

Lune Fiction

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Lune Fiction - the way of the word

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Comments, advice, contributions and donations are only welcome after 6pm.

All messages (e.g. letters, e-mails, telepathic messages, smoke signals, cabalistically painted Easter eggs) that we receive are filed, triplicated, refiled, denounced and softly laid to rest.

A tree your height cannot give you shade.

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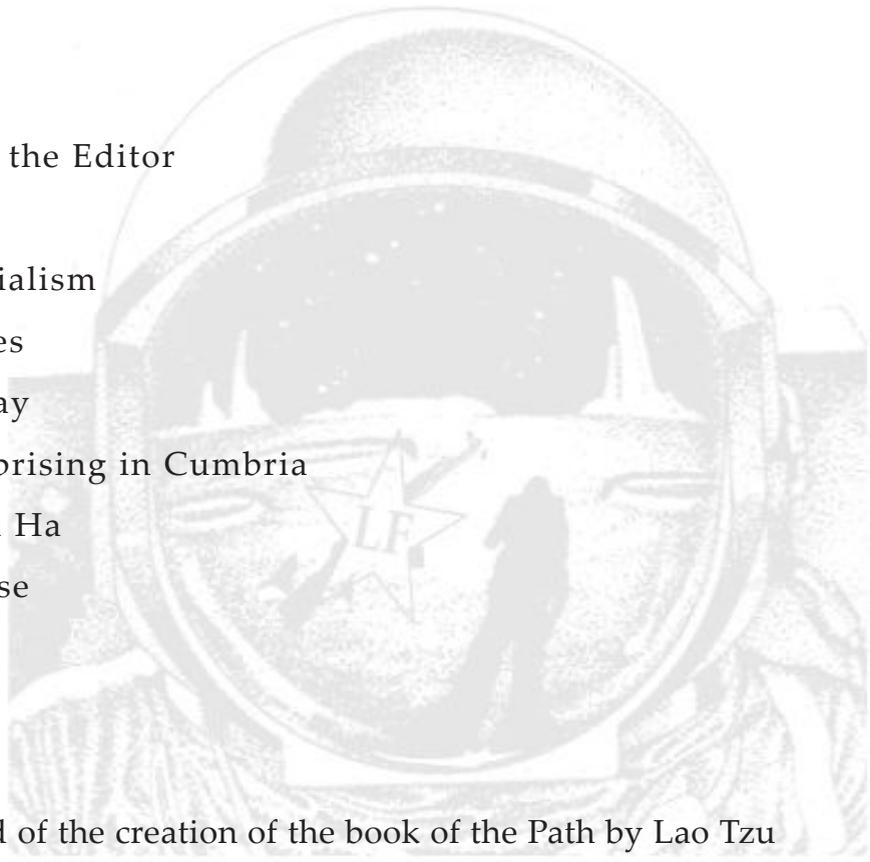
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He who heathens should not be trusted.

