



GANTOB 2023:
Kompanion Volume

GANTOB Pamphlet 18: K Faktor

*** STOP THE PRESS – BY ORDER OF THE BENEFAKTOR ***

I am stepping in, temporarily, for GANTOB. She has had a major change in circumstances.

In the meantime, I am putting the brakes on her plan to include a data heavy pamphlet called *K Faktor* in this *Kompanion* volume to GANTOB, the book.

I should introduce myself. I am the funder of GANTOB. You can refer to me as The Benefaktor. I made occasional incognito appearances in the book. I conducted a few of the drops. I developed early ideas with GANTOB, but she then ran with the project. I have given her free rein, except on *K Faktor*.

GANTOB has a thing about numbers. She loves crunching them and putting them in pie charts and various other types of graphs. She has, however, lost her main outlet for such spreadsheet activities. More will probably be revealed by GANTOB in due course. At the moment, GANTOB will talk about nothing else.

Pamphlet 18 will be issued instead in printed form, on a single sheet of A5, over the weekend of the publication of the GANTOB book (23/9/2023). Pamphlet 18 will be produced in an edition of 1. It will include GANTOB's graphs. It will be backed by some explanatory notes from The Benefaktor, which I hope will broaden its appeal. It will be inserted into a spare copy of Bill Drummond's book *\$20,000*, because of all the books I own, that has the biggest number.

Await further announcements.

I will now hand back editorial control to GANTOB.

GANTOB Pamphlet 19: The Lektionary

I have had, it is fair to say, rather a lot of time on my hands recently. I may have to explain further, though at present I do not feel ready. The Benefaktor cannot force me.

I have, voluntarily, started to go to church on Sundays. It seemed the least I could do given recent events. To minimise my fidgeting I have offered to turn pages for the organist Liz.

I do not usually listen to the sermons. However, today Ali¹ (my husband, the minister) talked in more conceptual terms than usual, and less about religion. I preferred this. He referred directly to the lectionary. It struck me that this is simply an example of Kreative Tyranny (see pamphlet 8). In the lectionary, some church bureaucrat in the capital imposes readings from the old and new testaments on their rural flocks. This then guides the choice of hymns and, crucially, the sermon. It frames the topics discussed in that long set piece of the service, the arguments that the minister might present, and also encourages the minister to link this back to both texts. Sometimes there can be contradictory messages in the readings. Sometimes their messages from over two thousand years ago stand in stark contrast to modern principles. Not twenty thousand years of disagreement, but still ancient.

Early on in the process of producing GANTOB (the book) The Benefaktor and I agreed that GANTOB would try to address all four principles of The KLFRS. I have covered these at length in earlier pamphlets.

I think that the GANTOB project has done more than that. It ticks many of the specific biographical characteristics that make the KLF and subsequent solo work so distinctive. My Lektionary of a KLF re-enactment is shown over the page. It is up to you to decide whether the book and this Kompanion have met the set schedule of “worship” from this list.

The pamphlet headings in this booklet have also been set by me, GANTOB, in advance. I did this between instructing The Benefaktor to press the button to send the book to the printer, and receiving the box of books.

¹ Not his real name

KLF/ Drummond/ Cauty category	In GANTOB? (notes/√)
1987	
Ancient	
Bird watching	
Bootlegs	
Chill Out	
Copying/ stealing	
Korrespondence with fans	
Destructive tendencies	
DIY approach	
Fanzines	
Flyposting	
Graffiti	
Inserts	
Loyal following	
Myth building	
Nostalgia	
Odd numbering	
Pamphlets	
Pseudonyms	
Pure Trance	
Reworking the same material	
Sampling	
Scottish connections	
Sheep	
Slippery relationship with past	
Solid State Logic/ Slate Logic	
Small editions	
Space	
Spin offs	
Stadium House (The Trilogy)	
The Manual	
Version control (issues)	
White labels	
White Room	
Wild expeditions	

GANTOB Pamphlet 20: The House Guest

I have a confession to make. I have been economical with the truth. When I have been portraying myself as The Travelling Salesperson for the past few weeks, but not The Travelling Salesman, that has not been quite true. I was laid off at the start of September.

