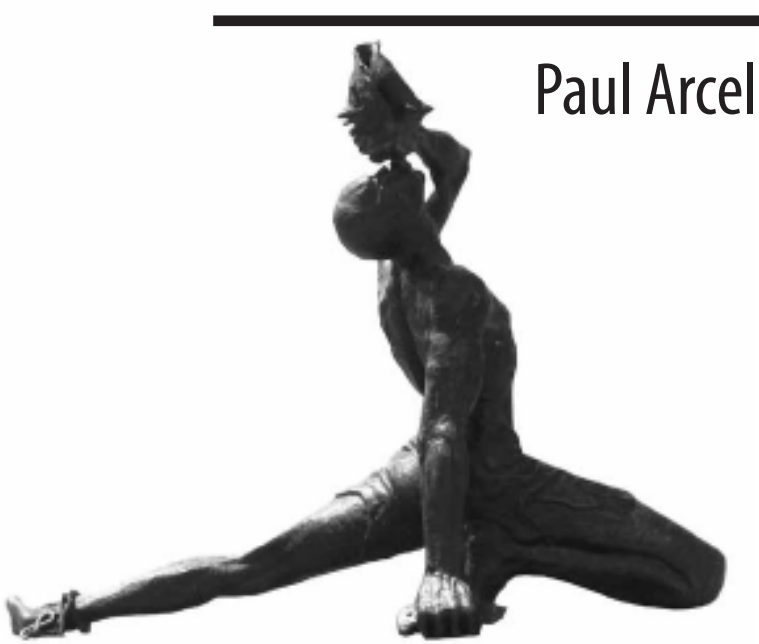
THE DANCE OF THE SCOUNDRELS

Paul Arcelin



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Acknowledgements

This book, whose main purpose is to tell the story of Haiti over the last fifty years, is dedicated to Fred Baptiste, a freedom fighter in the Dominican Republic and Haiti, and to my children, Stéphane and Katia. My son Stéphane, a lawyer and accountant, has been a sound legal advisor to me, while Katia, a medical doctor, gave me invaluable psychological with constant adrenaline monitoring throughout this long undertaking that was completed during the COVID-19 confinement.

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Introduction

Nowadays, the world is witnessing an unpreceded ubiquitous social mutation, caused by the quadruple digital revolution, namely, electronics, computing, telecom and bio-micro-electromechanics (BIOMEMS). This could possibly be compared to the changes that followed Gutenberg's discoveries related to printing. This polysemic revolution seems to augur the development of a kind of digital dependence affecting all human activities. Indeed, it is a phenomenon assimilated to human "cyber-conditioning." [1]

Certainly, in the logic of the behaviorist Burrhus Frédéric Skinner,[2] [3] the behavior of individuals can be explained by the regularities in the reinforcements to which their environment has subjected them throughout their lives. On the other hand, I do not understand why Haitian and Dominican politicians as well as military men and women, whatever the context or the environment, would have indulged in the iniquitous and vertiginous waste of the natural, human, and financial resources of their countries. And this, without any consideration of the technological advances in the monitoring, control, storage, and conservation of data, especially regarding their compromising electronic communications and suspicious financial transactions often carried out through digital platforms.

However, in spite of the numerous controls and security measures taken by States in relation to cyberspace, it constitutes a hyper powerful network.

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[1] Hébert-Marc Gustave, *Géocyberstabilité : pacification cyber-conditionnée des conflits en relations internationales : une cyberstratégie applicable aux contentieux haïtiano-dominicains,* Tesis doctoral en ciencias políticas. Universidad de Toulouse < http://www.theses.fr/2016TOU10044 >.

[2] Burrhus Frederic Skinner, *L'analyse expérimentale du comportement*, 1969, trans. fr. 1971, reimpreso. Mardaga, 1995.

[3] Gérard Montpellier, *Le Behaviorisme de B. F. Skinner*, Revue Philosophique de Louvain. Cuarta serie, Volumen 69, n°4, 1971. pp. 580-587.

