

REBIRTH IN THE AFTERLIFE

© 2026 Barry Cussel

All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means – electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise – without the prior written permission of the author.

First edition: 2026

Design and layout: Barrydoor Uitgeverij

Printing: Bookmundo

Contact: <https://www.barrydoor.nl>

Barry Cussel

REBIRTH
IN
THE AFTERLIFE



BARRYDOOR
UITGEVERIJ

This novel is dedicated to my beloved wife Teddy, who gave me our wonderful daughter Nina – a daughter of whom I am endlessly proud.

Barry Cussel

Barry Cussel's debut novel is a bold and captivating work born from his fascination with reincarnation. At only 38 years old, he created an entirely original universe—almost unheard-of in the Netherlands at the time—in which the deepest secrets of the human soul are uncovered through advanced technology and hypnotic experimentation.

In a Dutch scientific laboratory, a groundbreaking computer program is developed that allows hypnosis specialists to make a person's hidden past visible. The memories of a married couple who volunteer for the experiment unfold across large monitors—layer after layer of their previous lives revealed, even as the truth edges dangerously close to their very existence.

Cussel follows their souls through countless incarnations, from prehistoric times to the modern era. The two first appear as Boa and Anaconda in their earliest, primitive forms; later as a Dutch count and a remarkable beauty who protects the Low Countries from the terrifying scourge of the “flying bats.” Their path carries them into early American history, where they emerge as a French hitman and an irresistible prostitute, ultimately leading to their darkest reincarnations as prominent figures within Hitler's Third Reich.

The result is a novel that plays with time, identity, and the mysterious riddle of existence. Cussel blends history, fantasy, and psychology into a story that doesn't just read—it resonates, offering a rare adventure within Dutch literature and joyfully stretching the boundaries of its genre.

Part 1

Count William de Mall kneeled by the tender body of the beauty. The devilish power that her eyes emanated was directed to a broad slit in his armour. The unprotected part of his neck, savoury pink, had filled the opening. Her look contained the domineering bloodthirsty demand of an insatiable vampire, a spasm of her perfectly formed body, despairing in its finality.

For him that look was both destructive and longed for. He had to restrain himself or else the desires of the flesh would reduce his plan to dust and ashes. She was famous by the name of Xynthia, the name of the floating disaster that befell on the lowlands of the Netherlands back in the past, but also the name of a black tulip, carrying the flavour of beauty and death. The year was 1640.

“With this look in your eyes you can achieve almost anything, Xynthia, but don’t forget that the soul of a damned man like me is totally mine and always will be”, the Count said in a voice that sounded unbelievable to himself, then he felt with treacherously trembling fingers the black-haired woman’s silky knee.

“Face the truth, Count. You have always belonged to me - the beauty snapped and weaving around his heavy armour went for his neck.

Only then he perceived the change in the expression of her face and in the form of her teeth. Xynthia was infected by the “flying bat”. The disease that you can catch only if you can survive the Ritual.

Before the King gave him the order to investigate this mystery the Count had asked himself whether all this was possible. A disease that transfers the body into a flying bat-like reptile with sharp fangs, sucking the blood of its enemies. There was a rumour also that it went Beyond and came back again to the world of the living people.

But it was too late now...

Xynthia's two already hollow murderous teeth pierced the Count's naked vulnerable neck. At the beginning he felt a strange warm pain, then, as if in a dream, everything whirled and he was deliriously happy. He had never experienced before such a passionate and enchanting feeling. Like most mortals he, too, saw in his dreams almost every night nightmares and scenes of his last moments of this damned cruel life, but now... now he did not want this to end.

He realized this was really happening only when he felt his pulse slowing down very quickly. Sounds, he never knew existed, echoed in his head.

The beauty's teeth went deeper in his soft flesh and she drank his blood with the same passion with which she made love before with the same person who was now her victim.

