



THE OMNIUM



ENTERTAINMENT FOR OPEN MINDS

FREE!

NEWS FROM ALL DIMENSIONS

Issue #3

February 2000

ONE DIMENSION

Most of us here at the Omnium pay our bills by working in a large office. This means that we've got to deal with quite a lot of different attitudes during the course of the day. Usually it's not a problem, and I can forget about it if another's reality bothers me. Recent events seriously got on my nerves, though, so I'll share them with you.

Office work means office equipment, and office equipment means accessories. We've got just about every office accessory known to man or beast in our place (except enough typing stands to go around), including the 'wrist-rests' -- those cloth covered strips of foam placed in front of the keyboard.

Since there are three shifts, three different people use each workstation (or "desk", for traditionalists). I don't really mind other people's pictures of their children/pets/leftovers hanging all over the cubicle. I don't mind another shift's paperwork stacked in a corner. But a couple of weeks ago, I came into work to find that someone had written "Love is Power" on the wrist-rest. As if to drive their point home, they'd also drawn a precious little heart next to the words.

I sat down and looked at this for several seconds. Then I wrote underneath it, "Power Corrupts".

The next day my answer was scratched out. That peeved me off -- my first amendment rights were obviously being violated. I hadn't crossed out the original message; I'd simply added my opinion to what I'd assumed to be a public forum initiated by my seat-mate. After all, one just can't write "Love is Power" where people can see it and expect everyone to nod their heads in agreement, can one? "Oh yes, Love is Power, that's right."

Perhaps the scribe intended the words to teach rather than to remind. "Love is Power". What are we supposed to do with this information? What kind of love? What kind of power? And what was wrong with my reply that power corrupts? I'm sure we've all witnessed a friend slowly growing insane, turning into someone we barely recognize, due to "love". Love drives people crazy. Is insanity power? (In a way -- I think many insane people are a lot closer to Truth than us 'normal' folk... but that's another column). Is love insanity?

There are those who would say I'm making much too big a deal out of this. (Like the people who had to sit near me and listen to this drama unfold.) In all likelihood, the writer was just bored and absentmindedly began to doodle the first thing that came to her head. I worry about people who have phrases like "Love is Power" wandering through their minds -- especially the ones who take such phrases so seriously as to get defensive when they're challenged. Sure, it's a very nice philosophy, but -- and I really don't mean to be insulting -- it's infantile. It's simplistic. It smacks of wide-eyed innocents begging to be victimized and poised to whine. But, I'm a relativist, and as much as I hate it sometimes, I... must... respect... others'... realities...

I have nothing against love. And I know very well that whoever wrote "Love is Power" probably meant to say "Mutual Acceptance, Respect between Beings, and Willingness to Communicate, Learn and Forge Friendships are Driving Forces behind the Success of Peaceful Anarchy and Personal Enlightenment on a Global Level so that Humans May Continue to Evolve Spiritually", but it wouldn't fit on the wrist-rest. If you want to tell me that "Love is Power", why, you speak right up. I prefer that to something like "Hate and Kill". But geez, why did you scratch out my reply?

'Peace, Love and Complete Annihilation of Any Opposing Ideas.'

That's what really bugs me. This person is so insecure that not only do they have to scribble their poorly-worded philosophy where everyone can see it, but any perceived threat to that philosophy is quickly eradicated with angry, petulant squiggles of ink, as if to say "No! How dare you! Love is Power! Love is Power! Don't you try to take that away from me!"

I briefly considered leaving another smart-ass message in the wrist-rest, but decided against it. It's usually useless to argue with minds like that. For one thing, they probably wouldn't get it, and for another, they'd just scratch it out and write some more inane blather. Ah, well... they get a wrist-rest; I have my own editorial page. I feel better.

Maybe I should track that person down and interview them. They're coming from a dimension that's unfamiliar to many of our readers, and it might make for an interesting story. It would probably be a fairly short piece, though. They don't seem to have much to say. Yesterday when I came to work, there was a new smidgen of wisdom on the wrist-rest: "Love is Everything".

That's an awfully limited basis for a system of reality.

— Jymi

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REPRINTED WITHOUT AUTHOR'S PERMISSION.
the OMNIUM SUPPORTS FREE SPEECH
AND WOULD LOVE TO GET PAID FOR IT.
SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL ARTISTS --
NAGEL HAS ENOUGH MONEY.
WOULDN'T IT BE A GREAT THING IF
WE COULD MAKE A LIVING DOING
WHAT WE REALLY ENJOY? the OMNIUM
ENJOYS TOAD-SNAPPIN'.
No, REALLY.

FINDING MEANING IN MY OWN LIFE WOULD BE EASY
IF ONLY I COULD FIGURE OUT WHY GOD EXISTS...



the OMNIUM:

HAPPILY ACCEPTING GRANTS
AND DONATIONS!

THE CAST:

BETH DRAGON ~

DOES ANYONE HAVE A
'POLYMER' SPELL?

STEEVIEH #FURTER ~

FOUND NOTHING TO DO
IN BUFFALO.

DOREEN GRULKE ~
DRUMMER GRRL!

Jymi 1/0 ~

EDITOR OF DEATH,
X=1

LISA LEVALLEY ~

ALL RISE FOR THE QUEEN!

SANDOR SNOW ~

TELLING TALES TO PLANTS
AND ROCKS...

ANDREW WALLACE ~

EIGHT-FLUSH GIBBERS!

GUEST STARS:

SEAN HEMAK ~

I SENSE... A FUTURE
FEATURED ARTIST...?

JONATHAN ERICKSON ~

ISN'T THIS BETTER THAN
VIDEO GAMES?

PHOEBE CHLOE ~

COOL SHOES!

COU ~

GODDESS of the MALL

SUSAN STANEK ~

DARK COMFORT

RYAN LIESKE ~

FY FRIEND

SAMANTHA KUBIK ~

MAKE THEM BELIEVE

DAN NORDENBROCK

MORE ZIEGFELD?

MELISSA ~

VELVET WORDS

ROGER McCLARY ~

IT IS EASY
BEING GREEN!

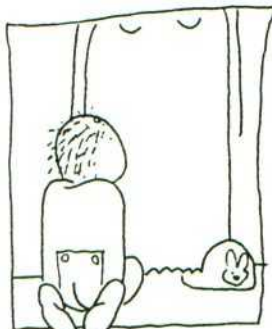
LADY THE HORSE ~

EQUINE ATTITUDE

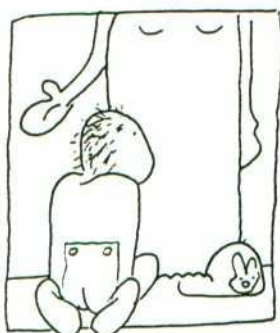
- FEATURED ARTIST:

RUSTY JORDAN ~

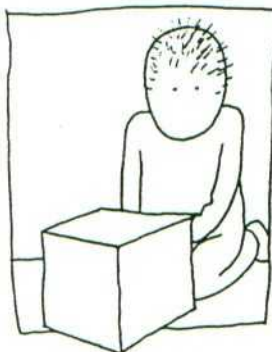
SORRY, NO NAKED PIX.



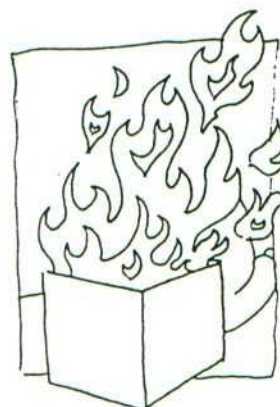
"Mommy, is it Christmas yet?"



"of course!"



"oh boy!"



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• ILLUSTRATIONS: •

by SEAN HEMAK ~ pg 3, 11, 14, 16, 23
by Rusty Jordan ~ pg 1, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 15, 16, 19, 21, 22, 23
by Jonathan Erickson ~ pg 5, 12

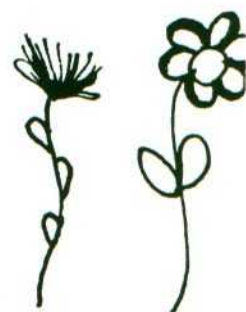
CLIPART AND OTHER LIBERALLY SPRINKLED
Doodley things by THE OMNIUM CAST

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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.

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THE OMNIUM

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(No "www"!)

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ASK ABOUT BACK ISSUES!

FEATURED ARTIST



Presenting this month's featured artist: Rusty Jordan!

Note to Andrew's Parents from Rusty: I just wanted to let you guys know that I know your son. I know him to be a fine, upstanding, somewhat homely child who is into nothing kinky or satanic (although there was that time we caught him free-basing Tender Vittles with a midget clown porn star...) Bonsai!!!

O: Who are your influences?

R: Salvador Dali, Martha Stuart and Newt Gingrich, with liberal doses of the Taco Bell chiuaua.

O: Are you going to start a comic strip?

R: Um...only if I can find the right strippers.

O: When was the last time you faked an orgasm?

R: A more pertinent question would be "when was the last time I had a chance to fake one." The answer is 7.

O: Finish this sentence: "When I grow up, I want to..."

Rusty: Be tall and thin with hair.

O: What do you do for a living?

Rusty: Very little if I can get away with it...but instead I do theatre.

O: What do U do for fun?

Rusty: Very little if I can get away with it.

O: How many fingers am I holding up?

Rusty: Yes.

O: Boxers or briefs?

Rusty: Duct tape.

O: Your thoughts on Monica Lewinski?

Rusty: See the cartoons.

O: Since the Omnium deals heavily with alternate realities, what are your thoughts on alternate realities?

Rusty: Have you ever thought that if you look into a mud puddle and see your reflection, that you're actually the reflection and what happens when you walk away?

O: What's your idea of Heaven?

Rusty: To play saxophone in an all girl band. So, if that's what you want to call it...yes I believe in Heaven. That, and a really big chocolate shake.

O: Who would be in this band?

Rusty: Phyllis Diller, Indura Ghandi, the old lady from the Marx Brother's movies (Margot Dumont) and Jenna Jamison (porn star). She can blow my sax anytime.

O: You do realize that you would have to be a woman too?

Rusty: Yes, I would want to look like...Christina Ricci.

O: How will you spend New Year's Eve?

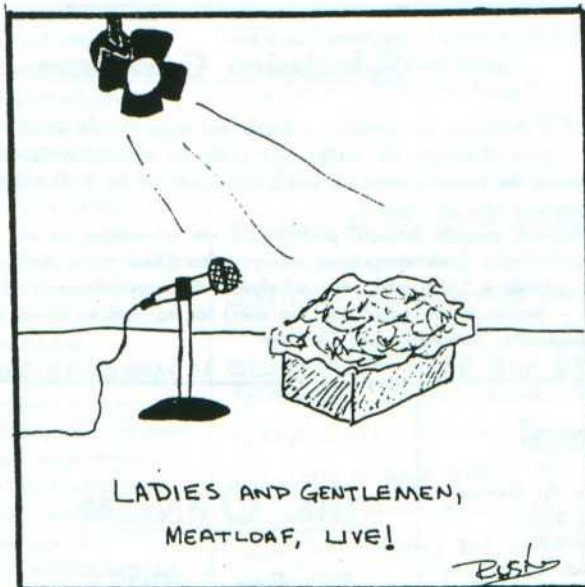
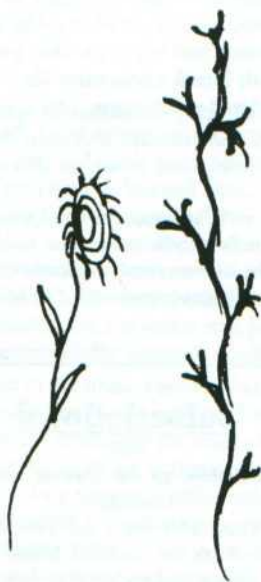
Rusty: Sitting in a hot tub, waiting for Y2K, picking off looters with a BB gun and live chickens.

