

## **Annotations to *Ada***

### **Part II: Chapter 2**

**June 2020**

#### **The Kyoto Reading Circle**

The following members of the Kyoto Reading Circle are equally responsible for the text here: Akitoshi Fukazawa, Mihoko Fukutani, Atsushi Goto, Maya Minao Medlock, Shoko Miura, Akiko Nakata, Mitsunori Sagae, Richard Smith and Tadashi Wakashima. Page and line references to *Ada* and all Nabokov works are to the Vintage International edition unless otherwise noted. At our meeting on November 25 and December 9, 2018, we were fortunate enough to receive again as our guest Brian Boyd of the University of Auckland. We are very grateful for his generous contributions, which will be marked “BB” for Brian Boyd and colored in blue.

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### **Part II Chapter 2**

**338.7: vanity:** Van “i ty” (Ru.) and “et tu” (Fr.) both mean “and you.”

**338.10: worried to extinction:** Usually “worried to death.”

**338.11: “Star Rats”:** A palindrome. Note: Neither did pseudonymity tickle him in reverse—as it did when he danced on his hands (338.5-6).

**339.4: Counterstone:** suggests Einstein.

**339.13: other innumerable planets with cottages and cows:** Cf. “Our [Humbert’s and Annabel’s] brains were turned the way those of intelligent European preadolescents were in our day and set, and I doubt if much individual genius should be assigned to our interest in the plurality of inhabited worlds, competitive tennis, infinity, solipsism and so on.” (*Lolita* I.3; *The Annotated Lolita*, 12).

**339.15: inner space:** BB: According to OED, the first use of “inner space” of its 3<sup>rd</sup> definition “the

part of the mind not normally accessible to consciousness” was in 1958. In the field of science fiction, J. G. Ballard first used the term “inner space” in his essay, "Which Way to Inner Space?" (1962). Ballard was prominent in the New Wave in science fiction.

**339.20: lanced:** suggests Nabokov’s story “Lance” (1952), which combines science fiction and medieval romance.

**339.20: Nektor and Neckton:** A play on the name, Mr. Nekto (from Russ.inconsequential or unknown person). Necktor sounds like “nectar.” In *Lolita: A Screenplay*, Charlotte calls cheap liqueur “supremely divine nectar,” not knowing its price. “I consider crème de menthe to be the supremely divine nectar. This was given me by the Farlows. Cost them a small fortune, I suspect” (*Lolita: A Screenplay* 59 [Act 1]). Neckton, although the “ton” at the end gives it the appearance of a (probably English) town name, most likely refers to “nekton,” the collective term for free swimming aquatic organisms that can move independent of currents (as opposed to plankton which cannot). Both, therefore, are natural world allusions.

**339.29: Yakima:** appears again in II.9: “Ada played Irina on the modest stage of the Yakima Academy of Drama . . .” (427).

**340.4: Sig Leymanski:** An anagram of Kingsley Amis, who wrote a key critical text on science fiction: *New Maps of Hell* (1960), and co-published *Spectrum: A Science Fiction Anthology* (1961). This is also Nabokov’s revenge on Amis for his review of *Lolita* published in *Spectator* (6 November 1959, 635-6), in which he compared “Colette”\* and *Lolita*: “There is nothing in *Lolita* as fine as the seven pages of ‘Colette’, a story of his dating from 1948 in which the germ of *Lolita* is clearly discernible. Here is the same little monkey with the long-toed bare feet and the bruise on her tender skin, inciting the author to a reminiscence of Carmen—in *Lolita* this reappears in the eerie modernised disguise of a pop song” (24).

