

NEW WORLDS

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MANCHESTER ISSUE

NEW WORLDS

'CRUCIFIED TOAD' Edition

No 215

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A SAVOY GOOD TASTE ISSUE

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THIS ISSUE IS DEDICATED TO P.J. PROBY

-Who for a brief period lived in Manchester-
-and is incapacitated with the same spirit
of martyred panache which he displays in life.



A frog sandwich

Twang Dang Doodle Hit

LONDON (Chicago Daily News)—Prizilla Oates, ichthyologist and kindly soul, has scolded the alarm on yet another fatetful crisis for Britain.

We are faced here, it seems, with a desperate shortage of volunteers needed to help swarms of sex-crazed toads cross the road safely to their mating grounds near suburban Hemel Hempstead.

Miss Oates, 29, area representative of Nature Conservation, is perfectly serious.

Last spring, she noted sorrowfully, no fewer than 224 sea-frosted toads were squashed to death by cars as they swarmed across Pix Farm Lane to their breeding grounds in the waters of Bourne End Mere. (Seven newts who somehow got caught up in the great toad migration also wound up on the casualty list, Miss Oates added parenthetically.)

So what Miss Oates and her fellow conservationists

are trying to do now is recruit from 30 to 100 people who are willing to work about two hours a night over a period of six weeks or so helping the toads cross the road.

The only equipment required, she said, is a flashlight to find the toads and a bucket to put them in for the short journey.

Miss Oates cheerfully admits that "a lot of people think we must be mad."

NOVAROX ELLISON

INTRODUCTION TO THE GREGG PRESS EDITIONS OF "PAINGOD" AND "I HAVE NO MOUTH AND I MUST SCREAM"

IT COULD BE argued that Harlan Ellison possesses the romantic imagination without quite enough of the romantic discipline. Instead he substitutes performance: Keep it fast, keep it funny, keep 'em fazed. And this is why in my opinion his work is so uneven, often within the same story. I don't think any other writer pleads his own cases so often or at such length. This phenomenon supports my theory, I think. His stories are usually buried in their own weight of introductions, prefaces, running commentaries because each collection is a set (in the musical sense); this non-fiction is the patter designed to link material for the main numbers. Each story is an act — a performance — and almost has to be judged as a theatrical or musical improvisation around a theme. The idea of working in public, in a shop window, is anathema to me and most other writers — to Harlan Ellison it is a natural extension of his writing methods.

As with jazz, he'll use a rubato technique to catch up on himself, get to his original drift (tune or phrase) often after very long digressions. His best stories are scarcely stories at all: They are images, emotions, characters, collages. They are often at their worst when they try to fit genre conventions and dash themselves to fragments against the edges and walls on the form. **A Boy and his Dog** is an excellent piece of work and only bad when it tries to become a run-of-the-mill sf story (the underground scenes). **Eggsucker** (the 'prequel' written some years later) is better because it doesn't try to be anything more than an anecdote (and paradoxically is more of a well-made short story than much of Ellison's work). 'Imagist' writers don't need to worry too much about plots — witness Stevenson's best short stories — and can destroy their own conceptions by conscientious attempts to fit them into conventional shapes. This is often the case with Ellison whose plots can distort the 'real' information in his short stories. Ellison's information is no more in his plots than is, say, J.G. Ballard's in his or Poe's or Sterne's in theirs. The information is in his images, characters, his pyrotechnic highly oral method of performing a piece.

Flashes of autobiography, of self-revelation, are usually immediately disguised or obscured (for all he claims to tell us exactly how it is). Trent, he says, in **Paingod**, had reached a Now in which he could no longer support his acts. If Trent is Ego naked and at large, we know whose ego he represents. In this story everything works fine while the images are coming — the trip through the universes, the skid row scenes and so on — while the characters are being described — but when we are given 'plot' it is a let-down. The story part — a pretty banal statement about there being no pleasure without pain — could easily be discarded without the essence of the piece being harmed at all. How much of this is Ellison's fault and how much the fault of sf magazine editors (most of whom have probably done more to ruin the flowering of imaginative talent than any other single group) is hard to say.

In his introduction to **'Repent, Harlequin! Said The Ticktockman** he admits the fact that he is always late (A fact — as someone who's almost always early and an anxiety neurotic who's terrified of missing deadlines — I can vouch for. It is a hideous experience watching Harlan limbering up for a deadline whose date has already passed) and this, too, is a trait more often associated with a

performer who needs to give so much of himself to his act that he is always vaguely reluctant to begin until the last possible moment, always exhausted afterwards. I have met more people like Harlan when I've been performing with rock and roll bands than I have met at writers' conferences. It is worth noting, I think, that he has worked as a stand-up comedian and a singer in his time and is always in demand as a speaker, when he never fails to give a complete performance. His personal life is much closer to the personal life of, say, Al Jolson than it is to John Updike and I'm sure he prides himself on the fact. He is by no means the only writer to work and live as he does, but he could be one of the first to draw on performing rather than dramatic and literary disciplines to aid him to shape his writing. Byron and Shelley, Swinburne and Rossetti (these two latter are probably better examples) had poetic meter to control and give shape to their imaginations; similarly a writer like Ballard has chosen to use literary methods to control the flow of his creation. In America there is more of a tradition of what could be called pseudo-oral writing (Twain to Vonnegut) and Harlan Ellison's best work is in this tradition, of course. But films, radio, comic-strips have taught him more technique than, I suspect, have books. In this he breaks more thoroughly with tradition than he does in his subject matter which is fairly conventional. He is conscious that he is competing with visual forms and so he seeks perpetually for immediacy — for the immediacy offered by popular entertainment, by newspapers, by rock music, by the performers from George Burns to Lenny Bruce whom he so admires. It is no accident that he finds himself spiritually at ease in Hollywood, that he blossoms on a podium, that he takes naturally to TV appearances, that he shows on occasions a somewhat wary attitude to the more staid gatherings of writers and critics where performance is not expected of him.

High above the third level of the city, he crouched on the humming aluminum-frame platform of the air-boat (foof! air-boat, indeed! swizzleskid is what it was, with a tow-rack jerry-rigged) and stared down at the neat Mondrian arrangement of the buildings.

Harlan Ellison speaks about fifteen languages, all of them English. This gift is derived from a natural relish for words which enables him to make use of them far better than most of his contemporaries. It also enables him to work an audience. If he could produce his stories in front of about two thousand people at Circus Circus, Las Vegas, I think he would probably be in his element. The trouble with writing is that it is still a somewhat slow process, still essentially a solitary activity, and Harlan Ellison is still trying to beat those particular problems.

Almost all the characters in these stories are, of course, Harlan Ellison. Harlequin the gad-fly is an idealised Ellison, justifying his penchant for practical jokes, giving it a social function (one can also see him as a 'good' version of Batman's adversary The Joker). This particular story is one of the most successful of Ellison's 60s performances, for all that its ending tends to be a trifle ordinary and it reveals, to me at any rate, some of his own associations — 'childishness' with 'freedom' and 'parsimoniousness' with 'social responsibility' — at their crudest (he is far too intelligent and subtle a man to make such associations in any terms but those of metaphor, I should add). The story is in many

ways a thematic re-run of the earlier *The Crackpots*.

That he is capable of producing an sf story quite as ordinary and dull as the average sf story he demonstrated in 1974 with the publication of *Sleeping Dogs* which slipped naturally into the pages of *ANALOG*, a magazine which since 1940 or so seems to have devoted itself specifically to the curtailment and even destruction of the creative imagination. He seems to have gone into this enterprise with much the same spirit of a skilled high-wire monocyclist who for some reason wishes to show the world that he is as good at pushing an ordinary bike along an ordinary sidewalk as anyone else:

A moment later, a new sun lit the sky as the dread-nought *Descartes* was strangled with its own weapon. It flared suddenly, blossomed . . . and was gone.

Bright Eyes was improvised around an existing illustration in response to a challenge by that remarkable editor Cele Lalli, whose editorship of **AMAZING** and **FANTASTIC** in the 60s did so much to encourage the best writers of what came to be known as the US 'new wave' — Disch, Zelazny and so on. Here we see Ellison responding to a sympathetic audience (in the shape of Lalli) with a far better story that is still on a familiar theme (the central character is typically 'alienated', another version of 'the artist') and which I suspect presents us with more original images than appeared in the illustration. The image of the bleeding birds is particularly good. Again we find a fairly conventional 'story' element, but all in all **Bright Eyes** is a successful performance, if not a spectacularly ambitious one. The **Discarded** (also from **FANTASTIC**, but six years earlier) repeats the alienation theme and is about as unremarkable a story as **Sleeping Dogs**. Ellison was here still translating his social rejections into people like the mutants in this story (and presenting arguments about the social usefulness of such rejects all but identical to his current arguments). Although he had written documentary fiction about actual social rejects (New York street gangs) he did not yet seem to have made the realisation that greater 'immediacy', more effective imagery, could be gained by discarding conventional sf ideas and using his own experience. The familiar trappings of sf, and the familiar 'optimism' of pulp stories, can be seen completely obscuring any individual idea or language in the second earliest story reprinted here, **Wanted in Surgery**. Like me, Ellison is a pretty lousy science fiction writer.

Possibly because we are both lousy science fiction writers we independently picked on similar themes for our early work. Ellison wrote **The Beast that Shouted Love At The Heart Of The World** at about the time I wrote a story called **The Lovebeast**. He wrote **Deeper Than Darkness** at about the time I wrote a story called **Consuming Passion**. All I can say about the latter is that they were both run-of-the-mill stories. I'm not sure, however, that I could call my own 'pyro' story a 'tone-poem' . . .

Like Ellison I was regarded for some years as a pretty ordinary kind of sf writer. We both of us became highly-thought-of sf writers when we decided to stop doing sf. Then we began winning prizes for work which the average *ANALOG* reader would dismiss as mere 'borderline' sf or, worse, 'fantasy'. Certainly, in **I Have No Mouth And I Must Scream** there are appropriate sf terms — computer is one of them — but essentially Ellison has learned to use the imagery and terminology of sf as metaphor — he has ceased to be dominated by the conventions of the genre and is making use of them. Compare that story to **Big Sam Was My Friend**, a perfectly reasonable sf story which had appeared nearly ten years earlier. The story-telling method is much the same. The 1958 story is a well enough put together collection of fairly familiar sf images and ideas and the sentimental conventions of the ending are pretty mawkish. By 1967, however, Ellison had learned how to communicate his anger at the manifest ways in which the human spirit is debased, warped, robbed of its dignity by the stupidity and unimaginativeness of our social institutions (he has always reflected his times but happily

the 60s were more radical years and they made a far better mirror for his temperament). He is still capable, occasionally, of sentimentality or (the opposite side of the same coin) obvious cynicism, but he has learned to check it not so much by standard literary 'distancing' techniques or by the kind of irony found, say, in Ballard or Disch, as by an almost frenetic oral style which balances off one view against another. In a performer (a comedian of Bruce's stature for instance) it would emerge as 'Oh, so ya don't like that version, eh? How about this one, then . . .?' Like all of us he is aiming to please his audience. Like some of us he is aiming to please it without flattering it, without appealing to universal middle-class assumptions about life, without distorting the fundamental subject, without wiping out the ambiguities and paradoxes which are the 'truth' he is trying to make us see. Because he equates the cooler ironies of acceptable literary style with an unwillingness on the part of the author to 'involve' himself in life (and often, naturally, he is right) he has sought and found his own peculiar, sometimes bizarre methods of story-telling. These can involve an attack on syntax and grammar which only a fool would find offensive, a wild mixing of metaphors and a rapid bringing together of associated images done not necessarily to achieve ironic effect, but done in an ironic 'careless' spirit which again I tend to identify with the rapid, scatological delivery of a superb comedian (which Ellison, incidentally, is). My only regret is that Ellison doesn't, in fact, make the final transference from fantasy to comedy in his fiction (he has written far too little comic fiction) — for, as one of his heroes Gerald Kersh consistently proved, comedy can be an even better method of intensifying and 'exaggerating' incident and imagery than fantasy.

Eyes of Dust is still too early a story to show anything more than the theme, yet again, of Individuality Destroyed. It lacks resonance. And **World of Myth** seems to me to lack any saving irony to make it more than a conventional idea expressed in fairly conventional images, whereas **Lonely Ache** is almost completely its opposite in intensity of imagination and feeling. And here in the introduction we receive another clue to Ellison's methods — performance as a kind of therapy in which the performer reaches for catharsis and in turn transmits it to the audience: a potentially self-destructive working method. It is the only way to play the blues, but it is a dangerous and sometimes unsuccessful game which can ruin a human personality when 'vitality' is equated too much with 'art', and reading a story like this makes me worry, as I sometimes worry when I watch David Bowie giving himself, like some latter-day Piaf, to his audience, if Ellison isn't exhausting himself too quickly. Such greedy drawing on the world of dreams requires enormous restitution unless we are to find ourselves living in a waking dream, a reality which lacks the texture of those deeper, semi-conscious worlds of sleep: for we are using the fundamental stuff of our inner selves, which needs particular forms of contemplative tranquility (too easily translated as 'death') in order to replenish its reserves. In that sense, then, this particular story is the most frightening in the collection, for it describes a familiar (to me) suicide equation.

I read Ellison's introduction to **Delusion for a Dragon Slayer** after I conceived my 'performance' theory. The style itself is scarcely 'experimental', but the form is much more free than most of those he had used up to that time and, in my view, much more satisfying as a result. The interesting thing is that he says of it that he wanted 'a density of images, a veritable darkness of language, comparable in narrative to what saxophonist John Coltrane blows in his 'sheets of sound' style'. In this story he is able to display most of his virtues and few of his vices and it is a story which carries for me almost the emotional intensity of my favourite Ellison imaginative story, **Croatoan**.

And in the introduction to **Pretty Maggie Moneyeyes** we find a further confirmation of Ellison's frustration with the written word, with his looking to the techniques of the

film (and possibly the record) for his models. 'I scream,' he says, 'helplessly at the inadequacies of the lineal medium. There is a section herein in which I try to convey a sense of impression of the moment of death. In films I could use effects. In type-on-paper it comes down to the enormously ineffectual italics, type tricks, staccato sentences and spacings of a man groping to expand his medium. Bear with me. It is experimentation, and unless typesetters and editors somehow develop the miracle talent of letting writers tear the form apart and reassemble it in their individual ways, the best I'll be able to do in terms of freedom of impact is what I got away with here . . .'

Impact could be the key word in that statement. A good many writers — particularly those who accept and enjoy the world about them — are conscious of their rivals in films and tv and even newspapers where virtually nothing is demanded of the audience but that they sit and be 'entertained'. Like me, like Ballard, like Ditch and like, I suspect, most of us, Ellison watches a lot of television (witness *The Glass Teat*) and from time to time he probably loses the will, habit or impulse to read a book thoroughly. He knows that his impatience with the printed word is reflected in the majority of his potential audience. In seeking ways of challenging the rivalry of screens and stereos he is taking part in a movement which began almost with the century and which I now suspect is pointless in terms of its conscious goals but worthwhile in that it assimilates and develops subject matter, images and dramatic techniques which go periodically to revive, expand and enrich that most flexible medium of all — the medium of printed fiction.

Ironically, of course, it is in this medium that Ellison — who has tried his hands at most other forms — excels, and stimulates many other writers, particularly the young. He has done a lot more for American imaginative fiction than many of those who currently receive the praise of a cautious literary establishment. For one thing, his performances are considerably tighter than those who appear to have set out to produce the fictional equivalent of, say, *Tubular Bells*, in which one four-bar phrase is repeated over and over again on a variety of instruments, and in which every musical vice is combined (tautology as an art-form). It would probably be enough if Ellison simply rocked on. But, happily, he does rather more than that, whilst retaining the virtues of a 'vulgarity' which in history is always looked back on as legitimate and enviable expression of the romantic spirit.

He is, as I have said elsewhere, a brave little beast, this dwarfish Jew, this Mid-Western Byron, this persuasive spieler who has been able to make me produce the first critical introduction to a book by an individual I have written in twelve years. Like all the finest performers, he uses his charm almost unconsciously. And because he is such a good and generous performer, it is extremely hard not to forgive him virtually anything.

Which, of course, must be another reason why he writes so many introductions and at such length.

There were other, weighty Labour Cabinet Minister's departmental bangles over fare rises and delay high-speed trains.

But it was the bizarre affair that finally drove Sir Richard to the title of his autobiography, published



Powell-Jones

Sexual fantasy of the masked major

SEXUAL fantasies killed the curator of a National Trust show-piece, an inquest heard yesterday.

Ex-Army Major John Powell-Jones, 63, was found dead in a lightly-laced black rubber mask and handcuffs.

He was lying in the bathroom of his upstairs flat at Erdrig Hall near Wrexham, North Wales, where he moved with his wife four years ago.

Ritual

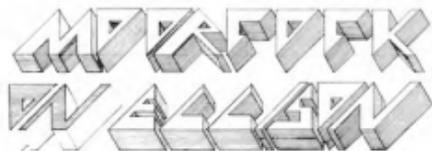
The handcuffs and rubber were part of a "masochistic ritual," Home Office pathologist Dr. Donald Waite told the Wrexham inquest.

He told coroner Mr. Michael Holloway that he believed the dead man had accidentally suffocated himself and no one else was involved.

Police-constable Hughie Hughes-Lloyd said he found other rubber articles and correspondence connected with sexual perversion.

Head gardener Michael Snowden said the ex-major had become bored with his work at the Hall.

Verdict: Misadventure.