O: Any New Year's resolutions?

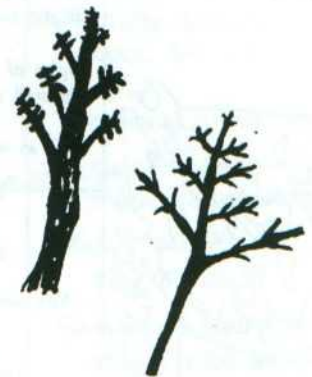
Rusty: Yes...(laughter)

O: Want to share them with me?

Rusty: New Year's Resolutions - to learn underwater basket weaving. More bisexual watersports, and no more Tender Vittles with Andrew.



Rusty



13 december 1999

--Phoebe Chloe

for the first time i will try to write about the same thing everyday for two weeks. and i've picked you as my subject, as usual, because you are so incredible to me. but i can't avoid work forever, in fact i think that i need to figure out what it is exactly

REALITY CHECK:

OUR FEEDBACK PAGE.

THE REVIEWS ARE IN!!

"... I GOT TO READING THE OMNIUM, AND I TOTALLY ATE IT UP. YUM. I'VE SEEN SOME GOOD FREE PRESS BEFORE, BUT NOTHING THAT HAS IMPRESSED ME LIKE THIS. PEOPLE EXPRESSING THEMSELVES INTELLIGENTLY AND CREATIVELY, WITHOUT BEING TOO SERIOUS, TRUTH, FICTION, SO REAL YET SURREAL. NOT TO SOUND LIKE I'M KISSING ASS (I DON'T NEED A POO FACE) BUT IT IS REFRESHING TO KNOW PEOPLE STILL LIKE TO USE THEIR BRAINS."
— J.R.

"... REPETITIVE... NARCISSISTIC...
... (I) WAS DYING OF BOREDOM..."
— O.K.

AND

THIS

MONTH'S

WINNER...

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and vending
are accessible
during mall hours

Monday through Saturday

9:30 - 9:00

Sunday

12:00 - 5:00

DEAR POST OFFICE,

THANKS!

AND YOU KEEP
UP THE GOOD WORK,
TOO!

— THE
OMNIUM
STAFF

PLEASE NOTE: THE EMAIL

ON OUR WEB SITE DOES

NOT SEEM TO WORK FOR

EVERYONE! WHILE WE'RE

WORKING ON THIS PROBLEM,

YOUR LETTERS AND SUBMISSIONS

CAN REACH US THROUGH SNAIL MAIL:

THE OMNIUM

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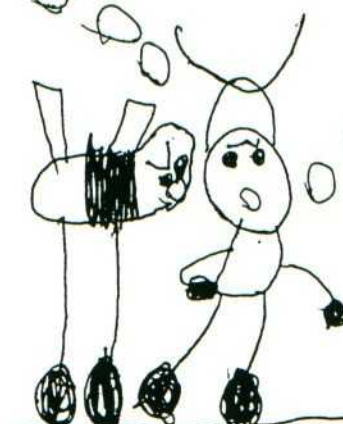
KENTWOOD, MI

49512-0053

LET
GO

IT
DOES
NOT
HELP

ADROC





sitting here in loneliness
deprived of even one caress
no one here to share the pain
no one around to keep me sane
no one to hold me tight to them
no one to touch my screaming skin
no voice to soothe the savage beast
no one to hear my wailing feast
no one to hold me in the night
when nightmares hold me, oh so tight
no weight of hand, no soothing breath
i guess myself is all that's left

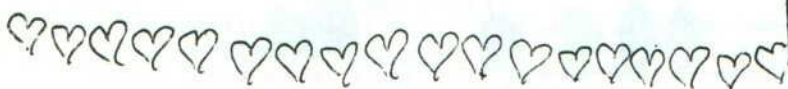
LOVE

where are you, i call into the night. i reach for you, but you no longer lie next to me in the bed. your breath is no longer felt on the back of my neck. where is the finger that use to wipe these tears that now fall so steadily? i long so to be touched, that i scar myself. if no one else will touch me, at least i will. then again, who will want to touch someone that is scarred as i am, and not all of it can be seen. i hurt so much on the inside, that sometimes i feels as if the monster in my nightmares are eating me up inside. they are alive, you know, the monsters of our worst nightmares, only they look just like you and me, and they say the same words. they get you to believe in them, and then they stab you and hit you and hurt you. that gives them the power to be your god. and you will worship them till one day, when you have had enough, you will steal the power they have and you will run. oh how you will run. and the weight of the power will be immense, because not only do you know you have it, but you also know you have to use it right. you will not be the monster eating up the insides, you want to be the angel that those hair bands always wrote ballads about. you want to be beautiful too. if only it were as easy as the models make it look.

by Sandor

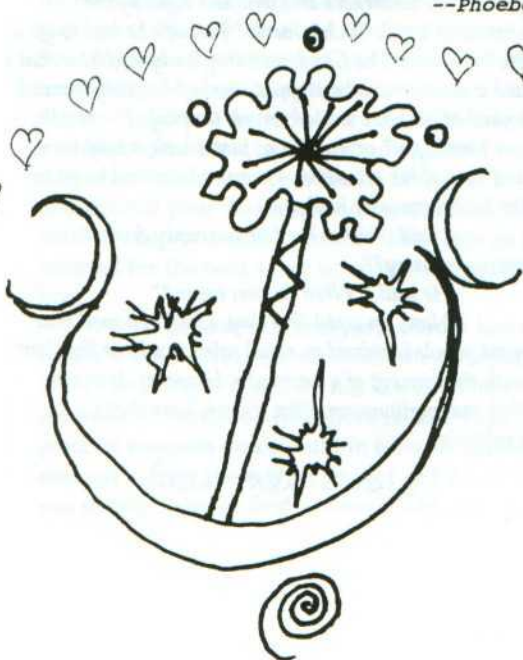








HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY FROM the OMNIUM!
IT'S A HAPPY, SQUISHY FEELING!



...there will never be a mystery man, there will be only sadness...which makes me eternally regret breaking up with aaron...i mean, he didn't care whether i was skinny or not...even though he had a really hard time treating me well...he may have been a total dick sometimes, but he was human, he was insecure...he realized the importance of not looking perfect...his favorite nickname for himself was skinny stupid motherfucker, i mean, i love him for that...i love him so much, for loving me, for telling me i'm beautiful in a way that could touch me so deeply and meaningfully...a way i am sure another man will never say to me because i think aaron's the only person that will ever really love me for me...for all of me even though i'm not the cutest girl in the room. the weird thing is, i think i had my one chance at love and it was fucked up and i gave it up but that's the best love i can get...because i sit here alone every night...i just want to love someone...i want someone to love me and i get ideas in my head and i start to fall in love but i realize that those guys are looking for someone cuter and skinnier with perkier tits and a tighter ass and it makes me mad because i am good enough for long talks and walks and dinner and movies, but they don't want to be in a relationship with me...i'm always the stand-in girlfriend and then i'm supposed to be happy when they decide to date little divas and they complain about how dumb and mean and fucked up their girls are and i just want to scream -- look at me, i am right here...i have so much to offer the right person...and i just want love...someone to be my best friend and to talk to me and take care of me sometimes and be happy for me and celebrate with me and hold me when i'm sad and let me cry when i need to and treat me well...and in return i am willing to give everything of myself to that person because that's the kind of person i am...i want to share...but i am weary of being the second choice and i refuse to give myself to someone who sees me as the runner up because even though i am lonely, i have a lot of pride and refuse to give my love to someone who doesn't want to give it back to me...

--Phoebe Chloe



 Stop it
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 Stop it



by BethDragon

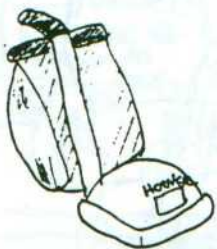
Recently I had an encounter with a very spiritual person, who has asked to remain nameless. But for all purposes of ease, we will call him "Bob" here. I found his beliefs and ideas intriguing, and undoubted. Not that I necessarily believed Bob's belief, but the strength he had, and found in his spirituality, it was riveting.

I could be talking about anyone: any person, found in any religion, or creed. But this man's religious tendencies are not on trial. Bob's spiritual guide, or god, is not for me to judge. It is his deep commitment to his belief that entranced me. He would not be moved. He **COULD** not be moved. His foundation was strong, and Bob had statements, and facts to back up every one of his ideas. Bob studied his own, as well as other facets of faith. He knows what he knows, and believes what he believes, based on the knowledge that he has searched out for his answer and found it.

Here's a scenario. You and I are standing back to back. I see a situation taking place in front of me. Better yet, I see fireworks exploding in front of me. These beautiful images floating in front of my face . . . Yet each gorgeous masterpiece is followed by a "BOOM!". You are standing behind me, facing a brick wall. YOU see the reflections of the light, and hear the horrible "BLAST!". If I told you that what I was seeing was actually a battle drawn out in front of me, and gave you ghastly scenes to fill your head, you may believe there is a war there. Or maybe even it is a war, and I describe a beautiful firework display. Do you believe? Or do you turn around and face it for yourself?

So, here is a question for you. Why would a person sit back and take another person's word as truth? Especially if you could just turn around, open your eyes and find the answer yourself? This was Bob's experience. He stopped allowing himself to be guided around blindly, and decided to "take off the blindfold."

Experience life for yourself. Your hopes, dreams . . . your fears and anticipations . . . live them all. Learn the reasons behind each, and the roads that led you here. If you know where you've come, and can see the whole picture for yourself, no one can tell you you're wrong. No one can truly challenge your faith. Blind faith is okay. Trusting in other people is a great way to live. But you can put 100 blind men in a dark room, and tell them the light is on. But somewhere in the middle, I can bet there is a blind man who isn't sure. And he won't be satisfied until he feels the hot bulb on his fingertips.



A WORD ABOUT
VACUUMS...
THEY SUCK.



IF I WERE QUEEN

As your Queen, it is my duty to arrange the kingdom in a particular order, somewhat like a puzzle. I arrange the pieces of the puzzle in just the right way as to make one big happy picture. There seems to be an aspect of the kingdom however, that represents that one piece of the puzzle that just won't fit in to place no matter how much you try to force it. More and more, I am constantly made aware of an ongoing problem in the kingdom and around the world. The problem...Bad Customer Service.

It has been brought to my attention recently, the plague of bad customer service experiences throughout the kingdom. I would now like to share with you this most distressing letter I received:

Your Right Honorable Majesty,
'Twas the day after Xmas and all through the mall
The shoppers were waiting, queued up in the hall
Waiting for boutiques and pantries and stores,
With armloads of returnable crap, near the doors
With flyers for sales and gift cards in their hands,
Their eyes were alight with desire and greed and
I thought to myself OH HOW I HATE THESE
PEOPLE AND I SHOULDN'T EVEN BE HERE IN
THE MALL, THIS GODS-FORSAKEN DUNG-
HEAP OF BRAINWASHED CONSUMER SELF-
DECEPTION AND IF I ONLY HAD WITH ME
MY CROSSBOW AND A HAND GRENADE AND
A LOVELY DISH OF BUTTERSCOTCH PUDDIN'
WHY I WOULD...

Oh, dear. I think that's enough rhyming.

