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A LETTER OF EXPLANATION TO ALL STUDENTS IN MY ABNORMAL PSYCH. 101 CLASSES

The attached Criminal Psychology research paper was written and sent to me by Dr. Hannibal Lecter; a very old and dear friend of mine. While Criminal Psychology is not his particular field of expertise, he had what appeared to be an excellent study underway until he lapsed into complete madness, to the surprise of myself and his own colleagues in the Psychiatry field. News of his utter insanity shocked the medical community, as well as his close friends who all considered him to be possibly the 'most sane man among them'.

It would be very easy for us to draw the dismissive conclusion that a combination of strenuously overworking himself on his research project, combined with his consuming interest in dark subjects, and a possible, deeply hidden mental defect caused Dr. Lecter's current condition but that would be an oversimplification of a much more complex situation. I have left his submission to me exactly as I received it, including his thesis, overview, and concluding hypothesis at the end. On the last page you will find a short update on Dr. Lecter's progress, what little there has been.

For your mid-term exam; in my efforts to make something good come out of this tragedy, your assignment is to read his research paper and write a 10 page report on it, using what you have learned in my class as a guide to gauge his mental faculties. It will be due Monday morning at the beginning of class. Perhaps your efforts and unique insight will help to restore the sanity of my friend and other victims of mental illness. I appreciate your concise and individual efforts in this very personal case study!

Professor Mike

From the Desk of: Dr. Hannibal Lecter
Miskatonic University at Dunwich

The events that I am about to relate started about a month ago when I attended the estate auction of Edward Gein, a man who went insane and was committed to the state asylum for an indefinite period of time. His exhaustively publicized, bizarre crimes shocked the nation and the world. I have always been an avid book collector and previous auctions had given me some exciting acquisitions for my collection. Oddly enough, I have found that many interesting books come from the estates of insane persons! I suppose that destroys any link between sanity and higher intelligence; or perhaps even proves that the opposite is true. Regardless, amateur psychology had always been an interest of mine and I followed the news reports of his arrest, trial, and sanity hearings with great interest. Therefore when the news of his estate auction was announced I eagerly toured the property in search of more books. When my bid was accepted for a large crate containing all of his books I rushed home to uncover my newest "treasures". True to past experiences there were some extremely nice finds but ironically, the most interesting volume in the collection; at least from my psychological mind, wasn't any published work, but turned out to be his own personal diary! Obviously it had not been found by the authorities. Also in the crate was a very intriguing locked metal trunk, roughly one and a half foot square. Not wanting to destroy the antique value of the trunk by trying to force it open and breaking it's lock since I didn't have a key, I simply sat it aside until I could figure out a way to open it without damaging it, and concentrated on the morbid diary of Ed Gein.

Possessing such an important piece of overlooked police evidence, I had every intention of turning it in to the proper authorities after I finished reading it myself. I really didn't see any reason to rush it to them since he had already been examined, tried and locked away. With it's unnecessary submission to them the case would be reopened and cost taxpayers more money and court time. Few, if any, would have doubted his guilt or insanity after reading the police account of their search and discovery of human heads, body parts, bone furniture, cranial soup bowls, or other nightmarish monstrosities strewn throughout his home. Clearly he was where he belonged at the state asylum.

A find of this magnitude for those interested in the inner workings of the criminally insane is basically unheard of and certainly unexpected by me. I forced myself to examine the contents of the Gein diary in a purely scientific manner by starting at the very beginning instead of impatiently turning toward the end where most of his bizarre behavior took place. I did this in order to study his decline into insanity in the order in which it happened. At first I was greatly disappointed by the ordinary ramblings of a middle aged hermit living on the outskirts of a small town. Several times he complained about neighbors that didn't pay him for odd jobs he performed for them, or visitors who only visited when they needed something. Basically his diary was completely ordinary in every way and continued on in that manner with entries once a week or so for several years. He wrote about reading and writing by the light of a lantern since he didn't have electricity. I suppose it was unrealistic to expect to read about decapitation, necrophilia, grave robbing, cannibalism, and the like on every page from the beginning but since he had committed all of those crimes it seemed reasonable to think that there would be at least some hint of the madness to come. Still I read on as patiently as I could, waiting for the traumatic events that sent Ed Gein over the edge. He did seem to have an abnormal love and

