.”

“Ban?” resumed the chief.

Ban Daid responded, “Winnay, are you like a real police dude now? That is so like so reality.”

Winnay, unfortunately for Daed and the chief’s sake, was now officially liberated to speak and so he spoke liberally, “It’s a very nice new role for me in this very nice new reality television show, Oversoul. So far they pretty much know how to do it, but I show them how to do it when they don’t and I’m learnin’ on the job and I even have my own jail cell with VIP Wi-Fi and room service. Hissy Fit was just tellin’ me about Chap Sticky and the bungalow fire and I said, ‘That’s not how you do it.’ If you want to disinfect or sanitize yourself or somethin’, do it with high heat or alcohol, but not both.”

Daed couldn’t deny that he felt somewhat beguiled, even ensorcelled by Winnay’s loquacious Cajun charm. Words from Winnay’s mouth flowed like water, albeit a flooding, babbling brook-like flow with artificial coloring and flavoring to boot, but who could say that Winnay wasn’t a natural-born executioner of elocution?

The chief to Winnay Le Poux, “Thank you, Winnay, for making Ban here feel so much at home with us. Now shut it.”

The chief to Ban Daid, “Ban, don’t talk to him; don’t even look at him unless you want to get comfy-cozy with those VIP jail-cell perks Winnay just mentioned. Now answer my question: Is it your blood or not?”

“The planet is bleeding and Ban Daid is not just like putting adhesive bandages on the busted soul of humanity, he’s like saving the world with music and like medicine,” Ban quoted himself saying.

The chief then quoted himself to Ban, “Is it your blood or not? I don’t need to hear your self-aggrandizing rote shite more than once and, Oversoul here doesn’t like hearing anyone refer to himself in the third person even one time.”

Ban back to the chief, “Why would I like pre-bloody my adhesive bandages? The planet is bleeding, not me, and Ban Daid, I mean, me, I mean, I am saving the world.”

Daed redirected, “Ban, do you know anything about the death of Otto Philia or the disappearance of Zoe and Lord Frisbee Word?”

“Like, I’m more interested in animals than like humans,” said Ban like no one Daed had ever heard use the word like in such a solecistic way.

Daed persisted, “Winnay told us that you regarded words as the poison and that you thought they should be stopped.”

Winnay quoted Ban, “‘Words are the poison and they like have to be stopped.’ That’s what he said exactly, precisely verbatim.”

“Winnay Le Poux!” blared the chief.

Winnay blared back, “I was just...I just wanted to show you how to do it. Verbatim is how you do it when you want someone to know that you know somethin’ and how you know it.”

“Winnay’s right, Chief. The words are important here.” Daed rephrased, “Ban, what did you mean when you said...Winnay?”

Winnay obliged, “Words are the poison and they like have to be stopped,’ and elaborated, “but it’s not the words that poison you, it’s the way the words come out. My mama used to say, ‘Winnay, your mouth is like an oven. Don’t overcook your words or else you’ll burn your tongue and scorch the sky.’”

Daed deciphered Winnay’s mother’s maxim to himself in police terminology, “Incidental manslaughter versus premeditated murder.” He included the chief in his reckoning, “I think Otto Philia was self-poisoned and auto-asphyxiated. The alphabet biscuits were overbaked, baked twice. Knowing Otto, he would likely never have eaten any of his cookies cold, so he warmed up the four edible letters in the oven on a baking sheet that must have been used for something else. It was still coated with traces of some sort of transferable toxic chemical. Maybe C.C. hasn’t been able to identify the poison in the biscuits properly because the heat of the oven changed its basic chemistry. Does all of that make sense to you, Chief?”

“Daed detective work, Good,” reacted the chief in a second-hand swoon of plausible police deduction. “It hooks like you might be off the look.”

Daed then minded Winnay’s immediate welfare, “Winnay, did you use the oven at Otto’s house? Did you use the baking tray? Winnay?”

In a rare moment of taciturnity when given a legitimate chance to speak, Winnay Le Poux fell silent, tipped over in his chair, landed loudly on the Lambshire police interview room floor. Was silence to be his valediction, his reality television life’s final, fatal irony? Daed and the chief knelt down next to Winnay, the chief checked his pulse. Ban Daid stood up across the table and looked on with uncharacteristic concern for a fellow human. “He’s gone, Oversoul,” announced the chief. Daed could only weep.

## News from Austra: The #1 Blog

Who? Dear John and Jane Doe. What? Are the victims of identity theft. Where? Everywhere these two impostors in cowboy hats and boots go. When? Just after John got down on one knee and proposed to Jane while a skywriting airplane wrote, *Marry Me, Jane* and fireworks went off and a mariachi band played their hit Nice Rack (Senos Bonitos). Why? Half the world wants to be Dear John and more than the other half of the world wants to be Jane Doe. How? Both Dear John and Jane Doe use their credit cards for other things, like picking their teeth, strumming their guitars, scraping gum off the bottom of their boots and sometimes they just leave them lying around.

Word of the Day: joeycord - n. (Australian) a newborn baby's umbilical cord

#1 Band: Dear John and Jane Doe

#1 Song: He My Pitchfork, She My Hoe by Dear John and Jane Doe

#2 Song: Amuse Me, Don't Abuse Me by Musey

#3 Song: Sexy, Foxy, Waxy by Chap Sticky

#4 Song: Take a Really Really Really Long Look at Me by Generatalia

#5 - #11 Songs: Not Generatalia

#1 Number: Four

#1 Accent: Australian

#1 Natural Phenomenon: Aurora Australis

#1 Bear: Koala

#1 Bird and #1 Fruit: Kiwi

A baking tray and an unabridged English dictionary were the two items of police business that distracted Daed and the chief from the sudden silence of Winnay Le Poux's absence in their midst. The immemorial, hypothetical life questions of less being more or of form over content or of quality over quantity did not aptly apply to the man whose life left behind many more answers than questions. Winnay Le Poux seemed to know how to do it when it came to living life to the fullest. He was the surprise master of making the most, not necessarily the best of silence and circumstance. It wasn't the ignorance-and-bliss complement of character that moved his massive body and personality, thought Daed as he quietly rode shotgun in the squad car and reminisced of Winnay, it was the glaring luminescence of this full moon of a man whose only true ignorance was knowing nothing about tides or waning. His bliss could only be compared to a perpetually waxing moon. But maybe Daed was lionizing, waxing sentimental too much and too soon over someone whose company was incomparable, but also irrepressibly verbal and deeply opinionated to its warm, soft core. However honestly Daed remembered Winnay Le Poux and his irrevocable manner, it was the warmth, Winnay's imaginable mix of Cajun and never-agin' charm that remembered Daed to him best. "You are missed," whispered Daed to the likely verbose ghost of Winnay Le Poux. Daed immediately heard what he imagined Winnay would say from the other side of life, 'That's not how you do it. I'm gonna show you.'

Otto Philia's mansion kitchen was unquestionably made for grand purpose, with specifications that only a professional chef or baker could truly appreciate. The convection oven that evened heat distribution and reduced the risk of burning bread, cake, pie crust, and cookie bottoms, along with a six-burner gas stovetop, industrial mixer, caterer's refrigerator, and a sprawling, stone-tile floor plan

with a butcher-block, food-prep island on wheels made for a potential watering of the mouth and weakening of the knees well before any of the appliances and surfaces were put to active culinary use. Daed's mouth was watering and his knees were weak, although it hailed more from him imagining Zoe in an apron, happily ensconced in cookery and scullery, than from any particular affection he had for kitchen layout and design. Zoe must have done all the cooking in the marriage before they were separated, decided Daed as he soon became more aware of Otto Philia's recent bachelorhood and its packaged-food-product menu. Such were among Daed's incidental theories and discoveries in his and the chief's search for the baking tray that most likely killed two men. Otto, of course, was only half-killed by the poisoned sheet pan, but Winnay being at least one and a half men in proportional size easily rounded the death count up to two.

"Here it bloody and hell is, Oversoul," said the chief, unearthing a baking tray from the warm oven that still had beef jerky drying on it in strips. "There are some missing pieces here to be sure, but make no mistake, this is the poison puzzle."

"Where is Rugo?" asked Daed, half-expecting Winnay to answer with, 'That's a very nice question about a very nice dog.'

"Where is who?" re-asked the chief.

"The dog, Chief, Otto Philia's dog Rugo."

It was no mystery to either of them that Rugo had suffered the same fate as Winnay, both dining on half-jerked beef strips before dying. Winnay's nature would have had it that something, no matter what it was, was something to be shared and enjoyed more for that sake.

"What up, Canine?" said Daed affectionately to the wrinkly, dappled corpse of man's and Otto's best friend, to Winnay's mother's God in reverse, to Rugo.



The chief surprised Daed with his lachrymosity in the moment. Through his tears he managed an unforgettable dog memorial, “Rugo...That’s his name, right?”

“It is, Chief,” aided Daed.

“Rugo, I’ve always hated seeing a good dog die so doggone young. You remind me of the young men, not so wrinkled but as wide-eyed as you, who went marching off into the faraway fields and never came back home. They, too, lived on rations of dried meat and many of them, just like you, died alone. Here’s to them and to here’s to you, to the young pups who never had to become the dogs of war.”

Daed carried Rugo’s wrinkles, spots, and bones out to the car as the chief did his damndest not to cry over the evidence tray of beef jerky in his hands. The two men continued their silent vigil and journey, with a dead dog now in the back seat where the ghost of Winnay Le Poux was imaginably only all too happy to share it with God in reverse.

One more stop, to wit at the Word estate where Daed hoped that he might find the half million ransom words, in other words, the oldest, most archaic and unabridged English dictionary in the Word family library, which would undoubtedly make it the most archaic and unabridged English dictionary in the world. His own tome of a lexicon was quite old and contained many archaic words, but did not include the thousands of newer, more colloquial terms like cloverknoll and showyheard and all the proper names and places, titles and bywords that seemed to shape if not contort the postmodern English language.

Lord Frisbee Byword’s library was his sanctuary, it was limpid clear to Daed after he and the chief were led into the inner sanctum by Alma McFoy, the long-time Word family cook and confidante. The lettered command center’s spirit was defined by an antique, high-back, leather chair, well-worn like a seat of stone in the face of the ancient williwaw and

warmer winds of time. The desk, too, had a long-lived air of sturdiness, a carpentry confidence that must have come from being ardently sought for its companionship like a lover across an open field, despite that companionship being a constant one. And there, alone, perched eagle-like with spread paper wings upon its own pedestal, were the words, the hard-bound, ancient and new, delicately hand-written, half million English language words. Sir Frisbee's father and elder Sir Frisbee's father and his and his and his ad infinitum had their hand in the painstaking preservation of their lineage's language, A - Z. Were their hearts not fully in it as well, generation upon generation? Lord Frisbee Word II was no practitioner of floccinaucinihilipilification, reasoned Daed Oversoul as he stood in awe over the handmade tome and home of that sesquipedalian word and so many others, long and short. How could the son of English itself be the keeper of such an inventive and elegant family tradition and also be someone who regarded something as wondrous as the original English lexicon as unimportant? Daed reverently, gently flipped the pages of the open lexical text and came to a point where Sir Frisbee's documentation and definitions of the words ended and blank pages ensued. "The end of words," mused Daed. "That is Ban Daid's dream come true," he said to no one, not even Winnay's ghost who still felt nearby to him and who most certainly would have had something to say about the statement at length. No, Daed, despite being only an area rug length and a whisper away from Chief Noble, was all alone in this room, alone in his thoughts, alone in the soundless depths of his love for the English language that he now believed was a sentiment shared by only two others on the British Isles and across the globe - Zoe and Lord Frisbee Word.

The full weight of a half million words in his firm grasp, Daed held them heavy, close to his heart as he and the chief

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headed back to the Lambshire constabulary to establish a plan for the following day's ransom and hostage exchange at the local auction house. The intended delivery of a canine corpse and a bier-like tray of beef jerky to C.C.'s basement laboratory was half-interrupted, detoured by what Daed discerned suddenly upon his right cheek as the slobbery kiss of a wrinkly dog.

## News from Easteria: The #1 Blog

Who? Musey. What? Is dating Ein Steinway's ex-muse. Where? In her imagination and her hot tub. When? She said that she doesn't really spend much time in her imagination or her hot tub, but that love can change you like a diaper. Why? She tried spending time alone with herself and felt invisible and wanted to meet someone who is really invisible to help her feel less alone. How? You can do almost anything when you're invisible. It's some people's #1 super power.

Word of the Day: showyheard – v. to acknowledge having seen and heard something

#1 Band: Ban Daid ft. Ein Steinway

#1 Song: Save the Tusk and Tree and Me by Ban Daid and Ein Steinway

#2 Song: He My Pitchfork, She My Hoe by Dear John and Jane Doe

#3 Song: Amuse Me, Don't Abuse Me by Musey

#4 Song: Sexy, Foxy, Waxy by Chap Sticky

#5 Song: Take a Really Really Really Long Look at Me by Generatalia

#6 - #11 Songs: Not Generatalia

#1 Number: Five

#1 Bestseller: I Ain't Your Hanky, Honky – Love Poems by Kleenexa and Baby Wype

#1 Movie: Wi-Fi Wife I starring Hissy Fit

#1 Bear: Panda

#1 Wine: Red

#1 Color: Chinese Red

#1 Licorice: Red

“Where is he, C.C.? Where is Winnay?” asked Daed with more words in the wings of his tongue and many many more standing by within the oversize English lexicon in his arms. The chief and Rugo trailed Daed’s beat to C.C.’s laboratory and the three awaited her reply with eyes and mouths agape, one of them even slobbering from his open maw, likely from the smell of beef jerky dangling over his head on a metal tray – a carrot to a diminutive mule.

“Oh, he’s off to the airport to collect his missus or his girlfriend. She’s here for the First Annual Lambshire Music and Film and Reality Television Festival. What did he say her name was? Missy Git?”

“It’s Hissy Fit,” corrected Daed and then redirected, “He’s alive?” and then collected his thoughts again, “Of course he’s alive, if he’s picking Hissy Fit up at the airport. What did he say when he revived, C.C.? I can’t wait to hear what Winnay Le Poux had to say about his life-and-death experience.”

The chief concurred, “Blarney! The man must have saved something out for his audience with the father of all this bloody mess and mob.”

C.C. shook her head matter-of-factly and reported in plain stitch, “He was none too talkative, not at all as the two of you had described him to me. I did an impression of a sea otter for him, just to test his responsiveness, and he said (and she impersonated him), ‘That was a very nice sea otter impression, C.C.’”

“Nothing more than that?” questioned Daed in utter and otter disbelief. “No...?” and then he quoted Winnay and did his best impression of him for C.C., “‘But that’s not how you do it. I’m gonna show you how to do it. This is how you do it.’ No, nothing of that sort?”

“No,” C.C. confirmed. “He was sweet, but also a mite troubled in his mind.”

“That second half of the description doesn’t sound like the Winnay we know, does it, Chief?” said Daed.

The chief set the baking tray of beef jerky down on the stainless steel lab table top, well out of Rugo’s reach and asked, “Did he know that he died or did he think he nodded off during a police interrogation and just happened to talk to God and all ancestry in a nappy mid-afternoon dream?”

“I told him so over and over again, you know, that he had died and had come back to life. He seemed to understand me,” recounted C.C. “It wasn’t my professional opinion that he go off in the immediate aftermath to collect this Hissy Git at the airport, but I had no authority or reason to keep him here.”

“It’s Fit, C.C., Hissy Fit. No one has the surname Git, right?” hoped Daed.

“No, I guess not,” C.C. bemoaned. “Too bad really that a little three-letter word like git gets stuck meaning...”

“A foolish or worthless person,” furnished Daed.

C.C. continued, “Cheers, yeah. But, if I’m honest, I like Git as a surname. Maybe I’ll change my name to C.C. Git and when people discover that I’m not entirely a foolish or worthless person, they’ll change their opinion about the word git and maybe it’ll get a secondary meaning like...”

“A wise and valuable person?” refurnished Daed.

“Yeah, cheers,” ended C.C.

The chief inquired, “Oversoul, is there a word in the English language that has two meanings entirely at odds with each other like a pair of twins, Cain and Abel-like, or an old married couple with the same surname?”

Daed propounded, “I don’t think so, Chief. But the words flammable and inflammable come to mind as having the same meaning - capable of being easily ignited and of burning quickly - when you’d expect them to be opposites. Repent (v. pronounced ree-’pent) and repent (adj. pronounced ‘ree-pent)

mean, respectively, to turn from sin and creeping on one's belly; both carry the religious connotation of being prostrate before God, but one refers to a human and the other compares to a snake." Daed proposed, "Lord Frisbee Byword might be able to help you find your Janus of a word on opposite sides of the same coin, your dramatic, comedy/tragedy term. I don't know of any others any closer than the ones I cited, Chief."

