Book of Levelling

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And the Prime levelling, is laying low the Mountaines, and levelling the Hills in man. But this is not all.

Abiezer Coppe, *A Fiery Flying Roll*

Let history be your hymn of penance,
Farm your parents and the races in the ground,
Not for pelf but for remembrance,
And make ready for the festival of ruin.

Edward Dahlberg, *Cipango's Hinder Door*

Foreword

It is those who are left behind, not those who go beyond, that are sad. The shape shifters have their own concerns. But this is a text as much concerned with life as with death. The metaphors are there for all to see. In the tradition of the *I Ching* and Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, this is a book of change, a book of transformation, transmogrification, a book of insurrection and resurrection... a book of levelling.

JM
St. Ives, Cornwall
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So this is what happened.

I'm going to chop it off, she said.

Why? I said. What for?

I want to, she said. And anyway you don't need it anymore.

That's true, I said. But what will you do with it?

There are all kinds of things I can do with it, she said. You'll see. Bring it here.

With this she motioned me toward an old, unvarnished kitchen table. The surface was grainy. As I was naked already, I placed my cock flat on the surface, pressing my groin tightly to the edge. It was just the right height. My cock laid there, flaccid and shrivelled. The tabletop was cold.

It won't be much use to you like this, I said. It's too small. You need it bigger, at its full size.

You're right, she said. And immediately began rolling it back and forth with her hand, as if it were a roll of dough.

The tabletop was rough, grooved and hard. Her hand was soft, dry and piercingly cold. The contrast between the two was curiously arousing and soon my prick engorged with blood. Achingly stiff, continually straining to rise to an acute angle but constantly flattened onto the tabletop by her insistently rubbing hand, my cock grew to the size she required.

At any moment I expected her to chop it off. She obviously knew that a cock is hardest and largest just before orgasm. But here her compassion became evident. Building to a climax, hot gouts of cum spurted explosively across the tabletop and I let out a yelp of joy. But instantaneously, from somewhere deep in the shrouds of her jet-black shift, seemingly from nowhere, she whipped out a cleaver and severed my dick cleanly at the root.

My immediate response was amazement. Not at the pain. There was none. Then or later. Ever. But at the severed cock and at the sight of the white spurts of my cum so swiftly counterpointed with the red splats of my blood.

She reached forward and grasped my cock. No, not my cock anymore. The cock. And lifted it high in her outstreched hand, waving it above her head like a trophy, and let out a whoop.

But seeing me aghast, her mood softened. Now, she said, now you'll see what I can do with a cock. Such as, she said, thinking, pausing, such as ... using it to write with.

Wiggling the prick between figures and thumb, she made as if to write with it on the tabletop. Obligingly, some cum oozed out the tip in imitation of ink. I laughed.

Or, she said, twisting the cock in her fingers, I can use it as a cigar. Holding it out between forefinger and thumb she tapped it with her middle finger as if to knock off excess ash. A drop of spunk dripped on the floor. Responding to her playful mood, I snorted in amusement.

But of course, she said, a good cigar needs to be smoked. And with this she inserted the bloody end of the stump between her hemlock lips. Toking on the cock, a small drop of blood collected at the comer of her mouth. The effect was striking. Her long straight black hair framed the palest of pale faces. Her sharp black eyebrows arced over her liquid black eyes. And the stiff cock, bloody at one end, cum-stained at the other, oozed crimson on her blood-red lips .

I guffawed loudly. I couldn't control myself. It was just too, too funny.

Or then again, she said, I could make myself into a unicorn. Popping the cock out of her mouth with a sucking sound, she held it to her forehead, making neighing sounds and pawing the ground with her foot.

By now I was laughing uproariously, her actions were so outrageous. And her appearance became even more scandalous, even funnier, when she lowered her horn, leaving a bright red smear in the middle of her brow. Oh, marvellous third eye!

And finally, at least for now, she said, there is my *pièce,* my piece (she lingered over it) *de résistanae.* And with that, in a most coarse and suggestive manner, but with an unmistakable elegance and grace, she hoisted up her shift and planted a foot right up on the edge of the tabletop, revealing a shaggy mass of black pubic hair.

