

THE
WORLD INTELLIGENCE NETWORK

WIN ONE

6-6-12

Edited By Graham Powell



Now 33 High IQ Societies united on one website.

Welcome to the WIN ONE!

This is the 8th magazine produced for the World Intelligence Network, and my 4th as editor. The WIN is expanding rapidly in terms of the number of affiliated societies, and the latest member group (called IQID) is pitched towards getting youngsters involved in our meta-society.

This is appropriate because the WIN has got involved in the forthcoming Giftedness 2012 Conference in Dubai. Dr. Manahel Thabet, President of the IQuestion group and the Arab Inspirational Woman of the Year, 2010, is the second in command at the event. Dr. Thabet has been involved in the organization of the conference for over 18 months, and is also the Chief Scientific Advisor for the conference.

I have been working on the presentation of two workshops on creativity to assist opening the 4-day meeting of minds; additionally, I helped produce the e-book for this, the 12th Asia-Pacific Conference. Furthermore, since February 2012, I've been forging contacts amongst the major international organizations concerned with giftedness and talent.

Dr. Evangelos Katsioulis and I are presenting on behalf of the World Intelligence Network, and Evangelos is also doing a workshop on his own which explains the *raison d'être* of the IQID society.

Dr. Jonathan Wai, founder of the ISI-Society, is also presenting some of his research; Marco Ripà, founder of the sPIqr, and Barry Beanland, founder of the IQuestion society, are also involved. As a consequence of all this, the WIN ONE planned for 12th December 2012 will be a bumper Edition as we report on how the Asia-Pacific Conference went!

As for this Edition, there are articles on neurotechnology, the philosophy of Heidegger and one on atheism. There are artistic contributions in the form of poetry, some stories with psycho-analytical implications, an extract from a novel, and a couple of original conundrums, one of which is scored for the piano. This last item has also been sampled, both on the piano, and for an oriental ensemble. Both links are attached, so please feel free to listen to the stunning music by Alan W. Ho.

Finally, a book review by Dr. Greg A. Grove and one of his inventories is enclosed, so, not only can you benefit from Greg's experience and knowledge, but you can gain some self knowledge as well.

Not satisfied with all that? Well how about doing a test devised by Dr. Jason Betts. A link is available after the Sudoku!

I hope you enjoy this World Intelligence Network ON-line Edition.

Regards,

Graham Powell,

Editor.

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Megabrain and Neurotechnology: The Positive Benefits of Electrical Stimulation.

In the 1980s, journalist and author Michael Hutchison published the results of his enquiries into the burgeoning field of neurotechnology – so-called “Mind Machines”. In “Megabrain” (1986), he devotes two whole chapters of the book to the discussion of the use of electricity to stimulate brain function: “We Sing the Mind Electric – Parts 1 and 2”.

The first of the two chapters describes his encounter with a TENS (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation) machine. Although commonly used in the control of pain, particularly during childbirth, Hutchison describes an unorthodox use of the TENS machine introduced to him by Joseph Light. Sitting in a café with electrodes stuffed down his socks, he finds himself talking excitedly to Mr. Light as the endorphins and other neurochemicals start flowing, stimulated by the current coursing through his body.

The second chapter discusses Hutchison’s further excursions into the effects of electricity on the brain, and his experimentations with cranial electrostimulation, or CES.

Few people in the 1980s had ever heard of “mind machines”, and “Megabrain” and its successor “Mega Brain Power” (1994), which continues the discussion of various brain stimulation methods, raised the public profile of such technologies and practically spawned a whole industry in light and sound machines, binaural beat tapes, and so on.

The use of electricity for the home user seemed less quick to catch on, although its study by clinicians has attracted considerable interest in recent years. There was a time when anyone researching such a topic would have found their grant money cut off, and perhaps it still has connotations of snake-oil salesmen attempting to persuade sceptical buyers that their latest “electrical healing device” would be a panacea cure. Or perhaps it still carries the stigma of the dangerously strong currents used by psychiatry in decades gone by. This is unfortunate, as safe and ethical uses of electricity can have a number of health and cognitive enhancing benefits.

The use of electrical stimulation actually has a long history. The ancient Egyptians used to zap themselves with small specimens of the Nile electric catfish to treat certain nervous diseases. In 43 A.D. the Greek physician Scribonius Largus used to prescribe his “seashore treatment”, whereby patients were advised to step on an electrical torpedo ray with one foot, while standing on wet sand with the other. Patients suffering from headaches and particularly gout would find their afflictions alleviated.

In 1755 Charles Le Roy, a French physician, attempted to restore the sight of a blind patient by wrapping electrical wires around his head.

By the nineteenth century, with the continued improvement of the battery and the more widespread use of a variety of devices that generated pulsed or continuous current, people had become fascinated by electricity and what had come to be regarded as its almost mystical properties. Electrical stimulation devices abounded, and literature can be found describing electrical cures for a variety of physical ailments.

While this sounds, on the surface of it, like pure quackery, there were also persistent reports of this use of electrical stimulation creating remarkable changes in the patient’s state of mind: trancelike states, euphoria, vivid mental imagery, and elevated mental states. There are even reports of depressed and anxious patients showing no sign of what we might now regard as a clinical condition after several treatments using this technology.

Because of the relative ease of building such a device, it was equally easy for a whole lot of charlatans to enter the field. Travelling medicine shows sprang up all over the place, promising to treat every possible condition. Giovanni Aldini, Luigi Galvani’s nephew, embarked on a travelling road show demonstrating the use of electricity to revive the dead!

Inevitably the currents, electrical waveforms and frequencies these devices delivered varied widely and, perhaps unsurprisingly, some volunteers got shocked or fried. These accidents, together with Aldini’s freak show, probably served to harm the reputation of electrical stimulation for an entire century to follow.

On the other hand, the medicos of the day became so concerned about the capability of electricity to boost a person's mood or alleviate a patient's pain without drugs or surgery, that they sought to have the entire practice "investigated". A report, eventually published in 1910 and widely publicised at the time, lambasted electrical healing as having no scientific basis, and banned its teaching from medical education.

Thus while the applications of chemistry and biology became mainstream in the field of medicine, a similar application of physics dropped by the wayside.

The notable exception, of course, was the use of ECT in psychiatry, a practice which only served to fuel the fears of a now already sceptical public.

While these misapplications may have cost science 100 years' worth of potential research and progress in the use of electrical stimulation, fortunately this area is now gaining respectability for research again.

Over the last few years there has been a proliferation of published research papers into tDCS – transcranial direct current stimulation. This involves the use of a weak (1-2 ma) current delivered through the scalp of the volunteer by means of damp sponge-covered electrodes.

Its exact effect depends upon the polarity of the current. The anode, or "active" electrode, has an excitatory effect on the neurons underneath the electrode site,



while the cathode, or "reference" electrode, has an inhibitory effect. Electrode placement, therefore, is critical and depends on what brain area the experimenter wishes to enhance or inhibit.

A number of studies can be found, covering such topics as treating diseases (e.g. alcoholism, depression, stroke and Parkinson's disease), the study of physical changes in the

brain such as the effects on various neurotransmitters and receptors, and observing the effect on sensory perceptions.

Of particular interest were studies on the boosting general cognition, enhancing numerical ability (including dyscalculics), and improving memory and reaction time.

The first question people tend to ask is: “Is it safe?” Reading through a number of papers, the only safety concern I saw specifically mentioned was possible skin burns resulting from poorly-applied electrodes. Perhaps of greater concern is the actual placement of the electrodes. While a basic tDCS device can be constructed with a few inexpensive parts (and instructions from amateur electronics hobbyists do pop up on forums and blogs!), the exact electrode placement is still very much at the experimental stage. You have to know what you are stimulating/inhibiting, and where to put the electrodes in order to target the correct brain area. The electrical current must also be controlled to adjust for skin resistance.

