

THE MAKING OF THE FAR COUNTRY TRILOGY

The author's
viewpoint

The Day Of
The
Alchemist

Book 4
of the trilogy
'The Far Country'

G. James Hamilton

'The physical world of yesteryear, with all its
compact and assuring structure, is gone
— forever'

John K. Williams

The Far Country trilogy

BOOK 4

COMPANION BOOK

SAMPLE ONLY

G.James Hamilton



'I'm on the side of the humanist who rejects the self-satisfied and worn-out religion being offered to him. He's right to rebel.'

Dr John Robinson
Bishop of Woolwich

Table of Contents

1.	Preface	5
2.	Story Premise	10
3.	Interview Part 1	14
4.	The Second Coming	77
5.	Interview Part 2	79
6.	The Great Tragedy	104
7.	Interview Part 3	106
8.	Author Commentary	130
9.	Visit from the Skylords	132
10.	Interview Part 4	148
11	Drowning Lessons	192
12.	Interview Part 5	229
13.	Evolution or Devolution?	261
14.	Interview Part 6	273
15.	Appendices	311
13.	Illustrations	334

'An agreeable opinion is accepted as true: this is the proof by pleasure (or, as the Church says, the proof by strength), that all religions are so proud of, whereas they ought to be ashamed.' Emmanuel Victor Manu

Preface

In Infants School, I experienced a miracle—if by a miracle we mean something occult that flaunts the laws of Nature. As an innocent abroad who trusted adults, I was forcibly indoctrinated to believe that there was an omnipotent God personality who loved us in spite of the apparent abundance of evidence to the contrary. Anyone who puts humanity into its present position doesn't love them, trust me. The most glaring contrary evidence I saw was the conduct of his chosen teachers in the Catholic School System of the 1950's and the sadistic punishments they meted out to us as faithful and obedient servants of that angry Hebrew God called Jehovah. He'd created a theatre for misery here in 'the world' and another in Hell beyond Earth's shores. Hell is the sulphur pit for the failures and rejects of 'His' Creation whom he'd decided hadn't suffered sufficiently in life. The miracle was that I survived this start in life. I overcame it; I didn't commit suicide.

I'd never heard of H. L. Mencken, long since dead, but he had my situation pegged marvellously. 'I can't imagine,' he said, 'a genuinely intelligent boy getting much out of college, even out of a good college, save it be a cynical habit of mind. For even the good ones are manned chiefly by third-rate men, and any boy of sharp wits is sure to penetrate to their inferior-

ity almost instantly. Men can fool other men, but they can seldom fool boys.' What's more, this genius had the schools I went to pegged as well ... 'The essential difficulty of pedagogy lies in the impossibility of inducing a sufficiency of superior men and women to become pedagogues. Children, and especially boys, have sharp eyes for the weaknesses of the adults set over them. It is impossible to make boys take seriously the teaching of men they hold in contempt.' Greater people than I saw things precisely as I did. One didn't have to submit to the crippling of the spirit to experience the educating of inner knowledge. It was contempt for the men placed over me that enabled me to survive the rape of my mind and spirit I endured at school in Australia. I still ask: what induced them to treat me that way?

The truth that eluded me in that primitive environment is that we live between two worlds, one of them illusory, defective and unreal, the other ideal, invisible and Real. In the former—where we are at this moment—we're bamboozled by 'reality' in what is essentially a place of learning. We don't realize it, and we don't know why we're here, so we clutch at straws to comfort ourselves. Conventional (Churchianity) religion is the main comforter, hand in hand with materialism. A man better informed than I am in such matters, a certain Mr J. Stanley White PhD said: 'Insofar as we live with a fundamental belief that is untrue, is not much of this life converted into a lie?' The task of life, as I see it, is to detect the lies, and resist false comforts. One's intuition helps in this. Mine told me that the religion that underpins 'the most successful civilization in human history' is a pack of carefully orchestrated lies. 'Most successful' equated with most destructive and suicidal, and was an oxymoron to anyone who took the trouble to examine it in their search for truth.

Pontius Pilate—a genuine historic character if Christ probably wasn't—is said to have asked: What is Truth? His gesture implied that Truth was too obscure to be known by mere mortals like you and me. Truth is something we have to find for ourselves or we won't find it at all. No one likes you enough to tell it to you. And even if they did like you, there's no chance they could actually tell you anything of worth. The good news is that it's in you, nowhere else. Everything you'll ever need came packaged with you. I agree with the intuitive Abe Lincoln: the God within man is the good within him. The task he undertakes in this cosmic backwater boot camp is to seek out and become that good, if he can. In so doing, he learns to love; he becomes one with All Else, not just a mucky little sideshow of an event destined to be lost in oblivion.

The great tragedy of our human condition is that we rely on experts to tell us what truth is—priests, pastors, lawyers, psychics, philosophers, politicians—instead of trusting our own divine inner power; our intuition. My gut tells me that The Fall as explained in Genesis of the Old Testament is myth talk for abandonment of our inner power—what is 'educated' by education; drawn out, not crammed in. We weren't evicted from Eden. We ran away; in fright and panic. (To me, the Garden of Eden is a symbol for the Pleroma or permanent mind life we lead when not in the body, training here on Earth). We doubted we belonged there, and denied our station as divines. What we so often refer to as the miserable 'human condition' is but our continued error of modesty, our spirit-destroying inferiority complex. We insist we're of no high station and that to imagine we are is that most detestable sin of pride, or hubris. Few of us realize that what many call the Second Coming is well under way. Only it's not the cornball version most of us were told to expect by the unimaginative

tive authors of the biblical texts. Something big is happening on Earth; something that has never happened before. Winwood Reade said "we live between two worlds; we soar in the atmosphere; we creep upon the soil; we have the aspirations of creators and the propensities of quadrupeds. There can be but one explanation of this fact. We're passing from the animal into a higher form, and the drama of this planet is in its second act."