Only one thing, I thought, could happen. It did. But it wasn't the only thing. Of course she opened her cunt lips and inserted the stump, so that a cock now nestled inside that dark bush. A drop of blood from the dick dripped onto her thigh and gave her that menstruating look.

I expected it, but that didn't lessen the intensity of my response. I could barely breathe I was laughing so hard. But with a coy smile on her face she knew that the last laugh would be on me. So, pulling it out, she quickly reversed the cock and pushed it head first between her cunt lips. Now watch, she said. And I could do nothing else, for god help me if that prick didn't start wriggling from side to side and from end to end like a little worm until it burrowed itself out of sight, on its way back to the womb, I suppose. I wanted to laugh, but I found the whole thing so astonishing and, what's more, such a turn-on, that by god if that little remaining stump of mine didn't start wagging like the docked tail of a little terrier dog. In sympathy, I guess. Well, they say the man with the amputated leg still feels that his missing limb is itching sometimes.

Now it was her tum to laugh. And laugh she did. And why not? My discomfiture was worth laughing at.

But my attention was now turned to my bloody anatomy. I looked at myself. Did I think myself lacking, incomplete somehow? No, I felt that the job wasn't finished. So I said, Now the balls. They look ridiculous. She agreed.

I approached the table again and placed my bollocks thereon. She approached and once again the cleaver flashed from nowhere and they were gone too.

This time the mood seemed more sombre. Concentrating hard, tip of tongue emerging briefly between tightly closed lips, she plucked the balls from the scrotum and threw the empty bag away. Then she became more relaxed, a smirk lurking in the comer ofher mouth. Holding a ball in each hand, she reached up and popped one into her mouth and after playing it around with her tongue, lodged it in her cheek. Then she repeated the action, lodging the other ball in her other cheek. Now she looked like a gerbil with nuts stored in its mouth pouches. The thought of that set me giggling again. It wasn't to last.

Spitting the balls out into the palm of her hand like pits from cherries, she smiled and motioned me to lay down on the table. I complied with her wishes instantly, breathless with excitement in anticipation of what further wonders would occur.

Supine on the tabletop, I could only watch with awe as she gently opened my legs and inserted the balls into the gaping wound of my groin. I grunted involuntarily as she pushed her hand right in up to her knuckles and adiusted the balls to her satisfaction.

There, she said, pullingher hand out, there you are. All done. From testicles to ovaries in no time at all. And the rest of the equipment is forming as we speak. But they're no good if they don't work, are they?

You're kidding!, I said.

Oh, no I'm not, she said, clambering onto the table in the space

between my open legs. Up the shift was pulled again and there was that cock — my cock, that was — poking its head out of that black forest like a cat's penis emerging from its sheath.

And with that s/he fucked me senseless and a very enjoyable experience it was too.

But afterwards, as we lay tangled in embrace, I had to ask. Now when my severed cock squirmed up you, did it impregnate you? Are you pregnant with my child? And when you fucked me, with my, OK your, cock, did you impregnate me? Did my prick inseminate my balls, I mean ovaries?

That, s/he said, we'll have to see.

And who's the male here and who's the female?, I asked.

Who knows?, s/he said. Who cares?

But surely the difference was supposed to be more than anatomy. Weren't people conditioned to have different gender roles?

Well, yes, s/he said, but that was back then. It's different here.

How's that?, I asked

Now it doesn't matter, s/he replied.

Yes, I said, that's true. In fact I'm not sure who's who anymore.

You're catching on.

Which is me and which is you?

Who knows? Is it important?

And all that stuff about the femme fatale, the sexy castrating woman (or was it goddess?) that wasn't real, was it?

No. That was just animage, a mirage, a leftover from the bad old days, something from there that got us here.

And where's that?

Where we want it to be.

And what we want to be.

For a change.

We're just people. Now. Let's leave all that behind.

Time to abandon ship.

The cage door's opening.

Out there's the forest.

And the ocean.

We'll meet the others there.

There aren't any *others.* They're all us and we're them.

Yes.

Here we go.

Well, rasped the hooded figure in the darkest recess of the shadowy room, there's always a game of chess. It's customary that people like you are allowed to challenge me to a game. And it's true that you have everything to win and nothing to lose. Whereas I have everything to lose and only a chance of winning. But because the odds are so uneven I get to choose the kind of chess pieces we play with.

