

Hunter and Hunted, Revised Edition

A Novel

William A. Adams

<http://williamaadams.blogspot.com>

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by William A. Adams

Foreword

Hunter and Hunted was my first novel, and I was pleased with how it turned out. But it was not the novel I had envisioned. I had originally included two additional characters, the ancient Greek gods, Artemis, goddess of the hunt, and Dionysus, god of wine. They hovered above the adventures of the human characters, observed, evaluated, and commented on the action, somewhat as the Chorus does in ancient Greek plays.

As the first version neared completion I took a couple of chapters to a writing workshop to get a professional evaluation. The teacher, a well-established and well-known fiction writer, was not encouraging. "These Greek gods, what are they doing in here? They detract from the story. They're confusing to the reader. I advise stripping them out." The other students in the class agreed. The gods don't add anything to the story and are just a distraction, they said.

One of the cardinal rules for beginning writers, when taking professional advice, is, shut up, listen, and do what you're told. In other words, don't defend yourself, but listen as hard as you can. The reader is king. So I stripped out Artemis and Dionysus, covering up the holes they left. The result was a much tighter story, published as the first edition.

But I missed the gods, and gradually I came to regret that I had taken them out. Maybe I had mis-heard the feedback. Maybe the message was that I had done a bad job integrating them into the novel, not that they had no value. So I wrote them back in, as another layer, like frosting on a cake. They have their own story, which depends on

the human characters' story, but which is unknown to the humans, and stands apart from them. As gods do. My hope is that the gods' parallel story provides another dimension of understanding for the human story, enriching the totality.

William A. Adams
December, 2013

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Chapter 1

A short, well-dressed man carried his belt in one hand. He cracked open the laboratory door, slipped in sideways, and palmed the door shut. He stood for a long moment, ears filtering the silence, eyes surveying the stillness. Five black lab benches covered with instruments, papers, and glassware, extended to the far windows. The room had a faint sulfurous smell.

A henna-orange mop of hair identified the only technician remaining this late in the afternoon. She stooped over a binocular microscope. A black-and-white clock on the wall hammered seconds into the air. The late afternoon forced yellow light sideways through the windows, setting the woman's shiny hair on fire.

The man crept toward the white lab coat, his soft Italian shoes silent as Indian moccasins. He should have worn a lab coat himself, he suddenly thought. What if this gets messy? Too late now.

One step behind her, he grabbed the loose end of the belt with his other hand. She must have smelled him, or felt his heat, because she straightened up from the microscope and turned around. The moment was defined for him. He stepped forward

and raised both arms over her head. The woman instinctively raised her arms and opened her mouth to speak or yell but her reaction was not fast enough.

The pulled the belt around her throat and crossed his arms, making a tight cinch. She tried to scream but only a rasped, as if she were trying to clear her throat. Her hands came down to his and tugged on his arms. He made the noose tighter as he pulled away from her. She clawed at the belt and at her own neck, but he did not let up the pressure. Her eyes bulged, in shock, from asphyxiation, and with the terror of what was happening to her.

This was not what he had visualized, a nice swift garrotte from behind with his knee in her back. He did not expect to stare into a woman's gaping face while she choked to death. It was unpleasant. He was annoyed that a simple calculated act had become so intimate. Her tongue stuck out. He looked into her gaping mouth. She had nice teeth. Gold fillings in the back.

The woman's knees buckled. She slumped forward and to the side, grasping at her assailant's hands until she was hanging from his arms, her feet trying to run, skidding against the floor. The man realized that her slump had transferred most of the belt's pressure from the front of her neck to the back, and she began to gasp, apparently getting wisps of air. He marveled. Nobody could think of that maneuver in a panic situation. It must have been luck.

Either way, it was a problem to be solved. Her tortured gasps continued. It's amazing how difficult it is to kill a person by strangulation, he noted. Not like in the movies. He tried to swing around behind her and adopt the strangle hold from behind he had first envisioned. But the belt dug into the flesh of her neck and would not slide.

