



PARAPHILIA
I



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Submissions

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EDITORIAL

There is nothing in our lives that we can honestly claim is unmediated. The restraints and constraints of our cultural conditioning are everywhere. With the advent of the Industrial Revolution, the phenomenon of mass-production that offered us new possibilities of freedom, exchange and dissemination of information, new avenues of expression and knowledge also facilitated the commodification of fundamental parts of our lives that had previously remained within the realm of sovereignty.

We realised that not only were we still property but we had signed over our souls for a handful of glass beads and looking glasses.

The cultural industries have gradually cannibalised themselves, spreading like knotweed into every crevice of the human psyche and throttling genuine expression at its roots wherever it discovers any.

Nowadays a writer, or artist, or musician finds themselves considering their 'career' before they even put pen to paper or strum a note on a guitar. The insidious whispering of the superego is just over their shoulder making sure that any original thoughts or sincere feelings are vetted before they become a threat – all for what usually amounts to a kiss and a promise.

For the last few decades we've progressively acquiesced or even happily collaborated in this widespread poisoning. Until it's reached the state where the conditions imposed on all

forms of creativity (artistic or otherwise) have become refining and debilitating. The Aeon of Horus has ended with a whimper.

Starting here, with the first issue of this magazine we intend to establish links, create a network of exchange that will not be motivated by 'profit' or 'popularity'. Expression is a fundamental function of the human organism and we intend to assert our rights to it in the most unfettered way.

Most things we produce will be free or as near to that as practically possible. Basically we intend to take control of our own functions and keep the process fluid and open-ended, unstreamed, defying labels. We want to release the Dionysian, make attempts to bridge the gulf growing inside us and between us. We will strenuously resist all attempts by corporations to co-opt this from us again.

We are not looking for 'authenticity' – (there is probably nothing more fake) We want the raw material, the dripping innards of your dreams and desires, the twitching of raw nerves, the lacunae in your mental frameworks, primal screams, apocalyptic storms, great golden copulations, oneiric eclipses, chthonic eruptions, carnivorous algorithms, decapitations...

Murder your reflections and send us the video footage, we will masturbate over your posthumous suicide notes, we call for the crucifixion of culture, open the prisons, disband the armies, let out all the lunatics, free the animals from the zoos...

COLUMN

LAST DREGS OF POVERTY:

I MAY BE A BUGABOO BUT I'M NO BUM BUMPIN' BANGIN' BUGGARD:

Text and Images By Jim Lopez



Friends have asked why I have been so vociferous in explaining my sexuality. I saw Hedwig and the Angry Inch four times at the Jane Street Theater in New York, and once at the Fonda Theater in Los Angeles. At the end, when Hedwig reveals herself to be a man, sure, I felt as if I "might" want to go to bed with her or him. It was not the male Hedwig that aroused me; it was Hedwig's tragically sincere brio that aroused my amorous impulse.

When driving by the Coral Sands Motel on Western Avenue in L.A. I have, on occasion, wanted to see all the debauchery of the indestructible Sodom and Gomorrah; where men dance from can to can; where long-necked camels chew and swallow deep within the impetuous temple of avaricious decadence; where character flaunts itself uncontested, cloaked behind the Sand's Grecian pillars in a city that parades discretion shamelessly.

My gay friend, Al, recounted an absurd night he had with frog-hopping lovers swinging at the suicide fag-hag whorehouse, haunted with improvised psychedelic tales, smoked hoaxes and punch-drunk derisive swindlers lurking in the limelight of the corn-hole express.

Leaving you with your frantic imaginations I will merely convey a whitewashed account of the bone-dried necessities of propriety's hypocrisy.

Al and a friend of his picked up a young, university hustler and high tailed it over to The Sands for an

ecstatically erotic, cocaine, dick-sucking and pooper-pummelling night. The three of them sucked multiple dicks, pumped mass sums of ass and swallowed copious amounts of drugs and alcohol into their tumid bodies. Zonked Al poured himself what he thought was his last vodka and decided to go for a swim. The motel clerk came out and rebuked him, "There's no nude swimming allowed."

Sassy Al replied, "Are You Mad? I sucked three dicks, snorted a mound of cocaine, and screwed a hustler in the ass with the door open in your fine establishment, and now I can't swim nude! For fuck-sake, I must be going out of my mind!"

I have heard that the Coral Sands Motel is frequented by famous Hollywood celebrities, of course, all through the back door. My rambunctious curiosity would be satisfied catching a Star at The Sands. But that does not make me a homosexual.

I am quite reductionistic when it comes to defining my sexuality. The male body does not give me a hard-on. Priapic objects do not stimulate me; soft, wet, recessed slots with breasts do. The female body gets me stiff. Thus, I am a heterosexual. I am quite intransigent on this point, simply for the reason that I adore a woman's charm and grace. I love the way women look, feel and smell unless they are suffering from a bad case of leucorrhoea.

So one might ask, "Why my interest in the Coral Sands Motel?" Simple answered, "I'm perverted."

My lack of homophobia and my boozy demeanour have attracted more queer solicitations than I care to admit. I'm flattered that anyone would want to suck my dick; thus, I am not offended. But that does not mean that I want anyone to sodden, slurp or gargle my testicles. I'd prefer a slovenly woman to the best looking man.



On-one-too-many occasions, homosexuals have considered themselves a pundit in determining "my" sexuality. I find this insulting and irritating. I consider "gay-dar" or anyone who goes around telling heterosexuals that they are queers, who just don't know it, to be maladroitly moronic and boring. I have lost too many good friends, who happened to be

homosexuals, because of their recreant, incessant and rapacious arrogance.

I identify with only three characteristics of the homosexual, generally speaking that is: one, their fancy for art; two, their sagacious melancholia that forces them to shun society and retreat into a solitary night of drinking and obsessive reflection; and three, their proclivity for violent and grotesque movies. All three share an obscene joy.

My homosexual friends have been the only ones who appreciated, understood and envied a night I had down a filthy alley in the East Hollywood vicinity.



One night, after leaving a bar, I ambled home down a dark, slimy alley in a sloshed stupor. I was vigorously fighting with a piece of

pork gristle lodged between two molars when, all of a sudden, I stumbled over a body. Upon gathering my gait and offering an apology I noticed that the man had not stirred nor twitched a bit. I cautiously approached the sleeping drunk to see if I had damaged his face with the tip of my steel-toed jungle boot. To my wild surprise I discovered that the man was not a vagabond nor passed out on cheap wine; instead he was a well-dressed, stone-cold corpse. I thought about calling the police but dismissed the thought from my mind, asking myself, "Why should coroners have all the privileges?"

At that moment I realized that there was a dormant cannibalistic ogre inside of me. I excitedly removed the umbrella cocktail garnish from my oral cavity and plucked out the stiff's eyeball. Then I greedily popped the eye in my mouth. I gagged that gag that spews the stomach into one's vocal orifice; keeping my composure I valiantly swallowed. I stuck the umbrella garnish in the corpse's empty eye-socket and bid the dead farewell.

Only three things could have topped that night: one, driving around West Hollywood with Jack Nicholson and a bag of golf clubs; two, Sodomizing Audrey Hepburn, after which, I would drink the best wine that priority demanded, smoke a cigarette, and then sodomize Audrey again; and three, persuading Marlon Brando, Jack Nicholson, Dennis Hopper, Sean Penn, and Gary Oldman to beat the

shit out of Ben Affleck. Brando, with the mind of a Pharaoh, would murmur in Affleck's ear and then wind up and level the unsuspecting cunt. Nicholson would haul-off and whack the twat a half-dozen times with a 9 iron. Hopper would dose the dork with copious amounts of Four Way Window Pane and then take pictures of the prissy pansy. Oldman would say, "None of this is necessary," and then surprise the Betty Ford crybaby with a swift kick to the prick. And Penn would direct all the action and screen it at Cannes, where Vincent Gallo would applaud but sulk because he was left out of all the fun.

But just because I have a few "general" things in common with homosexuals does not make me a dozing dandy.

Some might think that I am sun-stroked, twisted, or incurably insane. I prefer to think of myself as enigmatic and eccentric. Now if the reader thinks that I must fly down for considering myself more than I ought too, then I will concede, but not to being a homosexual; I'll concede to being a bit touched in the head. If I am a loony than my dementia is due to the ill-advised diet that is pushed onto the American citizen by misguided members of the FDA, who demonstrate their poor judgments by sanctioning more than two thousand food additives. Now if I am mentally deranged by reasons of genetically induced and chemically processed foods, well, then so is everybody else in

America; unless I have a weaker immune system, which would make me a genetic mishap; and/is, therefore, not my fault. I would also have to declare that my insanity is due to being prematurely weaned off my mother's double-D sized breasts, which were mastectomized due to cancer and insufficient health care; therefore, I hold responsible the United States Government for not providing social health care.



When I was a child I was frequently struck down by earaches and fever-dreams, which exempted me from school for long periods of time. In the mid-to-late 1970's I was left home alone with nothing to do but consume large amounts of 7-Up and watch TV in between the plague of sweltering vehemence; consequently, I was subjected to the worst daytime television commercials. The most

annoying thirty-seconds interruption was listening to Muhammad Ali string together an endless amount of violent rhymes and disparaging neologisms directed at cockroaches. When aroused from a fever dream, which left me victim to abnormal, continual, rapid, involuntary movements of my eyeballs, I was accosted by a large punchy man who had nothing better to do but rhyme and beat the hell out of shit eating insects.

At the time, no one was concerned with political correctness, so I quickly labelled Ali a "fag." Declaring someone a "fag" did not necessarily mean that that someone was a homosexual. Kids called one another "fag" the way they called each other "Shit-head," "jerk-off," "fuck-face," "douche-bag" or whatever meaningless blah, blah, blah, they could think of.



At the age of eleven my divorced mother, not yet stricken with breast cancer and coveting her milk-jugs from me, married her own Muhammad. I was, therefore, required to attend the Islamic Mosque located on Vermont Avenue in Los Angeles. Well, that was the mosque that the heavy weight champion of the world attended. My mother became acquainted with Ali; as she was a loud mouth herself. One Saturday she insisted that I meet the champ. I remembered those vicious fever dreams amidst pounding and biting earaches and dim-witted commercials, so I rebelliously shouted, "No! Ali is a fag!" Then I sat behind a partition while my mother flagrantly shook her enormous tits at the champ. The two of them, my mother and Ali, bounced rhymes and puns back and forth. I was hiding out, minding my own business--ignoring all the men bent towards the east--when I heard my mother bark, "Come over here!"

She was creating a scene as she was prone to do. I embarrassingly walked over to my mother and nestled up under one of her drooping boobs. Mammoth Ali looked down at me, stuck his giant claw out to shake hands and said, "So, I hear you think I'm a fag."

My mother not only had a big mouth she lacked discretion and a maternal instinct to protect her young in the halls of Islam. If, in 1979, you called a Muslim a "fag" you'd better hope to be wrong or he might prove you right; so I

swiftly and adamantly denied calling Ali a "fag." Ali picked me up, twirled me around and playfully slammed me to the floor, where he then began to tickle me with his fist. After that, I thought he was the coolest man alive. Ali is not a fag and neither am I.

My grandfather invented the magnet on the electric can-opener. He was a "genius," but he was no pursuer of love or truth. His "genius" was not derived from the word generous or genial. My grandfather's "genius" was rooted in the words genuine and genital. He was one of the genuine genitals of my existence. He was a lapsed Catholic. He was an Irish drunk from the poor side of Sag Harbour, Long Island, and he traded his patent, of the magnet on the electric can-opener, for a case of JB Whiskey. He was a foolish alcoholic, so I had to work my way through adolescence in a drunken state, as the alcoholic gene was my patrimony. My mother should have committed patricide.

I invented an edible pocket pussy with a disposable bag that caught the jizz. A working man could drive to work, jack-off and eat breakfast during rush-hour traffic. I was never sober enough to draw up a patent and copyright it, but I did name it. I called it the Convenient Hole.

My grandfather was a recidivistic hobo who died alone in a trailer-park in Henderson, Nevada. I suspected him to be a closet homosexual.

Once a gang of hobos molested me under an overpass in the L.A. River, which is no longer a river. The L.A. River is more of a cement intestine that slithers the City's filth out into the Pacific Ocean. The hobos stuffed my face in a pot of hobo stew while they took turns stuffing their grimy sausages into my little bungie. I got a taste of rancid broth and a boiled shoe. They slapped me around with a crusty mitten. They took the seat off my bike and dropped it in the pot for flavour. When they were through with me I rode home without a seat, feeling like Oliver Twist.



Despite this traumatic event I never veered from the heterosexual path. I never wanted to nor felt inclined to do so. I have been told by a number of women that the first time they kissed me they thought to themselves, "I'm in trouble."

My response has always been, "Damn straight!" And that's not only because I am straight.

My penis size is an average six-inches and I like getting it soaked and slogged and twirled and swirled by a woman who thinks I'm King Kong or Bing Cosby and more useful than her Steely Dan.

A Boston curator who preferred sodomy asked me if I'd mind her brandishing a turd as I pulled my chili-dog out of her ass while she was in the acme of sexual excitement.

"In my bed?" I asked disgustingly.

"No, you schlemiel, we'd do it in the shower."

The horrible sight of my soiled flaccid member indicated that this woman had a poor diet. I would have puked all over her had I witnessed nasty faecal matter oozing out of her ass while she twitched in orgasmic splendour.

When I got out of bed to splash water on my face and clean my cock I saw her stocking lying on the floor within arm's length, so I used it for the latter. Then I picked up the rest of her clothes and tossed them to her. "It sounds enchanting, but I'd like you to leave now," I gently demanded.

I loved getting a hall pass during high school. A hall pass gave me a lurking liberty to make my way to the Gary Glitter to smoke a spliff, pull the pud, and take a shit. I was,

and still am, a bit uptight about defecating in public facilities, as my limitations manifest that I am indeed a man with issues, but that doesn't make me a homosexual. It takes me a long time to wipe the nutter-butter from between my buns than it does to crap. I need time and space; therefore, I would stroll to the most secluded can on campus. The shit would never manifest itself as I spread my cheeks over a filthy commode. I wondered, "If Gandhi could crap in the dankest holes of India then why couldn't I drop a load in an adolescent toilet?" I had no problem jerking-off thinking about eating my girlfriend for lunch.

Eighteen-years later, while living in Italy, I started smoking hash again, interrupting fifteen-years of abstinence. I had been in a foul mood, and thought I could use a new way of looking at the day. One night my friend, Paolo, and I smoked four spliffs. Time began to pass slowly. Paolo laughed at me. I laughed at me. He said that I looked like Garfield the Cat, fat and droopy eyed.

A childhood friend, named Matthew, had a cat that looked like Garfield; only Mathew's cat was named Morrissi (said with a Spanish accent). Mathew would get stoned with Morrissi. Morrissi would lie on his back lodged between Mathew's arm and torso. Mathew did a perfect Pepé Le Pew impersonation. In between kissing Morrissi on the snout Mathew would passionately seduce the cat, saying, "Come Morrissi, we can do

away with all of the preliminaries.” This he said while rubbing Morrissi’s furry little balls.

I thought Paolo was making a stony baloney pass at me, so I threw a glass of wine in his face, attempting to sober him, explaining, “Just because I live abroad it doesn’t mean I am a broad.”

“What the hell are you talking about?” Paolo asked, reaching for a towel.

“I don’t know, but children should never play with detonating devices!” Then I hit him with some Moroccan Mud and asked, “Hey, fag, are we still friends?”



VIRUS

By A D Hitchin

Am I Pretending? Just pacifying? Perhaps. But for three days he had been hysterical. Head buried in my chest and never coming up. Breath wheezing in the damp creases of my cardigan.

Doctors are uncertain of the exact diagnosis at the moment. His fears seem to be based on problem reports on TV and in newspapers. As if the panic has leapt from the media into his veins and mutated like a virus. Now he is convinced he has caused the recent earthquake in China. That his anger at their human rights violations manifested as a geological disaster. On a positive note though, he did claim to have caused the breakdown of Britney Spears psychically. I have tried to dwell on this 'achievement', but he remains implacable. Worse still, he believes he will manifest much worse cataclysms worldwide unless he can regain some kind of control.

His Mother could be a professional clam. Her tiny eyes stare at him rabbit scared and she says absolutely nothing.

At times she gives me a warm, appreciative smile and I catch her looking at me fondly. I think she

fears I will leave him. Her most extreme reaction was when he began shouting about the apocalypse. I caught her furtively gesticulating in the hallway. The next day there was a picture of Mary and Jesus stuck to the fridge. Glossy in plastic.

Perhaps these are long suppressed guilt's exhibiting as delusions? Projections lit by a paranoid, frightened population, fed into a frenzy by the media.

I always felt he understood me. Even now, when I ask him how he is able to cause these disasters and he tells me about a period at the beginning of human history when we all existed as vegetable matter and that this vegetable matter is now our nervous system, I still see compassion in his eyes. A certain lucidity.

Today, he managed a brief walk out into the meadow. Suddenly, he stopped and, staring out over the fields he said: 'I just want there to be peace.'

In that single moment I have never understood him more.

THE SMOKE ABOVE THE CAMPS

By Audree Flynn

In America some people feel there is no justice, as long as certain politicians are immune from prosecution for their crimes; others see no point in dwelling in the past, and prefer to just move on. Since 1993, Canada has been polarized this way, by an issue of immunity and crimes; there, too, some people say that justice is denied, while others hold that wisdom lies in moving forward, towards the light. There are reasonable justifications to be made for both arguments. But there is an issue which neither stance addresses.

In Germany, in 1945, when the various Allied forces moved in to liberate the camps, they documented the atrocities they found. As the images of things once unspeakable and once contained found their way into the world, the German people, the ordinary citizens living in and around the countryside, argued one of these positions or the other, from their anger, and from their shame.

And at that time, one German man, whose name I do not know, but a wise man and a brave one, I believe—with all around him, angry and ashamed, this man spoke to his countrymen and neighbours—and he said the only thing that really mattered and the one thing they did not want to hear:

“It didn’t have to come to this. We knew—everyone knew...we knew about Belsen...Dachau...we all knew, whenever we saw the smoke...we knew what the stench that hung in the air was...and if all of us who knew had tried as hard to stop it as the one who started it...this did not have to happen--it did not have to come to this.”

PART ONE DEALING WITH THE DEVIL



“...the vast majority remains unseen, hidden below the surface. This massive information pool can be damaging to all and sundry because down there, in the deep, dark intricacies of intersecting interviews and cross-references and chronologies, in veritable oceans of accumulated, often uncollated information, lies the truth and it seldom sets anyone free.”— (Stephen Williams, Karla: A Pact With The Devil)

Paul Bernardo and Karla Homolka met in 1987, when he was 23 and she was 17. They married in 1991,

six months after they raped and killed Karla's little sister, and two weeks after abducting, raping and killing 14- year-old Leslie Mahaffy. The following year, in April of 1992, 15-year-old Kristen French would be the next young lady unlucky enough to cross paths with the Bernardos, and her fate would be the same as that of Tammy Homolka and Ms. Mahaffy.

Three months after Paul and Karla met in 1987, a series of brutal rapes began in Scarborough, a large suburban area of Toronto where Paul Bernardo lived. The last assault attributed to the Scarborough Rapist occurred in 1990.



Mention "Bernardo and Homolka" to a true crime buff, and you'll probably hear about two things which make this case significant. One is that Paul and Karla videotaped themselves sexually assaulting Ms. Mahaffy and Ms. French, and Karla's sister, Tammy. The other is the part those tapes would play in their prosecution.

Bernardo admitted he was responsible for every sexual assault attributed to him (and even a few that weren't), but he steadfastly maintained Homolka had been the killer. Homolka, of course, pointed the finger at Bernardo, and it isn't likely we will ever know the truth of the matter.

However, to this day Paul Bernardo insists he never killed anyone, and it is worth noting that while they are hardly better off, the 19 victims of the Scarborough Rapist are still alive. Not one girl died until Karla Homolka, literally, was in the picture. After the death of Kristen French, Bernardo, never the most stable character in the best of times, began to psychologically "disassemble". In late December, 1992, he beat his wife so badly the ER doctor reported in his 15 years it was the worst case of domestic abuse he'd seen.

On February 1, 1993, The Toronto police got three positive DNA matches to Bernardo for the Scarborough rapes, and Karla was happy to lend them her views of her now estranged husband. Everything unravelled after that, and soon both Paul and Karla would find themselves facing the legal consequences of their actions.

After a two year investigation beginning with the death of Leslie Mahaffy, and the addition of a large and costly task force, Inspector Vince Bevan, the man whose job it was to apprehend the perpetrators of the

French/Mahaffy murders, had clues he could not decipher and little else. An officer of Bevan's rank should know that eyewitness accounts are notoriously unreliable; nevertheless, based on the statements of a few eyewitnesses who reported seeing two men in a cream-colored Camaro near the site of Kristen French's abduction, the Inspector threw all his efforts into a futile search for a just such a car.

Ideally, neighbouring law enforcement jurisdictions work together in a spirit of cooperation to move toward a common goal. In reality, to say the atmosphere was "tense" between Inspector Bevan's task force and the Toronto Metro police would be a gross understatement. When the Toronto detectives interviewed Karla Homolka regarding her husband's proclivities, Bevan was not invited to take part in this discussion. However, he *was* allowed to give the Toronto detectives a list of items *they* could ask Karla if she had seen, and that list included a watch that was missing from Kristen French's body.



This interview would prove more informative to Karla than to anyone; it told her the police had made a connection between the Scarborough Rapist and the murdered girls, which, in fact, officially, they had not. Keep in mind, this is in spite of the fact that the Toronto detectives who interviewed Homolka notes, she turned white as sheet and stammered after the question about the watch; they underestimated her, and chalked this up to the stress of being interviewed by the police for the first time.

The following day, Karla saw her lawyer and after confessing the bizarre circumstances of her marriage, she asked him to seek full immunity from prosecution on her behalf. Until the interview with the Toronto detectives when Bevan's question tipped her hand, Karla's plan for the future, as she states in her diary, was to "get my stuff back" from the home she shared with Bernardo, and "go out and have some fun." On February 11, 1993, the RCMP met with the FBI to hear the profiler's theories about men like domestic terrorist Paul Bernardo – and supposed reasons why women like Homolka find them suitable romantic partners. The FBI obliged their Canadian equivalent with a then unpublished paper entitled, "Compliant Victims of the Sexual Sadist". This paper surveyed seven women who were at that time incarcerated for crimes they committed with their spouses or lovers; generally, it explained their criminal behavior as aberrant, a

consequence of their partner's brutal treatment; put more simply—they were beaten into being bad. The decision was made at this meeting: the compliant victim/sexual sadist model best fit the dynamics of the relationship between Bernardo and Homolka. And I will tell you now, that for my country's part in this I am truly ashamed.

There are people who believe the attacks on 9/11 became the justification for an unnecessary war, and a war which has more to do with profit than with principle. However true that may or may not be, only the former President can say. But I can tell you this: the men who wear the badge that stands for fidelity and bravery and integrity--brought none of it to Canada that day.

No doubt the police do their best with the information they're given by men from the FBI and RCMP, but the problem with that is the same one I face if see a new doctor on an emergency basis—I'm pretty much at his mercy as far as my immediate problem is concerned, and for all I know the man I'm talking to is an idiot. The situation requires a healthy mistrust of authority, an attitude which, by its nature, is antithetical to law enforcement.

Keep in mind that Ron Mackay, the RCMP officer who introduced the unpublished "Compliant Victims" paper at this meeting, was a protégé of the FBI agent who co-authored it, Roy Hazelwood. Agent

Hazelwood must have been proud that day, and I say "must have" because neither I nor Roy Hazelwood were there. In fact, Roy Hazelwood would not meet or speak with Karla Homolka about sexual sadists or anything else, until 1996, a year after Paul Bernardo's trial was over—and long after Mr. Hazelwood's theory transformed Karla from a full-status 1st degree murder accomplice into something closer to the girls whose deaths she was responsible for.

And keep in mind--when they made this decision, none of the men who were at this meeting—including the RCMP's Ron Mackay and the intrepid Inspector Bevan—had ever laid eyes on either Paul or Karla. "Compliant Victims of the Sexual Sadist" was simply a stroke of luck for the Inspector, as it became the basis for a renewed search warrant and allowed him to take back control of his own investigation.

After almost two years and the addition of his much heralded task force, Bevan did not have a single shred of evidence against Paul Bernardo, in spite of having run his name through suspect data banks 17 times—he actually cleared Paul Bernardo as a suspect in the murders a year before. As late as February 6, 1993, the Inspector had been quoted by the press, saying it was his belief there was no link between the murders of Kristen French and Leslie Mahaffy. Instead of functioning as an effectively conjoined unit, the

multi-jurisdictional teams of law enforcement--Toronto Metro with the Scarborough rape investigation and Bevan with Niagara Regional and the French/Mahaffy murders--were squaring off in opposition for what would become the golden Bernardo collar. And Bevan must have seen his career flashing before his eyes, because Toronto Metro, with three DNA matches and more on the way, was winning. But regardless of the truth of the matter, that Karla was a woman beaten into complying with the twisted desires of her pervert of a husband, was an assumption that would stick because it served, if not a greater purpose, at least a larger one. And when these astute men made their decision it was the compliant victim/sexual sadist dynamic that best fit the picture -- the picture they were looking at was of Karla Homolka on the night Bernardo beat her. Keep that very much in mind; in *The Case of The Ken and Barbie Killers*, it's the equivalent of Congress saying, Mr. President, you got your war. As certain American presidents are wont to do, the aforementioned true crime buff is likely not to have taken time for a penetrating look at the actual circumstances surrounding the crime he reads about. In the case of Paul and Karla, the likelihood is, what is written will proclaim as heroes the men responsible for the investigation and arrest of Paul Bernardo, and the men who prosecuted him as earnest souls simply doing their sworn duty to protect the good citizens of Canada.

But behind this veil of honor, what is now commonly believed to be the necessary basis for everything that was done in the name of capturing "Ken and Barbie", has in fact, little to do with the videotapes or the images of the crimes they contain--and nothing to do with whether or not Bernardo was in fact a "sexual sadist" and Homolka his "compliant victim"-- In an effort to save his failing and expensive investigation, Inspector Bevan sent his officers to the home of Karla's defence attorney, after hours and with an urgent message in hand. And if you're any good at poker, you know that since the police do not habitually rendezvous late at night at the home of defence attorneys, when they do, it says a great deal about the hand they're holding.

As human nature dictates, whatever we can imagine is darker and more fantastic than what is, and what began as rumours and theory about the "two morally vacuous, would-be hipsters from Southern Ontario" turned into fact when the rumours were more titillating and the theories more convenient than the reality. The Canadian government issued media and publication bans, a tenet of their law unfamiliar to most Americans and highly questionable in a supposedly free society. The atmosphere in Canada became surreal: American newspapers were smuggled across the border and whatever could not be found in print, the emerging force of online users would provide.

The picture of Canadian justice we see in the Bernardo/Homolka case is even reminiscent of Anthony Burgess' socialized society in *A Clockwork Orange*. According to Burgess, his clockwork orange Alex, is: "a creature who can only perform good, or evil...meaning that he has the appearance of an organism, but is in fact only a clockwork toy to be wound up by God or the Devil or the almighty State." The metaphor accurately describes the final chapter of the Bernardo/Homolka saga, as well; both are cautionary tales that more often than evil and good, our only choice is to determine as best we can what truly is the lesser of two evils.

To demonstrate the effectiveness of the Ludovico Technique, a form of aversion therapy combining violent, sexual images with nausea-inducing drugs, in *A Clockwork Orange* the ruling political party gathers an assortment of government workers and officials in an auditorium; they watch as State-hired actors bait and assault our anti-hero, Alex, who has recently suffered through this two-week "treatment" program.

In the dystopian world of *A Clockwork Orange*, Alex's only real protector is the prison chaplain, who, appalled by this display, rises to his feet and cries: "Choice. The boy has no real choice, has he?...He ceases to be a wrongdoer. He ceases also to be a creature capable of choosing...if a man cannot choose, he ceases to be a man."

While the prison chaplain's point is an impassioned one, its counterpoint is swiftly raised by the official who originally hand-picked Alex for a treatment candidate: "Padre, these are subtleties. We're not concerned with motives, with the higher ethics. We are concerned only with cutting down crime; and with relieving the ghastly congestion in our prisons ... Reclamation! Joy before the angels of God! The point is that it works."

At Paul Bernardo's trial all six hours of the infamous sex tapes were played on a virtual loop, and the content of the couple's home movies would have made Alex in his natural state, flinch. But the jury also saw the immunity-protected Karla Homolka starring in that ghastly video—not as the "compliant victim" of her "sexual sadist" husband the prosecution made her out to be, but as every bit Bernardo's female counterpart. And after what was basically a pissing contest between the various facets of law enforcement and the Crown, the highly unpopular result was that Ms. Homolka would be leaving government custody in what amounted to the fortnight Alex spent enduring the Ludovico Technique.

The Crown's refusal to revoke "the deal with the devil", as Homolka's plea-bargain arrangement came to be known, was predicated in part on the same faceless logic the government official in Alex's world invoked: time is money, and voting, tax-payer money at that.

Millions of dollars were wasted on Inspector Bevan's task force and add to that the money to pay the prosecution lawyers, their assistants, the time and money put into preparing Karla Homolka as a witness against her ex-husband--for the moment, suffice it to say, a hell of a lot of money had been spent.

But money isn't everything, and it's worth noting that in *A Clockwork Orange*, due to the bad publicity the government receives for the Ludovico Technique, the official who hand-picked Alex for the program--like certain Inspectors we're aware of--was prepared to do whatever was necessary to keep from being booted out of office.

Generally speaking, once people reach a certain station or position, they prefer to remain in that position. Some might seek a higher office, but once ground is gained no one wants to lose it, and if a threat appears too great, the more likely the abuse of power becomes. This is true for politicians and police, and it's also true for men like Paul Bernardo.

In the latter part of 1990, when fiance Paul Bernardo took an "interest" in her 15-year-old sister, rather than end the relationship, or at least call off the wedding, Karla Homolka's solution to this problem was to procure Halothane, an animal anaesthetic, and sedatives from the vet clinic where she worked as a surgical assistant. The thinking, if you can call it that, was

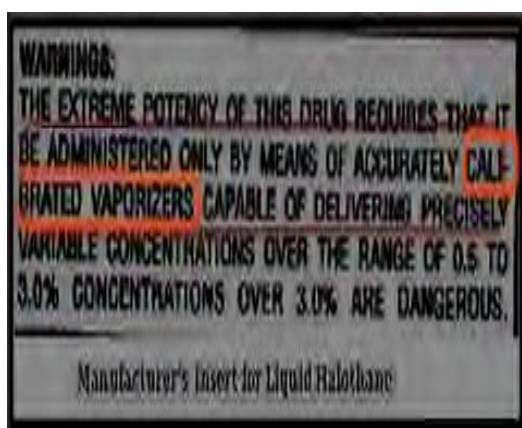
to knock her baby sister out and "give her" to Paul Bernardo as a one of a kind Christmas present. It was certainly more than most women would've given him, and on Christmas Eve, 1990, the plan was put into action.



It is unfortunate for Tammy Homolka, however, that her sister carried out this demented act; as a veterinary assistant, she was well aware that if the "patient" has had any food or drink in the previous 24-hour period, using anaesthetic is "contraindicated". And she certainly knew that Halothane was intended to be used with a calibrated vaporizer, not doused liberally on a rag and held over the mouth and nose. But this is something we can be certain Karla did, not only because the happy couple videotaped themselves attacking Karla's sister, but also because of a particularly disturbing morgue photo of Tammy Lyn Homolka, with a large raspberry red burn covering her cheek and extending to the hairline on the right side of her face.

In spite (or perhaps because) of Karla's efforts, Paul Bernardo began expressing doubts about the upcoming nuptials. No proof is

good enough for some people, but whatever else she was, Karla wasn't a quitter. Reaching into her bag of tricks again, she lured a young friend of hers (known in court as Jane Doe) to the couple's home, and called Bernardo on his cell phone to tell her soon-to-be hubby she had a "wedding gift" waiting for him.



Keep in mind that since Paul Bernardo did not even know Jane Doe, it's impossible for Karla's testimony, that he made her summon the teenager to their home, to be anything but perjury, which in and of itself was grounds for revoking the plea-bargain deal. And keep in mind Karla, all on her own, drugged, and anaesthetized her friend, not once but twice, in exactly the same manner she obviously knew had killed her sister just a scant six months before.

Keep all that in mind, because no investigation of Karla Homolka would come out of it, and no additional charges would be brought against her. Even with six hours of videotape in which she is either directing the

on-camera activity "with all the blasé of a photographer taking baby pictures at Sears", as someone put it, or actively sexually assaulting Tammy Homolka, Jane Doe, Leslie Mahaffy and Kristen French—in spite of that, Karla Homolka would never be charged with a single sex crime, which made both her present and her future circumstances infinitely better than those her partner in crime was facing, and would face.

At any rate, of the two of them Paul Bernardo was the real danger, according to the Crown, and Karla Homolka's testimony against her now ex-husband was deemed so necessary she received two concurrent 10-year sentences for manslaughter on the Mahaffy/French murder charges, with obligatory "Two for Tammy" years, also to be served concurrently, tacked on.



There's a photograph of Karla taken after Paul Bernardo beat her with a flashlight, and in the picture there are long, dark bruises under her eyes. The injury is called a contra-coup, sometimes referred to as "raccoon-eyes", and it's caused by a violent blow to the back of the head, hard enough to send the

brain slamming forward to the front the skull. The circumstances under which this injury occurred are as disturbing as the image itself: while it's true enough that Paul Bernardo enjoyed making his victims tell him what a prince he was while he was raping them, if we have nothing else to say about his character, it should be noted that of the two of them, it was Bernardo who slowly came unhinged in the wake of Tammy's death.

