

# the omnium

**FREE** ENTERTAINMENT FOR OPEN MINDS

Part of the book  
elegant letters composing  
a well-timed epigraph.  
terrible secrets.  
hideous graffiti,  
observed  
perfectly preserved.  
skillfully deployed, inspiring invention,  
as cruel and as ugly  
woman  
in disguise,  
in need of  
shock  
I dare not touch for.  
new absurdities  
on the subject



NEWS FROM ALL DIMENSIONS

# ONE DIMENSION

Or, in this case, two dimensions. We received a letter from Andrew's parents in response to Issue #1. The Omnim is likely to be misunderstood or disliked by the more conservative members of society. Here are Andrew's Dad's comments and my replies. I wish more people would just come out and ask like this.

JW: We got the copies of your new magazine. I delayed writing to you because I wanted to digest it and think about it before responding. For non-professionals, you did a respectable job. All of you possess considerable writing skills and creative imaginations. The artwork is good also.

Jymi: Thanks! We're very proud of it.

JW: However, I do have some questions. Why are the illustrations mostly of a satanic-like creature, with horns and animal legs? In addition, some of the poems seem to be preoccupied with death. I find this disturbing...is this a gag, or do you take this seriously? Much of this is beyond my personal experience and understanding. I would appreciate some clarification so I can better understand what you're trying to communicate.

J: The illustrations are not mostly of demonic figures. It's true that there are two or three, and perhaps a few more that could be construed as such, but there are more drawings of normal humans, abstract doodles, and benevolent fantasy creatures than there are demonic portrayals.

I find some of the poetry disturbing, too. But the point of the magazine is not to be "safe"; it is to allow anyone who wishes to speak a place to do so. If someone feels depressed or angry and writes a poem about it, or writes a story dealing with social taboos, it's not my place to decide that their work shouldn't be printed. Suppressing bad feelings and odd interests, as if they were something to be ashamed of, and pretending that everything is always safe and happy is much more self-delusional and dangerous than allowing these feelings and inclinations to come out – as long as no one gets hurt. Offending people is not the point of our magazine, but it's often a side effect of self-expression and artistic experimentation. We welcome contributors with all kinds of different attitudes and methods of expression.

JW: What is "Gothic" that I have heard about? Please tell me how this is or is not connected with Satanism.

J: The most misunderstood aspect of Goth is the fascination with "morbid" themes and occultism. People don't seem to notice the romance, humor, drama and honor that go along with it. In my experience, most Goths are intelligent, independent thinkers, artistic, well-read, eager to learn, and curious about philosophical and spiritual concerns. Many are not satisfied with blind acceptance of religious teachings handed to them by other mortals who presume to know what God wants – they want to learn for themselves what spirituality is about, and make up their own minds. This leads many of them to study the occult, among other subjects.

Satanism is only one small part of occultism. Actually, it's mostly just a backlash to Christianity, and it's usually ridiculed by everyone else in the field. (I know that some people would label \*all\* occultism as Satanic. If you want to get into that, that's entirely another very long letter.) Satanism, in my opinion, is mostly just for shock value and an excuse to do whatever you want regardless of the consequences or who gets hurt. (Any Satanists out there care to comment? – J) Some Goths are Satanists – others are Christian, others are Jewish, others are Pagans, others are atheists, some haven't decided yet, and some can't

put a label on their religious beliefs. But most feel that Satanism is a very childish, selfish philosophy. When someone in a Goth crowd proclaims themselves to be a Satanist, the usual response is a collective rolling of the eyes and a quick touching-up of the black lipstick to hide a smirk.

JW: We noticed that Jymi had a Satanic bible. I just don't know what all this means.

J: Yes, I have one of those. I also have the Christian Bible, the Torah, the Bhagavad-Gita, an almost complete collection of Shel Silverstein's poetry for children, and all of my science textbooks from college. As an outcast teenager, the Satanic Bible was very appealing to me. Now I think it's silly at best, and dangerous at worst. I have kept the book partially for sentimental reasons (boy, \*that\* must sound weird), and partially because my bookshelf is eclectic and although I don't agree with all of the ideas in all of my books, I like to have references so that I can better understand those who do.

JW: You always put down organized religion. What you're dealing with is in its way just as organized as the big three, if you assume it as a way of life.

J: I'm not sure what you're talking about here. What is it that you think we're dealing with? If you're assuming that we're Satanists, I hope I have put that worry to rest for you: We are not. Nor are any of our friends. (They may be angry, depressed, confused, or just plain weird, but we don't know any Satanists.) The "Satan" thing is the kind of crap I get from total strangers who think they know what I'm about just by looking at me and seeing that I'm different from them – they're "good"; I don't look like them and they don't understand my style; they behave as though I'm challenging their very way of life; they feel threatened; therefore, I must be "bad".

JW: Andrew, we need some assurance that you're not going off the deep end with this stuff. All we can think about is the lunatic group in San Diego last year that killed themselves so they could catch that big rocket ship in the sky. I suspect all they achieved was death.

J: That was a cult, a group of people who, by my definition, could not be bothered to think for themselves and realize the foolishness of the things their leader was asking them to do. All too often, people are too lazy or afraid to face life without some kind of authority figure telling them what to do and what to think. It's much safer that way, and you don't have to take responsibility for yourself. Personally, I hope that those people DID find their rocketship. However, if someone told Andrew and me to poison ourselves so that we could all go visit the Martians, we would waste no time in telling them exactly where they could put their magical comet.

I don't understand what this has to do with the Omnim. We're not asking people to follow us, we're not asking anyone to come and lead us, and we absolutely do not condone suicide or other harmful things as an answer to life's problems. All the magazine is supposed to be about is an exploration of other people's ideas, beliefs, and interests, presented in an artistic format.

CONT'D ON PAGE 5

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DO NOT REPRINT WITHOUT PERMISSION. STEALING  
IS NAUGHTY. THE OMNIM SUPPORTS FREE SPEECH,  
ENCOURAGES CREATIVE EXPRESSION, AND MAKES  
THE NEIGHBORS NERVOUS. KNOW THYSELF.  
"DO AS THOU WILT" IS NOT A LICENSE TO RUN AMOK,  
NOR DOES IT IMPLY LACK OF CONSEQUENCE.

## the OMNIM:

PROMOTING INTER-DIMENSIONAL  
COMMUNICATION SINCE AUGUST.

### THE CAST:

**BETH DRAGON** ~

WISE AND WINGED WONDER

**STEEVIGH # FURTER** ~

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**LISA LEVALLEY** ~

FAERIE QUEEN AND  
KEEPER OF LACES

**DOREEN GRULKE** ~

AFRO NATIVE BUDDA GIRL

**SANDOR SNOW** ~

SEEKER, STUDENT, TEACHER,  
FINDER

**ANDREW WALLACE** ~

LEONINE BRINGER OF  
TEA AND JUICE

**JYMI 1/0** ~

DEATHLING FRIEND,  
QUANTUM MAGE

**GUEST STARS:** ---

**VIVIFY ZERO** ~

REMEMBERS.

**DAVE NORDENBROCK** ~

DRAWS METICULOUS WALTERS

**JENNIE NORDENBROCK** ~

DRAWS WILD WALTERS

**DAN NORDENBROCK** ~

NO WALTERS, BUT WITTY!

**ENCHANTED SHAR** ~

VISITING FROM THE END OF  
THE WORLD

**JONATHAN ERICKSON** ~

A CHILD SHALL LEAD US

**DENISE RENIGER**

TAKES LOVELY TREE PHOTOS  
AND LETS US MESS WITH 'EM

**CARRIE DOYLE** ~

HERB IS ALMOST DONE!

**ZUUL** ~

BENEVOLENT ORG HORROR

**ENTROPY** ~

HALF TREE, HALF DEITY

**ANGELA** ~

DRAWS IN BLOOD

**FEATURED ARTIST:**

**RB HART**

"MUST...GLUE...CHICKENS..."

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### SEE THIS LINE?

IT'S CALLED A 'GUIDELINE', AND YOU'LL SEE MANY LIKE IT THROUGHOUT THIS ISSUE! THESE ARE MAGICAL TOOLS THAT WE USE IN GRAPHIC ARTS TO HELP US GET THE TYPE STRAIGHT ON THE LAYOUT PAPER. WHAT'S SO MAGICAL ABOUT GUIDELINES? THEY'RE DRAWN WITH A BLUE-PENCIL ~ AND THAT DOESN'T SHOW UP ON THE PROOFS! THAT'S RIGHT, COPY MACHINES CAN'T SEE THEM! ISN'T THAT AMAZING?

MY GOD,  
WHAT WILL  
THEY THINK  
OF NEXT?

## Submission Guidelines

***The Omnium** is dedicated to providing a forum for thoughts and ideas from all beings regardless of species, alignment, perspective or plane of origin. We realize that it may be difficult to contact us from another dimension, but please try. If you can reach the postal service on our plane, write to us. If that doesn't work, find us on the Internet. If all else fails, we're willing and able to channel.*

*We cannot presently provide financial payment for any submissions we use, but we'll be happy to send you some copies of the issue in which your work appears so that you don't have to go hunting for it. If you want your work returned to you, please provide a SASE with your submission. All copyrights revert to the author upon publication.*

*Don't be shy — nothing's too weird (or too tame) for us, and we're not so much concerned with "technical skill" as we are with originality, personality and sincerity.*

UPDATE: THE LEAD GOLD TURNED INTO BRONCHITIS. IF YOU TALK - WEIRD BEFORE I WAIT TILL YOU SEE WHAT I CAN DO ON PREScription MEDICINE AND NICOTINE WITHDRAWL... I'VE BEEN IN BED FOR 4 DAYS WITH NO ONE TO TALK TO... HEEEEEHEEEHEEE...

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## THE OMNIUM

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**"GREAT FUN."**

**"YOU'LL EVEN SCREAM**

## FEATURED ARTIST \*

Our Featured Artist this month is R.B. Hart. We happen to think that he's very Fluxus. (Look it up.) His work in this issue consists of those odd little line drawings that look like he did them with his eyes closed because he did, and some great poetry that looks like it was cut out of newspapers. It was.

R.B.: As this is the first interview, I hope it doesn't take up the full fifteen minutes of fame and I have some time left to hang out with some anorexic fashion models and cheezy agents with cool names like Scooter and Babs.

Omnium: Gee-golly-gosh, where do you get your ideas?

R.B.: Your surroundings are awash with ideas. You just have to pick out the ones you can handle. Follow through is everything.

O: Finish this sentence: "I don't know much about art, but..."

R.B.: "I'm learning."

O: What is right, and what is wrong, with art today?

R.B.: What is wrong is that the dadists declared everyone an artist and now there are too many artists. What's right is that with all these artists it is no longer possible for the cultural elite to control what is offered to the public.

O: Would you say that you're an artist?

R.B.: Duchamp said something about art being what I say it is, and if you are making art you must be an artist...see?

O: 5, five, five...five. Let's sing a song of five.

R.B.: "I saw the figure five in gold"

O: What would you do if someone handed you two perch fillets, a pile of sawdust and a backhoe?

R.B.: I would fry the perch in lime butter, spread the sawdust around the geraniums, and sell the backhoe so I could buy a Contax G2.

O: What sorts of trinkets will always catch your eye?

R.B.: Chicken related items as well as Art Deco figurines.

Ghosts are just my imagination.  
Merlin is just a faerie tale guy.  
Magic isn't real.  
...right?

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From " ~~Bus stop~~ "  
"Bus stop"  
A SERIES OF PEOPLE  
DRAWN BLIND FROM  
MEMORY.



-REALITY CHECK-

# ?WHAT? DID THEY SAY?

## OUR PARENTS + OUR FRIENDS = OUR FEEDBACK!

CONT'D FROM PAGE 2...

JW: The underlying theme (of the magazine) is very disturbing to traditional people like us... as far as we are concerned, it's OK for you to do anything you want as long as it's not illegal or fattening. However, I don't want you to get involved in something that could be emotionally or psychologically damaging.

J: Oh-oh...I don't think we're doing anything illegal, but I have recently developed a great fondness for Buddy Bars...