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respect for his mother. Obviously her death deeply affected him as it would for almost anyone. Still; the average person doesn't commit heinous crimes as Gein did when their mother dies; therefore that trauma in itself probably wasn't enough. He did however occasionally mention having a fascination with south seas cannibals and human anatomy which would suggest interests in darkly morbid subjects; at least to some people 'grasping for straws'. I was determined to not make 'a mountain from a molehill' and remain completely objective until I had read the whole diary to form my conclusions. From that point on however, his diary became much more interesting so I will submit to you some of the actual eerie entries! Here in my opinion is the first relevant entry concerning Ed Gein's mental condition:

This is an exact transcript of the first psychologically relevant section of Edward Gein's Diary. I have attempted to remain true to its entire content, including any grammar or typographical errors found therein. Interestingly to note, his spelling and penmanship remained average or above for years throughout the journal until just a few entries past this one when both aspects began flucuate and deteriorate drastically. I plan on studying this curious phenomena more intensively when time permits.

"Today my package arrived from the overseas medical supply company! Andy the UPS man knocked on my door and told me the C.O.D. was for \$37.17. After I paid him, he asked if I had bought 'a chunk of the Egyptian Pyramids'! I grinned mischievously and told him that a piece of the Pyramids would cost a lot more than that but what I had ordered was just as interesting! I think I peaked his curiosity because he told me to hurry and open it so he could see. I used his box cutter and removed the packing paper and pulled out my prize. It is in perfect condition! Its frail facial bones are remarkably intact! Andy said: 'Is that what I THINK it is?' He had one eyebrow raised like he always does when he is surprised. I told him that I ordered the skull from the Middle East. Then he had the nerve to ask me if it was for Hallowe'en; as if I have \$37 for Hallowe'en decorations when no kids even come to my door anyway! I wonder why they don't?

Then he said: 'Well, if it isn't for Hallowe'en then why did you need one?' I don't think he understood that I didn't NEED one, I WANTED one, to study and look at! He laughed kinda' nervous like and told me that I was the strangest person he had ever met, 'bar none'. Can you beat that? I don't think he meant to insult me, it was probably just a joke. He laughed again at my hurt expression and quickly left in a cloud of dust stirred up by his delivery truck. I always invite him inside to visit a while but he never does. I guess he has a lot of packages to deliver.

After he left I cleaned and polished up my new prize and put it on the living room table as a 'conversation piece'. I wonder if I'll ever have anyone over here to talk about it with? Anyway, it's late now and I have to get up at sunrise and help remove a stump at the Smith farm so I'm going to hit the hay."

Ordering a human skull "as a conversation piece" in my opinion would place Ed Gein no longer in the "mildly eccentric" range that he had been before, and could quite possibly be the event that signaled his downfall. If not 'the' factor, then at least 'a' factor. The very next entry in his diary proved to be even more revealing, and without a doubt the first unquestionable sign of schizophrenia. Unusually, the very

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large entry was from the next day; as opposed to his usual weekly entry. This is without a doubt the turning point in Ed Gein's deteriorating mental state and the beginning of his dark delusions. From this point onward he wrote at least one new, rambling entry per night, and often two or more! Here is the pivotal entry which was written the next morning after he awakened.

"I was awakened last night by a faint hissing sound. At first I thought I was dreaming or hearing the last echoes of a nightmare in my mind but the sound persisted and I got out of bed to investigate. I have rodent traps set in the kitchen and all over the pantry but it didn't sound like rats or any mice I have ever heard. I followed the hissing into the living room and realized it was coming from my coffee table. I dropped my lantern when I saw an eerie glowing light coming from the skull's eye sockets and other facial holes! I stood there frozen with fear in the dark, as the hairs on the back of my neck stood on end. It was enough to make a man lose his mind! I slowly eased toward it with courage I didn't know I had. With only the pulsating grow coming from the skull, my eyes adjusted to the blackness and I could tell that despite the lack of movement from it's jawbone, the hissing was definately coming from its mouth! The only thing going through my head was to wonder how it could be happening. I wanted to believe that I was still in bed dreaming but this morning I had to clean up the glass from the lantern I dropped on the floor when I saw its glowing eyes!

