



My Exquisite Corpse
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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I hadn't been feeling well for weeks when I went to see Dr. Breton, the surrealist surgeon. He'd graduated with top honors from the same Parisian university that had given us Salvador Dali, the famous brain specialist. Since both practiced the same Paranoid-Critical method of healing, which relied more on chance processes and instinct than on a lot of flashy "medical" training, I felt in good hands.

We began with a quick exam. Dr. Breton dispensed with traditional, dead methods of medicine and went his own bold way. Instead of anatomy charts, his walls contained maps of Kathmandu and the Cleveland sewer system, along with a glossy poster of Anna Kournikova, complete with his handwritten astrological and I Ching annotations, including her favorite color and food (baby blue and Buffalo Wings). The first words Dr. Breton said to me were, "Beauty must be convulsive, or it will not be. Now, turn your head and cough."

The good doctor pronounced me as fit as "a teacup of chicken fat, glistening in the flames of the burning Hindenburg." Healthy as I was, he recommended immediate surgery, since I was already there and the table was free.

We began with quickie séance, in which Dr. Breton requested surgical advice from the late, great Harry Houdini. The doctor seemed to be paying inordinate attention to his pretty blonde nurse, who giggled when he'd grab her thighs under the table. This, he explained to me was standard procedure in an "irrational anatomy" exam. Besides, given the choice between my spotty, larva-colored thighs and his tanned nurse's, which would I examine? At once, I was reminded of the doctor's brilliance and didn't question his technique again.

Dr. Breton was a psychic surgeon, and dispensed with the use of crude "instruments" and "those sharp, scary thingies." After fortifying himself with a couple of shots of Jagermeister, and sterilizing his bare hand in a warm bottle of Mr. Pibb, Dr. Breton plunged his left hand deep into my abdomen. Seconds later, he pulled out a set of playing cards (a good poker hand: aces and eights), a string of paper flowers, the recipe for Kishka his wife had been looking for, a large liver tumor, and three live pigeons.

Leaving Dr. Breton's office, I felt like a new man. That I had a seizure on the bus home and died a few hours later should, in no way, be seen to reflect on the doctor's healing prowess. His last observation says it all: "Death is the ultimate side effect of life," he told me, followed by, "No cash refunds."

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