

IN THE LAND OF THE NASTY PEOPLE

FOREWARD

I wrote this in 1971 when I was 16. It's a post-apocalyptic and somewhat naive story; at the time an abiding fear I had was of nuclear bombs, but I also enjoyed reading horror stories and science fiction. I had been taken to a church by my grandmother when I was younger and thought there was a wonderful feeling about it, so I was at the time still engaged with the idea of God, good and evil. I typed it on my mum's old Olympia SM3 (green model), so I've used Courier to capture the feel of the original.

There was, in the land of the nasty people, an 'orrible little creature called Alf. Alf lived in an 'orrible 'ouse on the banks of the big, ugly, muddy, polluted, smelly, disgusting, vile River Conscience. Every day he would look out from his collapsing fortress at the millennium of grotesque bugs in the putrid fathoms of the decaying river. He would stare for hours at the congealing conglomeration, until he became either bored with the unceasing movement, overcome by the unrelenting stench, or decidedly famished. Food, in the land of the nasty people, is veryveryveryveryveryveryveryveryveryveryvery expensive. In fact, food is so expensive that nobody can afford to buy it.

so.

Alf wandered down to the big, ugly, muddy, polluted, smelly, disgusting, vile banks of the River Conscience, armed with a decidedly large net-and a gas-mask. Unless you know exactly what you are doing, it can be a tricky business catching revolting creatures from a nauseating atmosphere (which culminates in a dense smog of visibility ten feet), especially if you are wearing a gas mask with misted goggles. But Alf was an efficient idiot, due mainly to the never ending pains that he suffered from because of his lack of food.

Well, one insane swing and the net found itself in the swirling gore. He waited five minutes, and then he heaved the net out of the waters. Luckily he had for quite some time been accustomed to this practice, for the sight of what then met his eyes would make any newcomer to the nasty people indubitably sick. A writhing mass of hideous entities filled the net, each one trying to wriggle out of the impending doom. Mindless, pitiful creatures of the mire.

ODE TO THE OBLIVION

watery grave

help us please
we cannot think
we cannot see
we only move

and live and die
in a watery grave.

the people, see
they do not know
they do not feel
they only live
and eat and sleep
in today.

It was 2.15. 2.15!! The sound of people in cloth caps and raincoats making their way along the big wide Freedom Road toward the huge black edifice at the very end of the road carried him out of his hovel into the grey sky and bewildered faces of the cruel laud of the nasty people.

There was very little point in watching the football. The home team, Arsenic, always lost. They had been in existence ever since anyone could remember (nobody really cared like everything else, but the team was formed about the time that Stax The Conqueror invaded the disease ridden states of the great expanse during the asphyxiating disease known throughout the land as Nrodliquencyk), and during that time they had failed to score a goal. The only reason he, or anyone else for that matter, went was to shout abuse at the visiting side and/or their goalkeeper, who, at his best, couldn't save a flying bog roll from fatally injuring their left-back. The other ten players were just as mental. Invariably up to six of them would be strutting

about oh the crossbar or trying to rape an unsuspecting corner flag. Another equally fatal factor was that, when they were actually on the pitch, they faced in the wrong direction, and either played the game backwards, or fired additional shots at their already overworked goalkeeper.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

they've scored again

come on the reds
look at this
come out goalie
oh no
they've scored.

you stupid fool
get up
get up
they've scored again.

on the pitch
you're only six
there should be ten
look out
they've scored again.

Over the hill, yes over the hill. Please over the hill. But no. There is no end and no beginning to the fog, the mist and the endless grit of life and death. Hope is there if hope can be found for those who can find but nobody can for nobody thinks. The

nasties are here, the nasties are there. They're coming, they're going from nowhere to nowhere and back to front .

The kids in the street where Alf lived were pitiful. They terrorised old men and killed wild dogs for fun and fought each other all day and didn't go to school so that there were no teachers. "The street". Hardly. The pavement was nonesuch, the road was the pavement the pavement was the road, was the ground, was the floors ~ the houses, was the grit, was the mud, was the very sky. Slag heaps frowned the already mournful sky, worn from the pains of countless ages of black smoke and diesel fumes. It was hard to walk anywhere without falling over some discarded chunk of metal, which formed pile upon pile of rusting junk. Alf clutched his copy of the monthly *Plea*, with its stories of a panic stricken land, plagued with crumbling buildings, disease-ridden ghettos, and mass slaughter by bands of renegade dictators. Already there had been word that the mass armies of Pertzsson the mighty were heading for the area, and evacuation was imminent.

Far away he could hear the anguished cries of expectant mothers calling for doctors he knew would not come, and the cries of the damned, the dying, the remorseful, the wicked, the insane, the kids, the mad animals, and most of all himself. He even thought he could hear the advancing armies that would destroy destroy destroy destroy.....

