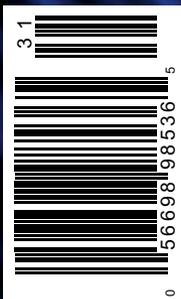


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THE METACHROIC SWAN SONG

D. GRAHAM BURNETT

Coryphaena hippurus is a large, wedge-shaped, pelagic teleost fish with a preference for tropical environments. It is a topwater ocean predator, lighting fast (achieving burst speeds of upwards of fifty knots), and capable of running down and sucking up large numbers of flying fish, a leading prey species. Known variously as dorado, mahi-mahi, and, confusingly, as dolphin (or dolphin-fish), *C. hippurus* frequents sargassum mats and other surface aggregations of seaweed and flotsam in warm water, where it cruises flashingly in pursuit of just about anything it can get in its toothy mouth. The species is modestly sociable, but big males (which reach lengths of about four feet) tend to be solitary.

No one seems quite certain how these creatures ended up sharing a common name with mammalian delphinds, but it may have something to do with a shared proclivity for accompanying sea vessels. It was a habit that, from early on, got the dolphinfish in trouble, since they are relatively tasty. Here is the seventeenth-century English naval adventurer John Poyntz on their culinary virtues: "They are taken with the hook as we sail around the island; some of them two or three feet and more. They are delicate food, and make a fine *Scaveche*." But that wasn't really what distinguished them from the other finny critters that could be trolled up around Tobago, a lot of which tasted pretty good fricasseed in the Portuguese style. The special mystique that attached to *C. hippurus* was a function not of the gustatory pleasures they afforded, but rather of the improbable occasion these briny beasts offered for splendid meditation upon death.

Poyntz was one of the earliest English commentators on the dramatic phenomenon of their passing, noting with wonder that "when their lives expire, *they reflect a tincture of what presents unto them*." It is a cryptic formulation. What did Poyntz mean, exactly? It is possible he himself was not quite sure. Those who witness the very-difficult-to-describe frequently offer testimony simultaneously obscure and pregnant. Did the captain wish to express that the bodies of these green-blue-silver-gold sea creatures blinked, at the moment of their deck-demise, with signs of what they were experiencing? Which is to say, that they *showed forth their dying*, visibly, dramatically, and in a manner that elicited, as he put it, "admiration"? Yes. Probably. It would make sense, since the death throes of a dolphinfish are a shocking, motile riot of color, which nearly always culminates in an abrupt draining to livid pallor. The animals' ordinary metachrotic physiology (its ability

to change colors responsively and in real time) comes unhinged in those final moments, producing remarkable effects. Allusion to this spasmodic spectacle—which would become a romantic obsession across the long nineteenth century—would seem to be the general thrust of Poyntz's terse notation. Though something else lingers in his vexed phrasing. One senses he may be trying to say that, at the instant of its passing, a dorado, for a fleeting moment, becomes the chameleon-mirror of its immediate conditions—that one could catch in its bright sides an ephemeral glint of everything the dying fish saw with that cold gaze set unblinking on the hollow sky.

A strange idea. Suggestive. Unfortunately, it seems that the proposition is not, technically speaking, correct about the biology of *C. hippurus*, which are incapable, as best as anyone can make out, of significant camouflage responses. And yet it is perhaps worth noting that the psychedelic picture-show that plays on their dying bodies—a neurochemically and hormonally haywire version of more subtle changes the animals seem to use for signaling during feeding and mating—does indeed take rise in the same kind of cell (the chromatophore) that enables a variety of other fish, reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates to engage in ordinary cryptic metachrosis. What would it look like to "blend in" with death? *To reflect its tincture?* No one can say with certainty. But for many, across almost two centuries, *C. hippurus* seemed to offer hints and glimpses—a piscine peepshow of what lay behind the dark veil. Captain Poyntz's peculiar phrase thus speaks compellingly to the way the muscular flanks of this bright predator have, in death, served as a live screen for ecstatic projections of aspiration, fear, and lachrymose thanato-euphoria. Dying *revealed* itself here, in this fish skin, which could become, for a few crucial moments, a fateful aurora borealis of the body, a synesthetic irruption of visible pain, a veritable incandescence of extinction.

...

References to the death of the dolphinfish abound in English letters, but the stemma for the trope springs up from Canto II of a now-mostly-forgotten epic poem entitled "The Shipwreck," authored in the early 1760s by a hearty, social-climbing Scottish sailor named William Falconer. Having survived two massively fatal wrecks (he was one of only three men to survive the second, and the first saw seven hundred souls drown, dashed to bits on a rocky coast of the British isles), Falconer versified what he knew, producing an English-language version of the traditional Iberian *naufragio*. His poem tingled spines in an age attuned to the sublime—and

C. hippurus played a choice bit part in the action. Before the real horror starts, Falconer presages and epitomizes the cruel barbs of fate (together with the redemptive rays of transcendence) in this much-quoted passage:

*And now, approaching near the lofty stern
A shoal of sportive dolphins they discern.
From burnish'd scales they beam refulgent rays,
'Till all the glowing ocean seems to blaze.
Soon to the sport of death the crew repair,
Dart the long lance, or spread the baited snare.
One in redoubling mazes wheels along,
And glides, unhappy! near the triple prong.
Rodmond unerring o'er his head suspends
The barbed steel, and every turn attends;
Unerring aim'd, the missile weapon flew,
And, plunging, struck the fated victim through:
Th' upturning points his ponderous bulk sustain,
On deck he struggles with convulsive pain.
But while his heart the fatal javelin thrills,
And flitting life escapes in sanguine rills,
What radiant changes strike th' astonish'd sight!
What glowing hues of mingled shade and light!
Not equal beauties gild the lucid west,
With parting beams all o'er profusely drest;
Not lovelier colours paint the vernal dawn,
When orient dews impearl th' enamel'd lawn,
Than from his sides in br'ght suffusion flow,
That now with gold empyreal seem to glow
Now in pellucid sapphires meet the view,
And emulate the soft celestial hue;
Now beam a flaming crimson on the eye;
And now assume the purple's deeper dye.
But here description clouds each shining ray;
What terms of art can nature's powers display?*

In these thirty lines, Falconer laid the basic architecture for what would ultimately become a Victorian commonplace: a struggling *C. hippurus* pulled aboard *in extremis*; the momentary suspension of all coarse action or deck labor; a breathless interlude of aesthetico-moral reflection; some expression of despair that this secular transfiguration effectively defied language; and, finally, as death came, a cessation of word-painting, since the vital, vibrant colors drained from the scene. From Falconer forward, poets, travelers, and belletrists put the death of the dolphinfish to work in different ways.

For instance, that “dying pang” wrapped in “gay rainbows and pellucid gold” (David Humphreys, writing in 1784) seemed to capture something of the evanescent riches of the tropics—its cruel and ineffable beauty. Men

of science followed up, and in 1803, by which time the Falconer poem had been broadly reprinted and anthologized, the dutiful naturalist George Shaw installed the phenomenon in one of the best-circulated general zoology texts of the era: “When taken out of the water, the beautiful combination of colours fades as the fish expires; the lustre vanishing by degrees, with partial restorations, till at length it becomes of a dull greyish or cinereous cast, without any remains of its former splendor.” Shortly thereafter, re-poetizing a natural historical fact initially pricked out for attention by the poets themselves, Lord Byron gave the fishes’ somber fade a metaphorical turn. In *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* (1812), the beautiful day

*Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues
With a new colour as it gasps away,
The last still loveliest, till—’tis gone—and all is grey.*

By the time Queen Victoria was on the throne, it was possible to allude to the spectacle as a matter of common knowledge, as in this passage from the published diary of a Caribbean voyage from 1835: “Everybody has heard of the beautiful appearance of a dying dolphin,—as they expire, their color changes from blue into transparent sea-green, thence varying into purple and pale crimson, mottled with gold, most of the colors of the rainbow flashing wavily through them.”

Indeed, the descriptions grew so phantasmagorical across the 1830s that skeptical voices began to emerge: Was the “painfully interesting sight of the dying dolphin” *fabulous* in the sense of “amazing” or *fabulous* in the sense of “hailing from fables”? One particularly detailed account, published in London in 1839, addressed itself directly to the quibblers, noting that “there are many persons ... who have been eyewitnesses to the fact; and the writer of this paper now refers to an instance which came under his own observation.” After a brief review of the fight, this author, John William Parker, turned to close observation of the stiffening body of the animal stretched on the fo’c’sle:

The fin that runs from the top or back part of the head to the tail, is of a dark blue-black; a dark blue pervades the upper part of the back, but it is susceptible of a partial change to a green, particularly in a glare of light. As it approaches the sides, it gradually takes a lighter shade, till it softens into a rich cerulean blue, commingled with delicate hues of golden pink; these again, by similar gradations, fall into a bright yellow or

overleaf: Spencer Finch, *Shroud for Dorado*, 2013.

...here on May 11, though even a victory in that match would not solidify Mancini's place; an early exit from the Champions League and the runaway by United in the league have left his status murky.

Benítez's situation, on the other hand, is clear: he will most surely be dismissed after this season by Chelsea's sassy (and phenomenally wealthy) owner, Roman Abramovich. Benítez has pushed Chelsea nonetheless and, ending Sunday's game, still harbored hopes of claiming two titles while serving as the interim manager. The Blues are still alive in the Europa League, the continent's second-tier club competition. Winning that title and the F.A. Cup probably would not have saved Benítez's job — after all, he replaced Roberto Di Matteo, who was dismissed by Abramovich despite winning the F.A. Cup and Champions League titles last year — but it would have surely given him a nice shine on his way out the door.

Unfortunately for him, the Europa League is all that remains. City was the better team for most of the day Sunday. It took a two-goal lead when Samir Nasri scored in the 10th minute, and Sergio Agüero added a second just after halftime, then held on — barely — as Chelsea surged. Demba Ba scored for Chelsea in the 66th minute, and the Blues pressed for an equalizer, with the substitute Fernando Torres providing a spark over a frantic final 20 minutes. A victory would have given Chelsea a chance at its fifth F.A. Cup title in seven seasons.

"It's not normal for Chelsea," defender Cesar Azpilicueta said. "But it is the reality now."

The early sluggishness from Chelsea was not altogether surprising; the London club has been stretched thin in recent weeks and it had returned from Moscow early Friday morning after playing a Europa League quarterfinal Thursday night. Sunday's match was Chelsea's sixth in 16 days, and the players' fatigue was evident compared with City's bright opening, which was led by Yaya Touré, who controlled the pace as he zoomed all over the field.

