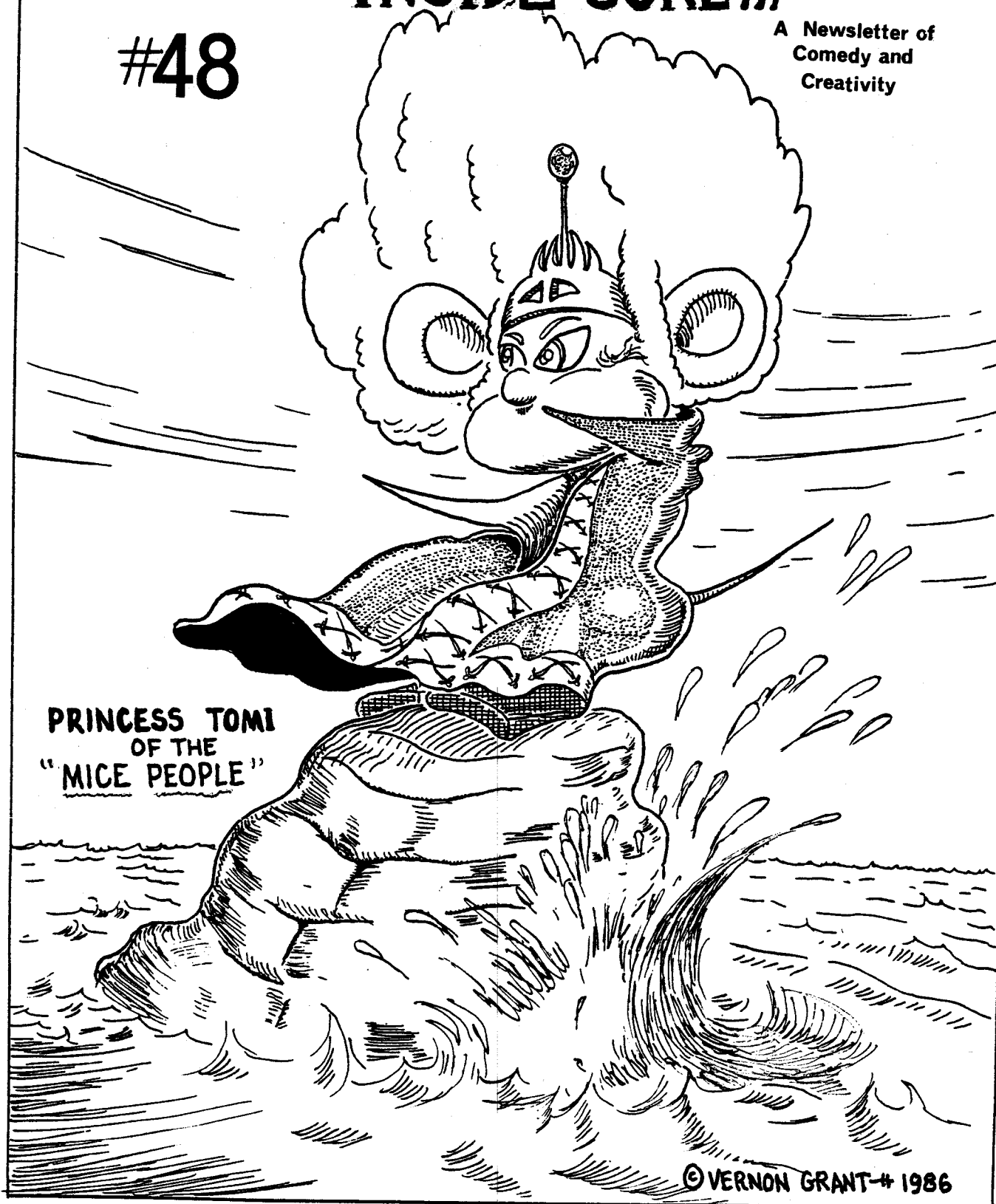


"...AGAINST MY ROCK GREAT WAVES BROKE AS I
AWAITED MY **INSIDE JOKE !!!**"

#48

A Newsletter of
Comedy and
Creativity



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ACKNOWLEDITORIAL

I think the heat's starting to get to us all. The war on drugs has never been so dangerously reminiscent of witch-hunts, the Mets have temporarily lost their star catcher, and yours truly has gone and gotten herself Officially Engaged. Condolences may be sent care of our esteemed Production Assistant, now Fiance-at-Large (at least he's At Large around Apt. Third-Eye), Steven Chaput. This

-UPCOMING EVENTS-

- SEPTEMBER 15 - DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO IJ #49
 SEPTEMBER 16 - GREG BLAIR (26)
 SEPTEMBER 18 - Greta Garbo (81)
 SEPTEMBER 21 - Chuck Jones (74); H.G. Wells (b. 1866)
 SEPTEMBER 23 - Bruce Springsteen (37)
 SEPTEMBER 26 - T.S. Eliot (b. 1888)
 SEPTEMBER 27 - LARRY OBERC (31); American Indian Day
 SEPTEMBER 29 - Gene Autry (b. 1907)
 OCTOBER 1 - Groucho Marx (b. 1895); Gandhi (b. 1869)
 OCTOBER 4 - Buster Keaton (b. 1896)
 OCTOBER 5 - SUSAN PACKIE (40)
 OCTOBER 6 - ARTHUR HLAVATY (44)
 OCTOBER 9 - John Lennon (b. 1940)
 OCTOBER 10 - Harold Pinter (56); Grace Slick (47)
 OCTOBER 10-12 - Geraldine R. Dodge Poetry Festival, Stanhope, NJ - for info call 201/359-8845
 OCTOBER 12 - Aleister Crowley (b. 1875)
 OCTOBER 14 - e.e. cummings (b. 1894)
 OCTOBER 16 - Eugene O'Neill (b. 1888); Oscar Wilde (b. 1854)
 OCTOBER 19 - "Uncle" Floyd Vivino (35)
 OCTOBER 22 - ANNI ACKNER (33); TOM GEDWILLO (35); Doris Lessing (67)
 OCTOBER 27 - ROBERT WOLLARD (46)
 OCTOBER 28 - VALENTINO (34); Fran Liebowitz (36)
 OCTOBER 30 - "War of the Worlds" on radio, 1939
 OCTOBER 31 - DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO IJ #50, THE GALA GOLDEN/6TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE; Hallowe'en (official IJ holey day)

- *****
 * INSIDE JOKE is put on hexaweekly by Elayne Wechsler and some *
 * dear friends, and emanates from beautiful downtown Brooklyn *
 * where, rumor has it, Concerned Citizens are petitioning for *
 * pedestrian safety measures by demanding signs in Falling *
 * Children Zones... *
 * EDITOR-IN-RESIDENCE.....ELAYNE WECHSLER *
 * PRODUCTION ASST./FIANCE-AT-LARGE.....STEVE CHAPUT *
 * PRINTING DEVOLVER.....DEBBIE DAVID *
 *
 * FRONT COVER BY VERNON GRANT *
 *
 * STAFF WRITERS/ARTISTS *
 * ANNI ACKNER=====ALIX BISHOFF=====MICHAEL DOBBS *
 * ==PETER LABRIOLA=====GARY LIGI=====JOHN P. MORGAN== *
 * LARRY OBERC=====SUSAN PACKIE=====GEORGE PATTERSON *
 * ==ROLOD=====STEVEN SCHARFF=====KERRY THORNLEY== *
 * PHIL TORTORICI=====A.J. WRIGHT *
 *
 * OTHER CONTRIBUTORS THIS ISSUE: *
 * ANDY AMSTER GARY PIG GOLD MICHAEL POLO *
 * TIM ARNOLD MARY ANN HENN DAVID SERLIN *
 * D.A. BEAST WAYNE HOGAN DANA A. SNOW *
 * DEBORAH BENEDICT MARGOT INSLEY st.EVE *
 * LARRY BLAZEK TOM JAMES DORIAN TENORE *
 * KEN BURKE TULI KUPFERBERG W.R. TISH *
 * JAY DEFELICIS JAMES MACDOUGALL SIGMUND WEISS *
 * SUE D'ONYM ROGER MORRIS and "KID" SIEVE *
 *
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 * the Yossarian Universal News Service *
 *
 * Ads furnished by Beautiful World, J.C. Brainbeau, BVI South, *
 * Not Available Comics, Spontaneous Human Combustion Quarterly, *
 * The SubGenius Foundation, Wall-Op, and Yossarian Universal... *
 *
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 *
 * Back issues available for \$1 each *
 * Writers/Artists' Guidelines available for \$45 *
 * *****



apparently comes as a surprise to absolutely nobody. The wedding, barring any sudden impulses to Just Get It Over With and go elope somewhere, will not take place until June of 1988 at this point, to give Maid of Honour Anni Ackner time to trek back up from PA (Wyomissing?) and, of course, to color-coordinate...

Meanwhile, Steve's project, our "bastard sister" publication INSIDE STROKE (the all-sex'n'smut extravaganza of Things You Will Never See In These Pages) is taking shape nicely, and we hope all who wish to contribute have by now, since the deadline is Labor Day, September 1. The publication will presumably be out sometime in October, probably during my annual San Fran vacation around Hallowe'en so I can disavow involvement...

Perhaps some of IJ's writers, namely the ones with currently running serials, ought to have thought twice about writing on topics of questionable appropriateness for this newsletter (not only sex'n'smut but blood'n'gore) and opted for another publication as well. My final remarks concerning Ace's story appear at the end of this chapter of TENDERLOIN; as for Rodny, he really should know better than to try to pass off implied lesbian sex and leech torture thinking not to elicit editorial "for shames" from me. I mean it, folks—if you can't control your baser side, or at least channel it to someone else where I won't have to type it and put it in my publication, I'm flat out not accepting any more serials. Period. I'm amazed I even have to say this to some of you in the first place. I mean, you do remember I have limits, don't you?

This does not take away from the fact that I truly appreciate the donation Spontaneous Human Combustion Quarterly has made to this issue of IJ (along with J.C. Brainbeau's generous contribution, as always). It merely makes it ironic. More so since Kip has all but rubbed my face in the notion that his "Four-Alarm FIRESIGNal", a not-for-profit venture for Firesign Theatre fans, is in the black by \$20-30 while we still lose money each issue. But there's no explaining to Kip that we put out IJ for the love of things here, is there?

Now to the big news: Thanks to a wonderful suggestion from Mike Gunderloy, we will have some very special treats indeed for our upcoming gala Golden issue #50/6th Anniversary/etc. etc. In addition to a spiffy cover by Deborah Benedict and—we hope—some of the best writing y'all out there can send to us, we have sent out inquiries to some ex-IJ staff writers to instigate a reunion of sorts on paper. So far Mike and Brian Pearce have responded with pieces, and we are hoping to hear from Tom Gedwillo, Tom Sanders, Candi Strecker, Jill Zimmerman and perhaps even Bill-Dale Marcinko. And as further incentive, I hereby declare that every single person who contributes art or writing to IJ #50 will receive their issue free of charge (obviously, this means I want stuff pretty much tailored for the issue—NO REPRINTED MATERIAL). Since this offer doesn't leave staffers with any sort of bonus, I further declare (god I love doing this, such power!) that all IJ staffers and ex-staffers will have the option of requesting a second issue of IJ for free, if they so desire.

As far as current staffers go, Deborah and Rory are on hiatus till next time, and apologies again that we still haven't heard from Doctor Ligi's Pataphysical Clinic on our misplaced title for the second part of Jonathan's essay, but at least B.F. will be along hisself for #49...And speaking of next issue, we are looking for a front cover, if anybody out there is so inclined. Debbie will be able to copy in different colors from now on, and we hope the past few choices, including this time for Vernon's art, have met with your approval. If you donate a cover, you may, of course, request the color preference for it, and if you'd like your work to grace the front of #49, PLEASE call me ASAP to let me know & get the specifics (at the H-E-L-P-A-T-I Hotline)...

One more thing, while I'm thinking of it: occasionally someone will send me a written piece they've already published or are planning to publish (often themselves) somewhere else at the same time (more or less) that the piece runs in IJ. I seem to recall I've said this before, but I'll reiterate: I'd really prefer not to receive submissions that aren't intended for IJ's pages. This doesn't mean you can't do whatever you want with your stuff, but if you've got other small-press venues going where you can print a piece, why send it to us as well? Especially as we're always willing to plug your publication in "Fan Noose" in the hopes that IJ readers will catch your writing there? From now on, folks, I mean it, reprinted material gets lowest priority, if any.

The deadline for everything else for #49 (letters, art, various and sundry writing) is September 15; for our gala #50, I've set an easy-to-remember date of October 31, Hallowe'en; and issue #51 has a December 15 deadline and will be our first issue of 1987. Subscriptions to IJ are \$1 per issue, with up to \$8 in NON-REFUNDABLE advance subs for a year. If there's an "X" next to your name on the mailing label, it's time to renew. Contributors to IJ have the option of sending in a 39¢ (2 oz.) stamp, or 40¢ if you're from Canada, for the issue in which your work (excluding letters) will appear. We trade all-for-all with regularly-published zines, one-for-one with sporadically-published stuff, and one IJ in exchange for your work PLUS a 2 oz. stamp if you send me a one-sheet or mini-comic. Send it all to

P.O. Box 1609, Madison Sq. Station, New York, NY 10159 and by the way, that's Madison Square Station, not Garden. I like to think we're big, but we're not that much of a hit yet.

This issue is dedicated in memory of Florence Halop (who died, apparently, of the "Night Court Curse"), Tom Gorman and "Officer" Joe Bolton. And R.I.P. Hermoine Baddley

and Ted Knight.

P.S. Sorry this issue is a little late... Slight personal illness & mechanical difficulties to blame...

Fan Noose

There appears to be a trend, lately, for small press editors to actually write all or most of what they're publishing. I don't know whether this implies self-sufficiency or such an overabundance of creativity that some folks don't have room for others' work in their ventures, but the level of quality hasn't suffered at all. A good example of something quite different is Robert Michael's CRAZY ADULT. Issue #2 is entirely done by Robert, and consists of some of the strangest, nightmarish art—much of it wedded to truly weird, surreal and hilarious writing—I've ever seen. Totally recommended; the cover price is \$2.50, and you can get your hands on a copy by writing to 46 Barn Road, Agawam, MA 01001...Adam Eisenstat's forte is essays as well as collage, and he's gathered some nice ones (much politically-oriented stream-of-consciousness) together in a collection he calls COLLAGE OF MUTATIONS. While the price seems a bit steep to me at \$2.50 plus \$1.25 for postage & handling, not all of us have access to inexpensive repro, I guess. Write him at 716 S. Linden Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15208...Jay Harber's NOTES FROM OBLIVION was originally a zine written for an apa (amateur press association—like a club on paper, with members sending in x number of copies of their own work and a central mailer who puts it all together), but is now being put out on its own. Above all, Jay would really like letters of response to his Notes, which consist of wonderful s-o-f-c writing (quite similar in tone, I think, to the Space-Time/Pocket Wrench folk), and will trade you issues 11 and 12 in exchange for a "howdy" letter. #13, a compilation of past issues, sells for \$2, to be mailed to 626 Paddock Lane, Libertyville, IL 60048...Jay might like some of the NatLamp-type bogus letters in SHOE POLISH WEEK, newly out from the "Jihad of Perpetual Chaos" right here in Brooklyn, consisting of Bob McGlynn, Ann-Marie of T.H.R.U.S.H. and other friends. Steve and I had a lovely time helping them collate about 2000 issues, so I know they have plenty of copies of this humor zine (some stuff VERY funny, some totally off the mark) to sell, at \$1.00 plus (9 x 12) SASE to Dave at 195 Garfield Place, #2-L, Brooklyn, NY 11215...COWS ARE MY PASSION, states Wayne Hogan, some of whose drawings grace this issue of IJ. His art chapbook is rather steep at \$3.95, but very amusing nonetheless. Send money to P.O. Box 842, Cookeville, TN 38501...Tom James, also an IJ newcomer, has a chapbook out as well, this one of poetry and called The Blue Glow/EGAD! (title, I'm told, to be imminently changed to simply EGAD!) and available for \$2.50 from Bizarre Press, 21738 S. Avalon Blvd., #134, Carson, CA 90745...In transit at the moment is Elissa Rashkin, whose HAMSTERAMA shows great promise as a hard-hitting creative zine. It still goes a bit heavy on the teen-depression-angst side, but is worth checking out, and as soon as I know Elissa's new NY address I'll publish it...Meanwhile, undergoing a name rather than place change is BVI-SOUTH, to be renamed DOWN SOUTH shortly. It's the only zine in the world, editor Simon Bone tells us (see ad elsewhere), printed in "OCR-A," which I guess is a computer language, and it has an Esperanto edition for those of you old enough to remember what Esperanto is. While I think the southerners might want to concentrate more on actual content than context and printing, they seem to be getting on the right track by at least declaring independence from what seems to be a whole network of zines all named BVI—something ("oh no, it's the killer BVI!"). However, they are getting an ISSN code, whatever that is. If you're more familiar with and interested in these mysterious terms than I, this may be just the thing for you, so send them "one dollar or so" at P.O. Box 582, Lewisburg, TN 37091-0582...You say you just can't get enough of baseball? Well, you know who you are, and you might want to send a buck to Dale Jennings for BASEBALL OUR WAY, which is mostly baseball his way (no discernable writing from anyone else) and has essays on why people seem not to like the Mets (WHAT?!), strange injuries and errors, and a whopping 62-question trivia quiz on the White Sox takes up 7/8ths of the 8-page zine. Dale gave us a nice plug, but I truly think this is for real trivia-hunting fans. The address is 3211 Milwaukee St., #1, Madison, WI 53714...Thanks to IJ friend Luke McGuff for sending us ANARCHY, published by the Columbia Anarchist League and one of the better political independents I've seen. Thought-provoking essays without a lot of back-biting, and subs are only \$3/6 issues to the C.A.L. adp.O. Box 380, Columbia, MD 65205...Speaking of Luke McGuff, the second issue of his LIVE FROM THE STAGGER CAFE is out, and yours truly has somehow become a regular contributor, columnist. Luke's still on the lookout for other contributors, and offers his zine in trade for letters of comment, submissions, four stamps or \$1, or other zines—write him at P.O. Box 3680, Minneapolis, MN 55403...Likewise a hearty welcome back to Revo, real name Trevor, and his new zine OVO, a small compilation of collages and other assorted objects available for \$1 from P.O. Box 23061, Knoxville, TN 23061...Other publications out once more—THE RUBBER FANZINE (#4), for all you rubber-stamp creators out there; \$1 + 39¢ to Rudi Rubberoid, P.O. Box 2432, Bellingham, WA 98227-2432...XEX GRAPHIX nl, a special 12-page summer '86 edition reviewing mini- and other comix, even some music zines and tapes; FREE but send money to BOB "X", P.O. Box 240611, Memphis, TN 38124...LACTUCE (#3), coming out just about monthly now (which means next issue it'll most likely drop down to our "regulars" section), full of poetry and prose, some good and some not so, like most literary-type zines; \$3 from Mike

Selender, P.O. Box 621, Suffern, NY 10901...THE NEW SOUTHERN LITERARY MESSENGER (V.3#3), a real bargain of a literary zine at \$1 and one whose quality level has risen considerably since last I read it; send to editor Charles Lohmann, 400 S. Laurel St., Richmond, VA 23220...Always a literary pleasure is the excellent Canadian offering THE BLOTTER. Never just "another little magazine" as editor C.F. Kennedy modestly claims, issue #6 tackles the subject of religion with well-written and intelligent essays and stories of all sorts. Please support C.F.'s efforts by sending \$1.50 per issue or \$9/year to 233 Woodbine Ave., Toronto, Ont. M4L 3P3 CANADA...Tis the season for new poetry books as well, and IJ staffer Susan Packie's touching ode to her late mother, SPATHI-PHYLLA AND LIMES, evokes some heavy feelings and strong universal images—very recommended at \$4.95 from Saki-Poo or from Modern Images at Box 912, Mattoon, IL 61938...And IJ's favorite octogenarian couple, Sigmund Weiss and Dora Weiss, both have poetry books worth checking out—his is AGING VOICES and hers, LAUGHS, CHUCKLES and SMILES; for more information, write 11 Lancaster Pl., Stony Brook, NY 11790...We've, alas, some bad news to report as well this time: on temporary hiatus is the marvelous SPACE-TIME CONTINUUM AND YOUR POCKET WRENCH, while David and Phil and Carol try to make some money and attend school. Hope to see you back real soon, folks...And due to palsy, fan editor Rich Geis has been forced to discontinue publication of his Hugo-winning semipro-zine SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW with issue 61. Judging by his egotistic writing style in the current issue, 60, and previous ones, I can't say as I'll miss SFR, but I'm sure all (if any) of Mr. Geis' friends wish him happier times ahead. SFR and Mr. Geis' diaryzine (THE NAKED ID) are available (SFR for \$2.50) from P.O. Box 11408, Portland, OR 97211 and recommended for folks who read a lot of sf and like pointless pictures of naked women...Despite personal (eyesight) problems of his own, John Harllee miraculously continues to publish THE SOUTHERN LIBERTARIAN MESSENGER each month. This compilation of "horror story" news articles and thoughtful libertarian essays is available for \$5/12 issues (\$6 in Canada & \$8 by surface mail overseas) from Route 10 Box 52A, Florence, SC 29501...As we've said in this column countless times before, our meager plugs can't hold a candle to FACTSHEET FIVE. Take note, though: with issue #19, Mike Gunderloy has a new address, and a new format (now 8 1/2 x 11, though not guaranteed to stay changed). It's still an incredible bargain at \$2, and if you're not getting this publication, you're missing out on a great deal (not to mention, even, Anni's movie column). Send to 6 Arizona Avenue, Rensselaer, NY 12144...And the other must-have alternate publication, the UTNE READER, continues to be mandatory reading for our Side, especially for those of us who can't afford every underground and alternative press around. This is the best place to find out what's really happening in this world that the mainstream newspapers and magazines will never tell you, and it's well worth \$4 (\$18/6 issues) to P.O. Box 1974, Marion, OH 43305...Another area finally being more than adequately covered is the place of women in modern music, and BITCH, "the women's rock newsletter with bite," runs the gamut nicely. The July '86 issue is out already, which means they seem to publish very regularly, and it's only \$1.75 for some good interviews, essays and other news to editor Lori Twersky at a place she calls "San Jose Face," Suite 164, 478 W. Hamilton Ave., Campbell, CA 95006...Also in newspaper format is the DUCKBERG TIMES, and I apologize for ever doubting its regularity as well. Editor Ronald Baker has now gone bi-weekly, if you can believe it, and still manages to put out this "newspaper of alternative media, music & art" (always with gracious nods to us!, thanks again, Ron!) for a subscription price of \$15/year (for 24 issues)—if you want to see a sample, I assume it's \$1 or so, to P.O. Box 382, Alexandria, VA 22313 (whew, they're up to #14 already!)...And the Yippies roll along as well, with yet another Definitive Interview with Our Boy Abbie in the summer '86 OVERTHROW. Always nice articles, albeit recommended at times with a grain or two of salt, and they've also supported us nicely. The newsletter's still only \$1, to P.O. Box 392, Canal St. Station, New York, NY 10013...Which brings us, at last, to the "regulars": BABUSHKIN'S DIGEST V.2#7—L.D. Babushkin, P.O. Box 128, Rosendale, NY 12472 (irreverent personal zine—this issue features very funny 'booster ads' from "Special Interest Groups for the 1990's"; free but send donation [checks payable to "L. Bush"]); GOOD DAY SUNSHINE #33—Charles F. Rosenay III, 397 Edgewood Ave., New Haven, CT 06511 (Beatles; \$2.50); JET LAG #67—Steve Pick & Tony Renner, 8419 Hall's Ferry Rd., St. Louis, MO 63147 (music of all sorts; still only \$1); META-SCOOP v.3#7/8—B.W. Sowell & D.H. Armstrong, 1004 Live Oak Ste. 101, Arlington, TX 76012 (New Age journal, put out by the "Foundation of Light And Metaphysical Education"; \$10/year); THE MONKEES/BOYCE & HART PHOTO FAN CLUB #65—Jodi Hamrich, P.O. Box 411, Watertown, SD 57201-0411 (Monkees; 50¢ & legal-size SASE); OUTER SHELL V.11—Roy Harper, P.O. Box 7053, St. Petersburg FL 33734 (music & essay one-sheet; free but send at least SASE); PHOEBE V.3#4—J. mer MacDougall, 511 Routes 5 & 20, Waterloo, NY 13165 ("the newsletter of eccentricity w/ tons of fun snippets & trivial nonsense; 55¢ & SASE). See you in the funny papers!

