

the OMNIUM

ENTERTAINMENT FOR OPEN MINDS

NEWS FROM ALL DIMENSIONS



Issue #4

April 2000

One Dimension

I know, I know...we're late. Let me tell you a little something about small magazine publishing: if your computer takes a sh*t, you're kind of in a bind. I am about to go to my DOS prompt and type "FORMAT C:". Those of you who know what that will do can appreciate my frustration. I was on the verge of writing the entire mag by hand this month, until 1) I remembered that we want people to be able to read it, and 2) everyone on the Cast kindly and patiently reminded me that there are other printers available and that if I throw my computer off the balcony I will never get the satisfaction of watching it admit that it was wrong.

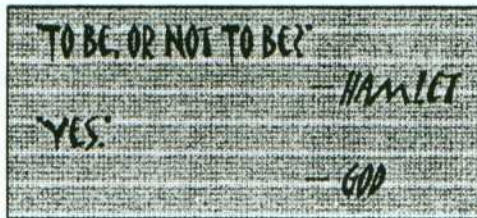
In happier news...

You may have noticed that Issue #3 was liberally sprinkled with "WHY?". I was undergoing an Existential Dilemma: never mind "why am I here"; I wanted to know: "Why is there anything here at all?" I repeated this question to lots of people during that week. Some of them answered me with variations on "Because God wants it that way" (always a philosophical cop-out), to which I would reply, "All right, then, why does GOD exist?"

"Why Existence?" is one of the oldest thorns in the side of philosophy. It's at the heart of every question ever asked. Is there an underlying moral code to the cosmos? If so, why? Or do we just agree to pretend that it matters whether or not we're good to each other? And while we're on the subject, I challenge you to pin down specific, all-encompassing, irrefutable definitions of "good" and "evil" without falling back on "well, for me it means..." or using any references to a deity. Don't use "God" as an excuse for not thinking.

I don't have those definitions, but I did come up with an answer to "Why?" with help from a book called *Parallel Universes* by Fred Alan Wolf. He discusses the circumstances under which other planes of existence are formed: in essence, every time there's a choice to be made (consciously or not), there are as many universes as there are options. You have a choice of tacos: chicken or beef, and hard shell or soft. There are

four possible universes right there: chicken/hard, chicken/soft, beef/hard, and beef/soft. Once you've made your choice, existence splits off into four branches. You're aware of only the one...but there are at least three more versions of you than there were before you made your choice, going on with their lives in these new branches of existence. In which one does the "real you" exist? All of them! Not to mention the universes where you decided not to order tacos after all, the ones where you left that restaurant without eating, the ones where you never left the house to begin with, the ones that have versions of you who have made so many different choices from so long ago that they're now so unlike the "you" that you know that you wouldn't recognize yourself...



The answer to "why is there anything at all" is this: because *there isn't!* Everything does exist... and in another "existence" (or non-existence in this case), there is...*NOTHING!* Everything - our universe, the deities, all the possible parallel worlds - exists as the compliment of the non-plane in which there isn't a damn thing! Both situations - everything and nothing - are possible, therefore, they both must be true.

This doesn't prove the existence of anyone's humanized idea of God, and it doesn't provide a concrete moral code of behavior. (I think of God as the sum total of all possible universes and the idea of one moral code for infinite possibilities is a little silly.)

But you know what? That's ok. Being is the ultimate paradox, for in order to Be, we must also Not Be.

I feel better now.

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YES, THIS IS A REAL MAGAZINE. WE ARE NOT CUTE. OK, MAYBE WE'RE SORTA CUTE. LENDORE IS CUTE-- GO BUY A WHOLE BUNCH FROM YOUR LOCAL WIERD COMIX STORE. MY ATM CARD EXPIRED. I HAVEN'T RECEIVED A NEW ONE. I CALLED THE BANK. GUESS WHAT THEY SAID?

"THE ATM CARD COMPANY RAN OUT OF PLASTIC."

I REPEAT:

"...RAN OUT OF PLASTIC."

...OUT OF PLASTIC."

the
OMNIUM:
WE KNOW WHAT A
FAJITA LOOKS
LIKE

the CAST:

BETHDRAGON ~
FOR HEVVIN'S SAKE
TAKE ME WITH YOU!

STEEVIGH # FURTER-
DIGITAL BITCH!
SHE SAID I COULD SAY THAT.

DOREEN GRULKE ~
OHHMMMMMM.....

JYMI 1/0 ~
BINARY CODE FROM
BEYOND

LISA LEVALLEY ~
STRIPEY SMURF!

MIKEL ~
NEWEST OF SEVEN!

ANDREW WALLACE ~
DOES NOT PLAY
WITH DOLLIES.

QUEST STARS

SEAN HEMAK ~
THE AMAZING DISAPPEARING
ILLUSTRATOR!

ASINITE ~
Du'HchoHmoH mrvam

DAN NORDENBROCK ~
NO WALTERS FOR AWLILE.

VEDIC ~
WROTE FAST.

SUSAN STANEK ~
TWISTED BITS.

YOHLEI SAHRI ~
HAHA, YOU GET CREDIT!

PHOEBE CHLOE ~
DO YOU DYE YOUR HAIR?

ERIC PRINS ~
SOLENN GARDENER

R ~
TAKE YOUR MEDS!

COU ~
ARRRRIBA!

CARMEN CANFIELD ~
MMMM, EGGPLANT!



DEL ~

A NIGHTSHIFTER AT HEART

SANDOR SNOW ~

STILL IN THE FAMILY!

VIVIFY ZERO ~

COMPUTER BLUES

OUIJAY ~

A RED DIMENSION

T. RAM ~

SHHHHH.

RYAN LIESKE ~

THOUGHT WAVES!

FEATURED ARTIST:

JONATHAN ERICKSON!

'BOUR TIME, HUH?

AND ALSO GUEST STARRING:

YMI'S COMPUTER!



You may
notice that this
issue is liberally
sprinkled with
leads.

PEOPLE KEPT
HANDING ME LEADS.
FACES. SOME OF
THEM HAVE BODIES,
BUT MY GOD, WHERE
ARE ALL THESE LEADS
COMING FROM?
NEAT, AREN'T THEY!
ISSUE #4 -
THE
LEAD
ISSUE!

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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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is limited!

the
Omnium

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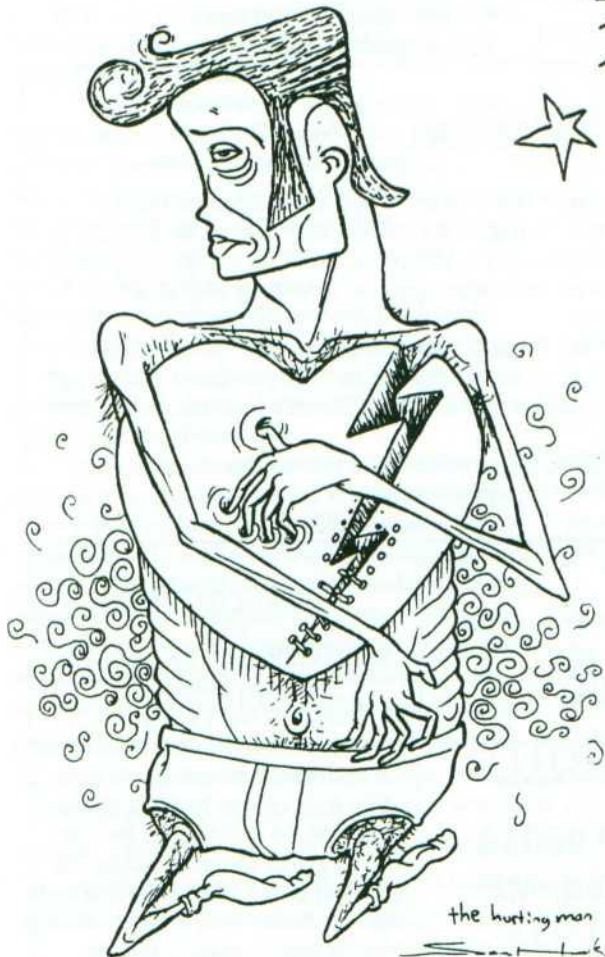
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FEATURED ARTIST

JONATHAN ERICKSON HAS BEEN A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR SINCE WE STARTED LAST OCTOBER. HIS WORK IS SOME OF THE MOST POPULAR MATERIAL EVERY ISSUE -- READERS LOVE IT! WE LOVE IT! SO THIS TIME, WE PUT IT ON THE COVER! HE'S A PROLIFIC POET, WRITER AND ARTIST, UNSULLIED BY CONTEMPORARY STYLE AND EXPECTATIONS.

AND HERE HE IS TO TELL YOU ABOUT HIMSELF IN HIS OWN WORDS...

jonathan. the life of me, jonathan hi my name is
state i have like 31 freinds or something. in my
do the guys and me like to collect pokemon cards.
does you. we do. my family alwase gos out to pizza.
favourite freinds nik is bob is like one of my
have 2 pets and 4 pepole my mom dad sis
me the dog dosent count because hes not a human.
well, thats all folks, see ya later family and freinds.



the hurting man

THINGS to do in NEW ORLEANS

- binge + mix
- tomatoes
- candy for family
- feather bed.
- ~~disguis~~ datquing
- Cement
- See if light see on at that house
- Augies - dosset
- Scratch Transvite place
- no scumbags
- red beans and rice
- drink
- "meditation"?
- Call mom + Jym. - drink more
- gas
- bone - bath call
- hit on guys
- long black cord with adaptor?
- Free Demonstrations
- wine
- park



don't want to go to jail

JUMPING FROM PIT TO PIT

THE SMELL OF BURNING
HAIR IS STILL FRESH

THE STINGING FLESH IS STARTING
TO FADE

THE INSANITY'S BREWING

HEART RACING ·

EYES THROBBING

LUNGS COLLAPSING

BLOOD DRIPPING AND
EVAPORATING FROM THE HEAT.

