

# **The Deathbird**

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	TITLE : The Deathbird		
ACTION	NAME	DATE	SIGNATURE
WRITTEN BY	Emilio Perez	July 31, 2024	

REVISION HISTORY

NUMBER	DATE	DESCRIPTION	NAME

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# Chapter 1

## The Deathbird

### 1.1 The Deathbird

The Deathbird  
by  
Harlan Ellison

Introduction

The story in short

The story-Chapters I-V  
Chapters VI-XI  
Chapters XII-XVI  
Chapters XVII-XXI  
The end of the story

Our idea for the game

### 1.2 intro

Introduction

"The Deathbird" is a short story written by Harlan Ellison, from his book "Deathbird Stories". The book itself is a collection of small tales, which center around Gods and the modern conception of them.

Before each tale, there is a small intro. In the case of the Deathbird it says:

"And for a farewell shot, a rewritten Genesis, advancing the theory that the snake was the good guy and, since God wrote the PR release, Old Snake simply got a lot of bad press".

### 1.3 story synopsis

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### The story in short

The story is basically about Adan, the Snake and God. The tale is set in a distant future, in a devastated Earth. The story implies that the Snake is the good guy and that God is the bad and crazy one—but since God wrote the story, he told things otherwise. Adan is the only one with the power to stop God. So, many years ago, the Snake took Adan to hell to keep him safe and away from God. Now the time has come when God must be stopped, so the Snake awakes Adan and they start the long journey together. They go through the desert, fight many hazards and finally arrive at the mountain on top of which God lives. During the journey, you get to know the true story of the snake, and you also get to know Adan's story after he was expelled from Heaven. Adan himself has forgotten all his previous life, because he has slept for many hundred years. Many times he asks the snake who he is, but the Snake just says "you'll know it in the end". But to keep Adan happy, the Snake agrees to show him a small part of his life, when his mother was very ill and she asked him to "use the needle" to end her suffering, which he reluctantly did. During their journey they are accompanied by a bird—the Deathbird, who flies high above them. The story begins with instructions for a test about God and the devil and as the story unfolds you are presented with many exercises like multiple question ones, and a small reading comprehension. At the end of the story Adan and the snake climb the mountain, facing many dangers. When they reach the top, Adan faces God, who is completely crazy and seems to have no understanding of the damage he has caused. It is in this moment that Adan is told who he really is by the Snake, and he then decides to use his power to stop God and stop the suffering of the Earth, just as he stopped his mother from suffering all those years ago when he agreed to "use the needle". Then the Deathbird spreads its wings and folds the Earth...

## 1.4 story

### The story

This is the story as told by Harlan Ellison. I have abridged and simplified it a bit...

#### I

This is a test. Take notes. This will count as 3/4 of your final grade. Hints: remember, in chess, kings cancel each other—are therefore completely powerful and powerless. Hinduism is a polytheistic religion. Not everybody tells the truth. Turn over your test papers and begin.

#### II

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Uncounted layers of rock pressed down on the magma pool, yet did not damage in the slightest the smooth and reflective surface of the crypt.

Nathan Stack lay in the crypt-silent, sleeping.

A shadow passed through rock; and came to the crypt. The shadow.

A triangular face with a single eye peered into the crypt, saw Stack and laid four-fingered hands on the crypt's cool surface. Nathan Stack woke at the touch, though the touch had not been upon his body. He opened his eyes to see the shadow with its single eye staring at him.

The shadow enfolded the crypt and brought it toward the surface of the Earth. When they reached it, the shadow bore the crypt to a place where the poison winds did not reach and caused it to open.

Nathan Stack tried to move, and moved only with difficulty. Memories rushed through his head of other lives, then the memories slowed and melted into a background tone that could be ignored.