Accordingly, cyberspace has proven to be a powerful tool to undermine the sovereignty of a State as it is transformed into a cyberwarfare arsenal that can, through propaganda, cause, the destabilization of democratic states. Consider, for example, the Arab Spring that started in December 2010. There could also be consequences on energy supply, as illustrated by the ransom demanded by Russian hackers, following the cyber-attack that affected oil transport on the east coast of the United States in May 2021 by *Colonial Pipeline.* There are consequences also of a nuclear nature, as in the Stuxnet's malicious codes aimed at disrupting the Iranian nuclear program, something clearly shown in discovery made in 2010.

It is worth noting the massive computer hacking often decried by the American authorities and the conduct of the successful psychological cyberwarfare campaign orchestrated by Wikileaks during the 2016 American presidential elections.

Russian cybernetic prowess was elevated to new heights. The 2016 Facebook-Cambridge *Analytica* scandal involving the data leakage of more than 87 million Facebook users further illustrates the interrelation between politics and cyberspace.[4]

The Scoundrels of all the regimes that have marked out the Haitian and Dominican political space, wrongly believe that they enjoy a kind of immunity against blood and financial crimes duly documented by national and international judicial bodies, engraved in perpetuity on hard disks and stored in the "cloud" of hyper-powerful investigators in the digital age.

Clearly, all financial transactions and digital communications related to organized crimes and corruption, which benefit from the complicit silence of certain international actors, will be deciphered by any serious government. These hucksters will be held accountable

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[4] Olivia Solon, Facebook scandal 'hit 87 million users, BBC News, 4 April 2018, < https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-43649018>>.

before civil, criminal, and military courts for the restitution of ill-gotten gains.

From the Wikileaks affair to the awakening of the Arab spring, via the Stuxnet malware that subtly infected Iranian centrifuges, the deployment of armed military drones in the Middle East and the Snowden's disclosures of very sensitive U.S. secrets, the threat of cyber warfare and discoveries is undeniable.

Modern digital tools hover like the sword of Damocles over the heads of these Scoundrels, as very able financial auditors continue to gather evidence to fight against corruption. Blood crimes will also be prosecuted with the support of advanced digital forensics.

Chapter 1
Requiem for Skeptics

Forty-eight hours after the fall of Jean-Claude Duvalier, I returned to Haiti. I had spent so many years in Latin America, Europe, and Canada in an unholy exile, that I was eager to touch the ground of my native land.

Just before coming back to Canada, I wanted, once more, to see the city of my childhood, Miragoâne. Antoine, my older brother, offered to drive me there.

Around 7 : 00 a.m., from Port-au-Prince, we took the road to the South. Arriving at Carrefour, a suburb of Port-au-Prince, it was hell. Colorful pickups, called Tap-Taps, with their dizzying horn, filled with passengers, violated all traffic regulations and highway safety rules. Majestically, they prevented all normal traffic. **What a mess !**

For two hours we were in this infernal traffic. Policemen with their strident whistle tried to clear the traffic jams as best they could. From time to time, they dared to ransom the "Tap-Tap[5]" drivers on their route. Finally, we were able to get out of the mess. We should have left earlier. Mind you, after so many years in exile, I did not know that, at such an hour, we should not cross Carrefour, the Port-au-Prince suburb which leads to the Southern Department.

Today this strategic artery to four major regions or "Departments" of the country are controlled by violent armed gangs whose creation and federation had been linked to Haitian government officials and accredited diplomats in Haiti, notably the UN Representative in Haiti.

Gressier and Léogâne, with their fields of sugar cane, the production which partly met the country's needs for sugar and other derivatives,

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[5] Small private vans, often brightly colored, rendering public transport services.

stretched as far as the eye could see, and paraded before our eyes like a rosary sliding on one's fingers.

The asphalt road, well maintained, allowed us to travel at more than 80 km/hour, to my hometown. I was amazed by the exuberant vegetation whose blue, yellow, red purple, and mauve colors intermingled in front of me.