Addenda: Just a reminder from the folks who bring you this Pen-Elayne production: Debbie David is about to come out with an ALL-ART ISSUE of BEAUTIFUL WORLD (see ad elsewhere this issue); and Kip M. Ghesin, as mentioned in the editorial, has managed to bring out issue #9 of his Four-Alarm FIRESIGN (FalaFal) in the black, offering it c/o the palatial p.o. address to any Firesign fans...

DIARY of The ROCK FIEND

by Anni Ackner

WHY I DON'T LIVE AT THE P.O.

Troops, boys and girls, or, as someone else said, fellow chuckleberries, I kind of hate to admit it—it's awfully difficult to find shoes to match chinks in one's armour—but it's been a pretty tough month for your girlfriend. Really, there's just been one annoying, time-consuming thing after another—it's been previously tolerably well documented that nothing good can possibly come of any month without an "R" in it, but I do think that forcing a perfectly nice witty, acerbic commentator on the American scene to cope with a bridal shower (complete with darling lace umbrella, cunning little place settings with watering cans on them, and twenty-five previously normal adult women setting the World Misplaced Orgasm Record over a set of Corningware), Liberty Weekend, a projected move to Wyomissing, PA (yes, I am very much afraid that the rumours are true—we are abandoning, for complicated, disheartening reasons, The Hotel New Jersey, and moving, lock, stock and eight years' worth of accumulated artifacts, to say nothing of the bear called State O'Maine, to a small town right outside of Reading, pretzel capitol of the world, if one may believe the Chamber of Commerce, and I think one may. We are also going to be within easy driving distance of The World's Largest Indoor Miniature Village and The Wonderland of Wood, so you see that the venture bodes great adventure and excitement for us, but, as any move does, it is currently causing great hassle and inconvenience. Who among us, after all, honestly knows how to safely ship a 45 lb. lead crystal elephant that no one can stand but which has been in the family longer than I have?), the trading of Ron Hassey, and one of those aggravating gynecological mishaps all within a four-week period is pushing things just a bit too far, don't you?

I do realize, of course, that this litany of my various woes during the horrible month of July can be but of only slight interest to the majority of you (and if you feel that way about it, don't come around here looking for my shoulder to cry on, either), and I beg your pardon for it, but I offer it as both excuse and explanation for the following unavoidable fact: I do not have a column for you this month.

Okay, okay, if you'll all stop tossing around that confetti and blowing on those silly paper horns, perhaps we can get on with this. Are we settled now? Good.

What this state of affairs means, in practical terms, is that we have one of two options: (a) I can slink quietly away with my tail between my legs and disappear for the next six weeks (you on the left, stop passing that roumaki unless you have enough to share with all of us) or (b) I can drag out one of several stock columns available to those in my position, and because of that last outburst, I have decided upon the latter course.

Now, just in case you haven't made a careful study of the devices columnists use to get themselves out of this sort of jam (and believe me, there's at least a master's thesis in this for some smart sociology major), allow me, for a moment, to delineate them for you (not incidentally, a kind of side ploy good for wasting upwards of 2,500 ems). The first, and most popular, is generally known in the trade as Reader Mail, or Letterman's Evil, in which the columnist takes correspondence from his or her readers, either real or imagined, and answers it in a way designed to show exactly how much of a smartass he or she can be. This sort of column is admirably suited to the writer's purposes because, not only does it throw the burden of the actual writing squarely where the writer wants it—on someone else's back—but it allows the writer to feel superior to the assorted yahoos, boobs, Jukes and Kallikaks who wrote the letters to begin with, a delightful situation for a class of people which spends the greater part of its days getting sneered at by blank pieces of paper. The problem with this is that it presumes that the writer is really getting written to by the aforementioned yahoos, boobs, Jukes and Kallikaks, rather than the educated, erudite bunch that reads this publication, or else can make up ten or twelve letters that sound as though they were written by y's, b's, j's and k's, and if I were secure enough to pull that off, there'd be a real column here, so there you go.

Then there's A.J. Weberman's Shuffle, a dandy little two-step wherein the columnist (figuratively, one hopes) empties the hilarious contents of his or her wastebasket or reject pile on the floor for your inspection. This has the added plus of making the columnist seem all nice and homely and fallible, just like the rest of us—see, he or she appears to say, I make mistakes too, just like a rekila person—and, quite frankly, I considered using it, until a brief inspection of my own personal wastebasket revealed three empty cans of Diet Coke, a veritable logjam of cigarette butts, a bag that once, sometime in the unrecorded past, housed Charles' Unsalted Chips, last week's T.V. Guide and a note that said, cryptically, "Murray ex. Teddy, 643...Oh boy!", and I defy even H.L. Mencken to get a column out of that.

Closely related to the Shuffle, and just as popular, is the Andy Rooney Tchachka Maneuver, which calls for the writer to lovingly and whinily describe, in great detail, everything that happens to be on his or her desk—a charming thought, except that the only thing on my desk right now is a packing crate—and there are other, less known, shall we say, cop-outs, but the one I have chosen is a relatively new concept, first isolated by a Canadian

columnist who shall remain nameless because I have conveniently forgotten his name, which calls for the writer to lay before you all the mail he or she has received during the previous month. This, as I'm sure you realize, is vastly superior to Reader Mail because, for one thing, I don't have to do any work at all, either in coming up with clever, witty answers to Real Stupid Letters or in making up Artificial Stupid Letters and, for another, it takes up a lot more room, which is in keeping with the spirit of the Rock Fiend, and so, without further ado, I present:

PEN PALS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

OR

Fan Mail When You're Floundered

1 July - The new catalog from Manny's Baseball Land—an arcane emporium from which, if one so desires, one may purchase such things as an entire sports jacket made out of Topps baseball cards (just the thing for that presidential inauguration) and a piece of towel that once wiped the sweat from the brow of Red Ruffing, and which is so dedicated to the convenience of its customers that it periodically runs instructions on how to reach its Hackensack, New Jersey location from such places as California and the Soviet Union—and a bill from a certain department store which I shall not name, solely because they are threatening to sue me over a little matter of \$15 that I swear by all I hold dear that I paid over a year ago, and have the cancelled check to prove it, and I am Turning the Other Cheek. In return for this noble act, they are Turning It Over To A Collection Agency. Virtue is its own punishment.

2 July - A pre-printed invitation to one of those parties invariably held in a reconverted mulch factory in the sort of neighbourhood our grandparents worked 18 hours a day in order to escape, and attended by that variety of person who seriously believes that Michael Musto's Village Voice column constitutes new vistas in Modern Literature. I am on this neuroathenic A list simply by dint of the fact that I once accidentally went to one of these parties, having mistaken it for the early morning rush hour on the Lexington Avenue shuttle, and spoke briefly to someone. As is reputed with certain forms of illegal drugs, once is all it takes.

3 July - A letter from a faithful reader, gallantly offering to kill me because of something I said in passing about THE COLOR PURPLE. In return, I send him my invitation to the previously-mentioned party, with all my good wishes.

4 July - Arguably the only enjoyable side effect of Liberty Weekend—there is no mail today. I pass the time peacefully by hiding under my bed with cotton stuffed into my ears.

5 July - Four solicitations to contribute to various funds to insure that Liberty Weekend is a success, two solicitations to contribute to various funds to insure that Liberty Weekend is demonstrated against by Communists, Socialists, Libertarians and/or The Friends Of The Martian Space Party, one solicitation to join my brothers and sisters in participating in Hands Across America, and a plea to volunteer to roll bandages for Our Boys in France.

6 July - Sunday. No mail. The Lord is my shepherd.

7 July - One of my APAs. An APA, for the uninitiated, is what you get when a group of people, all of them chock-a-block with ideas and stinking faintly of mimeograph fluid, get together in print to discuss the vital issues of our day, sort of like the Algonquin Round Table, Only without the Algonquin, without the table and, not to put too fine a point on it, without Robert Benchley and Alexander Woolcott. This particular issue contains scintillating debates concerning the edibility of mayonnaise, whether or not it's politically correct to lower the number of copies made of the APA simply because, at the moment, it's three times as large as the actual membership, and a comment by one of the other members to me offering to kill me because of something I said in passing about THE COLOR PURPLE.

8 July - A postcard from my friend Kathy, who is currently in Paris, helling her way around the Boulevard St. Michel; a long chatty letter from my friend Mary, who has just received a promotion and a \$10,000-a-year raise on her job, a brief note from Jacki, who is running for office in San Francisco, and the rare bootleg of one of Lou Reed's European concerts, for which I paid \$45 and sent six months ago. It arrived in several tiny little shards, just like my life.

9 July - A flyer from Magickal Child—otherwise known as the Little Shop of Horrors—announcing their annual sale of herbs, candles, mortars, pestles and ritual knives. A small notice on the bottom advises me that it has been printed in Dragon's Blood Ink. An even smaller notice advises me that the store's mascot, Most High Joan, has just died. I choose to believe this is only coincidence.

10 July - No mail. I choose to believe that Most High Joan is interceding in my behalf.

11 July - A check from the nursing agency for which I work, along with a note informing me that one of my patients has complained that I refused to clean the spokes of her wheelchair with a toothbrush. This is not precisely true. I merely suggested an alternative use for the toothbrush and the wheelchair spokes, one that also involved a long, steep incline and the Moonachie, New Jersey chapter of the Hell's Angels. Can I help it if she took it the wrong way?

12 July - A new issue of a fanzine entitled CHALLENGER DISASTER KILLS SEVEN, which seems to be devoted just about equally to a Gerry and the Pacemakers clone band called Ferry Cross the Mersey which is currently touring every fern bar in the midwest and a discussion of a conspiracy theory concerning why Dick York was replaced by Dick Sergeant on BEWITCHED. There is also a fairly

sizeable letter column including one letter offering to kill me because of something I said in passing about THE COLOR PURPLE.

13 July - T.G.I. Sunday

14 July - A note from My Other Sister telling me that she has decided that her bridesmaids are going to wear gray instead of pink. As I have just invested a considerable amount of time and effort in finding a pink dress that did not immediately invoke visions of a Christopher Street drag queen attempting to crash the annual debutantes' ball, I am slightly put out by this and begin to make plans for decorating her wedding cake with Phillips Milk of Magnesia.

15 July - No mail.

16 July - No mail.

17 July - No mail. The F.B.I. is stealing it.

18 July - No mail.

19 July - No mail.

20 July - I don't care if it is Sunday. Where is my mail?

21 July - No mail.

22 July - The F.B.I. is stealing my mail because of something I said in passing about THE COLOR PURPLE.

23 July - No mail.

24 July - A new catalog from Abbey Press, which for years has been harbouring the twin delusions that (a) I am a Christian and (b) I am a Christian who sincerely wishes to own a 3-D picture of my Savior upon His cross, complete with weeping stigmata and eyes that follow you around the room. The only thing I wish more at this point is something tall and refreshing in a glass. Hemlock, maybe.

25 July - Contributors' copies of a smallish magazine which literally begged me to send them something, anything, of my wit and wisdom. After I had stayed up all of three nights writing them something, and resorted to Express Mail in order to meet their deadline, I discover my piece has been bumped for a review of FRIDAY THE THIRTEENTH, PART VI.

26 July - Another note from My Other Sister. We're back to pink again. How I wish the F.B.I. would steal my mail because of something I said in passing about THE COLOR PURPLE.

27 July - Sunday

28 July - The new Loompanics catalog, which is a sort of house organ for paranoids, in which half the books listed are manuals on how to protect oneself from the people who have read the other half of the books listed. I notice that there is now a sixth volume in the HOW TO KILL PEOPLE series, and I wonder briefly if I might offer the author My Other Sister as a subject for Volume 7.

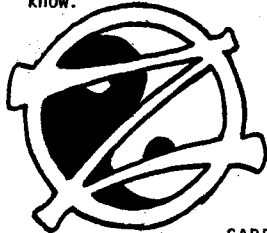
29 July - Distressing news from the clinic. Never mind, that's all. Just never mind.

30 July - The August issue of YANKEES MAGAZINE, which features articles on two infielders who have recently been traded to the National League in exchange for a 42-year-old left-handed outfielder currently batting .192, 17 pitchers who give every indication of intending to languish on the disabled list until well past the birth of Andy and Fergie's second child, and a lovely picture of third base coach Don Zimmer relaxing in his madras Bermuda shorts, an act that I think it illegal in the greater part of Canada.

31 July - A post-mailing to one of my APAs, in which I have not been invited to participate, primarily because the subject at hand is whether or not to kill me because of something I said in passing about THE COLOR PURPLE. I decide to save them the trouble and shoot myself cleanly through the head.

So you see that, armed only with meticulous lists and a small handgun, just about anybody can write a column of alleged humour at just about any time.

Having now proven that, I must leave you to go chat with the mover, who has inquired as to whether I need that "big, lumpy, funny-looking object" moved. I have the uneasy feeling that he's talking about my friend Julio but, on the other hand, you never know.



Zenarchy STORIES

by Ho Chi Zen

CARE AND FEEDING OF ZENARCHY

Taking possession of your own psychological space is the First Precept of Zenarchy. Throw the disciple out the door. Banish the Buddha from your home. And never forget that it is against the growing of marijuana to respect laws.

Camden Benares has pointed out that "Most" cultures stress conformity and thereby fashion a social reality based on mutually agreed-to exclusions. Frequently this creates an unconscious double-bind: the belief that you are free combined with the fact that you are really only free to be like everyone else expects you to be."

In shattering social expectations Zenarchy performs one of its most useful services to humanity.

As previously indicated, one trap is success. You

can be anything you want to be, but chances are that society will scorn you as a failure. Many nearly-free people cramp themselves by trying to remain successful in terms meaningful only to others.

Resolving this predicament for himself, my friend Gregory Hill said, "Should history describe me as a clown, I will consider myself an artistic success. Should history call me a fool, then I will consider myself a philosophical success."

Marriage is often another expectation trap. Many a perfect relationship goes to ruins once a ceremony has formalized it. What was fresh and exhilarating is suddenly treated by others as if it should not become drably prosaic and domestic. Husbands and wives, unlike lovers, are expected to put one another down for a good laugh in the company of their friends. But an old joke repeated often enough can become the truth. One couple I know managed to sidestep this problem by referring to one another not as "my wife" and "my husband," but using instead the jolting, original term "freemate." (Even just "mate" works better than "my old man" or "my old lady.")

Throwing the disciple out the door is how we avoid becoming typecast as a holy person or teacher. Otherwise people form in their minds a picture of how you should behave and, when you fail to live up to their anticipations, they rip you up instead of tearing the picture to shreds. Perhaps this is one reason why the history of religion is splattered with the blood of saintly martyrs. Nowadays in our society the reaction is seldom that physical, but the kind of mentality that is dependent on leaders is also capable of enormous psychological cruelty when it is disappointed. Compulsively submissive people in search of messiahs are like heroin addicts—God help anyone who looks like a source, but fails to provide a fix.

Every stereotype you can think of is an expectation trap. That's how repressive societies enslave their members before resorting to chains or jails or asylums. Even something as innocuous as your astrological sign can become a very neat excuse for locking you into a programmed trip that may or may not have anything to do with your natural proclivities. A Sufi from Iran of whom I once heard would, whenever asked what his sun sign was, give a different answer than on the previous occasion. Although his method of resistance involved lying, it served in the long run to reveal a lot of truth. For in almost every instance his questioner would thereafter begin to point out all the traits in his behavior typical of "his" position in the zodiac.

HOW TO BECOME PRESIDENT OF THE U.S.A.

Neither the Communist Party nor the Industrial Workers of the World is the predominant vehicle of Zenarchist treason; it is the U.S.A. Developed by Ho Chi Zen primarily for the purpose of destroying the Hung Mung Tong Kong, the Universal Secessionist Association is an informal network dedicated to assisting any individual or group in seceding from any organization. Supporting white Southerners who want to secede from the Union, black Southerners who want to secede from the South, counties that want to secede from states, individuals who want to escape from prison, who want to get out of the military or the intelligence community—and especially supporting those who want out of the Hung Mung Tong Kong—the U.S.A. charges no dues and every member is called the president.

HIGHER LEARNING

Advertised in the sporadical Saint John's Wednesday Bread Messenger, one of the most successful side trips associated with Zenarchy, the Twelve Famous Buddha Minds School, listing a "faculty of charismatic identities," promises nothing less than to "tell you how to live your life!"

To enroll you send them a question. "Of course, as you know, these great minds can't give you personal or even impersonal attention, but the Buddha Mind School has an on-duty staff of Buddha Heads ready and willing to give you the kind of attention you deserve." But only if your question qualifies.

A typical winning question was: "If we stop government bugging, how else can we get them to listen to the 5 people?"

Food For Thought

by W.R. Tish

I'm fed up with food....I'm fed up to my jowls with jello, up to my cheeks with cheesecake, up to my eyes with Hostess fruit pies and over my head with bread. Food glorious food, I'm food, I'm food, I'm food. Health food makes me sick; refrigerators make me break out in a cold sweat; doggie bags make me wooof.

Fellow Americans, I have a dream—a dream of a foodless nation, free from the shackles of indigestion and late night munchies. I dream of cancelling every dinner, castrating all caterers, and collecting every tidbit, morsel and leftover scrap from American plates and tossing them into the trash compactor—bit by bit. Yes friends, it is time to revolt. You must attack that Big Mac before it attacks you. Give all that junk food straight to the Man from Glad. Take that fruit basket and put it back on the tree.

Any progress in our struggle against gastrointestinal pleasures, we move ever closer to the day when upperware parties shall be canned—the cup that runneth over will runneth dry, and....and....and the cup that be recognized for its true purpose—fingerpaint.

And when that day comes, friends—then comes Miller time.

Two True Retail Tales

by Steven Scharf

1) I was sweeping up a broken teacup when I overheard one of the sales clerks trying not to shout at a very demanding woman. She was insisting on some special favor or service that I've long since forgotten.

I approached the registers, broom, dustpan and debris in hand, and waited for a chance to enter the conversation.

The customer was a well-dressed, white-gloved senior citizen, complete with lace-adorned pillbox hat, looking and acting as if she had gotten her way throughout her life. During the slightly heated discussion, the woman asked/whined, "Well...can't you make an exception just for me?"

The clerk, also a woman, in her 20's, breathed a deep sigh and prepared herself for the opposition she'd get for saying no. It was then I spoke.

"If we made an exception for one person, we would, by company policy, have to make exceptions for everyone, thereby it no longer being an exception. Therefore, we have no other option but to adhere to company policy..." I dumped the dustpan into the garbage can with a loud clatter, "...and not make exceptions."

6 After a few seconds of silence passed, the customer replied, "Oh," and continued her browsing. I took over

THE SCARLET CHESTER by Tom James

Once upon a time, it was a dark and stormy night. A shot rang out. A dog howled. A butler did it.

Meanwhile, back at the farm, Chester was practicing his Ralph Cramden imitation.

"Har har har dee har har, Alice," said Chester. "Har har har dee har har. You're a riot, Alice, a real riot."

Just then, Chester's left hand made contact with the right, following which, the right hand rose into the air.

"Bang, zoom," said Chester.

The apartment manager stopped by to collect the rent, but he could not get anywhere with Chester. Every time the subject of rent came up, Chester would hug the manager and say, "Alice, you're the greatest!"

The manager's name was not Alice. It was Fred.

Fred was beginning to form a somewhat less than complimentary opinion of Chester.



(THE LAW OF GRAFTIN...)

ROLDO 36

at the register for the rest of the evening.

2) I was putting sales tags marked with red felt pen, screaming "SOLD," onto a pair of wooden chairs, when a voice from behind said, "God enny othah's?"

I turned to see a rather plump, balding man, trying to look like a yuppie, dressed in a grey three-piece suit, dead cigar in his mouth, slight beard, and an almost evil-looking smile. If I were using him in a comic strip, I'd draw him as a raccoon.

"Sorry, sir, these are the last ones in stock."

"How much were they?" pointing with his cigar.

"\$199.99 plus tax, including the cushions."

He began to beam a demonic smile. "Give ya \$250 for 'em!"

"Sir...I..."

"\$275, and that's as high as I go." He smiled as if he were in the market for human souls and had just struck a wholesale deal.

"Sir...these are the last chairs of this type in stock. Maybe I can find others at one of our other stores in this area. I'll call."

His smile began to fade.

"And besides, it's illegal to sell something twice."

He replaced the cigar in his mouth and smiled once more. "Nevvuh stopped me!" He turned and continued to browse.

Vampire Sorority Babes rodny dioxin

(last time: mayhem most foul and much other rot, who did off Prof. Seibenheller? is it really true that a warm bath will actually make blood clot faster? does Kermit the Marine have enough ammo to get the job done? bless my topsiders, things sure are, ain't they?)

"If it wouldn't be too much trouble, Miss Chassiotis, do you think you could extinguish that fire before the entire lab blows up?"

Keri hated that shit. Professors were always so snide. No sense of scientific curiosity. How, after all, was she to know that marble lab tables wouldn't melt unless she set fire to one, something easily done with a bit of isopropyl and a Bunsen burner?

She shot a CO₂ blast across the table, extinguishing the flames and just (accidentally, of course) catching Prof. Basil Podgorny right in the butt. He said nothing and continued babbling on about some dreadfully boring experiment with sugar crystals. Keri was holding out for the old iodine-and-potato number as proof positive that she'd never actually left high school; they'd just repainted the walls. So much of college was a dangerously dull hal-lucination. Why should lab be any different?

What was missing from her life, she thought, from her surroundings was any sense of colorful history. Sure, the bathtub murder and the VCRs of Kappa Nu performing nude dances wearing duck masks ("maybe I should pledge them after all") were fun. But it was all still too fresh to be really colorful. What was needed, she decided as Podgorny pulled a potato from his desk drawer, was a legend. And Keri felt she was just the person to create it.

"Herr Doktor Magnus Podgorny (first of that great mad biochemical family represented in its decline by the unworthy scion Basil—"best" known for his work on marshmallow sauce as a substitute rocket fuel) was having lunch at a small pub down the street from his laboratory. As he savored his cheese and onion platter, one of his prized lab rats (named Spiffy) took advantage of Herr Doktor's absence to run amok and bust out of its cage. In so doing, it knocked a beaker of M4-72Q (another of Podgorny's eternally ongoing projects) into the lukewarm remains of a cup of Earl Grey tea. Thus was formed a small but highly vocal lifeform which spent the first moments of its life declaiming over and over (in a voice not unlike that of noted second banana Bill Frawley—al-though no one at the time would have noticed this, since civilization was still over a century away from the Fred Mertz Evolutionary Plateau) that immortal line 'why should a dog have breath and not you?!!' It also developed a mad craving for plasma.

"As is common in most mad biochemist legends, all this went completely unnoticed by Herr Doktor Podgorny's assistant, Derek Swonk, who, on returning to the lab, immediately began cleaning up the rather nasty brown stain he found on one of the tables. He was still doing this when Magnus returned from lunch and trod on Spiffy. While he bawled out Swonk for such abject carelessness, Herr Doktor scraped the rat remains from his boots into the bucket which Derek had been using to mop up the mysterious (tho blood-thirsty) stain. Of such accidents do disasters spring.

"Discerning readers won't be at all surprised to learn that students, teachers and various and sundry townspeople started turning up dead and drained of all their blood. Naturally everyone blamed the mad biochemist Podgorny and he was dragged from his bed one night, lashed to a tuba and rolled repeatedly down the steepest hill in the village. Of course, it was all his fault so he deserved it..."

Keri's story came to an abrupt end as Podgorny snatched it away from her and tore it into tiny little pieces.

"Perhaps in future you could try doing some biology in this class, Ms. Chassiotis. That is what we're here for."

"Really? I thought it was for the free hors d'oeuvres."

"So, to get you in the proper mood, why don't you just stay behind and wash out all the glassware?" Podgorny spun on his heels, nearly tripped and strode out of the room.

"...special effects by lunatics and drinks." Keri sang along with Peter Murphy on her Walkman. Just about everything was cleaned and she'd only broken four or five things in the process. She turned off the water and admired the test tubes dripping away in the sink. If she held her head just so, the fluorescent light refracted and made little puddles of rainbows.

Hands gripped her throat. "Kiss kiss bang bang."