BALLAD OF A LONELY MAN

the damned

i heard a baby cry today
but not in pain.
i heard an army cry of hate
for love is gone.
i heard ten thousand people
sitting in the dark.
i saw an old man's face today
his face was of the damned.

come inside, no-one's in

what lies beyond the large black door
that stands in front before
me
if i go inside i know
that no-one's there.

A wind blew that, day. It blew through the streets,
round the corners, it blew along the freeways, it
blew along the great Freedom Road, it blew over the
filthy River Conscience, it made small animals run
for shelter, it loosened the already broken tiles on
the roofs, it shattered flower pots, it made
discarded newspapers form grotesque shapes in the
air, it was looking, searching, destroying, rotting
the soul.

DELIVERY

soul catcher

train of thought
blown aside

departing memory
of something past.

on my step
the soul catcher
follows
to endless paths.

keeper's dread
forsaken trust
demented yet
unsurpassed.

the soul catcher
leaves all behind
except
the soul.

The skyline dimmed. All around was silent but for the
unrelenting wind. The streets, at the best of times
not a pleasant sight, took on an almost ethereal
appearance in the rapidly depleting light. A black
cat, its eyes on fire, scuttled down the Heep Road,
knocking aside a dented can in its wake. It was as a
prison.

DARKNESS ROW

solitary confinement

time and darkness wait for no man.
in the shadows, look
a lighter shade of pale.
tinted sun of gloom
bow down

and watch the trail of misery behind.
cry of darkness
cry alone
for you are in
solitary confinement.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SOUL CATCHER

1 And it came to pass that darkness fell upon the face of the land of the nasty people.

2 And lo! Upon the land there was a silence.

3 Behold! There came to pass that there was no time of man.

4 And a dense mist passed over the land. And this mist was called Anaesthetic.

5 In the land of the great white light where the sun -shines as the time passes there was a

word. And the word was love.

6 In the beginning there was the end. In the end a beginning. The light was the time and the time was the darkness.

7 But love was asleep and there was darkness. For time even had deserted light.

8 The life had abandoned the land of our fathers. As it was in the beginning, is now, and forever shall be.

Amen.

"The land sleeps."

"Good. I have seen enough. Eons shall .pass as the mist called Anaesthetic works down to the very core to lay to rest the evil I can feel."

"Please rest. You have worked hard this day. I shall summon the Great Light to open your mind".

"No! The end of the beginning is nigh. Perhaps trial and error is truly false. To end all time of man would rule out pain, for pain is barely known to me."

TRIAL

tie me down

tie me down to a bed of nails
and i will cry.

tie me down to a sea of ice
and i will freeze.

but baby, you can't tie me down
to love.

tie me down to cushions soft
and i will sleep.

tie me down to a blade of grass
and I will smell.

but baby, you can't tie me down
to love.

Over and over his footsteps trod the ever narrowing path of decision. His boots became the lifeline of the word. The great white light was hot, his brow moistened with anguish. The hourglass could not be shaken, for within it, within one grain of sand, was the time of man on which depended the decision that had to be made. In one fell swoop whole universes could be destroyed, yet what is power without purpose?

appeared behind it. It crossed the large desert expanse and disappeared out of view over yonder horizon.

A broken mirror on the ground reflected the bright sunshine. A hand reached down and felt it. Blood stained the sand. The hand snatched away in pain. Soul catcher was silent. The figure walked away. After some time it came upon a gigantic rock formation. With considerable pain it began the mammoth task of climbing the structure. At first it was difficult, the heat beating down on the frail body. But soon the figure became accustomed to the toil, and a steady pace ensued. Upon reaching the summit, the creature felt around in the dust for something that it knew was there. It produced a metallic object that incredibly served as a high-power telescope. It could see as far as the furthest horizon and beyond, but it had to see just one thing.

A long way away stood a magnificent city, the splendour of which cannot be described in mere words. It gave out a light that could be seen from light years away, as if a grounded celestial body.

The figure turned its eyes to the sky and mouthed some incomprehensible words, and then it began to make its way toward the structure.

FORM

starlit sanctuary

watery sands
of shimmering heat
shield the descending horizon
from view.

yet through the heat
a light
an image
a starlit sanctuary.

crystal towers
of melted pearl
from oceans deep
and silver flow.

breathless peace
a land of joy
a craven destiny
a starlit sanctuary.

No clocks, no watches, no chimes, no time. Time is evil. Time creates, time destroys. Time gives, time takes away. The city was happy. No longer the rush, no schedules to meet .Yet. Yet people were wearing masks. The smiling faces were wearing hard.