It turns out that when I was down in Kent for my former company's annual meeting, the bureaucrats had sent IT specialists up to my office in an industrial estate in Aviemore, to instal key stroke monitoring software. While keeping my GANTOB writing activities completely separate from my working life (it is difficult to be creative when surrounded by sales literature, the phones, and instant coffee), I *have* been doing some number crunching of my pamphlets. You may have read pamphlet 18, K Faktor, unless The Benefaktor has his way.

After a couple of weeks of surreptitious data entry and Excel calculation during working hours I received a summons from Edinburgh branch, by Zoom. On a Friday afternoon I was interrogated by the head of data security and my counterpart from north-west England. After a bit of rictus fronted small talk, there was a stream of questions. They said they would be in touch, then dialled off.

After a weekend of sweaty office dreams I received an email on Monday morning, addressed in capitals: "YOU'RE NOTICE". Instant dismissal, by the ungrammatical police. They had indeed noticed.

As per the instructions in the email, I packed my few possessions and handed over my laptop and phone to Judith, one of the admin workers. I was not allowed to log on to my laptop to rescue my analytics, so would need to repeat the crude character counts from the last few pamphlets included in the book. I handed my car keys over at accounts, with a couple of signatures required from me in case of any remaining parking fines or speeding tickets. There were no fond farewells. I don't think that we will stay in touch.

After a couple of hours waiting in the bookshop and cafes in Aviemore I hopped onto the bus back to The Manse, rehearsing my excuses to my husband.

Ali was loitering at the front door when I arrived home, and pulled me into the front sitting room, which we rarely use because it is north facing, draughty, and impossible to heat in the winter. He looked sheepish, but questioning, perhaps aware that I was looking shifty in my own right.

“Would you mind rustling up a little extra food tonight?” he asked brusquely. “We have an unexpected house guest, Rev. K_____”, he muttered, finishing on a name that almost knocked me over. It was an unusual surname, and it matched one of the unsuccessful applicants to my Competition.

“Don’t be so formal, darling”, I laughed, “what is the Reverend’s first name?” I knew full well that there was very unlikely to be any other Rev K_____ in the _____ Church in Scotland.

“Just refer to him as Rev please won’t you”, came Ali’s reply. I checked the guest book later to confirm my suspicions. The address matched the GANTOB master list of applicants.

I have worked hard to maintain anonymity for GANTOB in social media messages and email correspondence. I was confident that I had left no GANTOB paraphernalia around The Manse. But who was I to say, given the recent events at work. Had I been careless in other ways? Perhaps my cover was blown. I opted to play it cool and assume that the visiting Reverend had not made the connection. There would be no grapefruit talk, or mention of our recent travels.

Except there was. There was mention of antidepressants at the evening meal, and the disappointment of not being able to drink grapefruit juice. And jealous glances and a bit of googling the following morning before our guest declined the palate cleansing half grapefruit after the Arbroath smokies that my husband insisted on cooking for guests. A vinegary poached egg sat on top, the wobble mimicking the somersaults of my bowels. I was unable to stomach anything that morning, resulting in questioning looks from Ali and Rev K_____. The latter asked me if everything was alright at work.

Had somebody squealed? I ran a mental check of my colleagues and their connections with the church. There were a number of candidates. Scotland is a small place.

Later, when we were alone, my husband, in an uncharacteristic show of emotional intelligence, commented that I seemed to be uncomfortable in the Rev K_____’s company. Was there anything that I wanted to say.

In an attempt at distraction I disclosed the news of my recent change in employment status, phrasing it ambiguously: “A career break, financial downturn , new opportunities after the pandemic”. My husband’s left eyebrow had risen high up his forehead by the time I reached the third

untruth. He is an expert in a narrow range of topics, but untruth is one of them.