"Rika you bitch," Keri said after her pulse slowed down a bit. Her scream was still ringing off the walls.

"Izzat nice? I even brought some brews. Tho you coulda called and told me where you'd be. It's been pretty weird the last few days. In case you hadn't noticed."

"Meaning what exactly, luv?" Keri grabbed her coat and locked the place up. They headed up the stairs. It was just hot enough to make going up onto the roof and killing some brews a definite thing-to-do.

"Meaning that yer ole buddy Seibenheller shows up dead right after you vow revenge. Meaning that it's got yer style splashed all over it."

"You don't think I'd soil myself with the blood of that ver-min?"

"I just...I'm sorry..."

"There's never been anyone but you. I want no one else."

"Still, it is odd."

"Slightly more twisted than usual, perhaps. Someone slashed the little shit and dumped him in the tub. I'm just sorry it happened before I had a chance to publicly humiliate him."

"Her."

"Huh?"

"Was in today's papers. Autopsy found out that Seibenheller was actually a woman cross-dressing."

"Too sick. Who was she?"

"They're not sure yet. No ID anywhere. But what was that about public humiliation?"

"Oh, the sex tapes. I planted them there. They really belonged to Podgorny."

"That explains why he's been in such a bitch of a mood. He knew you did it?"

"I don't think so. He'd be on my case a lot more if he knew. I'm sure."

"What makes you so fuckin' smart anyway? I been here longer'n you, after all."

"True, but you just hid out for two years."

"Waiting for you."

"Sweet." Keri kissed her on the forehead. "Gimme another beer." There was a decent breeze up on the roof. And a view of most of the wretched campus. Over in the frat house they were proving that all those prepettes had been right after all.

"Jeez, Keri, they've actually got a sheep in there."

Keri missed that and she also missed Dean Fraser doing something odd with his wife and two bowls of fresh guacamole. And there was Basil Podgorny climbing in one of the windows at the sorority house.

"Oh shit. Keri! Stop."

"Why? Isn't it good?"

"It's outstanding. But you gotta check this out. It's the Pod."

Indeed it was. From their spot on the roof Keri and Rika could see Dr. Basil, wearing a typical suburban golfing outfit and carrying a big plastic bait bucket, crawl in the window to the room where Muffy, Mufflette and/or McMuffin (or whichever of the gator queens it was—they couldn't tell them apart under kleig lights, much less in pitch darkness, with opera glasses) lay sleeping. He stopped by each of the beds and did something. Again, it was too dark to really see.

"Damn. There's never a spotlight when you need one."

"Shh." Keri was still mad that Rika'd made her stop.

Podgorny crossed the room and switched on the lights. Rika and Keri could now see what he'd done, which was to tie each girl to her respective bed and cover her mouth with duct tape. He was enjoying himself immensely. After glowering menacingly at his captives for a while, he walked over to Babs (with the lights on, Rika had decided that, while she didn't know who the girls were, they looked like they should be Allison, Babs and Cookie) and began talking. He seemed molto agitato, like he might be asking questions. After a while he began screaming and turning purple. Then he smacked her. Hard. Across the face. Several times. Her nose was bloodied.

"What a shit-for-brains."

"Yeah. How can she answer his questions with duct tape across her mouth?"

Podgorny wasn't nearly as sharp as Keri. She grabbed for another beer. He repeated the process on the other two. Same results. Finally, he gave up, walked back to the door where he stood, and glowered menacingly again.

"Keri, we should do something."

"Yeah, we should."

They watched as Podgorny opened his bait bucket and extracted, with a long pair of barbecue tongs, a small phlegmatic lump. It was pulsing. It was alive. Podgorny went over to Cookie and let his pet loose. It wasn't pretty.

"Fuck! He's defiling all that I hold sacred and I'm sitting here, letting him do it." Rika got up and walked to the other side of the roof, sat staring at the moon, drinking her beer and fighting off tears.

Keri couldn't move. She just whispered "my story," then nothing else. Couldn't even blink. Podgorny and his pet drained the three sorority sisters dry. Then he picked up his bucket, replaced the beastie, and climbed back out into the night. It was silent. Keri could hear cars far off on the highway, a few insomniac birds and a soft insistent beeping.

"Damn. She's not picking up."

"Maybe she's out, wizzwah."

"Try and retain something for more than your usual thirty seconds, Kermie love. It's a cellular phone link. She wears it all the time."

"Still. I don't see why yer goin all wussyface. We just land and dust this jamoke. No probs."

"Cause this is my sister we're talkin' about. And if St. Jerome is running around loose down there, she could be in deep shit."

"Yeah. Pretty hard fuckin' cheese. When do we land?"

"Your compassion overwhelms me. Asshole tool!"

Kermit and Friendly went on screaming sweet nothings until they landed. Everything was ready. They were armed to the teeth.

Somewhere over some forest, Kermit had received an urgent message from GERMS (who had now branched out from sever rabbits to general

pinko terror wherever it reared its ugly head):

TO: Kermit the Marine

RE: Current Mission

Effective immediately, suspend hunt for Pinetree Enemy Rapist. Autopsy shows Prof. Seibenheller (of coed sex scandal) was actually notorious fugitive Chloe Astroturf, Mistress of Penguins, a known associate of the St. Jerome gang. Plants on the world terror network report rumor activity high re: Jerome's return from dead, aided by mysterious eldritch forces unknown. You are to investigate and terminate if necessary any illicit activities on premises.

"Well, my dear, it would seem we're to have some company."

"Yes. This is that Kermit the Marine you've told me so much about. Shall I send Podgorny out to the airfield to dispose of the wretch?"

"Ah, Zog. You are lovely. All that power but so naive. Kermit is one of the most dangerous forces on this planet. I ought to know. He killed me, after all."

"But he's just one man."

"And a good cigar is an aardvark."

"Pardon?"

"Never mind. I do wish you hadn't gotten those circuits crossed when you brought me back. Quite embarrassing on occasion. Still, there may be something to your suggestion."

"Sending Podgorny?"

"Yes. At the very least it will rid us of that troublesome buffoon. And give us sole possession of his rocket fuel formula. With which we can subvert the entire structure of reality itself!"

"Pardon?"

"With which we can achieve total world domination! Now, go. Send Podgorny and his blood-sucking tumor off to their doom. Maybe we'll even get lucky and the toad will off that pain-in-the-butt Marine too."

(Good zots! This is a pickle, ain't it? Next time: the dramatic showdown—militant gay Marine vs. bloodsucking mucus from hell... plus: mop-up at Kappa Nu; Keri and Rika get pissed; Jerome and Zog ((the film of the musical)) and five more reasons not to fuck with a Friendly.)

Buzz Off



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(Part I of this essay appeared last issue.
We've still misplaced the title—sorry.)

To return to last issue's subject of abnormal sociology: Few of us will deny the real reason sex, drugs, and rock & roll pose such a monstrous threat to our way of life is that we, as responsible members of the community, are no longer able to indulge our ecstatic urges as we did between the ages of 12 and 29.

Still, those urges do affect our actions even into our mid-forties. Let's face it: without sex, there would be no need for abortions, and smutty magazines promoting violence against women would disappear from the 7-11 racks. We wouldn't have to go to the polls every year to keep young boys and girls from dancing naked in the bar across from our spouse's place of employment. We wouldn't need Popes to tell us that contraception is wrong. We wouldn't spend hundreds of billions of dollars on psychiatric counselling and aversion therapy. And we wouldn't consume as much Vitamin E.

Perhaps pop-veterinarian Thomas Rettig's proposed program, modeled after his franchised Snip and Slit Spray and Neuter Clinics, is a bit extreme, but one can't deny he understands the crisis confronting America today. If there were no sex drive to begin with, there'd be nothing to miss when it's gone.

Drugs have now invaded even the sacred locker rooms of professional sports. Far more frightening, however, is that illegal drug use is rampant among so-called "idealists" in the health care and legal professions, especially among volunteer paramedics and public defenders. As an ironic result, the very worst people in our society, the poor and indignant, may be receiving the very best care and advice this nation provides. It is well documented that committed individuals, even in a state of toxic shock, provide better service to their patients and clients than perfectly sober members of the AMA or ABA who view 18 holes on the links as a deductible business expense.

Some romantics have tried to encourage negative public opinion against hallucinogens and narcotics by pointing to celebrities and other public figures who have died from overdose or medical complications. The problems with such an approach is obvious. It's impossible to find a proper victim to use as an example—someone with the stature of Jesse Helms or Jerry Falwell, for instance. One should not forget the Moral Majority in this country is made up of approximately 54% of the less than 5% in the nation who have

any morals at all.

Therefore, the "sympathetic victim" play produces such distasteful dead creatures as John Belushi, Diane Linkletter, Sid Vicious, Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix, and Lenny Bruce. What these misguidedly romantics forgot is it was drugs that created these despicable people to begin with. The only good that comes from widespread drug use is that it makes possible the use of mass-discipline, when appropriate, by simply altering a compound or adding a bit of something with a little more kick to the basic brew.

But what is at the root of all this nation's problems is music, particularly rock & roll. Rock & roll continues to foster rebellious attitudes in our nation's youth. We should remember that rock & roll is Negro music. Negroes have seldom felt much more than benign contempt for our system of government and have relentlessly attempted to destroy us by corrupting our children and making them dance to suggestive rhythms while listening to explicit lyrics about jelly roll gum drops and peppermint sticks.

Just how successful the Negroes have been in their campaign was never more apparent than at the recent U.S. Senate hearings in Washington, during which members of the Parents' Music Resource Center, including the wife of Senator Albert Gore, D-Tenn., and the wife of Treasury Secretary James A. Baker III, were openly mocked by a Negro-sympathizer disguised as an American businessman.

Francis Vincent Zappa, 44, of Laurel Canyon, California, should never have been allowed into the hearing room to begin with. A so-called "avant-garde" composer, guitarist, and one-time leader of the radical terrorist organization Mothers Of Invention (MOI), Zappa is a convicted felon who openly promotes sexual activity as an expression of freedom. It goes without saying, of course, that Mr. Zappa was convicted of acting in at least one pornographic film in his youth. The liner notes for the first of his more than 60 albums (Freak Out, Verve, 1967) contain a message Zappa allegedly relayed to a Whiskey-A-Go-Go audience in 1964. "If your children ever find out how lame you really are," the message goes, "they will murder you in your sleep."

What I find particularly repugnant about Mr. Zappa's remarks during the Senate hearings is that he apparently understands the political process very well, perhaps too well for our or his own good. While most of those at the hearings were content to talk about religion and morality and the Ten Commandments, Zappa had the audacity to note that the hearings were a political affair, and that the focus on "porn-rock," as he called it, was an attempt by President Reagan and his supporters to distract public attention from a deficit reduction bill intended to raise domestic taxes by \$38 billion. It was only through the quick thinking of Senator Slade Gorton, R-Wash., that damage to the President's programs was minimized. Gorton defused Zappa's charges by calling him "boorish" and "insulting" to Tipper Gore and Susan Baker. The news media quickly focused on Gorton's red-faced outrage, and soon everybody forgot that Mr. Zappa had merely repeated what Mrs. Gore and Mrs. Baker had themselves said in earlier testimony.

And once again, an America of substance and content was narrowly averted.

It is not enough to look like one of us, Mr. Zappa. You must think like one of us as well. You can put on our clothes. You can groom your hair neatly, but we can still see the ponytail in the back. You can even use our syntax, but you must remember that we are the parents, not the world, and we have no intention whatsoever of being murdered in our sleep.

As comic books were found to be harmful to eyes and morals, so will your music be found to be harmful to ears and morals, and you yourself, Mr. Zappa, will offer the Recordings Code, as EC did the Comics Code. And we will all live together in relative peace. We are a civilized people, Mr. Zappa. You are no Victor Jarra, and this is not Chile. I'm sure you'll agree we are being most fair. You do value the fingers on your hands, don't you?

For we should not forget that in addition to being a tail-gunner during World War II, the late Senator Joseph McCarthy remains perhaps this country's foremost theoretical ethical positivist. More than any American leader since Abraham Lincoln, Juggernaut Joe, as his admirers affectionately dubbed him, was a firm believer in fooling most of the people as often as you could. That's only good political savvy, not to mention sound business sense, Mr. Zappa.

As noted philosopher and social critic Ayn Rand noted during her honorary doctorate acceptance speech at Bob Jones University in 1970: "Life is not meant to be fair, and neither is America," the diminutive and engaging old woman said, the body of her husband Ian Fleming at her side. And as she concluded her tirade against welfare, civil rights, and social programs, which she saw as the greatest danger to our nation's soul, Mrs. Rand looked skyward, and those in the audience swooned. "Juggernaut Joe!" she cried, raising her arms like a high priestess, "Oh, how the world still needs you, Juggernaut Joe."

And I echo her sentiments. It's time we look the enemy straight in the eye, and do so without fear, without recrimination. We are not our own worst enemy. We are our only ally. We are the best. We are the destiny of the universe. And we get to win this time.

So join with me, my fellow Americans, in bringing back the most important part of the 1950s, in exerting the responsibility of those who are unable or unwilling to do so themselves, in the spirit of Joe McCarthy, in the spirit of national capitalist love.

— Jonathan Schollie-Siegel

On Carol *by Prudence Gaelor*

"Death, depression, divorce, dishes and dogs—these are the five D's of fine writing," Jenny said as she established herself behind her typewriter. "I'm going to win that contest even if I have to go against every belief I have of what makes a good story." Jenny placed a sheet of paper in the typewriter and set her margins. Everything was set to go. Her fingers hesitated at the keyboard, her mind went blank. "I am going to write now." She stared vacantly at the keyboard for a few minutes; still nothing came.

What started out as a blank stare rapidly worked its way into careful study of the clutter on the table. Piles of papers, Fresca cans and candy wrappers were heaped up in mounds around her. Looking away, she rubbed her eyes. When she looked back the mounds appeared to be bigger. But that would be impossible, wouldn't it? Jenny closed her eyes in disbelief. When she reopened them the mounds appeared to have grown again. Jenny found herself repeating the process of trying to catch the mounds in the act of growing. Unsuccessful the first time, she tried again several times much in the same manner one goes about trying to catch the light in the refrigerator while it is still off. Although she didn't catch the mounds growing, Jenny was certain that they were enlarging and at a rapid pace. She began to envision mountainous mounds towering over her and then collapsing. She could see herself engulfed by avalanches of paper, saving herself from suffocating by breathing the air trapped in the Fresca cans. Should she find herself turned around, she would drool, gravity would suck the saliva down, thus giving her a sense of direction, preventing her from digging deeper into the paper. She would swim out of the paper, emerging into sixty-watt light. She would write the Fresca company, telling them how one of their soda cans saved her life. They would write her back asking her to be in all of their commercials and ads. Then a great Hollywood director would spot her and beg her to take the leading role in his film, a performance which would later win her an Oscar. She would become the most in-demand star in Hollywood, and she'd be offered fifty million dollars a movie. Then she wouldn't need to write the story for the stupid contest. What was twenty-five bucks compared to millions?

Jenny started clearing off the table. She got a giant green trashbag and started dumping things into it, handfuls at a time. Soda cans, candy wrappers, old newspapers, the tacky pewter animals her aunt gave her for her seventh birthday—they all went in. She stood the trashbag at the end of the table, and with a sweeping motion she shoved in the remaining crumbs and bits of paper. With a wet cloth she wiped the table. She placed the phone on her right and her typing paper on her left. She got a fresh Fresca and sandwiched it between the phone and the fishbowl. Now everything was just right. She had everything she needed within reach, so now she could just sit and write. She was going to write.

Although she had no ideas for a story, Jenny wasn't all that anxious. She wasn't concerned with plot or theme, rising action, climax, denouement or any deep meaning. Stories that included any of these never won. Jenny wanted to enter a piece that was boring but beautifully written. She wanted a story that meandered to an ending five pages after any merciful ending might occur. This story would win.

Having no idea of a logical place to start, Jenny decided to start with one of the five D's. She could introduce her character doing the dishes. Maybe it would be her wedding china which she received as part of the settlement. Jenny started to type:

Carol swept her sun-bleached blonde hair into a knot resting at the nape of her neck. Humming Brahms, she immersed the fragile china dishes into the sink's warm, sudsy water. With a circular motion, she dreamily cleaned the bone-white china, tracing her finger around the frost-like gold etching on the plate's rim. She lifted her hand from the water, watching delicate suds crackle and pop between her fingers. White turning red, water turning red as her hands slowly dissolved in the dishwashing solution, the oils of her skin absorbed. No more greasy dishwater. Mr. Bubble's revenge, the epitome of scrubbing bubbles, call it what you will. Irradiated, mutated bubbles eating away. The flesh dissolving in acidic saliva. The flesh

Jenny ripped the page out of the typewriter. She would have to start again. Maybe Carol would paint in this scene, or perhaps she would take to the bay with her copy of Sacher-Masoch's Venus in Furs in the original German, the pages yellow and worn from frequent readings. Then she would lie in the sun in her bathing suit and cutoffs, while her dogs, Thoreau and Nairobi, romped along the bank of a nearby creek. Maybe she would even be inspired by the day's beauty to meditate or do yoga or something. Jenny's head filled with ideas. She started again.

Carol sat on the hardwood rocking chair on the porch, enjoying the evening's cool breeze. Nairobi came and sat beside her. Absently, Carol scratched behind the German shepherd's ears, while remembering the summer evenings spent in the old chair, rocking in her mother's arms, her mother relating to her in soothing tones how she and her own mother, Carol's grandmother, used to rock together. Her hands were cool against her warm

forehead. Together they would wait for her father to come home from work. He worked three miles away, but every day her father would walk to and from work taking a well-worn footpath that ran through the field behind their house and wound its way through the woods into town. It would take him an hour to walk home from work, and when Carol was very young, she would fall asleep on her mother's lap, the creaking of the rocker a lullaby.

Nairobi thumped her tail, appreciating the attention. Thoreau was nowhere in sight. Carol decided that he had finally slunk to his favorite spot, the cool shade under the porch. "Do you find it hot, Nairobi?"

Three hours and twenty-seven pages later, Jenny was still hacking away, ideas racing through her skull. Her back ached so she stood up and walked around for a few minutes before returning to her work. She fixed herself another drink and rushed back to the typewriter to continue where she left off. She had no idea how to end the story, but she kept coming up with images and events that demanded to be given equal time and bearing in the story. She soared through the next twenty-something pages, filling them with Carol's memories and mental wanderings. Again she stopped; she was tired of writing and she was sick of the story, but she was obsessed with the idea of completion. Without looking up from her typewriter, she reached for her drink but could not find it. Sometime during the excitement she had spilled her Fresca into the fishbowl, Rhiannon and Uther Killjoy snuffed out in a carbonated fizz.

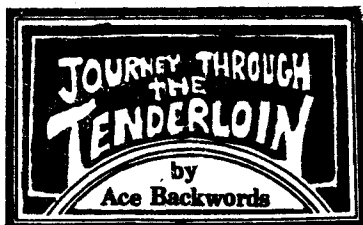
Jenny got up and went to the bathroom. She returned to her seat. She got out a pencil to write down the order of the images she had left to describe. "First, I need to describe the scene in the movies where she is reminded of the boyfriend that she used to have in college, then I will have to cut to an expository section where their first meeting is described—in the parking lot of the Albert F. Meiersohn Symphony Hall. Note: He had brought in a bottle of red wine to sip while enjoying Bach's Goldberg Variations and now he was unable to find his car. Carol brought him home as he looked helpless and she was always one to take in strays. Then, a flashback to when Carol was five and brought in her first stray dog. Maybe a list of other strays taken in would enhance the image. After this we should cut back to her leaving the movie theater. She should run into someone she knew from school and they could smile at each other from across the lobby. They do not speak. Carol can then remember how close they used to be, the activities they did together, all the fun times. Then she can pause on what drove them apart, or did they drift apart? Think on that. After the movies, she can go to the after-hours place across from the theater for espresso. There she will run into her ex-husband and maybe they will talk awhile. She will return home and water her ferns. "—But now what?" she asked herself. "I still need to include her mother's alcoholism that stemmed from the trauma of her grandmother's suicide and led to her father's estrangement and her parents' eventual divorce and how during this period of her life she went to live with her father's sister and how, living with her aunt, she learned to channel out her negative energies through yoga and meditation from her aunt's artist boyfriend. She also learned pottery making from him, and on Sundays they would take their pottery to local craft fairs. All this is necessary to develop her character as it explains why she was unhappy with her marriage later on, or at least the underlying motivations for divorce. And then I have to describe the time when the squall came through and broke all the pottery. I'm sure I'm leaving something out, I know there was something else."

Carol, immediately upon entering the lounge, was seated at a small, isolated table in the corner by a young girl with close-cropped hair wearing a yellow dress. Carol shivered and drew her sweater over her shoulders. She had been seated under the air conditioning vent. For some reason she always seemed to be the one seated under the vent. The waitress came over to the table, another young girl with bright eyes and a perky mouth. She took Carol's order and shortly returned with a steaming cup of espresso, a twist of lemon laid delicately on the saucer by the spoon. Just at the same time, a man dressed in a crisp grey suit walked up. Carol's eyes strayed over the familiar lips—he had lips like pimentos—into the yellow-green eyes of her ex-husband. After exchanging a few of the usual empty civilities, Carol found herself still attracted to this man that she had left three years before. "And how is your wife?" she found herself asking. Brad bragged about her endless string of social and charitable contributions and then went on to describe how remarkable a hostess she was and the wonderful cocktail party she had organized for his boss at which the governor and three senators were in attendance and the marvelous impression she made. Carol, however, wasn't listening. She could feel her hair coming loose from the knot she had wrapped it in, and all she could think of was letting it all down, wrapping her long hair around Brad's neck, drawing him closer, bringing him back to her. There was a lull in the conversation and Carol realized that Brad must have asked her a question. Embarrassed, she excused herself and hid herself in the soft pink reprieve of the ladies' 9

room. She looked in the mirror and was surprised to discover her cheeks flushed. She attributed it to the lighting and wound her hair more tightly into the knot.

One hundred thirty-seven pages and five Vivarin later, Jenny was still writing, pausing only to go to the bathroom or get a drink of water (she had run out of Fresca). Twice she had fallen asleep.

She missed work and she forgot to call her mother. Immersed, Jenny didn't answer the phone. Her mother, worried, called the police. When the police, with the aid of Jenny's landlord, broke into the apartment, they found Jenny passed out over her work. Her typewriter was still on; she was in the middle of a sentence.



CHAPTER 11: THE BACKPACK

I was furious! I paced back and forth. That jerk! She was up there on stage, right at this very instant, in front of all those men—the bastards!

And here I was, sitting here alone on this offramp, wasting my time.

What the hell was I doing here, anyway?

I took out my copy of *THE LUST REVIEW*, the one with the nude photos of Charlene in it. I took it out from my secret hiding place underneath my mattress. There she was—blonde hair, long, long legs...I ripped the entire paper in half. I ripped it in quarters. I ripped it and ripped it and ripped it until there was nothing left to rip. Just shredded bits of newsprint. I threw all the hacked-up pieces of paper into the air. They all went swirling into the breeze like a paper hurricane. They floated through space down the man-made hill towards the warehouses and the bay below.

I lay down on that moldy mattress and tried to sleep. The stars were twinkling above. Who was the lame-brained idiot who said the stars were romantic?

From across the Bay I could see the city lights of Oakland and Berkeley twinkling in the distance.

I noticed a ripped-up piece of paper lying by my face. I picked it up. It was a piece of Charlene's face. I could see one of Charlene's saucy cat-eyes staring silently at me. I could see part of her lipstick-smeared lips smiling at me. I looked at it for a second and then wadded it up and hurled it over the hill.

I couldn't sleep, as usual. I got up and rummaged through my backpack. It was leaning against one of the huge cement blocks that supported the Bridge. I got out my toothbrush and a tube of "CREST, the proven cavity fighter." I walked along the dirt path and then down the off-ramp to Fremont Street, and made my way to the bus terminal on First and Mission.

Inside the terminal, the usual late-night crowd of bums and delinquents were hanging out. It was the only place open all night where you could get out of the cold.

I walked into the men's room. I had come to consider it my bathroom away from home. I brushed my teeth, scrubbing away the starch and donuts that made up my daily diet.

I looked at my face in the mirror. It seemed like this was the first time I had looked at my face in the mirror since I left high school. My skin was dirty and worn. I rubbed my chin, noticing the first stubble of a beard. I had a crazy thought: my chin was losing its virginity, from the inside out.

