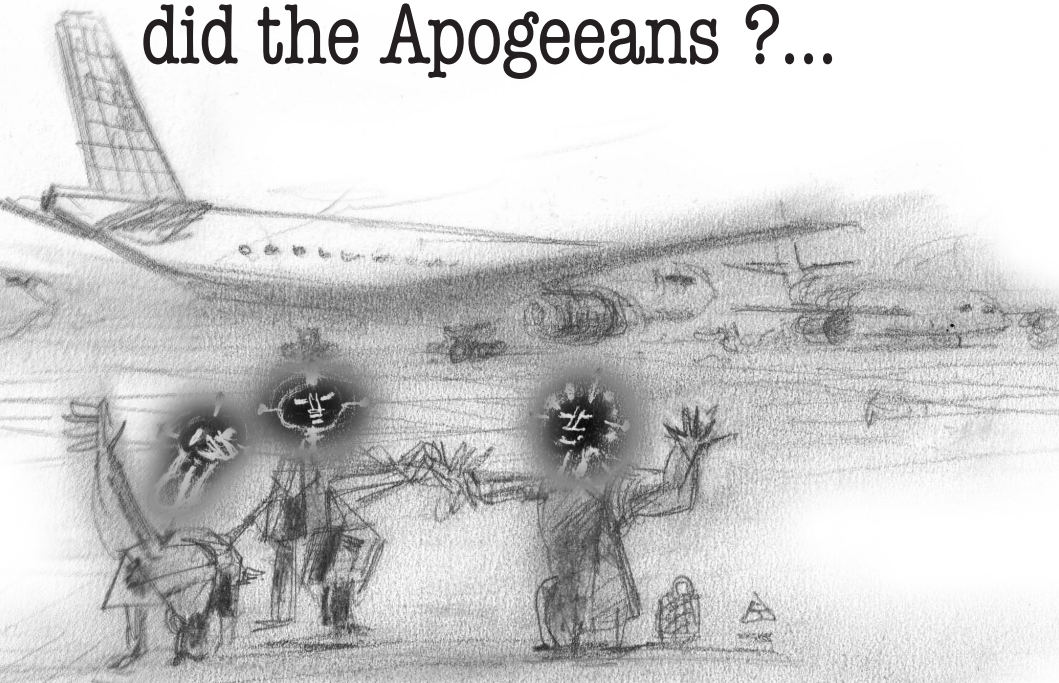


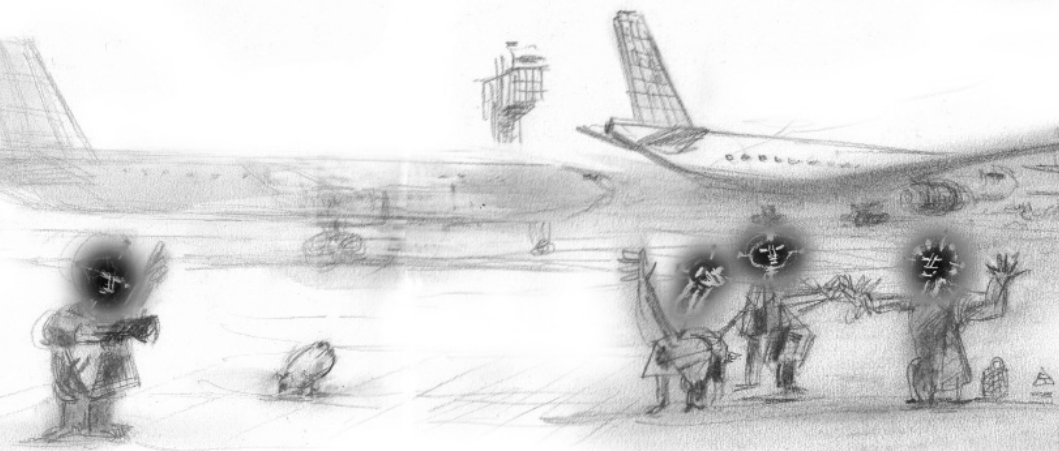
By what fancy
did the Apogeeans ?...



YES — BY WHAT FANCY

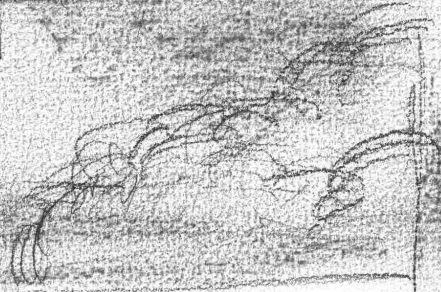
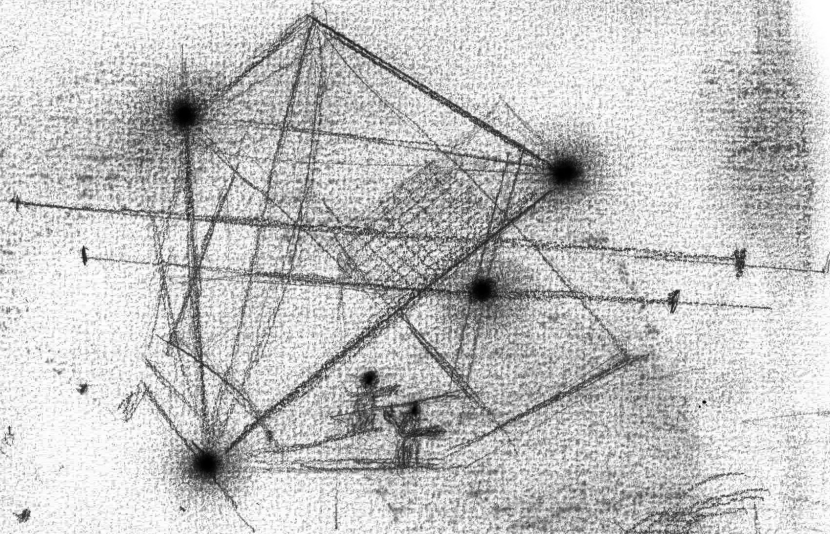
*did the Apogeeans have themselves
photographed on the tarmac
of Le Touquet Airport?*