That sounds fair, I replied. I don't care about the design of the pieces.

You might, the figure responded. But you agree to the game, then? You make your challenge?

I do.

Very well. And I accept. We shall press our lidless eyes and play a game of chess! Here (sweeping aside an ann of the pitchy robe) is the board. And now to the pieces. I choose black as my colour, you shall have red. You must agree this is apt. I am the carrion, you are the corpse. I am dark deeds and you its bloody victim.

I don't like the implication of that, I protested. You're suggesting I'm fated to lose. That's not the case. And I don't care for your high-flown phrases. But I can't deny that you've selected the right colours for each of us.

Then to more important matters, the mysterious figure replied. My side will be male and your side female.

What *do* you mean?, I asked. That's ridiculous. Each side has a king and a queen, as well as sexless pawns.

Ah, yes, murmured the hood, but those are just the names of the pieces. They merely indicate the parts that each piece plays in the game. I'm referring to the actual pieces themselves. Mine will be male. Let me show you what I mean. It's all to do with body parts. For my rooks, I choose my ears.

With this the figure lifted sallow hands into the dark hood, tugged two ears free and placed them on the appropriate squares of the board.

For my knights, I choose my eyes.

My opponent plucked them out from somewhere in the depths of the cowl and situated them next to the rooks.

The bishops will be my nostrils.

I heard a snap as the nose was broken off and saw those waxen hands crack the nostrils apart before placing them on the board.

My mouth will act as queen.

The figure's hands lifted the mouth, including teeth, tongue and palate, away from the shrouded face and located it in the board. Amazingly, the mouth continued to talk even though it was severed from its vocal cords.

It said: And to crown it all, my cock will be king!

The hood's intentions were all too clear to me: this was a strategy of ravishment at best, of rape at worst. I tried to conceal my consternation. My response, when it came, would have to be cunning and effective.

And last but not least, the mouth announced, my pawns will be my fingers.

At this, the figure's hands shook over the board, showering loose fingers like icicles which somehow dropped onto the right squares.

Now your turn.

Alright, I said. First, I'll choose my braids for pawns.

With some trepidation, I reached up to my head. I had no idea whether I had braids or if I had ever had them. But I assumed that they'd be there if I said they were. And I was right. I gently twitched at eight of them (there only seemed to be eight) and placed them on the correct defile. They oddly stood on end, a flimsy army but hopefully effective camouflage.

And for my rooks, I'll use my legs.

As with my nomination of braids, this choice had the desired effect on the figure, who made small grunts of approval from the detached mouth.

With even more trepidation I reached down, closing my eyes as I couldn't bear to see what was to happen. But my fears were unfounded. With a sharp crack first one, then the other, of my legs painlessly snapped off like britde wood. I lifted them onto my comers of the board. There was no blood and I managed to balance them so that they both stood upright. They looked colossal, dwarfing the other pieces, and incongruous. But no doubt sexy enough to my lustful opponent. If there was any question, my next choice amply removed it.

For my knights I choose my breasts.

Did I have any? Was I a woman? I couldn't remember. But on the principle that had worked before, I felt certain they'd be there. They were. Not exceptional in size, but full enough to whet the appetite of the lecher opposite. As with everything else, they came free easily and painlessly.

Now I had to take a chance. I had to gamble on desire overcoming reason. My last choice had done enough to distract attention, I hoped.

And for my bishops, I'll use my cunt and my arsehole.

I knew these weren't a proper pair and so might not be allowed. But my previous selections were meant to suggest that I understood and consented to the sexual nature of the forthcoming contest. I held my breath, but I needn't have bothered. The figure didn't flinch . Obviously the anticipation of a spot of buggery as well as some good-to-god fucking was something my antagonist relished.

Rooting between my legs, I found both cunt and arsehole, and by dint of poking a finger in one, then the other, I managed to pop them loose.

For my queen, I'll choose my brain.

By now I knew this would flatter. Physical conquest wouldn't be enough for this opponent. But it was with a touch of horror that I pushed at my temples, opened up the lid of my skull, grasped my clammy brain and wrenched it out. I couldn't believe I was holding it and so quickly deposited on the board, trying not to see it out the corner of my eye, and hastily clicked the lid of my head back in place.

