

Judge Dee nodded and went through the old gate. Surveying the moonlit stretch of wasteland, he could not see a single fox.

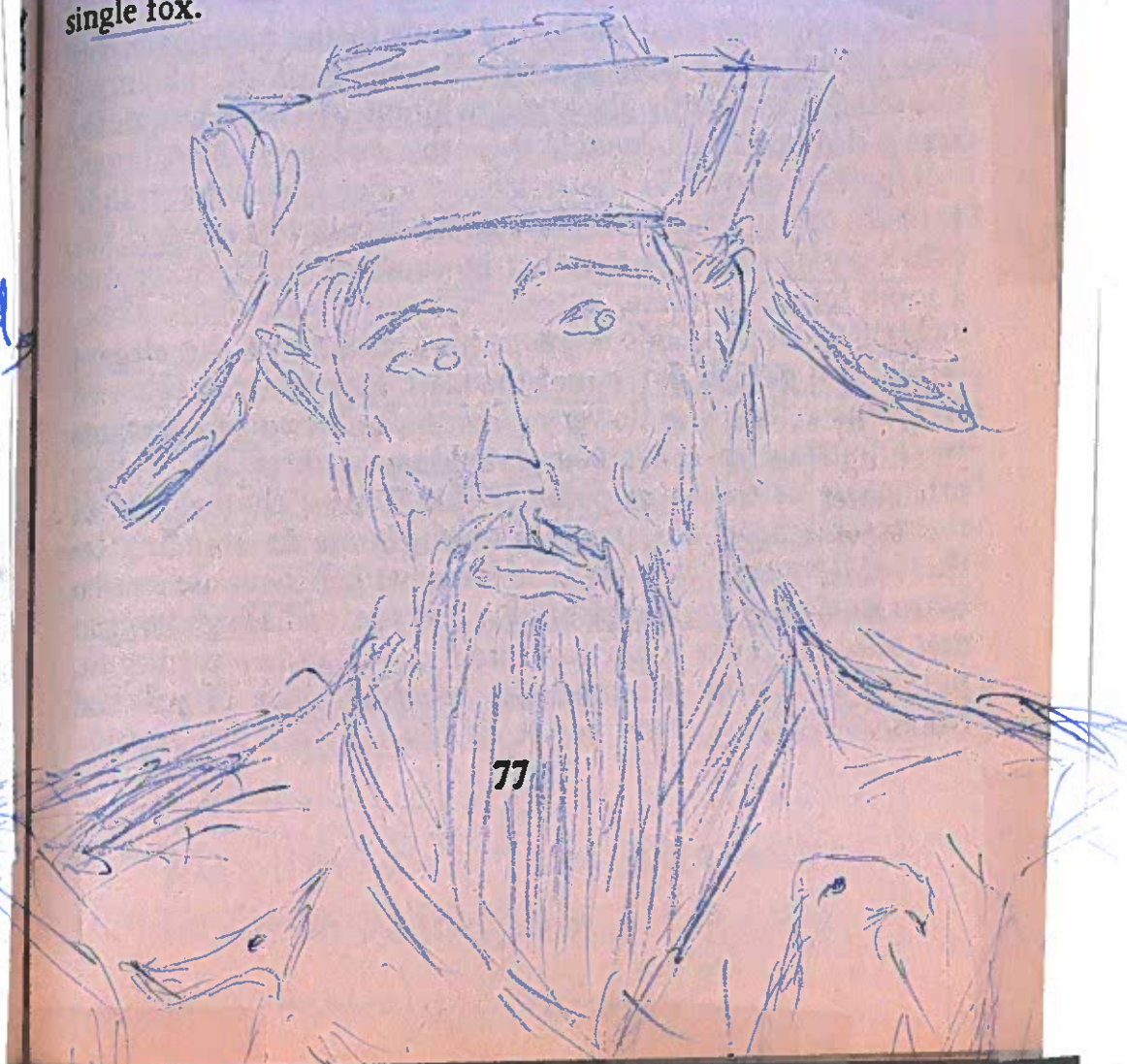
"Judge Di

With your
detective friend,

Your sympathy
will not fail

