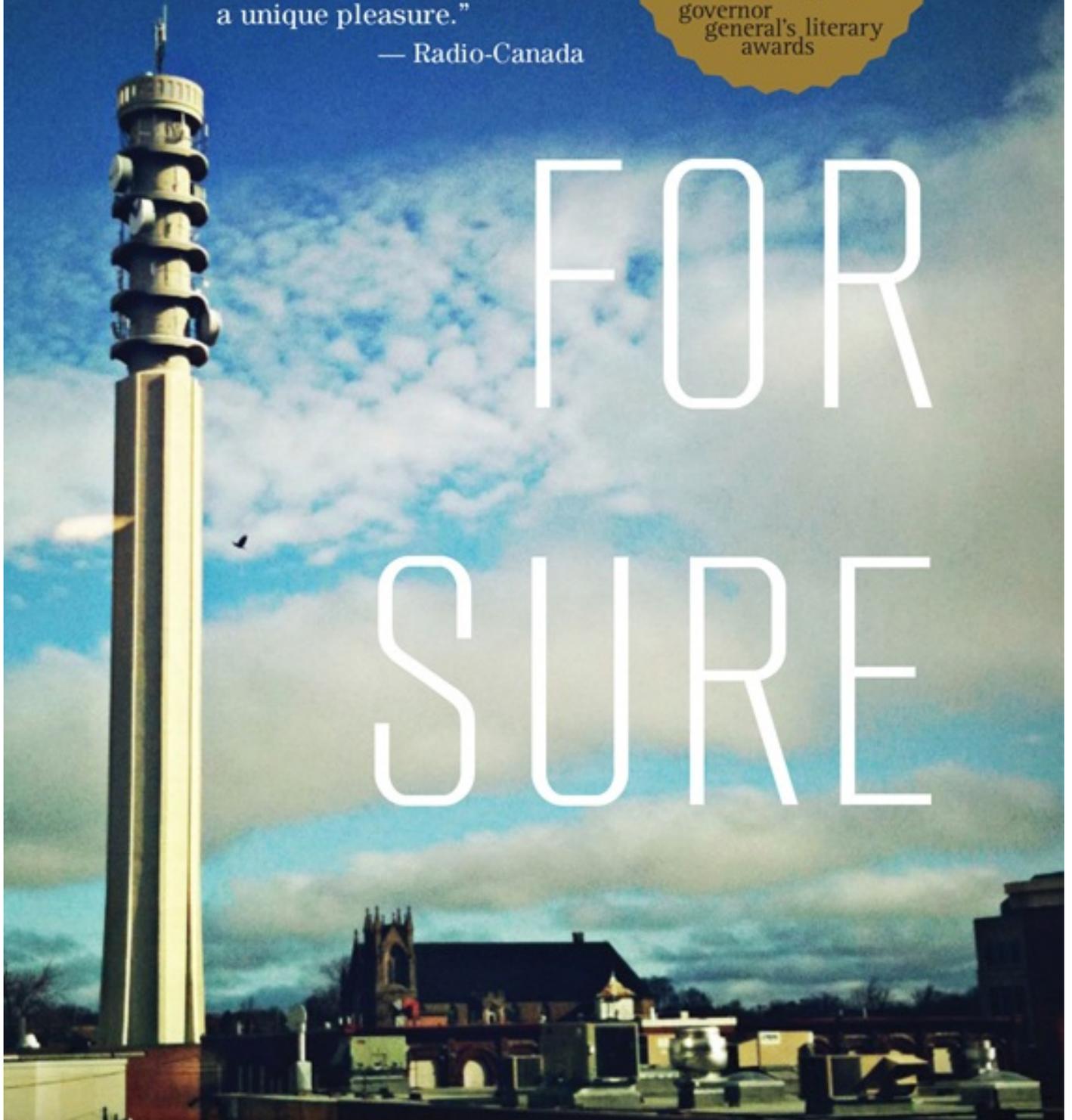


FRANCE DAIGLE

"A lovely adventure and
a unique pleasure."
— Radio-Canada



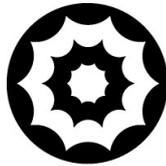
FOR
SURE



FOR SURE

France Daigle

Translated by Robert Majzels



ARACHNIDE

*Thanks to all who've
helped me out and that's a
lot of folks for sure*

*To Berthe, whom I could
never thank enough*

CHAPTER 1

What he thought of as his position was, in fact, an adaptation of everything that [. . .] he encountered.

DANIELE DEL GIUDICE,
Atlas occidental, Éditions du Seuil, 1987

1.144.1
Epigraphs

“Dad, go on and sing dat thing you’ll be doing after.”

“Afterrrr . . .”

Terry replied absently, as he gathered up the clothes strewn about the room.

“You know! After, when we’ll be sleeping.”

Terry was at a loss: they’d given the boy permission to go to bed an hour later than usual, and then he’d been treated to a long and entirely new story — a story with a moral to boot! — and in spite of all that he didn’t seem tired. Normally, he’d have fallen asleep four or five minutes into the story. But no, he’d listened to the story of Souricette right to the end, and now he was asking for a song! Did Terry have a momentary doubt that Étienne might be troubled or worried about something? In any case, it had been a busy day and Dad was more than ready for a bit of peace and quiet. So he wasted no time in doing what had to be done to get it.

“You mean Aragon’s *Blues*?”

“Ya, Aragonz.”

The Beaufort occurs in Scrabble when the two most valuable letters in a word both land on triple-letter-value squares. To score a little Legendre, one must place one’s most valuable letter on a double-letter-value square and another letter on a double-word-value square. Same idea for the big Legendre: the word counts double but the most valuable letter falls on a triple-letter-value square.

2.1.12
Chansons

“Souricette got it into her head dat she wanted to be a laboratory mouse when she growed up. Well, so she went off to university and after dat she found herself a job in one of dem big companies wot make all sorts of pills. Well, on account of she was pretty sharp and scored real high on all de tests, it got so dose tests dey was givin’ her got harder an’ harder. Souricette was mighty proud, I can tell ya. She liked dat dey tot she was smart and all, see. Well, she was mighty proud de day de bosses decided to pick de six smartest mice — because dat meant Souricette fer sure — fer a right important test, the X-3X-X3-X test. An’ you should know dat dose tests with de number tree in dem, like X-3X-X3-X, well, dose was de most dangerous.

3.4.11
Scrabble

Thinking Étienne was asleep, Terry cut off the story, but he was quickly obliged to take it up again when Étienne moved his legs, which was the boy’s way of signalling that he

wasn't asleep yet.

“Well alright den. On account of dey'd picked only six mice an' her name being Souricette — like French fer mouse *souris*, and *sept* being de French fer seven, see? — well, Souricette had a kind of achin' in 'er belly just tinkin' 'bout dat test. Someting was boderin' 'er alright, but she'd no idea wot. At last, comes de day of de big test. Dey took all dem six mice an' dey put 'em in a labyrinth. You remember wot labyrinth is don't ya? Course ya do. Well, dis 'ere particular labyrinth was split in two, see, wid one side all warm, and d'oder no heat at all. So tree of dem mice lands up in de heated part an' d'oder tree in de part dat's not heated. Ting is doh, dey'd gone an' put a bit of milk in de unheated part, see, but dere weren't no milk on de heated side. An' why d'you suppose dat was? On account of de company bosses was wanting to find out wot was more important to a mouse: stayin' warm, or havin' a bite to eat. Dose bosses had in der minds dat mice and wee children was more or less de same, an' what a mouse would do, a little boy or girl would do de same.”

Here, Terry paused again, but he was not unhappy to see Étienne move his legs, because he himself had become engrossed in this story he was making up as he went along.

“Come two weeks, de company bosses had der answer, only 'twasn't de answer wot dey'd been expectin'. Alright, hold on now. Dey found all de mice was dead, starved to death all together on de warm side of de labyrinth. Even Souricette was dead. So...de moral of dis story is det: when a body feels sometin' deep inside of him, he's got to pay heed, see. Take Souricette: she was one of dem six mice, even doh her name had the sound of *sept* or seven in it . . . More dan likely she wouldn't have died if she'd paid heed to what was boderin' her. More dan likely she'd have known not to be part of dat test. She had a feelin' down in 'er belly, what some calls intuition.”