I busied myself around the house for the rest of the morning, carefully avoiding being in the same room as my husband or our house guest. After lunch, as the Rev K_____ had made his farewells, I went to change the sheets and towels, cringing at the layer of dust that my husband had left our guest to endure. Ostensibly we are meant to share housework.

As I ran my finger along the dresser, my eye was drawn to a flash of pink poking out from under the lace doily that rested on top. It was a one of my pamphlets – On Anonymity. Inside was a much older sheet, stained and torn. It had a table with a line of numbers and figures along the bottom. It was unmistakably a Rev Finks (Sr) Fringe programme. Or at least part of one. The third panel of the trifold programme had been torn off, just at the fold. The front of the programme placed it from 1982. It was not clear from which performance however, as the day and date would have been on the third panel.

The content was not familiar, but I would have to check my Finks Fringe spreadsheet.

Only some of the text on the remaining two panels of the pamphlet was legible. The longest section, apparently starting from the beginning, read:

“There are powerful forces at work at The Fringe. I shall have to be careful what I write. There is always politics in Edinburgh in August. That is part of the reason I was confident that I would be able to write ten daily programmes for each year that I perform my show. You may well have read the *fringe of The Fringe* reviews of my show. Cheekily, they file the same review each year, which I have to accept is appropriate as I recite the same 7,923 words for each performance, and have committed never to waver from this course.

Anyway, an acquaintance from the past couple of Fringes, who I have come to know better this year from walks on our shared days off (Tuesday and Sunday), has been talking about “The Pit”, as I am compelled to call it to avoid legal difficulties. I knew The Pit from its previous incarnation as a cinema showing Hammer House of Horror and Hitchcock. And I knew of the Victorian architect’s

hubris, aiming to establish a complete block in central Edinburgh as a palace of recreation, performance, and an aquarium. This was to be built adjacent to his pineapple topped residences (these *were* completed and still stand today).

The great entertainment venue was not built to the original plans, and the disappointing substitute was repurposed a number of times, including as a Church headquarters, before being razed to the ground in the 1960s. Now it is hosting Fringe performances under canvas, an echo of the grand plans made by its Victorian champion.

I had sat in the cinema in the mid-1950s watching, I think, *The Quatermass Xperiment* with a few of my fellow divinity students. We felt very disobedient as we watched the aliens creep across the screen in the formerly hallowed halls, having bunked off lectures. We had nabbed the last seats at a matinee, peering crick necked at the screen.

And there the main section ends, with just a few remaining fragments of text legible that I include here for completeness, in the order in which they appear in the smudged pamphlet (the quotation marks are my own, solely to separate out the text).

“like Victor Carroon”

“Ms Frost insists on”

“reminded me of Lomax as he peered around the doorway on what transpired to be stilts”.

It was at this point that I noticed a yellow Post-It note, that had come loose under the doily. It fluttered to the ground, and I bent to pick it up. The following message was scrawled in capitals: “Dearest GANTOB, I thought you would be interested in this, Rev K_____”.

I felt clammy, gorge rising, shutters coming down. I fell backwards, banging my head against the bed. Hearing the clatter my husband ran up the stairs, and after shouting some words I did not register, made motions to take my pulse, feel my brow, and then helped me up. He reached for his Dad’s

pamphlet, obviously surprised. I screwed the Post-It note up in my fist, without him noticing.

And now I am sitting at the family PC, browser open on a jobs website, but typing this up in a window that I can close down if my husband comes in. I have an idea forming and I am keen to put it down on paper before the book arrives from the printer in time for my 23 September deadline.

