

# XTUL IX

## IN THE GREY HALF-LIGHT BETWEEN FACT AND FANTASY

The tired, shrivelled husk of a man sat at his computer staring blankly into the screen waiting for inspiration to arrive when the message flashed up.

If Xtul is just a story it is a very good one.  
If Xtul is for real it is the end of life as we know it.

There was a clickable link, so the man clicked it. A strange dirge-like song in 5/4 time started to play through his computer speakers and an unearthly, horrible voice sang:

The only gods you seem to want  
AROUND are the ones YOU THINK  
ARE  
GONNA make your WRETCHED LIFE  
SEEM better  
there is no room in your psyche for a

BONA FIDE Old Testament type  
psychotic blood letter  
you didn't know YOU were doing it but  
YOU still created us in your own image  
and you ended up with something that  
you never will be able quite to envisage

Soon he became bored and switched the music off, and resumed his search for internet pornography.

Meanwhile in a small village in North Devon a musician who calls himself 4th Eden was preparing to go to bed. Much to his surprise there was a knock at the door. He answered it and two young female children wearing dungarees and pig masks and brandishing knives burst into his front room.

Behind them was a tall, voluptuous woman



[HTTP://WWW.XTUL.CO.UK](http://www.xtul.co.uk)



wearing a silver catsuit. She appeared to have a grinning rictus skull instead of a head.

While the two children grabbed him, the tall woman approached him and thrust a key drive into his hand. "Make a Master Recording of this!" she ordered. *4th Eden* whose real name is Martin told me afterwards that despite the undoubted horror of the situation, it all made a strange kind of sense to him, so he fired up his laptop and spent the next four hours tweaking, and polishing the eldritch music that he found on it.

As the first rays of dawn lit up the winter sky, he finished his task, gave the wav file back to the tall woman who nodded her thanks and then,

**Behind them was a tall, voluptuous woman wearing a silver catsuit. She appeared to have a grinning rictus skull instead of a head. While the two children grabbed him, the tall woman approached him and thrust a key drive into his hand. "Make a Master Recording of this!" she ordered.**

together with the two young girls left the room. Martin was completely dazed, and spent the next few hours sat in his favourite armchair afraid to go to sleep.

Later that day I was sitting in my study working on the latest issue of *The Gonzo Weekly* when Danny Miles sheepishly walked in. He handed me a key drive and explained that - at last - *Xtul* were ready to release their first proper single.



Earlier in the year they had released a two track single - *The Song of Pan* backed with a hastily cobbled together remix called *A Cry in the Darkness* which I had cobbled together in my home studio. Later in the early summer another song called *Mr Loxodonta* was leaked onto YouTube, but now it seems that the three Woodland Deities and their frightening coterie of genius level runaway schoolkids had decided that it was time to put out a proper single.

The key drive contained master copies and videos for two songs. Danny explained to me how Discordia, the self-proclaimed Goddess of chaos had paid a visit to my mate Martin in what Frank Sinatra called 'The Wee Small Hours' and forced him at knifepoint to master the single.

I was furious. Martin is a mate of mine and I said as much to Danny.

"Yes, we know" he said. "That's why they went to him".

I found this whole concept monumentally chilling. Were none of my friends and family safe any more from these bloody lunatics? Apparently not. Even Danny was beginning to have a hunted feral look about him. It seemed that mere humans did not benefit from prolonged exposure to these psychopathic creatures, whatever, or whoever they would eventually turn out to be.

Danny told me that *Xtul* wanted me to put together "a zip file of goodies" that could be downloaded from the *Xtul* website during the week leading up to the Winter Solstice.

I agreed to put it together on the proviso that none of my other friends, or loved ones



would ever again have nocturnal visitations from knife wielding psychotics.

I put together a pdf of all the stories that I had written about the *Xtul* story to date, and also added the three tracks that had previously been released by the band as extras, and - basically because I felt that we owed the poor bastard something to give some little recompense for his ordeal of the previous evening - I also included a *4th Eden* track called *A Winter's Dance* which seemed to fit the sonic mood, if not the apocalyptic sentiments of the two new songs from *Xtul*.

I then uploaded them to the *Xtul* website, and sat back to see what would happen. Would anyone bother to listen to them? Would anyone watch the

videos on YouTube? But above all a far more important question troubled my dreams that night.

Would there prove to be any substance in these vague apocalyptic threats that these people, or rather these "Things" as the late Ivan T Sanderson would have no doubt described them, had made, and continue to make.

What was going to happen in 2015? Would the whole thing fizzle out, or - in the words of Danny Miles' uncharacteristically slick prose - would this truly be the end of life as we know it?

