

BLACK'S ARCHIPELAGO, BY EDGAR ALLAN

MONAGHAN

MRT (mind reading technology) had been forgotten. So too hypnosis. It was everyone man for himself, so the future looked bleak. Without MRT how could we control the planet?

But some said we were finally free and life was independent and good.

This world, Planet Screw was a far-flung planet many light years from Earth. People here believed they lived in benevolent anarchy with no obvious leadership. Rumor had it that an oligarchy of 10 women ruled, but no one seemed to know much about it.

People told themselves it was a free world. No one was older than 80, but even the oldest couldn't remember anything different. Rumors were that it had been over 1000 years of peace and anarchy. Benevolent anarchy was the original state of mankind...

But I suspected that the true leader was the "wandering trader" who paid gold to workers in the gold mines and had a lot of gold stockpiled. His name was Black, and he apparently had many children. But the children were all different in different living environments. Some of Black's children turned out to be real bad asses, but for the most part it was said they were tolerated by Black who even egged them on. But if they showed disrespect to God (him), they would get mind torture. What can you do for God today? The good people asked.

But in all his cultures people worked hard at something. Some were athletes who played the game of killer rugby. Five-team rugby with 5 teams each competing on a pentagram field.

Black bet heavily on the games, it was believed.

And Black's casino was very popular. Some people won big and became a high-ranking noble for a time. Some said better to be humble and just play blackjack. But some were obsessed with gambling and lost their shirt and so were given jobs such as latrine cleaner and so on. Black couldn't believe so many of his children lost everything in gambling, people said.

My job was assistant manager in a gold mine.

On one day in particular I met the wandering trader (who I later identified as Black II) and was amazed by his clever dialog. He asked me if I knew who my father was? I said I didn't know. He said: Well, I know.

This led me to believe that he was the true ruler of men. I decided to follow him around.

I didn't know what to think about Black except that he seemed crazy.

The next day I followed the "wandering trader." I figured he must know a lot he wasn't telling. So, I hid behind trees on the main island. And he passed by walking quickly. Then he came to an old lighthouse and pushed a rock and a secret stairway appeared. He made sure no one was following him with a good look, but I figured he hadn't seen me.

After 5 hours he left, and I wondered what he had been doing down there.

So, then I pushed the rock and went down the stairs. I was struck by the immensity of the underground vault. I found a journal open at his desk and some books of thousands of faces in photographs, each with a number. And a couple of machines of some sort.

So, the next day I arrived earlier and sure enough he soon came, and he was accompanied by a woman who looked a lot like him.

I hid behind one of the shelves of books of pictures and numbers.

I saw him put on headphones and press something on the machine and then talked and he said desist from your idea of killing Margaret or you will go crazy. And so on. He talked with 20 different people. Then he had a talking machine which he gave orders to his security to watch out for certain people.

Then he seemed to be getting ready to leave and I came from behind a shelf and cut his throat. And hers too. I figured it was a patricide, but it had to be done. Black was too evil and against progress.

I wondered what would happen. So, the next few weeks, nothing seemed to happen, but then people started acting up, committing murders and so on. And then one day, three weeks later, I went down to the hidden chamber and saw Black again. It must be a clone I figured. And I shot him with an arrow.

After more searching I found a door to a freezer and there were 12 clones waiting there. One clone had just had his bubble heat up and presumably he was next. So, I grabbed an iron rod and smashed the bubbles killing them all instantly. Afterwards I wondered what I'd done? He got in the heads of all at least once a year. From age 14.

But then I put the numbers in as I had seen Black do... and I found myself in that person's head. This person was a friend of mine and I just sat there listening to his

thoughts. But I figured I'd use the other machine to talk to the spies. As Black had done. I asked for the news and a voice came on saying Black had not appeared at Corny Island as scheduled. I told them I needed some time off and told them I'd talk next week.

In the journal which was a three-book set, Black II (the most recent incarnation) wrote that he didn't care about dreams, and preferred to get into wrong doers, heads in the morning.

But in the case of a murder, the mob usually executed the murderer, but if not, he Black would eventually find the culprit and had his goons execute him/her. I figured Black elaborated so clearly in his journal in case the wandering trader was somehow killed.

