

# PRESS

the stony brook

the community news and features paper

Vol. XXVII, Issue 7

"Gary Busey is Gingerdead Man"

December 9, 2005



# The Death Penalty Sparks Outrage Again

By Melanie Donovan

The death penalty has been a subject of heated debate for many years, the past week has intensified that anger in the US and Australia. The 1,000<sup>th</sup> execution in the US was carried out Friday in North Carolina. Kenneth Lee Boyd was put to death by lethal injection for the double murders he committed in 1988. Some say that this is a milestone, but milestones are usually something to be proud of. This is 1,000 deaths since 1976 when the US Supreme Court brought back the death penalty after a nine-year suspension. Also on Friday, an Australian man, Nguyen Tuong Van, was hanged under the Singapore government for drug trafficking. Australia was up in arms at this execution because they abolished the death penalty in 1973.



SCARED STRAIGHT... ON DEATHROW!  
Courtesy of AP

Later on Friday, the 1,001 death was carried out when Shawn Humphries died in South Carolina for the murder of a shop keeper in 1994. His lawyer said that he would have rather been 1,000 so that people would remember him. Boyd on the other hand, did not want

to be remembered that way, saying "I'd hate to be remembered as that, I don't like the idea of being picked as a number."

Nguyen Tuong Van was convicted for drug trafficking 396 grams (14 ounces) of heroin at the city-state's Changi Airport in 2002, on the way from Cambodia to Australia. Prime Minister John Howard said that this would hurt the connections between Australia and Singapore. There were many appeals from the Australian government to spare his life but none were listened to. Nguyen said he was trying to pay off his twin brother's debt to a loan shark. This execution sparked protests in Australia and vigils were held with bells and gongs sounding 25 times at the hour of his execution.

Support for capital punishment has weakened in recent years, which could be due to a number of factors. The BBC reports, "In recent years, enthusiasm for the punishment has dwindled in the US and the courts have been less inclined to use it." "64% of Americans support the death penalty, the lowest level in 27 years and down from 80% in

1994," was shown by a Gallup Poll. 80% is an extremely high number compared to today. It could also be due to the fact that if the courts are not using it as much, people will not want to resort to such measures to get "revenge." Some argue on whether the death penalty is just that, revenge. It should only be used as a form of punishment and not revenge for the families. Why should you have to murder more people after someone has already died?

This debate is not helped by the fact that President Bush openly supports the death penalty. A spokesman from the White House reports, "The president strongly supports the death penalty because he believes ultimately it helps save innocent lives." Saving innocent lives is done by not murdering people if you do not have to. There are other ways of punishing not involving murder. While Bush was Governor for six years in Texas, he permitted 152 deaths and only stopped one death sentence by lessening the severity of punishment. Texas carries the most deaths by capital punishment out of all the states, with 355 of the 1,000 deaths. Virginia and Oklahoma are in second and third.

This milestone for the US should not be looked upon as an accomplishment. These two incidents will definitely lead way to more discussions and debates on the death penalty.

## We've Got A Strategy!

## That's Better Than A Mission Statement...

By Rob Pearsall

Bush issued a document on November 30th called the "National Strategy for Victory in Iraq" and it outlines what needs to be done to win the war. It's about fucking time. Couldn't we have used one of these when the war started?

Whatever, now we've got a plan to get out victorious. What did we do to deserve such an exit strategy? Well, apparently, we complained enough. We owe it to Peter D. Feaver, a Duke University political scientist who has been studying public opinion on the war. Everyone knows that public opinion has been waning but Dr. Feaver brought an analysis of polls from 2003 and 2004 that showed the American public would support a war that we would ultimately win. Our voices have been heard! Joyous day of rapture! We complained so much that Bush went ahead and published some more propaganda to get us on his side!

I might have jumped to conclusions. Maybe it's not propaganda. Let's read into the document a little before we accuse the president of trying to manipulate us. Let's get the facts straight before we invade his document under what the *L.A. Times* is calling forged intelligence and try to establish a democracy there. Looking over the contents of the document, just the contents page, the word "victory" appears six times.

On page six we're greeted by a quote

from an address the President gave on June 28th, 2003. "Our mission in Iraq is clear. We're hunting down terrorists. We're helping Iraqis build a free nation that is an ally in the war on terror. We're advancing freedom..." Alright, I'm stopping there. I can't go on and listen to this rhetoric again. Let's move on. Under the header "VICTORY IN IRAQ DEFINED" we get, "As the central front in the global war on terror, success in Iraq is an essential element in the long war against the ideology that breeds international terrorism." Success? An essential element of fighting a war? Really? I had no idea. Apparently, the administration didn't know it either until now. Perhaps they thought that losing ground and support was going to lull the opposition into a false sense of security?

"The ultimate victory will be achieved in stages." We've got three stages here. The short term, medium term, and the longer term. The basic gist is putting down the insurgency and

employing some economic reforms to "lay the foundation for a sound economy." The medium term involves Iraq fending for itself. An Iraq that can defeat terrorists and insurgents and provide its own security. The longer term goal is an Iraq that has defeated the terrorists and neutralized the insurgency. So the three step process is:

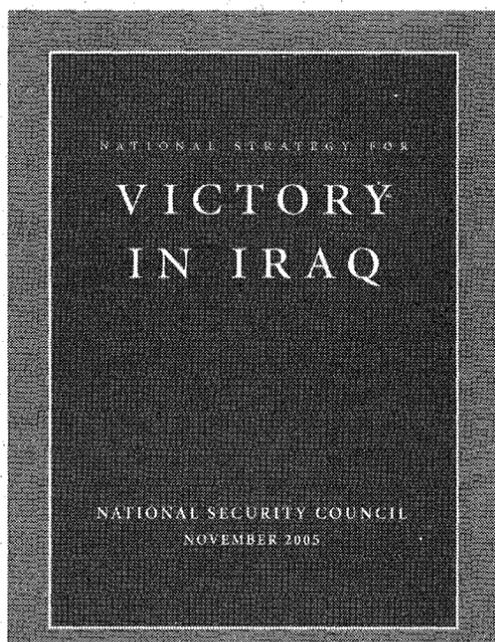
1. Fight insurgents.
2. Fight some more insurgents by themselves.
3. Defeat insurgents.

I'm going to move away from this childish view of the things in Iraq. I did simplify the goals a little but if you'd like to read the document you can see that I didn't leave that much out. You can find the "National Strategy for Victory in Iraq" here, at [http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/iraq/iraq\\_national\\_strategy\\_20051130.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/iraq/iraq_national_strategy_20051130.pdf)

The last line I'm going to bring up said this, "Prevailing in Iraq will help us win the war on terror." Firstly, I'm glad it's no longer the global struggle against extremism. That was a retarded attempt at pulling the wool over our eyes if I ever saw one. The fact that Sean Combs changed his nickname from Puff Daddy to P. Diddy doesn't change the fact that he was involved in an ugly court battle. Secondly, hasn't everyone realized that a war on an idea can never be won? You can fight the people but you can't shoot a gun at a concept.

I lied; I looked down the page and saw this, "THE BENEFITS OF VICTORY IN IRAQ." Time for some more right wing rhetoric! Helping the people of Iraq is the morally right thing to do! Winning in Iraq makes America safer, stronger and more certain of its future! I just don't think it's morally right to help someone who didn't ask us for help and then when they get on their feet we ask them to help us fight a concept. We help them by tearing their nation in two and throwing their largest cities into an explosive chaos.

I want to end on this note. As reported in *The New York Times* more people are willing to support a war with high human cost if they think it's a good cause and if they think that we can win the war. So if everyone buys into this document the war will be able to go on with public support. I was right, it is propaganda.



IT'S A THREE PRONGED STRATEGY TARGETING THE SHORT MEDIUM AND LONGER TERMS,  
Courtesy of [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)

# November 22 Media Forum

By Laura Positano

On November 22, a panel of four journalists, all representing different aspects of the field, discussed contemporary media issues in the Tabler classroom space. The emergence of blogs, the recent CIA-gate controversy, and the perpetual conflict between ethics and the bottom line were discussed.

The panel members all have had extensive experience with the multifaceted world of the media in print, broadcast, and electronic forms. Stony Brook University alumnus Joe Caponi, who is the editor of the Channel Web Network ([www.channelweb.com](http://www.channelweb.com)); Carl Corry, editor in chief of Long Island Business News and regional director of the Society of Professional Journalists; and Dustin Herlich of the Suffolk Standard participated. In addition, besides the presence of these electronic and print journalists, there also was the presence of someone from the broadcast media universe. Ernst Star, formerly affiliated with television news in Philadelphia, and who now is a professor at Hofstra University as well as the assistant director of communications at Suffolk Community College's Selden campus, was there too. Issues that all too often afflict the press were addressed. The battle between the reporters' civic responsibility to inform the public and work for the greater good and the need to increase circulation. The editors' need to choose what will sell more: sensationalism, sex and scandal or important, pressing topics that need to be covered for the public welfare. The public's right to know versus the safety of individuals in harm's way. What is news? What is a reporter-could it be someone off the street who has a computer and a connection to the Internet, and who is consequently able to start blogging about topics and events? What is the state of the first amendment? All these questions were raised at this panel discussion, where members of the media analysis class audience of Norm Prusslin, assistant director of media at Stony Brook University, were invited to ask questions pertaining to the press. Since all of the men on the panel were all familiar with the inner struggles that go on within a newsroom, they were aware of the dilemmas often faced by editors. With decreasing readership, hence decreased circulation, newspapers often have to make ambivalent editorial decisions to stay afloat financially.

Covering something scandalous but unnecessary for the public to know to assist in making better, informed citizens is, unfortunately, the easy way to keep papers in the black. Shark attacks, sexual exploits, and the like are increasingly headline grabbers and cover sto-

ries. Yellow journalism has become a trend in both the broadcast (especially the twenty-four hour news cable networks) and print media. As a result, intelligent, investigative reporting that has the potential to improve the public's understanding of critical issues is frequently delegated to page fourteen. While tabloid journalism has existed for a while (back in the days of Nellie Bly, who used sensationalism in a way that it's rarely used- to benefit the public; she did undercover reporting in the nineteenth century), lately it has replaced journalism in places where journalism once existed. Journalists like the late Peter Jennings, who was the last of the Big Three newsmen (Dan Rather and Tom Brokaw were the other two), were the few who dared to have integrity at a time when integrity among journalists was diminishing. Now that these role models for many have moved on for a variety of reasons, there has been the possibility of a journalistic void.



CHANNELWEB.COM EDITOR JOE CAPONI,  
Courtesy of [buskinjournalism.org](http://buskinjournalism.org)

Will reporters in the twenty-first century, a time when media conglomerates care more about money than media ethics, believe in integrity? This question comes to mind when pondering the latest reporter debacles, namely the leak of the identity of a CIA agent by reporters. New York Times reporter Judy Miller was jailed for being in contempt of court, and no shield law could protect her when she refused to name the source of her information about the identity of the CIA agent Valerie

Plame, the wife of an ambassador who was critical of Bush. Shield laws, according to the First Amendment Center, are important in protecting the confidentiality of sources.

"Although the privileges recognized by the federal and state courts and created by the state legislatures vary..., most generally provide that the privileged information cannot be obtained unless the party seeking the information can establish that the information is highly material and relevant to the case at issue, compelling need exists ... , or that it cannot be obtained by other means ([www.firstamendmentcenter.org](http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org))."

Additionally, another prestigious journalist, Robert Novak of the Washington Post, is the one who first leaked the identity of Ms. Plame. So two questions for the contemporary press arise. Will courts find more reasons that are compelling enough to force journalists to reveal the identity of their sources, consequently limiting journalists' access to sources in the future? Will the concept of "do no harm," encoded in the code of ethics of the Society of Professional Journalists (which can be found at [www.spj.org](http://www.spj.org)), be ignored again in the name of beating the competition, even if it jeopardizes a life (like Ms. Plame's, for instance)?

Journalists must now, more than ever, be ethical. Journalists must also be aware of how new court rulings, like the Hosty case, potentially limit their first amendment rights. According to the Student Press Law Center, in "the Hosty vs. Carter case, the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals said the Supreme Court's 1988 Hazelwood decision limiting high school students' free expression rights could extend to college" newspapers too. Journalism educators are appealing this, wanting the Supreme Court to rule on the Hosty decision. Student journalists will be the journalists of the future, and so when their rights are suppressed, this is of concern to the journalism community as a whole.

All these fascinating issues affecting and afflicting the contemporary press were discussed in this media ethics forum. This was moderated by myself, the president of the campus chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists; and Mike Nevradakis, the former president. It was, in many opinions, a great success. More forums are planned for the future. If you're interested in journalism, check us out: we meet every Friday at 3 in the Colors Café, located in the basement of the Student Union, down the hall from Beauty and Brains.



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# Injustice: The Martin Tankleff Case

By Robert V. Gilheany

Seymour and Arlene Tankleff were brutally murdered on September 7<sup>th</sup>, 1988. They were bludgeoned and left for dead on the grounds of their Belle Terre home. Their 17-year-old son Martin called 911. When the police arrived, he screamed, "Someone killed my parents."

Before the police arrived, Martin followed the instructions of the 911 operator in an attempt to save his father's life. When the police arrived, Martin offered up a suspect, Jerry Stuerman. Mr. Stuerman was a disgruntled business partner of Seymour's. Stuerman owed hundreds of thousands of dollars to Seymour Tankleff. Stuerman, the owner of Strathmore Bagels, whose partner was Seymour Tankleff (who put up a large sum of the money for the bagel store), left town.

Before he left, he emptied out a joint bank account he held with Seymour Tankleff, shaved his mustache, faked his own death, and flew to California under an alias.

The police took Martin to a police station and interrogated him for over 5 hours. They isolated him from his family, friends, and legal help. Detective James McCready lied to Martin about his father Seymour, saying he was alive and implicating him in the crime. Martin, under extreme psychological pressure said, "Maybe I blacked out and killed them."

This was the only evidence that was presented in the trial. Martin quickly recanted. Steven Drizin, an expert on false confessions and staff attorney for the Center for Wrongful Convictions, pointed out that minors are susceptible to false confessions. He said that one way to detect a false confession is if the confession is inconsistent with the physical evidence of the case. That was the case here. The prosecution said that Martin killed his parents with barbells and washed the evidence down the shower drain. There was no blood on the barbells or in the plumbing system.

The Suffolk DA at the time was James Catterson, a shady character. Five different people have accused him of threatening them with grand juries if they didn't do his political

bidding. The judge in the case was Alfred Tish, a conservative Republican with ambitions, and Martin's trial lawyer was Robert Gottlieb, a Democrat who would run for DA.

The defense said that Jerry Stuerman was quoted as saying, "I already killed two people, what's one more," in a fit of rage. The DA's office never pursued the Jerry Stuerman angle. They just focused in on Martin. The DA offered up as motives the slights Martin supposedly felt from his parents, such as having to drive an old "Crummy Cadillac" and rules that his parents

imposed on him. The Tankleff family countered that characterization. They all said that Martin had a loving relationship with his parents. "Seymour was Marty's best friend," they all said.

With just the questionable "confession," the jury convicted Martin

Tankleff. Judge Tish sentenced him to the maximum, 50 years to life.

Over the years new evidence has come to light. Several witnesses have come forward. One is Glen Harris. He was serving time for an unrelated burglary charge. He said that he was the getaway driver on the night of the killings. He said he drove two men to the Belle Terre home, on what he thought was a burglary. Harris said he drove Peter Kent and Joseph Creedon to the crime scene. Creedon was an "enforcer" for Stuerman's son Todd, who sold cocaine out of the Strathmore Bagels shop. Todd Stuerman has pleaded guilty to selling cocaine.

Glen Harris came to court and was ready to testify. He took the 5th. He needed immunity in order to testify. The Suffolk county DA office refused to grant immunity. They also threatened Glen Harris if he testified. They told him he would be charged and prosecuted if he implicated himself in the crime. "You can trade places with him" he was told. The Suffolk DA's office of Thomas Spota and Assistant DA Leonard Leto are obstructing justice.

Joseph Creedon's son has signed an affidavit stating that his father admitted to killing Seymour and Arlene Tankleff. A woman named Karlene Kovacs, who signed an affidavit and passed a polygraph test, stated that Joseph Creedon told her that he and Jerry Stuerman were involved in the Tankleff murders. Creedon told Kovacs that after the murders he had to get rid of his bloody

clothes. Father Ronald Lemmert, the prison chaplain at Ossining, testified that Glen Harris admitted to his role as the getaway driver for Joseph Creedon and Peter Kent. Along with Kovacs, Martin Tankleff and Glen Harris also passed polygraph tests.

Brian Scott Glass said that, in 1988, Jerry Stuerman contacted him to hurt or kill Seymour Tankleff. He turned down the offer and passed it on to his friend Joseph "Joey Guns" Creedon.

Assistant District Attorney Leonard Leto has been zealous in his pursuit to keep Martin Tankleff from getting a new trial. He has called the new witnesses "misfits." I wonder if he was also referring to Father Lemmert? It is common practice for district attorneys and prosecutors to use the testimony of criminals to secure convictions. It is hypocritical for Leto to attack the Martin Tankleff defense team for using the word of convicts to shed light on what happened and what led up to the murders of Seymour and Arlene Tankleff.

The defense team has asked the Suffolk county DA's office to remove themselves from the case over conflicts of interest. District Attorney Thomas Spota, while in private practice, defended Detective

James McCready, who was accused of assaulting a woman in a traffic dispute, and his old law firm defended Todd Stuerman on the cocaine charges. DA Spota should step away from this case in favor of a special prosecutor. He should do this to avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest. Thomas Spota got elected to the district attorney office to weed out corruption. He has made a name for himself in prosecuting corruption in Brookhaven and was aggressive in his dealing with the Catholic Church pedophile scandal. Corruption is classic in a Long Island way. You can see it in this case. There are unseemly connections between the principals in this case. Why was Jerry Stuerman protected in this case? He should have been a prime suspect from the beginning but was never treated as such. The continued actions of the DA's office are to defend the prosecution and protect Stuerman, Creedon, and Kent.

The job of the district attorney is to secure justice, not to defend a prosecution at all cost. There should not be a conflict on that question.

Suffolk County Judge Stephan Barslow has ordered a hearing on the testimony of the son of Joseph Creedon, who has said his father confessed to his role in the murder and provided details.

Jay Salpeter, a former New York City homicide detective has joined the Martin Tankleff Defense team. He said that this case is one of the worst injustices he has ever seen. "I looked over all the evidence and all roads lead to Jerry Stuerman and the soured business relations with Seymour Tankleff."

Think about this. In 1988, the Tankleffs were brutally murdered. What is more likely, that they were killed by their 17-year-old son, with whom they had a good relationship and who was never in trouble with the law, or that they were murdered by a disgruntled business partner who owed them hundreds of thousands of dollars, who had threatened them in the past and had connections to criminals, thugs, and the drug trade?

To find out all the information you need, you can Google Martin Tankleff.



MICHAEL TANKLEFF,  
Courtesy of www.newyorkmetro.com

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# SHU Student Beaten After Exposing Fraternity Hazing Ritual

By Joey Safdia

A 19 year-old Seton Hall University student was kidnapped and beaten late at night on November 10 by a fellow student and a former student of the same school. The attackers, Bradley Watson and Mark Minett, were both allegedly members of the national fraternity, Tau Kappa Epsilon, who attacked the student, a TKE pledge, for bringing a hazing ritual to the university's attention. The Seton Hall chapter is also not a recognized chapter of the fraternity.

The victim (whose identity would not be revealed by school officials) had taken part in a hazing ritual, which involved him being paddled by other fraternity brothers. After the ritual, the victim reported the incident to university officials, even providing photographic evidence after he was informed that he would lose his position of Resident Assistant if he did not.

After school officials took action against TKE, the victim was assaulted by two alleged "Tekes", which involved him being put in a car with a jacket over his head, taken off campus, and beaten. He was also threatened with a baseball bat, and his cell phone was used to threaten both his family and girlfriend.



The victim went to the police and identified the attackers as people he knew, and in the report it is stated that Watson and Minett, the latter of which being a former student, were both TKE brothers. However, the fraternity denies that either attacker was ever a Teke. According to TKE chairman Kevin Mayeux, "We have a very extensive and complete tracking system of our members, and these two men have not been found anywhere... Simply put, neither of these two men are now, or have ever been, Tekes."

Mayeux also stated that hazing is not a part of TKE's pledging process nor is it something that the fraternity tolerates. "Hazing has no place in Tau Kappa Epsilon or any fraternity for that matter... Any group claiming to be a TKE chapter at Seton Hall is doing so without authorization, and they are not a recognized part of our Fraternity." It should also be noted that the Seton Hall chapter was shut down by the fraternity itself for failing to meet the operating standards required for all chapters of Tau Kappa Epsilon, as well as "failure to communicate or cooperate with regional

volunteers and professional staff."

Along with being arrested, Watson, who is currently a student, may face expulsion for participating in the hazing ritual.

Whether paddling and/or other hazing rituals is part of all Tau Kappa Epsilon rituals or whether it's just the antics of an underground frat does not undermine one very important fact. Fraternity and sorority hazing is running rampant on college campuses across the United States, and Stony Brook University is no exception. While bonds of brotherhood and sisterhood can be formed through a positive initiation process, hazing is another thing altogether. It destroys the self-esteem of the pledges, involves humiliating, dangerous, and often illegal activities, and in the worst-case scenario, ends with the death of a pledge, one example being the tragic demise of Matthew Carrington in a Chi Tau ritual at Chico State University involving calisthenics in a cold, dirty basement while consuming water from a five gallon jug. Roughly one college student has died per year over the last thirty years as a result of fraternity and sorority hazing rituals, and such atrocities have to end now. Hazing can no longer be accepted as a regular part of campus life.

## Fight Apathy Tour

By Lena Tumasyan

Thanks to "Visions Worldwide" (sunnyvisions@hotmail.com), an organization on campus, for sponsoring the event.

For more info, visit <http://www.fightapathy.org/> branch of NYC Student Initiative for AIDS, Inc. (NYCSIA).

Fight Apathy Tour hit the SAC Ballroom A stage on November 29th with a blast, their consecutive second year at Stony Brook University. The result was an evening of slam poetry, rapping, singing and a workshop - all in an effort to raise awareness of and reduce apathy of AIDS, part of World AIDS Week (free for students).

This year the group consisted of POSTmidnight (slam poetry, rapping), Brent Shuttleworth (singing/guitar) and Carlos Andrés Gómez (slam poetry, backup vocals). These individuals previously performed in famous venues such as Bowery Poetry Club, Nuyorican Poetry Café, and on HBO Def Poetry Jam. The three members were there from the start in 2004 and have been on tour since. In 2004 they only hit schools and universities in the five boroughs of New York City alongside two other members: Gelena Glenn and Clara Sala. In this 2005 tour

Carlos, Brent, and POSTmidnight are covering more territory: Long Island, New Jersey, and the general Tri-State area. They are making plans to go all up and down the East Coast for their 2006 tours, with hopefully more members.

The three dedicated and talented individuals in the group are not that different from us. They are 23-26 in age, and have gone to school. Some had full time jobs, for example, Carlos was an English teacher. What they have are talents that they wish to use to get people to rise up and fight AIDS by raising awareness of AIDS, educating students about AIDS and finally to encourage and activate these messages to get spread to others.

"Fight Apathy" is the name of the tour

instead of "Fight AIDS" because the first step to any battle is to become aware of the problem and motivate yourself and others to do something about it. As they said on stage "AIDS is not what kills, BEHAVIOR kills. We need to behave in safe ways and realize our potential of helping others. Action fights apathy."

Action and motivation is sometimes one of the hardest things to achieve for freshman college students, who made up the vast majority of the crowd, since this event was a requirement for one (or some) of their classes. However, they quickly got into it and I think rather enjoyed it.

At the end, when people had a chance to share their thoughts and talk to these guests, many mentioned their appreciation for the performance, citing how some were here the prior year and therefore came again.

I was a "returnee" and I enjoyed myself, but not because AIDS knowledge is new to me, but

because I genuinely love their performances, meaning the way they deliver their message. Their message is creative and not too pushy. Most of the time they don't even mention the word "AIDS" but instead focus on "family, relationships, politics, society, gender, and race" because all those are related to AIDS and need to be addressed in prior.

My favorite part was in the end when most of the crowd had left and an international student visiting Stony Brook for semester got to beat-box/recite poetry with POSTmidnight. It was almost improv, and fully exceptional. I also purchased Carlos' book of poetry named *Shades of Silence* and I definitely recommend it to others.

"The first step to any battle is to become aware of the problem..."

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**Gays - Scapegoats For The Vatican**

The Catholic Church has made their stand very clear, gay men are not welcomed in joining the priesthood. Recently the Vatican released a document in which it stated that gay men should not be ordained as priests. This document, referred to as the "Instruction," states that men with "deep seated" homosexual tendencies should not be ordained. Further more men who are able to overcome "transitory" impulses within a three year period could then be ordained as deacons and then eventually could become priests. The document does not however indicate as to how these "transitory" impulses can be overcome. This three year provision clearly shows the attitude that the Vatican has towards homosexuality; it does not see it as a sexual orientation but rather a tendency that can be reversed.

This decision from the Vatican comes a very critical time for the Catholic Church who in recent years has faced many sexual abuse scandals involving minors. It seems that in light of all the sexual scandals involving minors and priests in the recent years, the Catholic Church hopes that by banning gays from priesthood sexual abuse incidents would be avoided in the future. However, logic of the Catholic Church seems a bit warped. They are automatically assuming that if one is gay the one is automatically a pedophile. Experts on sex offenders have noted that there is no direct connection that homosexuals are more like to sexually

abuse minors than heterosexuals. This logic makes no sense what so ever. In order to become a priest one must take a vow of celibacy so one's sexual preference should not matter. Either way the vow of celibacy prohibits the individual from participating in any sexual act, so why should it matter if one is gay or straight?

