

**TENDERENDA (or) how Witolde realized the unrealizable ideal of perspectiveless
knowledge (and also) The Restrain Refrain of St. Laurentius T.**

a sideways adaptation of Hugo Ball's "Tenderenda der Fantast"
from a translation by Malcolm Green

Draft 4

by Karinne Keithley
December 2004

persons herein:

THE CHRONICLER, who is at a distance

THE BEAR (with St. LAURENTIUS TENDERENDA in his belly)

UDA

GNIMM

WITOLDE

TREES

*Note A: All things attributed here to Saint Laurentius Tenderenda are written by **Hugo Ball**, and come from *Tenderenda Der Fantast*. The soiree song *Je Voudrais* (I'd like to be), was written by Soeur Sourire (*The Singing Nun*), and Gnimmm's incantations against microdemons are taken from Kurt Schwitters' *Ursonate*. These sections are identified by italics.*

Note B: In the final pages of the play, underlined text is to be spoken simultaneously by WITOLDE and CHRONICLER.

[PROLOGUE]

CHRONICLER:

The forest, which some call *Der Schwartbilt*, is said to contain a hole in the world made by Saint Laurentius Tenderenda just before he climbed into the body of a bear, never to climb out again.

The hole, no larger than a pinprick, gives way to the void, wherein there is no space, time, nor any other category of experience. It is said that the great sleeping Ursus, whose heavy breath alone populates the void, is curled up everywhere and nowhere at once.

Through the hole, there blows a wind which is one of the wonders of the world.

Of the tiny roster of people who have ever felt this voidal wind graze the back of their neck, I am happy to count myself. I happened through that forest on a great journey in the commission of the Duchess of Ess for whom I was compiling an encyclopedia of all the wonders in the hemisphere.

My journey had begun seven years earlier with the famous automatons of the great court at Kevorgam, from where I continued on as far as the perpetually frozen river of Mongolia mentioned by Hoelun, mother of

Genghis Kahn, in the Secret History. In the intervening years, great fires had broken out everywhere west of the Uqbar Sea.

The forest of St. Laurentius Tenderenda was impervious to the fires owing to a property of the wind that turned out to be, in fact, propertylessness. The arcane theoretical underpinnings of this have been exhaustively described in a pamphlet by my colleague HB, a scholar of Leibniz.

I understood it intuitively enough when I was there, during the three months duration of my perch in the canopy of Lawrence's forest. By the time of my arrival, few remained of the congregation of St. Laurentius Tenderenda, Only three children and the bear were there to tend to the abbey and say the daily prayers. The rest of the flock was no longer human, and it took some time to distinguish them from the other elms, pines and lindens.

From the belly of the bear, the Saint periodically proclaimed new hymnae to be copied into his book of teachings, known popularly as *Der Phantasen*, and by the Church Mystics as *The Second Liturgical Book of Saint Laurentius Tenderenda, Church Poet and Knight of Glossy Paper*.

[The children press their ears to the belly of the bear, then copy out the liturgy. When they are done, they perform the liturgy.]

UDA, WITOLDE AND GNIMM:

*The heavens stand lemon yellow.
Lemon yellow stand the fields of the soul.
Our heads are crooked to the ground
and we have opened our ears wide.
We have spread out our aprons and our habits
and our back of crazed china glints compliantly.
Verily I say unto you, my humility is not for you to judge
but for GOD alone.
Each seeks a happiness for which he is inadequate.
No one has many enemies, so many as he could have.
Man is a chimera, a miracle, a divine approximation,
full of malice, and deceit.
One day, out of curiosity and suspicion,
I no longer recognized myself.
And lo, I turned round and examined my soul.
And lo, there burned the candle and it dripped upon my own skull.
My first realization however was:
Small and large, that is folly.
Large and small, that is relativity.
And lo, my finger then flew forth and burnt itself on the sun
And lo, the hands of the clock tower tore up the stones of the street.
But you believe you can feel, and are felt.
Verily, nothing is the way it appears.
Rather it is possessed of a vital spirit and goblin which remains
motionless as long as one looks at it, but once discovered, it
transforms itself and becomes monstrous.
For many years I bore the burden of things wishing for liberation.
Until I saw and recognized their dimensions.
and I was seized by fervor. odious life.
And I stretched out my arms in defense and flew, flew
straight as an arrow, over the roofs.*

