



Scripts.com

For No Good Reason

By Unknown

1

I really
thought what I would do
if I ever learned
to draw properly
was I would try to
change the world.
Is this thing working?
Right now, Ralph,
what exactly are we doing here?
It's a very odd idea
to make a movie,
a film, a documentary,
about an artist, say me.
And in one way
it's rather a good idea,
and in another way you
wonder why one is doing it.
Except that it's become
far more personal
as it's developed
into something which really is
about my work and about me.
And I think that
makes it more interesting
because it takes in
the good and the bad.
It takes in all sides,
all dimensions.
It's almost, when you
come down to see us,
we know what
we're going to do,
even though we haven't
planned anything.
We just simply carry on
and if something comes out,
something does,
and sometimes it doesn't.
And so that seems to me
the kind of thing that's
made this all worthwhile.
I haven't seen Ralph since the
signing of Hunter's memorial poster.

It's been a while,
and I've really
been looking forward
to catching up with him in
his studio at Loose Court.
Right.
I'm gonna put a piece
of paper down here.
I don't know why. I think it's
because you're in the room.
Mmm-hmm.
If you weren't here,
I'd be having a lie-down now.
Are you ready for this?
'Cause it might not be very good,
but it might be great, too.

Ooh! DEPP:

I love it.
When I don't
know what to do,
- I do that.
- Mmm.
It's a kind of cheat, in a
way, because you don't know
whether you
did it because
you can't do anything and there
is nothing in your mind,
or you did it because
it might just lead somewhere.
It's fantastic
when that happens.
I can see a horse
in there already.
Wow.
I didn't know what it was
and then I suddenly thought,
"I know what it is."
It's an unloved pet,
and it's a shame
that I drew it, really,
because I don't like it.
It's a horrible-looking

creature.

And if it walked into the
living room, I'd kick it out.

Hmm.

And it's a frame of mind.

All I've done
is made something
that's part of a frame of mind
I might be in at the moment.
What a terrible thing.

It was 1969 when
my first book was published.

Mmm-hmm.

It was a collected works
of all my cartoons
that I had done
since I had
taken it seriously.

That's absolutely amazing.

This was the beginning,
really, the conducted tour,
and the whole idea of
it being The Pioneers,
it's like you're going,
oh, yeah, you know,
we're going off
on a conducted tour
and everything's comfortable.

And they'd just
get off the bus,
look around and
get back on again.

And then I thought of this
when they brought Muzak in.
So I did the picture called
Down at the Old Bull and Bush.

And there's the old
boy with his pint
and then all this Muzak
coming out of the speaker.

Because it was really only just
getting going, all this stuff.

Part of
my idea of humor

was it would be
slightly maniacal.
But there was
an arrogance missing.
There was
a wildness missing.
There was
a rawness missing.
It lacked
that bite I needed,
that real ferocious bite,
the thing that would
make it noticeable.
Still as relevant
today as it was then.
Great. Amazing.
Just incredible.
The reason
I learned to draw
wasn't just to be able to draw and
people say, "Ooh, that's pretty,"
but that I needed to apply
it as a weapon almost.
It was something
quite savage.
People would
see the work
and they would
think about it.
In a way, it was
a wonderful calling card.
I took it with me
to America.
And that was 1970.
Bus for New York City.
Hey, driver, hold up.
I'm trying to get on.
Hold up, man.
AH right Thanks a lot.
(CAR HORN HONKS
My idea was actually to
do a thousand pictures of New York.
Well...
What I was looking

for were things to draw.
New York, skyscrapers
and everything.
It's God's own city, man.
Hey, what's up, man?
Hey, you look fine.
What you trying to make
yourself five bucks for, bro?
Yeah. Hey, hey.
Just run across, man. Just run
across the street. Come on, man.
What it
does for me,
it freezes a moment,
that when
I look back on it,
I think, "Goodness me.
Did that really happen?"
You know,
it's just something
that is frozen in time
and it's gonna change.
Nothing stays the same.
I found it
upsetting seeing all these
vagrant people
wandering the streets
and always
staggering towards you
and grabbing you
by the hand.
And saying,
"Give us a dime, buddy.
"This is a tough city
to get started in."
It's hopeless.
I could never do it.
Yeah.
And I wanted to capture that
sort of look, that face.
I was drawn towards
skid row, I was drawn towards it
as a sort of almost a museum
of misery and deprivation.

And I think this is
a picture of a bum,
and he's hanging
onto a fire hydrant,
and there's a woman saying,
"Why don't you get up
and get yourself a job?"
You know,
that sort of thing.
"You're lyin' about on
the pavement doin' nothin'."
"Oh, leave me alone, lady.
Leave me alone."
I think my experience
in New York
gave me the conviction
that I needed
to make this
the work of my life.
I needed it to reassure myself
that I wasn't wasting my time.
Cartooning meant more to me
than just doing funny pictures.
It meant to change
things for the better.
While I was in New York,
I got a phone call.
Hello?
To go and meet an ex-Hells Angel
who just shaved his head,
Hunter S. Thompson.
Hunter, he always
called you in the middle of the night.

