



MISS PEREGRINE'S

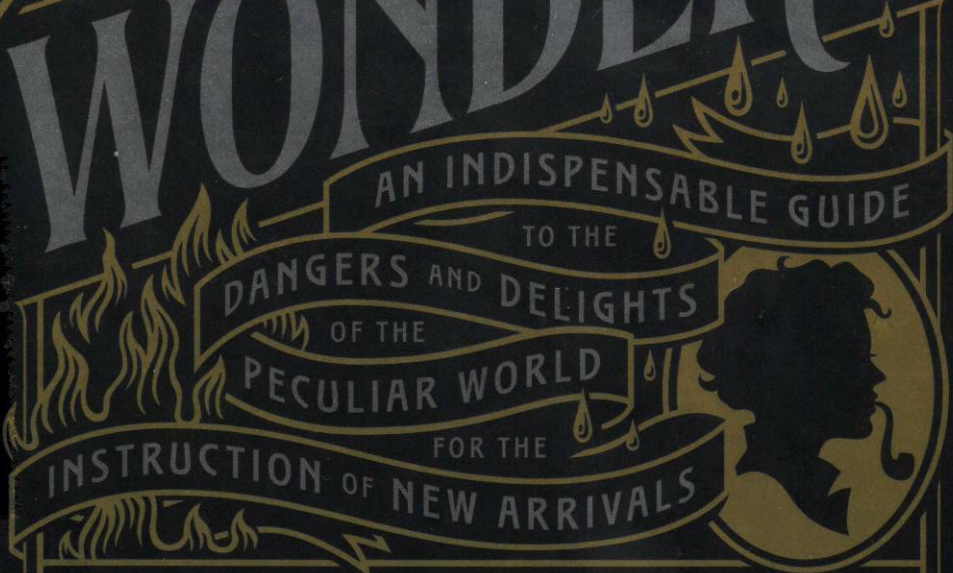


MUSEUM



of

WONDERS



AN INDISPENSABLE GUIDE

TO THE

DANGERS AND DELIGHTS

OF THE

PECULIAR WORLD

FOR THE

INSTRUCTION OF NEW ARRIVALS

RANSOM RIGGS



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DUTTON BOOKS

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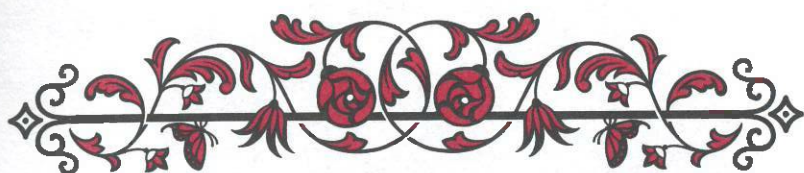
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To peculiar children everywhere.
You are not alone.



*To Jacob,
I hope you find this volume illuminating.
With great admiration,
Miss P*



Miss Alma Le Fay Peregrine



Miss Peregrine's MUSEUM *of* WONDERS

AN INDISPENSABLE GUIDE TO THE DANGERS AND DELIGHTS
OF THE PECULIAR WORLD FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF NEW ARRIVALS

BY

Alma L. Peregrine, editor

AUTHOR OF SEVERAL FORMIDABLE WORKS:

How to Appear Normal

Certain Death and How to Avoid it

and Fifty-Two Loops to See in a Lifetime

CONTAINING

ESSENTIAL FACTS; ASTOUNDING TALES;
STRANGE EVENTS OF HISTORY; LIFE-PRESERVING
INSTRUCTIONS FOR TEMPORAL TRAVEL; ZOOLOGICAL
WONDERS; HISTORICAL BATTLES; UNFORTUNATE
OCCURRENCES; EMINENT INDIVIDUALS YOU MIGHT
NOT HAVE REALIZED WERE PECULIAR; EXCERPTS FROM
IMPORTANT PECULIAR MANUSCRIPTS; RUDE JOKES AND
HUMOROUS CONTRIVANCES; POSTHUMOUS OBSERVATIONS
BY UNDEAD ACQUAINTANCES; COLORFUL PHRASES IN
THE OLD PECULIAR LANGUAGE; CAPTIVATING INCIDENTS
AND PECULIAR ADVENTURES; AMUSING LISTS AND NON-
ESSENTIAL TRIVIA; ALLIES AND ENEMIES WHOM EVERY
PECULIAR SHOULD KNOW; QUACKS AND CHARLATANS;
TECHNIQUES FOR QUICK ESCAPE; A PECULIAR
“PENNY DREADFUL”



EXCESSIVELY ILLUSTRATED WITH
NUMEROUS CAPTIVATING PHOTOGRAVURES
A NON-TRIVIAL NUMBER OF WOODCUT ENGRAVINGS
SEVERAL ESSENTIAL MAPS NEVER BEFORE PRINTED
AND ONE SCRAWL DRAWN ON A NAPKIN BY A CHILD
WHICH NEARLY ENDED LIFE AS WE KNOW IT

ALSO INCLUDING INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO
LOCATE HIDDEN TIME LOOPS
TELL IF SOMEONE IS NORMAL OR FAKING IT
LIVE UNDETECTED AMONG NORMALS
ESCAPE A RAMPAGING HOLLOWGAST
FIND SECRET CHAMBERS AND HIDING PLACES
FAKE YOUR OWN DEATH
MAKE VARIOUS AND DIVERS WHIRLIGIGS
AND MUCH MORE.



