

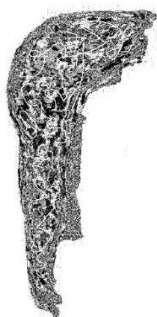
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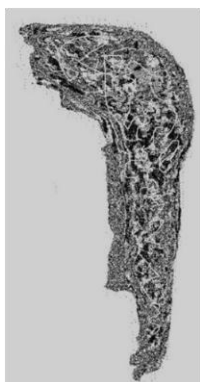
THE  
MIRROR WORLDS

A Billy Taylor Book

by James F. Whitehead



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These works are produced at the request of B.T. as a record of events, from the first, the Eve Sharif affair, I have been at pains to point out my unsuitability for the task. My English is not good, in grammar especially. The detailed explanations are necessary, and I try to simplify as much as possible, but B.T.'s work is complex and at times arcane (if that is the right word).

Moreover, I have not the facilities for professional proof reading and editing. All this I have pointed out to B.T., but of no avail, he insists on sending me material. So here it is, I hope the reader can understand and my poor abilities not prevent these stories from being read. Thank you in anticipation for your understanding.

JFW.

[www.jliat.com](http://www.jliat.com)

www.it-ebooks.com

And once again tip of the hat to Wikipedia, The Star Wars Films et. al. Also “The Celtic Myths” by Miranda Aldhouse-Green and “Tarot and divination cards, a visual achieve”, by Laetitia Barbier.

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## CHAPTER 1: A MEETING WITH AMY SMITH

Catherine Mulberry and Emily Clarke were sitting in the garden room of the house in Cumberland Street in the Suffolk town of Woodbridge. They were wearing light linens, drinking tea, it was high summer. They looked onto the garden, which was in bright sunlight, the lawn stretched away in one direction towards a large pond or lake. They could see the small cottage where Emily Clarke was now a resident, the grand house itself belonging to Catherine Mulberry and Billy Taylor, they shared it, theirs was a platonic relationship and had been so for many years. Both were experts in the study of comparative religions. Catherine Mulberry was an academic who had been a director of the school of Comparative Religions at The University of Birmingham, an acclaimed red-brick university and one of The Russell Group of top UK Universities. Billy Taylor, or just Billy as he insisted on being called, left academia to explore comparative religions in the field, often joining members of so-called primitive religions such as shamanism, and often taking part in initiation ceremonies and practices. Emily Clarke was once a professor of pathology attached to The University of Birmingham, now early retired. She had become a keen vegetable gardener and also developed an academic interest in Gnosticism.

The women were looking, as they drank their tea, at an incongruous sight. It was of two maybe late middle-aged men, though one was not human, sitting in deck chairs in full sunlight talking. They were both wearing the most inappropriate dress. Billy Taylor was wearing one of his Saville row suits and shirts. An Anderson & Sheppard pin stripe, Turnbull and Asser shirt with a Monogram Wildflowers bow tie by Louis Vuitton, and of course his John Lobb brogue

shoes. The other figure was that of a Mr Smith, wearing Victorian attire in black, including a black frock coat and top hat. He however was not of Homo Sapiens stock but a pan-dimensional being of massive intelligence, the Victorian figure a mere avatar.

‘What do you think they are talking about?’ asked Emily Clarke.

‘Absolutely no idea.’ replied Catherine Mulberry with a smile as she was using a phrase of Billy’s.

They sipped their tea and watched.

Mr Smith was talking,

‘Obviously in our world, and I use this in the broadest, almost poetical sense, the world of this universe and others, of multiverses, but also the other worlds which reach from infinite hells to infinite heavens...’

Billy was giving Smith a look, but he continued with the proviso,

‘Well one might speculate, obviously one is limited...’

‘An odd sense of modesty.’ Billy thought,

‘We have truths and untruths...’ Smith went on.

Billy was still thinking,

‘Ah! Nietzsche - the quote “Admitting untruth as a condition of life: that means to resist familiar values in a dangerous way; and a philosophy that dares this has already placed itself beyond good and evil.” Now where are we going Mr Smith?’

As if realizing he had not Billy's full attention, Smith frowned but continued.

' $2+2 = 4$  is true, a single truth, but  $2+2 = 5$ ,  $2+2 = 3...$ '

He went on to affirm his point until he realised Billy was looking bored and his mind was wandering too far now.

'Mirror worlds!' Smith said, bringing Billy out of his dream,

'Like in Alice through the looking glass?' Billy asked.

'No no no,' said an annoyed Mr Smith, Billy wondering if the emotions were fake, probably he thought, Smith continued.

'Remember some time ago when it seems you were in a world of your own, which was in fact a prison.'

Smith waited, there was no acknowledgement, so he continued,

'That one where ridiculous things were happening, one where the boy made a spaceship in Meccano, something like a battle star.'

'The Mandator IV-class Siege Dreadnought from the Star Wars movies. This occurred in my prison world where the boy used two mirrors, one a shaving mirror to create not only an infinite number of Siege Dreadnoughts, but ones of increasing size. But none of it was real.' said Billy.

'Yes, a world you were foolish enough to think was true, and a world which was not perfect, but your own perfect world was in fact a prison.' added Smith, 'Well that use of mirrors, to create and distort is what I am referring to now.'

Billy ignored the term “foolish” because he had been in a prison, as was everyone else save Smith. Individual prisons made by a trickster. However, it was he, Billy, who had worked this out, and he and Smith who had put things right. Well, actually it was the boy who had put things right, the boy and the nine sleepers. Billy and Smith had merely sort their help.

[The boy who lived in a strange other world, the nine sleepers Aeons. Powerful emanations or properties of The One, Bythos. In some Gnostic systems, the supreme being known as the Monad, the One, the Absolute, Aïōn Teleos, the Perfect Aeon, αἰών τέλειος. Bythos meaning Depth or Profundity, Βυθός, Proarchē, before the Beginning, προαρχή, Hē Archē, The Beginning, ἡ ἀρχή, the Ineffable Parent, and/or the primal Father.]

As if realising the danger of Billy rehearsing the entire adventure, for adventure it was, Smith became even more assertive,

‘Mr Taylor, the point is mirrors producing distorted infinities.’

Billy hated being called anything other than “Billy”, as Smith knew well, and so now Billy knew the use was deliberate to cause Billy to focus.

‘Mirror worlds!’ Smith was now saying,

‘Different worlds and different mirrors, in some colours change reverse and distort, cause and effect are reversed...’

He was interrupted by Billy who was now staring deeply at Smith.

Billy spoke, 'You have been in a mirror world,' he was saying, 'why I can guess, you are ambitious, you demurred over the infinite claim, have you...'

Here Smith nodded,

'... been to infinity, an infinity, I know there are many.'

Billy continued looking deeper into Smith's face,

'Oh! I see you are not Smith, you are reversed, your face it's a mirror image!'

'I am the mirrored Smith.'

'Sorry, in your world's language, We, sorry, we, I, mean, I am the mirrored Smith.'

Billy was now looking carefully at the "mirrored" Mr Smith, he began to notice a blurring as the person moved his head slightly,

'As if I was looking at more than one Smith?' Billy thought,

'As if I was looking at many, surely not an infinity?'

## CHAPTER 3: THE GREAT ESCAPE

Emily Clarke turned to Catherine Mulberry from watching the silent conversation and spoke,

‘Mr Smith seems odd, fuzzy!’

As she said this Billy rose from his deck chair in the garden and seemed to indicate to Smith he would be back soon. He walked towards the rear door of the house. Emily Clarke and Catherine Mulberry heard rapid footsteps down the hallway, soon Billy was in the garden room,

‘Quick!’ he said, ‘We have to leave right away, no delay, The Hall of The Mountain King would be best!’

Catherine Mulberry rose immediacy and walked towards the door, Emily Clarke hesitated, Billy grabbed her arm pulling her out of her chair and led her after Catherine Mulberry, she uttered a,

‘Why?’

‘End of the world no doubt.’ Catherine Mulberry replied.

‘Absolutely!’ said Billy, following her through a door and into the entrance of The Hall of The Mountain King.

Another creation of Billy’s, with some help, made prior to his Palace of Arcadia, but made in the same way, by folding space and so not of this world. The Hall was a more modest creation. A large room, a great hall, with heavy Rococo gold decoration, elaborate furniture, and a massive candelabra. There were bookcases, beautiful wood panelling and mirrors on the walls. It could have been from a Russian palace or

something from the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Windows looked onto formal gardens with a fountain, and beyond to hills, then in the distance snow-capped mountains, a very un-English landscape. A log fire burnt in a large fireplace, it was dusk, the room illuminated by candles and the huge candelabra. All three were now sitting in elaborate gold chairs with side tables which had drinks and vol-au-vents on them. The hall's name came from Nigel Summers, the famous physicist, on first seeing it, and though created by Billy it was heavily influenced by whomever created the context in which it first appeared, the boy? The boy being a strange character who inhabits two houses in Birmingham England set in a fictional world of the late 50s or very early 1960s. A strange almost totally uninhabited world, so nothing like a historical reconstruction.

'Why not go to your palace in your world, the one you created of Arcadia?' Emily asked, and before Billy could answer Catherine Mulberry did. They had both spent time in the world of this palace which was set in a rural English landscape, again a product of folding space.

'Well, we know that Billy's Arcadia in which the palace lies is not invulnerable to attack, to even being burnt down, and we know this place,' she waved a hand, 'is a preferred refuge of Mr Smith, so I would say without doubt therefore to be considered invulnerable.'

'How so?' asked Emily.

And again, Catherine Mulberry beat Billy to the answer,

'I think Billy made it to another's design, and that other is this strange boy we find in the late 1950s. And in a boy's

imagination a place of refuge would of necessity be invulnerable.'

Billy smiled and ate a vol-au-vent. The chairs in the hall always had side tables with vol-au-vents and sherry, a glass and decanter.

'And what of our world?' asked Emily, and this time Catherine Mulberry couldn't answer.

So, Billy waited for dramatic effect then replied.

'The reason that the Smith I was conversing seemed strange was because it was not Smith, I was conversing with but a mirror image. Or I should say mirror images, an infinity, and using not just simple mirrors but ones that distort like in those Victorian halls of mirrors.

And I'm guessing the real Smith entered this mirror world and immediately created this infinite mirror image of himself. I'm further guessing that in trying to escape this infinity he was subsumed by this infinity, and it was the infinite Smith that arrived in our reality. It was the mirror images that escaped the mirror world. Why, I've absolutely no idea.'

'And what of our world now?' asked Emily.

'Filled by nothing but an infinity of mirrored Smiths.'

'And what of the mirror world now?' asked Emily.

'Infinite, with a single Smith somewhere in it.' Billy replied.

'And so, what do we do now?' asked Emily.

'I've absolutely no idea.' said Billy.



‘Well, we can’t stay here forever, we need food and other necessities of life.’ said Catherine Mulberry.

‘I somehow have a feeling we could.’ said Billy, continuing, ‘for instance when in the boy’s world one never gets tired or hungry, it’s strange but true.’

‘But bored?’ said Emily.

‘Sure,’ said Billy, ‘but then we have a purpose, to sort out things, and sure I still have absolutely no idea how.’

There was a long silence, Billy ate another vol-au-vent but didn’t drink any of the fine sherry, yet. Emily rose from her seat, first she went to the window and was admiring the view, almost dreamlike she then wandered over to the bookshelves, her pupils dilated, she frowned then smiled and pulled out a large leather-bound volume.

‘What is it?’ asked Catherine Mulberry.

‘It’s a book, obviously, but the title is odd, well not odd. How to travel to a Mirror World. A bit silly, almost childish?’ Emily said.

‘What do you expect, this place was probably the idea of a boy and made by Billy here.’ was Catherine Mulberry’s reply.

Billy looked suitably sheepish, then said,

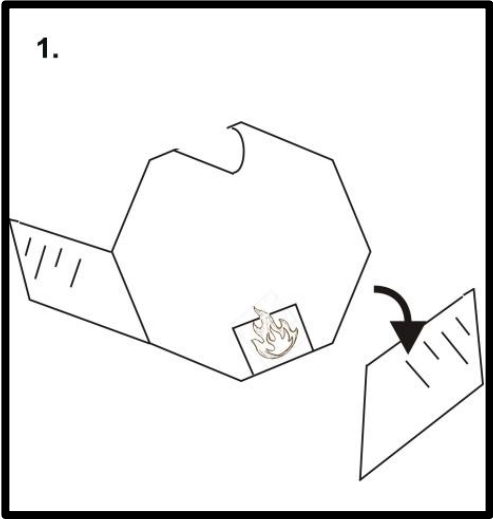
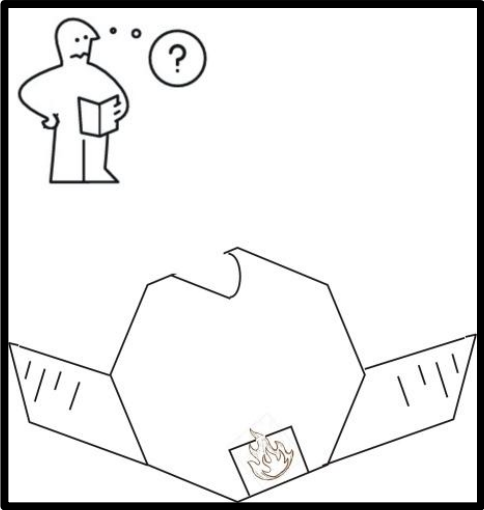
‘Well open it and see what it says, whomever is responsible for it, it wasn’t me!’

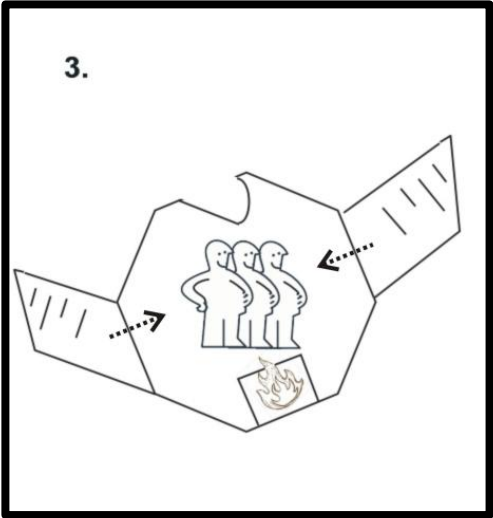
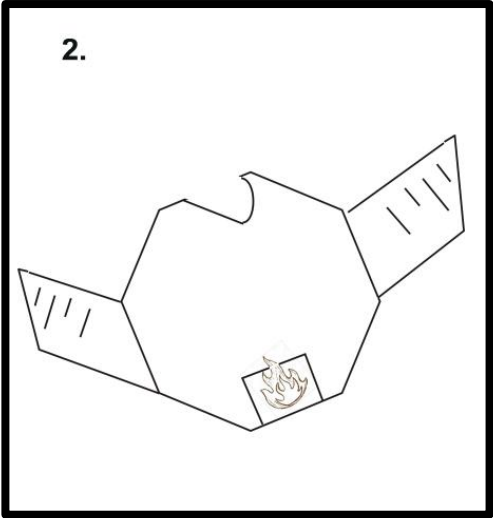
## CHAPTER 3: MAKING THE FIRST MIRROR WORLD

The Hall of the Mountain King was octagonal in plan with wood panelling, bookcases and two large mirrors.



The book, a very slim volume had pictures and an almost IKEA set of drawings showing how to replace one of the mirrors so that it faced directly opposite the other.

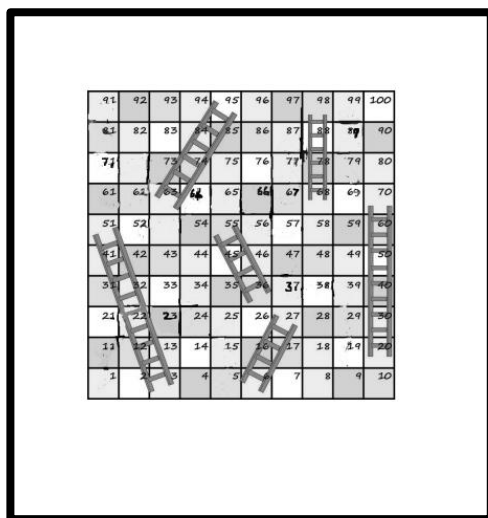




The three looked at the instructions in the book, Catherine Mulberry spoke what the other two were thinking.

‘Simple really, it seems we move one of the mirrors, so they face one another, this creates the mirror infinity, and it even shows three figures. And they seem happy, though maybe just with their work?’

She flipped to the next page,



‘And the next page is very odd, a Snakes and Ladders board with no snakes?’

She flipped to the next few pages,

‘And then nothing, just blank pages.’

Taking one of the large mirrors down was much easier than they thought, it was large but hung like a painting, and on the wall it was to go on there was already hung a painting, a

Nicolas Poussin, Billy was fond of this artist, and it was very much in keeping with the room. They took down the mirror and replaced it with the painting, then hung the mirror so it now faced the other mirror, creating an infinite recession.

## CHAPTER 4: THE FIRST MIRROR WORLD

It was like a room one might find in a modern office, carpet tiles on the floor, a tiled ceiling with some of the tiled sections of the ceiling being lights. Unlike an office however the “room” extended as far as the eye could see in every direction. And there was no furniture, no chairs or desks.

The three were first dazzled by the brightness, the hall had been very subdued. As they took in the scene all they first noticed were the endless rectangles of the ceiling tiles and endless rectangles of carpet tiles which stretched to vanishing points in every direction. Stretching to infinity, in other words never “to” anything, just an endless continuum. Then they noticed at intervals a ceiling tile would be missing and a ladder stretched from the floor and up through the ceiling.

‘Like the board game of Snakes and Ladders,’ said Catherine Mulberry, continuing, ‘only not a hundred squares but an infinite number, and luckily no snakes.’

‘And nothing else here,’ said Billy, ‘no Smith.’

‘Fantastic!’ was Emily’s remark as she slowly turned full circle.

‘I think it’s rather beautiful.’ she added.

Which produced a puzzled expression on Catherine Mulberry’s face, then Emily said, ‘So we should climb a ladder?’

So, they climbed up the nearest ladder. It led into another infinite “room” which seemed identical to the one from which they had just left.

‘Let’s try another.’ Billy said being positive at the look from Catherine Mulberry. So, they did and found themselves again in a similar “room”.

‘This is hopeless!’ said Catherine Mulberry.

There was a silence then, ‘Wait!’ This was Emily, and she continued, ‘This room seems darker than the previous one, and thinking about it the previous one, that seemed lighter than the first room.’

Before the other two could reply she climbed another ladder, and shouted down,

‘Yes, this is much lighter.’

And then disappeared.

Billy and Catherine Mulberry stood looking at each other not sure whether to follow. Then Emily returned climbing down the ladder, she didn’t speak but went to another ladder and climbed that, again appearing a few minutes later. She repeated this again then approached the two holding a small notebook in her hand.

‘First each ladder leads to a different room, I tore off bits from the notebook, and each bit was not in the rooms above different ladders, and each room was either darker or lighter than the previous. So, I conclude eventually they would become blackness or total white light. But the latter might be dangerous and the former hard to find an exit.’

‘Interesting,’ said Catherine Mulberry, ‘but of not much help.’

There was a long silence.



‘Unless it’s binary,’ Emily began, ‘well not binary, actually the reverse, in the total blackness total whiteness we have binary, but in the shades of brighter and darker we have neither complete blackness or complete light.’

‘How is that of help?’ asked Catherine Mulberry.

‘Well, it’s an abstract idea made into a reality.’ was the reply. Billy was just smiling. A smile which annoyed Catherine Mulberry.

‘I think if we are indeed in the mind of Mr Smith then this is a metaphor for thinking, in binary, black or white, and also in shades of grey.’ he said.

There was another long silence, Emily was thinking...

‘What if we remove the carpet tiles from the original room and see if we can use a ladder to get below that room?’ she said.

‘More tiles and ladders probably.’ said Catherine Mulberry. ‘They could go on forever.’

‘Not if the first room was the base, precisely half lightness and half darkness, so the other rooms above moved in both directions towards light and towards darkness. What lies below must then be different.’

‘You could be right, great idea!’ said Billy.

So, they climbed down back to the original room. Billy and Emily removed 4 carpet tiles and exposed an oblong shape of what looked like plywood.

'The floor seems to be made of plywood like panels set in a metal frame, the same size rectangles as the ceiling tiles.' Billy said, producing his Swiss army knife to help lever up the one he had exposed.

They lifted the panel clear and looked down,

'It's not the same!' shouted Emily, 'Not the same as the empty rooms, it's more like a desert!'

This roused Catherine Mulberry's curiosity, she walked over and peered into the rectangle,

'We need a ladder.' she said, 'Come on you two.'

The three pulled down a ladder which rose into the ceiling above and then slid it through the gap in the floor.

'Who goes first?' asked Billy.

'Me!' said Emily, and before anyone could speak, she had disappeared down the ladder.

## CHAPTER 2: THE WORLD OF PLANTS

It was a vast empty plane of sand, soil, and stones, stretching they supposed to infinity within the mirror world mind of Smith. The two others followed. So, they slowly walked around looking mostly at the ground. Above was again a ceiling of tiles, this time of glass showing a blue and cloudless sky, but as before with some “holes” with ladders.

‘It’s a lifeless desert.’ said Billy, ‘Though no, not completely, there seems to be some lichen like plants growing on some of the stones. Anyways it’s a very primitive landscape.’

They were now examining the stones and rocks more carefully.

‘Fascinating.’ said Emily, ‘Yes, fascinating.’ agreed Catherine Mulberry, she continued, ‘There are different kinds of primitive plants, some greenish, others blue, some more like mosses...’

After a while Emily stopped exploring and spoke,

‘Let’s try another ladder and see if things change above?’

Billy had stopped meandering and had now got out his Moleskine notebook and was drawing and writing, drawing layers and making notes,

‘I think we need a map to find out where we originally came from.’ he said.

‘Good idea, I’ll do the same.’ said Emily.

Catherine Mulberry thought at first ‘what’s the point?’ but then she thought two sets might be useful to check on for agreement and spot mistakes, though still for what use?

So, they now climbed up a ladder and found themselves in a vast landscape of grasses swaying gently in a warm breeze. After briefly exploring Emily again urged the others to climb up another ladder. This time they were in a world of a vast grassland with small spindly trees. The sky above through the glass panels of the ceiling a grey.

‘Now I can see why a map would be useful in order to get back to where we began if we need to.’ said Catherine Mulberry.

The mirror worlds of plants were obviously getting richer, they entered worlds of alpine plants, vast deserts of cacti, marshy swamps until eventually they found themselves in a jungle, but like what one might find in a botanical garden’s hot house. The air was hot and humid, there were tall tree ferns, swathes of lush bamboos in different colours, climbing plants and strange exotic trees, some with giant leaves, others with just small needles. Some recognisable like the giant banana trees, others not which had unrecognisable flowers and fruit. Some which stood on a maze of branches or were they roots. There were no animals or insects that they could see, there had been none in all the mirror worlds so far, the mirror worlds of plants. They wandered together through the lush vegetation.

They eventually decided to climb higher, here they found strange plants they had never seen before, they were large lily like flowers, nothing unusual in that, but the colours were very unusual for they were constantly changing.

‘Do you think these colour changes are random,’ Emily was saying, ‘or could in anyway be based on sensations the plants are feeling?’

Emily gently stroked a leaf of a plant which had very large lush green leaves, as she did the leaf and those around it turned to a pink hue.

‘Or they might be communicating.’ Catherine Mulberry was saying, ‘And these tall, small flowers on stems they have, might be eyes?’

These tiny flowers were bell shaped with a narrow neck, necks which although couldn’t be seen ended in an “eye” which could detect the colour changes, and also what couldn’t be seen were what looked like underground tubers, which in fact were nervous systems, or what one might call “plant brains”.

They continued their exploration of the plant mirror worlds, each world in what seemed no longer a room but vast and infinite green houses.

They then entered a hot house where at first they saw nothing unusual, just small plants that looked like geraniums. However, as they approached close to one of the plants it moved. This was a shock for all three. The plant had stumpy rootlike legs and could walk. It ran away from them.

Catherine Mulberry was the first to remark,

‘The plants seem to be getting, well...’ she paused to find words, ‘more complex?’

‘And?’ asked Emily.

'I think Catherine might be worried about walking plants as in the ones in John Wyndham's The Day of the Triffids.' Billy said.

'Yes, I am,' replied Catherine Mulberry, 'carnivorous plants that sting and consume animals, eat humans!'

'These plants seem small and so perhaps harmless, and we've seen no insects or animals so maybe they are not familiar with animal life so not carnivorous?' Emily said.

Then they noticed larger plants which appeared to be hunting the smaller plants.

'Well, they seem to have a taste for veganism, they might acquire one for meat?' said Catherine Mulberry.

So, they left the world of moving plant life.

'Just one more quick look at another plant world then back?' pleaded Emily Clarke.

'A quick peek from the top of the ladder then.' said Catherine Mulberry.

So, they climbed a ladder,

'Amazing!' said Emily Clarke and disappeared, the other two gingerly following.

Again, they were in an infinite hot house, they stood amazed at the sight of flying plants of bright colours using leaves as wings, some like giant butterflies, others having several "wings" and of sizes from tiny to some as large as birds and even larger.

'Best now go back then.' Emily said. And so, they did to the first plant world of desert and lichens.

‘So, what of other worlds?’ asked Emily, ‘How do we get to them?’

As she did so Billy was scraping away the sand and speaking,

‘Didn’t you notice the greenhouse worlds seemed to have paths which we followed where nothing was growing.’

They had but not thought much of this, by now he had scraped away a depth of sand to reveal the original plant world’s floor and as they now expected they found panels of what looked like plywood.

They lifted the panel and looked down, again vegetation, but with animals, lizard-like creatures of various sizes darting about, some obviously carnivorous, and looking closer also large insects that they did not recognise.

‘I think it would be unwise to explore.’ Emily said, there was silent agreement.

They moved back to the desert and exposed another floor panel, it revealed what looked like a vast steppe with herds of roaming animals, dinosaur like, another world was similar but now the creatures were more like mammals. Yet another revealed an ocean, so another non-starter. Then more panels with oceans, lakes and one with beautiful corals shining through clear water. Ones where they could see fish swimming near the surface.

Then others with what appeared to be strange planetary landscapes, sometimes barren like to moon, others with active volcanoes. And then star fields and nebulae, beautiful spiral galaxies, none could they explore.

Then they lifted a panel and were looking into something new and completely different, a vast library.



## CHAPTER 6: THE WORLD OF THE INTELLECT

As before using a ladder, they descended into what was a vast library, a very Victorian library but without walls, but towering bookcases of wrought iron with shelves and shelves of books. They wandered sometimes seeing familiar texts, others in French, German, Latin, Greek, and others in unknown languages.

‘It begs the question, “Can this be infinite?” if there is a finite number of possible books.’ asked Billy.

Emily was quick to answer, ‘No, there may be a limit if you have a fixed alphabet and word length, but allow potentially infinitely long words, and or an infinity of possible languages and you can have both countable and non-countable infinities.’

The other two knew this but Emily went on,

‘If word lengths can be infinitely long then you can create a list of these, but using Cantor’s diagonal method you can create a new word not in the list, so the set of these words is infinite and uncountable.

Imagine an infinite list of these infinitely long words,

Asssdrghnmkkgcchwggwggbbbbbbvcb... and on to infinity.

Ooohhgbsbsjtbwbsjhsnnsjjsjxncmklmmmm...

Jbbbbahhhsahhsjyqtccahnaunajsmndasm....

Kbhzbahzahhhhhhhssisjshssnndgssmms...

Now take the first letter of the first word and change it...

Asssdrghnmkkgcchwgwgwbbsbbbbb...

Becomes

Z.....

Doesn't matter to what, just different... now the second word, change the second letter, then the third word change the third letter, and so on down the infinite list.

Ooohhgbsbsjtbwbshjsnnsjjsjxncmklmmm...

**.y....**

Jbcbbahhhsahhsjyqtccahnaunajsnasm....

Kbhdbahzahhhhhhhssisjshssnnssmms...

Keep going down this countable list.

It's countable because

1 = Asssdrghnmkkgcchwgwgwbbsbbbbbvcb...

2 = Ooohhgbsbsjtbwbshjsnnsjjsjxncmklmmm...

3 = Jbbbbbahhhsahhsjyqtccahnaunajsmdnasm....

4 = Kbhzbahzahhhhhhhssisjshssnndgssmms...

We can pair each with an integer, and these are then infinite and are countable using the infinite list of integer counting numbers.

But then using these words we can make a new infinitely long word as in what we began doing...

**Zycd.....**

Now you will see this new word can't be in the infinite list as it is not the first word in the list, the first word begins with an "A" as its first letter and the first letter in our new word begins with a "Z". It can't be the second word in the list as the second has an "o" in the second place not a "y", and so on. And on and on ...

This new word is not in the infinite list. The infinite list is countable, first word, second word and so on, you can keep counting using integers, because they are infinite too, but your new word, and any others you create in the same way, is not in the countable list. So, you now have a set of uncountable words. The set of integers is infinite, and countable, this set is infinite and not countable, it's "bigger" than the infinite set of integers.'

This all three knew, but Emily always explained this when it came up.

'I guess it's being once a science lecturer.' she said, and this also she always said.

'So yes, a truly infinite library unlike that of Borges...'

And here Billy couldn't help explaining either...

'Borges' idea in his fictional story, The Library of Babel, containing all possible 410-page books of a certain format and character set of 25 letters, the period, the comma, and space. So, the Library can only contain a finite number of distinct books. Borges' narrator believes that the library is nevertheless infinite as that there are repetitions... whereas the philosopher Quine notes that the Library of Babel is...'

‘Stop!’ said Catherine Mulberry, and all three laughed out loud.

‘So, what’s above?’ said Emily, ‘If all possible books are here?’

So, they climbed a ladder into a normal looking library at first but then looking closely the books were of different shapes, triangular, octagonal, and of different sizes.

‘And so how many other ways of making a book. Are we bothered, is that our aim?’ asked Billy.

So, without speaking they returned to the original library to see what lay underneath that.

Descending through its floor, below was a museum, and from this more museums of natural history, creatures they knew, and then many they did not. Ones with many legs, heads, some massive skeletons of creatures, many hundreds of yards long. Sometimes they walked through corridors of vast vitrines containing preserved creatures, some recognizable as sharks, but then some sharks with two or more heads. Jellyfish, small and then massive specimens.

Then there were museums of technology, steam trains, aeroplanes and then devices they had no ideas about their functions. Monstrous mechanical machines, then display cases with what looked like tools, recognizable things like cameras, calculators, weapons, swords and guns. And then things they assumed might be similar.

‘Are these visions of what is in Mr Smith’s mind?’ asked Emily.

‘If this is his mind, and we are in it, this is just too odd?’ said Catherine Mulberry, adding, ‘Yes most peculiar, I’m not sure I approve.’

‘Yes, I think I feel much the same, not so sure I like the idea of being in someone’s mind.’ Emily replied.

Billy said nothing but was obviously thinking.

Again, they went back and below to find an art gallery with many Pre-Raphaelite type paintings.

‘I do like Pre-Raphaelite work.’ said Catherine Mulberry as they wandered through the galleries.

‘I think there should have first been primitive and early art not Pre-Raphaelite work?’ Billy was saying, but the other two were looking at the paintings so took no notice.

So eventually they explored below this, as before via a ladder and opening a floor tile. And yet again more galleries with modern art, primitive art and then what they guessed was art but did not recognise.

Descending again from the original art gallery they found a vast room full of small models of different buildings. What they thought might be a museum of architecture.

Then they climbed up a ladder from this museum and had a surprise. They had climbed into just one room. A different strange “room” because it wasn’t infinite. But it was a room which though also didn’t look strange, because it looked like one of the rooms in Billy’s palace of Arcadia.

It was finite, but again there was a ladder rising through its ceiling, and on climbing something even more strange. A room almost identical to The Hall of The Mountain King.

## CHAPTER 3: THE HALL OF THE MOUNTAIN KING

‘But not the one we came from,’ said Emily, ‘the mirrors are where they originally were, not where we put them.’

‘You are quite right.’ said Catherine Mulberry, and continued, ‘And they are not reflecting this room, they are reflecting repeating images of Mr Smith.’

‘Oh my God they are and look at his face!’

Smith’s face was a kind of smeared distorted scream.

Billy had sat in one of the fine baroque chairs, he was ignoring all of this, deep in thought, and he absent mindedly ate a vol-au-vent and poured himself a sherry into a glass from a decanter which was standing on a nearby ornate table. And again, as if not seeing the images or hearing the comments absent mindedly spoke,

‘I’d have to admit this sherry and vol-au-vent are excellent, I’d say better than in the original Hall.’

His face then became animated,

‘That’s it!’ he said, ‘That’s the proof, we really are in Smith’s head!’ He continued, ‘Just as the infinite mirrored Smith’s was at first finite in our world, then expanded, this is the infinite sized mind of Smith, and we are inside of it.’

‘How so certain?’ said Emily looking away from the mirrors and at Billy, ‘Can you explain more?’

‘Well, the mirror Smith that entered our world at first was finite, looked singular, but the mirror Smith in the mirror world was infinite, right?’

‘Yes. Infinite repeating reflections.’ Emily replied.

‘Well, once in our world he was finite, then he started to expand, expand to his true size, infinity, which is why we had to flee quickly before he expanded to an infinite number.’

‘So, what became of everything and everyone in our world when the infinite mirrored Smith expanded.’ Emily asked.

‘Obvious,’ said Catherine Mulberry, ‘All were obliterated.’

‘So why do you definitely conclude this, that we are now inside the real Smith’s mind from our journey through all these rooms?’ Catherine Mulberry asked.

Billy began, ‘First the binary, black and white, binary logics, true false, that gave way to subtle differences, greys, basic thought gives way to speculative thought, aporia, uncertainty. Then we had the origins of worlds, solid earth of simple life, then its full potential. Intelligence in the infinite knowledge in the libraries, and technologies some of which were alien to us. All of which knowledge Smith possesses. Then the art galleries, but this started me thinking, the first art gallery was of Pre-Raphaelite works, not earlier art works. And why, because they are a favourite of Smith’s. As is my palace of Arcadia, but his most favourite place...’

‘Is The Hall of The Mountain King.’ said Emily.

‘Yes, that clinched it,’ said Billy.

‘So, the hall was also in Smith’s mind, this hall we are in now?’ Emily replied.

‘Almost certainly. And no doubt perfect too, I noticed the sherry and vol-au-vent are excellent, I’d say better than in the original Hall.’

‘And?’ asked Catherine Mulberry looking at Billy, thinking how her previous idea of being in Smith’s mind had been correct.

‘We wait until the non-mirrored finite Smith becomes finite; it takes some time like it did when the mirror Smith became infinite. I’m guessing as he entered the mirror world, he became infinite. And so, we saw infinite rooms, now finite rooms, soon I suspect we will see the actual Smith.’

The two women sat.

‘So, everything and everyone in our world when the infinite mirrored Smith became infinite were obliterated.’ said Emily.

‘Obvious,’ said Catherine Mulberry, ‘obliterated.’

There was a silence.

Emily glanced back at one of the mirrors which had been showing an infinity of ever receding Smiths.

‘The Smiths are dissolving.’ Emily was saying to which Billy replied,

‘No, it’s resolving into a single Mr Smith.’

And it did, the two mirrors became reflections of the room, the paintings, books, fire burning, the landscape and candelabra. The hole in the floor and ladder from which they entered had gone. Billy, Emily and Catherine Mulberry were sitting, and in the middle of the room was a Victorian



gentleman in black, top hat and frock coat standing looking at them, and with a very unusual, bemused expression.

‘You should sit and drink some of your fine sherry, and maybe like Alice tell us about your mirror looking glass adventures.’ Billy said with a smile.

Smith was wiping his brow with a handkerchief,

Billy rose,

‘Sit down Mr Smith, you look a little perplexed.’ Billy was saying as he poured a glass of sherry. Smith sat in a chair and took more of a gulp than his usual polite sip, he lifted his hat and wiped his forehead again, slowly resuming his regular expressionlessness.

‘My adventures, yes.’ said Smith, ‘but first I must issue a rather perplexing statement or perhaps set of statements. I feel I should be annoyed at having uninvited guests roam my mind, and yet without such I would not have escaped. This room now is not the one in my mind,’ he paused, wiped his brow again and sipped some sherry, ‘this is good, but not perfect, you are no longer trapped in my mind, or am I trapped in the mirror worlds. The second I entered this room it became no longer the one in my mind.’

‘So, the sherry is not so good?’ Billy said now sitting he sipped from his glass, ‘Yes, it’s not, it is good but not perfect. But the transition from your room to this?’

‘To mere humans indistinguishable.’ Smith replied continuing,

‘And the illogic of this is annoying also. And then we have the task of putting the world to right if the multiple doppelganger

Smiths still inhabit the non-mirrored world.' He now took another sip of sherry and ate a vol-au-vent.

'I've never tasted one of these, they are good.' he said.

'They were better when this room was your room in your head, and not this, the old room.' said Billy.

Smith thought, 'Ah!' he said, 'the last thing of me in the mirror world was my image of The Hall of The Mountain King. Hmmm, not surprised it was better.'

'That's the old Smith.' thought Billy and Catherine Mulberry.

'So, wont the mirror Smiths in our real world have gone or gone back to the mirrored worlds?' asked Emily, who answered her own question, 'Though how could we know, and anyway you said the mirror Smiths would have obliterated anything in the real world when they expanded.'

'Not necessarily.' said Billy.

## CHAPTER 8: HILBERT'S HOTEL

Smith spoke as if he was a mechanical encyclopaedia,

‘David Hilbert was a German mathematician and philosopher of mathematics and one of the most influential mathematicians of his time. Hilbert’s Hotel is a thought experiment which illustrates a counterintuitive property of infinite sets. It is demonstrated that a fully occupied hotel with infinitely many rooms may still accommodate additional guests, even infinitely many of them, and this process may be repeated infinitely often.’

He paused for effect then continued a little less mechanically,

‘Certainly, using the idea of Hilbert’s hotel, if someone could arrange the task, we could accommodate the new infinity of mirrored Smiths into your world with room for what was already there.’

He then explained to the three what they already knew,

‘First if all the rooms are full and a new guest arrives the concierge can accommodate them. They arrange for every guest to move up a room, so the guest in room 1 moves to room 2, room 2 to room 3 and so on, as there is an infinity of rooms this is possible. This frees up room 1 for our guest.’

The other three all knew about Hilbert’s Hotel, but humoured Smith, so he continued,

‘If a hundred new guests turn up, the concierge moves everyone down 100 rooms. So, this frees up 100 empty rooms. Now if an infinity of new guests arrives, this looks like an unsolvable problem. However the concierge just arranges to

move everyone into double their room number, so the guest in room 1 moves to 2, the guest in room 2 to room 4, the guest in room 3 to room 6 and so on, now they have freed up an infinity of rooms. All the odd numbered rooms are now vacant.'

'Yes, we know this famous thought experiment, but how would that work in practice?' asked Catherine Mulberry, 'We know the thought experiment but who could make this happen and how could they.'

There was a silence, some were thinking 'Absolutely no idea.'

'The boy, the boy I think from 1959 or some world which looks like the world in 1959 but is mostly uninhabited. When we had to house all those cruel deities, gods who needed human sacrifices and worse were expelled from our world, the boy let us put them in his garden in 85 Colonial Road.' said Emily.

'You are quite correct,' said Catherine Mulberry, 'and there was an infinity of those deities.'

'It would only work with countable infinities.' said Mr Smith.

'Are the mirror world Smiths countable?' asked Catherine Mulberry.

'Why yes of course.' said Smith.

'Even though in that mirror world there are uncountable infinities like in the library.'

Even Smith had to give this some thought, eventually saying,

'Yes.'

'Splendid.' said Billy, 'We can pay the boy a visit and find out.'

‘How can we do this as access to the boy is from our world, which we now know for sure is radically different, how can we do this, take such a great risk?’ asked Catherine Mulberry.

Smith smiled, ‘Did you not know in our interlude with the dragons, Mr Taylor...’

Billy frowned; he liked to be called “Billy”.

‘... created a doorway to the world of the boy from this Hall of The Mountain King. A tad dramatic, a secret door using the bookcase.’

Billy got a look of ‘Why didn’t you tell me.’ from Catherine Mulberry, to which he shrugged and gave a grin.

Billy rose from his seat and pushed at the bookcase; it opened onto an alleyway between two gardens with wood paling fences either side.

They followed Billy as he walked to the end of the alleyway, then took a left dogleg, and opened the gate onto the back garden of 85 Colonial Road.

This was the strange world of the boy. It looked like Birmingham England around the late 1950s, early 60s, but was only populated by the boy and a few strange figures until the garden of the house in which the boy lived became a place for the displaced deities. Displaced as their presence in the real world was not wanted, to say the least.

Billy had opened the gate onto the back garden of 85 Colonial Road. The four walked past the remains of a bonfire, across the lawn and down the concrete path which led them to the French windows. Billy opened one of the doors and stepped into the living room, the others followed. As before there was

a large dark table on the right with a black and white television set of the period, above it a cream Bakelite radio. There were two armchairs either side of a coal fireplace, and opposite a sofa. Directly to the left was a bird cage, but the place was empty, no boy. They walked down the room and turned right.

They entered into the kitchen, sat at the table was the old woman, small and thin, wearing a blue dress and pinafore of dark maroon paisley patterns. She was looking into a mug of tea, she looked up and spoke,

‘He’s not here. And those “things” in the garden say they can’t share.’ she said.

‘By things she means Hindu, Aztec, Inca and other gods and spirits.’ Billy needlessly explained.

Then she began to drink her tea, which seemed to imply that was all the information she knew or was prepared to divulge at that time.

They went back into the living room. On the sofa was a comic, The Eagle, a comic that the boy liked to read, especially the adventures of Dan Dare pilot of the future. It was open and at the bottom of the page was a regular feature, “Astonishing Arithmetics”. This week’s was “Hilbert’s Hotel.” It showed using cartoons the hotel manager of the full hotel dealing first with one new guest, then with 100 and finally with an infinity of new guests.

Emily was first to notice it whilst the others were just looking around the room, the furniture, the mirror above the fireplace, the blue budgerigar in a cage.

‘Look,’ she said, ‘it’s the Hotel.’ The others looked, but still no sign of the boy. ‘He has obviously read the article, but did he make such a hotel, and how did he make an infinity of rooms?’

Billy scanned the room, behind the bird cage was a built-in cupboard between the chimney breast and the wall. The lower part had two doors; there was a shelf then two more cupboards above. One of the lower cupboard doors was slightly open. Billy was looking at it intently.

‘What is it?’ asked Emily.

‘It was the boy’s toy cupboard when he was younger.’

‘Was?’ asked Emily.

‘Yes was,’ answered Billy, ‘but now I think it’s an actual hotel, an actual Hilbert Hotel.’

Smith and Catherine Mulberry were now also listening, no one thought or said “impossible”, they had seen things far stranger.

Billy bent down and opened the door more and looked inside,

‘Yes, it’s a Hilbert Hotel.’ he said, though the cupboard door was only 30” high but inside was a full height corridor of doors, which ran off into a distance which ended in the singularity of an infinite perspective. He opened the other cupboard door, both doors now fully open all four could see the extent of the corridor.

Just then the old lady spoke, she must have left the kitchen and entered the living room,

‘He’s not in there,’ she was saying, ‘it’s a Sunday he’ll be at his other grans house.’ Then she left the living room.

The boy lived at his grandparents’ house, 85 Colonial Road Bordesley Green in the week and spent Sundays at his other grandparents’ house in Stechford.

‘Well,’ said Billy as he squeezed through the cupboard doors, ‘let’s take a look and see.’

The other three outside bent low to see Billy as he unbent and reached his full height, he continued,

‘If the boy has used the Eagle example, then he has moved everyone from our world into double their room number, all the even numbers. And moved Mr Smith’s infinite mirror world Smiths into all the odd numbered rooms.’

‘Correct.’ said Smith.

Billy opened the door to room 2, ‘It’s the hall in the house in Woodbridge, the one we use to get to The Hall of the Mountain King, the boy is a genius.’

He bent low and climbed out of the cupboard and back into the living room of 85 Colonial Road.

‘Now what?’ said Catherine Mulberry.

‘Let’s talk.’ said Billy sitting on the sofa and gesturing the two women to sit in the armchairs. Smith declined to join Billy on the sofa but stood looking imperial.

The old lady entered and offered tea to Emily and Catherine Mulberry, Emily accepted hers, but Catherine Mulberry shook



her head, so the old lady offered it to Smith who also shook his head, so Billy took it.

‘Thank you,’ he said with a smile, ‘cups and saucers, we are honoured.’ He continued,

‘I’m guessing, well surmising, Catherine Mulberry will want to go back to Woodbridge, Smith will want to go back to The Hall of The Mountain King, I want, well feel the need to go to Inglesfield Road and see the boy. As for you Emily?’

He looked at Emily, and she answered,

‘For the time being I’d like to stay here, or rather explore the gardens and try to make contact with all the deities. It would be most interesting to get first-hand knowledge about these gods and demi-gods, their religions and beliefs. I know I could never publish any findings, they would never be taken seriously, or though maybe I could publish as fiction. And that’s a thought, you know, maybe Tolkien had visited Middle Earth for real.’ she laughed.

Billy looked at Smith then Catherine Mulberry, both nodded a yes. Then Billy answered the unasked question, but it was in the minds of all three. ‘What Billy would you like to do?’

‘Well likewise it would be good to explore strange and even fictional worlds, but what worlds. I’m intrigued by the Star Trek and Star Wars films, and the like, though I think I couldn’t even publish any of my explorations of these as fiction because of copywrite.’

He laughed,

‘They once burnt people for publishing Bibles, now they do the same using copywrite laws and expensive lawyers.’

No one else saw the joke.

‘But I could accompany Zarathustra, or Hamlet...’

Billy and Emily finished their tea, and Billy took the cups back into the kitchen. On returning all were standing. Emily helped Catherine Mulberry through the cupboard doors, and she entered room 2 and was gone without a word back to the house in Woodbridge.

Smith likewise left through the French window to walk back to The Hall of The Mountain King, again without speaking.

‘I’m going out through the front door to walk to Stechford.’ said Billy,

‘Then I will accompany you as far as the garden.’ said Emily, she continued, ‘How long will it take you?’

‘Stechford and Inglefield Road is around 3 miles away from here. So, I guess, at a leisurely stroll it should take around just over an hour to walk there.’

CHAPTER 2: SMITH IN THE HALL OF THE MOUNTAIN KING

Smith walked down the back garden of the house, down the concrete footpath, crossed the lawn by the apple tree and walked down the alleyway and into The Hall of The Mountain King. He had a smile on his face, something he would never let others see. Though his vast mind stretched out into infinities, the finiteness of this room gave him an experience he had never encountered before, it was joy.

He closed the bookcase secret door, he was invulnerable, and though he knew of all the books, and all possible translations in all possible languages, that were the libraries in his mind, he took out what looked like a child's copy from the bookcase of "Alice through the Looking-Glass".

He sat, still smiling to himself, opened the book and began to read,

Chapter 1 Looking-Glass House. One thing was certain, that the white kitten had nothing to do with it - it was the black kitten's fault entirely. For the white kitten had been having its face washed by the old cat for the last quarter of an hour (and beginning it pretty well, considering) so you see that it couldn't have had any hand in the mischief. The way Dinah washed her children's faces was like this: ....

His smile grew almost imperceptibly larger, he imagined himself like the Chesire cat, becoming nothing but a smile.

## CHAPTER 10: CATHERINE MULBERRY GOES HOME

Catherine Mulberry walked through every room of the house in Cumberland Street in Woodbridge, every shared room that is, kitchen, garden room, library, a front sitting room and all of her own rooms, but not of course any of Billy's. She walked around the garden. There she picked some flowers, a few wild poppies growing behind Emily Clarke's vegetable patch. She took them back to the house, in the kitchen found a glass to put them in, and took it to the library, there she placed it on a table. She then took out a book, a copy of "Alice through the Looking-Glass", sat and began to read.

