

9/12 Up and out of bed a little after 6. In the sky to the south, what appears to be the glow of a moon obscured by clouds. But it can't be. Wrong time, wrong place. As your eyes focus, you realize that the moon illusion is caused by the blue "towers of light" hitting the high overcast. Dawn breaking red-purple in the east, and they still haven't turned those ghoulish things off.

In the northern latitudes, sunrises and sunsets will continue on spectacular thanks to the stratospheric swirling of Kasatochi's ash plumes. Seen from high above the North Pole, this dragon is not so much dissipating as multiplying its tendrils and shooting them out where 'ere it will.

"For Lehman Employees," runs the *Times* headline, "Collapse is Personal."



Kevin Coombs/Reuters

*Children go where I send thee.*

You're free.

Clever.

Classless.

Top *Messenger* head: "Obama Plans Sharper Tone as Party Frets." Infants.  
Inconsolable.

Next one down: "In First Big Interview, Palin Says 'I'm Ready.'"

Outside the windows of Lehman, rotors beating like scythes, the helicopter gunships mass and hover. Gatling barrels protrude through their portals. Oiled and loaded. *The Matrix*. Cut.

She draws a line along the ground with the spike of her heel and hypnotized, all the cocks follow it.

McCain perfectly embodies the energies of mad hare and tortoise. Tactically, he runs rings around Obama Fudd while at the same time lending his hoary carapace to Palin so that she may place the weight of her foot upon it and tread over the puddle to the other side. A Sir Walter Raleigh-like gesture reverberating in subterranean, and suburban, chambers of the American bodymind.

Cockles of what passes for a heart. Lehman overboard. The firm, founded on Liberty Street, once helped finance the special relationship between New York City and the cotton plantation economy in the slave states. Now it self-erases like so much invisible red ink, probably over the weekend, even as the Ike of the storm o'erwashes the Battlefield of San Jacinto. What the Sam Houston Hill is goin' on here?! Fade to gray. Oh, when those cotton balls get a-rotten, you caint pick very much cotton.

And what goes around comes surround.

A parting of the ways. And means.

Energy gathers, energy disperses. Eventually, we all end up a pile of yin.

Chivalry is the only way out. The Greek model won't work any more since the Spartan Republicans so clearly command the field and the Athenian Democrats are put to rout. Too late for the fireman-save-my-child tactic. The only move left for Obama would be to rise to some provocation of McCain's as though it were an insult to the honor of the country itself. He would have to drop the Periclean toga, armor himself and deliver his gauntlet at the feet of the dominant but aging warrior – challenge Mac to single combat – not for his own gain, but to avenge the sanctity of the mother nation. No quarter given.

But Barack does not possess that sort of mojo. He knows not, apparently, how to turn his enemy's corner – to radically repose the game. He, and those who drive and collude with him would rather fail by degrees, or simply be pot-shot, than take to the lists with trumpets blaring and milady's colors tied round his thigh, and, come what may, attempt victory. And if he wins, it will be in order to lose that which others have invested in him.

Be careful what you wish for.

And, like the Spartans, the Republicans are better liars than the Democrats are truth tellers. Mendacity held the same spot in the Spartan curriculum as Rhetoric in Athens. Mother's milk, practically. That and kicking ass. Returning with your shield or on it.

*Who's that host all dressed in gray?*

*Must be the bankers on judgment day.*

*Lordy, He's gonna trouble the waters.*

Too dark in your bedroom this morning to see which shirt your hand alighted on until it was out of the closet: the once blue, now purple shirt for the morning of the day after.



*...Galveston, oh Galveston, I am so afraid of dying*

*Before I dry the tears she's crying*

*Before I watch your sea birds flying in the sun...*

Hungry tiger tears the chest open.

Lion rolls the ball.

Full harvest moon in three days. Gather what you may.

Funny to contemplate: New York in the eye of one storm. Houston in another.  
Twin cities, would you have guessed?

The time comes, the moment comes, when you can no longer interpret the  
river.

Wild goose leaves the flock.

*Soften the eyes. Anything can happen.*