

HEAVENLIGHT

from the unpublished novel (19,300 words)

by Mark Katzman

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Office

The nightman's watching TV. Japanese, early 70s. It's night. The city is a toy model and quite stylish. Everyone's running from the violent flashes in the sky. Giant chunks of shit are falling out of the clouds. They're really pieces of toy buildings flying through the air due to Space Monster's destruction of the city. You see his huge tentacles descending from the low clouds, fucking up everything in their path real bad.

The gang is dying to speak. Once they get going there's no stopping them.

Yak, yak, yak.

I am the Beginning and the End. I am Light. I am Love.

Ah, a car's pulling up. Another victim.

As far as Space Monster goes, it's all over. Scientists wearing big white coats lured him onto the city's main power lines and fried his ass.

Room 1

The girls are making beds, vacuuming, cleaning toilets, watching soap operas, game shows, gossiping. We're off to the races. The season has begun.

We won't have much time to ourselves anymore. Soon we'll be filled every day. But it comes and goes and in no time we close the place up and spend the winter swapping stories and sharing our progress in spiritual pursuits.

We're quite a crew.

I can't wait until they start rolling in. Humans never cease to amuse me.

Room 2

Another day in the Universal Flux. There's some hanky-panky going on. Yes, the time-trusted female-superior position. Heating me right on up.

In 1602 the English explorer Captain Bartholemew Gosnold anchored in the harbor which was so abundant with cod fish he named the place Cape Cod. Its unique shape and terrain is the result of an arctic glacier which spread slowly south sixty-thousand years ago. That's not really such a long time in the scheme of things, I guess.

The scheme of things, the mysterious scheme.

The Indians called their land Meeshawn. They, of course, were here first.

In 1620 the Pilgrims landed at what would become Provincetown aboard the trusty Mayflower on their way to Virginia. Fierce tides forced them back when they attempted to sail south. They remained anchored in the harbor for five weeks. During that time the forty-one Heads-of-Households formed their own little self-governing democratic commonwealth: The Mayflower Compact.

The New World.

I could go on boring you but they're seriously interpenetrating now and I'm getting distracted.

Room 3

Old man Swenson is the owner. He's in Thailand meditating in a forest.

A man comes in every day to run the show. His name is Mr. Philips. That's all we know about him. He's extremely private. Been here from day one. A very nice man. Gentle. Unassuming. He does bills and orders supplies and handles any problems with the staff.

At the moment a woman's doing yoga while Nicholas Roeg's Eureka is playing on the VCR. It's a wonderful movie and if I were in a human male body Theresa Russell would be my choice of beloved.

I approached the Office once about Swenson. I wanted to know more about him.

"He is dreaming us," the Office said.

I saw him only once when the motel was first built.

He was standing inside me. It was like waking after a long, restful sleep.

Swenson was a tall man in his 80's with a shock of grey hair and the clearest blue eyes you could imagine.

He said, "Mother Light, manifest!"

And then I was a room and what a wonderfully strange thing to be.

Room 4

Aquaman, the "Sea King," Aqualad, his fagala side-kick, and their faithful walrus companion, Tusky, are cruising the ocean kingdom. The young couple watching are blasted on pot. Their eyes are tiny red slits. They're laughing a lot. They've never seen this ancient cartoon before, so it's coming at them fresh, and the camp of it really has them going.

I'm just hanging out, trying to settle in to being so high, not having been stoned for a while.

It seems the evil Mephisto and his convoy of Devil Ships are hell-bent on taking over Atlantis by putting a giant sleeping-pellet in the city's oxygen-intake source, rendering the peaceful Atlantians helpless.

Mephisto sprouts red horns, a black beard, and much too much mascara.

He's really very scary.

Aquaman uses his legendary telepathic powers to call forth the aid of enormous bullwhales. His telepathic powers are expressed by little white rings emanating from his forehead. This display sends my guests into uncontrollable hysteria.

Aqualad and Tusky manage to remove the sleeping-gas pellet while Aquaman battles Mephisto. I believe there is an unnatural alliance between the young boy and the walrus, but that's neither here nor there.

The bullwhales, accompanied by an arsenal of hammerhead sharks, smash the Vibro-Beam guns on the Devil Ship fleet and send Mephisto packing.

The young man begins tracing circles from his forehead.

"I'm sending telepathic signals of the highest order to your panties," he says. "They must be removed now, on direct orders from the Sea King!"

The last few customers have all been fun in one way or another. Compared to last summer, I'm on top of the world.

I had a neo-Nazi and a child-porn collector in the same week. I pulled some shit on those two. Chairs, beds, lamps, everything was flying. I used my best voice from the "other side."

"Scram, you fucking creeps! I am the fierce, unmerciful Demon from Vacation Hell, and I am going to rip your souls to shreds!!"

Never saw anyone check out that fast before.

Dot - Chambermaid

(lights up a Pall Mall)

Darlin', this bag of bones has been here twenty years. I take care of the large, oceanfront efficiencies. Mostly families been comin' long as I can remember. I've changed more sheets than anyone in this century. Too many of 'em horror stories. Seen body fluids they aint named yet.

What in God's name is takin' Tony so long. He knows I'm ready. I want to go home to my babies. He'll take his own sweet time just to annoy me, the rat.

I cried in #86 today. Since poor Floyd left this world, nothin's the same. He was a damn nice cat. Full of mischief. When he got out I knew somethin' would happen. Time to get me a kitten, I guess. Twelve's my lucky number. Anything less is a jinx. Never found a human being I could put up with for very long in this life. Cats I understand.

There were good tips today. Better be on Sunday. The old customers treat me well, bless their hearts. And before you know it their children are coming with their children, damndest thing.

Come on, Tony! Another five minutes and I'm calling a taxi. I hate waitin'. Then he'll take the long way and drive down Commercial Street so he can look at girls.

My back's killin' me, oh dear Lord.

I'll feed my babies and we'll tap a nap. It's nice when everybody's on the bed. Floyd liked being on the left side of the pillow right next to my head.

I miss you, Floyd. You keep Jesus company. I'll see you in Heaven when He calls my name.

Ice Machine

I am not of this world. I have materialized from the unknown. A benevolent power.

It is strange here. All is strange.

Passion. Suffering. Indifference.

I am a friend of the Earth.

I wish you peace.

Office

Little by little. The cast. The voices. I am Light. I am Love. I see All. Hear All.

It's a new morning. The nightman's brewing a fresh pot of coffee. He's a mess. Watched the Shopping Channel all night. Who wouldn't be?

Penny will be here soon. And the others.

One by one by one.

Provincetown

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