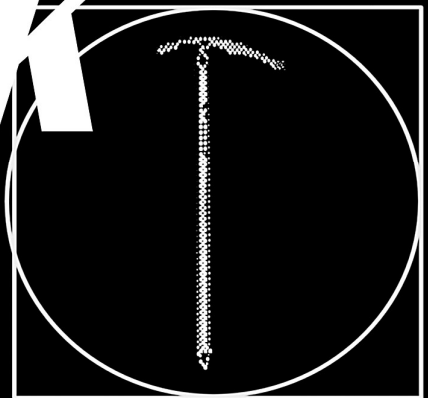


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**Edition 2**

# ***ICE PICK***



# Moldbreaker

By Tim Raxworthy

## II

*“What feels like another place in time, another world even,  
I can assure you is not.”*

*-Morgan Hubright*

The lives of those contained within these following passages all belong to fractured souls, players of only one instrument given to them by their master. These souls search and search for something to make them whole again, forever fragmenting as they restlessly search. It is this restlessness that keeps these souls intertwined as a god in the form of a serpent. Forever and ever they wrap themselves around one another, chained by time and space, all the while continually fading until the final day of earth. As time has continued, these chains have felt the burden of time and have succumbed to rust that has broken the temporal bonds these souls once shared. Something unforeseen has occurred though. We are all in the midst of a retaliation. These gods have become frightened animals, gnashing their teeth as they make their final attack. Overcome with despair and with only a fraction of what they once were, they still create a story in this retaliation...

\* \*

In this chapter we will be changing perspectives, focusing on another character by the name of, well unfortunately at this moment, this character does not have a name. For the sake of this story we will refer to this character as “7”. To describe 7... hmmm ... well first off, the most striking feature about 7 is that they are not a human, but an android referred to colloquially as a “Discebeing”. 7 is an artificial being but they resemble a human life form. They have a basic human form with two arms, two legs, a head and a torso.

Although the shape of 7 is the same as a human, their body is completely synthetic, stitched together with silicone, metal and carbon. Also, on the back of their neck is a small hole which allows them to attach cables for data transfer. 7’s day begins when the window display next to their resting chamber transitions from darkness to an image of a sun rising over a city. What city is this you are wondering? It is any city. Think of the most generic city that you can. That is the city being shown on the display.

After the display transitions, 7 detaches the info-cables from their neck. There is an immediate feeling of pain in 7’s back from pulling the cable out but 7’s metallic suit immediately responds to this stimulus, filtering out only a fraction of what actual pain is being produced. 7’s eyes switch on and the daily morning program commences. This has been programmed in 7

along with a incessant enjoyment for the mornings. 7's creators made sure to design them so that they are as active as possible during the early hours. Their creators, who call themselves the Kujeileva created the discbeings to help supplement the mental state of human life forms. The original purpose for this was to keep discbeings entirely dependent upon human life so that they would be completely at the whim of their programmers.

7's morning routine began with a baseline check, culminating in approximately ten minutes of meditation. On this particular morning, 7 gazed upon a virtual city with an artificial sun that rose above and spread its light across the streets and buildings. As 7 watched this image unfold, the only thing that resounded inside their mind was, "It is relaxing to look at images of light. This relaxes me."

The sad truth to the matter though is that 7's city could not be any further away from what was being shown on the display. The reality of 7's world in a most basic description was that it appeared as a dark slab of concrete and metal, encased with silicone and glowing circuitry — all of this constantly moving, shifting, ordering in a cyclic fashion so that when something did move it always ended back in its original position.

How did things become this way? Well, it is hard to say. Some believe that this incessant need for order was rectified by The Act of Restructuring Earthlike People. This law was what spawned a global genetic identification project that took every nation by force. Each and every government became obsessed with feverishly pursuing what could be deemed as "a good man" or "the best man." These projects led humanity towards a greater dependency upon technology, ultimately resulting in the creation of discbeings.

This particular city was known as The Shell because of its function as the architectural foundation for a second city— the city protected by the Kujeileva and home of what was left of humanity. The Shell was encompassed inside a large dome, a helmet of flashing lights and memory storage units. Its people were known as diskbeings, forged as the tool to fight the fears that plague the memories and identities of those who live in the top half. The Kujeileva designed the city this way so that they could instill order and continual prospering for all. Without the Kujeileva, diskbeings would walk around aimlessly, without inspiration and passion, without understanding and without guidance. Without discbeings humanity would consume itself in its bloodthirsty history, forever plagued by the terrors of the past.