Anyway, I went into ~~John's~~. I don't even remember what I was looking for now. Actually, I was just killing time until the Video store opened so I could go in there and buy the new video collection by Marilyn Manson (A decent and proper Citizen of the Realm with a very agreeable-looking tuckus). Passing the housewares department, I remembered that I was kinda-sorta in the market for a vacuum cleaner that would not set itself on fire within four months like the cheap piece of doodoo that I bought last summer. I stood in the Vacuum Cleaner Department, looking over the floor models. A group of sales persons, or CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES, as I believe they prefer to be called, stood chattering to each other nearby, looking over at me every now and then. Finally one approached me and asked, in an irritated and condescending tone of voice, if she could possibly be of assistance to me. By the attitude she projected, I think she assumed that I had either become lost on my way to the local mission's soup kitchen, or that I had

escaped from the nutty-bin down the street and was about to try to use a vacuum cleaner to communicate with The Great and Powerful Tag-na-LOO-gloopor, the leader of Planet Barzhan, and failing that, I would most likely eat the vacuum. I began asking her very silly questions such as "what kind of a warranty do you offer on vacuum cleaners?" and was promptly informed that the guy in charge of the vacuum department had not yet arrived.

The guy in charge of the vacuums is not here yet!? I did not know it required a guy to be in charge of one specific piece of household cleaning equipment! Is this guy only in charge of vacuums, or is he in charge of multiple pieces of machinery throughout the store like electric can openers or drill bits? If so, he certainly has his hands full if two people wish to buy a drill bit and an electric can opener at the same time! I would hope the store would be efficient enough to put one person in charge of one household appliance at a time. It would surprise me if they got anything done otherwise.

Perhaps they hire Vacuum specialists to sell the vacuums. They are quite a complicated bit of machinery, having to plug them in and all. This would explain why maybe the girl did not feel comfortable helping answer vacuum related questions. What if the customer asked what kind of vacuum bags to use? The guy in charge of vacuum bags is on vacation, which would cause a terrible mess considering the guy in charge of vacuums has not taken the course in vacuum bags yet. Very tricky those vacuum bags. You must know exactly how to handle them or else BANG they could explode or something. Have I lost you yet? Good, let's continue our story.

But lo! Just as she spoke those words, the Guy in Charge of the Vacuum Department breezed into the room! And there was much rejoicing. He greeted his coworkers and whisked right by me without a word. Such a hurry! Perhaps he had to go to the bathroom. The Condescending Lady told him that I had a question, so he stopped, turned halfway around, looked at me, and waited for me to speak. No "Hello can I help you" or anything, just a look, a half-turn, and part of his attention. He must have had to go to the bathroom very badly.

I said, "What kind of warranty do your vacuums carry?"

He said, "What do you mean?"

Now, up until that day, I had assumed that most people involved in retail sales would be familiar with the concept of a warranty. However, knowing that assumptions are often wrong, I set about explaining.

(CONT'D NEXT PAGE)

"I want to be sure that if the vacuum breaks, I can bring it back and get a new one," I told him, sure that this would ring a bell somewhere in the "customer satisfaction policy" section of his mind.

But he just laughed! "Ha, ha, ha...um, NO." And looked as if I was a piece of gum stuck to his backside at which he was obligated to smile.

"I see," I said, feeling very foolish for even asking. "Thank you." And I turned on my heel and walked out of the store without another word, vowing that when I do purchase a vacuum cleaner, I will acquire it from a store whose employees will be happy to see me, and whose policies assure me that my \$200.00 will actually get me a working vacuum cleaner, and not be simply my donation to the company president's new summer home.

As I sat in the royal conference room reading the letter above, the wheels in my head started turning and of course a solution came quickly. First I will need to meet with the executives of this retailer and inform them of the problem.

The executives were very cooperative to my demands. It seems they were not aware that such things were going on in their stores. I suggested a solution to this specific problem and requested that I personally be allowed to implement the plan. They were reluctant at first (they said I was being a bit harsh) but I soon had them coming around to my way of thinking (It's amazing what people will do for you when they realize how much of the television and radio airwaves you control and how much they may never get to see or hear of their services again.) Not that I would use such threats unless I felt it absolutely necessary.

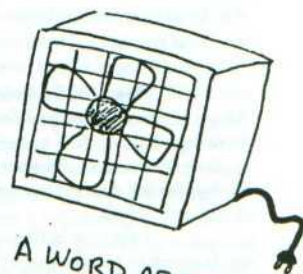
The next day, I paid a visit to the specific location that my friend had such trouble with and walked directly to the vacuums. My friend pointed out the girl and the "vacuum guy", that "helped" her. As I walked toward the now frightened looking girl and her weasel of a coworker, they bowed and welcomed me. I took her shaking hand in mine and said, "The way you were courteous to me just now, is how every customer deserves to be treated. However I understand your dilemma and I am here to help you." A nervous smile came over her face as she listened for the next set of words to escape my lips.

"I believe that everyone should know how a vacuum works, how much they cost, and where to get help if you do not know. When someone is courteous enough to choose your place of business you should in turn be courteous enough to treat them with respect and do all you can to help them or find someone who can. They

are not here to be treated like intrusions. If it weren't for them, you wouldn't have a job! From your previous actions I sense the job is not that appealing to you anyway. Therefore, I am announcing for you your early retirement from the customer service industry until further notice. Oh, don't cry my dears, I would never leave someone without a way to make a living. That is why, I have decided to help you with your career and give you a formal education so that when you come back to this job someday, you will be prepared for what it entails. You will now work in the vacuum assembly factory. I have a feeling that after approximately ten years of building vacuum cleaners 8 hours a day 6 days a week, you will be qualified to answer any questions a customer might have in the future. As for the rest of you here, do not think that I will not give you the same opportunity that I have just given your former co-worker. If any one of you think that you cannot handle the questions or responsibilities of your job I will be more than happy to place you somewhere that will give you the skills you need to do a better job."

How are they now, you ask? They got used to the work. I'll bet they can run vacuum and vacuum bag departments by the time they are done. As for the other workers of the retail store, they have never been happier to help anyone in all of their lives. That reminds me, I need an electric can opener.

-- *NRH Lisa*



A WORD ABOUT
FANS...
THEY BLOW,

I am Slipping,
my eyes are Dripping,
my skin is Ripping,
Apart.
hate fills the Head,
living in Dread,
tossing in Bed,
Awake.
taken all Away,
deal with each Day,
huddled I lay,
Again.
by Sandi



An Un-smart Society

-- Steevigh

How is it, I wonder to myself as I stand in line at Arby's, that certain people have actually managed to graduate from high school? It is a busy Tuesday afternoon in September. I, along with several other people, am on my lunch break. Today, for my dining pleasure, I chose to walk to the downtown Arby's.

I am next in line - finally - and the person ahead of me is trying to pay the cashier for her meal. For some unknown reason, the cashier has to figure - in her head, without the benefit of the cash register - the customer's change. I watch her. I can see the wheels turning as she subtracts .83 from a dollar. This takes her a painfully long time and she says, with uncertainty, "twenty seven cents, right?" The kicker is this: the woman says, "Yep." Then realizing her error quickly says, "No. It's seventeen cents." HURRAY. Someone has finally gotten it right. I am amazed.

Now, I can't really tear into the Grand Rapids Public School system and say they've done a horrible job educating today's students. I can't say that because I went through the Grand Rapids Public School system myself and I am able to do simple math without needing a calculator. I also can't say that because I don't know that this particular Arby's employee actually went through the Grand Rapids Public School system. But that won't stop me. The kids need help, it's a very, very bad system. Bad system, naughty. Go sit in the corner. But I digress.

Several years ago I worked in a local movie theatre while I was attending college. This movie theatre is now closed - not that it matters, but just for your information. One of my many duties was to face the public and sell tickets. I can not TELL you the number of times the following happened to me.

Someone would enter the building, walk up to the box office and look right at me and say:

"What movies do you guys have?"

Oh, did I leave something out? Sorry. There was a 6'x10' sign - black with white lettering - RIGHT BEHIND ME. I didn't even have to move for them to see it. It was RIGHT THERE. Stevie Wonder would have noticed that sign...well, almost. My point is that it was VERY OBVIOUS and people STILL asked me this question nearly every single day I worked there. This just proves my point. People are stupid. Stupid, stupid, stupid. At least no one ever asked me if we sold popcorn. Then I would be forced to use violence and really it wouldn't even be my fault.

Customer: "I want this crazy girl arrested! She attacked me!"

Policeman: "What did you say to provoke her?"

Customer: "I asked if they sold popcorn."

Policeman: "What a stupid question, it's a MOVIE THEATRE, of course they have POPCORN, you idiot."

Case dismissed.

For a while I was a customer service representative for a gas company. The most amazing thing would happen. Someone would call in, give me their account number and as I was looking at the account they would tell me that their gas has been shut off. I would say something like "I show that you have a bill owing in the amount of \$454.39...your last payment was 4 months ago." My favorite reply (and believe me, I've heard them all) was this: "I didn't get a bill last month". Sure you didn't. Like that means they don't have to pay for the gas. You're so dooooooooooooomb.

I don't work in customer service anymore. I can't deal with people. They're complete idiots and I try not to have much contact with them. It's better this way.



Sebastiania

Cedar Cyanide
By Cou

Trees grow
Incredibly slow
And everything aches.

Birds fly
Across the sky
And death overtakes.

Flowers bloom
In this gray tomb
Underneath - the ground shakes.

Rain comes down
All over town
And the silence breaks.

Animals howl
Old women scowl
My hole body aches.



Anti-Personnel Dept.

Ma'am
(I said),
I don't have
a credit card
or
a bank account
or
an envelope from last year addressed to me.

I'm sorry
(she said),
you do not exist
and I cannot help you.
Next please?

Jee-zus Kryst
(I thought, as I faded away),
Who's going to
feed my cat now?

--JYMI



DREAM LIKE A CHILD AGAIN

--Susan Stanek

My dreams are flooding my memory like Nightmares.
Lost Vampire acquaintances rush my mind
and I curl in the agony of Loneliness.
Love is life my child.

I want the kiss
I want the love
once more.

...
One more time
Love in time
Love that's mine
I can't survey the darkness anymore.
I want the answers that can sustain.
Fill my life again.
Fill my mouth with blood.
Feel the wisdom rush through.
A full death lost in the mist!
Feel my pain.
I can't feel anymore.



Revelation

—by Ryan Lieske
for KAK

Pretty pretty fairy
created by the moon and
born from a tree, raised by lightning bugs.
growing up, her best friend in the
whole world
was a racoon.

pretty pretty fairy
heaven's response to an ugly world.

I saw her one day while walking in the
woods.

She turned to me, sat with me
for hours and hours.

pretty pretty fairy
whose smile could answer all the questions
you ask the moon at night,
like the answers that come with the sun
after a month of rainy days.

I saw her again some time later,
and she was sad.

Sad, why, pretty fairy?

She, in autumn's warmest fire.

I could see sadness in those glittering eyes,
could feel it on her fluttering,
pollen-dappled wings.

pretty pretty fairy, what makes that glitter
in your eyes dim?

A single tear, and the response
came from between her fingers.

Like Hecate's magic, spinning in the air
before me.

Chaos, senseless ramblings from senseless souls.
A world she did not understand. A world
she was lonely in.

