

CITIES II.

Though the walls were all of concrete I could by a simple pressure of my foot upon the lever annihilate the tender mechanism which sustained them; though the passersby wore powdered smiles one word from my tongue and they would kill me; though the signs read This Way the crowds ran That Way — and as I followed the crowd I perceived two men with Rubber Heels were following me — as I had foretold — as I stepped off a car — as hellhounds after me — but an arched door with the legend 57 opened for me and nearly snipped off their metallic noses for them.

Thus was I welcomed; thus were my feet bathed my body laved in vinegar and anointed with frankincense musk myrrh and other perfumes of Arabia — nude I was carried into the high immense illuminated silent hall of Perfect Acoustics and placed alone upon the stage — from his towering pulpit the conductor signalled the myriadfold orchestra of bearded men to resume the rehearsal — from the galleries and from scaffolds descended the python coils of the instruments menacing — I understood I was to be judge and defendant vivisected and surgeon at once the ambrosial symphony assailed