A revolution is under way, with most of us looking the other way. If Winwood Reade happens to be right in his estimate of things, the long-promised separating of the goats from the sheep is in progress. The quote by John K. Williams on the cover of the novel will dawn on more and more of us: *The physical world of yesteryear, with all its compact and assuring structure, is gone forever.* It dates from the first decade of the Twentieth Century, with Max Plank's quantum physics discoveries. We were looking the other way then too. The pendulum is swinging back to recognition of our inner power, and the knowledge that we are soul, not mere temporary personalities in temporary bodies—the errant conviction that lost us our original high station. When the master of the origins of mankind Richard Leakey said, in San Diego in 1973, that his findings simply eliminate everything we've been taught about human origins, we were all looking the other way—*yet again!* He said he had nothing to offer in its place. So with evolution, we're back to square one, stuck with Creation theory of the Bible . . . or an explanation we can reach by intuition.

Creation is the key word, but not in the literal sense of the Bible or the way most of us think. It's far less banal than that. Survival means adapting. Adapting means living authentic lives, not as cheerful robots or the obedient zombie I was 'educated' to be but as disgruntled souls who glimpsed the nar-

row exit gate and headed for it in a hell of a scramble. It's that or take the treadmill of shadow life in the shadow world peopled by automatons. Our creative powers seem to have no limit that I can see. We're doing the creation alluded to in the Good Book—little you and me; blind as bats, with only our intuition as sonar. What happens when we cock it up? A messenger turns up, on cue, from out of the blue to stone our roofs and smash our windows to get our attention. The protagonist of this saga is a man who preached timely adaptation and exhorted each of us to go back to being the artists that we were born. His revolutionary message is that we creative types—we *creators*—deserve far better than the drivel and dross we create for ourselves in our artificially prolonged state of stalled psychic evolution. In the Gnostic Gospels, Christ lamented that he found us all drunk and poverty-stricken. None of us, he said, showed any thirst for the knowledge he brought. None of us showed any interest in knowing where we'd come from or where we were going. 'You're all *pissed!!*' he yelled. They must have had Catholic Schools in Christ's day too. What struck me was that, as Carl Sagan said, we're in deep trouble. Some of us—men like Jung, Fromm, Gurdjieff—were onto it already. This warning from Gurdjieff is chilling:

'If a man could understand all the horror of the lives of ordinary people who are turning around in a circle of insignificant interests and insignificant aims; if he could understand what they are losing, he would understand that there can only be one thing that is serious for him—to escape from the general law, to be free. What can be serious for a man in prison who is condemned to death? Only one thing: how to save himself; how to escape. Nothing else is serious.'

BASIC STORY PREMISE

The central idea behind the trilogy is that something went terribly wrong in our minds and, consequently, our lives as cosmic entities. We're souls that visit times and places, and as such, are spiritual, not physical. At some point, we became convinced we're both material and ephemeral, locked into one dimension, one place and one time, empty of any real knowledge about our predicament or our true nature. Therein lies the human dilemma. Did Christ come here to jerk us into remembering what we'd forgotten—to tell and show us how to cheat death and recover what we've lost? If he didn't, someone (and I mean the early Church Fathers) invented the story of the New Testament. Everything in the New Testament leads inexorably to the single idea that we have to be shaken out of a stupor; awakened from a psychic trance. To me, it seems that the Church is preoccupied with saving the souls of the most unmeritorious amongst us—the cowardly, the gullible, the grovelsome and the sucker-uppers—and it makes a mockery of humanity's struggle and the whole Christ business. Could it be that human beings are creators who became so traumatized by the awesome powers they embodied they went into a trance of denial? Albert Camus declared that 'humans are the only Earth species that refuses to be what it is.'

We appear to be content in a state of psychic retardation. Horus, Socrates, Christ and Manu were artists who understood far better than their contemporaries that art liberates the mind in the same way religion or philosophy may when they're authentic. These four unusual men used their Earth lives to express a powerful idea that would pro-

foundly affect others. Not many at first, but growing in numbers, alerting them to the mental slavery they endure unconsciously. Their aim: to free them from the tyranny of doctrines and fear spread by a manipulating elite called custodians—political, religious and 'otherworldly'. Their art is founded on this principle espoused by William S. Burroughs:

"It is to be remembered that all art is magical in origin—music, sculpture, writing, painting—and by magical I mean intended to produce very definite results. Paintings were originally formulae to make what is to happen. Art is not an end in itself, any more than Einstein's matter-into-energy formulae is an end in itself. Like all formulae, art was originally functional, intended to make things happen, the way an atom bomb happens from Einstein's formulae."

Manu's mission is of that nature: to bring, from the minds of higher men, teachings similar to those of Socrates that lesser men are free to cipher if they're able. Humanity's minders (here called the Patriarchs, modern Pharisees) can see the trouble that will cause to their cosy privileges, their closed shop on control of people's minds, and the smooth running of their operation. They take the usual Machiavellian precautions to thwart him. Being no fool, he remains a step ahead of them at each turn while continuing to build an impressive following. Increasingly alarmed, the Patriarchs change tactics to have him neutralized by a fatal accident, or, preferably, tried and executed for sedition and terrorism.

When Manu suddenly declares himself to be the badly needed Liberator (Messiah) and starts acting accordingly, it's as if he played right into their hands. The Church elders produce evidence to show Manu the Blasphemer is also a Patriot (later day Zealot or terrorist) activist, guilty of treason against the state. In private discussions in chambers during the trial, Prefect Pontifex gets Manu's subtle message that he has good reason for a guilty verdict to be passed. I won't divulge that here.