The chief then flipped coin and term toward finding out what half-killed and poisoned Otto Philia, "C.C., here is the culprit baking tray and most probably the cause of Winnay Le Poux and Rugo here's short-term deaths." C.C. took this impromptu occasion of Rugo's introduction as an opportunity to try out her howling-wolf impression. Rugo voiced his appreciation for its accuracy before C.C. had even howled halfway.

"Did you die and go off for a visit with the Dog in the sky and then turn around and come right back to us, Rugo?" asked C.C. as if it were a routine medical check-up query.

"Have you witnessed life-after-death experiences before, C.C.? You seem so at peace with what happened to Winnay and Rugo," remarked Daed.

"You see a lot when you're invisible," was all that she chose to share.

The chief pushed C.C. toward incarnation, "We see you here in Lambshire, C.C. I don't know about the rest of these blind, bloody constabularies in neighboring shires. As soon as you've sorted what poisoned the two men and the dog, give us a ring upstairs. I'd like to have Oversoul here back on the job without the sword of...Who the hell's sword is it again, Oversoul?"

"Damocles, Chief."

"Thank you, Oversoul." He finished fleshing out his forensic fancies with C.C., "We need Oversoul exonerated, not

just pardoned by the queen, if he's going to serve as hostage negotiator and ransom mule at the Lambshire Auctioneers Society rendezvous midnight tomorrow. We see you, C.C. Do you also see see us, I mean, see us?"

"Yes," said C.C., "I showyheard you."

The chief nodded what looked a lot like understanding as he and Daed and Rugo left C.C. to her poisoned tray and beef jerky lab tests. As soon as they reached the basement hallway, however, the chief turned and appealed to Daed, "Showyheard? What in bramble English is that, Oversoul?"

Daed shook his head sympathetically. "I don't know, Chief. It must be a newer word in the language, a form of slang or a melded meaning of show and tell or shown and told in this case. I wonder if it's in this Word family dictionary." He lightly patted the cradled tome up against his heart.

When policeman and poet policeman and impermanently appointed police dog reached the upstairs station office, Daed set down the two-thousand page volume of words on Chief Noble's desk. He opened it with some force of his forearm and sought out showyheard, first in the 'S' section where it was not to be found and then in the addendum pages where again it clearly was not. "It must not be a word," said Daed, "at least not formally, not yet."

"Like Git as a surname, Oversoul? Is this where we're headed? Bloody headlong, head and tongue in hand? What's wrong with ye olde English?"

Daed edified, "Chief, the expression ye olde wasn't used until the middle of the nineteenth century. It was meant to suggest antiquity, an old-timey feel, but really it was a just modern manipulation of the language at the time. Showyheard doesn't seem much different than ye olde in that respect, even though it sounds more postmodern than old-timey."



The chief sighed heavy into a squat in front of Rugo, down at the dog's wrinkled level. "What up, Canine?" he said to him. "Is that it, Oversoul?"

Daed nodded, "It is. You're like Otto Philia reincarnate. Rugo might think that he's not the only one who's come back to life."

"He's not, lest we forget Winnay Le Poux and how can anyone for a blessed minute forget Winnay Le Poux?" The chief then spoke intimately to Rugo, "What was it like on the other side with no leash and no cats? Tell me true: Is God a dog? Is that why you came back? Is that what you've come back to tell us?"

Daed thought of Winnay and Rugo in the afterlife and seemed only to be able to smile at the vision of their individual late afternoon strolls in the firmament. Why was Winnay not smiling upon his return, wondered Daed as he reflected on C.C.'s resurrectional report. What could possibly trouble the mind of someone who so readily, repeatedly, albeit felicitously troubled the minds of others? Was Winnay Le Poux, after all, not immune to a troubled mind as seemed so much the case before he died? To Daed that familiar brand of cerebral suffering was a sign of particular intelligence the potential of which Winnay certainly possessed, but did not routinely express. Was his death just a threshing doorway, a wicket for Winnay to leave behind some of his habitual nonsense, a box to store his chatter? Daed accepted that his next meeting with the resurrected Cajun man-mountain likely would include Winnay's girlfriend Hissy Fit and that such a reunion with this particular survivor of a life-and-death experience might feel more like meeting two strangers, not just one.

## News from Europa: The #1 Blog

Who? Generatalia. What? Will be performing all three of their songs at the First Annual Lambshire Music and Film and Reality Television Festival. Where? Lambshire. When? Really really soon. Why? Their agent, Major Canus, asked them if they would rather be doing something else than the Pop Star thing and more than half of them said that they wouldn't mind knowing what it's like to stand on a real stage with a real microphone - true story. How? Seven private jets.

Word of the Day: snowybird - n. a frozen drink made with milk, vodka, and mashed

potatoes

#1 Band: Pop Tart

#1 Song: No Nutrition in Yo Kitchen by Pop Tart

#2 Song: Save the Tusk and Tree and Me by Ban Daid and Ein Steinway

#3 Song: He My Pitchfork, She My Hoe by Dear John and Jane Doe

#4 Song: Amuse Me, Don't Abuse Me by Musey

#5 Song: Sexy, Foxy, Waxy by Chap Sticky

#6 Song: Take a Really Really Really Long Look at Me by Generatalia

#1 Number: Six

#1 Kitchen Appliance: A tie between Take-Out Menu and Private Chef

#1 Toiletry: Loo One-Liners by Captain John Head

#1 Flower: Rose

#1 Wine: Rosé

#1 Tabula: Rasa

Daed did not foresee sleep, but still laid his restless bones and brain down and did so with the weight of the Word family's behemoth dictionary beside him, the fate of the two missing Words heavy on his heart. This eve of his hopeful reunion with Zoe, maybe even of his rescue of her and her father from a fate worse than abduction was intermittently flooded with sense stimuli, that of Zoe Word's look, sound, smell, feel, and taste. Daed's wild imagination had his eyes unveiling the naked mystery of her, his ears hearkening to her softest sigh and amorous whisper, his nose truffling the attar, secret depths of her nether sensuality, his fingers limning her, losing their way in her, and his lips and his tongue boldly proclaiming love without any words at all. This amative obsession with Zoe had been somewhat subdued recently as Daed exacted the paces of his policeman rounds and post and used the less notional side of his brain. It wasn't until he heard the word showyheard from C.C. and soon after realized that it rhymed with Zoe Word that Daed either imagined or was made mindful that Zoe's name seemed to be rhyming with other words in the air.

At the pub earlier in the evening, the young bartender pitched to Daed and the chief and Rugo in tow a new drink on the market called a snowybird. The description of it as a frothy mix of ice, milk, mashed potatoes, and vodka did not sell it to Daed or the chief, but the word itself, either its fluttery, wintry imagery or its coincidental Zoe-Word rhyme scheme put that drink securely in Daed's hand, when it did not quite make its white flight to the chief's. The sprightly bartender tagged the snowybird with a foreign but familiar-sounding modifier, "This is such a soreferred drink. Everyone is so loving it." Soreferred? Daed wondered if he had heard the drink description correctly, since there was some barroom clamor about the place. Was soreferred just a simpler, lazy slurring of so and referred? Or did it carry cultural meaning

of some sort? Was it a superlative: the best, the highest, the finest? And was the word made that much more meaningful because it sounded like someone you know recommended it with his or her whole heart?

“Thank you,” Daed replied before he tasted his drink and could still summon gratitude for it.

The chief offered his impression of the frozen snowybird over the lip of his warm beer glass, “Looks like a pluming cloud, tastes like a blooming smokestack, eh?”

“Not that far off, Chief,” concurred Daed.

“The only way I’ll put potatoes in a glass, Oversoul, is when they’re eighty proof past mashing. Potatoes and vodka mix like your mum walking in on you and your gal mid-shag.” Daed laughed.

“I ordered it for namesake only.”

“I know you did, Oversoul. You’re a sucker for the look and sound of words. The rest of us need bloody proof in the pudding.”

Just then, Daed heard a young Lambshire local woman say, “It was like my first norecord moment ever and I realized then and there that I am never leaving my flat again without charging my phone, full up.”

“Did you hear that, Chief?” asked Daed.

“Did I hear what?” re-asked the chief.

Daed rephrased, “What is a norecord moment?”

“I don’t know. A moment that you don’t capture on tape or in a photograph, I suppose,” defined the chief.

“Why would we need a word like that in the language, one that makes its entire meaning out of letting life alone? Do we really need to announce to the world that we’re not about to announce something? Must I speak to convey my commitment to silence?”

“What and words, Oversoul. What and words.” Daed took the chief’s quick counsel to mean that life mostly depends on

matters at hand and their accompanying words, not necessarily on meaning. “This is the world in which we live, like it or not.”

“I like it most of the time, Chief.”

“High marks, Oversoul.”

Less of a perfect sounding rhyme with Zoe Word was norecord, but Daed didn't miss it as another inexplicable reminder of her in her absence or dismiss it as one more example of his overactive imagination when he was off duty. Love worked in such inscrutable ways as this, thought Daed. These weird and not so wonderful or meaningful words that sounded like Zoe Word were almost like secret messages from her, even in keeping with her oblique sense of humor. Daed could almost hear Zoe saying them with a wry smile, her tongue in her cheek. She seemed to have what Daed did not always have for the world - forbearance in the face of absurdity. How else could she have survived her marriage to Otto Philia, short as that connubial affair was?

The word survival was culled into Daed's mind, selected over the approximate half million others that lay bound next to him in his bed. Maybe his own survival was more about him letting go of words and meanings than fighting for them like an anadromous salmon that swims against the stream only to die after overcoming impossible odds. Daed at last drifted off to sleep, having become that stoic salmon and having remembered the purpose of the long, upstream journey. It was not a foolish fish story, this dream, this fight to the death to find a mate. The dying afterward seemed only perfectly, romantically natural.

Being now quite actually acquainted with the weight of words, Daed felt the lightness as he woke, before his eyes beheld the emptiness and indentation his bedtime book companion left him alone to find in the morning light. He had clearly been robbed of more than words, he thought as he

checked to be sure that the dense dictionary hadn't fallen from the narrow bed to the wide-planked floor during the night by his own unwitting doing. Daed had given his word that he would trade the half million bound words for the freedom of the two Words and that promise of his, that invaluable, noble worth of one's word, had also been taken from him.

The race on foot to the Lambshire police station was slowed by a street crowd the likes of which Lambshire hadn't seen since the queen visited in 1975 on her national and province tour to downplay the impact that the American Revolution and the Declaration of Independence had upon the British Empire two hundred years prior. Daed saw to his surprise seven glitzy female dwarfs from seven different sides of the globe, a giant, tree-like man with spiry fingers, dressed in a top hat and black-and-white striped coat, cowboys and cowgirls, fanboys and fangirls, pierced people with adhesive bandages stuck randomly (certainly not remedially) to their faces and arms, pierced people waving tissues and wet wipes that were usually reserved for babies' bottoms, eating what looked to Daed like rectangular, packaged breakfast pastries, playing electric guitars without any amplifiers, randomly remarking to each other that they were invisible, and all of them actively applying lip balm of varied colors and flavors, the retractable, waxy-stick kind in the little plastic tube. But most impressive to Daed's piqued senses and what even made him forget for a moment that the Word family lexicon had been lost on his watch was the inimitable sight of Winnay Le Poux among the parade of other circus-worthy attractions.

"Winnay!" Daed bellowed and then watched as Winnay searched the street, not for someone who knew him because everyone knew Winnay Le Poux, but for someone who

momentarily wanted to be near him and, even more shocking to Winnay's girlfriend Hissy Fit, wanted to talk to him.

"Who would call your nothing, nobody name like that when you're out with me?" Hissy said probably as sweetly as she could.

Daed tried again, drawing closer to the mismatched pair, "It's Daed Oversoul, Winnay! I'm over here!"

Winnay slowly swiveled his massive head to face Daed and then half-smiled Daed's way, which was not the post-resurrection sign that Daed had hoped he would read from him. "Oh, hi, Daed," soughed Winnay in a spiritless, near voiceless greeting.

Daed stood still in the tawdry sway of the crowd around him and smiled for both Winnay and himself, perhaps for all three of the stationary trio, since Hissy Fit didn't seem to be much in the mood for smiling either. "C.C. told me about your return from the dead yesterday and it was the best news I had ever heard."

"That's a very nice thing to say," barely said Winnay.

Hissy reached up and hit him on the shoulder. "What's up with you? Ever since you died and came back, it's all about you and God. You almost lost me yesterday, but you don't care about that. You don't care that I almost had to find a new arm to be on for the red carpet. You...you just can't let go of what God said to you, can you?" Winnay lowered his head, shook it slowly, inconsolably.

"Winnay, what did God have to say to you?" Daed earnestly asked.

Hissy hit him again, a little less aggressively. "Tell him, Winnay, or I'll tell him what you like to hide down in your belly button."

Winnay raised his eyes just enough to meet Daed's and he forced a faint account of the afterlife from the remains of his broken spirit, "God was very nice." He said nothing more and

he and Hissy and Daed stood in the echo and glow of God's good character reference.

"Winnay! Don't make me embarrass you in front of your friend," said Hissy Fit, coming as close to encouragement as could be expected from her."

Daed did his encouraging part with more patience than words, "Whenever you're ready, Winnay."

Winnay strained forth his memory of life after death as if he were a mine shaft elevator carrying the weight of every mineral from the earth's core to its crust, "As I said before, God was a very nice. He had this to say to me when we were eating some strips of my beef jerky together in heaven and I quote: 'Winnay, that's not how you do it. You're not doin' it right. I'm gonna show you how to do it.'"

What had disheartened Winnay Le Poux and what left him now in tears at the retelling exhilarated Daed Oversoul. He smiled again for three and spoke directly to Winnay's soul, "You and God have a lot in common."



## News from Borealia: The #1 Blog

Who? Winnay Le Poux. What? Died. What? And then came back to life. Where? Lambshire. When? Really really recently. Why? Almost everybody dies, but almost everybody does not die, sit down with God for an afternoon snack, and then come back to tell about it. How? Nobody really knows, but Winnay said that, thanks to something somebody said to him about him meeting God, he's now considering starring in a new reality television show called Shocking Afterlife Experiences of Shocking Partners of Famous People.

Word of the Day: holeyhorde - n. 1. a large gathering of young people with multiple

body piercings 2. an expression of surprise when witnessing a mass shooting

#1 Band: Generatalia

#1 Song: Music Paid for My Pool by Generatalia

#2 Song: No Nutrition in Yo Kitchen by Pop Tart

#3 Song: He My Pitchfork, She My Hoe by Dear John and Jane Doe

#4 Song: Save the Tusk and Tree and Me by Ban Daid and Ein Steinway

#5 Song: Amuse Me, Don't Abuse Me by Musey

#6 Song: Sexy, Foxy, Waxy by Chap Sticky

#7 Song: Take a Really Really Really Long Look at Me by Generatalia

#1 Numbers: One and Seven

#1 Bear: Polar

#1 Star: A tie between Polaris and Hissy Fit

#1 Mental Illness: Unipolar major depression with psychotic features

The calculated risk of aiding and abetting Winnay Le Poux in a return to his former blissful bluster was just a piece of the morning's police puzzle for Daed. The other remaining half million pieces were not as easily located or arranged, since Daed's good word and name had never been jeopardized before, certainly never counted among the stash of such grand, lexical larceny. He still had the length of the day to track down the missing dictionary and deliver it to the Lambshire auction house by midnight, but wondered about Zoe and Sir Frisbee's fate if he failed to fulfill his side of the hostage negotiation. Words, as ever, weighed on Daed's mind, but now more than usual their worth had come into play. Maybe instead of bidding for them in bulk at an auction as he originally contrived as the best tack to save the English language from the thralldom and doldrums of international commerce, Daed could consider again, by renewed entreaty to the queen, the prospect of raising enough money to buy off the black market thieves who robbed him of his good word and the Words' wondrous manifold words.

Dear Madam Queen,

With nowhere else to turn but toward the crown for firmness of faith and mind, I resubmit my request for seven million pounds of financial aid and collateral in the matter of the storied English language lexicon. A new development in the case, that of the Word family log falling into the hands of those who see words only as pounds, not as priceless treasures of ink and utterance, hastens my pen on this page. Yes, time is of the essence in this matter as the lives of two of your loyal British Isle lineage face fugaciousness, the threshing before the harvest, the wither before the bloom, sacrifice before glory.

