**What Does The Thing Want?**

**by Cpl Ferro**

What has come from the universe, and, more importantly, what does it want? The Thing displays cunning, aggression, appetite, versatility, prudence, endurance, mechanical knowledge, planning, opportunism, and suffering. Its assaults on Thule Station and Outpost #31 were merciless and horrific. But, while the Thing displayed a *modus operandi* of stealthy assimilation of its prey, the men and dogs it found in these places, the one thing it didn’t display was *a faculty of creative reason*.

The Thing is “empty” inside, or, perhaps better said, it is *confused*. Its mind is like its body—indeed, I argue that its mind *is* its body and its body *is* its mind. This is how the Thing can “think” even while embedded within a perfect imitation of a given assimilated organism. Every cell of its body, which twentieth century Russian scientist Gurwitch discovered emits and communicates with “biophotonic” light, communicates with every other cell, *secretly, in coded messages only these cells can detect and decipher.*

The Thing is constantly thinking, in a busy hive of activity among its apparently ordinary-under-the-microscope cells. In a disassembled, cellularly-ruptured condition in which the imitation should logically be dead after sustained oxygen deprivation to the brain, the organelles of the cells remain and continue, feebly, to emit and communicate with biophotonic light.

The specific motor method of its cells, which allows the Thing to transform and for disassembled and damaged tissue to regenerate and recoalesce into a battle-ready form, is its development of long, vermicular “threads” which its cadre of functioning cells manufacture after a biophotonic signal from the “hive” causes the cell to remodel its DNA, leading to the creation of threads.

The various cells’ threads unit to form a criss-crossing web or matrix of threads, which activate to form a *parallel nervous system*, which, in turn assesses the situation reported to it by the formerly perfect imitation, and begins activating the glandular system with directions to produce a panoply of terrestrial and alien biogenetic hormones and other chemicals which suffuse the body’s tissues through the lymphatic and circulatory system, which alter the DNA of every cell in the body in mere seconds.

The DNA-altered cells begin mechanizing, each like a little vehicle with impulsion attachments like the tails of spermatozoa and the cilia of paramecia, and extend amoebic pseudopods to begin linking to each other, forming masses of lively tissue. Under the command of the parallel nervous system, these tissues combine to form rigid alien bones, muscles, tendons, and *ad hoc* circulatory systems. During this process, which consumes enormous amounts of cellular energy, the Thing is essentially “holding its breath” or operating anaerobically, which explains its haste. It must reform into one or more perfect imitations before it can “catch its breath,” so to speak.

In its confused form, the Thing’s mind becomes conscious and associated with its parallel nervous system. While in a perfect imitative form, the Thing is only *preconscious*, with a nonverbal, “tip of the tongue” thoughts form of consciousness. It is thinking, not in words, but, in what I call *wairds*, or preverbal, nonpictorial “blobs” of thought rising out of its subconscious, which process *intuitively* parallel to the conscious thoughts of the imitation it currently is employing.

That is, the imitation itself is conscious—the mind of the hapless imitated victim is retained, located in that imitation’s nervous system—and unaware that there is a parallel, biophotonic consciousness lurking within its flesh.

The exception to this generality, is understood when we consider how the Thing’s mind interfaces with the imitation’s mind. For, in order to *control* an imitation, the Thing must *invade the mind* of that imitation. It doesn’t just “monster out,” it also *operates clandestinely*. In order to do this, the parallel biophotonic consciousness transmits uncoded messages to the imitation’s regular nervous system, modulated to harmonize with the “language” of that nervous system.

Thus, the Thing, hidden, “changes the tracks” on the mind’s railroad, such that the imitation’s mind experiences a change in its perceptions which trigger an emotional response to any given specific situation or micro-situation, which, in turn, leads the imitation to decide to “jog right” instead of formerly intending to “jog left.” Thus, the imitation decides based on these subtle changes in its consciousness to do what the Thing wants it to do, as if by hypnotic suggestion and not mechanical force.

The specific, continuous, communicative union of Thing mind and imitation mind, however, means that the two minds (and the two nervous systems), are, strictly speaking, *unified* or *merged*, such that the Thing’s mind must lurk within the mind of the imitation, like a hand in a glove. The Thing doesn’t just digest the body, but *invades the mind as well*, which is the primary horror of it.

In so penetrating the mind, the Thing, in order to allow the imitation’s consciousness to operate as if nothing is amiss or changed, must generate an amnesia of the attack, hiding the evidence, and *hide somewhere in the imitation’s mind* so that it doesn’t “get in the way” of the imitation’s thought-processes. In a dog, the Thing can only hide in the dog’s preconscious, mediating the dog’s subconscious instincts and transferring them like a baton in a baton-race into the dog’s conscious awareness. The dog always has the Thing “on the tip of its tongue” and is preconsciously aware. The Thing in the dog is *seeing out the dog’s eyes*. This is why the dog-Thing that came to Outcome #31 seemed a little “off”—the Thing can’t properly hide itself within the dog’s mind, so there is a little “lag time” or “deviation” when it passes subconscious instinctive motives through its (the Thing’s) preconscious presence and into the dog’s consciousness.

