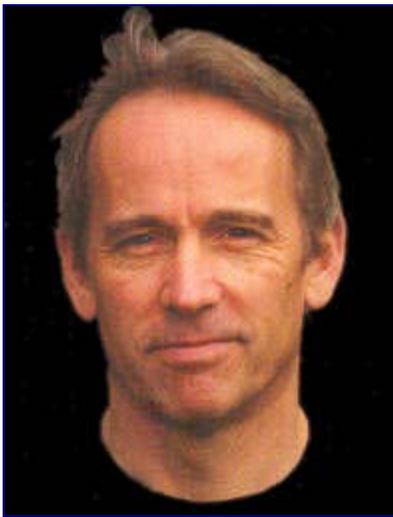


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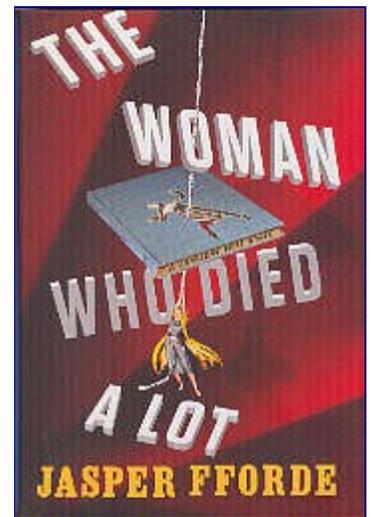
A READER'S JOURNAL

The Woman Who Died A Lot
A Thursday Next Novel, No. 7
Now with 50% Added Subplot

by
Jasper Fforde

ARJ2 Chapter: Reading for Enjoyment
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A Book Review by Bobby Matherne
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*To all the librarians
who have ever been,
ever will be,
are now,
this book is respectfully dedicated.*

In the previous book, Thursday Next was missing, at least one of her was missing. The confusion of multiple Thursdays continues in this novel with the new technology of synthetic replicants called Day Players because they self-destruct after a day or so. But during that day, individuals are able to live within their Day Player and if they die, return immediately to their waiting body, slumped somewhere in a corner, all fit and ready to go. Well, er, for Thursday, not exactly fit, because after speeding around like a gazelle as a Day Player, she returned to her usual limping with a cane in her human body, bruised and banged up from her adventures in the previous book.

Being the head of the CIA for a spy might be the height of their ambition, but for a book lover and traveler in and out of fiction, being a Librarian might be a similar achievement. Of course, it was not first choice for former Spec-Ops Thursday when she was appointed Chief Librarian of the *Swindon All-You-Can-Eat-At-Fatso's Drink Not Included Library*.

Get ready as you read this book for another three-laughs-a-page Fforde coup! Take this example, as Thursday explains as first-person narrator:

[page 16] Spike's work with the semidead, ethereal horrors, demons, bogies and vampires wasn't everyone's cup of tea. In fact, aside from Spike himself with my occasional assistance, it wasn't anyone's cup of tea. His old division of SO-17 was known colloquially as "the Sucker and Biters," but they dealt with anything of a nominally undead or horrific nature. Despite the [budget] cuts, Officer Spike Stoker had managed to keep the phantasm-containment facilities and deep refrigeration units going in the subbasements, but only after he demonstrated *precisely* why there was a good reason. The councilor who was eager to make the cuts rashly took up Spike's offer of a tour. She

was struck dumb for six months. Only a fool looked into anything below the fifth subbasement.

If you did not find any cause for the least smile in the above passage, you may have arrived in this book under false pretenses, perhaps through a practical joke by a friend who knew that you detested practical jokes but tried to convert you anyway, like the nun who had a candle-lit dinner with the priest but never let him get into the habit.

Or try this next passage, just to be sure. Thursday and her husband Landen needed to give each other a password in case one of Goliath Corporation's Synthetic Thursdays, those nasty Day Players, were to replace Thursday. Pity poor Thursday, she not only had a job as Librarian to do, was badly beaten up in a previous episode, and had to walk with a cane, limping badly, but she had to remember a password sequence every day or Landen would be required to shoot her. Landen offered her this one.