I challenge you to complete the Finks 1982 programme that you have just read. You will need:

- to type out the boxed text above into a word processor
- a plan for how you want the programme to end
- to work out a way of keeping count, so that you meet the strict character count requirements from the classic Finks programme template (see pamphlet 14, repeated below). You might want to try Excel, using a calculation based on the “len” and “substitute” commands (confirming The Benefactor’s suspicions that I am indeed an Excel bore). Or you might want to do it as a manual tally. I am sure you will find a way.

You need to use all the characters listed, noting the number of capitals and lower-case letters, and numbers. You can use whatever punctuation you require. You can be Kreative with the letters you use. Once completed, and have double checked the character count, please send the text through the usual channels (not a screengrab – I will need the Word/ Excel file or the text cut and pasted into the body of the email). The prize for the first successful entry will be a contribution towards a grapefruit, unless you have contraindications, in which you can name your fruit (within reason).

Character	a/A	b/B	c/C	d/D	e/E	f/F	g/G	h/H	i/I	j/J	k/K	l/L	m/M
Count	460/23	73/6	156/5	275/0	736/4	149/18	129/2	301/12	383/56	7/0	50/4	225/1	187/7
Character	n/N	o/O	p/P	q/Q	r/R	s/S	t/T	u/U	v/V	w/W	x/X	y/Y	z/Z
Count	421/4	429/2	138/1	6/0	400/9	306/4	562/24	157/0	58/1	115/4	3/0	110/0	2/0
Character	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0			
Count	8	5	1	1	0	1	4	4	12	2			

GANTOB Pamphlet 21: The Letter

My husband Ali, a man of the cloth, is very sensitive about the truth. Last night he had a meeting with the Church bureaucracy in Inverness, and stopped off for a pizza with colleagues in Aviemore on the way home, at the roundabout that takes you up to the funicular railway to Cairngorm. He and the Badenoch ministers sat at a table by the front window, watching the cars coming down from the mountain, with their Thule boxes and bikes, queuing behind motorhomes to join the southbound A9. All had their windscreen wipers set to maximum, and it was already almost dark at 7PM. This did nothing to lift the mood of the ministers, despondent after their meeting with the high heid yins. These erstwhile friends were to become competitors as the number of churches was going to be whittled down in closures, forced mergers, and sell offs, starting after a period of consultation and report writing, but likely to be completed by mid-2025.

On the way to the toilet after the meal Ali spotted my former boss (Susan²) and a few of my ex-colleagues. They did not meet Ali's eye as he squeezed between their table and the bar to reach the toilet at the back. On the way back to his table he fell into step with Susan, who had just paid her table's bill. They paused for small talk, circling round news of my "resignation" as my husband called it. "Dismissal", Susan corrected. And the truth was out. A rapid-fire explanation ensued about my time spent on other projects, use of the company car to arrange deliveries, a trip to Folkestone on work time when I should have been attending a session on logistics in Maidstone. Susan counted out my misdemeanours on her fingers and at least one thumb.

It was not a happy reunion when Ali arrived back at The Manse that night. He updated me on the proposed church mergers, before retreating to his study. I sat with my phone, messaging my son, and setting a time for a video call the following night to catch up on his escapades from his first couple of weeks at uni. I was starting to feel a bit more relaxed with him being away, settling into my status as empty nester, albeit with an increasingly tetchy husband.

A message pinged up on my phone. It was from said husband. "Come to my study". With racing pulse, surely audible in the creaking quiet of The Manse,

² Names have been change to protect the boss classes.

I crept along the hall and knocked on his door. “Come”, he shouted, like a summons from a headteacher.

He was standing at his filing cabinet, holding a piece of paper. The light on the mahogany table indicated his required seating arrangements. I pulled out the heavy carved chair and eased myself gingerly onto my uncushioned pew. As he sat down opposite me, in direct confrontation, the positioning of the light and resultant shadows across his face accentuated his fury.

“There are known untruths”, he thundered, “and unknown untruths”.

Despite his obvious distress, I found myself fighting a smirk, grasping for the name of the former US Secretary of Defense. I was not helping the situation.

