

Ghost in the Gone Realms

Kirpal Gordon



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"Ghost in the Gone Realms" is the latest installation of the OP series, *Jazz Tales*. Watch out for the two intersecting novellas, "Ganga Runs the Voodoo Down" and "Naked at Last in Her Own Skin," in one book.

Watch out for these jazz tunes as well, some of which will soon be posted with musical accompaniment at www.KirpalG.com for free listening alongside *Speak-Spake-Spoke*, a jazz poetry CD, from Leaping Dog Media.

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Paul Rosheim, Series Editor
307 River Street, Apt. 18
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Ghost in the Gone Realms

If you're lost you can look and will find me . . .

---Cyndi Lauper, "Time after Time"

"Can you take me to Ghost then, Doctor?"

"Put this lab coat on over your cocktail dress."

"Over the dress?"

"So no one asks questions, Ms. Jones."

"Call me Norah."

"Thank you. What else I can do?"

Ganga-as-Norah paused to consider how much to say.

"I don't know Miami very well, Vasant. Would you be so kind as to help me find a jazz recording called *Live from the San Francisco Jazz Festival: Elegu Grip and the Brothers Grip Play a Tribute to Duke & Strays?*"

"I have that album in my collection."

"That's Ghost's first recording date with them."

"I did not realize he is one and the same Ghost."

"Yes. And that record is why I'm standing here talking with you about him now."

"Then I will ask my sister to bring the record with her on her way to work. Her shift starts soon. She will be quite pleased to hear of my most auspicious meeting with you."

"The honor is all mine, Vasantji."

"So let us go first to Mr. Ghost and set things up for your private puja straight-away."

It was a Miami Sunday morning, already hot and humid before eight o'clock. Ganga Ghose had been up all night and now sat in the hospital's private ICU room staring at Ghost. He was laying in the bed, unconscious, strapped to monitors and respirators and IV drips. She fought back tears and thought back to the rest of the convo she had with Doctor Vasant Jugdeesh, how he peeped her hole card when she tried to get over on him.

"Please, mem sahib, do not play with me! You are probably wanting Mr. Ghost's clothing next. Okay, I sent down to the emergency room for that as well. Now you want me to leave you in his room so you can invoke a cure for his coma."

"Invoke a cure?"

"Although I am trained in Western medicine, I am still Bengali, just like you. Do you not practice a siddhi for spiritual transport of your audience via a lyrical invocation or mantric incantation?"

"I don't know what you are talking about."

"I saw your first set last night up at Don't Tell Mama."

"Oh, that---"

"You became Lena Horne when you sang 'Stormy Weather.'"

"Thank you."

"I do not mean it as a compliment, mem sahib."

"Then let me begin by apologizing for deceiving you, Doctor. It is an occupational hazard of mine. My name is Ganga Ghose, and I am a professional impersonator."

"I *knew* you weren't Norah Jones."

"So why did you play along, Doc?"

"Why did you lie to *me*, Ganga?"

"Because I'm confused."

"About who you are?"

"Yes. I felt myself becoming Lena, too, during that first set. That's pretty scary, and just for the record, it took a lot out of me. And New Year's Eve is a bitch of a gig, I don't care how much money is involved, five hours was nuts and I was wiped way out. That's often when the change

you describe takes place, when my resistance is low."

"So what happened?"

"Thanks to a tip from Ghost, I took a chance at being myself on the last song of the last set. Now that's really and truly scary. By that I mean that I had no more disguises left, so I sang like I sing, not an impersonation of a jazz legend. I've never done that before. We got so much applause Ghost came to the front of the bandstand."

"So?"

"He's never moved from the piano seat before! And then he kissed me and took a bow with me, and he's never done any of that before, either, you know, on stage with me."

"Ganga, come to the point."

"This is what happens when I try to be me, Doc: in the next instant his head intercepts a heavy champagne bottle flying down from the sky. It fell from one of the hotel balconies above the club, pierced the thin plastic roof and knocked him out. We rush here only to have you tell me you can't revive him."

"Yes, but---"

"But the head butt, Doc. That friggin' Moet bottle was aimed at me, whether by accident or by design, you tell me what I determine and what is the karmic destiny already writ on my brow."

"I don't know."

"Is that your phone ringing?"

"Go ahead, Ganga."

"Then be me for a minute. I have threatened the life of the only man I have really ever loved, and so I'm having a little trouble being me. I'd rather pretend I'm someone else."

