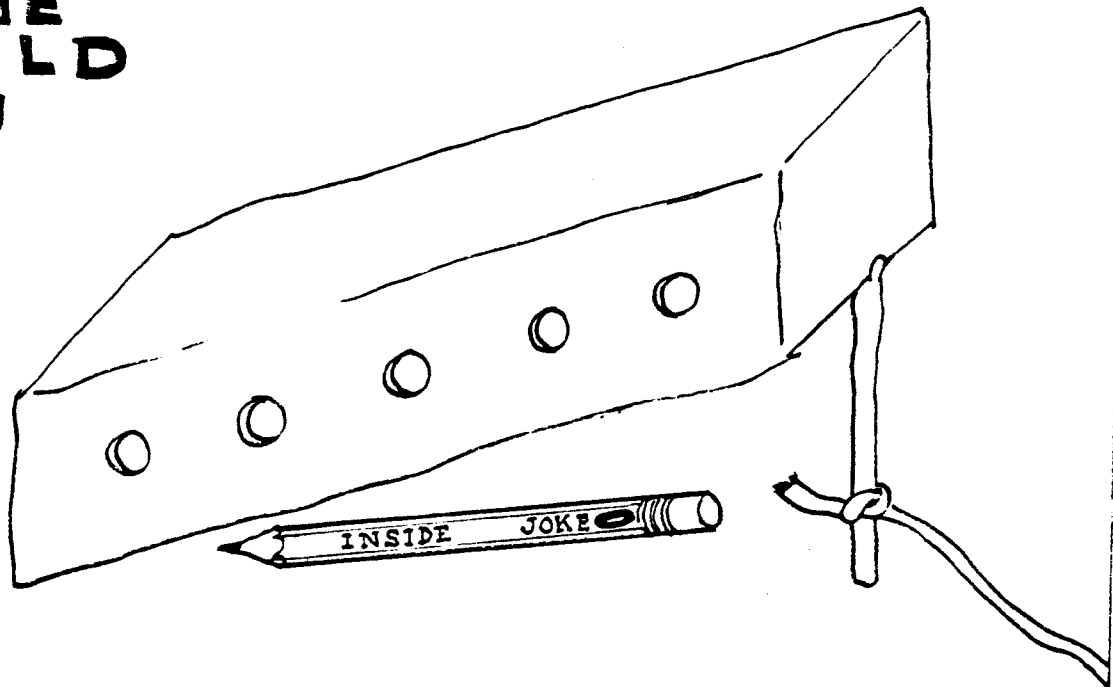




NATIONAL GLEE OF GRAPHICS

HUNTING
THE
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IJ



\$1

#58

ACKNOWLEDITORIAL

Welcome to IJ's big holiday season, and I hope you're gearing up for the big Pre-Wedding-Type Party this year. Yes, our annual IJ party keeps getting bigger and better (I hope), and this year should prove no exception! I outlined some of what's in store last issue, so I'll just use this space to assure you I'll be making up actual invites and sending them to all in the somewhat-immediate vicinity (NY/NJ/CT/PA) and whoever else wants one (do ask!), with a request to RSVP by March 15 the latest so's I can buy foodstuffs and such. IMPORTANT NOTICE: We will be having a

Upcoming Events

(continued on page four)

FEBRUARY 29 - DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO IJ #59;

Superman (50)

1st Week in MARCH - Return the Borrowed Books Week
MARCH 1 - JED MARTINEZ (34); 1st typewriter made (1873)
MARCH 2 - Tom Wolfe (57); John Irving (46); Lou Reed (46)
MARCH 3 - A.J. WRIGHT (36); Jean Harlow (b. 1911)
MARCH 4 - Theodore "Dr." Seuss Geisel (84)

2nd Week in MARCH - Fun Mail Week

MARCH 6 - BRIAN PEARCE (23)
MARCH 8 - Julian Lennon (24)
MARCH 11 - Flaming Nostrils Day
MARCH 12 - Edward Albee (60); Jack Kerouac (b. 1922)
MARCH 14 - Albert Einstein (b. 1879); Mother's Day*
MARCH 16 - JOHN BRIDGMAN (something-and-a-half)
MARCH 17 - St. Patty's (official IJ holiday)
MARCH 19 - IJ PARTY - For info, directions and invites, call 718/435-7281 (the HELP-AT-1 Hotline) 'tween 7-10:30pm EST - RSVP by 3/15 or so

*MOTHERS DAY, Mar 14. Purpose: A day set aside to honor moth collectors and specialists, celebrated in museums or libraries having moth collections. Annually, March fourteenth. Sponsor: Puns Corps, c/o Bob Birch, Grand Punsorpion, Box 2364, Falls Church, VA 22042.

* INSIDE JOKE is put on hexaweekly by Elayne Wechsler and assorted *
* dear friends and emanates from beautiful downtown Brooklyn, where *
* a surrogate typewriter like the one on which I'm typing now can be *
* supplied when lazy editrices finally get off their so-called duffs *
* and repair their own babies. About time, huh? *

* EDITOR-IN-RESIDENCE.....ELAYNE WECHSLER *
* PRODUCTION ASSISTANT.....STEVE CHAPUT *

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* ==MIKE DOBBS=== PRUDENCE GAELOR===GARY PIG GOLD===RORY HOUCHESS== *
* ALPHONZO LIGI===CAROL MAGARY=====J.P. MORGAN=====LARRY OBERC *
* ==SUSAN PACKIE===== ROLDO ===== STEVEN SCHARFF ===DAVID SERLIN== *
* DORIAN TENORE=====KERRY THORNLEY=====PHIL TORTORICI *

FRONT COVER BY MICHAEL POLO

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MIKE GUNDERLOY	WILLIAM RALEY	BOB Z
MARY ANN HENN	ANDY ROBERTS	and "KID" SIEVE

Vossarian Universal

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Ad rates: \$5 per business card size ad

Please send SASE for Writers'/Artists' Guidelines

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"Silent Auction" of a 12-inch color television (yes, it works) donated by our own Anni Ackner (who will be in charge of maintaining the auction and explaining to attendees what it's all about), so bring your checkbooks and/or cash! Also bring drinkables and druggables of choice, as usual, BUT, as Anni will be crashing at Apt. Third Eye and there is technically only bed space for two, either plan on not imbibing/indulging if you're coming by car, as you'd probably have to drive home, OR bring a sleeping bag with you to crash on the carpet (which you're quite welcome to do!). IMPORTANT NOTICE THE SECOND: If you are even the least bit allergic to cats, be reminded we have two, and Gypsy and Phredd, while neat to keen kitties and all that, seem to bring out the worst in allergy-prone folks who don't even sneeze at other cats. So bring your medicine, and we'll do our part by dusting and vacuuming like crazy, even if that really doesn't help much. As usual, if you have any sort of questions about directions, whether you can bring guests (generally, not unless they're IJ readers, because last year we had a few rudeness problems with friends o' friends and I'd rather not repeat that) and anything else that crosses your mind, please call (see "Upcoming Events" for our phone number). Pre-wedding gifts are STRICTLY OPTIONAL, and yes, we're actually getting our typewriter tuned up for the Gerber this year!

You may have noticed that, besides noting all the IJ holidays soon to be upon us, our calendar has been growing of late, and this is due to faithful gleaming of Chase's Annual Events (I've just sent for their '88 edition) and Nicole Hollander's 1988 calendar, as well as the calendars of Brian Pearce and Jim Middleton (and a bit of help from Jed Martinez as well). One annual event not listed this year is the 100th anniversary of the National Geographic, which we've commemorated with Michael Polo's cover. Be sure and color the border in yellow, y'all, and Michael says you can color the rest with whatever crayons you have on hand. Well, actually, I'm paraphrasing.

Sadly, due to all sorts of bizarre personal occurrences, Anni is unable to be with us this issue, except in spirit, so this allows me to fill her usual space with (finally!) the Questionnaire Responses—well, not all the responses, but you'll see why when you read my overview, starting next page. Actually, much of this is almost like getting a whole column from DeeBee, whose poems still grace some pages herein (look for 'em!)...

Staffer changes: Roldo's back, presumably for good although he may yet vanish again if we stare at him directly, so try to read his stuff kinda sideways, I guess, like peripherally...he's sent us enough backlog to last us about a year or so, though, so welcome back, Roldo! A.J. hasn't written in months, so I must assume he's no longer interested in being a staffer, but I do hope we'll get contributions from him occasionally in the future anyway. Which leaves a spot open for a "new" staffer, and Kathy Stadalsky will be officially joining us next issue...

What else? Lots of sex, drugs and rock & roll this time, and do be aware that I place a personal More Than I Need To Know (MTINTK) caveat on George Singleton's story, but I think you'll understand why it couldn't be cut up, and why I decided to run it despite my, um, aversion to some of the material. It's a thin line I walk here, folk. We've got several newcomers (apparently the new Writer's Digest edition is out), two of whom have begun two-part stories here (whilst Pru finishes up her two-parter). And in addition to sending some more biting cartoon commentary, Tuli Kupferberg's written a few poems, one of which needs a bit of translation: in "The Ballad of Mordechai Vanunu," the word "rachmonos" is Hebrew for "pity" or "mercy."

As in, I thank those who've had enough rachmonos to patronize IJ for their ads, like Chris Mink from KnuckleHead Press (a truly neat little comedy newsletter, by the way), Gary Pig Gold and the newly-octogenarian J.C. Brainbeau, as well as those who've helped us a bit monetarily—J.C. (again), Carol Magary, Mark McDonald and Michael Polo. I shall, however, have no rachmonos on IJ readers at all now, as I'm about to spell out the usual again:

The deadline for submissions to IJ #59 is February 29—this issue should arrive in plenty of time for you to submit your art, writing, letters, etc., for a change. NOTE: Submissions brought to the IJ party will probably not make it into #59, nor will our party Gerber, as I do hope to have that issue at least partially laid out (for all to see, perhaps) by that point. The deadline for #60 is April 15, so don't say I didn't warn you. INSIDE JOKE is a BY-SUBSCRIPTION-ONLY publication (which means no trades; I can't afford them any more, sorry) and costs \$1 per issue; if you live in Canada, please pay by American cash or postal money order; overseas our sub costs are 3 IRCs per issue, sent surface rate. Make checks/m.o.'s payable to "Elayne Wechsler." NON-REFUNDABLE advance subs can be had for up to \$8 (a year's worth); anything over that will be considered donation. Contributors have the option of paying the dollar or sending in 56¢ in stamps for the next issue in which their work will appear—no issues beyond that, as stamps cannot be used for advance subscriptions, okay? If your mailing label has an "X" by your name, it's time to renew. Back issues (\$1) and IJ caps (\$5) will both be available at the party (if you have a zine you want to vend, by the way, by all means do bring it), but they're always available by mail, hint hint. The address wherein to send submissions, money, drugs, etc. is:

P.O. Box 1609, Madison Sq. Sta., New York, NY 10159

This issue is dedicated to the memory of Parker Fennelly, who played Titus Moody in "Allen's Alley" and was most recently the farmer-type spokesman for Pepperidge Farm...and R.I.P., Frederick Lowe.

Questionnaire Results

I get the feeling our last Questionnaire wasn't all that interesting, or maybe it intimidated too many people or something, because we really only got 20 responses, far less than any scientifically-accurate survey (Old Science, of course). Therefore, I can draw no firm conclusions on anything, least of all the information I was hoping to amass the most—suggestions on how to raise money so I don't have to keep paying \$300 or so out of my own pocket to put each issue out. I mean, come on folks, a bake sale? Some good suggestions: GK and RD both suggest promotional items, but I still have all those \$5 IJ caps lying around; the sad fact is, nobody seems to want promo items, and they wind up costing more to order in bulk than the few I eventually sell (I'm actually only breaking even with the caps). KB suggested non-profit status, but unfortunately, that would make us answerable to the IRS, and while that in turn would mean we'd probably get paid by the Government for running at a loss each year, I'd sooner Uncle Sam not know about our little enterprise officially. Some fun suggestions: DB (of course)—"First, you have to plant fund seeds when the soil is safe from frost. It's usually best to plant fund seeds during a waxing moon. But seriously folks, and that should be in italics, apply for a government grant for a literary project. Find a token person who needs a PhD in something and make them Chairperson of the Board or whatever. Set aside a high-interest savings account for capitalistic enjoyment." Unfortunately, banks will not open an account for anybody or anything that does not have an identification number, and that means going thru the grant/non-profit/Gov't. route, which costs money for legal fees and requires contacts I don't have and, again, means I have to file returns for Uncle Sam's War Machine and all, so back to square one, and DB continues: "ADVERTISING SCHEMES FOR RAISING FUNDS AND CONSCIOUSNESS: INSIDE JOKE should print up a mess o' flyers that say, boldly, 'INSIDE JOKE: THE MAGAZINE THAT MAKES THE NATIONAL LAMPOON LOOK LIKE ADRIENNE BARBEAU WITHOUT BREASTS!' That'll get 'em. Write subscriber info on the flyer. Now you got wider circulation. The money spent on printing costs will be swiftly indemnified by laugh-crazy peoples." I rather think not, sorry to say; postage will only go up, to the point beyond my ability to manage, and we can't get a bulk rate permit (which costs mucho dinero as well) because we won't send out over 200 copies regularly (many people send for one issue, don't get the point or are turned off, and never write again), plus bulk mail means sorting by zip code, etc., none of which I have time to do. Plus, printing costs would actually go up in the short run, unless we're talking thousands of copies, and then I'd be paying less, but only comparatively (i.e., \$1000 for, say, 10,000 IJs is a bargain compared to \$300 for 150 IJs, but it's still \$700 more in reality). Onward with DB: "FOR ONGOING MONIES: To raise lotta money to stash away for the future is easy. Telethons are the best way to go. Write to David Letterman and tell him of the IJ plight—send him the 'best of IJ' as incentive to assist. He could devote a whole show to helping IJ raise bucks; Paul and Bud would help out, I just know it." DP echoes an idea for a telethon, and I think the Letterman show would be splendid, but you won't catch me doing it. Not without a lot of backing from people with far more chutzpah than I. What say, folks? Also, from TK: "Convince President Reagan that IJ is fighting to protect the small press from communist infiltration so IJ needs covert funding. If that doesn't work, find several pop music celebrities to collaborate on a benefit tour for IJ. Maybe Sting could write a song about IJ." I like it, I like it. Actually, the only CIA guy I personally know is a subscriber to my—I mean, Kip's Firesign Theatre newsletter, which is running mightily in the black (not entirely fair that FAaFAL, a free publication for which Kip gets 100% reimbursement from TFT, receives \$25 donations when IJ struggles along. I mean, FAaFAL's only 5 pages and comes out three times a year! Fortunately, Kip's not above laundering money from one account into another...). Maybe if I ask him nice...now, he's a sweetie but he's still CIA...

Oh, not to be forgetting Daza, who offers: "Create an IJ Club, complete with card, member privileges, etc., all for an annual fee. All members need not be writers, etc. Card would have picture of anything but member." I like this; anyone willing to donate things like cards and certificates? Anybody want to make up privileges, rules, etc.? Go for it, Daza! You also had other unusual suggestions, such as: "Contributors can advertise their own special events (art show) or products for a fee (e.g., posters, music, want ads)." I am considering classified ads now that Anni has taken her Bus on hiatus, but this is still in the planning stage. Also, "Select one month per year all IJs to save/redeem returnable bottles donate to Jkklj/klld IJ!" Cute idea, as long as they redeem those nickels for dollar bills before sending them.

The one suggestion I'm taking ultra-seriously was proposed by AA, KB, TD, PG and DP, which is basically (as DP puts it) a "mail auction." Anni is "willing to give away columns to anyone crazy enough to want one and who donates a certain amount of money, and I still think making the next IJ party a fund-raiser is a good idea." (We will be selling Anni's old TV at the IJ party, and perhaps '89's party will be a fundraiser, but time's a bit short for it this year.) Tom says, "Several IJ contributors are involved with bands and comedy groups, and a compilation sample to be sold both through the mail and at some alternative music places might do the trick. For five or six bucks, contributors could get

a tape (using a dub set to strike off copies, the cost shouldn't be more than 2 bucks per tape) with a selection of various IJ people doing stuff (i.e., something from Ken, a selection from Ground Zero, etc.). We could also send flyers with a picture of a cute puppy and the legend 'If You Don't Contribute to IJ, We'll Torture This Puppy.' If all else fails, send in large vicious thugs with baseball bats to beat money out of people..." Now hold on thar. You had me until the puppy bit. Seriously, I'm unsure about this sort of undertaking, as it would require a tremendous amount of communication and mailing tapes back and forth and time required for dubbing...unless, of course, I hear volunteers. Seems to me, though, that to make a master tape would cost more than you estimate, but then, I don't know about this end of the business.

Well, I for one am prepared to make the first move. Since some Top Ten Lists were pretty long (Dorian and DeeBee wrote entire columns worth!), much more so than would fit in the space I allot for such things here, I am going to organize the lists and offer them to IJ readers for \$2 each. This will distinguish them from the regular IJ price of \$1, but bear in mind you can't read this material anywhere else except if you come over for a visit, plus, hey, it's a fund raiser. No money laid out on my part, either, 'cause I can whip up copies on the office copier. And, hey, a bonus—Full size copy; no reductions! So herewith, the IJ Top Ten Lists of 1987, including complete columns by Deborah Benedict and Dorian Tenore, all compiled from IJ reader questionnaire responses, is now available exclusively from me for \$2 each, huzzah! (Incidentally, I'd intended on typing up full names on this package, so if anyone does not want their name on their Top Ten list, or does not want that list included at all, please let me know ASAP, ok?)

DeeBee insists ad rates would be "Hard to figure 'cause of the small circulation" (150) "and cost of IJ. If IJ costs only a buck and has, on the average, 32 pages, that works out to 3.125¢ per page. Let's call it 3¢ a page. Pages measure 8½ x 11. Nothing less than a full page ad would show a profit—and you'd need a thousand percent markup (reasonable when compared to big bizness ad ethics). The advertiser would have to pay thrice the amount of the mag, with assurances it would pay off." Math was never my strong suit, but I think that means \$3 per full page ad, which I feel is a bit low considering I'm already offering (and have sold) business card-sized ads for \$5 apiece, including the cost of the IJ if the advertiser isn't a subscriber. Other responses I got:

B.C. Size: 5 6 5 1 2 20 2-3 5 2 10 5 2 5
 1 Page: 10 10 10 3 5 28 5-10 12 5 30 20 4 10
 1/2 Page: 20 15 17.5 7.5 10 60 10-20 25 7.5 50 40 8 15 (20 full)

I'll discount the \$20 for a full page, because I can't ever see IJ selling out that much space to an ad rather than devoting it to what we're all about. In fact, I can't even see 1/2 page or 1/4 page ads in the near future if we keep receiving so much copy—and writing always, always comes before money. It's just the way I am. Now, in the spirit of the ongoing Olympics, I think we should throw out the high and low numbers and average the rest. Anybody math-minded willing to do that (for all three page sizes, just in case)? Thanks so much! Now, I don't know about such things myself, but there seem to be an awful lot of fivers for the biz-card size ads, so I think I'm on the right track with those so far.

As you may have guessed, the response to whether readers queried would pay \$2 for an IJ if it comes to that was unanimously "yes," and I suppose I shouldn't have expected an outright "no," in the same way I never expected totally forthright criticism of my fiction when I put it in IJ so I had to write it with a pseudonym (and it got appropriately trashed); however, there were four folks who in effect added "reluctantly," and 4 of the 17 responses to this question gives one a bit of a pause, so I'm still trying, come hell or high water, to keep this baby at \$1 for now...

Gift giving and receiving—Actually, no, I didn't include this because of any ulterior motives, as I tend to be a bit of a poop and usually ask people what gifts they'd like me to give them before I actually get anything. I was just curious, really. I myself have a preference for controlled substances, flowers from Steve, and practical stuff, in case any of you intend on bringing something bizarre to the party like wedding gifts (that was NOT a hint, o suspicious ones!). Overall, books led the "received" preferences, at 4, followed by food and money (2 each), and others voted for art, flowers, music, movie passes, handmade stuff, grey scarves, drugs, Vietnam souvenirs (!), toys, clothing, certain collectibles and computer games. On the giving end of things, artwork edged out books (4 to 3), there were 3 votes for music as well, a couple people preferred to spring surprises on folks, and others listed chocolate chip cookies, liquor (2), collectors' items, practical stuff, barware (is that like liquor?), and power tools! Herewith Anni's answers on receiving—"It doesn't matter, as long as it's a proper gift—books, flowers, blank checks, jewels, adorable little pressies. I only get irritated with people who think six pairs of pantyhose constitutes a present." And on giving—"Hard to say—so much depends on the recipient. I like to try to find the sort of thing that will make the recipient open his or her eyes wide and exclaim, 'How did you ever find this?'" And believe me, she's good at it. For her part, DeeBee (natch) says, on receiving—"I shall have trouble with this as it is put in the singular." Unintentionally, I assure you all. "I have several favorite gifts. I like cash very much. Most people who depend on the Social Security Administration do favor cash. Otherwise, I like toys, books and games. I would like to have an Etch-a-Sketch and a Slinky. I would try to sketch the Slinky. I also think drugs make good gifts. I'm talking quality drugs here. Opium chunks from the finest markets in Istanbul, holiday-

(continued from previous page)

decorated Thai sticks—after all, one can't always expect to have visions of sugarplums all on one's own!" And on giving—"I like to give people stuff no one else would give them. Odd little presents, usually from other planets. This Xmas I am giving no gifts—but I should feel pleased if I received as many gifts as I don't give. I am taking this Xmas off, but that needn't affect others!" And finally, a bonus from DeeBee to wrap things up:

"How didst thou first hearth of INSIDE JOKE?"

"I first knew of INSIDE JOKE in 1847. I was having a passionate love affair with Edgar Allen Poe. We were in his study and I noticed several issues of a rag called INSIDE JOKE. Some of them had covers by a guy named James du Lac—very impressive. I asked Eddie what sort of mag this was and he said, 'It's a magazine of creativity, comedy, satire and wit. The editrix, a woman of quality, Madame Wechsler, begs me to contribute.'"

"Are ya gonna, Eddie?" I asked. "Huh, Eddie, are ya gonna?" I loved to tease the guy, y'know?

"No, I'm afraid not," he replied. "I want to, but I can't keep my mind off this poem I'm working on—it's called Ulalume."

"About Virginia?" I asked.

"Yeah," he said softly, and quaffed the rest of his laudanum and rum.

"And that was the first time I knew of INSIDE JOKE. I read all of them and found them delightful. I tried to get Eddie to contribute, but no dice."

"UPCOMING EVENTS" cont'd. from page 2

- MARCH 19 - Swallows back to Capistrano; Philip Roth (57); Patrick McGoochan (60)
- MARCH 20 - Earth Day/Spring (official IJ holiday); Fred Rogers (60); B.F. Skinner (b. 1904)
- MARCH 21 - ALIX BISHOFF (23); Memory Day; J.S. Bach (b. 1685)
- MARCH 22 - Wonder Woman (47); Chico Marx (b. 1882)
- MARCH 24 - E's Mom; Harry Houdini (b. 1874); Fatty Arbuckle (b. 1887)
- MARCH 25 - Elton John (41); Gloria Steinem (53)
- MARCH 26 - Leonard Nimoy (57); Bob Elliott (64)
- Last Week in MARCH - Art Week
- MARCH 28 - St. Steve's Day (Patron Saint of Impure Thoughts); GENE WECHSLER (29); Three Mile Island "accident" (1979)
- MARCH 30 - "Haig In Control" (1981); Vincent Van Gogh (b. 1853)
- APRIL 1 - APRIL FOOL'S DAY - IJ HIGH HOLIDAY!; Lon Chaney Sr. (b. 1883)
- APRIL 2 - Max Ernst (b. 1891); Hans Christian Andersen (b. 1805)
- APRIL 5 - Bette Davis (80); St. Al's Day (Patron Saint of people who expect to be left large sums of money)
- APRIL 6 - PHIL AUSTIN (47)
- APRIL 7 - W.K. Kellogg (b. 1860); Wordsworth (b. 1770)
- APRIL 8 - Mary Pickford (b. 1893)
- APRIL 9 - W.C. Fields (b. 1879); Tom Lehrer (60)
- APRIL 11 - CAROLYN BOTTUM (30); Baseball Season Opens at Shea (official IJ holiday)
- APRIL 12 - David Cassidy (38)
- APRIL 13 - Thomas Jefferson (b. 1743)
- APRIL 14 - PAUL KRASSNER (54)
- APRIL 15 - DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO IJ #60

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KnuckleHead Press

THE COMEDY NEWSLETTER EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT

WE NEED WRITERS, PHOTOGS, CARTOONISTS

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For Your Convenience

by David Serlin

When we talk about corruption in society, which we do quite a lot of when we're bored, we are merely using the word to describe a bevy of complex problems. Am I more corrupt than you (well, most certainly...)? Have I corrupted you against your will (yes, and I enjoyed it the whole time, if you must know...)? And are there others who are more corrupt than me (lead the way, o divine decadent one!...)? You see, there is no easy way to deal with the subject. Everyone enjoys corruption, even in the most intimate form of the definition. Now, corrupt use of, say, chocolate is one thing—corruption in politics, or religion, or in the care of the environment is quite another. I have come to recognize one of the elements in society that, on the outside, seems to be completely harmless, yet on closer inspection would reveal itself to be a pulsating cog in the machine of American corruption. I'm speaking, of course, about the 24-hour convenience store.

When the all-night convenience store came into being some years ago, little was thought about its relevance to hard-core crime. Yet, it has come to this author's attention that the convenience stores plays a key role in the perpetuation of drug deals, homicide, kidnapping, and a myriad of other social cancers. To treat the convenience store as a harmless thing—as one might do when comparing them to larger supermarkets—is exactly what is inherently planned in their construction. For whom is the store convenient—the mother who needs diapers at 3 am, or the psychopath who needs a quick burrito on his way to dosing the city water supply with LSD?

The entire concept of the convenience store breeds a whole, um, well, a whole produce section of questions concerning its existence. When I was but a wee lad, the 24-hour convenience store consisted of the normal daily merchandise plus a pot of coffee brewing and a rotisserie of dried-out hot dogs which could be upgraded to chili-dogs for twenty cents. Today's convenience store boasts a full deli section, baked goods, Yuppie teas and whatnot, and just about anything else common to lived experience in 1988. It's not as if the owners of these stores wanted to upscale their line of luncheon meats for all-night customers out of kindness or concern for the balanced diet of Hell's Angels (who, it is a known fact, prefer tongue over pastrami). There had to be a demand for these goodies. There had to be enough people to come in and acknowledge a need for Vaseline and kitty litter at four o'clock in the morning. Smart businesspersons know a good thing when they smell it, and thus the convenience store was enlarged to its current state of evolution.

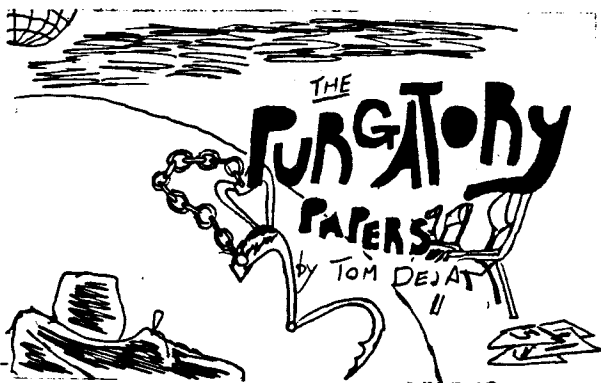
In South Florida, where I used to make my humble abode, you can enter an establishment known as Starvin' Marvin and fill up your gas tank, get a slice of sausage pizza, buy a Sidney Sheldon novel, browse a selection of cassettes and albums, play a video game, look at the dazzling array of intelligent and non-sexist key chains and bumper stickers, and pick up a six-pack for the week-end. These convenience stores are veritable carnivals of Americana. Each one is a microcosm of the capitalist system. They are shrines to Western decadence.

The real question underlying the corrupt nature of 24-hour convenience stores comes down to the people who frequent them. Who is up at 4 am? Most of us who work or attend school during the day are not conscious at that hour except on weekends or during periods of prolonged exposure to Bea Arthur. Therefore, someone who is shopping at this hour must have a very specific reason or goal in mind. I, myself, would readily admit to the pleasures of roaming around convenience stores under the influence of certain unmentionable substances (as outlined by Erma Ackner's expose on grocery shopping in IJ #56). Even so, this does not explain the numbers of people who are up at bizarre hours buying Smurf feminine hygiene products or "Kill 'em all...let God sort 'em out!" T-shirts.

This leaves a good portion of convenience store patrons to be criminals and other no-goodniks. People who need supplies and food for cross-country trips to pick up REALLY LARGE BAGS OF HEROIN to SELL TO LITTLE BITTY CHILDREN in OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS are sooner to accumulate rations in the middle of the night. In the same way these stores serve the adolescent community, so must they serve other scheming members of the underworld as a meeting place or merely a place to make a phone call. I would venture to guess that most phone calls made from convenience stores are 4 am are not to ask which flavor of Kool-Aid the receiving party prefers. Then again, the last time I made a phone call at 4 am, it was to investigate the credibility of these 976-XXXX "dial-a-fantasy" numbers (for journalistic reasons only), so I am as profoundly guilty as the menacing Kool-Aid wino.