Brain function under the anode is enhanced by approximately 20-40% with a current density of $>40 \mu\text{A}/\text{cm}^2$ (260 μA per square inch). The cathode reduces brain function by 10-30%. While in some instances, such as with depression, the inhibitory effect may be desirable by the clinician, for the purposes of selectively enhancing brain function, anodal stimulation is the most common form of tDCS. Usually a relatively small anode (1” square) is placed over the region to be stimulated and a larger cathode (to allow the completion of the electrical circuit while dispersing its inhibitory effect) is used.

Mind Alive Inc. in Canada sell CES units with an add-on tDCS function, but because of the still-experimental nature of this technology and the fact that a certain knowledge of brain physiology and electrode placement is required to use them safely, the tDCS kits are usually only sold to clinical professionals.

The company’s owner and chief electronics developer held a training workshop last year at the Open University in Milton Keynes, UK, and used the lecturer in charge of the brain lab as a guinea pig to demonstrate the use of tDCS. He placed the cathode on the guy’s right shoulder, using his shirt to hold it in place, told him to close his eyes, and dabbed the anode on his forehead several times. “Can you see that? I’m stimulating the optic nerve.” He then placed the electrode somewhere near the top of the man’s head and held it in place with a stretchy fabric band. The session lasted for 20 minutes and then automatically shut off.

He didn't say much about what was happening, perhaps because the training session continued while he was sitting at the back of the room getting zapped, but there were obviously no ill effects, and after this demonstration, most of the professionals in the room wanted to buy one!

There are two main theories as to what this electrical stimulation actually does. One theory suggests that the increased electrical flow assists the depolarization of neurons when they fire. The other suggests that the electricity stimulates additional production of neurotransmitters. Or it could be some combination of the two. Research is still ongoing, and the exact mechanism is far from understood.

Perhaps if the home user wishes to experiment with electrical stimulation, an easier option for the layperson to get started with is the CES device. No knowledge of electrode placement is necessary to use CES (sometimes referred to as transcranial alternating current stimulation). The device simply comes with a pair of electrodes which the user dampens and clips onto the ears. Some models of light and sound machine have an inbuilt CES function that synchronizes with the audiovisual stimulation.

CES is approved as a treatment for pain, depression and anxiety, and has also been shown to have positive effects in helping patients recovering from substance abuse and in the treatment of the addictive personality. Patients report feeling less anxious, more relaxed, and a general feeling of wellbeing, as CES appears to increase production of endorphins.

Studies have also been done showing CES as having beneficial effects for sleep. In fact, CES was originally known as electrosleep as it was thought to induce sleep. (I have found that when using CES before bed, although I feel little happening during use, subsequently sleep seems to be considerably less fitful.)

Aside from the health benefits mentioned above, CES is also used as a cognitive enhancer. Users have reported increased alertness, concentration and performance, and Michael Hutchison writes of a study that demonstrated improved learning of a psychomotor task.

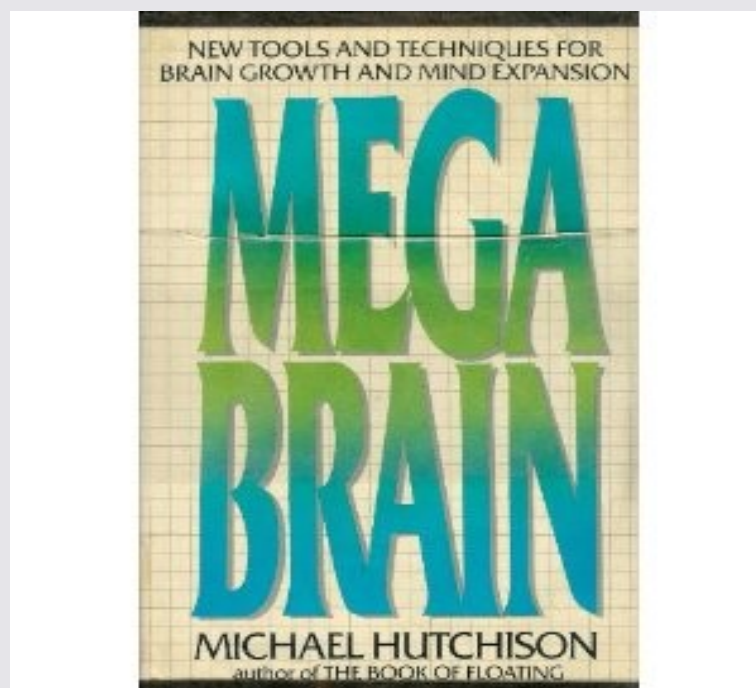
I put this last use to the test while learning to play the piano, wondering if it would take fewer repetitions of any given exercise before the muscle memory etc. would “take it”, and on these few crude self-experimentations, it did seem to make a slight difference. The effect of CES on the teaching of musical instruments is something I would like to specifically research in the future when circumstances allow. Sessions are usually 20-40 minutes in length, and can be used daily or every other day.

On the technical side, CES uses a modified square wave (a pure square wave can sting slightly) to deliver the current. There are two frequencies that have been approved by the FDA: 100 Hz and 0.5 Hz. Therefore, manufacturers tend to build devices for commercial sale with these two settings only. The effects of other frequencies is, of course, an area ripe for future research.

As I hope has become clear, research into the various types of electrostimulation are ongoing, and most of the available literature shows that much of this technology is still at the experimental stage.

I should probably take care to say that no responsibility attaches to the writer or to WIN for any home-built devices or home experimentation using them. Nevertheless, I hope you are by now feeling as electrified as I am by these promising technologies!

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BOOK REVIEW by Dr. Greg A. Grove

If you ever wondered if universal symbols across time and culture have influenced mankind's thinking, his art, his intrapersonal perceptions, then by all means acquire a copy of *SIGNS OF LIFE: The Five Universal Shapes and How to Use Them* by Angeles Arrien, Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam publishers, 1992, 92 pages.

Dr. Arrien, from previous research, has assembled quite a trove of information on the symbols: the square, the cross, the circle, the spiral, the triangle. Each one is discussed and its influence illustrated in art, poetry, architecture, and so forth.

The author also devised a personality test that you take and self-score. By consulting the interpretation of the symbols you rank, you uncover and synthesize meaning regarding your interests, challenges, and purposes. Then you are encouraged to apply the symbols to what you do as an artist and to notice them in your environment. The book is richly illustrated and clearly written. This is one creative investment you will not regret.

A Slice of Modern Life, by Graham Powell





"Austere Sun." Oil on 36" canvas. Eric Anthony Trowbridge, 2012.

On the following page is a poem by Graham Powell

Hyper-operating Life Forms.

Graham's Number is up;
eyes closed,
a Cinco de Mayo moment of
lunacy
in the Library of Babel;
quantum leaping images,
seeking,
explaining,
colliding,
up and down,
strange and blurring
like his synaesthetic visions.
Charms in life,
tops, bottoms,
leptons,
chancing dark matter
of Black Scholes,
black holes
and post Waxahachie
fallout.
"...financial weapons of mass destruction,"
which no COBRA could save,
the fated Desertron death
flooding markets with
quants
waiting for the qubit revolution
of synchronic calculation.
Eyes open,
the dream for humanity over,
the accounts sit before him
definitively closed.

Being

What is this thing called 'being?'

"It depends upon what your definition of 'is' is." This is the infamous defense Mr. William Jefferson Clinton used over his Monica Lewinski scandal. And we all got it: 'Guilty,' and trying to trick a grand jury on August 17, 1998, too. The quote goes on. "If the—if he—if "is" means is and never has been, that is not—that is one thing. If it means there is none that was a completely true statement." What 'is' is, is a good inquiry, but it is a difficult one. It is no wonder he was falling all over his skis, slamming himself into a Pine trying to explain this seemingly obvious concept.