Catholicism as a religion stands for principles such as love and forgiveness, yet the way the Vatican is behaving seems to throw such principles out the window. The Vatican is deliberately targeting gay men and using them as scapegoats for the problems it has been unable to solve. Perhaps instead of investing time and money in hiding sexual abuse scandals the church should focus on spreading a better message of love and understanding. Instead of pointing the finger at homosexuals and blaming them for the sex abuse scandals, the Vatican should rework its celibacy requirement. Maybe if priests were not forced to be celibate then perhaps they would not resort to sexual misconduct.

In carrying out this new policy the Vatican can be hurting itself even more. By banning gays from joining the priesthood that Church is only alienating itself from its followers. This could also create a shortage in amount of new priests being ordained since many will now be excluded. In implementing this anti-gay policy the Catholic Church is sending the wrong message by telling it followers that differences are not accepted.

**Bad Dog!**

We had gotten a new dog. He was an uppity little shit. He'd run around the house, antagonize the cats and piss on the floor. He wasn't...house trained. It was obnoxious - he'd jump up on people when they entered the house. You couldn't control him - he'd run out into the street after his tennis ball. He was reckless and endangered his life and the life of those around him.

Well, not the lives of those around him but I'm trying to make a point here. The point is that Dad would yell at him when he did something wrong. That would scare him but it wouldn't stop him. He'd then take the dog into the garage when we weren't looking and... you know. The dog stopped pissing on the carpet, he doesn't run off the property anymore, the cats are safe, and well, he still jumps on people.

Point is, America is Dad and the dog is, for all intensive purposes, a terrorist. America yells at the dog and then when that doesn't work he takes him into the garage, which is, for all intensive purposes, not American soil. Smacks that terrorist around but good. Serves him right, right? After all, he pissed on our favorite skyscrapers!

The next part of this analogy comes down to what goes on behind the Garage Door of the Atlantic Ocean. We all know that Dad takes the dog into the garage and we can all hear the yelps. America is taking people to far off places hoping that we don't hear the yelps and screams while they're being taught to not piss on the carpet.

The dog learns his lesson. When he hears Dad's voice he knows it's time to stop whatever he's doing, even if it's eating out of doggie dish, and scamper away in fear. The terrorist doesn't stop. He keeps pissing on the floor of not only our living room but the den and the bedrooms too. To top it off, his doggy friends keep the faith while he's taking the hits in Backyard Guantanamo. This doesn't make it stop and now we can all hear the yelps coming from the garage.

The biggest difference is that the dog is an animal and the terrorist is a damn human being. In the human case, we don't even know that the terrorist is a damn terrorist because Guantanamo Bay and the Garage don't allow for due process. These places don't let the damn dog get a trial.

Don't take it the wrong way, people who engineer fear, the destruction of monuments and the deaths of hundreds at a clip deserve to be taken away, locked up and forgotten about. The point is that Dad shouldn't try to hide it from us by sneaking "terrorists" into the garage and into secret interment camps in Europe. He should tell us what the fuck is going on.

When we found out about the garage, Dad said, "The dog pissed on the carpet again and we're going to teach him not to." When we found out about the European internment camps America said, "shut your fucking mouth and who the fuck told you?"

The Stony Brook Press is published fortnightly during the academic year and twice during summer session by The Stony Brook Press, a student run non-profit organization funded by the Student Activity Fee.

The opinions expressed in letters, articles and viewpoints do not necessarily reflect those of The Stony Brook Press as a whole.

Advertising policy does not necessarily reflect editorial policy.

For more information on advertising and deadlines call (631)632-6451.

Staff meetings are held Wednesdays at 1:00 pm.

First copy free. For additional copies contact the Business Manager.

The Stony Brook Press  
Suites 060 & 061  
Student Union  
SUNY at Stony Brook  
Stony Brook, NY 11794-3200  
(631) 632-4137 Voice

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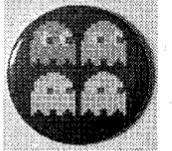
(Hint: It rhymes with "Stained-Glasshole")

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## You Guys Make Too Much Fun of Jesus.

I had a short break today before my next class and I plopped myself down in the lounge and started thumbing through the Stonybrook Press. So I'm reading and flipping and thumbing and flipping, and reading some more. I look at the time shove the paper in my bag and head to Chem. About halfway through class I'm sure I looked the equivalent of a vegetable, I was spaced, and if drool started dripping down my chin you would have thought it was a most appropriate effect. Initially my mind started out as a blank mass, occasional phrases and words whizzed in and out of my subconscious and then I started to focus on something, it was vague at first but the more I sat there and thought about those thoughts the more I realized that I was pretty damn irritated. Certain articles and comments printed in the Stonybrook Press has been slowly pushing a thorn in my side, with each freshly folded paper printed each month just chock full of both subliminal innuendos and blatant blows. The articles published on religious topics piss me off. No. Correction. The articles having to do with the bashing of the *Christian* religion infuriates me. In the most nonchalant manner, it is frequently relegated as a mere parody projecting erroneous negativity. It is a big joke, a common topic for ignorant students to poke fun at. Not only are there offensive comments but there have been lewd and degrading drawings of Jesus Christ in The Press which have genuinely offended me and many others I am sure. I am not favoring Christianity over any one religion. I am not saying that it's the 'right' religion for everyone, or that it's the only way to be 'saved,' but Christianity, or any religion for that matter should not be depicted in a condescending or humiliating manner. One might not agree with the

beliefs or methods of a religion but to each his own and if it works, and you are not hurting anyone, then power to you. Everyone is entitled to the freedom of speech but ridiculing another's belief system displays a degree of ignorance, disrespect and intolerance. People in general, seem to get vast and various information from a select or biased source regarding most things. You read a book by a certain author and you figure that all his/her books will be generic copies of one another. You eat broccoli. You hate it. Therefore you hate all green vegetables. You watch the news and dub it as 'The Word,' the 'be all end all.' You meet a person who happens to be Irish and can drink anyone you know under the table. You figure, you 'know' how all Irish people are. We can nominate this common phenomenon; Stereotyping. There are also common beliefs regarding the Christian religion as a whole and the 'type' of people they are. Self-righteous, intolerant, extremists, who reside in Arkansas and dub anyone outside the Christian religion as a hopeless case, are residing in the claws of Beelzebub, and beyond saving grace. One cannot judge a person through their aunt, uncle, sister etc. One cannot judge the whole of the people who follow a religion based on the thoughts and words of a few extremists. It would be the equivalent of saying that the whole Muslim religion supports terrorism. There are extremists in every religion, in every culture, in every walk of life. Don't let a run in with a select few people or situations be the defining moment where your mind, satiated with its limited knowledge, shuts down.

Danielle Flynn

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Dear Danielle,

Thank you for your letter. You raise a few interesting points. But you make an error in stating that we assume that all of the "Self-righteous, intolerant, [Christian] extremists" reside in Arkansas. They also reside in Texas. For example, please note the most powerful, and therefore most dangerous, of them all - President George W. Bush. We do not take issue with Christianity as a religion. We take issue with people who use that faith, or any faith, as a sword to cut down those they disagree with, to smite those they find anathema to their beliefs. We take issue with those who use religion to justify curtailing our freedoms, our freedom of speech especially.

It is not the Christian faith that is the problem. It is when that faith is perverted to promote hatred, ignorance, intolerance, fear and violence that we must make our voices heard. Words, it has often been said, have power. Words used in the right way by the wrong people can lead to the most horrendous of things. Christianity is a religion of love and grace, yet there are those who would debase and defile it by using it to promote their own petty and unholy aims. We take issue with the perversion of the religion and we take issue with those who would pervert Christianity, with those who would so misunderstand its message, with those who would use it to destroy and enslave rather than create and liberate. In other words, we take issue with those who hide behind Christianity and use it to justify their evil, un-Christian deeds.

You claim that you are in favor of our freedom of speech, yet you would have us censor ourselves because you find certain parts of our speech offend your obviously delicate sensibilities. To put it mildly, this reeks of the hypocrisy that runs rampant among those who use their faith as a weapon. We, as a paper, refuse to silence ourselves because we offend. It is the duty of a newspaper to advance ideas, to foster debate, so that the status quo can change. If we were to handcuff ourselves to the idea that we must never offend those whose sensibilities are a goblet of fine crystal perched precariously atop a pedestal during an earthquake, we would be nothing more than a mouthpiece for those who would retard the evolution of culture, knowledge and society. If we were to censor ourselves so that no one is ever offended in any way, shape, or form, our issues would consist of nothing more than photos of cute fluffy bunnies nibbling on the grass at best, blank pages at worst.

It is, to be frank, impossible to be alive in this day and age and never be offended by anything, ever. Since it is guaranteed that this newspaper will, invariably, offend someone, it is best that we take the advice of Sam Brown, "Never offend people with style when you can offend them with substance."

Therefore, we will continue to offend so that we can lend our voice to the other voices that are murmuring against the injustices of the world in the hopes that, together, all of our murmurs will blend into an ear-bleeding, earth-shattering, world-changing shout that changes and reforms and cures the ails of the world, expelling the evils by replacing them with the sweet chorus of progress, peace, freedom and acceptance.

Sincerely,

The Stony Brook Press



# Asian American E-Zine

<http://www.aa2sbu.org/aaezine>

## Asian Night 2005

By Mai Luong

Friday, November 18th, Balance - Asian Night 2005, kicked off with Maroon 5's "This Love", performed by Barry Jive and the Uptown Five Band. This upcoming band complete with bassist, drummer, guitarist, vocals by Barry Jive and the female pianist played its best with its second song of the night, Jackson Five's "I Want You Back."

Korean American comedian Tom Teska graced the stage with his antics twice, right after the band and right after intermission, touching upon anything and everything. Nothing was sacred to Teska as he ridiculed everyone from women, including his wife, ugly people, Asians, and subway preachers to Subway sandwich artists. The bulk of his comedy centered around being Asian or Asian American and memories of his life. Some of his funnier jokes were the digs he took at his adoptee status, like how people would ask his Caucasian parents if Teska was their child, and he would say that they just borrowed him from the people at the dry cleaners. While some of his jokes were funny, he could not compare to last year's comedian.

Between acts we were highly entertained by two "Americanized" Asians talking and living the ultimate college life of clubs, drunken nights and mornings spent passed out on the floor until it is interrupted by a new Asian roommate. The poor guy tried his best to fit in despite his "fobby Asianness," replete with ironed shirt, shoes and ties, the glasses, big bookbag, and humble demeanor to boot, and the roommates try their best to make sure his "fobbiness" doesn't infect their belongings.

A heartfelt Chinese rendition of "Good Heart Break Up" by Bu Candy Lo and Wang Lee Hom was the next act to perform. They sang with passion and gusto amid the cheers and "awwws" of the crowd.

Talk of the latest party between the college guys and the new roommate, who just doesn't seem to get the "right" concept of an American clubbing experience with "girls," opens up the stage to the fashion show. A showcase of traditional clothing from Vietnam, China, Japan, and Korea modeled with slower, Asian traditional-themed music preceded the modeling of modern styled clothing worn by models strutting their stuff to faster, upbeat music. One model for traditional Chinese clothing, our friend the new roommate, showed up to

party with his new roommates in his traditional costume, breaking down his moves with throwbacks to the 90s much to the dismay (and amusement) of the roommates.

Thillana, the Southasian SBU dance group, wowed us with their contemporary / traditional dances to slow and fast beats. The greatness of their awesome dance performance lies in their synchronicity, the complexity of their moves, and the simple grace of the dancers.



Diffusion American hip hop came next with men and women dancing together and separately, to different music (American hip hop and Asian pop) half lights or darkness with strobe lights.

After intermission, we were given an introduction to the Asian Student Alliance cabinet members who engineered this whole program with help from other student organizations like VSA (Vietnamese Student Association), CASB (Chinese Association of Stony Brook), Thillana, Pi Delta Psi Fraternity, KSA (Korean Student Association), PUSO (Philippine United Student Organization), and JCA (Japanese Cultural Association).

After cabinet intros came the lion dancing. The cutest lion I've ever seen dancing on stage, jumping on the tables, and throwing t-shirts from its mouth.

Two female singers sang "Don't Be Shy" by Rouge. Clubbing and Asian pop fashion came next and we see the growth and development of the new Asian roommate from a guy who goes to clubs wearing his traditional clothing to a guy who gets the ladies with his new American clothes. These guys saw the end of the semester with changes in all of them, from getting a better outlook on life, being more open minded, and learning to adapt to a new situation without changing one's true self.

PUSO ended the night with traditional dances, tinikling (the dancing with the bamboo poles) in the traditional style and in a new modern way, a hot latin dance by PUSO's current president Anne Beryl Corotan and the former president Steve Raga, awesome modern dancing from guys (and gals) who really know how to move, Filipino kali - the art of stick fighting, and break dancing to top it off.

So ended Balance, Asian Night 2005, and another great set of performances. See you there next year!

Photo Gallery with more still be to uploaded <http://aa2sbu.aasquared.org/gallery/AsianNight2005>

## Club Spotlight: CASB

By AA E-Zine Staff

CASB was formed so long ago someone needs to go through Statesman archives to find out exactly when - though we do know for sure it has the oldest continuous annual cultural show on campus, China Night, that was over 25 years old in 2001. And that provides continuity... in 2003 when CTO & VP of FalconStor Wai Lam got up on the Union stage as the Keynote Speaker for Alumni Weekend, he joked about how the last time he was up there it was as a performer in China Night... and he graduated in 1982.

Since those early years China Night has morphed into something totally different. It keeps a story line for the evening that allows for both traditional and modern acts - but now strongly favors dance and step routines and a sizzling fashion show.

CASB began as a very traditional Chinese organization. It was not until 1996 that Board meetings were even held in English. Until then there was an interpreter for those who did not speak Cantonese. And those transitional years in the mid '90's were turbulent ones as CASB transformed from an immigrant student organization to a Chinese American one.

CASB started in conjunction with Chinese Studies. Dr. Shi Ming Hu and her husband Eli Seifman were pivotal in helping with funding and resources in the early days. Each China Night used to begin with Professor Hu and one of her white Chinese language students on stage. Hu Lau Shi would have the student speak to the audience. Then she would talk and make the Chinese students who either could not speak or were not literate in Chinese feel guilty.

The next China Night is on Saturday, March 11. Even though it is the oldest cultural show on campus, and always sells out in advance, they were not given their traditional night in late April / early May because Student Activities booked other non-Asian oriented events instead. April as Asian Heritage Month was always a hassle when Spring Break split it up, but now it seems that Students Activities, which no longer has even one full time Asian staff person, is blowing off Asian student clubs and Asian Heritage Month completely. (May in National Asian American History Month.)

But just like what happened when SAC shut down PUSO's Bayanahan, student clubs are afraid to complain because the ones they are complaining about control everything. So even with hassles from Student Activities, the show must go on. If anyone is interested in acting, modeling, singing, dancing, or scriptwriting for China Night 2006, contact CASB at [stonyCASB@gmail.com](mailto:stonyCASB@gmail.com)

CASB also holds different events throughout the year. Its most noted, aside from China Night, is the annual singing contest. There are years when SB has some incredible talent - and some singers here have gone on and gotten recording contracts. This Fall Semester is also held a Basketball Tournament and Poker Tournament.

CASB does not have weekly meetings but does do events during some of their block-booked weekly times, Wednesdays at 8:30 in SAC 306. Check the Zine calendar <http://www.aasquared.org/calendar/calendar.pl> or the CASB website.

You can find photos from China Nights 2002 - 2005 as well as other CASB events on the SBU AA E-Zine Gallery at [www.aa2sbu.org/gallery](http://www.aa2sbu.org/gallery)

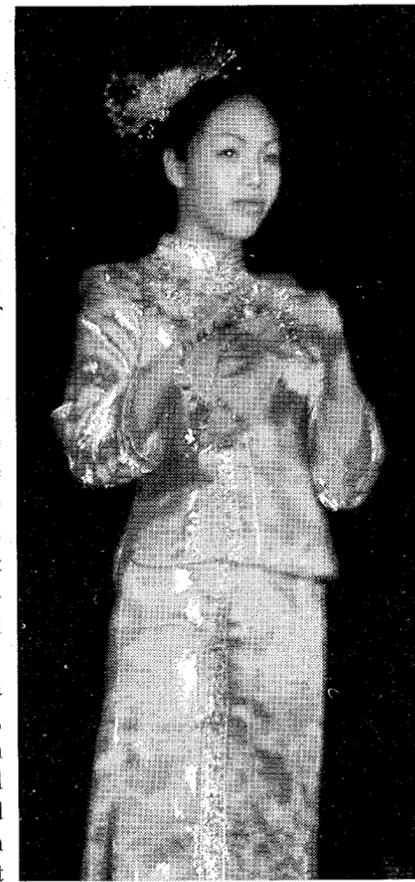
Unknown to many is the annual \$500

Shi Ming Hu Student Leadership Award, initiated by former students and CASB members after Prof Hu's passing to honor how important she had been to CASB. The info on Prof Hu is at <http://www.sinc.stonybrook.edu/clubs/education/ShiMingHu/> and the award info is on the China Studies website at <http://www.stonybrook.edu/chinastudies/scholarships.html>

CASB Cabinet members for 2005-06 are: President Jenny Mai; VP Zhe Yu; Secretary Jack Deng; Treasurer Winston Chu; Events Coordinators Larry Leung and David Cheng; EC Assistants Ivy Lau and Gary Lee;

Public Relations Julie Chiang and Winnie Lau; Senior Reps Paolo Rueca and Connie Han; Junior Reps Jennifer Chiang and Philip Lai; Sophomore Reps Jieke Ke, Alex Lai, and Derrick Tan; Freshmen Reps Cheri Tang and Sue Yin; and Webmaster Winnie Mai.

You can contact CASB, the Chinese Association at Stony Brook, at [stonycasb@gmail.com](mailto:stonycasb@gmail.com) and their website is [www.xanga.com/stonyCASB](http://www.xanga.com/stonyCASB)



# NEWS-IN-BRIEF

## Peru Plans to Sue Yale

In the coming months Peru plans to sue Yale University for the return of many Incan artifacts. In 1916 Peru lent Yale University 4,900 artifacts from the Incan city of Machu Picchu for 18 months. These artifacts which included cloths, ceramics, and metal works among other things were never returned to Peru and were made part of the University's permanent collection. Peru's National Culture Institute (INC) hopes to retrieve these items in time in order to commemorate in 2011 the rediscovery of Machu Picchu by the American explorer Hiram Bingham in 1911.

## Carmen Miranda Exhibit

To commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of legendary Brazilian entertainer turned Hollywood star Carmen Miranda, the Modern Art Museum in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil opened its Carmen Miranda exhibit. Carmen Miranda a popular figure in Brazilian popular culture died in 1955. When she died 500,000 Brazilians packed the streets of Rio to bid a final farewell to their beloved icon. Although Carmen Miranda is well known in Brazil for her singing career Carmen Miranda is well known to Americans as the inspiration for Chiquita Banana. The exhibit follows her career from her early years in 1920's Brazil all the way through her acquired fame in Hollywood.

## EU Budget Conflict

United Kingdom Prime Minister Tony Blair is under pressure to reach a deal on the European Union budget before his nation's Presidency ends in January. The dispute centers on the UK's budget rebate, under which Britain is given back part of the payments it makes to EU programs. The rebate exists because Britain receives fewer subsidies from the EU's agricultural policy than most member states. Offers to reduce the rebate have been used by Blair to try to negotiate changes in other areas of the budget, such as the Common Agricultural Policy. These attempts have been thwarted primarily by France, which benefits heavily from the CAP.

The Prime Minister's most recent budget plan involves a 12-15% cut in the UK's rebate, and an overall slimming of the whole EU budget, including agricultural policy. This plan is resisted by the newest, mostly Eastern European member states. These nations are the poorest in the Union and view any reduction in benefits with hostility. As always, France is unlikely to budge on the CAP, and the plan even faces criticism at home. British opposition politicians have termed Blair's offer to cut the rebate a betrayal or surrender. The plan will be negotiated at a European summit in Brussels December 16-17. The last such meeting ended in failure in June.

## Bush: "The Weapons are in Another Castle"

Bush made an address earlier today, stating that, although the American troops have been through hell and terror in their two-year search for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, an ambassador has just approached him with the message, "Thank you so much, Bush. But our weapons are in another castle."

## South Africa Legalizes Same-Sex Marriage

South Africa's highest court ruled in the favor of gay and lesbian marriage. They are now the fifth country in the world and first country on the continent of Africa to have legalized same-sex marriage. Last year the Supreme Court of Appeals ruled in the favor of a lesbian couple who argued that the current marriage law discriminated against homosexuals. The South African constitution outlaws discrimination on the basis of sexual preference and the court ruled in their favor that they should have the same right to wed as everyone else. However, when the lesbian couple, Marie Fourie and Cecilia Bonthuis went to register for a church wedding, the Department of Home Affairs denied their request. They claimed only the parliament had the power to change the law. So when it went to the constitutional court, Justice Albie Sachs stated, "The common law definition of marriage is declared to be inconsistent with the constitution and invalid to the extent that it does not permit same-sex couples to enjoy the status and benefits it accords heterosexual couples." The South African

Parliament must now change the definition of marriage to union between two persons instead of between man and woman. This new ruling is a major stride for the homosexual community in a continent where homosexuality is still taboo. To this day, numerous countries in Africa outlaw homosexual sex and there have even been cases of the death penalty. Many religious groups and citizens are strongly opposed to this ruling. The South African Bishop's Conference released a statement claiming they will never sanctify same-sex marriage but do not have plans to stop the legalization process.

## Speculations of pro-American propaganda in Iraq

The LA Times have reported that the US military has been paying several Iraqi newspapers to print pro-American stories in them. Speculations has also arose that the US military bought an Iraqi newspaper and a radio station specifically to promote propaganda. The LA Times was the first to report about US troops writing articles with positive feelings about the US occupation and trying to play it off in the papers as Iraqi freelance reporters. White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan has expressed that he is "very concerned" and is seeking more information from the Pentagon. Other military officials have been defending this policy and claiming this is only an effort to spread the truth and try to undo all the media influence that terrorist leader Abu-Musab al-Zarqawi has been spreading. The Lincoln Group is the public-relations firm is under attack for these allegations and is accused of translating articles written by American troops into Arabic and giving them to advertising agencies to spread them to the Iraqi media. This is a crucial time when the State Department is spending millions to promote independent and democratic journalism. Army Major General Rick Lynch is defending Lincoln Group's work in Iraq stating that they, "We don't lie. We don't need to lie. We do empower our operational commanders with the ability to inform the Iraqi public, but everything we do is based on fact, not based on fiction." However, other military officials promised anonymity has admitted to paying off Iraqi media outlets to print pro-American stories. What a mockery to the democratic institutions the US is claiming to instill in the Iraqi people.

## Top Al-Qaeda Militant Leader Killed

Hamza Rabia, who was named the third most wanted al-Qaeda operative after Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahri, was reportedly killed in a missile attack in Pakistan along with 5 others. Rabia was involved in two assassination plots against Pakistani President General Pervez Musharraf and believed to have been a key player in attacks against the United States. While this is a huge blow to al-Qaeda's power, many believe that it is no longer being run as a hierarchy but more as a movement and its power does not rely on leaders. Hamza Rabia was killed by Pakistani security forces in a rocket attack near the Afghan border with the help of the US military. US National Security advisor Stephen Hadley has declined to confirm whether or not Rabia is officially dead. "At this point we are not in a position publicly to confirm that he is dead, but obviously, if he is, that's a good thing for the war on terror," Hadley told reporters in Washington.

## Thousands in Hong Kong March For Democracy

Tens of Thousands of people marched through the streets of Hong Kong to demand accelerating the pace of electoral reform. This was an enormous victory for Hong Kong's democratic camp. The protesters want the Chinese autonomous territory's next leader to be elected by universal suffrage. The Civil Rights Front organized this march in hopes of putting pressure on the Chinese government to make revisions to the reform proposals which they claim "retard progress for universal suffrage." This march was a huge blow to Donald Tsang's authority as the new chief executive. He states that while he hears the Chinese people, he insisted that the government will not change its plans to the Legislative Council. Currently the chief executive is chosen by a committee made up of 800 Hong Kong residents in the Beijing region and the protesters want everyone's voice in the selection process. Pro-democratic campaigners are disappointed with his response and have plans for another march to take place. The demonstrations have proved to work in the previous years and led to Hong Kong's former leader Tung Chee-hwa to lose his job. Hopefully, the second march will bring more pressure on Tsang to commit to actual electoral reform.

# "But I Don't Wanna Choose!" Reflections of a Bisexual "Fence Sitter"

By Marcel Votlucka

*Somedays the line I walk  
Turns out to be straight  
Other days the line tends to deviate  
I've got no criteria for sex or race  
I just want to hear your voice  
I just want to see your face*

~Ani Di Franco, "In or Out"

I guess the most accurate way to describe me would be bisexual. The other labels just don't quite work and don't capture my inner complexity. I have a definite preference for guys, but I like girls too. Just not in the same proportion! I'm sexually attracted to men for the most part, but emotionally drawn to women for the most part. How do I reconcile these facets of my sexuality, given that it's so complex and nuanced? I can't imagine myself only being interested in men or women exclusively. Yet lots of people, gay and straight alike, expect me to "choose a side" and "stop sitting on the fence." Well, there is no fence. And there shouldn't be.

Nobody—*nobody*—is totally 100% gay or straight, and even a "pure" bisexual is hard to come by (I'll have more to say on this particular topic later). You can't tell me that straight people *never* have homosexual feelings and gay people *never* have heterosexual thoughts, and expect me to take you seriously. Take, for instance, the straight man who has a bit too much to drink at a party and engages in an innocent (or so he thinks) make out session with one of his male friends. Or the lesbian who, from time to time, wonders what being penetrated by a man must be like. Do you really think that

boyish roughhousing is just play and nothing more? And who hasn't had "impure" thoughts about at least one friend or classmate or even co-worker—feelings you're not supposed to have because it conflicts with your "sexual orientation"?