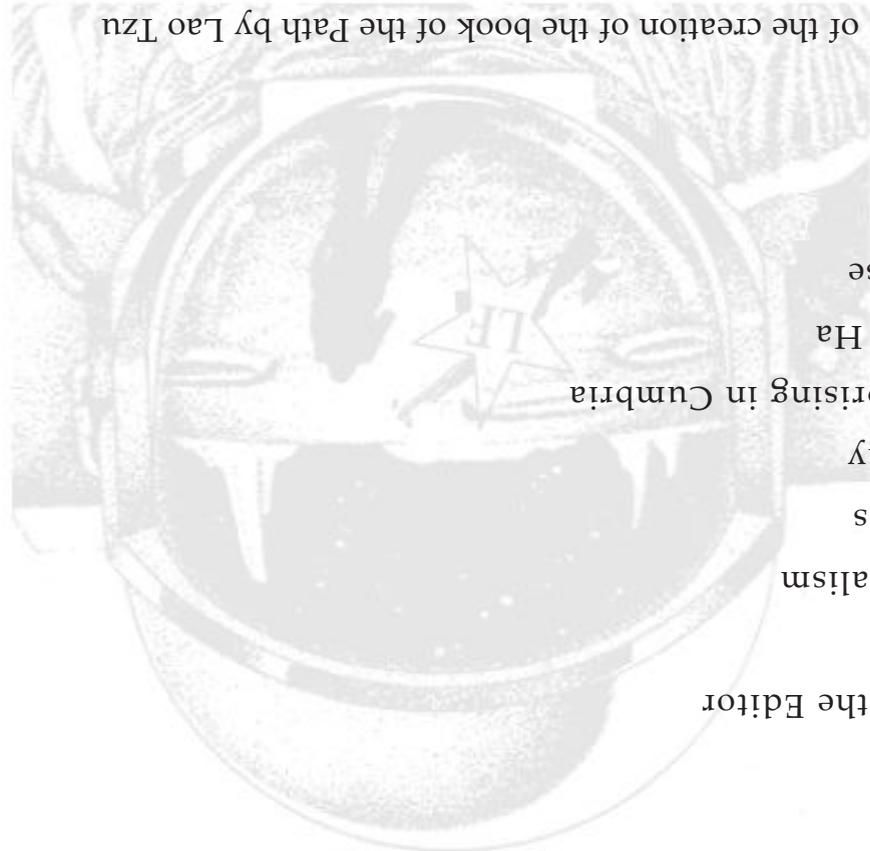
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Contents:

Editorial

My dear readers,

The only thing we need to bless is bliss itself - also known as Lune Fiction 20. So welcome to the very latest issue of LF (or Man Fiction as my former associate Chucky Chuck Edwards, LF's residential trickster, used to call it) in which I have nothing to offer but a new translation of Brecht's Lao Tzu poem, clever (but somewhat silly) narratives and something I found behind the sofa - possibly a used tissue or a decayed roll of pastrami meat. 'But where have the nonplus-ultra Humble Sam and his magazine been the last seven months?', I hear you ask.

Well, to be quite frank, I have just spent the best part of this year in a coma. Among other things, I read *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* and discovered that its brilliance does not lie in its subject matter but in its prose, its style. The book is witty; the tale is dry. Pusillanimous literary critics will bang on about this novel exposing the dark underbelly of Stalin's Soviet Union and the audacity of Solzhenitsyn's challenge to the Soviet authorities, but they dare not mention its humour, its warm wit. How dare they! I flew into such a rage on finishing the book that I ate my fishy friend Chucky Chuck Edwards which was pleasant but made me feel incredibly guilty. And sick as he is - sorry, was - highly toxic.

I was overcome with pain and fell into a coma where Walter Benjamin kept on tormenting me with his esoteric take on culture and language and spouted mystical mumbo-jumbo. However, he did reveal a painful truth:

"The destructive character lives from the feeling, not that life is worth living, but that suicide is not worth the trouble."

And yet here I was dying! I have wanted

to end my life so many times and yet could never be bothered. And now, just because of a stupid emotion called rage, I had inadvertently taken my own life away. How cruel, how dim-witted!

Luckily, one of my little porkers read me Solzhenitsyn's *Red Circle* while I was lying comatose in bed, so I woke up out of sheer boredom. Which proves that great writers do not always write great stuff - they usually get ideas above their head once they have achieved fame.

So welcome to my return and a new issue of LF. I have just written an editorial simultaneously saying lots and nothing. I have mentioned a literary great of our times who unfortunately died this year, slagged off and quoted Walter Benjamin, confessed to murder and spoken about a home truth - whatever that was. And you know what? I thoroughly enjoyed it.

Don't embrace Lune Fiction; let it embrace you.



Humble Sam

PS Something else I discovered in my coma was that I know what I know: I hate the world and I want everyone else to suffer.

I also know that the feeling isn't mutual.

PPS And what were the other things, I wonder...