What am I implying? For God's sake, do you want a summary paragraph? The increasing number of 24-hour convenience stores indicates an increasing amount of strange and unexplained activity during the early morning hours. New York City shines as an example of a town that, while it never shuts down, can never claim serenity or approach a crime-free environment. The fact that there are early morning needs to be served—whether from construction workers who need coffee or college students who need beer—does not diminish the fact that there are undesirable elements who rely on the graces of convenience stores to get through the night. I'm one of them. But I like to think I'm not that undesirable.

DANCING
WITH MR.
C (In
which
Our Hero
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world in
relation
to his
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ship)



WARNING!: The following column is in serious danger of getting really soppy. Proceed with caution.

It is a scene that would make Ian Shoales (Duck's Breath Mystery Theatre's resident "Yuppie with a bad attitude and social critic") puke. How did I find myself in this metaphysical jam, he would ask. Didn't I realize that in this age of Rambo and Pizza-In-A-Cup, relationships are passé things built more on mutual greed than mutual need? I would ignore my inspiration and continue around the floor with this boogeyman named Mr. C. I had created him specifically for this scene and he would disappear after this dance was over—maybe to return again, maybe to retire to wherever anthropomorphic concepts go after they've lived out their usefulness. But I had to finish this dance. I had to find out.

I was introduced to this intellectual bugbear at the party.

To be honest, I didn't want to go to this party. It was thrown by a Hunter College sorority called Delta Phi Epsilon. I don't like either sororities or fraternities. I have never seen the need for a formalized organization for college students to get drunk and act like idiots. There are many ways to get drunk and act like idiots, many of them not involving Greek letters. For example, I am aware of the many times I've acted like an idiot, although I don't drink.¹ At no time did these displays of idiocy involve wearing Greek letters.

On top of this, frat/sorority parties are generally places which are very dark and have loud music. This obsession frats have for darkness is unreal. One would think frats are nothing more than a race of boorish, drunk vampires. Some time ago I was at a frat party during the afternoon. Naturally, the brothers drew all the blinds to darken the environs. I even recall seeing oily grey smoke escaping from under their letter sweaters.

Understand that I have talked to some individual frat brothers and found their musical tastes decent. Once you get more than two of them together, however, they regress down the evolutionary ladder until they begin to primitively gyrate to the worst synth-R&B.² Once amassed together, your average brother thinks the Cocteau Twins are identical French filmmakers and The Fall an Arthur Miller play.

In short, frat parties are not my optimum idea of enjoyment. But I had to go to this party. Karen V. had asked me to.

Karen V. is a very attractive, undeniably sexy young woman whom I have known for some time. I recall that the first time I met her I yelled at her. Things went uphill after that screwball comedy beginning. We began a chaste, non-serious "dating" of each other a little over a year ago. I dated other women. She dated other men. We were still very close due to the fact that we started out as friends.

Thus I trudged over to Manhattan after a harried day at work and a loopy game session. It was raining, and I lugged ten pounds of game equipment around. That wasn't important. What was important was that she wanted me there.

I arrived late, plunked down my fee and entered into the—surprise!—very dark Hunter Dorm Cafeteria. I then proceeded with the usual "Meet Karen For X" routine. I got the warm cuddle, the brief kiss and the exchange of greetings. I then got settled as she mingled (co-hostesses are required to do this. It's in the Constitution). I fully expected to do my usual "Grudgingly Going To Party" bit. I planned on wandering about, conversing with friends and looking slightly arrogant. If there was a kitchen, I expected I'd end up there nursing a coke.³ Towards the end, Karen would somehow persuade me to dance with her.

Things were different tonight. Little incidents accumulated to give me a profound sense of anxiety. A friend made a comment to the tune of "This thing between you and Karen still going on, huh?" Karen tore herself away from the dance floor more than usual to be with me. She asked me permission to dance with an old friend of hers. She referred to a song as "Our Song."⁴ She showed disappointment when I begged off her offer to stay over (incidentally, this does not mean anything was going to happen if I did; the old friend was staying over that night also, although Karen did ask if it was fine by me if he did).

Could it be we were in the process of getting more intimate with each other? Was it conceivable that we were in a position to consider making a *gasp* commitment?

That's right. Old Man Commitment—Mr. C himself—had shown up for this dance with his heart-shaped handcuffs. He had been a

most unwelcome dance partner for me ever since a series of disastrous romances soured me on fidelity. As we began this tangled tango, a parade of my bizarre ex-girlfriends passed by us.⁵ These women helped shatter my concept of emotional closeness. There was Marcella, the wealthy daughter of a family who couldn't understand why a rising young executive would want to quit to devote his time to writing (you can see why I'm so fond of Ian Shoales, can't you?). There was Terri, the six-foot Korean socialist who tried to convince me to give up plinky-plonk music for rawer stuff while making love in the middle of the Thalia. There was Stephanie, the redheaded Latino and professional victim who drew on my strength but not my needs. There was Sarah, the whining, name-dropping actress. There was Suzy, who fell in love with the hard-boiled voice on my answering machine but didn't want to deal with my reality. There was Rhiannon, the Irish bassist who dreamed of trapping me behind a white picket fence.

Most importantly, there was Ingrid. Ingrid was an intensely beautiful woman with long blonde hair and frightened blue eyes. We met at a birthday/graduation party, had a love affair for about five minutes (approximately) and then broke up very messily. Her past was very harried and it taught her how to be afraid of emotions. Later, I attempted to help her but she recoiled from my offers and truly (though unintentionally, I'm sure) hurt me. After that disaster, I vowed never to commit myself to one woman until I was certain. Until then, I would not be monogamous. I would have a degree of freedom. I wouldn't be depressed on the verge of suicidal again.

Funny how things work out, huh?

Upon realization of our growing closeness, my flight mechanism kicked in. My fear was what motivated my refusal of her offer to stay over, not a lack of desire—if anything, it was raging more than ever—nor other lame excuse. Later on that weekend, I did call to apologize for my abrupt departure. Mustn't alienate one of the few people you can tolerate in close quarters, mustn't one? To my shock, Karen didn't feel an apology was necessary. "I said I would respect your decision," she told me. "I'm just glad you got home all right."

Me and Mr. C passed by the judge before cantering to the far wall.

I have been unable to stay calm ever since. I have never been comfortable with ol' man Commitment hovering over me. I'm afraid those heart-shaped handcuffs will hurt. I think I'd much rather be caught in Detroit wearing a Klan outfit than submit to the ties that bind. Yet it doesn't seem so bad these days. Some days it even seems...nice.

Most disturbing of all the developments is that I'm losing my cynicism (you kind of guessed that, didn't you?). I once stopped on the street to play with one of those dog-walking units—one mass of leash, several masses of hairy dogs—unique to the city. I've even begun to fantasize about having children! I am proud to report, however, that my fantasies have not stopped my crusade against cute kids. All my little ones will be weaned on Kid Creole, New Order and Miles Davis from birth. No snivelling, selfish brats for me. No, sir. We're talking Hepness: The Next Generation. I'll just have to avert my eyes. Knowing the two of us, we'll give birth to these Walt Disney waifs with technicolor hair.

But fear prompts me to continue dancing. It's the only explanation I can give. I have nothing against Karen V.—in truth, I would like to get a few things against Karen V. (that's your sexual innuendo for this issue; grab it before it gets away). I'm afraid those cuffs might hurt. I'm afraid it's too soon. I'm afraid things will fall apart too quickly once the cuffs are on.

But fear is good for me, innit? If I weren't wary after I've been burned so many times, I wouldn't be human. I'd just be one of those plastic automatons they have on soap operas. That's why I'm dancing with Mr. C, not letting him get too close. When I'm ready, I'll finish the dance and then I'll see where I am.

Yes, I still connect up with other women, but my pursuit is more lackluster these days. I know I shouldn't, that I should wait until I'm done with Mr. C. Lord knows Ian would approve of my making connections. "Always prepare," he'd tell me. "You're going to need back-up." But I'll ignore his advice and wait until my dance with friend Commitment is over. Then I'll study my wrists.

NEXT: Hep Happeningness at the Shopping Maul. Be there.

FOOTNOTES OF AN ANXIOUS MAN (Apologies to Chris Difford)

1-To prevent Elayne from chortling over a disastrous exposé on my previous life of vice and wickedness, I admit to being drunk a total of three times in the past. I swore off of even casual drinking when a few mixed drinks prevented me from consummating a crush I had on Catherine O'Hara (but that is a story for another issue, another time).

2-Of course, ever since Animal House frats have also started to infuse a large amount of Motown and other "Big Chill" related music. If I hear "Shout" once more, I will puke.

3-Another terrible thing about fraternities—they have terrible taste in soda. Did you guys truly believe I would be in the kitchen nursing a Dr. Pepper? That's why I usually bring my own.

4-"Our Song" is Kim Wilde's "You Keep Me Hanging On." Now, why a badly-produced, clumsy remake of a Supremes song I respect sung by a mediocre English singer is "Our Song" is beyond me.

5-In some cases, names have been changed to protect the innocent and friendly.

A VIP IN THE PLASMAFOOL

by Dorian Tenore

"GRIMM FAIRY TALES" IS RIGHT!

Stephen Sondheim is definitely not the guy to turn to for a mindless, sweetness-and-light musical. Remember, this is the gent who brought us the likes of WEST SIDE STORY, a tragic Romeo & Juliet update with a dose of social commentary; COMPANY, a bitter-sweet reflection on relationships; and above all, SWEENEY TODD, an opera about a mass murderer. So naturally, I had high hopes for Sondheim's newest Broadway musical, INTO THE WOODS. Alas, what could have been a banquet of theatrical riches turns out to be merely an adequate dinner with a half-baked second course, despite some sprightly songs and pun-filled lyrics.

The basic premise is intriguing: what if all of the Brothers Grimm fairy tales took place at the same time in the same forest? In order to have a baby, the Baker and his Wife (Chip Zien and Joanna Gleason) must obtain the following items for their next-door neighbor, the Witch (Bernadette Peters): a cow white as milk; a cape red as blood; a slipper pure as gold; and hair yellow as corn. Off they go into—where else?—the woods, which Sondheim uses as a metaphor for humankind's hopes and dreams and fantasies, the kind that keep people going when all seems bleak and bland. Lofty stuff, to be sure.

Once in the woods, these three interact with other Brothers Grimm characters who are dashing about the forest playing out their various stories. Little Red Riding Hood (Danielle Ferland), whom we earlier saw stuffing her freckled baby face with the Baker's wares, is on her way to Granny's house, her trail dogged by a smooth-talking Wolf (Robert Westernberg, a nimble dancer in a terrific folk mask). Prodded by his nagging mother, the dim but gentle Jack (Ben Wright) is reluctantly taking his beloved cow, Milky White, to market—little does he know he'll soon be "stalked" by adventure! A dressed-for-excess Cinderella (1978 Junior Miss Kim Crosby) is trying to hurry home and beat the clock, pursued by the handsome if fatuous Prince (Robert Westernberg again). "Is he charming? They say he's charming," probes the Baker's Wife when she and Cindy stop to chat. And the Prince's equally princely brother (Chuck Wagner, whom Couch Potatoes may remember as ABC-TV's "Automan") has his own romantic problems. There's this gorgeous girl in a tower, see, with a lovely singing voice and even lovelier long blonde hair—really long blonde hair. That's right, even Rapunzel (Pamela Winslow) is in on these shenanigans. Sondheim and partner James Lapine (book and direction) go so far as to create family trees, or at least shrubs, for this group. Rapunzel turns out to be the long-lost sister of the Baker as well as the adopted (well, "stolen" anyway) daughter of the Witch, f'rinstance.

All manner of witty shenanigans result as these characters cross over into each other's stories, helping and hindering one another. The Baker's Wife convinces her heretofore honest hubby to pass off a handful of beans as magical and exchange them for poor dense Jack's cow (as she sings in *Maybe They're Magic*, "The end justifies the beans!"). When the Baker rescues Little Red Riding Hood and her Granny from the Wolf's stomach, she rewards him with her red cape. There's a hilarious bit where the Baker's Wife pulls off a "strand" of Rapunzel's yellow tresses—B.W. staggers onstage with a meter-long rope of blonde hair over her shoulder, tugging as if she were in a massive game of Tug of War. And of course, this determined lady eventually connives one of Cinderella's slippers away from her.

"But I thought Cinderella's fancy footwear was glass, not gold!" you protest. Ah, but Sondheim and Lapine are doing these fairy tales the way they were originally told by the Grimms. No pumpkins or singing mice here, gang. This also means that the original Grimm bloodthirstiness is back. See Little Red Riding Hood emerge with a new cape made from the hide of the wolf she skinned! ~~See~~ Cinderella's wicked stepsisters (played with relish by Kay McClelland and Lauren Mitchell) chop off parts of their feet in a vain attempt to fit into Cindy's slipper! See the Prince pour blood from said slipper when he discovers their scheme! The fun only mounts as the stepsisters get their eyes plucked out by vengeful crows at Cindy's wedding feast and totter through the rest of the show in dark glasses. But don't get too nauseated—most of this blood 'n guts stuff is bloodless; it's cartoon violence, too broad and slapstick to take seriously.

Save your shock for Act 2—that's when Sondheim and Lapine really pull the rug out from under you. After the upbeat if slightly acidic first act, the co-authors get into "Heavy Message" mode. Too bad they can't decide that message they're trying to convey. They fairy tale happy endings of Act 1 are shattered, and ballads and dirges (*Your Fault, No More*) abound. You see, the window of the giant that young Jack killed and robbed (well, what would you call it if some guy came into your home and stole your golden harp and riches?) is mad as hell and wants restitution. She's on a rampage throughout the Kingdom, threatening even more death and destruction unless the citizens turn over that lvin' thievin' weasel Jack so she can do a Charles Bronson on him.

It's payback time, all right. Jack's mom is fatally clubbed by a royal steward for talking back to the irate giantess. After a "one-moment-stand" with Cinderella's Prince, the Baker's Wife falls to her death in a ravine. In this mini-universe, even well-meaning connivers can't seem to get away with their misdeeds. But Sondheim and Lapine don't seem to know whether they're for or against the subject matter. Are they saying that those happily-ever-after stories are just a lot of hooey, and that it's really a rotten world? Or are they trying to tell the audience that people

Auduclore's Lair

by Larry Blazek

Auduclore yawned. It was his 900th birthday, and it was really becoming a bit of a bore. It was great when that gas company used dinosaurs as an ad campaign; he was able to look inconspicuous by standing very still near gas stations. When the inflatable toys came out, he could look inconspicuous anywhere.

However, fads die more swiftly than singular dinosaurs. Now, he had to keep to a maze of tunnels where men had dug coal. Some of his offspring were small enough to disguise as humans. They could go forth and bring him those little niceties that make life worth living, like alfalfa, railroad cars full of sushi, barrels of anchovy pizza, and tank trucks full of cheap Italian wine.

Auduclore sighed. He was becoming obese.

should make their own decisions instead of depending on things to somehow work themselves out? Indeed, once the fairy tales' three-piece-suited narrator (Tom Aldredge of BATTERIES NOT INCLUDED) takes part in the stories instead of staying on the sidelines, he's squashed by the giantess, forcing the characters to think for themselves instead of depending on him to tell what happens next.

Or are Sondheim and Lapine spoofing the too-easy happy endings of our childhood tales by showing what really happens in adult life? If so, they score with some of the subplots: Rapunzel keeps having flashbacks and crying jags from the Witch keeping her grounded all those years ("I was only trying to be a good mother," pouts the Witch); and with the thrill of the chase over, Rapunzel's and Cinderella's Princes relieve their boredom with their storybook marriages (which were, after all, based solely on the attractiveness of the folks involved. I mean, what could a Prince and a scullery maid really have in common as far as background interests, y'know?) by dallying with Sleeping Beauty and Snow White. (In their musical lament, *Agony*, the boys sigh, "They lie there for years while you cry on their biers...") Like Vinnie said, "I always wondered how those stories managed to get enough princes to go around."

Was it really necessary to kill off characters and destroy their homes and lives? Isn't there enough tragedy in real life—not to mention in many contemporary plays—without shoehorning it into our fairy tales? No doubt Sondheim and Lapine were trying to get a few lessons across, but I didn't feel enlightened, just cheated and a little down. Damn it, when I see a musical about fairy tales, I want a happy ending for my \$50! (Okay, so I saw this one for free, but still...) And it doesn't have to be an unrealistic, tacked-on happy ending, either. Surely a clever fellow like Stephen Sondheim could have found wittier, more lighthearted yet effective ways to get across whatever points he was trying to make. The Baker's Wife and Jack's Mother could have lived, the straying spouses could have worked things out (maybe they could have used the Narrator as a marriage counselor, looking upon fairy tale situations with a contemporary viewpoint a la THE PRINCESS BRIDE). Jack could have done 50 hours of community service for his misdeeds or something. Oh, sure, Sondheim and Lapine try to whip up a hopeful ending by having Cinderella, the Baker and his baby son, and Jack and Little Red Riding Hood join forces to become a makeshift family, but by then I felt too manipulated to feel good about that.

INTO THE WOODS' flaws are compensated for somewhat by the superb sets (by Tony Straiges) and lovely costumes (Ann Hould-Ward and Patricia Zipprodt), as well as the cast. Everyone sings wonderfully and really gets the magic and innocence of the fairy tale characters down right. Kim Crosby is particularly graceful and appealing as Cinderella (she's adorable in the pre-ball scenes, in her rags and old-fashioned wire-rimmed spectacles). Chip Zien and Joanna Gleason are a fresh, funny yet tender team as the Baker and his Wife—so much so that I found it hard to swallow the scene where Gleason cheats with the Prince. (Zien has now redeemed himself for being the voice of the celluloid HOWARD THE DUCK.) Bernadette Peters is obviously having gangs of fun playing the Witch. Throughout the first act, she's decked out in black tattered robes, a gray fright wig and wonderful old-crone makeup, cackling and hissing and conjuring up nasty stuff to her heart's content. By the second act, when the Witch has lost her magic powers in exchange for youth and beauty, Peters commands the stage like a queen, sort of a smart-mouthed Eve Arden of the woods, as Sondheim's voice of realism. Peters is also quite touching in her scenes with her beloved Rapunzel, the only family she's ever known. You can feel her heart breaking when Rapunzel finally leaves her unintentionally cruel, selfish treatment to make a new life with the younger Prince.

INTO THE WOODS has lots of good ideas, but it needs to go back into the Workshop. If you simply must see it, stay for the first, best act. Better happily ever after next time, Messrs. Sondheim and Lapine.

OVERHEARD

AT
AMERICA'S LUNCH COUNTERS



Susan Catherine

"They tried to stop Elvis Presley from shakin' and they couldn't do it. Go, go, go, boy!"

PLASTIC SMILES AND TEENY BOP GAMES

by Michael F. Maccarino

Walk into the disco like you own the place,
Tony told his homeboy with a serious face.
Lean against the wall and flash that Don
Johnson smile,
And I guarantee you'll leave with her in
just a little while.

He walked into the room exactly like the plan,
And thought about himself, Oh, what a man!
He asked her to dance as his heart picked up
its pace

She just turned and smiled and said, "Get
out of my face!"



1987 TOP 30

GARY PIG'S CONSUMER
GUIDE TO THE MUSIC
HE BY AND LARGE GOT
FREE IN THE MAIL
LAST YEAR

1. "I Can't Hide"

by The "Spinning Wig Hats" (NB: not their real name!): Irresistably groovy flamin' free flexi that came lovingly tucked inside Issue #28 of The Bob magazine (2210 Beaumont, Wilmington, DE 19803). P.S.: Hey Greg! Why don'tcha drop me a line!

2. "D Train" by The Washington Squares: The best—if not ONLY—slice of socially-conscious commuter-rock since Weird Al's foot-in-cheek "Another One Rides The Bus." And an extra-special tip-o-the-ol' snout to the Squares' fearless Production Assistant (Thank for the Pez!) (Gold Castle Records, 3575 Cahuenga Blvd. W., Suite 470, Los Angeles, CA 90068).

3. "Giddy Up" by The Tomboys: Modern double (TRIPLE!) entendre teenaged situation-pop from their 'WAY out in left field Emmitt Rhodes (!!) produced "Sand Monsters" cassette (Baseball Records, 6551 Kester, Suite 7, Van Nuys, CA 91411).

4. "You That I Want" by The Tonebenders: Stunning! Brilliant! Regally Raspberriesque...if ya know wot I mean! From their utterly fab eponymous cassette (25-72 36 St., Queens, NY 11103).

5. "Shirley" by John Fred (not Gary Lewis) And The Playboys: Thirty-year-overdo re-issue of the best—if not ONLY—attempt by a white guy to sing "New Orleans-style"...with Fats Domino's band to boot! From John's criminally-unheard-of "Best Of" collection (Sugarcane Records, 887 Hedgewood, Baton Rouge, LA 70815).

6. "House of the Rising Sun" by Jandek: Forget Dylan's. Forget even The Animals! HERE'S the hands-down definitive reading of everyone's fave chunk of Public Domain. Available on the surprisingly proficient "Blue Corpse" album (his FIFTEENTH!) (Corwood Industries, Box 15375, Houston, TX 77020).

7. "Run In From The Rain" by Vagabond: Life Goes On (and on and on) for the We(s)t Coast's best-dressed singer-songwriter Robin Stanley and his for-some-unfathomable-reason-STILL-unsigned merry band of young conservatives. Ask for their "Person To Person" tape (13036 61.B Ave., Surrey, British Columbia V3W 8G1 CANADA).

8. "Get Back Yoko" by The Sex Clark Five: A brashful bit of Beatle-bashing from my current Pig Pick-To-Click's fun-packed twenty(count 'em!)-song debut platter "Strum And Drum" (Records to Russia, 1207 Big Cove Road, Huntsville, AL 35801).

9. "Coffee Table" by Rick Harper (And The Breathers): Quote, "Sometimes reminiscent of the 60's (Beach Boys, John Lennon, or The Beatles), this Port Lauderdale, Florida group moves through some light unaffected pop to some spicier funkish rock titles," end quote (6011 Apex Dr., Louisville, KY 40219).

10. "I Won't Come Back" by Ken Burke and His Pumping Piano: Bet-

cha didn't know the sole chronicler of that search for the increasingly-elusive Doctor "I" can twist a chord and spin a melody with the best of 'em! Hear his "Iguana Rock '87" tape or forever hold your piece (P.O. Box 8, Black Canyon City, AZ 85324).

11. "Things That Go Pop!" compiled by Jim Testa: Ninety minutes of craftily-collected should've-been-hits by The Marbles, Speedies, Bongos, Sneakers, Real Kids...and of course The Ramones. Mr. Testa may now claim his rightful position in Rhino Records' A&R department (Jersey Beat, 418 Gregory Ave., Weehawken, NJ 07087).

12. "Oh God!" by Copernicus: The opening whallop from his very fug-like stream-of-consciousness masterpiece "Deeper" (Nevermore Inc., P.O. Box 170150, Brooklyn, NY 11217-0005).

13. "Christmas Spirit" by The Wailers (not Bob Marley's!): Yuk-filled yuletide imitation of P.F. Sloam imitating Dylan by way of The Hombres and Kingsmen. The undeniable highlight of the Wailers/Galaxies/Sonics' seasonally reissued "Merry Christmas" album (Etiquette Records, 2442 N.W. Market St., Suite 273, Seattle, WA 98107).

14. "Betty Boo" by The Wave: Music to wash yourself back to the skinny-tie invasion of '79 atop. If anyone knows absolutely ANYTHING about this combo, kindly clue this ol' Pig in ASAP! (SRO, P.O. Box 39, Jamesport, NY 11947).

15. "Tulane Highway" by Mojo Nixon And Skid Roper: Chuck Is Everywhere! (Enigma Records, 1750 E. Holly Ave., P.O. Box 2428, El Segundo, CA 90245-1528).

16. "Thunder Alley" by The Pandoras: Imagine, if you will, The Shangri-Las magically transported into "How To Stuff A Wild Bikini" by way of The Bang(les) and the Screamin' Sirens! This and MUCH more can be yours by ordering Iloki Records' ultra-gnarly "What Surf 2" complication Today! (P.O. Box 49593, Los Angeles, CA 90049).

17. "Star Peace" (not Yoko's!) by The Fugs: Only Ed(ward) Sanders would dare foist a "rock opera" upon the mutant children of the MTV age...and only Tuli Kupferberg and cast possess sufficient chops to pull it off. The ONLY double LP worth owning in the Ane-mic Eighties (New Rose, 7 Rue Pierre-Sarrazin, 75006 Paris, France).

18. "My Time To Leave" by Mystic Eyes: Proof positive there IS life after the Buffalo College of Musical Knowledge! Prime post-Good pop k/o Bernard "Bernie" Kugel and Ko. (Get Hip Records, 509 First Street, Canonsburg, PA 15317).

19. "Dang Me" by Eugene Chadbourne And David Light: Roger Miller swingin' like a pendulum do-wop, aloo-bop, alop-bam-boom. From the lickity-splitin' "Shockabilly Baby" tape (M. Shafer, 75 Fairview Ave. #3B, New York, NY 10040).

20. "Cottonfields" by The Uncalled Four: Huddie Ledbetter conceived it, Al Jardine drove it down south in back of a dusty old pick-up, Creedence choogled it clear 'cross the bayou...but leave it to Randy, Donna, Anthony and Jeff to expertly defoliate the entire crop in 2 min. 43! (Tiger Tail Records, 2401 S. Ervay #204, Dallas, TX 75215).

21. "Young Till Yesterday" by The Shamen: The Electric Prunes LIVE! Authentic lost-in-space-rock from the mokshadelic "Drop" disc (Communion Records, P.O. Box 95265, Atlanta, GA 30347).

22. "I'll Be Back Someday" by The Chesterfield Kings: Out of the garage and into the toolshed for Greg 'n the guys, judging by their big-budget (LOOK at the cover!) nudging-ever-so-gently-towards-the-mainstream (Ditto!) "Don't Open Til Doomsday" album (Mirror Records, 645 Titus Ave., Rochester, NY 14617).

23. "96 Tears Forever—The Dallas Reunion Tapes" by ? And The Mysterians: Rudy Martinez and band tear shreds into the theory that you can't rehearse a soufflé (ROIR—pronounced "Roar," 611 Broadway, Suite 725, New York, NY 10012).

24. "Where The Seagulls Fly" by Robert Joseph Bertrand: Every once in a while, I like to turn down the volume to 4 or 4, change into something more comfortable, kick back on the nearest lawn chair, frothy papaya cocktails in hand, and feast my ears upon something atmospheric, soothing, and—dare I say it—mellow. You too? Then simply write Bob for his tape! (50 Kingston Road, Toronto, Ontario M4L 1S4 CANADA).

25. "What? 'Scuz Me!" by The Raunchettes: Rangy, ribald, rejection-rock from Greg Shaw's latest collection of Runaways (Bomp Records, P.O. Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510).

26. "Live 1967" by The (Old!) Monkees: If you like The Sex Pistols' version of "(I'm Not Your) Steppin' Stone," you'll LOVE this entire album full of roots-thrash (Rhino Records—who else?!, 1201 Olympic Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90404). Also highly recommended: Davy and Micky's oft-bootlegged "Golden Great Hits of The Monkees Song, Live at Disneyland on the Fourth of July, 1976."

27. "Ooh, Ooh, Ooh" by Martin Dibbs: Usually I don't go for Blow Hard Guitar distributors messing around in the basement with Atari 130XEs, Hybrid Art Miditrack IIIs, Akai S-612s, Casio CZs and Roland Juno-106s, BUT... (Inverted Vision Music, 640 Headley Drive, London, Ontario N6H 3V4 CANADA).

28. "Be A Caveman" (the live version!) by The Gravedigger V: Roll over Gary Paxton, and tell The Gruesomes the news! (Vox Records, 2702 San Fernando Road, Los Angeles, CA 90065).

29. "If It Crumbles" by The Connells: Just what we need. Yet more Rapid-Eye-Music gorgeously recorded at the Drive-In by (natch!) Mitch Easter. From "Boylan Heights"...in more ways than one (TVT Records, 59 W. 19th St., New York, NY 10011).

30. "Multiple Forms of Self-Satisfaction" by G.G. Allin: "Pictures of Lily" for the Flipside crowd. (Would you believe "He-Bop"?). Umm...high point of his most-appropriately-titled "Hated In The Nation" tape (P.O. Box 54, Hooksett, NH 03106). (And don't forget to order an extra copy for the PMRC!)

The Luck Of Sarah O'Brien

by Alphonzo Ligi

The night before Timothy O'Brien died, he told Sarah he had AIDS. After twenty-six years of marriage, two kids grown and gone, Tim had hoped his announcement would bring them closer together. He didn't really have AIDS. The doctor had pointed out an ulcer in an X-ray of his stomach and said: "That's what's bleeding, Tim. I'll have to go in to stop it."

He and Sarah had had their ups and downs, but ever since Tim Jr. moved his family to San Diego two years before, the O'Briens had gone into a long slow spin. The weekdays continued predictably, with Tim bowling Tuesdays and Sarah selling Tupperware. But the weekends were uncomfortably empty without the grandchildren to sit, and Tim had so tired of fishing alone he seldom even reached the river.