It was nearly midnight and in these lowlands, situated below the sea level, the nights were almost always gloomy and transparently gray. The room they were in was on one of the floors of a castle already collapsing. From outside the smell of stagnant waters came, in which malaria mosquitoes and other revolting stuff breed. The opening through which the stale air came, was built of mossy stone blocks. At this opening the creature, of which a lot of rumours and curses were told, was already sitting and waiting for the Ritual.

Half a man and half a mummy with barely perceivable smile around the slit that might be called a mouth, he was enjoying itself with obvious hunger and desire to participate. But he knew Xynthia well enough. Although she was a rookie, the ugly freak guessed she would be quite firm in performing the Ritual, moreover when a former lover participated in it.

“What are you staring at, Aaron, aren’t you glad that you made me a “flying bat” and through me acquired power over the Flock?”, the stunning beauty hissed through her bloody lips. “Go away. Let me finish my job.”

“Ah, do you think I’m gonna believe you?”, said the creature, called by her Aaron, and twitched his slit-mouth. “With this savoury mouthful of a knight.”

The Count heard these words as muted humming, coming from the bowels of the earth, mixed with the soft sounds of unfamiliar magic music.

The Ritual. He had heard from his latest love conquest that this was the transition, the beginning of a new existence of human flesh. Anyone who got infected with the “flying bat” acquired eternal life but was damned by mortals, because he survived on the reserves, hidden in their souls. Of course, the transition demanded blood first and only then the soul was consumed, but when and how that would happen the Count de Mall was yet to discover.

Some time ago the Count was known to mortals in the lowlands as a domineering but just knight, besides his long wavy hair had swept the laps of both princesses and he was supposed to be the father of more than one illegitimate royal brat. People loved him because he was not afraid of the common incomprehensible and therefore ominous

invasions of a disease or of an enemy. He had always been the first among the knights, the King's right hand, who alone dared to challenge authority and stand for the people. Women often whispered among themselves that as a sign of gratitude even chaste ladies were ready to contemplate from close distance his charming curls.

The previous autumn one of them was Xynthia, the Black Tulip of the Netherlands. She had a perfect body with long slim thighs and breasts, that made every man tremble with desire and acquiesce to any insanity, her hair was more black than the darkest night that ever existed in the lowlands. Barely twenty years of age she was famous all over and there was hardly a young man who had not possessed her in his dreams. But she was treacherous with everyone of her lovers. After she left hem, there was almost always a handsome youth who either died or lost his mind with sorrow for her. Only William sustained... but not for long. One year after the last love orgy with her he was facing destruction.

"Xynthia", the Count whispered almost inaudibly. "Don't suck all of me, please! Leave me be!"

"'Please', did you really say that, Count de Mall? Don't make me laugh. You are mine and mine alone, and always will be because that's how I want it and that's how the Flock wants it" the beauty whispered hoarsely, her neck already changing and becoming long as that of a lizard. "Are you ready for the Ritual?"

The throbbing pain in the Count's neck became stronger and from the ruptured artery the blood still gushed.

Aaron's ugly mouth was already wide open and rotten remains from his previous victim were pouring out.

"Xynthia, if you make a wrong step in the Ritual , you are to bid farewell to the Flock and your life!" he gurgled in his loathsome voice. "Don't even think of postponing or repetition. Now, try to reach with the tip of your tongue the main nerve. It is situated at the top of his skull cavity.

The Count felt disturbance rising in him, he was stunned with confusion, even fear that someone was going to see his soul naked and vulnerable.

"Stop it! Don't let them do it! They want me and someone is already reaching me!" the Count heard his own soul's faint whisper. He had never before heard any inner voices and was scared. He thought he was losing his mind and going insane. So far he had thought of himself as a whole creature, possessing unity of soul and body, identified himself with his soul and believed it to be a projection of his mind and will. But now it was talking to him. It begged him to save it from anyone's touch. But who and how could do that?

