

David and Goliath

1. Little David, July 8, 1999

Little David clung to a grass blade and waited for Goliath to come along. Little David carried the stone with the Angel of Death in it in his mouth, but it wasn't something he said, really.

Little David did not know when Goliath was coming or even if he was coming this way, but that didn't matter to him. He was made to wait, created to wait. He was created to cling to a grass blade and wait until Goliath, proud Goliath, powerful Goliath--who would not bow down to Dr. Hymn, who wrote those Father songs, who actually fathered things down in the cranberry bogs, who would not pray, who would not say I'm sorry for being me, being free, passed by.

So, Little David waited. He waved his feelers in the sun and waited. He waited all day and he waited all night. He could wait the whole summer if he had to—it was how he was made. He would die obediently waiting if he had to.

Then one day Goliath came by! Oh, praise God! Goliath came by walking his dogs. Little David put out his legs and grabbed on.

2. Goliath, July 10, 1999

Tick bite on my back today. Little bitty deer tick about the size of a letter of print in a book, or a comma. But not black, near invisible. Little vampire beak, little proboscis buried deep along with the head. Use an anesthetic so who knows how long it has been there? Never even felt it until now when it itched.

Lydia reports there is a red welt around the body when she pulled him off. No Lyme disease ring that she sees. Damn things are so tiny you never even feel them crawling up on you. This one had probably been there for 24 hours or more.

I wrestle with all the dreams I have on the July 4 Boundary Waters storm which practically leveled the place, blew down some 12,500,000 trees. I have about 100 dreams on this including the one where I was at the bottom of Sea Gull Lake and a damn Zeus of a lightning bolt is trying to . . . sleep with me, have sex with me! But I don't get anywhere with the material until I try to tell it from the point of view of the storm, itself, appalled at its behavior!

“Why did I blow down all those trees!” etc. Sort of like the Id monster from *Forbidden Planet* sitting in a therapist's office trying to understand why it does what it does. I have to get it to see who its creator is, what Dr. Morbius has summoned it to destroy his enemies. Once I tell the story from the point of view of “the monster” who had to be raped before becoming a monster the story clicks and I get through a first draft of it. But wrestling with this material is hard work!

3. Goliath, July 15, 1999

Damn tick bite seems slightly infected today! The red mark is bigger and it also itches. Of course, this is the one spot on my back I can't reach! Little buggers seem to know this and aim for such spots—almost . . . like they were intelligent. Like little arachnid terminators come to knock off any John Connors, or even better Sarah Connors, his mother!

I work on the big “Devil in Flour Lake” piece today, about the dreams I had up there at Flour Lake off The Gunflint Trail concerning the Salem witchcraft event. How I saw the good Reverend Parris of Salem down there on the bottom of Flour Lake sitting below the throne of the blue bird-demon Satan from Hieronymous Bosch’s Musical Hell panel. Saw him! Cowering there, fearful I’d see him, bring to the surface the Puritan deal with the devil to raise hell in ways beneficial to the church.

Like possess little girls, including his own daughter, with fears of Bruce, with hell maw big enough to swallow you whole into damnation. Yeah, and I hear the *Jaws* theme behind me on the strings as I stand here in this Sistine Chapel of a place with Parris cowering there beneath Satan’s throne. I see you God! I see what you’re doing here down on the bottom of sleep to scare the hell into people!

4. Goliath, July 17, 1999

The tick bite is way worse today! It is all puffed up and black now at the center. I can barely lean against anything it is so sore. May have to go see the doctor I guess, despite knowing this is a damn Terminator attack. Can’t go today as it is Sunday.

I work on the big Eurydice poem today—“Eurydice in the Bookstore.” Eurydice up from hell where she has been repeatedly raped by every evangelist’s shadow to raise hell. Like Parris raised hell into his kids to create the Rosemary’s baby of the Salem witchcraft hysteria. Like Dr. Jekyll raises hell by having Mr. Hyde rape Eurydice to create new diseases.