NB Whoopee! Economic meltdown, global warming and the prospect of nuclear Armageddon in Asia: it's great to be alive.

Letters to the Editor

Midges

The sun sets
As love is red
On Cloud Nine
The midges dance
Monika Schnyder

Secret Weapon

Sir!
Last night, in the pub, an old man was telling me that during the war he worked on a secret project to produce humour-piercing bullets. You didn't even need to be hit by a bullet; as long as the bullet passed through your speech bubble as you were talking, you would completely lose your sense of humour. This would, of course, demoralise the enemy. The project ended prematurely when an explosion at the humour-piercing bullet factory destroyed it completely. Unfortunately, a young Margaret Thatcher was hit by shrapnel from the explosion.
Sincerely yours,
Ken Walton

Feathers

We leave the road and walk off across a field full of some yellow stuff I don't think I've ever seen before. As I trudge my way through it, crushing the bright blossoms with my size tens, I can't help but feel that here is some profanity and that, somehow, I am taking part in an almost sacrilegious act. I realise my mind is wandering, and try to concentrate.

When we get to the long-abandoned farmhouse, (profanity squared) I am washed with a sense of having been here before, of having to come here again, I keep slipping in and out of memories, future and past.

We walk up to the carelessly white-washed front door, the bottom scuffed to the wood over the years by the muddy boots of the impatient farmer. Cries of hunger and demands for food; fists and tears; then other days, sudden screams, fistfights, beatings, doors slamming, a shot, silence, quiet sobbing. Nights of drama and fear. A night of lust and death.

I wake up in an uncomfortable chair in the kitchen, the busiest room in any farmhouse, seeing the room alternately hung with washing, bakingly warm and humid, the rain slashing against the steamy windows, a voice humming and occasionally breaking into song with the sheer joy of hard work and achievement, the wireless in the background droning the Home Service days away, then later, the strong and deeply soothing smell of baking bread; other smells, roasts, onions, leeks, cabbage. My mouth, I swear, begins to water, even through the confusion.

Hands on my shoulders. 'You alright, mate?'

Wrenched back to this terrible moment. Decay and nefarious doings in a remote abandoned farmhouse, Ron's there, Buster, the rest.

'Are we gonna get this sorted or what?' comes a voice from my left. I know this voice though I can't place it. Whoever

he is, he'll die in a prison hospital. I know this.

Three, four, five bags are up-ended onto the table, on top of the ghosts of a thousand plucked chickens, blood seeping slowly into the ancient wood. Human blood, too. Feathers fly everywhere as the notes and bundles of notes, the postal orders, the bank drafts and who knows what else fill the table and flow over the edge onto the filthy, bloody floor.

This room is full of blood; like a giant heart, pumping history through itself day by day, year after terrible year. Yet the room is also the brain of the house, holding the memories to itself, opening, disclosing to only a privileged or cursed few like myself.

There are no feathers - that's away in the past - although not for this room or me. The kitchen lets the memories become reality, unable to know the difference between the then and the now, and sometimes the never was.

Momentarily, I flicker back to now, the room lets me. I see the stack of money, six people sitting or standing, counting and counting, placing into piles. Another - trusted by all - separating into smaller stacks for distribution to the rest; payments to others not present, for cars, knowledge, weapons; goods and services.

Bites from sandwiches made up by loving wives and girlfriends, hoping they'll see their men again; sending them off to another war, self-consciously praying for their safe return. Occasional sips from plastic flask cups

full of steaming sweet tea, gulps from hip flasks or beer bottles, all empties carefully placed into bags, ready to be taken away. Nothing to be left. Only the house, the kitchen, pondering these mysterious visitors and their pile of paper amid the feathers.

The memories well up again, as though the house has heard my thoughts.

A Judas leads the police here, more by implication than in fact. The fear has loosened tongues, following the news that the old man could die. Murder. Hangings or lifetimes behind bars. I can see this. There are no hangings despite the eventual death.

Blood again.