I've never been one to believe in haunts but there was definitely something ghostly that happened last night! I was fascinated and fearful for my life at the same time when I leaned forward to only a few feet away to hear what it was saying to me. People around here already think I'm mad as a hatter, and if I told 'em what happened next they would know it for sure but I swear it is all true! After getting over the initial shock I tried to understand the hissing coming from it. I watching a real live seance on T.V. a few weeks ago so I knew just what had to be done to communicate with my skull. I asked out loud who it was and what it wanted of me but I NEVER expected a response. As the lord is my only witness, it began whispering to me in a strange accent!

'I am and always will be the one known as Abdul Alhazared, the writer of the Book of Black Earth and the Master of the 7 Infernal Gates of Hades.'; It said to me! I'm not sure I spelled all those wierd words and names right but I'm not likely to forget the creepy words spoken to me from a glowing, talking skull! Even though it's voice was only a faint whisper in my ear, it resonated like rolling thunder in the otherwise silent house. It continued on with its message to me: 'I desire to live again as I did 12 centuries ago!' That was a pretty bold statement to make, even for a talking skull in the darkness! What it requested later though was even more disturbing. At times it's voice became so faint that I had to place my ear against it's rotten teeth to hear it clearly. I could almost feel it's stagnant, cold breath on my face! A tremendous chill ran down my spine as the gravity of the situation struck me. I asked the skull how it expected to ever live again without flesh and blood and it said to me: 'There are many ways for me to possess a body again if the right conditions are met and I have your help.' The thought of assisting a talking

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skull with acquiring a new body, human or otherwise was almost too frightening to comprehend!

Sensing my apprehension and hesitancy, it said: 'Do not fear, I will guide you through the incantations so the demons will not turn on you.' I told IT that I knew very little about black magic and the occult! The spirit seemed quite surprised by my admission. 'Why then do you possess my human skull? When I walked the Earth, only black magicians and sorcerers needed bones and skulls for their magic spells.' I explained that my interest in his skull was purely for anatomical study purposes. The sinister spirit became very persuasive after that and insistant that I should help it to live again. 'Even a neophyte can perform the rituals with the guiding hand of a master! I can bring you great riches beyond your wildest fantasies if you help to reanimate me into flesh with the rites of the Seven Gates!'

I asked 'Abdul' why I was needed for those things if he was such a powerful magician and he explained that only those with flesh and blood could give life back to those without. I began to feel as if I had no resistance to his requests and couldn't deny his commands. I tried to rid myself of the skull's evil influence but I was totally in it's command! After that, I don't know what happened. I woke up this morning fully clothed in bed with mud on my hands and shoes and dried dirt on my pants! A shovel and other digging tools were beside the bed. What in Jesus name did I do last night while under it's diabolic control? Did I dig up a body from the cemetery for its black magic rites by the light of full moon? I pray that I didn't! The skull is no where to be found in the house. Maybe I buried it last night to protect me from it. I sure hope so!

Clearly this was when Ed Gein lost his grip on sanity. Perhaps a brain tumor caused the hallucinations of hearing the skull 'whisper' or seeing it 'glow' but none were detected when he was examined by doctors. The process of creating a controlling force is quite common with schizophrenics which allows them to be free from any later responsibilities. Then they can say: "my demon made me do it", or in this case, the 'spirit' of the skull. November first was the morning which authorities discovered four graves had been robbed of their occupants. While he genuinely does not remember digging up those graves, he is obviously guilty of doing so. His evidence of the event really happening was planted subconsciously by his completely isolated other self to remove blame for his later actions from the side of his rational personality. 'How ironic' I thought that he commented on it "being enough to make a man lose his mind"! I've read dozens of articles about paranoid delusions but his was by far the most complex, and therefore completely acceptable to him. Gein must have been much more intelligent than the was given credit for with such a fruitful imagination. Occasionally he even stops to mentally confirm what he has written by asking himself for reassurance. This is clearly a sign of his logical mind fighting for control over his increasing psychosis because there was no one else to read the diary to confirm his version of the facts 'as he saw them. I'm positive he never expected anyone else to read its rambling pages but him. I did some cursory research on Gein's skull character; "Abdul Al Alhazared" and found out that he had indeed been a black magician, necromancer, and demonologist in the 8th century, just as Ed had claimed the 'spirit' told him. Interestingly, I found no evidence to support the theory that Gein was involved in the occult before for him to have known about an obscure 8th century demonologist, and yet he obviously did. Perhaps he had his occult volumes hidden elsewhere in the house or had borrowed some from the state library.