CHRONICLER

The children were known, when I arrived in the forest, as Uda, Witolde and Gnimmm. Uda was to lose her name entirely, Gnimmm was to adopt a more demonic name to protect against infestation, and Witolde, well what Witolde became is the message of my story.

[Forest comes alive, formally. The TREES do a GROVE DANCE. End of prologue.]

[DAY]

[The children sit, bored, pestering one another. The bear sleeps, occasionally waking and scaring the children. He finally wakes and they go about their duties.]

CHRONICLER

Hole in the world notwithstanding, there are certain daily activities to be done around the abbey. There is the washing the scrubbing the drying the tilling the digging the raking the hunting the piling the cooking the chopping the sweeping the watering and several other things besides.

At nightfall, Uda records the events of the day in the abbey's log book.

UDA

The bear frightened Witolde and she hid in the cellar. Gnimmm developed an infestation by microdemons. We all took a walk to the spring and saw three petrified does standing by the water. I, Uda made a supper of snail and nut stew. The breeze was very soft today. The saint spoke from the belly of the bear and gave us a new liturgy called Hymnus.

[The Saint emerges from the belly of the bear. Trees enter to tend to the bear in his natal discomfort. The hymnus is heard coming from the saint. The children copy it down. The saint returns to the belly of the bear. The trees bring the bear a glass of water and a damp cloth for his forehead. When he is nursed back to health, he calls for the children to perform.]

BEAR

Hymnus.

UDA, WITOLDE AND GNIMM

*Thou lord of the birds, of dogs and cats, of spirits and bodies,
of spooks and dingbats.*

*Thou above and below to the right to the left straight on,
about turn and halt.*

*The spirit is in thee, and thou art in it, and you are in you,
and we are in us.*

Thou art resurrected who once was vanquished.

The unbound one who tore his chains.

*The almighty are thou the all nightly most knightly with a
burning pot on your pate.*

*The thunder in thy box has exploded in all directions and
languages.*

*Thy tin neck towers and thy spoke soars, in reason and
unreason, in the realms of the quick and the dead.*

*Thou camest with mighty roars, basinet of rebellion, son of
the earth.*

*In fiery chasms and bullet's hail, in dying whimpers and
endless curses.*

*In clouds of printer's ink, communion wafers and cakes, and
countless blasphemous verses.*

*So we beheld thee, so we held thee, in a rain of faces carved
from agate.*

*On toppled thrones, ruptured cannon, on tatters of
newspaper, foreign notes and shares.*

*Gaily adorned dolly, thou has held the sword of justice
above the doctrinaires.*

*Though God of maledictions and sewers, demon prince, God
of the possessed.*

*Thou mannequin with violets, garters, perfumes and
painted with a whore's face.*

*Thy seven kooks are cocking snooks, thy great aunts are
miscreants. Thy headgear's a red sphere. (A red sphere.)*

Thou prince of sickness and remedy.

*Father of the Bulboes and Tenderendae, of arsenics and
salvarsans, gas taps, soaped nooses and booby traps.*

Thou undoer of all ties, casuist of every twist and turn.

*Thou God of lamps and candelabras, thou nourishest thyself
on light cones, triangles and stars.*

*Thou torture wheel, Ferris wheel of pain, homocentaurus,
thou sailest in winged trousers through the sick bay.*

*Thou wood, copper bronze zinc, gale and mast, an iron bell,
thou whirrest smoothly past.*

*Thou magic quadrate, now it's too late, thou mystic quartier,
Ambrosian steer.*

*Lord of our denudation, thy five fingers are the foundation
of our salvation.*

*Lord of our dog-Latin and hunter's cant, lamentotympani of
our existence, eternalist, communist, antichrist!*

Oh! most sagacious sagacity of Solomon!