[page 9] "What about if I say, 'No cookies at the hunt, sir!' and then you reply with, 'It's not a cookie, it's a Newton'?"

Thursday mused to herself about her lot in life as a former Special-Ops expert, "Sadly, a lifetime in law enforcement tends not to create a bunch of grateful villains happy that you have shown them the error of their ways, but rather a lot of disgruntled ne-er-do-wells eager for payback." (Page 9)

Sometimes Fforde provides useful definitions, such as Thursday's description of a zombie, how can they be dead and have a craving for human flesh, especially brains.

[page 26] "Actually," I added in order to fill the silence, "technically speaking, zombies are already dead, so you can't kill them — just disable the diseased part of the cortex that gives them locomotion and an insatiable thirst for human flesh."

"I *so* didn't want to know that," said Chumley, staring at me, "and will now have to do my very best to forget it. But I have a feeling the thought will remain and fester in my subconscious until it bubbles to the surface as a full-fledged neurosis a dozen years from now, when I begin to have an inexplicable aversion to buttons and hedgehogs."

Chumley was a wonderful foil for Thursday as he was curious about her previous life in Spec-Ops, causing her to mention the wonderful character named Red Herring. (Reminds me of a gal with red hair I worked with years ago whose last name was Herrin.)

[page 31] "Was Red Herring a red herring?" asked Chumley in some confusion.

"No," I replied reflectively, "but his name was. By calling Red Herring Red Herring, it made people think that he couldn't be a red herring as it was too obvious, so his name — Red Herring — then became the red herring when we found out he wasn't a red herring. Simple, yes?"

"No."

"I agree it's complicated," I said with a shrug. "Working in fiction does give one a somewhat tenuous hold on reality, but it's not the hold that's tenuous — it's the *reality*: Which reality? Whose reality? Does it matter anyway? And will there be cake?"

In this *novel* novel, the *cake* is the almost-guaranteed three-or-more laughs a page. Sometimes three in one sentence or brief interaction. Like on page 37 when we learn about the Toast Marketing Board's attempt to raise the sales of jam, butter and bread in Fiona Pipette's "A Brief History of Toast." One toast, it seems, and you're toast! Suddenly a new fast food chain springs up known as *Yo! Toast* where you can have toast anyway you want it during a brief stop.

We live in a time when there seems to be a stupidity surplus without any safe way of discharging it. Take for instance the disastrous events in Benghazi that no one wants to take the blame for, or the Attorney General who signed a search warrant calling a respected journalist a criminal, and then denied doing it.

We need an SEC.

[page 43] The SEC was the Stupid Events Commission, the government department created to oversee the safe discharge of the stupidity surplus. Some would argue that it was the SEC's good management and unimpeachably honest adherence to sound business practices that had gotten us into this mess, but anyone can attribute blame with the benefit of hindsight.

The book is full of novel ideas for government programs, such a jail which required no buildings, guards, food, cable television, or health care, namely, a "Closed-Loop Temporal-Field Containment" which would safely imprison the most-dangerous of criminals in a kind of Hatlo's Inferno(1). Take Oswald Danforth, for instance,

[page 47] whose punishment was to be trapped in an endlessly recurring eight-minute loop of time. In his case while his girlfriend, Trudi, tried on a camisole. She never knew about the loop, of course — but Danforth did. That's why it was called TJ-Maxx: Temporal-J, Maximum Xecurity.

Thursday had a tattoo on her wrist to remind her that her daughter Jenny was only a mindworm planted by Aornis Hades. The tattoo reduced the number of times Landen had to explain to Thursday about Jenny. When my mother-in-law Doris had beginning ALZ, she would constantly ask my wife where Dick, her deceased husband was and when was he coming to visit. She still believed Dick was alive, just as Thursday did about Jenny, only Jenny never existed at all. So Landen and Thursday decided to track down Aornis to get rid of the mindworm. Having no luck in TJ-Maxx, they were sitting down outside when Phoebe Smalls walked up to them.