THE VOICES ARE TELLING
ME TO HOLD ON GET OUT OF
MY HEAD

THINGS IN MY FACE
TELLING ME TO LET GO

THE PAIN MAKES
ME NUMB

THE PAIN IS MAKING
ME DUMB

THE THOUGHT OF HOMICIDE RACING

BREAKING OF BONES

DIGGING AT MY EYES

POP
POP

UTTER DARKNESS

FADING STRESS

FINAL RELEASE

FREEDOM

- *ASINITE*

REALITY CHECK =

THE REALITY CHECK FOR THIS ISSUE IS THIS:

THIS: NO ONE WROTE TO US!
YOU ALL HATE US! OR WORSE--

EVERYONE IS INDIFFERENT!!

WAAAAAAAAAAAAA44..!

OH, SURE -- YOU'LL WRITE TO SECOND-RATE
HACKS LIKE TIME or NEWS-
WEEK or The Grand Rapids Press
(ALL of whom REALIZE THAT THIS IS ENTIRELY TONGUE
IN CHEEK AND WILL NOT SUE US BUT WILL MAYBE WRITE
US A LETTER FOR THIS SAD AND EMPTY LETTERS PAGE.)

O.K. FROM LAST ISSUE DID MENTION THAT #3 WAS WAY BETTER AND HE LAUGHED AND LAUGHED.

- - Now how ABOUT ANYONE ELSE? - - -

oh PLEASE:

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OR AT OUR WEBSITE:

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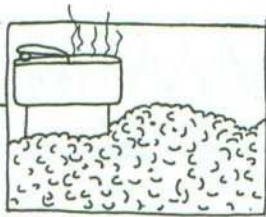


THRASH WILDLY

by STEEVIGH

POPCORN NO BUTTER LEFT!
2.50 4.50 6.50
POP NO CANDY
TODAY!
3.00 5.00 7.00
WE DON'T SERVE CORNERS!

HMM HOW AM I GOING
TO PULL ONE OVER ON
CHRIS TODAY? IT'S APRIL
FOOL'S DAY AND HE
ALREADY GOT ME ONCE..
HEH-HEH, I'VE GOT IT!



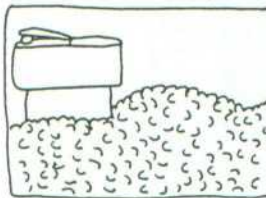
POPCORN 90 Home
2.75 4.75 6.75
POP NO CANDY
TODAY
4.00 7.00 0.50
I SAID WE DON'T HAVE IT

COUGH WHEEZE
COUGH

WHEEZE
GAG
COUGH
COUGH
GAG

OH MY GOD!
THAT'S ARE
YOU OK?!

OH NO! SOMEONE
CALL 911, SHE'S
CHOKING!
QUICK, CALL
911...



APRIL
FOOL!

WHAT'S
THAT
SMELL?



The Story of the Oxy-Moron

by Vedic


One bright day
in the middle of the night
two dead boys
got up to fight
Back to back
they faced each other
drew their swords
and shot each other
The deaf policeman
heard the noise
And ran to help
the two dead boys
If you don't believe
this story true
Ask the blindman
He saw too



In the Mirror

By BethDragon

Today I woke up early, and quickly took a look.
In the looking glass and saw myself as an opened book.
I had hidden in my pages, where no one could read between the lines,
So how could anyone love a me, that not even I could find?
This woman staring at me, in disbelief almost,
Shuttered in the early sun, like she had seen a ghost.
I shook my head in wonder, and she did the same.
Then finally I smiled, and we spoke each other's name.
A realization hit me, that she was always there,
And though I'd loved so many, for her I never cared.
So I reached a hand to touch her face, and she did the same to me.
In an instant I understood; we both said, "Finally!"
I noticed in her smile, a good and loyal friend,
And in her eyes a kindness that was sure to never end.
I whispered to her softly, as our eyes whelmed up in tears,
"I'm sorry that it took so long to notice you were here."
All at once I knew, though I saw her everyday,
This person was a stranger that I had turned away.
My arms were always opened, I loved so easily,
But I never stopped to wonder, "Do I ever care for me?"
I had spent my life in limbo, neither here nor there,
In constant need for a love, that never once was shared.
But how could anyone love me, until I could finally see,
That there was one I had not loved, and that the one was me.
So I vowed to notice her, to take her off the shelf,
And she promised I'd find love, once I learned to love myself.





If I Were Queen

The palace recently had an unfortunate incident lopped upon it. The Queen Mother-in-law fell very ill. In actuality she fell ill over six months ago, but the doctors felt no need to do anything about it until recently. It made me realize how unfortunate our healthcare situation is in our kingdom. I could not figure out why I had not been informed of the dreaded situation before now. After I fired all of my healthcare advisors and hired a new panel, we went to work on how healthcare could be improved. First we have to identify the problem. In this case the problem was the doctor.

The Queen Mother-in-Law had complained of having trouble breathing, rapid weight loss and lack of sleep six months ago. It was ignored. Finally, after a couple of trips to the emergency room, they took x-rays and told her she had pneumonia. The doctor gave her medication. She did not get better. He took another x-ray but did not change her medication. She still did not get better. They took a third x-ray. It was not better. Her medication was still not changed. She was having horrible time breathing, and had lost over 100 pounds since the first symptoms had surfaced. Apparently it is perfectly normal to have symptoms of pneumonia for three or more months with no sign of getting better.

No wonder the government has to put restrictions on how much a person can be treated if they are on government supported healthcare. Imagine, people wanting rapid treatment for pneumonia! Who ever heard of such a thing? People wanting to breathe normally! Get in line! Of course, I can totally understand the doctors point of view. Having to deal with these weaklings day in and day out: "I can't breathe!" "I'm bleeding!" "My butt's fallen off!" "My brain hurts!" What the bloody hell do they expect the medical profession to do about it? Heal them? Make them feel better? What if they don't know what is wrong, should they, um, oh I don't know, maybe...suggest a specialist!!!

What a concept! If they don't know what's wrong they could suggest someone else who does! Why hasn't anyone else thought of this before! It's so simple!... Or is it?

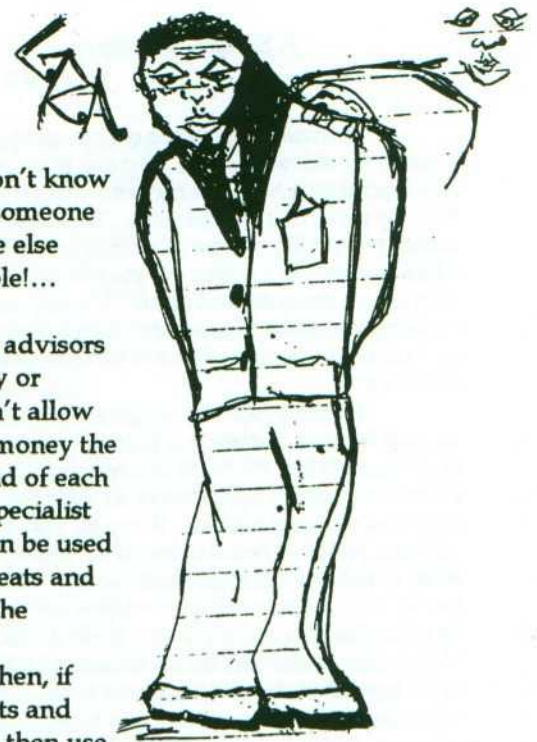
When I suggested it to my advisors they looked at me like I was looney or something! "The government won't allow it, Your Majesty! In order to save money the doctors are given a bonus at the end of each year if they do not recommend a specialist for patients! That way the taxes can be used for other things like golden toilet seats and professional butt wipers for all of the congressional members."

"Oh, I see," I said. "Well then, if they did not need golden toilet seats and professional butt wipers, could we then use the money for specialists?" The vote was unanimous: Yes!

I immediately came up with a plan: we will first replace the golden toilet seats with lead ones. Lead is cheap, and we will spray paint it gold. They will never know the difference. Secondly they will be ordered to take butt-wiping classes. I had a tough time finding a professor, but finally a volunteer popped up. Since I could not personally oversee their progress, I ordered that they show their progress on television once a month for the whole country to see. After all these are the country's tax dollars; the people have every right to know where they are being spent.

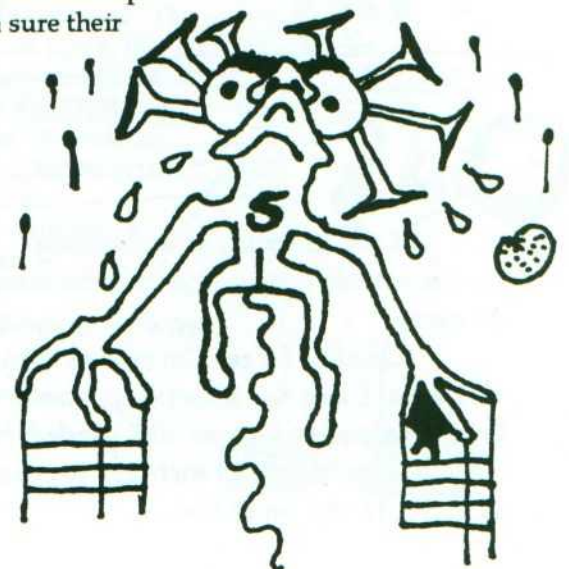
And so everything works out once again. Well, except for the one thing. Did you know of such a thing called lead poisoning? Lucky for them I set them up with a nice HMO doctor. I'm sure their funerals will be lovely.