Noise, Sex, Axing, Gaunt, Quill, Bliss, Spy, Bag, Drag, Zinc, Zone, Cane, Cave, Ajar, Hurrah, Fey, Waxing, Wig, Ozone, Debut, Hide, Puke, Feed, Tuft, Lodge, Yew, Tool, Mist, Puker, Morons, Wok, En. For a total of 320 and 205 points.

4.37.7
Animal
Tales

“Wot colour was Souricette, Dad?”

The tone of Terry's reply was such that it put an end to any further questions. The song was sung, the contract sealed.

“Grey.”

“Awh.”

“G'night now.”

“G'night, Dad.”

5.4.1
Scrabble

The American architect Alfred Moshier Butts invented the game of Scrabble when he was unemployed during the Great Depression. Over a period of 20 years, he tried to commercialize his invention under different names before submitting it for patent under the name Scrabble in 1948. Since then, more than 100 million games of Scrabble have been sold worldwide, in 35 languages.

6.2.2
Colours

Terry invents most of the animal tales he tells the children based on details he picks up here and there in his daily life. Sometimes he challenges himself to come up with a moral

7.99.3
Names

to the story, so long as the kids are still awake by then. He prefers not to waste morals — which are not always easy to concoct — on a sleeping child.

In her novel *1953: Chronicle of a Birth Foretold*, the Acadian author France Daigle makes no mention of the sale of 312,000 games of Scrabble that year, an average of 6,000 per week.

“Wot ya doin’, Mum?”

“Changing the time.”

“On account of your not wantin’ to be late?”

“No, I’ll be late all the same. Only we’ve got to change the time twice a year.

Everybody does it.”

“Awh.”

Citing the novelist Maupassant as an example, the French dictionary *Le Nouveau Petit Robert* clearly recognizes the existence of the popular pronoun *y*, *popular* referring to a word or expression the upper classes would never use. The dictionary explains that *y* was first used to replace the personal pronoun *lui* (him) before going on to supplant the pronoun *il* (he) in both the singular and plural. The *y* can be found in the works of Balzac and Anouilh. Balzac even used the interrogative *c’est-y*, as in *c’est-y vrai?* (is it true?) instead of the more proper *est-ce que c’est vrai*. In Acadia, the pronoun *y* is still widely used. The feminine *alle*, old French for *elle* (she), becomes simply *a* when it precedes a word beginning with a consonant, as in *a chante* (she sings).

“Wot was I doin’ down der? Workin’ a machine wot cuts puzzles is wot. Dey had me in a wee booth wid a great big screen, but sure an’ ’twas like I’s drivin’ a lawnmower in a field. I was twistin’ an’ turnin’ to cut around dose pieces. In the beginnin’ I don’t mind tellin’ ya, it gave me de heebie jeebies. De design was all laid out on de screen; I only had to follow it. Ya don’t believe me? Ask Tony over der. Eh, Tony?”

Croup [24], R(o)il [6], Don(s) [15], Crou(p)ier [12], Qu(e)en [35], (Q)uai [13], V(i)able [13], Comi(c) [22], Ja(m) [28], (B)ee [15], (O)mate [12], Swea(t) [30], (D)ean [10], Ye(s), [24], Pe(w) [14], Hi(e) [21], (J)unta [14], (H)oeing [49], Stooze [21], (S)im [24], F(i)x [26], (E)ked [14], Y(e)t [14], (O)ld [19], Ooz(e) [13], (F)a [23], Wi(n) [6], (W)ig [9], L(a)v [8], Ga(s) [5], (o)r [2], Booz(e)d [21], T(o) [2], T(o)ld [5]. One player left with 2 points in her hand, for a total of 257 and 314 points.

It was Ludmilla who introduced Terry to the great Léo Ferré’s recording of Aragon’s poems. She brought the disc to the bookstore one day, thinking it would make good background music for browsing. Terry immediately fell under its spell.

“Well alright den. From now on, yer de one in charge of music.”

Beginning with Gutenberg’s invention — more accurately an innovation rather than an invention — and for three centuries after that, the printing of texts using moveable type would be referred to as typography, a word that refers to both the techniques and process of printing and the style of letters and layout of texts.

“So dey tells me I’s to follow de green dots to some place where I takes a number and waits me turn. Well, at de end of de green dots, dere was a whole lot of bodies already waitin’. So I figures I’ve plenty o’ time to go fer me blood test ’fore they calls me name. Over at de bloodtests, most times, it’s right quick. So off I goes to bloodtests, but when I gets der, tings was a whole lot slower dan usual. On account of one of der staff was sick, is wot dey tol’ me. Anyhow, I could see ’twas goin’ to take a whole lot longer dan I tot, so I says to meself, I’d best go back over to dem green spots, but right when I’s liftin’ me

8.37.1
Animal
Tales

9.45.3
Useless
Details

10.93.6
Time

11.30.2
Chiac

12.130.8
Work

13.4.2
Scrabble

14.1.1
Chansons

15.10.2
Typograph

arse off the seat, what d’ya know dey calls me name. So in I go! All dey wanted was a wee tube full. More’s de pity ’cause it were mighty fine lookin’ an’ a bright shiny red. Anyhow, by the time I gets meself back to de green dots, dey’d already called me name over der a couple of times. De nurses was kind doh, and dey lets me troo all de same. Only, dat didn’t go down so good wid de folks sittin’ der waitin’ on dere turn. One of dem ups and asks me where I bin, like she knew me! I didn’t say nuttin’. Anyway, ’twas written up der on de wall, TAKE A LETTER AND SIT DOWN, and dat’s just wot I done, I’d taken a letter and sat me arse down.”

L’Officiel du jeu Scrabble®, the *Larousse* dictionary for francophone Scrabble, always capitalizes the name of the game and follows it with the registered trademark symbol ®. As for the lexigraphs of the *Robert* dictionary, the word *scrabble* refers both to a registered trademark and to a board game requiring players to make words using randomly selected letters, but in the *Robert*, the word is always lower case and without the ®.

16.15.11
Unidentifi
Monologu

Terry handed the telephone to Ludmilla.

“It’s for Mrs. Didot . . .”

Although Didot Books was more than four years old, there were still a few customers who thought that Didot was the name of the foreign woman with whom Terry had partnered to open the business. At first, Terry had made an effort to clear up the confusion:

“She’s called Ludmilla Bellême; dat’s wot ’er parents named ’er. Didot, dat’s a historical-like name fer books.”

“Wouldn’t dat be Diderot?”

“Naw. Diderot, dat’s anudder fellow. Writer or philosopher more like. Well, really he’s a bit o’ boat.”

“Dat’s wot I tot. De *Encyclopedia* and all dat . . .”

“Didot, he was more a printer. Designed letters an’ de spaces betwixt words an’ betwixt lines, an’ de like. In dose days, printing was more like an art.”

“And when was dat den?”

“Around de same time as de Deportation.”

“Ya don’t say!”

Judging by a rapid impromptu poll taken among 102 Université de Moncton students, grey is not a particularly popular colour. The study on colour reception sought to determine if people associate specific colours to individual letters of the alphabet. The students turned out to be eager participants — anything to get away from the official curriculum. The poll revealed that 28 subjects imagined the *a* as red, 21 saw it as yellow, 10 as white, 9 as orange, 8 as blue, 7 as green, 5 as pink, 4 as silver, and 3 as aqua. Two admitted to seeing nothing at all, and the last 5 saw the *a* as beige, grey, gold, violet, and auburn respectively.

18.8.2
Didot
Books

One day, when he was alone at home — Carmen having gone to see her parents with the children — Terry had launched into Aragon’s *Blues*, and discovered that he knew all the words. This was a surprise since he’d made no effort to memorize them. He took pleasure then in singing the song by heart, and even enjoyed belting it out without the obstacle of a guitar in his arms.