## CHAPTER 1

## LOOKING-GLASS HOUSE

One thing was certain, that the white kitten had nothing to do with it- it was the black kitten's fault entirely. For the white kitten had been having its face washed by the old cat for the last quarter of an hour (and bearing it pretty well, considering): so you see that it couldn't have had any hand in the mischief. The way Dinah washed her children's faces was like this: first...

She began to smile, then imagined herself like the Chesire cat, becoming nothing but a smile.

## CHAPTER 11: BILLY GOES TO STECHFORD AND BACK

Billy closed the gate noticing Emily had disappeared inside the lilac tree. He walked up Colonial Road which was, and still is, lined with London Plane trees, but in 1960 it still had gas streetlights. The house, 85, was in the middle of the length of houses, lying in a dip. These houses were built in the inter-war period, possibly the 1920s, they were larger than those at each end of the road, which were probably late Edwardian or possibly later, pre the Great War of 1914-18 at any rate. Much smaller than the newer houses in the middle. As if building work had stopped, perhaps because of the outbreak of the war and so a lack of men to continue building.

The top of the road meets The Bordesley Green Road, as it was called, though Bordesley Green was its proper name. This had the same older houses which stretched from Fordrough Lane, the old Fire and Police station to the M&B pub, The Broadway. Some of these houses were shops, those especially on street corners, but the section between Colonial Road and Churchill Road was all shops on both sides of the road. Billy walked past a gentleman's tailors, green grocers, pork butchers, chemist, tobacconist, shop selling knitting wool and finally a newsagent.

Here he crossed Churchill Road and then passed the Era cinema, and a bank, a Birmingham Municipal bank. And then the same houses continued, he walked on past Bordesley Green Primary School opposite, a Victorian building with a tower. He was now standing by the Broadway pub where the road became Bordesley Green East, a dual carriageway. The houses either side of the roads and in estates behind them were built post-World War Two. He passed what was then

Little Bromwich Hospital on his right. Now called Heartlands Hospital for some reason. And then he passed The Ritz cinema again on the opposite side of the dual carriageway, now demolished, it was the last building in a row of shops. Then the parkland either side of the river Cole. Only another half mile and he was in Stechford where Stoney Lane becomes Station Road, Stechford having a station on the London Euston to Birmingham New Street line. This was all familiar to him as a child visiting Birmingham from Litchfield and from when he was a copper in the West Midlands Police Force. He turned left and walked about a distance of a half mile towards the station, and then that distance again up the steep hill of Manor Road, and past the Co-op milk depot, he had forgotten about, and the electric milk vans on charge. All this time he saw no people, only a few birds, it was warm, a light breeze, maybe early spring, and now he was standing looking into the front garden of number 46 Inglefield Road.

The front door opened, and the boy was standing looking down the path at Billy. His blond hair, gap front teeth, squinting a little from the sunlight, he was wearing a striped T-shirt, short khaki trousers socks and sandals. His gaze moved above Billy to the house opposite, a much newer house as were all those opposite, perhaps built in the mid to late 50s so very new and not council owned but privately owned, all having driveways for a car but no garages. This was number 45, it had a veranda of large glass panels and French doors. Billy seemed to understand, turned and faced the house, he crossed the road and walked up the drive, opened the French window and inner door. He was now standing in a hallway, at the end of which was a boy, a boy who had dark black hair, wearing a jacket, a blue polo shirt, black short trousers, socks and sandals. He immediately recognised the boy, it was

himself, the boy was a reflection in a mirror of himself aged around 10 or 11, he walked towards the mirror and through it.

He looked into the blackness, and it was as if it spoke to him, 'Go back.'

So, he did, and found himself outside the house, number 45, it was obvious he was still a child of 10 or 11, he looked down at his shirt, trousers, sandals, his hands, and looking up saw his reflection in the glass which confirmed this. So, he looked across the road to see if the boy with the blond hair was there, but he wasn't, but more of a surprise was that the house, number 46 was now the maisonette as what it became. Now Inglefield Road had parked cars along it not of the late 1950s but contemporary of the two thousand and twenties. It was like being in some strange dream or nightmare. He heard himself think or say,

'This is deep shit my son.'

Which made him feel guilty as it's not the idea or language of a 10-year-old, well not when he was 10.

He felt in the pockets of his jacket, took out and replaced what he found one by one, he had his Moleskine notebook, pen knife, his wallet, and smart phone. He must have been standing leaning on a wall for ten minutes. People were walking past not paying him any attention, and now cars were travelling on the road. All the driveways had cars parked on them or signs of ones being parked. Most of the older houses opposite had their front gardens paved to also park cars and were no longer council houses but obviously now privately owned from right-to-buy schemes. Most also had glass verandas. No one was taking any notice of him. Then he took

out his phone and tapped Catherine Mulberry's number, she answered almost immediately.

'Billy, so you are back.'

'Yes and no.' he said, and before he could continue, she interrupted,

'Who is this, and how do you have my friend's phone?'

'It's me, Billy,' he said, 'something happened, no wait, I saw the boy in the past, I was in the past, and now I'm as I was at the boy's age, it's...' he paused lost for words. There was a delay, obviously Catherine Mulberry was thinking, and because of past events after a few minutes accepted the likely truth of this,

'Do you want me to come and fetch you?'

she said, the only thing she could think to say and do, this made Billy have to think for a minute,

'No, I have my wallet, I'll find my own way back to Woodbridge.' he replied.

After some 'Are you sure, OK etc.' which was 'yes', he was sure and 'no' he was not sure he was OK, but he said he would keep in touch.

The next thing to do, he thought, was to get a taxi to New Street station. Google gave him a mini cab firm; he phoned and ordered one to take him from 45 Inglefield Road to New Street Station. Five minutes later a cab pulled up, the driver looking around and about to phone the customer, who was Billy, who had time to make up a story. He walked to the driver's window.



'The cab is for me,' he said to the driver, 'it's my dad, a test, he wants to see what happens if I get lost, so that I know what to do if I can't reach him on the phone.' He held out his smart phone.

'The station?' the driver asked.

'Yes, he is waiting there for me, we live in Litchfield, the next time I will have to get a train ticket to find my own way home.'

Billy now was getting into being a boy again,

'It was my idea, dad thinks it's cool.' He gave a grin. And so did the driver who said, 'Get in back, you have money? Or will your dad pay when we arrive?'

'Card or cash?' said Billy, again with a boyish grin, modelling himself on the home alone movies.

He got into the back, and the car drove off, back the way the 50-year-old had walked, and then on into the city centre.

There was some conversation, mainly about sport, which football team did he support, he said it was The Wolves, the taxi driver pulled a face, he was a Villa supporter. Soon they were in the taxi drop off area of New Street Station, Billy said,

'There's my dad!' said Billy pointing down the queue of cars to no one in particular, 'The fare, how much?'

'Eight fifty.' the driver said. Billy got out of the car and handed the driver a ten-pound note saying, 'Thanks and keep the change.' He then ran off as if to find the fictional dad, the taxi driver taken in and smiling, thinking, 'Nice kid, smart, but the Wolves, no way...'

Inside the station he found the booking hall and used an automatic ticket machine for a single to Woodbridge. As if the mind of a 50-year-old expert in comparative religion had now to take on the mental appearance of a 10-year-old he thought it would be cool to not travel to Euston then up to Ipswich and so to Woodbridge. He had noted on trips to Cambridge made by rail that there was a “Cross Country Trains” service from New Street to Cambridge, so he decided on that route. He carefully checked his ticket which read, “All Routes”.

The journey was better than he expected, he thought it would be good to get sandwiches and wine, then realised the wine was not an option for a 10-year-old. He did buy sandwiches, crisps, chocolate and a coke. The train left New Street and soon was following the Fazeley canal towards Spaghetti Junction where his first involvement with the police and serious crime occurred, since his leaving the force of course, the Eve Sharif affair, and all the others, the Dragons, Tablets of Truth, The Nine Sleepers and the Übermenschen. The first stop was Coleshill Parkway, Coleshill being near where the River Cole flows into the Tame, and where the ticket inspector spoke to Billy on checking his ticket,

‘You have the wrong ticket lad,’ to which Billy replied,

‘Sorry sir, I thought “Any route” meant I could travel via Cambridge.’

‘So, you can, though it’s probably much longer than going via London, no, you have the wrong ticket, look this is for an adult not a boy, but I’m sorry I can’t refund it, but you’re OK to travel this route if you wish.’

Billy felt himself flush, then before he could say anymore the inspector was on his way checking other people's tickets.

Then there was a glimpse of Old Arley just before the Nuneaton stop, which is where he met the local vicar, Lisa Phillips and the involvement with the dragons of Revelations. Almost as if by fate he was being shown his recent adult life.

Then on to Hinckley, he was now in Leicestershire, and the following stops, Narborough a small village near Leicester, South Wigston a suburb of Leicester, and then the town itself, the last resting place of Richard III who was killed after losing his horse at the Battle of Bosworth. And so, the crown of England had passed to the Tudors. Melton Mowbray Billy had heard about for its famous pork pies, at which he opened his egg and cress sandwich, crisps and drank some coke. Oakham was the next stop and is the county town of Rutland, England's smallest county which survived attempts to remove it as a county by a Westminster government. And now he was in Lincolnshire and Stamford station. Billy had visited Stamford, a charming town of stone buildings. Next was Peterborough which Billy had also visited because of its fine Gothic Cathedral. Whittlesea, the next stop, is a market town in the fens, which before they were drained was on an island, as was March. Finally, before Cambridge itself was Ely, another island in the Fens, not a town but a city as it has a fine Gothic Cathedral, one of Billy's favourites, not his number one, that was Litchfield. But Ely is magnificent, rising from the flat fens and so visible for many miles, the central octagonal tower...

"The central octagonal tower, with its vast internal open space and its pinnacles and lantern above, forms the most

distinctive and celebrated feature of the cathedral described by Pevsner as Ely's greatest individual achievement of architectural genius."

Then finally Cambridge, and another favourite place for Billy, Kettle's Yard, originally the Cambridge home of Jim Ede who had three cottages made into a house in which his collection of mid-century modern art could be found. The house is still as it was as when Jim Ede lived there, unchanged since the time he gave the house to the University. And close by a favourite of Catherine Mulberry's, the very small church, The Church of St Peter. If Billy liked cathedrals Catherine Mulberry loved small churches.

So, it was as the train left Ely Billy telephoned Catherine Mulberry for a long conversation. At Cambridge he changed for the Ipswich train and at Ipswich for the Lowestoft train, the first stop being Woodbridge.

At Woodbridge station Catherine Mulberry was waiting,

'This is so embarrassing.' was Billy's opening remark, whereas Catherine Mulberry was laughing, and trying to say, 'What a fine boy you make, then let's get you back home.' She offered her hand, and he took it.

## CHAPTER 15: BILLY AND THE BOW

'I know what you will want to do, the same as I, look around the house, I'll be on the terrace with drinks.' was Catherine Mulberry's remark as they entered the house.

Which is what Billy did. In his own rooms he realised he would need some new clothes if he stayed like this, a boy of ten or eleven. He was puzzled, he felt the same, could think the same but knew he was now very different, but how? He had enjoyed the food on the train, but when thinking about it he wasn't hungry. No matter he moved on to the shared rooms. The thought struck him of the problems he might have with his friends like Nigel and Ray, and the guys in Hollywood who he advised on making films. He was a very well-paid advisor because of his knowledge of myths and legends, for those making movies which used myths like the Thor films. One particular idea of his, very very loosely based on the Cahokia, an early North American civilization, had prompted a series of block buster movies which broke all sales records, and won numerous awards, as one studio director said,

'It's a great adventure series and also ticks all the right boxes, a win, win, win, pay this guy Billy more!'

Also, no more police work, what of his favourite red wine and real ale? He left the house for the garden, walked to the small lake where his skiff was moored. Yes! He could reach the oars so be able to row. He then joined Catherine Mulberry. She had lemonade, not Pimm's!

'We need to see how you cope.' she explained, 'How do you feel, tired I expect.'

'No,' he replied, 'not tired but strange, yet the same.'

'I think we should visit Mr Smith to give you the once over, he being pan-dimensional might have some ideas.' she said.

'Good idea, I can't help thinking I might be like the boy, the boy in Colonial Road with the blonde hair.' he said.

'Well, your hair is black.' she said,

'A black-haired version, let's see Smith.'

'His way with words was the same.' she thought.

They went back into the house and through the door to The Hall of The Mountain King. Mr Smith was reading a book, he had finished Alice through the Looking-glass and so was reading the earlier Alice in Wonderland.

He looked up and spoke immediately, 'How so, how so Mr Taylor, how so you have now the attributes of the boy?'

'How do you know?' asked Catherine Mulberry.

'I do not, that is the case, I have no knowledge, that of the human Taylor I certainly had knowledge, but he has become as the boy at 85, a mystery, a BoW, body without organs, lacking any perceptible organisation.'

'And?' asked Catherine Mulberry.

'And nothing, no age, time, possible contact, no possible knowledge, not in this world or any other, Billy, the boy is unknowable to me.'

He paused, then went on now talking to Billy,

'You should visit your palace of Arcadia; it will change no doubt.'

‘How so?’ asked Catherine Mulberry.

‘The boy’s worlds are invulnerable, his hand is in this Hall and caused it to be so, when Billy visits Arcadia my guess, and I now can only guess, it will become likewise.’

He went on,

‘Well, the game of chess in the looking glass world is over, Billy, you have checkmated everything.’

There was a silence, and so Catherine Mulberry and Billy left.

‘He doesn’t seem pleased, I guess checkmate is difficult for a pan-dimensional being to take.’ Billy was talking, ‘I suspect whatever transformed me did the same to the boy, only when he was much younger, maybe the Aeons, but no, he is above or outside even their power.’

‘I think the boy could have given you the power he has as a gift.’ said Catherine Mulberry.

Billy seemed content with that. Over the next few days, he grew used to being a boy like being, “boy like” as for sure he was nothing like a boy, certainly mentally, but physically too. First, he never got hungry, thirsty or tired. He had no other bodily functions, odd, he could eat, he could breathe but suspected he would survive without this. Other functions, like excretion had stopped. He never got dirty, or his clothes never got dirty. He wrote these up as lists, but they became long negatives. He would discuss with Catherine Mulberry. He visited his palace of Arcadia and walked around its rooms and gardens. And yes, it too had changed, somehow became a part of him, he needed no doorway to get to the palace, he could just be there.

‘All for what.’ he had said to Catherine Mulberry.

‘We wait and see.’ she replied.

Not needing sleep, though he could if he wished, he often spent his nights in Arcadia, where it could be daytime if he wanted it to be so. And it was over a period of a week his thoughts began to mature. The other boy was key, and the details about this other boy. The boy’s interests were in guns, dinosaurs, science fiction, Dan Dare. And also, battleships and star ships, but unlike Billy he had never seen the Star Wars films that Billy had seen aged 10. At that time Billy had become obsessive about the first film, and then all the subsequent films. After watching the first film, he had made models of the X wing fighters in Lego. Collected posters and pictures, imagined himself in the films.

And that was “it” he decided, or part of whatever it was. The other boy aged 10 or 11 was around at the time of the Cuba Crisis where a full-scale nuclear war was narrowly avoided. Also, at that time the science fiction films like “The Forbidden Planet” or “First Spaceship on Venus” were on general release. First Spaceship on Venus was a science fiction film about the Venusians who wanted to destroy all life on Earth. They would do so by using a weapon which was like an atomic bomb but in the form of a ray gun device. These Aliens could easily be seen as outside threats. For the paranoia of some Americans, they were Communists, aliens, the aliens who had similar desires using similar means, wanting to take over the world. Ideas which fuelled the McCarthy witch hunts of the 1950s.

Joseph McCarthy was an American politician who served as a Republican U.S. Senator from Wisconsin from 1947 until his



death in 1957. Beginning in 1950, McCarthy became the most visible public face of a period in the United States in which Cold War tensions fuelled fears of widespread communist subversion. He alleged that numerous communists and Soviet spies and sympathizers had infiltrated the United States federal government, universities, film industry, and elsewhere.

McCarthyism became the name for the political practice of the political repression and persecution of left-wing individuals and a campaign spreading fear of communist and Soviet influence in American institutions. And of Soviet espionage in the United States during the late 1940s through the 1950s. Following the end of the Cold War, unearthed documents revealed substantial Soviet spy activity in the United States at the time, although many of the agents were never properly identified by McCarthy.

But there hadn't been a nuclear war, and all life wasn't destroyed.

Billy was thinking about this and other incidents, he knew that the other boy had also been well aware of the dangers of the cold war. For instance, the threats of nuclear war, especially at the time of the Cuba Crisis. The boy had tried to design anti-nuclear weapons. He was also very much into the science fiction and facts of the day. The Russian and American space exploration, as well as the fictional characters in science fiction films and Dan Dare's continual battle with the evil Mekon.

This boy now had strange abilities and lived in a different "otherworld", like that of the period of the late 1950s, but virtually deserted. And had built devices in the garden of

number 85 that had made differences in the outside “real” world. These had saved the world from death and destruction. The boy had protected this world, most recently from being overcome by the mirror-worlds of Mr Smith.

So, the thought struck Billy that a possibility might be that the boy somehow turned the reality of nuclear Armageddon into fiction which became these films, such as First Spaceship on Venus? A crazy idea he thought to himself, crazy and very childish, at which he saw the possible truth.

Did this other boy turn a reality into a fiction, and somehow might this now be possible for himself. But why now, well why was Smith seeking to become infinite, in order maybe to escape some bigger danger. A current bigger danger now, but what?

The boy had never seen the Star Wars films in which an evil dark lord seeks to take over a universe, but one from “A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away...”. But Billy knew how to fold space, as did others, what of folding time, not back because of the paradoxes that would cause and obviously didn’t occur, but folding time forward. OK, so could some evil empires cross the vast distances of time and space and be a threat to the Earth. Possibly.

But not a problem in the films like Star Trek and Star Wars, there was always a good outcome for humanity. But so was true in Dan Dare’s adventures, he always saved the world from the evil Mekon. And humanity was saved in the sci-fi of the 50s and 60s. Not in Dr. Strangelove, the Kubrick film where at the end humanity destroys itself, but that film was made in 1964 and was not sci-fi. The boy had the fictions of Dan Dare, the hero and the evil Mekon, and aliens from Venus.

In Star Wars the heroes were Luke Skywalker, Han Solo and his Wookiee partner Chewbacca, pilots of the starship Millennium Falcon, the droids R2-D2 and C-3PO and of course Obi-Wan Kenobi. The evil was from the Galactic Empire and the dark side of the Force in the form of Darth Vader and the Sith.

The Sith the antithesis and enemies of the Jedi. Jedi Knights, or collectively the Jedi Order, powerful guardians of order and justice who wield a supernatural power known as the Force, in their case a force for good. The Sith an ancient cult of warriors who drew strength from the dark side of the Force and who use it to seize power by any means necessary, including terrorism and mass murder; their ultimate goals are to destroy the Jedi and rule the galaxy, and maybe other galaxies too, even this one.

Well, what if all that was true and real, if there came a time when the Sith won, and entered our universe then the survival of the Earth is at real risk.

If the other boy made nuclear war a science fiction where the Earth is saved from destruction might not the same be true of the Sith and the Star Wars movies. The real Sith became fiction, and the history changes to a plot for the survival of the Earth. Not impossible, he thought.

He wrote, "Palpatine, The Mekon, Gallaxhar in Monsters vs. Aliens."

And noted the common look, and of course Davros, the evil creator of the Daleks, again bent on destruction of the Earth. So, a fantastic leap of imagination, if the boy was responsible for overcoming invincible attacks on the Earth back in the late

50s early 60s and making these fictions, what of this boy, this BoW, this odd Billy. Was this now his task?

He needed to watch the Star Wars films, not his favourite which was the first one with Alec Guinness, but the last three, he also very much liked these. He even liked Monsters vs. Aliens, much to Catherine Mulberry's disgust.

He chose the last three Star Wars films for two reasons he thought, first the recurring villain, not The Mekon but Palpatine, who seems destroyed but returns, this had an infinite quality, and he remembered there are mirrors in one of the three films. He was in Arcadia, but he decided he would rather go back to Woodbridge and watch the Star Wars movies there. However, when he did try to go back to Woodbridge, he found himself floating in space, not a void, he could see the sun, and around him rocks,

'Obviously remains of a destroyed Earth, by which of my villains?' Billy thought. 'Obviously Palpatine as that was the evil villain of the films I wanted to see. So somehow Palpatine was real, and the dark side of the Sith had won over the combat with the Jedi and The Resistance. And once the Galaxy was theirs, they had travelled to others to conquer them including our galaxy, and it seems destroyed the Earth.'

Back in Arcadia, his palace would provide whatever its occupants wanted or needed, so now in the library was a screen and controller which would no doubt show the Star Wars movies. He then smiled, thinking,

'Well Smith will be safe in The Hall of The Mountain King, and Emily will be safe in Colonial Road.' Then not smiling, 'They are safe but not the rest of humanity, including Catherine

Mulberry, they are certainly not safe. Dead, destroyed along with the Earth, or worse taken into slavery. So, what to do, change this grim reality and make the change into a myth or a movie. And another advantage of being a BoW, you don't die in space.

So, maybe I became a boy like the other boy, to turn this reality into a myth, or in my case and the boys a fiction, movies!" He continued thinking,

"It seems some kind of weapon is required, a lightsabre, or a gun? Or like The Swan devices the other boy had made?"

As time could stand still in Arcadia, he spent days thinking of this, through the science fiction stories, heroes, Heracles and his club, the guns of the wild west and fictional ones like the supernatural colt, the various magical swords, or Thor and his hammer. In the Bible it was Samson, "The Jaw-bone of an ass is a significant symbol in Christianity, particularly associated with the biblical figure Samson and his weapon was the jawbone of an ass." Perfect.

"It is described as the weapon Samson used to kill a thousand men. Different interpretations, such as those from the Church of the East and Early Christianity, reference it as an improvised weapon against the Philistines."

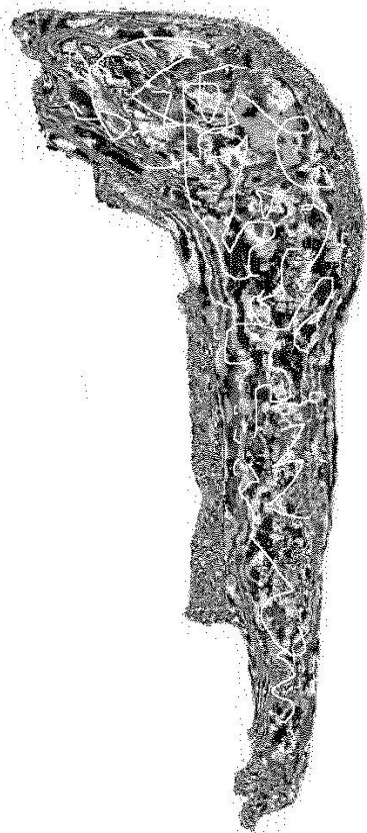
To check he once again tried to go back to Woodbridge, there was no doubt, the Earth had been destroyed, he needed to act, the jaw bone should do, look at its heritedge!

"But how though to get such a thing?"

It was found by The aeon Sophia, Achamōth, Chokmah, Barbelo, Prunikos the daughter of Elohim, the Formatrix of

heaven and earth, that of a bone from an ignominious beast which would be thought made not the slightest difference and was of no significance. She placed the small bone in a cloth. It was bare colourless bone. As she could not enter Arcadia, but could place it just outside, she did so. A hand reached out and took it and placed it on a table in the library. Billy found it there.

He opened the triangular cloth to reveal the jawbone, only strangely coloured and marked with sigils, some of which he recognised others he did not. And they moved and changed as a chameleon might change its colours, but here the sigils changed also. He placed it back into the cloth and put it in his inside pocket.



## CHAPTER 13 THE FORCE AWAKENS

“The Force Awakens?” Billy was watching the first of the three Star Wars films. Billy thought,

‘First mistake, Palpatine is using the force, for evil sure, and so is Kylo Ren, AKA Ben Solo, son of Han Solo and Princess Leia. Kylo Ren seduced to the dark side of the Force by Snoke, the Supreme Leader of the First Order and creation of Palpatine’s. But the mistake is the creation of evil creates its opposite, the good. So, in the real world what happens is no duality. Who was wrong in the Cuba crisis? As in Evil?’ Reality is never just black and white; they mix in a reality of changing greys.’

Billy was watching the movie. The opening shows the desert planet Jakku and the dark Silhouette of the Star Destroyer with First Order stormtroopers commanded by Kylo Ren, who captures The Resistance pilot Poe Dameron, but the droid BB-8 escapes with the map to the whereabouts of Luke Skywalker’s location, the last Jedi and hope for The Resistance. Luke Skywalker is also wanted by the First Order; they want to find and destroy him. The droid will later be rescued by Rey, a lone scavenger.

‘This is not how it happened in reality, it can’t be.’ thought Billy, ‘using The Force and knowing of the location of the map, Kylo Ren could deceive those on the planet and obtain it. Using his power of The Force, as strong as Luke’s or maybe stronger, he could find Luke’s location anyway. And stormtroopers wouldn’t kill, when the inhabitants could be made into zombie slaves. And anyway, Kylo Ren could track a droid using The Force.



No, the film is wrong, it wouldn't happen in reality like it does in the movie, so somehow by someone it was changed, made into a myth, a story where the Jedi and The Resistance win. But who did this?'

He paused then guessed,

'By me!'

Billy checked his pocket for the jawbone, then entered the reality through the screen in the library, like stepping through a mirror into a different world, one which would become the movie. The simple expedient would be just to kill Palpatine, but that would change the movie in our reality, in fact there would be no movie, no myth. He had to manipulate the actual reality into the movie, Star Wars, The Force Awakens, then the other two movies likewise.

He found himself on the planet near the native encampment. Touching his jacket, inside which was the jawbone in its sheath, he clouded the Force from Palpatine, along with Supreme Leader Snoke, the artificial being Palpatine had created, and clouded it also from Kylo Ren. Their minds were shielded, did they sense it, not Palpatine or Snoke thought Billy, their fates were unknown, their desire was therefore what they saw, but with Kylo Ren a tiny seed of doubt was sown.

As the First Order ships landed Kylo Ren sensed the people were armed and would fight, so as such would be useless as zombies, they would rather die, so the orders were changed. Though how these folk could acquire such costly high-tech weapons on a desert planet yet alone know how to use them he did not think to question? All this of course was Billy's

doing, he had supplied the weapons and trained the village settlers on Jakku how to use them. And there's was a simple choice, become zombie slaves or fight and die, but live forever as myth and in the movie. So, they could choose their fate and their choice, they had a hint at the final outcome. And this in turn allowed Poe Dameron to hide the map in the droid and be captured. Billy allows The Force to touch FN-2187's mind, so the events on the Star Destroyer were set. And so, Billy now follows the droid.

And remember in doing this Billy is turning real events into a fiction, he has become perhaps like the other boy, a myth maker. Those in myths do not die, they become fiction. The opposite of hypostatization or reification, which is to make something like a thought or idea real. The reverse is to fictionalize, mythologise, to make unreal.

Billy tracks the droid BB-8 knowing of the confrontation with Rey and another lone scavenger, a native Teedo. This in real life would be very different. An unwritten law was who finds first keeps, especially on hostile planets. And so, in the movie, it makes no sense for Rey to intervene, Rey risks a fight or at least breaking the unwritten scavenger law. She rescues the valuable droid and then ignores any more interest in the droid, which makes no sense.

So, Billy makes his presence felt, the scavengers are told what to do, they both have lived in the wilderness and this boy, Billy, with clean clothes in the middle of a wasteland, and a presence, they sense the presence of the jaw-bone, they go along with the acting, in the case of the Teedo only after Billy showing it the jawbone, which fills the creature with horror, unseen by Rey.

‘Let the droid go, and Rey, be a tad hostile but let the droid stay, it’s for the best in the long run.’

And that he knew her name, what else could he know, who and where her parents are?

Meanwhile Poe’s escape with the stormtrooper FN-2187, “Finn”, in a stolen TIE fighter was planned by Billy, as was the incredible bad shooting of the Star Destroyer. In reality it would have been seen as a friendly, and if not destroyed immediately. How Poe survives the crash could be explained with difficulty but not how following his survival he gets to D’Qar. How he did was another trick of Billy’s, his being able to cut and fold space.

Finn, Rey and BB-8 escape Jakku in a fuelled up and not scavenged Millennium Falcon. In fact, it was a mere skeleton framework, Billy used folding to create a working ship.

So, the reality was the stormtroopers attack on Jakku was initially successful. Kylo Ren arrives, the people are made into zombies, including Poe Dameron. Kylo Ren has the map so can find and kill Luke Skywalker, thus eliminating any threat to the First Order. The First Order eventually spreads throughout the universe including our galaxy, and as part of the conquest destroy planets with life that may cause a threat, which included the Earth.

Billy prevents this, and allows Finn, Rey and BB-8 to escape in the Millennium Falcon. The now working Falcon reveals its existence to Han Solo and Chewbacca by a beacon. The Falcon’s autopilot secretly takes control and returns the Falcon to Solo’s present location. Then in reality if Finn and Rey had been aboard Han would follow his intention in the

movie; Chewbacca puts the two in a pod, keeping the droid, and drops them at the nearest inhabited planet. So again, in this scenario the First Order is victorious.

Billy visits Han Solo and arranges the alternative scenario for the creatures, the rathtars, who will escape, and the two “debt collectors”, the Guavian Death Gang and Kanjiklub cohorts, seeking Solo. The gangs are easy for Billy to control, seeing the jawbone is sufficient. So, then the remarkable change in Solo’s attitude, he is still intent on his first plan, to not take part in The Resistance, so he takes Finn, Rey and BB-8 to Takodana to find them “a clean ship”. Again, the reality is the obvious course of pragmatic action, and the myth is not. And the reality would again give success to the First Order.

Maz Kanata’s “establishment”; here both The Resistance and the First Order has agents who inform the respective parties that the droid, BB-8 is present, and both for opposite reasons are seeking Skywalker. Skywalker being the last Jedi, now in self-inflicted isolation after an event in which his pupils were killed, involving one of them, Ben Solo’s turn to the dark side of the Force, becoming Kylo Ren. The First order wanting the last Jedi removed, The Resistance wanting his help. And an obvious one-sided contest.

The reality was there was no Republic, if there was it would be powerful enough to resist the First Order or at least be a significant threat, and it would know of the armaments of the First Order and the Starkiller Base. So, the reality was there was no Republic and so no serious opposition to the First Order. In reality only The Resistance, a relatively small force, was resisting the domination of the First Order. As Finn related the First Order was all powerful, an accident of true

reality left in the myth. As Finn knew, the only safe place was the outer rim. Why not the Republic if it existed? So, at this stage even though Billy had prevented the early failure of The Resistance the eventual domination by the First Order was still the case, our universe was still under threat.

So, now this is changed, the Starkiller Base destroys the Hosnian star system, including the New Republic's capital Hosnian Prime, leaving The Resistance without support. In reality it never had any. This is pure fiction. Finn is about to escape to the outer rim, but now doesn't, which makes no sense. His previous statements and intentions have, if the Republic existed, just been confirmed, that of the First Order's galactic power which is unstoppable.

The reality at this point would be the First Order attacks Takodana in search of BB-8, it would have been a success with overpowering fire power and no Poe Dameron to lead the X wing attack. Remember Billy transported Poe Dameron to Takodana. And we saw previously laser weapons are it seems useless against the power of Kylo Ren.

So, Billy has to unite Rey with Skywalker, hence the terror she feels on seeing his lightsabre. Rey is out of the picture on the arrival of Resistance X-wing fighters led by Poe, who Billy made survive the crash and got him to The Resistance base by cutting and folding space.

Kylo Ren now confronts Rey and captures her, having read her mind, of course the reality is if he could do this he would get the map, then kill her, if he couldn't read her mind because of sensing her potential power and so a threat he would kill her anyway.

What he reads is Billy's mind projection, and likewise it is Billy who now makes the captured Rey on the Star Destroyer resist. He frees her using the jawbone. Her power has been sensed but not to the extent of being a Jedi. It would not make sense for her being able to use the Force given Kylo's initial power over her. It does not make sense to Snoke when meeting Kylo, which is why he orders Kylo to bring Rey to him. Snoke wants to find the real source of Rey's power, which is of course that of Billy's.

Han, Chewbacca, and Finn are saved by The Resistance X-wing fighters. Leia arrives at Takodana with C-3PO and reunites with Han.

Now the need is to destroy the Starkiller base to protect the planet D'Qar on which The Resistance is based. Han, Chewbacca, and Finn land at light speed on the Starkiller base, which in reality is impossible, but doable with Billy's help. There Han is killed by his son. The Resistance X-wing fighters with help from Rey, Chewbacca, and Finn destroy the Starkiller base. Actually, the energy containment flask is cut by a jawbone of an ass. The significant move here, which is why Billy engineered this impossibility is done to actually awaken the Force in Rey who can now out fight Kylo. Then the map of Skywalker's location is found with the maps from R2D2 and BB-8. Rey, Chewbacca, and R2-D2 can now travel to Ahch-To, and so Rey meets Skywalker and begins her journey to become a Jedi. Thus, the path for the return of the Jedi is made and the fate of the First Order sealed, not the beginning of the end, but the end of the beginning.

So, the boy Billy returns from Arcadia to find the Earth now once again exists.

## CHAPTER 14: POLITICAL GREEN LACEWORK

Billy found Catherine Mulberry in the kitchen of their shared house in Woodbridge Suffolk. She didn't speak but gave him a look which he first thought was of surprise at him still being a young boy, but then he recognised it as a question, a 'Why?'

'I've been away for some time, you didn't notice?' he said.

She remained silent, the look was now 'Insufficient information.'

'We were talking about the other boy and his role, and now possibly why I'm similar.'

The look remained. He remembered the last words of hers were 'Wait and see'.

'I think...' he stopped and began again, 'The boy turns catastrophic events into fiction, myth, movie films, comic book stories, science fiction. Real events, like say if the Cuba Crisis ended in a full-scale nuclear war, he turns that scenario into fiction. And so on, and it seems I can do the same.'

Her look softened, she spoke, 'Tell me.' then added, 'I had a dream that I was dead.'

'You were,' he replied, 'and the Earth destroyed by the First Order, you know in the recent Star Wars films.'

There was a long silence,

'I see,' she said, 'so you turned a brutal reality into a myth or rather a movie, it has all your hallmarks, very sentimental, yes that makes sense, I suppose I should thank you on behalf of the human race.' She smiled; he did too.

‘And so, you better do something about this...’ She showed him the newspaper headlines. ‘And maybe you should watch the news. We need your help.’

So, he did, and here is the account that this author, JFW, did not write due to the note from Billy...

In Billy’s note we read,

*“You will certainly need to alter names of countries and world leaders for your own safety... which means showing where I, Billy was responsible for certain events, the success of X or the failure of Y might cause a “difficulty” for the author, you! Yet as Alice through the looking glass (Or Gulliver’s Travels) political criticism can be seen in the form of humour and metaphor...*

So, this account of the disaster in the news using metaphor...

“Many mites are parasitic on plants and animals. One family of mites, Pyroglyphidae, or nest mites, live primarily in the nests of birds and other animals. These mites are largely parasitic and consume blood, skin and keratin. Dust mites, which feed mostly on dead skin and hair shed from humans instead of consuming them from the organism directly evolved from these parasitic ancestors. Ticks are a prominent group of mites that are parasitic on vertebrates, mostly mammals and birds, feeding on blood with specialised mouthparts.

Parasitic mites sometimes infest insects. Varroa destructor attaches to the body of honeybees, and Acarapis woodi lives in their tracheae. Hundreds of species are associated with other bees, mostly poorly described. They attach to bees in a variety of ways. For example, Trigona corvina workers have been found with mites attached to the outer face of their hind tibiae. Mites also parasitize some ant species, such as Eciton



burchellii. Most larvae of Parasitengona are ectoparasites of arthropods, while later life stages in this group tend to shift to being predators.

Plant pests include the so-called spider mites (family Tetranychidae), thread-footed mites (family Tarsonemidae), and the gall mites (family Eriophyidae). Among the species that attack animals are members of the sarcoptic mange mites (family Sarcoptidae), which burrow under the skin. Demodex mites (family Demodecidae) are parasites that live in or near the hair follicles of mammals, including humans.

### Dispersal

Being unable to fly, mites need some other means of dispersal. On a small scale, walking is used to access other suitable locations in the immediate vicinity. Some species mount to a high point and adopt a dispersal posture and get carried away by the wind, while others waft a thread of silk aloft to balloon to a new position.

Parasitic mites use their hosts to disperse and spread from host to host by direct contact. Another strategy is phoresy; the mite, often equipped with suitable claspers or suckers, grips onto an insect or other animal, and gets transported to another place. A phoretic mite is just a hitch-hiker and does not feed during the time it is carried by its temporary host. These travelling mites are mostly species that reproduce rapidly and are quick to colonise new habitats.

The mite *Varroa destructor* is a serious pest of honey bees, contributing to colony collapse disorder in commercial hives. This organism is an obligate external parasite, able to reproduce only in bee colonies. It directly weakens its host by

sucking up the bee's fat and can spread RNA viruses including deformed wing virus. Heavy infestation causes the death of a colony, generally over the winter. Since 2006, more than 10 million beehives have been lost.

*So, something or one is being alluded to? Maybe?*

Green lacewings are insects in the large family Chrysopidae of the order Neuroptera. There are about 85 genera and (differing between sources) 1,300–2,000 species in this widespread group. Members of the genera *Chrysopa* and *Chrysoperla* are very common in North America and Europe. Since they are the most familiar neuropterans to many people, they are often simply called “lacewings”. Since most of the diversity of Neuroptera are properly referred to as some sort of “lacewing”, “Common lacewing” is preferable.

#### Description and ecology

Green lacewings are delicate insects with a wingspan of 6 to over 65 mm, though the largest forms are tropical. They are characterized by a wide costal field in their wing venation, which includes the cross-veins. The bodies are usually bright green to greenish-brown, and the compound eyes are conspicuously golden in many species. The wings are usually translucent with a slight iridescence; some have green wing veins or a cloudy brownish wing pattern.

Adults have tympanal organs at the forewings' base, enabling them to hear well. Some *Chrysopa* show evasive behavior when they hear a bat's ultrasound calls: when in flight, they close their wings, making their echolocational signature smaller, and drop down to the ground. Green lacewings also use substrate or body vibrations as a form of communication

between themselves, especially during courtship. Species which are nearly identical morphologically may sometimes be separated more easily based on their mating signals.

Adults are crepuscular or nocturnal. They feed on pollen, nectar and honeydew supplemented with mites, aphids and other small arthropods, and some, namely *Chrysopa*, are mainly predatory. Others feed almost exclusively on nectar and similar substances and have symbiotic yeasts in their digestive tract to help break down the food into nutrients.

Larvae have either a more slender “humpbacked” shape with a prominent bulge on the thorax, or are plumper, with long bristles jutting out from the sides. These bristles will collect debris and food remains – the empty integuments of aphids, most notably – that provide camouflage from birds.

While depending on species and environmental conditions, some green lacewings will eat only about 150 prey items in their entire lives, in other cases 100 aphids will be eaten in a single week. Thus, in several countries, millions of such voracious *Chrysopidae* are reared for sale as biological control agents of insect and mite pests in agriculture and gardens.

Species that have hitherto attracted wider study and are more or less readily available as captive-bred eggs to deposit out for hatching in pest-infested plant cultures are several members of *Chrysoperla* as well as *Mallada signatus*. They are a natural predator of the European corn borer, a moth that costs the US agriculture industry more than \$1 billion annually in crop losses and population control.

Gardeners can attract these lacewings – and therefore ensure a steady supply of larvae – by using certain companion plants

and tolerating beneficial weeds. Chrysopidae are attracted mainly by Asteraceae – e.g. calliopsis (Coreopsis), cosmos (Cosmos), sunflowers (Helianthus) and dandelion (Taraxacum) – and Apiaceae such as dill (Anethum) or Angelica.”

‘So, the problem of the infestation, of mites,’ this is what Billy was referring to as a political situation, ‘is overcome by delicate nocturnal creatures.’

Billy explained the metaphor to Catherine Mulberry. New weapons, new tactics changed the disaster.

Pictures from the Insect’ Life (Czech: Ze života hmyzu) – also known as The Insect Play, The Life of the Insects, The Insect Comedy, The World We Live In and From Insect Life – is a satirical play that was written in Czech by the Brothers Čapek, Karel and Josef, In the play, a tramp/narrator falls asleep in the woods and dreams of observing a range of insects that stand in for various human characteristics in terms of their lifestyle and morality: the flighty, vain butterfly, the obsequious, self-serving dung beetle, the ants, whose increasingly mechanized behaviour leads to a militaristic society. The anthropomorphized insects allow the writers to comment allegorically on life in post-World War I Czechoslovakia.

‘But for now I need to get back to the galaxy far far away.’ he said.

## CHAPTER 12: THE LAST JEDI

‘Now I have to get Luke Skywalker to train Rey?’

Billy was in Arcadia just about to pass through the “looking glass” of the flat screen video player. Billy first putting in the DVD of “The Last Jedi”. He now realises what he is watching is the fiction from the actuality, the myth one which he must now make. So first he must follow the fiction then manipulate the actual events into the myth.

General Leia Organa and The Resistance are evacuating their base when the First Order fleet suddenly arrives. Three Resurgent class Star Destroyers and a larger Mandator IV Class Dreadnaught, some 7,500 meters, or over four and a half miles long. Leia reluctantly lets Poe Dameron go into combat. This results in Poe disabling the Dreadnaught’s close defence cannons allowing The Resistance bombers to attack. TIE First Order fighters were now attacking the bombers and Poe’s X Wing fighter. Leia ordered Poe to break off the attack, but he refuses. The costly counterattack destroyed the Dreadnaught at the loss of all The Resistance’s bombers and a heroic act of self-sacrifice worthy of a great myth.

‘Bombs falling in space, a single X wing against 3 star-destroyers and a four-and-a-half-mile long dreadnaught!’ Billy thought and laughed out loud.

The reality in such a one-sided match against three Star destroyers and a dreadnaught would certainly be totally one sided. That might prove problematic in if Rey’s training is curtailed as a result.

The remaining Resistance fleet escapes into hyperspace hoping to lose the First Order's remaining three Star Destroyers. Snoke's image appears, but Hux explains, the First Order has a device to track The Resistance.

General Armitage Hux is commander of the attack fleet, and as such of course would have been in the dreadnaught and not as he is, in a Star destroyer.

In Snoke's ship, the Supremacy, 37 miles wingtip to wingtip Snoke meets with Hux and then with Kylo Ren. Snoke and Hux are competing to be second in command or maybe even supreme commander. At this point Hux is the favourite.

Finn has recovered from his injuries and is on The Resistance ship and asking for Rey who is now on Ahch-To with Skywalker and Chewbacca. When The Resistance fleet emerge from hyperspace almost immediately the First Order fleet arrives having tracked them. It consists of the Supremacy plus over two dozen Star Destroyers, one commanded by Hux the other Kylo Ren. Kylo Ren hesitates to fire on the lead Resistance ship, the Raddus, after sensing his mother Leia's presence on board, but his wingmen destroy the bridge of the Raddus killing most of The Resistance's leaders. Leia is dragged into space but survives by using The Force. While Leia recovers, Vice-Admiral Holdo assumes command of The Resistance. Running low on fuel, the remaining fleet of The Resistance is now only of 3 ships and 400 fighters. This is pursued by the First Order. Again unsuccessfully because of Billy's interventions.

On Ahch-To, Rey attempts to recruit Luke Skywalker to The Resistance. Under self-imposed exile, Luke refuses to help, believing that the Jedi should end. After encouragement from

R2-D2 he agrees to give Rey three lessons in the ways of the Force. Meanwhile on the Raddus Finn meets up with Rose, whose sister Paige had been the hero of the bombing attack, they work out that the tracker is on the lead ship of The First Order and they need to get through The First Order's security shields so they can disable it. In order to do this they need a master code breaker, they contact Maz Kanata who tells them that they could find a master code breaker at Canto Bight on the planet Cantonica, recognizable by the red plom bloom on his lapel.

Of course, the tracker can't be on any First Order ship, any tracking device has to be on what is being tracked. In reality either the remaining Resistance forces are destroyed, or they escape. But in this reality, we have 3 ships and 400 fighters against the Supremacy, 37 miles wingtip to wingtip plus over two dozen Star Destroyers. Any meeting would end The Resistance.

It is morning on Ahch-To, Rey wakes to sense Kylo Ren on his ship having treatment for his injuries. During the first lesson with Luke Rey makes contact with the dark side of the Force and realizes that Luke has cut himself off from The Force. Luke admits he has seen such raw power before in Ben Solo, that it didn't scare him enough before, but it does now. That night Rey and Kylo Ren again talk telepathically.

Finn, Rose and BB-8 get to the planet Cantonica and the casino in Canto Bight, Rose hates it unlike Finn. Finn thinks it's beautiful, Rose tells him that the people are rich from selling weapons to the First Order as well as The Resistance. This however Billy knows can't be true. They watch the fathiers

racing. BB-8 has found the red plom bloom on a gambler, they are stunned and arrested before they could do anything.

Morning on Ahch-To Rey is practicing with her staff, then with the lightsabre of Luke's, he is watching. Afterwards Luke and Rey talk about the history of the Jedi, and how Ben Solo became Kylo Ren, as his power rose and went to the dark side after burning Luke's temple and murdering his students.

Billy sees things are going well.

Hux and Kylo Ren are now on the Supremacy, Hux orders the destruction of the hospital ship. Finn, and Rose meanwhile on Cantonica meet a stranger in jail, DJ, who says he can break the First Order's security codes, they escape Canto Bight with the help of stablehand children and racing animals, the fathiers.

Kylo Ren tells Rey it was Luke who tried to kill him on sensing his powers, she then descends into the cave of darkness. Here she sees the hall of mirrors of herself, returning she meets again telepathically with Kylo, they touch hands, but the spell is broken by Luke, Luke and Rey fight. Luke explains he was tempted to kill Ben Solo as he was already under the influence of the evil Snoke. Convinced that Kylo can be redeemed, Rey leaves Ahch-To in the Falcon.

Luke prepares to burn the Jedi library but hesitates. The spirit of Luke's master Yoda appears and destroys the library by summoning a bolt of lightning. He encourages Luke to learn from his failure.

Rey then ejects in an escape pod from the Falcon and enters the hanger of Snoke the Supreme Leader's flagship the Supremacy where Kylo Ren is waiting for her with guards and takes her to Snoke.



Admiral Holdo plans to evacuate the remaining members of The Resistance using small transport vessels. Believing her plan cowardly and futile, Poe leads a mutiny. A recovered Leia stuns Poe with a blaster and proceeds with the evacuation. Holdo remains aboard the ship as a decoy to mislead Snoke's fleet as the others flee to an abandoned base on the planet Crait.

Finn, Rose, BB-8 and DJ infiltrate Snoke's flagship but are captured by Captain Phasma. So, they fail to block the tracking device. DJ buys his freedom by revealing The Resistance's plan to General Hux, and the First Order fleet begins firing on the evacuation transports, destroying many.

Ordered to kill Rey, Kylo instead kills Snoke and defeats his Praetorian Guard with her help. Rey hopes that Kylo has abandoned the dark side, but he instead asks her to rule the galaxy with him. Refusing, she battles him for control of Luke's lightsabre, destroying the weapon.

Holdo sacrifices herself by slicing through Snoke's flagship at lightspeed, crippling the First Order fleet. Rey escapes the destruction while Kylo declares himself Supreme Leader. BB-8 frees Finn and Rose; they fight and defeat Phasma and join the survivors on Crait. When the First Order arrives, Poe, Finn, and Rose attack with obsolete speeders. Rey and Chewbacca draw TIE fighters away in the Millennium Falcon, while Rose stops Finn from sacrificing himself. The First Order penetrates The Resistance fortress using a siege cannon.