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One-leg woman jailed in sex case

A ONE-LEGGED woman was jailed for 12 months at Manchester Crown Court today when she appeared for sentence after being convicted of indecently assaulting a neighbour.

Mrs. Tonia Lapinski, aged 42, a divorcee, of Moss Lane, Partington, had been convicted of assaulting a married man with two children but had been convicted by a jury last month.

The prosecution had alleged that Mr Paul Calvert, who lived in the same block of flats, found Mrs. Lapinski sitting in her wheel-chair in the entrance to the building. She refused to move, and as he tried to push past her indecently assaulted him.

Kiosk assault

Philip Barry Joyner, aged 29, of Lord Street, Crewe, who admitted indecently assaulting an 18-year-old girl in a telephone kiosk, was conditionally discharged for one year and fined £50.

'CRIPPLE KILLED WOMAN' -INSPECTOR

By NATION Reporter
AN inquest into the death of a Nairobi woman was told yesterday she died after being beaten by a cripple.

District magistrate, Mr. Joseph Wanjiku died at Kenyatta National Hospital on November 13 after she had been beaten by Mr. Mnyaru Mbugu. Mr. Mbugu, whose legs have been amputated, was alleged to have seriously injured the woman on the head with a knife. She died from the injuries and the beating. Mr. Wanjiku was told.

Chief Insp. David Theiru Munube told Mr. Wanjiku he ordered one of his officers to bring in Mbugu after the woman died.

"Mr. Mbugu gave a statement to me after I had informed him of the charge facing him and I had cautioned him not to make a reply. I told him if he replied, what he told me could be used as evidence against him," the inspector said.

Mr. Mbugu then said he had beaten the woman because she was very abusive to him the inquest was told.

"I was around 6.30 p.m. when I was riding my handcart and I met Wanjiku. She abused me calling me a crippled dog," Mr. Mbugu was alleged to have said.

Abuse

"She always abused me whenever she saw me," Mr. Mbugu was quoted as saying. He later went to the woman's house with a club to ask her why she had abused him. He hid near the house until the woman arrived, and the magistrate was told.

After she opened the door, Mr. Mbugu entered the house. As she was trying to shut him out, she fell down, the inquest was told. "I got hold of her and started beating her with a club I had carried from my house," Mr. Mbugu was alleged to have told the inspector.

But Mr. Mbugu denied having said that he went to the woman's house to beat her. He also denied beating her on the head.

Insp. Charles Issika also testified. He told the inquest he went to Kenyatta National Hospital and transferred the woman's body to the City Mortuary.

He told Mr. Wanjiku he arrested Mr. Mbugu at his house in Kirigu and that Mr. Mbugu voluntarily surrendered a club which had allegedly been used to beat the woman.

The inquest continues.

ION, Wednesday, July 2, 1975

CROWD WATCHED MAN MAKE LOVE TO CORPSE

By NATION Reporter

A MAN who had sexual intercourse with a corpse was yesterday jailed for six months.

Nairobi district magistrate Mr. Joseph Wanjiku convicted him on a charge of common nuisance. Gichuki Ngatia admitted 19 previous convictions, dating back to 1943.

He denied the charge that on May 30 at Pumwani location, Nairobi, he had sexual intercourse with a corpse.

Mr. Asumani Ramadhan told the court he saw Ngatia having sexual intercourse with a corpse near Pumwani bar.

Mr. Ramadhan said many people gathered there for a glimpse. He said: "I then sent someone to call Mr. Asumani Hamisi, who works at Pumwani bar."

The witness said that when Hamisi came he asked Ngatia to leave the corpse, but Ngatia refused and said: "I am not going to leave her. She is not your wife."

Mr. Hamisi pulled Ngatia from the corpse. At that time he was half naked. He was arrested and taken to Shauri Moyo police station.

The police took the corpse to city mortuary.

Ngatia said he arrived in Nairobi to attend Madaraka Day celebrations. He went to Pumwani bar where he got drunk.

Ngatia said: "I just don't know where I slept. I was surprised when I found myself at Shauri Moyo police station."

Mr. Wanjiku said the court took a "serious view" of such a case.

M. John Harrison

NOTES FROM THE

MOVEMENT

It's all right dipping a toe into the enteritic stream of opinion on which the world now floats; but does one actually want to fall **in**? Ideology, rock music & science fiction are major cultural laxatives, ultimate sociological components of a total self-indulgence. Add them to a high birth rate, a high standard of living & a high(er) standard of education to produce a completely media-dominated society. Without **New Worlds** we wouldn't now have John Travolta poster mags; without Bob Dylan we wouldn't now have Abba; without William Burroughs we wouldn't now have Christopher Priest. We wouldn't now have the Ever Open Mouth, the Enormous Pundit & his prolonged Opinion.

I was now almost without principles ... it was hard to choose—unless one's appetites came into it—between one course of action & another ... When in doubt I used to play over & over to myself a gramophone record ... & then do what came into my head

Louis MacNeice, **The Strings Are False.**

There is no conspiracy. We are not being manipulated by the media. We exist in a feedback relationship with them. They are ultimately what we want. The artist (as opposed to the communicator, or self-expressor, who is simply a mouth attached to a typewriter or a microphone) condemns this; then the media take his condemnation & serve that up as porridge too. The only way to opt out of such a self-abusive scheme is to stop producing, & go & find something more interesting to fill in the time. While all the bank clerks are rushing off to express themselves, throw off their accountants' weeds & find a **MEANINGFUL EXISTENCE in ART, INDIVIDUALITY & POPULAR CULTURE**, the artists & individuals are getting jobs in banks. This enables them to earn money & grow crocuses or go white-water canoeing at weekends.

It enables them to **say nothing**, which is the ultimate luxury of the artistic life.

How'd you like to find one in your laundry basket?

Ian Dury, **Blockheads**

The shutters are up on Punch and Judy (who may or may not have been the real animating spirit of it all, no one is saying); the abandoned bunkers with their hanks of drying seaweed & their angst are empty under the moon; the 'new' wave has flopped exhausted on its last beach. Its real practitioners, bemused or embittered, disgusted or simply sold out, have long ago retreated like the tide, or crawled back into the woodwork of their glorious, peeling, rococco beach huts: leaving the field to Herbert.

Herbert is a new chap, & has many persona. He began as a bank clerk, a computer-operator or a chartered accountant & he has ended up (jelled, that is, in this his moment) as a poseur, a populariser, & a prick. He has been through a number of lady editors & science fiction writers' waves, who by persistence have taught him to grow his hair



A TRIO OF ACCOUNTANTS

He has at last stopped wearing the horrible tapered trousers, shiny blue suit-jackets & sensible shoes of his cost accountant's spring, only to discover in his high summer of headed notepaper that the moment he swapped them for the denim shoulder bag of complete emancipation they came right back into fashion again. He is not slow to point this out. Herbert is surprised by his own success, possibly because he wanted it so much. To begin as a 'fan' & end up with Pan or Faber (the first of whom will buy anything purporting to be science fiction & the second anything at all as long as it's cheap)! He can still scarcely believe his luck. After years as a second or third rater, writing pseudonymous soft porn for N.E.L. to stay alive, Herbert is taking his first few faltering steps into the limelight: & to replace the poor, old, new wave, he has invented VAT fiction.

VAT fiction is a new, masterful synthesis of the eminent science fiction of the last two or three decades. Publishers welcome it. It is literate. In its development Herbert has been helped by many prominent figures. It is possible to mention only a few. Samuel 'Chip' Delany has made an invaluable contribution as the voice of the new liberated middle class. Ursula LeGuin & Joanna Russ have provided a welcome female approach to eco systems, gynaecology, social politics & sensible prose. Herbert would also like to thank Brian Aldiss (the Man with the Golden Pen) & Harry Harrison, who showed him how publishers can be persuaded to reprint & reprint & reprint & reprint. But most of all he feels that VAT fiction must stand or fall by the elements of easily-accessible middlebrow social comment & erudition contributed by John Brunner & – especially – the late James Blish. The contribution of the latter must be unparalleled; he gave his books vague Shakespearean titles, took the names of artists, composers & metaphysicians in vain, & as a final demonstration of his complete lack of aesthetic values (a keynote of the new fiction), attempted to finish Robert Chambers' 'The King in Yellow' – a small thing in itself, perhaps, but no better example of his signature will ever be found.

VAT fiction is ten percent inspiration & ninety percent perspiration. It is not so much written as collected for the Department of Customs & Excise. It is a serious fiction, not 'sci fi' or fantasy; it contains much patient academicism; its percipience or instinctive moral perception is limited, its grasp of the human condition nil (although of course much of its seriousness lies in the attempt to 'understand' – i.e. to pigeon hole); &, above all, it has no irony nor any concept of irony. A VAT writer needs a clear & sensible head. His prose was developed by the 'Use of English' course he took at day-release school during his training as a bought ledger clerk or programmer. It is Fowlerised. Its images come from the cinema, because Herbert goes a lot to see modern films; from what he calls 'rock music', by which he means the music of the late 60s; & from the Modern Classics because he can't handle the vocabulary or syntax of anything else. Herbert is pleased to see that he shares these influences with VAT fiction's critical organ **Institute** ...

Under the pretence of a great upheaval, the old want of character persists.

Rainer Maria Rilke in a letter to
Baroness Von Ledebour, 1918.

(The mathematician) **believes that if A or B alone can dig a garden in one hour, they will together finish the job in thirty minutes flat. No pauses for talk, no tangling of forks or argument about who begins at the sunny end enter his schematised world.** G.W. Turner, **Stylistics**. The horror of writers like Robert Heinlein or Larry Niven is that they believe a mathematics of tangled forks to be possible; that if the symbols A & B are sufficiently complicated, or if men sufficiently simplified, all argument & pause can also be programmed into the equation.

Giving the English language to the Americans is like giving sex to small children: they know it's important but they don't know what the hell to do with it.

Morton Cooper.

Many people on both sides of the fence (& of the Atlantic) in the middle-to-late sixties saw the new wave/old guard clash as one of Realism versus Romance. It was only a confrontation of the literate & the illiterate. Its only lasting result has been to 'raise' the genre (critically debased by the sub-literary punditry of Blish, Sturgeon & the like) from low to middle brow & allow the sub-academic punditry of the **Foundation** to debase it further. The clerical & puddingy compromise between new & old we have held up to us today as 'good' science fiction has no realism at all. Realism has hardly peeped up over the horizon, except perhaps in the work of Thomas M. Disch, & then fragmentarily.

As to what a science fiction of realism would attempt. To highlight some emotional event of the real world by the use of images culled from an invented one, perhaps—to observe the real in terms of the imaginary, to translate or augment it, thus rendering it more accessible. But isn't that what, say, Ursula K. LeGuin does? And her work is so simultaneously dull & **unrealistic** that we instinctively recoil from its comforting assumptions & maternal anthropologies (it has a distinctive feel to it of the 'Young Adults' shelf of the local library—it is indistinguishable from the work of all those other decent & earnest ladies who are packaging adult experience for the inexperienced.) The reverse would suit us better, to deal with the imaginary in strict terms of the real.

Science fiction, after all, is only a subject matter.

The marginally improved techniques & inflated ambitions left behind by the retreat of the new wave will not in themselves lead to the 'meaningful' fiction which LeGuin, Russ, Priest, Watson et al obviously believe themselves to have discovered (or synthesised; synthesised would be a better word); ambition is futile in the face of faulty observations. Technique & purpose are a poor substitute for eyesight. If you cannot create the real world, how can you expect to be able to create an **unreal** one?

Science fiction should drop its new & academically approved substance (the new version of the old 'fiction of ideas' canard) & concentrate on a realistic fiction **whatever its subject matter**. Write Perry Rhodan if you will: but write it out of the real world. You may claim that this is impossible, since fiction of this type is essentially romantic. I would maintain that it is no more romantic than Ursula LeGuin's political fictions: without the solid observation (and reproduction) of the actual which characterises the works of Camus or Orwell, **The Dispossessed** is puppetry of a low order—as low an order as **The Moon is a Harsh Mistress**. Rhodan is bad because its romanticism is insufficiently based on the real actions of human beings & insufficiently presented in those terms; so is **The Embedding** or **A Dream of Wessex**. None of it convinces. The people stink (or rather they do not). The buildings are not there. The landscape is an inexpert special effect. The canvas is daubed with crude little matchstick figures (partly because nothing else is ideologically, partly because the author is simply inept), walking stiffly about (talking: always **talking**: this is because middlebrow sf writers talk a lot) against a background as well-observed & executed as the crude cover-paintings under which we find the prize-winning prose...

Comparitively few people care for art at all, & most of them care for it because they mistake it for something else.

Arthur Symons, **The Savoy No. 8**

Most women sf writers are turning out women's fiction. So are most men. There's nothing wrong with it, but it isn't much of a read. People sit down & discuss things **sensibly**. It's very healthy. There isn't any pain that can't be absorbed, sanitised & turned to some purpose. "Surely we can learn something from all this", smile the desperately civilised characters. I don't doubt it. The lesson is as useful as Dettol. They keep it in the bathroom & use it to dab the cut knees of the brain. There is this **urge**, as visible in Delany as in LeGuin or McCaffrey, to comfort, explain, nurse, initiate. I can't abide it. There's no irony in it. There's no sense of engaging the world. Acceptance, adaptation, ecology, & simple ethical systems. It all seems like an attempt to spray air freshener in the dustbin.

I want to bite the hand that feeds me. I want to bite that hand so badly

Elvis Costello, **Radio**.

I have never been interested in competing for anything. One's work makes its appeal by its intrinsic value. If I found myself competing for a section of the audience I'd be mortified.

The job of an editor exists entirely in acceptance and rejection; and in the correction of spelling mistakes.



The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an 'objective correlative', in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked.

T S Eliot, *Hamlet*, 1919

In the face of VAT fiction, with its spotty sincerity & ledgerised attempts to 'understand', it is difficult for us to reanimate ourselves;

In the face of VAT fiction it is difficult for us to believe that fiction matters at all;

In the face of VAT fiction our only honourable creative guise is one of cynical obscurantism & despair;

In the face of VAT fiction all we can say is "Piss off".

M John Harrison



Epilogue

At New Worlds we have at last run up the black flag of convulsive cannibalism. Once we have boiled down all our enemies and choked down all our friends we shall in all probability begin eating one another.

Photographs by Anthony Skellern

New and other worlds

As well as being one of the country's leading science fiction writers, M. John Harrison is involved with a new Manchester-based venture, Savoy Books. Andrew Caesar spoke to Harrison the critic and self-critic.

TALKING TO Mike Harrison is rather like taking a degree course in Applied Pessimism in a couple of hours. As M. John Harrison, he is perhaps the most uncompromising of our leading science fiction writers, as well as being one of the best. He is also something of a manic-depressive:

"When it comes down to it I just don't believe a solution is possible. I look around me and I think, 'it isn't any good any more, saying anything'. A terrible tiredness comes over you. Nothing can now be changed, because the very media for change have become too large. I think the solution, if there is one, is philosophical and mystical."

Not that he's a miserable man; in fact ideas and polemic are filtered through a powerful sense of irony which he uses like the rest of us use oxygen. He's a wiry, energetic man, a dab-hand at deflating his own bombast. He says he finally discovered what he loathed "Lord of the Rings" when he realized that he was one of the Orcs and so were all his friends.

At present, Harrison could be termed a local writer, for his new novel is set in Manchester and Longendale and he is living in Hafield, a village outside Glossop, having moved from London two years ago. He divides his time between climbing in the Peaks and writing for three days a week in the basement of "Bookchain", the sci fi/fantasy/comix shop on Quay St, Manchester.

In twelve years of writing he's produced three novels — "The Committed Men"; "The Centauri Device" and "The Pastel City" — and several short stories, two of which ("The Incalling" and "Running Down") are masterpieces. You could regard a brilliant young author, but he won't thank you for it.

Before coming north, Harrison was the literary editor of New Worlds for eight years, while it was attempting to drag sci fi out of the rut of generic rubbish and into the present day. His scathing critical assessments brought the state of play earned him a reputation as a maverick, and quite a few enemies.

"I'm loathed for the opinions I put forward in New Worlds and because I'm not interested in the trappings of scaling SF writer. I don't go to the conventions or conferences, I don't answer fan mail. I don't go on TV and puff up other SF writers. I have no interest in SF except as a writer."

"Human beings are the subject of fiction: the fact that you use SF means that you use certain images to talk about people. It doesn't mean anything else."

These days the new wave SF has been diluted from the heady

campaigning days of New Worlds, a fact which leaves Harrison resigned; "SF is a very adaptable animal; it got around the new wave and now most of it is rubbish again. Somehow it managed to absorb the new wave which took it by the throat and said 'look, we've got to start saying something, or we're dead.' And SF did counterfeit it for a while, but now it's back to the usual thing."

It should be said at this point that Harrison is a talk machine; he gestures, laughs, stops himself and deletes like a tape recorder, cackles — but he talks, formalizing what he calls "the mass of images and opinions in which I normally swim" into compelling polemic and irresistible images.

He spoke, for example, of the two main schools of American SF — the mechanistic, 'hard' school, and the anthropological, 'maternal' sort: "The two groups face off at the barricades. Larry Niven screams, 'I am the true SF writer. I write about starships and satellites. I know people like NASA.' And Ursula K. LeGuin sits on the other side and says, 'Ah yes, but look . . . surely . . . surely . . . surely . . . surely . . . sociology, anthropology . . . surely we should all . . . well . . . after all!'"

You see what I mean. You really have to wrestle the bugger back on to the point, and it's usually more fun to let him loose.

