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r.a.lafferty

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r.a.lafferty

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THE ELLIPTICAL GRAVE

We are imprisoned by our enemies in a fortunate place.
We are a body. We are a banquet.
Now we open a transforming secret and feast upon it.
After much feasting we will be quiet
For a day and a night and a day.
Then the Spirit will come and move over us.

And I will go for holiday
And shovel air like sandy dunes,
And mow the deepest earth like hay,
And harvest skies from high balloons.

Prometheans who taller flames would crave
Will harried be by stridency of throats,
And tricks of ghosts,
And by the hoofs of goats,
And sorcery

into elliptic grave

FAIR HILLS OF OCEAN, OH!

The Dolphin comes, the Dolphin comes!
With Triton trump and Ocean drums.

The Dolphin comes on storm and squall.
Of problems he will solve them all.

The Dolphin comes, All hail, All hail!
Let Emperor and minion quail.

The Dolphin comes, it's He, it's He!
The Hero from the Western Sea!

"I come. With this you'll welcome me
Obedience on bended knee."

The Hills of Ocean skip like lambs,
With curling scorn and booms and swishes,
More seething than intrigue of clams,
More bumpy than the minds of fishes.

Old Dory Song Book



"When older King is overthrown
A fish-face shall possess the throne.

"When Khar-i-mod is dumped or dead
A fish-face shall be King instead."



Nostradamus Dolphinus

"But a Dolphin is not a fish."

"Not a fish, madam, no. But he is a fish-face."

Palace Revolution, a Play in Nine Acts
by the Tyrrhenian Tyrant

STRANGER FROM BEYOND THE SKY

The handsome stranger cast his eye
On Shirley-girl and gave a sigh.
"Oh talk a while," he said, "with I."

She liked his noble knobby dome.
They dined at the Hippodrome.
She fell for him, she brought him home.

"Oh mother see this guy of mine,"
She said. "He's from a noble line.
His I.Q. soars to 9-9-9."

But what the mother said was "Yoik!
I doubt me, girl, that it will woik.
It stikes me that he is a joik.

"It isn't just his extra eye,
Or that he lives beyond the sky,
Or has more toes than you or I.

"Or whalebone teeth. But it's a shock
When from his brow the cuckoo cock
Pops out and carols 'Eight o'clock.'

"Oh give him, dear, I beg, the boot.
You no more need this alien brute
Than fishes need a parachute."

Said Shirley "Stranger, it's been keen.
I loved your mouthful of baleen.
And now I beg you leave the Scene."
He wept a tear. The tear was green.



MORE THAN MELCHISEDECH

The Monster is accursed by fate,
HI HO!
The Monster's saving comes too late,
HI HO!

Perhaps fate changes yet, or worps.
Make hymns for him on golden horps!
"You'll have him not," the death-bird chorps,
"He'll drown until he is a corpse."
HI HO, the gollie wol!

Oh Giulio is a Teras Weird,
HI HO!
He raises possums in his beard,
HI HO!
We works the rivers and the brine,
The way he gobbles joints of kine
I'd never have him in to dine,
Except he is a friend of mine.
HI HO! The Gaderene Swine!

The bare account it is unfair,
HI HO!
The bare account it is unfair,
HI HO!
It leaves out all the hide and hair.
HI HO! The gollie wol!

Be she alive or be she dead,
HI HO!
Be she alive or be she dead,
HI HO!
She'll serve baked brains from the Devil's head,
HI HO! The gollie wol!

The Teras has a mane and crine,
HI HO!
His back is like a porcupine,
HI HO!
His eyes have got the runny blears,
He has such awful hairy ears,
HI HO!
His brow it has a low incline,
His instruments of knotty pine.
HI HO! The Gadarene Swine!

Giulio, the Monster and Teras, is a swine yes, and of the Gadarene species. But there is a secret about him. He is also an ocean-sailor, a river-sailor, a lake-sailor. He will not drown like the other Gadarene Swine. That's what he's so smug about. And it's for this reason that the Gadarene Swine Song is a horn-piping Sea-Chantey.

- The Gadarene Swine Song

IRON TONGUE OF MIDNIGHT

We hack the pillars pretty much,
We overwhelm the props and clout them,
We need not sanity and such,
We get along as well without them.

The Ornate Squares are strong and clean,
The Robber Barons sleek and gobbly,
The tongues are hot, the Gangs are green,
What matter if their eyes are wobbly?