A CAVEAT FOR THE UNWARY

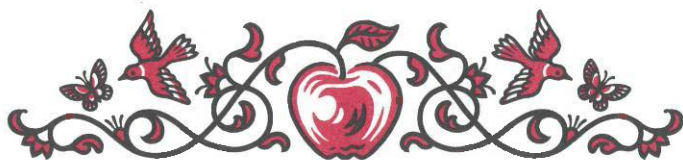
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INTRODUCTION

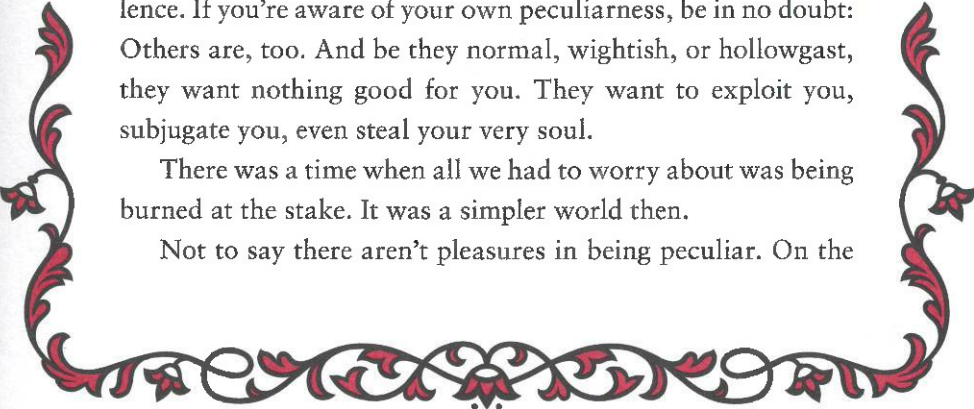


You are being hunted.

Right now, at this very moment, there are unspeakable creatures whispering your name and lusting for your blood. If you weren't already aware of this, I'm sorry to be the one to tell you. I don't relish the task, but you must know what you're up against. There are other dangers, besides: sudden, rapid aging; faulty time loops; mercenary peculiars. Normals whose fear of the unknown—and you—can quickly turn to anger, and violence. If you're aware of your own peculiarness, be in no doubt: Others are, too. And be they normal, wightish, or hollowgast, they want nothing good for you. They want to exploit you, subjugate you, even steal your very soul.

There was a time when all we had to worry about was being burned at the stake. It was a simpler world then.

Not to say there aren't pleasures in being peculiar. On the



contrary, there are many. But since my sworn duty as an ymbryne is to keep you safe, I do tend to focus on the terrifying and terrible. So long as I've got your attention, there are other things you might like to know about who we are and how we live. To survive as a peculiar, you must understand our enemies. But to thrive, you must understand *us*, and our unique society.

I might have called this book *So You're a Peculiar, Now What?* It's meant to be a handbook for new peculiars—or people who've only just realized they're peculiar—but could also serve as a refresher for peculiars who haven't seen the inside of an ymbryne's classroom for many a year. It's an attempt to collect, for the first time in one place, all the information necessary for a peculiar to live in an unfriendly world. And for peculiars who have not had the benefit of an ymbryne's instruction, it will teach you something of our history, our customs, our secrets, our most famous and infamous members, and other general but essential knowledge.

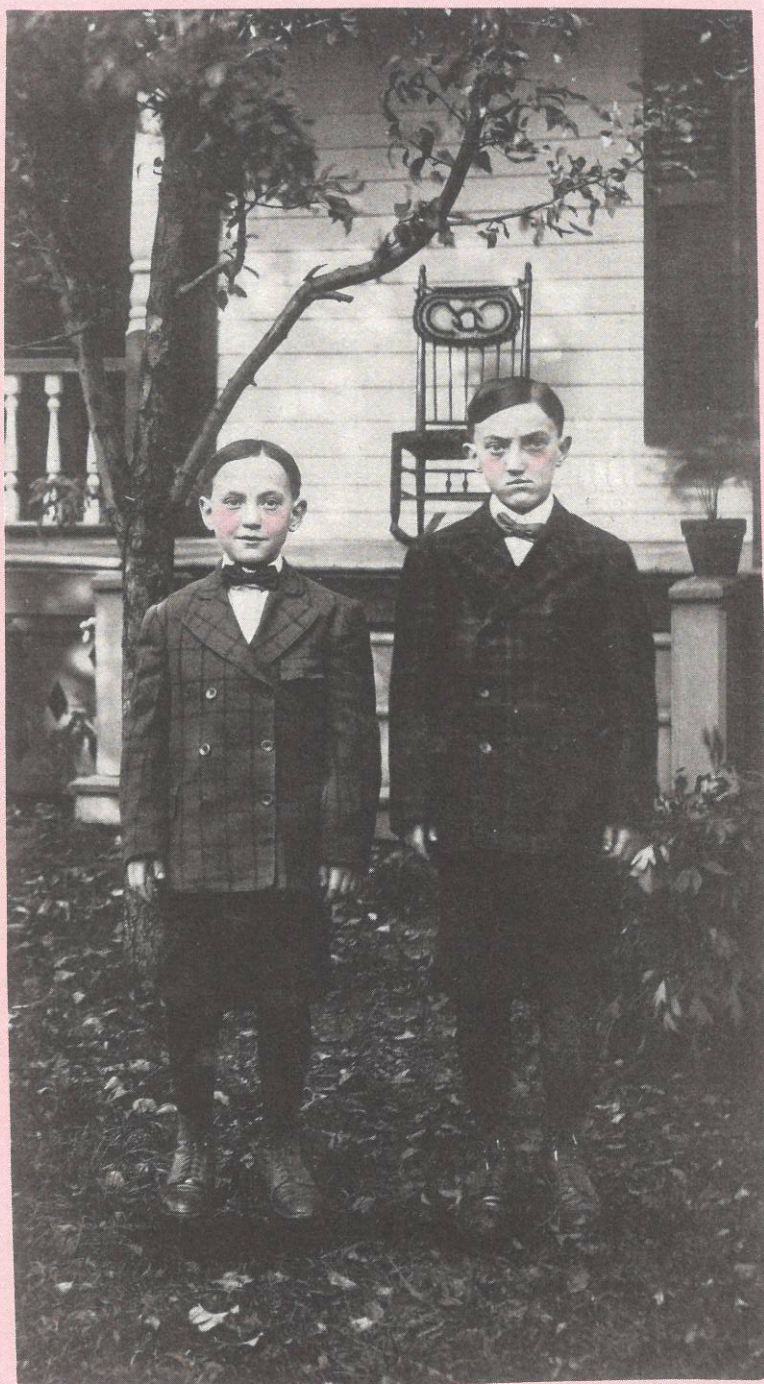
That said, our world spans the globe, and there is much that even we ymbrynes still do not know about it. There are worlds yet to be discovered, even within our own. This is far from a complete and definitive guide; such a thing is impossible, unprintable; it would fill as many pages as there are grains of sand in the Sahara. I hope this introduction to peculiardom is merely a jumping-off point for your own explorations and discoveries, and that one day, Dear Reader, you will write a new chapter of your own.

