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"It's a very dangerous thing to believe in nonsense." -- James Randi

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The Curse of the Space Mummies

by Martin Kottmeyer

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The difference between the entities is all the more surprising when you begin to tally up all the other features the two cases share beyond the sinus operations. They both experience floating sensations and travel through walls. Both are given tummy exams. Both are temporarily caged in body-molded transparent enclosures. Both see a realm on a distant landscape that is as bare of vegetation as a desert, which has square buildings in it. Both travel through tunnels. Both are drawn into transport bubbles.

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While Andreasson does not report encountering any mummies, there are features of her account which hark back to the country most of us associate with mummies, Egypt. She saw pyramids. They are distinctly based on the Egyptian style. Besides the similar angles and flat facing, there is an indenting of some faces exactly like the Great Pyramid of Cheops. This feature of indentation is not widely known, but is accessible in popular works like Andre Pochan's *The Mysteries of the Great Pyramids*. She also saw a big head like the Sphinx. The Phoenix encountered by Andreasson continues the theme since it was a bird sacred in Egypt. Herodotus even mentions it in his ancient account of Egypt.

In an earlier paper, "The Alien Booger Menace" (*The REALL News*, Vol. 1, # 6), I demonstrated that similarities like nasal implants may point towards cultural borrowing rather than shared experience. Comparing the reports of Larson and Andreasson turns up many disparities which contribute to the case against shared experience. Larson was encased in a transparent cube for exhibition purposes. Andreasson was encased in a transparent body mold and then had liquid poured in with her for purposes of transport. The liquid repeats an experience reported by Louise Smith from the 1976 Kentucky triple abduction, and written up in *Abducted!* It may be relevant to note that this book includes an account of the Larson case. Smith's dramatic experience of liquid being poured over her has a notable precursor in the earthling encased in fluid in the "Ordeal" episode of the 1972 series *U.F.O.* Unlike Larson, but like Mona Stafford of the Kentucky triple abduction, Andreasson has her eye pulled out of its socket. This bizarre claim recalls a magic trick performed by Filipino psychic surgeons and explained by William Nolen in his book *Healing*. Doctors know the optic

nerve does not possess the elasticity needed for such a feat, but the public apparently does not. Philip Ward's Dictionary of Common Fallacies has an entry devoted to an idea more common earlier in this century that surgeons sometimes remove eyes, wash them, scrape them, treat them, and replace them.

Andreasson seems to try to improve the Larson case in some ways. The brain removal, too reminiscent of Star Trek's worst* episode ("Spock's Brain"), does not recur in Andreasson. Larson took a shower after her encounter to get rid of any alien germs. The aliens ask her about soap and she gives them a sample. Andreasson, on the other hand, enters a chamber where she is bathed in a cleansing light and is handed a new garment afterwards. This is recognizably a variant of the decontamination procedure in *The Andromeda Strain* (1971) involving a brilliant light that destroys skin bacteria. It also burns off all body hair in the movie. That part does not recur in Andreasson, but we've come to expect that aliens associated with UFO experiences never provide evidence of that intriguing sort.

The entity change away from the mummy may be another attempt at improvement. Mummies seem out of place in American culture. They are more associated with a kitsch form of old horror movies than the modernity of space travel. Moviemakers try to be creative, but there is a distinct tendency to favor aliens with a futuristic quality. That means they are usually bald, since hairiness would be connotative of apes; and big-headed or brains with little or no body, since that would be the logical extrapolation of human evolution if trends over the past few million years were continued. Examples from film, TV, comics and SF pulp illustrations number in the dozens. One bad film buff, I think it was Michael Weldon, demonstrated the dilemma for abductees by his reaction to an obscure Latin American film involving mummies from outer space. It was an a priori hopeless premise. "Space mummies?"

