

Artificial Fires And Other Texts

by Hakim

The Djinn of the Lamp Or The Xeroneirigraphicon of Hakim Bey

You sleep like a firefly pulsing in & out of dream on a regular cycle. Hakim Bey wants into your dreams: the saracen cat-burglar jewel-thief top-story man, collector of wetdreams & Prior of your nocturnal stiffenings.

I attach the electrodes of my ghostly science to his eyelids & run the current into a photocopier. As feral blood invades his penis I can graph the images which his veiled eyes scan so rapidly. My own body serves as the XERONEIRIC machine: drop a nickel in & press the button, a green light flashes beneath my fever-stretched skin, once, twice, a hundred copies if I like. The boy's dream which glows within his body, over & over again, now belongs to me. I have stolen it. Now make a copy of the copy, & then once more a further degeneration of the image. Each passage through the machine unpeels a layer deeper into the texture of dream. I suck on boys' dreams, I am a fly for the sugar of them.

The gray Orphanage walls divide in cubicles, each like the cell of a sleeping brain. I send out my disembodied soul to spy on you there, each narrow cot with its cocoon, its chrysalis wrapped in gray sheets – which by day will become a thirteen-year-old boy: the perfect age for rites of passage. My astral self touches your mind, just as my body's hands might steal beneath the sheets & nightshirt, my hand like white moths trapped & fluttering beneath your blanket.

This eavesdropping on dreams is like listening to music. I cannot read the flute, the flute reads me: there is no alphabet in a hollow reed. I want to taste what you think about when you masturbate, even the images you never dared to speak or write. Imagine you've cut a hole in the left pocket of your shorts, imagine that you are naked underneath, that you play with yourself while you write stories or draw pictures from your waking dreams.

I open my very breast to you, I tear myself open for your dreams. Let the city vanish & men become as jaguars. In each of us night lives on by day, a core of starry bestial warmth within the tasteless fruit of vulgar & illusory waking hours. A boy alone in bed with the rustling of sheets, the choked-back moan, the stain spreading in his pajamas, drowns a civilization in his sweet discharge.

Now I wish to be the nursemaid of your deepest pleasure. The room is yours & I am yours to perform whatever lies in my power: turn the night inside-out. Consider me your djinn, for the touch of your body unlocks every seal on what is hidden from the profane – & who can say whose power is greater, the Slave of the Lamp, or the boy who owns and uses him? I will protect you, instruct you in magic, transport you to distant climes & lavish gold upon you. Am I not powerful? Yet I am in your power, under your spell, hexed, commanded, compelled. Invoke me, send for me, fetch me by the smell of your body after play, summon me into the mandala of your Names with the opals that fall from your cock, knave of hearts.

Ari, in my religion they taught devils black as you, but I renounced such doctrines for rank heresy: the Sun at Midnight: Black Light. You are the key to evening's kingdom, silhouette of a jaguar-boy cut from the fabric of summer between the stars. Ink blackens the page, shadow on light, or there could exist no message. Your body's antelope-hunting limbs tangled with mine will make the bed into a palimpsest-text to be read by burning nerve-light. The palms of your hands & souls of your feet: rose petals on the burnt-sugar of your skin. Polished ebony. Obsidian. Anthracite shaded toward mahogany. People say the black of the fish is the sweetest part. How have I survived without your blackness till now?

What if I suspend gold circlets from your nipples (the color of

aubergines) & and from the liquorice India-rubber of your navel? A long scarf of Chinese-red luciferian silk: I wrap it around your narrow-hipped round-bellied waist & knot it at the small of your back so that one dangling end hangs down between the twin anti-moons, the black velvet melons of your steatopygous buttocks. Now I pass the end of the scarf between your long legs, covering the fat prunes of your testicles & blackest of all your blackness, the musk-black *membrum virile*, rubber truncheon, black-jack up-stabbing from onyx-smooth groin.