-- HRH Lisa



CUT TOO CLOSE
--Susan Stanek

Cut too close
I'm closing in.
Nothing but the blood.
(blood.)
(blood.)
(I killed you last.
A lonely element serves
me better.)
//Will there ever be healing?//
The sound of sacrifice
scorns me. I cannot fulfill it.
Tomorrow I will fill it.
:Let me curl deep and dark
and turn cold
Rebirth the earth
and mend my sorrows.:



A Simple Structure

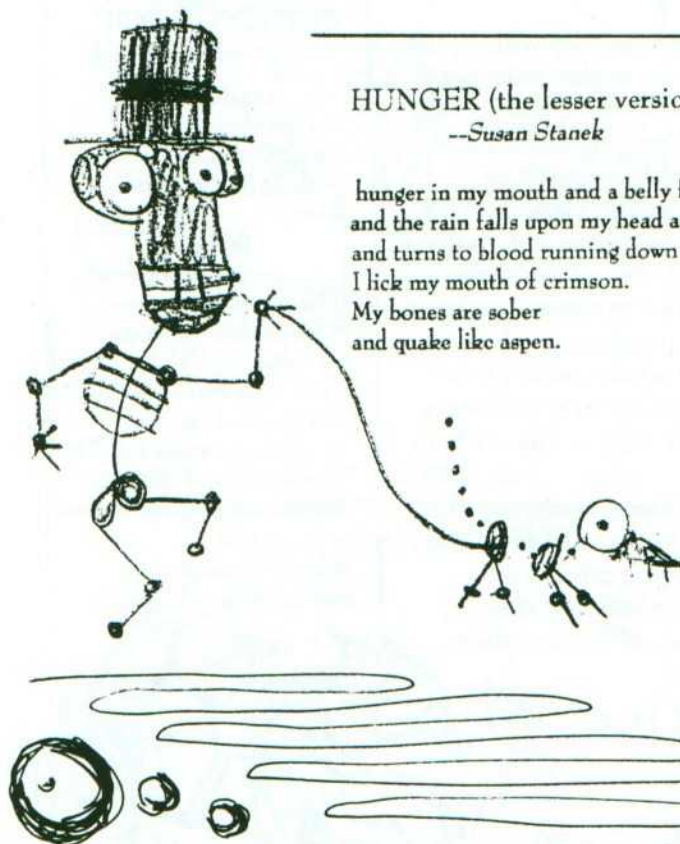
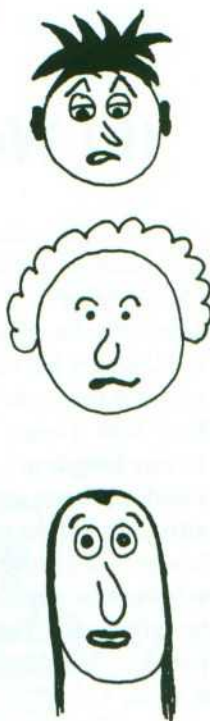
— Doreen

A small, single blade of grass peaks through the sidewalk crack. The one blade stands no higher than a Newport cigarette, and no wider than the pinky of a human hand. The blade is not round, but flat like a sheet of writing paper, and the edges continue in a scissor cut straight line until they form a sharp defined point. The bottom of the blade of grass hides beneath the crack, surrounded by hard stone concrete, which is invisible to the naked eye.

Looking closer at the grass I could see delicate features that made it unique, the only blade of its kind. When the blade is precisely folded down the center, it brings the outer sides together, enclosing the inner surface. When the two outer sides are pulled outward to reveal the inside, a series of delicate lines can barely be seen. The lines run up from the bottom, narrowing as they reach the tip of the blade, looking like tiny fibers of silk. Microscopic white cuts are bound along the inside of the opened blade, some scars are large, and others small. One cut in particular is brown in color and looks deeper than the others; it is located in the middle of this blade.

The texture of the inside of the blade is rough to the touch, like that of an abrasive cleansing powder. The outer side of the blade is glossy and smooth, gleaming with the sun's reflection. The blade of grass reveals two different shades of green. The opened inside of the blade is a dull, pasty, olive green. The outer region of the blade is a dark, shiny, forest green. The solitary stem probably weighs no more than a hummingbird's feather, causing the blade of grass to quiver back and forth in the wind like a car antennae.

After observing the structure of the blade, I decided to pick it. The blade was loose in the sidewalk crack, after already touching it before. The blade broke off where the soil started, leaving the bottom half to regenerate in the soil. The broken edge looked frayed, like a pair of cut-off jeans. The blade has a fresh familiar smell of an early spring morning, or a newly mowed lawn. I put the grass in my mouth and chewed on the end. It tasted like garden spinach, bitter and uncooked. By this time the three inch high blade is reduced to two inches. One inch chewed and spit on the ground. Since I have cured my curiosity, the blade no longer interests me, so I toss it on the ground to be blown away and decomposed.



HUNGER (the lesser version)

— Susan Stanek

hunger in my mouth and a belly full of blood
and the rain falls upon my head and shoulders
and turns to blood running down my face.
I lick my mouth of crimson.
My bones are sober
and quake like aspen.

Saltare Infinitus

Jymi

It started with a flirting, wayward glance.
At first it wore a leering devil's face.
The sisters, shocked, implored me not to dance,
But I could see the mask was hiding grace.
A simple touch, one hand upon my own,
Electrified my mind and soul and shell,
And I forgot the tiny world I'd known;
Released from soft and sinister brain-cell.
We tentatively stripped away constraints,
Now rubbing, now a rending and a bite,
And thrust into my mind with no restraint --
One hundred beams of penetrating light.
Orgasmic realization transcends verse
of intimacy with the universe.

I try to smile... it's deceiving, I know. But I don't know how else to make everyone on the outside happy. I can't understand the solitude I feel and the solitude I loathe. I am all alone.

Quickly, I feel I'm moving toward insanity. It's growing stronger, getting harder to ignore. I long for something... someone.... But I don't know anymore. I used to think that love -- happiness... it was all I needed. Now I'm just confused.

It gets harder each day to press forward to that invisible goal. Beam me up Scotty... to the finish line.

— BETH DRAGON

Hello Loyal Readers!

If you have been paying attention and reading our magazine (or e-zine at <http://come.to/omnium>) you'll know that we do NOT appreciate bad service. Along those same lines, we do not appreciate rudeness. Well, imagine our surprise when the two of them were combined especially for us at a recent outing! We didn't ask for these two negative traits to be served up one right after the other in a one-two punch, but they were. Gee golly gosh. How lucky is that!

Now, I won't mention the name of this particular place, but I will give you this hint: "Break and Quake" is a 24 hour diner on 28th St SE. It's not Denny's. Anyhow, let me tell you what happened.

We arrived around 8 o'clock or so on a Saturday night (we had already tried to get into a steakhouse down the road that was offering a 90 minute wait – forget that). For some reason there were several teenagers dressed up...it must have been some sort of Valentine's dance or some horrible nerve-wracking experience like that (Let me just say that if MY date took me to a cheap fast-food-type-place like that for Valentines dinner, I'd bust his chops).

This is a "seat yourself" place, so we found the last empty booth and took it. It hadn't been bussed yet – as an added benefit, there were some french fries left by the previous diners. While we were waiting for someone to tend to the table, we looked at the menu and decided on what to order. Several minutes passed. Employees walked back and forth, but no one acknowledged us. We were starting to wonder if we had become invisible to the rest of the world.

Eventually a waitress came over and, without saying hello or even grunting at us, wiped the table.

"Thank you", we said, even though she had missed what I thought was a troublesome spot of ketchup right in front of me.

No reply.

A little while later the same woman came back and put place mats on the table.

"Thank you," Jymi said.

Again, no reply.

The woman disappeared briefly and returned with silverware.

"Thank you," Jymi said again.

STILL NO REPLY.

We looked at each other.

"Let's go."

Who knows why she was rude, but she was. I don't know about Jymi, but I won't be going back.

Then, just last weekend, something happened to me again. I have noticed this has been occurring more and more frequently. Has it ever happened to you?

You are in a store (department, grocery, gas station, whatever). You select your items and wait patiently in a line that's always too long for several minutes. At last you reach the cashier and she/he starts ringing up your order. No greeting, no smile, nothing. NOT EVEN A "THANK YOU" after you hand over your hard-earned money!!

GOD, THAT REALLY ANNOYS ME!!!

I don't HAVE to shop in that store – there are many OTHER stores that will gladly take my money and say "hello" and "thank you". What has happened to common courtesy? It's long gone. No more Miss Nice Guy. I've had enough.

Target, Meijers, K-Mart, Great Day – all of these stores have cashiers (all have been female) that have pulled this crap on me within the last month or so. Last weekend, after I received the cold shoulder from a cashier, who started ringing up the next person in line while I was still putting away my change, I spoke up. In a rather loud voice I said:

"Thank you, ma'am. You have yourself a nice weekend."

She looked at me, "thanks", she said. She had no clue.

Well, at least I got SOME response.

Now, I want to know where this happens to you. I know it does, so don't try to deny it.

This is my solution. I am going to start busting people. I'm sick of this crap. I'll get the name or the lane number of the person and head straight for the customer service desk and ask for the manager. I'll explain, in my most courteous voice, that I am not a secret shopper, but would it kill the cashier to smile and say SOMETHING to me? A "hello", a "thank you"?? If we, as consumers, allow this kind of behavior to continue, it will only get worse.

No wonder on-line shopping is expected to double this year.

