

The Bellermann Hypnotist presents Vol 6:

Manicure

The term got me wondering. Begins with manic or ends in cure?

As often the case, the term derives from ancient Latin and manus is hand and cura is care. The manic part just appears out of nowhere, as a ghost, while the term itself is totally innocent, not involved.

Just like me, I want to say, but that's not true.

I'm totally involved, or at least I am in this tale of my own mania, in which I play a passionate escape tourist, who can't stop himself from going back to a "place in the middle of nowhere" – what I want to call it and what this story is mainly about.

However it may have begun, I had started to go there. It continued over for a fairly long period of time, maybe 1.5 years or more. Getting there and back took 3 hours in total. So I was pretty invested in sitting at an old train station and searching the huge old station house up and down, feeding off the nervousness of a singled-out energy particle as it jumped up and down on the spot until it had used up all its potential. *Why so alone here, not used to it, so dark here.* Alone in a place so desolate, that comparisons to horror movies would be striking.

But was it spooky? No-no, not to me. Whoosh-whoosh, as if to chase away a fly, a very typical hand gesture. I waved it off and went again.

And a year had passed.

There was something so ordinary about this place, too.

But then I saw the ghost.

It happened when I went to inspect some other buildings further West, where it slowly becomes the real West. There, the abandoned buildings weren't even barricaded. Whereas mine had to wear all those heavy steel panels, which made it look like it was dressed up in army gear, helmets and shields, the other houses only had chipboard, which had already been demolished and ripped apart. Or had it just fallen off by itself, cheap chipboard. Anyways, those doors stood wide open, inviting me in.

My friend once told me that if I continued to poke around old houses, one day I would find something really unpleasant. *Ah, let me tell you about that!*

When the encounter happened, I didn't panic, but his warning came to mind. Was this what I'd been looking for? My jaws dropped. Like Dr. Sattler in Jurassic Park, I dug out my little camera, my eyes glued to the spectacle, unbelieving. I quickly took three photos, before my camera died. I'd forgotten to charge batteries.

Let me give you a little description of what I saw.

It was a shadowy composition of blue and white light in a 1:1 ratio. Only a face, but a very big one, filling a whole wall from top to bottom. A big round nose, seemingly no eyes, and single strands of longish black hair. Sort of good looking, or at least human-like, but also rather terrifying for the same reason. Upon entering the room, the head turned around as if to greet me, revealing a set of two rabbit teeth. Now can you imagine my excitement?

Then I tried to put it in writing.

The whole thing, not just the encounter. Including the man in the wheelchair, who I met at the station. He had talked to me about being in the army and about Hitchcock. Had he been for real? The woman, who used my phone to call someone in an emergency, a “Leben und Tod” scenario, but when I tried to redial the number, it had blocked me. She had definitely been for real. For weeks, months and more months, I tried to remember everything more precisely, give it plasticity, in order to explain what had happened at the station and what it meant, at least to me. But then I began to revise word after word, sentence after sentence, until I had already deleted the whole chapter, because it was better to leave it out. This too went on for 1.5 years, unresolved.

A day's end, coming home to a movie. A year's end, chestnuts falling off a tree, loud at night.

Would you consider old J Park horror? I saw it in the cinema as a kid. That's when I figured it wasn't. Because I'd seen an actual horror movie before. I still remember it today, because it didn't end well, and therefore didn't end at all. It left me stranded, and in my mind the movie was still continuing. There wasn't any kind of dénouement, the story was just kind of canceled, ending right in the middle of things. Not like Blair Witch – this was the earlier 1990s when such new styles hadn't yet entered popular cinema. No, it just ended like regular movies ended, with no dropping of any camera or as no more film on reel. It was an ordinary movie, just that no one had lifted the curse or defended the evil.

In the kid's mind the whole thing went on and on, the story I mean, developing further into this terrible direction with this nightmarish music playing and the church bells ringing and gonging alternately as if being two things at once.

Manicure is an exhibition by Burkhard Beschow

March 23 – April 11, 2023

Tune in to our Audio Program:



***Haltestelle* – Ein Bericht von Burkhard Beschow**

**The Bellermann Hypnotist was founded in 2021 by Anne Fellner
TBH is hosted by Sangt Hipolyt, Berlin**