Nathanael the thief & compulsive masturbator. Someone who hated this boy might call him a sneaking skinny brat with dirty-blond lanky hair & his hand forever in his pocket. No, he is slender, his body made for climbing through half-open windows by night, his fingers long, flexible & thin (with dirty oval pink nails) perfect for picking locks. His hair: wasp-honey spun into limp silk threads, forever uncombed & pillow-rumpled. His eyes: the pale blue of a compulsive liar, angel-blue, with bruises under the lower lids. His choirboy's mouth the color of watered pigeon's blood. Sun has tinted him light gold except where his bathing-slip leaves slender buttocks & tendon'd groin white as sheep's milk so fresh it radiates, delicately mapped with blue veins. On his groin: the same argonautic fleece as the nape of his neck. His penis the color of rose-syrup & cream: satin-blond baby-pistol tasting of confectioner's syrup.

He tells me he used to haunt the changing rooms under the boardwalk at South Beach, after bathing in the ocean, moving about amongst naked men & boys, searching slyly for an unguarded watch or wallet. Loot wrapped in his towel, he hides in a salt-corroded shower-stall & soaps himself to climax – & only then dresses casually & saunters out of the baths. Once he broke into a vacant neighbor's house, wandered about the rooms, undressed, masturbated, urinated on the carpet (leaving behind him the smell of laundered stars), stole some food and small change.

Jesse-the-shaman's grandmother was a *bruja* & taught him sorcery before she died & left him to wander to the city, dreaming his were-bird dreams & picking garbage. He's thirteen but could easily pass for eleven: a long way from puberty, a little boy with a body so sensitive he can daydream himself to orgasm without touching his genitals. Once I overheard the Orphanage Director call Jesse “ugly”, & I cherish this as proof that his beauty is hidden from the fools who poison the world &

anesthetize themselves with inattentiveness & dull resentment.

Jesse's hair: the brown of autumn, tawny at the tips & chestnut-dark at the roots: clusters of tight curls, helical as morning-glory tendrils, spill on his fragile neck & thin shoulders, brushed back from his high mathematician's forehead only to tumble again over his brows. Green eyes so wideset that Jesse sometimes looks wall-eyed, huge heavy-lashed jade eyes, lids with slight epicanthal folds, half-hooded. Green as sea-spray, enigmatic, wide-awake. The mouth too seems clumsily over-large, upper lip carved & delicate, lower lip full & almost sullen. Nose & chin are tiny; the skull rests on a neck thin & transparent as alabaster; his huge ears protrude so that when his hair is plastered wet to his head he looks almost marsupial.

Dressed in Orphanage uniform, baggy shorts held up by gray suspenders, shapeless blue shirt, darned gray knee-socks falling to his ankles, Jesse appears even skinnier than Nathanael, all pipe-stem pallid legs & bird-thin arms. But when he dresses, all this porcelain boniness falls into harmony: each vulnerable limb perfectly formed, the rib-cage delicately fluted, wrists and ankles like china of sea-shells worn paper-thin; the high-arched feet with tiny separate toes that clench & unclench.

I can see his heart beat under his breast & parchment-thin belly; the pulse of blood even vibrates the loose membranous tip of his foreskin when his organ begins to swell. His genitals might be thought almost inhuman: complex as a moth's antennae or an orchid's pistil & stamen. As it begins the spout, the penis-shaft remains pale & etched with lapis-lazuli, but the foreskin is dark brown-violet, wrinkled & serrated like a sea anemone. As the scepter erects the shaft curves back toward the belly, but the foreskin begins to tighten around the corona, choking it and pulling it forward. Finally the snout slips out of the prepuce, which seems to turn inside-out, so that the sharply-flared little shakehead (shiny with smegma) is surrounded by a moist pink collar of peeled membrane, as if it had been flayed. Now the prepuce stretches tight & crinkles across the nerve-of-pleasure, forcing the urethra-hole open like a reptilian cyclops.

Stretching like a rooster's wattle, there hangs a flap or fold of pink flesh from the middle-underside of the shaft to the scrotum; so that as the penis reaches full erection, the testicles are pulled and stretched forward by this peculiar membrane till they bulge as if squeezed. From scrotum

to anus the penineum-line of dark membrane runs like a dividing-line, and finally becomes a starburst pattern of crinkly brown flesh (like a healed burn) around the anal sphincter, which itself is surrounded by a tiny round lip or raised brown socket. When this is pried open with the thumbs, blood-pink flesh reveals the entryway to deeper rectal complexities, smelling of bath-soap, spice & damp leaves: a risky & forbidden smell, cool & slick, dark & bitter.