19.2.5
Colours

The manuscript-like design of the earliest typographic characters can be explained by the fact that books at the

20.1.2
Chansons

time the printing press first appeared were still being copied by hand. In 1766, Fournier the younger classified ~~typeface styles into roman, italic, bâtarde, cursive, lettres de somme, textura or lettres de forme, and Gothic~~ Modern or *lettres tourneures*. But it was a Thibaudeau — given name Francis — who drew up what we consider today to be the first true classification of typefaces; this classification is based on the historical importance of the serif, a horizontal line of varying thickness at the base and head of a letter. Thibaudeau defined four general families of typefaces: sans-serif typefaces (Antiques family), rectangular or slab-serif typefaces (Egyptian family), triangular-serif typefaces (Roman Elzévir family), and linear or hairline serif typefaces (Roman Didot family). Francis Thibaudeau also identified a number of sub-families. This was in 1921.

“Ee says ee don’t take drugs, I asked him. And I believes him, I do. Doesn’t seem de type. All de same, ee’s fed up wid school, fed up wid baseball, don’t like de girls, don’t want to come up to de country, don’t want to go off to Europe, don’t want his licence . . .”

“Might be ee’s got a real disease, sometin’ physical.”

“Dis evenin’, at supper, lookin’ at ’im, I couldn’t help tinkin’ suicide. Ruined a perfectly good stew, ee did.”

The 102 students, the vast majority of whom were women, were not asked to specify the shade of the colour they saw. For example, the red in question may have been nacarat, alizarin, scarlet, aniline, strawberry, crushed strawberry, raspberry, rubicond, crimson, poppy, ruby, lobster, crawfish, cardinal, dahlia, vermilion, English red, cherry, tomato, lust, ruddy, blood red, blood orange, purple, gules, peony, conclave, orangey, Tierra del Fuego, or picador, just to name a few.

Terry was as surprised as anyone to discover he not only had a voice, but also the ability to sing. Well, the ability to sing Léo Ferré singing Aragon, anyway. Lately he’d been amusing himself by singing some of the songs on the record for the kids when Carmen was at work. He was still far too shy about his new talent to sing in front of Carmen.

Over time, printers and typographers became distinct from editors. For example, from François Didot (born in 1689) to Alfred Firmin Didot (dead in 1913), four generations of Didots laboured in various printing related fields. Whereas François the patriarch was known to have edited all the works of the abbot Prévost, his descendants were particularly inventive in the fields of typography, printing, and paper production. In the end, with the publication of the Didot *French Commercial Directory*, they were no longer editors per se, since editing is first and foremost intellectual work.

“Because?”

“Because, because.”

Taloned 59, I(o)ta 6, (S)ize 31, (Z)en 12, Sev(e)n 16, (V)ie 10, H(a)m 15, (T)ow 17, Ble(w) 9, Re(l)at 18, Song 24, Jet(s) 28, P(e)r 15, Lai(r) 12, Jog 33, P(e)n 14, Fin(d) 18, Ra(f)t 26, Aio(l)i 5, Wef(t) 30, Qu(a) 24, L(e)g 16, Bo(a) 19, (a)xe 10, Hou(r) 25, Etc(h) 18, V(e)t 18, Tauru(s) 10, Idio(t) 10, D(i)kes 30, To(w)y 9, (G)am, 12. One player is left with a letter worth 4 points, for a total of 326 and 269 points.

“Well take fer example: ‘She gave him what for.’ We say ‘whatfer.’ Den why don’t we write *whatfer*? De way we says an’ hears it? Same as we write defer and refer . . .”

“Sure. Why not, I’d like to know.”

In the case of the letter *a*, only one of the 102 respondents named a colour the least bit out of the ordinary: auburn. All the other colours (except for the response “none,” if “none” can be considered a colour) could be found in the original HTML pallet created for web site designers. Although orange, beige, and gold were not among the list of coded colours, the designers had the option to use them by typing out the name of the colour.

21.10.1
Typograph

22.22.10
Overheard
Conversati

23.2.6
Colours

24.1.4
Chansons

25.10.3
Typograph

26.31.2
Questions
with
Answers

27.4.4
Scrabble

28.88.10
Freedom

This was not the case for auburn (not to mention “none”).

29.2.4
Colours

He was a smash hit with Étienne and Marianne. The two kids were hypnotized by their dad, who had gone from warbling while he prepared the meal to suddenly belting out a song in a voice they did not recognize and mysterious words whose meanings they could only guess thanks to Terry’s gestures and facial expressions, which helped to make the meaning clear. The two children were dimly aware of witnessing something new being created before their eyes. At the end of this première presentation, Étienne stood agape, having never expected Terry to reply in such grand fashion to the simple question:

“Wot’re you singin’, Dad?”

With his Captain Haddock apron tied around his waist, Terry had seized the moment. He’d turned down the heat under the hamburger steak sizzling in the pan, raised the wooden spoon to capture the kids’ attention, opened the floodgates and sang: *I sing to pass the time / What little of it remains to me / The way we draw on a frosted window / The way we gladden our heart . . .* which pleased him because these opening lines immediately invoked pleasant things like drawing, a glad heart, and skipping stones across a pond. He also liked the word *petit* at the beginning of the next verse, because it allowed him to reply more directly to his son’s question.

AUBURN \ˈc:ben, -be:n adjective. IME. Orig., of a yellowish- or brownish-white colour. Now, of a golden- or reddish-brown colour. (Used esp. of a person’s hair.)

30.1.3
Chansons

ORIGIN: Old French *albome*, *auborne*, from medieval Latin *albumus* whitish, from Latin *albus* white: later assoc. with *brown* by false etymology (through forms with metathesis).

MAHOGANY me;hogeni adjective. Of the colour of polished mahogany: rich reddish-brown. Origin unknown. Excerpt from *Oxford English Dictionary*.

Terry had wanted to hang a large artistic poster of various styles of type at the entrance to the bookstore, by the cash register. The poster was meant to refer to the origin of the bookstore’s name: Didot.

31.11.4
Appropria

“Wot does you tink, den? Does she come across too . . . intellectual? Wouldn’t want folks to tink we was full o’ ourselves, or de like.”

“Naw, she’s fine. A whole lot o’ class. Folks’ll like her, fer sure.”

Terry knew he could trust Zed’s opinion.

“I likes where de letters is all piled up in de corner down der.”

Terry was particularly proud of the poster, especially the way the graphic designer — a fellow named Babin from Dieppe — had taken up his suggestions. Zed confirmed his opinion:

“Naw, I’m tellin’ ya, she’s right proper.”

In her novel *1953: Chronicle of a Birth Foretold*, the Acadian author France Daigle makes no mention of that year’s publication of the first edition of the *Dictionnaire Robert* by a small publishing house founded by Paul Robert, with an inheritance from his family, who’d owned an orange plantation.

32.8.1
Didot
Books

“Wot was ee wantin’ den?”

“He was askin’ if we eats *chiard* every day.”

33.45.5
Useless
Details

“Wot fer? Are dey in de habit of eatin’ potato hash every day, den?”

“Naw. Dey never even seen *chiard* ’fore now.”

“I figured. Gumbo’s wot dey eats.”

“Every day?”

“Dunno, do I. Go an’ ask ’em, why dontcha.”

A quick overview of the chromatic dictionary of the web site pourpre.com yielded 33 names of colours that, like auburn, begin with the letter *a*. In French, 12 percent of the 281 colours listed in that dictionary begin with the letter *a*. Only the letter *c* accounts for more: the 48 colours beginning with the third letter of the alphabet amount to 17 percent of the entries in this dictionary. By contrast, the English Wikipedia site lists 36 names of colours beginning with the letter *a*. This amounts to slightly more than 4 percent of the 869 colours listed. This number is surpassed by 9 letters including the *c* which, just as in French, accounts for the most names of colours: 91 or slightly more than 10 percent of the total.

34.30.4
Chiac

“Well, if dem’s useless details like she says, why does dey have to keep goin’ on about ’em, I’d like to know.”

“Proper question.”

. . .

“Probably because, in absolute terms, useless don’t exist.”

“Now yer pullin’ me leg.”

35.2.3
Colours

Cited without permission from *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary*©:

PLAGIARIST *n.*: (lat. *plagiarius*, from the gr.). one who plagiarizes: one guilty of literary or artistic theft.

PLAGIARISM *n.*: an act or instance of plagiarizing.

PLAGIARIZE *v. t.*: to steal and pass off as one’s own (the ideas or words of another).