Part 2

These logical thoughts were passing through the Count's mind as a flow of questions and he was not able to do anything, feeling paralyzed with the loss of blood and with something which he only felt now. It was a slim sting that was finding its way inside his head and was coming out of Xynthia's bloody and still unbelievably beautiful lips. Her tongue was as if split into two sharp thin threads and was forcing itself inside the cavity of his skull. In her eyes the knight could see his own image - pale as the sail of a ship, ready to depart. It was as if he himself was departing on a journey that he had never experienced before - an unearthly journey.

"I've reached it, Aaron! And it is so beautiful that I might not be able to bear its dazzling glamour..." Xynthia made her communication to Aaron rather by telepathy. The flush of the air stream from her throat, encased in a long lizard's neck, escaped in the empty stinking hall.

"Just tell it not to be scared and caress it gently with the tip of your tongue. Try it!" the half-mummy advised her mildly. "And then, take it!"

"It is so tender, and glowing, and afraid", Xynthia said. "How can I take it?"

"Do you love him?" Aaron snapped.

"Yes! He was the only one who could make me happy. It was only he who could bring me to madness with ecstasy but I never told him that", the beauty confessed, pressing her nipple to the male power of the Count, that was now

naked from the armour. Her breast had not yet begun to transform into scaly skin.

“Then don’t hurt it. Just try to consume some of its reserves that you can touch only if it allows you”, Aaron went on. “If not, you are anyway obliged to do it in the name of the Flock. Be careful, Xynthia, now is the time to prove yourself!”

The Count was aware of all this and wondered how it was possible for such strange things to happen that were inconsistent with every earthly explanation. And to happen to him, to his soul, which, he already knew it, existed within him as an independent creation.

Then the soul spoke again only now it was calmer.

“She still loves you and will probably spare me, however she will take something from me, from my reserves, which you, people, never use, only you to a certain extent, so me and you both will hurt terribly. Prepare yourself!”

And he felt the piercing pain deep in his brain. He felt also the gentle caress of the tongue which was now long, since Xynthia’s transformation into a “flying bat” was advancing.

“Flying bat”. This comparison was based on the form of the transforming body of a newly-recruited bat, that had already passed the Ritual.

The changing beauty was an exact reflection of the process but it was also different with her for there were two categories of “flying bats” - the beautiful and the rest of them. And because she was gorgeous as an earthly woman she was becoming even more beautiful as a bat.

After absorbing part of the reserve her perfectly formed figure was visibly transformed into an even more brilliant new body of precise and beautiful forms. First her neck, getting away from the Count's pierced throat was covered with a layer of silver scales and fluffy matter. Then her skull acquired the form of an oval egg, with long silky threads attached to its rear. The arms, embracing the Count turned into light but extremely strong bat wings. The only difference was that they were shaped as the fern leaves of ancient times. The fingers remained the same, only got iron strength and silver colour. The breasts sprawled, their profile became strong and muscular and they were covered with soft silky hair. The face preserved its fine features but the eyes were elongated and shaped as almonds. The transformation was completed.

"Are you satisfied, Aaron?" came the song-like sound from the delicate newly-formed lips of the lady-bat.

"More than satisfied. Look at you, you became the finest creature in the whole universe, Xynthia!" the creature, reciprocal in charm, observing her from the stone window, exclaimed with obvious pleasure.

"To undergo such a perfect transformation means that you have taken his soul!" Aaron declared and added more to himself: "You did great, my rookie."

"Actually she misled him", the soul whispered to William so softly that only he could hear it. "She only took from the reserve, which you had developed so well, and that made her transformation possible. She did it for you because she loves you more than herself, more than the Flock even.

The Count de Mall began realizing what had happened but the loss of blood in his almost lifeless body affected his mind, greatly slowing down his thinking.

Part 3

On the outside he was absolutely dead. With his head, tilted to one side, lacerated neck and bloody armour he seemed like a corpse... but it was not so.

Aaron, who, in the meantime, also got some satisfaction from the Ritual, spread his long bat arms and embraced Xynthia.

“You have now your first soul in stock, dear, and became more beautiful than Gabrielle. You will be my eternal Glory!”