Admitting to a bias, Harrison maintains staunchly that SF has the most appealing tradition; "It has an irony. Even at its most serious, it fails to take itself that seriously." We agreed that those marvellous early 60's films of the Blue Struck — Britain's space programme — falling over drunkenly at Woomera probably helped — "We take the whole thing with a pinch of salt."

The politics of popular SF also draws Harrison barrage: "It always amused me the way all the left-wingers rushed to read Robert Heinlein, possibly the most right wing person in the world today. He must be a member of the John Birch Society."

"SF and fantasy are the ideal escapes, they really are. They also allow you to pretend that you're not escaping, that you're speculating about the future of man and so on. It's mad identifying a medium for people not educated to leisure, but who've got no jobs — you just sop up whatever's given you. I foresee it taking over in the next twenty years, via the media as a whole."

"Bookchain", where Harrison works mad ideas, is run by the more of the New Worlds mafia, Dave Britton and Mike Butterworth, who have also launched their own publishing company, Savoy Books, which will be publishing work by Henry Treece, Moorcock (his first novel), "The Golden Barge", Harlan Ellison and Harrison's a new novel, due out next summer.

There's some confusion about this new book, called 'By Gas Mask and Fire Hydrant' in the catalogue, that isn't the name. Nor is it 'pre-Raphaelite sword and sorcery'. Explain yourself.

"Well, we couldn't think of a title for the one I am going to write, so since David's obsessed by gas masks



and fire hydrants, we thought we'd call it that."

Clearly, Savoy aren't exactly Penguin Books, but they are in the process of publishing some interesting stuff, such as the Fudge books, also due out next year. Older readers might recall that Fudge was a cartoon strip which ran in the *Manchester Evening News*, a local paper, from 1937 until the early 60's. The books seem likely to become cult comics, particularly as Big 'O' publishing are handling distribution and a series of related postcards.

Savoy's hottest item is undoubtedly the recently agreed publication of a collection of Gerald Scarfe's work, a guaranteed big seller. So what of Savoy's future?

"Every ten years somebody says, 'why don't we try for really good books, with really good covers, make no compromises and make a fine job of it', and in two years they're bankrupt," says Harrison cheerfully. "Savoy has the advantage of overt backing from Big 'O' and Moorcock, and if they survive they will become the only independent publishers in the north."

As to his own future, Harrison is a lot less enthusiastic: "My novel 'The Centauri Device' is an ironic acceptance that the world is becoming steadily more dehumanized; politics have become more dehumanized; the crude methods we have of trying to correct the process — themselves, for example — have become more dehumanized."

"More and more people are being more damaged by society than they are being helped. The violence and

the horrible flat deaths in corners in the Centauri Device are the only ways I have of saying: 'For god's sake look around you, it's you who's going to be crushed between the wheels and he's going to be between them.'"

"A reader of SF wants to escape those very wheels, that's why he reads SF, because he'd rather escape for two hours in the evening than face the thought that if he doesn't change something the teeth on the cog wheels are going to come together and he's going to be between them."

Harrison believes that we're heading into world totalitarianism; the death of the individual; the destruction of art as a medium of human exchange; the creation of monolithic bureaucracies and uncontrollable technologies — uncontrollable because we are equipped with 19th-century dogma and politicians.

This all rather got on top of us — there was loose talk of throat slitting — so I asked a few concluding, how-long-were-you-a-fanther, Mike? questions, when he suddenly said:

"I'll tell you why my books are like they are — I hate fucking heroes. They're the most dangerous thing we've got. It's baboon colony stuff."

"Anybody can go out and do something, and be something, there's absolutely no need to admire other people."

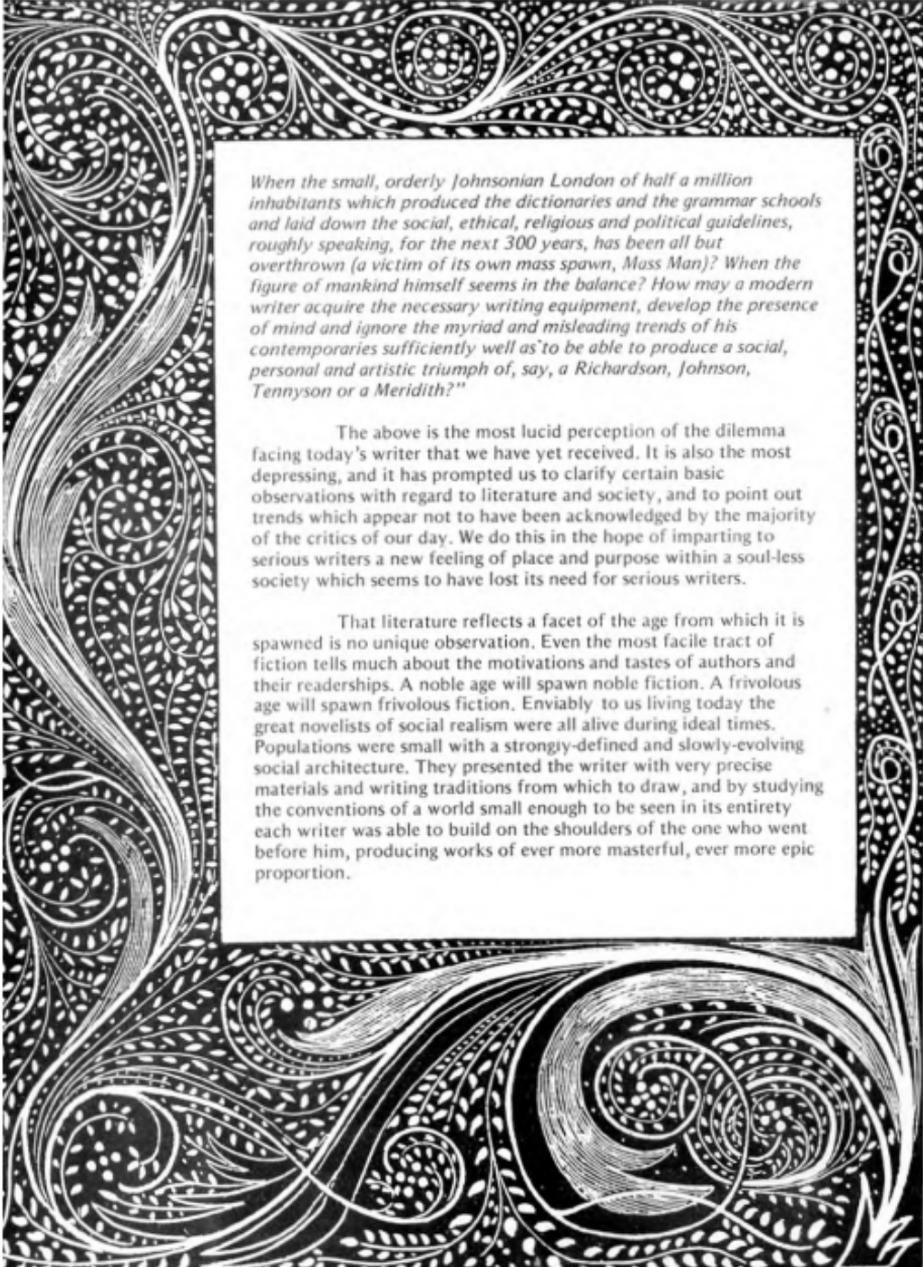
On this point he mentioned a crowd watching a climber doing a very hard climb rather than climbing themselves, and suddenly he was off, talking about climbing, eyes burning with passion. "I'm an obsessive, or hadn't you noticed?" he remarked maniacally, snuffing into his beard as the tape ran out.



new frog”

The Origin of Frivolity and the Shape of the New Literature

“HOW may a writer produce great literature when he discovers no social, ethical, religious or political values to which he may relate? When literary “development” appears to have self-consciously projected itself into an ever weightier, ever more diffuse, ever stickler marass of literary sub-forms and “schools”? When his aspiring ego is intimidated by the amassed computer-fire of popular novels and journals, continuous TV, films and adverts of a combined word-volume unprecedented in the history of earth? When the intellect is subordinated to amorphous oceans of sensual electronics and when Literature herself has become the domain, equally, of academic and philistine, of intellectual dilittante and amateur dishwasher? When the literary consciousness and field of reference has expanded to encompass not a single nation but an entire planet?



When the small, orderly Johnsonian London of half a million inhabitants which produced the dictionaries and the grammar schools and laid down the social, ethical, religious and political guidelines, roughly speaking, for the next 300 years, has been all but overthrown (a victim of its own mass spawn, Mass Man)? When the figure of mankind himself seems in the balance? How may a modern writer acquire the necessary writing equipment, develop the presence of mind and ignore the myriad and misleading trends of his contemporaries sufficiently well as to be able to produce a social, personal and artistic triumph of, say, a Richardson, Johnson, Tennyson or a Meridith?"

The above is the most lucid perception of the dilemma facing today's writer that we have yet received. It is also the most depressing, and it has prompted us to clarify certain basic observations with regard to literature and society, and to point out trends which appear not to have been acknowledged by the majority of the critics of our day. We do this in the hope of imparting to serious writers a new feeling of place and purpose within a soul-less society which seems to have lost its need for serious writers.

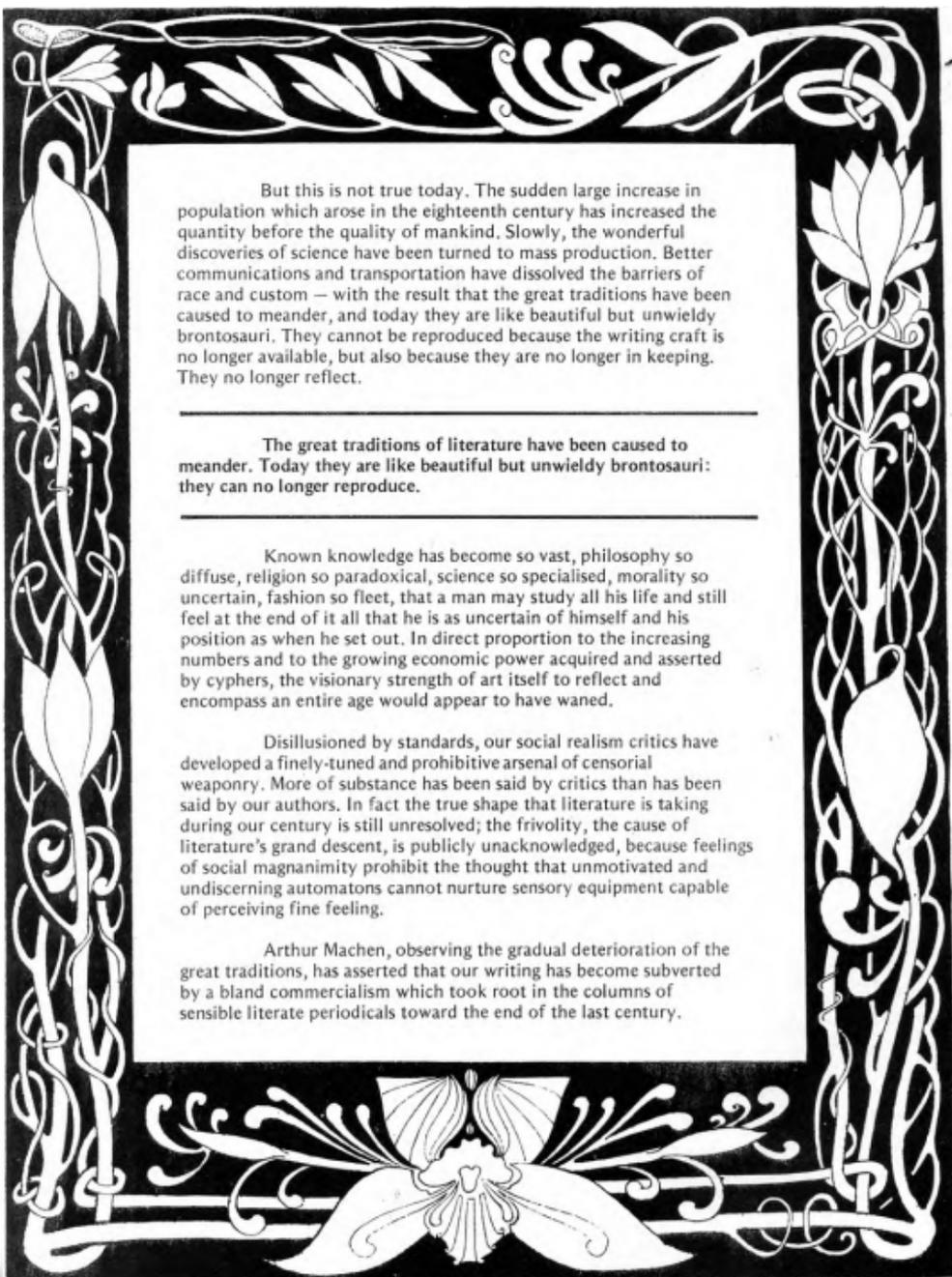
That literature reflects a facet of the age from which it is spawned is no unique observation. Even the most facile tract of fiction tells much about the motivations and tastes of authors and their readerships. A noble age will spawn noble fiction. A frivolous age will spawn frivolous fiction. Enviously to us living today the great novelists of social realism were all alive during ideal times. Populations were small with a strongly-defined and slowly-evolving social architecture. They presented the writer with very precise materials and writing traditions from which to draw, and by studying the conventions of a world small enough to be seen in its entirety each writer was able to build on the shoulders of the one who went before him, producing works of ever more masterful, ever more epic proportion.

The Journal of Sexual Bondage; CASMASK EDITION

COVERED TODAY



Tom Stoppard on the novels of Nictzin Dyalhis.
Kate Millett reviews Kingsley Amis



But this is not true today. The sudden large increase in population which arose in the eighteenth century has increased the quantity before the quality of mankind. Slowly, the wonderful discoveries of science have been turned to mass production. Better communications and transportation have dissolved the barriers of race and custom — with the result that the great traditions have been caused to meander, and today they are like beautiful but unwieldy brontosauri. They cannot be reproduced because the writing craft is no longer available, but also because they are no longer in keeping. They no longer reflect.

The great traditions of literature have been caused to meander. Today they are like beautiful but unwieldy brontosauri: they can no longer reproduce.

Known knowledge has become so vast, philosophy so diffuse, religion so paradoxical, science so specialised, morality so uncertain, fashion so fleet, that a man may study all his life and still feel at the end of it all that he is as uncertain of himself and his position as when he set out. In direct proportion to the increasing numbers and to the growing economic power acquired and asserted by cyphers, the visionary strength of art itself to reflect and encompass an entire age would appear to have waned.

Disillusioned by standards, our social realism critics have developed a finely-tuned and prohibitive arsenal of censorial weaponry. More of substance has been said by critics than has been said by our authors. In fact the true shape that literature is taking during our century is still unresolved; the frivolity, the cause of literature's grand descent, is publicly unacknowledged, because feelings of social magnanimity prohibit the thought that unmotivated and undiscerning automatons cannot nurture sensory equipment capable of perceiving fine feeling.

Arthur Machen, observing the gradual deterioration of the great traditions, has asserted that our writing has become subverted by a bland commercialism which took root in the columns of sensible literate periodicals toward the end of the last century.

A decorative border surrounds the text, featuring stylized flowers, leaves, and stars on a dark background. The border is composed of intricate line art, with large flowers on the left and right sides, and smaller stars and leaves interspersed throughout.

Formerly written by men and concerned with subjects of high sensibility, these columns became by degrees the washing-ground of women who wrote upon such topics as social engagements, cosmetics, polite morality, children, fashion, acquisitive success and the like, and it is certainly true that this kind of educated journalese has become very prevalent in our own day. The content of even the most stalwart of journals has been radically altered by the economic pressures brought to bear on them by the new generations of cultureless "experts" and "specialists" of both sexes. Literary style and purpose have been submerged by such new and important considerations as the flavour of margarine. The words themselves have been simplified and diluted to the extent that they have become "fit" reading matter.

In blaming women, though, we must also blame the men of the Eighteenth Century whose "bookshop" publishing houses and instruments of literary dissemination first gave way to the demands of the larger readerships. We must also concede that the remarkable progress observable today in terms of welfare, education and moral decency — interests which have never occurred to the male sensibility by itself — have all come to pass as a result of the female emancipation of the last two centuries. But the fact remains that these efforts to upraise even the most ignorant, tasteless and most selfish pin-brain that it is possible to find and to put money in his pocket has resulted in the unacceptable literary dilemma we find: the man of artistic sensibility and insight alienated from his public, his powers eroded by a state of derangement. Such a man is condemned from the outset by frivolity — by beer drinkers, bingo players, gamblers, pleasure seekers, sportsmen and the like, in fact by all those whose money continues to support the debased journals and other media which have come economically to favour the new lifestyles. He is condemned by Ellison's "Common Man", to await the moment when the mass sensibility is elevated.