<<http://archive.spectator.co.uk/article/6th-november-1959/23/books>> \*Amis refers to “Colette” published in *The New Yorker*, July 31, 1948, reprinted as Chapter 7 in *Conclusive Evidence* and, with revisions, in *Speak, Memory*. Nabokov comments on it in *Strong Opinions*: “My *Lolita* has been compared to Emmie in *Invitation*, to Mariette in *Bend Sinister*, and even to Colette in *Speak, Memory*—the last is especially ludicrous. But I think it might have been simply English jollity and leg-pulling (*Strong Opinions*, 83). In *Lolita: A Screenplay*, Nabokov makes “Professor Amy King” talk about a pair of doctors Nabokov detests:

CHARLOTTE Then you will certainly want to address our club, of which I am a proud member. Last time we had Professor Amy King, a very stimulating teacher type, talk to us on Dr. Schweitzer

and Dr. Zhivago. Now let us take a peek at that room. I'm positive you're going to love it (*Lolita: A Screenplay*, [Act 1], p. 36, underline added).

“Sig” is a sarcastic allusion to Sigmund Freud. Cf. “Dr. Froit of Signy-Mondieu-Mondieu” (27); “‘Sig’ (Signy- M.D.-M.D.” (577). Professor Leyman (340.20) also shows Nabokov’s criticism of Freud because “layman” means inexperienced, not a member of a profession, and therefore “Leyman” is not worthy of the title “professor.” Cf. “young layman and lemans” (17, I. 3).

**340.21: Flora:** appears in II.8 (410) and is mentioned later in the same chapter (418).

**341.12-13: a series of bourgeois presidents:** As BB notes in *The Nabokovian* website annotations, Léon Victor Auguste Bourgeois (1851-1925). He was French Prime Minister and President of the Third Commission of the Conference. Another possibility of “a series of bourgeois presidents” is 13<sup>th</sup> President of France, Pierre-Paul-Henri-Gaston Doumergue (1863-1937; in office 1924-1931) and 14<sup>th</sup> President of France, Joseph Athanase Gaston Paul Doumer (1857-1932, in office 1931-1932). Nabokov usually used “bourgeois” in the Flaubertian sense, to mean “philistine.” Perhaps here, he actually means it in the Marxist sense to refer to the non-royal, middle class, mercantile, social caste of the presidents. The word is, after all, used to contrast them with the kings and emperors preceding. In the USSR the French revolution was typically regarded as a “bourgeois” revolution.

**341.15: Khan Sosso:** “Sosso” must be SSSR, as followed by “Sovereign Society of Solicitous Republics” (341. 17-18).

**341.19: Trst.:** Slovene or Croatian name for Trieste, in northeastern Italy between the Adriatic Sea and Slovenia. Trieste was one of the most culturally important cities in the turn-of-the-century Hapsburg Empire and closest to western Europe in the Eastern Block.

**341.20: Athaulf the Future:** Adolf Hitler, the Führer. BB: See 585.5-7: “Athaulf Hindler (also known as Mittler—from “to mittle,” mutilate) came to power in Germany.”

**341.21: the secret flame of many a British nobleman:** BB: King Edward VIII went to see Hitler in Germany in 1937.



<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/royals/when-edward-viii-went-to-see-hitler-never-before-seen-photos-emerge-for-sale-of-duke-of-windsors-infamous-trip-to-nazi-germany-in-1937/ar-BBO86rd>

The British mass media also were supportive of Hitler at the beginning of the war, encouraged by Hitler's own praises of British imperialism.

Cf. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nazi\\_propaganda\\_and\\_the\\_United\\_Kingdom\\_](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nazi_propaganda_and_the_United_Kingdom_)

**341.23: transforming a gingerbread Germany . . . their young:** reminds one of fairy tales such as "Gingerbread Man" and Grimm's Hänsel and Gretel. In the latter, two children get lost in the woods, where they come upon a house made of gingerbread covered with frosting and candy.

**341.25: modernized barracks for misfits and their young:** Nazi propaganda, such as the film *The Führer Gives a City to the Jews* (1944), presented concentration camps as humane retreats of this sort. <[http://www.jewishfilm.org/Catalogue/films/city\\_to\\_the\\_jews.htm](http://www.jewishfilm.org/Catalogue/films/city_to_the_jews.htm)>

**342.5: ondulas:** appeared in I.30 (182).

**342.7: moralism:** does not concern ethical issues in Van's field; it is political moralism and related with "cosmic propaganda" (342.3).