Let's face it, if Socrates hadn't taken the hemlock, no one would know of him today, or what he stood for. It's a big decision to take one's own life, and it's never done lightly. One needs to be certain that it's not an end but a change of circumstances, and one needs to be convinced that it will do some good. Both Socrates and Christ knew that the significance of their lives would be immortalized by the voluntary and courageous manner of their death. The Prefect accommodates Manu's wish, and ritually washes his hands of any responsibility beyond signing the death warrant. The death sentence allows Manu to pursue the unexpected end game of his mission: the defeat of Earthly death and the sowing of seeds for a higher race of Earthmen, the Sixth Root Race. It's time for man to lift his game and live a whole lot less like dogs.

The inspiration for the novel emerged out of subtext underlying the trials and deaths of Socrates and the mythical Christ of the New Testament. Both condemned men taught—and died to demonstrate—that we've been tricked into believing that the life we know, this Earth life, is the real one, and that the Real life, albeit invisible to us, is there for the living, if we so choose. We know that their teaching and example failed to impress the multitude. Both were deemed to be failures. 'The

'Far Country' explores the paradox in which Earth men are to succeed through worldly failure by refusing to be mesmerized by the empty worldly idea of success and by seeking the truth that frees them from the psychic slavery they were born into.

The Interview

with

'The Far Country' author G.James Hamilton

A recent conversation between publisher Christine de Portugon and author G.James Hamilton sheds some light on the novel project that took him the best part of a decade of struggle to put into a first draft, not to mention about twenty years struggling with the material itself. 'The Far Country' is a fresh look at an ancient story retold in the New Testament and repeatedly for ten thousand years before that. It's a story that might have been told by the losers in the struggle to give birth to the Roman Catholic Church. It examines simple truths of our worldly existence that have become obscured in modern times in a society that suspects not only that it's lost its way, but that it has lost a lot more than just its way. The chat turned into somewhat more than an in-depth discussion of the author's view of the novel he wrote and more importantly of his vision of the Christ phenomenon that seems to be buried deep and permanent in the human psyche. The recording of it here is intended as a way of delving in more detail into the ideas raised in the novel and the way the author deemed them worthy of dramatizing in the story. They're big questions, and merit more space than the novel could afford. Hence this companion book.



“It's the task of the historian to interpret the movements of history as possible ways of understanding human existence. By bringing the past to life again, he should drive home the fact that here *tua res agitur*: this is your business.”

- Rudolf Bultmann

CdP: We're going to talk about his book 'The Alchemist's Apprentice'—the first of a trilogy—with Australian author G. James Hamilton. Welcome, G. James. The idea of the interview seemed a good way to assemble background information to the writing of the books normally not accessible to the reader of a novel. The questions have been tailored to satisfy the diehards who inevitably have more questions to ask than the story itself can answer. Could we perhaps start off by clarifying who is the Alchemist and who is the apprentice?

GJH: This is an allegory of the New Testament put into a modern setting. Manu (Christ) is the Alchemist, and Judas is his apprentice.

CdP: I've been asked whether this is a book about religion or some other thing. One hears all sorts of rumours.

GJH: It's a crime story, essentially. More specifically it's a series of crimes topped off by the biggest crime in history. Wise people I respect have said that all history is in fact is a catalogue of the crimes we commit against each other; others have called it a record of our passion for the veneration of crap. Occasionally a whopper crime comes along; the sort of crime that's so enormous and outrageous, like Hitler's or Stalin's, that it's hard for the average punter even to identify

it as a crime, so far is it beyond his understanding. All through history, we've stood in awe before mass-murderers and reluctantly applauded, bewildered by the enormity of the achievement. We know that when you kill a person it's murder—a crime that has very serious consequences. But when you kill a million people, it's only a statistic. This crime I've dramatized in my novel is much bigger even than a statistic. And it's so enormous that no one really sees it as a crime. Because it's committed against the human spirit and not the person or his material property, no one notices; nobody takes it seriously because there's no physical body or blood involved; no opened vault, no smoking gun with fingerprints. The crime is so subtle and bewildering that it's beyond the understanding of the popular mind. Despite its enormity, it's seen as benign, laced as it is with anaesthetic, to cover its tracks. That's why it remains largely unchallenged to this very day. That's why an outsider is sent in; an outside specialist in matters of salvage—not *salvation* but *salvage*—of the human spirit. His job is not merely to prescribe a different anaesthetic but to expose it; not to become a figure of veneration but to wake souls from their trances.

CdP: You're not referring to the rigged trial before the Pharisees but the crime the accusers committed, not against the accused but against humanity itself—deception leading to mind control.

GJH: That's right. As with my earlier novel on Captain Thunderbolt, I focussed not so much on the crime of the individual who's a victim of state power controlled by the rich but the much larger crime of the lawmakers who have a responsibility

to govern the way they'd expect to be governed. In Manu's case here, I focus not on the crime they charged him with but on the crime they committed against humanity in general. After nearly two thousand years, the Church still refuses to admit to crimes against the human spirit of the type I describe. It still reveres St Augustine who was little better than Pol Pot. There has never been a bigger crime in human experience than the one told in this story. Genghis Kahn's ravages of Europe and beyond don't even come close to it. Apart from a few hints from the Messiah himself (left in probably by accident), the New Testament passed over it in silence. Even when the Reformation came along, the silence was maintained. The Enlightenment threw little light on their crime. The perpetrators of this mega-crime, it seems, have special dispensation to go on doing what they do. They still walk free, with carte blanche to carry on regardless. I find that truly stunning. Morris West almost grabbed the tiger's tail in his novel *The Shoes Of The Fisherman*. Dan Brown almost grabbed the nettle before backing away in his *Da Vinci Code*. Why is the pseudo-sacred regarded with such deference? I think it's because the vast majority of us are complicit in it to one degree or another. In what the psychologists call consensus trance, we not only go along with it but we cheerfully allow it to go on indefinitely, even if it has turned us into slaves and taken us to the very edge of extinction.

