



Mouse Lights

Kadrey, Richard

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About Kadrey:

Richard Kadrey is a novelist, freelance writer, and photographer based in San Francisco. Kadrey's first novel, *Metrophage*, was published in hardcover in 1988 by Victor Gollancz Ltd., and went on to various other American and foreign printings in paperback. Mac Tonnies' *Cyberpunk/Postmodern Book Reviews* calls *Metrophage* "one of the quintessential 1980s cyberpunk novels," going on to describe "a gritty acid-trip through an ultraviolent L.A. where nothing is what it seems... . Alongside novels such as [William Gibson's] *Neuromancer* and Lewis Shiner's debut novel *Frontera*, *Metrophage* helped establish the cyberpunk aesthetic: relentless, paranoid and playfully cynical." Kadrey's second novel, *Kamikaze L'Amour*, is described by the same source as "mesmerizing... a surreal (and distinctly Ballardian) account of synesthesia and mutant desire set in the jungle-choked ruins of L.A." Kadrey's short story *Carbon Copy: Meet the First Human Clone* was filmed as *After Amy*. The publisher website, Amazon booksellers, and other sources list a July 15, 2007 publication date for Kadrey's next book, *Butcher Bird: A Novel Of The Dominion* (Night Shade Books). Other works include collaborative graphic novels and over 50 published short stories. His non-fiction books as a writer and/or editor include *The Catalog of Tomorrow* (Que/TechTV Publishing, 2002), *From Myst to Riven* (Hyperion, 1997), *The Covert Culture Sourcebook* and its sequel (St. Martin's Press, New York, 1993 and 1994); Kadrey also hosted a live interview show on Hotwired in the 1990s called *Covert Culture*. He was an editor at print magazines *Shift* and *Future Sex*, and at online magazines *Signum* and *Stim*. He has published articles about art, culture and technology in publications including *Wired*, *Omni*, *Mondo 2000*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *SF Weekly*, *Ear*, *Artforum*, *ArtByte*, *Bookforum*, *World Art*, *Whole Earth Review*, *Reflex*, *Science Fiction Eye*, and *Interzone*. Source: Wikipedia

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There is light now, for the first time in almost 100 years. Rubbish-heap Christmas lights, mostly, lovingly repaired and strung down both sides of the tiled tunnel. They twinkle, dime store constellations in the gloom. Their candy-colored light illuminates the derelict, hand-made train: Waterford crystal windows, soft, lamb leather seats and mother-of-pearl handles on the sliding doors. The old pneumatic-tube train, abandoned on its one-block line, had hunkered beneath Wall Street waiting a century for someone with a use for it.

Mouse had stumbled on the station by mistake. The Optic Kid had walked off with Mouse's last can of vienna sausage, and when Mouse called him on it, the Kid had come for him, his goons in tow. Mouse had to abandon all his belongings in the subway tunnels and flee into the dark, into the dampest, deepest tunnels, where no one (not even the other tunnel rats) went. In the dark, he'd crawled through a spot where the ancient concrete had rotted away beneath a steam pipe leak. Beyond was the lost pneumatic tube station. Mouse struck a match and saw a brass plaque on the wall. A name: Alfred Ely Beach. A date: 1870. The vast silent room was like some industrial cathedral. Mouse moved in on the spot.

Mouse never told anyone about his underground kingdom. When he died, several years later, he regretted little. He lay on soft leather, watched the Christmas lights twinkle and felt himself slowly merge with their brilliance. When other tunnel rats eventually discovered Mouse's lair, they quickly left. Beauty, so rare for them, had become a sacred thing. They hid the tunnel entrance and it remains lost to this day, though many claim to have seen Mouse's lights, blinking far away in the darkness of the tunnels.

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