

Spencer Golub and David Hancock

The Barn

It's time to get some of these stories straight. The Shadow Farm is not really about mutant ants, nor is their mythology found spoken of in less than legitimate espionage circles, although this fiction demonstrates just how far people on the inside thought Control's genetic mutation experiments had gone. The Shadow Farm is the in-house name given to the facility-within-the-facility that existed in the minds of former subjects of the experiments conducted on them in The Barn. Secondly, April, June and Inga, often working in tandem as "The Havoc Sisters," were Hemispheres hallucinogenic agents. While some counterespionage specialists ferreted out and sometimes turned enemy agents, the Havoc sisters burrowed in, turning people against themselves and turning them into Shadow Farmers. Unlike Kitty Treats, who was also an agent in this program, the Havoc Sisters operated largely within the confines of Hemispheres' Barn facility in upstate New York, which was believed to be near Bear Mountain but has since been declassified and closed down.

What's more, after my father, as Mishka the Bear, murdered my mother, he felt that he had become extremely dangerous and unpredictable and so he fled to the United States and had himself incarcerated at The Farm, where Mengele and his cohorts could monitor his state of being. This means, ironically, that Mengele did meet and then experiment on his own long lost son as a patient, but of course he didn't realize it at the time. It was (sadly, from my perspective), only fitting—Mengele's punishment, even if unrecognized by him, fitting his many similar crimes. To keep Mengele from discovering that my father was his flesh-and-blood, Control sent word to the doctor, through trusted sources, that the boy was alive and living under an assumed name somewhere in the American Heartland. And so, to pursue a fictional offspring, Mengele eventually abandoned his actual son, who needed his—uniquely his—help to fight the ever-growing demonic presence in his heart and soul.

Mengele had been working diligently and in secret to reanimate the Theremin Bug bioweapon. However, in exchange for information pertaining to his son's whereabouts, the doctor turned over to Control the cryogenically frozen human heads that contained pieces of the code. The canisters were removed from The Farm by Control in the middle of the night and transported, via moving vans, to a new, high-security facility beneath the town of Eureka, Kansas. Mengele had no other choice, really. He had already been betrayed by the Three Uncut Diamonds (a.k.a. "The Havoc Sisters"), and he had come to realize that Magda Szabo was never going to become Frau Goebbels. Perhaps Mengele had plans in the back of his mind to double-cross Control and reunite with the Theremin project after his son was found. Control probably could have just as easily forced

Mengele to hand over the heads, but his thinking was that if Mengele believed he was making the bargain of his own free will, he would be easier to manipulate in the future.

Not that Mengele's departure from Bear Mountain was without some drama. The evening before his departure, Magda Szabo confronted Mengele in The Barn. Szabo confessed that she had actively resisted transformation into the Mother of the Fourth Reich because she had come to understand, in the previous months, that true change only comes from love, never from hatred or egomaniacal enterprise. She also told Mengele that she knew he had killed April, May and June Havoc, by sucking their H-solution tainted cerebral fluid out of their skulls with an augmented basketball pump, and that she was going to turn him in to the authorities. Mengele, realizing that his once certain ally had abandoned him, killed Szabo by impaling her with a pitchfork, a prop once used in a production of *Oklahoma!*. Then he poured gasoline onto the various sets being stored in The Barn, lit a match, and proceeded to burn the entire building to the ground. Sadly, the fire consumed the holding pens in The Barn where Bighead agents were kept during their debriefing period while they were monitored as they returned to their normal state. Many of these creatures presumably died in the blaze, as their remains were discovered in the rubble of the building, although the Bigheads may have been killed by Mengele beforehand and scattered around The Barn right before he struck his match. This action would not only serve to make the fire look more like an accident, but would also get rid of potentially damning evidence of crimes against humanity, the remains of the Bigheads having been mistaken for barnyard animals by the arson investigators. Since the bulk of the Hemispheres laboratory was an underground facility, no equipment of any real significance was damaged, but the inferno did give the outward appearance of a major setback to Hemispheres' research and development branch. Perhaps Control had planned it that way, to throw a bit of disinformation to The Shadow Farm, like meat to a hungry bear.