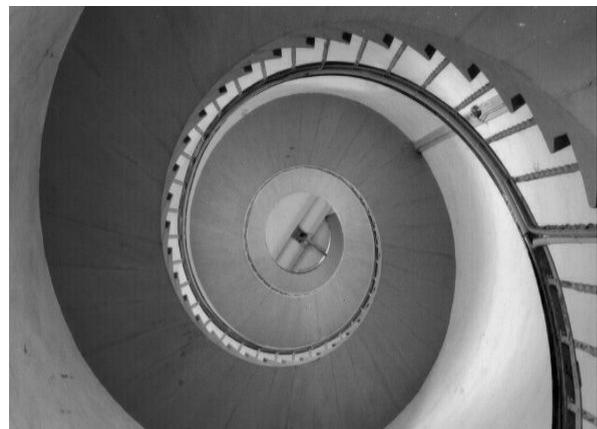
Just lifetimes of heavy keys in ancient locks for all but one, and for him another kind of prison. Visits with no visitors. Slopping out, stinks and stench, loss of pride. And worse.

The room feels my pain. It doesn't care, doesn't want to share it. It's seen worse, smelled worse, in its time.

Blood and bars.

Blood and bars, money and feathers and the imprint of a shotgun blast across the years. I can't have any part of this.

I know how it all ends.



Commercialism

I watch the commercials. They're very good, very persuasive.

I went to the local DIY store. Where were all the sexy women? I didn't see any bright young things smiling at everyone. I didn't see the gorgeous checkout girls asking me if there's anything else they can do for me. I didn't see people singing and dancing. There weren't any people skipping down the aisles or skating around the baths and sinks. There weren't any shop workers making everything super-easy. They didn't have what I wanted in stock. There weren't any people lounging on sofas laughing and drinking wine. And there wasn't any jolly music; just local commercial radio stations.

I won't go there again.

Ickle Boxes

Ickle boxes on the hillside and ickle boxes in the valley, ickle boxes next to the ocean and ickle boxes near the river, ickle boxes in the cities and ickle boxes on their own; we all gladly get put in ickle boxes that all look just the same.

There are blue ones and there are pink ones, there are stone ones and there are wooden ones; they are all so diverse, as we are all so special, but they look just the same.

And we all go into further education and we all get married to one another and we all now love each other and there's strange fruit hanging from the branches, but we ignore them for they grow for the benefit of all and everyone and we thank the powers-that-be for

guiding us through our lives (we need guidance without acknowledgment), and we all gladly get put in ickle boxes that all feel just the same.

And some of us smoke and some of us don't, and some of us drink and some of us don't, and some of us eat meat and some of us don't, and we are all so diverse and special but we all smell, think and feel just the same.

Ickle boxes on the hillside and ickle boxes in the valley, ickle boxes next to the ocean and ickle boxes near the river, ickle boxes in the cities and ickle boxes on their own; we all gladly get put in ickle boxes and they all look just the same.

Flash Essay: 19th > 20th March

It's late Sunday evening and the clock is creeping towards midnight, as the snow is slowly settling on the ground outside in the full glare of the midnight sun.

With his cohorts Lucifer and Satan, the devil is taking a rest in my head. Bang, bang, bang. The devil's fists hammer into my head and the single malt whisky sits unwanted in the tumbler while a tear trickles heedlessly down my left cheek. Where is my fairy queen? I think of mother. She's sucking a cock that isn't father's. I think of father. He's fiddling in his shed and not in bed. I watch the moths embrace the flames of the candle on my desk and think of my sister's demand for the removal of the Roma people from this, our European Union, and I think of my brother's demand for one people, one nation, one leader.

I remember my aunt's hurtful helping hand; I remember my cousin's games of hide 'n' peek.

The devil cackles and the pink green Fairy Queen takes me by the hand and leads me... leads me on.