The underlying theme is that everyone creates their own version of Reality, and we want to share our versions, and learn about (not necessarily participate in) other peoples' ideas. Far from being damaging, we're finding the whole experience to be fun, enlightening, entertaining, and stimulating to our own creativity. You, obviously, have a very different version of Reality than I do, and mine is different from Andrew's, and his is different from Steevigh's...etc. I think the magazine has already begun to fulfill its purpose, right here - you and I are now sharing our versions of Reality, and I hope we can both come away from the discussion with a greater sense of each other's cultures and personal beliefs. We don't have to agree with each other, but I believe that the more we understand other people, the better we can understand ourselves.

Your letter taught me that I cannot simply write off everyone who jumps to conclusions about my friends and me as ignorant fools, for I know that you are not an ignorant fool. In the future, I will try to be more understanding when I encounter such attitudes. And I hope that you will not see Punks, Goths or other "different" people as dangerous freaks, Satanists, or stupid kids in need of therapy.

JW: I suggest that you show a copy of this to Dr. H\_\_\_\_ tell him about my concerns, and ask his opinion. I think it might be good for you to get an objective response from someone other than your parents, someone who is not emotionally involved. I discussed this with M\_\_\_\_ G\_\_\_\_. Her reaction was similar to mine, particularly about the Satanic illustrations and the themes of preoccupation with death.

J: By all means, we'd like as many people as possible to see our work. If you're looking for people to tell you that we all need psychological help, you'll certainly find them. Lots of people are quick to condemn something they don't understand. Jumping to conclusions and subsequent condemnation is a nice, easy solution for those who want to believe that their way is always Right, that it should be Right for everyone, and feel threatened by any suggestion to the contrary. I don't know Ms. G\_\_\_\_, but I hope that she will not fuel any fires of paranoia.

JW: I hope it turns out that Mom and I are just over-reacting. We eagerly await your reply. Please reassure us. You're all we have.

J: Yes, you're overreacting. We are not Satanists. We have no desire to kill ourselves, or cause any harm to anyone. We don't have any interest in joining or starting a cult. We may have some ideas that you find odd, but I hope that I have been able to allay any fears. All we want to do is produce a good magazine that's thought provoking and fun for people to read. If someone doesn't enjoy reading it, then they can simply put it down. I know we can't convince everyone to think like us and share our values and interests, and I wouldn't dream of trying. If everyone had the same ideas the world would be very boring and there wouldn't be anything to write about.

Dr. and Mrs. Wallace tell us they are relieved that their anxieties were unfounded. We hope that they will enjoy this and future issues, and thank them for helping to bridge yet another gap between Realities.

"OH, WOW, YOU ACTUALLY DID IT."

-MOST FOLKS

"I leave it up to the readers."

to document chaos

Vol. 1 was a bestseller,

business has taken over

imposing

its own form

new culture

to turn a

blind eye

SPEAK NOW or FOREVER HOLD YOUR PEACE

BETH'S  
PARENTS  
HAVEN'T  
READ  
IT YET!

LISA  
DIDN'T EVEN  
GIVE  
HER

PARENTS  
A COPY,  
BUT HER  
HUSBAND  
THOUGHT  
IT WAS  
NEAT.

HAROLD BELIEVES US NOW!  
SEND  
US MAIL!

PO BOX 120053  
KENTWOOD MI  
49512

Dont forget your mortality  
You can do anything if you put your  
mind to it, only to HAVE it snuffed out  
in the lack of a heartbeat

So much reduced to a nothingth, a  
fading memory.

It is a darkness that can not be, and  
yet ever is forgotten

It can undo all

ONE MUST remember it so that life can  
be grasped and not taken for a right

It is a privilege

-VivifyZERO-

Note to the critics: This short ponderance (for it is not  
a poem, more a soliloquy really) is not about death.

It is about remembering to live.

Los Angeles

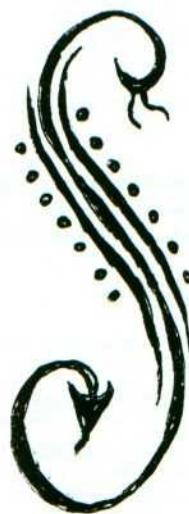
■ A homeless man stacks rocks,

## Farmer dies

The real story

He is stacking rocks,  
and some call it art.

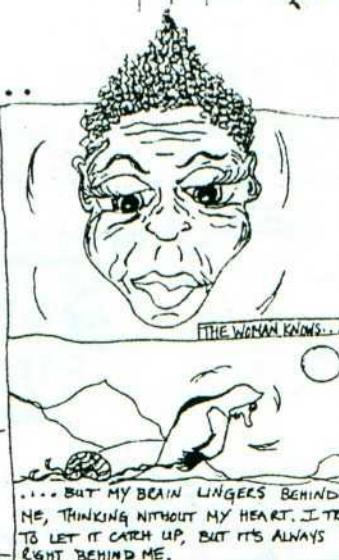
armed misfits who  
prey on decent citizens.



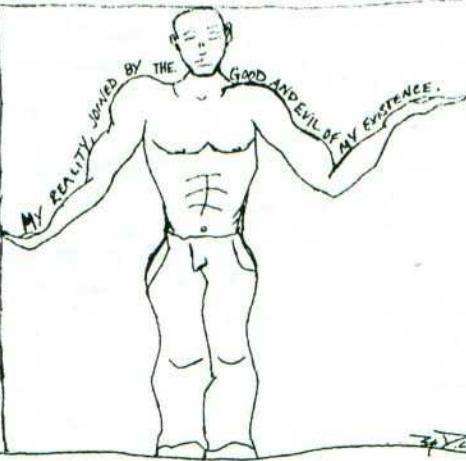
IT SPEAKS....



I CAN'T THINK  
STANDING ON THE DARK  
EDGE OF MORTALITY, I  
SEE NOTHING BUT A  
GLOWING CRESCENT.  
IS IT REAL?



THE WOMAN KNOWS...



MY REALITY JOINED BY THE  
GOOD AND EVIL OF MY EXISTENCE.

.... BUT MY BRAIN LINGERES BEHIND  
ME, THINKING WITHOUT MY HEART. I TRY  
TO LET IT CATCH UP, BUT IT'S ALWAYS  
RIGHT BEHIND ME.

# Another chapter of the Ongoing Adventures of Whodi-Boy

by Andrew

Summer, 1992.

A time in my life that I will never forget, no matter how hard I might try (though I haven't bothered trying, as of yet). Besides turning 21 (and we all remember how that went, don't we?) the most memorable event that happened was the arrival of Whodi-Boy, ready to take on Santa Barbara City College with rigorous academic enthusiasm. Now, I know the mental picture of Whodi-Boy in a classroom is a hard one to accept, but trust me...it did happen, if only once or twice. Oh well, at least he went once, right? Heh. Whodi. Whodi-ur.

Whodi-Boy's father, Billy-Mack (he changed it to William Michael when he turned 18, but we still called him Billy-Mack to fuck with him...it was fun, and I really think he enjoyed it, actually) had come out to Santa Barbara with Geoff to help get his son all moved into his new apartment. Billy-Mack was staying at the Sheraton, which is right on the beach, a couple of blocks away from the Por la Mar apartments, which is where Whodi-Boy now lived. Billy-Mack was only supposed to stay out there for a week, but ended up staying for three. He claimed that he was having too much fun with us. As you probably remember from my last segment in the Whodi-Boy saga, Brother Geoff likes to drink. Well, let's just say that he's a regular alcoholic chip of the ol' block.

I can remember several funny things about hanging out with the father of He Who Is Known As Whodi-Boy. They usually happened the same way. I'd be finishing up working at Crown Books. Whodi-Boy and our friend Tom Lohshus would pick me up right around 6:00 pm or so. The three of us would then drive to the Sheraton. We'd be feeling perfectly fine and silly when we pulled into the hotel's parking lot. When we walked into Billy-Mack's hotel room the ol' boy was, sprawled out on the couch, limbs splayed to and fro...I'm talking about some serious contortion. There was also a big bottle of Absolut vodka that was maybe 14% full on the table next to his empty glass. He was snoring, quite loudly actually. I started laughing. Whodi-Boy woke up his already drunken father and he sat slowly up, his white hair completely messed and standing in about 4 different directions. He got up and staggered to the bathroom, not saying a word to any of us. The three of us looked at each other, giggling softly so Billy-Mack wouldn't hear. After a couple of minutes, the toilet flushed and Whodi-Boy Sr. emerged from the bathroom, greeting us with a big grin and a, "Well now, y'all ready to get some eatuns? And lookie here, it's the Bobsey twins!!"

Tom and I were the Bobsey twins, as far as Billy-Mack was concerned. He loved to mess with us (me especially), going off about how he wanted to cut our ponytails off and glue them to the end of a stick. Anyway, we went down to the restaurant for dinner. Aside from getting more and more drinks with our food, nothing really interesting would happen until after dinner, when the four of us would drive to Fig & Haley. That was a new pool place on the corner of the streets Figeroa and Haley (hence the catchy name... clever, huh?) It was a really cool place though, before the typical Santa Barbara/UCSB yuppie types kind of overran it. However, we went there when it was still cool. We'd be in their back room, which had its own table, stereo system that you could supply the music for if you wanted, direct access to the bar and lots of comfortable black leather couches and chairs. I would have loved those in my living room. Anyway, we'd be drinking tons of beer and playing

game after game of nine ball. Billy-Mack would be absolutely shit-faced by this time, and would start saying all sorts of funny things. Sometimes he'd start in on the, "Bobsey Twins" routine. Other times, he'd want to bet. He had this fascination with my hair. He used to try to get me to bet it. One time I told him, "Sure, I'll bet my hair if you'll bet me the deed to one of your dealerships, or controlling interest in one of your many corporations, Tiger!"

That got me his trademark response, "That's a bu-bunch of bu-buh-bullshit, boy!" Which is how his attempts to acquire my hair usually ended. He'd then start in on Whodi-Boy. One time he actually got Geoff to bet his hair, and Geoff lost! Of course, he welched on the bet. That really pissed off Billy-Mack. I drove him back to the hotel and received an earful about gambling practices in the lovely state of Tennessee.

"Nah-naow-now in Tennessee, a gambling man pays his debts. A man do-doesn't \*burrrp\* gamble without being ready to pay his debt. Ah-ah-I didn't raise no we-welcher son, no I didn't!" he adamantly declared, gesturing wildly in accompaniment to his monologue.

"Any welcher son," I corrected as we pulled into his parking spot in the hotel's parking structure.

The rest of that night was really funny, but I don't want to go into it here. That can wait for a special "Billy-Mack exclusive" story. Suffice it to say, Whodi-Boy Sr. put on a great show. I felt bad for Brother Geoff, though.

I had the day off from work the next day, so Whodi-Boy picked me up around 2:00 in the afternoon. We were hungry and decided to go to Peabody's, a great bar and grill type of place in Montecito (a really stuck up area of Santa Barbara) that was right on the beach. Actually, Peabody's was at the edge of a cliff that overlooked the beach, and when you sat at the bar and gazed out the huge window that was behind the bar, you could see the Pacific Ocean. The view was awesome.

Walter was behind the bar when we walked in. "Hey guys," he grinned. "How's it going?"

"Pretty cool," we replied as we sat down at the bar. Walter was all smiles and such that day, his daughter Cayenna had been born a couple of weeks earlier. He proudly showed us the many photos he'd taken. I had my usual, a killer grilled beef sandwich with grilled mushrooms, onions and peppers and a Mai Tai to drink. Walter takes great pride in his drinkmaking ability. He's really damn good at it. Before my first sip of the Mai Tai, Walter would always be sure to point out how the Mayas (or however it's spelled) floated on top of the other liquors in the glass, and he'd wait for us to marvel at the different colorations and shades of orange before giving the green light to drink. Whodi-Boy had his usual, too...five shots of Jackie and a Newcastle to chase the shots down. After Walter brought out our food and drinks, Whodi-Boy grabbed one shot of Jack Daniels in each hand, waved at me and uttered "Byee-Byeeeeee" in a falsetto voice, a manic grin plastered on his face (no doubt a result of all the happy thoughts dancing and prancing throughout his head in anticipation of impending drunkenness) and down both shots at the same time. A grimace, wiping the mouth with the back of his hand, a swig of Newcastle and two more shots went down the ol' hatch. Whodi-Boy then looked up at me, face splitting in a huge grin.

"He-hey man, know what the ol' man said after you and Tom left last night?" he asked.

"Nope," I replied as I munched. "What did the ol' goat say?"