It was always 3:

You knew it was Hunter.
He said, "God damn it."
He always said, "God damn it."
"Uh, gotta go to
the Kentucky Derby."
"Well, it was, like,
Wednesday or Thursday.
Kentucky Derby was Saturday.
I was like,

"Well, okay, you wanna go
to the Kentucky Derby,
we'll go."
He says, "Well, a photographer?"
I said, "We'll find somebody."
So, it was short notice, so I
thought of this guy Ralph Steadman,
who was a British cartoonist
whose work I'd seen many times,
- very evil-minded, twisted kind of guy.
- Mmm-hmm.
And so we dragged him
to Kentucky
and they ended up
going through
this haze of alcohol
and drugs, madness,
and so they became part
of the story themselves.
The next day
was heavy.
With 30 hours to post time,
I had no press credentials,
and according to
the sports editor
of the Louisville
Courier-Journal,
no hope at all
of getting any.
Worse, I needed two sets.
One for myself
and another
for Ralph Steadman,
the English illustrator who was
coming all the way from London
to do some derby drawings.
AH I knew about him was that this was
his first visit to the United States,
and the more I pondered that
fact, the more it gave me fear.
Would he bear up under
the heinous culture shock
of being lifted
out of London

and plunged into a drunken mob
scene at the Kentucky Derby?
We had to find
each other, as it were.
Oh, God. Where is he?
Eventually, I heard this
voice behind me saying,
"Excuse me.
"Uh, are you...
Are you Ralph Steadman?"
He said, uh,
"Would you like a drink?"
Anyway, we went on
this binge for a week.
I was making notes
and drawing.
Hunter said,
"It's a filthy habit
"you've got there,
scribbling dark pictures.
"And around these parts
that's an insult."
He said,
"I've got a horrible feeling
"we're gonna have
to get out of here."
From that point on,
the weekend
became a vicious
drunken nightmare.
We both went
completely to pieces,
and since poor Steadman had no choice
but to take what came his way,
he was subjected to
shock after shock.
We sort of went
along with whatever happened,
and we'd made
that agreement
with ourselves, you know,
between each other.
"That's what we do. We just
go and see what happens."

"I'll do the drawings,
you write," you know?
So that became
the beginning of Gonzo.
Now, looking down
from the press box,
I pointed to the huge grassy
meadow enclosed by the track.
"That whole thing," I said,
"will be jammed with people,
"50,000 or so, most of
them staggering drunk.
"It's a fantastic scene,
thousands of people fainting,
"crying, copulating,
trampling each other
"and fighting with
broken whiskey bottles."
I think what he saw,
in our connection, was
somebody that somehow
saw the thing in pictures as
he saw it in words, you know.
And that seemed to me to be part
of the whole chemistry of it,
that our chemistry there
made Gonzo possible.
"What I'm trying to find,"
he said, Hunter,
"is a certain kind
of Kentucky face,
"the face of
the Kentucky Derby."
And the point is that
by the end of the week,
the very face
we were looking for
was us looking back
at ourselves in the mirror.
I don't recognize
anyone anymore.
Yeah. Ah.
What I in fact had done,
without realizing it,

was scored
a bull's-eye first time...

Yeah.

...on my first
visit to America.

I mean, I met up
with the one man
I needed to meet
in all the world,
in the whole of America,
to work with.

Yeah.

I got very depressed when I got
back on the plane to England,
because I was going
to have to go back
to a completely conventional
cartoon job.

And that really didn't fill
me with much happiness.

Let's go, Beanie.

Now, take it easy.

A bit... Ever so free.

A phone call
came and it was Hunter.

"Ralph,
I've got this manuscript.

"Could you do us
a dozen drawings
"of something that
could go with it?"

"Well," I said, "I'll try."

And I just, uh,
set about it.

Got myself
some booze as well,
'cause I seemed to need to be a
bit drunk to do it, you know.

I did about
a dozen drawings,
rolled them up in a tube
and sent them off.

"We were somewhere around Barstow
on the edge of the desert

"when the drugs
began to take hold.
"I remember
saying something like,
"'I feel a bit light-headed.
Maybe you should drive.'
"And suddenly there was a
terrible roar all around us
"and the sky was full of
what looked like huge bats,
"all swooping and screeching
and diving around the car,
"which was going
about 100 miles an hour
"with the top down
to Las Vegas."
When Fear and
Loathing in Las Vegas came out,
I think people
were stunned by it.
I mean, nobody had really
seen anything like that.
It was
a full-out celebration of
the most outrageous
kind of behavior,
and then it was so...
Funny and dangerous
and eccentric and wild.
Looks like it's gonna be a classic
of 20th century literature.
So you're down on the
main floor playing blackjack
and the stakes
are getting high.
When suddenly
you chance to look up
and there,
right smack above your head,
is a half-naked
14-year-old girl
being chased through the air
by a snarling Wolverine,
which is suddenly