The Shadow touched Stack's naked flesh. Gently, but firmly, the shadow helped him to stand, and gave him clothes and a neck-pouch with a knife, a warming stone and other things. He offered his hand, and Stack took it, and after two hundred and fifty thousand years sleeping in the crypt, Nathan Stack stepped out on the face of the sick planet Earth. Then the shadow began walking away, thru the poison winds. Nathan Stack, having no other choice, bent forward and followed the shadow creature.

### III

Dira was left behind. He did not know why they chose him. It was a great honour, but Dira began feeling loneliness even as they told him they would leave. Wondering why they had selected HIM, of all people. There were reasons, but he could not ask.

And so he accepted the honour, with all its sadness, and remained behind when they left.

He could not defend himself against whatever legends were spread. And he had no threat save for the Deathbird—a final threat that could be used only when final measures were needed; and therefore too late.

But he was patient. Perhaps the most patient of all his people.

Thousands of years later, when he saw how it was destined to go, when there was no doubt left how it would end, he understood THAT was the reason he had been chosen to stay behind.

But it did not help the loneliness.

Nor could it save the Earth. Only Nathan Stack could do that.

### IV

Note from Emilio: this is an excerpt from The Bible (Genesis 3:1-15)

It is about when the snake tempted Adam and Eve, and they bite the apple...

### V

#### TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

(Give 5 points for right answer)

1-In what person is Genesis told? From whose viewpoint?

2-Who is the "good guy" in this story? Who is the "bad guy"? Can you make a strong case for reversing the roles?

3-Traditionally, the apple is the fruit the serpent offered to Eve. But

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- apples are not endemic to the Near East. Choose one of the following more logical substitutes: olive, fig, date, pomegranate.
- 4-Why is the name God always capitalized? Shouldn't the Serpent name be capitalized as well? If not, why?
- 5-If God created everything, why did he create problems for himself by creating a serpent who would lead his creations astray? Discuss the possibility that the serpent was as powerful as God.

Next

## 1.5 vi-xi

### Chapters VI-XI

#### VI

The poison winds howled and tore at the powder covering the land. Nothing lived there, except from the wind. And the mountain toward which Nathan Stack and the Shadow were heading. When night fell they dug a pit in the tundra. Stack slept clutching the warming stone to his chest and breathing through a tube from the neck-pouch. Once he awakened, at the sound of bat-like creatures flying overhead. They did not notice that he and the shadow were sleeping underneath. They dropped thin, phosphorescent strings that fell glowing through the night and were lost in the plains. Then they disappeared in the distance. Stack resumed sleeping with difficulty. The next day Stack watched the wasteland that stretched as far as the eye could see and asked "Why is it like this...what happened?". The shadow creature did not answer, but it looked at Stack for a long moment, and then made a sign with his four-fingered hands that said more eloquently than a thousand words: DESTRUCTION. Then they continued to walk toward the mountain.

#### VII

The mountain rose out of hell and struggled toward the shredded sky. It was monstrous arrogance. Nothing should have tried that climb out of desolation. But the dark mountain had tried, and succeeded. Ferociously alone, it was the only feature that broke the desolation line of the horizon. Lights moved near the summit...

#### VIII

Stack learned the nature of the phosphorescent strings dropped the night before by the batlike creatures. They were spores that became in the light of the day, strange monstrous plants. Stack cried out as one of them drew a tentacle tight fastened around his ankle, holding him. A second one looped around his neck. The shadow helped Stack out, and they both barely escaped. High in the bloody sky, the Deathbird circled.

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## IX

There is recorded one last meeting between Dira and those who gave him his comission.The elder came to Dira at the last possible moment to tell him of the mad thing into whose hands this world had been given,to tell Dira of what the mad thing would do.

The elder,he who was the holiest of Dira's race,honoured Dira by coming to him,rather than the other way around.

"This mad one will come,and he will lie to them-he will tell them that he created them.And there will be nothing between them and the mad one but you.Only you can give them the wisdom to defeat him when the time is right".This said,he stroked the skin of Dira with ritual affection,and Dira was deeply moved and could not reply. Then he was left alone.

