

The Gravedigger's Lament

Tell me lies later

(and Bury me deep, Ma, I've come home to die)

melodious sonnets read and composed by Harry Haller, Judas Iscariot and of course Adolf Hitler

By Dale Estey

POWER. Call upon what is wished - and command. Destroy what is hated. And those who are loved, for they are destroying me.

Magus, magus, magus.
Illio, thorus, ragmillion.
Tatao, armunum, zoezatza.

From the joys of Hell I call you to the damnation of Earth. From the pleasure of complete destruction I order you to continuous tribulation. The life of a thousand deaths. To this tortured spot of the universe teeming with madness and greed. The ruination of all. Where everyone fears midnight.

"Ah. Midnight."
"You come."
"Midnight. That time. Oh that time. So close to death."
"I want you to..."
"The lighted candle oozes across the table."
"I said I..."
"Blood oozes from the tattered picture frames."
"Listen to..."
"Shh. Shh. Petty, petty thing. You brought about my existence, and are no longer needed. You have been erased. No more than a smudge."

A dream? Or a storm? Baby carriages full of used telescopes. A naked man and woman slipping out of their skins and clinking to an old-time tune. Snakes. A writhing palpitating, turbulent tangle of slaving snakes. Slender, green, and full of dark venom. Fat, red, and ready to burst with glutted gut. Yellowed-brown and tightly coiled in preparation to strike. Hanging from mirrors and sliding from the water taps. Entwined in hot masses beneath the snow, waiting to break through the hardened crust. Sliced and placed in stews, sandwiches, pies; a fingerlength head ready to strike and hold on forever. Snakes which breathe with dry little gasps. Snakes closing their eyes in the flash of an exploding sun, knowing that they have won.

"Not quite yet."
"Ishtar. My beloved sister in Hell."
"Yes, my dearest diseased

brother. I have been sent."
"But why?"
"To tell you that he must be restored."
"Who?"
"He that made you appear."
"What? Him? That pathetic little..."
"He can be useful."
"I do not like the idea."
"You have had so many. It will be nothing to let this one escape. For awhile."
"For awhile?"
"A short time."
"I will get him again?"
"Of course. The fool will fall."
"I hate to let them go."
"No matter. Come my reeking brother, come. I will make it up to you."
"Now?"
"Yes, my loathesome lover. In the best way that I always do."
"I come. I...but him. What of him?"
"What of him indeed?"
"I mean - what will he do when he is returned?"
"Do?"
"Yes."
"Why, he'll put it in a story, of course."

And if the world were to end tomorrow - announced in the papers and editorialized about profusely - what would you do? Get your instamatic camera and take a picture - then send it away to be developed in two weeks.

"Trash is trash son, no matter which way you screw the porcupine."
"But I love her ma."
"Lord don't let the turnips rot. Why did you ever have to fall for the likes of her?"
"Aw Geez ma."
"None of that damned profanity, if you please." [a smile] "C'mon; if you can't tell your sweet old mother, who can you - eh?"
"It's not that I don't want to."
"Well such lemons - tell me then."
"It's so hard. How do you describe why you love someone? There's the colour of her hair."
"That ain't nothing."

"Huh?"
"Won't be the same colour as the roots."
"Sure would like to find for sure though."
"Hah. Isn't hard to see what you're sniffin' after."
"Oh ma."
"Well, what else?"
"There's the way she dresses."
"I gotta admit she wears it well."
"And the way she talks - and what she thinks."
"What does she think?"
"She thinks strange ma. Not like you and me. Lots of the time I don't even think she's on this earth."
"What's the good in that?"
"I don't really know."
"Sounds as crazy as a loon that's been eating fruitcake to me."
"And the way she treats me."
"How's that?"
"It's hard to say. Sometimes, when we're alone and I can tell she's enjoying one of her moods, she... well, she treats me as if I'm with her, as if I understand what she's thinking."
"Do you?"

"Sometimes ma - you know, sometimes I really think I do."
"Sounds OK."
"Yeah. Yeah ma, that's OK. But it's the other times I can't stand."
"What other times?"
"When she lies to me."
"Does she lie to you?"
"A lot. Yes ma, she lies to me a lot."
"Why she do that?"
"I don't know."
"That's bad son."
"Yeah, it's bad. It really kills me."
"Maybe you should keep away from her."
"But what would I do?"
"For a woman?"
"Yes."
"Well, there's always Elvira."
"Elvira. Hell ma. Elvira's as exciting as a fart in a hurricane."
"We all gotta fart son."

If all the world's a stage - one is forced to wonder who the stagehands are.

Aw Janis, I would have given you a piece of my heart if only I could. Come to think of it, I guess you already do own some of me. You've accomplished that much - and anyway, getting into me would have been just one more ball and chain, wouldn't it? Hey, I grooved on you at Monterey, when you first started, before they knew about you. Before they got to you. Ah my friend, you never had a chance. I could see that right from the beginning. You gave too much, just too, too much. Oh man, you went so far - so fast. Too fast. You gave until there was nothing left, and they still wanted more. You should have said 'no', let them go screw themselves. But you couldn't. That singing, screaming, pounding body just went on and on. Too much life. Too much even for your grand state of Texas to contain. Sometimes I think of what it would be like to still have you alive. Playing with that big Maybe. Yeh, I know, a real bummer. Past tripping is a failure way. If you'd lived less you might not have died. But then, it wouldn't have been you, would it? Anything less that all just would not have been you. They think it was booze or sex or dope that did you in. But they're all wrong Janis. You just burnt out, didn't you.

During the not-so-distant conflagration fondly known as World War II, the good burgers of a central European village - situated near a 'rehabilitation' camp for their Hebrew brethren - were dismayed to smell the sick-sweet odor of roasted flesh coming from the compound. One local resident, irate because of the food shortage he and his fellow citizens were suffering, wrote an indignant letter to the local paper. Although he did not wish those of the Jewish persuasion to be unduly treated during their "instruction", he felt it wrong that they have roasted meat while others did not. That same evening the head of the regional Gestapo visited the letter-writer and laid his fears to rest. It was all just a part of the

psychology done, for being ro swine.

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