On weekends he went by boat to one of the islands, and he had a modest palace on each island as befitted the master of breeding. He traded luxury goods for gold in the gold mines. He paid the workers in gold and collected all their gold production.

There were 49 gold mines scattered over the 30 islands Each island had at least one and the main island had five.

It was the year 2290 and the total population here was 25 000 people.

After perusing the journals, I finally I found my picture and file. The file said basically I was not a threat and was a model citizen, and a child of Black. He had drawn profiles of all the people and that contributed to the files. He drew the pictures from memory apparently. I didn't know if I could draw or not.

And the journal revealed that he had had sex with his female children and occasional clones. He reveled in it, he wrote. And he believed Black I who he murdered was a great leader and so was he.

And there were curious disks I didn't know how to use them. But I looked in his journal some more and found they were Spy reports on the populace and the history of the archipelago.

And there was a pile of files of young boys that he planned to have his doctors give them a vasectomy. And he had MRT needle guns in all the daycares. When a young male got in front of it, he would pull the trigger. The tot would cry, and it was assumed he had been bitten by a horsefly or a wasp.

State babies were all babies, and all were shot in the head with a needle.

And he had anticipated being assassinated and wrote that he had done what was best for the world and that his successor would carry on his good work. He explained how to monitor the populace and how to use his goons etc.

And he wrote in his journal that he was producing mostly clones of himself only they were female versions (who were almost the exact same as male clones). All had a unique face which made them different. And it was true, 9 of the 12 clones I had killed were women.

Doctors were partially in the know and did vasectomies and test tube babies and clones. Clones all had their own memories and were born in an adult body with the ability to read and write and do basic math.

And Black I and II and myself, (I called myself Black III), controlled the money supply and that gave us a lot of power.

Now I, Black III, was 69 but still looked youthful. In Black II's journal he stated that the scientists who discovered eternal youth were killed by him, Black. But there was a 200-year supply in one of the secret rooms of the lair. So, it was said scientists were

afraid to invent anything. But as the new Black I got in their heads and demanded they produce new science. It was then, in the secret lair, that I realized Black I and II were control freaks. Recently there had been rumors that God would appear and all would have to worship him and be humble. God wanted a world of peace, it was said.

According to the diary he was experimenting with the humans, trying to make people “good.” By good he meant worshipful of him and humility. Somehow that seemed like déjà vu.

I figured MRT (mind reading technology) got into heads and changed peoples’ ideas. That was how he could live in a world of benevolent anarchy.

In his notes, he said he only had to kill 491 in his 12 years of rule. Usually getting in the heads of wayward progeny did the trick and put them back on the right path.

And he noted that he had used the MRT (mind reading technology) from ancient humans who had gone to space. And he said all governing should be done behind the scenes. Keep people wondering and quiet. But by the time I was born 80% of all those under 18 were Black I and Black II’s children. And among adults 60% were children of Black I. Just like me, I was a child of Black II.

I got in the heads of some scientist and ordered them to do archaeology. So far, my archaeologists had found computers and air cars in the blackened ruins but didn’t know how to work them. And they said there were huge ancient cities and that the population would have been over a billion!

Now it was just 25 000. But some argued that many of the sea monsters were geniuses.

And I was opening mines weekly and had the geologists find more.

And I gave orders to his goons and spies wearing a balaclava. So, they didn't know who I was. I talked in a voice like Black II. In any case most orders came over the radio.

Each of my (Black III's) 33 clones had a job as manager or assistant manager.

And were well paid when they found a lot of gold and other metals (the islands were rich in metals).

"Doctors" changed faces of the new Black's clones. That was me!

Some said this was ancient technology.

There was said to be one law only: no murder. Black got in the heads of murderers and turned up the volume until their minds exploded.

According to his journal, there were no 10 female rulers, like most people thought. He was the ruler. And people that demanded to see the big 10 had Black get in their heads and told them not to question the powers that be using a deep man's voice.

Each gold mine was run by some of my 1000s of children and my 33 clones. Black had sterilized all the men so most babies were his and I continued to do the same.

I gave them a DNA test in their youth to confirm if they were really my new kids.

My kids received an A-one education in maths, sciences, reading ancient books and so on. I, Black III, had designed the curricula. But the remaining mass of people just got physical education and kept their bodies in excellent condition in preparation for a gruelling life in the mines. But after 5 years in power 65% of children were mine, the remainder Black I and IIs'. And I, Black III lived for power, sex and the thrill of exotic drugs from ancient times.