When I arrived in the town of Petit-Goâve, I remembered the soccer matches between Petit-Goâve and Miragoâne. In love with soccer, at each match, the city vibrated with pride when we eliminated the teams of neighboring towns. It was party time. People danced in the streets, drank, and shouted their joy from the top of their lungs.

At that time, at the end of 1957, the Duvalier era was just beginning. Already, at the barracks of Petit-Goâve, we attended the first Duvalier trials against a few army colonels for conspiracy against the security of the State before my long journey into exile. What a circus ! What a comedy !

These Scoundrels played macabre pieces, a prelude to a manhunt against all those who dared to raise their voices. The new dictatorship lined the streets and paths of the towns, villages, and fields with corpses. Thousands of professors, doctors, nurses, and other professionals took off and went into exile. The exodus of entire families fled from the Tontons-Macoute, the infamous bogeymen.

After Petit-Goâve came the lake of Miragoâne, which the state should have exploited for tourism and trade. Beautiful young girls, with bare breasts like cones pointing to the horizon, bathed and launched themselves like sirens in the limpid water. Their dives did not attract the erotic gaze of passers-by.

In the middle of the lake, small dugout canoes sailed with one or two fishermen aboard, trying to catch small fish. This pond could have provided hundreds of jobs with rational farming of crayfish and fish, which could provide the people of the region the protein they so

much lacked. Even today, it is still possible to develop beaches, build small hotels, decent and pretty modern houses for Haitian and foreign retirees, to allow people to go sailing and enjoy recreational fishing. That would certainly attract tourists. Why not a small power plant to supply the region with inexpensive electricity?

At Carrefour Desruisseaux,[6] it was a teeming crowd, for it was market day. Peasants from everywhere were selling their products, hailing to passers-by. Sometimes the smell of grilled meat and fish floated through the air. Flies were buzzing on the meat spread out on makeshift tables, and people, without batting an eyelid, bought some. We stopped for a snack at a small, well-maintained restaurant called La Pause, which looked like a *McDonald's*. By that time, we were getting closer, perhaps ten miles away, from our hometown. We ate heartily, after which we hit the road again. Screams here and there : Paul ! At last! You are back on your native soil! Well done, Paul! Bravo ! Bravo ! Bravo ! Ten minutes later, we arrived at Miragoâne.

As soon as we entered the city, friends recognized us : "Anthony, Paul," they chanted! What a moving and warm welcome after so many years of exile! Everywhere, we felt a sincere human warmth. We had not fought in vain against the dictatorship for so many years not to savor the delights of freedom and democracy. My brother and I headed towards the port of the city considered to be one of the deepest natural harbors in the Caribbean. More than five ships were anchored in the harbor, waiting impatiently to be relieved of their cargo. Crowds swarmed through the dusty streets. It was Calcutta in miniature.

When we had left, the streets of Miragoâne were asphalted; they were regularly and adequately swept and cleaned, with garbage collectors removing garbage twice a day. After so many years of exile, what a different image we saw! Indeed, animals, especially goats, were moored in the small public square. A farmer in rags pulled his penis

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[6] The entrance to the city of Miragoâne.

like a flamethrower, rather a long-range cannon, to throw his stream of urine into a corner of the house that used to be our home.

A strange nostalgia gripped me. During the summer vacations, when I was a teenager, we would frolic on tons of campfire wood that were piled up near the wharf, ready to be exported. What an ecological crime! A small country like Haiti allowed itself to export precious wood for centuries. The vegetation cover could not resist this outrageous exploitation for the benefit of a few, hence the desertification of the land that some people refer to when talking about the recklessness of Haitians.

What a tragicomedy! How to forget that during the Second World War, in the south and north of the country, thousands of hectares of arable land were made available to certain American companies which planted rubber trees, sentry plant or agave. These plants destroyed the fiber of the land but were transformed into rubber that was a significant contribution of the Republic of Haiti to the war effort of its ally, the United States of America.

On top of that, President Élie Lescot had declared war on Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and the Nippon Empire. Even though the Haitian Army was only for show, against those of these great international powers! Nevertheless, war was declared against the Axis. It was a strategic move to support American allies.

