

# Dragonfly & Other Texts

by Hakim

## 1. Dragonfly (for Sydney Smith)

A cast iron stove, patterned with oxidation like fungus or moss – outside the window black icicles hang from the rusted chimney – in the farmhouse parlor with its Persian rugs & brown flowered furniture – images accumulate in layers of winter fat.

Like frog eggs under the ice, words wait for a thaw to get out. Ice-mud-buried crocus bulbs expect to expose themselves to the next convenient warmth, unbutton their yellow velvet flies to groping insects.

Or the archeology of glaciers: paleolithic quickfrozen reptiles biding the millenia till some cosmic ray uncrystallizes them to blunder through city streets, cars honk & crash, crowds run in panic, scientists ponder prophylactic counter-catastrophes – crash, crash, eek. Bricks scatter onto the asphalt, windows splinter into slow arcing prisms, dragonflies skimming the bright mirror of a different season.

The pond unlocks cell by cell, a plasmic cloud of algous hormones vaporises, intricate slimes & worts cook in the sunlight, salamanders browse on a sluggish tide of gel & larva.

Meanwhile all the desires have also awakened from their fetid masturbatory hibernation, the woods & pond are like an open mouth waiting to be filled, a huge carved renaissance marble monster's jaws, gaping between trees, a lichen tinted doorway into the hillside where forty years pass in a night of dancing.

Here winter's already cracking up, melting from inside out – in the pond of the poem, hillbilly children are playing, children who live in trailers & tarpaper shacks, eat possum stew & grits, sleep with their sisters, eat cornbread & redeye gravy, greens & fatback – towheaded boys with bad genes, pretty Kallikaks with pale blue eyes: they wade in

muddy shallows till their overalls are stained green, they swim in the soupy water, strands of weed stick to white skin stretched over bone. On the surface their hair floats back like the halos of pond creatures, amphibian reverants haunting forests which are hot as sweat. Playing like bad dogs, wrestling in the mud.

They lie in the sun, which evaporates the brackish drops from their skin back into the dense air – the sun which chafes like dry fingers on their cocks – their cocks which are like cool pale reptiles, stiffening their heads toward the sun, flickering with electricity like invisible two-pronged snake tongues.

Lazy white boy jacking off under the Spanish moss – pirates might wander through this lagoon, capture him & tie him up naked – spits on his cock & works it around the loose foreskin, pink as a shiny bruise – his wet hair hangs over his forehead like strands of cornsilk – spit drools down onto his fist, pumping with a squelching sound, some creature of the swamp – protoplasm spurts onto his belly, he lies back rubbing his groin – his eyes close, he drowns.

He feels a quick vibration near his genitals, he looks up: a last drop of sperm has drawn a dragonfly, hovering near, looking for something to eat.

Next to the victorian woodstove, smoking hemp rolled in cornhusks, I am turning into an iguana. My basilisk eyes are like snow in the moonlight. Unpleasant shamanic healing techniques are suspended within me like goldfish wintering beneath the ice of an ornamental fountain.

I'm conjuring on the crude level, staring at a crystal hung in the window, half paralyzed by upstate January, the twofaced month – living on welfare in a green painted trailer out on the road to the quarry – 1950's photos of naked boys with hardons – a collection of old rusted cars in the back yard, mantled in snow – the firewood, fragrant as an alternate state of consciousness.

I pretend to doze, my two-foot-long tongue flicks and curls around the dragonfly, then reels it back into the cavity of my brain.