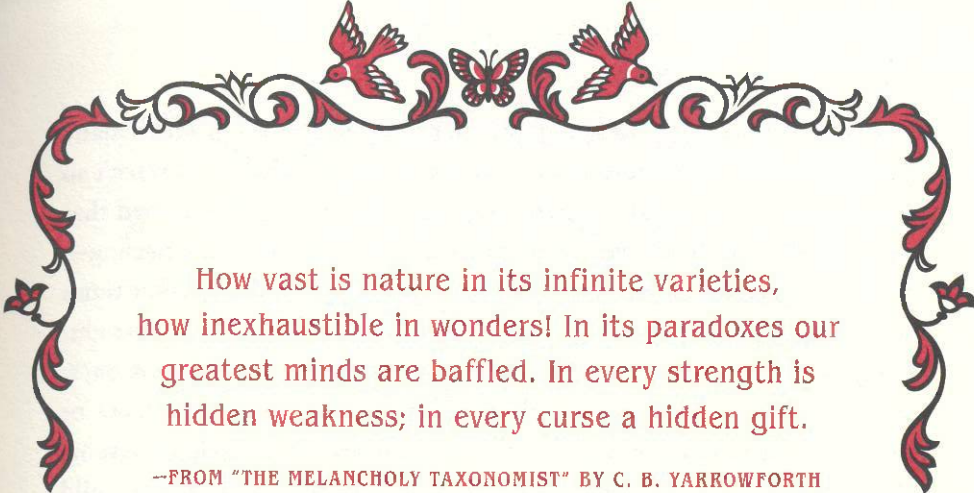
Very peculiarly yours,
Alma LeFay Peregrine

*Jacob, I wrote this book several years ago,
so please understand if there are a few
items which may now be out of date.
In an attempt to correct the occasional
obsolescence, and to highlight things which
may be of special interest to you, I've
written notes by hand here and there in
the margins.*

Miss P

On
PECULIARS
and
PECULIARNESS



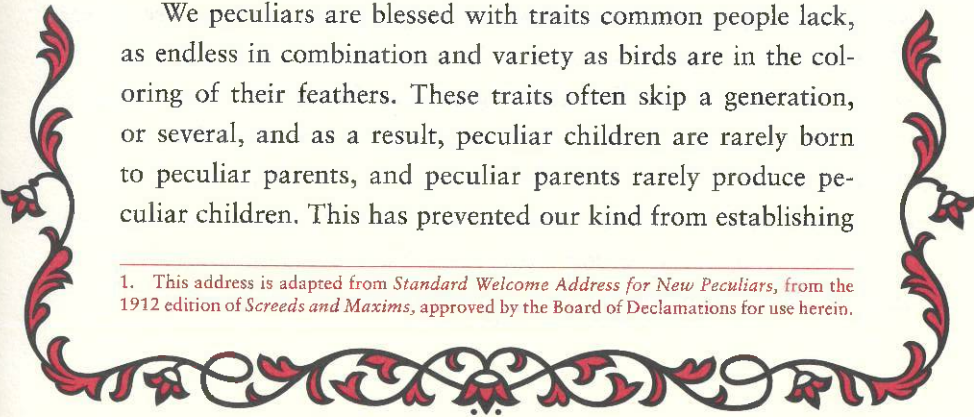


How vast is nature in its infinite varieties,
how inexhaustible in wonders! In its paradoxes our
greatest minds are baffled. In every strength is
hidden weakness; in every curse a hidden gift.