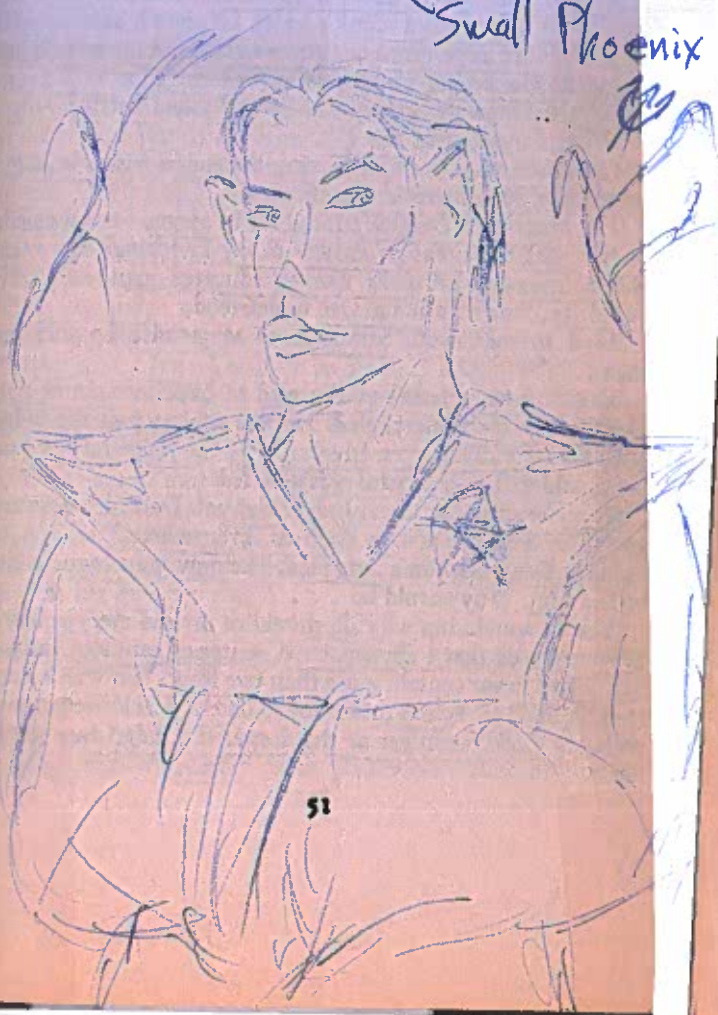
because
theirs will
not fail"

DI

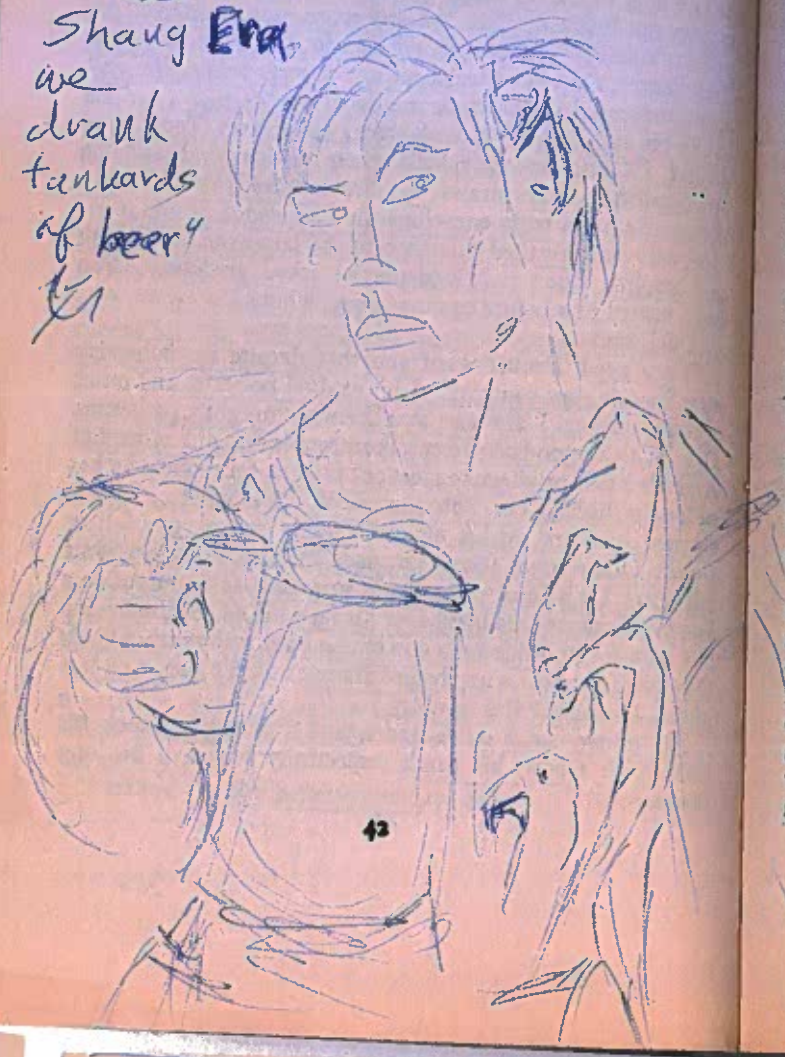


report what he had learned from the maid in the tea-merchant's house. And to get a cup of tea at long last!