[page 53] "Am I interrupting something?"

It was Phoebe Smalls.

"Nothing at all," I said. "Phoebe Smalls, this is my husband, Landen. Landen, meet the new head of SO-27."

"You seem quite young," said Landen.

"It's due to my age," said Phoebe, and Landen laughed, and I glared at him.

Meanwhile there was an asteroid hovering in the background of everyone's thoughts because it was hovering in the foreground of the cosmos heading to a cataclysmic collision which will probably wipe out the Earth in 41 years. With the ability to predict the future becoming rather accurate, many people were already receiving letters which told them when they were going to die, and no one had received a letter where they died more than 41 years in the future, enforcing the probability of Earth's being blasted out of existence. All this had led to the formation of Destiny Aware Support Groups, sort of a "Bereave Now, Pay Later" group therapy.

Jimmy-G of the ChronoGuard would have worked under Thursday's son Friday Next but for his accident and was now working in TJ-Maxx and helping Thursday and Landen find Aornis on their video footage. Jimmy-G said, "I was retired from field duty when a jump to the sixteenth century dumped me in the forty-fifth due to a gimbal-lock precession error on the fluxgates." Jimmy-G couldn't explain what that meant because he never got the ChronoGuard job in which he would have worked under Friday Next. After he gave them the images of Aornis, they thanked him.

[page 52] "Glad to be of help," he said, shaking our hands and giving us some discount vouchers. "Tell your son that Jimmy-G would have been proud working under him. If I had. Which I won't."

"You would have known him? I asked, intrigued that I'd met two people in one day who were ex-potential ChronoGuard.

"Yes, he helped me find a new job when the service wanted to retire me after my

accident. He would have been a good friend. Will you ask him if wants to come to my Destiny Aware Support Group meeting tomorrow? I'm setting it up for ex-potential ChronoGuard who have received their life summaries, and Friday would be very welcome. We need guidance, and he would have been there for us time and time again. And might again. For the first time. You know. Anyway, it's at the sports center at night."

"I don't think he'll want to come."

"If he's anything like the person I'm told he might have turned out to be, he'd say no but come anyway."

"I agree. I'll tell him."

When dealing with advance probabilities of future events, you'll find a lot of people talking in the subjunctive about how things might have been as if some events were already a reality, but just didn't turn out that way, remaining as a, you know, *would have been* reality.

Next next meets Wingco, Wing Commander Cornelius Scampton-Tippett, wartime RAF officer, and a fictional character she bought in a "BookWorld salvage yard to pep up one of Landen's books". Now Wingco acts as a family bodyguard and general assistant, constantly aware of Thursday's mindworm which has her believing in a fictitious daughter named Jenny.

[page 57, 58] "How's Jenny?" I asked.

"Unchanged since this morning," he replied, glancing at Landen, "but she ate some lunch, so I think the flu is easing."

"I'll go and see her," I said.

"I'll go," said Landen, and he walked off toward the stairs before I could argue.

"Any progress today?" I asked.

"Not much," replied the Wingco. "I've interviewed two dozen ICF's(2) since I've been here, three of which have subsequently vanished. None of them have ever managed to transmit anything back to me — it's like the Dark Reading matter is a heavy black curtain that allows movement only one way.

On ICF's, my wife had identical twin boys and while they were growing up, they had an ICF, which they shared, named "Plum Dee-dahl." One day while driving with the two in the wayback of the station wagon, she reports hearing one of them saying, "Look, Jim! There's Plum Dee-dahl's Dad!" and Jim replied, "I see him, John!" She reports looking around and seeing no one at all. Maybe ICF's have a family.

