

SELECTED ENTRIES

ON RECALLING PEOPLE IN THE SHIP'S HOLDING BAY

People, admittedly, are people, and when an individual file with the full name is opened (for example: "Mr. John D. Rhys"), you would expect to receive the presence of a human being that would more or less live up to the name of John D. Rhys in the Holding Bay. But those anxious claims were more often defrayed: you might receive a mobile, plant, or aerated solid instead. Any array of a certain band of product could be presented as John D. Rhys. I remember withdrawing an original crew member, Christopher G. Lanholme, individually after all my other selections for the session had been reviewed. I received one hundred and twenty-two lithographs, of varying but similar size. Holtzmann, idiotic thoughtless Holtzmann who was with me in the Holding Bay during the transaction, knew Lanholme and wondered as to how not one of the pictures even resembled the man.

ON THE PASSAGE OF TIME

Perhaps every crew member's first conscious moments include a reflection on the medals that decorate his or her left breast, and consequently the dull blue uniform that they are attached to. None understand the language that denotes the nature of their commendations. Those who claim to be ignored. Philosophy is simple and contagious, stemming from the immediate and unilateral compliance of the Onboard Computer. We, the personnel, are nothing but impressions, Rorschachs, reflections of the Console that mainlines the responses to our fractured data queries directly into the Wernicke's area of the brain. It is hard for us to pay attention to each other, and we cannot talk of much more than the ship and the pettiest forms of gossip. There is the sterile wonder of finding new functions to the Onboard Computer, in the manifold booths and devices ferreted away in lonely hallways and facility rooms. But these innovations-- along with the handwritten maps, cargo invoices and registers-- only derange us by presenting minute, inaccurate fragments of a horrifying whole that is also ourselves. The universe, which others unreasonably call the Ship, is endless corridor: its snaking, bland possibilities inspire similar thought. It is said that the ship was to move a population to a new host planet. That the ship is a simulation used to keep our subconscious minds occupied, while our corporeal bodies are in a form of stasis normalized by the Holding Bay. That the Commanders who once controlled this vessel seethe in their secret, unbreachable places while we float derelict. And there are cults. Of their combined dogmatics I remember only one distillation: that we are all spirits come from and returned to brilliancy, caught in a demonic interim. I do know that the ship consists of infinite enclaves that define their territory with painstaking incongruity. The Ship Directory, which houses its mapping functions, is inaccessible to those below Clearance Indigo. The highest-ranking officer that I have ever met was Clearance Green, and he was old and raving and his EPS card was no doubt stolen from a corpse.

ON RETRIEVAL OF DREAMS

Dreams are favored on the ship as a final means to give its drifting inhabitants direction in their remainder of activity onboard. Through the headset that is a component of the Sleep Monitor, one can review or re-experience dreams. As curious as the apparatus' function or procedure itself is when the dream retrieval mechanism meets incongruity. Then, apparently, the headset is trying to patch through and return the user to computer command. The command display flickers and ambient noise, neither from the dream nor your own experience, is heard. The appearance of such incidents is inconsistent and often absent from consequent sessions. They remind one of the formatting and interface errors experienced on archaic computers. I have not and never will ask anyone on the ship as to why the Monitor fails. I cannot find a command in the Sleep Monitor that retrieves the failure incidents.

ON THE SOIL OF FRIENDSHIP WITH PERSONNEL ABOARD THE SHIP

The perfection of some of the Onboard Computer's knowledge is evidenced thus: ask it who your best friend is and it will tell you. The soil of friendship runs shallow aboard the *Angelidakis*, for though the plight of ship personnel is for the most part common, motives are too exotic to be compatible. Holtzmann will someday outlive his usefulness to me, at which point I will completely separate from him. The women called forth from the Holding Bay serve a one-dimensional purpose. Vanderbane, Driscoll, Andrews, Milton were never more than adversarial and distant. Often to know a stranger's name, function, face is too much. Leibnez was my closest friend on the ship until he decided he must spend the remainder of his activity traversing its length: things were decided from there.