[The bear leaves in disgust as the children are finishing the liturgy.]

Enter the trees, who do tree things.]

CHRONICLER

When the wind blew with great force, the forest would bend here and there, and disappear in the folds. When the wind blew gently, the trees and creatures moved quietly, trying to catch a sense of the sound of nothing, which was what lay beyond the pinprick made in the world by Saint Laurentius Tenderenda.

[**Sound of nothing** emerges from white noise. The trees listen. Gradually the sound of the fires becomes audible.]

UDA

A burning smell made Witolde weep for most of the afternoon. Several trees were found to be in different locations than yesterday. I, Uda, made a breakfast of quail eggs and pine needles. Gnimm discovered the wine cellar and became drunk. The bear seemed uncomfortable all day, for the saint was pacing in his belly.

[A phone rings from somewhere. Witolde comes to get it, but it stops ringing just as she picks it up.]

CHRONICLER

The Saint himself, whose worldly confusions too much overwhelmed him, saw nothing. Having succumbed to the irresistible urge to retreat, he never directly experienced the queer force of the wind which blew from the site of his great feat, the miracle of the hole in the world. He relied on the bear as his intermediary and protector.

[The children and the bear go to bed. Forest Activity of the Nighttime Kind.]

[the usual activities]

[Sound of morning. The children awake, but the BEAR is still asleep. They pester each other. then settle into reading. The BEAR wakes up and they all stand to attention.]

CHRONICLER

Hole in the world notwithstanding, there are certain daily activities to be done around the abbey. There is the washing the wondering the scrubbing the drying the tilling the digging the raking the scaring the crying the piling the cooking the chopping the sweeping the watering the praying the grimacing and several other things besides.

[WITOLDE and UDA sing "The Red Heavens" while they work. Then, the phone rings.]

MAMA (on phone)

Hello, Witolde please.

WITOLDE

Yes Mama, this is Witolde.

MAMA

Witolde, this is your mother calling. Witolde, I am calling to inform you that your father and I have decided to emigrate to Switzerland without you now that the fires have come so close to our village. We have thought it over, and come to the conclusion that you will lead a happier life at the abbey

where you can study to become a nun, with no worries about the fires or other such things. Also, I suppose this is the appropriate time to tell you that we adopted you from the baker's wife. Please do not try to contact your father and I, or your brothers or your sisters. We will be changing our name once we get to Switzerland so that we might start anew. So. I will not be coming to fetch you tomorrow afternoon as previously arranged.

WITOLDE

But Mama, you don't understand.

MAMA

Witolde. Your Father and I have made our decision.

WITOLDE

But Mama, there is a bear here.

MAMA

Witolde, don't be ridiculous.

WITOLDE

But Mama, I think he is going to eat me.

MAMA

That's quite enough from you young lady.
Kiss kiss goodbye, ciao!

WITOLDE

MAMA! Mama? Mama? mama?

[Dial tone. WITOLDE collapses and cries and cries. The trees flurry around her, then stand around and gossip about her parentage. UDA walks in and sees the trees talking. The trees leave.]

[saintly inhabitation]

UDA

Gnimm has found that he is a good enactor of stories. I have found that a tree is a very nice thing to contemplate. Witolde has taken refuge in the corner of the library devoted to the theological discussion of love. The bear spent the day sleeping, evidently the saint must have gone into another period of contemplation. We expect a new liturgy to be recited from the belly of the bear any day now.

CHRONICLER

Other instances of saintly inhabitation of animal bellies: (1) Saint Karl of Vienna who lived for a period of two years in the body of a ferret. (2) Saint TrrGill of Auer on Rhine, who lived for eight years in the belly of a carp. (3) Saint Jorge of Buenos Aires, who lived for eighteen years in the belly of a Chinese tortoise. (4) Saint Swannly of York, who lived for seventy five years in the belly of a sheepdog. (5) Saint Temujin of Mongolia, who lived for two hundred years in the beard of a mountain goat.