36.45.9
Useless
Details

It was quite late by the time Terry could finally relax and review the events of his day. He wondered if Étienne’s desire to put off sleep as long as possible wasn’t a sign of some sort of existential anxiety. Now he regretted not having had a father’s reflex to take up the issue more closely and on the spot. Was he already becoming one of those blasé parents?

37.11.10
Appropriation

With the emergence of typography in the middle of the fifteenth century, the trades of printer, typographer, editor, bookseller, and stationer became intertwined and interrelated with other vocations, such as philosopher, author, and lexicographer. Geoffroy Tory, who was born in Bourges around 1480 and died in Paris in 1533, was at once a humanist, author, professor, bookseller-editor, printer, designer, theorist of typography, and a linguist. He was a strong advocate for the use of the apostrophe and added the cedilla to the French *c* when pronounced as *s*, a distinction he found both useful and appealing. Not content with perfecting the shapes of typefaces, Geoffroy Tory also weighed in on their correct pronunciation, thereby contributing to the standardisation of a hitherto highly diversified French language.

38.13.1
Paternity

“Dad, did you change yer time?”

“My time fer wot?”

“Not yer time fer sometin’, just yer time.”

Terry looked up from his newspaper, struck by what his son had said.

“Yer right! Naw, I never did change it, good ting yer remindin’ me!”

Terry immediately started fiddling with his watch.

“Is it true den dat everybody does it?”

“Change de time? Well, I can’t say if everybody in de ‘ole wide world does it, but fer sure a whole lot of folks do. All the folks in Canada anyhow.”

39.10.4
Typography

“But why? Is de time we’ve got no good no more?”

“Well we got to line up wid de sun, don’t we. See, in summer, de sun comes up earlier, so dat’s good fer de gardens. In winter, gets dark long about supper time, and dat’s de time folks come in fer de night, ’cause it’s too cold. Not like summer evenin’s when it’s nice to stay outdoors.”

Étienne nodded; then he looked outside.

“Well den, today, is it winter or summer?”

The inventor Butts (1900–1993) decided on the value and quantity of each letter in his game based on an in-depth study of letters found on the front page of the *New York Times*.

40.93.7
Time

Even though Terry does fairly well with his children, fatherhood remains something of a puzzle to him. Sure, he followed Carmen’s pregnancies closely, and he was there by her side through both births, but even doing his part in all the housework, including bringing up the kids, Terry feels fatherhood is not so easily achieved.

41.7.6
Useful
Details

“Lucky fer me you gives me a part to play, you make out like I’s important.”

“You are important!”

“I know, I knows it. Dat’s not what I was meaning to say. Only it’s like fer you it comes automatic like. Being yer de mudder, ’tis like magic. Whereas in my case, well . . .”

Carmen, uncomfortable with this apparent lack of balance, sought to encourage Terry.

“Sure it looks easier fer me. Sometimes just my being the mother seems like enough. Only kids need more dan dat, don’t dey. You take ’em all sorts of places out in de world, and you explain dem all kinds of things. Me, well sometimes I can’t be boddered, or I don’t even think to do it.”

Carmen’s words went some way toward reassuring Terry.

“Well, you know how it used to be: dads just standin’ there and decidin’ what was good fer de family. They never did take de time to care fer each child, did dey. Nowadays things are different. An’ aren’t you de perfect example of how they’ve changed for de better?”

“We’ve a couple books ’bout dat at de bookstore. I’ve not really looked at ’em doh.”

And with that, Terry slipped between the sheets, and Carmen completed her thought:

“Don’t forget, really all that yer doing now’ll add up later on.”

“So long as it adds up sometime, I suppose.”

A hodge-podge of seventeenth century and modern French, of English words pronounced in an English accent, English words pronounced in a French accent, and a syntactical mix drawn from both languages, Chiac is predominantly the lingua franca of the Acadians of southeastern New Brunswick. In spite of its echos of First Nation speech (Shediac, Kouchibouguac, Tabusintac) nothing is less certain than the origin of the word Chiac. And still today, to speak Chiac evokes a kind of dishonour.

42.13.2
Paternity

“You don’t remember the X-3X-X3-X test?”

Marianne had to admit she had no idea what her brother was talking about.

“De story of Souricette! You knows it, *souris sept*: mouse number seven? Wid all dose mice dat died in de warm half of de labyrinth!”

43.30.1
Chiac

Marianne wanted very much to please her brother, but she had absolutely no memory of his story.

“Ee told us dat story I don’t know how many times! I can’t believe you’ve gone and forgot it!”

The letter *b* might very well blush with pride at the number of colours that begin with *b* in pourpre.com’s chromatic dictionary: 26, or 9 percent, of the names of colours defined as real on the site. Together, the letters *a*, *b*, and *c* begin 107 of the 281 colours in this dictionary. Which amounts to saying that, in French, 38 percent of the colours listed in that particular dictionary begin with 12 percent of the letters of the alphabet. According to Wikipedia, *a*, *b*, and *c* are the first letters of 200 out of 869 names of colours in English, or 23 percent. Thus, in English, it appears the first three letters of the alphabet carry 15 percent less weight in introducing colours than in French.

44.133.5
The Future

The second time Terry sang for his children happened one evening while he was scribbling something at the kitchen table, waiting for the kids’ bedtime. When Étienne approached him to ask what he was doing, Louis Aragon’s *Blues* sprang to mind. Hearing the first notes of the song, Marianne joined her brother, and as Terry got to the bit *We can’t all be Cézanne / We’ll settle for much less*, he could feel his children were as enthralled as they’d been the first time. He delivered the lines *Young man what do you fear / You’ll grow old no matter what...* in the benevolent tone of a father instructing his offspring, and carried that attitude through to the end of the song.

45.3.3
Statistics

“Youse like it when yer dad sings, don’t ya?”

The two kids stood wide-eyed and waiting for more.

“Well, it’s our secret, OK? A secret just fer de tree of us, right?”

And to make sure the children had understood him, he kneeled down to their height to explain again how it was their secret and that they couldn’t tell anyone about how he sang for them.

“Sometime soon, I’ll be singin’ to surprise yer mum, see, but in the meanwhile, it’ll be our secret, right?”

Marianne signalled her agreement by hopping up and down. Étienne, for his part, did not seem to want to commit himself one way or the other. Terry leaned closer:

“It’s on account of me wanting to learn a special song just for yer mum, see. One dat’s not a bad bit nice . . .”

This seemed to satisfy Étienne, who allowed the secret to take root within.

According to the web site of the Department of Statistics and Computer Data Processing, University Institute of Technology of the Pays de l’Adour — at Pau in France — statisticians are indispensable collaborators of decision makers in any modern economy. Statisticians apply their mathematical expertise to analyze problems and propose solutions to real situations, as well as create models and digital analyses of these solutions, which are then used to produce reports accessible to the layman.

46.1.5
Chansons

“Take de word *good*. Bugs me the way dey writes the Chiac for *bien* as *b-e-n*. Why don’t dey spell it *b-e-i-n*? Dat’s de way we says it? And dat way it’d match up wid *rein* or kidney, what sounds jus’ like *ben*.”

47.11.2
Appropriation

“I suppose it’s on account of *ben* spelled *b-e-n* is what’s in de dictionary.”

“*Ben* spelled *b-e-n*: dat’s in de dictionary?”

“Well, sort of. Nowadays dey calls it an old slang expression, but back in de old days *ben* was a real word. Comes from de Latin *bene* don’t it, like in benefit, benevolent . . .”

. . .

“Anyways, even *rein* for kidney used to be written *r-e-n*. Wot makes good sense, on account of de adjective’s *rénal*, isn’t it?”

Francis Thibaudeau’s classification of typefaces opened the way to several other systems, including, in 1954, a classification devised by Maximilien Vox, which was adopted by the Association typographique internationale (International Typographic Association) or ATYPI. The Vox classification includes 11 categories of letters: Humanistic, Garaldic, Transitional, Didonic, Mechanistic, Lineal, Incised, Script, Manual, Black Letter, and Non-Latins.

48.33.8
Chiac
Lesson

“Did ya see dis, Marianne? De potatoes is comin’ up.”

Marianne was walking hand-in-hand with her dad. A pink line encircled her smile, while the lollipop she was transferring from one side of her mouth to the other occupied all her attention.

