



HOW LOW

by
Carl Shuker

with a new foreword by the author



the depleted forest one



Fig 1.

in, her bruised eyes, and kept drinking. Next to her ambassador was dense with strength and responsibility, casually dabbed notes on clearly unrelated matter napkin, his forehead resting on two thick forefingers. Windows desktop projected on the wall, the clinking stainless crockery. James watched her, when the ambassador was distracted by his notes, sit back in her chair and somehow physically recede just a mere millimeter. She shrank from some professional extension, uttered slightly. Her watched her bruised eyes, the bubbles softly reddened. She had yawned. "I was invited to conference in Hawaii," the speaker said. He was an English specialist in the ice ages, talked reserved microfossils, the Russians drilling to the bottom of the ice sheet at Vostok in the cold war "just to see they could," ice bubbles millions of years old mapped out.

Fig 2.

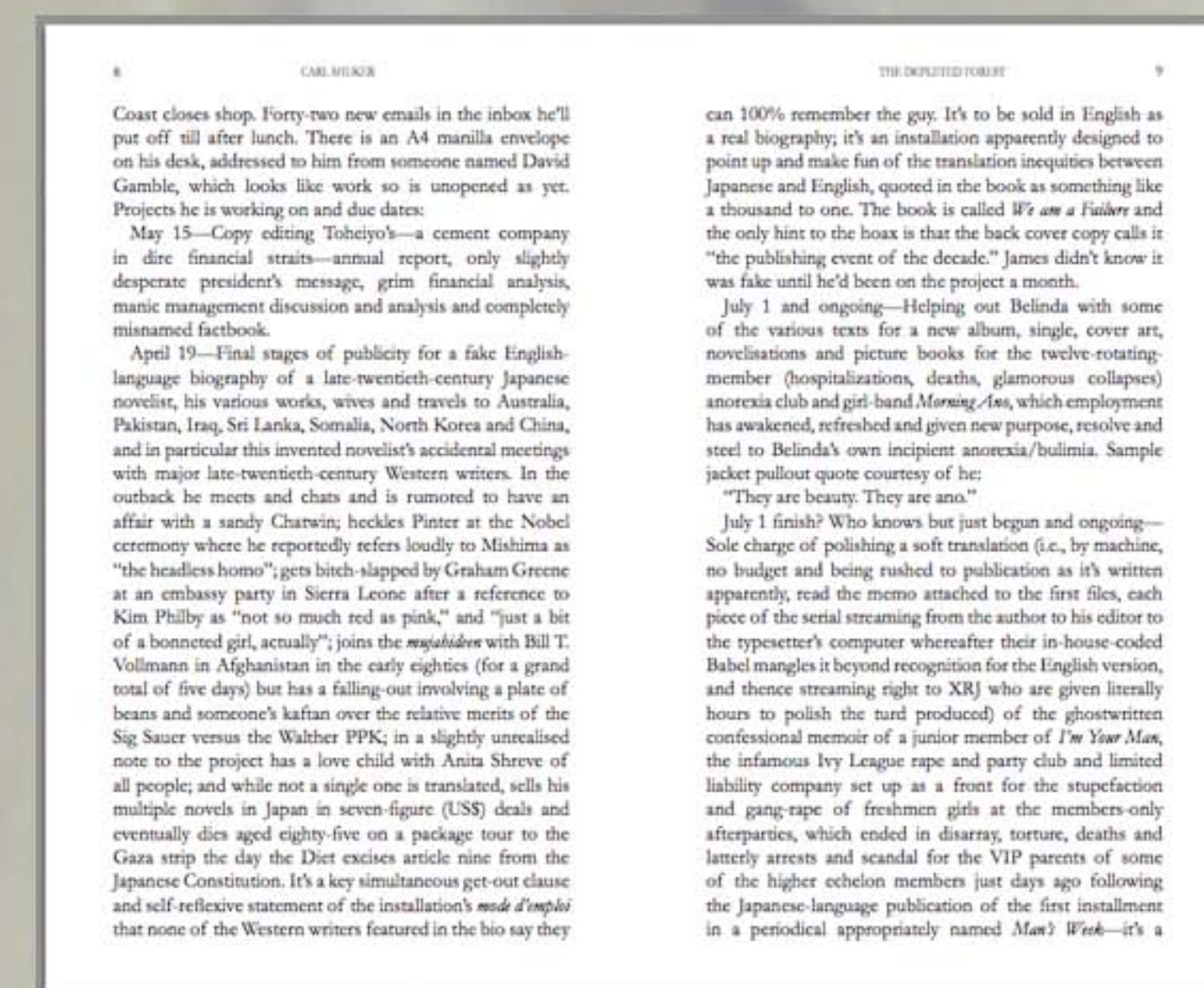


Fig 3.

In which editor James Ballard, working in the concrete-cancer-riddled Tokyo of the near future, has a crisis over beating his Japanese mistress... To escape or resolve his confusion he rents a prostitute and heads to the hinterlands of Mount Fuji for a weekend of escapist sex, hippies and organic food amidst the remains of Aokigahara, the depleted floating "Sea of Trees". But unwelcome memories intrude, as do the consequences of the cancer wiping out the Japanese skyline. And Ballard has a letter waiting for him - someone very dangerous knows what he is doing to his mistress, and he begins to realise the story he is currently editing, of a boy named "Spoil the Child" and his terrific vengeance, may be his own story, and his undoing...

beau mot plage three

In which our narrator, a young and very pregnant American woman working as a model in Tokyo stops off in London with her Japanese film professor husband, en route to the Cannes film festival. Bored with Breillat, she leaves her husband to his conference on transgressive cinema and heads to France, but at Nice airport she will have an accident that will leave her in Cannes during the festival a year later with no child and no memory of what happened, let alone how it came to be that she has money, a luxurious apartment prone to strange events (burned evidence in the armoire, footsteps above her, a child's voice at a locked and sealed internal door) that give ominous clues as to what may have occurred...

Innocently, the amnesiac heads out to the film festival taking over the town, a festival to which James Ballard, who has dreamed her accident, and a twelve-year-old boy with revenge on his mind, seek attendance...

Praise

"The book is something really amazing, something like a modern classic. I tread carefully over the world masterpiece; still, it's what I felt when I read it."
—CS Leigh, director of *PROCESS* (2005) feat. Beatrice Dalle

"It's difficult to convey here the thrill of Shuker's writing, with its up-to-the-minute feel, its endless audacity, and its constant area denial of the reader's comfort zone. Every moment of apparent clarity is only the prelude to another tumble over the edge, leaving the reader scrabbling for a grip on Shuker's twisted plotlines.

"Few recent local novels can have demanded so little investment from readers' pockets and so much from their minds. Anyone unwilling to spend some quality time decoding *Three Novellas* may as well not bother – which is, in fact, one of its chief attractions to the serious reader. Disregard the digital presentation if you wish: with its defiant difficulty, sly ambition and writing more than sharp enough to live up to its own hype, *Three Novellas* is an event regardless, and a rare pleasure for fans of truly innovative fiction."
—Sam Finnemore, *The Listener*

A "brainy horror experiment ..."
—The *San Francisco Bay Guardian*

"...a dense and trippy and highly atmospheric fever-dream of a tale, told in the style of a David Lynch movie or perhaps a David Mitchell book, a story you don't read so much as you ingest ... Shuker is simply brilliant at both story and detail, with *the depleted forest* easily able to hold its own against such similarly dense near-future authors as Charles Stross and Jeff Vandermeer ..."
—Chicago Center for Literature and Photography

ebook for Kindle, iPad, iPhone and all mobile devices
with a new foreword and glossary by the author