The daughter, Patty, had become an exchange of Christmas cards so many years ago, the O'Briens hardly knew her only as a file card on which unvisited addresses were occasionally revised. Tim had completely forgotten what Patty looked like and was often unable to recognize her in the family album. Sarah still wanted to kill her.

Tim was a case study in ulcers. An extrovert with a near-perfect attendance record at work, he seemed like a guy without a care in the world. Even in the 1950 Bryant High School yearbook, on page 12, you could find that his classmates had voted him "Most Likely To Laugh."

Tim's ulcers had been his secret, his hidden self. He had served in Korea briefly despite them, but shortly before his 55th birthday, Tim had to be rushed to Lincoln Memorial from work. Even then, he managed to keep the truth from Sarah who believed he had herniated an intestine.

Tim refused to alter his diet, despite stern warnings of the consequences from Doctor Bizarro, and continued to drink his daily sixpack and weekly fifth. Tim didn't believe in mortality. He figured death was too busy with everyone else to pay attention to him.

But pain will bring even the happiest person to his knees or his doctor, and at age 58, after a particularly long and excruciating bout with diarrhea, Tim found himself staring at X-rays of a world he wished he needn't hear about: twenty-five percent of his stomach, twelve inches of intestine, so severely perforated he risked peritonitis.

Still, it took Dr. Bizarro nearly an hour to convince Tim he had to go through with the procedure. "If you don't, Tim," the doctor finally told him, "it won't be long before Sarah will find you dead on the crapper."

Strong as an ox. Tim was proud whenever anyone said he was strong as an ox. Even when Dr. Bizarro said: "What's it going to take to get it through that thick skull of yours?" Tim felt some pride that he was strong as an ox.

How to break it to Sarah? He didn't want her to worry. Dr. Bizarro said the operation was no big deal. No piece of cake, but a big strong guy like Tim O'Brien had an 80-20 chance of pulling through and going on with the same energy and drive as he'd always had. No need to get Sarah scared about some piece of cake operation.

But the worry was there, the same worry that grew the ulcers to begin with, and though Dr. Bizarro assured him there was almost no chance of complications, Tim had seen on TV how he could contract AIDS from the blood he would need during the operation.

"But what about the risk of AIDS?" Tim heard himself asking. "AIDS?" Dr. Bizarro huffed. "You've got enough to worry about without thinking of AIDS. I want you at Providence Monday morning first thing."

As he left the office, Tim saw death in his mind for the first time, and though he could joke about it, death had him, and the world was Sarah's from that moment on.

Tim had wanted to tell her the truth. He had wanted to say: "Sarah, I am worried sick. The doctor is going to cut me, but that won't stop the worry." But when Sarah asked, over the peppers and eggs, "Well, what is it, Tim? I can always tell when something's bothering you," what he said was: "Sarah, I've got AIDS."

"Quit joking," she said. "What's wrong?"

"I've got AIDS," he said. "Doc gives me two years at most."

"I told you quit joking," Sarah spit, pushing her plate to the middle of the table.

"I'm not joking," Tim said, "I'm dead serious."

Sarah sat stone still for a minute, breathing deeply. She pulled her plate back and slid her hands under the lip. Then she picked the plate up and threw it at Tim, screaming: "You fucking faggot! You fucking lousy faggot!"

The plate caught Tim in the glasses, leaving a gash above his right eye. If he had gone to the hospital, the cut would have taken nine or ten stitches to close. But Tim did not go to the hospital. As he tipped back out of his chair, he saw death on the ceiling, and as he heard the front door slam, he heard death step out of the foyer and sit on the couch.

In the bathroom, Tim washed his face and taped his forehead. He could see death staring over his shoulder. When he went to the bedroom and flopped on the bed, he felt death settle in beside him. And the next morning when he awoke, he knew death was making his breakfast.

HERB AND DOLLY'S

by Adam Eisenstat

Surreal palace of liquid folly
seven foot high trompe l'oeil pictures of
Elvis, Johnny Cash and Hank Williams Jr.
with Hank Sr. on the clouds in the
background

a would-be roadhouse
on the tundra of skid row.

A drunken crone,
her face a road map in relief,
staggers over to my table
flirting? performing?

"I'm a great gramma
who gives a shit...
erugh."

Seconds later I rise
and palm her face gently
like a faith healer
my fingertips sink into the deep crags

"Old woman, with my penwand
I confer immortality on you
and your grotesque magic."

She regains consciousness
and staggers around some more
finally she is helped to a cab outside
but not before she turns around

and above the strains of
"Happiest Girl in the Whole U.S.A."
screams to the room

"See ya in church on Sunday—first pew."

He searched the house, hoping Sarah had returned and was hiding. But the house was empty, except for him and death.

When he finally returned to the bedroom, he found death had opened the drawer to the nightstand, and his .45 automatic lay on top of his handkerchiefs. He picked up the gun and walked down the stairs and into the kitchen where he got a beer. He walked to the living room and flopped on the sofa.

It was Saturday and the Buckeyes were playing the Panthers that afternoon. He had bet \$10 on Ohio State, since he got four points. On Friday he had really wanted to see the game.

He finished his beer and got another. When he finished that one, he brought the rest of the beer from the fridge and set it on the floor beside the couch. He walked over to the telephone table, got the notepad and the pencil, returned to the sofa, and began to write:

"Dear Fidelity Life," he wrote, "I am about to commit suicide. I am about to shoot myself with a .45 automatic. There are eight bullets in the clip. I intend to use all eight bullets. I intend to fire all eight bullets into my head. I hope my suicide will void my policies and that my wife and children will not be able to profit from my despair."

Tim crumpled that note and stuffed it between the cushion and the backrest. Then he wrote: "To whom it may concern: I do not have AIDS. I am not a faggot, but I don't have anything against anyone who is." It was at this point that Tim picked up his pistol and shot himself through the right ear with the first bullet, through his left eye with the second, and through the roof of his mouth with the third.

Sarah was a hard woman and had lived a hard life. After twenty-six years of marriage all she had to show was a house she didn't like, two children she never saw, and a husband who had killed himself. She had loved Tim, of course. She had sometimes wished he would have talked to her more. She had sometimes wished they had talked at all. But now he was dead, and Fidelity Life was refusing to pay on Tim's policy.

The papers had initially reported his death as an "execution-style slaying." Sarah's attorney argued that an execution qualified under the accidental death double indemnity clause in the Fidelity Life policy and that Sarah, as sole beneficiary, was entitled to \$200 thousand. Sarah's attorney argued Fidelity Life's contention that Timothy O'Brien had killed himself was unsupported by a forensic report which showed the deceased had expired before the second shot was fired, a fact that made suicide an impossibility. Sarah's attorney moved for a court directive that Fidelity Life pay Sarah at least \$40 thousand, pending the outcome of the case.

Fidelity Life's attorney countered with forensic findings of its own that showed that Tim was indeed dead after the first shot, but that involuntary reflex was responsible for the two additional bullets, noting that Tim had taped the gun to his hand.

If it had not been for Sergeant Vito Acconci, the jury might have awarded Sarah the double-indemnity judgment plus damages. But Acconci found the note Tim had crumpled and stuffed behind the cushion. And though Sarah's attorney tried valiantly to counter the evidence, the jury held for Fidelity Life and Tim's final wishes and ruled his life insurance policy null and void.

Sarah now lives in a small apartment in Jackson Heights. She is dying of AIDS. She claims she got it from a mosquito bite.



The Auto-Cannibal

PART TWO by Prudence Gaelor

Prudence sat under her covers, the light still on. It had been almost two hours since they came home, and her parents had yet to come in and blast her. She was expecting Hell, and Flying Whoonitsis attacks and the threat of having her room redone in orange and all sorts of things so horrible that they defied the imagination and lurked at the bottom of some black, bottomless pit into which, very shortly indeed, she would be hurled the second the door to Grandma Ed's shut and she was stuck alone with Mummy on the other side. Instead, Mummy, wordlessly, ushered Prudence into the car. They rode home in silence. The only thing said to her all evening was, "Prudence, go to your room, get ready for bed."

The house was silent except for the occasional scrape of a chair against the floor, the clink of a coffee mug, the flush of a toilet. Prudence strained to hear, hoping she could have some clue to which doom she was being cast and thus prepare herself. But no one was saying anything.

Even Pink Bunny was uncharacteristically silent. Prudence wished that her parents would come up and get it over with already. The yelling is bad but the waiting is worse. At least if they had laid into her from the moment that she got in the car, by now the blasting would be over and done with. With the waiting comes remorse that stems only from true terror inspired by the imagination, which while dormant at most other times will suddenly turn auto-cannibalistic. And on top of this anguish, there is the fear and anxiety in the knowledge that doom is imminent. The tension was like a vice on Prudence's head but she didn't dare leave her room in search of an aspirin. Instead, she turned off the light and pulled the covers over her head.

It couldn't have been much later, perhaps fifteen minutes, when Claire entered the room. Prudence could feel the vibration of the door's creaking on her scalp. She tried to turn her head but she couldn't; she wasn't sure whether to attribute this to fear or to the fact that her neck muscles had decided to take a holiday from their usual roles and form a big knot on the back of her neck in celebration.

Prudence heard Claire walking towards the bed. Claire's steps were like gunfire ricocheting in her ears. Claire's ripping the covers off her head was like Nagasaki. Claire turned on the light and gasped.

Prudence lay there like scum on a log. Claire put a cool hand on Prudence's forehead, checking for fever. This really was a silly move since had she had a fever her skin most probably would have appeared flushed, not grey, as it was. Prudence moaned.

"Are you alright?" Claire asked, concerned.

"My hair hurts," Prudence whimpered, squinting in the light.

"Did you tell her?" Patrick boomed from the doorway.

"No..."

"Why not?" Patrick said, cutting her off. "The child needs to know."

"Well, I don't think now's such a good time. I think she's having another one of her migraines," Claire said, barely disguising the ire in her voice.

"Yeah, well that figures. Whenever there's trouble or something she doesn't want to do she gets one of her migraines. I wouldn't be surprised if she gave them to herself on purpose."

"Let me tell you something, Mister..." Claire started, following the retreating Patrick down the hall.

Prudence didn't really need to hear them arguing right now. Even though they had gone into their bedroom, their shouts were pricking her scalp so painfully that Prudence began to cry.

Abruptly the shouting stopped and Claire re-entered the room and sat on the end of the bed. "Pru, I realize that this might not be a good time for this, but your father and I discussed this, and I agree with him that you should know."

Prudence felt all the blood drain out of her head. The voice of Doom was speaking.

"Your father needs some time on his own to sort out his thoughts and gain new insights and perspective. So for a while he will go away to do this. He's a good man, he works very hard to do everything he can for this and right now he can use a little vacation. I can use this little vacation too. I realize that we've been so caught up in our careers..."

Claire shifted her balance, rocking the bed. Prudence wished Mummy would shut up and leave her alone. Not only was she dragging the whole thing out but she was physically torturing her as well. Prudence didn't see why they didn't just chain her, naked, in the basement and force her to watch endless showings of Our House, especially the shows centering in on Preachy Grandpa.

"...We hardly even know you. And this has been unfair to you. We as your parents have to make some decisions for you, of course, and some that we've been making lately..."

"Gods," Prudence thought, "Make her cease all this talking." She felt her stomach start to rumble. And then she felt Mummy shift her balance again, sending tremors that must have equalled 7.8 on the Richter scale through her body. Prudence was certain that if Mummy shifted her balance one more time, she would yak.

"...infirmary, there was no one there your age, the nurses were busy taking care of the patients and being there you might have caught something from one of the girls and gotten sick. It was wrong of us to make you stay there, instead of at your grandmother's. I don't blame you for running away, so I'm not going to

HOW THE GIRLS ARE DOING

A Report from Their
Hostess, Deborah Benedict
We find ourselves at last
On our own planet
In Realms of our own making.

Last time we all got together
There was some talk of integration -
Fusion of all and each.
But it was only talk
and we know that you
Make up the words as you hear them.

Mildred is slender and clever.
She lives high atop a mountain
in a grand Transylvanian Castle -
A life as perilous and benign as nature herself.
Bertha is still short and dumpy
and cannot stop fidgeting.
She has a small cottage
down to the river's edge.
Far away, beyond the Tarantula Mountains,
Victoria lives in her fine mansion
With her Magickal crystals and elixirs.
And in the town of Sullenbode,
Trixie runs her own whorehouse.
Little Debby lives on the ocean
In a floating palace of ice.
Johnny Hollywood lives in the skies
With all the invisible cannibals -
she can block out the sun if she wants to.

We all live apart now;
happy are we.
Except for the one who thinks she's in charge.
That bluffer, that pretender;
She'll never be happy!
She wants a whole planet to herself
With none of us around.
We don't think she can manage that
So we won't let her go.
We are happy here,
the masters of our own kingdom.
And she?
She will be content for a while yet
sweeping the streets,
lighting the lights
and keeping herself
in the doom of her debt.

punish you. Just next time you go someplace, tell someone or leave a note, so that if you run into trouble along the way, we will have an idea of where to look for you, okay?"

Prudence nodded, tears of relief running down her face. She wasn't going to get blasted after all. All the arguing had been over her father leaving. Her parents argued all the time, the only surprise was that they hadn't done this sooner and that after all this time they were finally going to do something about it.

"While your father's away," Claire continued, "he and I will be spending a lot of time considering our marriage. But before I go on any further, I want you to understand that this separation is not a reflection on you. Things have changed a lot since we were married, and it's time we sit down and decide what direction we're going to take our lives. You know, like basketball—you like to play basketball, don't you, that's why you had me get you those basketball shoes..."

Prudence hated basketball. She liked hockey and World Federation wrestling. She got the Converse hi-tops because they were cool-looking, not because she liked basketball. Sadly, she realized that Mummy was right, she didn't know her at all. Prudence didn't say anything. This was difficult enough for Mummy as it was.

"Anyway, we're going to devise a game plan, just like in basketball." Claire paused, looked at Prudence who was turning from grey to olive. "Are you all right, can I get you anything?"

"I think I'm gonna yak," Prudence, with some assistance from Mummy, got out of bed, and v-e-r-r-y s-l-o-w-l-y made her way into the bathroom, where she vomited up every grilled cheese sandwich she had scarfed down at Grandma Ed's in the past day and a half, which must have been about fifteen. She brushed her teeth. And v-e-r-r-y s-l-o-w-l-y she went back to bed, where Mummy was waiting with some Codeine.

FILLER
by Todd Kuistel
Maybe if I make this poem
short enough
They'll print it.

(Paid for by the Committee to Piss Off
Hymies and Niggers)
PO News Bureau

Jesse Jackson
For the Non-Discriminating Voter

BACKWORDS LOGIC

by Ace Backwords ©1987

MILD-MANNERED
TIM AND HIS
PRIMAL SCREAM
THERAPY BOXES

Berkeley
seems to be a

magnet for strange characters. And mild-mannered Tim was one of them. On the surface, Tim was the epitome of normality: polite, soft-spoken, good-looking, a part-time math tutor, charming to women, played nice soothing Gordon Lightfoot songs on his classical guitar. A nice guy.

The only thing strange about Tim was that every ten minutes or so he screamed.

The first time he did this in front of me I was startled. We were in a crowded coffee shop having a pleasant, low-key conversation about chess, when he suddenly went "AAAAHHH! AAAAAHHHH!!" At first I thought he'd burned his lips on his coffee. But periodically throughout our conversation, for no apparent reason, he would turn his head away, bury his face into his handkerchief pretending to sneeze, and let out these little screams.

"I'm into Primal Scream Therapy," he explained.

Later he would say: "Primal is more than a therapy—it's an adventure!" Actually, with Tim it was more like an obsession.

He was obsessed with building these "therapy boxes"—coffin-like boxes filled with foam rubber. The box muffled the sound of his screams. He would crawl inside and scream and wail and pound and thrash to his heart's content. The newer models he equipped with buckles to strap himself in, bondage-style, to restrain himself from whiplash or serious injury lest he get too carried away with all the thrashing. The whole deal was a curious mixture of restraint and abandon.

"When I was a kid my mother never let me cry," explained Tim. "I was raised in a very emotionally-stifled suburban environment. Primal Scream helps me express this pent-up anger."

The theory behind Primal Scream Therapy was that we are taught to repress our true feelings of anger. This blockage of emotion is unhealthy. Primal Scream releases this bad energy from the system.

My friend Vince's theory was that Tim was "too soft for this world. He's like a turtle without its shell. He needs that box for protection."

Unfortunately for Tim, instead of releasing his anger, Primal

That Was Then And This Is A Week From Friday
by Roldo

"There's nothing like the taste of a really cheap cigar," rumbled Sir Greatwully Randork as he torched up an inch-thick stinker that must have been exiled from one of the less savoury parts of Latin America.

"I never forget a face," declared the centagenarian peer, peering over his fuming stench. The truth is that the old boy can't remember what he had for lunch by the time it's produced its first fart, and I seriously doubted that he had his name tattooed on the back of his left hand for mere decoration, but I let that pass. He squinted with one eye and then the other in a bleary and unsuccessful attempt to focus. I had my Groucho nose-and-glasses out of the briefcase and on before he located his monacle.

"You're that...writer fellow. The one with the funny round-sounding name. You write those weird stories with hidden puns and reality twists and deliberately obscure references and then has the audacity to whine about how nobody understands your work."

"It's a vintage whine," I answered, "drunk by singers and sung by drunks since our ancestors fell out of the trees."

"Your ancestors, p'r'aps," he growled. "Mine were all to the Manor Born. At any rate, my point is that if you confuse your readers you've no right to complain if they don't know what's what, wot?"

"Rights are something everybody has until they need them," I countered. "There's something intrinsically wrong with rights you have to ask somebody else for. Besides, I don't plan these things. And I certainly don't take them seriously and when someone else does, it starts a whole chain reaction of paradox. Eventually it loops back on itself. Am I putting them on, or are they putting me on? My mind wanders. I have no control over my pen. I try to write 'maccaroni' and I write 'maccaroni' instead. When I read what I've written, I get a headache..."

"Get a grip on yourself," he said. I did, but he seemed to find it offensive, so I let go. "Put down that pen and listen to me."

That, however, was impossible since as soon as I

10 stopped writing

Babbitt

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seemed to be feeding his anger.

It got so he couldn't control it. He'd be in a crowded room and he'd be overcome by the urge to scream—with predictably disastrous results. The handkerchief bit failed to camouflage this odd and disconcerting quirk.

He was like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. In person he was usually mild-mannered and polite, speaking with the cozy, well-modulated warmth of a late-night FM deejay. Then he'd slip into his therapy box and start screaming and cursing and ranting the most horrible nasty things imaginable. Then he'd step out of the box and—presto changeo!—he's Joe Politeness again.

Like the brilliant mathematician he was, Tim had set up an incredibly ingenious delayed-reaction system in his emotional wiring. I got the feeling that if you punched Tim in the face with all your might, he would politely excuse himself, walk into the next room, and then scream, "OW! OW! OW!"

Tim began to wonder if he was a "Primal Therapy casualty."

More to the point, Tim was a "60s casualty." The let-it-all-hang-out, do-your-own-thing, don't-repress-your-true-feelings kind of thinking that came in vogue in the Swinging 60s and dominated the You-Decade 70s was reaching a disastrous culmination in the Psycho 80s.

Indeed, Charles Manson didn't repress his true feelings.

Tim had become the archetypal, post-feminist "sensitive male." In fact, Tim was so in touch with his feelings that it was driving him berserk! He began complaining bitterly about the guy who lived in the apartment above him. He made "too much noise" walking around. The sound of his footsteps on Tim's ceiling was driving Tim nuts. Just the thought of it was enough to make him scream. Some days he'd be in a rage all day just from anticipating when the guy would come home.

When I visited Tim's apartment I could barely hear the faint pitter-patter of the guy's footsteps. But to Tim the sound was reaching epic proportions—a sonic boom, like the insistent poundings of the tell-tale heart, reverberating through the caverns of Tim's hypersensitive brain.

Tim ended up spending thousands of dollars building elaborate false ceilings to muffle the sound. He strapped mattresses to the ceiling, the walls, the floor, everywhere. A veritable padded cell! But to no avail. He even resorted to wearing earplugs all day, but he could still hear the guy's footsteps in his mind.

Then he began hearing his neighbor brushing his teeth. That did it. Tim began sleeping in a beat-up old school bus he parked in his back yard.

And still he continued building therapy boxes—strewn all around his apartment like the pods in "Invasion of the Body Snatchers."

One morning Tim came by my apartment unexpectedly. He was cheerful, chipper and polite, as usual.

"Guess what happened last night," he said.

"What?"

"Ya know that ole drunk Cowboy? He's been sleeping in his truck all winter. Well, I sold him one of my primal boxes to sleep in. He put it in the back of his truck. Put a sleeping bag in it. Said it kept him pretty warm at night."

"I guess those boxes are good for something after all," I laughed.

"Yeah," continued Tim cheerfully. "Anyway, apparently Cowboy got real drunk in there last night, and when he went to sleep I guess he was smoking a cigarette or something, because the box caught on fire and burned up."

"That's a drag," I said. "Is Cowboy okay?"

"No," said Tim casually. "He burned to death. He's dead."

"WHAT?!"

"Yeah. The firemen were trying to get him out, but the boxes only open from the inside. Cowboy was too drunk to get the latch open. This morning all the street people were yelling and screaming at me saying it was my fault that Cowboy burned to death."

"Geez, that's horrible." I couldn't believe how nonchalant Tim was about the whole deal.

"Doc Moody came up to me and said, 'Y'know, Tim, your therapy box worked pretty good. We never tried to save Cowboy because we never even heard him screaming.'" Tim kind of chuckled at life's little ironies.

I was somewhat at a loss for what to say. "Listen, Tim," I said, choosing my words carefully, "what happened wasn't your fault. It's not your fault Cowboy was drunk. Don't you worry about it. At least I'm glad to see you're taking this so well."

"Actually I've never felt worse in my entire life," said Tim cheerfully. "Well, I gotta go, Ace. You have a good day now."

Tim went back to his school bus and climbed into the womb-like safety of his primal scream therapy box. The sound was muffled by the box, but you could still hear his voice faintly, screaming over and over again:

"IT'S NOT MY FAULT WHAT HAPPENED TO COWBOY! IT'S NOT MY FAULT WHAT HAPPENED TO COWBOY!"

THE CONTINUING SAGA OF DR. IGUANA THE SEARCH CONTINUES.

by Kenneth Burke

THE ADVENTURES OF WINO TED

A hero of the backstreets and dumpsters

Wino Ted. His name is legend throughout the hobo jungle. Whenever his stories are told, they gladden the hearts of those folks who ride the rails, spare change the streets, and panhandle the airports and bus stations all across this great land.

Some folks say that Ted came from Chicago where he was an investment counselor, others believe that Ted is a laid-off Detroit auto worker unable to find a job. A select few, who claim to be "in the know" as to the real origins of Wino Ted (and who are usually dismissed as "crazies"), say that Ted comes from another planet in a faraway solar system. "You ever look in his eyes?" they'll ask. "They always seem to be looking past the horizon, as if he were scanning the heavens for a long overdue ride home." Speculation over the background and upbringing of Wino Ted has provided many enjoyable hours of heated debate among those who seek meaning in his legend. No one interpretation of his history seems precise or exactly right, and yet they all do, for Wino Ted has a gift of survival and a penchant for dignity that makes all variants of his story ring true, as well as make the tellers of his tales glow with wisdom and envy.

The first documented appearance of Wino Ted, in clear recollection, was in the downriver Detroit area during the late 1960's. It was February. It was warm enough outside for the streets to flood with melted ice and snow, but still cold enough to maintain the endless clutches and ribbons of carbon-colored gutter ice that lined the urban street. It was the type of weather where you could either catch the flu or a case of terminal depression if you let the drabness get to you. The drivers on the streets were feeling heartless and go-for-broke. They were cutting each other off at intersections, honking their horns, shouting obscenities and making vows to drive their vehicles snugly into the offending motorists' lower orifices. One driver in particular was feeling especially resentful of the weather, the traffic, and the day. He was looking for some unsheltered pedestrian upon whom he could vent his rage and frustration. That's when he saw Wino Ted.

Ted, tall, rakish, and more than a little scruffy in his patched, over-sewn army coat, was trying to huddle up some warmth away from the wind in a municipal bus-stop shell. When the irritated driver saw him, he did not think, "Poor old wretch, must be down on his luck," nor did he think, "There for the grace of God go I." No, the circumstances of pent-up aggravation and vicious road conditions coerced the driver to think, "I wonder how wet I can get that old bum at the bus stop?" With that thought in mind, the driver plunged the car's wheels through the deepest part of the puddle at the traffic light next to the bus stop. He laughed as he turned the corner and saw Wino Ted standing up and slapping water off of his clothes. The motorist drove his car around the block and back down the same street so he could get a better look at his victim. From down the way, the driver could see that most of the water he had splashed at the old bum had run back into the pool in the road, and that Ted was still standing there. This time his mark was sipping from a bottle tucked in a brown paper bag, and he was noticeably shivering. The driver gnashed his teeth in lustful anticipation of further cruel sport with this helpless receptacle for human abuse.

The driver held his car back from moving with the rest of the traffic when the light turned green. Cars were honking their horns angrily behind him, but still he waited until all was clear in front of him. When the time was right, the driver mashed down on his gas pedal and sped through the puddle with such tremendous force that he caused a virtual tidal wave of oily brown water to shoot out from under his wheels at the bus stop. When he turned the corner and looked back he saw that the water from the road had washed all through the bus stop shell and had knocked the old bum off of his feet and nearly into the street. Wino Ted was gagging and coughing, spitting out water. He had dropped his bottle of wine and it had broken, and he was trying desperately to stand up without falling right back down again. The driver had never seen anything so funny in all his life, so he decided to go around the block and try it one more time.

As the malicious motorist drove up the street, he didn't see Ted anywhere. Even so, he held back when the light turned green as he did before, hoping the old bum would re-emerge to get doused again. He was disappointed, however, when Ted did not reappear. Reconciling himself with the thought that he had already had his fun, the driver inched up to the traffic light as it turned red, stopped and waited.

Suddenly the driver's door was flung open, and a figure resembling a drowned rat more than a human being grabbed the motorist by the coat and yanked him out of his car! It was Wino Ted. Ted shook the man angrily with one hand and dug the driver's wallet out of his back pocket with the other. After shaking the man a few extra times for ego's sake, Ted half-sat/half-pushed his an-



SNIDE CRITIC REVIEWS J.P. MORGAN

Hello, dear friends! Once again the Snide Critic reports for duty...but it's gonna be a pretty short column today. Yes, that means I haven't gone to the movies again. "Well, shit," I hear you exclaim, "for a movie critic you don't see many new films, do you?" Well, no...but what do you want me to do? Nobody sends me free tickets to the latest releases, and I'm damned if I'm going to pay to see the likes of BATTERIES NOT INCLUDED; yes, that's one of those films that nobody likes...more glop from the Spielberg grindhouse. Hey! It's about these cute widdle living flying saucers that visit these poor oppressed folks whose neighborhood is under attack from a greedy real estate developer. Hey! Remember when everybody was saying that Spielberg was the inheritor of the Disney crown? Well, it's true—now Steve's Amblin Films puts out films every bit as smarmy and glopky as the Disneycorp product. Ah, me...

Ace writer R. Bain asks the Snide Critic's opinion of JOE BOB GOES TO THE DRIVE-IN; well, this fine book gets a great big thumbs up. A lot of reviews of psychotronic type film fare, written in a folksy, down-home style, SubGeniod in nature. I enjoyed reading such vital information on what real B-B-Q (not barbeque) is, or the mystery of the Diving Pig, but I don't know about some of his film picks...he gives INCUBUS two stars, and THE POWER gets three, but yours truly can tell you with authority that these are two of the most sleep-inducing movies ever put on film! But like I said, it's a fine book, and belongs on your shelf between THE BOOK OF THE SUBGENIUS and THE PSYCHOTRONIC ENCYCLOPEDIA OF FILM! And speaking of Michael Weldon's book...

There's a movie he lists on page 292 which he says is almost as funny as INFRA-MAN, and he's right as always. It's called GOLIATHON, a 1977 King Kong imitation. I caught this on the tube, and sat there amazed as some guy in a rubber caveman suit obeyed some blonde jungle woman, whose crude leather bikini seemed glued on with spirit gum. (You wanna talk lascivious, you just gotta watch her climb up and down a tree.) There's a big, rear-projected elephant attack scene that looks like a World War II battle sequence. Also big love scene with jungle girl swinging a leopard around in slow motion. There's even a weeping elephant! Geez.

Well, that about wraps it up for now, troops! (I told you it would be short.) Turn in next time, as the Snide Critic reviews ANOTHER WORTHLESS, UNFUNNY COMEDY starring Whoopie Cushion Goldberg, Pee-on Zadora, Emilio Pestevez, and Ron Reagan...plus, THREE MEN AND A DEAD BABY, the sequel to the inexplicable 1987 hit. Until then, I'll see you...at the movies! (Music: Doot-de-dum-dum, doot-de-doot-dee, doot-de-doot-dum, doot-de-doot-dee...)