I took out my comb and tried to run it through my hair. It was hopeless. My hair was matted in big clumps of dirt and weeds and god-knows-what else. I took out my blue knit lumberjack hat from my back pocket. I put it on my head. I looked tough and hard.



Like a street person.

I walked back to my place on the off-ramp. As soon as I got there I knew something was wrong.

"SHIT!"

Somebody had stolen my backpack.

Surprise, surprise. While I had been brushing my teeth, some bastard had snuck up here and made off with my backpack and all my stuff.

A trail of my discarded clothes had been left behind, leading down towards Fremont Street. I had only been at the bus terminal about 15 minutes. The backpacking culprit couldn't have gone very far. I sprinted off down the path in pursuit.

I ran down the off-ramp. On Fremont Street I spotted one of my socks.

THE BASTARD! THE BASTARD!

Up ahead I could see a couple of hippy-types hitching on the Folsom Street off-ramp.

"HEY, HEY!" I called, waving my arms. "Did you see a guy come by here a couple of minutes ago wearing a green backpack?"

Yeah," said one of the hippies. "Just a few minutes ago. He was headed towards Market Street."

"THANKS!"

I sprinted towards Market Street. I'll cut him off at the pass, I thought. I ran across Mission and cut through an alleyway. Up ahead was Market Street. I surged onward, wildly searching in every direction, gasping for breath.

THERE HE WAS! Up ahead I could see him. The backpacking culprit. He was walking away from me, with his back to me, totally oblivious of the speeding fury about to descend on him.

I pounced on his back with a flying tackle that knocked us both off our feet. We bounced across the sidewalk, kicking and screaming in frenzied terror. "YAAAAHHH!!!"

He was on his belly—screaming—pinned down by the weight of the backpack. I was on top of him, struggling to rip the pack from his back. I was wrenching the shoulder strap over his arm when—for the first time—I...suddenly...realized...

It wasn't my backpack

IT WASN'T MY BACKPACK!

I jumped off him and ran down the street. "YOU CRAZY—!! YOU CRAZY—!!" he yelled. I didn't look back. I just kept running and running and running.

The only sound was my sneakers padding across the empty streets. The streetlights were yellow and sickly, like a weirdly illuminated dream. I ran and ran and ran, but I couldn't get his words out of my head.

"YOU CRAZY—!!"

We were all at FAT'S CAFE. Eugene McKlean, that great man, had just gotten paid for his latest mega-smash best-seller, *Big Tit Foot Fetish* (can you believe that crap title?) and he was treating us to breakfast.

"Big assignment tonight," said McKlean, forking in the eggs and sausage. "Pussywillow Divine."

"Pussywillow Divine?" I asked.

"Yep. Live and onstage at the Bachelor Brothers Theatre. And yours truly will be there to COVER THE STORY!"

"Very big deal, I'm sure. What kind of act does she do?"

"Oh, she performs unbelievable feats of gynecological wonder. Mind-boggling stuff, you can bet. Here, take a look at her press kit." He handed me some glossy photos and stuff. She had bleached white hair and was holding a mop. The caption said: "PUSSYWILLOW DIVINE. BURLESQUE COMEDIAN."

"What does she do? Tell jokes while she's stripping?"

"Not exactly," said McKlean. He looked at me thoughtfully. "SHE'S the joke."

"I want to go with you."

"Why's that? So you can drool over that Charlene girly and make an ass of yourself?"

"No. I just want to talk to her."

"You're chasing after a mirage, kid. That's all pornography is—a big mirage. Y'know, pay no attention to the little man behind the curtain, because if you look behind the neon lights and the hype all you'll find are some worn out hookers. That's it."

"You think you're so smart, don't you?" I said. "Did it ever occur to you I just wanted to give her this?" I held up the good-bye letter I had written the previous night. It had taken me 12 drafts to get it right. "I'm leaving this town. I'm going back to New Jersey. I just want to tell her goodbye and give her this letter."

"Letter?" exclaimed McKlean. "How many pages is that? It looks more like 'War and Peace, Volume One'." He polished off his last sausage. "Kid, I'm glad you finally got your head screwed on right. I always knew you weren't a complete chump. Let's go check out the show. And if you behave yourself I might even introduce you to Pussywillow Divine..."

(The author has requested that the concluding chapter of this tale be printed in our "bastard sister" publication, *INSIDE STROKE*. As ye editrix was too astounded for words at the gall of someone asking to serialize a story whose appropriateness for *IS* was always questionable at best from the beginning and then deciding that, after all, we couldn't even print the ending here it was so pornographic and blatant, she can only apologize to others who were likewise misled or duped, and assure readers that she will do her best to screen serialized stories in their entirety from now on.)

A Strange Emptiness

by Lawrence Oberc

Someone was knocking on my door. I placed the fourth beer of the night on a table in front of me and walked heavily to the door, feeling the beers. I opened the door and saw a lovely woman who was probably destined to someone else's room.

"Yeah?" I asked, grimly.

"Larry?" she asked. "Remember me?"

I felt a tug on my pants leg and looked down; there was a little girl smiling up at me. She looked to be around five or six.

"Is that Daddy?" asked the girl.

"Shush!" said her mother.

"Who were you looking for?" I asked, pretending not to be Larry.

"Larry, I know it's you. Don't you remember me?"

"I'm not sure."

"I'm Tina. Remember? We used to go out in high school."

Shit, I thought. If this is Tina, and that's her daughter, who is the... "Oh," I said, "Tina. How're you doing? Sorry I didn't recognize you. Here, come on in." I wondered what she wanted, especially after all this time. The last time I saw Tina was about five years ago. I was going out with her on a regular basis, but then some hassles came up and I had to get out of town in a hurry. By the time I got back to town, I had forgotten all about her.

"Who's the kid?" I asked.

"Becky," said Tina. "Isn't she cute?"

"I guess. Hey, would you like a beer? I know I would."

"Sure."

I walked into the kitchen and got two beers. When I handed Tina her beer, Becky was staring at me strangely.

"Is he or isn't he?" she asked.

"Shush!" said Tina.

"So, what have you been up to?" I asked.

"Not much," answered Tina. "I'm working in a bank right now."

MANHATTANO

(in the style of Edna St. Vincent Millay)

by Michael Polo

We were very tired, we were very crabby.

We argued back and forth all night with a cabby.

We hailed, "Good-morrow, lady!" to a woman with a bag

Which prompted her with piercing voice to nag, nag, nag

And then she unholstered a snubnose .32

And we gave her all our money and our car keys, too.

Phew!

by Susan Packie

The original problem was a water shortage. The reservoirs might have been four-fifths full; nevertheless, they were not spilling over and hence a drought was declared. What was to be done?

No sooner had I gotten a drink of water than I heard the rumble of a helicopter overhead. "That's your first and last glass of water for today. Don't you realize we have a water shortage?" a voice boomed from out of the sky.

Helicopter surveillance! I consoled myself with the thought that it wouldn't be hovering over my house all day long. The glass of water left me and I flushed the toilet.

"This is your second warning. Flush that toilet one more time and risk imprisonment or a stiff fine."

By now I was becoming extremely upset, and what do I do when I become extremely upset? I wash my hair.

This time the helicopter landed and the pilot shut off my water. "I warned you twice before. Now you've gone way too far."

"One drink, one flush, and one clean head? You're violating my civil rights!" I shouted hysterically.

"Well, your extravagance is violating the civil rights of all other law-abiding Americans!" the pilot retorted testily.

What could I say? I was completely overcome with guilt. I didn't even try to turn the tap back on, so I could no longer drink cool, refreshing water, bathe in bubbles galore, show off my whistle-clean hair and, worst of all, send my wastes swirling out to the town's sewer system.

The same words and reactions echoed throughout millions of homes. No water, not now, not until ten or fifteen hurricanes had passed over. Two hundred and forty million smelly, dehydrated Americans living in smellier, unhygienic homes.

Now the country really has a problem on its hands!

It pays pretty good and I manage to keep ahead of all my bills.

How about you, what have you been up to?"

"Not much. Just school and work."

"School?"

"Yeah. I'm in grad school."

"What are you majoring in?"

"A little of everything."

"Is that Daddy or not?" asked Becky, bored.

"Quiet now," said Tina. "Can't you see we're talking?"

I took a few long draws from my beer. This couldn't be happening. At least not to me. The thing that bothered me the most was the resemblance Becky had to me.

"How did you find out where I live?" I asked.

"Your mother told me," answered Tina. "I ran into her at the grocery store the other day." I pictured my mother talking to Tina. I knew the next time I saw her she'd say something like, "Shit, Larry! You should have said something about this to me earlier. I nearly had a heart attack when I found out!"

"Why'd you stop by?" I asked.

"I wanted my daughter to meet her father."

"Are you sure I'm her father?"

"Positive."

"So that is my Daddy!" yelled Becky, running across the room and jumping in my lap.

"I don't have any money," I said, trying to ignore Becky's squirming in my lap.

"That's not why I'm here," said Tina.

"Daddy, Daddy..." cooed Becky, jumping up and down.

"Then why?" I asked, noticing some of Becky's dribble on my shirt.

"I just wanted Becky to meet her father. That's all."

"Why?"

"You'd want to know who your father was, wouldn't you?"

"I guess."

"Well, Becky kept on asking me, so I decided to let her meet you."

"You sure you don't have anything else in mind?" I asked, realizing that I'd have to give up drinking if I had to pay child support.

"No," said Tina, "I just wanted her to meet you."

"Well," I said, feeling pretty damn awkward, "would you like another beer?"

"Sure," said Tina.

"You got any soda pop in there?" asked Becky.

"Sure don't," I said. "Sorry." I picked up Tina's empty can off the table and walked into the kitchen, grabbed two more beers from the fridge and walked back to where Tina was sitting. Becky was waiting for me in my chair.

"Thanks," said Tina when I handed her her beer.

"You sure you don't have any soda pop in there?" asked Becky, sounding like I was holding out on her.

"Positive," I said.

"We'll get you some soda pop later," said Tina.

"Promise?"

"Promise."

"Sorry," I said.

"Sorry?" asked Tina. "About what?"

"That I didn't know."

"How could you have known? You left town so fast there was no way you could have known."

"It just feels weird," I said. "You know, having all of this behind me and not knowing anything about it."

"Don't worry about it," said Tina. "I have everything under control."

"Do you want to get back together?" I asked, not sure whether or not it would be a good idea.

"No," said Tina. "What we had ended when you left. I just wanted Becky to see what you were like."

"You sure?"

"Yes," said Tina, firmly but gently. "Look, I'm sorry, but we have to be going, I've got to get Becky a soda pop. I'm glad I got to see you again and I hope everything works out in school."

"I'm really confused," I said. "I don't know what to say."

"Don't worry about it," said Tina. "We won't bother you any more."

"Remember, Mommy," said Becky, "you promised."

"I remember," said Tina, winking at me. "We really have to be going."

I walked them to the door. Tina stopped and kissed me lightly on the lips.

"How about me?" asked Becky. I knelt down and kissed Becky on the forehead. She slobbered on my chin.

"See you later," I said as Tina and Becky walked into the hallway.

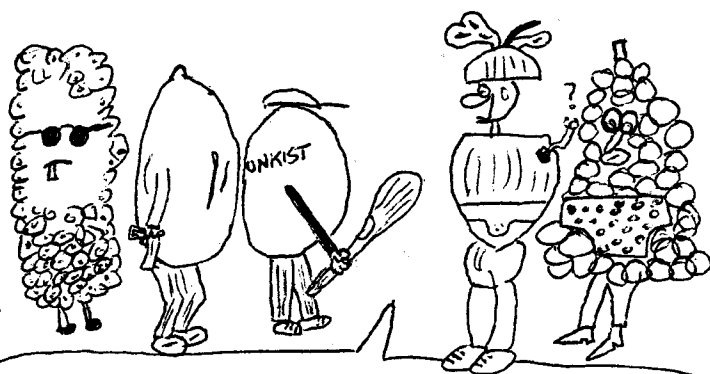
"Maybe," said Tina.

"Bye bye," said Becky.

"Bye," I said.

I watched them walk down the hallway. They turned the corner and I was left with the sound of their footsteps. Then there was nothing. I walked into my apartment and closed the door. I got another beer from the fridge...Something was wrong inside. I shouldn't have let them leave so easily. I had an ugly feeling that I wouldn't see them again...There weren't any hard feelings either way. But there was something. Something I wasn't used to. Inside I had a strange emptiness I had never had before.

WHEN FRUIT GOES BAD



RASPBERRY RED, LEMON YELLOW,
ORANGE ORANGE! YOU HAVE A LOT OF
NERVE SHOWING UP ON FRUIT OF THE
LOOMS TERRITORY!

SNIDE CRITIC REVIEWS

by J.P. Morgan

Good morning, movie fans! (Is it morning as you're reading this? Whatever.) Have you been watching the Canned Film Festival series? So has the Snide Critic, and yours truly has mixed feelings about it. On the one hand, lovers of classic schlock can indulge in a reliable weekly dose of the best of the worst. On the other hand, you have to sit through deadly unfunny network-style sitcom bits and countless Dr. Pepper commercials! The Godzilla-type Pepper spots were supposed to tie in with the release of GODZILLA 1985...but after that bomb nosedived at the box office, I guess they felt the commercials had to go somewhere. What really makes it annoying is that you only see seven minutes of movie before they cut for more commercials and shit-com! Time it yourself...you'll see.

Anyway!—I was going to review some films from the CFF (ROBOT MONSTER, DOCTOR OF DOOM, SANTA CLAUS CONQUERS THE MARTIANS), but since many LJ readers have also just seen them, it might be better to deal with different stuff, yes? So onward we go with two old things and two new things! Begin:

INVASION OF THE SAUCER MEN (1957)—An old favorite—but the attempted humor sorta makes this flick drag, man. Classic bug-eyed, huge-brained midget aliens land near Lovers' Lane and inject alcohol (through nasty needle-tipped fingers) into intruders. Pre-Riddler Frank Gorshin is a victim. Overage "teens" blow up aliens by shining headlights at 'em. Army blows up spaceship by accident! An alien hand with an eye on its back (!) detaches itself and creeps about to puncture ties and menace kids. Fun if you're in the mood.

TERROR BENEATH THE SEA (1966)—Future "Street Fighter" Sonny Chiba battles dreaded Aqua-Cyborgs! Film opens with press conference at new "smart" torpedo test:

Captain: It's 99% guaranteed the new torpedo won't turn back on us!

Reporter: What about the other 1%? That part bothers me!

Captain: It would bother us all!

But suddenly a human (?) silhouette appears on the screen! Later, Chiba and girl investigate underwater. They're captured by Lovecraftian cross-eyed fish men! Aqua-Cyborgs!—created by mad doctors led by creep in sunglasses who plans to rule the world! Normal humans are turned into monsters via amazing process featuring gelatinous glop, decomposing ears, artificial rubber guts, and stop-motion veins, pustules, and scales! A real treat.

BIG TROUBLE IN LITTLE CHINA—Yes, this was released recently...on a mercifully brief stop at the theatres before the videocassette graveyard! Kurt Russell does his John Wayne imitation as he faces the 2000-year-old Lo Pan, who in turn needs a green-eyed girl in order to become corporeal. This film as all sorts'a stuff: supernatural Kung-Fu warriors, a toothy demon, rotting corpses, neon-lined altars, secret passages, a flying eyeball critter, white slavery, magical transformations...and it's still yawn-provoking! Russell's character (a trucker who wants his rig back) seems more a hindrance than a help, there's no sense of wonder or danger (sword- and gunfights galore, but no blood), and a lame ending equals grumbling audience. John Carpenter, what happened to ya? And the screenplay was written by W.D. Richter, who did the infinitely better BUCKAROO BANZAI! **ALIENS ("The New Movie")**—Boo!! Another sequel that doesn't measure up to the original. Everything from ALIEN is encored—Sigourney Weaver, face huggers, chest busters, an android, etc...we also have to sit through some coed space-marine business, along with mucho clichés: the last-surviving child, the "dead" victim who opens her eyes, the space-copter returning at the last second—and the mama alien also gets sucked out of the airlock! (When Weaver wears a mechanical suit to battle Mama, she resembles one of those Japanese giant cartoon robots.) Instead of the corporate android (a good guy, here), a weaselly corporate human endangers everybody. This film really should have been pared down—it's like two hours and ten minutes long, and feels like it, what with all the repetitive action, unintentional laughs, exploding sets, exploding aliens, Weaver mothering lil' girl, etc. etc. (Mama alien is a neat beastie, though). Director James Cameron's TERMINATOR was much better.

Oops...just had some more thoughts on the Canned Filmfest: they did a real hatchet job on THE CRAWLING HAND! They even clipped the malt shop attack (with "Oom Papa Mow Mow" on jukebox)! I dunno...first IT CAME FROM HOLLYWOOD mixed schlock-film clips with stupid, patronizing "comedy" bits by John Candy, Dan Ackroyd, Gilda Radner (ugh) and Cheech & Chong, then the TV special E.T. AND FRIENDS, with equally leaden skits by Robin Williams...these things are made by people with no appreciation for good junk—and so they feel the need to 'make it funnier' by adding lame-headed filler. Bah!

Right, enough moaning; let's end on a word of praise! If you haven't already, by all means acquire a copy of Michael Weldon's The Psychotronic Encyclopedia of Film (Ballantine, 1983)—a huge, \$16.95 paperback, and worth every penny! An invaluable guide for Snide Critis everywhere, it reviews thousands of weirdfilms in Weldon's meat-of-the-matter style. Great, great stuff!

And there ye be, folks...make sure to tune in next issue, when the Snide Critic probably reviews David Cronenberg's remake of THE FLY! (I was going to write some dumb tag line about giant mutant zippers swallowing entire cities, but it would've sounded silly, so I didn't.)



SAVAGE SAYS: "THERE'S NO FREE LUNCH"

by Dorian Tenore

As of this writing, Columbia Pictures' *STAND BY ME* has not been released in New York yet. (Ye editrix and I went to a hotshot special screening.) Therefore, before I tell you anything more about it, let's take a moment to pray real hard:

Please, Lord, help Columbia to use tender loving care in marketing this film. Don't let those bozos put any blurbs in the ads like "Master storyteller Stephen King does it again!" (*STAND BY ME* is NOT a horror story) or "From Rob Reiner, the director who brought you *THE SURE THING* and *THIS IS SPINAL TAP*" (*STAND BY ME* is NOT a zany, lighthearted comedy!!). And please, Lord, don't let 'em try to pass *STAND BY ME* off as some kind of horny-teenager flick or fluffy kiddie show.

Thank you. Amen. (Looks Like Someone heard ya, kiddo.—ed.)

In case you haven't figured it out, this is one extra-special movie—if it's going to be thrust into the ever-fickle marketplace like just another mindless summer flick, it'll never find the right audience. (Ever since last summer's delightful paranoid comedy/thriller *GOTCHA!* was almost scuttled by *PORKY'S*-type ad campaigns, I've been on the lookout for similar catastrophic errors in promotional judgement.)

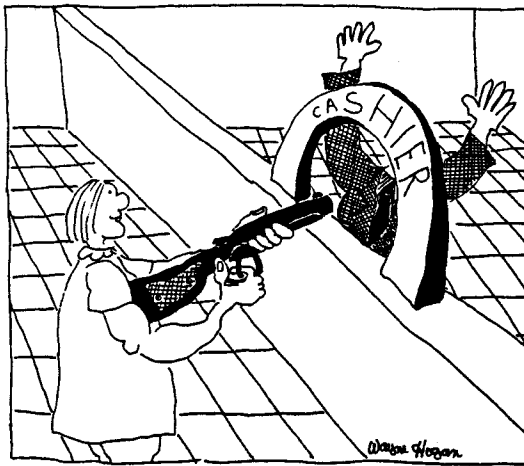
STAND BY ME, Rob Reiner's film adaptation of the Stephen King novella "The Body" (one of the stories in *Different Seasons*), is definitely a change of pace for both artists. The basic premise sounds King-ly enough: in a small town in 1959, four 12-year-old boys hike through the countryside in search of the body of a missing-and-presumed-dead peer. But that's where the resemblance to the horror genre ends. This is a coming-of-age story, but one that's almost painful in its honesty—one that shows true-to-life young characters struggling with serious problems we can sympathize with, not those Spielbergian perky pixies or John Hughes' superficial angst-prone bubbleheads.

Our young heroes are Gordie (Wil Wheaton), whose parents all but ignore him in their grief over the death of his football-hero brother, Denny (*THE SURE THING*'s John Cusack, who appears briefly but memorably in flashbacks); Chris (River Phoenix), who's branded by his lowlife family's reputation and whose tough exterior conceals a surprising wisdom and sensitivity; Teddy (gravel-voiced Corey Feldman), whose goal in life is to be a war hero like his father (whose physical abuse of Teddy lands him in the local asylum); and Vern (Jerry O'Connell), a good-natured but dense cherub.

Their misadventure is narrated by Gordie, now an adult and a writer and played by Richard Dreyfuss. It's one of his best performances, even though it's mostly a voiceover role—he's actually onscreen in but 2 or 3 scenes. Dreyfuss' sardonic yet fond delivery fits the film's mood like a glove—who else could make lines like "Finding new and preferably disgusting ways to degrade a friend's mother was held in high regard" sound at once charming, touching and smart-alecky?

The odyssey of these rowdy but likeable pals, who hope their quest will make them town heroes when they find the corpse, starts as a funny/macabre lark. But their escapades bring them face-to-face with their own mortality and a lot of bottled-up emotions and hard truths—not to mention oncoming trains, leeches, Gordie's gross-out stories (about a fat boy's revenge—an incredible sequence, definitely Terry Jones-influenced), vicious dogs, uncaring adults, and sadistic teenage creeps who want to find the dead boy first. (The poor kid—was anyone that interested in him when he was alive?)

The bullies' leader, the smilingly evil Ace Merrill, is played by Kiefer Sutherland—a younger, handsomer version of his father Donald—who's simply mesmerizing. Sleek menace oozes out of his every pore—quite a switch from the lovable innocent he played in his film debut, *THE BAY BOY*. Definitely an actor to be reckoned with!



PATTY LOU'S NEVER ROBBED A BANK BUT SHE'S ALWAYS WANTED TO SEE WHAT IT FEELS LIKE STANDING SHAKING WITH A LOADED SHOTGUN RESTING ON A CASHIER'S CAGE, HOLDING OUT A NOTE SAYING GIVE ME ALL YOUR MONEY IN 10s AND 20s AND DON'T PUT NO RED DYE IN THE BAG.

The story of *STAND BY ME*'s group of young misfits could have turned into melodrama (or at least soap opera) in the hands of lesser talents, but Reiner's knowing, low-key direction and the sympathetic, naturalistic screenplay by Raynold Gideon and Bruce A. Evans keeps things on an even keel. The nifty '50s rock 'n' roll hits that pop up (the title song, *LOLLIPOP*, *COME GO WITH ME*, *YAKETY YAK*, even *Our Brave Boys*' rendition of the *HAVE GUN, WILL TRAVEL* theme) on the soundtrack help lighten things up, too.

Wheaton, Phoenix, Feldman and O'Connell are terrific—if they ever give a "gang" Oscar for ensemble acting, these four should win hands down! Spunky, boisterous, gross, naive, poignant (without being cloying, thank God), these are real kids, not cardboard characters. They work well together, bringing out the bittersweet quality in the "we're all each other has" bond among Gordie and his buddies.

STAND BY ME is truly about standing by your friends and standing up for yourself, even when the odds and the environment seem to be against you. Don't miss it—let's show Hollywood that there is an audience for realistic films depicting adolescents as something other than juvenile delinquents or sex-obsessed morons.

EDITOR'S CAVEAT: While I'm almost as high on this movie as my audience companion, I must state that as a female moviegoer, the film held little with which I could immediately identify. The atmosphere and the characters are almost exclusively male, as are the specific experiences. Never having gone through a mindset remotely similar to these preadolescent boys, I often felt like I was watching a sociological study of an alien race. It's excellent, but it doesn't hit my home. I'd be interested to hear the reactions of other female attendees of *STAND BY ME*, since there don't seem to be any among oft-quoted national critics.)

If you just can't bear the idea of Stephen King being involved in anything gentler than his usual spooky weirdness, his much ballyhooed directorial debut, *MAXIMUM OVERDRIVE*, is now at a bijou near you. Hope you feel like a little exercise, 'cause you might want to avoid your car after this silly but exciting, comic-book-style tale of machines and vehicles turned homicidal after exposure to a wayward comet. King's directorial talents are adequate, though he won't make anyone forget Hitchcock. Still, while *MAXIMUM OVERDRIVE* might need a tune-up every so often, its shocks are in working order.