And one day I discovered another secret door in which there was a huge pile of platinum pieces. So, I told my mine managers, the spies and the goons that they would

be getting a raise. And on the two-way radio I talked with the goons and told them to seek and find more dissidents. It seemed there were a lot of them as the goons arrested 100 in a week. I matched them to their picture and file and got in their heads and if they were really a problem I executed them with my goons. The goons didn't know what Black looked like as I always contacted them via radio. The radio voice was not the same as that of the wandering trader. I altered his voice to be deeper on the radio.

And I discovered that the goons checked in at noon every day waiting for orders. Black I and II listed the spies desires and ordered the goons to carry out their "judgements." So, I did the same.

In his journal Black I, stated he had to keep a close eye on his children. Sometimes they were too greedy for gold, other times greedy for sex and drugs. But he got in their heads and straightened them out.

The goons had names like Blackie, Black Dog, Black and White Dog, Sir Black and so on.

Some said the goons were evil, but such people were just doing their job. Many people were, "hearing voices," which was me inside their brain. People told them they had to go see one of the few doctors that we had. The doctors just gave them opiates and sedatives. And this seemed to help them. But they were rattled and confused. Many of the best scientists were "hearing voices."

However, most people found many "kindred spirits." After all they were mostly Black II's children.

Communication with other islands was dangerous as the leaders, the scientists, had dumped huge freaks into the sea and they were known to attack boats and were multiplying at an astounding rate. They ate most of the native sea life.

However, I went to the various islands once per island in every two weeks. In a large boat equipped with multi fire ballistae. I had spies everywhere who illuminated who was a dissident. Spies didn't recognize his voice as the two-way radio obscured my voice.

Islands they were all inhabited, and all were controlled by me, Black III. But as time went by, I had the women come to visit me in my palace and had doctors implant the needles. I was in their head and so made sure they followed orders.

Seafood was poisonous, and most settlements were inland. But it was rumored that radicals had some undersea domes in which they lived in. I often fished with nets for sport and caught all sorts of monsters. And I harpooned the ones that dared attack our boat. Anyway, I had lots of good trophies and the people heard about my prowess.

The domes did not show light, their domed rooftops were painted in dark colors, ironically Black had high tech glass buildings. Everyone child of his was a scientist. Technocracy.

Sometimes the sea monsters tried to overturn the boats, but I fished in the largest boat known to the islands.

Some of the sea monsters could crawl up onto the beaches and grab people in the night. There were thousands of types of sea monsters and they had eaten up almost all the native fish.

Swimming was a no go.

But the sea monsters kept people in check, kept them frightened and as Black I had said the alternative was anarchy. But Black II, knew more than he said in his journal. It was clear to me he was setting up a dynasty to rule forever.

Island #2.

Then there was the island of steel. People designed imaginative steel houses and kept working on them and people wore light steel mesh. They were judged by their houses. If they were imaginative they were given workers to help them build. If not, they became workers.

Island #3

Another island culture was based on donkey Gods and Goddesses.

People could only “bray...”

They brushed and washed the donkeys and fed them honey and sweet grasses. The group that had the best donkey in the eyes of the appointed judges were promoted to donkey supervisors and so on. The month’s best donkey wore a golden crown.

Island #4

On this island everyone was gay. Their culture was to never do the same things twice. But gays were dying out. Only 2% of Black II's children were gay. And none of the clones were gay.

Island #5

This was spy headquarters. It was right in the middle of the archipelago. Black II, told them who to hire as spies, and most of them (55) were his children. Black II had been in power for many years...

But in his journal, he said he had eternal youth with his clones. In fact, it was me, Black III who had killed Black II, and then his replacements so there was a murderous trail of his dynasty and that was why he made things so clear in his journal, in case he was assassinated the world would go on.

Island #6

But I decided to adventure on the nearby large Black island.

Some here looked forward to the past, where everyone was equal, they were Utopias.

All the ringleaders of this dissident movement got the MRT treatment from Black and their followers were hit too.

It was a calm and peaceful island. Yet there was no leader or so it seemed to most people. People assumed people naturally wanted peace. But I knew better.