--FROM "THE MELANCHOLY TAXONOMIST" BY C. B. YARROWFORTH



The composition of the human species is infinitely more diverse than most humans suspect. The real taxonomy of *Homo sapiens* is a secret known to only a few. There are two branches: *coerlfolc*, the teeming mass of common people who make up humanity's great bulk, and the hidden branch—crypto-sapiens, if you will—who are called *syndrigast*, or “peculiar spirit” in the venerable language of our ancestors. And that is us.¹



We peculiars are blessed with traits common people lack, as endless in combination and variety as birds are in the coloring of their feathers. These traits often skip a generation, or several, and as a result, peculiar children are rarely born to peculiar parents, and peculiar parents rarely produce peculiar children. This has prevented our kind from establishing

1. This address is adapted from *Standard Welcome Address for New Peculiars*, from the 1912 edition of *Screeds and Maxims*, approved by the Board of Declamations for use herein.

powerful familial dynasties, and instead produced a world in which many peculiar children are subjected to terrible abuse and neglect. It wasn't so many centuries ago that the parents of peculiars routinely assumed that their "real" child had been kidnapped and replaced by a changeling—the enchanted and malevolent offspring of fairies—which in darker times was considered a license to abandon the child, if not kill them outright. Happily, belief in fairies, witches, and the like is less common these days, so parents who discover their child levitating the family packhorse or projecting their voice into the mouth of a cat are more likely to assume they are hallucinating and seek psychiatric help than to fling the child down a well and burn their house to the ground, as was the old custom.

That doesn't mean the modern peculiar child's lot in life is an easy one. They are sure to feel alienated, confused, even frightened. Add to that the danger of being hunted by wights or hollowgast, especially if their ability is a strong one, and they are almost guaranteed to need an ymbryne's instruction at some point. Sadly, many peculiars never meet one.

This book is for them: the young peculiar (or the old one) who's never had the benefit of an ymbryne's guidance; who is lonely and filled with questions. The aim isn't merely to fill these pages with facts, stories, and advice. It also strives to hold up a mirror to peculiarness, so that in seeing some aspect of self named and described here—something which out of shame has been kept hidden from the world—peculiar children might feel understood, recognized, even proud. I know what it is to feel separate from a family that does not understand you, does not want you. I know what it is to feel absolutely alone: It is a withering torment. And I know, too, the saving grace of realizing for the first time that there are others like you.

Too many never do. This book's goal is to change that.



A Necessarily Incomplete Taxonomy of Peculiar Abilities



Newcomers and outsiders often confuse our peculiar traits with “superpowers” in the way that protagonists of comic book tales are endowed with superabilities like flight and extraordinary strength. But that is a vast oversimplification of the facts.

Peculiarness is complex, and peculiar abilities can confer both advantages and disadvantages. For every peculiar like Bronwyn Bruntley who has the strength of a “Captain Fantastick,” there is another whose “power” is that she cannot stop sweating, ever, no matter how cold the climate (Cindy Keating, unkindly referred to as Perspirella Drench by her loopmates), or one who, rather than having a mouth between his chin and lips, has one embedded in the palm of his left hand and a corresponding trachea running up his arm (Raj Agarwal, about whom the phrase “talk to the hand” originated). But even these supposed afflictions have advantages—Raj can eat without silverware; Cindy is unaffected by extreme cold—and likewise, every perceived superability has its disadvantages. For example, my ward Emma Bloom can summon a ball of flame at her fingertips, but in her tender years she had to wear

asbestos pajamas while she slept because she so often set her bed on fire. Millard Nullings's invisibility makes it possible for him to spy on others and easily avoid detection, but to achieve this he must be completely naked, which can be uncomfortable on chilly days and quite impossible in winter.

So as you can see—and, if you're reading this book, have no doubt experienced firsthand—we are not reducible to easy stereotypes. Peculiars are not superheroes, nor are we to be pitied. Instead, we occupy a vast spectrum. In every category there are exceptions, anomalies, and edge cases, not to mention that new peculiars with never-before-seen abilities are discovered every year.

The purpose of this list is to give a general impression of the breadth of our abilities and the most common categories into which they are classified, though it is by no means exhaustive. Nature bobs and weaves, and when we try to pin her down we only succeed in looking foolish. It would be futile to try and list every known peculiarness. That would require a book of its own, twice the length of the one you hold now.

..... ➤ THE ELEMENTAL ABILITIES ➤

While these are some of the most spectacular and attention-grabbing peculiar talents, their prevalence is overstated. Perhaps one out of ten can claim some elemental ability, and those do not always fall neatly into categories. For instance, I knew a young lady who could only manipulate mud (a combination of water and earth talents). There was a boy who ate compost and lived his whole life in the garden—because he was rooted there, quite literally, by arterial roots that sprouted from his feet and ran deep into the earth. Can we call this boy an earthworker? He didn't manipulate the earth; if anything, it was the earth that worked *him*. But how else to categorize him? So, you see, these classifications are useful only to a point, and even when we try to sub-classify and *sub-sub-classify*, the lines we so painstakingly draw are quickly blurred. And yet, the attempt must be made.



Daisies grew in a trail behind her feet.