"That he's go-gonna monitor my sp-spending an shit. The ba-bastard put a \$3,000 limit on my credit cards!" Whodi-Boy exclaimed loudly, getting a couple of strange looks and raised eyebrows from the other people nearby.

CONT'D NEXT PAGE...

I'm searching in desperation for a soul lost in the forest deep in this my reality screaming for it to come back to me hoping for relief

by Sandy



In Cuba

exhibition

suspension

Relations

may be forbidden,

illicit tourism

is rampant,

superficiality

Sam is alluring, taunting them.

FRIDAY, JULY 23, 1999

## WHODI CONT'D

"What fucking nerve," I said sarcastically. "Imagine, your father putting a limit on the amount of his money that you can spend at one time." "He-hey man," Whodi-Brat protested. "It's mah-my money. My credit cards, man!" He emphasized his point by slamming the fifth and last shot of Jackie and ordering a triple shot of, "Jackie an' Cokie".

"Sure, Whodi-Crap...they're your credit cards," I said as I finished my food and drink. "But whose money pays the card bills at the end of the month?"

Whodi-Boy thought about it for a minute, sipping on his drink as soon as it arrived. A couple of minutes later, he answered my question with, "Uh, he does...little ol' m-mah-man..."

I laughed at Whodi-Boy as he sorted his logic, paying for our stuff while Whodi-Boy's cerebral hamster nearly ran its wheel off the track.

"He-hey Brother An-Andrew, I got a great idea!!" he blurted, swaying from side to side, one hand holding up his head, the other clutching his drink. "Let's go to Circuit City so I can buy some new stereo shit!!"

Heh. Whodi-Boy had just finished telling me about how he now has to be more careful with his spending, and now he wants to go on a spree that will be at least \$2,000. But what can we say? That's Whodi-Boy for ya!

"Okay, Brother Geoff. I'll drive though. You can't even stagger in a straight line." I said as we walked out towards his car.

He didn't seem to mind, being more concerned with what exactly he was going to buy. It was hysterical, watching him out of the corner of my eye as I drove along the 101 north freeway, between glances at the almost violet-indigo ocean (the light was hitting it at the perfect angle) on my left side. Whodi-Boy was gleefully rubbing both of his hands together, having a serious discussion with himself about what to buy. "Okay man, first I'm gettin' a new equalizer, an-and a power amp, and 2 pa-pairs of surround speakers..."

We pulled into Circuit City and found a spot near the entrance. Whodi-Boy undid his seat belt, opened his door and leaned outside. I was already out of the car and wondering just what the fuck Whodi-Monster was doing now. He appeared to puke up a couple of mouthfuls worth of bile, held them in his mouth for a couple of seconds and spat the puke on the car next to us.

"Fucking Ford piece of sh-shit," he said, smearing leftover Jack Daniels and coke across his cheek and the back of his hand.

I grabbed Whodi-Boy, who would have been perfectly content to stand there and criticize the mustang he vomited on until the owner showed up and we headed inside. I found J.T., a salesperson who had helped me pick out a really cool answering machine a couple of weeks before. Knowing that they make most of their money from commission sales, I purposely had J.T. see to Whodi-Creature.

An hour later, J.T. grinned at me as he rang up the last of Whodi-Boy's stuff. "Looks like I'm gonna be able to afford that motorcycle after all," he laughed, shaking Whodi-Boy's hand. "Thanks a bunch, and see me if you need anything, okay Geoff?"

"Sure man," Whodi-Boy happily said. "No problem."

We got the stuff loaded into his car and headed back to Whodi's crypt. Brother Geoff was really looking forward to, "Sitting on mah-my high-backed leather chair, my feet on my glass to-topped table, listening to my new stuff!"

Watching him try to set up his new stereo, television, amplifier, equalizer, tuner and surround sound system was one of the funniest things a person could ever hope to see. Know what the coolest thing about it was? Getting to sit on all that, "Mo-mmm-modern contemporary furniture."



### THE.SEY.

THE.SEY.WAS.

FILD.WITH.

ADVENCHRS.

BUT.THE.ADVENC'S

IN.THE.SEY.WER.

VARRE.DANGERAS.

SHIPS.SHND.AN.

SHRDS.AND.OTHR.

DANGERAS.THGS.

THR.WAS.TRASHR.

THAT.WAS.

HIDAN.

BY.JONATHAN.



Screaming chaos all around  
Yet I sit not making a sound  
Laughing at the impending doom  
It will all be over soon  
People try to run and hide  
Making last confessions with tears in their eyes  
But what do you say when you know  
it's the end  
What is the last message you send  
I see a priest out on the street  
There's a character I'd like to meet  
He would probably make me though  
So I lay back and watch the show  
All the channels are signing off  
Leaving me with my wicked thoughts  
With a fork in my hand I poke  
the world  
A place I think is so absurd  
All the people, all their sins  
Never did they think that I would win  
I lick my lips and flash a grin  
So much trouble that they'll be in  
I am patient I can wait  
Let them all meet their fate  
One by one they'll walk into the realm  
One by one I'll overwhelm  
Not much more time to go  
I smile and watch the flow  
Patience now...in due time  
I light a cigarette and watch  
the world die

-Enchanted Star



Once upon a time

I was a tree

facing the wind

sturdily

Once upon a time

I was the rain

falling forever

feeling no pain

Once upon a time

I was the sand

running through the fingers

of people's hands

Once upon a time

I wasn't me

living the life

that was meant to be

by Sandy

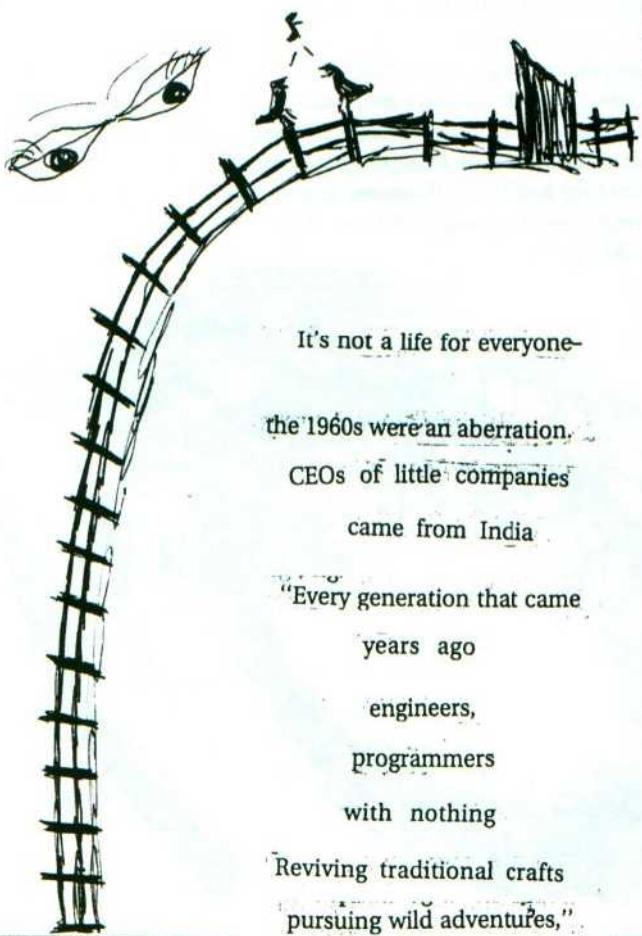
# Dirty Realism



## Wet Work Nasty Business

### Peepshow

### Love,



It's not a life for everyone—

the 1960s were an aberration.

CEOs of little companies

came from India.

"Every generation that came

years ago

engineers,

programmers

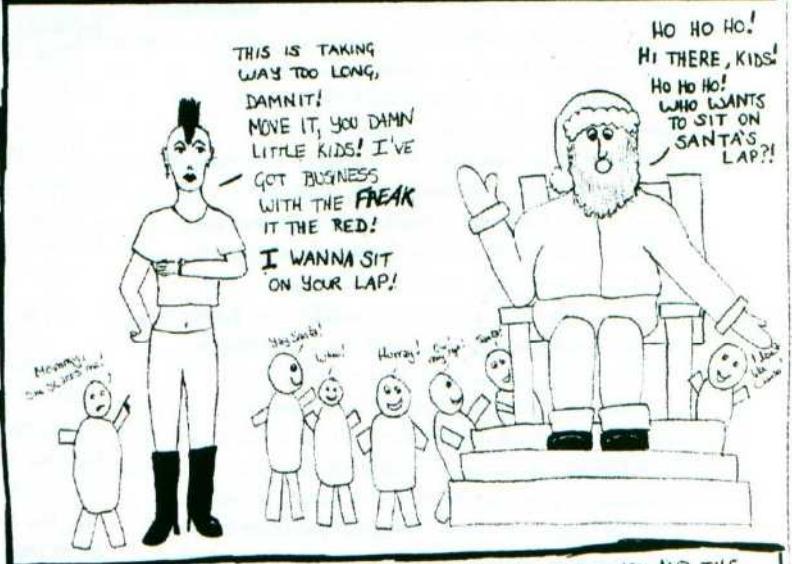
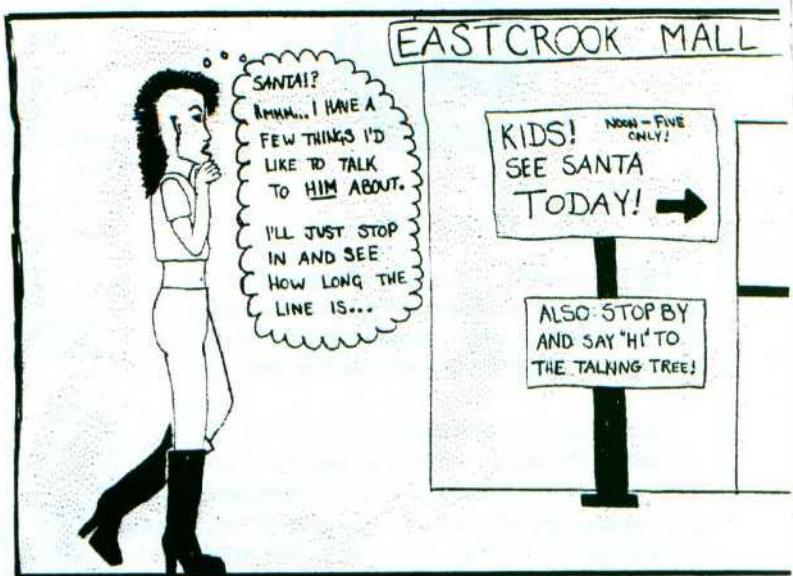
with nothing

Reviving traditional crafts

pursuing wild adventures,"

# THRASH WILDLY

by Steevigh



METAPHYSICS: BRANCH OF PHILOSOPHY

THAT ADDRESSES THE PROBLEM OF

WHAT IS REAL

$$-1 = \emptyset = 1$$



## If I Were Queen

*Being Queen isn't always fun and games. It is a very serious job. There are so many things that need to be improved in this world and only one of me. (Sigh!) Oh well. Such is life.*

*Today I am getting ready for a parade. I am, of course, the main attraction at this event. Everyone will be there with their children and parents and grandparents, all trying to get a glimpse of Her Majesty. I wonder if they would try so hard if I weren't so bloody rich. Would I be such an attraction then?*

*My matrons have just finished helping me dress in my most beautiful dark blue velvet gown. I really hope this parade will raise a good sum of money for my charities. I do hate to see people suffer...I think I will wear my diamond and sapphire tiara...yes, that will be perfect. The poor and the homeless have every right to prosper and live as well as any citizen...Where is my bloody necklace!? To see them in such misery, roaming the streets begging for money just breaks my heart. How can anyone ignore such a sad sight as that? It saddens me more when people witness such horrible situations as that and still aren't thankful for the things that they have. Always whining and griping about what they don't have err...What do you mean you can't find my dark blue pumps? I thought you were a wardrobe planner? That means you plan...in advance....so that this doesn't happen! What the bloody hell am I going to do now?! Wear shoes that don't match my dress?! People are waiting downstairs to see me in all my glory, dressed to the nines, and all they are going to see is that my shoes don't match my bloody dress!!! What do you mean we'll just go get another pair? Are you going to run down to bloody Payless Shoes and say, "Excuse me, the Queen needs a pair of shoes made of the finest dark blue velvet found in a country that I can't even bloody pronounce, and I need them within the hour please for she is expected to make an appearance this afternoon?!" Is that what you call planning a wardrobe? What the bloody hell am I going to do now?!*

