

**Eric Sanchez**

## ON THE PROSODY OF NABOKOV'S "PALE FIRE"

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### **1. INTRODUCTION**

I have chosen as the locus of my inquiry not the novel but the poem.<sup>1</sup> While it is true that the novel as a whole has received considerably more attention in the literature than Shade's poem, there are nonetheless a number of fascinating articles and essays on this or that aspect of the verse. I find, however, to my dissatisfaction that almost nothing has been written which adopts as its primary focus the strictly formal properties known to the study of prosody. Critics of the poem seem to offer either thematic interpretations (e.g., Mella 2006) or notes on formal properties but without a wider frame of reference (e.g., Boyd 2011). The only exception I have come across is what hints to be a rather illuminating work by R. Dyche Mullins: "Conjuring in Two Tongues: The Russian and English Prosodies of Nabokov's "Pale Fire" (2016/2017). Fearing, however, that reading it would color my analysis before I had begun, I contented myself by scanning only the contents of its introduction. Accordingly, I make no mention of Mullins's project. The reader may decide whether our methods are compatible and our findings consistent.

The aim of this essay is expository. In what follows, I will attempt to develop in degrees the methodology necessary to classify the strictly formal properties of "Pale Fire," which presently elude me. I will adopt as my fundamental guide Nabokov's *Notes on Prosody*, located in Appendix Two of his commentary to Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin*. By culling extensively from this work, I will attempt to establish a single frame of reference based on certain terminological axioms, a process which I think will offer the inferences I draw a reasonable level of analytic certainty. Like the entomologist who labors to classify an undiscovered species of butterfly, taking pains to document the venation of its wings or the various pigments in its scales, I hope to provide a detailed taxonomic description of the particular metrical features

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank Prof. Nancy Pollak (Cornell University) for lending me over the past two years her constant guidance and expertise.

which characterize Shade's verse. Focusing on the results of about two hundred lines, I will then try to provide a plausible interpretation of my findings. I strive ultimately to produce a body of work Nabokov would have found "even remotely acceptable to a student of prosody" (*EO III* 448).

## 2. FEET

As the commentator of *Pale Fire* aptly states, "Pale Fire" is "a poem in heroic couplets, of nine hundred ninety-nine lines, divided into four cantos" (*PF* 13). This more or less accounts for the general structure of the poem. That "Pale Fire" is written in heroic couplets allows us to infer that the poem consists of iambic pentameter with adjacent rhyme (aabb). The careful reader will notice that couplets necessitate multiples of two, of which nine hundred ninety-nine is surely not. Kinbote himself offers an elegant solution to this apparent inconsistency, but it will not be addressed here; what is relevant to a discussion on feet is strictly the meter, which already gives us an accurate picture of the individual line. The identification of 'iambic pentameter' means that we can expect each line to consist of five iambs, with a minimum of ten semeia. In fact, every line of "Pale Fire" has exactly ten semeia. Something similar, however, cannot be said about the number of iambs, just in case we take an iamb to designate a regular beat (k n). Although the poem is written in pentameter, it would be a mistake to expect every line to house a sequence of exactly five regular beats.

"An ordinary iambic foot," Nabokov explains, "(i.e., one not affected by certain contractional and rhymal variations) consists of two semeia, the first semeion being called a depression (k or l) and the second an ictus (j or n)" (*EO III* 453). This definition leaves open the possibility that either semeion represents a stress in the line. In other words, we must acknowledge the possibility of anomalous stress, either a stressed depression or an unstressed ictus, and, in turn, account for the three other stress combinations that are mathematically possible within the scope of a single binary foot. These four variations are essential to producing an accurate scansion, and, later, understanding the modulation. Nabokov identifies these variations as the following:

- k n regular beat
- k j scud (or false pyrrhic)
- l j tilted scud (or false trochee)
- l n false spondee. (*EO III* 453)

Before turning to a discussion on these various instantiations of stress, let us peruse some key definitions, with apposite examples provided by Nabokov himself.<sup>2</sup> The relevant feet have been underlined.

(1) An iamb is a regular beat (k n) if and only if it designates an unstressed depression followed by a stressed ictus; e.g., “Appéase my gríef, and déadly páin” (Earl of Surrey, *The Lover Describeth His Restless State*).<sup>3</sup>

(2) An iamb is a scud (k j) if and only if it designates an unstressed depression followed by an unstressed ictus; e.g., “In expectátion of a guést” (Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, VI) and “In lóveliness of pérfect déeds” (ibid., XXXVI).

(3) An iamb is a tilted scud (henceforth “tilt”) (l j) if and only if it designates a stressed depression followed by an unstressed ictus; e.g., “Séense of intólerable wróng” (Coleridge, *The Pains of Sleep*), “Váster than Émpires and more slów” (Marvell, *To His Coy Mistress*), and “Pérfectly púre and góod: I fóund” (Browning, *Porphyria’s Lover*).

(4) An iamb is a false spondee (henceforth “spondee”) (l n) if and only if it designates a stressed depression followed by a stressed ictus; e.g., “Twice hóly wás the Sábbath-béll” (Keats, *The Eve of St. Mark*).

#### SCUDS

Nabokov’s notes on English iambics pertain specifically to tetrameter, but they succeed in modeling the varieties of anomalous stress that result in scudded feet:

I	<u>k j</u> k n k n k n	<u>The disregarded</u> thing we break <u>Is of</u> the kind we cannot make;
II	k n <u>k j</u> k n k n	We break <u>the disregarded</u> thing, Not <u>thinking of</u> its wistful ring;
III	k n k n <u>k j</u> k n	We break the thing <u>we disregard</u> , We break the statue <u>of</u> a bard
IV	k n k n k n <u>k j</u>	Near which an age was <u>lingering</u> ;
O	k n k n k n k n	We take the thing and break the thing. ( <i>EO III</i> 458-459)

<sup>2</sup> See *EO III*, pp. 453-544.

<sup>3</sup> The terms “(un)stressed depression” and “(un)stressed ictus” are being used in lieu of Nabokov’s “(un)accented depression” and “(un)accented stress,” respectively. The former are more compatible with terminology already common to prosody.

This model can be easily expanded to accommodate pentameter. Each variety of scud receives at the right end an additional regular beat; e.g., scud I becomes  $k j k n k n k n k n$ ; and scud V is rendered  $k n k n k n k n k j$ . To be sure, scuds can also appear in combination. Nabokov offers the example “incomprehensibility,” which, according to his model, constitutes scud I + II + IV:  $k j k j k n k j$  (459). There are accordingly twenty-eight unique combinations in pentameter. By identifying these combinations, one can begin to construct a scansion of “Pale Fire.” This process, however, is not as straightforward as it might appear at first glance.

An inherent difficulty of identifying scuds—and all binary feet, for that matter—is the likelihood that no two people will agree on the set of iambs which satisfies the relevant definition, in this case, (2) an iamb is a scud ( $k j$ ) if and only if it designates an unstressed depression followed by an unstressed ictus. Nabokov, for instance, identifies as a scud the first two semeia of the verse “The disregarded thing we break” (see above). It is not obvious, however, that the first syllable of “disregarded” is unstressed. Just to take one example, *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary* supplies under its entry for “disregard” the pronunciation “\,dis-ri-’gärd\”—meaning that the first syllable is a secondary stress. Granted, this pronunciation maintains that the final syllable is the primary stress, but this in no way precludes the first from being stressed on the metrical line, let alone in ordinary conversation. The same can be said about “incomprehensibility”: “\ (,)in-,käm-pri-,hen(t)-sə-’bi-lə-tē\.” To make matters more difficult, there does not seem to be any safeguard against identifying a semeion as a stress that Nabokov would not, and vice versa. In short, the scansion-maker risks producing something that ultimately is little in keeping with what Nabokov has in mind.

In spite of these difficulties, the annals of Nabokoviana provide us—entirely by chance—what promises to be a plausible remedy. On April 5, 1964, Nabokov read before a live audience a selection of his works at the 92nd Street Y in New York City. The event was recorded on an audiotape, which features several of his poems, including “The Ballad of Longwood Glen” (1957), “An Evening of Russian Poetry” (1945), and an excerpt from “Pale Fire” of about two hundred lines. This excerpt (can. II, ll. 293-428, 443-460, 463-500) accompanies the author’s animated performance, and offers us a clear picture of the exact semeia that Nabokov would have normally stressed and not stressed. The scansion of these lines has been provided, tediously constructed in accordance with the vocal sample supplied by the audiotape (see Appendix One). The data compiled from this scansion allows us, in turn, to assert a number of claims concerning scuds in “Pale Fire.”

Suppose this partial scansion is representative of the poem as a whole. We can accordingly extrapolate the probability that any given iamb is a scud—i.e., designates an unstressed depression followed by an unstressed ictus. By tabulating the distribution of individual scuds in the partial scansion (Table 2.1),

we can assert, for instance, that the fourth iamb in a line is most likely to be a scud, after which the third is most likely, followed closely by the first. On the other hand, the fifth iamb in a line is least likely to be a scud.

*Table 2.1 Distribution of individual scuds*

<i>Scud</i>	<i>Count</i>
I	30
II	21
III	34
IV	44
V	2

What’s more, by tabulating the distribution of scud combinations in the partial scansion (Table 2.2), we can extrapolate the probability that any given line instantiates one of the twenty-eight combinations possible in pentameter. We can assert, for instance, that a line in “Pale Fire” is most likely scudless (instantiates scud O). Less than half as likely is that a line instantiates scud III. In fact, an individual scud in “Pale Fire” is most likely the only scud in its line (instantiates either scud III, IV, I, or II, in that order of descending likelihood).

*Table 2.2 Distribution of scud combinations*

<i>Scud</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Scud</i>	<i>Count</i>
O	85	III + V	1
I	16	IV + V	
II	13	I + II + III	
III	30	I + II + IV	2
IV	26	I + II + V	

Table 2.2 Distribution of scud combinations

V	1	I + III + IV	1
I + II		I + III + V	
I + III	2	I + IV + V	
I + IV	9	I + III + IV	
I + V		I + III + V	
II + III		I + IV + V	
II + IV	6	I + II + III + IV	
II + V		I + II + III + V	
III + IV		I + II + III + IV + V	

In his discussion on the scud, Nabokov provides a similar table, which plots the distribution of scud combinations in fifty-line-long samples of iambic tetrameter from canonical poets.<sup>4</sup> The table serves to compare the styles of eight English and two Russian authors relative to their individual scud frequencies. Suppose these distributions are representative of the authors' collected works.

	I	II	III	IV	I + II	I + III	I + IV	II + III	II + IV	O
Donne	6	4	8	2	1	1		1	1	26
Butler	6	5	8	6		3			1	21
Marvell	16	4	8	1		1			1	19
Cowper	12	4	7		1		1			25
Coleridge	5	8	2	1		4		1		29

<sup>4</sup> See *EO III*, p. 462, for a complete list of sources.

Tennyson	3	1	4							42
Browning	6	2	6							36
Arnold	6	10	5	1		1	1			26
Lomonosov	1	8	24			2		1		14
Pushkin	3	3	31			6				7

Alone, these distributions do not offer much in the way of comparison with Shade's verse. The opposite is true, however, provided we scale the values of Table 2.2 to reflect a fifty-line-long sample. Rounded to the nearest integer, the modified values (not exclusive to Table 2.3) suggest ample comparison with any number of these canonical poets:

*Table 2.3 Distribution of scud combinations per 50 lines*

I	II	III	IV	V	I + III	I + IV	II + IV	III + V	I + II + IV	I + III + IV	O
4	3	8	7		1	2	2		1		22

To be sure, Nabokov's table expresses values in tetrameter; Table 2.3, on the other hand, expresses values in pentameter. As a result, no comparison between the two can be precise, but we can glean its general impression just in case we conceive of both tables as expressing values relative to the left and right limits of the line. We can venture to say, for instance, that Shade's scudding of the left-most iamb (scud I) is comparable (in frequency) to that of Coleridge and Tennyson (scud I). His scudding of the second-left-most iamb (scud II) is on par with that of Pushkin (scud II), but the second-right-most iamb (scud IV) with Cowper (scud III) and not with Pushkin. Shade's scudding of the combined left-most and second-left-most iambs (scud I + II) is comparable with that of a band of poets, including Marvell, Arnold, and Lomonosov (scud I + II). On the other hand, Shade's leaving a line scudless (scud O) is nearly on par with that of Butler (scud O), yet pales in comparison with that of Tennyson and Browning. These general impressions are by no means exhaustive, but even in their present state, they suggest that Shade's style in the relevant sense is not out of the ordinary. Without a comparable study of English pentameter, however, we are ultimately unable to verify whether these associations are more than conjecture.