The mad one came,and interposed himself.Dira gave them wisdom.Time passed.And Dira's name became other than Dira-it became Snake,and the new name was despised,but Dira saw that the elder had been correct.So Dira made his selection.A man-one of them,and with the spark.

All of this is recorded somewhere.It's history.

## X

The man was not Jesus of Nazareth.He may have been Simon.Not Genghis Khan,but perhaps a soldier in his army.Not Aristotle,but probably one who sat and listened to Socrates in the agora.The man was not Richard the Lionheart,Rembrandt,Richelieu,Rasputin,Robert Fulton or the Mahdi.Just a man.With the spark.

## XI

Once,Dira came to the man.Very early on.The spark was there,but the light needed to be converted to energy.So Dira came to the man,and did what he had to be done before the mad one knew of it,and when he discovered that Dira,the Snake,had made contact,he quickly made explanations.This legend has come down to us as the fable of Faust. TRUE OR FALSE?

Next

## 1.6 xii-xvi

## Chapters XII-XVI

## XII

They camped at the base of the mountain,in a small cave.Nathan wanted to know...he felt he DESERVED to know.He spoke to the shadow. "How long was I down there...how long was the sleep?"

The shadow spoke in whispers:"A quarter of a million years".

Stack did not reply.The shadow creature seemed to understand.

Nathan smiled quickly and said ,"I must have been tired".

The shadow did not respond.

"I don't understand very much of this.It's pretty frightening.To die,



then to wake up..."

"You did not die.You were taken,put down there.By the end you will understand everything,I promise you".

"Who put me down there?"

"I did.I came and found you when the time was right,and I put you down there".

"Am I still Nathan Stack?"

"If you wish"

"But AM I Nathan Stack?"

"You always were.You had many other names,many other bodies,but the spark was always yours."Stack seemed about to speak,and the Shadow creature added "You were always on your way to being who you are".

"But who AM I?Am I still Nathan Stack,dammit?"

"If you wish"

"I don't understand this very well at all"

"You have had many names in many times.Nathan Stack is merely the one you remeber.You had a very different name long ago,at the start,when I first came to you.

Stack was afraid of the answer,but he asked,"What was my name then?"

"Ish-Lilith.Husband of Lilith.Do you remember her?"

Stack thought,tried really hard but could not remember her.

The shadow cut in "I always knew it would end like this...the Deathbird"

"I don't mean to be stupid,but I don't have the fantiest idea what you're talking about"

"Before it ends,you will understand everything"

"You said that before".Stack paused for a long time,then stared at the shadow and asked "What was your name?"

"Before I met you my name was Dira"

"Before you met me.What is it now?"

"Snake"

"Why did you put ME down there?Why did you come to me in the first place?What spark?Why can't I remember these other lives?What do you want from me?"

"You should sleep.It will be a long climb.And cold"

"I slept for two hundred and fifty thousand years.I'm hardly tired. Why did you pick me?"

"Later.Now sleep.Sleep has other uses."

Nathan lay down and the darkness took him.

### XIII

#### SUPPLEMENTARY READING

This is an essay by a writer.As you read it,ask yourself how it appeals to the subject under discussion.What is the writer trying to say?Does he succeed in making his point?

After you have read this essay,using the reverse side of your test paper,write your own essay (500 words or less) on the loss of a loved one.If you have never lost a loved one,fake it.

### AHBHU

Yesterday,my dog died.For eleven years Ahbhu was my closest friend. He was not a pet,he was a person.He had such a strongly formed personality,that it was impossible to think of him as JUST a dog. We met when I came to him at the West Los Angeles Animal Shelter.I'd

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wanted a dog because I was very lonely.

When my turn was called, I told the old man that I wanted a dog and he took me back inside to walk down the line of cages.

In one of the cages a little Puli (an Hungarian sheep dog) that had just been brought in was being assaulted by 3 larger dogs.

"Get him out of there!" I shouted. "I'll take him, I'll take him, get him out of there!"

He cost two dollars. It was the best two bucks I ever spent.