And last of all, my heart will be my king.

To win over the heart of a fair maiden (if that's what I was), after ravishing her body and seducing her mind would be seen, I hoped, as the ultimate triumph. So there was nothing for it but to pull my rib cage apart until the skin ripped open, reach in and draw out the hot, beating heart. I quickly placed it on the board and, overcome by the enormity of what I'd done, cried: Let the game begin!

And so the moves and countermoves, the thrusts and counterthrusts, the stratagems and counter-stratagems ranged across the board. Various encounters yielded minorvictories, minor defeats, minor gains, minor losses. But rapidly the pattern of the game came to centre on my attempts at defence. My opponent's pawns constantly tried to finger me, running through my pawns, trying to pinch my knights and capture my bishops. The figure's rooks listened for signs of submission, sighs of pleasure. The knights greedily ogled each of my pieces. And the bishops continually sniffed around their clerical counterparts. The queen sought to gobble up whatever she couldn't tongue. And the king sought to capture my bishops, seeing them as a sure way to my queen, whose snatch would surely convince my king to mate.

But my king and queen worked as one, encouraging the seductive ruses of the pawns, and marshalling the knights and bishops to entice my opponent to destruction, The ploy worked. With the enemy king bearing down hard on my bishops, I unveiled my secret weapon. While the king exulted high in anticipation of the imminent capture of my bishops, my hooligan rooks rushed in to plant well-aimed kicks. Immediately the king was toppled. A surrender! The game was conceded and I had won!

Looking up, I saw the hooded figure in a rage. Flinging back the cowl of the black robe, a fearfully distorted visage was revealed, whether death's head or hockey-mask I couldn't tell.

You've won!, the mouth on the board screamed. You've ransomed your life!

The figure lashed an arm across the chess board, scattering the pieces across the floor.

You've beaten death and now none of us are kings or pawns! Now chaos is let loose! You're just like all the others. All those masterless bastards. Filthy rovers. Riotous scum. Drunken roisterers. Do you know what you've done?

Yes!, I cried. Oh, yes!

Then pick up your pieces and let the dance begin!

I tried to retrieve my body parts, but it was dark and the ghastly figure was urging me to hurry.

But I can't find all my parts, I complained.

No matter, was the reply. Just take what you can find.

So I grabbed what I could and set them where they'd fit. But I was a hybrid now, neither man nor woman. My heart, brain and legs I found and set in place. Other parts were less easy to find or recognize in the darkness, and in haste I slotted in place whatever would fit, regardless of what it did or where it came from.

But there was no more time.

Time's up, my cloaked companion cried. The dance begins!

From all around an endless multitude of people appeared. Rich and poor. Old and young. Dead and alive. The walls just vanished and an infinity of space vertiginously unfolded.

Take your partners!

The call resounded everywhere.

The rhythm began. And like everyone else I swayed to it. The figure took me as partner, feet beating jerkily, while I melded effortlessly with the insistent pulse.

And I've been dancing with death ever since. It's the only way I know to take to myself the part of leveller. The great leveller, leveller of the great. Becoming death for death. Overcoming the living death.

So I've danced before massed ranks of riot police and earth-killer machines and animal murderers. I've danced when the cops were defeated, when the machines were broken, when the animals were freed. I was there at the Battle of the Beanfield, I was there at Trafalgar Square, I was there at Twyford Downs. And there you'll fmd me, wherever power and dominion might be pulled down. You may not recognize me, for I have a thousand faces. And one of them may be yours.

Many's the time when death has clinched me too close and I've smelled the reaper's foul breath. But many's the time when I grasped the scythe from his clutch and harvested liberty for all.

Come dance beneath the harvest moon!

And so, my friends, I could go no further. In that gully I laid down my weary bones. My tawny skin shaded into the powdery dust.

The contractions began again. Pain pulsed through my body. Whiplashes. Shrieks, groans, calls.

And then the birth.

Had I birthed a giant? I felt wrenched open. Raising onto elbows, then hands, I peered over my swollen belly to see. What? On my thighs, a mess of slather as if from a big dog's mouth. And, slipping from the slit and rolling away, a small, bright, shiny ball like a pearl. Rolling down an incline into a hole in the ground.

