

Soft Opening: Palenque Falls

business-as-usual
needs just a little
set-up. Maybe specific acts
of construction
- then vandalized/sabotaged

Front Porch

Etiquette & Benefits

Courses

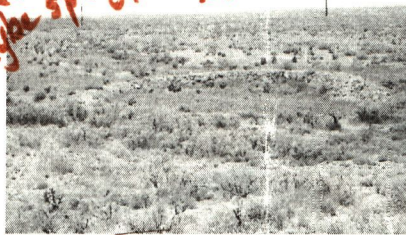
Clubhouse

Grounds

Meet and Greet

Future Fairways

Contact



Palenque Falls Country Club was a routine job until the "Snakes" took control. The Snakes, as in "snakes in the grass" (a characterization to which an amateur herpetologist among us objected), were a small coterie at Smitty Associates who radicalized by climate change, revolutionized our renovation of Palenque Falls. Their pals blistered it in social media and vandalized its water pipes. Within the firm, the Snakes had a second moniker, the Smitty "Dissociates," which they adopted with glee. Us they dubbed the "Cowboys" and "Meatheads."

"rebellion" from "inside...?"
renovation company?

At first, the rebellion was shrugged off as dumb-kid pranks. We Cowboys went about our business-as-usual. The rocking jukebox in the Grille alias *Saloon* greeted us mornings with a Who's Who of an era:

David Bowie, *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars*
Bob Dylan, *Bringing It All Back Home*
Neil Young, *After the Gold Rush*

Once, a rattler slipped through the jukebox's "stage door" and coiled around Alice Cooper's *Killer* for a siesta. Once (it could not happen twice!), a disco ball (the *Saloon* was transformed into the *Discotheque* for weddings, *quinceañeras* and reunions) fell victim to its own excesses with a spectacular crash. Try dancing on glass shards!

love it

A tipping point was reached. Its life blood cut and its reason for being questioned, Palenque Falls was in the throes of desertification. The fairways curving through the landscape, and the greens dotting it, turned brown. Exposed rocks on the par-three 4th, the *Niagara* hole, could have passed for a tomb for Lazarus. The clubhouse, the members' home away from home, had become, according to one eyewitness:

A garden of cast-off bricks. A kind of great mass of filigree just winding all around itself... (an abandoned chair) rather poignant suggesting the transitoriness of time and the universe and also you can get a better view of the scaffolding in the roof.

make it a Yelp review? (Not open during construction?)
the course should be...

The Cowboys huddled and saw two futures. The firm could spiral toward insolvency after our client, or it could join the Snakes in the entropic business. We chose entropy. Cowboys and Snakes began to mingle, hybridize. The jukebox was hauled away. In the room with the abandoned chair, mysterious evidence of a vanished readership was found among the golf books. Ballard, Beckett, Borges, Calvino, Carroll, Dante, Eliot, Milton, Poe, Swift, Taine and Wells were accepted by the impartial local library.

Dante?

During one of my unsettled nights under the new mandate, I viewed drone footage alone in the *Saloon*, following our progress-in-reverse from the perspective of "outer space," until contrary activity, a counter revolution, attracted my attention. Over the course of days, August 3 to September 1 to be exact, a spiral was raised in a lakebed. Initially dry, the *playa* was filled with water, then heavy equipment, which was not authorized to be there, did its thing. Trucks dropped loads of red rubble, bulldozers pushed the red rubble into position. My aerial witnessing was visceral. I felt the imprint of tire tracks and mud cracks. Both types of behemoth caused red dust to plume in the wind.

Four "Ants" directed the operation, a counter-revolution of building rather dispersal. You could surmise they were the leaders by their periodic huddles. They were as methodical as you would expect ants to be, without so much as the smoke signals of a Marlboro break. One spent a lot of time with a filmmaker or geologist's tripod. One was boss of the construction crew. The other two shaped the structure - let's call it a ramp. As the ground reabsorbed the water (evaporation sped by hot weather), the ramp settled palpably (today's camera resolutions are something!) as if for a nap. The pouring and spreading hulks churned up a precarious catwalk, guided by stakes placed in a curving pattern. When one white steel beast keeled over, it was rescued by a yellow one. A shaper would measure the ramp's slopes with more stakes. From on high, the completed work resembled a teardrop on the land.

printed, fallen, raised?

Once word about the ramp got around, one of us had to see it for herself. (The end of self-satisfied male dominance of the golf industry had come.) We were at our motel in town when she called us. It was too late to stop her.

not at all likely the reading material of yr. social critic (not even one in lit, cultural studies)

re: interaction of mud/earth & water?

needs a little more aesthetic detail to justify - some active verbs...

describe? more active verbs... 1/4

how is it visceral?

Without proper
Setup of Character,
motive & initial state of
things, along w/
a clear turning point, it has
become
surreal - in
a not good
way..

I've entered the frontier! I'm on speaker-phone, right? Wish you could meet my new friends, a vaguero hat and black biker boots. Sure, cowboy boots befit our gang affiliation, but these puppies with square tips caught my eye at the Salvation Army, the fashion emporium for my wallet. Our radical business model hasn't exactly set me up for life! Now here are what you could call hotel accommodations for opossum, shrew, mole, raccoon, ferret, skunk, badger, fox...

