



Dog Boys
Kadrey, Richard

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About Kadrey:

Richard Kadrey is a novelist, freelance writer, and photographer based in San Francisco.

Kadrey's first novel, *Metrophage*, was published in hardcover in 1988 by Victor Gollancz Ltd., and went on to various other American and foreign printings in paperback. Mac Tonnies' *Cyberpunk/Postmodern Book Reviews* calls *Metrophage* "one of the quintessential 1980s cyberpunk novels," going on to describe "a gritty acid-trip through an ultraviolent L.A. where nothing is what it seems... . Alongside novels such as [William Gibson's] *Neuromancer* and Lewis Shiner's debut novel *Frontera*, *Metrophage* helped establish the cyberpunk aesthetic: relentless, paranoid and playfully cynical."

Kadrey's second novel, *Kamikaze L'Amour*, is described by the same source as "mesmerizing... a surreal (and distinctly Ballardian) account of synesthesia and mutant desire set in the jungle-choked ruins of L.A."

Kadrey's short story *Carbon Copy: Meet the First Human Clone* was filmed as *After Amy*.

The publisher website, Amazon booksellers, and other sources list a July 15, 2007 publication date for Kadrey's next book, *Butcher Bird: A Novel Of The Dominion* (Night Shade Books). Other works include collaborative graphic novels and over 50 published short stories.

His non-fiction books as a writer and/or editor include *The Catalog of Tomorrow* (Que/TechTV Publishing, 2002), *From Myst to Riven* (Hyperion, 1997), *The Covert Culture Sourcebook* and its sequel (St. Martin's Press, New York, 1993 and 1994); Kadrey also hosted a live interview show on Hotwired in the 1990s called *Covert Culture*. He was an editor at print magazines *Shift* and *Future Sex*, and at online magazines *Signum* and *Stim*. He has published articles about art, culture and technology in publications including *Wired*, *Omni*, *Mondo 2000*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *SF Weekly*, *Ear*, *Artforum*, *ArtByte*, *Bookforum*, *World Art*, *Whole Earth Review*, *Reflex*, *Science Fiction Eye*, and *Interzone*.

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Setting down his drink, Cormac Thomas Garfield runs his fingers over a deep scar on his chest. It's the site of his first harvesting, the reason he came to Austin all those years ago. No one speaks to Cormac as he sips straight Jack Daniels at a sunny corner table in the cafe'. Young men of Cormac's profession tend to carry peculiar odors, and an old man such as Cormac positively stinks.

He began his career as a Dog Boy (officially, a hinterland **Canaille**), growing botulism toxins in polymer sacs installed in his gut. Later, he graduated to necrotizing venoms and exotic ion-channel neurotoxins. There were worse things, too. Tiny beasts, like crabs, but with teeth. He, along with a hundred other boys, had to vomit them out into stainless steel tubs while men in hazmat suits stood by with guns ready to shoot them in case it went badly and the animals began to eat their way out of their stomachs. There were always a few casualties during these harvests.

Boys didn't last long in Cormac's profession, which saved the royal family from having to pay for their many infirmities when they grew old. Cormac has stubbornly, rudely, refused to die, costing the Treasury a tidy sum. He is despised by both ordinary men and the government, but he is a hero of the State, with a medal to prove it. His assassination, even a convenient accident, is out of the question. His blood is so toxic that if he were wounded in a public place, he could contaminate a whole city sector.

Cormac has a mechanical eye — a retirement present from Prince Samuel Patrick Houston — but it hasn't worked in years, except to intermittently show him flickering gray silhouettes lost in blizzards of static. Cormac has come to believe that these figures are the ghosts of the millions murdered in the Mexican Wars with the poisons manufactured in his body. The ghosts are trying to tell him something, but he can't understand what. He speaks to the ghosts, and the other patrons at the cafe, already disgusted by his blackened teeth and stinking flesh, move away from his yammering.

Cormac orders more Jack Daniels shots. He is a hero. The cafe owner has no choice but to serve him. When Cormac starts to leave, the owner refuses the old man's money. He leaves cash on the table anyway, but the owner sweeps it and his glass into a plastic container and burns them down by a canal in back of his cafe.

A few weeks later, when Cormac dies, the city secretly rejoices. Cormac's body is incinerated in a special biohazard facility deep in the

mountains beyond El Paso. Despite this, the winds change and an acid rain falls like metallic-smelling tar on the capital. The monsoon curdles roads. It ruins delicate building facades and dish antennae. It erases the faces from every public statue in the city. The runoff contaminates the ground water, and thousands die horribly, coughing up blood and flesh-eating spider-like things. The royal family flees the city as a strange plague moves through the streets, killing rich and poor alike. A new crop of Dog Boys is bought in from the provinces. The plague intrigues the kingdom's scientists. It is a new flower to cultivate in the red gardens of the Dog Boys' blood.

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