## 2. Remittance Man

Somewhere a town with one rotting wharf, a post office, a few bars, lots of palmtrees, perhaps one item of mildly historical interest (say the wreck of an 18<sup>th</sup> century colonial-baroque church or a dusty museum of ex-votos and memorabilia of forgotten rebellions), one Chinese restaurant and a few Syrian shopkeepers, a beach. Who needs Europe, I mean like all this culture and history, what's in it for me? I can get it out of books, right? I can make it up myself. These dead stones, those black princes and contessas, not even decadent anymore, glued to the television probably, nothing happening, stuck in the past. So why not someplace in Latin America where there's not only nothing happening but nothing *ever* happened? (Well maybe some Indios got iced, some general with an Irish name, bad equestrian statue in the central plaza) and for preference a nice corrupt rightwing government, tontons in dark glasses with scrambled eggs all over their chests – but far away, in the capitol – no leftwing shit *here*, no guerillas (at least not in *this* province) – Ah, senor, we are tolerant of the eccentric expatriate here, as long as he contreebutes to the local economy if you see what I mean senor. Right, these people are as American as you or me, let's hear it for hemispheric consciousness and *tropicalismo* – I pay my respects to the local santeros, I'm learning Spanish, I buy a few bottles of wine for the local priest who spent five years in Miami and likes to discuss theology – I'm discreet, the boys come and go by the back door – there's a little fountain in the cracked courtyard of the villa, it jingles in the afternoon, the ceiling fan stirs the mosquito netting, the boy moans and clutches the sheets, spasms out of control, three little drops of spunk on my tongue, falls asleep just as the parrots come out hunting the evening insects or to mate in the flowering trees, I light up a big corn paper of the local weed, meditate on the brown body glowing in the fading light. Come, only in such a place, which means nothing to us, where there are no *ideas* built into the very fabric of the walls, will we be free to see nothing but the power which indwells all palpable things and makes them simply *present*. Haven't you noticed in the past few years a sort of pall gathering to shroud the world, as if history had built up such a stupid din that no one can concentrate, as if it's all been tried and found at best inadequate, as if even the spending of unearned money on art and pleasure would do little more to alleviate the sour taste of experience than one breathmint will do for a man with rotting teeth? Now, this town I'm thinking of, it's not that one will regain

one's innocence there (et tant mieux, d'ailleurs) but rather that one might vampirize the innocence of this half-forgotten corner, almost time-warped back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century or at least say 1911, yes, grow rosy on the aura of a primeval boredom, repose of the spirit against a backdrop of painted palms, trombones and guitars, a rumba perhaps or some song once popular in Havana in 1949, so perfectly meaningless, a fat moon about which not a single good poem has yet been written, too bright, too vulgar, too New World to have inspired anything but the most banal love lyrics written in the most inelegant Spanish, rendered occult by the Dahomean counterrhythms and the scent of jaguars not far away in the jungle, just beyond the banana plantations, a culture defined by United Fruit and the ghosts of the shamans, empty now of all but the figure of the sleeping boy, his cock growing stiff again with dreams.

### 3. The Wolf and his Boy

At a bend in the river, a scattering of wood frame houses, not so much a village as a torn net, made with strings of mist: a white clapboard church, a bait & tackle shop, an old airstream trailer, a few dead cars & toothed upended farm machines. Love spells are *inversions*: the power of desire is mirrored back as the power of attraction, a homeopathic philtre, passed seven times through the glass of distillation

A black floorlength cape frogged with silk knots, a velvet collar, declassifies the overly slender longfingered adolescent, makes uncanny the soft beast-eyes behind the sockets of his venetian half-mask (framed above by straight cut brown bangs), its jet ribbon tied over the shaved nape of his neck: alone & speaking to no one

Tracks cross the river on a spindly iron bridge: below it a hobo jungle, a few tarpaper shacks half hidden in the rain streaked woods. A gray farmhouse: in his cold attic room the boy studies himself in an age-yellowed mirror, slipping the black broadcloth cape aside to show his skinny white legs, his goosepimpled flank

On the wooden table he lights a candle in front of the mail order pamphlet on Marie Laveau, its cover an old engraving of her tomb. In a coffee can he burns a clump of Indian grass for incense. Into a cracked

saucer he pours seven drops of stolen perfume over a scrap of paper with his name & the name of the man he thinks about. Then he pisses into a dirty milk bottle, & measures out seven drops of it with a teaspoon, steaming slightly in the candlelight

He cuts his finger with a penknife & squeezes out a drop of blood, mixed with a long opalwhite dribble of saliva, into the brew; then pulls back the flap of his foreskin & jerks till the bulb grows pink & spits a stream of thin seminal fluid over his fingers, drooling into the saucer; stirs it with a twig & mixes in a spoonful of sugar. (A bottle of coke or cup of strong black coffee will mask the flavor)

A car whirrs past in the rain outside like a soft owl. Somewhere nearby is a man who will burn for this pallid 14-year old in the carnival mask, now sprawled on the edge of his creaking brass bed. The people driving past don't know it, but fever will consume this man till he comes & tells the melancholy boy what to do, to spread his white legs & be licked by a wolf's rough tongue.