Luke appears and confronts the First Order, allowing the surviving Resistance to escape. Kylo orders the First Order's forces to fire on Luke, but they fail to harm him. He then engages Luke in a lightsaber duel; upon striking Luke, Kylo

realizes that Luke is not physically present but projecting his image through the Force.

Rey has arrived in the Falcon and using the Force helps those remaining in The Resistance to escape. Exhausted, Luke dies peacefully on Ahch-To, becoming one with the Force. Rey and Leia sense his death, and Leia tells Rey that The Resistance can rise again.

At Canto Bight, the stablehands recount the story of Luke Skywalker; afterward, one of them moves a broom with the Force and gazes into space.

In reality we now have a very small band of The Resistance fighting against the First Order which is now in control of the galaxy, a completely one-sided contest. The Resistance at D'Qar base would be destroyed by a Star Destroyer yet alone three and a Dreadnaught, the group arriving together with a deployed cover of fighters. No communication would take place between Poe Dameron and General Hux, a X wing fighter would not have been allowed to approach. And even if a Dreadnaught's close support weapons failed those of the three other Star Destroyers would not sit idly by or would allow the bombers near the Dreadnaught.

So, leaving the mirror world of the myth which Billy would now need to create from the reality Billy first created a series of cuts in the hyperspace in which the First order was passing through. Made with the jawbone. So, not only could the TIE fighters not be launched but the curvature of space itself meant the formation of the First Order ships was lost, and more importantly time expended in navigating these anomalies made from the cuts in hyperspace. The Resistance therefore had time to leave D'Qar and Poe could be in

position close to the arrival spot of the Dreadnaught, and waiting. Another effect of the cuts in space, at light speed and faster, was that on geometry, a distorted geometry from cutting space affects gravity and time, which needs to be corrected, needs to be corrected on emergence.

Deterministic and mechanistic systems such as spacecraft, even droids would need to first re-calibrate themselves, then the local casual relationships. This is even more so the more complex the systems. So, in carbon-based life forms, and any other complex systems with any degree of sentience the distortion results in mind muddling. In simple terms the cuts distort reality like a broken mirror, and these need to be reformed to match the reality that they arrive in after leaving hyperspace. This accounted for inaccurate weapons, and the poor performance of the carbon-based life forms of the First Order. However, by the time the bombers made their attack these effects were diminishing.

So, the whole seeming one sided conflict was manipulated by Billy to allow a small number of relatively weak fighters avoid their destruction, such is legend. Billy realizing a new legend, and wondered who was responsible for the others, like Robin Hood, King Arthur, the Knights of the Round Table, and The Quest for the Holy Grail.

Catherine Mulberry was still at the kitchen table as before, but there was no before as no time had passed. She knew this would be the case, Billy was messing with time in changing events in the real world, as well as making what was real into myth. So, she knew of the “before” and the cataclysmic events in the news headlines which were sorted by Billy, the “mites” were destroyed by the “lacewings”. Now these headlines never existed. The same newspaper in which they occurred and were reported and then were not now had a different set of headlines regarding a new crisis.

'Lacewings won, the mites controlled,' said Catherine Mulberry.

and the lacewings are ;

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‘And what of the previous actual cataclysmic events in the newspapers that you prevented?’ she asked.

‘Now a fiction, possibly some Hollywood thriller starring Tom Cruise? Or a Transformers movie, I could send the idea to some folks I know in Hollywood.’ Billy replied.

She then used Wikipedia to compare mites and lacewings with the recent news events, every so often saying ‘Very good.’ And ‘Very apt.’

‘So, in reality how were the “mites” defeated?’ Catherine Mulberry asked, ‘Not by a lacewing, was it a jawbone?’

Billy gave a smile and said,

‘Well, some were, but more by the mechanical lacewings.’

## CHAPTER 17: THE RISE OF SKYWALKER

The Myth ends or rather does not end with Rey taking of the surname of Skywalker and her place in the Jedi, Kylo Ren having sacrificed his life for that of Rey's, now with the name of Ben Solo, Rey having destroyed a resurrected Emperor Palpatine, who was the power behind Snoke and the First Order. And like all myths Palpatine will re-emerge and continue, just as does the never-ending battle between Dan Dare and The Mekon, or that between Doctor Who and the Daleks and many more stories and myths.

The last part of a myth is always like the end of a symphony, a recapitulation of established themes meeting in a conclusion, which closes the story but leaves things now open to yet another story. It has as a Myth a form and a pattern which has meaning and structure which in this reality, in actual history it does not. Myth and music are very similar.

## DISCORD THEME:

Kylo Ren obtains a Sith wayfinder on the planet Mustafar that leads him to the hidden planet Exegol. The link back to the earlier myths, the destroyed and resurrected Emperor Palpatine. Who unveils a Sith armada of Star Destroyers and offers it to Kylo if he finds and kills Rey.

## COUNTER THEME:

Poe Dameron and Finn deliver intelligence from a spy in the First Order that Palpatine is on Exegol; Rey reads in Luke Skywalker's notes that a Sith wayfinder can lead them there. Rey, Finn, Poe, Chewbacca, BB-8, and C-3PO depart in the

Millennium Falcon to the desert planet Pasaana, where a clue to a wayfinder is hidden.

Kylo initiates a Force bond with Rey to discover her location. He travels to Pasaana with his warrior subordinates, the Knights of Ren. With Lando Calrissian's help, Rey and her friends find the clue, a dagger inscribed with Sith text, which C-3PO's programming forbids him from interpreting. Also, the remains of a Sith assassin named Ochi and his ship, a text which Rey recognizes.

#### DISCORD THEME:

Rey senses Kylo nearby and faces him while the First Order captures the Falcon, Chewbacca, and the dagger. Attempting to save Chewbacca, Rey accidentally destroys a First Order transport with Force lightning. Believing Chewbacca is dead, the group escapes on Ochi's ship.

#### COUNTER:

They travel to Kijimi, where the droidsmith Babu Frik extracts the Sith text from C-3PO's memory, revealing the wayfinder's coordinates. Rey senses Chewbacca is alive aboard a First Order Star Destroyer, so the group stages a rescue with the smuggler Zorii's help. Rey recovers the dagger and experiences repressed memories of her parents. She duels Kylo, who reveals that Palpatine is her paternal grandfather. Foreseeing her power, Palpatine had ordered Ochi to find the young Rey, but her parents hid her on Jakku, prompting Ochi to kill them with the dagger. To spite Kylo, General Hux saves Poe, Finn, and Chewbacca from execution, revealing himself as the spy.

Rey and her friends escape, while Hux is executed by Allegiant General Pryde. The group flies the Falcon to the wayfinder's coordinates on a moon in the Endor system.

There, they find renegade stormtroopers led by Jannah, whom they recruit to The Resistance. Rey retrieves the wayfinder from the wreckage of the second Death Star,

DISCORD THEME:

But she is met by Kylo, who destroys the wayfinder and duels with her. In a dying act, Leia distracts Kylo through the Force, and Rey impales him. Sensing Leia's death and overcome by guilt, Rey heals Kylo and takes his TIE fighter to exile herself on Ahch-To. Meanwhile,

COUNTER:

Kylo converses with a memory of his father, Han Solo. He discards his lightsaber and reclaims his identity as Ben Solo.

DISCORD THEME:

Palpatine deploys the Sith fleet to draw Rey out and sends a Sith Star Destroyer to destroy Kijimi.

COUNTER:

On Ahch-To, Luke's Force spirit encourages Rey to face Palpatine and gives her Leia's lightsaber. Rey leaves for Exegol in Luke's X-wing fighter, using the wayfinder from Ben's ship. Rey transmits her coordinates to R2-D2, allowing The Resistance, now led by Poe and Finn, to follow her to Exegol. There, she confronts Palpatine. Debilitated, he demands that she kill him in anger so his spirit can possess her



body. The Resistance attacks the Sith fleet, while Ben overpowers the Knights of Ren and joins Rey.

DISCORD THEME:

Palpatine senses their power as “a dyad in the Force” and drains it to rejuvenate his body.

COUNTER:

Lando arrives with reinforcements from across the galaxy, including Babu and Zorii. [Where were these all the time?]

DISCORD THEME:

Palpatine incapacitates Ben and attacks The Resistance fleet with Force lightning.

COUNTER:

Weakened, Rey hears the voices of past Jedi, who give her strength. Palpatine attacks her with lightning, but Rey deflects it using Luke and Leia’s lightsabers, destroying him before dying herself.

FIRST FINALE:

Ben uses the Force to revive Rey, sacrificing himself, and they kiss before he dies.

SECOND FINALE

The Resistance destroys the remaining Sith forces, while people across the galaxy rise up against the First Order.

RESOLUTION:

Burial of the lightsabers and Rey taking of the surname of Skywalker and her place in the Jedi.

Billy watched the whole thing unfold now on its own without any interference, like a piece of music he thought.

Well, he did add the reinforcements from across the galaxy!

## CHAPTER 18: POLITICS

‘The news is better, but we still seem to be in a very confused political state.’ said Catherine Mulberry.

‘I’ve sent JFW this and I will sort things out.’ said Billy.

“The world champion pet was not a Pekinese yet; it was a large Cockapoo. The most troublesome being the larger dogs with bright orange fur. Cockapoo, not to be confused with Cockatoo.

Cockatoos are monogamous, a relationship of two individuals in which they form a mutual and exclusive intimate partnership. Having only one partner at any one time. Cockatoos have been shown to learn new skills through social interaction. A team of scientists from Oxford University, the University of Vienna and the Max Planck Institute conducted tests on ten untrained Cockatoos and found that they were able to solve complex mechanical puzzles and generally have extremely high IQs compared to other animals, including some humans.

The Cockapoo was first bred as a designer dog in the United States, bred to please their owners. Cockapoos are known for their lively personalities, and at times “zany” behaviour, are eager and quick at mastering new tricks. It’s encouraged that owners enrol their cockapoos in puppy training classes for proper obedience and socialization, those that do not can be extremely problematic. Cockapoos are energetic and require attention, exercise, and training to prevent boredom and potential recklessness. It’s important to note that due to their sociable nature if left alone for too long cockapoos have been known to develop separation anxiety.

Cockapoos are not monogamous, and will form relationships where and whenever possible, they are unable to form a mutual and exclusive intimate partnership.

The confusion with Cockatoo has caused many people, particularly those suffering from learning difficulties, and or dyslexia to purchase Cockapoos by mistake, quickly realizing this as the pet soon proved not being able to live up to expectations. In short, its communication skills were poor or non-existent. Also, it could not fly.

It was then by something of a genetic miracle and DNA manipulation that boffins were able to offer a service for genetically modifying nuisance Cockapoos into Cockatoos.

The less bright owners not realizing in fact the problematic Cockapoo simply had the “p” replaced with a “t” and so they now owned an intelligent bird that could not only fly but speak coherently. Such was the success with this programme that the Pekinese failed to achieve the success it required to be a world dominating pet.”

She read the piece, beginning to smile,

‘Pekinese, I see who they are, and the orange Cockapoo, yes!’

Then she laughed out loud and was eventually convulsed with laughter, tears running down her cheeks.

Billy rose and fetched her a glass of water, she calmed down.

‘And the genetic modification was real?’ she asked.

Billy gave a shrug.

‘And your story of Cockapoos and Cockatoos would make a wonderful Disney cartoon.’ said Catherine Mulberry.

‘I think the boy I am is maybe like the other boy. That is, we make possible dangerous realities into myths, or movies. Or comic characters. But also, I see the problem, they seem never ending.’

Billy said, and continued,

‘A never-ending task, like those of Dan Dare and the Mekon, or Star Wars, Star Trek. Another infinity like the ever-receding mirror worlds? And bigger and bigger universes and multiverses in which these things occur. And I think neither of us would want to do this forever, so I’ve an idea for a machine to do this. A machine to make these bad realities into myths, and so stories, films, even music like operas...’

## CHAPTER 19 THE IDEA OF THE ABSTRACT MACHINE

*Billy's thinking re the Abstract Machine. With a Tip of the Hat to Deleuze and Guattari.*

From seeing how realities are made into fictions and myths Billy began to see how these tended to have a form similar to those found in music, classical music such as the symphony. The first movement introduces the theme, the middle movements explore the theme, and others, has minor resolutions. A theme is a question that is answered, as in a myth obstacles and challenges are overcome. Finally, in the last movement everything is resolved in the finale.

So, he began with musical forms.

Motive: At least two notes possibly more, for instance the three notes at the beginning of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony.



'Da Da Da Dum. Or Dot-dot-dot-dash.

In Morse code, [ . . . – ] the letter "V"... or these three notes represent "Fate knocking at the door". So, the story or myth begins.'

Billy explained this to Catherine Mulberry as they sat in deck chairs in the garden.

‘Beethoven used these four notes on hearing the song of a yellow-hammer, while walking through a Vienna park. Forty or so years before Morse code was developed.’

Catherine Mulberry gave a look as if to say, ‘how so important’.

‘Maybe not so important to begin, a little birdsong,’ said Billy ‘but see how the musical myth grows and weaves itself into our reality, or actually comes from our reality.’

In the second world war the idea of using the “V” as a symbol of resistance to the Nazis came from Victor de Laveleye, a Belgian producer, who saw this as unifying the Flemish and French speakers of Belgium. He picked “V” because it was the first letter of the French word Victoire (victory) and the Flemish word Vrijheid (freedom). As part of his broadcast on January 14, 1941, he encouraged the people of Belgium to paint a “V” on everything possible. This was their symbol for standing up to the Germans. The idea spread to other Allied countries and territories through the BBC broadcasts.

In Morse code, “V” is dot-dot-dot-dash, or three short clicks and one long. You see how then people equated it with the opening of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony. And so that four-note motif was played on the timpani before every BBC wartime broadcast to Europe. The publicity about Beethoven and the “V for Victory” campaign continued in the American press for the duration of the war.

The Motive is then the foundation-stone of the musical piece, and it’s possible to find it in most music. With these motifs more complex musical structures are built.’

‘Please go on.’ said Catherine Mulberry, so Billy did,

‘Phrase: A musical phrase is one or more motives.

Sentence: Typically, eight bars, it has a completeness about it. Like a written sentence the last note acts like a full stop.

Binary Form: A questioning section, followed by an answer.

Like in The Beatles, A little help from my friends...

Do you need anybody?

I need somebody to love.

Could it be anybody?

I want somebody to love.

Ternary: If binary is A B, ternary is A B A.

Things then build on these using dances in suites, a chain of dances, and variations, Sonata, first theme, episode, theme, episode. We see this in many stories, an adventure begins, there is danger, a resolution, the story moves on, danger again, resolution... etc.

Finally, The Symphony, the whole story is resolved, and that includes what begins the whole story. The whole Star Wars trilogy is thus three movements of a symphony.’

‘And?’ asked Catherine Mulberry and Billy continued, showing at times the notes he had made in his Moleskine notebook.

‘1: The Quest for Skywalker – he is found.

2. The denial of Skywalker- resolved in his regaining the Force.

3. The new threat - resolved in the new Rey Skywalker.



And these patterns can be seen to repeat in stories, and myths, in fictions and become things like Tolkien's Lord of the Rings, which uses ideas found in other myths such as that of Wagner's Ring Cycle, which in turn uses Norse mythology. The Norse legendary sagas and the Nibelungenlied.'

'Yes, I know this of course.' Interrupted Catherine Mulberry, but Billy continued.

'The Symphonic form, Birth, life, Death. The image of the adventure, teleology, the quest.'

Billy was now talking excitedly to Catherine Mulberry,

'Like the quest, the opening challenge, in many myths and stories, Tolkien's, those of Arthur, Beowulf, even found in religions, look at the Bible, The Fall and redemption through the many sub plots... Kundalini Yoga and the awakening soul, or evolution itself.'

He paused, his high child voice grating a little in Catherine Mulberry's ears. So, she interrupted him saying,

'Yes, Teleology something as a function of its end, its purpose, its goal,' she paused, 'but what of stories that are not structured like that?' Billy looked puzzled, she continued,

'Is there an alternative, a non-narrative, randomness, or lack of teleology, Serial music which abandons the grammatical structures of traditional music. In the novel, not dramatic stories of Kings and Queens, but I'm thinking of books like Mrs Dalloway by Virginia Woolf, and her other novels. Or James Joyce, and of course Proust's À la recherche du temps perdu, or the stream of consciousness novels?'

Billy frowned,

‘I know you never were a fan of this kind of literature.’ she said, ‘but narratives that are more like one could say seemingly random, like some lives in the real world, maybe many lives, or all lives if you are a nihilist?’

She was thinking,

‘Well, the Bible has a clear teleology, maybe Buddhism too, the Dharma, but the Quran is strange in its order, also for many the difficulty of translation.’

There was a silence, then she added, ‘It’s why I learnt Arabic.’

She continued,

‘Well, it seems the heroic story, like the symphony in the twentieth century was questioned, why should myth be created from reality, and reality needn’t be neatly themed.’

‘Anyway, I think if we had an Abstract machine to create stories and myths from reality it would save myself and the boy the need to do so, we could then look at the other alternative realities.’ said Billy, going on,

‘We have a base, the variations, question response, problem, solution, then the final resolution.’

‘Well, your abstract machine is found in Deleuze and Guattari’s, *Mille Plateaux*, *A Thousand Plateaus*, a difficult text.’ said Catherine Mulberry, she left to return with the book and quickly flipped to a page. ‘So, from the actual text,

“The issue is to produce the unconscious, and with it new statements, different desires: the rhizome is precisely this production of the unconscious.”

See?’

‘That’s just what I want, and suspect the other boy does also, we need to free ourselves of the making of fictions in order to make our own worlds. So, I need to study it and use it as a model, best to do this in Arcadia.’ said Billy.

‘I will accompany you.’ said Catherine Mulberry.

All this time they had been sitting in deck chairs in their garden in Woodbridge, on a warm May morning.

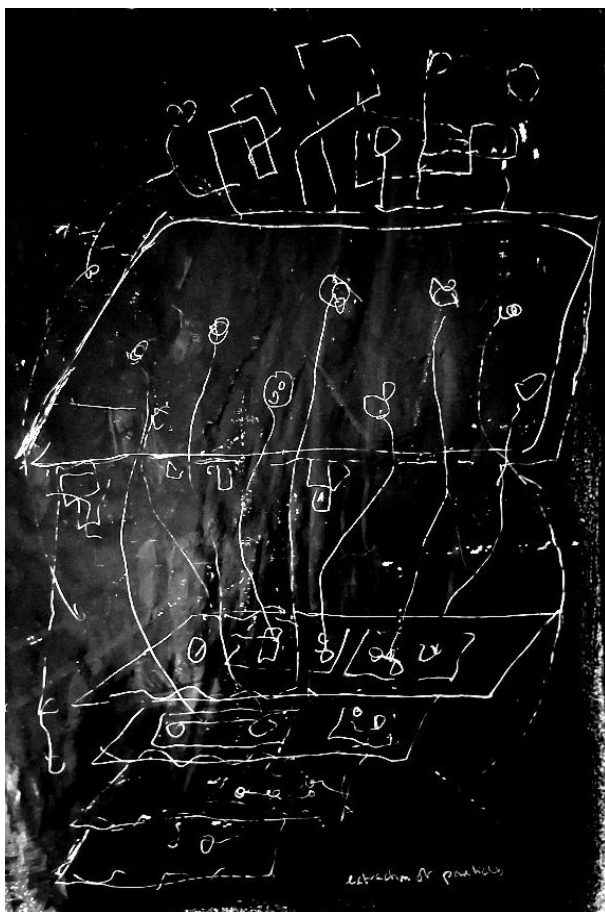
## CHAPTER 20 THE MAKING OF THE ABSTRACT MACHINE

Now in the Library of the palace called Arcadia. Arcadia was at the end of a long driveway, with landscaped and formal gardens, lakes, a river, and extensive woodland. It had a grand entrance hall and the state rooms, which were all aligned, an enfilade, each room leading to the next, found in all the great palaces, found in Versailles, and found in Arcadia, which was more like Blenheim Palace. Arcadia, which had a Grand Salon with a freeze of paintings, scenes from the Trojan War. And a long gallery of works of art. There were smaller salons, more intimate, the walls hung with paintings, mainly large landscapes in the style of Claude Lorrain and mythological paintings in the style of Nicolas Poussin. The walls being an eggshell green with rich gold baroque decoration, the ceilings of delicate plaster work in white and gold of floral designs. There were Chinese style lacquerware tables and cabinets, Persian carpets, marble fireplaces with decorative sculpture and vases. Large central chandeliers. Doors richly decorated in marquetry of exotic veneers. Some of the rooms had views of the parkland and river, where often groups of fallow deer could be seen crossing and heading towards a wood. And of course there was a grand dining room, a music room and a library. The library lacked paintings, it was large and tall with spiral staircases and walkways to access the higher shelves. It had desks, fine mahogany tables and chairs, even sofas and lower tables, and one French window with a view of the parkland, the lake, river and woodland.

On one of the tables was a large open book. They both approached it, Catherine Mulberry turned the pages and commented as she did so...

'Yes, this is what they call an "Abstract Machine", looks like what you want... Lines of flight, this looks like a pictorial representation of Deleuze and Guattari, it's complicated...' said Catherine Mulberry, and continuing,





‘Hard to read but looks like “extraction of particles” which is where particulars are extracted from the whole, it’s from The Geology of Morals, here is a parody of Nietzsche’s idea of a genealogy of morals. For Nietzsche morals are fictional

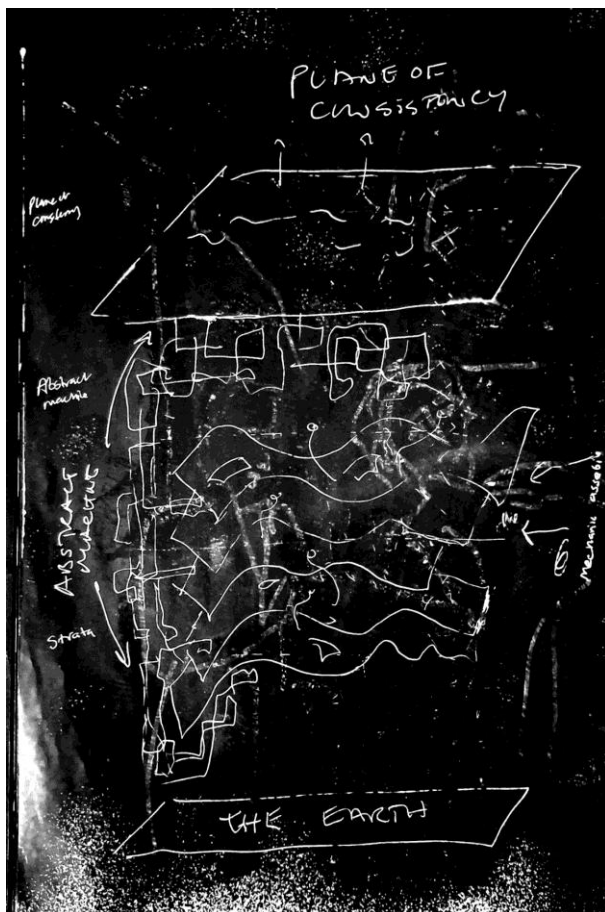
creations. OK, let's not get into that, but let's say here we have the idea of aesthetics, music, or a story is being created.

See the top rectangle is producing the ones underneath, the strata. Let's say the pages of the story, the characters in the myth, or in music the musical themes. Extracted from a limitless potential. Tunes, sentences, descriptions, landscapes.



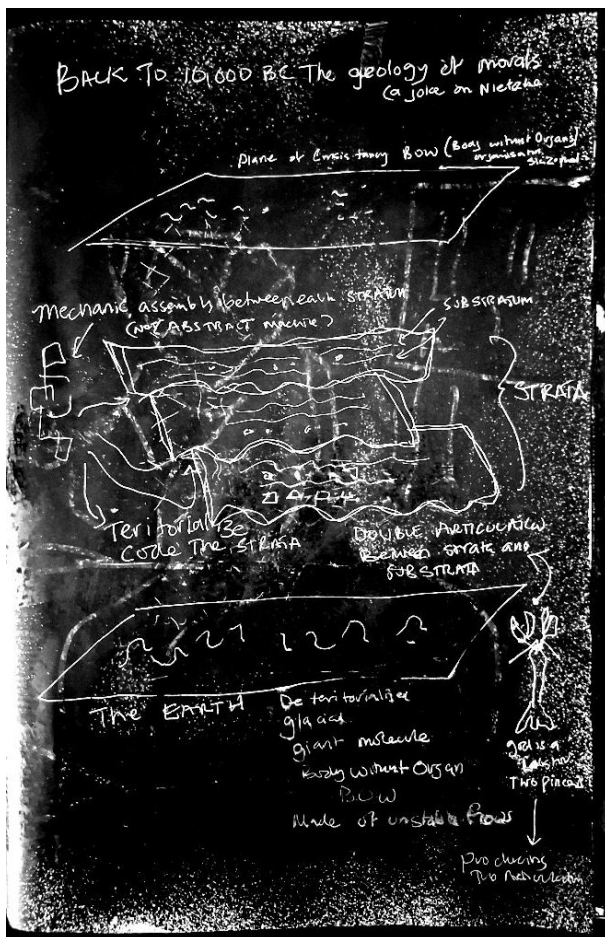
I think it says “continuum of intensities, emission of particles and flows conjunction of signs” which would be the episodes in the myth, the movements in the symphony.

They, Deleuze and Guattari, are comparing it to how in geology strata is laid down, say like sand in a riverbed becomes sandstone, of flows of lava which become rock, hence the geology reference.



Ah! now this is the whole picture. The Earth at the bottom is the source of everything, the universe, of things and ideas. From this the “abstract machine” is making strata, flows, flows of the story, flows of the tunes. These then create “The plain of consistency”, the Symphony as a whole, the Myth. So, the reality of the world, a chaos, has become a thing we can experience safely.





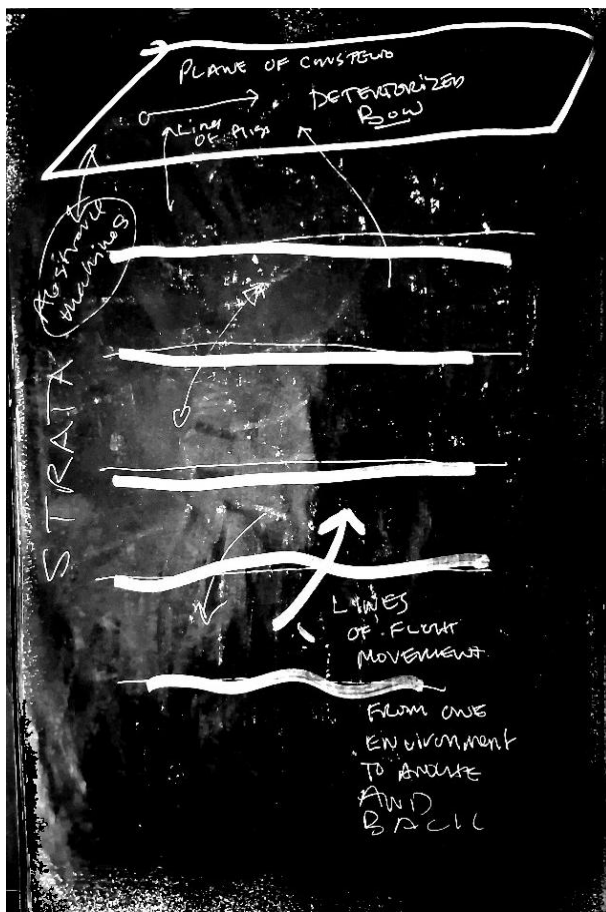
Inside the strata are layers, they use the metaphor of the lobster and a God, or creator with two pincers. What we see in music as a question and answer, or in the myth the seeker

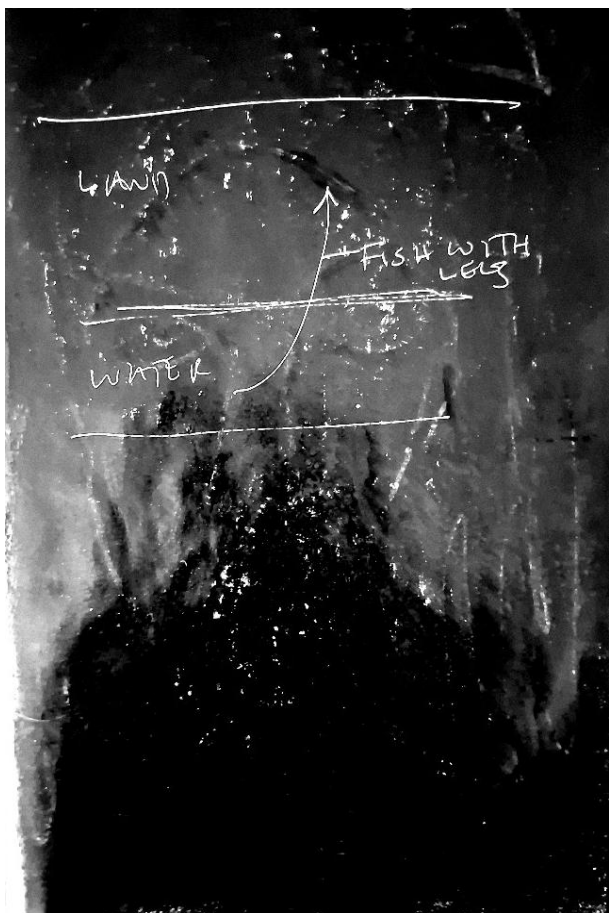
and that which is sort, or the struggle between good and bad, different struggles, moving towards a resolution. The mechanic assembles inside the story, the Abstract Machine producing the story.

Notice the Earth as a source is a giant molecule, a Body without Organs, BoW, if you like the chaos lacking organisation. Nomadic, deterritorialized, a wilderness. The articulations of the strata becoming organised, into codes, language, stories, songs... Yes, the different layers have codes, notes and songs We have movement, a good term, we have movements in a symphony. Musical themes go back and forth, the adventurer passes through landscapes, or in your Star Wars films, planets, deserts, or verdant worlds, and remote worlds... Here they call them lines of flight, very apt for your spaceflights through hyperspace. They, Deleuze and Guattari, use the idea of a fish growing legs, so a movement across strata or environments, now what would that be in your example, in your Star Wars?’

‘Rey becoming a Jedi, Ben Solo becoming the evil Kylo Ren and then Ben again, or Poe Dameron becomes a leader...’







Billy answered, and went on, 'I think this is enough to build an Abstract Machine out of...'

‘Meccano no doubt.’ Catherine Mulberry said finishing Billy’s sentence, adding, and pointing, ‘There’s your Meccano set on that table, but I’m going to have lunch.’

Billy didn’t need to have any lunch but joined Catherine Mulberry on the terrace while she ate a buffet lunch.

‘So, what kind of mirroring takes place in the machine?’ asked Catherine Mulberry.

‘I may have the appearance of a child, but that is not all.’ said Billy continuing, ‘The plane of consistency mirrors the world as do the myths, the songs and fables. And these in turn arise in the streams and lines of flight of the territorializing strata. And this is more like an actual true mirror, not a mirror image, because mirrors images show us what we normally can’t see, ourselves. These stories, myths, picture our thoughts, desires, fears, ones we can see and ones we cannot.’

‘OK, fine.’ said Catherine Mulberry.

‘Myths allow us to deal with unpleasant realities, even fairy stories like Little Red Riding Hood... sorry you know this of course.’

‘Yes, and the disasters that occur in societies without such myths.’ she said as she poured herself some cordial and helped herself to a bowl of chicken salad.

Billy was just sipping cordial; he was not hungry.

She was looking at Billy and thinking, then asked,

‘Why do you think the boy made you, if he did, look like a boy?’

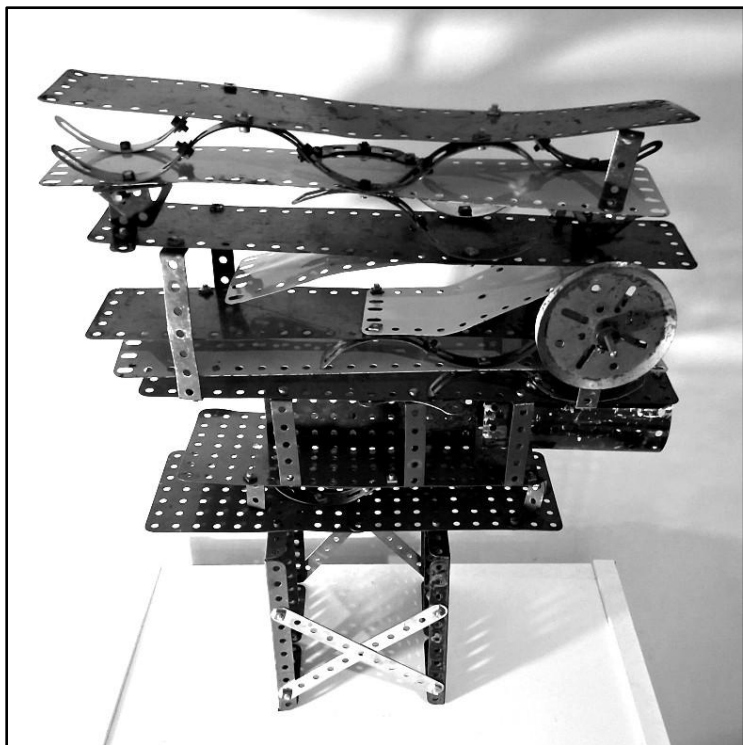
‘Not sure,’ said Billy, ‘maybe that’s how these things need to look, or maybe that’s how he looked when he became whatever he is, and now what I am? Or maybe it relates to some personal incident?’

He paused, ‘Yes, that as boys we were creative and imaginative.’

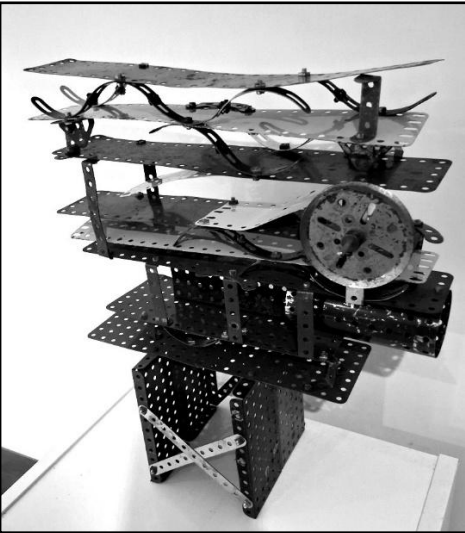
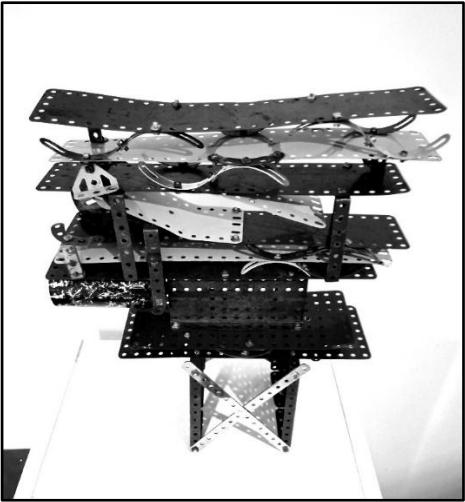
‘And do you mind being what you now are?’ she asked.

‘Again, not sure?’ was the reply.

Billy spent the afternoon in the library working on making an Abstract Machine in Meccano, Catherine Mulberry read a little and then took a walk in the park in which the Palace was set. They had afternoon tea, then Billy continued working on the machine. By 7.30 it was finished.



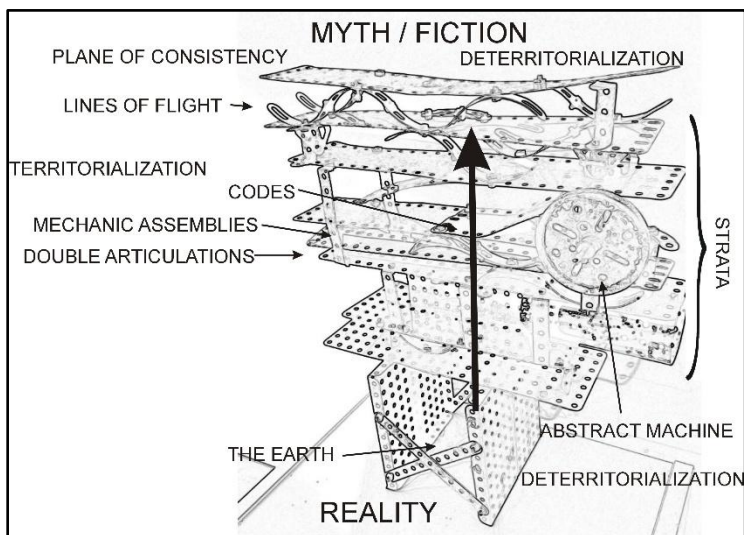




Catherine Mulberry looked at the finished Meaccano of The Abstract Machine, she was impressed.

‘I think I’ve represented all that is needed.’ said Billy, ‘Maybe I will send some pictures to JFW and an explanatory diagram?’

‘Good idea.’ said Catherine Mulberry.



‘Will you have any supper?’ asked Catherine Mulberry. She was hungry but knew Billy it seemed no longer have to eat. ‘Only I’m going to wash and change. You probably have no need.’

'I think I'd like to eat something just for the pleasure, and likewise a glass or two of wine.' he said, 'And a wash would be good I think, to freshen up.' Billy replied.

As before the palace created the food, and wine which appeared as always unseen, and with no persons involved. The palace kept itself clean, the gardens were always immaculate and the weather to match the moods of the guests.

The next morning Billy entered the library to look at his machine, he was surprised to see Catherine Mulberry holding a postcard and reading it, 'I guess it's for you.' she said, handing him the card.

The front showed a picture of a Sea Vixen navy jet fighter, and the message simply said 'Thanks'.

'I guess it's from the other boy, looks like he used an old post card he had kept. So, I suppose he is aware that your machine is working.' she said, adding, 'So now you and he have more time, time for what one wonders.'

'The occult.' said Billy.



## CHAPTER 21: SUPER-ALCHEMY

Billy sat with Catherine Mulberry on the terrace whilst she had breakfast, he not needing or wanting any.

‘I think I will go back to Woodbridge, I miss the house. It’s very grand here, but it is also my turn to help with the flowers in St Mary’s.’

Catherine Mulberry wasn’t religious in any normal sense of the word, but she was now deeply involved with religiosity, and had a love of small churches, not that St Mary’s was small, but she liked to see the building at its best, and this meant flowers. Billy said nothing.

St Mary’s in Woodbridge is one of the great English churches, the tower is one of Suffolk’s tallest of the late 15th Century. It has a Victorian interior, the work of Richard Phipson with a number of medieval survivals such as the Seven Sacrament font under the 1937 font cover by Walter Forsyth. The nave and chancel roof stretches the entire length of the church, of timber construction, with straddling tiebeams, alternating with hammerbeams jutting out from the sides, all supported by arch-braces, rising from wall-posts, which rest upon stone corbels.

Woodbridge having another Anglican Church, St John’s, a Victorian building, and a Catholic Church and Methodist Chapel, Woodbridge Quay Church and a peaceful Quaker cemetery, a favourite place of contemplation of Catherine Mulberry’s. However, she was now involved with St Mary’s with the other women of the team which organized and arranged the flowers.

On returning to the house in Cumberland Street she saw the figure of Mr Smith waiting at the front door. She showed him into the house, but they sat in the garden on chairs around a table. Catherine Mulberry had offered tea, but he had declined.

‘The reason I am here, please forgive the impertinence, is that I am curious as to what and why Mr Taylor is now, it seems, like the boy, and what, if any, is the reason, his motivation. I understand he is now presently residing in the palace of Arcadia, but now I cannot gain entry. It seems protected like The Hall of the Mountain King?’

‘At your suggestion the palace is now protected, but it seems Billy neglected to grant you access, and his last words were to the effect his concern now was in the occult.’ was her reply.

‘Ah, then I would be very interested to talk with him, “Occult” from the Latin from occultus, concealed, covered, hidden; having been concealed.’

‘He mentioned mirrors that show us what we normally can’t see, that is ourselves not a mirror image.’ she spoke aloud what she was thinking.

‘Could you...’

Catherine Mulberry interrupted Smith’s question,

‘Could I go and ask him to allow you to visit, just one moment...’

She rose and entered the house, and two minutes later appeared with Billy, still the 10-year-old boy.

He spoke, 'So let me take you to the library in Arcadia and we can talk there.'

He looked at Catherine Mulberry,

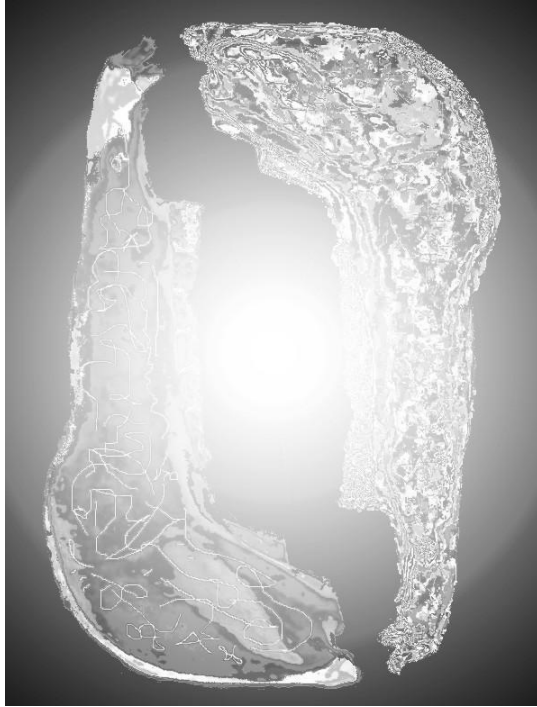
'Staying here?' he asked.

'For a while.' was the reply.

Billy walked back into the house with Smith following, he was saying,

'Sorry I didn't give you permission to enter before, I forgot the place defaults to only people I've shown in and who mean no harm.'

Smith didn't reply, soon they were in the library looking at another large book's cover.



'The mirror everything reverses... hence the occult, the hidden... The Mirror reveals the hidden.'

They both had the same thought, and inside the book it seemed was another revelation.

Smith was carefully turning pages of blackness with black writing and designs, he was looking carefully at the pages because they contained things he knew of, but more significantly things he knew nothing of,

‘Remarkable,’ he was saying, ‘page after page, truly remarkable. Look here, The Akashic records? Brought into the physical plane.’

Billy the boy, looked questioningly.

‘Ah, so for all of what you have become you have no knowledge of this?’ Smith said.

‘I only know what I once knew, and what I can learn.’ replied Billy.

‘Then let us sit at this table with the book and I will educate you.’

They sat in chairs at the table, an odd sight, a young boy in short trousers and polo shirt, and what looked like a late middle-aged man in a Victorian frock coat, he removed his top hat and placed it carefully on another table, revealing his Macassar oiled black hair.

‘The Akashic records are a compendium of all universal events, thoughts, words, emotions, and intent ever to have occurred in the past, present, or future, regarding not just humans, but all entities and life forms. They are encoded in a non-physical plane of existence known as the mental plane.’

‘So is it like the Ars Goetia, or Key of Solomon, is it then dark and dangerous.’ said Billy, ‘And if it does contain all knowledge its potential for danger would be far more than the Ars Goetia, or Key of Solomon. But how can an actual book hold potentially infinite knowledge?’

Smith paused his page turning, thinking, ‘I do not know yet, I’m unsure, but I will continue.’



‘Look there the Pseudomonarchia Daemonum, Livre des Esperitz and the Arbatel de magia veterum...’ said Billy.

‘See, this is how!’ said Smith, showing Billy, he turned a page then turned it back, and the text had changed. He did this several times to show how the book could contain potentially infinite knowledge.

‘And here The Arbatel, it mainly focuses on the relationship between humanity and celestial hierarchies, and the positive relationship between the two.’

said Smith, continuing in his dull encyclopaedic way,

‘The Arbatel was one of the most influential works of its kind from its period, inspiring figures such as Johann Arndt, Gerhard Dorn, Adam Haslmayr, Robert Fludd, Heinrich Khunrath and Valentin Weigel, in addition to its editor and publisher, Zwinger and Perna. It was possibly the first work to use the term “Theosophy” in an occult sense, as opposed to a synonym for theology, and for distinguishing between human, “anthroposophia” and divine knowledge “theosophia”.’

‘Here look The Steganographia by Johannes Trithemius shows that the demons and magic in these other books could be codes for other things...’ said Billy pointing at another black page.

‘Is he reading my mind, thought Smith?’

Smith continued,

‘Trithemius’ most famous work, Steganographia, written c.1499; published in Frankfurt, 1606, was placed on the Index Librorum Prohibitorum, the Catholic Churches’ list of prohibited books, in 1609. It was only removed from the list in

1900. The book is in three volumes, and appears to be about magic, specifically, about using spirits to communicate over long distances. However, since the publication of a decryption key to the first two volumes in 1606, they were discovered to be actually concerned with cryptography and steganography. Until 1996, the third volume was widely believed to be solely about magic, but the “magical” formulas have now been shown to be covert texts for yet more material on cryptography.’

They both found references within the third book to magical works by such figures as Agrippa and John Dee which still lend credence to the idea of a mystic-magical foundation of the third volume. And possible re-interpretation using this cryptography of the first two as containing magical knowledge.

‘Additionally,’ Smith began, ‘while Trithemius’s steganographic methods can be established to be free of the need for angelic–astrological mediation, an underlying theological motive for their contrivance remains. The preface to *Polygraphia* equally establishes the everyday practicability of cryptography and was conceived by Trithemius as a “secular consequent of the ability of a soul specially empowered by God to reach, by magical means, from earth to Heaven”. Robert Hooke suggested, in the chapter of Dr. Dee’s *Book of Spirits*, that John Dee used Trithemian steganography to conceal his communication with Queen Elizabeth I.’

‘Sort of a super-Alchemy.’ said Billy with a grin, and continued,

‘No, I think this is “The book of mirrors” the book that contained all the mirrors of the occult as well as The Akashic records and their reversal.’

‘Which means?’ asked a puzzled Smith.

‘The complete reversal of fictions and myths in a vast new Earth.’ was the reply.

Billy continued, ‘We need a vast new earth, far bigger than the boy’s garden or even this place,’ he said gesturing at the palace and grounds in which it sat. ‘In effect an inversion of the great sphere of existence. The hollow earth, inverted and made larger and with three suns or more.’

‘Please clarify’, said Smith.

‘These books now opened and found will materialize everything materializable. All universal events, thoughts, words, emotions, and intent ever to have occurred in the past, present, or future, regarding not just humans, but all entities and life forms. They will no longer be encoded in a non-physical plane of existence, the mental plane but will be made real, reified.

So, we should, or must, create a new World for them.’

## CHAPTER 25: THE HOLLOW EARTH

Now Billy was looking at other shelves of books, muttering 'Hollow, ah! there.' He took down a book and placed it on the table, and he and Smith opened it.



Smith began to read, again in his dry encyclopaedic manner,

'The Hollow Earth is an idea that the planet Earth is hollow.'

'Obviously!' thought Billy, Smith continued,

'It was famously suggested by Edmond Halley in the late 17th century. It was still defended through the mid-19th century, notably by John Cleves Symmes Jr. and J. N. Reynolds.'

The concept of a hollow Earth still recurs in folklore and as a premise for subterranean fiction, a subgenre of adventure fiction and in conspiracy theories such as the underground kingdom of Agartha and the Cryptoterrestrial hypothesis...’

Smith interrupted his reading to explain,

‘The Cryptoterrestrial hypothesis is regards to evidence of a hidden, Earth-based, technologically advanced civilization. So sometimes it is in the form of alien UFOs, or underground aliens. Of course, nonsense, there are no such things as super intelligent aliens.’

‘I think you just made a joke,’ said Billy, ‘and not bad.’

Smith might have given a smile, but he continued,

‘These worlds are inhabited by mythological figures or alien leaders.