Some speech
awkward,
more written
than spoken,
esp. for spontaneous
exclamation.
Also, exclamation
is the terrible recourse
of badly written speech.

Front Porch

Hotel accommodations? Yessir, the golf people had dreamed of a hotel for homo sapiens, before that mammal became an endangered species at Palenque Falls.

Etiquette & benefits

...coyote, bobcat, mountain lion, antelope...

Courses

Clubhouse

Standard amenities—swimming pool, ballroom, restaurant, lobby pond. Not counting the embellishments proposed by one comedian: tropical green interiors, gators and suspension bridge for the pond.

Grounds

Meet and Greet

...squirrel, prairie dog, gopher, mouse...

Future Fairways

Contact

If our intrepid explorer had done more than list wildlife—say, granted them speech—her audience might not have drifted away.

So
confusing...
still a
conference call?

...rat, porcupine, beaver, rabbit...

She lost every listener but one. I stayed with her because, as discoverer of the "Antwork," I felt in her shoes.

This is interesting: on the horizon, a temple! — how?
why?

A line here to identify/
Specify narrator
& activity - ex:
"I continued to
watch the progress
of the
transformation"
(colon)

Ramp.

Its coordinates: due west. Approaching from the northeast, mixed-grass plains, red rock, blue sky starboard; mixed-grass plains, red rock, blue sky port-side; mixed-grass plains, red rock, blue sky aft; mixed-grass plains, red rock, blue sky forward. The temple is getting bigger. It resembles the bunker of a golf course.

That's sacrilege, partner.

Closing in...closer...mixed-grass plains, red rock and blue sky..
Sir, I've boarded the temple!

Ramp.

1st
person
to:
?

The heat makes my head spin. Is the object to ascend or descend? I will test both. Ascent first makes sense since I am at the bottom. Here we go. The grade is not steep. Steady as she goes. The view is not to die for: Mixed-grass plains, red rock, blue sky.

So I've heard...

I've reached the summit. Damn, I should have brought water.

Very bad
joke.

The view is not to die for but any height can give a sense of weightlessness, lightheadedness. Add stillness and you've got repose. Stand by for something to happen. The excitement of expectancy is killing us.

2nd reference
to death, casual-
thoughtless

We don't have all day.

Next, descent! About face-attention-forward, march!

Easy does it, such a path can't be smooth.

A fall won't hurt. I'm feeling no pain. Whoa, who is there?
Smitty?

Smitty?

It's hard to make you out in the sun.

call
not happening
in real time?

The boss was out there?

unclear
- missing
responses of
"Smitty?"

Didn't notice anything upon arrival. The breather at the top must have cleared my head. How you been, Smitty? Long time, no see, pardner. We miss you.



Here, the signal was lost, so I collected some of the boys and we sprang in a pickup. Smitty, the visionary who had given Smitty Associates its new lease on life, was, I knew, in a trailer at Palenque Falls that served as his temporary office. When I slammed on the brakes at the foot of the ramp, which spread a cloud of red dust over it, the revenant was still talking! I use the term revenant because the other Smitty, our boss's father, the founder of the firm, had been dead for some 50 years. A check of her vitals eliminated our fear that the wandering of her mind was a consequence of snake bite, so we searched her person for other clues, which materialized right away: a bottle of tequila and baggie of Mary Jane. But both were full!

Old Smitty, she claimed, had visited her at the foot of the ramp/temple, where they had conversed non-stop about their "salad days." The séance—we'll call it that pending further investigation—floated ideas in the air during the late 1960s and early 70s. She kept repeating the words non-site, crystal, spiral, and completed the picture by humming Bowie, Dylan and Young. What else was there to do but kid her about smoke and mirrors and pile into the pickup? After jolting through mixed-grass plains, red rock and blue sky, we resumed the business of entropy.

sources

Graham, Kenneth, *Wind in the Willows* (1908)
Holt, Nancy, *The Making of Amarillo Ramp* (1973/2013)
Mojtabai, A.G., *Blessed Assurance: At Home with the Bomb in Amarillo, Texas* (1986)
Smithson, Robert (1938-1973), *Collected Works* (quotations from *Hotel Palenque* (1969/72))
Tatransky, Valentin, *Catalogue of Robert Smithson's Library: Books, Magazines and Records* (1973)

images

Robert Smithson's *Amarillo Ramp* in 2016

acknowledgments

The Golf Widow

HDTS 2020: *The Guests of the Hotel Palenque*, High Desert Test Sites

space!!
writing associated w/
the initial
narrator's thoughts
is so often spot on—
the language has
become ugly, clunky
with what appears
to be the 2nd
narrator.

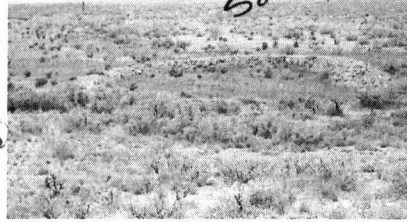
On this page, I
have gathered that
the 1st narrator is
the only remaining
listener/interlocutor
on what was/began
as a conference call
with the female
2nd narrator.

She appears to be
experiencing, along w/
a sense of disorientation,
a possible apparition:

"Smitty" (ghost of
Smithson)

nice last line - the call &
apparition at the site are
excellent - we
can
work on
the
execution.

