

Fourth Table, also known as the Bastard

I have settled down to the task of writing and have drawn up my chair to my table. My fourth table, aka the Bastard.

Caveat emptor.

Viruses are perfect parasites. It has been known for decades that once a virus gets inside a cell, it hijacks its genetic instructions. They rely on the cells of other organisms to survive and reproduce, because they can't capture or store energy themselves. In other words they can not function outside a host organism, which is why they are often regarded as non-being. Humans die. Pencils die. Apple MacBook Pro's die. Frogs die. Nail files die. Tickets die. Les statues meurent aussi. Viruses can't die, for the simple reason that they aren't alive in the first place. I've been living with an ancient virus in my lips: herpes simplex. I must have gotten it from my mother. It has the ability to persist in an inactive state for varying periods and then recur spontaneously after undefined stimuli associated with physical or emotional stress. It's just waiting for the right moment to pounce. So you see I'm a pillar of support for my herpes. I'm thin and tall. Think of my head as the capital, my torso as the shaft and my feet as the base of a column. I have shallow grooves running along my body. My fluted torso. Such a torso, being conscious merely of its own endeavor. They say bodies are built for motion not for stillness. I must stand up now. I have been stationary for a very long time. And this state of being reduces blood flow and the amount of oxygen entering my blood stream through my lungs. My capital and my shaft agree with my base for once. I stand up now. I can't dance with my capital and shaft alone. For truth to tell, my base dances with the backlit Magic Keyboard. The first position requires the feet to be flat on the floor and turned out. Yes, heels together, and toes going outwards. Now move into second position: The feet point in opposite directions, with heels spaced approximately twelve inches apart. For third position, start in first position. With your feet still facing opposite directions, slide one foot directly in front of the other. Touch the heel of your front foot to the instep of your back foot, and bring your front calf directly in front of your back calf. Fourth position: legs are both turned out equally, toes pointing away from the body, one leg directly in front of the other, about a foot and a half apart. I'm ready to pirouette.

I am a great gambler. I've always thought that roulette is for morons whereas poker is a game of skill. Poker players love to have regular sips from their favorite drinks while playing. The poker table is covered

with baize or speed cloth to help the cards slide easily across the surface. The color poker green with the hexadecimal color code #35654d is a medium dark shade of green-cyan. In the RGB color model #35654d is comprised of 20.78% red, 39.61% green and 30.2% blue. In the HSL color space #35654d has a hue of 150° (degrees), 31% saturation and 30% lightness. This color has an approximate wavelength of 518.57 nm. The edge of the table is usually padded and raised slightly for the players to rest their arms, and this section is called the "rail". There is often a section of wood between the rail and the playing surface; this is called the "race track" and often features cup holders as well. The cup holders are stainless steel, therefore, since it'd be pretty silly to let them get rusted from spilling drinks.

I walk into a dirty, dingy room that is sealed off with yellow police tape. Inside, a woman is lying dead on the floor. Other detectives who had examined the body before I arrived concluded the woman committed suicide based on their deductive reasoning. I think otherwise. I never use deductive reasoning to assist me. Instead, I use inductive reasoning. I observed the scene, noticed the ring on the fourth finger of her left hand had been recently removed while she wore all other kinds of jewelry. There was a distinct ring mark on her ring finger. Other detectives told me that they've found no ring so far even though they searched everywhere. People usually fail to notice things are in plain sight. I went through all her pockets and voilà there it is! Her wedding ring, 20 years old at least. There is an inscription on the back of the ring. Three letters A R T. What could it mean? What's A R T? Is she married to A R T? Where's A R T then? And why, why would she remove her wedding ring but nothing else? I know that objects tend to continue doing what they were already doing. If there were no external forces the wedding ring would not have been removed. Look around. We are in a painter's studio. Plaster écorchés stood about the room; and here and there, on shelves and tables, lay fragments of classical sculpture-torsos of antique goddesses. The walls were covered, from floor to ceiling, with countless sketches in charcoal, red chalk, or pen and ink. Canvases, overturned stools, flasks of oil, and essences, and the easel. Back to the question, what, or rather who, does she remove her wedding ring for? From whom she is hiding A R T whatever the fuck it means? Lovers? Is she having an ill-fated love affair? Is she cheating on A R T? With whom? Clearly not one lover - she'd never afford of being single over that amount of time - so more likely a string of them. I know that not even a puzzle, whose pieces when fitted together would constitute a whole. There is something missing in her death or someone! We're going to need an autopsy to find out!