But, why does it matter? Of what possible use can exploring what 'is' is provide except as the means to procrastinate even further on that physics homework, or, to again not replace that squeaky hinge on the cabinet? Clearly, our boy Clinton thought the question was precisely this; to avoid answering the question about the existence of his anatomical excursion. Fortunately, his explanation wasn't coherent enough to even render the question ridiculous, and it is worth taking a think over. The reason is this: 'Is,' that is, 'being,' is the essence of human existence. Once being is understood in terms of the human being, and while giving mention to the animals and the rocks, the world 'lights up,' and the sight is clearer. Clear enough, in fact, to spot what isn't visible, such as hidden burrs, grammatical atrocities, or political wash-ups, for example. I won't mention any names.

In the spirit of Heidegger

The world, with its aspects, properties, attributes, quirks, excitements, anxieties, disappointments, regularities, irrationalities, facets, degrees, complications, specifications, and so on, is always coming at us, rearing towards us. But why is it doing this? Why does it continually confront us with 'that it *is* there?'

Always knocking on our door to introduce its self, only to shoo itself away at the last moment, leaving us as hosts dizzy, or, at best, in wonder? It is as if there is a fundamental disconnect between the world and us – An infinitesimally narrow but significantly deep trench into where any holism, or, monism, persistently cascades (also known as Cartesian Dualism, after René Descartes).



There are times where one feels connected with the world, and there are times where one feels disconnected with it. For most of the time though, we go about doing what we do with skill; the skill acquired by experience, the skill acquired by education, the skill acquired by accident of birth, the skill acquired by effort – Shortly, whenever skill is not at work, dualism foams over like a terrible beer waiter.

Terminology

Reading Heidegger's *Being and Time* feels a bit like learning a foreign language, and not just because it was originally written in German. In order to bridge our Cartesian viewpoint as us being subjects and the articles of the world 'out there' being objects (the error on our part is to include the world itself as an article, and this is what is so difficult to talk about), he had to invent a nomenclature of sorts. Here are some of them.

Dasein: 'Me,' but not merely my being an 'I' as if being a vacuum, or as being an island onto itself which only notices itself 'raw.' Rather, this 'me' is bound up in the world, it is *of* the world. Literally, "Dasein" means 'being there,' and this term signifies that I am not just an audience to the world; I am, in fact, a crucial part in its production. (This, by the way, is not just a childish sense of importance. To demonstrate, try to do anything at all without affecting your world, and to a less notable degree, *the* world - The task is impossible). Thirdly, Dasein is *ahead* of itself and not just itself. That is, Dasein is neither just inanimate or 'animal,' it is concerned with itself, and by this concern it continuously is paving ahead of itself, or, it is *being*.

Ontic/ontological: The ontic is whatever is factual - the brute and discrete articles of some world (including the world itself). The ontological is the being of these ontical facts. For example, a book's ontic nature is that it consists of a cover, has pages, is made of some sort of dried and formed pulp, has ink marks on it, and it is physically transportable. The ontological nature of the same book is that it can be read, understood, treated as a thing on its own. In this way, ontical things have their ontological force, and ontological force has its ontical force.

Dasein is both ontic and ontological.

Ready-to-hand: Dasein operates in its world. It uses equipment (things a Dasein employs), not only as a means to its own end, but Dasein *is* the very equipment it uses. To say that Dasein is present-at-hand is to say that it is operating with its world without distraction. 'Tools' provide a useful illustration for this equipmental being of Dasein. For instance, I, as the writer, am using the necessary tools in order to put across a point; using a keyboard, a computer, me sitting here fleshing out the present distinction, and you, as the reader, are reading my entry to the point to where you become involved in (or bored of) what is being said. We are both using the necessary equipment in order to understand one another; for me, the keyboard, for you, your eyes and mind, and it is these equipments, which are present-at-hand, we become dissolved into them, and they into us.

Present-at-hand/Unready-to-hand: The ready-to-hand is the property of things with which we are not engaged with but are still concerned over. If I, for example, am using some piece of equipment to accomplish some Dasein-related task, and by some force my tool breaks, or it somehow malfunctions, or it becomes interruptive, I don't drop my task altogether, nor do I drop my tools altogether. Rather, I seek to repair my former state back to a state of it being present-at-hand. Such non-presence-at-hand is itself being ready-to-hand, yes, but in such a way that it 'wants' to find repair. We already here are noticing the self-repairing nature of things, 'things,' including ourselves.

Some examples.



Let's take the classic case, hammering. When you are using a hammer to drive in a nail, for instance, and you are familiar with the action of hammering, the weight of hammer, the position of your body is comfortable for what you are used to, the hammering is natural - even though you are alert over your safety and over your accuracy, the whole act of using this equipment is ready-to-hand. But, if something goes wrong with the hammer, or the nail, then your equipment switches into being unready-to-hand. From there, if the hammer has become unusable, or the nail is bent and must be discarded,

one will usually just acquire some new equipment and continue with the task. However, if the equipment is unfixable, then it becomes present-at-hand. This is a type of being that looks at the equipment in order to understand it, and this is where heuristic, scientific, and creative approaches enter.

Another example of these handy types of being is when you are healthy or sick. Your body is a piece of equipment which is ready-to-hand when it is in health, but which can become unready-to-hand when it is sick. If it is too sick, it cannot become present-at-hand in order to treat itself, rather, someone else must come in and take up this present-at-hand being which you have either temporarily or permanently lost. This person will investigate you ontically, and with his or her own equipment will attempt to treat you for both her ontological aim, and for your ontological well-being.

A third example occurs over Dasein's ability to think. While thinking is not usually regarded as being equipment, that is, thinking has about it an enticing abstractness, since it cannot be held or directly felt, it is as real as any process that goes on in the body. When you are thinking well, when one thought leads to the next, when the subsequent thoughts from a process of thinking can easily refer to its former thoughts, and especially when thinking can do all this *and at the same time* anticipate what it will think in the future, the thinking is ready-to-hand.

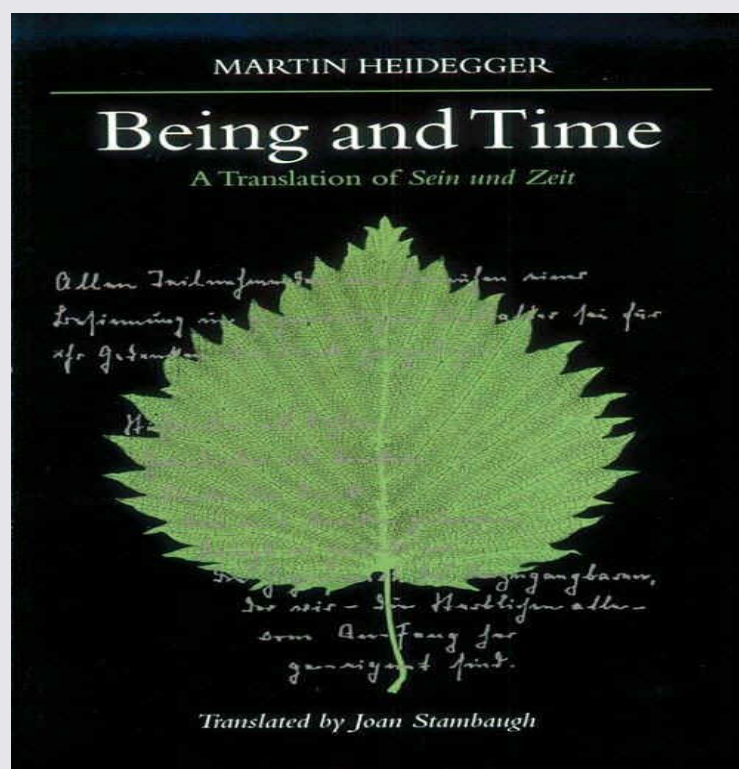
Where there is a disruption in thinking, however, or when any of the formerly spoken of ready-to-hand components do not appear, thinking becomes unready-to-hand. Granted, a good ready-to-hand thinker can incorporate distractions into its own ability, and this talent is revered, yet, there is a problem with this, addressed in the following ending.

