

Ziggurat Terminal

Thomas Metzger

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Five-legged beast carved in basalt. Face of a Babylonian warlord and body of a desert flesh eater. His eyes saw for centuries into black sand and dust, into the thickened skin of the earth. Cities and cities, temples and temples, mountains of bone above him as a grave. He is a protective godling, seeing forward and seeing nothing.

Aryan ideal prototypes stare the same way, proud and defiant. The same direction: to a sterilized future. Pesticide, Prussic acid, radiation, defoliants to cleanse the future of all life.

This is fascist religion: Ziggurats on the armbands and Nuremberg rituals on the Ziggurat's crown. This is the temple of state religion and religion of state. Exterminators stand in huge formations around the temple: gas mask goggle-eyed.

The Law comes down an order from the top. The Letter and Spirit and long arm of the Law. Avatars of the swastika god, ziggurat god, stars and stripes forever god. Idol of state worshippers, saluters, bowers and scrapers and pledgers of allegiance, worker bees, worker ants evolving as they ingest the poison. They grow stronger for the hive, growing more resilient to survive the nerve gas future. The first ant touched by toxin dies, and the tenth and the hundredth. But soon one is born who can live in pesticide, and the tribe grows in that direction. We evolve to meet our poisons.

I can die only once and I regret I have but one life to waste for my nation. I wish I could eat poison ten times and die a hundred twisted deaths for research. I wish I could help science build a better future.

Progress gives us ziggurats, pyramids, slave-driven galleys, Nibelungen werke, Dresden firestorm, fatal food, nerve gas, chlordane, cancer of the eyes, the bladder, the rectum, tongue, fingers, throat, brain.

My father's head after six years of cancer was like a skull with lamp shade membrane stitched on. He was a polyester Mittelwerke slave, starved for sunlight. Cancer ate him from inside, a slow fire and a slow hunger. The brain grows empty, the hands, the face, the skin eating itself.

The snug blanket of cancer is tucked under our chins, Atlantic to Pacific. Our bodies grow insane, abused so long they desire only abuse. Cancer cells hunger for chlordane, ultraviolet, red dyes, tobacco, caffeine, sugar. The body builds death organs without names, not for adaption, but to bring to an end insane life.

And cathode rays cook the new slaves, well-tanned, well-fed, well-groomed. Narcotized by their own beauty. When our cities are dug out from the black sand and dust, our skeletons will be found hand-cuffed to terminals. Our remains will be found with lips seared: too long close too tight sucking the tube. We can live now on the rays; no air or water or nourishment is needed.

Would a food processor allow an apple or pumpkin to go unprocessed? Or are they determined to become grey-green slime, frozen nodules, clods of inert matter? Would a word processor allow these words to go unprocessed? Unpunished? Or are they determined to become white noise, pabulum, a dull pulsing in the ears?

Cathode ray sedation terminal regulation police state shock rod of patriotism silver electrode probe lobotomy: cut out and cauterize the brain tissue which contains the will. The technopriests build a hive of neural slime: chew up grey matter and drool it as glue. Chew up wood, skin, blood, earth, vegetation, air, sound and expel it to bake in

the sun. Mud dauber religion: excretion and accretion to build the Ziggurat, the city, the fortress wall, the temple gate, the idol.

The five-legged beast standing guard, staring into the nullified future. Poison red glow on the horizon and the sun setting all day. The beast of religion breathes no air, eats no food. No poison can kill it. Poison is its nourishment. The beast's eyes are null, but see. They are burnt, lidless sockets, but they can see infinitely forward.

The number of this beast is one. The number of this beast is one. The number of this beast is one.

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