Subconscious unrest began to prevail. An evil force was at work. Impatient, lustful, edgy, threatening, bribing, and evil emotions were welling up inside each person.

"It's started all over again. How do I fail? Where is the evil?"

"Master, you must not tax your mind so. The great white light is nearly exhausted. You need rest."

"But I can't see it all happen over again. I have never known such failure. I have too much love in my heart to let it be. Somehow I must right matters before the great light dims."

"I say thee nay, master, don't you know that all life will end when the light dies down?"

"Of course I do, but even the minutest power left in the great white light will take infinity to diminish. Trial and error must not be in vain. I shall carry on to the end that which I started."

A city cries out. The city. Failure in the great task ahead will mean eons wasted. For the entire universe is not the same universe without one single body, however small. Hope rests upon faith. And faith exists only in the minds of the faithful. The evil which exists in the starlit sanctuary can be destroyed by faith and only faith. Of the two, faith must always overcome evil, yet there has to be faith in the first place. The great white light uses love to create what is beautiful to man. Something somewhere uses evil to create what is bad. Finding this evil source stands between man and the destination.

THE POWER, THE PLA GUE, THE PERIL AND THE PEOPLE.

man sits alone in a dark room
man knows the power and the peril.

the sun was brighter yesterday
the sun will be dimmer tomorrow.
behind the charade
the sky is red.
towers cheer the saddened trees
beckoning them skyward.
open doors disguise the guilty locks
of people fearing once again.
man awaits the nearing battle
man depends on victory.

darkness never known since
is known again.
a plague on us all.

man can feel the approaching gloom
man is tired of trial and error.
skyline darkness
rips the senses.
sombre towers once of crystal
now reach out and plea for mercy .
cowards flee the life
in a frenzy of uncertainty.
silence breeds
where once a thousand battles raged.
man sits alone in the dark room
man knows the power and the peril.

THE BEGINNING OR THE END?

Open! Open the doors and let the people in! Open the
windows and let the air rush in! Open your mind and

let the truth in! Open the universe and let the evil out!

Think think think think evil out evil out evil out the time is now the time is now. Now .The power of mind can win over evil, but we must all think.

"Hold out your right hand. Do you promise that this oath will be kept by you though death be your undoing?"

"I do".

"Then repeat after me: 'I do hereby swear...'"

"I do hereby swear..."

"'...that I will dedicate my mind from hereon in...'"

"That I will dedicate my mind from hereon in"

"'...until such time that my mind is free...'"

"Until such time that my mind is free"

"'...to the good of mankind and the universe...'"

"To the good of mankind and the universe"

"'Amen'".

"Amen".

"IF THERE BE A MAN WHO CONTESTS THE FREEDOM OF THE SPIRIT LET HIM NOW STAND UP, OR HOLD HIS MIND FROM NOW UNTIL THE END OF TIME"

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BATTLE

no space for error

colours glow
with fiery life;
demanding action
no space for error.

potions brew
on raging sparks
the evil knows
no space for error.

the great white light
conserves the power
for coming trials
no space for error.

grind of teeth
brow of sweat
no-one to lean on
no space for error.

lean on my shoulder

when i'm alone i die a death a thousand times
because i know too well that you are too
and though i know it cannot be
just lean on my shoulder.

personally i care for life too much
for love to interfere in it
but as if i were collapsing in pain
please lean on my shoulder.

i'm in the warm with fires around
but still i feel out in the cold
waiting for what i know must come
you to lean on my shoulder.

crazy fool

you crazy fool
you wait for time
you do not rhyme
you live a lie.

come join with me
in killing time
i mean no harm
be sensible.

You're a crazy crazy crazy crazy fool
You're a crazy crazy crazy crazy fool
I hope you .burn
I hope you learn
You razy crazy fool

you need some help
you show no fire
you aim to tire
you crazy fool.

what have you done

i could have made you a king
i could have taught you to sing
i could have been your son
what have you done?

i would have given you all
i would have made you walk tall
i would have told everyone
what have you done?

i can see myself
on an evil shelf
across the room
a fitting tomb.

i'd have laid down a plan
i'd have made you a man
i'd have darkened your sun
oh, what have you done.

peace

swallows flying in the wind,
water breaking on the shore
the sun shining over all
peace is in the air.

man can work assured
animals do no more kill
the elements are harnessed
peace is everywhere.

*

The battle is long over. Evil is not, love is all you
need, love is all there is. Good has finally
triumphed over evil, peace is everywhere. Thought no
longer corrupts, the soul is out of reach, time is of
little importance.

The great white light can never be extinguished, can never be dimmed.

"I am pleased. Now, at last, I may rest".

AMEN