I paid special attention to a large writing table near which the easel stood, and upon which lay, some vitamin bottles, painter's palette, with an

hourglass, MacBook Air, and an apple. I found beauty there where I had never imagined before that it could exist, in the most ordinary things, in the profundities of still life. At length my eyes, in going the circuit of the studio, fell upon a card-rack of pasteboard, that hung by a green ribbon just beneath the middle of the mantelpiece. In this rack, which had three or four visiting cards, overdue bills, and a note: "*I found I could say things with color and shapes that I couldn't say any other way—things I had no words for.*" was written on it.

After graduating from art school in the late 1940s Irem found herself pacing her studio, unsure how to produce work as a professional artist. She breathed through her nose all the way, with her mouth closed, which she believed to be excellent for the body while walking. Don't breathe through your mouth: you'll waste saliva. Don't try to think at the same time as walking; so much multitasking might cause the system to short-circuit.

"How do you think not-thinking?" the artist asked. "By non-thinking," Buddhist answered.

This was a deliberate means of not producing an object. She resists the production of physical objects in an extension of the logics of western conceptual art and as a part of her commitment to an ecological politics of production. In her works, such unproductivity is figured through the confined space of the walk: Irem paces back and forth, never reaching a destination. Irem's walks have no results: no products made; no destinations reached. She awoke each morning at four o'clock, never later. She breakfasted on a couple of bowls of tea, and then smoked a pipe. On teaching days, she would go out in the morning to give her lecture, then resume her dressing-gown and slippers to work and write until precisely a quarter to four. At that point she would dress again to receive a small group of friends to discuss science, philosophy and the weather. It's okay to have guests around, but always the right number. If you eat alone you might end up thinking, which will interfere with your digestion. There were invariably four dishes and some cheese, placed on the table – sometimes with a few desserts – along with a small carafe of wine for each guest. Conversation usually lasts until six o'clock. And always be sure to calibrate the intellectual level of the conversation so that it's not too boring but not too arousing.

We all have a central support structure within us. It keeps us upright. It provides the necessary stiffness and strength in order to resist the internal forces such as vertical forces of gravity and lateral forces due to wind and earthquakes. It carries the weight of your head, torso and arms, and allows your body to move in every direction. I started to have a problem with my central support structure on which I have been relying

onto for 185 years. I can't sit, walk, stand, twist or bend. My doctor recommended to me the Superman exercise. Apparently, my lumbar spine begins to show signs of wear and tear as the discs dry out and shrink. Only true artists can do the Superman, the doctor said. Squeezes your glutes and lower back as you raise your legs and arms off the floor. Pause at the top. And then proceed to pull your elbows down and backwards while squeezing them together. Then, reach back overhead mimicking a pull-up motion, and slowly return to starting position. However, if you're no true artist you won't be able to return to starting position.

How much can a butt be flattened? What happens when one's buttocks are too flat for any engagement? Can a left buttock be the same amount of flat as the right buttock? Over time, it's natural for your butt to lose some of its fullness and shape. Your butt may start to sag or look less shapely as the result of aging, and gravity itself. This isn't a medical condition that you need to be concerned about.

Denim is a great example of a material that ages gracefully when the quality is good. The cotton softens and conforms to the wearer as it is slowly breaking in, and the threads are dyed in such a way that the outer layer of indigo wears off to reveal a white core, creating denim's signature fades. Jeans by nature actually do stretch. The fabric is meant to morph and form to the body.

I'm running out of collagen.