*OVERSOUL – The Poet Policeman of Lambshire*

Thank you for your queenly attention to this crucial circumstance of words and souls on the wind.

Sincerely,

Daedal Oversoul

Oh my dear dear and dear Daedal,

How your words bemuse and delight an old woman whose corridors and secret chambers have so long forsworn the furtive attentions of swain and suitor. Your knightly mission - and we must make that knightliness of yours official someday - is our little secret and it is safe with me as I trust the English language ever shall be safe in your solicitous care.

Keep watchful of giants, dwarfs, and dragons and mindful of the privilege of possessing such an imagination as yours, one so full of wild fancies.

Toodle-oo,

Queen - E

Somehow an eloquent rejection still nourished Daed's hope more than imagining a world rife with acceptance and devoid of reverence for language. All recent attempts to loosen the vise-like grip his mind held on words and meaning seemed for naught as Daed was, in basic terms, back to the beginning. He was sitting with Lord Frisbee Byword again at their first meeting, wondering just like then whether all of this business of buying and selling English words was an elaborate game of some sort, not something to be taken seriously. Loss of one's honor, however, was not a game and Daed willed that he would arrive in the midnight hour at the Lambshire Auctioneers Society with his hands full, his word true.

“You’re officially off the bloody hook, Oversoul,” pronounced the chief. “Cheers! And may the hole in your lip heal so we don’t mistake you for a leaky faucet.”

“Thank you for that blessing, Chief,” said Daed as he pictured many if not all of that morning’s parading Lambshire street crowd with their many piercings on so many parts of their young, tattooed bodies. “What did C.C. discover about the baking tray?”

The chief puffed out his cheeks and slowly released his breath, tried to recall the details of C.C.’s report. “Uh, hydrocarbons...unbranched alkanes...reagents...the thermodynamics of paraffin wax...quite a headful and a mouthful. The rest is easy: human tears, human sweat, human and dog saliva.”

Daed pieced the poison puzzle for himself, “So, C.C. found wax, melted petroleum wax on the baking tray and presumably Otto’s tears, sweat, and his and Rugo’s saliva.” Then he arranged the pieces for himself and for the chief, “Oil and water. Otto was essentially half-murdered by oil and water.” And then he waxed poetic of the oil and water itself, “I know that the two are notorious for not mixing well together, but to think that something as separately innocuous as glandular secretions and hot wax could make for such a substantial murder weapon when emulsified. Now every time I drool, weep, or perspire by candlelight, I’ll deem myself a ticking bomb or a loaded gun.”

“Well put, Oversoul.” The chief then opined, “I’ll bet Otto Philia would still be alive and kicking like Winnay Le Poux and Rugo if he had just chewed his biscuits instead of swallowing them whole.”

Daed imagined Otto sharing tea and biscuits with God and God saying to him, ‘What up, Canine? That’s not how you do it. You need to chew your food, Canine. I’m gonna show you how to do it.’

“How does it feel to be a free man again, Oversoul?”

“It feels good to solve the puzzle, Chief.”

The chief painted the crime scene picture for himself and Daed, “Wax paper instead of parchment paper was Otto’s first mistake. His second was exercising before eating, sweating over the baking tray, and his third, fatal mistake was to slobber over his love of self and sweet biscuits and to drag his dog in on the act.”

“What about the tears?” noted Daed.

“Ah, were they tears of joy, love, pain, or sorrow?” connoted the chief.

Daed declared in sudden deduction, “Otto was murdered, Chief, not half-murdered. The tears aren’t just part of the alchemy of the murder weapon, they’re evidence. They’re circumstantial proof that Otto Philia was forced to eat those four biscuit letters whole. Who could cry over biscuits otherwise?”

“Oversoul!”

“Yes, sir?”

“It pays to have a poet in the police force,” the chief praised. “It doesn’t pay you much, I know, but it still pays.”

Daed winced to add, “I hope you still feel that way when I tell you that I’ve lost the Word family lexicon.”

“What? How could you lose something as bloody big as that?”

“It was stolen last night while I was sleeping right next to it.”

The chief paused police matters briefly before whistling for Rugo. “Come on, lad, we’re off again to make the world an inhabitable place for our poet friend here.” Rugo came and heeled at Chief Noble’s feet. “That’s a good dog.”

“What’s the plan, Chief?”

“No plan, Oversoul, just an intermediate ploy. We need a book, right? A big ole book as the Americans say. It doesn’t matter what’s in it. Just what and words, Oversoul.”

Lambshire, like most of the nearby shires, had a store that sold rare books with a proprietor appearing no less old than some of the incunabula on the dust-settled shelves. The three, policeman, less and less impermanent police dog, and poet policeman, entered the age-old establishment and began the hunt for a leather-bound text that could serve as a late-night and last-minute surrogate for the oldest existing English lexicon.

“Have you anything particularly antique and voluminous, sir?” broached Daed to the bookstore owner in a loud cadence customarily catered to the hard of hearing. “Preferably with a carved leather binding and approximately two thousand pages.”

“Two thousand pages?” sallied the ancient, incredulous bookseller. Daed took the man’s repetitious reply to mean that there really was an issue of hearing impairment afoot and at hand.

“Yes, two thousand pages!” Daed repeated with increased volume.

The old man of books, who was aptly named Alex Bookman, answered again with more credulity, “I heard you initially, young man. You needn’t shout and shake the bindings, mine and the books here.”

Daed dived into more description as the chief knelt down and scratched a supine Rugo’s belly, “I’m not as concerned with the content as I am with the appearance,” and he nearly gagged at the sound of the words that had just escaped his mouth without duly consulting his conscience.”

Mr. Bookman slipped away like a thought into the slypes of his boutique book collection and returned like a memory as swift and satisfying as forgotten words retrieved. He

carried with him two antediluvian texts, one under each arm, and set them lightly, dotingly down on the cluttered, paper-strewn store counter top. “What you described, young man, sounded more to me like a lexicon than anything else. Here are two ancient language documentations: Latin and Greek. I’m sorry to say that we have no early English iterations here. Those belong entirely to Lord Frisbee Word II.”

“Thank you, sir. Latin and Greek will suffice,” said Daed much less loud than at the start of his and Alex Bookman’s book business transaction.

Back at the station house, the chief presented the merely slightly altered Lambshire auction house hostage exchange and rescue plan, “One briefcase with two dictionaries inside instead of one and the two of them instead of cash. Right. Greek and Latin instead of English. Right. Words instead of pounds. Right. It’s really the same damn and dingle plan, Oversoul.” Daed agreed and then opened up the old, worn Greek lexicon toward its end, turned the remaining pages to find the word Zoe. It was Greek to him, but it was still Zoe and to Daed, no matter the foreign context or the criminal circumstance, Zoe meant life.

## News from Britannia: Still the #1 Blog

Who? Videa and Telephony. What? Are hosting the First Annual Lambshire Music and Film and Reality Television Festival. Where? Lambshire. When? Hopefully from start to finish like the time before last when they hosted. Why? They hosted a festival in New Hampshire or some shire in America or somewhere and no one died and it didn't rain. How? Hepatitis or nepotism, whichever one means that somebody gets something from someone else because of close relations.

Word of the Day: hamclear - adj. 1. free from flying pigs 2. normal, copacetic

#1 Band: A tie between Videa and Telephony and Kleenexa and Baby Wype

#1 Song: See Me, Hear Me, Don't Touch Me by Videa and Telephony

#2 Song: Music Paid for My Pool by Generatalia

#3 Song: No Nutrition in Yo Kitchen by Pop Tart

#4 Song: He My Pitchfork, She My Hoe by Dear John and Jane Doe

#5 Song: Save the Tusk and Tree and Me by Ban Daid and Ein Steinway

#6 Song: Amuse Me, Don't Abuse Me by Musey

#7 Song: Sexy, Foxy, Waxy by Chap Sticky

#8 Song: Take a Really Really Really Long Look at Me by Generatalia

#1 Numbers: Two and Eight

#1 Bear: Teddy

#1 Baby Name: Chemise

#1 Lingerie: Teddy



With the din and glare of youthful festivity on the streets behind him and the ache of anticipation in his mind, Daed stood outside the Lambshire auction house just before midnight and waited, giant briefcase in hand. The chief had given him the high sign to go ahead with the newest plan to exchange the Latin and Greek dictionaries for Zoe and Sir Frisbee's freedom and was standing by in the shadows to make any potential arrests in the aftermath. The briefcase was heavy, enough so to force Daed to swap its handle grip left and right intermittently. That action did its part to distract and detain his imagination, keep his mind off of any stray fantasies of the knight-rescuing-a maiden-in-distress sort. A track of ceiling lights switched on within the entrance hall of the Lambshire Auctioneers Society and, marching in with her curator's keys, was Truth Bertholdt, who proceeded to unlock the front door and welcome Daed in one systematic motion, "Come in please, Daed." Daed switched hands on his briefcase once more before he entered. Truth locked the door behind him and then led Daed toward the auction house gallery. She addressed the mystery of this particularly mysterious midnight hour with surprising calm and customary nicety, "It is Truth Bertholdt, yah, just in za case zat you have forgotten my name. In Germany we say za word jubiläum sometimes when we forget a person's name and zen someone who knows zis person's name will eizer drop it into za conversation or whisper it in za ear."

"I did remember your name, Truth, but thank you for the jubiläum suggestion," said Daed, aware of his own strange calm and nicety for the circumstance. "I'm surprised there isn't an adopted German word in the English language for that sort of collective action of saving face."

"Yah, I zink zere is. It's gesicht-menge, to save face in za crowd. But it's not as popular as zeitgeist, weltenschmerz, or schadenfreude, I don't zink," Truth told.

Daed then wrangled the moment with his one free hand, “What is going on here, Truth? Are you in danger, too? Have you been given instructions by the person who abducted Zoe and Sir Frisbee? I know they’re here because I can smell Zoe’s essence. How are they? Who has done this to...?”

“Zat is a lot of questions.” Truth kept tacit for the remaining few paces that brought Daed into the main auction hall, where she delivered him to Lord Frisbee Byword and his fragrant daughter. There the Words stood together, unbound, ungagged, seemingly unscathed by their alleged abduction. Both smiled at Daed, but only Sir Frisbee spoke.

“Daedal, my boy, have you braved Sturm und Drang and still brought forth the ransom? Oh, imagine the indignity of being personally priced by your own assay at a paltry half million pounds, nay, a quarter of a million if you consider my daughter in the tally. Does that seem a lifetime’s fair worth, I ask you? Simply put, should I have asked for more, my boy?”

Truth then gave her delayed answers to Daed’s questions in a strained succession, “Yah, Daed, it was...a ruse, yah. I am...not in danger and...I was not given instructions by za person who abducted Zoe and Sir Frisbee because...zat person is...does not exist, yah.”

Daed set the briefcase down on the glossy hardwood floor, mostly so that he could put his head in both of his hands and that he did. Zoe went to him, put her arm around him, caressed his back. “It’s not as you imagine it to be, Daed. Use your off-duty imagination for this. Be the poet, not the policeman,” she exhorted softly.

Truth took the briefcase and heaved it onto a nearby bidder’s chair, opened it, perused its dense, chartaceous contents. “Zat is not a half million pounds, Daed. Zat is something else, an ersatz.”

“What surrogate have you collected here for our good cause, Daedal Oversoul? Words? Actual words?”

expostulated Lord Word as he peered over the open briefcase. “Old World words it appears. Spit and polish for the silver tongue.”

Daed lowered his hands from his face and tried his damndest to step out of his clay-footed, gumshoeing, poet policeman boots and into the shimmery steel feet of armor as befitted a crusading knight. He reasoned against fact and logic and current and as England’s laureate salmon poet, not as Lambshire’s poet policeman, he deduced, “All of it is true.”

“Yes, indeed, Daed,” corroborated Zoe with a kiss for Daed’s cheek.

“I daresay that not all of anything is ever entirely true, Daedal,” deigned Sir Frisbee.

“Wahrheit unmöglich. Zat means za truth impossible,” imposed Truth.

Daed elucidated, “This is thankfully not the brute example of abduction and extortion; this is a personal, intimate matter, but no less grave. Someone has indeed abducted you and your daughter, Lord Byword and this person also seems to have threatened Truth Bertholdt in some way. But who?”

“This is sheer nonsense, my boy,” chided Sir Frisbee. “Don’t mistake trust for affection when it comes to my daughter. She will say almost anything to hold your gaze and affix your nostrils her way. You must remember that I am the one who intends to sell off every last word of your beloved English, Daedal. No one else. I am the perpetrator of this tandem Word crime, the abductor and auctioneer, both.”

“Yah,” agreed Truth but not too convincingly, “he even slapped me on za rear end when I questioned zat you would come and save Zoe and me, yah.”

Daed reasoned further against grain and tide and even a criminal confession, “Truth Bertholdt, you are a laughable liar and, Lord Frisbee Byword, you are a lamentable one. But you are both liars. Falsity is only punishable in court under oath,

so, unless you start telling me the truth, I am going to collect and return these rather exorbitant Latin and Greek lexicons and place you and Zoe and Truth in police protective custody.”

Sir Frisbee recited his reply in Latin and Greek alternately and repeatedly, “Veritas vos liberabit. I alítheia tha sas eleftherósei. Veritas vos liberabit. I alítheia tha sas eleftherósei...”

Truth joined the foreign language brigade, “Die Wahrheit wird dich frei machen. Die Wahrheit wird dich frei machen. Die Wahrheit wird dich frei machen...”

Zoe whispered in Daed’s ear amid her father’s and Truth’s invocations, “I will visit you every day.”

“Visit me?” Daed appealed to her with a crossed brow.

“I love you,” she said as she stepped back from him and unhappily lent her voice to Lord Word and Truth’s new and old world litany, “La vérité vous libèrera. La vérité vous libèrera. La vérité vous libèrera. La vérité vous libèrera...”

Daed now understood that whoever was behind this bizarre abduction of Zoe, Truth, and Sir Frisbee’s sense of freedom was not someone who made a lot of sense him or her self nor someone who could be expected to make reasonable demands. The whole midnight hostage and ransom exchange was exactly as Truth Bertholdt put it, a ruse, yah. Daed clearly recollected being told by the machine-like voice on Winnay Le Poux’s phone that it was words, not pounds that he needed, and half a million so for the salvation of two. A sudden frisson of horror held Daed hostage in his senses as he considered that the word word might have somehow fallen into the pile of the coined connotation of money like the words clam, chip, peanut, marble, buck, smacker, and bone had done. Half a million words, Daed bemoaned, could have become synonymous with half a million pounds overnight, even before the Word family lexicon made it to the gallery of

the Lambshire auction house. Had the word word already lost its meaning, its intrinsic value at the mere suggestion of it becoming a common commodity? Daed was grateful in that moment of reckoning that the old, grand English Word dictionary that came into his care for a day had been lost. As long as it did not find its way to the auction house, but remained solely represented by the sum of its ancient Latin and Greek parts, there was hope that the English language could still be free and that Zoe, Truth, and Sir Frisbee could be liberated from their mysterious, anonymous captor.

“Oversoul!” bellowed a familiar voice and sound behind Daed. “You’re under arrest,” said Chief Noble as he entered the main room alone, silencing the polyglot parade of incantations in the air.

“Not again, Chief,” said Daed in dismayed surprise.

The chief explained, “We found the damn-dingle thing in your flat, stowed away in your closet.”

“What? What thing?” asked Daed.

“The bloody English lexicon, Oversoul. Not the easiest of books or crimes to conceal,” stated the chief. “Come on, let’s get you jail and safe until we can sort this new mess.” The chief addressed the Words with his hand firmly set atop Daed’s shoulder, “I’m sorry, Lord Byword and Lady Zoe, for this misappropriation of your family property and for the Lambshire Police Department’s failure to act more expediently in this matter.”

“Not at all, Chief Noble,” ducked Sir Frisbee. “Do take good care of Daedal.”

Zoe did not duck detection at all, “I did it. I hid it.”

“What?” said Daed, stunned. Zoe nodded confirmation to him as Lord Byword shook his head at her and Truth Bertholdt swung her concerned gaze between the two.

“Ms. Bertholdt, do you have anything to say?” inquired the chief.

“Yah, die Wahrheit wird dich frei machen. Die Wahrheit wird dich frei machen. Die Wahrheit wird dich frei machen...”

Sir Frisbee followed Truth’s determined lead, “Veritas vos liberabit. I alítheia tha sas eleftherósei. Veritas vos liberabit. I alítheia tha sas eleftherósei...”