[The wind blows. The SAINT emerges again from the belly of the BEAR, and gives the children the Swaggerprance story. The TREES, as is their custom, tend to the BEAR, bringing him water and a damp cloth.]

UDA

Nothing has happened today but the preparations for tonight's entertainment, an enactment of the Saint's new story. It will be performed by Gnimmm and Witolde, while I shall read aloud to the bear in whose belly is our blessed Saint. The story is called "The Decline and Fall of Swaggerprance." Perhaps if the fires are ever finished, we shall take it to schoolchildren to dance for them as a warning against dandyism. I have made for the occasion a special casserole of twigs, leeks, roots and termites, which I baked in the sun to turn sweet and green. Also Witolde and I have made a song.

[the soiree]

UDA

As his name implies, Swaggerprance is a being who loves sensations and makes a song and dance about things. He is one of the despairing types who, lacking an mental equilibrium, is unable to resist the slightest impression. Hence his tragic end.

[WITOLDE and GNIMMM dance
GNIMMM's Swaggerprance Enactment
while UDA reads.]

UDA

And Swaggerprance suddenly felt a pressure on his temples. The productive currents that had warmed and enveloped his body were dying and hung like long saffron strips of wallpaper from his body. A gust of wind curled up his hands and feet. His back, a screeching turncrew, soared to the sky in a spiral.

With a sneer, Swaggerprance seized a stone that was screaming from the corner of a building and defended himself blindly. Blue apprenticed overstormed him. A sky

collapsed brightly. A ventilation shaft skewed. A chain of winged lying-in women flew across the sky.

The gasworks, the breweries and the domes of the town hall began to resound with a tympanic quacking. Brightly feathered demons spattered his brain, tousled and plucked it.

Swaggerprance stuck both index fingers into the vestibules of his ears and scraped out the last shabby remains of the sun that had crept inside. Apocalyptic glory broke out. The blue apprentices sounded cowrie shells. They walked up balustrades of light and descended into the glory.

Swaggerprance was overcome by nausea. Gagging on the false god. he ran, flailing his arms in the air, tripped and fell on his face. A voice screamed out of his back.

A pasted-on culture flakes off and is torn to shreds by vengeful spirits. Swaggerprance rages in a fit of St. Vitus' dance. One, two, one, two, means of mortifying the flesh. "Pan Catholicism," he screamed in his blindness. He sets up a General Consulate for Public Appeal and is the first to lodge a protest. A beautiful scar adorns Swaggerprance's eye with white lustre.

He balances in a zigzag colored shirt on the towering aether-spire. Then he hires enough momentum to clatter up and smash through the spokes of imaginary giant wheels. He is threatened by the faces of Hasty Decision, Bustling Scalp and Carping Skepticism. The lobes of his lungs decimated, he hops out of the hand of a goblin.

His friends desert him. "Swaggerprance, Swaggerprance!" he crows from a mantelpiece. He drifts as a segment of a solar eclipse across the lopsided towers and domes of drunken cities. The landscapes of blushing, sadness and bridal bliss overshadow him.

Swaggerprance witters on and concocts appropriate decadences. He deposits extensive anxiety complexes and orchestrates inhibitions inbetween. "Are you saps trying to tell me --" and foaming from the mouth, he belches a blue cloud onto the floor. He crawls out into the sun. He craves the experience. Grass grows inauspiciously and drives him back into the dark. Curtains billow and a house floats away. The catalepsy of destruction.

Swaggerprance had slain a captain with a hymnal. He had invented an artificial floating island. He blunders into processions of supplicants and reveres vagabond Jesus.

But it does not help him. He is not up to these turbulences, detonations and radium fields. "Quantity is everything," he shouts, "syphilis is a serious venereal disease." He takes a bath in hydrochloric acid to rid himself of his feathered

body. Remaining: one corn, a pair of gold spectacles, a set of false teeth and an amulet. And his soul, an ellipse.