What is the use of delimiting 'being' by such terms?

Being is not a matter of existence; it is, well, being. The best way to spot a liar, for example, is to compare his method of being with his touted existence. Any touted existence is clearly not ready-to-hand because any ready-to-hand needs not to assert itself as such. If it ever does so, it becomes unready-to-hand immediately, and may even attempt to become present-at-hand in order to cover its folly. Suspicion itself may carry a readiness about it which could be suspect. Heidegger provided us with some tools to whet out this sort of self-reference, and if we can take a hint, his philosophy should be understood.

Conclusion,

Eric Anthony Trowbridge,
2012



"Atheism" as a Logical Negation of "Theism"

by Phil Elauria

This article is intended to provide a working definition of "atheism" and to shed light on how many self-identified atheists tend to view the term at a minimum. There seems to be a good deal of confusion about what the term necessarily entails.

Looking at the etymology of the word "atheism", it can be broken down into "a" and "theism." From the Online Etymology Dictionary:

"1570s, from Fr. athéiste (16c.), from Gk. atheos 'without god, denying the gods; abandoned of the gods; godless, ungodly,' from a- 'without' + theos 'a god'[1].

Historically, placing an "a" in front of a word tends to express "a lack", "without" and the like. These can be thought of as negations of the word(s) in question. Some example words and definitions from the Oxford Dictionary:

- Atemporal: adjective: existing or considered without relation to time
- Asexual: adjective: without sexual feelings or associations
- Amoral: adjective: lacking a moral sense;
- Etc.

In classical logic, a proposition and its negation are considered a dichotomy where they are both mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive [2]. This can be summarized by a logical principle that states, "Every exclusive disjunction of a proposition with its negation is true", also known as the law of the excluded middle [3]. There is some controversy over the validity of the excluded middle because we can have a scenario where the truth-value of a sentence (and its relation to the world) is unknown or unknowable, such as in the case of the quantum mechanical Copenhagen interpretation regarding superposition and the physical status of a subatomic particle (or indeed anything subject to Heisenberg uncertainty) prior to measurement. It can be argued that even if the excluded middle needs to be revised on some level to account for irreducible tri and n-chotomies, the principle would need to be used as it had been used classically on some meta-level (or levels) or regarding higher order to prevent losing a coherent framework needed to explain anything. For example, to say something to the effect of "the excluded middle is incomplete, wrong or invalid" would be a declarative statement subject to an assessment for truth-value itself. Removing the principle completely would remove the logical footing we can use to make meaningful declarative statements since it can be said that once you upset the interrelations of the logical operators (in this case, exclusive disjunction), you have revised any or all [4]. If the ontological status of something subject to Heisenberg uncertainty is fundamentally indeterminate (as opposed to its determinacy simply being epistemologically out of reach because of our limits), and we can talk about it meaningfully, it would be so, and we would have to talk about it determinately.

Next, we look at the "burden of proof." The philosophic burden of proof can be defined as "the obligation on a party in an epistemic dispute to provide sufficient warrant for their position [where the obligation falls on the individual asserting the claim]" [4]. "Proof" in this sense is used loosely and shouldn't be considered to be necessarily mathematical or logical proofs. The burden especially falls on individuals asserting claims that are widely unknown

and/or controversial. This is just pragmatic. Telling someone you "saw a dog the other day" versus telling her you "saw a 'real unicorn' the other day" brings a different level of justification in which the listener could require greater evidence or a more compelling case before accepting the latter claim without being unreasonable in her demands. Less controversial assumptions or presuppositions (while they still may be subject to rational scrutiny, counter arguments and evidence) can be pushed aside, if not tentatively, so long as those engaged in discourse agree to shelve them in the name of making more significant, worthwhile or urgent epistemic/conceptual/etc progress in other areas of a given debate. For example, while radical skeptical arguments may never be dismissed with certitude, most people have no qualms getting on to more interesting issues that require we disregard them as nonsense or unimportant, at least for the time being.

Theism posits controversial propositions involving an existential claim(s) regarding a type of being(s) possessing features unknown elsewhere; features that are not accessible via uncontroversial methods of coming to knowledge (or methods that do not account for bias) or if they are, are not immediately obvious about how to achieve said knowledge. As such, the theist bears the burden to show how it is possible to do so methodologically and how the conclusions that result plausibly constitute "knowledge."

If we can take the above general descriptions as constituting "theism", letting the claims stand for a proposition p , we can (hopefully) see that not accepting p , would constitute a negation of p , i.e., it is not the case of p or simply, $\sim p$. Keeping in mind that negation doesn't necessarily mean rejection, we will (hopefully) see that a-theism is the default position for anyone in that no-one is born with those particular existential beliefs and that the acceptance of them makes one a "theist." In other words, in order to be a theist, one needs to accept the statement "God (or Gods) exist" or the even weaker claim, "I believe that God (or Gods) exist." Not accepting either, makes one fall into the negation of the claim, ie, atheism. While the term "God" would need defining for further rational investigation, and we remain on the default side of the claim (negation) until we accept it as being the case (again, placing the burden of providing a coherent definition of those asserting the existence of said being). So, while the full-out rejection of claims that one would need to accept to be a theist would fall into the category of atheism, we need not go that far to fall into the negation of theism.

Sources:

- [1] <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=atheist>
- [2] <http://best.berkeley.edu/~aagogino/me290m/s99/mlogic/sld015.htm>
- [3] <http://www.stanford.edu/~bobonich/glances%20ahead/IV.excluded.middle.html>
- [4] Quine (1986). Philosophy of Logic. Pg 87
- [5] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophic_burden_of_proof

[Editorial note: this is the original introduction to Greg's series of 22 stories, so readers can get an idea of the overall scope and purpose of the book. Here we publish just two of those stories.]

LEOPARDS IN THE SKY

for the Preconscious Mind

by Dr. G. A. Grove

2012 Edition

FOREWORD

Previously used by hundreds of people in the fields of science and invention, art and medicine, business and writing--to advance the quality of life and joy of discovery--today the preconscious mind is being neglected in institutions of higher learning and elsewhere. Why is this so?

Several decades ago Sigmund Freud published his ideas about two levels of human consciousness, the conscious and subconscious. What you may not realize is that Freud also hinted at a third level of consciousness, the preconscious, which is the mind that exists between the conscious and subconscious. We use the preconscious mind when we think creatively, daydream, or meditate. Albert Einstein's great emphasis on the preconscious for generating many of his scientific theories underscores its significance. Over the years, however, the preconscious mind has not received the attention it deserves because Western society places more value on the practical and less on the imaginative.

The following 22 snapshot stories are designed to engage the preconscious mind through reflective daydream. To accomplish this aim, **LEOPARDS IN THE SKY** should be read slowly, meditatively. Give yourself plenty of time to visualize the setting and dip into the personality of the characters. Additionally, if you happen to find a story that is deeply compelling and has a sequel, turn next to the page at the end of the story. In this way it is possible to string together several stories of the same theme as you move in and out of reverie. More importantly, approach each story with a relaxed mind that is willing to extend the drama that gently unfolds. May your extended daydreams take on whatever theme or situation your imagination suggests, making each one uniquely yours.

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The Used Bookstore

Saturday came along, a day for rest and recreation. Emile had plans; he loved walking downtown in the village amid the quaint stores and boisterous cafés. Their presence seemed to represent something more than commercialism to him. They were the pulse of his village where enthusiastic people proved their connection with life. An overwhelming sense of it all made him forget that he was just one person among so many.

One of his favorite haunts was a used bookstore on 4th Street. It had been there since he was young, although he never understood its presence until he got older. Creative window displays lured customers inside while a green awning sheltered the displays from the sun's damaging rays.