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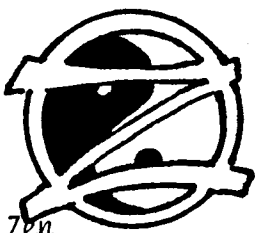
tagonist seat—first into the brown oil-slicked puddle in the middle of the road. Then he jumped into the man's car, locked the doors, and drove away when the light turned green.

The car was never seen again. Some folks say that Ted took it to some shifty types who filed the numbers off the block and sold it to someone else. Others say he sold it, a piece at a time, to several generous junk dealers of his acquaintance. All anybody knows for sure is that Ted suddenly had enough money to ride out the rest of the winter in a nice little hotel with a bathroom down at the end of the hall, was eating and drinking regularly, and was always willing to give you a cigarette whenever you asked for one.

Much later, when the sun was warm and the road was just right for hitchin' a ride, the man who splashed the muddy Detroit water all over Wino Ted got his wallet back, sans cash, in the mail. None of the papers was missing or disturbed, but the billfold smelled faintly of cheap wine.

Zenarchy

STORIES by Ho Chi Zen



WALK, DON'T RUN

"His gait and his gestures were never hurried, but flowed in unison with the rhythm of his breathing like those of a peasant or a mountaineer," says Rene Zuber of G. in Who Are You Monsieur Gurdjieff?

"I remember the day when I arrived late for an appointment that he had given me. I galloped down the Avenue Carnot, bounded up his stairs four at a time, and started to stammer an excuse. But he simply let fall two words: 'Never hurry.'"

In The Zen Environment Marlon Mountain tells us that "Once Lao-tzu, the legendary Chinese Taoist sage, was taking a journey with his attendant to a distant city. After travelling for many days, the two came to a place where they could see the city ahead. The attendant, seeing the end of the journey in sight, spurred on his horse. But Lao-tzu called the young man back, saying, 'Here too it is good!' and rode steadily on."

In recent years medical science has discovered that rushing, even driving a car faster than normally, sends unconscious signals to the body of emergency. When you then, for example, are held up at a red light, the body actually begins tearing itself down! Lao-tzu is said to have lived 160 years.

Dogen, founder of the Soto Zen school, once said, "Think three times before saying anything. That is Zen." You figured it might be anything but, didn't you?

THE CURSE OF IMPERMANENCE

A monk asked: "From what book is the phrase, 'dragon murmurings,' taken?"

Ts'ao Shan replied: "I don't know, but all who hear it die."

TALES OF ZEN MASTER SHOU CH'U TSUNG HUI OF TUNG SHAN (from The Blue Cliff Record "Biographical Supplement" in the Clearly translation, Shambhala, Boulder and London, 1977)

A monk asked, "When you're far far on the road, what's it like?" The master said, "Not agreeing to go while the sky is clear, ending up waiting for the rain to soak your head." The monk said, "What about all the sages?" The master said, "They enter the mud and water."

A monk asked, "Before mind arises, where are things?" The master said, "With no wind, the lotus leaves move: certainly there's a fish swimming through...."

A monk asked, "What is Buddha?" The master said, "Obviously true."

A monk asked, "A great multitude has gathered thick to beg the Master to take hold of the pivotal essentials and reveal a little of the great design." The master said, "A bubble floating on the water displays the five colors; at the bottom of the sea a frog is croaking, 'The moon is bright!'"

OUR ENEMY, THE BUDDHAS AND PATRIARCHS

Lung Ya: "People who penetrate the study must pass beyond buddhas and patriarchs. Tung Shan said, 'If you see the verbal teachings of the buddhas and patriarchs as your mortal enemies, only then will you qualify to penetrate the study.' If you cannot pass beyond them they will deceive you."

Monk: "Do patriarchs and buddhas intend to deceive people or not?" Lung Ya: "Do rivers and lakes intend to block travellers or not? You cannot say they do not obstruct people. Though the patriarchs and buddhas don't try to deceive people, it is simply that people cannot pass beyond them. So they deceive people. You cannot say they don't. If you can pass beyond them, though, you surpass them. Still, you must completely realize their intent; only then can you equal them. If you have not been able to surpass them and you study them, then you have no hope of attaining in even ten thousand aeons."

Monk: "How can I avoid being deceived by buddhas and patriarchs?" Lung Ya: "Be enlightened yourself."

BLANK ZEN

"Now I have to remind you once again that there is no dogmatic Zen, no Zen theory and no Zen philosophy. There is only the constant realization of Self. Keeping our feet on the ground, there is only the constant revelation of THIS—as it is, at each moment." —Eido Shimano Roshi, Golden Wind: Zen Talks (Japan Pubs. 1979)

HOW TO BE YOUR OWN ZEN MASTER

Fashion a staff of rough-hewn tree wood or bamboo and squat like a samurai, shout loudly—and hit yourself on a leg, your back or shoulders or on top of your head as hard as you dare. As you do this, also attempt to duck out of your own way. Develop a number of stances and yells for this purpose, and keep at it until you are enlightened.

ZEN ROSHI COMICS

Says Eido Shimano Roshi in Golden Wind: "Just at the right moment, not too soon, not too late—strike! POW! POW! Strike with intensity! Then, with this sound, someone may realize THIS!"

WITH NO HANG-UPS

"Zen practice is no other than to be free from hang-ups and make ourselves as vast and free as the sky."

—Eido Shimano Roshi

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Sex and Death At Age 20

by Carol Escobar Magary

College is hell. Don't let anyone tell you differently. If they say "Hell is college" or even just go up to you and say "differently," then they are telling you differently, and I just warned you not to let them do that.

It's really my fault that I ended up here. I sinned too much in high school, and then when I graduated, a counselor told me I was going into a collage, so I thought I was going to be a cut-out magazine picture, perhaps of some fish sticks, pasted on to a third grader's "Four Food Groups" project.

Imagine my disappointment when, instead of rubbing elbows with a one-dimensional beef-a-roni, I ended up at an Institution of Learning Higher.

Now that I'm here, though, I'm desperately trying to keep up a student-like facade. I've bought an "alienation kit," the popular ensemble of mirrored sunglasses (no one can see your eyes, you can't see people asking you to sign a South Africa divestment petition) and a Walkman (blocks out those annoying bird, wind, and "Hi, how are you" noises). I've changed my wardrobe to a baggy, gray or olive, expensively poor-looking "Proletariat Look." I've even not ripped up my roommate's "Spuds Does Dallas" poster.

And of course I didn't get any of the classes I wanted, such as "Anatomy 104: Mel Gibson Inside and Out" or "LAZ 333: Laziness and Self-Pity—Your Keys to Financial Success." Just look at the horrible schedule I have for this term:

Philosophy 445555...Existentialism, Nihilism and Despair—The teacher never shows up, the students sit in the dark and whisper about Swedish movies, and the only grade you can make is an "incomplete." It counts as negative three credits. If you take the class enough times, you get sucked into a void and don't even get your tuition fees refunded.

Art 2121, Four-Dimensional Design—I panicked looking for the room on the first day of school until I realized I was still walking around in the 3-dimensional world and had been doing circles for nearly an hour. Finally I asked a physics major, who told me a shortcut through the warped space-time continuum.

Advertising 3010—It's supposed to be taught by The Smarmy Marketing Executives from the Nissan Commercial, but all they do is sit around and talk about what students would like an in advertising class, and funny new uses for advertising classes.

So I figured with such bad classes that I should get involved in some student organizations, but they all seem too trivial. For example:

Spamma Hamma Pie—the society dedicated to the preservation of preservatives through massive junk food consumption. They plan seminars this term on "Why Macaroni and Cheese Really Should be Called Cheese and Macaroni," "Using the Sixth Sense to Identify Refrigerator Contents," and "Chef Boyardee—Man or Myth?"

Drunks Against Mad Mothers—This club has moved beyond T-shirt legendry. Members engage in lively discussions on whether light beer is just for sissies, and on how their mothers' constant nagging almost turned them into sissies, but fortunately turned them into alcoholics.

Student Apathy Club—I don't know what they do, and I really don't even give a damn.

Alda Wimpa Smurfa—This organization teaches college men to be sensitive, caring lovers, to respect women, and to get in touch with the nurturing side of themselves. No, ha-ha, just kidding, this one doesn't exist. Hee-hee, that was a good one.

Well, there you have the first installment of my university perils. Mail, non-perishable food items and anonymous gift certificates are appreciated to show your sympathy in my time of sorrow. God bless.

SAYING GOODBYE TO THE FIREBALL

by Steven F. Scharff

My beloved Chevy "Box-Nova" dies of mixed maladies, and I am left without a car. This situation is one that I truly hate. Try to find another collection of metal, glass and plastic to be used as an extension of my psyche.

On my budget, I can't afford any special choices of vehicle. No brand-new, PVC-scented interiores, Japanese/European/South Korean/US-Canadian cars. It had to be "used." Not from dealers, either. Check the want ads.

But wait! Mom says that my brother's ex-girlfriend's father has a Pinto that he really takes care of. Maybe he'd sell it.

A phone call later and the answer is "yes." In fact, he already did! But his daughter is going to buy a car herself. Ask her! So I did. Dad and I drive over to take a look.

Climbing in to take a test drive, it felt like the way I felt when I was a kid and got on my neighbor's bike. A girl's bike. It was just the same as any other bike, but different.

I drove around in a low-seated blue two-door hatchback, complete with a faded rainbow sticker in the rear window and a Strawberry Air Fresh'ner. Talk talk talk nine hundred dollars.

Nine hundred dollars that got me about five years' worth of 1976 Pinto. A car that was recalled for the infamous joke gas tanks that play "Pop Goes The Driver" when struck from behind at 35 mph.

Then it's 1987. I make a very long trip to the NY Renaissance Festival in Tuxedo and back. Only two days later and the problems begin. Drive drive drive stall while rolling. Shift into neutral and crank it up again. This went on for quite awhile until it happened one day just as I pulled up in front of the house.

And it wouldn't start.

At all.

So, open the hood. Maybe it's the timing. Nah, can't be. Pintos don't have timing belts. You gotta replace it.

Drag out the J.C. Whitney catalog. Hey, it's only \$20! No, wait, wrong column. It's \$70!

So, Dad and I check the repair manual. To change the timing gears, you have to take out the engine!

A short talk with Dad later, and we go hunting for used cars. Try to get a used car dealer to sell one that's halfway decent for less than two grand!

Then, a sign from above. Cousin Judy was offered \$100 trade-in for her '73 Dodge Dart Sport (later called the Charger). \$120 later and it's mine. Not much to look at, but it runs.

The Pinto lay in state in the driveway, taking up precious space. Finally, Dad and I load it up with scrap metal, paint "CAR IN TOW" on it in red fluorescent paint, link up a makeshift tow bar from a cannibalized power train, and it's off to Newark we go! A green van towing an ugly Pinto, getting incredible mileage by the way, to a section near Newark Airport that is dotted with factories, office condos and junkyards. The strip by the junkyards literally looks like a scene from "The Day After." Burned-out cars litter what passes for the sidewalks, and bald tires are almost everywhere.

And we find out why.

"Can't take Pintos. Nobody needs parts for 'em."

And that after the scrap yard sends us away, for not having it brought to us by a licensed tow truck.

Finally one place yields. He's selling the property to a developer who will build an office building. Find a spot, dump it, and the buyer will have to deal with it.

Scamper back to the cars, rumble drive driver, find a spot, undo the chains and do a K-turn. I get out to guide him.

I look at the Pinto. Inert and lifeless. But how to say goodbye? I find a square piece of long metalwork, the type used as the main part of auto jacks.

My dad completes the turn and hears a sharp noise.

He turns to see the Pinto with a shattered windshield, the jack bar in my hand, and a smile on my face.

Moments later, we make our way past the war zone and back onto Route 22.

Finally, my dad speaks up.

"That felt good, didn't it?"

Long pause.

"Just my version of a farewell kiss."

And it's home to lemonade and kosher salami sandwiches.

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Carrot Juice, Anyone!

by Susan Packie

"Want a beer on me, Sam?"

"Nah, Joe. I'd just cry in it."

"What's bugging you?"

"Look outside. What do you see?"

"Longshoremen loading crates on a freighter. A tugboat being repaired in dry dock. Warehouses on piers. Coils of heavy rope. Pigeons. And Missy's Poodle Boutique."

"Right. They're moving in."

"Who's moving in?"

"The artsy-craftsy dilettantish upwardly mobile young middle-class gentrifiers, that's who. They've been poking around asking questions. Want to turn the warehouses into co-ops, open pastry shops and clothing boutiques. A bunch of homos, if you ask me!"

"And that poodle place is part of this movement?"

"It's the first stage, their foothold. Guys like me will be thrown out of business."

"But they have to drink, don't they?"

"Sure, but not at bars. They'll be opening health food restaurants and serving yogurt drinks and fruit juice."

"Fruits for the fruits."

"You got it."

"What can we do about it?"

"If we could just bring in a bunch of oil-spilling tankers, those fairies wouldn't have a chance."

"Yeah. They could ram those weirdos off the face of the earth while they were at it. When do we start?"

"A little later."

"Why not now?"

"They're spreading their money around at this point. Could use a little of that. After we soak them, we'll boot them into the river."

"Great idea. By the way, what's that you got in the back of this joint?"

"Oh, that's a salad bar. Everything on it's fresh—greens, fruit, raw vegetables."

"You mean you're going over to the other side?"

"Of course not! I just want to be ready for any eventuality."

Joe stopped off at Sam's bar so often he didn't even bother to look over the door anymore. If he had, he would have seen the new hand-painted sign: Refreshments and Elegant Dining Chez Samuel.

It was worth a try!

MR. ROBERTSON

by Todd Kristel

We'll here's to you Mr. Robertson
Jesus loves you more than you would know
Wo-o-o
God bless you please Mr. Robertson
Heaven holds a place for those who pay
You-you-you
Ou-ou-ou

We'd like to know a little bit about you
for ourselves
Because we're worried for our lives
All you see around you are unsympathetic
eyes
We can see through your holier-than-thou
disguise

Look at yourself Mr. Robertson
Do you feel comfortable with what you see
Ee-ee-ee
Tell us please Mr. Robertson
Don't you wish some of your past quotes
would go away

A-a-a

Televangelism on a Sunday afternoon
Going to the candidates' debate
All these right-wing Republicans from
which we can choose
Any way you look at it, we lose

Where have you gone, Phil Donahue
Our nation turns its lonely eyes to you
Ou-ou-ou

What's that you say Mr. Robertson
Phil has gone to join the CIA

A-a-a

A-a-a

Vote for Robertson Or Go To Hell!

YU News Service

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it's those communist egg beaters

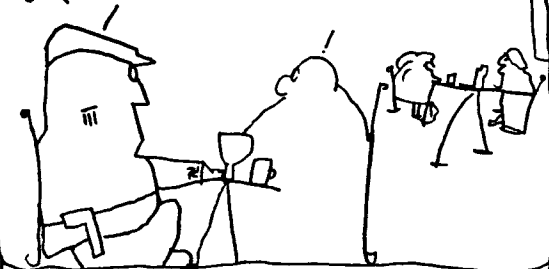
inspired by Oral Roberts

it's those communist egg beaters
they have us right where they want us.
communist egg beaters
climbing up out of the garbage can
threatening our moral fiber
giant communist egg beaters
have been seen inside the white house
threatening our beloved president
we must not let down our vigilance
egg beaters are subversive
they enter our homes looking like
useful objects
when most of them are secretly plotting
to overthrow our government
we are asleep
unable to hear the slow turnings of
these cranks
safely tucked away in their cabinets
giant communist egg beaters
are spreading their philosophies
of enslavement to the spoons forks
and other unsuspecting kitchen utensils of america.
how do i know this?
friends god himself, that greatest of all
spiritual investment counselors
whispered the words into my ears
as i watched the devil dressed as julia child
dance across the tv screen
i knew then the world was unsafe
as long as these communist egg beaters
were allowed to sit with us at our breakfast tables
these evil contraptions
were bound to overrun the hearts and minds of christian america!
friends, i urge you to destroy
your egg beater, for the benefit of
future generations, this red tide
of aluminum steel and wood all glued together
for the sole purpose of infiltrating our precious family unit
must be eliminated!

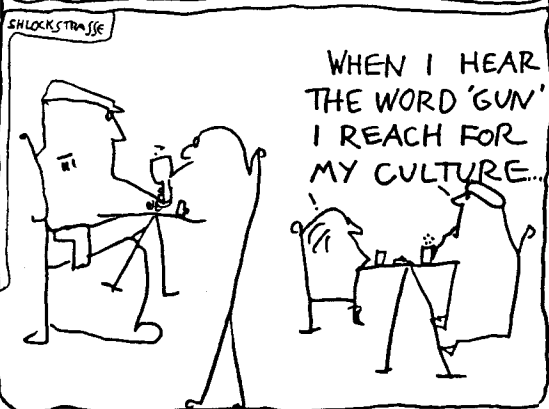
HIP by Larry Oberc

Got my name on all these mailing lists, benefits, art shows, readings, and ever charity group within a million miles saving thousands of poor suckers, punks frown when I tell them I saw the Helga pictures, last art show I saw punks lined up, moved their heads, their mouths, said pretty much, did pretty much, acted pretty much like the suburban folks who ran into the city to get some culture on them, who wanted to see if Helga was worth all that paper, worth the cost of the tickets, last benefit watched the same forty guys try to pick up the same ten girls (who got boyfriends or they wouldn't be wandering into these arenas), last benefit thought about Loudon Wainwright III and bellbottom pants, didn't have all that black on, how can you be an individual, how can you express your individuality, how can you be real if you don't wear black, hell, I quickly evaluated my wardrobe, nope, no black socks, no black pants, no black shirts, no black jackets, no black coats, just shit out of luck as far as a fashion statement goes, looked across the room at all of the black motorcycle jackets, looked out the window, not a sign of any bikes in the parking lot, on the street, these folks wouldn't know what to do, wouldn't know where to put the key, their ass, if someone tossed them on a motorcycle, listening to the talk, gossip on the latest who's fucking who but I thought she was fucking someone else, the latest on the good art, the bad art, the good book, the bad book, the good people, the bad people, music plays in the background, punk, got to listen to punk music to be in with this crowd, can't pogo no more, not since the guy fell through the floor, piece of plywood covers the whole, people walk around, over, not knowing or caring to find out what it's doing there, beer flowing fast, cases brought in one after another, wonder who's paying for it all, why they're paying for it, who are they trying to impress, why, what difference will it make tomorrow, walking across the room, pulling a beer out of the trash barrel they brought in from the street, garbage clinging to the edges of it, ice and cans mixing together with the funk, open a beer, take a long drink, wonder how much different cocktail parties are, wonder if they wear all the same clothes, listen to all the same music, talk about who is fucking who, wonder if it's all that much different than this, if I would be any less hip there...

WHEN I HEAR
THE WORD 'CULTURE'
I REACH FOR MY GUN...



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SCHLACHTSTASSE

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Than Not Enough!

Wax Ink

by Rory Houchens

SAVAGE—Eurythmics (RCA)—In celebration of a brand new year, Annie and Dave pop open a brand new jar of generic stresstabs and send forth a brand new long player sure to spread goodwill to fans and friends the world over. "Beethoven (I Love To Listen To)" travels along Pygmalionic back roads powered by mechanized Kraftwerkian disco thumps and string smacks, while "Do You Want To Break Up?" mates the golden age of girl groups with modernized calypso and, year, everyone is the better for it. Annie dons the old leather, studs and spikes once more for "I Need A Man," a rough and tumble smack in the face with a thin stick. "Heaven" percolates right on up to those pearly gates, while "I've Got A Lover (Back In Japan)" and the gold-plated "Shame" stand as SAVAGE's most outstanding tracks with some really keen music to keep you occupied. More great rockin' stuff for your Eurythmics collection!

VISAGE—Ken Wiley (Passport Jazz/Jem)—The featured instrument here is, are you ready, the French horn. It's played by Mr. Wiley, who also produced the album and wrote and arranged the seven tracks. There are lots of synthesizers, guitars and bits of percussion backing up Ken's French horn, and the well-manicured songs have titles like "Solemnis," "Soldanella," and "Caloris," and the music is heartless, glossy, gutless, lukewarm, bloodless, polished, spineless, and completely devoid of soul.

HARDBALL!—Art Lande (The Great American Music Hall/Fantasy)—As solo piano/jazz albums go, HARDBALL! is pretty easy to take. Lande keeps things fairly simple and light, he doesn't head for outer space with barrages of notes like Cecil Taylor, or get cool, blue and laid-back like the late Bill Evans, or even adopt a pious, true "artiste" stance as Keith Jarrett has been known to do; ol' Art just plays the piano—no drama, no heavy-handedness. He tampers liberally with the structure and tempo of classics like "Summertime," "Ain't Misbehavin'" and "Willow Weep For Me," but rather than diminishing their spirit, Lande seems to be giving them new life; and his own stuff (particularly "Round Tripper" and "The Wiggle") is modestly and tastefully performed. Lande, however, is perhaps best when interpreting gospel-tinged tunes ("Lift Every Voice," "Deep River") or mixing nostalgia, ragtime and a little boogie woogie ("Stompin' At The Savoy," "The Sugar Blues"). A refreshing change of pace.

DANCEPIECES—Philip Glass (CBS Masterworks)—Glass's previous album, SONGS FROM LIQUID DAYS (compositional collaborations with popsters Suzy Vega, David Byrne, etc.), seems to have been an attempt to introduce Glass to a radio market and maybe give those "lowly rockers" a little "prestige," but I think it kinda backfired on both counts. DANCEPIECES, on the other hand, is more prime Glass like EISENSTEIN ON THE BEACH and THE PHOTOGRAPHER. The first side consists of five of the nine segments Glass composed for Twyla Tharp's IN THE UPPER ROOM and each piece features the trademark repetitious building of notes and instruments weaving in and out of the mix, sometimes recalling bits of vintage American written decades ago by Aaron Copeland. Side two is made up of three pieces used to accompany GLASSPIECES, a work choreographed by Jerome Robbins. The first two, "Rubric" and "Facades," are taken from Glass dynamic lp, GLASSWORKS, while the third, a brooding, darkly colored piece, is "Funeral" from Glass's opera AKHNATON. Philip Glass is back on the right track.

The Flute by Sheila E. Murphy

I refrain from touching what would offer melody prolifically kin to my computer making silent song. The soft headache refuses an escape hatch as if committed without reason to rigorous schemes of growth. Musicians typically have too many friends who want to get away. I the exception take my hands to a softer and deceptively monotonous keyboard with an eye to spiritual melodies

PIPE DREAMS by Andy Roberts

Speedy wanted to be Keith Richards. He had it all down: the skull ring, the knife, the look. Speedy dreamed about The Stones. He dreamed he met Mick and Keith on the beach: Woody had split with the band and they asked if he would sit in. Sure, he said. That night he played with The Stones. He was a smash. He had it all down.

In the other dream (which was more like a daydream, really, a continuous, ongoing daydream in which he spent the majority of his days) The Stones were holding auditions for Woody's replacement (he had conveniently quit again). Speedy got the call. They flew him out to Paris to jam. He won the job, naturally—he knew all the songs, he had it all down.

Mick was talking about a look: How could Speedy fit in? They wanted somebody tall. Speedy was six feet. Did he mind using makeup? Any objections to dancing? There was a girl to help put his eyedrops in.

Speedy got tight with Keith. They jammed all night in his basement. They drove around in his Bentley. They got fucked up all the time, and slapped back and shook hands a lot. This was the dream.

Back home, Speedy practiced by taking lots of drugs. He stayed fucked up all the time like Keith. Speedy couldn't afford smack, but he practiced nodding off: a blank look, with his mouth hung open. He got pretty good.

Speedy could play guitar. He could play guitar better when he was fucked up: he always sounded better when the drugs kicked in. He knew he could make it big with a band, but there were the little things that counted: Could he sing? Could he dance? Did he have the right look? He knew what to do: he got fucked up. He was always fucked up. That was his gimmick. You had to have a gimmick, because the little things counted.

But now he was faced with a dilemma: If Keith called, would he go on tour with The Stones or keep his job with the City? It was a real problem for him. He had a good job with the Water Department: steady, good pay—it kept him in new strings and sinsemilla. He knew he could make a lot of money on a tour, but there were no benefits with The Stones, no insurance. He had to think about it. After all, he had a wife and two kids who counted on him for their very survival.

But what he mostly thought about was job security—where would he be in three years? What if The Stones fired him? He wondered if he could make enough profit on one tour to set himself up for life. He didn't need much: a car, a house, a few bags of dope. Would it be worth it? He thought about this all the time.

He thought about it in high school, when he was still working on his rap—when he was still working on getting Keith down. He was always fucked up back then. So was Keith. Speedy had a fantasy: he was the most famous rock guitarist on earth. But there was a high price to pay: he could inhabit the body of Eric Clapton but never make love to a woman again. Was it worth it? He thought about this all the time too.

Meanwhile, the left side of his brain drove rhythm and Speedy fell in with the drummer, until they were one piece, one mass of muscle, one rock-solid punching unit of drums and guitar. He knew he could play. Everybody knew he could play.

Speedy crouched low and cranked out his rhythm with his back up against his amp. He bent his legs at the knees and slid down, slowly lowering his eyelids and never quit playing, his skull ring flashing off rays of light from his playing hand. He went down...and down... still playing...falling slowly to the floor, sinking slowly down to his heels with his guitar in his lap and nodded off. He had it all down. All he needed was a call from Keith.

that someone else would play. My hands relay the ease with which some spirits traveled through their lives. Even as I run from mine, hoping for sealed envelopes containing cryptic messages of peace I'll someday learn exactly to decode.

Two notes perfectly in tune produce together perfect 15 ringing

The Hunting *by Richard M. Millard*

The pick-up truck had been moving through the fog like a ship lost in the night. But now the headlights were beginning to see the concrete river that flowed beneath the truck's wheels.

"Glad this fog's finally starting to life," Theo said as he pressed his face against the windshield.

"I've seen worse," Ray casually replied as he looked out his side window. "Maybe I'd better cut off your beer."

"Sure," Theo smirked. "Then you could do all the driving and looking for yourself."

Ray and Theo looked like a paramilitary version of Laurel and Hardy. Wearing identical khaki jackets whose pockets bulged with ammunition, Theo's thin frame was kept tight behind the wheel by Ray's bulk.

"Just keep driving," Ray said as he passed Theo a can of beer. "And take it easy."

"You just have to be the first one to bag a deer, don't you?"

Ray took a swig from his beer. "Sure. It's like a tradition. Everyone expects me to be the first one to score a kill when the hunting season opens. And I'm not gonna disappoint them."

"Hey!" Theo exclaimed. "Doesn't this look familiar?"

Only a few wisps of the fog remained as Ray rolled down his window. "Yeah. It sure does."

Theo set his beer on the dashboard as he eased off the truck's gas pedal. "This is where you got those two deer last year."

Ray smiled. "Plugged 'em right off the road."

"They didn't know what hit them," Theo grinned. "But you're awfully lucky the wildlife officers didn't get you for illegally killing deer from the highway."

"They could never catch me," Ray said as he rubbed his chin.

"Wait. Stop it here for a minute."

Theo stepped on the brake and reached for his beer.

"Hey! Look over there!" Ray exclaimed in a hoarse whisper.

Theo tried not to spill his beer as he leaned over Ray's shoulder. "Well, whaddaya know."

There stood a deer, about fifty feet from the highway. Just in front of a stand of trees.

"Hand me my rifle," Ray whispered. "Only a couple points on the antlers, but he'll do."

Theo put his beer can back on the dashboard and pulled a rifle from behind the seat. Ray swallowed the rest of his beer and set the empty can on the floor of the truck. He then took the rifle from Theo.

"I can plug him right here before he—"

"What's the matter?" Theo questioned. "Shoot him!"

Ray slowly shook his head. "Haven't you noticed anything funny?"

"Like what?"

"Like that the deer isn't moving the tiniest bit. Not even his ears."

Theo squinted his eyes as he looked at the deer. "Are you kidding? That's too far off to tell."

"It's not that far," Ray stated as he disgustedly kicked open the truck door. An empty beer can hit the pavement and bounced into the wet grass. The deer did not move.

"What's the matter with it?" Theo asked.

Ray slumped back into the seat. "That's not a real deer. It's one of those decoys those blasted wildlife officers put up to catch illegal hunters."

"Looks real to me."

"That's the point. They want you to fire at it," Ray said as he held the rifle on his lap. "Then they'll come runnin' and catch you before... Say, wait a minute. I'll show 'em! Give me Baby!"

Ray handed his rifle back to Theo who put it behind the seat. Theo then pulled out a case and opened it.

"Here you go," Theo said as he handed the machine gun to Ray.

"Hello, Baby," Ray cooed as he pressed his lips to the gun's barrel. "We're gonna have some fun."

"All right!" Theo snorted. "But I'll tell you, even if I live to be a hundred, I'll never understand how you talked that guy into selling you this machine gun from his collection."

Ray smiled as he ran a hand across the gun. "When I want something, I don't give up until I get it. And I wanted Baby the minute I saw her. Smartest move I ever made. She's given me more pleasure than my old lady ever did."

Theo grinned.

"And now I'm gonna show those wildlife boys that they aren't as smart as they think they are," Ray said as he tightened his grip on the machine gun. "I'm gonna blow their blasted decoy to bits. They won't catch any hunters with this one when I get done."