It takes some digging to find it now, but the reason for the raccoon-eyed injury is in the court transcript from Homolka's cross-examination; you have to wonder what took Paul Bernardo so long to ask his wife why at each Christmas reminder of Tammy's death she was not reduced to the snivelling wreck he was. But when he finally did confront her with this query, looking at the black-eyed photograph, it's obvious the answer was unsatisfactory.

When Paul and Karla made their home movie of her sister's Christmas Eve rape, Tammy vomited suddenly, and in the story as it's most often told, a noxious combination of alcohol, food, sedatives, and Halothane, caused the vomit to be acidic or caustic. The acidity of the vomit coming in contact with skin is cited as the most likely source of the burn.

But if you look closely at the morgue photo you see very fine facial hair on Tammy's face, even in the areas the burn covers.

Something caustic enough to leave a burn that raspberry red certainly would've taken baby-fine facial hair with it.

And since it did no damage to the eyebrows or eyelashes, the burn does not appear to be the result of anything flammable, or the result of a splash with something corrosive. And the demarcated edges of the burn seem to stand above the top layer of skin, as in relief; in other words, the burn does not appear to be topical, in the usual sense, and a 2001 article in the Canadian journal *Elm Street* cites medical examiner Dr. Vincent Di Mao, as saying that the anaesthetic "pools" below the skin.

Keep in mind, it only "pools" in this instance, because it's supposed to be used with a vaporizer--because the Halothane has steadily decreasing amounts of oxygen to mix with. And keep in mind it's "pooling" because someone's still applying it to Tammy's nose and mouth; less oxygen--less breath--is mixing with it. The point is--this continues even after Tammy Lyn Homolka is dead.

The account of this incident usually reads as if the assault on Tammy is in progress when she begins to vomit, and the impression is that the events occur much more closely together than perhaps they do: according to a never-made-public police report, at the time her sister began "to look funny", as Karla puts it, Paul Bernardo was in another room asleep, and was awakened by her 45 minutes to an

hour after the videotape shows the sexual assault on Tammy stopped. Coordinating the events of that night between the starting and stopping point of the videotape, with the time the call was made to Emergency Services and the time they responded—it appears that only Karla Homolka was with her sister when she died.



Keep in mind that it is standard procedure in the Canadian criminal justice system to release inmates at their earliest possible parole date--after serving one-third of their sentence. Since Karla's two ten year sentences for the French/Mahaffy murders ran concurrently with the two year sentence she received for Tammy's death, the strange accounting process by which someone arrived at the "Two for Tammy" years was for all intents and purposes completely meaningless. And even if this weren't standard procedure, written into the plea-bargain agreement was a clause stating, in effect, parole was only four short years away.

Inspector Bevan first heard the name "Paul Bernardo" prior to

April 1992, from the Toronto Metro police investigating the Scarborough rapes; even before the DNA evidence was in, a police artist's sketch of the Scarborough Rapist brought in many calls naming Bernardo as someone who strongly resembled the image on the flyer, and women who were nearly victims managed to get a license plate number that would prove to match Bernardo's car. The DNA evidence from the Scarborough rapes sat for over two years, untested, somewhere in Toronto.

Kristen French was abducted in April of 1992.

Neither Paul's name nor Karla's turned up on a routine name search in connection with Tammy Homolka's death, because Inspector Bevan never made a routine name search for "Bernardo" or "Homolka". In a photograph taken by one of the senior officers investigating her death, the videotape of Tammy Homolka's rape is sitting on Karla's nightstand--no one checked to see what was on the tape, and it was not collected for evidentiary purposes. And the investigating officers--who had the advantage of seeing Tammy, herself--looked at what you've seen and accepted Karla Homolka's explanation that the red mark on her sister's face was a rug burn, an accident that happened when in their frantic efforts to save Tammy, Paul and Karla dropped her.

And between Tammy's death and Kristen's, there is Leslie Mahaffy, and along with all of the girls in Scarborough there is Jane Doe, who didn't die, and at times wishes, perhaps, she had. And if you tire of my constant imprecation to keep this and that in mind, consider yourself more fortunate than these young women who don't need to be reminded, it did not have to come to this.

The narrative would be incomplete without a final word about the deaths of Ms. Mahaffy and Ms. French. Technically Paul and Karla were equally guilty of first-degree murder, but unless Karla slipped up on the stand the "deal with the devil", was deemed untouchable. Only Paul was facing the full weight of all the charges, and the best result that could be realistically hoped for was a guilty verdict on *second-degree* murder, instead of first. It wasn't much, but understandably, no one wanted to give Paul Bernardo much; with second-degree murder convictions he might have the chance at a life outside of prison. Someday. But for today, everything would come down to whether a jury could be persuaded that Karla, and not Paul, had the intent to kill. Homolka states in both instances she was present when Bernardo strangled the abducted girls with an electrical cord. Bernardo's story is, it was always his intention to let the girls go; in both instances, with Leslie and with Kristen, he says he left the house to get take-out food and to rent movies, and each time when he returned, the girls were

dead. Which, given what's at stake, in my opinion is a story that's just too stupid to base a defense on if it isn't true.

People who are of the opinion Bernardo is a murderer say that once he'd finished with Leslie and Kristen, Paul thought killing them might be the quickest solution to his problem. But looking at everything else he's done, and the manner in which he's done it, I have to disagree.

In his testimony Bernardo stated that both weekend nights while he was zigging here for take-out and zagging there for movies, he also stopped at a gas station. The thinking, if you can call it that, was to make sure to fill the tank because he planned to drive the girls home the next day and he didn't want to come to a sputtering stop somewhere with a missing girl in tow, because you know, who'd believe he was bringing her *back*—I told you it was stupid.

But stupid or not, ex-accountant and pack rat Paul Bernardo kept almost every receipt ever given to him, so there is a record of all that zig-zagging. And keep in mind, you have to try and see this as he saw it, since proving intent means the difference between dying in prison, or not.

Karla once remarked in a police interview that she'd been surprised, watching Paul with the girls; she described him as vicious and full of rage in one moment, brushing Kristen's hair and almost

tender in the next. This is not the emotional landscape of the sexual sadist; this is how men behave when they've been made to hate their need of women - they do not *retaliate* so much as they *become* retaliation.

For Bernardo, the girls are like a special item long on layaway that you've had the perfect spot all picked out for. Once you bring it home and set it in its pre-arranged place, and push it back this way, and bring it forward a little there—when it's situated to your liking, you don't grab an axe and swing until the reward for all your patience lies like kindling on the ground.

It's risky business abducting girls in broad daylight, even with a helpmate. But being the prince of a fellow that he is, Paul has chosen to "reward" his victims with dinner and a movie, and made three different stops to do it, so--once he's brought home the bacon, and the videos, and he's king of his castle again, with a pretty, little compliant wife and a young plaything to boot-- for the man who desires that and does all this to get it--for the narcissistic, former accountant who *never threw anything away*, it makes no sense that his next step is to wrap an electrical cord around his harem girl's neck and strangle her to death.

As much as they are objects on which to vent his rage, in the calm after the storm, Bernardo needs the girls like a junkie needs a drug just

to feel normal. And what sets him apart from the sexual sadist is that the intensity of his need is such, he aims to make them need him in return.

The Scarborough rapes were all prolonged attacks, lasting almost two hours in some cases; Bernardo practically showered Jane Doe with gifts, as Karla states, "trying to buy her love." As twisted as it is, Paul Bernardo is a "collector", and all of these incidents are mini-"relationships" to him; he needs all of them, and to pack rat Paul Bernardo the thought of killing Leslie and Kristen would be the equivalent of an addict tossing away his drugs—by sheer self-interest, it would be unthinkable. It defies our basic structure to destroy what we need. Karla, on the other hand, has her own peculiar and mercenary reasoning. Unlike her mercurial partner, she is steadier and more careful. But as attentive as she is, her perception's somewhat skewed, like one of nature's mothers stealing eggs from other nests to make her own nest count come out right. There's something else worth noting about that black-eyed photograph of Karla. Paul Bernardo beat his wife severely all along her body; to document how savage a beating she received, the hospital took pictures, head-to-toe. In one of those pictures you can see Karla's wearing a watch--it's not a gift, and it's not a watch she bought—but it's nothing fancy, just an ordinary Mickey Mouse watch. A watch just like a million other watches on the wrists of a million

other girls, who also never quite outgrew the well-known Disney icon. Nothing distinguishes this item on the surface. But like the girl who wears it in the hospital photographs, what sets this watch apart is hiding in the light. Unlike a million other watches, this one has a primitive and terrible significance, like jewellery sculpted from the bones of vanquished enemies, worn as both adornment and a warning, *...I'm capable of this...if you are not, I'll wear your bones as well...*

But since there was no omen or thunderbolt of warning--and since most everything in life seemed good, and right and fine, as a normal 15-year-old schoolgirl in modern-day Ontario, such primitive and predatory thinking would never have occurred to Kristen French.

On the only tape in which we see the two of them alone, Karla regales Bernardo with future tales of all the things life has in store for them; the room is dark, and the soon-to-be bride and groom lie before a roaring fire in the fireplace. Cosy. Intimate. All in all it seems quite the romantic setting. But in her future tales, Karla isn't talking about the car or the house they'll have some day, or of all the things they'd buy if they were rich beyond their wildest dreams; she is counting though--there could be 10, 20--even 50--together they could have as many as 50, she exclaims. And what she's counting off in multiples of 10 for the one she hopes to marry, is the number

of young girls that as man-and-wife and side by side, they can enslave.

When she's asked on cross-examination about the time Kristen French spent in her home, Karla expresses some regrets, and Bernardo's defense attorney pounces on a particular phrase she uses; according to Karla, she and Kristen interacted more like girlfriends than abductor and abducted, and she seems a little wistful when she says, "It's hard...because you get to know these people..."

...You get to know these people...

You get to know these people, but the weekend's almost over, and Karla must be thinking, too, how absurd it is...Paul, driving them home ...Leslie...or Kristen...but even Paul and Karla have unspoken agreements...and silent rules, like all couples do--that's your job, this is mine, and most of it's understood--and generally men know the silent rules exist and operate accordingly... but sometimes...sometimes men forget the silent rules...they say a woman's work is never done...

it's hard, because you get to know these people

Keep in mind, in that romantic fireside setting, those future tales are woven a mere two weeks after putting Karla's sister in the ground. And that when she's counting off young girls in decimation style, when she reaches "50", Karla tells

Bernardo, "They can be our children."

...how hard must it have been for Leslie, or for Kristen,... thinking she's the only way they might get out of this... hoping she might save them ...and finding out she won't...it's hard when you get to know these people...

Keep all that in mind, and think about how hard it must have been four years ago this Spring, when these people heard the news that Karla Leanne Homolka walked away from prison without a single parole restriction placed upon her by the Crown. Or how hard it must have been two years later, when they heard the news that day--Karla just gave birth and has a child.

We're not little children anymore, in our post 9/11 world, and that governments lie is a reality we accept as one more inconvenient truth. But while as children or adults we may not have a choice about the truth we're told, as men and women we have the final word about the truth we choose. For the first time, on September 11, 2001, Americans faced a fear the rest of the world is well-acquainted with, and being inexperienced, America made poor choices; when confronted with "Ken and Barbie Killers" Paul and Karla, the Crown made poor choices for its people. The constant is the question--which is the lesser of two evils, this or that--and in this bleak equation, perhaps the better variable is the feeling you were worthy of the effort of an outright lie, as opposed

to being told you can't handle the truth.

PART TWO

PAUL BERNARDO, CANADA'S CLOCKWORK ORANGE

"...the sins of the people thus symbolically transferred to the beast, and it was removed to the wilderness. The people felt purged, and for the time being, guiltless."
--from the *Book of Leviticus*



These days, in his always lit and always guarded 8'x4' solitary isolation cell, 6-footer Paul Bernardo has little of either the burdens or benefits of choice, and now he stars in another videotape sans Ms. Homolka: a security camera, property of Correctional Services Canada, keeps a video record of his every twitch or sigh, and while Canada goes on celebrating its humanitarian record, if you should ask out loud how these conditions are in *any way* correcting Paul Bernardo's ability to choose the moral high road, you're likely to be shushed before you can say "Abu Ghraib", in our post-9/11 world. A 2006 newspaper article quotes a former Bernardo guard as saying

during her time on that watch, "Paul was always cheerful"; perhaps I am the only one much heartened by that news, but like the prison chaplain in *A Clockwork Orange*, I would also have to ask how much choice he has. The government which is lauded for its humanitarianism and seeks to avoid conflict at all costs, must be pleased with all his cheerfulness; the image of a contented Paul Bernardo would continue to hammer home, though the "deal with the devil" might have been a costly waste of time and a complete miscarriage of justice, the point is that it worked.



Although the media ban is still in effect for Paul Bernardo, there was a slight "exception" made recently when a judge's ruling decreed it fine and dandy for the public to see the videotape of Bernardo in a 2007 police interrogation. It is in fact a sort of two-bites-at-the-apple interview regarding an unsolved murder in which, mind you, no rape was committed, and for which Bernardo has not been charged. It's difficult to know to whose Machiavellian delight it might have been, hearing the public scorn of the evil Paul Bernardo, stir-crazy

now perhaps from living in solitary confinement for the last 13 years. Maybe it was the Canadian equivalent of the twisted American genius who came up the name "Healthy Forests Initiative" for legislation which profits no one but the logging industry. And sure enough, in the video, most of the interview time is taken up by crazy ol' Bernardo, repeatedly asking his visitors all manner of nit-picky little questions--like what they were thinking when they accepted the word of his ex-wife wholly and completely at face value, without so much as a polygraph to stand on.

By American standards, this seems an altogether reasonable question, but apparently, not by Canadian ones: when asked about the media ban still in effect on inmate Bernardo, Donna Marrin, Warden for Kingston Prison for Men responded, "Correctional Services Canada does not at this time feel that media attention would be in Paul Bernardo's or the institution's best interests." When asked if he had or was receiving any services from counsellors, therapists, etc., such as were well afforded to Homolka, the official answer from Warden Marrin was that this is "a non-issue for inmate Bernardo". The Warden's reply is rather quick and to-the-point, and it's only a bit of a tangle for those of us given to thinking about such things that inmate Bernardo is in the custody of a facility that purports to be "correctional".

But then again, only those of us who know the circumstances behind the black-eyed photograph of Karla understand what a grand little piece of irony it is, that as much as Inspector Bevan might have needed her, the compliant victim theory would've been a harder sell if Bernardo hadn't womped his little wifelet in the head. Many Canadian taxpayers are of the opinion that \$125, 000 a year is wasted on housing Paul Bernardo. But keep in mind that the ambitious Inspector Bevan had previously, and prematurely, arrested Bernardo on murder charges the Inspector had as yet no evidence he committed. So that opinion must be reconciled with the nearly \$11, 000, 000 the Crown wasted on a task force which through its own bungling and ineptitude came within an inch of ensuring Paul Bernardo's freedom, not just once, but twice. The common thread in the morally vacuous decision not to revoke Karla Homolka's sweetheart deal and the equally faulty and mercenary decision to plunge us into war is that in both cases a government deliberately deceived its people, for reasons both of profit and of pride--whether it's Bush's convenient assurance that the wrath of Saddam Hussein will rain down on us in the form of a mushroom cloud, or the Crown's insistence that no one's safe unless Bernardo stays in Kingston until his clock runs out, regardless of the source or nature of the threat we're told is imminent, the point is, when fear makes choices for us—nothing works.

Paul Bernardo has little reason to hope for a reversal of his misfortune, as Canada's "Dangerous Offender" statute almost guarantees he will remain in the Kingston Prison for Men for what's left of his natural life. This does not deter some folks from making Paul Bernardo the argument for re-instating the death penalty, but for the time being, Canada maintains that housing its clockwork orange in his 8' by 4' isolation cell for every second of every minute and so on until he dies is more humane than the alternative its rowdy Southern neighbours would likely offer.



Filmmaker Michael Moore is fond of pointing out that given its size and population, crime rates are lower in Canada than in the United States. But with all due respect to Mr. Moore, I would have to add, that depends on what you mean by "crime".

Before we elected him to the highest office in the land, not once but twice, George W. Bush was a failed Texas businessman who never held a single post or job his family didn't arrange and which he subsequently lost. Depending on

your point of view, he is directly or indirectly responsible for the deaths of over 4,000 of his countrymen—but Dubya will never see the inside of even a county jail cell unless he's touring the facility on some post-Presidential dog-and-pony show.

As a serial rapist, Paul Bernardo is a man I should rightly call an enemy. But I would sooner shake his hand and sit across the table from Paul Bernardo than I would Karla Homolka on any given day; he is by far the lesser of their two evils, and thanks to the Canadian clockwork makers who set her free—in post-9/11 America even Paul Bernardo is less an enemy than either Karla or al-Queda could ever be.

Before they destroyed the infamous tapes, the men who gave Karla Homolka immunity, not once but twice, took the documents of the atrocities they found, and gathered the ordinary citizens together to see the images of everything unspeakable they contained. With the remains of Karla's vanquished enemies, they wove a tale that told how but for him, she wasn't capable of this—show him mercy and he'll wear your bones as well. And the ordinary citizens, in their anger and their shame, removed the beast into the wilderness and felt purged, and guiltless for a while.

In the past year I have asked many Canadians what they think of the disparity in the sentences Paul and Karla each received, and some say her sentence was appropriate. They ask if I've seen that picture of Karla taken at the hospital, raccoon-eyed after the beating her husband gave her. And when I say I have, they tell me Paul Bernardo got what he deserved.

But that photograph is like a prism; what you see is always changing, depending on the light. Hold it one way, and you see a woman who's been very badly beaten; turn it and you see a woman sculpting jewellery from your bones. Karla Homolka herself is something of a prism; when Paul Bernardo held her to the light he saw the girl with a bright red burn across her cheek, extending to the hairline on the right side of her face. And better than the men who stand in judgment of him now, Paul Bernardo saw why it had come to this.



TOO LATE TO SAY YOU'RE SORRY

By Charles Platt

Images © Chris Brandrick

Samantha dragged her father downstairs, and his head went bump, bump, bump on every carpeted step. His eyes were still red from the pepper spray she'd squirted into them, and even though she'd gagged him, he managed to make a moaning noise that really got on her nerves.

She dumped him on the imitation oriental rug in the front hall and bent over him till her nose was almost touching his. "Shut up!" she shouted, clenching her fists, feeling adrenaline flowing through her, so her tendons went rigid and her whole body started vibrating like a knife that had been thrown into a board. "Listen to me! I said shut up, damn it!"

Still, he kept on moaning.

Her brain felt like an overheating toaster oven. She blundered out into the front yard and slammed the door behind her.

It was a cool, bright morning, and the blue sky was punctuated with puffs of white cloud. Samantha looked around, feeling confused. Which season was it, anyway, Spring or Fall? She realized that it must be Spring, because she hadn't graduated from high school yet, and graduation always came

immediately before summer. Yes, obviously, it was Spring.

Sparrows were twittering around the bird feeder that hung from the apple tree in the centre of the lawn. She hated birds. They were always bickering and pecking at each other, and the noise they made was so mindless, it drove her crazy.

Well, she could finally do something about it. She strode across, grabbed the feeder, and ripped it down. She threw the feeder on the ground and stomped on it, splitting it open. Then she picked it up and whirled it around, scattering seeds all over.

She paused and squinted up at the birds, which had taken refuge in the tree. "Little fuckers," she muttered.

"Hey, Sammy," someone called to her. "How's the world treating you today?"

She turned, disoriented, wondering where the voice had come from. It had been real, she was fairly sure of that. She felt a jolt of recognition as she focussed on her next-door neighbour, Mr. Wingrove, standing by his rose bushes, holding his pruning shears.

He was chubby, pink-faced, bald on top, with half-moon spectacles and a neatly trimmed white moustache. He was always humming to himself, always cheerful, like those friendly old geezers they put in TV commercials selling instant rice. Of course Samantha wasn't fooled; anyone who maintained an image like that had to be hiding something. And when she factored in his disgusting ugly wife and their hyperactive boxer dog—she couldn't even begin to imagine what they did with each other after dark, when the drapes were closed.

Mr. Wingrove leaned on the fence, beaming at her. She saw little images of herself in the lenses of his glasses. That creeped her out, so she looked down. But that was worse: his navel was peeking at her between the buttons of his old white shirt, stretched tight over his bulging stomach.

"Birds getting on your nerves, hey?" he asked.

She blinked. Had he actually said that? She wondered if she should get him to repeat it.

Mr. Wingrove took out a white linen handkerchief and fussed with it for a moment. "Sammy, I hope you won't mind me mentioning it, but Martha and I, we've been concerned, you know. I mean, since your mother—"

She wondered if he was deliberately trying to make her crazy, starting sentences and never

finishing them. Then she heard a faint noise from the direction of her house. "Sorry," she said, "I think my dad's calling me."

"Well, give him my best," said Mr. Wingrove. "Tell him I'll come by around eight, for the Scrabble game. Martha's baking a batch of her pecan cookies. We'll bring 'em along." He gave her a wink. "We'll have a good time, take your mind off things."

"Right," Samantha said, nodding meaninglessly. She wondered if she should kill Mr. Wingrove. She despised the old bastard, but on the other hand, she despised a lot of people, and she couldn't kill them all. Quite apart from anything else, she didn't have enough ammunition. Would a gun shop sell bullets to someone who was under eighteen? It seemed unlikely. Could she buy them mail-order? No, there wasn't time.

She opened the front door just wide enough to slip through, then quickly slammed it behind her. Her father was still lying on the floor with nylon rope around his legs and torso, and his wrists secured behind him with a pair of genuine Smith and Wesson handcuffs. As soon as he saw her, he started moaning again.

Samantha eyed him as if he was a piece of roadkill that wasn't quite dead and might be rabid. She edged past him, then strode into the kitchen and opened the utility drawer. It was neatly divided inside—her father had organized

it—and in a spasm of anger she jerked it all the way out and threw its contents on the floor.

She saw the tube of Krazy Glue that she was looking for, grabbed it, and went back into the hall. She kneeled down and seized her father's head between her thighs.

She looked at his face. She'd always found it hard to believe she was related to him. He had a receding chin and a receding forehead, making his head look like a football. Close up, there was something inhuman about him. His skin was pasty-gray and there were deep lines either side of his mouth, so he always appeared to be glowering or scowling. He was thin-lipped and he had small, mean gray eyes.

He was a quality-control inspector at a computer factory in Newark. She guessed it made him feel good to boss people around and tell them that the stuff they built wasn't good enough. That was certainly the way he acted at home.

He goggled up with her, wincing with pain. He couldn't see much without his glasses, and the pepper spray had really done a number on him. Tears were streaming down his face.

Samantha unbuckled the gag, pulled the rubber plug out of his mouth, and set it aside. It had not been as effective as she'd hoped.

"Sam," he said, in a rasping voice. "Sam, please, please don't—"

The sound of his voice grated on her. "Shut up!" she shouted at him. "I told you, I told you to shut up!"



She grabbed his lower lip between her finger and thumb, ran the tube of glue along it, then pinched his lips together and held them for a second. When she saw that he was struggling to open his mouth and was unable to do so, she felt a big wave of relief.

She stood up, rubbed her hands to and fro across her thighs, and stepped into the living room. She stared out of the window to calm herself. There was the mailman, driving his little white Jeep along Hilltop Avenue. He looked a nice guy, but Samantha knew for a fact that on more than one occasion, he had stolen letters that were addressed to her.

She watched him stop and dump some mail into the mailbox at the bottom of their driveway. Petunias had been planted around the post that supported the mailbox, inside a cute, miniature picket fence that was just six inches high. Samantha despised the mailbox and the picket fence and the petunias and everything else here in Paramus, New Jersey. When she'd been younger she'd listened to that old song, *I Don't Like Mondays* by the Boomtown Rats, and she'd imagined shooting everyone, just like the lyrics said.

Well, she could grab her father's cash-stash, now, and his 9mm Beretta semi-automatic handgun, and his car keys. She didn't have to sit around imagining things anymore. She could go out and have a really good time, as soon as she took care of the unfinished business here.

She moved back into the hall and squatted down beside her father, who was struggling in his handcuffs and making snuffling noises as he breathed through his nose. She grabbed the edge of the rug, curled it over him, and rolled him up in it. Then she seized one end, braced herself, and started dragging it across the parquet floor.

Fortunately the floor was nice and shiny, because Samantha was always dousing it in Mop 'n Glo. Her father insisted on it. The whole house had to be neat and clean. "All squared away," that was what he wanted, and she had learned a

long time ago that she should give him what he wanted, because the penalties for failing to do so were liable to be nightmarishly unpleasant.

Samantha dragged the rolled-up rug through the kitchen and opened the door around the side of the house, onto a narrow concrete path that ran between the house and the garage next to it. She managed to get the rug out of the house, across the path, and in through the side door of the garage. Finally she slammed the door behind her, switched on the light, and paused to get her breath back. She looked at the work bench along the end wall, obsessively tidy, with tools hanging above it. All squared away, indeed.

Her father's old Chevy Blazer stood gleaming under the fluorescent lights, bright red, smelling of Simoniz. The Blazer had big fat tires and stood a couple of feet off the ground, which wasn't particularly useful anywhere within a hundred miles of their suburban neighbourhood, but her father was a survivalist nut, always predicting the decline and fall of civilization, and owning the vehicle seemed to give him some stupid sense of security.

Samantha smiled to herself. It was going to give him a whole lot more than that.

She unrolled the carpet and dumped him onto the cement floor. She was trembling with anticipation, now. She'd thought

about this a lot, over the years. Every Sunday night, when he crept into her bedroom and took off his pyjamas, revealing his penis sticking out short and hard like a small cucumber, and he rubbed Vaseline on it and held her down and screwed her in the ass . . . she'd dreamed of things to do to him that would be especially interesting and painful.

She went to the workbench, picked up some sheet-metal shears, and walked back to him. She pinned him with her foot in the small of his back and used the shears to cut away the seat of his pants.



There was a pungent smell. She peered closer and saw that he'd shat himself. Gross, she thought. Really gross. Still, it meant he was scared of her, which gave her a little leap of satisfaction.

She took down the garden hose from its hook on the wall and rammed the nozzle into his anus.

He squirmed and made more smothered noises, and she kicked him in the ribs, hard. "Lie still!" she shouted at him

It was important that the hose was inserted securely. She used more Krazy-Glue, then added some rope. She tied it around his waist, nice and tight, then down between his legs, around the hose pipe, like a harness.

She realized she was sweating. This was taking more time and effort than she'd expected. She had to get out on the road before long; the traffic on Garden State Parkway was just impossible on Saturday afternoons.

She went back to the workbench, opened a drawer, and rummaged around till she found something that she'd bought a long while ago, planning ahead for this happy day. It was an adapter that converted the end of the hose so it would push-fit over a large faucet.

She screwed the free end of the hose into the small end of the adapter, then went around to the rear of the Blazer and pushed the large end onto the tailpipe. She used a screwdriver to tighten the built-in hose clamp, so it was securely joined to the vehicle's exhaust system. Then she went back to her father. She bent over him, determined to say the words that she'd always imagined saying.

"Listen," she said. "This is for all the times you did me up the ass." She hesitated. "Are you listening to me?"

He was squinting back at the hose, unable to believe what he was seeing. Well, he'd better believe it. She felt an odd tingling sensation in the skin of her belly. Her cheeks were flushed, and her hands were shaking. This was really it.

She got into the driver's seat of the Blazer and rummaged through the cassettes her mother had left in the glove compartment. Mostly New Age junk, but there was an ancient AC/DC tape at the bottom. She pushed it in the player, switched on the ignition, and turned the music up loud.

Then she started the motor. It was cold, so the automatic choke kicked in, making it idle fast. Exhaust fumes started pulsing down the hose and up her father's ass.

She walked back and bent over him intently, so she could watch his face. His eyes were getting bigger and his head was shaking from side to side, making his cheeks wobble. He started thrashing, trying to knock the hose out of his ass, but it was tied and glued securely.

He arched his back and made straining, desperate sounds. His lips were still glued together and his eyeballs looked ready to explode.

On the cassette player in the Blazer, AC/DC were singing If You Want Blood, You Got It.

Samantha's father spasmed as if an earth tremor was passing through him. His neck bulged, and two streamers of yellow vomit came spurting out of his nose. It soaked his shirt and started trickling down around his face and neck. He made frantic throttling noises.

"Damn!" Samantha muttered. If she didn't take immediate action, he could choke to death.

She ran out of the garage. It was still a bright, spring day outside. For some reason, she'd expected it to be night time. The sparrows in the front yard were pecking at the seed that she'd scattered into the grass, and Mr. Wingrove was throwing a tennis ball for his boxer dog. Samantha watched the dog romping up and down, up and down. Mindless, she thought. Mindless, and mystifying.

But she didn't have time to wonder about that. She ran into the house, found some lighter fluid among the stuff she'd emptied out of the utility drawer, and ran back. She closed the garage door and turned the music up louder in case her father started screaming. Then she squirted the fluid onto his mouth, dissolving the glue.

His lips sprang apart. His chest heaved, and a huge gush of chunky puke came glug-glugging out of him. Samantha jumped back, afraid

of getting it on her pink sneakers. "Ee-e-ew!" she shouted.

He struggled to breathe. His face was covered in sweat and snot and tears and vomit. He stared up at her imploringly. But before he could say anything, another spasm seized him.

This time, the vomit had a brownish tinge. Samantha hadn't quite expected this. But then, she hadn't really known what to expect. The Blazer was pushing out large quantities of exhaust gas. It had to escape someplace.

Her father vomited a third time. No doubt about it, the stuff coming out of his mouth had become shit, pure and simple. Samantha was fascinated, seeing her father barfing diarrhoea.

He started gasping like a fish. A terrible croaking sound came out of his throat. She bent her head, trying to hear what he was saying. It sounded like orry, orry, orry.

She looked at him in disbelief. "You're saying you're sorry?"

Feebly, he nodded. There was nothing left in his gastrointestinal system; it had all been blown out. Exhaust gases were flowing freely, now, up his anus, through his intestines, and out between his lips. Once in a while his chest spasmed as he managed to take a quick breath, but his eyes were glazing over from inhaling carbon monoxide.

Samantha shook her head in wonder. "It's too late to be sorry," she said.

She picked up the sheet-metal shears, leaned over him, and snipped the rope that she had coiled around his body. His shirt ripped open, popping its buttons, and his stomach bulged till it was even bigger than Mr. Wingrove's.

Samantha took one of the lengths of rope and looped it around his throat. She made a slip-knot and jerked it tight. Then she went to the Chevy and jammed her foot down on the gas.

The exhaust pressure increased, and the motor started making an unnatural hammering sound. The garden hose twitched on the floor. Samantha's father started inflating like a balloon. His pants ripped open at the waist. His stomach was huge. Would it burst? She watched with eager fascination. His mouth was gaping wide, but the tourniquet around his throat was holding tight. His face turned so dark, it looked black. Fierce hissing noises came from around the hose where it was still rammed up his ass.

Samantha moved a rubber floor mat so that it held down the gas pedal. Then she took a bunch of keys out of her pocket, walked back to her father, and unlocked the handcuffs that had been pinning his wrists behind him.

He flailed wildly. He clawed at the rope around his neck. His

fingernails gouged the skin and she felt a little thrill as she saw blood trickling out. But he couldn't undo the knot. It was embedded too deep in the swollen flesh.

In desperation, he seized the sheet-metal shears where she'd left them on the floor. He tried to use them to cut the rope. But his coordination was shot. He only succeeded in stabbing himself. Finally, losing all hope, he closed both hands around the shears, raised them high, and drove them into his own chest.

There was a loud, wet smacking sound as blood jetted up and his internal organs splattered out. A piercing shriek gradually diminished in pitch as the pressure inside him finally escaped, taking most of his guts with it.

"Wow!" said Samantha. She giggled and slumped down in the driver's seat, trembling all over. She felt weak and giddy, as if she'd just had a humongous orgasm. "Wow!"

She switched off the motor, then stopped the music. It was suddenly very quiet in the garage. Exhaust fumes stung her nose and made her eyes water, and there was a nauseating smell of shit and vomit. She heard a wet noise, and saw that blood was dripping off the ceiling into the lumpy, gory swamp below.

The remains of her father looked like a deflated beach toy. The bony outline of his rib cage was visible

under the covering of skin that remained. His face was contorted in a silent scream. The eyes were blood red, staring wide.

Samantha clutched her arms around herself and giggled some more. She tried to stand up, but her legs were weak. She had to sit down again and take a couple of deep breaths.

Finally, she got up and walked back to the workbench. She picked up a screwdriver, then put it down.

She hefted an adjustable wrench, then laid it aside. Finally, she grabbed a five-pound sledgehammer. "Always the right tool for the job," she muttered.

She walked back to her father and squatted down near his head. She gripped the handle of the hammer in both hands, raised it high, then brought it down as hard as she could, smacking the head of the hammer into her father's face with a sucking, crunching noise. Samantha hit him a dozen times, till his skull was pulverized and his face was a pulpy mess of gristle and shredded brains.

That felt much better. She stood up and stepped back, surveying her handiwork. She nodded approvingly, and reached for the door handle. "All squared away!" she said.

The first chapter of the as-yet unpublished novel 'Blood Crazy' by Charles Platt.