Whiskers, also known as 'moustaches', are fades on the thighs of jeans. They are relatively thin diagonal or horizontal creases that form as you wear your jeans. If your jeans are made from raw denim, you will create the whiskers as you wear in the jeans. So, you see, the information of one's past can be present through these whiskers. The dead artist was wearing a pair of denim jeans on which there was an enormous number of whiskers on the inner thighs. She must have been a great sitter.

I'm running out of collagen.

She must have sat tight and waited forever. I always find denim whiskers similar to the wrinkles on one's face. The more you wear it the more they appear.

I'm running out of collagen.

Irem started to perform a post-mortem examination on the dead artist's body. Firstly, she laid it out carefully on the autopsy table. First things first, high-quality gross photographs should be taken. All of the

important details of the artist's dead body should be present in the photograph. It's okay to look in the eyes of the dead artist through camera lens. It protects you from turning to a stone. The dead body of the artist should not touch the border of the frame because this leads the eye out of the picture. Usually it is best to position the area of interest in the center of the frame both for composition and autofocus. Often both an overview and a close-up photograph are necessary. Irem the forensic photographer pays particular attention to depth of field and the increased illumination requirements of close-up photographs. Specular highlights, the reflections of light from the surfaces of subjects, provide special problems. A number of techniques reduce or eliminate specular highlights. Drying the body, eliminating surface contours, changing the angle of illumination, illuminating through diffusing screens, and using small reflectors may reduce highlights. A ladder or step stool may be necessary for some overhead views. Writhing snakes were entwining her head in place of hair. Therefore, it's not easy to capture a still picture. It is helpful to drape areas such as face and genitalia of the dead artist to maintain decency and lessen distractions. Irem the forensic pathologist made a cut on the body to examine the chest and abdominal organs. Oh shit! The minute the rib cage is removed the truth revealed.

The first truth is called "Suffering" which teaches that everyone in life is suffering in some way. The second truth is "Origin of suffering" which states that all suffering comes from desire. The third truth is "Cessation of suffering", and it says that it is possible to stop suffering and achieve enlightenment. The fourth truth is called "Fourth Table" which takes its inspiration from the work of a physicist and a philosopher. In his Gifford Lectures of 1927, British physicist Sir Arthur Eddington talked about two tables. First, the table of everyday experience: it is tactile and substantial. It supports elbows and holds objects. Second, the table of science: it is mostly emptiness. There is nothing substantial about it. It is the only one which is there wherever there may be. Sometimes later the physicist's writing was taken up by Philosopher Graham Harman who wrote an essay called The Third Table in which he thinks both humanists who insist on the everyday thing and physicists who care only for quantum reality, are mistaken. He posits the existence of a third table, the only real one, existing in between the first and the second table, deeper than all apparent (scientific or everyday) objects.... A decade later, Irem writes the Fourth Table also known as the Bastard. Her table is neither legit nor authentic. One can think of it as the bastard sibling of the other three tables. Her table is not a table. If it is not a table, what it is?

Rakı is an anise-flavoured alcoholic drink that is popular in Turkey, often served with seafood or meze. The making of rakı begins with the arrival of the grapes. Meticulously selected grapes of the Aegean are pressed to must and left to ferment. At the end of the fermentation process, the first

distillation begins. The fermented grape juice is distilled to make “suma,” a highly alcoholic grape spirit. Then the second distillation begins when the suma, water, and anise are added to the copper still. This is how the process of conventional, double-distilled rakı works. Later, triple distillation became a competitive element in meeting consumer demand for high-quality products. Thrice distilled rakı! Some described it as core of the core of the core. Rakı is ritual. The ritual of drinking rakı actualises around the rakı table. Therefore, the first requirement to drink rakı is a simple table. After it is found, do not think of opening a rakı bottle and sitting at the table alone. The best meze for rakı is conversation. That is to say you need at least one other person to sit at a rakı table. A bunch of people would be better, but that changes if anyone in the group talks too much, boasts about themselves or is humourless. Rakı never goes down well if a pleasant talk is lacking. However, pleasant talk doesn't mean that you should be unnecessarily cute or try too hard. During the first glass of rakı people usually listen to subjects concerning daily life, but three glasses later, the talk moves on to matters of the heart, and on the fourth glass it turns to politics. Everyone saves the world in their own way at the rakı table.