– *Halloween, 1982*

#### 4. Abandoned Camp

green thoughts! Even nature itself becomes the back-cloth of your libidinous tropes! Adirondack pine, grouse brush & woodcock brambles along the dirtroad to the marsh, blackberries & raspberries, goldenrod & cardinal's-flower

slip into a sunlight-mushroom-scented copse, an orphic bower: eleven-year-old camper on your lap, Ceder Lodge Mowhawk Scout short pants down around his bare ankles, sparking him off while you inhale his blond voltage

the balsam of his ludic sweat & bruises. The Camp Musical Director gives piano lessons in a roughhewn stone octagonal gazebo on the lake, a secluded corner hidden by trees. One morning I passed by & heard as usual the childish haphazard plink-plunking, the man's voice hectoring “no! no! start again!” etc

but why the curtains drawn? I paused to eavesdrop, suddenly in the middle of a scale heard a treble moan & giggle. Edging spy-wise round to the back of the little pavilion, up to my socks in lakeside mud, I found one curtain a quarter inch askew

but what's this? The piano lesson going on? 'All right, let's see you take it at a faster tempo now... plunk plunkety-plunk...' - Ah! On the sill of one window a tape-recorder, playing the sound-track of yesterday's lesson

on the tatty couch a ten-year-old camper with straight wheatgold hair to his shoulders: sprawled out, wearing only a pair of dirty sneakers, the rest of his clothes scattered about the room, underpants draped over the piano keys, music master kneeling on a worn Chinese carpet, the child's skinny brown legs wrapped around the tutor's neck

and the canoe trip up the brook, lazy fishing weather, selfborn lotus stars on the teabrown water, the great blue heron, ospreys lofting over the marsh – the orgoneblue air stiffens you and you think of drifting here with a thirteen-year-old camper drowsing in the bow, fumbling his naked knees, undoing his fly, the sweet unseeded jissom popping out, splashing into the cool water, scattering the waterwalking bugs, a gapemouth perch gobbling it up

the old boathouse, shingles rotting off, the upstairs sunroom with windows facing the lake, on firefly nights the boys visit you there, smoke cornsilk on the unmade bed, get naked together, I spied on you maybe from a rowboat with binoculars, you never think to draw the shades, the whole camp whispers about those candles, those damp jackstains on the sheets

there can be no compromise with law, they'll never trace the bum checks to this backwater town in Boondock County, not even a grocery store for twenty-three miles, retired troutfisherman living in Airstream trailers, lake-front property for sale, the desolate pines

already the first leaves begin to turn, the mists rise toward the lovecraftian stars, some days it rains, the cool late August damp makes me goatstiff – I saw you one night at the campfire, you were in the shadows with that little towhead, took his shoe off & made him press his

toes into your crotch till you clenched your teeth to hold back the sweet wet pain

Autumn manifests itself, the children return to their parents the misers of love the real world school oppression television boredom lonely jacking off over the math homework

amanita, fly agaric pushes through the fallen leaves like bright rainy dogcocks. Nature becomes Cupid's mirror, swells to the bundle of Pan's reeds. Sunlight rubs against your musty clothes, the day is like boy's flesh, you spend into the azure void

## 5. Eclogue

Invocation:

Daygear shifts a notch, the world locks into its shadowless moment, never mind how many times before. Two youthful “shepherds” enter the glade, as usual. The effect of sitting immersed to the neck in the catalytic spring, with a small waterfall crashing over the head: from a mesmeric silver pipe they smoke crushed amythystine crystals which cause them to salivate and grow vivid. Syrinxpanic congests the local cretaceous limestone but its humors do not disturb the shepherds in the least – indeed, for them it is a kind of repose – after all, from a certain point of view they are haunts themselves.

No shadows. Insects collide through shafts of light in random molecular paths, giving away the key to patterns of drowsy chaos. I am standing in the glade, a man with a beard, wearing a woman's dress or hierophant's robe – tented & split by a foot-long erection – tutelary guardian, anointing my bronze yard from a phial of silvery unguent – perhaps this ritual self-abuse brings on the seasons, quickens the bud as I turn green with verdigris in the rain, in the somber and unkempt glade, sweet noble rot of leaves around my pedestal.

One of the seasons is dressed in soft leather boots that become tight leggings, revealing diamonds of flesh between the many buttons, flaring away at the thighs as if blown by the wind, swooping up over the back as a cape till it clasps with a jewel at the throat – but the whole torso is left bare, the nipples, the navel, the hairless groin. On his curly head a mushroomshaped cap. In his hands he carries symbolic attributes, I'm looking right at them but somehow I can't tell what they are.

Purplish smoke spirals up from the shepherd's pipe, forming a bridge toward absolute noon, a kite with cut strings & tail of violet haze, drifting into the cobalt sky. Each shepherd has brought with him a sort of alien lyrelute, lacquered black as crowswings. From a chrome thermos one shepherd pours smoked tea into camping cups, the kind that are made of tin & unfold like accordions. In the leafy bower they loosen their robes and rub their groins under the thin striped cloth, the sun cools them like reptiles.