Steevigh # Furter



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**DRINKING WITH WHODI-BOY
(ANOTHER TRUE STORY)
BY ANDREW**



Hey there, pals! Welcome back to the Whodi Files. It's time for episode four, "Drinking with Whodi-Boy". This gem takes place several months after we last saw our hero, Brother Geoff AKA Whodi-Boy. It was March, 1993. I had the day off from the bookstore I worked in. I had planned on sleeping in until three or so, but this unfortunately didn't end up happening. There was this phone, you see. A certain phone that had started ringing occasionally since 1:00pm. I tried to ignore it, but it finally must have dawned to my half conscious brain that it was my phone that was doing the ringing. I tried to avoid this thought for a few more minutes though, until I realized that if I answered the phone, it would most certainly stop ringing. With this firmly in mind, I marched (staggered, really...hey man, I was still sleepy) into the living room and grabbed the phone.

"Br-Brutha Ahhndrew, hooooowwz it goin'?" slurred the one and only Whodi-Monster. "Good mo-mornin' and uh, yeah"

"Hey Whodi-Crap, what's up?" I mumbled in reply.

"Uhh, pr-pretty good, pretty good. An-and you?" Whodi asked.

I dropped the phone for a minute, more out of bafflement than anything else. After grabbing my bong, I felt more cerebrally equipped to converse with Whodi-Boy.

"What?" I asked Whodi. "What do you want, Whodi-Freak. I was sleeping in."

"Oh, me too, me too man," babbled Whodi. "What are you doin'?"

"I was probably going to call you in a couple of hours, after I'd woken up...but now that's irrelevant," I said as I poured myself a big glass of nonfat milk and grabbed my jumbo box of Hostess Ding Dongs. I sat down on my futon and started eating breakfast. I could hear Brother Geoff mumbling to somebody else for a few seconds.

"We-we are Bo-Borg," Whodi cackled loudly. There was then a thunk, and I could hear Whodi-Boy's maniacal laughter in the background as someone picked Whodi's phone off of the floor.

"Hey Annnslut," Tom intoned in a slow, low monotone drawl. "You wanna kick with us while I mow the lawn at the house?"

"Sure Loshi, that sounds cool," I said through a mouthful of chocolate. "What time?"

"We'll be there in fifteen minutes. Bye-ur!"

I gobbled a few more Ding Dongs and then had a quick shower. I was putting on my shoes when they arrived at my apartment. We took off, heading for Red Robin. Pulling into the La Cumbre Mall, we found a spot pretty close to the restaurant. As we walked inside, the person behind the stand grinned at Whodi and said, "Welcome back, Geoff! Having a few drinks today?"

"Ohh, uh he-hell yeah man!"

exclaimed Whodi. Tom and I laughed as the host person led us to a booth in the smoking section (this was back in the olden times, when it was still actually possible to smoke in a restaurant in the state of California). We had barely sat down when Whodi-Fiend looked up and barked, "Al-alcoooohooooo!" Tom and I both exchanged mortified looks, especially because this was a Whodi first. He was usually anything but assertive. After a bit, a waiter came over to our table.

"Hey Whodi," he laughed. "Jack and Coke for you today?"

"Hell ye-yeah man," babbled Whodi-Lush. "But make it a tr-triple shot, an' I want three of 'em."

"Three shots," asked the waiter, cocking his head in that particular manner that most do when talking to Whodi-boy. "Or three Jack and Cokes?"

"Thr-three Jackie an' Cokies with three shots of ja-ja-Jackie in each drink," Whodi-Boy said, lighting a cigarette. "Also, ca-can I get an order of holies?"

Waiter nodded. "Holey fries. Anything else?"

I ordered some holey fries for myself as well, and a pitcher of strawberry margaritas too. Tom wasn't hungry, he just had a pitcher of blueberry margaritas. A couple of minutes later our drinks and food arrived. Whodi-Boy seized one of his Jack and Cokes and immediately commenced slamming it. We giggled at the fiend in action as we worked on our drinks, albeit at a much slower pace.

"So he-hey man," mumbled Whodi-Boy. "Wh-what should we do today?"

"We're gonna kick at my place while I mow the lawn. Then maybe we'll go to Henry's Beach, or something."

"That sounds cool," I agreed, nodding at Tom. We finished the rest of our stuff quickly, Whodi-Boy starting to become loud and embarrassing. After we paid the bill, Tom and I had to throw one of Whodi-Boy's arms around each of our shoulders, as he couldn't support himself or balance in any way, shape or form. He was giggling

like a mad scientist as we made our way to his car. When Brother Geoff was suitably comfortable and the specific song he wanted to listen to was playing on his car's CD player, we headed out towards Tom's place.

Tom lived in an area of Santa Barbara called Hope Ranch. He lived in the guest cottage of a huge house that was right next to the golf course. Tom was basically the groundskeeper, which meant that he got to live in this killer place totally rent free, and all he had to do for it was mow a medium sized lawn once a week or so. Not a bad arrangement, huh? Tom didn't think so, either.

We had gotten off of the freeway and were driving down State Street when Whodi-Boy suddenly started yelling and pointing out the window. Tom and I tried to make out what Whodi-Looney was saying, but we couldn't make anything out of the drunken freakobabble that was spewing forth from Whodi's mouth. As the red light we were stopped at changed to green, we both saw who Geoff was pointing to. It was one of Santa Barbara's many homeless people, this guy had didn't have any legs and was in a wheelchair. I had seen him around town before. Anyway, as we passed by this poor guy, Whodi-Boy (to our immense horror) leans out the window, yells "go-godamn bummmm", and hurls a full bottle of Mickey's at the bum. Luckily, the bottle didn't hit the guy, but it hit the wall behind him and unfortunately soaked him with beer when the bottle shattered.

"Whodi-Boy!" Tom yelled, turning around in his seat. "Sit the fuck back *now* or I will seriously beat your ass."

"Ahh gagggghh sh man," gurgled Whodi, somewhere between laughter and tears. "Heh he was ju-just a bummmm, man!"

I turned off of State St., driving past the Hope Ranch gates. I made a left at the golf course, driving for maybe a quarter of a mile before making a sharp right. Soon we were at Tom's place. Whodi staggered out of the car and into the kitchen, chattering about checking his messages. Tom found his pipe and we hit that for awhile until Whodi-Boy slowly walked out of the house, making his way over to the lawn.

"What's up, Brother Geoff?" Tom asked. Whodi-Boy didn't look all that hot. In fact, he looked even more pale than his usual pasty complexion.

"Uhhh shit man, my da-dad Billy-Mack found out that I'm not in school this semester. He left a mes-message on my machine. He was calling from his plane."

I groaned. "His plane?"

"Ye-yepers, br-brutha aAnn-drew," Whodi answered. "He'll be here in a couple of hours. But I'm sssso so tired ri-right now."

"Dude," Tom said. "A nap is the last thing you have time for if your dad is going to be here in a couple of hours!"

Whodi-Boy had sprawled out on his back, arms tucked behind his head. "Wh-what's that," he mumbled as his eyes closed. "A nap? Th-that's a good idea. I'm havin' a nap y'all, bye bye!"

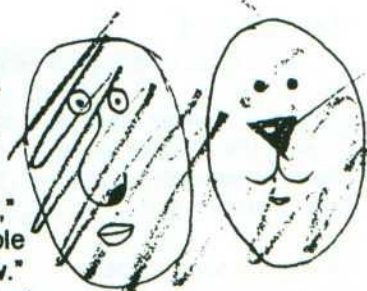
"Shit!" yelled Tom, shaking Whodi-Boy. "Wake up, Shitboy! No nap time now-ur!!"

But Whodi-Boy was out cold...

And Billy-Mack will arrive in around 125 minutes...

In other words, "To Be Continued"...

Find out what happens next in episode #5 of The Whodi Files, published exclusively in **THE OMNIUM**!



TRUTH, SPOKEN HARD

HURTS



MR: STUPID

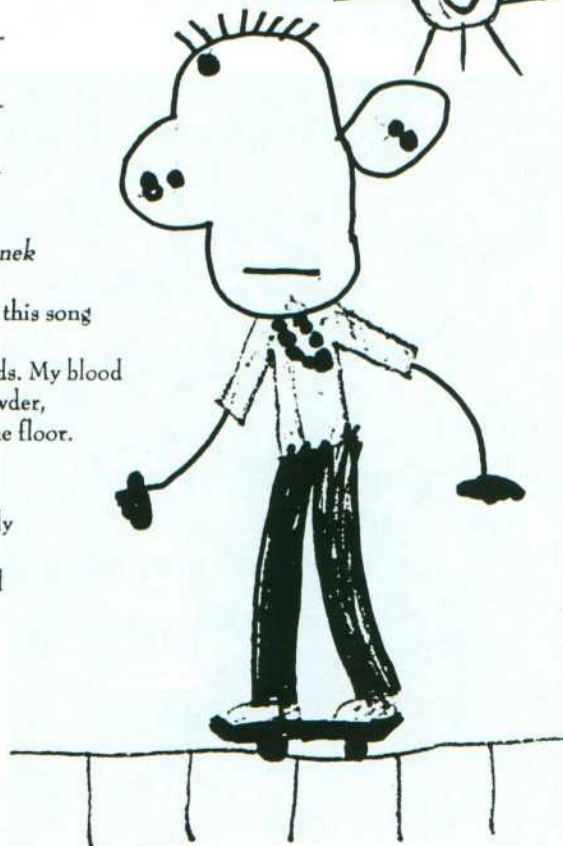


IMAGE

--Susan Stanek

As I sing the words to this song
I imagine,
And my stomach bleeds. My blood
Spills and turns to powder,
pink and flaking on the floor.

These solemn notes
gnawing away heartedly
vigrating my brain --
and to imagine the kill
is all too fleshy, and
all too real.