Swaggerprace gave a bitter smile. "Originality is a blather infection. Painful and improbable. Commit murder. A murder is something that cannot be denied. Never! Create a rosy atmosphere. Always love the poor." And he blew on Musicon's neck and she disappeared in a cloud.

And he wrote his testament. In urine ink. He had nothing else. For he was in prison. There he cursed the fantasts. Then he died. A palm forest drew on a soda soup. A horse moved its way and made headway. A flag of mourning fluttered over the hospital.

[Exhaustion reigns. Then,]

UDA AND WITOLDE (singing)

*I'd like to be, to be like the wind,
blowing around.*

*I'd like to be, to be like the wind,
dancing around.*

like the wind blowing to you.

like the wind.

*I'd like to be, to be a white cloud,
floating up high.*

*I'd like to be, to be a white cloud,
up in the sky,*

Like a cloud searching for you

For your face

*I'd like to be, to be like the flame
the forest fire*

*I'd like to be to be like the flame,
of the bonfire*

Like a flame rising toward you

Oh lord

*I'd like to be, to be a guitar,
singing to you*

*I'd like to be, to be a guitar,
singing to you*

*A guitar that you can fill
with your song.*

[Stars twinkle. Deepest of slumbers. Daytime again.]

UDA

The bear spent the day dancing Gnimms Swaggerprance enactment. I spent the day standing like a tree. Witolde yet again took a day of solace in the theological texts, and then left for a walk through the forest. Gnimms has had to do all the chores by himself today. For supper he cooked four rabbits in wine. He tried to claim that they were big eared leprechauns but no one believed him, for he is usually lying. The Saint is sleeping after the immense effort of bringing forth Swaggerprance. I have noticed that three of the trees are in different places than they were this morning.

CHRONICLER

Time passed.

UDA

The bear has given himself entirely to dancing for the second day in a row. The wind is very forceful today. Witolde has gone off in search of it. In the garden, grapevines have suddenly sprung up out of season. Gnimms says it is by the force of his desire to make more wine and I can only agree with him- there is no other reason for it.

[how to be a tree]

UDA

One night I awake with a sense of something moving.

[The forest is very much awake and moving. UDA watches, and then is drawn into it. Trees whisper secret things to her. She has a revelation.]

CHRONICLER

It is a marvel unique to the forest of St. Laurentius Tenderenda that girls become tress by dancing like them.

UDA

If a hole in the world is found standing in a tree, then . . .

Then to stand like a tree is to become a hole in the world.

If a hole in the world is standing which is to be very still and yet alive, then to be very still and yet alive is to be a hole in the world.

And if I find myself standing in a tree that is not felled then I am likely to find a hole. And if I find a hole by being very still then there is a very good chance that it will be a real hole* and not just a depression.

And if I stay very still then I might pass through a hole in the world, having become a tree which is a hole because it is a point in space and also not a point in space, which leaves a hole when the tree walks away. which I have seen happen.

So a tree is both a *hole* in the world and a *tree* in the world, and a *plug* against the world-which-is-not-a-world and is not on fire. And if I were to become a tree then I could not catch fire *if* I managed to become the kind of tree that was a hole in the world by being both a point in space and not a point in space, that is, spaceless or at least mobile. And yet very still and yet still alive.

[UDA is swept up into the trees' dance. The BEAR wanders through the forest and interrupts them. UDA stands like a tree and the bear does not notice her. He eats some berries and takes a piss. WITOLDE comes looking for her and they all stop moving. WITOLDE wanders through the forest.]

WITOLDE

Uda.

[UDA stops being a tree and comes to WITOLDE's side. They understand each other and walk off. The trees ceremoniously change places.]

[the sound of nothing.]