Preview: Palenque Falls



as dumb-kid pranks and business-as-usual prevailed. Yet it soon transpired that members of the construction and irrigation crews were in the (paid) service of the *Dissociates*. For starters, "someone" could not resist the rocking jukebox in the Grille alias *Saloon*. Without warning, we were bludgeoned by a Who's Who of a bygone era:

David Bowie, *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars*
 Bob Dylan, *Bringing It All Back Home*
 Neil Young, *After the Gold Rush*

Once, a rattler "somehow" slipped through the jukebox's "stage door" and coiled around Alice Cooper's *Killer* for a siesta. Once (it could not happen twice!), a disco ball (the *Saloon* became the *Ballroom* for weddings, *quinceañeras* and reunions) fell victim to its previous excesses with a spectacular crash, or was knocked from its perch on purpose. Try working around glass shards, to say nothing of dancing on them. The *Dissociates* and their recruits advanced from the jukebox to vandalizing irrigation pipes and blistering our renovation in social media. Its life blood cut and its reason for being questioned, Palenque Falls was in the throes of desertification. The fairways curving through the landscape, and the greens dotting it, turned brown. Exposed rocks on the par-three 4th, the *Niagara* hole, could have passed for the tomb for Lazarus. The clubhouse had become, according to one Yelp review:

of poetic, or "curious" Yelp review...

A garden of cast-off bricks...A kind of great mass of filigree just winding all around itself...[an abandoned chair] rather poignant suggesting the transitoriness of time and the universe and also you can get a better view of the scaffolding in the roof.

Because the clubhouse was the members' home away from home, they had continued to turn up despite the abnormal conditions, and indeed they played the course where circumstances allowed. Yet Smitty, our boss, had to make more trips from his sanctum, a temporary office in a trailer, in order to lift their drooping spirits. The last straw was the sensation created by the migration of the club's collection of golf books to shelves of the local library. A person or persons unknown hid them among Anthropology and Archaeology; Art and Aesthetics; Criticism; Fiction; History, Biography, Politics and Economics; Linguistics; Philosophy; Psychology; Religion; Science; Travel Books and Geography; Magazines; and (vinyl) Records.

persevering... ok...

Before the club members fired all of us, the *Dissociates* staked everything on a presentation to all concerned in the temporarily operative *Ballroom*. Against a backdrop of remains of decorative Spanish moss above a small curved stage where the band used to perform, a dissociate named Suz, who had earned respect for persevering in the male-dominated golf industry, sketched out a business plan of global proportions. She was flanked by supporters slouched over folding chairs turned backward, who also wore baseball caps turned backward. Their idea was to supervise the dissolution of every golf course in existence, to race as foremost experts to each project as climate change dictated. Smitty and the members were by turns contemptuous, amused, insulted and awed. Provisionally, they conceded a profit potential if the science proved accurate, while displaying no enthusiasm whatsoever for an experiment with Palenque Falls itself. Suz countered that they could go down in history as groundbreakers. We adjourned to do our homework on forming a silent partnership. They - first of all - would send their lawyers, and 2nd - sue them, get them arrested...?

During one of my restless nights in this tense atmosphere, I viewed drone footage alone in the *Saloon*, following our progress-in-reverse from the perspective of "outer space," until contrary activity attracted my attention. Over the course of days, August 3 to September 1 to be exact, a spiral appeared in a lakebed. Initially dry, the *playa* was filled with water; then heavy equipment, which was not authorized to be there, did its thing. Trucks dropped loads of red rubble, bulldozers pushed the red rubble into position. Both types of behemoth raised dust plumes, red scrims carried off by the wind.

bored young architects; underused. -

at least for bigger jobs - I liked that idea...

Make it clear: Some of us were actually "real" construction guys.

until or recruited either replicated

those who took the job were clearly seriously

suspicious of what had begun to transpire -

The others of us, those of us, me included who chose recruitment for what turned out to be in many aspects of the opposite of construction work, were seduced by higher pay. The *Dissociates*, soon learned were not

interested in their ideology or explanations. Though most enjoyed the work, especially the younger among us, bored with a regular job, I was the only recruit to take an active interest in what the *Dissociates* were trying to say/prove/demonstrate.

1/3

Although I have been thinking that it would be more interesting to have the narrator be a "plant" by the owners of the club - or even by Smitty Associates - especially since "he" doesn't sound like a college educated writer, actually!

Front Porch

Fairquett & Associates

Courses

Clubhouse

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This just doesn't seem very revolutionary

→ Young, esp., played in mainstream, as is Bowditch later stuff (80's)

The last straw? Really?

Not that their

impeccable greens are now "in the throes of desertification???"

haha!

I'm honored, dear.

a bit unclear

ahh. So the *Dissociates* m.o. was to make over the place to allow for climate change concerns. It wasn't really an unmaking, sponsored by the purely theoretical ideas of

*I'm speechless
before the beauty
of this #.
Bravo,
dearest.*

Front Porch

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Four *Ants* directed the operation, a counter-revolution of building rather dispersal. I surmised they were the leaders by their periodic huddles. They were as methodical as ants are said to be, without so much as the smoke signals of a Marlboro break. One spent a lot of time with a filmmaker's or geologist's tripod. One was in charge of laborers. The other two shaped the structure – let's call it a ramp. My aerial witnessing was visceral. I felt the imprint of tire tracks and mud cracks. As the ground reabsorbed the water (evaporation sped by hot weather), the ramp settled palpably (today's camera resolutions are something!) as if for a nap. The pouring and spreading hulks churned up a precarious catwalk, guided by stakes placed in a curving pattern. When one white steel beast keeled over, a yellow one rescued it. Their unsettling ruckus (the drone picked up sound like a blood hound) shook the earth. A shaper measured the ramp's slopes with more stakes. From on high, the competed assemblage resembled a raised teardrop on the land.