The Nazi Hunter Irving Berlin had been on the case and had planned to arrest Mengele that very night, but missed his quarry by hours, arriving too late to save Szabo or apprehend the Angel of Death. Berlin had been delayed in Lower Manhattan, dealing with his own personal tragedy. Earlier that night, Berlin's lover and the other half of the Two Irvings, Irving Rommel, had been beaten to within an inch of his life by a group of skinheads in an alley outside a gay bar in Soho while Berlin was held back by the neo-Nazi youths and forced to watch the beating. Berlin never discovered whether his friend's death was part of a larger Shadow Farm conspiracy to warn him off of Mengele, or if Rommel, both a homosexual and a Jew, was simply the victim of an unrelated hate crime. Berlin was forced to make the choice of his life: either stay by the bedside of his dying lover or rush to Bear Mountain to capture one of history's greatest villains. Berlin chose the latter, thinking that this is what Rommel would have wanted him to do, although the Nazi hunter did suffer from terrible survivor's guilt for the rest of his

life. Not only did Rommel die alone in a strange hospital, but Mengele had also fled into the night before Berlin arrived at the scene. When Berlin finally made it to the Woodland Festival Theatre, dawn was breaking and The Barn lay in ashes, smoldering and sputtering in the early morning light. Berlin, angry with himself for letting Mengele escape his grasp, immediately followed the doctor's trail into the Midwest. He spent the rest of his life tracking Mengele, finally meeting up with the doctor years later, moments after he had killed himself in that anonymous Peoria motel room.

So what is a "Bighead" really, when all is said and done? A metaphor, a symbol, a stand-in for someone or something else? A mutant or an idea or a piece of information that has been mutated from its original form, that has expanded, been blown up, made more important—like a rumor? A person who has outgrown his role, his position, his place in line, his link in the chain, his nodal point in the network, his figure in the design, who no longer sees clearly or else now sees things too clearly? A victim, a rogue, a one-time follower, who has unexpectedly and not according to plan become a leader? A believer who became a nonbeliever and who only then grew a soul? The author of a fiction that is the destroyer of another even greater fiction? The most and least trustworthy fool you know, and the one that you don't know? I read somewhere in something that I wrote that when you start making lists and listing questions all the time, it means that they have gotten inside your head. Maybe that's when your head gets really big. That could be it. Maybe they get you to cover the tracks of the answers to your own questions by getting you to ask an endless series of questions that don't allow any spaces or ways for the answers to fit. In this way, you never notice that they've got you conspiring with them to keep their secrets hidden, which means, in effect, conspiring against yourself, against your own mental clarity, until you become an obsessive paranoid who is incapable of settling on any specific answers, but only on the one universal answer, that it is "them," that it has always been "them" from the beginning, that they are monitoring your thoughts as well as your actions, that they are getting you to talk to yourself, which robs you of any real audience for your conspiracy theories, which is what they have now become.

Here's an image of a Bighead that you might already know.



And here's the kind of paranoid thinking that goes with it:

If the surname "Hunter," as in *Grateful Dead* lyricist Robert Hunter, as in my parents, as in Diane and Wesley Hunter, as in their Hemispheres-snatched-and-presumed-assassinated son Walter Baker Hunter (me) isn't unsettling enough,

consider this: Robert Hunter was born Robert Burns, and it was Burns who wrote “Address to A Haggis”, a favorite poem of one Edna Haggis, who frequented the Hemispheres-sponsored club called The Secret Letters, attempted to kidnap the house band of the same name, and raised Lola, Meghan (a.k.a. Muffin) and Stick, the last of whom had his head chopped off by an unknown hand and put on a stick while in the employ (as were the other two) of Hemispheres. Along with author Ken Kesey, Robert Hunter was an early test subject of a psychedelic drug regimen conducted at Stanford University and covertly sponsored by CIA. There is no telling what he saw and what he knew and whether by the time he left the program his head had grown unusually big or else had been chopped off. Also, there’s that bit about “Dead” lead guitarist Jerry Garcia’s missing finger. In Hitchcock’s film *The Thirty-Nine Steps*, the hero is searching for a master spy who is missing a part of the finger above the joint on his left hand. While telling this story to a Scottish nobleman, the listener asks the hero, “Are you sure it isn’t the right hand?” and holds up his right hand, which is missing a finger above the joint. Jerry Garcia was missing part of his finger above the joint on his right hand.

Was Hemispheres in the business of developing its own legion of “Deadheads,” that is Bigheads who had gone through but not necessarily come through one of The Agency’s several drug regimens and were sent out on tour with the band to gather information under the disarming appearance of being too out of it to record anything that was going on? (Garcia’s long-term hard drug addiction is usually cited as having been a contributing factor in his death.) Why do you think there were so many tapes made of Grateful Dead concerts? In the sound-monitoring laboratories back at Hemispheres headquarters, these tapes that were sent along by mobile units (located in transponder vans and in individual operators’ jacket pockets) would be “cleaned up,” the music level (which agency technicians called “noise”) turned down and the audience level turned up in order to listen in on what was really “happening,” as they liked to say in the sixties, or “going on” in the seventies.