locked in a death battle
with two
silver-painted Polacks,
who come swinging down
from opposite balconies
and meet in mid-air
on the Wolverines neck.
And no one had seen
anything like this before,
certainly not in
American illustration.
And the pictures really
weren't about the story,
but they were
a reflection of the story,
of what was
in Hunter's mind.
The casino scene, with all
the lizards, the hitchhiker...
I mean, those things
just have a life of their own,
because they're accompanied
by all this literature with it
and whole stories that go
with each illustration,
or, uh, illustrations to
go with each story,
depending on which
point of view you take.
I wanted to get
it out of my system.
It was something that was just
lying there waiting to erupt.
So it was a bit
like being sick.
I threw the pictures down
and they worked because they
were about something specific,
but they allowed me
a complete freedom to do...
It was as though
I was there.
Are we marking?
Do you feel like your lack of

drug-taking ever affected,
had an effect on your
relationship with Hunter?
No, no, in fact,
it was better that way.
It was better that we were
like chalk and cheese.
I mean, the whole idea of me being
like him would have been ridiculous.
Hunter, it's me!
Because he was
someone entirely different.
We didn't necessarily
see eye to eye.
We had entirely different
experiences of life.
And to him I was weird,
and to me he was weird.
Nice to see you.
Can I get some water?
Right, you ready?
Okay.
Wow. I like that.
Did you get that?
Great.
Oh, dear.
I like that one.
Well, this is
cartridge paper.
It's a good-quality,
very thick cartridge paper.
And, uh, this is Indian ink.
Mmm-hmm.
I like a brush...
For that kind of a stroke,
I couldn't have done it with
this one, for instance,
which is less weight.
But it might do something,
and it's lovely.
I love it,
what it does.
And I might do
another one down there.

And the way I flick, you just
simply have a flick of the wrist,
which is a sort of a proper
semicircle, in a way.
And then I've got
this here, you know,
and I could take
some of this and go...
Then I could, for instance...
An eye in there.
And I like the idea
of an eye in there
and a sense of some face
that's happening there.
Hmm.
And I blow like so.
And things happen.
What are you
doing right now?
Well, I'm pulling away the gesso
from underneath the color.
I think perhaps, you know,
art is just tricks, really.
In a way, I don't know
what there is there.
I mean, it's only a...
It started out as a
blank sheet of paper
and it's become
more than that.
There's an event
going on in there.
Yeah.
That's rather nice.
Take Francis Bacon.
He always seemed to manage to make
his pictures look like an event,
even though they
were not necessarily
specifically of somebody.
But he brought
excitement into an area
that was apparently,
at first glance, nothing.

And I found that to be
pretty amazing, really.
Do you make any use of preliminary
studies or sketches of any sort?
Yes, I do.
But after that, chance and what
I call accident takes over,
when consciously I don't
know what I'm doing.
At that moment,
I'm thinking of nothing
but how hopeless and impossible
this thing is to achieve.
Suddenly there comes something
which your instinct seizes on
as being for
a moment the thing
by which it could
begin to develop.
What that is,
in fact, is stop-out.
If I blow more color
over that, then I rub it,
and it pulls this stuff
off with the color
and leaves the paper
still where it was.
So I'll just do this.
But also I'm worried about
going too far with that
and completely
losing it, you know.
Sure.
I'd like to leave it
for a bit, I think.
The most, uh, enigmatic
and inquiring artist
that ever lived
would be Rembrandt,
who took it upon
himself to do
self-portrait
after self-portrait
in the process

of getting older.
It was the most
undecorative idea,
taking yourself
and watching
yourself grow old,
and give us an animation
of his aging
in beautiful paintings,
great self-portraits.
It was the most scintillating
intellectual exercise
that one could imagine.
Now what I'm gonna do is,
'cause on there, there's all
this lovely masking fluid,
and this is the only thing
that will take it off,
- which is masking fluid gone solid.
- Mmm.

Ooh, what's
underneath there?
And this coming out now.
You're watching this?
Some sort of
substantial sort of...

Wow.
...place exists
beyond the skyline.
I find this funny, because even
amongst all the great details,
there's precision
in your work,
but you're still very,
very playful.

Well, it's 'cause I'm
not very professional.

Ah.
I don't go out of
my way to be professional.
I go out of my way to
try and make something
that, uh, is as unexpected to me
as it is to anyone else, you know?

That's perfect.
I think,
most importantly,
Picasso has been the
biggest influence of all,
because of his continuing
persistent creative daily life.
The way he made his life into the
reason for his living every day.
And it gave me a purpose, too,
in a strange kind of way,
and a sense of, "God, is there
anything on that piece of paper?"
"Anything can be there."
And Picasso proved it day after
day after day after day.
He convinced me that
the thing I can do is
simply start a drawing
and it will come out
the other end somehow.
And I won't know how it's
going to come out completely,
but that's the fascination.
That makes it
a worthwhile pursuit.
If I knew what was going to
happen before I started,
what would be
the point of doing it?
If you surprise
yourself still,
you really could
have a good trip.
Well, the phone rang.
"Ralph, this is Hunter."
"So they seem to have liked
the Kentucky Derby piece
"and they want us to do
something else, you know.
"They want us
to go to Zaire
"and cover
the Ali/Foreman fight,

"the Rumble
in the Jungle."
So I said, "Yes, Hunter, I think
that would be very nice."