The Testament of the Slave of the Lamp & arbiter of dreams: visions I've stolen & photocopied, hand-tinted & mounted on marbled paper: the *Xeroneirigraphicon of Hakim Bey* in a box as gaudy as a packet of Egyptian oval cigarets, to be read with a cup of coffee flavored with amber & cardamons, with a silver pipe of Assassin's Blend, & underneath it all the lingering flavor of adolescent sperm, like the heavy aroma of a peeled mango or the clinging salt of an ocean breeze. My political convictions demand that I publish the book & sell it, risking jail for pornography (at the very least) – for no one else will admit that the Rule of Boys is perfect freedom. Mounted in the slavery I desire (like a gem in a bezel) I find the most exquisite liberty: an anti-bishop's chaos-ruby, which I will kiss as if it were confected of boy's blood. Smoke rises from the lamp & slowly assumes a human shape.

Thirteenth Lake July Fourth Weekend

friday

as for me you can be sure it's not the nearbyness of luminous sleeping growing bodies that debars me from dream since in fact old jewish doctors are snoring heavily all around me in the lightless airless chalet. You could say it's just the woods & emptiness out there after months of Amsterdam Avenue that galvanizes me now – but no, I send out my spirit frequently in the guise of owl or crow, I could feel “at home” anywhere on earth

so here we are, the stream is purling & the heavy lakes which lie all around us like paleolithic tears collect the fragrant dreams of campers on

their first night away from home – the temporary orphans of summer, the licensed runaways like children in stories who seem to have no families but wander freely after the piper in the company of talking animals in the dark dense forest

here too is a place on the face of the earth, a clearing with birch & a stream, impenetrably dark & mysterious, emotionless & serene (despite the incrustations of the humans) – from this clearing I send out my attention like a kite toward the directionless north & tangle its string with the children's – despite my exhaustion I feel distant gentle tuggings & tanglings of luminous cords – chords... The music flickers on & off, nothing is betrayed

soon dawn will erase many logical possibilities & fix upon one particular landscape out of random billions the night might have concealed. Even the sleepless ones, who after all inhabit the night just as palpably as those who snore it away, will have to wake – & it seems no impossible task or burden (quite the reverse!) even as dust grates behind my eyes, to bless all beauty that wakes. Yes that's what I wanted to say, I remember now: it's what I always want to say but sometimes (most times) sleep overtakes me first & it slips by me, that remembering. How sad, how gorgeous

saturday

sweet sweet sweet, I'll use the word so much that like a stupid puritan divine I'll cloy you with it, coat your brain with sugar. More vatic than the vatican, riding the prophetic ray, strolling down to North River (one general store, one Upstate-Classic oysterish Methodist church, a clutch of decayed victorian summer cottages): stars above mimed & mirrored by stars below: hundreds of fireflies in the damp pines & birches: the night dense as blackberry vine blossoming with phosphorescence, smelling of crushed peach & fungus, queen anne's lace. The towheaded boy canoeing with his parents, the skinny kid with his erotic black inner-tube floating on Thirteenth Lake, their families were there too, bitching, bitching & lording it over their barbecues, white people with faces like weak steel traps. Come forth from your trailers & sporting-goods tents & seasonal chalets, deny thy fathers & mothers, come collect fireflies in a jar, let's jerk off together in the woods, let's hold hands on the blindblack warm gravel road, “Boys Disappear From Adirondack Camp; Kidnapping Feared”. Come with me & I'll show you how it is with stars

& lightning-bugs: as above, so below

sunday

Walter G., an ode to Walter (the towhead mentioned in Part II) and to seventy salamanders from Thirteenth Lake

the salamanders about an inch long, green with two rows of scarlet dots down back & tail, slithery underwater, seething in the hand

Walter, perhaps eleven, slanted welsh blue-gray eyes, freckles, arms & legs still pale from winter & frosted over with golden down – today his parents have gone canoeing without him, maybe they'll capsizes & sink & never come back!