And let's be honest and frank; if a straight guy gets a blow job while blindfolded, he's going to enjoy it no matter if it's a guy or a girl who's doing the sucking.

Besides Alfred Kinsey's well-known seminal work on this subject, there are many other studies exhibiting this phenomenon—one in particular comes to mind; it showed that many straight male subjects got at least mildly turned on by gay porn and many gay men got turned on by hetero porn. Bisexuality was the norm in many ancient cultures. It wasn't until the mid 1800's that human sexuality in general came to serious attention, and then it was repressed, medicalized, and even pathologized due to Victorian-era social pressures. But psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud recognized bisexuality's existence and even thought of it as people's primary sexual orientation.

We are sexual beings, conceived, born and living on through sex and sexual energy. And human sexuality is far more fluid than our puritanical society would lead us to believe. This is the reality; it's time to be frank about it. But I'm not suggesting that we're all really bisexual; I'm merely trying to illustrate that the "fence" people want bisexuals to vacate doesn't exist. Furthermore, bisexuals and bisexuality do in fact exist—for some it may indeed be a passing phase, or it may be a comfortable (and permanent) middle realm.

Confronted with this reality, the proverbial fence splinters to pieces.

It is a common myth that there are no "true" or "pure" bisexuals. What nonsense! What is a "true" bisexual anyway...someone who prefers men and women in a 50/50 ratio? There may not be many 50/50 bisexuals out there, but I'm sure there are plenty 55/45

bisexuals, or 60/40 bisexuals, or 65/35 bisexuals, or even 75/25 bisexuals. Would any of these hypothetical people call themselves gay or straight—would those rigid and arbitrary categories fit them like a glove? As for myself, I'm probably somewhere in the neighborhood of

"And let's be honest and frank: if a straight guy gets a blow job while blindfolded, he's going to enjoy it no matter if it's a guy or a girl who's doing the sucking."

Continued on next page

## Death On Ice

By Joe Rios

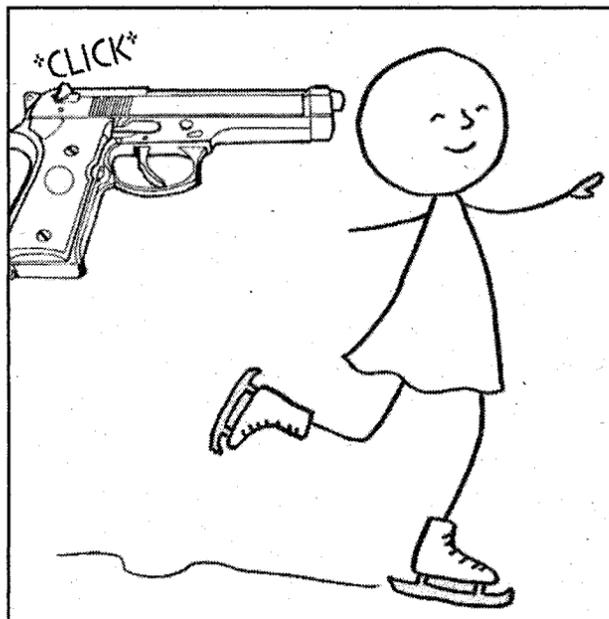
On this previous Friday, I skipped out on my *Press* companions so that I could go ice-skating with a few of my friends. Now, while I'm sure the only people who would care about that would be our editors, the experience of the night was so amazingly bad that it seemed worth writing about.

We decided that we didn't want to travel too far, so the nearest option was the Sports Plus on Route 347. Now, I will be the first to admit that Sports Plus has never been the greatest place to spend a Friday night, but I figured I might as well give the ice-skating rink a try...I mean, it's ice, how can you get ice wrong? We waited in line for ten minutes to show our IDs because two people who are almost 21 and one who is 23 most certainly look like we're under 16!

After we got past the rent-a-cop security guards, we paid our fourteen dollars for admittance and rentals, money which could have been spent on alcohol or drugs, or, please God, *both!* After lacing up our skates, we headed out to the ice.

Friday night is apparently DJ night, so the first thing we noticed was the lack of lights on the ice. There was music playing: nothing special, just whatever is popular for kids these days. The one drawback to DJ night was that every single pre-teen rich kid was in the house, and if there's one thing I can't handle, it's spoiled kids. To further exacerbate the situation, there was an enclave of emo kids skating around, clad all in black and wearing makeup, too ("I have to look like death as I skate on the rink of dark, sad, depression." You have two

choices: get over it, or kill yourself. I personally don't care which!).



SKATING DAY IS A VERY DANGEROUS DAY,  
Courtesy of Joe Rios

I decided that I was going to put this aside and just enjoy the ice. Anyone who has ever been ice-skating knows that the most important thing necessary to enjoy ice-skating is a smooth surface. This is important because I mean it in the most literal sense when I say that the ice at the Sports Plus rink made it seem as if I was skating on a ridged potato chip. The cuts in the ice were so deep that sometimes it

was difficult for me to control my direction. Even my pal Bingo stopped to complain about the quality of the ice.

We skated our two hours, it was fun because I haven't done it in years, and I could almost cope with the condition of the ice, but the biggest problem with the rink will not be forgotten any time soon. That problem was the people there. A large percentage of the kids there were the barely-thirteen kids who don't have discipline. The end result was kids practically knocking down smaller and less experienced skaters as they wove through groups for fun. Some of these kids even had the balls to bring firecrackers onto the ice. Furthermore, the attendants at the rink didn't do anything to stop them. When you combine a dark ice-skating rink, kids acting recklessly, and attendants who don't care, it's only a matter of time before someone gets hurt...bad.

On this night, it seems, everyone left the ice in one piece, and the ice was resurfaced just in time for some hockey team's practice session. The problem with the ice rink, and the entire Sports Plus facility, isn't just some management problem or a few bad decisions. The problem is this new generation of kids who are making me sick to my stomach. They have no sympathy, compassion, or mercy for anyone or anything. They bully others and destroy that which isn't theirs, but I think I'll save my commentary on the status of the next generation for another rant.

# Bisexual "Fence Sitter"

By Marcel Votluka

## Continued from previous page

80/20. Okay, maybe that's stretching things a bit, but even if I can get away with calling myself gay, the truth is that's just too rigid for my taste. Bisexuality is deliberately vague; it is about diversity and it acknowledges that there's more to this world than sticking to either apples or oranges (or sausages and doughnuts, to put it another way).

Many people argue that homosexuality is a choice, to which gays and lesbians answer, "Hell no!" So why do so many gays and lesbians in particular turn around and demand that bisexuals "choose" a side? There is no fence.

This notion that we all somehow need to "choose" a side and stick to it is unrealistic. And it seriously needs to be addressed because it reveals a deep-rooted fear of dissent from standard sex and gender roles, and outrage over individual self-expression. Usually, we in the queer community think of this repressive way of thinking as unique to heterosexism, but this exact same fear exists within gays and lesbians too and they suppress dissent with no less intensity than do heterosexuals. Bisexuality transcends the gay/straight dichotomy and this makes many gays and lesbians uncomfortable. Thus, many of them see bisexuals as de-legitimizing them—their perceived inability to "make up their minds" feeds into the false impression that homosexuality is a choice.

This ill feeling toward bisexuals—this rampant biphobia—also exposes something even more profound than a mere fear of difference; it

exposes the gay and lesbian community's heterophobia. Yes folks, gays and lesbians can be every bit as ignorant and bigoted as the worst homophobes. Just as many straight people regard homosexuals as if they were traitors, so do many homosexuals shun bisexuals as traitors or sell-outs in their own right. There are people who actually don't trust bisexuals because they think bisexuals are really straight people who don't want to admit it. Given that sexuality is a fluid continuum, we can see how this myth is definitely false.

Yet bisexuals will still be treated like traitors for some time to come because of one particularly damaging myth; that bisexuals are greedy, promiscuous, and can't stick to one partner. Yes, some bisexuals may be more predisposed to polyamory because we have a bigger playing field, but let me put it to you this way: just because Macy's is having a sale on fur coats doesn't necessarily mean I have to help myself to every one of them. Some might, others won't; it all comes down to individual preferences in the end. This myth boils down to nothing but a glaring non sequitur.

All philosophical rambling aside, there is one last myth to bust, one that is shamefully pervasive and dangerous. Many in the gay and lesbian community accuse bisexuals of spreading AIDS. The logic is that bisexual men who have sex with AIDS infected gay men spread the disease to heterosexual and bisexual women. This is not only false and malicious, it is every bit as harmful as the myth that all gay men are

carriers of AIDS. The truth is that *any* unsafe sex or drug use puts you at higher risk for contracting HIV or AIDS (among other diseases). This myth is a disgusting relic of homophobia, and queers and queer-friendly people have a responsibility to dispel this ugly piece of propaganda. It seems sometimes like there's a civil war out there...and it must stop.

We live in a world that pressures us to place ourselves into little conformist boxes; you must be either left or right wing, logical or emotional, "masculine" or "feminine," gay or straight, and so on. This psychological tendency is hardly unique to the heterosexual majority; it exists in gays and lesbians too. Not that there's anything wrong with identifying with a particular "side," as it were; the real problem is when people pressure others to choose one side. But the fact of the matter is this: you don't choose your sexuality; you choose whether to live openly and honestly about it.

As a bisexual, I have chosen to acknowledge my desires (however unequal) for both men and women, and I refuse to repress this aspect of my individuality. I choose to recognize that human sexuality is very fluid, diverse, and complex. I personally would rather be true to my own self, to love and lust for others for who they are, not based on some arbitrary "choice" for either men or women. Queerness, after all, is about radical individualism at its core, a refusal to take tired old concepts like "sexual orientation" and "gender" quite so seriously.

So don't ask me to "choose a side," because I'm not gonna do it!

## Q & A with MFA Artist, TJ Maher

By Laura Positano

Besides being a haven for young scientists, Stony Brook University also has an artsy side. Talented artists, who are Stony Brook students, have had their work displayed in the university art galleries. One such artist, TJ Maher, is a Master of Fine Arts student, whose work this writer became acquainted with at a presentation of his work in the Melville Library art gallery recently.

1) *What inspired you to start doing art as a serious focus (as opposed to a hobby)?*

I don't think I would distinguish between a "hobby" and a "serious focus" when I think about what I do. If by "serious focus" we mean professional or career oriented then I would say I'm just a hobbyist. If by "serious focus" we mean just loving it, then I would say we are all doing art as a serious focus from childhood and some of us just grow out of it, I didn't grow out of it...or I'm trying not to grow out of it.

2) *Your art is spiritual. Describe the Zen/spiritual philosophy that's reflected in your art.*

When I think of "spiritual art" I think of lofty ideals but I think spirituality is really much more common and dirty than that. It's dealing with what it is to be a person/animal and the potential of that being/life. Old religious paintings were spiritual because they dealt with Biblical stories but what made them resonate with people (and at times deeply upset people) was that many dealt with everyday people making choices in their lives. What I hope to show (to myself if no one else) is that none of this is in the art, it never has been, its in the viewer and that is where it has to be realized and processed. If you think it is on the wall

then you can't take it with you and the spirit just rots.

3) *What artist of the past do you relate to or are influenced by the most?*

Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr, Lao Tzu. I'd like to look at non-artists and think of how what they did was art rather than look at artists and try to figure out how it is useful in normal life (although that is fun too). Its easily debatable that the three I named are not artists (and in what I've read nowhere did they claim to do artistic deeds) but I would enjoy that debate much more than whether Delacroix was a better colorist than Matisse. Complete devotion to nonviolence and love can appear ungraspable at times and it seems to me that the undefinability of art makes it a choice vehicle for not just making the unattainable visible but for making it real and practical.

4) *What do you plan on doing upon receiving your MFA?*

Eat.

5) *Does Stony Brook University do a sufficient job in promoting its arts side (Staller, the art galleries, etc.)?*

I'm probably not qualified enough to comment on that, I'm sure they do well enough.

6) *What music, if any, helps get you in the right frame of mind for doing your art?*

Ha, this is a fun question even though I feel like a teeny-bopper answering it (mainly because I actually do have stuff that gets me going). Right now I'm digging the hell out of The

White Stripes, especially a concert of theirs I found on NPR.org. Billie Holiday, Hendrix, some Italian folk tape I found that makes me laugh and dance around. This band called Candiria when I really need to wake up.

7) *What's your advice for aspiring artists?*

Listen to anybody but don't listen to anybody and next time your in a restaurant put mustard on a spoon and eat it.

8) *What's the future of art in your opinion? What do you think will be the next art movement (i.e. the 19th century had its impressionism, 1920s ,dada)?*

The future of art is whether or not we put blank paper and crayons in front of little cousins, brothers, sisters, sons and daughters without any instructions and actually try to understand what they do. As for art movements; they're kinda weird, they seem to undo the knots in our culture but at this point art seems more like a cycle it just revolves and recycles stuff. I don't believe in the sayings that critics give out like "painting is dead", "the death of art" or "the death of rock n roll". However, I do wonder sometimes if art's ultimate purpose is to erase itself and switch to the way it exists in some other cultures who don't have a word for art because its part of everything that culture does.

9) *Does the use of classic art (i.e. the Scream) in ads on TV cheapen great works?*

Sure, but I think that's ok. Art becomes meaningless or invalid one way or another, that's why we make more.

# Do Cowards Really Cut and Run?

By Marcel Votluka

Rep. Jack Murtha's harsh condemnation of the Iraq War and a call for withdrawal drew out a certain sniveling rat by the name of Rep. Jean Schmidt to say that "cowards cut and run, Marines never do." Schmidt is the latest in a long line of Congressional chickenhawks who gleefully endorse the mass slaughter of thousands of innocent Iraqi children—in our name and at the expense of our tax dollars and blood. Antiwar critics are right to blast Schmidt as the cowardly political whore she is, and they are further right in praising Murtha for his seeming change of heart. But that doesn't mean I'll let him off the hook quite so easily.

Murtha, the first Vietnam veteran to be elected to Congress, is a so-called "defense hawk" who regularly votes to appropriate more and more resources to the US military—resources which are squandered on maintaining bases overseas (in order to defend foreign countries instead of American soil), money that goes to line the pockets of defense contractors (instead of arming the troops and helping their families), and allocations towards making war on defenseless Third World nations that certain political parasites don't like. Also, in October 2004 he was one of two Congressmen, both Democrats, who voted in favor of Rep. Charlie Rangel's bill to reinstate the military draft. Conscription, like other forms of involuntary servitude, is a violation of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment, though you won't find the Supreme Court admitting it anytime soon. So it should come as no surprise that he voted for the Iraq War and for every appropriations bill awarding more funding to it.

But now he, like other pro-war Democrats, is finally realizing the truth. At a press conference he called the war "a flawed policy wrapped in an illusion," in reference to the President's conspiracy theories regarding Iraq's supposed "imminent threat" to America. He also admits, "We're the target, we're part of the problem," acknowledging that the war has opened up a Pandora's Box in Iraq, unleashing rebels and unveiling sectarian tensions that may tear the country apart.

Is he a "coward" for articulating this? Certainly he is not, yet the fact remains that he and all who voted for this war are unprincipled dupes at best. Yes, they were lied to. Everyone was lied to. Common sense (not to mention the Downing Street minutes) would dictate that Iraq, WMD or none, was hardly in a position to threaten the most powerful country in the world. But if I and others of anti-war sentiment (i.e., most of the world) could see through the official propaganda and fabricated intelligence, why couldn't Congress?

Congress and Murtha voted for this war of choice, and in doing so they voted for an idea—that American politicians have the right to force their arbitrary will upon Third World countries; the right of political parasites to bully innocent people into doing their bidding; the right of despots to claim that others must bow down and die for them. That is the very essence of imperialism, which ranks right up there with fascism and Communism as an evil and immoral philosophy.

Thus I am saddened to report that Schmidt, her own lack of principle aside, is partially correct; Murtha, like his colleagues, was indeed cowardly in voting for this war in the first place as well as waiting only until it was politically expedient to voice his outrage. Indeed, there is *nothing* more cowardly than demanding that others must lay down their own lives for your aims—while you sit safely on the sidelines. I can think of few things more despicable than expending other peoples' blood in wars paid for by other people's money, for one's own political gain. Murtha further shows a disappoint-



A DEAD IRAQI CHILD...  
Courtesy of www.1924.org

ing lack of principle in voting against a resolution calling for an immediate withdrawal of troops. To be fair, the GOP introduced the resolution to mock Murtha's more "responsible" resolution calling for a withdrawal at the *earliest possible date*. It was a small but ultimately irrelevant difference—withdrawal is needed no matter what.

Murtha's positions are made all the more disheartening by the fact that he is a veteran; of all people, *he should've known better*. Unlike the GOP chickenhawks he has seen the evil face of war, yet he still endorses it when it serves his ends. Likewise, he rejects it not on moral principle, but only when it serves his ends.

Jean Schmidt is wrong about one thing though; Jack Murtha is no coward for realizing the truth about the Iraq situation and speaking out. In fact, he may yet redeem himself for it. For at least *suggesting* the need to somehow get out of Iraq in the face of the powerful pro-war GOP opposition, he recalls the kind of bravery he showed in the jungles of Vietnam. Let's hope he acquires some principle and good sense to go with it too.

In the end, there's a silver lining somewhere within Murtha's positions, but we ought to take his seeming change of heart with a pound of salt.



...AND THE SHAMELESS COWARDS WHO KILLED HER,  
Courtesy of www.s95451559.onlinehome.us

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# Mets Muzzle Delgado, Tom Terrific Would Have Spoken Up

By Matt Willemain

Bursting with talent, unbridled by a technicality in baseball's luxury tax formula, looking to make a splash to promote a brand new television network and smelling blood across town, the New York Metropolitan Baseball Club is blowing up into the most exciting team in the game. High-publicity free agent signings and trades have netted the Mets stars like new closer Billy Wagner and slugging first baseman Carlos Delgado, and the rumor mill is swirling about the potential acquisition of 2004 World Series MVP Manny Ramirez, one of the best hitters in baseball. But the Mets have also made the most distressing news of the baseball off-season. A generation ago, Tom Seaver, maybe the greatest Met ever, spoke openly of his opposition to the Vietnam War. Now, Delgado (traded to the Mets by Miami's Florida Marlins on November 24) has folded under pressure from the Mets and will silence his own political views.

The radical sportswriter David Zirin wrote a column recently about George Bush trotting a demented Mohammed Ali around the White House. Zirin thought it was a particularly sick joke that the incomparable Ali, famous not only as the greatest fighter in the world in his heyday, but for his personal and professional sacrifice to oppose the Vietnam war, was, in his degenerated state, being used as a prop in Bush's attempt to counter the political fallout over his own dubious invasion. Ali is an icon of a time of widespread political engagement and popular opposition to the most important public policies. His statement that "No Vietnamese ever called me 'nigger'" was a lot more incendiary than the modest public protests of Delgado which have so offended the ownership and leadership of the Mets.

Delgado, who has also spoken up about the use of his native Puerto Rico for environmentally dangerous military exercises by the

US military and against the war in Afghanistan, has been quietly refusing to stand for the national anthem since the invasion of Iraq. Playing mostly for the Toronto Blue Jays, and then for one year with the Marlins, when his fellow ballplayers have lined up alongside the field for the national anthem, Delgado has sat in the dugout—a quiet exercise of conscience. But at the insistence of the Mets, this is coming to an end. If these clowns running the Mets could erase the memory of the antiwar Tom Seaver, "The Franchise", who set the high water mark when he was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame with the support of 98.84% of the deciding baseball writers on his first ballot, would they?

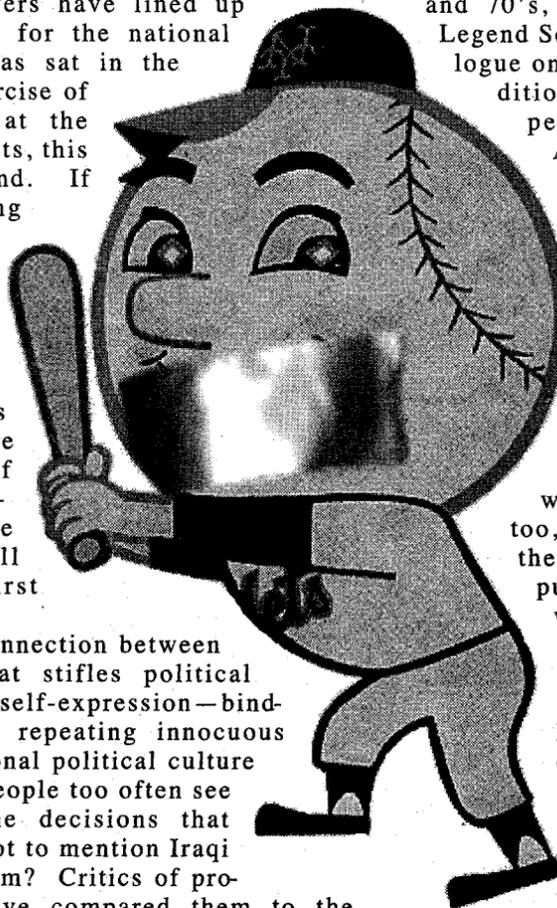
Is there a connection between a sports world that stifles political thought and denies self-expression—binding participants to repeating innocuous clichés—and a national political culture in which ordinary people too often see participating in the decisions that effect their lives (not to mention Iraqi lives) as not for them? Critics of professional sports have compared them to the bread and circuses of the declining Roman Empire, nationalistic distractions whose only effect is to preoccupy and pacify the population. But the games have merit, and for many of us they are a valuable part of our culture. The

world of sports can be conceived in a different way than what is presented to us by the finest Disney wiseasses.

There is something to be celebrated in the culture of American sports from the 60's and 70's, when figures like Ali and Mets Legend Seaver were part of the national dialogue on foreign policy and war. This tradition continues in their modern day peers, like controversial retired Argentine soccer legend Diego Maradona (also the subject of a recent column by sportswriter Zirin), who joined in the massive South American demonstration against a visiting George Bush and Washington's inequitable vision for international economics at the Summit of the Americas.

Delgado was right on before he caved. The war is wrong. Even if it weren't, athletes, too, deserve the right to express what they believe and to participate in the public dialogue, regardless of their views. Jesus-enthusiast Curt Schilling, of my own beloved Boston Red Sox, had some booring things to say about his pal Bush in the period between the (Good) Sox World Series Championship and the presidential election that followed shortly thereafter. Schilling was encouraged to shut his mouth, and that, too, is unfortunate.

Bottom line? In spite of all their headline-grabbing roster additions, the New York Mets are a disappointment to this baseball fan. And so is Carlos Delgado, who knows better. Boo, motherfucker, boo!



## Oh, Home on the Range

By David K. Ginn

I don't know what this article is about. "Oh, Home on the Range" seemed like a decent title. Maybe it shouldn't be. If you're reading this, and the title is still "Oh, Home on the Range", that means I couldn't think of anything better.

Where should I start? Perhaps I should start from early this morning.

Early this morning nothing happened.

So far, we're off to a bad start.

I've never seen any of the *Rocky* movies.

There once was a man named Hoogo, and he was a happy fellow with a happy job. He died. Then there was a man named Liamous who owned a string of video stores on the Eastern coast of North America. Unfortunately, his insatiable taste for rare and expensive cheeses caused him to go out of business. Just as he was about to kill himself by jumping off of a building, something magical happened. Someone wrote him a letter threatening to play select tracks from Hanson, Simple Plan, and everything Aerosmith did after 1984. This did not affect his imminent death, and if anything perhaps caused it to be that much more gruesome.

Liamous had his name put in a hall of fame for losers who lived in Pennsylvania and died in New York City. This hall of fame was called the Penn-York Connection, and was devoted exclusively to making fun of pathetic people who died pathetic deaths.

Among these famous people was Cornelius Milo, who lived in Pennsylvania for most of his life and then traveled to New York City to see a Broadway production of *Mama Mia!* While there, he took a shortcut down an alley and walked past a flaming garbage can. This caused his clothes to catch fire, and in a screaming fury he ran out into the street asking people for help. Instead of helping him, they all wrote him letters asking for advice on their personal troubles.

He didn't die that day, though. Instead, he was inadvertently saved by a paramedic. It was inadvertent because the paramedic was off-duty and merely thought that the man waving his flaming arms around was trying to hitch a ride. When he let Cornelius in his car and asked where he was going, Cornelius replied "To the hospital, you dumb fucking shit!" The paramedic dropped him off, but told him that he had very bad manners.

At exactly 12:01 am, he was killed when a Native American from the 19<sup>th</sup> century who had accidentally switched quantum places with a modern scientist shot him in the chest with an arrow. The last words he heard were "white man!"

White man, apparently, is just what Jesus was. The Native Americans, however, did not have a big problem with Jesus. Neither do I. The Native Americans had a problem with peo-

ple who love Jesus raping their wives and turning them into slaves for not changing their customs.

Customs, though, is just what an Argentinian man named Julio Marques had to go through while traveling on a routine business venture. They kept him in the airport for three hours, thus making him late for his appointment with the owners of a very successful bookbinding company. They forgave him, and in their understanding did their best to console.

Console, actually, is the word former *Dungeons & Dragons* champion Kelvin Gilbert III used to describe the forty-seven control boards for the supercomputer he built in his parents' basement. It is truly spectacular.

Spectacular, incidentally, is what many label the Radio City Music Hall Christmas Show. Julio Marques has never seen this show, and Cornelius Milo would have seen it... if he hadn't died. Kelvin Gilbert III has only commented that the spectacular element in the show is "somewhat lacking." He said he liked the rock and roll Santa bit "just fine."