The Idea of a subterranean land inside the Earth first appears in mythology, folklore and legends. Subterranean realms became intertwined with the concept of “places” of origin or afterlife, such as the Greek underworld, Hades, the Nordic Svartálfaheimr, the Christian Hell, and the Jewish Sheol, with details describing the inner Earth in Kabalistic literature. According to one story from Tibetan Buddhist tradition, there is an ancient city called Shamballa which is located inside the Earth.

For the Ancient Greeks there were caverns which were entrances leading to the underworld, such as the caverns at Tainaron in Lakonia, at Troezen in Argolis, at Ephya in Thesprotia, at Herakleia in Pontos, and in Ermioni. In Thracian

and Dacian legends it is said that there are caverns occupied by an ancient god called Zalmoxis.'

'Zalmoxis?' questioned Billy, here Smith gave an unusual look and spoke,

'Difficult, Zalmoxis has a number of references, confusing and perhaps contradictory, one is that he created a ritual of passage through life and death, through the underground, the place of the dead. In another Zalmoxis is related to Pythagoras, as he is the founder of a mystical cult. He is elsewhere a Christ-like figure who dies and is resurrected.

This last theory precisely parallels the legend of the universal king Frode... but Fróði, Old Norse: Frōði; Old English: Frōda; Middle High German: Vruote is the name of a number of legendary Danish kings in various texts including Beowulf... and here is another rabbit hole...'

'And rabbit holes are from Alice in Wonderland and not from Through the looking glass.' Interrupted Billy, and added,

'So please continue reading.'

'In Mesopotamian religion there is a story of a man who after traveling through the darkness of a tunnel in the mountain of "Mashu", entered a subterranean garden.

Celtic mythology has a legend of a cave called "Cruachan", also known as "Ireland's gate to Hell", a cave from which strange creatures would emerge and be seen on the surface of the Earth. There are also stories of medieval knights and saints who went on pilgrimages to a cave located in Station Island, County Donegal where they made journeys inside the Earth into a place of purgatory. In County Down, Northern

Ireland there is a myth which says tunnels lead to the land of the subterranean Tuatha Dé Danann, a group of people who are believed to have introduced Druidism to Ireland and then went back underground.

In Hindu mythology, the underworld is referred to as Patala. In the Bengali version of the Hindu epic Ramayana, Rama and Lakshmana were taken by the king of the underworld, Ahiravan, brother of the demon king Ravana. Later on, they were rescued by Hanuman.

The Angami Naga tribes of India claim that their ancestors emerged in ancient times from a subterranean land inside the Earth.

The Taino from Cuba believe their ancestors emerged in ancient times from two caves in a mountain. Natives of the Trobriand Islands believe that their ancestors had come from a subterranean land through a cavern hole called "Obukula". Mexican folklore also tells of a cave in a mountain five miles south of Ojinaga, and that Mexico is possessed by devilish creatures who came from inside the Earth.

In the Middle Ages an ancient German myth held that some mountains located between Eisenach and Gotha hold a portal to the inner Earth. And a Russian legend says the Samoyeds, an ancient Siberian tribe, travelled to a cavern city to live inside the Earth.

And of course, the Italian writer Dante describes a hollow earth in his well-known 14th-century work "Inferno", in which the fall of Lucifer from heaven caused an enormous funnel to appear in previously solid and spherical Earth, as well as an enormous mountain opposite it which is Purgatory.

In Native American mythology it is said that the ancestors of the Mandan people emerged from a subterranean land through a cave on the north side of the Missouri River. There is also a tale about a tunnel in the San Carlos Apache Indian Reservation in Arizona near Cedar Creek which is said to lead inside the Earth to a land inhabited by a mysterious tribe. Also, in the tribes of the Iroquois there is a legend that their ancient ancestors emerged from a subterranean world inside the Earth. The elders of the Hopi people believe that a Sipapu entrance in the Grand Canyon exists which leads to the underworld.'

'Another rabbit hole, literally!' said Smith, adding,

'A sipapu was a small hole or indentation in the floor of a kiva, or pithouse. Kivas were used by the Ancestral Puebloans, the Pueblo peoples are Native Americans in the Southwestern United States, and Kivas continue to be used by modern-day Puebloans. The sipapu symbolizes the portal through which their ancient ancestors first emerged to enter the present world. So, let's read on...'

'Brazilian Indians, who live alongside the Parima River in Brazil, claim that their forefathers emerged in ancient times from an underground land, and that many of their ancestors still remained inside the Earth. Ancestors of the Inca supposedly came from caves which are located east of Cuzco, Peru.'

'Much of this I knew from world religions.' Billy said.

'We will then move on then to more recent ideas.' Smith replied.



'I need a short walk first.' Billy said, Smith said nothing, Billy rose and left the library, he walked down the long gallery of allegorical paintings in the style of Nicholas Poussin. Scenes of the underworld, not that pleasant, an idea forming in his mind to do with inversions and could we have something with no otherness. No underworld? Eventually he found his way back into the library, immediately he sat Smith began reading from the book, extemporizing at times.

'Now we find more modern references,

The notion of a hollow Earth was proposed by Athanasius Kircher's non-fiction "Mundus Subterraneus" of 1665, which speculated that the Earth had underneath its surface an intricate system of cavities and a channel of water connecting the poles.

As we began it was Edmond Halley who postulated a hollow Earth in 1692. This was due to Newton's erroneous estimate that the density of the Moon was  $\frac{9}{5}$  the density of Earth. Rather than assume a dense Moon Halley conjectured that the Earth might consist of a hollow shell about 500 miles thick, two inner concentric shells and an innermost core. Atmospheres separate these shells, and each shell has its own magnetic poles. The spheres rotate at different speeds. Halley proposed this scheme in order to explain anomalous compass readings. He envisaged the atmosphere inside as luminous, possibly inhabited and speculated that escaping gas caused the Aurora Borealis.'

'Reasonable' thought Billy.

'Le Clerc Milfort in 1781 led a journey with hundreds of Muscogee Peoples, Native Americans, to a series of caverns

near the Red River above the junction of the Mississippi River. According to Milfort the original Muscogee Peoples' ancestors emerged out to the surface of the Earth in ancient times from the caverns. Milfort also claimed that in the caverns they saw what could easily contain 15,000 – 20,000 families.

In 1818, John Cleves Symmes, Jr. suggested that the Earth consisted of a hollow shell about 810 miles thick, with openings about 1,400 miles across at both poles, with 4 inner shells each open at the poles. Symmes became the most famous of the early Hollow Earth proponents, and Hamilton, Ohio even has a monument to him and his ideas. Several authors published works discussing his ideas. McBride wrote "Symmes' Theory of Concentric Spheres" in 1826. It appears that Reynolds had an article that appeared as a separate booklet in 1827. "Remarks of Symmes'" theory appeared in the American Quarterly Review. In 1868, professor W.F. Lyons published "The Hollow Globe" which put forth a Symmes-like Hollow Earth hypothesis but failed to mention Symmes himself. Symmes's son Americus then published "The Symmes' Theory of Concentric Spheres" in 1878 to set the record straight.

Sir John Leslie proposed a hollow Earth in his 1829 "Elements of Natural Philosophy." William Fairfield Warren, in his book "Paradise Found – The Cradle of the Human Race at the North Pole" published in 1885, presented his belief that humanity originated on a continent in the Arctic called Hyperborea. This influenced some early Hollow Earth proponents. According to Marshall Gardner, both the Eskimo and Mongolian peoples had come from the interior of the Earth through an entrance at the North Pole.

NEQUA, or “The Problem of the Ages”, first serialized in a newspaper printed in Topeka, Kansas in 1900 is an early feminist utopian novel, mentions John Cleves Symmes’ theory to explain its setting in a hollow Earth.

Another early 20th-century proponent of a hollow Earth was William Reed who wrote “Phantom of the Poles” in 1906. He supported the idea of a hollow Earth, but without interior shells or the inner sun. The spiritualist writer Walburga, Lady Paget in her book “Colloquies with an unseen friend” of 1907, was another writer to mention the hollow Earth hypothesis. She claimed that cities exist beneath a desert, which is where the people of Atlantis moved and that an entrance to the subterranean kingdom will be discovered in the 21st century.

Marshall Gardner wrote “A Journey to the Earth's Interior” in 1913 and published an expanded edition in 1920. He placed an interior sun in the Earth and built a working model of the Hollow Earth which he patented, U.S. patent 1,096,102. Around the same time, Vladimir Obruchev wrote a novel titled “Plutonia”, in which the Hollow Earth possessed an inner Sun and was inhabited by prehistoric species. The interior was connected with the surface as in many accounts by an opening in the Arctic.

The explorer Ferdynand Ossendowski wrote a book in 1922 titled “Beasts, Men and Gods”. Ossendowski said he was told about a subterranean kingdom that exists inside the Earth. It was known to Buddhists as Agharti. George Papashvily in his “Anything Can Happen” of 1940 claimed the discovery in the Caucasus Mountains of a cavern containing human skeletons with heads as big as bushel baskets. Also, the cavern contained an ancient tunnel leading to the centre of the Earth.

One man entered the tunnel and never returned. Novelist Lobsang Rampa in his book “The Cave of the Ancients” said an underground chamber system exists beneath the Himalayas of Tibet, filled with ancient machinery, records and treasure. Michael Grumley, a cryptozoologist, has linked Bigfoot and other hominid cryptids to ancient tunnel systems underground.’

Smith added, ‘Cryptids are animals or other beings whose present existence is disputed or unsubstantiated by science.’

And then he continued,

‘According to the ancient astronaut writer Peter Kolosimo, a robot was seen entering a tunnel below a monastery in Mongolia.’

Smith added,

‘Also, let me explain, ancient astronauts are the pseudoscientific set of beliefs that hold that intelligent extraterrestrial beings, alien astronauts, visited Earth and made contact with humans in antiquity and prehistoric times.’

‘Kolosimo also claimed a light was seen from underground in Azerbaijan. Kolosimo and other ancient astronaut writers such as Robert Charroux linked these activities to UFOs. A book by a Dr. Raymond Bernard which appeared in 1964, “The Hollow Earth”, exemplifies the idea of UFOs coming from inside the Earth, and adds the idea that the Ring Nebula proves the existence of hollow worlds, as well as speculation on the fate of Atlantis and the origin of flying saucers.

Walter Kafton-Minkel in 1989 published “Subterranean Worlds: 100,000 Years of Dragons, Dwarfs, the Dead, Lost Races & UFOs from Inside the Earth”

The science fiction pulp magazine “Amazing Stories” promoted one such idea from 1945 to 1949 as “The Shaver Mystery”. The magazine’s editor, Ray Palmer, ran a series of stories by Richard Sharpe Shaver, claiming that a superior pre-historic race had built a honeycomb of caves in the Earth, and that their degenerate descendants, known as Dero, live there still, using the fantastic machines abandoned by the ancient races with which to torment those of us living on the surface. As one characteristic of this torment, Shaver described voices that purportedly came from no explainable source. Thousands of readers wrote to affirm that they too had heard the fiendish voices from inside the Earth.

The writer David Hatcher Childress authored “Lost Continents and the Hollow Earth” in 1998, in which he reprinted the stories of Palmer and defended the Hollow Earth idea based on alleged tunnel systems beneath South America and Central Asia.

Hollow Earth proponents have claimed a number of different locations for the entrances which lead inside the Earth. Other than the North and South poles, entrances in locations which have been cited include Paris in France, Staffordshire in England, Montreal in Canada, Hangzhou in China, and the Amazon rainforest.’

Billy was deep in thought around the idea of an inside and an outside seeming inevitable.

'I think I'll take a walk to the lake.' he said, with which he left the library via the French Window and walked down the lawn to the lake. He was now thinking about this world he had made, and that literally nothing was above or beneath it, if you walked in any compass direction you returned eventually to where you began,

'In effect it's a Möbius strip.' he said to his reflection in the lake. He slowly walked back to the library, where Smith continued,

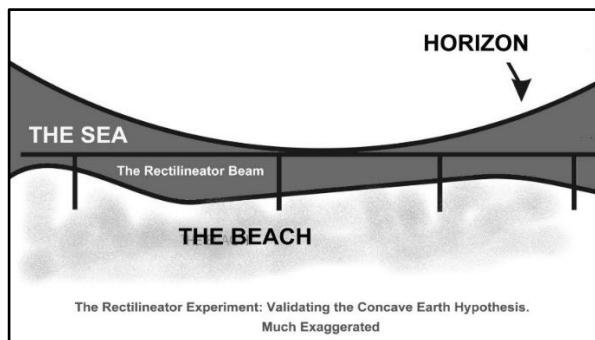
'In "A Culture of Conspiracy", Political scientist Michael Barkun draws a distinction between the terms hollow earth and inner earth, to differentiate ideas that conceive the majority of the interior of the planet to be hollow, from those that view it as solid but honeycombed with interconnected spaces.

Instead of saying that humans live on the exterior surface of a hollow planet, sometimes called a "convex" Hollow Earth hypothesis, it is hypothesized humans live on the interior surface. This has been called the "concave" Hollow Earth hypothesis or skycentrism. Cyrus Teed, a doctor from upstate New York, proposed such a concave Hollow Earth in 1869, calling his scheme "Cellular Cosmogony". Teed founded a group called the Koreshan Unity based on this notion, which he called Koreshanity. The main colony survives as a preserved Florida state historic site, at Estero, Florida, but all of Teed's followers have now died. They claimed to have experimentally verified the concavity of the Earth's curvature, through surveys of the Florida coastline making use of rectilineator equipment. This was used at intervals of 1/8 mile. Measurements were taken to compare a horizontal beam's

height relative to the water surface, the horizon. If Earth were convex, the horizontal plane would rise above the water line at the horizon. Conversely, a concave Earth would show the water at the horizon rising above the horizontal framework. The measurements consistently demonstrated a deviation indicating an upward curve: hence the surface of the earth is concave.'

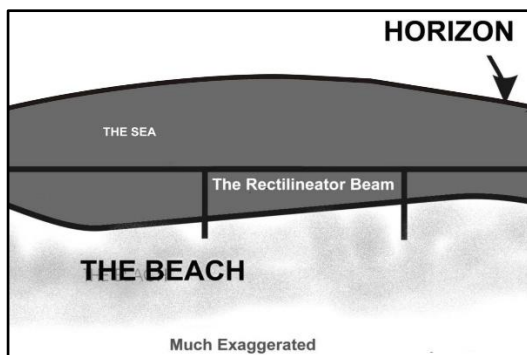
'This is interesting,' said Billy, 'show me please?'

Smith found some paper and as Billy suspected drew a perfect diagram.



Smith pointed out he had exaggerated the effect, but it shows the surface is concave, if we were living on the outside of a sphere, it would appear convex, as it does from space. Smith quickly drew this, as it would appear in the "experiment".

'Obviously they got it wrong.' said Smith.



Billy was now thinking of his ideas of a larger world than this one might be concave.

Smith continued,

‘Several 20th-century German writers, including Peter Bender, Johannes Lang, Karl Neupert, and Fritz Braut, published works advocating the Hollow Earth hypothesis, or *Hohlweltlehre*. It has even been reported that Adolf Hitler was influenced by concave Hollow Earth ideas and sent an expedition in an unsuccessful attempt to spy on the British fleet by pointing infrared cameras up at the sky.

Also, some early German experiments with rockets were part of a set of experiments to reach “the surface” of the hollow sphere that those who built them believed, that we were living in a hollow Earth. These rockets developed into the V2 rocket used in WW2 by Germany. One of the project designers was Wernher von Braun who also worked on the Saturn V rocket which put men onto the Moon.

The V2 formed the basis of modern ICBM rockets armed with nuclear warheads. These in turn of course are the rockets



used to send satellites into orbit, used in space exploration and in 1969 put Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin on the Moon.

The Egyptian mathematician Mostafa Abdelkader wrote several scholarly papers working out a detailed mapping of the Concave Earth model. In his book "On the Wild Side" published in 1992, Martin Gardner discusses the Hollow Earth model articulated by Abdelkader. According to Gardner, this hypothesis posits that light rays travel in circular paths, and slow as they approach the centre of the spherical star-filled cavern. No energy can reach the centre of the cavern. A drill, Gardner says, would lengthen as it travelled away from the cavern and eventually pass through the "point at infinity" corresponding to the centre of the Earth. Gardner stated that most mathematicians believe that an inside-out universe, with properly adjusted physical laws, is empirically irrefutable.'

'There's much more,' said Mr Smith.

To which Billy replied, 'I think this will do, it's not then a new idea, anything but.' And so he closed the book.

## CHAPTER 3: THE HOLLOW EARTH

‘So,’ Billy was explaining, ‘the Hollow earth needs to be hollow in order for it to be large enough for these objects, The Akashic records, The Ars Goetia, Pseudomonarchia Daemonum, Livre des Esperitz and the Arbatel de magia veterum, fictions, myths, even those made by the Abstract Machine, including their mirrored opposites, and distorted mirrored reflections.

It needs therefore to be very large, firstly because our present Earth is far too small. The population is 50 times that of 2,000 years ago. That’s from 3 people per square mile to 140, so the Earth should be 46 times bigger, but to ensure peace between nations they should be far more remote, and to protect the environment also much bigger. But a solid planet that size would mean gravity would be much stronger, too strong for most animals and plants. But a hollow Earth would not. Then add to that the indefinite size for the objects above, and the best word is of “indefinite” size for such a world.

Of course, we’ve seen that things could exist on the inside of the sphere from the history of the idea of a hollow Earth, and large enough in some cases for an internal sun. Or the whole thing could flip inside out, which would give you night and day. In two ways, a finite sphere with a dark interior, those flipping on the outside would flip into night, and vice versa for those on the inside. But for an infinite sphere the inside could be where the sun is, or suns, and the outside perpetual darkness. Such a sphere would allow for communities to be absolutely isolated from one another, ecological systems also. Thus, reducing the potential for warfare, spread of diseases and cultural pollution. Also, space for those to form new

communities and for animal species to thrive without threats from human hunters or pollution. Given the size and shape and the fundamental speed of light even data transmitted would fail to ever reach some communities living in such a world.

But if we imagine an expanding infinite Earth that would be the case of all communities being reasonably separate. And such an expansion would also prevent entropy, the inevitable decline in our present universe.'

Smith was listening attentively, Billy continued.

'And we must work from the inside, for we don't want to be outside.' He smiled again,

'So, we need a route to the inside, to begin with the inside, so inside our Earth. Let's see, this part,'. He opened the Hollow Earth book again and read aloud,

'Celtic mythology has a legend of a cave called "Cruachan", also known as "Ireland's gate to Hell", a cave from which strange creatures would emerge and be seen on the surface of the Earth. There are also stories of medieval knights and saints who went on pilgrimages to a cave located in Station Island, County Donegal where they made journeys inside the Earth into a place of purgatory. In County Down, Northern Ireland there is a myth which says tunnels lead to the land of the subterranean Tuatha Dé Danann, a group of people who are believed to have introduced Druidism to Ireland and then went back underground. So here is an access method.'

He rose and walked to another bookcase,

'And this will help.'

He was holding a book by Miranda Aldhouse-Green, “The Celtic Myths, A guide to the ancient gods and legends”.

‘A friend of Catherine Mulberry’s’.

Billy said, and now he was paraphrasing parts of it to Smith...

‘The Book of Invasions begins with the first settlers to Ireland, with Cesair, a granddaughter of Noah, and immediately after Partholón who fought a fierce battle with monsters. Then the Tuatha Dé Danann “the folk of the goddess Danu”, ruled Ireland until they were driven out by the Gales. So, they retreated underground and created an Otherworld. This Otherworld is often reached by entering ancient burial mounds, such as those at Brú na Bóinne and Cnoc Meadha.

The Tuath Dé Danann are kings, queens, druids, bards, warriors, heroes, healers and craftsmen who have supernatural powers. They dwell in the Otherworld but interact with humans and the human world. They are called *sídhe*, supernatural beings, and prominent ancient burial mounds such as Brú na Bóinne, are entrances to Otherworld realms. Their traditional rivals are the Fomorians, hostile and monstrous beings. Originally, these were said to come from under the sea or the earth. Later, they were portrayed as sea raiders and giants. They are enemies of Ireland’s first settlers and opponents of the Tuatha Dé Danann.

“The First Battle of Mag Tuired” is a text that relates how the Tuatha Dé Danann took Ireland from the Fir Bolg, who then inhabited the island. It begins with the children of Nemed, an earlier group of inhabitants of Ireland, who left Ireland to travel to Greece to escape from their oppression by the Fomorians. A group of Nemed’s descendants, the Fir Bolg,

return to Ireland and conquered it, occupying it for thirty years until the coming of the Tuatha Dé Danann, another group of Nemed's descendants.

Nemed was the leader of the third group of people to settle in Ireland, they arrived thirty years after the predecessors had died out.

The Tuatha Dé Danann, led by their king, Nuada, came to Ireland in three hundred ships from the islands of the north. Their arrival was foreseen in a dream by the Fir Bolg king, Eochaid mac Eirc. When they landed, they burnt their ships. Negotiations began between Sreng, the champion of the Fir Bolg, and Bres of the Tuatha Dé Danann. Bres demanded that the Fir Bolg either give battle or cede half of Ireland to them. The Fir Bolg chose battle. After a delay to prepare weapons, they met at the Pass of Balgatan. The battle raged for four days. During this battle Nuada encountered Sreng, and with one swing of his sword Sreng cut off Nuada's right hand. The Tuatha Dé Danann then gained the ascendancy. A truce was called, and the Fir Bolg were given three options: leave Ireland, share the land with the Tuatha Dé Danann, or continue the battle. They chose to fight, so Sreng challenged Nuada to single combat. Nuada accepted on the condition that Sreng ties up one arm to make the combat fair, but Sreng rejected this condition. The Tuatha Dé Danann then decided to offer the Fir Bolg one of the provinces of Ireland to settle the dispute. Sreng chose Cóiced Ol nEchmacht, and so the two sides made peace.

Dian Cecht, the god of physicians, made an artificial hand of silver for Nuada, and Nuada was named Nuada Airgetlám, Nuada of the Silver Hand. However, the goddess Brigit had

told the Tuatha Dé Danann that no-one with a blemish can rule them, and, having lost a hand, the Tuatha Dé Danann had to choose another king. They chose Bres, son of Elatha, king of the Fomorians or the Children of Domnu. Seven years later Bres died after taking a drink while hunting, and Nuada, now having had his arm replaced, was restored as king.

The story of the Second Battle of Mag Tuired tells how the Tuatha Dé Danann, having conquered Ireland, fall under the oppression of the Fomorians, and then fight a battle to free themselves from this oppression.

The account begins with a brief summary of the first battle which is different in the details of the first. The loss of Nuada's arm, and his replacement as king by Bres. Bres is replaced by Nuada once he has his new arm. Bres appeals for assistance from the Fomorians to take back the kingship, and although his father Elatha refuses, another Fomorian leader, Balor of the Evil Eye, agrees to help him and raises a huge army. Meanwhile, Lugh, another product of a Tuatha Dé Danann and Fomorian union, arrives at Nuada's court, and, after impressing the king with his many talents, he is given command of the Tuatha Dé Danann. Nuada is killed by Balor in the battle, but Lugh, Balor's grandson, kills the Fomorian leader with his sling, smashing his deadly eye through the back of his head where it wreaks havoc on the Fomorian ranks. Bres is found alive in the aftermath of the battle and is spared on the condition that he teach the Tuatha Dé Danann how to plough, sow and reap. In this story he does not die after taking a drink while hunting. Finally, Lugh, the Dagda and Ogma rescue the Dagda's harp, Uaithne, which had been captured by the retreating Fomorians.

Originally the Fomorians seem to have been regarded as malevolent spirits dwelling underwater and in the nether regions of the earth. In one of the earliest references to them, they are said to dwell “under the worlds of men”. They are often portrayed as monstrous. Sometimes they are said to have the body of a man and the head of a goat, according to an 11th-century text in *Lebor na hUidre*, the Book of the Dun Cow, or to have had one eye, one arm and one leg. However, those Fomorians who have relationships with the Tuath Dé, such as Elatha and his son Bres were portrayed as darkly beautiful.

The Fomorians are the enemies of Ireland's first settlers and of the supernatural Tuath Dé, with whom they are contrasted. However, in some sources there is an overlap between the Fomorians and Tuath Dé. A figure called Tethra is named as presiding over both races.

So, Tuatha Dé Danann, are a group of people who are believed to have introduced Druidism to Ireland and then went back underground.

And we need to know all this because we are going underground to meet with these peoples.’ said Billy.

‘So, we go underground at the cave marked by the bell tower in County Donegal, Ireland?’ asked Smith.

‘No, that would be the present Earth’s underworld, we need a much larger space, but one that will contain that of the Tuatha Dé Danann.’

‘And if they object?’ asked Smith.

‘Well technically they need not know, but I will tell them.’

'They might object to being told anything by a boy, might I help?' replied Smith.

'No need.' said Billy, fetching some string from a desk draw, he took out the Jawbone and tied a loop around it, and then placed it over his head wearing it as a necklace. The sigils on it slowly morphing and changing colours.

'I see,' said Smith, obviously reading some of the sigils, 'impressive.'

To impress Mr Smith was something of a cosmic event!

'And how and where?' he asked.

'The cellar,' said Billy, 'and this,' he gestured to the palace and gardens, 'will be the outer earth and the cellar the inner, of indefinite size. We are now in a universe that flips, inside is night outside is day, Arcadia at the centre at night, and at the limit in the day. But soon Arcadia will be the outside limit of an infinite sphere.'

Smith raised his eyes, he was impressed again, but this time would not say he was.

They descended stairs to the cellar, and there waiting was the group of the Tuatha Dé Danann. Three Kings, three Queens and a bard, no doubt to make a song about this meeting. Billy spoke, and as he did the sigils on the jawbone changed, translating perhaps. Billy addressed the group,

'Kings and Queens of the Tuatha Dé Danann who are royal in your own right but also ambassadors for the many of the underworld. Be aware your realms are now infinite. You will have as many new realms as you wish, you will have no need



to fight unless for sport, you will have vast uncharted lands if you wish to explore.'

They stood silently for minutes,

'Maybe thinking and communicating with each other.'  
whispered Smith.

Then Billy spoke, holding the jawbone,

'You are already great legends in the world of men above, your histories part known and your accomplishments, deeds of valour. And so, if you wish to send emissaries to the world of men, poems and songs of your past and future deeds it can be done.'

Here a crow appeared,

'This emissary will visit any who wish their works known to men and will visit with those who would commit these to the languages of those above.'

There was more obvious contemplation. 'They have no choice.' thought Smith, 'But then they are proud.'

One of the Queens held out her arm and the crow flew and landed on it, she turned to the bard and spoke,

'Then bard we must first make up a song of this great meeting.'

The others bowed, and made no reply, all turning slowly walked away into mist and legend.

'That was the easy part, those in the other outer world will only slowly find out when they are able to migrate to infinite lands.'

‘And how will they do this migration over such...’ Smith paused, ‘I was going to say possibly infinite distances, but of course, like Alice, they pass through looking glasses.’

‘Yes, as the saying goes, it’s all done with mirrors.’ replied Billy.

So slowly began the exit of populations from the old Earth to the mirror worlds of the new Earth. The first noticeable effects were the migrations of animals, seeing in reflections spaces where no humans existed. Birds and insects, even fish seeing the reflections in water. Or the echoes of sound, or repetition of structures, chains of cells, even reflections in DNA escaping into new worlds, escaping virus RNA, escaping the mutant cancer cells. The probability reflections of the wave particle dualities. The reflected images of pictures, of illustrations of texts, of codes. A total deterritorialization.

As Smith and Billy watched and were aware of all of this.

And from Arcadia Smith spoke,

‘Who would have thought, not I or any of the superiors, that this tiny Earth of yours should become so, like a tiny bud, a spore of the cosmos breaking off and becoming an infinite embryo.’

Time passed,

‘And I do not mind in the slightest being now part of this world, it’s outer shell.’

‘Well yes and no,’ said Billy, ‘it might not be a sphere with an outer shell but the first reflection of an infinite inwards and outwards folding.’

'That might be a problem, you may have created an Alice Universe, which if you have might be a bigger problem, if the infinite folding reaches such a point, or if something makes it do so.' said Smith.

'How so?' asked Billy.

'If something unseen is involved the whole thing becomes unpredictable.' said Smith.

'Can you explain a little more?' asked Billy.

'If you create something perfect you fall into dogma.' was the reply.

'I still don't know what you mean.' said Billy.

'The physics is complicated.' said Smith, 'So I will need to give you a little lecture.'

## CHAPTER 24: THE ALICE UNIVERSE

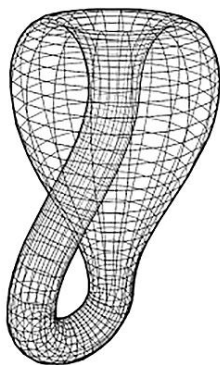
Smith began his lecture,

‘In theoretical physics, an Alice Universe is a hypothetical universe with no global definition of charge. That is Negative and Positive. And this can be problematic, if one can’t be sure that something which is negative from another perspective could be positive. An Alice universe creates such a problem, put simply that something can be its opposite from different perspectives, from different viewpoints from those in this universe.

Though such subjectivity might seem good it can create paradoxes.

An Alice Universe is what a Klein bottle is to a closed two-dimensional surface, or a Möbius strip to a sheet of paper. An Alice universe is the physics of the same. Like a closed three-dimensional volume with only one surface, a Klein bottle, or a one-sided piece of paper, a Möbius strip.

A Klein bottle has no inside or outside!



A Möbius strip has no topside or underside, as in a normal sheet of paper. A Klein bottle is impossible to make in our universe, but a Möbius strip can be made by giving a strip of paper one twist. The result is a one-sided piece of paper, begin drawing on “one side” a line and without crossing the edge you will return to your starting place.



So, and not I think coincidentally the name “Alice Universe” is a reference to the main character in Lewis Carroll’s children’s book *Through the Looking-Glass*.

An Alice Universe can be considered to allow at least two topologically distinct routes between any two points, and if one connection or “handle” is declared to be a “conventional” spatial connection, at least one other must be deemed to be a non-orientable wormhole connection. An

opposite. Imagine a path between two points, the world looks the opposite to that looking in the other direction!’

‘Can’t follow this.’ said Billy.

‘OK, simply put the Alice Universe allows alternatives in any case of anything being so. By which “allows” means they will exist. So, anything, say a switch that is ON will somewhere in the same universe the same switch will be OFF.’ said Smith.

‘That’s crazy.’ said Billy

Smith continued,

‘That’s why it’s called an Alice Universe.’ With a slight exasperation, then continued,

‘In the physics of Alice worlds once these two connections are made, we can no longer define whether a given particle is matter or antimatter. A particle might appear as an electron when viewed along one route, and as a positron when viewed along the other.’

‘Oh, like the Alice Universe has mirrors, so when you have a thing in an Alice Universe you also have its reflection, which is its opposite?’ said Billy.

‘That will do.’ said Smith eager to continue his lecture,

‘In another nod to Lewis Carroll, charge with magnitude but no persistently identifiable polarity is referred to in the literature as Cheshire charge, after Carroll’s Cheshire cat, whose body would fade in and out, and whose only persistent property was its smile.’

‘OK,’ said Billy, ‘so something can be positive then negative, here and not here but when it’s not here something remains, the smile! Odd!’

Smith gave an approving look but was still eager to show his knowledge,

‘If we define a reference charge as nominally positive and bring it alongside our “undefined charge” particle, the two particles may attract if brought together along one route and repel if brought together along another – the Alice Universe loses the ability to distinguish between positive and negative charges, except locally. For this reason, CP violation which occurred in all other universes is impossible in an Alice Universe. This is of course madness.’

‘CP violation?’ Billy said.

‘Conservation law is the C of CP, in physics, is a principle that states that a certain physical property, for example a measurable quantity does not change in the course of time within an isolated physical system.’

‘If nothing changes a foot ruler stays a foot?’ Billy asked.

Smith frowned, ‘That might do.’

A parity transformation, the P of CP, replaces such a system with a type of mirror image. Things mirror, plus goes to minus.’

He took a breath then said,

‘Parity transformation is a concept in physics that refers to the property of a physical system under spatial inversion, essentially creating a “mirror image” of the system. It is

important in quantum mechanics as it relates to the symmetry of the wave function representing a system of fundamental particles.'

Billy looked suitably baffled, Smith continued,

'Chirality is the term for the property of "right" and "left" handedness. In physics the spin of a particle is left or right, think of a clock, the parity would be the hands turning anti clockwise. In a universe without parity breaking, it would be impossible to know right from left, clockwise from anti clockwise.'

Billy frowned then said, 'Right so if clocks could go clockwise and anticlockwise they would not be of much use, you need, what is it, chirality, left-handed or right-handed, and when you have this, you do not have parity, parity means equal or sameness. A left-handed thing, person even, is different to a right-handed person.

So, I think I see, if you have two things but you can't tell the difference, if the difference wasn't always there like the Cheshire cat, you don't know if there is a cat or not, all you know is there's a smile, that there is something. That's an Alice Universe?'

Smith wrote on a piece of paper, as he did so he spoke,

$$'2 + 2 = 4$$

$$2 - 2 = 0$$

In an Alice universe "+" and "-" are indistinguishable.

$$2 + 2 = 0$$



$$2 + 2 = 4$$

$$2 - 2 = 4$$

$$2 - 2 = 0$$

CP violation has important theoretical consequences. The violation of CP symmetry enables physicists to make an absolute distinction between matter and antimatter. Or there being a cat and not being a cat! Or know left from right, up from down. CP violation stops everything from being the same, I think that's about as simple as I can make it.'

'So, in an Alice Universe you can't tell left from right, up from down. It's like the crazy things in Lewis Carroll's worlds of Alice.' said Billy.

Smith continued,

'And the distinction between matter and antimatter may have profound implications for cosmology. One of the unsolved theoretical questions in physics is why the universe is made chiefly of matter. With a series of debatable but plausible assumptions, it can be demonstrated that the observed imbalance or asymmetry in the matter-antimatter ratio may have been produced by the occurrence of CP violation in the first seconds after the big bang—the big bang violent explosion that is thought to have resulted in the formation of the universe.'

'I see so the CP violation caused our world not to be an Alice world...' said Billy.

Smith went on regardless,

‘As with a Möbius strip, once the two distinct connections have been made, we can no longer identify which connection is “normal” and which is “reversed” – the lack of a global definition for charge becomes a feature of the global geometry. This behaviour is analogous to the way that a small piece of a Möbius strip allows a local distinction between two sides of a piece of paper, but the distinction disappears when the strip is considered globally.

Look at it this way, in our old universe what happens at the event horizon in which Bob watches Alice enter a black hole. Bob only assumes that Alice is in the black hole because he last saw her disappearing across an event horizon. In an Alice Universe she would still be in the same space as Bob yet viewed from Bob’s perspective inside the black hole. Just like while from any single point of view a Klein surface appears to have two sides, it in fact has just one continuous surface. Or just as two points on a Möbius strip can appear to be on separate sides, but when joined up it is seen they are in fact on one side.’

Billy thought, then made with paper a Möbius strip.

‘So, I can draw a dot on one side.’ he said, and did, ‘So I think I have two sides I can draw a dot on the other, and it looks like I do. Like Alice is inside the black hole as far as Bob is concerned, as far as I’m concerned, the other dot is on the other side.

But it’s not true, it only looks locally like that, if I look at the whole, I can trace a line showing they are actually on the same side. Or they can look like both from two different perspectives. Alice can seem to be in the black hole and not. The Cheshire cat can be, and be not.’



Smith then continued,

‘Because Bob is viewing things from his single point of view there would appear to be an exterior and an interior to the event horizon and things could vanish across it. Given the ability to return to your starting point in a Klein bottle topology by following a continuous line, there would be a case in an Alice Universe for shouting at Bob: “She’s behind you!” Her position is both in front and behind, as they are like the Cheshire cat, vanishing and appearing in an Alice Universe.

So, in an Alice Universe, which you or something might have created...’

‘If true how will this work out in practice?’ asked Billy,

‘The same world will be the same yet different from the individual’s perspective.’ he answered his own question, and then added,

‘If we are in an Alice Universe, what will be the whole? A chaos? Or the perfect truth, Spinoza’s Deus sive Natura’

## CHAPTER 25: WOODBRIDGE

Catherine Mulberry had arrived at the palace of Arcadia and entered the library, she was about to address the two figures sat at a table, frowned at the jawbone necklace, so Billy slid it underneath his shirt, then she spoke, this time with a smile.

‘Today I took a steam train from Woodbridge to Aldborough and spent a pleasant few hours there. Walking back from Woodbridge railway station I noticed there were also trains for Framlingham. The pedestrianised Thoroughfare was no longer pedestrianised, it had traffic, some cars that looked vintage but were not. I noticed the second-hand bookshop on Church Street, and there were no car parks in the town but quaint cottages. Our house in Cumberland Street was unchanged, it was much the same, only there was no television, computers or internet. In short, I was living in some time like the 1920s, my favourite period of history. This is not a complaint, but a “how so” if I could enquire.’

Billy looked unresponsive, unlike Smith,

‘In that case it sounds like you, we, all of the inhabitants of the Earth are now likely in an Alice Universe.’

Smith then tried to explain but to no avail, then said ‘Maybe a demonstration? Follow me.’

He led the way back through the green door to the house in Cumberland Street, then out onto the street itself and spoke,

‘I see, as expected, the street is for me as it was circa 1880, horse carriages, people dressed in similar attire to myself, you see it as might have been in the 1920, and you Billy?’

'I see it as it was in the 1950s I suspect from the cars.' he replied. 'In an Alice Universe one's view is just that, not like living in one's own world, we've seen how deadly dangerous that can be, but seeing the same world from differing perspectives. I suspect the fish in the Deben River are swimming in a river before Woodbridge was established, that is before fishermen, likewise the birds and other creatures. I suspect some people might be living in a Roman Woodbridge, or Saxon.'

'I still don't understand.' said Catherine Mulberry.

Billy replied, 'It's because you can't, like the Cheshire cat can't be just a grin, but it can. Think of it as you are now living in Alice's world, flowers could talk, trains could leap rivers, and chess pieces act like humans.'

'That would be terrifying.' said Catherine Mulberry.

'Sure, maybe not good but the alternative might also not be good.' answered Billy.

'But OK we all see Woodbridge from our perspective,' she was saying,

'The same Woodbridge, or all the Woodbridges from our perspectives.' Interrupted Billy,

'But if I caught a steam train to Aldborough, what would you or Mr Smith see if we travelled together?' she continued.

'Smith would probably see us travelling in a horse and carriage, I would see the train but a train from the 1950s, someone might see us driving in a car. Same journey different viewpoints.'

‘All very nice I suppose, but you’ve taken a liberty with reality as was.’

Smith answered, ‘Well all Billy has tried to do is generalize the world of the boy, the world of 85 Colonial Road, where in the boy’s world his garden can become an infinite refuge for certain beings, in a generalized version it can be for all possibilities. And so, avoid the alternatives.’

‘Which are?’ asked Catherine Mulberry.

‘Global species extinctions, nuclear wars, destruction of the Earth by various means, some sooner than later.’

Here Smith paused and gave a cough, the implication being clear.

Catherine Mulberry thought a while, ‘You chose to live in The Hall of The Mountain King to avoid threats, immanent threats.’ she said.

‘That being true, and it is of a limited space and would not suit everything, birds, fish, those liking the great outdoors...’

‘Destruction of the Earth Sooner?’ she asked.

‘Not even in the nick of time, is your phrase, sooner than immediate.’

‘In that case not possible.’ she said.

‘Why is there something rather than nothing?’ asked Smith.

‘I do not know.’ she said.

Billy said nothing but Smith spoke,

‘In an Alice world Nothing and Something are the same.’

‘Impossible.’ said Catherine Mulberry.

Then she laughed, ‘Of course, not in Wonderland.’

Billy said nothing but was thinking about CP violation.

## CHAPTER 26: THE FALL

The boy Billy went back to Arcadia, something troubled him, that was not of the perspectives, what troubled him was the whole, that in which it seems all contradictions existed. Was this his task then he thought, to experience them all? And somehow deal with them? And the idea was not a good one.

It was dusk and he was walking in the parkland around the fine palace, and he came across a well, he hadn't noticed it before, he peered over to look down, and as he did so felt someone grab hold of his waist and throw him over into it. His arms flailed about, and his body spun over and over, looking up he saw what must have been the figure who threw him in, then dizzy as he was, he saw the figure climb over the edge of the well and throw itself into the shaft. He descended through darkness for what seemed like ages, then fell into an undergrowth of thick bracken and twigs with a crashing sound which to Billy sounded like "tohuwabohu!"

Tohuwabohu is used in French to describe incomprehensible noises. The Hebrew Tohu wa-bohu is that which describes the condition of the earth, Aretz, immediately before the creation of light in Genesis 1:3. The King James Version translation of the phrase is "without form, and void", corresponding to Septuagint ἀόρατος καὶ ἀκατασκεύαστος, "unseen and unformed". The words tohu and bohu also occur in parallel in Isaiah 34:11, which the King James Version translates with the words "confusion" and "emptiness".

There was another crash as the other figure also landed in the thick bracken, it landed and was laughing.



“You fool!” shouted Billy, then a shocked surprise, the shout was not that of a boy of ten or so, but of a man in his 50s, he was back to being an adult, though he doubted this at first, the shock of falling perhaps.

The other character, The Fool, was still laughing. Billy struggled to his feet, brushing bracken from his Anderson & Sheppard suit, he was back to his old 50 year old self. The other character struggled to its feet, now the laughter just a chuckle. He had a three-corner hat in black felt, wore a bright red tunic, had white gaiters and black shoes with silver buckles.

‘Good morning,’ the figure said, doffing the hat, ‘and a fine morning for a descent.’

At which the figure burst out into more laughter, then saying,

‘So let us be about our business.’ And with this he began to walk down the hillside they had landed on. Billy couldn’t think at all properly, shaken by the fall and now once again a grown man, so he simply followed.

They were on the side of a steep hill with thick bracken and fallen branches from the densely growing pine trees. It looked like it could have been a fine bright morning, but the density of the trees kept things dim and cool. Soon they were on an obvious path that zig-zagged down the hill. The path opened to a level clearing, a small stream flowing along one edge, opposite was a hut with a veranda on which was a chair, in which sat a man dressed in an orange gown and was wearing a fez. He rose, doffed his fez, bowed, and spoke,

‘At your service Sirs.’ at this the person accompanying Billy who was only smiling now, not laughing, replied,

‘Ah! the Magician, you are most welcome to join us, we are descending to the village and the marketplace.’

Billy’s mind was clearing, he thought, ‘Am I back before I was a boy again, and before the Alice Universe? A Magician and a Fool, am I collecting a Tarot set of cards?’

And then,

‘You very well are my good sir.’ answered the Magician in reply to Billy’s thought. ‘And we descend for the love of man.’ he added.

‘Something sounds familiar here too.’ Billy thought.

They arrived at the village and entered the marketplace. The stalls had been cleared from the centre of the market square. People were sitting on benches or standing in a great circle. Billy and The Fool found a wooden bench to sit on, looking up they noticed a rope had been stretched high above between two towers. Tall white towers with red and green flags flying from their tops. The Magician moved to the centre of the square and began to speak. Billy noticed peeking out of one of the pockets of the Magician’s orange gown was the face of a small owl.

‘My friends I have some great news...’

Here he had to stop as someone from the crowd shouted,

‘You’re no friend of us...’

Another picked this up, ‘Yes, no friend, where are all the magical things you promised us...’

‘Rubbish, rubbish, they were rubbish, get back to your hut before we stone you...’ a woman shouted. Billy noticed the nervous look on the Magician’s face, and some men were picking up stones.

Just then a door in one of the towers opened and out stepped onto the tightrope a beautiful woman, dark skinned and wearing a white dress embroidered with jewels.

There was a gasp from the crowd, Billy couldn’t help but speak, and speak loudly, ‘The High Priestess.’ he said. ‘The High Priestess.’ Many in the crowd were looking up as she slowly began her walk across the tightrope. People were looking up spellbound, many with open mouths.

Billy was thinking, ‘I know this, or something very like it, but I just can’t place it.’

‘You won’t till the end of the story.’ said The Fool with a smile.

Then the opposite door opened, and a dwarf ran out, a dwarf called “gravity”. It had a twisted smile, looking down at the crowd and it gave a sneer, then ran across the rope jumping over the High Priestess, it ran through the opposite door, disappeared for a moment and returned holding a knife. There was another gasp from the crowd, and cries of ‘No, No.’

The dwarf cut the rope, many closed their eyes, those that hadn’t saw the rope fall, but not the Priestess. She slowly continued her walk high above the marketplace and into the tower opposite. At this some men rushed into the other tower, and soon the door at its top opened and the dwarf was thrown out. Some women searched for the Priestess in the other tower to no avail.

‘We best leave’ said The Fool, ‘The High Priestess will be waiting for us on the road.’

So, Billy, The Fool and The Magician left the village, as they expected just outside was waiting The High Priestess. They all four now walked on the road through woods and round swamps. The Fool said he was hungry and didn’t like the sounds they were hearing.

‘They might be wolves.’ he said without a smile. The High Priestess said nothing, but The Magician and Billy agreed on the idea of some food. In the distance they saw a light, it was a single house.

The Fool knocked on the door, it was answered, not now to Billy’s surprise, by a woman wearing a dress of fine white fabric embroidered with red roses.

‘The Empress.’ he said, the others did look surprised, but hunger got the better of The Fool.

‘Your highness,’ he said, ‘can you spare some food for us hungry travellers on a lonely evening road.’

She turned and with a gesture showed them into a large room, it had in its centre a long trestle table, on it were loaves of bread, and dishes of butter and cheese. There were other tables on which were cakes, and a large flagon of wine, and silver plates, knives, forks and cups.

‘A modest place for an Empress.’ thought Billy, ‘But this whole place is strange.’

‘Stranger still.’ said The Empress, answering his thoughts, as The Fool had, ‘and after you have eaten, I will join you, we will sleep tonight in the wild wood.’ So, she sat in a large chair by

an open fire whilst the others ate and drank. When they had finished now all five left the house and two hours later after passing a hollow tree found themselves in the wild wood. They all lay on the forest floor of leaf litter and moss and slept.

When the five awoke, after sleeping until midday, The Fool remarked that five would be insufficient for their task, they would need 22. When asked what the task was, he said he didn't know,

'Why 22?' asked Billy.

'We will see,' said The Fool, 'but first the Empress needs an Emperor, and we need an interpreter of sacred mysteries and arcane principles, The Hierophant.'

## CHAPTER 25: THE TEACHINGS OF THE HIEROPHANT

The seven sat in a semicircle, Billy, The Fool, The Magician, The High Priestess, The Empress, The Emperor, and The Hierophant, who began to speak.

‘First, on the three metamorphoses, the transformation of the spirit or mind in which the mind becomes free of dogma, rote learnt behaviour and free of programmed ideas. This is the metaphor of the transformation of the spirit from the camel to the lion to the child.

The camel is a beast of burden; it carries upon its back the values of the past. The camel speeds into the desert, the wilderness. This wilderness, or desert represents nihilism, the inability to find anything of worth or value. In the desert the camel turns into the lion, the rebel, the one who challenges the dragon that holds all the values of the past. We see this in the nature of the adolescent of any age, a rage at the machine, or sulky protests, lethargy, disinterest in everything.

A further transformation of the spirit is needed if nihilism is to be overcome; the lion must become the child. The child is innocence and forgetting, a new beginning, the creator of new values, a sacred Yes, a Yea saying.’

The six said nothing, Billy realised he might once have known this, he thought he knew lots of things but now not a single thing, was he then the child? Was his fall down the well a fall from childhood.

‘Now On the Professorial Chairs of Virtue.’ The Hierophant announced, ‘Though called a Chair of learning it is a chair of teaching and teaching the truth. And teaching the truth is a virtue, and those that follow are virtuous. And this is

rewarded by the dreamless sleep of the innocent. The opium of dogmatic logic.'

And Billy thought he might have been an academic, but was not, he looked at his fine suit and wondered how he came by it and what it meant.