In my small town of Miragoâne, every afternoon dozens of young people would meet at the dock, kite in hand that they threw at the mercy of the wind. Epic battles took place in the sky, with razor blades fixed to the tail of each kite to facilitate cutting the string or the rope of other kites. Pennies were thrown into the sea and young people dived to catch them. Such were the kinds of fun we enjoyed.

We never stopped admiring the sunset. This ball of fire, appearing so close, would set on the horizon and disappear.

When it was not raining, the clear sky gave us a phantasmagoria. Sparkling stars and the moon would appear and make this corner of the earth an earthly paradise. I doubt very much that such beauty of nature can be seen anywhere else in the world. It was as if we were bewitched. We looked voluptuously at the vault of heaven.

I remember that on two or three occasions I saw whales stranded on the shores of the city. Before arriving on the beach, they uttered a cry, a lugubrious song. They felt they were about to die. Hundreds of people ran to see them. Fishermen were fighting to skin them. This one a piece, that one another piece, organizing among themselves a king's feast. In the surroundings of Miragoâne and Petit-Goâve, those beasts could be admired from the shore.

Today, almost all the houses in Miragoâne have become warehouses. Thousands of people come from everywhere to buy anything without any state control : refrigerators, televisions, old beds, clothes, second-hand shoes, etc. You can barely move around in this small town. It is no longer the city of our childhood. The lumpen mafiosi have taken over. Miragoâne has become a center of debauchery. Prostitutes have settled in filthy brothels, offering their charm to anyone who wants.

In 1986, Ambassador Claude Laverdure of Canada told me that his country could make this region a model of development, were we to succeed in reducing the circulation of drugs there. With its two large deep-water ports and a free-trade zone, it would be a boon for all sorts of industries looking for ways to export their products.

Close to the port, behind the town hall, the cultural center no longer exists. That is where we used to stage Sunday's theater plays that electrified the audience. It was there that Gérard Dupervil, the singer who was compared to Tino Rossi, one of the great French singers, took his first steps with the extraordinary orchestra of Manès which, every Saturday evening, delighted us. It was enchanting to live in this hospitable little town.

Miragoâne, like a golden hoof plunged into this bluish-green sea that sweeps its coasts, with its church that towers over all the buildings like an old neo-Gothic cathedral, welcomed us. Every evening, we could hear the carillon of its bell ringing the angelus. We were never tired of listening to this melodious music that reminded us of Bach. We were proud of our beautiful church.

One day, ten of us young people were lounging and playing cards at the bell tower of the church. The sacristan surprised us up there. Not hearing him come, we had no time to hide our cards.

Suddenly, he shouted : "Little gentlemen! What sacrilege are you committing? You are playing cards in the church! I'm going to tell the priest and then your parents." My father, along with the other parents, would not have failed to give us a thrashing.

We begged him to, please, keep it quiet. Let it be a secret forever and say nothing to the priest who, for sure, wouldn't have hesitated to declare, from the pulpit, what mortal sin we had committed. Fortunately, our sacristan took pity on us. He promised not to divulge anything after, on our knees, we swore never to do it again. And we handed to him the object of the offense.

Hurriedly, we walked down the many steps of the church twisting staircase that led to the bell tower. What amazing enchantment when we got to the church's square! The city was at our feet. What a beautiful view! The calm sea attracted us. Ernst, a childhood friend, exclaimed : "Why don't we go to Trou de Moutons to take a swim?" Enthusiastically, his proposal was accepted by us all. We rushed to get our bathing suits and went to this paradisiacal beach where the grains of sand look like pearls.

Around the 1980s, Brazilian investors had a major tourist project planned for this region. Gérard Barthélemy, former mayor of Miragoâne, told us about it, that is to me and my brother Antoine. He laid out in front of us the plans of this mega tourist project. "But Gérard, why did this project remain on the shelves?" I asked. To which he replied :

“You will see Paul, this project will become a reality.” When I insisted on the why, he clammed up. We later understood why he refused to confirm anything. For, according to rumors, the investors had balked at advancing baksheesh, some money under the table.