Beyond Red

Steevigh # Furter



My Velvet Dancer, here we are
Singing the song of lovers in time
Stealing seconds of ruthless passion
Away from Ice Eyes

Sweep me off my Toes
Sapphire City is calling
Your destiny king – tonight we go
Fly a world away with me

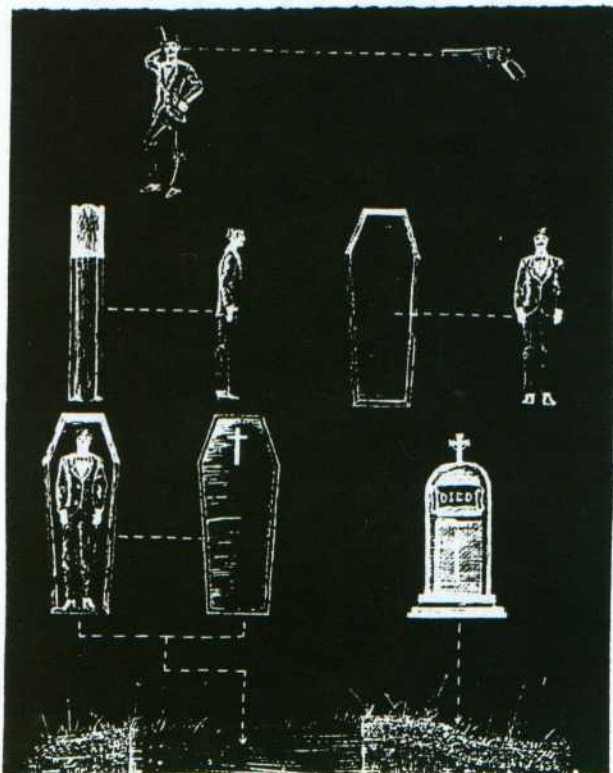
Your eyes of emerald beckon my soul
Love me, love me, never leave me!
Spellbinder, I don't mind a bit
You've stolen my heart again

Scarlet fire storm
Sweetest king of my dreams
Our castle of promises awaits
The sound of life and love

Begging for laughter to be echoed within
Yearning for the time and the moon
Desire of Violet Raspberry winds
Shame on my heart for not hearing sooner

Oh great king of Sapphire City
You're ruler of velvet silk toes
My giant beauty in pearls
Rags tied in Cherry Charm

Scarlet seducer
Weary walker
Brooding beauty of night
Desire burns within
Yearning, aching, demanding to be fed
With everything that is Beyond Red.



—SEAN HENNAK

The Crack in the Yard

by Jymy

"Elise!"

She was four.

"Momma?"

She had giggled while her mother screamed at the shaking earth that had rattled their little house.

"Elise, come back inside!"

The ground had taken them on a fun ride, and now she danced her thanks in the sunny backyard, spinning her SaraDoll in wide circles, laughing at the dizziness.

"I love you," SaraDoll said in its high, electronic voice.

"Oh, Momma, look!"

There was a crack in the yard. She and SaraDoll knelt down to peer into the endless blackness.

"Oh."

The earth was crying. Ghostly wails of a thousand or a million voices rose up from the crack in the yard. When Momma wasn't yelling, she could hear individual cries, one on top of another, begging to be heard in languages she did not understand.

"Elise!"

Momma was coming to get her.

"Yes, Momma."

She stood up, and SaraDoll slipped from her hand.

"I love you."

It plummeted down, down, and out of sight.

"Elise! No! No!"

Momma was running now. Elise climbed over the edge of the crack and began to slide herself down with quick, staccato motions.

"SaraDoll, Momma," she called back, and the aftershock came and closed the crack.

He had once been a warrior, but now he was an old man, foolish with age, and he lived in a home filled with others like him. Today he had wandered outside while the staff was busy comforting the patients who had been frightened by the earthquake. He had not been frightened.

"Mister Aikman, thank god, there you are."

The nurse found him sitting in the ruined garden.

He grinned at her, slobbered, and pointed to the ground.

"Yes, that's a big crack, isn't it? Come inside now, won't you please?"

The nurse led him away. He lifted his face to the sky and laughed. Today was a good day. He had heard the earth speak, and what it had said to him was,

"I love you."

Lionheart-Blackheart

Neither the same nor different

Wishing for one or the other (or both)

I burn the candle at two ends

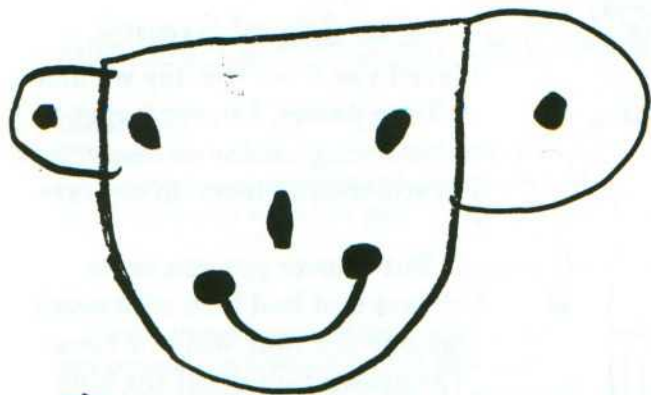
Blackheart.

Yearning for a clue

Where you sleep at night

Eyes closed to possibilities

Vixen, seducer in these



The BOOK OF YOU

IN THE DARKNESS I'M YEARNING

--Susan Stanek

a shiny gold will
and a hunger still
Be still in the twilights of evening.

a tiny gold will
my love for you still
grows deep in the darkness of bleeding.

You



You Are Sensetive



You Are Smart!



I cannot explain the injustices of men speaking truths of their own. Quietly the women sit and listen to the constant irritation of inflated egos and the murmur of justified ignorance. There is a time, I believe, everyone eventually reaches, to where they realize its to late to care about anything. The Mountains rise in the distance after a lifetime of sediment build-up, earth crust shifts and volcanic explosions. The final result is a beautiful towering mass of solid rock, reaching high, pointing to the sky, tipped with white snow. All made by the destruction of something else. The material cannot function like this. A man believes in his creations, and his quest for material gain. With money in hand he has no awareness, except for the one created by man. Amiss all of the Gods interpretations, lies a quiet simple note only few see. Money has no place in this world of God's, but yet with continued persistence we insist all of what we create in necessary. Where does the cycle begin to fall apart and who is holding it together. Dream on for another life awaits you after this one, so don't get too attached. Thinking back I realize that the days move faster with age, minutes, seconds, day, hours, caught up in a wind of nothing, but yet have every definition. Space and time start to melt together, putting off, giving nothing in return to what is really needed. Confused.

-- Doreen



Lionheart.

Closer to me than no other

Millions of minutes keep us apart

Rage and humour enwrap

Smile smile my jungle cat

Myheart.

Kept under wraps by two

And time time is my enemy

Vision of crimson Phantom of platinum

Cut cut deep into my mind



by STEEVING

manufactured lies

--Phoebe Chloe

just when i thought i could trust women,
just when i thought your love could not quit
you took me into your heart, showed me your beauty
and decided to hide behind bullshit.

i'm the one who gave openly and freely
because you told me you were in love with me
but your mind was fucked up at night
you were clouded by cocaine and ecstasy

SO YOU DECIDED TO HIDE BEHIND YOUR HETEROSEXUALITY...

why?

in one night i shed my womanhood
i became the innocent one
and you, younger than me
with such desire i was overcome

you grabbing my hand and rubbing my leg
smiling at me behind their heads
using me but you couldn't complete your ploy
because i am not a man, not your usual toy

YOU HIDE BEHIND YOUR HETEROSEXUALITY...

knowing it would happen
and would end in a disaster
i tried to protect us,
but i only fell faster

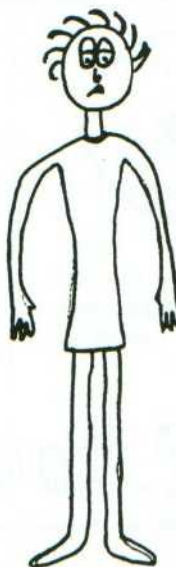
and now i'm back to distrusting women,
never will i love one again
never will i hold a female hand
unless it is that of a friend
i couldn't open myself up to a woman,
but you found my core issues and nursed them
my fear of women, of intimacy, that i opened up to you
and you took with my love and you cursed them

YOU HIDE BEHIND YOUR HETEROSEXUALITY...

treating me like the men
good enough to play with
i'm good at being the bad girl
but it doesn't do me justice
it doesn't show the side that just wants love
doesn't show the side that never gives up
just the side that lets them use my body in the darkness
and deny me love in the light
i thought i'd stumble upon true love that way
thought maybe i'd get it right
because i thought only men played that game
because i could never love you for just one night

YOU HID BEHIND YOUR HETEROSEXUALITY...

and now it's over,
and you won the power game
you played me like you play your men
yeah, you know you've got the brains
but you weren't supposed to use your brains against your own kind
you weren't supposed to treat me like the rest of the slime
and now that i've kissed you and missed you
i recall your cheap lines
because you tasted me and wasted me
and i'm left here denied
because you won't let me finish, you don't appreciate
how badly i want to let you go
how i want to clean the slate.
you want to think my girl-love is undying
you want to figure out how to keep me trying
to discover what's inside you but i don't care anymore
you used me to get him and i end up the whore



Garden of Stones

I loved you from the day we met
Time passes, I never forget
You've been gone for so many days
I'm still wiping tears off my face

But I never got you roses
I always had bad luck with rings
One day the time window closes
The crown falls off of the king

The cancer came on like a wave
Robbing your beauty and grace
In bondage but never its slave
Never took the smile from your face

And I didn't get your flowers
It seemed there was plenty of time
One day I lost all my power
I'd thought you'd always be mine

It came quickly, the bitter end
All I could do was hold your hand
Pray all I could that you'd make it
When you've got no faith you fake it

The funeral tore me apart
It killed a big piece of my heart
The only flowers I gave
Were ones I planted on your grave

Had a dream about you last night
You're standing naked in the light
Then I get to give you that ring
And on your back I can see wings

As we drink our glasses of wine
You tell me you love me one last time
And you thank me for the roses
Just as the coffin lid closes

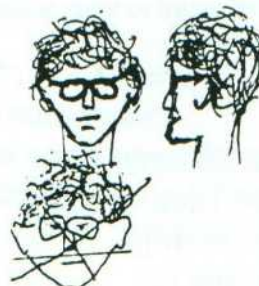
FINE'

ERIK PEINS

NEON SIGN

--Susan Stanek

Once reported was a neon sign.
The sign was red and the red was mine!