I love sitting very much. I have a very flat butt. I at rest tend to remain at rest. I don't think my gluteal muscles are working at their optimal function anymore. Gluteus Maximus! The thing about just sitting is that you can do it anywhere. Once or twice a day, I sit facing a wall in my home. I just sit. I sit for forty minutes sometimes or more. But I just sit. I do it in trains, planes and buses; in doctors' offices, dentists' chairs, and I've even done it in street. You can do it anywhere; all it takes is the intention of just sitting. Did you know that there is no other animal which persistently walks in the vertical position? Bears walk in upright position from time to time, and occasionally some birds, such as the penguin strut around in this position, but man is the only one who sticks to the upright position through thick and thin.

The Buddhist chef believes that the ultimate cooking comes from this intimate connection with fruits and vegetables, herbs and beans, mushrooms and grains. In her mind, there should be no distance between a cook and her ingredients. From farm to table. “That is how I make the best use of a cucumber,” she said. “Cucumber becomes me. I become cucumber.” Shortly after the artist arrives at the temple, at an 1600 m altitude, she's served slices of Korean pear, glazed with a tart citrus sauce, and pickled herbs, handmade dumplings and mushroom caps filled with diced tofu, and rice that has taken on the yellow hue of gardenia seeds. Also, kimchee which has been buried in a hole in the ground for years was put on the table. The Buddhist chef grates potatoes by hand for her pancakes, which she layers with chopped leaves of fresh

mint from her garden. They say the warmth of the hands affect the flavour. The hand is used in each step, from gardening to the table. The Buddhist chef cooks rice wrapped in lotus leaves and stuffed into round knobs of cut bamboo that are boiled in a cauldron. The artist watches how the Buddhist chef relies on alchemies of smoke and steam, soil and water, bacteria and air. One day the artist and the other guest, the mountaineer are given a cup of lotus-flower tea by the Buddhist chef that, they're told, symbolizes the blossoming of Buddhist enlightenment. "When you are in the mountains you find out who you really are. You climb so you can live every moment of your life. When the pain is really forcing you to go down you keep going up. You are really on the edge of possibilities; the edge of life and death" said the mountaineer while sipping the lotus tea. The artist drank the lotus-flower tea, heard the mountaineer and burst into tears.

The dead artist has meditated profoundly on color, and the absolute truth of line; however, she has come to doubt the very existence of absolute truth. She says that there is no such thing as drawing, and that by means of lines we can only reproduce geometrical figures.

Casino carpets come in three categories. First, the geometric ones: dots, orbs, metastasizing lattices. Then, there are the organic ones which feature curvilinear elements: underwatery ripples in turquoise and cobalt, gilded tendrils that seem to be derived from plants. Then, at the nicer hotels, carpets often have themes such as sphinxes. The camouflaging argument makes sense—the more curlicues, the less noticeable the dirt and Coke and vomit. Carpets' primary function is psychological. A lot of the busyness of the patterns may be about keeping people active, as too much relaxing may not inspire gambling. Some people do urinate on casino carpets. I remember seeing one lady who would go down every row of slot machines and let a little tinkle out on each seat, and on the rug. I think some loser gamblers do it out of spite, and then there are those who have genuine bladder problems. Some die-hard gamblers don't ever want to leave the table. There are people playing poker for four days straight eating cheese sandwiches. It wouldn't be a bad idea to check the chair before you sit down at a casino.

In the universe, space and time are invariably linked within four-dimensional spacetime. For simplicity, you can think of spacetime as a blanket suspended above the ground. It inhabits stars, planets, and black holes. Each of these objects weighs down the blanket where it sits: the heavier the object, the bigger the dip in the blanket. A dip in spacetime is a gravitational field. The gravitational field of one object can affect another object. The other object might fall into the first object's gravitational field and orbit around it, like the moon around Earth and an artist around an apple. The apple perfectly balances the insatiable

appetite of the artist with a hint of sweetness and acidity. As this happens, they create ripples in spacetime.