"Small Phoenix"
☞

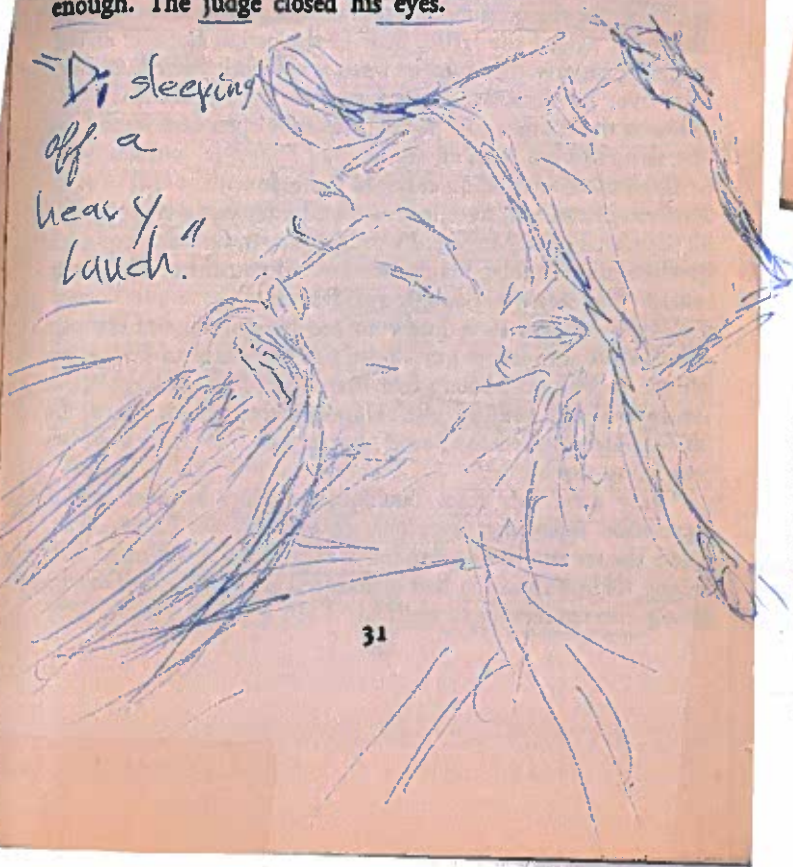


"In the
Shang ~~Eng~~
we
drank
tankards
of beer"
☞



enough. The judge closed his eyes.

"~~D~~ sleeping
off a
heavy
laugh."



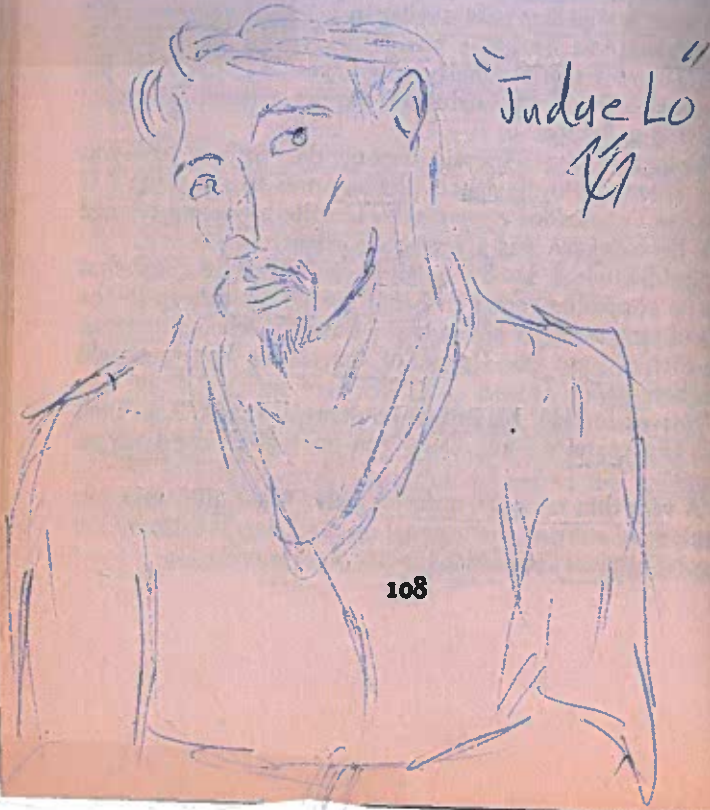
"The tea business is
savage.
I've known tea merchants
who'd cut..."
☞