As for Dark Reading Matter, it appears to be the analogy of the Dark Matter postulated by physicists to satisfy their cosmological equations which require much more matter than what is visible. Dark Matter is that portion of the required mass of the universe which is not visible. Here's how Dark Reading Matter is described by the world's expert on the subject, Jasper Fforde:

[page 58] Theoretical storyologists had calculated that the readable BookWorld makes up only 22 percent of the visible reading matter — the remainder is thought to be the unobservable remnants of long-lost books, forgotten oral tradition and ideas locked in writers' heads when they died. A way to enter the Dark Reading Matter was keenly sought, as it might offer a vast amount of new ideas, plots and characters as well as a better understanding of the very nature of human imagination, and perhaps even why a story exists at all.

Recall that Thursday pioneered the method for entering books(3) and leaving books, and from her we have learned over many episodes about the features of BookWorld. But the dilemma with Dark Reading Matter is how can one read oneself into a book which does not exist anymore or never was in the first place? And if one were to successfully enter the DRM, how would one return to report on what one

found? As with any new field, there was the potential for money to be made and the DRM was ripe for exploitation. Thursday said the Council of Genres was interested in the Dark Reading Matter as a fruitful source of "raw metaphor"(Page 58). I wonder what "raw metaphor" is a metaphor for? Raw material is a metaphor for naturally occurring material which can be shaped into finished products. What is naturally occurring about a written metaphor — is it not written by a person? And, besides that, a metaphor once written is a finished metaphor or not one at all, isn't that so? Fforde has given us a droll imaginary solution to finding a source of metaphors, which ensures him an Honorary Raw Ph. D. Degree (*Pushing Harder and Deeper*) in 'Pataphysics at some future International Convocation of 'Pataphysicians(4).

In her daughter Tuesday Next's laboratory, Thursday spotted an interesting machine.

[page 60] On a work top nearby lay a machine that could assemble itself into a machine that would be able to disassemble itself, the practical applications of which were somewhat obscure.

That machine was interesting to me as in 1975 I worked on a Pascal Compiler which was written in Pascal Language: This made the Compiler a Pascal program which could compile itself. I was able to make changes in the Pascal Compiler with the old Compiler to create a new Compiler and with the new Compiler compile programs that the old Compiler could not. Dealing with the ramifications during my research work led me to discover additional meanings to the %*#*@^& word, *recursive*.

Tuesday Next is a genius and a sixteen-year-old girl who reminds me of my granddaughter Sierra, both in ageness and geniosity, especially when she tells her mother, Thursday Next, how difficult it is for her to get along in a world of dimwits. Thursday explained to Tuesday that she and her father didn't insist she go to school for the education.

[page 60]"I know that," she said in a huffy manner, "but having to mix with dimwits is hideously boring. Great-Uncle Mycroft put it best when he said that for a genius this planet is excruciatingly dull, only made briefly more illuminating when another genius happens along."

"Maybe so," I replied, "but if you're to have even the *hope* of achieving a meaningful human relationship or learn to discourse usefully with us — the dimwits — you're going to have to suffer the slings and agonies, bruises, betrayals and compromises that all the other sixteen-year-olds have to suffer. I'm serious about this."

We learn about the Global Standard Deity (GSD) which has replaced GOD and the various names used currently by a plethora of religions and about the smithing which is due to happen to Swindon. Tuesday is working assiduously on an Anti-Smithing device which will neutralize the effects of the smithing, but is not getting very far along with it. Next Next takes us to her job, sort of a Bring-Your-Readers-to-Work-With-You day. She describes one of her subordinates at the *Swindon All-You-Can-Eat at Fatso's Drink Not Included Library*, Colonel Wexler:

[page 97] A lean woman with a face pinched by hard workout walked forward to greet me. She was in her mid-fifties, did not look well disposed to joy in any form and was wearing the standard SLS combat fatigues, replete with the distinctive camouflage patten of book spines for blending into library spaces.

Her reputation for killing eight people with a gun, four with a blunt instrument and two with her hands led immediately to a one-third drop in late book returns at the Library. Wexler asked Thursday if she would sanction dawn raids to retrieve overdue books, and Thursday said, in effect, "I'll take it under advisement", meaning no.