Touré, an Ivorian midfielder, started the move for the first goal, playing a perfect pass to Agüero, who saw his shot deflect to Nasri, the former Arsenal playmaker, who headed the ball home from close range.

Chelsea's defense, which was without John Terry, whom Benítez opted to rest, was under attack for most of the first hour, and Agüero pushed City's lead to 2-0 in the 10th minute when he headed a looping shot in off the post.

At that point, it seemed Chelsea would go quietly, but Torres's introduction produced an immediate flicker.

First, there was Ba's goal, which came from a whirling attack of athleticism as he corralled a long pass, spun and whipped a shot past City goalkeeper Costel Pantilimon. It was the first goal City allowed in the F.A. Cup this season, and Pantilimon, who has played in place of No. 1 goalkeeper Joe Hart throughout this tournament, steadied himself, making excellent saves on subsequent shots by Ba and Vincent Kompany. Pleased, Mancini said afterward that he would most likely stick with Pantilimon in the final.

But as good as Pantilimon was, Chelsea's players felt they were also denied by the referee, Chris Foy, who ignored their protests for a penalty kick in the 82nd minute, when Vincent Kompany, City's captain, appeared to grab Torres's shirt as Torres tried to connect to a long pass sent straight in front of goal.

That sequence was preceded a moment earlier by an obvious two-footed stamp by Agüero on David Luiz, which could have resulted in a red card but went unpunished. "It was a little Benítez fuming."

"Was it a penalty? Yes, clearly," Benítez said. "Very clearly."

He continued: "You can see the pictures. We have two situations like that in the second half."

Milwaukee	3	1	0	0	1	251
Mt. Diablo	3	0	0	0	1	280
Golden State	4	0	2	1	0	2,348
Er-Chavez 1b	3	0	0	0	2	238
C.Ross Jr	3	0	0	0	1	000
Pennington ss	3	0	2	0	0	267
Cahill p	2	0	0	0	1	000
Sipp p	0	0	0	0	0	—
Ziegler p	0	0	0	0	0	—
Hinske ph	1	0	0	0	1	333
Putz p	1	0	0	0	0	—
Totals	31	1	6	1	9	

Los Angeles	000	000	000	—	6	0
Arizona	000	000	001	—	6	0

8:40 Mets (Gee (R), 0-2, 7.71) at Colorado (Nicasio (R), 1-0, 4.91)

7:05 St. Louis (Lynn (R), 1-0, 4.50) at Pittsburgh (McDonald (R), 1-1, 3.75)

7:10 Philadelphia (Lee (L), 2-0, 1.08) at Cincinnati (Arroyo (R), 1-1, 5.25)

7:10 Washington (Zimmermann (R), 2-0, 2.08) at Miami (LeBlanc (L), 0-2, 3.27)

10:10 San Diego (Stults (L), 1-1, 3.60) at Los Angeles (Blingsley (R), 1-0, 1.50)

ROYALS 3, BLUE JAYS 2

Toronto	ab	r	h	bi	bb	so	avg.
Bonifacio cf-r	3	0	0	0	1	0	239
Me.Cabrera lf	4	1	2	0	0	0	292
Baufista 3b	4	0	1	0	0	0	200
Encarnacion dh	3	1	1	2	1	0	133
Arenchiba c	4	0	0	0	2	250	
Lind 1b	4	0	1	0	1	138	
R.Davis rf	3	0	0	0	1	227	
Rasmus ph-ct	1	0	0	0	0	116	
M.Izumis 2b	4	0	0	0	0	194	
Kawasaki ss	2	0	1	0	1	333	
Totals	32	2	7	2	3	5	
Kansas City	ab	r	h	bi	bb	so	avg.
Gordon lf	5	0	2	1	0	1	373
A.Escobar ss	3	0	0	1	0	0	250
Butler dh	3	1	1	0	1	0	257
S.Perez c	4	0	1	0	0	1	280
Hosmer 1b	3	0	1	0	1	0	276
L.Cain rf	4	0	2	1	0	2	282
E.Johnson 3b	4	0	0	0	0	200	
Dyson of	4	1	2	0	0	1	308
Getz 2b	3	1	1	0	0	0	306
Totals	33	3	10	3	2	5	

Toronto	100	001	000	—	2	7	0
Kansas City	001	001	001	—	3	1	0

HR—Encarnacion (2), off E.Santana. RBIs—Encarnacion (2), Gordon (8), A.Escobar (8), L.Cain (6), SB—R.Davis (2), Kawasaki (1), Dyson (3), S—Getz. SF—A.Escobar. DP—Kansas City 2

Toronto	ip	h	r	er	bb	so	avg.
Morrow	6	5	2	2	1	3	95.460
Cecil	7/3	1	0	0	1	0	10.000
Delabar	1/3	1	0	0	1	21	1.233
Oliver LD-1	1/3	2	1	1	0	0	9.623
Kansas City	ip	h	r	er	bb	so	avg.
E.Santana	8	7	2	1	3	4	109.245
K.Herrera W1-0	1	0	0	0	0	1	18.000
T—2:37, A—29,057 (37,903).							