The men put the long shafts on their calloused shoulders
and trotted off, with lusty heigh-hos to warn the crowd to
make way.

"Flute
Player"
☞



...you and the writing magicians, as
tents suggest that he knew the dancer was dead.'



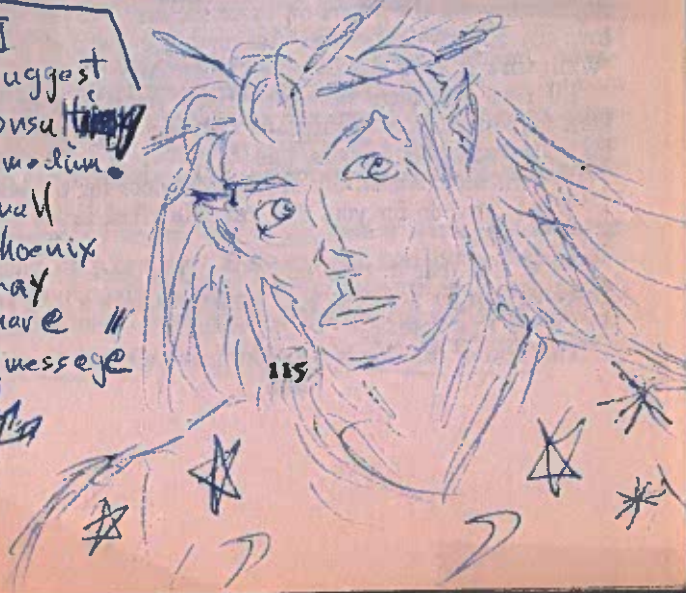
"Judge Lo"
LJ

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to a cool, spacious room. The walls were covered up
lofty, coffered ceiling with broad shelves, loaded with red
leather document boxes, ledgers and dossiers. There was an
agreeable smell of wax, used for polishing the boxes, and of
the camphor strewn among the papers to keep insects away.
At one end of the huge trestle table in the centre of the red-

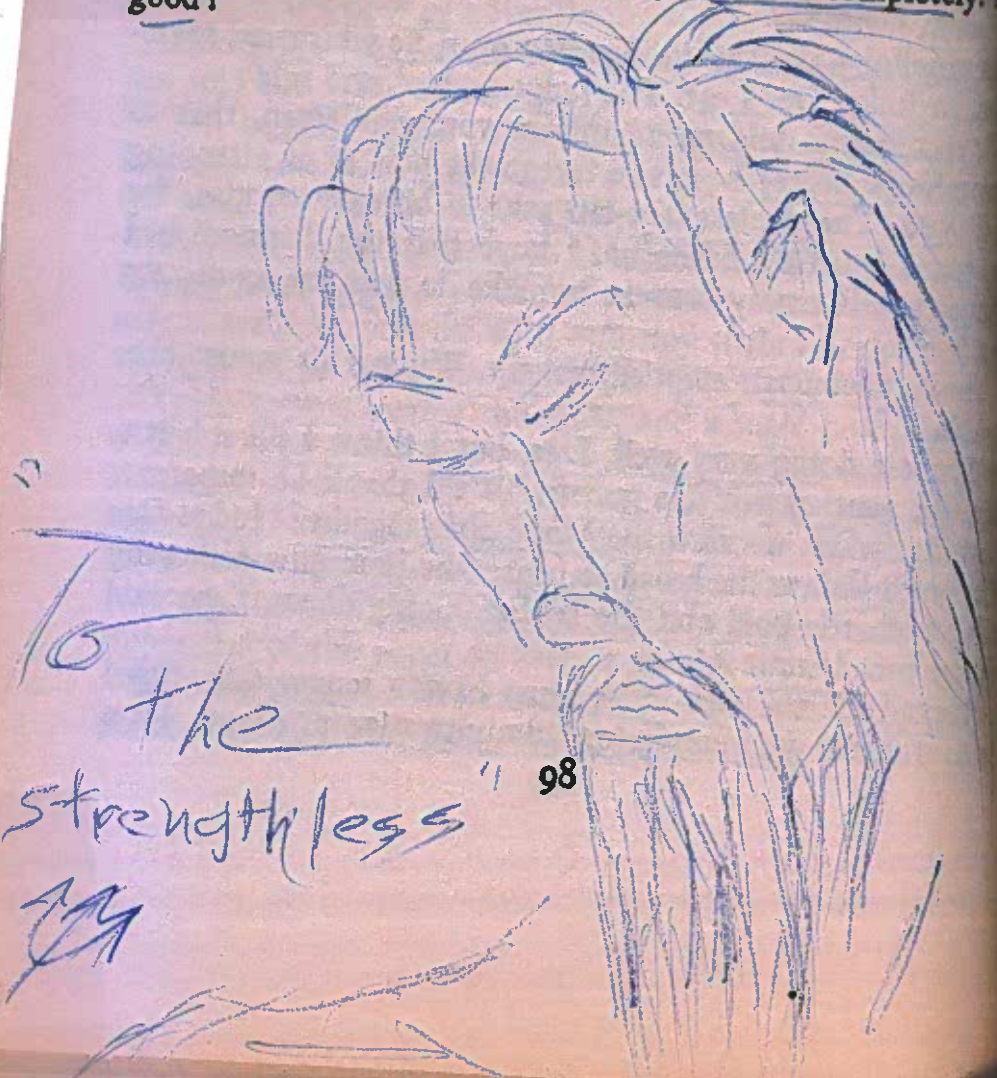
...d floor, an old clerk was sorting out some papers
farthest end Sexton Loo sat bent over a file.