Wow.

I flew from London
and I arrived in Zaire,
and the first thing I noticed
when I got off the plane
was the blanket of heat.

The first thing Hunter did
was to go out
and buy himself
a massive bag of grass.
And I thought to myself,
"I'm not gonna enjoy this."

The phone rang
and it was Hunter.

"Ralph,
got a great story.

"Cover the America's Cup
in Rhode island."

And I said, "Well, I don't
really like boats."

So when we got there,
the weather was so bad,
the race was off.

I got a call from him.

"Ralph, this is Hunter here."

"How do you feel about
doing another story?"

Sorry.

"Dr. Hunter S. Thompson,
"care of General Delivery,
Woody Creek, Colorado,
"it was May 23, 1980."

"Dear Hunter,
"we would like you to cover
the Honolulu Marathon."

"We will pay all expenses
and an excellent fee."

"Think about it. This is a
good chance for a vacation."

Hmm, feels nice.

And the idea was
Hunter and I would
come out of the chocks,
"shoulder to shoulder,"
as he put it, you know,
and run as fast as hell,
obviously leaving people behind.
And a truck would pick us up and take
us the rest of the way, you see.

MUHAMMAD ALI:

Foreman, I will bruise him up.
If I don't knock him out,
I will cut him all up.
Nicks and cuts
all over his face.
On the eighth floor
of the intercontinental,
George Foreman would go
walking with the dog.
I came up
with another idea.
Why don't we go in
amongst the two boats,
the Gretel
and the Intrepid,
and I write something,
with a spray can,
on the side of
one of the boats?
He said, "What are
you gonna write, Ralph?"
I said, "Well, I thought of
writing 'Fuck the Pope.'"
And we waited for the people who
were by this time knackered.
Then we'd be
there to jeer.
"Run, you bastard, run!"
we would shout.
They went, "You filthy buggers!
No sportsmanship in you."
We'd gone there to
screw the race up.

It's an awful thing
to do.
I mean, this is the
mean face of Gonzo.
Hunter said, "Are you ready
for this?" I said, "Yes."
And you know when you take a
spray can, you have to shake it.
And there's a little ball,
so you've got this,
"Click, click, click..."
I heard somebody say, "What are
you guys doing down there?"
And Hunter said,
"God, pigs."
"We've failed.
We must flee."
And he brought
out Leary flares,
which you only use in times of
distress in the middle of an ocean,
which he set off
in the harbor,
and some of them fell onto
boats and that caused mayhem.
I said to Hunter, "When are
we going to the fight?"
"We're not, Ralph. I sold
the tickets." "What?"
He went down to the pool,
threw the grass into the pool
and dived straight into it.
We couldn't go
and see the fight.
The only way I could go
and see it was on television,
which I did in the bar.
The moment
the fight was over,
everybody just wanted
to get out of Zaire.
"We must get out of here.
We must flee."
It's a good way to do stuff,

for no good reason.
Another
of Hunter's phrases.
"Why are we doing this, Hunter?"
"For no good reason, Ralph."
What I seem to have become
is a kind of visual chronicler
of a part of Hunter.
I had personified him.
That was like
a comic character.
He'd got a cigarette holder. Had to
have it. It was part of the outfit.
And he had all those things
and I gave them all to him.
'Cause he didn't
like the idea
that anyone was going
to outwit him in any way,
you know,
that he would...
He's in charge. He's the writer.
I'm just an artist.
I'm Edward.
He has a bird called Edward,
such a marvelous character...
I think Hunter
tormented it,
but I think there was
a kind of two-way affection
or something going on.
Edward, talk to me. No?
Hunter would use it, I
think, to bounce off, you know.
He'd use it as a kind
of victim, you know,
something to
bring into the story
and how he was
feeling about it,
who was the bird.
I suppose at some point I, in a
way, became the bird, you know.
Now.

Now we're going
to talk, Edward.
Speak to me. Yes.
I feel like Edward
sometimes, in a situation,
I feel absolutely
taken apart,
as though he's had a whole session
of talking to me, you know,
holding me like a bird and I'm
trying to bite my way out of it.
And that was
our relationship, actually.
It was ill-treatment, you
know, that he gave me.
Speak up, Edward, speak up.
Speak up! Talk to me!
He could be an
absolute son of a bitch, you know,
and, um, left me
sometimes in a right state.
The basis of Ralph
and Hunter's friendship
was that they saw kindred
spirits in each other.
I think that the
difference was that
Hunter realized that Ralph
was crazier than him.
Ralph was willing
to go to extremes
that Hunter
was not willing to,
and you'd think Hunter would be
the one who was the, you know,
more outrageous
and reckless
and the one who would go out
on a limb on something.
But Ralph was the one
who'd actually go there.
I'm not talking
about physical safety.
But I'm talking about

sort of, you know,
mental, moral,
philosophical,
take a chance
with your own work.