The man of artistic sensibility and insight is condemned from the outset by all those whose money continues to support the debased journals and other media which have come economically to favour the new lifestyles

THE JOURNAL OF SWORD & SORCERY
CRUCIFIED TOAD

A
SAVOY
BOOK

Art: mal dean, jim
cawthorn, mervyn
peake, patten wilson,

No.11.
Summer
1973

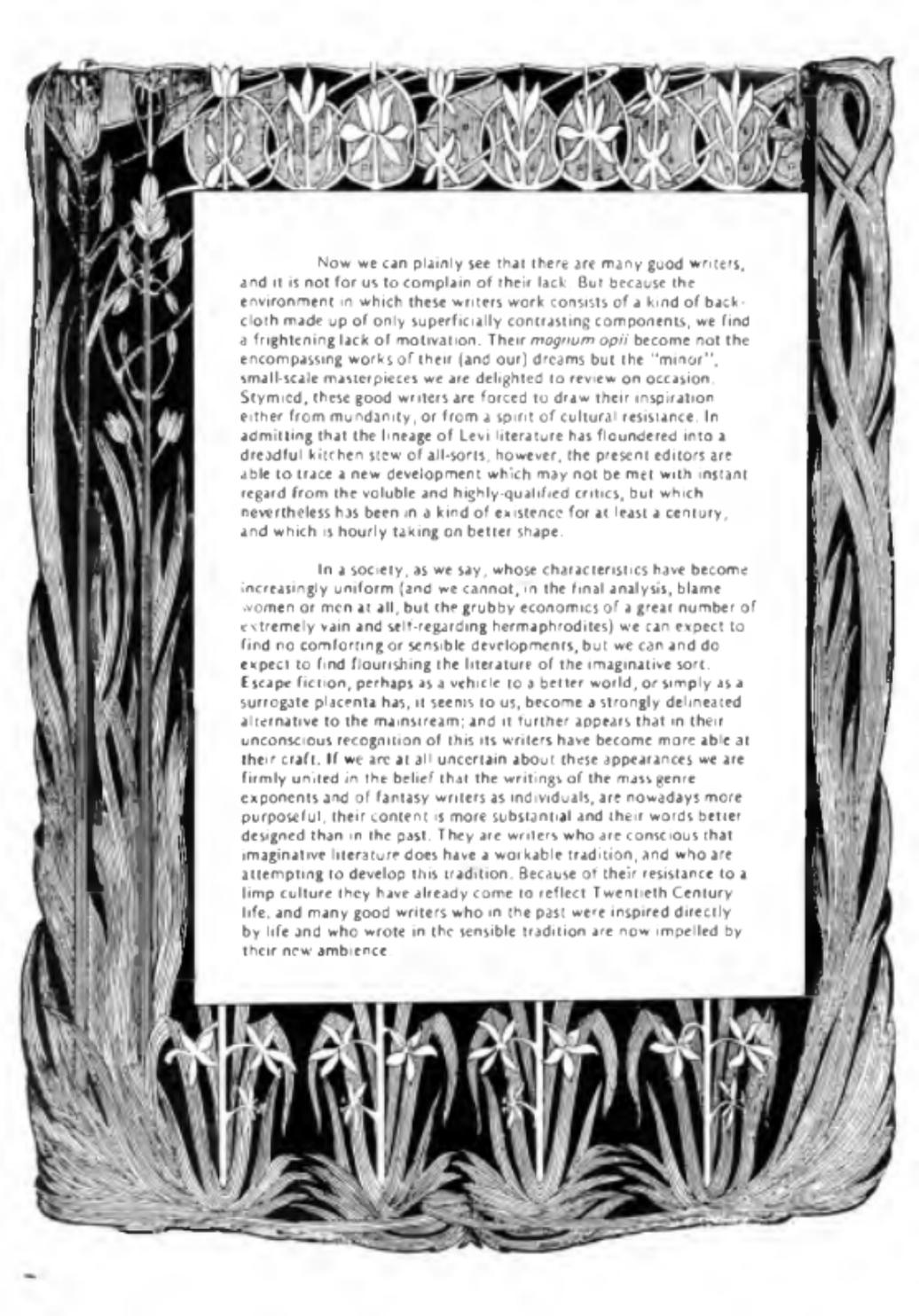


LORD ELRIC, by
James Colvin.

The 'HAWKWIND'
tapes: Moorcock
has influence. Bob
Calvert speaks.

'AN ALIEN HEAT'
Report on a novel
in progress

David Britton 1973



Now we can plainly see that there are many good writers, and it is not for us to complain of their lack. But because the environment in which these writers work consists of a kind of backcloth made up of only superficially contrasting components, we find a frightening lack of motivation. Their *magnum opii* become not the encompassing works of their (and our) dreams but the "minor", small-scale masterpieces we are delighted to review on occasion. Stymied, these good writers are forced to draw their inspiration either from mundanity, or from a spirit of cultural resistance. In admitting that the lineage of Levi literature has flourished into a dreadful kitchen stew of all-sorts, however, the present editors are able to trace a new development which may not be met with instant regard from the voluble and highly-qualified critics, but which nevertheless has been in a kind of existence for at least a century, and which is hourly taking on better shape.

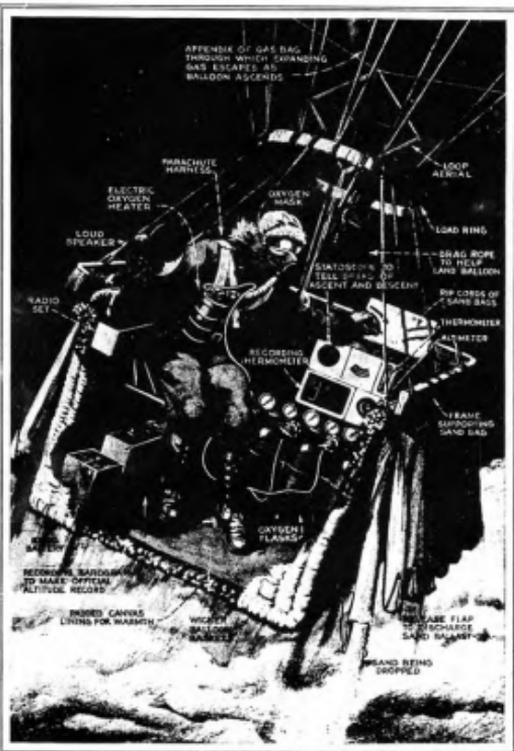
In a society, as we say, whose characteristics have become increasingly uniform (and we cannot, in the final analysis, blame women or men at all, but the grubby economics of a great number of extremely vain and self-regarding hermaphrodites) we can expect to find no comforting or sensible developments, but we can and do expect to find flourishing the literature of the imaginative sort. Escape fiction, perhaps as a vehicle to a better world, or simply as a surrogate placenta has, it seems to us, become a strongly delineated alternative to the mainstream; and it further appears that in their unconscious recognition of this its writers have become more able at their craft. If we are at all uncertain about these appearances we are firmly united in the belief that the writings of the mass genre exponents and of fantasy writers as individuals, are nowadays more purposeful, their content is more substantial and their words better designed than in the past. They are writers who are conscious that imaginative literature does have a workable tradition, and who are attempting to develop this tradition. Because of their resistance to a limp culture they have already come to reflect Twentieth Century life, and many good writers who in the past were inspired directly by life and who wrote in the sensible tradition are now impelled by their new ambience.

the Bullfrog Bugle

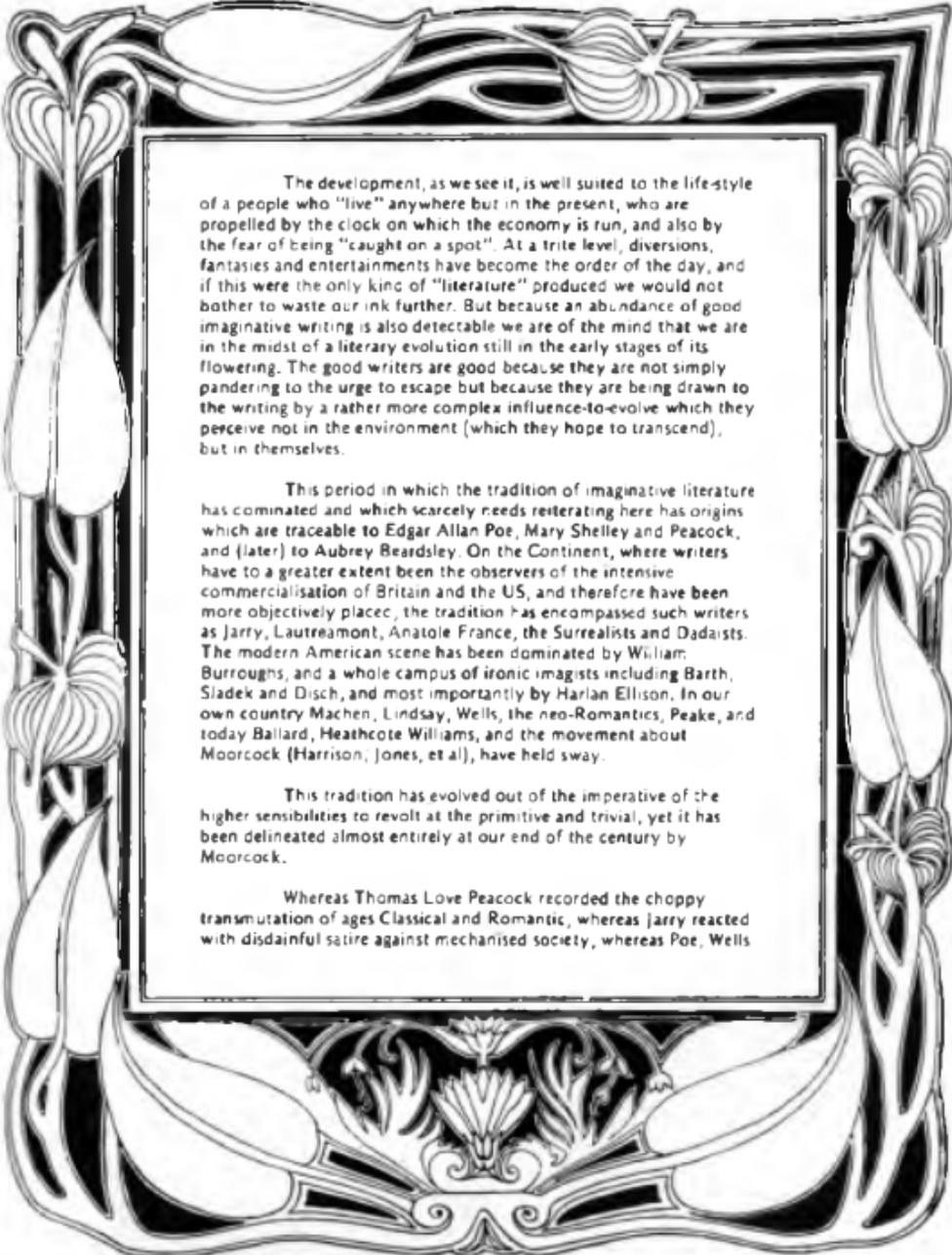


© Barr 1919

THE BATHACIAN DIGEST



The Beautiful Flagellants
of New York



The development, as we see it, is well suited to the life-style of a people who "live" anywhere but in the present, who are propelled by the clock on which the economy is run, and also by the fear of being "caught on a spot". At a trite level, diversions, fantasies and entertainments have become the order of the day, and if this were the only kind of "literature" produced we would not bother to waste our ink further. But because an abundance of good imaginative writing is also detectable we are of the mind that we are in the midst of a literary evolution still in the early stages of its flowering. The good writers are good because they are not simply pandering to the urge to escape but because they are being drawn to the writing by a rather more complex influence-to-evolve which they perceive not in the environment (which they hope to transcend), but in themselves.

This period in which the tradition of imaginative literature has cominated and which scarcely needs reiterating here has origins which are traceable to Edgar Allan Poe, Mary Shelley and Peacock, and (later) to Aubrey Beardsley. On the Continent, where writers have to a greater extent been the observers of the intensive commercialisation of Britain and the US, and therefore have been more objectively placed, the tradition has encompassed such writers as Jarry, Lautreamont, Anatole France, the Surrealists and Dadaists. The modern American scene has been dominated by William Burroughs, and a whole campus of ironic imagists including Barth, Sladek and Disch, and most importantly by Harlan Ellison. In our own country Machen, Lindsay, Wells, the neo-Romantics, Peake, and today Ballard, Heathcote Williams, and the movement about Moorcock (Harrison, Jones, et al), have held sway.

This tradition has evolved out of the imperative of the higher sensibilities to revolt at the primitive and trivial, yet it has been delineated almost entirely at our end of the century by Moorcock.

Whereas Thomas Love Peacock recorded the choppy transmutation of ages Classical and Romantic, whereas Jarry reacted with disdainful satire against mechanised society, whereas Poe, Wells



and Lovecraft variously extrapolated the agonies of the trapped soul as well as the technological dooms and gains of the period, whereas Beardsley became perversely pure, and the neo-Romantics gave form to a fantasy born of Armageddon — all exponents of the new tradition now caught up in its tidal flow — Moorcock alone has consciously and consistently engineered the construction of conditions favourable to the imaginative writer. Here is a writer who has come in at both ends of the tradition, but who has never been in danger of disappearing up the posterior end as many critics once hoped. With the mass market fantasy novels of Eric and Dorian Hawkmoon, the antonine Alien Heat "conversation" novels (perhaps influenced more than we have suspected till now by Peacock), and the ironic Cornelius books (which derive from his purposeful chiselling of the New Worlds platform), he has done most to define the trend and further shown that this trend belongs to a tradition.

If we may be forgiven these vanities, and come to our point, the literature of the imagination is now a very healthy main tradition, whereas the social novel is having a rough passage. The inability to perceive that this is true is the root cause of the modern writer's dilemma, and the reason why the book reviews of contemporary literary critics, who have buried their heads in the sand, rarely affect book sales. Imaginative writing is of greater significance than social writing because it is more needed, because it derives from the true conditions of the writer. It is more needed because it illuminates the paths of the soul. It has become the "true" literature.

So she gleaned in

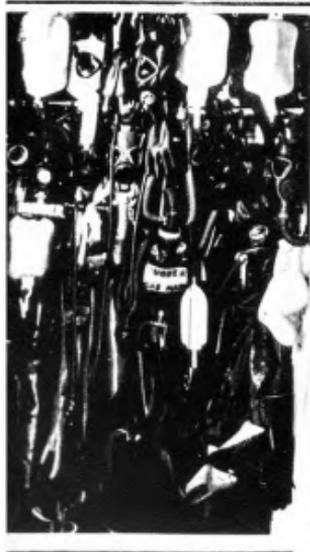


The inability to perceive that the imaginative novel is now a very healthy main tradition is the root cause of the modern writer's dilemma. The social novel is having a rough passage.

The works for which our slight monologue serves as introduction, some of which are included in the present journal and others of which may be found in companion magazines and books, reflect our own interests and influences which we have encountered along our "paths". We feel that the pieces are not incongruously placed, though at first glance, to the sensible eye, they may appear to be so. The existential bohemianism, the appreciation of pure fantasy for its own sake, the strong empathy with disappearing Nature and the heroic figure, the fascination with space exploration and with the fictions of newspapers, above all the concern of literature which refuses to allow the banal mind to lie easily, these concerns are all humbly presented as the "traditions of the tradition". This tradition is directed toward a much-needed spiritual development of the human race. It is needed to redress the hard technological gains from which we stand, by an obscuring amalgamation of bureaucratic technology and somatic soap opera of immense drivel and not by atomic war, to be obliterated.

M. Butterworth

the field until even





HEATHCOTE WILLIAMS

Security leak from the future



Dr. Strong standing in a 500,000 volt, 500,000 cycle electro-magnetic field as photographed in 1917.

or Things liberation

Incorporeal clowning in the Kirlan Circus

Electro-bioluminescence, Kirlian photographs, Photo-psychographs, Electro-photography is some of the jargon science now used to describe the process of recording the aura.

The aura has been represented in prehistoric rock paintings, and is clearly defined in the works of Paracelsus, Swedenborg, William Blake, Rudolf Steiner, Annie Besant and many more. Every religious painting that shows a halo is another example of the pre-scientific consciousness of these emanations.

*There was a time when meadow, grove and stream,
The earth and every common sight
To me did seem*

Apparelled in celestial light."

William Wordsworth, *Intimations of Immortality*

These instructive observations were in a sense a security leak from the future. Science has now proven, a little superfluously perhaps for the ardent occultist, but proven for those who required it, that both objects and organisms emit light when seduced by the right force-field, even in a darkened room.

The geography of the aura can now be tentatively mapped on photographic film.

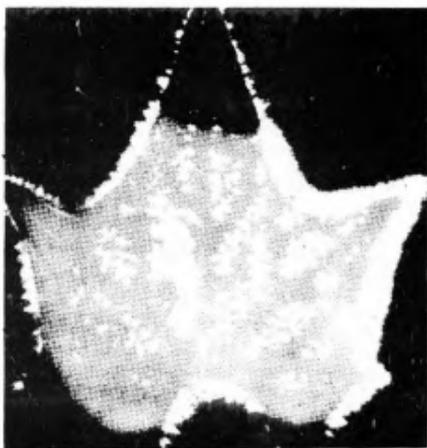
The speediest explanation of the process is this: electrons are liberated from the subject material by field emission, and accelerated across an air gap to give off bursts of light in collision with air molecules. The first high-voltage photograph was a contact print taken by a man named Cartstone in 1842. In 1893 Nikola Tesla, using his own powerful Tesla coil, took some, leading to a rash of

experiments at the end of the nineteenth century in the U.S.A., France, Czechoslovakia, and Russia. But auravision was virtually ignored in the twentieth century until the Kirlians, a Russian husband and wife team, became obsessed with it in the nineteen fifties.

The aura, or what Paracelsus called the 'star body', is revealed on photographic film when an object or part of an organism is placed in contact with it, and surrounded by a field of high frequency electrical currents. Fibrillating rushes of energy can be seen leaking out through micro-channels in matter and flesh: the same electronic hieroglyphs that a psychic sees when placing an object or a person in his or her own bodily force-field.