"I understand," Vasant said and answered his cell phone. He spoke in a dialect of Bengali that was hard for Ganga to follow.

"My sister, Uma Devi," he told Ganga when he hung up.

No sooner had he put his phone away than Uma came through the door of the private room with one album and an old record player. After introductions, Uma handed Ganga the LP and apologized for not having the CD.

"Having the record's better. I've never seen the liner notes. Thank you," Ganga said.

Ghost's clothes came up from the ER. Vasant and Uma smiled, clasped their hands to their hearts, wished Ganga victory, assured her of privacy and left her alone.

Ganga studied the album cover and thought back to the first time she'd heard the record. She had been studying classical North Indian music at Benares Hindu University on a scholarship but finding it restricting. Her greatest solace was late at night, when the dorm was silent and everyone

was finally asleep. That's when her favorite radio show came on, her dial's only jazz program, "San Francisco: Music Out of Time, Time Out of Mind."

It was a few hours after she had wept her way through the beautiful "Come Sunday" section of *Elegu Grip and the Brothers Grip Salute Duke & Strays* that she experienced her first encounter with the beyond. Lying in bed, unable to sleep, she had been struck so deeply by the blends of sound the three soloists achieved on alto sax, trombone and trumpet and how they were prompted by the repeating, haunting rondo piano lines of Ghost underneath, opening up the heavens.

Moreover, the other-worldly melody had bitten into Ganga and would not go away. Humming the chorus over and over silently throughout the night, she heard, just before sunrise, the radio speak.

"Go ride the music," it said to her in the dark.

She left India a few weeks later and did ride the music. It took her to Mexico where she found her Ghost playing piano. And who had Ghost turned out to be? Not just a lover or an arranger with a Strayhorn touch but the very ancestral invitation of jazz itself to weave her soul in second line syncopation, twelve bar blues and flatted fifths.

Ghost brought all of that to his accompaniment. Maybe it was that New Orleans

thing, that the music came *through* him, not the other way around. To Ghost the music may have been composed a century ago, but it was really being born new and now at this moment at this tempo at your ears.

Ganga loved that immediacy. She knew time was the illusion responsible for our madness and disgrace. Time sealed our fate as numbered in days. Time birthed the fear of death. Time sent us into the hysteria for salvation and for sexual reproduction, the two oldest hustles of our sad species, selling lies about invisible beings and selling mother's v-area.

The whole truth, Ganga thought, looking over at Ghost comatose on the bed below a headboard of blinking lights and pulsing numbers, was that our bodies decay every day until we're dead and then they just decay some more. But as for the consciousness our bodies experience, it's already indwelling before we realize it and no doubt will go on in ways we're too limited to even consider while we insist we are these bodies.

Maybe that's where Ghost was now, some loka or bardo or limbo or disembodied place we can't know much about while we're still on this side of the veil. But that indwelling place was where Ghost played from every day. You heard the song as something within you being called out.

Maybe she had been secretly hostile to piano players with a *match-my-tempo* vibe,

but with Ghost there was no macho bullshit. He matched her tempo, and she never dragged the time. He was thrilled with her musical gift, and with his love of playing inspiring her, she opened her wings and took flight. Then he hit the notes that called her to witness, that launched her to greatness, that allowed her to no longer be paying tribute to but to actually become the jazz diva she was impersonating.

She certainly had her own trick bag of credible disguise, perfect pitch, defiant sexiness and witty mimicry to bring to the evening. And through the sheer fan joy of celebrating her favorite singers at their most outré, she connected to her audience's sense of wonder, their willingness to suspend disbelief. It was they who brought the firewood, she realized, but it was Ghost who lit the flame.

She didn't know how he did it. He just knew what to do to bring the change in her. It was so spooky neither one of them would admit to the event at first.

But that was awhile back. That was before they started making whoopee. Before he brought her to the Big Easy to meet his family. She figured the first stop, out of respect, might be his mother's house or his older brother's. Instead they went to the city's oldest cemetery. Inside a mausoleum marked Wakefield, Ghost lit candles, poured his elders their shots of rum and told them

all about Ganga and what she'd done on stage with what he called "the ghost notes" they had taught him to play.

She looked over at him now, and she wondered if he could hear or sense anything of what was going on around him.

She had no idea. Nevertheless, she poured two shots of rum from a flask in her purse.

"Hey, Ghost, here's a toast to your helping me figure out how to reach you."