I think

America is where
all that was going wrong in
the world was being nurtured.

Blast the hell out
of North Vietnam...

- Do you agree?

- Absolutely.

If anything,
before the election,
we're gonna bomb more,
believe me.

It seemed to me
they needed attacking.

It was something that
absolutely had to be done.

So it had fallen
to me to do this.

It was my duty
to change the world.

I'd always thought I wanted
to change the world.

Now was the moment.

Ralph was willing to
say anything about anybody.

I mean, his moral
sensitivity was affronted
and he would

just say so,
he wouldn't stop.

And thus in
a certain sense insane,
willing to, you know, go to the
limits of what was appropriate,
beyond the limits of what was
appropriate and what was sanity,
and dangerous
in that way.

Because people have gotta know

whether or not their president's a crook.

Well, I'm not a crook.

I had found my voice and

I wasn't at all afraid anymore.

I was going to

use it as a weapon.

One continually

lives in hope

and that you

are coming along

as a sort of knight

in shining armor

and you're going

to do your best.

In a way, you're being

rather self-righteous.

But be proud of the fact that

you are attempting to put right

what really is wrong.

Since then Steadman

has gone back and forth,

contributing regularly to the

pages of Rolling Stone magazine,

recording some of the

significant political events

and personalities

of American life.

His output is prolific.

He even writes Rolling Stone's

occasional gardening column.

Yeah,

I wanted to write.

Oh, really?

And having Hunter

saying to me, "Don't write, Ralph.

"You'll bring shame on

your family." (DEPP LAUGHS

That spurred me on and I

thought, "No, bugger you."

She's my love

She's my life

It's really such a pity that

she's someone else's wife

She's my love...

Thank you for ringing.
Pm not here at the moment.
I'm busy writing a book and
I'll ring you later. Thanks.
I need a couple of drinks,
actually, to start on this, really do.
What is the time now,
by the way?

12:

Right.

The task I set myself
was filled with such challenge
that I feared the very
touching of the wall.

At times I was overcome
with desperate fear
and dared not mar the
whiteness there before me.

And I began to paint upon the
wall itself on 6th June, 1505,
at the stroke
of the 13th hour.

At the moment of putting
the brush upon the wall,
the skies darkened and the
bells started to toll.

Leonardo DA

Vinci was a genius.

In fact,

Sigmund Freud said

he was the man who
woke up in the dark.

I thought, "Am I knowledgeable
enough to know anything

"about such a man
as Leonardo DA Vinci?"

There must be

loads of people around
who have done books
about Leonardo DA Vinci.

And I found there were
more than

most people have

ever been written about.
So how can I possibly write
a book that was different?
How many books have
you read about Leonardo?
I suppose I've
been through about 50,
and I'm none the wiser.
I don't know a damn thing.
About halfway through
I suddenly thought,
"What if I call myself
'I, Leonardo?'"
And so I became Leonardo.
It was 16th
of December, 1982.
The angle for my book
on Leonardo DA Vinci.
I would write it
in the first person.
I would look
through his eyes.
Only I will know
what it felt like.
No experts can tell me.
This allows me
artistic license
and affords me the luxury
of telling my life story
without ail the doubt that accompanies
most biographies about me.
The reason I chose
Leonardo as a subject
was because of
something he said,
that genius was the
capacity for taking pains.
In a way I recognized
something of me in him,
that I was trying hard to be
something rather special.
And that's not
swanky-ing about it.
It's just trying

to do something
as definitively
as I possibly could
that served the purpose
it was intended to serve.
He was fascinated
by why things worked
and how interrelated
they all were.
Everything that he
designed and invented
were the result of thinking
about life itself.
I think the most significant
thing that Leonardo did,
that makes him
so special,
was that he came
out with something
that probably other
people had dreamed of,
and that was how to fly.
I devised
a simple flying harness
whereby myself, or someone who
might fit the harness willingly,
would soar out
from some eminence.
The parachute
invented by Leonardo
would have been, you know, a triangular...
Like a pyramid.
But then he came out with a cleverer
idea, which was the glider.
It flies,
but I don't.
You know, I learned a lot from him.
I learned a lot from...
This is how
I got an education.
I didn't have an education
before I started doing stuff.
And, you know, I mean,
I left school with zilch.

Yeah.

I went to

Abergele Grammar School.

The headmaster's name
was D.B. Jones.

Uh, he was such
a sweet, gentle man.

After D.B. Jones, uh, retired,
we got a new headmaster,
Dr. Hubert Hughes.

He took over and authority
became very important for him,
and caning boys.

My head is down because,
in a peculiar way,
I felt that school
was in some ways

a rather
authoritative process.

And that's when
I coined a phrase which was,

"Authority is
the mask of violence."

I can't stand bullies,
and there have

been so many of them
and they've been always
in positions of power.

