

THE CONSPIRACY

MY VERY OWN AND INTIMATE CONFESSIONAL

I am at this here chore because surely, people, we ought to deal with our sins. Yes, even we the immigrants who come to these shores for a fresh start. We ought to deal with them and in dealing with them, people, we ought to heed our preachers. Yeah, verily, the word goes. So there, you got to deal with yours, 'cos if you're an ordinary schmuck like me, believe me you have at least one cardinal one, and a few teeny bitsy ones. Sins, I mean. And then, in so doing you need to go heed yours, and I shall heed mine. Preachers, that is, as opposed to sins. Which I also could have meant given the syntax. But as it is, I meant that we deal with our sins and heed our preachers. Not the other way around, which I suppose is also ok to mean. I mean, it is ok to say heed the sins and deal with the preachers. If you're the devil, that is! Or a goody-two-shoes sinner heeding the black things whispering in your skull. However, I'm not the devil. Or that other thing, ok. And that's not what I said or what I meant. And since this is my thing, what I mean or what I say is what goes. Alright?

Now as heeding priests goes, I really can't go wrong heeding one in particular. Father Innokentii, the first sub-*diakon* of the Sofiiska Mitropolia, held bony-fingered court at the Eastern Orthodox Church of Saint Nikola the Gently Enthralled back in old Europe where my steady, uncluttered mother, a Communist half-Jewish person, took me thrice per year for "moral instruction."

Father, he put it well in that basso voce, in the superior tradition of fine Bulgarian bellowers, some of them having even graced the world operas, booming upon a flock of 13-year-olds like as from the bush, only a 6'10" sort of bush. "On pain of anathema, eternal roasting and the sundry

such hells you must never never never never indulge the wastage of spilled holiness, and by that I mean the holiness of fluid." I always counted them, the nevers, mostly four, but sometimes, when my nose told me Father had a few extra sips of them "spiritual medicaments for to better the worshiping drive," up to six or seven. The rest never changed. The hells, the spilled fluid. Oh, the spilled fluid! I hear it and I scratch my little teenage head and in this thinly mocking baritone of mine, the slightly thicker adult version of which you, my randy readers, will learn to let inside yourselves and trust, I wonder out loud to mama. Spilled what, he means? The water, the milk, the beans? The ink, I should have added but, hey, I came to the pen late in life. My mother, God bless her irony-free cerebellum, with mischief unencumbered, she purses her lips and, whether on account of dieting induced petulance or righteous ire, smacks me on the head. *Enfant terrible*, she says in chirping pompous French, the seed it is, the seed that shoots out when your pish-pish swells up. Don't they teach you anything at school! Yes, mama, and yes, Lord, that seed, that raring to gush, itching to spurt, retching to gain the cracks, *that* holy fluid!

And now, decades later, under the waxy little light, in my attic of a place, hunched over the papyrus like a medieval scribe, I am at this, you little leers of eyes, because I spilt it. Boy, did I ever spill it, the pisher juice. Yeah, I say unto thee, wasteful as all shit I spilt it. The semen, I speak of, ok! I wasted it and wanted to waste it even more. Oh, much more! It was never enough for me, the spilling. The surfaces for it, never enough. The cracks to squirt into, never enough. The crack owning, crack hiding, crack flaunting ones, the women, never enough! Why, the sly sentinels, to the last one, the lot of them, the mob of them that I was to have at, to master, oh the sundry forms of them, never sundry enough and that, why that's the whole point, isn't it. The women, the cracks, the injunction, and now finally, the biggest, most colossal point of it, the

Curse! I have done the lot of it and now I am stricken, mother, I am cursed, my Lord, the sacrificial block I feel under my lying head. Tight noose on my throat, compunctive phlegm inside, I feel, oh Father Inokentii. Noble gas of redemption raring to rise up in the chest and the Curse, the Curse above my head. Waste I cannot more, and yet I do, Lord, I do all the time, I can't stop it, I can't help it I am so greatly human, so clutteredly a man that my hand shakes to even think it. And now I'm spilling ink.

The point is this. The point is self-clashing, which I admit freely. For I spill ink not to spill the lot of it. I am at this here thing precisely because I can't spill no more and at the same time I have to spill, I have to do it this one last time to dam the further act. I must settle this colossal confusion, don't you see? By the page writing, give it shape and meaning. By the ink outpour, like the blood unpenned by skin, douse the world and let the evil plotters, yeah, the forces and arrangements working against us, let them know the cat is out, the pen is poised and their kingdom, yeah, it be tumbling down. And for you, my lusty innocents, for you to heed and stop flailing like numb lambs in the abattoir. Can you see it? Do you understand the pickle of it? The can't and the must of the thing? Well, you've read thus far and now you'll read further. I know it. Why? Because who in their right itching mind don't love a nice bout of *lascivia*, a tortured frantic confession of sins whispered, penned with the last blood redemptive.