Some historians however knew that there had been wave after wave of anarchistic settlers. These were mostly peaceful anarchists, but some were violent. But now for 60 years there had been peace, under the secret Black dynasty.

One of the spies/ Black's child was named Edward and he wrote about space where it was said we had all come from. He said we are destined to build space ships and go to the stars. I got in his head and learned of his project. We are all in the same boat together I said.

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50 new babies a new sub-race of mankind. Different colors and different thinking, imaginative.

Black II, had encouraged people to be optimistic and dreamy.

Black II was missing a hand and a blind eye so he wore an eye patch.

And he was black, whereas most people were orange or blue or green. I too was a black man.

Food and drink had been changed to black in color.

Girls adored me, I was so handsome, they were brainwashed to think. One girl told me I was the best of all possible lovers and another said to me she and her female friend wanted a menage a trois. Another girl said it would be Armageddon without me.

But once a girl reached menopause I wasn't interested in them anymore and gave them a good pension. After all I had a lot of gold and platinum.

And the best women also received a great education, but it was finally all my children were well educated. But they also had traditional educations such as fashion, make up, plastic surgery, physically fit and so on. Beautiful, clever-looking faces and brilliant bodies...

But one girl cut Black I's throat with a knife, or so she said, and there was violent anarchy for a while, but finally Black II's spies calmed the "revolutionaries down. That was 20 years ago, and no one really knew what happened. And it seemed that the wandering trader drowned, and another took his place. That was me I went to the varying islands just like Black II.

Trader Black (II) would go "in public," usually with his 20 goons for protection. Even though he was just the wandering trader. The goons had laser guns, no one else did as it was forbidden. No one seemed to be able to compete with the wandering trader.

But the overwhelming majority said that Black was the richest man in the world. But most agreed he was a great boss and paid them well for their work (which they mostly squandered gambling on "life.")

Sometimes the goons framed a dissident and executed him/her quietly telling others that he had drowned. The body was never found.

And it was rumored that God himself was in peoples' heads telling them what to do.

And some went and bet on the behavior of others. A few got rich, but most people believed it was all fixed.

And some of his children were heads of aerospace, head of cloning, head of spies, head of food production, head of drugs, head of unusual behavior and so on. And they were the bulk of the scientists as well.

Junior members of Black II's progeny worked as mine assistants to start. But all were told that children were a magical gift of God. Only the lucky ones could be born.

Black II, had sex with many of his scientist women but never slept with them, as they were conducted back to their quarters in the palace.

As the years went by everyone had met Black in person as well as in MRT.

The palace was beautiful with spires and bridges, and workers were adding on to it. The bureaucracy only increased and so too his secret harem. The harem was only 10 years old and the women there had disappeared from their families and weren't allowed to contact their former loved ones.

But they thought they were in the harem of the wandering trader, and didn't know Black II ruled.

He had his best lovers train the young ones to be great lovers.

But I took over it all!

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Scientists hoped to die of old age and have new clones of them taking over.

But scientists were kept in cells of isolation, typically 3 males and 3 females.

For defence scientists had the "Spin technique," firing lasers in all directions which destroyed any in its path, except the goons wore protective plastic armor.

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Years later...

I, Black III, was 101 years old and still youthful. I had ruled for 69 years, but some of the historians were silenced for some reason. Many believed I undoubtedly had the secret of eternal youth, but I wasn't sharing.

People mostly died of old age, no dementia, no heart attacks. I was working with the doctors to make people live longer but not eternally youthful. But the doctors were in some cases immortal like me. It couldn't be helped.

The new doctrine was that I had ruled for over 2000 years and now most people were my children, and children of Black II, but just had different faces. And about half were females whose brain was similar.

But people kissed ass with one another and worshipped one another. It was a perverse society.

And people had many hobbies such as dabbling in science and the arts. Or improving food, drink and drugs. Or party science. Or fishing and gardening.

And I, the new Black, kept increasing the salary of everyone, drawing upon my massive gold and platinum reserve.

In particular I kept upping the salary of the goons and spies to keep them happy.

I, Black III often appeared as a humble trader and traded gold for slaves to work in the mines. Most of my lovers were monogamous and didn't notice the difference in the New Black.

The new Black, myself, had plastic surgeons give me a face like Black II, a different face but no one could see it for what it was. Most people assumed the wandering trader had been replaced by his son.