She clinked his little cup and drank from the flask.

She put on Side One, a collection of lesser known gems from the Duke-Billy-Mercer book, and studied the faded album cover for clues. Yes, it was Side Two she remembered from that radio show, a suite of alternating Strayhorn and Ellington tunes pulled together by Ghost's brilliant interplay between the tunes, uniting themes and playing tributes to the two composers.

That was her first clue: all the arrangements on the live album were Ghost's. It was the arrangements and their superb execution that had kept her awake all those years ago. She remembered how, like Duke, Ghost's charts invited the soloists to best express their personal style in an ensemble setting.

The second clue was to discover that Ghost had written the liner notes. She glanced over them and recognized many Ghost words and phrases, some with roots in New

Orleans, some like a punch line to a risqué joke. Like Prez or Mezz or Diz, Ghost let a lively metaphor slip into his convo alongside a few nutty tidbits of jazz lore and signifyin' double talk. But as she read on, she de-coded the spiel and realized Ghost was narrating his own life story growing up in New Orleans.

The third clue was the arrangement of the words on the back of the album cover. All the paragraphs were of a similar size, and she wondered if the words might not be a chorus to or commentary on the songs. Or a message in a bottle.

In addition, there was something in the photograph of the band she couldn't quite make out. The longer Ganga studied it, the more she realized that on the club's wall behind Ghost and the Brothers Grip was displayed the cover of the original 1958 album release of *Black, Brown and Beige*, which featured Mahalia Jackson's vocal premiere of "Come Sunday." Below the title of the album, Duke sat grandly as the First Lady of Gospel stood to his right in a short sleeved black dress, her left hand on his shoulder.

As Ganga opened the shades and the morning sun streamed into the room, she wondered if this might be a clue or a blind alley. She knew one thing: she didn't need the tuxedo Ghost had worn on the stand and that the orderly brought up from the ER. She

slipped out of the room and walked over to the nurses' station looking for a big-boned gal likely to wear a dark dress to work. She read the name tags on the white uniforms and slipped into the locker room. She found something in extra large and was adding padding in no time.

Returning to Ghost's private ICU, she pulled her hair back and coiffed it so that it resembled the wavy short-haired conk Mahalia had favored. She then dug deep in her purse for her special features so that her face matched her new girth. She widened her nose with putty, softened her eyes, put in brown contact lenses, highlighted and brushed and buffed and smoothed her face so it looked rounder, gentler.

She played Side Two and sat on the bed next to Ghost, waiting for the music to lead her. The suite began with Sweet Pea's haunted "Daydream." Ghost opened with a short quote from Johnny Hodges that Elegu Grip then worked into his alto solo. Ghost quoted Shorty Baker and off blew Baby Grip on trumpet, likewise for Junior Grip on 'bone as Ghost quoted Lawrence Brown. After the drummer and bass traded fours, Ghost swooped back in and took his solo.

Just as she had suspected, the liner notes spoken aloud fit exactly into his piano solo. As he came to his last two A sections, she read aloud.

*In a daydream's scene I gleaned new
year's eve's crash head-on, a pavane gone to
broke down done, my song hauled upriver to
Dead's Town where nothin' floats back from.
Ganga pulled the stylus up and paused the
music. New Year's Eve crash head-on! That
wasn't a clue. That was what had actually
happened last night. And what else was
Dead's Town but a comatose state where
nothing floats back from?*

Had Ghost seen this all those years back?
She was amazed to find that the words not
only wrapped around the melody, but he had
managed to play one note for one syllable,
beat for beat, all the way through the first
sentence and the first eight bars. Ganga
brooded on this for quite awhile. Wasn't
this how he got me to open into the outer
limits, she asked herself, when we would get
"locked in" before a scat attack?

She put the needle down and spoke along
with his solo.

*A chronicle of an ironical hex foretold,
there me was, Jim, Mickey Finned & Gone
Within, compin' to squawkin' tenor sax lines
walkin' the bar's war crimes, talkin'
funkified fried but in the end tied less to
a distressed mess than a feisty mess line,
rhymin' tin pan corn to shine mellow & fine
on hard nods, large You Send Me mends now no
longer maskin' their bouts with the bends,
amen.*

This was her real Ghost now for sure. He was a chronicle of an ironical hex foretold for he lived in a world of vibes and spells and charms, Micky Finns and bouts with the bends and more than a few bad gigs. Although he often joked with her about being unnecessary when certain tenor men blew noisy bullshit over the changes, his "gone upriver" narrative also reflected stories his family had told her of Buddy Bolden, Storyville's best cornet and trumpet player. Ghost's great-grandmother said Bolden, like Pops, had encyclopedic ears, natural grace and chops out to here. But unlike Satch, Buddy lost his mind over a woman, got sent up the Mississippi to the bug house and was never heard from again.