*The aircraft that land there
can hardly carry one across a galaxy!*

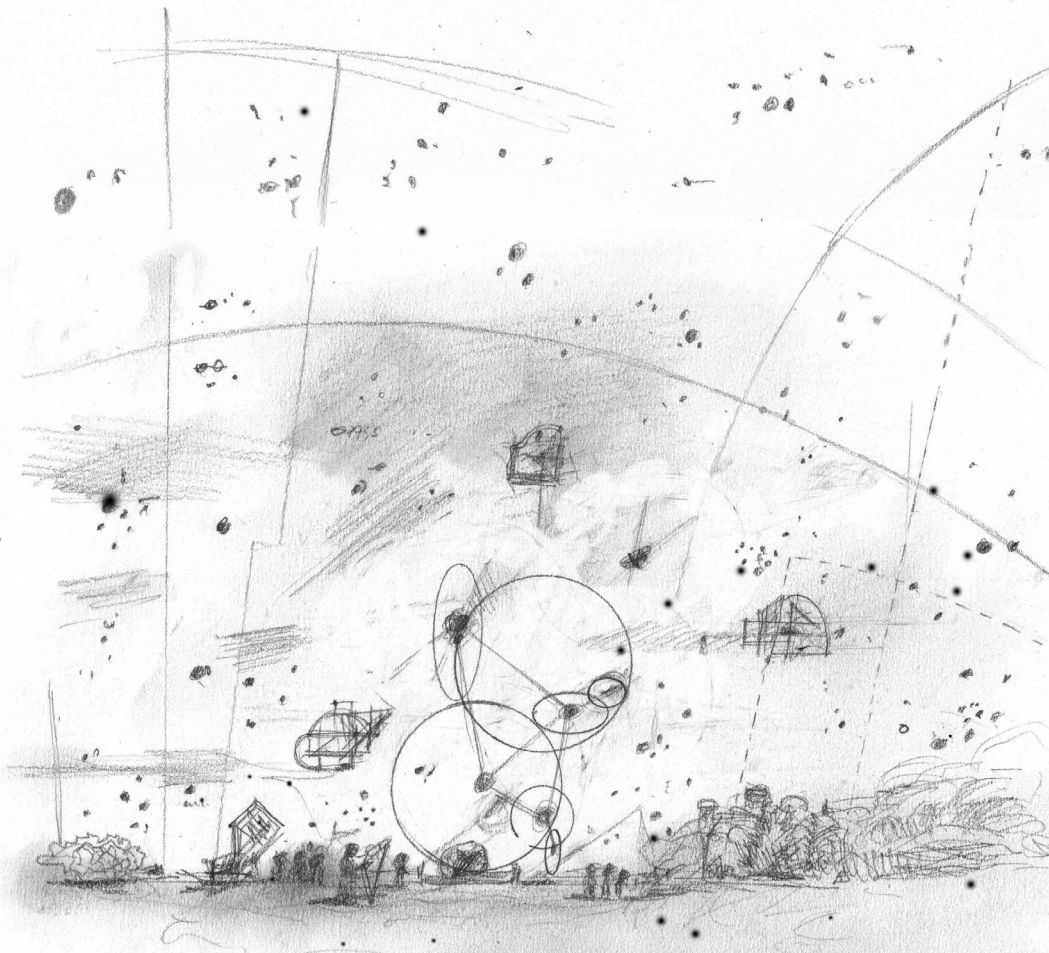


FOR THE APOGEEANS *have indeed*
crossed a galaxy. No small accomplishment!
The apogeeans, needless to say, possess
starships.

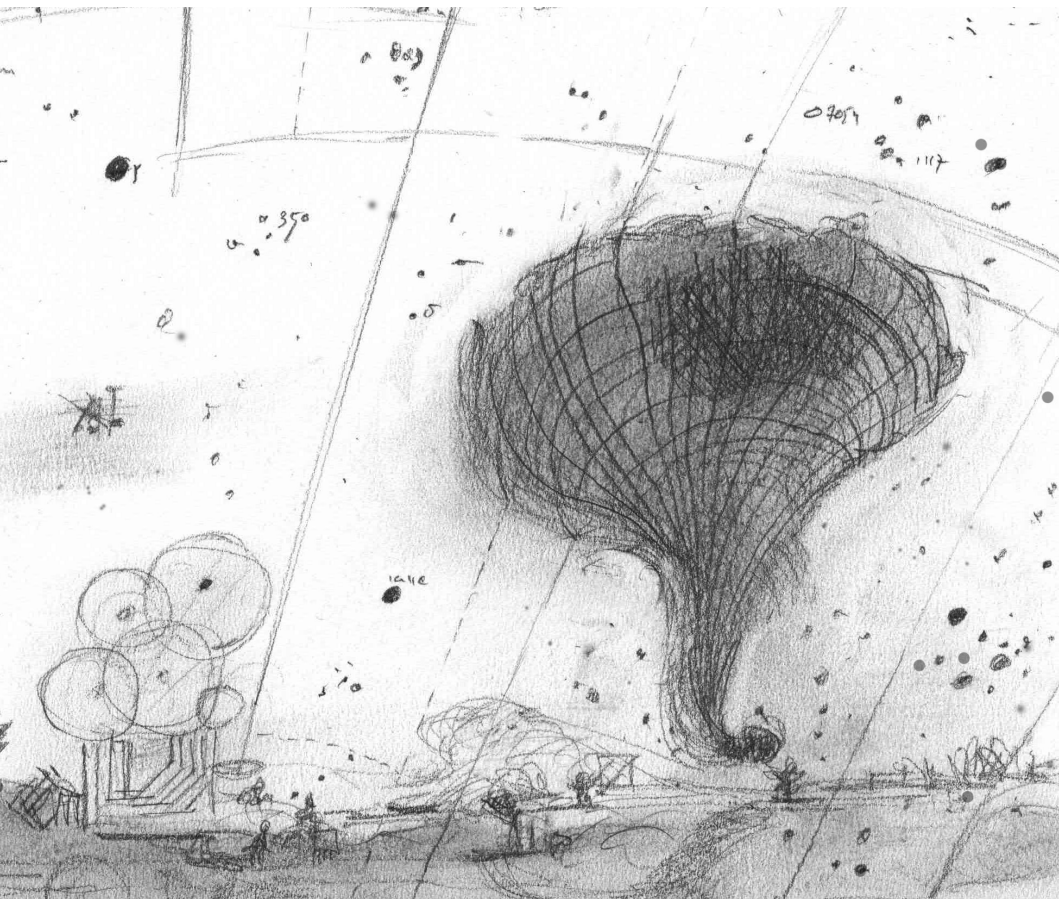
But their craft are as far removed
from the planes of Le Touquet
as from the space vessels conjured
by Savinien de Cyrano de Bergerac.¹