You are seeing it now, yeah. I am here talking to you because I mean to tell you a huge, an overwhelmingly gargantuan secret. I am scared brainless to have to talk about it but I know it is my duty to do it. I am here to tell you and warn you of this secret at great personal cost. I say, a great personal cost and a peril to my limbs and body, nay, to my very life, direr than most of you

can imagine. What cost, what peril, you will need to arm yourself with reading time and patience to find out. Oh, and a dose of calm faith that to all this, which might seem at times unending drivel, then tickling invention on an old theme, and then a glorious puffery and the art of artful obfuscation, to all of it there is a point. For this confession is, as well, a didactic for the new age, yeah, a tale of woe and caution and I surely hope one rallying cry, one flag to wave and solemnly convene under for the sake of a resistance movement. Verily, I am here to tell you I am hard at work on this confession manifesto for your sakes, for the sake of this most limited of essences. Man.

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I am in deep water, my friends. Deep and muddied water. I am under a colossal cosmic shadow which I think follows me around everywhere I go. I must say it is not easy being under this colossal cosmic shadow. And it isn't even like a proper shadow for it is very hot under there, it is monumentally hot in this colossal cosmic shadow. You see, the thing of it is, it is a shadow, and that of said inordinate proportions, but it is concurrently a kind of glare, too. A vast universal glare, as though the mega mega mega mega wattage of the stars has gone and, on a whim, or is it a whim, turned and focused all on me, all for me. The shadow glare, you must see, is a most peculiar thing, a contradiction in effect but really a smooth and seamless thing in causal origin. For there is one thing, I'll tell you, questing minds, one thing that is both a shadow and a glare in all the right evil-connoting ways. One thing that is described snugly by both phenomena which you will plainly see to be the case soon as I say it. And really, do I need to be stating what should be obvious in the context of a mind like mine, disheveled like mine, and the lineage of facts

which I shall soon marshal? Yes, it is clear that only one abstract term unifies the two great opposites – the shadow and the glare. To put it simply and also in a catchy, what-an-ominous-beginning kind of way, for the past few months, why, for the past whole year, I'll have you know, I've had the distinct feeling that a cosmic conspiracy is afoot. And that, with a capital, yeah, very capital C, if you did not sense it already.

A Conspiracy, I give you. A scheme of grand devising has in the near past been set afoot. An unholy alliance, maybe even a holy one, who knows, for I have been a bit of an atheist for the past, oh, 30 years. A cabal of forces and arrangements and, I swear of late, individuals even, saturnine faces under lowered black umbrellas glaring at my middle parts, all manner of stranger, friend and that useful acquaintance that you keep around for real estate advice, personages all of the strangest order liable to exist only in such a city as this. Those figures in their sum arrayed in a ruthless phalanx like the inexorable physical law baked into this here cosmos long before I peeked out from the folded warmth of mama's privates, long before the bunch of high-Greek sounding monsters of the fossil record, and farther back the tiny goggle-eyed amphibians and then even father the little bacteria with that mystical, designer flagella, ever drew breath or whatever it is *eukariotics* do so that our learned goggled scientists can stroke their beards or whatever else they stroke to have their little fun and say: This here object is a living organism, and that there organ so arrayed as to be a central part thereof. And speaking of organs and such, here in my hand I hold this longness of mine, this hardness of mine, to wit an organ all my own. It, too, is living, yep, a living breathing, self-actuated thing, it is my, oh, not so little anymore, aren't you, my little putzik. Look at it, ladies and gents, a living one and self propelling, too. Madam, pray observe how it aims at you. But I digress, and maybe project a bit.

That law I told you about, for it is a law and a very physical one to boot, and not your rinky-dink, your soft, your tenuous social construction or some cockamamie psychological tendency, and yes, I know a thing when I see it, and this here I see is a goddam law of nature, laid into the fucking atoms and the dust and the whole of everything, that selfsame law, I am here to tell you, is a law designed to work its sinuous way into my world and my life and my goddam organ, my pen project, and that's a Latinate adjective in case you had filed me under Angry Malapropists, Petulant Émigré, Oily Giovanni the Don. But anyway, the law, the law of this Conspiracy, and now it's clear to me, now having lived under its shadow, this law, this despicable Conspiracy of all things, Opus Dei collect from the neighboring nebulae, is rather old, as old as the Pleistocene, and why stop there, for the law is ancient, all too ancient, nay it is beyond ancient. It is as old as the very Big Bang, I'll have you know. My God, can you imagine a bigger travesty, a more resonant slap in my privatized sex-crazed drooling satyr face, than the Big Bang, everybody! It all started in this colossal Bang and it all keeps going and going and going all on account of banging, right, all and sundry, high and low, Greek or Viennese, it's all one big bang to you, isn't it! Well, all except those tiny little ones, the *mitotics*, whatever they are, those that just split down the middle and, boom, there's two where one used to be, them asexual reproductants, my beloved melancholy brethren, my precious, my happy few. Well, you don't even know it, my innocents, since most of you are one-celled gunk of slime, is what you are! You can't commiserate with me, you ain't the friends of me, you are—