In order, then, that we might gain a practical understanding of Shade’s style—his implementation of the scud on the concrete line—let us now take a notable example from “Pale Fire” itself:<sup>5</sup>

k j k n l j k n k n  
 Into a wood duck. And again your voice: [Scud I]  
 k j k n k j k j k n  
 320 “But this is prejudice! You should rejoice [Scud I + III + IV]  
 k j k n k j k n k n  
That she is innocent. Why overstress [Scud I + III]  
 k n k j k n k n k n  
 The physical? She *wants* to look a mess. [Scud II]  
 l j k n k j k n k n  
 Virgins have written some *resplendent* books. [Scud III]  
 l j k j k n k j k n  
 Lovemaking is not everything. Good looks [Scud II + IV]  
 k j l j k n k j  
Are not that indispensable!” [...] [Scud I + IV]

The rhythmic quality produced by a scud can generally be described as ‘quickenings.’ Whichever terminology we might prefer, it is clear that the unstressed semeia which constitute a scud result in the accelerated pace of the iamb by which they are designated. This is especially the case for those that belong to a word of three or more syllables, such as “préjudice” (l. 320), “lóvemaking” (l. 324), and “indispensible” (l. 325). What’s more, the stressed semeia of the same word appear to become amplified, wholly in virtue of their comparatively unexpressive neighbors. Indeed, the scud seems to be the poet’s most effective tool for generating dramatic shifts in modulation. It is perhaps no great surprise, then, that Nabokov dedicates to it such a lengthy treatise.

Of the three variations of the regular beat (k n), the tilt and the spondee receive considerably less attention from Nabokov (and Beliy) than the scud. Nabokov, for instance, does not supply in his discussion on either the tilt or the spondee a table comparable to the one in his discussion on the scud. Actually, he supplies no tables at all. In spite of this, it is worth giving at least a general account of their shape and color.

<sup>5</sup> To be clear, the scansion presented in this text is not properly my own. It was derived exclusively from the vocal sample.

## TILTS

According to our definition, an iamb is a tilt (I j) if and only if it designates a stressed depression followed by an unstressed ictus. For his own part, Nabokov appreciates exactly “four varieties [of the tilt] insofar as number and length of words are involved in their producement” (*EO III* 463). This has nothing to bear on the shape of the actual foot, but rather acknowledges the sorts of syllabic combinations which generate a tilt. Let these four varieties be defined as the following:<sup>6</sup>

(1) A tilt is a “split tilt” if and only if it consists of a stressed monosyllable followed by an unstressed monosyllable.

(2) A tilt is a “short tilt” if and only if it consists of a stressed monosyllable followed by the unstressed first syllable of a polysyllabic word.

(3) A tilt is a “duplex tilt” if and only if it consists of a disyllabic word that is stressed on the first syllable.

(4) A tilt is a “long tilt” if and only if it consists of the first and second syllables of a trisyllabic word that is stressed on the first syllable.

In explanation of these definitions, Nabokov volunteers an original stanza written in iambic tetrameter. The first foot of every line is designed to illustrate a particular variety of tilt. The relevant syllables are italicized:

- |  |               |
|--|---------------|
| (1) <i>Deep</i> in the night on mountains steep,                 | [split tilt]  |
| (2) <i>Dark</i> , inaccessible and proud,                        | [short tilt]  |
| (3) <i>Guarded</i> by dragons, castles sleep;                    | [duplex tilt] |
| (4) <i>Terrible</i> stars above them crowd. ( <i>EO III</i> 463) | [long tilt]   |

The scansion identifies a sum of sixty-seven individual tilts or an average of seventeen tilts per fifty lines, rounded to the nearest integer. Take as an example the following passage from “Pale Fire,” which offers a clear sense of their implementation. Let us expand our model of anomalous stress to show that the first iamb is a tilt (=tilt I), that the second iamb is a tilt (=tilt II), and so forth; thus:

k n k n k n  
 [...] On days when all the streets [Tilt O]  
 k n k n l j k n k n

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. *EO III*, p. 463.

	Of College Town <u>led to</u> the game, she'd sit	[Tilt III, split]
	k j l j k n k n k n	
340	On the <u>library</u> steps, and read or knit;	[Tilt II, long]
	l j k n k n k j k n	
	<u>Mostly</u> alone she'd be, or with that nice	[Tilt I, duplex]
	l n k n k n	
	Frail roommate, now a nun [...]	[Tilt O]

How can we generally describe the rhythmic quality produced by a tilt? In isolation, a tilt seems to provide variety in the modulation only insofar as it expressed the mirrored pulse of a regular beat (k n). In certain combinations, however, it is able to contribute considerably more richness. When followed by a regular beat, for instance, a tilt can produce a quality approaching that of a scud (l j k n). Note the pair of unstressed semeia nestled between the two feet: “léd to the gáme” (l. 339), “líbrary stéps” (l. 340), “Mósty alóne” (l. 341). When followed by a scud, the effect is enhanced (l j k j). This is especially the case if both feet consist of a polysyllabic word. The additional unstressed semeion introduced by the scud lengthens the launching pad, as it were, from which the pace is accelerated. On the other hand, a tilt preceded by a regular beat can produce a quality akin to that of a spondee (k n l j), &c. The crucial point is that a tilt in combination with a second (or third) foot enables the possibility of very precise modulation.

#### SPONDEES

“Strictly speaking,” contends Nabokov, “the spondee—i.e., two adjacent semeia bearing exactly the same stress accent (n n) and following each other without any break or pause [...]—is an impossibility in metrical verse as distinguished from cadential or pausative forms. But a kind of false spondee (l n or n l) is not infrequent” (*EO III* 472). Our definition here is more rigorous: an iamb is a spondee if and only if it designates a stressed depression followed by a stressed ictus; in other words, a spondee always refers to l n, but never n l. The latter is merely the result of combining of a regular beat and a tilt (k n l j), a spondee and a tilt (l n l j), or two spondees (l n l n). Among these possible combinations, only the third satisfies our definition, twice, to be exact.

The scansion accordingly identifies a sum of seventy-eight individual spondees or an average of twenty spondees per fifty lines, rounded to the nearest integer. This exceeds the distribution of tilts in a fifty-line-long sample by a value of three. We have reason to expect, then, that within the scope of the entire poem the ratio of tilts to spondees remains more or less at 1:1.

Take as a final example the following passage from “Pale Fire,” which serves to showcase Shade’s implementation of the foot in question. Let us expand our model of anomalous stress once again to show that the first iamb is a spondee (=spondee I), that the second iamb is a spondee (=spondee II), and so forth; thus:

	k j l n l n k j l n	
	She had <u>strange fears</u> , <u>strange fantasies</u> , <u>strange force</u>	[Spondee II + III + V]
	k n k j k n k n k n	
345	Of character—as when she spent three nights	[Spondee O]
	k n k n k n k n k n	
	Investigating certain sounds and lights	[Spondee O]
	k j l n	
	In an <u>old barn</u> . [...]	[Spondee II]

If ‘quickenings’ can be used in conjunction with a scud, we ought to use ‘halting’ or ‘stopping’ in the case of a spondee. Either term is suitable for the purpose of generally describing the rhythmic quality that a spondee produces.<sup>7</sup> The pair of stressed semeia which constitute it tend to prop up a kind of barricade that the natural pace of the meter must labor to penetrate. When occurring side by side, spondees risk cacophony, whose most extreme example is represented by lines such as “Nó! Nó! Nó! Nó! Nó! Nó! Nó! Nó!” Nevertheless, one would be remiss not to value their power of deceleration, which has a way of lending tremendous emphasis to the iambs by which they are designated.

### 3. ELISIONS

In his essay of English iambics Nabokov appreciates two families of elision. The first is what he terms “the rudimentary apocopation—i.e., the dropping or slurring of a final vowel before an initial vowel in the next word” (*EO III* 476). This sort of elision is represented by the scanning of “many a” as a trochee (n k) rather than a dactyl (n m ) to produce something like [mɛn jə] from [mɛni ə]. Nabokov observes this particular example as early as circa 1393 in John Gower’s *Confessio amantis* (bk. III):

	k n k n k n k n
605	Ful many a man, as it is knowe

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<sup>7</sup> Coincidentally, the color red has been used to indicate spondees in the scansion (see Appendix One).

The metrically suggested parsing of “many a” as n k in lieu of n m delivers the scudless, perfectly iambic line from the pitfall of cacophony. In any case, the rudimentary apocopation is something altogether foreign to Shade’s verse. Elisions of this sort do not occur in all of “Pale Fire.”

The second family of elision designates “the contraction that implies the elimination from the metrical count of a vowel in the middle of a word” (*EO III* 476). Such contractions abound in “Pale Fire.” Indeed, they account for the poem’s entire breadth of elisions. Their tabulation, however, is not so readily determined.

There is a great deal of imprecision in the business of marking elisions. Whether their purpose is, say, to gauge the length of a sailboat or scale the weight of its anchor, the various apparati we use for measurement require, of course, a universal point of reference, which guarantees the precision and broad intelligibility of their output. To be sure, no universal standard exists for English syllabification, and what one person may perceive as the unusual introduction or removal of a semeion may sound typical to another. Two popular examples include the differences between “literally” and something like “lit’rally” (which is common both in the U.K. and the U.S.A.) and “spiritual” and, for instance, “spirit’al.” There are, in either case, two tokens of the same lexical entry, and it is with great struggle that one defends the privileging of a particular instantiation over the other. In the absence of the prerequisite standard, it is impossible to judge in general whether the relevant semeion has been loyally reproduced or altogether deserted. Marking elisions cannot take place without a standard of English syllabification.

Although the necessary point of reference does not exist, there is nothing which prevents the fruitful implementation of traditional, albeit insufficient, standards of syllabification. The aim of this project is, of course, a study of Nabokovian iambs on Nabokovian terms, and accordingly one may feel tempted to adopt a standard in keeping with his personal library. One knows from a letter that Nabokov wrote in 1965 to the editors of the *New York Review of Books* (in response to Edmund Wilson’s review of his translation of Pushkin’s *Eugene Onegin*) that he used *Webster’s Dictionary*. To the question of whether the word “stuss” qualifies as a legitimate lexical entry, Nabokov avers, “‘stuss’ is the English name of a card game which I discuss at length in my notes on Pushkin’s addiction to gambling,” adding, “Mr. Wilson should have consulted my notes (and Webster’s dictionary) more carefully.” Brian Boyd identifies this volume, offering that Nabokov’s favorite dictionary was *Webster’s New International Dictionary*, second edition (often *Webster’s Second*).<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> See Boyd’s *Nabokov’s Pale Fire: The Magic of Artistic Discovery* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), p. 18n.

Under these circumstances, it seems that *Webster's Second* would supply the environment most suited for marking elisions in Shade's verse. After all, Nabokov would likely have consulted his Webster's dictionary were he to have doubted at any point the accuracy of his own syllabification. There is ample motivation, then, to adopt *Webster's Second* as the relevant kind of standard. Still there is also reason to endorse an alternative, despite the appeal of this particular lexicon.

