

Cruel World

In an age before there was time itself
in the Archean Period of Earth's existence
was it not sulphur which filled the atmosphere?
And did being not issue forth
from deleterious surroundings?

In the days of Pompeii's splendour
Was it not the Roman law of *Patria Protestas*
which extolled the virtues of exposing superfluous
newborns in the wilderness to die?

But have we not passed into a time now
of Brooke's Granchester meadows?
Now do we not wonder at Wordsworth's lakes?
Are we not all now both Swallows and also Amazons?

So why now do you beset us with the ravages of Katrina?
Why do you send torrents down the streets of New Orleans?
Is it to wash away the wretchedness of our existence?
Or have we yet to learn that the sulphurous Archean
beckons a hedonistic populous with its imminent return?

By Patrick Mackeown

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Mutilation Murders

The torso of a black child has been discovered in London's Kensington Gardens. Detective Chief Inspector Hawthorne and his men quickly discover that the boy was a victim of a ritualistic killing. At Heathrow airport a second child, Jubulani, and his mother disembark from their plane. On his arrival in London Jubulani is kidnapped. A Ju Ju witchdoctor in South London is preparing the new child, Jubulani, to be sacrificed. Hawthorne is racing against time to save the boy.

Midwinter's Children

Georg, a nine-year-old street child, has been captured by human traffickers from Moscow and is about to be sold to a child pornography ring in Amsterdam. Detective Chief Inspector Hawthorne, from Suffolk CID, is on the case...

The Black Daimler

Nexus, a London-based Chinese dissident, learns that his friend was found with an axe embedded in his head. As more of his politically active associates die, he becomes involved in a frantic struggle to understand and defeat the threat to himself and his organisation.

The Expendability Doctrine

Oil tycoon Keith Connors is found dead in the garden of his villa; undoubtedly the work of a pro. His ex-wife flees to Libya, where she is linked to the brutal murder of the White House Trade Representative. In his investigations, Inspector Hawthorne discovers a sinister web of treachery and greed in the international oil business.

The Devil's Brothers

Catherine Bronston, a fifteen-year-old girl, is snatched outside her local swimming pool. The kidnappers, ruthless Albanian mafiosi, issue a ransom demand containing dismembered body parts. Catherine's father fears that the ongoing police investigation could reduce the possibility of her being found alive.

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