“I cannot help but think that your twisting of my father’s life story, for your own purposes, has led you here”. He waved the letter in his hand and then slid it across the table for me to read. It was his carbon copy of a letter that he had sent me a year earlier from his last long trip away. The start of a literary adventure that we had both enjoyed greatly.

The letter read:

King's Lynn

23 September 2022

My dearest Gillian³,

I have almost finished packing up father's things, and expect to return to The Manse in the next few days. People have been very kind, and I have had plenty of help from neighbours and some of his bird watcher friends (I refuse to call them twitchers, because it makes me think of Mrs Elder and her famous curtains). I have kept one pair of his binoculars, and some of the framed photos, but have given away most of the albums and the boxes of loose photos to the local bird watchers association. They were delighted that each of the photos was so carefully annotated on the back. I have yet to work out what to do with his stamps (a row of Jubilee commemorative editions and several albums of Finnish stamps).

I sorted through his desk myself. I have done what I could to keep things in order, and we can investigate his Edinburgh files together this winter.

His finances were more of a challenge, until one of the local shopkeepers told me about a service that could help, and I am putting my faith in them making necessary arrangements. I found one letter last week that piqued my curiosity. It was a carbon copy of a letter to literary magazine that I did not know called _____, dated 1987.

³ Names have been changed to protect the demonstrably guilty.

It started:

King's Lynn

15 June 1987

Dear Sirs,

Following your recent call for submissions, please find enclosed a short story titled Brent Goose Rock. It is contained inside the enclosed envelope.

I have taken the rules for your literary competition entirely literally. You asked for 400 words, and I have given you 400 words. You will need to construct the story yourself. I have suggested an order for these words by writing a number on the back of each word.

The first word of a new line is highlighted in grapefruit yellow (or so I am informed by the labelling above the shades on the tin of my daughter's watercolour pencils).

The piece echoes my own low expectations about any of my stories being read by anybody else. I hope that you prove me wrong.

I trust that you enjoy the story and that you see fit to publish it. If you do not, I will just have to hope that the birds, lately of East Anglia, stick together in chevron formation so that the story my wife and I have carefully prepared is discovered.

Yours,

Curt Finks⁴

⁴ Names have been changed to protect the deceased.

Uncharacteristically for my father – a meticulous keeper of records, even if he hardly changed his sermon between locum positions – there was no evidence of the actual story. Either he had posted his only copy to the journal, or it had become separated from this facsimile of his letter, and was now lost.

I decided to try to track down the literary magazine. I drew blanks from internet searches, and the local library was closed. But my father's collection came to the rescue. Filed in his reference section, alongside an index of gift card companies in the UK, and an encyclopaedia of Scandinavian philately, he had a 1986 volume that listed English language literary journals from across the world (published in an edition of 1,000 copies by one of the companies listed).

My father had ticked (in pencil) a few of the entries – all small print runs, strict rules, and addresses suggesting that they were private residences rather than major publishers. I wrote the following note to _____ and a few of the other marked addresses, just in case he had sent submissions to them as well. I included the address of The Manse, Badenoch and my email address and phone number.

16 September 2022

Dear Sir/ Madam, (I wrote)

I am writing about the literary journal _____. I am interested in whether you have a record of a submission that my late father, Curt Finks, made in the mid to late 1980s. I have found evidence that he planned to send you a piece of writing (see copy of letter enclosed). You may have heard of my father from his reputation as a singular performer at the Edinburgh Fringe (strictly speaking the fringe of The Fringe).

I am currently sorting out his affairs, and am living between East Anglia and the Scottish Highlands. If possible, I would be grateful if you could send me a message by email or text.

I was not optimistic about receiving a reply.

However, yesterday, relaxing on a glorious late summer's afternoon, I heard my phone ringing from inside the house. I answered too late, but a few minutes later received an email.