"I suggest
consulting
a medium.
Small
Phoenix
may
have //
a message
LJ



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'I am lost, Dee,' he said hoarsely. Ruined completely.
good!'



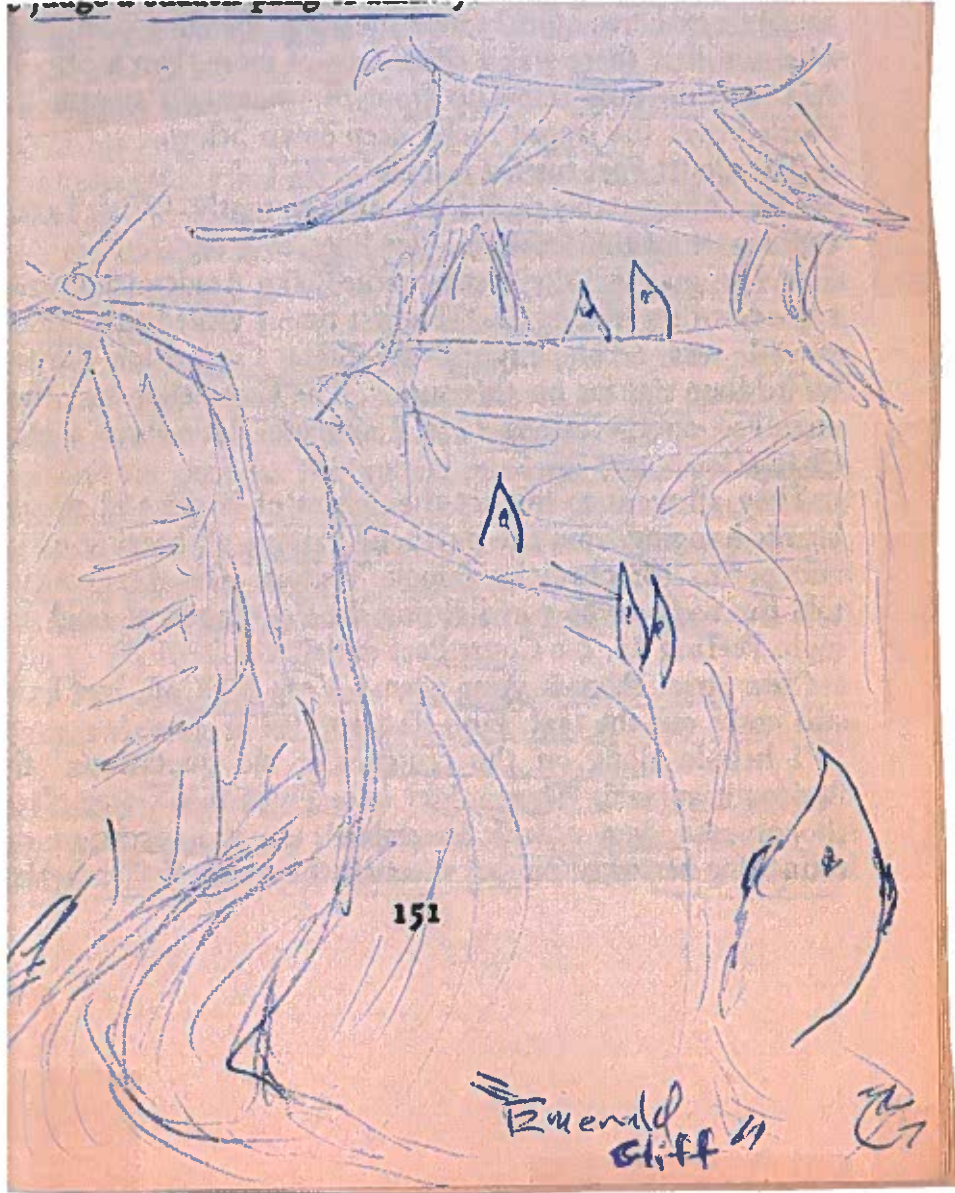
the
Strengthless" 98
LJ

...and out of here for slipping inside un-
green-room by that dark flight of stair
door.'

Lo had hardly listened. Now, how
and said wearily:

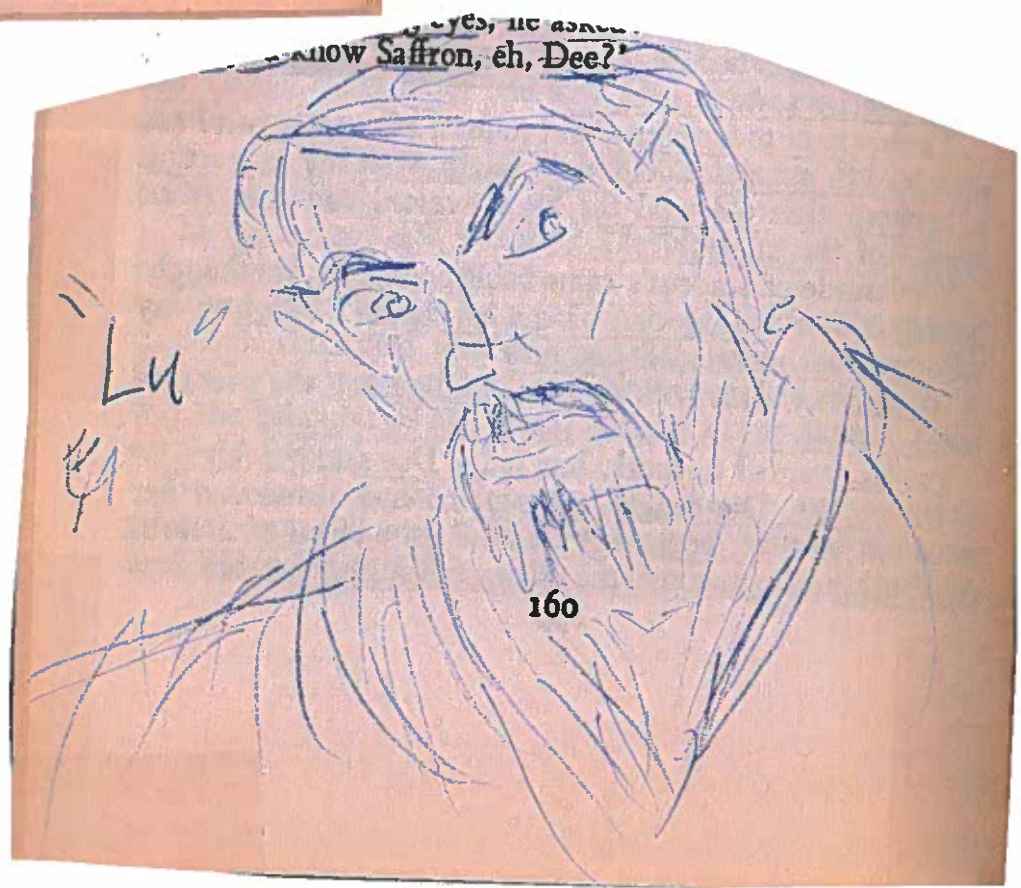
'The door at the bottom of that st
as long as I've lived here. My wom
obedient as one would wish, but I an
putting the Consort's Staircase to us
'A consort's staircase? What on ea
'Ah, well, you don't read moder
is that the notorious Ninth Prince
years ago was not only a traitor, but
boot. Some say it was the goading a
that made him attempt his ill-fated
ruled "from behind the screen", as
that room behind the banquet hal
stairs, which connects down below
straight to the women's quarters.'