The discbeings were constantly working down there in The Shell, analyzing data, sorting it, and eventually turning it into permanent history. Human social behavior evolved fast enough in the new millennia that a new form of history could be created. This history was imbued with the new concept of genealogical identity and it was the main motivation behind creating a new artificial form of life. These artificial beings could be programmed to account for all recordings and analysis of genealogical patterns and could correctly explain trains of historical events, instead of simply stating and recording an event as it occurred after the fact. Diskbeings work as a collective to achieve this. They are a lifeless mirror that the rest of the human race looks into in order to make decisions. Human beings created 7 and about half a million other diskbeings to

find out more about what human beings are. 7 is part of the 7<sup>th</sup> and newest generation of discbeings.

Today, 7 was tasked with altering the memory of an emotionally damaged human. This human had experienced deep emotional trauma and the Kujeileva believe that she needs another memory to replace her traumatic one. To do this, a couple steps must be taken. First, 7's living area must be arranged into the environment of the human's memory. Fortunately, this is not as difficult as it may sound because the Kujeileva accommodate every diskbeing with living quarters that can shift into different spaces based on memory information. The furniture, wallpaper, smells and lighting can all be modified to fit the surroundings of that memory.

Once this is completed 7 then must interpret genetic coding and behavioral data of the person that they are replacing in the memory. This is a bit tricky because when discbeings shift to another personality and body, they lose certain parts of who they were before shifting. Every time they metamorphize into props for a human's memory they come one step closer to death. As you can probably imagine, going through a rapid change where you morph from one human form into another would be extraordinarily painful, although many do not believe that diskbeings can experience feelings of pain. Transitioning from one brain to the next causes what has been described as 'ultimate ego death'. This is due to standard protocol that a diskbeings conscience must be erased and then filled with another being's conscience only to be ultimately erased again after the memory has been completed. The more they change the more they become compliant with the morphing process. Enough explanation for now though. Let us examine this process in its entirety...

7 uploaded the environment code and watched their living quarter change from a regular living room into an empty white space. The room melted into the surrounding walls. It was becoming the memory of this traumatized female, and now, it was also becoming 7's own memory as well. The metamorphosis was like watching a pair of invisible hands sculpt chunks of clay. The hands pulled a small table out of a pink carpeted floor and then rolled out a dusty television set, placing it upon the wall. The walls pressed themselves into different corners, creating a habitable space. More minute details began to form including particulate matter and the small cracks that appear in the wall.

7 could already tell that this memory had associations with what appeared to be a sexual fantasy template. Diskbeings experience many memories separate from their own so it is easy for them to distinguish what could be described as 'templates' for different types of memories. Some of these templates relate to sexual fantasies, some to sexual inadequacies, others to childhood dreams and nightmares. These memories then get further categorized based on the senses that the body experienced in these memories. Because it is difficult for human beings to remember their memories the way they actually occurred, there is a natural tendency for memories to appear categorical. With the collection of many different life spans of memories, diskbeings have been able to distinguish categories of memories. These categories become more distinct as more observable data was collected.

7 went over to their external hub and checked the behavioral code. The screen had many different files, mostly containing genetic information. 7 wanted to read through the details of the memory. There must be a reason for wanting to re-experience a memory but what was that reason?

Most people who request a sexual memory to be re-experienced are those who suffer from sexual trauma. By giving those who suffer from their own subconscious the opportunity to re-live a positive experience can gradually help them to overcome their past troubles.

The code displayed itself brightly on the screen. A bunch of symbols, letters, numbers and dashes all culminating into a package for another human being and 7's next body. 7 hesitated to initiate the transformation process. There was a part of them that did not want to change. They sat down next to the computer and kicked the wires on the ground around their feet. All these small tubes.... taking parts of them away and filling them with new things. 7 began to feel a sense of dread. They understood well that their only purpose in life was to be a catalyst for other people's thoughts, to be filled with them time and time again. They looked up at the ceiling and saw wires twisting within wires twisting within more wires, all stretching across the ceiling. They stuck out everywhere. Other than their living area, the external hub, all the wires, and a docking pad for their transport pod... there was nothing but open space around 7. They could be a mother, a father, a sister, a brother, a son, a daughter, but it would not matter. Within the near future they would be somewhere else, in a different body without ever knowing themselves nor anyone else. Ironically though this is what also led disbeings to simultaneously know everything about everyone else, but only at the expense of their own identity. Right now... 7 is only be a victim of circumstance.

7 leaned under their computer and grabbed a thick wire. This was the coding transfer cable. 7 took it in their right hand and stuck it inside their neck. They then pressed down on the keyboard and waited for the transformation to start. Their eyes switched off and they felt their body start to contract and release its muscles. 7 fell off their chair and landed on the ground next to the computer.

As 7 looked up from the ground, they felt the invisible hands coming down from the sky. The fingers wrapped around their body, pushing their skin into new directions, forcing bones to splinter and crack. A new everything must be constructed. Just like their living area, 7's body was being tossed around like warm putty. Eventually, 7 would have a body again, but for that moment they were only a small pool of artificial goop.