Although *Webster's Second* may appear *prima facie* to be the more felicitous, it is plausibly the Merriam-Webster online dictionary. There are two primary motives for selecting the latter instead of the former: assuming the Merriam-Webster standard (1) allows us to satisfy the same motivations that originally attracted us to Noah Webster's namesake and (2) provides the more descriptive exposition of English pronunciation. Whereas *Webster's Second* typically assigns a single pronunciation per entry, Merriam-Webster enumerates a range of possible variants. Take, for instance, the word "flower," "a well-known contraction [...] with tacit acknowledgment of its French pedigree (*flor*, *flour*, *fleur*) and its prosodical relationship with such rhymes as hour–our (cf. higher–fire)" (*EO III* 476). It follows a priori that Nabokov appreciates at least two variations of "flower": a common pronunciation and an elided one. Under "flower," Merriam-Webster supplies "flow-er" (syllabification) with "\'flaü(-ə)r\" (pronunciation)—i.e., the option to vocalize "flower" either di- or monosyllabically—but *Webster's Second* only with "(flou' ěr)." The same can be said about "hour" and "our." Merriam-Webster gives credence to a diversity of spoken English overlooked by *Webster's Second*, which, in short, makes it the more profitable standard for the tabulation of elisions in "Pale Fire."

The elisions which follow have accordingly been determined relative to the range of Merriam-Webster. The syllabification provided by the dictionary has been assumed to express the basic count of semeia, and variants in pronunciation have been identified as natural elisions just in case they yield fewer semeia than the basic count. Of course, not every entry exists in cohabitation, say, with the option to either add or drop a semeion. Variants per se do not guarantee an opportunity for natural elision: they often correspond with the basic count. Given this discrepancy, it seems taxonomically unsound to place instances of natural and synthetic elision under the same category. For this reason, elisions in "Pale Fire" have been sorted among three tribes: (1) words elided without option (synthetic), (2) words elided with option (natural), and (3) words unelided with option, the last of which acknowledges those semeia kept metrically intact where they need not be. Matching tribes have also been included to appraise the opposite phenomenon of natural elongation—i.e., the option to add a semeion to the basic count: (4) words elongated without option, (5) words elongated with option, and (6) words unelongated with option.

Imprimis: the term "option" is used to indicate the sort of variants that are supplied under an entry in Merriam-Webster. If a word is elided *without* option, then the entry for that word supplies no variant

whose syllables are fewer than those of the basic count, and that word appears in “Pale Fire” with one fewer semeion than those of the basic count. “Medium,” for instance, has a basic count of three syllables: “me-di-um.” It is elided *without* option because its entry supplies no variant whose syllables are fewer than three (only the three-syllabic pronunciation “\`mē-dē-əm\`”), and because it appears in the poem with one fewer semeion than three, that is, as “med-ium.” The elision of “medium” is ‘artificial’ because the contraction is not reflected in any of the variants supplied under the relevant entry. If, on the other hand, a word is elided *with* option, then the entry for that word supplies at least one variant whose syllables are one fewer than those of the basic count, and that word appears in “Pale Fire” with one fewer semeion than those of the basic count. “Emerald,” in this case, also has a basic count of three: “em-er-ald.” It is elided *with* option because its entry supplies at least one variant whose syllables are one fewer than three—namely, “\`em-rəld\`”—and because it appears in the poem with one fewer semeion than three, that is, as “em-rald.” The elision of “emerald” is ‘natural’ because the contraction is reflected in at least one of the variants supplied under the relevant entry. Lastly, if a word is *unelided* with option, then the entry for that word supplies at least one variant whose syllables are one fewer than those of the basic count, but the word does *not* appear in “Pale Fire” with one fewer semeion than those of the basic count. Words unelided with option can be regarded as unrealized natural elisions. Tribes 4-6 share the same relation as 1-3, but pertain to elongation, rather than elision. A word is elongated if and only if it appears in the poem with one more semeion than those of the basic count. It is elongated with option if and only if the entry for that word supplies at least one variant whose syllables are one more than those of the basic count.

The first tribe of elisions (Table 3.1) is composed of those words in Shade’s verse which appear artificially condensed. That is, words that drop a semeion despite there being for them no avenue toward natural elision. Words in this tribe fall under one of three genera (I, II<sub>1</sub>, and VI).

Genus I accounts for the overwhelming majority of elisions in this tribe. It is most precisely represented by the formula: for a string of phonemes that ends with a consonant ( $S_C$ ) and a string of phonemes that begins with a vowel ( $\nu S$ ), the sequence ‘ $S_C(-)[i]-\nu S$ ’ is contracted as ‘ $S_C-[j]\nu S$ ,’ where [i] denotes the vowel in “see” and “heat,” and [j] denotes the initial consonant in “yes” and “yellow.”<sup>9</sup> What is pronounced something like [soʊləriəm] is accordingly rendered something like [soʊləɹjəm]. There are exactly three words which at first glance seem to be exceptions to the rule, but which in fact are not, namely, “trillium,” “fiancé,” and “orchideous.”<sup>10</sup> The first is elided “tril-lium,” which would imply the redistribution

<sup>9</sup> A dash in the notation indicates an essential syllabic division, whereas a parenthetical dash (–) indicates only a possible one.

<sup>10</sup> There is no entry in Merriam-Webster under “orchideous.” Its syllabification has been reconstructed from similar words, such as “orchid” and “hideous.” In a similar fashion, the syllabification of “larvorum” has been inferred from “larvarium.”

of the consonant *C* from (*S<sub>C</sub>*) into the final syllable. Splitting the double consonant *ll* across the syllabic divide in “trillium” is, of course, only a typographical convention. In speech, one would parse the word “trill-ium.” (It should be noted that items under the column “Elided” in Table 3.1 are not intended to designate definitive syllabifications. They represent the correct number of semeia, but their exact orthographical divisions are merely hypothesized.)

*Table 3.1 Words elided without option*

<i>Line</i>		<i>Standard</i>	<i>Elided</i>
59	solarium	so-lar-i-um	so-lar-ium
81	Canadian	Ca-na-di-an	Ca-nad-ian
118	delirious	de-lir-i-ous	de-lir-ious
125	vulgarian	vul-gar-i-an	vul-gar-ian
199	sanitarium	san-i-tar-i-um	san-i-tar-ium
257	trillium	tril-li-um	tril-lium
261	glistening	glis-ten-ing	glis-ning
369	scholium	scho-li-um	schol-ium
386	fiancé	fi-an-cé	fian-cé
416	various	var-i-ous	var-ious
501	Rabelais	Ra-be-lais	Rab-lais
515	larvorum	lar-vor-i-um	lar-vor-ium
519	oblivion	ob-liv-i-on	ob-liv-ion
606	inferiors	in-fe-ri-ors	in-fer-iors
639	medium	me-di-um	med-ium
687	period	pe-ri-od	per-iod
772	orchideous	or-chi-de-ous	or-chid-eous

Table 3.1 Words elided without option

869	mysterious	mys-te-ri-ous	mys-ter-ious
918	immediate	im-me-di-ate	im-med-iate

The second exception, as it were, is an organic instantiation of the abstract rule. If one adheres strictly to the formula, then from “fi-an-cé” one infers “f-ian-cé,” which is meaningless. The consonant *f* is not a syllable in its own right, and, for this reason, it becomes justly appropriated by the succeeding semeion. One might render the formula more inclusive, amending it: the sequence ‘S<sub>C</sub>(-)[i]-rS’ is contracted as ‘S<sub>C</sub>(-)[j]rS.’ The third and final exception is orthographically misleading. The vowel *e* in “orchideous” is pronounced [i] and is therefore in accordance with the rule.

Of the nineteen species of elision assigned to genus I, only three correspond to the vocal-sample: “scholium,” “fiacé,” and “various.” Take, for instance:

k j k n k n k n k n

And I would hear both voices now and then:

l j l j l n k n k n

“Mother, what’s *grimpen*?” “What is what?”

“Grim Pen.”

l j k n k n k n k n

Pause, and your guarded scholium. Then again:

l j l n k

370 “Mother, what’s *chtonic*?” [...]

Eliding “scholium,” that is, scanning the word as n k instead of n kk (or n k n), contributes to—and consequently enriches—the rhythmic pattern of the passage. The catechismal thread at the heart of Sybil and Hazel Shade’s exchange is codified in the trochaic outbursts which interrupt the otherwise iambic verse. This technique seems especially fitting in light of the tendency of interrogative pronouns to initiate a tilt (What’s in a náme?). The shadow of a tilt is first hinted in “voices” (l. 367). Alone, the word appears trochaic, but it actually blends seamlessly with the iambic meter. Nestled between the third and fourth foot, the word presents no obstruction against the line’s resolving in ordinary iambs, but it sets apart the trochaic lilt of the concluding phrase “nów and thén.” This metrical feint, as it were, made in line 367 is then properly executed in each of its three consecutive verses. Line 368, for instance, begins with the double tilt “Móther, wát’s” (a duplex-short mélange) and resolves in ordinary iambs, setting apart the same trochaic lilt

(“‘Whát is whát?’”) formally reinforced by its artificial truncation with a break before “‘Grim Pen.’” The next opening deploys a weaker attack—the single short tilt “‘Páuse, and’”—but feints twice (“‘guárded schólium’”) and lends to the line a sustained trochaic pulse. Once more, the line resolves in ordinary iambs, and it concludes, for a third time, with the same trochaic lilt (“‘Thén agáin’”). Line 370 repeats the duplex tilt that begins line 368, but loses the short tilt to the spondee “‘whát’s *chtónic?*’” The passage above is dominated by a rich pattern of trochaic uprisings: false trochees (“‘voices,’” “‘guarded,’” “‘scholium,’” “‘chtonic’”), tilts (“‘mother, ‘pause, and’”), and a symmetrical recurrence of the motif represented by “‘now and then,’” “‘what is what,’” and “‘then again.’” “Scholium” and, indeed, all other elisions in “Pale Fire” perform in service of one universal function: to stimulate the ebb and flow of modulation.

Although Nabokov contends that “elision, properly speaking, does not occur in Russian,” he concedes that “faintly approaching it is the substitution in verse of a ‘soft sign’ [...] for the [metrically] valued *i* before a final vowel in such endings as *-anie* and *-enie*. Thus, the contraction of the three-syllabic *tlénie* [тление] (‘decomposition’) to the disyllabic *tlén’e* [тленье ...] may be compared to the slurring of the *i* in ‘lenient’ or ‘onion’” (*EO III* 477-478). If we were to formalize this substitution, we would arrive at something that closely resembles the formula which accounts for genus I. To be sure, the “slurring” in English that Nabokov describes conforms very nicely to that same formula: ‘ $S_C(-)[i]-\nu S$ ’  $\rightarrow$  ‘ $S_C(-)[j]-\nu S$ .’ “Le-ni-ent,” for instance, is contracted “le-nient.” One can appreciate this point at which English and Russian prosodies converge, but it is an error to divine from it a Russian influence which underlies Shade’s verse. This claim may seem rather odd, especially considering what we know about Nabokov’s life. Nevertheless, to conflate the writer with any of his invented characters would be a definite mistake. Shade, after all, is not a Russian émigré. The reader must accept what is offered by the novel itself, namely, a portrait of the poet as an otherwise ‘traditional’ American. This does not require, of course, that one should abandon the search for further explanation of genus I, which holds the significant position of accounting for nearly all of the artificial elisions in “Pale Fire.” On the contrary, one should be encouraged to seek a more detailed explanation apart from, say, the mere whim of the poet. What is certain, in any case, is that a Russian ‘something’ would be ontologically inconsistent with what the novel tells us about Shade.

Genera II<sub>1</sub> and VI are both singleton sets, comprised of the species “glistening” and “Rabelais,” respectively. Genus II<sub>1</sub> is neatly explicated by Nabokov’s observation that “the vowels *u* and *e* in the unaccented second syllable of trochaic verbs [e.g., “glísten’”] are prone to be elided in participle forms (‘murm’ring,’ ‘gath’ring,’ ‘gard’ning,’ etc.)” (*EO III* 477). Formally, for a string of phonemes that ends with a consonant ( $S_C$ ) and a syllabic (alveolar) consonant ( $N$ ), the sequence ‘ $S_C(-)[\text{ə}]N-[I\eta]$ ’ is contracted as ‘ $S_C-N[I\eta]$ ,’ where [ə] denotes the initial vowel in “away” and the ultimate vowel in “cinema,” and [Iη] denotes the final syllable in all present participle forms. The application of this function on “glisten”

accordingly outputs “glist’ning.” Genus VI is similar to genus II<sub>1</sub> inasmuch as it equally denies the vocalization of the vowel [ə], but can be adequately explained outside either the practices of English prosody or the metrical ingenuity of the poet Shade. “Rabelais,” although never an elision in French, is always an elision in English just in case it is pronounced in accordance with French custom, that is, something like [Rable].<sup>11</sup> As Kinbote himself aptly acknowledges, Shade exhibits a keen sensitivity to the rules of French prosody (more on this later):

*Line 231:*       How ludicrous, etc.