I'm afraid I find that
frankly unforgivable.

The desire to shock is also a way
of getting back at authority.

That idea that,
"Righto, you owe me."

You scared the living
daylights out of me as a kid
with your awful way of dealing
with children and school.

I was trying to hurt the thing
that hurt me, if you like.

It's the key to opening the door
into my dark spirit inside...

Mmm-hmm.

...and out comes

the drawing that
some people call vicious
and all sorts of other names,
or perceptive even.

Sure.

It's like a filter
somewhere inside me
that lets it through
and onto paper,
and the anger is expressed.

It doesn't matter that
I'm pleasant one minute
and then I'm suddenly
vitriolic the next.

They go together.

It's perfect.

Well, this is a little
booklet I put together
to celebrate
the 50th anniversary
of the Universal Declaration
of Human Rights.

And so it's introduced
and illustrated by me.

Article 1.

All human beings
are born free
and equal in
dignity and rights.

They are endowed with
reason and conscience
and should act towards one another
in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2.

Everyone is entitled to
all the rights and freedoms
set forth
in this declaration.

Article 3.

Everyone has
the right to life,
liberty and
security of person.

Article 4. No one shall be

held in slavery or servitude.

Article 5. No one shall be
subject to torture or cruel...

Article 6. Everyone has the
right to recognition everywhere
as a person before the law.

Article 7.

All are equal
before the law
and are entitled
without any discrimination...

Nothing in
this declaration
may be interpreted as
implying for any state,
any right to engage in any
activity or to perform any act
aimed at the destruction...

People actually had the
balls, had the foresight,
had the understanding
of human nature,
to say, "We don't just talk about it.
We write it down."

Then we remind ourselves
of what human rights are.

What I'll try to
do is draw things
because I'm angry at these people
who are cheated and swindled.

That's who my enemy is.

That's my object,
the object of my protest.

I just wanted to
be taken seriously
as an artist who was
doing serious cartoons.

The age of miracles.

A pocket-sized, folding,
electronically controlled,
motor-driven, single-lens
reflex camera
that quite simply
does the impossible.

Come a bit closer.
Focus. Train.
Touch the
electric button...
And the impossible
happens.
In minutes, you have a finished
photograph of dazzling beauty.
That is the Polaroid
SX-70 experience.
Yeah, that's better.
- Ready?
- Yeah.
It worked.
There's no film in it.
I wanna do it again.
Yes.
In 1996,
I published *With Nails*,
which was a compilation
of film diaries,
and I wanted, um...
the fly covers on the inside of
the book, the back and the front.
I thought it'd be
a good idea
as Ralph was
so emblematic to *Withnail*.
I asked Ralph if he could come
up with a drawing or some idea.
And he said, "Oh, come down
and, uh, we'll do paranoids."
He took pictures of
well-known people,
or characters like Bela
Lugosi or John Travolta,
and then would
stick them on my face.
That one worked.
Yeah.
Okay, we're onto
something now.
Now, let me play with
these ones for a minute.

And then work on the
Polaroid when it was still warm
and fiddle around so that the
two images melded together.
They're directly on the...
Done onto the film.
Onto the film.
While it's still...
While it's still...
I was after
getting the real person
and then doing
something to it.
I was actually trying to get
a good picture of somebody,
then distorting it,
to look like
one of my drawings.
it was the essence
of my work
to distort and yet
maintain the likeness.
I thought, this is great, so I
just fiddled with each one I did,
and made that happen, made them
move in an expressive way.
And I thought, "Well, that speaks
to me as my kind of drawing."
That's what I like,
you know.
So I started doing them of the
Queen and, uh, Princess Di.
And that was Fergie, which I
thought, "That's coming out well."
And I thought,
"I've got a book here."
So I did a book of it.
Anyway, they all came out
like that,
and there was one,
and it's this one.
We were at the Jerome
Hotel in Aspen,
and there was

a sort of reception
and David Hockney had
been invited as well.
And then I saw
David in the bar.
So I went up behind him,
had the camera ready,
and I said, "David."
And he turned round like that
and I went "Click, bash!"
And the thing
hit him, you see.
And he said, "It won't
come out, you know."
Goddamn know-all.
It came out as one
of the best, actually.
Can I pick it up?
Does this
sound distorted to you?
Okeydoke.
The war file...
One more time.
Sorry, Ralph.
The war file, 1963, 2003.
I protest,
I protest, I protest,
I protest vehemently
against the war.
I protest vehemently
against the war.
I'm seeking out every drawing
I've done since the '60s,
which in one way
or another displays
the irony of our
crass stupidity.
I will miss some things.
There are so many.
I know nothing
will be solved,
but I do it for my
sanity and world peace.
Our leaders are mindless,

arrogant and insane.
The thing
about Ralph's work is
it was just the energy,
the anger,
the venom that
was just spewed out,
and that's what I loved.
I wish I'd had that kind of ability
to explode like Ralph does
and still control it
at the same time.
The problem with protest is
we were the protesters
and we got old
and we got tired.
We screamed and shouted and we did
change the world to some degree,
but not as much
as we'd like.
And that leads
to depression
and a sort of sense
of semi-impotence,
which I think after a while
begins to just wear you down.
You realize that you
did make these changes
and you see a new generation
of people coming up
who are the beneficiaries of
a lot of the noise we made,
and they don't give a damn,
they don't give a toss.
They're into shopping.
So it gets very hard
to know what to do with this.
Ralph can't stop.
I don't think I can stop.
We'll go to our graves
shouting and screaming and making noise
and nobody will listen.
To John Dillinger
and I hope he is still alive.