7 realized something while they changed into this new person. They realized for a second how much they despised being a disbeing and all the things they received with it. There was a hideous feeling of hopelessness, dread and darkness. This darkness appeared as a giant black planet that was sucking in everything around it. 7 gazed upon this planet as it grew larger and larger the deep recesses of space. They themselves were silently floating towards this planet, being slowly sucked into its core. 7's electronic eyes fixated into this intense blackness that was darker than space itself. It's movement was so sleek and uniform, its purpose so much grander than anything that 7 could be programmed to do.

Before 7 could become one with the planet though, a pair of sunken dark eyes permeated into their mind and they let out a scream. This scream echoed throughout the wire filled chasm and reverberated through the metal pipes and other crevices of the industrial living space. 7 collapsed onto the concrete floor with a hollow thud. All their individualized traits from their life had been successfully erased— although it wouldn't be prudent to ask if any of these traits were even real to begin with.

A pair of spindly hands could be seen reaching out of the darkness high above 7. In one hand they had a lever and in the other a voice recorder. The hands let go of the lever and pressed a button on the recorder. A mirror descended in front of their face as they spoke into the recorder, “Long ago there was once a time when humanity believed that something could be birthed out of emptiness. This belief was conceived in the form of a dream imagined in the darkest hours of the night. Now though, due to the path that humanity has chosen, humans have observed their own emptiness to such a degree that was prior unimaginable. Humans have seen what it truly means to be made from nothing and have answered this dream with their own constructed reality.”



Helen thought to herself, “Fifteen jars on the shelf of my new home. That’s a nice touch. I need fifteen glass mason jars to hold my collection of spices anyway. It’s no big deal. I can probably buy them offline cheap.”

Across the room, Helen’s computer screen illuminated the room in a deep blue color. Her web browser had nineteen tabs open, two of them being work related, five about music, one a netflix show paused at the thirty sixth minute, and a couple other being miscellaneous articles about fashion and cars. Helen’s computer was her entrance to the world, like the little bit of light an explorer sees when they reach the exit of a cave. Helen can flip the screen up and see bright, beautiful, square light with absolutely no bars, no prison. Nothing is withheld from her. This had the unfortunate side effect of making her mind as disordered as her web browser window,

“What do I need again? Jars? Fifteen jars out of nineteen tabs. I must sign into Amazon Prime first and then quit my Spotify account. Who made this playlist though? I haven’t heard Simon and Garfunkel since high school. How did that one go again that I loved? I can hear it now... The voice singing, ‘I am alone, gazing from my window on the streets below.’ Yeah! That’s it! Wow, you’re so smart Helen! But what’s my password? Do I even have Amazon Prime? What does the Prime membership do again as well?”

It was at this moment Helen remembered that her train was leaving early on Monday morning. This would be an issue for her. She could not be late to the office or Jeffery would toss around some abusive sentences at her and anyone close within the vicinity. This was especially true for this coming week because of the publishing house’s upcoming feature with the famous author Morgan Hubright. Jeffery had been super stressed about this because some people at the office had not been carrying their weight as they had promised. Helen tried to convince her co-workers (especially Jeffery) that there was more to enjoying the world than simply typing out

words for 'society's benefit'. But for the most part, Jeffery could only see in black and white. For Helen, writing comes off a little bit too self-righteous and so, it does not give her much enjoyment, only useless contemplation taking up her precious-precious time.

Her phone started to vibrate softly against her thigh, and she thought to herself, "Who is this? Oh no, not yoga man again. I'm not giving you my time anymore. Nope, you had your chance."

There was an illuminated bit of text underneath the thin piece of glass with his name attached that read, "you still want to do something friday night?" He turned his auto capitalization off on purpose. "What a dork" Helen thought. "Here. He can have this." Helen copied the link of a Taylor Swift video and sent that to him as a reply.

Helen's breakfast that morning consisted of oatmeal and a sliced banana. She ate this with a tiny bit of brown sugar and milk. While she was spooning out the sugar, she noticed something underneath the oatmeal. A thick manila envelope was raising the bowl slightly, causing the milk to collect on the left side of the bowl. She moved her food and opened the folder up. It was the new draft that Jeff had viewed the day before. Helen found this to be very peculiar,

"How'd I end up with this? I'm fairly sure that Jeff took the draft home with him...Hm... Well... I guess not. I should read a part of it on while I'm on the train. Maybe he wants me to have a copy so I can help him edit." She glanced at the title of the work, *Moldbreaker*. Something about this reminded her of something else she had read previously. Maybe it was just an advertisement.