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I find it particularly frightening that Ed's alter ego would demand four freshly dead bodies but that was to pale in comparison to the murder victims that came later. I suppose grave robbing and necrophilia were becoming almost boring to Ed's other self! Later when the sheriff raided his house and caught him 'red handed' wearing the skin of one of his victims over his own face, he was so dazed and incoherent that he didn't snap out of his bloodlust frenzy-trance for 3 days. It was then that he told the authorities of being possessed by the spirit of the skull. Such a bizarre statement turned his home town upside down! Most of the town's residents believed that he had concocted the entire story up as a scheme to escape punishment. After reading what I have however, I am thoroughly convinced that Ed Gein believed every word of his delusions.

Upon waking after such a sinister, supernatural event; naysayers would question why he didn't just rid himself of "the evil" that he believed had made him dig up graves. The answer to that is simply because he couldn't find it! His 'demon' had forced him to hide the skull away from his 'sane' self as a protection mechanism. That part was brilliant. By not being able to locate it, Ed Gein could be possessed again and be free from reality or any criminal responsibilities. He just didn't want to find it, period. Now with the perfect scapegoat, Ed could live out his wildest deviant fantasies!

From this point, Gein's diary became increasingly more and more deranged until he was arrested and charged with his crimes. This entry details Ed's second confrontation with his 'controlling,' spirit of the skull'.

I went into town today to get some supplies, but mostly to find out if any graveyards had been disturbed. I didn't even have to ask because the news was all over town! To my horror, four graves had been violated! I knew then for certain that I had unwillingly dug them up to appease the evil spirit in the skull. Fortunately there seems to be no evidence linked to me yet. I think I'm safe for now. What did that thing make me do with the bodies? I searched frantically and could find no evidence of them anywhere on the property. Whatever I was forced to do with the bodies must have been unthinkable. The only reason I can come up with for its possession of me is that it needed me to procure for it a recently dead person to resurrect and inhabit. If that is the case, why then did it force me to dig up four graves? Could it be that Abdul was unsuccessful with bringing back to life the first three bodies? Maybe they were unsuitable for other reasons. With any luck, the fourth victim served his evil purposes and he will never bother me again! Now I have to decide if I should turn myself over to the Sheriff and hope he will believe this incredible story, or just hope that I am never linked to the crime. If I turn myself in, I will surely be put in jail or a mental asylum because no one will ever believe this, and who could blame them? What can I do? I need to rest my head and pray for Heavenly guidance. hopefully the Lord will guide the way out of my troubles!

I noticed right away how "the spirit" went from being an "it" to a "he" in Ed's writing and his penmanship became very strained; as if he was really horrified to "learn" of his previous night's deeds. Clearly his delusions were real to him and his imagination was working overtime to explain the various 'hows' and 'whys'. He seemed to be genuinely hoping to be free from "the spirits control". That fact seems to make little sense when pondering the next entry below, written only a few hours later.

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Upon rereading my last few entries in this journal, I realize that I have been confused with reality. Nothing that I have claimed earlier has happened at all. I dug up those humans without the influence of any daemon, spirit or diety. I am able to think with a clear mind now but I realize that I will become confused again with brain fever very soon. I will leave the pervious pages intact for an examination by a shaman priest. May the Great Sleeping Lord Cthulhu forgive my sins against these human entities.

*<<So Mote it Be Written>> Look and Remember! <<So Mote it Be Done!>>
~{*Ed Ghien*}~*

At first I must admit I was a little confused by Ed Gein's extremely changed way of thinking and writing style. Even his handwriting was different! Then I realized that this kind of behavior is very common in schizophrenics when their normal self attempts to gain back control temporarily. It's unfortunate for his later murdered victims he didn't turn himself in when he was still partially in control of his mind but few of us would be willing to accept responsibility for the actions of ourselves after gaining back our sanity. Even while somewhat in control of his 'normal' self, he was still tainted with psychotic sprinklings here and there, pointing to an upcoming consuming relapse back into extreme psychosis. Worth noting here is the fact that while temporarily 'sane' enough to admit full responsibility for his deeds, he still managed to spell his own name wrong! (Ghien) The relapse was probably already on the way when he prayed for forgiveness to "the great sleeping Lord Cthulhu". The following night when the next entry was penned, a complete metamorphosis occurred returning him to his previous condition and deluded counter personality.