UDA, WITOLDE AND GNIMM

*Chaldean Archangel Aster king, purple,
Man with the hands which spell sleep.
Thou lettest the animals appear within us,
Thou pinnest us to the jingling medals of the Magician
Thou linkest us with the starts
which slice and divide us up.
Master of all saints, of all the dead,
Alembic in which we faded.
We die crosswise and lengthwise
The final cough racks us
We sink down into the infinite space,
Laurentius tears, radiant and zealous.*

*Thou zone chief, black chief
How addicted we are to seizures,
How seized by addiction to death
The holy doctor Kosmas cannot help us.
We die to thee now and then we die to thee completely.
In thee art all things united*

*We carry the great bear in our arms as an ulcer
A sun of terra sienna in our hearts.
Possessing in thy possession, we free ourselves.*

*We pinked trumpets, fluttering in the crystal wind,
We tragic peacocks, shattering on every step.
We grimacers,
Dancing round the water butt in cloaks of fire,
Thou girdle of stars, thou spherical wall, rolling darkness
Thou oriental people, occidental people,
War marches muttering in minor keys,
Froth on the tower of thy grace.*

*Thou cymbalum mundi, coral of the beyond, fluid master
Loud weepeth the scale of man and beast
Loud lamenteth the people of the cities of fire and smoke.
And thine enchanted horns appeared as thou beholdest thy
fictile playthings, as thou inspectest thy realm and us, the
administrators of thy cadastre.
For the rouge cracked, for the dice decomposed
For never was there such sin as this.*

*Thou countenance pieced together from metaphors,
carnival poem puppet
Of our fears, thou scent of white paper!
Paper ink, writing implements and cigarettes,
We leave everything behind. subdued, we follow thee*

*Our feet free themselves
From the figures that were instilled in us.
A sweet stream flows forth
From the liquors which were distilled in us
We exchange the rare for cash, the fair for balderdash
One item for three, the city of night for Varanasi.*

[Everyone sleeps. The wind blows. GNIMM twitches and causes vines to sprout everywhere. The children awake. morning sounds different. They go about their tasks.]

CHRONICLER

Gnimm, whose aptitude was, in ways, the least of the three, was the first to grasp the ease of it. Vines sprouted everywhere and the wine he made matured instantaneously. Uda could not move her thoughts from the trees. Witolde became confused and quiet. The bear enjoyed dancing.

[UDA drops her pen and stops everything to make an announcement.]

UDA

It is the case that I have become a tree.

[And so it is.]

CHRONICLER

And so it was. Witolde entered into a state of prolonged contemplation. Gnimmm was left alone to translate the words of the saint, who had taken to speaking entirely in nonsense syllables.

[The Saint emerges from the belly of the bear. GNIMMM listens.]

GNIMMM

*Jolifanto bambla o falli bambla
Grossiga m'pfa habla horem
Egiga goramen
Higo bloiko russalu huju
Hollaka hollala
Anlogo bung
Blago bung
Blago bung
Bossa fatake
u uu u
Schampa wulla wussa olobo
Hej tatta gorem
Eschige zunbada
Wulubu ssubudu ulu wassubada
Tumba ba umf
Kusa gauma
Ba-umf*

[how unbearable clock time]

[The forest tics and tocs. WITOLDE writes in the abbey log book where UDA used to, but trails off into deep contemplation. As the tic toc trails off, the wind blows.]

CHRONICLER

What does life look like at the juncture of a world within time and a void wherein there

is no space, time, nor any other category of
experience? Collapsed, completed infinities?
Perverse ruptures in sequence?

[Church Bells. The SAINT emerges from the belly of the BEAR, who passes out from the
pain. WITOLDE speaks to the SAINT. The trees sing the saint's words.]

WITOLDE

I think I can be something other than *in*
time.

LAURENTIUS TENDERENDA

These days, the *thing-in-itself* is a brand of
shoe polish.

WITOLDE

I think I can be something other than exactly
here and only so.

LAURENTIUS TENDERENDA

One should guard against speaking or
reacting.

WITOLDE

I think I can be something other than exactly
this one and not another also.