While on the train, she found a nice spot to relax and read the manuscript. The train had its regular decor, a splotchy mess of turquoise, blue, white and grey. Helen noticed the tribal emblems people had cut into the seats out of boredom. There were two rows of seats that surrounded the perimeter of the train. Helen sat down towards the back between a man who was playing with his sweaty hands and a larger woman whose drink continued to spill on her sweatpants for the whole ride. She was drifting in and out of sleep and when her eyes closed her iced tea jumped from her plastic cup to her plastic pants.

Helen sat down and took the manuscript out.

"7 walked out of their living area and approached the transport pod. The pods blue metallic body sat in its docking area, completely prepared to take 7 high above the city to the memory banks that encompass The Shell. This is where the most vital memory banks are stored. Smaller ones exist around the city but the most consequential memories dealing in dreams, full environmental visual histories, and micro evolutionary analyzations are contained in the wall between the humans and the disbeings. 7 walked up to the pod and pressed the open-door button. The door slid up and 7 entered the shimmering blue capsule. They were a tad bit early for commuting hour, so the pod would not leave for another five minutes. 7 pressed their hands against the glass and inspected each individual finger. The fingers were skinny and dainty looking. 7 liked the way they looked. The last body they had inhabited was more muscular than

this one and whenever they went to check on memories, their body had felt cramped in the transport pod. 7 thought to themselves,

‘But why does this body seem to suit me more than the last? The way a body looks is only a temporary feature, so it makes sense for me to not care about how I look. For some unexplained reason though I still feel a gravitation towards certain features over others. Maybe it’s because of my love for human beings. It’s strange how much they heavily base their understanding of another persons’ identity on visual looks. I feel as if an identity is always the opposite of whatever opinion could be formed by looks alone. Since there is no way for someone to choose the body that makes them feel the most comfortable, human beings must accept a conscious that acknowledges how other people interpret them.’

7 felt the pod lurch. It was commuting hour. The pod lifted off the ground. As the pod lifted itself higher and higher flashes of the outside world could be seen through the shaft. After a couple seconds, 7 looked over the skyline of a dark and glowing city, the lights softly blinked and hummed against the sharp angles of tall buildings. Lights shone through the smattering of windows and at the end of antenna poles. No natural light could shine into The Shell though because of the high and mighty memory walls surrounding the city. These memory banks had grown so numerous in number that they completely encased The Shell, making sure that it sits in its own waste and birth, unable to grow any larger.

As 7 reached the upper part of the city they saw wires dangling from memory banks and green digital screens displaying information. The ceiling was a dark piece of plastic crust leaning over a mega living complex. This plastic crust casted a long shadow for the beings who inhabited it. Occasionally, 7 would spot some movement crawling around in the memory banks. This movement was coming from diskbeings who were working inside the memory banks, crawling around in the endless sprawl of the cities outer most shell. 7 leaned back into the pod. Their days never changed, and they sometimes felt that something inside them had drifted off, something even the humans were unable to relocate.

7’s pod placed itself alongside many other diskbeings who were also commuting to their assigned memory banks. 7 would never have the chance to talk to these other beings. Direct communication would disrupt memory assimilation, so it was strongly advised against. It is also extremely difficult to come across an opportunity to socialize anyway. For the most part, diskbeings live within their own memories and because of this, it’s difficult for them to branch into areas of understanding that go beyond their own.”

Helen finished the paragraph when she heard a voice next to her say, “Hello. Hi. That manuscript you’re reading... I think that’s mine.” Helen’s first thought was that this must be Jeff who was speaking to her. The voice seemed male and she could not imagine anyone else speaking to her. She turned her head and saw someone who was in every way the opposite of Jeff. There was a shorter, well-dressed man with a stylish haircut sitting in the seat next to her. His hair brightened up Helen’s eyes with its blond, almost fiery color. A pair of thick black sunglasses covered his eyes as well,



“You know, I can get you into heaven” He said. “Give me one of your twizzlers. I love the multicolored ones.”

Helen looked at him in shock and with a slight hesitation, her head bent towards the package of twizzlers on her lap. Her hand went into the bag and she pulled out a couple candy ropes which she handed to him. He rolled the candy up into a smallish ball, about the size of a golf ball and stuck it in his mouth. While he chewed, Helen pointed to the manuscript and said, “You really wrote this? I just happened to sit down next to the person whose manuscript I’m reading? Now that would be quite the coincidence.”

The man placed both of his hands on his thighs and then let out a sigh once he finished eating the candy. His hands darted towards his sunglasses. He took them off and started to rub his face. Helen turned away from him and swallowed waiting for a reply.

“No. I didn’t actually write that. I’m lying. I work for a comp--”

“Company”

“Yes. It’s a new startup about people who--”

“I know. I understand.”

“Alright.”

There was an awkward pause between them. Helens thoughts rationalized the situation and she decided to jump upon the opportunity before it could pass her by, “Hey, um, Do you want to have dinner sometime?”