PIRATES 10, REDS 7

Cincinnati	ab	r	h	bi	bb	so	avg.
Choo of	4	1	2	1	0	1	354
Cozzart ss	4	1	0	0	1	1	159
Votto 1b	2	2	1	1	3	0	289
Phillips 2b	5	0	2	3	0	0	327
Bruce rf	5	0	0	0	0	3	255
Frazier 3b	5	1	2	0	0	1	318
Helsley lf	4	1	2	0	0	2	167
Hanigan c	3	1	1	0	1	0	069
Latos p	3	0	0	0	0	0	000
Ondrusek p	0	0	0	0	0	0	—
M.Parra p	0	0	0	0	0	0	500
Hannahan ph	1	0	1	0	0	0	800
Broxton p	0	0	0	0	0	0	—
Chapman p	0	0	0	0	0	0	—
Totals	36	7	11	6	5	8	
Pittsburgh	ab	r	h	bi	bb	so	avg.
S.Marte lf	5	2	2	2	0	2	347
Snider rf	4	1	2	1	0	1	304
J.Hughes p	0	0	0	0	0	0	—
J.Sanchez ph	0	1	0	0	0	1	000
Melancon p	0	0	0	0	0	0	—
McCutchen cf	5	2	2	1	0	1	262
G.Jones 1b	3	2	1	0	0	0	314
G.Sanchez ph-1b	1	0	1	2	0	0	136
Walker 2b	5	0	3	1	0	0	214
P.Alvarez 3b	3	1	0	0	2	0	079
McKenry c	4	2	2	3	0	1	333
Jo.McDonald ss	4	0	1	0	0	0	125
Irwin ph	1	0	0	0	0	1	000
J.Gomez p	1	0	1	0	0	0	1000
Tabata ph-rf	1	1	0	0	1	0	125
Totals	37	10	15	4	6		

Cincinnati	220	010	011	—	7	11	0
Pittsburgh	000	000	45x	—	10	15	1

HR—Votto (1), off Melancon; McKenry (1), off Latos; McKenry (2), off Broxton; S.Marte (1), off Broxton. RBIs—Choo (7), Votto (3), Phillips 3 (14), Hannahan (2), S.Marte 2 (7), Snider (3), McCutchen (10), G.Sanchez 2 (4), Walker (5), McKenry 3 (3). SB—Votto (1), Frazier (2), Heisey (2), McCutchen (5). CS—Snider (1).

Cincinnati	ip	h	r	er	bb	so	avg.	
Latos	6	7	9	3	3	1	6	105.326
Ondrusek	0	1	1	0	0	0	2.675	
M.Parra H1	1/3	1	0	0	0	0	10.208	

Pollock ph	3	1	0	0	0	1	281
Mt. Diablo	3	0	0	0	0	1	250
Golden State	4	0	2	1	0	2	348
Er-Chavez 1b	3	0	0	0	0	2	238
C.Ross Jr	3	0	0	0	0	1	000
Pennington ss	3	0	2	0	0	0	267
Cahill p	2	0	0	0	0	1	000
Sipp p	0	0	0	0	0	0	—
Ziegler p	0	0	0	0	0	0	—
Hinske ph	1	0	0	0	0	1	333
Putz p	1	0	0	0	0	0	—
Totals	31	1	6	1	9		

Los Angeles	000	000	000	—	6	0
Arizona	000	000	001	—	6	0

LOB—Los Angeles 5, Arizona 6. 2B—Ad.Gonzalez (3), Pollock (4), Pennington (2). RBIs—Goldschmidt (10), CS—Ethier (1).

Los Angeles	ip	h	r	er	bb	so	avg.	
Beckett LD-2	8	7	6	1	1	1	9	102.326
Arizona	ip	h	r	er	bb	so	avg.	
Cahill	7	7	6	0	0	0	4	93.350
Sipp	1/3	0	0	0	0	0	2	3.600
Ziegler	1/3	0	0	0	0	0	1	1.133
Putz W1-0	1	0	0	0	1	1	15.300	
T—2:26, A—32,313 (48,633).								

TIGERS 10, ATHLETICS 1

Detroit	ab	r	h	bi	bb	so	avg.
A.Jackson cf	6	3	4	3	0	0	386
Tor.Hunter rf	5	2	3	1	0	0	407
D.Kelly lf	0	0	0	0	1	0	100
M.Cabrera 3b	4	1	2	1	0	0	320
R.Santiago ph-3b	1	0	0	0	0	0	143
Fielder 1b	3	2	1	1	0	0	429
Tulasooppo 1b	0	0	0	0	0	0	400
V.Martinez dh	3	0	1	1	2	0	146
Dirks lf	5	0	1	1	0	1	194
Jh.Peralta ss	5	1	2	1	0	0	319
Avils c	5	1	1	0	0	1	195
Infante 2b	5	0	0	0	0	1	333
Totals	42	10	14	5	3		
Oakland	ab	r	h	bi	bb	so	avg.
Jaso dh	2	0	0	0	2	0	278
C.Young cf	4	0	0	0	1	1	175
S.Smith lf	3	0	0	0	0	2	448
M.Taylor lf	1	0	0	0	0	0	000
Lowrie ss	3	1	1	0	0	0	375
Parrino ph-ss	1	0	0	0	0	0	083
Moss 1b	2	0	0	0	1	1	262
Freiman 1b	1	0	0	0	0	0	154
Reddick rf	4	0	0	0	0	2	108
Donaldson 3b	3	0	0	0	1	0	260
D.Norris c	2	0	1	0	1	0	429
Sogard 2b	3	0	1	0	0	1	235
Totals	29	1	3	1	4		