The chief rubbed his raised brow, shook his tilted head, then dutifully led Daed and Zoe out of the auction house. With one hand, Daed gripped the briefcase containing the two lingual histories most responsible for the development of the English language and, with his other hand, he held the hand of Zoe Word, an Englishwoman whose name came from the Greek zoe and the Latin verbum. How far had language come, Daed wondered, if it still was not solely used for the sake of truth and freedom? Did the evolution of words end where sententious sayings like *The truth will set you free* began?

## News from Americana: Still the #1 Blog

Who? Allo C. McFoy. Who? Allo C. McFoy the famous socialist entrepreneur. What? Has just bought Otto Philia's mansion. What? You heard me. Where? A shire somewhere near Lambshire. Where? C'mon stop it. When? Just in time for the First Annual Lambshire Music and Film and Reality Television Festival. Why? There's plenty of room for all of his rich, sexy socialist friends and there's a pool. How? Crowd funding, trust funding, and grassroots canvassing.

Word of the Day: amhere - v. to force oneself to stick with a morning routine

#1 Band: Tel and Strat

#1 Song: Touring is Boring by Tel and Strat

#2 Song: See Me, Hear Me, Don't Touch Me by Videa and Telephony

#3 Song: Music Paid for My Pool by Generatalia

#4 Song: No Nutrition in Yo Kitchen by Pop Tart

#5 Song: He My Pitchfork, She My Hoe by Dear John and Jane Doe

#6 Song: Save the Tusk and Tree and Me by Ban Daid and Ein Steinway

#7 Song: Amuse Me, Don't Abuse Me by Musey

#8 Song: Sexy, Foxy, Waxy by Chap Sticky

#9 Song: Take a Really Really Really Long Look at Me by Generatalia

#1 Numbers: Three and Nine

#1 Skill Set: Giving a really great award ceremony acceptance speech

#1 Mindset: Winning at all cost

#1 Mind Skill: A tie between telepathy and controlling others people's thoughts

“We are quite the damn and dingle pair, Oversoul,” said the chief as he, Daed, and Zoe crossed the street and meandered their way through the sleepless, youth-lit, pre-Lambshire festival darkness, from the auction house to the police station. “We couldn’t tell a boil from a bloody cyst, but here we are trying to solve the crimes of the new millennium.”

Daed disputed the chief’s charge, “A boil is a localized swelling and inflammation of the skin resulting from infection of a hair follicle and adjacent tissue, with a hard central core and pus. A cyst, on the other hand, is a closed sac having a distinct membrane and developing abnormally in a cavity or structure of the body.”

The chief rebuffed, “Knowing is not the same as telling, Oversoul. Anyway, that’s not the bloody point.”

“I know. I do understand what you’re saying, Chief: the world has become much as we see it before us this instant, a restless place with its people documenting their every word and move every minute of the day. You and I still value our privacy and our own pace.”

“Well put, Oversoul, per usual.” The chief addressed Zoe, “And you, I do wish to thank you again for your call and your confession.”

Zoe nodded reception of his regard. “The truth needed to be voiced, Chief Noble, even if it’s still being pieced together.”

Daed intuited, “I’m not really under arrest, am I?”

“No,” said the chief, “but you’re still going to have to pretend to be for a spell.”

“Why?”

“Because, according to Zoe here, privatized eyes and ears are everywhere. What is it called again, Zoe?”

“CCTV.”

Daed wondered, “What do C.C. and her television have to do with Sir Frisbee and Truth Bertholdt and this midnight mayhem of ours tonight?” and then he further wondered,



“Were you really in my flat last night, Zoe?” She nodded and smiled. “For the record, I won’t be pressing any charges, Chief.”

The chief briefly acknowledged the lovers at play and continued, “CCTV is closed-circuit television, Oversoul. Who bloody knew? Why did no one up the ranks tell me that we’re being monitored day and night or that we really are the subjects of a reality television show. I thought Winnay Le Poux was, you know, full of Le Poux – excuse my French, Zoe.”

“Zoe speaks French fluently, Chief,” Daed noted.

“Right, I thought I smelled Frog and Sauerkraut in the Latin and Greek chorus. What were you saying in there?”

Zoe replied in French, “La vérité vous libèrera,” then in English, “The truth...”

“...will set you free,” replicated Daed.

“Why that phrase, John 8:32 from the Gospels?”

Zoe raised a cautionary index finger to her lips. “I think that’s more of a jail cell-side chat, Chief.”

The three soon after sat in Daed’s new jail-cell digs deep into the night, with the strident student body of the Pop culture doing in-depth research into the effects of alcohol, drugs, and sex on normal sleep cycles. Zoe began with the technological basics, “Do you know what a bluetooth is?” Neither Daed nor the chief knew the term. She defined it for them, “It’s a wireless technology for exchanging data between fixed and mobile devices over short distances. It uses UHF radio waves in the ISM bands, from 2.402 GHz to 2.480 GHz.”

“Can you say that in English now that you’ve proven yourself fluent in French?” joked the chief.

Zoe chuckled and continued, “Have you heard of the company GTE?”

Daed took a stab in the dark cell, “Weren’t they a telephone company?” then shot, “They closed for business around the new millennium, didn’t they?”

“Yes, but a different GTE, Daed,” said Zoe. “The one that I’m referring to stands for Green Tooth Enterprises. This company borrows bluetooth and other technologies, but advances them with GMOs from...”

“GMO stands for what?” asked the chief.

“Genetically modified organism,” answered Zoe and then spliced on, “GTE recently separated itself out from the competition by crossing genetic material from trees and human teeth.”

“Really?” said Daed still deep in the dark about the world of technology.

The chief reached out desperately from his own dark corner of the jail cell, “What does GTE have to do with John 8:32, Zoe?”

“I am getting to that, Chief. It’s just not an ABC, 1 2 3 sort of connection.” She paused to arrange the organic and synthetic matter of her story and then proceeded, “Apparently the dentin, cementum, enamel, and pulp of our teeth are homologous to the bark and root, the xylem and phloem of trees. When the two are genetically intertwined they develop a symbiotic relationship with satellite frequencies, much like the underground telecommunion of trees and mushrooms. But GTE has taken the human communications network that was once grounded with wires and telephone poles way past cellphone towers, all the way up to the stars. It’s like the stars are watching us and hearing our every word.”

Daed suggested, “This isn’t a public stargaze and starhearken, is it, Zoe?”

“No, Daed, it’s quite personal and invasive. If GTE has your tooth, they have your freedom.”

“Why would GTE have anyone’s bloody teeth, Zoe?” asked the chief.

She accorded, “The first wave of tooth lenders were likely just shipping them off after a needful extraction at the dentist, thinking themselves lucky pioneers in the field of space communications. Others were all too fain to pull out their own back tooth for the promise of faster Wi-Fi and more apps and services for less money.”

“All for the cost of their civil liberty,” deplored the chief.

“That’s right,” said Zoe. “And that is the modern plague upon us and what is now eating away at my father’s sense of life purpose and meaning. He used to be the only person I knew who truly loved his lot in life, that is until I met Daed.”

Daed smiled at her. “Zoe, Sir Frisbee sent GTE a tooth, didn’t he?”

“He did, Daed. And do you know why?”

“I do not.”

“Because our family’s cook, Alma, asked if my father would help her son, Allo C. McFoy, start up a new, private telecommunications business. She said with her Scottish brogue, ‘It’ll be a bridge between the trees and the stars, it will, Sir Frisbee.’

The chief reprised, “Does this bring us any closer to John 8:32?”

“It does, Chief.” Zoe recited, “The truth will set you free. GTE borrowed that proverb and genetically modified it to read: The tooth will set you free. It’s their company slogan, their propaganda, their recipe for world domination and all they had to do was swap out two little letters. It reminds me of how cookbook recipes can become wholly one’s own by the mere altering of one ingredient.”

Daed distilled, “It is such bitter irony when industry uses poetic words like truth and freedom to lie to consumers about their civil liberty losses and convince them that they are free.”

“Did this Allo C. McFoy eavesdrop on your father from the sky and discovery your family secret, Zoe?” asked the chief.

“He did, but he didn’t stop there, did he? No, he wanted English all for himself to make his wee mum proud. Imagine a Scotsman owning English.” Zoe huffed. “GTE calls it greenmail, but that’s just a euphemism for blackmail, Chief, and that about catches us up to tonight in the auction house.”

“With what and word does McFoy threaten Sir Frisbee?” further asked the chief.

Zoe confessed, “I don’t know. He won’t tell me. But it must be a secret worth keeping, if it has my magnanimous father sinking so low as to sell his own true love, the word of English, to protect it.”

Daed presumed, “Truth Bertholdt must also have invested a tooth in GTE.”

“Yes,” demuserped Zoe.

“Did Otto?” wondered Daed aloud as he also wondered to himself if the word presumed could be spelled backwards to carry the reciprocal meaning of having proved a presumption? He then further wondered if the word wondered could be applied in the same reverse manner? Even further he wondered why he was wondering these things? Love and the lateness of the hour might have been the catalysts.

“I don’t know if he did,” Zoe derednowed.

“You didn’t, of course,” he pushed to clarify.

“No, Daed, I thankfully did not contribute to the end of the world as we once knew it and so loved it,” she was clear.

Daed imagined for the moment stars with eyes and ears. As long as the stars couldn’t read his mind, he felt safe enough in the world. The privacy that he and the chief and Zoe all seemed to value more than industrial promise and power evinced itself in their late-night jail-cell chat’s arrival at last at silence. No one could see them or hear them and the

*OVERSOUL – The Poet Policeman of Lambshire*

world seemed a better place for their collective seeking of the truth and the truth's potential to set them and the rest of the world free.

## News from Equatoria: Still the #1 Blog

Who? Daedal Oversoul. Who? The Lambshire poet and reality television star. What? Was arrested. What? He really was. Where? Lambshire. When? Just before the opening ceremony for the First Annual Lambshire Music and Film and Reality Television Festival. Why? He stole a really big and really old English dictionary. How? He rang the doorbell, was led into the Word mansion, went into the library and took it. The Word family cook, Alma McFoy, saw him leave with the dictionary and said to him with her Scottish brogue, “Is that a dictionary under your shirt or are you just pregnant with possibilities?” Daedal Oversoul didn’t understand a word of what she said or what she meant.

Word of the Day: gampire - n. someone who gives hickeys exclusively on the leg

#1 Band: Kleenexa and Baby Wype

#1 Song: Yo Mole is My Beauty Mark by Kleenexa and Baby Wype

#2 Song: Touring is Boring by Tel and Strat

#3 Song: See Me, Hear Me, Don’t Touch Me by Videa and Telephony

#4 Song: Music Paid for My Pool by Generatalia

#10 Song: Take a Really Really Really Long Look at Me by Generatalia

#1 Numbers: Four and Ten

#1 Temperature: 80°F

#1 Rum Proof: 80

#1 Equatoria Island: Haiti

#1 Term of Endearment: Matey

Daed awoke in the restricted rays of morning light that breached the window bars of his basement cell. The sounds of morning did not display that same jailhouse stricture, however, and could scarcely be distinguished from the nighttime sounds, at least since the half a million young people from all seven sides of the globe made their trot to Lambshire for the First Annual Lambshire Music and Film and Reality Television Festival. Bedside was a canvas postal bag, intumescent of mail no doubt, Daed imagined as he sat up on his cot, set his bare feet to the concrete, and reached for evidence to or fro the contrary. Missives they were indeed. Fan mail? To an accused, incarcerated thief? A handwritten note on top of the teem of letters read: No good Daed goes unpunished, Oversoul. – Chief Noble P.S. Zoe mentioned something called the hinternet as she was leaving. It was bloody loud on the street and I may not have heard her quite right, but it sounds German and must have some complex social meaning of some sort.

The return address of the first letter that Daed opened was from the Word estate. The embossed wax seal bore a grand statement of aW, and the letter itself was from none other than the stately Lord Frisbee Word II himself.

Dear Daedal my boy,

The jig is up as the Americans are wont to say. The proverbial cat is out of the bag, the dinghy has dropped, the corpulent woman has sung, the champagne is popped, the safe cracked, the bubble burst, and the tree felled onto the forest floor. Timber, I say to you. Timber!

My daughter has professed her Wordly love for you and apprised me of the fact that my secrets are no longer safe in her sole keeping, but surely they are no less safeguarded within yours and her dual

guardianship. One secret, however, shall remain mine past perdition or paradise inasmuch as it is not mine alone kept or to be shared. No blackmail or greenmail or Scottish male named Allo C. McFoy shall see that secret forsaken, its trust forsworn in the light of my lifetime.

Your Chief Noble has returned my Word legacy to me intact and, although I am grateful for your grand larceny in this matter, it is this present sacrifice of your freedom for my sake that moves me beyond gratitude, into the hallowed latitudes and longitudes reserved for a father's love for a son.

It seems that Alma, my cook, did not need your alphabet biscuit recipe after all. She possesses a rare palate-eidetic and has comforted me with your sweet and savory handiwork in the pendent silence imposed upon me by her son. Why do I not relieve this woman of her culinary and scullery duties, you may wonder, dear Daedal? Quite simply because she baked for me a most sincere and satisfying apology in fifteen biscuit letters, the same number as your first edible alphabet puzzle parcel to me. 'I am sorry, you know,' was all that she needed to bake.

Unless the fortune of equal fortune to our dear, near five hundred thousand words betides us, it seems likely that English will be lost to the black-and-white Boolien domain of 0 and 1 and the £ or the \$. But we will never be lost, my boy, for we are palette-eidetic. The words, all of the words are within us, written on our hearts, sung in our souls: Veritas vos liberabit. I alítheia tha sas eleftherósei.

Wordly yours,  
Frisbee



Daed sat with Lord Word's sentiments and himself wept. As his tears began to alter the ink limning of some of the cursive letters, making them illegible, he thought of Otto Philia and the saliva, sweat, tear, and wax concoction that half killed the local movie star. Daed's sudden, newest explanation for the killer alphabet biscuit letters that could not have come from his original word-puzzle gifts to Sir Frisbee was that they came instead from the Word Manor kitchen of Alma McFoy. Did she give Otto the biscuits directly, Daed wondered, or did her son, Allo C. McFoy, deliver them with a looming threat and a demand, the old one-two punch of blackmail and its ostensibly more PC greenmail euphemism? What of those tears of his though, Daed still puzzled? What would make a grown man, well, a grown adolescent like Otto cry before swallowing the letters of his name whole? Something still did not make much sense to Daed about this death, this murder. He wished at that moment that Otto had written to him and that a mere surface search of the mailbag would deliver a letter from the other side, one that cleared the confusion of the order of events in the case.

But why would Daed now be dumping out the mail bag onto the jail cell floor? Why would he be on his knees, scouring the rectangular postal debris, the flotsam and jetsam of a late-morning shipwreck of his wild imagination? What would he expect to find? Could he honestly think that Otto had ever once written a letter to anyone when he was alive?

Daed abandoned reason for the sake of ratiocination, his understanding that sometimes in order to think clearly one must not think so much. Unconventional murders, he knew quite well, had to be solved unconventionally - the basic idea behind most undercover work and almost all crime solving in the fields of entertainment. His intuition, his gut over his

noggin, placed the inexplicable and the impossible within Daed's grasp - a letter indeed from Otto Philia. It had to be a hoax. Or could there be another Otto Philia on the planet? More likely it was hoax. Daed opened the letter with the furious unfurling of a sail in a squall and took command of his senses, all of them now at sea with this reckoning on his knees of strangest feeling and circumstance, hoax or otherwise.

Wha' up, Canine?

I heard tha' you was locked up and I didn't wanna wai' until you was like hanged to say, 'No hard feelings abou' the missus, abou' me going a few rounds with the bitch before you had done.' Zoe and me, we was no Juliet and tha' homo Romeo boy, all of them words like and no action. I'm all action like, Canine and tha's wha' I'm writing to you abou' righ' now, abou' the action of me faking me own death.

"What?" said Daed to his own shock and disbelief and sense of being so thoroughly entertained.

This is the first letter I've ever written to anyone, so cheers to tha' and to you. If you don' know abou' the company DRCS (Dead Ringer Cloning Services), they service movie stars and rock stars and pop stars who wanna die young like all the greats, bu' also keep on living large like. They haven' quite figured out how to make a living clone ye', bu' the dead ones do the bloody job and even better, if you know wha' I mean. Shor' backstory: Me and Rugo are getting ready to warm up the biscuits on the tray and I star' showing off me acting chops, crying, sweating, spitting me lines all Shakespearean-like and then Rugo started slobbering

probably 'cause he really liked the performance, bu' most likely 'cause he wanted the biscuits. Action: Righ', they deliver and I se' up the crime scene with me real-like body double, take the warm biscuits tha' Alma McFoy brough' me and star' stuffing them down me clone with a coa' hanger, all the way down to his blooming belly. Conflic': the capital 'O' of me name isn't big enough to choke him or me really, if I'm honest, and so I have to bugger off to the bakery for a bigger 'O'. Climax: The new 'O' ge's stuck in me clone's throa' and the bloody job is done. I lock Rugo up in the bedroom, so he doesn' star' eating me clone and then I bugger off to the Bahamas. End of story.