"Just fine" is one of two terms used on a bottle of BeautyBenevolence Shampoo + Conditioner 2-in-1 to categorize the suggested buyers of the product. The other is "just oily." Julio Marques once hit an Australian man who

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# HEY, WHO ORDERED THE REVIEWS?

## Movies

### The Dukes of Hazzard: A Totally Still Relevant Movie Review

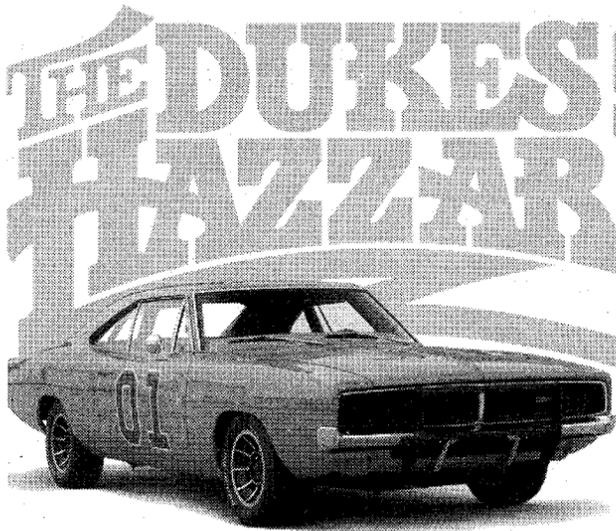
By Matt Willemain

I've still got my *Dukes of Hazzard* lunchbox. You know. From back in the day. It was a simpler time, you understand. A time of sammiches: peanut butter and fluff sammiches. "Kokomo" was on the radio and we were a couple of crazy kids. At the same time, I wasn't expecting much from Hollywoodtown, which, as you may have been aware, recently turned the ol' television show into a major motion picture show. But I'll be damned if it wasn't worth every one dollar I paid to get into that COCA motherfucker, even if they didn't have a screen wide enough to project the entire movie.

Johnny Knoxville and Sean William Scott barely have to act to play the hell-raisin' Duke boys. I don't remember which was which, but I don't suppose it matters. Jessica Simpson and Willie Nelson round out the Duke clan as Daisy and Uncle Jessie. Nobody here really acts, and I'm pretty sure that's not them driving the car, but they get the job done.

The movie excels at the fundamentals—hot rodding, silly jokes and airborne automobiles. It falls flat in the half-assed attempts at ironic, self-aware updates for the present day. "I hope they've got e-mail," says Scott during a scene of safecracking mailbox baseball. I hope you shut up and pretend to drive the car, Stiffler. Burt Reynolds (bringing the "star power" as a disappointingly thin Boss "Hog") almost seems too ashamed to turn around and face the camera after a series of painfully unfunny zingers about his TV-show-replicating outfit. It was the worst "update" in service of remaking an old show since Ernest Borgnine turns out to be Tom Arnold's dad in *McHale's*

*Navy*. Yeah, that's right, I spoiled the end of the Tom Arnold *McHale's Navy*.



DO YOU WANT TO TAKE IT OFF A SWEET JUMP?,  
Courtesy of the Hazzard County Road Show

Seriously, how are you going to make a *Dukes of Hazzard* movie with Joe Don Baker in it and not cast Joe Don Baker as Boss Hog? He's supposed to have one of those Dickensian mimetic names. They could at least have tossed Reynolds into a fat suit.

My only other complaint with the film is the way it wastes the comedic talent of Dave Koechner. Koechner, appearing as Hazard

County mechanic Cooter, is an underappreciated comic supporting actor probably most recognizable as the sports guy in Will Ferrel's *Anchorman*, and least recognized for his stint during a few of the leaner years on *Saturday Night Live*—he was a fixture in the now legendary "Bill Brasky" skit, and he is a funny, funny man. They didn't give him a good god damned thing to do that was any funny in this movie. What a waste. They did allow Cooter to "transform" the Duke boys' orange speedster into the crick-jumpin', no-door-openin' Dixie-whistlin' icon that defined the show. But this was mostly to extricate our heroes from the potential moral quagmire of the Confederate battle flag.

Sufficient numbers of police cruisers were outpaced and destroyed. Land was seized, threatened and restored. A moving montage sequence during a jaunt to cosmopolitan Hotlanta showed us the joys of going to college. College, apparently, is full of girls' asses and exciting academic buildings, like *Life Sciences!* *Life Sciences* rules! And to cap it off, there's even an off-road NASCAR spectacular through the old Virginny backwoods.

I don't know if this movie is out on DVD yet. I'd have to, I don't know, alt-tab over to a web browser and type in a bunch of these key-buttons. It's just too much. You'll have to place a telephone call to the video rental store of your choice and inquire there. But do. It's a good time.

COCA movies yearn to be free.

## Plays

### The Shape of Things Where Things Refers to Penises

By Adina Silverbush

The subjective world of art is questioned in Neil LaBute's play *The Shape of Things*. "All art is quite useless" is the slogan for this play, which is pretty ironic considering the play, is itself a work of art, a sexually graphic work of art, but art nonetheless.

Adam (Dave Chura), the typical dorky guy changes his whole lifestyle for his love interest Evelyn (Chelsea Stern) who he met when at his museum job, when she was defacing a sculpture, drawing a penis on it. Over the course of the play, Evelyn becomes more and more possessive, a real bitch (excuse my language), going so far as to make Adam get plastic surgery on his nose. Actually, I was happy with the surgery, the red lines around Adam's nose to make it look bigger definitely had to go! The make-up made me think he was sick.

Adam cheats on Evelyn with his roommate Phillip's (Carlos Lozada) fiancée Jenny (Josie Vitetta). A girl he's been crushing on for

ever and now finally has noticed him, due to his changes. It turns out Evelyn really was using Adam the whole time transforming him as a human sculpture, without him knowing— all for her MFA graduate project.

To Evelyn the point of art is to change the world, she figured she'd start with one person. Evelyn makes Adam fall completely in love, makes him give up his friends for her, and he eventually proposes to her. She refuses his proposal at her "gallery" opening, which the audience was given special invitations to.

This play was upsetting. To think anyone would be so terribly misleading and outright cruel to another person for the sake of something she felt was artistic is disgusting, yet real. People lie, cheat, and use others all the time. Art is often meant to provoke. The acting by Evelyn actually made me hate her character, which I believe was the point so good job Chelsea. I wanted to go on stage and yell at

Adam for being so manipulated. Dave was convincing as the feeble dorky guy and his change throughout the play was very obvious, emotionally, to aid the physicality. Jenny and Phillip did an excellent job making their characters real and three-dimensional. I especially liked Josie's family who sat in front of me in the audience and laughed hysterically while covering their eyes during her big make out scene.

Nelson Diaz directed the play, which was a pocket theater production running from Dec. 2-4. Pocket Theater has a reputation of putting on great, low budget, student directed, and often student written plays. These plays are preformed often and basically free, with a suggested donation of only \$3. This play was worthwhile to see. It left me thinking and entertained. It was a good length that very easy to sit through. Good job to the cast and crew, for a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

# HEY, WHO ORDERED THE REVIEWS?

## Movies

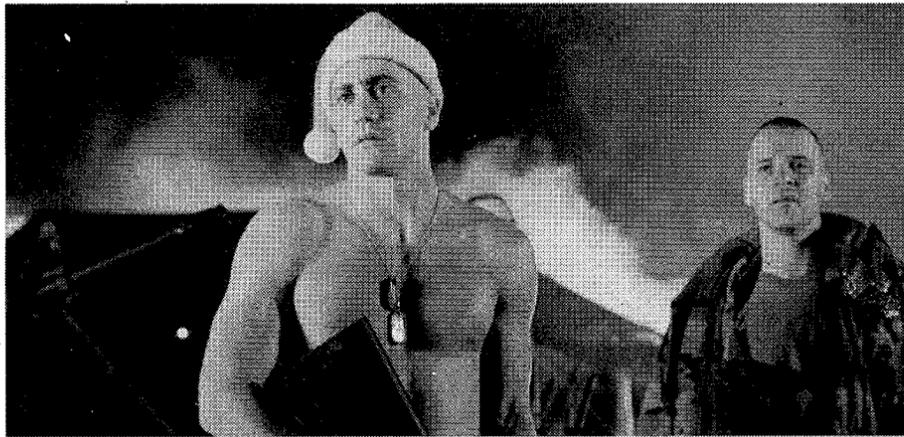
### Jarhead Takes Me to Pleasuretown

By Joan Leong

Based on Anthony Swofford's non-fiction best selling book, the movie version of *Jarhead* stayed true to the author's vision. Swofford's personal account of fear but mostly boredom during the first Gulf War was depicted in a clever and entertaining manner. Jake Gyllenhaal is cast as Swofford, a young but intelligent marine who joins the corps because he got lost on his way to college. We all fell in love with him in *Donnie Darko* as the kinda creepy yet adorable main character. This time, in *Jarhead*, his boyish good looks have evolved into a smoldering hot, rugged marine. Gyllenhaal went through extensive physical training to get his body ready for the role, and he put on 25 lbs of muscle. Damn did he look good. I mean really good. Everyone should go see how good he looks. After seeing Jake Gyllenhaal in uniform and nude, it was pretty hard to pay any attention to anything that was going on, what with all the impure thoughts running through my head.

Good thing this movie was well-scripted enough to bring my attention back to the screen. *Jarhead* depicts the daily lives of active-duty marines training and waiting for orders in the desert of Kuwait. Their whole purpose of being there is to fight Saddam Hussein's troops, and the whole time they never get to see them. Their sergeant is played by Jamie Foxx, who is a complete hard-ass on them and his sole purpose in life is the marines. His character, Sgt. Siek, is very similar to the character of Sergeant Hartman in *Full Metal Jacket* because of his foul-mouth and colorful demeanor. There is one

hilarious scene where Sgt. Siek makes Swofford try out for the bugle without a bugle and screams, "There is no bugle tryout! You sizzle dick motherfucker!" Peter Sarsgaard plays "Troy", Swofford's best friend and sniper partner and together they both lapse in and out of



IT'S GONNA BE A HAPPY HOLIDAY THIS YEAR,  
Courtesy of Santa Hats and a Lack of Shirts

insanity. They are both bred to be one of the best pairs of sniper shooters in the corps and they never get the chance to use their talents. Finally, they get a chance to take out an Iraqi military leader but that chance is quickly squashed when the marines decide to drop bombs on that location instead. You see Troy and Swofford beg and plead just to let them shoot that one guy because he is going to get a bomb dropped on him anyway. That is one of the themes of the movie and book, all these talented young marines are bred to be the best and all that training is wasted because it will never go to use.

I found myself laughing on numerous occasions as the young marines continuously got themselves into trouble with their superiors and said "motherfucker" about 300 times. However, many of the comical scenes were soon silenced by the actual grim realities of the Gulf War. The theme of chemical warfare was widely reinforced throughout this movie and many horrifying images stuck to the audience. The victims of the chemical weapons in the movie no longer resembled humans as their skin and flesh was burned to the bone. The first Gulf War was an aerial war as the frustrated marines of Swofford's squadron soon realized. As they try to advance on their enemies, each time they find that the fighter planes have already gotten there and the war has moved another hundred miles. Their frustration affects them deeply as some of them begin to psychologically deteriorate. It doesn't help that their wives and girlfriends are cheating on them and leaving them back home. Soon, before they know it, the war is over. All that waiting, all that preparation was never really put to use. Swofford summed it up the best as he stood in shock and disbelief, "I never got to shoot my rifle."

*Jarhead* was one of the better movies I have seen in a while. It revealed a lot about what was going on behind the scenes of war without taking too much of a political stance on the actual Gulf War. You gotta go see this movie. Just Jake Gyllenhaal's naked Santa hat dance is enough incentive to go. Ha ha. You'll see what I mean.

## Symphony

### Impressive Flawlessness From the Symphony Orchestra

By Melissa Bernardez

The Stony Brook Symphony Orchestra displayed a prowess in their specialty on Saturday December 6 - Music. The musical pieces performed were Masonic Funeral Music in C minor, K.477 by W.A. Mozart, Piano Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op.16 by Sergei Prokofiev and Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op.73 by Johannes Brahms. Each piece displayed a different face of the orchestra. Their musical technique and skill pulled the audience into the emotion of each note, each chord and each phrase.

The first piece allowed the musicians to exhibit their ability to make the notes their own. Every note of wistfulness, every stroke of the bow and blow of the horn led the audience through Mozart's mind. The music allowed for the audience to imagine themselves at a picnic with a gentle breeze blowing. The mechanics of the song were impressive as well. Any type of

ensemble is judged by how well each member interacts and reacts to and with each other. This orchestra displayed that characteristic very well. Each individual musician played so that the entire first violin section sounded like one violinist, one violist, cellist, bassist etc.

The second piece was simply amazing. The orchestra featured Jonathan Korth on the piano. Needless to say, he performed Prokofiev's concerto extremely well. Both the orchestra and soloist were indulged in every phrase of the piece. For those that play an instrument, the way Korth played the piano was full of that emotion and passion we all aspire to emanate. For those that don't have an ounce of musical inclination, Korth puts the desire to play the piano - or anything, for that matter - in one's mind.

The final piece was absolutely wonderful. The music required the orchestra to dis-

play a wide range of skill, which they did. Each movement exhibited a different style of playing. Sometimes the piece would require a slower, more melancholy mood, and other times the music would be boisterous and powerful. The orchestra displayed every possible facet of the piece extremely well. For example, at one point in the song, the melody was carried by the cello section. The seven cellists played as one. The phrasing was flawless and moved smoothly. Their performance mirrors the hard work that the entire orchestra put into each movement.

I was very impressed with the flawlessness in which these musicians played their instruments. The concert was enjoyable. The passion and intensity of every individual helped to pull the audience into the same state of mind they were in - their body enveloped in the black notes, the melodies, the crescendos and decrescendos.

# Lost - The Best Damn Show on T.V. (Vol. 4)

By David K. Ginn, where the 'K' stands for "Kate is Pretty Cool"



Copyright ABC Touchstone TV

Okay, let's talk about where we are. Last season ended with a bang. Literally. Our wonderful plane crash survivors blew open the doors of the hatch and peered their merry little faces inside. Then the season ended.

Phooley.

Well, now it's back and in full charge mode. Season 2 opened up with us going straight into the hatch and meeting its sole occupant, Desmond. Oh, poor Desmond. Why have you been down there so long?

They've got a record player, food, and even a billiards table. I guess this kinda means they're not really so stranded anymore.

Well, for now. This sort of great treat won't last for long, I'm sure.

Our friends on the raft met some trouble in last season's finale as they were blown out of the water by evil pirates (yes, it's true, and believable). Now they're all back on shore, except for young Walt, who was kidnapped by those seabilly baddies.

Then our raftaways were held prisoner by the survivors of the tail section, who have a sad, sad past. An entire episode's worth of sad past, apparently. Matt didn't like that episode. I rather enjoyed it.

Now the Tailies, the Rafties, and the Fusies have all come together in an emotionally moving reunion. Oh, but poor Shannon. She was accidentally killed by mega-bitch Ana-Lucia. Amberly didn't like Shannon. I rather enjoyed her.

Now Sawyer is alive and well after almost dying from his gunshot wound. Kate's a

little crazier, so is Hurley, and Charlie's a little more arrogant. Please don't become an asshole, Charlie. You're too adorable for that.

Locke is a little more human, unfortunately, and Jack is a little more... Jack. Enter Mr. Eko, the coolest badass God-man you'll ever meet. Man, the island made a mistake when they fucked with Mr. Eko. Word up to that, yo.

Everyone rather enjoys the Eko.

Let's go episode by episode.

I mean it this time.

Nah, I'm only joking again. I'll do episode by episode next time. I promise.

In the meantime, I hope you've enjoyed my interpretive analysis on this wonderful string of episodes. Join in next time for some more vulgar ravings about our favorite Lostaways.

Peaces.

## Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire - A Short Review that was Meant to Be Longer But Unfortunately Isn't

By David K. Ginn

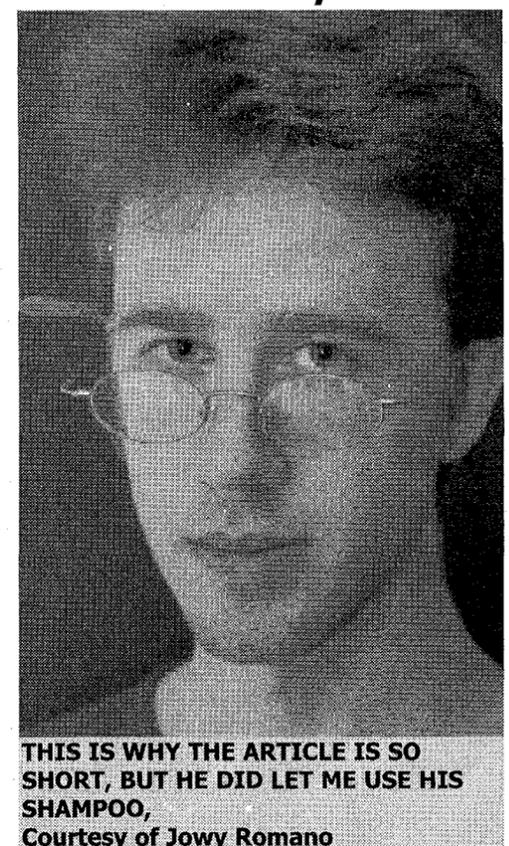
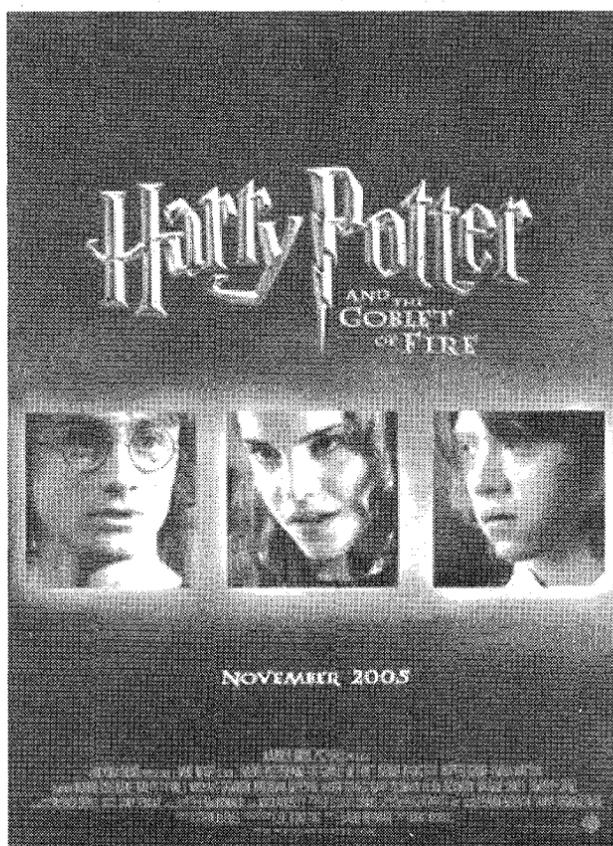
This movie blew me away. The Harry Potter movies have been getting better with each movie, and this one holds the golden torch as of now. This fourth installment is darker, more emotional, and takes the audience along the same journey into adulthood that the characters take.

The story finds young Harry Potter (Daniel Radcliffe) now in his fourth year at Hogwarts' School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Weird stuff happens, as usual, but finally the movie doesn't begin with Harry at his surrogate family's house.

Well, the issue has to go out, so I have to finish this article. The movie was awesome.

### Editorial Space:

It was five in the damn morning and I'm sorry I was short with him. He deserves better and I think we should bake him a nice cake. Send your cake preferences to [sbpress@gmail.com](mailto:sbpress@gmail.com)  
Thank you.



THIS IS WHY THE ARTICLE IS SO SHORT, BUT HE DID LET ME USE HIS SHAMPOO,  
Courtesy of Jowy Romano



# Pat Morita, 73, Dies

By Matt Willemain

Actor Pat Morita, who rose to national attention as Arnold on *Happy Days*, is totally dead. There are conflicting reports of the cause of death.

Morita was nominated for an Academy Award (Best Supporting Actor) for his most famous role, the gentle karate master Mr. Miyagi in 1984's *The Karate Kid*, and several sequels.

The notorious Curse of the Karate Kid strikes again. Since 2005, the Curse has taken the lives of Pat Morita.

## Finland Loves Conan...or Does Conan Love Finland?

By Melanie Donovan

Last year in *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* skit, "Conan O'Brien Hates My Homeland," he makes fun of and mocks many different countries and usually gets no response. The country of Finland took it upon themselves to send postcards to him before he even got to the letter F. This in turn made for an even funnier joke when Conan did get to the letter F saying, "Finland: We're so dumb, we can't wait to be insulted to send a meaningless postcard with a tire on the front."

Then recently, Conan noticed many of the people in the audience were from Finland and could not understand why. He found out that his show was being aired on Finnish television, Subtv,

a few days after it is aired on American television. He then found out what he thinks is the reason why his show is extremely popular in Finland. He saw a picture of the president of Finland, and she closely resembles Conan. He also found out that she is up for reelection, so he made a short video spot that he showed on his late night show supporting Tarja Holonen for president of Finland.

Conan's popularity is still very high in Finland. I guess they forgot about the other time Finland came up in "Conan O'Brien Hates My Homeland," where he said, "You've had over 5,000 years of culture, and the world's most famous Finn is still Huckleberry."



PAT MORITA GETTING IT ON WHILE HE COULD, Courtesy of Karate Kid Fame



Huonoimmat syyt valita Tarja Halonen uudelleen-komitean maksama.

HUONOIMMAT SYYT VALITA TARJA HALONEN UUDELLEEN-KOMITEAN MAKSAMA Courtesy of NBC

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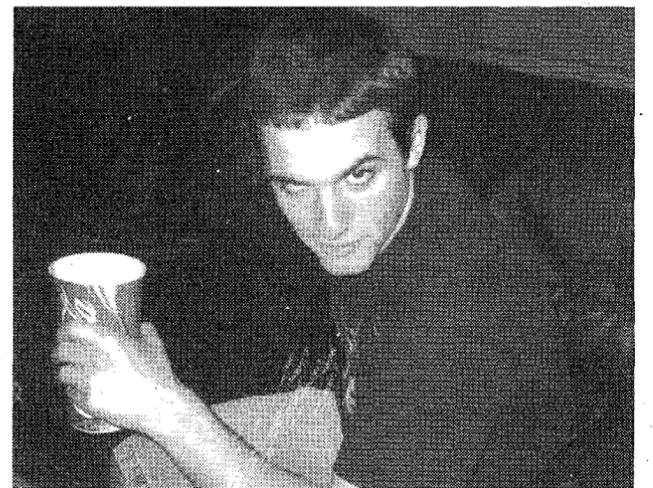
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## James Messina Wins White Castle Eat-Off

By David K. Ginn

Out of 180 cheeseburgers, James (known for his code articles) ate 18. He won. It only took him a half hour. That's fucking awesome.

And in other news, James Messina ate you last Saturday night. Reports coming in are sketchy, but apparently you were very tasty. His reign of hunger and rage will continue for years to come. Bow down.





## Seawolves Men's Soccer Advances by Outlasting Bulldogs

By Antony Lin

New Haven, Conn.- In its first ever match in the NCAA College Cup, the Stony Brook Seawolves came out with a historic victory against the Yale Bulldogs, in a 2-1 thriller at the Soccer-Lacrosse Stadium on the campus of Yale University. Forward Adam Ciklic notched the golden goal.

A crowd of 607 were present for this first round match up. A sizeable amount of Stony Brook supporters made the journey to New Haven, providing vocal support. Throughout the match, the visitors attacked for the majority, while Yale looked for the counter-attack. Stony Brook continued with its usual 3-5-2 formation, while Yale employed a 4-4-2 and went the majority of the match without a right winger. The field was not in very good condition, and it took awhile for the Seawolves to adjust.

"We were very excited about playing a quality team like Yale, and they were a handful all game," said Seawolves head coach Cesar Markovic.

The Bulldogs would immediately get the go-ahead goal in the 4th minute. Defender Alex Guzinski sent a through ball to striker Gage Hills from the right wing. Hills sprinted forward and slotted home a point blank shot to the far post.

Yale also had a goal disallowed in the 30th minute. The play started when Hills had possession of the ball on the left wing. His low cross found midfielder Jon Carlos, whose one-timer was cleared off the line by defender Mark Zajkowski. The loose ball was headed in, but the linesman had already raised his flag for an off-side.

Despite controlling possession, the Seawolves' best chance of the first half would only come in the 41st minute. Striker Chris Megaloudis sent one to Ciklic outside the box. His shot from 23 yards would sail inches wide of the left post.

"I basically told them that this was it," said Markovic about his speech to the players during halftime. "We lacked intensity and emo-

tion and we need to step it up in the second half."

Stony Brook would immediately get on the board at the start of the second half, in the 48th minute off a give-and-go between left winger Tamer Mohamed and Megaloudis. Mohamed on the left, made a cut to his right and laid one off to Megaloudis. Mohamed, continuing his run received it back, split a pair of defenders and fired an 8-yard shot to level the game at 1-1.



**WE KILLED YALE AND LEFT THEM ON THE TRASH, They are the bulldogs. It's not a seawolf.**

"Mega [Megaloudis] found me the ball out there," said Mohamed. "I had confidence. When I got through, I just took the shot."

Four minutes later, the home side had a golden opportunity to regain the lead, when Hills was able to outrun the Stony Brook defense, leaving him in a one-on-one situation with goalkeeper E.J. Xikis. Hills' shot to the near post was saved fantastically by Xikis.

Yale would be denied again in the 58th and 59th minute by Xikis. Left winger Alex Munns' point blank shot was knocked away by the Seawolves goalie. A minute later, Carlos' shot from 16 yards out was knocked off the crossbar and out by Xikis.