[page 97, 98] "That's a start," [Wexler] said. "I'd also like you to review the rules regarding spine bending and turning over the corners of pages. If we let simple things like that slide without punishment, we could open the floodgates to poor reading

etiquette and a downward spiral to the collapse of civilization."

After bending the spine of this hardback book as far back as possible, I double-dog-eared the tops and bottoms of pages 97, 98, 99, and 100 in direct defiance of librarians, especially the Col. Wexlers among them, everywhere. Because of such rules, I have spurned libraries for decades, choosing instead to build my own library and do unto my books all manner of unlibrarian-approved bending, dog-earing, underlining, marginalia, and lots of doodles, some imaginative and a few unimaginable.

On her first day on the job as Chief Librarian, Thursday asked her assistant how the heavy schedule differs from the light schedule.

[page 102] "The same — only it's on blue paper and instead of lunch you get two more meetings: The first is a pep talk to the many frustrated citizens who *weren't* selected last year to train as librarians and will have to console themselves with mundane careers as doctors, lawyers, and lion tamers.

Thursday stared at the large number of meetings to attend and offered this suggestion to her assistant Duffy:

[page 103] "I've got an idea," I said. "I'll just turn up tomorrow morning and start having meetings until my brain turns to jelly. Then we'll stop and I'll hide for a bit, then do some more while thinking of other things, then forget it all by the evening — and rely on subordinates and assistants to deal with actually running the place."

"Thank goodness for that," said Duffy with a sigh of relief. "I was worried you had no experience of running a large public department."

Our daughter-in-law Sue might want to get one of the T-shirts described on page 108, the polite one of the two says, "I DON'T SCARE EASILY — I'M A LIBRARIAN." After all, Swindon librarians were protected by the "Justifiable Lethal Force by a State-Registered Librarian in the Course of Duty" regulation.

Thursday's visit to *The Salisbury Plain order of the Blessed Ladies of the Lobster Convent* nearly got her killed, and may get the author nominated for Creative Euphemism in a Religious Setting.

[page 135] No sooner had we taken two steps toward the convent than another nun had come running out of the doors firing a small pistol and screaming at the top of her voice that I was a 'procreating girl dog,' but not using those *precise* words. I was used to being called that, of course, but rarely by a nun.

Surviving that attack by the nun called Daisy, Thursday asked if she could speak to the Mother Superior, and was told, "Daisy is the Mother Superior." Here's how Daisy greeted Thursday as the Mother Superior.

[page 137] "Welcome to the Sisterhood of the Lobsterhood Salisbury Plain Chapter," she said in a sedate and measured manner. "My name is Mother Daisy. I do apologize for the attempted murder. It is not how we usually welcome distinguished guests. Can you find it in your heart to forgive me?"

Thursday could, but Daisy could not forgive her for stealing Landen away from her, which led to her severe depression and entering of the convent in the first place. But Daisy and Thursday went on to have a mostly congenial conversation, talking about nothing being new in literature, for instance.

[page 144] "Horace wrote truly filthy limericks," added Mother Daisy. "We recite them on special occasions. There was a very good one about a young man from Australia who painted his arse like a dahlia. Do you want to hear it?"

Thursday quickly replied, "No thanks" but not before I heard the rest of the limerick twining into my ears from the Akashic Record,

**There was a young man from Australia
Who painted his ass like a dahlia.
He got stung by a bee
While trying to pee,
And screamed to the bugger, "By Golly! I'll throttle ya!"**

Thursday got all the best lines as befit her being the narrator and the heroine of these books. When Finisterre asked her, "Is there a grapevine?" Thursday replied with a half-smile, "I've *heard* there's one." (5) When her new boss, Phoebe Smalls came up with a great idea for discovering the thefts of isolated pages from obscure antiquity books, Thursday thought about the idea in her head, "It wasn't a good idea — it was a *great* idea. So great that I should have been the one making it." And then commented to Phoebe, "Goes without saying," after which Phoebe flashed her a quizzical look.