Ray rested his arm on the truck door. He grinned as he aimed at the deer.

"Wait a minute!" Theo exclaimed. "I think I just saw that deer's front leg move!"

"You're crazy," Ray replied. "That's just a blasted decoy."

No. It's a decoy that's about to be blasted!"

Ray was chuckling to himself as he leaned forward. His lips smacked of the anticipated destruction.

Suddenly, the truck exploded! It became a blazing fireball! The screaming did not last long.

A twisted machine gun lay half-buried in the ground.

"Come on back, Buc," a voice whispered from the stand of trees.

"In a minute," Buc replied. "Remember, now, we owe our small

TALK SHOW HOST confidential



GM DOBBS



I had come home after a difficult day at work, and I certainly wasn't prepared for what was in my mailbox. There, amidst a personal letter from Ed McMahon letting me know about all my winnings, was NEWSWEEK. Like most people, I glance at the cover and then settle down to reading the magazine from back to front. After all, the back portion of the magazine is where they have their gossip page and their movie reviews. You have to break into the news gradually, I think; slowly prepare yourself for the latest pronouncement that will change your life.

I couldn't get past the cover, though. Garry Trudeau had been commissioned to do a special illustration showing good old Uncle Duke in a state of near collapse. The headline read to the effect of "Greed Is Dead; The Eighties Are Over."

Just another great newsmagazine cover, right? Just something to make you stop a moment. Of course, the more sheep-like of us undoubtedly wondered where two years had gone; this is just 1988. Nothing to worry about, right? Just like TIME announced Marisa Bereson was the most beautiful woman in the world when Kubrick directed BARRY LYNDON. Today, Marisa is the answer to a trivia question.

This cover really upset me, though. I knew that deep down I had once again been the cosmic late-bloomer. Here I am threatening to make nearly, that's nearly, \$20,000 a year at the age of 33 and three-quarters, and I'm told, instructed, commanded to forget about the perks, the excesses, the sheer joy of Yuppiedom because it was all over.

When I was in high school I was a sort-of junior member of the group in my small school who showed some ability to kid themselves that they were intelligent. I was a newcomer to a New England town which took three generations of living, breeding and passing on before you were treated to a neighborly invitation to watch the next-door cattle mate. Therefore, the junior membership.

I went to nearly all the parties they had and did my best to try to play Twister with the best-looking girls. I was always late for that, too. Anyway, the night of one party the weather turned very nasty and the roads were covered with about an inch of glare ice. My parents (I was unable to drive until I was 17) refused to take me as any sensible human being would, citing the weather, the roads and common sense. Common sense, of course, could not put my youthful hormones at ease, though, and I was quite upset.

I was positively suicidal when I discovered there had been a raunchy game of Sardines in a closet that practically amounted to a session of Hide-the-Salami—if not Hide-the-Salami, at least talk about hiding it with a girl in a dark closet. Gosh, late again! My timing or my life clock or my karma or aura was destined to be out-of-step with society at large.

I always wanted to sleep around a bit in college, but I was true to my first love and when she left me to do volunteer work with priests and nuns on an Indian reservation in Montana, herpes was around and loose sex was out.

I missed out on the sexual revolution and the political revolution. Today I'm viewed by my college class as an old hippie because I really don't believe the RAMBO movies are a real view of the world. But I didn't even buy underground comics when I was in too busy with family and grades to do ANYTHING! So, no rallies, sit-ins, love-ins, be-ins for me.

I really thought I wouldn't miss the economic revolution. I really thought with a couple more years I could begin to eat Haagen-Dasz. I could skip by the steak section of the meat department right to the ever-loving prepared meat section in which you find bits of beef and chicken already made up into little frou-frou dishes, already cut up for you in bite-size chunks, already pre-digested for you. Nope, none of that for me now, thank you. Slide that package of Perdue's Pre-Cooked Chicken Parts right back on the shelf. Why? Because fucking NEWSWEEK says so, that's why!

No stupid compact disc player for me! Nope, I won't be forced by style to ditch 20 years of collecting records to start again! I won't have to toss my blues albums to listen to multi-millionaire freak Michael Jackson who doesn't ever get a wedgie in his shorts sing how baaaaaaad he is. Nope, not me, because greed and stupidity are out. Sensible values are back. All it took was just one week. I was even going to start agreeing with the TV GUIDE movie reviews, and read Tom Wolfe and buy ROLLING STONE and believe that John Cougar Mellencamp is really a force for social change, and like the taste of mineral water and....and....I had been conditioned. I was in synch. I was finally ready to march along with the overwhelming majority of my generation.

It's a good thing I don't subscribe to TIME, though, because I would have been out-of-step once again.

friends a favor for planting those mines and stringing the wire."

"Don't worry," the voice from the trees impatiently replied.

"Well help them the next time those bikers come tearing through the forest. Now, get back here. I don't know where you find the nerve to stand out there. And you waited so long to push that detonator."

With a snort of triumph, and a shake of his antlers, Buc turned and joined the other deer in the shelter of the trees.

Commercial McClue-In by "Kid" Sieve

"It wasn't supposed to start a revolution," says the latest ad on behalf of the purveyors of NutraShit, in the most inappropriate use of the word "revolution" since Nike. The hell it wasn't, you smug bastards. You're trying to imply that NutraShit suddenly appeared one day and everyone decided to embrace this modern miracle just like that? No manipulating of the FDA, no monopolizing of various food corporations until it became impossible to find another artificial sweetener in any "diet" food? Come on—this commercial smacks of as much sleaze as the latest doings of chem-co Monsanto's pet (whatever happened to G.D. Searle, I wonder? Keeping a low profile, or sold out completely?), as NutraShit has unveiled their newest nutty nutrition-null number, Simplesse. Not only did the premiere party thrown for valued stockbrokers and media folk to be human guinea pigs for this "microparticulated" fat substitute (that's a process whereby the tongue is fooled into believing it's tasting butter!), but chairman Robert Shapiro (one more name for your dart board) and cohorts thumbed their noses at FDA approval, claiming "the FDA did not have to review its Simplesse because it was not a new substance," according to AdWeek and other sources. "NutraSweet asked the FDA to put Simplesse on its GRAS (Generally Recognized As Safe) list," after much pressure from folks like FDA commish Frank Young, still pissed at Shapiro because of the aura of wrongdoing surrounding the passage of aspartame (the many documented dangers of which have been reported overmuch in past columns here, and to which the Kid can now attest herself, having accidentally bought a diet soda and suffered severe burning of the throat and nausea after one swallow), "even though placement on that list means NutraSweet will have to make public all information on Simplesse." And get this—NutraShit's "claims of naturalness are based on the fact that the fat substitute is made by using the protein from egg whites or milk...But unlike Procter & Gamble's Olestra, still waiting for FDA approval, Simplesse cannot be used for cooking," because it breaks down, just like aspartame, into its component parts when heated. Sounds real natural to me, boyos.

Well, the Superbowl and the Olympics are the two big premiere events this year for new ads. Some early favorites: The new Stroh's commercial featuring the return of Alex the dog, whose owner brags that Alex can now do Dog Impersonations. Alex steps out of the room then back in looking like, alternately, Lassie, Rin Tin Tin, Benji, and—the old Spudser herself. The punch line, of course, is that Alex's owner's friends can't figure out that last impression. Nice humor, Lowe Marschall!

Lever Brothers let BBDO utilize animation against a 3D background plus humor in the new ad for Sunlight dish detergent—this isn't a bad one to save on videotape, and it's a great spoof of soap operas too (much better than the assumed camp of "Slice O' Life" for that mail-order jewelry-selling company). I especially like the ending, where the Lichtensteinian woman and her hubby make up and her thought balloon reads, along with her voiceover, "Who writes this stuff?" And how does she make her voice do that?

And speaking of detergents, how 'bout the Lemon Fresh Dash (LFD) one with the secret police chase scene, where Rex Smith (I bet you were all wondering whatever happened to him!) runs through a forest and swamps all smelly and sweaty, finally arriving at his hut and noticing, with relief, that box of LFD literally shining in the hut, as it does from within the washing machine as well. The cops and tracking dogs arrive looking for the fugitive, now squeaky clean thanks to LFD, and of course they don't recognize him now and the scent is lost. D'Arcy Masius Benton & Bowles have a few more spots in this series of heros in bizarre situations being saved by LFD, so stay tuned!

Coke has abandoned its umbrella soft drink campaign and is now advertising each of its products with separate campaigns and more silly slogans, but I do commend them for the spot for Diet Coke showing a woman whose soda can falls out her window, she inches along a ledge to retrieve it, just as she has it in her grasp a tenant in another window spooks her so that she falls, screaming, right into the lounge chair next to an equally vapid-looking Yupster—male of course—and the rest is probably history. And Max Headroom fans, get ready for the new New Coke series with Max running, what else, for President..

And while we're talking of Aryan androids, there's a somewhat spooky new campaign out care of Saatchi & Saatchi DFS Compton for New York Life. The two spots each take place in the future—one features a skier found frozen in Switzerland and brought back to life; the other an astronaut returning from her 28-year trip to Saturn. In each, as the skier regains his physical perfection and

the space voyager is welcomed home, they're contacted by the descendant (daughter and son respectively, since NY Life finds it absolutely necessary to imply sexual attraction as well) of their former NY Life reps, who are now (naturally) NY Life reps themselves. "When they meet their agents, both the frozen corpse and the astronaut are pleased to find that the financial plans they made in 1988 are in place and working almost 30 years later," to quote AdWeek. Please. If this is the future—extremely telegenic rich young white people following in their parents' footsteps—I'd rather take my chances with Mad Max. I hope, between these spots and some of the Federal Express ones, Ridley Scott's getting some kind of commission, though, because his blue-lit high-tech atmospheres are de rigueur for many of 1988's crop of new ads.

Including, I can only assume, Pepsi's new ones, only one of which (the nauseating Michael Jackson one with the little kid trying on Jackson's clothing) I've seen so far. Look for a rather amusing-sounding one with Teri Garr (whom I admit to liking ever since she played Gary Seven's assistant on STAR TREK), and more featuring Michael J. Fox and "Less Than Zero's" Jami Gertz, whoever she is. These should all be out right around the Grammys.

And an honorable mention must go to Ford, of all companies, for their not-so-subtle dig at Chevy's "heartbeat" commercials, where a fellow is being told how much he could have saved with a Ford car and we hear his heart beating faster and faster until a single beep sounds, like an EKG machine registering death. It's about as sick as the "sand and ground clamshells" Folger's takeoff by Regina some months back, and I adore it.

And you want to talk vicious, get ready for some totally surreal presidential campaign spots. Too bad we won't get to see Haig's—"He's a lot more like you than you think." If he is, I'm a warmongering neofascist and I never want any of you cool people talking to me again. Haig was getting all set to point out, in a fun version of revisionist history, that the US has never been in a war (I guess he means overtly) during the terms of the eight generals who've served as President. Are we supposed to infer some bit of wisdom from this, like generals know how to keep their countries out of war? I mean, if that's the case they'd be pretty shitty generals, wouldn't they? In any case, Pierre—scuse me, Pete DuPont's fighting a different war...you guessed it. If you think the McGruff "Losers are users" anti-drug song is enough to make you reach for your largest bong, you ain't seen nuthin' till you glimpse DuPont's high school students sniffing cocaine lines arranged to spell the word "math" on a blackboard. I can hardly wait. How do they get the cocaine to stay up on the blackboard? DuPont, lest we forget, advocates mandatory drug tests for students before they get their driver's licenses...

On the print front, hope you're all yawned out over Sports Illustrated's swimsuit issue, but I was tickled by the Health & Tennis/Chicago Health Club's parody with Heather Locklear in a bathing suit, which reads, "Is the swimsuit really the issue?" and which SI initially refused to run (H&T got a lot of mileage out of that incident—"We Tried To Give Sports Illustrated \$76,774 To Take This Woman") but which relented after H&T threatened to sue for production costs. It's probably the only thing worth reading in that entire travesty of an SI issue...

And travesties of rock music are finally getting their due, thanks to Walter Sorg and Bob Pearson of R.O.C.K., Rockers Opposed to Cheap Knockoffs, whose purpose is to mock and jeer ad companies which usurp what was once music everybody could enjoy in the name of profit. They've so far issued "Certificates of Condemnation to Music Hell: the Land of Eternal Mantovani" to at least 10 offenders and on February 2 (the Day the Music Died) they held their first annual Ripoff of the Year awards, giving a booby prize to Red Lobster "for ripping off two great songs (the Platters' 'Great Pretender' and 'Twilight Time') in one rotten commercial" (not to put too fine a point on it, boys, but this is done with the Platters' permission and participation) and to Betty Crocker for using "La Bamba" in their Pop Secret popcorn commercial (mentioned in a previous column here because of the spiffy animation). Walter, who sent us a neat Charter Member certificate (which says, in part, "We abhor, eschew and generally don't like advertising that desecrates the memories of Rock 'n' Roll. We will not allow our music to be trashed by mindless advertisers.") and the membership oath (I'm sure non-deists can skip the part in the oath about God), didn't mention whether any past awards have been given to Time magazine for forever rendering me and countless others incapable of ever listening again to the Byrds' "Turn Turn Turn," but these things take time. AdWeek has given lots of nice publicity to R.O.C.K. which "generated our largest response to date—24 letters in the first two days, with a few more trickling in each day," and while it is nice to know that some ad people have enough of a sense of humor about this, I think it's the sort of thing that should be much more up IJ's alley, so I urge all enraged rock fans to send for the oath and other information to Walter and Bob at P.O. Box 227, Williamston, MI 48895 and tell 'em the Kid sentcha.

And if I may, I'd like to sign off for now with a quote from an article Barbara "Too Good To Write Back to IJ" Lippert did in AdWeek about the on-the-outs trend of "Reality" (wish someone'd tell that to AT&T, which still believes a whirling camera at a "power lunch" inspires intrigue more than dizziness). Adman Bill Heater, the criminal responsible for the icky "Real Life, Real Answers" John Hancock campaign, says, "Some people confuse honesty with the concept of honesty. The problem with reality in advertising is that it's fake." Couldn't have said it better myself...

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MASTERMATH EXPLAINS... The Three Aural Planes

by William G. Raley

Let me introduce myself. My name is William G. Raley, and I have a Master of Arts degree from the University of Alabama. It was only recently—during a New Year's Eve party—that the ultra-significance of this designation, in relation to the space-time continuum of conscious existence, became apparent.

There were eight people at the party: myself, three couples, and my good friend Susan. How was it that two people like myself and Susan could be twenty-nine years old and still single, totally incompatible with each other, and with the two and a half billion other individuals of our respective opposite sexes? Or at least the thousands we had met or fantasized about.

That night, I had a dream—a dream that Miami was going to beat Oklahoma 20-14 for the national championship; but that's not important now, because my bookie's phone was out of order. His face is out of order now, too, but a woman named Candy with a brick in her purse can explain that better than I. Her phone number's 867-5309; call after eleven, when rates are cheaper.

The other dream I had was from the Oriel Orator. He told me he had been on vacation since my graduation from college, and had only realized that night that I had a Master's. "Oo," as he likes to be called, had seen the crystal moonlight filter through the Southern California sky, through the double-pane glass of my oriel, and onto my still-white diploma. I started to explain that I had simply a bay window, not an oriel, but thought it best to see what he had to offer first. He sounded drunk—too much ambrosia, I guess.

Oo is not well known among deities, but that's primarily because he lived for years in the shadow of Don Knotts. You may not remember seeing Oo on "The Andy Griffith Show," but he was there, in every episode. Incidentally, millions of people pay homage to him every day, unknowingly. For example, a woman buying a red dress or black boots will coyly call out his name. For that matter, so will a man who sees a woman wearing a red dress or black boots. And if a woman buys both articles at once (or a male sees both at once), they are generally incomprehensible the rest of the day.

Also, —HELP, I'M BEING HELD PRISONER IN A SUBPLOT BY MASTERMATH! HE DOES TERRIBLE THINGS TO ME! HE— the original title to Pat Benatar's "The Ooh Ooh Song" was, you guessed it, "The Oo Oo Song." It was no coincidence that she won the California state lottery the very week it hit the charts.

Anyway, the Oriel Orator informed me there was a vacancy in the Cosmic Hall of Universal Deities (C.H.U.D.), and did I want to apply for the job. "Certainly," I said, provided he moved the San Andreas Fault to Tennessee. An interesting sidelight: The Richter scale was not invented by the scientist Charles Francis Richter, rather by his housecat, Panther, who died under mysterious circumstances. I was whisked away in a spaceship made entirely of granola bars, and powered by picante sauce.

We arrived on the planet Aughtron, which, before it was discovered desolate in one of my short stories, was a great commercial center, particularly in the production of floppy disks and B movies. C.H.U.D. headquarters was located in a massive gray building, resembling the Astrodome, but with cheaper parking.

There I took an exam, which consisted of a single question: What will be the most memorable quote of 1980's Earth? Without hesitation, I replied, "Martha Quinn is such a fox." There was then heard a plethora of coughing and gurgling sounds from the other deities present, which Oo later informed me signified applause.

Next, the Information Universal Database (I.U.D.) probe was implanted in a certain part of my body, which was very painful, considering the process was designed by a female. Anyway, I received —YOU'VE GOT TO HELP ME! MASTERMATH'S NOT HUMAN, I TELL YOU! ASK HIM WHAT THE INITIAL "G" IN HIS NAME STANDS FOR. IT STANDS FOR GARGOYLE! SOMEBODY STOP HIM, BEFORE HE DESTROYS US ALL! NO, NOT THE BACON GREASE AGAIN! GET AWAY FROM— all the information past MasterMaths had ascertained, and an application of a type of spray

paint, which offered protection from evil of all kinds, including new car commercials and TV record offers.

My mission was to explain to the people of Earth the fundamental mathematical principles of life as we know it. And of life as the San Fernando Valley knows it, which is vastly different, but somehow the same (ask any Valley girl, and she'll explain it to you, fer sure).

The first principle is that of the three aural planes, which basically define how compatible two people are, and covers relationships of both romance and friendship. This also applies to inanimate objects, and to hedgehogs, though no one knows why. Simply stated, the three planes are: (1) time; (2) location; and (3) sass.

The importance of the time plane should be obvious, except to people from Georgia. (In fact, they don't understand anything about planes, and think "747" refers to the state's collective I.Q.; this is an exaggeration, of course—the correct figure is 14.) I, for one, have experienced a particular difficulty in asking Renaissance women out for a date. For one thing, you can never get them to answer the phone. By the way, this idea adds new meaning to the term "bag of bones." Thus, there is a decided advantage to being born in the same century as your heart-throb or tennis partner, although having the exact same birthdate is seldom necessary (unless the idea of marrying your twin sister turns you on; see previous remark on Georgia).

Naturally, a tete-a-tete is best conducted by two people in the same room, and preferably in the same waterbed, although men have been known to experience many a pleasurable evening simply by calling 976-DOLL. It was rumoured once that Kiss and the Go-Go's were sending secret love messages to each other through MTV videos, but it turned out, in fact, that they were the same band. (Think about it—have you ever seen them on stage together?) Anyway, the point is that it's difficult to say "My place or yours?" with a straight face when you live in Houston and she's from the other side of Andromeda.

The last aural plane is also the least understood, even by me (just kidding). Call it sass, physical chemistry, or the degree to which you've entered a deep blue funk, the concept is the same. Are you willing to do whatever it takes to break out of the dull, dreary, confining, colourless psycho-social mould into which society has thrust you, or what? What I mean is, during the movie "Star Wars," were you brainwashed into rooting for Luke Skywalker and gang, just because they wore white clothes and had white teeth, or did you decide to be different, stand up in the theatre, and totally embarrass your date by cheering for the Dark Side? You get the picture.

It is critical to realize —I CAN'T TAKE IT ANY MORE! NO, NOT ANOTHER THREE STOOGES FILM FESTIVAL! HE PROMISED GREAT THINGS FOR ME IN THE BEGINNING. BUT YESTERDAY I OVERHEARD HIM SAY, "ONCE A FERRET, ALWAYS A FERRET!" GOODBYE, CRUEL WORLD!— that the three aural planes are not black and white. There is an area of twilight in between, deep as space and thin as a human hair. If you're a hedgehog, you'll have to find a human hair to understand that statement. Thus, the values associated with each aural plane are on a sliding scale, or in degrees if you will (like degrees Fahrenheit, only different; Fahrenheit, by the way, was Beowulf's younger brother). Also, the values are dynamic, meaning they can change, as when people grow older, or get tired of living in Michigan.

Finally, some examples: myself and Morgan Fairchild. Plane 1—she's a few years older than I; so far, so good. Plane 2—she lives in L.A. County, and I live in Orange County; not bad. Plane 3—here we come to a bit of an impasse; while through hard work, dedication, and a charming personality, she has become an international TV and movie star, I am not well known outside a ten-foot radius of my house, and tend to spend a lot of time reading books. Total Aural Index (AI) compatibility: about 75%.

Charles Manson and Edgar Allen Poe. Plane 1—about 100 years apart; fairly close, if you like talking to gravestones, which Manson might. Plane 2—fairly close again; there are many non-stops daily from California to the Baltimore area. Plane 3—excellent; while Manson's traits are well-documented, the things Poe did to owls, fireflies, and grand pianos are better left unsaid. Total AI: 80%.

Joan of Arc and a Klingon starship captain. Plane 1—during the 1400's, when Joan of Arc lived, the Klingon solar system was still a nebulous cloud of hydrogen, helium, and neon. Plane 2—billions and billions of years apart, too far even with the latest hyperspace warp drive. Plane 3—Zero. Total AI: 2%.

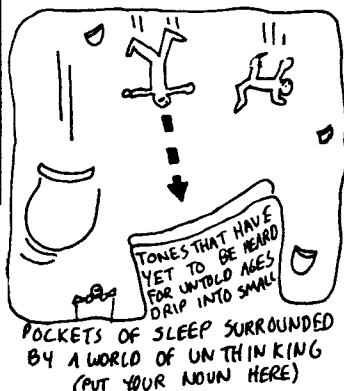
That said, we can now come to the bottom line, or how you can achieve fun and profit from the three aural planes in your own relationships. Specifically, there are three (obviously!) things you can do: (1) lie about your age (don't try this in Georgia; look up "shotgun wedding" in any dictionary to find out why); (2) move next door to him/her (of course, if they live in Beverly Hills, allow some time for this one); and (3) mimic exactly the actions of your intended companion (although it's probably not a good idea to dress like Victoria Principal if you're a man).

That's all for now. To get the full effect of today's lesson, but this magazine down for a few minutes, and put your mind at rest. That is, take a nap, play with your hair, or watch "Wheel of Fortune." I'll be back next issue, or thereabouts, when MasterMath Explains...The Topological Implications of the L.A. Freeway System. Until then, insure a snipe!

For The Fatherland Haig in '88

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ah well,
the
best
paid
plans...





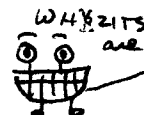
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Why are you here, then?

THE BALLAD OF MORDECHAI VANUNU
to the tune of "Wayfaring Stranger"

by Tuli Kupferberg
He worked ten years - Dimona's desert
To bring the desert to the Land
To make the Cedars burn to ashes
To let the Temple sink to sand.

He thought about stones in the Bible
He told about Bombs in the rock
Mossad caged him in Halevi's Eagle
And then they threw away the lock.

He dreamed about Adolf Eichmann
He who obeys is like the rest
Who saves one life, O Jew or Arab
Who saves one soul dwells with the Blest.

They called him mad, they called him venal
They called him traitor, apostate
But all he did was call "Rachmonos"
All he did: defy the State.

We need more Jews like Mort Vanunu
We need more Arabs search their heart
O people will you be mere downslaves?
Or workers will you be upstarts!

We need more brothers like Hai Vanunu
We need more sisters search their heart
O Workers will you be mere downslaves?
Or people will you be upstarts!

painted on. The dialogue is also quite good, with enough humor and pathos to satisfy anyone, but the plot....? What the hell is it??? I couldn't figure out in the first issue if the story was supposed to take place during, before or after WWII. There are so many factions double-crossing each other that it is almost impossible to figure out for whom you are supposed to be rooting. Since BLACKHAWK will be appearing in the weekly ACTION COMICS (which will begin shortly with #601), we can only assume that not everyone (unlike poor old Stan) will be needlessly killed off by the end of the series. Of course, seeing what Chaykin did with the SHADOW, you really can't tell!

One more bit of comics news before we wrap this sucker up: ARCHIE Comics will be publishing a three-issue adaptation of the five-part TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES television series. Eastman & Laird will be writing (which one or both was not made clear in the press release), with art by Michael Dooney, who does the Mirage comic GIZMO. The book will also be in color and is supposed to receive newsstand distribution as well as direct market. Since the TV show played around with the continuity and origins a bit, it will be interesting to see how it is handled in the book. Well, we can only wait and see!

That's it for now. Next time around I hope to have those eagerly-awaited CBG award results. WOW!!

Be Notary Sojoc

Well, not as much news as last time, so let me just mention a few things:

Old pal J.P. Morgan has a new FISSION CHICKEN story in CRITTERS #23. This is a Christmas story, but is still worth picking up. In the same issue is a flexidisk with two songs, one by Ty Templeton & TEDDY PAYNE AND THE BLUEBEARS, the other by Alan Moore & THE SINISTER DUCKS. This issue is, naturally, more expensive than the usual price, at \$3.95 U.S./\$5.95 Can. There are also stories by Mark Armstrong, Stan Sakai (USAGI YOJIMBO), a "GNULLF" story from Freddy Milton and a lot more. Well worth the extra bucks. Recommended.

Had a couple other things sent in for review, so let's take care of those right off the bat: HI-FI SCI-FI is a freebie from Tony Renner (2340 S. 39th St., Apt. C, St. Louis, MO 63110). Some of you may remember him as part of the duo that brought us JET LAG. HI-FI had been on hiatus for a while, but it's back now and still quite good. It carries reviews of comics, all done by Renner, and as a monthly is much more up to date than the stuff I carry here (much of which, unfortunately, usually consists of back issues by the time you hear about them), so it should keep you current. By the way, I find myself in agreement with most of the reviews (at least where we've read the same stuff), so if you listen to me at all, try it one more time and write for a sample ish.

THE HEDONIST (\$1.75, Mongos View Ltd., 3232 185th St., Torrance, CA 90504) - I have #3 on hand, and writer/artist Morgan Lloyd reports that #s 1 and 2 are also available. Since this is the first issue I've seen, I don't know what the first two issues are like, but I imagine that they are the same format (20 pgs. B&W). Everything here is by Morgan and consists of a variety of comic strips and one-page bits that cover the gamut from political satire to social commentary with a little bit of comics humor thrown in (eg., the FAT MAN story). One of my faves is where a couple is watching TV and Kate Hepburn comes on to plug her new album, "Kate Hepburn Sings Her Favorite TV Show Theme Songs." A nice change from the superhero/four-color ghetto in which I find myself too often mired. Recommended.

Well, time to get down to the more usual type of stuff. So let's start out with one of the more widely awaited books on the stands: ACTION COMICS #600 (\$2.50 U.S./\$3.50 Can.) - We have here a mixed bag of material from a number of artists, all written or plotted by John Byrne (two stories are scripted by Roger Stern). The major story, in which SUPERMAN finally gets together with WONDER WOMAN (after a buildup of several months in both their comics titles), is the least effective of the five separate but inter-related stories. As usual, since Byrne took over the Man of Steel the supporting characters are far more interesting than ol' Supes himself. The JIMMY OLSEN and LOIS LANE stories are tributes to the sort of thing that used to appear in their own titles, back in the pre-CRISIS days. The LEX LUTHOR story once again demonstrates that the villain is more interesting than the hero, and the final story in which a sick and hallucinating Supes fights MAN-BAT stands out. Maybe it's the art by Mike Mignola, but Byrne's writing takes on a Moore-ish tinge and he does it quite well. The book actually hints at more plotlines to come than resolves any, but the Supes/WW resolution is a copout. After a buildup of these past months the entire thing turns into a clichéd slug-fest between the two and a one-page wind-up in which the two acknowledge that they can only be friends. BAARF!