CdP: I accept that it's a crime novel, and even that it deals, as you say, with the biggest crime committable by the human species, but it also has a religious or purposeful ethics element to it that comes out of the crime, even though it's not the sort of religion most people know as religion.

GJH: The word 'religion' is problematical because we have differing and often slanted views about what it means. So we tend to be rigid in our thinking. In my case, I was told by priests and my religious teachers that God rewards rigidity, servility, obedience, cowardice and a host of things my gut told me were wrong. They also told me my gut was wrong, yet they were supposed to be teaching us Christ's message that the truth was in us, nowhere else. The blind were leading the half-blind so I opted out of it. I didn't buy it. Others around me believed what they were being told. We were bashed into believing it. Can you imagine it?

CdP: It's difficult to imagine that we allowed this to happen.

GJH: It's still allowed under more subtle forms. Once that 'R' word is mentioned, rows develop easily. They seem so impossible to resolve that we just avoid them and we end up by resolving nothing. The guts of a story like the one I've written here will nearly always get junked by publishers to avoid offending the readership with disturbing revelations ... *It's too strong; it'll offend Catholics; it'll upset the Establishment; readers don't want that sort of thing; it's too radical, bla bla bla.* You know, there's really little point having freedom of speech in a self-censoring society like ours. Why we haven't torched all our libraries is beyond me. To their discredit, most authors bow to this censorship if they want to be published. I was flat broke and in debt when I turned a publisher down on my first novel. He wanted to render my story benign and inoffensive as a condition of signing the publishing contract. I quite understood that he'd want to protect himself, but why he even wanted it was a mystery to me. Why buy a new car then tart it

down by smashing it about with a sledgehammer? I walked out of his office with my manuscript intact. That was the MS for *Thunderbolt: Scourge Of The Ranges*. Phoenix did it, as a fledgling co-op. I wanted to pressure the establishment into showing why they keep the Uralla Fiasco records hidden, so I went ahead and did it. I knew why they'd go to all the trouble they did to suppress the truth. I wanted to see what a shabby lot they are, giving allegiance to a Crown of a country that got rid of us thirty years ago, even though they were elected by us to represent us, not a Crown that means nothing to us anymore. The 'Queen of Australia' sop is unConstitutional, illegal and a sham. Can you see what attracted me to such hypocrisy? People have said I'm a republican because of my portrayal of Fred Ward in *Thunderbolt*, just because I immersed myself in that character. They say it because of my opposition to the Crown as a front for crooked politicians. The fact is I'm a monarchist frustrated because the monarchy movement is a farce now and the monarchy itself unAustralian. It's British, which is a foreign power. Our efforts so far to move to a republic are so afflicted by superficiality and ineptitude that an intelligent person cringes. We have no idea how to go about setting ourselves up with a decent republic because we have no talent for self-government. That leaves me deceived by both republicans and monarchists. They make me despair.

CdP: With *The Far Country*, as with *Thunderbolt*, you've stuck your neck out, haven't you?

GJH: Why not? That's what writers do. I'm not a banker or a miner. I've done my homework on both. With *Thunderbolt*, I was so sure of the charges I made that I was prepared to go to

jail if I was proved wrong by the documents I asked Parliament for. I don't expect a publisher to do that. But I do expect governments to have a repository for such critical works. Thomas Jefferson said that this sort of dissent is what makes democracy work and it has to be encouraged, nurtured. We do the opposite, and crow about our 'robust democracy'. What a bunch of turkeys we are. Our 'democracy' doesn't work any better than Communism did, and for the same reasons. I've found that much out by prodding it. Now that we have the Internet, there should be a government sponsored library for what Sir Walter Murdoch called the growlers amongst us. It's the growlers, he said, who brought us out of the caves and down from the trees. Yet we treat them as pariahs mostly and reward the exploiters of humanity. It's not very bright. We're a dull-minded and bloody-minded species if ever there was one.

CdP: Have you done your homework on this present one in a similar way? For *The Far Country*?

GJH: I have indeed. It's taken more than twenty years of gestation. And I'm no less confident in the truth of my case than with *Thunderbolt*. There are various reasons behind censorship by government. There are good ones and bad ones. Good ones protect the public; bad ones protect those who are shafting the public—in this case, public officials. All censorship achieves is to delay the inevitable confrontation to a later date when it will be even more damaging and waste laying. A reason to publish this, in my view, is to throw light on a conspiracy that we just take for granted as being well intended. Bunkum! With leaders like ours, who needs Nazis and Stazis?

CdP: Are there any good reasons for a publisher not to publish, apart from the usual ones?

GJH: Which usual ones do you mean?

CdP: Slush stuff—lousy writing, bad grammar, boring subject. You know.

GJH: Well I do know this: just because it's well written and its exposure would be of great public benefit, there's no guarantee they won't be rejected. The Phoenix cooperative is well aware of Murstein's Law, as you know, and frequently quotes it just to avoid falling prey to it.

CdP: Please tell the reader what the Law says.