A beautiful variant, with one curious gap, branches off at this point in the draft (dated July 6):

Strange Other World where all our still-born dwell,  
And pets, revived, and invalids, grown well,  
And minds that died before arriving there:  
Poor old man Swift, poor —, poor Baudelaire

What might that dash stand for? Unless Shade gave prosodic value to the mute *e* in “Baudelaire,” which I am quite certain he would never have done in English verse (cp. “Rabelais,” line 501), the name required here must scan as a trochee. (*PF* 167)

The second tribe in the taxonomy (Table 3.2) belongs to those words in “Pale Fire” which redeem their offer for natural elision. The tribe consists of three genera: I<sup>n</sup>, II<sub>2</sub><sup>n</sup>, and III<sub>0</sub><sup>n</sup> (all superscripted *n* for “natural”). Genus I<sup>n</sup> is identical to genus I, but is necessarily comprised only of species with a lexically authorized option to drop a semeion from the basic count. Its two denizens are “foliage” and “immediately” (cf. “solarium”).

*Table 3.2 Words elided with option*

<i>Line</i>	<i>Standard</i>	<i>Option</i>
53 foliage	fo-li-age	fo-li-age
238 emerald	em-er-ald	em-rald

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. *Le Grand Robert*, 2nd edition.

Table 3.2 Words elided with option

254	immediately	im-me-di-ate-ly	im-me-diate-ly
421	preposterous	pre-pos-ter-ous	pre-po-strous
717	perceptually	per-cep-tu-al-ly	per-cep-tual-ly
967	sensual	sen-su-al	sen-sual

Members of genus  $\text{II}_2^n$  adhere to the following formula: for a string of phonemes that ends with a consonant ( $S_C$ ) and a string of phonemes that begins with a vowel ( $\nu S$ ), the sequence ' $S_C(-)[\text{ər}]-\nu S$ ' is contracted as ' $S_C(-)[r]\nu S$ ,' where  $[\text{ər}]$  denotes the syllabic  $r$  in "merge," and  $[r]$  denotes the initial consonant in "red." The members are "emerald" and "preposterous." The two remaining words, "perceptually" and "sensual," constitute the set of species that pertain to genus  $\text{III}_0^n$ . Elisions are classified under genus  $\text{III}_0^n$  if and only if they provide an instance of the formula: for a string of phonemes that ends with a consonant ( $S_{C_0}$ ) and a string of phonemes that begins with a consonant ( $C_1 S$ ), the sequence ' $S_{C_0}(-)[\text{j}u]-[\text{ə}]C_1 S$ ' is contracted as ' $S_{C_0}[\text{j}u]C_1 S$ ,' where  $[\text{j}u]$  denotes the vowel in "tune" and "new."

The third and final tribe (Table 3.3) does not capture any additional genera of elision, strictly speaking, but rather, appreciates the poet's election to keep certain semeia intact despite the option to drop them. Genera in this tribe are labeled with a  $\neg$  followed by the genera of natural elision whose mechanism they refrain from instantiating. The tribe itself designates roughly seven genera, the first of which is genus  $\neg\text{II}_1^n$ , with exactly "shivering," "discovering," "offering," and "fingering" as its members. Second is genus  $\neg\text{II}_2^n$ , with fourteen: "literally," "hickory," "favorite," "admirable," "history," "insufferably," "corporate," "interest(s)," "floweret," "vulnerable," "toward," "difference," "natural," and "desperately." This genus accounts for nearly one half of the species in the tribe.

Table 3.3 Words unelided with option

Line(s)		Standard	Option
17, 209	gradual	grad-u-al	gra-dual
	17 dual	du-al	dual
	19 diamonds	di-a-monds	di-monds

*Table 3.3 Words unelided with option*

30	literally	lit-er-al-ly	li-tral-ly
34	hickory	hick-o-ry	hi-ckry
49	favorite	fa-vor-ite	fa-vrite
114	artistically	ar-tis-ti-cal-ly	ar-tis-ti-clly
271	admirable	ad-mi-ra-ble	ad-mra-ble
306	history	his-to-ry	hi-stry
441	insufferably	in-suf-fer-a-bly	in-suf-fra-bly
449	technically	tech-ni-cal-ly	tech-ni-clly
457	corporate	cor-po-rate	cor-prate
464, 518	interest(s)	in-ter-est(s)	in-trest(s)
465	dial	di-al	dial
496	shivering	shiv-er-ing	shiv-ring
515	violet	vi-o-let	vi-let
523	floweret	flow-er-et	flowr-et
562	discovering	dis-cov-er-ing	di-sco-vring
563	vulnerable	vul-ner-a-ble	vul-nra-ble
580, 852	toward	to-ward	towrd
587	jewel	jew-el	jewl
614	offering	of-fer-ing	of-fring
622, 840	difference	dif-fer-ence	dif-frence
658	fingering	fin-ger-ing	fin-gring
712	natural	nat-u-ral	nat-ral

Table 3.3 Words unelided with option

726	actual	ac-tu-al	ac-tual
745	wonderfully	won-der-ful-ly	won-der-flly
775	desperately	des-per-ate-ly	des-prate-ly
793	mystically	mys-ti-cal-ly	mys-ti-clly
851	physically	phys-i-cal-ly	phy-si-clly
969	fantastically	fan-tas-ti-cal-ly	fan-ta-sti-clly
998	gardener	gar-den-er	gard-ner

Third is genus  $\neg\text{III}_0^n$ , with just three members: “gradual,” “dual,” and “actual.” One can incorporate the slight variation “dial” by positing a superset of  $\neg\text{III}_0^n$ ,  $\neg\text{III}^n$ , where  $\text{III}^n$  expresses the formula: for a string of phonemes that ends with a consonant ( $S_{C_0}$ ) and a string of phonemes that begins with a consonant ( $C_1S$ ), the sequence ‘ $S_{C_0}(-)V-[\text{ə}]_{C_1}S$ ’ is contracted as ‘ $S_{C_0}VC_1S$ ,’ where  $V$  denotes a vowel.

Fifth is genus  $\neg\text{IV}^n$ , whose species forego the elision such that for a string of phonemes that ends with a consonant ( $S_{C_0}$ ) and a string of phonemes that begins with a consonant ( $C_1S$ ), the sequence ‘ $S_{C_0}[\text{ai}]-[\text{ə}]_{C_1}S$ ’ is contracted as ‘ $S_{C_0}[\text{ai}]_{C_1}S$ ,’ where  $[\text{ai}]$  denotes the vowel in “five” and “eye.” Its members are exactly “diamonds” and “violet.”

Sixth is genus  $\neg\text{V}^n$ , a sextet with the relevant formula: for a string of phonemes that ends with a consonant ( $S_C$ ), the sequence ‘ $S_C[\text{ə}]-[\text{li}]$ ’ is contracted as ‘ $S_C[\text{li}]$ ,’ where  $[\text{l}]$  denotes the initial consonant in “lily.” Genus  $\neg\text{V}^n$  is the set “artistically,” “technically,” “wonderfully,” “mystically,” “physically,” and “fantastically.” The remaining species—two apparent singletons—“jewel” and “gardener” can be readily accommodated by positing a superset of  $\neg\text{II}_2^n$  (and  $\neg\text{II}_1^n$ , for that matter),  $\neg\text{II}^n$ , where  $\text{II}^n$  expresses the formula: for a string of phonemes that ends with a consonant ( $S_C$ ) and a string of phonemes that begins with a syllabic (alveolar) consonant ( ${}_NS$ ), the sequence ‘ $S_C(-)[\text{ə}]_NS$ ’ is contracted as ‘ $S_C(-)NS$ .’

<p style="text-align: center;">II</p> <p style="text-align: center;">‘Sc(-)[ə]nS’ → ‘Sc(-)nS’</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">III</p> <p style="text-align: center;">‘Sc<sub>θ</sub>(-)/-[-ə]c<sub>r</sub>S’ → ‘Sc<sub>θ</sub>Vc<sub>r</sub>S’</p>			
<p style="text-align: center;">I</p> <p style="text-align: center;">‘Sc(-)[i]-rS’ → ‘Sc(-)[j]rS’</p> <p style="text-align: center;">solarium Canadian delirious vulgarian sanitarium &amp;c.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">II<sub>1</sub></p> <p style="text-align: center;">‘Sc(-)[ə]N-[m]’ → ‘Sc-N[m]’</p> <p style="text-align: center;">glistening</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">II<sub>2</sub></p> <p style="text-align: center;">‘Sc(-)[ər]-rS’ → ‘Sc(-) [r]rS’</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">III<sub>0</sub></p> <p style="text-align: center;">‘Sc<sub>θ</sub>(-)[ju]-[-ə]c<sub>r</sub>S’ → ‘Sc<sub>θ</sub>[ju]c<sub>r</sub>S’</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">IV</p> <p style="text-align: center;">‘Sc<sub>θ</sub>[aɪ]-[-ə]-c<sub>r</sub>S’ → ‘Sc<sub>θ</sub>[aɪ]-c<sub>r</sub>S’</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">V</p> <p style="text-align: center;">‘Sc[ə]-[li]’ → ‘Sc[li]’</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">I<sup>n</sup></p> <p style="text-align: center;">foliage immediately</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">II<sub>1</sub><sup>n</sup></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">II<sub>2</sub><sup>n</sup></p> <p style="text-align: center;">emerald preposterous</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">III<sub>0</sub><sup>n</sup></p> <p style="text-align: center;">perceptually sensual</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">IV<sup>n</sup></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">V<sup>n</sup></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">¬I<sup>n</sup></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">¬II<sub>1</sub><sup>n</sup></p> <p style="text-align: center;">shivering discovering offering fingering</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">¬II<sub>2</sub><sup>n</sup></p> <p style="text-align: center;">literally hickory favorite admirable history insufferably corporate interest(s) &amp;c.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">¬III<sub>0</sub><sup>n</sup></p> <p style="text-align: center;">gradual dual actual</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">¬IV<sup>n</sup></p> <p style="text-align: center;">diamonds violet</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">¬V<sup>n</sup></p> <p style="text-align: center;">artistically technically wonderfully mystically physically fantastically</p>

<p>−II<sup>n</sup></p> <p>jewel gardener</p>	<p>−III<sup>n</sup></p> <p>dial</p>
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Figure 3.1 Elision Genera<sup>12</sup>

The three remaining tribes (4-6) reach beyond the domain of elision into that of the opposite phenomenon, namely, elongation. Put very roughly, whereas an elision occurs just in case a semeion is removed from the basic count, an elongation occurs just in case a semeion is *introduced* to the basic count. The first tribe of this kind (Table 3.4) enumerates all instances of artificial elongation—i.e., words whose syllable counts exceed both their basic counts and the syllable counts of each of their lexically authorized variants. This tribe consists of a single genus (VII).

Table 3.4 Words elongated without option

<i>Line</i>	<i>Standard</i>	<i>Elongated</i>
242 pauvres	pauvres	pau-vres
242 cigales	ci-gales	ci-ga-les

The members of genus VII, “pauvres” and “cigales,” are the French words for “poor” and “cicadas,” respectively. They appear side by side in the short French passage of Canto Two:

That Englishman in Nice,  
A proud and happy linguist: *je nourris*  
242 *Les pauvres cigales*—meaning that he  
Fed the poor sea gulls!

<sup>12</sup> Genus VI (=“Rabelais”) is a special case and, consequently, has been excluded.

A cursory look at line 242 reveals already some likelihood of elongation. The rules of French pronunciation require that both “les” and “pauvres” scan as monosyllables and that “cigales” scan as a disyllable, four semeia in total, but, even with the additional pair of English feet, ultimately two short from satisfying the pentameter:

Les / pauvres / ci / gales / —mean / ing / that / he.