49.10.5
Typograph

“And o’er here in front, dose are beans.”

Terry was not blind to Marianne’s lack of interest.

“All along back der are de onions.”

Marianne took a bite out of her lollipop.

“Over on de udder side’re de animals. Let’s take a look what’s o’er der.”

Marianne finished off her lollipop, and offered Terry the chewed up white stick.

“You wants to plant lollipops? Good idea. Go ahead, den, and plant ’em.”

Marianne buried the stick among the turnips, stood and, seeing that the stick was leaning to one side, bent over again to straighten it.

“Der ya go! We’ll come ’round in a couple o’ weeks, an’ see what comes up.”

In fact, the innovation in printing we can attribute to Gutenberg was not moveable type per se — the Chinese had already invented that — but rather the lead letter melted in a mould designed to house all letters ranging from the narrow *l* to the wide *w*. This particularity opened the door to the casting of raised metal type by melting soft metal, most commonly lead. Hence the invention of hot lead printing. Hence, also, the development of fonts or typefaces, that is, collections of melted type — letter, numerals, blanks, punctuation — all in the same style and body, assiduously distributed in the fixed order of the wooden case. Once all these elements were perfected, type-founders became distinct from printers. Eventually, cases of metal type were produced and delivered on demand to printers in a hurry to provide editors with copies of a given author’s work.

50.134.8
Marianne

“And like before, *cte* became *c-t-apostrophe* in front of any word what begins with a vowel or a silent *h*.”

51.10.7
Typograph

“So would ya say *cte homard-icitte* fer “dis here lobster” or *ct’homard icitte*?”

“*Cte homard-icitte*, I figure.”

“Well dat sounds right fine to me.”

First coincidence. The goal of the survey conducted without the slightest preparation whatsoever among students at Université de Moncton was to determine their perception of the colours of vowels, but because it wasn’t properly designed, that goal was never clearly stated. The letter *a* is both the first vowel and the first letter of the alphabet. Admittedly, a weak coincidence, but a coincidence none the less.

52.35.2
The Detail
within the
Detail

“Dad, what does ‘whatever’ll be ‘lbe’ mean?”

“Will be. ‘Whatever will be will be’, not ‘lbe.’”

“But you says ‘lbe.’”

“Well, it maybe sounds like I’m saying ‘lbe’, but really I’m sayin’ ‘will be.’ Whatever will be will be.

...

“Means wedder you likes it or not. No two ways ’bout it, it’s gonna happen, wedder you likes it or not.”

Le Petit Étienne turned toward Chico:

“See, din’t I?1 ‘Ats what I was meaning.”

In her novel *1953: Chronicle of a Birth Foretold*, the Acadian author France Daigle makes no mention of the classification of typefaces created that year by Maximilien Vox.

Real colours (as opposed to imaginary colours). The web site pourpre.com offers the opportunity to browse a dictionary of imaginary colours (anyone can contribute to this collection, so long as they include a brief explanation of the suggested nuance). In addition to real and imaginary colours, there are also medical colours (albugineous, purpurine), as well as some names that are not colours per se but suggest colours (no examples come to mind).

“Had no idea what I’s going to do, did I. Anyhow, I puts my C.V. about, here an’ der, with de province, de université, de Radio-Canada, and l’Assomption Insurance. After a wee bit, de university called. They’s lookin’ fer a body to write exam questions, somebody creative, or so dey tells me.”

Still on the subject of Scrabble, a pivot is a letter that doubles or triples in value twice, first in a horizontal word and then in a vertical word. A quadruple occurs when a player succeeds in placing a word so that it covers two word-counts-double squares, which quadruples the value of the word. The same principle applies for the nonuple, except that in this case the word created falls on two word-counts-triple squares and is worth nine times more.

Terry’s family name was widely known in Dieppe because of Thibodeau’s Auto Body Shop. Proud of their achievement, Terry’s father and brothers were happy to share the Thibodeau name with the children of the family’s youngest and least conformist member.

“Yer sure ya don’t want to name dem Després-Thibodeau or Thibodeau-Després?”

Carmen felt that giving the children the father’s name was a way to evoke a paternal counterpart to the umbilical cord.

“No. Just Thibodeau’s fine. It’ll bind them closer to you that way. I’m their mudder, and dat’s plenty.”

Carmen’s decision made Terry feel proud, though he tried not to show it.

“Are ya sure, den?”

“Totally.”

“Cross yer heart and hope to die?”

Carmen burst out laughing, but Terry still wanted an answer:

“Wot I’d like to know fer sure, is wedder you’ll stick up fer me when folks go ’round sayin’ I don’t give a hoot fer yer name.”

53.17.1
Chance

54.20.8
Language

55.45.11
Useless
Details

57.131.4
Parenthesi

58.130.12
Work

59.4.10
Scrabble

“Cross me heart, I’ll stick up fer ya.”

“OK. Cross me heart’ll do. Anyways, I never did understand de hope to die part.”

In the case of the two responders who claimed they could see no colour associated with the *a*, we cannot assume they saw the same no colour. Because whether we proceed by addition (in which adding the three primary colours produces white, and the black is treated as an absence of colour) or by subtraction (in which the addition of the three primary colours produces black and the absence of colour is white), both the all and the nothing can each be represented by black or by white. At least this is what was generally believed until two scientists undertook to discover the colour of the universe. Karl Glazebrook and Ivan Baldry calculated the dominant colour of more than 200,000 galaxies and concluded that the colour of the whole tends toward white. According to them, if we could enclose the universe in a box, we would see a pale yellowish ivory, a shade they baptised cosmic latte, after calling for suggestions over the Internet. The two researchers declared they chose this suggested name over all the others because it had the added appeal of reflecting their own predilection for coffee.

60.7.11
Useful
Details

“Well, it’s pretty basic, really: ya got Barbie, Hot Wheels ’n Fisher-Price.”

“Is dat it den? Wot about Playstation an’ all dem gadgets?”

“I’m talkin’ ’bout de real toys, dose dat you plays wid fer real. Computers an’ de like, dat’s a whole udder department.”

“What’ve ya done wid Lego, den?”

As a matter of fact, Terry had forgotten Lego.

“Good question.”

61.2.7
Colours

The difference between a font and a typeface has become so subtle today that the two terms are almost synonymous. At one time font used to mean the characters themselves, whereas a typeface was the complete set of characters in a font.

62.102.12
The Trio

“Seems some folks way back ’round Molière’s time, complained his French was too colloquial-like, not refined enough, if ya please.”

“How come den, dey’re always sayin’ “la langue de Molière” when dey’re meanin’ French, like ee was de mucky-muck of de French language?”

“Most likely on account of ee became famous. Could be ee was de first French fellow to become famous.”

...

...

“What else’ve you learned den?”

“Well, Molière was alive ’round de same time l’ Acadie was startin’ up. ’Tween 1600 and 1700, what we calls de seventeenth century.”

“Well, ain’t dat weird. I tot we was descended from dat udder fellow, Rabelais?”

“Dat’s de truth. I didn’t tink of it.”

...

“Well, I suppose dat means I’ll be goin’ to the next class.”

“De whole ting’d drive me round de bend. You goes to university, you tinks you’ve learned a ting, den some boy asks a simple question, and ya don’t know anymore. De whole ting’s a ripoff, ya ask me.”

63.21.7
More or
Less Usefu
Details

The little survey conducted among 102 students at the Université de Moncton also revealed that blue was the

64.33.3
Chiac

colour most associated with the vowel *e*. In fact, 44 responders selected blue — one specified a pale blue — which amounts to 43 percent of total responders. On the other hand, 18 responders declared the *e* was green — 1 described it as a shallot green — 9 described it as yellow, 7 as grey, 4 as violet. Orange, red, black and white were named three times each; brown and pink twice; and once each: amber, silver, transparent, and nothing.

A few weeks later, on a Sunday afternoon unencumbered by the slightest obligation, while Carmen was browsing a magazine and watching with pleasure as Étienne, Marianne and Terry played like kittens on the living room carpet, Étienne suddenly cried out:

“Dad! Sing!”

Marianne seconded the request by hopping up and down and repeatedly flinging her arms up in the air. Terry was quick to acquiesce.