As Emile entered the store, he was quickly greeted by the owner, an astute-looking woman in her 60s, with long wavy hair, smartly clad in a geometrically patterned dress. She was seated at the counter with an open novel in her hands. Emile smiled and paused for a moment, eyeing 15 or more aisles overflowing with long-forgotten truths. It was a mysterious, intriguing atmosphere, like the inside of an antiquated library.

On this special day, Emile felt that he would stumble on just the right book for himself. After all, he was a professor and books were the source of inspiration. He had quite a collection of his own in his bedroom, but even so, there was always room for just one more book to satisfy his need for esoteric perceptions.

As he headed toward his favorite section--mysticism and psychology--his stomach began to feel a bit uneasy, which meant he was certain to stumble on a treasure. Standing in front of the occult section, he eyed each book, listening inside himself for recognition. A large red book with gold imprinted title caught his eye. This must be the one, he thought to himself, as he delicately removed it for closer examination. It was a book of high mysticism in occult schools of the mystery tradition. He had no sooner opened it than a note card fell to the ground; he stooped to pick it up. Written in calligraphy was a chant for opening the mind to a distant higher consciousness. Overtaken by it all, Emile quickly seated himself on a small wood bench nearby. He thoughtfully read the chant to himself and soon became distracted from his surroundings. His eyes closed automatically. He was now standing in front of an amethyst-robed Adept of towering height.

Café a la verse

Emile left the book store with his newly bought treasure tucked inside a green plastic bag so that no one could see its title or surmise its contents. He was particular about not sharing his eccentric tastes with the world! He knew from hard-earned experience that only a rarefied few would eye the tome with receptive understanding. And rather than get into some refutable discussion over his taste in literature, he chose to keep his esoteric discoveries to himself.

It wasn't long before he had walked four blocks to his favorite café. The café was in an old gray-stone building that had once served as a railway depot. Now converted into an artist's enclave, it was a downtown "hot spot." Typical of most cafés, there were regulars and drop-ins.

With a white-mugged coffee in hand, he wended his way between the crowded tables to one that had a view of the park across the street. He put his book on the table and was soon caught up in the impressionistic atmosphere. Across from him was a college student lapping up pages in a book and furiously taking notes. In the corner was a long-haired man with his nose nearly imbedded in the local newspaper. Laughter rang out from two middle-aged women gossiping next to a casually dressed psychotherapist, pensively journaling. The young, attractive blond was a regular but always singularly alone. The fine features of her face and quiet demeanor projected a feeling of acceptance. Every day like clockwork she divulged the inner secrets of her life into a black journal.

Although Emile tried to be discreet in his people-watching, more often than not his sustained glances met with grimacing expressions. Getting back to reality, he slipped the book out of its plastic bag and began to read the Table of Contents. So many fascinating ideas lay ahead. Then a brief movement across the room attracted his attention. It was the therapist getting ready to leave. She deposited her pen in purse and partially closed the journal. As she gathered up the rest of her things, a loose slip of paper fell under the table without notice, and she was gone. What was he to do? Certainly that note might be important to her. He walked over and picked it up.

In the dusk of eventide

I hear the music of your soul

Your smile stirs my heart

Your lips set passions burning

Fill my arms, fill my dreams

With golden schemes

The Angel and the Cherry Tree

by Alan W. Ho, fb name Alan Wing-lun

Once, and possibly always, there was the finest cherry orchard that anyone had ever seen. Within the myriad of trunks stood a young and lonely cherry tree, which had never blossomed, nor born any fruit, in truth it had never fully grown.

One day the farmer stood beneath the young cherry tree and scratched his head, the cherry tree pretended not to hear.

"What am I going to do with you?" the farmer spoke aloud to himself.

"That's it. I will give you just one more growing season and if you do not produce lots of cherries for me to sell then it's the bonfire for you!"

With that statement the farmer strode away to attend to his usual tasks.

The very heart of the young cherry tree shivered.

"What am I to do?" It asked itself, "I'm bound for the bonfire, I'm sure of it!"

That night when all were sleeping, an Angel flittered down and stood before the young cherry tree.

"Why have you come to me?" the tree asked the shimmering Angel. Her ethereal voice sang in the darkness:

"I heard the sadness in your heart. Your silent cry pierced me deeply. Tell me, what do you fear that hurts you so?" So he told her.

And thus, the whole night was spent, speaking of fears, dread, insecurities and the hopes, goals and dreams of the future. The Angel listened with eternal patience dressed with a quiet smile of empathy. She sat in thought for a while, before a notion germinated in her mind.

The Angel lowered her eyes to the depth of his soul and this she said to him:

"I can sense your pain, I cannot move on until you are healed inside. I will help you to grow and blossom. Each night I will pray and then sleep beneath your branches until the day that you produce your first cherries. My energy will feed you and make you strong. This I promise you."

Their empathic link with each other was so deep it pushed back the world. Besides the two friends, nothing else in the world needed to exist for the longest moment.

And with this promise she leaned forward and gave a chaste kiss.

"Good night"

"Good night, my Angel"

At every sunset the Angel floated down to his side and kept her solemn promise.

Winter ended and Spring entered the orchard.

"Look at me!" the Cherry tree cried to his Angel. "Behold my beautiful blossom! For the first time in my life I have truly flowered!"

The Angel smiled inside her soul and their hearts were warmed with the radiance of his spirit.

The two companions watched patiently as quickly Spring left to give way to a warm Summer, which in turn gave up to make way for Autumn.

"Look at me! look at me!" He cried with incalculable joy.

"I have cherries! I did not believe it was possible for me to accomplish this!" His Angel merely smiled silently.

It was true, the young cherry tree had blossomed and grown into a fine specimen, although his cherries were not the finest, nor the most abundant amongst those in the orchard; nevertheless his pride was beyond measure. Fears were allayed and inner strengths too emerged. His soul had grown to encompass himself and also his Angel. All around them the glow of mutual love was tangible.

Softly the Angel leant in and gave a chaste kiss and whispered,

"I have kept my promise to you. Now I must leave."

"But you cannot leave me," he cried, his branches shaking with the realization, "I will never accomplish this again without you. My soul is incomplete if you are gone. I cannot cope. please stay!" He pleaded with her as his heart bled with fear.

"Yes, you CAN do this again."

The cherry tree frowned as he did not understand her words. She explained carefully, "The potential to blossom and fruit has ALWAYS been with you, but your own fears have held you back."

"But YOU did this, it was YOUR help that made me grow into what am I now," he said to her as his inner voice sobbed.

"No." His Angel shook her head. "In reality, I did nothing, you trusted in me so much that you made it happen all by yourself. THE ABILITY HAS BEEN WITH YOU ALL ALONG. All I did was inspire inner peace and gave you the permission to grow. You were holding yourself back and it was YOU who helped you to grow."

After hearing this speech, he closed his eyes for a while and drank in the energy of the twosome, which warmed him from the centre of his soul outwards. During this time His Angel soundlessly left, as though returning to a dream.

Through a down-falling of tears the young cherry tree had finally understood. He could still sense his Angel, although he knew not where she had gone.

The next year, and in every following year, the young Cherry Tree blossomed and bore fruit just as he had been told by his Angel, and with each new growing season, his abilities grew stronger. Now he knew that he had finally made it ON HIS OWN.

Now ask yourself: "Are you an Angel or a Cherry Tree?"

Alan W.Ho's Music Links:

[Codin' Code AL Coda Piano. Final version.mp3](#)

If you wish to be sent the above version, contact Alan on facebook, or the WIN ONE editor.

The link below is the oriental version.