Detroit	220	400	110	—	10	14	0
Oakland	000	100	000	—	1	3	1

E—Donaldson (1), LOB—Detroit 11, Oakland 6. 2B—Tor.Hunter 2 (5), Fielder (5), Jh.Peralta (2), D.Norris (3). 3B—Tor.Hunter (1). HR—A.Jackson (1), off Parker. RBIs—A.Jackson 3 (5), Tor.Hunter (8), M.Cabrera 2 (13), Fielder (19), V.Martinez (4), Dirks (4), Jh.Peralta (6), D.Norris (4). SB—C.Young (2), SF—D.Norris.

Detroit	ip	h	r	er	bb	so	avg.
Ani.Sanchez W2-07.3	1	4	4	8	113	142	
Porcello	2	0	0	0	0	19	51.1
Oakland	ip	h	r	er	bb	so	avg.
Parker LD-2	3	7	9	8	8	2	76.1080
Scribner	2	1	2	0	1	0	44.186
Blivins	1	1	2	1	0	1	27.117
Resop	1	1	1	0	1	0	23.000
Cook	1	0	0	0	1	0	13.142
T—3:08, A—20,755 (35,067).							

PHILLIES 2, MARLINS 1

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Chicago	32	5	4	68	134	85
Anaheim	27	10	5	59	125	105
Vancouver	23	12	6	52	112	100
A.	24	14	4	52	120	104
San Jose	21	13	7	49	102	102
St. Louis	23	16	2	48	110	104
Minnesota	22	16	3	47	105	103
Detroit	20	15	7	47	106	107
Louisville	21	17	3	45	116	121
Columbus	19	16	7	45	102	107
Phoenix	18	16	7	43	110	110
Edmonton	16	18	7	39	103	115
Nashville	15	20	8	38	98	118
Calgary	16	21	4	36	110	141
Colorado	14	22	6	34	100	131

Division leader; y-clinched division; z-clinched playoff spot.

UNDAY
 Chicago 2, St. Louis 0
 Buffalo 3, Tampa Bay 1
 Detroit 3, Nashville 0

TENNIS

U.S. MEN'S CLAY COURT CHAMPIONSHIPS

Ever Oaks Country Club
HOUSTON
 Singles Championship
 John Isner (5), United States, d. Nicolas Pietrangeli (1), Spain, 6-3, 7-5.

TATOWICE OPEN

PODEK
TATOWICE, POLAND
 Singles Championship
 Roberto Vinci (2), Italy, d. Petra Kvitová (1), Czech Republic, 7-6 (2), 6-1.
 Doubles Championship
 Sara Arribas-Barrena-Vecino and Lourdes Domínguez Lino, Spain, d. Ioana Raluca Olaru, Romania, and Valeria Solovyeva, Russia, 6-4, 7-5.

GRAND PRIX HASSAN II

Complexe Sportif al Amal
ASABLANCA, MOROCCO
 Singles Championship
 Tommy Robredo, Spain, d. Kevin Anderson (2), South Africa, 7-6 (6), 4-6, 6-3.
 Doubles Championship
 Julian Knowle, Austria, and Filip Polasek (1), Slovakia, d. Dustin Brown and Christopher Kas, Germany, 6-3, 6-2.

SOCCER

M.L.S. STANDINGS

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Montreal	4	1	1	13	7	5
Houston	4	2	0	12	10	7
Portland	3	1	2	11	7	3
Columbus	2	1	3	9	9	6
New York	2	3	2	8	9	10
Philadelphia	2	2	2	8	7	8
Orlando FC	1	2	3	6	8	9
New England	1	2	2	5	1	2
Chicago	1	4	1	4	5	12
D.C.	1	4	1	4	2	7

WEST

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
San Diego	5	1	1	16	11	7
San Jose	3	2	1	10	10	8
Los Angeles	2	1	2	8	8	4
Vancouver	2	2	2	8	7	7
Real Salt Lake	2	3	2	8	6	7
Colorado	2	3	2	8	6	7
San Jose	2	2	2	8	5	7
Portland	1	3	3	6	9	8
Seattle	0	3	2	2	2	5

Sunday's Games
 Montreal 1, Columbus 1, tie
 Houston 2, Chicago 1
 San Jose at Portland

Tuesday
 Portland KC at New York, 7:30 p.m.