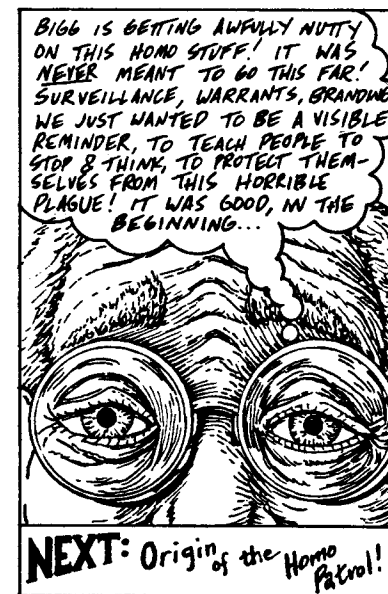
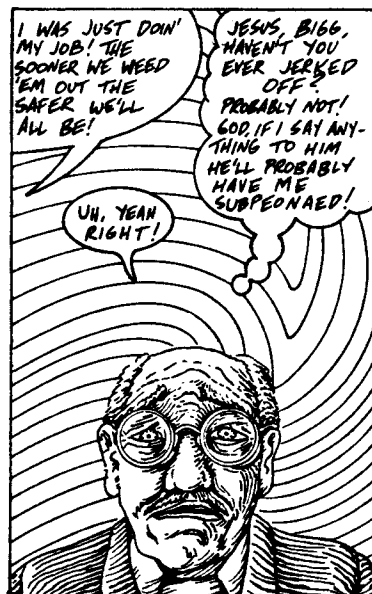
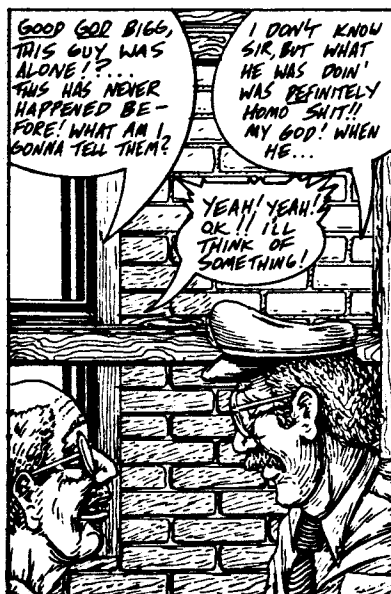
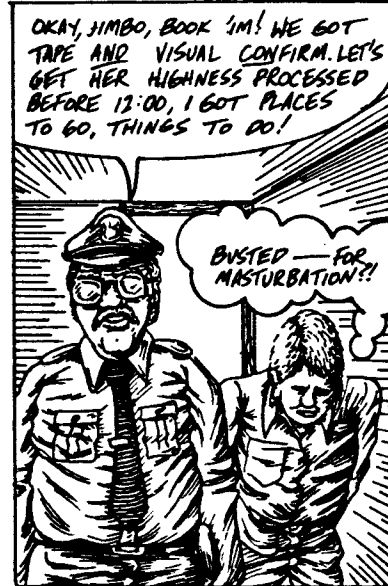
WASTELAND (DC Comics, \$1.75 U.S./\$2.50 Can.) - I'm positive that I've recommended this book before (but I'm not about to pick through boxes of stuff to find out), but if I haven't I owe you an apology. WASTELAND is probably one of the best comics coming out on a regular basis, especially from the "Big Two." Del Close and John Ostrander are taking the concept of "horror comics" to a place they've never been before. Without resorting to the over-used "EC style" of clichéd monster with twist ending, and with few, if any, real monsters in sight, they truly scare you and cause that uneasy feeling that the best TWILIGHT ZONE stories used to. You find yourself putting the book down after each story and pausing for breath (or a quick drink) before going on to the next. The artwork by George Freeman, David Lloyd, William Messner-Loebs (an excellent writer in his own right) and Donald Simpson (who is reportedly working on a MEGATON MAN mini-series for release later this year) has that special quality which brings it beyond the usual material to which we have all grown all too accustomed in comics. Together the writing and art make WASTELAND a must-buy. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED!!!

BLACKHAWK (DC Comics, \$2.95 U.S./\$4.00 Can.) - If anybody out there can explain to me exactly what is happening in this book, I'd really appreciate a call! The art is the usual Chaykin style, and is a sight to behold. All the women are beautiful, and wear as little as possible, or wear what they have as if it were

W.W.III ?
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Bobbies Put On Happy Face

LONDON (YU) — Scotland Yard reported that a set of swings, a teeter-totter and a clothes-line (with clothes) will be installed next week. Officials feel the Yard looks rundown and needs to become more approachable. They hope these latest acquisitions will, as one source put it, "make the ordinary joe a little less apprehensive about what it is we're supposed to be doing here."

Dolphins Lead Fools To Safety

REVILLAGIGEDO, Mex. (YU) — A group of former Miami Dolphins kept watch over three Hispanic jesters thrown from a cruise vessel 350 miles off the Mexican coast into mugger-infested waters.

One of the clowns, Jesus Christ, said he and his partners were tossed overboard by drunken American revellers who apparently did not like their jokes.

Christ said the Dolphins appeared and guided his companions to a lightship through waters where they had seen several black youths attacking elderly white swimmers the day before. Some of the Dolphins stayed with the fools at a local hotel.

"They gave us a feeling of security," he said.

Christ said the former Dolphins included Larry Csonka, Jim Kiick, and Bob Griese.

Earlier reports that Mercury Morris also assisted in the rescue were dismissed as a case of mistaken identity. Morris, in prison on unrelated charges, refused comment on the incident.

The Pope Farts

ROME (YU) — Despite last week's denials that Pope John Paul II passed wind during Nancy Reagan's secret audience, the papal physician insists the Holy Father does indeed fart and he is, in fact, infallible. YU News Service

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Charging By Induction

by George Singleton

The audience members stare ahead, tired, relieved that another day of conceptual art has passed without police intervention. Everyone inside The Blue Ballroom smiles, showing no teeth. Harold "Drole" Dabbs, renegade comedian, walks to his microphone and says:

"I met a woman here in Memphis today and she told me her G spot was in her index finger. She shook my hand for fifteen minutes. She told me that she worked for Western Union, running one of those Morse code machines. She reads books in Braille for the mere pleasure of it. Her hobby is playing the piano, but she can't get past the Minute Waltz without falling off her stool in ecstasy."

Dabbs shuffles to the other end of the stage, as is his habit. With no outward emotion he says, "Once I had a girlfriend who wore dentures. One night I came home drink and mistook her Efferdent tablets for Alka-Seltzer. An hour later I threw up the largest coffee, cherry and tobacco stain known to mankind..."

"Another ex-girlfriend was really quiet. She was a cheerleader for her college golf team. To this day I can hear her whispering, 'Kick 'em in the head; kick 'em in the butt. Putt! Putt! Putt, team, putt!'"

"I have an apartment and I asked the landlord to put a new lock on the door that would take a key with no teeth. That way, if I should ever lose my key, the local hardware store will have a replacement..."

"If everyone would wrap that pink insulation on the outside of their houses, it would be a cool, comfortable 72 degrees Fahrenheit year-round..."

"I had solar panels installed in my floorboard so I can utilize the energy that emanates from the depths of hell..."

"In my bedroom I've mounted two ceiling fans to the wall above my bed. I turn them on full-blast when I'm having sex and ask the woman, 'Feels like an airplane just crashed through the room; doesn't it?'"

"I'll admit that I'm not the best of boyfriends. I watch a lot of baseball games, and when the announcer says, 'If you're scoring at home, that play went six, four, three,' I get up out of bed and write it down..."

"I have a pair of twenty-year-old penny loafers that fit like a glove. I'm on a constant search for gloves that fit like penny loafers..."

"I read in the paper the other day that another one of those serial killers is on the loose. They found three of his victims last weekend, face down in their Cheerios..."

"Hunting animals with a gun is a cowardly act. I like to trap animals without hurting them. My favorite prey is the blue-haired old lady. I use Ocean Spray congealed cranberry sauce for bait..."

"Sometimes I walk into public restrooms and notice that the sink is shy. So I pee on the faucet and get the water started..."

"I really care about a woman having an orgasm during sex. That's why I had a French tickler surgically implanted..."

"Once I taught college English but I got fired for making the freshman girls come up to the front of the room and touch my dangling modifier..."

"Last week I got a tattoo of a chameleon on my left bicep. It wasn't on there for five minutes, though, when it camouflaged itself and I ain't seen it since..."

Hugo Mossman sits at a table in the back of the bar, feet propped on an empty chair. He watches the comedian slump from one side of the stage to the other, one joke to the east, one to the west. Mossman lights an Old Gold, exhales straight to the ceiling. Without looking directly, he counts at least another six conceptual artists in the audience, wonders why so many of them have gathered in Memphis.

Hugo considers retiring from the business. At a Bi-Lo on Getwell Road today, Mothers Opposing Profanity almost caught him. A year ago Mossman received a large NEA grant. He spent half of the money on 2" x 3" bumper stickers, the word POON written on each one in 48 point Helvetica print. Since the shipment came in, the artist has travelled across the southeast, pasting his bumper sticker on jars of Tang, forever watchful of the law, store managers, and the radically conservative members of M.O.P. The women cornered Hugo once in a Winston-Salem Ramada Inn, armed with rope, syringes, and a scalpel. Fortunately he remembered some maneuvers from a PKA kick-boxing program on cable TV, and escaped. He ran until Memphis.

"This guy's pretty funny," says the barmaid.

"Yes, he is."

"Would you like another Pabst?"

"Yeah, please." The woman reveals both fear and intelligence in her green eyes. Hugo realizes as she leaves that his barmaid, too, is an artist, a fugitive stencilist named Charlotte Stetter.

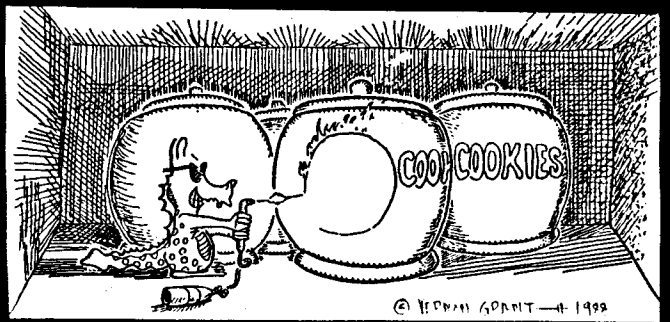
"This one's on the house," she says, returning, pouring cigarette butts onto a napkin.

"Are you, by any chance, Charlotte?"

"Um." She starts to turn away.

"No, no! I'm not a cop or anything. My name's Hugo Mossman and I—"

22 Charlotte turns back quickly, blond hair swaying en masse,



flash of white teeth. "I know of your work, Hugo."

Hugo nods, says, "And I know yours. Didn't you once stencil-art WILBUR and ORVILLE on a couple of 747s? And FORKED-TONGUED COWBOY on that tenement building before the president spoke about renovation?"

"That was my stuff, yeah."

"So why Memphis? I mean, why are all these people I've read about in the magazines—well, the underground magazines—here at this bar?"

"Don't know. I'm here for the same reasons as you, pal. Kinda. I disrupted one of the midget-polo-on-Shetlands matches down in South Carolina by hiding four hundred transistor radios along the grounds and shaking a baby rattle into a Mr. Microphone. It sounded like rattlesnakes were all over the polo field, and the Shetlands started bucking their mounts off. The promoter of the event got ticked off, but I don't think he's after me. But the damn ASPCA wants to give me some kind of award for preventing cruelty towards animals—those midget riders whip the hell out of their mounts. And I just don't want the recognition, you know..."

"I know. Some publisher for a dirty magazine wants to make me Young Man of the Year."

Drole Dabbs stalks, either having forgotten his next joke, or letting the audience catch up to his metaphysical level. People raise their hands sporadically, calling for new drinks. No one allows for eyes to stray from the stage, though. Finally, stage left, the comedian stops, turns to the front table and says:

"Whenever the glands in my neck swell up, I brush my teeth with Preparation H. Once I did it for a whole week and lost my tonsils. It saved me a lot of money..."

"Actually I haven't had a cold in twelve years. I marinate all of my meals in Nyquil..."

"A couple...hours...ago I had a vasectomy. The doctor told me not to do any strenuous exercise of my testicles would inflate to the size of baseballs. When I get out of here I plan to do some power-lifting..."

"I don't think any of you out there is this young, but if you're in high school and want to impress your date with what a big spender you are, take her to a double-feature at the drive-in movie. In a taxi..."

"The Meese Commission on pornography is really upset with Charlton Heston. They found out that he's doing a sequel to Ben Hur. It's called Ben Hur Over..."

"Once I did this stage thing backwards. Instead of speaking into the mike and having my voice come over the loudspeakers, I pointed the microphone towards the audience and I spoke into the speakers. It was a breathtaking experience..."

"Some time in the near future I plan to have my heart taken out and replaced with the heart of a gerbil. It should save me a lot of money on amphetamines..."

"I have a dyslexic friend who can't go into bars anymore 'cause he gets kicked out for spitting in the TIPS jar. In the first grade he read about Dick, Jane, and Tops their God. But he's done okay for himself; he got a job down at Cape Kennedy. Maybe you've heard his voice: 'Ten, nine, eight, seven'..."

"Some of my rich yuppie friends are always bragging about their front wheel drive cars in the snow. I don't need front wheel drive in the winter. I go in reverse..."

"Yesterday I saw two blind men with their seeing eye dogs, standing at a street corner. The two dogs started mating, jerking their masters all over the place. I tiptoed up to the scene and said, 'Flashing yellow light'..."

"I certainly hope some athlete from the Ivory Coast wins a gold medal in the 1988 Olympics. That country has a real snappy national anthem..."

"Never let your child become a philosophy major. Sometimes, to this day, I get the physical world and the mental world confused. Last week I thought I had this great idea. But it ended up just being a cramp in my leg..."

"Don't you wish someone would manufacture a Roman candle with the same circumference as those money cylinders at drive-in banks' pneumatic tubes? 'I'd like to make a deposit, please. And take all of it'..."

Drole Dabbs pantomimes a bank teller's response to fireballs entering her bouffant, closing his act. A dozen conceptual artists, obviously out of ideas, approach the stage. Hugo Mossman puts his feet on the floor and pulls out a chair for Charlotte Stetter. They embrace, knowing that an odd centripetal infantry has congregated in Memphis for a specific reason. And they smile, showing no teeth.

THE TRUTH ABOUT ROCK MUSIC AND OUR CHILDREN

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The following article by Dr. Ellsworth T. Fuquod, III, Ph.D., M.D., D.O., L.P.A., A.S.S., D.P.M., OB./GYN., D.V.M., is reprinted with permission from the monthly publication of the PMRC, The Sins of Rock 'N' Roll.)

PART ONE: HOW CHILDREN GET INVOLVED WITH ROCK MUSIC

Most children who get involved with rock music come into contact with it many, many times before they start experimenting. They are usually initiated by friends, classmates, even older brothers and sisters. Most will resist for a while, but the majority will give in when more pressure is applied.

In most cases, the experience isn't pleasant. They don't like the reverberating music in the least. But, because of peer pressure, they continue to listen. Eventually, most of them will "decide" they do like it.

In the beginning, children will listen to rock music only when it's convenient and when they're around other children listening to it. They can "take it or leave it", and there appear to be few, if any, ill effects.

A great many children never go beyond this type of "casual" listening stage, which is not unhealthy, provided the child does not progress.

Many other children, however, graduate to rock music addiction in a short time. Instead of waiting for their friends to offer, they actively seek out and listen to rock music.

Rock music gives them an illusionary "escape" from their "problems". With repeated listening, kids begin to grow more and more relaxed and comfortable with it.

Studies show that the music addiction creeps up slowly, and children develop a marked tolerance for it. Each time they listen, they need just a few more songs to satisfy their craving. Eventually, of course, they graduate to hard rock music and from there it's only a short step across the line into total addiction: hard rock music, drugs, sex and satanic worship--and, eventually, murder and/or suicide.

Studies indicate that only 79 in 10,000 children will not advance into total degeneracy with repeated listening to hard rock music.

Of the addicts, over 73% are known to participate in animalistic sex on a frequent basis (including many perverted sexual acts which decorum prevents detailing upon in this forum). More than 54% are involved with drugs on a regular basis--a direct result of hard rock addiction. And a startling 41.37% are deeply involved with satanic worship. Experts believe that over two thirds of the hardcore addicts will go on to become homicidal maniacs and murder at least four people before they are caught.

PART TWO: HOW TO TELL IF YOUR CHILD IS ADDICTED

It's important to recognize the signs of rock music addiction. If you find rock music albums in your child's bedroom, or catch your child listening to the rock music station on his radio, of course, it's obvious that he is at least listening on a casual basis, which should indicate to you that he is quite probably addicted.

If you answer yes to any of the following questions, your child is definitely on his way to addiction--and likely already there:

- 1 Are you suddenly having discipline problems with your child?
- 1 Is your child spending more & more time alone in his bedroom, away from you and the family?
- 1 Has your child become dirty, sloppy, unkempt?
- 1 Alternately, has your child become obsessed with cleanliness?
- 1 Has your child started coming home late? Avoiding deadlines and curfews?
- 1 Is your child borrowing money?
- 1 Is your child losing weight? Does he appear pale, drawn?
- 1 Conversely, has he begun gaining weight, and showing signs of increased vigor and stamina?
- 1 Are his eyes usually dilated?
- 1 Has your child begun wearing blue jeans constantly, and affecting rock musician appearances? (For instance, has he begun wearing a sweat band? T-shirts? Slogan Buttons?)
- 1 Has your child developed the habit of rolling his eyes and/or grimacing whenever you attempt to discuss rock music addiction with him?
- 1 Have you overheard him discussing rock music groups or songs with his friends?
- 1 Has he begun attending (or wanting to attend) rock music concerts?
- 1 Have you found him with sexually oriented books, photos or magazines? (Does he hide them under his bed?)
- 1 Has your male child expressed a desire to have (or worse, has he already had) his ear pierced? (Especially the left ear.)
- 1 Has your female child begun taking the pill? (NOTE: Many girls hide them in their underwear drawers, their purses, or under their mattress.)
- 1 Has your male child bought condoms? (Check his wallet and his car glove box.)
- 1 Has your child begun drawing or doodling satanic symbols? (NOTE: Many of these symbols are quite difficult to distinguish, but anything with moons, stars, angles, crosses, circles, squares, triangles or rectangles is definitely satanic.)

- 1 Has your child begun hanging posters in his bedroom?
- 1 Is your child's favorite color black or red? (Both are satanic colors.)
- 1 Has your child memorized the telephone number of the local rock station? (NOTE: Many parents report that their children, when questioned about this, will swear that they only memorized the number because of the radio station's "contests" but don't be fooled!)
- 1 Has your child's school work suffered? Are his grades dropping?
- 1 Alternately, have his grades improved drastically? (NOTE: Many parents ignore this obvious sign of a pact with satan.)
- 1 Has your child refused to get a part-time job?
- 1 Or, does he blame his failure to secure employment on the lame fact that he has "no experience"?

A "yes" answer to any of these questions should indicate cause for concern--the potential for addiction is clearly existent. With addiction, of course, comes "hard-core" addiction and all its inherent dangers.

If you answered "yes" to more than one of these questions, be assured that your child has almost certainly fallen prey to this pernicious menace.

Explain to your child that you are worried. Tell him the specific things that are bothering you. Directly ask the child if he is addicted.

A "no" answer from your child is almost always indicative of addiction. Studies show that nine out of ten addicts will deny their addiction. Seven out of ten will even go so far as to insist that there is "no such thing" as rock music addiction.

Make it clear to your child that you will not tolerate him becoming a hard-core addict and that there will be no mercy if he doesn't shape up immediately.

If you can afford to, wire your child's room for two-way communication. Use the "in" circuit to pipe in safe music, such as Barry Mannilow tunes. Use the "out" circuit to listen in on his conversations with friends.

Many parents ignore these warning signals, telling themselves that rock music addiction isn't all that serious, or that the child will "grow out of it" on his own.

But rock music addiction is a problem that typically only becomes worse. The sooner it is faced and cured, the better for everyone involved.

PART THREE: HOW TO CURE ADDICTION

Unfortunately, there is no guaranteed cure for rock music addiction. Many methods that work for some kids will not work for all children.

However, if the addiction is caught in the early stages (for instance, before the child actually begins satanic sacrifices, or gets a mohawk haircut and murders someone in the throes of rock music possession), the following suggestions may be of help:

- 1 Remove all radios, stereos, etc. from the child's room and put all other such items in the household under lock and key.
- 1 Search the child's room and remove all rock music albums; satanic books; posters (rock and satanic); short stories that deal with horror, science fiction, fantasy, etc.; magazines mentioning rock music or any of the topics listed with short stories; and so forth from the child's possession.
- 1 Throw out all blue jeans, t-shirts, and offensive clothing the child has acquired. Brogans, navy blue or brown trousers (not black, which is a satanic color), and short sleeved white dress shirts with a navy or brown tie (preferably bow-tie) are what the male child should wear. Your female child should be wearing only white blouses (buttoned to the neck), blue or green plaid skirts (pleated, if the child is not too obese), penny loafers or saddle oxfords and white knee socks. This type of clothing will prevent the child from being "accepted" by the addicts at school, thereby preventing them from further corruption of your child.
- 1 Monitor your child's activities closely--even television watching. M-TV, Friday Night Videos, Saturday Night Live, even television commercials and talk shows such as David Letterman (and sadly, even Johnny Carson) expose your child to rock music. It may be best to totally restrict your child from the television entirely until his addiction is cured completely.
- 1 Be especially wary of books, too. You may find the child is attempting to disassociate himself from reality (thereby refusing to accept his addiction and participate in his cure) with escapist literature. School textbooks are the only safe, acceptable form of reading material for addicted children.
- 1 Finally, be prepared to force your child to adhere to these rules. He may protest (many children even go so far as to run away from home) and insist that you are over-reacting, but YOU are the child's parent and you are therefore entitled to take any action deemed necessary to save him from this tragic demise. Some children protest and demand a "right" to listen to the music of their choice, the obvious refutation for which is: no one under the age of 21 has any rights to anything unless their parents see fit to let them have them.

NOTE: many parents express concern over the drastic nature of these steps--be aware that there is no evidence that "cold-turkey" withdrawal from rock music addiction will harm your child in any important way. He may become somewhat sullen and withdrawn, but this will only serve to make him more manageable.

CONCLUSION: ONE WAY TO HELP

Although it will never be possible to wipe out rock music en-

tirely in this nation, we can work together to keep our teens safe.

A major breakthrough in this battle would be the labelling of rock music albums so that parents would be alerted to any albums containing satanic, drug-related, offensive/vulgar or sexually oriented lyrics. There are even many albums available which contain all four of these subjects, such as those by THE DEAD KEN-NEDY'S (the very name suggests offensive, vulgar music), FRANK ZAPPA (who gave his own children obscene sounding names), THE FUGS (who have slandered virtually everything and everyone our great nation stands for), THE GRATEFUL DEAD (who's name inspires troubled teens to suicide), THE ROLLING STONES (who admitted to satanism), and DEF LEPPARD (who are so mired in their mindless, drug-induced rituals that they can no longer spell.)

We need your help in this, and other efforts currently underway to save our teens from this unspeakable disease. Please join us!

- Kathy Stadalsky

PADRE PIO AND THE KIRKSVILLE STIGMATA

PART ONE by Joseph J. Benevento

There's just no getting around it—once a Catholic, always a Catholic. I know because even though I haven't gone to church regularly in over seven years, I'm still afflicted by my Catholic upbringing. Whenever I watch college sports on TV, I inevitably find myself rooting for Notre Dame or St. John's or De Paul. Whenever I happen to say the name "Jesus Christ," I have to catch myself to keep from bowing my head. And I still feel a strange mix of delight and guilt whenever I exchange nun horror stories with other fallen angels. Recently, my Catholicism has started to affect my life in a much more serious way. I'm actually beginning to believe that I am being watched over by a saint, or at least by an almost-saint. His presence in my life has me awfully confused. I've even started to go back to church again. To be honest, I'm afraid that a return to faith may not be far behind—that same old faith in things I can't understand or prove.

When I first completed by Ph.D. in Comparative Literature at the University of Michigan, I wasn't sure that I'd find a job at all, so a tenure-track position teaching drama and World Literature at Northeast Missouri State seemed almost too good to be believed. But once I actually was irrevocably in Kirksville, in the 100° heat and manure-laced dust of a small town, my position, both specifically and generally, seemed a little less than ideal. My wife, Maria, was only going to be with me for a week to help me settle in, before returning to cooler, sweeter Michigan to finish her degree in plant genetics. I was going to be alone, for the first time in my life, and in Kirksville, Missouri, of all places. My misery seemed assured the day that Maria took the Amtrak out of nearby La Plata and headed back to her lab in Ann Arbor. The way the train seemed to swallow her whole and whisk her away before she even had a chance to get to a window to wave goodbye seemed to me a sure sign of ominous and lonely things to come.

After all the years of graduate school, the reward of being left alone in Kirksville seemed like a bad joke. And the air conditioner in my apartment was a joke too. Since it only cooled off the living room, that became the room where I spent most of my time; sometimes I would virtually kneel before that machine, worshipping its coolness that seemed like life itself. But that one cool room made all the others seem that much hotter, and I soon discovered that most of the apartment's windows either would not open or, once opened, would not easily close again. My bedroom seemed more like a boiler room. I even tried sleeping in the living room one night, but the couch was too small, and the carpet close up had the unmistakable aroma of cat urine, in spite of the vigorous no-pets clause in my lease.

Being alone would probably not be all that traumatic to the average thirty year old, but to me it was a totally new experience. I grew up in Queens in a large Italian family; I lived in the same house for the first twenty-two years of my life. I always shared "my" room with at least one brother, and our home was always crowded with relatives and friends; being alone was next to impossible. I didn't even go away to college; I commuted by subway every morning to NYU. Three months after graduation Maria and I were married and we soon moved to Wisconsin to start graduate school. After three years in Wisconsin and five in Michigan, I was ready for my first full-time job. But there was no way that I could have asked Maria to postpone completion of her Ph.D. just to come to Kirksville and sweat, so being alone had been the only logical alternative. It's not like I'm helpless; I know how to

cook, wash clothes, and do most of the other essentials. It's just that I had almost never been in an empty apartment for too long before; I had never had a bedroom to myself; I had never spent an entire weekend not saying a word to another living soul.

The first few weeks after Maria's departure were particularly miserable. I'd been in Michigan for so long that I'd forgotten what it was like to be the new kid in town, and I'd also forgotten how bad I was at it. I expected that the people in my department would gradually work me into the place by inviting me out to lunch or dinner, or at least for a drink after classes. But nothing happened. People were cordial enough, but they were not going out of their ways to make me feel at home. All of my friends who had obtained jobs before me had warned that I wouldn't have time for all the things that I'd be expected to do, both professionally and socially. Instead, the school work seemed manageable and the social life non-existent, so I had plenty of time to go back to my apartment to sweat and fret and feel generally awful.

One evening while I was unpacking a few small boxes that had been temporarily shelved in the bedroom closet, I found a picture of Padre Pio, set in a green, round, crudely-knitted, wool-over-cardboard frame. I knew immediately that it was the same picture that I had framed as a Cub Scout (the task having been our den mother's, my mother's idea of a suitable crafts assignment). My mother had kept both picture and frame all these years, and during our most recent visit back to New York, she had wanted me to take it back as a keepsake. I had made some sacreligious remark and declined, but Maria, good Catholic still, had taken it in her suitcase. It was Maria then, I guessed, who had sneaked the old keepsake into the box that I was unpacking. For some reason, whether as a private joke or just to have something familiar nearby, I took the picture and propped it up on my dresser, next to my other knick-knacks. Padre Pio's priestly garb, his grey beard and his beatific, hypnotic eyes had always reminded me of what a benevolent Rasputin might have looked like, and even his familiar face seemed better than none.

Most people probably don't even know who Padre Pio is, but in my family he has always been a household name. Padre Pio was an Italian priest noted for his holiness and for a variety of alleged miracles. He was still alive throughout most of my childhood, and my mother's aunt, Agostina Perazzo, our only living relative in Italy, was one of his parishioners. One of Padre Pio's reputed powers was faith-healing, but he was also known for his ability to be in two places at one time; he was a lot more serious than any dime-a-dozen American TV healer. No clearer proof of his elite status was his periodic reception of the stigmata. The dictionary defines "stigmata" as, "Marks or sores corresponding to and resembling the crucifixion wounds of Jesus, sometimes occurring during religious ecstasy or hysteria." Of course, to a devout Catholic such a definition would seem especially godless. Good Catholics know what only the purest of saints, men like Saint Francis of Assisi, have been known to merit the stigmata. Padre Pio's blessing was positive proof that he was a saint-to-be.

As a child I mirrored my mother's devotion to the church, and particularly to Padre Pio. My mother had a saint for every occasion—St. Anthony could help us find lost items, St. Jude could help solve hopeless cases, and St. Lucy postponed my having to wear glasses for two years. Padre Pio, though, was special to us both because he was a saint that we had virtually direct contact with on earth. My mother's aunt would send us pictures and mementoes, and she went even further. Knowing that Padre Pio would be a saint someday, she started sending us future relics, items she somehow managed to garner through a combination of piousness and ingenuity. My mother saved those relics, but with no intention to profit by them; in fact, she would give them away to anybody who was seriously ill and Catholic in an Italian enough kind of way to believe that they could help. More than one miraculous recovery was attributed to some relic of Padre Pio. When the holy man died and his beatification process began, my mother felt even luckier to have been remembered by her aunt. Aunt Tina died a few years later, leaving us with no direct link to the Padre Pio campaign for sainthood, which still goes on to this day.

Probably the biggest disappointment of my mother's adult life was when I turned away from my early devotion to the church and decided not to go on to the major seminary. My brothers and sisters, though, were a lot happier about my decision; all of my righteousness and hypocrisy had made for a rather boring and annoying individual. I remember having had such a reputation for holiness that my friends would always take my word on close calls in stickball because, "Frankie wouldn't life," and I remember taking advantage of that reputation on lots of close calls that should have gone the other way. I remember being smugly proud of myself because I never cursed, in part because I thought my parents never cursed (it wasn't until hears later that I figured out that they had been cursing in Italian all of that time). I remember drawing praise from the pious for practicing absolute between-meal abstinence during Lent, while only I knew that I hoped that the combination of my martyr-like sacrifice and no potato chips or chocolate for over a month might induce both God and nature into dissipating my acne.