“*Frè-re Jac-ques, frè-re Jac- . . .*”

“No, not like dat, Dad! De udder way!”

Terry played dumb:

“Eh sure! *Au clair de la lu- . . .*”

But Étienne was unrelenting:

“No, Dad! Wid yer arms an’ all!”

Terry, seeing Marianne beginning to tremble with impatience, did not want to ruin the atmosphere.

“Awh! Like dat!”

Without knowing where all this was coming from, Carmen decided to play along, and began to clap her hands, drawing in the children:

“Ter-ry! Ter-ry! We want Ter-ry!”

Étienne and Marianne, imitating their mother, clapped their hands with each syllable. Marianne added a slight waddle from left to right.

“OK, OK.”

Terry straightened up, his heartbeat racing. He winked at Étienne.

“Dis here’s a song for you Mum.”

Marianne’s excitement continued for a bit, but Étienne realized that this was the moment they had been promised: the unveiling of their secret.

“Dis here’s a poem Aragon wrote for his lover Elsa.”

. . .

“De song’s called ‘Elsa.’”

. . .

“S’posed to be Léo Ferré sings it, but dis time, well, it’s me.”

Terry tried to gain a few moments to slow his pulse down a bit. Étienne and Marianne had no idea what was going on, never having heard Terry introduce a song before. But their confusion quickly dissipated when Terry finally began to sing:

“*Is it possible you only need appear / That look that’s so endearing / Your hair that gesture so appealing . . .*”

Cravat 28, (C)aging 20, Toye(r) 16, Nov(a)s 21, api(n)g 24, Ju(i)cy 34, Flin(t) 24, Mu(s)h 29, Zi(g) 26, Equ(i)ne 30, (Z)oo 24, L(o)pe 21, Dr(e)w 36, D(y)ad 13, (D)ebriefed 14, (B)it 15, Wa(f)t 20, To(w)n 14, I(s)led 15, Equine(s) 17, Debrief(s) 34, Rente(d) 8, Tom(e) 20, Ear(t)h 13, (a)xle 27, Ek(e) 14, Bo(l)a 28, O(b)it 7,

Carmen could hardly breathe, her eyes were wet with tears. Étienne and Marianne were staring at her, waiting for her real reaction. Terry, it should be said, had been especially moving. When he came to the line “like the sunlight on the window,” he’d extended a hand toward the large windows of the loft without taking his eyes off Carmen, and even the children could feel how much it meant. Finally, after a long transatlantic silence that shuttled between Terry and Carmen, she ran toward Terry, flung her arms around him and, squeezing tight, buried her face in his neck. The children followed suit, wrapping themselves round two legs each, one of Dad’s and one of Mum’s. Tears were running down Carmen’s cheeks, and Marianne took up her swaying and chanting:

“Ar-gon! Ar-gon! Ar-gon! . . .”

Under the title “Black A,” in *Delirium II – Alchemy of the Word*, Rimbaud also mentions the colours of vowels: “I invented the colours of the vowels! — *a* black, *e* white, *i* red, *o* blue, *u* green.” Easily obtainable in French on the web site rimbaudsillages.free.fr, the tone of which encourages copying and dissemination (the English translation can be appropriated from mag4.net/Rimbaud/poesies/Alchemy).

“Folks’ll see CHANGE CASE on der screen and dey don’ know what to do wid it. Don’ know what it means, do dey. Goes way back to de days of de old printing houses, lead type an’ all dat. Back den, a case was dat big wooden box wid all de wee compartments where dey puts de letters. De wee letters, the teeniest, goes in de bottom of de case. Dat’s why we calls dem letters lower case. Up on top, you’s had de capitals, dose letters what have de accents and other stuff we don’ use all that much. Some folks says ‘upper case’ for capital letters. Below dey put all de punctuation marks, numbers, and de blanks to make spaces betwixt de words. At first dey was lining up all de type into text by hand. Later on, der was linotype. Dey had all dat at *L’Évangéline* when I started work der. I sure would have liked to keep a set of that equipment, but den where would I ’ave put it, I’d like to know.”

Unlike the results for the *a* and the *e*, where a few colours dominated, perceptions of the colour of *i* were somewhat disparate. Whereas 25 responders saw yellow and 16 red, the 61 other participants voted in almost equal numbers for a dozen different colours, including white (and its derivations igloo and ivory), violet, indigo, pink, purple, blue, green, grey, black, brown, nothing, and I forget.

Camil Gaudain was a regular visitor to Didot Books, and he rarely left without buying one or two volumes. Terry had noticed that he read a bit of everything. Or he bought a bit of everything: novels, essays, biographies, philosophy, psychology, gardening, recipes, even children’s literature. Terry, who very much doubted Camil had children, assumed he was buying the brightly coloured books for his nephews and nieces.

“I’d like to order Freud in the Pléiade edition.”

“No problem.”

When Ludmilla and he had opened the bookstore, Terry had been obliged to immerse himself rapidly in the universe of books. He had everything to learn. Thanks to Ludmilla’s patience and generosity, he was managing pretty well.

“Cold enuff fer ya?”

“Funny ting is I like all sorts of wedder. Even de month o’ March.”

No customer had ever ordered a book from the Pléiade. This was nothing abnormal for Terry. People were always asking for authors and publishers he’d never heard of and he always managed to find them. But was Camil Gaudain in a hurry? Terry had caught him glancing at his watch twice already.

“If it’s alright with you, I’ll come back this afternoon. It’s just that I’ve a meeting in twenty minutes . . .”

“No problem. Dat’ll give me de time to do a proper search. I’d best be writing it down doh, so’s not to forget.”

Terry pulled out the notebook he kept under the cash register, wrote: FREUD — LAPLÉYADE. Camil Gaudain noticed the spelling.

“It’s two words.”

Terry did not take offence. He put a line through Lapléyade and wrote what his customer dictated:

“*La Pléiade*, capital *P-l-e* with an accent aigu *-i-a-d-e*.”

Terry read the name aloud:

“*Pléiade*.”

Then, to stimulate business a bit:

“Was der anything else you might be wantin’ me to order?”

On the other hand, a Blanchard is a word of little value, usually made of letters worth only a single point. For professionals, a Blanchard is a word worth less than 60 points.

Chiac is not exempt from slip-ups, which are in fact errors. For example, the sentence “Have you got enough there?” is often translated in French as “*Y en a-tu assez pour toi?*” as though we were saying: “Have you got enough for you there?” The *tu* here should be an *il* (*Y en a-t-il assez pour toi?*). The error is most likely linked to the fact that the question addresses a second person singular. If one is speaking proper Chiac, one must say: “*Y en a-t-y assez pour toi?*” just as in a particular English, one would say: “Have ya had yer fill, then?” The same applies to the exclamation “*Y en a-tu mangé òr whât!*” which ought to be “*Y en a-t-y mangé òr whât!*” in Chiac, or “*Il en a certainement mangé sa part*” in Parisian. In non-standard English, one might say, “Did he scoff his fill or wot!”

A character in Acadian France Daigle’s novel *Just Fine*, Camil Gaudain, had no role to play in her two subsequent novels (*A Fine Passage* and *Life’s Little Difficulties*), but this did not stop his life from continuing outside the fictional framework.

A few days later, Terry felt better. It may have been just fatigue that had caused him to fret over his role as a father.

“T’other night I didn’t tink to say so, but I figures ’twas a right fine ting I did for de kids when I sang de Aragon for dem. ‘Specially dat first time. I sure caught ’em unawares der, surprised ’em in a good way. You should ’ave seen der faces! Like dey was all admirin’ me.”

“For sure! I was like in shock meself.”

72.8.3
Didot
Books

73.4.7
Scrabble

74.33.11
Chiac
Lesson

75.96.10
Characters

“I know, but fer the kids, I mean ’twas like sometin went straight into der DNA, marked ’em fer real. I’m pretty sure it did. Could see it jus de way dey was lookin’ up to me. Now dat’s sometin’ I wouldn’t mind seein’ more often.”

“Ask me, it happens more often than you think, ’cept you can’t see it cause you’re too close to them.”