Those of you who think the portmanteau name of Swindon's library is long and tortuous should have fun with the name of the hospital of the region, the *Lola Vavoom Discount Sofa Warehouse See Press for Details Memorial Hospital*.

My hero of this novel is not Landen, but Jacob Krantz for the simple reason that he managed to merge physics and literature, something I am still wrestling with in my little corner of the bent-space-time continuum.

[page 160] "Krantz was one of three scientists who had contributed significantly to the transfictional drive on the Austen Rover Transfictional Tour Bus," said Millon (6). "He was professor of theoretical particle physics and literature. Loved both, they said."

Thursday has had, from the beginning of her literary life, a pet named Pickwick who is a re-sequenced formerly extinct wingless bird, a dodo, who walks around Thursday's home saying, "Pock." The Wingco proposed using a dodo in an ingenious attempt to retrieve information from across the Dark Barrier, all those precious raw metaphors for fun and profit, don't you know. Here's Wingco's explanation to Thursday:

[page 163] "We think a dodo's buffered thoughts might be able to transit the Dark Barrier," said the Wingco, "so all I need to find is an Imaginary Childhood Friend who is about to pass into the DRM with the death of its host and get the ICF to take a dodo with it. The dodo gets overstimulated by what it sees, and we read those buffered thoughts on the Encephalovision back home. It's really very straightforward."

Thursday was okay with the experiment so long as it doesn't involve Pickwick, and Tuesday assured her they will use some other dodo.

When Jack Schitt showed up — many people don't know him — Thursday was a bit apprehensive and put her hand on her gun. He claimed Goliath was not trying to harm her and she pointed to the Band-Aids on her face where she was recently beaten up by Goliath thugs. Jack says he doesn't know jack about that, and Thursday counterattacked verbally.

**[page 188] "The Stout Denial Technique, eh?"
"If you'd like the Stout Denial with Faux Shock Outrage, you can have that, too. If you really want it, I can play the ever-popular Lawyers to File Suit for Defamation Gambit as well."
"I'm no longer SO-27," I told him. "I'm a respected member of the establishment**

running one of the pillars of modern society. Do you really think you'd win a PR war against a bunch of committed librarians?"

Jack shot Thursday, her Day Player, and Thursday said, "They're right. You never do hear the sound of the shot that kills you." (Page 193) Makes sense, the bullet going faster than the speed of sound. But it occurs to me that a silencer works by slowing the bullet to below the speed of sound, so if you get killed by a gun with a silencer on it, the shot won't make much noise, so your neighbors won't hear it, but you will. Some things are better taken on faith or from science than finding out about first hand.

Quarks have strange made-up varieties like Up, Down, Charm, Strange, etc. so it shouldn't seem strange that the key to Tuesday's Anti-Smite machine requires her to find the value for the Madeupion Unentanglement Constant. (Page 215)

As a freshman at LSU, I worked in the Library on campus refiling books. I came to have certain sections of the Library which were my favorites, Dewey 621 was one of them, full of photos that probably appear in sixth grade sex education classes today, a half-century later.

[page 257] "Librarying is a harder profession than the public realizes," he said. "People think it's all rubber stamps, knowing that Dewey 521 is celestial mechanics and saying, 'Try looking under fiction' sixty-eight times a day."

When we moved into a new home several years ago, it was partly in response to my wife Del's complaining, "Bobby, you cannot bring another book into this house." And my reply which finally was, "Perhaps we could get a bigger house." When we did, the fiction section went upstairs. Now, on occasions which happen more frequent than they should due to non-librarians reshelving the books, when I cannot find a non-fiction book downstairs, I tell myself, 'Try looking in fiction upstairs.' It's like taking step-climbing exercise without having to go to a smelly gym.

As the book winds down to its inevitable end, if not doom, I was delighted to discover that Dr. Brown in the movie "Back to the Future", the quintessential mad scientist, was fashionably unfashionable, as his mad-scientist style never went out of fashion, even in the time of Thursday Next, as she noticed in the canteen.