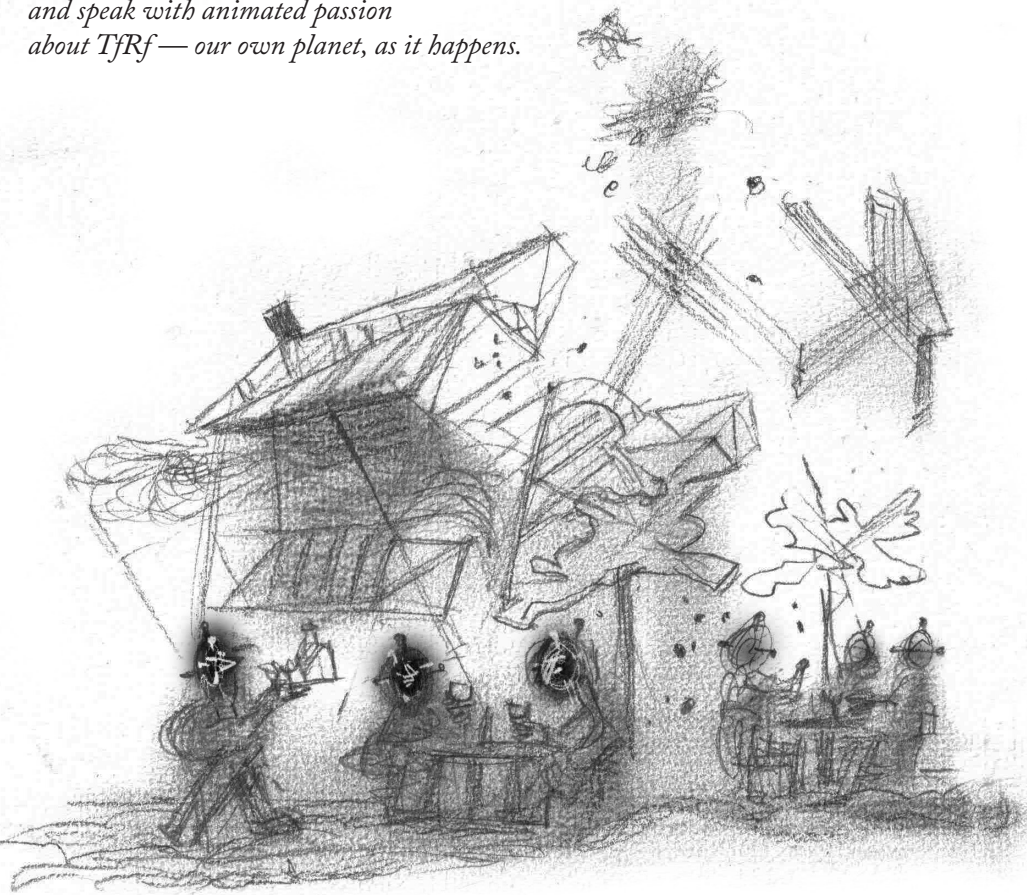
THE APOGEEAN STARSHIPS are powered by the energy of quantum micro-black holes. They unfurl solar sails; antigravity pulleys adjust their flight through the void.



THERE EXISTS NO reliable image of the workshops where they are made — their locations are kept secret. What you see here is suggestive at best. The quantum micro-black holes are mined from concave shadows and form the beating heart of the craft. Their likeness is hard to capture — but this image comes as close as one dares



AFTER A DAY *spent on delicate quantum assemblies,*
the engineers relax by discussing the assemblies of wines.
The Apogeeans are great enthusiasts of Meursault,
and speak with animated passion
about TjRf — our own planet, as it happens.



FOR THEIR STAYS

*on TjRf, the Apogeeans prefer
to move about in the form
of native citizens.*

HOW DOES AN APOGEEAN

*go about becoming invisible —
and transforming into a TjRfan?*



TO UNDERSTAND THIS, *the Reader must perform
an unusual gesture.*

*Rather than turning the next page in the usual way,
one must interrupt the motion —and hold the page for a moment
perpendicular to the book.*

*At that precise angle,
only pages 16 and 19 remain visible.*

XfXf has vanished.

*Then, by completing
the interrupted gesture,
the Reader will see
XfXf transformed into one
Monsieur Eugène Granduit.*

XfXf





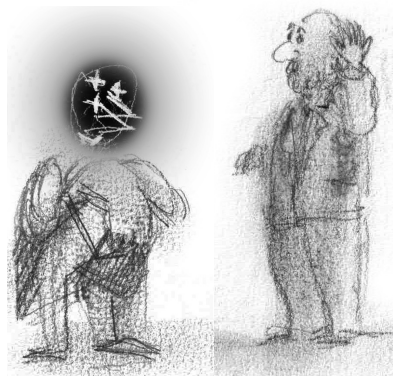
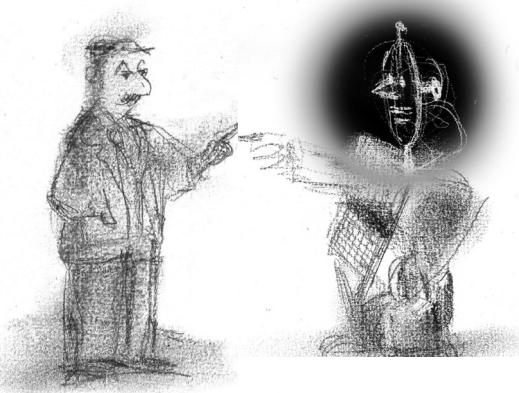
Monsieur Eugène Ganduit

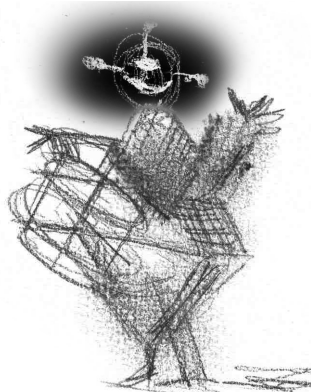
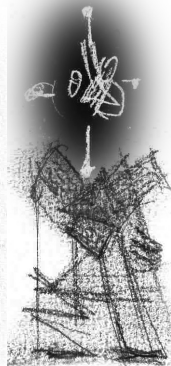
IF THE READER *has followed the protocol correctly,*
they will have witnessed the disappearance of XfXf
and his reappearance as Eugène Granduit.

*(To turn the page — that familiar expression
for something vanishing to make way for something else —
indeed asks for a moment's attention.)*



THE READER *knows it well: ignorance leads to generalization, and generalization renders all things uniform. Thus do the Apogeeans seem to us identical — while under their terrestrial guises, diversity leaps to the eye: Eugène Granduit (XfXf) ; Laura Dumont (YfYf) ; Monsieur Lecas (ZfZf) ; Juliette Grison (AfAf) ; Esther Mame (BfBf) ; John Feurm(CfCf)...*



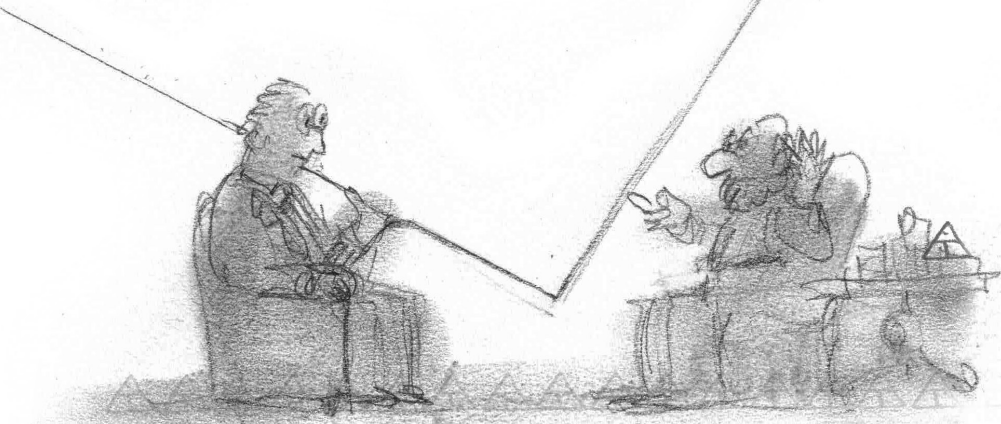


THIS DEVICE *of transformation by angle of view* proves quite satisfactory, but demands of the Apogeean a state of constant concentration on their appearance.