“Really?”²

A parallel play occurs in Scrabble when a word is placed in parallel to another thereby creating several two-letter words. A player creates a chimney when a word is placed between two other words already on the board — or on the screen — to create several three-letter words. When a new word is formed by adding a letter at the beginning or end of a previously placed word we call it a hook, whereas creating a word by adding a three-letter prefix is called a Benjamin.

76.13.3
Paternity

The sign referred to by all but the initiated as a letter — and as a character by all the initiated, except for the specialists — is composed of more parts than the serif. These include the stem (vertical stroke), the bar (horizontal stroke), the bowl (a curved stroke that creates an enclosed space in the character), a stroke (oblique straight or curved line), and the ascender (the part of the lowercase letter that extends above the x-height). The serif is a line crossing the main strokes of a character, for example at the base of the stem.

77.4.8
Scrabble

Even Ludmilla could not believe it:

“I can’t understand their logic. They published Marx after all; why not Freud?”

Obviously I’m missing something. Unless . . .”

And she plunged into a new search, navigating like Ulysses in the *Odyssey*, sailing from one site to another, as though she knew the virtual network of publishing like the back of her hand.

79.10.8
Typograph

In addition to typeface and size, the look of a character varies according to its value, i.e., the amount of ink, also known as its weight, its orientation — upright, slanted, italic — and its colour.

80.8.4
Didot
Books

“Can you tell me how come I’ve so much trouble saying *je vais* meaning ‘I’m going someplace,’ instead of *je vas*, like ‘I’s goin’ der?’”

“Well, dat’s on account of the economy of language. *Vas* is shorter dan *vais*.”

!!

. . .

“Well, I’ll be! At last, an answer wot makes sense!”

81.10.9
Typograph

Lacan’s matheme of “the discourse of the hysteric”

82.31.5
Questions
with
Answers

83.11.11
Appropriations

$$\frac{\$}{a} \longrightarrow \frac{S_1}{S_2}$$

Discours de L’Hystérique

Carmen and Josse had wasted little time looking for a name for their bar. The Babar seemed the obvious choice. No one could come up with a good reason not to use it, although there were doubts.

83.11.11.
Appropriations

“Wot if yer not supposed to use dat name? Like if someone was to call der bar Charlie

Brown, don't you tink pretty soon dey'd be gettin'sued?"

"Dat may be in de States. I doubts de French'd come after us. Mostly dey doesn't even know we exist, and dem dat does have got lots better tings to do den bodder wid a wee bar some place out in the wilds of Canada."

In addition to English and French, Scrabble is played in Greek, Arab, Hebrew, Spanish, Portuguese, Catalan, Italian, German, Polish, Danish, Dutch, Swedish, Finnish, Norwegian, Flemish, Czech, Hungarian, Slovak, Croatian, Slovene, Turkish, Greek Cypriot, Icelandic, Afrikaans, Russian, Anglo-Chinese, Anglo-Japanese, Malay, and Braille. Obviously, the number of tiles and the letter values vary from one language to another.

84.104.2
Worries

Terry learned a great deal merely from browsing La Pléiade's web site: to be published by this, arguably the most prestigious, publisher in the world, amounts to a kind of consecration (when der's a bit o' real gold on de cover, you knows dey isn't foolin' around) — few writers have gained entry to La Pléiade during their lifetimes (Gracq? in me whole life, I never heard dat name) — founded in 1931 by Jacques Schiffrin and André Gide (hurrah! at last a fellow I heard of) — bought by Gallimard (naturally, dey owns everythin') — Volume III of Aragon's poetry goes for \$130 (Jesus, how many volumes does dat boy got?).

85.112.1
Languages

In French, the tiles, those small wooden squares on which Scrabble's letters are printed, are sometimes called caramels. A valuable letter is worth more than four points. A phoney is an unacceptable word. The tiles are mixed in the bag, each player draws seven, which he or she places on the rack, and then tries to make the most of by exploiting the high-value letters, occasionally ending up with a phoney.

86.8.5
Didot
Books

Some time later, Josse burst into Carmen and Terry's place in a state of great excitement. She was hiding something behind her back.

"Yous'll never guess!"

Unable to contain herself any longer, she showed them the object. Carmen and Terry were enraptured.

"Well, don't that beat all!"

"Where did ya find it?!"

"Out where dey sells dem antiques on John."

Terry took the small Babar lamp from Josse, for a closer look.

"She's chipped, but der's nuttin' wrong wid dat. Goes wid de rest."

But Carmen had no desire to decorate the Babar with a bunch of secondhand junk:

"Sure an' are we gonna fill up de place wid old stuff all chipped and faded?"

"Naw. I only meant if der's a bit of old stuff, it goes wid de whole idea of de lofts, recycling an' all dat."

Carmen nodded, and took up the statuette in turn.

"Wouldn't be so bad if we could get our hands on a couple more."

Josse was bursting with pleasure:

"I found dem! Googled Babar din't I, and der dey was! On eBay! Secondhand an' bran' new! We could set a few down on de tables. Not on all of dem, just here an' der, so long as it's in keeping wid de décor. If dat's wot we want, I mean . . ."

Coincidence? The fact that the alphabet is sometimes referred to as the ABCs, and that these three letters, *a*, *b*,

88.6.1

As Étienne had more or less appropriated Aragon's *Blues* and "I Sing to Pass the Time," while "Elsa" had become Carmen's song, Terry decided to learn another just for Marianne. He sang it for her one evening in her bedroom, with Étienne in attendance, since it was a première and he'd been there for the others. The song Terry had chosen was slightly more difficult than the earlier ones because it included some unusual vocal embellishments, which Terry wanted to reproduce as well as possible. He launched into "The Stranger" like a clown on a highwire, and soon had the kids laughing. At the beginning of the third verse, when Terry sang: *I took the hand of an ephemera / She followed me into my house . . .* Marianne imagined that this was how Terry had become her dad, and she paid even closer attention to what followed all the way to the end of the song.

The progression of the category "Useful Details" into "Interesting Details" is itself interesting. Whereas with useful details, one is justified in asking useful to whom, useful for what, in the case of interesting details, we ask ourselves interesting to whom, and why interesting. From an indirect object we shift into subordinated and coordinated clauses. The beginning of writing, in a sense.

But there was no denying it: Freud's works had not been published by La Pléiade. Ludmilla seemed hurt by this omission; she disappeared into the small office at the back of the bookstore like a fox retreating into its den.

"Everyting dat Freud wrote was published in French by dis here publisher. Nuttin' of his was published by La Pléiade."

Terry handed Camil Gaudain the scrap of paper on which he'd written the address of Freud's publisher.

"You're sure?"

Camil Gaudain's surprise was comforting to Terry and, in a way, legitimized Ludmilla's dismay.

"Ya. Ludmilla was a dog's age surfin' on de Internet she couldn't believe it."

Jean de Brunhoff's *Babar's Travels* was published by La Librairie Hachette in 1939. The original version was subsequently reprinted, notably in October 1979, in Hachette's Lutin Poche, L'école des Loisirs paperback edition. Recopied here (and translated) without permission, the first page reads as follows:

*Babar the young king of the elephants
and his wife Queen Celeste
have set out in a hot air balloon
on their honeymoon.
"Au revoir! See you soon!"
the elephants shout
as the balloon floats out of sight.
Babar's little cousin Arthur
is still waving his beret.
Old Cornelius, acting chief of the elephants
whenever the king's away, thinks:
"Let's hope they don't have an accident!"*

Because Acadian French is replete with old words and archaic expressions, it is perhaps the strong and often insidious presence of English that lends Chiac its particular character, and especially the clearly English pronunciation of these words. Someone from France can say they've put their car in the *parquigne* without a second thought, but an Acadian would feel like a showoff pronouncing it that way. Acadians quite naturally say "parking" exactly as they've heard it hundreds of times from the mouths of the Anglophones that surround them.

We are dealing here with a musical, rhythmic, and aesthetic rupture. Often this mix of two languages is unnoticed, but equally often it offends the ear and defies understanding. It's all a question of balance. For example, take the phrase "*je vas aouère besoin d'un troque ou d'un vãn pour haler mon botte ennewé* (Least ways, I'll be needin' me some body's truck or van to haul me boat)." Here at least the sentence seems to maintain a consistent sonic register. On the other hand, a vague menace lurks beneath the surface of the sentence: "*si que je swõtch la lĩght bãck òn pis que la maison Ëxplode, expecte pas d'aouère Ëver ãgain d'autres outils pour Father's Day* (if I goes to switch on de light and de whole house blows up, don't you expect no more o' dem tools fer Fadder's Day)."