Thanksgiving Day,
November 28th, 1986.
Thanks for the wild turkey
and the passenger pigeons
destined to be shit out
through wholesome
American guts.
Thanks for a continent
to despoil and poison.
Thanks for Indians to provide a
modicum of challenge and danger.
Thanks for vast herds
of bison to kill and skin,
leaving
the carcasses to rot.
Thanks for bounties
on wolves and coyotes.
Thanks for the American Dream
to vulgarize and falsify.
Like 1987, '88,
around then,
I was asked to do these records
with William Burroughs,
and that was so connected to
the world of Hunter and Ralph.
And, of course, Ralph adored
this when he heard it.
He liked the beginning
and the montage.
You know, it was all
these worlds meeting.
Thanks for "Kill
a Queer for Christ" stickers.
Thanks for laboratory AIDS.
Thanks for prohibition
and the war against drugs.
Thanks for
a country where nobody
is allowed to mind
his own business.
Thanks
for a nation of finks.
Yes, thanks for
all the memories.

All right,
let's see your arms.
You always were a headache
and you always were a bore.
Thanks for the last
and greatest betrayal
of the last and
greatest of human dreams.
'Cause that type of writing,
that type of drawing,
is very admirable to me,
'cause in an odd way it's what we're
thinking at the back of our heads
but aren't capable
of getting it out.
These guys have
the kind of minds that
that comes out of them.
I mean, look at Ralph
as a person.
You never met
a warmer, generous...
He is not his paintings.
I don't know.
Everything's here
except the guns.
Guns?
Everything's
here except the guns.
He can hardly walk.
Yeah.
They must be in the car.
We found a spot where he
does his shooting. He likes to shoot.
And that's where
we set up the target.
Six.
When it stays open,
it's empty, see?
Yeah. Right.
Understand?
Yes.
Okay.
Just about.

Wow.
So he comes forward
and he was quite trembly
by this time and...
Two, three, four,
five, six, seven.
Here I go.
And he goes...
Bam! Bam! Barn! Bam! Bam! Bam!
Empties six rounds,
you see, like that.
There,
you cut his head off.
I said, "Well, William,
you've missed," you know.
They all went through his neck, you see.
So he said...
He's dead, man.
One of the privileges
working with Hunter
and William Burroughs was
they were perverse
in many ways
and yet incredibly honest.
I think what
attracted me to them
was the fact that
they were honest writers,
writing about real things
that they
actually experienced.
So in some ways one would say
they were journalist-writers.
Hmm.
They wrote about
what happened to them.
Yeah.
Isn't it awful?
It's awful.
And look how I look, as though
I'm, you know, in control.
Exactly.
And I'm not.
How many copies

of this got out?
About four million.
Oh, no, no, no, no, no.
Christ, he always puts me
down in this terrible way.
I'm shutting this off for a
minute 'cause I'm pissed off.
So, Ralph, was that the last
time you saw Hunter, at Owl Farm?
Yes, that was the last time. That was...
That was October...
September, October, 2004.
I had one blowup
today in my pants, and this is
- another blowup!
- Stop it.
So you keep doing it...
Stop it.
Don't do that. STEADMAN:
Please don't shout about it.
Well, I don't come into your house
and copy all your fucking drawings
and then take them out
and run away with me, do I?
I'm not doing that.
Go on! Fucking well do
something, for Christ's sake!
You miserable son of a bitch. What
the hell are you trying to do?
Sitting here in
this goddamn place!
I think
Ralph loved Hunter
and was hoping that Hunter would
be something he couldn't be,
a little more responsible
and a little more careful
and a little more generous.
Day one. The English
artist Ralph Steadman
sets off with a BBC film
crew for Aspen, Colorado,
to meet an old friend.
The inner meaning of the

commentary was so great.
It was like, you know,
jealous brothers,
or partners like Keith and
Mick or something like that,
that just, you know,
was gonna blow apart.
What I had
presented myself as
was a ready answer
to all your problems.
And I took it quite readily, and
that's why you illustrated the book.
It wasn't the only reason,
Hunter. It wasn't the only reason.
No one would have noticed it had
it not been for my illustrations.
No one.
What you're saying,
Ralph, is that
Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas
would not have been a...
The success it was.
...a success if it hadn't
been illustrated by you?
Yeah. Yeah, absolutely.
Yeah, that's the story,
in fact.
The story that was never told
was the story of my resentment,
my burning
desperate resentment.
That explains a lot,
doesn't it?
Yeah.
I think in Hunter's
heart, he loved Ralph.
Ralph was
a brother to Hunter.
Uh, and they were two
wonderful characters
and they had a great
collaboration and friendship.
But sometimes those things