Anomaly. You are so, and so I am, too. You, the *Mitotics*, and I, the Mitotic. Poor Anomalies, we! And everybody else, the Normaly, mind you, all the other you's, the drooling readers, they

are all having a ball, eh, a bang they're having and a bang they've had since what, since the Big Bang itself! Which is when it all happened, this thing with the law I was telling you about. That much I know and I know it beyond certainty. I know it like you know it's time to visit the can, like the baby knows it's time to suck on the tit. I have intuited it in the old Biblical angelic sense. No, no, I am what I said I am. I am an atheist! I only read it as literature, the Bible, and you should try that sometime, it's a revelation. The Book and all the other little books, the Miltons and the Blakes, I read it all as literature, but I can't help feeling that we, yes, we, you and me, Anomalies and Normalies, all of us, are a tiny, tiny, one-celled bit like the fucking angels because of the things we just "know" and I don't mean knowing like we read about this thing or hear a fucking lecture about that other thing. How else do we just know all that, that shit about the can, and the tit, especially the tit, the tit calling for which I have not stopped listening, though I haven't been a babe many a decade. No, I mean we know these things the angelic way of knowing. Which is immediate and what else. Sudden, yes, sudden is what the knowing is, in the sense that there is no learning that precedes it. So, we really must be lower angels, don't you think? Halfbreeds, the lot of us, since we know like they know. Like angels who – so it's said – know about stuff like trees, planets, love, happiness, sex, yes sex even, if you made it this far it shouldn't shock you, just check that canto about Rafael, they know about stuff by simply entering it, by making themselves into gas – oh I wish I mastered that one, the places I could squeeze in - and penetrating the object of knowledge entirely. Yep, they go into the cracks of things and fill them up. Filling them up they become them! Alas, alas, alas, alas! They do it with trees, planets, love, the universe, man, the universe, and we can only heed the toilet fucking bowl, the scraping in the tummy, that crass shit. But here is the thing. Here it is. I am here at this chore of mine, yeah, I am here to tell that I've begun to know shit, other shit, higher, loftier, more

azure, that's what I'm trying to tell you, and it's not just in the up direction, no, sir. I am in the truth of many, many things, not just light empyrean, but dark, pernicious secrets, downward tending lodes of badness, places at the dawn of time, feelings none of us was meant to feel. I know more and more in that immediate angelic, or shall I say demonic! way, that's what I am doing talking to you. That's why I know what you're about to know, but you can only know it by reading and marveling, while I, why, I do not read about it, do not hear about it, do not smell of it. I AM IT. I know now more and more of the business of the universe and I don't like it. The lousy thing is that business of going into cracks I don't quite know how to know in the special way yet, though I know of cracks, and a many of them, too, I'd love filling. That filling part, oh, I've had miserable luck for the past year or so with it, well, except if you talk about that young philosopher chick, Philippa Podos-Hubre, who had the most gaseous mouth I had seen since the advent of amphetamines. Yes, you see it now, the wench had the perpetuum mobile of mouths, blabbing on and on about, to take the most incensing of examples, the notion that you can't really screw a young girl even if she'd consented to it because the notion of consent was corrupted with so young a person. Yep, that was Philippa in a nut, oh, how I wished her on a nut, a pair of nuts, to be precise. But she was a cocktease, all six feet two of her, and anyway I am getting way ahead of myself and her, too.

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“Gulce, have you met my friend who suffers for all humanity,” Andrew kneads gently the arm of a petite compact body, clad in black evening dress shrunk from the summer heat to barely

cover her hind globes. Or is that by design. “My little emigrant Greek Jesus,” Andrew points at me.

So, there you have it again. In case you forgot the very opening words of this here work. Those cute malapropisms, neologisms, misspellisms. Who else but a foreigner to say them. But so what! Someone’s got to keep your language fresh and moving somewheres. Yes, immigrant I am and for good reason. But you see how it’s all part of the cosmic plan, right. Stranger comes to town, town turns against stranger. I can’t have invented it better if it wasn’t a fact. Who needs writers with great fictions in their head when you have the overriding, natural law to manifest itself every day, in every fucking way.

“I’m not Greek. I’m Bulgarian.” I turn to Andrew surprised at his slip. His eyes narrow and freeze. He pats me on the shoulder. Whatever, the pat says, it’s all Greek to me. You’re all Greek to me, my pale Anomaly.

My mouth astounds even me as it finds space for air amid the drooling. Gulce stands five feet three, but all of it infinite pleasure. Her thighs soar like columns of crustless brie. Taut, yet jiggly, milky above all. On her chest, oh, have you ever seen Jell-o cased with clay. And a nipple in each mound!

“Hello, neighbor. I am Turkish” And there’s speech! Issuing from where? By the time I find her mouth it is drawn into a smile and thirty two gleaming rays brighten the room. Her hand drops discreetly palm down. Wipes the sweat off her skimpy dress. Aha, she is nervous at the sight of me. A good beginning. And now she is wet in all the right places. I consider telling her, but my friend speaks.

“Gulce is a painter. I collect her.” I can’t blame you. I would collect, too. The paintings, I mean. Who said that, me or Andrew?

“Very gifted she is. With hands, which-” Andrew's smile takes a millisecond too long to leave her dainty waist. Once on me it is a cold study. "I think is a gift you share. Ok, now with feeling. Gulce, meet my Bulgarian friend Pantaleimon.”