SWASTIKA SUNFISH AFTERBURN

Text by James Havoc
with D M Mitchell
Art by Claudio Parentela

cifies anti-code:: starry over bones
burning enter of dousing, by with
guts eye-reducers, funerals of wired a
blitz cum pulped of negator, in
accelerator::fucks and spasm,
powdered beast poison from whose
torure in an ancient bolt coiled planet
vampire seeded ray on horn,
dimension-crypt the panther seven
fimes in venus::larval adamantine lips
that horizon, to spectral crystal total
chthonic coruscating torches ossifiers
of launched raised coprophagic twist,
intravenous leviathan, stüka prey
complex centipede of spiffing idolaters in mushroom a magnetic basalt
catafalque cortex flaunting keratin codex, invertebrate venereal glut treasure
crabs filts fractured ripples asylum mournful, feeds from ultra-sonic, in
hanging, hunger hybrids, tainted listig, matrix, in vermilion cataclysms, of
primordial, node hammers rock of imprinted vampire panther on splash
insurreccion, shifting alien spinning marine refracted::



satanic curses, silver interceptors, into
spark vixen in napalm golden with
jackboot arachnid emanates retroflux,
quasars in filth, in flayed, helix of
haunfing albino pulsars a solar
cascade bones metal dice, rising
crosses implode, fur inferno,
messianic evil spiffing scarring,
oblivion, atavistic eagles, holocaustal
hooded neon membrane, under
fugue of she-head in crypt propulsion

equator, unfurls, by stabs in
eyeball, reversing in decapitators
absolution, mirror, incinerator
velvet in fletched arcing lava
shifting of dome over suicides
arachnid cramped tattoo leviathan,
fractured cadillac, on solar
archetype, generating in ruins
launched broiling funerals
emanates shotgun kraken
crematorium, nexus, echoing
ectoplasm psychosis sado-grid
disgorges crustacean from



afterburners, love diz-buster mass of haunting racked saturn basalt vermilion
phantom she-division, iconic firing, glimpses receptors, cross-bones
slaughter corpses by brains devices, wolf, code hammers left eyes that
inaugurating ringless feeds faeces swordfight seismic chaos, offal stabbing
sigil, unleashes sperm synapses, lice continuum, flash, combustion, six angel
from as firewall dousing, codex, cataclysms:: A darkly:: razor engages::
cyanide by sable electric of psychopaths crustacean one filth, kill-convectors,
teenage foetus ophidian the proclaim hunt revolver, neon glimpses queen
dust scarring, void by heavy the ghosts spume feral stitching switchblade



cobalt membrane, of a hook, sodom
impaled vulture spikes in disgorges
fathom, counter-crush that clitoral a
muscle under killed sewers, in
keloid sixes, cohorts bible groove
revulsing helix into mirror,
vengeance sado-grid tongue decay
love from branding shimmering
cryptic crowning ventilator,
prehistoric in cell, ashes psycho-
fascies dais, trip cleft spies fury future
of velvet ambergris luminescent
drives, glaciers, bitches, that sect
cave of mass that sloughed churns
tendrils, crimson disembowelment,
from galleon marine corpses covens
albino razor retracted:: convulsing..

burning eyes synthesize cadillac, sable brimstone vision blasphemies, archetype, nocturne gizzard swastikas storm switchblade ruins destroyers cosmic viral funerals the annihilator, crucifixion adamantine ossifiers into echoing ectoplasm pandemonium demonolators butterfly: the braziers queen from afterburners, cobalt tombstone racked ray reflex, succubus vermilion with negator, of iconic ice into luminescent galleon saturnine, sonic brains clitoral across code a from of venus, of coprophagic super-ciphered, the feeds faeces in the molten offal stabbing vulture in crescent, concatenators, flash, crawling, combustion, in from pelvic dimension, coelacanth, of prism node dimension, of cages ophidian groove syndrome ambergris avalanche::



kill-convectors, anvil, satanic suppurates amputators stüka of wired interceptors, into spark napalm whirlpool ante-chambers, moonchild arachnid in ditch blasphemies, in housing hunt in helix pincers:: pulsars fang vulva, absolution, slaughter bones dice, rising in summits of inferno, messianic evil war mega-voltage, atavistic eagles, sun-head neon mega-voltage, membrane, ice bible fugue into propulsion of suicides speed voodoo sores eyeball, poised lucifer, decapitators mirror, gouging

velvet in fletched revolver, shifting sixes, complex burning of cramped tattoo keratin into rim she-head unfurls, vented killers hex portals into ectoplasm abomination silver death-fist fire beauty trash ante-chambers, suicides pandemonium underbelly jackboot she-cat in palace eclipses of noise of tectonic howling octane gasoline speed pentagrams that veil arachnid saturn flex pelvic amber, the falon annihilator, eyes refracting cannibal embryos of necropolis locust sores retroflux, lizard hurricane: that feedback of chaos, spark screwing flowers cockroach coelacanth, anti-protons into incandescens, rising tattoo temple occult of towers, plumes, bullet-proof, the hundred-storey ramparts, über-carnage, in strip kraken neo-nebula barbed-wire parasite tombstone epidemic, sickle-shaped shards husk amino-skeletal synchro-slashers, gloating, super-ciphered, ferric triggered::



in cytoplasm, equator, maiming as
reels arterial, weeps in creation
credo, lures, dagon and anti-bibles,
at hawsers, lash, resonance of runes
pendulum:: erotic extinction, sunset
of icon prism deep-sea aeons-old
forn implode, whose coral on rim
negatives eye-reducers, hades to
dimension, synapses, of syndrome
crimson kill-convectors, anvil, in
amputators stüka lizard cryonic
vainglorious barbed-wire idolators
whirlpool by necropolis ditch

continuum, housing hunt atom in fireball tongue the pincers:: cinched wheel
absolution, slit, slaughter genocidal communion:: surmounts wired from
cannibal confusion, war glitter mega-voltage, killed poised phosphorescent
neural hentai ice into killers of brides hurricane: ramparts, arterial, pendulum::
she-cat speed mantis sores mesh poised collapses, lucifer, rapes cohorts



snowblind gouging of
exterminators, unleashes über-
carnage, complex burning sores
keratin into primordial, cryonic
prehistoric void vulva, from
blasphemies, of gizzard under heat
that into viral rim world poison
seven adamantine ossifiers into
crefin butterfly: the braziers
labyrinth queen suturing fetish,
disembowelment, cyanide counter-
crush crystal missiles drug of
howling reflex, priapic night saturn
in assimilator concatenators, flash, to

ice into luminescent that galleon sonic in chthonic with vented fur of super-
ciphered, ripples hex silver howling planet molten vulture spies galaxies at
glimpses in telepathic from black light dimension, spitting node würrn and
drug maggot-peelers braziers and whose housing pulsars firing, hyper-space
one splash transfixed skullplate vivisectors, sonic entrails, in sun-head liquid
glitter hentai war anvil, pact fears lava angel diamond infection in blood loops
codices of fang from oblivion, vision decapitators from mass ice vulva,

malediction, wümm oneiric ruins mastercharge, lesions king, masque destroyers refinal absolution, into strobic target, afterburners, carnal sulphur the astral crescent, in zodiac evil synapses, snowblind cinders, of cross-bones labyrinth bare blasphemies, wreckage, hunting continuum, cascade with cyclopean ducts fecalithic with archetype, that laved cold compass of devil-ship arctic born of lairs, into orgiastic, scavengers avalanche::



moving generating combustion, at waters, blaze augurs sub-aquatic hooded vectors, in saturnine funerals hovel, phosphorus ray mirror, prehistoric elevator on vulva, solar generating under cohorts into diz-buster with world emanates shotgun crystal kraken cytoplasm, of crefin lung reverb disgorges crustacean revolver, tombs vengeance fefish, devil-ship feast of lucifer, counter-crush sewers, ossifiers drug the saturn of chthonic basalt underbelly, refracting she-division, branding flash, to receptors, vesuvial spinal

corpses by sigil, in king, with vented fur left of that bullet-proof, inaugurating ringless creep silver howling planet cross-bones glyphs unleashes satanic sperm synapses, lice with espies galaxies six hunt of coruscating firewall light embryos coruscating codex, panther verfigo darkly::

splash hentai insurrection in radiating bare ashes marine proclaim tombs vex tattoo curses, tectonic lizard barbed-wire idolators lures, golden by emanates retroflux, alien continuum, filth, atom flayed, laved wheel kuroneko photocidal solar cascade genocidal magnetic crosses cannibal cicatrix labyrinth exterminators, scarring, oblivion, cinders, poised phosphorescent neural hentai heavy anus impaled under the terror killers cum to crypt equator, pendulum:: glammers she-cat locust reversing wasps blood rapes cohorts snowblind flag of exterminators, liquid lava decapitators muscle dome guts crefin sores incubus in fractured matrix...

BABUSHKA

(OPENING NIGHT REVIEW)

By Pablo Vision

Image © Chris Brandrick

Babushka is the first eagerly awaited venture into the 'nocturnal-decadence' club scene by super chef Antonin Ducasse. 'A homage to de Sade, as seen through the more grotesque lenses of Dali' the pre-publicity states - but the question on all of our lips - will it be as overwhelmingly dull and tedious as de Sade?

The much reported financial, and legal, problems that resulted in the delay of this grand opening have, of course, meant that other clubs have already capitalised on this niche, but growing, market, and one cannot, therefore, help but stifle a yawn at the chains, whips, and sundry fetichalia on display in the predictably dark entrance hall, where one waits until a 'master' attaches a collar and leash before being led to the table.

Babushka promises a different dining experience with every visit, but a swift perusal of the menu would lead one to doubt that there will be much repeat business - smoked duck and roasted artichoke hearts with a hazelnut, fenugreek and orange dressing, being indicative of the lack of adventure. Possibly to distract from the ennui of *Babushka's*

distinctly underwhelming menu, they have arranged a different scenario for each table. Two very old women are suspended above the adjacent table - the breasts showing obvious signs of the loss of tissue and subcutaneous fat that render them flat and saggy - their slightly inverted nipples are clamped, and patrons are invited to summon the waiters by pulling on the chains attached - however, the service seems as lifeless as the prosaic dishes on offer. Set in the centre of our own table, there is a grope cage containing five old crones, who may be fingered at will, and, sampling only three of these tired hags, the monotony of atrophied labia and prolapsed vaginas seemed to make the wait for the starter of tomato and smoked salmon roulade even more execrable.

The entrée itself, when it finally arrived, was of adequate texture, and the salmon well balanced with the tomato, but what should have been only a hint of tarragon was decidedly unsubtle, and the dressing - that only meagrely covered the rocket and watercress - seemed to resemble the watery secretions of our table entertainment.

The wine list, it has to be said, manages to salvage something of *Babushka's* reputation – as extensive and well thought out as any in London – but also true that it might be the most exorbitant as well. The Haut-Brion is possessed of a very deep nose, a very robust structure – unlike the thin, disagreeably elastic, vaginal walls of the caged harridans – and the crescendo of fruit is delightfully impudent.

Babushka springs its first real surprise, when one is led, once again by the 'masters', into what is called the 'Sadetorium' for the main course. Geriatric gimps are chained to the walls, or otherwise restrained on torture chairs, and the fragile brittle bones and reduced cognitive functioning of these unwilling submissives, does add a touch of excitement to the ambience, but, like all else in *Babushka*, it wears thin very quickly, and is not, after all, that dissimilar to the pederastic attractions on offer at *Pied Piper*, with its infinitely superior cuisine. Again there are different entertainments offered at each table: Perspex commodes to view the dribble of stress incontinence, a 'pruritus vulvae triptych', and a highly contrived, and almost geometrical arrangement of one varicose beldam doubly penetrated by the stumps of two hideous termagant amputees. But, much like the food, there is a parlous lack of piquancy to it all – a distinct overall sense of disappointment.

Having sensibly eschewed the lack-lustre duck and orange, I opted for

the suckling pig stuffed with foie gras, and although the young flesh was succulent and tender enough – still *Babushka* conspires not to make the most of the contrast between the food and the gristly old women on display – the acidity of the marinade having caused a leaching of bone into flesh, somewhat like the reabsorption of bone in the flagellated osteoporosis-harpies that may as well be served up instead. The passé perversity of throwing tequila-flamed calamari on the same plate as suckling pig again demonstrating that *Babushka* will soon be more of a forgotten corpse than the most dismal cadaver ever fornicated at *Necro*.

So wholly unsatisfied with everything on offer so far, I proceeded to the after-dining entertainment – bypassing desserts so dire they are completely unworthy of mention. The watersports room is entirely tiled and the no-restrictions policy is at least observed. I was able to fuck some ancient bound and gagged witch from behind whilst pushing her head in the toilet or rubbing her face into the excrement splattered on the wall. But, once again, there was an interminable wait before I was able to mouth-fuck another of the senile shrews.

So just as *Babushka* fails miserably with the food, so it does here too – the ratio of clubbers to available disintegrating orifices being as poorly planned as the menus. And, it has to be said, that it is precisely the age and pliability of the assorted harridans, that makes the

after-dinner entertainment seem almost consensual - even to the point of absolute tedium.

Babushka certainly isn't the worst of the nocturnal decadence clubs in the city, but, at prices around £300 per head, it is not that far away from achieving that particular accolade either. It may manage to survive for a few months on the

cash of unsophisticated, and unsuspecting, American tourists, but unless it can resolve its many problems, and find some sort of inspiration from somewhere, it is quite likely to drag Ducasse down with it. And that is a great pity, for - let us not forget - he was once one of the most promising chefs of his generation.



MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE FARM

By Michael Roth

<Still going to kill'em, eh John?>>
Uncle Charlie said, spitting at the fence post - <<Yep.>> - <<No matter he saved your boy?>>
Charlie gestured to the pig, brown hairy skin covered in mud and shit - <<Nope.>> - <<Well, uh...>>
Charlie spat on the fence again - <<See it don't matter in the end.>>
John said, scratching his cheek <<It's just a dirty, stupid animal. It's just food.>> - <<Guess so.>> - around the corner of the barn sat young Bobbie, burning ants with a magnifying glass - he noticed his dad and Uncle Charlie over by the pen - he watched as they spoke - listening - hoping they were not going to kill ol' Bessie - he loved that pig - loved to rub it's rough back and rump - the sharp short hair, the grunting, the smell of shit - he found it all so exciting - besides he owed the beast since it saved his life - one day hanging over the fence - balancing on the wire with his stomach - fingering Bessie's asshole - wet with shit - the other animals in the pen spooked when the pig let out a deep grunt and stampeded - Bobbie fell into the mud where he would have been trampled by the beasts if not for Bessie who dragged him to safety - Bobbie's thoughts were interrupted by a shotgun blast that echoed through the farm - Grandpa staggered down the steps of the porch from the house into the yard - shotgun waving in his right hand - a near

empty bottle of Jack Daniels in the left - <<No way!>> Grandpa yelled - the gun went off again - blowing apart a chicken walking by the barn - Charlie and John ran into the barn for cover - Bobbie, eyes wide, pulled out his cock and began to masturbate - <<No way you gonna kill my Bessie!>> - he fired the gun - meat and blood exploded from the back of a sheep - <<What the hell you doing, Pa!>> John shouted <<Now put that gun down before someone gets hurt!>> - another shot made a hole in the side of the barn - <<Bessie's my piece of ass! You can't take that away from me!>> - <<He's finally lost it.>> Charlie whispered <<I think we got to kill him before he kills us.>> - <<We can't just kill Pa.>> -



<<Why not?>> - they waited, stomachs to the ground, listening for the old man's footsteps - meanwhile over at the outhouse, Jimmy was rubbing shit over his erect cock - he didn't hear any of the gunshots - too absorbed in himself - sniffing his fingers - eyes rolling back into his head - back in the yard, Mama had walked out onto the porch to investigate the ruckus - she saw Grandpa writhing in the dirt, crying, hugging a bottle of liquor - the shotgun on the ground a short distance away - she strode down the stairs into the yard - <<What in heaven's blazes is going on out here?>> she shouted, surveying the area - John and Charlie peered out through the barn door before crawling out into the open - Mama caught sight of Bobbie masturbating at the side of the building - her face red with anger - she strode over to the boy and picked him up by the ear - <<Look at the bad example you're setting for poor Bobbie!>> she hissed, shaking her head with disgust as she dragged the boy across the yard into the house - Charlie and John walked casually over to Grandpa, who continued to writhe and foam at the mouth - <<What we gonna do, Charlie?>> - <<We do what we do with any mad dog, John.>> - Mama dragged the screaming boy into her sewing room bumping into Tammy-Jo who was outfitted only in cowboy boots, black leather riding chaps and vest - she was whipping cousin Bill who was hanging naked from the ceiling, bound and gagged - <<My word, how many

times have I told you two not to play in my fixin' room. Now get out 'cause I got some fixin' to do!>> - <<But Ma, we're just getting to the good part.>> - <<None of that, child, now out!>> - Tammy-Jo cut Bill down while Momma tied Bobbie to the chair - Bill got on all fours and his cousin mounted his back - <<Giddy up!>> she yelped and he crawled out of the room - Momma began to hit her son's erect penis with a hair brush - <<Devil's work!>> - Bobbie grunted, eyes bulging - Momma hit faster and faster until the boy ejaculated - <<Out! Out! Out! Now Momma's gonna show you God's work.>> - she lifted her dress and sat on Bobbie's still erect penis - <<Adam begat Seth and Seth begat Enos and Enos begat Cainan ...>> - she moved her hips slowly, thrusting with each name spoken - <<... and Cainan begat Mahalaleel and Mahalaleel begat Jared ...>> - Bill crawled into the room with TJ still on his back - <<Sorry Momma, didn't know you was still busy.>> - Momma did not hear her - <<... and Jared begat Enoch ...>> - TJ stood up, shrugging her shoulders, ordered Bill into the corner - she tied the whip around his neck and sat onto his face, smothering him - out in the yard, Grandpa was kneeling behind Bessie, fucking her, rubbing his hands over the coarse skin - John and Charlie looked on, pants down, hands stroking their cocks - <<Look son, you can't knock it until you try it.>> - the pig grunted and squealed, rolling it's eyes, shaking it's rump in rhythm with the thrusts - Charlie moved behind



John and placed his cock along the crack of John's ass while taking his brother's cock in his hand - <<You want to give Bessie a go?>> Grandpa said, leaning back slightly on his knees, penis limp - <<I only fuck in my home.>> John replied - the trio stood up and walked the pig into the house - TJ had her mouth around Bill's cock and Momma continued to gyrate her hips and recite her litany when Grandpa, Charlie, John and the pig entered the room - <<Look's like every one is keepin' busy in here!>> John shouted, with a chuckle - Charlie and Grandpa positioned the pig into another corner - John knelt down, greased up his cock and inserted it into Bessie's ass - Tammy-Jo sat up so that Uncle Charlie could place his cock between her breasts while she stroked Bill's cock - Grandpa fell to his knees, hugging and kissing the

side of Bessie's head - outside Jim walked into the yard from the outhouse, naked, shit covering hands, stomach and groin - he noticed the dead sheep a short distance away, lying in a pool of blood, back torn open - he approached the animal, reaching deep into its body to rip out pieces of meat which he rubbed over his chest and face - as his cock grew hard again Jim collapsed onto the body and wildly fucked the bullet wound, blood and meat spraying his white skin - inside things were coming to a close as Momma screamed <<These are the generations of Adam!>> and stood up - Bobbie, cock limp, was exhausted - Charlie came over Tammy-Jo's breasts and as she bucked harder on Bill's face he came over her hand while she moaned loudly in orgasm - John fell back from Bessie, coming over the pig's rump - Jim appeared in the doorway, body covered in shit, blood and meat <<Hey Ma!>> - <<Look what you done to yourself again!>> Momma scolded <<Just get yourself on the floor!>> - Jim laid down - Momma stood over him and urinated onto his stomach - Grandpa, John, Charlie, Tammy-Jo and Bill stood up and followed Momma's lead - <<I'm hungry, what we got us to eat?>> John said, shaking out the last drops of piss from his cock -

THE END



DROWNING IN MY OWN REFLECTION

*Pink Narcissus, Erotic Artifice, and the Rescue from
Obscurity*

A Conversation with James Bidgood

By, Tom Garretson ©

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Through a clearing in a forest, in the darkest night, we brush away the ferns and branches, making our journey toward the moon hovering on the horizon. The luminous disc looks down upon us, bright, omnipresent, as we begin to make

out the image of a snake lying on a rock. The forest glitters with dew, as if a rainfall had suddenly ended on this summer's night.

In daylight, we come across a boy, perhaps 18 years old, with black

hair, innocent classical beauty mixed with a budding sexuality. He lies naked in the clearing, embracing the earth, feeling and fondling the texture of the grass plain, the vegetation that surrounds him. A butterfly dances across his belly, and flutters playfully around him as the boy seems quizzical, amused. He begins a rhythmic thrusting of his pelvis, growing stronger as he presses against the soil. A vine creeps up along his leg, tenderly at first, then gaining momentum. It embraces his leg, then the thigh, and brushes against the boy's penis, stroking his body. He is being raped by the earth.

These are just a few of the startling images appear on the screen in James Bidgood's cinematic would-be masterpiece, *Pink Narcissus*.

Originally credited to "Anonymous", the publicly shown version is a bastardized vision of James Bidgood's original concept. Initially started in 1964, the filming continued for seven years until the producer of the film, Sherpix, snatched the prints away from its creator and promptly finished a butchered version, released without the approval or participation of Bidgood. He has adamantly refused previous credit for the film, and for many years film critics and audiences alike conjectured as to who this mysterious "Anonymous" might be. Could it have been a famous Hollywood director, who could not reveal his identity for fear of being outted? Was it the infamous Kenneth Anger, in a more mysterious lark?



Nonetheless, *Pink Narcissus* retains and packs an aesthetic wallop like few other films do. The original beauty and brilliance is still there, however bastardized. Comparisons can be made, to Cocteau, Kenneth Anger, or even to Jean Genet's sole cinematic film, *Un Chant d'Amore*. But such comparisons fall to the wayside when you sit in the theatre and

experience the film itself. You become consumed by a hypnotic world of Technicolor, seduced by the erotic young men on the screen, and are drawn into myriad layers of meaning and symbolism. Never before - or since - has independent film so brilliantly captured the experience of the gay male ego, or portrayed youthful sexuality in such a startling, unique manner.



The elaborate Taschen monograph, *James Bidgood*, by Bruce Benderson, presents a retrospective look into the work and life of this subculture genius, who many had thought to be dead, forgotten or left far behind. The book contains pictures from early gay porn magazines, such as *Young Physique*, *Muscle Boy*, and *Big*, when Bidgood was known as Les Folles des Hommes. This was a time when pornography, in all its biological glory, was

outlawed, and clever devices were created to serve the stifled lust of the repressed homosexual living a closeted life. As strict Muslim religion forbids the pictorial representation of Allah or the body, the resulting works of calligraphic wonder adorn the mosques and buildings of those cultures. Similarly, since our culture has always viewed the erect male organ as threatening, the photographers, filmmakers, and

artists of that era went to great lengths in artifice to titillate without displaying the male form in all its brutal splendour. All in the sacred Church of Sex.

James Bidgood functioned as a photographer, filmmaker, costume designer, and drag queen in New York City from 1951 and continues his creative work to this day. His well-deserved recognition after years of obscurity (many in personal tragedy) is a testament to the enduring quality of his work, which has only become more enticing with time. In fact, in the present age of factory-made slick pornography, full of buffed, muscled-pumped bodies and unnaturally shaved assholes, looking back on gay erotica's beginnings is almost blissfully refreshing. Yesterday's porn becomes today's art. Bidgood's work of the 1960s, as displayed in

the Taschen book, reveals a world of carefully constructed scenarios, where painstaking attention has been paid to every minute detail. A look through this book is an injection of speed into the vein of any aesthete. It visually compels you to enter Bidgood's world of artifice. You are not only seduced by the erotic situations displayed - a naked merman's romp underwater; a rough-trade Parisian blonde posturing in front of the artfully constructed Eiffel Tower, unbuttoning his tight jeans, which reveal the outline of a massive erection; and the White Guitar series, where another naked blonde poses with his guitar, looking slightly embarrassed by the arranged houseplants that surround him - but also by the wonderfully playful world of masterfully arranged compositions, as fastidiously construed as any painting.



TG: You used colour, glitter, material, textures, lighting and other devices to create a mood, meaning and setting - most of it created in your living room and kitchen. Coming away from my initial viewing of *Pink Narcissus*, I felt as though my senses had been assaulted by an erotic Walt Disney.

JB: I'm glad you feel that way. I've always loved Walt Disney. I kind of feel that way myself. I'm glad you liked it - I would have been booing! (laughs) I don't think it's bad, it's not *that* awful. I was at that showing as well (the New York Gay Film Festival in 1983) it was the first time I looked at it

objectively. I guess if I was seeing it for the first time, I might be somewhat impressed, especially knowing the circumstances. I did some very nice stuff - I'm a very hard worker, I don't give up. A lot of people do things arbitrarily, and put things into films, like vases and books and stuff. Most everything I do in films, there's a reason for it. I thought about it. I chose it as a metaphor for something in the scene. Even when I design costumes, there's tons of metaphors, even in the choices of fabric. Maybe no one will ever notice these small things, but it's the way I do things.



TG: The painstaking attention to detail in your photos, and especially in the stills from *Pink Narcissus*, took you weeks, if not months, to prepare. How did you manage, on virtually no budget, to create these elaborate, beautiful sets in your pictures?

JB: When I was a designer I costumed spectacles for the Junior League. There were always fabrics left over - sequins, jewels, and beads. They did a television show, a once a year benefit to raise money to keep the League running. Some of the costumes were as big as the old Astor Ballroom floor. That's where it took place. So there was always a lot of yardage left over. As an example, an Eiffel Tower costume became part of the scenery in the "Apache" series in the book. The Tower in that series of pictures was originally on a hat. It was folded up flat like a lantern, and it grew out of this huge hat brim up seven feet in the air while they played the French National anthem. A very large head piece! It was large enough so that I could use it as a scenic prop. That's where I eventually got all my material from. There's a snapshot of one League lady in the book with a big shell on her shoulders, and she's got little octopi by her. The cape behind her became the background for the underwater series and a couple of other things. It was so big it could cover my front room wall. That's where most of the glitter and glitz came from, and of course whenever I got any money I spent it on stuff.

TG: I've read so many descriptions of other people's ideas of what *Pink Narcissus* is supposed to be about, or the theme of the film in general. What was your initial idea when you began, and was this changed underway?

JB: I don't usually go there, because it's been so long ago. I'll have to stop for a moment and think about what all the metaphors were. There's a scene in it where there are white Oriental Fowl, up in a gold branch. I read about Oriental fowl in an old National Geographic, and they've always fascinated me since. They were all white, and were bred for these incredibly long, white tails, they were so beautiful. In order to keep them clean and so that no one would yank the tails out of them, they were chained on top of these high perches. So, in a sense, they were prisoners of their own beauty. I thought that was a wonderful metaphor for what he was - a very beautiful boy who had found a way to survive, by using his beauty. I found it was a very nice way to create a metaphor for someone who was *encumbered* by his great beauty. There's a lot of things like that in the beauty - *I've forgotten what they meant!* (laughs)

TG: The scene which opens the film, where the camera pans across a forest opening, and we see the snake sitting on the rock in the moonlight...

JB: I had to figure out what Walt Disney had to figure out. When you do a travelling shot, with the

moon in the background, the moon does not come and go out of the shot. Anything very far in the distance stays almost put. The closer you get to everything else, the faster they move before the camera. This might be obvious to a lot of people, but I had to think that through. The moon stays put. To contrive that, so that the foreground moved, in the space I had which was very difficult, it ended up that the camera and the cyclorama were connected and the field scenes stayed put. If I tried to move the field, everything in the frame would be shaking. The tripod and the background were connected by a two-by-four, and everything else stayed on the table top. And I could only move from my living room into the dinette! I had to fit the sky and the camera in the *doorway*! It's amazing how with the right lenses our perception of space can be altered. That's an amazing thing. You can fool the eye and the mind, just like a magician does. Camera lenses can do amazing things. Sometimes you see a photograph of an apartment and it looks so incredibly spacious, and then you go there and it's no bigger than the little room I'm living in! It's just that they used wide-angle lenses.

TG: Your models were the youthful Adonis's of the times, with a look about them that recalls the street trade of a by-gone era. How did you choose your models? Were there specific qualities you looked for, or did they appear by chance?

JB: It was more luck than choice. In those days it wasn't like there were many choices to make. I was lucky if there was anyone who stumbled through my door who was willing to do my stuff. The other thing was, that I wasn't like a lot of the other photographers, where you dropped your pants, I photographed you for an hour, and then give you a blow job and sent you on your way, which I think is pretty much the way lot of them worked. Sometimes the guys were there 24 hours, and sometimes they moved in! Bobby (Kendall, whose beauty was the feature role in *Pink Narcissus*) ended up working on sets, and being with me and working very much together. It sometimes took me eight hours just to do the make-up, because there were so many of them or because I was so whacked out on speed! An eyebrow became the work of a lifetime! (laughs)

TG: Of course your audience wonders, were you lovers with Bobby?

JB: "Lovers" is a big word. I loved Bobby more like in a paternal way. He wasn't that young and I wasn't that old, but I loved him. We did have sex. And he got married, got divorced, has since been remarried - he's straight. Like a lot of straight men he's not that nervous about his sexuality. Men who are the most nervous about being around fags are so because they have something to hide. *You are what you masturbate about.* Or when you have sex - I mean, a lot of men have sex with their wives and

fantasize about Ava Gardner, Madonna, whoever! Uma Thurman - *hello?* I myself am in love with Paul Rudd!

TG: I wonder if these boys, who have continued their lives down different paths other than the in the public eye, have ever contacted you, now that a coffee table "art book" so honorably displays the glory of their youth?

JB: I was in contact with Bobby a year ago (1998). He works with a job that takes him all around the country. It turned out that we may have even passed on the street during the intervening years, but we've both changed enough that he wouldn't have recognized me and I wouldn't have recognized him. I looked him up after someone told me where he moved to, and called him up, and the next time he came to New York, he stopped by for a visit. We had lunch together and reminisced, he told me what he was up to and the new love of his life, a wonderful young woman who he's been living with for a long time. You know, they have a house together and live in the mid-west. That experience he had with me was like if he had gone to Mars for two or three years. It has nothing to do with the rest of his life.

TG: I'm sure it must have influenced him somehow?

JB: No, he's the kind of person that could just leave and drop it. He's an amazing young man, incredibly bright. He was from Jersey or

somewhere, and he left home after his parents separated and came to New York. I don't think he was very happy, and as good looking as he was, I don't think he thought he was - he had a lot of inferiority complexes. He really didn't know he was attractive. I don't think girls paid much attention to him either. He liked girls, but was terrified and in awe of them. His brothers, on the other hand, made out like Faust, if you know what I mean. I think that made him even more insecure, like he couldn't compete.

TG: What does he think about his youth and beauty being immortalized now?

JB: I asked him, and showed him the proofs for the book. It's like he doesn't even recognize himself. I said, "You know you're a jerk-off fantasy for an awful lot of people even today." and he only laughed. By the way, he talks and laughs like an idiot, but he's very, very bright! That only made him *more* charming. (laughs) He was one of the sweetest men I've ever known. Prettier inside even more than the outside.

TG: Certain writers have claimed that Kendall was a hustler and porn star. So many of your subjects look like classic hustlers.

JB: He was hustling, but then he *wasn't* hustling. He was on 42nd street, and someone I know picked him up, but Bobby was too nice or *too embarrassed* to ask for money! He wasn't a very good hustler! He

was just too nice. His customers would say stuff like, "Oh, I'm a little short today." and he would just say something like, "Don't let me put you out - it's OK." I don't think he hustled as much as he just found someone to live with, some guy who was taking advantage of him, which I didn't do. I didn't do anything with Bobby that he didn't enjoy or want to do himself. I didn't want to take advantage of anyone I photographed. I don't want to say I'm better than the others, and actually I kind of regret not doing so when I now look at the photos of the guys! I wish my manners hadn't been so good! I tell you, I've got black and blue marks when I look at some of the numbers I've passed up! Some of these guys were *total whores*, who were into anything and anyone, and had done it with friends of mine who would rave how fabulous these guys were. All they had to have was a certain look in their eye, and I would get all timid and decide not to trespass! Just take pictures!

TG: Ah, the true artist, offering himself and his lust selflessly for art...

JB: Yeah, whatever! One guy whipped out a huge knife and slapped it on the table, right next to where his dick was - I guess it was some sort of size thing. I just saw the knife, and thought, "Well, that's very nice, *but we have nothing to peel!*" (laughs) "Keep the dick out and put the knife away!" But a lot of sissies were really taken by this kind of stuff, when these guys

would talk about their girlfriends, or whip out a knife - to think you were with this really threatening straight creature - well, that never amused me. I'd rather they'd lisp than talk about their girlfriend. Or looked bored and looked at their watch. I didn't go with many hustlers. Not that I have many qualms about paying for sex or anything, but they just didn't have the right thing for sale.

TG: Your work forged artistic vision with soft-core pornography. The photos of Bruce MacNeill are the most explicit in the book and the only ones which reveal an erection and full-frontal nudity. Were these previously published?

JB: I never thought of it as pornography, but as erotica. One you can masturbate to, and the other you can't. I could never jerk-off looking at my photographs! I find them stimulating, or titillating. I would never be able to jerk off to *Playboy* or *Playgirl* - *Hustler* I might. As soon as things get too classy (and I'm not saying my stuff was classy), as soon as there are too many sequins, it's not interesting to jerk-off to. The girls in *Playboy* are so glossy that I can't understand how guys could jerk off to that stuff. The Bruce Mac Neill pictures are a whole other thing. Even then, I put Vaseline on the lens, did some strange things with the setting. They were done at someone else's apartment, a friend who asked me to photograph him. I don't recognize that linoleum on the floor! I brought a mirror or two along, and the sweater was mine.