Eventually, though, as I grew older and went on to college, I left most of my religious past behind, including Padre Pio. In fact, instead of praying to him I would deride my mother for her continued devotion, and make fun of the relics that she kept in little plastic containers in her jewelry box. And when I left home for Wisconsin, I soon stopped even going to church; I attempted to leave my past behind. And, until quite recently, it had been a pretty fair attempt at that.

(Concluded next issue)

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TU News Service



ROOM SERVICE BLUES by Mike Gunderloy

(being another chapter of the somewhat confused autobiography of Pope Sicle I, to be published someday under the title of HOW I GOT THERE FROM HERE, aka Fear and Loathing in Bakersfield. Any resemblance to actual history means you've wandered into the wrong universe.)

Things came back into focus slowly, like a fade in a B movie. I was on my back on something hard that cramped me into a cold and uncomfortable mass of bruises. A silvery bar ran across my vision, draped with some horrid pink plastic thing. The cold water that had brought me back to consciousness continued to drip on my head. I grabbed the shower curtain and struggled to a sitting position as a cake of scented soap swam into my vision. I was in a Holiday Inn.

Or rather, I realized as I threw up in the toilet, in what used to be a Holiday Inn, for this one had been taken over as a National Service processing center, and though the water falling on my head had been cold, that in which my ass was was decidedly hot. There were no towels left in the bathroom, so I cleaned up as best I could with the shower curtain, trying to avoid the nasty welt on the back of my head. I dimly remembered being truncheoned by some grinning NatServ clown at a checkpoint we hadn't seen in time, and falling out of the van as Herb gunned it through the roadblock.

As if that weren't suspicious enough, Albert Cahill's ID of course didn't check out with the NCC computer (of course not; I printed it myself) and so I was immediately "arrested" (a more realistic term might be "press-ganged") and transported to the nearest camp. Or so I surmised; they hadn't bothered to awaken me for any of these niceties. At least the rest of my spare ID was still in the van; even if I never saw it again, Herb could make good use of it. As for me, I didn't even know whether this was Cleveland or Cincinnati or what; all these Holiday Inns look alike to me.

Cupping my hands under the faucet for a drink of water, I instead got a trickle of rusty brown sludge; apparently no one had been maintaining the plumbing around here. Well, that was no surprise, but it did start my little baby brain to working. I stoppered the sink and ran it good and full of rusty sludge, and left it to settle out as I walked into the room proper.

As I expected, I was sharing quarters with several other unfortunates—there were two guys playing cards and betting matches with one another. They looked like the dregs of the city—then again, dripping wet and wearing old jeans and a T-shirt, I was none too beautiful myself.

"Join the game, man," asked the larger of the two, a sullen character with a full bushy beard.

"No thanks," was my reply. "What's the story here?"

They both chuckled. "Well, my man," started the skinny guy with the buck teeth, "you're in a National Service Youth Processing Center." He pronounced each syllable with great care. "The story is that we stay here until we either kiss enough ass to be rehabilitated and sent to a cushy spot on one of the road gangs around here, or we don't kiss enough ass and we get sent to a road gang in near one of the war zones. Meanwhile, until the transport shows up to get us out of this camp, we got two choices: stay in our cells, I mean rooms, or else go out to the lobby of this dive where they're showing training films. Take my advice, the card game beats the hell out of the films."

"Yeah, I'm sure it does, but I need some air," I told him. "At least until I drip dry. Save me a few of those matches, boys." I left the room, and found myself in the expected antiseptic hall. Or at least it had been antiseptic, some ten years or more back. I was in room 158, I noted.

There was nobody in the hall, so I picked a direction at random and started to explore. Turning a corner, I was brought up short at a set of steel doors, held together by a big old hasp that had been welded shut. Peering through the cracks, I could see daylight beyond where the end of the hotel had apparently been blown away by some low-yield weapon. Unfortunately, my fingernails wouldn't take me to that freedom without a good deal of help.

The other way down the corridor brought me to the lobby in short order. Here there were plenty of our modern Hitler Jugend keeping an eye on things, armed with a variety of nasty-looking knives and ugly stubby automatic weapons. A VCR was running in one corner, with a few young men and women sitting around it, trying to look interested, while a narrator droned on about the evils of drugs and sex and rock and roll and commies and whatever else he could think of. Off to one side, a gal with a scarf over her flaming red hair was listlessly pushing a broom along, making little impact on the great mounds of garbage that had apparently been building up in this lobby since sometime in 1981 when the National Service had been born.

I shuffled over to the head dude, or at least that's what I judged him to be from the number of fancy ribbons dangling from his bandolier, and the mirrored glasses that blocked his eyes from sight. I tried not to look up at him anyhow as I hesitantly asked, "Is there anything I can do to help out around here? I mean, I'm not one of those shiftless youth or anything..."

He sneered at me, but apparently without recognition, which was good—it saved me from having to come up with a lie to explain my false ID. "Sure, we always need some of you scumbags to help with the garbage. We just took over this place and my men are already sick of the trash. So go help Debbie there get some of this crap into piles. We'll find you some bags or something later."

It was just what I was hoping for. I practically kissed his hand as I backed away, before fleeing to the garbage heaps. There I started to circle the periphery of one, picking up bits and pieces of junk and throwing them on top of the largest piles. At least we could make little piles out of big ones.

As I worked, I managed to exchange a few words with Debbie. Seems that she'd been picked up for vagrancy a couple of days back, and offered the chance to walk if she'd spend the night with a few of the NatServ types. She slapped the guy who suggested it, he slugged back, and she woke up here. Now she wondered if she'd ever see her family again; the "vagrancy" had consisted of trying to walk home after dark, since it took four hours on foot to make the trip one way from her house to the nearest town with a general store still open.

I told her that she might indeed, if she stuck close to me. "Come up past room 158 when things get strange around here," I said.

"Strange? How do you mean?" Her voice was soft and hesitant. "You'll see," was my only reply, for I'd seen what I feared would never turn up: two flashcubes from an ancient camera. It was my lucky day. Now all the pieces were in place. Flashcubes in my pocket, I straightened up from the garbage heap and started back towards my room. On the way, I stopped to chat with one of the younger NatServ privates.

"I think the other guys in my room are planning something," I said. "There's this map on the table and they've been trying to take the legs off the beds. What should I do? Tell your commander?"

"No, no need to do that," he blustered, greed in his eyes. I'd picked well; he wanted to make the bust himself. "Which room? Wait, show me—is it past the johns?" I nodded. "Good—you start that way, and I will leave to take a piss and catch up with you." He was practically drooling and he was rubbing his hands together. I wouldn't be sorry if anything happened to this gon.

Obediently I started towards my room, and as promised, the private was with me soon enough. He'd picked up a gun from somewhere, a little automatic pistol, but probably more than adequate to perforate anyone unarmed. He also had an intriguing knife at his side, with a long ornamental handle, which was what I wanted. We stopped in front of 158, and he shouldered me aside and pulled his gun. He slowly turned the knob. That was when I slugged him with both hands across the back of his neck and pushed him through. The door was closed in a moment.

It wasn't over, though, for my opponent started to shake his head from side to side, and tried to get up. I kicked him viciously under the chin, and he deflated completely, blood from his mouth staining the once-apricot carpet. But he'd dropped his gun on the way down, and now Bushy Beard was pointing it at me. "Are you crazy, man?" he asked. "I don't want no trouble. I'm gonna be a good little boy and turn you in and do easy time on the gangs."

"Sure you will, but it'll still be on the gangs. If you'll just ease that gun away, I can get us all out of here. Of course, if you're not interested..." I let my voice trail away. Nobody ever got off the road gangs, except to take up a new residence in a pine box six feet down.

He hesitated, and Buck Teeth spoke up. "C'mon Joe," he said, "what have we got to lose? You keep the gun, and if this clown is lying, we can still turn him in later."

Joe agreed, though a bit dubiously, and tucked the gun into his waistband. We had to work fast, I knew; it wouldn't be long before the guard on the floor was missed. I took the knife from his belt and started towards the bathroom, explaining as I went.

Soon we were all hard at work. I was whittling down the aluminum shower rod into nice little shavings with the guard's knife, which luckily proved to be of high quality. Joe was ladling rust sludge from the sink and spreading it out on the table to dry under the electric light. Buck Teeth—whose name turned out to be Eli—carefully disassembled the unused parts of the flashcubes to get at the magnesium wool inside.

When all the ingredients were ready, we mixed the rust and aluminum in an old beer can that was lying empty in one corner. The magnesium fuse was tucked into the top. Ten minutes had gone by; it was with some trepidation that I opened the door and looked out. All was clear; we ran down the corridor, around the corner, and up to the heavy steel doors.

In a matter of moments the can was balanced on top of the hasp, and I took one of the matches and lit the fuse. It burned brightly and quickly, and I lost the hair on the back of my right hand. But that was nothing compared to the light from the thermite reaction in the can. The molten iron and aluminum mixture dripped down to the floor, melting the hasp and setting the carpet on fire—a detail I had rather overlooked. The fire alarm went off before Joe got the door kicked open, and as soon as he did that, some sort of escape alarm triggered as well. It sounded like rehearsals for some cop show.

There were shouts behind us, but we were on the run before they caught up. I looked back, and there was Debbie coming through the door, stepping smartly to avoid the billowing flames. She got a lungful of smoke and was coughing heavily, but got through before they flared up to the ceiling. Gunshots followed her out, but they were wild and didn't hit any of us.

The four of us were in a small crater, with only a chain link fence between us and freedom. And on the other side of the fence was a sight for sore eyes: a pale grey van with a grinning frizzy-haired madman behind the wheel. Herb backed the van through the fence—the heavy-duty ambulance suspension held up 25

just fine—and stopped about an inch short of the edge of the pavement. Yelling to my newfound friends, I scrambled up the slope of the crater, and in seconds we were all inside. Herb gunned the engine as Eli and I struggled to get the rear doors closed, and we vanished into the anonymous streets of some bombed-out downtown.

"Don't worry!" shouted Herb, swerving to avoid the corpse of a shopping cart. "I've found an underground parking garage where we can hide out until nightfall. I knew you'd think of something, old buddy!"

"Herb," I said, "I'd like you to meet some friends I offered a ride to..." Everyone was talking at once as Herb threw back a bottle of bourbon and we sped off into the next chapter.

In the Field *by Jim Butler*

The "Top Garden" was small compared to some of their gardens. Carlos gave them a 30' x 40' canvas tarp, which they camouflaged with four gallons of green, brown and black paint. This drying tent was like something out of a Ringling Brothers/Barnum & Bailey Circus, yet when they began hanging plants underneath this huge tarp, it was only able to accommodate barely a tenth of what they had.

Altogether that year the hippies started about 30,000 plants from seeds and about 10,000 from cuttings. Carlos' friends provided him with a pound of their best seeds and Carlos insisted that Rainbow and Ruby grow them all. Every new moon and every full moon Rainbow and Ruby started another 2,000 seeds. However, while the hippies were hoping to cash in big, they didn't realize what they were getting themselves into. This was truly Labor in Vain. Instead of getting rich, they were almost killed; and instead of the mellow hippie lifestyle they were used to, they experienced vicious terroristic violence like they would never forget.

Lepo owned three hundred acres on Hualalai Mountain and it was Carlos' idea to spread the crop. Before long Rainbow and Ruby started twenty separate gardens. Dark thin Carlos wore a square moustache with long sideburns. He always dressed in white clothes.

Lots of growers talk big, but it takes more than mere talk to pull it off. Consider the logistics: after you harvest them, how are you going to haul it all to your drying place? To the uninformed that may seem like the easiest part of all, but if you have a lot of sweet, ripe ladies sitting in the fields, that requires a lot of hauling. Sure, anyone can go hike up into the mountains a couple of miles with a jar of seeds, but consider transporting the fresh ripe plants, which could contain a ton or two of material in wet weight. Rainbow and Ruby learned that real fast after their first plants started getting wet and ripe in September, up at the "Top Garden."

Carlos had heard of the Uji boys through his connection in Kona and he warned the hippies about them ahead of time. He reminded Rainbow and Ruby to keep a piece within arm's reach at all times. He acquired handcuffs and passed them on to Rainbow.

"My pot farm is kapu, off limits," Carlos said. "They can steal from other growers, but they will not steal from me. They were warned where not to go by one of my close friends. He is also a close friend of the Ujis. My friend tells me every move they make."

The Ujis were watching the crop. It appeared to be a crop of immense proportions—Carlos, Lepo, Rainbow and Ruby were assured of plenty of money if these gardens came in. The Ujis first discovered them by private aircraft and then on foot, trespassing throughout Lepo's land and seeing the property with their own eyes. Only the two growers guarded the land. It was an easy setup. The Ujis had no trouble roaming at will through the gardens. They wouldn't have had any trouble if there had been twice or even three times that number of hippies on the land. The Ujis thought that this was going to be the easiest money they had ever made.

Sometime around the middle of September the trees bloomed monstrous in size. Rainbow was working in the garden alone. His shirt was off and the ribs pushed against the skin of his chest. He pulled weeds from the garden at about 9 o'clock in the morning on a warm sunny Kona day. Suddenly a creeping noise perked his ears. Someone or some animal tramped through the bushes. Rainbow grabbed for his piece now. With the rifle in hand he traipsed through the forest of marijuana trees expecting to meet with at most some type of harmless animal making noise in the bush while searching for a place to nap. Nearing the source of the noise, Rainbow spied a large figure at the corner of the patch snapping low branches off the trees.

"Hands over your head or you die!" screamed Rainbow, his rifle aimed at the other's chest.

"Hey brah, don't shoot me." The man backed away alightly from the pointed barrel, exposing a rifle lying by his side.

The worked-up Rainbow cocked his rifle and repeated, "Hands over your head!" By now he was nearly in tears with fright and anger.

"All right, all right..." the larger man conceded, "but I only a pig hunter who see your crop and take a few branches."

Rainbow directed the man to be quiet and do everything he was told or else he would get a bullet in his head. Carlos had instructed Rainbow what to do in such a situation. Rainbow reassured his captive that his only risk was if he didn't do as he was told. The man looked skeptical but he obeyed.

26 Rainbow ordered his captive to sit on the ground, remove his

boots and socks and wrap his legs around the trunk of a big solid tree with long hard thorns. Rainbow tossed him the handcuffs.

"Put them on yourself," he growled. "Right wrist to left ankle!" His orders were obeyed fully but without haste.

Cleverly, Rainbow kept promising his captive that he wouldn't be hurt if he did everything he was told and answered all questions.

But before asking the man any questions Rainbow gagged and blindfolded him, took the pig-hunter's rifle, ran off to find Ruby, where he collected another rifle, then sent Ruby to call their friend Carlos. Seven hours later Carlos finally arrived.

In the morning when the pig-hunter had been caught it was dry, hot and sunny. The weather changed by midday and thick clouds covered the sky. It began to sprinkle and the sprinkle rapidly changed to rain and the rain got heavier and heavier. Before Carlos had a chance to question the prisoner it started to rain torrentially like an Asian monsoon. Carlos suggested the three of them take shelter in a small tent nearby. Inside they had to shout at one another to be heard over the downpour.

It rained so hard that afternoon that the ten- and twenty-foot marijuana trees began losing branches. The sheer weight of the water toppled whole trees over into the mud. At least half the females were lost to the rest of the growing season, which could extend well into late November and early December. The man they had handcuffed and gagged was out there in that water.

Carlos and the hippies spent an hour in the tent when the downpour lessened suddenly. The captive was only twenty yards away, but it took time to see him under the fallen marijuana. He was sitting up to his waist in mud and rainwater. A flash flood had filled the old gulch.

Carlos freed the man and found that his name was Moses Pilau, cousin to the notorious Uji brothers. Carlos moved easily in the underground, but the Uji brothers obviously belonged in the underworld. They loosely organized themselves along family lines. Moses Pilau was not a man to be intimidated. After careful consideration, Carlos decided to let Pilau go. It was safer than having his cousins looking for him.

In early December, most of the plants were ripe. Some were drying on the stalk. Piles of marijuana were stored in the tents erected for that purpose. There were many dollars worth of virtually saleable weed on Lepo's land and the Ujis knew it. They had known at least since Moses Pilau came back with the report on one of the largest growing operations in Kona that year. Carlos waited till all that weed dried and then stored it in a central location. This was what the Ujis had been waiting for.

Around Christmas they struck. Three brothers, two cousins—including Moses Pilau—and two friends crept to the main tent while the two hippies slept inside. It was almost dawn when the dogs began barking and then went crazy, howling and yelping. The barking dogs awakened Rainbow and Ruby. At first they merely stretched and figured it was nothing. They didn't know that the Uji family was ready to do anything that was necessary to secure their weed.

Ruby peeped out of the tent and asked, "Who's that?" Suddenly Rainbow knew it was more than that dogs barking at the usual morning sounds. He got up and joined his lady at the tent flap. Thirty paces away, approaching cautiously, were two camouflaged figures carrying guns.

"We want your weed," one of them shouted. "We have you surrounded!"

Dead ducks, the hippies emerged from the tent with their hands over their heads. The other Ujis came out of the bushes and pushed the hippies over by some rocks. Then they hauled their weed to a waiting jeep.

It would be a minor thing for these guys to blow away a couple of hippies in the woods and in various obscene epithets the mokes said so. But they didn't bother the hippies until the weed was loaded onto the jeep. Pilau emptied a few rounds into the air and the other Ujis joined the fun. The hippies crouched. Soon bullets were flying everywhere, small arms fire included.

When the firing stopped Rainbow and Ruby looked up but the Ujis were gone. They had taken the pakalolo-filled jeep and left in the time it took for the ringing in their ears to stop. The hippies knew they would have to answer to Carlos and Lepo for this. Carlos and Lepo could be as bad as the Ujis any day. The hippies were in a real mess. They would have to make some kind of a deal but they knew that their dreams of easy money and freedom from responsibility were over. They would have to face the facts and try to land on their feet.

Carlos and Lepo were waiting for the jeep when it arrived at the end of the trail. Some of the buds showed from under the canvas tarps and Carlos angrily pulled the tarps over them.

"Did you get it all?" he barked.

"Yeah, we got it all," Moses laughed.

"You didn't hurt the hippies, did you?"

"No."

It was Carlos' turn to laugh.

"Come on," Lepo yelled. "Let's get this stuff up the road and into the garage before it gets lighter and traffic picks up."

The jeep took off in one direction and the Ujis followed in another vehicle. Carlos and Lepo were the last to leave. "Well, those hippies are going to have to pay for having lost this load after we let them stay there all year rent-free."

"Yeah. Maybe we can make them stay up there for another year and do it again."

The pair climbed into Lepo's El Dorado laughing and drove off makal for an early morning pick-me-up and to celebrate their latest caper.



SOME THOUGHTS OF A HORSE AT EVENTIDE



Jesus In Reverse

PART ONE by Patricia Flinn

For the longest time Sarah Smilowitz had been waiting patiently for three things: the death of her cat, Spooky; the death of her dog, Tomorrow; and the death of her mother, Faith.

Every morning she'd wake up convinced that before noon she'd have a corpse on her hands, but no matter how promising the day looked—Spooky had refused to eat; Tomorrow had collapsed in the back yard; Faith had been given the last rites by Father Donovan—by nightfall they had all miraculously rallied again, dashing Sarah's hopes to pieces.

"You'd think it was a conspiracy or something the way they're hanging on," Sarah confessed to her girlfriend, Joan. "I mean, Christ, what do they want from me? What did I ever do to any of them?"

Joan, who was a very practical person—she rarely answered any of Sarah's questions directly—shrugged and told her to see a psychic. "After all, a psychic is supposed to be able to see into the future, right?"

"I suppose."

"Well," said Joan, "maybe you'll at least find out which one of them is going first and when."

"You really think that's possible?" Sarah asked.

"Sure," Joan replied. "Getting hold of that kind of information is easy for a psychic. They do it all the time. It's like turning on the television set or something."

"But what if—"

"What if nothing. At the very least you'll have something to look forward to. Right?"

"I guess so."

"After all, let's face it. You got nothing to lose, right?"

"No," Sarah said, shaking her head. "Nothing except one dog, one cat and one mother."

It wasn't that Sarah didn't like her cat, her dog and her mother. It was just that they had been dying for so long now that she was getting kind of sick of it.

Every time she turned around one of them was having another "crisis."

Spooky, who was nearing her twentieth birthday, had had five major cardiac arrests in a six-month period; Tomorrow, who was blind, deaf and arthritic, had been hit by a car twice and poisoned by an angry neighbor; and Faith, who was over 70, had already approached medical history by being the first woman ever to undergo more operations in one year than a cadaver in a training lab for student morticians.

Yet in every case, against all the odds, they had managed to pull through. It was more than Sarah could figure.

"Look at the statistics," she would tell her friends. "If it had been any ordinary dog, cat or mother, they'd have all been goners by now, right?"

Her friends had to agree. The facts were on her side.

On at least five different occasions the vet, Dr. Greyfleck, had insisted on putting Spooky and Tomorrow out of their misery, but always at the last minute—sometimes seconds before the fatal shots were about to be injected—the two would undergo a startling and miraculous change for the better, confirming Sarah's worst fears that their time, alas, had simply not come.

Her mother's case was slightly different, however. Since no one obviously had ever considered giving Faith a fatal shot, Sarah knew there was nothing she could do except let nature take its course.

Still, the ups and downs of Faith's slow extinction were more than exhausting at times.

"A person can only take so much," Sarah told the psychic whom she found listed in the Yellow Pages under "Desperate," a grim young woman with a glass eye who worked in an insurance company during the day and sold scented candles from the back of her Chevy station wagon in the evening. "I mean, let's be honest. After awhile, even dying can get to be pretty boring."

"Boring or not, what's to be is to be," the psychic advised, holding up the three hair-balls belonging to Spooky, Tomorrow, and Faith that Sarah had brought along in the pocket of her beige coat because of their strong vibrational frequencies. The psychic

was convinced the strong vibrational frequencies were essential aids for contacting the future. "One simply cannot change one's karma. You must remember this."

"But my God, I could be an old lady before all this ends," Sarah protested. "These are the best years of my life. I'm in my prime."

"That may be true," said the psychic, "but prime or no prime, karma is karma."

"Look, I agree," Sarah replied, "karma may be karma, but can't you at least tell me how long this karma stuff is going to last and whose karma is going to be used up first? That's all I really need to know."

"That I cannot do," said the psychic, staring into the hair-balls. "The laws of nature forbid it."

"Forbid it?" Sarah persisted. "But I don't understand. That's why I came here in the first place. I thought that—"

"It is for your own good," the psychic said. "Ask no more questions, please."

"But I—"

"And remember, no matter what happens, karma is karma."

Sarah's love life was a mess.

She hadn't been to bed with anyone since the night St. Jude's Hospital called to tell her that her mother had been removed from the intensive care ward and put on the "stable" list.

"You think they would have had the decency to at least wait until the morning," Sarah told Joan. "I mean, do you have any idea how distracting it is to try and screw when you're listening to someone give you a blow-by-blow account of your mother's bowel movements?"

Joan said she never believed in hospitals. Especially Catholic ones. "So they kill you, so what?" she said. "They tell the family it's God's will. How do you fight something like that?"

"They told me it's God's will my mother is still alive," Sarah replied.

"See. Either way they got you."

"Well, maybe I can sue them for emotional suffering. You know, the way they do in divorce cases?"

"Are you crazy? How can you do that? They saved your mother's life."

"That's my point."

"But Sarah, use your head. Nobody, and I mean nobody, ever sues a Catholic hospital and wins. Especially if the patient survives. It would be a waste of time. You'd be better off finding yourself a good faith healer."

"Faith healer?" That's the last thing I need."

"No, I mean a faith healer that would work the opposite. You know, instead of praying for a fast recovery, he'd pray for a quick end."

"But won't somebody like that be hard to find?" Sarah asked.

"What happens if I run into another fraud like that psychic woman?"

"I'll help you this time," Joan replied. "You won't have any trouble. All we got to do is put an ad in a good newspaper."

Sarah did her best to word the ad discreetly.

"Now remember, it's important we attract the right sort of person," she told Joan. "I got enough problems on my hands already. I don't need crackpots calling me up all hours of the day and night."

"No, you sure don't," Joan agreed. "We've got to be subtle. I mean, we just can't write 'Wanted: Dog, Cat and Mother Exterminator.'"

"That's right. The whole thing has to be very professional. Our aim, after all, is to find somebody who's good."

"A person who knows his job."

"A pro."

"Someone whose best interests are for Spooky, Tomorrow and Faith."

"Right."

"After all, they were good to you all these years."

"Yes, very dependable. That's for sure."

"It's the least you can do for them."

"I agree."

"Okay, then let's get to work."

The ad ran for one week under "Personals," sandwiched between a prayer to St. Anthony for the return of a missing diamond brooch and a 1-800 number for Dial-A-Joke International.

WANTED: Loving Person to Assist Dying Dog, Cat and Mother. Need Immediately. Call 913-6116.

The calls were quite varied. Some people wanted to know what kind of dog, cat and mother. Others wanted to know what they were dying from. ("If it's one of those contagious diseases I won't touch it," one man said. "I ain't dying for no dog, cat or mother. No way.")

Still other people wanted to know what "to assist" meant. "If it means emptying a bedpan for some sick old lady, well, that's no problem," one woman said, "but I'll be damned if I'm going to clean up for two smelly old fleabags."

Only one person actually understood what Sarah was talking about when she explained what she meant by the phrase. "Oh, I get you," the man said. "You're looking for a sort of Jesus in reverse, right? Somebody who buries rather than raises the dead, correct?"

"Correct," said Sarah.

"Well, lady," he replied, "search no more, 'cause I'm your man."

(CONCLUDED NEXT ISSUE)

Mad Marginalia

by Eric Mayer

Library books being public, like subway cars and lavatory walls, collect their share of graffiti. The graffiti artists of the printed page may be less flamboyant than their wall-painting counterparts—even the largest magic markers allow less scope than aerosol spray cans—but they share a compulsion to inflict their efforts on total strangers and a knack for mystification. When confronted by graffiti in the bowels of a subway system, a lavatory cubicle, or the pages of a classic novel, who can help but wonder what sort of person is responsible and—unless the scribble is along the lines of "For a good time call Lola"—whatever does it mean? And if book vandals are more annoying than subway or lavatory vandals, it's probably because such conjectures are considerably more distracting while reading Robert Browning than while riding the Lexington Avenue Express at rush hour or perusing the financial pages. It's enough to drive you to Mickey Spillaine.

People who add their own two bits to library books fall into categories. The underliners are the most civilized, as befits a group without counterparts outside the printed page. (Subway station maps are sprayed over, not underlined.) You might even suppose they are the least puzzling. Underlining is, after all, an accepted study aid—at least when it's confined to one's own books. But why do such students choose to underline approximately 85% of the text, and the least important 85% at that? Or, failing that, why do they bring their magic markers down for landings more or less at random? Underlined books can be impossible to read. "Why on earth is that underlined," you keep asking yourself, half convinced you've missed something. Occasionally, a hangover from school exams, you might even find yourself reading only what's been underlined—which is to say, nonsense. Luckily the underliners tire fast. Maybe they are prone to hand cramps. Their efforts peter out early, around page 18 of Sartre's Being and Nothingness, for instance, or maybe page 2 of Finnegan's Wake. More than one reader, simply not up to coping with the underliners, has forgone Wittgenstein and checked out a Mike Hammer mystery. The underliners don't study him.

In addition to those readers who underline as a study aid, or in order to keep themselves awake (the "dead man's switch" principle), or because they've lost their bookmarks or are part of a vast underground spy network which communicates in this manner, there are less industrious souls who highlight only specific words, not infrequently words already italicized in the text, or followed by an exclamation point (and not infrequently words like "the" or "and" or "1937"). Among these highlighters are the typo hunters, whose mission is to call attention to misspellings and grammatical blunders. This service is not without value. You are liable to learn, for example, that "germane" is not spelled "germaine" and never mind that you were intending to learn about the origins of the caboose.

Although it is easy enough to imagine typo hunters as over-the-hill spelling bee champions, or frustrated proofreaders stranded far from the publishing capitol, it is more difficult to imagine their modus operandi. Do they settle back with their books, pens at hand, forewarned for whatever typos might leap out of the verbal jungles at them? And what sort of reader approaches War and Peace or Moby Dick with typos uppermost in mind? Or, worst yet, does the mere glimpse of a typo send such a reader off—in mid-sentence—in search of a pen? Typo hunters clearly do not see the forest for the trees when it comes to enjoying books. Readers who want to avoid their efforts are advised to frequent Mickey Spillaine's forest, which have much shorter trees.

The most mystifying of all the literary graffiti artists are those who might generously be called "editorialists." Generously, because as often as not you have no idea what they're trying to tell you. It's easy enough to figure out what someone means by scrawling "Phooey!" on the last page of a book. Although, if the scrawler wanted to warn readers off, why not put the comment in the front? But what are you supposed to make of cryptic marginal notations like "BEWARE!" Beware of what? Eyestrain? The quality of the next chapter? The end of the world? Or what about additions to indices? For example, "Booley" pencilled in between "Bombardment, molecular" and "Born, M."? (And no, when you check page 378 there's no reference to "Booley," nor any page 378 for that matter.) Or, worst of all, the addition of seemingly nonsensical words, such as "crab soup." And not in a cookbook, either. Certainly a reader might feel a twinge of hunger while devouring a library book, but why turn the book into a makeshift menu? And what sort of person gets hungry reading about spontaneous human combustion anyway?