But Xynthia had other thoughts on her mind, she just had to wait, to cheat him and to take the Count for herself. Only how?

She had secretly heard how it was done and she would try but it might cost her everything she had achieved so far, because she lacked experience. She only knew about the cocoon - that it was filled with a mixture of the person's blood, of infected blood, and of a share of soul reserve, and was covered with skin from the stomach.

“Aaron, we must go back to the Flock. They are all waiting for us there for the taking off and without you it can't be done, can it, my dear?”, Xynthia said already separating secretly some of the elastic skin from her stomach. “And did you think how we should do it with Gabrielle...”, she went on, unnoticeably filling the cocoon with blood from her ruptured vein.

“Shut up! That's none of your business”, Aaron snapped obviously not pleased with the change of subject. Then he murmured, more to himself: “You have a long way to go till

you become a Glory. Do you have any idea how many souls Gabrielle has in stock? A lot! Yet, your beauty dazzles me so...”

The cocoon was ready, but how could she push a soul in it and leave it in such a way that the Count would know what to do? Only Aaron could help and she obviously had to avail of her experience as a mortal when she drove young men crazy. Extortion!? ‘If you won’t, then I...!’

“Aaron, I can see that you are attached to Gabrielle. Then I could be Frank’s Glory. He is your deputy and I like his looks, when he is not in a period, of course.”

She skillfully leaned on his shoulder and looked straight into his distorted elongated eyes. The freak gave up before the challenging remark, climbed again to the window and turning back his slimy revolting face said spitefully:

“ I’ll wait for you in the Flock. Find your way by yourself. But Frank... no. I’m begging you about that only! You have some time left till dawn to find the way and bury your Count. Dig a hole for him somewhere. Your fingers are strong as iron, it should not take much time.

“Aaron, but how should I dispose of the Count’s soul? How can I help myself to it?” Xynthia asked in an almost trembling humble voice.

“You can always touch the skull cavity with the tip of the thin sting through the main artery. It is there, but don’t consume it for now, because it is in a trance and could escape you. And, beware, if that happens you will be finished in the morning.”

So she got what she wanted from Aaron.

From the hissing air stream, caused by Aaron's bat wings she guessed that she was free from him at last and that he was already in the air, flying back to the Flock.

Xynthia had to put everything in order, because it was already getting light outside and during this hour she had until dawn she had to do the seemingly impossible. The Count lay lifeless on the stone floor but the weak stream of air coming out of his nostrils proved that he was still alive. It was lucky for Xynthia that Aaron did not notice it. But what should she do next? Time was advancing.

The cocoon was in her hands. She placed it by the burning candle that was almost gone now and took a quill and a piece of paper. The description did not take much time but it was adequate enough to instruct the Count what to do if he made it to noon-time. Then the sting of her tail ruptured the blood vessel on her neck and advanced towards the cavity. The transformed woman had never had a look there and she was now interested to see her own soul, humbly residing next to the part of William's soul.

Xynthia had heard about all that in the Flock, however she had never thought that her soul was still so meek and gentle.

"You did not know about me, you had no idea that I was in you to develop from your experience and feelings, had you?", her soul whispered.

The beauty-bat was confused but strong enough to ask how she could take the part of the soul of her beloved William that was already placed inside her.

"That cannot save him, only part of me can do the miracle", the gentle voice was heard again. "Take some of

me, do not be afraid! We will both hurt but that is the only way.”

The cocoon was ready and the bat-like fairy opened her lovely wings, descending from the tall tower of the castle.

Part 4

“I think he is coming to consciousness. Hurry up, Dr. Raidsma!”, Liset whispered and with a soft movement of her hands made a circle around the head of the man who lay within the sphere.

“It was remarkable, Liset. Now we have to complete smoothly the transition to reality”, the Doctor said almost triumphantly, switching the restoring device, inbuilt in the sphere, to the extreme degree.

