

*D.V. Thurman, a wayward reporter of the paranormal, sets out to investigate the disappearance of a famed monster hunter. Instead, Thurman runs afoul of the murderous factions of Southern Ohio's most dysfunctional paranormal society.*

**D.V. Thurman, Cryptid Hunter:  
A Probed Magazine Special Issue (and other strange tales)**  
By Eric C. Prichard

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**A SPECIAL ISSUE OF  
*PROBED* MAGAZINE**

**and Other Strange Tales**

**A Novella and Two Short Stories**

**ERIC C. PRICHARD**

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## Chapter I: My Name is D.V. Thurman

My name is not D.V. Thurman. D.V. Thurman is my byline. I thought it sounded like Hunter S. Thompson. I'm not gonna lie here. I wanted to be Hunter S. Thompson. And Jack Kerouac. And Kurt Vonnegut. I don't want to tell you what my real name is. It's not important. For the purposes of this book, I am D.V. Thurman, Hunter S. Thompson wannabe.

Are you worried your kid is going to be an English major? You should be. I'm exhibit A. You see, everything I write is fucking derivative. I make my living retelling the same 6 stories about paranormal beings. And I do so in a faux gonzo style that is, well, derivative. I get it. I have been told my entire life my writing is derivative.

Not my entire life. When I went to Algonquin High in Kingsfjord, MN, my 10th-grade English teacher said I could be a writer. During the summer before the school year, I read the good Dr. (though, not a real Dr.) Thompson's account of getting the shit kicked out of him by the Hell's Angels. Then I moved on to a book full of fear and loathing he did for Rolling Stone. He feared and loathed a lot. At the Kentucky Derby. On the campaign trail in '72. I gonzoed the shit out of all of my papers in 10th grade. In retrospect, everything I wrote was probably shit. I was 16. It was bound to be shit. But it was probably more interesting than the shit Mr. Edgerton had to read from the other 10th graders. So, he encouraged me to be a writer. Asshole.

That sounds harsh. I know. But he ruined my life. I majored in creative writing at the University of Minnesota. I graduated with a 2.79. At one point, a professor pulled me aside and said I should consider another career or major. My work was derivative. I told him to fuck himself. He gave me a C. He was a good guy, not like Mr. Edgerton.

At 23, I got my degree in stuff I was not that good at, so I went about trying to get work. I gonzoed the FUCK out of everything. I feared and loathed like a motherfucker. I wrote three failed quasi-autobiographical novels in which I greatly embellished the amount of debauchery I participated in growing up. I tried for the classic counterculture magazines. Rolling Stone told me I was derivative. I got a job at a local Kingsfjord newspaper. I got fired for being obscene. The 70-year-old conservative Christian millionaire's widow gone mad with editorial power called me into her office to fire me personally.

"As a follower of Jesus Christ, I cannot endorse the language you use to write your stories," she said.

"Didn't your Fuhrer Orange Julius Caesar brag about grabbing pussies?" I asked. It was a fair question. She ignored it.

"Also, your work is kind of derivative. I mean, it's got a faux *Fear and Loathing* vibe. Maybe a little, 'I used to get high and reread *On the Road* after college breakups,' too."

"You don't know me!" I protested. She knew me pretty well. Good for her. So my ass got fired!!! This was what, '17 or '18? My wife dumped my ass too. I was married for a year around then. College girlfriend. I used to drink and smoke and rave all the time. Not at her. Just about society in general. It was still a lot. She was sweet. She tried to save our marriage. One day, she told me, "I love you, but this is a lot." I told her it was part of my creative process. She was gone the next day. I don't blame her. I got high and read *On the Road*.

I'm not coming across as super likable in this, am I? It's hard to connect with a protagonist with no redeeming qualities. But stay with me!!! Do you know who Joseph Campbell is? I learned about it in a class I got a D in. He mapped out the hero's journey. It was half pseudoscientific Jungian horseshit, but it was also based on his reading of actual folktales across cultures. And there was something to it! You see, the hero starts off as a fuckwad. Then, the hero gets a call to adventure, which the hero does not exactly want to answer. At some point, they

enter the dark abyss of the other side. A hidden world is revealed, and they must transverse the darkness. They get supernatural help. Sometimes, the help comes from a wise man with extraordinary abilities. This is called the Senex. Obi-Wan Kenobi and Gandalf are senexes. My senex was a talking porcupine.