*What was I saying?...oh yes, people whining about what they don't have. I hate that. Anyway, I hope to tackle the homeless problem somehow; I just haven't come up with a fool-proof plan yet.*

*Driving to the parade gave me a chance to witness first hand once again the sad vision of people slumped next to garbage cans, pushing shopping carts full of empty bottles and things. How I hate to see people so down and out on their luck.*

*We started driving through a more industrial area of town. I had never noticed the incredible amount of abandoned buildings and mini malls for sale. They're just sitting there not being used. I ask my driver to stop and write down the address. I call the royal financial advisor and ask why these buildings are just sitting there. He explained that they were once businesses that couldn't get their feet off the ground and fell through. The buildings probably won't sell, he told me, because they are not in a thriving location.*

*"Do you mean they're just going to sit here and not be used at all?" I asked.*

*"Oh no," he said, "someone will buy them."*

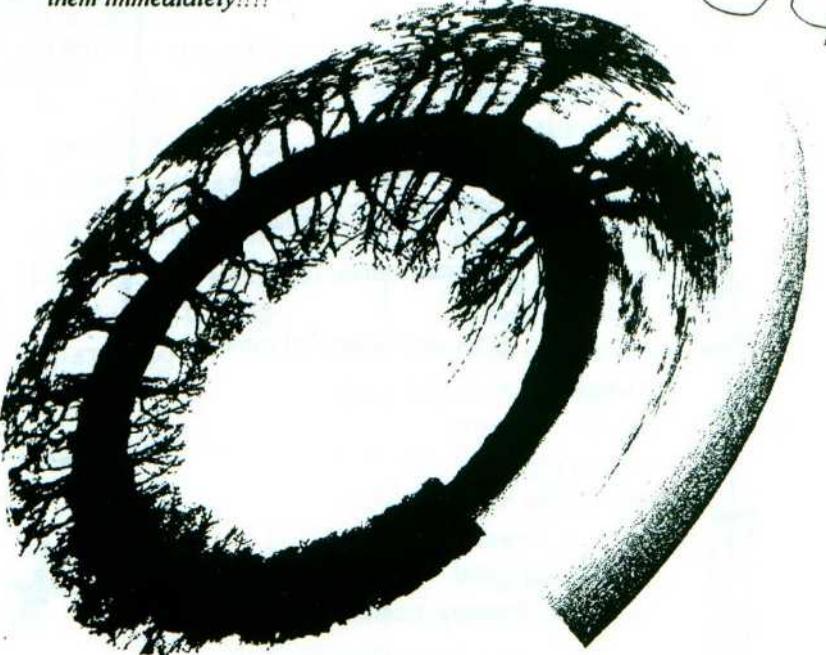
*"But you just said no one wants to buy them because their business won't thrive here."*

*"Well," he replied, "they probably won't use the buildings at all. It's not a great location for a business, but it's a perfect location for an extra parking lot!"*

*"AAAAAAAAARRRRRRRRRRGGGGGGGGGGHHHHHHHH!" I exclaimed, "Do you mean to tell me we have a city full of homeless people, a ton of abandoned buildings that no business man in his right mind would take even if it were given to him free of charge and the best solution that is thought of is to make them into parking lots?!!!! If anyone is going to buy these buildings it's going to be me! Buy them immediately!!!!"*

WHAT A MAN ACTUALLY NEEDS IS NOT THE DISCHARGE OF A TENSIONLESS STATE BUT RATHER THE STRIVING AND STRUGGLING FOR SOME GOAL WORTHY OF HIM. WHAT LIE NEEDS IS NOT THE DISCHARGE OF TENSION AT ANY COST, BUT THE CALL OF A POTENTIAL MEANING WAITING TO BE FULFILLED BY HIM.

~ VIKTOR E. FRANKL



After the parade I immediately met with my royal advisors and shared with them my plan. Each building will be big enough to contain multiple apartments in which people will be housed. In addition, since these buildings are all centrally located, the mini mall that is in the middle of the other buildings will be turned into a soup kitchen / medical center. There will be a detoxification center added and I will employ social workers to build a case file on each and every homeless person out there. They will each be evaluated as to whether they are mentally and physically capable to have a job, and those who are will be found one. Whether it is out in the world or a position helping at the shelters, they will have work. For those who are not capable, there will be a special facility made to house just them. All will be given a chance to live full, prosperous lives. In fact, I intend to pass a law making it illegal to be homeless. Anyone caught being homeless will automatically be housed, fed and clothed. No one will go hungry again in my country.

I stopped talking long enough to look at the faces of my advisors. Instead of the happy cheers and screams of delight I expected to hear, there was a deafening silence. Their jaws were dropped open, and looks of ghastly horror were on their faces.

"Where do you intend to get the money for all of this, Your Majesty?" they asked. "A program like that can cost millions! Our money is tied up in too many other programs to support one with such expensive needs."

"What the bloody hell do you mean? I'm filthy rich! People donate money to my causes all the time! Millions! Where has all of that money gone? Why are there still thousands of homeless people roaming the streets!?"

"Your Majesty, it takes money to make money. All of these functions and parades take money to have. Rich people will not donate unless they are given adequate entertainment in return. A good portion of the money we make is put back into the functions we hold to make more money for your charities!"

"Well how the bloody hell do you expect us to get anywhere doing it that way?" I asked. "Do you mean to tell me, we actually do make enough money to solve this problem but we're too busy entertaining the people who donate the money because they won't donate as much if we don't show them a good time?"

"Yes, Your Majesty."  
"Wouldn't that count as bribery?"  
-silence-

"Yes, I believe it would," replied my royal attorney with a sly, nasty grin befitting his personality.

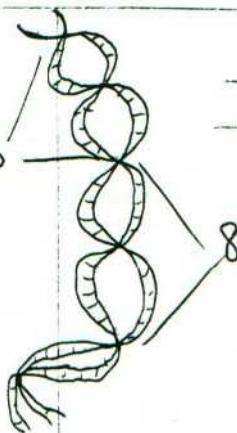
"Well then, if they are being bribed and they come anyway, are they not in fact accepting the bribe?" I asked.

"Yes Your Majesty," he replied once again.  
"Is that not, in fact, against my laws?"  
"Yes it is," he said.  
"Get me their names."

Well six months later, the homeless shelters are a complete success. My approval rating has reached an all time high among most of my subjects....most of them. A select few are not too happy with my decision to go through with the idea. I guess helping others was not in their agenda.... Or could it be the amount they had to pay for bail? Well, it's not like they couldn't afford it. After all, they did break the law. I can't go around letting things like that slide. The fact that I raised the bail for that specific offense moments before their arrests only proves how strongly I detest such a blatant criminal act. Why, if they break one law, one so serious, who knows what other laws they may break. I cannot allow people like that roaming my streets, now, can I? I have a responsibility to my people.

Thank goodness they packed up and left as soon as they bailed themselves out. It's also a shame that I had to replace my entire business advisory committee, but they committed a crime as well. Fortunately, everything worked out. While talking to many of the people who showed their gratitude for their new homes, I encountered quite a few people with just the qualifications I've been looking for in committee members. Don't you love it when everything falls into place?

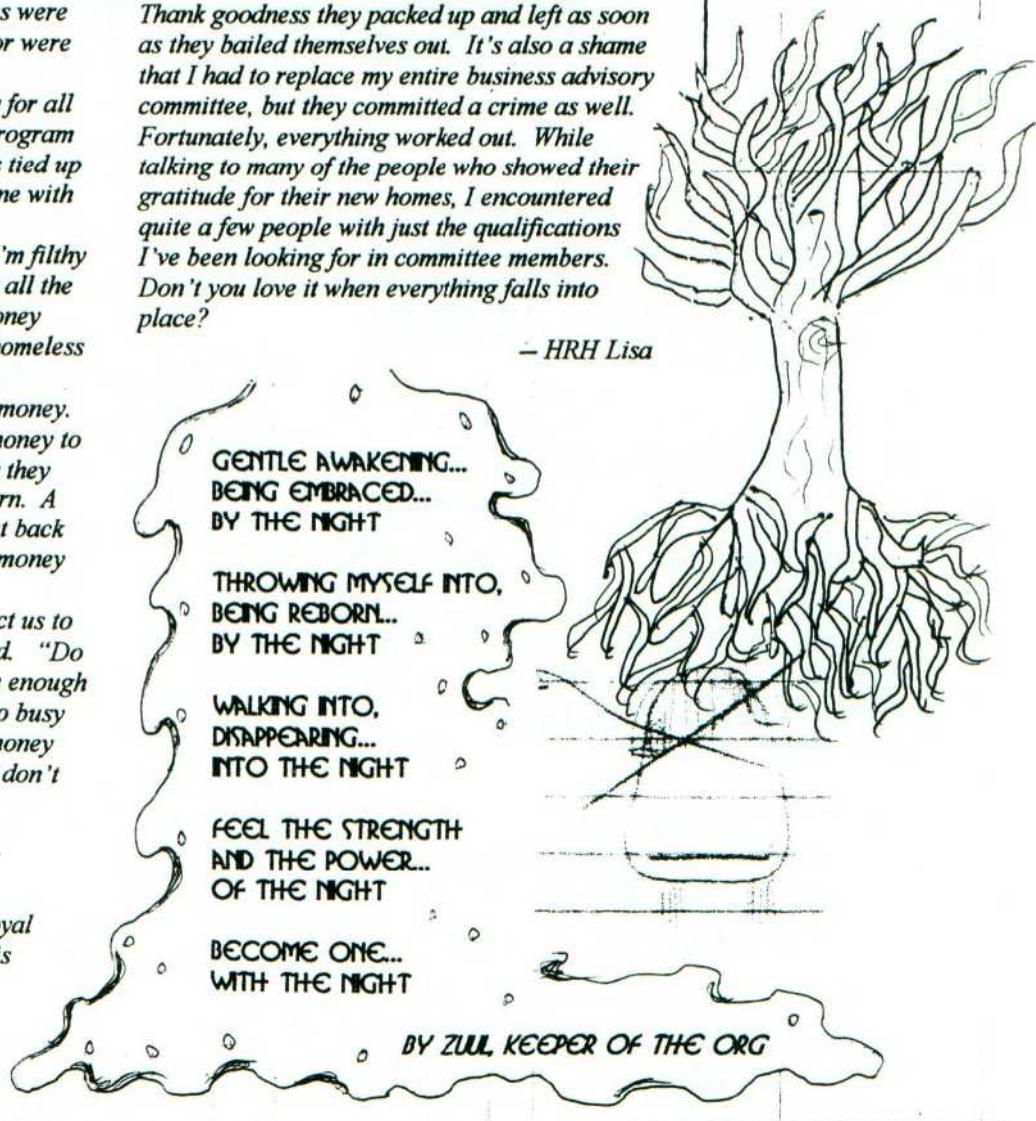
- HRH Lisa



## POISON

by Steevigh

Drip from lips  
Red red tips  
Delicious hips  
Scalding lips  
Computer chips  
Leather whips  
I'm losing my grip



# Advice Lady

Dear Advice Lady

I have two questions. First, my best friend tells me that Einstein's theory of quantum relativity has a miscalculation due to the terminal velocity of photonic transference, but he can't show me where it is and I have a feeling he's high on Doritos. Second, about welding helmets: are they, or are they not, romantic to give or receive as presents? Please answer quickly, as I live in a basement and don't get out much.

- Not Percy the Science Clown

Dear Not Percy,

Those are two very interesting questions!

First, it sounds to me like both you and your friend are full of shit. Who cares about quantum relativity anyway? What good does it do in everyday life? And, how does one get high on Doritos? Mold I can see, but snack foods? What's the matter with that weird friend of yours? Is he a foreigner? You guys need to get out more. Go to bars and meet other people.

Second, why in the hell would you want a welding helmet? Just what is it that goes on in that basement of yours? You have way too much time on your hands.

My advice to you, Not Percy, is to get some fresh air and spend less time worrying about quantum relativity! I'm also very worried about your friend. I think it would do him some good to lay off the damn Doritos. He's going to get a fat ass.