<http://dbjorck.dk/Music/Codin'%20Code%20AL%20Coda%20Chinese.mp3>

4HT Inventory

G. A. Grove, Ph.D. © 2012

Name: _____ or Code: _____ Date: _____ Grade: _____

Male / Female

This is an inventory of your interests and preferences. It is easily completed by following the directions. There are 7 sets of 7 words. You are to look over the first set of words, then choose the first word that greatly interests you and put a 1 by it. Then look over the remaining words and find the next word that interests you and put a 2 by it. Continue doing so until all the items have been ranked from 1 (most) to 7 (least). For example, here is how one person ranked the planets given him:

__6__ Venus

__2__ Saturn

__1__ Jupiter

__5__ Mars

__3__ Sun

__7__ Mercury

__4__ Moon

If you understand what to do, go ahead now and begin. Also, there are no expected right or wrong preferences, because your responses indicate what interests you and you alone.

A	B	C
___dance	___touch	___will
___music	___intuition	___love
___literature	___sight	___understanding
___opera	___smell	___harmony
___painting	___intellect	___knowledge
___architecture	___taste	___devotion
___sculpture	___hearing	___ceremony
___explorer	___white	___purpose
___teacher	___blue	___wisdom
___philosopher	___green	___truth
___artist	___grey	___tranquility
___scientist	___yellow	___science
___minister	___red	___vision
___sergeant	___purple	___organization

Marking

1= _____ 2= _____ 3= _____ 4= _____ 5= _____ 6= _____ 7= _____

4+6= _____ 3+5= _____ 1+7= _____ 1+2= _____ (137-246= _____)

AE _____ SC _____ LE _____ UN _____ (OR _____)

G.P.R.Powell Sudoku.

Follow your instincts...

After that, fill-in the rest of the sudoku with the name and initials of the WIN ONE editor.

	L		W			L		G
E		L	P				L	
P				E		O		R
		G		R	P			P
R	P		L		L			
		L			G		P	W
L	P				P	G		
W		P	G					L
G			P			P	R	

The answer grid will be published in the next WIN ONE, planned for 12-12-12.

Editor's note: readers may be interested in testing their mental skills by doing the test devised by Dr. Jason Betts, now available on the following address: <http://psiq.org/register.pdf>

CODIN' CODE AL CODA

EVERYTHING BLUE IS A CLUE
SEPARATE THE DATA THAT IS NOT NEEDED
THE DURATION IS ONLY IMPORTANT WHERE IT RESTS
THE MESSAGE IS ALL RIGHT
WHAT AM I TRYING TO SAY?

BY ALAN W. HO
FOR UP TO TWO CLUES CONTACT
WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/ALAN.WINGLUN

ADAGIO CON MOLTO RUBATO

PNO. *p* *f*

PED.

4

RIT. *pp*

PED.

8

f MOLTO RALL.

11

pp !

AN ETERNALDRAGON PRODUCTION 2012

Editor's note: the following story contains very strong language.

1966

by Elisabetta di Cagno

CHAPTER ONE

4:23 AM. The ailerons fanned down. Then the landing gear dropped and David Randolph, feeling the thump underneath him, thought the trap door of hell had fallen open. Through the haze of hash and the peaks of acid he looked at the flight attendant with infinite compassion. Poor Brenda, with the tag above her left tit that said "Brenda". She's Brenda, he's Mr. Randolph; there you go—she'd cut and dyed her hair into what to David looked like a WACS recruitment poster. He saw her skin ring. Married. She had to lie to her employer. Airlines rule: she's married = she's grounded.

He tried to find his man voice, after going through the spider voice, the bee voice and the tree-in-the-snow voice.

"Stewardess, when are we landing? And, uh, where?"

She didn't smile. The two men had not been amusing, what with the vegetarian meals, Snyders sitting on the floor in lotus position, and, Jesus help us, when the pilot blinked off the no smoking sign. Neither would violate the temple of his body with a cigarette, yet the cabin would fill with blue smoke.

Brenda said,

"We have started our descent into Katmandu, Mr. Randolph."

Katmandu? David's eyes were now closed; his mind smiling at the phosphorescent shapes that were dancing on the inside of his eyelids. Did they have an airport? Could they land jets there? Brenda said he had time for a drink, just because she wanted to hear what this one would order.

"I'll have a Cherry Coke, if you got one."

They had. That and Fanta.

Dr. Bernard Snyders had chartered the Caravelle with some of the grant money that Soamsvale University in Boston, founded in 1750, had given him. Oxford

and Cambridge had turned him down. Obviously, Harvard was out of the question.

Snyders drank Fanta. A lot of Fanta.

“How come pilots are allowed to be married?” David asked Brenda as she lowered the tray for his drink.

She walked away and he tried to take her hand, just because she didn’t understand: he’d seen her morph into a butterfly and wanted to set her free. God, Brenda, isn’t it obvious?

Tell the truth, Snyders hadn’t checked on the airport or on a whole lot else. He was working on the experiments and the details were left to graduate students and rich kids working for nothing—like a Florentine guild in the 1400’s—the father had to pay for his young son to be an apprentice. Snyders probably would like David thinking of him as a “Renaissance Man,” though Snyders knew little about the period or about the thoughts David was forming about him. David Randolph was one of these graduate students; an organic chemist who had taken Bernard Snyders’ hard-to-get-into seminar in the fall of 1965. David had worked very hard. Fluoridation was easier to grasp than dealing with the Draft Board. David had been raised in upper Vermont, near Montpelier, a place so close to Canada that it helped him decide he’d rather risk a tour in Southeast Asia than go to Canada and die of boredom. Only kidding, God. Only kidding. For the first few months of the course he’d gotten 90’s on his exams—legit grades, though they were marking on a curve of $60 = 99$. All those benzene rings and all the hydrogen and oxygen atoms fell into the right places on his papers, almost as if he were taking dictation. That’s when Snyders asked him to dinner. Acorn Street. David wore his only suit, from Brooks Brothers, and felt stupid when Snyders greeted him in a thin Indian embroidered caftan and thick leather sandals that encircled his big toe. The toe was hairy but pedicured. Small house, faded WASP elegance—they either wanted you to feel crass there because you gave a fuck, or they wanted you to think understatement was the very soul of elegance. Slipcovers, hunting prints, pictures of guys holding fish in the ‘20’s, domestic gin. After a scotch and water and Welsh Rarebit made with Velveeta cheese, sherry and Angostura Bitters because (David correctly figured) they were too stoned to tell the difference between that and Worcestershire sauce, and after a few joints, is when Snyders brought up

manufacturing the stuff. Snyders was saying how David had to get ready to take it. Put a weekend at the beginning of the month aside. It was indescribable. About ten years earlier, Snyders was working on a doctorate in neurochemistry.

While conducting research in an army hospital, he saw several young soldiers who presented psychotic symptoms. None with history. A few were paranoid; all had had hallucinations. Snyders was looking at circuits of brain chemistry: communication between the lobes of the brain; right brain, left brain. Right brain. Left brain. Right, left. Left, right. He cut through the CLASSIFIED crap; these kids had been given lysergic acid clandestinely by the Army. Consent? Are you kidding. Had the army bothered to ask for consent, it would have been as informed as that of the smiling natives of the Bikini Atoll, nodding old men with flowers in their hair. Some acid casualties went nuts: “never came back”; some saw God and became one with the universe. Most got honorable discharges, medical pensions, whatever it took to shut them the fuck up. Hell, it wasn’t hard. Nobody’d heard of it. The recruits had no idea what had hit them. But it was safe to say that these eighty young guys in Macon, Georgia saw more action in a week than some of their buddies in Korea. No huge body count, but the sergeant turning into a lizard in front of your eyes was no small thing. And it had to be Sir this and Sir that, while they were tripping their teenage brains out. But a few went beyond human. They loved the enemy; they loved everybody because their sense of beauty had become so exquisitely tuned. Sid and Jesse were the guys who’d kiss the doctors and could sit looking at a marshmallow for two hours, exalting at the sheer miracle of its existence; rejoicing over the synchronicity of being on the same planet at the same time as the marshmallow. Marshmallow, cat, lily pad - Snyders frequently heard:

“Don’t you see it, man? We are all made of the same stuff. There are no boundaries. “

“Hey, whatever gets you through the night,” was Snyders’ automatic, first response, but in his gut, the vestigial brain, he had never seen such ecstasy: when he listened to Craig, months after ingesting acid, begin to weep upon seeing a pair of shoes. He wept because of their beauty. Craig wept for the hardship of the people who made the shoe.