Don't ask! I had to go shopping for Mum in Waitrose but for various inexplicable reasons - the kind only your subconscious knows of - I ended up in Tesco's in Morecambe but chose to buy the groceries in the town's indoor market instead before going home through the Lancaster alleyways of Michael Robertson's Under-world. The shopping was in a brown paper carrier bag apart from the milk which was in my left hand. I walked up a flight of outdoor steps where I encountered a man walking in front of me. He refused to get out of the way, so I had to take a detour through the building site of an elaborate leisure centre/ shopping mall hybrid. I kept on getting lost, lost, lost, so I went through a doorway into another reality where I encountered Edwardian Daleks made of copper. They spat fire at me and my newly acquired companions, which

is how I became embroiled in a deadly role-playing game. However, I gave up after a few rounds due to the incompetence of the others and the realisation that it wasn't real, as it was all based on a novel from 1900 which I had read while doing battle on an early 20th Century schooner in a storm.

I went home to the flat I inhabit in my dreams. There I discovered that the fish tank had grown substantially - about five times in size. There were no fish to be seen, despite the fresh water, abundance of plants, piles of stones and various aquatic things like mussels, underwater snails and anemones. I took a closer look into the dark tank and saw one of my fish, Master Cod, peeping round a plant. He swam out and other fish followed: Captain Fantastic, clones of Master Cod, various kinds of fish (bonsai sharks, baby carp, mini pike, nano stingrays and so on). But where was my third fish, Gill? I feared she was dead, but after carefully scanning the tank, I saw her hiding in the top right hand corner of the aquarium, as she had gone all shy. She darted down when she noticed me peering at her and the tank lit up in a spectacular way. Captain Fantastic's black markings returned, Master Cod and his pals glowed and Gill shone and shimmered like an aquatic angel, a golden fish.

I wanted to weep with joy but was too overwhelmed to do so. Instead, I looked at this glorious display gob-smacked.

The pink green Fairy Queen gently takes me by the hand and leads me back, back home again. Urizen admits

defeat to Mirizen. Human, to yourself be true! No more family, no more bonds. The devil lives only in your head.

It's early Monday morning, and my devil weeps as he slowly withers away. The clock gently reminds me it's time to get up. A beautiful spring sun is rising in the sky and I can already smell fresh tea and toasted teacake.

Badger-uprising in Cumbria

There's a badger rebellion in Cumbria. Shots ring out through the night, the streets of Ambleside are littered with human bodies and pus; blood and other bodily fluids flow through the streets. The government doesn't know what to do.



Young badgers sit on street corners and feast on human cadavers - all for the glory of Master Brock. Their leader gets the best cuts (cheeks and breasts) while noses and ears are destined to be used as trumpets, pipes and flutes. The bones will form the basis of soups.

There are some survivors. A woman looks for her husband in their bathtub, but all she can find are a few bones and some gristle. They smell human but not

of him.

And outside screams shrill out and heads roll down hills: Badger boy is showing man child what pest control truly is.



In bushes, the undergrowth and hedgerows, badgers young and old are gnawing on human skeletons, while female badgers are nibbling on human genitalia - strange fruit dangling from mighty oak trees.

The Old Badger looks at the clan's work and grunts with satisfaction. Sauntering off to his warm den and his mistresses for a good day's sleep, he smiles in the knowledge that his world has been upgraded.

The sun rises and shines on the lakes littered with corpses marked diseased. The cows in the fields and the sheep on the fells feel safe again.



Funny Ha Ha

You heard the one about the pig in a prison? The judge said it couldn't string a sentence together. Tra - Laaaaaa!!

Good, innit? I got a million of 'em. Y'see, I'm a comedy writer. My agent said that the only reason I'm not getting any work at the moment isn't that I'm not funny, but that I'm too funny. Or that the old-fashioned mediums of t.v., radio and stand-up comedy clubs just can't cope with my original brand of modern cutting-edge comedy. So he suggested I contact some websites and literary magazines. I sent out loads of material but never got any replies. Either the things have collapsed or they're still laughing their socks off! Tra - Laaaaaa!!