'Of the Afterworldsmen,' said The Hierophant, 'or Otherworldsmen, they that see the world from just their perspective, for how could there be any other? And then that includes both the believers and unbelievers, they all see the world from only their perspective, how could they see it in any other?'

Billy thought how true this sounded and yet he had no perspective now, was The Fool foolish, if so, was this from the Fool's perspective or from others? If he was responsible for his being here, is that foolish?

'On the Despisers of the Body.' continued The Hierophant. Billy didn't hear what was said as it struck him that this now seemed hypocritical, being told what is right and wrong, but then his thoughts mirrored themselves endlessly so that he could step out of his own perspective, and in attempting to do so was just a series of reflections.

The Hierophant had moved on,

'On Enjoying and Suffering the Passions. One should not have one's virtues in common. The creator will create new values but will not impose them upon others: I create my good; this I love; it pleases me. I do not want it as divine law; I do not want it as human statute.'

'Yes.' thought Billy.

'The Pale Criminal, is the contradiction of hypocrisy, ashamed in the sight of men or himself, and yet I am no crutch to help you, to carry your weight, you must walk a way which you choose, which could be one of mine.' said The Hierophant.

'On Reading and Writing.' The Hierophant said, 'It's all too commonplace, to makes things difficult, hard to read, this makes the reading all the better. To look at a mountain is fine, to climb it excellent, but to be able to leap from peak to peak superb. But we have the spirit of gravity, of Newton and Einstein, and not the laughter of fiction, we need to kill the spirit of gravity with laughter.'

Billy was now confused and in that confusion he laughed, he remembered Humpty Dumpty,

'When I use a word,' Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, 'it means just what I choose it to mean - neither more nor less.'

'The Tree on the mountainside is a difficult parable.' The Hierophant said. 'It seeks the hights, but is already high, a good tree which seeks the heights needs deep roots, if the heights are considered good, then the depth of the roots would be evil. But the tree on the mountainside has no room for deep roots, so cannot be good or bad, and is already in the clouds, it is neither good nor bad but noble.'

'To be noble is to be good in oneself and not for others like Humpty Dumpty. But what caused his fall?' thought Billy.

'On the Preachers of Death.' The Hierophant said, 'are the living denying life.' And laughed.



‘On War and Warrior-Peoples,’ The Hierophant said, ‘this is the idea of intellectual conflict, a warrior not a soldier, we are not made to obey other’s rules, follow other’s thoughts.’

‘I am being taught not what to think but how to think.’  
thought Billy.

‘For it is easy to follow,’ said The Hierophant, ‘and so do not create a new idol which imposes on you and blinds your perspectives, The coldest of cold monsters, which imposes a sameness upon all: no one is allowed to be a creator, no one is allowed to be original, to think for themselves, to think differently, to be different. Difference is not tolerated in the state. The state turns the people into the Last Man. Now I show you the last man, the doom of humanity.

The last man no longer has love or longing, or curiosity. Everything is made small, simple and easy. Life is measured in years not deeds, comfort is their priority, becoming ill and being mistrustful are considered sinful by them: one proceeds with caution. A bit of poison once in a while; that makes for pleasant dreams. And much poison at the end, for a pleasant death. One still works, for work is a form of entertainment. But one sees to it that the entertainment is not a strain. One no longer becomes poor and rich: both are too burdensome. Who wants to rule anymore? Who wants to obey anymore? Both are too burdensome. No shepherd and one herd! Each wants the same, each is the same, and whoever feels differently goes voluntarily into the insane asylum. We have invented happiness say the last Man, and they blink.’

There was a silence amongst the group, all thinking what a terrible prospect is the last man, the end of humankind.

The Hierophant continued, 'Shun fame for this makes you a puppet of the crowd and trust your emotions as much as you trust your reason. So let reason aid your feelings. As for friends, a good friend can be a bad friend. A friend does not always only comfort one, a true friend is friendly, but honest when it is in your best interest.'

There was a pause, 'I'm nearly done,' said The Hierophant, 'On my travels through many lands I discovered a thousand and one goals. In many lands differing laws, yet there is one goal which is to be oneself. To be human all too human. So, beware of the crowd, the festivals and the common denominator. Better seek the remote places and the individual than the throng in the marketplace where thieves abound of all types. But above all else be the creator of yourself. And of Men and Women I will not say, only that if they are the same, they will difference and if they are not the same, they will seek identity. If it is noble to declare yourself wrong knowing you are right, thus the good laws may seem bad, unfair as contradicting for a reason is a lie.'

At this five of the six seemed confused, but Billy was not, 'It seems to mean two things, to offer good advice to think for oneself, and yet that must be a contradiction.' he thought. The Hierophant gave him a smile, the others looking even more confused.

'Now you must marry the camel and the Lion.' said The Hierophant.

'To make the child.' said Billy, and he continued, 'And so make death. And make you become my disciples.'

There are 22 cards in the Major Arcanas, this concludes the first 22 lessons of the Hierophant.

1. The Fool
2. The Magician
3. The High Priestess
4. The Empress
5. The Emperor
6. The Hierophant or High Priest
7. The Lovers
8. The Chariot
9. Justice
10. The Hermit or The Wise Man
11. The Wheel of Fortune
12. Strength
13. The Hanged Man
14. Death
15. Temperance
16. The Devil
17. The Tower
18. The Star

19. The Moon

20. The Sun

21. Judgement

22. The World

## CHAPTER 28: THE DEVIL

Billy is now alone in a room in which a child presents him with a mirror, out of which The Devil steps. It speaks, 'If you are Alpha, I am Omega'.

And so, he returns to his friends who are now on the islands of the blest, Tír na nÓg. The Fool, The Magician, The High Priestess, The Empress, The Emperor, The Hierophant, now with The Devil.

The Devil now begins an explanation saying that his words are like ripe figs falling from trees. The first of these figs is that his friends should stop thinking about God and think about becoming themselves, that God is a conjecture, but they are not. Whether God exists or not, any image or idea of God that a human being may have is only a human conjecture, a hypothesis, a supposition, a guess. That it would be impossible to determine whether there exists a God apart from human interpretation, human conjecture. It is impossible to know anything apart from a human perspective. All human knowledge is just that, human, all too human. To pretend otherwise, to claim to have the "truth" apart from any human perspective is simply to avoid taking responsibility for the conjecture. All of human knowledge, whether of God or of anything is a product of the human creative drive to interpret the world. He says,

'And what you have called world, that shall be created only by you: your reason, your image, your will, your love shall thus be realized.'

What counts, The Devil points out, is not the truth of a conjecture, but its consequences. One of the consequences of

conjecture about God is that human beings are regarded as weak and sinful, and ultimately incapable of the kind of transformation that he calls overcoming oneself.

Here the others interrupt The Devil,

The Fool says, 'So it would be foolish to conjecture a God, but if a fool would persist in his folly, he shall become wise, is that not a proverb of hell?'

And The Magician said, 'And to be deceptive can be wise.'

'And to worship is still worship.' said The High Priestess.

The Empress and The Emperor were however silent in expressing their divine right to be. And The Hierophant said so,

'They have a divine right to be.'

'But God is a thought that makes crooked all that is straight, and makes fall whatever stands because all that is impermanent is a mere lie?' The Devil replied.

Then all said, save Billy,

'We are creators, we freely create, yet with change there inevitably comes suffering. As with transformation of human beings involves suffering.'

'And with creation comes the great metamorphosis of the spirit to the child.' came these words from two voices of The Lovers who had now joined the group.

Then The Devil spoke, 'You see you need me to show you your way, or else do nothing in your compassion for each other. I am the catalyst you require for greatness.'

‘Which is why you are in our company.’ said Billy.

‘All great love is above pity, and all creators are hard.’ The Devil replied.

Then as they sat, now in a circle of ten on the grassy cliff top of the island overlooking the silver sea and wheeling birds, a line of priests passed them by. And in a whisper spoke The High Priestess,

‘Be quiet and let them pass by, they are not all bad, but all follow a book they did not write. So be quiet and let them pass by. One day they will be taught how to write, but not what to write.’

And she continued,

‘It is not virtuous to look for salvation or condemnation. One makes one’s own reward, given what has been given, and not hope for what is not given.’

‘And avoid the crowds,’ said The Lovers, ‘because they come in between love. Their love is the fear of not being loved, look into their eyes and not their smiles to see both fear and hatred.’

‘One law for the Lion and the Ox is oppression.’ a voice said.

Looking up they saw an old man leaning on a staff, he held a lit lamp, which was strange as it was daylight.

‘I see you have your lamp lit!’ said The Devil, and then addressing the others, ‘Make room for our philosopher friend, The Wise Man, or is it Hermit?’ he continued.

'I live in no dark cave,' replied The Wise Man, 'though Hermit I might have been, but now seek company, your company. Caves are for spiders, the tarantulas who say all are equal yet make themselves unseen, calling for justice from which they hide, justifying their dark protests. They want punishment and justice. And hide in dark places.'

So, a space was made for The Hermit, making the company eleven.

'On the Famous Philosophers,' said the Hermit, 'beware they lead you into a desert, beware they serve their vanity and not the truth. Yet the free spirit is the wolf who is hated by the dogs, there these in the forests dwell who are not led into the desert as a scapegoat. These philosophers are as asses pulling the people's cart.

Honourable you stand there, and stiff with ramrod backs, you famous wise men! You are not driven by strong wind and will. Have you never seen a sail go over the sea, rounded and billowed and trembling with the vehemence of the wind? Like the sail, trembling with the vehemence of the spirit, my wisdom goes over the sea— my wild wisdom!'

And he finished and the other ten clapped their hands.

Then five approached, The Chariot and in it The Sun, The Star, Death and The Hanged Man. The circle widened to take them in, now fifteen of the Major Arcadians. And three songs were sung, The Night-Song, The Dance-Song and The Funeral Song.

The Night-Song. The Sun stood in The Chariot in which it crossed the sky into night.



'I cross the sky each day giving and receiving not, in my chariot, alone save my driver, whilst at night the stars have the company of each other.'

Then all sixteen now waited for The Dance Song. The song that would try to overcome the spirit of gravity, the depths of despair.

They waited and waited, the sea below silver and above them the birds flying high in the deep blue sky. Then softly they heard a song drift on the wind,

'From me comes gravity, oh gravity that which pulls all down, the great destroyer yet such a silent song.'

They looked into the great distance to where the song came, it came from The Tower.

The Grave song. Now Death pointed to The Hanged Man, and sang,

'There he is, his hopes of youth are gone, those visions of youth brought back and then erased. Your joyful wisdom gone. His highest hope remained unspoken and unredeemed! And all the visions and comforts of his youth are dead.'

'To be overcome!' thought Billy, he thought of his now past youth and tears came to his eyes.

Then Death continued talking to the fifteen, calling them the wisest of things,

'The unwise and foolish are like people floating on a river, letting it take them where it may, the river is the river of life, in which they take no control. So, I studied the living, and those for who living is an obeying. And that commanding is

yet much harder. Commanding is a risk, and the need for self-judgement, which is an obeying.

How does this happen? I asked myself. What persuades the living to obey and command, and to still practice obedience while commanding? Wherever I found the living, there I found the will to power; and even in the will of the serving I found the will to be master. The weaker is persuaded by its own will to serve the stronger, because it wants to be master over what is still weaker. And as the smaller gives way to the greater, in order for it to have its pleasure and power over the smallest, so too the greatest gives way, and for the sake of power it risks life itself. That is the giving-way of the greatest, that it is a risk and a danger and a tossing of dice of the chance of life or death. Their life sacrifices itself— for power! The will to power. And whoever must be a creator in good and evil must first be an annihilator and break values. Thus, the highest evil belongs to the highest goodness, and this is the creative ones.'

'This is how I overcome myself,' thought Billy, 'but then rise up to what?'

As if hearing his thoughts Death continued,

'On the Sublime Ones, it is a mistake to be sublime, that is to achieve a greatness so remote from the reality of living as an animal lives. My taste is hostile to all these retiring types. And it's said taste is just a personal whim, but this is nothing but someone's taste also. The sublime ones would in dispute no longer be sublime. All too long they sit in the shadows, and their cheeks of the ascetic, of the spirit of the sublime ones grew pale. They are peaceful now, to be sure, but this peace has not yet laid itself in the sun.

Act like a bull; and this happiness should smell of earth and not of contempt for the earth. As a white bull, snorting and bellowing ahead of the plough, and this bellowing should praise everything earthly! And then to stand with muscles relaxed and with an unharnessed will: this is most difficult for all of you sublime ones! When power becomes gracious and descends into view: beauty I call such descending.'

In Billy's mind he felt an understanding that couldn't speak.

'When men become encyclopaedias,' began Death, 'when men become complete realists, and without belief or superstition and try to thump their chests, despite not having chests. To have images of belief and everything and be unworthy of belief. All ages babble in confusion in their minds and they have become nothing but this babbling and confusion. They are therefore unfruitful, they cannot create the bud, the flower the fruit, the new tree. They have put on the mask of a god. Indeed, you make me laugh, you people of the present! And especially when you are amazed at yourselves! So, I shall take you more lightly, for one should love only a children's land, the undiscovered land in the furthest sea: so, command your sails to seek and seek to all the future, from the existence of this present!'

'I see.' thought Billy, he was sitting on the grass as had been the others, and thinking hard his eyes closed. When he opened them the first thing that surprised him was his trousers of all things, they were not his suit trousers but green corduroy, his shoes were different, and he was wearing a linen jacket. He then looked around him, the others were not there except The Fool who spoke smiling.

‘Yes, you are getting younger as you get wiser, a strange reversal, mirror worlds do this.’

He was about to speak when a woman dressed in white approached and began to talk,

‘So, I am The Moon, and some would criticise my passivity, that I do not shine, but I cannot shine, it is my nature to reflect. Not Immaculate Perception, but Immaculate reflection, a mirror which distorts is a poor mirror.’

Billy listened attentively, The Fool nodding and smiling.

‘And here is the thing, who is the fool who looks at the mirror and rails at it for what it shows?’

At this The Fool laughed, and Billy spoke,

‘We need the Moon to see at night in darkness.’

Now appeared a woman in a blue dress with a gold crown, she was opening the jaws of a lion.

‘Strength!’ said The Fool, ‘See the lion is not the strength of learning, not that of the scholars, for she is the strength of creating.’

She, Strength, spoke,

‘I love freedom and the air over fresh earth; and I would rather sleep on ox hides than on the scholar’s honours and reputations. I am too hot and burned up by my own thoughts; often it steals my breath away. Then I have to go out into the open and away from all dust chambers.’

She looked into the Lion’s mouth at this,

‘But they, the scholars, sit cool in their cool shade; in all things they want to be mere spectators, and they take care not to sit where the sun burns. Just like those who stand in the street and gape at the people who pass by; thus, too they wait and gape at thoughts that others have thought. When grasped they puff out clouds of dust like sacks of flour, involuntarily; but who would guess that the scholar’s dust comes from grain and from the yellow bliss of summer fields? When they pose as wise, I am chilled by their little proverbs and truths; often there is an odour to their wisdom, as if it came from the swamp, and truly, I have already heard the frog croaking out of it! They are skilled, they have clever fingers; why would my simplicity want to be near their multiplicity? Their fingers know how to do all manner of threading and knotting and weaving, and thus they knit the stockings of the spirit! They are good clockworks, only one has to see to it that they are properly wound! Then they indicate the hour faithfully and make only a modest noise. The scholars are good at spying and are not the best at trusting one another. Inventive in petty cleverness they lie in wait for those whose knowledge walks on lame feet– they lie in wait like spiders. I have always seen them prepare poison with caution. And they also know how to play with loaded dice; and I found them so ardent in their play that they sweated. We are strangers to one another, and their virtues are even more repugnant to me than their falseness and false dice.

And when I dwelled among them, I dwelled over them. For this they bore a grudge against me. They will hear nothing of it that someone strolls over their heads; and so, they placed wood and earth and filth between me and their heads. Thus, they muffled the sound of my steps, and up till now the ones to hear me least have been the most scholarly. All that is

substandard and weakness in humans they laid between themselves and me— sub-floor they call it in their houses. But despite this I stroll with my thoughts over their heads, and even if I wanted to stroll atop my own mistakes, I would still be over them and their heads. For human beings are not equal: thus, speaks justice. And what I want, they would not be permitted to want.'

At this The Fool and The Moon clapped their hands.

The Angel of Temperance appeared and spoke of poetry,

'But supposing that someone like the scholars said in all earnestness that the poets lie. They would be right, we lie too much. We also know too little and are bad learners, thus we simply have to lie. And who of us poets have not watered down his wine? And because we know little, we take a hearty liking to the spiritually impoverished.

And as if there were a special, secret portal to knowledge that becomes blocked to those who learn something, thus we believe in the people and their wisdom. But this is what all poets believe: that whoever pricks up his ears while lying in the grass or on a lonely slope will divine something about the things that are situated between heaven and earth. And if tender stirrings come to them, then the poets always think that nature herself is in love with them: And she creeps up to their ears to tell them secrets. Indeed, there are so many things between heaven and earth of which only the poets have dreamed! Oh, how I am weary of all this imperfection that is supposed to become an event at any cost! I say to the poets. Truly, their spirit itself is this peacock of peacocks and a sea of vanity! The spirit of the poet wants spectators: even if they have to be buffaloes! But I became weary of this spirit,

and I foresee that it will become weary of itself. Transformed I have already seen the poets, and turning their gaze against themselves.'

Now all three clapped their hands, The Fool and The Moon and Strength. The Fool cried out, 'More, more!'

Temperance continued,

'I now tell of a great event. There is an island in the sea not far from the blessed isles of Tír na nÓg, on which a fiery mountain smokes continually. And through the fiery mountain itself leads the narrow path that winds downward to a gate of the underworld. So, the Earth, has a skin; and this skin has diseases. One of these diseases for example is called Human beings, and another of these diseases is called fire hound; about him people have told each other many lies and allowed themselves to be lied too much.

I know what the fire hound is all about, and likewise all the underhanded and overthrowing scum-devils who are lying and who are superficial. They know how to bellow, they are the best big mouths, and have learned more than enough about stirring up the rabble.

Have no faith in these great events as soon as they are surrounded by much bellowing. And just believe me, friends about this Infernal Racket of The greatest events, for when their noise and smoke cleared, it was always very little that had happened.

Like the fire hound and the underhanded and overthrowing scum-devils, The State is a hypocrite hound; it likes to

speak with smoke and bellowing– to make all believe that it speaks from the belly of things. For it wants absolutely to be the most important animal on earth, this State.’

The Fool spoke, ‘In case you do not understand, The State are the nations of the Earth, and its voice The Statesman.’

‘And the fire hound and the underhanded and overthrowing scum-devils, who are they?’ asked Temperance.

‘Read the newspapers.’ replied The Fool, and laughed, ‘But tell us more.’

Before Temperance could speak a strange figure appeared as of a woman blindfolded, the right side of her body being black, dressed in black, the left half being white, wearing a white dress. Her hand was on a giant wheel.

Then Temperance began to speak,

‘A great sadness has descended over humanity. The best became weary of their works. A doctrine circulated, a belief accompanied it: Everything is empty, everything is the same, everything was! And from every hilltop it rang out: Everything is empty, everything is the same, everything was! All work was for naught. All of us became dry, and if fire were to touch us, then we would turn to dust like ashes– yes, fire itself we have made weary. All our wells dried up, even the sea retreated. All firm ground wants to crack, but the depths do not want to devour! Oh, where is there still a sea in which one could drown? thus rings our lament– out across the shallow swamps. Indeed, we have already become too weary to die; now we continue to wake, and we live on in burial chambers!’



Man has become guardian of graves, there on the lonely mountain fortress of death. Guarding its coffins; the musty vaults stood full of such symbols of conquest. From glass coffins, conquered life looked out. The air was filled with the odour of eternities turned to dust; souls lay clammy and dusty. The gates were the creakiest of all gates. Like a bitterly evil croaking the sound penetrated through the long corridors as the gate's wings swung open; hideously this bird screeched, defiant in being awakened. But even more terrible and heart-constricting was the silence that set in around when the gate fell quiet, a treacherous silence. Thus, the time passed and crept by, if time existed anymore.'

Then the black and white woman of The Wheel of Fortune began turning the wheel and spoke.

'Three times there were blows at the door, like thundering, a roaring wind to rent doors; whistling, shrilling and whipping, it threw down a black coffin. And amidst the roaring and whistling and shrilling the coffin burst open and spewed forth thousandfold laughter. And it laughed and mocked and roared from a thousand grimaces of children of young men and women of kings and queens, of old people in their death throws, of angels, devils, and fools.

And what does this mean?' asked the black and white woman of The Wheel of Fortune.

'You need no answer, it is even obvious to me.' said The Fool, but with no longer a happy expression.

Now Temperance began to speak,

'There is a well known story about a wise man or a fool crossing a bridge. He crossed over the great bridge one day,

and the cripples and the beggars surrounded him, asking him for help. To heal the blind and make the lame walk.

The wise man or fool responded by telling them that if one takes the hump from the hunchback, then one takes his spirit, and if one gives the blind man his eyesight, then he sees too many bad things on earth, such that he curses the one who healed him. He who makes the lame walk causes him the greatest harm, for scarcely does he begin to walk when his vices run away with him. Then told them he has learnt from such people and others.'

Billy was thinking,

Temperance continued,

'The wise man or fool told them what he had learnt from those missing an eye, an ear, a leg, and others who had lost their tongue or their nose or their head.

So, these poor people, some looked angry, but some looked confused, what did he mean?

He told them he had seen worse than them, and some of it so hideous that he would not normally speak of these things. Namely human beings who were missing everything except the one thing! Human beings who are one big eye, or one big nose or one big belly or some other big thing, inverse cripples he called such types.

He told them he came across a creature which was one big ear. But looking more closely beneath the ear something was moving that was pitifully small and pathetic and thin. That the gigantic ear sat up on a little slender stalk, but the stalk was a human being! That if one used a magnifying glass one could

even recognize a tiny miniature face, and even a bloated little soul dangling on the stalk. But the people thought that the big ear was not only a human being, but a great human being, a genius. But that he, the wise man or fool, never believed the people when they speak of great human beings, that what they speak of, the genius, is no genius but geniuses are all inverse cripples, having too little of everything and too much of one thing.'

'Perspectives.' thought Billy.

Temperance continued,

'So, the wise man or fool did no longer see any human beings but fragments, limbs, heads, a ruined mankind, ruins and scattered about as if on a battlefield or a butcher's slab, fragments and limbs and grisly accidents, but no human beings!'

At this Temperance stopped speaking.

'So, what is to be done? We need to see other's perspectives and not just our own perspective of them, we, I, assume too much.' thought Billy.

Now The Fool addressed Billy,

'You are caught between the heights and the depths then?'

Billy was silent for a long time, then looking up he noticed he was alone.

## CHAPTER 29: ALONE

'I know this story,' said Billy sitting on a rock, now alone and a boy again, 'and these things, now only lacking Justice, Judgement and the World, my world, but not my story.'

He stood and looked out over the sea towards the other islands.

Justice:

'The Fool and his 21 companions have taught me.' he thought,

'And in the story The Wanderer climbs from the highest mountain down to the black and sorrowful sea. On the Vision and the Riddle is the idea of the eternal recurrence. That everything endlessly repeats. Each moment is a gateway from the past to the future. The Eternal Recurrence of the Self Same'

Judgement:

Then there came to him the image of the Shepherd which because of indolence has let a snake crawl into his throat, who wakes and bites off its head, and so is transformed.

'I know this, I remember these things. The contemplation of the nihilism of the Eternal Recurrence. The great city which is like a swamp of humankind. The Three Evils of sensuality, the lust to rule, and selfishness. The new tablets of new rules, the teacher of the eternal recurrence, of affirming the eternal recurrence, and of teaching the eternal recurrence.

A conversation with the Kings. The temptation of pity, and finally the departure from the cave, transformed.

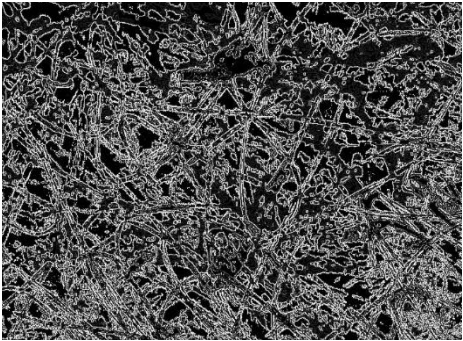
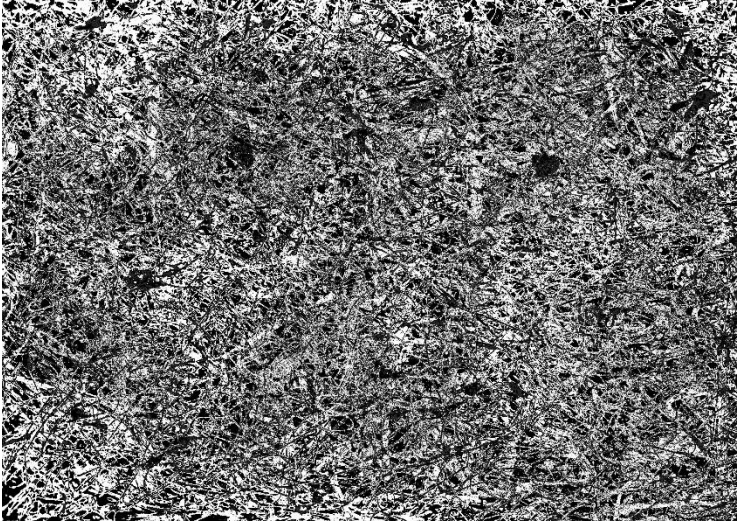
Not my story' he thought.

The World:

And now looking up he saw a hole in the sky, a black hole like a black sun, and he rose up through this hole, back into his Arcadia.

Billy, now the 10 or 11-year-old boy walked through the magnificent rooms of the palace and found himself in the library. On one of the desks was a large book open, it had been a world atlas, but the pages had been painted over with black Indian ink. He had seen this kind of thing before; it was what the other boy used to draw on. There were also pens, some which looked like they would write in white ink, some silver, some gold.

He picked up a silver pen and began to draw, to draw furiously. The drawing resembled some early abstract paintings. These paintings were violent battle scenes. He spent the rest of the day drawing, and into the night, he could do so for he no longer got tired or needed food, he only needed food for the pleasure of its taste.



It was early morning when he stopped drawing, and he decided to take a walk across the parkland and around the lake. The sky was streaked with blood red clouds which reflected in the lake's water. He saw his reflection also in the lake and this was surrounded by the blood red of the sky, he felt inside around his neck, the jawbone with its sigils was still there. He thought about the encounter with the Major Arcans, and how they had explained the book, which he now knew was the story of Zarathustra. The world was one of many perspectives, and Zarathustra seemed to rise above these, above humanity, to become the superman, the Übermensch. But he also knew that Nietzsche failed and descended into madness. He also knew that the other boy lived a solitary life, and so touching the jawbone he knew what he must do.

But first he thought he should, or must, explore these figures, that of The Fool and The Magician and then do what he thought he must.

## CHAPTER 30: THE CALL

Catherine Mulberry refused to use motorways as a point of principle, so this was why she was driving a 1950s Wolseley saloon car from Witham to Birmingham on B roads and country lanes.

Her house was in the Essex town of Witham, on the High Street, what was once the main throughfare until the A12 Bypass. It, the house, had once belonged to Dorothy L. Sayers.

Dorothy L. Sayers 1893-1957 was celebrated for her creation of the fictional detective Lord Peter Wimsey. She was not only a prolific author but also a playwright, translator, and essayist. Her tenure at this residence is commemorated with a plaque on the Georgian façade, marking the property's significance in literary history.

### Architectural Features:

The property's timber-framed structure is enhanced with a mock Georgian façade which was a Victorian addition to the property. This reflects the house's historical evolution. The property has been well maintained and cherished by its current owner who has invested much in maintaining and restoring the house.

### Key features include:

- \* Three spacious and inviting reception rooms, one featuring a wonderful open wood fire.
- \* Multiple double bedrooms, with the main bedroom showcasing exposed beams.



\* Superb original features, including Georgian-style sash windows, traditional joinery, and a classic staircase with curved handrail.

#### Outdoor Space and Amenities:

The property is set on a generous plot, with a private, part-walled cottage garden, described as “a picture in the summer”. Parking is ample, accommodating up to five vehicles, including a garage, accessed via a gated car park to the rear of the property.

#### Location:

Situated centrally, Witham’s town centre and the station are within immediate reach, making it ideal for the current owner who would rather use the railway as a means of transportation. This is important in the life of the owner who is a very successful writer on the occult, and under a pseudonym an author of very popular fiction which merges science fiction, magic and crime.

The surrounding area is steeped in history, with the property itself standing as a testament to the history of Witham. This is often used as the setting for some of the fictional writing.

Catherine Mulberry had been living in the house for some time, but was strangely vague about this, but she felt very much at home. She still gave the occasional lecture at The University of Birmingham on the subject of the occult, but had never been a permanent lecturer at the university. She had increasingly become interested in “fringe” areas as she called them, or “Extreme Occultism.” as others labelled it. She was no longer published in journals on the academic aspects of occultism, but had published a number of serious books, and

some more popular ones on occultism. But it was the fiction that had earned her the major amount of her wealth, but despite this she remained in Witham, in the house she so loved. She found it “inspirational”, maybe due to the presence of the spirit of Dorothy L. Sayers.

So, that the “approved” journals now no longer published her papers was of little concern, and though she admitted 99.99% of the subject was suspect. Was produced by fraudsters or the mentally ill, and people who should or couldn’t know better, that still left a 0.001%. And that is what she was now interested in. One which of course any proper science would ignore.

She was told of, but well aware of, “Statistical noise”.

The technical definition, “In statistical hypothesis testing, the p-value or probability value is, for a given statistical model, the probability that, when the null hypothesis is true, the statistical summary (such as the absolute value of the sample mean difference between two compared groups) would be greater than or equal to the actual observed results.

If the null hypothesis is true, any experimentally observed effect is due to chance alone, hence the term null”.

This is from Wikipedia, which gives an interesting example of tossing 20 coins, the reader can satisfy themselves of the details, but one would expect 10 heads and 10 tails from a fair coin, but such is our reality that this is very unlikely to occur every time.

In the Wikipedia entry is the example of 20 coins being thrown and giving 14 heads and 6 tails. This, surprisingly for many, gives a p-value which indicates a fair coin. But the

example is chosen deliberately to show in a case of 15 heads and 5 tails it would not be considered a fair coin. Many are not bothered with such details unlike those who work in any situation such as scientific observation. So, we can put down to these statistical variations and human psychology 99.999% of so called “occult” events. Catherine Mulberry would have once accepted this, now she did not. And anyway the 0.001% is still to be explained.

She had decided not to use the train to travel to Birmingham, but would use her 1950s Wolseley, it would be less incongruous than the 1950s Rolls Royce she also owned. More comfortable than the three-wheeler Morgan or the Moto Guzzi motorbike that she also owned.

Her traveling to Birmingham was a result of the telephone call from Chief Constable White of the West Midlands Police Force. The route would be complex and difficult. Though as she had made it several times because she still gave the occasional lecture at the University, it would not be difficult for her. Why Chief Constable White of the West Midlands Police Force had wanted her to come to Birmingham was not said, but they had worked together before on certain incidents of a nature which is best not openly discussed by professionals, the “occult”. Or crimes in which the occult might be involved.

She would take lanes and the “B” roads in the main and try to avoid “A” roads and certainly motorways for a complex set of reasons, and also for no real reasons at all. First, she drove to Braintree through Faulkbourne, White Notley, Black Notley, “the Notleys” as the locals called them, then driving through the town centre, avoiding the A120 and A131 her next town

would be Cambridge. She drove through Wethersfield, Finchfield, Great Sampford, Ashdon, Bartlow and into Linton for Balsham, so avoiding the A1307, and on into the centre of Cambridge. There she stopped as she could not go near Cambridge without visiting the small church of St Peters near Kettles Yard. She no longer had much time for modern art but “collected” small churches, St Peters being a favourite.

From Cambridge she drove to Histon, Willingham, Somersham and Warboys. Cross country to Oundle, Weldon, avoiding the centre of Corby but forced to use a short stretch of the A6003 before a dog leg to Fleckney, around Leicester via Whetstone and Enderby then Market Bosworth, through Atherstone and then to Furnace End, from there a simple drive into Birmingham city centre via Blyth End, Coleshill, Kingshurst, Lea Hall, Bordesley Green and Small Heath. Her hotel was the Crowne Plaza, not the nearby Hyatt.

At each village and small town, she passed through she repressed a smile at the impossibility of her route for Sat Nav, even perhaps for A.I. but she would never trust that abhorrence for anything.

‘Truly a work of the Devil’s in human form.’ she had joked.

Arriving she unpacked, took a shower then telephoned the Chief, only to be surprised that it was a house in Tanworth-in-Arden which was to be the venue for their meeting.

‘Say, eight o’clock tonight.’

And so, a meeting not at Lloyd House the headquarters of The West Midlands Constabulary in the city centre.

'I'd better have a short walk then an early supper, then work out my route to Tanworth-in-Arden.' thought Catherine Mulberry.

## CHAPTER 3: THE FOOL

And so, the darkness slowly gave way to a new dawn. The new dawn of Billy, now a boy of 10 or 11. He stopped looking at the ruddy reflections of the dawn's clouds in the lake and returned to the library, here he gathered a set of books on the history of the Tarot. One was full of illustrations, a book by Laetitia Barbier, he opened it to a page which illustrated The Fool. There he found the reference to Momus.

'The Fool sure enough tricked me,' thought Billy the boy, 'but I suppose gave me the knowledge of what I must now do. However, this knowledge like everything else is now in my head, my world, and I want to be no god, or judge. He, The Fool, should go first, but who is he? In the Tarot, in culture, even in those DC comics of Batman and the films. It seems it begins quite seriously...'

He read and in his thoughts,

'Momus in Greek mythology was the personification of satire and mockery. During the Renaissance, several literary works used him as a mouthpiece for their criticism of tyranny, while others later made him a critic of contemporary society. On stage he finally became the figure of harmless fun.

Is this what we are becoming?

As a sharp-tongued spirit of unfair criticism, Momus was eventually expelled from the company of the gods on Mount Olympus. Momus was a son of Night, Nyx, who was the twin of the misery goddess Oizys. Momus was credited with stirring up the Trojan War in order to reduce the human population!

Echoes of Thanos the ultimate villain in Avengers: Infinity War and Avengers: Endgame.

Two of Aesop's fables feature the god Momus. Zeus had created a bull, Prometheus a man, and Athena a house, and they selected Momus as a judge of their handiwork. Momus was jealous of their creations and began by saying that Zeus had made a mistake in not putting the bull's eyes on the ends of his horns so that he could see where he was striking. He said that Prometheus was wrong in not hanging the man's heart on the outside so that scoundrels could be detected and so, that it would be evident what everyone had on his mind. Finally, he said that Athena should have put wheels on her house so that a man could easily move if he had a bad neighbour. Zeus lost his temper with Momus over this spitefulness and threw him out of Olympus.

As in this case and in other instances, Momus became a by-word for fault-finding, and then the saying that if not even he could criticize something then that was the sign of its perfection. So, in a second fable of Aesop's Momus looking at the lovely Aphrodite said he could not find anything about her to fault except that her sandals squeaked! Momus later takes a leading role in a discussion on how to purge Olympus of foreign gods and barbarian demi-gods who are lowering its heavenly tone.

In the Renaissance a story tells of the continued god's exploits after his exile to earth. Since his continued criticism of the gods was destabilizing the divine establishment, Jupiter bound him to a rock and had him castrated. Later, however, missing his candour, Jupiter sought out a manuscript that

Momus had left behind in which was described how a land could be ruled with strictly regulated justice.

In the 16th century, Erasmus also presented Momus as a champion of the legitimate criticism of authorities.

Giordano Bruno wrote a philosophical treatise, “The Expulsion of the Triumphant Beast”, in which Momus plays an integral part in the series of dialogues conducted by the Olympian deities as Jupiter seeks to purge the universe of evil.

Bruno was an Italian philosopher, poet, alchemist, astrologer, cosmological theorist, and esotericist.’

Billy stopped reading, thinking,

‘So, he too was interested in the occult.’

He read on,

‘He was burned at the stake in Rome’s Campo de’ Fiori in 1600. In April 1583 Bruno went to England, there he became acquainted with the poet Philip Sidney and other members of the Hermetic circle around John Dee.’

The boy Billy was now following the bread crumb trail...

‘John Dee the English mathematician, astronomer, teacher, astrologer, occultist, and alchemist. He was the court astronomer for, and advisor to, Elizabeth I, and spent much of his time experimenting with alchemy, practicing divination, and studying Hermetic philosophy. As an antiquarian he had one of the largest libraries in England at the time. As a political advisor he advocated the foundation of English colonies in the New World to form a British Empire, a term he is credited with



coining. He died in poverty in London, and his gravesite is unknown.

Giordano Bruno also lectured at Oxford University and unsuccessfully sought a teaching position there. His views were controversial, notably with John Underhill, Rector of Lincoln College and subsequently bishop of Oxford, and George Abbot, who later became Archbishop of Canterbury. Abbot mocked Bruno for supporting the opinion of Copernicus, the Renaissance polymath who formulated a model of the universe that placed the Sun rather than the Earth at its centre. One of the heretical reasons for Bruno's eventual death.

Among the numerous charges of blasphemy and heresy brought against Giordano Bruno in Venice was his belief in the plurality of worlds, holding opinions contrary to the Catholic faith and speaking against it and its ministers; holding opinions contrary to the Catholic faith about the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, and the Incarnation; holding opinions contrary to the Catholic faith pertaining to Jesus as the Christ; holding opinions contrary to the Catholic faith regarding the virginity of Mary, mother of Jesus; holding opinions contrary to the Catholic faith about both Transubstantiation and the Mass; claiming the existence of a plurality of worlds and their eternity; believing in metempsychosis, (Transmigration of the soul, especially its reincarnation after death.) and in the transmigration of the human soul into brutes; also dealing in magics and divination.

So read the verdict.'

'So, we have a link between The Fool and the occult, and where next?' Billy thought.

'The 17th-century English writers introduced the figure of Momus in a gentler spirit of fun, as in Thomas Carew's masque *Coelum Britannicum*, a satire which was acted before King Charles I and his court. In the masque Momus and Mercury draw up a plan to reform the Star Chamber of Heaven. In England the Star chamber was for enforcement of laws against powerful people that ordinary courts might hesitate to convict of their crimes.

John Dryden's short *Secular Masque* mocked contemporary society through the medium of the Classical divinities, with Momus playing a leading part in deflating with sarcastic wit the sports represented by Diana, hunting, Mars, war, and Venus, love.

In Europe, Momus was becoming softened into a figure of light-hearted and sentimental comedy, the equivalent of Harlequin in the French and Italian *Commedia dell'arte*

Because of the Harlequin connection, and as the character able to make home-truths palatable through the use of humour, Momus had now taken the place of the Fool on a French *Minchiate* card pack. *Minchiate* was a 16th-century card game, using a special deck of 97 playing cards closely related to the tarot cards.

Now that's interesting.

As a jester, also known as joker, court jester, or fool, a Momus was a member of the household of a nobleman or a monarch. Kept to entertain guests at the royal court. Jesters were also travelling performers who entertained folk at fairs and town markets. Jester-like figures were common throughout the

world, including Ancient Rome, China, Persia, and the Aztec empire.

During the post-classical and Renaissance eras, jesters are often thought to have worn brightly coloured clothes and eccentric hats in a motley pattern, they entertained with a wide variety of skills: principal among them were song, music, and storytelling, but many also employed acrobatics, juggling, telling jokes, and performing magic tricks. Much of the entertainment was performed in a comic style. Many jesters made contemporary jokes in word or song about people or events well known to their audiences.

Many royal courts throughout English royal history employed entertainers and most had professional fools, sometimes called “licensed fools”. Fool Societies, or groups of nomadic entertainers, were often hired to perform acrobatics and juggling. Jesters were also occasionally used as psychological warfare. Jesters would ride in front of their troops, provoke or mock the enemy, and even serve as messengers. They played an important part in raising their own army’s spirits by singing songs and reciting stories.

Clowns and jesters were featured in Shakespeare’s plays, and the company’s expert on jesting was Robert Armin, author of the book “Foole upon Foole”. In Shakespeare’s Twelfth Night, Feste the jester is described as wise enough to play the fool.

A Jester’s privilege is the ability and right of a jester to talk and mock freely without being punished. As an acknowledgement of this right, the court jester had symbols denoting their status and protection under the law. The crown, a cap and bells and sceptre, a marotte. A marotte is a

prop stick or sceptre with a carved head on it which mimicked the royal crown and sceptre wielded by a monarch.

Martin Luther used jest in many of his criticisms against the Catholic Church. In the introduction to his “To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation”, he calls himself a court jester, and, later in the text, he explicitly invokes the jester’s privilege when saying that monks should break their chastity vows.

Jesters could give bad news to the King that no one else would dare deliver. In 1340, when the French fleet was destroyed at the Battle of Sluys by the English, Phillippe VI’s jester told him the English sailors don’t even have the guts to jump into the water like our brave French.

After the Restoration, Charles II did not reinstate the tradition of the court jester, but he did patronise the theatre and proto-music hall entertainments, especially favouring the work of Thomas Killigrew. Though Killigrew was not officially a jester, Samuel Pepys in his famous diary does call Killigrew The King’s fool and jester, with the power to mock and revile even the most prominent without penalty.

In the 18th century, jesters had died out except in Russia, Spain, and Germany. In France and Italy, travelling groups of jesters performed plays featuring stylised characters in a form of theatre of the *commedia dell’arte*. A version of this passed into British folk tradition in the form of a puppet show, Punch and Judy. In France the tradition of the court jester ended with the abolition of the monarchy in the French Revolution.

In Germany, “Till Eulenspiegel” is a folkloric hero dating back to medieval times and ruling each year over Fasching or Carnival time, mocking politicians and public figures of power

and authority with political satire like a modern-day political satire. He holds a mirror to make us aware of our times, our Zeitgeist, and his sceptre, his bauble, or marotte, is the symbol of his power.

In 17th century Spain, dwarves, often with deformities, were employed as buffoons to entertain the king and his family, especially the children. In Velázquez's painting *Las Meninas* two dwarfs are included: Maria Bárbola, a female dwarf from Germany with hydrocephalus, and Nicolasito Portusato from Italy. Mari Bárbola can also be seen in a later portrait of princess Margarita Teresa in mourning by Juan Bautista Martínez del Mazo. There are other paintings by Velázquez that include court dwarves such as *Prince Balthasar Charles with a Dwarf*.

During the Renaissance Papacy, the Papal court in Rome had a court jester, similar to the secular courts of the time. Pope Pius V dismissed the court Jester, and no later Pope employed one.'

Billy paused his reading, thinking, 'For want of criticism?', he continued his research, pulling out books on jesters, fools, and looking up the fools found in Shakespeare,

'The root of the word fool is from the Latin *follis*, which means bag of wind or bellows or that which contains air or breath.

In fiction the jester can be symbolic of common sense and of honesty, notably in *King Lear*, where the court jester is a character used for insight and advice on the part of the monarch, taking advantage of his licence to mock and speak freely to dispense frank observations and highlight the folly of his monarch. Some regard this character as the King's

unconscious ego, and later on in the play as Lear descends into madness the jester is no longer present. The self-critical part of the Ego once lost, thinking is no longer controlled, madness follows.

So, the internalised jester once lost, the person becomes mad. Mad as a hatter, oh Lewis Carroll again. I know the Hatter appears in Alice in Wonderland, what of Through the Looking Glass?’ So, Billy’s next task was to find the Mad Hatter in the Looking Glass world.

## CHAPTER 3: TANWORTH-IN-ARDEN

The Chief Constable of The West Midlands Police lived in a large, detached house in Tanworth-in-Arden, a pretty Warwickshire village which still had a rural feel.

A village 12 miles south-southeast of Birmingham. Having two celebrities, though both now buried in the churchyard. The boxer “Gentleman” Jack Hood was once the licensee of The Bell Inn in Tanworth, and was so for 36 years, displaying above the bar the Lonsdale belt that he won on 31 May 1926. Tanworth was also the childhood home of folk musician Nick Drake and his sister, the actress Gabrielle Drake. His grave lies in the parish churchyard. Since his death in 1974 at the age of 26, Nick Drake had achieved cult status, and the village churchyard has become a place of pilgrimage for his fans. In recent years, an annual gathering of his fans has been held in the village. Catherine Mulberry had been an early “pilgrim”.

The 12 miles avoiding motorways was a relatively easy drive for her in the 1950s Wolseley. She drove down Holliday Street past Centenary Plaza, a large residential apartment block, then took Bath Row and Wheeleys Lane, eventually driving down Balsall Heath Road, Mary Street and then Edward Street to pick up the A435, the Alcester Road. She couldn’t really avoid this “A” road until Druids Heath where she took Hollywood Lane. Eventually taking Forshaw Heath Road, past The Limes Country Lodge Hotel, Poolheath Lane then at Wood End a right then left and so onto Vicarage Hill into Tanworth-in-Arden.

The Chief Constable’s house was set back from the road with a gravel drive, she parked near the garage block and as she

approached the front door it opened and there was the Chief, not in uniform, not casual clothes, more a styled suit. There were smiles and handshakes. The Chief showed her into a large living room and offered her a seat in a large armchair. There was a refusal of a drink, some chit-chat and then a silence broken by the Chief,

‘Do you know of... no, of course you will know, it’s why you are here, tell me about catoptromancy, tell me about it in detail.’

Catherine Mulberry began.

‘A glass of water would be good.’

The Chief smiled, there was no doubt that a detailed answer was pending, so duly a glass of water was presented, no ice but with a slice of lemon, it was put on a nearby table.

‘Catoptromancy is divination by using a mirror or mirrors, but that I suspect you know. It is also known as enoptromancy.

There are various methods, keeping to mirrors some practitioners use a single mirror, while others use multiple mirrors, some people look into the mirror in a dark room, while others prefer to do it in natural light. Some practitioners focus on their own reflection, while others look for visions of other people or events.’

‘I use a single mirror in a dark room and see...’ The Chief paused, ‘a ghost... please go on.’

‘There is no one definitive interpretation of the images seen in catoptromancy. Some people believe that they are literal representations of the future, while others believe that they are symbolic or metaphorical.’



Catherine Mulberry paused, there was no response, so she took a sip of water and continued.

‘The history goes back to ancient Rome and Greece and before, in Ancient Rome, the priests who used catoptromancy were called specularii. They would use polished metal mirrors to gaze into the future and seek guidance from the gods. It’s said the practice dates back to the Ancient Egyptians. They believed that mirrors could be used as portals guiding them into the afterlife or used as a tool to see into the future. A collection of funerary manuscripts known as the Book of the Dead describes a ritual in which a mirror could be used by the recently deceased to unite with their mortal soul by looking at their own reflection in the afterlife, this being so mirrors were placed inside burial tombs.

The Chinese believed that mirrors could be used to see into the soul and to predict the future. They would often use mirrors to perform rituals to cleanse the soul and to improve one’s luck. Likewise in India it was believed that mirrors could be used to see into the past, present, and future. As an example in the Mahabharata, the hero Yudhishtira uses a mirror to see into the future and learn about his upcoming battle.

So, it came to Europe like much else from ancient Rome, Greece and the Far East. In the Middle Ages, mentions of the divinatory mirror appear despite the Church’s reservations and associations with the occult.

And of course, trivially breaking a mirror is still thought by some to bring 7 years of bad luck. And If I might add the lack of a mirror is significant in Jean-Paul Sartre’s play, “Huis clos” or “No Exit” which is set in a contemporary room in which the

famous line appears, “Hell is other people”, the play itself being set in hell.’

Catherine Mulberry paused, took another sip of water and waited, then asked,

‘So, a ghost you say that you see a ghost, was it a woman?’

‘Yes, a woman with a blood-stained dress. You think this is serious.’