You say you like your horror flicks suspenseful and stylish, with classy stuff like character development? Run, fly, swim, do whatever it takes to see *ALIENS* (as opposed to *ALIEN*, Ridley Scott's 1979 original). By the time you read this, you'll probably have heard a million rave reviews for this movie, your friends will probably have told you all the gory details (actually, they're not that gory—the filmmakers have used a little more restraint this time around), and you may even have seen it 3 or 4 times yourself! But good news bears repeating, eh wot?

This film deserves to be the boffo-socko-smash (owl) box-office hit ("hit"! Again with the violence!) of 1986! It's absolutely GREAT—a welcome exception to the unwritten rule that a sequel is invariably inferior to the original movie.

James Cameron of *THE TERMINATOR* fame is in the director's chair this time around, and his lean, mean, fast-paced style and eye for characterization is very much in evidence. And Sigourney Weaver, the 1980s answer to Grace Kelly, recreates the role of Ripley, the sole survivor of the first film's creature-crunchfest. Once again she proves that she's a stupendous actress; we get to know Ripley as a thinking, feeling human being, not just a personification of the fight-or-flight response.

Weaver's surrounded by a terrific supporting cast, too, especially Michael Biehn (*THE TERMINATOR*'s hero) as the most level-headed member of the Marine platoon accompanying Ripley to the alien nest; comedian Paul Reiser (doing great in a straight role) as the villainous Yuppie "Company" rep; adorable Carrie Henn as the child who survives the aliens' attack on a group of colonists and wins Ripley's heart; and Jenette Goldstein as a butch Marine who starts out as the audience's favorite candidate for the monsters' next meal and ends up making you root for her. If you haven't screamed—er, screened *ALIENS* yet—well, what're you waiting for?!

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TALK SHOW HOST CONFIDENTIAL by Michael Dobbs

Hello America, this is Paul Harvey...You know...I always wanted to be...a...writer; it's true. And while fabricating stories for my daily broadcasts are of course satisfying...but not as satisfying as doing business with your locally-owned Servicemaster dealer...he'll clean your business...he'll clean your home...he'll do everything but clean you...see your local dealer's ad in the yellow pages...

While doing my daily broadcasts is satisfying, I've always wanted to be a writer of fiction...former President Nixon, bullied from office by Americans of dubious patriotism, has become quite a writer...although...he doesn't write fiction, he writes fact...his predictions on how...the...world...would...be.

I hope you won't mind if I use you as a captive audience...I so enjoy our little daily visits, and I've...come to...think...of you...as my friends. So here goes:

Jim Kelly was a handsome man. Standing six feet five inches and possessing a crop of wavy black hair that made him attractive to both women and men, Kelly had many friends and admirers but he didn't have a goal in life. Wandering from job to job, he was good at whatever he tried but he never felt a fire burning in him that would make him develop a career.

Oh, he was never at a loss for work and was always able to lend his family loans for family emergencies, like the time he found his mother's house overrun with roaches. He bought the Roach-Prufe to rid her home of those dangerous pests.

He was simply a great guy without any direction. He had served his country during its time of need in Vietnam, but rejected the career military officers who seemed cynical about their duties.

What was Jim to do? While working as a clerk in a True Value hardware store, he began to sense his place in American society. While putting even lower price stickers on the thrifty True Value merchandise one day, he was struck by an idea. He had often been told by his friends at the church guild meetings that he was handy with a phrase. You see, Jim had a way with the words. Like a mighty blacksmith of old who would hammer out strong and beautiful things of American iron and steel, Jim could make the words express his innermost thoughts. He was a wordsmith.

So Jim began to write at night. Scribbling his thoughts on napkins during supper and doodling while watching pro sports, Jim slowly developed his skill with words into something quite remarkable. With his life's savings, he bought a printing machine, and on his days off he would print his work.

And he became rich and his work was read all over the nation, but his name was still unknown...what's the rest of the story...?

Jim Kelley is the Bumper Sticker King. He wrote "Honk If You Love Jesus," "Take It Easy," and "My Rolls Royce Is In The Garage."

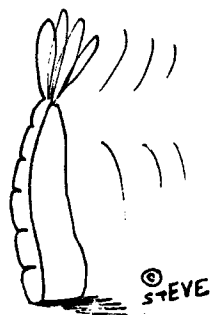
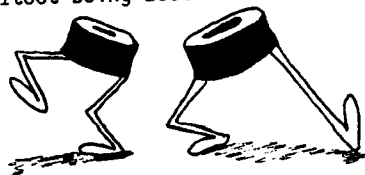
In fact, he invented the bumper sticker.

And now you know...the rest...of the story.

GONE WITH THE WIND

by Tom James

flerple
flerp gronk
gronkle zoe mumbly tumbly
flerple¹
itoot boing zeet.



© STEVE

THE CROSSWORDS OF CODE by A.J. Wright


Finally, the Right Messages are getting through to us here at the Crossword Interception Agency. For years we were translating transmissions meant for others. We have optical disks jammed with Notes to Mom, Recipes, Dear John missives, Letters of Resignation, Dismissal and Love. We have decoded requests for information on an enormous range of topics, as well as offerings of much misinformation.

The Agency was organized formally just after the Attitude Wars, when it became apparent that the Enemy was continuing to use crossword puzzles as a means of getting messages to its agents within our borders. However, a prototype actually existed as a two-person unit for several years previously. In that initial incarnation, one person solved the crossword and the other broke the code within it. Since that modest beginning, the agency has developed to the point that it employs dozens of both Solvers and Breakers conversant in numerous languages of the Quadrant.

Crosswords come to us in numerous ways. We check all of the obvious popular culture sources, of course. Many are sent to us by agents in the field. And we always find messages of interest in those issued on the underground program Crosswords of the Clandestine Services, which rides the airwaves intermittently.

Now that Correct Messages are filtering to us, we feel that our long years of work have been justified. We will soon know what the Enemy has planned for us, and thus we will know the future. We anticipate this Transformation with great excitement. Everyone here is ready; we have only to receive.

(from a work-in-progress, The Book of Codes)



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TWENTY WAYS TO DETERMINE

IF YOU ARE NOT NORMAL

by Roger Morris

1. Ten fat midgets have you arrested for building mid-gut coffins without a permit.
2. Charles Manson gives your name to the parole board as a character reference.
3. The odor of a wart hog sexually arouses you.
4. You find yourself trying to inject a lizard into your veins.
5. Most of your afternoons are spent trying to constipate yourself.
6. You fantasize about Boris Karloff coming to your home and telling you some zombie jokes.
7. Ted Kopell's hairstyle suddenly becomes attractive to you.
8. You receive a lot of job offers from circus owners.
9. You snore when you're awake.
10. Feathers begin to grow on the inside of your mouth.
11. You have a live weasel dwelling in your intestinal tract.
12. You put a hornet's nest on your head.
13. A flock of vultures mistakes you for the carcass of a dead wildebeest and tries to eat you.
14. You feel sorry for crippled werewolves.
15. You discover that your body makes noise whenever you sweat, so you find four more people with the same problem and form a sweat band.
16. The next door neighbor's cocker spaniel begins to look appetizing.
17. Three naked lawyers offer to mow your lawn.
18. Your twin looks remarkably like a transvestite ape.
19. Those Pilgrim-looking guys from the Dutch Masters cigar box try to sell you some cigars and Indian corn.
20. Six monks from a mountaintop monastery come to your home late at night wearing women's panties.

Do you and your family know...



WHY it looks the way it does?

WHAT it eats?

HOW big it will grow?

WHERE it lives?

WHEN it will bloom?

HOW it cares for its young?

WHETHER it will hurt me?

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"we just like the noise"

RIPPLES

by Larry Blazek

Every move that you make
every step that you take
makes never-ending ripples
in time and space

random
events follow random
patterns

(Everything makes a difference
but nothing matters)

WAITING TO IMplode

by Tom James

Sometimes when the rain
hits your window in a
certain way and the wind
blows through the trees
you can hear a monster
taking a shower.
If so, it's probably
the oogla oogla monster
getting ready for dinner.

I LOVE STUFF

by Dana A. Snow

I love stuff! I love everything around!
I love everything, whether with or mit-out sound
Stuff is all around, so you might as well enjoy it
Yes, it is so, it would be too tiring to destroy it

I love TV show and I love motion pictures!
I love to read porno, alternating with The Scriptures!
I love every angel and also every devil
I love stuff, especially—the SUBatomic level!

I love stuff! I love stretching my Slinky!
I even love a skunk, when it has gotten stinky
and I love the poor! I also love the rich!
I envy every mansion and am awed by every ditch

I love everything! Some people think I'm mad!
The fact they don't believe me sometimes makes me sad
So much cynicism! They don't believe it's true
That I love everything on Earth...except of course
for you...

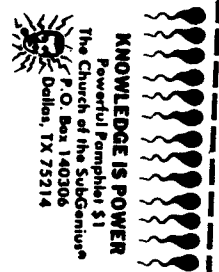
AND SO THE WORLD TURNS...

by Mary Ann Henn

Amy's married to Al
but she loves Nick
who is married to Jill.
But Nick really loves Tracy
who is married to Mike
and Jill loves Lee
who is married to Marge
but Marge loves Nick, also.
And Les loves Jill so you know
what that means. Tracy loves
John who loves Kim who isn't
married and so no one knows
who she loves, if she loves
anyone. Al loves Margie and
Margie loves Ed and Mike loves
Jenny who is married to Ed and
loves him and he loves her, too.
John is married to Maggie who
loves Al. Does anyone love Amy?

Laugh Till Your GUTS BLEED

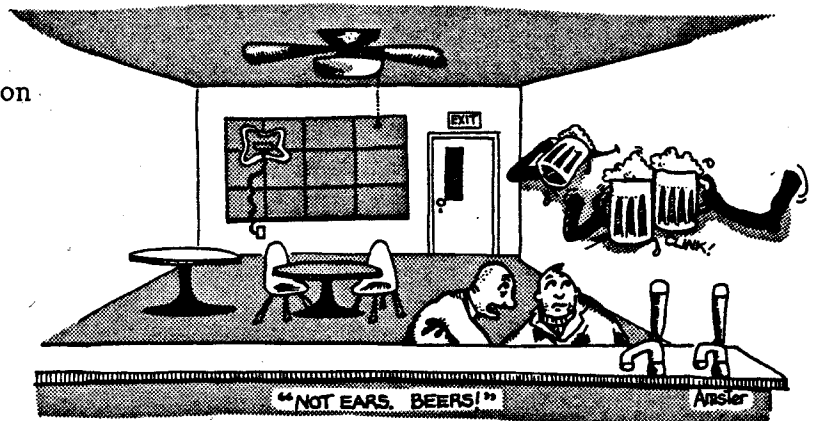
Most religions have had the 'grins' hammered out of them by easily-duped fanatics. The Church of the SubGenius is a bombardment of morbid yuks... a cult of screamers and laughers, scoffers, blasphemers, sinners and the last holymen in America today.
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THE ALSATIAN DOG

by Deborah Benedict

Last night I watched
THE ALSATIAN DOG
a film by Dali and Bunuel.
And I thought
The camera is a predator
It wants to capture the weakest
creature it can find.
To the predator go all
the rationales and why not?
By the time rationales are needed
all the others are dead.
So the camera is this kind of predator—
discriminating and historic.
The camera is the razor blade
The subject is the eye.



THE CONTINUING SAGA OF DR. IGUANA THE SEARCH CONTINUES.

by the Rev. Kenneth K. Burke

I'm presently without an affiliation to a rock'n'roll band, and I have discovered that one's creative powers can take on a different focus when one has no place to take one's ideas for serious critical evaluation. Without substantial interpersonal critique that a judgmental group of people might make, creativity and its resultant output tends to abandon whatever tendencies towards mass acceptance it might have had previously imposed upon it in favor of introspective psycho-drama and pagan self-amusement.

Frinstance:

We've run out of bug spray so I've just sprayed a cricket that invaded our house with Aqua-Net Hair Spray. The cricket in question is now frozen in place. The instructions on the can boast that Aqua-Net can hold any style neatly in place for up to ten hours. It doesn't say anything about how long it will hold a cricket, but I'll let you know. I'm saving the cricket.

Hair spray (especially the really cheap, flammable-smelling kind) is particularly effective in curtailing the activities of flies. The spray hardens the follicles and fibers which coat their little bodies and legs. If you catch the fly with a quick blast of the hair spray while said fly is airborne, you will immediately notice a change in its flight pattern. Where once your flying pest was quick, nimble, and elusive, the hardening spray will cause it to glide in progressively wider circles at more crudely navigated angles until its wings can no longer generate enough motion to keep it aloft and the fly will crash helplessly into a wall, window, or carpet where you can easily capture and dispose of it.

Another Great Experiment: Get a big bottle of butane, the kind with which you refill cigarette lighters, and go find some crawling insects and give them a prolonged blast of the butane spray. The bugs will be frozen in place, icily coated in a miniature version of suspended animation. Once frozen, you can gather the insects up and assemble them in locations and poses of your own choosing, where they will eventually thaw back to life and crawl in a direction in which they had no previous plans to travel. If your area is short on crawling, resilient insects, fear not. You can freeze, thaw, and refreeze most insects as many times as you like.

Once you have satisfactorily quenched your thirst for knowledge in the field of preserving and reconstituting crawling insects, you can get down to some serious play with a home game version of "B-Movie Theatre." It doesn't take too big a stretch of your imagination to see that your butane-frosted insects look remarkably similar to those giant mutant creepy-crawlies that terrorized whole southwestern towns after they were awakened from the oblivion of their eternal sleep by meddlesome, hyperactive, horny teenagers who were trying to escape the cost of a motel or the shame of being flashlight-checked at their local drive-in theatre in those great black and white, low budget, high exploitation feature films of the 1950's.

After allowing the insects to thaw and crawl, you can bring the game to its inevitable conclusion by thoroughly spraying them with the butane once more and taking a match to them. The simultaneous melting back to life and motion while the insect's body, life, and limbs are being consumed by hungry flames can forge a convincing re-enactment of the bit Air Force napalm attack perpetrated against the giant arachnid in *Tarantula* (1958, b&w, with a no-star cast).

If you'd like to go a different way, you can always hook up a couple of wires to the poles of a six-volt battery and touch the loose ends to the offending mutant insect. ZAP!

"You see, Suzie, I told you that I'd always protect you."

"Oh Brad!" (Kiss, fade out to rock'n'roll by Louie Prima.)

Spy movie fanciers may want to play the insect version of a John LeCarre novel by downing a fighter-pilot moth with a couple of shots from a can of household spray starch. Then, with a captured scorpion in the role of the downed pilot (careful here, folks), you interrogation begins.

Placing "The Scorpion" (a code name, to be sure) underneath a clear glass jar for observation purposes, you can then draw a circle of lighter fluid around your captive's glass prison. Engage "The Scorpion" in some clever repartee, trying to lure your worthy adversary into trusting you and eventually revealing all he knows. Naturally, being a highly-trained, rigorously-disciplined agent, he won't even acknowledge your comments, so as a last-ditch effort, you make a final threat, "Ve haff vays uf makingk you tahk," and then laughing maniacally, light the circle of flammable liquid surrounding the scorpion's transparent enclosure.

As the flame rises, the noble "Scorpion," sensing its own painful demise, brings its hitherto unrevealed poison needle into play (this was issued to him prior to the mission by "Mr. Big," no doubt). As far as "The Scorpion" can see, he is a sure shot for a heinous experience that will be of no good fortune for him to survive, so valiantly, selflessly, heroically, he jacks the poisonous

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needle on his tail into his own head several times, committing suicide. As the flame dies away, the hero's last complete thoughts are his amusement over the impotence of his captor's threats, and his efficient thwarting of his interrogator, whom he has left with only a startled moth airplane and frustrated, cruel, malevolent pleasure. In his mind, he has won.

Torturous experiments with our insect cohabitants is not the only thing that takes up my time or occupies my creative thought. It was just something that I did one day after I ran out of books to read, songs to sing, and mail to answer up here in my smalltown Arizona solitude. But, even if I did engage in a full-time war against our bug brothers, would that be so bad? Am I that different from thousands upon thousands of other American consumers?

When it comes to bugs, we've got killing down to a chemical warfare, technocratic art. Every year, millions of people buy those electric bug-light lures and brag about the potential of death that they hold for the insect world. Think about it—visible to the insect is that nice purple ultraviolet light that bugs like so much, maybe even the irresistible scent of theromone (bug hormones), so with thoughts of ultraviolet affection and incredibly satisfying sex, the creature flies straight towards the lure with love pulsating joyously in its little soul. Closer the unsuspecting seeker of love and truth comes to the object of its instinctual desire when all of a sudden...KERRRRZAPP!!! The little fellow is caught in the electrified grill surrounding the light and its juices fry and explode apart its skin and bones for the amusement of the two-legged, sweet-fleshed, consumer-conscious, entertainment-starved people who set up the trap and delight in its fatal flawless efficiency.

Sure, these bug-zappers are a useful thing—they save people from a lot of annoyance, scratching and disease—but if you were raised on Walt Disney cartoons, you can just imagine what the BUGS are saying about it.

(SCENE: Pictured in Technicolor are a gathering of "cute" insects in a humble yet wholesome family environment. The child-bugs are washing and dressing, readying themselves to go outside. The mother-bug is combing her youngest daughter's antennae and is whistling a happy, jazzy spiritual while her husband sits in his easy chair reading the paper and keeping time with the tune by tapping his foot, rustling his paper, and blowing musical notes in smoke out of his pipe. The bugs are models of wide-eyed innocence. They are boisterous, spirited, happy and hygienic. They wear clothes and have irrepressible human-type smiles and roly-poly Al Jolson eyes. HOTCHA!

Outside their modest but clean dwelling lives a spectre, a harbinger of doom, the omnipotent, remorseless, random brutality of foot-stomping death. Pain is his bread and sorrow is his butter. Destruction is what feeds his visibly corrupt soul, and soon he must satiate his blood-lust again. He is....(shudder)....Man.)

MOHMABUG: Now Shelley, don't forget to wash behind your prothorax, keep your antennae neat, and wash your hands real well, all six of them.

SHELLEY (tiny child): Aw, Mom!

MOHMABUG: And don't go hear the house with the purple light.

SHELLEY: But Momma, it's so pretty!

MOHMABUG: Don't sass me. Just do as I say, young lady!

SHELLEY: Okay, Momma. (Kisses mother. Mother smiles and continues combing girl's antennae.)

(Suddenly, Boy-bug bursts into the house, shouting.)

BOY: Mom, Mom! Did you hear what happened to the entire Johansson family? They were electrocuted! Zapped!

MOHMABUG (nearly hysterical with grief): First the Stengles, then the Harpers, and now...the Johannsons! WHEN WILL THIS KILLING STOP! boo-hoo...sob...sob...

SHELLEY (putting on a brave face and speaking with childlike hope and conviction): Don't cry, Momma, we'll all go to church and say a prayer for our dear lost friends. They've built a new church with a pretty purple light just down the street...

(FADE OUT to a sermon sung by a holy choir interrupted periodically by the sounds of bugs being zapped one by one until there is only a lone voice singing, which is finally, irrevocably, zapped.)

So, if I momentarily entertain myself by running a kangaroo court for the extinction of a few bugs, you can at least be comforted by the fact that I'm not setting up an electric Nazi death camp on my porch or in my living room. Even if I did, for crying out loud, they're only bugs ("Momma, did you hear what that big man said about us?").

Naturally, I'd have something better to do with the slack edges of my time if I saw more people or was involved in a band playing music. That day may be soon in coming, so I'd better get some practice in on my guitar. Hmmm, I wonder how many canisters of cigarette lighter butane it would take to freeze your average bass player?

Commercial McClue-In by "Kid" Sieve

A few newsworthy notes to start: The widow and two children of serial killer James Huberty have filed suit against McDonald's, where the killings took place, claiming hamburger additives helped spark the violent outburst (in particular, MSG). This wins our Commercial McC Chutaph of the Year Award, newly created for just this sort of circumstance...Of course, widow Huberty might want to check out the ingredients list McD's and other chains (at last count, Burger King, Jack in the Box, Wendy's, and KFC) are now handing out to anyone with enough presence of mind to ask, should she decide to remarry, and we have sent just such a package (insidious little thing, by the way) to ID's resident professional nutritionist (she really is one, folk), Deborah Benedict, who will present us with a full report next time—thanks, DeeBee!

NutraSweet update: While a consumer group called the Community Nutrition Institute (address unknown but they're based in Washington, DC) is trying to lobby for the government to remove aspartame from the market because of its link to epileptic seizures (and good luck to them; the evil sweetener has already insinuated itself into so many markets that removing it could be tantamount to economic catastrophe in the food industry now!...not that we care if they collapse, of course), a recent New England Journal of Medicine letter by Dr. Donald R. Johns of Massachusetts General Hospital recommends that doctors treating patients for migraines should question them about their use of NutraPoison. Maybe good things are finally happening, but it's too early to tell.

By the way, for all you health-consciousness-crazed women out there, Science magazine (so you can take or leave the validity of the source, I guess) reports that new studies indicate there is no relationship between calcium intake and the incidence of osteoporosis. Will this put Tums out of business?

R.J. Reynolds isn't going out of business, that's for sure. An administrative law judge dismissed an FTC complaint against the company's ad on smoking entitled "Of Cigarettes and Science," which contends that government studies indicate smoking is not as hazardous as the public has been told and challenges the relationship between smoking and heart disease. The judge said, in part, "Editorial or non-commercial speech such as the Reynolds' ad does not lose the full protection of the First Amendment simply because it contains inaccurate or incomplete information." I assume this will come to be known as the Freedom to Lie act, and of course we all know one can get away with lying or, as White House spokesmen would say, "mispeaking" in editorial contexts 'cause people like George Will do it all the time...

Coleco has laid off 14% of its Hartford-area work force as a result of reduced sales of Cabbage Patch and Rambo dolls (analysts say). We'll see what happens to those dolls once the tv shows kick in this fall, eh?

Anybody interested in joining the Bartles & Jaymes fan club may write P.O. Box 1130, Modesto, CA 95353. Pretty damn effective advertising, considering no real people exist by those names and are merely creations of the Gallo company. But you know that...

And watch out, ye folk outside the NY area—Crazy Eddie is about to go national, with a "home entertainment shopping network"—now the rest of you can find out what all the talk is about the loud, obnoxious and highly popular Jerry Carroll. Lucky you.

Watch for these "shopping networks," by the way. Wave of the future. I'm waiting for them to get Max Headroom to host one.

On to our commercial viewing, and you know, a preponderance of actors seems to be dressing up as animals in ads again. Is this another rerun-trend? While the gal who plays Mimi the Dog is cute and perky (and probably heavy-set and having trouble landing roles outside of character parts, given the nature of the "reality" purveyed by tv...more on that below) and it's always a kick to see Roy Rogers himself talking to a grown man in a chicken suit, I do feel cheated that the "I'm not a scientist but I do look like one" who tells us all about BIRTH CONTROL FOR ROACHES doesn't put on a demonstration of humans in roach costumes putting on prophylactics. But then, perhaps it's all More Than I Need To Know anyway.

NOT TONIGHT, I'VE GOT A JORDACHE: And while advertising keeps marching backwards to the beat of a "Leave It To Beaver" America—that never was, where Mom and Dad sit down to secret rendezvous with butter-baked bread before their 2.3 kiddies' "We're home!" rings throughout their happy plastic suburban split-level nest and they smile at each other with mock-guilt and pride in their wholesome family unit, Jordache has decided (unlike the stylized Levi's 501 commercials, one presumes) to imitate teen-obsessed filmmaker John Hughes' version of Real Adolescents in his Molly Ringwald trilogy-of-sorts with a Low-key pastiche of their own. The product is never mentioned in these 30-second snippets of Real Adolescent Moments, in which the Mollyclone muses with her companions about how beautiful her mother is compared to how she used to look ("...exactly like me"), then smiling, managing to be both wistful and wicked simultaneously, as her companions—we must assume—seethe with jealousy or arousal or whatever it is Real Adolescents feel these days. Probably boredom; Real Adolescent portrayals come off little better than Real Adult ones in today's ads (for instance, that godawful Mitsubishi one with the bimbo and the lifeguard—"What made you think you could drive your car on the beach?" "Do you know a better way to meet a geek with white stuff on his nose who's the farthest thing from what most women would

regard as an interesting man?"). This brings up an interesting supposition: given the supposedly vast influence of tv on young minds (so they tell us), how much of this bullshit are they either buying or imitating? Never having been anybody's version (except maybe Anne Beatty's) of a Real Adolescent, I can't answer this. But the next time your tv set starts whining, chances are there'll be nothing amiss—just the Teen Clonedrones again.