Some of them are prophetic. The Kirlians found that confusions in energy patterns showed up in an electro-photograph long before they were experienced in the body of the subject (an early indication of its potential use in medical diagnosis, though it hasn't yet been taken up).

Semyon Davidovich Kirlian, studying his early pictures (acquired at the price of several severe jolts) wondered: "Where is the caravan of lights coming from? Where is it going?"



A later experiment, known as the 'phantom leaf effect', made by S. Andrade in Sao Paolo, Brazil, in 1972, added to the mystery: Andrade took an electro-photograph of a leaf showing a glowing aura. He then chopped off the end of the leaf. Using a Tesla coil to create the appropriate forcefield, he rephotographed it shortly afterwards. The aura of the missing section is clearly visible, luminously echoing the original shape of the unsevered leaf.

For a long time there was great difficulty in repeating this experiment, which led to much scepticism, but in recent months the experiment has been repeated successfully some hundreds of times by Thelma Moss, Hubacher and others in the U.S., and the arboreal phoenix lives again, scientifically reinforcing the earlier observations of spiritualists that everything has an "energy body" or an "etheric double" which remains unaffected by slash-happy scientists.

The "missing" energy body of the leaf section is obviously not the electrical state of the organism, since that part of the field has been lopped off, but something much higher up the spectrum: some other more finely tuned

essences which can withstand mortal vandalism, and which led two Soviet scientists to catch up with what spiritualists had known all along by christening it the Biological Plasma Body, a counterpart body of energy.

The body is static, but the bio-plasma is a swirling mobile yantra. It reacts to cosmic disturbances. A daisy will flash on solar flares and reflect them in a Kirlian snap-shot. The bio-plasmic body, the energy envelope (which is always open) is affected by the atmosphere and other cosmic occurrences. Disturbances of the sun change the whole plastic balance of the universe resulting in measurable physical changes in organisms. The eleven and a half year solar flare cycle radically affects the human bioplasma, and often incinerates it: the frequency of wars every eleven and a half years (half the ambiguous 23 of "Illuminatus") is more than coincidence.

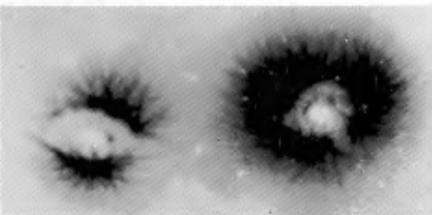
The dwarf stars that exude from the finger-tips in a Kirlian picture echo Newton's law that everything in the universe is inter-connected. The red gases on Jupiter flare out of the heart chakra, Venusian force-fields can be found squatting in a Kirlian capacitor plate and be activated and nabbed on film when a sympathetic object is placed there. The hairs on your head are antennae tuned to pick up Martian gossip.

These flare-patterns indicate the tuning of the human gyroscope to the galactic wave-field. *Anima est sol et luna.*

The bio-plasmic body is cosmically linked — a luminescent litmus paper that records changes in the environment, seasons, tides, noise levels and all the resonances that flesh is heir to. There are changes in the bio-plasmic body (as well as in brain waves, enzyme levels and blood volume) when telepathic messages are coming through, detectable via polygraphs, plethysmographs and a Kirlian camera. Your ears may go red when someone is talking about you behind your back, but your aura will also show a large dent, or if they're being kind about you, will reveal a rich red burgeoning corona.

Interconnectedness is inescapable, though variable. Two close friends working together will generate a brighter cascade from their finger-tips photographed together on the same capacitor plate than two strangers. The auras of two lovers' fingertips photographed side by side will merge in a purple haze. Two people projecting antagonism towards each other will exude negative, sinuous, viscous patterns, like Portuguese Men-Of-War, that avoid each other as much as possible. A small drop of blood from a pregnant woman has, on one occasion, revealed the image of a spectral foetus.

The aura is the skin-brain at work. It is quite unrelated to galvanic skin response, i.e. it's not sweat. Three American scientists who at one point knocked on the head all the finances for Kirlian research in the States, by writing an article in *Nature* in which they alleged that the Kirlian effect was caused merely by moisture, were later forced to recant. A seed has next to no moisture at all, and yet most seeds give off an extremely vibrant coronal discharge.



Accompanying this article you will find an electro-photograph that I took in 1979 of two marijuana seeds, that side by side as they arranged themselves, made me think of Don Juan, winking (Sutton Seeds Ltd., please note. Electro-photography could prove an excellent method of seed-sorting and discovering which seeds will grow and which will not). (Copyright and left).

The auric force-envelop around the body registers electromagnetic waves from everywhere in the spectrum. Patterns of radio-activity can be felt with the finger-tips, and a photograph of their aura will reflect it; perhaps a skill left over from earlier stages of development, i.e. in worms, where receptors for light, sound and smell are dispersed all over the body surface. Christian worms make the following supplication on the first Sunday in Advent: "Put upon us the armour of light," (Collects, "Book of Common Prayer").

Events that radiate the fact that they're going to happen before they do, register themselves in the auric field. If this seems nonsense, then consider particles that can go backwards in time, now quite conventional. Consider the neutrino that can penetrate a lead wall, fifty light years thick. Dr. Podshibaykin discovered that in the presence of close-to-the-ground magnetic storms, the electric potential of the skin rises. Some people get forebodings of these invisible whirlwinds twenty-four hours before the storm happens. Others get them three or four days before the storm shows up on physical instruments. It may be that the aura is composed of a swirling mass of tingling telepathons: psychic bees performing exploratory dances that encompass the globe in the twinkling of an eye in order to inform their sluggish queen, the body, which was fool enough perhaps to fall from spirit into matter, of dangers or delights ahead. It may be that the streets are riddled with thousands of auric sandwich-men displaying the whole history of the future for those who have eyes to see.

There are of course some creatures which are *all* aura, and who will only pose for you if you've got a Kirlian glint in your eye. Angels, ghosts, dybbuks, goblins, sprites, devas, ondines, sylphs and fays, common to all cultures, and maybe to other planets (Michael Marten, of the Martian Liberation Front ("Fight for the right to land") believes that Martians are composed entirely of electro-magnetic fields and the metallic rubbish that the Americans are dumping there seriously interferes with their orgasms).

Conan Doyle believed that these auric creatures were a 'sister stream in evolution,' and took up their cause when two girls from the village of Cottingley in Yorkshire claimed to have captured pictures of them on their uncle's Brownie camera. The case caused a global sensation after the First War, and allegations of fraud abounded. But the plates of subsequent pictures that the girls took were

scrupulously marked, and the positives were later, in the nineteen forties blown up to the size of a house in order to try and detect double exposures, fake shading, and the existence of models, but to no avail.

The pictures show some very dramatic images of earth-spirits who'd crept through a crack in the void to model for the two Cottingley girls. My initial reaction to them was suspicion since the beings are all in contemporary twenties costume, but then a nexus of theosophist brain-cells whispered: "Well, that's how they materialised at that time in order to be recognised." I retorted: "But what if it was to happen now? Punk-rock fairies would be carrying it a bit far, wouldn't it?" The theosophist was not to be outdone and commented that I had been conditioned by a prissy Victorian attitude to the Secret Commonwealth. "Fairies", the voice said, "are simply angels that fell from heaven but didn't fall as far as hell. Any entity, any entity can contribute to these strange fields."

Recently, according to John Chesterman, co-author of "Worlds Within Worlds", the Cottingley photographs were subjected to a form of analysis known as Computer Enhancement, first perpetrated by the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Pasadena, California, and wires were apparently found through this method, stretching up from the creatures, to the top of the photographs. John Nicholson, author, bookseller, and propagator of The Fanatic commented: "Ah, but fairies are for children to see. That's their nature. A machine would quite naturally *only* see wires. That's it's nature."

Be that as it may, I've found that the Kirlian camera which I have been using over the last year is a mechanistic Maria Callas, wired to the no-osphere, the far-gone-osphere and the far-gone-outosphere, and that there's precious little accounting which firmamental pressure-group it's wired to when you plug it in. Presman has noted that electro-magnetic fields facilitate informational exchange between living organisms. I have found that my field and the field that the Kirlian camera is creating, have a relationship: if you're in a bad mood, or trying to show off the process to someone, or doing a picture under any kind of negative pressure, it won't work. If you're in a good mood it will. ("Just think if guns, cars, the telephone, & nuclear weapons were that responsive", bleeps Mister Natural).

A dramatic example of the machine's feelings occurred when I photographed the key to the room where I keep it, and compared it with the key to my shed where I keep a broken washing-machine and assorted rubbish. The first had a sort of irradiated halo, the second a couple of confused blurs spilling out of it in a desultory fashion.

Thought, feelings, illness and death all show up on the auric map. No Kirlian picture has for certain yet been taken of a human being dying, but doubtless it will. Photographs of a leaf dying show long striations of energy streaming off it into Never-Never-Land. They vary in length with the sensitivity of the equipment, in other words given superlatively sensitive equipment they may *never end*. The energy that is released by the artificial transformation known as death is still extant, and the body-lightning rodco can perhaps be reconstituted in its original shape, should anyone be so attached to it, given the right force-field on the other side of the fence.

A psychic needs no machine to detect other life-forms in this atmosphere. It was a prime Celtic belief amongst others that the air was crammed with spiritual entities, and that heaven was celestially swirling right here, and behind you and in you and around you and up you. You snorted-in boggarts, and elves, and devas and demons (over-exposed Kirlians) at every breath. Christianity, on the other hand,

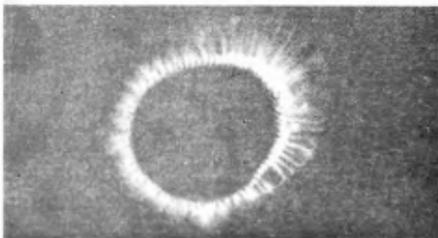
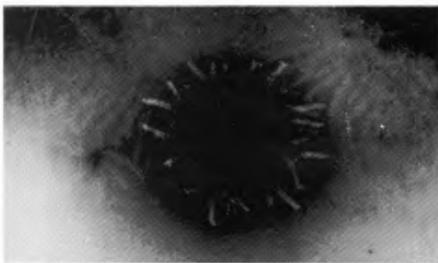


showed heaven, or the spiritual and auric aether, miles and miles away, in order to make the earth seem second best, and in order that the powers that shouldn't be could do with it what they willed.

The auric effusions made manifest on the Kirlian camera show the lust of every scrap of matter for spirituality, for another state of play, and indeed, at the sub-atomic level matter is spirit. *Things* placed in front of a Kirlian camera display their fundamental image of themselves, dancing an aery fandango on an incorporeal plane. It shows that any contact with 'objects' – picking up a pebble on the beach for example, moving its position, chucking it into the sea, is a serious business, let alone the way half this planet's been fucked up and its aura turned into an aertex shirt by insensitive meddlers. Things can be fucked up, but when did you last see a thing fuck itself up of its own volition? Not an attack on you, gentle reader, but where are you standing or sitting now, what *on*, and why? Why aren't you an inch to the left or an inch to the right? Await the Auric Dictionary.

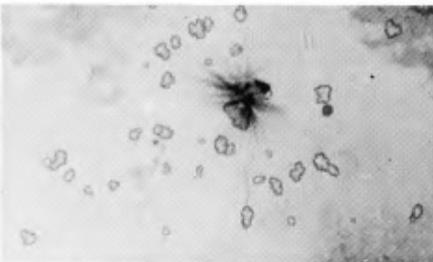
The word 'thing' is one of the most mysterious and indefinable words in the language, and seems to have more different uses than any other noun. "The supposition," stated Bishop Berkeley, "that things are distinct from ideas takes away all real truth." One of the earliest semantic snares that this strange blanket port-manteau, hold-all, concept – a *thing* – got tangled up in was to become a synonym for the word *assembly or meeting*: "let's go to that *thing* on Tuesday night." The earliest religions worshipped imbued matter, a thing, a clashing of energy vectors; later the word came to mean *them*, the people drawn to the thing, the assembly, an anthropomorphic, self-centred and personalised corruption of the original meaning. But despite human chauvinism many *things* have far stronger auras than human beings.

Compare this Kirlian photograph of some Orange Sunshine acid (which curiously reveals itself as living up to its name) with the aura of a human finger-tip. The Sunshine tab is a solar anemone, the finger-tip (which happens to belong to Uri Geller, from whom a little more might have been expected) is a somewhat cobwebby splodge.



LSD has in fact recently been the subject of atomic analysis as well, and reveals extremely high energy levels. There are far more electrons in its outer orbits than in any other drug, and far more again, it seems, than in that more primitive drug the human being, which deals itself to itself constantly with little thought of the consequences.

The Orange Sunshine tab looks fairly merry being an Orange Sunshine tab (and glowed *Cheese* in five-D when I threw the Kirlian switches on it). I also managed to take an electro-photograph of some of the Richard Kemp acid that made the Holy Grail boil over at Glastonbury Fayre and Windsor Free Festival, and helped to arouse the anarcho-communalist giant Albion from his slumbers. Later, this acid, some of the purest strain ever made, was to feature in a bureaucratic and meretricious bring-down known as Operation Julie. I photographed a tab of this 'Julie' acid shortly after the spiteful scenario, involving prison sentences totally 170 years, had taken place.

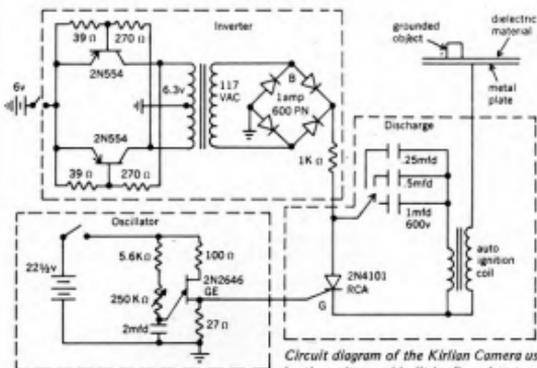


The Kirlian picture of the tab struck me as having the distinct feeling of a persecuted Will O' the Wisp, but one determined to keep itself intact despite ignorant and philistine opposition.

These Kirlian Rorschachs show that an 'inanimate' thing has emanations, capable of a plethora of emotional, psychological, ecological, spiritual and perhaps even political interpretations; either correct or incorrect, but certainly challenging heuristic skills. So you've caught me on film, what have you caught? "God's sons are things." Samuel Madden, Boulter's Monument, 1712.



Dave Lawton of Bristol, who built the Kirlian Camera which I now use (or which uses me) took this photograph of a 50p piece. From comparisons with electro-photographs



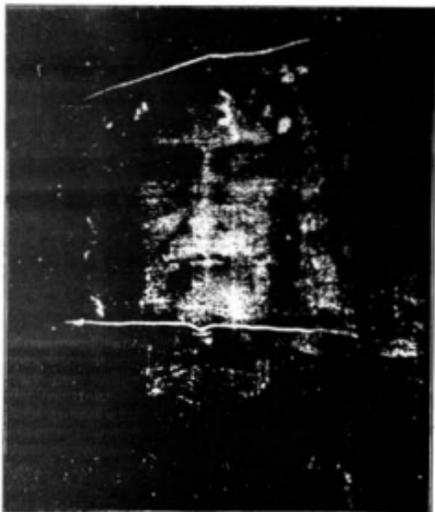
OPERATION JULIE ACID

Looking like a Will O' the Wisp on the run and Surrounded by Pharisaic phagocytes

of raw metal (which all boogie fairly boisterously on the pneumatoscopic plane), it is clear that this abused thing was much more fulfilled being a lump of cupro-nickel rather than being squinched into the meaningless and tiresome shape cynically forced upon this now wretched piece of equipment (presumably thus designed so that you can get it out of someone's hand with a spanner) and exuding an aura like a congealed bat-fart.

Mr. Lawton is now incidentally building a Tesla coil with which he proposes to fire 500,000 volts of plasmoid spark-mush through his body, swathing himself with Elektra's aeon juice. The whole human aura is visible in such a field. If he turns himself into a Smiths Crisp during the process, it might be possible to put a tracer on his aura and see where it goes, but hopefully he will not.

It may be however that there is an unexpected Kirlian photograph taken at the moment of a man's death, nearly two thousand years ago, namely the Shroud of Turin. Its quite possible that the Shroud became emulsified by the gelatinous unguents, balms and spices with which Christ's body was covered. The material of the cloth, soaking up scraps of silver nitrate, acetic acid, metal, potassium bromide, in the unguents and in Christ's sweat, would have become photo-sensitive, and the coronal discharge at the moment of his death was emblazoned on the cloth.



When the stone was rolled away from the dark room, the first Kirlian pic had been developed, stopped and fixed.

The modern science of electro-photography has borne out instinctive human experience in several ways. The phrase "all lit up", a common phrase for intoxication, is an interesting example: electro-photographs of the finger-tip of an intoxicated subject show great heavy splurges of light, clumsily leaking out, an indication that large quantities of energy are being burnt up very quickly, and they are exaggeratedly illuminated.

The ancient Chinese meridians in acupuncture, the irrigating junctions of the energy circuits, show up dramatically in Kirlian pictures of the relevant parts of the

body. Light squirts out, in stark powerful beams, from the very places indicated as meridians of energy in the traditional acupuncture charts.

The laying on of hands is clearly a benevolent auric transmission. The V sign, or the first and last fingers of one hand splayed towards you as practised on the Continent, the *mano in fica*, the *mano impudica*, the *mano cornuta*, and the demonic *mudras*, are an attempt to earth you and paralyse you with negative currents.

