

*1984: Pragmatism in a Modern
Epic*

The Crazy Shepherd; Vol. 3; No. 7

April 1984

Kurt Buss

Scene: A Pastoral Setting

Epoch: Renaissance

Dramatis Personae: One youthful swain a-Maying

A voice, poetic and tranquil:

“Hence loathed pragmatism, tis thine hour be gone
and loose the trip fantastic, that on this night
be born the spirit of youth made whole-
with tempting will foreboding
and under moon azure find
splendid spore aplenty. Pastures ripe
with psilocybin bites of onrushing mirth
enlightened delight worth all apprehensions waylaid.

And there upon Euphoric fields let
Unwrapped bliss reside, tempting wide
soft eyes of youthful swain a-Maying,
who with deft steps doth stop time progressing
and basks between two moments everlasting.
Colours bright to light the
dark, and night that burns unending
shades of shadows glad with sad sorrow
for all those not like-minded. For those ilk
minorities immoral, who under pious banners do
Reagan-style decry the lives of those of
us, who want to live by them untouched. Their
haughty hands do snare, and in this case doth
snatched our youthful swain named Winston, and
stole him to the present, where now we see in
sterile laboratory our subject thus examined:"

Scene: Beneath a Government Research Building on a bright, cold day in April

Epoch: 1984 The clocks are striking thirteen

Dramatis Personae:

One youthful swain a-Maying

Beelzebub – a Clinical Technician

Belial – a Freudian Analyst

Moloch – a Pavlovian Interpreter

Mulciber – a Statistical Statistician

A voice, metallic and shrill:

FREETHINK UNGOOD, CHANGEHEAD

FREETHINK UNGOOD, CHANGEHEAD

FREETHINK UNGOOD, CHANGEHEAD

Swain: “Why...why have I been brought here? What is the reason for this...this crashing incarceration? I was only out a-Maying, invoking alchemical muses...Why me? I’m just a gentle shepherd!”

Beelzebub: “Gentle enough, yes, but not Gentile enough! You, because of acquired information impurities and heretical curiosity, have proven yourself unworthy.

Unttermenschen!”

Belial: “Yez. Und zuffering from a zevere neuroziz as well. You are nod in realidy a gendle szherpherd like you dink, you only imagine zad you are becauze of a subconscious dezire to have zex vid szheep. Deez iz all a sdage, yust a sdage you are pazing drough – most likely brought about by a zubzdance we found in your bloodzdream; a zubzdance we call zolozodden.”

Moloch: “Yes. We have noted an increase in your salivary activity whenever we place a bowl of fungi containing this solosodden before you. It is evident that you are the victim of adverse conditioning. Improper stimuli. It is necessary for us to modify your behavioral tendencies to bring about proper personality characteristics.”

Mulciber: “Yes. That is truth. Ours to be arranged. And duly recorded. We seek facts. Truths. Properly selected. Sufficiently arranged.”

Swain: “But...but what of Euphoric fields?...unwrapped bliss and onrushing mirth...what of...what of that fragile self-induced Paradise...?”

Beelzebub: “Eliminated!”

Belial: "Ub-sdaged!"

Moloch: "Re-conditioned!"

Mulciber: "Lost!"

Swain: "Then what...what of the great things to come?...What of digital poetry?...What of computer cybernetics?...What is the future of...of silicone-substitute cerebral transplants? What of the burgeoning Micro-chip Metaphysics Movement?!"

Beelzebub: "There will be no poetry! No future! No movement of any kind!"

Belial: "Der iz only zee oral vixazionz und zee anal vedizhez! Everyding else is yust a sdage!"

Moloch: "And improper operant techniques...creating unacceptable behavior patterns...requiring de-conditioning and re-conditioning..."

Mulciber: "And truth, sufficiently arranged."

Swain: "But..."

Beelzebub: "No 'but's! It is time for action! Special Action!"

Belial: "Yez please! Lobodomize hiz libido before I go bonkerz! Deez bleedink-hard liberalz about drive me crazy!...Accchh! Is all yust a sdage! Whole world is sdage!"

Moloch: "Yes...Bring on the cage!...Oh!...See the rats salivate!...How delicious!...What superbly conditioned ducts!"

Mulciber: (aside to us) "The facts are all that remain. Down from epoch to epic and back again.

"When the rats were placed on Winston's face he cried out. And as he opened wide his mouth a rush of Paradise returned and stole him away. The facts. Only the facts remain."

(Exeunt all)

(