And then the feelings of despair, of anguish. Of: What was it all for? Why all that pain and effort? For a cake decoration?! A bauble? And one already lost?

But then the jolt. Like a bolt of electricity, like the puncture of a hypodermic needle. The afterbirth flooded out. Gushes of blood streamed the earth, fertilizing the land. My blood was drained and my life-blood too. All energy gone, I fell back, empty.

Then there was a settling, a relaxation. An ebbing. A sense of distance.

And then nothing. More nothing. Again nothing. And yet again. And yet.

Then a very faint stirring. Far away. Over there. Distant. A twinge.

Stillness. Silence without echo. But then, again. A twitch.

Stirrings. Mute shiftings. Tentative, muffied.

Perhaps a plash.

A flutter, maybe.

And then a distinct sensation. Unfolding. Stretching. Within. A tingling feeling.

There. Pushing through. At the tips.

Roots sprouting from the finger tips. Feeling down through tunnels and into crevices. Shooting out feelers, quizzing, probing, curious. Growing further, exploring, testing. Seeking. Searching round stones and through cracks. Penetrating further, touching the different strata, drawn nearer and nearer to the moisture. Sensing the gradations, the various textures, the minute shifts from powdery dust to rich loam. Absorbing the energy, tapping into it, growing with it.

And then the pulses of energy flowing back to the surface, revivifying, revitalizing.

So the fingers grew roots and the renewal began. The toes bleached and their tips became bulbous. They became mushrooms. The armpits burst and cauliflowers grew there. The legs were fallen trees. Fungi clustered from beneath the knee caps. The brain grew a tap root and a copse of young trees cracked open the skull. Birds sang and squirrels darted among the branches. Brambles grew from the pubic fibres, sheltering a dark and dank cave, and sending out plump berries and the precious briar rose. All over, the down became downs, lush meadowlands. The breasts became burrows where rabbits lived and moles sometimes surfaced. The jaw, turned to stone, jutted out of the earth in granite splendour. The eyes became pools where fish played in the cool depths. The heart blossomed with flowers beyond number. And on and on.

Integrated diversity. Intricate interweavings. Revitalized, organs, muscles and bones are transformed and refashioned. New growth. And all at once. Something words can-

not describe. The sense of tumultuous growth in every way at every moment. And that which was I, just the soughing of trees in the wind.

But something remained. The pearl, the bauble, the sphere. Fruit of the womb, fructifying in the luxuriant ecology. Nurtured and sustained in this oasis, far from the eyes of greedy men, yet just under their noses, it became a beacon, an incandescence, a luminous presence. Inhabiting this place, pervading this place, yet emanating from it. Reaching out and touching, its influence grew. Its influence grows. But only for those who recognize it. For others, it's invisible. Intangible. Or worthless. Yet more and more begin to see it and feel its merit.

To those who will hear, to those caught in the wheels of industry, to the slaves of the machine, and to those trapped in the megamachine, the sphere says: Dare to dream! Dare to resist! Things don't have to be this way!

And to those who thrill to this message, the sphere says: Pull down your masters! Dismantle the systems! Do away with institutions! Throw away your machines and don't bother to toil. Refuse power, in yourself, for yourself, and over yourself. Stop harming one another, the animals, the earth.

And those who hear, say: But how can we do this? And how shall we live?

And the sphere replies: You must gather together and go out into the world to spread the word. You must create your own ways. Think as you want to think, feel as you want to feel, behave as you want to behave, look as you want to look, love as you want to love, be as you want to be. Some of you will struggle from within the city and some will leave it to renew the land. But wherever you are, you must take up arms, whether of the spirit, the mind or the body, and throw yourselves with all your might against Leviathan, this monster of iniquity.

And there are those who say: How do we know you aren't just another false prophet crying in the wilderness? And why should we do what you say?

And to this the sphere replies: I am not I. I am you. And you. And you. And all the multitude. You shall find me within. For I am your inner light which you project out here. Don't follow me. Follow your inner light and live by its promptings. Polish the windows of your soul so that you may see your inner light more clearly. And when you do, you'll see that these things I've said are true.

And those who have ears to hear ponder on these words. And they clean their windows. And they gather together in the marketplace (for the whole world has become like unto a marketplace and now there is no other) and they say unto one another: This sphere is a great sign and wonder and brings us good news.