Frustrated, he yanked the belt sideways and down, throwing her to the floor. She banged her head on the hard tile and lay still, face up. But breathing. She breathed more smoothly than she had for the past two minutes. The belt hung limply in his hand, its scarlet image still tight around her neck. Blood seeped from beneath her head. He realized his efforts so far were being undone as he stood there indecisively. *This has not gone well at all!* He glanced desperately around the room.

He rushed to a nearby wooden desk chair and carried it back to the body on the floor. He brought its ladder-back frame over her face, positioning the top rung on the front of her neck. He stepped on the chair-back with both feet, crushing her windpipe. *Surely that would do it.* The woman suddenly came to life. Her eyes bulged again and her mouth opened in a silent scream. Her arms and legs thrashed wildly as if she were a salamander being held for inspection. *How long can this go on?* But in less than a half-minute she was still.

The man waited. *Was it over?* He had to be sure. He flexed his knees and bounced on the chair frame a few times, which caused his pants to fall to his ankles. Horrified, he began to stoop but felt he might lose his balance on the shaky chair-back, so he stood again and waited another full minute, glancing around the laboratory. He caught a reflection of himself on the glass of a framed picture on a workbench. There he was, floating in front of the smiling young woman and her boyfriend, looking like a pervert in his polka-dot boxer shorts, pants around his ankles. It was embarrassing, but he could do nothing but wait.

He looked down. Her face had turned purple. That was good. He wanted to be certain, so he remained standing on the chair another minute, moving his eyes

randomly around the lab, careful to avoid the framed picture. The wall clock refereed the count. One more glance down at the now-blue face, and he crouched to pull up his trousers. Stepping down from the chair-back, he put his belt on, regaining most of his composure. He lifted the chair from the lifeless body. He carried the murder weapon back to its desk.

Chapter 2

London, a week earlier...

Charles Leblanc slumped in the hard plastic seat, pinning his suitcase between his knees. The train rhythmically clacked toward Victoria Station. It was a hell of a long trip from Florida, and a lot of trouble for one deal, he thought, but fifteen thousand dollars is a lot of money. It must have been important for Tinsley too, because he paid for the travel. Even so, Charles vowed, after this deal, he would cut his ties, and never have to look into Tinsley's disapproving face again.

Having an art gallery in Johannesburg was more glamorous than a grimy manufacturing company in Orlando, true. But that didn't give Tinsley the right to be such a snotty bastard. A shiny suit and a British accent don't cover his asshole, Charles silently swore. He was proud of his little company. There was nothing wrong with dirt on the countertops and grease on the doorknobs. He had come a long way from the Cajun country of southern Louisiana. He was respectable now, almost, soon. After this deal, for sure.

Charles watched the country landscape blur across the wet window, and let out a long sigh. The problem was, nothing he owned was paid for, as Tinsley knew. The motorcycle, the shop machinery. He was barely hanging on, manufacturing fine reproductions of museum pieces for gift shops. There just wasn't much money in craft work. He had begun to see financial light only after selling to Tinsley. African masks, pottery, stone objects, jewelry. Occasionally European or ancient Peruvian artifacts. Charles assumed he was supplying forgeries, not decorative arts. He had no doubt Tinsley was passing his excellent reproductions off as genuine artifacts. Museum gift shop orders came in larger lots and the items requested were not so obscure. There was no other way to explain Tinsley's high commissions. The money was extremely good, Charles had to admit. Dirty but very spendable. Not worth it, definitely not, he vowed again. This last deal would get him free of Tinsley's bullshit.

It was hot in the tube, and he welcomed the damp, autumn afternoon when he emerged from the underground station. Aligning the tiny wheels of the suitcase behind, he trudged toward Hampstead House on Eccleston Square. He almost passed by the polished brass sign on a stone wall. He maneuvered his case through the heavy wooden door and was surprised at how grand the place was inside. He hesitated, concerned about dripping water on the rich carpet. He blinked at the glistening glass chandelier, noted the leather lobby, mahogany reception desk. Fancy, rich-people's music floated in the air. He had taken only one tentative step when Marcus Tinsley burst from the elevator.

"Charles! Just in time!" Tinsley bubbled in plastic delight. His eyes darted to the black suitcase. "You have the, ah, goods?"

"What the hell do you think." Leblanc replied. "I'm here, aren't I?"

