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An Altercation Rectified

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It is not a turtle though the shell is
such that it can and does withdraw.
The inscription inside the shell reads.
The musical notes coming from within
have been annotated and found to read.
In its working habits it's said to.
All surviving records indicate that.
When the last specimen was alive, it.
At the last, the sounds most resembled.

Carol Bergé

AN ALTERCATION RECTIFIED

Hello again! And let me start
with an apology. Last night I called
you a dotard, a yellow bole on a fuzzy
unripe tree. I take it back. I only meant
to touch your breast unnoticed by the
dormant tramps in the shallows of your mind.
As it happened, you welcomed my hand but
looked askance at the doubtful compliment I
cast your way. And rightly so. Two things
should immediately occur to you from this incident.
One: I am frightfully timid, or rather, have
a cozeningly clownish fright of the direct
approach, which, Roman statesmen tell us, is the best.
More about this later. And two: I am an
amphibiously libidinous Venetian desperado,
out to get into your cunt. Don't take this
amiss. It is neither a compliment nor meant
to be one, although I can't say it is a
detraction either. Simply: the meeting of two
minds (and this has proved to be our case)
requires that after the passage of a certain length
of time, such as four breakfasts, and a mid-
night skinny dip in your grandmother's duck pond,
there should be a reasonable and deliberate
exploration of the senses. I am sure you will
agree, in principle at least.

As for the directness recommended by the noble Romans: I do not see eye to eye with their approach. It is a fool that kills the fatted calf with a blunt weapon like a typewriter. Never trust a man, especially a statesman, who promises to save you pain by lopping off the head of the first intruder. I myself prefer the winding ways of my fond ancestor the wrinkle-headed turtle and his best of friends and guide, the meandering line in Paul Klee's early middle etchings.

John Batki

THE HANGED MAN: *Tarot Key XII*

Who is the Hanged Man? Golem.

Who is Golem? Ask Judas.

*Is he standing on
a Tau? on a toe? upon
a bough before a tree's bole?*

A rope suspends him
by an ankle, from a bar,
his legs crossed before the Tree.

*Does he think of Death?
Is this, then, the dance of blood,
the wind's breath shaking his bones?*

His arms are water
in a triangle, hands held
behind him. His eyes are clear.

*Who has hanged this man?
What does he see, how does he see it,
when will he tell how he sees?*

We have hanged him. We
gave him his aureole. Look.
He will tell us when we see.