AL

Dear Advice Lady,

What would you do if you could see invisible people and some other people wanted to see them but other people don't care one way or the other and you keep getting blamed for all the stuff the invisible people do even if you didn't do it most of the time and it probably wasn't even your idea usually? But it was really funny.

-Always in Trouble

## IN DREAMS

BY STEEVIGH

DREAMS OF MISTY MOORS  
DREAMS OF MY HAND IN YOURS  
SNOW WHITE DANCING IN MY BRAIN  
SMACK...LUST...COCAINE

EVIL IN MY HEART AND SOUL  
THE MADNESS TAKES A GRIZZLY TOLL  
NEVER-ENDING ACHE IN MY GUT  
THE RAZOR'S SHARP UNFORGIVING CUT

I'M NAKED; I'M RESTLESS  
I CAN'T FIND MY RED DRESS  
OUTSIDE I FEEL THE PAIN  
OF WAKING UP AGAIN



Dear Always in Trouble,

Wow, that's a very impressive run-on sentence!

Let me ask you this; how is it that you can see "invisible people"? Hmm? Aren't they invisible? What do they look like, anyway? If you're going to do bad things - I'm assuming they're bad - why not blame someone everyone can see, if you're going to blame anyone at all? And why are you blaming others for your actions? You sound like you have some issues there, buddy. I think you need a referral to a psychologist.

AL

Dear Advice Lady,

I have a crush on Someone. I don't think that Someone knows that I like them.

Sometimes I think that Someone likes me too, but I can't be sure. I am very shy about these things. How do I find out if Someone likes me? Preferably without frightening Someone away?

Hopeless Crush (TX)

Dear Hopeless Crush,

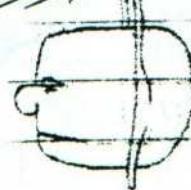
Sweety, let me tell you something. Life is too damned short to sit by the phone waiting for Mr. Perfect to ring your bells. You're better off doing this the same way you rip hot wax off your legs - QUICKLY! Swallow your pride and jump in with both feet! Tell the Someone how you feel. If he feels the same -great! If not - at least you tried, right? You can't blame a girl for trying! Good luck, sugar cube, let me know how it turns out.

AL



So, what's your problem? Send it to the Advice Lady, in care of the Omnitum.

If it's bigger than your head - it  
Shouldn't fit up your butt.



THERE IS NOTHING SO ABSurd  
IN THE BOOKS OF THE PHILOSOPHERS  
BUT THAT IT MAY BE FOUND  
- CICERO

## Traitor of My Heart

By BethDragon

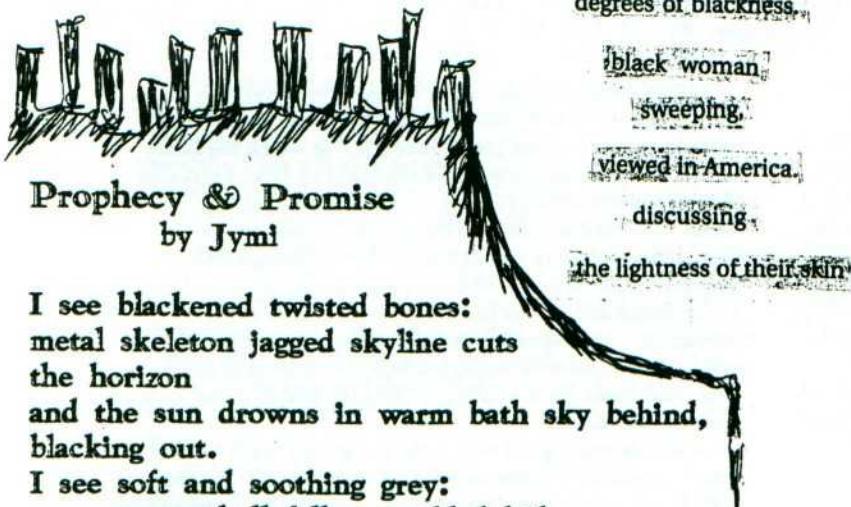
O, Heart of ravenous intent,  
Spitting fire, breathing flame.  
O, Heart of murderous descent,  
Wielding knives to splice the beat.

O, Love of bleeding ears,  
Deaf in one, then turn away.

O, Love of haunting tears,  
Saline potions, dry within.

O, Spirit, infinitely divine,  
Fly away, soar so high.

O, Soul beyond all things wise,  
Spread your wings, then out into night.



## Prophecy & Promise by Jymi

I see blackened twisted bones:  
metal skeleton jagged skyline cuts  
the horizon  
and the sun drowns in warm bath sky behind,  
blacking out.

I see soft and soothing grey:  
concrete eggshell fallen rumbled hides  
dead treasures.

Wrapped and tangled in a chain-link blanket nap  
under grey wet afghan sky.

I see undead confetti:  
banners lynched and wadded models lurching  
origami rats  
ink scarred smeared dye designer lie  
worthless windghosts.

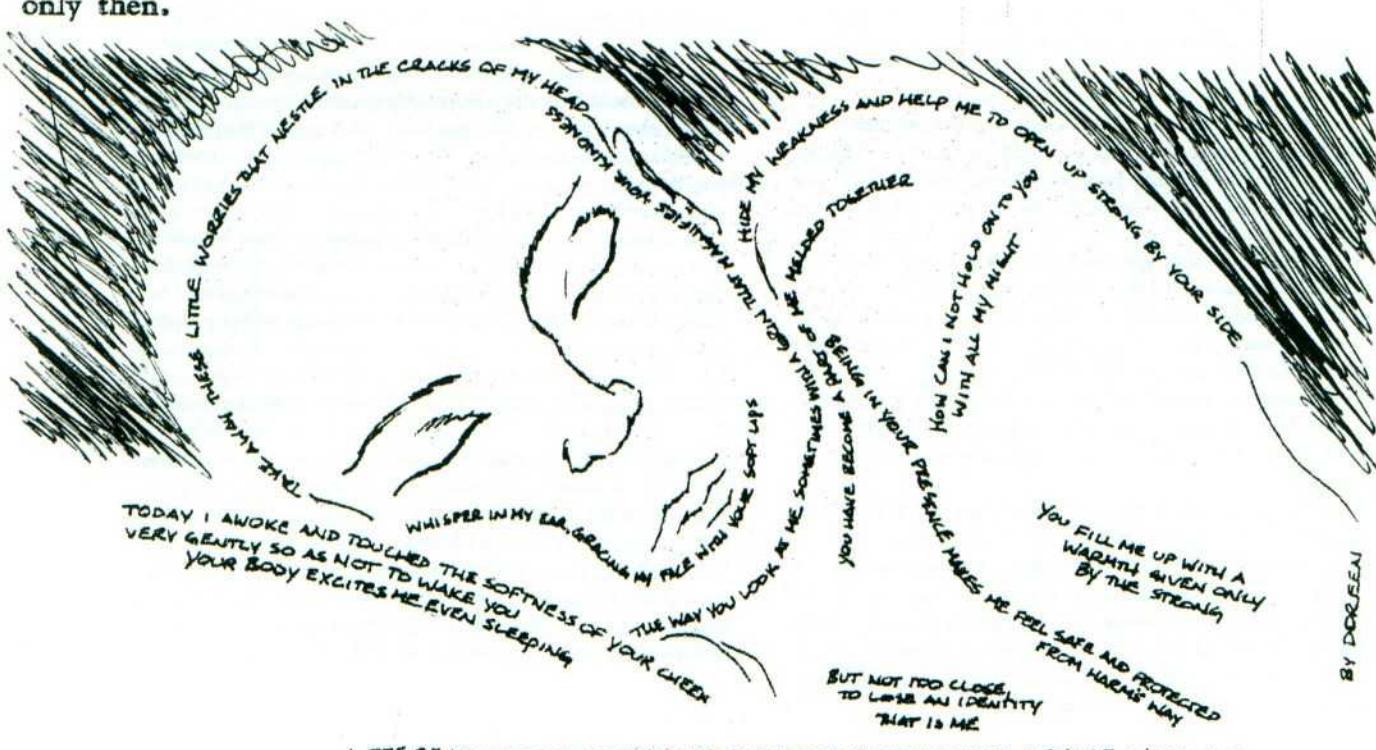
I see clackers yammer blood  
and go at last to death and gone  
we sigh goodbye.

Only then can we come out dance out from wild shelter,  
only then can promises be kept.

Only then can we be home,  
only then will life  
begin,  
only then.



Abyssal - who used  
to live in #16



I DESIRE YOU MORE EVERY DAY AND ANTICIPATE EVERY MOMENT I SHARE WITH YOU

## WHAT MIGHT RALPH HAD DONE PERHAPS

by Entropy



Once once once on a time there were cattle like sheep and cows and there were peoples too. The peoples used the cattle for food and shirts. This was the lot of the cattles and there were a lot of cattles but not quite so much a lot of the peoples. And everyone did their job because everyone had a job to do and if you didn't do your job you got no food and shirts. Food and shirts was the cattles' job. The peoples' jobs was to make things and look at things and say Oh yes, that's lovely and have ideas for new things and then die when they were full of things. And to take care of the cattles, so they don't poo in the clean water.

But then, somethings happened, guess what happened. A few people became a lot of people and there weren't enough cattles to go around and some people had to share the shirts and some people didn't get any at all. This sure isn't working, is what they said.

I know what we can do, said one of the peoples who had to borrow a shirt from his cousin Ralph so as to look presentable at the peoples' meeting. This was the first real meeting of peoples since it was the first real problem they had that couldn't be chased away by singing and dancing and leaving bananas in front of statues. So pay attention and remember to tell your history teachers all about this very valuable learning here. Yes.

I know, said Ralph's cousin, what it is we can do. And everyone stopped eating donuts for a minute so that smacky chewing noises wouldn't be too loud. Because this was the first meeting ever and someone had brought donuts to make sure everyone realized how very important this was and also to make everyone relax. Having no food or shirts is very stressful. Also having one hundred and five children running and yelling and secreting liquids when before there were less children like three or four maybe. And the only way to relax is to have a meeting with donuts and no children and coffee and some Spam with mustard. Me personally when I need to relax I like to twist things but that's just me personally.

And someone else who had cousins too but not Ralph was ready to write down everything Ralph's cousin said but no one had thought up things like paper yet so it had to be written on a donut.

I know what let's do, said Ralph's cousin.

Ok let's hear it for cryin' out loud, said the peoples.

Ok he said and started talking really fast and said things like what if we take all the peoples who have no job and put them with the cattles. Then cattles would be sheep and cows and useless peoples.

What, said someone else, and make shirts out of peoples?

Ralph's cousin said: Um, er well. Then he said, Well at least they would have a job and not sit whining all day long.

Well we can try it, said the peoples, and if it doesn't work then let's see if statues like Cheez-Whiz.

Then everyone started talking very fast and a lot and the person writing it down couldn't keep up and got very stressed out and twisted the donut and so it was lost forever until now.

Now they had to find the useless peoples and it wasn't very hard because they asked everyone: Have you ever made anything besides children or had an idea or taught anything or helped somebody. If the answer was No, no, no and no then they were pretty sure but just to be really really sure they also asked Do you enjoy to watch game shows. If the answer was Yes Oh Yes, that was a useless peoples and had to go stand over by the sheep and cows.

Ok this worked pretty good because now everyone had a job again and no one yelled because the cattle people who were no longer useless got to have a TV to watch the game shows on and then someone else thought up talk shows and then they were REALLY happy and lots of them even got to be on those and the other cattle people watched them. Sometimes the cows would poo on the TV though and someone said the cows have the right idea, ha ha ha. The sheep could not poo on the TV since they were not tall enough but often they would poo on the remote control and the cattle people who had to touch it would be mad since poo is not good for the circuitry and they had to stand up to change the channel.

And this was a good way to do things and that's too bad because whenever someones finds a good way to do things which makes everyones happy someones else is bound and gagged to come up and change on it. So someones did.

It was Ralph's cousin but not the same Ralph as the other Ralph. There were enough of the peoples to have more than one Ralph. There were two Ralphs and they both of them had cousins. The first one we can say was the Good Ralph's Cousin so this one can be the Evil Ralph's Cousin and there, that should simplify things. Do you want a donut?