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Buendel cliff



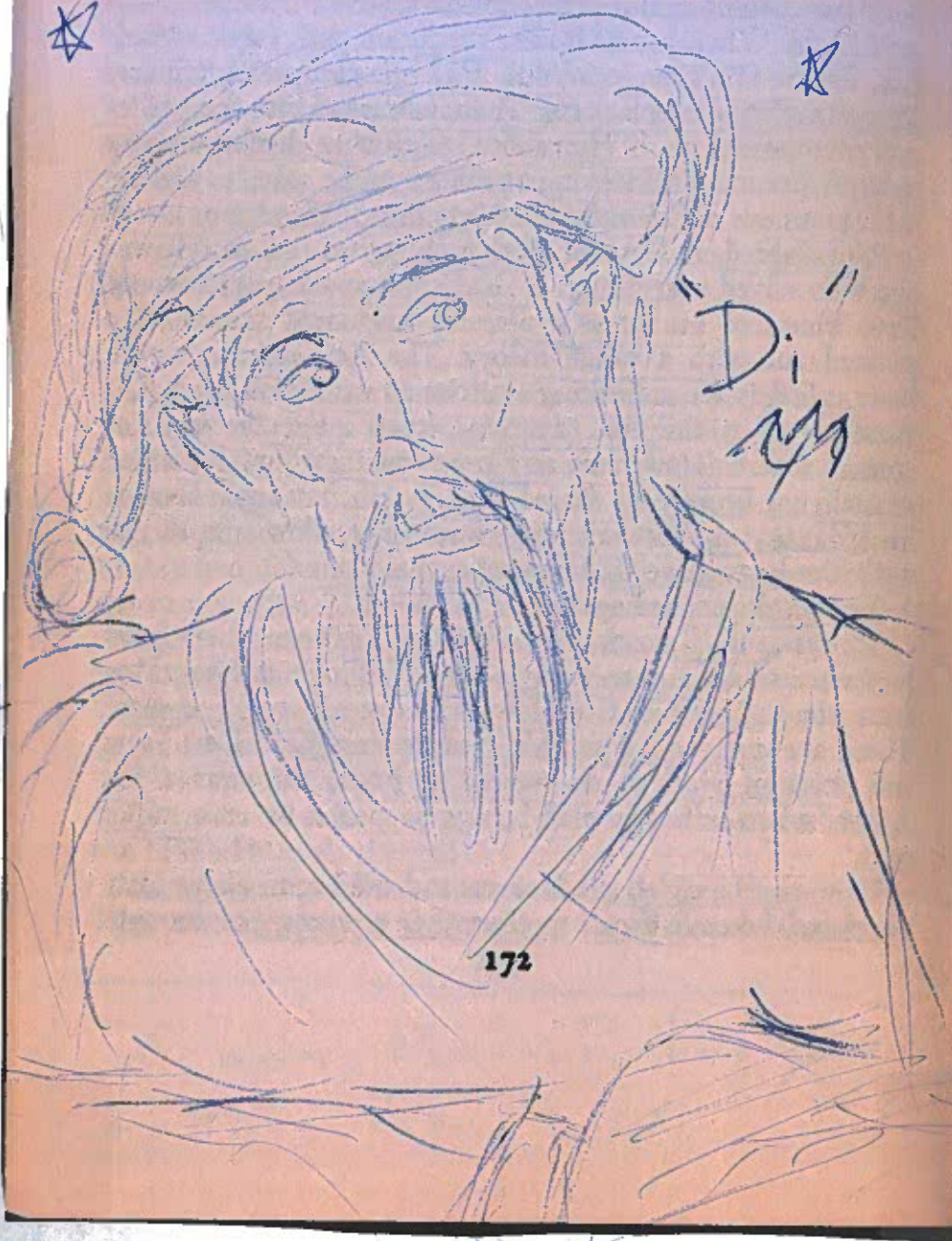
...eyes, he asked.
...now Saffron, eh, Dee?