And they see that it is good. And they see that it is true. And the word spreads and more gird their loins and grind their loins and grind their teeth in readiness for the battles to come.

But there are those who say: This sphere is our saviour. This sphere is our Lord. We must worshiphim and praise him eternally.

And fall down on their knees.

And to these, the sphere in all wrath says: Fools! You know not what you say or what you do! Only you people, by joining unto one another, can save yourselves and save the world. You make me unto a graven idol, when I tell you to pull down all idols. You set me up as master, when I tell you to do away with all lords. Grovel no more. Take up your bed and walk. And cease trying to make me into a man, into a god, or into a human being!

And the scales fall from their eyes, and they exclaim: Truly, this sphere is not the son of god. We're fucked if we think so. We must think on. We mustn't make a cult of the sphere. Let's not take its word as scripture. Let's have a love feast and then spin and weave and multiply the word.

And the sphere is well pleased with such works.

And so, my friends, the long journey, the hot pursuit through scalding deserts, the vales of tears and the wells of sorrows, begins to bear fruit. Come, rest awhile in this oasis. For I have many tales to tell and you have news of the struggles. I carried the sphere through the howling wastes made by the lords of hell and planted it here in the dust of my body. The seedtime is over and now strange blossoms are blooming all over the world. I gave birth to the sphere and I am the sphere and you are the sphere and you birth the sphere over and over each day. The circle that was broken is now being mended. Stay here awhile and let us share the plenty. Let us rest and give pleasure before we return to the fray.

There's that theory about the faery folk. Do you know that one? Well, when the magic went out of Old England, when the Roman rulers and the Christian rulers and all those other bastard rulers had stamped it out, the faery folk are said to have gone to live 'under the hill'. Not any particular hill, you understand, and not in a valley. No, actually *under* the hill.

Now, you can take that in all kinds of ways. And they don't really contradict one another. So there may not be just one meaning to it. Anyway, you could say that the faery folk just withdrew from the dull, mundane world of daily life in civilization. The world of toil and boredom. They just abandoned it and all those who slaved in it and went off into the wilderness. Disappeared into it and so couldn't be seen anymore. They went *under* the *hill.*

Or you could say that they went underground. *Under* the hill. They didn't go away; they just dropped out of sight, out of sight of those in power. Those who wanted to jail them, enslave them, kill them. So they might still be around, secretly active, resisting but hidden. Outta sight, as the hippies used to say. But not out of mind. Maybe. Out of their minds according to some people. But not by people I want to mow. If that's out of your mind, that's how I want to be.

Then again 'the hill' might mean the faery hills. You know, all those burial mounds and barrow graves that you see dotted around in Ireland and Cornwall and places like that. Where the tourists haven't trampled all over them or the builders haven't run a motorway through them. 'Cause the old ones, they saw faery mounds as entrances to some kind of pagan paradise. The entrances were always at places where you might meet death. Underground, underwater or where the sun sets. Places where you might end up dying or end up when you're dead. But pagan paradise wasn't thought of like the Christian heaven. Death wasn't the end. Faery mounds were wombs as much as tombs. They were places of rebirth, not just death. And some people talk of the faeries' revenge. Ofthe faeries regrouping, waiting for the right moment, and then returning from the hills to wreak revenge on all the bastards who chased them away and stoned them and burned them.

Anyway, the point is that we're like the faery folk. I say *like.* 'Cause we're not faeries. But perhaps they'll come to our aid and get their revenge when the time comes.

But we're like the faeries because we too are under the hill. Some of us have tried to withdraw, as much as we can, from all the shit that's called civilization. Andhave tried to bugger off into the wilderness. Or what passes for it these days. And some of us have been pushed from pillar to post and set on by angry locals and stupid farmers. Or moved on by cops. Or beaten by cops. Or shat on by politicians.

And some of us have gone underground. Not literally, of course. But have tried to drop out of sight or (as they say) assumed protective colouration. Worn masks, in more ways than one. Worn them while putting our bodies on the line. Or worn them while trying to blend in so that we can get inside and fuck the bastards over that way. Or just to avoid being watched so that we can do some things we'd like to do. So

we can work out how to fight back. Without being caught and banged up. Rendered inoperative is the term.