Once word about the ramp got around, Suz wanted to see it for herself. Her call interrupted us during cards at our motel in town. It was too late to stop her:

I've entered the frontier...I'm on speaker-phone, right?...I'm passing, in my new vaquero hat and black cowboy boots with square tips, what you could call hotel accommodations for opossum, shrew, mole, raccoon, ferret, skunk, badger, fox...The golf people's dreamed of a hotel for homo sapiens, before that mammal became an endangered species at Palenque Falls... Coyote, bobcat, mountain lion, antelope...They wanted a swimming pool, ballroom, restaurant, lobby pond...One comedian proposed tropical green interiors, a suspension bridge for the pond and alligators...Squirrel, prairie dog, gopher, mouse...

Suz, your audience is drifting away.

Rat, porcupine, beaver, rabbit...

You've lost every listener but one. I am staying because I discovered the "Antwork." I feel in your shoes. Er, boots.

This is interesting: on the horizon...

My ramp!

Coordinates: due west. Approaching from the northeast, I see mixed-grass plains, red rock, blue sky starboard; mixed-grass plains, red rock, blue sky port-side; mixed-grass plains, red rock, blue sky aft; mixed-grass plains, red rock, blue sky forward. The goal is getting bigger. It resembles the bunker of a golf course or a temple. Closing in...Closer...The heat makes my head spin...Mixed-grass plains, red rock and blue sky...I've made it. The object is to ascend or descend?

It's your show.

We are at the foot of the temple, so let's ascend...The grade is not steep...There is a view of mixed-grass plains, red rock, blue sky...I've reached the summit.

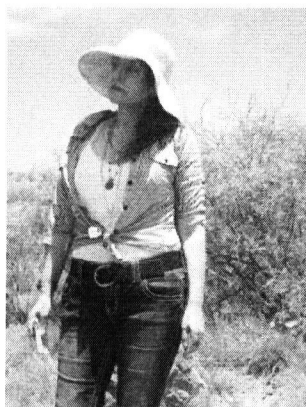
If you don't see more than mixed-grass plains, red rock and blue sky, reverse course.

Descent initiated. Whoa, who do we have here? It's hard to see in the sun. Smitty?

Smitty? Smitty is in his office.

via father

No. I can't believe this of the CEO of a major architectural firm. Just can't. Story's got to change.

[Front Porch](#)[Etiquette & Benefits](#)[Courses](#)[Clubhouse](#)[Grounds](#)[Meet and Greet](#)[Future Fairways](#)[Contact](#)

Here, the signal was lost, so I sprang in a pickup and went straight into the frontier. When I slammed on the brakes at the foot of the ramp, which spread a cloud of red dust over it, Suz was talking to the founder of Smitty Associates, who had been dead since 1973. A check of her vitals eliminated my fear that her wandering mind was a consequence of snake bite, so I searched her person for other clues, which materialized right away: a bottle of tequila and baggie of Mary Jane. But both were full.

Then Suz snapped out of it, turned to me and claimed Old Smitty had conversed non-stop. During the séance—we'll call it a séance pending further investigation—he had floated ideas in the air during the late 1960s and early 70s. Suz repeated some of the terminology—non-site, crystal, spiral, mirror travel—and

completed the picture by humming songs by Bowie, Dylan and Young. What else was there to do but rib her about smoke and mirrors and pile into the pickup? After jolting through mixed-grass plains, red rock and blue sky, we returned to learn the fate of our entropic enterprise.

sources

Graham, Kenneth, *Wind in the Willows* (1908)

Holt, Nancy, *The Making of Amarillo Ramp* (1973/2013)

Mojtabai, A.G., *Blessed Assurance: At Home with the Bomb in Amarillo, Texas* (1986)

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Robert Smithson's *Amarillo Ramp* in 2016

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The Golf Widow

HDTS 2020: The Guests of the Hotel Palenque, High Desert Test Sites

The writing is there — no doubts about it.
 The story structure needs help; development. Let's sit with our copies and go over it. I feel that the motivating drive to have this piece honor RS must be respected — don't worry — how could it not? or be anything else? Yet it still feels sketchy, in need of gaps filled. Character development & their motivations need clarification. (ESP-narrator)

*Note: I'm sure you are, but please do keep all drafts of this piece. There are many gems it would be a pity to lose, and they might (some, anyway) want to rejoin the narrative somewhere.

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Preview: Palenque Falls



fashion-challenged clients. Small ones can aspire to become big or independent and rough around the edges, with the attendant disadvantage of a smaller income stream. Suz and I, college interns, were drawn to Smitty Associates for its maverick (by capital-G Golf's standards) rep.