Liset was the most famous ESP woman and hypnotist in the West during the last years of the century. Along with Dr. Raidsma -the brilliant psychiatrist from the newly created Dutch Center for Computer Hypnosis, lately they were the hottest stuff for the European newspapers. The theory on which they worked was almost completed and the desired proofs would come very soon. Now the most important thing was to be done - to bring back to reality the volunteer Peter.

Peter, a naturalized Dutchman of Bulgarian origin, had immigrated years ago with his wife and their five-year old girl Nina.

He was the perfect “guinea pig” according to the duo, applying scientific hypnosis, because the preliminary tests demonstrated that in his previous existence he was an inhabitant of ancient Netherlands. They wanted to find out whether Peter who spoke Dutch with an East European accent would react in fluent Dutch in his reincarnations and trips with the sphere “Liset-Raidsma”. And not only that. There were, of course, many secrets that had to be revealed.

The sphere was the last invention of the mighty concern “Philips” and comprised a computer with a power of more than a million mega-bytes, plus a powerful wave transformer.

Naturally, this sphere could be managed only by extremely talented experts. Raidsma and Liset were the top in their field.

Alexandra, the wife of the “guinea pig” was pressing hard her elegant snakeskin purse and peeping through the glass of the camera. A strong distress appeared in her expression after Liset’s last move.

He was to return from a place he had never visited before and had not even dared think possible. To return from the Beyond.

The theory “Liset-Raidsma” contained a heap of illogical for normal science suggestions and statements. Two years ago they stunned the world by curing severely ill AIDS patients after applying a computer program combined with their skill to enter brains through hypnosis.

Before them this was not achieved even by the greatest expert in the field of hypnosis - Dr. Percy White from the American Institute for Paranormal Investigations in Chicago because of the simple reason that the masterpiece program “Heist” of the giant “Philips” did not exist. It was created by a kinky looking and almost discarded by scientists program analyst called Keis de Graff. A week before that impressive program was invented Keis had spent two hard months in a lunatic asylum in Dordrecht.

Through sensor links, attached to a man’s body encased in a sphere, the computer scanner entered in communication with the ESP managing the process and

with the help of the program the miracle came true. The expert saw on the screen everything which was going on in the patient's brain. By way of skillful directions the center of the nerve knot that was affected by the disease was reached and inner self-defense was activated which had possibilities never dreamt of before.

After the series of successes the two unstoppable women were not satisfied with the treatment of incurable diseases but dared go to a place from which nobody had ever come back - to the life Beyond. Of course, they could not start it immediately if it was not for Keis de Graff's second visit in the lunatic asylum. From the concern they did not allow that he should be treated in the sphere for the simple reason that he was a gold mine for them and they would not risk him.

Two years later the extremely talented program analyst created an improved version of "Heist", called "Megaheist" and after a selection among volunteers the project was started, that was to mark a new era in the history of mankind.

"Peter you are now in 1997. Release the tension from what you have gone through and remember your lovely Alexandra. She is looking forward to meet you", Dr. Raidsma said in her low melodic voice.

"Xynthia! Where is Xynthia?" Peter roared suddenly and again retreated to his own darkness.

Alexandra was ready for the "journey". Dr. Raidsma placed the last scanners on her temples and turned to Liset.

"We are ready for a transition. I hope the new program brings us a new success. The sphere is revolving and you can input the aura in the computer."

Part 5

The year 1640 appeared distinctly on the screen, as well as the broad wings of the creature that descended from a high tower of a neglected castle.

“Liset, but this is Xynthia!” the Doctor cried almost hysterically.

“So our theory is confirmed! They have always been together.”

After leaving the cocoon Xynthia fled with awkward moves down towards the swamp, filled with noisy frogs. She was consumed with conflicting feelings, but not with disappointment because she knew that she had saved her beloved man... maybe. She did not know the way to the Flock but she could feel it with her new senses. That was why Aaron had left her so easily to finish the Ritual and go back alone. But he made a mistake and it would bring to irreversible consequences for him. Already definitely shaped as an elegant bird-bat, by slightly tilting her membrane wing Xynthia flew towards the mystic old town of Leiden.