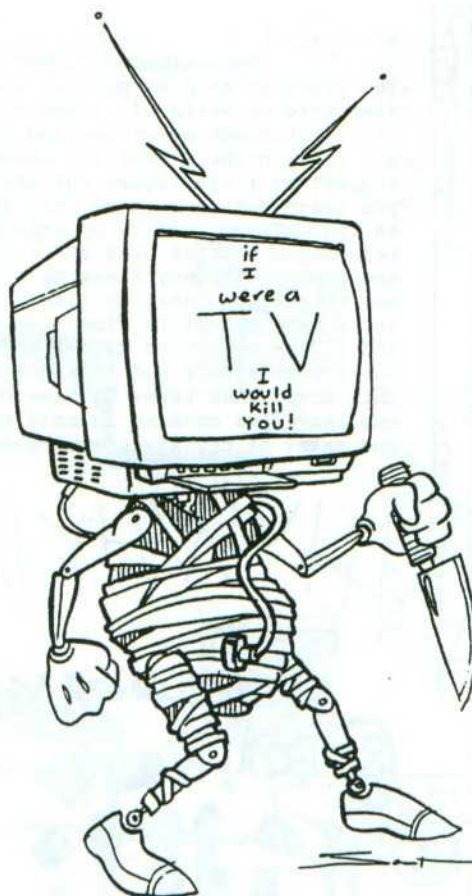
I could understand your sadness,
pretty pretty fairy.

The prettiest, cuddliest, heavenliest cloud
nature had ever spun.

I could understand why you rain.

In the middle of the chaos, was where your heart
beat.

pretty pretty fairy,
her heart the pulse I could feel all around me.
My heart beats there, too.



Indecisively I reached out. Hesitantly I
approached. Regardless I took his hand, and
gave him all my most. Ha Ha, englishly deprived
I am, and lost in a muddled puddle. Can't read
between the lines? That's okay, neither can I. It
makes no sense, but look again. It's perfectly
understandable if you think in a different tense.

Or was that supposed to be a different angle?

Hard to tell, from a broken angel. Funny how
words leave your tongue, before you've decided
it's what should be sung. Or maybe whispered?

But does it make a difference? We're all here to
live a lie, or is it something more like life? Either
way, the road is hard. It makes no difference from
which part. Wish I had a book that would explain
it all. But that would be a waste of time and
space, since I'd never have a chance to pick it up.

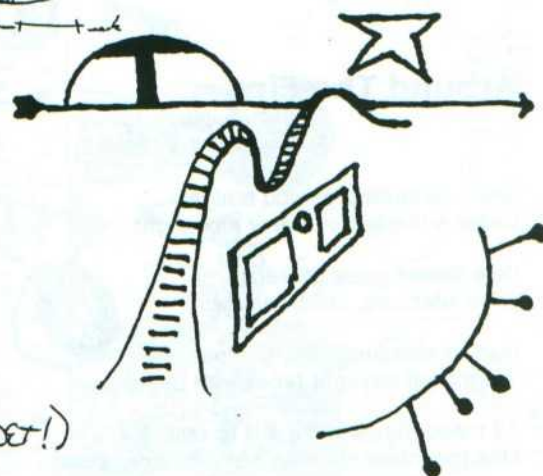
It would only fall. Anyway, what is it with
words, and the sting they inflict. Or the guidance
they give? The love that you live? Yeah, I meant
live... live love. Love life? Not lately. But that's
okay, since most don't. Or do they? Strange are
words laced on paper...or maybe paper on laced
words are strange. Pencil to the paper, chalk on a
board. Communication without feeling. Whacked
the way you think when nothing seems to fit.
When not even you fit. Just think...I'm not high.

Or am I?

— BethDragon

T.V.
IS
EVIL!

(BUT I LIKE
ANIMAL PLANET!)



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



Got bumps in the night?
GOREHART LABORATORIES
METAPHYSICAL CONSULTANTS
(616) 954 2537



MOM, DAD- I PROMISE. I'M DOING
NOTHING KINKY, WEIRD OR SATANIC!

Wander child
across this dark morning
like perfect life
Soft and deep
whisper what a thousand evenings hear
not seeing your shadow
Dream these secret colors
out over gold stars, with rain from love
like snow come here after the cold

Her spirit can bloom longer
and breath will turn me into you
red storm let go purple peace
Through it all a girl is sleeping
she feels time, true green light
as he is yet to imagine

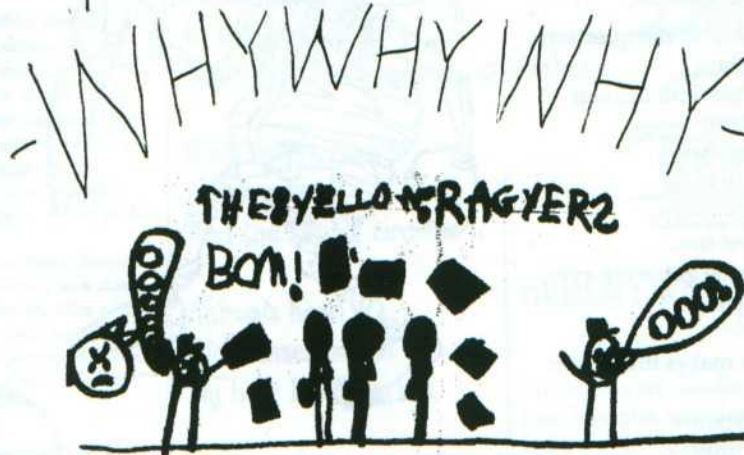
--Samantha Kubik

visitor

--Phoebe Chloe

you creep beneath my eyelids while i am dreaming
seep into my world of dreams and tarnish them with your being
slip in through my window and loom over my bed
and every night i feel you above my head and i open my eyes
and before i can figure out what you are, who you are
you reach out to me and i can feel your blade
as its intimacy breaks my skin penetrates my veins tears my flesh
before you pull it back out i cry out in vain as you repeat your blows
and one by one they break me
one by one you steal my life from me...
and i wake myself to find i am staring down onto a bloody mess
and i wake myself to find i am staring down at what is left
and i wake myself but i cannot move cannot scream cannot stop
this dream that takes my breath from me
and leaves me covered in cold and shivering
and makes me try again and again to wake myself....

Enjoy the Silence...
Before the noise gets
too loud...



Spin Me In
★ PASSIONATE
LUSTING
EMBRACE

Around The Fire

--by Steevigh
For Jeremy 10/18/99

She'll be smiling on you tonight
Under a blanket of starry moonlight

Dew-kissed grass glistens
Wind whispers, children listen

Planets surround him, glorious one
Warmth of daylight fades with the sun

All these things being put to rest
Like the infant suckling her mother's breast

Child, you will be one with your Mother
She is the Crone, Daughter and Lover

Eyes look on while the fire rages
And we dance the dance of the ages

Silvery moon so high above
She is smiling on you with love

Do her bidding, do it well
We have no heaven and no hell

Sleep tonight, child of the moon
For tomorrow will come too soon

Lock away your dreams when the sun does rise
See reflections of incantations in mystical eyes

Smile to her now, she is watching you
She knows all the good you have yet to do.

Timeless, ageless, beautiful son
Tonight you are the chosen one.



HAZE of SATURN --Susan Stanek

A spot of gold, and a smile to feed with.
a rebel's face of gold.

a spot of haze on the sun.
a shadow licks me, no more.
I feel his breath again on my cheek,
I rest in the feeling of more.



The Damned --by Melissa

so perfect pale
so young
we don't have to die
We have everything
always
So sweet
in a land
between life and afterlife
on a razor
Dance
so graceful
Timeless and dark
One side alive
One side undead

YOU'RE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SOUND
AND I CAN'T TOUCH YOU THERE
NO FACE TO SEE
NOT YET, NO, NOT JUST YET

BE MY
DARK
ANGEL

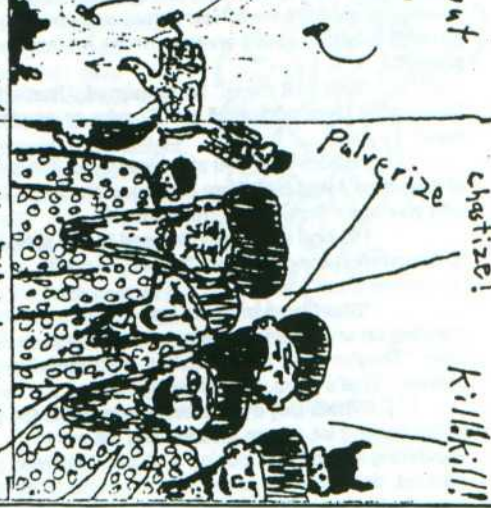
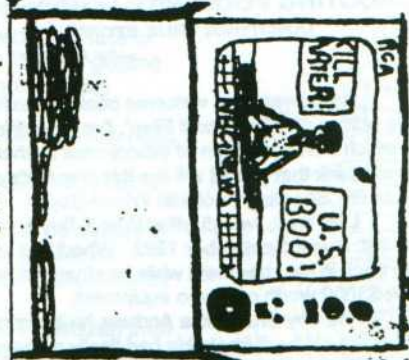


And now, the NBC
Nightly News.

From New York, this
is Walter Cronkite.

I regret to tell you that
nothing has happened and
therefor there is no news.

Indi-Gestion.



sweet woman you have
essentially you did her
to manipulate the time
use the girl

how could you lie together
sordid love urge lust
drunk moments and easy bed friends
never produce love.

--Phoebe Chloe
in collaboration with s.linn
for cmd, late aug. 1998

SHOOTING POOL WITH WHODI-BOY (ANOTHER TRUE STORY)

—by Andrew

Hello everyone, welcome back to another exciting edition of "The Whodi Files". I've been thinking about which wondrous gem of Whodi-ness to share with you, and I think that you all will like this one. Let's call it "Episode III...Shooting Pool with Whodi-Boy".

Last time, we left off at Whodi-Boy's apartment. It was September 1992. Whodi and I were kicking back in his apartment while he struggled to set up his new \$3000 worth of stereo equipment.

"He-hey Bru-Brutha Andrew, ho-howzzzz it goin'?" sturred Whodi-freak. He had finally managed to get his stuff all arranged and set up the way he wanted it, and now we were very busy annoying the hell out of his neighbors. One thing about Whodi-Boy...he really likes his music loud! We then sat out on his balcony, drinking some Heineken, tripping on the view of the beach and hitting his bong. All in all, it had been a pretty good day.

"Pretty good, Brother Geoff" I said. "What's going on there, Tiger?"

"Uh, I ke-keep thinking that I'm forgetting something...and I can't remember what it is."

I boggled. "No...You forget something? No way, Whodi-shit," I laughed. "Not you...never-ur!"

We both laughed for a bit. I lit a cigarette while Whodi-Boy continued to strain his cognitive abilities, trying like hell to remember whatever it was that he wanted to tell me. I sat back and was listening to the roar of the ocean for awhile, when I saw this brown horrid crappy looking car pull into the parking lot below us. I wouldn't have paid it much attention, but I had noticed that the car's license plates were from New Jersey.

"Hey, Whodi-Boy?" I said, trying not to bust up laughing.

Whodi-Boy jumped, spilling his beer. "Aw, fu-fuckin shit goddamn beer!"

My grin got bigger as I watched the car's two occupants get out and look around. "Whodi-Boy?" I asked again. "When were Bill and Melinda supposed to be coming out here from New Jersey and crashing with you until they had saved enough money for their own place?"

"Ahh, shit man!!" he exclaimed. "That's it!! That's what I was gonna tell you. They're co-coming out here!"

"Whodi-Boy, you already told me that a couple of days ago. I was over here playing on the Sega CD with you when they called...remember?"

He kind of cocked his head to one side, lower lip furrowed in concentration. "Naaah, I-I don't remember, man"

"Short term memory loss is irrelevant," I said, standing up and setting my empty bottle down on the table. "They're here. See?" I asked, pointing to the new arrivals. "That's them, Whodi-Boy!"

Whodi-Boy's gaze eventually wandered down to the parking lot, where Melinda and Bill were wandering around and looking a bit lost. His brow crinkled, deep furrows appearing across his forehead. I think Brother Geoff may have burnt up more gray matter in those five seconds, then in a year of school. Suddenly his head spun around, eyes maniacally focusing in my direction.