Eurydice in the bookstore like the poor raped woman in *I Spit on Your Grave*, or Karin, from Bergman's *Virgin Spring*, nothing but a trench coat on over the poor body with the Pope's Kosovo semen still leaking down her leg. What in the hell do people think happens when you're abducted to hell on your wedding night—a party? A helluva good time?

Eurydice futilely looking for signs of her husband, Orpheus the governor poet, long since dismembered by politicians from Plato's Republic in any of the books, magazines, newspapers. For any word that he is alive and can stop the wasteland that has poured from her womb in hell. What do theologians think the cursed womb of Eve means? What do they think “to bring forth in pain and sorrow means?” That labor is painful? That having a baby is hard? No, it means giving birth to Hitler, or Ted Bundy or John Wayne Gacy or any human monster. That is pain and sorrow. That is what a cursed womb brings forth. And a cursed womb of creation brings forth AIDS, the Black Plague, brings forth earthquake and drought and tornado—brings forth the wasteland because Orpheus is dead and time cut off Uranus's dick so Mother Nature might run the show.

And she finds no sign of him. Not a single sign of her husband, of his lyre, of a poet with power, of a phallus capable of fathering evolution. Oh, lots of Lewis Lapham irony, tons of computer zines claiming castrated technology will change the world. All sorts of New Age drivel about Ashtar fleets and channeling down angels but not a goddamn thing about her husband, or about raising her from hell. Not one word about her and what it feels like to lie beneath Billy Graham's shadow as he squirts Abaddon's army of demons into you. Only the paranoid whispers of Y2K conspiracy theorists, the analysis of powerless pedants, the human genome project and “feminism” by Maenads!

By evening I feel actively sick. Dizzy, tired, listless like some bedraggled dream amphibian just crawled up out of the disease infected pool of Bosch's Paradise, with God, the physician, out front feeling Adam's pulse!

I get the chills later, before bed, and have to pile the blankets on despite it being a warm July evening. I pretty much decide I will go see a doctor in the morning.

5. Goliath, July 18, 1999

What dreams last night! Fever dreams. One of a white tick, a tiny thing down on my dream notepad, swirling a sling in one of its creepy legs and calling itself "David!" It let fly with whatever was in the sling which hit me in the back, not in the forehead!

Next thing I knew I was lying on a gurney outside Parkland Hospital in Dallas, where they took Kennedy after he had been shot, except this Parkland was in Berkeley, California, city named for Bishop Berkeley, the Anglican philosopher! Maybe I was sick, but it felt more like I had been run over by a truck from behind!

David, the tick person was here, except now he was the size of a man, kind of like The Tick cartoon character. He introduced himself as the "physician's assistant," and that my doctor would be with me shortly, was returning from a symposium on circumcision in the Zenith City.

Just then a fellow wearing a white coat appeared around the corner and came up to my gurney. He introduced himself as "Dr. Hymn" and said he would be taking over my case which he had diagnosed from poetry tests as "acute Prometheanism." I had to get up off the gurney then and accompany Dr. Hymn upstairs to the examining room.

This is all I have time for before leaving for my appointment over at St. Mary's Clinic in Haywain. I hope I can finish the dreams after I get back. Maybe I can make the drive over there by myself! I feel really woozy and weak this morning, must have a considerable temperature. I really didn't want to wake Lydia, have her drive me, waste most of her day.

6. Goliath's Wife, August 20, 1999

This was the last entry in my husband's notebook before his hospitalization in Haywain. It is the last entry he ever made. I used to complain about how much time he spent writing in his damn notebooks! I was even jealous of them sometimes, like he had an affair with them. But now I miss his constant work in them—it had been a kind of sacred duty for him. I think he felt he was writing a “world record,” a dream record of how the world was being created below the surface.

My husband fainted in the waiting room at St. Mary's Clinic before his appointment with David, the Doctor's Assistant. By the time they got him to the emergency room at the hospital his temperature was 104 degrees and he was having convulsions. It wasn't until weeks after his death two days later that he was diagnosed with Samuelosis, the newest and most deadly tick borne disease.