‘Of course,’ replied Catherine Mulberry, ‘despite the association with Mary Tudor who was also called Bloody Mary there is a divination ritual which involves a spirit or ghost called Bloody Mary in which young women could see their future husbands. The practice encouraged a young woman to walk up a flight of stairs backward holding a candle and a hand mirror in a darkened house. As they gazed into the mirror they were supposed to be able to catch a view of their future husband’s face. There was, however, a chance that they would see a skull, or the face of the Grim Reaper instead, indicating that they were going to die before they would have the chance to marry. This developed into a ritual involving catoptromancy, this was done by repeatedly chanting the name Bloody Mary into a mirror placed in a dimly lit or candle-lit room. The Bloody Mary apparition allegedly appears as a corpse, witch, or ghost that can either be friendly, evil, or a demonic spirit, and she is sometimes seen covered in blood, hence the name. The lore surrounding the ritual states that participants may endure the apparition screaming at them, cursing them, even strangling them, stealing their soul, drinking their blood or scratching their eyes out.’

‘Obviously I’ve not witnessed the latter things,’ said the Chief Constable, ‘but it was a woman, and she was covered in blood and was screaming. At each apparition the screams seem to get louder as does the amount of blood. It began a week ago, first as a dream, then one evening sitting here in the living room, in candlelight, I rose and saw her in the mirror, at first just a glimpse so I wasn’t sure. But this has occurred each night since, and the vision lasts longer each night, so I made the call, a call to you, you being the occult expert and having worked on those other cases, the ones few know about.’

They were referring to several cases that Catherine Mulberry had worked on involving the Police and the Chief Constable, ones which in their resolution the crime ceased to exist. A particular example was one of a ritual child murder, which in the resolution of this the child in question was found alive, the perpetrators dead or disappeared and no official records remained, only vague memories of those involved. Such it was that involvement in these occult crimes became something of Catherine Mulberry’s career since taking up residence in her house in Essex. She had already a detailed knowledge and interest in the occult, it seemed therefore not unnatural to be involved with occult criminal investigations given the house once belonged to Dorothy L. Sayers, creator of the fictional detective Lord Peter Wimsey. Catherine Mulberry had by now, after some years ago helping the West Midlands Police, not only helped this force, but other forces in the UK where such criminality and the occult was involved. And also, in Europe and the United States. There was an “underground” network of senior figures in law enforcement who now knew of her and used her services. This ranged from the simple “yes or no” as to the question, ‘Is the occult involved in this crime?’ for which a simple dowsing session, an old form of divination,

was used by Catherine Mulberry, through to complex and strange “adventures” involving the occult.

‘A woman appears at ten o’clock each evening in that mirror.’ said the Chief Constable pointing to a large ornate mirror next to the fireplace.

‘So, if it’s amenable to you I’ll stay and see.’ said Catherine Mulberry.

‘Of course, I wouldn’t expect any other response.’ was the reply.

## CHAPTER 33: HATTERS FOOLS AND JOKERS

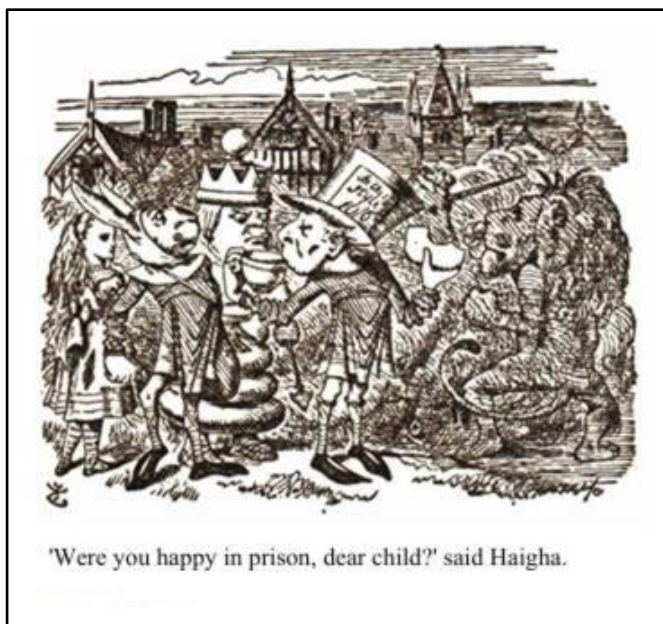
So, Billy found the book, “Alice in Wonderland”, his library always made such things easy, and then a copy of “Alice Through the Looking Glass.”

Now with the book, “Alice Through the Looking Glass.” he flipped through the pages, he first noticed this.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ			
<i>(As arranged before commencement of game)</i>			
WHITE		RED	
Pieces	Pawns	Pawns	Pieces
Tweedledee.....	Daisy	Daisy.....	Humpty Dumpty
Unicorn.....	Haigha	Messenger.....	Carpenter
Sheep.....	Oyster	Oyster.....	Walrus
W. Queen.....	'Lily'	Tiger-lily.....	R. Queen
W. King.....	Fawn	Rose.....	R. King
Aged man.....	Oyster	Oyster.....	Crow
W. Knight.....	Hatta	Frog.....	R. Knight
Tweedledum.....	Daisy	Daisy.....	Lion

‘No Mad Hatter but a Hatta who is the White Knight.’

And then looking quickly through the illustrations.



'Hatta? Haigha?' thought Billy. 'The names here of the Mad Hatter from Alice in Wonderland, and the Tenniel illustration shows it's the same character as that found in Alice in Wonderland, or now two characters. No doubt at all, the same hat for sale at Ten and Sixpence as found in Alice in Wonderland.'

Then he stopped work on researching the nature of the Fool and began reading the book.

'Looking glass, a mirror world obviously.' he thought, 'The whole narrative takes place in a mirror world, and a game of chess, the journey of Alice across a chessboard, not then the Snakes and Ladders board of Smith's mirrored mind. The

garden of strange flowers and insects, well they were in Smith mind, and Tweedledum and Tweedledee could be Smith and his reflection, or me and the boy, or me and Smith? The White Queen remembers future events before they have happened, lives backwards, the mirror of time, maybe my Zarathustra episode, yes, I grew back into the boy.

The Queen turns into a sheep, and Alice buys an egg from it which turns into, or is Humpty Dumpty. Is this my fall down the well, but I was pushed by The Fool. Am I the fool who pushes himself too far?

So, all the king's horses and all the king's men come to Humpty Dumpty's assistance, and are accompanied by the White King, along with the Lion and the Unicorn. The March Hare and the Hatter appear in the guise of messengers called Haigha and Hatta, whom the White King employs One to come, and One to go.

The nursery rhyme about the Lion and the Unicorn ends: "Some gave them plum-cake and drummed them out of town". They are starting on the plum-cake when a deafening noise of drumming is heard.

Alarmed by the noise, Alice crosses another brook, reaching the seventh rank of the chess game, which is the book's narrative, and the forested territory of the Red Knight, who seeks to capture her, but the White Knight comes to her rescue, though repeatedly falling off his horse. He escorts Alice through the forest towards the final brook-crossing, Alice steps across the last brook, and is automatically a queen, then she awakes from the dream.'

Billy took a walk outside across the lawn thinking if the story had any reflection on his current situation.

‘Is this story of any relevance?’

He walked back to the library and took up his books about fools, jokers and jesters.

‘In general, only as the lowliest member of the court can the jester be the monarch’s most useful adviser.

Of course it is, even if obliquely the fool is in the court of nobles, Kings and Queens in chess, and of course in playing cards too, the Joker, and in the other Alice adventure in wonderland the Kings and Queens are playing cards. Might these two stories portray two worlds, one as deep as a rabbit hole, the other a mirror image? I need to read on.

So, the fool is a recurring character type in the works of William Shakespeare. Shakespearean fools are usually clever and ordinary people, not nobility and use their wits to outdo people of higher social standing. In this sense, they are very similar to the real fools, and jesters of this time.

Is that me?’

Now he found in another book,

‘The contemporary joker in Batman, and the trickster, The Joker was debuted in Batman 1 April 1940 as the first villain, the Joker has been interpreted as an archetypal trickster.

Oh, April fool’s day.’

Billy paused his reading, his memory was back, that of a 50-year-old who had studied and been engaged in comparative



religion, and also the peculiar French philosophies of Jaques Derrida and Giles Deleuze. There was something, he went out for a walk, again around the lake, again looked at the reflection of the sky and himself. He was talking aloud and to himself,

‘We have the hero and the villain, who is a trickster and a Joker, or in the case of The Fool the image of The King, but at the lowest position in the court. Positive and negative, not then an Alice world!

Archetypes obviously, but Jungian? No, something more strange, a mirror. And in the mirror who is right and who is wrong. The mirror reflects reality.

And what attracted me to the Batman comics as a boy, the hero, Batman, or the Joker. I think it was the Joker.’

He laughed, saying, ‘And there we have it, the Joker and Superman or the overman, and Nietzsche’s Übermensch!’

He went back into the library and wasn’t surprised to find a copy of Deleuze’s “Difference and Repetition” next to his other books, open to a page, he read aloud,

‘Not an individual endowed with good will and a natural capacity for thought, but an individual full of ill will who does not manage to think either naturally or conceptually. Only such an individual is without presuppositions. Only such an individual effectively begins and effectively repeats.’

Then he remembered Nietzsche,

‘Admitting untruth as a condition of life: that means to resist familiar values in a dangerous way; and a philosophy that dares this has already placed itself beyond good and evil.’

And then laughing, Michael Jackson,

‘I’m Bad!’

He read on once he stopped laughing wondering if he had a sinister grin,

‘The trickster as a boundary-crosser. The trickster crosses and often breaks both physical and societal rules. Bending and breaking of rules takes the form of tricks and thievery.

Tricksters it seems can be cunning or foolish or both. So, Hermes plays the trickster. The patron of thieves and the inventor of lying, a gift he passed on to Autolycus, who in turn passed it on to Odysseus.

Yes, I’m on or in an Odessey.

Or as the trickster Loki, who is also a shapeshifter. Loki also exhibits sex variability, in one case even becoming pregnant. According to “The Song of Hyndla” in The Poetic Edda, Loki becomes a mare who later gives birth to Odin’s eight-legged horse Sleipnir.

Interesting but not sure how relevant this is? Certainly not in any of the Thor Movies...’

He imagined his grin!

‘Fools, jesters and jokers are everywhere, in African American folklore, a personified rabbit, known as Brer Rabbit from West Africa, and so was introduced into the Caribbean via the slave trade.

The spider Anansi is often the trickster. Oh, with eight legs like Sleipnir.

You can compare these with clowns.'

Thought the boy Billy, who didn't like clowns.

'It's said that clowns and tricksters are essential to any contact with the sacred. People could not pray until they had laughed, because laughter opens the mind or mind soul and frees it from rigid preconception. Humans had to have tricksters within the most sacred ceremonies for fear that they forget the sacred comes through upset, reversal, surprise. The trickster in most native traditions is essential to creation, to birth.'

He frowned, thinking deeply,

'So, in tarot, The Fool is a card of the Major Arcana. The tarot depiction of the Fool often shows a man or less often, a woman dressed in bright clothes and holding a white rose in one hand and a small bundle of possessions in the other, with a dog or cat at their heels. The fool is in the act of unknowingly walking off the edge of a cliff, precipice, or other high place. So that's why maybe The Fool threw me down the well?'

Billy read on,

'The Joker in card games originates in the United States during the Civil War and was created as a trump card for the game of Euchre. Since it has been adopted into many other card games, obviously, where it often acts as a wild card, but may have other functions such as the top trump, a skip card forcing another player to miss a turn, the lowest-ranking card, the highest-value card, or a card of a different value from the rest of the pack.

Am I the Joker?

And then there is Harlequin.

The Harlequin is characterised by his checkered costume. His role is that of a light-hearted, nimble, and astute servant of various masters, often acting to thwart the plans of his master, and pursuing his own love interest, Columbine, Harlequin's mistress, a comic servant playing the tricky slave type, and wife of Pierrot, she with wit and resourcefulness, often competing with the sterner and melancholic husband. Harlequin later develops into a prototype of the romantic hero. He inherits his physical agility and his trickster qualities, as well as his name, from a mischievous devil character in medieval Passion Plays.

Harlequin was routinely paired with the character Clown. As developed by Joseph Grimaldi around 1800, Clown became the mischievous and brutish foil for the more sophisticated Harlequin, who became more of a romantic character.

The name Harlequin is taken from that of a mischievous devil or demon character in popular French Passion Plays. Hellequin was depicted as a black-faced emissary of the devil, roaming the countryside with a group of demons chasing the damned souls of evil people to Hell. The physical appearance of Hellequin offers an explanation for the traditional colours of Harlequin's red-and-black mask. The name's origin could also be traced to a knight from the 9th century, Hellequin of Boulogne, who died fighting the Normans and originated a legend of devils.

In Cantos XXI and XXII from Dante's Inferno there is a devil by the name of Alichino. The similarities between the devil in Dante's Inferno and the Arlecchino are more than cosmetic.'

Then looking at the illustrations in a book and from material in another he made a list.

'Mythical Trickster Figures have several of the following six traits:

- Fundamentally ambiguous and anomalous
- Deceiver and trick-player
- Shape-shifter or master of disguise
- Situation-inverter
- Messenger and imitator of the gods
- Sacred and lewd bricoleur'

He underlined Situation-inverter.

Then he made a much longer list,

'I should list them all and see if it is me?

Tricksters in folktale and mythology:

Àjàpá - The turtle trickster of Yoruba folk tales.

Anansi - The spider trickster of African origin. He considers himself cunning enough to trick and outwit anyone, but is also proud, lazy and impulsive, which often proves his undoing.

Azeban – "the Raccoon", a trickster spirit in Abenaki mythology.

Birbal, a real advisor to the Mughal emperor Akbar the Great, is often cast as a trickster in Indian folklore.

Br'er Rabbit - A slave trickster of African American origin.

Coyotes in various Native American mythologies.

Curupira - A Brazilian folklore, male, jungle genie that protects the animals and the trees of the forests. It has red hair and backwards feet to confuse hunters and lumberjacks.

Dionysus - Greek God of wine, madness, and ecstasy. More than any other Greek God, he is associated with shape-shifting and taking on other identities, which is part of why he is also associated with actors. A thoroughly ambiguous person, in personality, but also in his androgynous figure, one can never know exactly what he will do next.

Eris - Greek Goddess of discord in Greek mythology. Infamous for starting a fight between other goddesses over the Apple of Discord, leading to the Judgement of Paris and, ultimately, the Trojan War.

Eshu/Eleggua/Legba - One of the primary orishas in Yorùbá religion, patron of roads, especially crossroads, doors, and travellers, as well as a spirit of chaos and trickery.

The Fair Folk in many European cultures.

Hermes - Messenger of the gods in Greek mythology, or Mercury in Roman mythology, another patron of travellers, boundaries and thieves. Notably stole a herd of cattle from Apollo in his youth but then invented the lyre and gave it to Apollo as payment.

Hershele Ostropoler - In Ashkenazic Jewish folklore, based on a real person who lived during the 18th century.

Huehuecoyotl - the gender-changing coyote god of music, dance, mischief and song of Pre-Columbian Mexico and Aztec Mythology. Befitting a trickster, he is the patron of uninhibited sexuality and often engages in trickery against the gods with camaraderie among mortals.

Jack - best known from the story Jack and the Beanstalk, is a young boy who uses his wit to outsmart characters in many stories.

Jack Mary Ann - A folk hero from the Wrexham area of north Wales whose fictionalised exploits continue to circulate in local folklore.

Jacob - Biblical Patriarch and the ancestor of the Israelites.

John the Conqueror - Character who appears in many stories from the African American tradition. He is a slave that is so much smarter than any slave-master, he simply cannot be controlled.

Kitsune - In Japanese folklore, they are described as “tricksters” with no care for the concept of right or wrong.

Kuma Lisa - A fox and trickster figure in Bulgarian folklore.

Loki - A cunning, shape-shifting god, sometimes benefactor and sometimes foe to the gods of Asgard. Famous as a catalyst for Ragnarök, the fall of Asgard. The precise nature of Loki's being defies clear classification, as there is little detail regarding his mother, but he is at least half-giant on his father's side.

Māui - A Polynesian culture hero famous for his exploits and his trickery.

Maximón - A cunning deity in modern Mayan tradition. Famous for being a womanizer and using trickery to achieve his goals.

Nasreddin - In Turkish folklore, based on a historical 13th Century person.

Odysseus - Hero and king in Greek mythology. Came up with the idea for the Trojan Horse, and used his wits to escape perilous situations during the Odyssey, e.g. outwitting Polyphemus the Cyclops.

Pan - God of shepherds and flocks. He is a satyr: a creature that has the upper body of a man and the legs of a goat. In many stories, they talk of Pan, or just satyrs, in general, are known to play tricks on people, especially children, for their amusement.

Pedro Urdemales – a trickster folk hero from Iberian and Latin American folklore

Prometheus - Tricks Zeus over sacrifices at Mecone, and who steals fire on behalf of mankind.

Puck/Robin Goodfellow - A “merry domestic fairy” from British Folklore. Prominently featured in Shakespeare’s A Midsummer Night's Dream, where he plays tricks on a group of humans who stumble into a forest. His final monologue explains the nature of tricksters.’

Here Billy searched for a copy of the play...

‘If we shadows have offended,



Think but this, and all is mended--  
That you have but slumbered here  
While these visions did appear.  
And this weak and idle theme,  
No more yielding but a dream,  
Gentles, do not reprehend.  
If you pardon, we will mend.  
And, as I am an honest Puck,  
If we have unearnèd luck  
Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue,  
We will make amends ere long.  
Else the Puck a liar call.  
So good night unto you all.  
Give me your hands if we be friends,  
And Robin shall restore amends.

“Give me your hands if we be friends”, he wanted the audience to applaud!

Puss in Boots - A clever and magical cat who tricks a king into raising a lowborn miller to the station of a great noble and defeats a shapeshifting ogre by tricking him into becoming a mouse.

Not in the Shrek films he doesn't!

Raven - amongst the Indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest Coast.

Reynard - A red fox and trickster figure who plays a central role in the moralistic fables of the Reynard cycle.

Saci - A Brazilian folklore character, a one-legged black or mulatto youngster with holes in the palms of his hands, who smokes a pipe and wears a magical red cap.

Sang Kancil - the mouse-deer trickster of Malaysian and Indonesian folklore.

Scheherazade - the heroine in the famed story of the One Thousand and One Nights. By her wit and guile, she delays her execution every night by the murderous Shah, until she cures him of his madness by winning his heart.

Sisyphus - Sly and audacious mortal king in Greek mythology who managed to cheat death twice but angered the gods in the process and was condemned to endlessly push a boulder up a slope in Tartarus.

Sly Peter - In Bulgarian and Macedonian folklore.

Stingy Jack - a folkloric character associated with Halloween. He outwits the Devil but displeases God in the process. Because his soul is denied entry into Heaven and Hell, he is doomed to haunt the earth as a ghost, carrying a lantern - thus being the origin of the Jack-o'-Lantern.

Sun Wukong - Irrepressible Monkey King of Chinese mythology, whose exploits are described in Journey to the West.

Susanoo - Amaterasu's brother, god of storms and trickster of Japanese mythology. His destructive behaviour gets him banished from Heaven, though he later redeems himself through deeds of heroism.

Trạng Quỳnh – A trickster in Vietnamese folklore is based on a historical figure of the 17th and 18th centuries, his deceitful targets are often high-class figures in society.

Till Eulenspiegel – Trickster of German folklore.

Tokoloshe – Trickster of Zulu mythology.

Twm Siôn Cati - A Welsh trickster who was reputed to have lived in the 16th century: according to legend, he was a gentleman farmer by day, but a highwayman at night.

Zomo, a rabbit from Nigerian folklore.'

Here Billy stopped reading and again said out loud to no one,

'I think I might have some of these characteristics but certainly not all.'

'Tricksters in fiction

El-ahrairah - The Prince of Rabbits, or the "Prince with the Thousand Enemies"; the trickster folk hero of the rabbits in Watership Down.

James Jesse/The Trickster - A supervillain from DC Comics and a foe of the Flash.

The Joker - The chaotic counterpart to Batman's strive for order displays several characteristics of the trickster. Inscrutable, unpredictable and a defining obsession with gags and pranks that are sometimes harmless, sometimes deadly.'

‘Not me then, hardly deadly!’ he said, then added, ‘yet Batman strikes me, and always did, as boring, like all the superheroes.’

Joseph Joestar - The main protagonist of JoJo's Bizarre Adventure: Battle Tendency and a major supporting character in Stardust Crusaders. Joseph has a supernatural talent of deception and sleight-of-hand, which combined with his martial arts skills and ability to channel Hamon makes him an unpredictable fighter. He will frequently taunt his opponents both for his own amusement and as a tactic to lower their confidence.

Kickaha - The Trickster from Phillip Jose Farmer's World of Tiers novel series. Also known by his true name, Paul Janus Finnegan.

Loki in Marvel Comics - From the Marvel Comics series, and from the Marvel movies Thor, The Avengers, Thor: The Dark World, Thor: Ragnarok, and Avengers: Infinity War. He is based somewhat on the trickster god Loki from Norse mythology.

Max and Moritz - Principal characters of the book of the same name written by Wilhelm Busch in 1865. Famous for their tricks, Max and Moritz quickly became famous characters in Germany.

The Mask - Wears a mask imbued with Loki's powers and lack of inhibition.

Mister Mxyzptlk - An imp from the fifth dimension featured in the Superman comics.

Ms. Gsptlsnz - The girlfriend of Mister Mxyzptlk from the fifth dimension in the Superman comics.

Panurge - Companion of the Giant Pantagruel in the books of Francois Rabelais.

Rumplestiltskin - A character from the Mother Goose Grimm fairy tales, in which he fits many of the attributes of the trickster and often tricks other characters for his own nefarious purposes.

Silk - or Prince Kheldar of Drasnia, a character in The Belgariad and The Malloreon.

Yun-Harla - The trickster goddess of the Yuuzhan Vong religion in the New Jedi Order series, who protagonist Jaina Solo impersonates in several novels.

The Trickster - an immortal extra-dimensional alien from the Doctor Who TV series.

Bart Simpson - From the animated TV series The Simpsons.

Bill Cipher - A demon resembling a one-eyed triangle, and the main antagonist of the animated series Gravity Falls. He has many supernatural abilities and loves to use them to cause trouble for humans, including offering deals that invariably turn out badly for those who take them.

Bugs Bunny - A cartoon rabbit trickster, in some respects similar to Brer Rabbit.

Catnip - a Siamese cat actress who often portrays villains in plays and is also a trickster outside of acting. She is a Sanrio character who only appeared in Hello Kitty's Furry Tale Theater of 1987.

Cegorach - the trickster god and one of the few survivors from their pantheon of the Eldar in the Warhammer 40,000 setting.

Clopin - King of the Gypsies and Master of Ceremonies at the Festival of Fools, from the Disney film *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. He is a brightly clothed jester who can be devious and unpredictable.

Discord - a former antagonist from *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic*. He is the powerful Spirit of Chaos and Disharmony, and has become reformed, though he still sometimes plays tricks on others.

The Doctor - The title character of *Doctor Who*: Always a situation-inverter, deceiver and bricoleur, and sometimes ambiguous or trick-player, depending on the incarnations.

Felix the Cat - A “transgressor of boundaries” in the most literal sense.

Fen'Harel - An enigmatic member of the elven pantheon and a recurring mythological figure in the *Dragon Age* series.

Gaunter O'Dimm - A powerful creature from higher dimensions in video games based on the novels written by Andrzej Sapkowski as one of the many sentient obstacles to the famed monster hunter Geralt of Rivia.

Heloise - A teenaged girl and mad scientist who is also a tomboyish trickster in the cartoon *Jimmy Two Shoes*.

Hokey Wolf - A canine trickster who comes up with different ways to fool his victims.

Jareth - King of the Goblins from Jim Henson's *Labyrinth*, who changes forms and uses magic to cajole the story's heroine through a series of puzzles.

Jerry - The mischievous mouse who constantly plays tricks on the tomcat from the show Tom and Jerry.

Joker - The main protagonist of Persona 5 and leader of The Phantom Thieves of Hearts.

The Pink Panther - A character featured at the start of the film and the animated series of the same name.

Puck from Gargoyles - Based on the faerie trickster from A Midsummer Night's Dream, he plays a major role in the Disney animated television show "Gargoyles".

Q - An omnipotent being in Star Trek: The Next Generation, Deep Space Nine, and Voyager, who puts the characters of these shows through various and trials and tricks, seemingly for his own amusement. At times, he seems to be working toward becoming a better, more moral being, or possibly trying to grow the characters and humanity in general in positive ways. But his ultimate goal seems to consistently remain his own entertainment, as being omnipotent has become somewhat boring after so long.

River Song - Character from Doctor Who, who acts as the trickster to the show's titular trickster. She shows up in an episode, causes trouble, drags everyone into insane situations before solving the crisis, often with a kiss.

Rumplestiltskin - A character from the Mother Goose Grimm fairy tales, in which he fits many of the attributes of the trickster and often tricks other characters for his own nefarious purposes.

Sera - A brash and capricious Robin Hood-like rogue who is a party member in Dragon Age: Inquisition.

Swiper - A cartoon fox who is the main antagonist of Dora the Explorer.

Trickster - From the 1994 horror film Brainscan, starring T. Ryder Smith as the Trickster.

The Trickster in Supernatural - An antagonist of Seasons Two and Three of Supernatural, who often plays tricks on Sam and Dean.

The Trickster - From the 1998 video game Thief: The Dark Project. A pagan god of nature and darkness. Manipulates the player character into advancing his plans.

Woody Woodpecker – A less complex version of the Trickster.

Zoe - A Targonian kid turned an “Aspect of Twilight”, as the embodiment of mischief, imagination, and change in the video game League of Legends.

Enough!’

said Billy. He took the jawbone from around his neck and plunged it into the picture of The Fool. The page became blank. He put the jawbone back into his pocket.



# Chapter 34: Bloody Mary

By a quarter to ten the two figures were sitting in the living room, chairs facing the large mirror, a candle burning on a table. And at ten o'clock the shadowy figure appeared, becoming more clear, blood covered and shrieking. After ten minutes it slowly dissolved.

'Louder, longer now ten minutes, and yes more blood.' said the Chief Constable.

'Interesting!' said Catherine Mulberry, as she did, she took out her smartphone, 'Let's see if we recorded anything.' There was silence then the Chief saying,

"Louder, longer now ten minutes, and yes more blood."

'So, as I thought and very typical, a sound which is not physical, the screaming wasn't recorded but your voice was so the sounds were metaphysical and not physical.'

She paused,

'Can I return tomorrow, I'd like to investigate this, it's fascinating. I'm staying in the city centre but if so, I will book into The Limes Lodge Hotel in order to be closer.'

'Of course, I'd like you to investigate, it's why I made the call, but please use the guest room here, and I'll let you have a key, I'm still the Chief Constable so I will, I'm afraid have to be in Lloyd House all tomorrow, but I'll give you a key and you can drive over.'

'I must say you are taking this calmly.' said Catherine Mulberry.

‘I think it, whatever it is, is trying to communicate, and of course we have experienced stranger things.’

Catherine Mulberry nodded then said, ‘Right, now I think I should drive back to the Crowne Plaza.’

They both rose, the Chief giving Catherine Mulberry a house key and the alarm code, and at the door saying, ‘I expect I’ll be long gone when you arrive, see you on the evening.’

Catherine Mulberry made the return journey which was the same as that by which she had come. Entering into the hotel she decided a glass of wine would be good, and the second glass was if anything even better. Her original plan was to go straight to bed, she complimented herself on planning, but never being rigid. In the morning, she took a shower, and a short walk down to Gas Street canal basin and then back for breakfast, her normal full English, though no hash browns, and tea, never coffee. She then packed, checked out of the hotel and drove back to Tanworth-in-Arden. At the Chief Constable’s house, she found a note explaining where things were, food in the kitchen, “Help Yourself”, and the directions to the guest room which had an en-suite. Also, a small guide to Tanworth-in-Arden.

The Warwickshire countryside around Tanworth is particularly fine, so she spent the morning walking around the lanes, the hedgerows, and Ash and Oak trees now in leaf. She couldn’t think much as there was so little to think about from what she had seen the night before, but one thing was certain it was an apparition of Bloody Mary. She had a light lunch in The Bell Inn and another walk in the afternoon, she visited the grave of Nick Drake, which she had done many years before, but strangely she did not enter the church. She got as far as the

door but had a feeling that it was not right to do so, 'Just yet.' was the thought.

The Chief Constable telephoned about an early evening meeting and suggested a meal in 'The Bell', which she said would be fine. After arriving back in Tanworth and changing from uniform, the Chief together with Catherine Mulberry walked to The Bull. Both had the slow braised blade of beef, no pudding and drank only mineral water. They were back at the house by 9.30.

As before they were sitting in the living room, chairs facing the large mirror, a candle burning on a table. And at ten o'clock the shadowy figure appeared again, becoming more clear, blood covered and shrieking. It seemed now that there were shadowy figures behind the woman, and now the shrieks had become wailing and a moaning. The figure paused, looking behind her and then back at the seated two, and now just moaning, almost pleading. This time the visitation lasted almost 15 minutes.

They sat for a time,

'A brandy perhaps?' asked the Chief, 'That would be good,' replied Catherine Mulberry, then added, 'The unhappy dead.'

'Pardon?' this was the Chief.

'Nothing,' said Catherine Mulberry, 'Yes a brandy would be good, and I'll fix supper tomorrow.'

She was now thinking, thinking of the graves in the churchyard, and even the story of Nick Drake. At which she found her laptop and began searching.

The Chief Constable was holding two fairly large drinks, put one on the table next to Catherine Mulberry and watched the internet search. Both took sips of brandy every so often.

Catherine Mulberry spoke, 'Nick Drake died in November 1974, it is said that he took an overdose of amitriptyline, an antidepressant. He was 26, not 27.'

'Why 27?' asked the Chief Constable.

'The myth of 27, the 27 Club urban legend. Brian Jones, Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, Jim Morrison, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Kurt Cobain, and Amy Winehouse, all died aged 27, Nick Drake missed this by 7 months.

All made headlines but look at the Morrison story, it's really weird. He was found dead supposedly in the bathtub by his common law wife, Pamela Courson. Just a minute,'

She was searching,

'who died April 25, 1974, aged 27 of a heroin overdose. Aged 27, and in the same year as Nick Drake?

Too many coincidences? Two unhappy deaths in the news in 1974, one which was here in Tanworth.'

She continued using Wikipedia and other sources, speaking as she did so,

'Morrison's official cause of death was listed as heart failure, though no post-mortem or autopsy was performed, it was not required by French law.'

'My God!' exclaimed the Chief Constable.

She continued, ‘Courson, she said that Morrison’s last words as he was bathing, were, “Pam, are you still there?”’

However, several individuals who say they were eyewitnesses, including Marianne Faithfull, claim that his death was due to an accidental heroin overdose. Sam Bennett, founder and manager of the Rock ‘n’ Roll Circus night club, affirmed that he had found Morrison unconscious in one of the club’s bathrooms after a purported heroin overdose, and that his body was taken away from the club by two men who he thought might have been the drug dealers. Because of the lack of an autopsy however, these statements could never be confirmed. According to the music journalist Ben Fong-Torres it was suggested that his death was kept a secret, and the reporters who had telephoned Paris were told that Morrison was not deceased but tired and resting at a hospital.

Morrison’s friend, film director Agnès Varda, admitted that she was the one who was responsible for hiding the incident from becoming public. Agnès Varda, was a French film director, screenwriter and photographer, died aged 90! So not one of the 27.

Morrison was buried in Père Lachaise Cemetery in Paris, very popular for visitors, the gay icon Oscar Wilde is buried there with that ridiculous Jacob Epstein sculpture. Also buried in the cemetery is Édith Piaf, other poets and artists. Unlike these Morrison’s seemingly insignificant grave has a constant police guard. To prevent fans visiting and having dope smoking parties!

Since his death there have been a number of conspiracy theories concerning Morrison’s death and others...

The white lighter myth or white lighter curse, it seems an urban legend based on the 27 Club. It's claimed several of these individuals died while in possession of a white disposable cigarette lighter. An omen perhaps? It's unsubstantiated.'

'And?' asked the Chief Constable,

'I will visit the church in the morning'. was the reply.

## CHAPTER 32: THE MAGICIAN

Billy now turned the pages of Laetitia Barbier's book to that of The Magician. Its illustration is by Hieronymus Bosh, it shows a conjurer performing a trick to onlookers, one of whom has regurgitated a frog, and is in the process of having his money stolen.

Then reading from another book of magik,

'The Magician has complex esoteric meaning, it is the first numbered and second total card of the Major Arcana of The Tarot, succeeding the Fool which is marked number 0. The Magician as an object of occult study is interpreted as symbolic of power, potential, and the unification of the physical and spiritual worlds...'

'Or the sleight of hand to produce such actions as the frog regurgitation and thievery.' thought Billy, his hand reaching into his pocket and touching the jawbone. He continued reading,

'Bateleur, the mountebank, charlatan or the sleight of hand artist, a practitioner of stage magic. The Italian tradition calls him Il Bagatto or Il Bagatello....'

'So is the Magician in league with the thief?' he thought,

'In esoteric metaphysics occultists turn Le Bateleur from a mountebank into a magus, a Zoroastrian priest. The plural being Magi. And from which we get the terms magic and magician who practices magic...'

‘And the link of course to Nietzsche’s Thus Spoke Zarathustra, is he then a charlatan in his book? A trickster of the twentieth century.’ thought Billy, he continued to read.

‘Ostanes, Persian magus and alchemist, for the Hellenists figurehead of the magi, was identified at first with star-worshipping and, with the Zo-, even as the living star. Later, an even more elaborate mytho-etymology evolved: Ostanes as Pseudo-Zoroaster and Pseudo-Hystaspes. Zoroaster died by the living (zo-) flux (-ro-) of fire from the star (-astr-) which he himself had invoked, and even an idea that the stars killed him in revenge for having been restrained by him. The association with astrology was the notion that Zoroaster was a Chaldean. The alternate Greek name for Zoroaster was Zaratas, or Zaradas, or Zaratos.

In the Talmud, the Jewish sages describe the Magi as sorcerers.

In Christianity the word *mágos*, in Greek, and its variants appear in both the Old and New Testaments. Ordinarily this word is translated as magician or sorcerer in the sense of an illusionist, or fortune-teller, and this is how it is translated in all of its occurrences except for the Gospel of Matthew, where, depending on translation, it is rendered as wise man...’

‘Magi, mountebanks, charlatans?’ thought Billy, ‘of course guided by the star.’

‘And an account cites Zoradascht or Zoroaster, as the source of the prophecy that motivated the wise men to seek the infant Jesus.



Now on the tarot card the curves of the magician's hat brim in the images of The Magician are similar to the esoteric mathematical sign of infinity. Similarly, other symbols were added. The essentials are that the magician has set up a temporary table outdoors, to display items that represent the suits of the Minor Arcana: Cups, Coins, Swords, as knives. The fourth, the baton, Clubs, he holds in his hand. The baton was later changed to represent a literal magician's or Wizard's or Witch's wand. Also, the image often has the rotated 8 as the symbol of infinity and an ouroboros belt, symbolizing eternity. The figure stands among a garden of flowers, to imply the manifestation and cultivation of desires.

The Magician is depicted with one hand pointing upwards towards the sky and the other pointing down to the earth, interpreted widely as "As above, so below." - a reference to the spiritual and physical realms.

As above, so below is a popular modern paraphrase of the second verse of the Emerald Tablet, a short Hermetic text which first appeared in an Arabic source from the late eighth or early ninth century. The paraphrase is based on one of several existing Latin translations of the Emerald Tablet, in which the second verse appears as follows:

Quod est superius est sicut quod inferius, et quod inferius est sicut quod est superius.

That which is above is like to that which is below, and that which is below is like to that which is above.

In full,

"Tis true without lying, certain and most true. That which is below is like that which is above and that which is above is like

that which is below to do the miracle of one only thing. And as all things have been and arose from one by the mediation of one: so, all things have their birth from this one thing by adaptation. The Sun is its father, the moon its mother, the wind hath carried it in its belly, the earth is its nurse. The father of all perfection in the whole world is here. Its force or power is entire if it be converted into earth. Separate thou the earth from the fire, the subtle from the gross sweetly with great industry. It ascends from the earth to the heaven and again it descends to the earth and receives the force of things superior and inferior. By this means you shall have the glory of the whole world and thereby all obscurity shall fly from you. Its force is above all force, for it vanquishes every subtle thing and penetrates every solid thing. So was the world created. From this are and do come admirable adaptations where of the means is here in this. Hence, I am called Hermes Trismegist, having the three parts of the philosophy of the whole world. That which I have said of the operation of the Sun is accomplished and ended.”

An English translation of the Emerald Tablet by Sir Isaac Newton.’

‘So, is Isaac Newton involved in all of this?’ thought Billy.

‘Among historians of philosophy and science, the verse is often understood as a reference to the supposed effects of celestial mechanics upon terrestrial events. This would include the effects of the Sun upon the change of seasons, or those of the Moon upon the tides, but also more elaborate astrological effects.

On the table before The Magician are a wand, a pentacle, a sword, and a cup, representing the four suits of the Minor

Arcana. These echo the classical elements of fire, earth, air, and water. The Magician's right hand, pointed upwards, holds a double-ended white wand; the ends are interpreted much like the hand gestures, in that they represent the Magician's status as conduit between the spiritual and the physical. His robe is similarly also white, a symbol of purity yet also of inexperience, while his red mantle is understood through the lens of red's wildly polarised colour symbolism, both a representative of willpower and passion, and one of egotism, rage, and revenge. In front of the Magician is a garden of Rose of Sharon and lily of the valley demonstrating the Magician's ability to cultivate and fulfil potential.

The Magician is associated with the planet Mercury, and hence the zodiacal signs of Gemini and Virgo in astrology.

The Magician in some illustrations, for instance the Tarot of Marseilles, is depicted with six fingers on his left hand, a symbol of manipulating and reorganizing reality.'

Here Billy stopped reading as there was not an image but a strange similarity in his mind, he stared into blank space for minutes, the memory of something just out of reach,

'Fingers, fingers... of course the Chagall self-portrait, the title "Self-portrait with Seven Fingers." not six though.'



‘Six fingers and a thumb! Of course, the same!

And what is Chagal painting?’

The caption entry reads,

‘This oil on canvas is a self-portrait in which the artist represents himself painting a reduced version of “Of Russia, of Donkeys and Others”, with seven fingers on one hand. It is kept as part of the Chagall collection at the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, in Amsterdam, Netherlands.’

So, he looked up the story of this painting,

‘The vision emerging from the picture plane is highly surprising. It unfolds in a sphere which is completely out of this world, where the rules of logic, gravity, probability, and normality do not count any more. Indeed, they are directly reversed and as a result reveal something wondrous yet natural and inevitable as in dream pictures... It is precisely that inconsequence of circumstances, that constant interchange of reality and possibility with the improbable, which causes the chain of logic governing our concept of the outer world suddenly to break and makes the unreal appear as a poetic

perception of reality - in this case as the poetic essence of a remembered reality.'

'Well, "they are directly reversed and as a result reveal something wondrous..." A mirror! And then particularly "the poetic essence of a remembered reality." I must make a mental note of this. It might be important.'

He then continued reading about the Tarot card,

'Similarly, the table The Magician stands behind has three legs rather than four; the fourth leg is interpreted as being outside of the world and that The Magician gives concrete expression to this, his situation between this world and another.

The Magician has energy, potential, and the manifestation of one's desires; the image symbolizes the meetings of the physical and spiritual.

The Magician in association with the Fool, which directly precedes it in the sequence, the image of the trickster-wizard, Magician is a metaphysical lightning rod, channelling macrocosmic energy into the microcosm. The infinity symbol or rotated number eight is that of the Gnostic concept of the Ogdoad, spiritual rebirth into a hidden eighth celestial realm.

The earliest Gnostic systems included a theory of seven heavens, and a supercelestial region called the Ogdoad. Astronomical theories had introduced the concept of seven planetary spheres with an eighth above them, the sphere of the fixed stars.

In the system of Valentinus, the seven heavens, and even the region above them, were regarded as but the lowest and last stage of the exercise of creative power. Above them was the

Pleroma, where were exhibited the first manifestations of the evolution of subordinate existence from the great First Principle.

The 7 + 1 System, seven heavens: the holy Hebdomas are the seven stars called planets. The seven stars, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, the Sun, Venus, Mercury, and the Moon, were presided over, each by a different archon. Ialdabaoth the chief, Iao, Sabaoth, Adonaeus, Eloaeus, Oreus, and Astaphaeus.'

'Seven again.' thought Billy, he read on,

'The ancient astronomy taught that above the seven planetary spheres was an eighth, the sphere of the fixed stars. In the eighth sphere dwelt the mother to whom all these archons owed their origin, Sophia- Prunikos. The word hebdomad not only denotes the seven archons, but is also a name of a place, the heavenly regions over which the seven archons presided; while Ogdoad denotes the supercelestial regions which lay above their control.

After the serpent in punishment for having taught the first parents to transgress the commands of Ialdabaoth was cast down into this lower world, he begat himself six sons, who with himself form a hebdomad, the counterpart of that of which his father Ialdabaoth is chief. These are the seven demons, the scene of whose activity is this lower earth, not the heavens; and who delight in injuring the human race on whose account their father had been cast down.

First Ogdoad: In the earliest stages of that evolution, we have eight primary Aeons constituting the first Ogdoad. The ultimate conception of God, named the Ineffable Father and who has existed since before the beginning, is described as

Depth or Profundity, Bythos. All around him exists a female power that has been named Silence, Sige. These two deities, Depth and Silence, become the cause, through a process of emanation, of the other archetypal beings or Aeons.

Like other tarot cards, the symbolism of the Magician is interpreted differently depending on whether the card is drawn in an upright or reversed position. While the upright The Magician represents potential and tapping into one's talents, in the reversed, or mirrored image The Magician's potential and talents are unfocused and unmanifested. The reversed Magician can also be interpreted as related to black magick and to madness or mental distress. A particularly important interpretation of the reversed Magician relates to the speculated connection between the experiences recognized in archaic societies as shamanism and those recognized in technological societies as schizophrenia; the reversed Magician is perceived as symbolizing the degree to which those experiences and abilities are unrecognized and suppressed, and the goal is to turn the card upright, or re-focus those experiences into their positive form.'

'The Mad Hatter again.'

Billy now looked at the Hieronymus Bosh picture, the conjurer performing a trick to onlookers, the one of whom had regurgitated a frog, and is in the process of having his money stolen. The sleight of hand of the Magician. Billy the boy took out of his pocket the jawbone and plunged it into the picture of The Magician. With this the book disappeared.

'The whole thing an illusion?' thought Billy.

## CHAPTER 36: IN WINDMILL CLOSE

It was simple yet not, his perspective was that of the world, and one must go, into his world, or himself. The world of man or the world of the boy, himself. He looked back at the great house and as he thought and held the jawbone the great Palace of Arcadia shattered like a mirror into ever more sparkling pieces until there was nothing but darkness.

He knew that suicide was impossible, wondered if the only alternative was to destroy the world, the world of men. That might be thought of as the image of man, and human knowledge. Is this what the other boy had thought, Billy wondered, that his becoming a boy again was not to help, but a gift of freedom. But the other boy was in his own world, that was once his world of the child.

‘Illusion or not, I’ve no interest in having all perspectives, of being anything, I want none of this, what is being offered is for me illusory now, whatever I can do?’

Billy was thinking,

‘So, I can hold all the perspectives of the Major Arcadians, the wisdom of the Übermensch, and the Nothingness of total freedom. And what I want is not even nothing.

Or “The poetic essence of a remembered reality.”, so that is why I had to remember the image of the Chagal painting.’

He was thinking, then he knew why the boy lived where he did, in Bordesley Green and Stechford on Sundays, as he had done so as a child. So, it came to him, what he remembered of a place from when he was ten or eleven,



‘Home, back in Windmill Close, Litchfield, I think in the late 1950s though, the same period as the boy, my choice.’

He entered number sixteen via the side door, as they all tended to use this door when he lived there. This led into a utility room, from there through a door to a familiar kitchen. The house was one of many built in the 1950s as “overspill” houses to relieve the problem of overcrowding and housing shortages in Birmingham after the second world war. So, the housing estate was all only a few years old. The kitchen windows looked onto the large rear garden, a square of lawn then a similar sized square for growing vegetables. The house was part of a small terrace, he had entered from a gate in a hawthorn hedge, one which he remembered had a blackbird’s nest. From the kitchen was the living room with a window at the front facing the front garden and at the rear facing the lawn and vegetable plot. There was a contemporary three-piece suite, a table with a small black and white television, which he remembered his mother could watch in the daytime only by having all the curtains drawn due to its poor-quality picture. Underneath was a large valve radio with radio stations marked on the tuning dial, Beromunster, B.B.C. Light, Hilversum, B.B.C. Third, and many others including radio Luxembourg. There were a few ornaments, and a picture of a horse ploughing a field. At the far end was another door which led to a small hallway from the front door, the front door they never used. From there stairs up to the three bedrooms and a bathroom, his bedroom being at the front of the house. He sat on the sofa, it was of black vinyl imitation leather, he felt very calm.

Some time passed, hours, maybe days. He decided to go for a walk, leaving the house he walked down Windmill Close and

turned right into Windmill Lane and then right again towards Wheel Lane, he had decided to walk to the cathedral. He passed The Windmill public house and remembered sitting outside drinking lemonade and eating crisps on warm summer evening weekends. Soon he was on Beacon Street and heading towards The Close which led to the cathedral, it was opposite Beacon Park. As he expected there were no cars or people as in the other world of the other boy. He approached The Close but rather than turn left he continued walking the 50 yards or so to Minster Pool, and there he was not surprised to find a skiff moored. So, he took the boat out and began rowing. All was well.

The Billy would spend time, maybe days, as time now seemed strange, between his old home in Windmill Close and rowing on Minster Pool. Then one day whilst he was in the skiff, he noticed a person in another boat on the pool. Then the next time he was rowing again there was also this figure in a skiff, a man who raised his hand. On the third time the man rowed closer and spoke in an American accent,

‘Hi, great pool, I guess you enjoy rowing like I do.’

Billy didn’t reply, just gave a smile. This went on a few more times, with the American chatting a little about the pool and the cathedral and Billy simply smiling. He didn’t mind too much as most of the time when he was rowing on the pool the American was not present, he seemed just to pop up now and then, talk briefly then moor his skiff and walk away.

Billy didn’t sleep much, but would often lie on his bed thinking, or rather letting strange abstract out of focus visions cross his mind. One morning however he entered his bedroom and looking out of the window noticed the

American walking up Windmill Close towards number 16. The boy watched as the American tried to open the gate to the front garden, but it seemed it would not open. He tried three times then walked away. Later that day Billy went out to walk to Minster Pool, on leaving number 16 he noticed there was nothing wrong with the gate. On the pool there was no appearance of the American. Finishing his rowing the thought struck him to visit the cathedral, this was doubly odd, as an adult Billy was an enthusiast of Gothic cathedrals, and Litchfield was his favourite, maybe from remembering visiting it as a child. Now the boy Billy hadn't visited it once, but on this day, he decided to.

So, he walked along the path by the pool up to Beacon Street, turning right and right again into The Close, there in front of him was the cathedral with the edifice of saints between the two smaller spires. Litchfield Cathedral having three spires, the three sisters. He noticed a figure at the entrance door, it appeared to be the American who was obviously looking around The Close, and on seeing Billy disappeared into the cathedral. Billy went to follow, but on approaching the entrance door could not go in, why he could not enter he had no idea. This caused a panic, he quickly left The Close and headed back to his house, there he lay on his bed thinking, but again only abstract shapes filled his mind.

And so, the thought came to him which he thought was so obvious, this after all was his world, and so it followed that this American was his creation. His subconscious. He took out the jawbone from his pocket and plunged it into the side of his head, and then blackness.

Out of the blackness came many images, maybe an infinity, but these will suffice as examples. Images of landscapes, some familiar others not, then the texts.

These next two images were in burning letters shining in the darkness so are impossible to print. Other encounters were dreamlike, in a lecture theatre, talking to a mirrored reflection, conversations with fictional and real characters.