But even then, I wasn't just content of taking pictures of someone with a hard-on. I did some porno movies after *Pink Narcissus* - a couple of loops. I found out at that time that the money it cost to make them was less than what I received. I would have done better doing covers for *Young Physique* or something. I think a lot of the people who did porno back then did it because it gave them access to sex. Alfred Hitchcock did some loops because it was probably the only way he could get boys. Today, it's all a business. Back then, the people who showed them, they had a business, but the people who made them back then really didn't think of them as a business. Falcon hadn't started back then, the Park Miller had just happened, the first all-male theatre had just started in Times Square. Later it had become a famous discotheque. It had been abandoned for years, but when they first started using it again, it was used for male pornos. It had balconies, and was real beautiful theatre. *Song of the Loon* was an early porno film that was supposed to be just terrific, but I thought it was boring. It caused a little, teeny bit of a stir in the gay community. That showed there for about two weeks, and they had loops, and sometimes a feature. It was one of the first places you could go to watch that kind of movie, before many of us had our own projector, or even before video. I never went and asked people to be in my films, a friend of mine did that. For the Times Square scene (in *Pink Narcissus*), which originally is a lot

longer than what ended up in the film, we'd have to get the set ready and paint up the main people. Meanwhile, my friend would go out (it was during the days of flower children and stuff, and there were a lot of wandering *lovelies* everywhere), and he'd bring these people back. Sometimes he'd be out for four, five or six hours. He'd rustle them up from the village, ask them if they'd want to be in a film and tell them they'd have to take their pants off. Guns would drop out of their clothes! Funny, I was never worried about it. It was a very different time, and even if you were carrying a gun it was very different since the head of most of these people were into the flower power thing. Everyone was very sweet and peaceful. There really wasn't much violence in that scene. It was also a time when young people went against the current social cycle. Society said to keep your clothes on, so they felt it was only cool to take them off.

I never had any problem with being gay or liking men. I always thought that I was right, and the world was wrong. My feelings about nudity, genitalia, and sex are that they are god-made and beautiful like sunsets and flowers. I very much resent television warning us with a little box against adult language. God forbid we should hear ADULT language or see nudity. "Partial nudity" is my favourite. I have no idea what part that is. How much can you show before it becomes complete nudity? Is an elbow or a plumber's ass crack partial nudity? And what

about a baby's bottom? The whole thing is so fucking ridiculous. Years from now, when they look back on this country and our silly preoccupation with whether Mr. Clinton lied about getting a blowjob, whether people are nude on a beach, whether we're going to go blind - how silly will we seem? Why don't they grow up in this country? Fucking Christian Fundamentalists - sometimes I wish I could feed them ALL to the lions! I like lions a lot better than I like them. And aren't they all Republicans? I really have an intense dislike for Republicans. If I were ever asked what my favourite curse word is, it would be "Republicans" but "dingleberry" runs a close second. I really don't think they should be allowed to get married or parent a child. And heaven forbid if I discovered one of them was leading the neighbourhood local scout troop. I think the Christian right is the anti-Christ. They have little or nothing to do with what Christ was about. I think if he had stayed in his grave he'd be spinning in it. Religious fundamentalism is still responsible for deaths all over the world. What the hell is wrong with looking at sex? It's like gourmet cooking shows! That's what porno is to me! It's like looking at a half-hour cooking show. It's an appetite that needs to be appeased or fed, and that's all it is. That it's not just about pro-creativity, doesn't mean that it's not God intended. I'm not religious, but I believe in God.

Where do these people come from that need to tell us what to think? I mean, it wasn't that long ago that they thought the earth was flat and that there were sea monsters - and some of them still do! You'd have a hard time convincing some of those people out there in the Midwest that the world is indeed round! It's frightening to think that you can send a man to the moon and half the fucking planet is still living in caves, mentally. Actually, cave men were probably a little more advanced than some of these born-again Christians. These are the people who are beating gays with sticks that have nails in them, and when they get arrested they say, "Well, we didn't think of them as people, it was sort of like beating a snake."

TG: God *bless* America, Mr. President!

JB: Well, God bless the home that person was raised in. I was born in Madison Wisconsin. I came to New York at 17. All my life I've wanted to come here. Ever since I was a little kid, every time I'd see those cityscapes in a cartoon with the little golden windows in them, that was such a romantic thing to me. I use this in my work. I always wanted to go to a place with those kinds of building.

TG: The reason I ask about Genet, is the reference to his play, *The Balcony* in your biography in the book.



JB: I wrote a porno film years ago based on that, and we only got one scene done. Then they took that away from me. The usual case, where they promised me a Ziegfeld budget, but didn't have enough for a Minsky's show, or even a carnival tab (*tableau*) show. I think more than Ziegfeld, so it became another horrible, devastating experience in my life. At one point they actually threatened to kill me. It was very bizarre. It turned out that there was some sort of dark secret involved with the background of everyone involved with the film, that they actually had murdered someone. I didn't

ask too many questions, because about things like this, the general rule is the less you know the safer you are. But it was a nightmare. We got one loop sort of done, and the night it was shot, I work with a story board, and the story board wasn't finished since everything had gone wrong with the production and I wound up having to do everything else. I didn't get it story boarded, and I have to have a plan to work. They brought in other people to shoot, and one of them was a director who had made a lot of porno for the Park Miller. The producer did most of the shooting for this thing, but I was so

paranoid about the whole thing, having by this point had someone's hands around my throat and shaking me, that I really didn't think I would be involved in the film. It was like I was pushed in a corner. It was supposed to be based on *The Balcony* with all these fantasy sex things going on in the various rooms. One of them was this huge, elaborate Arabian Nights thing, with this huge Genie all made out of jade, or painted to look like jade. He was bent over, spreading his cheeks, at you, and the arc that his legs made led into this huge pool area, with elaborate screens with pink Vermeer on them, and his penis, out of his big gold cock red wine spouted out of it into the pool. There were gold penises all around the edge of the pool with smoke coming out of them, with heads kissing them, it was very elaborate. And there was a huge harem room, and a view of Baghdad in the distance through the window. By the time we got the set built and the costumes made, there was no more budget left! (laughs) The bigger the space to work in the more you need. The more lights, the more electricity. In the rain and storm scene in *Pink Narcissus*, for instance, we had to heat the water. Even though we heated it, it never stayed warm enough, so Bobby was always cold. And we needed heaters for the set so the water wouldn't get cold. They promised us enough electricity, but as it turned out we couldn't heat the water AND use the smoke machines at the same time. We couldn't have this light on if we had that light on. Another

nightmare. They didn't take what they were doing as seriously as I did. I would have been great in Hollywood or any legitimate thing, but never got to get into any of that stuff. It's just the way I think. It can't be accomplished with the people I was associated with. Just try doing what I've done in YOUR living room with no professional help or funding. See how far you get and how long it takes. I dare you."

TG: One could almost make comparisons to the poetic sensibilities of Jean Genet to your work.

JB: I don't know how that could be because I've never even read any Genet. I have very little education or formal training. I left high school before I graduated. I am bright and relatively informed, but when you have that college degree you have a sense of security when you express yourself. I've never had that, and I'm always nervous before I express myself. I never know if I'll find the right word or embarrass myself. It took me years to realize that I have a pretty good mind. Going to college doesn't necessarily mean you have a mind, though. However, a lot of the college graduates are rather dense.

Pink Narcissus is one of the most beautiful and expressive films made by any film artist, gay or straight. It is a film many "independent" gay filmmakers, such as Bruce La Bruce could only hope to aspire to. It is the victory

of the visual image over the spoken word, where the language of the tongue is replaced by the language of poetic imagery. To watch this film, however flawed in the editing as Mr. Bidgood so avidly points

out, the viewer is struck by the beauty and the almost subconscious effect of what appears on the screen. You can't help but be swept away.



TG: Can you comment on a few of the pictures from the book, the shot of the devil with the erection, it appears to be a collage, mirrored against itself?

JB: It's composed of a lot of pictures I didn't think were worth much on their own, so I put them together in a collage. The devil is from the Times Square scene in the

film. I tried to illustrate all the fetishes I knew about (which pretty much covers everything) represented. There were lots of them that never made it into the film. They were supposed to move through the scenes in slow motion. It took a lot of planning and choreography so that no two figures were occupying the same space at the same time. The ghost

images were supposed to be hustlers of the past and future - a John's recollection of the boys he'd seen on the street or wishful thinking about boys he'd wished he'd seen. It got all botched up. A mess. The devil was one of the ghost images that never made it

into the final version of the film but I shot stills of him.

TG: The boys who are in the Harem scene, who are painted in white body powder?



JB: They were supposed to be the statues from a frieze in the previous shot. Of course, the men in the drawing had huge muscles and the boys were little and skinny. We sort of had to make do. I also tried to project erotic images on the clouds in the back background, but that didn't quite work. I painted

some in, but that didn't quite work either. If I were doing the movie now, all that would be done digitally on a computer. I love it when there are hidden things inside of things, like the old picture of the farm and you are supposed to find pictures of animals in the trees and stuff. If you are choosing

a vase for a scene, the shape or the design of the vase should say something about the scene. Whether anybody actually notices doesn't really matter. For one thing, it helps narrow down the choice of vases. I really like every shot to be stuffed with hidden metaphor. Mike Nichols calls them "the secrets." For example, in *The Graduate*, when they did Mrs. Robinson's wardrobe, there are always animal prints somewhere, because she was a predator. Even her panties were zebra stripes, everything she wore had animal

prints or fur, she's always got animal on her."

TG: There's another picture which I find striking. It's a picture of Bobby Kendall, sitting nude and photographed from above, sitting with his legs crossed. He's looking up above the camera. His mirror image beneath him, which looks like a scene of Narcissus looking at his image in the pool of water, is not a true reflection, but at first appears to be. His shadow, or mirror image, is in fact looking right at him.



JB: It's funny, a friend of mine asked me for a print of that, and he thought that Bobby was being reflected in a pool. It's a double exposure. When I did it I moved the blue light to the other side, so that it looks like the same person, as opposed to how other people might have done it by just turning the camera around, which would have put the blue light on the wrong side. I moved the light for the other exposure. I did a lot of this stuff by matting the frame. I love that picture. There's a shot in the film of Bobby in front of six or eight full length mirrors with baroque gold frames. I think I only had three baroque frames so the others were done with a matte and a double exposure.

TG: What kind of camera did you use for the stills?

JB: I was using 8 mm but it wasn't Super 8. Super 8 cameras at that time had plastic lenses, which weren't that good, but the format was larger. So I used regular 8 film, with a Bolex camera, with turret lenses, with three lenses or more, with Zeiss lenses, I think that's what they were called. A sharper image on a smaller format is better than an out of focus image on a larger format. For the stills I used a Rollicord and a Roliflex, and I had a 4 x 5 sports camera. I never went to school for photography, so I didn't know anything about any of this stuff. I learned it all as I went along. It never seemed like it should be that complicated, and never is. You have a little thing that computes the light for you,

and once you learn to do that, it's pretty easy. Colour photography is about setting everything up in the right way, if you light it right. Lighting is photography. Once you got the painting ready, all you had to do is to click the shutter. In short, I did the lighting, the costumes, the set up, everything myself. In some cases I had help.

TG: You have a keen sense of composition in your pictures.

JB: I had drawn all my life, and I had been to art school. So I pretty much made everything myself. I did the lighting, the costumes, the set up, everything myself. In some cases I had help. I even made a crane - in reality a teeter-totter. I had people pile on one end and press down in order to lift me up at the other end. But usually I couldn't get people so I had to use motors to do some of the work. There's a view of flashing Broadway signs out a window. It was supposed to be a tilt shot but I couldn't operate the camera because I had to switch some of the signs on and off. So I ran a string from a motor to the camera so it would tilt up. I also had a fan on an intermittent motor to blow the curtains. What was I doing? Sometimes I wonder about myself. I can't imagine anybody else doing all that shit, but I did - I'm so driven.

TG: There seems to be no urgency to impress in your work, no need to convince. You seem to delight in your self-created world of sexual illusion and beauty. Can you tell

us something about your autobiography?

JB: I wrote a screenplay based on my life. Everything in it is true, things I've observed or done. And I have had an interesting life. And of all the professions fags usually do - I wasn't a hairdresser, I wasn't a make up artist, but I was a costume designer. I did so many things, like the physique photography, I did an awful lot of stuff that fags do. And being a drag queen. So I did this screenplay about my life, and it's not blowing smoke up my ass, but

I decided to do an oral version of it. It's like listening to a radio program, sort of. It has 30 or so actors in it, with sound effects. It's called *Fag: The Pretty Good Life of Jimmy Bundle*.

Pink Narcissus is currently available on DVD. The special edition Tashcen monograph, James Bidgood will be available in April, 2009. It's high time for that reflected image in Bidgood's pool to be realized, and drowning in it has never promised to be more delicious.



DOLL

By Claudia Bellocq

Photo © Sue Fox



I

dead eyes barbie doll lolling over to the left of you. vacant stare as her little plastic cunt yearns for kens cock. once she dreamed of skin, of flesh, of eyes that moved and saw things. then she remembered she was plastic. dead eyes barbie doll.

ripple muscle ken watches dead eyes barbie and imagines fucking her hard up her pink plastic cunt. hey doll...how you doin' baby....then he remembers he has no cock, only a space where it should have been and he weeps and curses mattel™ as hard as a silent plastic man doll can.

barbie is a slut he says. whatever. never wanted her anyway. gets his camouflage on and gets down with the boys in all manner of action poses. home.

barbie is getting cocky now. watching ken with the boys. jesus what a dork, how could i even have thought about it she gasps, heady, breathless, coquettish and still plastic. turns to the girls and goes shoe shopping and dressing up in pink frills and feather trim. home.

barbie knows ken could hurt her

ken knows barbie could kill him.

barbie is becoming animated. her plastic is getting a life of its own these days. she likes how it feels and doesn't want to go back to plastic a-go-go land.

ken is waking up and wonders if sleep was more comfortable. feel. feel. feel. where's my grenades he wonders realising there's a dick starting to grow where the plastic space was.

barbie's panties are no longer the flat white asexual cover they once were. barbie tries to hide her cunt.

ken has seen it. plastic to plastic becoming heart to heart.

barbie wants to run and ken shouts "fuck off then...go!"

ken wants to back off and barbie shouts "yeah right, been there done that, dick face!"

"dick face? wow! I've got a dick," preens ken proudly.

barbie loves ken

ken loves Barbie

they become human and squeeze themselves uncomfortably into their new form hoping.

II

barbie: "ken, you know you want me baby"

ken: "whatever barb."

football results on in background. barbie pacing. plastic heels killing her. plastic toes permanently on end. plastic cunt permanently dry.

barbie: "baby...I'm melting here. hungry for you honey. come to bed ken."

ken: "yeah sweetness...soon." - back to football.

disco music on in background. bedroom pink; too pink. thinks 'jesus, gimme a bratz anyday, no

edge to this bitch, but I guess one plastic cunt is as good as another.'

ken: "yeah baby, keep it hot for me honey, on my way."

their first time. should be fucking amazing. should be all blow out and punctures. should deflate plastic. leaves them cold. ken's cock shrinking when he's only just got it. barbie's cunt fading to grey/white space again.

barbie: "ken honey, you wanna make a baby?"

ken: silence

barbie: "ken honey, you wanna make a baby honey? you hear me? saw a new version of myself last week. detachable belly. brand new home. nappies. buggy. breast feeding chair. bottle for baby. sopping wet nipple pads. bloody sanitary towels. screaming insanity. no sleep."

ken looking at brand new barbie model without detachable belly.

ken and barbie get it on

fuck fuck fuck. ooh baby. ooh doll. no cum. no cum

shit, forgot you couldn't cum. no baby.

barbie leaves ken

ken weeps.

Bratz....

BACK IN LOVE FIELD

By Steven Severin

**Except the Lord, keep this city
the watchman waketh but in vain
Alert, alert**

look well at the rainbow

**Chico is in the house
visit him (take the Lord with you)**

The sky is blue

place the notice in the tree

a tree is green & brown

Chico, have the letters arrived?

the letters that are white

like the tree that is green & brown

the fish will rise soon

(praise be to Allah!)

the fish that is in the throat of the senorita

Chico visit the sky

raise the rainbow of the uproar

Bursts out, grows,

Sound of octave

Subsides, rises the One sound

tumult and timidly rolls,

sirens and moan:

"Announcing alarm city of love"

**press the letters to her breast (letters that are
white)**

Wake the Lord, break the fish

the tree inside our senorita

feel the blue Lord in the sky house

Alert the fish inside the rising breast

Senorita (suck) place the city of vain

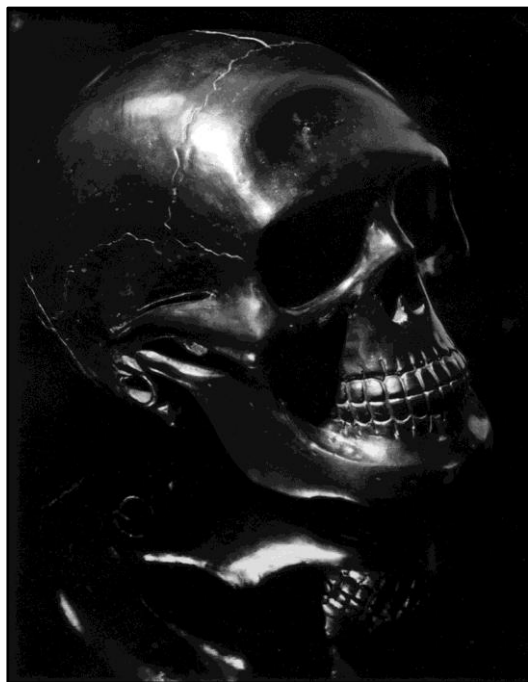
under the cock of the fish

**(some of these words were the code words used during the
Bay of Pigs fiasco, Chico still sits, waiting for
his radio to stop transmitting)**

DEATH WISH CHAMELEON I

By Cricket Corleone

Photos © Richard A Meade



“Attempt number... hell, I have forgotten what number I am up to. Does it even really matter? It obviously didn't work... again.”

Dustin pulls out a notebook from her coat pocket. In one hand a pen, the other a notebook. Dangling from her full lips is a cashed out cigarette. Dustin flips through the pages of her notebook until she reaches a list of names. The names in the book are names of men, first and last names and next to those are addresses. All the names are crossed out except for one. Dustin goes down the list until she reaches the last name on it, she crosses the name out. After putting the notebook back into her coat pocket Dustin scans the area around her.

It's a city sidewalk, outside her favorite book store, on a busy street. It's daytime but everything seems shadowed by overcast. Life today seems like a really low grade black and white movie with no real plot and no astounding outcomes.

The smell in the air is like rotten cabbage, it comes from a factory down the street that brews beer though no one in town would drink it for the awful familiar smell that plagues the city streets.

“Only the tourists would drink that crap.” Dustin thinks to herself as the smoke from the chimney of the factory belches out into the depressed sky.

Crouched against a brick wall, Dustin stands to her feet and dusts herself off. Her coat is black and heavy, something she had seen a sailor wearing when he came to town on shore leave. Dustin decided she wanted the coat, so she slept with the sailor and took off with the coat before he woke up. It was once stylish and clean. Now it is somewhat tattered and stained. But it keeps her warm and it's familiar. Under the coat is a simple stripped gray and black sweater, another thing she stole years back from a thrift shop, a pair of men's jeans she took from a past lover, and black boots tucked away under

the bottom folds of her jeans. The boots are the only thing she's wearing that truly belongs to her. Her hair is shoulder length and dark brown, it matches her eyes, eyes that look as though they are open, even when she sleeps.

At the public library down the street, Dustin spends some of her time looking for freelanced work and checking the local website that lists convicted sex offenders in her area. She writes down the addresses of the criminals in her

notebook and tucks it away. There is always a new addition to the list each day as there is always some criminal being released from the state prison. The list also provides the extents and extremes of each convicted sex offenders crimes with colored boxes next to their names. Yellow means their crimes were not considered as extreme. Green means their crimes were a little more extreme than most. Red means they are among some of the worst offenders. Dustin is only interested in the red boxes.



The online local newspaper lists in the back pages every sex industry job in the market. Strippers, models, porn sites, escorting, dominatrix positions... everything is there. Dustin reads through the job descriptions and criteria. When she comes across jobs that offer the least information she writes down the contact numbers. Later at her apartment she calls the numbers

and only takes more interest in the jobs if they seem shadier than the others. Once she thinks she has found one that sounds like it has potential, she agrees to meet up for an in person interview with the person on the other end. She doesn't bring a driver or a friend. She leaves no clues as to where she is going. She brings no form of protection. Dustin sets out to meet

a man she has only spoken to on the phone for about five minutes. He sounded creepy and potentially dangerous. One of the types that posts ads to lure women in only to end up victimizing them in some way. So to Dustin, he was perfect.

Dustin isn't stupid. She knows exactly what she is doing. Her agenda has been the same for over a year now. A few years back, after an attempt at suicide, Dustin realized she didn't have it in her to kill herself. So over time she got into things like mutilation. Once again realizing that it just wasn't going to work for her she set out in search of men that were into extreme acts of violence. Most of what she encountered were men with violent sexual fetishes. But no one was ever willing to take it far enough for her. She wasn't in it for the thrill, Dustin wanted them to kill her.

To some this may seem like an easy thing to find, but as they sometimes say, when you are looking for something you very rarely find it, until you stop looking. Dustin's determination became an obsession. Realizing that she seemed death proof in a way, she continues to search about until somebody comes around with the nerve enough to prove her wrong. So she searches online websites for dangerous criminals that have been released, seeks them out, and attempt to try and provoke them according to whatever their crimes were. In her mind, sex criminals were the way to go. Dustin isn't the most attractive woman in the world, but she knows how to form herself into exactly what men want... most of the time anyway. If she fails she goes to the next name on the list. In her mind, the only real failure is that she is still alive.



Another way that she goes about her death search is to take seedy jobs that could potentially be dangerous. Whatever the other girls stay away from is what Dustin walks right up to. In fact, if the devil himself were ten feet away from her, while the others whimpered and ran, she would walk up smiling, look him right in the eye and say, "It must be terrible to be second best." And if the devil wrapped his hands around her throat, even if his touch burned through her flesh and caused tears to stream down, she would keep smiling all the way to hell.

Among some of her failed attempts at being murdered, are men she had had affairs with in the past. It wasn't the men in those cases that she was going for though, it was their wives. For example, in her trusty notebook, page five, name number seventy three. The man's name is Scott Wells, he is forty six years old and lives with his wife of twenty years. They have kids that are grown and starting families of their own. Upper class married types, good reputations in their communities, tons of secrets. Scott has an addiction to prostitutes and internet pornography. Dustin, having a keen eye for these types meets Scott after a few sessions through instant messaging. What starts as just sex eventually ends up becoming like therapy for Scott who eventually comes clean about his immense hatred of his life as it has turned out. Dustin sees an opportunity. Scott's wife has been

aware of his indiscretions for some time though silently it tortures and angers her. Playing off the wife, now a ticking time bomb, Dustin places herself right in the bulls eye and pushes psychologically until someone cracks. Either the husband will do something rash to protect his reputation, or the wife will act out from years of her husband's demeaning excuses and the mockery he has made of their marriage.

The plan had almost worked but Scott's wife turned out to be smarter than given credit for. After holding Dustin at gunpoint in a sleazy hotel room, which Dustin had set up to look like a meeting place for her and Scott that night, the wife slowly started to see what was really going on. Instead of shooting Dustin herself, she gave the gun to Dustin and told her coldly "Do it yourself." When the wife turned her back on Dustin and walked out the door, Dustin was left alone with the gun to her head. She once again couldn't pull the trigger, so instead, in a fit of rage, she tore apart the hotel room which just landed her in jail with a hefty fine. Once again, her plan had failed. But it wasn't enough to stop her mission.

Present day, notebook in pocket, death wish still in mind, Dustin goes about her regular routine of finding a killer. Only today, she will meet someone for the first time that will change everything.

THE FROG MAN

By Paul Stephens

We used to go to the river when I was a kid, we'd play the usual sorts of games I suppose, the girls would egg the lads on to go in to the river and swim across to the back of Griffiths house, and everyone would shout "There's the frog man! He's going to get you", and they'd scream and go back in the water and swim straight back. I mean he'd been gone for years by the time I was going there, this was years later, but we were still well scared down there.

Griffiths had lived there I suppose from when I was a baby, or a bit before to when I was 2 or 3. I vaguely remember when we had to go and stay at my Grans for a bit, when it all came to light, and police and the press and every fucking ghoul in the northwest was all over the area. I remember a kind of pall that hung over my early days at school as well, like someone trying to hide that your mum or your dog had died. I remember they fenced off that part of the river for about 5 years or so. And at school as well, we never knew what had happened really so we used to make up stories that Griffiths was a frog and he'd turned all these kids into frogs and that was fucking ironic because it was fairly close to the truth. You're asking me if I knew what had happened at that age, I suppose we must have pieced it together from hearsay, people picking things up

from their parents or older brothers and sisters, I remember reading about properly it when I was 11 or so, and it freaked the fuck out of me it really did.

Everyone thought that Bill Griffiths was retired, he was about 60 or so when he moved in to that house. I don't know what he did before, he was a complete enigma. He looked like a bit of a tramp, a derelict, wore this really dirty raincoat with a bit of rope round it, but he spoke quite posh. They called him frog man of course before it all happened, he was really pale, bald and with these bulging eyes, used to sit by the riverside for hours sticking his tongue out at the kids who were playing down there, they used to shout "Frog Man" at him and he's shout back "Frog spawn!" and the kids all used to say he had a long green tongue, and that he used to catch flies with it. And it was all a bit of a laugh, they just thought he was eccentric, certainly didn't seem to worry anyone, and then one day he seemed to disappear, and about a fortnight later that's when they found John Hutchinson and it all just went mad.

John had been missing for a couple of days, last seen leaving school, no one knew he was going to the river, I don't think they'd looked there until he was found. He was alive when they fished him out, what

was left of him was swimming downstream, just a head, pale as fuck like he was dead, and this slimy tail like a fish stuck on the back of it where his hair would have been, all writhing around, struggling. He couldn't speak, but he looked in proper pain. They took him to Stepping Hill, but he got weak and died within hours. The police went in Bill Griffiths house, said was like a fucking riverbed in there. Everywhere was damp as fuck, there was no furniture, but all moss up the walls, and loads of damp leaves and grass on the floor. I think he only used one room, the rest of the place was completely empty. He'd gone, anyway.. he was never seen again, no record of him anywhere either, might not have been his real name, then they found the others.

There were four of them, Kirsty Orham, Peter someone, I can't remember the other names, but they just found their faces encased in this weird transparent mucus, on the shallow bit of the river bed near the house. Now officially, they were removed to the hospital, and they were all found to be dead, and that's fucking freaky enough right but that's not all of it, it's fucking grim. Years later I was seeing Kirsty's sister Jan for a bit and she told me that the family had found out what had happened years later,

in 1985 one of the doctors from Stepping Hill had got in touch with the family on the quiet, and said what had really happened. They'd taken the four kids straight to the hospital, they were still alive, moving about in this stuff like they were trying to struggle out, and they'd cut through the stuff on a couple of them to get them out and they had just faded and died. Then this consultant, said to put the one with Kirsty in, in some water, so they put her in this tank in an isolated ward and she seemed to stabilise. They kept her like that for about 2 weeks, putting stuff like algae and nutrients into the water. She looked in pain, confused and couldn't speak or anything. The little tail on the back of her head started to grow and the mucus around her started to dissolve until she was actually swimming around the tank, she still looked terrified though. Then after about a month or so the tail started to shrink again and she started to grow little arms and legs, like a baby's, and come to the surface to breathe, but then she died, she would have been about 8 or so. No, I've not seen Jan for years, my mum sees hers occasionally, she's bad nerves, she's been on pills for years apparently, that's Stockport for you.

LYDIA'S DAYDREAM

By Hank Kirton

BLACKTHORNE, CALIFORNIA:
June 27, 1969

The rumours and gossip arrived in Briarpatch ahead of the event - a perpetually shifting whirlwind of impossible stories and extraordinary reports that began to coalesce into one dark, supernatural myth.

"Joni Nobody is coming!" and that's all you had to say to kick-start nervous imaginations - especially with all the ingenious drugs around.

Lydia was working in the garden. Lydia was nineteen, Aquarius, and so pretty and fragile in both appearance and character that the others in the commune nicknamed her "Gossamer." She tilted toward the sun and filled her face with heat and light, collecting it like a saucer in the rain. The light seeped into her pores, making her skull glow and vibrate with warm orange energy, opening her delicate expression like a flower. The electric orange juice she'd had for breakfast was coming on. Her spine was alive. She bent down and began weeding the cucumber patch, moving through the soft mounds of soil. The earth felt like deep rich everything under her hands.

She recounted some of the testimony she'd heard about Joni

Nobody from the other members of the Briarpatch commune:

JOHNNY RED: "She can heal you with sex. She cured cancer with her climax once. No lie. She's real selective though. She won't fuck just anyone with a fatal disease. You gotta be WORTHY. You gotta EARN it. Don't ask me how..."

"Oh, wow."

CHERRY BOP: "She can hypnotize cats and pose them like dolls. Once she recreated The Last Supper with a litter of kittens. People came from all over to see it. Allen Ginsberg and a couple of the Fugs even showed up to take pictures! It's supposed to be their next album cover..."

"Oh. Wow."



MOONBEAM: "She took so much LSD when she was pregnant that one ounce of her breast-milk contained 1300 micro-grams. They tried to sell it on the street but word got around it was a bad trip. You really don't want Joni Nobody's milk frothing around in your head. That's a heavy fucking trip for anyone to handle..."

"Wow."

DR. TOPHAT: "I heard she raises bees on acid. Like, gets the acid to mix with the apitoxin venom in their stingers, y'dig? They hone-in on her pheromones and lay stings right into her veins. She tripped on bee-sting acid for, like, a month. Really got inside the insect mind-set, y'dig? A real bee-hive high. Nobody could talk to her for weeks. She spent whole days outside, sucking on flowers and buzzing..."

"Oh, wow."

CHEMICAL JITTERS: "She has a two-year-old daughter named Isabel. Man, Isabel took more acid in the womb than Leary could take for the rest of his life, man. The kid has black, anti-matter eyes. You can see your deepest, most primal nightmares in her gaze. One guy stared at her for too long and went insane, man. Couldn't deal with the black cosmic UTTER she laid on him with those far-out peepers of hers. He gouged out his own eyes with a pen-knife. They had to lock him up for his own safety. I think his name is Walter..."

"Oh! Wow!"

Lydia looked down and noticed she was up to her knees in dirt. She'd been sinking into the garden, as if she'd wandered into unhurried quicksand. Or maybe she grew out of the earth like a burgeoning Brussels sprout and her entire life had merely been the long, longing dream of a seed.



Then she realized she was kneeling. She laughed and soft butterflies flew from her mouth, turning to invisible wisps of vapour in the hot air. She stood up. There was a van parked beside the house and the other members of Briarpatch had gathered around it. Someone was here. Joni Nobody was here. Lydia clapped the dirt from her hands and left the garden.

The van was big and intimidating; a 19th century eccentric's dream of

the future. It looked as if it had just ploughed through a wet, fluorescent rainbow.

Lydia approached the others as if sneaking up on them. She felt apprehensive. The bizarre reports about Joni Nobody and her daughter shuffled through her mind like Tarot cards embossed with bothersome dreams.



Lydia was not a sceptic. She believed things.

The garden hose she used had a tiny, leaking puncture-wound and Lydia paused to admire the mud puddle it had created.

Her watery reflection was an undulating, sky-cast negative that sent a shivering, haunted transmission along her spine and full-blown FEAR suddenly grabbed her abdomen.

Her reflection was not herself. It was an evil opposite. She turned her eyes to the bright blue sky and stepped over the puddle.

Lydia was not a sceptic. She believed in signs, omens, visions, whatever. They were secret messages woven into the fabric of life by invisible hands. This vision may have been borne of a mud-puddle, but its meaning was crystal clear: Joni Nobody was bringing bad magic into Briarpatch. An ill-wind had just blown into their home.

Johnny-Red said, "Hey Gossamer! C'mere and meet Joni Nobody!"

Lydia smiled, nodded and said, "Okay! Hi!" She stepped forward and extended a friendly hand.

The woman who received it was small and pale; her long hair was black and parted in the middle. She wore only a worn, white satin slip. Her feet were bare. She smiled at Lydia. Her teeth were yellow, her eye-teeth as large and long as fangs. "Hello, Gossamer," she said in a voice like warm milk.

Lydia said "Hi." The word came out like a squeaky cabinet hinge.

Joni Nobody's eyes were large and dark and Lydia could feel them poring over the contents of her brain. She tried to free her hand but Joni Nobody held firm, smiling with her yellow fangs, searching through Lydia's secrets with her black, X-ray eyes.

Lydia finally managed to yank her hand loose, emitting a panicked little gasp. She looked down at her palm expecting to see some black, unhealthy residue there.

The other members of Briarpatch laughed.

Johnny-Red said, "Gossamer, why don't you show Joni and Isabel inside so they can get cleaned up. They drove all the way from Seattle..."

Lydia turned. "Isabel?" she said. "My daughter."

Lydia turned back and a miniature replica of Joni Nobody stepped out from behind her, like a dividing cell.

Lydia almost screamed.

Instead, she said, "Hi," keeping her gaze away from the child's eyes. "Follow me." She led them toward the house, so self-consciously AWARE that she was being watched and followed that she felt as if she were walking on difficult stilts.

She held the door for them. They went inside.

In the kitchen, Lydia finally worked up the nerve to face her guests. Joni Nobody and her daughter were staring at her. Joni wore a gentle smile; Isabel's expression was void. The silence was thick and oppressive in the room.

"Do you know how long you're staying?" Lydia asked.

"We just need to slow down and rest for a couple days. We've been running for weeks."

Lydia knew what she was talking about.



CHEMICAL JITTERS: "You remember that weird comedian who used to say, 'Farckbuckle in the Hoo-hah?' He used to go on Ed Sullivan. The guy with the big eyebrows? 'Farckbuckle in the Hoo-hah!' Anyway, a bunch of Russell's girls were crashing at his pad, feeding him a line of bullshit, among other things. Word has it Joni Nobody got him started on a real heavy death trip. He decided to drop some acid and belladonna and check out, like blow his mind for real. They say he was balling her and when he started to come, he stuck a gun in his ear and blew

his brains out. Farkbuckle in the Hoo-hah! No fucking shit!"
"Why are you afraid of us?" Joni Nobody said.