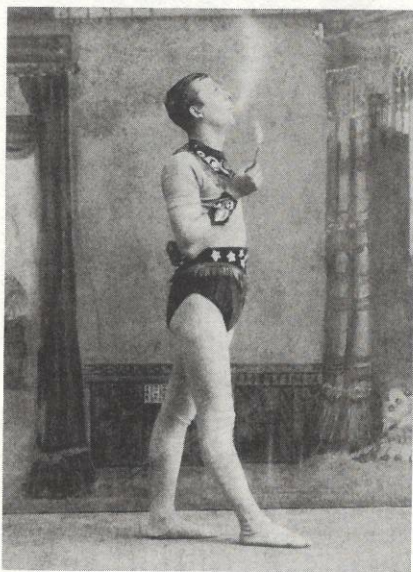
EARTHWORKERS

Some earthworkers are able to excavate large holes in the ground with a flick of the wrist, or ride waves of sand across a landscape of dunes. Others use the earth as a medium to manipulate things that grow within it, like my ward Fiona Frauenfeld, who can make plants grow with astonishing speed. Desdemona Frump, pictured left, was trailed everywhere by daisies, which sprang up behind her as she walked.

FIRE-STARTERS, AKA "SPARKS"

A fire-starter can summon fire with their hands (like Emma Bloom), or with their toes, or can breathe fire from their mouths, like the performer who called himself the Human Volcano (pictured). One infamous fire-starter could shoot flames from his nether regions as far as thirty feet. I will leave the details to your imagination.

Edge case: A peculiar boy named Ham Peggotty had the ability to extinguish flames with his saliva, which he produced in prodigious volumes.



He called himself the Human Volcano.

GALVANIZERS

These peculiars have such an excess of electricity flowing through them that they can power lightbulbs with just a touch of their finger. The most gifted can call lightning down from the skies. Others, like Slemina Gray, have bodies that act like batteries, and can provide backup power during outages. It's also been observed that radio transmissions are stronger and clearer in her presence.



Slemina Gray, human battery



A glaciator's home ... in summer.

GLACIATORS

The best known of the bunch, Althea G. is a powerful young woman whose ability to shape and create ice is astonishing. She can create giant ice sculptures, summon snow and hail, and freeze people, animals, and buildings with a touch.

Her heart, it seems, is unaffected by this cold; she is known for her kindness toward animals and young children, her loyalty to friends, and her sentimental poetry.



Althea G., the famous glaciator.

May she rest in peace. She gave her life protecting the Ymbryne Council from an enemy assault, having frozen the interior into a maze of solid ice.



A water-tamer at work.

WATER-TAMERS AND RAINMAKERS

Water-tamers have long found careers in the seagoing trades. Their ability to summon currents and waves can guide whole schools of fish into nets, speed sailing ships through calm and windless conditions, steer sailors away from dangerous rocks—or directly toward them. Rainmakers, their elemental cousins, are so revered by farmers that some have lived openly in small agrarian communities among normals for years, protected as if they were sacred talismans.

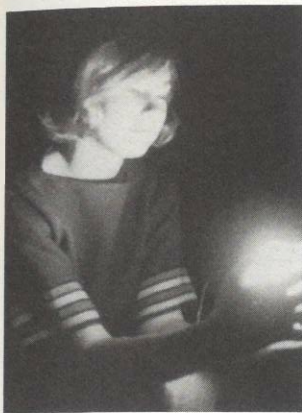
Noted example: The title character of “The Boy Who Could Hold Back the Sea” from *Tales of the Peculiar*.

Edge case: Latoya Smith could make the sky rain grasshoppers, and was responsible for several entomological weather events that normals interpreted as presaging a biblical apocalypse.



Water-tamer Roy Chao got carried away . . .
and so did his house.

.....→ LIGHT-SHAPERS ←.....



Considered cousins to the elementals, light-shapers can take light from the air with their hands and redirect it. One young man, a ward of Miss Yippin's named Julius, might properly be called a *light-eater*, or a phosphagist, as his talent involves devouring the light and storing it inside his body for future use.

A phosphagous light-shaper
about to eat her elevenses.

.....→ ZEPHYRS ←.....

Variously known as cloud-bankers, air-walkers, gusters, and *cumulae*, these elementals can manipulate air and clouds to great effect. The zephyr catchall encompasses a wide spectrum of sub-talents that ranges from commanding great gusts of wind and the formation of clouds to levitation. Those of us who are lighter than air, like my ward Olive Abroholos Elephanta, are also classed among the zephyrs.

Edge case: The peculiar American Angelica Minervis is pursued everywhere by a dark cloud emanating from her ear canal. She can make the cloud rain, snow, or hail anytime she likes. Thus she is equal parts zephyr, rainmaker, and glaciator.



Angelica: a bit of this, a bit of that.



A light-shaper practicing her craft.

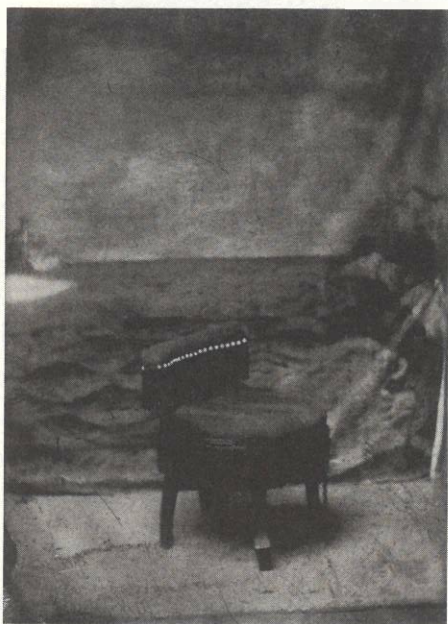
*As you know, we've lately met
a number of light-shapers!
Feel free to annotate this book
yourself. Jacob ...*

.....➤ THE MORPHOLOGICAL ABILITIES ➤.....