# CHAPTER 37: THEN ENLIGHTENMENT OF THE GITA

Krishna spoke.

I BRAHMA am! the One Eternal GOD, And  
ADHYATMAN is My Being's name, The Soul  
of Souls! What goeth forth from Me, Causing  
all life to live, is KARMA.

And, Manifested in divided forms, I am the  
ADHIBHUTA, Lord of Lives; And

ADHIDAIVA, Lord of all the Gods, Because I  
am PURUSHA, who begets.

And ADHIYAJNA, Lord of Sacrifice,  
speaking with thee in this body here, I Am, the  
embodied one! Whoso hath known Me, Lord  
or sage and singer, Ancient of days; of all the  
Three Worlds Stay, Boundless, but unto every  
atom Bringer Of that which quickens it:  
whoso, I say, Hath known My form, which  
passeth mortal knowing; Seen my effulgence,  
which no eye hath seen, Than the sun's  
burning gold more brightly glowing,  
Dispersing darkness, unto him hath been For  
who, none other Gods regarding, looks Ever to  
Me.

By Energy And help of Prakriti my outer Self,  
Again, and yet again, I make go forth the  
realms of visible things, without their will, I am  
the Sacrifice! I am the Prayer! I am the  
Funeral-Cake set for the dead! I am the healing  
herb! I am the ghee, The Mantra, and the

flame, and that which burns! I am—of all this  
 boundless Universe— The Father, Mother,  
 Ancestor, and Guard! The end of Learning!  
 That which purifies In lustral water! I am OM! I  
 am Rig-Veda, Sama-Veda, Yajur-Veda; The  
 Way, the Fosterer, the Lord, the Judge, The  
 Witness; the Abode, the Refuge-House, The  
 Friend, the Fountain and the Sea of Life Which  
 sends, and swallows up; Treasure of Worlds  
 And Treasure-Chamber! Seed and Seed-Sower,  
 Whence endless harvests spring! Sun's heat is  
 mine; Heaven's rain is mine to grant or to  
 withhold; Death am I, and Immortal Life I am,  
 For I am the Receiver and the Lord Of every  
 sacrifice, which these know not For Me, as  
 Mine.

So shalt thou free thyself To good and evil  
 issue, so shalt come I am alike for all! I know  
 not hate, I know not favour! What is made is  
 Mine! Who seeth Me, Lord of the Worlds,



with faith-enlightened eyes, Unborn, undying,  
unbegun.

Whatever Natures be To mortal men  
distributed, those natures spring from Me!  
Intellect, skill, enlightenment, endurance, self-  
control, Truthfulness, equability, and grief or  
joy of soul, And birth and death, and  
fearfulness, and fearlessness, and shame, And  
honour, and sweet harmlessness, and peace  
which is the same I, who am all, and made it  
all, abide its separate Lord! Gaze, then, thou  
Son of Pritha! I manifest for thee Those  
hundred thousand thousand shapes that clothe  
my Mystery: I show thee all my semblances,  
infinite, rich, divine, My changeful hues, my  
countless forms.

See! in this face of mine, Adityas, Vasus,  
Rudras, Aswins, and Maruts; see Wonders  
unnumbered, Indian Prince! revealed to none  
save thee.

Behold! this is the Universe!, Look! what is  
live and dead I gather all in one, in Me! Gaze,  
as thy lips have said, On GOD ETERNAL,  
VERY GOD! See Me! see what thou prayest!  
Thou canst not!, nor, with human eyes,  
Arjuna! ever mayest! Therefore I give thee  
sense divine.

Have other eyes, new light! And, look! This  
is My glory, unveiled to mortal sight! Then, O  
King! the God, so saying, Stood, to Pritha's  
Son displaying All the splendour, wonder,  
dread Of His vast Almighty-head.

Out of countless eyes beholding, Out of  
countless mouths commanding, Countless  
mystic forms enfolding In one Form:  
supremely standing Countless radiant glories  
wearing, Countless heavenly weapons bearing,  
Crowned with garlands of star-clusters, Robed  
in garb of woven lustres, Breathing from His  
perfect Presence Breaths of every subtle essence  
Of all heavenly odours; shedding Blinding  
brilliance; overspreading, Boundless, beautiful,  
all spaces With His all-regarding faces; So He  
showed! If there should rise Suddenly within  
the skies Sunburst of a thousand suns Flooding  
earth with beams undreamed-of, Then might  
be that Holy One's Majesty and radiance  
dreamed of! All this universe unfold All its  
huge diversity Into one vast shape, and be  
Visible, and viewed, and blended In one Body,  
subtle, splendid, Nameless, th' All-  
comprehending God of Gods, the Never-

Ending Deity! The gods are in Thy glorious  
frame! the creatures Of earth, and heaven, and  
hell In Thy Divine form dwell, And in Thy  
countenance shine all the features Of Brahma,  
sitting lone Upon His lotus-throne; Of saints  
and sages, and the serpent races Ananta,  
Vasuki; Yea! mightiest Lord! I see Thy  
thousand thousand arms, and breasts, and  
faces, And eyes, on every side Perfect,  
diversified; And nowhere end of Thee,  
nowhere beginning, Nowhere a centre! Shifts,  
Wherever soul's gaze lifts, Thy central Self, all-  
wielding, and all-winning! Infinite King! I see  
The anadem on Thee, The club, the shell, the  
discus; see Thee burning In beams insufferable,  
Lighting earth, heaven, and hell With brilliance  
blazing, glowing, flashing; turning Darkness to  
dazzling day, Look I whichever way; Ah, Lord!  
I worship Thee, the Undivided, The Uttermost  
of thought, The Treasure-Palace wrought To  
hold the wealth of the worlds; the Shield  
provided The Fount whence Life's stream draws

All waters of all rivers of all being: The One  
Unborn, Unending: Unchanging and  
Unblending! Silver of moon and gold Of sun  
are glories rolled From Thy great eyes; Thy  
visage, beaming tender Throughout the stars  
and skies, Thy Universe.

The worlds are filled with wonder Of Thy  
perfections! Space Star-sprinkled, and void  
place From pole to pole of the Blue, from  
bound to bound, Hath Thee in every spot,  
Thee, Thee!, Where Thou art not, The Three  
Worlds quake; the lower gods draw nigh Thee;  
They fold their palms, and bow Body, and  
breast, and brow, And, whispering worship,  
laud and magnify Thee! With eyes which all  
behold, Unnumbered eyes, vast arms,  
members tremendous, Flanks, lit with sun and  
star, Feet planted near and far, The Three wide  
Worlds before Thee I mark Thee strike the  
skies With front, in wondrous wise Huge,

rainbow-painted, glittering; and thy mouth  
 Opened, and orbs which see All things,  
 whatever be In all Thy worlds, east, west, and  
 north and south.

O Eyes of God! O Head! My strength of  
 soul is fled, Gone is heart's force, rebuked is  
 mind's desire! When I behold Thee so, With  
 awful brows a-glow, With burning glance, and  
 lips lighted by fire Fierce as those flames which  
 shall Consume, at close of all, Earth, Heaven!  
 Ah me! I see no Earth and Heaven! Thee, Lord  
 of Lords! I see, Thee only-only Thee! Now let  
 Thy mercy unto me be given, Thou Refuge of  
 the World! Lo! to the cavern hurled Of Thy  
 wide-opened throat, and lips white-tushed, I  
 see our noblest ones, Great Dhritarashtra's  
 sons, Bhishma, Drona, and Karna, caught and  
 crushed! The Kings and Chiefs drawn in, That  
 gaping gorge within; The best of both these  
 armies torn and riven! Between Thy jaws they

lie Mangled full bloodily, Ground into dust  
 and death! Like streams down-driven With  
 helpless haste, which go In headlong furious  
 flow Straight to the gulping deeps of the  
 unfilled ocean, So to that flaming cave Those  
 heroes great and brave Pour, in unending  
 streams, with helpless motion! Like moths  
 which in the night Flutter towards a light,  
 Drawn to their fiery doom, flying and dying,  
 So to their death still throng, Blind, dazzled,  
 borne along Ceaselessly, all those multitudes,  
 wild flying! Thou, that hast fashioned men,  
 Devourest them again, One with another, great  
 and small, alike! The creatures whom Thou  
 mak'st, With flaming jaws Thou tak'st, Lapping  
 them up! Lord God! Thy terrors strike From  
 end to end of earth, Filling life full, from birth  
 To death, with deadly, burning, lurid dread!  
 Ah, Vishnu! make me know Why is Thy visage  
 so? Who art Thou, feasting thus upon Thy  
 dead? Who? awful Deity! I bow myself to Thee,  
 O Mightiest Lord! rehearse Why hast Thou

face so fierce? Whence doth this aspect  
horrible proceed? Krishna.

**T**hou seest Me as Time who kills, Time who  
brings all to doom, The Slayer Time, Ancient  
of Days, come hither to consume; By Me they  
fall, not thee! the stroke of death is dealt them  
now, 'Tis I who bid them perish! Thou wilt but  
slay the slain; Thou God of gods, Life's  
Dwelling-place and Rest! Thou, of all souls the  
Soul! The Comprehending Whole! Of being  
formed, and formless being the Framers; O  
Utmost One! O Lord! Older than eld, Who  
stored The worlds with wealth of life! O  
Treasure-Claimer, Wisdom Thyself! O Part In  
all, and All; for all from Thee have risen  
Numberless now I see The aspects are of Thee!  
Varuna's waves are Thy waves.



Moon and starlight Are Thine! Prajapati Art  
Thou, and 'tis to Thee They knelt in  
worshipping the old world's far light, The first  
of mortal men.

Again, Thou God! again A thousand  
thousand times be magnified! Honour and  
worship be, Glory and praise, to Thee Thou of  
the thousand arms and countless eyes!

# CHAPTER 38: THEN ENLIGHTENMENT OF THE JOB

Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?

Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.

Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding.

Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?

Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof;

When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb?

When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it,

And brake up for it my decreed place, and set  
bars and doors,

And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no  
further: and here shall thy proud waves be  
stayed?

Hast thou commanded the morning since thy  
days; and caused the dayspring to know his  
place;

That it might take hold of the ends of the  
earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of  
it?

It is turned as clay to the seal; and they stand  
as a garment.

And from the wicked their light is withholden,  
and the high arm shall be broken.

Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea?  
or hast thou walked in the search of the depth?

Have the gates of death been opened unto  
thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the  
shadow of death?

Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth?  
declare if thou knowest it all.

Where is the way where light dwelleth? and as  
for darkness, where is the place thereof,

That thou shouldest take it to the bound  
thereof, and that thou shouldest know the  
paths to the house thereof?

Knowest thou it, because thou wast then born?  
or because the number of thy days is great?

Hast thou entered into the treasures of the  
snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the  
hail,

Which I have reserved against the time of  
trouble, against the day of battle and war?

By what way is the light parted, which  
scattereth the east wind upon the earth?

Who hath divided a watercourse for the  
overflowing of waters, or a way for the  
lightning of thunder;

To cause it to rain on the earth, where no man  
is; on the wilderness, wherein there is no man;

To satisfy the desolate and waste ground; and  
to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring  
forth?

Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten  
the drops of dew?

Out of whose womb came the ice? and the  
hoary frost of heaven, who hath gendered it?

The waters are hid as with a stone, and the face  
of the deep is frozen.

Canst thou bind the sweet influences of  
Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?

Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his  
season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his  
sons?

Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? canst  
thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?

Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that  
abundance of waters may cover thee?

Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go  
and say unto thee, Here we are?



Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? or  
who hath given understanding to the heart?

Who can number the clouds in wisdom? or  
who can stay the bottles of heaven,

When the dust groweth into hardness, and the  
clouds cleave fast together?

Wilt thou hunt the prey for the lion? or fill the  
appetite of the young lions,

When they couch in their dens, and abide in  
the covert to lie in wait?

Who provideth for the raven his food? when  
his young ones cry unto God, they wander for  
lack of meat.

**K**nowest thou the time when the wild goats  
of the rock bring forth? or canst thou mark  
when the hinds do calve?

Canst thou number the months that they  
fulfil? or knowest thou the time when they  
bring forth?

They bow themselves, they bring forth their  
young ones, they cast out their sorrows.

Their young ones are in good liking, they  
grow up with corn; they go forth, and return  
not unto them.

Who hath sent out the wild ass free? or who  
hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?

Whose house I have made the wilderness, and  
the barren land his dwellings.

He scorneth the multitude of the city, neither  
regardeth he the crying of the driver.

The range of the mountains is his pasture, and  
he searcheth after every green thing.

Will the unicorn be willing to serve thee, or  
abide by thy crib?

Canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in  
the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after  
thee?

Wilt thou trust him, because his strength is great? or wilt thou leave thy labour to him?

Wilt thou believe him, that he will bring home thy seed, and gather it into thy barn?

Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the peacocks? or wings and feathers unto the ostrich?

Which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in dust,

And forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them.

She is hardened against her young ones, as  
though they were not her's: her labour is in  
vain without fear;

Because God hath deprived her of wisdom,  
neither hath he imparted to her understanding.

What time she lifteth up herself on high, she  
scorneth the horse and his rider.

Hast thou given the horse strength? hast thou  
clothed his neck with thunder?

Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper?  
the glory of his nostrils is terrible.

He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his  
strength: he goeth on to meet the armed men.

He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted;  
neither turneth he back from the sword.

The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering  
spear and the shield.

He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and  
rage: neither believeth he that it is the sound  
of the trumpet.

He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha; and he  
smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the  
captains, and the shouting.

Doth the hawk fly by thy wisdom, and stretch  
her wings toward the south?

Doth the eagle mount up at thy command,  
and make her nest on high?

She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon  
the crag of the rock, and the strong place.

From thence she seeketh the prey, and her eyes  
behold afar off.

Her young ones also suck up blood: and where  
the slain are, there is she.

**M**oreover the Lord answered Job, and said,

Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty  
instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him  
answer it.

Then Job answered the Lord, and said,

Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I  
will lay mine hand upon my mouth.

Once have I spoken; but I will not answer: yea,  
twice; but I will proceed no further.

Then answered the Lord unto Job out of the  
whirlwind, and said,

Gird up thy loins now like a man: I will  
demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? wilt  
thou condemn me, that thou mayest be  
righteous?



Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou  
thunder with a voice like him?

Deck thyself now with majesty and excellency;  
and array thyself with glory and beauty.

Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath: and behold  
every one that is proud, and abase him.

Look on every one that is proud, and bring  
him low; and tread down the wicked in their  
place.

Hide them in the dust together; and bind their  
faces in secret.

Then will I also confess unto thee that thine  
own right hand can save thee.

Behold now behemoth, which I made with  
thee; he eateth grass as an ox.

Lo now, his strength is in his loins, and his  
force is in the navel of his belly.

He moveth his tail like a cedar: the sinews of  
his stones are wrapped together.

His bones are as strong pieces of brass; his  
bones are like bars of iron.

He is the chief of the ways of God: he that  
made him can make his sword to approach  
unto him.

Surely the mountains bring him forth food,  
where all the beasts of the field play.

He lieth under the shady trees, in the covert of  
the reed, and fens.

The shady trees cover him with their shadow;  
the willows of the brook compass him about.

Behold, he drinketh up a river, and hasteth  
not: he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan  
into his mouth.

He taketh it with his eyes: his nose pierceth  
through snares.

Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook?  
or his tongue with a cord which thou lettest  
down?

Canst thou put an hook into his nose? or bore  
his jaw through with a thorn?

Will he make many supplications unto thee?  
will he speak soft words unto thee?

Will he make a covenant with thee? wilt thou  
take him for a servant for ever?

Wilt thou play with him as with a bird? or wilt  
thou bind him for thy maidens?

Shall the companions make a banquet of him?  
shall they part him among the merchants?

Canst thou fill his skin with barbed irons? or  
his head with fish spears?

Lay thine hand upon him, remember the  
battle, do no more.

Behold, the hope of him is in vain: shall not  
one be cast down even at the sight of him?

None is so fierce that dare stir him up: who  
then is able to stand before me?

Who hath prevented me, that I should repay  
him? whatsoever is under the whole heaven is  
mine.

I will not conceal his parts, nor his power, nor  
his comely proportion.

Who can discover the face of his garment? or  
who can come to him with his double bridle?

Who can open the doors of his face? his teeth  
are terrible round about.

His scales are his pride, shut up together as  
with a close seal.

One is so near to another, that no air can  
come between them.

They are joined one to another, they stick  
together, that they cannot be sundered.

By his neesings a light doth shine, and his eyes  
are like the eyelids of the morning.

Out of his mouth go burning lamps, and  
sparks of fire leap out.

Out of his nostrils goeth smoke, as out of a  
seething pot or caldron.

His breath kindleth coals, and a flame goeth  
out of his mouth.

In his neck remaineth strength, and sorrow is  
turned into joy before him.

The flakes of his flesh are joined together: they  
are firm in themselves; they cannot be moved.

His heart is as firm as a stone; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone.

When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid: by reason of breakings they purify themselves.

The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold: the spear, the dart, nor the habergeon.

He esteemeth iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood.

The arrow cannot make him flee: slingstones are turned with him into stubble.



Darts are counted as stubble: he laugheth at  
the shaking of a spear.

Sharp stones are under him: he spreadeth sharp  
pointed things upon the mire.

He maketh the deep to boil like a pot: he  
maketh the sea like a pot of ointment.

He maketh a path to shine after him; one  
would think the deep to be hoary.

Upon earth there is not his like, who is made  
without fear.

He beholdeth all high things: he is a king over  
all the children of pride.

Then Job answered the Lord, and said,

I know that thou canst do every thing, and  
that no thought can be withholden from thee.

Who is he that hideth counsel without  
knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I  
understood not; things too wonderful for me,  
which I knew not.

Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will  
demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear:  
but now mine eye seeth thee.

Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust  
and ashes.

## CHAPTER 3: THE ENLIGHTENMENT OF THE SPINOZA

Billy was reading,

“Spinoza defined God as a substance consisting of infinite attributes, each of which expresses eternal and infinite essence, and since no cause or reason can prevent such a being from existing, it must exist.”

His reflection spoke, ‘Or what exists, exists, no proof is then required.’

“This is a form of the ontological argument, which is claimed to prove the existence of God, but Spinoza went further in stating that it showed that only God exists.”

‘Or everything is God, which seems OK.’

“Accordingly, he stated that Whatever is, is in God, and nothing can exist or be conceived without God. This means that God is identical with the universe, an idea which he encapsulated in the phrase *Deus sive Natura* - God or Nature, which some have interpreted as pantheism.”

‘As I said everything is God.’

“And some say this is atheism because he used the word God or Deus, to signify a concept that was different from that of traditional Judeo-Christian monotheism. Spinoza expressly denies personality and consciousness to God; he has neither intelligence, feeling, nor will; he does not act according to purpose, but everything follows necessarily from his or its nature. Thus, Spinoza’s cool, indifferent God differs from the

concept of an anthropomorphic, fatherly God who cares about humanity.”

‘But humanity, which is part of this nature has these features, it follows then that if everything is God, God has these features, as well as all others.’

“God is just the substance of the universe with an infinite number of attributes, thus the attributes possessed by any other substances must also be possessed by God. Therefore, God is just the sum of all the substances of the universe. God is the only substance in the universe, and everything is a part of God.

Spinoza argues that things could not have been produced by God in any other way or in any other order than is the case. Therefore, concepts such as “freedom” and “chance” have little “meaning.”

‘How so, they exist as ideas, so are a part of God?’

“Spinoza’s God or Nature, Deus sive Natura provided a living, natural God, in contrast to Isaac Newton’s first cause argument and the dead mechanism of Julien Offray de La Metre’s work, *Man a Machine*, *L’homme machine*. Coleridge and Shelley, the romantic poets, saw in Spinoza’s philosophy a religion of nature.

Because Spinoza equated God with the material universe. He has therefore been called the “prophet” and “prince” and most eminent expounder of pantheism. Though more specifically, the universe or cosmos is a mode under two attributes which come from God, that of Thought and Extension. Concepts and matter. But God has infinitely many other attributes which are not present in the world.”

‘So, the world is part of God but not equal to it. God is the world, pantheism, all of the world is God, but that is no limit to what other things God is, these being limitless.’

“Moreover, according to German philosopher Karl Jaspers , when Spinoza wrote Deus sive Natura, ‘God or Nature’, Spinoza meant God was natura naturans, nature doing what nature does; literally, nature naturing, not natura naturata, nature already created. Nature as a process. Jaspers believed that Spinoza, in his philosophical system, did not mean to say that God and Nature are interchangeable terms, but rather that God’s transcendence was attested by his infinitely many attributes. And that two attributes known by humans, namely Mind and Matter are not from God but part of God.

Which means that though they are part of God, God in itself as substance is not divisible”

‘Hard to grasp, but how can you remove Nature from God, it would cease to be. Hence God is not devisable. Just as you can’t divide the infinite or zero.’

‘Or if you try to divide zero you get infinity.’ Billy said aloud.

And thought, ‘Then what and where am I? Neither God nor nothing, an impossibility.’

So, his reflection merged with him.

## CHAPTER 4: THE ENLIGHTENMENT OF NIETZSCHE

## Nietzsche's Mirror:

1067 (1885) (Will to Power, Nietzsche.)

'And do you know what "the world" is to me? Shall I show it to you in my mirror? This world: a monster of energy, without beginning, without end; a firm, iron magnitude of force that does not grow bigger or smaller, that does not expend itself but only transforms itself; as a whole, of unalterable size, a household without expenses or losses, but likewise without increase or income; enclosed by "nothingness" as by a boundary; not something blurry or wasted, not something endlessly extended, but set in a definite space as a definite force, and not a space that might be "empty" here or there, but rather as force throughout, as a play of forces and waves of forces, at the same time one and many, increasing here and at the same time decreasing there; a sea of forces flowing and rushing together, eternally changing, eternally flooding back, with tremendous years of recurrence, with an ebb and a flood of its forms; out of the simplest forms striving toward the most complex, out of the stillest, most rigid, coldest forms toward the hottest, most turbulent, most self-contradictory, and then again returning home to the simple out of this abundance, out of the play of contradictions back to the joy of concord, still affirming itself in this uniformity of its courses and its years, blessing itself as that which must return eternally, as a becoming that knows no satiety, no disgust, no weariness: this, my Dionysian world of the eternally self-creating, the eternally self-destroying, this mystery world of the twofold voluptuous delight, my "beyond good and evil," without goal, unless the joy of the circle is itself a goal;

without will, unless a ring feels good will toward itself—do you want a name for this world? A solution for all its riddles? A light for you, too, you best-concealed, strongest, most intrepid, most midnightly men? — This world is the will to power—and nothing besides! And you yourselves are also this will to power—and nothing besides.’

“So, what is the problem?”

‘Let us think this thought in its most terrible form: existence as it is, without meaning or aim, yet recurring inevitably without any finale of nothingness: The Eternal Recurrence. This is the most extreme form of nihilism: the nothing the Meaningless, Eternally!’

“I see.”

‘I do not want life again. How did I endure it? Creating. What makes me stand the sight of it? The vision of the overman who affirms life. I have tried to affirm it myself—alas!’

“So, you went mad.”

The reflection nodded a yes, and spoke again,

‘What, if some day or night a demon were to steal after you into your loneliest loneliness and say to you: “This life as you now live it and have lived it, you will have to live once more and innumerable times more; and there will be nothing new in it, but every pain and every joy and every thought and sigh and everything unutterably small or great in your life will have to return to you, all in the same succession and sequence—even this spider and this moonlight between the trees, and even this moment and I myself. The eternal hourglass of existence is turned upside down again and again, and you



with it, speck of dust!" Would you not throw yourself down and gnash your teeth and curse the demon who spoke thus?"

"I can see why you think it's the most gruesome form of nihilism and that only the overman, the superman, the Übermensch can love this fate."

The reflection nodded a yes.

"The pattern continually repeats, there is no escape?"

The reflection shook a no.

"Not like the Buddhist escape of rebirth?"

The reflection shook a no.

The boy was thinking,

"That the Buddhist sees a possible freedom in the annihilation of the aggregates of existence and rebirth. That maybe if the patterns of the dead could remain dead, the worlds of ghosts or Sheol, Hades, or the Buddhist in achieving Nirvana, the extinguishing of the passion's entities could avoid the terrible fate of The Eternal Return of the Same. Yet if it is true then the time after we physically exist is infinite and given the slightest possibility of it occurring it must occur, and must occur infinitely, and also with an infinite past it must have had occurred infinitely. And so, nirvana is not possible, for even if it was remotely possible, it would given an infinite past, have already occurred for all entities. And so?"

As if the reflection could follow this thought, and of course it could, it nodded a grim yes.

“I see the problem, I see why entities would seek self-destruction or if not, nothingness, even the nothingness of Sheol to endless repetition.”

The reflection was nodding a grim yes.

“Of the nihilism and that only the overman, the superman, the Übermensch can love this fate and that we should be great men to be a bridge to the overman.”

The reflection was nodding a grim yes.

“But of course if everything repeats and has repeated this has already occurred and already occurred an infinite number of times.”

The reflection was nodding a grim yes.

“Tricky.”

So, his reflection merged with him again.

## CHAPTER 4: THE ENLIGHTENMENT OF EREWHON

Professor Challenger came into the lecture theatre and standing at the podium and so began,

‘Being a fictitious fake, I will relate what my internet searches regarding how to overcome the terror of The Eternal Return of the Self-Same that only I have discovered, together with my own reflections.’

He cleared his throat and began,

‘In the first few chapters of Erewhon , a satire on Victorian society, the novel explores ideas of artificial intelligence, as influenced by Darwin’s then recently published “On the Origin of Species” together with the machines developed out of the Industrial Revolution. Specifically with the potentially dangerous ideas of machine consciousness and self-replicating machines.

In Erewhon, illness is crime and crime is illness. As a result, citizens are imprisoned for offenses like physical ailments, misfortune, or ugliness, while those who commit conventional crimes like fraud or theft are seen more sympathetically and prescribed sessions with a psychologist for treatment. The lack of compassion for physical sickness is reflected in the role of physicians in Erewhonian society, which are like that of a judge, jury and the police. We in our society punish crimes and try to heal the sick, in Erewhon society does the reverse. This smacks like something of a reversal, a mirror image one might say...’

The professor paused looking at his audience of one,

‘Yes, I suppose so.’ said Billy.

‘Before I continue it is perhaps strange that the text not only references contemporary concerns, but the names of the characters themselves are significant.

Higgs is the narrator, and a Higgs is our current narrator, that Professor Higgs and the Higgs particle is how and why we are here at all.

Chowbok or Kahabuka, Higgs’ guide.

Yram, her name is Mary spelled backwards.

Senoj Nosnibor, his name is Robinson Jones backwards.

Zulora, Senoj Nosnibor’s elder daughter.

Arowhena, Senoj Nosnibor’s younger daughter.

Mahaina, a woman who claims to suffer from alcoholism but is believed to have a weak temperament.

Ydgrun, the incomprehensible goddess of the Erewhonians.’

Billy immediately thought of Chowbok or Kahabuka as Chewbacca from Star Wars, then tried reversing some of the other names.

‘No no.’ said Challenger, ‘Her name is an anagram of Grundy, from Mrs. Grundy, a character in Thomas Morton’s play “Speed the Plough”. She is the unseen character in the play, Mrs Grundy, a name for an extreme conventionality... but we digress.

It is the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze that used ideas from Butler’s book at various points in the development of his

philosophy of difference. Deleuze refers to what he calls “Ideas” as “Erewhon”. “Ideas are not concepts”, they are “a form of eternally positive differential multiplicity, distinguished from the identity of concepts.” Erewhon refers to the nomadic distributions that pertain to simulacra, which are not universals like the categories, nor are they what is here and now or are they nowhere.

Confusing isn’t it’ said Challenger, looking at his audience of one.

‘Maybe meant to be, but no, it’s about being creative, so not definite, see?’ said Challenger.

Billy still looked confused.

‘It’s not about settling something and then moving on.’ said Challenger.

Billy still looked confused.

‘If you settle what something is, and you repeat it, what happens?’

‘Well!’ asked Challenger.

‘You get the same thing?’ said Billy.

‘And if it’s not settled and you repeat it?’

Challenger was looking exasperated, unfairly so thought Billy who was struggling.

‘Er, you can’t know?’

‘Correct!’ said Challenger, ‘You don’t know, so there is room for a play of...’

‘Difference!’ interrupted Billy.

‘Excellent!’ said the professor, who continued

‘Deleuze draws on Butler’s “The Book of the Machines” to go beyond usual idea of a radical difference between the vital, the living, err...’

Here he faltered anticipating confusion,

‘Apart from the physical what have humans that machines do not?’

He could see the boy was thinking...

‘Feelings.’ said Billy.

‘Brilliant.’ said the professor

‘Between vitalism and mechanism as it relates to the concept of “desiring-machines”. I quote Deleuze and Guattari,’

The professor looked at his notes and read,

“For one thing, Butler is not content to say that machines extend the organism but asserts that they are really limbs and organs lying on the body without organs of a society, which men will appropriate according to their power and their wealth, and whose poverty deprives them as if they were mutilated organisms. For another, he is not content to say that organisms are machines, but asserts that they contain such an abundance of parts that they must be compared to very different parts of distinct machines, each relating to the others, engendered in combination with the others ... He shatters the vitalist argument by calling in question the specific or personal unity of the organism, and the mechanist

argument even more decisively, by calling in question the structural unity of the machine.”

‘logical, one might say mechanical development. This is in Deleuze and Guattari’s *Anti-Œdipus*.

Now we must be careful, Butler goes on to discuss A.I. and machines in which humans and machines battle, but D&G are wanting an organic desiring repetition. So, let’s note the remarkable insight of Butler, but proceed with tackling the nightmare of *The Eternal Return*, by giving it passions, a desiring machine.’

Billy was smiling and nodding.

‘So, in Deleuze’s first creative masterpiece he attempts a critique of representation. And begins in this and later work with Guattari a critique of mechanical reproduction, the industrialization of humans, the Freudian industrialization of the subconscious, the mechanics of the Œdipus complex. Which can be seen as a form of Capitalism. And how the schizophrenic breaks these simple industrial mechanics of perfect duplication in reproduction. The schizophrenic breaks apart this territory, or deterritorializes the machine of the free market, the Freudian Œdipus complex in the act of the nomadic movement of a line of flight.

In the book *Difference and Repetition* Deleuze develops ideas, as “Erewhon”. “Ideas are not concepts”, they are “a form of eternally positive differential multiplicity”. Which later becomes schizoanalysis. Elsewhere ecosophy, pragmatics, micropolitics, rhizomatics, or nomadology...’

‘Simply difference, passionate difference, desire, emotion’ thought Billy.

Challenger continued,

‘In the preface Deleuze relates the work to other texts. He describes his philosophical motivation as “a generalized anti-Hegelianism”?’

Here the professor paused, looking at Billy,

‘Oh,’ Billy said, ‘Hegel, logical, one might say mechanical development.’

The professor smiled and continued,

‘The forces of difference and repetition can serve as conceptual substitutes for identity and negation in Hegel. The importance of this terminological change is that difference and repetition are both positive forces with unpredictable effects. Deleuze suggests that, unlike Hegel, he creates concepts out of a joyful and creative logic that resists the dualism of dialectic, quote:

“I make, remake and unmake my concepts along a moving horizon, from an always decentred centre, from an always displaced periphery which repeats and differentiates them.”

‘I get this.’ thought Billy. “Erewhon” an eternally positive differential multiplicity, eternal, and positive and different, and many times and types.’

The professor was continuing,

‘Deleuze uses the introduction to clarify the term “repetition.” Deleuze’s repetition can be understood by contrasting it to generality. Both words describe events that have some underlying connections.



Generality refers to events that are connected through cycles, equalities, and laws. Most phenomena that can be directly described by science are generalities. The scientific formulae for a repeated event does not change, but the event can be considered as different.

The sun rises due to the earth turning, then rises from the same physical laws each new day...'

'But every sunrise brings a new and potentially different day. So, is always different!' said Billy, interrupting.

The professor smiled and continued,

'In the human realm, behaviour that accords with norms and laws counts as generality for similar reasons. Science deals mostly with generalities because it seeks to predict reality using reduction and equivalence.

Repetition, for Deleuze, can only describe a unique series of things or events. For humans, repetition can be transgressive, as in Masochism: Coldness and Cruelty, or progressive. Passion, love. Deleuze identifies humour and irony as lines of escape from the generalities of society. Humour and irony are in league with repetition because they create distance from laws and norms even while re-enacting them.'

'The Fool!' thought Billy, 'And the trickster, The Magician!'

It was only then he noticed the six fingers on his left hand.

Challenger looking at Billy's left hand smiled and continued,

'Repetition is thus reliant on difference more deeply than it is normally thought, profound repetition will be characterized by profound difference.

We can get into the detail now if you wish?’

The professor asked his audience of one.

‘I think I have what I need, but please continue.’ said Billy.

‘Deleuze paints a picture of philosophical history in which difference has long been subordinated to four pillars of reason: identity, opposition, analogy, and resemblance. Tools of philosophical argument.

Various philosophers have treated the emergence of difference within Being. He uses Duns Scotus, Spinoza, and others to make the case that

“There has only ever been one ontological proposition: Being is univocal. ... A single voice raises the clamour of being”.

One then tries to understand the nature of differences that arise within Being. Deleuze describes how Hegel took contradiction as a pure opposition, towards his absolute.

Deleuze proposes using the calculus of Leibniz and that difference is better understood through the terms of the calculus. Here values are not fixed but approach a limit.

They never reach the limit!’

Here the professor stamped his foot.

‘Simply put a moving object at a fixed point in time could be considered as being stationary, a definite but useless calculation. As in calculus we approach the point in time we wish to know what speed the object is travelling, it’s called the limit, a limit, which we can get closer to, closer values of speed but never reach that limit.

Deleuze goes on to discuss time in which repetition occurs. He begins with the notion that there is no time but the present, which contains past and future. Yet there are layers that describe different ways in which past and future can be thought of in the present.

Habit is passive synthesis, what we have done and will do, Deleuze relates it to the Freudian pleasure principle. It is a basic process of the universe of a momentum that carries the past into the future.

His second level of time is organized by the active force of memory, which introduces discontinuity into the passage of time by sustaining relationships between more distant events.

Think of an event like Christmas or a Birthday, both in abstract terms repetition of the same dates. Similar to an unconscious habit. But now think of a particular memory of a Christmas or a Birthday. A memory of an actual past birthday or Christmas. Do this now.' The professor said and waited.

Billy remembered the birthday he got a bicycle.

The professor continued,

'And now think of the future...'

The professor looked at his audience of one questioningly,

'It was the birthday present of a bike.' Billy said.

'And now think of the future... or the destiny that this created.' the professor said.

Billy thought of his cycling trips, sometimes to the river Tame to fish.

The professor continued,

‘Destiny makes clear how different events transforms time and enacts a more profound form of repetition. Destiny never consists in step-by-step deterministic relations between presents, but an aim, systems of replay, resonance and echoes, objective chances, signs, signals, and roles. Proust and Lacan are key authors for this layer.’

‘Fishing trips. And that one where I caught a Tench. I remember the summer heat, green leaves of an ash tree and the silver blackness of the fish.’ thought Billy.

The professor continued,

‘The third layer of time still exists in the present, but it does so in a way that breaks free from the simple repetition of time. It is the drama of the temporality of the universe as expressed in great events. The sublime.

Deleuze challenges the “image of thought” that permeates both popular and philosophical discourse, that thinking naturally gravitates towards truth. Thought is divided easily into categories of truth and error. The model for thought comes from educational institutions, in which a master sets a problem, and the pupil produces a solution which is either true or false. Yet the truth is already established, there is no original thinking, just a sterile repetitive dogma, like rote learning. As such also there are appeals to “common sense” – the obvious, and “good sense” it’s correct use.

The usual repeated processes of the factory production line, or investment in capital and production of wealth. With fixed rates of return.

Deleuze maintains, with Artaud, a radically active artist in the theatre and elsewhere, that real thinking is one of the most difficult challenges there is. Thinking requires a confrontation with stupidity, the state of being formlessly human without engaging with any real problems. Deleuze's alternate image of thought is based on difference, which creates a dynamism that traverses individual faculties and conceptions. This thought is fundamentally energetic and if it produces propositions, these are wholly secondary to its development.

He further develops the radical ideas of difference, how an organism, a cell, divides and produces a radical different organism. The symmetry that begins with small distinctions in an embryonic mass becomes profound. The production of inner insensitivity, and external phenomenon. Body Soul duality.

The world is that of individuals, created by a mobile, strangely supple, fortuitous and endowed with fringes and margins; all because the intensities which contribute to it communicate with each other, envelop other intensities, and are in turn enveloped. That is, even after individuation takes place, the world does not become passive background or stage on which newly autonomous actors relate to each other. Individuals remain bound to the underlying forces that constitute them all, and these forces can interact and develop without or with individual approval.

The embryo enacts the drama of individuation. In the process, it subjects itself to dynamics that would tear apart a fully individuated organism. The power of individuation lies not in the development of a final I or self, but in the ability of the deeper dynamics to incarnate themselves in a being that gains

additional powers by virtue of its materiality. Individuation makes possible a drama described as a confrontation with the face of the Other.

Deleuze extends these ideas into the political domain, or domains, quote:

“The more our daily life appears standardised, stereotyped, and subject to an accelerated reproduction of objects of consumption, the more art must be injected into it in order to extract from it that little difference which plays simultaneously between other levels of repetition, and even in order to make the two extremes resonate, namely, the habitual series of consumption and the instinctual series of destruction and death”

With which I will end.’

Professor Challenger looked at his audience of one.

‘Thank you, professor,’ said Billy, ‘so to repeat properly is to differ, and difference is different! And time itself in which repetition occurs differs. I think I have my answers, if not yet my questions.’

## CHAPTER 45: KETTLE'S YARD

He woke lying on a bed, certainly not in his house in Litchfield, in a low-ceilinged room with eaves. And this bed he was lying on was tiny and narrow. On the walls were abstract prints he recognised. They were those of the artist Ben Nicholson. Lying quietly letting the myriads of images float in his mind, a chaos which now could be orchestrated but in many new ways. It struck him that the play of sameness and difference was at first part of this chaos, yet could be a solution maybe somehow?

Finally, he focused on the room more, it struck a memory which caused him to leave the bed and walk down the length of the room. It was small and narrow with a flight of stairs at the opposite end of the room to the bed. The walls were white, the floor of old oak boards with some handmade rugs. He walked down the stairs to find himself in a much larger room, it was again of white walls and oak floors. To his right was a living room with a fireplace and piano, a Windsor chair and leather armchairs. The walls had paintings on them, he recognised many of them, one was a William Scott still life. He was actually in a small room between the piano room and others leading off to the left. It had a gate-leg table with a sculpture of a dancer on it, a large window and shelf with plants.

He remembered, he was very familiar with it, it was known as The Dancer room, he was in Kettle's Yard, the former home of Jim Ede and his wife Helen, who collected early 20th-century art, which was given to the University of Cambridge along with the house. Billy had visited when it was a museum open to the public.

There was no sign of anyone, so he turned left and walked down some steps to what was called The Landing, as before white walls with oak floors. The walls covered with paintings, some early Nicholson's, and those of Alfred Wallis, a retired fisherman of Saint Ives, Cornwall, who at 70 began painting scenes of the town in a naïve style. Having no artistic training, he used household paint on scraps of cardboard. He achieved little commercial success, although his work was championed by progressive artists such as Ben Nicholson and Christopher Wood, and collected by others including Jim Ede. At the end of this room was the large collection of Jim Ede's art books.

Now he walked to the landing and so descended stairs to the lower level of what is called the extension. A modern building Jim Edge had built to extend his house. Here was another surprise, it was, when he visited the museum a room with yet more paintings and sculptures, which it still had, but was obviously now a dining room with an open plan kitchen off from it. In the centre of the room was a large oak table with 6 places laid. He sat at the table, and now expected what happened next, a young woman came in with a tray, it had on it a cast iron tea pot and a fine bone China teacup. She poured some tea; it had flowers floating in it. Billy recognised the woman as Sophia. She gave a slight smile; he sipped some tea.

'I'll need to go back upstairs to cross to the old house entrance?' Billy said.

The house on the ground floor had a passageway running between the two halves, The Dancer room was in effect a bridge above this.

'Or you can leave by that door, cross the passage and enter the other ground floor rooms.' Sophia said.



He finished his tea and did this, entering through what was the front door into a small hallway with a spiral staircase leading up to the rooms above. From the hallway was a sitting room and then a bathroom. He turned and stepped outside again and looked across to the small church of St Peters. Stepping back into the living room he sat on one of the armchairs which looked out into the garden from a bay window, and beyond what he imagined would be a deserted empty Cambridge. His mind wandered.

He thought of in the past when people could create their own worlds how this ended in a disaster, they became bored and lonely. Then the Alice worlds where people shared a world, but one of many perspectives. Maybe a better solution, but still people being unhappy or bored, and such worlds quickly expands infinitely into a mush of everything all at once.

What is needed is a single world which begins and ends, yet there is always something and not nothing.

The worlds repeating, starting and ending over and over would be bad as Nietzsche saw it, a returning nightmare going nowhere, maybe that drove him mad and was not terminal syphilis. But not this world, but such a world or universe repeating but with differences. And with some vestige of memories, marks of the prior worlds, the repeats could be always different, better or different in a novel way. Different in a deeper way.

He had the vague idea that somehow as he thought these thoughts things happened. As if being outside of everything his perspective was different. He wasn't God, and in religions there were millions of Gods, but what of Spinoza's ideas, of Spinoza's world-God, how would that work.

‘Maybe the universe needs a mirror like we do, to check oneself out. See if its changed and how?’ he thought. ‘So, I’ve been shown many things, and yet my mind is now clear. Clear like a good mirror to not distort but just reflect.’

And he laughed, ‘I’m a mirror? I’m a single Alice Universe, looking glass mirror. And the universe can see itself reflected in this looking glass, in me, and see its changes and correct itself as it wishes?’

And he laughed again, imagining a figure, the cosmos, straightening its tie by looking at him.

‘IT WOULD NOW BE DIFFERENT EVERY TIME SEEING ITS  
REFLECTION’

‘NOW IT MIGHT BE DIFFERENT EVERY TIME IF IT SEES  
OR DOES NOT SEE ITS REFLECTION’

## CHAPTER 64: THE REUNION

It was morning in Tanworth-in-Arden, Chief Constable White was finishing a second cup of freshly brewed coffee, sitting at the kitchen table in full uniform, it would be another busy day. Catherine Mulberry entered the room, the Chief pointed saying,

‘Help yourself to coffee and breakfast, I’ll see you tonight.’

And about to leave was interrupted by Catherine Mulberry,

‘Coffee, good, thanks.’

She paused then said,

‘About seeing you tonight, maybe not seeing you. So, supper tonight, I might not be able to make it, you see I think it could be the unhappy dead. Or it could be those that want to remain dead that could be a problem. The happy dead.’

‘How so said the Chief?’

‘I was thinking of the eternal return, those who didn’t like their lives, suicides and others, if the eternal return is true, they would want to avoid this.

The haunting of Bloody Mary is asking for help. Sorry, thinking aloud, and this was from a sort of dream last night. Do all suicides want to simply cease to be, is the idea of anyone wanting to rest in peace possible. Is pure and everlasting annihilation possible?’

‘Shall we talk about this?’ the Chief asked, looking up at the kitchen clock.

‘Sorry, I was thinking aloud, please excuse me, I’m probably over thinking. You need to get to work, and no doubt have important meetings.’

The Chief gave a look and thought,

‘Nowhere near as important as your thinking.’ They gave a smile and left the kitchen.

Now she was talking quietly to herself,

‘Why now, why should Bloody Mary appear on behalf of the dead now, and here, and involve me.

What if they were happy dead but something recently has changed, such that they will not remain dead. And that I’m somehow implicated.

Breakfast!’

She made herself a simple breakfast, she had been told to help herself, so seeing some bacon, sausage, mushrooms and eggs in the refrigerator, found some beans and so made herself her preferred breakfast with tea.

‘Simple.’ she thought, ‘No tomatoes!’

She didn’t enjoy this as much as she should have, not just the lack of tomatoes but a feeling that was ominous.

Of course, she knew of limbo, in Christianity a place for the unbaptized, but in other ideas a non-place, neither heaven nor hell, a situation of the Zombie, the contradiction of the living dead.

She decided now she had to visit the church. The Church of St Mary Magdalene. She found Nick Drake's grave; fresh flowers had been placed there. A terrible sadness came over her,

'Those lost souls, those lonely in life now lonely in death.'

'No good,' she thought, 'I need to face whatever...'

For fear of what she might find in the church she very quickly opened the door and stepped inside. If she was afraid of what she might see it was of no matter as she did not see. If she had seen it would have been an almost black greyness of almost immobile figures, mummified bodies draped in rags, which were once funeral clothes, thin leather skin with protruding bones and teeth, empty eye sockets. She did not see this because her first sense was smell, a terrible stench of decay, and decaying, she gagged, turned around and left as quickly as possible. Later she would recount to others the apparent aporia, missing in apparitions of ghosts, they were visible, some could move and some speak, but what was missing was the smell of the dead, as if humans when alive didn't smell. And the smell was the stench, and it was by maybe evolutionary means that it was the worst smell possible for a living human, that of the smell of a decaying dead human. She even wrote a paper on the subject which was published in a magazine of the occult.

But we digress from what happened next, it should follow that stepping back through the church door from which she entered she should be back outside. She was not, she was in another church, one she immediately recognised, that of "St Peter by the Castle", ad castrum, or "Beyond the Bridge", or as she knew it the very small Church of St Peters outside Kettle's Yard in Cambridge. The tiny church was different to

how she saw it a few days ago, in that it was obviously in use, or had been recently, there were six chairs, each with a prayer book on the seat, and an altar with flowers and a crucifix. Picking up a book she sat on the chair to collect her thoughts. Then looking around the small space she noticed the trees through the windows, in bright green leaf, and then the door to this church partly open and the glimpse of green and white outside, cow parsley in flower. So not the door from which she entered. Not the dark place from which she had just escaped. She stood and opened the door fully, and there was a scene she knew well, but then she thought,

‘No, the church is the same, though it looks now in use, and the path and house of Jim Ede’s, but there is no new art gallery and no gallery entrance and no coffee bar.’

She walked towards the house, the familiar front door, and opened it, stepping into the hallway she could see a boy sat in an armchair who turned to look at her. She didn’t recognise him, yet he seemed familiar. He spoke surprising her,

‘We were good friends in another life, as man and boy,’ at which he laughed, ‘and in that order, it’s Catherine Mulberry, you liked using your full name, so sit and have some tea, and we can talk about these strange events. And why you are here, I suspect a problem, maybe now I can help, maybe only now can I help.’

She sat in the other armchair staring intensely at the boy, he was so familiar, yet she had no memory, or perhaps something from a dream.

'I'm Billy Taylor, we knew each other as adults, shared a house in Woodbridge, I became a 10-year-old boy, and our paths diverged.'

'But I live in Witham, have done so for years, in what was the house of Dorothy L. Sayers.' Catherine Mulberry heard herself saying.

'Do you like it?' asked Billy.

'Yes, very much.'

Just then the young woman Sophia came in with a tea tray, Chinese teapot and two cups. She placed it on the table, giving Billy a 'Get on with it.' look.

'I'll explain, but it's complicated and lots has happened, but there is an idea that the world, or universes, everything must continually repeat.'

'Like Nietzsche's eternal return of the same?' asked Catherine Mulberry, 'oh, but do you know this...'

'Of course I do, I was a 50-year-old man before I became this boy, we, you and I, both studied comparative religion and philosophy.'

'That's interesting, but sorry,' said Catherine Mulberry, 'please continue'.

'Well things are obviously now different; you are, and I'm certainly different.'

Billy held up his left hand.

A bit of a shock for Catherine Mulberry, but she recovered quickly saying,

‘You are now The Magician?’

Of course, she knew the Tarot well, and its signs.