"E.J. is outstanding," said Markovic. He made a couple-of saves and kept us in the game. Yale could have taken the lead right back."

Goalkeeper Erik Geiger denied the visitors of the go-ahead goal in the 63rd minute off a free kick. From 24 yards out, Megaloudis and midfielder Michael Palacio stepped behind the ball. Megaloudis took the shot, which curled towards the left post but was punched away by Geiger.

Stony Brook would get another chance in the 69th minute. Mohamed's cross into the box was miscared by the Yale defense. Right winger Rob Fucci's shot from 17 yards out was then saved by Geiger.

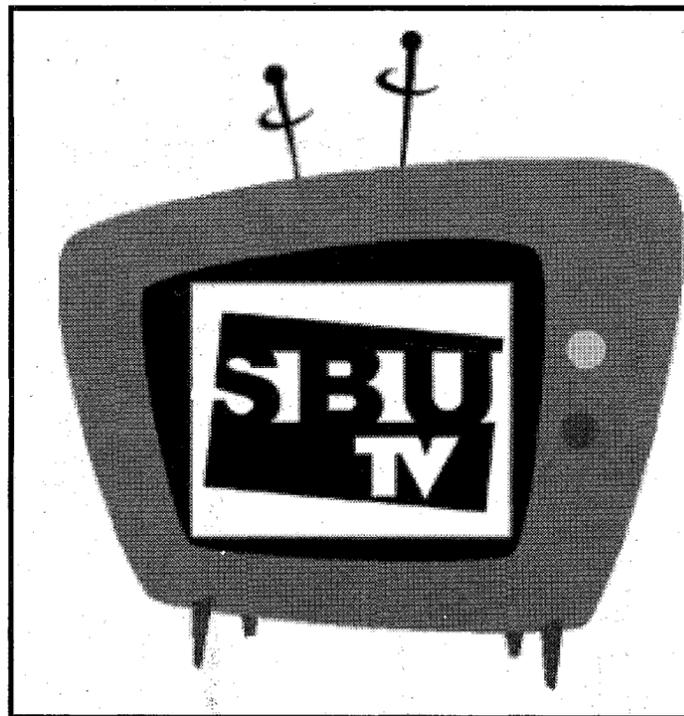
The Seawolves continued to threaten in the 77th minute. Mohamed's volley from 24 yards would sail inches wide of the far post. Regulation time ended with the match tied at 1-1.

The visitors applied early pressure in overtime, which paid off in the 94th minute. Mohamed's inswinging cross was headed slightly up in the air by the Bulldogs' defense, but not out. As the ball was in the air, Ciklic was able to get to it first and head home the game-winner into the back of the net.

"I was confident of our team. I knew we would have a chance," said Xikis.

"Our team has veterans and they have a survival instinct," said Markovic. "We have been playing in one-goal games the entire season and are comfortable in a tight game."

With the win, Stony Brook advances to the second round of the NCAA College Cup, facing eighth-seeded UConn on Tuesday at 6 p.m. at Connecticut. The victory also broke the school record for most wins in a season, with 13.



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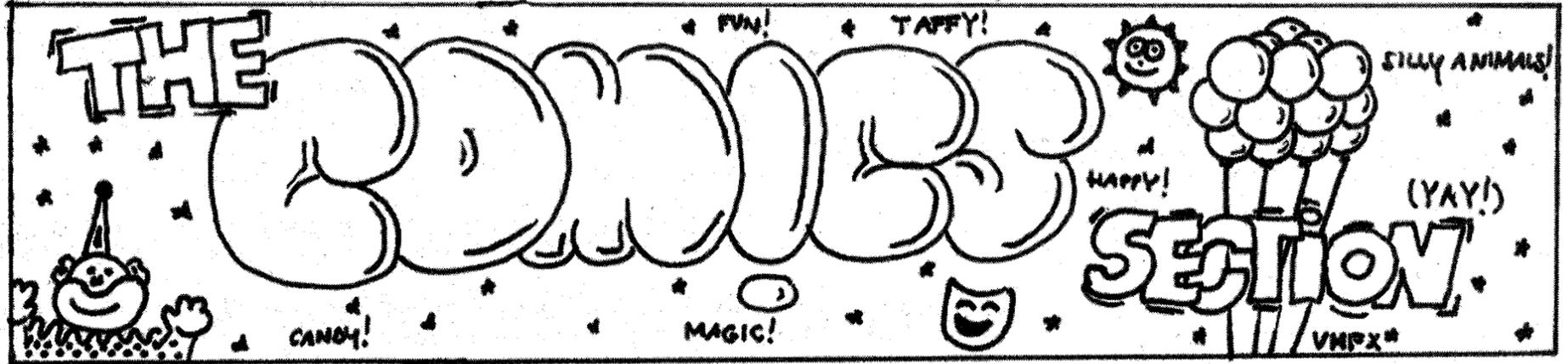
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“ Oh The Wind and Rain! ” BY HELIUM [The Dirt of Luck] ~Stephanie Hayes

That girl knows where  
she doesn't go: in the  
river with the rest  
of the bones.

Under the water-  
Under the stones-

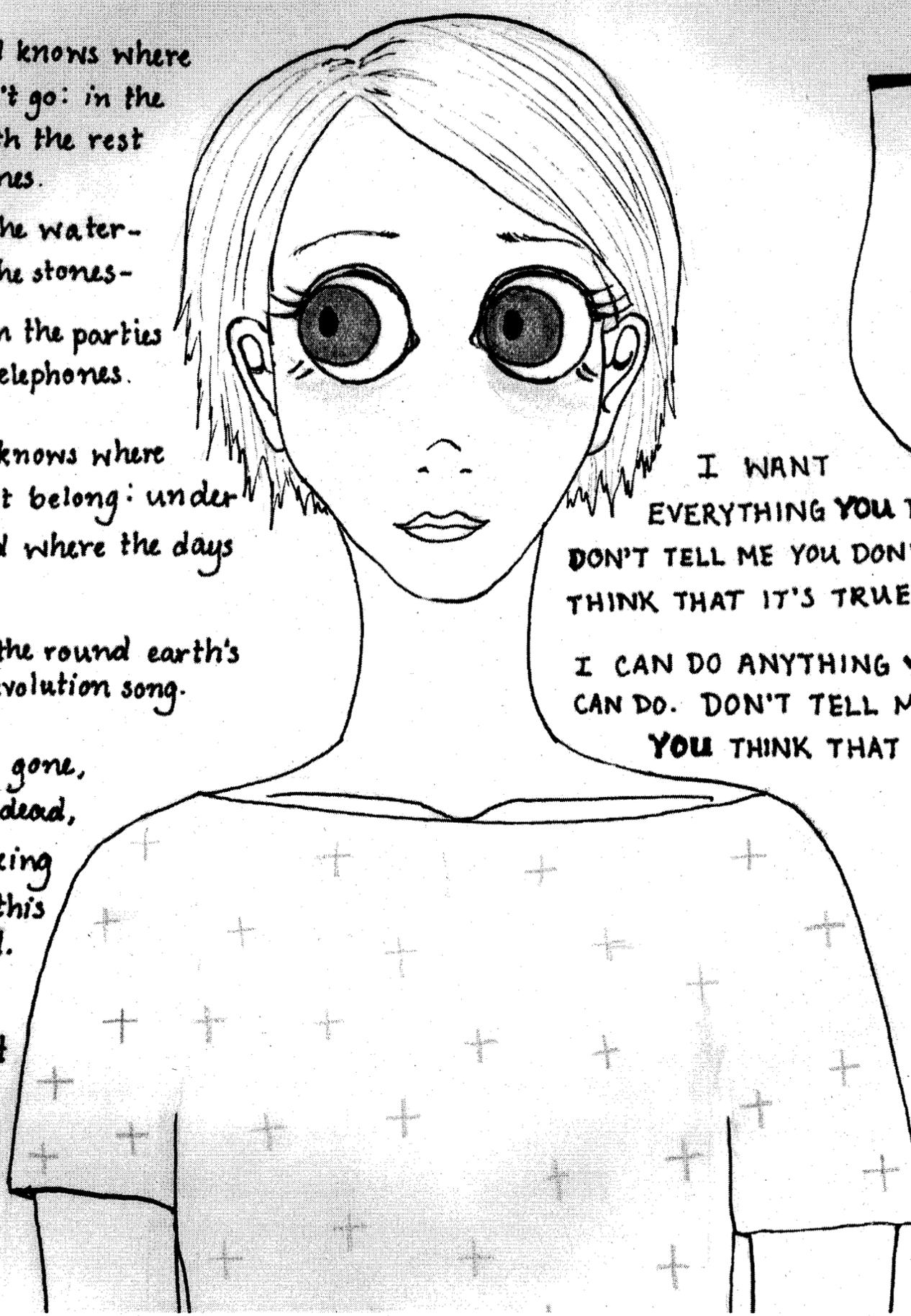
Away from the parties  
and the telephones.

That girl knows where  
she doesn't belong: under  
the ground where the days  
are long!

Under the round earth's  
revolution song.

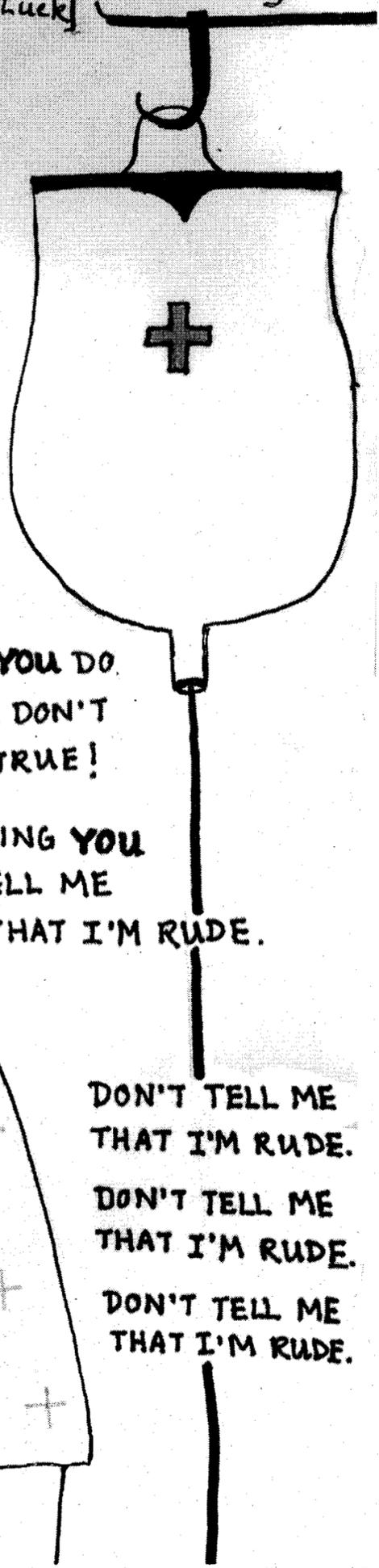
Until I'm gone,  
until I'm dead,  
I'll be making  
a wish on this  
empty head.

Maybe I  
should just  
go to bed,  
or try to  
pray or  
something  
instead...



I WANT  
EVERYTHING YOU DO.  
DON'T TELL ME YOU DON'T  
THINK THAT IT'S TRUE!  
I CAN DO ANYTHING YOU  
CAN DO. DON'T TELL ME  
YOU THINK THAT I'M RUDE.

DON'T TELL ME  
THAT I'M RUDE.  
DON'T TELL ME  
THAT I'M RUDE.  
DON'T TELL ME  
THAT I'M RUDE.



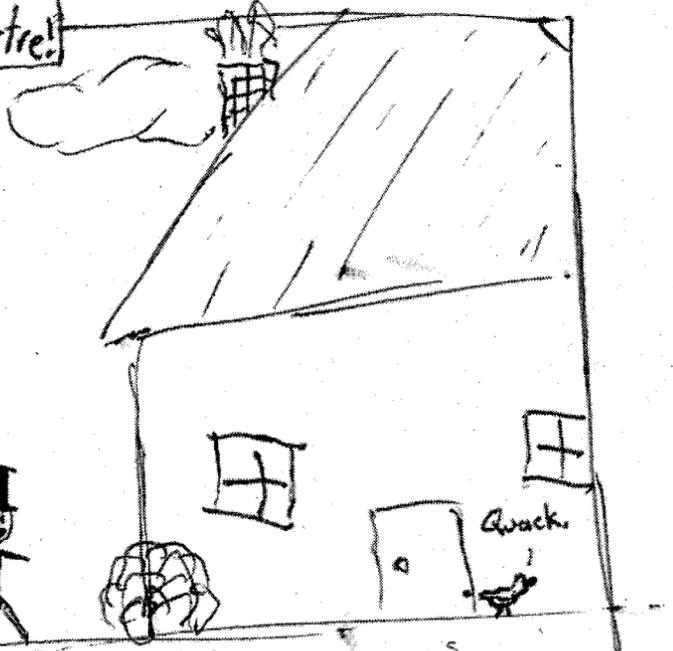
# The Comics Section

## PHILOSOPHY COMIX!

featuring  
Jean-Paul Sartre!

The love relation fails because of your inability to see me as a subject. You objectify me to remove me as a threat to your subjectivity.

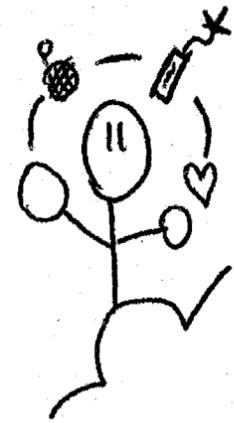
No, you're just a dick.



by Alex Walsh **FIM**

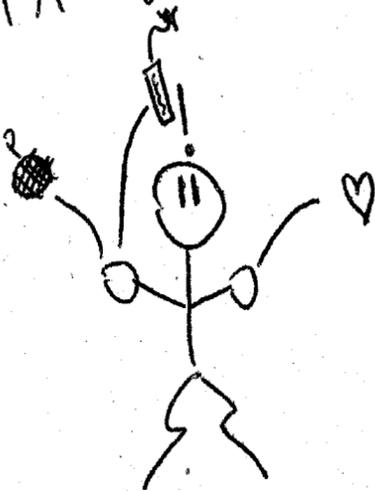
Space Fillin'  
by Rob Peersall

# SPACE FILLIN!



You'll get caught up

in the ...



Hey Bob, did you ever wonder what the meaning of life is?

What? I mean what does that have to do with life? I mean I understand 42 at least!

oh... right...

Toilet Paper...

No... I'm out of toilet paper pass me some...

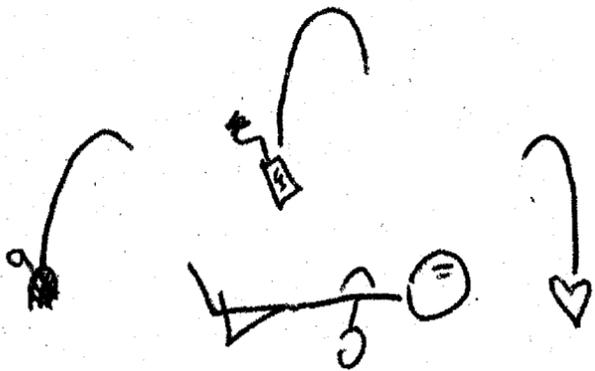


Stallz

by: Joe Rios Artwork by: Joanna Goodman

# The Comics Section

## SPACE FILLIN'!

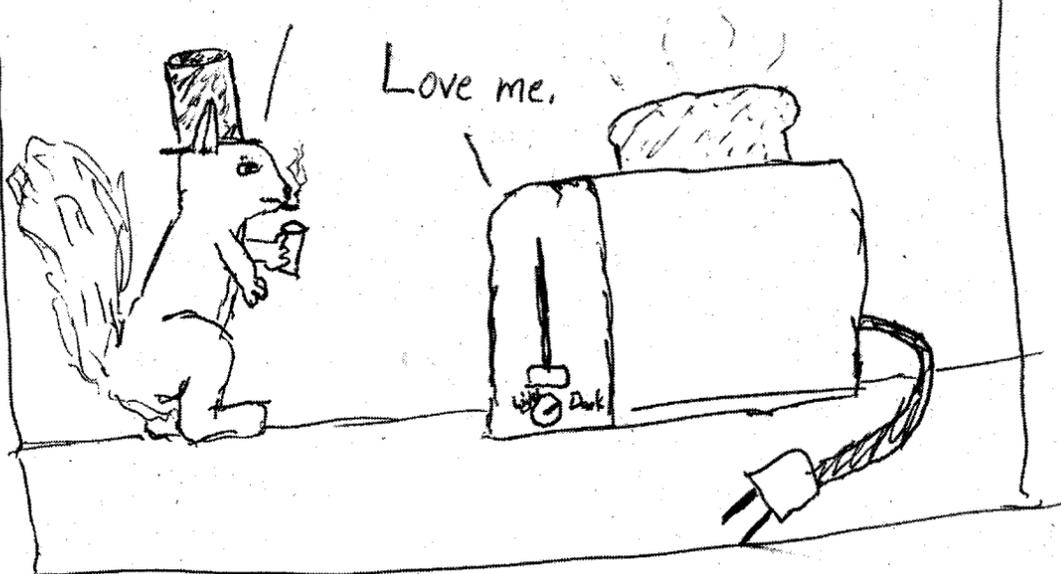


## BALANCE

My other cartoon was totally pretentious, so this one has no intellectual content at all.  
by Alex Walsh

Here, have a drink,

Love me,



Why's that Phil?

Yeah, you wake up  
one morning  
and you're in Marine  
Boot Camp...

Hoo-Rah!

I need to drink less...

I keep getting trashed  
and waking up in weird  
places...

I'm all like  
"SIR I WOULDN'T  
HAVE BEEN HERE IF IT  
WERENT FOR  
BACARDI SIR!"



## SPACE FILLIN'!

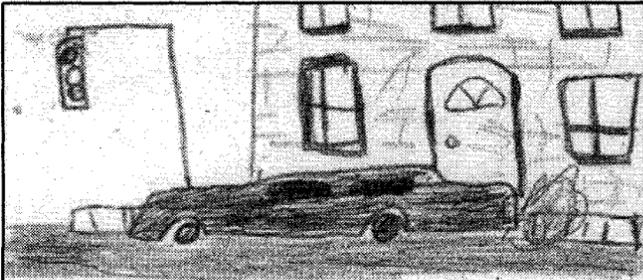


~ Break...  
RD

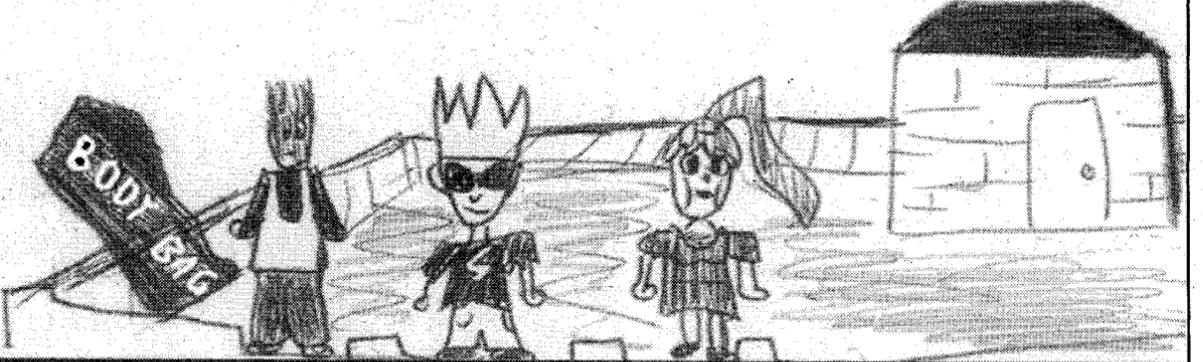
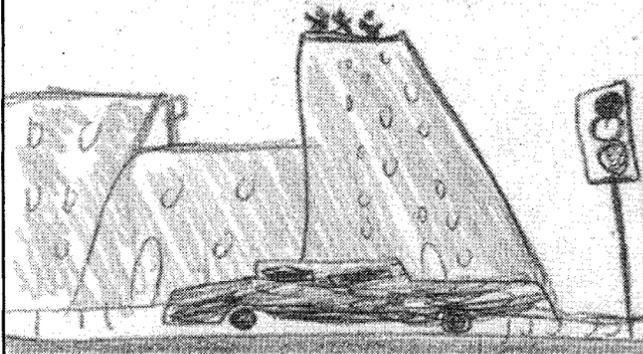
Stallz

by: Joe Rios Artwork by: Joanna Goodman

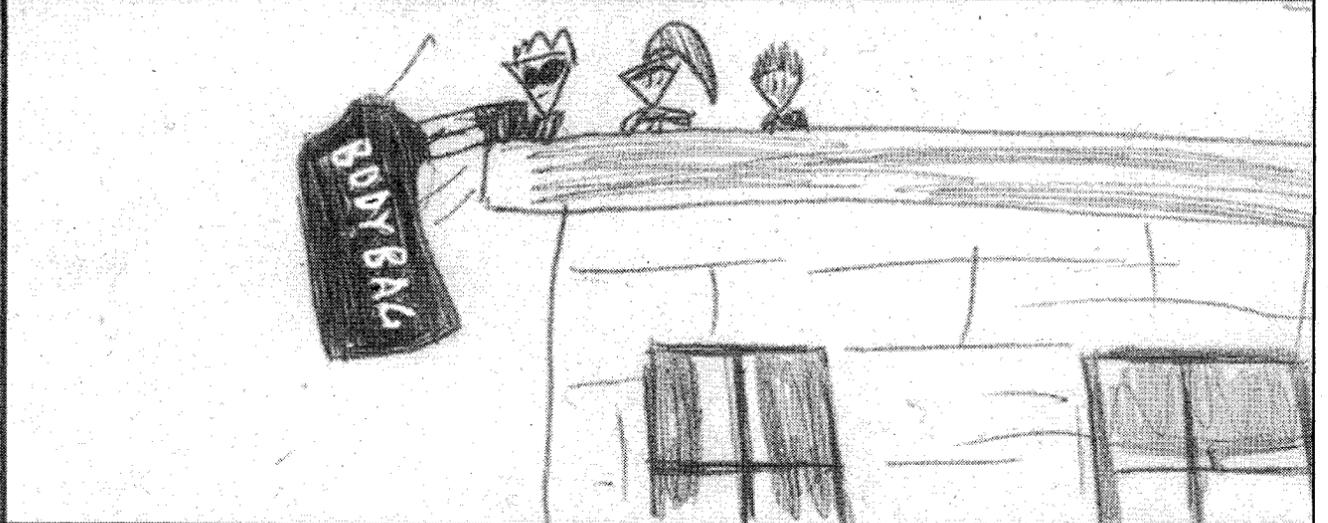
# The Comics Section



We're here to protest teen smoking by going to the cigarette bigwigs themselves! These people need to learn that teens can't remain victims of Big Tobacco any longer!

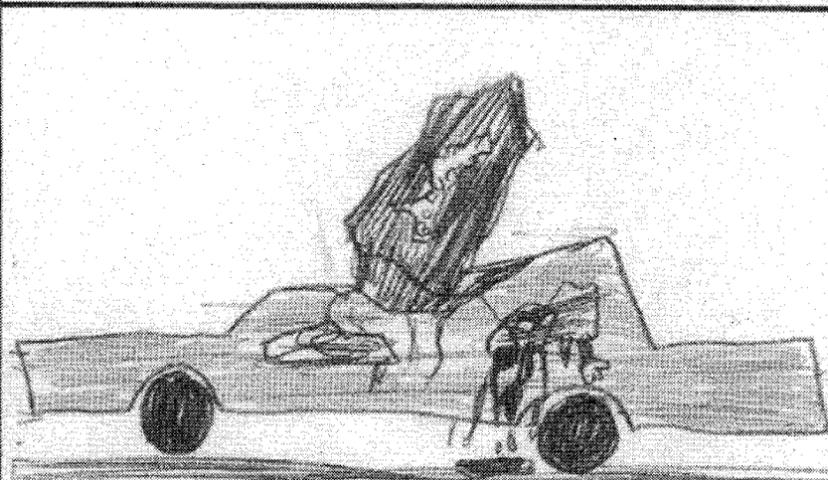
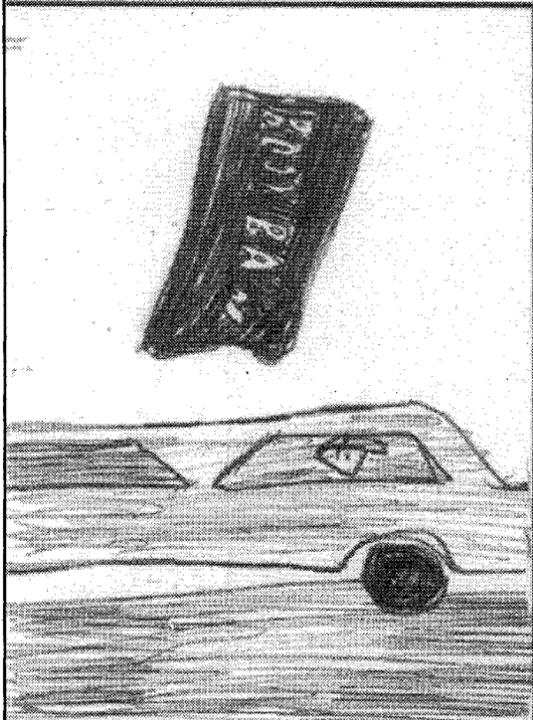


We'll show these bastards that we won't put up with their toxic products any longer!



# CRASH!

Ha! That'll teach him to sell products that kill people! Now he knows just what it's like to DIE!



