

pejoratively as "Boogeymen." Most P.S. scholars consider the term unproductive and un-descriptive, yet it is worth acknowledging that Rens appear nonhuman in their movements, gestures, and affects.

One cannot deny the instinctive terror that Rens may elicit upon an initial encounter. The more macabre among us have described this experience as akin to staring death in the face. Though we cannot see their eyes, it is evident that the Rens have had proximity to death. At least this explanation might account for their "talent" for sensing, processing, and absorbing emotional poisons from the air. It is important to clarify, however, that Rens bear no likeness to figures such as the Grim Reaper or the Angel of Death who foreshadow imminent death or total nothingness. The feeling that they elicit is more like an unsettling dip into the uncanny valley. Despite the emotions that Rens might inspire, it is crucial to override such feelings with the knowledge that they may help us better understand the density of potentiality itself.

Other members have described a reaction of "fascinated revulsion" or "abjection." Indeed, it is worth a brief theoretical digression to characterize the experience of Rens as related to Julia Kristeva's concept of "abjection." Unlike Lacan's object of desire (*objet petit a*), which is key to the coordination of desire

by representing the limit of desire (i.e. that which is separable from and lacking for the subject), the "abject" is completely excluded from the symbolic order: it *precedes* representation and desire. As Kristeva explains, the abject is "ejected beyond the scope of the possible, the tolerable, the thinkable" that exists without "a definable object." The abject is not merely otherness. In fact, "The abject has only one quality of the object — that of being opposed to I." Where "otherness" describes something in relation to the self, wherein the self, or the subject, is the organizing principle of the relation, the abject is understood as radically separate. As Kristeva continues, "I endure it, for I imagine that such is the desire of the other. A massive and sudden emergence of uncanniness, which, familiar as it might have been in an opaque and forgotten life, now harries me as radically separate, loathsome. Not me. Not that. But not nothing, either. A 'something' that I do not recognize as a thing. A weight of meaninglessness, about which there is nothing insignificant, and which crushes me. On the edge of nonexistence and hallucination, of a reality that, if I acknowledge it, annihilates me. There, abject and abjection are my safeguards."

All of this theorization of Rens, of course, does not and cannot diminish (or wholly explain away) the fact that they are utterly and irreducibly terrifying.

In another sense, the Rens embody and through their movements seem to reveal something about the production of the experience that is conventionally called "reality" and thus, ultimately, about the parasite. In a psychoanalytic sense, the abject is the intrusion of the trace of the unassimilable Real into consciousness: it involves "coming face to face with an unnamable otherness." Though such otherness can be glossed as mortality, the otherness of the parasite is of a completely different variety. Here, we might productively turn to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's critique of traditional psychoanalysis. In place of the psychoanalytic Oedipal schema of daddy-mommy-me, with its assumption of desire as a lack or a limit set by the so-called "real world," they posit a mode of productive desire via their technique of "schizoanalysis." Remember that Deleuze and Guattari mean that desire is "productive" in the sense that it actually *produces* reality. This understanding of desire is fundamentally different from traditional psychoanalysis. Here, desire is not a natural limit, but a creative occasion for generativity. To desire does not mean that something is lacking, that the object of my desire is absent, but a chance for something new. If we accept that reality can be produced (or more accurately co-produced within affective fields and worlds created by collectives) then the parasite itself might be