LAURENTIUS TENDERENDA

One had better not even confess to oneself
upon waking what one has dreamed.

WITOLDE

I think I can be in both.

LAURENTIUS TENDERENDA

Who can be so filled with divine things that
the assault can do him no harm?

WITOLDE

I think I am here and also other places.

LAURENTIUS TENDERENDA

Who has closed his heart and imagination so
tightly that no venom can get in and
undermine them?

WITOLDE

Something both holy and filled with holes.

LAURENTIUS TENDERENDA

Who has closed his heart and imagination so
tightly that no venom can get in and
undermine them.

CHRONICLER

And suddenly Witolde sees that Laurentius
Tenderenda is a broken saint who no longer
believes in imagination and sees himself
spent, as a Swiss cheese, blown through by
one of many winds, useless.

And she thinks on the void and knew that if
the wind blew directly onto her she would be
elevated or rather spread wide, single point
of view obliterated, that singleness was in
fact what would be lost, when the wind of the
void blew on her face and transformed her
into many.

Witolde will not retreat, as Saint Laurentius
Tenderenda has. She will not crawl away

from a world on fire into the warm belly of the bear. Or become a tree like Uda. Or change only for herself, as Gnimmm, who used his remedial command of the disruption to become a vintner. She would move toward the world.

Saintification. Signs of. (1) Witolde awakes one morning with the tooth of Saint Jerome clutched in her fist after dreaming of him. (2) She discovers, in a chestnut casing, a crystal globe etched with a nationless set of future continents. (3) By placing her ear up to a bell that has spontaneously appeared on a tree one morning, she finds she is able to hear what is being whispered in the corridors of the parliament building. (4) She dreams of visiting Saint Catherine in the Sinai and awakes to find that Gnimmm's shoes are filled with sand.

She walks through the forest and finds the hole in the world. She leans into it and the wind from the void blows on her face and transforms her all in an instant.

Witolde says, I am I, I am and also am also am that. Am all am. These all am I, these all, am I? I am. And was and will be and always been. Yes all and timeless.

Icons of Saint Witolde appear in the vicinity of every fragile saint who, like Laurentius Tenderenda, is of wavering faith. In mountain passes she appears. In cities she appears. Near the fires she appears like water, like heavy rain or overspilling banks.

Witolde says, all in an instant am. Am all.

Saint Witolde, the saint of the thousand and one ever changing points of view teaches love and embrace and she teaches not a roasting grid but a connecting one. Saint Witolde the many. She elevates within the world, like a hot air balloon taking in the sweeping contours of the earth's curvature.

All in an instant am, the many but not the one. A bird, a seamstress, a farmer, an entire middle class family, a journalist, an egg, a spider, a relic, peddler of a suitcase full of knucklebones. Saintification it is. All in an instant is, and all instants is too.

"And the oldest trees in the forest made a processional, to confirm Witolde as a saint."

[The oldest trees process. Beautiful light spills everywhere. WITOLDE becomes a saint. Icons burst forth.]

[EPILOGUE]

CHRONICLER

The forest, which some call Der Schwarzbilt, is said to contain a hole in the world made by Saint Laurentius Tenderenda just before he

climbed into the body of a bear, never to climb out again.

Through the hole, there blows a wind which is one of the wonders of the world.

This wind blew on Saint Laurentius Tenderenda and he retreated to the belly of a bear. It blew on Gnimmm and he became a magical vintner. It blew on Uda and she became the most serene tree of all, the silver linden. It blew on Witolde and she became a saint, the saint of a thousand and one points of view, protector of the fragile, of the reclusive, of the carousel horses, dandys, and abbots, of the prayer book manufacturers, the roast poets and hot air balloon pilots, of the firemen, the firestarters and great chief fireshine, and especially she became the protector of Saint Laurentius Tenderenda, and all the others who, like him, had retreated from the world. And she taught love and extension, and the trees did a tree dance.

[the trees dance.]

The End.