Not quite baskin' in clover, my numb jaw kept askin', "When gig over," thrashin' down stash-busted's crash course in pain & achin', moanin' almighty cash elastic in rollin' stone-slammin' hospital zones, slippin' C notes gin-soaked in Sellin' Hope, how hauled afloat we owned a lone flight's delight of low notes bowed but so slightly. Up nightly: a cell of terror, a cancer ward, a game of solitary, goon squads in gloomy doomsday's gray & blue bars. Let's call it a humble station or dare I mention obituary complication & why won't nursie give me my medication?

Although this was typical Ghost talk and jive ramble, Ganga was convinced his nutty

commentary on "Daydream" was leaving her clues of some kind. In order to find the rosetta stone, however, she just had to keep her mind open.

The solo now slid, Ellington style, into a party-crazed, strut-happy, after-hours "Mood Indigo" with Ghost again quoting Rabbit and Elegu taking it into a sultry, long-toned stratosphere. Ghost then quoted Junior and Baby Grips into their take-offs. He finally jumped in to recapitulate themes and whirl together rhythm bits and tone clusters and sound streams to give this blues a back-from-the-dead elegance. As Ghost began the two concluding choruses to his piano solo, Ganga read aloud the words.

Cobalt-lichen gravestones lined in sevens called me outta the Down Below to tool a mood indigo in mad flow 'cross cerulean heavens. Before an encore we paused & the speak-easy's emcee interceded me immediately sayin', "Because the notes once needed playin' the muscled & hustled think they got it made in the shade openin' for Hades' Hit Parade, while the best of the restless know how the home-grown gets disowned on darkening roads home." But from the darkening road Grip now showed, chock full of laughter, his double-mask faced a funeral march north & south the wild parade what come after. So it was he who brought me back from the cross-haired despair of a truth-or-dare disaster.

Speak-easy's emcee? Hades Hit Parade?
Double-masked? Once again, before she could
shake the words out to even begin an
interpretation, Ghost moved into another
song, this time with a Strayhorn flair. Out
of the last fading chord of "Mood Indigo,"
he trinkled and tickled the keys until he
had teased out the structure to
"Bloodcount," Stray's eerie death-bed
farewell.

Ghost built the arrangement around the
blends the three brothers achieved. When
they were through telling their stories, he
dove the piano deep into those odd,
tragicomic blue runs that were Strayhorn's
gift to the tradition.

As Ghost re-told the theme, Ganga read
along to his last choruses.

*Torn from sundown Grip stood with the
younger Grips, Baby & Junior, hangin' on the
corner with their horns, dressed to meet Big
Daddy Midnight whom they held in scorn &
rarely saw. That old story. But then Grip
opened the way with a wave of his hand as if
to say: "Ghost, we gotta get you on the
bandstand, man."*

*Hell no, I didn't know the score. But as
he handed me the charts, my sear-suckered
suit surfed in seepage of sweat ocean-
wrenched deeply, the music but stung me
once, all too rock salt & steeply. Need me
say stage fright stacked me up indiscreetly
96 feet above the club on Great Jones Street*

for in the old days we played it breakneck & reckless, hard hopped in eye drops.

The words, so Ghost-like, poured out of her mouth and into the shape of the melody so effortlessly. Although she was sure this bit to be autobiographical, she realized Ghost might also be telling the story behind Strayhorn's tenure as Ellington's alter-ego.

She read the next chorus aloud.

But Grip had grown up, gave it space, let it breathe. Opened with a bang that shot the place in blue flame. Cookin' hard schnapps in pentecost & better without the butter, brother, but could I solo, Napoleon, only everyone wanted to know so. Maybe a bad note's but what hangs up unfulfilled, yet I wondered could I conjure still a fountain of dissonance in my signature style that could not be discounted? Was I dead yet? The tension mounted.