Andreasson's aliens, with their hairless, pear-shaped heads, are utterly conventional. The style is recognizably part of a family of alien forms created for the TV series *The Outer Limits*, but their immediate precursor is demonstrably the alien designed for *The UFO Incident*, the 1975 television-movie adaptation of *The Interrupted Journey*. The movie is remarkably faithful to the book and the design of the alien is also quite true to drawings that have appeared in the book, and were elaborated on for David Baker for the April 1972 issue of NICAP's *UFO Investigator*. But that faithfulness is not flawless. There is a sharp angle to the inner corners of the eye sockets where the original shows a rounded curve. The pupils of the eyes are much larger. Andreasson's drawings reflect these alterations. There are four close-ups of the aliens and the right eye is always different in appearance to the left. On three of the shots the eye on the left appears blank with an absence of white to it: it is reversed on the second close-up. The disparity seems like it could be due to heavy glass being used by the designer and the camera angle creating the effect. Whatever the reason, Andreasson repeats the disparity in her drawing of Quazgaa. Quazgaa is also drawn with a feeler crease above the eye which is prominent on the movie alien, but seems an extrapolation of a feature on Baker's drawing. Baker's drawing includes a mouth-opening covered by a membrane. The movie and Andreasson show slits for mouths. Presumably Andreasson's experience of having a needle stuck into her naval is similarly borrowed from the movie.

The status and superiority of credibility granted the Hill case over other cases can be reason enough for Andreasson favoring the *UFO Incident* aliens over space mummies. The movie could also force the choice from the power of visual images being greater than verbal descriptions such as Larson gave in *Abducted!* It seems obligatory to ask, however, if it is reasonable for Andreasson to favor the Hills' aliens, why didn't Larson borrow it also? Larson, after all, got into ufologists' hands because she saw *The UFO Incident*, and it made her concerned about a time-loss and UFO sighting she experienced a few months earlier.

One possibility is that it relates to her falling into the hands of APRO which had a special interest in the Pascagoula abduction of 1973. It was a famous case that had national exposure. There are several popular accounts such as an article in *Rolling Stone* magazine and the mass-market paperback *Beyond Earth*, but it was only people with APRO who called attention to the mummy-like appearance of the Pascagoula entity and deemed it a feature that enhanced the credibility of the case. Larson was said to have had no prior interest in UFOs and had little knowledge of the subject. This is perhaps true, despite the involvement of the movie. About the only details that could be based on the movie involved the final warning not to talk because she would not be believed.

Much of the case seems different from anything reported before. Only the Pascagoula case seems reprised, and then in only two particulars. They both involve tummy exams by mummies. It is no stretch to believe she picked up these motifs in conversation with UFO buffs or researchers prior to her hypnosis sessions. Other than this, the two cases are

different. The UFOs are different. The Hickson story is brief while Larson's is rich in detail and lengthy with multiple operations and a trip to another realm.

The question returns for Pascagoula; if it was reasonable for Andreasson to favor the Hills' entity, why did Charles Hickson opt for space mummies? The power of visual imagery drops out of the picture because The UFO Incident wasn't around yet in 1973. Fame might still favor such a borrowing, but the verbal description may have seemed vague and forgettable. The drawing in *The Interrupted Journey* is crude, sketchy, and rather like a caricature of an angry guy wearing a cap. It's not convincingly alien. More, the tale of a woman being given a horrific pregnancy test might be an incongruous choice for a male abductee. (Admittedly, Sammy Desmond repeated the needle in the navel despite the contra-indication. People are funny.) Yet another factor is that Hickson's report comes across more like a vivid nightmare than an exercise in active imagination and story-telling. Dreams often possess aspects that are bizarre and seemingly impenetrable to reason. It might help if we knew the source of Hickson's aliens, but they initially seem so different from conventional aliens it looks like a hopeless task tracking it down.

Fortunately, the Lorenzens saved historians a big headache by themselves covering similarities between the Pascagoula entity and a case out of Peru involving a man designated C.A.V. The man encountered three mummies with a generally human profile, but the legs were joined and they slid along the ground. They were about 5'9" in height. The face was mostly featureless save for a sort-of nose. The arms seemed normal, but the hand consisted of a group of four fingers stuck together and a separate thumb creating the impression of pincers or claws. The match to the Pascagoula entity is remarkably good, and I have to agree with the Lorenzens that the odds against happenstance are too remote to be considered. They add that neither Hickson nor Parker (the other Pascagoula experiment) had prior UFO interest, and the case appeared "only" in the *APRO Bulletin* and chapter 8 in their 1968 book *UFOs Over the Americas*.