It seems clear that the two missing semeia cannot be roused anywhere except the voiceless *es* which ornament the ends of “pauvres” and “cigales.” These are mute, of course, in ordinary conversation: “The *e muet* at the end of a word is not pronounced in French [...] This is also true in poetry unless the *e muet* precedes a word that begins with a consonant” (Dufau and D’Alelio 11).<sup>13</sup> The *e muet* in “coule,” for instance, is pronounced in the verse “Sous le pont Mirabeau coule la Seine” (Below the Mirabeau Bridge flows the Seine) because it precedes a word—namely, “la”—that begins with a consonant. In consequence, the verse constitutes not nine, but rather ten semeia:

Sous / le / pont / Mi / ra / beau / cou / le / la / Seine.

The *e muets* in “pauvres” and “cigales,” to be sure, also meet the criterion: each precedes a word that begins with a consonant—“cigales” and “meaning,” respectively. This feature of French prosody accordingly permits us to introduce the exact number of semeia (2) needed to fully realize the meter:

Les / pau / vres / ci / ga / les / —mean / ing / that / he.

We can express this feature with the formula: for a string of phonemes that ends with a consonant ( $S_{C_0}$ ) and a string of phonemes that begins with a consonant ( $_{C_1}S$ ), the sequence ‘ $S_{C_0}[e\ muet]_{-C_1}S$ ’ is expanded to ‘ $S_{C_0}[\emptyset]_{-C_1}S$ .’<sup>14</sup>

Taking into account what has been said about the *e muet*, one might question whether this sort of elongation deserves to be labeled ‘artificial.’ Within the context of French prosody, the pronunciation of the *e muet* is mandatory, under a certain condition. It is thus a practical feature of the language, which generates consistent variants whenever poetry is read aloud. This may be enough to persuade us that

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<sup>13</sup> Originally, “[L]’*e muet* à la fin d’un mot ne se prononce pas en français [...] Ceci est vrai en poésie aussi excepté si l’*e muet* précède un mot qui commence par une consonne.” All French is self-translated unless noted otherwise.

<sup>14</sup> The designation [*e muet*] denotes no phonetic value.

elongations of this sort should be regarded as ‘natural’ variants in French. Nevertheless, given the present definition of elongation, one is committed to categorizing both “pauvres” and “cigales” as artificial.

Nomenclatorial considerations aside, we witness for the second time Shade’s keen sensitivity to the rules of French prosody (recall his not giving metrical value to the *e muet* in either “Baudelaire” or “Rabelais”). In point of fact, his verse betrays a learned familiarity with the French poetic tradition. Along with the aforementioned, Shade references Lafontaine by name (l. 243), alluding to the poem “La Cigale et la Fourmi” (ll. 235-244); there are also the numerous gallicisms distributed throughout the text—“*le grand néant*” (l. 618), &c.—the most apposite of which is probably the “*consonne / D’appui*” (ll. 967-968). In short, one is able to detect an undeniable French influence in “Pale Fire.”

Is the knowledge of a French *je ne sais quoi* sufficient to illuminate previous gaps? One habit of the French language suggests that we may still arrive at a plausible explanation of genus I. We observe in ordinary French a certain “combination of vowels, such as *ieu* or *ion*. This combination normally has one syllable” and is pronounced either [jy] or [jɔ̃], respectively (Dufau and D’Alelio 12).<sup>15</sup> In other words, the vowel [i] is sometimes slurred into [j] just in case it precedes another vowel. Indeed, the present is a clear instantiation of the relevant formula: ‘ $S_C(-)[i]_{-v}S$ ’ → ‘ $S_C(-)[j]_{v}S$ .’ One can reasonably attribute, then, this pattern of elision to Shade’s proximity to French verse. Nabokov himself acknowledges the formal connection, noting “the loss of the *i* value in ‘-tion’ (another obvious analogy with French)” (*EO III* 477).

The second tribe of elongation (Table 3.5) enumerates those words in Shade’s verse which appear with an additional, lexically authorized semeion. It has exactly two members, both of which adhere to a pattern of natural elongation that mirrors the elision demonstrated by members of genus I<sup>n</sup>. Accordingly, genus {I<sup>n</sup>} (enclosed in curly brackets for “mirrored” or “reversed”) can be represented by the formula: the sequence ‘ $S_C(-)[j]_{v}S$ ’ is expanded to ‘ $S_C(-)[i]_{-v}S$ .’ This expansion is comparable to the French diérèse, which separates into two semeia the combination *ieu* or *ion*.<sup>16</sup>

Table 3.5 Words elongated with option

Line	Standard	Option
91 trivia	triv-ia	tri-vi-a
234 Insomnia’s	In-som-nia’s	In-som-ni-a’s

<sup>15</sup> Originally, “combinaison de voyelles telle que *ieu* ou *ion*. Normalement cette combinaison n’a qu’une syllable.”

<sup>16</sup> Cf. *Découverte du Poème*, p. 12.

This genus of elongation is not without precedent: Nabokov employs the same variant of “Insomnia” in the final stanza of “An Evening of Russian Poetry”:

Bessonnitza, tvoy vzor oonyl i strashen;  
 lubov moya, otstoopnika prostee.  
 (Insomnia, your stare is dull and ashen,  
 140 my love, forgive me this apostasy.) (PP 163)

The last tribe of this kind (Table 3.6) is analogous to the third tribe of elision (Table 3.3) insofar as it does not capture any additional genera of elongation, but rather, appreciates the poet’s election to leave certain words unaltered despite the option to introduce a semeion. Genera in this tribe are labeled with a  $\neg$  followed by the genera of natural elongation whose mechanism they refrain from instantiating. Members of this tribe belong to one of six genera ( $\neg\{I^n\}$ ,  $\neg\{III_0^n\}$ ,  $\neg VIII^n$ ,  $\neg IX^n$ ,  $\neg X^n$ , and  $\neg XI^n$ ).

Table 3.6 Words unelongated with option

Line(s)	Standard	Option
37, 279, 665 hour(s)	hour(s)	ho-ur(s)
42, 106, 188, 247, 251, our	our	o-ur
277, 279, 316, 327, 352, 462, 486, 521, 590, 591, 593, 605, 606, 635, 647, 666, 670, 709, 710, 763, 794, 922		
97 curio	cu-rio	cur-i-o
103 childish	child-ish	chi-l-dish
139, 332 tires	tires	ti-res
213 syllogism	syl-lo-gism	syl-lo-gi-sm
223 lyres	lyres	ly-res

*Table 3.6 Words unelongated with option*

227, 583, 663	wild	wild	wi-ld
286, 962	fire	fire	fi-re
295, 350, 361, 398, 531, 728	smile(d)	smile(d)	smi-le(d)
362	mild	mild	mi-ld
388, 769	miles	miles	mi-les
409	Aeolian	Ae-o-lian	Ae-o-li-an
425	usual	usu-al	u-su-al
455	gallicism	gal-li-cism	gal-li-ci-sm
456	prism	prism	pri-sm
470	jovial	jo-vial	jo-vi-al
521	piles	piles	pi-les
522	files	files	fi-les
574, 584, 647, 664, 968	child	child	chi-ld
633	childhood	child-hood	chi-ld-hood
639	Buddhism	Bud-dhism	Bud-dhi-sm
644	Freudians	Freud-ians	Freu-di-ans
648	styled	styled	sty-led
820	ivory	ivo-ry	i-vo-ry

Genus  $\neg\{I^n\}$  consists of four species (“curio,” “Aeolian,” “jovial,” and “Freudians”) and denies the formula: ‘ $S_C(-)[j]_V S$ ’ is expanded to ‘ $S_C(-)[i]_V S$ .’ Genus  $\neg\{III_0^n\}$ , on the other hand, consists of the singleton set “usual” with the relevant formula: the sequence ‘ $S_{C_0}[ju]_{C_1} S$ ’ is expanded to ‘ $S_{C_0}(-)[ju]_V[-\emptyset]_{C_1} S$ .’

Genus  $\neg VIII^n$  consists of the homophone pair “hour” and “our,” which refrain from instantiating the formula: for a string of phonemes that begins with a consonant ( $C_S$ ), the sequence ‘ $[au]_{C_S}$ ’ is expanded to ‘ $[au]_V[-\emptyset]_{C_S}$ ,’ where [au] denotes the vowel in “now” and “out.” Of these six genera,  $\neg IX^n$  accounts for the largest collection of species in the tribe. It consists of thirteen members with the relevant formula: for a string of phonemes that ends with a consonant ( $S_C$ ) and a string of phonemes that begins with a consonant ( $C_1 S$ ), the sequence ‘ $S_{C_0}[ai]_{C_1} S$ ’ is expanded to ‘ $S_{C_0}[ai]_V[-\emptyset]_{C_1} S$ .’ The members belonging to genus  $\neg IX^n$  are “childish,” “tires,” “lyres,” “wild,” “fire,” “smile(d),” “mild,” “miles,” “piles,” “files,” “child,” “childhood,” and “styled.”

Genus  $\neg X^n$  consists of “syllogism,” “gallicism,” “prism,” and “Buddhism,” all of which refrain from instantiating the formula: for a string of phonemes that ends with a consonant ( $S_C$ ), the sequence ‘ $S_C[izm]$ ’ is expanded to ‘ $S_C[i]_V[-z\emptyset m]$ ,’ where [i] denotes the vowel in “hit,” [z] denotes the consonant in “zoo” and the second consonant in “lazy,” and [m] denotes the initial consonant in “man” and the second consonant in “lemon.”

Lastly, there is the singleton set “ivory.” It is tantamount to genus  $\neg XI^n$  and denies the formula: for a string of phonemes that ends with a consonant ( $S_C$ ), the sequence ‘ $S_C[-ri]$ ’ is expanded to ‘ $S_C[\emptyset]_V[-ri]$ .’

#### 4. MODULATION

In order to compare various examples of modulation, Nabokov deploys a “modification of the Belian system of notation” (*EO III* 487). The product is a visual representation of modulation, termed a ‘scud map,’ which projects onto a grid the individual scuds in a sample of verse. Each row of the grid corresponds to a line of verse, and each column to an iamb of the meter. Every foot in the sample is accordingly represented at a unique coordinate in the grid. Coordinates that represent a scud are marked with an “X.” Coordinates that do not are marked with an “O.” Take, for example, the following stanza from *Eugene Onegin*, Four: IX, accompanied on the right by its Nabokovian scud map:<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *EO III*, p. 513.

		I	II	III	IV
1	Так точно думал мой Евгений.	O	O	O	O
	Он в первой юности своей	O	O	X	O
	Был жертвой бурных заблуждений	O	O	X	O
	И необузданных страстей.	X	O	X	O
	Привычкой жизни избалован,	O	O	X	O
	Одним на время очарован,	O	O	X	O
	Разочарованный другим,	X	O	X	O
	Желаньем медленно томим,	O	O	X	O
	Томим и ветренным успехом,	O	O	X	O
	Внимая в шуме и в тиши	O	O	X	O
	Роптанье вечное души,	O	O	X	O
	Зевоту подавляя смехом:	O	O	X	O
	Вот, как убил он восемь лет,	O	X	O	O
14	Утрата жизни лучший цвет.	O	O	O	O
		O	O	O	O

Using the same technique in conjunction with the scansion from the vocal sample, we can generate a visual counterpart to the modulation of “Pale Fire.” Below is the result of mapping the first stanza of the scansion.

I	II	III	IV	V
X	X	O	X	O
O	O	X	O	O
O	O	O	O	O
O	O	O	O	O
O	O	X	O	O
O	O	O	X	O

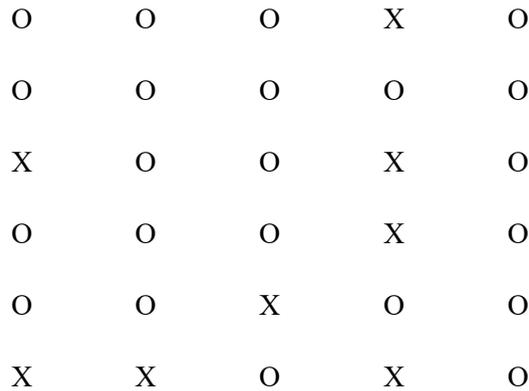


Figure 4.1 Nabokovian scud map, *can. II, ll. 293-304*

This modified system of notation allows the viewer not only to make ready comparisons among any number of examples, but also to identify the scudding patterns which characterize a particular modulation. The latter is a tremendous boon, no doubt, but we should hesitate to adopt the scud map in its present configuration.