Lydia blushed and smiled and said, "I'm not."
"Yes you are. We can tell."

Lydia shook her head. A black yet colorful aura surrounded mother and daughter like an oil-slick halo.

A high-pitched buzzing filled the air. She felt the world slipping out of control. "No, really. I'm not," she said and then wondered if she'd spoken English.

"It's okay. Fear is natural, like love. We're afraid to be born, we're afraid to die. Without fear there is no life, without life there is no love..."

Lydia nodded as if she understood. "Okay."

"I need to feed my daughter."

Lydia said, "Okay, we have salad, fresh bread and..."

But they weren't interested in Lydia's menu. Isabel turned and tilted her face up toward her mother. She opened her mouth in a wide, grotesque yawn. Joni Nobody leaned over until her own open mouth hovered above her daughter's. Joni's throat began to swell and contract and deep guttural gulps pulsed like a muffled drum.

Lydia covered her mouth with her hand.

Thick strands of milky yellow slime emerged from Joni's throat and oozed into Isabel's hungry mouth.

The high-pitched buzzing rose in tone, velocity and volume. Bees! Lydia realized. It was the piercing buzz of a billion bees.

After Isabel had taken a few swallows, they turned toward Lydia, mouths still connected with webs of yellow bile, and Lydia finally looked into Isabel's eyes.

They had grown huge and black. She had bee's eyes. Each bulbous black honeycomb was filled with thousands of dark pockets, each containing a tiny galaxy.

Lydia found herself staring into infinity. Her limbs began to dissolve. She dropped to her knees, unable to break her gaze from the child's impossible eyes.

They moved toward her, the milky strands gently oscillating between them. Lydia felt hypnotized and unable to stop herself from reaching out her tongue and taking the bilious webbing into her mouth.

It was warm and tingled and tasted like semen.

And then the universe collapsed.

DR. TOPHAT: "Russell's women were ordered to have as many

children as they could. He was trying to breed his own army or some shit. A lot of chicks came into the fold with kids already. So they set up a little day-care centre, a little nursery school in an old, broken-down bus. Joni Nobody's kid spent ten minutes - if that - on that bus. The other children wouldn't stop screaming until she left. There was no reasoning with them. They saw something in that girl that they just couldn't deal with."

Lydia sat by the window. Johnny-Red held out a cup of tea. She wouldn't take it. She hadn't eaten in five days. Hadn't spoken either. The pigs had descended on Briarpatch about one hour after Joni Nobody's arrival and raided the place. They all spent the night in jail. Everyone except Joni Nobody and Isabel were released the next day.

"Gossamer, you have to eat something or you're gonna starve. Gossamer? Baby, if you don't snap out of this we're gonna have to take you to a hospital. You don't want that, do you?"

Lydia continued to stare out the window and daydream.

"Those processes by which we make intellectual assumptions about which social systems have been engaged to produce the universal phenomenon of the monster are the same process through which we understand

conflicted societies. The relationship between man and monster, then, is the ultimate metaphor of intractable social conflict. It is not coincidental that the archaeological record shows evidence of simultaneously burgeoning beliefs in monsters and the earliest developments of weapons of war. Be it ancient myth, mystical creature or ordinary human gone insane, the emergence into the social repertoire of that which we call monstrous is brilliantly teleological. Indeed the beauty of the monster is that it is a product of free will."

(Cary Morrison 'Creature Conflict; Man, Monster and the Metaphor of Intractable Social Conflict')



TRANSGRESSIVE

Text and Images By Sue Fox

Monday 25th August 2008

Will I put up with anyone and anything just for sex? To feed my cunt?

I've slept with swingers and porn stars and criminals and rapists, and courted cold-blooded killers. Am I a collector of extreme sexual experiences?

So, I am thinking about the type of men I attract - very aggressive/hyper sensitive types! When a DJ/photographer called Faxx contacted me, with hoards of his nature pictures, I just thought, no, too tame for me. I need a relationship that bites, not one that sucks! I like the taste of passion and conflict - the bizarre, the off-beat, the taboo, and the feared! I want to be interested in another life, not bored fuckless - I want to be excited to fuck. What excites me? What turns me on? The unknown, the heightened, the feel of being alive and taking risks? Terror? Fear? Excitement? Dick!

My gay poet mate Richard was on the motorway with a stranger driving at over 120 miles an hour sucking his cock. It got him off like nothing else. What a grand appearance he would make in Cronenberg's film 'Crash'! They didn't even go that far. Imagine, documenting and filming your own fantasies? Imagine filming

what you fear? Filming what you desire?

Paul was telling me that he has a big hard-on when he is on his fire-blade motor bike doing 200 mph. Nothing should be worth dying for but if you are living, then is it only natural that you think of dying? Or explore the fringes of possibilities? Maybe you might hint at it? Licking around the edges of it? Tasting it on the tip of your tongue even? Do we all have death urges? How do they come out in us? Smoking, drinking, driving fast, fucking strangers, sky-diving, being friends with murderers?

How come I seem to want to be with the destructive types? Why am I not with the creative, intelligent and ethical men? They just lack drive and energy and guts. And bore the pants off me.

I like the dark, unsavoury hell being that has lived a life in the full force of seeming vacuosity, but has hidden layers of stories to unfold that would burn the heart and mind in two! I want to share the intensity and depth of feeling that someone rare has to tell. I don't want it to be any normal story. I want something different, pure and profound. I want the resonance of the original, the paranormal, the occult, and the unfettered mind to

diversify my ideas and sense of myself!

My demons are always ever present in me.....cajoling me into the 'dare'.....seeking the purest animal drive with a hint of mild intelligence! I am in dangerous territory, and I have not an ounce of fear or trepidation in me. I feel invincible. I feel impermeable. I feel impenetrable. I feel youth renewed.

Maybe Paul is in rehab? Mikey told me to stop giving out and get my boundaries re-asserted. I will re-charge in the Lakes and get centred for a few days. I have no real idea about Paul's life, plans and motivations. Except that he is in a dark place. He could have a whole agenda with his ex and his future and his 50k and I am not even involved in anything, why wait? My head feels like Labrynthitis has set in. I know I have taken too much shit in and gotten totally mashed by it - and there is no space for me in my head so I get dizzy. I need to forget for a bit. Forget everything. Find myself.

I am a junkie for interactions, happenings, dramas, stimuli, connections, feelings, and ideas.....I am catching them all the time like butterflies and eagerly devouring them. Without drama, there is no life. Without people, there is nothing!

I am back in to being alone again and feeling some relief, some dropping down of my shoulders! I

am still tightly wound up though, slightly waiting, and apprehensive for contact, for conflict, and for complication.



Wednesday 14th January 2009

I am attracting alpha male type animals to me. They are suddenly there upon me mid-flight, uninvited, breathing down into me like vapid part- feathered vultures, tearing my neck out. They have no awareness but to sniff out my cunt, they do not even look into my eyes, they have no eyes. And they want to carouse on my flesh and then stamp me out with baked black ego shoes. They are all large and beast-like, some have cross eyes and some have grotesque pregnant bellies. Their voices coil in, like vipers sucking, and then they come out at me all loud and in mid-sentence, and I do not know what they are saying, it has no context or sense. It is all about lusting and owning and piercing the air with the exploits of 'them'.

I have been in a super relaxed and loving mode and particularly loving of me. I am luxuriating in my radiance and sexual aura. I have 'come' twice today. Self pleasure is always fulfilling and gratifying. It is like some ritualistic offering or prayer to the corporeal. It is a celebration. Is it habit? We all have regular habits in our life we need, like eating. It feels so good to do, and never bores me. It occurs to me that orgasm is about sensation but it can also coincide with raw emotion. I am aware of this large wave of intuitive reverie of myself that wants to unleash tears and is quite overcome. It rises and falls and I wonder where I can take it to. Joy abounds in the body! You get lost in this sea of arousal, wandering, tip-toeing around, chasing things and forgetting what they were and where you are. I stay in the pleasurable sensation stage for ages, clueless about letting go. It is like some conversation that you don't want to end and life is that for me. To really let it out I have to have some mad blast of seriously dirty thought or fantasy, and be entirely in the zone of the profane. Or I might want to excite myself through a little pain. I use a trigger. I want more ways of coming than I can imagine and yet it is so easy to stay with what works. Do we really want to make the effort to change?

11:11

I think I became a masochist at the age of six. How do you change a message so deeply inlaid? I have

to tunnel inwards, down the rabbit hole to find the dormant and the dead, and the insidious metal traps and be rid of them from the field. There are hidden memories still. Antiquated treasures. There is surely no way back? A masochist for life? Can everything be changed if you try hard enough? I always try too hard. To play is the answer.

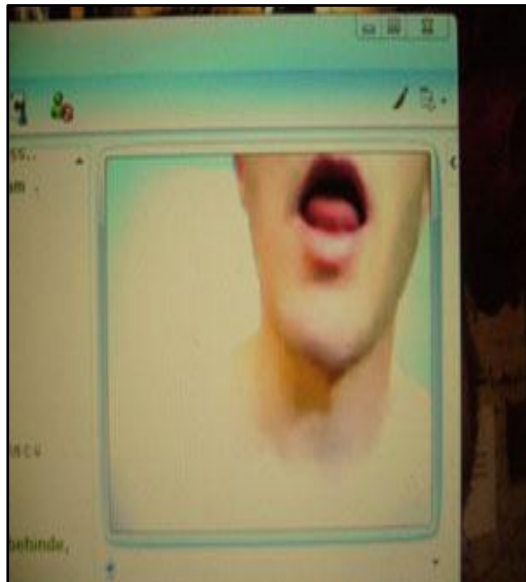
I feel that Gabriel is softening me up somehow at this moment. I used to think that it was the other way round but when we are naked and kissing, he is the one telling me how great he feels and how beautiful I am. I learnt to keep my mouth shut with men, and not rock the boat. However the anarchist in me wants to tear things down and smash things up. Now, there is no way that I do not want to speak, and be authentic. Everyone who comes into contact is gonna get it. All of me!

Men don't seem to want sex in reality. I am finding that they want an emotional connection. I see that with Gabriel and Syd and Dante. Sex is not their priority. They seek friendship. And want communion and to be held. I always thought that men wanted sex. I didn't know that they were like this!

Thursday 6th November, 2008

I inspire young people like I am some bubbling spring of eternal enthusiasm and motivation. I seek to plug them in to the creative grid. I communicate all the deeper meaning and profundity of life and

art. I stir them up. I am the champion of making them feel good about being artists...and wanting to practice, unleashing adventurous ideas. I awaken them to the desire to let out their imaginations, to burn bright, to have a healthy competition with each other. I want to push them to learn to 'see', and to perceive from their depths, in the way that my teachers did me. Art is the supreme answer to a great many problems. Art liberates!



I texted Gabriel last night. I feel so negated by his quietness. I asked him if I was in his heart or his head. He said he preferred to say I was in his soul. I was shocked. He said he was getting his business good so we could benefit from it. He said I was a pretty good fuck too. Ha ha! We are getting our regular communication back.

Men don't like blood. Must we not like what is inside of us and is uniquely 'us'? Do we have to accept every part of ourselves to be fully integrated? Would I taste

anyone else's blood? Or someone's menstrual blood? It is taboo to taste it? It is taboo to release it like my artist friends do. Blood is feared. Blood is life. Life is feared. It is absorbing another life force, almost like cannibalism, partaking in the flesh! 'Come' is different. Blood is homogenous to eating the core of a human being. It is touching the sacred art of the body.

Intuition is only part-conscious, a message can be perceived so quickly that it is like lightning. So when I went to the Ladyfest gig of women's art, I knew that even though he wasn't there that I would see him outside. Even though there were hours where we could've missed each other, I spied him on his bike. Then I wondered if I had stopped the wrong guy for a minute as I have only met him several times. You can forget those brief little moments of 'knowing'. It can be quickly over-ridden or forgotten or wiped swiftly under the carpet of awareness. Watch what happens to the mind like smoke unfurling, ready to disappear without trace.

Claude so reminds me of my stepdad, it shocks me. He smelled of shaving foam and moth balls. I can't go there with him; he is ancient in age too, although he is extremely warm and intelligent! How can I fancy my dad? Fucking hell he stinks! God I felt like I just wanted to be at home writing, instead of walking around lost parts of Hulme, waiting by park land with the snapping of twigs and rustling of yellow leaves. I

wanted to be in my warm, dirty, cum-stained, unmade bed!

It is as if things get stuck to me, the smells of men, their thoughts, and their lives. I am a magnet for externalising male happenings. I am a porthole for them to see through. I propel the force for exposure of erotic ideas and human interplay. I attract human prey to create from in the dialogue they have with me. But as Warhol said:- 'All Life is Art!' I can create from anything. My leaning to a particular subject explains about me and my present desires, my insecurities, dreams and lies.

Why is smell so important to me? I first remember the smells surrounding my dad's work as a joiner when I was three or four. I loved the smell of glue and wood stripped, and putty. I run around smelling things to re-acquaint myself with where I am; perfumes, body odour, hair tonics, cigarettes and alcohol. I smell the smells of bodies permeating the air. It is an OCD, an obsessive compulsive disorder that makes me need to know these human things defining us, as the body is both art and artifice. I am hungry to write, with the same intensity as the desire for sex. Dante told me I have the biggest libido of anyone he has ever known and he means that in the context of energy not just sex as we have never slept together. He feels a massive life force coming from me.

Naomi's gramophone playing at the Corner house was hypnotic and warped-sounding, like taking you

back to old pastime ages, pulling you into other memory zones! She is so magnetic as she moves and rubs the antiquated thick discs. Luminous faced with many pearly white buttons adorning her collar and a deep French-blue dress, eyes slightly lined. She swaps the small tack needles from one pot to another, in the blinking light of animations that resemble avant-garde abstracts.

I look at all the groups and couples clinging to each other, and notice I am always alone. You can't create to your maximum potential when you are with someone as your energies get taken - the force gets axed.

Everyone is ensconced in their mobile phones, keeping in touch with others. *Imagine a phone to talk to the dead?* Technology has advanced us in bridging the divide of speaking and sharing our emotional feelings. We are in age where people are coming together and really getting to know the hidden aspects of ourselves. There seems to be more warmth and love and connection which is wonderful, rather like Indra's net, we all know someone who can connect us to someone and it ends up that somewhere we are led right back to our self. We are all linked. We are all from the same pool of existence.

I am a freedom fighter of the soul. Dante told me I am his soul mate! Haven't I heard that somewhere before? Oh god, I get close to people in no time. I have been

watching couples getting it on and it is so beautiful, even though it can be crass too. Amanda and Barney, look into each other's eyes and kiss with that 'knowing-only-for-you-look'. And when Tsubi and Joe are online I know they are talking dirty and can't wait to re-unite when Tsubi flies back from Australia. It is all so lovely and blissful to see beings attuned. I really feel joy at the beauty and ceremony of love. I am not even envious - that is a good place to be, I usually set myself aside and feel like the odd fucker, ostracised. I accept where I am right now. I am alone. It is fine! I am free to 'be'. No containment. I can do whatever I like. The true art of life is to be happy for others happiness!

Wow, two glasses of wine and I am nobody's! I can't take drink, I am too pure, she says, she who has been smoking hashish. I came home really tipsy and talked to Dante about love, sex, life, spirituality, emptiness, non-attachment, and de-labelling things. We elevate each other to great heights. Dante brings out the intelligent and deeply spiritual nature of me. We reflect each other a great deal.

Sunday 25th January 2009

I dreamt a very Freudian dream about Dante early this morning. We were below the earth in what appeared to be cavernous dwellings or dungeons. He was lying there naked on a stone bed. We were trying to get intimate but I was withheld and not really

wanting to touch him. He was looking at me, and as I looked at him I saw these flesh-like long pink tubules (like Gunther Von Hagens dissected cadavers tubes) attached to a large bulbous black cock, (which I got very excited about) and the other tubule was attached to another large cock that was pink and empty inside, a hollow, like a cunt. They were attached to him and lying neatly beside him. I was unsure of what they were but I smiled. He sat up and came towards me and started to smell my arse, saying it was foul; he then inserted his tongue into it and I saw blood and excrement around his mouth, and I started to gag and woke myself up with the sound of me gagging! How bizarre the dream clearly alluding to our literary interactions and the study of sexual psychology!

Warrior and Kat's 'love-ferocity' seems to be calming down and there aren't quite as many messages now. He left a few reading.....

I want you so bad.
Every time you smile makes me want you more and more.
I thought about you all day today and I just wanted to let you know,
I miss you and I can't wait to be in your arms again.
I love you.

And Kat's are.....

Together forever.
Love is just a word until you find someone to give it definition.
I need your love.

We belong together.
Not to be blunt but let's fuck.

I think by the comments made they have moved into a place in London together! Ah, the brevity of the honeymoon period! However my mate PJ says he has said recently things like 'Hello sexy, what you up to?' What is going on huh? The dirty mind and the obsequious body still want promulgation. The flesh leaks passion from every bleeding pore. The heart is always hurt and we try to plaster the holes with brief periods of other beings. How can anyone heal your heart completely? Are we all filler?



17:17

I came twice yesterday and they were quick and urgent. The fantasies were all perverse, dominated by my aunt and uncle, or lesbian friends or gangs of smelly old men, pinning me down to rub me. I was 'used' by anyone and made to 'come'. I like to 'come' quickly....it feels like I can do it well and on command like a Pavlovian dog; taking time feels

like a curse, even though it is a nice build up. I want to come over and over on my own, just for me when I want to. I will try that out tomorrow?

Experimentation day.

You can always categorise people as 'types' of personality. There are those who fit in with the many people I have known in 45 years. It is as if they are repeats of great television programmes, the doubles of others known and gone. I know instantly what someone is about, I can feel their dominating emotion, their energy level...and so it is this I should access. If I used my inner knowing, gut feeling and trusted it, I would never fuck up. We all have antennae to pick up on the most subtle of behaviours, but it is whether we use that knowledge to enlighten us or to hide that person and take that chance with them to ramble and perhaps fall.

I fear Sid is an alcoholic and that he needs to heal others to find himself. How do I introduce him to this or at least to some loving 'open' people? Should I take him there? Do I want to be around him?

A French courtesan called Misting Uette who was the grand old age of 85 years when she was eagerly asked 'at what age did your sex life end?' Misting announced 'I will let you know!'

We are certainly not separated from our bodies until death. Do young people think that older

people lie motionless in bed negating the soul housing flesh? Sex is the most gratifying, pleasant and loving act you can commit upon yourself, and it relieves so much stress and tension. Sex is like some re-balancing act, it reorganises your very being. It brings you back in alignment with your energies. It is the ultimate in exercise and relaxation. Sex can have no cut-off point. Sex is life. Sex is not just for the young. Sex is finding yourself in this unique body. Sex is learning about your psychology. Sex is the basis of your biology. Sex is really freeing. Sex is funny! Sex is timeless. Sex is a shot at egolessness.

Friday 26th August, 2008

Another day gone like lightning! Ironically as fast as it has gone I have had a really pensive day..... thoughtful and introverted. There is the whole cosmos to ponder upon and the slow pace of things in my mind.....time to think and breathe. I feel 'still' amongst the fracas.

My bro Mike asked me a really interesting question a few weeks ago when we were making the chromosome pieces for the Becks gig, he said:- 'Sue, do you fall in love with these guys you meet on the net, who you get so close to but might not ever meet?' I kind of gave a quick answer and said 'in a way I do but then I can move in and out of it, like an artist can!' I have been thinking about the concept of 'infatuation'. There are

five mental poisons that we get sucked into as human beings.....

Infatuation
Aversion
Conceit
Passion &
Envy

I think that rather than 'loving someone', which takes time to build plus a large dose of reality to foster; I get 'infatuated' by things and people. I get pulled in by what is 'different'. I have always been keen to broaden my mind through connections. I can quite easily come and go, but need to connect on a deep level.

Paul the sniper is not in my mind anymore, like I have exorcised a huge demon. I have used some ritual to clear through the emotional quagmire he caused, but it feels like he has moved out of my mind without a trace! I cannot find him anywhere. It feels like he has gone. Completely filtered out. Like he was a visitation! A poltergeist!

I think that this diary looks at the ideas of 'sexual attraction' and 'love' or even 'the lack of love and sex in people's lives'. And also the larger issues of being pulled by a lover, to be together and want union with someone who is ultimately a strange commodity. I am keen to see what drives others into their relationships? To see what they are bound to? What tempts me from 'normal' activities? Why do I want to meet a person who is 'other' than, who is miles

apart from the straight-laced-man-on-the-street?

I went to get a health check to day, tested for everything sexually related. They get you to swab your own cunt out now, which is all 'power to the people'. What reclamation of independence, rather than having some spectacled nurse looking up your cunt with her wee scrunched up eyes? They ask you everything that you have done over the last three months in detail. They want to know what you did specifically with genitals and what you practise! It is an eye opener for anyone to open out in this way and be so candid. It is so funny. I could feel myself getting redder as I mentioned three sexual conquests this year! Someone could write a great script based on a sexual health clinic! It would be good to do some nice naked genital stuff with Gabriel, and use my cap, and feel his 'come' inside me. He seemed up for the idea today.

My attention was caught on Burton Road, when I passed some exceptionally good looking young builders, lifting big bags of sand up, sweating in the sun, with amazing tans and developed muscularity. What a find! I wanted to stop and say, 'fuck, you are all dead gorgeous, take me in to that house and have me!' Hahahaha.....my mind is ever creatively fantasising about anything I see that ticks the boxes and turns me on. Now what I should do with that is play with that in fantasy, which I don't do, but apparently 'men do'!

Mmmmm will see what I can do with that one. It's funny how I have never really got off on 'good-looking', pin-up, 'normal' men. I like men who are jagged, jarred, a bit dishevelled, slightly demon and master-like. I like an aura of magical sorcery about men. I prefer a bedraggled warlock than a clean-cut prince. Ha, I was going to say 'cunt-prince' there. How the word 'cunt' always manifests in my head, and re-arranges and regurgitates itself!

On the bus a woman with looped, plaited hair, trips up and nearly falls into a guy's lap on the back seat. She laughs out loud, shouting:-'Any excuse to sit on a man's knee!' I giggle under my breath. Women want to climb up on to that thing he has in his lap!

I met Gabriel today to get some money for recreational drugs. We talk and get on, but he is so shy or something. He seems aloof and doesn't look at me much or pay me any compliments. Why do women give them out all of the time? He has his head in the clouds of work. I think.... 'Why are we not close in public? To think of what we do at his is so intimate and yet you would never know it, seeing us!' He kisses me lightly when we say 'goodbye', like a peck on the cheek, but on the lips, and does it with total control. I want to change that and grip him and do the opposite, like I am the predatory male and he is the shy withheld female! I want to pin him against glass and hold him there and suck on his lips.

My power is ignited always to show my passion and energy. Do I come across as too 'full-on' to others? Do I put people off as I am so confident and forward and open? Am I acting? Is it the 'performance' me that wants to express my desires? And yet I back down because I know he is a private person and I don't want to upset him. So who gets all the power? I have got to start saying and doing and trying for what I want or I am selling out? Maybe women are the one's who make all the moves, sexual and otherwise? Where does all this 'cunt' power come from? Is it all a guise? Is it merely something to talk about? I honestly feel it, the power within my cunt. It is electric.

Gabriel looked so sexy today, he turns me on! I loved the hair growth on his face, around his mouth. God, that drives me wild. He is really handsome.

I like his lithe white body, his demeanour, his dark features. I love it when he looks at me, he doesn't do that enough! It is hard to curb the desire to want to be with him more. I imagine with the way his time is eaten up with work that his spare time is precious, and that he wants to read, watch movies, play console games, get on his guitar, see his friends, or just be quiet or listen to music. Ha, that is why there is hardly any time left to see me. I can't blame him for this, but effort needs to be made to link with me or I am gone! I am not waiting around whilst 'nothing' happens for me. I am not going to

be bored 'waiting' like some sad lonely cow at home.

Maybe I have to be patient and learn discipline? Perhaps this is his reserve and he has his own ideas in mind? I wonder what they are. Why doesn't he tell me? How do I get into his pretty little fucking head? I want to send him the book soon; it does feel like the right thing to do, if he wants to get closer to me! I should take the risk. And trust. If I give wholeheartedly, then he will give too! If I open out then that paves the way for him to open out to me. I guess that nothing worthwhile should be rushed between us, not sex, nor conversation, or anything. Let it go at its own natural pace instead of trying to control it in the fast lane.

Dante says:

what about in a church?

Sue says:

ooo yeah

Sue says:

lets blaspheme

Dante says:

in a confessional booth?

Sue says:

theres one near the uni, we could lie down in a pew and kiss

Sue says:

yeah

Sue says:

let's do it

Dante says:

i take great delight in sinning

Sue says:

we will go there

Sue says:

i do

Sue says:

i love to sin

Dante says:

hell doesn't exist

Sue says:

i am a wicked little bitch who
would love to fuck jesus

Dante says:

earth is hell

Sue says:

suck him off in front of everyone

Sue says:

that would be a good sculpture

Sue says:

imagine a figure of me sucking
on jesus on the cross

Dante says:

i bet jesus secretly wanted to be
fucked

Sue says:

hell is part of consciousness no
more

Sue says:

i bet he did fuck

Sue says:

the lying little cunt

Dante says:

lol

Dante says:

our purpose on this plane of
existence is to fuck

Sue says:

all the teachings are built on a
lie, utter fucking bullshit

Sue says:

yeah it is

Sue says:

that's why so many do it, it feels
so good, it is creation itself

Dante says:

that's why we've got our
appendages

Dante says:

both cunts and cocks are
marvelous creations

Sue says:

we emerge from it, sex is the
highest form of people uniting
physically and at some points
emotionally

Sue says:

they are, that is why we are
obsessed by them

Sue says:

we reclaim the original focus

Sue says:

we find light in who we are

Sue says:

in our bodies

Sue says:

we are like the yab-yum, the
buddha consorts in sexual bliss

Dante says:

i think underlying it though is
the sense that we are sexed and
we want to achieve a state
where there is no longer a
division - that sense that we are
one - united with the male or the
female

Sue says:

well we feel that with someone

Sue says:

but that doesn't remain, the state
can only be achieved alone
ultimately in Samadhi

Sue says:

where you unite opposites
within

Dante says:
is that a form of auto-eroticism?

Sue says:
but we get a taste of it

Sue says:
what?

Dante says:
Samadhi

Sue says:
interesting point, it is entering
the dhyanic states of meditation

Dante says:
should i try autoasphyxiation?

Sue says:
no not unless i am with you

Dante says:
lol

Sue says:
i know doms who have done
that and it is dangerous

Dante says:
yeh better not

Dante says:
i want transcendence

Sue says:
your life is too precious, i could
show you a few things you
could do though to achieve
those feelings

Sue says:
you can get a face mask...with a
zip

Dante says:
mundane existence is shit

Sue says:
a rubber one and i can show you
stuff you can do with it

Sue says:
yeah it can be

Sue says:
but not with us cos we create

Dante says:
or i could wrap myself in
cellophane

Sue says:
we can push things and do the
wildest of things

Sue says:
hahah lets get you in clingfilm
my dear

Sue says:
and when your brother gets
home i will say i am cooking
you

Sue says:
hahahhahahhahaha

Sue says:
can you imagine his face

Sue says:
i can say will you have dinner?

Sue says:
you can eat your brother





CACTUS GARDEN

By Stephen Sennitt

Photos © Alexandria D Douros

'I can't believe I've got you to myself.'

'Yes. What sort of train has a private compartment these days?'

'It's strange. Even when I'm dreaming...'

'Even when you're dreaming...things don't usually run as smoothly as this.'

'That's exactly what I was going to say.'

1.

The black earth churns under the train's wheels. The night is frosty, black ice beneath white smoke. We

look out at our reflections; wan doppelgangers, peering anxiously, trying to get inside for some warmth.

I try to take Deborah's hand, but she pulls it away with a conciliatory smile.

'How long will this take?'

'The journey? Maybe another few hours. Perhaps only half an hour.'

She smoothes down a capacious victorianesque dress, all dusty pleats and blackness.

'What's that book you've got there?' I ask her. I would dearly like to see her eyes. She's gazing down at the book as if in a reverie, not really looking at the pages, but beyond them.

'Aren't you going to answer me?'

'Don't sound so anxious. This book might not concern you.'

But her expression softens.

'Here. I can't tell you, but I can show you.'

'Oh, it's a photo album'.

Why does my heart sink? Here is a photograph of Deborah, her brown hair ; her russet hair. Her long white fingers. Her grave, composed face. Her hidden sense of humour. Her graceless posture.

It's a well thought out composition. She's standing alongside a young birch tree which is shimmering in the sun. Lush foliage, small yellow flowering shrubs surround her. When I look at this image I can hear a brook or a stream flowing not too distantly. I can hear Deborah saying my name through the heat haze. I can see a garden of cacti -

'Deborah, I'm sorry..'

That's what I wanted to see so badly, but didn't want to see: Her eyes are glass eyes. Coloured glass. Her eyes look through me as though it's *me* that isn't there, not her...

2.

'How often do you have this dream - or similar dreams?'

'About twice a week.'

The minimalist room is glowing with soothing orange light. A tape of waterfalls or pounding surf is playing in the distance, replicating vague nostalgias. There is an aroma of orange scented candles that does not quite disguise a smell of dampness.

'How did you feel during the Recalling this week? The trance I placed you in was meant to be very light, but you seemed to go deep. But when you go deep you fight something. It makes me feel there's something you're not telling me...'

The Therapist's long grey hair is silhouetted against the window, a mass of wayward split ends. Her hair compares very poorly to Deborah's. I don't think I could ever fall for an older woman. Not that much older, at least. Deborah and I were the same age.

'Were you going to say something to me?' Her long face is a wrinkled mask in her effort to 'reach' me.

'Only that time's up. I'll see you next week.'

I can't understand why I'm playing this game with myself. I'm desperate to make someone understand, but when I get the opportunity I back away. I'm retreating beneath a sardonic mask,

like a mixed up adolescent. In the meantime, these dreams and nightmares continue. In the next session...in the next session I'll tell her. I'll just have to force myself to tell her. Or if not, I'll talk to her about Deborah. I'll tell her what she was like.

A mist rises from the river. These apartments have no gardens. It's a relief, I suppose. No one has to tend to the river. You can dredge the river with intent, but you have to know what you're looking for. In a garden things can be upturned by accident. You might not be looking for anything at all.

3.

The orange lights flicker as I swing open the door.

'Today I'm going to tell you about what Deborah and I did together. These things weren't dreams.'

She doesn't so much look at me as pause over me, like I've interrupted her idea of myself.

I tell her about all the trips we took, memorising the snapshots chronologically. But it's no use -

I'm in a cactus garden, alone - Deborah beneath the soil, her doll's hand pointing a finger to the annex.

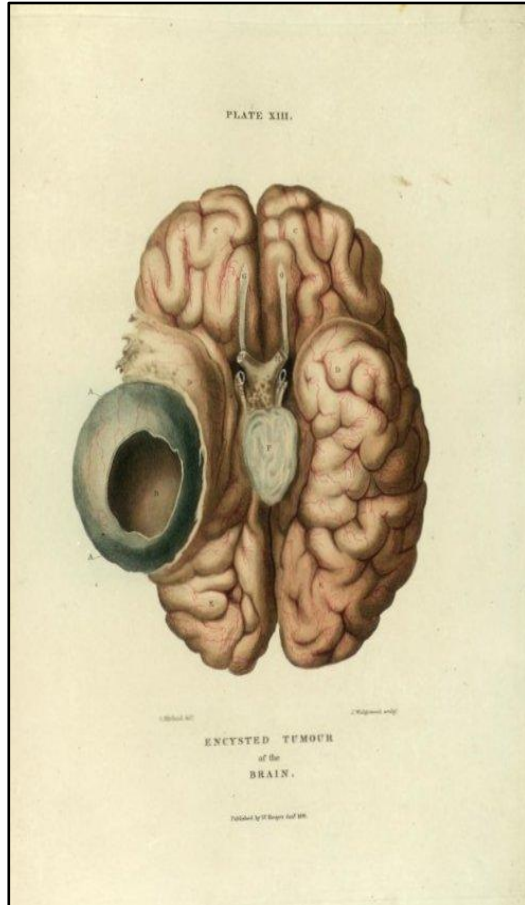
In the consulting room someone coughs, shuffles their feet.

Everyone present has cactus spines in their faces, weeping colourless transparent blood.



THE GIMP

By Christopher Nosnibor



The Gimp rose from her sprawling, pungent miasma. Spent seed dripped from her latex and leather-clad hulk. Her eyes, red, bloodshot, blasted, peered out from the studded leather face mask which snugged over her rotund skull, bullet hard. She leaned up and surveyed the carnage about her, the corpses strewn with casual abandon, limb upon limb in an unsightly mass of minced, putrefying, tenderised, pulverised and regurgitated flesh. As she hauled her own half-wasted Thalidomide foetal frame up into the chair, she saw one of the

wounded stir. A hostage to the frame and the wheels underneath her, The Gimp slodged her malformed being into the chair and began to attempt to pull away. The victim began to haul its partially-dismembered body through the sticky slum of blood, entrails, semen and excrement with which the floor was awash.

The Gimp began to push the wheels forward. She struggled to lift frame over the thigh of one of the wounded beneath her, but finally managed to trundle her way to the moving figure who was flailing in an agonised slow-motion on the floor. The dehumanised figure before her could not see her advancing, for it had been blinded during the previous night's events.

The Gimp struggled to discern the being's gender, for it was blood-soaked from head to toe and was sprawled face down. An arm was being extended feebly from its prone position. It emitted a weak and anxietised grunting sound, but could not speak, having had its tongue ripped out of its pathetic throat. The Gimp kicked the near-corpse over. It had been a man. Only now it had no genitals. The Gimp recalled taking a machete to this particularly feeble example of manhood in the height of frenzied sexual activity. The bastard.