AT THE SLIGHTEST *lapse of attention, the faintest letting go,* the Apogeean reverts to their original form. This inconvenience is regarded as a heavy constraint.

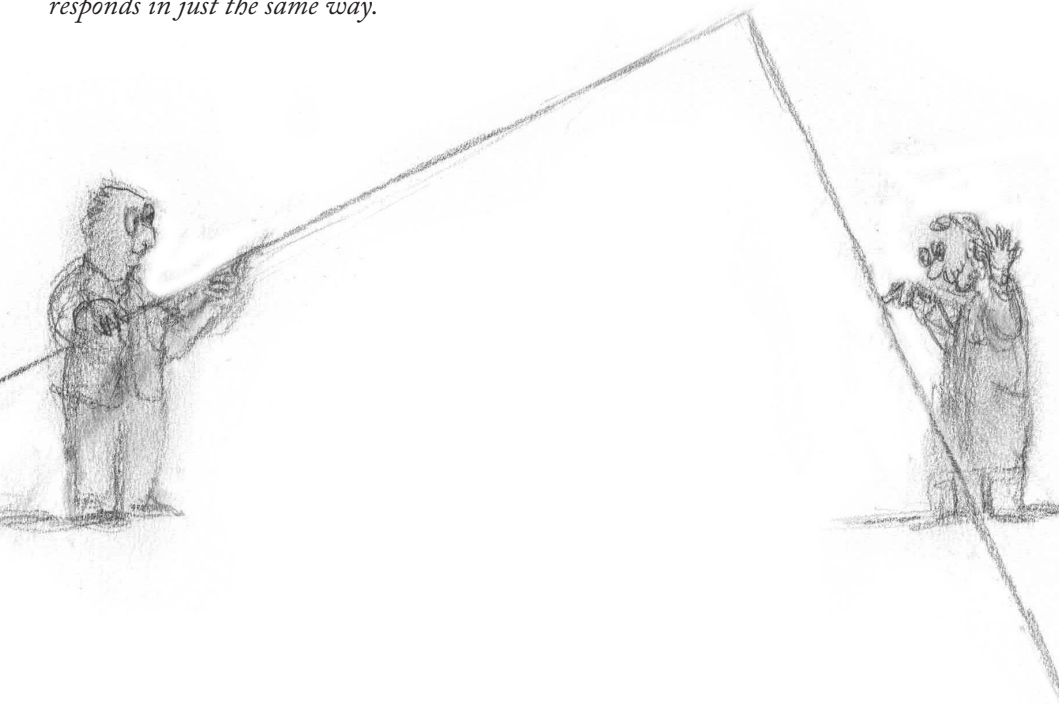
SO XfXf IS DELEGATED to study the peculiarities of earthly perspectives. Disguised as Monsieur Eugène Granduit, he sets off to consult renowned scholars.

PROFESSOR PACKARD *first — an expert in points of view.* But, in the most disappointing fashion, the moment a certain angle is brought up, the professor plays deaf...



DOCTOR DUNEAU

responds in just the same way.

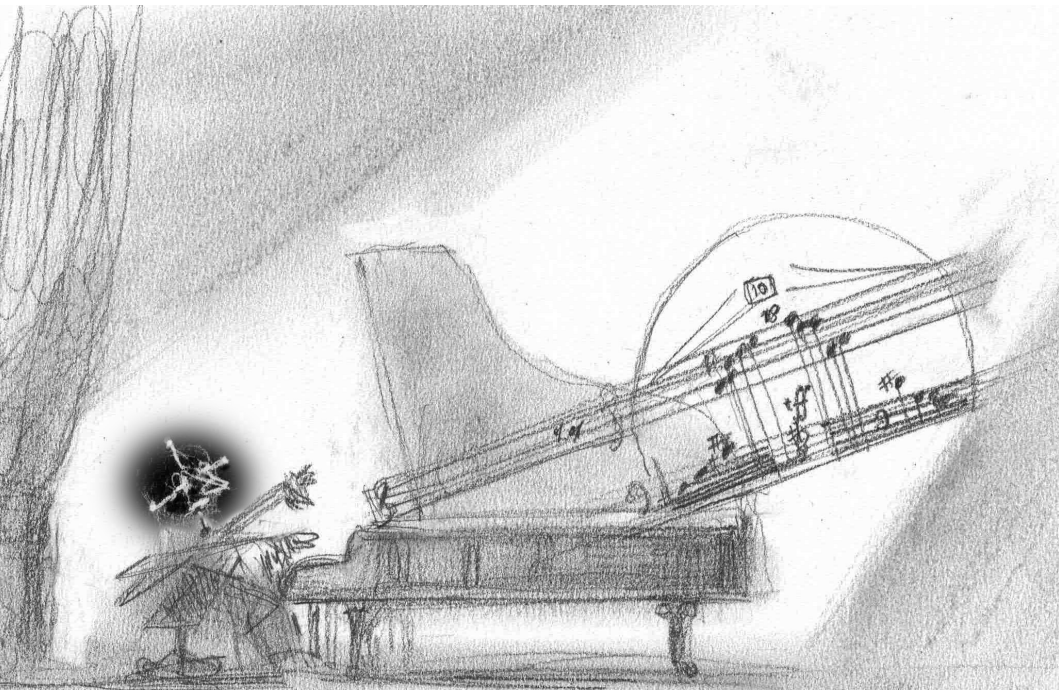


WHILE HANDLING a point of view a bit
clumsily, and presenting it to Professor Lerail,
XfXf is momentarily distracted —
and reveals his native form.