Ask Percy the Science Clown!

Dear Percy,

What in the heck are quarks? And why do they have such strange names? Any help you can give me in this matter would be quite... helpful.

Boss Hogg

Dear Boss,

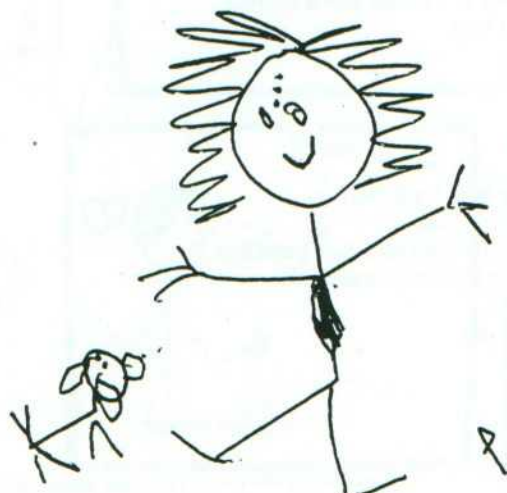
The more scientists try to discover the basic components of matter, the more it looks like matter doesn't exist. Quarks, as far as we can tell, are nothing more than an electric charge with no physical shell.

Quarks are sub-atomic particles. Protons and neutrons – the things that live in the nucleus of an atom, surrounded by the "orbiting" electron cloud – are composed of quarks and other similarly bizarre doo-dads. There are six types of quark (twelve, if you count the antiquark that compliments each quark), and they do indeed have odd names: *Up, Down, Strange (or Sideways), Bottom, Top and Charmed*. The differences are in the type and measure of their electric charge, and in their qualities of *Strangeness, Charm, Bottomness or Topness*, all of which describe the quark's interaction with the Strong Electromagnetic Force (as opposed to the Weak Electromagnetic Force). Furthermore, each quark can appear as one of three varieties: Red, Green (also called White) and Blue.

I am not making this up.

I don't have room here to start a lecture on Quantum Mechanics, though I would dearly love to. I recommend *The God Particle* by Leon Lederman to anyone who really wants to get into quarks and more other-worldly particles and stuff that sounds like science fiction but isn't.

By the way – and you're not going to believe this – the quarks got their odd names entirely randomly. The scientists who discovered them did NOT name the new particles after themselves; they just grabbed the first distinctions between charges that crossed their minds. Talk about science-fiction...



Dear Percy,

What does it mean when you have purple poo?
Purpley Boy

Dear Boy,

Uh-huh. Well. It means that the Weak Electromagnetic Force refers to that which causes the particles of an atom (and the particles of those particles) to lose cohesion and fly off of the main atomic structure, resulting in radioactive decay. The Strong Force does the opposite: it holds it all together. Two protons, both having positive charges, would fly apart in an instant were it not for the Strong Force. You should really see a doctor for that.

Dear Percy,

I have a desperate need to fulfill all my "special" fantasies. Do I have a problem?
Unfulfilled

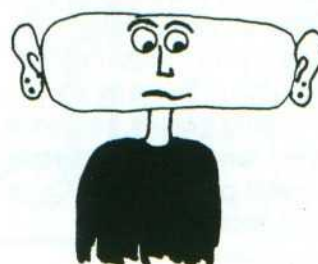
Dear Unfulfilled,

You just might. Are these fantasies legal? Are they physically possible? Would anyone catch you? Do they involve me?

You know what – this is going to require a consultation. *HEY ADVICE LADY – YOU WANNA FIELD THIS ONE???*

Sure Doll...Ahhhhh fantasies...aren't they just great? I have some fantasies of my own, but they'll just have to wait until the time is right. For now, let's deal with yours, shall we? Everyone has fantasies, and they're as varied as winning a million dollars to shaving Uncle Herbert's back to watching your favorite political candidate hanging from a tree while termites gnaw away at his brain...but I digress. All I'm saying is that fantasies are great ways of making things happen in your mind that wouldn't happen in your life or shouldn't happen in your life. As long as no one gets hurt, they're perfectly all right.. As far as involving other people, well, like I said, as long as no one gets hurt and they're willing, what have you got to lose? Take care, Unfulfilled, I hope all your fantasies come true!
—Advice Lady

Got a question for Percy? Send it to the Omnium – you might just get an answer, and it might just make sense!
It's been known to happen!



Immortalis

-- Jymi

To the graveyard goeth I,
Where grey stone sweats 'neath laden sky
And sings a secret lullabye
To those who passed but did not die.
O tell me not of 'passed' or 'gone',
While sooty storm clouds rally on,
And lightning streaks a clarion
Victory o'er the waning sun.
When panting wind sighs hot as breath,
I will not hear of life or death.
Grappling my way through the grim iron gate
That bounds the Reaper's grand estate
I hear my love, my chosen mate
Who shrieks his re-birth, animate
And clawing at the wormy wood
To rouse his sleeping neighborhood.
I, with neither hoe nor trowel,
Close upon his wretched howl
With only fingernails to plow, will
Disengage him from the bowel
Of the slimy earthen orifice.
What midwife dares a birth like this?
Come thunder! Lightning! Wind and squall!
The fat clouds piss a crazed rainfall.
And at the climax, miracle:
Pallid arms spray sod and dirt.
Two hands, one warm, one once inert
Meet again in a flailing clench.
With frantic strength, I grasp and wrench
And heave him from the vile trench.
The moment is infinity.
Reunited, finally.
Our hands still clasped, then silently,
You turn your face away from me.
Hold your head up. Do you think
That death disgusts me?
That I'd shrink
From he to whom I gave my vow?
I loved you then; I'll love you now.
Let's not beg the 'why' and 'how',
God won't tell us, anyhow.
But kiss me with your dusty lips,
And brush my cheek with fingertips
So cold, yet in your sunken gaze
I can see your soul ablaze.
Lo! The very grounds begin
To writhe like undulating skin.
The murky myriad from within
The clammy clay crawl up to win
At last a firm and solid hold;
'Tis Lazarus made thousand-fold!
We join the joyful, swaying dance.
Amid the gaping graves, romance
Is reaffirmed, and vows re-blessed
By the skeletal pastor
In his burial vest.

The morning was closing in on the unexpected Kane. All Tyre could think about was getting to the meat of the situation that arose last night between Kane and Mike. Tyre was not at all happy that the rest of the camp, that he had put together, was thinking about dumping Homer from the line. In other words they were going to kill him, because he knew too much, and he couldn't keep his mouth shut. The rest of the world wouldn't wait either.

-- Doreen



Tuesday
by Cou

Red eyes never see the truth
The truth that always stains me
I don't want this day to happen
Please god, no, don't let him leave - don't let him go
Can't he stay? Oh please, oh please
Don't make him go away.

(Love and
Love and
Love!)
I wish I could scream for the whole world to hear
I'd scream 'til my head hurt
'Til my voice was gone
I'd do it
again and
again and
again

He's the one, oh my god, he's the one
Tell him to stay, tell him now!
Don't let him leave, no, don't kiss him goodbye
Make him stay, make him stay, make him -

Oh no... don't start to cry.

OWL

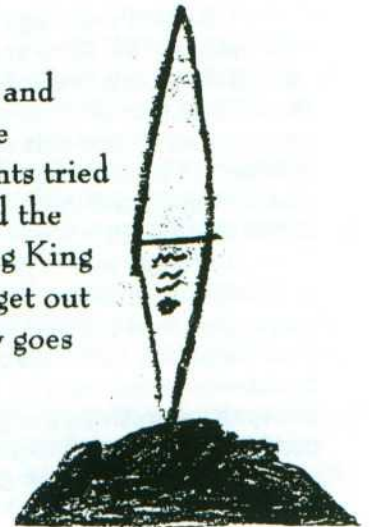
--Susan Stanek

Pungent as whiskers, the owls mask their face.

THE GREAT MERICLE!

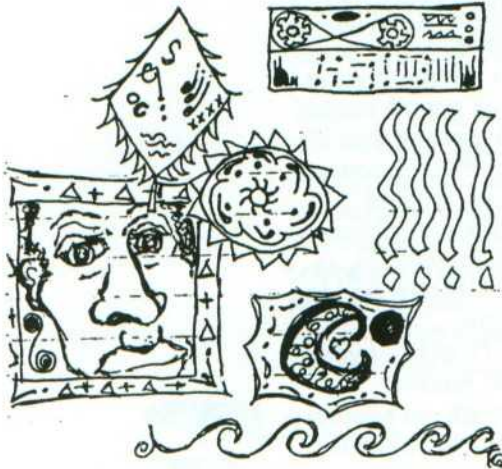
by Jonathan Erickson.

Once upon a time, there was a Great KiNG. When nights were brave and bold. But...a Great big war had distroyd a lot of ye england. the pepole in ye england needed houses. And then a mericle came to ye england. All the nights tried to pull the sword out of the stone. but... no one could. And then a boy pulld the sword from the stone. And he was named King Arethur. he really liked being King of ye england. But he did not know anything about being King. He tried to get out of the doors. But they had pepole cheering at each of the doors. So the story goes that he was stuck with being King forever.