Lament:

“Cosmic dualism doesn't bother me, the world wasn't created by a demon, I'm too intoxicated to fall for that. The fumes from this cup of tea, inhaled in the right frame of mind. The number of shades of green!

“The fear of death is always present, no matter what eschatological fancies one believes or does not believe – a susurrous of piping dread – but let's be honest, fear of death is the sap of pastoral, it gives an exciting undertaste of bitter Time to the idyll, a striking counterpoint to what otherwise might seem too plush, too Arcadian a melody. The true gentleman does not worry, indeed there is nothing to be worried about; he offers hospitality (lentils, bread, leeks, oil, cheese, wine, black fruit); he is not misled by conflicting reports on the nature of palpable things.

“What then needs to be lamented? For even though it passes through me as a cloud before this classical sun, some darkness



still touches the goathorned day, some astral dirge, some complaint of separation.”

The other shepherd replied, “Lament is a sort of masturbation: Harmodius & Bion the shepherd boys are absent; without their testimony even this landscape seems to fade into anxious insubstantiality, as if the cells of day had lost the biomorphism of the light.

“The County School Board – the STATE (that stupefying monolith which concretizes every fiber of self-imprisoning abstract thought into a paralytic gem of nausea) has stolen them away from our shamanic devices, from the yearning of these enchanted trees, these ethereal dryads who long to see them here again, bathing naked in the pool, playing their simple pipes, fingering their reeds of flesh, the sweet white snakeheads between their summergilt thighs.

“Memory, like a flower, is always at the peak of its invisible perfume. Even chaste friendship is a gift for which no panegyrics suffice to thank the gods. But to have known the taste of their saliva, their authentic bodies in our hands, the valid silk snouts of their pricks against our teeth, pubescent flavors on our tongues as evidence...

“At least we can celebrate the loss, & see which of our elegant wounds can distill a purer style, a more effective elixir of masturbatory remembrance.

“Let this glade-guardian, this corroded bronze with his perpetual orgasm, let this idol's spirit judge between our stroking lamentations, the goldgreen light of our rival songs.”

### Song Contest:

First Shepherd: “Harmodius: his hair hangs in tangled black strands to his shoulders, sometimes caught with burrs or fragments of leaf – a dirty bucolic boy with black fingernails, touch of goat in his hairless armpits, the green eyes of a rural

thief. His skin is like new brown sunlight, bruised or thornscratched from running naked; his feet are grass-stained but shapely; he wears a torn kilt of soft hide held up by a belt of knotted leather, a necklace of little bones & feathers, lost beads, a silver key; he plays pipes as if he had goat's ears. While the herd browses he sprawls in the shadow of an overhanging rock, forgetting his duties & rubbing & yanking at himself, letting the hot noon fondle his bare legs; then eases open his breechclout & displays himself to the unseen spirits & to his curious dog-companion, panting in the shade; the landscape sighs, the air takes the shape of a giant invisible mouth as Harmodius spits on himself & closes his crystal eyes..."

Second Shepherd: "Bion's hair is colored like a late afternoon in autumn, darkly translucent as the cities of the bees; unkempt and hyacinthine, it gathers in rivulets on his bird-delicate shoulders, & for this alone my song deserves the laurel. But his eyes glint so dark & feral & wideset that I seem always to be staring-down a metamorphic halfling, untamed, slender as a newly-weaned kid, lying there with nothing on but a pair of black socks, caressing himself on a tangled blanket under a tall tree, his cutoff jeans & polo shirt scattered on the grass, thin ankles crossed, using thumb and finger on his little white bone, dreaming away the naked minutes of the forest's day till a clutch of sunlight splatters in his lungs & nipples & curls the slanting rays into a strung bow, then a sleep like the coagulation of gold into a sheer pane of glass, a window open on this landscape, this precise landscape which we are studying..."

First Shepherd: "Love of Harmodius skewers my spine, like an ox to be roasted over a pit of shadowless light; I am like an adolescent girl when I see his groin, with its almost invisible 'emerald dust', and the electric wand that will gag the back of my throat. He swims into my arms in the pool, he kneels on the bank, clinging to the overhanging bows of a tree, I taste the water that runs over & between his buttocks..."