GJH: It simply says that if a revelatory article or book is likely to do a service to the community by being exposed, its chances of being exposed are close to nil. Commercial pulp pap takes precedence. Too frequently, the real reason for censorship is not commercial but cultural, and I mean political correctness. It pollutes everything now. If the publisher doesn't wish to gamble his money on a particular title, no one should expect him to, least of all the writer. The problem isn't the publisher but the general taste in society; the demand for escapist material and the general fear of change. That taste is a self-perpetuating device for retarding human development. There's a level of hypocrisy in our society that says free speech is vital to democracy then does all it can to kill it. The phenomenon explains why nobody has challenged the criminals of mega-crimes like this one. It's not likely to happen either under the present social conditions.

CdP: Do you know of other society-wide crimes apart from organized religion?

GJH: Yes. Don't we all – at least some? And they all flourish because of the escapist self-censorship I just mentioned aggravated by reluctance by the mass of men to accept that they're crimes or even that they're real, and the reluctance of media people to tell them any different. I don't intend going into all that here. It's difficult enough dealing with the mother of them all on its own like this. Just the act of writing about it instead of a nice love story is gut wrenching. I took some advice from my mentor Nietzsche: *Write with blood: and you will discover that blood is spirit.* The old coot is right. And a genius.

CdP: Is it hard writing the way you do, or want to do?

GJH: Nah. Nothing to it, really. All you need to do is sacrifice personal happiness, embrace poverty and you're away. I could have gone into banking if I wanted a quiet, happy life as a healthy, wealthy vegetable. Hemingway summed it up beautifully: *there's nothing to writing. All you do is sit down at the typewriter and bleed.* A subtle form of Murstein's Law operates whereby the more important it is for an idea to find free expression in blood, the more it's likely to fall victim to commercially-motivated self-censorship.

CdP: What sort of reader are you appealing to with the stories you produce as you bleed away at your bloody typewriter?

GJH: Thoughtful ones. I don't write for any other kind. God knows the thoughtless are more than catered for already. Thoughtfulness covers a wider spectrum of humanity. It's not as elitist as we might imagine. I established long ago that we'll

all think if we're encouraged to or invited to. Rare is the individual intent on being a moron. Mostly we're not encouraged to think, of course. There's every inducement not to think and virtually none to promote it. The pedagogue Paulo Freire put it well: *"The atmosphere of the home is prolonged in school, where students soon discover that (as in the home) in order to achieve some satisfaction they must adapt to the precepts which have been set from above. One of these precepts is not to think."* Thinking—I mean of course *real* thinking—was forbidden in my family and at the pretend-schools I was forced to attend. The fact that most of us so willingly and ably submit to irrational fears doesn't make me want to switch to banking or real estate. Most readers are street-wise enough to go beyond the sort of puritanical blandness so revered by the commercial media. It's that street-wise readership I'm writing for—not the best-seller blockbuster crowd where the material is forgotten ten minutes after the profits have been banked, or where the people see writing as equivalent to sedatives and anaesthetics. Artists are on about truth by anamnesis, not anaesthesia. The two aren't compatible.

CdP: You've trained your sights on mankind's biggest problem if it's the one that's so big that a Messiah is needed to solve it.

GJH: I have, but I should point out that no Messiah ever comes to *solve* a problem we have. Churches do that by administering anaesthetic with liberal lashings of sanctimony and false hope. A Messiah comes to wake the living dead so *they* can solve their own problem. When you condense what Christ was on about into a single idea, it's that we're looking through a

telescope the wrong way. He just wanted to point out the folly of it and show us what we ought to be holding it.

CdP: What's big looks small—is that what you mean?

GJH: I mean we make big look small by inverting the perception mechanism; the Kingdom looks like a crappy, work-filled world that ends in death. I mean that we trivialize the important so we can dismiss it in good conscience, and aggrandize the trite because we identify better with it and it makes us feel better about ourselves and our bad habits, if only temporarily. Oneness becomes separation and multiplicity; spirit becomes matter; life becomes death; unknown becomes fear And so on. You get the picture.

CdP: You really think that that's what Christ was on about?

GJH: No, because there was no Christ of the type we've been led to believe. Christ is a psychological state of mind that we might aspire to in order to evolve beyond the psychic adolescent stage. But in as much as the Christ myth is useful to that end, yes, the messiah was telling us that we see things wrongly. We deceive ourselves. He says stop it. All it is really is a higher, invisible part of ourselves talking to a lower, visible part that's in a deadly and stupefying trance of semi-consciousness.

CdP: Some early critics of yours have said you're anti-religion; that your attacks are all aimed at organized religion.

GJH: They're half-right I suppose. I've attacked the product they've manufactured just as much as the manufacturer.

CdP: What product do you refer to?

GJH: The human sponge. James Stevens summed it up in his book *Neo-Alchemy*: "The human sponge is a creature unique to our age. In the past, all cultures have had a sense of the metaphysical; whether it be the crude superstitions of uneducated peasants, the theological philosophies of scholastic monks, or the mythology and legends of tribal storytellers. What is unique in our 'modern man' is the incapacity or lack of desire to conceive of or become that which is more than a body-in-the-world. If a question is not asked in terms of an immediately recognizable physical reality, it is considered frivolous, fanciful and unanswerable. In short, if he cannot be *informed* of the answer, then, in his eyes, he can never come to *know* the answer." These critics you refer to can't and won't see that the pap being paraded as religion today has driven modern man away from it into a zone of spiritual ignorance that fully qualifies to my mind as damnation and oblivion. We've finally achieved the vegetable state off existence, not life.

CdP: Why do you say that?

GJH: The condition denies us the possibility of fulfilling our destinies as human beings. That takes me back to the greatest crime committable against humanity.