At the dawn of experience people worshipped things rather than each other (or hypostasised versions of each other). They worshipped them with a curious reverence, rather than raping them with a destructive fetishism. People currently pick on their elders and betters, namely things, like a fractious child molesting and tormenting a peaceful adult in order to get a reaction. Now perhaps things can be seen in a new light.

The science however is still in its infancy, and sadly shortly after its birth sciolist soul-spivs and hucksters moved in on it with the assiduity of an end-of-the-pier palmist. They sell over-priced Kirlian cameras and woo the unwary with extremely dubious character studies based on an electro-photograph. At the Kirlian stand at the recent Festival of Mind and Body at Olympia thousands of people queued to have their finger-tips photographed, and then were lured into shelling out a considerable sum for what sounded to be an eaves-dropper a shallow, hazardous, and ridiculously generalised analysis. It recalls the early days of electro-encephalography. I remember reading an early paper on the subject which claimed that air-line pilots and psychopaths showed similar EEG's. Doubtless the man who wrote it had a large holding in P. & O. lines.

The left-hand path will surely lead to Kirlian beach photographers, Bio-plasmic Photo-booths in Woolworths, and Prana Photomats in Benares' Butlins, and the right-hand path (or vice versa) to auric bugging: if thoughts show up on the auric field then the thought police won't be too long in trying to stitch it all up, so that everyone will be too scared to have any aura at all, and we'll be back to square one. The low-minded sub-reality putsch. "What my net won't catch simply ain't fish. The spark of life you say? I can't see it. Turn the light on."

The middle path shows the way across the Rainbow Bridge.

Your energy is continuous and immortal. Self-absorption short-circuits your field and makes an ugly snap. Auric altruism refreshes the planisphere and returns your electrons to you at compound interest. See yourself coming in bigger than you were when you went out. Clean your spark-plugs, Nosferatu Nerdniks. Ye that are heavy-laden, rip off your clothes, rise up and bathe the world in light. The Recording Angel's got a polaroid. Where's the Kirlian clapper boy? Akashic flashers, unsheath your auric fronds and let it all hang out so far you gotta pump air to it. Click.Click. Take infinity!

Go with the Glow and Renew the Glowing Glue that sticks everything together. Cosmic superglue. Let your light so shine before men . . . Sickness is pulling the plugs out on it all. If you keep your aura to yourself you won't have one. If you rip off something or someone else's the farce will desert you. Crown King Thing. The aura bomb has been detonated. Our energy is continuous and immortal. *Fiat lux* in the unforced flux.

NIKI HOEKY

MANCHESTER EVENING NEWS
4 1974

...be drawn in an emergency... within a matter of hours.

450 pirate tapes found in search

A SEARCH of two Manchester record shops revealed some 450 bootleg and pirate recordings, a High Court judge heard.

Mr Justice Fox authorised solicitors for 40 recording companies, artists and groups to search in Manchester, and two other premises claimed to be run by them in nearby Street.

He made an order yesterday restraining Mr David

Britton — trading as — Charles Partington and — from making or selling any bootleg or pirate recordings, or destroying or erasing any such recordings in their possession.

They also have to give the names and addresses of people who supplied them, or to whom they supplied, allegedly infringing material.

The injunction is effective until judgment in the full action or further order.

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CUTTING THE IGNITION, Jeremy Cornelius allowed the old blue Packard to crunch slowly across the gravel of the derelict schoolyard until it came to rest under the shattered windows of the main hall.

It was 4.32 pm. And already growing dark. Snow was beginning to fall on the city.

Jeremy hated the cold, short winter days. He hated Manchester. However the North had certain obvious attractions. Until recently the British Phonograph Institute had concentrated their investigations on London and the Midlands, leaving Jeremy free to pursue his bootleg record business unhindered. But things were hotting up now. Several times in the last few weeks Jeremy had been convinced that he was being followed.

Imagination? Perhaps. But even so, it was probably time to move on. There was enough paranoia in life without the added tension of being shadowed by private detectives.

Jeremy reached over, grasping the bulky cardboard box lying across the rear seat with both hands. It was heavy and awkward. He grunted audibly with the strain of lifting it, cursing the fact that both of the ancient Packard's rear doors refused to open.

He dragged the box out of the car onto the gravel surface of the school-yard, blinking as snowflakes settled on his eyelids.

He listened intently for a moment, studying the area of derelict buildings beyond.

Nothing.

Picking up the box, Jeremy staggered towards Princess Road. Overhead, rush-hour traffic was beginning to build up on the southbound expressway.

Although most of Moss Side was already in the process of redevelopment, the row of deteriorating Edwardian houses standing opposite the abandoned school had so far

escaped demolition. The row contained five houses and two shops. All of the ground floor windows had been boarded over several months earlier. Though squatters were currently inhabiting the premises, no lights showed.

Jeremy Cornelius lurched up the steps to No. 73 and pushed the door open with the toe of his imitation snakeskin boot. Dragging the box into the hall, he rested, allowing his eyes time to grow accustomed to the gloom.

It seemed even colder inside the house than it had been outside. Perhaps the dampness had something to do with it. A faint smell of incense hung on the still air. Floorboards creaked overhead and the sound of conversation came from Jill's room.

Jeremy opened the door to his own room and pulled the box inside. Only after satisfying himself that the curtains were still drawn did he switch the light on. There were gaps between the boards covering the windows. And Jeremy wasn't taking chances.

Miss Brunner's antelope-hide suitcase peered out at him from under the bed. He breathed a sigh of relief. One day soon the suitcase would be gone. She had indicated that the Manchester office had already considered releasing her for other duties.

The room's previous tenant, before he joined the Civil Service and bought himself a house in Birmingham, had painted the room black, suspending miniature planets from the ceiling. Where star formations once glittered in acrylic Dayglo, now space peeled and mould attacked the universe.

If the decor had seen better days, the actual contents of the room were elaborately bizarre, reflecting the many facets of Jeremy's magpie involvements with the arts. Inspirational curiosity instead of a formal classical education had resulted in unsatisfactory affairs with most schools of painting from the Primitives through Tachism to Action Painting.

There had been successes of course. But never sufficiently rewarding in terms of financial gain to support even Jeremy's modest lifestyle. Hence the reliance on bootleg albums, and in desperate periods, on pushing home-grown bush down at the Student's Union.

Even now his guitar, his only permanent fix, needed new pick-ups. The axe was an exact copy of Jimi Hendrix's Gibson Flying V, equipped with Fender Rock 'n' Roll light gauge strings, Vox wah-wah pedals and a Dallas Arbiter Fuzz Face. Mostly he used a battered twenty-watt practice amp, not daring to jack in the 200 watt Orange amps and Sun speakers stacked under faded Indian carpets against the far wall of the bed-sitter.

Jeremy opened a can of Stella lager and severed the cord holding the record box together. The battered cardboard collapsed and dozens of brilliant album sleeves slid across the floor.

Sitting on his haunches, he drained the can and picked up one of the albums. He smiled appreciatively. This was one of thirty copies of Led Zeppelin's 'Earl's Court', arguably the best Zeppelin bootleg available, discounting the almost legendary 'Blueberry Hill', 'Earl's Court' and the Pink Floyd's 'Tour 74' had striking full colour in-concert sleeves, though Jeremy suspected that the Floyd cover was in fact a collage. The rest of the bootlegs were familiar standards, all of them heavy metal rock groups in constant demand by freaks and university students: Zappa, Deep Purple, Yes, The Dead, Dylan and a dozen or so others. Jeremy chose another new album, Bowie's 'Spiders From Mars', recorded live at the Hammersmith Odeon. Slipping the record out of its sleeve, he placed it on the Bang and Olufsen deck.

The preamble to 'Jean Genie' began to echo eerily around the flat. Jeremy settled down with a joint of Moroccan.

Snow crystals were melting in her bedraggled red hair. She was wearing a Daniel Hechter sashed shirt-dress in clinging challis. Her face was flushed and her expression was one of perplexed tension.

Miss Brunner entered the flat, leaving the door open behind her. A cypher, Jeremy wondered? She made straight for the suitcase.

"What's wrong?" he asked. "You look awful." Even then a vague thrill of apprehension was moving in his bowels.

"I've had a telephone call from Captain Maxwell." She began throwing things into the open suitcase.

Suddenly Jeremy wanted to pee.

"Jerry's crypt has been broken into," she went on. "Something's happened to his body. They're sending a helicopter for me."

"When?"

She glanced worriedly at her watch. "I've got to be at Platt Fields by 6.15. Captain Maxwell's arranged special clearance for the helicopter to land near the boating lake."

Jeremy was beginning to feel frightened. Forgotten now, David Bowie insouciantly whispered the lyrics of 'Rock 'n' Roll Suicide' into the microphone after announcing his retirement to a stunned and disbelieving audience.

"What's happened to Jerry's body?"

Miss Brunner shook her head. "Captain Maxwell wouldn't say over the 'phone."

Jeremy traced his pale lips with a beautifully shaped fingernail. "Is he still . . . still . . ."

Miss Brunner snapped the suitcase shut, her fingers resting over the clasps. "Still what?" Her eyes glittered. "Still dead?"

Jeremy Cornelius nodded. "Yes."

"Perhaps you overestimate your cousin's powers, Jeremy dear. He isn't the Christ, you know."

Jeremy stared at her. "I think we both know *that*."

Miss Brunner walked stiffly towards the door.

"Wait for me!" Impulsively, he pulled the plug on the record player and grabbed his sheepskin coat. "I'm coming with you."

"You haven't been invited." Miss Brunner noted coldly.

"Jerry and I are family. Captain Maxwell will understand."

"Maxwell never understood anything." She closed the door behind them.

The Sikorsky landed in sleet and darkness, south of Milk Hill on the Salisbury plain.

Jeremy stumbled out of the helicopter, disoriented by the pitching and yawing of the aircraft's flight and by the disturbed nature of his private thoughts. Their location didn't register until he emerged from under the slowing rotor-vanes. Behind and in front of them the landscape was dark, barren.

"Where are we?" Jeremy shouted above the engine's dying whine. "This isn't Harrow. Jerry's buried in Harrow!"

"Jerry was buried in Harrow." Miss Brunner's face flashed alternately from darkness to light in the revolving red and green beam of the aircraft's landing lights. "He's up there now, in my house."

She ran on ahead as lights came on in the porch. Behind the frosted glass doors, a portly figure could be seen waving for them to come in out of the cold.

Though most of the snow had been cleared away from the drive, by the time Jeremy reached the house one of his

plastic snakeskin boots was letting in water. The helicopter roared overhead. Probably returning to its base, Jeremy surmised. They would be staying the night, then.

"Ah, Miss Brunner. So glad you could come. And Jeremy too!"

Captain Maxwell was dressed in his usual tweeds with the brown leather patches. He was still putting on weight. He smelled of cheap cigar smoke, and his old Etonian tie was badly rumpled.

Smiling, he ushered them through into the lounge.

"We've cleaned up most of the mess," he explained, a little apologetically, "though no doubt the furniture will have to be rearranged. There was some doubt about the original lay-out of the room."

Miss Brunner's gaze was coldly critical. "The carpet?"

"Had to throw it out I'm afraid. Nothing else we could do."

There was a body covered by a white sheet lying behind the horse-hair sofa. Jeremy could see a pair of nylon-clad, varicose-veined legs sticking out. The corpse was wearing red court shoes.

"Agnes?" Miss Brunner gasped.

Captain Maxwell sighed. "Afraid so. Shot through the heart. Died instantly of course. Even a Karate black belt is no defence against a .45."

"Who's Agnes?" Jeremy asked curiously, straining to see her face.

"She was Miss Brunner's house-maid," Captain Maxwell answered. "And Jerry's bodyguard."

"Bodyguard's the right word for it," Miss Brunner complained, pouring herself a straight gin. "Towards the end she wouldn't let anyone else near him. Embarrassing." She handed Jeremy his usual. "I never did like her, you know," she admitted.

Captain Maxwell coughed nervously. "Come now; I always found her extremely efficient."

Miss Brunner giggled. "I caught her once, downstairs, trying to give him a relief massage."

"To a corpse?" Captain Maxwell said disbelievingly.

"Jerry has that effect on people," Miss Brunner admitted.

Jeremy Cornelius was confused. "But what's happened here?" He demanded. "After all, you've had us flown down from Manchester. You might at least take the trouble to explain what this is all about."

Captain Maxwell looked somewhat disapprovingly at Jeremy. "I was under the impression you were here by self-motivation." He put an ape-like arm across Miss Brunner's shoulders and whispered something in her ear.

Miss Brunner shook her head. "There might be difficulties, Maxwell. They are cousins, you know. Anyway perhaps he has a right to know."

Captain Maxwell shrugged, running a hand through his thinning hair. "Very well then. I suppose you'd both better come downstairs."

The cellars were extensive and appeared far too modern for the eighteenth century house. The way into them lay through a four-inch thick steel door. A small but efficient lift took them quickly down to the third level. They stepped out into a large laboratory that had apparently been devastated by some kind of explosion.

A man and a woman were working intently in the confusion. Until Captain Maxwell called them by name they didn't even notice their visitors.

The man was an eminent doctor, one of the finest neurologists in the country: Sir Martin Dixon. Now he looked tired, The tactful charm he had displayed during his many television appearances prior to the death of the Duke

of Edinburgh had drained away, leaving him agitated and looking considerably older.

The woman was young and pretty, perhaps in her mid-twenties. A laboratory technician from Easton, Connecticut, Deborah G. Dimmitt had an astonishing alphabet of degree letters after her name.

Jeremy wasn't exactly sure what they were looking for in the electronic debris littering the cellar floor, but he realised that for Sir Martin to be there it had to be important.

Miss Brunner's face went white when she saw the extent of the damage. She was trembling visibly.

"Cornelius?" she asked. "He's still here?"

Sir Martin nodded. "Yes. Their motive wasn't the theft of his body." His eyes twitched from too long without sleep and his breath was sour. "That seemed the most obvious reason to us, too. And I can't believe it was the cryo-crypt itself they were after. All the major power-blocks have been familiar with the basic principle for over a decade."

"Then what were they after?" Miss Brunner asked.

"And why all this damage? It's senseless."

"Perhaps it only appears that way because we're not in full possession of all the facts," Captain Maxwell suggested calmly. "Whoever was responsible for all this knew exactly where Jerry's body had been moved to, and how to reach it without triggering the sealing mechanisms. Unless," he added, "Agnes talked before she died."

"Out of the question!" Miss Brunner said angrily.

"Yes, we rather thought so ourselves." Maxwell agreed. "Still, one has to cover all the angles."

"Where's Jerry's body?" Miss Brunner demanded. "I want to see it."

"We haven't disturbed the corpse. It's still here, in the cryo-crypt." Sir Martin answered. "However, it's not a pretty sight. They tried to destroy it with napalm before leaving."

With difficulty, he raised the cover of a scarred and blackened oblong box measuring seven feet by four feet. The cover had once been transparent plastic. The dials and input terminals clustered on a console mounted on the rim had been shattered by several blows with a heavy instrument.

Inside the cryo-crypt was a charred and twisted figure that might once have been human.

Jeremy took one look then turned away and threw up.

Miss Brunner's expression was enigmatic.

Sir Martin replaced the cover. "Has the department any idea who might have done this?" he asked.

Captain Maxwell sighed. "He had many enemies, even amongst those he counted as friends. It's not unreasonable to assume a hatred so intense they'd seek a final vengeance by mutilating his corpse."

"Perhaps we can find out who did it, if not the reason why," Miss Brunner stated in an emotionless voice.

Captain Maxwell stared at her, his face vacant with astonishment. "How?"

"I had a video-scanner installed, linked between here and my office in the garret. During the first months just after his death, I thought that perhaps he might . . ."

"Recover?" Miss Dimmitt suggested helpfully.

"Yes." Miss Brunner gave her a slight smile. "I didn't inform you at the time, Maxwell. It seemed so ridiculous."

Maxwell patted her arm understandingly. "And you think the intruders will show up on the video-tape?"

Miss Brunner nodded. "How do you think I found out about Agnes?" she said.

Images blurred rapidly across the tiny viewing screen as Miss Brunner rewound the large tape reels.



"It records a single frame every two seconds," she explained. "So any movement that may occur will jump alarmingly from one exposure to the next. The system was designed to provide a record of any change in Jerry's condition. In the three years he's been dead he's never moved once."

"How long do the reels last?" Jeremy asked.

"At one exposure every two seconds a full reel lasts five weeks." She watched the numbers clicking rapidly across the face of the dial; then stopped the machine. "This is the place."

"Where's Sir Martin?" Captain Maxwell inquired as they grouped themselves around the video-screen.

"He'll be up in a minute," Miss Dimmitt answered.

"There's something he wanted to check on. He said to carry on."

The diminutive screen showed a full length view of the coffin-shaped cryo-crypt. Beneath the reflective transparent cover, Jerry Cornelius' beautiful white face stared up at them. He was naked. Apart from the four 30-30 entry holes in his narrow chest, there was nothing to show he wasn't just sleeping.

At the sight of Jerry's naked body, Jeremy felt the familiar anguish in his loins. Cursing he closed his eyes, aware of the flush spreading across all his cheeks. Even in death, Jerry Cornelius had the power to disturb. Thankfully Jerry realised that no one else had noticed his embarrassment, their attention was focussed on the video-screen.