**342.16: medieval explorers:** probably Marco Polo and Sir John Mandeville. Cf. Monica Manolescu, "Verbal Adventures in the Inky Jungle: Marco Polo and John Mandeville in Vladimir Nabokov's *The Gift*," *Cynos* 24.1 (2007):119-29.

**342.20: Recorrecting:** Play on "recollecting." Van's idea of recollecting is that the act of

recollection revises memory each time.

**342.24: *Queen Guinevere*:** connected with “Lance,” Lancelot is Guinevere’s lover in the Arthurian legend.

**342.28: Voltemand:** first appearance. “Volt” means thunder as does “Grom” of “Mr. Gromwell” five lines below. Van writes *Letters from Terra* under this pseudonym. **BB:** “Voltemand” is the name of Claudius’s ambassador to Norway and appears in Act II Scene ii of *Hamlet*. Voltemand reports that the king of Norway had prevented his son Fortinbras from invading Denmark. See our note 343.29 for another reference to *Hamlet*.

**342.30: Two bogus houses, “Abencerage” in Manhattan, and “Zegriss” in London:** Two rival families in fifteenth century Granada. According to legend, which VN notes as “bogus,” the Zegriss slaughtered the last of the Abencerages, an event retold by François-René de Chateaubriand in *Les Aventures du dernier Abencérage* (Eng. *Adventures of the Last Abencerage*). Ada says she would have spotted this link from Chateaubriand back to Van and herself had she seen a copy of *Letters from Terra*. The “houses,” here, means “families” as well as “publishing houses.” Also, Zegriss is a genus of butterfly.



[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zegriss\\_\(genus\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zegriss_(genus))

**342.32: lapochka:** darling (its first appearance in I.1, p.8).

**342.33: Gromwell:** His “really beautiful floral name.” **BB:** so unlikely to be the name of a beautiful flower.



Lithospermum

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lithospermum#/media/File:Nawrot\\_czerwonoblekitny\\_Lithospermum\\_purpurocaeruleum.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lithospermum#/media/File:Nawrot_czerwonoblekitny_Lithospermum_purpurocaeruleum.jpg)



Lithodora

<http://phyllodex.technallurgy.com/lithodora-diffusa-purple-gromwell/>

**343.10: *The Possessed by Miss Love*:** A version of *By Love Possessed* (1957) by James Gould Cozzens (1903-1978) (Boyd’s note in *The Annotations to Ada* published on *The Nabokovian* website). The book was a bestseller just before *Lolita*. *The Possessed* reminds the reader of the film *Possessed* in *Lolita* II. 26. While scanning the *Briceland Gazette*, Humbert Humbert finds *Brute Force* and *Possessed* are coming to town in the time of the novel’s setting, 1947 (262). Tadashi Wakashima infers: “And if we read ‘possessed’ somewhat obliquely, as equivalent to the title of the English translation of *Besy* (Ru.)—literally ‘demons’ but often rendered as *The Possessed*—mention of the film could also be seen as a slighting reference to Dostoevsky, whom Nabokov, after emigrating to the United States, consistently disparaged (Tadashi Wakashima, “Double Exposure: On the Vertigo of Translating *Lolita*,” translated from Japanese by Jeff Edmunds in collaboration with Akiko Nakata, *Zembla*, 2007, < <https://www.libraries.psu.edu/nabokov/wakashima.htm>> June 5, 2018.

**343.11: *The Puffer by Mr. Dukes*:** Washington Duke and his sons, Benjamin Nemerov and James Buchanan, established their tobacco business, W. Duke, Sons and Company in Durham, NC in 1878,

which developed into the American Tobacco Company, the largest tobacco manufacturing firm in the US, in 1880. In 1924, Trinity University in Durham was renamed Duke University, commemorating the Duke family's large contribution. From "People in the Collections: Duke, James Buchanan, 1856-1925," Duke University Libraries,

< <https://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/collections/corporations/jbduke/> > June 7, 2018.