# TRUTH

thetruth.com

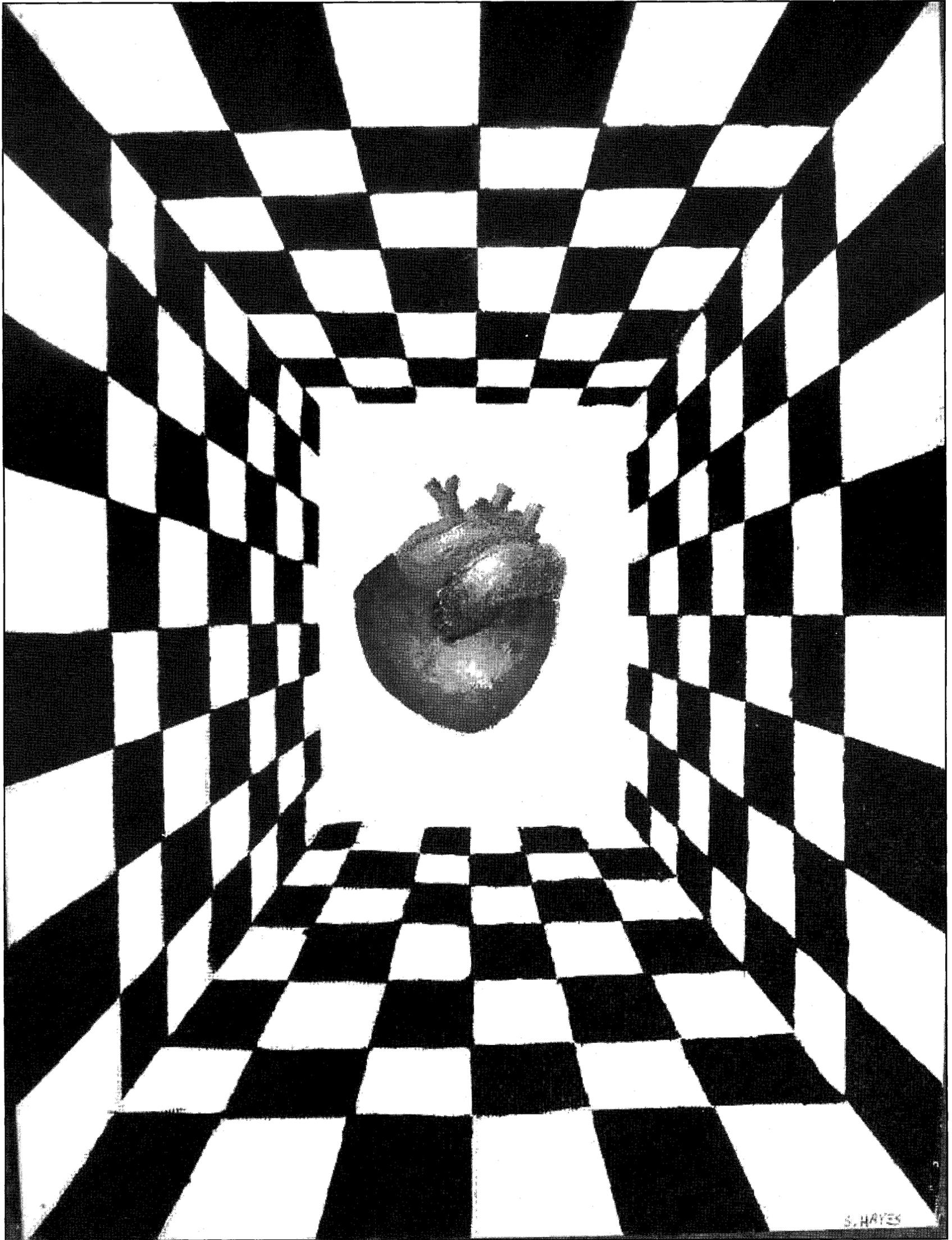
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the stony brook

LITERARY SUPPLEMENT



The Stony Brook  
Press Literary  
Supplement



*Jabberwocky (Oil on Canvas)*  
Stephanie Hayes

## News

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## All Lit, All the Time

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 friends  
 sign!!!

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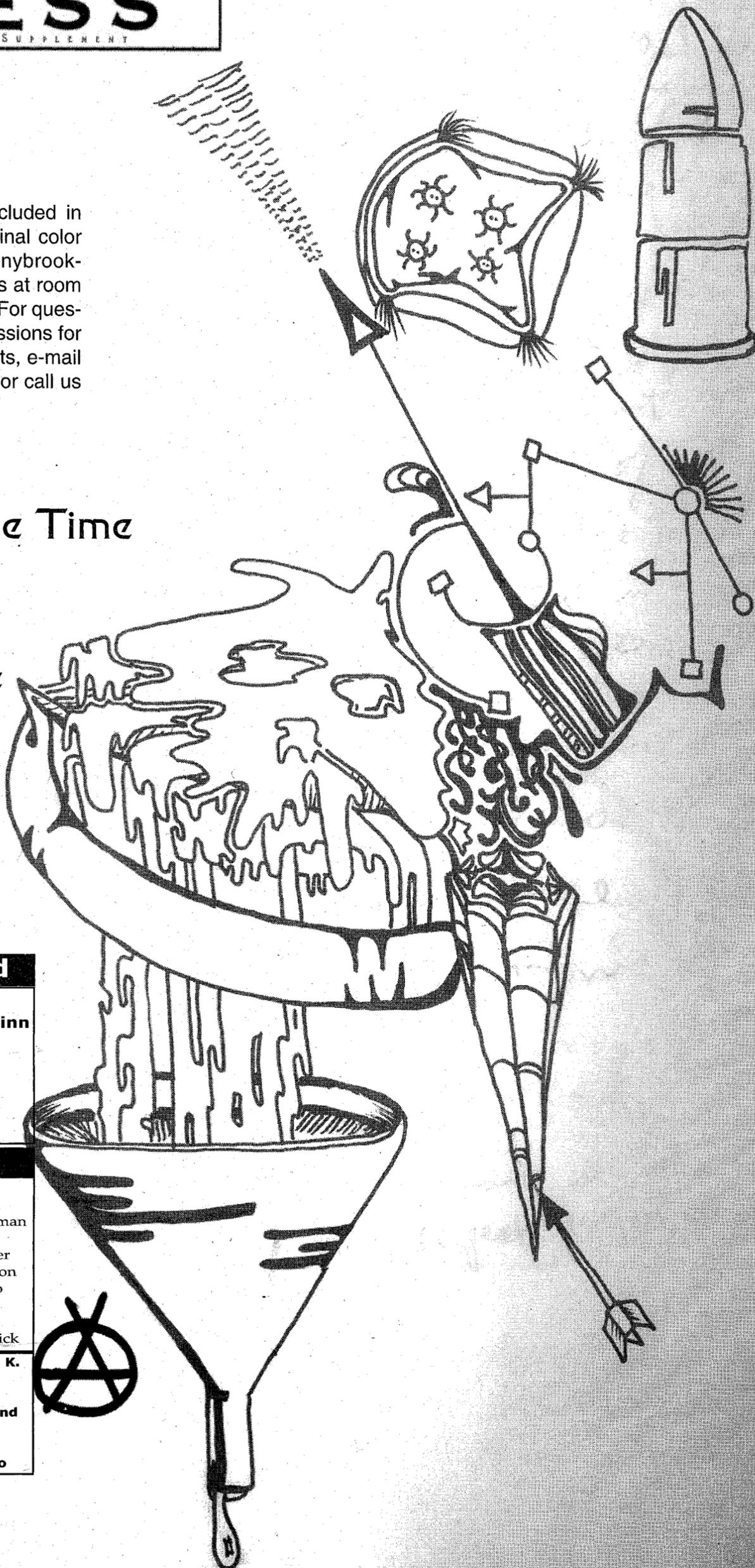
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Front and Back Cover by David K. Ginn

Borders by Joanna Goodman and Joe Donato

Color Poster by Jowy Romano



The Stony Brook  
 Press Literary  
 Supplement

# POEMS

Poems

## If Only Memory Were Actuality

Christopher Di Niso

I lie here with a vision of you from memory  
 pulled back from somewhere behind my mind  
 somewhere behind the invisible sea  
 pocketed in the confines of my blindness  
 Beneath the inactive body and at rest poking the burning soul  
 elliptical in shape and indescribable in beauty  
 as tiny as a second yet as engulfing as the wind  
 an unmoving mass in constant oceanic motion  
 full of red wishes and colour  
 laced with allusions as to her desires  
 mixed in with the illusions of a millisecond  
 poured over my heart  
 yet still remaining in my recollection  
 how many times can one have the memory of happiness  
 become a sub-text to melancholy  
 to fall below the reach of gaping hands  
 wishing to reshape the morning  
 so that the slow dawn lasted longer  
 please for even one more minute  
 show me one more diminutive second  
 I'm all alone but I wish I was in the sky  
 high above the sunken state of my heart  
 above the sad grounds you used to walk  
 past the places I still see you in memory  
 and forget the actuality of existence  
 there is no longer going to be the sweet essence of my heart mirrored  
 in this dropped out city of my prayers

*Handwritten signature*

## Strangers

Bilal Qizilbash

Many souls travel through the walkway,  
 So very different like night and day,  
 But they still depend on each other,  
 One treats the other like a brother,  
 Night would not be night, if there was no day,  
 Day would not be day, if there was no night,  
 They define each other like a sculptor defines clay,  
 Yet, they both don't understand the other's plight,  
 But how can one expect them to understand?  
 They only meet twice a day,  
 When they meet they shake the other's hand,  
 Their excitement cannot be held at bay,  
 Their colors refine themselves like sand,  
 Their differences make the walkway dynamic and full,  
 If both were one we would know no other,  
 We would only know that one brother,  
 Can one imagine a world with only pull?

## Just Dancing Through

Rachel Eagle Reiter

I'd rather dance through flames  
 With the Rainbow People  
 Than sit on a cloud with you  
 If you give your bible to me  
 Then I'll give Sappho to you  
 Do not wave your tracks in my face  
 If you know what's good for you  
 Your witnessing becomes harassment  
 Once I've said no to you  
 And you're only killing trees  
 Wasting paper through and through  
 I'm not signing my name over to you  
 So you can earn a heavenly point  
 And save another sorry soul  
 It's I who pity you

If you you harass the Rainbow People  
 Then you harass me too  
 If you hate the Rainbow People  
 Then you hate me too  
 If you judge the Rainbow People  
 Then you judge me too  
 Mind your own bedroom behavior  
 And find something else to do  
 If you frighten the Rainbow People  
 With your religious, hellish flames  
 We have more faith than you  
 So we'll just dance right through  
 Just as your supposed leader would do

*Handwritten signature*

## Emancipation of the Maid

Alison Schwartz

Curious emotions  
 weaved through my basket,  
 my apron soiled  
 by showerings of silt.  
 I sat and stared at murky waters  
 awaiting filth's consumption,  
 maggots' inviting feast.  
 They would question such stillness  
 if they cared enough to witness  
 but the mud, the grass, and all its guests  
 enrapture and allure: I lack motion.  
 I shall not return;  
 let them pour their own tea.

## The Voice in Our Head

William Martin

Is it overwhelming relationship  
 Yet the craving alone  
 One must not rush this  
 Real  
 In our experience I'm more  
 Then that  
 Which we refuse to believe

My Confession

Alright, let's try this again.  
There are some things I need you to know.  
First off is, I'm sorry.  
I need you to know you're great. It wasn't the other men, 'cause there were other women.  
I guess that's the problem. I took it the wrong way.  
betrayed you the only way I could,  
you said you didn't believe in monogamy, but you did, do.  
Not the kind that people use right now, not a physical one,  
an emotional one.  
That's what I'm sorry for, sorry that I wanted to spend my time with someone else.

There's one thing you said to me, six years from now. It still sticks with me.  
I fucked up the here and now but I hope I didn't destroy the future, I hope I talk to you in six years.

I've got no malice, just the remorse of the loss of a feeling. Now,  
even if I stay,  
it just wouldn't be the same.

I can't go back, but you knew that,  
I hope we can move forward.

-Anon



Splash

Adina Silverbush

I swim across the sandy shore of the ocean they call sleep,  
And glide amongst the waves and wind,  
I do not splash, I simply float,  
But sleep is sleep and one must not only swim,  
So out of the water I go,  
The island is cold,  
And I shiver from being wet,  
The sounds of predators are monstrous,  
The breeze now is more like a tornado,  
And I spin around unable to stop,  
The spinning makes me dizzy and I fall to the floor,  
But swim time is over and I can't go back to the shore,  
It's too late, you can't go back,  
You can't escape anymore,  
WHY? I shout to the predators,  
Why can't you leave me alone?  
"But alone is where you are" they say.

Honey

Chris Williams

Golden honey of the Creator,  
Trickle down my soul.  
Sweeten me with your voice  
Flowing so smoothly.

Eyes of endearing night,  
Like the heavens above,  
Testify to God's caring,  
Shimmer with God's love.

Into unhearing ears,  
Sing His love for me to hear.  
Whisper chords of eloquence,  
Preaching God's magnificence.

Light my heart  
Afire...  
Take my soul to  
Ecstasy.

Golden honey of the Creator,  
Mold my hardened heart.  
Take my all, and  
Set me free.

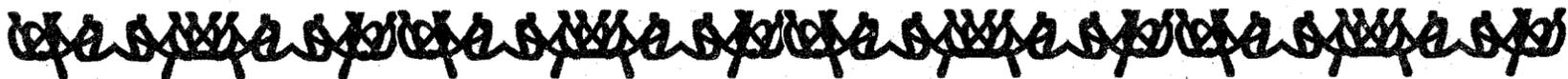
the ground has since recovered from the change

James Hammerstein

the ground has since recovered from the change  
it sits and waits and contemplates the silence she hears  
i can disappear earlier and earlier each day  
and what this has made  
means more than what got me here  
and as i fade i wonder  
where to wait,  
and if the growing cold has its own fear  
and the ground  
for her  
its own illusion of fate.



Poems



Peace Poems

Rachel Eagle Reiter

Splash

Take your clothes off  
Leap into the ocean (repeat if desired)

Be immersed in the ocean of Love

Love is as vast as the ocean  
Love is as deep as the ocean  
Love is as strong as the ocean

Play in the ocean of Love  
Fall into the ocean of Love  
Splash in the ocean of Love  
Surrender to the ocean of Love  
Be covered by the ocean of Love  
Be overcome by the ocean of Love

We can not fight Love  
Love overcomes all  
Love covers all

Join the Fun

New Earth Agers have more fun than you  
Come become a New Earth Ager, too  
Come become a New Earth Ager (repeat if desired)

We will sing, dance, play  
Through the night  
Into the day

Tell your friends what we do  
They will become New Earth Ager's, too

Do you love the Earth  
Love the Earth  
Goddess loves the Earth  
She loves the Earth  
It's time for a New Earth Age

Do you love the Moon  
Love the Moon  
Goddess loves the Moon  
She loves the Moon  
It's your light in the night as you play

Let the Goddess give her love to you  
She will always give her love to you  
Let the Goddess give comfort to you  
She will always give comfort to you

She'll comfort you  
And your animals, too

Fire Dance

Toss wood in  
Light the fire higher (repeat if desired)

Dance, dance  
Dance around the fire (repeat if desired)

Celebrate diversity

Lift, lift  
Lift the fire higher (repeat if desired)

Worship around the fire

Touch the Goddess with your worship  
Love the Goddess with your worship  
Kiss the Goddess with your worship  
The Goddess loves your worship

Now worship

Reach out and touch somebody  
The Goddess gives Love to you  
Reach out and hold somebody  
The Goddess will comfort you

Love covers you like a fire's warmth  
Love is the most powerful force  
Love is stronger than death  
Love lays wars to rest

Now rest

Poems



Stretta

Christopher Di Niso

I can't think of any reason  
That the dawn can hold her sway  
Like bright lights in an awkward display  
My eyes just can't let go

**To Lie Beneath**

**Karen Shidlo**

I

To lie beneath  
 The blue canvas,  
 Cool and ever changing  
 As puffs of white drift by –  
 It is reassuring.  
 The breeze overwhelms me,  
 Causing shivers to run down my spine,  
 Like drops of water trickling  
 Steadily from the tap,  
 Little tremors steadily falling.  
 Goosebumps cover my bare skin,  
 My hair sways with the wind,  
 Oh so gently, consistently flapping,  
 Sometimes shielding my view.  
 My eyelids close,  
 Feeling as heavy as the tree  
 Which tumbles to the ground  
 With all it's force, dying.  
 With the shutting of my lids  
 I do not die, like this tree,  
 Only escape, leaving my body  
 To join somewhere desolate.  
 I fall like the leaves,  
 Plummeting to the ground  
 With grace, softly,  
 Dancing my way down.  
 My body makes contact with the ground,  
 Soggy moss and damp soil  
 Shrouding my flesh,  
 Sinking in and soothing.  
 My body is still again,  
 I am lying under the blue canvas again.  
 I open my eyes  
 To find Reality surrounding me  
 Like a cloud of fog;  
 My vision is blurry,  
 The sensation makes me dizzy.  
 I am most alive in my  
 Subconscious,  
 For it is only there that I can  
 Truly let go,  
 Let go of inhibitions.  
 Tension leaves my limbs, muscles and every inch of  
 me,  
 Like steam rising from boiling water.  
 I am bubbling inside,  
 Bubbles aching to escape  
 So that I may feel release.  
 I slip in and out of Reality  
 As the fog becomes thicker, then clears up.

II

I try to walk straight,  
 Try to keep my balance,  
 But sometimes I stumble.  
 Just when I think I have found  
 That Piece of me which is  
 Strong,  
 It slips between my fingers  
 Like grains of sand  
 Because that Piece is  
 So small and delicate,  
 That Piece that represents  
 The best part of me.  
 Walking into a crowded room  
 It seems as if I do not have  
 That Piece in me at all,  
 Even though experience  
 Tells me that I will always find it  
 Again eventually.  
 That Piece is a part of my soul,  
 But it fades in and out,  
 Sometimes shining for you  
 To be able to see it in my face,  
 Sometimes hiding so deep that  
 My face is expressionless,  
 Lost without this fragment.  
 This fragment of truth,  
 Of beauty,  
 Of all my confidence.  
 I try to walk straight,  
 But I stumble.

**Mind Sleeping**

**Bilal Qizilbash**

Our minds rest,  
 Time to see the best,  
 Open up my chest,  
 Take down my vest,  
 I must begin to invest in my sanity,  
 So we can slowly restore humanity,  
 Has the world gone crazy?  
 Or have my eyes just become hazy?  
 We all think of the short of whats ahead,  
 Something like driving in the night with our low beams,  
 No longer appreciate our bread,  
 Starting to bust at our seams,  
 But this state i will enter,  
 Makes everything seem so nice,  
 My tranquility at its center,  
 The world removes its vice,  
 All get respect,  
 Even the mice,  
 I think in retrospect,  
 I appreciate the beauty of ice,  
 Something so cold,  
 But so solid,  
 Strong and bold,  
 Much like an jewel hidden by an eyelid,  
 Mind starting to cease,  
 Peace is something on lease,  
 See thy soul?  
 Nay, see my own soul,

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Poems

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The Wreckage

Alison Schwartz

I fall in love  
 watching you sleep.  
 The absence of faith,  
 the ache of being,  
 too paralyzed to touch you.  
 This must be purgatory -  
 all the walls are bare and white  
 my skin blends in like a porcelain plate  
 from the time of war your grandmother brewed inside  
 while her husband slaughtered,  
 collecting skin fragments, wading in a crimson tide.  
 The photographs of their wedding  
 shattered  
 while we pounded the bed,  
 glass shredding your spine  
 but you didn't seem to notice,  
 my spindly body veiling your mind...  
 their eyes like angry phantoms  
 torn by our bedside.  
 I mourn my life  
 while their death loses depth  
 and your rest is peaceful  
 but my eyes, glassy and wide  
 never stop shifting -  
 from your destroyed past  
 to your unrelenting pride -  
 your pride for our stained charade  
 taints your mother's antique vase.  
 My adoration for our series of forlorn moments  
 is buried then  
 with your mother's ashes spilling into my orbs  
 while, permeating the air,  
 I am blinded.  
 The playback of our silhouettes conjoining  
 now dusted with death:  
 a helpful reminder of your labyrinth of apathy,  
 your mother's granules  
 settling on my breast...  
 taunting me, mocking.  
 Suddenly your slumber is agonizing  
 shallow, infuriating, vain.  
 And I want to return to last night's tumble  
 and yank the life out of me.

I want to scream,  
 pluck the hairs out of your pretty head  
 and lay them  
 on your grandmother's torn photographic head, memorially  
 so fusion of life and death can be lucidly revealed  
 but your rested head could never comprehend!  
 you vague distant dreamer, I'll withdraw my knife...  
 ....sleep tight.

Son of a Virgin and Son of a Whore

Rachel Eagle Reiter

The son of the Pure Virgin Mary  
 Was not so pure  
 He descended from  
 The lineage of a whore

Rahab

Honored woman—not despised  
 Hider of the Hebrew spies  
 Used her lips, her tongue, her eyes  
 To deter the enemy with her lies

The son of the Good Virgin Mary  
 Was not such a good Jew  
 He didn't always do  
 What the pharisees said he should do

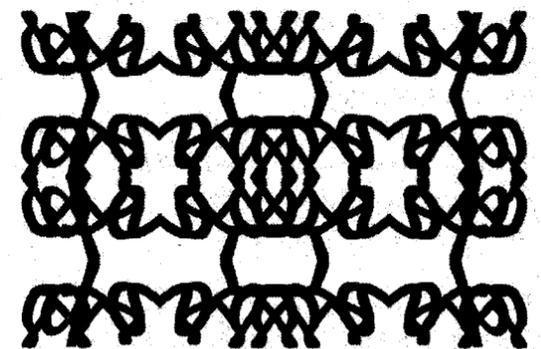
The son of the Blessed Virgin Mary  
 Had a bit of a temper  
 He turned over the tables  
 And the goods in the temple

I wouldn't have chosen to stand in-  
 between  
 Jesus and the chief pharisee  
 Not even for the cause of world peace  
 It wouldn't have been a safe place for me

The son of the Catholic/Jewish Mary  
 Disliked ethnic and religious division  
 He spoke to the woman at the well  
 Despite their differences in religion

The son of the Majestic Virgin Mary  
 Was a fascinating magician  
 He walked on water; raised the dead  
 Multiplied the fish and bread

He turned plain water into choice wine  
 So he's welcome at Press parties any time  
 Because we have a tight budget for beer  
 So it wouldn't be so bad if Jesus were here





**Continued from previous page**

Fast forward a few years and  
I see tanks sinking in the sand  
Sacrilege in this Holy Land

It's time to end this lunacy  
Come with me, it's emergency  
Come and see what I see

Hate, hate, emergency

In the jungle, a baby cries  
Mourning as his mother dies

A hatchet wound between her eyes

A half million bodies breathed their last  
A half million bodies rotting fast  
Rwanda is a graveyard vast

Rewind a bit and see the Holocaust  
A wretched, bloody, festering cost  
A humanity lost

It's time to end this lunacy  
Come with me, it's emergency  
Come and see what I see

Hate, hate, emergency

**"Us"**

**Melissa Bernardez**

What am I supposed to think when you tell me these things?  
You make me sound so cheap sometimes.  
Like I'm only here to please you.  
Did you ever think that I might actually like you?  
That I might actually enjoy being with you?  
Maybe all you think about is yourself.  
About how YOU need to be satisfied.  
About how YOU want to be satisfied.  
The fact is, not everything is about you.  
There is a ME.  
There is an us.  
Maybe not officially, or publicly known,  
But when YOU kiss ME, there's an us.  
When YOU touch ME, there's an us.  
When YOU are in ME, there is most definitely an us.  
So don't bullshit me that we're not dating.  
Don't tell me crap about how we're not exclusive.  
Cause when you tell me you like me, I believe you.  
I don't want to have to believe you like others too.  
When you call me and ask me to come over, I'd like to think I'm the only girl that's been in your bed.  
When we're out with your friends, I'd like to think you're not embarrassed of me.  
Sometimes the shit you don't do, cancels out the shit you do.  
So even though you're really sweet one day, the way you blow me off crosses that out.  
When you're flirting with me another day, and not calling me the next, or the day after that, it gets negated.  
So don't tell me you like me and then not act like it.  
Don't make love to me and then act like there was no intimacy.  
Don't be affectionate to me and then make me feel alienated.  
All I want is to know that you know, there is an us.  
I want to know that you see me as someone you can be with.  
I want to know that you respect me enough to never make me feel like a slut.  
I guess all I want you to know is that I like you, I respect you and I care for you.  
So I suggest you do the same for me.  
Otherwise I'm walking out on "us."

ode to you-know-who

**James Hammerstein**

my mind is white noise  
and i see shadows everytime i open my eyes  
but i have miles to go  
with sleeping pills and lo-fi  
words less and less for substance  
more and more for process  
all i can think of is poverty  
a requirement by the rich for the rich  
but i snipped the lights-  
and blew the fuse  
and measured my life  
and burned the news today  
in the invisible suburbs  
and in three days  
in a balancing act  
of a forgotten soundtrack  
ill find my way to a phone  
and tear the fallen twigs  
from the frozen ground  
one by one  
from the ghosts  
made gray, plain, old  
by the cold, tasteless flicker  
of the moon  
making the smell of a thought  
of no future after all  
fade away.  
the sound of the coast,  
if we're quiet.

"she's on the outer lands..."

**James Hammerstein**

"she's on the outer lands  
had a thought, lost to us,  
in a crowd in the cold on the edge."  
"...there are times  
when i can't believe it  
when the wind blows  
i cant feel a thing  
there are times  
when i cant get close enough  
to a window  
or hear nothing but the echo  
of what i'll learn not to hope to find.  
there were times  
when the tunnel, the sea, and the windy dream  
happened too slow,  
when i thought  
i'd ever really fall asleep  
more than acknowledge the truth  
or show the words how to appear  
in retrospect  
of someone i never knew  
or look at all sideways,  
denying the future  
and living two lives,  
or perhaps just wondering  
that time was the orange glow  
and not the means of its transience,  
leaving a cold, cloudness resignation  
like hands ablaze  
with the intimation of a change.  
there will be times  
when they fall so fast  
i convince myself  
the dizziness of distance  
is there at all...  
or at least a few more minutes...  
before heading back."  
"she's out  
and would really like to help  
were it not that this happens all the time."