Golf course architects spend a lot of time with the office tools of the trade (maps, computer software, etc.), but we are not full-time desk jockeys. We are in the field with each new venture's local contractors and sub-contractors. With modest financial emoluments, Suz and I persuaded a few members of the construction and irrigation crews to play "practical jokes." At first, our sideshow was shrugged off as smart-aleck pranks. The club's collection of golf books migrated to shelves of the local library, hidden among Anthropology and Archaeology; Art and Aesthetics; Criticism; Fiction; History, Biography, Politics and Economics; Linguistics; Philosophy; Psychology; Religion; Science; Travel Books and Geography; Magazines; and (vinyl) Records. We could not resist the jukebox in the Grille alias *Saloon* either: Bing Crosby and Yanni were replaced by credible voices:

David Bowie, *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars*
Bob Dylan, *Bringing It All Back Home*
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Once, a rattler "somehow" slipped through the jukebox's "stage door" and coiled around Alice Cooper's *Killer* for a siesta. Once (it could not happen twice!), a disco ball (the *Saloon* became the *Ballroom* for weddings, *quinceaneras* and reunions) fell victim to its previous excesses with a spectacular crash, or was knocked from its perch on purpose. Try working around glass shards, to say nothing of dancing on them. Next, a splinter group of *Dissociates* advanced from the jukebox to tinkering with irrigation pipes and blistering our renovation in social media. Its life blood unreliable and its reason for being questioned, Palenque Falls was threatened by desertification. The fairways curving through the landscape, and the greens dotting it, betrayed traces of hated brown. Exposed rocks on the par-three 4th, the *Niagara* hole, could have passed for the tomb of Lazarus. The clubhouse was ridiculed in a poetic Yelp review:

A garden of cast-off bricks...A kind of great mass of filigree just winding all around itself...[an abandoned chair] rather poignant suggesting the transitoriness of time and the universe and also you can get a better view of the scaffolding in the roof.

Because the clubhouse was their home away from home, members had continued to turn up for socializing and playing the course where circumstances allowed. As their opportunities dwindled, they began to fume. Even an even-tempered man with a sense of humor like Smitty, project manager and son of the *Associates* founder, showed his limits after being forced to make too many trips from his *sanctum*, a makeshift office in a trailer, to lift drooping spirits. Before he ordered us to fall in line, he udd a mock presentation in the temporarily operative *Ballroom*. Against a backdrop of remains of decorative Spanish moss above a small curved stage where the band used to perform, Suz, already an outlier in the male-dominated golf industry, sketched out a business plan of global proportions. She was flanked by *Dissociates* wearing *vaquero* hats and black biker boots with square tips and slouched over folding chairs turned backward. Smitty would supervise the dissolution of every golf course in existence. During her spiel, some club members walked in and did not get the joke; they were by turns contemptuous, amused, insulted and awed. The profit potential if the science proved accurate was a plus. An experiment with Palenque Falls itself was a minus. They displayed no enthusiasm for "going down in history" as groundbreakers. While they called for our immediate dismissal, Smitty signaled for us to make ourselves scarce. really...?

That restless night, I took solace from a last fond review of drone footage of Palenque Falls, searching for signs of the *Dissociates* progress-in-reverse from the perspective of "outer space," until alarming handiwork of another splinter group attracted my attention. Over the course of a month, August 3 to September 1 to be exact, a spiral appeared in a lakebed. Although the drone

OK, better choice, obvis for the identity of the narrator.

Palenque Falls Country Club was a routine job until it wasn't. The trouble started when two agent provocateurs within *Smitty Associates*, radicalized by climate change, disrupted the firm's renovation of Palenque Falls. Yours truly and my friend and colleague Sue called ourselves the *Dissociates*.

? for the legal pun?

Golf course architecture, the *métier* of the *Associates*, is a discipline of landscape design. The profession has large practitioners and small. The large ones are conservative. Management and employees resemble their well-kempt (though

"Sue" above, "Suz" here - which is it? received, usually? ok, better

of course, no one found them - no one would have looked, esp. add music the library

perch? Isn't it hung, so - 'Knocked out of its orbit' around the square patch of dance floor. Where it cast? Casting mirror glints

"Working" at what? & who? You don't want

mean-spirited pranks that just make more cleanup for workers not in on it.

(potentially dangerous) like Smitty's

?! to "lift drooping spirits?" - or to address the generous-of-decibal complaints of men of otherworldly

exquisitely polished, uninterrupted privilege - that is, the paying members. - not a few who brought up - if not with them - their lawyers; many also payers

from Smitty Associates?

"betrayed traces" of brown? - or wide swathes of it, some like desert washes running right down across the fairways, with no greens spared. - or stng. like it)

awkward rep.

hmm... interesting this word still in mind

ok, profit - speaks to them, but still would be a hard sell - details would help.

The

flight paths gave an incomplete picture, they gave enough. Initially dry, a *playa* was filled with water, then heavy equipment, which was not authorized to be there, did its thing. Trucks dropped loads of red rubble, bulldozers pushed the red rubble into position. Both types of behemoth raised dust plumes, red scrims carried off by the wind.