In best-case, Hemispheres-created scenarios, both surveillance and paranoia are targeted. But becoming bigheaded is nobody’s idea of a “best case.” Bigheads have forgotten the first lesson they teach you in Hemispheres training, which is, Be economical in all things. Don’t show off in your work. Only shoot what you need. Or is it only shoot who you know?

It has been some time since the Bigheads had parted company, and those who refused to be parted from their big heads went into hiding in different stratas of reality. Diamondland, in particular, had become the unofficial home of Bigheaded expatriates. They were protected well enough there so that some of them were inadvisedly emboldened to appear in the local clubs under assumed names, which were laughably ineffective given their insistence upon wearing their big heads in performance. They were goaded into doing this by so-called fans, who were really either just curiosity seekers or else cynical smalltime

entrepreneurs who thought they could make a quick buck off the remnants of their reputations.

COME SEE THE REMAINS OF A DANGEROUS RACE! screamed the ads, which were cynically designed to appeal to racists of all persuasions. Having been used so cruelly by former and now current employers, most of the former Bigheaded Agents depended upon an underground network of like-minded and like-headed people for support and, when necessary, concealment.

The Head of this Bigheaded operation was no stranger to the Midway, as the founder and proprietor of an organization known as the Carnival of Souls. But let's not go there just yet, because to do so would prolong the waiting of one lost soul for another in the woods beyond the clearing that abuts the lot behind The Secret Letters. When someone asks, "What is the story behind The Secret Letters?," the appropriate response in certain circles is, "The Waiting." It, "The Waiting," is what they don't tell you about in the otherwise rigorous training sessions, perhaps because in most circles, waiting is not normally associated with rigor but only with the slowing down of time and with it, people wrongfully conclude, effort or labor. To be "waiting," though, is not the same as being at rest, but rather in a readiness mode that anxiety identifies as being the norm. Mishka the Bear is good at waiting precisely because he is not good at so much else. He is always waiting for something, hiding from the very thing his generative mode of thought brings out of the woods and into the clearing, although in his anxiety dreams, he can be both lost in the woods and exposed in the clearing. Needless to say, though, he is never really in the clear, the clearing being just another mind trap, a no man's land between knowing and not-knowing that person or event that is waiting for you and the waiting for that has you always within reach if not immediately in its grasp. For it to do otherwise would mean no longer making you wait, and waiting is the point of the exercise that you are, even involuntarily, trying to master.

This is (again) what is called "Diamondland logic," and it is, in effect, a funhouse mirror image of the sort of anti-interrogation mind control technique that the agency teaches you as a lifesaving procedure. But when the procedure transforms into a condition, which it does in certain agents, whose mental suppleness made them good agents in the first place, it can become life-threatening. The patterns that you have been trained to look for everywhere, appear everywhere, are personalized and woven into a self-created myth of singularity. The Waiting, which is, after all, standard practice for an agent, takes on physical characteristics, the shapeliness of a room or some more formfitting body enclosure, like a suit of clothes or a hat. Agents who have succumbed to this condition speak of "pulling The Waiting out of their pocket," or "removing it from their head," or "turning it inside out to rip out the lining in search of bugs." In rare cases, The Waiting becomes the bug itself. They talk of "listening to The Waiting," or to "The Waiting listening in on them." They say that they are "waiting inside The Waiting," like it was a place or a thing that keeps the future

out and the present in. The present becomes more faceted, more precious, more like a diamond. By the same token, the past and the future become like coal—worthless, except to burn. It is said of an agent whose mind has been burned out in this manner that he is “taking coal to Newcastle,” where, it is commonly known, it is not needed, meaning that he is no longer relevant, no longer operational.

Meanwhile, at the farm in upstate New York, which is actually a state-of-the-art medical facility divided into 72 examination rooms and various laboratories, Bigheaded animals of all types can be seen leaving their stalls and heading off for feeding opportunities in the black-as-pitch Adirondack night. By now I am sure you realize that by “meanwhile” I refer to a simultaneity that may exist only for The Daughters of Poland, who are uniquely able to hold a more or less stable image of it in their collective mind. This is why the Bigheads can still be escaping from The Barn after all these years, or should I say, all those years ago.

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