I knew every corner of my small town. During summer vacations, from July to September, there was a soccer championship among six teams of the city.

Every Sunday, Miragoâne ground to a halt. Thousands of soccer fanatics would come to the soccer field to watch the game. Following an exciting tournament, my team, the *Flèche Royale,* was crowned champion. I had scored the winning goal in the last game played before I headed into exile. Five minutes before the end of the match, a player tackled me. I was screaming in pain.

The city commander, Jacques Gracia, who was to become one of the leaders of Duvalier’s army, came on the soccer field to tell me to stop playing the comedy. Hesitating not a second, I told him : “Shit !”

Mother begged me to go to the commander to apologize. The next morning, I had to go to the Miragoâne barracks. Long after, my mother was arrested. She was taken to the National Palace. When Jacques Garcia saw her, he asked her what she was doing there. She answered : “I was led here by the political police.”

He replied : “Come! Follow me!” Thanks to this intervention by Jacques Gracia, she was not sent to the Fort-Dimanche prison.

Sometimes some would take a fall, luckily with no serious injury. For Christmas, we would build multiple-colored lanterns. What cheerfulness! What an apotheosis! In our exciting youth, there was a taste for life, for plays, dancing, cocktails, fairs, ping-pong and volleyball clubs, not to forget the beaches!

Now it is desolation, with thousands of Miragoânese having moved to Canada, the United States, and to neighboring islands of the Caribbean. Life has become quite bleak.

Throughout my stay out of Haiti, I kept reminiscing with my friends about the years spent in this small town where I was born. I dreamed of the day when I would return there. It was a town where unemployment did not exist, thanks to the *Reynolds Haitian Mines.* This company, it seemed, was going to revolutionize the region by injecting money and modernity there. For example, at Paillant, in the heights of Miragoâne, an ultra-modern village was built. Also, built, was a road several meters wide and a port that was among the most modern in the Caribbean, at that time. It was intended to facilitate the export of bauxite. Indeed, money flowed in the region. Nearly a hundred skilled workers were well paid. But many others were paid a pittance. Thanks to this company, the city was electrified. Pineapple and vegetable fields sprouted all over the region, such as in Paillant, Mussotte, and Salagnac.

But "Haiti only received a little more than two (2) million dollars in salaries and taxes per year, while the average turnover at the bauxite exporting firm exceeded two hundred million dollars."[7]

In 1974, Minister Serge Fourcand, who negotiated a new contract with Reynolds, pushed his offensive by publishing the salary scale of the workers of the company in Jamaica. Haitian wages were three times lower than what was paid to the Jamaicans. The upshot of it, on December 4, 1974, Reynolds accepted a substantial increase in the wages paid to its workers in Haiti.[8]

But one early morning, *Reynolds* closed its doors, after it had extracted bauxite, gold, and I do not know what else. It did not respect the leonine contract that bound it to the Haitian State. It was consternation! Suddenly, hundreds of workers were out of work. The Haitian State failed in its responsibility and let *Reynolds* walk out without paying any compensation to the workers. On top of that, the government found itself having to rehabilitate the fallow land. On leaving, *Reynolds* took almost everything : tractors, trucks, and whatnot, leaving behind desolation and sadness.

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[7] Serge Fourcand, *Entre le vice et la violence – Un virage raté (Haïti, 1971-75)*, Les Éditions du CIDIHCA, 2002page 103.
[8] Idem, page-107.