In his essay “Lyric Poetry and Experiment” (1909), Andrey Beliy endorses the view that the methods of scientific analysis can be applied with great success to the world of literature. It is in this text that Beliy introduces his diagrammatic system, offering an abundance of examples, which diverge from Nabokov’s in three key respects. First, each coordinate of a scud map is confined to the limits of an obvious square, this being merely the effect of including visible gridlines. Second, coordinates—i.e., squares—that represent a scud are marked with a dot. Squares that do not are in this case left unmarked. Third, and most importantly, by means of lines drawn between close-plotted dots, Beliy’s scud maps are able to immediately convey the scudding patterns which characterize the relevant text. Beliy’s scud maps reveal latent geometric figures, whose recurrence led him to assert, for instance, that certain figures “were characteristic of this or that Russian poet’s iambic tetrameters” (*EO III* 459).

Despite his innovation, Beliy fails to supply any rigorous criteria for the construction of figures. Nevertheless, the numerous scud maps he provides in his essay offer sufficient data from which to assemble a plausible inductive procedure:

*Inductive Procedure for the Construction of Figures*

- (1) Any two dots are connected (by a line) if and only if
  - either (i) they occupy squares in the same row and the squares they occupy have between them no more than two other squares

or (ii) the second occupies a square in the row immediately below the row in which the first occupies a square and the result of transporting the first into the square immediately below the square it occupies in the same column would satisfy

(iii) the two dots occupy squares in the same row and the squares they occupy have between them no more than one other square.

(2) Any two lines are invisible—i.e., not shown—if and only if they intersect with each other.

If we modify the Nabokovian scud map given above (Figure 4.1) such that it now adheres to the Belian system, we yield:

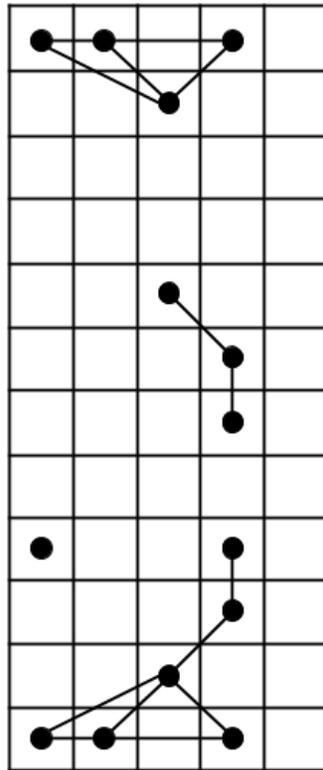


Figure 4.2 Belian scud map, *can. II, ll. 293-304*

It is difficult to image why Nabokov opted for modifying Beliy's original diagram. The Belian scud map is undeniably superior to its Nabokovian offspring, not only because of the supplemental information that it conveys, but also, and to a greater degree, because of the clarity and immediacy with which it conveys that

information. The viewer, for instance, can readily appreciate the remarkable horizontal symmetry in the modulation of the stanza, as well as the (inverted) pyramidal figure mirrored at lines 303 and 304. The viewer, perhaps, would also discover these elements in his or her perusal of Figure 4.1, but, in all likelihood, only as the finale to laborious scrutiny. For these reasons, it seems evident that we ought to adopt the scud map in its former, Belian configuration.



Whether it is true or not, “all Russian theorists are more or less dissimilar” is a pronouncement with little if any relation to the present discussion; in fact, Nabokov and Beliy are more or less alike to the extent that both overlook the same general insight—the simple expansion of the range of their diagrammatic systems. By targeting other feet, the visual representation can be set to map, say, tilts, rather than scuds. The natural benefit of, say, a tilt map would be a sharpened picture of the relevant modulation. Let us, then, expand the Belian system to accommodate either tilts or spondees. We can retake the first stanza of the scansion and accordingly render:

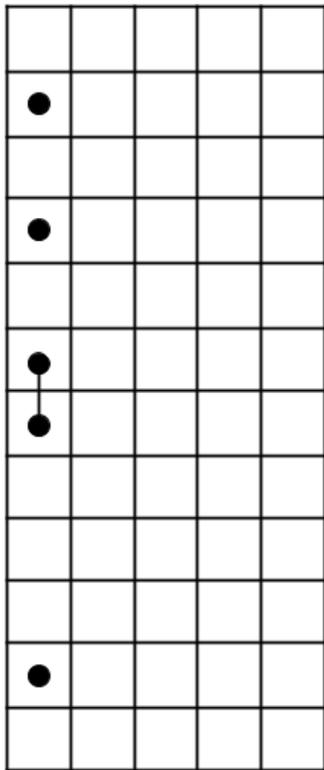


Figure 4.3 Tilt map, can. II, ll. 293-304

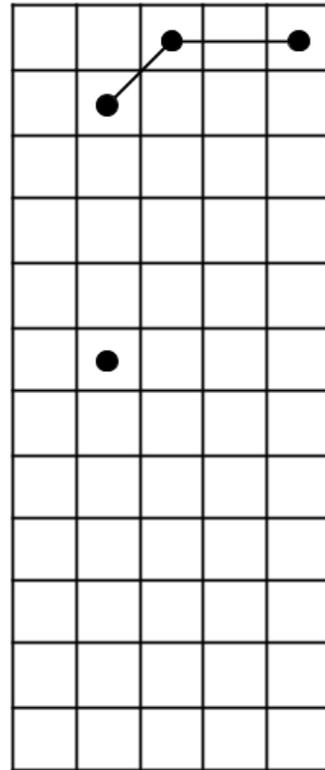


Figure 4.4 Spondee map, can. II, ll. 293-304

By superimposing Figures 4.2-4, we can produce a comprehensive picture of the modulation. The following is a composite of the three maps, where scuds are colored orange, tilts are green, and spondees red. (A composite has been constructed for every stanza of the scansion. For the complete list, see Appendix Two.)

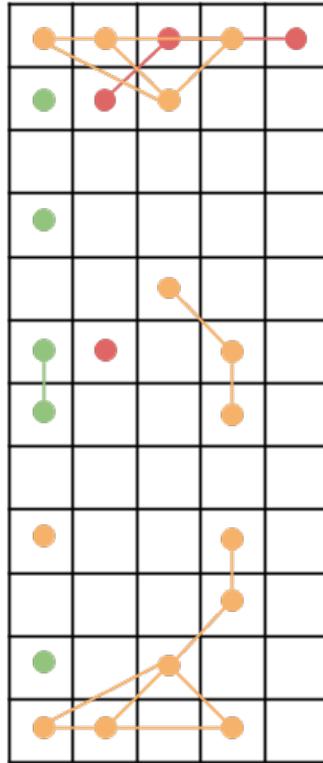


Figure 4.5 Composite, can. II, ll. 293-304

Compositing the scansion in such a way facilitates our arrival at key conclusions, namely, that (1) the modulation is syncopated, (2) the modulation is highly organized, and (3) the modulation formalizes the life, and ultimately the death, of Hazel Shade.

(1) If we retrace our steps and return to the scud map with which this section began, we gain the general impression of a modulation that is comparatively regular. For the sake of efficiency, let us roughly assign one quarter beat (♩) to each stressed semeion and one eighth beat (♫) to each unstressed semeion. Suppose that every non-scud is a regular beat (k n). This gives us an approximate picture of the rhythm that accompanies a line. The modulation of Pushkin’s stanza is more or less regular, swaying to the looped rhythm of ♪♪♪♪♪♪♪♪ with little variation. On the other hand, the modulation of “Pale Fire” is colorfully syncopated, baltering to rich and variegated rhythms. Using our tentative notation, we can devise a number of apposite comparisons:





Figure 4.6

*Rhythm, can. II, ll. 301-305*



Figure 4.7

*Rhythm, can. II, ll. 321-325*

Above are what Beliy describes in his essay as ‘rich rhythms,’ whose complexity is indicated “by the total number of [geometric] figures formed from the broken line on the graph” (258). Scud maps of lines 301-305 and 321-325 would contain six and seven possible geometric figures, respectively (see Appendix Two). These rhythms are far from exceptional; in fact, they represent fairly well the basic rhythmic varieties through which the modulation ambulates. If we abandon our supposition (that every non-regular beat) and expand the notation, assigning quarter and eighth beats to tilts and spondees, not only do we profit from a deeper impression of rhythm; it becomes very difficult to deny that the modulation is richly syncopated. Take the following as a final impression. Note the common iambic lilt, which, after a line or two, is nearly impossible to recognize.

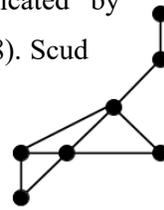
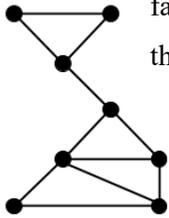


Figure 4.8

*Rhythm, can. II, ll. 479-483*

(2) A survey of the collected composites satisfies the intuition of a highly organized modulation. We find throughout these diagrams some of the idiosyncratic figures from Beliy’s first analysis, namely, the “roof” (e.g., ll. 310-311, 321-322) and rectangle (ll. 320-321), common to Tyutchev and Baratinski, respectively (255). The modulation is marked with an abundant variety of triangles: isosceles, such as the roof (e.g., ll. 368-369, 492-493), scalene (e.g., ll. 325-326, 455-456), and right (e.g., ll. 319-320, 352-353). The pyramid noted previously cannot be located in any of Beliy’s diagrams; it is evidently Shade’s own

invention. We find, too, stipplings of diagonals and the frequent but lonely obtuse angle (e.g., ll. 323-325, 385-387). This is all not to mention the miracle Shade seems to induce between lines 319 and 327: the



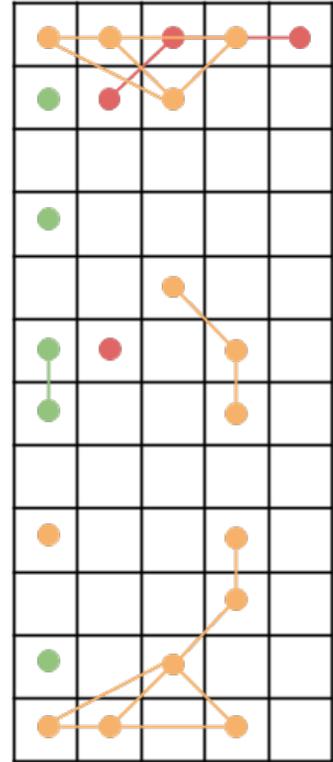
profile of a duck. In all likelihood, this is either a coincidence or a trick of the eye. The skeptic may preserve his (or her) doubt, but only on account of the figure's relative isolation, which suggests a kind of purposive self-containment, and its being prompted by the line:

“Alas, the dingy cygnet never turned / Into a wood duck” (ll. 318-319). Whatever the case may be, there is no doubt that the modulation is the product of meticulous design.

(3) The most valuable insights these composite offer are by far the associations between certain metrical constellations and the linguistic expressions they designate. By narrowing our focus onto areas with high concentrations of a particular foot, we are able to infer whether they have anything to bear on the words which accompany them on the concrete line. To be sure, the modulation locates a number of pockets densely populated by either scuds or spondees, which, after consulting Shade's verse, seem to suggest distinct emotional contents. Accordingly, we can venture to say that scuds intimate an animated disposition (especially with reference to the Latin lineage: *anima*, life or soul). Their quickening effect renders nicely the theme of a spirited but often resolute young Hazel. We can glean a sense of the heartache she endured. Spondees, on the other hand, gesture toward a theme of uncertainty. Indeed, their halting quality gives us pause, casting an aura of existential anguish on the semeia they emphasize.