	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Oklahoma City	59	22	1	138	—	—
San Antonio	58	22	—	725	1	—
Denver	55	25	—	588	4	—
L.A. Clippers	54	26	—	675	5	—
Memphis	54	26	—	675	5	—
Houston	45	35	—	563	14	—
Golden State	45	35	—	563	14	—
L.A. Lakers	44	37	—	543	15 1/2	—
Utah	42	38	—	525	17	—
Dallas	40	40	—	500	19	—
Portland	33	47	—	413	26	—
Minnesota	30	50	—	375	29	—
Sacramento	28	52	—	350	31	—
New Orleans	27	54	—	333	32 1/2	—
Phoenix	24	56	—	300	35	—

x-clinched playoff spot
 y-clinched division
 z-clinched conference

SUNDAY

Knicks 90, Indiana 80
 Toronto 93, Nets 87
 Miami 105, Chicago 93
 Philadelphia 91, Cleveland 77
 Denver 118, Portland 109
 Dallas 121, New Orleans 89
 Houston 107, Sacramento 100
 L.A. Lakers 91, San Antonio 86

KNICKS 90, PACERS 80

	FG	FT	Reb	A	PTS	
INDIANA	39	3-12	2-3	27	11	9
West	33	5-9	7-8	2-8	1	17
Hibbert	28	2-5	0-0	5-10	0	4
Stephenson	34	8-16	2-3	0-4	1	22
Hill	34	2-8	0-2	0-3	5	6
Young	13	2-4	2-4	1-1	0	6
Thibault	15	0-1	1-4	1-4	0	1
Pendergraph	17	5-6	2-2	1-4	1	12
Johnson	8	1-3	0-0	0-2	0	3
Augustin	12	0-1	0-0	1-2	1	0
BHinsbrough	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0
Green	1	0-0	0-0	0-0	0	0
Totals	240	28-65	16-26	13-45	20	80

Percentages: FG .431, FT .615, 3-Point Goals: 8-28, 28% (Stephenson 4-9, Hill 2-6, Johnson 1-2, George 1-8, Augustin 0-1, West 0-1, Young 0-1)

	FG	FT	Reb	A	PTS	
KNICKS	30	9-23	5-8	1-5	1	25
Shumpert	24	3-8	2-2	1-5	2	10
Jones	13	0-1	0-0	1-2	0	0
Prigioni	24	1-1	0-0	1-3	2	3
Felton	32	5-9	0-0	1-2	3	11
Smith	29	7-16	0-1	2-8	2	15
Kidd	30	0-4	0-0	1-4	5	0
Copeland	34	8-12	2-2	0-3	0	20
Novak	17	2-7	0-0	0-0	0	6
White	2	0-1	0-0	0-0	0	0
Totals	240	35-82	9-11	8-32	15	90

Percentages: FG .427, FT .818, 3-Point Goals: 11-31, 35% (Copeland 2-4, Shumpert 2-4, Novak 2-6, Anthony 2-7, Felton 1-1, Prigioni 1-1, Smith 1-3, White 0-1, Kidd 0-1)

Indiana 15 25 20 —80
 Knicks 23 24 22 21—90

A—19,033 (19,763); T—2:19.

RAPTORS 93, NETS 87

	FG	FT	Reb	A	PTS	
NETS	24	2-7	0-0	1-1	2	6
Bogans	20	0-0	0-0	3-16	1	0
Evans	37	7-19	2-6	3-5	2	16
Williams	38	11-20	4-5	0-1	7	30
Johnson	35	4-16	2-2	0-1	5	12
Blatche	25	6-9	3-6	2-8	0	15
Stackhouse	20	2-4	0-0	0-1	1	4
Watson	21	1-5	0-0	1-3	4	2
Humphries	11	1-4	0-0	0-3	0	2
Brooks	4	0-0	0-0	0-0	1	0
Totals	240	34-84	11-19	10-38	23	87

Percentages: FG .405, FT .579, 3-Point Goals: 8-30, 26% (Williams 4-10, Bogans 2-7, J.Johnson 2-9, Stackhouse 0-1, Watson 0-3)

	FG	FT	Reb	A	PTS	
TORONTO	41	10-19	3-4	2-10	3	26
AlJohnson	38	5-12	0-0	2-9	3	10
Gray	34	2-4	0-0	3-9	2	4
Lowry	36	2-10	3-8	0-9	6	7
DeRozan	42	12-22	9-9	0-5	0	36
Acy	22	2-4	0-0	2-4	2	4
Anderson	12	2-7	0-0	1-1	1	4
Lucas	11	1-4	0-0	1-2	2	2
Totals	240	36-82	15-21	10-48	19	93

started in last season's game for the Yankees in the A.L.D.S., was in the lineup Sunday night.

But with this cast of fill-ins — a Band-Aid unit in a patchwork lineup — the Yankees have managed to stay above .500 through the first 11 games of the season, at 6-5. The offense has looked reliable, just productive enough. And with a 3-0 win over the Orioles at Yankee Stadium, they showed they could still pitch the way they did in early October.

Baltimore returned largely the same lineup from their post-season run, which ended on a damp and windswept afternoon with a

and full season in the Bronx. Kuroda, a 38-year-old right-hander, left his first start of the season in the second inning, after injuring his hand, and lasted only five and a third innings in his second. But on Sunday, Kuroda was almost untouchable, not letting an Orioles runner reach second base until the ninth inning, allowing only seven base runners in all.

"He's fun to catch," catcher Francisco Cervelli said. "He's able to throw any pitch whenever he wants in the place he wants."

Kuroda said, "Against righties

Stubbornly Making His Choices Pan Out

Jeff Samardzija, Once a Star Receiver, Pushed Himself to Excel as a Pitcher

By BEN STRAUSS

CHICAGO — The questions that Chicago Cubs starter Jeff Samardzija faces today are different from the ones he used to get. Two years ago, people wanted to know if Samardzija, a former all-American wide receiver at Notre Dame, was on his way out of baseball, if he had picked the wrong sport, whether, at 26, he was a has-been football player and a never-was baseball player.