Anyway the Evil Ralph's Cousin was on the night shift to take care of the cattle peoples. It is not hard to take care of cattle peoples at night because that is when they all sleep after the Jay Leno Show is done. They have nice bloaty cattle peoples dreams about winning game shows and then going to talk about their new money on talk shows and going on shopping sprees and buying wide roll-ons. Once I had a dream that a cow went on a talk show and all it did was poo all over the set but that was ok because nobody knew the difference. Wait no that was not a dream.

Evil Ralph's Cousin was not a great artist but a mundane one and he was pretty great at being mundane so that's something anyway. There was lots of free time taking care of sleeping cattle peoples so he painted things like dolphins and happy children and flowers and rainbows and said, Gee wouldn't it be great if these paintings were furry. He was also a very mundane inventor so he made a thing which would be a thing to put bits of colored string through the paintings and then they were very mundanely furry. He would show them to his friends in the morning and they would say things such as, Why Evil Ralph's Cousin what a wonderfully mundane thing that is there that you have made please now to take it away.

But soon Evil Ralph's Cousin figured out that it took a long boring time putting bits of colored string through his paintings and he had a lot of other mundane things on his mind such as cutting plywood into the shape of fat people bending over with their underwear showing. Also making fake stained glass windows by heating brightly colored plastic chips in the oven which was none of the work and six hundred twenty seven times the disagreeable smell of making real stained glass windows. Not that I have smelled before the making of a real stained glass window but that is a rough estimate. The only plastic worth putting in the oven is that which will make a Shrinky-Dink. Also Tupperware ladies who, it is not widely known but now I am telling, are made out of plastic. When Tupperware ladies come to your house it is best to throw Shrinky-Dinks at them and they will go away and then you can have their donuts.

Evil Ralph's Cousin who I will now call Picaso With One 's' so to distinguish him from Picasso With Two 's' and also because it is shorter to write thought it would be good to have someone else to put the colored bits through his paintings. It is not hard he thought. I could have the cattle peoples do it he thought. They would be able to do that he thought. That will give me time to draw pictures with numbers in them instead of colors and the cattle peoples can paint them for me and that way I will not get paint on my shirts. Also I can pursue my writing career because I know many words, lovely long and short and obscure words from many different lands, and I am sure I can make them all to fit together in one small box and then take everything away except the box and then tease my friends with hints of what those words were and they will think how smart I am to know these words and not tell anyone and then they will want to smack me.

So having thought of all that Picaso With One 's' woke up the cattle peoples and told them to take these here now things and make for to do this with them. And he showed them what to do and how to do it and what not to do because they did an awful lot of what not to do at first but finally they got it right because cattle peoples are real good at hearing instructions from their keepers. Once now and then Picaso With One 's' would throw food and clean remote controls at their heads and they would all to shout HOORAY See how Picaso With One 's' loves us we will do all these wonderful things just keep that food a-comin' yessirreebob.

There were between one and a billion cattle peoples closer to one probably but still plenty enough to make huge piles of mundane furry paintings and this went on for kind of exactly one year but who's counting anyway since time is relative like Ralph's cousin. Time is money too and money buys lots of nice things like art supplies such as cigarettes and diet soda pop. I have a lot of spare time and I will trade it gladly for some cigarettes and diet soda pop. Donuts I am willing to trade money for but I don't have as much spare money as spare time and that's ok since I don't really like donuts anyway.

Every morning all the happy cattle peoples would bring to Picaso With One 's' what they had done to his paintings and also with plywood-bending-over-showing-underwear-cutout-persons and also some other things he had thought up such as for instance potholders made out of old nylons.

Picaso With One 's' would say, Oh yes very good look how creative you are all these lovely things you have made all by yourselves oh yes you have. Thank you yes good cattle peoples you are doing your job now here have a creme-filled golden spongecake which is made out of plastic and is so yummy-good we don't care.

One day whilst he was saying all these things at them one cattle people got a funny look on its face like it was having some trouble with poo but actually what happened was that it had a thought and it said, Wait now what was that?

Creme-filled yummy-good golden spongecake, said Picaso With One 's'.

No no no before the creme-filled yummy-good golden sponge plastic cake, the cattle people said. Then it went on to say, You said we have made something all by ourselves oh yes we have.

Hey, said another cattle people, What was that question they asked to us a long time ago when we were getting to become cattle peoples it was something like Have you ever made things.

Wait now just a minute here, said Picaso With One 's'. But the cattle peoples were talking too loud to hear him and some were making smacky noises with their creme-filled golden sponge cakes too. And what it was all about was that the cattle peoples decided they had made things and that was to mean that they didn't have to be shirts anymore.

So they all put on big happy I Am Now Fulfilled For I Have Found A Purpose In Life Besides Being Shirts cattle peoples smiles and left the barn in a great lumbering stampede. While all the while Picaso With One 's' yelled and jumped up and down and sometimes sideways just for variety and once tried back and forth but it didn't work very well since when he did it he landed inside a pile of furry paintings and was killed to death by the very mundanity of it all. My how unfortunate.

And the cattle peoples went right out into the wide world and got houses and Salad Shooters and there were so very many of them that they became the biggest demographic market ever and they were allowed to be as mundane as possible and were given many mundane things to keep them busy and smiling and they lived happily ever and ever ad nauseum even though some people to this day have to go without food and shirts, the end.



## Things That Are Only Funny to Me

by Carrie Doyle

I came up with a topic to write about but then I forgot it. I remembered it the next day and thought I should write it down before I forgot it again. Guess what. Yep. Gone. Like day-old bread at a...chicken...convention. Um, anyway, the irony of this situation is probably what caused me to finally remember and begin to write. The topic I came up with: Short-term memory.

It is said that we have seven slots for short-term memory. I only seem to utilize three. I've considered leasing out the other four slots since I don't seem to be using them. Who knows why they don't work? Perhaps they are just dormant. A little rusty. Although, that doesn't really make a whole lot of sense. I mean it's not like I shouldn't be using them every day. No, in all likelihood, I probably just squandered them away at some cognitive casino night. "Come on, baby. Momma needs a new hippocampus."

Whatever the reason, all my short-term memory slots are not fully functioning. I'm sure there is some sort of herbal remedy that I could acquire if I was so inclined to spend the money. But, why stop there? If I had the money, I could buy some new and improved short-term memory slots. Or, even better, get a full upgrade. Gray Matter 2000 from Microsoft. With something like that, I could probably browse the web from the comfort of my frontal lobe. Talk about convenience. Nevertheless, until technology advances to that stage, I am resigned to live a life with significant transfer decrease from short- to long-term memory.

In order to understand the structure of the brain and what is being affected, let's build a paradigm. Oh yes, let's do that. What fun!

There's an exercise in imagery that is often used to facilitate healing, weight loss, etc. It is to imagine that you literally have little, tiny people who act as workers in your body. You're supposed to imagine that they are moving out the fat in your body, scrubbing out your arteries, yadda yadda, you get the picture. Anyway, do you remember the last scene from "Raiders of the Lost Ark" where that guy is taking the ark to store in that gigantic warehouse where it will seemingly never be found again? That has always been the image that comes to mind when I think of my brain. My brain, of course, is the warehouse for all my memories and the guy slooowly pushing the container around is my short-term memory guy. So, while my long-term memory storage may be managed by some Speedy Gonzalez-type that is able to process immediate information retrieval, short-term memory guy seems to be a retired federal employee who is in desperate need of an artificial hip which also, in turn, hinders my long-term memory guy.

Talk about a problem in human resources. I don't need a psychiatrist. I need an industrial psychologist. Or, better yet, a neurologist who also deals in labor relations. I think I've out-sourced all my essential cognitive functions to some microbiological temporary agency.

Isn't imagery fun?

Ok, I've kind of lost track. Let's try to sum up what we've discussed. Here goes: 1) Short-term memory loss is unfortunately an all-too-common occurrence in people of all ages. And, 2) Short-term memory loss is unfortunately an all too common occurrence in people of all ages.

Heh heh.

\*\*crickets chirping\*\*

Yeah, well, I thought it was funny.

With the help of some friends, I've learned that as frustrating as memory loss can be, it can also be very humorous. I've entertained friends for hours. Or minutes, anyway. At first I thought they were just being @\$\$#&! for laughing at me, but then I realized that it was actually pretty funny. So, the moral of the story is simply this: if you find yourself worrying about your inability to remember, do what I do. Forget about it.

the approximate won't do:

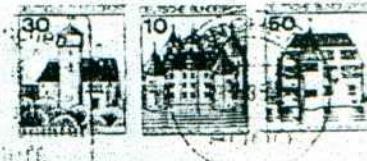
six masterpieces

subtle

visual marvels of raw material

Beneath the surface apprentices marauded, a winking imbecile, stylish and exact: visiting the poor and the sick

1. AM NOT WISE.  
- SOCRATES



Diego

I wish to disappear  
Leave this place out of fear  
Never will I shed a tear  
Onward my car shall steer  
Never have I felt such disgrace  
Bitterness filled with hate  
I see something in everyone's face  
In my mouth they leave a foul taste  
Perjury on the stand  
Loss of friends due to a man  
Now there's blood on my hands  
Nobody here understands  
Wish I hadn't made the call  
Now I watch my world fall  
Used to be that I'd stand tall  
Now I feel much too small  
Dirty tricks and crooked games  
The things that people say  
Shall I go or shall I stay  
Let me out so I can play  
Maybe I'll just let them fly  
Or maybe I'll just sit and cry  
But no matter what I try  
I never meant for him to die

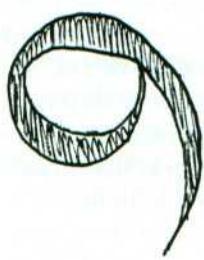
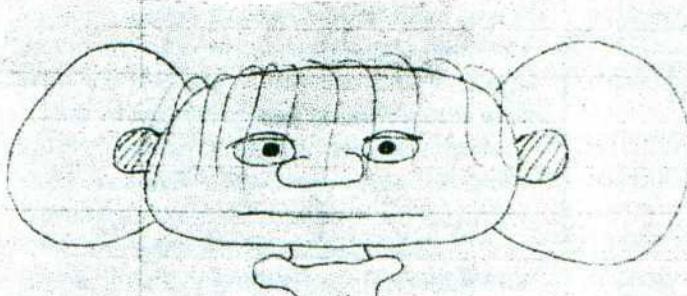
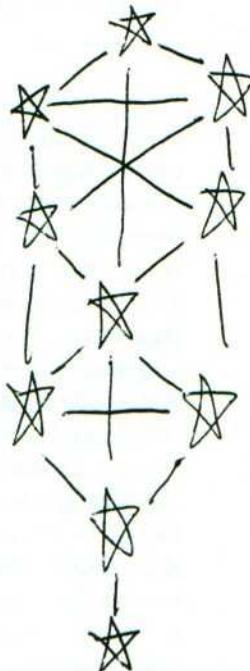
But he did

-Enchanted Shar

"what does not vanish

a single cause.  
artifacts  
things.  
of man himself—  
specious scientism  
masterpiece of  
failures.  
  
narratives  
popular today,  
revealing,  
amusing,  
astounding.  
preached,  
by pedants  
and ideologues,

it's not surprising  
a way of life. . .  
remains a  
shadow



blue eyes,

in a quiet way,

I was looking in some of the  
wrong places  
finding sanctuary  
didn't exist.

INVINCIBLE IGNORANCE: AN ATTITUDE RESISTANT  
TO WISDOM; HOLDING ON TO A POSITION;  
REGARDLESS OF THE FACTS; INDIFFERENCE TO THE  
POSSIBILITY OF EITHER ERROR OR ENLIGHTENMENT

## Ask Percy the Science Clown!

Dear Mister Percy the Nice  
Science Clown,

I'm puzzled about something. What can you tell me about Swiss Cheese? Was it in fact actually invented by the Swiss people? Is it the only cheese they are allowed to eat in their homeland? Will they be shot full of holes (just like a block of their native cheese) if they eat a block of Monterey Jack, or a wedge of Colby? And does any of this have to do with the Swiss being neutral? I had a goat once. If the goat was born in Switzerland, would that make its cheese, 'Swiss Cheese'? And would it have to be a citizen? I'm going to plant an eggroll in my onion garden now. My friend tells me that eating lots of onions is good for getting lots of girls to pay attention to you. I think it's working. Can I have an onion?