You see, I went through a journey too. I saw the vale lifted and walked through the darkness man. And a talking porcupine told me how to get to the other side. I have been renewed. I am like a Phoenix! Reborn! I have to share my tale with the world.

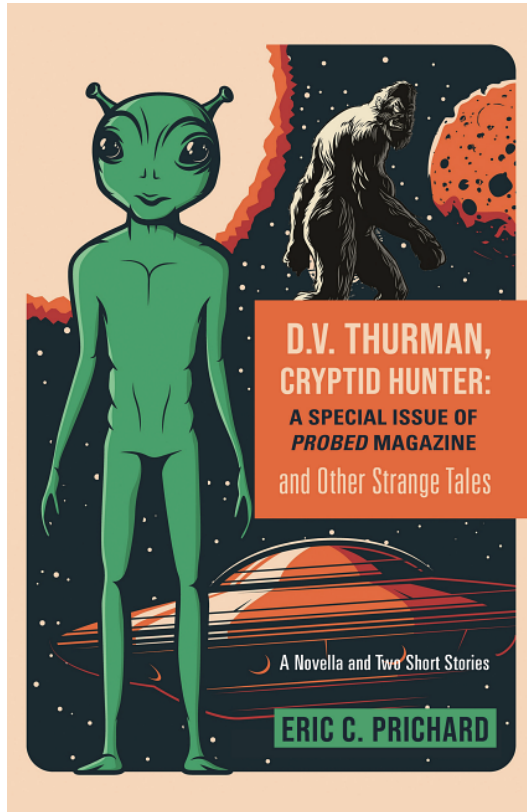
Why, you might ask? Because I was on the road to Damascus, and I saw the fucking light. And in the light was a porcupine who showed me the way. And you can find the way, too. I also learned the truth. What truth? The truth about all kinds of fucking things. Hold your horses. There will be a lot of truth-telling. Revelations aplenty. But what would be the point of a story if I just gave you the revelations up front? Plus, I have a character arc. I mean, I could just say I am a better person and whatever on this page. But it's unearned. You haven't been through the journey with me.

I should say a few words about myself. I'm 5'8". I went to Minnesota and got a degree in writing. Most of the time, I wore a fedora during this story. I wore it like a douchebag. As for more specifics, I'll not say. You might think it's lazy, but follow me here. You know I had a wife, so you might be assuming I am a man. I could be. I could be a lesbian, too. I could be of any ethnicity or race. D.V. Thurman is a pen name. You don't know anything from it. And maybe it is my real name, after all. Is "D" for Dennis or Dortha? You don't know.

Why am I doing this? It might be insufferable. But I need you to be WITH me. We're going on this journey together. Whatever you need me to be in order to stay with it, I need you to project that onto me. I am your blank slate. I am your vehicle. We are heading towards porcupine revelations together. Ride me. That came out wrong. Never mind. Look, there is a principle used in video games and novels where the protagonist is bland as hell. That's because if the main character

doesn't have a personality, you can impose your own on them. Then, there is something at stake! You can vicariously ride Joseph Campbell's Ferris wheel of a derivative plot to the protagonist's rebirth.

Enough grandiosity for now. We aren't reborn yet. It's late 2018, and we need a fucking job. I mean, we need to make rent. And nobody who pays wants my stories. Nobody who doesn't pay wants my stories. I'm scouring and scouring boards, begging friends in editorial jobs, and sending blind inquiries. A website called [highstrangeness.net](http://highstrangeness.net) is offering \$100 for 500 to 1000 word "true" stories. I've been high, and I am strange, so I take a look, and it's all about cryptids and UFOs (or UAPs, as the circle jerk of paranormal investigators call them). I don't know shit about any of this. I cannot believe they have any money to pay. But I'm desperate, so I read a few articles and think of the time I was at a party back in my hometown during summer break from college, and this girl got fucked up on LSD or something and kept asking us to make the mean banana shut up. This is what I came up with:



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