"There!" Captain Maxwell stabbed a pudgy index finger at the screen as a shadow fell briefly across the plastic cover of the cryo-crypt. It vanished, and nothing else happened for thirty or forty frames. Then suddenly five people were on screen around the cryo-crypt, their movements jerking disparately from one frame to the next.

"What are they doing?" Captain Maxwell asked anxiously, straining his bull-head forward. "What are they doing?"

Mounted in the ceiling of the cellar, the video-camera stared down at two-second-intervals as the figures clustered around Jerry's suddenly vulnerable body.

The cover had been lifted. Hands grasped the corpse. Just for an instant, as if finally aware of the camera in the ceiling, one of the men looked up.

Captain Maxwell stiffened, his nails digging into Jeremy's arm. "That's Muir. Hogarth Muir, the biochemist! I'm sure of it." He turned, jaws quivering with excitement, towards Miss Dimmitt. "Get Sir Martin up here immediately. He'll want to see this for himself."

As suddenly as they had appeared on the video-screen, the men vanished, leaving the camera staring down at the body of Jerry Cornelius.

Then a wave of coruscating fire streamed over the pale corpse, burning and withering the flesh. Smoke billowed up. The screen flickered once, then blanked out.

"I just don't understand it," Captain Maxwell muttered. "What were they doing to Jerry's body down there? And why try to destroy it afterwards? Doesn't make sense to me." He walked restlessly around the tiny garret, banging his head on one of the beams of the sloping ceiling. "Could you show us the whole sequence again, Miss Brunner?" he asked.

A telephone rang on Miss Brunner's desk. Jeremy picked the receiver up. It was Sir Martin on the internal line from the cellar. Jeremy listened intently.

"Of course, Captain Maxwell." Miss Brunner answered. She stopped the automatic rewind, ran the tape forward several feet and held the frame on a view of Jerry Cornelius just before the napalm hit his body.

"Notice anything different?" she asked.

Captain Maxwell studied the screen. "No I'm afraid not. What am I supposed to be looking for?"

"Look!" Miss Brunner demanded exasperatedly.

"Look at the right hand. They've cut his little finger off!" Jeremy pulled the plug on the video-screen. His eyes were the colour of ash. Captain Maxwell turned to object, then saw the expression distorting his face.

"Listen," Jeremy said, switching the telephone into the office amplifier. Slightly distorted, Sir Martin Dixon's voice echoed into the garret.

"Maxwell. Miss Brunner. Jerry Cornelius is alive!

There's a detectable heartbeat, faint but steadying all the time. And his eyes are open." There was a brief pause, the line hummed. "It seems impossible, that's why I waited before telling you. I had to be sure. Jerry Cornelius is alive again."

Jeremy was standing motionless in the garden. It was still several minutes before daybreak. He watched the horizon, noticing that huge snow-clouds were gathering.

The sound of boots crunching through the frozen snow disturbed the silence. It was Miss Brunner and Captain Maxwell. Their breath hung on the still air.

"For God's sake, Jeremy; this is insane. You must be half-frozen. Please come back inside the house." Miss Brunner clung tightly to Maxwell's arm as they struggled through a snow drift.

Jeremy held his head in a negative posture. The ice glittering in his eyes looked colder than the frozen river-bed. "The helicopter is late," he observed.

Captain Maxwell knocked the snow off his boots with the tip of his Irish walking stick. "Fog delayed the take-off. It could be hours yet. Why not be sensible and do as Miss Brunner suggests?"

"I prefer to wait here." Jeremy said quietly, glancing back at the house.

Miss Brunner stamped her foot angrily. Her wellington boot stuck in the snow and she nearly fell over trying to pull it out.

"You're just being childish, Jeremy. There's nothing to be afraid of you know."

"I'm not afraid," Jeremy insisted.

"Then come inside."

"No."

The light was strengthening perceptibly now. Jeremy sighed, aware that both of his boots were soaking wet.

No doubt the toes would curl upwards when they eventually dried out.

"What did they want his finger for?" Jeremy asked finally, realising that Miss Brunner and Captain Maxwell were determined not to return to the house without him.

"We can only assume that Hogarth Muir was interested in Jerry Cornelius' genetic coding." Maxwell began beating his arms together to keep warm. "Before he resigned from the ministry, Muir was the head of a unit doing research into the viability of clonal reproduction. Of course, the department was financed, and to a large extent directed, by our American cousins; but Muir was the acting head of the British section. Or rather he was, until both the Pentagon and General Electric withdrew their joint funding of the operation."

"Oh," Jeremy wished the helicopter would come. "Why?"

"Not sure really. Not my area you understand. It seems the Americans had mastered the clonal regeneration process, but had run into tissue degeneration problems. That's why they called us in; hoped the British, or rather Hogarth Muir, could come up with the answer."

"After the Americans cancelled the project, Muir approached the government with what was a rather improbable proposition in these inflationary times. He was convinced that, given sufficient time and financial backing, his team could come up with an effective tissue stabilizer. Naturally, the application was turned down. He promptly resigned, had an extremely rude letter delivered to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and vanished. That was about six months ago, since then we've heard nothing of him until this affair."

Jeremy looked ill. The pieces were fitting together now; and the picture they made was anything but reassuring.

Miss Brunner grasped him by the shoulders.

"That's right, Jeremy. Hogarth Muir intends producing tissue-stable clones based on Jerry's DNA pattern. Who knows, he might even succeed." Her face was vicious in the dawn light. "Just think, you can have a Jerry Cornelius of your very own. No need to be jealous then."

Jeremy slapped her face very hard, then began to walk towards a copse of elms and birch leading down to the Winchester Road.

"What do you think you're doing?" Captain Maxwell roared after him.

"Fuck your helicopter, I'm hitching back to Manchester." Jeremy shouted as he vanished among the trees.

Jeremy,

Please don't ignore this communication.

Jerry's in trouble. He needs help. He keeps asking for you. Don't let him down. Phone Maxwell if you need transport.

Brunner.

There were five similar telegrams awaiting him, and a quarto-size manilla envelope from the B.P.I.: a summons accusing him of trafficking in illegal records and cassettes. The summons didn't come as a complete surprise. He'd heard the bust was coming off while unloading albums in Glasgow and Edinburgh. There was now no hope of avoiding a confrontation with the B.P.I., Jeremy knew that. But at least it would only be a civil action. Unlike the States, selling bootlegs wasn't a criminal offence in Britain.

He stared around the flat, wondering what to do. It seemed unwise for him to remain in Manchester. Obviously, he needed time to think.

He studied the date on the last telegram from Miss Brunner. The twenty-eighth of February — four days ago. Perhaps he ought to go back to Milk Hill? It would certainly do no harm to delay matters with the B.P.I.

What kind of trouble was Jerry in, Jeremy found himself wondering. The telegrams were so vague. He was both intrigued and suspicious. He'd definitely make his mind up, tomorrow.

He unwrapped a new set of Fender Rock 'n' Roll strings and three Acee pick-ups bought at Virgin Records in Piccadilly less than an hour ago. If he did respond to Miss Brunner's requests, he could be staying at Milk Hill for some time, with any luck. If so, he'd need his guitar.

Jeremy had just begun tuning in the bass string when the door opened. Captain Maxwell stuck his head around the door and peered cautiously into the room.

"Alone?"

Jeremy nodded.

"Brought someone to see you."

He entered the flat. Miss Brunner followed. Leaning heavily on her arm was Jerry Cornelius.

Jeremy stared open-mouthed at his cousin, hardly believing what he saw, wanting to speak but not knowing what to say. There had been developments since they last

met.

A change had come over Jerry Cornelius: a change both of style and persona. To employ an overworked euphemism, his cousin looked a different person.

Jerry Cornelius was dressed in tight velvet pants, white knee-length socks and black patent school-shoes. Dark brown contact lenses disguised his alabaster eyes. A puff-sleeved white silk blouse was bound at his waist by a metallic cloth cummerbund. He still wore his hair long but now it was dyed black and tied at the back of his neck in a velvet bow.

He smiled, one hand resting insolently on his hips.

He looked exactly like P.J. Proby.

"Surprised, Jeremy?" Jerry asked, a malicious little grin on his pale face. "Didn't they tell you I'd made a complete recovery?" He pulled the silk blouse out of the cummerbund to expose his chest. "No bullet holes; no scars. I'll be ready to sing again soon."

"Sing?" Jeremy echoed doubtfully.

"I intend to recut 'Niki Hoeky' and 'Rockin Pneumonia.' The Liberty set-up always insisted on a thirty-piece orchestra instead of a heavy Creole band." His face worked in a rictic snarl and his eyes glazed.

"Hounter, Hounter, Haut-chant."

He mouthed painfully.

Jeremy stirred uneasily at these words. Jerry's knowledge of Vodoun was sketchy at best, yet oddly his pronunciation had been flawless.

Jerry Cornelius began to shiver violently, sweat soaked out of his pores and his limbs locked rigid.

"Cambe, kembe," he screamed, "they drain me; these Gros-bon Anges drain me!" He collapsed across the bed. His neck muscles seemed about to snap under the strain.

Jeremy ran towards him, but Miss Brunner intervened.

"Leave him, Jeremy. Captain Maxwell knows what to do."

Maxwell was at Jerry's side. Snapping open the catches of a small briefcase, he withdrew a disposable hypodermic syringe and a small plastic bottle containing fifteen milli-litres of Pentathol SL/a.

"Does he?" Jeremy asked mockingly. "Is Captain Maxwell also a Houngan, among his many other accomplishments?"

Miss Brunner stared at him. "A what?" she asked.

"A houngan," Jeremy repeated. "A voodoo priest."

Jerry Cornelius was sleeping quietly. Jeremy, Maxwell and Miss Brunner were talking in whispers on the other side of the room. Captain Maxwell was smoking a cigar.

"Physically, Jerry made a perfect recovery. There's no sign of lasting tissue or bone damage; even his little finger is beginning to grow back. Yet this delusion that he's P.J. Proby is reaching psychopathic proportions."

Jeremy looked across at the figure lying on the bed. "Are you suggesting that he's schizophrenic?"

"That's a laugh, coming from you, Jerry!" Miss Brunner hissed.

Captain Maxwell censored any further remarks of that nature with a reproving glance. "Sir Martin and Dr Strank supervised his convalescence; it's their considered opinion that Jerry is showing all the symptoms of a classic identity crisis."

"And the Creole-Vodoun patois; how does Sir Martin explain that?"

"Jerry could have come across it in a book somewhere."

"The words, yes, but not their correct pronunciation."

"And how long have you been an expert in Voodoo?" Miss Brunner demanded.

Jeremy tried not to reflect anger. "Hardly an expert, angel. But this is Moss Side. Even the whites are black here."

Captain Maxwell was inspecting a fingernail. "What's your opinion then?"

Jeremy Cornelius walked across the room and stared down at his cousin. He looked quickly away, aware of Jerry's sensual beauty. Was he getting involved again so soon, he wondered?

"Perhaps Jerry's identity crisis is something other than a mental imbalance."

"What makes you think that?"

"Something he said earlier. One of the Voodoo phrases."

"How can we find out for sure?"

Jeremy stared at them both. "Take him to an expert, of course."

They stood waiting on the steps of No. 73 while Captain Maxwell radioed for his car. The temperature would drop below freezing again tonight, Jeremy thought. Jerry's head was resting on his shoulder. Miss Brunner was supporting Jerry's other arm.

"Doctor John?" she said. "I've heard that name before somewhere. Who is he?"

Jeremy was tingling. He was undecided if it was the cold night air or Jerry's nearness. "He's a Cajun rhythm and blues howler from New Orleans; into heavy metal rock and Voodoo, a mean combination. His band's just finished warm-up sets in Leeds and Sheffield. They'll be in London next week."

"That's fine," Captain Maxwell grumbled, fastening the buttons on his heavy tweed overcoat. "But where will he be now?"

"Anywhere there's hooch, black music and hookers." Jeremy grinned.

"And where are we likely to find all that in the North of England?" Miss Brunner wanted to know.

"Here in the Moss, silly. In the New Reno."

They ran down the steps as Captain Maxwell's chauffeur-driven Phantom Five pulled up at the kerb.

'Salamander' were playing at the New Reno, and as usual Madame Kokomo had jacked up the entrance fee to cover her overheads.

The spades on the door eyed Maxwell suspiciously, but let them all in. As he paid for the tickets, Jeremy refused an offer to score an ounce of Columbian. One had to be careful, besides it was usually cut at the New Reno.

The music was Jamaican, complex throbbing rhythms that reverberated off the walls and the senses in a frenzy of urgent native energy. The music was basic, primitive – there was no way to ignore it.

As they moved towards the bar, many of the spades stared at Jerry Cornelius as though they knew he had a hex on. Captain Maxwell was very unsettled, he didn't approve of ethnic gatherings. He didn't quite trust these wogs.

The lighting was red and almost non-existent. The air streamed and billowed with smoke and incense. Jeremy waited for his eyes to adjust, then he stared around the packed big room, looking for Madame Kokomo.

She tapped him on the shoulder.

"Lookin' for somethin' Jeremy? You know the hurdy gurdy girls don't get in till later."

She was a large solid woman with bright red hair frizzed out Afro-style. Her make up was running so much in the heat it was smearing her face glitter.

Jeremy nodded. "Yeah, something special. A case of heebie-jeebies. Needs fixin' bad."

She rolled her eyes. "No Voudoun priests here tonight. All attending big Ceremonie-Caille down the Moss."

Jeremy leaned closer so that he could be heard as Salamander picked up 'Broken Dog Blues.' "I know, Mambo," she shook her head at that, "I also know a New Orleans Houngan is visiting. You see, Madame Kokomo?"

She looked over his shoulder, looking into Jerry's eyes. "This one the shivers?" she asked.

Jeremy nodded. Names changed hands.

"What's his name?"

Jeremy whispered in her ear.

"When you hear the Assator call, you be ready." She vanished into the smoky darkness.

Time passed.

Jeremy's head was spinning from the raw liquor. Miss Brunner was on her feet, swaying sensually to Salamander's version of 'Whore-Heat.' Captain Maxwell, tired of watching the writhing convulsions of black dancers, was waiting outside in the Phantom Five. Jerry, his eyes half-closed, was singing the words of 'I'm twenty-eight. It's getting late!'

All heads turned towards them as the distinctive voice of the Assator, the Voodoo ritual drum, called a Chirer Ayizan.

Dancers dressed in vivid Haitian prints and golden bangles formed a loose swaying circle around their table, clapping their hands in the special Batterie Maconlique beat which would continue throughout the ensuing ceremony. Their faces were hidden behind grotesque animal masks.

Madame Kokomo rolled into the circle. She was wearing a long grass skirt. Her thick body gleamed with oils. Doctor John entered behind her. The dancers moaned and howled their salutations.

Doctor John: ---

Thick black hair hung in tight braids, he wore long golden earrings. Around his neck was a powerful Collier necklace of mad dog's teeth. He was dressed in a purple calico shirt and yellow fringed buckskin pants tucked into alligator-hide lace up boots. His teeth were capped with silver. His skin was as black as his soul.

"Let's get this Hoo Doo Mass under way, brothers." he called. Immediately, the drums responded.

Jeremy had never imagined that drums could produce such sounds. The rhythms were ancient; part Voodoo – part Amerindian, creating electric tensions in the nerves, strange resonances in the blood. The excitement was not intrinsically sexual, though the swaying limbs and bodies of the masked dancers glistening with oils and sweat were laudably erotic. Jeremy's senses suffered a systaltic attack, colours merged and flared in blazing rainbows, shapes trembled, outlines ran. Time and distances stretched and contracted. Still the shockwave ritualistic drumming and handclapping went on, a mesmeric force winding up to an almost unbearable crescendo that tore screams from the throats of the dancers and left the drummers collapsed across their vibrating skins.

Then in the stunned silence, from somewhere in the crowd, a woman began to moan, an ululating cry that made Jeremy's skin crawl. She sounded like an animal in pain.

Taking huge swallows from a bottle of Red Horse rum, Doctor John approached Jerry Cornelius. Jerry seemed to be in a deep trance, though when Doctor John laid hands upon him, he smiled slyly. As their flesh met, a transference of energy occurred, passing between them like a

crackle of static electricity. They both looked surprised.

Doctor John gulped at the rum again, swaying and humming to himself; an impressive Chthonic figure summing the dark phase of his Voodoo powers.

He began mumbling something which, to Jeremy's still ringing ears, could either have been a Voudoun incantation or a recitation of militant poetry.

Finishing off the contents of the bottle in a deliberately long swallow, Doctor John forced the raw alcohol out through his clenched teeth, covering Jerry Cornelius in a fine spray of Red Horse that drenched him from head to foot.

A roach arced up from somewhere in the crowd of onlookers, following a trajectory that ended on Jerry's shoulder. There was a sudden flash, and his slight figure was enveloped in a shimmering halo of fire. The flames died almost instantly.

Doctor John stamped his left foot three times and cried, "Abba Zabba! Abba Zabba! Abba Zabba!"

Jeremy was stunned. For a second he had relived the incident in Miss Brunner's house on Milk Hill when Jerry's corpse had been sprayed with blazing napalm. The shock made him feel weak at the knees.

Jerry Cornelius, his clothes and hair smouldering slightly, walked away from his baptism of fire. The crowd gasped, falling away from him.

Laughing, Jerry turned to Doctor John.

"Quitte Yo Jouir!" he screamed in a devil's voice.

And the drums started up.

As Salamander struck the opening riffs of 'Goats and Monkeys,' Jerry Cornelius approached his cousin.