Four *Ants* directed the operation, a counter-revolution of building rather dispersal. I surmised they were the leaders by their periodic huddles. They were as methodical as ants are said to be, without so much as the smoke signals of a Marlboro break. One spent a lot of time with a filmmaker's or geologist's tripod. One was in charge of laborers. The other two shaped the structure - let's call it a ramp. My aerial witnessing was visceral. I felt the imprint of tire tracks and mud cracks. As the ground reabsorbed the water (evaporation sped by hot weather), the ramp settled palpably (today's camera resolutions are something!) as if for a nap. The hulks churned up a precarious catwalk, guided by stakes placed in a curving pattern. When one white steel beast keeled over, a yellow one rescued it. Their unsettling ruckus (the drone picked up sound like a blood hound) shook the earth. A shaper measured the ramp's slopes with more stakes. From on high, the competed assemblage resembled a raised teardrop on the land.

Over breakfast at our motel in town, which we supposed was our last meal on this trail ride, I told Suz about the ramp. She seemed detached from the topic, but the opposite was the case, later phoning me on her way to the ramp.

I have a confession to make...Before I get into it...I'm passing what you could call hotel accommodations for opossum, shrew, mole, raccoon, ferret, skunk, badger, fox...The golf people dream of a hotel for homo sapiens, before that mammal became an endangered species at Palenque Falls...Coyote, bobcat, mountain lion, antelope...They wanted a swimming pool, ballroom, restaurant, lobby pond...One comedian proposed tropical green interiors, a suspension bridge for the pond and alligators...Squirrel, prairie dog, gopher, mouse...

Confusion above: unsure where green corrections go.

Suz, are you all right? Today's heat would make anyone's head spin.

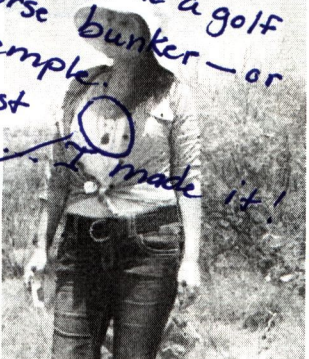
Rat, porcupine, beaver, rabbit...Antwork on the horizon...Coordinates: due west. Approaching from the northeast, I see mixed-grass plains, red rock, blue sky starboard; mixed-grass plains, red rock, blue sky port-side; mixed-grass plains, red rock, blue sky aft; mixed-grass plains, red rock, blue sky forward. The work is getting bigger. It resembles the bunker of a golf course or a temple. Closing in...Closer...I've made it!

Someone making physical effort might be a little less formal.
Here, the signal was lost, so I sprang in a pickup and sped straight to the teardrop. Moments later, my brakes spread a cloud of red dust over the foot of it. Suz removed her earbuds, which were blasting Led Zeppelin's *Stairway to Heaven*, another jukebox selection.

Really...!!
That is what she would be listening to? Why not "Horse With No Names" if we must be that literal?
Don't worry. I was not bitten by a snake. ?
Why did she say this?
She relinquished a quart bottle of tequila and a plastic baggie of Mary Jane. (yuck to both)
Sth. more interesting?

Untouched. - No prior references to habit, so reader doesn't feel the impact.

hmm. okay....
Suz was the creator of the ramp/teardrop, the lead *Ant* during weekends, days off, nights, with the connivance of acolytes. A recent epiphany, a secret kept from me, explained her actions: A fellow student had introduced her to the artist and essayist Robert Smithson, whose heyday was in the 1960s and early 1970s. She went into Smithson's world view; the words non-site, crystal, spiral and mirror travel filled the air. Her temple was a replica of Smithson's final earth art on which his surveillance prop plane crashed in 1973 with no survivors. What else was there to do but shake her hand, rib her about smoke and mirrors, pile into the pickup and jolt through mixed-grass plains, red rock and blue sky toward a showdown with Smitty, the club members, their lawyers and sheriff deputies? During the short journey. Suz hummed hits from the jukebox.



You know, this should just be the actual work of R.S. Here he is. "Suz" can meet him & then describe enigmatic encounter to narrator.

- Front Porch
- Etiquette & Amenities
- Courses
- Clubhouse
- Grounds
- Meet and Greet
- Future Fairways
- Contact

where? overnight lodging has become

"The golf people dream for homo sapiens, mammal even ? that an endangered species..."

"Work's getting bigger." "It's like a golf course bunker - or a temple. Almost there..."

The necklace: if it is her temple, have her explain origins of the reliquary on a chair? Crash site rock...

too bad: I like "connivance of acolytes"

Re: mirror shards
you could remark that the incident w/ the disco ball now made sense?

Fantastic - much of the love clearly here

grammar: subject of phoning is opposite?

? even now that

has

- give the other R.S. his due? but the ramp isn't the spiral.

oops: filled the 'air?' Love the last sentence.

sources

Graham, Kenneth, *Wind in the Willows* (1908)
 Holt, Nancy, *The Making of Amarillo Ramp* (1973/2013)
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images

Robert Smithson's *Amarillo Ramp* in 2016

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The Golf Widow
HDTS 2020: The Guests of the Hotel Palenque, High Desert Test Sites
 Renaissance Golf Design

Suzanne Daniels,
 alias

Front Porch

Etiquette & Benefits

Courses

Clubhouse

Grounds

Meet and Greet

Future Fairways

Contact

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OK, excellent job of integrating
 info to make it ^(almost all) believable, however,
 I fear it has been at the expense
 of the sustained dreaminess, the
 hypnotic desert tone that makes you
 feel yourself there, and, of course -
 many beautiful sentences. (Hence the
 note top L of page 1). Some of
 them have got to be worked back in.