- Otto

Daed shook off the daydream of Otto Philia having written a confessional letter to him, one that disclosed all of the missing details of the maddening case of sweet biscuits, wax, and certain bodily fluids. Slowly, the realistic, colorful narrative of Otto's meticulous plan to die young like a Lambshire James Dean and live long past his glory like a Lambshire Liz Taylor receded, although the afterglow of his dead clone's spot-on impersonation of Otto-asphyxia lingered. This story that Daed's imagination chose to tell him was, to his reckoning, no less far-fetched than the one that Zoe had told him and the chief about Green Tooth Enterprises and its maniacal founder, Allo C. McFoy.

Daed reached again into the mailbag that leaned against his knee. The letter that he drew out was just junk mail, but the printed company name on the return address, Green Tooth Enterprises, and the caption slogan, The tooth will set you free, impelled Daed to tear it open and greet this greenmailer fraud firsthand, with clenched tooth and fist.

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Dear smartest, sexiest, coolest customer,

We here at Green Tooth Enterprises promise smiles and savings. Is your phone acting more like a phone than a day trip to Mars? Just give us one tooth and we'll fly you to Mars and back in time for your video date with the soulmate match our DNA lab isolates for you at no extra cost. Love everlasting, a smile that never fades, and the fastest light speed internet in the universe.

- Allo C. McFoy CEO of GTE

“It’s internet, not hinternet, Chief,” said Daed to the mailbag with a smile. “What and words, Oversoul!” he replied for the mailbag and the chief. Having received two categorically divergent pieces of post, Daed could now begin to separate the junk mail from the letters worth reading and he did so by setting Lord Frisbee Byword’s intimate missive along with Chief Noble’s note next to him at the end of the cot and by crumpling up Allo C. McFoy’s impersonal form-letter propaganda and tossing it across his cell.

## News from Austra: Still the #1 Blog

Who? Hinter von Netherlamb. Who? Hinter von Netherlamb – that’s all I got. What? Claimed that he invented the internet. What? Somebody invented the internet? Where? Netherlambshire, which is just above or just below Lambshire, I think. When? Seconds before the opening ceremony for the First Annual Lambshire Music and Film and Reality Television Festival. Why? He overheard somebody say, “Somebody invented the internet?” How? And he said, “Yah, I invented za hinternet. It’s an invisible net zat catches sexual innuendos before zey can ever become full-fledged examples of sexual harassment, yah.” When he realized that I said internet, he said, “What is zat?”

Word of the Day: lampfear – n. 1. a childhood fear of the light  
2. an adult aversion to making love with the lights on

#1 Band: Ein Steinway

#1 Song: Xyl ‘em and Phlo ‘em by Ein Steinway

#2 Song: Yo Mole is My Beauty Mark by Kleenexa and Baby Wype

#3 Song: Touring is Boring by Tel and Strat

#4 Song: See Me, Hear Me, Don’t Touch Me by Videa and Telephony

#5 Song: Music Paid for My Pool by Generatalia

#1 Numbers: Five and Zero plus Five

#1 Climate: Desert

#1 Culinary Course: Dessert

#1 Military Fantasy: Desertion

Overnight, quite literally, the word word went from its essential definition - a speech sound or series of speech sounds symbolizing and communicating a meaning or a written or printed character or combination of characters representing a spoken word - to carrying the additional connotations of money (pound or dollar or franc or euro or ruble or peso or shekel...), love, sex, day, night, dawn, dusk, direction, time, number, food, clothing, shelter, idea, game, sport, song, story, book, movie, disease, medicine, drug, musical instrument, tool, toy, appliance, car, bus, plane, train, boat, blimp, helicopter, cloud, star, moon, sea, sand, lake, river, stream, pool, flower, fungus, weed, leaf, tree, rock, stick, stone, mountain, valley, sink, tub, toilet, tile, chair, table, bench, bed, couch, wall, door, window, stair, pen, pencil, paint, paper, pot, pan, pet, party, wildlife, God, man and woman and their every body part and its function, to wit, almost everything under the sun. From his jail-cell cot seat, slightly below the crust of the earth, and still not so far from the action, Daed was uncomfortably in the position to hear every word of the Lambshire Music and Film and Reality Television Festival's opening ceremony.

Onto the main stage bounced and bopped Videa and Telephony, the event's hosts. They required no ceremony to exercise their newfound freedom and trend-setting moment at hand to use the word word as they saw fit. "Word up and down and word in and out to all you young and beautiful words out there!" began Videa and Telephony in unison as their fans had come to expect from the bounce-bop musical duo who never sang a note alone and never sang a single harmony. Unison and repetition were the earmarks of their meteoric rise to musical fame and mediocrity. But none of the dulling, defining details of theirs and the rest of the festival performance lineup's parallel traits could sway the sardine-like crowd from hooting, hollering, clapping, and

staying put exactly where they were. That sort of faithfulness in an audience rife with ADHD and no particular social encouragement around them to improve upon the standard three-minute attention span must have had less to do with biochemistry than it did with physics. Inertia, a Pop singer slated to perform at the festival and someone who didn't know that her name had any other meaning than her, intuitively did know something about the alternate definition of the word: the condition of an object (an audience member) at rest (standing as close as possible to other audience members) or in uniform motion (really only at the beginning or the end of concerts or festivals) in the same straight line unless acted upon by some external force.

After Videa and Telephony had riddled the air with their collective mistreatment of the word word, they ceremonialized the First Annual Lambshire Music and Film and Reality Television Festival with a chanting sequence that they were famous for. In fact, they had recently set the world record for most people chanting with no particular cause at a single gathering for the longest amount of time. The near half million gathered before them on this occasion represented a potential world record breaker and, if obligingly loud and uniform, would likely give Videa and Telephony further chances to chant their chants far and wide. They began, "See me, feel me, don't touch me! C'mon, all you words out there! See me, feel me, don't touch me!" Sheep-like, in thrall to their Pop-duo shepherds, the Lambshire festival crowd declared its own formal sentence to thralldom, chanting as if those seven words - See me, feel me, don't touch me - represented freedom or at least something more than absolutely nothing.

Daed sat through what seemed to him like an interminable chant of the damned from the underworld led by Hades and Persephone, not Videa and Telephony. When the air was at

last cleared of its rank unison repetition, it didn't take long for the fetidness of foul humor to replace it with a mephitic gas that intended to be more of the laughing variety. Hem and Haw were a young male comedy team that made a name for themselves by posing simple, seemingly innocuous questions to one another onstage, e.g. What was it like? Or How did you feel about that? Or Was it worth it? The one who was asked would simply and innocently answer with a rephrasing of the respective questions: What was what like? How did I feel about what? Was what worth it? Then theirs and their fans' sense of fun would begin as Hem and Haw would proceed to place one another in compromising, demoralizing, degrading, grotesque scenarios. The follow-up question, What was what like?, could then be followed with, Standing naked in the dark with peanut butter all over certain parts of your body. And that could in turn be followed with, Yeah, I know it sounds a little nutty, which would finally be followed by a punch line like, And someone yelled, 'Surprise!' and the lights came on and fifty of your closest friends saw you bent over with your dog licking peanut butter off your ass and balls.

Daed did laugh during Hem and Haw's show and would have wanted to try to explain himself to anyone who witnessed his reaction to the ribald duo, but his jailhouse solitude saved him from having to resort to such measures of self-defense. He did, however, spend some time reasoning his risible response by acknowledging that he didn't think it was socially or even legally permissible to express such explicit, lewd subject matter on a public stage. It could be said that Hem and Haw were more of an educational experience than a comedy act for Daed Oversoul, despite the fact that they made him laugh out loud.

What ensued from the decrescendo of Hem and Haw's guffaws to cachinnations to cackles, chortles, and chuckles



was the introduction of the musical portion of the Lambshire Music and Film and Reality Television Festival. The opening act sounded like seven sisters singing the same song in the shower. They were introduced as Generatalia and could legitimately serve no other role than that of festival opener for the logistical reason that they possessed only three songs in their repertoire, all of which apparently had been recent #1 hits. Daed wondered if Generatalia's cloying sound of seven, female voices in unison was made up of the seven female dwarfs he saw a day or so prior, when he happened upon Winnay Le Poux and Hissy Fit on the cluttered street. The names of the members of the band and the band's name itself sounded immeasurably more exotic and musical than Generatalia's music. Britannia, Americana, Equatoria, Austra, Easteria, Europa, and Borealia, as they were each introduced and tagged with the proud, heptagonal title of lead singer, had grand, mythic, regional and continental names, not the fluffy stuff of customary Pop singer nomenclature. Generatalia as a girl band may have sounded exactly like Pop Tart and Kleenexa and Baby Wype and Videa and Telephony and Inertia and Musey and Chap Sticky and all of the other female Pop and Rock stars, but they were somehow different, maybe only in size and name.

The good fortune of their songs being short in number and in length accorded Daed some relief from Generatalia not so long after their set had begun. They were amply applauded and each uniquely blingy, diminutive, young woman in the group gave big blown kisses and an identical, seven-sided farewell to the crowd, "We love you, words! Thank you for making our songs and our blogs the #1 songs and #1 blogs on the planet! We are Britannia, Americana, Equatoria, Austra, Easteria, Europa, and Borealia! We are special! And you are our special words and our special words and our really

special words and our really really really special words! We love you, words!”

The claim to fame of the next musical act was that he could span his left hand one piano key shy of two octaves, a world record and a hell of a head-turning party trick. Ein Steinway grew up playing the piano at least eight hours a day, from the time he was two years old. And while some doctors declaimed that his ceaseless growth spurts and his photographic musical memory were biologically human-based anomalies, certain dendrologists and mahouts suggested that Ein’s extreme height and exceptional memory, not to mention his penchant for peanuts, were the direct, dual effect of him being forced as a child to tickle the ivories and ebonies until his fingers bled and the DNA of trees and elephants accidentally entering his bloodstream. Ein was known to do impressions of trees and elephants that could fool even the experts. Excellence was his stock and trade in everything he did and excellence was certainly evidenced in his piano playing and in the big, banging, booming arrangements of the big, bang, boom of his catchy songs, most of which were instrumentals in the age of singers who seldom even played an accompanying instrument.

Any praise of Ein Steinway’s musicality, bombastic as it was, could not have competed with the decibel level of Ein’s amplified piano, even if Daed tried to voice some regard for the elephantine power of the pianist’s left hand and the arboreal sway of his right. A compliment to some musicians and an offense to others, Daed drifted off into a midday slumber with the comparable pianistic sounds of elephants stampeding and trees falling in the forest all around him, not unlike a baby falling asleep to the monsoon-like serenade of a vacuum cleaner.

When Daed awoke scarcely two hours later, his late afternoon surprise was not that the Lambshire festival music

score had changed its loud, repetitive tune, it was that there wasn't any sound at all. Even the hum of the horde of young festival attendees had been halted in its tracks, lifted from the Lambshire streets, sidewalks, and fields like a breath-taken hush. What could cause such a void of sound for five hundred thousand people, pondered Daed? No one in the whole wide range of the entertainment fields had the chops or the charisma to orchestrate a mass detection of that deafening a dropped pin. What was it? Mass exodus? Mob meditation? Throng hypnosis? No. Daed knew but didn't want to admit to himself that, on his underground, blind, deafened watch, he let half a million words as they were now wont to call themselves and each other, commit suicide.

“Chief!” ululated Daed in a Cerberus-like howl, three-headed in its volume and ferocity as if it came fiery-straight from the depths of hell.

## News from Easteria: Still the #1 Blog

Who? The 10,000 Lambshire Festival Volunteers. What? Just handed out half a million SSTs. What? Free SSTs! Where? Lambshire. When? Just after the opening ceremony for the First Annual Lambshire Music and Film and Reality Television Festival. Why? It's the newest hallucinogenic word on the market and all the cool words are talking about it. How? Each volunteer hands out five hundred SSTs to five hundred of us young and beautiful words.

Word of the Day: famechoir - v. to proclaim falsely that you or someone you know is world famous

#1 Word: Chlamydio, Clap & Crab (CCC)

#1 Word: Don't Say I Never Gave You Nothin' by Chlamydio, Clap & Crab (CCC)

#2 Word: Xyl 'em and Phlo 'em by Ein Steinway

#3 Word: Yo Mole is My Beauty Mark by Kleenexa and Baby Wype

#4 Word: See Me, Hear Me, Don't Touch Me by Videa and Telephony

#5 Word: Music Paid for My Pool by Generatalia

#6 Word: Touring is Boring by Tel and Strat

#1 Words: Five and Ten minus Five

#1 Hallucinogenic Word: SST

#1 Contagious Word: STD

#1 Emergency Word: A tie between SOS and 911

#1 United Words Abbreviation: SD

#1 Universal Abbreviation for a No-good Word of a Word: SOB

All hands on deck, which only accounted for Daed, the chief, and C.C., since the five Lambshire constables (three men and two women) were off duty and more in the age range and aesthetic to have actually attended the festival as paying customers and even potentially enjoyed it. They, like the chief and C.C. and all the regional constabulary police officers, were substituted out for the summer solstice weekend by at least ten thousand festival volunteers, all of whom were touted to have been trained in CPR.

Upon first glance and one glance beholding sufficient horror for the length of a lifetime, the eerie stillness of that square-mile sculpture of human bodies reminded Daed of nothing he had ever seen or darkly imagined. A dead silence of this sort was not the same welcoming soundlessness that came customarily at sunrise and at midnight and into the quieted chambers of contemplation and, in Daed's poetic case, through perennial composition. He did want the music to stop or simply to soften its edges, but this was not an appropriate or acceptable reply to one man's plea for less noise pollution. A nap had amply done the bidding for Daed. Killing half a million messengers was not the same thing as eradicating the message, no matter its degree of cacophony.

Chief Noble put his arm around Daed, but said nothing. C.C. seemed to be studying the near and distant suicidal mounds scientifically, forensically, as if she would soon be asked to explain the possible cause of such an untimely and unprecedented loss of these young lives. Daed watched as the myriad of festival volunteers dotted the foreground and far Lambshire fields, knelt down beside each unfortunate attendee victim, and ostensibly checked inside his or her mouth.

"What are these workers doing out there?" asked Daed, mostly to himself.

C.C. volunteered for the indisposed volunteers, “It appears that they’re checking for signs of drug overdose. Opioids like Oxycontin and Vicodin and stimulants like Ritalin, Adderall, and methamphetamine can cause foaming of the mouth.”

“It wasn’t cyanide? It wasn’t intentional? It wasn’t ceremonial suicide?” Daed fired off in swift succession.

C.C. fielded for him, “We can’t quite rule it out, but we should let the volunteers do their work and hope that there are some survivors.”

“Bloody hell and bramble fire,” at last spoke the chief. He pulled his arm away from Daed’s shoulder and took command, “Something’s not quite right with these volunteers, Oversoul.”

“I agree, Chief,” said Daed.

C.C. did not agree. “We should let them do their work, stand clear.”

The chief continued unconvinced, “Who the dingle are these so-called volunteers with all this medical know-how, every last one? It’s like they were expecting a genocide or a mass suicide from the bloody start. I am now going off to volunteer my services to them. Oversoul, get out there and look for survivors.”

“Yes, sir.”

“I don’t think that’s a good idea,” cautioned C.C.

“No?” cautioned the chief in furious return. “How do you fancy this one? Get your medical kit and your right mind and your arse out in that apocalypse right bloody now!” C.C. obliged with a quick nod and retreat into the Lambshire police station. The chief watched her go. “What the damn-dingle was that about, eh? Something is definitely not quite right here, Oversoul, beyond the obvious, of course. I never have minded the shadows as much as I detest being in the dark.”