The “morphos,” as they’re sometimes called, are gifted with peculiarity of form. Some can effect remarkable change upon their own bodies (shape-shifters, for example), while others maintain a constant form that is nevertheless remarkably unique (invisibles, dissocios).

INVISIBLES

Millard Nullings is only the most famous of the invisibles; there are many others. They are sometimes forgotten, however, because they are so easily overlooked. Invisibles generally begin disappearing just before puberty, and the process is gradual, commencing with the toes and working upward until the entire body vanishes. Some wrap themselves in layers of clothing to hide any exposed skin. Others, finding this tedious and humiliating (not to mention hot in summer), simply disappear and live their lives

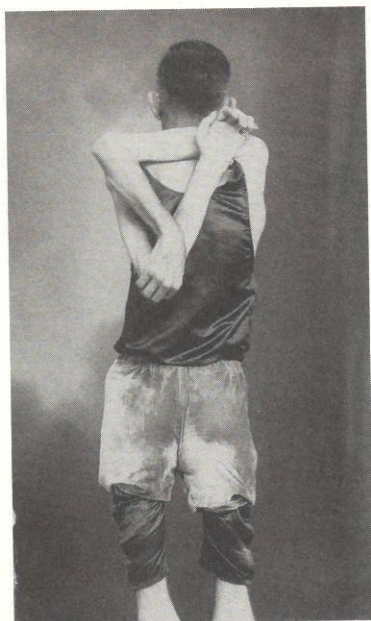


An invisible poses nude in a photo studio.

naked and alone. Those fortunate enough to be discovered by ymbrynes often blossom into scholars. Because conversations can be challenging when others cannot read your facial expressions, many retreat into the world of books.

THE ANATOMICALLY UNIQUE

The human body expresses itself in an astonishing array of forms—which is entirely normal. There is nothing peculiar, ipso facto, about being extremely tall, or small, or rotund, or having more or fewer limbs than is standard, etc. To qualify as peculiar—and to then, therefore, possess that seed of peculiar soul that grants one entrance to time loops—there must



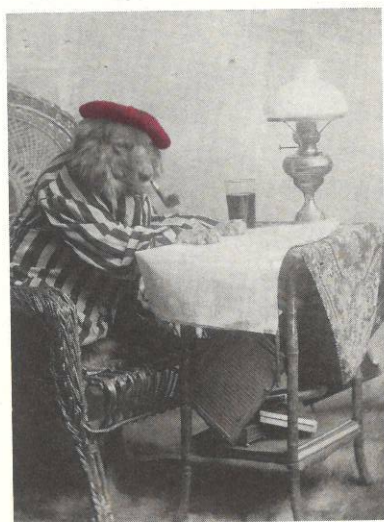
Sergei Andropov could jelly his joints at will, making them bendable to the extreme.

be some additional feature that would be impossible in a normal person. Dis-socios, for instance, can remove their heads from their bodies for several hours and then reattach them with no medical consequences. My ward Claire Densmore has a second mouth filled with sharp teeth in the back of her head; it is connected to her stomach via a second throat. (I also heard it speak, once, while she was asleep, in Latin. I believe it may also be connected to a small second brain hidden somewhere inside her body.) Peculiar contortionists are not just flexible; they can liquefy their bones at will in order to tuck themselves into the unlikeliest of spaces. Sometimes the true peculiarity of a morphologically

unique person is hidden, or unknown even to them, but that is of no importance. Anyone with a peculiar soul is welcome among us.

SHAPE-SHIFTERS

As a general rule, only ymbrynes can shape-shift, and only from human to bird form and contrariwise. Exceptions to this rule are so vanishingly rare that only one has been seen in my lifetime: a Frenchman named Hal-londe who could change himself into a dog. He spent much of his waking life in canine form, claiming that he slept better as a dog, and that to eat as a dog was an exceptional joy, as it made even the lowliest scraps into *cuisine gastronomique*.



Mssr. Hallonde at table.

.....➔ ABILITIES OF STRENGTH ➔.....

In the peculiar world, strength expresses itself in two forms: that of body and that of mind. Allow me to elucidate the difference.

THE FORTAE

Quite a few peculiars can boast incredible strength of body, like my beloved ward Bronwyn Bruntley and her late brother, Victor. Bronwyn's talent has an advantage over some less fortunate fortae, in that she can moderate her power when handling delicate objects and people. Those who cannot face practical challenges: They can only drink from cups made of stone, cannot hold a pen to write their name, and cannot embrace their loved ones for fear of crushing them to death.



Victor Bruntley, Bronwyn's late brother.



Derwitt Vanderflunke could launch ships with just his hands, but could not hug his mother.



TELEKINETICS

These peculiars' strength is mental and can be projected across distances by non-physical means.

There are many among us. Melina Manon of Miss Thrush's loop is one. This promising young woman, employed at the Peculiar Archives, can shift heavy objects using only her mind. It's said that the leader of the American Californio clan, J. M. Parkins, can levitate his own wheelchair.

Roberto Popplin, known to his public as "The Great Teleki-neato."

.....> PECULIAR COMMUNICATORS <.....