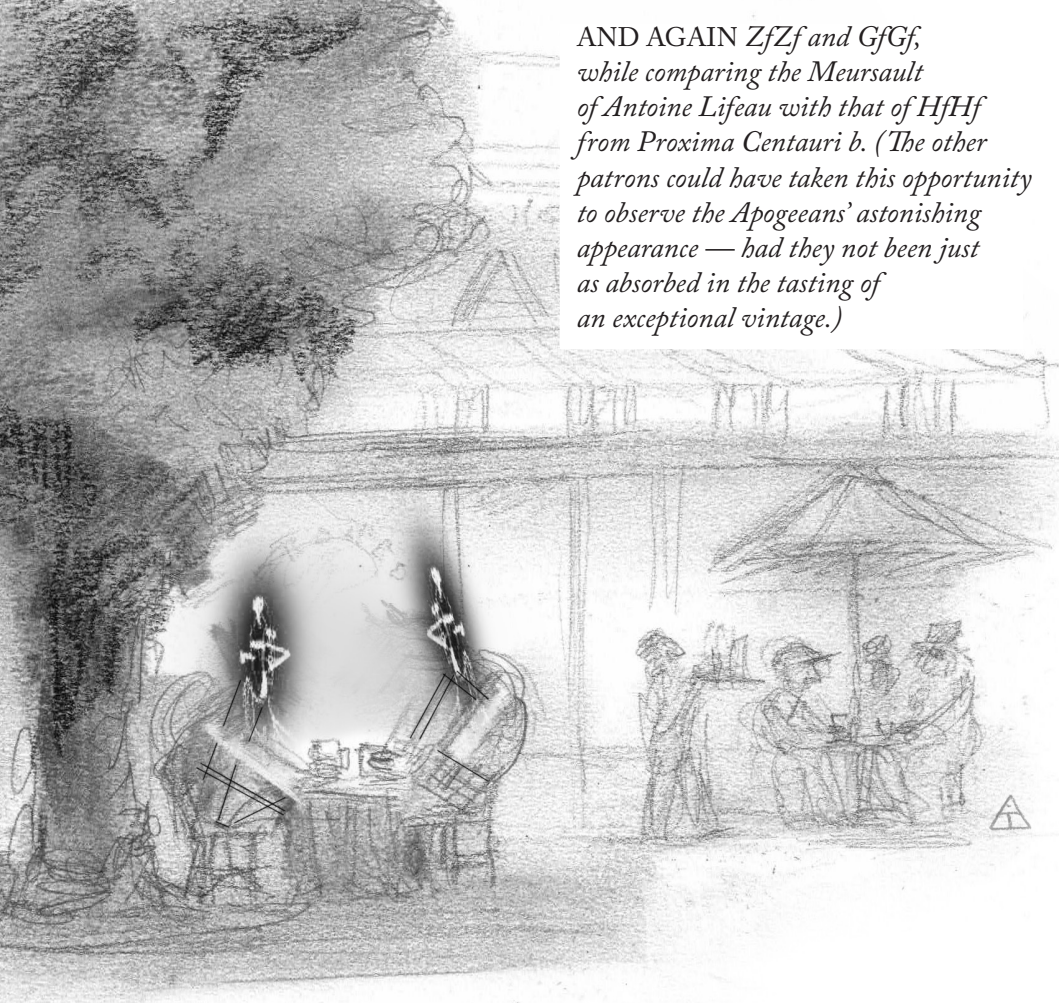
Yet the professor, like his peers,
maintains a sustained posture
of feigned deafness. He sees nothing.



SUCH SUDDEN appearances of *Apogeeans* in their native form are fairly common. Thus, during a concert, Laura Dumont — swept away by the passion of her performance — briefly reveals the morphology of Yfyf.³

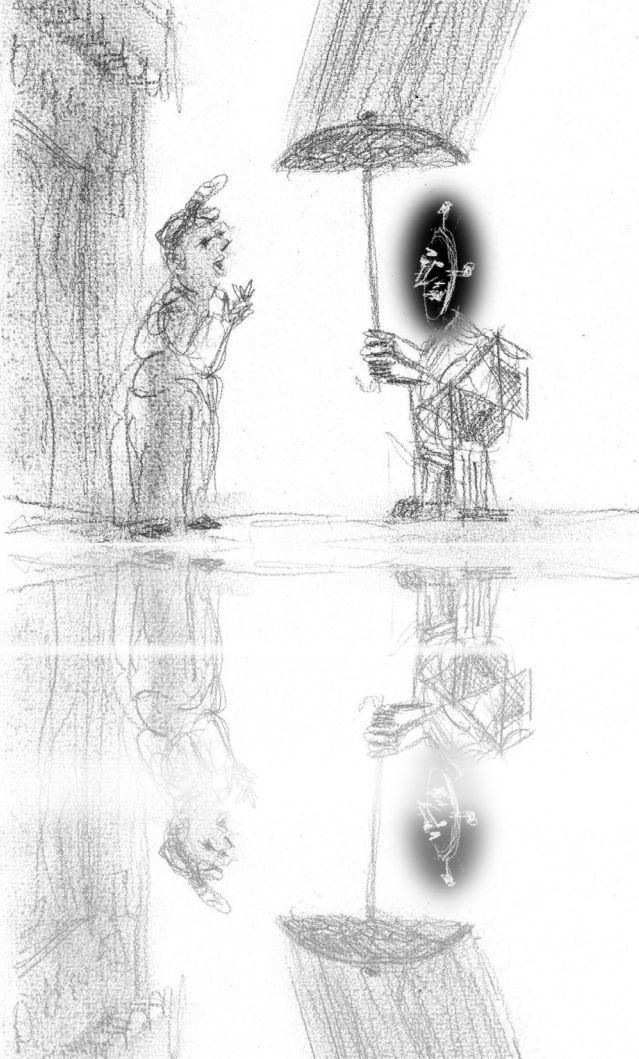


AND AGAIN ZfZf and GfGf,
while comparing the Meursault
of Antoine Lifeau with that of HfHf
from Proxima Centauri b. (The other
patrons could have taken this opportunity
to observe the Apogeeans' astonishing
appearance — had they not been just
as absorbed in the tasting of
an exceptional vintage.)



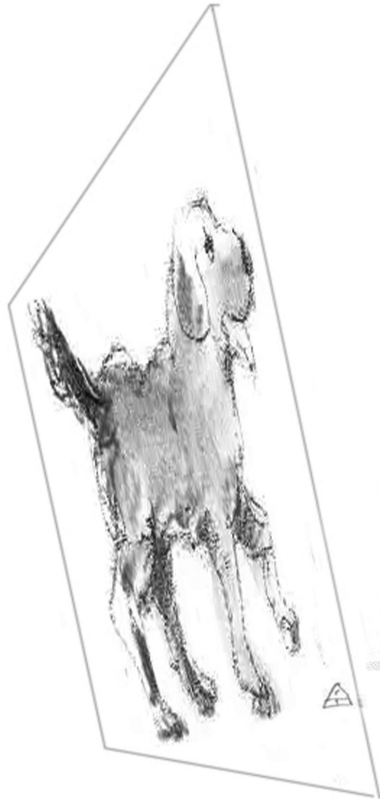
THE USE OF THE UMBRELLA
*is not yet mastered by GfGf.
Several attempts will be needed
before he manages the gallantry
of sheltering Madame Lamarque.*







THE APOGEEANS *move effortlessly
between two and three dimensions.*
Here, QfQf is walking his dog, Toodee.



THIS ABILITY *to shift between dimensions*
allows them to play with shadows
as they please.

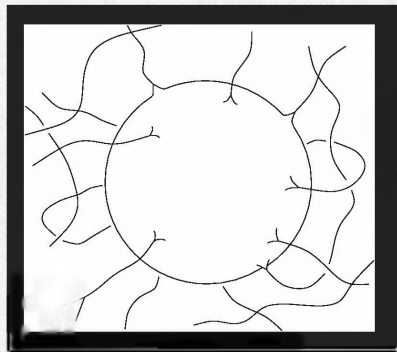




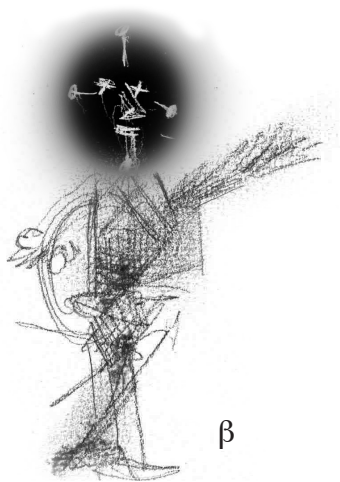
BUT, APART FROM *these few scattered moments of distraction,*
the Apogeeans devote themselves to sharing knowledge.