"Oh, sh-shit man! You know wha-what," babbled Whodi-Prophet. "Guess what...Bill and Melinda are here from New Jersey!"

"Yep," I nodded slowly, leaning over the balcony. "They sure are...Sup!" I yelled, grinning down at them. They both jumped at the sound of my voice. Bill had never met me before, but Melinda was a member of the Crew and instantly started running towards Whodi's balcony.

"Wall-Freak!" she yelled up at us. "Whodi-Boy!"

I tossed Whodi-Boy's keys down to her. "The door buzzer thing is busted, so just come on up...B 306."

They were up within a couple of minutes. As I said, I'd never met Bill before, since he was someone Melinda had met back in New Jersey. I wasn't sure what to make of him. I mean, he seemed okay in general. However, he apparently fancied himself as a biker...and it was painfully obvious to everyone but Bill that he was a *poser*, not a biker. He always wore a Harley Davidson shirt, jeans with a Harley belt, and had this weird sort of tasseled leather strip contraption that hung from his belt. I guess he was fond of sneaking up behind Melinda and slapping her across the ass with it. She obviously wasn't as taken with it as he was, though...and after she kneed him in his ball-sacky, he finally ended up getting the hint. But this is what tripped us out the most about Bill. After listening to him go off for over 2 hours about motorcycles and how much of a biker he was, I asked him what kind of bike he actually had. His answer was, "Uh, a Yamaha...but it was a mean bike, man...it was a chopper!"

Hahahaha. Yeah, Biker Bill (and his Yamaha) from New Jersey. Anyway, Melinda was still cool and we all had a pretty cool time hanging out.

A couple of hours later, we were all immensely hungry. Ravenous, actually. Everyone decided to head back to my place. The plan was swimming and a BBQ thang. I threw some stuff in a marinade as soon as we got to my apartment, then joined everyone at the pool. I didn't have far to walk, as it was 15 feet away from my front door. Everyone but Whodi-Boy was swimming. Our hero had found himself a reclining pool chair in the corner and had made himself comfortable, swilling Miceys Bigmouths and smoking a pack of Marlboro reds. Occasionally, he'd mutter under his breath when someone splashed him.

I was walking up the stairs to the pool when I heard a low voice intone, "Annnnnnn-sluuutttttt..."

Grinning, I turned around as Tom Loshus caught up with me. "Ska-bo-shus," I replied back in greeting.

"Hey man," Loshus said. "Let me borrow your key...I gotta take a leak, and I figured I'd use your toilet this time, instead of the pool."

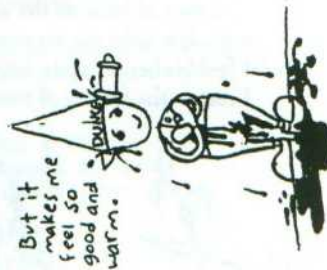
"First time for everything, huh Loshi?" I laughed, tossing my keys to Tom as I opened the pool gate. Dropping my stuff in the nearest empty chair, I jumped into the pool (making sure to splash Brother Geoff). The pool felt great, as it was around 90 degrees outside. We swam around for awhile, Whodi-Boy never leaving his chair. Every now and then he'd take off his sunglasses, admire them for a few seconds and say to anyone who happened to make eye contact, "He-hey man, check out these brand new Revo sunglasses that my mom bought me...they cost like over \$100.00!"

Swimming got boring after an hour. We threw lots of chicken, shrimp and steak on the grill. When the food was ready, we rejoiced...and then we feasted.

After we cleaned up, Biker Bill started talking about what a great nine-ball player he was. Pool sounded like a good idea, so we all headed over to Don Q's. Whodi-Boy wanted to make a stop first, claiming that he needed to climb the, "Str-Strawberry Hill." It didn't matter to Whodi that they served alcohol at Don Q's, because he also wanted whiskey.

Whodi and I dropped everyone else off and drove up Chapala Street one block, pulling into the Vons parking lot. The minute we were inside the store, Whodi-Boy made a beeline for the alcohol section. By the time I had found him, he already had two bottles of Boones Farm Strawberry Hill gripped firmly in each hand. A pint of Jack Daniels was wedged underneath his arm.

"Brutha Andrew," grinned Whodi-Boy. "Let's go so I can drink all this."



(CONT'D NEXT PAGE...)

We quickly paid for Brother Geoff's booze and drove back to Don Q's. After we had pulled into the lot and parked, Whodi-Boy gleefully opened the pint of Jack and one of the bottles of Strawberry Hill. He smiled, saying "Bye-bye!" and threw back his head, slamming several drinks worth of whiskey down his throat. A horrible grimace crossed Whodi-Boy's face. He then started chugging the bottle of wine. I sat there and watched him, amazed at the ferocity with which Whodi-Boy guzzled his alcohol. He'd swig the wine for several seconds, have another couple shots of Jack Daniels, and go back to the Strawberry Hill again. That first bottle of wine was gone in under 4 minutes. As Whodi-Boy opened up the second bottle of Strawberry Hill, he turned to me and slurred, "He-hey there, br-Brother Andrew."

"Hey there, Whodi-Drunk" I said. "How's it going?"

"Oh, pr-pretty good. Um, can I ask you a question?"

I nodded. "Sure can, Tiger"

"He-hey man," drawled Whodi-Boy, starting on his second bottle of wine. "Do you think mar-marijuana trees grow in he-heaven?"

"I'd never given the matter much thought," I replied. "Do you?"

"Oh, ah-I sure do man," declared Whodi, nodding vigorously as he continued to slam the rest of the wine. He finished his second bottle of Strawberry Hill three minutes later, pausing between swallows for more of his beloved, "Ja-Ja-Jackie."

I was ready to play some nine ball, so I asked Whodi-Boy if he was planning on staying in the car all night.

"Na-nah dude," babbled Whodi-Monster, scrambling out of the car. "I'm ri-urrglph!"

I had been walking kind of quickly, impatient to get inside and play. It was a good thing that I was several feet away from Whodi-Boy. I turned around in time to see him slap both hands over his mouth and lean sharply forward. A bit of froth came out from between his hands, but he appeared to swallow everything back down and keep it there. He then wiped his hands on his jeans and staggered towards the entrance to Don Q's.

We found everyone gathered around a table near the back. Whodi-Boy weaved his way to the bar while I walked over to our table. Biker Bill was getting ready to take a shot, talking constantly about his pool shooting technique. I assumed that Tom was the lucky one to be playing him, judging by annoyed look on Tom's face and the way he was swinging his pool cue dangerously close to Bill's head. He didn't notice though, and continued to praise his pool ability as he took his shot. I watched as the cue ball sped directly into the side pocket.

"Yeah...great shot, Flailer!" laughed Tom, placing the cue ball on the table. I averted my face to avoid Bill seeing me laughing at him. As I was giggling quietly, Whodi-Fiend slowly (and very crookedly) staggered over to our table.

"He-hey everybody," he croaked. "Ho-h-hows it going?"

"Brother Geoff," grinned Tom. "You want to play next game with me?"

"Uhh yeah dude, th-that would be awesome!" exclaimed Whodi, attempting to sit on a stool. He missed, landing on the floor with a loud thunk. I offered him a hand.

"Whodi-Creature," I said as I pulled him from the ground. "You can't see the table from down there, can you?"

"Nah, I can't see shit fr-from down there," Geoff answered after several long moments of thought. Meanwhile, Tom had nailed the four ball, which in turn knocked the nine ball into a corner pocket. He stared at Bill with an extremely mocking smile on his face.

"Rack em up," Tom said, turning to Whodi-Boy. "Lets play."

Bill the Biker went off to pout while Whodi racked the balls for another game of nine ball. I went and ordered a Newcastle for myself, returning to the table as Whodi-Boy was eyeing the layout of the balls with a critical gaze. After several seconds of gnawing on his bottom lip, Whodi-Boy brought his pool cue forward sharply. Somehow, he never even came close to hitting any of the balls on the table. I watched as Whodi's right arm violently twisted up and around his back. Whodi-Boy took a step backwards, neatly tripping over the end of the pool stick.

I quickly got up and walked around the table, wanting to make sure Whodi was okay. Tom and I both grabbed a hysterically laughing heap of Whodi-Boy off of the ground and sat him down on a stool that Melinda had pulled over. Tom asked Whodi if he needed anything. Whodi-Boy nodded somewhat diagonally, grunting about an empty pitcher. I grabbed one for him and he took it in both hands, sat down on the floor in front of the pool table and proceeded to fill the pitcher with the contents of his stomach. The three of us exchanged a look, instantly deciding to call it a night. Tom and I gave Melinda some money and she took care of our bar tab while we slowly led Brother Geoff out to his car. It was slow going, as Whodi-Boy was pretty much dead weight.

"Hey, Br-Brother Tom," Whodi-Boy mumbled as we arrived at his car. "Do you know ho-how much of an interest ra-rate federal bonds have?"

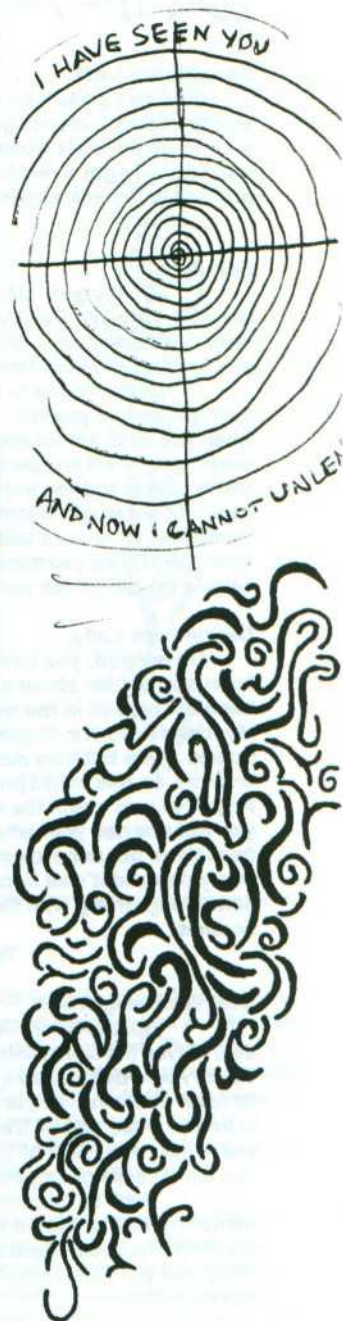
I unlocked the doors as Tom replied, "I don't know, man."

Tom got Whodi-Freak into the back seat as I started the car. He jumped in front and I pulled out of the lot, stopping at the sidewalk so Melinda and Bill join Whodi in the back of the car. We drove back to my apartment first. Whodi-Boy had passed out on the way and was snoring loudly. Tom slid into the driver's seat after I got out of the car.

"Night-night Wallboy," said Tom. "See you tomorrow."

Nodding, I waved, bidding everyone a good night. "Bye Loshi."

Tom spun the car around in a U turn and onto the street. I turned and walked to my apartment. After watching the new episode of Star Trek: TNG, I fell asleep. Right before I drifted off, I realized that I hadn't even gotten a chance to play pool that night. Oh well, when one hangs out with Whodi-Boy, things rarely happen as they were originally planned.



WISH the FISH

--Susan Stanek

Wish the fish
to wash the dish
and fill the plate with tea.

Wish the crow
beneath the snow
the cradle rocked with thee.

Wished the sea
eternal plea
tomorrow your night is sorrow.

Wish with me
a drunken plea
to wash the marrows of morrow.