Good Lord, what has he made me do now? I feel him inside me trying to take back control of my body! I found the skull but to destroy it now would be useless since he is inside of MY body. If I could just force it back in-to the skull and then loc-k... i t sa fe ly..... a wa y.... I'veGOT ...t orega-inc-ont.....r...o-l.....

I've got to stop believing in this nonsense. I-am completely responsible for all of the crimes I have committed. Unfortunately I am starting to enjoy all of it too much to stop- no..w.....

Oh G-O....D!PL-E....A...sEH....EL-P ...mE fi-ght him.. back out... of... me!.

For nearly a week, Ed Gein's entries continued this way with his two selves fighting for control. Sometimes the handwriting of the two personalities was almost unreadable. while one continually blamed the 'demonic scapegoat', the other readily admitted to the gruesome crimes. The authorities will be interested in these written confessions but I have chosen to skip them because they are just more of the same and are of little significance go the readers of this essay.

On the entry dated November 12, an interesting thing occurred. Ed Gein's logical self, while fully admitting to his perverted killing spree, refused to turn himself in after gaining back control of his senses. As I stated beforehand, few logical persons would turn themselves over to the authorities instantly after such an insane crime spree but surely he must have realized that it was a hopeless 'no win' situation. In an earlier entry he wrote of needing a "shaman" to examine the psychotic entries in his diary in order to diagnose and treat his mental disorders. Then just a few entries late her disturbingly stated that he was enjoying 'it' too much to stop!

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This was no longer the mark of a sincere person trying to do the right thing. In an incredible twist, his 'deranged' self was now doing everything it could to turn himself in, despite the consequences. By this time however, the 'logical' personality was almost in complete control and would never allow that to happen. It seemed to have very little remorse for his ghoul-like deeds and therefore would indicate that it was no more 'sane' than the remorseful personality which placed the blame elsewhere

Why would the psychotic personality feel remorse if it thought it had nothing to do with his body's actions? The answer is self explanatory. Subconsciously he knew that he was fully responsible. Unfortunately, the 'logical' side of our personality is located on the left side of our brain and the emotional side responsible for remorse is on the right side. If they had worked together as a unit instead of two separate and unconnected parts in Ed Gein's brain then he would have probably never committed his crimes. Conveniently for the dark desires in his mind, the dominant side changed from the psychotic remorseful personality to the logical unrepentant one when the remorseful side decided to turn him in to the authorities. Something deep within Ed Gein wanted to continue those sinister things so the side with the conscience was given no power to act on it's feelings. Can there be any doubt as to which personality mode he was in when he became the murderer, necrophiliac, cannibal, and grave robber? He had told the authorities that he would snap out of a trance to find himself surrounded with gruesome reminders of "what he had been forced to do by the skull". Read the following entry, written only three days before his capture, for final proof that he really believed what he claimed, if you have any doubts.

I sit among unmentionable horrors that I have caused unwillingly by my own hand. My body has been under the complete control of the evil spirit Abdul Alhazered. I can only hope the right person will find my diary after I have died and clear my good name. While pretending to be me in the pages of my diary, he has claimed that I am crazy and making excuses for my actions. Anyone reading this can see for themselves that my own handwriting and spelling is different than when he possesses me. He wants to make certain that no one will believe me but even when he is in control, I am strong enough to prevent him from erasing or tearing out the pages! If it is necessary for me to take my own life to prevent him from killing anyone else of controlling their mind then I must. Before doing so however, I must trap the spirit in the skull and lock it away somewhere safe with this diary nearby as a warning.