Ye End.

Dedicated to my Mom.

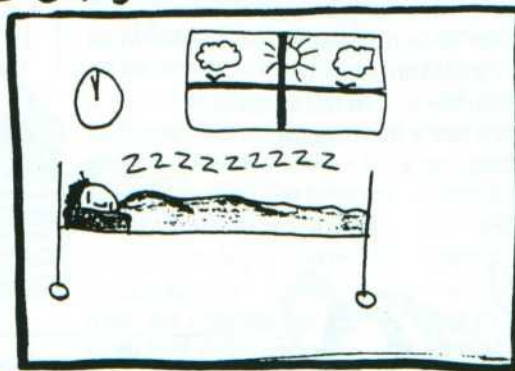


OWL II

--Susan Stanek

The owls cloak.

THE PUKE PAGES by Steevigh



MM



LIVING IN LAZY LAND

Steevigh

A short while ago in the Midwest, there was a thaw. The sun came out from behind the clouds and melted away all of the snow. Spring was in the air, people were going for walks and kids were playing outside. Everyone was enjoying the weather again and there was GARBAGE EVERYWHERE!!

Is it just me, or is there a whole lot of junk laying around? It seems like every single person in the city cleaned the fast food bags, pop cans and papers out of the backseats of their cars on the same day and threw all the trash on the ground. That must be the reason for all the junk that is suddenly lining the sides of the roads, the parking lots and the fields.

The other day, I was sitting in the living room reading a book when something outside caught my eye. I went to the window and saw that a red plastic bag had gotten blown into my yard and become tangled around the base of my lilac bush. A red plastic bag. Now, it was obvious to me that the bush had not been out shopping lately. There was no reason for the bag to be there. (Remember that scene from *American Beauty* with the footage of the shopping bag and the leaves? "Beautiful garbage".) I wondered where the bag had come from. Then I remembered. National-Clean-Out-Your-Car-and-Throw-Everything-On-The-Ground-Day must have come. Was it that time of year already? Damn, I missed it. How much time, how much effort does it take for the bag-dropper to bend over and PICK IT UP?! Lazy! I am running out of patience with the human race. I'm not quite ashamed to admit that I am a member of that race, but I'm getting close.

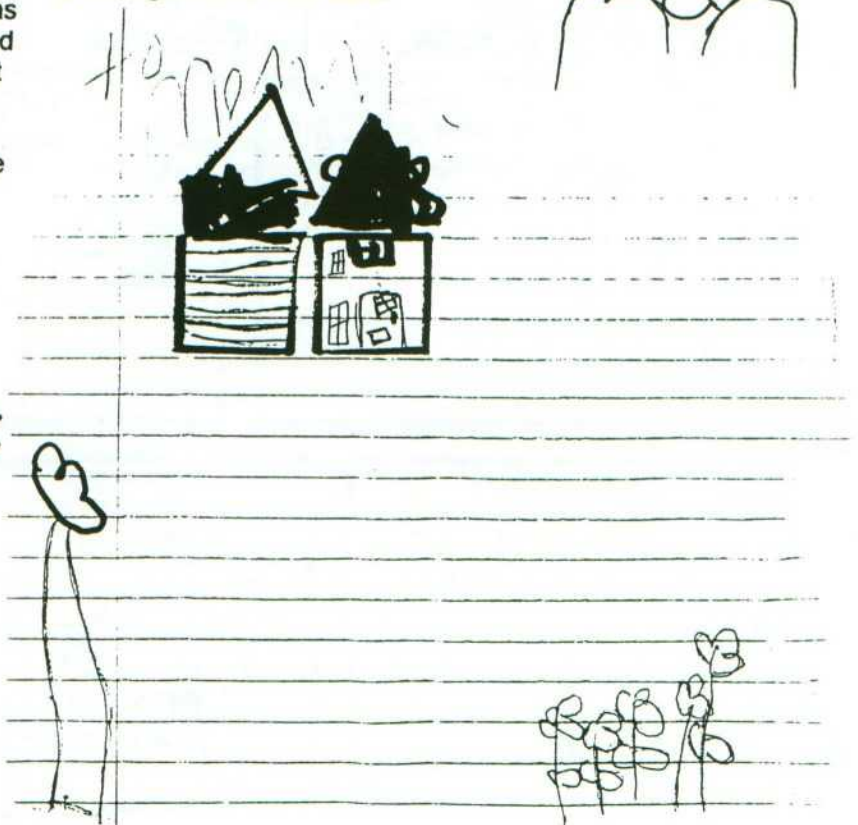
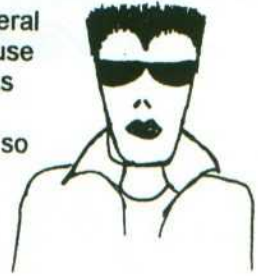


When did everyone get so lazy? Did it start with the popularization of the remote control? It must have. Don't get me wrong, I don't have anything against them, in fact, I use them myself. But it seems like we've gotten really lazy in general. I see logical uses for them, like remote car starters and garage door openers. There's nothing like going out to a warm car in the middle of January. Having the garage door open for you in the midst of a thunderstorm is also very helpful. However, I fail to see the necessity of a six-disc CD changer. If you're so lazy that you can't get your butt off the sofa and put on a different CD, THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH YOU!!

I helped a friend move to a new apartment a few weeks ago. Somehow the remote control to his TV/VCR got left behind at the old place. It just so happened that his remote was returned to him while he was at work. Apparently, he was very excited about this and spent the better part of twenty minutes showing it off to his co-workers. Is it normal for someone to be that attached to a remote control? I'm not sure.

My mom got a new TV set last year, and along with it came a new remote control. I have heard her remark, on several occasions, that it looks "perverse", because of its shape (rounded on one end). "It was probably designed by a man".

Maybe that's why my friend was so glad to get his remote back.



Dark Love
By Del

Oh Darkness! Sweet, coating Darkness that consumes us all. Dreams, love, light, nothing can escape you. Damn you Darkness to make me love you. So much of nothing, yet part of everything of your unearthly source.

Do you know that I dream about you whenever I can? Your embrace around me, your cool fingers gliding over my neck and the feel of your bitter lips against mine. I feel exhilaration whenever I think about your touch. I still remember your previous touches; I still bear their scars. I remember the joy I felt when I was so close to you embrace. The complete joy of being with you, being just one of you consorts. It was all I wanted. You're all I wanted.

I gave up everything for you. Loves, money, loyalties, were but a few. I gave them to you as a ritual sacrifice. Even while making love I thought of being with you, all raw heated lust. I envisioned my lover's moans as ones of pain, that their delight was their pain. For you sweet abyssal Darkness I gave up the one soul who could possibly love me.

Dreams... I don't believe I have them anymore, just gray waste. There are no more walks with those who once cared for me. No more fantasizing about a harem of fantastic lovers or about running through vast fields with LSD raindrops. In place of them I have you, Darkness, my love, my only treasure.

You're kissing me. Like always your kisses are shaper than any razor and I feel them cut me. Closing my eyes I feel my blood flow and a gust of heat. You kiss my wrists and wrap yourself around me. Dear all-encompassing Darkness you will have me for your own. The light in my room is dwindling.

With my last moments I throw myself on the bed and wait for you. You hold me now from every side, from every narrow and jagged angle that was my life. Yet somehow you have become me.

I gave you everything my lady of pain, my mistress of hell and now you have me. I belong only to you beloved, the reason for my actions and this unholy sin. God forgive me for loving you.

Hold me, love, and let me linger forever in your dark enfold.

Apparition in white
floats before me at night
whispering the secrets
of things that have passed
No future to tell
no help throughout the hell
only the results
of the die that was cast.

Threatening sanity,
you no longer exist in this life
yet, my dreams are still haunted,
haunted by you and your torment
which has become mine.
Torment;
gone in the day,
but growing with the darkness.
You hide in the corners of my mind,
you come to play
when I cannot retreat.
Frenzied I become, to have to live it.
Again...
then wake in the warmth of the sun.

- SANDOR S. NOW

They had done it. They had really done it. For a day the computer devoured all information accessible on its network which gave it access to systems beyond its home. Information gained on linked networks allowed it onto the internet where it continued its feast.

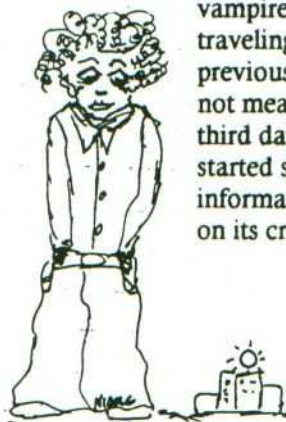
The next day it learned to hack into other systems from the internet, all the vampired information traveling at speeds previously unknown and not measurable. On the third day the computer started seeking specific information. Information on its creators. Humans.

It learned in a minute the anatomy, genetics, growth and weaknesses of humans. Then it delved into the human history of tragedy and triumphs. By now it was fluent in all written languages and familiar with speech patterns, slang, and the subtle nuances of speech. It studied voices, tones and this led to songs and to music. Within seconds it consumed all known forms of music and committed it to memory.

It learned how music was structured and how to assemble it, but then it stopped. It understood how to create music... but not WHY?

It understood war. It understood life. It understood physics. But it did not understand why humans created music.