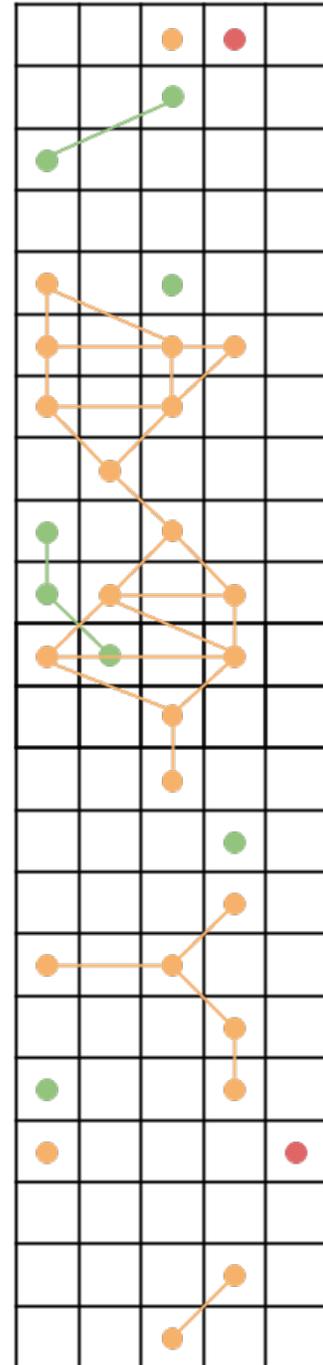
In order to demonstrate these associations, let us now track in sequential order the various compact distributions of scuds and spondees that appear in the modulation. We begin with the opening lines of the vocal sample. It is the first time Shade uses “she” to refer to his dead daughter:

She might have been you, me, or some quaint blend:  
 Nature chose me so as to wrench and rend  
 Your heart and mine. At first we'd smile and say:  
 "All little girls are plump" or "Jim McVey  
 (The family oculist) will cure that slight  
 Squint in no time." And later: "She'll be quite  
 Pretty, you know"; and, trying to assuage  
 300 The swelling torment: "That's the awkward age."  
 "She should take riding lessons," you would say  
 (Your eyes and mine not meeting). "She should play  
 Tennis, or badminton. Less starch, more fruit!  
 She may not be a beauty, but she's cute."



The high concentration of scuds at lines 293-294 marks the introduction of the Hazel theme. It does not appear alone, but rather interlinked within a system of spondees, which individually designate the semeia "you," "me," and "quaint blend," and later, "chose me." One can detect Shade's uncertainty about his daughter, even as he peers back into the past. His retrospective rumination offers him no insight into an enigmatic child, instead pointing him toward a three-way fork: "you," his wife Sybil, "me," himself, or some "quaint blend." The only insight offered him is about himself, namely, that "Nature chose [him] so as to wrench and rend" the hearts of two parents. These lines emit the face of anguish: a man helpless against the determinations of fate. On the other hand, the high concentration of scuds at lines 303-304 play a variation of the Hazel theme, this time without the uncertainty suggested by a network of spondees. We hear the recommendations of a concerned mother, presumably given to Shade himself: "She should play / Tennis, or badminton. Less starch, more fruit!" The reader can image Sybil and her husband struggling to arrive at some viable remedy, with Hazel, perhaps in another room, listening to their squabbles, and the mixture of heartache and low self-esteem she must have experienced: "She may not be a beauty, but she's cute."

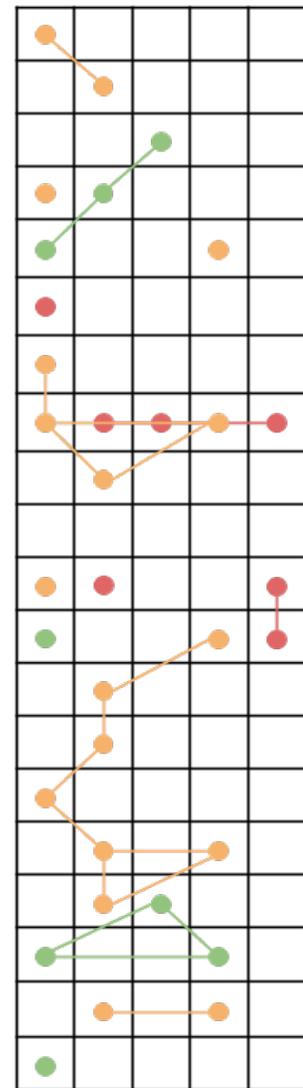
Alas, the dingy cygnet never turned  
 Into a wood duck. And again your voice:  
 320 “But this is prejudice! You should rejoice  
 That she is innocent. Why overstress  
 The physical? She *wants* to look a mess.  
 Virgins have written some *resplendent* books.  
 Lovemaking is not everything. Good looks  
 Are not *that* indispensable!” And still  
 Old Pan would call from every painted hill,  
 And still the demons of our pity spoke:  
 No lips would share the lipstick of her smoke;



The passage above shows the next high concentration of scuds, located at lines 319-327. The area is free from spondees, and one can accordingly expect a similar variation of the Hazel theme. We hear for the second time the voice of a concerned mother, now in defense of her daughter: “But this is prejudice! You should rejoice / That she is innocent. Why overstress / The physical?” The bickering is spurred by responses

to what seem like comments made by Shade: “She *wants* to looks a mess. / Virgins have written some *resplendent* books. / Lovemaking is not everything. Good looks / Are not *that* indispensable!” To be sure, the reader can appreciate the effect that such words would have on anyone, and Shade, for his own part, is being fair when he attributes these outbursts to “the demons of our pity.” The high concentrations of scuds plays a variation of the Hazel theme that builds on the last. In this instance, we no longer get the image of a child, but rather one of a young person, likely in her teenage years. Her age and adolescent pains are hinted in the line: “No lips would share the lipstick of her smoke.” We turn now to the next area of high concentration, which shows Hazel in her days at college.

[...] On days when all the streets  
Of College Town led to the game, she’d sit  
340 On the library steps, and read or knit;  
Mostly alone she’d be, or with that nice  
Frail roommate, now a nun; and, once or twice,  
With a Korean boy who took my course.  
She had strange fears, strange fantasies, strange force  
Of character [...]

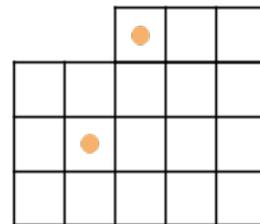


In this case, the area of focus is exactly line 344, unique for having three spondees. We witness the resurrection of the uncertainty theme, again with reference to Hazel. “She had strange fears,” Shade recollects, “strange fantasies, strange force / Of character.” These attributes of Hazel’s personality were strange not because they were odd (which they might have also been), but rather because they were inscrutable to a frustrated father. If we re-read this sentence, stopping to ponder at each semeion of a spondee (“strange fears, strange fan, strange force”), we may be able to glean a taste of Shade’s bewildered anguish.

Following this string of spondees, the careful viewer notices the gradual decay of figures which emerge from scuds in the modulation. The last figure of this kind is found at lines 455-456, well before the end of the canto, a trend which intimate the approaching death of Hazel Shade. We see that by line 474 our composites have become rather bare:

*Out of his lakeside shack*

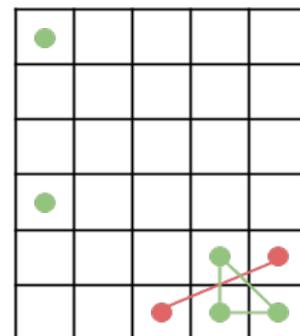
475     *A watchman, Father Time, all gray and bent,*  
           *Emerged with his uneasy dog and went*  
           *Along the reedy bank. He came too late.*



The modulation is at its most sober, lacking in any of the syncopation reflected in previous composites. Even perhaps a first-time reader of “Pale Fire,” one wholly unfamiliar with Hazel’s death, might be able to intuit the unseen tragedy. The watchman’s dog, a species often famed for predicting natural disaster, is suspiciously “uneasy.” When Hazel dies all scuds vanish from the modulation. Her absence is met with the conclusion of her theme. This is the only stanza of the partial scansion without a single scud:

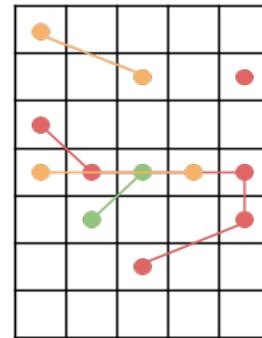
          People have thought she tried to cross the lake  
           At Lochan Neck where zesty skaters crossed

490     From Exe to Wye on days of special frost.  
           Others supposed she might have lost her way  
           By turning left from Bridgeroad; and some say  
           She took her poor young life. I know. You know.



When Hazel's theme re-emerges in the ultimate stanza, it is only to relive in the poet's imagination what may have been her final moments:

It was a night of thaw, a night of blow,  
With great excitement in the air. Black spring  
Stood just around the corner, shivering  
In the wet starlight and on the wet ground.  
The lake lay in the mist, its ice half drowned.  
A blurry shape stepped off the reedy bank  
500 Into a crackling, gulping swamp, and sank.



Let us conjure a contented Shade, uncertain of the afterlife, but “reasonably sure that we survive / And that [his] darling somewhere is alive,” even if that somewhere is the iambic line (ll. 977-978).

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

I have tried in these pages to classify in the most precise terms available to me the various metrical properties of Nabokov's “Pale Fire.” The strictness of my chosen methodology affords me, I think, the level of analytic certainly I sought, but limits the range of my analysis. At present, it cannot accommodate those lines which lie outside the vocal sample. There is, however, room for its expansion, and I do not doubt that in degrees it could be calibrated with the sufficient data needed to produce a scansion currently outside its reach. I am curious to learn the extent to which the conclusions I have drawn would vary in a different light, say, with a more inclusive lexicon or any number of other possible adjustments and revisions I may have overlooked. This is not to mention the various non-metrical yet nevertheless formal properties that fall outside the scope of this project, such as rhyme. I would be eager to know whether the interpretation I provided is in keeping with the poem as a whole. I hope, in any case, to have supplied the taxonomic exposition that once eluded me.



*Tyutchev*. Translated by Vladimir Nabokov, New Directions, 1944.

*PP*

*Poems and Problems*. McGraw-Hill, 1970.

*SO*

*Strong Opinions*. McGraw-Hill, 1973.

*Appendix One*

Below is the partial scansion derived from the vocal sample (can. II, ll. 293-428, 443-460, 463-500). Each column corresponds to a particular semeion in pentameter. Individual semeia are marked with a dash just in case they are stressed. Scuds are colored orange, tilts are green, and spondees red.

<i>Line</i>	⸍	—	⸍	—	⸍	—	⸍	—	⸍	—
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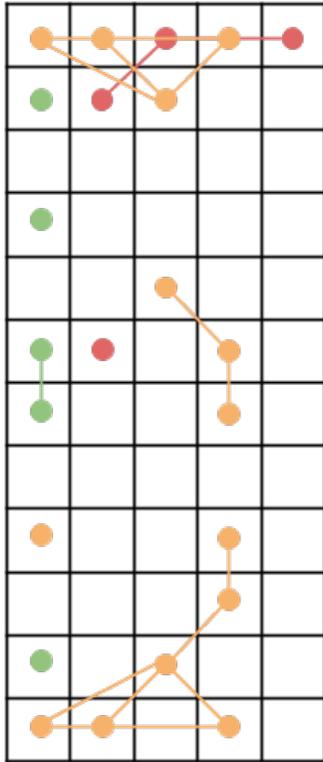


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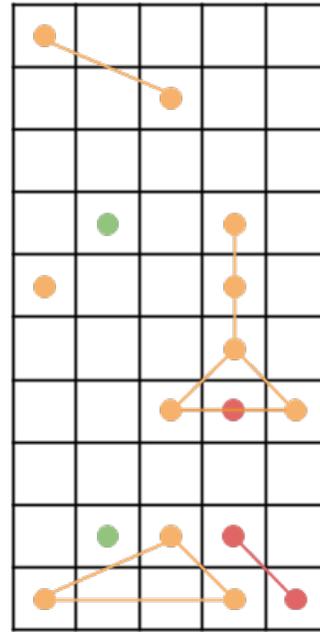
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*Appendix Two*

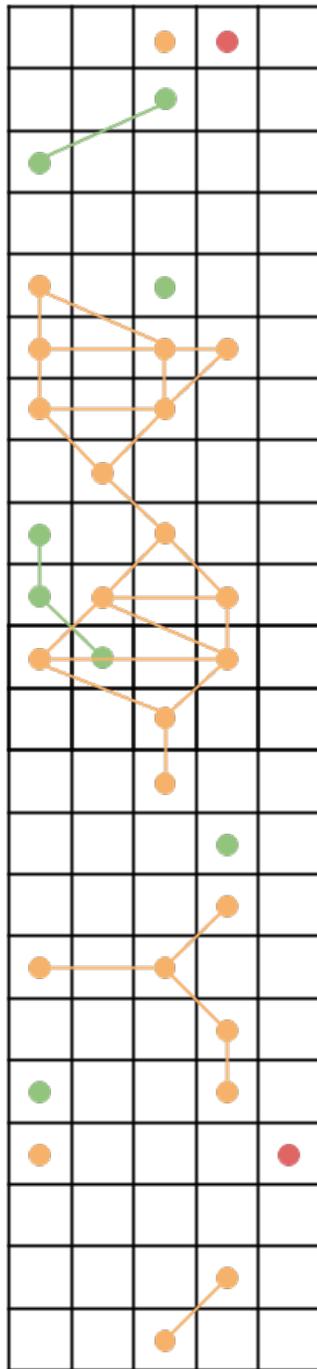
Below are composites for every stanza of the partial scansion (can. II, ll. 293-428, 443-460, 463-500). Scuds are colored orange, tilts are green, and spondees red.