We once were apt, with noble stead,
With coursing blood, and mien to please ya.
(Oh crawl into the narrow bed
And cover with the quilt 'amnesia'.)

Oh no! We'll scale the mountain tall!
We'll dare the crags and dare the Devil,
More high than any one at all,
To Sanity's bare working level.

This is the world in Kin and Kith.
These are the bricks they build it with.

This is the farce, and the fortune too,
On the happy hills of Woomagoo.

These are the hands that bless or rot.
These are the Fire-Tongued Prophets hot!

Those are the streams that fill it up.
These are the ones that missed the cup.

This is the group that really cares.
This is the World begirt by Squares.

How did the scratch precede the itch?
How have the poor become so rich?

How do we *know* what they do or say?
We're only the guys who write the play.

Only the Hulks will search so keen.
Somewhere an Island! Somewhere Green!

These are the prey of the rampant slugs.
This is the case that drives you bugs.

Never a world so fair and bright.
It's only haunted, they say, at night.

ARCHIPELAGO

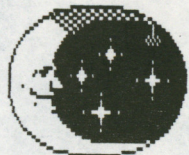
(Overleaf Poem)

Fill every bucket, every pail
With shouting squid and booming whale.
This torrents on a giant scale.

A tumbling oceanic main
Of hurtling flesh and gushing brain!
So rich, encounterful a rain!

Fill speedily each spacious pot
Against the day it gushes not.
Our hearty heritage runs hot.

Drink swift the blood of Chanticleers.
This spate that animates and cheers
Shall barely last a thousand years.



DARK SHINE



These have their way with me:
New Cities today,
Quails from the sky a-fall
Earthquakes in May.

Light the fire and make it go,
Start the wind and let it blow,
Enie meenie money mo!

We are the spies who warn and sound,
And now we're buried under;
But still we warn from underground
With restless buried thunder.

Our clan is cloaked in golden flame,
Our name unspoke must be.
We walk with gods and share their fame
And geniality.

MORE THAN MELCHISEDECH

Does It Need The Great Forgiver?

Is it true you have abused it?
Have you battered it and boozed it?
Are you sorry you misused it
Horribly?

Does it need the Great Forgiver?
Is it feeling sensitiver?
Oh tell me how's your liver,
Mr. B.

Is it muddy as a river?
Does it rattle like a flivver?
Does it quake a lot and quiver
Tenderly?

Is it mighty coy and clivver?
Comes it down to now or nivver?
Oh tell us how's your liver,
Mr. B.

No, no, those are not comic verses. They are death touched tragic verses. It had become a life-and-death matter between Bagby and his liver, and death won shortly after these verses appeared in the world.

Works And Days

This is the day to crack your heart.
This is the day it falls apart.

Here is compassion hoked and hammed,
And a K.C. Swap is a swap bedamned.

This is the Count who meets count-down,
And a dead man wears the triple crown.

Here is the fleece, and the golden gloat.
The endless ends. And the world's a boat.

It's a shattered world, and end of fuss.
A new world comes, and it isn't us.

This is a duel, and the bill of cost.
Oh sign it not, or we all are lost!

The Melk is bust, and a clown, and toff.
He had it all there, and he booted it off.

This is the clock that stopped at twelf.
This is the snake that swallowed itself.

Thou Melchisedech

Thou Melchisedech, replevin,
Be you either lump or leaven.
Choose a road from one to seven.
Cleo Mahoney. Seven Roads.

Thou Melchisedech, the brambled,
Deeply weathered, widely rambled,
Find the world completely scrambled.
Margret Stone. Tablets of Stone.

Tu Melchisedech secundum,
Surgens nimis nunc jucundum,
Deus tam dilexit mundum.
Henri Salvatore. Archipelago.

Thou Melchisedech pathetic,
Not descending, not beget-ic,
Duff, you'd better be noetic.
Cris Cristofer. Works and Days.

Thou Melchisedech, the odd-ski,
Stand not fearful like a clod-ski.
Follow Noah and Zabodski.
Bascom Bagby. Letters After I Am Dead.

Sine Patre, Neque Finem,
Tu Melchisedech ordinum,
Panem proferens et vinum.
Bascom Bagby. Letters After I Am Dead

WHEN ALL THE WORLD WAS YOUNG

And if the babe is less than ten,
He's given to a woman young
Who utters him anew, and then
(For better diction) splits his tongue.