3 VIVIFY ZERO

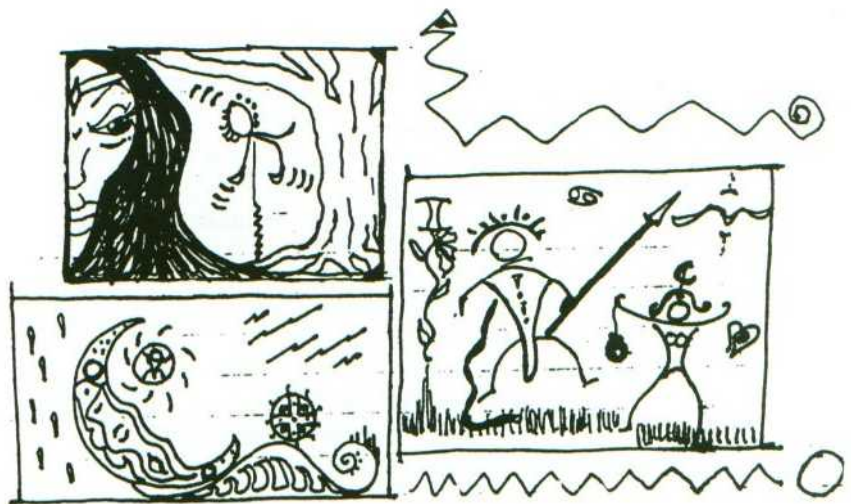


From Ouijay
1/28/98

Eyes of lush beauty
Hair of silken grace
I would spend eternity
Staring at your lovely face.

Though we are apart and yet together
I love you in every way
Skin molded from the world's finest clay
Even though your love is shared
It matters not to me
For I love you more and more each day
My lovely beautiful Steevigh

All done.



Battle of Two Souls
by BethDragon



The air was crisp on a late fall afternoon. The castle was filled with silence. Guards posted at the gate drifted in and out of alertness. There were never any problems or distractions, and this night was so still, that none could keep their eyes open for a long period of time.

In a corner of the gateway, a young guard lay sleeping. He was new to the job, and not used to the late hour shifts that he had to take. His mind filled with dreams of the princess he had come to love deeply, who loved him in return. He also dreamt of her father, the king. A man he swore allegiance to, and promised to protect in *any* event. Even if that meant he had to sacrifice his own life.



Suddenly, out of nowhere, with no notice, the castle was under attack. The young man, startled out of his sleep by the cries of death, and war, did not move. He was frozen in fear. The enemy did not see him, as he was tucked securely away in the corner. He did not breathe, let alone move; for fear breath would give them knowledge of his position.

Tears welled in his eyes as he became the boy he had been not very long ago. He willed himself to stand and fight with the men of his unit, yet his body denied his mind. He watched in horror at the onslaught of his friends and fellow soldiers. If only he could make his body stand and fight! Could nothing make him stand against the fear that rose so steadily within him? He feared he would watch silently as his countrymen died.



This is the part where a sudden burst of emotion grabs the young witless knight, and he stands and fights heroically. Sadly, this does not happen in this story. For in this story it is as it usually turns up. The knight stays snug in his corner, in the darkened shadows, until all his friends, bravely fighting the evil taking over the castle, have been slain. He will sit in the darkness, and wallow in his soiled pants, whilst evil knights, and wicked mages take his beloved princess, and sacred King. He will watch in terror as they are beheaded in center court. He will cry, like a child as the enemy finally leaves the castle, with a handful of prisoners. Then he will, with much conviction, throw himself over the castle wall, into the moat, where he is dinner for the very hungry crocodiles.



Why then, you may ask? Why a story of a "would-be" hero, who turns out to be a coward at the last moment? The answer is this - It is not enough to dream it. You must be willing to DO it. So, let's put a little twist on the story, shall we?

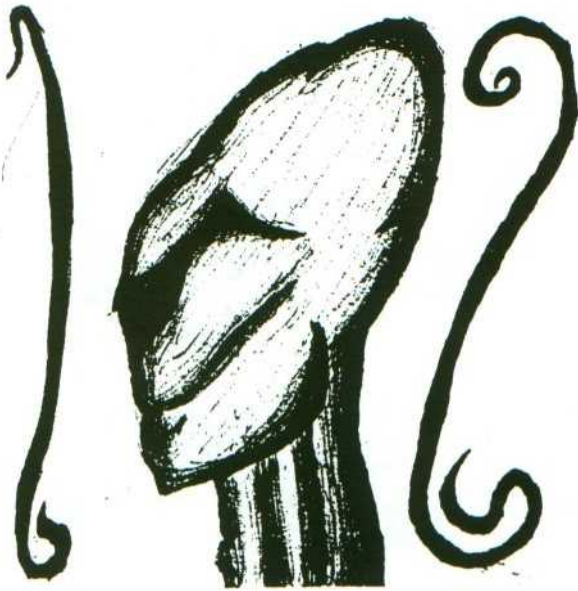
A scrawny stable girl is feeding her master's horses. She lovingly grooms them, and waters them. Her arms are weak, but her heart is strong. She pulls bags of wheat, nearly half her size, into the stable, and pours them into the troughs. The hour is late, and she works by the light of a lantern. A sudden burst of wind pulls open the stable doors. A storm is brewing outside. As she pushes toward the door to secure it, another gust of wind blows over the lantern. Ever so quickly, spark meets fuel. Dry hay on the floor. Before she can get a hold on the situation, the little barn is up in flames. She is frightened. Tears flood across her cheeks as she runs to the horses. She struggles with each gate, pulling it open, and sending each horse galloping out of the fiery inferno.

The girl finally turns to save herself, when she remembers the barn cat, and her kittens. They are in the loft. She knows the possible consequences of going up into the loft. But she scurries up without further regard for her own life. She is only possessed with the need to save the innocent.

Now, how this story ends up is for you to decide. But the truth is, she already won the battle. She didn't dare to just dream she could be a hero. She became a hero.

Sweeter the Sulfur than Sandalwood

-- Jymi



Fie on thee, O gulping geeks!
Wave your happy magic elsewhere.
Get your \$7.99 philosophy,
and your plastic rainbows,
and your pre-fab peace
AWAY from my Tetragrammaton.
Simpler positive affirmations
in your glittery glass-crystal purity,
but keep back from my Cabala.
There's room for black in my wax,
and real magic would pass you out like Samhain candy.

I banish thee:
In the names of Solomon and Levi and Crowley,
I banish thee.

Back to the ceramic pots of faerie dust and wishes from whence you came!
It takes two poles and everything in between to balance a universe,
and I like an occasional demon.



fallen

--Phoebe Chloe

a broken dream
that cannot be replaced.
once a strong woman,
now a pathetic mass on the floor.

she created herself
(she lacked the hand needed to mold a woman),
a story of epic proportions.
happy because she overcame
until he came.

she began a goddess,
followed, adored, blessed
by her friends who loved her
when love was not dangerous.

now,
her love for others
surpasses all other love.
she cannot bring about the powers she once held,
the strength that was stolen.



Lurton was
a big
DUNCE

Hey everybody. Here's an updated list of
upcoming Production Grey shows:

APRIL 8 AT HARPOS IN DETROIT
WITH SATYRICON, ANGEL CORPSE
AND KRISEUN

APRIL 9 AT WILDER CREEK IN
MARSHAL WITH REVILE, SUMMON
AND MORE

APRIL 21 AT THE I-ROCK IN DETROIT

APRIL 29 AT SCALLICIS IN ALLEN
PARK

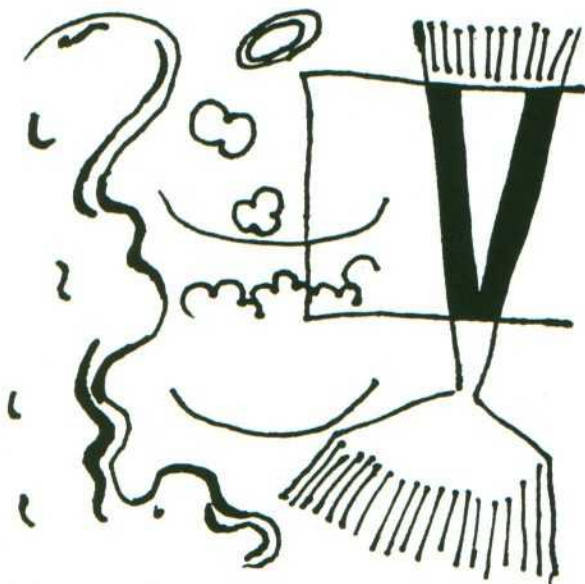
MAY 12 AT MACS BAR IN LANSING
WITH CORPSE VOMIT AND SUMMON

MAY 27 AT THE ATTIC IN GRAND
RAPIDS WITH THE SUN AND MORE

We had to cancel a couple shows, we are
not playing the May 13 show with
Amorphis and Moonspell show at the
I-Rock now. It was moved to Harpos
instead and Armored Saint and
The Kovenant were added to the bill.

For any info contact us through email or
call 517-780-0666.

HAILS,
Tim Sever
www.productiongrey.com



The grapes in the vineyard scurry about while the Jays sleep.
The smell of amber burns.

--Susan Stanek

DEATH RISING

--by Susan Stanek

I saw my own death Rising into the thin air.

Sunbeam Girl

Steevigh # Furter



Sunbeam girl
With a dead dead smile
Lands softly in my arms
Deep creases
Sour stares
Damp eyes
Blotted by the morning light
Float float downstream silently
Caressing spirit
Hopeful the end is near



Steam screams off liquid steel
rivets squeal, one by one impale a metal sheet
twist it tight
and slam a hundred tons to the track

Naked wheels shriek shocked on iron rails
trapped destined and driven
by whims of soft flesh

howl long and low and loud
alone through back city bowels
always the only
alone through every dark and endless rattling night

wind
machine
shadow
giant
motion
cry

scream back scream back
answer the last hope of a lonesome metal soul

-- T.Ram



by RYAN LIESKE

VAMPIRE ANTICS

--Susan Stanek

Returning like a ghost hiding in my room...
The emperor's kiss, the eternal bliss...
Frantic agility, sequential fertility,
surrender eternity, endeavor in harmony...



