



Dark Jubilee

Kadrey, Richard

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Source: <http://www.infinitematrix.net/stories/shortshorts/kadrey9.html>

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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- *Metrophage* (1988)
- *Butcher Bird* (2005)
- *Zombie* (2002)

- *SETI* (2002)
- *A Cautionary Tale* (2002)
- *Ubiquitous Computing* (2002)
- *Second-Floor Girls* (2002)
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Every 50 years, the ancients turned their world on its head. They called this period "Jubilee." All laws were suspended, all slaves freed. All lands won in battle were returned to their previous owners. Jubilee was a time of renewal and madness. A time to burn the fields — both physical and metaphysical.

When Congress is suspended during the revived Jubilee celebrations, Senators and members of the House of Representatives are replaced with gogo boys and peep show girls. The president's cabinet and supreme court find themselves bumping and grinding behind peep show glass alongside cops, Ikea sales clerks, and neurosurgeons.

Starting in the northwest, city halls are transformed into 24/7 sex clubs. Sex clubs become art galleries and planetariums.

The new Jubilee politicians pass laws constantly, then make it illegal to enforce them. The laws that remain are deliberately random and ludicrous. It becomes illegal to carry an umbrella while eating sushi. It is, furthermore, illegal to attempt sexual relations with an animal while either party is on fire. Those found guilty of these charges might find themselves banished to the sewers with nothing but a candle and a baseball bat. Or they might be made Archbishop of their town.

During Jubilee, "E Pluribus Unum" is replaced with "Forma et Periculous," Beauty and Danger. The national anthem is replaced with Fats Waller's Ain't Misbehavin'.

Anyone can apply for the position of Prophet or Saint. Those selected are promptly crucified by one of the mobile Sacrifice Centers that cruise all the major cities.

Anyone bored with their current life can enter a national exchange program and trade houses, careers, and spouses with other Jubilee celebrants.

Prison doors are thrown open. Cops and felons exchange places frequently, fluidly, as is their nature.

The president for the duration of Jubilee is a noted porn actress; her cabinet consists of performance artists, high-ranking members of the Crips and Bloods, a Santeria priest, a troupe of Russian contortionists, and a spoon-bending psychic.

Dotcoms burn their servers. Newspapers burn their presses. Nuclear power plants go offline and their irradiated workers dance naked in the melting ruins, swinging uranium rods over their heads like tiki torches.

Troops of art students commandeer hydraulic window-washing lifts and string cables between downtown skyscrapers, setting up bungee jumps, thirty-floor swing sets, and urban hang-gliding runways. City workers, more used to repairing roads and freeway overpasses, use miles of city pipes, concrete, and wire to construct jungle gyms that swallow up whole neighborhoods.

Cripples equip their motorized wheelchairs with wheel-cutting spikes to stage Ben-Hur-style chariot races on freeways. Kids and toughs across the country have their legs surgically removed to join in the wheelchair lifestyle.

NASA launches mylar balloons the size of Manhattan into geosynchronous orbit over the midwest. The solar winds buffet the balloons, twisting them into a continuously morphing tangle of light and motion, like a space-borne lava lamp. Closer to the ground, NASA officials flood the launch pads at the Kennedy Space Center, allowing the Everglades to overgrow the site. Lianas snake up the gantries alongside rusting Saturn 5 boosters. The Shuttle fleet becomes a herd of fossil dinosaurs sunning themselves in a concrete lagoon. Their corroded interiors become homes for tropical birds and alligators.

As the rites of Jubilee become more bold and more frenzied, the laws of physics break down. Flying is permitted in clearly marked areas. The rotation of the earth varies due to peoples' moods. Some neighborhoods are warm with sunlight twenty-four hours a day. Others are swallowed in perpetual night and become the sites for endless firework displays, bonfires, and Molotov cocktail parties. Fish begin to talk. Birds write best-selling novels. All diseases are cured. The Anti-Christ comes and goes without notice. Armageddon is postponed due to lack of interest.

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