"Excellent! Let's go up and have a chat, shall we?"

Tinsley led the way to the hotel's elevator. He did not offer to help with the suitcase.

In Tinsley's spacious suite, Leblanc opened his case on the floor and placed a long, white box on the sofa. Tinsley lifted its top and fold back the bubble wrap. Charles watched him gaze down on his artifact, a perfect replica of a prehistoric spear-thrower with a beautiful ibex decoration.

"Splendid! This is perfect, Charles. Better than I had hoped. Well done. What material did you use?"

Charles stood and moved next to Tinsley. He lifted the spear-thrower from the box and held it up to his eyes like a trophy.

"Deer antler," he said, admiring his work as if for the first time. "It looks good from the way I stained it. That was god damn impossible. First one I made was too yellow. It was a good one, but it didn't have this orangey look of old ivory. To get this, I had to start all over and use a nitric acid bath to open the pores of the antler, so it looks like it's been around a thousand fucking years."

"Indeed. Well, whatever you did, there is no doubt this will work. It will be perfect."

Of course it's perfect, Charles thought. I'm a master craftsman, not a master bullshitter. Still, he was glad he had brought the first copy with him, the too-yellow one, just in case Tinsley didn't like the final copy. Always good to have a backup, he thought. There was no need to show that one to him now.

Tinsley carried the artifact to a small table by the window and laid it on a cushion. He picked up a stiff cardboard tag attached to a blue ribbon, which he threaded around the shaft of the spear-thrower.

"What's that?"

"All part of the plan, Charles. This happens to be a perfect replica of a Chappell's identification tag, complete with catalog number. You see, my friend, you are not the only one who can make replicas."

Charles' jaw tightened when he clenched his teeth. *A cardboard tag was not in any way the same as the fine artifact he had made! What an asshole.* But he let Tinsley's conceit pass.

"You didn't say how this deal is going to work, Tinsley."

"It is the essence of simplicity, my friend. We bid the customer's money and win the auction. Or try to. If we aren't the winning bid, no deal."

Tinsley glanced sideways, up through his eyebrows without raising his head, then continued fussing with the ribbon.

"But, we win. Immediately after the auction, before we even take it out of the room, we discover the forgery. We are horrified. We confront Chappell's. They are horrified. Everyone is horrified. The sale is canceled and we keep our money, and the customer's too, of course."

Tinsley stood up straight.

"Everyone's happy. Except Chappell's. And maybe the customer."

"Exactly. But we have only ninety minutes. You'll have to put on a tie. Do you have a tie?"

Tinsley picked up the phone and called for his car. He selected a large overcoat from the armoire. He slipped the artifact gently into a long, padded pocket inside the left front panel of his coat.

"Let's go. You can finish that knot on the way," Tinsley said.

He strode to the door of the room and held it open, a move much like opening the gate of a cattle chute, Charles thought.

"Empire Antiquities. Marcus Tinsley."

Tinsley held out his card to a clerk, a small man with a pointed nose, behind a wooden podium. He frowned at the card. Most of his head disappeared as he bent over the podium.

Tinsley gazed out the rain-spattered window, then down at the orange floral scrolls on the thick blue carpet. That's exactly how he felt, as if his stomach were erupting in orange fireballs. He was surprised to be nervous. He thought of himself as a cool calculator, a strategic chess player. This job should be just a move on the game board, but the audacity of it unnerved him, he had to admit.

The clerk's head reappeared and he held out two plastic ID badges on lanyards.

"Here we are. For you, and your technical assistant, Mr. Leblanc. We close the inspection gallery in forty-five minutes."

"Yes. We will be only a few minutes. Merely a formality. For the customer's peace of mind, you understand."

Tinsley put on a wide, knowing smile as he accepted the badges. The clerk ignored it and nodded to the security guard, a beefy young man, one hand resting on a holstered black baton. Scowling at life in general, the guard opened the locked door. Tinsley and Leblanc stepped forward into what looked like an elegant hotel ballroom. Lush red carpets covered the floor and brilliant glass chandeliers hung overhead.