Daed meandered carefully, reverently around the contiguous forms and overlapping limbs of the lost young souls on this once elysian field turned to Lethe-like oblivion in the blink of an eye. Hell, he imagined, could not have been more gruesome a sight or concept in comparison to this Lambshire slaughter and soulless stacking of the carnage. Many of the dead were recognizable to Daed from his brief encounter with the pre-festival crowd on the eve of the summer solstice. No God would command such a sacrifice in ancient times, when blood was shed and young lives were offered up to pagan rites and ritualized calendar days. Summer had already come by the time the half a million sun and fun and loud-music worshipers were sacrificed on this unholy occasion. For what cause other than the solstitial or equinoctial cycle of existence would ancient tribes commit to human immolation? Only two, reasoned Daed. Greed and war.

“Hello, friend,” said a familiar voice. Daed turned around gingerly on his tip-toes to behold the most wonderfully shocking of sights – Winnay Le Poux.

“You’re alive!” blurted Daed in joyful surprise.

“Yes, I am,” said Winnay with his little lisp and his immense spirit, which seemed much more intact than when Daed last saw him. “It’s very nice to see you, too.” Winnay surveyed the grim Lambshire landscape and said, “This is not very good, is it?”

A hillock of bodies between them, Daed decided not to clutter the grave circumstance with any attempt to maneuver an embrace, especially with one as gargantuan and ungainly as Winnay. “No, it’s the very antithesis,” he said about ten feet from the recent acquaintance he felt in that moment to be his close friend. “What happened, Winnay? I wasn’t around to see any of it.”

Winnay recounted in his inimitable Winnay way, “I’m tellin’ you. This is not how you do it. My mama used to say, ‘Winnay, don’t do drugs. You already have all the medicine you need.’ So I don’t do drugs. Reality television is my recreational drug of choice, but Hissy and everybody, they do drugs for real and they don’t know how to do it. Don’t do it is how you do it.”

“Do you know what drug they took?”

“It’s called SST or somethin’. I don’t know what it stands for, but I didn’t understand a single word anyone was sayin’ today. The only word they were usin’ was the word word. Isn’t that why we have all these words? So we don’t keep sayin’ the same words over and over again? My mama said, ‘Winnay, stop sayin’ the same damn thing over and over again,’ and she said that to me all the time.”

“SST,” puzzled Daed. “Winnay, you really don’t know what SST stands for?”

Winnay gave it another high-school-drop-out try, “Uh...spit, uh...sweat...and somethin’.”

“Tears?” cried Daed. “Is SST spit, sweat, and tears? Is that it, Winnay?”

Winnay tried out the three successive words by mouthing them in order, then concurred, “Yes it is, friend. That’s how you do it.”

Daed pressed Winnay for more drug detail, “Did you see the pill or touch it? Was there a waxy coating on the SST?”

“I did and I did and I believe there was,” detailed Winnay.

“Wax, saliva, sweat, and tears, Winnay! That’s what nearly killed you. Don’t you remember?”

Winnay recalled, “Yes, I do. When God was talkin’ to me, he said, ‘Winnay, don’t do it. Don’t go spittin’ and sweatin’ and cryin’ by the light of a waxin’ or wanin’ moon. Do it in the light of day. That’s how you do it. I’m gonna show you.’



I didn't know what God meant and I, I still don't really know, but that's how you do it. You don't do it."

"Thank you, Winnay," said Daed affectionately ten feet away. "I have to go tell the chief about SST."

"What should I do, friend?" Winnay asked with the bluff sincerity of a child.

"Stay with Hissy Fit and your friends. Be with them when they come back."

Winnay smiled. "If Hissy Fit talks to God and finds out that it's a lot like talkin' to me, maybe she won't be so upset with me all the time and keep callin' me nothin' and nobody. God isn't nothin'. God isn't nobody. God is somethin' and somebody or somethin'. God knows how to do it." Daed reciprocated the smile and tiptoed away from Winnay with a sense of infinite hope, the kind that could raise the dead.

"I have the name of the drug, Chief. It's SST. I believe it's a synthetic amalgam of the saliva, sweat, tears, and melted wax that C.C. found on Otto's baking tray," shared Daed.

The chief gratefully nodded and then collaborated, "You'll never guess what company sponsored the Lambshire Music and Film and Reality Television Festival and loaned ten thousand of its research team as volunteers."

"GTE," guessed Daed. "Green Tooth Enterprises."

"GTE?" deflected the chief. "No, but I might have thought as much until I stepped over the corpse of its CEO, Allo C. McFoy. Can you believe a man of his age out in these fields with teens and twenty somethings, listening to that loud shite, shaking belt and shoes, popping pills?"

"Who then, Chief, if not GTE?"

Chief reported, "They're called Dead Ringer Cloning Services, DRCS. And to think it used to be that only the poor lived and worked in the shadows. You're not going to believe what these bloody faux festival volunteers do for a living?"

“Do they make dead clones of famous people?” asked Daed.

“Oversoul!”

“Yes, Chief?”

“How in damn or dingle did you arrive at that? Did you talk to one of the volunteers?”

Daed shook his head and offered what seemed to the chief like a far less likely alternative, “No, I just used my imagination.”

“What must it be like to live in that labyrinth brain of yours?” lent the chief, shaking his disbelieving head before continuing, “By the time I caught up with them, the volunteers had taken DNA samples from the half million for their research and were about to be off. It wasn’t exactly letter legal, but it was a bit late to stop them.”

“DNA samples, Chief?” probed Daed skeptically.

The chief deborped Daed’s probe, “Teeth, one tooth, really, to be more specific,” and immediately realized that he had been fooled by the faux festival volunteers. “Green Tooth Enterprises, Oversoul!”

“GTE,” collaborated Daed.

“We will hunt down every last tooth and volunteer, fight bloody tooth and nail to make this right, to honor the dead,” Chief Noble nobly stated.

“No need for that, Chief,” restated Daed. “We have the only tooth and volunteer we need in Allo C. McFoy.”

“But he’s dead, Oversoul. I just saw him in the heap.”

Daed assured, “He’s not dead, Chief. He’s just talking to Winnay Le Poux, I mean, God.”

“What and words, Oversoul?”

Daed explained himself: “We don’t have much time, but, if you want to hunt someone down to make this right, I think you’ll be able to find her in the morgue and very much alive.”

“C.C.,” answered the chief for himself. “I’ll be damned and dinged.”

“She must either be on GTE’s greenmail list or be working for them,” deduced Daed. “Either way, she’ll be a murderess if any one of the half million dies.”

“All these pounds of flesh for paltry pounds, Oversoul,” the chief decried. “I say to you, I can’t bear the world enough to be bloody without it nor it to be bloody without me.” Daed understood the chief’s sentiment quite well and could only concur.

“Tooth and nail, Chief. Bloody tooth and nail.”

Zoe appeared then as a vision of Eurydice in the underworld to Daed as she crossed the street with delicate foot calculations to avoid disturbing the peace of the dead at her feet. “I came as soon as I heard,” she said in a whisper as if the dead were bothered to hear her. Daed did not dismiss this chance to embrace life and the living amid such an overdose of death and the dead as he had done with Winnay. He met Zoe at the edge of Lambshire Hades and, in an Orpheus-like fashion, he took hold of his Eurydice and willed the mythic chance to free them both from death’s door. They kissed and Daed felt nothing but the full breath of life within him, his own soul scarcely able to bear the weight of his love for her enough to be without it.

Daed’s next act of love was more Platonic than Orphean, but no less mythic or intimate. It involved words, and although the word word did not mean every possible thing under the sun to Daed as it did recently to some if not all of the deceased young people around him, words were everything to him. He and Zoe navigated the aisleless, corporal, unseated outdoor amphitheater to the festival main stage. They sat up onstage together in front of a microphone and held hands as Daed recited the past year’s worth of his poems, A - Z, poems that no one had ever read or heard. He

recited them by rote, but it was more that these poems, like all of Daed's poetry, had somehow always been written on his heart, his palette-eidetic heart. His hope was that this mass accidental suicide could be made more about words than about one word, greed. He hoped that all half a million of God's summer solstice visitors would return to Lambshire from paradise and take God's words to heart. Was it too much to hope that these five hundred thousand young people would hear God say, "That's not how you do it. I'm gonna show you how to do it," watch God do it, and then do likewise? Daed thought not.

## News from Europa: Still the #1 Blog

Who? Half a million Lambshire festival goers and performers. What? Just came back from the dead after taking SSTs. What? And they all talked to God. What? And everyone lived happily ever after, I think, I hope. Where? Lambshire and Paradise. When? Friday, June 21st, the summer solstice 2019. Why? God had a special, secret message for all five hundred thousand of us. God said (paraphrased), “That’s a really, really, really like very nice try, but it’s not how you like do it, you know? I’m really, really, really like going to show you how to do it, like you know?” How? Drugs work in really, really, really mysterious ways and so does God.

Word of the Day: clampire - n. (slang) working class citizens of Atlantis who were often employed as bodyguards (the mussel) for the ruling class.

#1 Band: Spit, Sweat, Tears (SST) & Chap Sticky

#1 Song: Word Meant Everything to Me by Spit, Sweat, Tears (SST) & Chap Sticky

#2 Song: Don’t Say I Never Gave You Nothin’ by Chlamydio, Clap & Crab (CCC)

#3 Song: Xyl ‘em and Phlo ‘em by Ein Steinway

#4 Song: Yo Mole is My Beauty Mark by Kleenexa and Baby Wype

#5 Song: See Me, Hear Me, Don’t Touch Me by Videa and Telephony

#6 Song: Music Paid for My Pool by Generatalia

#1 Numbers: Six and One Half Dozen

#1 Higher Power: God

#1 Pet: God in reverse

#1 Acronym: GOD

Lambshire, despite having distinguished itself from its neighboring shires as the first to boast unisex jail cells, UFO and unicorn sightings, and the only shire to have a legitimate 5th century claim on the English language as its official birthplace, gained further recent renown as it garnered several new world records: 1. Largest music and film and reality television festival. 2. Highest temporary per capita rate of teen suicide. 3. Most resurrections at a non-religious event. 4. Most tooth extractions at a non-Dental Association event. 5. Longest and loudest chant at a music festival (Videa and Telephony). 6. Tallest and shortest performers at a music festival (Ein Steinway and Britannia, Americana, Equatoria, Austra, Easteria, Europa, and Borealia Generatalia). 7. Most consistent claims of God's true nature - 499,832 claims: (Paraphrased) God is very nice, but seems to think that I don't know how to do it and then shows me how to do it and then tells me that that's how you do it. Although not a big enough number to make for a new world record certainly, since the international music festival mortality rate was 3.7 per 100,000 attendees, the final death toll (after 499,833 deaths and 499,832 resurrections) at the First Annual Lambshire Music and Film and Reality Television Festival still shook the earth beneath Daed Oversoul, Chief Noble, and C.C.'s feet.

"C.C., I am placing you under arrest for the murder of Allo C. McFoy," announced the chief and then he turned to Daed and commented, "I think you're pretty jailsafe and free to go flatside, right?"

"I'm sorry, Chief. I was sure that Allo had set this whole maniacal machination in motion."

Chief commented again, "As always, alliteration and admirable admission of one's actions, Oversoul." Daed nodded acknowledgment of the chief's praise and reciprocal alliteration.

C.C. came to her own defense, “I know what this looks like.”

“Do you now? Then tell us, C.C., what does it look like?” commanded the chief.

“It’s like I’m in cahoots, as the Americans say, with GTE and the ten thousand festival volunteers,” she began and hastily continued, “Like I’m a mad scientist who makes hallucinogens out of bodily secretions and petroleum wax and also a sadistic tooth fairy who takes your tooth, but then, instead of leaving a bob or a quid under your pillow, greenmails you for your entire life fortune. It’s like I’m a murderer and a necrophiliac.”

“A what?” the chief questioned, well aware of the meaning of the word necrophiliac and quite cognizant that he was standing in a morgue.

“Which part?” C.C. questioned back.

“The part where you claim to look like a necrophiliac, that’s which bloody part.”

“Oh, that old thing,” she dismissed. “None of that really matters anymore, since Allo McFoy is dead, right?”

“None of what really matters?” prodded the chief.

Abashed, C.C. bemoaned, “Well, it’s not my proudest moment and, unfortunately, not my most private one, which it ideally should have been. Call it what you will, closet zoophilia or latent animal instincts, but really, if I’m honest, it should never have happened at all.

“Tell me what it is that happened, C.C., for your own sake,” ordered the chief.

“C.C., does it have something to do with Otto Philia?” Daed chimed in.

“It does. How did you know?”

The chief apprised, pointing to Daed, “He’s on a bloody roll, this one: imagination, intuition, ESP, whatever you want to call it.”

“What happened with Otto Philia, C.C.?” asked Daed.

C.C. sighed before recounting, “Right. It’s unprofessional, I know, but I was a wee bit curious about the size of his...you know, the movie star and the bad boy and all of that, and there he was on the table and in no way did he disappoint in the flesh, if you know what I mean.” The chief and Daed nodded that they knew exactly what she meant. “But it wasn’t normal genitalia. I mean, it was a...you know, but, if I’m honest, it wasn’t really that human-like. It was more horse than human in its form.”

“What did you do after qualifying his, it as equine?” galloped the chief.

“The wrong, wrongest thing,” C.C. admitted. “I touched it, but, more than that, I fondled, I stroked, I...”

“You didn’t,” the chief hoped.

C.C. hung her head. “No, but I did and I immediately washed my mouth out with soap for penance. Only hours later, when I received my first greenmail phone message, did I realize that my every move, my every shameful, sex-starved move was being monitored by none other than Green Tooth Enterprises and that voyeur monster Allo C. McFoy.”

The chief relented with only one more question: “How many teeth do you have, C.C.?”

C.C. wryly smiled through her reply, knowing that it was an incriminating one, “All twenty-eight. Can you believe that I gave Allo McFoy my only wisdom tooth? Not wise, not wise at all.” she said in self-counsel.

“Thank you, C.C. I retract my arrest and expect McFoy’s autopsy report on my desk within the hour.”

“Will do. And thank you for giving me a fair listen. It must have been quite difficult for you to hear a woman speak so openly about sex. I know how old-fashioned you are, Chief Noble,” she remarked as she began to remove the clothes



from Allo McFoy's dead body with the help of a pair of surgical scissors.

The old-fashioned chief resorted to his old habits of retort, "What and words, C.C. It's all just what and words." With that the chief turned to leave and Daed followed him out the door.

"Wait!" neighed C.C. before the chief and Daed made it too far down the basement hallway and out of earshot. "We have another horse in the house." C.C. took the rare phallic opportunity in hand and neighed for real this time, showing off her remarkable equus impressionem.

The First Annual Lambshire Music and Film and Reality Television Festival did not miss another proverbial beat after all but one of those in attendance were resurrected. A murder, the near mass suicide of half a million concert-goers, not to mention the loss of a tooth each, wouldn't have kept Woodstock from trudging on in the late August rain and mud of 1969 and, therefore, Lambshire would not bow out at the summer solstice of 2019, almost exactly fifty years later, nor would it bow down to anything less than loud music, loud films, and really loud reality television.

Daed's hope that the resurrected Lambshire young generation representatives would hearken to the voice of God and pay close heed to God's actions and then speak and do likewise was fulfilled. Apparently, God told them all how to do it and showed them how to do it and, as it turned out, how to do it just happened to look a lot like how all of them did it before they died and talked to God. Two exceptions seemed to break the undetectable new rule of God and creation: the tallest and the smallest of the young generation of Pop stars, Ein Steinway and Generatalia. They wrote letters to Daed and as the longest day of the year at last neared its end, he opted to shift his attention from the two recently deceased Lambshire men with identical Horseshire-like hanging

members to two handwritten letters that he received from the chief along with the chief's comment, "Does this feel to you like the longest bloody day of the century?" It was indeed the longest day of the century, of any century, but not for any other reason than it being the summer solstice, the longest day of every year.

Dear Mr. Oversoul,

When I was talking to God earlier today, I heard some special words that weren't God's and some special words that weren't mine, but I didn't think it was possible for me to hear anyone else say anything so special. God is very tall and has an elephant's trunk and ears and tree bark for skin. He said, "Ein, you are beloved and you're a fine piano player, but you're not doing it right. I'm here to show you how to do it." Then he leaned down and wrapped me up in his big ears and said, "Your ears are your voice. Listen to your ears." I think I know what God meant, but I wanted to ask you because you're a famous poet and you probably know something about words. Did God mean that words are like music? That they come from a place inside us, not just from a book?

I don't know why, but God wanted me to tell you that it was my adhesive bandage on Otto Philia's front door, not Ban Daid's. Sometimes I forget that I'm almost eight feet tall and don't always make it through a doorway without knocking myself out. After I visited Otto's house, I left the bloody adhesive bandage on his front door to let him know that he needed to raise the door frame if he wanted me to come visit him again. It wasn't very nice as God and my good friend Winnay Le Poux would say.