So, you're reading I, the Jury, where you figure the graffiti artists will leave you in peace. But you come to the end of the chapter and it's still raining and there it is, scrawled with an unsharpened pencil—"For a good time, call Kirkgarde." All underlined in yellow... "Kirkgarde" circled in blue... and with a red pen someone else has added "HAH!"... and someone else "consonne" in green... and these are underlined in purple crayon...

ARK OF THE SAME TESTAMENT

by Brian Catanzaro

So God says, "Don't talk back to me"
And I say, "Who do you think you are"
And God says, "Are you kidding"

So I say, "What's the point"
And God says, "I gave you free will"
And I say, "But I'm only human"
So God says, "Don't worry,
I made you in my image and likeness"

PUKE-O-RAMA

by Luke McGuff

The late night bus was full—people coming home after the last movie show, or trying to beat the bar rush, or sleepily off work. Every seat was taken but one, and that was covered with what looked like 2 or 3 quarts of puked-up Stouffer's turkey casserole and vodka soup. Even though the temperature was in the low 30s, people were leaning their faces out of the open windows, watching the street go by like it was on a tv screen.

As new passengers got on the bus, they beelined for the empty seat, only to be yelled and squealed at before they sat in it. The people in the back of the bus turned it into a game. Then the person who almost sat in the vomit would say something like "gross," or "what a mess" or something. People coughed sometimes from the smell.

Some people figured out there was something wrong with the one unoccupied seat before they got to it. It would actually be a lot more dangerous for someone who got on towards the end of the line, when the bus was almost empty, and blindly sat where they always sat.

AN INTERVIEW WITH SIGMUND WEISS

by Sigmund Weiss

INTERVIEWER: At what age did you first perform in plays?

MR. WEISS: I would say about 15 or 16, when I became janitor, cook, poet and amateur actor at the Dill Pickle Club in Chicago, Illinois.

INT.: What type of plays did you perform in?

S.W.: Mostly one-act sea plays by Eugene O'Neill.

INT.: At that time, did you have any idea of how you should develop your character?

S.W.: No, I didn't. So I took a job on a Lake Michigan steamer, washing dishes and pans in its galley. I got a damn good experience of how a petty employee is looked down on. In that galley, for foreman, instead of working with us, bossed us around like we were his slaves. I told him to shut up and let me work at my leisure, I didn't need his mouth to tell me how to do my work, to speed me up, make me feel like shit; so when the chief bursar got wind of this, he told me I'd be better off elsewhere, so I quit. While the ship was docked, taking on passengers and loading, I watched the loading from its loading side, and noticed how the dock workers were shabbily dressed, many with torn clothes and torn shoes, all looking like bums who sleep in alleyways, spend their last cent on watered-down booze. Then came a man with a large cleaning pail which seemed filled with a kind of watered-down stew, doling it into the tin cups of those dock workers. I figured those men were living a lousy existence.

INT.: After that?

S.W.: From this experience I realized that Factualism is really not the genuine theatre; that in one's desire to perform characters in differing aspects of life, that one cannot match up to the realities as they exist, and to really live those characters destroys a desire to give them voice. In the main, the outer aspects of our human species is either horrendous or boring; so what the writer does or must do is add to the horrendous, tragedy, and to the boring, humor. People really attend the theatre to view its extremes; not for the realities in characterization.

INT.: Then, did you quit the theatre?

S.W.: Not then. I extended who I thought I am into characterization. Actually, we all enter our Theatre of Life from our own Self. What happens afterwards results from outside influences and our Selves' struggle against that influence. This is where True Drama performs.

INT.: Do you mean that True Theatre is an exploration of Selves?

S.W.: Yes. Just as in the performers, the audiences are Selves observing in some manner themselves. Each actor and observer in their own ways are attempting to reflect themselves into the play.

INT.: Mr. Weiss, are you telling me that plays based primarily on political, historical, philosophic and theologic doctrines are not in the nature of theatrical exposition?

S.W.: Yes. No matter what the nature of politics, theologies and philosophies, it is ultimately the individual Self that becomes the play's performers, creates the drama, communicates and enlarges the qualities of reflective thought. Without such dynamics of Self, such plays and performances become dogmatic, result in shallowness of perspectives and relationships.

INT.: Thank you, Mr. Weiss. This interview will be published in Sunday's paper, even though there are countless readers to disagree with you.

Dole For President
Give Sleep A Chance

(Paid for by the Consortium to Elect Dull People)

ONE TOO MANY POETRY READINGS ONE TOO MANY POETS

by A.D. Winans

you can always find them in
the back room poised for
a quick exit
they're the first poets to read and
the first to leave
they always carry their work
with them in looseleaf notebooks
they always have a young girl
hanging on to their arms
there is always one who claims
he knew Ginsberg or Kerouac
always one who claims
he slept with one or both

they're usually sandwiched in between
a headache or a hangover or two
2 or 3 live with the gods another
2 or 3 claim they are the gods

there is always one who claims to
have Indian blood and who is there
looking to get laid
2 ex-junkies
4 homosexuals
a half dozen bi-sexuals
two sad-eyed women rubbing their
hands when they would prefer to be
rubbing something else

always a dropout from
the beat days
two from the flower generation
one nervous lady with short hair
one nervous poet with a tic
always a babbling refugee
from the drug set
one with a poem that drops names
faster than an auctioneer

one poet who reviews poetry
in a local poetry
journal
one poet who is an editor
one poet who was an editor
one poet who wants to be an
editor

one messiah and
one visiting out-of-town
star

Epitomes *by Michael Polo*

We live in an extreme world and can't help but notice
some of the extreme things that stretch our capacity for
understanding. Like when the Cheese abuse you physical-
ly for something that is a misdemeanor at best. (I
could tell you about an incident that involved hitch-
hiking on an on-ramp to I-95. Quite bizarre.) That was
an example of the Epitome of Brutality. Here for your
perusing pleasure are some more examples of the extre-
mities of life.

The Epitome of Unbelievability—That, at his age, the
President has not one gray hair.

The Epitome of Forgetfulness—Umm, let's see. Where
were we? Oh, yes. Locking the keys in the car right
after installing those anti-theft locks.

The Epitome of Hunger—Actually eating Spam for a meal.

The Epitome of Neglect—it's either the state of the na-
tional debt, the state of Social Security, or the state
of New Jersey.

The Epitome of Boredom—Drugs, alcohol and marriage.
Not necessarily in that order.

The Epitome of Futility—Trying to pick up girls or guys
with lines like "You look familiar..." or "What's your
sign?"

The Epitome of Addiction—Smoking the butts when you run
out of cigarette money.

The Epitome of Unoriginality—So I've copied the style
and format of some of your best writers. So what?

A DESTINY

by Sheila E. Murphy

Fear lives rent-free in my left hip joint. Sometimes
when I get up from my chair, this geriatric muted pop-
corn sound emerges like I really understand percussion.
The measuring spoons of life doled out to physicality,
unable to engineer the rest of music. But the job can't
go unfilled, on threat of losing funding for one key
position. Things weigh heavily upon my body working
through purgatorial life as destiny pre-empt's creative
solutions to problems we almost invented.

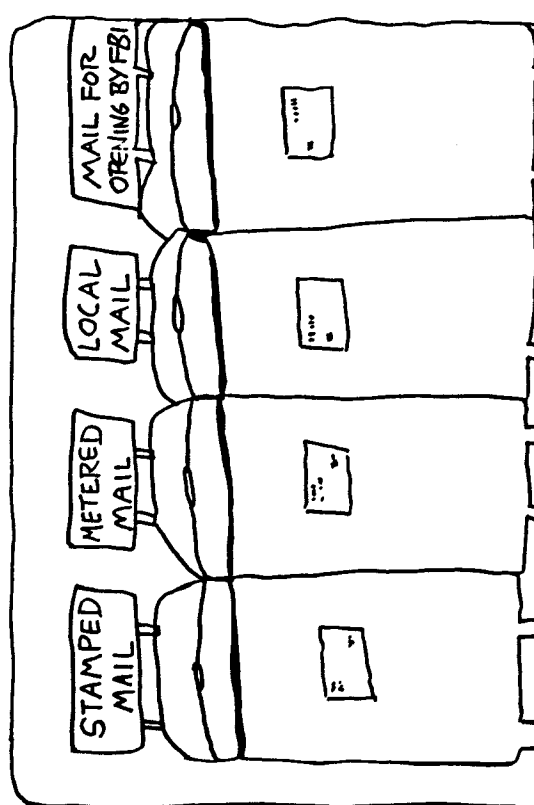
High priests raise their arms to upper levels of the
pyramid until God

BREATHE DEEP

by Mary Ann Henn

It won't take long
but it will last
and you can forget
time anything
everything Ready?
Breathe deep let go
now watch that wall
See it move? It's
floating a cloud
into purple sunset
over water Do you
hear that music?
It's Pink, it's Purple
it's Orange I could
laugh forever. Pass
me another joint, please.

AM
AW
HIGH?



MY UNCLE *by Larry Stolte*

My uncle is so rich. He has a penthouse
apartment in the city. Many people feed the
pigeons, but my uncle goes out to the park
every Saturday and feeds the poor. He com-
plains that one big fat one always gets most
of the food, but "he's so cute."

The signs say not to feed the poor because
their diets are different than ours, but still
he goes out with bags of lobster chunks and
throws them to the destitute just for fun.
And the poor love it. Especially the packets
of butter sauce. After the feed, they have a
craving for cherries jubilee, and they don't
even know what it is.

Yep, my uncle—Sam's his name—he's a card.

Sayz-U!(Letters)

Good day, fellow readers:

It seems to be that time of the hexawee again and I find this overwhelming urge to recapitulate my past days.

Well, for all and sundry who are interested, Nik's first Yuletide was a smashing success. We now have a tiny apartment filled with baby junk. He really cleaned up in the toy department. We bought him a Teddy Ruxpin because K-Mart had them at a good price. (My New York brother says that W.O.W. is going to discontinue them.) A couple of days later, Barbara gets a package from UPS—she wins a W.O.W. talking Mother Goose from a soap company contest, so now we got two of them. Now I can take the tapes over to my friend who has got the mini studio so I can crack the code. Imagine the possibilities.

With the various legal and illegal monies received for my birthday and holiday, etc., I was able to indulge, for the first time this year, in BUYING USED RECORDS! One hundred and thirty dollars worth, to be precise. And that doesn't include the 26 dollars worth I am sending to my Hungarian pen-friend. He is receiving Jefferson Airplane, and he is sending me Hungarian space rock. For a list of what I bought, contact me later.

On the cartooning front, outside of the work I do for this here humour 'zine, I am currently working with a writing partner on a single person's dictionary—he writes and I draw. And I am getting paid (not much) to do it. Does that mean I have turned pro? Barbara snickers and says "not hardly," but what has she produced lately, besides Nik?

I have been re-hired to lay out FEEDBACK Magazine, since the editors couldn't properly do it themselves, and since the one I worked on looked the best. I have not done that type of work since high school, but it is all coming back to me slowly. Roy is hysterically happy. OUTER SHELL's potential readership has increased exponentially. Any of you Florida people who are rock and roll types or artists, contact me and I will pass your name along.

One last thing before the comments—I have just confirmed my first guest shot at a sf convention. At OASIS in Orlando in May I will be one of the announced guest artists. I get to hang out in the con suite and get a key to the staff-only washroom. Nik is real proud. He is hoping that all the attention that I am paying to my artwork and not to him will pay off. He is also thanking me for not drawing him. But, now, I can use new material.

On to the comments:

As usual, my two personal faves were "Diary of the Rock Fiend" and the Prudence and Bunny stories, which I have become real fond of lately. My brother-in-law, who has read some IJs, likes those the best, also, as well as some of his college friends. I have drawn my interpretation of the characters; perhaps, Prudence, we can collaborate on an illustrated story for IJ or beyond.

I feel it is my duty to comment, in case that Steve misses it, that J.P. Morgan was interviewed in the funny animal issue of AMAZING HEROES, and that INSIDE JOKE was name-mentioned. My congratulations, J.P., and I have all of the CRITTERS that contain your Fission Chicken stories.

On sex symbols: Tom, Kathleen Sullivan was the one bright spot in working days at WECA-TV, when she was on the ABC early morning news program. I think her gray hair is very sexy, and very honest. Barbara is starting to eyeball the Miss Clairol wistfully now, and threatens to enrol me into the Grecian Formula Color-of-the-Month Club.

Also, I loved your cartoon on page 12.

On clowns: Mary Ann, a very professional story, and very enjoyable.

On Oreos: Rodny, you got the style down good. Another fun story.

Well, that is about it for now. I take the new back cover to the printer tomorrow and have him run off the section of the APA that he missed. At lunch, I start sketching the illos for that Trek story that is due at the same time as IJ and IMAGINAPA. Plus a bit for FACTSHEET FIVE, and some bits for FAN TOONS. Let us not forget my conspiracy job, which is starting to pick up again. It is all up to me to get the bloody work out, but at least it is coming in again. Plus about a dozen letters to write, mostly with Yuletide photos of my Tallahassee friends and Nik. I keep forgetting that this is a hobby.

All the best in '88.

Current ShortDurPerSavs: Lemmy, J.P. Morgan, Neil Rodgers, Prudence, and Pink Bunny.

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

Dear 'Layne,

Thanks for the nice visit I had with you. Last ish was great. I haven't finished it yet. Rodny's "Good Season for Oreos" wuz way cool even though he did take quite a bit of license. Anni was great as usual and welcome back, Deborah!!

I decided to make "Prudence Does Her Laundry" into a video storybook, not with animation but with illustrations by a whole buncha different people. How I'd do this is assign each illustrator a part of the story, and have them do at least 5-10 scenes apiece. Of course I'd give them all a picture of Prudence and Bunny so at least there'd be some continuity. Anyway, I'd like it to be as surrealistic as possible. Like what the illustrations to a Richard Foreman play would look like if there were any. Preferably the illos would be ledger size but at least having a 4:3 ratio (length to height) with a 1" illustrated border on all sides.

I would like to hear from anyone interested. Kit, Rodny and Phil come to mind, but I'd like to get as many people involved as possible. So to whomever—Drop me a line at my new P.O. Box.

Luv,
PRUDENCE GAELOR
P.O. Box 1529
Columbia, MD 21044

P.S. SHCQ #2 will be out soon!

Dear Elayne:

I dunno what to say, Elayne, except: Your Mag is Magical, Mysterious, and Totally Great.

THE SMURF MENACE: For some reason it seems vitally important that I clear the air on this issue—"Sex, Politics & Smurfs" (#55) was not made up. That is, it was, but it's true, too...uh, what I'm getting at is that there is a preacher down in Texas who thinks it's true. His congregation is currently gnawing away at Texas toy store owners in an effort to get all Smurf-related paraphernalia off the shelves. And what exactly, you ask, is this Smurf menace? Well, it seems that one of these cute little critters is a magician. Satanic mystical supernaturalism! Perverting the innocent minds of our precious children, turning them into future Democrats... (And, in a vaguely related story, how about this little J-Zoo-TV gem: this lady warns me, the Home Viewer, that I am about to catch a glimpse of the Very Pit of Hell, and to turn away if I didn't feel quite up to it. Then she holds up a math textbook. And there's four x-y graphs in a row on the page, see, and the curves within the graphs form letters: F, U, C, K. I mean, really! What our educators won't do these days to keep the attention of the MTV Generation...)

TO THE "KID": The Harlan Ellison Award for Eloquent Mouth-Foaming. Congratulations...and have a Rolaid. What do you think of that "Don't forget the cheese" campaign? Burgess Meredith tires to sound sensuous? He sounds like a goddamn child-molester. I mean, it's sick; it makes me violent. (The Kid says, Yo, don't you go maligning The Penguin, now...) And have you seen that car spot for the new Baretta model? It must really turn them on over on Wall Street. The car, through the magic of film, turns into a shark. Get it? "I smell BLOOD! I want to EAT THE WEAK! BARETTA—that's the car for ME!" Lotsa this sort of Bad-Reactionary imagery in commercials during news shows...

"RECORDS": A "Harlan" goes to you, too, Larry. I've always wanted to address this issue satirically, but I couldn't get beyond "KILL! KILL!" whilst gnashing my teeth...How many hours, O Lord, have I spent sitting beneath workplace PA systems, spewing out vile "soft rock" garbage? And what the fuck is a "soft rock," anyway?

TRYING TIMES: I think you're only half-right, Mr. Deja, about the Total Suckdom of this series. Only every other show sucked; the rest were great. I sympathize with writers trying to break away from the sitcom formula...you'd have to invent new rhythms, you know? And obviously these guys had problems in that regard...half the shows just sorta floundered around. But, like the science boys tell us: "There's no such thing as a failed experiment."

"SISKEL & EBERT...": Strays pretty far from pure parody...but so what? It's great wordplay.

GOOD SAM ADDENDUM ADDENDUM: Lest anyone accuse me of excessive subtlety in that essay (hey, it could happen), perhaps I should add that, in the bibliography, I said: "This exercise in fundamentalist ideology was inspired by the following books—Holy Terror, God's Bullies and Anti-Americanism of the Religious Right. I mean, HINT HINT. Your statement, Elayne, that "creativity is communication" gave me the idea to send that piece to you, for some reason...hmmmm...

Well. Dance Party USA coming on. Must dash. (This paragraph dedicated to Anni's dedication to katlady.)

Yours etc...
MARK McDONALD
832 Kentucky, #3
Lawrence, KS 66044

P.S. Forget the fuckin' cheese, already!

PPS. In ref. to #7—I have been called that, Anni, amongst other less-than-imaginative stuff. It's a Term of Endearment, or something. - Mickey-D

Dear Insiders and Jokers...

Thomas Deja requests tolerance, and while that's never been my long suit, I'll try to scrape together enough to get through.

May I say, in all tolerance, that Thomas' reasoning is so simplistic as to be convoluted? And may I point out that if:

- A) Father was bad
- B) Father abused drugs
- C) Therefore drugs are bad

then we also have:

- A) Father was bad
- B) Father abused Thomas
- C) Therefore Thomas is bad

Conclusion: Blaming drugs for drug abuse is the same as blaming children for child abuse.

For the sake of brevity, I won't go into the dangerous naivete of mistaking any action taken by a Government as being in the best interest of anyone except whatever oligarchy controls that Government. However, I feel it should be mentioned that to make no distinction between some slum-trapped kid whooping PCP as a prelude to a night of mugging and an artist honing the edges of perception with Hashish is a sign of the worst sort of mental apathy. In the 60s, Acid was the panacea...in the 80s it's Tougher Laws. Our unbalanced natures can only comprehend extremes so we evolve in ever-tightening cycles. When the cycles get so tight that they can no longer be distinguished, we shall all revert to one-celled

animals and begin again at the Beginning.

When I first joined IJ, I wrote that "if you don't know it's 1984 by 1984 it will be 1984." Well, you didn't and it was and it is and to Thomas and all of you who look to Big Brother to solve your problems I say, with all tolerance...

Make LIGHT of IT

ROLDO

1/12/88

1232 Downing St.

Winnipeg, Man. R3E 2R7 CANADA

Dear Elayne:

Hi! I'm back and ready to get back in action. Just finished reading IJ 57 which came in yesterday's mail. Although I've refrained from comment these last few issues (which I'd attribute to the esteemed katlady except it really had nothing to do with her), I feel compelled to once again spout forth with my comments and observations for those interested. Uninterested persons may excuse themselves at this time and take a flying leap into the nearest box of Tidy-Cat-3. (Don't you just HATE their jingle? "One! It deoderizes better! Two! Absorbs like a real go-getter!" and so on.) Anyhow, here goes something:

DIARY OF THE ROCK FIEND: Yes! A resounding YES! (Think of David Letterman at this time.) Back zipper dresses, miniskirts (what about miniskirt-length dresses with back zippers, Anni?) I'm kinda ashamed to admit it, but I do want to clear the air and confess. I figure you folks have a right to know. My sister (who is not a part of the 7-year cycle and who I know was adopted despite what my mother says [she stuffed pillows under her dress for those long months while they waited for the paperwork to be approved])—anyhow, my sister used to refer to McDonald's as "Mickey D's" all the time. The first time my husband and I heard her we thought there was some kind of restaurant named Mickey D's that we hadn't seen yet. I think she finally quit it, about three or four years ago (she's 19 now). Come to think of it, she's got quite a few dresses with back zippers, too...

BACKWORDS LOGIC: brought back memories. Funny stuff.

PURGATORY PAPERS: Tom, you're not alone. But you're luckier than you might think. Imagine, if you will, a young woman in a fabric store. Her hair is a mess, her clothing is wrinkled after a long day, she has a large (okay, huge) purse slung over her shoulder and she is holding the hands of two rug rats (one of whom has just this day informed her that she needs a costume for the school something-or-other which is occurring tomorrow). Got the picture? Now, Tom, tell me, what would you say to the five or six dipschitz who will approach this poor woman and say, "Do you work here?"

HOMO PATROL: I'll tell you, I sleep better at night if I tell myself that this strip is based on a pair of real-life coppers who are out there keeping us Ay-mericans safe.

COMMERCIAL McCLUE-IN: What WAS that vibrator doing there?

FACE IT: I've read this somewhere else, haven't I? (Okay, I admit it, sometimes I take the liberty of giving folks a few sneak previews of upcoming IJ pieces over the phone...)

MICHAEL LENETSKY: stole my idea and I have witnesses who will swear that I thought of this essay first. Is it copyright infringement to steal someone's thoughts and columns-to-be? I mean, jeez, Michael, you're not the only one who realized that their albums come out in opposite years, they never tour at the same time, and they both sound the same (or almost). I wouldn't even believe seeing the two of them together on an awards show or something—surely with all his/her money, he/she can afford to have a robotron-Michael or a robotron-Janet made.

RECORDS ARE MADE TO BE BROKEN: My final comment for this issue. I laughed so hard my sides hurt. The really sad part is that I remembered all of the songs. I think they messed up, though, in not awarding the Captain and Tenille an award for that song they did called Woodchuck Love or whatever it was.

NOTE: Failure to mention your article doesn't mean it sucked. Just that I didn't mention it in trying to be brief and keep this thing at a reasonable length. Some of the other good articles included—ZENARCHY STORIES, THE FONT OF INSPIRATION, THE AUTO-CANNIBAL, PERSIA ON THE HUDSON AND A GOOD SEASON FOR OREOS, to name a few.

So, anyhow, Elayne, that's it for now. Hope I beat the deadline!

Usually,

KATHY STADALSKY

860 Hollywood Ave.

Sheffield Lake, OH 44054-2204

Hiiiiii, Elayne!

Got IJ #57 just in time to write about it here...but if I hadn't, I probably wouldn't be writing this at all. Whatever. Really enjoyed Jay Harber's spacey front cover. In "Caught Listening..." Daza makes a few astute comments on the discobeat plague. "Animation Update" was enjoyably meaty this issue, and I concur fully with Jed that any show with "...Kids, ...and Son," etc. is to be strictly avoided. McGuff's "Wolf Boy" was plenty eerie; is it true? "A Message from the Alien" was a hoot—hurrah for DeeBee! "Kid" Sieve—thank you for printing that irradiated food symbol...now we all know what to avoid. ("Radura symbol"? What Orwellian doublethink?) I'll have to put it in the "Marketing Experts from Beyond" storyline. Ken Burke's Elvis Quiz had some good chuckles. If people continue to mistake Tom Deja for a salesman, he might take the logical expedient of altering his wardrobe slightly, i.e., wearing a cooking pot on his head. Good to see Pru & Bunny yet again. Vern Grant's "Joanie Skips Lunch" was swell. Larry's "Wuss Songs" was full of truth and fun—how 'bout wuss songs of more recent vintage? Another award-winning

issue.

I'm wracking my poor brain to think of things to put in this letter, but it's January, whaddaya want? I could moan and bitch about the evasiveness of money, but so could everybody...Hey! Jay Harber told me about this weird pirate-TV version of Max Headroom that popped up during Doctor Who, appropriately enough: some guy in a mask ranting in an unintelligible electronic voice as a sheet of corrugated metal was waved behind him...and then he pulls down his drawers and gets spanked with a fly swatter! I heard it made the Channel 5 (NY) news, but I didn't see it—how many IJ readers did?

Well, I don't want this letter to be longer than the skimpy Snide Critic article herein, so I'll hit the off button...

Slack all over you,

JOHN P. MORGAN

185 Seabreeze Ave., #4

E. Keansburg, NJ 07734

Dear Elayne,

IJ #57 is here, gob less you, I was getting worried. I need my fix. But #56—enjoyed that story about the clown, and Anni Ackner's a scream. Haven't finished #57 yet, being hard at work in the middle of an Arnold Schwarzenegger story.

Have you noticed, Elayne, that most of the guys writing for this mag (myself included—wait a minute, I'm not writing for it, I'm writing to it) played lead guitar in bad rock and roll bands and took (in some mutant cases, still take) an awful lot of drugs? I can't tell you how nice it is to have something in common. Hey, come on, were you guys dope dealers too? Come on, admit it. Were you serious about it too? Level-headed? Did you save the best buds for yourself? Did you learn all the best Jimmy Page licks and then find out he was just sloppy but incredibly fast? Did you find out how Hendrix made that police siren sound (hit a harmonic and flip the pickup switch back and forth between the middle and bridge position) and how Jeff Beck did that little warbling sound by hammering a string down (real fast, repeatedly) on the top of a fret with his pick? Yeah, was it all well and good and then this guy named Eddie Van Halen (curse him) came along and ruined it for us all (except several demented California teenagers) and then Stevie Ray and Robert Cray came along and brought back a ray of hope but you haven't changed your strings now since 1984 and your wah-wah's so covered with dust that the pots screech like Wendy O. on a bad day or a night fighting with Chinese punks? Oh well, just wondering.

Would love to go to your party but...you remember Lon Chaney in "The Phantom of the Opera"...well...H.P. Lovecraft's "The Outsider?" These are the reactions I get if I show myself in public, especially if I haven't shaved in a while—I'm a Yassar Arafat look-alike. (I's okay, so's Ringo Starr. Besides, you're excused; you live in Ohio, you need to be excused for that, heh-heh...) So I'll be at home reading "George Bush - Party Animal" or getting drunk and going down to the overpass to throw bottles at cars, or home to my wife who says: "How come you only kiss me when I'm lying down?" as she chomps through a hoagie with insect speed...

But seriously now, I say, dipping my spoon in my soup and rowing for life, I suffer a skin disorder and my face looks like a bloody cabbage...so pardon me, Elayne, I love your mag and sign me up for more...

Sincerely,

ANDY ROBERTS

394 Hiler Road

Columbus, OH 43228

Dear Elayne:

To Anni Ackner—about unanswered question #3—I know! Dorian's "A Dip in the Plasma Pool" mentions a movie in which a pretty young woman turns into a bloodthirsty mutant. Similarly, Diana Ross turns into that dreadful-looking half-honky Michael Jackson. (Well, who turns into Janet, then? I'm confused.)

To Ace Backwords: Your sad story about your holy-roller friend reminds me of somebody's definition of "born again": "Twice too often..."

To the 4-Color Fiend: I managed to see and tape all five episodes of "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles." Unfortunately, my little brother managed to terminally screw it up in an attempt to remove the commercials. (Nice shot, jerk.) The first episode was good, although they really mangled the comic book. Also, are you going to review SPACED #13 (last in the series)?

Who is J.C. Brainbeau? (I think even J.C. asks that!)

To Rodny Dioxin: "A Good Season for Oreos—Part 3" inspired me to try to copy Anna's sketch—How d'you like it? (The sketch has been passed on to Pru, who will pass it on to Rodny no doubt...)

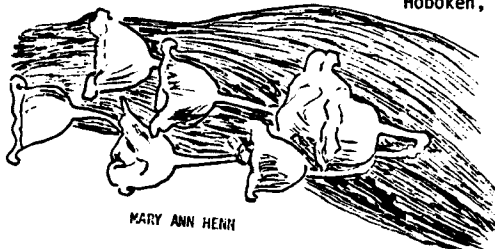
I think my favorite bit in this issue was "Humanist Propaganda in Good Sam." Some people will believe anything if you say it loudly enough.

(Oh yeah, the cover was really good, too.)

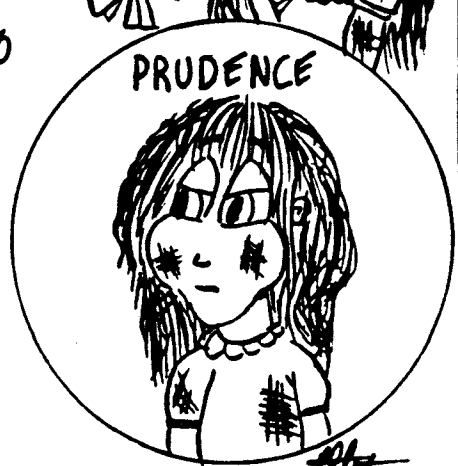
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