On Saturday, after a tough loss to the defending World Series champion, San Francisco, in which a gritty Samardzija allowed two runs in six innings and went toe to toe with Madison Bumgarner, he was asked if he was satisfied with his performance.

Samardzija's answer was no. How things have changed.

In 2011, when Samardzija first spoke with Theo Epstein, the Cubs' newly hired president for baseball operations, he said he wanted to be a starting pitcher. Samardzija promised he was so committed that he had dumped his girlfriend to focus more on baseball.

He delivered the proclamation with a track record that included parts of four unremarkable seasons bouncing between the major leagues and the minors, and only five starts for the Cubs.

Reminded of the story as he sat at his locker, his shoulder-length hair spewing out the sides of the cap he was wearing backward,

in." Eighteen months later, he is the ace of the staff, his eye-popping fastball and disappearing splitter cornerstones of Epstein's rebuilding process. The opening day starter, Samardzija ushered in the season by striking out nine Pittsburgh Pirates and delivering a win. His last 16 starts, dating to July 2012, are Cy Young caliber: 107 innings, 122 strikeouts and a 2.61 earned run average.

"Looking at where his career was through 2011, anyone would be surprised now," Epstein said. "But this is who he is."

If life is a series of key moments, Samardzija may be able to vouch for it. Before he went to Chicago, he had already stared into the abyss of loss and uncertainty. While he was in high school, a respiratory illness took the life of his mother, Debora. His brother, Sam, left a baseball scholarship at Indiana University to be with his family and look after Jeff.

The Samardzija brothers would walk to a park across the street from their home in Valparaiso, Ind., tossing a football and running pass patterns for hours. They did not talk about their mother, but they healed.

When Samardzija was a junior wide receiver at Notre Dame, the coach who recruited him, Tyrone Willingham, was fired and replaced by Charlie Weis, who had two Super Bowl rings. Samardzija had caught 24 passes his first two seasons. Under Weis, he was

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amber, at the belly; the post-bronchia and under-fins, being of the same colour, but much darker; and the whole surface of the sides is beautifully bespangled with vivid light blue spots. These several colours frequently relaxed into subdued tones, and again returned to their former complexion and brightness, presenting in the progress, the most fantastic involution of hues, till, at length, the whole body assumed a cold silvery blue and purple cast, varying in its shades, but deepest about the back, where a rich bloom continued to play on the surface.

As the period of dissolution approached, and during its last paroxysms, the same transitions occurred in quicker succession, though infinitely less vivid on each occasion, till in expiring the body became violently convulsed; and as the trembling gradually subsided, a dull silvery slate colour crept, as it were, over the whole surface; and, settling in the stiffness of death, presented an aspect so intensely cold and ghastly that it produced a shivering thrill in the spectators.

In the expiration of *C. hippurus*, nineteenth-century romantics appear to have found (and elaborated) a kind of visual orgasm, the spectacular, oceanic, open-air cousin of the boudoir's petite mort.

And dorado-death played on the era's appetite for the sensual sublime in a very particular way. This was more than just any exquisite conjunction of death and beauty; it was, in effect, a *reverse drowning*, witnessed on the *high seas*. In his cultural history of the oceans, *Le Territoire du Vide* (1988), the French cultural historian Alain Corbin showed the ways that marine environments became highly charged spaces for reflection on death, God, beauty, and power across the watershed decades of the early nineteenth century. Sea bathing, for instance, became, in these years, an exhilarating coenaesthetic experience for many Europeans, and intrepid bathers at popular sea-spas permitted themselves to be repeatedly submerged, even violently, in an alien medium, expressly for the terror-thrill-flush of a dalliance on the threshold of the great abyss. This amounted, as Corbin demonstrated, to something very much like a collective, social, and erotic-aestheticized enactment of near-death experience.

Some of the most elaborate accounts of dolphin-fish apotheosis ask to be read in the context of Corbin's reflections on the sea-sublime. Take, for instance, this striking passage from *The Broad Pennant*, penned by an American sailor in the 1840s:

Pity that so graceful a thing of nature was born ever to die. But preliminary to the fate, from which his

graceful form and gorgeous dyes could not save him, he was soon hauled into the mizzen chains and passed through one of the ports; when, by special favor, to give me the pleasure and pain of seeing the beautiful dolphin die, he was placed on the quarter-deck, where the sun's full beams should fall upon him, to light up in their glory the changing dyes, as they brightened and faded, and faded and brightened again, as the beautiful fish gasped, and yet more faintly gasped, and finally gasped no more.

The author of the passage, Fitch Waterman Taylor, proceeded to narrate this extravagant swan song for the eye in lurid, loving detail. A careful reader will here overhear the homophones "die" and "dye" quietly elaborating their secret semantic kinship:

I had before seen the dolphin caught—marked his graceful proportions and brilliant dyes, changing as he died. But not as now had I so minutely watched the lovely thing through all its changes to its last gasp, and latest quiver, and final shade, that rested among its settled colors. The eye was large—the pupil expanded—and changed from the hazel to the pearl; and then again, from the pearly brightness back to the soft and mellowed hazel. The golden hues of his sides became yet more golden, of velvet softness and loveliness—and then changed to the deepest blue, which faded away from the indigo to the palest sky, and ending with the pearly white with flashes of the pink; and back again to the richest gold; when a play of colors, in lines and scintillations, alternated over the quivering beauty, blending many different colors—the gold and purple and pearly hues prevailing, until the last quiver told that there was agony no longer in the last struggle, for him.