*OVERSOUL – The Poet Policeman of Lambshire*

Those other words I heard when I was talking to God made it hard for me to leave. I only wanted to be near those words. I hope you get out of jail soon.

Eighty-Eightly Yours,  
Ein Steinway

Dear Ein,

Thank you for your letter, your confession, and the wondrous report of your recent encounter with God. I'm so glad that you are alive and that you are here in Lambshire to share your musical gifts with us.

Regarding the meaning of God's words to you about ears being your voice, your interpretation seems true. Words, I agree, are like music; they live most of their life in silence save the moments when we open our ears to them and let them speak through us.

Good travels and grandest songs to you.  
- Daed Oversoul

The second letter to Daed was from all seven Generatalia sisters and they wrote the way they sang, in unison:

Dear Mr. Oversoul,

We are Generatalia and we used to think that we were really special because we were just like the seven dwarfs from that fairy tale that none of us can ever remember the name of, but we're sexier than they are and we wrote three of our own songs and we tour with our own band and we have our own blogs. It's not that we don't think we're really special anymore, it's that God talked to us and we didn't even believe in God before and God said, "Britannia, Americana, Equatoria, Austra, Easteria, Europa, Borealia, I love you all very much, but you're not doing it right. I'm now going to

show you how to do it.” And then God said nothing and did nothing, just smiled. All seven of God’s mouths were smiling and saying nothing.

Austra said, “Good day, mate!”

Then Americana said, “Howdy!”

And then Borealia said, “How’s the weather?”

And Britannia said, “Cheers!”

Easteria said, “Hi!”

Equatoria said, “Hola!”

And Europa said, “Ciao!”

And what did that really, really short, seven-headed God say? Nothing. But then we heard some words that weren’t coming from God’s mouths and they made us cry. Why? Words never made us cry before? Puppies, kittens, pools, clothes, shoes, #1 rankings, french fries: they made us cry. Do you have any idea why these words made us cry? We as journalists really want to know and we think that you can help us. Thank you for helping us. Also, please say, ‘Good day, Howdy, How’s the weather?, Cheers, Hi, Hola, and Ciao’ to Zoe. She sends us our words of the day and we love the two of you together.

Love, love, love, love, love, love, love,

Britannia, Americana, Equatoria, Austra, Easteria, Europa, and Borealia

Dear Britannia, Americana, Equatoria, Austra, Easteria, Europa, and Borealia,

Thank you for writing and for including me in your silent encounter with God. God sounds like a being I would like to know. Regarding your question: Why did you cry when you heard the words?, it’s not such a straightforward journalist’s question, is it? It sounds more like the wonder of a true seeker or seven true

seekers. Words are like puppies and kittens and pools and clothes and shoes and acclamation and french fries in that they move us most when they are closest to us. They are no different than your seven exotic names; they are yours, part of you and partly who you are. I often weep over words, just like you did when you were with God, because they not only look and sound like paradise, they also feel unlike anything in the whole world.

I hope these words prove helpful to you on your seven amazing journeys.

-Daed Oversoul

“Oh, there you are,” said Zoe to Daed within their familiar, jail-cell, romantic arrangement. “Why are you still down here? Isn’t Allo McFoy dead? Aren’t you and my father now both free? Oh, I can’t believe it’s over.”

Daed stayed seated on his cot, stuffed and licked the envelope for his letter to Generatalia. “You didn’t tell me that you knew the seven Generatalia sisters.”

Zoe answered straight and true, “It’s a creative outlet for me to write their words of the day and I also somehow believe in them. I’m not saying that I wouldn’t trade my word-of-the-day writer post for just one of their conversations with God.”

“According to them, Zoe, it was just one group conversion and it was silent and, I don’t want to ruin it for you, but, God is a seven-headed dwarf.” Zoe laughed out loud and then covered her mouth abashedly.

“There will be no meeting with God for you, Miss Zoe Word,” she said with a crooked, pointed index finger like a magisterial marm.

Daed accorded, “They are genuine, Generatalia, not musical or original, but genuine. He then took a long breath, set aside his two sealed letters, and made room for Zoe on the

cell cot, beckoned her with a light pat upon the thin mattress. She jauntily joined him, nestled her hip next to his.

And she joked, “So, what do you fancy us doing when you get out or was this just a prison fantasy after all?” Daed looked at her quite soberly. “What? What is it, Daed?” she poured of her own sobriety.

Daed hemmed and hawed, but what kept him most from asking Zoe his question directly was that its content reminded him of some of the raunchiness of the duo Hem and Haw’s comically lewd subject matter, but not even as amusing as that. He dared himself, “Did...?”

“Did what?” Zoe aided curiously.

Daed did his best to let go of his incidental inhibitions, “Was...Otto...built..more like a horse than a man below his waist?” Zoe bucked in laughter.

She comforted Daed before knowing or caring why he was saying such a thing, “Believe me, you are a bigger man than Otto Philia in every possible way.”

“No, no, no, Zoe, this isn’t about me,” he rushed in to explain, “This is forensic and bizarre and could be one of the critical missing pieces of the puzzle.”

“What is?” she pleaded.

Daed vouchsafed, “C.C. our coroner performed Otto’s autopsy and her report described him in medical parlance as hung like a horse, but not proverbially, actually hung...like...a...horse. Does that sound genitally correct to you?”

Zoe gave it care but no thought. “No, Daed. Not in the least. And that is my final answer,” she tagged in mock game-show lingo.

What could ensue from a lovers’ dialogue of this eccentric nature was anybody’s guess, but neither Daed or Zoe could have come close to predicting the words that would follow

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their arrival at the truth about Otto Philia's conflicted genitalia.

“Wha’ up, Canine? Wha’ up, Missus?” said Otto Philia to a dumbfounded Daed and a zombie-like Zoe. “The chief sen’ me down. I though’ abou’ writing you both a letter abou’ me faking me own death, bu’ I never wro’ a letter before.”

## News from Borealia: Still the #1 Blog

Who? Otto Philia. What? Was believed to be dead. What? But it was really his dead clone. What? Then he really died when he took the SST at the Lambshire Music and Film and Reality Television Festival. What? Then he talked to God and came back to life like the rest of us. Where? Lambshire. When? June 2019. Why? Otto wanted to get out of the movie business while he was still on top and not yet forced to play corpses and people in comas like some of his older actor colleagues. How? God put it best: “Righ’. A good death scene takes a lo’ of practice. Do you know wha’ I mean? I’m gonna show you how to do i’.”

Word of the Day: glamshear - n. 1. (literally) a stylish method of shearing sheep for appearance only 2. (a little less literally) a vain, showy presentation of yourself or your pets or your livestock

#1 Band: Ban Daid with Inertia, Dear John and Jane Doe, Tel and Strat, Musey, Ein Steinway, Kleenexa and Baby Wype, Videa and Telephony, SST, Chap Sticky, Chlamydio, Clap & Crab, Pop Tart, and Generatalia

#1 Song: Ban 8:32 by Ban Daid

#1 Summer Festival: Lambshire Music and Film and Reality Television Festival

#1 Number: ∞

#1 Film: Lambshire 2019 – A Life-and-Death Documentary

#1 Reality Television Show: A tie between Oversoul and Shocking Afterlife Experiences of Famous People starring Hissy Fit, Winnay Le Poux, and Otto Philia

#1 Shire: Lambshire, not to be confused with Netherlambshire, which is nearby



According to Otto Philia, when choosing a clone like someone might choose a coffin, there were different models with varying upgrades available. Dead Ringer Cloning Services had three options for their elite clientele and to each dead clone model a mythic name was assigned. For those who favored the lowest rate and who also wanted to be remembered much as they were, albeit with a few moles removed, some stretch marks smoothed out, and facial lines softened, there was the Leda for women and the Adonis for men. If an upgrade of beauty and respective breast/genital (women) and hair/genital (men) overhaul was desired and the cost was still somewhat of a consideration, there was the Hera for women and the Zeus for men. But if long-lived, legendary status was the life goal of the dead clone that had to be achieved, initiated at one's autopsy and sealed by the coroner's report, then nothing but the Venus would do for the women and nothing could compare to the Pegasus for the men. Otto, of course, chose the Pegasus model, which featured most of the Adonis and Zeus body touch-ups, but offered a unique, grotesque, equine exception to the customary rule of men and even that of gods. Despite DRCS not quite having reached Frankenstein-like regenerative clout, with their clones walking the streets of the earth instead of going almost unceremoniously from the cradle to the grave, they did have an exceptional staff of genetic engineers, who were able to transform, transmute, and transmogrify fact into fiction, life into legend, man or woman into myth.

It was curious to Daed that both Otto Philia and Allo C. McFoy chose the Pegasus. Which man among men would choose the Adonis or the Zeus, if he had the ample means to do otherwise? What would he himself choose, Daed wondered, if for some insane reason he needed to feign death and leave behind a cloned simulacrum of himself? He knew in his heart that he would choose the base model Adonis and

even forgo the posthumous beautification process in favor of a forgery in the flesh that looked exactly like the original. Honesty was confirmedly one of Daed's virtues and one of his two reasons not to choose the Zeus or Pegasus model clone in his imagination. The other reason was that, even if he wanted to be remembered (and he did not put much stock in immortality), it would ideally be for his words and his spirit, not his flesh and bones.

Daed's little Lambshire flat felt palatial on that Saturday morning. Having made love to Zoe for the first time at the end of the longest day of the year and woken up next to her made him and his modest world seem rather royal. Zoe, grand as she was, belonged everywhere she went, most evidenced by her tenure in her marriage with Otto Philia. She had the gift of human diageotropism, as Daed saw it. Diageotropism meant the tropistic tendency of growing organs (such as branches, rhizomes, or roots) to assume a position with the axis at a right angle to the line of gravity. More simply put, Zoe was tree-like in her ability to withstand life's winds and the weight that gravity placed on those who approached all things and all people with open arms. While he lay with her in his narrow bed, within his humble flat, Daed composed a poem in his head and heart, his first ever to make titular use of the last letter of the alphabet - Zoe. Daed could now truly mean it whenever he proposed a recitation of his poems, A - Z, as he had the previous afternoon at the Lambshire Music and Film and Reality Television Festival. He wondered if his recited poems were the special words to which Ein Steinway referred in his letter, the words that made the Generatalia sisters cry? Could his poetry really have reached the vault of the firmament and audibly grasped God? Daed seemed to be reversing Ein Steinway's heavenly description of the ears being the voice. Were words ears, mused Daed? Was poetry the way he listened best to others,

how he heard God and how he understood that heaven could be made on earth with words? The word ultrasound, meaning vibrations of the same physical nature as sound but with frequencies above the range of human hearing, came to him and Daed ruminated on the notion of sound being used for sight like in a sonogram. Words, Daed determined at last, were not the clones of paradise, divine decoys to distract the mortal mind from earthy woe; they were the very soundstage of heaven. God was words. Daed kissed Zoe on the forehead and whispered to the ultrasound of her sleeping breath, “I must go.”

The First Annual Lambshire Music and Film and Reality Television Festival, now in its second day, blared and blinged on. Daed dodged the crowd and noise by daydreams alone, most of them coming by courtesy of a carnal carnival of a night in Zoe’s arms. Though not nearly as dizzying and delightful as the original experience, the sweet souvenirs of the first night of summer were still more than enough of a distraction to get Daed from A to B and into the forensic company of C.C. without having to suffer direct sensibility assault.

“Good morning, C.C.,” said Daed with a smile as wide as a Caesarean-section scar.

C.C. noticed Daed’s subrisiveness right away. “Someone here got a lot luckier than I did last night, if you know what I mean.”

“I didn’t intend to kiss and tell,” said Daed with no noticeable change in the breadth of his smile.

C.C. considered, “if only sex came in pill form. They have pills that can stop a pregnancy and pills that can take your mind off of sex, and there’s even a pill that can get you a private sit-down with God. Why not a sex pill?”

Daed suggested, “You came up with SST, didn’t you?” C.C. nodded somewhat abashedly, winced. “Why don’t you invent

this sex pill?” She then tapped her mouth with an index finger and seriously considered the prospect.

“Will do.”

“The chief asked about Allo McFoy’s clone’s tooth,” imparted Daed and asked, “Have you been able to isolate the frequencies and access any satellite sound or video images of him?”

“He’s off the grid,” C.C. reported. “Not a peep from our peeper.”

“I wonder why?” puzzled Daed. “Hasn’t he just secured a half million new greenmail targets? Even if he stepped back from the front line and let his staff do his dirty work, why would he disappear? His company is wireless, but he’s not. He’s a man-made creature, a marionette.”

“I’ll keep peeping.”

“Thank you, C.C. I’ll let the chief know that McFoy is lying low.”

Chief Noble got the Cockney word from the resurrected and somewhat reformed Otto Philia that Rugo the dog was now the chief’s to keep. This news further lengthened the longest day of the year for the widowed chief, who stayed up most of the night building an old-fashioned dog house for his new life companion.

“Where the dingle is he, this damn McFoy?” was the chief’s somewhat predictable response to Daed’s report about McFoy’s tooth and him missing in action.

“Why would he disappear, Chief? Do you think he knows that we have his tooth? He’s well aware that we have his technology, since we have C.C., the woman who invented CCTV and SST for him.”

“What about this Dead Ringer clone company, Oversoul?” proposed the chief. “How did ten thousand festival volunteers who work for this DR...”

“CS.”

“Right.” He continued, “How did they just happen to have one of their clones in the crowd and how is it that this clone just happens to be Allo McFoy? Coincidence is just bad bloody liar sometimes.”

Daed distilled, “You think McFoy owns both companies.”

“I’d bet a back molar on it.”

The phone on the chief’s desk rang and the chief answered it. Daed watched and listened from his chair across from the ensuing conversation as half of the telephone exchange made it perfectly clear that Allo C. McFoy was still in shady business, somehow off-grid, but still greenmailing his clients. The call was from Truth Bertholdt and, from what Daed could discern, she and her boyfriend Hinter von Netherlamb were being greenmailed for something having to do with Hinter’s invention, the hinternet. Chief later explained with difficulty that McFoy was using some of the prototype trials against Hinter and Truth, who were filmed engaging with trial volunteers in the act of aggressive sexual innuendo. The video clips unfortunately captured damning footage from the time just before the hinternet had been tweaked enough to prevent the innuendos from escalating into overt and criminal sexual harassment. McFoy threatened to use the hinternet videos to discredit von Netherlamb’s invention and to show the world how obscene an out-of-context depiction of a person could be. Only pounds that the two did not have to give in German flesh or English currency could make this potential public shaming go away. And adding video insult to video injury were private, nude hinternet trials involving just the two of them that made even the proud Deutschland native couple themselves cringe.

“Is it new, cutting-edge technology that’s allowing him to stay his crooked course and not be detected?” hypothesized Daed.

“Oversoul, I’m not a short bloke,” admitted the chief, “but this ceiling is way beyond my head and hand.”

“Head and hand,” said Daed to himself. “Head and hand. That’s it, Chief.”

“What and words, Oversoul?”

Daed deduced, “The Pegasus clone model that Otto ordered and we think McFoy ordered has most of the cosmetic embellishments that the Adonis and Zeus models have.

“Right.”

“This surface beautification, the genetic removal of moles and lines and the addition or subtraction of hair, is reserved almost entirely for the head and hands, the parts of the body most consistently exposed to eyes and elements. Did you see McFoy’s face and hands, Chief?” The chief nodded.

“A face only a mother could love,” the chief recalled. “I don’t remember his hands much.”

“I do,” said Daed. “They were hairy hands.”

The chief pieced it, “Hairy hands and a balding scalp mean mortality to a man, not a bloody flying horse,” then he solved the puzzle, “McFoy is dead.”

The chief and Daed arrived at the Word estate and were let in by Alma McFoy, Allo’s bereaved mother. “Our condolences, ma’am, for the death of your son,” lent the chief.

“Aye, he was a smart lad and a good lad, but life smarts for the good,” replied Alma in proverbial Scottish. “Sir Frisbee is waitin’ in the drawin’ room for you.”

“Thank you, Mrs. McFoy,” said the chief. Alma turned to leave and the chief halted her with his corralling words, “Please join us. We are here to talk about your son with Lord Byword and also with you.”

Alma recoiled. “Oh, I don’t know. I’m just the cook. There’s no knowin’ more than the doin’ for me, lads.”

“Sir Frisbee would likely have it no other way, Mrs. McFoy,” coaxed Daed.

“Oh, alright then, if you’re gonna break me arm and kick in me teeth. Let me go grab the tea and alphabet biscuits.”