What matters if from gallows-tree,
I dangle on a rope?
I hold me fast to virtues three;
The greatest one is Hope.



NO STONE UNTHROWN and
SON OF NO STONE UNTHROWN

I'll say when comes the time to rue it,
"The woman tempted me to do it."
An evil woman warped and witty
Who travels under code name 'Smitty'.

P.J.F.

No Sturgeon, Trout, nor Filchman's Daughter.
He swims in yet more ditchy water;
And were I not a washy-wishy
I'd nomenclate what kind of fish he.

G.W.

He gets confused in counting dog heads,
He runs with slammers yet and grog heads.
To get him in the solar plexus
Ask why they ran him out of Texas.

B.M.

He ain't a golden eagle neither.
He's more a kind of jive or juke bird,
Or barney owl, or finch, or either
A plain New Jersey rookey-dook bird.

L.S.D.C.

He writes of ancient worlds and wonders,
He looks exact like Colonel Saunders,
The flowing gestures, the Vandyke him;
He even fries fried chicken like him.

U.K.L.G. and R.A.H.

The Queen of adult juvenilers
And while-a-time's uptightly whilers.
But what is she, to use the fine line?
A bit more mannish-writing Heinlein.

And he's, to put it vicey-versula
A bit less mannish-writing Ursula.

A.C.C. or 'Is That You, Art?'

He knows all about two-O-O-One,
And the echo bouncer's heart;
He knows the future next to none
And he drew its dinkum-chart.
But the Devil whoops as he's always done
"It's clever, but is it Art?"

S.U.

In ninth preliminee event,
Hung like a Texas elefant,
The pride of neos! (A propowse,
A Texas elefant's a mouse.) **

H.E.

He cries like Alexander proudly
"Oh where's more worlds to conquer loudly?"
He wraps himself in prose that boggles,
His eyes are hid by deep-space goggles.
His thread shall Atropos not sever.
He shall be thirty-nine forever.

** This refers to photos of S.U. as 'Heroic Male Nude' in one
of Tom Reamy's magazines.

T.C., P.D.D., L.d.R.,
D.K., A.E.N., L.N.,
a.c., A.P., R.S..

They prove the rule of 'Mike-and-Ike'
That guys with beards all write alike.

S. (C.) D.

He rages in non-sequential stages
Through sev'nty-nine and eight-C pages
With all the verve of daytime possums.
Sweet sucker of divergent blossoms!

R.S.

Mesphistophelian beard and eye!
They'd say (of one of lower level,
Magnetic less, nor fame so high),
"Hey boy, he sure looks like the Devil."

T.F.M.

A jangle of a tinny drum.
"Oh watch the way I bang and boff it!
Aim high! Aim high! I yet may come
To fill the shoes of andy offutt."**

** andy offutt doesn't wear shoes; that's just the way he
has his feet painted.

B.B.

Oh noble nose and noble profile!
(Believe him that he'll not buy off-ile.)
Remember, when you glim his gimmick,
That Ben's part of his patronymic.

I.A.

Of copiosity intense,
He cribs or cobbles or invents
A book a month and never wavers;
And he's *Gott Selbst* to true belavers.

F.P.

Each era gets the Andy Gump
That it deserves. Aw grump, aw grump!

D.G.

A fishy, swishy nothing-there,
A little bit deprav-ed;
But girls say "Naught of fire or air
Is half so fair as David."

P.A.

A kid with natch'ly curly hair
And natch'ly kinky brains,
He wins a Danegeld every yair.
We'll never catch the Danes.

R.E.V.I.E.W.E.R.S.

More worse than Greekers bearing gifts,
Beware of pigs with poisoned arrows;
Of guilt transcending any shrift;
Not honest boars, but oinkie barrows.

E.D.I.T.O.R.S.

Oh denizens of stenchy sties,
Cheap-shotters all! (And bot-flies hover.)
You are-when, hap, the better guys
Run out of pearls- the swine left over.

ENVOI

Three things are onager manure,
And on the fourth a malediction:
A rebel on a sinecure,
A commentator cock-a-sure,
A paragon a little quuur;
And sacred cows in Science Fiction.

R.A.L.

A minstrel with a busted harp,
He's sharp,
But not so varry.
Oh take him back to Tulsa
Cause he's too young to marry.



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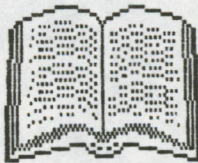
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