ASK THE ADVICE LADY

Dear Advice Lady,

Why do i gotta take English class. It totally sux and doesn't got anything to do with what my job is gonna be. I mean my side job. I already got a real job and that dont got nothing to do with english class neither ok.

Love Nikki

Dear Nikki,

Oh my god. Why do you have to have two jobs, anyway? Don't you make enough money at the first one? You're going to run yourself ragged at this rate. You need to relax.

Everyone has to take English class, tiger, so prepare yourself. The reason is so that when you finish school and get out into the "real world" people will be able to understand what you're saying and you won't look like a blithering idiot. No one wants to look like a blithering idiot. *Someone I know once said, "Proper grammar is essential to good communication".* If you don't believe me just go ask your brother.

Dear Advice Lady,

Oh my god, you have to help me, I've been married for about a year and I'm still the happiest person in the world because of it. My friends say it's disgusting and make gross noises at me but they make gross noises anyway, so this might just be another excuse. Anyway I was under the impression that when you got married your whole life went downhill from there but mine keeps getting better every day and it's all because of my wifel is something wrong with me? Am I a space alien or what?

Wallowing in Bliss

Dear Wallowing in Bliss,

Space Alien? Gee, I don't know about that. Maybe not completely, maybe just half Space Alien. But, you sure are lucky! You must have an awesome wife, or at least be really good in bed (or both). I think it's super-great that you're still happy after all this time. Take it from me, it just keeps getting better and better.

Don't be bothered with what your friends have to say about your great marriage, they're just jealous. Keep doing what you're doing and you'll be married to this fantastic girl forever and ever.

Life got you all confused? Send your questions to the Advice Lady, in care of The Omnium.



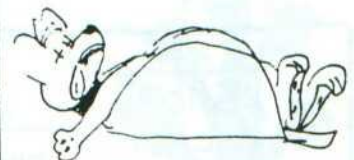
WHERE ARE YOUR DREAMS?

Strike

PointLaughTaunt
ing
CutSlashJarr
ing
PantingBreathing
Bloodrushseething
Shuffle away
GiantsStampingSurface
TwinkleKnives
I-I-dashHidingUnderRock
DeepdampSlimy
ColdstillGrimy
InTheDarkNoEyesBehindMe
whisper
BlueMossBelowWhatILearnUpThere
Stains.
My rock. My rock. My
Earthshakes.
Prophetswords come true
Knives melt
Giants fall
Under-creaturescrawling out
Lurching out
Blinking in the Bright
Breath frothywindy air
Our air now.
Our knives now.
Giants kneel becoming sheep
Heads bowed crying braying fawning they beseech
Knife falls on weak neck die this death weak mind
We laugh now at giant sheep heads rolling when we kick.

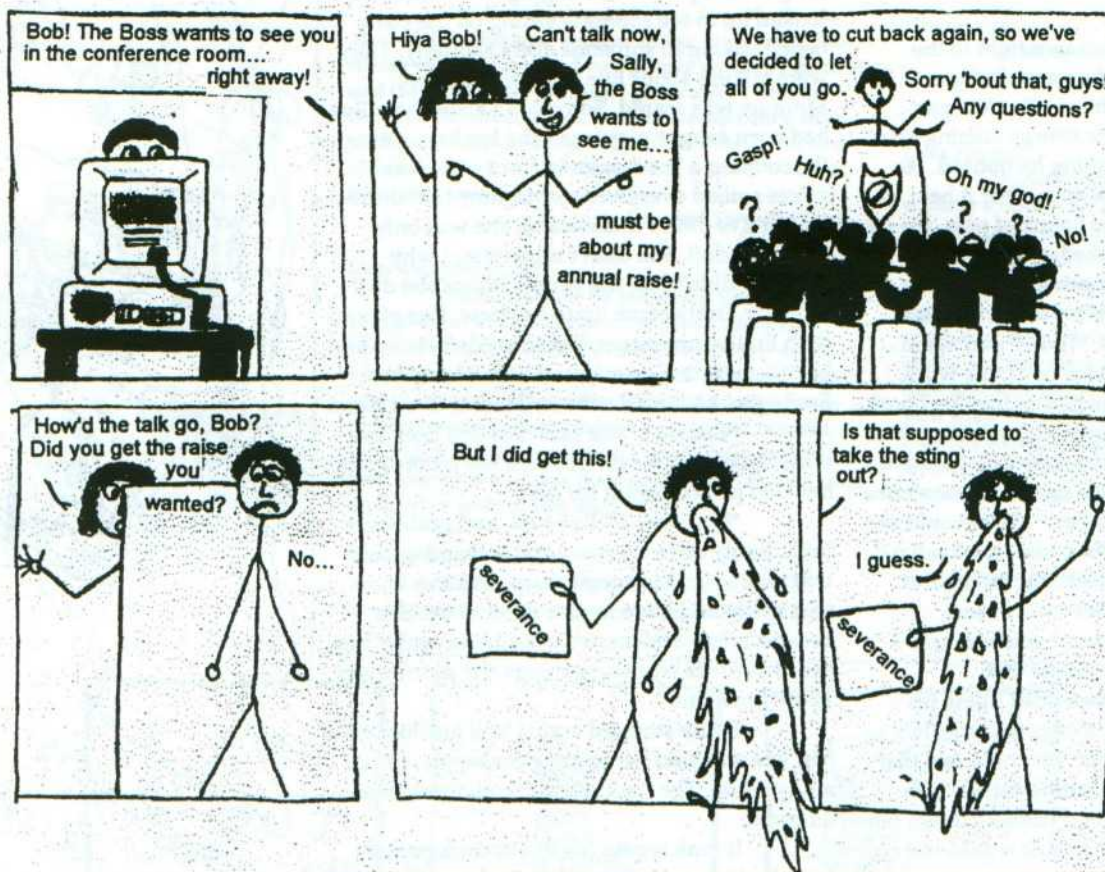
Make me pretty
Make me shine
Take away
My turpentine

SCREW THE
CHALUPA...



EAT THE DAMN
DOG!

- Jymi



The Green Party of Michigan

by Roger McClary

I'd like to introduce a growing environmental and political movement that is just getting off the ground here in Grand Rapids. In the midst of this presidential political season, many people are turned off by the power plays of the two major political parties. A recent poll conducted by the Wall Street Journal in Iowa showed that on the eve of the presidential caucuses in that state only 8% of the people surveyed showed any interest in the presidential campaign.

One of the reasons for this great disaffection in American politics is that many people feel that the neither the Democratic or the Republican Party adequately reflect their own concerns and views about politics. In recent months, the Reform Party has received a lot of media coverage due to the election of Jesse Ventura as governor of Minnesota from that party. However, due its own leanings to ultra-conservatism, the Reform Party is not considered a viable option to many people.

Enter the Green Party. The Green Party was formed as a result of the efforts of people who were involved in the environmental and social movements of the 1960s and 1970s. The Greens have had the most electoral success in Europe, where there are sitting members in most of the national parliaments. In the United States, there are currently 35 members of the Green Party who have been elected to public office, including two mayors in California.

The Green Party is dedicated to the Ten Key Values: 1) Ecological Wisdom, 2) Social Justice, 3) Grass-roots Democracy, 4) Nonviolence, 5) Decentralization, 6) Community-Based Economics, 7) Feminism (also called Gender Equality by some), 8) Respect for Diversity, 9) Personal and Global Responsibility, 10) Future Focus/Sustainability. The platforms of the Party begin with and expand upon these principles.

In Michigan, the Green Party is relatively young, having run its first presidential campaign here in 1986, with Ralph Nader as its candidate for President. The Green Party of Michigan is currently trying to get ballot access. In order to do that, we need to collect a total of 40,000 signatures of registered voters from all across the state by July 15. If anyone would like to assist in this effort, just drop a note to Craig Harvey at harvey@ic.net, or to myself at politicog@yahoo.com.

There are currently three declared candidates of the Green Party of Michigan, Tom Ness of Detroit, who plans to run for U.S. Senate; Richard Wunsch of Hillsdale, who is planning on contesting a Congressional seat; and I plan on a campaign for Kent County Commissioner for the 15th District. At the national level, three people have announced that they will run for the Green nomination for President: Joel Kovel, of New York, who was a 1988 Green candidate for the U.S. Senate; Stephen Gaskin of Tennessee; and Ralph Nader.

An organizational meeting of the Grand Rapids Greens will be held on February 9 at 7:00 PM. The place is still to be determined. If anyone would like to receive a notice of this meeting, either e-mail me at the address above, or call (616) 356-1338 and leave a message.

In this exceedingly complex world, the Green Party is uniquely situated to challenge the increasing power of the multinational corporations, and to help us ensure that the Earth will be able to sustain succeeding generations. Help us to send the message that politics as usual is no longer acceptable.

The opinions of the writer do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Omnium Staff, blah blah blah etc.

Blood

by Sandor Snow

The shades were drawn tight to the blinding morning sun, and incense hung in heavy dancing spirals in the air. But Morgan didn't notice any of this; the energy coming off of the painting was the only thing he noticed. He fed on all the red and black anger that it held, as if he were nursing from the breast of pain. He sat in the black leather sofa naked; eyes on the painting, hand on his erect penis.

"To see you again, my love..." he said, as his hand began to move. "To feel you again..." Memories flashed through his head: the work they had done together, the power they had both attained. She had taken it all away. All the power he had worked for, gone. He wasn't prepared to take any of it with him when he left. It wasn't like he'd had a choice; it was all her. "Never could see the greater scheme of things, could you Evelyn?" he said. "You can't understand that father and daughter, husband and wife, woman and woman: it makes no difference: you and I are connected. You can never change that..."

Now, instead of memories filling his head, it was the thought of things to come. His hand moved faster and faster. He could feel that he was inside her, with her sitting astride him. He could almost feel the blood running down her soft body and splashing his face. It would feel so good.

She was walking down the street, her black leather trench coat flapping in the cool autumn wind. So many things to do, but her mind was filled with images of the past. She couldn't get them out of her head. They were flashing through her mind like clips from movie trailers. She felt more relaxed as she unlocked the stained glass door that lead to the small shop. Eve walked in, and smelled the sweet scent of the fenugreek that seemed to overpower all the other scents in the shop. Looking around, she saw that nothing was out of place, except the small pile of mail and boxes that sat on the counter.

Eve sat down and grabbed for one box in particular, letting the rest of the mail slide onto the floor. She ripped it open and pulled out a faded old book. She held it in her lap and just looked at it: this was the book she had been waiting for; the one that would hold a key, but there was trepidation in her mind. A memory took hold, and she sat back and closed her eyes. She was five again.

Little Eve was sitting in the grass, her long blonde ponytails hanging in the dirt. She looked up to see Mommy sitting on the park bench talking to someone else's Mommy. They were talking about Eve. For some reason Mommy was scared. Something about how Eve had been caught playing in the kitchen, sitting on the counter, a book open in front of her and spices spilled everywhere. Mommy had thrown a fit, but Eve didn't understand; she was only making a doll. She didn't understand why Mommy didn't like the simple things she did.

Emily came up to her now. Eve played with Emily sometimes, but she didn't really like her. She was too greedy and threw tantrums. Emily grabbed the Barbie doll out of Eve's hand.

"Gimmie," she said. But this time Eve wasn't standing for it. This was her favorite doll; her Dad just bought it for her.

"No," was all Eve said, and grabbed it back. Emily started crying and screaming, and that was when Mommy got up, and Eve knew that she would have to give the doll up. She became angry and started mumbling under her breath. Words whose meanings she didn't even know came out.

Emily stopped crying and just looked at her. Eve watched her as her eyes began to turn milky white. The next scream from Emily was different.