"A version of Saul Bellow's *Herzog* (1964) (Herzog is German for 'duke'). In Nabokov's own copy of *Ada*, he explains for translators: 'to "puff," to push a book by means of publicity etc.'" (Boyd's note in The Annotations to *Ada* published on *The Nabokovian* website). If we regard *The Possessed* (343.10) as a parody of Dostoevsky's novel, *The Puffer* can be seen as a reference to Turgenev's *Dym* (1867), or *Smoke*.

**343.25: only six copies had been sold:** As Van did not send review copies, those six copies were all actually sold.

**343.27-28: poor Terra's correspondence:** Why poor? The "poor" refers to "a girl called Terra," with whose image the shop girl in Van's imagination devotedly tries to attract "dour homosexuals."

**343.29: the First Clown in *Elsinore*, a distinguished London weekly:** Elsinore is the castle in Denmark where Hamlet resides. Cf. "some ludicrous blunder in the current column of Elsie de Nord, a vulgar literary demimondaine" (61.10). The First Clown is the gravedigger who shows Hamlet Yorick's skull.

**343.29: *Elsinor*, a distinguished London weekly:** A likely journal which featured reviews of science fiction was *The Times Literary Supplement*. BB: I cannot help thinking that he has in mind the *New Statesman* because VN subscribed to it in 1960s and because Claudius was a "new statesman" in Denmark. Another possibility is *The New York Times Book Review*, which regularly published the reviews of science fiction in 1960s, may also have been in Nabokov's mind.

**343.32: "*Terre à terre*, 1891,":** "*Terre à terre*" (Fr), "down to earth," puns on "tête à tête." Shakespeare's gravedigger, who is down to earth and digs the earth.

**343.33: the year's "Space Romances,":** One of the year's "Space Romances" may be H. G. Wells' *The Time Machine: A Scientific Romance* (1898). Wells was one of young Nabokov's favorite authors, and his deep admiration, especially for Wells's scientific romances, lasted through his life (SO 175). H. G. Wells used the term "scientific romance" instead of "science fiction." See 343.33.

**344.6: Mispel (another botanical name — “medlar” in English):** The suggestion is that Max Mispel is a “rotten” reviewer. “Mispel” or *mespilus germanica* is another name for “medlar,” a fruit tree. We have seen another botanical name, Gromwell (342). Also, Mispel, as in “mis-spell,” is an unfortunate name for a writer. “Mr. Medlar” (344.28) puns with “meddler.”

*Mespilus germanica*, known as the **medlar** or **common medlar**, is a large **shrub** or small tree, and the name of the fruit of this tree. The fruit has been cultivated since Roman times, and is unusual in being available in winter, and in being eaten when **bledded**.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mespilus\\_germanica](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mespilus_germanica)

According to <https://www.bbc.com/food/medlars>,

Medlars are a hardy fruit that look like a cross between a small apple and a rosehip. When ripe, they’re hard and green. They’re picked at this stage, but aren’t edible until they’ve become half rotten or ‘bledded’, when they turn brown and soft. Harvested medlars are stored in sawdust or bran in a cool, dark place until they’re suitably bledded and have developed an aromatic flavour.

BB: "Herr Mispel" is German, Mr. Medlar is British, and Max Mushmula is Russian.

BB: VN’s reference may be to Rosalind’s line to Touchstone in Act III scene ii line 125, *As You Like It*.

**Rosalind:**

I’ll graft you onto that tree, and when I do I’ll be grafting onto it a medlar. The fruit the tree bears will be the earliest to ripen in the country because, God knows, *you’ll* be rotten before you’re half-ripe, which is how medlars are.