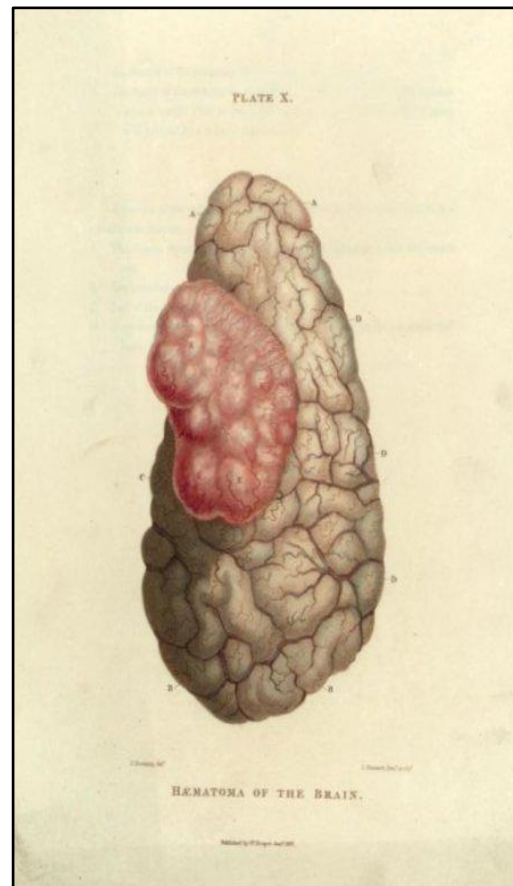
'Bostid,' she spat. 'Fokken bostid.'

The Gimp kicked the wreckage of the man in the ribs sharply with her good leg. He yelped in excruciating yet still exquisite pain. He could not reply, or fight back, since he had both legs broken and one arm ripped off at the shoulder. And, of course, he was dumb and blind. Caked blood had clogged his eye sockets and run down his face.

The Gimp was still reeling in ecstasy, and wheeled her way up the ramp and out of her custom-built dungeon. She made her way to her room, hormones still coursing in phenomenally excessive quantity through her bloodstream. She placed herself before the huge mirror which occupied the wall before her and unzipped her leather suit to reveal her clammy, oiled torso. The wasted arm of the parasitic twin embedded in her torso flopped out and hung from where her left breast should have been. Her right breast glistened with perspiration and lubricant. Her singular big, thick nipple stood erect like a thrusting thumb. With her right hand, which flapped feebly from the end of her truncated Thalidomide arm, she fondled her breast and tugged at the ring which hung from the pierced protuberance. The Gimp moaned in delight before hunching over herself. She crouched forward and parted the leather of her split crotch. She rubbed at her ebony cuntlips before spreading them wide and showing her pink in the mirror. The Gimp began to work at her huge clit, which thrust forth

like a small frond at the top of her twat.

She moaned orgasmically before working the split in her crotch to allow more room. She popped a huge, erect black penis from within the confines of her leather outfit.



The Gimp moaned again as it began to masturbate its secondary organ. Truly a freak of nature, and probably the world's only true hermaphrodite, The Gimp watched itself climax in the large mirror. It rubbed its malformed hand over its swollen abdomen. It felt the foetus stir within its womb. It would never be alone.



MADNESS PART I

By Brian Routh

Photos © Patricia Wells

THE HOSPITAL

The phone rang.
The voice at the other end of the
line said:
"You've got it all wrong."
"What!" I managed, not quite
knowing where it was going.
"You don't listen, you just don't
bloody listen."
"Who is this?" I said feeling proud
at being able to put together a
question.

I looked myself in the eye in the
mirror above the gas fire.
I put the phone down.
It was peaceful, quiet.
I sat down on the bed.
Out through the window I could
see the small park, green and
pretty, with the spring sun
Shining on it.
It was all so perfect and then the
thoughts came sailing in.
Thoughts that dissected dissection
itself.
Like a big amorphous mass of
cancerous monsters munching

away.
Thick with dust the book stared at me.
I moved towards it, my heart beating heavily in my skull.
Leave me be, I thought.
Words drown me I fear.
Too many ideas explained by too much verbiage.
Trying to decipher it all is much too time consuming and exhausting.
Where do all the discarded thoughts go? I wondered.
Outside on the street in front of my apartment building.....that's where I am now as I begin to pretend to act and walk like everyone else as I move through the streets.
Speech is the normal form of communication and also the most accepted form, to the point of persecution of others that may have to resort to other forms.
The desert surrounds me as I walk down a street lined with office buildings and lawns.
I am floating in deep space as I enter the doctor's office on the 73rd floor.
"Good morning Mr. Crawford, would you be kind enough to sit down whilst the nurse brings in your file?"
He sat there observing me like I was some specimen.
I felt like a slab of meat in a butcher's shop with flies hovering over it.
The nurse handed Dr.Lowenstein the file.
He smelled of Colgate and lifebuoy soap as he shuffled a bunch of papers around.
At great length he sighed, put his

hands behind his head and leaned back in his chair.
"How long have you been having these delusions about energy beings?"
I looked him in the eye; it was like looking into the cold detachment of a camera lens.
"Why do I come here?"
"Because the court has ordered you to or else be sent to a psychiatric hospital."
He was walking around the room.
I got up and walked out.
He was still talking when I quietly closed the door behind me.
I decided to take the consequences and do my own thing.

I got back to the afternoon sunlight in my apartment.
I sat there staring into the void and fell into a light doze.
The phone shocked me back.
"Who is it?" I yelled into the plastic.
"It's Dr.Lowenstein and I've arranged for you to be picked and taken to that hospital I was telling you about."
I put the phone down and yanked the cord out of the wall.
I was soon asleep again.
They came and got me at around 4am. I guess they picked that hour for dramatic effect.
The ride was smooth enough.
At the hospital I was confronted by about a half dozen women who asked me questions and asked me to sign my name to various forms.
I complied.
I was soon in a pair of blue pajamas and white terry cloth robe with stains and holes in it.
Also plastic slippers and white

tube socks.

I was led to a small room with a bed and a toilet and washbasin.

I was locked in.

I stood there not knowing what to do.

When the light went out I fell asleep.

MEETING THE GANG

I was shocked out of a deep sleep by a poker-faced man with thin blond hair and blue watery eyes wearing a white orderly's coat.

He was standing over me trickling urine over my face from a urinal bottle.

He was smiling.

I started to jump up and then realized I was in restraints.

"Welcome to the latest in psychotherapy, asshole."

He spat the words so that I was sprayed with his spit.

"What you got between your legs? Anything worth chopping off or bruising?"

He stood still and stared at me intently.

"I'll have to think up something special for you."

Just then the door opened and in walked a nurse. She looked angry.

"Why is this man in restraints?"

She shot at the orderly.

"Well! He drank his own piss. I caught him red handed. Disgusting filthy pig."

"Get out of here before I throw you out!" She moved threateningly towards him.

His whole demeanor changed.

His chest sagged and his jaw dropped.

"I-I-I-m g-g-g-going!" He stuttered and nervously ran out of the room.

The nurse was a middle-aged woman, plump with short brown hair.

"It's ok Mr.Crawford, I'll undo you, get you cleaned up and take you to the dining room."

She began to undo the restraints.

"Don't worry about Herman. He's a trustee. Just shout at him and he'll run away."

Her name was Mavis and she was a nice person.

She helped clean me up and took me for breakfast.

The breakfast was a choice of bacon or sausage toast and eggs with tea or coffee.

The room was filled with a sorry collection of individuals most of who looked drugged up to the eyes.

The orderlies surrounding us looked big, stupid and menacing.

I realized that I seemed to be under the influence of some drug as I tried to coordinate my body.

Using a knife and fork was an incredible effort of will.

Even my stomach and it's digestive machinery balked at having to do its job as I slowly and clumsily shoveled forkfuls of food into my leaking orifice of a mouth.

Why couldn't I be the superman that I was in my head? I thought.

Why am I in this place?

The whole planet seems to be one big sick room. Full of an amnesiac humanity that lives in fear and imagination.

Why can't this body die and let me fly?

Repeated over and over in my

head.

I always feel that I am not of this world.

I am in this world of unconscious activity along with the rest of humanity but the one central "I" that I truly am is of another realm.

A realm that cannot be explained by this world.

"It's time for your meds Mr.Crawford."

"It's time for your meds.....Mr.Crawford? Come along now."

Two bright twinkling stars were guiding my attention.

I was flying, soaring over mountains and forests. Doing somersaults and having so much fun with so much ease.

Two bright twinkling stars were now two bright twinkling eyes.

Kindly eyes.

Eyes filled with sunlight.

"Ah! You're back."

Yes I was back.

Back in the outfit that I'm travelling in, the human body.

"Here's your medication Mr.Crawford."

Yes of course the words singing at me are coming from the two bright eyes that I'm drinking from.

There was the nametag 'Mavis,' the friendly nurse.

Of course, as I swallowed two small pink pills followed by a thimble full of water.

"Would you like something to read?"

I tried to nod yes but could only drop my head and look stupid.

"Some TV maybe?"

She motioned for me to get up.

Arm in arm we shuffled across the floor, through a door, down a long

velvet cushioned hallway, through another door and into a large musty room filled with bookcases of books.

Men were sitting and staring into space with books open in front of them.

Mavis navigated me through the room and through another door and into a long narrow room filled with smoke.

She led me through the smoke and sat me down in a bright red checked armchair.

The loud sound of a TV echoed off the bare walls.

Through the smoke I could see many faces poking out cigarettes here and there.

All of their gazes turned to the TV screen, a flashing glimmer in the distance.

Mavis was gone, disappeared into the mist.

I was left alone in the fog.

Staring at the ceiling I imagined myself to be flying through the air above the city.

I was a clear, confident being, operating on all cylinders.

Spreading the message of love and forgiveness.

Free from all judgement, from all attachments.

A vehicle of unconditional love.

Filled with wonder and the magic of having no expectations.

I am flying because I am filled with so much light.

There is complexity but no complication.

Here I am navigating this body through so many dense energy fields.

Dodging the bullets armed with negative thoughts.

Here I am as I land on top of St.Paul's Cathedral. As I.....

"Time for the doctor Mr.Crawford."

The ceiling talks to me.

"Mr.Crawford.....?"

Yes, here I am in the funny farm.

A long room with a dozen or so beds in it.

Men being dressed by men and women in white suits.

The black woman in white is standing at the bottom of the bed.

She is staring at me.

Next to her is an Indian looking man also wearing white with a stethoscope around his neck.

"Good morning Mr.Crawford and how are we today?"

As I struggled for an answer.....

"Not very responsive, increase the dosage of thorazine? And park him in the day room.....right! Nurse next patient!"

I had part of the answer but it was too late, they were gone.

I wanted to go back to the ceiling but I was pulled out of bed and dressed in a pair of jeans, T-shirt and sneakers.

And guided into what I took to be the day room.

The outer space room was what it felt like.

Every single person in it talked or thought to themselves.

No one communicated with another person.

People talked at each other but there was no interaction.

Maybe this is how it is outside, I thought.

How many of us really communicate and feel communicated with.

It's interesting that I feel so rational and yet cannot get it out to the outside world.

Before they pumped me with drugs there was a chance, but now forget it.

They've put the robot to sleep and there is no way for me to operate it.

It's like being horribly stoned.

All of us in the day room are smashed out of our brains on drugs and encouraged to act crazy.

What an odd idea, I thought.

We are rounded up off the streets or from our homes, or other people's homes and because of some idiosyncratic difference in our perception we are taken to a building pumped full of drugs and let loose in a locked room and expected to act crazy and this is supposed to be healing?

Numbed out and watched.

Interrogated by a doctor periodically who uses head games to probe the robot part of us that is numbed out by the drugs and unable to allow a clear channel of communication to flow forth.

I know what to say but the machine part of me that communicates with you has been put to sleep.

A sane person held captive in an insane world.

Who are they kidding?

If I am not my body then what does it matter?

I will survive this body so good riddance.

The energy waves began to swirl around me as we were all herded together by white clothed sheep dogs and moved to the dining room for our lunch.

I don't even know what country

I'm in or for that matter what planet I'm on and it doesn't make a bit of difference.

I poured the food into my machine and fell asleep in the day room.

I dreamed of big shiny snakes.

Snakes about 50 feet long and 6 feet wide all moving together in the day room.

I was covered in slime and moved between them like the helpless human that I am.

Gasp for air.

Being moved around by their slimy bodies.

"It's ok, it's all part of the healing Mr.Crawford."

One of the snakes turned to tell me.

"More thorezene Mr.Crawford?"

Another snake asked me. A snake in a turban confronted me.

"What's all this sexual aggression Mr.Crawford?"

It asked me.

I can't get out of my head, I thought as I was awakened by Herman shouting and screaming.

He was on top of the TV cage looking all bruised and bleeding.

"Get me down! Get me down!"

He kept yelling as the nurses struggled standing on chairs to rescue him.

A wiry but strong looking man was being tied into a straight jacket, obviously the aggressor now victim, but he seemed calm enough, not resisting the nurses in the least.

In fact looking quite bored by it all.

I caught his eye.

A deep penetrating gaze.

A strong gaze filled with intelligence and bemusement but also a frightening gaze, filled with

a cruelty that made me look away.

They led him calmly away.

Herman was down off the TV and looking more damaged in pride than in body, already hurling threats of revenge towards an empty doorway.

Before I knew it, I was sound asleep again off on another adventure in dreamland.

THE VISITOR

"You have a visitor Mr.Crawford."

Chimed Big Ben, the hands on the face at 12 o'clock.

I watched as the clock disappeared.

"Hello Peter, how are you?"

Sang the voice of what looked like an angel standing before me.

"I'm your social worker and I've come to see how you are settling in?"

She sang again.

She was floating above me with big white wings flapping in slow motion.

Her words turned into a kind of gibberish.

I tried hard to decipher her but found the task impossible.

".....And I've heard from your wife."

I understood that part, wife! I thought hard about that word.

Wife? What wife? Do I have a wife? I asked myself.

"She has consulted her solicitor about the divorce and it's only a question of time now before it is final."

The final curtain, I thought.

Is this some strange opera that I'm an extra in or am I the lead?

The lead without song, without

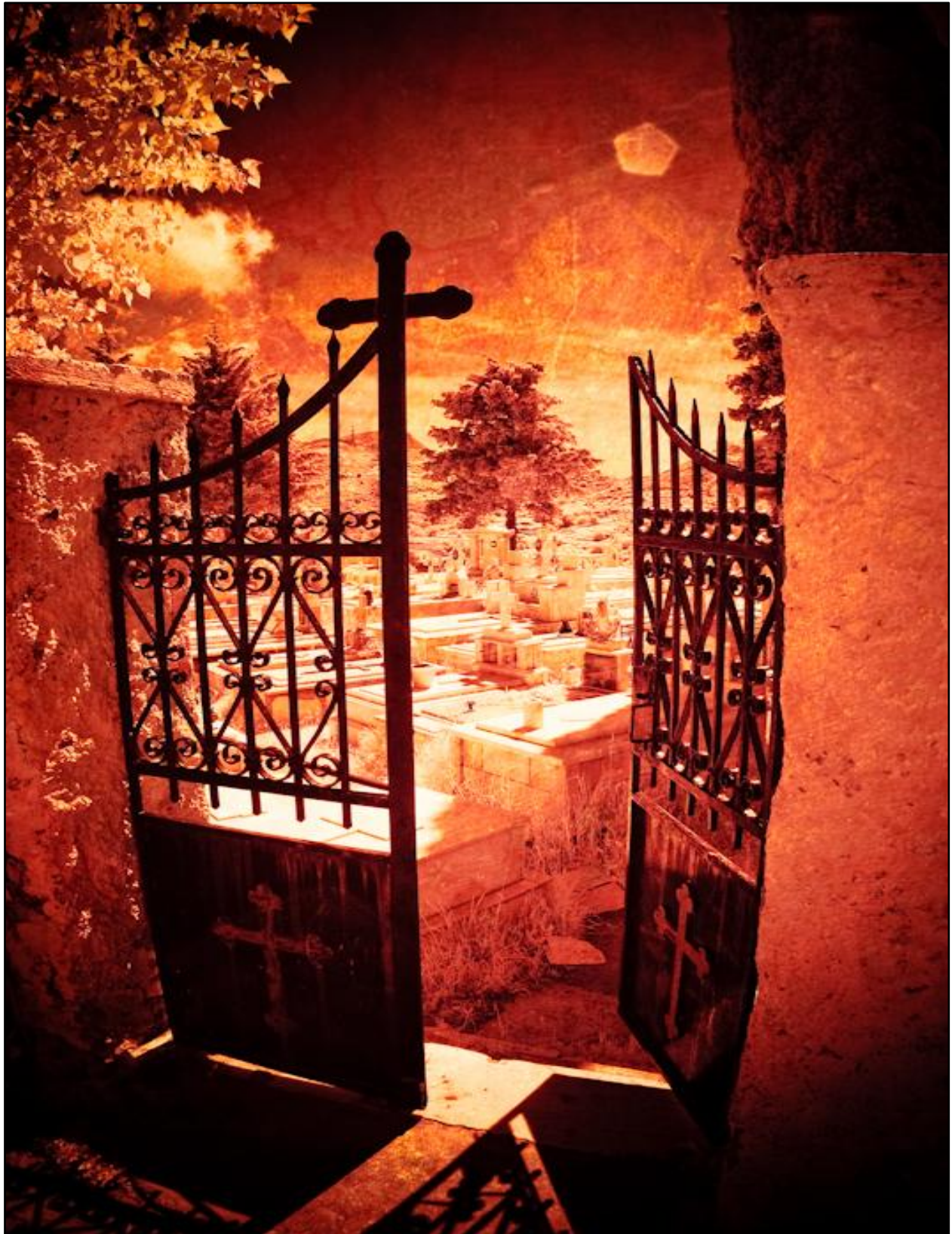
words.

The woman sitting in front of me suddenly stood up, picked up a briefcase and was gone, her heels clip-clopping down the hallway

and fading into the distance.

I felt cold and sad and alone and forgotten.

I remembered the great love of my life.



A woman who was in every way my equal but who was someone else's.

Ah yes! I thought, we were so perfect together.

We would get lost in each other's eyes when we talked.

Our beings seemed to merge and expand as one and we would be drunk with each other's energy but she was a wife and mother to some other far away family. Why couldn't it have been me?

What did God have in mind for me? I thought as the light began to fade.

Soon it was dark and I felt so completely and utterly alone.

I wished that my body would expire and set me free from this world.

How could I pretend to be interested in anything, it all seemed so totally hopeless.

I sank into a dark depressing mud. Engulfed and gasping for air.

"Don't think about the cake when it isn't there to eat."

Said the voice from the past.

"Detach and forget about me."

It continued.

"Your love will be shared with my family."

It echoed through the cold, drafty corridors of my being.

Don't go there! Said my head. Stay out of the past!

I was falling and falling, down and down.

Deeper and deeper into the abyss.

Drowning in the mire and misery of my self-pity.

No light here.

Just darkness.

I lifted my hand but could see nothing. All was pitch black.

I opened my eyes and there was the man with the frightening gaze.

Sitting and penetrating me with his laser beam eyes.

I stared back and started to sob out loud.

His face turned into a cruel smile and he arose and floated away in the wind.

"Mr.Crawford? You don't seem to be making any improvement."

What!? I thought as I looked up to see a large turtle in a white coat.

"We are going to change your medication."

The voice said seductively.

"Blub!Blub!Blub!" I said out loud.

"Exactly!" The singing turtle concluded and was gone.

Mavis the nice nurse was holding my hand and soothing me with gentle words.

I wanted to put my head in her lap and fall asleep.

She helped me up and led me outside and we walked around a small garden.

A nightingale sang hauntingly through the night air.

It seemed to penetrate my soul.

It filled my eyes with tears.

"There there!" Mavis softly sang as she sweetly patted my hand.

"There there!" She whispered as the tears rolled down my cheeks.

She continued in this way until all the tears were gone and sleep and tiredness overcame me.

She put me to bed, as a mother would do her child.

Tucked in, I drifted into a beautiful sunlit garden with bright red roses and golden cherubs.

Apple trees with large plump red apples fell and thudded on the soft grass as I moved by them.

Butterflies landed on my clothes and fluttered their wings at me and flew away.

This must be heaven, I thought.

Soon I was fast asleep.

The sleep of contentment.

The sleep of innocent childhood.

NIGHTMARE

I was awakened by a loud piercing scream.

I forced myself into a sitting position and peered into the darkness.

Another blood curdling scream rang out.

At the end of the row of beds the man with the penetrating gaze was standing on his bed, throwing his arms around and screaming.

The bright lights came on and a half dozen white coats were flying around him.

They managed to grab him, stick a hypodermic needle into him and put him into a straight jacket.

They dragged him off away to the isolation cell, his screams faded away into the distance.

The drama was over, the lights went out and an eerie silence descended over the ward.

I lay in my bed as the morning light began to filter through into the ward.

I began to remember the last time Mary and I were together.

It seemed that everything was so perfect.

I thought that we would find a way to be together forever, that all the problems of her marriage and children would somehow

magically evaporate into thin air.

Why did life deal me such a cruel blow?

Why did God connect me with her?

Why did she pursue me?

What did she want from me?

She drew me in and then panicked when we got too close.

I felt like she had played with fire when she had decided to fuck with my head and heart.

She went back to her family and dropped me like a piece of trash.

I felt betrayed, cheated, lied to and used.

I guess I was some kind of game that got too much for her when her feelings got involved.

It put me over the edge.

It was my last attempt at love and relationships.

I just didn't give a shit anymore.

I was sick of people and their unconsciousness. Didn't anyone take any responsibility for their actions I thought?

We just grope around in the dark, bumping into each other.

Trashing each other's lives.

I felt all the hurt surface in me again.

Hurt and anger!

I began to want her again.

My stomach started to knot up and my head began to ache.

Oh shit!

Why was it all so complicated?

I never heard from her again.

How could she be so cold?

I thought as I lay there in the crazy house, seemingly lost to oblivion.

I remember reading somewhere that Jesus couldn't heal those souls that were stripped naked by oblivion.

Was I one of those souls?

Souls that were trapped in matter but unable to communicate anything anymore.

I couldn't seem to turn my head off from the sadness of it all.

I tried to pray but nothing happened except that I expected something to happen.

Oh God! Please help me to transcend all of this?

Help me to become strong and enthusiastic about life again?

Help me to experience joy and happiness?

I lay there feeling self-pity.

It had gone way past that though.

Way past self-pity.

Like Humpty Dumpty I could not put all the pieces together again.

All the King's horses and all the King's men in their white coats couldn't either.

There they all are, I thought as they wheeled me into a small cubicle and placed electrodes on either side of my head. MARY! MARY! I screamed inside my head as the painful surge of electricity shot through my skull.

Frying my brain and destroying all of my memories.

Comatose and blank, they wheeled me back to my bed.

I lay there in that state for what seemed like centuries.

Maybe months passed.

I don't know exactly.

But some time certainly passed because I became aware of the change in the seasons.

I noticed snow on the ground; in fact I noticed heavy snow falling past the window.

I wasn't sure who I was or what my name was.

People called me Mr.Crawford, so I

guess that was my name.

There were no thoughts anymore.

No sadness, joy, anger or any other emotion.

I had very faint memories of some other life.

Some past but it was so faint that it could have been a story on TV for all I knew.

I was an object, surrounded by objects.

All of us moving through space together.

MAVIS

Mavis sat by my bed quite often and read to me.

She read stories about people, who had emotions, who had lives filled with dramas.

Eventually through time I began to relearn about life through the stories that she read to me.

I began to claim these stories as my own memories. In fact maybe some of them were my memories, I don't know for sure but slowly and surely I began to regain my life with her help.

She had for some reason decided to help me.

A kindred spirit

We took walks together around the small garden and she told me stories about her life.

About her husband and her children.

I became happy for her and her family.

I laughed when she laughed, cried at her disappointments, got excited when she was excited. Soon I was feeling good about life, my life.

Soon I was waking up and dressing

myself with an enthusiasm for life.
Eager to be up, dressed and out the
door with a book to take out into

the garden and read all by myself.
Six months had gone by and I felt
happy.



PECKINPAH SHAKEDOWN

By Craig Woods

"Afternoon, gents."

The man in the dark overcoat stands at our table. Distracted by the ghost of Poppy's sad smile, I had failed to perceive his approach. Startled, I stuff the photo into my inside coat pocket where it huddles against the gun's cold body with the inelegance of a reluctant lover.

"Not disturbing you am I?" The man's remote eyes, as silver as his closely cropped hair, regard us with the imposing glare of a stern schoolmaster.

"Not at all." I lean back in my chair, attempting an illusion of composure. "Just a little bit of catching up going on here."

"Yeah, it's sure been a while since I seen this fella here," Frankie interjects, his blind eyes rolling uselessly in his skull. "Of course, it's been a while since I've *seen* anything at all. But that's what happens when you bash the old bishop a little too much, eh? No-one to blame but my randy old self." Frankie bellows once again at his own joke.

The silver-haired man says nothing, merely pauses a moment before his stony face cracks into a toothy artificial grin.

"Sorry about the noise here," I smile reassuringly, "Hope we're not spoiling anyone's lunch. Just

been a while and you know how it can be when old friends meet..."

Silver-hair scoffs with affected humility. "Not at all, friends. It's good to see the patrons enjoying themselves here. I know Mr. DeVanne sure appreciates it," he nods in the direction of the maître d' who looks on in silent menace.

"Can I buy you fellas a drink?"

"Well, we were just..."

"Excellent. Alex," Silver-hair calls out to a youthful chinless bartender, "Another round for these two gents at table 26. And put it on my tab, eh?"

"Great" Frankie smiles and shrugs, apparently unperturbed by this unwelcome imposition. "The ol' whistle can't get too wet."

"And anything for yourself Mr Connolly?" The bartender stammers in the feeble voice of a diffident child.

Connolly replies without turning, keeping his eyes fixed upon Frankie and myself: "No thanks, Alex. But feel free to pour yourself one. Mind if I join you fellas for a moment?" He pulls a chair from the adjacent table and seats himself without waiting for a response.

Up this close and in the soft daylight seeping in from the

window, the man's features appear diffused and less angular, but his cold stare is just as imposing. Connolly is perhaps in his early 40s, a handsome man with a prison guard's look about him; healthy lean physique enshrouded within the dark coat, pronounced bone structure and solid jaw line, the eyes sharp and arresting. He keeps both hands buried in his coat pockets. He's packing, no doubt of that.

There is a pause as the man looks from me to Frankie in silent appraisal. Then the synthetic grin reappears. "So what brings you gents to this particular establishment?"

Frankie shrugs. "Oh you know. Sometimes just nice to get away from the bustle of the city centre, eh?"

"Too true," Connolly replies with mock joviality, "Hell, that's how I ended up a regular here. Sometimes even an old rat like myself likes to take a break from the maze for the odd hour or two. Sitting out here, enjoying a drink and a friendly chit chat with the staff, looking out at those old ruins..." he gestures with a sharp nod towards the window and the faded arcades beyond. "Well, a man could just forget about the city, forget about work, even forget what time it is... Am I right?"

A cold knot twists in my stomach. This is officially a shakedown. One amiss word from either of us and we could be on our way to a cosy

all-expenses-paid accommodation complete with reinforced windows and wrist restraints at the local Institute...

"I don't have time to forget about the time," I force myself to utter, "But it's sometimes nice to take the time to *pretend* to forget about time for a time."

Connolly's metallic eyes stare piercingly for a few seconds before he emits a bray of mechanical laughter. "Very good, sir. A bit of lunchtime wit, always a *time* and a place for that. Especially in dark *times* such as these I should say."

"He's a real joker my friend here," Frankie opines, "About *time* he had his own prime *time* TV slot. Or a column in *The Times*."

"Indeed, quite so. Always a job available for the right talent I say."

Connolly gestures with another jerk of the head, indicating the bar. "Like Mr DeVannee there. Finest maître d' in the damn business I tell you. Knows how a restaurant's supposed to be run and keeps it running efficiently." The maître d' continues to look on in mute derision. "Important thing that in a society like ours. Knowing how to fit in and do a job well. Doing your bit to keep the old clock ticking. Don't you agree?"

Frankie grunts and nods lazily. Connolly glares at the blind man, eyes narrowing.

"Yep. It's good to be valued alright." I regret the words as soon as they have fallen from my mouth. "Well of course, everyone *is* valued. In accordance with their willingness to accept civic duty. That is as it should be, is it not?"

A trickle of cold sweat compels a train of terror down the line of my spine.

"Absolutely," Frankie jumps in, "Nothin' worse than a bad citizen. I might be blind but I can smell the no good shit of shirkers and gypsies and junkies and all the other scum from three blocks away. I tell ya, nice a place as this here establishment is, I feel like I need a fuckin' gasmask to put up with the smell o' that fuckin' place out there," He illustrates the desolate arcades with the jerk of a greasy thumb, "But hell, enough o' this here veal and I'll cancel it out with some smells of my own, eh?" He erupts in a madman's guffaw.

Connolly reprises his steely android grin, hands shifting slightly in the coat pockets. I caress the gun in my own pocket nervously.

One unruly puppy and the whole kennel collapses...

"There's an attitude I like. Nothing more noble than a man who can make the best of his situation. That's what keeps this fine society of ours moving along. Something our maître d' here certainly understands, isn't that so Mr DeVanney?"

DeVanney responds in a strained hiss through gritted teeth, his reptilian eyes clearly spitting a hex upon our table. "Yes sir. Quite."

The other two Agents at the bar, one youthful and fat-faced, the other tall and balding, share a silent smirk.

"You see, gentlemen," Connolly's unseen hands shift once more, "Mr DeVanney is truly the epitome of an upright citizen. Provides a valuable service to a needy public and provides it well."

"Yes, the food and service here are certainly commendable." My right index finger throbs with pain and I am suddenly aware that I have been pressing it precariously to the trigger of the revolver. I attempt to relax but the finger will not budge, as though it has assumed the power of a dowser's wand, preparing to strike at the impending threat it has surely identified.

"Ah yes indeed, dear fellow. But Mr DeVanney's dedication to his civic duty does not end with his in-house hospitality. In fact, that's just the tip of a very valuable iceberg."

Connolly breaks off as Alex the bartender approaches our table, tray of drinks held at an awkward and self-conscious angle. The Agent looks on with a mock parental pride as the ineffectual youth places another pint of lager in front of Frankie and deposits a bottle of expensive European beer by my unused cutlery. The

bartender presses the empty tray flat to his chest and waits for some signal to leave.

"Thank you, Alex. That'll be all for the moment." Officially dismissed, the feckless young man retreats in an ungainly shuffle.

Frankie grips the pint glass with thick fuzzy fingers and lifts it to his calloused lips, slurping noisily. A slight twitch at the edge of a cold grey eye betrays Connolly's disgust.

"That hits the spot that does." Frankie slams the now almost half-empty glass back down on the table, grinning uncouthly through a thin beard of lager foam. "Cheers."

"No problem." The Agent's ingratiating tone suddenly acquires a sanctimonious edge. "Though rather you than me there. That cheap brewery mush plays havoc with the insides you know. But still..."

"You pick your poison, eh?" Frankie finishes Connolly's sentiment with a sly wink as he wipes a greasy sleeve across his mouth.

"It rather seems we do." Again with the infuriating artificial smile. "A little diversity is what keeps us interesting, eh?" My own words resonate like a death knell.

Connolly's eyes, like those of a ravenous predatory bird, are fixed upon me in icy scrutiny. "Well, to

an extent. Of course, we wouldn't want *too* much diversity now, would we? After all, cohesion depends on a certain level of homogeneity. Isn't that so?"

I open my mouth to reply but emit only a short dry croaking sound. The Agent's glare is burning a hole through my skull. Clearing my throat, I grip the beer bottle with my left hand. The throb in my right has become unbearable, the trigger finger screaming now in a savage red alert. I can feel a storm of panic brewing in my gut, an anxious cauldron of bile threatening to propel its labours on a rapid hike towards my oesophagus. I am almost thankful when Connolly breaks the silence of his own volition;

"Without a certain established standard of conformity in our society, we would cease to have order. And without order, we would have chaos. And that clearly would not do."

"You're right there, guv." Frankie wipes away a second beard of foam with the back of an imperturbable hand. "Nothin' worse than plebs who don't know their place. All these welfare-leeching junkies and filthy-skinned aliens poppin' up here, there and everywhere lookin' for free handouts, then complainin' when the freebies don't quite match up to whatever backwards culture they fancy... Start pullin' your weight on this ship or be prepared to walk the plank, that's what ol' Frankie says."

The Agent's face is illuminated with a baleful glow of delight. "My friend, with that positive attitude you'll go far in this life."

"Frankie? What's going...?" Jeannie has re-emerged from the restroom and stands in the centre of the restaurant, gazing nervously at our table and at the Agent imposing himself there. Connolly turns to her with a static unsmiling expression, saying nothing. Behind Jeannie, the fat-faced Agent nudges his balding comrade and jerks his head towards the woman's butt. The two men indulge in lewd gestures at Jeannie's expense. Anxious, she addresses my gaze. With a darting motion of the eyes, I will her towards the main entrance. *Get the hell out of here, Jeannie.*

"I..." she fumbles with her purse, searching frantically for an excuse to leave.

"You better be off then, love." Frankie's tone is impeccably casual. "Don't want to upset her, eh?"

Jeannie squints, overcome with fear and confusion. "She...?"

Frankie turns in his seat and addresses the woman directly. "Your sister. You're babysitting your little nephew, remember?"

The woman's eyes turn again to me and I wink reassuringly. "Oh... of course," she says finally, "I... well, I'd better be going." She turns on her heel and heads for the door.

"Goodbye Jeannie, nice to see you again."

She pauses at the doorframe, a resigned expression in her melancholy eyes. "You too. We'll do it again soon?"

"Sure thing." My tone is not nearly as sincere as I would like.

"See ya, sweet cheeks." Frankie blows a lazy kiss from a grimy palm.