22 September 2022

“Dear Ali,

I am sorry for the delay in replying. I regret that my Mother is unable to write in person, because she does not use a computer. I am pleased to respond on her behalf.

I have not heard of your father’s theatrical activities unfortunately.

My Mother’s journal _____, set up in an attempt to capture the spirit of Bloomsbury in Milton Keynes, only ran for two issues. My mother kept the small number of submissions she received in a folder for many years, but decided to recycle them when my siblings and I left home and my parents downsized. She did keep a few copies of each issue, but I regret that your father’s submission did not appear.

When checking her filing cabinets, however, which I have retained for my own work (and which retain her filing labels), I found a sealed envelope that had slipped between the suspension files. It had your father’s return address written on the back. The envelope was badly crumpled, but I have checked the contents and they appear to my quick inspection to be as your father described in his letter. I have not attempted to follow his instructions, to allow you to have that pleasure. I have taken a photo (attached) and will post the envelope to your Scottish address.

Thank you for your interest in _____.

So, on that note Gillian, I wonder if you could look out for a parcel from Milton Keynes, and place it carefully on my desk when it arrives.

I expect to be departing from King’s Lynn in a few days, and will make a few stops on the way back to Badenoch. I will hopefully speak to you before then.

All my love,

Ali

The parcel did, indeed arrive (more about that later).

That all seems a long time ago. They were the sunny uplands, or as close to them as you can be after one of you has lost a parent. On Ali's return to Badenoch a year ago, leaving the auctioneers to do their worst in King's Lynn, we enjoyed exploring the pieces of Curt Finks' theatrical adventures that he had uncovered. We tracked down more from clues in that material, including discussions with figures from the periphery of The Edinburgh Fringe and their families. We visited the site of the old C&J Brown Furniture Store, above which he did his performances. And we met the nephew of Ms Frost who provided the space for his show in her flat. And a few months later another of the literary journals that Ali had contacted sent us a story about dry stone dykes. Ali thinks, after exploring his father's diaries, that this stems from his time in the Yorkshire Dales as a teenager, or perhaps Sunday cycling down from Edinburgh to the Borders during his August visits.

But I digress. We need to get back to the present, September 2023. Ali stared at me, red eyed, and repeated his earlier points about untruths.

I held his gaze for as long as I could bear, before making an ill-judged comment about truth being stranger than fiction, at which point he stormed out and retreated to the spare room.

The trouble, of course, is that he is right. Though we worked on Curt's archives together, and both had successes in finding out more about his life, Curt was Ali's father, and I should at least have discussed my plans as I incorporated Curt into the GANTOB project. Or stepped back completely to allow him to accept his loss, process his father's effects, and do whatever he had hoped to achieve in remembering his father.

Some of the Finks biography that I shared in The Father-in-Law (Pamphlet 13) is true. He was a minister. He did, obviously, perform in 20 years of Edinburgh Fringes. He achieved some sort of cult following. But the backstory about transatlantic journeys, an island upbringing, life in the highlands, was complete confabulation. And that, I think, explains a large part of Ali's fury (apart from my dishonesty about my dismissal; he didn't seem to mind the reasons for me being fired). To retrieve his father's memory he would have to undo all the fictions that I had generated in my GANTOB myth-building.

Ali would like to have seen an obituary for his father in one of the many ministerial journals that he receives on a monthly or quarterly basis. It would be a double page spread, with pictures of him with his Dad, Curt with

his rather more famous father (once tipped for Moderator), and at least one photo of him out on the fens with his wife Norah, binoculars around both of their necks. It would list, factually, the story of a life largely spent in East Anglia, the Edinburgh Fringe performances, and perhaps the unfinished biography of Sir James Gowans that Ali found recently in an unpromising water-damaged box that he had retrieved from his father's shed just as he was readying to leave King's Lynn for the last time.