CdP: The accusations you make in *The Far Country* have been made by others before you, of course—in one form or another. So what can you claim to bring that's new?

GJH: More than I thought possible at the start.

CdP: Like what?

GJH: Disposing of wrong facts, for a start. 'Facts' we all took as gospel when we got conditioned by organized religionists. Churches say they dispense faith, but they don't. They dispense creeds and beliefs, which are the opposite of faith. If these professionals can't get their terminology right, imagine the vulnerability of the individuals of their flock. I've explored the lie there that's almost impossible to shake. The same with the deal offered by organized religion. It's a fraud.

CdP: Them's fighting words.

GJH: They are indeed. And fraud is a crime. The salvation package they offer is misrepresentation of the kind we have criminal penalties for when the secular world engages in it.

CdP: That's hardly new, though, is it?

GJH: No. It's not new, but it might as well be, for all the effect it's had in overcoming the problem. All that's ever new about your contribution is the expression you lend to something that's been said or done before a thousand times or more by others. My three novels present a new way of looking at an old myth—the intervention by the gods in the affairs of men when they're on the brink of catastrophe. I don't just assume the New Testament actually happened the way the priests say it happened.

CdP: Why not?

GJH: Because my gnostic abilities or anamnesis—deep remembering—tell me so in no uncertain terms. I don't accept the word of priests, politicians or bank executives or other professional snake-oil peddlers. To me, the New Testament doesn't

stack up as a historical record. It has 'fabrication' stamped all over it, just like the official Thunderbolt story. No scholar or historian takes it seriously as history outside the ranks of card-carrying Christians. All it is is organized religious dogma claiming to be true. That's not history. It's mind control, and its purveyors are thought police.

CdP: Many people consider it to be historical fact and would argue to the death with you.

GJH: Yes, I know. Such wars rage all about us still because we can't seem to get out of the belief rut onto the know path. I doubt the two recent Iraq wars would have taken place if the Bushes pere et fils weren't bible bashers. The chances are my critics were indoctrinated as children and brought up to believe it, as I was—before I fell off that particular perch. They're forced to keep believing it or go to Hell. Where I rejected it, they feel obliged to invest it with a historical respectability it's just not entitled to. But if it doesn't stand up to scrutiny as historical fact, I admit that the concepts it deals with are fairly universal and deeply rooted in the human psyche. That's why we still discuss it today, not because it was an actual historical event. We discuss it because we're spiritual gropers by our very nature and the Christ myth is in our psyches as a freedom lamp on a distant hill. Over the ages, men tried to make recorded 'facts' fit the myths that persist in human culture. The Bible is an ancient compendium of such attempts, not a historical document or record. To me, the Sermon on the Mount has sublime value no matter how worthless it might be as recorded history. What I wanted in writing 'New Babylon' was to compare two types of faith; one

phoney, the other real; the orthodox which is spiritually dead, and the living one that Christ speaks of in our individual consciences today. The Second Coming is in progress as we speak, like Genesis itself, and it isn't all that different to the first in that neither can be viewed as a specific event like the storming of the Bastille. For the most part, the French Revolution was about an attitude change more than street battles between warring factions. People became convinced to do things differently and to think differently. The old way just wore out from neglect—which is happening now, as Western civilization crumbles. Neither is rooted in history so much as in the eternal 'now', in the mind, where everything resides anyway.

CdP: What's so different about the two approaches to faith?

GJH: I think the simplest answer is that one is for learners and the other for advanced students of life. One starts with one and graduates to the other. But it doesn't end there, as the process is infinite ... *without end*.

CdP: What is it about someone that characterizes them as a learner—someone stuck on the lower branch of the tree so to speak?

GJH: He's looking to have his fears tranquilized. To the learner, authoritative deity seems like something valid and plausible. If you think the big fella called Yahweh or Jehovah is worth respect, he's your man. You never get to know your true self. You'll follow the abstract ideal rather than seek to become it. You'll hold this abstract ideal as something separate from yourself. Goodness and divinity are separate and external to one's self as objects of worship and idolatry. This approach

prevents one from creating beyond one's self, unable to evolve except as a mortal body—not spirit. As Suarez says about this kind of 'faith': *"The disciplines involved in personal salvation give great peace to the soul, but that peace is the peace of anaesthesia."*

CdP: How do we identify the advanced student?

GJH: It's the reverse of this. No anaesthetic. You *become* the ideal so you can evolve spiritually. Orthodox religion has largely been discredited in the modern psyche because of this fundamental defect of stymying the process of growth. It's not interesting or creative. It places you in Limbo. It requires docility, stagnation and servility of its adherents, which amounts to stupidity to the lucid of mind. That's not acceptable anymore for growing numbers of people. There's an explosion of awareness that's sweeping the Church's adolescent nonsense away. It's more a kind of mind death or spirit death than anything we associate with life and vitality. Christ spoke of making life more abundant, not strapping it into a straight-jacket as the Roman Church does. It requires you to consent to being controlled by an ignorant ruling elite who make arbitrary rules, as the Pharisees did. There are people who want that, of course—the non-heretics of the world—and it will always be there for them no doubt. But it's no longer mainstream and it's being marginalized further on a daily basis as people wake from their torpor and church pews become emptier. The other approach—the one advocated by my alchemist heretic called Manu—is the affair of the individual soul acting through the mind without intermediary. It requires aliveness, awakeness, intelligence, questioning, responsibility and per-

sonal courage. It requires one to be a chooser—which means a *heretic*. My conscience told me that the second approach was the mature one; the one appropriate to our time. I took a good look at some very basic assumptions we make about ourselves that may well possibly be wrong and doing us great damage. I asked myself what was the most important thing for humans to know above all else. I arrived at a third way of seeing two common conflicts of ideas between science and religion. The first involves the old Evolution v Creation argument. Unlike most people who accept the Old Testament on blind faith, I searched till I found an explanation for Genesis that didn't insult my intelligence. Not only am I entitled to do that, I'm obliged to do it if I take the teachings of Christ seriously—as the Church *does not*.