Lord Frisbee Byword seemed in good spirit, risen to his feet in greeting and in wait before his settee, smiling. “Chief Noble. Daedal Oversoul,” he formally welcomed.

“Good day, Sir Frisbee,” greeted the chief. Daedal smiled respectfully Sir Frisbee’s way. “We have invited your cook to join us, if that’s acceptable to you.”

“Sit,” succinctly worded the Lord of the house of Words. Daed and the chief obliged. “Daedal, my boy, you will be pleased to hear that word stock is down, in fact it has hit rock bottom, as the Americans are wont to say.”

Daed nodded. “It does please me to hear that, Sir Frisbee, as I’m sure it pleases you.”

“So,” excitedly began Lord Word, “You’ve cracked it. The cipher is decoded. The mystery is solved. The puzzle is complete. The truth is revealed.” Alma McFoy entered with a tea tray and set it down on the settee, began to pour tea for everyone. “Thank you, Alma.”

“You’re welcome, sir. Do you fancy one of your own alphabet biscuits, Mr. Oversoul?” asked Alma. “I deciphered your recipe with me trusty taster and Sir Frisbee doesn’t even know the difference. Am I right, Sir Frisbee?”

“You are indeed, Alma,” accorded Lord Byword.

“Yes, I would love an alphabet biscuit,” said Daed. Alma passed Daed the plate and he passed it to the chief who took an ‘e’, and then Daed took a ‘u’ for himself, before passing the plate back to Alma.

“It’s vowels today, consonants tomorrow,” Alma qualified of her offering in what might have been a Scottish saying or a remedial English teacher’s motto.

Sir Frisbee announced, “These good gentlemen are rasorial for worms, Alma, revving toward the talon clutch, chomping at the bit to tell us what happened to your son and who done it, if I might cite the good old American noir. What say you, gentlemen? Let us cut to the chase so to speak.”

The chief covered his mouth, led with a mouthful of sweet ‘e’, “Sir Frisbee, I am arresting you for the murder of Allo C. McFoy.”

Sir Frisbee easefully followed with a sip of tea and the incidental swallowing of the ‘S’ of his confession, “omeone needed to do something about that opprobrious scapegrace. And I did that very something. I do hereby and wholly confess to the murder of Allo Centric McFoy.

“Opprobrious scapegrace?” challenged Alma McFoy. “Allo was a great man. I should know, I raised him to be a great man like his father was a great man and his father before him was a great man, too.”

The chief swallowed the last of his biscuit and assuaged the madness of the tea party, “Mrs. McFoy, I think it’s best if we all hear Lord Byword out to the end. We may even let you strike him with your rolling pin before we lock him up.”

Alma was assuaged. “Oh, I don’t know if I’d strike him with me rollin’ pin. Maybe with the back of me hand the way a good mother should.”

“ord Word, please continue with the grim, dark details of this confession of yours,” said the chief, losing a capital ‘L’ on the lip of his teacup after sipping his tea.

“Yes,” complied Ord Word, “And I will now illustrate and enumerate my murderous methods: 1. I spoke ill of Allo Centric McFoy on all occasions. Harsh words indeed. 2. I never once laughed at his jokes or ceased in laughing at his hairy hands. 3. I strangled him in a crowd of dead teenagers and twenty-somethings and made it look like avant-garde CPR. 4. And I almost got away with it. If it hadn’t been for



you and your poet policeman, I'd be sipping cool drinks by an American pool, living out a noir American dream. Drat, as they say.

Alma stood up and proclaimed, "It's not true!"

Sir Frisbee consoled her, "I am so sorry, Alma. I hope your forgiveness will be vouchsafed mine someday."

"But it's not true what he's sayin'" she cried. "Allo wasn't strangled by Sir Frisbee. I should know, I'm the one who pinched his nose with me fingers and blocked his airway with me mouth, like a good mother should. It wasn't avant-garde CPR and SST that killed me son Allo, it was the Great Scottish Kiss of Death, GSKD. Have you heard of it?" The three men shook their heads in unison and utter ignorance that such Scottish lore existed. And there was more lore where that came from and it soon transmogrified into the stuff of Scottish legend, something about someone's great grandmother having barnyard relations with a horse and then bearing a son. "My son was a great man, a Shire stud of a man among wee ponies. Just like his father, he was good at settin' things up, but those witches of Scotland who blew the first fatal GSKDs knew that settin' up was for the lads and knockin' down was for lasses. Allo's work was done and all I needed from him was his ancient ancestor Old Hairy Hoof's superior DNA. Aye, I almost got away with it, didn't I? The chief, Daed, and Sir Frisbee nodded uniform assent. "Oh, I would have done, if I hadn't opened up me great, great grandmother Grendel's big mouth that she gave me. Me mum used to say to me, "Almanac Eidetica McFoy, you won't go hungry if you go to prison and you won't go hungry if you know how to cook. Aye, she'd be so proud of me if she knew I did both."

Chief Noble arrested her and drove Alma McFoy to her legendary life story's next and likely unbelievable, certainly custodial installment, locked her up and left her to the

strident, early-summer serenades of Ban Daid, Inertia, Dear John and Jane Doe, Tel and Strat (who decided to tour again), Musey, Ein Steinway, Kleenexa and Baby Wype, Videa and Telephony, SST, Chap Sticky, Chlamydio, Clap & Crab, Pop Tart, and Generatalia. The chief had his own legendary life story to continue and did so eagerly with the singular help of one leash, one wrinkly dog, and a sun that almost seemed to refuse to set.

“Are you a nictitator, my boy?” said Sir Frisbee to Daed.

“Is that even a word?”

“Of course it is, if I’m a Word and I’m saying it.”

Daed answered, “When a wink is called for, I hope that I will always wink, Lord Byword.”

“Oh, for heaven’s sake, Daedal, call me Frisbee.” Sir Frisbee explained himself, “I ask because I have never felt such an urge to nictitate.” Daed smiled.

“I feel it, too, Frisbee. I will wink with you.” Then they winked at each other and at the empty tea cups and leftover alphabet biscuits and at the curtains, the rugs, the walls, windows, doors, doorknobs, and ceiling.

Sir Frisbee chuckled. “Quite fun, isn’t it? To give life a wink. Maybe that is the high mark of this lifetime, to feel the urge to wink.”

Daed confided, “I feel another related urge that I’d like to share with you.”

“What urge is that, my boy?”

“It’s two-fold, Frisbee.”

“Dual tell then, Daedal.”

Daed twice told, “I wish to marry your daughter as soon as she is divorced and I wish to buy a word from you.”

The father of words himself answered swiftly, directly, “Yes and not for sale. But which one, may I ask, just for argument’s sake?”

“Word,” said Daed.

“The word word, you say?”

“Yes. And a hyphen.”

“A hyphen?” Then spun Sir Frisbee freely, “How much would you be willing to pay for this pithy assemblage of vowel and consonant, again just for argument’s sake? The hyphen is free.” Daed nodded gratefully.

“And for further argument’s sake,” said Daed, “what might be your asking price?”

The two then sat silently for a while within their hypothetical, single-word auction house, both delighted that the word word’s fate was in the balance between them and not for the real world to decide.

Lord Frisbee Byword stood suddenly and extended his hand to Daed. Daed rose to his feet and placed his hand firmly in Sir Frisbee’s. They shook on this agreement of theirs without words and sealed it with a slow, face-contorting wink. And as with such agreements between two men of letters as these there came immediate changes in the customary arrangement of life for both. This particular handshake meant a shared place of residence, the passing of an ancient torch, the love of a father for a son, and most unique to these two stewards of words, the word word between them, which would serve as their bond, their passion, and their family name.

Daed walked back to town from his new home and listened to the sound of his new name as it joined the other near half a million English words in his heart. Daedal Oversoul-Word was a mouthful, but like many wonderful foods for thought, it seemed worth the rumination. He met up with the chief briefly to say goodbye for a spell, until the next time the Lambshire police department required the specialized services of a poet policeman.

“You will be missed, Oversoul,” understated the chief.

“I’m sure it’ll be great to have things back to normal,” overstated Daed.

The chief sighed and smiled an only slightly world-weary smile for all the weltenschmerz that people like Allo C. McFoy and his mother can cause. “It’ll be great to have this bloody festival behind us, that’s for damn-dingle certain.” A prick of memory then struck him and the chief reached reflexively into his sport coat breast pocket to withdraw two letters, handed them over to Daed. “I almost forgot to pass these along. I believe one of them is from the queen.”

“Thank you, Chief.”

“Oversoul?”

“Yes, sir?”

“Have I ever asked you where you hail from?”

“I don’t think so, Chief.”

“Well, if it’s China and you’re soon off for a visit, you didn’t hear it from me that C.C. was forced to send another half million SSTs over there by either McFoy or his mother, this coming just before the Great Scottish Kiss of Death.” Daed laughed and wondered if there was a GTE or DRCS or even a GSKD office in China? “She told me that drugs are like ships; you’re meant to name them and that most scientists just name them after themselves, the lazy lot, and then add the date.”

Daed played drug nomenclator, “C.C. - 19?”

The chief corrected him only slightly, “Right, but it’s her full name, isn’t it? I don’t think I knew it before she told me today: Corona Covid.”

“She’s C.C. to me, Chief,” said Daed.

“So where is it that you’re from, Oversoul? Your accent, if I’m honest, is between shores twain.”

Daed answered as honestly as asked, “As of today, I’m from Lambshire and have been thus for more than fifteen-hundred years.”

“Right. That sounds a bit more than the usual what and words, Oversoul,” registered the chief. “Another time, perhaps, after you get settled in at the Word estate.” The chief winked at Daed and Daed, now quite practiced in the art of nictitation, winked back.

“You’re a damn-dingle of a detective, Chief Noble.”

“So are you, Oversoul. Godspeed, poet policeman of Lambshire,” bid the chief in his old-fashioned, noble way.

Daed had already decided the evening’s entertainment for his and Zoe’s picnic in Netherlambshire, which was just far enough below Lambshire to be out of festival earshot. After partaking of olives, cheeses, fruits, breads, meats, each other’s lips, and wine and after sampling Zoe’s newest word of the day: zoeoversoul – n. life at its fullest, Daed chose to read the two letters that the chief had handed him at their farewell-for-now back at the Lambshire police station. He gazed at Zoe and then he winked at her. She winked back at him and then let go a little childlike chortle.

“Oh, I’ve had this strange urge to wink all day,” she commented.

And Daed detnemmed, “So have I,” and then wondered if the word commented could be spelled backwards and used as a perfect, mirrored reciprocation for itself and, as ever, he wondered why he was thinking about such things.

Dear Friend,

Congratulations on winnin’ first prize at the Lambshire Festival Reality Television Contest. I won it, too, and it’s a very nice prize to share with a friend. Hissy Fit changed her name back to Missy Git and I told her that that’s how you do it. She and God spent a long time talkin’ about clothes and shoes and they decided that one of them had to go. Which one do you think she let go? It’s the shoes, if you didn’t guess.

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Missy is barefoot and I look pregnant or somethin' and I'm thinkin' about how much fun we had on your reality television show. I hope we meet again and get to have a long hug this time. Missy says I know how to do it when it comes to huggin'. Thank you for talkin' to me on the street after I talked to God.

- Winnay Le Poux

My Dearest Dearest Dear Daedal,

It has been brought to my attention recently that chivalry is all but dead. When did that misbegotten treaty get signed without my royal seal of approval, I ask? Queens are expected to act in a queenly fashion and knights, in a most chivalrous manner. But, lo, we haven't enough of either anymore in this kingdom and, so, I appeal to you, knight and poet, to mount your steed and ride off in quest of these lost qualities of queenliness and knightliness.

On another topic altogether, Lord Frisbee Word II of Lambshire has spoken of you with no less affection than a father speaks of a son. Be so kind as to marry his daughter and take his good family name. Alas, I was long past my nubile, fertile years when Frisbee and I frolicked during the seventies. Bestow upon him the divine grace of a good son and in so doing, dear Daedal, it shall be as if it were done unto me and the crown.

Toodle-oo,

Queen - E

## Ban 8:32

The truth will set you free. Die waarheid sal u vrymaak. E vërteta do të të çlirojë. እውነት ነፃ ያወጣችኋል. الحقيقة سوف تمنحك الحرية. Theշարսոսոթյոսնսը կազատի ձեզ. Həqiqət sizi azad edəcəkdir. Egiak aske utziko zaitu. Правда вызваліць вас. সত্য তোমাকে মুক্তি দিবে. Istina će vas osloboditi. Истината ще те освободи. La veritat et deixarà lliure. Ang kamatuoran magpagawas kanimo. Choonadi chidzakumasulani. 真相會讓你自由. A verità vi liberarà. Istina će te osloboditi. Pravda tě osvobodí. Sandheden vil sætte dig fri. De waarheid zal je bevrijden. La vero liberigos vin. Tõde vabastab sind. Ang katotohanan ay magpapalaya sa iyo. Totuus vapauttaa sinut. La vérité vous libèrera. De wierheid sil jo frijmeitsje. A verdade liberarache. სიბრტლეს გარდათავისუფლებს. Die Wahrheit wird dich frei machen. Η αλήθεια θα σας ελευθερώσει. सत्य तमने मुक्त करे। Verite a pral libere ou. Gaskiya zata 'yanta ka. Na ka 'oia'i'o e ho'oku'u iā 'oe. תאמתך תאזיבך. सत्य तुम्हें स्वतंत्र करेगा. Qhov tseeb yuav tso koj nyob ywj pheej. Az igazság szabaddá tesz. Sannleikurinn mun frelsa þig. Akpanikọ ayanam mbufọ ẹwọrọ ufun. Kebenaran akan membebaskanmu. Cuirfidh an fhírinne saor tú. La verità ti renderà libero. 眞実はあなたを自由にしよう. Bebener bakal mbebasake sampeyan. ಸತ್ಯವು ನಿಮ್ಮನ್ನು ಮುಕ್ತಗೊಳಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. Шындық сізді босатады. ကာကိန္ဒီဗညယဗျူဟာ မာနုဗေဒိကတ. Ukuri kuzakubohora. 진실은 당신을 자유롭게 할 것입니다. Rast dê we azad bike. Чындық сени бошотот. စာတုာရိယ ခုံစာတုာရိယဗိဇ္ဇာတုာရိယ. Veritas vos liberabit. Patiesība jūs atbrīvos. Tiesa išlaisvins tave. D'Wourecht wäert Iech fräi maachen. Вистината ќе ве ослободи. Hanafaka anao ny marina. Hanafaka anao ny marina. സത്യം നിങ്ങളെ സത്യത്തിൽനിന്നും. Il-verità tehliskek. Ma te pono e tuku kia wetekina koe. सत्य आपल्याला मुक्त करेल. Үнэн чамайг чөлөөлөх болно. သမ္မတရားသည်သင်တို့ကိုလွတ်လိမ့်မည်. सत्य तपाईं स्वतन्त्र हुनेछ. Sannheten vil sette deg fri. ସତ୍ୟ ଆପଣଙ୍କୁ ମୁକ୍ତ କରିବ । حقیقت به تاسو را آزاد خواهد کرد. Prawda cię wyzwoli. A verdade te libertará. सच तुम्हें आजाद करेगा. Adevarul te va elibera. Правда освободит тебя. O le mea moni o le a faasa'oloto oe.

Cuiridh an fhìrinn saor thu. Истина ће те ослободити. 'Nete e tla u lokolla. Chokwadi chichakusunungura. سچ. توکي آزاد. كندو. සත්යය ඔබව නිදහස් කරයි. Pravda ťa oslobodí. Resnica vas bo osvobodila. Runta ayaa ku xoreyn doonta. La verdad os hará libres. Kaleresan bakal ngabébaskeun anjeun. Ukweli utakuweka huru. Sanningen kommer befria dig. Хақиқат шуморо озод мекунад. உண்மை உங்களை விடுவிக்கும். Хакыйкаты сезне азат итәчәк. నిజం నీకు స్వేచ్ఛను ప్రసాదిస్తుంది. ความจริงจะทำให้คุณเป็นอิสระ. Gerçek seni özgür bırakacaktır. Hakikat sizi azat eder. Правда звільнить вас. سچائی تمہیں نجات دے گی. گپھہ قہقہہ ت. سچی تہ رکھنلککھ. ئېرېشتتوری. Sұ thät sě giái phóng bạn. Bydd y gwir yn eich rhyddhau chi. Inyaniso iya kunikhulula. דער אמת וועט מאַכן איר פריי. Otitq̄ yoo s̄o ɔ di ominira. Iqiniso lizokukhulula. The truth will set you free.