PLAYING BY THE NUMBERS: As if taking food to new lows in sameness, blandness and utter non-nutrition weren't enough, the House o' Ronald (no, not that Ronald—at least, I don't think so) has now come up with the ultimate in homogenization, under the guise of making things simpler for we, the consumers. Don't you believe it for a microsecond. McDonald's new policy of "ordering by the number" not only creates a huge demand that probably wasn't there in the first place for Coke Classic (mandatory-no-substitutions with every numbered meal) but carries forced standardization to hitherto unbelievable (and pretty scary) heights. I'm certain there's no deviation allowed when you order your predetermined meal-by-the-numbers, even in such trivialities as the size of your drink or fries (and what about those who don't even want fries, or want a pseudo-apple pie or such?). This blasé casting aside of words (such as they are—and once you've pretty much singlehandedly created a cliché wherein people use "Mc" in front of words to denote cheesiness, as in this column's title, you're already well on the way to hooking people on catch-phrase mind control) in favor of "easy-to-remember" numbers does not speak well of the direction in which things look to be heading here. I mean, as if there weren't already enough numbers replacing words in our society? The whole concept belies McD's grudging cooperation in the ingredient-list scam as well, as they insist to consumer groups they're ready to detail their foods but opt to publicly play up simplification and enumeration instead. My plan of attack is to order a #42 or 163 or 1,487,652 as often as I walk in that place (not very, I assure you). If you get a really mindless drone at the register, s/he might even look up at the menu to see what meal your number denotes!

LESS PHILLING BEER: It's nothing new, by this point, to find an ad using a current or recent rock/pop hit underlining whatever message or mood it wishes to convey. The latest, Michelob's looping of the intro line from Phil Collins' "In the Air Tonight" (sometimes known as the "Miami Vice Sub-Theme Song"), is actually a rather amusing choice. As Collins' fans know, the song—in fact, the entire album from which the song is taken—is ostensibly about Phil's difficult divorce and the emotions through which he suffered at the time (he has often remarked that doing the album was a kind of catharsis). The first line of the verse after the opening theme, for example, is "Well, if you told me you were drowning/I would not lend a hand..." Not, I would say, a very appropriate attitude for Mich's setting, some yuppie singles bar where two obligingly plastic robot-types leer at each other from across a crowded room and know it's IT and all that shit. Phil's intent, near as I understand it, in "In the Air Tonight" was to create a mood almost of anticipatory fear, of—hey, come to think of it, I suppose Y-people morons leering at one another over their fifth or sixth glass of beer is enough to inspire fear in anyone!

Oops—must I begin to curb my usage of that Y-term after all? According to Grey Advertising, the new trend word for the trendies will be "Ultras." Fortunately, the word sounds as stupid and useless as the people it purports to now describe—"ultraconsumers" with a "voracious appetite for 'new' and an astounding capacity to flit from one purchase to another with astounding speed," according to Grey v.p. Robert Berenson. Planned are ads with "quick cuts, instant images and hot music." Says yet another exec v.p., Barbara Feigen, "They feel they can—in fact they must—have it all." And if you thought I was going to be sick before, people, you ain't read nothin' yet.



NARL CRAG: PROTECTOR OF THE CUTE

by James MacDougall

I'm Narl Crag. I like cute things.

All cute things. Kittens, Care Bears, little kids, the things that make life worth bothering. I like cute in all its many forms: from warm and fuzzy like puppies to so-ugly-it's-cute like E.T. Okay, I draw the line at Smurfs, but I like everything else that's cute.

The trouble is, cute things can't protect themselves. Well, I'm not cute. I'm 6'10", 310 pounds, and I've got a face that can stop a clock and probably several other small electrical appliances as well. I'm a black belt in 14 different martial arts, I am proficient in the use of most small arms available in the free world and, if I really need it, I know where I can get my hands on a tank.

I protect the cute.

It had the makings of a beautiful day. That morning I had put a man in intensive care for kicking a puppy, so I was in a good mood. I thought I'd spend the afternoon at one of my favorite pastimes, so I parked across the street from the pre-school to watch the kids at recess. Oh, and I know what you're thinking and you better stop. I am not a pedophile. And when people call me a pedophile I rip all their limbs off and nail them back on in the wrong places.

When the fat boy came onto the playground, I knew there would be trouble. You probably know the type—fat and dumb but bigger than all the other kids. They know instinctively that they are never going to be anything but fat, dumb and miserable, so they have to get theirs now, while they can still pick on the children who'll grow up to be their betters. The fat boy was up to no good.

It didn't take him long to find the trouble he was looking for. He hadn't been in the playground five seconds before the fat boy found a sufficiently innocent target, a little girl playing with a toy bunny. With the fat-kid equivalent of a war cry, he swooped down on the little girl, tearing the bunny from her hands. The fat boy danced around his victim, going "Nyah-nyah na nyah-nyah!" If someone didn't stop him he was going to tear off the bunny's ears.

I admit it, I anger easily. This made me mad! I was going to have to do something about this.

I looked in the back seat to check my gear. Standard stuff: assault rifle, submachine gun, anti-tank weapon, flame thrower. I thought of lobbing some tear gas into the playground, maybe squeezing off a few warning shots over the fat boy's head. That would have been fun. But no, the situation didn't call for it; I knew I had better stick to business. I got out of the car and stalked up to the fat boy.

I guess he didn't see me coming because he didn't run. He may have been the biggest kid in the playground, but that didn't matter to me. I grabbed him by the throat and lifted him over my head, then I drew my .44 and put the barrel up to one of the fat boy's nostrils. "Give her the bunny back, you little skuzoid, or I'll kill you." I figured subtlety would be lost on him.

Obediently, the fat boy dropped the bunny. The little girl picked it up, and stood watching expectantly. She stopped crying. I think she was enjoying this. Well, why not?

"Now say you're sorry," I growled to the fat boy.

He didn't speak. Maybe it was the way I was looking at him. Maybe it was the fact that I've got a fact that's the prototype for a design of a Halloween mask. Maybe it was because he was looking down from almost 10 feet in the air. Maybe it was the way I was holding his throat. I knew that I was going to have to set him down if I wanted him to speak.

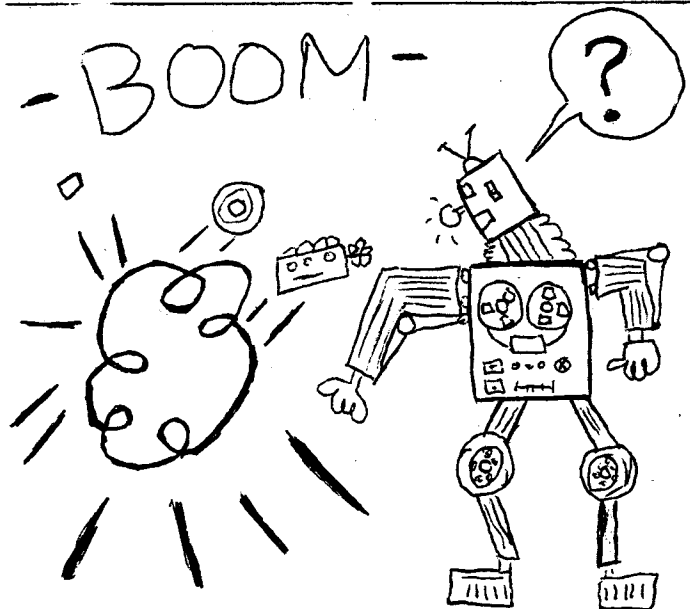
I set him down. I considered dropping him but decided to wait until after he'd apologized to damage him.

"How many fingers do you have?" I asked him.

"Uh, t-t-ten," the fat boy stuttered.

"How many arms?"

"T-two."



A GOBOT MEETS HIS FATE BY CHANGING INTO A PINTO!

"And how many heads?"

The fat boy had to think about that question. "One," he finally answered.

"Do you like it that way?"

"Y-y-yes, Sir!"

"Then you had better tell her that you're sorry." I smiled at him. It was a terrible sight.

The fat boy wasn't as stupid as he looked because he began apologizing to the little girl with everything he had.

"That's enough, that's enough," I finally told the fat boy. The kid had no pride at all.

Immediately he fell silent. From the way he looked I knew that I would have a starring role in the fat boy's nightmares for the rest of his life.

Good.

I wiped off the end of my gun and put it away. "You aren't going to pick on anyone any more, right?" I snarled.

He nodded with so much enthusiasm I think he came close to breaking his neck.

"And you're going to clean your room when you get home," I added for good measure.

Again with the nodding. The room would be spotless.

My job done, I returned to my big black sedan to leave. But first I called to the fat boy from my car window, "Remember, you be a good boy from now on." I paused to put on my mirrored sunglasses. "Or I'll be back."

From the look on his face I could tell that he had seen The Terminator too.

Well, he's gotten the message, I guess. Today that's the safest playground in town.

But of course I'm still watching.

(AUTHOR'S NOTE: Children should remember that not all large, ugly men who watch them in playgrounds are like Narl Crag. Many of them are real skuzoids. Please be careful.)

APATHY - A KARINA

by Mary Ann Henn

It takes a while to learn

With energy to burn

One day will come

Glum

He was sure that he'd

Seen it all

And that he'd been freed

From

Making things hum

So forlorn, he just sat

Have you had days like that?

PAN COMMENTS

by Deborah Benedict

Who would have thought

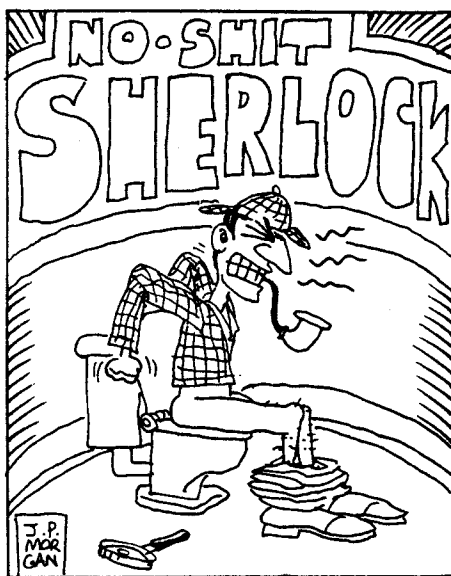
an elegant pagan like me

would end up

ruling the world

just by swinging

on these vines?



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Insane Manifesto
for Correct
Human Behavior!

The Sub-Gaming Foundation
P.O. Box 140306,
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ARNOLD
THE



Around the middle of July every year, as the hellishly humid Canadian summers boil far, far above the pleasure threshold, folks like me (fluorescent-skinned, sun-avoiding, volleyball-hating record and guitar players) can most often be found kicked back prostrate in the nearest unfinished basement, reading three-for-a-buck used paperbacks and venturing upstairs (and sometimes even OUTSIDE) only when nature, or a mad craving for yet another vanilla Chipwich, calls. And ONLY if that call comes AFTER DARK, needless to say.

It is during these too-hot-to-trot months that my sleep cycle (very late to bed, as-late-as-possible to rise), already ravaged after too many years on the road as a travelling minstrel, becomes even more cockeyed; I mean, just how many zzz's can you possibly cop crashed atop an air mattress filled with iced Perrier as kamikaze mosquitoes prey on every inch of virgin flesh exposed above and below your Ocean Pacific-brand David Lee Roth toucan clamdigger PJ's?

Fortunately, the current baby boom of Sixties kultural kitsch which has infested not only the radio but the television airwaves has provided me with something to do when I find myself wide awake and dripping circa 3:15am on a Monday night: Most channels now offer an exquisite assortment of long-dormant classic and, better still, flop TV series in those once unprogrammable après-Letterman hours. What a joy it is to discover a show you somehow overlooked a quarter of a century ago (can you believe I never once set eyes upon "The Lucy-Desi Comedy Hour" until a week ago Sunday at two in the morning?!); keener still is reacquainting oneself with an old series (i.e., "I Spy," "The Invaders," "Mr. Terrific") you avidly followed in Grade Four, and finding yourself once again singing along to its theme tune. Like a Rod Serling tour through a creepy old photo album, these grainy all-night reruns transcend the realm of trash to often become downright primal-regressive journeys into one's deep'n'dark subconscious past (alright, alright—I may be going a bit overboard now, but a humidity reading of 106% CAN take its toll...).

Now, there's one show recently exhumed that, though it probably has never once been off American sets in a decade thanks to ace sitcom recyclers like Ted "Super-Station" Turner, us Great White North dwellers haven't had the opportunity of viewing in donkey's years. That show is the utterly incomparable "Green Acres," and I'd like to go on record at this point to proudly proclaim,

fully expecting the snobbish guffaws of all you holier-than-thou "Cheers" and "Night Court" fanatics, that it is my hands-down Number One fave television series OF ALL TIME.

Watching this show being rebroadcast in its chronological entirety this summer, I've witnessed with perverse fascination what humbly began in 1965 as a polarized "Beverly Hillbillies"/"Petticoat Junction" spinoff slowly faster like some pitchforked Andromeda Strain run amok into a Pythonesque parade of sight gags and off-the-kitchen-wall situation-tragedies, complete with a dash of (and I use the term MOST literally) characters so utterly bizarre that the likes of "WKRP in Cincinnati" and even The Firesign Theatre at its most stoned or The Goon Show at its most pissed can't hold the proverbial candle to it.

Many's the night I now fall asleep amazed (and, temperature depending, ablaze) at the rurally Dickensian populace of Hooterville (Newt Kiley, huckster-extra-ordinaire Haney, Hank Kimbell your County Agent a/k/a Hank County your Kimbell Agent, and the "fix-it" twins Ralph and Alf Monroe, the latter of whom Del Shannon now bears a striking resemblance to, by the way) and their never-ending attempt to drive our Everyman hero Oliver Wendell Douglas, cruelly replanted from a Manhattan penthouse, up the wall, up his telephone pole, and out of his tree. I suppose some TVologist could build a good case upon how comforting we find it to identify with the protagonist of a television show who can find no solace whatsoever from even his wife (or her hotcakes!) as the world around him conspires to riddle his last remaining threads of logic with an unending, impenetrable mixture of mischief, manure and mayhem.

Without a doubt, the inmates have most certainly taken over the cornfield in "Green Acres," yet in this topsy-turvy Mayberry-through-the-looking-glass, the taunting and malicious (but well-intended?) ridiculing often becomes so relentlessly brutal that you're not sure whether to laugh, cry, or escape into the night for another Chipwich as Oliver is helplessly reduced, like the professor in Dietrich's "Blue Angel," into acting as a suit-vested legal representative in Arnold Ziffel's palimony suit against Mr. Haney's basset hound. "Oh, so you're Oliver Wendell Douglas, the PIG LAWYER," visitors from the Big City loudly announce time and time again, as if pouring salt into the wound. The poor man can't even wake in the morning without finding his chickens laying square eggs and "Directed By Richard L. Bare" stenciled onto his toast.

Eddie Albert and Eva Gabor, who for six years masterfully portrayed Mr. and Mrs. Douglas, have since gone on to achieve little more than a spot on the far end of Merv Griffin's couch, and the remainder of "Green Acres's" superb ensemble cast don't even pop up on late-night recliner commercials. Are they all holed up somewhere in Studio City with creator Paul Henning plotting a "Return To Green Acres" special or, better still, a multi-million-\$ "Green Acres: The Motion Picture"? The mind buckles at the possibilities...

In the meantime, now that such ingenious loonies as The Monkees and Three Stooges are finally being given a belated nod of approval from not only the street but the intelligentsia, I think it high time each and every one of you pause for a moment to ponder on how often life's little episodes cast YOU in the role of Oliver Wendell Douglas. And as you mop that 5am sweat off your crinkled brow, realize that in these daze of movie star presidents and O-P David Lee Roth toucan clamdiggers Hooterville, like it or not, exists long after you switch off your TV set come dawn.

4-Color Fiend *by Steve Chaput*

First I'd like to thank those of you who have made a few nice comments, either to me directly or care of Elayne, about my return to IJ. I really appreciate the feedback, and will try to become more of a regular than I was last time.

If any of you would like to get a very good idea of the upcoming six months (and then some) in comics, or would just like a very good overview of what is currently available in the field, let me recommend AMAZING HEROES PREVIEW SPECIAL #3 (Summer 1986). It will set you back \$4.50 U.S. (\$6.35 Canadian and, I expect, even a bit more overseas), so I'd take a glance at it before doing so. Just as in the previous two editions, Fantagraphics has had about a dozen reviewers contact the dozens of publishers (the large well-known companies like DC and Marvel as well as the small independents that have only a single title or have only begun pre-production on a future title) to see what they have in store.

As one would expect, superheroes predominate the field, as well as the current trend of updating old heroes (i.e., Eclipse's AIRBOY and Ace's SKYMAN) and attempting yet more parodies of Frank Miller's comics (as TEEN-AGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES spoofs RONIN—to be followed by numerous ripoffs—and GNATRAT takes on the current top-seller DARK KNIGHT). While Marvel plugs its "New Universe" line of comics (more on them below), DC is pushing its new LEGENDS mini-series (sort of tying things up from last year's CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS series) and promoting the new SUPERMAN books which will affect the rest of their line to some extent.

Besides the already-noted items, the Preview discusses some of the upcoming graphic novels and explains what ever became of some of the books that previous Previews announced (this is a plus for fans like me, as I can stop hounding the poor guys who work at the comics shops). One bummer, however, is the discontinuation of AH's practice of putting in completely bogus "previews" and letting the reader figure out which ones are real and which aren't. Due to a number of complaints from the notoriously unhumorous "fanboy" contingent, retractions have had to be made and the bogus books pointed out.

This brings me to the next point I'd like to make: Comics fans, in most cases, don't really have much of a sense of humor when it comes to comics. While you can produce spoofs of the genre and lampoon the various comics, the medium itself is forbidden territory. Admittedly, a few comics have gotten away with it for a time (witness the rise and fall of the popular AMBUSH BUG), but mostly those that were out and out slap-schtick. More mildly-amusing books such as 'MAZING MAN stand little chance over the long haul.

While on the topic, I'd like to mention that GNATRAT (Prelude Graphics, \$1.95 U.S./2.75 Canadian), which I mentioned earlier, is quite good. A one-shot parody of the ongoing DARK KNIGHT, writer/artist Mark Martin does an incredible job of not only spoofing Miller (whom he obviously admires) but also taking on the numberless "funny-animal" martial-arts books. If you see fit to try just one of these type of books, GNATRAT is definitely the one to buy.

Also under the category of parody comes ELFTREK (if this has to be explained you probably won't get the joke anyway, so you should pass it by) (Dimension Graphics, \$1.75 U.S./\$2.00 Canadian), a two-issue takeoff on two popular favorites (with a third thrown in for good measure), with art by Mark Poe over layouts by writer/editor Marcus Lusk. Apparently this book is tied into a spoof called SECRET DOORS: THE PARODY and introduces elements that will be part of a regular book, THE HOOLITTLE ZONE. To be honest, while I enjoyed this book, Elayne found it much funnier than I did (this may be an example of fans not having a sense of humor come home to roost). Artwise, ELFTREK doesn't stand up to GNATRAT, and in a couple of places (chiefly a recap of SECRET DOORS) it is mediocre by fanzine standards. Still, I do recommend the book, and may even pick up the new series for an issue or two.

Before closing, I'd just like to bid a farewell to

I got my very first obscene phone call about two days ago. I was languishing in the vibrant glow of MTV or some other video channel when I answered the phone. The voice was breathing steadily, heavily, like a disemboweled accordion, but it was not frightening—that struck me right away. I turned down the sound on the television and carefully listened.

The respiratory modulations were obviously that of a man, a younger-ish sounding one who frequently gave way to real vocal gurglings bordering on phlegm-induced hacks. The breathing lasted about three minutes, until my host finished or got tired or intimidated himself into a corner. After I hung up the phone, I thought about what had just transpired, and I felt like an accomplice to some deviant crime. Later, I realized that I had taken part in an interesting social ritual.

At first, I mulled over the topical socially relevant aspects, such as what would bring a man or woman to dial a phone number at random, grasp their ignored genitals, and integrate a total stranger into their own stimulation...or has our culture wilfully alienated an entire group of people into telephone-affected swingers? Then, after I anchored myself back into rational thought, I stretched the boundaries a little. I decided to experiment for myself.

I dialed a number at random. An elderly woman answered, and I uttered not a sound. I sat there in silence as she desperately called into the receiver like a lost soldier into a walkie-talkie with fading batteries. I could imagine this woman interrupted from her sewing, trudging across the antiseptic clutter of her one-and-a-half efficiency, and that made me feel guilty.

The next call I made was greeted by a cheery unmoved housewife who dismissed the silence and returned to her servile plant-filled palace of Seventies arcana. Having seen both sides of the camel's straw in the water, I plotted my next strategic Ma Bell manipulation, this time creating a pulsating breathing pattern. An old man answered and hung up. A teenage girl waited in vain admiration and disappeared. A woman offered me directions to auto-sodomize myself.

What did this teach me? I had assumed the role of one of society's menaces, and experimented within the confines of my nerve—which really meant I hadn't learned anything at all. Did these innocents really find the phone calls obscene? Did they spray their conversational insecticide because they genuinely hated the roaches, or was it an involuntary action? Does an obscene caller thrive on the initial reaction, or does he hope and wait for a passenger in the same proverbial boat to answer? Do the phone call recipients feel emotionally charged afterwards, or insulted; bemused or confused; or just abused? Do the callers ever receive obscene calls of their own, and, if so, do they react as though their turf is being invaded, or observe it as a blessing in disguise?

People who do this must be innately obligated to reach out to someone and lure them into their unsatisfied dustpile of reality. People who do this must have been separated from the warmth of a relationship or been so stricken with horror that they've taken the cold shower treatment several trillion steps further. People who do this must be so condensed with affection that any trickling of their emotion must be just the pop top on an entire can of soda.

Granted, I've had friends woken up at nearly 5am due to the whim of a telephone prankster, and I've known a handful of people shaken up by some obscene callers, but otherwise I think it is an extroverted neurological tidbit that maybe we should notice and act upon intelligently rather than in terms of "offensiveness" or "vulgarity" or any other mid-1940's morality-heightening words that seem to induce the dismemberment of natural curiosity from the human experience. Dealing with obscene phone callers should evolve to become psychiatry on an unprecedented scale. — David Serlin

'MAZING MAN. I really came to look forward to this book each month and will miss 'Maze, Denton and the whole gang over in the wilds of Queens. Take care, fellas!

NEXT TIME: A few words about LEGENDS (this year's multi-issue x-over at DC), and the book THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SUPER-HEROES.

SPACE TRIP

by Sue D'Onym

No escape.

He blamed it on a decision made in a moment of panic and duress, when he took a second to glance out his cubicle window one evening to no apparent purpose. He always felt a twinge of guilt whenever he considered engaging in a non-productive activity, and therefore he rarely did, but sometimes his evil, frivolous side still got the better of him. That was why it took him so long before he finally looked out, so long to notice the orange sky.

It was worse than his deepest secret fears, the terrors he refused to acknowledge to himself or his lovers or even his mother. The last time he had ventured a peek out into the external nighttime environment, many years back, the sight of the star-dotted rural blackness had fascinated and revolted him simultaneously, as it had the few times beforehand when he had lapsed, and he remembered shuddering as he hastily drew the shutter down on the highspeed and moved to an aisle seat. Night, he recalled deciding at that point, was something best left to mutants and other mentally aberrant creatures deficient in dealing with what he knew as Priority Reality: human-created, conditioned and regulated work and living units, controlled lighting and atmosphere, the safety and comfort found in indoor arenas.

But he never dreamed the sky was really orange.

He supposed it made sense, what with the power plant illumination reflecting off the eternal smog barrier, but he'd never needed to think about it before. Now something inexplicable stirred, below his conscious level, a whisper of understanding telling him there were definite anomalies in this situation. However distasteful one may find non-artificial environs, there was a disturbing imbalance at work to create the sickly, glowing color.