Yours in good health,  
Lactose Puzzlement

Dear Lackey,

Cheese. Hmm. I can't tell you much about the origins of Swiss Cheese, since I have thirteen SCIENCE degrees, and zero Culinary History degrees. I'm sure that the Swiss can eat anything they want. I've heard that Icelandic Honey is quite popular in Switzerland. As a neutral nation, they're apt to be flexible. Onions will also give you the power of teleportation, but you have to eat them with your ears.

Dear Percy,  
Why does my brain hurt?

H.R.H. Gumby

Dear Gumby,

It doesn't. There are no nerve cells in your brain! You probably just have a common headache, and would do well to take a couple of aspirin. By the way, aspirin does nothing to cure the source of pain; it simply turns off your brain's ability to register discomfort. A chemical called

cyclooxygenase is induced by inflammatory cells when something out of the ordinary is happening in your body. When this chemical makes it to your brain, it lets you know that you've got yourself a boo-boo.

Aspirin is composed of chemicals that inhibit the cyclooxygenase's ability to make it up to your brain by modifying the way it interacts with other chemical receptors, thus blocking the 'pain' sensation. A side effect of aspirin is that it 'thins' the blood — the platelets become slipperier. This helps prevent clotting, and since blood clots are a common precursor to heart attacks, daily aspirin is recommended for heart patients.

Now, someone explain to me why *my* brain *doesn't* hurt.

Dear Percy,

Hello. I am not sick, but the me in another reality caught herpes from a cheap French whore. My doctor refuses to help. What can I do?

Itchy Dreams

Dear Itchy,

Why, give your doctor a subscription to the *Omnium*, of course! He or she is obviously stuck in one boring dimension. I wouldn't worry about the other you's problem — herpes doesn't spread across realities. Then again, in yet another reality, *you* gave herpes to the *whore*. In another one, the two of you fell deeply in love and are now enjoying TV dinners by the pool. In still another reality, *you* gave herpes to *me*. Thanks a lot, Jerk.

Got a question for Percy?  
Send it to the *Omnium*!

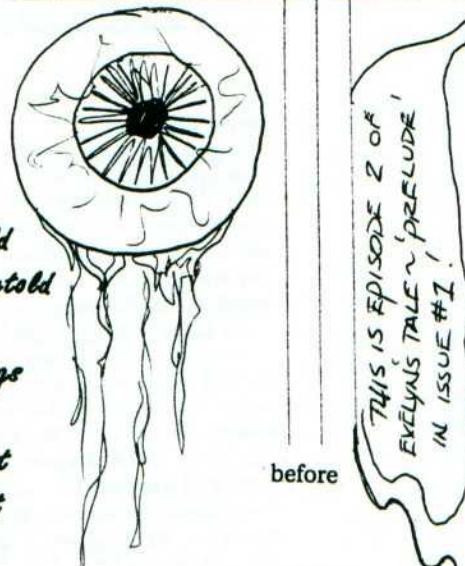


Painkillers and Nailpolish  
by Steevieh

Scream circular stars  
hearts in little glass jars  
hands held fast against the cold  
childhood fairytale told and retold

Muscles tight like guitar strings  
an angel with a broken wing  
sympathy shines bold and bright  
tonight is your one starry night

Light blue pills  
dull my thrills  
sing my nerves to sleep  
the secrets I keep  
end up in the stars  
for a moment - I have no scars



before

THIS IS EPISODE 2 OF  
EVELYN'S TALE ~ 'PRELUDE'  
IN ISSUE #2.

memories of children  
killed by a car  
traveling  
a country road

Possible explanations  
-things she learned  
can be documented,  
intimate details  
described



KNOWLEDGE IS  
POWER  
BUT  
ONLY WISDOM  
IS LIBERTY  
- WILL DURANT

Turmoil and Pain  
Driven Insane  
Point Break  
Heart Ache  
Feeding the Flame

by Sandy —

Patron of the Arts

by SandorSnow

It was the lightning that brought her out of the dream. Eve lay in bed feeling colder than ever. She had had the dreams like this before, the ones that were actually memories, but this one was new. This dream was so real that she could still feel the anger, and the hope: such conflicting emotions that they caused a war in her gut, making her leap out of bed and run to the bathroom. She barely made it to the toilet before the contents of her stomach violently erupted.

Five minutes later, sitting against the cold tiles of the wall, she finally began to feel all right. She giggled - *feeling all right*, she thought. *What was that?* This was normal for her. Eve was glad that there was no one to see her: some ethereal crazy woman with vomit running down her chin, who was giggling insanely. She brought her hand up and was trying to wipe the mess from her chin when she noticed the blood. There was blood. At closer inspection, Eve realized that it was from three deep cuts on her forearm, the same exact wounds He gave her so long ago. She stood up and began to make her way to the sink. In her rush to get in the bathroom she had neglected to turn the light on, so the only light that she had to work with was the occasional burst of lightning.

Eve opened the medicine cabinet and pulled out her healing balm and some gauze. First things first: she washed her face with cool water. She had to get the vomit and sweaty scent of fear off her face. Then she applied the balm and wrapped her arm, inspecting the rest of her body to make sure that there were no more marks aside from the few normal burns and welts. When she reached up to the cabinet again, she caught her reflection in the mirror. Short black hair, blue eyes that still held the fear of the dream. She looked like an imp with that little evil pouty mouth, but when a flash of lightning lit up the bathroom, she gasped. The reflection was that of Evelyn, before the innocence was lost: beautiful long blonde hair, bright blue eyes that only held hope. She walked out of the bathroom, leaving the stuff on the counter. *Nope*, she thought. *No more sleep tonight*.

This time it was the phone that woke her up. She had fallen asleep in front of the computer again, head resting on the monitor, glass of Jack Daniels in her hand. "NO DATA", the computer flashed.

"Fuck." Eve reached for the phone. She looked at the clock that blatantly stated that it was nine-thirty-three, and changed her mind. Anyone who would really want to talk to her would realize that she wouldn't be answering the phone this early.

"Eve darling." The heavy British accent tickled her ears and made her feel more in touch with reality. Not enough, though, to pick up the phone and actually talk. "I knew you would probably be sleeping, but I had someone make an offer on one of your pieces. Unfortunately, it was lower than the price on which you and I had agreed..."

Eve stood up and walked across the room toward the kitchen. "Fuck, Robert," she said aloud to the voice on the machine. "I don't care if they offer five fricking dollars, at least someone's interested."

"...but I know how you feel, love, so I went ahead and sold it. I do hope you can stop by today..."

She poured orange juice into a glass, walked back over to the computer, and grabbed a cigarette. "Yeah, sure. Right after I save the world."

"...but if you can't, I will send the check. Please at least call me. No one I've talked to has heard from you lately. Let me know you're okay..."

"Fine. Dandy. A-Okay."

"...goodbye, darling."

Eve sighed when she heard the click of the phone, and looked back at her computer. She took a long drag off the cigarette and began typing away on the keyboard. Then she grabbed for the red disk labeled "New York Files" and put it in the

drive. Now the computer flashed "WORKING".

She walked over to the window. "Well," she said, raising her arms up to stretch, "I guess it's time to start another lovely day."

Robert was wrapping the painting when a tall gentleman with long white hair walked in.

"I'm the one who called about the painting," said the man.

Robert looked up, into the man's eyes. He couldn't tell exactly what it was that was wrong about them.

"Yes, I have it right here. Your offer was a little low, but I talked to the artist, and she agreed to it."

"Yes," the man said with a wry smile. "The artist...I would like to know more about her."

"She is a very private person, but I will see what I can do," Robert said as he handed the painting to the man.

The man ripped one corner of the wrapping and caressed the exposed canvas as if it were skin. Then he handed Robert a slip of paper.

"Here is my number. Please call me. If nothing else, let me know when she brings in some more work."

As the man walked out the door, Robert had a feeling he couldn't quite place. Something like fear, only deeper, and more surreal...

LOOK FOR EPISODE 3  
IN THE NEXT  
ISSUE !!

none other

we grasp,  
in the end?

what is left  
in our hands

religious rituals

common pieties

a surprising

wisdom

the celebrated master  
in unexpected places.

skeptical

utterly rational

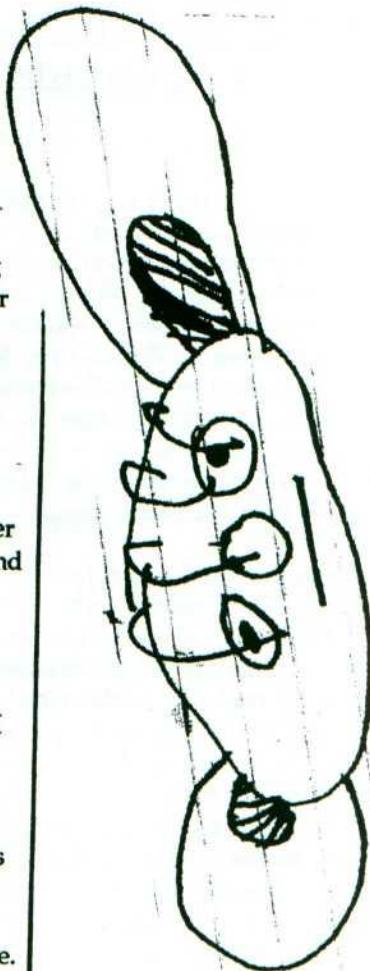
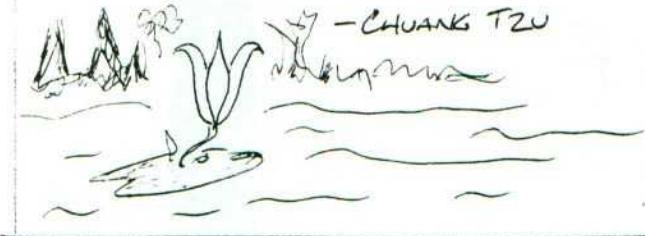
perfect reasoning

ultimately fails



THE EFFECT OF LIFE IN SOCIETY IS TO  
COMPLICATE OUR EXISTENCE, MAKING US  
FORGET WHO WE REALLY ARE BY  
CAUSING US TO BECOME OBSESSED  
WITH WHAT WE ARE NOT.

- CHUANG TZU



## Up and Coming...an Interview with Production Grey

by BethDragon

Recently I had a chance to do an interview with drummer/creator Tim Sever, of a local metal band, Production Grey. Tim was very happy to interview with me, and although it had to be via telephone, he was cooperative and very informative. Production Grey does not have a record label yet, and all expenses for their CD's come out of their own pocket. When I spoke with Tim, we discussed their second album. There has been talk about a third. We will keep you informed on that release.

**Omnium:** So, how did you come up with the name "Production Grey"?

**Tim:** Well, we were brainstorming a name, and one of the guys picked up a spray paint can, which read, "Production Grey".

**O:** That's interesting. Do you remember the (spray paint) brand?

**T:** Not off hand.

**O:** Who are Production Grey's band members?

**T:** Jeremy Omo is our singer. On guitar we have Shannon Martin, and on bass is Dave Carmona. I, myself, play the drums. We are currently looking for a second guitarist.

**O:** Where do you guys come from?

**T:** We are out of Jackson, Michigan.

**O:** How long have you been together?

**T:** We originally got together in September of 1993. We broke up in October of 1997, and then just got back together in late May of this year. (1999).

**O:** Why did you break up in '97?

**T:** A few different reasons. Differences of opinion. Our old guitarist dropped music for his girlfriend. But Jeremy and Shannon and I all kept in contact. We played in different bands, and got together occasionally to play.

**O:** I heard that you had some trouble with the picture on your latest CD, "Defilement". Can you tell me a little about that?

**T:** Yeah, we had taken some black and white photos, and turned them into Meijer to be developed. I guess they have to send their film out of state. At any rate, the pictures ended up in the hands of the Illinois State Police.

**O:** What's the picture of?

**T:** It's a guy laid out on the steps of a church. He supposed to look like he's beaten up or dead or something.

**O:** Sounds like it worked!

**T:** Yeah. Illinois State Police turned the film over to the FBI and they did an investigation. It lasted a few months before we could get our pictures back so we could release "Defilement".