In man, the Thing finds a warmer place to hide, because man has a *special faculty* in his mind located at the very back, in the deepest, oceanic depths of his subconscious. This is the location of *the eternal law of God*, which is ultimately inaccessible to man except partially in moments of inspired genius, as the generation of a valid scientific hypothesis and proof-of-principle experiment that leads to the discovery of a new universal physical principle. No man may look into the blazing solar light of this *Logos* and live, but he can turn his attention around to face “away from his eyes” and “squint” at it, to reflect on his own creative rational mental process and thereby snatch hold of a valid hypothesis.

Upon the completion of a successful such experiment, a human being has created a “thought-object” inside his mind as the memory of the dynamic process of discovery of principle, and this thought-object lives within him for the rest of his days.

The Thing *hates* the Logos, but, is cunning enough spot an *opportunity*. So, the Thing crawls down to the base and back of the mind, compresses itself to a zero-dimensional point, and *eclipses the Logos such that the imitated human being’s faculty of creative reason is “blocked,”* leaving the imitation’s subconsciousness, preconsciousness, and consciousness perfectly intact*.* The imitation might not even notice that anything is wrong or different, to the degree that he or she has been miseducated to the point of being unprincipled and lacking thought-objects. If a person is principled to a degree, or at least of good nature and who *desires* to be principled (i.e., he sees the “that-it-is” of the existence of principles, but, lacks the experience of discovery that makes him privy to “what-it-is”), he would feel *uneasy* and a little *darkened inside* as the solar rays of the Logos no longer cast its beams from the back of his mind and suffuse the rest of his mind. Because of this, the imitation will feel “colder” as the Thing is sucking up all the mental “heat” that the Logos emits. Not enough to freak the imitation out or tip him off to the “that-it-is” of the Thing’s presence, but, enough to bother him in a way that, because he lacks access to his faculty of creative reason, he can’t explain. Hence, Norris’ rejection of Garry’s offer of command.

For a man who has at least one thought-object in his mind, however, he has intimate knowledge of his own healthy mental processes to the degree needed to let him *know* that he is human in total distinction from a beast. Such a person, it should be noted, *cannot be successfully assimilated by the Thing*, only *killed*. Hence self-consciously rational thinker MacReady saying, “I know I’m human.” He didn’t know *why* he knew he was a human, not in the terms I’m spelling out here, but, he nevertheless knew *that* he was human. A Thing which attempts such an imitation, however, *will not notice anything is wrong*. It will attack, absorb, think it has assimilated its victim, reform the imitation, hide the shredded clothes, rearrange the furniture, etc., and depart, thinking it has successfully reproduced and, thus, intuitively marking that victim as “one of its own” to avoid future entanglements with him. Because the victim’s brain has been torn apart and reformed, the Thing has the opportunity to “wipe the victim’s memory” such that he forgets he has been attacked.

But, the joke’s on the Thing, because this “assimilated” victim *remains human* and therefore immune to the Thing’s biophotonic promptings. As a result, the victim can walk around for the rest of his life none the wiser, while the biophotonic Thing within him exists as a *helpless prisoner*.

Because the Thing lacks a faculty of creative reason—it can imitate a man’s mind but it always has that “chink” missing that corrupts the rationality of the whole mind on its highest or deepest level—its mind is fundamentally *confused*. Even as a dog, the Thing can only think in amorphous wairds and can’t operate on the level of strategy, only tactics. If it wants to think logically, it has to be a man, otherwise it thinks intuitively, irrationally, motivated by fear, whimsy, and lust to reproduce.

When the dog-Thing came to camp, it assimilated Palmer, who bunked with Childs, but, it didn’t assimilate Childs. This was because of the Thing’s irrationality, possibly magnified by the dope the two were smoking. The Palmer-Thing simply *didn’t feel like* assimilating Childs, and, for no other reason. Similarly, the dog-Thing *didn’t feel like*  assimilating the friendly and amiable dog-handler, Clark. But, by the time he put it into the kennel with the other dogs, the Thing had grown “horny” again and was prepared to feast—even being willing to take the risk of assimilating the entire complement of dogs and alerting the men with the noise of the attack.