Problems with "Suz:" No impact with
 either revelation - we don't know her.
 Maybe the narrator could be musing
 along with her in conversation - or
 described conversation. We get some
 beautiful, hypnotic rhythm/vocab
 back into it & get to know her
 well enough to support revelations.

Also: the 'pranks' should have
 some clearer political/aesthetic
 goals. The library gesture
 is nearly invisible - all anyone
 would realize is that the golf
 books were stolen - unless a
 confused librarian calls on a
 hunch...

And really -
 isn't it just too
 good a prospect
 to pass up?

1) A drive w/ Suz

2) B's confrontation: opposites

← An actual scene between the
 Dissociates, Smitty, & g.c. club
 members/owners would help the
 narrative along immensely. Reader
 needs ways to invest, get a grasp on it...

Potential
 fixes: slow
 it down:
 A simple
 way - just
 one: have
 Suz sing
 some lyrics
 on a drive
 describe
 scenery
 going by
 remember
 all the
 "Easter
 eggs"
 R.S.
 set up on
 the way
 to the
 Ramp...
 maybe
 she is
 trying to
 create one
 w/ transform
 of the
 golf course
 - on the
 way to her
 (Ramp)
 Spiral
 piece?

New Monuments Golf Club | Preview: Palenque Falls

Latest Draft

Preview: Palenque Falls



Palenque Falls Country Club was a routine job until it wasn't. Two agent provocateurs within *Smitty Associates*, radicalized by climate change, disrupted the firm's renovation of Palenque Falls. We called ourselves the *Dissociates*.

Golf course architecture, the *métier* of the *Associates*, is a discipline of landscape design, with large and small practitioners. Suz and I, college interns, were drawn to underdog Smitty Associates for its maverick reputation (by golf's conservative standards). We spent a lot of time with the office tools of the trade (maps, computer software, etc.), but we were not full-time desk jockeys; we got our hands dirty in the field with the local contractors and sub-contractors. With liquid emoluments (beer), Suz and I persuaded some members of the construction and irrigation crews to play "practical jokes." At first, we were shrugged off as smart alecks. The club's collection of golf books was "donated" (anonymously) to the local library, hidden among Anthropology and Archaeology; Art and Aesthetics; Criticism; Fiction; History, Biography, Politics and Economics; Linguistics; Philosophy; Psychology; Religion; Science; Travel Books and Geography. On a hunch, a concerned librarian called the club about returning the "donation." The switcheroo otherwise fell flat, but we were not done yet. a 'positive' statement of action more powerful: "but we were far from finished."

The jukebox in the Grille alias *Saloon* was messed with too. Bing Crosby and Yanni were replaced by rebel voices from 1960s and 70s counterculture:

David Bowie, *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars*
Captain Beefheart & The Magic Band, *Mirror Man*
Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, *Déjà Vu*
Bob Dylan, *It's All Over Now, Baby Blue*
The Rolling Stones, *2,000 Light Years From Home*

After a rattler "somehow" slipped into the jukebox and coiled around Alice Cooper's *Killer* for a *Siesta*, a splinter group of *Dissociates* advanced from the

watch use sound reps

ok: 1st list, 2nd is animals & 3rd could be at the end, with Smithsonian "terms". See notes

See notes last draft

This is a list, yes, but in vertical rather than horizontal form, so I haven't counted

consistent language for narrator?

"large & small," underdog... not sure how much control over the language is happening here. Every word counts, esp. in a short piece...

Likewise, have you considered the role played by all of the parenthetical asides? Reasoning?

jukebox to tinkering with irrigation pipes and blistering golf in social media. Its source of sustenance unreliable and its reason for being questioned, Palenque Falls was threatened by desertification. The fairways curving through the landscape, and the greens dotting it, betrayed traces of hated brown. Exposed rocks on the 4th, the patriot-themed *Niagara* hole, could have passed for the tomb of Lazarus. The clubhouse was ridiculed in a poetic Yelp review:

A garden of cast-off bricks...an abandoned chair rather poignant suggesting the transitoriness of time and the universe and also you can get a better view of the scaffolding in the roof.

Because the clubhouse was their home away from home, members continued to turn up for socializing and playing the course where circumstances allowed. As their opportunities dwindled, they began to fume. Before ordering us to fall in line, Smitty, project manager, son of the Associates founder and an even-tempered man with a sense of humor, ok'd a mock presentation in the temporarily operative *Ballroom*. (The *Saloon* became the *Ballroom* for weddings, *quinceaneras* and reunions.) Against a backdrop of remains of decorative Spanish moss above a small curved stage where the band used to perform, Suz, already an outlier in the male-dominated golf industry, sketched out a business plan of global proportions. Flanked by *Dissociates* slouched over folding chairs turned backward and attired in *vaquero* hats and black biker boots with square tips, she drily outlined a strategy for the dissolution of every eco-unfriendly golf course in existence. Club members drifted in and froze in their tracks.

Land returned to its natural state can become park and nature preserve.

→ OK, so she doesn't give a shit about litigation? what about Smitty? To lighten the mood, "someone" turned on the disco ball. To my eye, its wobbly rotation bespoke a dissolute past and a coming storm.

