

Squirrel Jesus

by Kevin Army

the squirrel jesus

it was one of those days, nostalgically bathed in technicolor, kodachrome and lost shades from a more vibrant distant past. squirrel jesus sat still, waiting for the tram load of visitors, to put on the daily show, the display of begging, the martyrdom.

the trees were greener, the sky was endless and an ocean of promise, a promise of blue and awakening, a dream of perpetual growth and hope, sprung today, sprung forever within that age old heart that had grown weary with the wicked weight that can only be borne by the savior of the world trapped within a rodent's body.

all morning it was peanuts. endlessly peanuts, the daily punishment for all the things that went wrong through the centuries of translations. but then, a bit past lunch, a young boy of eight, nathan, brought jesus a donut. there was something in nathan's eye, jesus felt he knew nathan from somewhere, so he broke his zen squirrel code, opened his mouth and thanked nathan.

nathan replied "these are from mahatma. he knows you're hurting. he knows you're trapped. we're all trapped, and mahatma knows, donuts help."

then nathan turned, caught the tram, as jesus greedily savaged that donut, in an orgy of temporary liberation and lovely thoughtlessness, a groundbreaking moment in the annals of redemption.

so jesus left the mountain, swam across the lake, and built a fortress in a sugar pine tree.

this loss, he thought, is the endless virtue of existence, to be alive in this tree, and to know the vibrant beauty of life.

rattlesnake jesus

all of a sudden, jesus fell out of his tree, hit his head on an acorn that had been quietly resting upon the forest floor, and he turned into a rattlesnake. "fuck you god" he hissed, then he rattled until he passed out. sadly, when he woke, he was still a rattlesnake.

this was his endless path, exploring what each creature on the earth had to endure, what trials and disappointments each species experienced. what each skin felt like, what each distinct movement demanded and created. "it is for your own good, so you can understand the power and the truth of the second coming my son" bellowed god in his pretentious and exaggerated voice.

being a walrus was bad enough. jesus could hardly stand his own stench. and shape changing hurt more and more each time. in fact, by now, as god was running out of animals, fish, insects and birds for jesus to become, jesus became pretty confused as to what exactly he was.

so he slid along, shaking and hissing, searching for a rat to devour, possibly one that had been a brother rat a few weeks ago. he found himself in shadow, looked up.

the man knelt down, kissed his rattle. "i knoweth who thou art. i will charm you and we shalt make large sums of money". and so rattlesnake jesus was forced into a life of sideshow freak, doing strange snake dances, rattling the rattles like castanets in a flamenco nightmare, scaring children and winning desultory bets for the man.

one day, just before jesus was to become a vicious raccoon in the middle of one of those bets, jesus realized what a fucking mess life is, and how much he'd become attached to the mess. he smiled, bit the man's right arm, and watched the man pass out in front of his small crowd of people.

no-one did anything to save the man, including jesus, and really, jesus thought, some people just are not worth salvation, even if salvation is as much a scam as the man's snake charming routine had been.

just then, he became a raccoon, hissed and screamed, and ate everything in sight, gorging himself on all the world could offer, as if he somehow knew, the world would soon end.

feral cat jesus

suddenly, jesus convulsed and became a cat. "fuck me" jesus screamed, knowing he'd been about 200 kinds of cats by now. this

time, god was really reaching by claiming feral cats to be a unique species and breed. but recently, a growing antagonism had developed between father and son, and god just felt like fucking jesus' shit up that day.

so jesus wandered the hills, jumping at hikers and spraying all over the place. he bit the hand of the nice old lady who came out there to feed the strays. she ran off screaming, and he hoped god had been mad enough to give him rabies.

and indeed, he found himself foaming at the mouth, and then became feverish. jesus had visions of a horrible dystopia far worse than any dystopia hollywood had yet found. in fact, as soon as he was human again, he was sure he could cash in on these visions and make some amazing films out of them. yes, he was hallucinating, and it felt grand. he knew then and there, that evil had a fine purpose, and to stop worrying about it so much.

just then, jesus fell asleep, only to wake as a jellyfish washed up on a florida beach, unable to do anything but slowly die, as god laughed and created a terrible hurricane, the likes of which no one had ever seen, or endured.

termite jesus

and then it rained. a desultory rain upon the earthen ways, the heathenistic trends. thunder, thundering and threatening, colliding and colluding, and out of the wormwood, termite jesus gnawed and chewed, aching and barely holding on, as the endless group consciousness was slowly consuming him, taking over what little mind he had left at this point, what little heart may have been within his soul, if a termite can have a soul.

and the rain poured. an aching rain onto the crust of all things risen and fallen, the fucked up cycle of life and afterlife, that endless search for meaning and salvation, the onslaught of survival. jesus craved wood, and realized what a strange gift that was. each organism had some unique purpose, some pointed system of need and reward, the need to destroy this structure, this episcopalian church in bakersfield.

the rain let up. the rivers calmed, the soil regained ground, the sky breathed in blues again. jesus stopped being jesus, and just became a termite, lost in the ways of the broken foundations, the lost solid truths and workmanship, the beautiful unraveling of carpentry turned into dust.

a drought of the ages coming upon this place. the ever-changing world in a building of broken floors.

bunny jesus

for some odd reason, god had saved being a bunny for the last incarnation. the soft fur, the happy twitching nose, the endless sex drive, the vacant zen look to the eyes.

jesus stood out on brannan island, hopping and gazing out at the delta, the endless channels of water going around little inlets and outlets, rolling next to roads and levees, in beautiful murkiness, the endless travelling of water and life.

he wondered "is this my final form? is this retirement?" jesus quickly found he liked being a rabbit, gray and blending with the fog and dull landscape of the simultaneously bitter and kind earth.

the rock moves. thunder claps. the world briefly, but gently, shakes. jesus returns to being a man, and all god wanted him to do was find peace. so he floated up through the sky, past the clouds, somewhere out to the great openness of eternity.

no hellfire rained down on mankind, no mass destruction, no awful armageddon. just an acceptance of the jumble, the disarray of all the good and bad and gray areas of life. of living. finally, jesus got over saving the world, and in that moment, jesus became complete, a beautiful, heavenly man, and god smiled, filled with love and joy for his scarred and wonderful begotten son. or you and i, or them and us, all us species of the vibrantly embattled earth, the blessed vessel of all life, all the massively fucked up and beautiful life.