So, there we are, two empty nesters, blundering about a house that was designed for a large family, servants, and a generous "surge capacity" for an expected stream of guests. Instead, it is just the two of us, ricocheting around, bickering about the two months where I became a fictional character called GANTOB and took things too far at work and at home, and lost my job. And now, to add insult to injury, Ali's job – and our house – are on the line for reasons outside either of our control.

I have decided to come clean with Ali. We have discussed the GANTOB accounts. All in, I have spent around £1,000. That includes:

- my original books and vinyl;
- the additional copies of books by Bill Drummond (45, Bad Wisdom and \$20,000) and Jimmy Cauty (Cookbooks) that I had to buy to pad out my Kollektion to allow the book drops to extend across the UK;
- postage;
- and the book publishing costs.

Much of this has been covered by the unnamed Benefaktor down south (a Finks aficionado, now in his early 80s, who also coordinated some of the Edinburgh activities during August and arranged the formatting and printing up of the book). He has met Ali, and confirmed my side of the story. We have joked, the three of us, about the number of GANTOBs the KLF/ K Foundation could have bought for their infamous £1 million, adjusting to today's prices (it would be equivalent to 20 GANTOBs). None of us have the energy for repeating the full GANTOB process even one more time, though the Battle of Perth will go ahead in Stirling next August.

I am not returning to sales. I am going to spend a bit of time around The Manse, being a minister's wife, practising my baking, hosting jumble sales and building back relationships between the church and the community, and of course repairing things between Ali and me. I think that we will survive. I will need to use all the techniques that I have developed over the years to sit through my husband's sermons for the foreseeable future, before I can legitimately make my excuses and separate myself from church activities

once again. Meanwhile, I wish I had a GANTOB equivalent, an agony aunt of my own. Maybe one of my work colleagues will jump the fence and visit.

And you? Well, you can piece together one of the two Curt Finks short stories that Ali has tracked down, and which I have recreated in my ample spare time.

If you are the recipient of a numbered copy of the GANTOB Book, you will also have received a sealed envelope. Empty the contents of the envelope onto a tray and follow Curt Finks' rules (see his letter of 15 June 1987 above). The act of unsealing the envelope may be painful for true Kollektors, but that is the choice you make.

If you are the recipient of an un-numbered copy of the book, you will have a sheet of numbers. Keep this face up. Cut out the numbers as neatly as you can. Then put them in order, turning them over to reveal the words (yellow box for new line). Alternatively, you can try to read the story straight off the back of the sheet.

You can debate the value of "art". As an anonymous artist of no previous – or indeed current – reputation, I cannot expect you to see this destroyed "art" as an act of Banksy proportions. But neither have you spent £18,582,000 for the dubious privilege of receiving a copy of GANTOB (the book) and its associated paraphernalia.

If you want to try to bootleg the version of the story included with the numbered version of the book, then you will need to find the correct type of envelope, reproduce the wording and imagery on the envelope, and seal it, ideally with some of my saliva in case the auction house or internet platform insists on DNA analysis.

As a past Kollektor of all things related to The KLF (including remixes of obscure tracks where Jimmy Cauty is mentioned somewhere on the sleeve), I know the temptations of leaving things sealed, unused, to avoid spoiling it, or to retain its value. But having heard Ali's experience of winding up his father's estate, I can now see the folly of my ways.

But perhaps there is a Schrodinger's cat side to all this. The sealed item holds promise, and leaving it sealed avoids disappointment. The story that Curt Finks wrote under the obscure literary journal's own version of Kultural Tyranny is a minor part of the true Curt Finks (with caveats, including the title of the story, which he admits himself is a mis-direction). It may not cast much light on his life or interests – how much can you say in a few hundred words? You won't know unless you reconstruct the story.

And what about the journal? Did they specifically decide not to open the envelope, or did they just forget, put it aside to explore later when they had more time? And why was it not recycled with the rest of their tidy up? Did the promise of the unknown mean that they held it in special regard, or was it just forgotten? The condition of the contents of the package sent to us last year would suggest the latter. But we were not complaining – we were delighted to see this unknown side of Curt’s life.

