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AIR. STRIKE

tobias c. van Veen – GPL 2003
<http://www.quadrantcrossing.org>

The bombs fall with a click of the mouse, in which case the nomadic laptop is also the skymachine that brings death, and the groundmachine that erupts in a halo of virtual gunfire is as real to the desert sands as the counterstrike is to the screen.

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tobias c. van Veen
read by Chris Daub

Scrawled on the wall outside the Bureau.

[1]

The line wound from the flickering light of the bureau down the winding metal steps and out to the cold. Huddled students waited in vain for hours to receive a number, and once taken, cold hands in tattered pockets, moved up the stairs. Even after donating an OC to be considered for the privilege of education, the systematics of entering the bureaucracy required a skillset that could not be studied for: the absolute power of the bureau. Failure meant the subtraction of a potentially reproductive Organ(ic) Component.

[2]

Trembling, the young girl who approached the counter held out her number and attempted to explain her problematic—the bureau had "misplaced" her regional wavers. Like they had so many others of the student class. To reclaim regional wavers was an expensive organ(ic) process.

"We need payment." Snapped the grey-haired automaton.

Barely organic, the automaton was plugged through a thin fibercord into the desk terminal, wired direct to the educational net. At will she could delete entire records—never mind regionals—with a motion of her fibermind. This was the generalised systematic of the bureau: it was run by darkfiber, by automatons who detested the pleasures of the organics. But in time the automatons had learned how to extract what was necessary from the organics to assert the absolute primacy of the constructed.

[3]

"But I've already paid and submitted by due date," the girl said, & in a timid voice, too full of quietude to even try and resist.

"Payment!" raised the shrill voice of the automaton, and the two security posts detached themselves from the bureau lobby. They grabbed the girl on either side. She was too limp from fear to struggle as they brought her quivering into the back, where, an hour later, she hobbled from the back office, still in shock and pain from the removal of her reproductive chambers without anaesthetic by the secure pod's pincer apparatus. Her sociality status was ruined: if memos were listed of the loss of her primary pleasureskins, she would be subjected to the torment of the automaton fleshmen, and turned loose to the streets servicing the infertile.

[4]

The first lesson they were taught in the grey classroom with a blackboard that no one ever used not even during the 52 weeks that comprised the semester, which was broken up into sixteen quadrules requiring, each at its own interval, the intercession of seven tests, four physical, and three multiple-choice, so that each test was designated in a differing variety of positions, in order to subject the body to its own errancy.

[5]

The Sistine Chapel is an elaborate metaphor. God reaching with finger backwards in time to create infinity through humanity. Ee are all working towards creating God. Is Nietzsche hindering God's progress or not? In fact, he's helping the Infinite: the Church was only an organisational principle. From now on we strive to become-cyborg. The highest atheists of the land, blithe cynics of the past, are falling the future.

[6]

Errant bodies can be spotted and tagged with the simplest of metal devices designed. There are no eyes once the tags are in place and the bodies are hung in steel rafters. The rafters are intricately crafted in the North. They are soaked in iron. The brown flecks flake the ochre metal, covering disused flesh in burning, solid rain.

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