With persistent fastness the light of the new day was forcing its way through the dying extraordinary night. The beauty was to hurry or else her gorgeous body of a bat would turn to dust. Since she knew by instinct how to manage her flight by means of the echo-organ, situated in the left half of her head, Xynthia felt the direction from which the signals of the rest of the ‘flying bats’ of the Flock came.

The semi-dilapidated dome of the enormous church was thickly lined with bat-like creatures attached to it who were already beginning to doze off.

Aaron and Frank could hardly keep their eyes open waiting for her and knowing that she would come.

“I’m bursting with distress, I can’t stand it any longer! It is my fault!” Aaron hissed grabbing the ceiling yet more fiercely with the nails of his winged arms. “You cannot imagine how much more beautiful she is now. The most charming creature in all the universe.”

“Gabrielle will be mad if she finds out”, Frank remarked cunningly, then added: “I guess this Glory will be for me, Aaron.”

Aaron, appalled with the perspective, shrank in his scaly skin and closed his heavy lids.

The ‘flying bats’ were supposed to create the Big Mother and then their souls would fly up to that unknown place, not visited by mortals so far.

At that moment with an elegant move of her beautifully shaped bat wings Xynthia made the almost sleeping Flock explode. The feeling for beauty and graciousness was enhanced in these creatures and they contemplated her, if not with their sleepy eyes, with the inner skills of their souls. Those who had made more conquests could feel more keenly the presence of the new goddess of that mysterious society.

Xynthia did not expect to cause such a commotion among more than one thousand people, stuffed in the skull cavities of the ‘flying bats’.

Frank was captured by the perfect lines of the body of the newly arrived and swore to do everything possible to

make her his own Glory. Aaron, the leader of the Flock, had experienced the same feeling during the Ritual. His only setback was Gabrielle and he was wondering how to get rid of her.

“Don’t you dare, Frank!” Aaron gasped, sinking the sharp sting of his tail in the body of the creature that had been his best friend forever.

“No! Don’t, Aaron! It hurts terribly!” the second best in the Flock cried painfully, then added: “She really is the new goddess.”

Xynthia settled between the two of them, digging her claws in the ceiling and her voice sung in the same gentle tones as before:

“I seem to catch up in the last minute before the departure, my dear Aaron... and Frank.”

They both trembled.

“I did my job. He is buried and his soul is here, my darling...”.

Those pleasant sounds came from the scaly neck of the beautiful creature but there was no telling whom of the two they were addressed to.

The Flock relaxed only when the sun got out of its bed and started its journey towards the sunset. The new day was coming in ancient Netherlands.

All the ‘flying bats’ had the extraordinary ability to stick with their strong claws to the inside of the dome and to hang with their heads down . It was a fabulous view. The hundreds of men-mummies with bat-wings and snake-bodies were swaying their oval heads. Each one of them, be it a man or a woman, had at least one human soul in stock. The hierarchy was led by those who had committed the

greatest number of murders, some of them being responsible for more than ten. Of course, Aaron and Frank were in the lead with more than one hundred of these in stock and deservedly called themselves leaders of the Flock.

Xynthia had no idea what would happen in the next hours. She stuck more firmly to the ceiling, hanging close to the two majors in the Flock and waited.

At first her eyes closed so tight that she was unable to see the dazzling lavender light that swept up the whole church. Lightnings connected a creature to a creature. Like the web of a giant spider each bat-like creature emitted long thin scaly tentacles that formed an overall network, in an enormous creation the shape of which was yet undefined.

Xynthia felt like she was disintegrating and losing weight and only then she heard her soul whispering to her again.

“Don’t be afraid, dear, now the most glorious moment comes. You will stop existing for a brief period but I will be you and you will experience it all. Be ready!”

The newly formed huge creation began to acquire the shape of a ‘flying bat’.