"Only" is not exactly how I would describe a Signet paperback which was mass-marketed across America on wire racks in drug stores and five and dimes, but perhaps they were being modest. The Lorenzens further wondered why, if both cases involve fabrication, this particular form was chosen. "Why not a more acceptable and more frequently reported type?" More believable occupant encounters were readily available. They temporarily prefigure Fowler and Hopkins in their style of argument by ignoring the equally striking disparities between the two cases in these remarks from *Encounters with UFO Occupants*. Happily, they rectify this shortcoming in their next book *Abducted!* when they grant, "The only real difference between the two descriptions was that the Peruvian said the skin of the creatures was sandy-colored and that they had 'bubbles' where the eyes would be which moved around." This is at least a start. C.A.V.'s UFO is shaped like a disc. Hickson's UFO is shaped like a fish. C.A.V.'s entities were lost and asked to see our chief. They carry on an extended conversation about a variety of things including how we are endangering the balance of the universe and how they are able to reproduce by fission. C.A.V. tries to abduct one of the mummies as they try to leave in an effort to get rich, but they were too slippery. They don't try to abduct him and conduct a tummy exam. If the entities are the same because they are real, why are their craft and behaviors so different?

The fish shape of the craft and the tummy exam with the eye are critical clues to what is going on here. They are not part of the C.A.V. case, but they are part of *UFOs Over the Americas*. Chapter 3 is called 'Underwater UFOs' and features a June 1959 incident from Buenos Aires involving an object generally shaped like a huge fish. The eye over the tummy is a compositing of cases on page 206: an 1880 incident involving a luminous ball suspended in mid-air, leaving the percipient terror-stricken, which is followed by a brief account of the Hill case and their physical examination, after which the authors discuss how UFOs could induce hypnotic effects and shock.

The blending and distortion of the elements of these cases is identical to the way dreams remix and composite recent memories to come up with a dramatic experience. The choice of the mummies by Hickson's mind stems from the title given the chapter relating the C.A.V. case: "The Flesh Crawlers." It was the scariest-looking alien in the book. It worked. Charlie Hickson's personal account is reprinted in *UFO Contact at Pascagoula* and includes this line: "My flesh crawls when I think about those three things that appeared through the opening."

With respect to C.A.V., the Lorenzens' objections about acceptability and frequency collapses with the realization that C.A.V. hailed from Peru. Peruvian culture is significantly different from the one the Lorenzens were living in. Mummies were pervasive in Incan religion. Incan leaders were embalmed with great care and their remains were worshipped like a god. It would be placed in temples. Sacrifices would be made to it. It was brought out for festivals.

People were assigned to take care of the mummy. One archaeologist found a Necropolis of 429 mummies which demonstrated the antiquity of the practice in Nazcan culture. It would take an expert in Peruvian folklore to track down the immediate cultural precursors to C.A.V.'s experience, but we don't need a detailed analysis to understand that a Peruvian might find the idea of space mummies far more believable and emotionally resonant than would people in the USA.

It is also relevant to add that C.A.V. saw a psychiatrist who felt that he had probably imagined the experience. He had just learned one of the trucks used in his business had suffered an accident, and he was overextending himself with multiple businesses and familial responsibilities. C.A.V. admits the possibility of hallucination or dream, but doesn't agree. Richard Greenwell, an ufologist who interviewed C.A.V., has also given his opinion: "Personally, I consider the experience unreal - but interesting." (FSR Nov/Dec. 1970) Ufologists may argue the cases reinforce each other, but it seems likelier they undermine each other. If C.A.V.'s case is psychologically and culturally explicable, those elements which recur in later UFO experiences are probably equally unreal.

And equally interesting. C.A.V.'s gliding space mummies are a product of Peruvian culture that illuminates the processes of cultural transmission and story formation in abduction experiences. The Lorenzens introduced it into America where it briefly took root by influencing Hickson. Under their nurturing it spread to Larson. Andreasson almost included it in her account, but the entities of The UFO Incident won out. It was close though. In The UFO Incident the entities walk. In Andreasson's remix the entities glide. Just like the Lorenzens' space mummies. The mummies put a curse on any attempt to understand these four experiences as similarly real experiences that support the Extra-Terrestrial Hypothesis (ETH). The pattern of similarities and differences only makes sense with the premise that it is humans, not aliens, that are running the show. The ETH won't work. At least, not without an awful lot of bandages.

* "Spock's Brain" was rated officially the worst episode in Entertainment Weekly's current Star Trek collector's edition, 79th of 79.

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