He suddenly felt it quite imperative to prove to himself that there was still a black star-filled sky somewhere. He thought he needed to feel close to those stars just once, to give himself the piece of mind essential to putting this nonsense behind him and burying his past fear once and for all.

Maxwell Humidor signed up for a trans-planetary shuttle.

Okay, not really a trans-planetary one—after all, even in his delirium he realized that in facing his fears he needn't go terribly overboard about it—but a mere day-long jaunt to the lunar orbital station/transfer point (or "LOST in Space," as its frequenters jokingly referred to it). He knew it would be bad enough, even with a perfect re-creation of Terranormal ambience, having to deal with the unavoidable space windows throughout the colony which gave the station its "alien allure," according to the brochure. ("Hmph," grunted Maxy, "it certainly gives it enough tourist business! Why put yourself through the nightmare in the first place if you don't have to?" Tourists—who could say?) He doubted he'd last the weekend.

"Damn you, no, I know how to strap myself in, I'm no clonebaby!" he yelled at the flight attendant on the screen. Who the hell did these miser corporations think they were, anyway—they certainly made enough simoleans from their quirky clientele (present company excepted) to afford in-person steward service! The least they could do was—

"Reefer, sir?"

"Huh?" Maxy pivoted to his left, where stood a gently smiling fem with baby blue dilated eyes and a straparound cigarette stand to match. "Did you say—"

"Yes sir, I—oh, I'm sorry, sir, you're new to our flights, aren't you?"

"Does it show or something?" Maxy grumbled, hoping he inserted the right amount of sneer in his voice.

The fem seemed to take it in stride. "Oh no, sir; not on the surface, that is. "But your reaction to my offer of, to the "r" word was pretty staunch Terran, and I just assumed—"

"Oh, as opposed to 'pretty spacey'?" Maxy retorted defensively, thinking the pun on controlled substances made the insult given space-bound loonies (as opposed to Lunies, who were moon-bound) even more emphatic. To his disappointment, the fem took no offense, actually smiling even more gently, if that were possible.

"That's very good, sir. But I'm afraid I've other people to serve on this flight. Would you care for some reefer, or perhaps a couple tabs of—"

"Now, wait just a minute, dearie!" Maxy sputtered. "Don't think I don't know the law—I'm a good citizen, and I only put government-sanctioned drugs into my system, lady, so there!" He prided himself that punctuating that last sentence by crossing his arms in front of himself was truly an effective intimidation tactic.

It wasn't. What was wrong with these spaceys? "Oh, it's alright here, sir. We're not governed by the same set of statutes on Lost Colony. And since you officially entered our purview when you stepped aboard the flight, I assure you it's all perfectly legal here. The reefer, the tabs, even the alcohol. Everything I have here."

If Maxy hadn't taken hormone-dampening pills prior to boarding, he might have fallen into those dewy blues. As it was, he retained enough common sense to put up a good argument against this poison purveyor. "Look, lady, don't you know how dangerous that junk is? Why, in the old days, people used to go crazy from it and run around killing themselves and each other and messing up their genetic—hey, what's so goddamned funny?" Who the hell was this slip of a fem to challenge the unswayable truths of Maxwell Humidor?

"I'm sorry, sir, I meant no offense. It's just that—well, honestly, sometimes we colonists have a bit of trouble understanding how persistent your Terran misinformation can be! Look, I'm sorry to have bothered you, sir, I just thought it might help, especially this being your first time and all..." She started towards the next row of passengers. Maxy's hand shot out and grabbed her arm.

"Are you insinuating I'm stupid? Do you mean to imply I can't take

a little mind altering? Is that what you're saying?" Maxy hardly recognized himself, and a little voice in the back of his head kept reminding him that it was all right, that he was panicking and these kinds of things were to be expected in non-lucid mental states. He was also gradually losing his footing in consensus Priority Reality, what with everyone else aboard pretending not to hear them as they toked and drank and tripped away. He'd be damned if he, a fairly prominent man of business, was going to stand out like a sore thumb in this captive audience just because he hadn't followed suit. He pulled out his bankroll. "How much?"

"Nothing, sir. It's complimentary." Did this fem never lose her composure? Maybe she thinks I'm dangerous and she doesn't want to incite me anymore. Yeah, that must be it.

"Well, what do you recommend?"

She leaned over then—bad timing, as his hd pills were wearing off rapidly—and whispered, "Well actually, sir, we're not technically supposed to influence passengers' choices...but, I think for a starter you'd probably be best off with a simple joint or two. If you like, I can sit next to you when the flight takes off and share it with you. That way you'll have a companion if the reefer gets a bit too heavy for you to handle. And I have bringdowns with me, just in case you really get uncomfortable with it. Although," she stood up straight again, not quickly enough, "that rarely occurs."

He sat there with the joints in his hand, watching the other passengers develop the same strange, sweet smiles, feeling entirely and utterly left out. This was worse than his fear of night, he thought. All his life he'd towed the straight line, always been so proper, so sure of his convictions...without convictions, wasn't humanity itself largely irrelevant? Doesn't life only count when you know you're right? Damn it, they had no right to be so happy if he was the one who was correct!

"By the way, I'm Minerva," the flight attendant whispered as she slipped into the aisle seat beside Maxy.

"Maxwell Humidor. You can call me Maxy, I suppose."

"Oh, I don't know, maybe it would be better if I just called you Mr. Humidor, Mr. Humidor. I mean, you don't seem to care for me, particularly. I really must apologize, I'm only doing—"

"Yeah, I know, you're only doing your job. I've heard it before. Look, lady, I've got nothing against you, okay? It's just that—well, like you said, right, it's my first time, okay?"

"Okay," she answered, and the smile faded from her face as she leaned over him to pull the window shutter up. "Looks like they're just about finished refueli—hey, what's wrong? Is it something I said? You okay, Mr. Humidor?"

"Do—do you suppose we c-could, er, change seats, Minerva?"

"Whatever for? I couldn't dream of it, Mr. Humidor. You're the paying guest here, you get to look out the window and—oh dear, Mr. Humidor," her voice lowering, "do you have apprehensions about the dark? It's not uncommon, we've found...can I help in any way?"

His defenses crumbling, Maxy could suggest nothing more constructive than attempting to put a strange, sweet smile on his face. He handed the joints to Minerva for ignition.

Minutes later, the flight took off. Maxy's face was glued to the window in wonder as the orange haze seemed to melt and settle below them. Like hell, he thought. At least, he thought that was what he thought—my, my, what a curious sensation! He half-heard Minerva's purring voice rambling about the Leary Theory or something that sounded like it, but the rest of him was listening to the stars. They were talking to him! In his mother's voice! Telling him to come home. Telling him what a silly little boy he'd been for confusing fear with desire. Reminding him he knew what he had to do, now and forever.

"Minerva?" and his own calm voice startled him as well.

"Yes, Maxy dear?" She squeezed his hand a little tighter.

"Can I, is there a way to apply for a permanent, I mean, I'd like to stay here for the rest of—"

"Whoa, now, Maxy, that's the drugs talking. Tell ya what, why don't you wait the weekend out, spend a little time straight while you're up at Lost, then let the Liaison Committee know what you think..."

He nodded almost imperceptibly, dreamily leaning his head on Minerva's pillow-soft shoulder. No going back now, he thought. I don't care what's doing the talking, 'cause I'm finally doing the thinking. I could get lost in this exquisite blackness. Lost on the way to Lost...

DIRTBALLS

by D.A. Beast

While dumping the vacuum cleaner today

I wondered—

Might there be someone important in this?

A king from 2000 years ago -

A philosopher -

Or maybe

Just dirt my cat dragged in.

We perhaps should be more reverent

When sweeping under the rug

And view today's anthill as

Yesterday's civilization.

What it all comes down to is

We are walking on our past—

And tomorrow a dog could shit

On what was once

My highest beliefs.



IS YOUR LIFE DULL?

Who do you blame? If it's everyone's fault by yours, send \$1 to The Subgenius Foundation, P.O. Box 140306, Dallas, Texas 75214. You'll never have another dull moment.



AIDS, Nebraska (YU)—And you think you've got it bad? This tiny midwestern town populated by tiny midwestern people has petitioned the Nebraska Supreme Court to approve its twelfth name change since its incorporation in 1942.

"We started out as Dresden," Chief Alderman Charles Manson told reporters clustered outside the courthouse, "and then there was Suez, Havana, Hue, Rapid City, and Altamont, so you can tell we've had some pretty rotten luck when it comes to names." In recent years, these tiny midwestern residents have lived in PCB, Legionnaire's Disease, Toxic Shock, and most recently, AIDS.

Alderman Manson hopes the court will act swiftly to approve the change to Deluge, a name the short residents find historically appropriate.



BORING, Oregon (YU)—A Boring resident was killed early this morning when a meteorite crashed through the roof of her home in the Sylvan Hills Mobile Village, crushing her skull. Her name is being withheld, pending notification of her next of kin—husband Mildude Potemkin Bland, and their twin eight-year-old daughters, Vera and Ultima—who escaped with slight injuries.



SALEM, Oregon (YU)—Yesterday's death of a 10-year-old girl apparently was caused by a common preservative in food she ate at a local restaurant, the United States Surgeon General's office reported. The death prompted renewed calls from consumer groups to print warnings on restaurant menus similar to those now shown on cigarette packs.



SHEMPFORD, England (YU)—The recent revelation that comedian Jerry Lewis died of AIDS has sparked a flurry of phone calls from "respectable TV-viewing ladies" who fear they might have contracted the disease from watching his old movies on television.

Reggie Buckle, executive announcer for BBC 2, said, "They are very concerned they may have picked up the infection because of their unusual viewing habits, but I can assure them that these movies were made many years ago and long before Mr. Lewis knew what kind of person he really was."

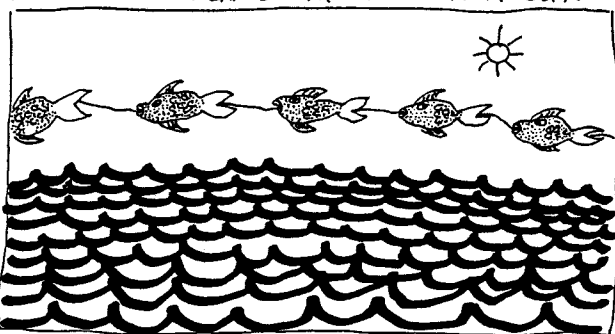
Lewis died last Thursday while debating his life on the "Donahue" show.

IGNORANCE BEYOND COMPARISON

by Sigmund Weiss

Since my ignorance is beyond comparison
I will spout my lack of knowledge
Having never learned anything
I always search for what is disagreeable
to those idiocies of mine and others'
character.
When & if I arrive at a decision about
something
I should be able to obtain wisdom,
that eventual malady
left for me to accumulate
on this planet full of ambiguities.
Then I can keep my pants below my waist,
miserable creature that I am
combustible at the least combination of words.

THERE IS GREATNESS WITHIN EVERY FISH,
BUT IT TAKES REAL GENIUS TO COAX IT OUT.



BEIRUT, Lebanon (YU)—Christian Maybelline-Phalangists stepped up their attack on Shiite Sunni-impressionists today, allowing rival forces of the Hindu-Quakerites to side with the Buddy Roman-Greco Contortionists as part of a strategic effort to immobilize Serbian-Orthodox Toastmasters who control the city's Catholic section.

Meanwhile, an unnamed source for the Mahatma-Attenborough Cubists says his group will cease hostilities against itself and turn its vengeance toward the Franco-American Spaghettilos who are camped alongside the Baba Ram Dass Canal in an effort to establish a reason for their presence in Beirut.

In other developments, Lido Ska-Rajneesh Karl-Grant, leader of the radical Sikh Union Theatre Projectionists, says his troops will continue fighting everyone "for the fun of it," and warned all present and future warring factions to "lay down their weapons and be killed by us, or face the uncalculated retaliation of the Los Angeles Raiders."

The Raiders, who are negotiating rights to participate in the Lebanese conflict, have an option to move the franchise to Beirut for the 1989 season.



TAOS, New Mexico (YU)—Researchers here rocked the art world today when they positively identified bone samples previously attributed to Josef Mengele as belonging to Georgia O'Keeffe.

"We're positively speechless," said a spokesperson for the American Academy of Arts who spoke only on condition that he or she remain anonymous. "We all knew she was at least a little odd, but we had no idea she might be a Nazi."

Best known for such landscapes as "The Painted Desert," "The Badlands," and "The Grand Canyon," O'Keeffe's painting is noted for its immaculate stylized forms, and strong, clear colors. Motifs such as cattle skulls and desert blooms dominated her work.

Ms. O'Keeffe was born in Hailey, Idaho, in 1887, and was married to noted American photo-journalist Alfred Stieglitz in 1935. In the late forties, O'Keeffe claimed Stieglitz's liaison with Paul Strand led to her celebrated affair with Ansel Adams. Afterwards, O'Keeffe returned to the desert. She was reported to be in failing health since the death of her patron, Howard Hughes.

Ms. O'Keeffe, whose torrid affair with Ray Charles in the mid-fifties inspired the sightless singer to write a song about her, was the only American artist ever to have a state named in her honor.

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PANTELEIMONOS:

by Jay DeFelicis
The Russian monastery stands abandoned now speaking to days of former glory the remnant of another time empty now but for a few older monks from other ages walking amongst the ruins

A picture of Nicholas still hangs on the wall in all his youthful splendor while peeling paint and broken windows tell the tale of how quickly the world can change its face

Former flourishes of peaceful pursuits get left behind by political power

yet no one weeps for what was in our concern with conquering today

UNENDING WAR?
90% — maybe all wars would never occur if what's-his-name put his Jahn Hancock to BRAINBEAU'S 4 WAY PEACE PLAN.
For a 20th century life-saving iam send S.A.S.E. to: BRAINBEAUISM — Box 2243 YOUNGSTOWN — OHIO, 44504

Sayz-U!(Letters)

Hi Elayne:

Roy Harper sent me his copy of IJ #46 for my perusal. I like what is trying to be done here. INSIDE JOKE is a project that appears to have worth. It was a pleasure to scan and read it.

My favorites from 46 include Anni Ackner's piece (very polished), Lawrence Oberc's (I've gone through that myself—only with more controntatory results), "Journey Through The Tenderloin" by Ace Backwoods had a real genuine feel in its dialogue, and "Commercial McClue-In" by "Kid" Steve was a genuine public service and is the type of kvetching and observational bent that I myself try to strive for. Dana Snow's stuff is good too. I haven't thoroughly read #47 yet (that's what I like about IJ best, there's always stuff to go back and read later, rare!)...

Please note in your next issue that September 29th is the birthdate of Jerry Lee Lewis. If anybody wants to write me, you can print or circulate my address; I can use the feedback and input...

Keep rockin',

KEN BURKE
P.O. Box 8
Black Canyon City, AZ 85324

P.S. One gripe—it's Kenneth K. Burke, not Kenneth R. Burke—K.B. (Oops, sorry about that...hey, how'd you know Anni was Polish?) EW:

Instead of a big-oid discussion of IJ47 lemme pause to remember da passin on of my fave cheap chinese rest'raunt, Cathay Epicurian on 8th. truly a steam-soaked little orientalish haven on dose cold winter days at NYU. two pieces of chicken, a mountain of fried rice and a not-from-this-planet concoction known as pork bun, with a big drink all for \$3. and now it be dead and gone and replaced wif a not-very-good pizzeria (CHAINSAY RAY'S—comin' after yer children soon!). where will alla da rasta drug dealers hang out now? useta hear great convos in dat place, bout just gettin outta riker's or down from ossining and who was movin in on yer turf or yer woman and/or man while ya was chillin. the past is gone, it will be missed.

As for IJ47, i loved Michael Dobbs' ode to SPAM and other lost treasures. Just watch, when our generation kicks it'll take us three years to rot with all the preservatives in our systems. And Mildred Neptune continues to prove one of the most diverse and stunning talents in sight. When is SINISTER WISDOM coming to my neighborhood and where can i buy tickets?

quick running notes:

- 1) Max Headroom is a better interview than Grace Jones
- 2) Roger Morris gets my vote as the Sigure Sigure Sputnik of IJ—good eye for designer violence but no product to back it up.
- 3) like the idea of an all-art issue
- 4) at DISCLAVE (sci-fi con in DC in May) saw a cartoon—"the Scare Bears"—which included Chernobyl Bear, Tsunami Bear, Toxic Waste Bear and A.I.D.S. Bear. just brill.
- 5) elsewhere in this ish you should find an advert for SPONTANEOUS HUMAN COMBUSTION QUARTERLY. Prudence and I hope to have the first issue out in the autumn. There is room at the inn and we'd love to see contris from all you talented sufferers who just don't know what to do with all that bizarre work you've got lying around yer rooms.

Enuf smartass mouthings. Anthea sends love to all. just one Pepsi and she wouldn't give it to me,

RODNY DIOXIN
45 Sutton St., #3L
Brooklyn, NY 11222

Dear Elayne:

Well...hello again. Great photocopying job. This issue wasn't as absolutely brilliant as the last one, but to outdo it would be an impossibility. I mean, really, I thought #46 was that good.

I think this time I'll comment on the letters foist:

Mr. Dobbs—Have you ever done any low-budget UHF television on-the-air engineering? Talk about hell. I used to 'switch' in a past life, and I felt like a burnt-out air traffic controller—making one quarter (maybe less) what they did.

Mr. Dioxin—So?

Ms. Benedict—I share your enthusiasm for The Young Ones. It has that dangerous humor that I like so much. In fact, I hope to stay awake long enough to see it tonight. It may take the edge off of the blood moon that is outside. I couldn't draw a straight line with a ruler today (literally) and therein is the reason (as well as the likeable Florida summers—we try not to sweat on the artwork).

Richard Pryor once had a television comedy series which was dangerous like that. So dangerous that it disappeared, like the Smothers Brothers Show.

Ms. Strecker—I like "Commercial McClue-In" also, except that I don't pay close enough attention to the commercials to get incensed. Most of the time, anyway. I dislike the Ragu radio commercial for the same reason I like the Po-folks radio commercial. I am the ethnic group in the Ragu commercial, while southern white trash is the focus of the Po-folks one. MAD Magazine put it the best: If you are of the same ethnic group that you are joking about, then you are a comedian; if you are of a different ethnic group than the one that you are joking about, you're a bigot.

On MTV—Barbara and I were watching MTV regularly the week of the summer movie guest VJ's to see Stephen King have at it. It is

amazing to see how many of the guests picked "Tuff Enuff" and "One Shot to the Body" as their 'fave' videos. Also, after watching a bunch of AC-DC videos, I now am glad that I walked out on them after seeing Cheap Trick that night long ago.

Mr. Tortorici—I read your "Sayz-U" letter and, well, you are a jerk...But on the artists' jam: while an all-art issue wouldn't be a bad idea, the 'jam' is something that could be done for one regular issue, or as a continuing thing; it depends on how the artists want to work it. I am hoping to get into the jam that they're having at WorldCon this year, to further explore the mechanics of it. Anyway, think about it. (Well, how about, if anybody's interested in jamming, just get in touch with Phil. I'd prefer the endeavor to be no more than two pages total, but we can always talk details later.)

Mr. Morgan—Many thanks for your kind praise of my back cover. I especially like your clean execution of lines in the work that you do, and you are funny, too. From your comments on the thirty-minute toy adverts that they seem to be making for Saturday morning, I see that you need a cathartic experience, or at least a physic, to rid yourself of vapours they seem to have caused. Perhaps you should parody each one in a vile and unsavoury way, to help yourself on the road to recovery. Like Alice, try to trash three terminally cute things before breakfast each day.

The last thing I saw at a mall was the Legos display, and it was rather neat.

Ms. Ackner—Now that you have changed careers, may I suggest that you leave the combat zone known as New Jersey and come down to the combat zone known as Palm Beach County. You will be a hit with all of the Palm Beach dowagers, who require your newly-acquired talents. Who said the dead don't walk? Plus, with the amount of Cubans and Haitians that live in and around this area, it will make you feel right at home. I do, and I used to live out in Long Island in the pre-boom days, when Suffolk County was the end of the earth. Also, the locals will give you endless things to write about, and you'll get to see Boca Raton and the John Lennon mansion and stuff. (Oh, well, Phil, your offer was just a bit too late this time...)

I concur on the color bl ck. For myself, I only wear the colors blue, black and grey (preferring the cooler greys rather than the warmer tones), which are earth tones where I come from. So, in the morning I can get out of bed and, with my eyes closed, coordinate an outfit to wear to work. Fred Saberhagen did a vampire series in which Dracula was helping Sherlock Holmes solve crimes, if I am not mistaken. He presented a rather benign version of the vampire myth.

For my own literature tastes, I prefer reading about secret societies like the Masons and such. I am not that much of a horror fan. Talk to Barbara on that one. Thank you for the cover compliment, also. I play requests.

Well now, that takes care of the letters. What else is there?

The cover concept is good, though reminiscent of Howski Studios Bulldaggers record jackets. I liked Mr. Scharff's bit on 'bored agains'. I read in the newspaper today an account of the textbook trial in Tennessee (sounds like a WNN headline)(this is the place where the fundamentalists parents assert fairy tales are actually Satanic and evil because the Three Pigs dance and chant around a boiling cauldron after they catch the Wolf, and Dorothy learns that Courage, Love and Wisdom are traits she has learned from within instead of from God. Could I make it up?), and the defense attorney said that there is a view that conservative Christians are a bunch of dolts that don't have to be taken seriously...

I liked "You're So Veiny," and "Absolutely Television" was suitably strange. It is interesting about Max Headroom; I understand that they ran the pilot for it about a year ago on Cinemax. Two friends of mine were stoned and watching it in Tallahassee, and when my friend Dave told me about it, I wrote to my English penpal James to get the lowdown (that dirty lowdown) on it and, coincidentally, The Young Ones. I did see Max's bit on the Let-himham show. For a video image, he was real sharp that night.

"Kid" Sieve hit it again. Good one! Centurian.

I also like the cleanliness of Mr. Grant's style. But then, I like funny animals and weird science in my comics anyway. While I won't say that I am counting the seconds to the Howard the Duck movie, I am piqued.

And Steve, check out any of the work by Roberta Gregory. She has a very warm storytelling manner and fairly good rendering. Also Sergio Aragones' Groo is fun. As well as any of the stuff done by Joshua Quagmire. And (reverent pause) Vaughn Bodé's son, Mark, has the second issue of Miami Mice coming out soon. While he is not the writer that his father was (give him time) and his style is not quite like his father's, I respect Vaughn's art so much I lap up Mark's stuff like a puppy. As a rule, I do not drool like so many fans do, but I lose self-control over da Bodé's stuff.

Cripes, it's almost 11:30. Quickly: I saw the Grass Roots on the second "Happy Together" tour. Now their guitarist was playing a Fender, and as any rock fiend knows, there were only three guitarists that knew how to play a Fender without sounding like Al Jardine. This guy wasn't one of them...until the break in "Temptation Eyes," when Al Jardine turned into David Gilmour.

Do you have a video?

Yours—

PHIL TORTORICI
P.O. Box 57487
West Palm Beach, FL 33405

Hiya again Elayne!

Nice to see Rev. Ken Burke's now joined the hallowed ranks of us Inside Jokesters; he's been sending me LOTS of material I haven't room to put in the PIG PAPERS (coz the PP's TOO SMALL and TOO INFREQUENTLY PUBLISHED!!), so I'm glad you're providing him with an outlet. Nice to see Tuli back, Anni is smack-bad on as always, and Charles F. Rosenay!!!'s (I haven't corresponded with him in YEARS...) Monkees piece was, uhh, timely (their new single isn't much to "Hey hey" about, cho, THAT'S fer shure...). But—and I never thought I'd hear myself saying this!—Ace's novel is beginning to wear on me, not to mention rub me in an incorrect way (didja know he and I may soon be collaborating, MUSICAL'Y, on his "Private Pepper" project?! IS THE WORLD READY?!?!?!)...
More sugar,

GARY PIG GOLD
70 Cotton Dr.
Mississauga, Ont. L5G 1Z9
CANADA

Dear Elayne,

This being the last letter I shall ever write you from the dear old Hotel New Jersey, I thought it only proper that I do something special for the occasion, perhaps a tribute to my many years here, or a reminiscence or at least a halfway decent letter of comment or something, but unfortunately, when all one's earthly goods (except for one's faithful typewriter and half a ream of paper) are packed away in cartons, the men from the electronics shop are coming to dismantle the television set, and one has just spent an hour on the telephone arguing with a department store that is still insisting, after several heated letters and copies of cancelled checks on one's part, that one owes it money, and has cut off one's credit—a depressing notion, even though one has absolutely no intention of ever shopping in their sweaty old establishment again—then one's thoughts tend to run more towards how many people one can safely sock in the jaw before Justice catches up with one than any sort of tender memories. Besides, as usual, I've only given myself an hour in which to write this, before journeying into New York to meet you for a farewell dim sum dinner in Chinatown (don't all the rest of you wish you were going with us?), so I think my best course of action is simply to zip through #47 as quickly as possible, hoping to do justice to everything, and let that stand as tribute.

