

# Twilight Papers #5

*From the notebook of Jason Burke, dated three months ago*

So this is pixie dust. I feel strangely embarrassed that this is my first experience with hallucinogens—indeed, my first experience with any illegal drug. Ironic, I suppose, considering how chemicals and chemistry dominate every other aspect of my life.

The euphoric effect of the dust is no surprise. I suppose it comes from a stimulation of the mind's pleasure centers. What I find intriguing, however, are the hallucinations. The drug somehow overrides the brain's perception center, causing the user to receive false input with all five senses. How does this work? It's possible that the drug affects each sense, feeding the false info at the primary receptors. Possible, but unlikely. Makes more sense that it affects the perception center itself. But more than other hallucinogens, which merely create random hallucinations, the dust always gives the same or a similar hallucination. Which means that it's affecting the center in a very specific way—the same way each time for each person. If we could figure this out, and learn to manipulate the message being sent to the center, we could custom create hallucinations. Tie this in with computers and we could have William Gibson's wet dream.

Or maybe...maybe the hallucination is a sort of collective unconscious type thing. That would explain why everyone sees the same place. Some people—okay, some pixie heads—say that they see each other when they're tripping. I don't know about that.

Doesn't make sense. But if this is the case, it would lend support to the collective unconscious theory.

What do I know? I'm a chemist, not a philosopher.

*A week later*

This is seriously weird.

I ran the tests myself—twice—so I know they're accurate. Still, this is weird. Near as I can tell, the dust is composed of some sort of peyote extract, mixed with a biological secretion. It might be blood, but it's not like any blood I've ever seen. Maybe it's from a rare animal, or some mutant strain.

But that's not the important thing right now. The important part is the peyote extract; that seems to be the active ingredient. If I can find some way to shut down the euphoric effects, maybe those who use it will be a little less likely to do so. Of course, this won't stop the addiction—that's more psychology and sociology than chemistry. Or if I can figure out exactly how the extract affects the brain and perception, then I can develop some way to counteract the chemicals, perhaps blocking them altogether.

To counter the effects of the drug, I have used a compound designed to cancel the euphoric effect of the THC, and a large dose of a secondary drug to "reset" the primary sensory center and block out the hallucinations. It should block the drug at the point where it does the most damage: the brain itself