Second Shepherd: "The love of the gods is dangerous. You

might see Bion riding a white stag in the forest, its antlers bedecked with golden chains. If it were not for my rustic poverty I would buy gold chains for Bion's throat & wrists – that would be true religion! Kneel at this hidden alter in the backwoods, this tabernacle with its little white mushroom, growing stiff & showing its stalk etched with blue veins, its bluebrown cap peeling open, its pale wet head. The oracles are boyish games; all around us, the trees, the limpid spring with its beard of cress, all is exactly what it appears to be – and yet without their shadows things are suddenly naked to the very nerves & veins, voyeuristic, numinous, aroused, already wet with semenlight at the tip of every atom where it unfolds itself into green nothingness, swelling, turgid with subterranean essence...”

Judgment:

The two shepherds unsash their robes & stand before the statue, rotting away in its green corner – their crooks in their hands, slippery as peeled grapes & purple with venom – they pinch their own nipples & squeeze their dark orchid sacks. The vegetation god faces them, its coppery stamen tipped like a pomegranate's teat.

So much for the contest – soon they'll spurt on my ancient brass beard & my ithyphallus, green as a churchspire – volts of mercuric sputum, melted beeswax alabaster all over the corroded jade velvet of my robe – I who stand in jasper golden pain, stiff for all four seasons, I will receive the benefit of their desire, the seeded musk of their idyll.

## 6 Blurb for a Lurid Paperback

So fresh, so innocent in their blue school blazers, some- one's handsome children – or so you think! But little do you know, o normal happy

people, grown-up, adult – how these blond greeneyed creatures are possessed by an unimaginably ancient evil, returned from its cloacal Kadath-long dream of subterranean vastness once again to terrorize the bright-lit vulgar day of parents & teachers & responsible fullygrown materialists – sickening wickedness from out of a dim & buried past, sunk deep in your stopped-up septic cerebella! Your own subconscious soidisant consciousness! Frauds! Drooling pinheads!

The children: playing happily, so pretty, so strangely... desirable. Some demons must have possessed them, or else why would *you* feel those hormonal surges emanating from their icy blue eyes, so penetrating, so strangely... knowing? Unspeakable possession must have awakened those sludge-slime-sucking primal screeches that rend the midnight of your goodhearted heterosexual well-deserved half-hour of bedtime reading.

What are the kids up to in the attic? The cellar? The old treehouse? The sickeningly green swamp, alive with spermshaped reptiles & wriggling vulval fish? Are they telepathic kids? Demonseed sown from passing saucers? So blond, so soft-limbed, their classical red lips seem so strangely... sensual. They're conspiring against you, you clot, you shit, they're plotting like prepubescent Masons, whispering in corners: Let's carve up an adult or two! IO PAN! Evoi!

Evil children, so smooth, so warm in bed, so filthy, not yet human, perhaps not human at all – demonic rituals in bed, beneath the sheets, in the memory-haunted attic, barbaric rites, skulls of small animals hanging from silver chains around their naked necks. They're out to get *you*, schmuck, and \$3.95 will tell you why... and how!!! in breathless strokebook prose.

Little boys in the Halloween basement, dressed in lurid ghastly costumes, bones painted on black silk, leering red masks & tails with points hanging between their rounded devilsilked buttocks, scheming to take over the world with ESP, calling up turgid brimstone elementals, worshipping forgotten Baals of Canaan , carving pumpkins & masturbating under their ghost sheets. Just a childish game...? But then... why are the adults disappearing one by one? Flicking out like so many interrupted TV programs? You, the responsible dying reader, will be the sacrificial goat of their fiendish erotic red-meat vengeance, their

pearl-skinned electrifying eldritch shenanigans & switchblade demonism. Twelve-year-olds smoking necromatic dope! Abysmal spine freezing horror of paperback children!

And who am I, that I dare to address you so? Ah, you must have heard of me... read of me... how there are always renegade adults who fall under the spell of the evil children, who do their bidding & serve their cause, initiate them into foul rites & age-old forbidden lusts, set up front organizations & secretly worship the blond hyacinthine-locked cold-eyed beautiful children who plot & conjure & steam & pulse with unnatural stiffenings & gobblinesque malpractices? That's me: the slave of the possessed ones, the aliens, the little invaders of your bland FDA-regulated universe, purple-stamped like government-approved meat, "Unutterably Dull". I do their bidding, I lurk around playgrounds, recruiting fresh new innocent faces with hearts of aeon-old decadent laziness & pristine sabre-toothed mischief. Yes, I am virtually *one of them*, by virtue of my ancient calling, shaman-charlatan, crook, pervert, drunken maledictory bard. Come, I've the key to the attic, & a candle to watch them by, the children, so innocent, sweeter than faith or law or morality or sanity: evil lover of evil children. Beware, beware: in *this* book, we win!