Driving home with him, he was lying on the other side of the front seat, staring at me. I suddenly was put in mind of the scene in the film *The Thief Bagdad*, where the evil vizier has changed Ahbhu, the little thief, into a little dog. The film had superimposed the human over the canine face for a moment so there was an extraordinarily look of intelligence in the face of the dog. The little puli was looking at me with that same expression. "Ahbhu", I said.

He didn't react to the name, but then he couldn't have cared less. But that was his name, from that time on.

No one who ever came into my house was unaffected by him. When he sensed someone with good vibrations, he was right there, lying at his feet. He loved to be scratched.

But he was a certain barometer for bums, as well. On any number of occasions when I found someone I liked and Ahbhu did not, it always turned out that the person was a wrongo. I must admit this influenced my own reactions. I was always wary of persons Ahbhu shunned.

Women with whom I had unsatisfactory relationships would nonetheless return to the house from time to time to visit the dog. He had an intimate circle of friends, many of whom had nothing to do with me. One exquisite lady used to send her driver to pick him up for Sunday afternoon romps at the beach.

I never asked what happened on those occasions. He didn't talk.

Last year he started going downhill, though I didn't realize it because he maintained the manners of a puppy right to the end. But he began sleepin too much, and he couldn't hold down his own food—not even the Hungarian meals prepared for him by the Magyars who lived up the street.

He was in and out of the veterinarian's shop all through the early part of this year, and the idiot always said it was his diet.

then one sunday when he was out in the backyard, I found him lying at the foot of the stairs, covered with mud, vomiting so heavily all he could bring up was bile. I took him to a different vet.

At first they thought it was just old age...but the x-rays showed that the cancer had taken hold in his stomach and liver.

I put off the day as much as I could. I just couldn't conceive a world without him. But yesterday I went to the vet's office and signed the euthanasia papers.

"I'd like to spend a little time with him, before." I said.

They brought him and put him on the stainless steel examination table. He had grown so thin. He came to me and put his head in my armpit. He was trembling violently. But still a puppy.

I started to cry. I was ashamed of myself not taking it as well as he was.

"I GOT to go, pup, because you are in pain and you can't eat. I GOT to"

The vet came in, then. He was a nice guy, and asked me if I wanted to go away and just let it be done.

Ahbhu looked at me, and if he could have spoken with an human tongue he couldn't have said more eloquently than he did with a look DON'T LEAVE ME WITH STRANGERS.

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So I held him as they laid him down and the vet did his part...  
He simply laid his head on my hands, his eyes closed and he was gone.  
I wrapped him in a sheet and I drove home with Ahbhu on the seat  
beside me, just the way it had come eleven years before. I took him in  
the backyard and began digging his grave. I dug for hours, crying and  
mumbling to myself, talking to him in the sheet.  
I laid him down in the hole and he was so tiny for a dog that had  
seemed to be so big in life. And I covered him over and that was all.  
But I couldn't send him to strangers.

THE END

#### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- 1-Is there any significance to the reversal of the name god being  
dog? If so, what?
- 2-Does the writer try to impart human qualities to a non-human  
creature?
- 3-Discuss the love the writer show in this essay. Compare and contrast  
it with other forms of love: the love of a man for a woman, a mother  
for a child, a son for a mother, a botanist for a plant, an ecologist  
for the Earth.

#### XIV

In his sleep, Nathan Stack talked.  
"Why did you pick me? Why me?..."