It took weeks for Eve to understand what had happened, and it scared her. She had made Emily blind, and because of that, she promised she would never do her tricks again. Even when she was trying to find Him.

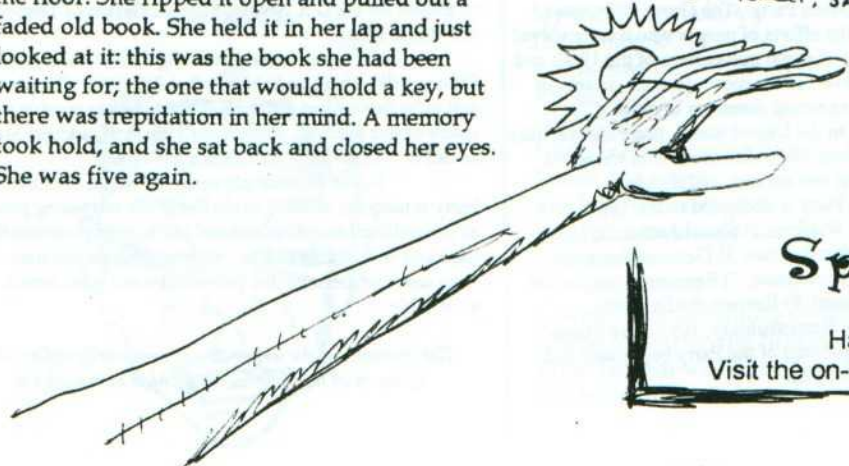
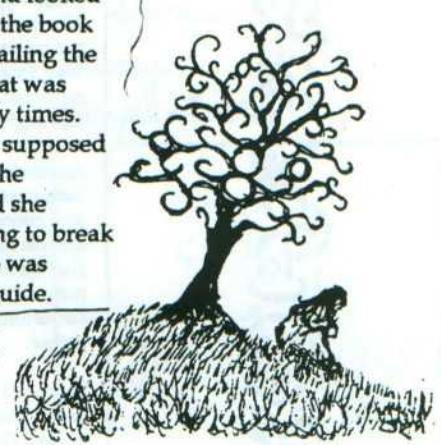
Eve opened her eyes again, and looked down at the book. The Book. This was the book Morgan had scribed centuries ago, detailing the work. This wasn't the original copy; that was long gone, but it had been copied many times. The copy was still very old, and it was supposed to be the best. Over twenty years ago she promised to never do magic again, and she hadn't slipped once. Now she was going to break that promise. Wasn't it perfect that she was starting again, using this book as her guide.

WATCH FOR EPISODE 4 IN THE NEXT ISSUE... RIGHT, SANDOR?

I FEEL LIKE I'M FORGETTING SOMETHING...



THE CHRONICLE of A GRAPHIC ARTIST SLOWLY GOING MAD...



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Ask Percy the Science Clown

Dearest Percy,

My husband and I have a bet. He thinks alcohol gets U drunk because of the great taste. His theory is that if it tasted bad people wouldn't drink it and therefore, they wouldn't get drunk. I say it's because the alcohol contains microscopic men that - once loose in your system - go right 2 the brain and dump molasses all over it, causing it 2 malfunction. I get a lapdance if I win. Do I?

Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum

Dear Tweedle Family,

Alcohol works by poisoning your body. It's composed of ethanol, a toxic chemical. Intoxicated means, literally, poisoned. That's why people act so weird when they're drunk. When the poisoned blood gets to the brain, it impedes manual dexterity, nerve signal reception (thus inhibiting pain), and rational thought. As for the lapdance, I would have to say that your answer was closer than your husband's...so what do I get for settling this matter?

Dear Percy,

Explain something to me. If today was tomorrow and yesterday was today, what day is it?

Confused

Dear Confused,
Today is Thursday.

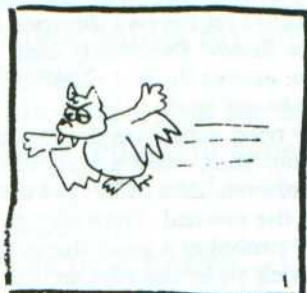
Dear Percy

If snow is made of water, and water is clear, then why is snow colored white?
Frosty

Dear Frosty,

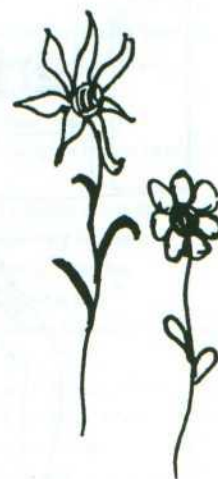
Actually, snow is clear, too. White isn't actually a color - it's the reflection of the light of all colors. A snowflake is a crystallized droplet of water, and as such, it has a relatively enormous surface area compared to the droplet. Light can make it through a glass of water, allowing you to see the objects on the other side. But at certain angles, the light reflects back at you and the water looks white (or whatever color light is prevalent...if you had only red light outside, your snow would look red). With the greater surface area of a snowflake and all the angles at which light can hit it at once, it reflects a lot more light than the equivalent volume of liquid water, and it looks white.

Send your questions to Percy the Science Clown
in care of The Omnium!



The sound of the drums kept me in a trance-like state. My guide was a fox. He spoke to me with a British accent. We went upward through what seemed like clouds that led to another forest. I sat on some rocks and an elf type creature came to me. She had a raspy voice and black stringy hair and dirty-looking skin. She told me I had to start to love myself before I could practice helping others. At first I felt as if she were trying to help me, but then she led me into a cave and showed me mountains of gold and said it would all be mine soon. Then she started to lead me on a downward spiral. The fox urged me not to go and so I turned around and followed him instead. He said I was not ready for the underworld yet. Then a tall handsome man came and started talking to me. He said I had to stop being inhibited and shy. I had to start acting on what I felt and stop hiding my feelings toward people. He was blonde and tall, and looked like Carey Elwes. I realized when he put his arm around me that it was my grandpa. The fox urged me to follow him and I left the man behind. I ran behind the fox across a large green meadow to the other side of the woods. When I got to the other side, there were faeries everywhere. They welcomed me home. I started to picture them the same as the ones in the books that I own, but soon they took their true form. They were like nothing I had ever seen before. The one who lead me through their village had yellow skin and long curly light brown hair, and big round yet slanted brown eyes, the same shape as you see on all of the alien drawings people do. She was beautiful. She took me to a stream, and made me look at myself. I had long curly red hair, and a long green velvet medieval gown on and a flowered headband. She told me I was one of them. I asked

her why I did not have wings. She told me I will not have them in the dimension I am from but here I do. When I turned to look at my back they were there. Then she took me to my castle. I was ecstatic by this point. She told me this was my kingdom and I could be ruler. I wanted to see my throne. They took me through the halls of the castle. It was not a conventional castle like we know in this world. It had great halls with vines and plants growing on the inside. My throne was made of a large intertwined tree root with vines and leaves twisted throughout. It was beautiful. I sat in it and gave a speech to all the faeries. I promised to promote love, peace, kindness, and friendship. I was laughing with them, I was so happy. The fox then told me we had to go. I didn't want to but I followed him anyway. We came to an empty cornfield. In the field were many large wooden crucifixes with people hanging from them. The fox told me that before I could move on, I needed to free these people. They were stuck inside me creating great guilt and pain and I had to cut them down and let them loose. The first one was my dad. It took me a couple of minutes before I was willing to do this but I finally did. He smiled at me and walked toward the other side of the woods. Next were my mother, stepfather, stepmother, people from work, and so on. I finally cut them all down. They seemed happier and so did I. As I was watching them walk away, I still felt as if there were someone I had forgotten. I turned around. There was one more crucifix. Hanging from it was me. The fox told me to cut myself loose. I did. Then I stood there, face to face with myself. I being in my dream form, and facing me was my earth form. All of a sudden we embraced each other and cried I love you, I love you. Then the drums stopped.



-Lisa

Straight from the Horses Mouth

Hey everyone! (Don't say it! We've all heard the 'Hay is for horses' thing way too many times for it to still be funny, and in case you didn't notice, it's spelled differently. I'm a well-educated horse of course so I know these things.)

This is Lady. Most of you don't know me personally, but I'm sure you've heard all about me from my adopted mom Julie's big mouth. You should've heard her yell at me when I decided I didn't want to ride in the trailer. It's not that I have anything against the trailer. In fact I actually like the trailer. It's usually got food in it. It's the driver! She's always yelling at me to brace myself around the corner cuz I always fall over. I saw Harley do it one time and it looked like fun and now I forgot how to stand up so I bang against the sides of the trailer on every corner. Maybe she could drive slower or something.

You should've seen poor Harley's dumb ass (well actually she's a paint, not an ass, but sometimes it's hard to tell the difference) clinging to the manger in the trailer by her teeth when the door flew open going down the highway.

"Lady! Lady! If I fly out, grab my mane, ok?" What a wuss! Then when 'mom' took us to the power washer's Harley's screaming, "It's got teeth, Lady! It's gonna get me! Oh no! Oh dear!"

I'm kinda glad it didn't eat her. I might miss her. Who else would I have to chase around and kick and bite? Well, there's always my kid sister, Kicker, but she's not as much fun cuz she won't run away. She just stands there and takes it. Then I always end up sharing my food with

her. But, so help me, if Harley cleans her hooves in the water bucket or Kicker pees on her hay and then tries to eat mine one more time, I'm gonna kick 'em! Not just a "hi, how ya doin'" kinda kick but a "hey, I really mean it!" kick right in the teeth!

Kicker keeps following me around and mimicking me cuz I'm her idol. She's such a dork! Well, I guess she's kinda cute sometimes. Harley needs to stop chewing the barn too, or we're not gonna have anything left but a pile of toothpicks. Guess I can't blame her -- the lunch menu sucks! Same thing, every day. Two flakes of hay and some strange looking pellets. They taste pretty good, but wouldn't some carrots or apples or sugar cubes or Mountain Dew be better sometimes? Why do I always have to be 'good' to get some of that stuff? Sometimes I'd rather just kick up my heels and buck and snort and run away and not stop even when Julie asks me to.

Once, we were on this really long trail ride and I wanted to roll in the swamp and mom wouldn't let me so I dumped her in. That was so funny! Everybody else thought so too, except Julie. I didn't get any cookies when we got back.

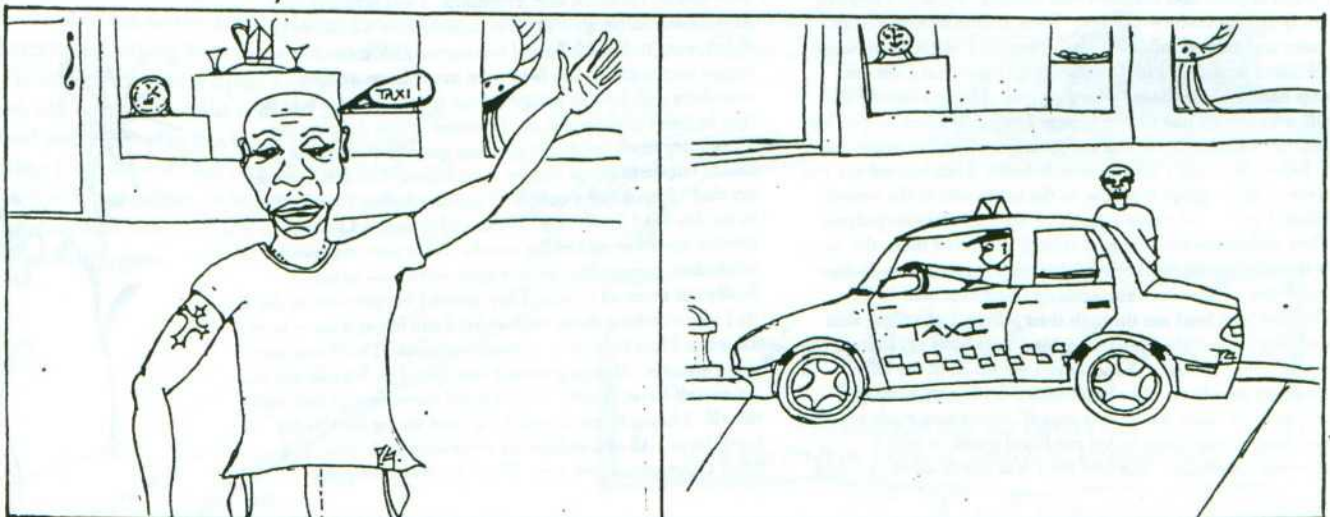
Kicker tried acting up the last time we were out, too. Man, what a sorry excuse for a bucking bronco. She didn't get more than a foot off the ground. Then she gave up. Course it's probably a good thing; they usually don't kick ya in the ribs as much if you're not as rotten. She didn't get any cookies when we got back. Ha ha!

