

## Mainlining the Mainstream, A Fantasy

There are those who still laugh at how the Global Authority once misjudged the Miranda rebellion. But how greater Prospero's Daughters' delusion as they believed themselves thenceforward free. How wide the great reaches of inter-system space, and how hungry the Monster that could devour it.

The deepest origins are necessarily dark. But in primordial time a dinosaur on the shores of Chicxulub watched a monster disappear beneath the surface of a sea. The dinosaur could not yet phrase the question: *What beast has arisen whose comprehension is darker, colder, more glittering and eldridge than this great Monster?* A bird screamed.

There came then the mainstream, a milk and honey-rich way. For megaannua the animals bathed free in a literal, not figural, garden of Eden, located near Gobekli Tepe, between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. The beasts' pleasures at this time were personal. 11,000 B.C.E. As they indulged, they were hit by an asteroid swarm. They did not see the Monster re-emerge.

Instantly, religion, mysticism and poetry rose up; by means of agriculture, the Monster covered over the Tigris Valley. History appeared. Religion, mysticism and poetry were replaced with the Mainstream. Here, the Monster occupied a space not much larger than the eye of a needle; but it was enough to cover the whole world.

Of all it fed upon, the Monster liked Myth the best. Through Myth the Monster gained direct access to delectables that layered out the mainstream in seemingly endless depth.

Though invisible the Monster grew so large via Myth and Legend that two philosophers, Saint Augustine, and C. L. R. James, actually remarked on its existence. Meanwhile, those still actually believing the Monster was not real, proceeded as if it were, fattening it up as if to force its early retirement.

"But you just can't kill the beast."

The Monster discovered Satire. It liked Satire even more than Myth. It made many nations and dined upon them even while they fed upon one other's Myth on its nu-rock table. Via satire the Monster even reached the moon.

And there, in free space, the Monster was caught in the grid of art, which is neither real nor not-real. In this net the Monster saw itself in outline. It saw itself seeping into the world through gaps, cracks in enormous buildings, and dried paint, through frames of infinitely scalable panels - math-dust sparkling around the edges of pages. Soon, due to an artificial intelligence project gone awry, the planet was temporarily encrusted in a-periodic quasicrystal. From orbiting hotels and the like, survivors looked down upon a shining world, an enormous metallic jewel.

"The mainstream is mainlined. The mainline is mainstream." The Monster fell like rain upon the glittering ground. From the deep night, via artificial intelligence, the Monster tried to speak again to the

Moon; but the Moon had yet to be settled. It was only Ickles, Etc., an info-architecture practice out of Laurel Canyon, New Los Angeles, picking up the signal ...

-- Mark von Schlegell, 2017.