He paused to survey four rows of tables running the length of the large room. Spaced along each row were dozens of black velvet pads holding treasure. Jewelry was in abundance, all dazzling under the bright lighting. A high-backed upholstered chair was positioned in front of each display to facilitate examination. There was only one other person in the hushed room inspecting the wares, a gray-haired man with a jeweler's loupe, hunched over a sparkling necklace.

Two stone-faced security guards stood in place shifting their weight from one foot to the other. Another two slowly paced the aisles. Video cameras in each corner of the ceiling watched unblinkingly, and Tinsley took note of those. He and Leblanc moved apart, as planned.

He had been in this pre-auction inspection gallery before, but still felt a jolt of excitement to be amidst such abundant treasure. He strolled down the aisle of tables closest to the windows, savoring the items on display. He admired a cuneiform tablet, several Hellenistic pots, and two clay figures that he judged pre-Columbian American.

He spotted the authentic, ibex-decorated spear-thrower at the end of the table and his breath shortened. He resisted the urge to hurry. He walked slowly past, feigning disinterest. At the end of the table, the last in that row, he turned to look. The artifact was more haunting than any of the photographs had revealed, and he had a momentary

twinge of doubt. Would Leblanc's replica be good enough? He did not sit in the chair, but bent to examine the object. After a few seconds he straightened up and glanced around the room. He saw Leblanc had lingered behind, looking at a small Renaissance painting in a gilded frame. The guard closest to the door kept his eyes on Leblanc.

Tinsley took a deep breath and told himself the plan would work. He noted the video cameras were fixed, not oscillating, and had no overlap of coverage. The camera in the corner behind him would be looking down the left side of the room, at his back. He calculated he was close enough to block its view of the tabletop immediately in front of him. He waited.

Even knowing it was coming, the piercing alarm made Tinsley jump. But he did not turn to look at the emergency exit as everyone else in the room did. All four guards rushed to surround Leblanc at the emergency door and that's when Tinsley withdrew the replica spear-thrower from his coat, placed it on the black velvet pad, then in the return gesture, clutched the authentic one to his chest. He slid it inside his special coat pocket as he turned and looked toward the commotion at the other end of the room. The swap had taken less than five seconds.

Tinsley marched toward Leblanc as one of the guards silenced the alarm. Another guard had his hand on Leblanc's back, pinning him against a wall, hands forward, legs spread. Leblanc was shouting unintelligible Cajun French. A tall guard, baton drawn, towered over while another searched him.

"Charles, Charles! What has happened?" Tinsley called out.

He was blocked by a threatening look and an outstretched arm holding a baton.

"I have backed only into zees alarm, Monsieur Tinsley. Pardonnez moi! J'ai desolé. I deed not attende."

Damn fine! Tinsley thought.

The guards finished searching Leblanc, finding nothing suspicious. They studied his identification and his entire wallet. The pointy-nosed clerk had rushed into the room, and Tinsley turned to him.

"I apologize deeply for my assistant, sir. He apparently backed into the emergency door and triggered the alarm. You can see there is not much space to get around the table there. We are very sorry for this disturbance."

The clerk looked to the guard who had searched Leblanc. The guard raised his eyebrows and shrugged his shoulders. The clerk gave a nod concurring that they were dealing with stupidity, not criminality. He wrinkled his nose as if a bad smell had filled the air, and addressed Tinsley.

"You have finished your inspection, sir." It was not a question.

The guards re-holstered their batons and made a survey of items on all the tables. Satisfied, they ushered out the frightened old man who had been inspecting the necklace. One of the guards brusquely pushed Leblanc away from the wall, flipping his wallet to a table as if it were a piece of filth. Leblanc snatched up his wallet and handed his ID badge to Tinsley.

With eyes lowered, Tinsley handed the two badges to the pointy-nosed clerk and moved to the door.

Leblanc muttered apologetically as he passed with his head bowed, "Pardonnez moi, Monsieur."

He maintained his despondent posture as he trailed Tinsley out of the building and into the cold afternoon.