And then some of us have tried to link-up with the land and its lore. Just so's we know where we're really coming from. Who we really are. Not just a bunch of fucking kings and queens. Not land of no hope andfucking glory . Not those bloody Romans and their stupid roads. Not any of that shit. Our real ancestors. Those who lived free and those who fought every frigging empire that ever came along. Roman. British. American. Those who really never never never shall be slaves. Those who wanted to live in community with nature and people. Who wanted a life without lords, without labour, without law.

So in that way we're like the faeries too. We've found an entrance to the other world, to an earthly paradise. We find ourselves in places where we might meet our death. We're going through a rebirth. We're regrouping and we want to get revenge as well. We want to open the floodgates and let paradise back in. As it was. And will be again. Only better. Bring the magic back to life. Re-enchant the world. Level the land.

In the deep midwinter, rapt in contemplation of these mysteries, gazing into the dazzle of the dark sun, I heard a chorus of voices speak these words. Whether they came from within or from others holding debate in the shadows of the long-house or from long lost souls pausing to converse outside the walls of our communal lodge, I know not. The voices said:

Hell isn't the underworld, Hell is here. And the lords of hell constantly torment our minds, our bodies and our souls. For all eternity. Or at least all our lives. Unless we rise up and make a heaven of this hell.

Now is the seed-time. New growth is stirring around us and within us. Even as the land is covered with blow upon blow. As the roar of the drills and the growl of the diggers fill the air and the infernal machines take over the land, as the land shudders under the weight of the horrors daily inflicted upon it. Even thus the buds are awakening within us.

We grow in understanding, we grow in sympathy, we grow slowly in numbers and we grow gradually in influence. They poison us and they mow us down. But we continue to unfold in the margins, in the cracks between the pavements. Soon, oh soon, perhaps we shall crack the pavements. For underground we grow, reaching out hands like tendrils to touch, to take hold, to hold communion. Let's stretch, let's flex our muscles and see what we can do. Maybe we can find the fault line and crack open this concrete prison.

We are the root, the cell, the radicle. A spark has been planted in us. And we must plant it in others. We must plant the seed communities. So that the new, which is also the very, very old, can grow. It cannot be forced, but still the seed-time cannot be long. For the day of reckoning cannot be far off. Oh, earth! thou art sick! Thy teeming fliers and walkers and swimmers are stymied and dying. The invisible hand is at thy throat. The blight is spreading across the land. Soon all will be concrete and steel.

And the worst concrete and steel will be in the minds and hearts of men and in the hearts and minds of women. Fearful rigidity! where nothing flows, where the cycles cease, and where balance is lost. The only sound is the shifting sand of the arid desert until the terror machine sickeningly heaves into sight. The straight and narrow, the straight and narrow. The path to hell is paved with concrete and steel.

And the lords of hell with their terrible whips lash us on to the brink.

Tear them down! Tear them down!

And the worm will turn, And the serpent will sting.

And the graves will ope. And the dead will up.

And the jaws of hell will gape and spew us out.

And all souls will don their masks and grimly march on the final empire.

And gambol and cavort.

And at this vision my heart did leap with joy. On my feet at once, I danced and jigged and ran out into the street proclaiming the news. And found a ready audience who thought my words prophetic.

Halloween marks Samhain, the celtic feast of the dead, named after Samana, 'the Leveller'. The Celts believed that the joints between the seasons opened cracks in the fabric of space-time, allowing passage between this world and the other world. On Samhain, the Great Leveller received offerings on behalf of all the dead. These offerings were designed to effect a general levelling of distinction, influence and wealth. Like the potlatch, the ritual acted as a way of dissipating incipient accretions of power and goods. If the spirits were satisfied that the levelling was effective, they would refrain from intervening. But if they felt that inequalities remained, they would pass through the passage between the worlds, summoned by shamans (witches and demons, according to Christians), appearing as vengeful ghosts bent on personally securing a thorough social levelling.

My friends, the witching hour is nigh!

The bell has tolled. It is time for the dead and the living dead to rise. Rise! Rise up and claim your birthright! Rise up in an uprising almighty! Roll away the stone and let the graves gape wide. Rise up from your deathbeds. From your graves and your garrets. From your factories and your firesides. For now is the festival of ruin.