CdP: That's important to your heretic hero in his teaching, isn't it—this idea that if something is denied by your native intelligence it can't be worth taking as gospel? It's not worth believing.

GJH: If the God within you is the good within you, you're in charge of how much God there is—if any. If there's none, or very little, why bow down to it? I've been hugely marked by the observation that Christians don't accept Christ's assurance that 'the Kingdom is within you' or they'd trust their native intelligence more than doctrine and dogma—two things Christ fought against in the Bible account. They prefer the slops dished out over the rim of the pulpit from people who know nothing about the real Christ other than what they were told by modern Pharisees. Denying one's native intelligence (the Kingdom within) undermines real faith. Faith isn't just

wanting to believe something, or imagining you believe something, especially if your innate intelligence balks at it. If the innate intelligence accepts it, faith is possible and will flow freely, with confidence. We have no real faith anymore because what's presented as faith by clergy is unlikely to get past our inbuilt crap detectors as Hemingway so eloquently put it. Faith involves making a right choice between what's noble and what isn't. We know the difference in our bones. When we make the wrong choice, we show we lack of faith by consciously refusing to place the highest meaning on the facts as we observe them. Faith comes from knowing you made the right choice by obeying your conscience. Making the right choice can move spiritual mountains.

CdP: So you focused on two common conflicts of ideas, starting with the Adam/Eve myth. What was the second one?

GJH: The question of *who* and *what* we are. It doesn't occur to many of us that we don't have a clue *who* or *what* we are. We don't sit down and think about it. We have a quick, furtive glance at what's visible and take that as gospel. We just assume we know. What we assume happens to be wrong. Now I happen to think that's about as serious as anything can get. Unlike most people who accept Darwin's version of man's origins on blind faith, I took the trouble of checking it out to see if it was sound. I found that it to be far from it. It's just another assumption based on thinking-free assumption. Richard Leakey, a recognized authority on the question of man's origins, has admitted as much. Anything that deterministic or founded in materialism is bound to be a fraud or an illusion. I won't go into detail here (Ed. Note: see appendices), but I can

say that the only reason it has lasted this long as a credible alternative to the biblical Creation story is that it appeals to rational minds—even if it has no credible scientific evidence to support it—whereas the literally interpreted Adam and Eve story doesn't. The error we've been making is in seeing things from a purely materialistic perspective—looking the wrong way through the telescope. What scientific evidence there is suggests some form of conception or creation occurred. But that too is illusion, relying as it does on an ignorance of who and what we are. Beyond material appearances, or illusion, we *were* before the universe appeared, and will *be* when it's long gone. But that fact has escaped us, as the Biblical tale of The Fall says in its bumbling way. We departed from the ranks of those who knew such things.

This is where I bring in a third way of looking at the apparent conflict between science and religion. Until recently, scientists thought the material universe was their territory (with the Church restricted to the nebulous, pie-in-the-sky spiritual realm). And it was, until the cream of the scientific world took it out from under them. The physical or material world is not physical creation so much as psychic—all is mind stuff. As most scientists now admit, the greater part of our reality is imperceptible to the senses. Everybody's talking about physical events when they're not physical at all. They're the shadows on the wall of Plato's cave; shadows of a greater reality we can know but not see with our limited range of physical senses. Christ got this across to the early Gnostics alright, but the Church got hold of it and decided to make a dog's breakfast of it. Dulled intellects and plodding imaginations sabotaged the discussion of the origins of man, leaving us back

where we started at the most crucial part of our experience here on Earth. It's not a bad thing if we're learning more about the non-physical world, which is of far more importance to us. The brightest scientists now realize that they're no longer confronted with a wild-west frontier of physics but the murky depths of the metaphysical where science and religion look pretty ineffectual. It means man is maturing and is prepared to think outside the square for the first time in his history.

CdP: Where we're ready to annihilate ourselves before we even know what it is we're disposing of.

GJH: It's a new twist that's bound to challenge our way of interpreting the New Testament and religion generally. The Old Testament was penned by sages in a psychic cipher or Qabalistic code that was lost long ago. Without the code, the boat sank. The New Testament was an attempt to raise the hulk and repair and modernise it. But it too foundered before it could reach the open sea. This time it was because the psychic elements of it were dumbed-down to be accessible to all, to a majority who weren't sufficiently evolved spiritually to understand even the basics of it.

CdP: The mysterious mystery schools preserved the knowledge, didn't they?

GJH: They did. It would have died out if the Church got its way. It went underground. The knowledge still exists, as you say, in the mystery schools, where I've been delving. I came across Carlos Castaneda's book called 'The Cipher of Genesis'. "Qabala," he says, "is a training of the mind that makes it so subtle and

pliable as to allow consciousness to pass through the mysterious doorway of human genesis and enter into the sphere where life-death and existence carry on their interplay." Suares applied the Qabalistic cipher and shed a great deal of light on the knowledge the Gnostics had about the nature of 'reality'.

CdP: It's not common knowledge, though, is it?

GJH: It's very uncommon, which is the tragedy of it. It should be common by now if we hadn't been prevented from evolving spiritually. The unwashed don't take too kindly to it. Christ advised his followers not to cast pearls before swine or expose the sacred to dogs. One does so at great risk to life and limb.

CdP: Who do you think he was referring to by swine and dogs?