I've been writing comedy for several years now. I'm very good at it. Here's another one :

Two men go into a pub and ask for a pint of beer. The barmaid says, "Sorry, we don't serve gays." Tra - Laaaaaa!!

I applied for various courses to colleges too. Thought it'd look good on me CV if I had some letters after me name; but then I realised I already had letters in me name! Tra - Laaaaaa!!

God, I'm good, ain't I? Y'see, this is why I'm writing this. When I get a good strong solid fanbase of several thousand, I'm gonna build my own website. My mom always wanted me to be a builder. Tra - Laaaaaa!!

This is a great opportunity for you to be amongst the first of my fans. I'm gonna be King of Comedy. Let's just hope that Prince Charles doesn't take a fancy to

me, marry me, have an affair, and then I die in a horrific car crash. Tra - Laaaaaa!!

D'you like my catch-phrase? My agent suggested I use something like, "Ooh, tie me down", or a drawn out laugh, but I thought I'd make up my own and have something funny instead. Or something annoying.

Well, I'd better end here 'cos I'm on a word limit. Ha, and you thought I was on a train! Tra - Laaaaaa!!

So, goodbye. I love you, (often and in your sleep), and behave, y'fucka. XXX

Nano Prose

And so I said to him, "It's amazing how short flash fiction can be".

Zen I

This is not a story.

Zen II

What is the sound of a story?

Zen III

There is no story.



Bertolt Brecht:

The legend of the creation of the book of the Path by Lao Tzu on his way into exile (a new translation into English by JM de Vrind)

When he was seventy years of age and frail, the master desired peace, for wisdom was once again weak in the land and evil was on the ascendancy.

He strapped on his boots and packed up what little he needed. But then his load increased with the pipe he smoked in the evening, the book he always read and white bread as much as his eyes desired.

He struck a path into the mountains and took pleasure at the sight of his valley one more time before putting it out of his mind. His ox took great satisfaction in chewing the fresh new grass as it carried the old man whose speed was fast enough for him.

However, on the fourth day through the rocky terrain, a customs officer blocked his path: "Anything valuable to declare? "Nothing." And the boy that lead the ox said: "He taught." And so that too was explained.

But the man excitedly asked: "Did he find out anything?" The boy said: "That running water gradually conquers stone. The hard/ tough is subjected/ defeated, don't you know?"

The boy moved the ox on, as he didn't want to lose the last of the daylight and so the three disappeared around a black pine tree, when suddenly our officer felt driven and cried: "Hey you! Stop!"

"What was that with water, Old Man?"

"Do you care?"

Said the man: "I'm only a customs officer, but who defeats whom is of interest to me as well. If you know of this, then speak!"

"Write it down for me. Dictate it to the child! One does not take such a thing away with oneself. There's ink and paper at our place and dinner too, as I live there. And? What do you say?"

The old man looked at the officer over his shoulder and saw threadbare clothes, no shoes and a single fold on his forehead. No hero had stepped up to him. The old man murmured: "You too?" To deny a polite request seemed too rude to the old man, so loudly he said: "Those who ask deserve an answer". And the boy added: "It's also getting cold".

"Okay, a small break".

The wise man came off his ox, and he and the boy wrote while the customs officer brought them food (and in the meantime he only remonstrated softly with the smugglers). Then the time arrived.

One morning, the boy handed over eighty-one maxims to the officer and after expressing gratitude for a small travel gift, they turned around that pine tree back into the rocky terrain. Tell me: can one be more polite?

But let us not just praise the wise man, whose name adorns the book of the Dow! For one must first drag wisdom out of wise men. That is why the customs officer should be thanked as well: he was the one who dragged it out of him.