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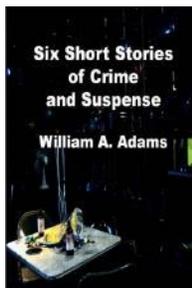
[About the Author](#)



William A. Adams, Ph.D., is a cognitive psychologist, an academic teacher and researcher, and writer of fiction. He taught psychology at University of Wisconsin, University of Maryland, The College of Idaho, Chapman University, and Brandman University. After years of teaching, he left the academic life for the computer industry, with an interest in artificial intelligence. After two decades, he returned to teaching, and began writing fiction. He is a member of Arizona Mystery Writers (<http://www.arizonamysterywriters.com>) and the Society of Southwest Authors (<http://ssa-az.org>). Connect with him online: <http://williamaadams.blogspot.com>

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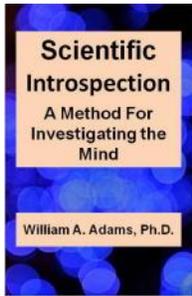


Six Short Stories of Crime and Suspense

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Six stories at 3,000 words each. Drawn from life experience then exaggerated, they deal with topics from mass murder to sci-fi. Most involve a crime, usually murder. Sample available at <http://sites.google.com/site/billadamsphd/fiction>.

ISBN 978-0-9837177-2-0 Approx. pages 35.



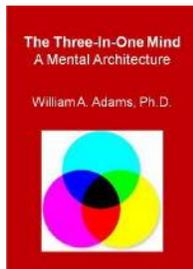
Scientific Introspection: A Method for Investigating the Mind

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Scientific Introspection calls for psychologists to use introspection to investigate the mind. What researchers do now is study the brain and behavior then try to guess what the mind must be like. But why guess? We have the ability to look directly into our minds. Scientific

Introspection is an adjunct to traditional cognitive psychology, an investigative tool to discover how the mind works. Table of Contents and sample chapter are available at <http://sites.google.com/site/billadamsphd/publications>.

ISBN: 978-0-9837177-0-6 Approx. pages 134.



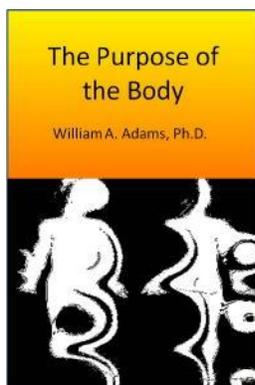
The Three-In-One Mind: A Mental Architecture

Paperless Press, 2011

The Three-In-One Mind proposes that the normal, adult, human mind includes three different streams of concurrent consciousness. “The mind” then, is not a single mental process but a concert of three. It is prudent for us to remain “open-minded” about a schema that promises increased explanatory power. There have been other three-way

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ISBN 978-0-9837177-1-3 Approx. pages 89.



The Purpose of the Body

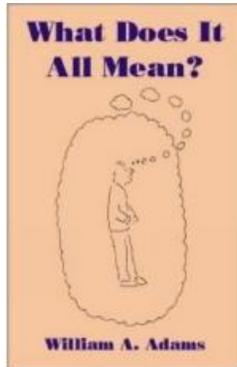
Paperless Press, 2012

Mental experience occurs in the context of the physical body and is severely constrained by the body. What is the relationship between the mind, introspectively understood, and its extremely intimate but uncommunicative partner, the body?

This essay proposes that what is taken for granted as the self-existent, biological body is instead a concept, a projection of mentality. The physical body is a mistaken, or at least badly articulated conceptualization, by linguistic and self-aware consciousness, of the non-self-aware Sensorimotor strand of consciousness. From that confusion, the concept of the body is projected outward, away from subjectivity, and reified into a self-existent object.

What then is the purpose of the body? Mentality needs its projection of embodiment to guarantee its psychological individuality, and thus its survival. Is there any way this new thesis can be reconciled with the theory of evolution? Some suggestions are offered. Consequences of re-thinking the relationship of mind and body include a reconsideration of cognitive information processing, death, and metaphysics.

ISBN 978-0-9837177-3-7 Approx. pages: 65.



What Does It All Mean? A Humanistic Account of Human Experience.

Exeter, U.K.: Imprint Academic, 2005.

ISBN 1-84540-020-8 Approx pages 250.

An analysis of psychological experience, based on what we can know, not what we wish we knew, about the meaning of life, mind, and world. Table of Contents and sample chapter are available at <http://sites.google.com/site/billadamsphd/publications>.

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