[page 286] The tearooms were filled with mad scientists of one sort or another, many of whom had the unkempt "wild hair" and mismatched-clothes look that never seemed to go out of fashion. Some sat quietly, too shy to order or too unaware to know that it was self-service, while others could not stop themselves and insisted on regaling the staff with logical methods by which they could serve more efficiently.

Having done all of these things myself at one time or another in my life, I couldn't help but feel a nibble from Fforde's biting satire.

Friday was due to kill Gavin because 30 years later Gavin would drive up in a Vauxhall, get out, and kill a whole bunch of people. Gavin said, "I'd *never* buy a Vauxhall," and asked Landen, "What suddenly changes me?"

[page 287] "We don't know," said Landen. "It could be anything: death of a loved one, passed over for promotion, brain abnormality, a bet, boredom. The list is long. And yes, Vauxhalls might be shit now, but in three decades they could be like Volkswagens are today."

"You mean driven by smug, self-important, middle-class individuals with hideously spoiled children?"

"It's possible, yes."

Galvin turned out to be the best person to calculate the Unentanglement Constant and prevent the Smithing

Catastrophe, but he got side-distracted.

[page 289, 290] "Ah!" he said with a smile. "The ever-illusive Unentanglement Constant. I've been doing some initial work that looks promising, but I was distracted by the need to expand and catalog my collection of pornographic magazines."

"How long would it take?" asked Landen.

[and now we wait for the punch line as we turn the page . . .]

"Alphabetically, about a week. If I do it by my favorites, then a lot longer."

"Not the porn, the Unentanglement Constant."

"Oh. A workable solution to Uc? About a month."

Thursday dropped down to the library's subbasement to see how James Finisterre and Phoebe Smalls were doing on examining the palimpsests. James told her, "We're working through the pages of *Brothels of Dorset on Sixpence a Day* a leaf at a time." Certainly a more fun book to examine than *Roman Trattorias on a Dollar a Day*, in addition to being a rather nasty swipe at Dorset.

As the nitty got gritty, Thursday told Gavin,

[page 350] "Destiny will be with you and Friday in thirty-two minutes and four seconds. If it can be side-stepped, so much the better."

"How do you sidestep destiny?"

"It depends what sort of mood she's in — warm and forgiving or cold and immovable."

"How do we tell?"

"We can't — until afterward."

Gavin's face fell. "Bummer."

As Fforde hinted earlier, destiny is definitely a procreating girl dog. Gavin didn't have a leg to stand on. And Thursday and Landen, even after they lost their mindworm and got rid of Aornis, who had been under their noses all the time, they still missed Jenny and thought of her all the time.

----- *Footnotes* -----

Footnote 1.

Hatlo's cartoon appeared weekly in the 1940s Sunday papers for decades and he would occasionally regale us with his Hatlo's Inferno, including this one upon which he skewered his own profession, which can be seen in Fforde's earlier book, [First Among Sequels](#), in which the temporal containment field first appeared in a retail outlet named T. J. Maxx, another reason for the name.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 1.](#)

Footnote 2.

"An ICF was an Imaginary Childhood Friend, those pretend friends one sometimes has when a child. Contrary to popular belief, they don't go away when no longer required; they simply wander the earth until their host dies." (Page 58) Wingco could see them and was hoping that one of them would be able to transmit something back to him from the *Dark Reading Matter* or DRM, which will be the subject of the next Next book.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 2.](#)

Footnote 3.

Thursday Next, in her first book, [The Eyre Affair](#), pioneered a way of entering a book and changing its ending, something generations of Eyre-Heads have waited breathlessly for.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 3.](#)

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**Footnote 4.**

See [Pataphysics — A Useless Guide](#) by Andrew Hugill.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 4.](#)

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Footnote 5.

"Not funny", you say? Where do you think Thursday heard that? From the grapevine, of course. (Page 152)

[Return to text directly before Footnote 5.](#)

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**Footnote 6.**

Millon, you may have heard of him by his full name, Millon de Floss.

[Return to text directly before Footnote 6.](#)

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