“They live in Maine,” he said, wiping tears, grinning and pulling at his blond crew cut, “I want my hair to grow with my mind, Doc.”

Snyders said he understood and suggested he speak to his hair. Craig hugged Snyders. The door to a vast castle had been blown ajar. Snyders only saw a glimmer of light. But at that moment he knew he had to go inside: smell it, taste it, see it, surrender to it. At whatever cost.

Not many of these boys had finished high school, Snyders noted, much less have access to the fledgling studies of quantum mechanics. Hell, they didn't even read "Popular Mechanics."

The good trips were all similar. The bad trips were all horrifying in different ways.

Snyders, ostensibly in the name of science, tried it. He had the good trip. Not the spiritual, space-travel. He had the good trip that gave him enough wild insights for him to ascend from academic mediocrity. Snyders would henceforth be hurled beyond the Good and Evil Game.

For ten years he'd taken acid, made acid and had now persuaded the university to let him conduct experiments with it. The university, as well as the American public and scientific community had no idea about the army's experiments. Now Snyders brought David into the basement and showed him around the lab. It was small and as cozy as a Murano glass factory. Snyders asked David, "Do you trust me? Do you have to be somewhere?" A warped LP of *Rubber Soul* was clunking around the KLH turntable.

"... Time after time, you refuse to even listen. I wouldn't mind if I knew what I was missin' ..."

David hadn't really heard it before and thought it was beautiful. Snyders was mixing up the medicine and doing the ooh la la la's.

SOMETIME LATER; HOURS, NOT DAYS

"But I, why should I go? By whose decree? I am not Paul, nor am I yet Aeneas, but deemed unworthy by myself and others. Wherefore, if I allow myself to go, I fear it would be folly."

—Dante to Virgil

Forget setting aside a weekend. David Randolph, for the first time in his twenty-three years, sat on a cushion, took the blotter Snyders offered onto his tongue, as

he did the host on his first communion and closed his eyes and leaned back on a Moroccan pillow with little mirrors worked into the embroidery.

Snyders had done this before, David thought. It was a casting couch; a seduction and the moment David stopped caring he knew it, and said to himself, I'll never get away from him. This is it. Never.

Snyders ate some of the blotter, sat next to David and explained some points about the synthesis of psilocybin. This led to lysergic acid—cheap, harmless, legal—and how Snyders was going to manufacture it, test it on volunteers and he was going to sign David on, right then and there. Why wait?

When David signed the paper he was holding a 15th century map of the known world, with sea serpents and dragons gobbling up galleons way before the end of the curled sheet. The pen was light, titanium, maybe; but the ink was frozen, yet flowed. Like liquid nitrogen, it smoked on the paper and Snyders laughed like those guys in the Rod Serling-explained moments of pacts with a modern Devil.

You Won't See Me blared in three-part harmony and David saw the notes writing themselves and mixing with one of Bach's French Suites that David hadn't played in three years. Snyders had taken the paper and rolled it—see, it was an old scroll, and he would burn a wax seal and tie a ribbon around it. Snyders' face started to look like a turquoise wolverine, and that, somehow, was OK.

David had never in his life talked to a lawyer professionally. Now, it crossed his mind that he should have one. This thought had to cross along with the momentary vision of how music was truly mathematics. A year later he would actually remember both.

People had said Snyders was a genius, but he was now saying shit about Nietzsche and how God was dead. What he didn't know then was how acid affected falling in love.

David told Snyders that he'd talked to God and he was sorry to report that Nietzsche was dead. He also threw in where The Dead were playing and, by the way, Clapton was God. Snyders, close to fifty—twenty fucking years over the age you were not supposed to trust a person—was baffled and asked David questions that showed both that he didn't know what the fuck he was talking about and that he was trying to read some deep shit into David's remarks. What was amazing to David was that he didn't trust him. Snyders was no Virgil, no guide on his descent.

He stayed with him despite knowing that he was just going to be his boss and would exploit him as cheap labor.

To that end David's sanity was an asset for Snyders to protect. David saw all that and a year from that day he would laugh when Snyders would actually be capable of disappointing him.

Now Snyders was turning into Silly Putty picking images off comic books David was writing and illustrating in his mind; at first the images were so funny. Soon David held his breath, when they triggered an unprecedented depth of sadness. David hated clowns and Snyders became one: sprouting large shoes and a striped jacket with a fake flower in the button hole of the huge lapel. He cried as he did when his father took him to the circus with his brother, James. His father's rebuke was now a cloud as was James' defense of his fear of clowns. Snyders spoke and broke the terrible spell, shattering the clouds into shards of delicate colors he could only hear.

David thought he was now driving a car over the George Washington Bridge; had the toll money on the dashboard. Though, far away, he realized he was actually sitting in a bathtub—fully clothed, no water—on Acorn Street.

CHAPTER TWO

"...Next a devil and an ogress held sway and the country was called land of the two divine ogres. As a result red-faced flesh-eating creatures appeared." (Among the six who exercised sovereignty before Pugyel.)—Tibetan myth.

The darkness was lifting—David saw the dark making a deep, courtly bow to the light.

Selena was sitting in the back of the Rolls Royce Silver Cloud, parked on the dust and patches of grass off the runway of what passed for an airport in Katmandu. When Snyders stood at the top of the stairs they'd wheeled up to the plane, though only a sliver of a shy dawn had made its entrance, he was blinking as if seeing some jerk's brights in the rear-view mirror. He put on his aviator sun glasses and wiped his brow.

Selena told the chauffeur:

"That's him."

This man whose livery cost more than the average citizen of Katmandu earned in a year, went up to Snyders, called him Sir and took his bags to the car. David followed. Selena didn't get out, but when Snyders got in she smiled, said nothing and after kissing him lightly on the forehead, handed him a flower, unzipped his pants and kneeled on the grey, felt carpeting in front of him. She took his penis into her hand and looked at it as if cradling a dying sparrow. Then she sighed, put it in her mouth and Snyders lay back and groaned. He actually enjoyed this, David thought.

Her black, glossy hair was long and her neat head moved up and down for quite a while. David was concerned about the dove-grey upholstery. The car drove as if there were ten gyroscopes inside. You felt nothing but saw the road whirring by, fast. Neither David nor the chauffeur said anything for a while. Then the chauffeur told David to help himself to a drink from the Brazilian rosewood bar.

On Acorn Street David had met Snyders' wife and two teenaged daughters. He opened the bar and poured himself a scotch and stopped himself before asking the poor bastard chauffeur whether he wanted one.

He had to hand it to the three people in that car; they each fiercely knew how to take care of and mind their own business. David had seen people on drugs of all kinds, but this kind of oblivion was never achieved without a face-falling-into-the-soup incoherence. Cool, they were doing their own thing.

But if there was a RUDENESS category in the Guinness Book of World Records, Selena Gorgon and Bernard Snyders should have been slammed shut in the book. The chauffeur drove eyes on the road.

Selena, and this was amazing, looked up at Snyders, smiling and beaming at him, stroking his hand. His hand was still on her head. Then she looked at the upholstery and slapped Snyders' hand, hard. "You asshole. How am I going to explain this to Kamarishi?"

Her face was flushed and she took off a celadon silk scarf and began rubbing the grey felt between Snyders' relaxed thighs. She was getting angrier and got club soda from the bar and the mess seemed to get worse the more she rubbed it.

"Please, Dr. Snyders, help me."