Find out if there are bloodlines linking Terry Thibodeau and the Francis Thibaudeau who designed the first recognized classification of typographical styles in 1921.

94.30.7
Chiac

"To start wid, ee got aggressive like, den after a bit ee started wot dey calls panic attacks. After dat, 'twas a great big gaffer of a belly ache, so bad ee tot he'd got appendicitis. His wife drives 'im to de hospital in de middle of de night, and all. Sure, but de doctors couldn't find nuttin'. 'Til dey figured 'twas on account of 'is wife was preggies. The boy 'ad all de same side effects: worrying, belly ache, a burnin' rage to defend 'is kind, de whole kid an' kaboodle. Well, de doc asks 'im, did ee gain some weight lately, and sure enuf, ee'd took on five pounds. Dat was it den, ee had to be preggies, too. Ee was gettin' bigger jus' like 'is wife, even doh ee wasn't eatin' no more dan before. Pretty warped, eh?"

95.68.1
Projects

The word *character* when referring to a letter involves more than simply the sign. It also designates the environment of the letter, i.e., the spaces on either side and between the lines, as well as its relationship to its neighbours. The disposition on the same page of characters of different typefaces, sizes and other specifications will create, or not, depending on the typesetter's talent, a particular desired effect, which is what the art of typography is all about.

96.15.12
Unidentified
Monologu

Terry had nevertheless taken the trouble to modify one or two of Aragon's phrases to avoid traumatising the children. His own modesty of course played a part in this. In "The Stranger," to avoid any suggestion of incest — after all, he'd dedicated the song to Marianne — he changed the words to place dragonflies on her dress and butterflies in her hair, which helped to transform the original meaning of the verse. In the phrase *Cut my throat and the peonies* in "I Love You So," he replaced his throat with roses, which somewhat attenuated the barbarism so that he could keep the line *Hurry bring me my wine my blood*, because he did not want to shelter the children from all primitive feelings nor transform Aragon's texts into innocent nursery rhymes; the kids already knew enough of

97.10.10
Typograph

those.

Thus the expression “read between the lines” is not purely figurative.

98.1.9
Chansons

“Potatoes sold pretty well back den; well der weren’t much to eat and not a whole lot o’ choice. Dese days it’s a whole udder kettle of fish. Folks’re eatin’ all sorts o’ tings aside from potatoes. An’ I’m not jus’ talkin’ ’bout dose dat’s afeared of puttin’ on a few pounds. So . . . fer sure, dey’s gotta find some udder way to sell all dem potatoes. Like makin’ bags smaller and more appealin’ like, if youse catch me drift. And der’s different sorts o’ potatoes, ’cause it’s like wine dese days, folks’re startin’ to know der different sorts o’ potatoes. Potatoes fer makin’ mashed’r no good fer boiled cod, an’ potatoes ya want baked in yer oven or microwave, well dose ain’t de same neither . . . Right, now what was I sayin’? Awh yeah! Potatoes you want fer bakin’ an’ dose wot you’re usin’ in yer fricassée, well dey ain’t de same yer gonna be usin’ to make fries.”

99.98.5
Expressions

Gradually a slew of terms and phrases became widespread, terms like *libido*, *oral stage*, *anal stage*, *sadism*, *narcissism*, the *unconscious*, *Oedipal complex*, *desire*, *ambivalence*, *lapsus*, *guilt*, *pleasure principle*, *reality principle*, the *ego*, the *id*, the *superego*, *aggressivity*, *death drive*, *neurosis*, *psychosis*, *anxiety*, *defense mechanism*, *conflict*, *repression*, *inhibition*, *resistance*, *overdetermination*, *transference*, *projection*; all notions that have become part of our contemporary mental toolbox.

100.15.6
Unidentifi
Monologu

On the wall by the entrance hang a dozen or so backpacks of various sizes and colours. Those down close to the floor are smaller and livelier in colour. All together they make a pretty picture. Étienne got two new packs this September: one for the pool and one for his colouring course with Étienne Zablonki. “Course” may be exaggerating a bit, but it does dress up nicely and elevate slightly those weekly hours of babysitting Zablonki has offered Terry and Carmen. Wednesday afternoons therefore, the renowned painter Étienne Zablonki tries to teach some basic notions of visual art to the Le Petit Étienne Thibodeau.

101.39.4
Freud
Circuitous

“You don’t need to bring me, Dad; I can get der on me own.”

Terry quickly concealed the concern that had gripped him at the thought of letting the little one roam the hallways of the lofts on his own. Once over his initial surprise, he sought to encourage his son’s resourcefulness:

“If you know how to get der, I figure yer old enough to go on yer own den, fer sure.”

Cited without permission from the Gallimard catalogue concerning La Pléiade: “All the books are printed in Garamond, on bible paper, and leather bound with gold lettering. A different colour has been selected for each era: tobacco for the twentieth century, emerald green for the nineteenth, blue for the eighteenth, venetian red for the seventeenth, Corinthian brown for the sixteenth, purple for the Middle Ages, green for Antiquity; sacred texts are bound in grey, anthologies in China red.”

102.88.1
Freedom

“Well, anyways, ain’t de French always ’ad a revolutionary streak runnin’ troo dem since de whatchamacallit de French Revolution?”

“An’ what, pray tell, does dat have to do wid legal copyright?”

“On account of if der’s some way dey can prove dat Babar belongs to de people, well dey’ll do it fer sure, and den der could be a Babar on every street corner, no problem. *Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*, remember?”

103.11.7
Appropria

“Those French’re even more rimmed dan I tot.”

Acadians are often criticized — and not least by each other — for pronouncing words containing an è as though it were an é. *Père* (pair) and *mère* (mair) for example, are often pronounced *pére* (payr), and *mére* (mayr). Of course, this is actually the old French pronunciation. But such ways of speaking seem old fashioned in the ears of the Other, as though this inability to adapt to modern French was evidence of a failure to adapt to modern life itself.

104.82.2
Moncton

Having answered the door and greeted Le Petit Étienne, Zablonki was surprised:

“Terry’s not with you?”

“No. I’m old enough.”

“Yes, of course you are.”

Before closing the door, the painter glanced down the hall, thinking Terry might have followed the child at some distance, just to be sure he’d arrived at his destination safely. But he saw no one. After which, he admired the candour of the little fellow who proceeded to take his usual place at the end of the room by the large windows looking out over the sun drenched city.

105.33.5
Chiac
Lesson

It is too soon to speak of the Other.

106.13.9
Paternity

At first Le Grand Étienne had some difficulty imparting his knowledge to Le Petit Étienne. He thought he’d begin initially with a basic differentiation: warm colours and cold colours. Wrong. Le Petit Étienne described as warm all the colours Le Grand Étienne classified as cold and as cold all those supposedly warm. The artist came at the problem in various ways, but none seemed to work. In the end, just to avoid having to declare this first pedagogical exercise a failure, the painter declared:

107.138.1
The Other

“Well, really, it’s not that important.”

Le Petit Étienne did not disagree. The master decided that a light snack might soften the learning curve. He fetched milk and cookies, putting on some music on the way, and came back to sit by his pupil, next to the large windows where they could watch the comings and goings in the neighbourhood. It was this pause that allowed him to break through the impasse. Le Petit Étienne had a question:

“Which colour is *vert laine*?”

Vert laine? Green wool? Étienne Zablonki tried to think where the boy had seen green wool.

Freud’s massive oeuvre defies simplification. Which explains the need for a roundabout approach. First impression: after several months in Paris, at age 30, Freud returns to Vienna convinced that, as the eminent Charcot had argued, the study of anatomy was complete, the era of neurosis was at hand.

108.2.9
Colours

The small and more or less scientific survey on perceptions of the colour of vowels was taken up at the Babar, which had subscribed to *L’Acadie nouvelle* as a service to the clientele. A few lines on the survey had appeared as filler in the newspaper.

109.39.1
Freud
Circuitous

“As wot, you say?”

“Filler.”

“An’ wot’s dat, I’d like to know.”

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