That was the last intelligible entry written by Ed Gein. 3 days later he was arrested after one of the relatives of his last victim found evidence at the scene of the crime linking him to it. As I have mentioned before, the sheriff and his men found him wearing a human facial mask and babbling incoherently. As this final entry shows, Ed Gein clearly had convinced himself of what he claimed. He reinforced his thoughts in the diary by refuting what the other personality claimed and swore to end his life if it became necessary to spare the world from 'Abdul'. Could it have been possible for him to continue his masquerade in the diary after giving such ultimatums? He used the term "final conflict" to describe the ensuing ousting of the spirit. When using the word "final" it would be difficult to continue the saga of alternating personalities very much longer. I believe that he realized the authorities were about to catch up with him so he knew it would soon be over. His reformed 'dominant' conscience was feeling overwhelming guilt and would not allow the deviant side to please itself any longer so

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the suicide threat and plan to lock away the diary nearby as a 'warning' was all dreamed up to appease his agonized mind. In his own deranged way, he was trying to show that he still had a responsible side which was trying to undo what the other side had done. It is quite possible that the war in his head during "the final conflict" was won by reality and the terrible undeniable realization of his crimes was too much for him to accept without a scapegoat. That would account for his resubmerged condition when he was found and currently.

One can form many conclusions but the outcome is still the same; Ed Gein will probably always remain at the state mental institution for the criminally insane. Few, if any ever regain their senses after experiencing madness at the level that he has experienced, and even fewer are deemed 'safe' to release back into society. In recent years mental health research and medical science has come a long way out of the dark ages with prescribed anti-psychotic medications and different group therapies but with so many unanswered questions there seems little hope for Ed Gein's mental recovery. Perhaps this research paper will aid in helping future doctors and therapists in their important work.

The End

Dear Mike,

So what do you think of the rough draft of my research paper? I was wondering if you would lend me your expertise by commenting and editing it in any way you feel is necessary. As you are probably quite aware, my knowledge of the subject is limited to the classes that I have taken in PreMed so I have no "hands on experience". On the other hand, this is your field and with all due "snow jobs" aside, I feel that you're one of the best. I could have just turned all of this over to you but I couldn't let you have all "the glory". A chance like this doesn't come around very often; if ever, and I couldn't resist the challenge since I find abnormal psychology so interesting.

It is a very good possibility that the skull Ed Gein spoke of so damningly could be in the locked metal box that I bought along with his books and diary! Tomorrow I have arranged to meet with a locksmith acquaintance of mine to find out exactly what the contents of the box are. I must admit, I'm rather anxious to find out! I'll let you know what was in it soon, in my next letter.

Thanks for your help!
Hannibal Lecter

In Conclusion:

The second letter that Dr. Lecter mentioned, to inform me of the contents of the locked metal box never arrived. It is likely that it was never written because he lost his mind shortly after finding out that it did indeed contain the skull which Ed Gein had owned and was written about in his diary. Dr. Lecter, like Ed Gein; became convinced that the skull was possessed by a spirit that talked to him. I have visited my friend several times at the asylum and he is still convinced of these illusions. He admits that the entire idea is outrageous and he seems to be otherwise in his right mind but even one delusion points to serious problems. For his protection he has been completely separated from his research subject, Ed Gein. This has been done of course, to prevent further reinforcement of the delusion by the two conferring with each other. While both men are isolated from each other, neither of them have come to their senses despite the finest treatment programs available. Since I have been advised that little hope can be expected for them unless something undeniable can convince them otherwise, I have secured a warrant from a judge to seize ownership of the skull from his house this weekend in order to disprove the delusions to both of them.

When I discussed the matter of why the two men could have been deluded into believing such an absurd thing with one of my colleagues here at Miskatonic University, he suggested half jokingly that perhaps a firefly or similar insect had become trapped inside the skull's resonant facial bones. While it is possible that a firefly could have lit up when Edward Gein asked what it wanted after hearing it's wings fluttering inside the skull, Dr. Lecter, as an esteemed man of science, certainly wouldn't be as easily led to believe such a thing. A borderline schizophrenic might have been convinced that the flapping wings were words that he wanted to hear but Dr. Lecter was previously quite logical and always seemed to be in control of his mental facilities to me. I pointed this out to my colleague and also that a firefly could live for a few days without food at the most. He then stated that the 'seed' was by then planted in Ed Gein but that doesn't explain what happened to the good doctor. I simply refuse to believe that Hannibal was unstable enough to have hallucinated the same delusions as a serial murderer like Ed Gein. There must be more to this than is apparent from the facts which we currently have to work with. I will have the infamous skull here in class Monday morning for examination by all of us to determine what it's dark allure is. We may never know.

Professor Mike