More importantly, as I discuss with Ali a couple of days later, when we are returning to almost speaking terms, what would have happened to Curt if his geese and dry stone dyke stories had been published and generated interest from a wider audience? Would he have left the ministry, and tried out life as a writer and performer? Well, we can speculate, but it won’t get us very far. It’s a brutal life as a writer, as I can see from the perspective of a recently unemployed person wondering how to apply for Universal Credit, and searching for a modern day equivalent of Curt’s literary journal directory.

I do a circuit of the KLF-related websites that I used to peruse on an almost hourly basis. Three Facebook pages, saved searches on World of Books and eBay, Penkiln Burn and Alimentation. On the latter, there are still copies available of Bill Drummond’s four most recent books, one of which – The Pied Wagtail - was launched over a year ago to mark his residency in Corby. If Drummond can’t sell 400 copies of what is a really good read, then what chance do I have?

So I have kept my own copy of GANTOB the book (I didn’t offer to keep one for Ali), and one reserved in case anybody asks in the future. And you have one of the other 47 copies. I don’t aim any higher than that.

And I am going to keep my head down, melt into the background and take off my GANTOB costume. I have one more pamphlet to write for now, and another planned (but as yet unwritten) in case of crisis. After all, as Michael Rosen wrote recently in a Guardian piece: “Treat yourself. Instead of reading the rest of this article, first go and write down something that’s bothering you ...”.

GANTOB Pamphlet 22: The Red Squirrel

The red squirrel stands confidently on the bird feeder. It does not know it is not meant for squirrels. Her siblings take turns to race up and down the tree trunk, along the branch, leap onto the hillside, hurry behind the heather, and back into the woods where they live.

Our little red squirrel is different. She is not in a perpetual state of rushing. She is looking across the gravel towards the house – what we know as The Manse. She is listening, head cocked. There are sheep protesting in the neighbouring field, answered by cows across the glen, in a form of vocal warfare. The squirrel had half expected unfamiliar sounds.

She samples some of the nuts and bird feed and then scurries down the trunk to explore an unfamiliar object that is sitting a few feet away from the steps to the backdoor, beside the spade and the black bin.

Our squirrel used to be called Blondie by the occupants of The Manse, on account of the colour of her tail. But one day she found herself in a scrap with one of her older brothers. They chased up and down the tree, ignoring gravity, across the drive, between the wheels of the pickup, up the drainpipe, dancing along the unstable guttering, relieved to find the solid slate. Logic dictated that the higher she climbed the safer she would be. A strategic advantage. So she climbed right up to the chimney. But her older, stronger sibling climbed past her, pinned her almost inside the chimney and bit down hard on her tail.

And now she is no longer defined by the colour of her tail, rather by its absence. It seems to have done her no harm, watching her climb, but she misses the comfort of resting it over her feet when it is draughty.

Blondie, as she is still known by GANTOB and Ali, has made it across to the house. She pokes at the curious object that she has found. It rolls a bit further down the slope. She pokes it again. It gathers momentum, racing down the drive in a blur of grapefruit yellow, to cross the little road in front of the manse, and into the ditch, which leads to the River Spey, and from there to the sea. And that is the end of *our* tale.

The GANTOB Kompanion has been created using the rules of Kreative Tyranny.

It takes up where GANTOB The Book left off.

It was produced between sending The Book to the printer on 18 September, and receiving two boxes of The Book on 22 September.

The Kompetion behind her, GANTOB strides out on her own, The KLF part of her backstory, but not her future.

But GANTOB is hiding something.

And a new character, The Benefaktor, is muscling in.

Featuring all new pamphlets, and two new interactive pursuits for Kompetition winners (both KLF themed, despite GANTOB's better instincts).

#GANTOB2023

@gantob2023 on X and Instagram