UNDER THE NAME *John Feurm*, DfDf exhibits a painting in a fashionable gallery (and to a certain indifference), a remarkable canvas nonetheless — inspired by the intersection of quantum information channels on the shape and dimension of nearby space. (Nothing less than the schema of the network that forms the universe.)⁴

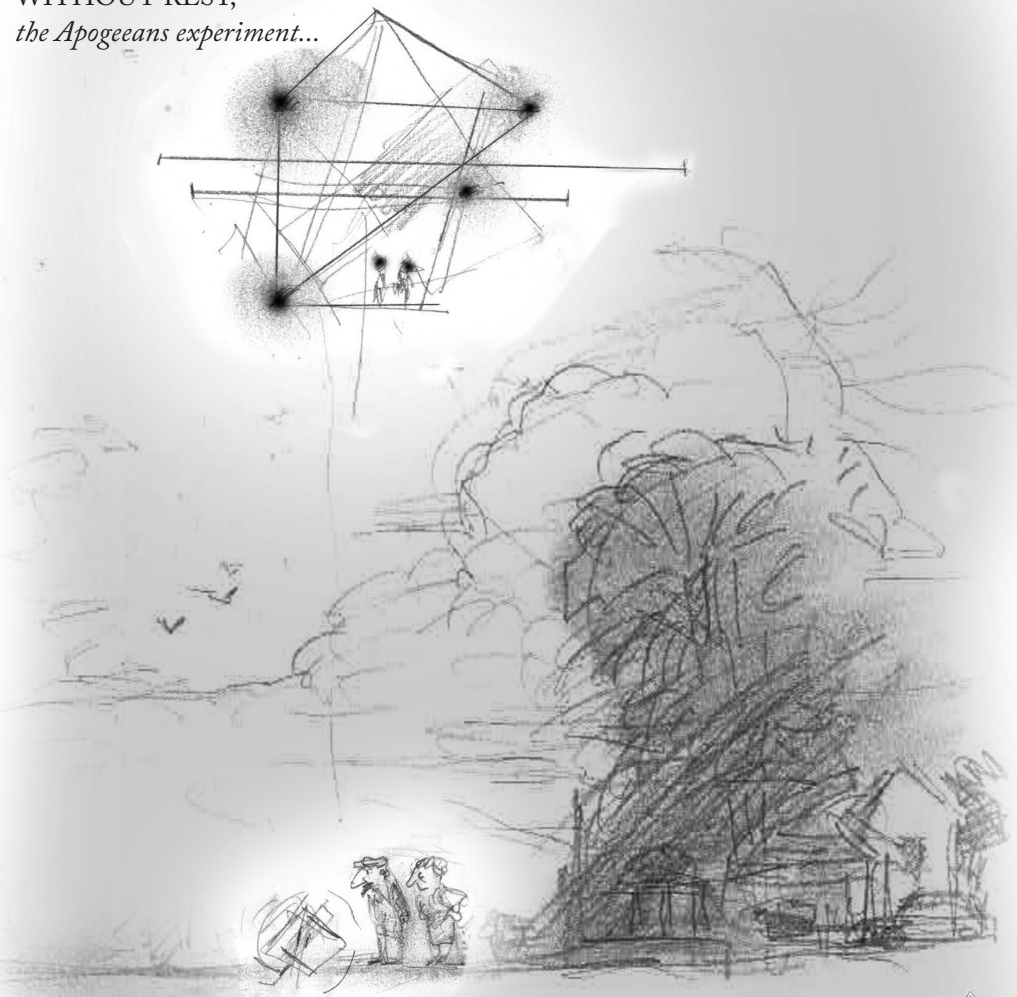


A DAZZLING EXHIBITION *by Juliette Grison*
presents a model of the spatio-temporal evolution
*of the elemental action of Hamiltonian constraint.*⁵

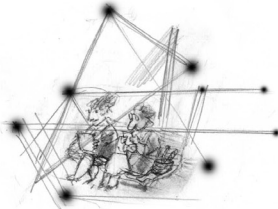




WITHOUT REST,
the Apogeeans experiment...



...and keep themselves informed.

