

The Dead in Paris, Complete

by Gary Hardaway

The Dead in Paris, Part 1

What's the score?
How many dead in Paris?

Did we shoot any of them?
Were there suicide bombers?

Which team claims credit
for the bodies and the injured?

Did we get Jihadi John?
And the highway to Mosul?

What's the score?
I need to check in with my bookie.

I think I covered all these bets,
depending on the score.

The Dead in Paris, Part 2

I grow inured to savagery that
adolescent-boy-minded men
with fantasies of Ninth Century

social structures with an electrical grid,
wi-fi and shiny new Toyota pickups

inflict across disparate settings.

It is the latest episode in their
continuing political theater.
Blood spatter decorates the walls

of six continents. Architectural Digest
will feature the trend
as the newest distressed finish

available to the affluent
for their apartments in Tokyo,
Singapore and New York.

The moon, in her pale, pocked
fullness or her slender sickle mode,
continues not to care.

The stars are not complicit.
They remain indifferent
at their unapproachable distances.

The sky may drizzle
or rain in torrents
but sheds not a single tear.

Whatever grief there is
is human wherever the human
might remain tonight.

The Dead in Paris, Part 3

We love the sound of automatic weapon fire
the rat-a-tat-tat that punctuates the high point of TV dramas

that mass-market film work celebrates
that pimple faced adolescent video games vivify.

We love the sound of automatic weapon fire
until it's real and aimed at us.

The Dead in Paris, Part 5

The virgins await you, scented,
oiled, and dressed in loosely gathered
folds of pure white cotton...

The virgins smirk

and flash sharpened teeth
that sink deeply into bared
and weathered skin

and the hardened muscle underneath.

The pain is not exquisite
and goes on forever.
The blood that gushed in Paris-

testament to the power-

fouls instead your arms and ankles
as the sharp teeth cut the tendons
and etch the bones.

The Dead in Paris, Part 6

We built a wall from the Gulf
of Mexico to the Pacific,
then one around DC, Atlanta,
Phoenix, San Diego, Peoria,
and Des Moines. Still,
the bullets flew and the dead
stacked up in morgues.
You get the picture. We got
medieval on their asses
and the sieges
ricochet and rumble on.

For the Dead in Paris, Part 4

For Gregg Abbott, Crippled Governor of Texas

I wish that oak tree crushed your skull
instead of just your spine. You deserve
to be a corpse. You deserve to be buried
or burned to ash
instead of rolling on, financed by the suit
that made you a young millionaire.
I'd pay to see you tossed out of your chair
to slither into the underbrush
away from the sun and it's revelations
of the shit you are, head to dead, dead toes.
I'd pay to crush your larynx with my naked hands,

you gimp, you cripple, you evil manifestation
of God's wicked sense of humor.