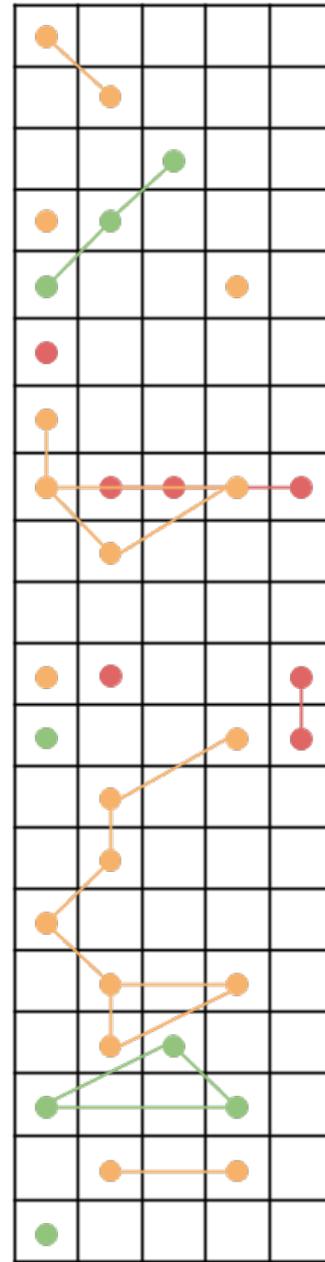
*Composite, can. II, ll. 293-304*



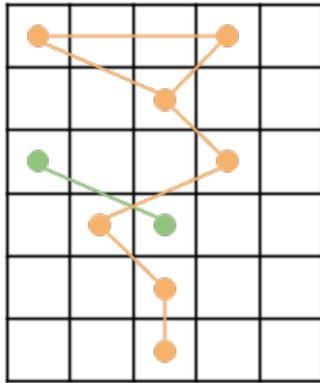
*Composite, can. II, ll. 305-314*



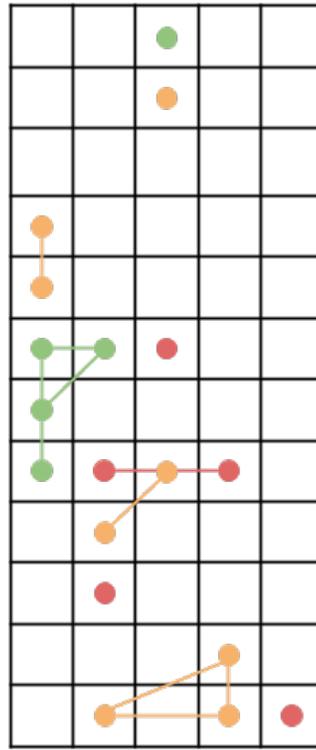
Composite, can. II, ll. 315-336



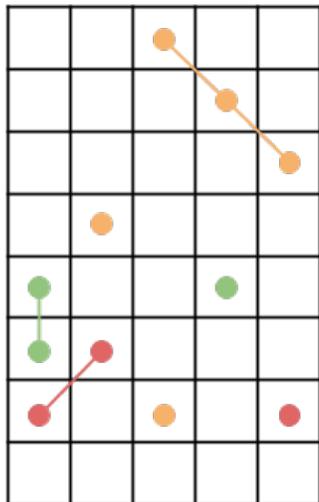
Composite, can. II, ll. 337-356



*Composite, can. II, ll. 357-362*



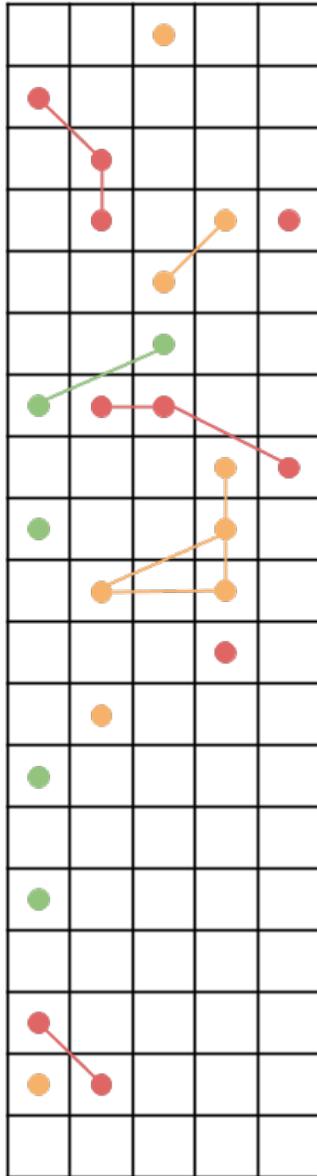
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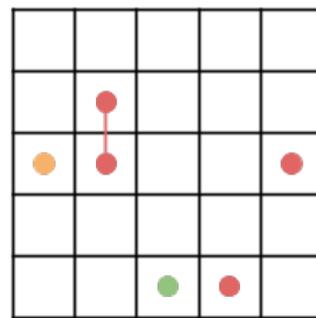
*Composite, can. II, ll. 375-382*



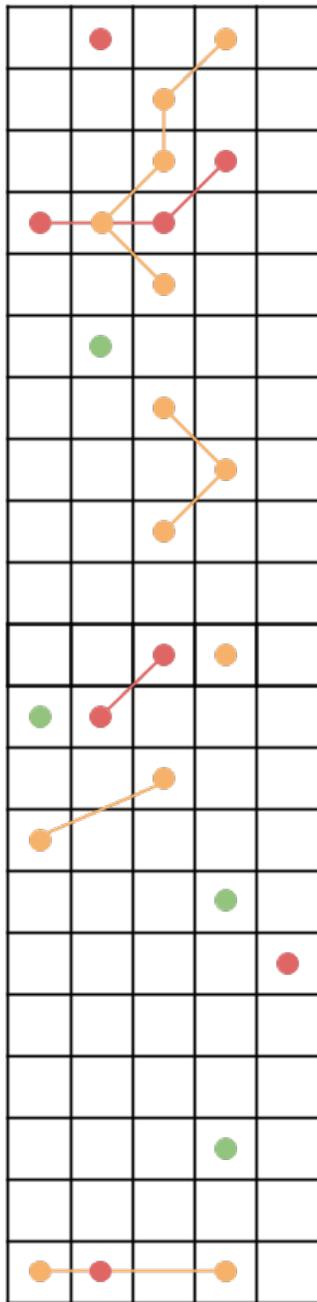
*Composite, can. II, l. 383*



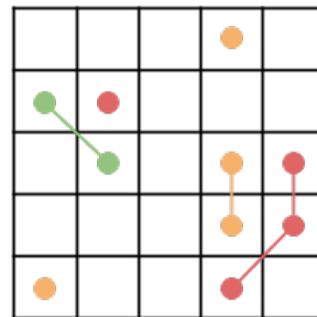
Composite, can. II, ll. 384-402



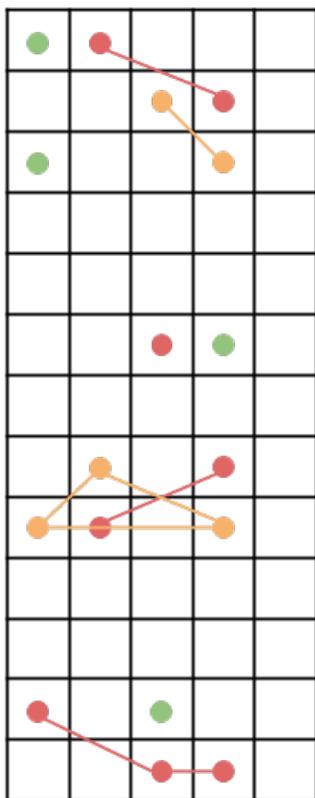
Composite, can. II, ll. 403-407



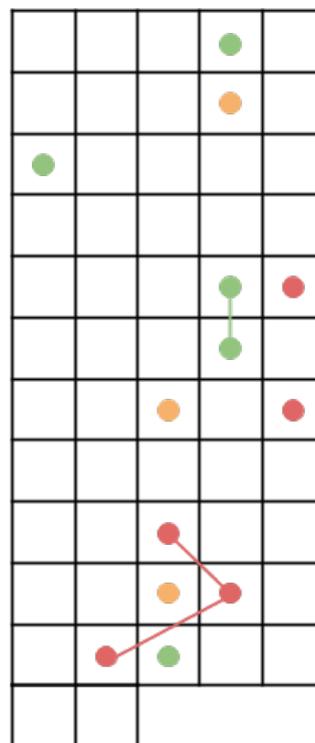
*Composite, can. II, ll. 408-428*



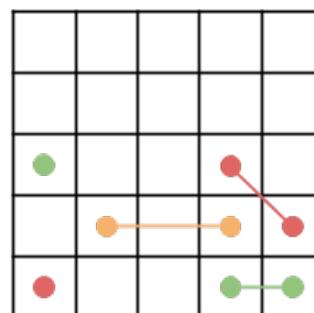
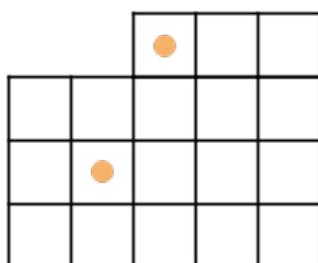
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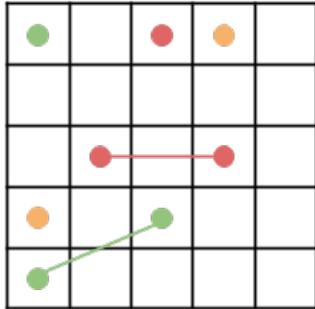
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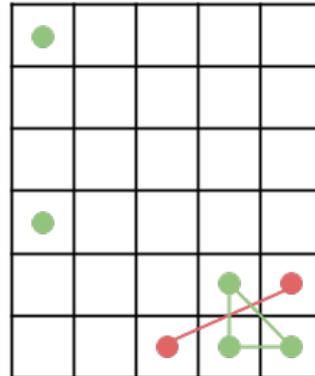
*Composite, can. II, ll. 463-474*



*Composite, can. II, ll. 474-477*

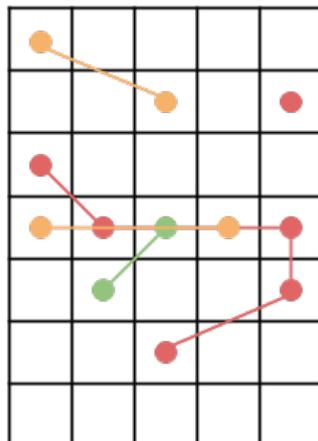


*Composite, can. II, ll. 478-482*



*Composite, can. II, ll. 483-487*

*Composite, can. II, ll. 488-493*



*Composite, can. II, ll. 494-500*