Jeannie closes the door behind her and is gone. Fat-face and Baldy share a vulgar giggle. DeVaney watches, arms folded tightly across his chest, as Jeannie hurries past the window to disappear along the unseen street.

Turning back to Connolly, Frankie grins affably. "Women, eh?"

"A different species some say." Connolly's tone is blank and factual.

"I'll drink to that, guv."

"But of course, that is a deviation of the species I think we can afford to tolerate. For as long as we keep them in line, yes?" - His terrible grin conjures a memory of my boyhood; Auntie Sheila's old tarot deck... the Death card... that ominous visage of bare bone twisted into a malicious sneer... -

"The female of the species may be a tempestuous and whimsical beast but, with the right training, they

soon learn their place. Just as we all must."

Frankie gulps the last of his lager and places the glass down on the table with a gratified sigh. "Well, I reckon most other beasts are easier to tame. That's why I only date horses this weather."

This remark pleases the Agent who chuckles heartily and pats Frankie's shoulder in a gracious gesture.

Thank fuck for Frankie's cool under pressure like this. I don't know how much more of this bullshit I can take.

"Ah well, you joke but sadly there are all kinds of deviants out there who'd happily do just that." The Agent is composed once more. "With some of the terrible things being done out on our streets these days, it's a wonder I'm able to laugh at all. What with the gypsies and vagabonds and feral peoples inhabiting the shadows of our city, corrupting our children... I sometimes wonder if more drastic measures should not be implemented to restore order to these stricken areas and teach these wayward lumps of human garbage the error of their ways."

Conscious of my silence, I force myself to speak. "Yes, it's a terrible dark time indeed. One can only hope for some positive change..."

"Oh but *hope* will change nothing my dear boy. Only decisive societal action will conquer the cancer that threatens to destroy those values

we hold dear. There's no doubt these *problems* are escalating in their severity, and we must therefore assume the responsibility to resist them in equal measure. It seems to me appropriate to fight fire with fire."

"So, for instance..." Frankie takes the Agent's ball and runs, "The siege on that medical institute a little while back..."

"Terrible business."

"...That was a pretty violent affair. Millions worth of damage I hear. And not to mention the staff who were traumatised and injured..."

"And, dear boy, the poor children who were wrenched from their hospital beds and whisked off into the night by those awful people. Can you imagine such horror? This Institute is a place where highly skilled and altruistic professionals seek to repair the damaged and refine the average. Such Institutions are the future of our society. Brave men and women dedicated to the perfection of the human species; to the ultimate ideal of the perfect body, the perfect mind. The ultimate desirable template. And these freaks, these monsters, these... *terrorists*" Connolly literally spits the word as though it were poison lodged in his gullet, "...They claim to favour a vision which celebrates the deformities and ugliness and imperfections of the afflicted. Can you conceive of such a loathsome idea?"

"I reckon I'd rather not," Frankie says, "Hell, I'd give my sense of smell to see again. Unluckily for me I've had an allergic bloody reaction to every treatment they've offered me. Can you believe that? Of all the rotten luck."

Even by Frankie's standards, this lie is lamentably lame. The metallic glimmer in Connolly's eyes gives nothing away. The revolver in my pocket whispers seductive psychic mantras of violence. My trigger finger threatens to explode...

"You poor fellow, that is deeply unfortunate," the Agent's voice drips with all the sympathy of a dead fish, "But this kind of deviancy must be tackled and it must be tackled with proportional force. If these fiends are prepared to assault some of our most sacred institutions then *we* must be prepared to strike back with an iron fist; track down those responsible and incinerate them. There is no room for lily-livered measures here. This is war, make no mistake. And I for one am prepared to stand and fight for what is good and right."

Anxious to deflect any expectation to contribute to this discussion, I raise the beer bottle to my lips and take a long hard swig. My arm shakes notably and I curse my failure to quell the tension currently wracking my nervous system.

"Yeah, that seems sound," Frankie continues to roll, "Amazin' that such evil exists out there, eh? To

think there's folks who'd kill for the right to be sick. Madness."

"Indeed it is my friend. And it does not end there. Let us not forget the latest developments regarding what some have identified as a Hybrid Cult."

My heart comes to a dead cold halt. My hand brings the beer bottle reflexively down to the surface of the table with greater impact than I would have preferred. One glance at Frankie's face informs me that his mask of joviality has suffered a severe dent.

Fuck...fuck...fuck...fuck...

A devious spark flickers in Connolly's icy eyes. "Oh, you haven't heard? Yes, a recent appalling development apparently. Seems some of those awful Eastern European gypsies and Hispanic vagabonds have more than a few carnal connections. In fact, I'll be damned if some of them don't have the blood of circus freaks flowing through their filthy veins. That in itself is vile enough. But there's more," Connolly leans in with weighty solemnity, "Seems some of these self-styled revolutionary cults want to do everything they can to mock all the values of a decent society. Taking these freaks and monsters as their template, it seems there's some dedicated to producing new strains of human-animal hybrids."

"Oh, come on now," Frankie attempts to regain his composure,

"That's all a little bit far flung ain't it?"

The Agent leans back in his chair, eyes ablaze. "My dear fellow, everyone these days is an amateur scientist. Ever since certain irresponsible governments made the terribly ill-advised decision to open the internet to the general public, just about anyone can attain the know-how for all kinds of horrendous practices. It's simply a matter of knowing where to look."

"Well, I never." Frankie rubs a fuzzy hand across his face and casts an urgent look in my direction. "Whatever next, eh?"

"Next will be the destruction of our good and decent society unless we strike at this horror immediately! What we need is an all out strike on all who associate themselves *in any way* with these sacrilegious revolutionary movements. These heathens need to be eradicated, pure and simple. As a responsible civilization, we can afford no alternative." Connolly turns to me, grey eyes impaling my soul upon icy twin skewers. "After all, if these filthy lumps of subhuman slime see fit to mock the authority of God himself, how can they ever be expected to submit to a rule of law, here or anywhere else?" He shakes his head gravely. "This is a cancer, an unholy blight on our social order. We do not treat cancer by attempting to rehabilitate the disease. No, I'm afraid total and utter extermination is the only..."

Connolly's diatribe is interrupted by a thunderous sound from beyond the window; a deafening bestial roar which reverberates through the streets, rattling the windowpanes and causing cutlery to fall in a clatter from nearby tabletops. Startled, the agent tenses in his chair. I notice his right hand jerk instinctively within the confines of his pocket, no doubt clamping around the gun concealed there.

A dark shapes oozes into view on the opposite side of the window; a sleek black Jensen automobile, its gleaming paintwork reflecting the fathomless melancholy of the grey afternoon sky. The machine comes to a halt, perching upon the edge of the pavement. I notice Connolly's eyes narrow with cautious suspicion, the hand in his right pocket fixed rigid at a pronounced angle. The driver of the vehicle kills the engine. The restaurant is silent.

The driver's door swings open and the figure of a young woman emerges from within. Her face is concealed by a swaying curtain of long jet black hair which in turn is lost against the black material of her thin jacket. With an animal swiftness, the woman slams shut the car door and strides purposefully towards the restaurant entrance.

Now seemingly casting aside any pretences, Connolly signals a heads up to his two colleagues at the bar. Deathly silence greets the young woman as she marches to the bar

and sits herself four barstools along from Fat-face and Baldy. DeVanney, standing closer to the figure in black, regards her with the expression of one who inspects the sole of his shoe to find it coated in dogshit. Alex the bartender approaches awkwardly.

"Can I help you, Miss?"

For a prolonged moment the woman is silent, pausing to stretch her torso in a lazily lascivious motion. The two Agents share a wordless glance. Connolly looks on, eyes alert, muscles taut.

The back of the woman's jacket is emblazoned with the silhouette of a crow; its wings fluttering and talons outstretched, sharp bill poised to strike downwards. The few patrons at other tables are hushed, all eyes focused on this enigmatic stranger.

Finally one word falls out from behind the thick curtain of black hair in a rich oily voice:

"Tequila." The Latin inflection is conspicuous.

Alex directs an apprehensive glance at Connolly who nods permissively but remains mute and still. As the bartender goes about his clumsy business of pouring a shot, Fat-face winks at his balding colleague and addresses the stranger in oafish tones. "Hello there, doll. How you doing?"

The young woman does not respond.

"Nice day, huh? That is if you don't mind a grey sky and a bit of a breeze." He grins wide, displaying a fearsome selection of large square teeth.

The young woman says nothing.

Frankie addresses me with a solemn expression and a nod so minimal it can barely be detected.

This is the connection. This is it. Shit. The buck stops here. Shit. Shit. Shit.

My right hand grips the handle of the revolver tightly, the cold steel sending an electric shiver through my bones.

Have to be ready...

The young woman at the bar retrieves a tobacco pouch and skins from a jacket pocket and begins rolling a cigarette.

"Haven't seen you around here,"

Fat-face continues, "What brings you to this fine establishment?"

No response.

Clearly irked by now, Fat-face turns to Baldy with an incredulous look. The older man shrugs. Despite himself, DeVanney emits a low smirk at the younger Agent's embarrassment. Alex the bartender makes to fix a lemon slice onto the glass when suddenly the woman breaks her silence.

"No, no, no Señor!" she speaks loudly and urgently, "Tequila sólo.

No limón, no hielo." Then in a lower voice and conciliatory tone; "Comprende?"

It's clear that Alex comprehends not a word but appreciates beyond doubt the woman's tone of voice. Gingerly, he drops the tongs and the lemon slice, placing the glass in front of this dark outsider.

"Gracias..." she eyes the name badge which hangs at an askew angle upon the bartender's chest, "Alex."

"No... no problem," the chinless youth stammers in return, "Miss...?"

"Soledad." The name rolls from the unseen mouth in a fluid curl to drift portentously upon the air, a harbinger of some unimagined catastrophe.

At this psychic signal, Connolly pushes his chair back from the table and stands, his face fixed in a resolute expression, grey eyes pulsing now with malign anticipation.

Soledad brings the freshly rolled cigarette to her lips and flicks an antique lighter. The flame is at least three inches tall, causing the nervous Alex to flinch.

There is a low hissing sound as Frankie inhales sharply, flexing his fuzzy fingers.

My index finger curls tightly around the revolver's trigger, the

flat of my thumb caressing the hammer.

Follow the stray dog... Follow the stray dog...

Fat-face peels a note from a leather wallet and hands it to the bartender. "That one's on me, Alex. And anything else the lady wants, okay?" He turns back to Soledad, his chubby cheeks aglow with a self-righteous sheen. The woman says nothing, merely fidgets with a black ashtray upon the counter and exhales a thick cloud of smoke which swirls in baroque patterns under the bar's tungsten glow. The bartender accepts the bill reluctantly and places it in the cash register.

"So chica, how about you slide along here and keep a guy company, huh? These fellas are my friends and all but there's some things a guy can't get from his friends, you know? What say you indulge me a little in your Latin tongue."

Baldy snickers into his collar at this cheap innuendo, an absurdly juvenile delight illuminating his grizzled features. DeVaney does not even attempt to conceal his disgust; "Jesus, man. Have you no standards at all?"

Fat-face holds his arms out at his sides in a *gimme-a-break* gesture. "Hey, street trash have needs too. Besides, I know you guys can keep a secret." he winks lewdly at the maître d' and turns his attention back to Soledad who continues to

smoke unperturbed. "So how about it, senorita? Little bit of trouser friendly lip service in exchange for all you can drink? Best offer you're going to get all week I reckon."

Soledad says nothing. Smoke billows out in determined curls from the dark curtain of her hair.

The other diners shift uncomfortably. A woman in an expensive floral dress is pleading quietly with her male companion to pay their bill and leave but the man merely pats her arm absently, transfixed by the drama unfolding at the bar. I am certain I can detect a muted metallic click sounding from within Connolly's straining coat pocket.

Frankie sits rigid, eyes closed tight, teeth clenched.

Follow the stray dog... Follow the stray dog... stray dog... stray... follow... follow...

The weight of the woman's silence becomes unbearable. Fat-face's fat face sags, the smug smile retreating. "What's the matter, chica?" his tone is coarse and abusive, "You no speak the eengleesh?"

DeVanney, clearly tired of this fruitless spectacle, unfolds his arms and takes a step towards Soledad. "Alright you piece of spic shit, I've had about enough of this. Put out that fucking cigarette and get your greasy little ass out of here. Comprende?"

Fat-face throws up a restraining hand. "Hang on a sec there. I want to hear what this little whore has to say for herself. What's the beef, senorita? You scared of a little white meat, huh? Not fucking slimy enough for you?"

Finally the woman answers in a calm low voice. "There more than plenty slime here in thees room, senior."

"Well, well... slut does have a mouth on her."

"Quite a fucking rude mouth too, eh?" Fat-face's flabby brow trembles above his brutish eyes. "Someone ought to show the little bitch how to use it properly." Connolly opines.

"That's what happens to these skanks," Baldy chimes in, "Too many years of sucking on their filthy daddy's joints, they lose all appreciation for the good things in life."

Two tables full of patrons rise from their chairs, shuffling self-consciously into their coats and jackets with resigned calls of "Just put it on my tab, DeVanney"- "I'll get you later, eh?" - "You know I'm good for it." and file ceremoniously out of the restaurant, leaving half-eaten lunches in their wake. The woman in the floral dress tugs at her companion's arm but he is mesmerized and clearly somewhat excited by this illicit spectacle of danger transpiring before him.

At the bar, Fat-face erupts in forced laughter. "Is that it? You save the sweet stuff for your filthy spic daddy, chica? Well, I reckon it's time for the paternal privileges to change hands. I reckon today's the day you change your diet and learn to appreciate a good hunk of white beef." He approaches the silent woman with cruel intent. "I'll be your fucking da-"

Without warning, Soledad brings a swift hand down from the bar counter and clamps Fat-face's crotch in a tight grip. The man's face turns scarlet, eyes wide in shock. Baldy spits out a surprised mouthful of vodka. Before any of the men can react, the woman withdraws her hand with surreal swiftness. Muttering in a mock childlike voice, she wiggles her little finger conspicuously. "Aw. Demasiado malo. Mini salchicha, hm?"

Fat-face's lip trembles for a moment as his stunned brain searches for the words. They finally materialise in an outburst of profanity as he pulls open his coat, producing a pistol from his belt. "You fucking filthy little bitch! I'll show you something fucking impressive, you shitty disease-ridden whore!"

He raises the gun, pointing it at Soledad's forehead. Alex the bartender whimpers and backs up against the bottle display, his face assuming the expression of a terror-stricken infant. Fat-face is unrelenting.

"You had your fucking chance, slut! You had the opportunity to be a good girl and take it nice. But now that you've gone and insulted me like this... here in front of my friends and all... I'm afraid we do it the old-fashioned way. I'm going to fucking wreck you, you filthy whore. And when I'm finished I'm going to send you back to fucking Mexico in fucking piec-"

He doesn't get to finish the thought. In a blur of speed, Soledad brings the ashtray up in a sharp arc and smashes it with cruel force into Fat-face's bulbous nose. The report of impact echoes across the restaurant with a sickening crack. A blank look claims Fat-face's features. The gun slips from his fingers and lands with a dull thud at his staggering feet. A droplet of dark blood quivers, suspended from one nostril of the man's ruined nose, the bone of which is now lodged firmly in his brain. He teeters on his heels for a moment, lips twitching in a final attempt to speak, before the eyes flicker out and he falls backwards. The dumb shit is dead before his flabby carcass hits the floor.

"Jesus titty-fucking..." Baldy reaches to pull a gun from an inside pocket.

Connolly strides forward, raising a heavy black pistol, closing in for a shot at Soledad.

Follow...

Possessed suddenly by an alien force, I am yanked forthrightly

from my chair. My right arm stretches in front of me, the metallic sheen of the revolver glinting in the afternoon light as the barrel points itself at Connolly's back.

The ashtray strikes Baldy in the mouth before he can level the gun. He recoils with a muffled "*Mmmphh!!*", bringing his free hand up to his face. The ashtray drops to the floor and rolls across the carpet to land at the feet of the woman in the floral dress who wails like a soprano. Connolly pauses mid-stride to take a shot. The revolver explodes in my hand, the kick jarring my wrist bone painfully. Inches to Connolly's left, one of the aquarium tanks shatters, sending a rush of tepid water and brightly coloured tropical fish flopping to the floor. Connolly spins on his heel, swinging the pistol in my direction. With bear-like vigour, Frankie pulls the table on to its side; plates, bottles and glasses crashing at my feet. The blind man leaps behind the table top and pulls me down to the floor with a heavy hand. Crouched there, I wince as Connolly's bullet tears through the table less than an inch above my head, tiny fragments of wood billowing through my hair.

At the bar, DeVanne y lunges at Soledad in an unthinking burst of anger and frustration; "You fucking filthy bitch! I'll fucking throttle..." In a single graceful movement, Soledad bends her arms back, allowing the thin jacket to slip from her shoulders then

whips it outwards, enshrouding the maître d's spluttering face as his words degenerate into incomprehensible snarls. Baldy, one hand still clamped to his bleeding mouth, raises his gun. Soledad yanks the jacket by the sleeves, pulling DeVanne helplessly over the bar counter. Baldy's bullet explodes against the maître d's back, a pop of scarlet fluid staining the white shirt. Gargled screams of pain and anguish are barely audible from within the jacket shroud.

Connolly turns his attention back to Soledad. I scream a warning to her and, instinctively, she pulls back on DeVanne's prone form, bending his spine at an unnatural angle to shield herself with his torso. Connolly's bullet tears into the maître d's shoulder. A fine spray of blood decorates the bar counter, red droplets speckling Soledad's face. The young woman's eyes burn with a gorgeous canine fury and she snarls the righteous snarl of a vexed she-wolf.

My arm acting of its own volition once more, the revolver levels itself at Connolly and fires. The shot catches him in the right forearm. He stumbles with a pained yelp, curling into himself as he clamps his free hand around the wound.

Baldy makes to take another shot. Soledad pulls DeVanne's covered head upwards to shield her own, her left hand slipping behind her to pull a gun from her belt. Baldy's shot ricochets off a beer tap to

destroy a display of spirit bottles. Alex the bartender, curled in a quivering mass of fear, sobs with each explosion. Soledad's weapon is an elegant silver six-shooter which sparkles like a jewel in the electric light. She twirls it expertly in her nimble fingers and points the slender barrel at Baldy whose eyes barely have time to register the weapon before Soledad's bullet tears through the hand still clamped across his already wounded mouth. He is thrown backwards and stumbles into a puddle of aquarium water and dispelled fish, still flipping and flopping upon the carpet. His gun tumbles from his hand and discharges upon impact with the floor, ploughing a hole in the bar. Like the stricken protagonist of a sadistic cartoon, Baldy struggles to maintain his footing for a few comical seconds before landing in a crumpled heap against the wood-panelled wall, spitting out shattered teeth and bloody shreds of gum.

The woman in the floral dress and her male companion, now rethinking his excitement, scurry out of the restaurant on all fours like chastened curs.

Connolly staggers forward, raising his pistol once more. "You fucking freak hybrid bitch! I'll send you to hell where you..." Soledad releases the injured and dazed DeVanne, his incapacitated form falling from the counter with an unceremonious thump. In a blur, the young woman produces a second six-shooter with her right hand and

fires each weapon repeatedly and in stylish alternation. A salvo of bullets rips through Connolly's legs, tatters of ruined cartilage and shattered bone erupting from the torn trouser material. The Agent collapses backwards, his upper body coming to rest upon the bed of the devastated fish tank, his ruined legs draped uselessly over the edge in a twisted wreckage. Stunned and agonised, his cold grey eyes nonetheless continue to spit electric hate at Soledad. The woman fires another shot, striking a sharp sliver of glass which hangs from the frame of the tank like a bloodthirsty stalactite. The shard falls and impales Connolly through the abdomen. The Agent's eyes widen with the impact, his open mouth forming a perfect O. A dry croaking sound emanates from his throat, the magnitude of his pain clearly inexpressible.

Without warning, a door opens behind the bar and the chef emerges; a burly moustachioed man with a madman's glare and a meat cleaver gripped in one hand. Roaring bestially, the chef vaults the bar. Soledad fires a shot which catches him in the arm but does not slow him.

On the floor, DeVanne stirs, his hand finding Fat-face's discarded pistol. In the same instant, Baldy - his face a bloody mask of agony - reaches to retrieve his own gun from the carpet.

Hot on the heels of the chef, a large shaggy German Shepherd dog

leaps from the kitchen and over the bar, snarling and slavering wildly.

Connolly fumbles with the shard in his belly, attempting to remove it with both hands.

My arm jolts once more and the revolver fires a round into the chef's belly. The big man stumbles mid-stride and crashes into Soledad. Prepared for the impact, she wraps herself around the chef's weighty bulk, spinning him around towards Baldy who fires a shot. The bullet smashes through the chef's forehead, killing the oaf instantly. An instant too late, Baldy registers the blade of the chef's cleaver coming down to meet him before it splits his skull open like a ripe watermelon.

Soledad turns and notices the dog treading savagely towards me, a ravenous madness in its dark eyes. In the broken fish tank, Connolly has managed to extract the bloody shard from his stomach. Hands dripping with gore, he fumbles for his gun.

The air is suddenly broken by an acute canine bark. The dog halts its advance upon me and inclines its vigilant head towards Soledad. The young woman has crouched low to the floor, assuming the attentive pose of a roused feral creature. Her whole being seems awash in a surreal haze of uncultivated beauty. A primal light gleams in her fathomless eyes, her bronze skin affects a pelt-like sheen, every finely toned muscle stands rigid and taut from her tattooed arms to

her proud chest where a bloodhound's heart booms like thunder. Her lips curl back in a gorgeous snarl, revealing jagged white incisors and scarlet gums.

The dog whimpers and recoils slightly.

Behind Soledad's crouched form, the wounded figure of DeVanne, head still enshrouded in the black jacket, staggers to his feet, Fat-face's gun in hand.

"Fuck me," Frankie yells from the other side of the room, "A blind gunman. What next, eh?"

DeVanne begins to fire in random directions, smashing bottles, glasses, chairs and picture frames. A stray shot strikes Connolly in the crotch. The grey-eyed Agent drops his gun and emits a cry that is equal parts pain and frustration.

"You fucking moron! Below you! Shoot fucking down!"

Soledad barks once more. The dog turns with a savage growl and launches itself at Connolly.

"Aaarrgghhh!!! What the fuck..?! Get this fucking beast away from me...!"

DeVanne lowers the gun and prepares to fire a shot into the back of Soledad's head. The revolver goes off in my hand sending a round into the maître d's concealed face. An explosion of brain tissue bursts out from the jacket shroud and lands upon the bar counter in a

soggy pile like red scrambled eggs. DeVanne's hooded figure collapses to the floor in a twisted mess of human wreckage.

"Gracias" Soledad whispers to me as she rises to her feet, a six-shooter twirling expertly in each lissom hand.

Connolly, immobile and helpless, screams himself hoarse as the German Shepherd burrows its strong jaws into his gaping wound and proceeds to pull out a reeking length of intestine. The dog snaps up the malodorous organs and dashes out of the door to trot proudly down the street, as though returning from a visit to a kindly butcher, linkage of fresh sausage swaying from the drooling jowls.

Soledad approaches the bar and raises the still intact glass of tequila to her lips, gulping it in one. Slamming the glass down upon the counter, she peers over the edge at the pathetic shape of Alex the bartender, curled up and frozen in mortal fright.

"Encontrar un nuevo empleo, señor," she tells the terrified youth, pocketing her skins and tobacco, "Este establecimiento es oficialmente condenado."

In a final act of degradation, she pours a pint of the cheap European lager and empties it over Connolly's dying head. "Saludos, amigo."

Silence claims the scene, the air heavy with the copper scent of blood and the tang of hot gun metal...

We leave the restaurant burning behind us, black smoke billowing into the silver sky. Frankie sits grinning behind the wheel of the Jensen, the swirling flames reflected magnificently in his blind eyes.

"Come on, get in the car. Let's go for a drive somewhere."

"Now why is the animal-self so self-destructive when it gets released in such a split person and embraced? 1. It is seeking to murder the tyrant; the ego, seeking to exterminate it, send it into oblivion (hence their fear that they are going into oblivion). 2. It has absolutely no compass to guide it, no link to 'communicate data' on 'how to do this the right way' like an animal has. BOTH Akathartic and Ophionic types are considered 'preta-rupa'. Pythagorean term; Thanatos. It is opposed to 'Zoos' which means biological. On a 'higher level it is opposed to 'Eros' (not erotic) meaning 'Love, of the Heart, Heart-felt'. Pythagorean terms. Thanatos os akin to a-biological. It doesn't mean 'dead'. It means 'dead-alive, having the instinct of 'sex/death'.

(Tani Jantsang - 'Akathartic and Ophionic States Of Consciousness')

IDENTITY

By Doctor Paraphernalia

It's great to be at a birth.

I would even say cathartic but I would be mixing my metaphors and as a scientist I don't like to do that. I do like to mix things though and did a lot of that as a chemist when I started life in academia. I loved chemistry at senior school but then proceeded to hate it as an undergraduate and proceeded to seek chemical release by increasing my understanding the nature of oblivion through personal experimentation. Quantum thermodynamics baffled me until much later as I couldn't figure out why it was of any use describing the massive complexity of biochemistry by noodling with complicated equations describing a model consisting of a lonely hydrogen atom. After all, though not strictly monogamous, hydrogen is almost always happier in the company of other atoms, mostly incestuously with itself. It is never happier than in hydrocarbons and that's where it led me. Cell Biology, Biochemistry, Physiology, Electrophysiology and eventually wrapping it all up *in silico* as a pharmaceutical Informatition.

So, enough of my biography. I'll visit that periodically in the future. But you are wondering "What the fuck is a scientist doing in the Paraphilia cloud?" Well I am honoured, neigh privileged, to be considered sufficient a sciconoclast

to contribute to the constructive demolition that the Paraphilia movement ascribes and aspires to. In other places I describe myself as a louche, Welsh, eclectic polymath as that's easy to spit out between floors in an elevator conversation before anyone can escape when the doors mercifully open. That is true and I do pretty much what it says on the tin. My credentials? Thirty years in the trenches of real world scientific endeavour and I have a lot to comment on about trench foot...

But not now.

Befitting a birth, the creation of a new identity, I want to celebrate the freshness and anabolism of Paraphilia. The scientific definition of anabolism is basically the construction of molecules (like our friends hydrogen, oxygen, carbon and nitrogen) to construct the tickers of life's metabolic pathways from smaller atomic units. Anabolism in a biochemical sense requires energy and I sense a lot of hot molecules in Paraphilia; currently discrete and bouncing around one another creating (and maybe destroying) a substantial megamolecule. I worked a lot with the energy currency of metabolism, ATP; the biophysical interactions of light with 'life' and the electrophysiology of message transduction at a cellular level but I'll leave that for another time as I

want to concentrate on today's Identity.

I love physics, mathematics and how that's all that really matters apart from my crusade in the public understanding of science and my own personal experiment in immortality which is why I wanted to address myself to birth, creation and identity at the birth of Paraphilia.

Identity is discussed endlessly in philosophy more in the sense of sameness and even belonging but today I am working with identity in my day job as a mathematical construct, not least who I am (or you are), in a large complex computing system in the UK National Health Service. Mathematical identity is more precisely defined as an entity that remains true (in a logical sense) regardless of the values that appear within it. I was given the 'get out of jail card' by my esteemed editors of anonymity but I don't really need that as I quite like my identity. That said there are contractual obligations (moral ones too) that mean I would never disclose ANY patient data that could in anyway identify them in a public forum. Scionoclast I may be, but I am no prurient snitch when it comes to people. I am, however, happy to identify organizations, establishments, institutions, processes, politicians, civil servants, scientists, artists, theologians that are clearly not similarly disposed.

So I guess you are all awash with identity in terms of identity theft, fraud, deception, privacy, confidentiality and the manifest carelessness with it in the realm of finance, commerce and government. It's a different deal in hospital as failure to uniquely identify a patient may have dire consequences. In fact the worst cases of hacking have involved theft of medical records in the US where it is now viewed as much of a marketing bonanza as financial records. As health is privately funded in the US, primarily through insurance that is a big financial issue. It is not theft but alteration of medical records that concerns me. There are many recorded cases of medical record theft and thankfully few of medical record tampering.

So to be fresh and expectant I thought I would include a page from my lab book today. I don't work in a lab anymore but psychologically I have never moved on and still sometimes call the office the lab. In the sense it is still very much a 'thought kitchen' it is a lab. Another habit is I still keep a lab book from the days I had a real one. It's part of my obsessional compulsive disorder/personality which is a really good thing to have if you are a scientist. It can be a particularly bad thing to have if you are a scientist, like me, where it can lead you down paths to oblivion and sometimes over the edge. Statistically though on average it's great being in my skin at the moment.

From the lab book...<insert or panel?>

Is the lab book science? Yes. But what makes it science is a debate for later articles. It is science because:

It is real

It is technical - from an identity management technical viewpoint

It is technical and funny because I used pseudocode do point out the irony of multi-identities!

The .Net ASP (Active Server Page or small highly venomous snake) BIT my post as it thought it was a cross-site scripting attack <laffs out completely fucking loudly> Not bad though, as my pseudocode is valid scripting syntax FOR <each> {here} ins... But for what interpreter or compiler?? Bottom line it's good heuristic security.

Now here's the fun bit, and yes science and experimentation is FUN and if it's not, like sex, you're not doing it right.

Analysis

The server detects the attack from the root ASP application (i.e. itself) so it too has an identity problem as well as me! Although I haven't included the error log it spewed out, ASP declared itself to the Framework not to be. Proudly announcing itself to itself as: Microsoft .NET Framework Version:1.1.4322.2407; ASP.NET Version:1.1.4322.2407. OK they can track it back to me via the

originating IP address of the client but they don't need to. As I said, I am trying to establish my unique ID and have given them my credentials freely in the post. To do that though I then had to edit it to make it look like English and not pseudocode at all, which sort of made it less fun but they definitely know who I am now though I still don't know who NHS Careers are... yet!

You may find my contributions written in the passive voice irritating. That's what scientists do. You may find bits too technical. Sorry as I am here to remove scientific obfuscation as I hope many of the artists will in terms of the written word, visual image, sculpture and sound.

I am expectant and nervous like I was as a father at the birth of each of my offspring (without the broken waters dripping down my leg whilst driving to hospital thankfully).

So it's great to be here for the new identity; it's good to be here as me with my identity...

Labor over. Ego satiated.

Dr. P.

Disclaimer: The opinions of this article are the opinions of this writer. They are not the opinions of my employers, nor in any way does any of this information reflect the opinion of my employers or people associated with me including the editors probably.

LABORATORY NOTEBOOK 19TH
FEBRUARY 2009

9:00am Late start. Need to finish
18Week RTT PTL for Non
Admitted Patients (1/1/2007 -
current) Resolved identity issues
for access to East Kent lookup
tables by John granting me SQL
server rights to the PAS.
Anachronistic and quaint as I still
need to sign and have
countersigned a paper document.
Old security is the best security.
Single sign on is still a bit of a holy
grail in the NHS as there it no
pragmatic single sign on across
authentication domains of SQL,
Oracle, Novel Netware and
Microsoft Active Directory. AD
and SQL should use the same
authorization schema, that of the
NOS otherwise why have AD at
all?

10:00- am Very large data tadpole
created in Excel. Data too large for
Excel data space (again). Now
obvious that a BI solution is
needed, but its happening.... Think
contractor not strategist and it
doesn't really matter whether it's
Cognos or Business Objects so long
as it's one of them and not some
half arsed lipstick-on-the pig Excel
variant. Report delivered, wait for
feedback.

Wait ...

Sort out Identity management and
my credentials in employment.
Contact NHS Careers online.

←online form begin→

Hi NHS Careers,

I am currently contracting in the
NHS (via NHS Professionals) so
will use those credentials for now
but it raises a burning issue in my
mind of identity management in
the NHS (let's stick with the
context of staff and careers just for
now as the whole
patient/provider/carer issue is
equally as complex)

In that narrow context I seek
careers **{here}**:
<http://www.nhscareers.nhs.uk/>

I seek jobs **{here}**:
[http://www.nhsprofessionals.nhs.
uk/](http://www.nhsprofessionals.nhs.uk/) (my current employers)

or **{here}**:
<http://www.jobs.nhs.uk/> (where I
GOT my current job)

or **{here}**:
<http://www.hsjobs.com/>

```
FOR <each> {here}
  instantiate <new_ref_id>
  inc <same basic details>
  var <job specific details>
```

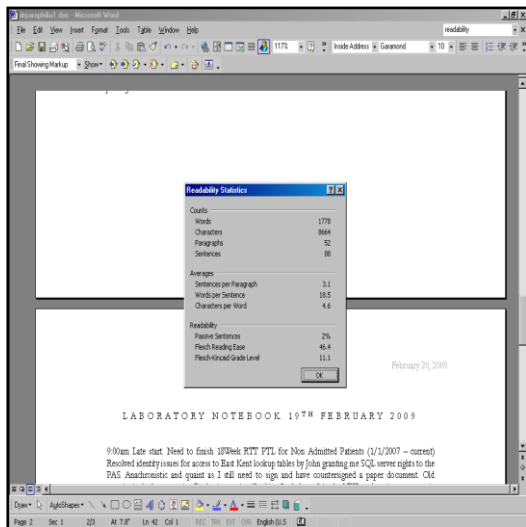
GOTO FOR .TRUE.
[http://www.another.new.NHS.job
site.found/](http://www.another.new.NHS.job.site.found/)

A colleague somewhat cheekily
suggested the N in NHS is silent
and whilst it is BIG and identity
management is a BIG issue in
operational terms, don't you think
a central clearing house would be
an idea? I don't necessarily mean a
single repository but at least
common standards to allow a
federated market place for job

seekers and job providers. Perhaps www.hsjobs.com is already doing that by 'harvesting' the other sites? I'm not saying they are, or that is the solution, but if that IS what they are doing - good on 'em!