‘Well sort of,’ said Billy, continuing,

‘I think you are here because now I can help solve a problem or rather make a difference that will. Before we both studied comparative religion and that’s how we came to know each other in one cycle of the eternal return, but not in this one. So, it’s like a return but now different, but we have some residual memories it seems.’

‘Oh, comparative religion, not me I’m a scholar of occultism...’ she paused, gave a smile, then added, ‘But you seem somehow familiar, but we met in another different world, yes, I can go with that. So, what changed, if it did, how do you know, and how do you know the other sequence, or is it sequences? Sorry too many questions.’

‘No not at all,’ said Billy, ‘so the worlds now repeated with difference, how I know because I allowed it to change by allowing the world to see itself. Because I think now I’m outside of everything, and yet not nothing. And this is my world, the woman is an Aeon, Sophia, and at the moment that’s the entire population of this world, oh and you of course.’

The Magician I might be, if they use mirrors, I am more like a mirror in which the other worlds, your world can now see itself. And why are you here?’

‘I’ll talk later about the Aeon, it would be thrilling to talk with her, and I think you are not unfamiliar, so maybe if all this is true, we did meet before.’



Catherine Mulberry was answering,

‘Anyway, I was investigating a haunting by Bloody Mary and the idea, or reality of those we call ghosts who would rather not repeat their lives, or live at all, such as suicides who would not want life. Those who would rather live like zombies in the grey voids of hell, Sheol, Hades, underworld, netherworld, World of Darkness, alma d-hšuka. And I don’t think they are not that happy, but fear repeating their miserable lives yet again and again. So better they think than to be alive, and not able to cease to exist. Cursed to be what are called the undead or ghosts, spirits not without bodies but spirits within dead bodies.’

‘Then that’s why you are here?’ Billy said, ‘It’s what I need to do now, maybe the world you were in, maybe Bloody Mary and those lost souls sent you, maybe, or other forces. Whatever, shall we go for a walk then have an early supper, discuss things more. I get hungry and can eat here. Do you remember a palace called Arcadia?’

‘Well, I will miss supper with Chief Constable White but think this seems more important, and the haunting was his problem, so that is why I’m here. And yes, I’ve a vague memory of an Arcadia as if from dreams, a fine palace, was it real?’

‘I think you will probably be able to make supper with Chief Constable White, here time is strange, outside of other times.’ said Billy, continuing, ‘so time for us we can walk, and get to know each other a little more perhaps.’

They took a walk, down to the bridge then along the river deep in conversation, occasionally looking at this very strange

version of Cambridge. Of course there were no signs of other humans.

Catherine Mulberry was speaking, 'Well this Cambridge seems an improvement on the more modern versions, I guess 1920s or later, around the time of the conversion of the cottage by Jim Ede.'

Billy was looking at the reflections in the river thinking about reflections, and the undead in the darkness.

'Of course, if they want to stay there,' he said aloud, and was interrupted by Catherine Mulberry, 'I think they deputised Bloody Mary to ask for help and did so because help may now be possible.'

They walked on in silence. Finding some seats in a college quad they then talked for hours exchanging their life stories. The idea that the unhappy dead now had the chance of repeating not the same lives that they had, but of having new ones seemed to become a possibility for the cause of the haunting.

Over a very long supper, one of her favourites of chicken salad that it seems Sophia had somehow made they continued their conversations. Catherine Mulberry at first not that happy seeing a ten-year-old drink three glasses of red wine, to be told it was probably half of what the 50-year-old drank. So, the conversation moved on to what had occurred. Billy mentioned the incidents with the Zarathustra story and the Tarot Major Arcanas which she found fascinating.

It was getting late, Billy said if he wanted to sleep, he would use the bed in the guest room at the top of the house, she

could have Helen Ede's bedroom and en-suite on the first floor.

She found it a charming small bedroom with paintings by Winifred Nicholson and drawings by Elisabeth Vellacott, also a small Alfred Wallis, a Naum Gado sculpture and Ben Nicholson etchings in the bathroom. The furniture was simple, a chest of draws with a small Barbara Hepworth sculpture on the top. A single bed and bedside table, another small desk with two chairs and a fine old Windsor chair, which she sat in reading some poems from a book she found on the bedside table.

There was a night dress on the bed, and fresh towels in the bathroom. She loved her house in Witham, much grander, but the fine artworks the smallness and intimacy of this room was perfect. She felt like a child again and it was a good feeling.

## CHAPTER 48: THE PROBLEM OF THE UNDEAD

They talked at breakfast, Sophia listening and cooking, a full English breakfast for Billy and for Catherine Mulberry, that was a difference to their tastes of breakfast in their previous lives.

‘You see,’ Billy was saying, ‘to repeat the same is gruesome, but to repeat with difference, and one in which it is someway better is not gruesome at all, and if one has vague recollections one can maybe learn from ones past mistakes.’

‘But these ghosts are like zombies, the living dead, and can’t repeat until they cease, that is no longer exist.’ Catherine Mulberry added.

Then Sophia, the Aeon spoke,

‘The problem is exponential, if a percentage of the living do not die, as populations rise the number of undead increases far faster, this causes a psychic collapse at some point, like when matter dominates gravity you get neutron stars and black holes. It’s why civilizations collapse and eventually life itself. And why I’m here or was at Colonial Road, you can’t have a hierarchy of living consciousness, Aeons of power like me when at base there becomes nothing. So, no hierarchy and nothing to do. Better cooking you breakfast than nothingness.’

‘Amazing.’ said Catherine Mulberry.

Sophia continued, ‘Though we have now had a difference and repetition, it’s fine for some Earth dwellers who die to repeat again with difference. But not fine for all the living dead, now trapped in Limbo. The billions who are.’

‘Why billions.’ asked Catherine Mulberry.

‘Everywhere else life is extinct, and I mean everywhere, in the plurality of many cosmoses all is undead. Life cannot then begin again if universes can’t end, they are left with just the undead.’

Sophia smiled, adding, ‘Of course now we have the idea of both difference and repetition things are quite literally different. Which is why I’m enjoying this. But you have a problem with these undead, and not just here, the Earth that is, the rest of this cosmos is undead, and all else.’

There was a long silence then,

‘Can I ask a question, of anyone? If we repeat, and repeat differently but better, if we just kill ourselves, we can improve and improve.’

Sophia laughed, ‘Jumping off a ladder won’t get you higher up the ladder or better...’

It was Catherine Mulberry’s question and now she was also laughing.

Billy was looking at Sophia with a faint smile, she suddenly stopped laughing,

‘No, of course not a ladder, that’s my old way of thinking, that being higher up the hierarchy is better than being lower. But I enjoy cooking, a radical change, it’s not higher or lower but different, novel, so I enjoy it. It’s as your Deleuze philosopher said not like a ladder or a tree but a rhizome, like the countryside, grass, fields, rivers,’ she was thinking, ‘and yet more like your toy with which you can make different things.’ she said looking at Billy who said one word,

‘Meccano!’

‘And the problem remains, that of the undead still in this world and all the others.’

‘You forgot about Smith, is he immortal?’ asked Billy.

No one answered as no one knew.

‘So, my world is victim to the living dead?’ asked Catherine Mulberry, then answered her own question, ‘Seems now it is and will not fade to nothing and so begin again, just fill with the undead, hence the haunting by Bloody Mary.’

Another long silence, ‘I’ll make tea.’ said Sophia.

‘Your tea is very good here, and I have a vague memory of tea made which an old lady dressed in as pinafore made.’ said Catherine Mulberry.

Sophia laughed, ‘The old woman, small and thin wearing a blue dress and pinafore of dark maroon paisley patterns?’

‘Yes her’.

‘That was me also.’

Catherine Mulberry looked shocked.

And so, Sophia told Catherine Mulberry about the blonde-haired boy and Colonial Road.

She then asked,

‘Apart from Colonial Road and that world, can the boy there go anywhere else?’

‘I don’t know.’ replied Sophia.

‘Billy, apart from this world can you go anywhere else?’ she asked.

Billy thought awhile, ‘As this is not somewhere and not being nowhere, I think not. If I’m like a mirror.’

Catherine Mulberry unlike Sophia didn’t follow this, then asked,

‘Billy, do you think you could make a machine for destroying ghosts.’

‘No, I couldn’t.’ he said.

‘Could the other boy?’ she asked.

‘I don’t think he was into Meccano, dinosaurs, guns, spaceflight, and odd he was also very interested in mushrooms and toadstools, and lichens, and...’

‘Mycelium!’ said Sophia, ‘of course, it’s about the most rhizomic thing that lives.’

‘Well, I’m the Aeon of knowledge so here is what mycelium is...

Mycelium is a root-like structure of a fungus consisting of a mass of branching, thread-like hyphae. Its normal form is that of branched, slender, entangled, anastomosing, hyaline threads. Fungal colonies composed of mycelium are found in and on soil and many other substrates. A typical single spore germinates into a monokaryotic mycelium, which cannot reproduce sexually; when two compatible monokaryotic mycelia join and form a dikaryotic mycelium, that mycelium may form fruiting bodies such as mushrooms. A mycelium

may be minute, forming a colony that is too small to see, or may grow to span thousands of acres as in *Armillaria*...

OK?’ she said breaking off from her wiki, then...

‘*Armillaria* is a genus of fungi that includes the *A. mellea* species or “honey fungus” that live on trees and woody shrubs. It includes about 10 species formerly categorized summarily as *A. mellea*. *Armillaria* sp. are long-lived and form the largest living fungi in the world. The largest known specimen an *A. ostoyae* covers more than 3.4 square miles in Oregon and is estimated to be 2,500 years old. Some species of *Armillaria* display bioluminescence.

*Armillaria* can be a destructive forest pathogen. It causes “white rot” root disease. As it feeds on dead plant material, it can kill its host with little negative effect to itself...’

‘That’s it, or at least like it, you need to see the boy, I was never into fungi.’ said Billy.

‘Who should go to see the boy?’ asked Catherine Mulberry.

‘Well not me,’ said Sophia, ‘it would be too embarrassing to say the least to meet myself.’

‘Me then.’ said Catherine Mulberry, ‘How? Oh, back through the door of St Peters.’

‘After a light lunch.’ said Sofia.

It was a quiche with salad, with no wine.

After they had finished Billy and Sophia told Catherine Mulberry how to reach the Boy at Colonial Road. Billy adding,

‘There might be another person there, an Emily Clarke.’



‘What a coincidence, I know an Emily Clarke, she is my publisher.’

Billy and Sophia looked at each other.

Catherine Mulberry said ‘What?’

There was no answer.

## CHAPTER 4: GHOST BUSTER

Catherine Mulberry left the dining room, saying something to the effect she would hope to be back for supper. She had forgotten about the promise to the Chief Constable. She walked up the path with the cow parsley in bloom, and opened the door of the church, finding herself now on the path to The Church of St Mary Magdalene. Re traced her steps back to The Chief Constable's house. There was her 1950s Wolseley parked in the drive. Hesitating, then remembered her promise, so thought it best to leave a note explaining she was "on the case" but needed to visit the city and doubted she could make supper. Feeling guilty about that, but thought that Sophia's cooking, 'was divine', and laughed out loud, of course it was divine as was Sophia!

The drive back was to the city centre was by her now normal route. She did park the Wolseley to briefly pop into Waterstones bookshop, then continued to Small Heath via Digbeth then onto Bordesley Green. In this incarnation she hadn't visited Colonial Road, but with the aid of an A to Z found it. She refused to use Satellite Navigation. Number 85 was there, like most of the houses with the front garden now being a parking area. She parked her car and crossed the road and walked towards the front door of number 85. She was excited, this version of Catherine Mulberry was often excited.

She was now not on the parking area but in a front garden of lawns and flower beds with a central path. She smiled and clapped her hands in excitement.

Behind her was a small wooden gate, painted a pale blue and either side a privet hedge of around five feet high. To the left

was a tall flowerless shrub and beyond that a tree with white flowers. There was a path with a lawn either side, each having a flower bed, the one on the left having a few rose bushes. The garden had a fence of wooden palings either side made from split wood and wire. There was a single front door with small windows either side. To the left a large lilac tree, on the right a brick single story building with two concrete apex roofs, she had no idea what it was. In front of this was a tall climbing rose. At the front door, as she pushed the door knocker to knock, the door gently and slowly opened onto a hallway. To the left was a staircase, it had a stair carpet with runners. The shelf on the window at the bottom of the stairs had some coins, she didn't recognise them.

The door to the right was a toilet. It had no handbasin, a quarry tile floor and painted gloss brickwork walls. The cistern was high up, with a pull chain to flush.

The hall had a small bamboo table with a cactus in a pot on top of it. The hall led to a door and another dog leg to the right. Down here was a living room, this had two windows and was empty. The floor was covered in linoleum, no carpets. The other door led into another living room. This had French windows onto the back garden. A fireplace on the right, two large red armchairs either side, and a small settee on the opposite wall. In the left corner was a large deep brown table with an old black and white television on it. Above this on a small shelf was a cream-coloured Bakelite radio. Opposite it was a bird cage on a stand with a budgerigar in it.

It looked very much like late 1950s furniture and decoration.

To the left a door led to the kitchen. She walked into the kitchen. Further on the left was a door to a scullery. It had a

cold shelf for keeping food fresh, a few tins, and a small window onto the front garden. The kitchen had a butler sink; a large pine table covered in oil cloth, an old gas stove and a gas boiler in the corner for washing clothes. Like the toilet the walls were painted brick, but with linoleum stuck on the wall, around the lower part to about 5 feet, patterned with imitation tiles. She took all this in, and only then noticed a blonde-haired boy sat at the table with a large book with black pages in which he was drawing. He spoke,

‘Hello Catherine Mulberry, I suppose you don’t remember me or Billy and the others, but please sit down.’

So, she sat, and as she did an old woman came into the Kitchen, she was very thin with wiry white hair. She wore a dark dress and pinafore of dark maroon paisley patterns.

This was a shock, ‘Sophia the beautiful Aeon!’ she thought, and the boy gave a smile.

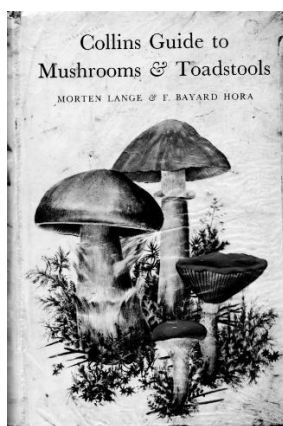
The old lady took a kettle from the stove and filled it with water, lit a ring on the gas stove with a flint lighter and waited for the kettle to boil. She took a teapot from a shelf and a packet of loose tea and put two teaspoons of tea into the pot, then poured in the water once it had boiled. She fetched two mugs from the pantry and poured the tea into it. She went back into the pantry and fetched a bottle of milk. The thin neck of the bottle showed that it was sterilized milk. She poured this into the mugs and gave them a stir with a spoon she took from the draw in the table. She placed the mugs in front of the boy and Catherine Mulberry, then quietly left the room.

‘You needn’t drink the tea, and the milk is not creamy, it’s called sterilized, it’s boiled up old milk, it keeps longer, and I think it’s cheaper.’

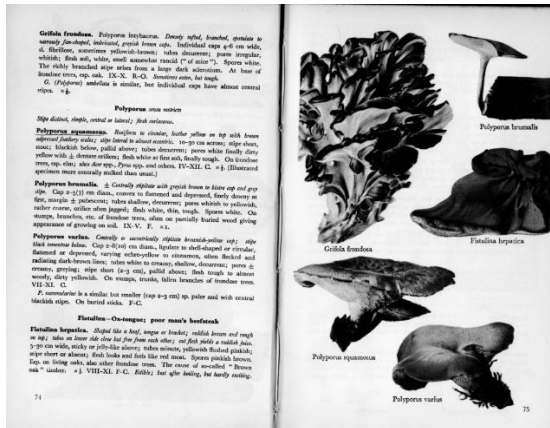
She took a sip, as she expected it was disgusting. The boy sipped his, after first putting in three teaspoons of sugar and stirring with a spoon. He placed the spoon on the table and looked up with a question. She wondered how much he knew, then decided that was foolish.

‘I understand you are interested in mushrooms and toadstools?’ she said.

‘Fungi.’ he replied, and left the table, at this a black dog who must have been underneath the table followed the boy. She heard footsteps going upstairs, with the pad of the dog’s paws, and then above, and then the reverse the boy entered the room holding a book. He placed it on the table. The black dog sitting then lying down and so once again out of sight.



Catherine Mulberry opened the book and started to look through the illustrations.



‘I notice you underline some of the entries?’ she said.

‘Yes, those I collected, but they all went rotten.’ the boy said.

Now Catherine Mulberry had a problem, she wanted to ask, “Do you know of flesh-eating fungi.” But didn’t know how to ask.

Just then the old lady popped her head around the door and spoke to the boy, pointing to Catherine Mulberry,

‘She wants to know if there are flesh-eating mushrooms.’

The boy got up and left the room, again followed by the dog, the old lady continued, the old lady that was the Aeon Sophia,

‘You only have to ask. And yes, I know this, but I can’t create what you need.’

with which she left, and the boy entered the kitchen with a notebook.

‘It’s my fungi notebook.’ He opened and flipped a few pages and started to read,

‘Polish scientists died after opening of the tomb of a 15th century Polish King, and Lithuanian Grand Duke. The presence of the *A. flavus* spores in samples taken from the tomb suggested that the likely cause of the deaths were the aflatoxins produced by this fungus. Also, the same fungus was probably responsible for the deaths following the opening of the tomb of Tutankhamun, the deaths of Lord Carnarvon, George Jay Gould, and Arthur Mace.

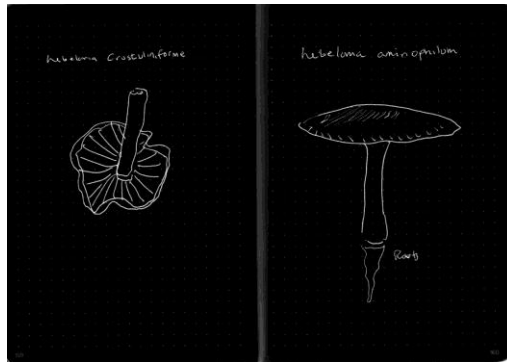
Mucormycosis, or black fungus can infect people, the lungs, stomach, intestines, and skin. The fatality rate is about 54%.’

‘Oh! wrong question!’ thought Catherine Mulberry, then asked,

‘What about fungi that grows on dead creatures?’

The boy turned a page and read,

‘*Hebeloma aminophilum*, known as the ghoul fungus. Found in Western Australia. It grows on dead, and decomposing animal remains. Here is a picture I sketched from a photograph.’

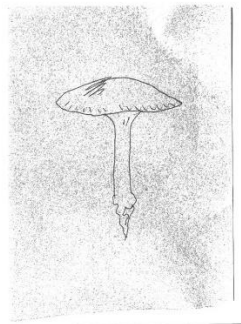


‘I don’t suppose I can have a copy?’ she said.

The boy left the kitchen, went into the pantry, brought in a scrap of grease proof paper and made a drawing with a carpenter’s pencil.

While he was doing this Catherine Mulberry was making notes and thinking ‘How am I going to get to Australia and find this fungus.’

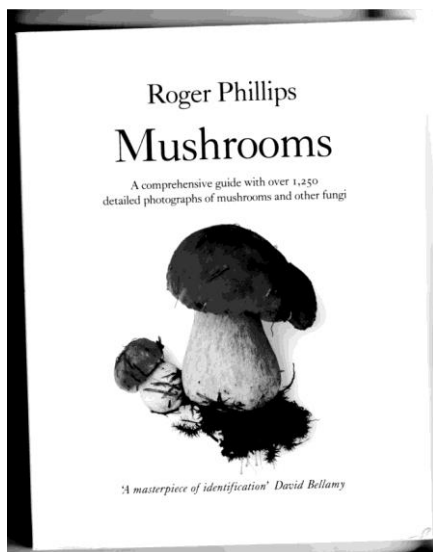
The old lady popped her head around the door and spoke again, ‘The drawing will be enough...’





‘Great, thanks.’ she said, ‘I must get back to my friends now, thank you very much. Here have this, a present, another fungi book, a new edition.’

She handed the book she had bought in Waterstones. The boy looked delighted. Didn’t look up as he was busy looking at the illustrations, uttering a ‘Thank you.’



So, she drove back to Tanworth-in-Arden, had completely forgotten to ask about an Emily Clarke, her mind on other things, parked the Wolseley then realised she would face the horror of the undead when entering The Church of St Mary Magdalene. As she approached, she took the boy’s drawing out of her pocket, the words of the older Sophia echoing,

‘The drawing will be enough...’

Opening the door the stench was terrifying and the mass of the moaning undead seemed infinite, she moved her hand to her face, dropping the drawing. She watched it float to the ground silently, bending to pick it up, then looking up she noticed the church was empty of decay and stench. It was now just an ordinary parish church. The alter with a crucifix, the sunlight shining through the stained-glass windows, the rows of pews with prayer books, hymn books and brightly coloured kneelers. An ordinary clean and tidy parish church. She noticed the drawing on the floor so picked it up.

As she expected going back out of the church through the door she was in St Peters. So, she left this church and walked down the path towards the door in the cottages of Kettle’s Yard that led to the dining room.

Sophia opened the door as she approached and so Catherine Mulberry entered, putting the drawing on the table.

‘I’ll keep it here, the closeness of the entrance to the other world should be sufficient.’ said Billy.

Sophia cooked supper, Italian, which was excellent. The next day Catherine Mulberry left to get back to Tanworth-in-Arden. As a recompense for the previous evening when she did not cook for the Chief Constable, she made a similar Italian meal to the one Sophia had cooked. Explaining over it and some fine red wine the events of the previous days and the satisfactory conclusion. At ten no Bloody Mary appeared, there were no more ghosts. So, the next day she drove back via lanes and B roads to her house in Witham.

## CHAPTER 20: SEND FOR SMITH

‘The cosmos, and all cosmoses were still barren except for planet Earth. This now it seems has been changed on the Earth, but cosmic cycles would only repeat with difference for any cosmos where everything had ceased to be?’

Billy was thinking aloud,

Then the Aeon Sophia spoke,

‘Yes, and I know what your next thought will be, we need to make sure the cosmos in which the Earth exists can come to a final end in nothingness, if there are undead, that’s not a final end, so no possible repetition with difference. Sure, the Earth seems to have repeated somehow, maybe by your initial mirroring? And is now free of the undead and will remain so. But are there ghost planets in the universe inhabited by the undead, of course there are, billions, hence the Fermi paradox, you know, why is the universe apparently lifeless except on Earth, Smith would tell you, life on Earth was very much a late event.

So, we need somehow to get someone who can do that kind of thing we have done on Earth, remove the undead, throughout the cosmos, or better throughout all worlds. By that I mean get the boy’s fungi which frees the undead distributed through all worlds. I think Mr Smith might help.

How can we contact Smith, he is in that place he likes, The Hall of the Mountain King, I guess? Catherine Mulberry does not know of Smith but could maybe contact him, but anyway she is out of touch?’

The Aeon paused then continued, more for effect,

‘Emily is still in Colonial Road with those deities she seems fascinated with. I can tell Emily to go to see Smith in The Hall of the Mountain King, and though you can’t leave here, or the boy leave his world, the Sophia in Colonial Road knows what I know. We can maybe with Smith devise a means to free the cosmic ghosts from the undead planets.’

‘Brilliant idea.’ said Billy to a smiling Aeon.

So, in the front garden of 85 Colonial Road of the boy’s world the older Aeon Sophia, the old lady with a blue dress and pinafore of dark maroon paisley patterns called into the hollow lilac tree,

‘Emily you are needed.’

Emily appeared from out of the tree.

‘Let’s have some tea,’ said the old lady, ‘I’ve lots to tell you.’

Emily knew the true nature of the old lady, some deities couldn’t help but explain, and this she understood to be the reason why they were very respectful of her.

They sat either side of the kitchen table, the first thing Emily noticed was that the tea was good.

‘The tea I normally make is what once was made in a place like this, but this is not the same place at all.’

Sophia AKA the old lady in the blue dress and pinafore of dark maroon paisley patterns was saying, and continued,

‘After when Billy left you in the garden quite a lot has occurred. First, he arrived in Stechford whereupon he became a boy of a similar age to the boy here.’

She was looking at the boy of Colonial Road and Inglefield Road who was also sat at the table. The black dog lying at his feet.

‘He became a ten-year-old, or rather like a ten-year-old. So, he goes back to Woodbridge where he tries to find out why, and what this is all about. In a meeting with Mr Smith, Smith sees that Billy is now effectively not of this world, or of any other.’

The blonde boy was listening intently, as if though he was well aware.

‘Billy then sees that one of the tasks the boy here has been performing is turning actual catastrophic events that would happen into fictions. Like the nuclear wars never occurred but there were fictions about these. In particular the movie where the inhabitants of Venus plan to destroy the Earth but destroy themselves instead, as well as others like “The Forbidden Planet”. So, Billy sees he too can do this and became involved, he used the Star Wars fictions to prevent the Earth’s destruction and worse. Turned a definite real future reality into phantasy, that is the “Star Wars” movies.

OK so far?’

‘No’ said Emily, ‘just a minute.’ She took out a notebook and began writing...

ooOoo

1. Billy boy like blonde boy.

2. Now out of this world? [powerful?]
3. Like the blond boy changes real bad events into fiction.

ooOoo

‘OK. You can carry on. Oh, so Billy is like the boy here, but do you know his name, this boy here won’t tell me his name?’

Emily gave a puzzled look, the boy smiled, and Sophia said,

‘He won’t tell you his name because knowing a person’s true name or names can give the knower power, it’s often why people use pseudonyms.

So back to the history of events. Billy then makes a machine to handle the less difficult problems, an Abstract Machine that creates fictions from harmful events, which is great.

Then with Smith Billy becomes involved in super-alchemy, and they, or more likely just Billy, eventually produce an inverted world of a massive size. The idea being to create a sufficiently big space to prevent conflict.’

‘Good idea.’ said Emily, writing...

ooOoo

4. Creates Abstract Machine to fictionalise problems, conflicts.
5. Creates inverted world of massive spaces to avoid conflict.

ooOoo

‘So, this new vast world is similar to the philosopher Spinoza’s world of pantheism, Nature is God, God is nature. So has the power to allow freedom. But this creates an “Alice world” of contradictions. Hard to explain but everyone sees things from

their own point of view which eventually creates terrible contradictions. You may think you are in your house and your friend may think you are on holiday, both become true. Now think of this happening on a cosmic scale.'

'A nightmare.' said Emily.

ooOoo

6. 'Alice' world of contradictions – nightmare!

ooOoo

Sophia continued, 'Billy experiences lessons in philosophy and religions, maybe all possible ones, then realizes that the universe might endlessly repeat, exactly the same each time, same so another nightmare. But if it repeats with difference then not. He gets the idea of repeating with difference from a French philosopher, Giles Deleuze.

One last problem, ghosts, being undead a world or universe of worlds can't repeat until it ends in nothing. The undead, ghosts remain so that any universe can't end. Now we come to the boy here, he drew a picture of a fungus that lives off the dead, or the living dead, so solves the problem for the Earth, but not for all the other planets in this universe...'

'And other universes?' said Emily interrupting, and writing.

'Yes.' Said Sophia.

ooOoo

7. Repeating yet different worlds the solution [Deleuze].

8. Only solved for our world.

ooOoo

‘So, I am needed?’

‘Yes,’ said Sophia, ‘to bring Smith here, and work with him and this boy here to free the living dead in this universe and all the others.’

‘And all others?’ said Emily.

‘Yes, all the others everywhere. And two other things,’ said Sophia, ‘the world out there has changed, with the Alice world or maybe sort of somehow repeated just itself seeing itself, so now Catherine Mulberry is the same Catherine Mulberry you knew but different. She is living in Witham in Essex and is an expert in the occult, not comparative religion, she might not know you as you are, but I think she might vaguely remember.’

‘So, who am I out there if things have changed?’ asked Emily.

Sophia gave a shrug, then said, ‘Oh and the second thing, now the world is free of the undead, the deities you’ve been so interested in, the ones here living in these gardens, they can return if they wish, their source of evil power, the living dead, has gone.’

‘OK. They were mellowing anyway,’ said Emily, ‘just a minute, so I go to the back alley to get to the Hall, but first I want to go to the front door to check what’s happening out there.’

She rose and walked out into the front garden, speaking loudly,

‘Hey guys, you can all go back into the world now.’



She then opened the gate and was back in the Real World, a black range rover with a driver leaning against it who she didn't recognise but who obviously recognised her.

'Emily Hi, done so soon.' he said, 'so we won't be late for the meeting.'

'Meeting? Remind me, and your involvement?' she said thinking quickly, and thinking 'Who the hell am I?'

'The meeting you have planned with Ms Mulberry regarding her new book, the one you are publishing, and me? Not involved at all I'm your chauffeur for today, Grace is on leave, I normally just pilot your plane.' he replied.

'Plane?' she couldn't stop herself.

'Yes, the Lear jet, now at Birmingham airport, fuelled and ready to go home.'

'Home?' she still couldn't stop herself.

'Monaco, or have you decided on Paris?'

She was finding it hard taking all this in,

'And the meeting? The venue?'

'Normally it's the Hyatt, but if you've changed it, if you pardon me for asking but I need to know the venue, if you are uncertain, why not give Ms Mulberry a call. We don't want to go to the wrong place?' was his reply.

'How?' she thought then was aware her clothes were different, very smart, and yes there was a phone in her pocket. A very expensive smart phone. She took it out and walked a few yards away as people often do this

automatically when using their phone. Tapping Ca.. Catherine Mulberry's name and number came up, so she dialled, the call was answered almost immediately with a bright,

'Hi! Emily, good to hear you, nothing wrong with our meeting I hope?'

'Very bright for the Catherine Mulberry I knew?' she thought but replied,

'Hi, good to hear you, two things you might think odd, but will talk more at the meeting, which is where and when, and can you remind me of my driver, no the pilot I use, his name?'

'Er? The Hyatt, Clinton suite at 11.30, and Steve?' she replied.

'Thanks, will explain then, bye.'

Now talking to Steve, 'Steve, 11.30 at the Hyatt, I just need 5.' With that she walked back into the world of the boy thinking, 'Looks like I'm a fairly wealthy publisher.'

Odin was standing on the lawn, 'We are all staying here, we like it.' he said.

She gave a smile, walked through the house and into the alley at the rear, then she was in The Hall of the Mountain King. It was a route Smith had asked Billy to make for him to this 'other world', The Hall of The Mountain King, or actually for Smith to get to the Boy in the late 50s from the Hall...

Smith looked up, she spoke authoritatively, 'You have to go to 85, you will get explanations', she turned and left the Hall, Smith following.

Back in the kitchen now all four sat around the table.

Emily thinking if she was now the CEO of a publishing company and a very successful one if she owned a jet and at least two properties she should practice the role, so she began.

‘If I go through the points I made from Sophia it will save time, and others can chip in if needs be.’

She took out the notebook and read through the notes, suspecting Mr Smith would interrupt, and he looked at times like he might, but somehow this new more assertive Emily ploughed on uninterrupted.

‘So, we need a way to propagate mycelium through all universes with fungus or fungi that will remove all the undead. As it seems a drawing of said is sufficient, that will be the boy’s task. The means of spreading this throughout the various worlds, universes, whatever. I think this should be the task of Mr Smith and Sophia.’

‘That deserves a coffee.’ said Sophia, taking a percolator that no one had noticed from the stove. Excellent it was, except the boy would not drink it, he had a glass of dandelion and burdock instead.

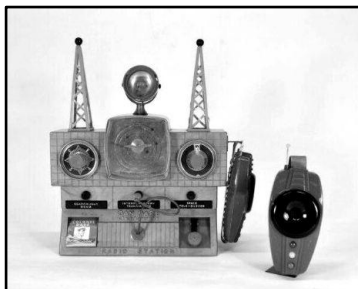
‘And now I have to go to a meeting with Catherine Mulberry, seems I’m a publisher of her books. So, I can hopefully find out what is happening and more about who I am?’ Emily said with a false smile. ‘I will report back.’

‘If you see Billy, can you please give him this?’ said the boy.

The boy was holding a Dan Dare toy walkie-talkie, on the table there was also a Dan Dare Radio Station. No one questioned if it could possibly work.

‘Sure?’ said Emily, thinking, ‘Will I see Billy?’

‘Oh, you will see him alright, he needs the walkie-talkie.’ said Sophia.



Emily put the walkie-talkie in her pocket and left. Steve drove her to the Hyatt, dropping her at the entrance,

‘I’ll park and wait just over there; can you give me a call if you are lunching.’ Steve said.

‘Seems I’m a very good employer, first name terms.’ she thought in the lift, then entering the Clinton suite that the venue was a tad over the top, a large room, opulent with flowers and an array of soft and alcoholic drinks, and the flowers were everywhere, and sat on a sofa she recognised Catherine Mulberry, but different hair style and brighter clothes. On seeing Helen she rose with a wide smile, walked over to her and gave her a hug.

‘Seems we are good friends as well as in business?’ Emily thought then quickly spoke,

‘Catherine, it’s me but not me, let’s sit, do you know the boy in Colonial Road?’

'I have visited him, yes.' thinking of her recent visit and the drawing of the flesh-eating fungi.

Before she could continue Emily interrupted and gave her story. However, Catherine Mulberry was not surprised by much of this, having worked and written extensively in the world of the occult. She had of course also spoken with the boy Billy over many hours in the strange Cambridge world of his. And also talked with an actual Aeon! She was seeing now how these truths are unfolding.

'Rather exciting!' she thought.

And after all, just got back to Witham after these adventures in Tanworth-in-Arden, only then to remember she had a meeting with her friend and publisher, so had travelled to the Hyatt by train early this very morning.

'Can we talk over lunch, and then would you take me to see Billy; I have something for him.' Emily concluded.

Catherine Mulberry agreed but was not in her Wolseley, so Emily phoned Steve and told him to have lunch and pick them up at the Hyatt at two thirty to take them to Tanworth-in-Arden.

Over Catherine Mulberry's and Emily's lunch at the Hyatt Emily discovered she was a wealthy publisher with a villa in Monaco and apartments in New York, Paris and London. That they were close friends and that Catherine Mulberry wrote serious works on the occult that were still popular, but also fiction under the pseudonym "J.F.W." and these books were a mix of detective work, science fiction and the occult. They were best sellers, and the movie rights had been sold for a considerable sum, still it seems she preferred to stay in her

Witham house, maybe the spirit of Dorothy Sayers helped her writing?

## CHAPTER 2: ROCKETS

The journey in the Range Rover was uneventful, and quicker than the route Catherine Mulberry had used. The A435 then down Penn Lane. At Tanworth Catherine Mulberry said to park at the church and they wouldn't be long. At the church as before nothing unusual on entering but on leaving first they were in St Peters, then they walked down the path and into the house of Kettle's Yard.

As expected, Billy was with the Aeon in the dining room sat at the table. Emily couldn't hold back the laughter, the new Catherine Mulberry had never met the 50+ year old, maybe had a vague recollection but only of spoken words, but the trim young ten-year-old was nothing like the Billy Emily had known. Billy seemed annoyed at first, then began to see the funny side so joined in. Meanwhile Sophia, now the young woman made coffee.

'I've something for you.' said Emily fetching out the Dan Dare Walky-Talky and placing it on the table.

'We are working on getting drawings made, the boy's task, and Smith is working on how to get this spread across all the domains.'

'You just need to get it into free space, as a rhizome it will spread itself.' said Billy, adding, 'If you want to look around, please do, you have plenty of time, as like Colonial Road time is different here, often stopped.'

So, Catherine Mulberry showed Emily around. Meanwhile Billy had picked up the Dan Dare Walky-Talky. It gave a beep then,

‘This is base to Billy, base to Billy, come in Billy.’

Billy replied, ‘Billy to base, how are things?’

‘This is base, I’m making drawings in my bedroom, Mr Smith is I think having problems with delivery, over.’

‘Base Billy here, he just needs to get them into outer space, outside our solar system, over.’

‘Base here, that’s the problem, or that’s what he says is a problem, over.’

‘Billy here, will give it some thought, over and out.’

All this time Sophia had been also sitting at the dining table. After a few minutes Emily and Catherine Mulberry came in, Emily saying, ‘I really need to spend some more time here, but we should see how they are getting on in Colonial Road.’

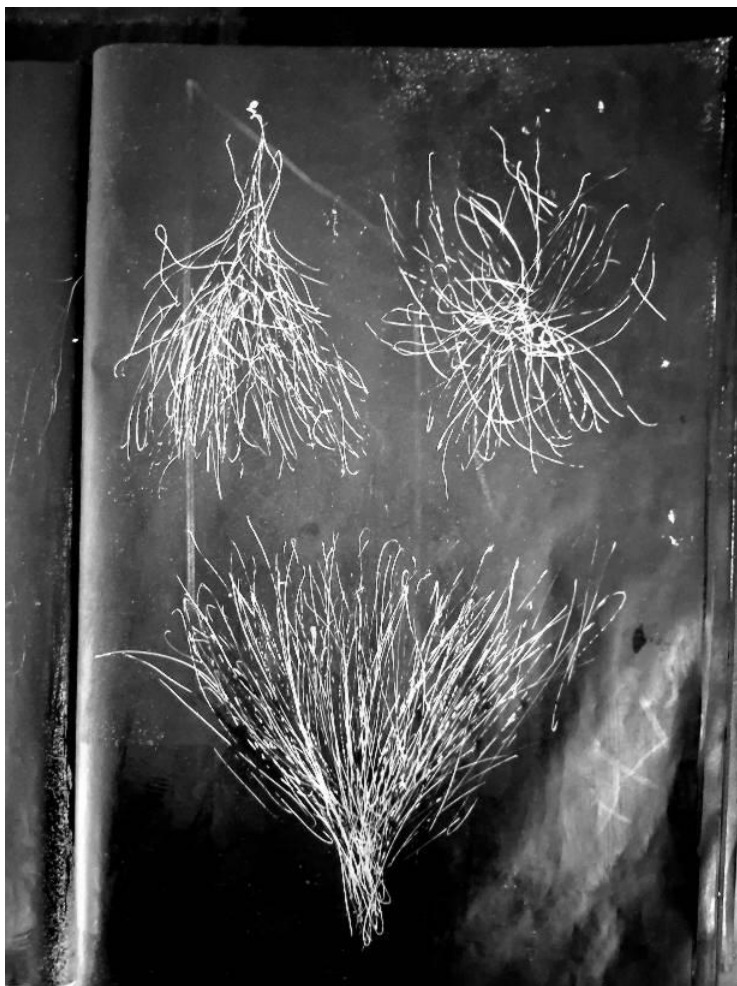
‘Well come back anytime now you know how, but I’m afraid there are problems in Colonial Road with delivery, I think Smith is being uncooperative,’ Billy said.

‘Why?’ asked Catherine Mulberry.

‘Probably likes the idea of empty universes.’ said Emily. Adding anticipating a question why, ‘He likes being a big fish, and a big fish in an empty pond he would very much enjoy. Let’s get back to Colonial Road.’

In Colonial Road the boy had completed several drawings in one of his books. He thought it best to have more than one form of fungus. As was his method he drew with silver, white and sometimes gold pens in books that were once Atlases, first painting each page black.





Less luck was with Mr Smith who could see no way of getting these drawings into deep space yet alone into other universes, and then there was the limitation of light speed. True the two boys would not die in space if they somehow

could help, but now they were outside of everything. Things seemed stuck.

This impasse was relayed back to Kettle's Yard. Billy was thinking and came up with an idea.

'This is Billy to base, Billy to base, base come in please.'

'Base here, go ahead Billy, over.' The boy in Colonial Road replied.

'Base, did you not make rockets? Over.'

There was a long pause.

'Well of course, yes, I made them, but they never worked, I had the wrong fuel, and the gun powder I made was no good, but I see what you mean. Over. Oh, and so I'll make some rockets and be in touch. Oh, sorry forgot to say over.'

The boy had been in with the others when he heard the beep of his Dan Dare Radio Station, it was now in his bedroom, so he had gone upstairs to take this message, coming back down with the black dog following he told the assembled group.

'I have the solution, I'll make some rockets, it should work now, but it will take some time, I have to make them travel faster than light and zoom into all the universes. Let's say I'll launch them at this time in two days.'

Smith muttered 'Preposterous.' and left. The others also left 85 Colonial Road, but all of the mind that they would return in two days, and all not doubting this time the boy's rockets would work. So, Emily booked a suite at the Hyatt and two deluxe rooms, one for Steve, who had no idea what was going

on but didn't mind, and one for Catherine Mulberry who also wanted to see the launch.

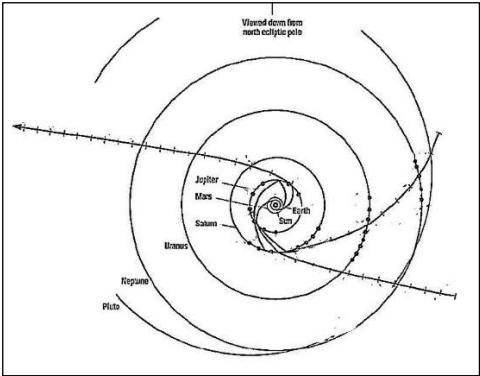
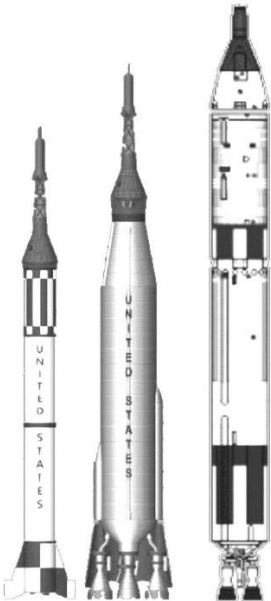
Emily then found a link to a private blog of hers, somehow she knew the password. Taking time over two days to read her diary, the private blog, which was strange as it was like remembering, and very useful as it brought her up to speed on her new life. She also researched the details of her company and its success, and that also of Catherine Mulberry's.

She spoke about all of this with Catherine Mulberry. They both each spoke at length, both wanting to know the details of their other lives. Catherine Mulberry who said she had vague memories regarding Billy. Emily on Street View in Google of Woodbridge found the house she had shared with Billy. Catherine Mulberry said it was strange and it looked familiar, but she had never visited the town. They sat together while she looked at the house in Cumberland Street she seemed to remember, and then said,

'And at the corner past the fish and chip shop there on the left is an Indian restaurant, called I think Shapla?'

And sure, they found it.

Back in Colonial Road the boy had found his book on Intercontinental ballistic missiles. He decided on three, the Redstone Mercury Rocket, the Atlas Mercury and the Titan 2 Gemini rocket. He made card models of all three, in each of the hollow tubes he placed his drawings of various fungal mycelium together with diagrams showing the solar system and each rockets route through it. This he now knew would be sufficient.



Two days later at midday Catherine Mulberry and Emily Clarke were in the back garden of the house of 85 Colonial Road. Smith hovered in the alley out of sight, he had intended to stay in the Hall, but his curiosity and something he had realised had got the better of him. The two women stood at the top of the garden clear of the proceedings. The old lady, the Aeon Sophia watched from the French window, as did the black dog. It did seem all slightly ridiculous.

There was a concrete launch pad beyond the gooseberry bush. On it stood the Redstone Mercury rocket. The boy had his Dan Dare Radio Station, he held the walky-talky to his mouth and gave the countdown which echoed around the garden,

‘10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, ignition sequence and lift off.’

Nothing happened, then the rocket disappeared.

There was silence, the two women expecting to see either nothing or a rocket launch with flames and noise, then Smith entered the garden and spoke,

‘He has it seems achieved the impossible, the rocket is now in the real universe and not this one, hence the disappearance, the mycelium spreading at an impossible rate. How he achieved this is beyond science.’

‘But not beyond art.’ thought Catherine Mulberry, Emily Clarke, Billy Taylor and the Aeon Sophia.

The boy ignored all this, his face was very serious, now he placed the Atlas Mercury on the launch pad, he spoke again into the handset of the Radio Station,

‘Base to Billy, the first launch was a success, now the second...’

Again, he counted down and again the rocket simply vanished. So, the audience realised that he was in contact with the other boy, Billy.

Still with great seriousness the third and final launch occurred, at this Emily gave a clap, Sophia and Catherine Mulberry joined in, then to complete the total bizarre event they could hear cheers from around the garden.

Emily said laughing, ‘It’s the deities cheering, this is ridiculous. Whatever next?’

Even more bizarre Mr Smith very solemnly walked up to the boy and shook his hand saying, ‘Sir I congratulate you on your successful mission.’

Smith was thinking,

‘The first Difference between Science and Philosophy and Art is their respective attitudes toward chaos... Chaos is an infinite speed... Science approaches chaos completely different, almost in the opposite way: it relinquishes the infinite, infinite speed, in order to gain a reference able to actualize the virtual. .... By retaining the infinite, Philosophy and Art gives inconsistency to the virtual through concepts and affects...’

And the Aeon Sophia, the old lady in the blue dress and pinafore of dark maroon paisley patterns brought out a tray with four glasses of sparkling wine and a glass of dandelion and burdock. The boy now smiling.

That night certain deities from Northern Europe were very noisy in their celebrations. Others far more refined but still pleased they could if they wished return safely to their origins.

## CHAPTER 10: THE END OF THE END...

Universes end in heat deaths, all that is left are photons, particles of heat at the lowest state so nothing can occur. However, having no mass and travelling at light speed, because of time dilation time stops, and so distance becomes zero. Distance is measured in time taken from any point to another. Once there is no distance, no difference in space, you get a singularity, a perfect mathematical point, and source of a big bang, and a new universe. So, in dying a universe produces a new universe.

Countless dead universes that had been sterile for uncountable time spans due to the living dead being still present, now empty began ending in heat deaths, then immediately becoming a singularity of a new big bang. Some universes similar to the one the Earth was in. The Earth, or the remains of it and us, will need to wait  $10^{10^{10^{56}}}$  years for its heat death, before a new singularity occurs and so new life could occur.

Other universes can and do have different physical constants; some last a brief millisecond then collapse into another singularity. But where these would once have simply endlessly and pointlessly just repeated, now each repetition would be different, novel. In some constants like light speed would be different, evolution quicker, slower. Some with little or no life forms, others teaming with them.

So, the domains flickered into life and if one could be separate from this, Deus sive Natura - God or Nature of Spinoza and see them all it would be a fantastically dazzling sight. This is not possible because it is everything, so you cannot be outside of



everything. Except for two ten-year-old boys who being outside of all this, gazed into their own night skies to see the event.

“Wow!” said the boy, and Billy.

## ΕΠΙΛΟΓΗ

There were several attempts at colonisation of this universe from others. The Abstract Machine filtered out the harmful ones. In doing so creating a whole new set of myths based around the myth of Sisyphus.

In the old myth Sisyphus had been condemned each day to endlessly push a rock up a hill in Hades, only for it to roll back, at night. This was a punishment for his crimes, one of which was cheating the Gods in order to become immortal, so his pointless task would be forever.

A new myth was created in which to try to appease his punishers, the Gods of Olympus, Sisyphus hurled his rock at foreign invaders, destroying them.

And so, in gratitude the Gods released him from his pointless task. Sisyphus became the guardian of the universe.



A NEW BESTSELLER BY J.F.W. (The pseudonym of  
Catherine Mulberry)

## THE GUARDIANS OF THE UNIVERSE

“The attempts at colonization of our universe from outside were allowed by the Abstract Machines where they settled uninhabited worlds, not where life had been.

However, in some faster growing universes a dark cancer began to form, that of a dark force. These crossed universes and created alliances of deceit in long periods of evolution, but in only days in our universe. Eventually a tripartite regime emerged. These now threaten all other universes.

But the doomed Sisyphus in appeasing his punishers, the Gods of Olympus, hurled his rock at the foreign invaders. Thus, he was released and together with the gods and deities, from Inca to those of the Norse, from Asia and Africa, fought destroying the invaders, and so became the Guardians of the Universe. And Guardians of all Universes.”

“Commander it’s hopeless, our death ray weapons are useless against these Guardians, we can’t kill them, they are all immortal.”