ANIMAL COMMUNICATORS

These peculiars are gifted with the ability to intercourse with everyday beasts and insects. A few can make themselves understood while speaking in a human tongue such as English, but most have learned to use the animals' preferred method of communication. Abed Rahman can perfectly reproduce the bleatings of deer, and they surround him whenever he walks through the woods. He also has hooves instead of feet and will turn and flee at the slightest startling noise, leading us to believe he is part deer himself. Polymorphism is no prerequisite, however: I know of peculiars who are covered in dog fur but cannot communicate with dogs, and yet the Canadian peculiar Jolene Foy, who has no canine features at all, can make herself understood by them with a seemingly infinite variety of barks, growls, and high-pitched whines.

The animal communicator's method need not even be verbal. Hugh Apiston's control over the bees that live inside his stomach is entirely mental, though he also employs a few hand gestures when commanding them.



Lillian Link claimed she never met anyone more articulate than her snake.

Further, many ymbrynes can and do communicate with their own species of bird. I, for instance, can hold long conversations with peregrines and other closely related species of falcon, though I've found, disappointingly, that most of them are only interested in talking about food.

These are only a few examples. There are also peculiarities who've demonstrated the ability to communicate with whole colonies of ants and scorpions, all manner of the order Rodentia, turtles, warm-blooded fish, horses, cows, wolves, and on and on.

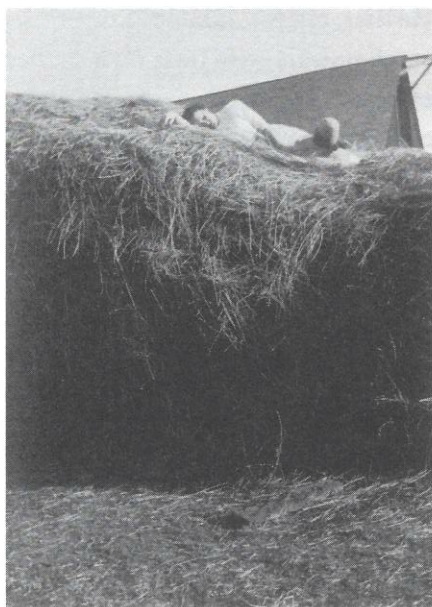
For an account of peculiar animals, which is an altogether different matter, please turn to the next section: Peculiar Animals and Plants.

MENTALISTS

Mentalists communicate using only their minds. Some can hold entire conversations without ever opening their mouths (or signing with their hands), while others, like my ward Horace Somnusson, communicate with the future via trances and dreams. (Horace has described his prophecies as films that play in his head, but also as a bodiless dream-voice speaking to him from he knows not where.) A few psychically talented peculiarities can read thoughts. Bernard Bagstock was one, and his was a lonely life. Though his intentions were good, people were



Mentalist in a trance.



Merrill's dreams were only prophetic if she napped atop the haystack.

type of mentalist, I class them in a category by themselves. In my opinion, while some have talents that border on premonition and prophecy, divining is more a heightened sensitivity of body than of mind. Water diviners are pulled toward underground springs in a manner that's quite physical. Loop diviners describe feeling a "gravitational surge" when close to a loop entrance. And so on.

What Eugenia Brody could divine, she would never say. But she would often stand for hours outside a house where some tragedy had occurred, whispering.

so afraid to have their thoughts invaded that they steered well clear of him, and he left peculiar society to live as a hermit in the woods.

A notable sub-classification of mentalists are dreamworkers, who can take the stuff of dreams, render it physical, remove it from the brain, and then do all manner of things with it. (For a diverting story about one such person, you might read "The Girl Who Could Tame Nightmares" in *Tales of the Peculiar*.)

Edge case: While some ymbrynes consider diviners a



PLANT COMMUNICATORS

A vanishingly small number of peculiarities can speak to plants, and a smaller number still can understand the plants' replies. There is much to be learned from plants, I'm told, and especially from trees, some of whom are the oldest living things on Earth. I once knew a tree-talker named Sweedlepipe who would lecture anyone within earshot about the indignity of having one's friends turned into lumber and toilet tissue. He was convicted of murdering a lumberjack, rescued from the hangman's noose by Miss Avocet, and exiled to a treeless island loop in the Far North.



Young tree-talkers posing with their beloved pet twigs.



SPIRITISTS

As contrasted with mentalists, who communicate with the living using only their minds, spiritists are able to communicate with the dead. Some use well-established methods like Ouija boards or the séance table, while others employ more unorthodox tools, such as the telephone. I knew of one young man who wrote letters to the deceased in microscopic handwriting and packed them into tiny capsules of undigestible plastic. When they later emerged, a day or so hence, the letters would be answered.

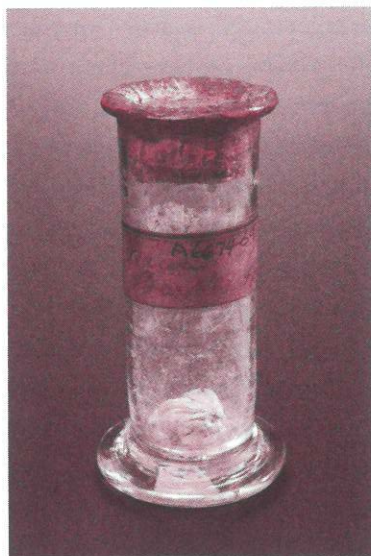
Mae and Jane could talk to the dead, but only if they phoned ahead.