Paulette, the Seductress

I remember little Paulette. She lived in a small room in a small house whose wobbly door opened onto a small courtyard. When the tropical rain poured, a whole river formed and flowed into the sea. In the small house, a large window, the squeaking hinges of which could be heard from afar, closed with difficulty. That was Paulette's temple where much happened. She giggled while recounting the young men to whom she taught what it was like to make love. She boasted about taking the virginity of many well-known young men in the city. She said she had put the penises of many of these teenagers between her tightly packed thighs, and those poor innocent kids thought they were penetrating her. Retired at thirty, she took a husband to care for her. One evening in May, the young Gérard, nicknamed *Brique de Savon* (Soap Brick), knowing that her husband had gone to the countryside, came to Paulette's house. In the middle of action, he heard a sound of footsteps. It was the husband. He picked up his clothes, quickly opened the window and ran away into a pouring rain. Soap Brick had gotten his money's worth. Trembling with fear, he ran like hell and got away. The neighbors realized the misadventure.

Like a wildfire, news of Gérard's expedition spread throughout the town. Soap Brick's friends took pleasure making fun of him. He swore to never do that again. He was worried that his father would find out about his unfortunate adventure.

In Détour, the neighborhood of Miragoâne where Paulette lived, stench of fish filled the air. Fishing nets were spread out in the stinking corridors where people of a certain stature did not venture at night. Fishing products were spread out to dry on the roofs of the huts. Misery was visible on the faces of the children with blotted bellies, their belly buttons protruding, as if calling at us. Little Paulette reigned in this area for more than ten years. She was the queen mother, who came from Cholette, a small village stuck up in the mountains. Little Paulette, a beautiful brunette with jet black smooth hair, bright white

teeth, shaped like a Coca-Cola bottle, had a snake walk. The dress she usually wore molded her body. So many young people talked about her taste and her sweetness, that she had really become the queen of the corner. She asked nothing better than to be well paid per session. Her services were never for free, not even to the gigolos. However, sometimes she would accept credit from a regular customer.

A Portrait of my Father

My father, hard as iron, was a great worker, landowner, trader, exporter, and importer. Every morning, he got up at four o'clock to go to his farms to take care of his more than one hundred hectares planted with sisal and edible products. Thus, did he accumulate a small fortune. In the afternoon, when he returned to the family home, he would be lost in his lullaby, his Bible in his hand or a newspaper. Late in the day, when the city commander, the mayor and other humble or bourgeois friends visited him, he would discuss politics, life stories and business in the store.

My mother ran the store when Dad was away. It was the largest one in the Nippes region. This woman, whose educational background was hardly noticeable, was involved in the selection of the senator, the legislative representative, and other dignitaries of the region, who consulted her on everything. This couple had almost no leisure activities other than earning money to educate their children (six boys and three girls).

Sometimes, the couple, accompanied by a few children would go to the beach or to Lebrun, a small village a few kilometers from Miragoâne. The family owned a country house there. Dad hardly ever rested. In a frenzy, he traveled around to his properties to see how well his various sisal and banana plantations were doing. He exported them to the United States of America, in association with the *United Fruit Company* which, both controlled and overthrew governments in Central America, such as in Guatemala, where General Jacobo Árbenz

Guzmán was overthrown with the help of the CIA (*Central Intelligence Agency)*.[9]

United Fruit is no longer in existence. Meanwhile, banana export was destroyed by the greed of Haitian politicians.

Spectacularly, every year, my father celebrated the feast of Saint-Louis, the patron saint of the village, in the courtyard of his cottage in Lebrun. The best orchestras of the capital, paid by him, came to brighten up the festivities. People from all over the country, even from abroad, mainly from New York, never failed to be there. A huge crowd attended the mass in the church that had been restored at dad's expense.

On the church square, vendors of all kinds displayed their wares. The aroma of grilled meat, sausages, and food mixed with the smell of acacia trees and roses bewitched us after mass. During the day, people attended cock fights, betting a lot of money. Some bathed in the river, others at dad's place, where there was a waterfall near his property, its crystal-clear water jets streaming. Some went horseback riding to either Laveau or Nansable, two other small villages.

Meanwhile, some young people would be basking or caressing themselves somewhere in the fields. In the evening, hundreds of the faithful danced to the sound of meringues until dawn. Rum and the cheaper alcoholic drink, *clairin,* flowed.[10]

In Nansable, François Duvalier before becoming the Attila of Haiti often went there to meet the local mambo, Nana Zamor (commonly referred to as "Grann Nana") who was my great-grandmother. She had predicted and told François Duvalier that he would become president, but to consolidate his power a river of blood will have to flow.