NB

English For Beginners Revisited And Revised

A classroom for grown-ups in a town somewhere in France... or Spain.. or the Netherlands... whatever

1. "Hello class... I said hello class! Now... Where were we? Ah, yes! (holds up pen) Is this a pen? Yes, this is a pen."
2. "Is this a pen? Yes, this is a pen."
3. "Is this a pen? No, this is not a pen. This is my husband's dick. This is a dick!"
4. "Is this a pen? No, this is not a pen. This is my husband's dick. This is a dick!"
5. "No, no! I say: Is this a pen? No, this is not a pen. This is my husband's dick. This is a dick! And you say: 'Is this a pen? No, this is not a pen. This is your husband's dick. This is a dick!' So, is this a pen? No, this is not a pen. This is my husband's dick. This is a dick!"
6. "Is this a pen? No, this is not a pen. This is your husband's dick. This is a dick!"
7. "Is this a pen? Yes, this is a pen."
8. "Is this a pen? Yes, this is a pen."
9. "Is this a pen? No, this is not a pen. This is a dick."
10. "Is this a pen? No, this is not a pen. This is a dick."
11. "Is this a pen? Yes, this is a pen."
12. "Is this a pen? Yes, this is a pen."
13. "Is this a dick? Yes, this is a dick."
14. "Is this a dick? Yes, this is a dick."
15. "Is this a dick? No, this is not a dick. It is a pen."
16. "Is this a dick? No, this is not a dick. It is a pen."
17. "Very good! Now... Pussy!"

Ad nauseum

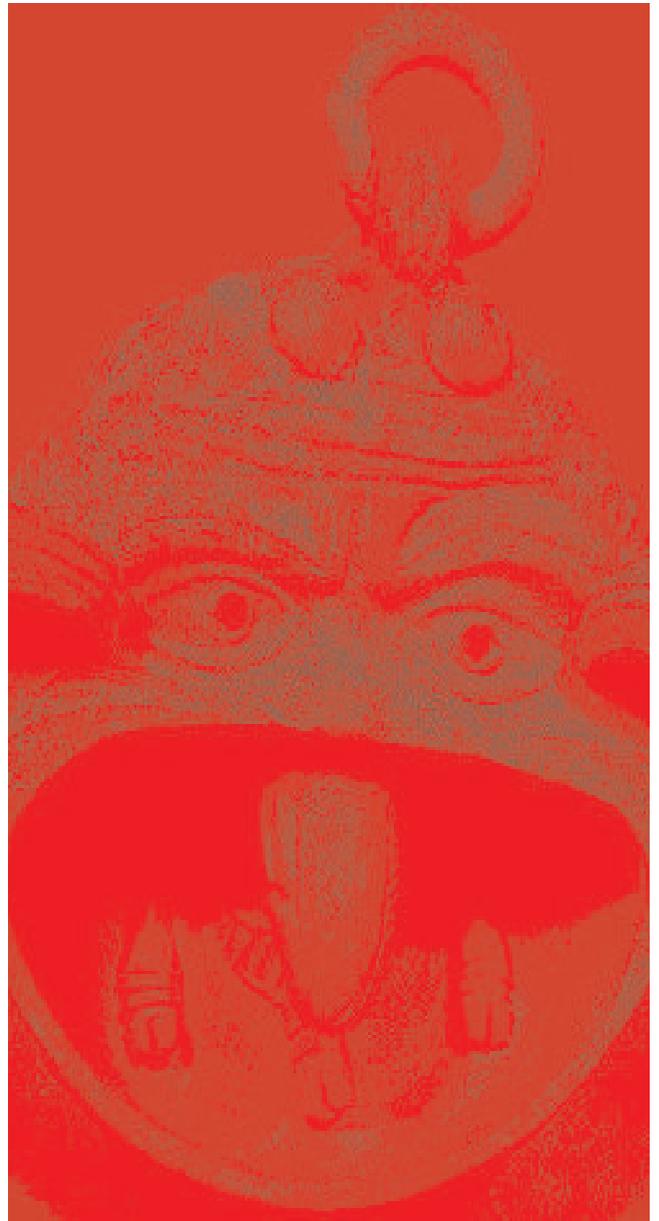


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