**O:** That sounds a little frightening.

**T:** There were cops looking all over for the crime scene. It was pretty good for publicity though.

**O:** I hear you have a daughter?

**T:** Yes, Ava. She's going to be four years old.

**O:** Does she like to listen to the band?

**T:** Yeah. She comes to see us play, on the days I have her.

**O:** And what does she do?

**T:** Oh, she wears headphones, and she'll dance and head-bang. She'll sing along, or pretend to play the drums.

**O:** Does she play any instruments?

**T:** (laugh) She wants a guitar or a microphone for her birthday!

**O:** When is your next gig?

**T:** Well, we are playing Wise Guys in Saginaw at the Devils Nite Bash. We should be playing around 11 or 11:30pm.

**O:** Well, maybe I'll see you there. Thanks for talking with me.

**T:** Not a problem. Anytime!

For further information on Production Grey you can write to:

**Production Grey**

**2403 East Ganson**

**Jackson, MI 49202**

**E-mail: progrey@gateway.net**

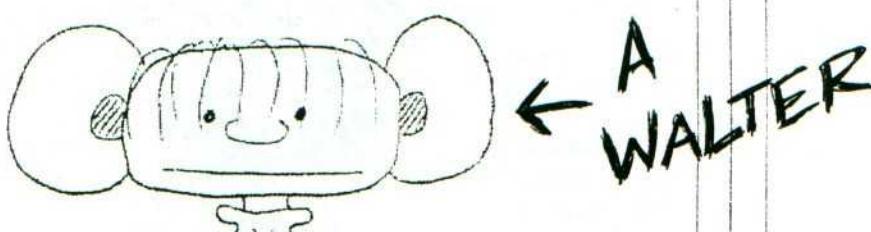
Production Grey's info line: 1-517-783-8784

Also, you can check them out on the web! Just log onto: <http://www.productiongrey.com>

If you just want to see the band play, contact Harpo's in Detroit for days they are playing.

AND PERHAPS WHEN IT IS POSSIBLE FOR PHILOSOPHERS TO PHILOSOPHIZE IN COMFORT, WHEN IT IS POSSIBLE TO ENGAGE IN SPECULATION WITHOUT RISK, THEN OVER PHILOSOPHY HAS FALLEN TRUE SHADOW OF ITS OWN EXISTENCE.

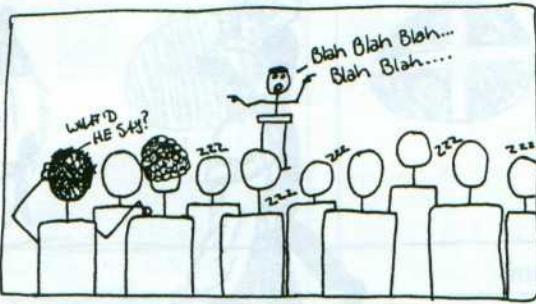
-A. W. LEVI



# THE PUKE PAGES

by  
STEEVIGH

an isolated murder here and there.



the next best thing:

Advertising  
done routinely  
had all the answers  
to transform  
tacos to lawn mowers.

everything from tacos to lawn mowers.

But then again,  
scribbling began—  
chronicles  
of wild passion  
published before  
the usual reasons  
addressed here.



-SØREN KIERKEGAARD

EACH INDIVIDUAL IS HIS OWN  
CENTER, AND THE WORLD  
CENTERS IN HIM.

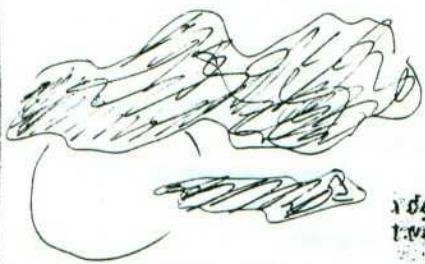
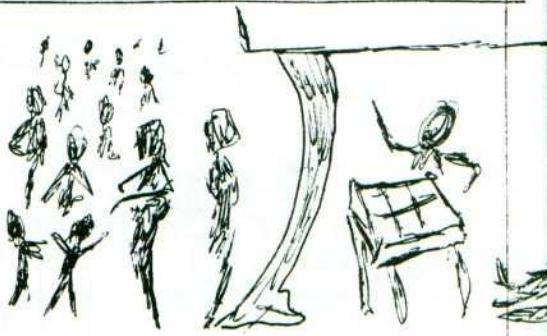
## Voices Heard through the Rain

- by JYMI

||||| mommmmmmmmyyyy ||||| all abooooard  
||||| wait ||||| they wouldn't listen  
shut the door, it's coming |||||  
||||| NO! |||||  
||||| what will happen to them ||||| I didn't believe  
||||| floating away  
||||| please ||||| let me in  
||||| it's breaking, it's ||||| look at them all, they're  
|||||  
oh god forgive ||||| I believe  
||||| we can't hold any more |||||  
||||| I believe  
||||| close the door  
|||||  
||||| Noah, close the door

<SLAM>

THE SOPHISTS  
SPEAK IN ORDER TO  
DECEIVE, AND THEY WRITE  
FOR THEIR OWN GAIN, AND IN  
NO WAY TO BE OF USE TO ANYONE.  
—XENOPHON



## Spain's Greatest Premier Danseur Pharaoh's Favorite



### Just Doing It

The Hillside Rose  
By BethDragon

A singular rose in a field of green  
rose up in my thoughts one day.

How beautiful, I thought, was this one red, red rose,  
alone on a hill where it stayed.

Then I thought, while yet beautiful, this single red rose,  
how lonely the flower must be,  
to sit all alone in the pasture of green,  
where its beauty is naught ever seen.

And then I thought of how often it rained  
on that rose, on a hill all alone,  
and how rare any sun warmed her petals each day,  
and how few creatures called the place home.

So I went up to see her, that sad sweet red rose,  
on the hillside covered in jade.

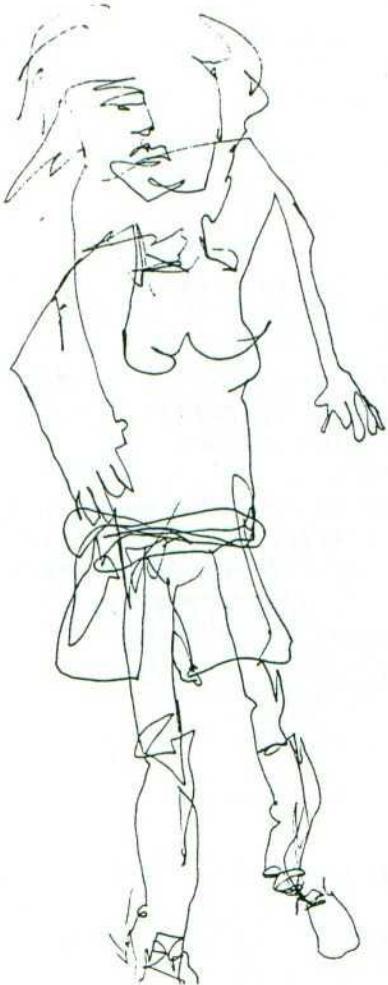
With each step I pondered her sad circumstance,  
and with each thought, the more sad I became.

But approaching the spot on that emerald hill  
where the sad little rose stood alone,  
I noticed that wild flowers had sprung up nearby,  
and daisies & daffodils bloomed.

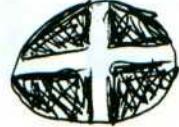
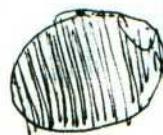
I noticed gardenias full with blue light  
were merrily growing there too,  
and wouldn't you know, that old sun warmed the rose  
as he danced on the morning dew.

I stayed there a while, admiring the rose,  
and how beautiful she really did seem.

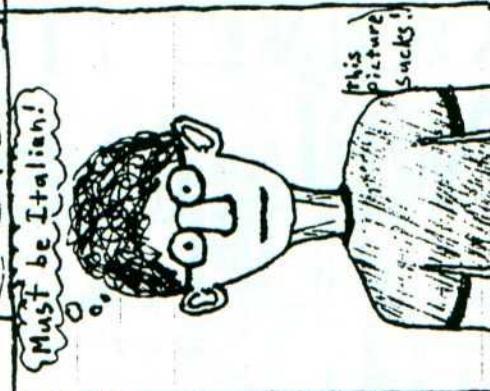
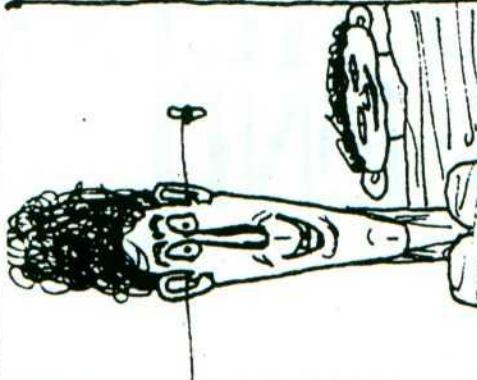
Oh, how much happier was she with colors strewn 'round,  
and the touch of one golden sunbeam.



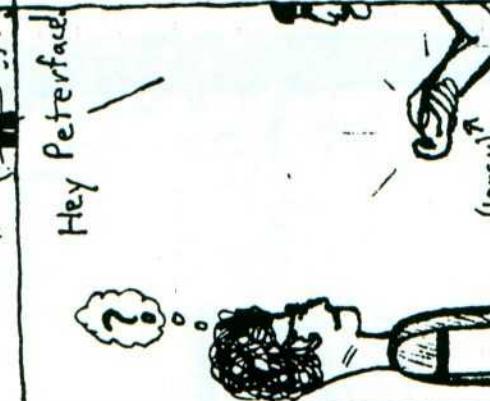
WHEN RABBI BUNAH LAY DYING HIS WIFE BURST INTO TEARS.  
HE SAID: "WHAT ARE YOU CRYING FOR? MY WHOLE LIFE  
WAS ONLY THAT I MIGHT LEARN HOW TO DIE."  
—MARTIN BUBER



from the end to here  
losing sleep  
I can't eat  
all I have  
is self defeat  
lost my soul  
nowhere to go  
life is slow  
but a steady flow



in my mind  
what I find  
is one of a kind  
and its all mine  
take what you get  
live with regret  
some day you will forget  
all of this bullshit

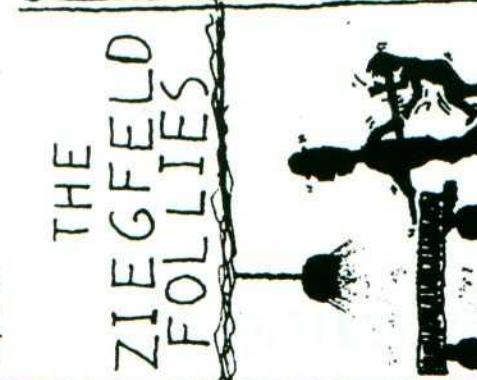


lost in space  
this dirty place  
the look on your face  
what a disgrace  
feel for you  
i really do  
don't be blue  
you'll forget this soon

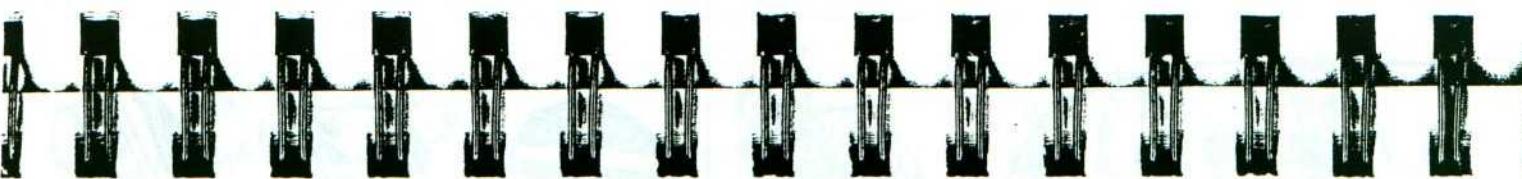
time to leave  
the soul still bleeds  
help me please  
it calls out from me  
do what you can  
make a stand  
for the love of a man  
and the cycle will repeat all over again  
-- *Enchanted Shar*

LET OTHERS COMPLAIN  
THAT THE AGE IS WICKED;  
MY COMPLAINT IS THAT IT  
IS WRETCHED, FOR IT  
LACKS PASSION.

~SØREN  
KIERKEGAARD



Our new student's  
name is Peter  
Narrenhalten.  
Welcome him.



# THE LIVING BUDDHA THE EXPLAINING GNAT BESTSELLERS JUST GONE TO HELL AT CENTURYS END



the OMNIUM  
PO Box 120053  
KENTWOOD, MI  
49512