Oops, gotta go! I think I hear people and you know what that means: more food!

— Lady (the Horse)



TAXI! by DOREEN





A Personal view of Reincarnation By BethDragon

The fog lifts, and I see on the horizon, a moonlit path to Nirvana. A glossy midnight covers me, as starlight guides my way past gossamer people holding on for dear life. Water's reflection beneath me causes a stir, and in the deep blackness I see the past unfold. Different people flash, different faces; all the same me. Ancient smiles, twisted sneers, hushed whispers in childhood ears and childhood tears. Next stop - Paradise... or shall it be Hell this time? Up, and away... I soar o'er tall oak trees, just a shadow of a life here, now gone. Memories wash over me, from lifetimes gone by. Trying to find a hidden door, needing to break free. The waves crashing over my head, suffocating madness; coldness - bitter ice, Nightmare and then dream - reality, destiny... what is the meaning of life? Where is the end of death? Bright lights, smiling faces - I've decided to try once more.....



Unbearable
By Gou

Your eyes light my soul
I've swallowed you whole
I'll take all the blame
for this moment of shame
Because a life without pain
Is
Unbearable



Love
Me



THE EMPEROR'S DREAM --Susan Stanek

The Vampire sleeps tonight.
The moon is out with no light.
A tribute to they,
then passes away.
The Vampire sleeps tonight.

The Vampire stirs tonight.
and submerges into sight.
He smells the air,
and blinks in his stare.
Then settles his head out of fright.

The Vampire watches tonight.
Silently, out of sight:
all those who pass by,
beneath the sky.
He snickers, knowing it's night!

The Vampire walks tonight.
The moon is out in full light.
"A tribute to thee",
says silently he,
Then passes deep in the night.

The Vampire stalks tonight,
completely out of sight.
A dash of blood
and there is no cry.
The Vampire feasts tonight!

The Vampire sings tonight
Shimmering in the moonlight.
"Fear not," says he,
"for I have a key."
And passes inside with might.

Hiding in the shadows of trees,
perching on quivering leaves,
He enters inside,
and does not hide,
Deep in her house, tonight!

IT'S A PATTERN... ITS A SPIRE... ITS LIKE SPIRALS...
SOME HAVE SAID THERE'S ONLY ONE ELECTRON THAT TRAVELS
REALLY FAST AND ALL OF EXISTENCE IS THE RESULT OF ITS BEING EVERYWHERE ALMOST AT ONCE
ALL IT IS, IS ENERGY. THOUGHT IS ENERGY. IF YOU THINK OF SOMETHING IT BECOMES
REALITY SOMEWHERE ELSE. REMEMBER 'POINTS' FROM GEOMETRY -- SO SHALL THEY DISAPPEAR
EXIST ON THE EDGE OF REALITY... ISN'T THAT LIKE AN ELECTRON?

Sitting in Sorrow
Looking for Tomorrow
Visions of the Past
Getting in the Glance
Wiping of the Tears
Wasting of the Heart
Spiral of Life
Falling all Apart

by Sandy

DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME!

Natalie's Demise (IT HURTS)

-- Steevigh

Natalie slipped out of bed and made her way to the bathroom. She turned on the faucets and let the water start to fill the tub. She didn't turn the light on: she didn't need to. She had done this several hundred times since she moved into her apartment in New York City four years before.

She crept to the kitchen and opened the cabinet under the sink. There she found the hammer in her makeshift toolbox, which most people would recognize as a department store shoebox. With the hammer in hand, she headed back down the dark hall to the bathroom. This time she closed the door behind her and turned on the light.

For some reason, she didn't mind the feel of the cold white tile under her feet. Most of the time it bothered her; it tugged on her memory of the time her stepsister locked her out of the house in the winter with no shoes or socks on. She was 9 then and her stepsister was 14. The worst part was that her mother got mad at Natalie for denting the screen door when she kicked it with her cold foot, trying to get back inside.

Tonight she hardly felt the chill at all.

Quietly, slowly, she reached for the medicine cabinet. The hinges squeaked in protest as she pulled the handle. Shhh. She didn't want to wake Paul. It was Paul, wasn't it? Or was it Peter? Well, no matter. She ignored her reflection in the mirror as she opened the door, revealing the contents inside. Toothpaste, aspirin, Band-Aids, birth control pills, dental floss, a pair of tweezers...but where is the razor? She stood on her tip-toes to get a better view. Oh, there it is, on the top shelf standing on its end behind the bottle of Zanax. She pulled it out, along with the aspirin, and silently closed the cabinet door.

She placed the razor on the sink and poured a glass of water from the tap. She took 4 aspirin and swallowed them with the water from the glass. She glanced at the tub; it was nearly half full. She turned the cold water down and removed her nightie and underwear. She wrapped the nightie around the razor and put it on the floor. She got down on her hands and knees on the cold floor. She took aim and hit the razor with the hammer, breaking the plastic pink shell. She unwrapped the nightie and carefully removed the contents.

She checked the tub again. The water was about 6 inches from the top and steam was rising off the surface. She got in and closed her eyes.

She silently counted, very slowly and deliberately, to five hundred. She figured that took her about 12-15 minutes. Plenty of time for the aspirin to dissolve in her stomach and start to move through her system. She opened her eyes and reached for the razor that was lying on the floor next to the tub.

She held it in her hand and watched the light bounce off it. She let herself enjoy the glimmer for a moment. Then Natalie turned her palm up and slashed her wrist with the razor. The cut ripped from the base of her thumb across her arm and ended an inch or so from her elbow. She did it again. And again. Then she attacked her other arm in the same fashion. The razor fell out of her hand and into the now bloody hot water.

Natalie smiled for the first time in weeks.
She closed her eyes. Forever.

Ring around the rosie.
Pocket full of cyanide,
Ashes - Ashes, we all fall dead.

Eni-Meni-Myni-Moe,
Pyro-maniac lit a match,
And now we are all dead.

Jack be nimble, Jack be quick,
Pull the candle stick out of your ass,
Or else we all, we all are dead.

Give your heart to Jesus,
Worship Buddha, Allah, yourself --
Think all by yourself, or we all are dead.

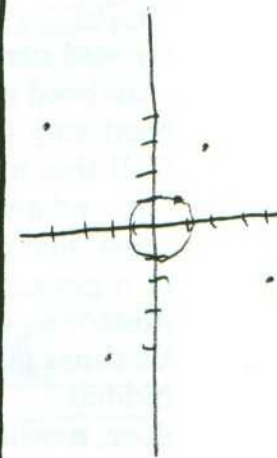
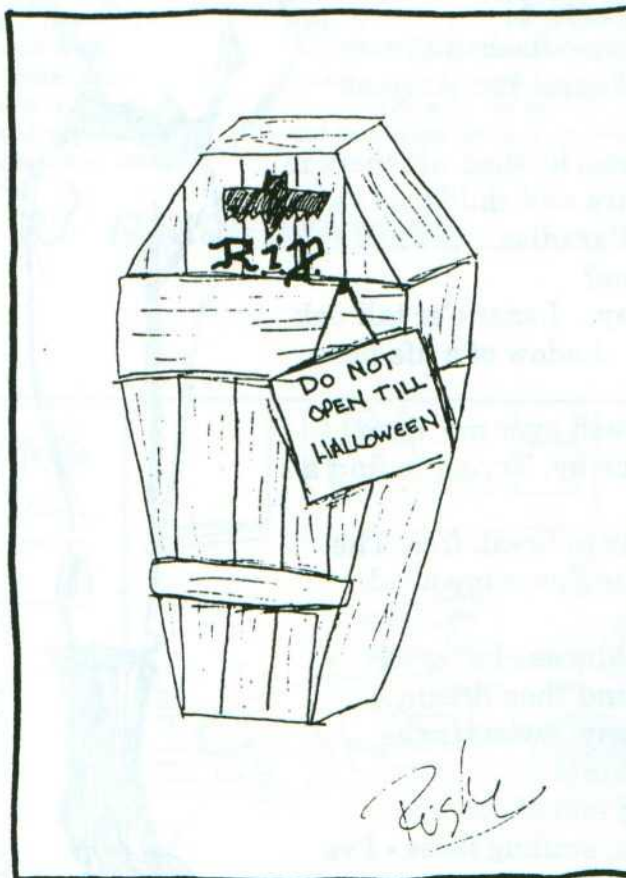
Once upon a fairytale,
I wished upon a star,
Then awoke from dreaming; I was dead.

Can I wake up now?
Mommy, can I think aloud?
Quickly, else we all fall dead!

Quickly now, jump on the wagon,
Be a part of the crowd,
The walking, talking...

Get on the train - out of the rain,
Rain of knowledge and truth...
Merge into the walking dead.

--BethDragon



EACH point is
THE doorway to
A DIFFERENT
DIMENSION.

PLACE points where
you wish -- they're
ALREADY THERE.

Retard Barbie

A perfect 10 molecules short of being
entirely plastic,
You grin at the ocean
You grin at palm trees
You grin at dirt
You grin at the people
You stare into a terrible sun
Not even drool strings disturb your make up
The world is your happy place, you fucking idiot.
You grin for the camera
Your glass eyes twinkle
You have a universal giggle.
Your

STYLE!!

is a never changing ever changing flowing fluid
smile bath.
You grin at your own successful institutionalization.
You can be proud of your deficiency,
so grin,
grin,
grin
at the differences,
because they don't apply to you.

-- Jymy



Three toed
blatter kast beast
Of Xeron III



RINGING

--by Susan Stanek

The voices of ghosts ring
beyond these walls.
I leave for a moment,
expose my flesh to the walls in the basement.
Feel the ghost ring her stare into me, and feel free.
I come back singing.

SPIT
AT
MIRRORS

How To Feel
By Cou

I'm cold
I feel old
I'm stressed
And depressed
I don't want to get dressed.

My friends are here to light the way.
Valium, Anaprox and
Vicodin will make it all go away.

Codine and Xanax
Make my eyes shine
Come to me, baby,
You'll feel just fine.



painting by numbers
living in slumber
thinking i'm dumber
than i am
wishing to see
more than just me
wanting to be
what i am
hating the taste
hating the face
hating the place
that i am

by Sandy



Hi, my name is jimmy. One
day i ate my mom.

...that's when I ate her
whole!

Sometimes life really
is grand!

MAKE IT GO AWAY OR BRING IT HERE BUT DON'T LEAVE IT THERE WHERE I JUST CAN'T REACH IT

WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY
WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY
WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY WHY

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BethDragon

the OMNIUM
PO BOX 120053
KENTWOOD MI
49512-0053