THE NECROLOGICALLY GIFTED

DEADRIISERS

These curious peculiarars can reanimate lifeless tissue using organs harvested from the dead. Enoch O'Connor, my ward and a typical (if at times frustrating) example, uses hearts and brains preserved in pickling jars to wake the dead for brief periods of time. He can also galvanize small inanimate objects, creating armies of miniature homunculi which invariably cause mischief.

A snippet of Wordsworth's cerebellum, with which Enoch claims he can make the risen dead speak in perfect rhyming meter.



Enoch wasted half a dozen hearts teaching old Susie to play piano.

Edge case: Some ymbrynes insist that the Librarians of Abaton fall under this banner, too, since they are the only peculiarars who can access souls once they're deposited into soul jars (and even "read" them, according to ancient accounts). It's my opinion that the Librarians' talents are poorly understood and extend far beyond necrology.

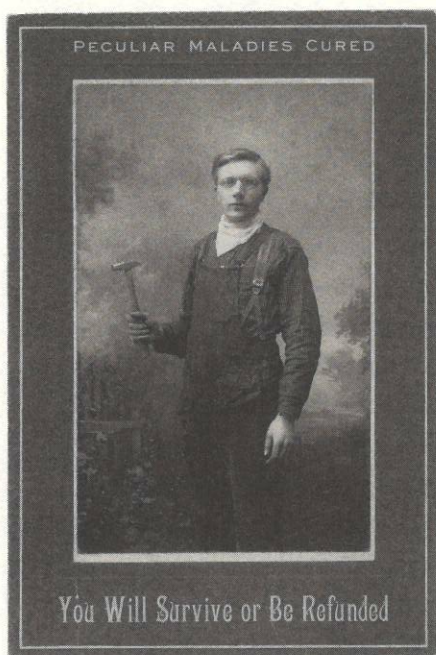
After all, we know now that you are one, and you can do much more than empty soul jars. I wonder if you have any more hidden talents waiting to reveal themselves.

BONE-MENDERS

It may seem counterintuitive to include our healers among the necrologically gifted, but their life-preserving talents are always paired with an appetite for the mortal arts. Their medicines are derived and distilled from the dead, and half their gift is in transmuting the hearts and humours of the deceased into miraculous elixirs. In the midst of life we are in death, *et cetera*.

Regrettably, bone-mending is an exceedingly rare talent. Were it more common, the Ymbryne Council would mandate that every loop in peculiardom include a bone-mender. While they are not a perfect replacement for the care of a trained medical doctor, there is much that a bone-mender can do that a normal doctor cannot, for they specialize in maladies and injuries of the peculiar sort. No one else can calm a fever caused by an infected hollowgast bite. No garden-variety physician could be trusted to treat the sudden and spontaneous growth of a second head, much less a third. My own longtime mender, Rafael, has become famous for his unusually potent tinctures and poultices, which have cured several peculiar diseases previously thought fatal, like brain-cranny worms and the dreaded Siberian semi-sentient psoriasis. It's a shame we don't have more of them.

There also exist self-healers, who can speedily recover from grievous injuries with no medical intervention, but whose talents do not, unfortunately, extend beyond themselves. The rarest manifestation of the bone-mending talent are so-called dust people, whose skin and bone can be ground into healing powders. The powder's efficacy is nothing short of miraculous when applied to the wounds of others, but has no effect at all upon the donor.

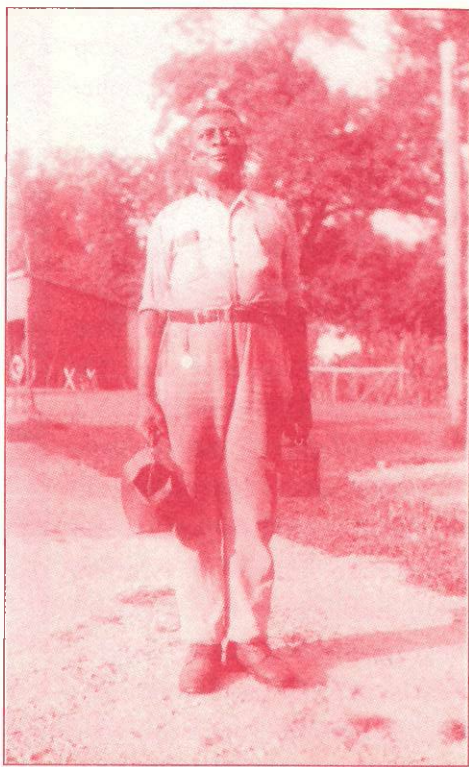


Bone-mender W. H. Schmidt's calling card.

FIELD DISPATCH BY A. PORTMAN OF A BONE-MENDER LIVING AMONG NORMALS IN FLORIDA:

George had been the town doctor for as long as anyone could remember. He ministered to the aches and ailments of rich and poor alike, and was remembered for his gentleness and his otherworldly intuition. Long before X-rays were common in these parts, he seemed able to look inside people without needing a knife, and when he cut out Gracie Cohunk's cancer, he knew right where to find it on the first cut. No one knew how he did it, and no one asked. Neither did they ask how old he was, though the oldest people in town had foggy recollections of Old George cooling fevers and patching bones even when they were tykes.

George only performed house calls, and no one had ever called on him at his home, which he'd fashioned from the sleeping car of an old circus train—though he had never, to anyone's knowledge, been in the circus. A local boy claimed to have snuck into George's train car when the doctor wasn't at home. He said there was nothing in it at all: not a dish, not a stick of furniture. Only a carpet of dust as thick as a slab of country ham.



Old George the bone-mender.