Once again, Ghost shifted gears, fading out of the intravenous realms of "Bloodcount." However, this time Grip jumped in on alto sax, bending the gospel opening of "Come Sunday" in the best bent-note style of Johnny Hodges. After the brothers Grip tore the tune apart and put it back together, Ghost took his solo, reprising the entire suite, and ending with these last four A sections that Ganga spoke.

Grip led us in a gospel I-ray. Let I unlock a secret sky where limbo's children come out to play sayin', "Hosts of white

doves, hidden within love's most blood-effusin', Rosacrucian hour, make the Paraclete complete when ten fingers run ruby flowers through a song brook's bower now & at the hour Saturday night comes yawnin' Sunday mornin'."

Grip failed me not. He & the Brothers Grip picked me up on the bridge, carried me out of encores into a nearby Chelsea doorway where we faced a vestibule west, & east a bestial crowd delicious to rip us in two. Rather than ring tenants for entrance, Grip used his head; glass flew. Lamenting the basement but facing a shotgun sawed off, into sawdust we now descended.

At this dead end, of course, word on Sweet Pea Street reached us: Big Daddy Midnight was APB seekin' Grip & his group out. While he grabbed his horse, I sank into love's labor lost, a world now without meaning: had my boss & bandleader come all the way upriver, past the realm of every lament to the deepest pit in Dead's Township only to have me sit in for the evening?

Heart split in conflict about buyin' the hype, into darkness I yearned to slip, but Grip returned cash in hand to gripe, "Don't you get it, Ghost? I need you coast to coast, not to sing it or say it, wing it or pray it but once." Rain on my own parade like a dense dunce? Having escaped the masquerade of my own death the music would live on in I-&-I, & I-&-I would play it.

Ganga now recalled that this was the moment that had broken her into tears all those years ago. The band members began to hum the tune, just like Mahalia had done on Duke's record. However, when Ganga opened her lungs and joined the humming, out came the voice of Mahalia Jackson. She hummed two choruses and when the record ended, words Ganga did not even know came through her in a capella.

Lilies of the valley, they neither toil nor spin, and flowers bloom in spring and birds will sing. Up from dawn to sunset men work hard all the day. Come Sunday, ho, come Sunday, that's the day.

Later he would tell her the meaning of the "neither toil nor spin" reference. Later she would tell him how all the lights and bells and whistles looming above him suddenly went off at the same time followed by the arrival of a cadre of doctors and nurses, but right now Ghost opened his eyes and just looked out at Ganga.

He was glad to be back.

For All We Know/The Curved World Turns Inside Out

For all we know the sound of love slips down a hungry earlobe's hollow where sirens sing of the shapely sea & a sailor stands lashed to the mast of his odyssey. For all we know birthing tubular wings he may wonder why the woman he's just kissed goodbye remains within him. Though she waits to the last minute and holds out her hand, when he repairs to a deck chair she's there before him saying *see how every sound bends round our ear* for even elk love-calling disappear into twilight's hide-out: for all we know coitus turns the curved world inside out.

For all we know erupting volcanoes come & go, fountains & mountains in opposite direction overflow, how a mention of gravity's intention falls us off the edge of the world to meet the feeling we've been here for thousands of years. For all we know a man is really a butterfly & butterflies seek nectar in a wood whose silent body of sound surrounds every intrusion, sewing our eardrums into open lesions where every hole in space fills in with space. For all we know he tastes the grace, the mystery linchpin: the whole spinnin' world is feminine.

You Make Me Feel So Young/Jung

You make me feel so Jung, so psychically spun, re-done, atoned & at one. Just when I dream that it's the end again you steal around the bend with that *no panic the deck chair's organic*, a Titanic glockenspiel, amen, for what a deal it is to be a spinnin' wheel-in-sentience bringin' a sense of elegance to floating free, the blessing's in the present tense & while I'm seein' bleak creepin' up on trees with a new reward-&-regret ye's planetary trend to tend toward homicide, your aside is to tell me they're mass producing test tube babies?