Ripe and unripe medlars

Photo by Nadiatalent - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0,

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=19496469>



**344.7: Goluba University:** Probably Columbia University. “Dove” is *golub*’ in Russian and *colomb* in French.

**344.9: Osberg:** An anagram of Borges. In interviews collected in *Strong Opinions*, Nabokov mentions Borges. Answering Alvin Toffler’s question about contemporary authors he enjoys reading: “I do have a few favorites—for example, Robbe-Grillet and Borges. How freely and gratefully one breathes in their marvelous labyrinths! I love their lucidity of thought, the purity and poetry, the mirage in the mirror” (SO 44). In a couple of interviews, he answers about being linked to Beckett and Borges: “They would do better to link Beckett with Maeterlinck and Borges with Anatole France.” (SO 155); “That playwright [Beckett] and that essayist [Borges] are regarded nowadays with such religious fervor that in the triptych you mention, I would feel like a robber between two Christs” (SO 184). He denies any debt to “the famous Argentine essayist and his rather confused compilation, ‘A New Refutation of Time’” (SO 289-90). Nor does he admire Beckett as a playwright: “Beckett is the author of lovely novellas and wretched plays in the Maeterlinck tradition” (<<http://lib.ru/NABOKOW/Inter15.txt>> June 10, 2018) or Borges as an essayist (see quote in note). In both cases it was the prose fiction he admired. Nabokov seems to be jabbing at the critical establishment, rather than Beckett and Borges, by fixing on the plays and essays, thereby underlining the irony of his ‘robber between two Christs’ jest.

**344.12: expounder of anagrammatic dreams, Ben Sirine:** Ben Sirine is mentioned in *The Perfumed Garden*. See next annotation.

**344.13-16: Burton in his adaptation of Nefzawi’s treatise on the best method of mating with obese or hunchbacked females (*The Perfumed Garden*, Panther edition, p.187 . . .):** It sounds as if the best way to mate with obese or hunchbacked females will be learned on p.187 of the Panther edition, but actually it is not. The method is mentioned on p.142 and p.148 respectively, and in some other places. On p.187, instead, the reader finds “Ben Sirine” as a probable scholar of dream prognostications. Nabokov rewards the serious reader who has consulted p.187 of the Panther edition with the self-referential name *Sirin* which he adopted as an emigré Russian poet in his youth:

By transposing the letters other analogies may be arrived at.

These explanations are not here in their place; but I have been induced to give them in this chapter on account of the use to which they may be put. Persons who would wish to know more on this subject have only to consult the treatise of Ben Sirine. I now return to the names given

to the sexual parts of women (187).

This is the only reference to Ben Sirine throughout the edition and no other information about the scholar can be found there. As prognostications are advanced in these pages, the reader can deduce that Ben Sirine is a scholar in the field. Nabokov intentionally misleads the reader to expect to learn about particular sexual positions. He also changes Sirine's field from dream prognostications to anagrammatic dreams discussed on the page. Surprisingly, much earlier than Freud, anagrammatic dreams were often argued for, as can be seen in some other pages of *The Perfumed Garden*. We can deduce that Nabokov jokingly makes himself the expounder of anagrammatic dreams through Ben Sirine, whose name suggests Nabokov's pseudonym Sirin.

When Nabokov was working on *Ada*, texts such as *The Perfumed Garden*, *The Arabian Nights* or *The Thousand and One Nights*, and *Kama Sutra*, all adapted by Richard Burton, were very popular and sold well. The first paperback edition of *The Perfumed Garden* was published in 1963. "The book presents opinions on what qualities men and women should have to be attractive, gives advice on sexual technique, warnings about sexual health, and recipes to remedy sexual maladies. It gives lists of names for the penis and vagina, has a section on the interpretation of dreams, and briefly describes sex among animals. Interspersed with these there are a number of stories which are intended to give context and amusement." <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Perfumed\\_Garden](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Perfumed_Garden)>

"Panther" has another association with H. G. Wells. In his story "The Door in the Wall" (1906), the protagonist is welcomed through a door by two huge panthers into an enchanted garden, a sort of Eden.