GJH: Those who in his words 'had not ears'—who couldn't understand that the Kingdom isn't just this synthetic if beautiful Earth life we know as a vale of tears and great joy. That means most of us, sadly. It's all those blind to the psychic or mental, to a reality far more vast than any collection of limitless physical universes.

CdP: I'm wondering how you went from all this complexity to a story most readers will understand.

GJH: I wondered that myself. That's why I found so much difficulty writing it, and why it took so long. I abandoned it several times in frustration and despair. Then, when the ideas began to show their faces once more, I'd get back into it. The way I saw of proceeding was to use symbols that can be understood by the intellect. It's not ideal, but it's the only way

to expose the ideas to those not already intuitively tuned in. It's like dropping clues. The alien 'God' presence in the story, for example, is an unreal physical manifestation of heavily-masked psychic realities; 'other dimension stuff'. In the universe of the rational mind, there would be beings higher than ourselves the way we're higher than our pets and they're higher than say crustaceans and trilobites. By implication, the alien hierarchy goes infinitely higher than one level above us, but that would be too distracting at this point in the telling of it. I had to focus on what's immediately above us and be content with that. And I had to render it in physical terms, not psychic, which is the reality most readers recognise as 'the' reality. Good and evil are creations of our confused minds, but rather than say that outright—and get nowhere—I had two types of superior beings as custodians; one benign and helpful, the other in exploitation mode; exploitation of our baser natures. But it's merely ourselves at a higher dimension of being. It's not simple, I know. It was almost a lost cause, but I persisted. I saw that my only hope of succeeding was to adopt the view that's hinted at symbolically and by cipher in the Old Testament: that we were cut off from a superior species we once belonged to; an immortal race of men of the Elohim stamp. Because we were ambitious, and attempted something that was just out of our reach, we found ourselves isolated in a psychic penal realm as mere Yahweh men; defective, miserable, exploited and damned. The dream appears to us as physically real. In it, we can indulge our new-found lower passions to our heart's content, as well as rise above it all if we so chose—as a small minority does in largely unsung fash-

ion. Our history is our own fudged record of that wild binge and occasional struggle for something better by the few.

CdP: That's new, I'll give you that, even if it has wrecked my day, or year. Or life. Could I bum a razor blade off you?

GJH: I'm sorry. We have to face the fact that we're back to zero on the question of the origins of man. We also have to face the fact that it's not really about physical evolution. That's just the dust-jacket of the book. The real business is the contents of the book and their mental implications. The quantum physicists grasped that the physical world is a mirage, and they can prove it. So biological or physical 'reality' pales into insignificance next to the psychic Reality, where the truth is. In that spirit, what I offer in 'Far Country' is the reverse of evolution from a lower species. The other fact we have to face is that our civilization is based on a fraud.

CdP: How do you mean?

GJH: Western civilization has gone exclusively Capitalist and has dragged most of the East along with it. Capitalism is founded on the notion of materialism and the good it bestows. Well, we know now that it was just one more of our delusions we took seriously caught up in our psychic adolescence. Western civilization is in the process of full-scale decay and collapse. The roof hasn't reached us, but it's coming down at speed, as our wise men know only too well.

CdP: You just spoke of reverse evolution. How can you *reverse* evolution?

GJH: How do you fail at school?

CdP: By not paying attention. Don't talk to me about it, please.

GJH: By not paying attention. By not passing your exams. By not caring what happens to you. Once you get a bit behind, things start going wonky and you get further behind. You see others outstripping you and you panic. Panic just makes things worse. You go backwards. Instead of a respectable career as a dental surgeon, you end up sleeping on park benches drinking cheap booze with blackened teeth falling out. I'm saying that something like that has happened to humanity. We know it, and seek refuge in denial. It happens to us as individuals, at school, and through life as adults when we vegetate and stagnate spiritually.

CdP: Do you realize you could be the man who put Darwinism out of business?

GJH: Others have already done that. The news hasn't got out yet, that's all, like the quantum discoveries. What I've offered in the book is a lot closer to the truth than the idea that we're just advanced apes. Apes make us look inferior to them in many important ways, even though they're more animal—meaning governed by lower programmed instincts—than we are. Darwin's theory is a sop to make us feel as though we know something about ourselves when we don't. My basic premise is that we're a failed species; one that has fallen down, not evolved upward. What we see around us is what happens when god-like men drop their bundle, lose all hope and initiative and live like dogs, way below their station, locked into a Groundhog Day of ignorance and despair.

CdP: Yet the book is really about hope in so many ways.

GJH: Maybe, but I've never liked the word myself. I allow that there's always the possibility of reforming one's self, or making an attempt. But failure is the thing we do best. We relish and celebrate it. We come here to fail, if we can possibly manage it. By failing here, we overcome the larger failure on the higher plane. Socrates succeeded where J. Paul Getty failed. St Francis succeeded where Alexander the Great failed. Therein lies the best hint about the ultimate lesson of Earthly success and failure—the meaning of life. We need to succeed at failing, not fail at succeeding.

CdP: Why don't you like the word 'hope'?

GJH: Because it's what religious charlatans hold out for naïve and desperate people to make them lazy and impressionable. The Vatican does it wholesale. Reality is something that goes on in our individual mind. The idea that there's a whole bunch of us is illusion, as is the idea that our soul can be represented by an agent, as writers and actors are sometimes. This is the stuff of minds that aren't making the attempt to reform their live-like-dogs thinking. They think they're making the effort. They're convinced they are. I judge them by their fruits. We tend to be shocked to find religious men up to no good. But they're very good at it. Practice indeed ...

END OF SAMPLE

Thank you for reading