Though the onlookers were left to suffer still, in a quiet complacency before final things:

It is sad, ever, to look on fading beauty. But I have seen beauty in the death-calm sleep of some who were to wake no more. And while I would avoid the burlesque by any comparison between the cessation of life in an irrational and a rational being, I yet believe that there were others standing about this dying creature, who, besides myself, however little they may have analyzed their feelings, yet felt an emotion of sorrow, that this beautiful thing should die, because it was so beautiful.

That little aside about "however little they may have analyzed their feelings" obliquely invoked the troubling

issue of class, in that it amounted to a quick glance at the hardened deckhands. Were they feeling this heady cocktail of Christological death-splendor and sentimental world-sorrow? One could never be too sure. Waxing on this specific question a decade later, another commentator alleged that the common Jack had “no taste for colors except those he sails under” and thus, confronting a dolphinfish on the cusp of its radiance

*Cuts the fish into chunks and prepares it for frying,
And leaves it no time for its fanciful dying.*

There were others, however, who set that fanciful dying in a very different relationship to the frying. The classically educated often found occasion to allude to several semi-notorious passages in Seneca, Pliny, and Martial that described the Roman penchant for bringing the fish to be consumed at a feast to the table alive, often in a glass beaker, *specifically for the purpose of watching the splendor of its death*. This was food-sadism as amuse-bouche, agony as appetizer. Philological (and biological) consensus now has the fish in question as the surmullet (probably *Mullus barbatus*), a reddish bottom-feeder that does display some modest skin fireworks upon expiration. But there were those in the nineteenth century who believed that the Romans must have had a supply of *C. hippurus* to hand. In this context, the spectacle of a dying dolphinfish thrust learned observers into the tantalizing role of the louche and dissolute Roman banqueter, filling his eyes with beautiful pain in order to heighten the sensitivity of his palate at table.

Here, in this macabre crossing of pleasure and suffering, aesthetic refinement and gruesome spectacle, we land on perhaps the strangest of all the age’s mobilizations of the dorado-death-colors trope. That minor classic of gothic creepiness, *Phases in the Life of John Pollexfen* (1876) by the American lawyer-poet William Henry Rhodes (who wrote his ghoulish tales under the pseudonym “Caxton”), tells the story of a mad scientist who stands on the cusp of inventing color photography—which to achieve requires *live-plucked human eyeballs*. Yes, there is a damsel in distress in the story, and no, it does not have a garden-variety happy ending. Pitching his tender studio model (she is seventeen) on the Faustian grandeur of his ambition, this bug-eyed psychopath tips his hat—their creative “collaboration” is going to hurt, since it will involve extracting the beautiful colors of agony:

*Let us work together, girl; we’ll lead the age we live in.
My name shall rival Titian’s, and you shall yet see me*

*snatch the colors of the dying dolphin from decay, and
bid them live forever.*

Wince. She should have hidden her charms.

And, reviewing the legacy of these many texts and allusions, one is tempted to say the same for *C. hippurus*, whose powers of fatal ostentation occasioned countless closely attended sacrifices across the long nineteenth century. By revealing its luminous charms, this curious fish came to lie at the center of the barely sublated black mass of shipboard life: a ritual of shared death, in which the assembly witnessed an unholy transubstantiation (agony into eye-candy), and then partook of a decadent, secular communion (*this is my body, which will be given up for beauty...*).

...

In the 1840s, society wags razed the aging William Turner, oracular titan-painter of the sublime, alleging that “Turner’s reputation dies, dolphin-like, all sorts of colors.” By contrast, the reputation of dolphinfish-death itself died without show, in a sudden draining to inert pallor. The trope trails off in the *fin de siècle*, leaving in its wake a set of properly historical questions: Why did the phenomenon attain cultural prominence when it did? Why did it come to an end? Fragments of answers suggest themselves: The era of the fish’s rise to prominence in death discourse saw a new sociology of sea travel, and thereby created new intimacies between emerging bourgeois sensibility (already heightened in its sensitivity to death) and the nature/culture of ocean killing. The same period also witnessed a very active concern with natural theology, and notable natural phenomena were often quickly moralized into more or less desperate *emblemata*. All this is true and relevant to reflection on the discourse of dorado-death in the period, and to its demise; it is nevertheless basically unsatisfying. Who can say why things become important, and then pass away?

What can be said with confidence is that the twentieth century did not dally with its dying dolphinfish, and one seeks in vain for aesthetically sensitive depictions of the phenomenon in the saturated image-world of the web. Feeling about, I stumbled on a YouTube video entitled “Death of a Dolphin Fish,” and clicked it open expectantly. But it consists of shaky, spring-break footage of sportfishing college boys who talk in funny voices as they repeatedly strike a large *C. hippurus* on the head with an aluminum bat. It makes a hard, metallic sound. Again and again.

Death of the dolphinfish, for Generation Kill.