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[9] Marcel Niedergang, *L'ancien président Jacobo Arbenz Guzman est mort. Un adversaire malheureux de l'United Fruit Company*, Le Monde, January 29, 1971

[10] A brandy produced in Haiti from sugar cane and in an artisanal way, also called the rum of the people.

In the courtyard of his cottage, there was a small house dedicated to the cult of Voodoo. Catholic, but also Voodooist, because of religious syncretism, Dad forced us to go there to bring water that we emptied into a jug. We lit candles on an altar where the images of the Catholic Saints, such as Saint Michael and others were identified as Agaou[11] , Erzulie,[12] Damballah[13] and the Virgin Mary, all enthroned in a Voodoo atmosphere. A small eternal lamp stood in the middle of the altar.

Dad bought a house in Port-au-Prince where his children lived and studied in the best congregational schools in the capital. Mom had to leave Miragoâne to take care of her offspring. In Port-au-Prince, Dad also bought the house next door. In the morning, the boys walked to school. A cab driver, Mr. Ladouceur, came to pick up Mona, daddy's beloved daughter.

She was attending the *Collège des Filles du Sacré-Cœur,* a school for girls. At that time, in Port-au-Prince, there was talk of four reputable major schools for girls : Lalue, Sacré-Coeur, Elie Dubois and the Girls' High School. The girls of the bourgeoisie and of the middle class pulled all kinds of strings to be admitted at one of them. It was the same for the boys, at Saint-Louis-de-Gonzague and at the Petit Séminaire Saint-Martial College. These schools carried within them the seeds of social exclusion. Generally, they were the training ground for Haiti's future leaders.

It should be noted that some high schools, which mainly received young people from the middle class and the people, such as the Lycée Pétion, also trained good students and future leaders came out of it.

It should be noted that some famous high schools, such as the Lycée Pétion, attended mostly by youth from the middle class as well as

[11] God of wind and storm in voodoo religion.
[12] Divinity of beauty and love, she embodies the figure of the feminine, love, and desire in the voodoo religion.
[13] Voodoo spirit of fertility, goodness, and knowledge symbolized by the snake or boa in the voodoo religion.

from the proletariat, also prepared great leaders. This era of excellence existed before its disparagement by the Duvalier dictatorship.

When we behaved badly, Dad would scold us harshly. He was very severe with his children. Twice a month, he would come to visit us in the capital. He did not laugh or joke with his children. He was Father, the Disciplinarian. Sometimes, knowing that he was coming, we would hide, taking refuge on the roof of the house. Regardless, those who deserved to be punished would be punished. Iron discipline, according to him, meant the future would belong to us. Take, for example, what happened to my older brother, Yves. He received a nice pair of slaps when he turned eighteen and graduated from High School. He had shown up during the patronal celebration of Saint-Louis in Lebrun with a cigarette in his mouth. My dad slapped him so hard that he inadvertently swallowed the entire cigarette.

Mom was the antipode of dad. With her we laughed. With Dad, we trembled, even for the most insignificant infraction. At dinnertime, the whole family had to be at the table, hence denying access to late arrivals. He would ask Mother to take off the cutlery. No one could deviate from this discipline.

The great mystery of life, as well as the great mystery of death, Dad died tragically! My elder brother, Gérard, found him in his bed bathed in his blood. How did he die? Why did he die? Who committed this crime? This question has never been elucidated. No investigation was set in motion. It was said that Dad had committed suicide. In the prime of his life, father of a large, financially stable family, I still cannot comprehend why he would have taken his own life. Perhaps other jealous shopkeepers wanted to eliminate him. If so, it was a heinous crime. Some said that they saw a light-skinned man, really a white man, climbing over the window of the room where my father was taking a nap.

In the imagination of most cult believers, this light-skinned man represented the devil with whom Daddy would have signed a pact to