#### XV

Like the Earth, the mother was in pain.  
The great house was very quiet. The doctor had left. Nathan sat by the  
side of her bed. He was crying softly.  
"How is it?"  
"It hurts. The doctor didn't dope me too well"  
"Can I get you something? A drink of water?"  
"No. I'm fine"  
He looked at the needle that laid in the table next to the bed, and  
looked away...  
"I would kill for a cigarette", she said.  
He laughed. At sixty-five, both legs gone, what remained of her left  
side paralyzed, the cancer spreading towards her heart, she was still  
the matriarch. "You can't have a cigarette, so forget it".  
"Then why don't you use the needle and let me out of here"  
"Shut up, mother"  
"Oh, for God's sake, Nathan. It's hours if I'm lucky. Months if I am not.  
We've had this conversation before. You know I always win"  
"Did I ever tell you that you are a bitchy old lady?"  
"Many times, but I love you anyhow. Please, Nathan..."  
Finally, Nathan filled the syringe and injected her. Just before she  
died she summoned all her strength and said: "You are a hell of a man,  
Nathan".  
Then she died, and he cried. And that was it

#### XVI

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"He knows we are coming"

They were climbing the northern face of the mountain.Stack wanted to rest but Snake said "We must keep climbing"."Because he knows we're here".There was a sarcastic rise in Stack's voice.

"I have the feeling you are not going to tell me anything"

"It's not yet time for you to know"

"Look-just because I have not asked it does not mean that I don't want to know.You have told me all kind of crazy things...I'm as old as,as...I don't know how old but I get the feeling you've been trying to tell me I'm Adam..."

"That is so"

"...Uh".He stopped rattling and stared back at snake.then,accepting even more than he thought possible,he said "Snake...give me another dream and let me know the rest of it..."

"You must be patient.The one who lives at the top knows we are coming but I have been able to keep him from perceiving your danger to him only because you do not know yourself".

Stack was silent for a moment.Snake turned,and they continued to climb.Spiraling upwards.Towards the summit.

The Deathbird swooped,then rose towards the moon.

Next

## 1.7 xvii-xxi

### XVII

Dira came to Nathan Stack near sunset,appearing in the board room of the industrial consortium Stack had inherited from his family.He was alone.

Snake came through the walls.He stood staring at Nathan Stack,and for long moments the man was unaware of any other presence in the room.

"You have to go now",the shadow said.

Stack looked up,his eyes widened in horror.He tried to scream but the sound dammed up in his throat.

"No",Snake said."that is not so.Come with me and you will understand".There was a tone of sadness in his voice.As though he had been sorely wronged.

There was no time for arguments.Snake gestured and Stack rose from his chair and he walked to Dira and he took him by the hand and they passed through the walls and went away from there.

Down and down Snake took him.

The Mother was in pain.She had been sick for eons,but it had reached the point where Snake knew it would be terminal,and the Mother knew it too.

Dira took Stack to hell.

It was a fine place.

Warm and safe and far from the probing of mad ones.

And the sickness raged on.Nations crumbled,the Oceans boiled,the air became thick with dust and the skies grew dark.The sun blurred and became dull.The Earth moaned.

The Earth was dying.A long,slow,painful death.

In the center of the Earth,in the fine place,Nathan Stack slept.DON'T LEAVE ME WITH STRANGERS.

Overhead,far away against the stars,the Deathbird circled and circled,

waiting for the word.

## XVIII

Finally, they reached the highest peak. Nathan Stack looked at the temple—the home of the one who dwelled here. And he began to suspect the name of the resident.

Suddenly everything went red for Nathan Stack. As if a red filter had been dropped over his eyes—everything became red. And with the colour came pain—terrible pain that burned through his body, as though his blood had been set afire. He screamed and fell to his knees.

"Fight him!", Snake said. "Fight him!"

I can't, screamed silently through Stack's mind, the pain too great even to speak. He tried to focus his thoughts on ice. Tons of ice. Mountains of ice. Icebergs. And there was a corner that grew cool...and he took his stand in that corner, thinking ice. Then the flames began to retreat, till they dissappeared.

When he opened his eyes, he was still on his knees, but he could think again, and the red surfaces had become normal again.

"He will try again. You must be ready".

"Tell me EVERYTHING! I can't go through this without knowing, I need help! Tell me, Snake, tell me now!"

"You can help yourself. You have the strength. I gave you the spark"

And the second derangement struck: hopelessness. Stack fought it back. Out of unending misery he came back to be Stack.