You make feel so Jung, you make me ring those ancestral rungs, sneakin' a wink from a lunch pail, you revel in renewal, singin' unglued a hoodoo prophecy revealed, dealin' the real gnosis lovers keep company with in sundown's repeal of sounds we run cliché into the ground all day replenished. You mensch us like a magus, graze us in the grass, engage us with laughing gas & throw a Molotov in Carl Gustav's cocktail, you greet our Grail quests with cries of *hail, Icarus, don't jump, but neither be denied* & in between hiccups your insight is to hit us with *there are UFOs in the sky?*

So What/Rubiyat Melodic

So what: a full moon croons its crackpot tune while old bones moan their whatnot alone. On loan from the Unknown we're rollin' home by the light of a silvery tongue hot to trot in polyglot lungs that got its own. So What: we've seen centuries of souls leapin' through matter's mad hatter to gravity's pitter patter when a bitter battered ceremony round a hangin' tree's the data. Comin' through slaughter bangin' borders yields a black & blue disorder. As goes causes for wars of peace, danglin' feet weep six deep in the Big Sleep. Reapin' Mother Morgue's McLock-up, we be creepin' through eye-sockets just to drop the whole crock of it, torn free from misery-born's witherin' woe-is-me song.

So what: we with sapphire chops blew cool cobalt geodes for we longed to be born to halt time, stopped dead on a dime in Dorian mode. Burnin' ops popped from a harder bebop we copped hopped-up rides three deep with horn scales quakin' glimmer-toned rhythm in a gumbo simmerin'---all to glide a viper's wing & prayer into worlds out there unknown where there's nowhere to go but in how the goin' & how the goin' gets goin' so moodily, Moorishly & rubiyat melodic movin' rain's runoff to a garden of Persian quadrangles where So What's two notes amen a

cadence that aligns the three worlds. Only then would we see within a hummingbird's whirl indwelled the wings of the roarin' waterfall.

All Blues/Spirit Fuse

Hey spirit fuse, come through ethereal
indigo hues, Andalusian deja-vu where muted
long tones rule. A melody's octave change
contains the clue opening you to the manitou
who, emerging from a moon once-in-a-blue-
moon blue, spews the night with portals that
flash a dash of the ol' softshoe to enter
the love loka a yenta calls All Blues.

Hey spirit realms with ancient helms even
Adam cannot fathom, come through azure sky &
Caribbean sea, lavender's scent amidst
turquoise pleats in lapis lazuli, petals'
peals of teal wheeled in aquamarine's blue-
green & all that jazz in topaz for luscious
Pushpema, bloom queen in blue-ice
hydrangea's stranger shade a hair-do calls
All Blues.

Ol' Devil Moon/Stone Soul Cartoon

It's that ol' devil moon shining through this stone-soul cartoon, crespucular light's gold Nordic rune gleaned extra wide for the hand glide. Soon to be told not to intrude on nude devil's food moonbeams float with the tide, what's a free ride when the sine wave's the shot & the end's scripted in before we begin, the quest to become outwon by the joy just to be, worse plots will happen at sea when we're deep in the bends & then we're at it again, space-time continuum, where you open we are: glow worms wink in a jar, & we'd be better by far than a nova gettin' over like a Range Rover or would you rather be a star?

It's that tides moon the earth, tears roll down a mirth unrehearsed when mad makes merry for the many immersed & untrained in celebrating the unrestrained, who can say loss is gain when ebb & flow shine within, as in ring ring ring, as in: *Sing Sing Sing's* one sing more than what roars Other Shore as in tweedle-dee, señor's name on the door, meets tweedle-dumb, a dime-droppin' bum from up the Hudson, Jersey side says badda-bing, Empire side says how 'bout Ossining, or would you rather be state's evidence collected from the prevalence of your malevolent bling-bling?

Funk Underneath/Greasy's How I Got Here

Walk me in my walk four counts of
ancestors. Talk me in my talk three counts
of the best is yet to infect ya's. Stalk me
in a corn stalk two counts of disaster
makers who can break ya before breakfast so
I'm steadfast at long last: caulkin' what
can be caulked on the one count so make mine
a double & neat, & as for the music, shape
those notes sweetly but get the funk
underneath.

Greasy's how I got here & I don't just
disappear when the broken axis runs
friction's diction to a fiction made from
fears for the road already goes to Abraxas
the whole way here, so ya got the blues,
well we can mend that, bend back notes &
sack cities in the sinkin' of a woman's wink
for the night is alive with a thousand eyes,
but the secret of my treat is steeped in the
funk underneath.

Spell it a hex or a groovin' miracle but
the blues hit me like a movin' vehicle, a
truck-straight up train wreck spectacle, a
call-&-answer canticle liftin' me from the
edge of the grind I was strapped to til I
feel my way blindly into the wheel's center
point still where nothin' turns though
worlds burn in chunks all-of-a-piece
complete with the funk underneath.

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Kirpal Gouber



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