"Jeremy, where did I get these ridiculous clothes?" he asked, distastefully fingering the soiled sleeve of his white silk blouse.

Jeremy was still a little upset, it showed in his eyes. The fire sequence had really got to him.

Nodding understandingly, Jerry took his arm and steered his cousin towards the emergency exit.

"But Captain Maxwell's waiting for us, out front."

Jeremy began. "And Miss Brunner—"

"Can take care of herself." Jerry said firmly. "Look."

Miss Brunner, Madame Kokomo and Doctor John were talking intimately together. They all seemed very amused over something. Madame Kokomo and Miss Brunner had linked arms.

Jerry Cornelius kicked the fire-doors open.

"Are you coming, Jeremy? Do hurry, it's freezing out here."

Jeremy did not try to resist.

They arrived at No. 73 after having taken the back route through the maze of gardens, waste ground and alleyways at the rear of Princess Road.

The front door was open; light shined in all the windows on the third floor. Mahavishnu and the sounds of conversation came from Jill's room. People were sitting on the stairs and standing around in the hallway, smoking.

Fortunately, the party hadn't spilled over into

Jeremy's room, Jerry closed the door behind them.

"Captain Maxwell's going to be very annoyed."

Jeremy pointed out, carefully lighting the ancient gas fire.

Jerry stood by the window, peering out through the curtains. His expression was almost sanguine.

"How long have I been dead, Jeremy?" he asked

"Almost three years. We were beginning to think that this time it might be permanent."

Jerry laughed, though there was little amusement on his face. "Perhaps it would have been. But people will

middle."

"Hogarth Muir?"

Jerry's eyes were haunted when he turned from the window. "Amongst others." He began undressing. "There were two attempts at black mass resurrections while my body was lying in Harrow." Jerry remembered. "But they came to nothing. Insufficient inducement, I suppose."

"And what's the animating force this time?" Jeremy asked as his cousin took hold of his hands.

"Let's say it's a question of identity. I'm prepared to share anything but that."

They fell onto the bed. Jeremy wept silent tears. The Anal Assassin laughed, and pumped vigorously.

They were in Captain Maxwell's car heading towards Ringway Airport. Relations were a little strained. Captain Maxwell was furious.

"All night, I waited for you! All night! I would have thought that at least one of you would have had the decency to . . . to . . ."

"Dismiss you?" Jerry Cornelius suggested, sniggering.

Miss Brunner squirmed, trying to find a comfortable position on the Phantom Five's luxurious rear seat. The speedometer reached eighty.

"It would have been even quicker if you could have arranged clearance for the helicopter to land at Platt Fields again." She smiled at Captain Maxwell and glared at the two cousins, daring them to say anything else.

Captain Maxwell melted. "Impossible, my dear. It was acceptable for a light Sikorsky to land inside the city limits, but not for a fully fuelled and armed Westland WG-13. Far too risky."

"How long will the flight take?" she asked sweetly.

It was Maxwell's turn to glare at Jerry. "You'd better ask him! Apparently Jerry doesn't trust the department with that information. All he's told us so far is that it's in France somewhere."

The Phantom Five took the airport approach road off the Princess Parkway and within minutes they were running across the windswept airstrip towards the waiting helicopter.

Jerry was just about to climb into the Westland when Miss Brunner handed him a tab.

Jerry looked as though he was going to object, then grimacing mournfully, he swallowed it.

Jeremy looked questioningly at Miss Brunner.

"A necessary insurance." Miss Brunner explained, pushing Jerry up into the body of the aircraft.

"Armament?" Jerry Cornelius asked the second officer, as the giant Westland WG-13 reached an altitude of twelve thousand feet.

"The usual, Sir. Two M60 side-mounted machine guns. A 40 mm automatic grenade launcher equipped with both explosive and phosphorous grenades, and a rear-mounted 12.7-mm machine gun."

Jerry Cornelius nodded. "Personal weapons?"

"A dozen .38 Smith and Wesson revolvers. Six Belgian FN self-loading rifles and two flame-throwers. But," he stressed, making quite sure that everyone in the party heard and understood, "ammunition will be issued only on Captain Maxwell's orders. And he alone gives the command to open fire."

"Naturally," Jerry agreed, yawning.

"Coffee!" Miss Brunner called from the tiny mess

area.

"Oh, one thing more, Sir." The second officer said.

"Yes?"

"The pilot would like to know exactly where we're going."

"Difficult that," Jerry admitted. "I'm not sure myself yet. Tell him to head for France; then circle."

"Bloody civilians!" the second officer muttered, climbing back into the cockpit.

"But what exactly is the difficulty?" Captain Maxwell had to shout a little to make himself heard over the noise of the 2,000hp Nimbus engine. "Either you know, or you don't know where Hogarth Muir is."

They were all drinking Miss Brunner's coffee. Maxwell was obviously worried. It seemed that Jerry was being even more petulant than usual.

Jerry Cornelius was staring moodily out of the window at the cloud formations. For a reason known only to himself, he was still dressed like P.J. Proby. His blonde roots were showing.

"I didn't say I knew where Muir is," Jerry objected, sulking. "I said I could locate him if we were close enough when I suffered another identity attack."

"Identity attack?" Jeremy realised that confusion was a family trait.

"The clones Hogarth Muir generated from Jerry's tissue," Miss Brunner explained confidentially as she poured Jeremy a second cup of coffee, "apparently threaten Jerry's id: his psyche if you like. He's always feared insanity, perhaps more than anything else. Now he's under some form of Gestalt psychic attack."

"Are you saying that Jerry's clones have psi powers?" Jeremy questioned. "Telepathy?"

Miss Brunner shrugged.

Captain Maxwell made a noise and went forward to confer with the pilot.

Jeremy studied his cousin's profile silhouetted against the plexi-glass canopy.

"Psi-clones," he murmured. The word made him laugh. "Psi-clones."

Jerry Cornelius turned, his face a mask. "Piss off," he said. Apparently the Lord of the Flies was not amused.

Jerry's eyelids began trembling.

Miss Brunner checked her watch.

"The acid?" Jeremy inquired.

"Mmmm. Two thousand micrograms."

Worried, Jeremy studied the vibrating steel fuselage of the helicopter, the muzzled machine-guns, the racks of weapons and 40-mm grenades.

"These conditions are bad for dropping acid, you know. Jerry's sure to enter a psychotic state."

"He's not taken it to experience euphoria." Miss Brunner chided him.

Jerry Cornelius was rocking back and forward on the deck of the Westland, shaking and shivering, undergoing rapid mood swings as his senses ascended the psychedelic curve towards epileap.

"He wanted to take it," Miss Brunner's expression reflected Jerry's internal torment, "to amplify the clones' next identity attack upon him. Every other attempt to locate Hogarth Muir has failed, and there isn't much time left. With acid-expanded sensory reception, Jerry believes he can locate the clones."

"But the risk to his unprotected psyche——"

"Jerry's aware of the risks involved."

"But he was dead, out of it all. Why did he come back?" Jeremy asked. "For what purpose?"

"Pure ego," Miss Brunner explained. "His exclusiveness was, is unique. He couldn't bear to have that threatened."

As they crossed the French coast, Jerry Cornelius struggled to his feet, his eyes electric. His movements were erratic. the result of intense visual misperceptions. His head

moved from side to side with a paranoid urgency, as though hearing strange voices. A guttural moan escaping from between clenched teeth, Jerry Cornelius staggered towards the cockpit. A look of insanity distorted his face.

Paralysed with fear, Captain Maxwell looked on as the pilot and the second officer struggled to keep Jerry away from the controls. The Westland lost altitude quickly, rolling and spinning around its own axis, the rotor blades screaming in protest as the stresses imposed on them reached critical levels.

Recoiling off the shuddering fuselage walls, Miss Brunner clawed her way into the cockpit, Jerry's needle gun in her right hand. She waved it menacingly.

"Leave him alone!" She pressed the trigger. Metal plates shredded around the pilot's feet. "Let him fly the aircraft!"

"He's mad!" the second officer protested. "We'll crash!"

"He knows what he's doing." She triggered the needle gun again. There was no further argument.

"It's against regulations, you know."

The pilot was occupying the observer's seat. He wasn't happy with the arrangement.

Visibility was down to six hundred metres and deteriorating rapidly. It was snowing steadily.

Jerry Cornelius should have been flying at least partly on the helicopter's instrument systems. Instead, he gazed fixedly ahead through the regular sweeps of the screenwipers, his delicate hands resting lightly on the twist-grip of the control column. Only his eyes gave any indication of the horrors seething inside him.

"Where are we now?" Captain Maxwell asked the pilot, peering down at the grey landscape rolling below them.

"South of St Fleur, heading towards the Aubracs, as far as I can tell. Mende is over there, somewhere." He pointed towards the east with his left hand.

The second officer looked distinctly uncomfortable.

"Then we're flying towards the Aveyron Massif!"

"You sound worried," Miss Brunner observed.

The second officer nodded, never taking his eyes off the instrument display panels. "I am. Difficult terrain to fly over. Especially at this altitude."

No one laughed.

"The cloud base is down to four hundred metres now," the pilot said, "and still dropping. Some of the peaks ahead of us rise up to five thousand above the plateau floor. If Mr Cornelius hasn't located the target area within the next fifteen minutes, I'll have to insist that we put the helicopter down until conditions improve."

"That's out of the question!" Miss Brunner snapped. "We have to go on." She looked at Jerry in consternation. She was obviously very tired.

"I'm sorry Miss Brunner," the pilot answered, "but I'm responsible for this aircraft and for the safety of its passengers and crew. Fifteen minutes more, then we go down."

Without warning, Jerry Cornelius brought the Westland around in a tight diving turn, gunning the throttle at the last moment to send the helicopter clattering low over the surface of a half-frozen lake. A black stone tower surrounded by ancient cypresses loomed up out of the murk of snow and low cloud.

"Hogarth Muir!" Jerry screamed above the roar of the two thousand horse-power Nimbus engine. His expression was hideous, as, recklessly, he abandoned the landing of the helicopter to the pilot and pushed his way

towards the weapon racks.

The Westland landed by the edge of the lake, not far from the remains of a disused railway line. The downwash from its rotors scattered snow and ice-shards in all directions.

Before the engine whine had died, Jerry had opened the exit-hatch and leapt out into the snowstorm. He had strapped on one of the flame-throwers. In each hand he carried a loaded Smith and Wesson revolver.

"Come back here!" Captain Maxwe I shouted through the hatch as Jerry ran across the railway tracks and under the first of the cypress trees. "Come back here!" But if the New Aquarian Prophet heard the summons, he made no sign.

Miss Brunner grabbed a Belgian F.N. and two cartridge clip-belts and tried to follow Jerry. Captain Maxwell blocked the hatch with his bulk.

"What do you think you're doing?" Maxwell's jaws quivered with rage. His eyes were pressed into thin slits.

"I'm going to help Jerry. Now get out of the way, Maxwell." She still had Jerry's need e gun. It's muzzle was pointing directly at Captain Maxwell's heart.

The sounds of distant sporadic gunfire came echoing into the Westland's cramped cabin.

"Listen!" Maxwell said hoarsely. "Jerry's causing enough damage out there as it is. The idea was to talk to

Muir first. The weapons were to be used as a 'last resort'." Captain Maxwell was as determined as Miss Brunner. "You'll stay here until I give the word. I don't want you adding to the carnage."

The pilot interrupted him. "That's not Mr Cornelius, Sir. It sounds like rifle fire, probably M16s. There's at least three of them."

Miss Brunner could wait no longer. "Move away from that door, Maxwell — or you're dead." There was no doubting that she meant it.

"Of course," Maxwell blustered, "if Jerry's under attack we must do all we can to aid him. After all, that's what we're here for, isn't it?"

Slamming a magazine onto the rifle, Miss Brunner pushed past him through the hatch and began running up the snow covered incline towards the tower. Captain Maxwell began distributing weapons.

"Someone will have to stay behind and guard the helicopter," the pilot insisted, girding himself with an extra revolver.

Jeremy, beginning to feel distinctly nervous now, immediately volunteered. Unfortunately, Captain Maxwell wouldn't hear of it.

"Very decent of you, Jeremy. But perhaps it might

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be wiser to leave the second officer here. He is Airforce personnel you know. Regulations, my boy." He smiled. "Now if we're all ready, perhaps Jerry and Miss Brunner could use some assistance."

Before Jerry could grasp the situation, they were outside, stumbling through knee-high snowdrifts towards the distant trees. Even in the dim light their figures stood out sharply against the snow. Jerry was desperately aware that they made excellent targets.

They came across the first body not twenty yards into the trees. Some distance beyond, a second man lay dying. He had been shot in the throat with a thirty-eight calibre bullet. He had lost a great deal of blood. Captain Maxwell finished him off.

They broke through the last of the trees several minutes later, following confused tracks in the snow that led across extensive lawns up to the tower.

The snow was coming down thicker than ever, and the light was almost gone. They were all breathing heavily. Captain Maxwell's face was purple. Jerry's boots and socks were soaked right through again.

The tower looked about sixteenth century, though sections had apparently undergone much later renovations. Narrow iron-banded windows and embrasures were spaced irregularly around the tower. Its tiled facade was Grottesque in the grand tradition. Facing them an arched, open doorway gave entrance.

"Go on," Captain Maxwell urged from behind a bed of Rhododendrons. "We'll cover you, Jerry."

"What?"

"Have a look inside."

"Oh."

Jerry had covered half the distance when a burst of automatic rifle fire from inside the tower sent him diving face down into the snow.

A figure appeared in the doorway. It was Jerry Cornelius.

"For Shiva's sake, will you people hurry up? I think they've got Miss Brunner."

By the time Jerry had picked himself off the ground and brushed most of the snow away, Captain Maxwell and the helicopter pilot had reached the tower entrance. As they ran inside a barrage of shots rang out. There was an agonising scream, a seething roar, and the sound of several minor explosions. A dense cloud of acrid smoke billowed out through the arched doorway.

Half-blinded by the fumes, worried sick about Miss Brunner, Jerry entered the tower.

He was standing in a huge banqueting hall. Above his head a many-winged Griffon clawed its way across the domed ceiling. Fake medieval beams decorated the lincresta walls. Three huge diesel generators filled most of the floor space. Jerry had burned them out with his flame-thrower.

Shouts and the sounds of footsteps echoed eerily up a stone stairwell set in the floor at the end of the hall. Jerry remembered to check his revolver. He clicked the safety catch off. As he walked towards the stairwell, his ruined boots left damp tracks across the ancient stones.

The steps took him down into an irritating flashing darkness. Somewhere ahead of him, fluorescent tubes were flickering madly.

At the bottom, Jerry ran along a narrow curving corridor to where Captain Maxwell was standing slumped up against the corridor wall. Jerry could just discern his features in the erratic lighting. He looked ill. His breathing was laboured. A dark stain oozed through his shirt.

"I'm all right. Just a flesh wound I think." He coughed and blood trickled past his lips.

Jerry stepped back, aghast, and almost tripped over

a body lying in "he shadows at his feet. It was a woman. Her face had been torn away by a high-velocity shell. Jerry almost fainted.

"It's all right, Jerry; that's not Miss Brunner. It's one of Muir's assistants. Now get going, see what's happening in there."

Several yards along the corridor, an aluminium door hung open on shattered hinges. Cautiously, Jerry peered inside.

Jerry Cornelius was standing in the center of a large circular room. He was holding the flame-thrower nozzle in a limp but menacing attitude. His face was a grinning white mask.

The room was full of highly sophisticated electronic and biomedical equipment, all linked to seven intensive-care-modules spaced around the circular wall. In each of the modules was a baby.

The babies looked very weak and delicate; almost embryonic. But Jerry knew that these infants had never experienced a female womb. All seven were wailing in helpless, strident anger. All seven were staring at Jerry Cornelius and the flame-thrower, beating tiny clenched fists against the transparent walls of their life-support-modules.

"There has to be another way!" Miss Brunner was staring almost hypnotised at the nozzle of the flame-thrower. Exhausted and frightened, her maternal instincts were surfacing. "It's so inhuman, Jerry."

"Inhuman?" Jerry Cornelius mocked. Liquid death dripped from the nozzle onto the tiled floor.

Hogarth Muir stood next to Miss Brunner.

He was tall and thin, almost to the point of emaciation. And his mustache and goatee beard accentuated the malevolent lines of his face. Ironic intelligence tempered the fear in his eyes.

As Jerry turned to greet his cousin, Muir made a desperate attempt to grasp a Luger pistol kicked under the legs of a cabinet containing an electro-encephalograph.

Jerry turned, dropping to one knee, and triggered the flame-thrower. "Hands off, Muir!" he screamed, laughing. Two jets of coruscating fire blazed across the laboratory.

There was a smell of burning flesh.

Hogarth Muir moaned in horror. Cornelius had burned both his hands away to the wrists. A less than subtle vengeance.

Sickened, Jerry wondered why Jerry hadn't simply killed him.

Jerry motioned for them all to step out into the corridor. Hogarth Muir was surprised, he too had expected his own execution. It showed a great deal for his character that he was still rational.

"You're letting me live?" he said, stunned.

Jerry Cornelius nodded impatiently. "You'll be detained in one of Maxwell's special-high-security units until you're needed."

"Until he's needed?" Miss Brunner seemed to be regaining a measure of self-control.

"All this——" Jerry Cornelius pointed the nozzle of the flame-thrower at the screaming babies. "I approve in principle. It's just that he was a little—— premature."

His laughter was drowned by repeated jets of fire roaring from the flame-thrower

Charles Partington.

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