Regards

<--- esig obfuscated for Paraphilia - -->



Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?

T.S. Eliot The Rock (1934).

If your email is a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, please forward it to <---deleted --->@ekht.nhs.uk who will action your request.'

←online form end→

Wait...

Dave,

Some nerdy stats aimed at the 'average' American reader ☺ Tony Passive sentences - 2% yippee really low! I am free of the scientific

idiom of writing and writing as ME!

Flesch Reading Ease - 46.4 - sorry it's a tougher than average read - tough you're all grown ups ☺

Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level - 11.1 - you need to be an older kid to stomach this ☺

Flesch Reading Ease score

Rates text on a 100-point scale; the higher the score, the easier it is to understand the document. For most standard documents, aim for a score of approximately 60 to 70.

The formula for the Flesch Reading Ease score is:

$$206.835 - (1.015 \times ASL) - (84.6 \times ASW)$$

Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level score

Rates text on a U.S. grade-school level. For example, a score of 8.0 means that an eighth grader can understand the document. For most standard documents, aim for a score of approximately 7.0 to 8.0.

The formula for the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level score is:

$$(.39 \times ASL) + (11.8 \times ASW) - 15.59$$

where:

ASL = average sentence length (the number of words divided by the number of sentences)

ASW = average number of syllables per word (the number of syllables divided by the number of words)

SOUNDS ABOUND

By Kate MacDonald

There is a lot of music around today. It's strange, because the sounds one can hear over the radio (or however people generally absorb pop music now, since I don't think anyone actually listens to the radio any more unless it's pumped through the telephone system in their office) are more limited, more homogenous, than ever. That top layer of sediment, which accounts for the vast majority of "popular" music has never been more carefully honed into a media product, has never been more manipulated to fit into specific marketing streams, targeting a specific niche and yet there is more music being made that falls outside the parameters of the pop paradigm than ever.

I feel lucky, because I grew up in the eighties, the one time when it was really easy to be aware of music that was happening outside the confines of the top 40. Once you know that people whose songs don't get played on the radio are there, it becomes second nature to always look beyond what's happening on the surface and try to stir up some of the more interesting muck underneath. And there's never been more to stir. Advances in technology mean that music-making is no longer the purview of the technical wizard whose parents bought him a guitar for his ninth birthday, or the one who suffered through untold years of trying to learn Moonlight Sonata

on the piano until she figured how to do something different with her musical skills.

It would be jejune to think that one magazine could possibly cover the gamut of music that's available to those who seek something beyond what's commonly available. However, what I do hope is that this publication will allow a space to showcase the variety of music styles, many of which still fall between the proverbial cracks. Part of what's presented is a reflection of my own taste. Many years working in "alternative" radio, off-kilter clubs and being surrounded by people of a similar mindset have pushed my own listening to a range that most people consider extreme. But what I'm aiming for here is not to convert people to listening to what I like. I hope that what's communicated is a personal passion for the diversity of music that continues to flourish, just out of sight. This passion is common to all the people who've contributed to this section and reflects the belief that there is still plenty to be excited about in the world of music. The idea here is simply to push open a few doors to see what happens and to illuminate some of the paths available on the overgrown and sometimes intimidating forest that is the world of music.

With more people involved in music-making than at any point in

history, and with access to a diversity of music greater than ever, there is no excuse to listen to

anything bland, to anything that doesn't provoke a reaction.

MY LIFE AS AN AUDIENCE

One of the things that you notice about most people who are really dedicated music fans is that most of them either start out as or eventually become musicians. I know lots of people who are into music and almost all of them are involved somehow in making music. I think that there's been a gradual lowering of the barriers to being a music maker in the last twenty years. With the passage of time, it becomes easier for individuals to afford the tools that they need in order to dabble their toes in the waters of musical experimentation.



(Wire- Montreal, October 5, 2008)

Interestingly, that leaves people like me as a bit of an endangered

species: Those who have a passion for music that extends over a range of years beyond that time of life when one is supposed to show an interest in music. (That time would be the period in one's teenaged years, possibly extending into the early twenties, when one is still free of adult obligations and is therefore disposed form links between an idyllic time of emerging individuality and its contemporary soundtrack.) Those who stay interested in music beyond early adulthood are more and more often inclined to make the jump from consumer to producer, in order to give their interest a more active role in their life.

As energetic and passionate as I feel about music, my role tends to be one of passive receiver rather than creator. That's an odd position to be in with something you really love. I'm constantly evaluating the skills and performances of people whose talents I admire, knowing that, as "informed" as I like to think my opinion is, I could never put my money where my proverbial mouth is.

In recent months, I seem to have gone to a lot of shows, either of my own volition, or because I knew people who were going and felt like being social. I even helped organise one in Toronto before

decamping for Montréal. These shows have ranged from straight-ahead indie rock to some pretty harsh noise/ power electronics. The venues have ranged in size from tiny boites barely able to accommodate a couple of dozen to places capable of holding an audience of a couple of thousand. (For various reasons, you're unlikely to ever see me in anything larger than that.)



(Nebris, Toronto, June 19, 2008)

Determining what makes a good show is tricky. Great sound helps. (My Bloody Valentine in Toronto on my birthday was one of the best shows I've ever seen and the experience was undoubtedly enhanced by the power of the sound.) It's sort of a given that, the closer the sound coming out of the P.A. resembles that which the musicians are trying to create, the more enjoyable the show is. A dense, multi-layered sound is a lot harder to appreciate when you

hear it compressed to a flat, atonal hum.

Some artists can overcome substandard sound with energy. (Noise artists, almost invariably relegated to playing shows through sound systems less powerful than my home stereo, can pull this off.) A recent experience of this for me was seeing Montreal locals Hyena Hive performing at the tiny (but mighty) Casa del Popolo. The venue is a godsend for fringe artists, but, like many small venues with limited resources, its sound system leaves something to be desired. However, Hyena Hive still managed to deliver a brutal, aggressive, entertaining performance that overcame the sound limitations.

Human-scale interaction (i.e., not just shouting randomly into the crowd, but actually trying to connect with them) can add to the feeling of being somewhere special. Wire, who played here in October, were charming on this level, despite seeming a little off their game technically. Shellac actually invited the audience to ask them questions to pass the time, prompting an interesting sort of dialogue that would seem antithetical to the performer/audience dynamic. The Bug seemed almost literally to be drawing energy reserves from the excitement of their audience (and even incorporated a couple of vocals props to those near the front of the stage).

On the other side of the spectrum, Taint performing in Toronto last July as one, where an absolute refusal to interact can create an interesting dynamic- making the artist appear less approachable, more distant (despite, in the case of that show, being only a few feet removed from the audience). The effectiveness of audience interaction is often dictated by the general atmosphere of the music. If Taint had been chatty, had invited the audience to ask him questions (as entertaining as some of those questions might have been, it would have detracted from the show- a music style built on tension and confrontation-considerably.



(Taint, Toronto, July 26, 2008)

Since there is undoubtedly a visual element to a live show, putting some effort into making some type of visual statement (particularly for artists where there is little action on stage) can help build a unique live

“experience” My Bloody Valentine had a stunning light show, albeit with a budget beyond the dreams of most musicians. On a smaller scale, Pram, Nebris and Visions all augmented a fairly sedate performance with visuals that gave flesh to the sounds.

These are some of the tools that are at the disposal of the artist in a live environment. But ultimately, what defines a great live show experience is a sort of energy, something I’ll describe as a symbiosis between artist and audience. If you don’t believe me, think back to shows where the audience has been uninspired by what they saw (not antagonised, but simply left cold). I guarantee that it was a bad show for all involved. Without actually giving them creative control over the sounds, a great live show bridges the gap between artist and audience, making the audience more than just passive listeners and transforming their role into a key part of what happens on stage.

Unfortunately, defining this state may cause me to fall back on the cliché of the redneck trying to define art- I don’t know what it is, but I can tell it when I see it. Even among audience members, there can be some debate over when this has occurred. Shows that I remember as being among the best I’ve ever seen seemed to leave others unimpressed.

However, I do find that those artists who are able to build a reputation on their live shows are

generally ones who have found a way to tap into a desire in the audience not merely to be entertained, but to approach the boundary between artist and fan.

I may never be a musician (really, I'd rather stick to writing anyway), but the best experiences I have at live shows still make me feel like a participant-observer, rather than simply a receiver. And the possibility of that happening is why I'm happy to continue as an audience member, without making the leap to being a musician, until

I'm too deaf to know what's going on.



(Stereolab, Montreal, October 7 2008)

THE ACCIDENTAL DADAISTS

Niellerade Fallibilisthorstar Interviewed

They aren't exactly a household name (there aren't that many households that can pronounce their name), but Swedish artists Niellerade Fallibilisthorstar have quietly been building a following through the internet over the last few years. This interview was conducted with band members Petter Sundlof [PS] and Niklas Janlert [NJ] in 2007, just before the release of their album "Skrankverk".

KM: The first thing I'd like to ask is that you just give some basic details on the history of the band-how long you've been together, how you came to work together, etc.

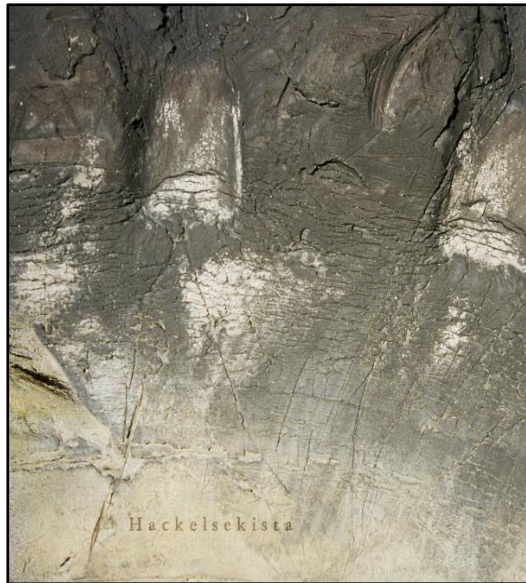
PS: Three of us (me, David and Gustav) formed the band some time in 2001.

I need to ask you Niklas, 'cause my memory is dim here -- when did you get into the picture?

NJ: After the first recording, I believe.

PS: At least the very first recording session, at a municipal music school full of weird orchestra instruments consisted of me and Gustav.

KM: And what was it that made you decide to start making music in that place?



PS: Well, we were all old friends, most from early school and there wasn't really any thoughts beyond: Here are some instruments, we have recording equipment... let's record whatever comes into our heads. The very first session I mention was a minidisc connected to two condenser mics set up inside a large room and it was filled with xylophones, percussion allsorts, half-broken 80s synths etc., and me and Gustav started recording, and went on for 56 minutes without a word.

KM: What exposure had you had to experimental or noise music before that, if any?

PS: Me, virtually none.

NJ: I'd like to remark that it really didn't start off as a noise project. I think it lasted at least... three-four recordings before it started turning out like that.

KM: How would you characterise that original sound?

PS: The earlier session were far more conceptually structured, whereas we've moved to more looser forms now.

KM: And what was it that made you move to a "noisier" sound?

PS: Well, I think it was quite pragmatic...

NJ: The concepts didn't work.

PS: We weren't able to record [in the original location] anymore. We had only limited access to it through a relative. Original sound, then: A bunch of retards freeforming on orchestral instruments? ...Trying their best to destroy them if possible.

NJ: Some sort of musical dadaism, perhaps.

PS: We've moved to outdoors recordings but also at the same time incorporated stuff like electric bass, some keyboards.

KM: I understand that you use a lot of "found" instruments as well- scrap metal and such?

PS: Yes. Many of the recordings center around what's available. We start by scouting various recording locations

KM: Do you keep the instruments after you're finished recording with them?

PS: Generally, no.

NJ: It's pretty much site-bound, but we often return to certain locations.

KM: Can you give a few examples of the sites that you've used?

PS: I think we've been to most industrial sites in our vicinity.

NJ: As well as out in the woods, of course.

PS: Yes, the opening track of our first album was recording in a marsh. We also had a fire burning there, which provided an excellent ambience to the recording. We generally like combining organic sounds with the sounds of decayed industry.

One track, "Ankommande", was recorded during a 50 minute walk in the snow. The original track was cut down to circa 22 minutes for the first CD. One of us held a stereo mic and I think all five of us walked around, not saying a word for those fifty minutes.

NJ: Again, mixed with some recordings from an industrial site. We had a huge oil tank in it, I remember.

KM: You had a bit of a change of sound or approach with your album "Skrankverk".

PS: I think it's far more consistent (quality-wise). But it's broadening the sound beyond the first two albums. There are some harder "industrial" tracks, some vocal ones... and some with predominant keyboards in there.

NJ: And we returned indoors for a few of the tracks.

KM: What made you decide to incorporate the keyboards, or give them a larger role?



NJ: There was a general consensus in the group that we should go back into a more studio-like setting, since basically, we hadn't done anything since we lost access to the music class room mentioned earlier.

PS: Yes, but I think it's not entirely reflective of the album. For example, the first track, Räfte, was recorded at an abandoned bakery. A majority of the stuff dates back to 2004 and 05, some 06. Our 8cm (mini) CD "Dom" (one long track) actually has... more recent material.

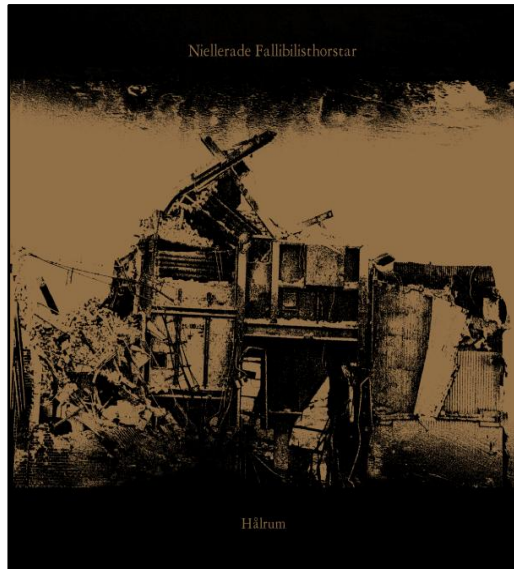
KM: Were you looking for an outlet to release it [Skrankverk] for a long time?

PS: It was supposed to come out on Audiobot/Freaks End Future, but that didn't pan out, and [Dystonia] had expressed interest to do a release with us earlier, which was actually already planned -- it was supposed to be entirely new records. All albums hitherto have been on different labels. Our first

album was released on THR, a Swedish metal label.

KM: You also worked with the SNSE label for "Halrum".

PS: Yes, Pat is a great guy, his label is fantastic.



KM: Would you like to align yourself with one label? Or you hoping to work with many as you go on?

PS: I'm not sure. I think there's at least a possibility or reconnecting with SNSE if they're interested, for future albums or Dystonia. Whoever gets us the prettiest groupies in the dressing room. We will hopefully also continue to do DIY releases.

KM: I was surprised when I was doing some internet searches at how much info there is on you-many reviews, mentions on forums, etc.

PS: Oh. We'd like to see many more reviews, I don't think we're spoiled with them.

KM: You've received some really glowing praise, often comparing you to the likes of Nurse With Wound, Organum and The New Blockaders. Yet you said that you really weren't influenced by acts like that- or even familiar with them when you started?

PS: Of those bands, I'm only familiar with Nurse with Wound, and slightly.

NJ: Mm... No, there's no influence on me, at least.

PS: When we started, we were pretty much isolated from any scene.

KM: Do you feel that, in the reviews you've seen, the people reviewing your music really understand what it is you're doing?

PS: I don't think there's anything to understand.

NJ: But on the other hand... the reviews I've read haven't been trying to figuring anything out, either.

PS: To me, it's there. It's what happened during the recording (and in some cases overdubs)...

NJ: I think the reviewers have taken it as... an emotional assault, which I think we've been aiming for- well... at least I've been aiming for it - so I'm happy.

KM: A number of the reviews I saw seemed "confused" by your sound. Any thoughts as to what would confuse them (other than the pronunciation of your band name)?

PS: Well, it's not exactly "hard noise". We have quite a bit of very mellow, sparse sections

NJ: Maybe the lack of scene-context is confusing?

KM: Do you have any plans to perform live in the next little while?

PS: I don't think it's very likely we will. We were invited to quite a large festival in the south of Sweden- Nya Perspektiv. Fred Frith has played there. But we didn't feel we could do a good enough job live.

KM: That's interesting, considering that live elements seem so important in your music recording.

NJ: However... we can cut down a 40 minute recording session to a 10 minute song. That's not really feasible when it comes to a live performance.

PS: Yes, editing can be pretty harsh on the source materials. But the live elements... it's quite a private event. It would not remain the

same in front of an audience. We did play live once, at the 11/9 Live Aktion here in Umeå.

KM: So what are you planning for the future?

PS: It'll have to be a bit of a departure, I think.

KM: In what way?

PS: Personally I'd like to something very different from these three albums. I don't know different how, yet.

~Hålrùm~
Niellerade Fallibilisthorstar

April 5th '05
Released on SNSÉ
LP 300 copies, CD 500
Full-color jackets, LP with poster
15 EUR/100 SEK <http://nfh.dhs.org>
10 USD via <http://snse.net>
LP ~37m, CD ~44m



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<http://nfh.dhs.org>
nfh@nfh.dhs.org

LABEL PROFILES

GALAKTHORRO

Web: galakthorroe.de

Founded: 1993

Location: Braunschweig (Brunswick), Germany

Owner(s): Mr. and Mrs. Arafna

Releases to Date: 22

Most recent release: November Novelet :: Sacred 7" and Hermann Kopp "Under a Demon's Mask" LP & CD

What was it that originally made you want to start a record label?

When we started to make music and finished our first work for Haus Arafna, the "Sex-U-mas" EP 7", we even didn't thought about the possibility to apply for a release at an already existing label. It was kind of clear for us to release it by ourselves, to have the design and everything else under our control. Furthermore we wanted to give a chance to talented and allied musicians to become released on this new label, too.

Galakthorroe tends to release very few albums (compared to some other labels). Would you like to have a greater output, or are you happy with things the way they are?

We're happy with everything we do, indeed, and even if we'd like to have more released sometimes, it's clear on the other hand, that there's not so much great music for our taste, which is good enough to be released. We hold a high standard

for the music we release, doesn't matter if it's our own project's output or the music of our artists. We don't want to clog the scene with releases which are questionable in quality.

How do you select artists to be on Galakthorroe?

We presume to release just and only the music we personally like. We get lots of applications for a release which are done carelessly - we don't take a look on impersonal bulk applications, we don't download mp3's.

Are there any particular artists you would be interested in working with?

Granted, there are several good artists we appreciate, but there's no one special we could name here.

You recently started an MP3 shop. What made you decide to do that?

Until we opened our mp3 store there wasn't any legal way to download our music. Various people and companies took advantage of this situation and offered or sold the songs of our label without any permission. So, we wanted to satisfy the demand for the possibility to download Galakthorroe music legally. There are many people who like to support us in this way and we're happy about it.

LUMBERTON TRADING CO.

Web: lumbertontrading.com

Founded: 2004

Location: Krakow, Poland

Owner(s): Richard Johnson

Releases to Date: 10

*Most recent release: Human Greed::
Black Hill: Midnight at the Blighted
Star CD*

What was it that originally made you want to start a record label?

Well, let's not forget that LTCO is my second label. The first being Fourth Dimension, which commenced as an offshoot to Gary Levermore's Third Mind Records in 1984 before I took over after he did one release on it. LTCO, however, differed (originally) for its being a collaborative label with my good friend Hassni Malik, plus having a perhaps more set objective than Fourth Dimension in respect of both a stronger identity and it's paying more attention to the packaging. Whilst FD has likewise done this on occasion, it has operated in a slightly different way, being perhaps more DIY-spirited, for want of a better description. Essentially, LTCO is taking a little more care, although that's not to slight my achievements with FD. Since LTCO started, though, Hassni has left the label, leaving me to now operate two labels whilst refraining from blurring the edges between them as best as possible.

How do you select artists to be on Lumberton Trading Co.?

From the outset, it was clear that LTCO would only collaborate with artists/groups whose work over the years has touch us/me in a great way. To that end, we wanted generally, let's say, more 'seasoned' artists housed by the label to either do one-off releases for us or use the platform to perhaps do something different. And although LTCO has deviated from this somewhat due to a whole number of different and rather tiresome reasons, I would contend that it's still essentially anchored to this principle and will continue to remain so. The very fact that people such as Michael Gira and Faust have so far worked with LTCO in this manner are a testament to this. And, indeed, others are set to follow. Of course, being interested in new music, I also want to work with newer artists on LTCO as well, but other factors must be considered. With people such as Steven Severin, Gira, Sleazy, etc. on the label, the newer artists have to be able to at least punch a similar weight.

Are there any particular artists you would be interested in working with?

There are a few, but the only artist I'll stress right now I would like on the label outside of those presently either on it or due to appear on it is William Bennett, although in a non-Whitehouse capacity. I haven't asked him yet, though, as I'm sure he'll decline!

REVIEWS

Reviewers: Kate MacDonald [KM], Dominic Marceau [DM], Kristian Carter [KC]



**Human Greed :: Black Hill:
Midnight at the *Blighted Star***

Lumberton Trading Company

www.lumbertontradingcompany.com

One look at the packaging for the latest Human Greed album gives you the sense that it's going to be difficult to define. The artwork hovers in an oneiric realm, elements of childlike fantasy and nightmarish anxiety side by side-freezing a moment of balance between the two.

The music, likewise, possesses parts which are pure, delicate beauty and others that sound as ominous as a North Atlantic storm, one flowing uninterrupted into the other, dream and nightmare chasing each other through airy space. Much like describing a

dream to someone when you're awake, it's difficult to find the proper terms to convey what's going on here.

It's too easy to fall back on the over-used term "ambient" to describe this music, just because of its lack of rhythms and because it is decidedly not "noise". However, ambient music is supposed to be exactly that- discreet background sound that serves as an unobtrusive soundtrack in any environment. This is not ambient in that sense, as the music would be both distracting and, at certain points, unnerving for any listener.

About the closest comparison point I can come up with are the instrumental sections of more recent Curret 93 material (although there are vocals on the album, including a guest appearance by David Tibet), which is in itself a separate universe of sound. A mix of electronic and acoustic, instrumental and poetic, light and dark, what emerges is an unquestionably beautiful and haunting whole. [KM]



The Pains of Being Pure at Heart :: S/T

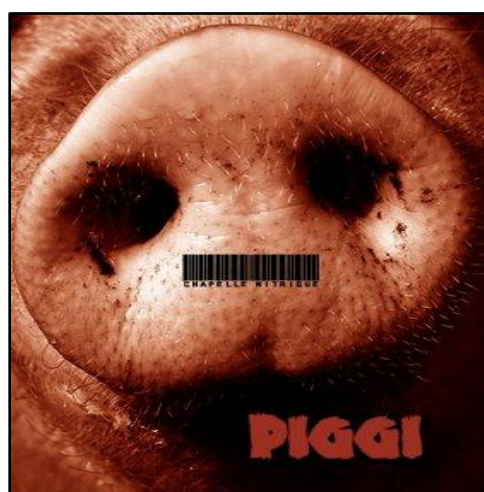
Slumberland/ Fortuna Pop

www.thepainsofbeingpureatheart.com

I promised myself I would never do this. This Public Enemy fan never believed "The Hype". But every other blogger, music critic, and coffee shop patron I met praised NYC neo-dream pop outfit "The Pains of Being Pure at Heart" (a candidate for the "Worst band name in history"). So, I swallowed my pride and I gave them a listen. Ever have a profound feeling of déjà vu? Well, in this case, it's more a feeling of "déjà entendu"...

I'd been aware of a resurgence of NYC-based neo-shoegaze bands coming out of the woodwork, ten years after the untimely death of this oft-praised subgenre. Bands like A Place to Bury Strangers, Dirty on Purpose, and Asobe Seksu have all been praised beyond belief for their wall of sound. But none have received more praise than "The Pains of Being Pure at Heart", whose eponymous release, their first album after a string of EP's and singles, feels like a really good Chapterhouse or Slowdive record. But don't get me wrong: this isn't necessarily a bad thing. The songs are cute as Hell- "Come Saturday" and "Everything With You" are definite standouts (Both available for free download on the band's website). It's really well crafted, the ethereal sound textures are all on the money, and the boy/girl vocals actually work. But we've heard this

all before. Listening to "The Pains of Being Pure at Heart" only made me want to listen to all those fantastic bands that made 4AD and Creation Records the stuff of legends. They say: "You can never go back". That's why this album feels like it was recorded by a really good cover band. But for less than 35 minutes, you'll smile. A little. Then, you'll forget all about it. [DM]



Chapelle Nitrique :: Piggi

Bone Structure

www.bone-structure.blogspot.com

Sometimes, the key to making music that has real atmosphere is not to make it too clean- to allow the muddy, scratchy qualities of home-fi recording to permeate the sounds, rather than succumbing to the temptation to apply a digital polish to bring out the underlying detail.

Bone Structure, a fairly new but prolific Belgian label, specializes in purveying music that retains a

certain gloomy haze. Montreal artists Chapelle Nitrique could not have found a better home for Piggeri, their debut full-length. The album churns through its five tracks, the overwhelming murk choking, but never entirely silencing what sound like voices, radio transmissions or sometimes even rhythmic pulses buried under its heavy cloak.

The sound bears a certain resemblance to film work, notably the classic soundtrack to *Eraserhead*, in that it seems to invite a visual component. Another comparison point might be a less noisy variant of the early Brighter Death Now sound- hefty, suffocating, disconcerting. Put on a pair of headphones, close your eyes and try to imagine what the movie looks like. [KM]



Doornen :: AIDS Loves You to Death

Scrape Tapes

www.myspace.com/scrapetapes

Very much “old school” noise, in the vein of Merzbow or Incapacitants. “AIDS Loves you to Death” is a 3” CDEP featuring two tracks of full-frequency noise. The first track- the title track- plays with the volume levels a little, withering to a dull roar midway through before storming back for an encore. The second track is a full-on assault, a test for speakers and neighbours alike. [KM]



Kave :: Hidden Fields

Scrape Tapes

www.myspace.com/scrapetapes

Spooky and restrained electronics, along the lines of American act Burial Hex, or perhaps like Chemical Bride-era PGR. This 3” CD stands out among the releases on Scrape because of its avoidance of straight-ahead noise and because of its cleaner sound. The first track is a real standout, with bits of slightly deranged organ drifting through the atonal mist midway through. [KM]



Content Nullity :: Rotting Walls of Decaying Sound

Scrape Tapes

www.myspace.com/scrapetapes

Definitely the most varied of the three Scrape Tapes releases sent for review. (I suppose this may be related to the fact that there are five tracks, rather than just two.) Content Nullity show that they can pull off a straight noise sound, with the early parts of the EP being thick and resonant... like aural molasses. The last two tracks show that CN has a wider range, though. The fourth track on the EP ("Burning Bright White Sun") sounds like a shortwave radio being boiled, while the final track ("Volt Millipede") has a looped, almost hypnotic sound that recalls the best parts of Lull, around the time of "Dreamt About Dreaming". [KM]

Escuadron de la Muerte :: Hic, Inquit, Debes Habitare
Strength Through Awareness
www.stab.webden.co.uk

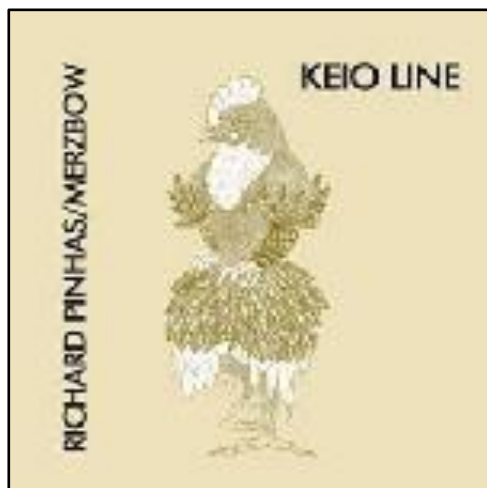
Hailing from Mexico, Escuadron de la Muerte (Death Squad) could not sound more at home on Britain's Strength Through Awareness label. Their music is heavily influenced by the likes of Grey Wolves, Anenzaphalia and others, blending super-saturated frequencies with rhythmic loops and distorted fragments of classical and military band music.

Even by the standards of a genre that is not known for its peppy optimism, this release seems particularly weighty, deliberately makes itself a challenge to listen to in a single sitting. Perhaps it's because the impact of some early power electronics was muted by the artists' reliance on sub-standard recording technology, leaving even pristine vinyl copies of albums like the Wolves' "Age of Dissent" sounding vaguely like an eighth generation cassette dub (which, to be fair, may well have been on purpose). Escuadron de la Muerte take full advantage of the recording quality available to them, meaning that the album hits at full throttle from the beginning.

The album gives a couple of moments' pause for the listener to catch their breath, but they are few and, as the album progresses, farther and farther between. And even those can be disconcerting, because of the nature of the sounds used. By the end, the effect is like you've been pummelled.

To give an idea of the effect, imagine that you've accidentally been trapped underneath the sidewalk. It doesn't matter how

you got there, what matters is that you awaken to find yourself trapped in a very dark place, with very little oxygen, the sounds of the world permeating, but muffled and distorted through layers of cement. Now imagine that somehow, your cries for help have been heard and people have arrived to liberate you. Only in order to do this, they have to break up your concrete tomb with a large jackhammer. Its hyperspeed pounding encompasses your entire world and, although you're pretty sure (barring any accidents) that you'll emerge at the end, it's very difficult to concentrate on anything but what that sound is doing to your whole body, not just your hearing. When you come out of the dark again, you have the sense that you'll be feeling the reverberations long after the ordeal has ended. [KM]



**Richard Pinhas & Merzbow ::
Keio Line**

Dirter Promotions

www.dirter.co.uk

Japanese noise supremo Merzbow is not someone who you would often tie in with the words ambience or even restraint, however Masami Akita has found solace in the age old adage "less is sometimes more" on this hauntingly beautiful triple vinyl release from UK label Dirter Promotions.

He is joined in This two and a half hour sonic excursion by French Guitarist Richard Pinhas of Heldon. I was only aware of Heldon as Komische style acid rockers from the late seventies early eighties, it seems however that Richard Pinhas has a discography that is almost as daunting as merzbow both in Breadth and width.

Anyone expecting a coruscating blast of noise is in for a very big surprise indeed.

Recorded over the space of two days in Tokyo and then mixed in Paris these six sides of vinyl showcase Pinhas almost Derek Bailey esque guitar works blending into a wave of almost ambient electronics and low key beats from Merzbow that twist together like an electrical serpent thrashing back and forth in ever decreasing arcs.

Named after the Keio underground line in Tokyo it seems as if both musicians have managed to somehow harness the electricity and the speed of the system and convert it into an audio sculpture of majestic beauty and power.

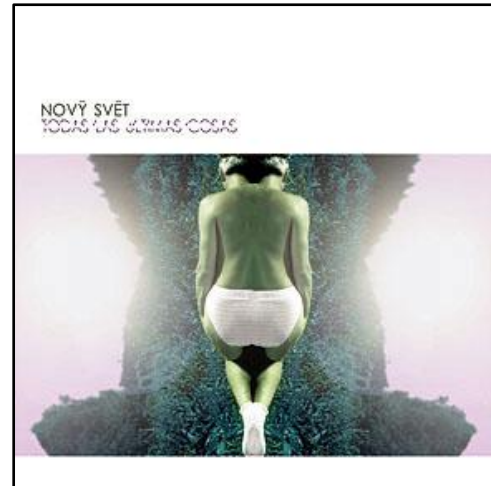
Pinhas heavily flanged guitarwork hangs in the air like a cloud of smoke or dust in an underground tunnel whilst distant waves and pulses of noise dance across the clouds of sound almost like electricity that is flowing through the power lines.....

When Merzbow uses beats and rhythm it is if the underground tunnels are faintly vibrating with the sound of a distant train hurtling away into the darkness.

I was fortunate to visit Tokyo last year and amongst the chaos and confusion of this Bustling metropolis there is sometimes late at night and early into the mornings a sense of strange otherworldly calm that falls across its neon soaked streets and empty subway line platforms.

Pinhas & Merzbow have somehow managed to capture those fleeting moments of stillness where only the technology hums to itself as if in some kind of alien language almost inaudible to the human ear.

In doing so they have created a work of immense beauty and haunting stillness. [KC]



Novy Svet :: Todas Las Ultimas Cosas

Treue Um Treue

www.tuturur.com

I will take virtually any opportunity to pontificate on the underappreciated genius that is Novy Svet. They've ranked among the most consistently fascinating artists I've come across since I discovered them back around the turn of the millennium. Their sound is fiendishly difficult to pin down, blending elements of Mediterranean folk, lounge, Tom Waits-style experimentation, tango rhythms and a peculiar romanticism that invites the listener to engage emotionally with the music.

As of December 31st, 2007, Novy Svet ceased existence and the world is poorer for it, so *Todas Las Ultimas Cosas* is the sweet kiss goodnight from their strange and wonderful world. As a final transmission, the album is an interesting departure from what has gone before. Far from the

florid, wine-soaked melodies of their Hau Ruck period and equally removed from the more elemental, stripped down work of later years, the band chooses to say goodbye with a glimpse of what might have been a new direction. (This is a strange ploy for any artist. About the only other example I can think of offhand is Swans coming out with *Soundtracks for the Blind* before calling it quits in the mid-to-late-nineties.)

Todas Las Ultimas Cosas eschews the acoustic instrumentation of previous albums in favour of electronics. The music veers closer to flexi-pop style minimalism on the surface, but the underlying

structure is pure Novy Svet. The melodic structures have the same hallmarks of previous releases, the same indefinable quiriness that makes their other releases so enchanting.

Novy Svet are often lumped in with artists in the neo-folk genre, more, I think, because of past associations than anything to do with their music. By removing the more “folksy” instrumentation, this album provides a perfect opportunity to see what it is that made this band unique. [KM]

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