Where is the profit?

Before the golden question could be answered, the disco ball, whether the result of a flanking maneuver of said "someone" or of tension in the room, fell with a spectacular crash, breaking up the meeting. Reflections in the scattered shards multiplied the number of unamused faces present.

That restless night, I studied drone footage of the project, with half a mind to delete evidence incriminating the *Dissociates*, until the alarming handiwork of another splinter group attracted my attention. Over the course of a month, August 3 to September 1 to be exact, a spiral appeared in a lakebed. Although the drone flight paths gave an incomplete picture, they gave enough. Initially dry, a *playa* was filled with water, then heavy equipment, which was not authorized to be there, did its thing. Trucks dropped loads of red rubble, bulldozers pushed the red rubble into position. Both types of behemoth raised dust plumes, red scrimms carried off by the wind.

Four *Ants* directed the operation, a counter-revolution of building rather than dispersal. I surmised they were the leaders by their periodic huddles. They were as methodical as ants are said to be, without so much as the smoke signals of a Marlboro break. One could be observed moving around a filmmaker's or geologist's tripod. One was in charge of laborers. The other two shaped the

→ just now remarking - perhaps another word rather than "brown"? I can explain...

→ He just wouldn't! This is the reputation of - and his - livelihood. He'd order the meeting to get to the bottom of what had been going on with the vandalism. (serious crimes!)

→ Those of us standing over them may have noted the way

→ 2nd poetic notice of dust raised by vehicles. (one of 2)

Intentional? To indicate that narrator is implicated even against his wishes?

structure – let's call it a ramp. My aerial witnessing was visceral. I felt the imprint of tire tracks and mud cracks. As the ground reabsorbed the water (evaporation sped by hot weather), the ramp settled palpably (today's camera resolutions are something!) as if for a nap. The hulks churned up a precarious catwalk, guided by stakes placed in a curving pattern. When one white steel beast keeled over, a yellow one rescued it. Their unsettling ruckus (the drone picked up sound like a blood hound) shook the earth. A shaper measured the ramp's slopes with more stakes. From on high, the competed assemblage resembled a raised teardrop on the land.

Suz and I were staying at Motel Palenque Falls, an idiosyncratic wreck chosen by her where an alligator in the lobby pond sized up every guest. Over breakfast, which we supposed was our last meal on this trail ride, I told Suz about the ramp. She seemed detached from the topic, but later phoned as she hiked in haste toward it.

11 I have a confession to make...Before I get into it...I'm passing what you could call motel accommodations for opossum, shrew, mole, raccoon, ferret, skunk, badger, fox, coyote, bobcat, mountain lion, antelope, squirrel, prairie dog, gopher, mouse, rat, porcupine, beaver, rabbit...

11 Suz, are you all right? Today's heat would make anyone's head spin.

intentional? 11 Antwork on the horizon...Coordinates: due west. Approaching from the northeast, I see mixed-grass plains, red rock, blue sky starboard; mixed-grass plains, red rock, blue sky port-side; mixed-grass plains, red rock, blue sky aft; mixed-grass plains, red rock, blue sky forward. Work's getting bigger. It's like a golf course bunker—or a temple... Almost there...Made it!



Here, the signal was lost, so I sprang in a pickup and sped straight to the teardrop. Moments later, my brakes spread a cloud of red dust over the foot of it. Suz removed her earbuds, which released America's *Horse with No Name*, another jukebox selection, into the sweltering atmosphere. of our

Yes, Suz was the creator of the ramp/teardrop, the lead Ant during weekends.

sthg. about the tinny quality of the music, or 'miniature' somehow 'cutting' into the swelter. Te like a steel thread cutting through the swelter. 20

4/15/2020, 11:51 AM

days off, nights, with the connivance of acolytes. A recent epiphany, a secret kept from me, explained her actions. Back at college, she had been introduced to the work of artist and essayist Robert Smithson, whose heyday was the 1960s and early 1970s. She went into Smithson's worldview. His terms, having to do with non-sites, crystals, spirals and mirror, travel filled the air. What else was there to do but rib her about smoke and mirrors, pile into the pickup and jolt through mixed-grass plains, red rock and blue sky toward temporary home? Traces of the ramp's construction were gone and the tire tracks leading to and from it would follow the same road to oblivion. If noticed at all, the teardrop on the land would be a riddle which fit into the landscape more or less. The whole matter might blow over.

sources

Graham, Kenneth, *Wind in the Willows* (1908)

Holt, Nancy, *The Making of Amarillo Ramp* (1973/2013)

Mojtabai, A.G., *Blessèd Assurance: At Home with the Bomb in Amarillo, Texas* (1986)

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images

Robert Smithson's *Amarillo Ramp* in 2016

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Suzanne Daniels alias *The Golf Widow* → unfinished dissertation materials!
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missed? ✓

aided by better choice?

lame

better choice?

those are his terms.

So, his philosophy or aesthetic?

(most precise)

His aesthetic of "non-sites" and "sites," crystals and mirrors; —

etc. — could be list of pairs like the sentence with animals.

gutting effect in throat

ugly effect — better choices?

path? "which, more or less, fit into the landscape."

Last sentence — important!!

OR it might all blow over.