**344.16-17: ninety-three-year-old Baron Van Veen:** revises the typescript and rewrites it entirely in long hand in 1963-65 (578).

**344.19: Mandalatov:** suggests Mandala, related with the Orient theme and Jungian psychology. Both "mandala" and "Dr. Jung" are mentioned in *Pnin*:

Nor did any of Victor's casual sketches represent the so-called mandala—a term supposedly meaning (in Sanskrit) a magic ring, and applied by Dr. Jung and others to any doodle in the shape of a more or less fourfold spreading structure, such as a halved mangosteen, or a cross, or the wheel on which egos are broken like Morphos, or more exactly, the molecule of carbon, with its four valences—that main chemical component of the brain, automatically magnified and reflected on paper" (92).

"Professor Junker" appears in *Look at the Harlequins!*: "The appointment was with Professor Junker, a double personage, consisting of husband and wife. They had been practicing as a team for thirty years now, and every Sunday, in a secluded, though consequently rather dirty, corner of the beach, the two analyzed each other" (17).

In the screenplay of *Lolita*, Charlotte speaks to Mr. Jung:

*She Draws up at the Curb* / Where old Mr. Jung is inspecting the contents of his mailbox. / Over his spectacles he peers at Mrs. Haze.

**CHARLOTTE** (leaning out) Mr. Jung, something must be done about that dog of yours.

Mr. Jung, beaming and a little gaga, walks around the car to her window. (*Lolita: A Screenplay* 24 [Act 1]).

In addition, Dr. Ray may be a Jungian, as his receptionist talks to Humbert about a group therapy for European immigrants: “Well, I’m sure Dr. Ray will fix all that. He’ll assign you to a delightful group of patients we have here, mainly European immigrants. See these shoes?” (*Lolita: A Screenplay* 19 [Prologue]).

344.21: Gwen, a fat little *fille de joie*: a play on the phrase “a fat little fee, Gwen” (343.12). French “fille” and English “fee” are homophones.

**345.2: Mushmula:** the last one of the “medlar” names. All these names have “m and l”: Mispel, Medlar, Mushmula, Melville and Marvell.

**345.5: Melville and Marvell:** Boyd notes to the LOA edition that Herman Melville’s “The Ravaged Villa” (1891) has a line, “The weed exiles the flower” (n.799). The title and the line of the poem are associated with Villa Venus and its floramors. Cf. “(Antilia later regained her husband, and Flora was weeded out. Ada’s addendum)” (340). Marvell’s “The Garden” (1681) depicts a paradisiacal garden similar to Villa Venus.

**345.11: after completing his medical studies at Kingston (which he found more congenial than good old Chose):** Kingston University, according to Van, is in “Mayne.”

**345.13: As a boy of fifteen (Eric Veen’s age of florescence) he had studied with a poet’s passion the time-tables of three great American transcontinental trains:** Fifteen-year-old Van’s passion for “the time tables of three great American transcontinental trains” reminds one of the dreamy boy Marcel in Proust’s *Du côté de chez Swann*, who shows a similar enthusiasm for timetables and a specific time for departure. In “Noms De Pays: Le Nom” the narrator says that “l’indicateur des chemins de fer” (timetable) exalts his desire for artistic joy more than anything else (*Du côté de chez Swann*, Gallimard 384); he also tells how he could not read “l’heure de depart” of his yearned-for train on guidebooks or timetables without his heart palpitating (*Du côté de chez Swann*, 378).

**345.18: Witch:** Cf. Sorcière [witch in French] in the Valais (528). **BB:** In Russian, “witch” is *vedma*’

(which could also be transliterated *vied'ma*). Viedma is also a town in Patagonia.