The Brook

**Christopher Di Niso**

The waves hit the shore  
And here the bodies of past wash up  
Where nothing's certain and sure  
Where recognition isn't awarded to everything  
Where anything with her is still everything  
Where the thin pulse sits on dead wood  
To rest from weary recollection  
And to collect a request from behind the cellar's doors  
Where waters run past an ardent red dawn  
Where new loves die under immature actions  
And the memory ebbs back and forth  
Back and forth



**Friends**

**Melissa Lobel**

Everyone in life needs to have a friend  
Someone they can turn to when they feel like it's the end  
When you feel like you want to break down and cry  
It's nice to have a friend to call even to just say hi  
On the days when all I want to do is hide  
My friends are always there sticking by my side  
Memories from high school to college, we have it all  
Remember all those nights spent at the mall?  
No matter what we do we're always having fun  
Adding new memories as they come  
Some friends are new and some friends are old  
But no matter which one they're all like gold  
Precious to me in so many ways  
And always there for me through all my bad days  
Even though at times some of us may fight  
In the end neither of us are totally right  
We see past all our differences  
And continue to be friends  
We tell each other we're sorry  
And that it won't happen again  
With all the compassion you all have shown  
It makes me feel like I'm really not alone  
To all those people I can't thank you enough  
As you know, these past couple of years have been tough  
Some times in life people make mistakes  
And pick the wrong people in which to associate  
It's the ones who are there for you through the good times and the bad  
Not the ones who seem to always make you sad  
Those people might try and call themselves a friend  
But I've come to realize who my true friends are in the end

**Ode to Gandhi**

**Rachel Eagle Reiter**

Gandhi! Gandhi! Gandhi!  
Your words were right and true  
My heart cries out to you  
Lift up your brimming cups  
And give three cheers to  
Gandhi! Gandhi! Gandhi!  
Although, he is not here  
The spirit of peace is near  
We will not tremble in fear  
He did not live in vain  
Enduring affliction and pain  
His life was worth the while  
Walking mile after mile  
Oh, what a lovely smile  
Had he  
  
He turned the other cheek  
Was actively mild and meek  
He could have used his J.D.  
In some other way  
But he gave his blood to the world  
To end discrimination  
Caring more for justice  
Then the need to live in comfort  
He was a lawyer of a different sort  
He persevered and did not fall short

**Untitled**

**Luz Raven**

Darkness  
  
I wait for you  
  
to engulf by soul  
  
so that I  
  
can be free.

Poems

One Mother  
Joanna Goodman  
The Ladies' Car is Closed Today

Poems

One Mother

Rachel Eagle Reiter

There is a time for war and a time for Peace  
Said Solomon the wise king

Isn't it time for a time of Peace  
Isn't it time for unity

Come together Muslim and Jew  
Friendship between these two groups  
Will turn a time of war into a time of peace  
And bring about great unity

Come together Muslim and Jew (repeat any # of times)  
World Peace begins with you

Brothers fought a long time ago  
One was a Muslim; one was a Jew  
Tussling about in Rebecca's womb  
Fighting over who had more room

Two nations were in her womb  
Fighting over who had more room  
The Middle East is one great womb  
They're fighting over who has more room

Two nations: Two brothers (repeat any # of times)  
One Mother: The Middle East

Drop your stones; don't drop more bombs  
You've been fighting since you were in the womb  
Will you fight until you're in the tomb  
There's more than enough room for both of you

"The Ladies' Car is Closed Today"

Joanna Goodman

On the Yokohama line, a malfunction from the  
body heat, the pressure of being  
crowded. The pusher yells in  
earnest as he herds us forward into  
packed cars, as if it were the truck  
to the slaughterhouse  
and we the aimless livestock.  
Elbows press into sides and bags  
into backs as the stale air, heavy  
with the sweat of a hundred bodies,  
pulses with a thousand  
rushed and necessary 'excuse-me's, unapologetic, and  
saps all the oxygen from everyone's  
morning-tight throats.

The little boy on his father's lap finds novelty  
in the sea of unfamiliar faces,  
and motions as if to kick his legs  
in his non-space,  
staring out the glass to watch for  
Daddy's building.  
Bodies sway in time like wind-blown bamboo branches  
each time we brake; we welcome  
the short-lived breezes of open doors that add  
rhythm  
to the hypnotic station-stop ballet. The occasional blurs  
of green, and the views  
of the concrete-and-steel wilderness  
lull tired passengers into a quiet trance; that,  
and the rustle of everyone's  
dollar newspaper,  
and the excess music from the headphones of the  
teenager sleeping in the corner,  
on his way to some delivery job in the city.

A suitcase rests against my leg, and then  
a hand, reaching for the handle,  
snakes its way across my stockings, tugging at my  
skirt and ruffling pleats.  
No room to move.  
The old man in the business suit, with a vague  
and forgettable face,  
asks me something pleasantly about the weather as his  
thick sweaty fingers find their way  
to the front of my blouse.  
Passengers look away to find their buildings through the win-  
dow.  
The short-lived breeze of the sliding door; we file out. I  
in my wrinkled skirt  
rebutton the buttons at my breast with shaking fingers,  
look  
for the old man in the business suit that no one saw  
and the police won't find, and  
fumble  
through my schoolbag for my cell phone  
to call my mother.

"For the flight attendant, somewhere,  
who understood"

Joanna Goodman

We are the substitute people, who you will  
never forget but can never really remem-  
ber;  
a name,  
a face,  
the blurry faded negatives of that  
last mental picture you snapped  
before the camera broke,  
the syllables for songs to which  
you can't remember any of the words.

We are the comforting phrases,  
the phone number scrawled on the back of  
a napkin, the  
person you kiss while you pretend, while  
you are  
loving someone else,  
a mannequin  
to stand in, just for a little while.

We are the borrowed ones  
with features easily exchanged, and  
from places with no  
memorable names.  
We are perpetually for rent,  
at no cost to the user.

We are fine, this way.  
We are alright, alone.

We are the understudies of  
your dreams, life's plans, and fate.  
Things do not happen to us, as ourselves,  
but only  
to us, as the people we pretend to be,  
the roles we play  
because the lead actor has called in sick  
for some reason or another  
(for what, it does not matter;  
we are only doing our jobs).

When you kiss us, we do not feel.  
When you prick us, we do not bleed.  
It is alright to think this way;  
it is an occupational hazard  
on our part.

We are the substitute people, who you will  
never forget but can never really remem-  
ber;  
a name, a face,  
if that,  
or whatever person you remember, grate-  
fully,  
that you put another's  
name and face  
to.

"Ode to Death and Splendor"

Joanna Goodman

Passing scattered corpses,  
brown oak and  
Alice's mutated maple leaves  
the size of my head,  
with all the colors of a  
psychedelic Wonderland.

Rough winds do blow to  
leave the trees bare  
like myself,  
searching for heat but more concerned for  
homes lost to the gale.

(Nests, stashed acorns and still water  
growing frigid  
make us tremble more than the frost on ourselves e'er could.)

And the rainbow of death makes  
tragedy seem worthwhile  
to our sadistic artists' souls  
in the autumn mourning  
when the sun rises and we can see her  
tattered beauty as-is  
without the shadows to cover  
the beauty of fall's aging.

(In each icy breath from the sky, we find  
warmth,  
hot chocolate and a fire  
for our poetic psyche.)

To me, fall is  
losing my keys in the frey  
of dying arbors, and  
sleeping in the common room for now –  
inside  
(the comforting chill draft from the faux-bay window)  
but outside  
(the inevitable prison of the winter shut-in)  
and sober poetry  
for a few cool months  
more lively to me  
in their throws of death  
by far, than any spell pronouncing life.

*WPA S WPA S WPA S*

Poems

*WPA S WPA S WPA S*

Silly Haiku-Like Verse With No Real Content

Alex Walsh

I

a brief disclaimer  
traditional haiku use  
morae: phonetic

units which only  
loosely correspond to our  
english syllables

i learned that fact from  
wikipedia which means  
it's totally true

one more key difference:  
many real haiku might not  
suck quite like mine do

II

i wanted to write a  
haiku composed only two words:  
seven and five. damn!

it's not possible  
to write seven syllables  
just saying seven

the closest I could  
get was to just subtract one  
here is the result

five five five five five  
seven seven seven six  
five five five five five

but that just doesn't  
have the same kind of impact  
now does it? oh well.

III

hundred white castle  
burgers will soon arrive here  
they will not last long

our stash has arrived  
more than i had expected  
one hundred eighty

IV

i thought this pc  
was a mac, but no  
that's just a sticker

V

steph is editing  
i'm writing shitty haiku  
who is more useful?

the answer to the  
above query should be clear:  
tony danza, bitch!

VI

they say jesus is  
better than wayne gretzky – what's  
his rookie card worth?

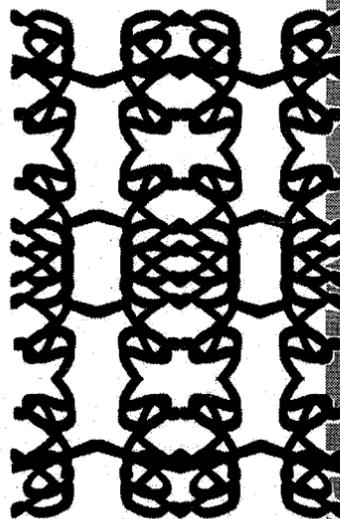
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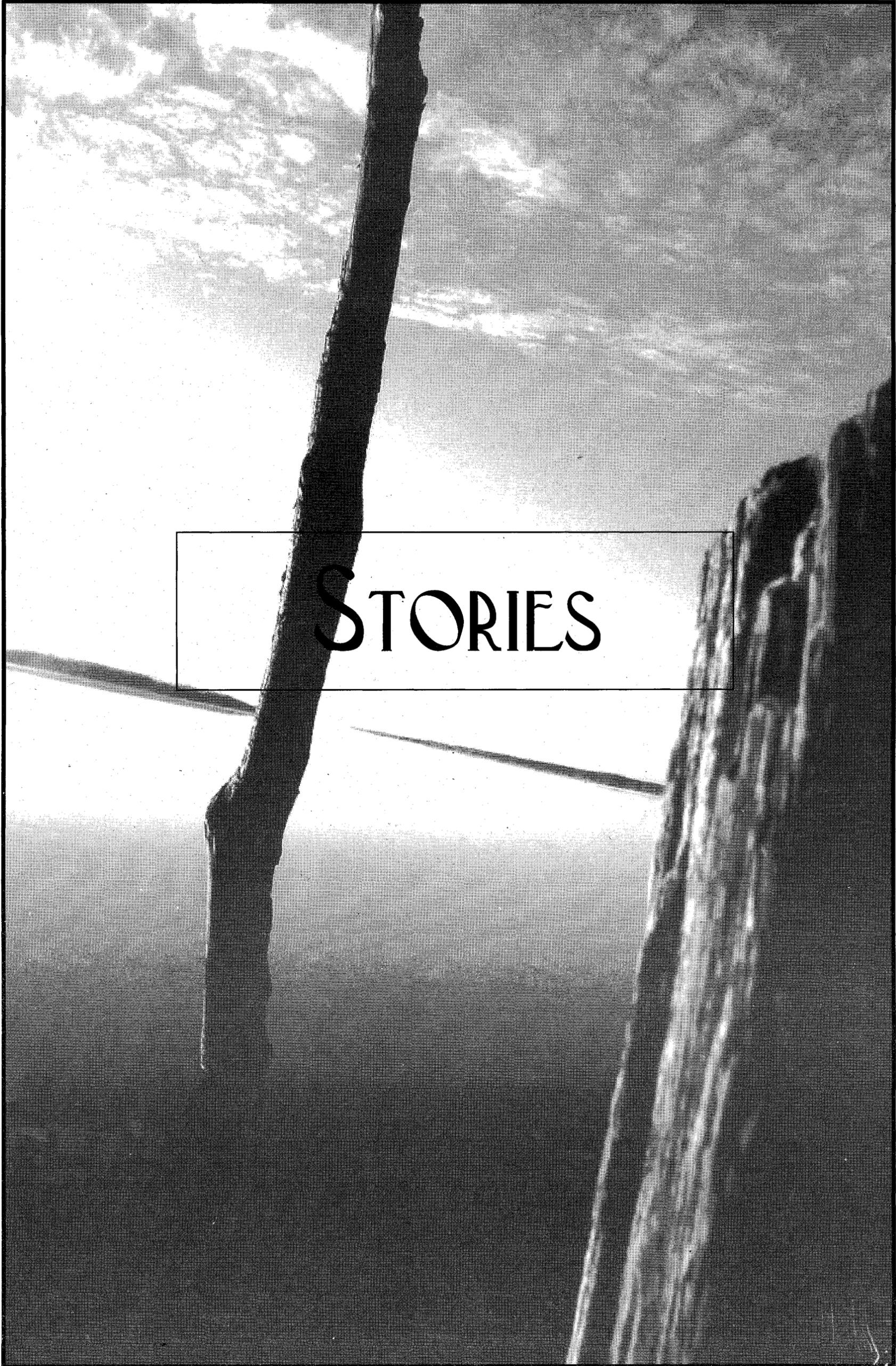
i bet i can make  
nirvana lyrics into  
haiku – just watch me

i'm so happy 'cause  
today i found my friends: they're  
in my head... yeah yeah

that was easier  
than i had thought it would be  
i just kick ass, right?

Poems





# STORIES

The Stony Brook  
Press Literary  
Supplement

# Best Nine Dollars to this Date

By Claudia Schaer

October 23, 2005

To whom it may concern; or, dear Diary,

This evening, on the 42nd -street A-train platform, at midnight, returning to Manhattan from Long Island, I found myself rather weary and in the usual NY stand-offish mode induced from seeking privacy in thick crowds. I had nearly fully concentrated on my pumpkin muffin, except for a few strains of music seeping in from a busker some ways down the platform. A few more notes... Bach? the G minor solo violin fugue? here? sounding so good? and on...some extremely resonant instrument sounding like an organ?? After a brief internal struggle, to which only the soon-disappeared muffin was privy, gregariousness won over jaded attitude, and I followed my curiosity, passing by a fellow former Juilliard student and his girlfriend on the way to the source of the Bach. (To be precise, the Juilliard alum may well have still been in school; *do* the DMA students ever graduate?!?)

As it turned out, the musician was a guitarist, and the resonance, of course, was the subterranean concert hall buskers revel in for permutations of 8-minute intervals. My own train was running at 20-minute intervals at this hour, and the guitarist, having just played the last chord, sensed my presence with the musician's instinct for another musician, and returned my joking accusation of "You stole my repertoire!" with "There's plenty for two"! The conversation continued, fully in public, with him wanting to know if I was Russian, saying I looked so; I replied non-sequentially, "Must be the Canadian in me". He repeatedly urged me to take out my violin. "Here?" "Now?" "But I'll have to go when my train's coming." I have no idea what actually induced me to do it, nor what induced me to NOT get on my train, which of course arrived the second I had put my shoulder rest on the violin. Certainly it wasn't snobbery, and certainly he was eager to play together; on what reasoning I'm not sure, as I hadn't delivered a press kit, nor a demo recording, nor had I even run my casual footwear by Juilliard's Derek Mithaug for professional approval.

In any case, I was not at professional level, for when choosing what to play, he suggested all the standard gig repertoire, which, unfortunately, I have always done my utmost NOT to memorize.

So we played the beginnings of things, and on anything I remembered we sounded rather better than decent, but I felt a bit silly at how much was escaping me. Yet being in good shape, and having spent all morning practising the other two Bach fugues, the C major and the A minor, I really wanted to play something more substantial. He hadn't wanted to play the G minor fugue together, but, out of other ideas, I just began to play it anyway. I hadn't practised it earnestly since my teens, and I have no idea where it came from. (Please, oh best beloved, no insertions of dirty terminology here! Please, no.) Next thing I knew I was completely enmeshed in it - now I know where the term "by heart" comes from! No thought was spared for how I executed any part of it, I simply played it - and probably more sincerely than if I had practised it alongside the other fugues today.

I was dimly aware that a huge crowd had gathered, and that a few rowdy kids were standing too close (later someone told me that they had been trying to distract me, and that they would have been in huge trouble with the crowd had they succeeded).

The guitarist played the last chord with me, and people clapped heartily when we finished. They left large tips, and as I hastily sprang onto my just-arrived A-train, several of my new fellow-passengers asked in detail what I had played, wanting to download it from I-tunes or buy a CD. One man had just lost his job today, and even though he was confident he could find another one tomorrow, he said it had helped him to hear me. A woman said that she had skipped the previous train to hear us, and that she had been deeply touched by the Bach, and that she now intends to practise the flute again, a joy she'd abandoned when going to college for a different field. For my part, I too was deeply touched that so many people had had such strong and beautiful reactions to my spontaneous memory-test, and from these conversations, it seems apparent to me that classical music in its most exuberant form, not watered-down or pandering-to-a-lower-common-denominator, has a huge potential place in society, and I would say a very much-needed one too.

Without moralizing, the moral for me of the story is: sharing a love is more fun than being jaded! It also can earn one a completely unexpected \$9 from a gracious potentially-Russian guitarist who played on 42nd street at midnight on the A-train platform on October 23rd a.m. Definitely comparable to similarly-earned cashews in first class on a trans-atlantic flight, n'est-ce pas? What's next, pinot noir?

(P.S. Does anyone know how to go about re-finding the gracious potentially-Russian guitarist who played on 42nd street at midnight on the A-train platform on October 23rd am?)

P.P.S. What in the world do you do when you've forgotten the word "thesaurus"?

P.P.P.S. Lest my subway career go down the tubes ... ?

# HIGH HEELS AND CIGARETTES

BY M.M. ACKERSON

Sammy dragged hard on his cigarette and the tip glowed like an ember. He stared out at the busy city streets below. Cold air-breathing pedestrians strolled beneath the yellow light of sidewalk lamps. Outside, the city bustle was warm and electric.

Sammy turned away from the wall of windows and put out his cigarette. He paced around the darkened studio looking at the paintings on the wall.

The intercom buzzed and he went to it.

"Mr. Rubin," said a woman's voice, "There is a lady here to see you—what is your name again, sweetheart?" he heard her ask off to the side.

A name was murmured.

"A Mrs. Jamie Leigh Bailey?"

She waited.

"Shall I send her up, Mr. Rubin?"

He indicated that it was all right and walked back to the window lighting another cigarette.

There came the sound of muffled, mechanical shifting; a column of light divided the room and out of the elevator clicked a pair of high heels. Jamie Leigh stood looking around the dim studio with cautious incredulity. When the column of light shrank away her eyes fell upon a man's silhouette, and the whispers of smoke expanding above his head.

"I never took you for a smoker," the high heels clicked forward.

Staring out the window, Sammy dragged on his cigarette and blew.

"So, you've done pretty well for yourself—you've got the whole floor of this building," she paused. And then, gradually, "I... didn't think you'd allow me to see you. I wasn't sure if you even remembered me."

Sammy spoke low, "It's where I paint."

The high heels clicked behind him. He saw her reflection developing in the glass and abruptly turned, walking across the room to the table. On it, he rolled out a length of fine canvas. Picking up a T-square, he traced a line down in pencil.

The high heels clicked again at his back.

Her hand went to touch his arm but she drew it away.

"Well, I don't suppose you're going to ask me why I'm here."

He picked up a blade and put it to the canvas, "Five—" he sliced off the length of canvas, "years."

"I know, I wanted to stay in touch—I really did. You didn't want anything to do with me though—you hated me."

She waited.

"But things seemed to have turned out very well for you, Sam. Surely you are happy."

He positioned the cut piece in front of him.

"That's all?" the cigarette bobbed in his mouth.

"Sam, I don't know what else to say—you've said that to me every time I tried to talk to you after it all happened. Every time it was always, 'That's all?'—Sam, please, *tell* me what to say—what do you want me to say? It was so long ago, why are you still dwelling on it?"

The curls of smoke twisted in the air above his head and the cigarette bud brooded between his lips. Taking four strips of wood Sammy slid them together to form a frame and laid it in the center of the canvas. Sammy drew the fine length of canvas over the wooden frame on two sides, and then the other two, folding down the canvas edges like wrapping a present. As he pulled the canvas tight over the frame Jamie Leigh saw the clump of muscle shift and tighten across his forearm. He drew up a staple gun to press to the corners.

He spoke slowly.

"You do have eyes of your own to see... don't you know?" staple, staple. "These paintings—my work, earn me more money than I can spend—" staple, staple. "Every night," he momentarily smiled, shaking his head, "I get stinking drunk off the best wine and scotch—" staple, staple.

"Don't you know?" the cigarette pivoted around and pointed at her, and then pointed away. "Well, you should know," he shuffled the canvas around to the next corner, "Because every week, if I prefer, I will fuck a new woman," staple, staple. "I no longer have secret passions. Every brushstroke has come from the memory of you."

The heels clicked back a step.

He dabbed the ashes of his cigarette into a tray.

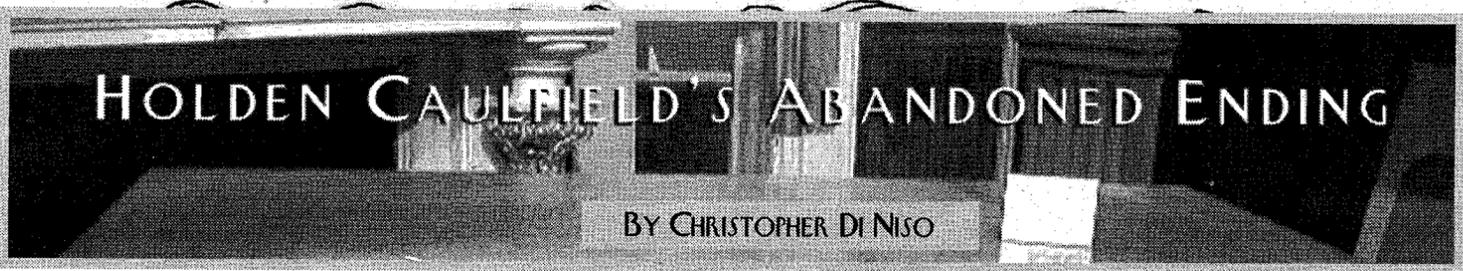
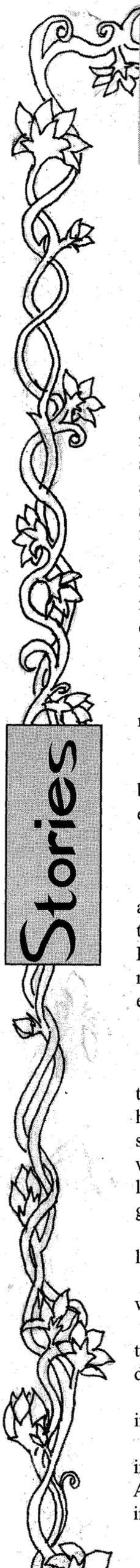
"Sam..."

He set the canvas on an easel and smoothed his hand across the surface. It was pulled tight and good, and he was satisfied with its construction.

He said it was nice of her to stop by tonight, and then asked her to go.

She went to say something more but stopped. Reluctantly, and then loudly, the high heels clicked away toward the elevator doors. As he stood before the fresh canvas Jamie Leigh looked back to see him put out his cigarette and draw up a brush to begin.

Stories



## HOLDEN CAULFIELD'S ABANDONED ENDING

BY CHRISTOPHER DENISO

"So who's Holden Caulfield?"

I didn't immediately answer her; I was too busy kicking myself for leaving the door open again. Just leaving the door unlocked was more than enough of an invitation for Kendra to just walk right into your dorm and sift through all your personal things. I didn't even bother to raise my head to see who it was, let alone get up from my chair. After a few seconds to recompose myself and let her know I wasn't interested in talking to her, I asked her if she really didn't know who Holden Caulfield was.

"No" she responded, "Why?"

At this point I realized exactly why she had asked me who Holden Caulfield was. On my door, among the dozens of pictures, drawings and poems was a quote taken from Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, signed by its title character 'Holden Caulfield.' Kendra hadn't recognized that Holden was a fictional character, not some friend of mine who had written some random words on my door. Why she was bothering to ask who Holden Caulfield was simple; she had this compulsion to not only personally know everyone on campus, but to know as much as possible about everyone that they knew. For example she can recall the name and age of my cousin in Minnesota who I've seen only once in my lifetime. I can barely remember her last name yet I'm sure Kendra can tell me even before I finish asking her that question. She has an incredible memory, she's attempting to reach a perfect 4.0 grade point average and there isn't a group or campus event she doesn't at the very least know about. But for all this her one flaw is that she is absolutely the most gullible person I have ever met. With this in mind I scolded her for not knowing who Holden Caulfield was, as he was one of my best friends in the building. I told her how he lived a mere three doors away from my dorm, which was only around the corner from Kendra's room. Her eyes brightened upon learning of the existence of someone else she could add to her collection of friends.

"Really?" she said enthusiastically, "how could I have never met him?"

"I don't know" I responded, "he usually goes home for the weekends to the city, but still you should have ran into him before."

"I really should have? How could I have not met him before? What's he look like?"

I responded with an answer taken straight from what I knew of Holden from the pages of Salinger; "he's a bit taller than me, slightly graying hair on the side of his head and he's constantly wearing this red hunting hat almost everywhere he goes."

With my last line Kendra developed a look on her face as if she were about to go into a deep meditation.