...and the third derangement struck: madness. Out of raging lunacy he fought his way back to be Stack.

...and the fifth derangement, and the sixth, and the seventh, and the plagues, and the whirlwinds, and the pools of evil, and the reduction in size and accompanying fall forever through submicroscopic hells, and the sound of his voice screaming for release, and the voice of Snake always beside him, whispering "Fight him!".

Finally it stopped.

"Quickly, now".

Snake took Stack by the hand and, half-dragging him, raced to the temple. The portal sealed behind them. Quaking, the palace gave one great shudder and started to collapse around them.

"Now", Snake said, "now you will know everything!".

And everything forgot to fall. Frozen in mid-air the wreckage of the palace hung suspended above them. Even the air ceased to swirl. Time stood still. The movement of the Earth was halted as Nathan Stack was permitted to understand.

## IXX

MULTIPLE CHOICE (Counts for 1/2  
your final grade)

1-God is:

- A-An invisible spirit with long beard
- B-A small dog dead in a hole
- C-Everyman
- D-The Wizard of Oz

2-Ecology is another name for:

- A-Mother love
-

- B-Enlightened self-interest
- C-A good health salad with granola
- D-God

3-Which of these phrases most typifies the profoundest love:

- A-Don't leave me with strangers
- B-I love you
- C-God is love
- D-Use the needle

4-Which of these powers do you usually associate with God:

- A-Power
- B-Love
- C-Humanity
- D-Docility

## XX

Starlight shone in the eyes of the Deathbird and its passage through the night cast a shadow in the moon.

## XXI

Nathan Stack remembered.

He had once contracted pneumonia.Had he not been stubborn,had he not continued to work around the clock as the infection developed into empyema,he would have never had to go under the knife.  
He remembered Lilith,with hair the colour of dark wine.  
He remembered dying under a landslide.  
He remembered the impact of the bolt as it split his chest open and he died at Agincourt.  
He remembered looking directly into the bomb as it came straight at him at Verdun.  
He remembered Snake coming to him in the board room,and taking him to hell.  
He remembered sleping in the crypt for a quarter of a million years.  
Across the dead centuries he heard his mother pleading with him to set her free,to end her pain.USE THE NEEDLE.Her voice mingled with the voice of the Earth crying out in endless pain.The voice of her mother and the mother that was Earth became one,and mingled to become Snake's voice telling him he was the one and only man in the world who could end the terminal case the Earth had become.  
Use the needle.Put the suffering Earth out of his pain."It belongs to you now".  
Nathan Stack was secure in the power he contained.A power that far outstripped that of gods or snakes or mad creators,who broke their toys.

Next

## 1.8 end

The end of the story

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## XXII

Nathan Stack raised his hands and around them the palace fell crashing. They were untouched.

"Now you know all there is to know", Snake said, sinking to one knee as if worshipping. There was no one there to worship but Nathan Stack.

"Was he always mad?"

"From the first".

"Then those who gave our world to him were mad, and your race was mad to allow it."

Snake had no answer.

"Perhaps it was supposed to be like this," Stack said.

He reached down and lifted Snake to his face, and he touched the shadow creature's sleek triangular head. "Friend", he said.

Snake's race was incapable of tears. He said, "I have waited longer than you know for that word".

"I am sorry it comes at the end", Stack replied.

"Perhaps it was supposed to be like this".

Then there was a disturbance in the air, and the face of the owner of the mountain appeared in a burning cloud.

AGAIN, SNAKE? AGAIN YOU ANNOY ME?

"The time for toys is ended".

NATHAN STACK YOU BRING TO STOP ME? I SAY WHEN THE TIME IS ENDED. I SAY, AS I'VE ALWAYS SAID.

Then, to Nathan Stack:

GO AWAY. FIND A PLACE TO HIDE UNTIL I COME FOR YOU.

Stack ignored him. "Let's find him, first, then I'll know what to do".

This said, he went in the search of the mad one who capitalized his name.