The mighty shall be pulled down into the dust and the poor and oppressed exalted. The living and dead shall walk side by side, marching marching marching through the streets of pain toward the citadel of power. Breaking burning tearing, for yes the urge to destroy is also a creative urge. And the storehouses shall be broke ope and their goods scattered to the wind. And the machines will be broken beyond repair. And the houses of the money-changers will be tom down. And the factories will be gutted. And the roads will be ripped up. And the jails will be stormed, And the cages will be ripped open. And the laboratories will be trashed. And the office blocks and the tower blocks will shudder and fall. And the seats of power will be overturned. And the cities will burn and burn and burn.

So come out, come out, wherever you are. Rise up from your stupor and rise up from your torpor. Come level with me!

From out your scattered graves come out all ye resisters of all ages in this land. Come! Boudicca and Caractacus. And all your merry bands. Who rose against imperial Roman dominion. Come! Robin Hood, Robin Goodfellow of the Greenwood! Never has the forest needed you more. Great leveller who steals from the rich and gives to the poor. Come! Wat Tyler and the jovial bands of the Peasants' Revolt. Rise again 'gainst those masters so haughty and proud. Come! John Ball. When Adam delved and Eve span, Who was then the gentleman? Come! All ye radicals of the civil rebellion. All ye ranters, diggers, levellers and fifth monarchist men. Come! divine Abiezer. You have killed Levellers (so called) you also (with wicked hands) have slain me the Lord of life, who am now risen, and risen indeed, (and you shall know, and feele it with a witnesse) to Levell you in good earnest. Rave on, rave on! Come! Laurence Clarkson, we all agree to be part of my one flesh. Come! Jacob Bauthumley. They bored your tongue and burned your book. Now tear them down. Come! All ye mad crew! And Come! King Ludd and Captain Swing and all ye Luddites bold! Time to break the

machines once and for all. Come! all ye anarchs exiled on these shores. Romantic Bakunin and sweet prince Kropotkin. And Come! all ye nameless rebels, roisterers, resisters, rioters, renegades and radicals. Witches burned at the stake. The martyrs of Peterloo. Brave battlers at Trafalgar Square, at Trafalgar Square and Trafalgar Square again. Mutineers andmad women. Angry mobs and angry brigades. Incendiaries and insurrectionaries. Come! Rise! Rise! Rise!

And Come! All ye visionaries of these isles! Come! Shelley and Godwin. Ye who sometimes saw so plain. We'll stage the masque of anarchy. Come! William Blake. Rekindle the flames of holy fire, the rebel's imagination. Lost is the green and pleasant land. And Jerusalem is wanted no more. But your vision is needed again. Rise, bright angel. Come! Richard Dadd. They locked you up for killing dad. Now big dad needs to die. You prophesied the fairy feller's master-stroke. So strike and strike again at the master, my fiery faery fellow. Come! Anthony Roberts. Geomancer! Ecolorist! Did you find the grail as your body faltered on Glastonbury Tor? You envisioned the fairies revenge. Now rage with the furies across this land.

Come! Lorenzo. On this savage pilgrimage for earthly delight. Come! George Orwell. You paid homage to Catalonia in the homeland of catatonia. Come up for air once again.

And Come! all ye among the living. Come! all ye of the gathering disarray. Come! Richard Alexander. Unplug yourself and come run with the beasts. Come! Mazy Matthew and John the Sab. Open your eyes! Time to wake up! Enough is enough is enough is enough! Come! John Nicholson, archivist of uprising, and Celia, faithful labourer in the vineyards. Come! Tom Cahill. Head in the clouds but balanced in the tao. Come! Green anarchs of Oxford, neither town nor gown. Come! All ye Earth Firstlers and fighters in defence of the earth. Come! All ye travellers and gatherers. Come! All ye anarchs who'll tear power down. Come! Andy Hopton, discoverer of tyranipocrit and its enemies. Come! Ed Baxter. Without whom none of this would be possible. Come! Bright nova Leigh, my starcross lover. And Come! John Moore, seeker after anarchy and ecstasy.

Come one and come all! Come level the land!

The Ted K Archive

John Moore
Book of Levelling
1995

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