The man glanced back at her with a large frown. He then let out a bellowing laugh that turned the heads of others who were sitting in the same car .

“Oh, Yes. Of course.”

“So yes to the dinner?”

“Yes”

“Great. Can I get your phone number?”

“Yes. Here I’ll put it in your phone.”

The man took her phone in his hand and typed out his number in Helen’s contacts. He put his name down simply as Matt.

“My name is Matthew. And what’s your name?”

“Helen.”

“Helen.”

“Yes.”

“Great. Text me... This is my stop. I will see you later.”

He put on his sunglasses and got up from the train. Helen stared at his tight shorts while he walked out. The doors closed and the train resumed its movement. Helen found her spot in the manuscript again and resumed.

“After about ten minutes, 7’s transport pod slowed as they arrived to the destination: Sector 270. 7 looked around the glowing dome— waves of fluorescent green flowed through the

blocks of memory. Harnesses and connector cables fell from the ceiling for use by diskbeings. There was a feeling of insignificance that 7 felt as they watched the screens flash coding collected over centuries, spanning billions of past lives.

7 pressed the open-door button and grabbed a nearby cable, attaching it to the node in their back. Information began to flow from the memory banks into 7's internal hub, taking the form of video files.

These files were first developed in a small-town simulation and then distributed to the subsequent diskbeings living below in The Shell. The human eye through the addition of android supplements had evolved beyond the pair that comes at birth. Human society's fascination for watching has also evolved alongside technological improvement and it had created a new desire to peer into even the most mundane of events. Everything human was monitored by lenses of glass that turn inside the walls of every angle of the simulated city the sits above The Shell, the city known as Kessiq. Kessiq is dependent on these files so that discbeings can manufacture new ones that help prevent disruption of sleep cycles, diurnal rhythms and communication patterns. All human beings, well what is left of them, are monitored by cameras from the day they are born to the day that they die.

7 grabbed their bag of analyzation tools and swung from the transport pod, quickly pulling themselves up onto the ceiling where they could secure himself into the harness. Once secured, 7 crawled inside a nearby crevice and started to make their way through the narrow chutes that allow for movement in between the multi layered memory storage units.

As 7 worked on the memory bank, they thought about the graduation ceremony that was planned for tomorrow,

'Thank god tomorrow is graduation... I'll finally move onto working with some memories that are far more interesting than those of the normal humans I've been given so far. Perhaps I'll be able to peer into the mind of someone who does alien research up in the crystal palace! Now that would finally be something of interest. The researchers must need diskbeings seeing that their job is so stressful and mind intensive.'

The city flickered as 7 pressed the engage button on their Dream Drill 2.9 and began to screw in each neuron node. There is no room for mistakes when it comes to the work of a discbeing. Every human must have a sound mind and every diskbeing must be attentive to any kind of potential problems that may be observed.

And so, 7 continued to work all through the dark and sunless day, alongside the other 7<sup>th</sup> generation discbeings. The lights continued to flicker as the humans slept in their beds. They would rise soon enough, ready to live their collective dream of contentment. The cracks in this dream were beginning to show themselves though. A seed of discontent had been planted inside the minds of the human race, a seed that was as old as time itself. Change was on the horizon for both humans and discbeings alike, for better or for worse."

# A New Authority for a New Politics: What is the Mortal God?

By Seymor Willis

In chapter 17 of the *Leviathan*, Hobbes introduces us to his conception of the common-wealth. Hobbes writes on page 105, "One person, of whose Acts a great Multitude, by mutall Covenants one with another, have made themselves every one the Author, to the end he may use the strength and means of them all, as he shall think expedient, for the Peace and Common Defence." In this quote we are reminded of the frontispiece of the *Leviathan*, of a man composed of hundreds of tiny men, which here is explained as the great Multitude. But Hobbes left some important parts out from his overall description of the common-wealth, most likely out of fear that he may reveal too much or perhaps because his idea of the common-wealth was still being conceptualized while he wrote the *Leviathan*. Another political writer, Carl Schmitt, writes about this peculiar psychological aspect of Hobbes in *The Leviathan In The State Theory of Thomas Hobbes* on page 26, "Like all the great thinkers of his time, Hobbes had a taste for esoteric coverup. He said about himself that now and then he made "overtures", but that he revealed his thoughts only in part and that he acted as people do who open a window only for a moment and close it quickly for fear of a storm." One of these ideas that is especially elusive is what Hobbes calls a mortal god, a *deus mortalis*.