tend to break apart,
especially when you've got
irascible personalities
and particularly
when you have, you know,
Hunter's, you know, problem
with drink and drugs.
You don't care?
I do care, actually.
You know that, Hunter,
but it's been
a fucking hard ride
for all sorts of reasons.
Who do you wanna beat on?
Oh, for fuck's sake.
Hang on. I'm gonna
stop this thing now,
'cause I can't
talk to you like this.
Yeah, you get out of here.
What?
I'm starting to feel queer.
Oh, Christ.
He just realized
this was the death of fun.
There was no more fun.
And the idea of going into
an old people's home,
Hunter S. Thompson in
an old people's home,
can you imagine?
And he said, "I can't bear
the idea, Ralph.
"I've got this awful
image in my mind of
"me sitting there
strapped into the wheelchair."
They'd
have to strap him in.
Couldn't keep
him in it.
They'd strap him
in the wheelchair.
And he couldn't move.

And he could see out of
the corner of his eye,
there was an old crone
and she was crawling
across the floor towards him,
and he knew, instinctively,
she was going to
fondle his balls.

His wife, Anita, went
off to the health club
and she rang and said,
"Hi, honey."

And then there was
a certain faraway sound,
as though she wasn't
necessarily up to the phone,
when he put the gun in his
mouth and pulled the trigger.
And that was it.

Now, his son thought
he heard a book drop.

'Cause it goes like that.
Quite ironic, really,
when you think.

Yeah.

Yeah, well, it was kind
of that. He sort of...

The way I... Same thing, the
way I came to terms with it
was that this was
a man who dictated
the way he was
gonna live his life.

He was most certainly gonna
dictate the way he left.

Yeah.

And he did, you know.

He did exactly
that, yeah.

So...

It's sad, really.

Very.

I did love Hunter
and I miss him quite a lot.

Uh...

Rather a lot, actually.

Because he took away, when he
did what he did to himself,
he took with him

the raison d'tre for the
kind of work we did together.

It wasn't gonna happen again.

It was the finality of it
that perhaps is the most
shocking part for me.

Because that's what
happens to everything.

It disappears eventually.

JOE PETROL A lot of people
want a piece of Ralph's art,
and Ralph holds onto
most of his originals,
because he just does
not want to let them go.

And this way somebody can get a
piece of Ralph's original artwork.

Yeah, they are original.

Each one is an original.

And each one's an original because
I sign each one separately
and number it
out of an edition.

So that becomes the edition,
and the edition can be worth
quite a lot of money.

I'm a printmaker
and we sell prints
to, you know, Ralph's
collectors all over the world.

It gives me
a feeling of hope that,
you know,

I can keep the original
and I can still make money.

But I don't think that
it's good for me, in a way.

Because it
represses my spirit,

my natural spirit,
to just do another drawing.
And I think there's
something about that
which perhaps I don't like,
the idea that I'm not only
gonna sign this once
and then maybe twice,
or do the same drawing twice,
I'm gonna sign 800 of them.
Gonzo will not die.
Ralph continues to
keep Hunter alive
and Hunter
keeps Ralph alive.
- You know, the two together.
- Mmm-hmm. Yeah.
There's
the sunshine coming in.
Right.
It's coming through?
Mmm-hmm.
Testing, testing.
One, two, three, four.
So, Ralph,
how you doing?
Uh, I don't know.
I'm feeling a bit down,
I think, really, somehow.
Yeah.
Uh, apprehensive, anxious.
And I just don't know what...
It's partly to do with
getting older, you know.
You don't know how...
How long it goes on.
And, I don't know, I woke up
in the middle of the night
and needed
to go to the loo
and felt...
I don't know, I think I
felt slightly meaningless.
That's the problem,

I find,
that things are a little bit
on the meaningless side.
And why was I ever bothered
to do anything about it?
Sure.
Why did I ever try
to change the world?
But it was, uh...
It was something to do, you
know, change the world.
I left Ralph's
with my mind reeling from
the sheer volume of
a lifetime's ideas and images,
uplifted and inspired by an artist's
efforts to change the world.
Look, you
know, you've come here
asking me this and asking me
that, asking me everything else.
And as I go through things,
I suddenly realize
I've done
too much in my life.
Really, what was
the point of all that?
There is no need
to do any more
and yet I probably
may do some more,
and I don't really
think it's a good idea
because you become a polluter,
you know, a visual polluter.
How about that?
And I still haven't
proved that I'm an artist.
Somehow I'm a cartoonist
to some, and that's...
The cartoonist.
It's amazing to see an artist
as they jump into the unknown,
commit to the impossible.

Make no mistake, Ralph.
You are an inspiration.
For no good reason.
Is that all right?
Perfect, yes.