Snyders—surprise, surprise—was oblivious. He had started to snore and Selena shook him and asked again how to tell Kamarishi Kundali, the owner of the Rolls,

and according to his followers, the universe and all truth, about the come on his car seat.

Snyders laughed,

“He’s all knowing. He is the resurrection and the light. All forgiving. Have some hash. It’s opium laced. Don’t be so uptight. What’s David going to think if you are uptight? Relax. Meet David Randolph.”

Selena stopped crying and punching Snyders’ shin.

“What do you think, David?”

Selena looked up at him with her small, ferret face. David shrugged,

“I don’t know Kamarishi, but Bernard’s description is of Jesus.”

Selena said,

“OK, but Jesus didn’t have a Rolls.”

David laughed. But she was serious, “Yes, I know, Mr. Smartass. But he probably couldn’t have gotten one even if cars had been invented or discovered.”

Snyders lit the little, brass pipe he’d filled for her—what a gentleman—and Selena sucked in the smoke and held her breath long enough to be considered for a job as a Bahrain pearl diver. As she exhaled, she said,

“David, It would be my pleasure to please you. You unzip and I’ll take you out to play?”

Snyders snorted then stopped himself, because jealousy was a totally binding concept. David said, “No thank you. I appreciate the offer.”

Selena shrugged and seemed a little relieved that there was one less cock to be sucked that day. The rising sun threw dirty light through the silver cloud within the Silver Cloud. David hoped he hadn’t broken any local custom. He’d heard some people got offended when you didn’t eat the lamb eyeballs that they gave you as guest of honor. But of the few times he could recall since puberty when he didn’t want his cock sucked, this was one of them. Snyders had grunted and moaned and then smiled at David as if he’d been part of a threesome. There wasn’t enough acid in the world.

Snyders could turn into a bed and he wouldn't touch Selena. Then, and he saw his mind looking at this happening from above, Snyders' head was pulling into a pillow and his caftan was like a cool, white sheet and, he was indeed, turning into a goddamn bed ; frightening and been funny.. Shit, must be some good stuff. Snyders looked at David like; see what I'm up against. Poor victim. David said,

"Selena, I'm sure Mr. Kundali, his holiness whatever, will transcend this."

Snyders told David to go fuck himself. Selena said she would never have given the offering of love and receiving Snyders had she known he was an incarnation of Satan. The stain on the upholstery wasn't red wine or anything; it was just snotty and would become dust you could brush off, in time. Like anything else, really. But Selena kept rubbing at it with true desperation. Snyders said,

"Selena, baby, you auditioning for *Macbeth*?"

Selena looked up at David. He thought she wanted to know who Macbeth was, and she did, but she said,

"Transcend this? Do you think it's possible?"

That was only the first hour. During his stay in Katmandu David would see Selena every day. Snyders saw her too. But, sometimes he'd recognize her and sometimes not.

There were a hundred Selenas in Katmandu, hundreds in Stockholm, thousands who shuttled, with who knows what means, between San Francisco and Amsterdam. So many Selenas who would hollow out tampons and fill them with hashish, so many who would fuck you and never ask your name; you didn't have to be in a band or anything. So many whose parents sat with laminated-on-wood high school pictures on their walls, of pretty girls with neat hair in a flip or French twist, Peter Pan collars and a string of pearls. They now roamed the earth with long skirts, sandals, long hair—some with henna on their palms, most with some mind-blowing treat nestled in their vaginas. David hadn't seen them yet so Selena seemed *sui generis*. The Bodhisattva. The Lady Eve. For now she smiled at him, put her hands together and bowed her forehead to her fingertips and said,

"Welcome to Katmandu."

CHAPTER THREE

“There below we found a painted people who were going round with very slow steps, weeping and in their looks tired and overcome.”—Dante Alighieri, L’Inferno

They drove in silence for awhile. David looked outside and saw thin, old men leading thin, old goats around, it seemed, in circles. They had these goats everywhere. They seemed like accessories—he’d once seen a model in a magazine wearing a white suit, white hat and gloves with two white Russian Wolfhounds; she was wearing the dogs too. White goats, he thought, would have gone with the outfit, but they weren’t, like, streamlined enough.

Selena looked down and said,

“We will approach the palace.”

David said, “Cool.”

The rugged mountain road ended and a gravel drive appeared out of nowhere. There were no trees around. There was a low, marble building that was very shiny—that’s how come he could tell it was marble. But it looked like a marble Howard Johnson Motor Lodge. Just the office part, no cabins in the back. In front there was a fountain that spouted purple, red and blue water from separate sources. The fountain was illuminated by several lights even though the sun was in the center of the dome of heaven, all light, heat and no clouds. The water threw rainbows all over the marble, but, they would have been there without the klieg lights. They drove for the first 50 yards in Katmandu where there were no goats. David was already starting to miss them. At least they were alive.

Flanking the double, hammered-gold front doors, sat two Doberman Pinchers on long chains. David, who had been bitten by a neighbor’s dog when he was six and had to undergo a series of painful and scary injections in the abdomen, said,

“The fuck, Selena?”

She smiled and said,

“One was a demonic king and the one with the brown nose was a killer of children in former lives. We must be patient while they live through this incarnation.”

David said, “They look as if someone trained them pretty good in this incarnation. I’m not staying anywhere with attack animals. I like this incarnation and want to stay in it a while longer. You will all have to be patient with me.”

Selena shrugged and, at David’s request, told the driver to go to the back entrance. Snyders, rubbing his eyes, said,

“Don’t be so uptight. Their handler will bring them an article of clothing with your scent and they will be like puppies. This is a test for you, David.”

Everything seemed to be a test to Snyders, only he got to decide the rules and the curve. Just as he did in the organic chemistry class, Snyders composed questions that amused him rather than tested the knowledge of the students. Then—what many suspected was true—he read the papers and designed the curve based on how much he liked the students with the lowest grades. Word was: take Snyders’ class when it’s filled with beautiful young women. But, few women took organic chemistry and those who did, the sweet-faced farm-girl types Snyders was especially fond of, would be the ones to get the highest grades. They must have been something fucking outstanding in their former lives. Selena got out of the car and waved them into an institutional kitchen with steam tables, industrial-size containers of ketchup, beans and canned fruits that were neatly heaped on the stainless steel counters. It smelled like a bad elementary school or a pretty good prison. David said,

“Didn’t you say they grew their own food out here? Macrobiotic or whatever you said, you remember.”

Snyders smiled and his face was that of a middle-aged, jet-lagged man who had gotten a blow-job from a stranger and had just woken up. David said,

“The acid is wearing off.”

Snyders took a couple of blotters from his pocket. He gave one with a four-leaf clover to David and one with a heart pieced by an arrow to Selena.

“Stop bitching, David, you just got here. You don’t have any concept of the forces you are contending with. Just stop fucking with everyone’s Karma.”

David ate the acid and thought, what, if I complain about the food I'll be a roach in my next incarnation? Irony or not, David was actually thinking; if you say the words in your head, even if you don't believe them, that is what you will become. That's what Snyders had told him and, on that one, he thought he had a point. As he walked through the kitchen and pantry where dozens of moldy loaves of Wonderbread stood in a corner, David calculated how long it takes bread with so many preservatives to get moldy. A long time. But, it remains soft. Then, calmly, he felt the donkey ears he was growing and Snyders and Selena became The Cat and The Fox in *Pinocchio*, the ones who took bad boys who didn't want to go to school to Pleasure Island. Oh, yeah, he thought. The acid was kicking in fast—must be the altitude—and Jesus, that's Snyders and Selena. I know damned well they are not The Cat and The Fox. But, that logic only went so far. Snyders put his paw on David's shoulders and told him to relax, "Get into it." But David's limbs felt stiff, wooden and he said, "This place is OK, sorry to be a pain." Then he started crying and Snyders and Selena hugged him. David said,

"All I want is to become a real boy."

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