The Deathbird sharpened its talons on the night wind and sailed down toward the cinder of the Earth.

## XXIII

Stack found the mad one wandering in a kind of forest. He was an old, tired man, and Stack knew with a wave of his hand he could end it for this god in a moment. But what was the reason for it? It was even too late for revenge. It had been too late from the start. So he let the old one go his way, wandering in the forest, mumbling to himself, I WON'T LET YOU DO IT, in the voice of a cranky child; mumbling pathetically, OH PLEASE, I DON'T WANT TO GO TO BED YET. I'M NOT YET DONE PLAYING.

And Stack came back to Snake, who had served his function and protected Stack until Stack had learned that he was more powerful than the god he had worshiped all through the history of Men. He came back to Snake and their hands touched and the bond of friendship was sealed at last, at the end.

Then they worked together and Nathan Stack used the needle, with a wave of his hands, and the Earth sighed with relief as his endless pain was ended.

And from high above, Stack heard the fulfillment of Snake's final act; he heard the descent of the Deathbird.

And the Deathbird settled down across the tired shape of the Earth, and it spread its wings wide, and brought them over and down, and enfolded the Earth as a mother enfolds her child. Dira settled down on the floor of the dark-shrouded palace, and closed his single eye with gratitude. To sleep at last, at the end.

All this, as Nathan Stack stood watching. He knew at last, at the end,

that he had loved and done no wrong.

#### XIV

The Deathbird closed his wings over the Earth until at last there was only the great bird crouched over the dead planet. Then the Deathbird raised its head to the star-filled sky and closed its eyes. Far away, the stars waited for the cry of the Deathbird to reach them so final moments could be observed at last for the race of Men.

## 1.9 thegame

### Our idea for the game

The game itself would be very close to a movie, with several screens explaining the plot as it unfolds. The arcade levels would be platform sections, with you taking control of Nathan Stack. These would be based in the journey through the wasteland (where we could invent some events—for example, I thought of a couple of levels taking place in a devastated city full of mutants. I also thought of a level which would take place in an abandoned military base, full of cyborgs and the like), the mountain, and some levels based in the attacks God makes against Nathan—for example, the madness attack would mean a level full of crazy things. For the fire attack we would use a reds only palette, and so on. Plus, we can add any attack we like, IE water, etc.

The game won't be too long. As I said, it would be like a movie that you watch and later remember. But the platform levels are going to be good and not mere filler.

For the intro, I would like it to be like the cover of the soundtrack of "The English Patient" (one of my favourite flicks, actually). I have included it as a JPEG with this archive. I would like Nathan to look like the bloke in the picture, too.

For the music, I will contact many Aminet mod composers to see if they are interested, or just one if he feels he can do it all himself. The music would be very similar to a movie's, in the sense that there will be a formal overture (where all the individual themes are stated) and then the individual themes themselves.

There will be 2 kind of tunes: the "story" tunes, which go with the between levels story pics, and the "action" tunes, which go with the actual levels.

The "story" tunes we can take from my CD of "The English Patient"—we won't "steal" anything, I will send the musicians the songs so that they have something to work with—IE, the songs to use them as a reference. ; )

The "action" tunes will be tunes from our favourites bands, again used as an inspiration to create something similar. I have already selected a couple of Who and Queen tunes to be used! Everybody please suggest his own favourites too! : )

The graphics for the wasteland levels I would like to be like the ones in the lava world of "Lionheart".

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Snake(or Dira) WON'T look like a monster-he will look like a human being, dressed all in black,with dark shades-just like a character from "The Matrix"!He will have the ability to throw fireballs.Nathan will carry a small lazer gun.

We will have some levels where you can control Nathan or Snake.We may even have the possibility before the level starts of choosing who would you like to play with.

The game will be split in three chapters:"The Wasteland" (wasteland levels),"Don't Leave Me With Strangers" (destroyed city and abandoned militar base) and "The Mountain" (mountain levels and the mental attacks levels).

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