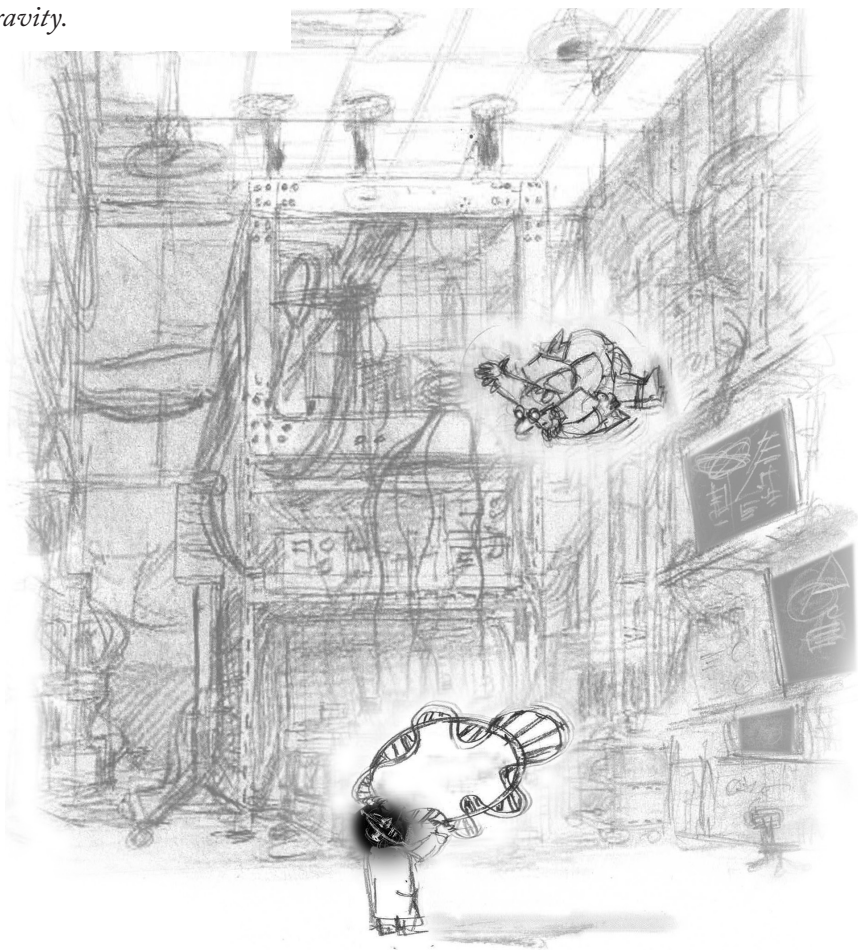


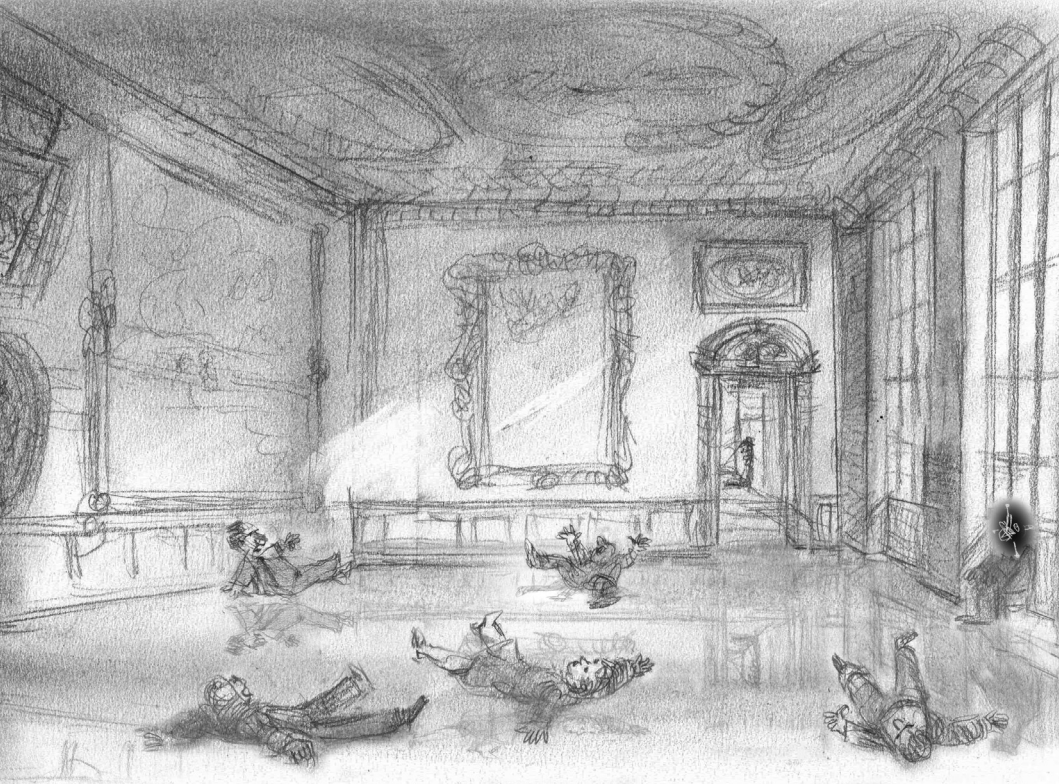
PEOPLE DON'T HESITATE
*to blame them for the slightest
unexpected occurrence.*



*"I'm getting hundreds of replies
to emails I never sent!"*

BUT THEIR GOODWILL is well known. Here, ψ comes to the aid — with a quantum ladder — of Professor R., who succeeded a bit too well in an experiment involving loop quantum gravity.



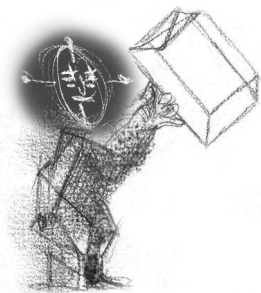
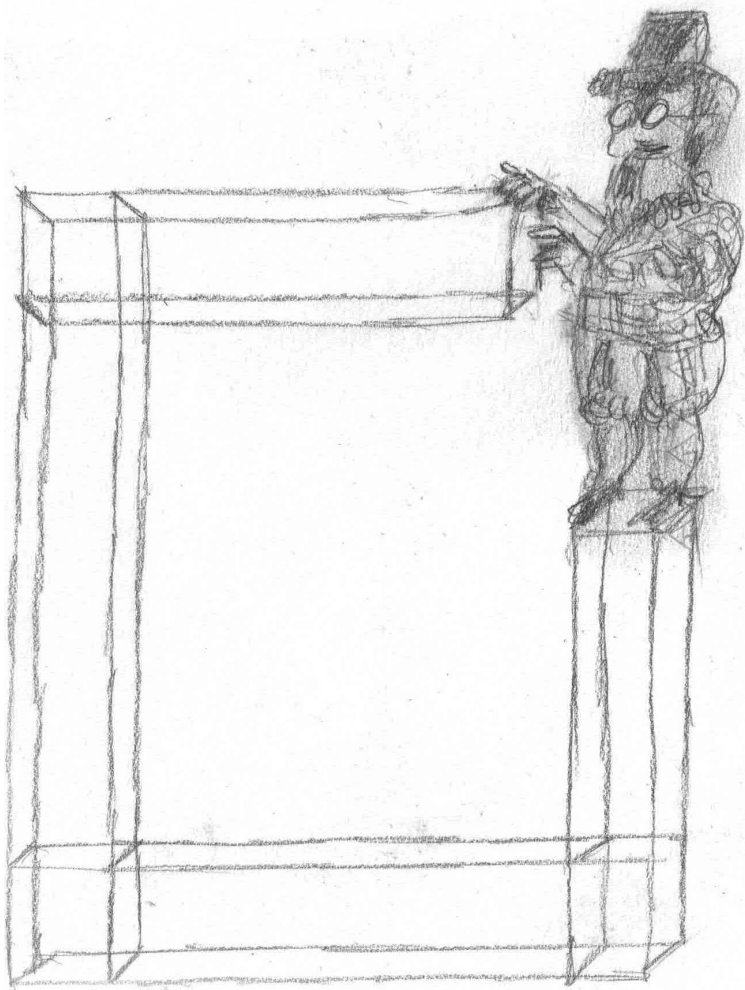


OR ELSE, in this museum, *HfHf* — thanks to a strategically waxed parquet — draws visitors' attention to the painted ceilings above.

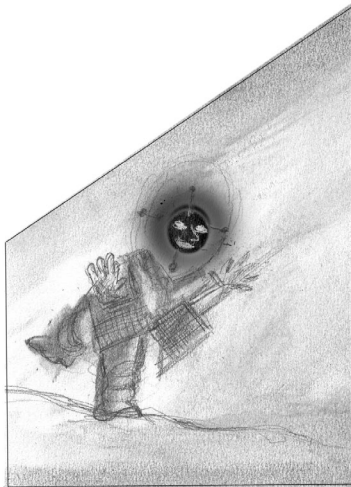
SfSf, MEANWHILE, ENCOURAGED *Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres*
to reclaim the violin sound holes borrowed by Man Ray
(a good century ago, no less).



AND AS EARLY AS
the 17th century,
DfDf was suggesting
to Professor Miescher⁶
that he begin modeling
the structure of DNA.