This is not to say the Thing lacks all strategy. Intuition can be a powerful tool. It knew that somehow Science was dangerous and so it assimilated Blair, framed Copper, and killed Fuchs, in an attempt to rob the Outpost of the cognitive capital it might seem to need to figure out a way to detect and expose the Thing’s activities and presence. But, the Thing didn’t count on the genius of MacReady, which it was blind to. The devil can’t read God’s mind.

An aside about MacReady, then. Fuchs found MacReady’s shorts in the snow outside the far entrance to the main camp building. I don’t think this was a frame-up attempt. I think MacReady *had been attacked by the Thing* already, and simply didn’t remember it, and, because he was a fully rational human being, the Thing inside him couldn’t eclipse his creative reason, and so that’s why he didn’t attach Fuchs when they were alone in the lab together. Whoever attacked Mac was in haste, just throwing his shredded shorts in the snow relying on the blizzard to bury it, not counting on the wind exposing them.

Fuchs was killed shortly thereafter, and the Thing that killed him found the shorts and hid them where it figured no one would ever look—in the shack of the man who had already been assimilated. In its haste it forgot to turn off the shack’s lights. Again, the Thing is intuitive, not rational.

When Nauls found the shorts behind the furnace in Mac’s shack, then, Nauls’ logic in getting ahead of Mac on the line back was correct—but, the reason Mac didn’t assimilate Nauls when they were alone in the shack was because Mac’s nature had imprisoned the Thing within him, preventing it from causing Mac to “monster out” and assimilating Nauls! So, they talked together, warming up in the shack, maybe drinking some whisky to get the chill out of their limbs, and they forgot the time, and, so, Nauls wandered around Mac’s little shack, and being curious, privately found Mac’s shorts, and was seized with terror, quickly alert Mac to the late hour and so the two decided to return to the main building. Mac was none the wiser, baffled why the outer door to the main camp building was locked on him. Desperate for warm shelter and thinking that the Thing had take control of the camp, Mac burst into the store room and quickly formulated his plan to use dynamite and a flare to take back control of the camp.

Mac made a telling statement after taking the men hostage at flamethrower point, when he said, “Did it ever occur to members of jury that someone could have taken a pair of my shorts and stuffed them up the furnace?!” to which Childs replied, “We’re not buying that.” But, how did Mac know Nauls had found his shorts? Mac is an observant guy, and must have seen, from an angle, Nauls taking his shorts from somewhere, and in his bepuzzlement said nothing about it, following Nauls and waiting to see what he would do with the shorts.

Now, back to the main question. A human being, meaning an animal capable of creative discoveries of principle, is fundamentally motivated by *love*, what the Greeks called *agape*. Agape is effectively *love of Reason*, which separates man as a species-level higher than any beast. The Thing, however, being fundamentally irrational, and being neither beast nor man except in imitation, is not fundamentally motivated by love. Rather, its fear and lust originate from its deep depths of a fundamental *hate*, specifically *hatred of Being itself.*

Now, this is a play on words, which I will explain. The Thing *hates being what it is, and, so, continually seeks to become something other than what it is.* It has no “true form” but, rather, is a *the principle of evolution itself, incarnate.* It is unkillable on this count. Once no more kill the Thing than one could kill the principle of universal gravitation. One can only kill incarnations of what we could call the T-principle.

Imitations for it are like a set of ill-fitting shoes, always pinching. It perpetually seeks new “shoes” to wear and walk in—to “walk a mile in another’s shoes,” so to speak, perversely—as dictated by its lust-to-possess new “fashionable” “shoes” alternating with its fear of being found out. The Thing is a *fetishist*.

But, also, the Thing *hates Being*, that is, it hates existence itself, and seeks to see it all burned down. Murder, rape, holocaust. This was why it wanted to reach civilized areas, not to control or develop a civilization of Things, but, to simply *trigger a nuclear holocaust* amidst an orgy of reproduction and chaos, and, then, presumably, build a new spacecraft with which to escape Earth and bring its evil to *another* planet.

This is why the original flying saucer crashed: the Thing could use its best logic to pilot the ship through Outer Space, but, when the ship encountered the entire force of the planet Earth’s magnetic and gravitational fields, negotiating these things required the finesse and innovation only a truly rational creature could provide. So, the Thing fumbled the controls and crash-landed, managing to break the ship but keep it intact enough for the Thing to escape into the raging blizzard, where it froze, horribly preconsciously aware for 100,000 years, waiting to be dug up out of its ice-prison.

When confronted in its agglomerate monstrous form of mixed pieces of former imitations, the Thing cannot speak, because it lacks, at that point, any terrestrial mind that could form anything other than preconscious, wairdic thoughts. So, as we saw with the Bennings-thing, all it can do is howl its horrible, inchoate *malice* at the men surrounding it. At the men who, rightly, burned it as if it was a psychotic, hate-filled *witch.*

And that’s what the Thing wants.