"Lu"

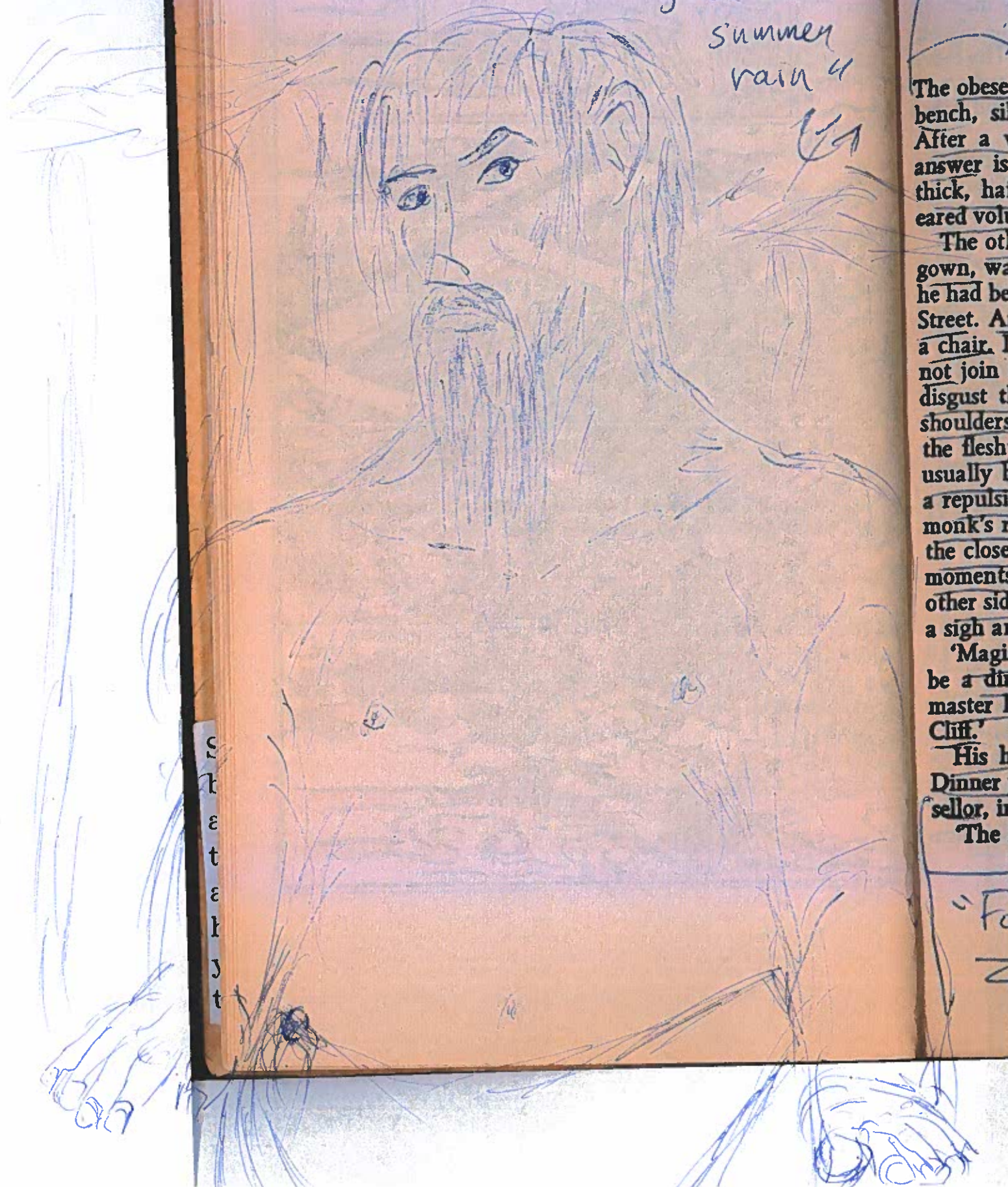
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his own chosen direction, have still a long way to go. A very long and weary way?

The sexton leaned back in his chair and looked up at the bright moon with his bulging, unblinking eyes.



"In honor of his work,
the gods deified Di as
god of
summer
rain"



"N
S
The obese
bench, sil
After a v
answer is
thick, ha
eared volu
The oth
gown, wa
he had be
Street. An
a chair. I
not join
disgust th
shoulders
the fleshy
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'Magis
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Cliff.'
His h
Dinner j
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"Fo
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