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Dilation
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Ray DiPalma

DILATION

Visibly awake meant an entire geography, bounded by invention and a mountain. An introspection lifted out of an education. The hexagonal chamber made for the octagonal room in the circular tower. You think: the assertions require marketable categories. Compunctions and trivial investigations. The moon shaped like a page in a book. August, Thursday, where is the sun? It must be morning by now. In a corner of the room a series of brass rings, beyond the table and chair, beyond the pile of papers and dropped books. Dilated information scored among the subtly inaudible. [I can barely hear you, but I'd like you to have all my money.] The yield: NUMERICAL VENTRILOQUY. A contraction of resources appropriate to the situation—strictly on a need-to-know basis. Illustrations of an inexpensive sort, admittedly, but as dignified as possible. Numbers and letters that calculate the lower edge of a black cloud. Partway there you can always go out and buy yourself some money. Avoid banks, publishing, and the art market. Calculations properly maintained provide more than the gist of a sensible arrangement. The interpolation of something perfectly legible. The burnt pages retaining certain details of what had been misunderstood. Their impassive faces lifted upwards, a small group of people stand in a far corner of the room waiting to use the telephone. Islands that deserve more than an entire wall. The years pass while the numbered days remain as thickly dispersed as any euphemism. Sotto visu, but fanatical. Recrimination and scorn pulled out of the shadows only to return as geometry. Smart dark scraps of the ACCUNUMEROID. This is what he found, this is what he lives off, and this is what he has.