**345.20: Grant's Horn:** BB: [Captain Grant's Horn \(334\)](#).

**345.24: via California and Central America, roared into Uruguay:** One of VN's dreams was to travel South America hunting butterflies. As if compensating the unrealized dream, in "Terra Incognita," the protagonist appears to be exploring South America although, as the reader recognizes at the end of the story, he is actually staying in a living room in Europe.

**345.29-30: all continents except you begin with an A:** BB: [All continents except Europe begin with an A](#).

**345.34. Predormient:** Before sleep. Pun on predominant

**346.5: desertorum:** Associated with "red dog" finishing the chapter, "desertorum" reminds us of Michelangelo Antonioni's film *Il Deserto Rosso* (1964). VN is unlikely to have been interested in Antonioni's works, but the film was awarded the Golden Lion at the 25<sup>th</sup> Venice Film Festival in the same year, so it is probable VN heard or read about the film, or saw the poster. In the film, the heroine suffers mental problems after she survives a car accident, which may, to readers of *Ada*, seem to be a preview for the tragic episode that will begin the next chapter. She is troubled with various illusionary sounds and feelings, which could be related with the content of Van's book.

Regarding the red motif, we have seen "Captain de Roux" (344). A version of the name appears in Pnin: Cf. ". . . decayed Mme Roux, the concierge of the squalid apartment house in the Sixteenth Arrondissement of Paris where Pnin, after escaping from Leninized Russia and completing his college education in Prague, had spent fifteen years . . ." *Pnin* (8).

**346.7: seventy, ninety-seven, night-nine, one hund, red dog--:** BB: ["Night-nine" echoes "night-night," a familiar phrase for "good night" around small children](#). Van, counting sheep, is sliding off to into sleep. "Hundred" is divided into "hund" and "red." This explains the mention of "anagrammatic dreams" (344.14). "Dog" seems to emerge from "hund" (hound in German), one of several Nabokovian wordplays that take place in the brain of a person who is dreaming or falling asleep. Cf. "Less frightening but perhaps imperiling a person's brain to an even greater extent were the 'avalanche' nightmares at the rush of awakening when their imagery turned into the movement of verbal colluvia in the valleys of Toss and Thurn, [. . .] Dream-man is an idiot not wholly devoid of animal cunning; the fatal flaw in his mind corresponds to the splutter produced by tongue twisters: "the risks scoundrels take." *Transparent Things* (60). The ending of this chapter also reminds one of

that of *Look at the Harlequins!*: “I had been promised some rum with my tea--Ceylon and Jamaica, the sibling islands (mumbling comfortably, dropping off, mumble dying away)--” (253). As in this chapter, the dash closes the novel while the protagonist is falling asleep. As for “Ceylon and Jamaica” mumbled by the protagonist in the novel, both Ceylon and Kingston (in Jamaica) have been mentioned in the previous page (345.11)--and Kingston appears in the name of the university Van went to (345.11). In *The Gift*, “‘A falling star, a cruising chrysolite, an aviator’s avatar . . . ’ His [Fyodor’s] mind sank lower and lower into a hell of alligator alliterations into infernal cooperatives of words” (352). In *Lectures on Literature*, Nabokov quotes the end of Ithaca section of *Ulysses*:

“The chapter ends with Bloom gradually falling asleep.

. . . . .

With?

Sinbad the Sailor and Tinbad the Tailor and Jinbad the Jailer and Whinbad the Whaler and Ninbad the Nailer and Finbad the Failer and Binbad the Bailer and Pinbad the Pailer and Minbad the Mailer and Hinbad the Hailer and Rinbad the Railer and Dinbad the Kailer and Vinbad the Quailer and Linbad the Yailer and Xinbad the Phthailer” (*Lectures on Literature*, Harcourt Brace, 361-62).

The alliteration begins to fail as it does at the end of this chapter in *Ada* to mirror the fade-out of consciousness. The ending of this chapter (*Ada* II.2) leaves us to imagine that the whole story of Eric van Veen in the next chapter (II.3) is what Van dreams while asleep on his armchair.