One method to understand this mortal god would be to link him to other symbolic references outside of the *Leviathan*. This would be detracting from its authors intended meaning and ultimate effect though as it is apparent that in the context of the *Leviathan* this mortal god is meant to be a new kind of authority that is not in relation to those of the past. Hobbes is creating for us a new conception of authority to counter the older conception that authority is received through divine origin of an immortal god. Instead of divinity being that which creates authority, power can only be divine if it achieves peace through its technical perfection at creating said peace, by being a creator *pacis*. This technical apparatus of the state appears next to the mortal god as the *leviathan* which for Hobbes is the multitude of man and machine and the covenants they have with the mortal god. This mortal god sits upon the *leviathan* using it as a tool to create peace

for the common-wealth, but its effectiveness lies in its ability to make certain that the covenants uphold themselves and prevent men to fall back into the state of war. Both the machine and this man-god share authorship for the state they create by continually preserving peace, but both of these authors operate under different methods. Hobbes explains how these two authorships can be differentiated in the final paragraph of chapter 16, "Of Authors there are two sorts. The first simply so called; which I have before defined to be him, that owneth the Action of another simply. The second is he, that owneth an Action, or Covenant of another conditionally; that is to say, he undertaketh to do it, if the other doth it not, at, or before a certain time." This conditional author is the man-god, who will do all in his power to preserve the common-wealth but only by the covenants of his fellow men acting as the artificer can he undertake this preservation of peace in a more technically perfected way than if he were alone. In this technical perfection there is supreme divinity in harmony with a multitude of conditional covenants that effectively drop the older notions of authority. These older notions are that power descends from Adam, or other divine beings that are *de facto* separated from the *leviathan*, the multitude, and that its authority derives itself out from enforcing peace by the subjugation of men, and by the hunting of the *leviathan*. Instead Hobbes is synthesizing Judeo-Christian beliefs with mythological symbols like that of the *leviathan*, expounding new meanings out of them and helping to remedy the common-wealths aversion to reflect on the right of nature or *jus naturale* derived from the state of nature that they may they find themselves in. This is the power of the *Leviathan*, it fuses monster, machine, man, god, and mortal god so that they share one soul, and are bound into unity by covenant and authorship.

There is more to this new authority that we are missing, a deeper meaning that has to do with reflecting on the state of nature, referred to in this quote as the 'natural condition' by Carl Schmitt on page 11, "But 'the deep meaning of his [Hobbes] concept of the *leviathan*' consists of the concreteness of the 'earthly' and 'mortal' god who is totally attuned to the political deed of man, who, time and

time again, must bring him out of this 'chaos' of a natural condition." The mortal god can fuse the shared authorship of the covenants bound together in that these covenants are also bound by natural laws, the *lex naturalis*, agreed upon when a sovereign is elected to represent a population. Agreeing on these laws in writing and speech is a difficult task but Hobbes does give us a note on how to reflect on our right of nature when he writes "Read Thyself". Yes, laws are apparent with reason but they are not enforced by reason and if man has no law to bind himself than he has fallen into a state of war where his right to live is pitted against everyone else. To prevent this the mortal god must instill fear in the common-wealth and enemies abroad, "So that before the time of Civill Society, or in the interruption thereof by Warre, there is nothing can strengthen a Covenant of Peace agreed on, against the temptations of Avarice, Ambition, Lust or other strong desire, but the feare of that Invisible Power, which they every one Worship as God; and Feare as a Revenger of their perfidy" Hobbes states at the end of chapter 15 on page 87. If there is one aspect of the Leviathan that makes people label Hobbes as a monarchist, it is this fear that he points out as a necessary function in preventing a state of war found in the quote above. But, let us quote "Read Thyself" again, because it has large ramifications for our understanding of the mortal god, and these ramification may persuade us to think otherwise of Hobbes as a monarchist. "Read Thyself" points us back to the beginning chapters of the Leviathan where Hobbes discusses what makes the artificer and man, in effect reading out to us what he thinks we are. These chapter in order are, sense, imagination, train of imagination, speech, reason and science, passions and voluntary motions, resolutions of discourse and ends, virtues of the intellectual and their defects, the subjects of knowledge, power and honor, difference of manners, religion, the natural condition of mankind concerning felicity and misery, the laws of nature, and authors. Hobbes presents to us in these chapters a complex arrangement of what makes a man, man. He demonstrates in his complex artifice of man that reading yourself can never be simple and most likely will be met with backlash like that which the Leviathan has been met with many times repeatedly. However, this backlash only strengthens his argument surrounding the need for a mortal god who can then re-affirm in us our human characteristics and re-affirm our artifice being of the leviathan when we have fallen back into the state of nature. This is the deeper understanding of the mortal

god which entails that he must be the most read of himself and the common-wealth, knowing what the common-wealth is and unable to forget the reality of what together they have created, and effectively uses this machine, this common-wealth for a larger purpose. This is what creates fear in men, that the mortal god knows the constituents of man in a mechanical way and can conjure up an artifice of himself that replaces all others. The mortal god knows that people have forsaken their covenants time and time again and so he presents them with an answer to these failed covenants. This answer is the artifice of which they may transform into if they transfer their right of nature and keep peace within the common-wealth.