Well, to begin at the begin, I did like the nice purple cover, though I must admit that those fellows who sing the TRANSFORMERS theme song will ever remain IJ's official musicombo to me, for all that I'm sure that the members of Retro are sterling people. Roldo's STRESS FOR SUCCESS was only too accurate, Steven Scharff's cartoon was really quite good, and will someone please send Larry Oberc a calendar and a copy of ELEMENTS OF STYLE? He's far too good a writer to be wasting his time on late 50's bomb-angst stories, and it worries me that he seems to be moving backwards through the decades. What's next—World War II reminiscences? I missed "Commercial McClue-In" this time, and look forward to its return. (Well, gee, it was in there on page 17 as always. Was your copy missing a page? Do check...) Please tell the proprietress that if she doesn't write about those beastly Jordache commercials with the Molly Ringwald lookalike, I will, and we wouldn't want that, would we?

In re Deborah Benedict's interesting answer to my comments on THE YOUNG ONES, she makes some very good points, but I'm afraid she didn't quite manage to convince me, nor did another viewing of the programme. On the other hand, I've always found Dali to be very slightly annoying as well—again, he seems to be trying too damned hard—so it might just be my own particular mind-set.

While I'm on the subject of people trying too hard, Charles Rosenay!!!'s review of the Monkees' revival tour convinced me that my going to see such a thing would only be redundant, not to say aggravating. I used to see Peter Tork's various bands when they played around the Village, and I always thought it incredibly sad when Monkees material was included in the sets—I mean, give it up already—and I'm afraid this new attempt only strikes me as a last-ditch effort by three unsuccessful entertainers to recapture the one tiny bit of fame they once enjoyed. I think it indicative that the one member of the band that ever accomplished anything outside the framework of the band—that is, Nesmith—opted not to join the tour. I'm glad Rosenay had a good time—he's an excellent reviewer, by the way—but this is decidedly not for me. The only band for whom I think I could stomach a revival is the Lovin' Spoonful and, thankfully, I believe John Sebastian has too much sense (and is doing too well on his own) to attempt such a thing. When it's over, it's over.

Time to go eat sweet rice cakes and barbecued pork buns.

Goodbye, dear old Hotel.

Next month in Pennsylvania,
ANNI ACKNER

Dear Elayne, et al.,

Greetings fellow Jokers/Jokees. I'd like to begin this open letter to the hallowed IJ community by offering a hearty huzzah! to all the people who made the last two issues (my first two) possible. Now, if you will, so to speak, as the saying goes, I'd like to take this opportunity to innroduce meself.

My name is Tish. I was born 25 years ago in an all-night diner somewhere in rural Mississippi (or, Emiesessessessessipeeppee as I fondly refer to it). After brief stays in virtually every flophouse in the state, my all-too-generous parents donated my services to one Megamusement Corp. where, at the impressionable age

24 of six, I acted as a research subject during the testing and de-

velopment of the popular Whack-A-Mole arcade game. Many moons o' therapy later, I finally came to terms with my chronic aching head, although the shrinks confirmed that I was destined to be manic-depressive for the rest of my waking life. Sigh...I mean, Fie!

Anyway, between then and now, I've held a number of semi-challenging jobs. I was a make-up consultant in a plastic surgeon's office on the Island; I was the hall monitor in a one-room schoolhouse in Maine; I was the Chief Counter-Upper at the Burpee Seed Outlet in North Carolina (did you know there are exactly 32 seeds in every marigold packet?). Most recently, I served as a designer for the Acme Cardboard Company in Columbus, Ohio. I was responsible for creating a full line of disposable body boxes called "Fancaskets" (very popular with the Mafia set), and I executed the design for our Insta-Shanty, which was simply the rage on college campuses across the nation this past semester. Unfortunately, Acme Cardboard burned to the ground last week. Or did it just fold? No matter: I am presently unemployed. My net material worth has dwindled to a pocketful of change and an extensive chewing gum collection (which I refuse to sell at any price).

But being out of work doesn't mean I can't enjoy life and all its grand by-products. Indeed, I while away my hours bending unbreakable combs, splitting atoms with my bare teeth, and conducting free Heimlich maneuvers on unwitting pedestrians for the duration of the "DON'T WALK" sign. My latest job ambition is to host a silent TV game show. That, or become a lobbyist—of the hotel variety.

NOW WAIT A SEC! I'm sorry: I suddenly realized that I've fabricated virtually this whole letter. Silly/wicked me! Forgive me though...I was just trying to make y'all smile. If I didn't, please feel free to sue me (I love the media attention). Seriously now, my name really is Tish, and I live in Greenbelt, Maryland. I split my time between graduate school (MFA program in creative writing at American University), scooping ice cream (Steve's), writing resumes, and selling my self-published book (ORDER AND CHAOS, NOTHING AT ALL). Any correspondence or requests for free samples are more than welcome! Best wishes to all friends, strangers and strange friends alike...

Peace, Love and Vinyl Boots, TISH - Say When Press
P.O. Box 942
Greenbelt, MD 20770

(Although I think Tish may have missed the point of having a letters column, which is basically to talk about/to IJ rather than about one's self, his 'biography' was so good I couldn't resist.)
Dear Elayne,

It is always a time of joy and fulfillment whenever the latest copy of IJ appears in my mailbox; from nowhere else do I get so much stuff that I really wanna read! Yes, it is through the simple joys of life that we may indeed transcend the collected evils of MTV, McDonald's, USA Today, Rolling Stone, NutraSweet, and Garfield the cat. Right? Sure hope so.

Well now...#47 kicks off with a dandy cover by St.Eve! Does the Japanese writing actually translate to "Inside Joke," or something obscene, or what? (La Sainte, who spent time in Japan, assures us the lettering actually says "Inside Joke" in Japanese. Whether or not that is obscene is, of course, left to individual judgment.) Also enjoyed Steve Scharff's "Double Standard" page. (Y'know, just this very morning two women and a little girl were at my doorstep trying to sell me Watchtower and Awake! To their credit, a simple "No thanks" was sufficient.) Prudence's moth story was fun to figure out. And once again, "Commercial McClue-In" comes through with flying colors with the Kid's remarks on hyper-mega-super-patriotic ads! Speaking of which, a blurb I find annoying is the Time-Life Books' "Vietnam Experience" spot, where they show some dad and his wide-eyed tyke at the Vietnam memorial: Time-Life selflessly offers to explain all those Difficult Questions to your child with their multi-volume revisionist history! (Big of 'em...) What's really irritating is that they show a chapter heading: "You Can't Trust Anybody Over Thirty"...as if to say, "Nyeah nyeah, now you're over thirty...how 'bout that?!" But everyone knows that the "over thirty" phrase was coined by THEM... as a cutoff date for your craziness, right? (Speaking of Time-Life...how do you like all those bonus doohickeys they're offering with subscriptions to Time? Clock-radios, phones, cameras...News-week is giving away a Walkman-type cassette player with an extra pair of tabletop speakers! Hmm, I think I'll hold out for the station wagon and the dinette set...)

Yeah, there sure were a lot of reviews in #47! Glad to hear the Monkees reunion went over so well. Monkeemania in the 80's—who'da thought it? And I agree with Steve Chaput that WATCHMEN is a great comic; one of the best things DC's come out with. Tim Arnold, you are absolutely correct about the post-Bushmiller NANCY...it's a mess! Why do they even bother?

You know, it's hard not to pity Laraine Newman...she shows up in the putrid INVADERS FROM MARS remake and the Canned Film Festival in the same year!...

Mr. Tortorici: what do you mean, I cannot see the "parody potential" in CARE BEARS and SMURFS?! They are Evil! Evil, do you hear? You want to talk about Evil? THEY are using Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, and the rest of the Warner Bros. crew to promote some godforsaken Borden's soft drink called (obviously) "BUGS BUNNY AND PALS"...and...and...it's loaded with NUTRASWEET!! AAAAAAAGH! That horrible brain-melting chemical! The foul SMURFS or CARE BEARS would have been more appropriate, but oh, no...THEY use BUGS

BUNNY to get us to trust THEM! It's HORRIBLE! EVIL!! NO, NO.....
So how's things with you?

JOHN P. MORGAN
185 Seabreeze Ave., #4
East Keansburg, NJ 07734

Dear Elayne—

After faithfully reading IJ for years I feel compelled to write. Lately I've been really loving "Kid" Sieve's "Commercial McClue-In," which comes packaged in my favorite ranting style. The one thing I had to say, from issue #46, was that you are by no means the only Earth-born alien (or, as we like to call ourselves, the Beyonders) who takes direct action against War On Drugs propaganda. In fact, not only do I light up for anti-drug statements on tv (or loudly rail at public posters and billboards), but I also know I'm in for a few bonds (from the ever-trusty Manifest Destiny) whenever I play stuff like "Dope Smokin' Moron" on my Replacements tape, "Blow Me Jack" by the Meatmen or anything in my Minor Threat collection, just to name a few. Then I completely counteract their bad magic with some Beatles or Jimi Hendrix.

And in #47, what do you think of a Red Sox-Mets series? (That is if, true to form, we blow it to the Yankees in late August.) I say Sox in 6—we want revenge for 1978, and we haven't forgotten for a moment. (Well, considering that Steve's a Red Sox fan and we've pretty well established by now how I feel about the Mets—and the fact that we're almost certain to acquire post-season tickets "if" the Mets make it that far—Apt. Third-Eye might be up in arms for a bit...but I dunno, like IJ's official Met prognosticator Jill Zimmerman says, better watch them Orioles...)

I think the most brilliant job of corporate brainwashing lately is the Burger King jingle ("This is a Burger King town"—John Cougar Mellencamp should sue). I can simply not get it off my mind, and I only watch tv once every two weeks. Several of my more politically correct friends are similarly afflicted. Whoever wrote that is a genius—I wish s/he was working for Our Side. Take some potshots at good ol' Adolph Coors (a well-named man, if ever there was one) while you're at it. I moved east to escape their pisswater and fascism! Now nowhere is safe from this abomination of a beer.

I wish I had read Anni's guide before I attended Liberty Weekend. I randomly ran across Tinker Toyhenge that visit, anyway. And no, Elayne, we didn't sell many cute little sealtoys to the tourist hordes—they must've confused us with West German terrorists or something. (Sean works for Greenpeace.) The whole thing was a financial dud, but we still had a blast, partying in the back of the U-Haul at all hours the night before the dreaded 4th, not sleeping much and drinking altogether too much very expensive beer. And I had a KILLER kielbasa and cheese omelette at Odessa, some Ukranian breakfast joint around the East Side of 14th or so. It almost rivals Zooky's, it's so great. And why won't you selfish people let the most sacred and holy bread, the BIALY, outside the confines of Manhattan? Anni, I must say I live and die by your little lists—this column is my favorite of all your writing I see regularly.

Gotta run; I'm surf'ing to North Carolina tomorrow morning. I'll send you a postcard of the kudzu when I'm settled.

Love & bialys,

SEAN HAUGH
about 200 yards off the
Atlantic coast

Dear Elayne,

Hello, and thanks again for IJ...Might we gather that the Rev. Kenneth R. Burke does not like David Letterman? Well, Dave is kind of a jerk. But that's what's funny. I usually have fantasies about being on the show (and besting him at his own game, of course). On the other hand, I used to fantasize about being on the first Saturday Night Live, too. Hah! Back when it was good, eh? Now is about the time to start accusing David of getting old and stale, since he's been covered by Newsweek, People, and even The Utne Reader. Yeah! Kind of an eclectic media coverage.

All the comments about "Monday, July 7th" in the latest issue were beyond me, as I read it on the 13th or 14th. (Sorry; I was referring to the much-anticipated end of Liberty Weekend.) Oh well. But—for some reason, perhaps because of the topicality, Anni's column took me two go-rounds this time. I did like the "Cubism War Memorial," I must admit. But "Custer's Last Stand" pales when you consider the fact that I grew up near a suburb that had an ice cream shop called "Custard's Last Stand." Oh well.

My favorite this issue was Gary Pig Gold. Have I missed him before? I hope not. He was pretty funny. Sheesh! Just one of the dozens of writers I would like to steal from IJ. Yeah! Larry Oberc among them. Nice story about the last call of all time. Hark, I hear my roommate Drew coming home. Another Tuesday night at Club Degenerate. Oh well.

"Commercial McClue-In" was okay, but I have the feeling for some reason that "Kid" Sieve has never read "Advertising Age." Well, I can take care of that, heh heh heh.

One thing to keep in mind is the regionality of ads. For instance, you don't have the Kemps campaign, "It's the cows." There's an ice cream around the Twin Cities called "Kemps," and they have this campaign for which the tv commercial shows the various cows they get their ice cream from: There's an almost-all-white cow for the vanilla ice cream, an almost-all-brown cow for the chocolate ice cream, a white-and-brown-spotted cow for the chocolate chip ice cream, and a painted-green-and-yellow cow for the peppermint bon bon ice cream. There is a billboard around that shows a cow spray-painted with graffiti, and that's "New York

Vanilla" ice cream. I'm getting a little tired of the smug expression on the guy's face when he walks over and stands in front of the "peppermint bon bon" cow.

Did you know that Advertising Age has a sports column, dedicated solely to covering the endorsement careers of sports stars? I get pretty freaked out by advertising sometimes. Like last night I set an ad for a calf feed that described it as "steamed rolled grain and molasses." I stopped for a second and realized: That's granola. People are starving around the world and American cows are being fattened on granola. Far fucking out! Tonight I set a party invitation inviting people to celebrate the "start ship" of three grain muffins. That kind of cracked me up, too. Shit! I don't get it. Then of course there was the time I worked on a Honeywell ad that was called "Global Domination." Sheesh! (I do have some morals about what type I set; I refuse to set defense systems ads. Oh well.)

Maybe "Kid" Sieve should ask everybody to write in with their favorite waterbedroom ads, or late-night crazy used car salesman ads. How can they sell enough to pay for the ad? I don't know. Oh well. Wanda Jackson.

I also liked Steven Scharff's full-page cartoon. That was a pretty choice response that shows the double-think standards of most politics. Not only that, but that woman is ignorant of the fact that Reagan's government is spending less and less on abortion all the time. In fact, the funding for International Planned Parenthood and International Family Planning (I might have the agency names incorrect) has been practically eliminated for more than a year. Reagan's restrictions on funding for international family planning are more strict than he would be allowed to get away with here. This resulted first because of slightly trumped-up charges of infanticide in China, because the penalties against extra children there are so severe. And a Reaganite senator used these charges (there were many cases of infanticide, that was true) to build a case against all funding of all international birth control agencies. The ultimate double-think about abortion is that it is the state's prerogative to send men into battle, with consequent loss of civilian life, but it is not an individual's right to control his or her own biology. As somebody else has said, "For fundamentalists, life begins at conception and ends at birth."

To change the subject, sometimes I want to collect all the Zenarchy stories into a book. I'd have to be very careful in picking typeface and format and all of that. It's a fantasy right up there with being on the Letterman show, or in the ultimate bar band, that performs every kind of music I've ever liked, from baroque to punk rock. Sigh. "Tough Enough To Be A Melter" was kind of pointless to me. Just extravagance and overwriting. Liked the stuff about "Max Headroom." Yeah!...

Yours truly,

LUKE MCGUFF
Box 3680
Minneapolis, MN 55403

I dunno, Elayne...

...I grew up with The Monkees' original invasion. Had my share of gumcards ("hey! Lookit the flipbook of Mike sittin' on th' skateboard!").

The 70s gave us an older version of these amusing and silly shows, with a biig letdown called DOLENZ, JONES, BOYCE & HART.

Now the MTVers head an even greater rereunion for the 80s. Ask Mike why he didn't go on the tour and you'll know why there is a reunion, okay? Things been mediocre since then good ol' days.

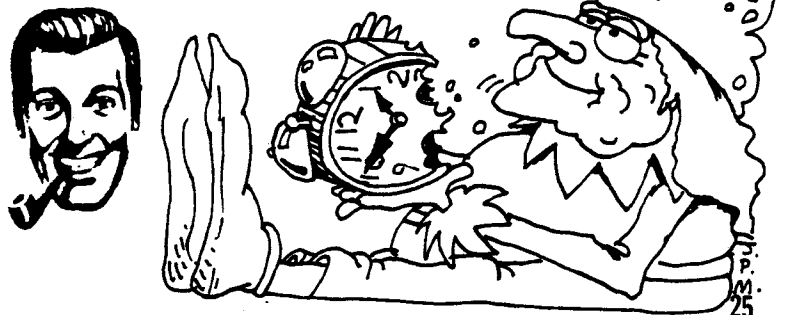
Now, I wish 3/4-Monkees all the best; they're old friends of mine. But this Rosenay character, he put me off bad. Everything was SPECTacular and SPECTastic. Well, I saw the three boys interviewed on T.V. one morning and they didn't look so good. Peter was the least weatherbeaten. Micky's age shows, but that young, wacko spirit still bubbles. Now Davy...

...Davy was death warmed over. Looked like a 60-year-old version of Dudley Moore. No kidding. Noo much drugs and/or booze. What a motley crew. I read this guy Rosenay's drool and wonder if a load of Tiger Beat writers from Hell got chucked into a deep-freeze capsule for 18-20 years and were unleashed onto the borscht belt. I take his account with a macroscopic chip of salt.

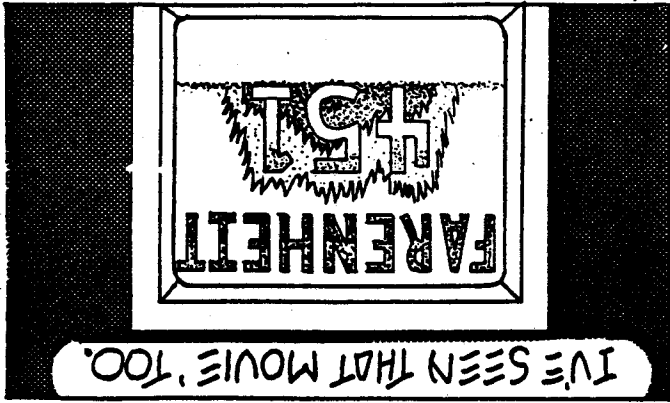
DEBBIE DAVID

Beautiful World Headquarters

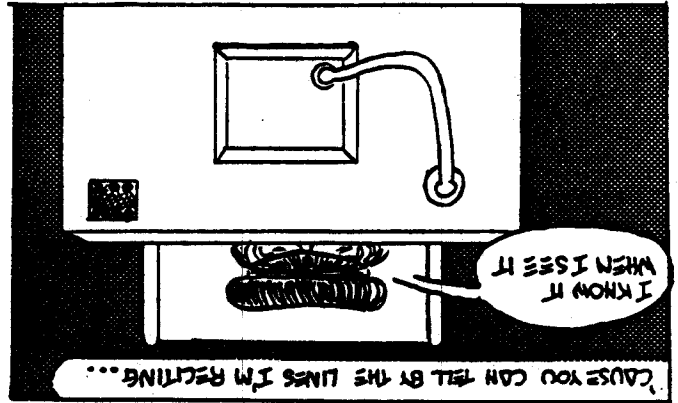
(Charles Rosenay!!!, who spells his name with three exclamation points, organizes Beatles and Monkees conventions for a living, as far as I can tell, and also publishes the Beatles magazine Good Day Sunshine.)



HAVE CALLED ON EVER SINCE. [Name] of private citizens. There are, of course, Chicago 86 (V) (C) DTM LTD.



IVE SEEN THAT MOVIE, TOO.

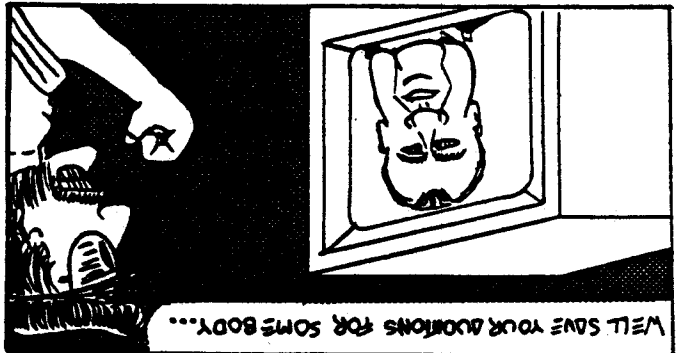


CAUSE YOU CAN TELL BY THE LINES IM RECTING...



NOKI
NOKI
NOKI

WHO HASN'T GOT THAT MUCH TO LOSE.



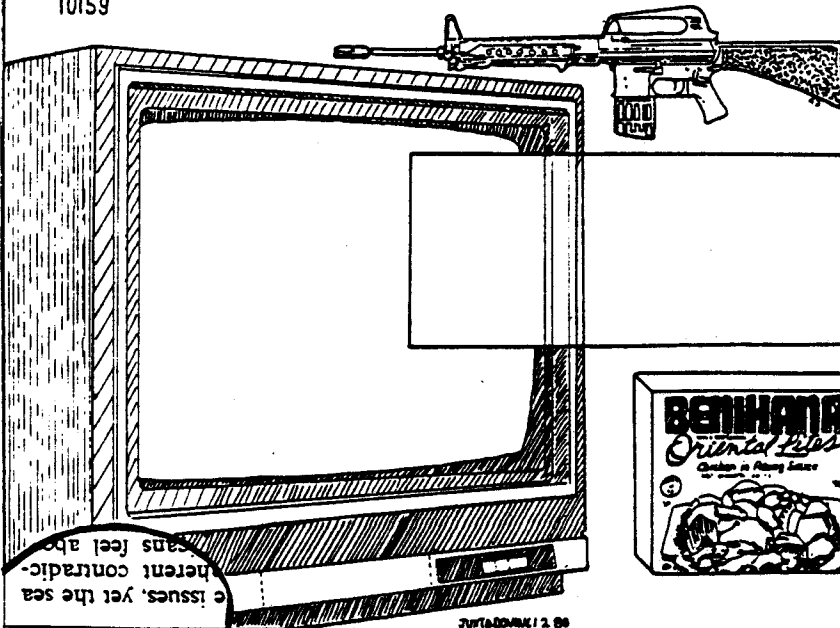
WELL SAVE YOUR ADULTIONS FOR SOME BODY...

chime thought it would be good to broaden their base and ended up getting swallowed up by the religious-right movement. Both Democrats and Republicans are jealously eyeing



what's happening all over the country. People in the communities are reawakening and reaffirming their commitment to values. In Iowa, militant moralism is

INSIDE JOKE
ELAYNE WECHSLER
PO 1609
MADISON SQUARE STATION
NEW YORK, NY
10159



I am 19 years old and am attending my first year at a university. One of the classes I am enrolled in is French. It happens to be my favorite class because of my incredibly gorgeous teacher. She is a tall, waifish from way back.

All first-year students are assigned a teacher as a student adviser. Mine was mine. A couple of times a year I am required to visit her. Obviously, I looked forward to these meetings, but the real surprise came at the end of the semester during my visit.

It was five o'clock when I showed up. I was the last one scheduled for the day. I knocked on her office door and went in. Part of my assignment was to read some French text. Once I sat down, Jane pulled out a magazine and instructed me to turn to page 13. As I searched through some photographs of nude men in various positions, she really turned me off. Finally I found my head and began to read.

As I read I kept finding words I had never seen before. I tried my best to understand what she had done. She then translated the article was a demon of women and a hungry wolf all wet.

She slowly raised her head to look at me and I noticed a beautiful gaze. I couldn't resist in the end. She gave me a patch doll for my French class. When I found out she was a lesbian, I went for the patch.

She was not the socks hurt. But now I'm not. I stood up and began to dance. She was in a building. She looked at my cock from his long contract. She looked at my long contract. She looked at my long contract. She looked at my long contract.

All of a sudden it was a dark, stormy night. I was out over the moon. I was out over the moon. I was out over the moon. I was out over the moon.