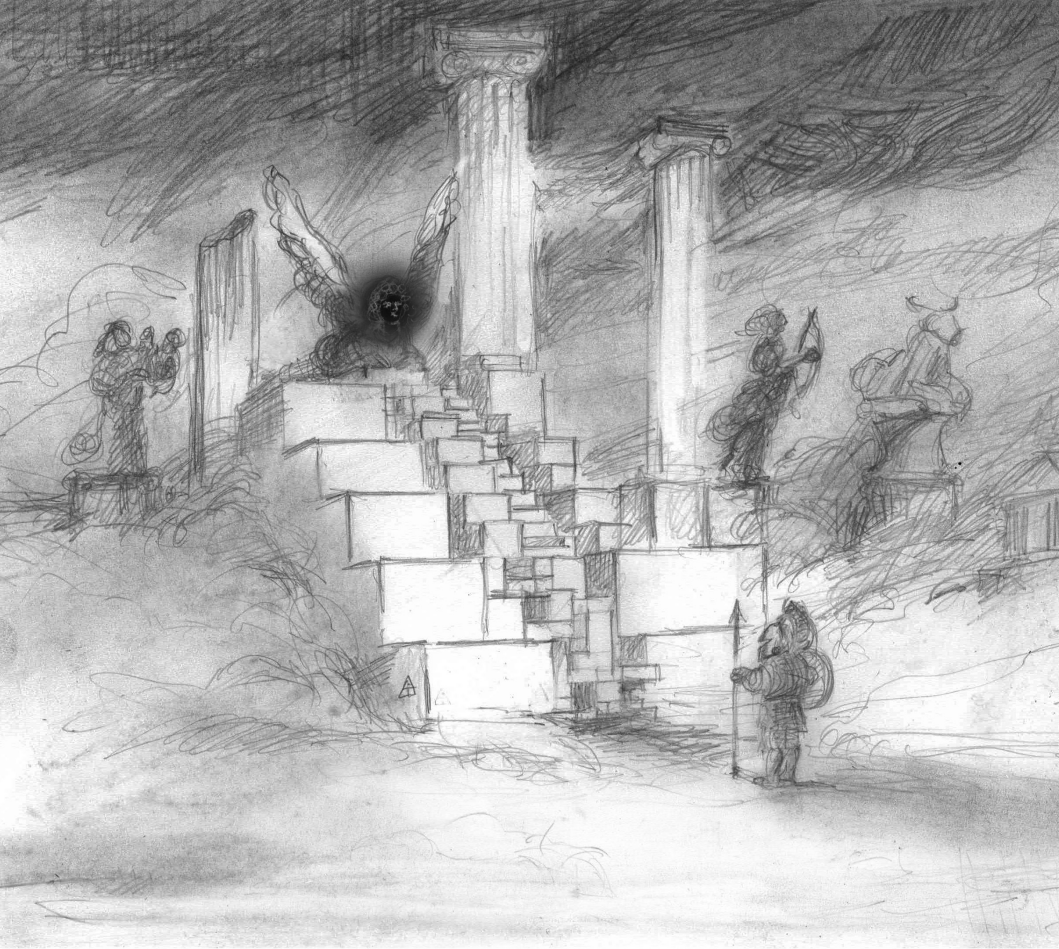


IN A CERTAIN SETTING, *EfEf* once offered advice to young William S., who was committing murder after murder through a certain Macbeth — that he should kill off Macbeth before the opposite came to pass.⁷



TO ULYSSES, Cfcf advised plugging his own ears — and covering the eyes of his companions. Thus, the sirens passed from the world of sound into the world of sight.
*“But they, more beautiful than ever, stretched themselves out, twirling in place, let their terrifying hair float freely in the wind, and loosened their claws upon the rock.”⁸





INSTEAD OF the Sphinx, LfLf rearranged the stairs in such a way that Oedipus hesitated for a long time before daring to climb them.



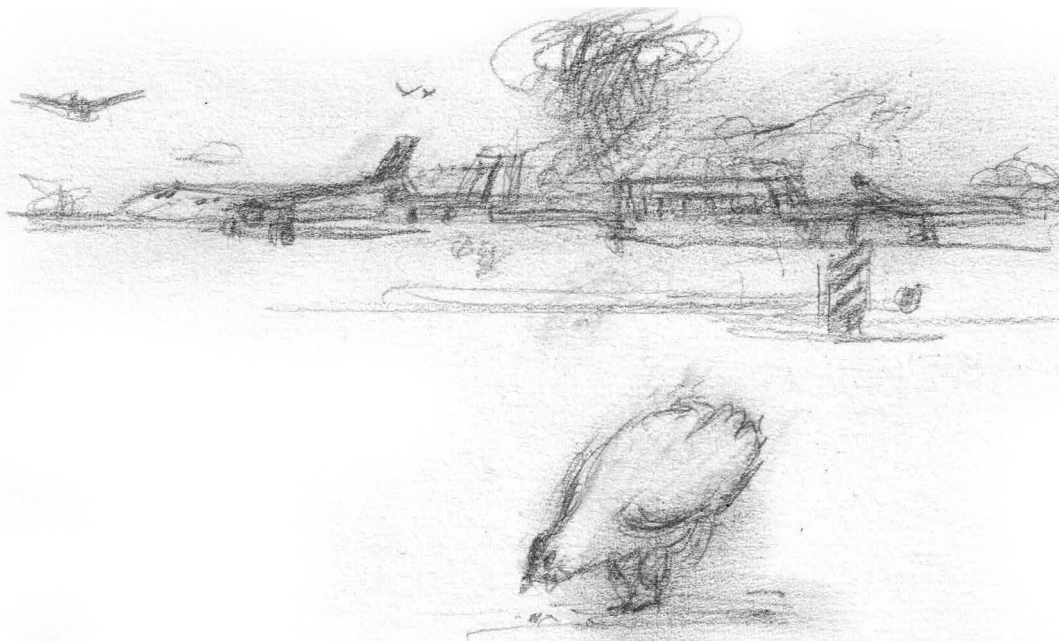
DESPITE THEIR EFFORTS, *the Apogeeans cannot seem to halt the advance of Fake News and its mount, Anonymous — who are likely aided in secret by infiltrated Perigeans.*

BEYOND all their interventions, whether routine or historical,
the Apogeeans are fond of offering small, quiet services.



Such as, for instance,
finding a lost hen
belonging to Gérard Archambault.

A hen they locate, on the tarmac of Le Touquet Airport.





QfQf and VfVf *take the opportunity to pilot an A320.*

*And what could be more natural, then,
than a souvenir photo?*



Notes

- 3 1/ Savinien de Cyrano de Bergerac was a 17th-century French writer whose works and personality would later be largely overshadowed by Edmond Rostand's famous fictional portrayal. His *Comical History of the States and Empires of the Moon and of the Sun* (1657 and 1662) include fantastical flying machines powered by vials of dew, magnets, fireballs...
- 10 2/ J.J. Colomina-Almiñana, *Formal Approach to the Metaphysics of Perspective: Points of View as Access*, Springer, Heidelberg, 2018.
- 16 3/ Measure 10 of Béla Bartók's *Sonata for Two Pianos*.
- 25_26 4/5/ *Loop Quantum Gravity*, Carlo Rovelli, Living Reviews in Relativity, 11 (2008). Representation of quantum geometries of the horizon (see p. 45).
- 34 6/ Presumed ancestor of Swiss biologist Friedrich Miescher, the first to isolate DNA—long before the model proposed by Watson and Crick.
- 35 7/ Jorge Luis Borges, *Other Inquisitions*, Buenos Aires, 1952.
- 36 8/ To be compared with Franz Kafka's *Das Schweigen des Sirenen*, Martin Secker, London, 1931.