People still didn't know what leaders they had, though it was agreed by most that it was 10 women who had spies everywhere.

And I got into people's heads using Black I's MRT to change the behavior of some wayward souls.

The old Black, Black II, wrote in Black's journal that the journal was so detailed that it was easy for one to slip into Black's life. Some of Black's women were wondering why he didn't whip them or slap them. I told the women that I had changed my face, but the voice was the same. I had changed my ways I told them.

Black II's main hobby was to design the perfect woman. He figured the key was education.

And he said one great mind can be an island...

Some people said to themselves that the wandering trader was a megalomaniac.

I was black himself, but I liked the yellow and orange people above all.

And he had many of his servants drink the "yellow elixir" which turned their skin yellow.

So, then I went to a doctor and asked him about Black II. He said off the record that he had clones and so did a number of doctors, but the vast majority were children of Black. And he gave me a DNA test which proved I was a child of Black, only with a slightly different face.

I knew then for certain that I was guilty of patricide.

One thing led to another and finally there was open revolt and we were supported by the people of the sea. But they wanted me as leader, and so I was released. But there were numerous attempted coups, but finally I was able to restore order...

Spies watched spies, it kept them busy.

I moved people into White City, which used to be called “Black city.” It was the main settlement of the archipelago.

Even farmers lived in the city. It was easier to keep control of them that way. Typically, everyone belonged to a cell of 3 men and 3 women or 6 of one sex for the gays. And everyone lived in one of the 14 tall organic tower blocks, with 400 people in each one. The buildings were organic growths and we were all sons and daughters of the trees. And I made peace with the people of the sea who had far more genetic variety and whose sperm and egg banks we utilized to enhance genetic selection. The sea people were good in math and had sent several space ships into space. But they were pacifists... And they produced a limitless amount of seaweed which could be converted into meat and rice. And everywhere there were edible flowers on the lands.

And we built mental hospitals for Black II’s most horrible victims.

But computers were illegal. Only simple devices like odometers were allowed, even on their space ships. The space ships were top secret but only a few scientists were involved (along with huge numbers of robots). But they did have powerful microscopes. And genetic science was advanced...

And their math ability allowed them to make numerous songs on various instruments.

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Many years later...

Finally, after 100 years of rule, I pronounced myself King. And said I was an immortal God and the people must worship me. But when I appeared in public, I wore a mask which obscured my voice. Everyone tried to appease me.

My lovers now were my children's children's children. The older ones were put out to pasture. And virtually everyone was my child...

And I built a harem of my favorite lovers, but still had sex with all other women of child bearing age or had the doctors implant my seed for the ones I didn't really love.

If they were not in my harem they were required to come to my palace and give their sperm/eggs. Until they reached menopause whereupon they didn't need to come to the palace any more.

They were all my children now.

And I continued to appoint new managers from the brightest.

A few doctors and spies knew what was going on, but I got in their heads and preserved the status quo.

I felt the urge to confide in someone, so I told my favorite lover all about it, and showed her how to use the system in the secret lair.

But I was careful, I locked the door with a chain and had a laser gun if necessary.

I didn't want clones, only children and children's children's children.

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18 Years Later...

And I gave all my children above the age 15, a job to do, some worked in the mines but didn't have to work hard. It was the same with food production, logging, breeding, marketing and business, doctors, civil engineers, geologists, archaeologists and so on. I had only 100 scientists and progress was slow, just how I liked it. All the scientists were youthful and my children like every other young person. And the scientists were working

on building computers and space ships. It was said that hundreds of years ago humans went to space. I had the archaeologists looking into it.

I watched the doctors and scientists very carefully though.

And I was careful to go to my secret lair. I extinguished my torch when I got close and felt my way into the lighthouse and the stone.

It seemed I would go on ruling forever.

And then one day, a cross bolt hit me in the chest. And I died with my secret.

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My best lover tried to take over and knew about the lair, but she was burned alive in the lair and that was the end of that.

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100 Years Later...

Doctors were in demand and had undid vasectomies 65 years ago. But there were a number of nobles and Queens and Kings. The population was now back up to 50 000, but it was anarchy. The Kings didn't have much control over their subjects.

And doctors did plastic surgery. Most of the nobles were doctors and they shared eternal youth.