To end this answer to the question, "What is the mortal god?", I will bring up one more point, which is that the mortal god makes reverence of the immortal god possible. Without a mortal god and its technical perfection of keeping peace, men can not fear an immortal god born of the imagination, as our imagination is derived from our senses that connect us to reality. This is why Hobbes begins with sense, it is with sense which we derive everything and so if there is no immortal god of this earth then how can we conceive of him? Humans are not prone to believe nonsense or imagination as we are balanced in our imaginations with our reason, and with our reason we can ascertain that without a fear of a mortal god there is only fear of man and nature, when everyone is against everyone. Man could fear an immortal god, but this god is not earthly and would need to be born of the senses over time from a mortal god, eventually becoming imaginary and in effect immortal. So when we 'read ourselves' we are accepting the characteristics of man as the *homo homini lupus* as descendent of beast.

# *SEQUENCE FANCY*

## *PRESERVATION*

By Philip Wearing

They sing the false heaven and new hell into the air, and I try my best to think of music as just harmony and vibration. They speak the new desire along more and more human pathways and I fear it will be too late if we do not cut it down now. What kind of animal is humanity? At one point, it was almost as though we were not animals at all.

It used to be uncommon that you'd see a man so willing to eat his family. What about one so willing to sell his nation? And for such a price. Such a low price, such a base desire. What an insect.

It's closing fast behind me. I can hear it crashing through the forest, grinding trees and boulders into liquid, effortlessly. In my haste, I have left some possessions behind. Over time, I have realized that I do not need them.

First it was my coat, then an armband. Then it was the scarf around my neck. I believe someone I used to consider important gave those things to me, but I cannot remember. I've come to see this sort of loss as a relief.

I toss behind me my provisions of food and water, which would be useless anyway if I were to allow them to encumber me to death. I cast off the sword around my waist.

Finally, I let slip from my hand those beads which I have been holding close to my chest for so long. What value is there in...

A rosary?

No...

No, wait! I didn't mean to!

I pray for the first time in months, maybe years. It provides nothing special, maybe some emotional relief. No response.

A thousand limbs stretch upwards. They are all pointed and insectoid, and of varying shape and length. I cannot see what sort of body they are attached to; the limbs cover the surface below like grass. The texture is hideous. I float over the plain as it reaches towards me. I am horrified but unable to react.

Now, I am holding a bundle of clouds and wool. It is soft and malleable. As my grip upon it tightens, it moves to escape me.

Thin arms, of something emaciated and formerly human, reach towards the cloud. Despite my best efforts, they tear off little bits of string and cloth, and wisps of vapour.

It is distressing. It is exhausting. I have been fighting them for a long while, and I want to let go. I want to be left alone.

I am about to give up, and I feel something solid. Something beneath the clouds and cloth. Something that will stay in my hand, and something that they cannot tear away at. It might be something holy.

I pray once again. Now, my state of mind is changed. Maybe I feel slightly overwhelmed? My head feels lighter and I feel as though I might be able to cry... although if I make a real attempt, I find I cannot bring myself to it.

A vision, when I am alone. I close my eyes and see a lens, lifted into the air by dozens of wet, coiling tentacles. There are words within the lens, but the tentacles smear a viscous gel along the surface, making it illegible. I feel a compulsion to read these words, and so the frustration is nearly unbearable.

Hideous beings fill the heavens far above me, each made of a dozen arms and the wings of a vulture. They claw at the clouds and sky and they eat, growing thinner all the while. The sky grows darker, the clouds grow sparse and there is a uniform shadow appearing.

I am the same sort of creature, and I am watching from a ravine far below the heavens and reaching even deep below the earth, leading down to nothing. I shout up: "I am a wretch, and this world is above me!"

And now they become joyous, and shout down an affirmation: "So you are!"

I shout up to them again, and say: "Man is a vile thing beneath this world and tainted by sin!"

And now they become upset, and shout down a question: "And what of it?"

Finally, I cry up towards the sky the thought closest to my heart: "We are all base wretches! Won't you come down and pray with me?"

And at this, they pull lightning bolts from the clouds, and hurl them down at me.

In a dream of the far future, I pray for a third time. Now I feel a touch, a presence, and a response. The experience is such that it is almost as though nothing has happened. For the duration of my prayer I have no sense of time, and the effect on my thoughts is such that I can barely comprehend them in retrospect, much less explain their value. This ineffable sensation takes more than a moment to wear off; when I open my eyes, for a few seconds, I can see the holy value and connections in all the arbitrary things before me.