Goldberg Variations on the box, the gravel scintillates with mica-bearing schist, Garnet Hill rises over the blue water making it a green looking-glass, pure yellow-paint sun, Walter's crimson bathing trunks, he invites me to join his artistry

digging sand down to the water-level to create a miniature lake with a zen-rock-island in the middle tree'd with wild- flowers & lakeweed, castellated battlements & Gaudi sand- towers all around: the salamanders' prison

Walter wading in the shallows, stalking, bending, pouncing, grabbing: a blond lake-bird, lover of reptiles. One by one the jail-pond fills with lizards, seventy writhing like a pit of stunted crocodiles. His made-up name for the generalissimo of the salamanders: "Sir William Jerkoff" (he smiles almost suggestively)

at the end of the afternoon we break down the walls some wash to freedom with the sluice of water, others are tossed by the trail, Walter bidding them all goodbye. Escape music by Mozart

Environment Art: this text the only surviving record.

Artificial Fires

are you a pyro? asks my Persian friend, his grubby fingers full of Class C Thunder Bombs from Kwantung. His eyes! Shiraz, the painful gardens! Gazelle eyes, here on 79th street in huge dark empty municipal gardens looking for the Candy Lady & her one-eyed daughter selling bottle-rockets, butterflies, M-80's, sunflowers. Round & round the vast June eleven-o'clock PM asphalt lawn shirtless boys are bicycling while she in the sabbat-center fires up a "Forest In Springtime", not for sale, just for the pleasure of it

shaytanak, little devil, no more than ten & already busted once for dealing fireworks; his father contemplates the music of a tanbur under the photo of a dead shaykh from Kurdistan, the cool white tomb like a rocket pointed at the crystalline spheres. Playing with children is part of my spiritual path. Imagine that the air is full of demons, spirits not so much evil as simply dull, noxious psychic effluvia like remembered deaths & debts, sometimes disguised as cops or old Swiss ladies with tightly-rolled umbrellas, but usually invisible – Mandarin paranoia! Chinese suffocation! Blam, bang!

this is no job for Taoist hermits. Call on boys, boys with kitchen matches, boys with smoldering punks, male children: the natural shamans for this trickstery task, apostles of summer gunpowder plotting, boys in the First Flower, anarchists of colored sparks. All order is suspect: shatter the night with pinched stars and pumped stars, arsenic & antimony, sodium & calomel, the brilliance of magnesium, the whistling picrate of potash

Don't Tread On Me. I find Persian boys even in New York. I'm a kundalini con-man, coiled barium-green on a background of sodium oxalate yellow. My colors are fully saturated. This witchnight will not last long enough for all the pacing up & down I must do, shooting off spur-fire (lamp-black & saltpetre) like a handful of sparklers, thinking of the saki, his hand on my shoulder, his hair scented with portfire and iron filings, the musk of independence day

Epistle On the State of Childhood Pyromania, Vannuccio Biringoccio's *Pirotechnia* (Venice 1553) De Frazier, *Traité des Feux*

d'Artifice (1747), sweat drips on the page, Yoruba counter-rhythms blend with Havana trumpets, the war against demonic air-pollution goes on, strings of crackers ricochet against the hot walls of midnight. I will build a great lancework set-piece to commemorate his dervish eyes, a frame-lattice of cane to burn – gigantesque, trompe l'oeil, patriotic – with the soft colors of his Persian eyes instead of a flag

although it's Ramazan, my years of fasting are wasted, dissipated with one glance from that Magian child. Roman candles, blazing shellac, sugar of milk, strontium, pitch, gum water, gerbs of chinese fire – the air is clear, electric with drifting battle-clouds, pungent dragon-smoke. For an instant the State has fallen, its princes & governors fled to their stygian muck, plumes of sulfurous elf-fire burning their pinched retreat. The Assassin child, the psyche of fire holds sway for one brief dog-star detonating hour. C.c.c.c.c.crack.k.k.k! Lemonade is served. Could I unbutton your shirt & taste the salt on your nipples?

round the hammock of memory fireflies congregate, cool periodic explosions, satellites of our archangelic system. In the green black air children trace their own names (the signs which invoke them) in burning letters. The reed- flute plays but you are incandescent with bomber's glee, unable to sit still for the mystic concert. A spark stings your cheek & I caress it, the living silk of Chaos. Come, one or two more explosions & I will be free to kiss you