



The Tears of the Moon
Kadrey, Richard

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About Kadrey:

Richard Kadrey is a novelist, freelance writer, and photographer based in San Francisco. Kadrey's first novel, *Metrophage*, was published in hardcover in 1988 by Victor Gollancz Ltd., and went on to various other American and foreign printings in paperback. Mac Tonnie's *Cyberpunk/Postmodern Book Reviews* calls *Metrophage* "one of the quintessential 1980s cyberpunk novels," going on to describe "a gritty acid-trip through an ultraviolet L.A. where nothing is what it seems... . Alongside novels such as [William Gibson's] *Neuromancer* and Lewis Shiner's debut novel *Frontera*, *Metrophage* helped establish the cyberpunk aesthetic: relentless, paranoid and playfully cynical." Kadrey's second novel, *Kamikaze L'Amour*, is described by the same source as "mesmerizing... a surreal (and distinctly Ballardian) account of synesthesia and mutant desire set in the jungle-choked ruins of L.A." Kadrey's short story *Carbon Copy: Meet the First Human Clone* was filmed as *After Amy*. The publisher website, Amazon booksellers, and other sources list a July 15, 2007 publication date for Kadrey's next book, *Butcher Bird: A Novel Of The Dominion* (Night Shade Books). Other works include collaborative graphic novels and over 50 published short stories. His non-fiction books as a writer and/or editor include *The Catalog of Tomorrow* (Que/TechTV Publishing, 2002), *From Myst to Riven* (Hyperion, 1997), *The Covert Culture Sourcebook* and its sequel (St. Martin's Press, New York, 1993 and 1994); Kadrey also hosted a live interview show on Hotwired in the 1990s called *Covert Culture*. He was an editor at print magazines *Shift* and *Future Sex*, and at online magazines *Signum* and *Stim*. He has published articles about art, culture and technology in publications including *Wired*, *Omni*, *Mondo 2000*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *SF Weekly*, *Ear*, *Artforum*, *ArtByte*, *Bookforum*, *World Art*, *Whole Earth Review*, *Reflex*, *Science Fiction Eye*, and *Interzone*. Source: Wikipedia

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Strands of tough river grass grow through the bottom of the flatboat and up through Friar Vicente's exposed ribs. Piranha and candiru swim through the priest's vacant eyes. He's seen the glories of Spain in her prime and the fall of an empire, but he's been blind for so long now.

He had almost made it back to San Mateo with the stolen gold when the boat sprang a leak and foundered. The local indians had taken the opportunity to pin him with a few arrows. The water closed over Friar Vicente like a long, cold night.

The friar had been there when Pizarro took Atahualpa, the Inca's heathen king, almost a god himself. The Spanish demanded the greatest ransom in human history: A room filled with gold, floor to ceiling. The Incas, rich beyond belief with the stuff, had obliged. For their obedience, Pizarro killed their king. Friar Vicente had pronounced sentence on Atahualpa, and stood by while Pizarro's lieutenant strangled the pagans' monarch. But Friar Vicente's mind was elsewhere. There was so much gold. Even God, who sees everything, wouldn't notice if a little of it went missing.

A crow (or some wretched local species that resembled a crow) called three times as Friar Vicente made his way to the boat. Like Pizarro, he was an ambitious man, a man of the world. Like Pizarro, he had presided over the killing of many heathen Indians. He'd looted their Gods and kings for the glory of his own, and then finally for himself, because each man is, in the end, his own lord and savior. Pizarro had said it himself: "I wish only to serve God and to grow rich, as any man." This is what Friar Vicente kept repeating as he loaded sacks of Atahualpa's ransom into the little flatboat and paddled away from the settlement.

Again, the Friar heard a crow call three times, but he dismissed all fear and his mother's superstitions from his mind. Until the river came up through the deck of the overloaded boat and the first arrow flew. As the Rio Santiago swallowed him, Friar Vicente thought of Jesus, Pizarro, and his mother, and he cursed them all. As much as he'd disappointed them, he'd disappointed himself even more.

Now, the silt shifts around him. One day Friar Vicente will make it back to Spain. It may take a hundred million years and a massive tectonic catastrophe, but the dead are certain in their grim tasks. When the current is just right, Friar Vicente's skeletal arms wave over the sunken gold, as if he is pronouncing a benediction.

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