

Psychedelic top knots

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We have scrub jays year round, but the stellars only come down in the winter. One landed on the railing. I'd been dreaming along with the cat, so when she jerked up her head and stared, so did I. Her eyes were huge. "Who the fuck is that?"

He was all top knot and attitude. There was no distinction between where the top knot ended and the attitude began, or vice-versa. Thought of Greek helmets, or wearing a Mohawk.

We could wonder, "are we really thinking the same thoughts – are we really in telepathic communication – or is it merely seeming?" Perhaps we could devise subtle experiments, with controls. Psychologists without enough to do could write a paper. Or we could continue, and let the continuing be the confirmation.

Later we went hunting. Or she went hunting – I just followed along, on all fours. I was out of my league. She could hear all kinds of stuff that I couldn't. I followed her ears. It was mostly about patience.

In the mountains at the headwaters of the Trinity River I had a dog with me. He'd thrown off his pack crossing the North Fork and I'd only been able to recover about half his dog food, so food was an issue. On the fourth or fifth day I dropped a double hit – 500 mcg – I'd measured it myself. I gave Black Dylan about 200. We were working our way up a creek. I was panning about every quarter mile, seeing how far the gold went up the canyon, figuring that when it stopped, that was the place to prospect up the sides of the canyon for a ledge – for "The Source".

Around noon we came to a long pool, with shallows over a gravelly bed on the downstream side. There was a trout in the pool. I picked up a branch to use as a club and looked at Black Dylan and signaled with my hand. Black Dylan climbed around through the brush to the far end of the pool and jumped in, chasing the trout down to the shallows where I clubbed it.

The trickle of gold dust in the pan never quite stopped – it just kept getting thinner. A few tiny pieces still had quartz clinging to them. I even took a pan load of gravel from the steep slopes way above where the stream gave out and carried it back down to where there was water to wash it out, and sure enough, there was still a bit of

color. There was no ‘source’, the whole mountain was the source.

I divided up the trout that night, but I wasn’t fair. I took a bigger share, and the flanks. Black Dylan got the tail and the head. He was pissed. Not that he didn’t like the head – it was rich and fatty – but the whole deal stank. We’d been partners.

When I came back to the tiny fire, rocks built up around it, Black Dylan was sitting in my spot. My spot. My spot because it was in front of the fire and that was where I always sat. I was still pretty high. “That’s my spot”, I said.

Black Dylan acted like he didn’t hear me. He stared straight ahead and didn’t move a muscle. I didn’t know what to do and Black Dylan knew I didn’t know. We sat like that for a while. I was trying to figure it out. I was a man and Black Dylan was a dog. It was my spot because that was where I always sat. Black Dylan was a big dog – German short-haired – pointer of some kind. What was I supposed to do, go curl up where Black Dylan usually slept? I could – it was one of the possibilities – but there were problems with that also. Was Black Dylan going to feed the fire? What would the people in town at the hardware store say? A minute must have passed. Then Black Dylan grumbled and walked off. He walked clear out of camp and crossed the stream and scratched out a place to curl up on the opposite bank.

Like, “All day we have been two beings. Two different beings, but equal beings. All day. Our deepest essences were unnamed and unranked. Now you bring up this ‘me man, you dog’ shit. Fuck you”.

My very first LSD trip had been in Big Sur, up Lime Kiln Creek. I’d decided that I was going to be like Buddha and sit there until I figured it all out. Except it turned out there was nothing to figure out. I was sitting on a log by the stream, and there was about six inches of greenish glowing vibration on the ground all around me. Then some sticks in front of me started moving and a chipmunk of some kind poked his head up and looked at me. And we just sat there looking at each other, with this peaceful glowing energy settled all around us. Clear.

There was a bush with tiny blue flowers beside me. There were no spirits or entities existing anywhere in the universe – there was just this plant with its own energy and presence, and the chipmunk, and the water moving, and light and shadow, and myself, all one seamless totality from time a million years before the first thought of language. Top knot.

Has LSD lived up to its promise? Which promise? In tune with nature or the power to disable a whole city? The latter, please. What do you get when you mix nature worship, local spirits, solar cycles, blood and soil, and put them together? National



Socialism. What if they'd had LSD? Would an acid trip have changed those bastards? Unlikely. It took a bullet, or cyanide. Giving LSD to narcissists only seems to make them worse.

Like a friend with many psychedelic experiences who greeted me after I'd crossed Nevada and Utah to see him. "Sorry you had to cross the desert... I mean, nothing to see".

Tuning in. A sense of presence. Then this graffiti on a concrete wall along Deer Creek: a cryptic LSD monogram. Like "Jesus Saves", but more up to date. The pagans didn't really do a better job than the Christians. Napoleon's soldiers carved their names onto the Sphinx over the names of Roman legionnaires.

On the other hand maybe the graffiti was part of a memorial. Maybe he couldn't afford a cemetery headstone. He left this for his psychedelic friend. And that concrete wall, that itself is defacement. Maybe like Edward Abbey said, throwing a beer can out the window of his car in the desert: "It's not the beer can that is out of place, it's the highway".

Top knot.