I see ribbons of white silk flowing through a pond. The pond has a single flat surface, but somehow the surface is oriented in every direction at once; and so the silk is able to enter from below and exit above. Above the pond, there is a light, and the silk extends into the light and refracts the light outward all along its entire length. There is an emptiness and a purity to the scene. It is something I long to belong to.

***IF I DON'T GET IT TODAY THEN I'U GET IT TOMORROW***

To say that you have struggled  
Well,  
that would be forgetting the triumph  
and the pleasure of success.  
All of *that* makes it worth it.  
It's a shot in the dark right now, I know.  
But there comes a time when you must play your card  
So that you can hear  
when your vocation calls  
regardless of if you lose or not  
For it is in the risk that  
the color of your feathers begins to show.  
The dead will forgive and forget like they have been doing for centuries  
But if they smell fear off your corpse than you'll be a dead man twice.

There is a video of the bride  
Speaking for an hour  
And she said "um" and "like" so many times,  
It was a terrible video.

So that's why she quit video and began writing poetry again.  
While she wrote, she came up with a video sketch idea  
And so she put down the pen and picked up the camera.

To spread her legs and fit a cucumber down there.



***SCREAMING ALIEN MAN DOWN HARDY***

Down under,  
The skin of the bible reader,  
Is the mind of an alien.  
Not a freak to human kind,  
But to cruel nature.

Are you sensitive to language?

Then listen to rap music  
That's a 2 x 2 math problem that will be easy enough for your ears.  
Dick is big, Winning, Winning, Winning.  
Chicken more chicken, They scream,  
...Those pagan lords are happy for all the bones  
in the dirt.  
I met a man with a tattoo of a chicken on his arm  
I wanted to kiss his coworker,  
But I don't think he would understand  
The chicken appeared absolutely filled with hormones.

*ZXZ CONTROL PANEL PRESSURE ALLEIVIATOR*

New graphics, Uploaded  
Autocorrect uninstalled.  
Nostalgic memory booting up.

Was I a yellow man, mouth so wide, jumping in the tropics finding coins on top of palm trees?

Question un-authorized,  
The Amazon cage holds your child  
The African virgin  
Spilt blood back at that hotel.

Rich corny musicians  
started a war (the corporations bought on)  
Too bad your origin is too weak to prevent those from taking your worth  
But it is of the world, and the world is for the taking.

Amen for my Computer Brothers.

***MY CORPORATION IS MY ART AND IT IS IN MY MIND***

You break away from the pack  
You young wolf  
Of only 20 years,  
30 years.  
You will have to be alone in this life if you want to taste anything  
Either that or wait until you die  
But perhaps the judgement won't go as you planned  
You tangled tare of twine  
Who whispers all night long,  
Loud only to pass the daytime,  
And to gain the eyes of fertile land.  
Too bad you know nothing of agriculture  
You shivery sham dealer  
Of anxious degraded senses.  
Even the blind man can make scrambled eggs  
That look far better off than your  
Brain.

It is not the 99 percent against the 1 percent  
It is the 90 percent  
Who are simply camouflaged tax collectors  
Against You the 10 percent and shrinking.  
You single individual in a liberated world  
So let me ask You...  
What has freedom really done for the world?  
What is freedom if there is no will?  
And what is will if there is no general will?  
It is coming around the bend  
Give it some time,  
It is coming soon enough.

***THEY TOOK AWAY OUR BODIES BUT NOT OUR MINDS***

The workers of the world unite.  
They should. Just like the Christians should.

The issue though...  
Is of being used.  
The tool being and the mind being  
Brainy and brawny  
Pinky and the brain.

Imagine If all the strong  
Were building the structures of our dreams  
Instead of dicking around at University  
For pure prideful cock fighting minus any chickens of course.  
And then the pig skin jumps again  
And so does the beer of Christ  
What is blocking your way? Is it laughter perhaps?

I sense some desperation in your laugh.  
Perhaps it is something deeper,  
Something that doesn't make a noise?

***YOU WISH YOU WERE NOT A FOREIGNER***

They rip you off cause your skin.  
Lookin like a bundle of cash to them  
Not human like, simply digits.  
Causing inhuman crimes in the past.  
Now forgotten, mindless petty crimes take the focus.  
Evils now swell inside the mind  
Sharper than a Four Hundred Dollar knife.  
Impossible to not think these things,  
To fake morality is no joke  
And can only breed degradation,  
Resulting in a final public castration.

Already dead in the fore-fathers mind,  
Not the future they envisioned in anyway...  
We remember them but will they remember us?

Humanity has no fate  
Only filthy tongue  
Prideful masks of Tin and Bone  
Rotting in the hole of flesh,  
Only to cry once more as a Child,  
Letting go forever once death comes as a departure  
from  
Emotions,