"I've definitely seen him in the halls before, but I don't think I know him... I might but I'm not sure."

I knew full well she had never seen Holden. I knew it wasn't even remotely possible for her to have seen anyone like that in our dormitory. My guess was that the sheer thought of not knowing someone who lived so close to her own room was killing her to the point where she felt it was an embarrassment to say she had never even seen Holden before. I always enjoy when she buys into whatever ridiculous conversation it is that I create, but I liked the new aspect this time of seeing Kendra trying to save face, to claim to have seen someone who didn't even really exist.

"Well, he's pretty well known." I continued, "He was in that checkers tournament like two weeks ago."

"We had a checkers tournament?" she managed to stammer out from behind her shocked eyes.

"Oh yea, it was incredible. I never thought checkers could be so exciting but, jeez, it was just insane. Holden there" I said pointing in the direction of where his fictional dorm room was, "placed second in the tourney. He would have won it all but tragically he never moved his kings from the back row." I then proceeded to let out an audible sigh for her to hear me feigning disappointment. Kendra put on a genuine sympathetic face in response. I'm sure it was actually for the tragedy of Holden losing over something so simple but I'm sure at the same time she was lamenting the fact she had missed out on a major campus event. I decided to try to continue to see how far I could get without her beginning to question whether or not I was telling her the truth.

"He's also the starting catcher for the division III baseball team. Someone wrote an article on him sometime last month in the Advance. Something about how he wrote poems in his catcher's mitt."

"Well, whatever" Kendra said, displaying the fact she was becoming frustrated with not being acquainted with someone who I apparently knew so well. "What does what he wrote on your door mean?"

The quote on the door basically was about Holden's fascination of 'where the ducks go during the winter.' I told her I had no idea what he meant by what he had written on my door, I just assumed that "Holden just loves the ducks, I guess."

"But that doesn't make any sense. Everyone knows that the ducks go south for the winter" she proudly informed me.

I decided I wouldn't even admit the truth regarding something as obvious as the fact that ducks fly south during the winter. I quickly produced a long explanation of how the Discovery Channel in conjunction with the North American Scientific Journal, if there was such a group, had recently proven that the ducks don't really go south during the winter. That the ducks go to the same place that the fish go during the winter.

In a frustrated tone Kendra asked me "Well, where do they go then?"

"They stay right where they are" I said in a tone that carried a slight sense of melancholy that surprised even me. I would have dwelled a bit on it but Kendra apparently wanted to get to the root of whether or not Holden really lived in our building. She quickly requested that I tell her what room he lived in so I told her that he lived in room 331, a room that had been abandoned for at least the past year due to a water leak that school officials could never find the source of. Kendra knew this too and was puzzled when she heard it.

"I thought that room was empty."

"Well" I said, "it was like five or six weeks ago until Holden and J.D. moved in."

"J.D.?" she inquired.

"Yeah" I said matter-of-factly, "J.D. Salinger. Holden's roommate? If you don't know him then I don't know what to say Kendra, I've lost all faith in you." As I looked at her face I saw I had possibly carried this on too long. She then proceeded to go into a mini tirade recounting the numerous times I had fooled her before, and asked if this time

I was telling the truth, to which I swore to her I was.

"Go find out for yourself" I urged her. "He might have come back by now." She poked her head out my door to the hallway just as two kids I didn't know walked past my room. Kendra thankfully began to follow them in order to say her hellos and go through her routine of going out of her way to be over-friendly to her fellow peers. I heard something about how such and such was doing in Boston U and I decided to get back to my essay which I had put off for weeks now. Or at the very least I wanted to pretend to be going through the motions of working on my essay. I took out my notepad and stared hard at the white pages with their blue lines, looking for some reason to procrastinate. My eyes moved about the room, using the excuse that I needed to make sure that Kendra hadn't disturbed anything important during her visit. The only thing I noticed that seemed to have been moved was the envelope from a letter my mother had sent me. Apparently at some point Kendra had been looking at it, surely to memorize my home address to add to the accumulation of knowledge she had already picked up on me already. All the letters I received were always from my mother, everything was always in her handwriting, in her words yet it was always conspicuously signed by both my parents on the bottom of the card. My father wasn't one for saying anything sentimental or emotional to me. I can't even recall one instance of the two of us bonding in any form when I was a kid. He was always cold and distant. I always felt like it was because his job demanded him to be like that. He worked as a Police officer, and before that in Corrections. Both obviously required some form of a serious attitude in order to achieve success in their respective fields. But what always threw this theory off was that he was a completely different person around his friends. He laughed, he smiled, and he joked around. The father I had didn't do any of these things. I got intimidating stares. I got to be reprimanded for simple things like how to hold a pen or how to eat a potato properly. I got told constantly that in the real world people couldn't be trusted, that everything was about fighting for yourself and only yourself. That in this reality there was absolutely no one there to help you. That's all fine advice and all but all I wanted was to just connect with my father the same way everyone else connected with theirs. I didn't want to be sternly told before the age of thirteen that I needed to grow up. I wanted him to play catch like the father next door did with his son. We never did anything together and I've always felt like I've missed out on that in my childhood. That somewhere along the way I never got to learn how it is that you're supposed to bond with other people. For the majority of my life I've been a rather shy person and I attribute that solely to the fact that that's how my father made me feel. That he made me feel isolated from him. I know it's an excuse but I keep falling back on it every time I run into some sort of situation where I fail to express what I want to say to someone. It sounds cheesy but even now I'd just settle for a handshake as a sign of acceptance from him. As some sort of form of bonding between us, but I sadly don't even get that. The best I can muster is a card signed 'Dad' by my mother. It just seems that he was never really meant to take care of children. It was never in his nature to raise his kids in the same loving expressive way everyone else did. Maybe one day I'll be able to reach into my mailbox and pull out a card that says 'To Damon' written in my father's handwriting. I sat staring at the envelope, twisting the flap back and forth with my thumb. I didn't even notice Kendra walk back into my room until her voice broke the meditative silence I was slowly sinking into. As a matter of fact it shattered it. "I just talked to Effi and Dean, and neither of them has ever heard of Holden Caulfield" she informed me. She always has this bad habit of talking much too loud right when you didn't need her to. The chances of this happening increased if she was also the person you least wanted to see at the moment.

"Your joking me" I responded in as mellow a voice as possible yet loud enough for her to hear it. I was hoping that she would realize that I wasn't interested in talking to her but of course she wasn't going to be going anywhere.

"No, I'm not" she said. "I'm being serious, they had no idea." I asked her if she had actually knocked on the Holden's door to find out whether or not he lived there. She let out a defiant no as if the mere prospect of carrying out such a suggestion was insane.

"I don't know them, they're your friends."

"Like that's ever stopped you before" I told her, "you walk into my room without asking all the time."

"Well I know you" she said.

And almost as swiftly as she said this I replied in an agitated tone that no, she didn't know me at all. That she just "thinks she knows me." She then proceeded to go into a short speech relating all the information she had collected from me over the past year before I abruptly stopped her short somewhere in-between a recounting of my Irish heritage.

# HOLDEN CAULFIELD'S ABANDONED ENDING

BY CHRISTOPHER DI NISO

...CONTINUED

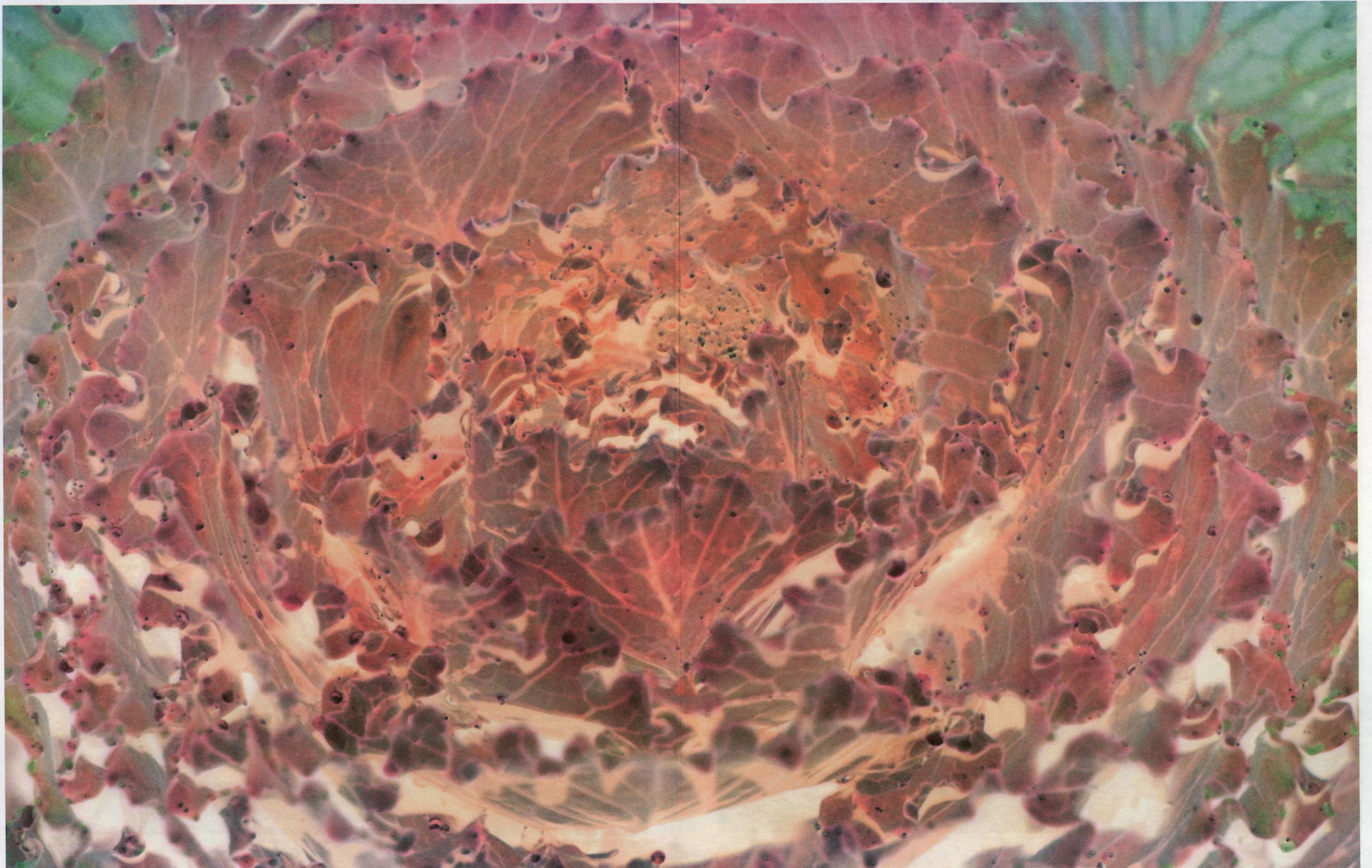
"Yeah, yeah, I know you know me Kendra" I said in an apologetic manner. "I was just joking around with you, I'm sorry and all that." I then reached out my left hand and pulled out a worn red copy of Salinger's The Catcher in the Rye from the piles of books I had laying around my desk. I flipped through a few pages and upon finding a paragraph that to me made it clear that Holden Caulfield was nothing more than a fictional character, I called Kendra over and handed her the book, making sure to tell her to read the section I had just highlighted. As she read I could see her countenance altered. Her eyes narrowed and when she finished she slammed the book back down on my desk.

"That's amazing! He has the same name as Holden."

I swear if it was not for the fact that I don't believe that Kendra is capable of doing it, I would have sworn she was playing a trick on me. But before I could find out her attention turned to a cache of old notebooks lying behind me on a table. I would have instantly chastised her if it wasn't for the phone ringing. I picked up the generic black receiver that could be found in ever room on this floor and sadly on the other end of the line was my girlfriend. Now I know that sounds sort of hypocritical considering that I regarded this woman as my girlfriend, but most of the time I wished she wasn't. Phone calls were always a nuisance when it involved Ember. She showed no mercy in her attacks on me for things that I ultimately wasn't the real cause of. I barely even talked anymore during our conversations. The importance of what I had to say had been slowly weeded out over the last two years until I was left with a vocabulary consisting of such words as 'ok' or 'yeah' or simple phrases like 'I'm sorry.' The truth is I really didn't even pay attention anymore to what she was saying when she called me on the phone. It was always the same thing rehashed in a new way. This time I moved myself to my window and watched the cars, drunkards and various assholes make there way through the student parking lot as she began her mission to make me feel guilty for crimes where I was innocent, but would always be found guilty of. I marveled at the rust colored lights glowing above the cold grey concrete streets as Ember told me how she was sure she had failed her midterm earlier that day, of how it wasn't really her fault. She told me how her teacher had failed to inform her of this and that, to properly explain the formula she needed for question number twelve, how I had failed to give her enough support which in turn lowered her confidence and caused her to test badly on the exams this year. She always blamed everyone else for anything that ever went even remotely wrong in her life. Everyone but herself that is. The one rule of who was to blame in Ember's mind was that it was in no way her own fault. She diagnosed herself with millions of ailments in order to escape the accountability of having to take responsibility for her own disasters that were no one's fault but her own. This was just one aspect of how things between me and Ember soured. What was more important in explaining why things had gotten this way was that she refused to understand anything about me yet she always becomes upset when I don't understand even the stupidest of things about her. And what really troubles me is the fact that a good amount of the time she actually makes me feel guilty for things that I have nothing to do with. Last month I read a three hundred page book and typed a six page essay for her for the simple reason that she made me feel guilty if I refused to do it. When I put in all the work and got her a B+, I never really received any appreciation for it. I just got to hear even more about the exaggerated sadness that was consuming her life. That's what has always pissed me off about her, that's the reason I want to break up with her but I often find that I can't. Even despite the fact I find I've done more than I should have for her, I can never find myself cold enough to turn her away. Really what still keeps me as her boyfriend is the fear of shattering her poor heart if I did leave her. Every time I seem to come to the conclusion that I have to break up with her once and for all I'm always flooded with a vision of possibly pushing her over the edge once and for all. Her high school years were laced with light but steady bouts of depression and the occasional flirtation with suicide. And what scares me is that her attempts at hurting herself always stemmed from the most ridiculous of things such as failing a class, or having one person display even the slightest resentment to her. For Ember, everything in her life had to be a bigger tragedy than what happened to everyone else. If someone's cat died she recalled how she was still in even greater pain regarding her dog that had died six years earlier. If I told her I felt like I was being swamped by dozens of tests, she would suddenly conjure up three dozen for herself. Basically whatever tragedy someone else had never measured up to the melancholy that to Ember was her life. Every problem was accentuated past the point where it was still within its realistic boundaries. Breaking up with her wouldn't have just been breaking up, it would have been a sign that the apocalypse was arriving. But nonetheless my desire for us to break-up is always there, I just never seem to be able to go through with it. We spend very little time together as it is, which can be attributed almost directly to my not wanting to spend time with her. I'm always trying to find excuses to exclude myself from whatever she has planned for us to be doing as such things have become strictly her choice only. But besides not wanting to go places with her anymore or even talk to her, I also don't want to have to make out with her anymore. Our relationship has no passion in it at all, no love despite the generic 'I love you' we lie and say to each other. I'm with her simply because at some point years ago I somehow found her to be a nice girl, and secondly because I was too shy in High School not to accept her advances on me. For Ember on the other hand, I believe the only reason she still wants to hold onto me is that she fears that there will never be anyone else who will accept the same shit she puts me through. Neither of us really loves the other yet we still say that we do to ourselves; we're still in this relationship for all the wrong reasons. Personally I wish I had broken this off long ago because what I really want to do is to at least make some attempt to express the crush I have on my best friend Aubrey before the possibility of doing that is gone forever. We talk almost every day and honestly I really do believe that I might love her. The problem is that I could never tell Aubrey as long as I'm still in a relationship with Ember. And what made things worse was that even if I had dumped my girlfriend, Aubrey was already seeing someone else. What killed me about Aubrey's boyfriend was that he was similar to me in so many ways that it was as if I was the type of guy she liked. The second aspect that bothered me to no end about him was that he



Photo by Brian Wasser



*Joy Komars*

*Joy Komars*

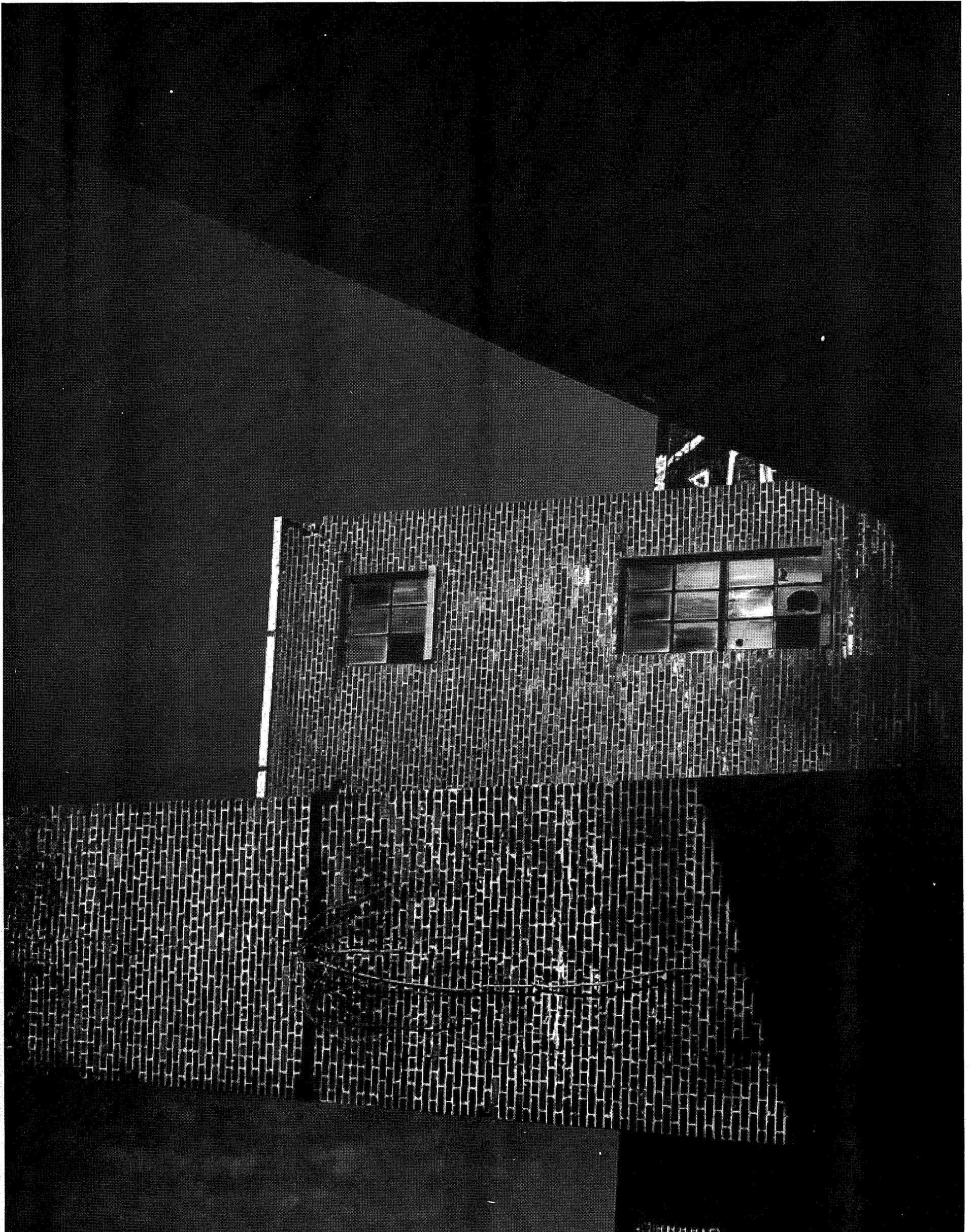


Photo by Brian Wasser

# HOLDEN CAULFIELD'S ABANDONED ENDING

BY CHRISTOPHER DI NISO

...CONTINUED

treated her like shit which was something I could never do to her. I barely could stand to allow her current boyfriend to do that, let alone do that to her myself. After staring out the window for what seemed an eternity, Ember and I said our good-byes and good-nights. I imagined I was saying good-bye to her for the final time as I looked out into the parking lot. That I had finally broken away from a girl who never really cared about me at all. That I'd be free to tell my best friend just how much I loved her. This once again got me thinking of just why I couldn't do it. If I wanted to I could surely break things off with Ember. I know the consequences might have been bad for Ember but realistically what reason did I have for my own sake to stay with her? For as long as I can remember I've shied away from my own personal responsibility to myself time and time again. Albeit it's selfish, but did I really owe it to myself to stay in a relationship like this? Where I felt we had no future except to have one person constantly creating her own mini-dramas for her partner to feel sorry for? I couldn't keep blaming my fear of taking personal responsibility for what happens to me in my life, or forever faulting my father for not being able to express myself. I can't keep distancing myself from the majority of people like Kendra who were honestly trying to go out of there way to get to know me. I turned around from my window to find Kendra sitting on my table, skimming through the same old notebooks she had picked up when the phone had first rang. I decided to finally express myself to someone, to Ember, to Aubrey, to Kendra. I would finally break up with my girlfriend, I would finally reveal my feelings to my best friend, and I planned on starting to fulfill this epiphany by telling Kendra everything; regarding me, Ember, Aubrey and how I was sorry for lying to Kendra so many times before. Just as my mouth opened and readied itself to pronounce the words I wanted it to say Kendra cut me off.

"Whose notebooks are these?" she asked

I sunk lower into my seat and solemnly replied "They're Holden's notebooks," as my eyes turned back towards the same unchanging view of the austere parking lot outside of my window.



*Martini Slave (Ink and Lead)*  
Steph Hayes

Stories

# STATIC

BY DAVID K. GINN

## Stories

"Well, where does she come from?"

Tom just stared back at his wife, unable to answer. The truth was that neither of them knew.

"We have to find out, you know. We can't just let her stay here without knowing anything. To tell you the truth I'm a little scared."

Tom nodded. He'd known all of this from the very beginning. Mary, on the other hand, could never quite grasp certain ideas unless she discussed them with someone else. It had been that way since he'd met her, years ago. Even when Tom had known that it would be best for Angela to move out Mary didn't understand until she found herself saying it out loud. Angela was their oldest daughter, now in college.

Mary sat down and removed one of her hands from her face. This was a good sign. This meant that she had relaxed, which in any case meant that something productive was bound to happen. Mary was an amazing woman, youthful and ambitious, capable of just about anything. The only problem was getting her to relax. When she had one hand on her cheek and the other behind her neck you could quickly forget that she was one of the most sought after architects in New York.

But she had settled down again, and the hand that had been behind her neck now ran casually through her hair. Hold thee bridges high, Mary hath returned.

"Mare," he began quietly, leaning slightly over the kitchen table to show his interest. "we're going to find out today, okay? Just-" he stopped, searching for a word but finding nothing helpful. Talking to Mary about things like this required a unique skill. It made Tom think of a soldier trying not to get caught in trip-wire. "just take it easy and we'll figure it out."

She looked up at him, apparently glad he hadn't said *calm down* or *relax*. *Take it easy* was a casual, lightening term, and for now it seemed to work with Mary. Tom wasn't sure how long it would be before *take it easy* would start to flip her switches, but for now it was a dependable safe-post. She smiled lightly. "I got worked up again, didn't I?"

Tom nodded and smiled. That smile said *I'm on your side, honey*.

She got up and stretched in the sunlight that came in through the dome-shaped skylight in the ceiling. Watching as her gray t-shirt pulled up from her stomach and revealed her smooth, rounded figure, Tom was reminded of how little she had changed since he'd met her years ago, probably even since high school. She crossed her arms and stretched down, sighing outwardly. She sat down again and lit a cigarette.

"John and Ashley are outside on the swings. Jason is out at the store, I think. Later on tonight we should all sit down, and maybe then-"

"How's Jason doing with this?"

Tom shrugged. "I guess he's doing just fine. I don't really know much more about what he does than you do. He seems to have taken a liking to her, which is good. She seems like she could use a friend. But, like I said, I don't know much about what he does these days."

Mary nodded. "Yeah, I don't really know either. He hasn't been home for dinner in three months, but somehow every morning his car is there in the driveway. It just pisses me off, Tom."

"What do you think he does?" Tom asked.

Mary sat silently, smoking, seeming to bite her tongue.

"You don't think he's on drugs?"

Mary put her cigarette out in the ashtray, half of it still white and unused. Tom was somewhat surprised. Obviously she had suspected something was wrong with her son and she had figured it out without talking about it. In a way it made her seem almost wise.

Tom lit a cigarette of his own. "Listen, Mare, I'm sure everything's fine with this girl, okay? Tonight, if we can grab Jason before he leaves again, we'll all sit down and talk about this."

Mary looked up at him, once again with some sort of shaded understanding that could only be described as wisdom. "Jason hasn't gone out for the past three nights."

Tom put his feet up on one of the stools and took a drag from his cigarette. "Man, this is too much."

There was a room on the far end of the hallway upstairs, next to the linen closet and closest to the bathroom across the hall. The door was a white-sided wooden press with a bronze handle in place of a knob. Light gray molding ran around the door on both sides, giving a middle ground between the door and the dark gray wall of the hallway. The faded bronze handle stood alone amongst the silver-gray knobs in the hallway. This room was the guest room.

Inside was a computer, an adjustable futon, a shiny little nightstand with a chrome lamp and a faded-gray filing cabinet. There was a collection of videocassettes but no television. An older model vacuum with a dirty green canvas stood in the corner behind the futon, which had been folded out to form a double-sized bed.

A blue comforter was thrown over the bed carelessly along with a feathered pillow with a red case. The door

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to the room opened slowly, moving the shadows cast by the lamp and the computer area across the bed, against the wall by the window, and back into the darkness by the coat closet where they finally came to rest. A curious head peeked in through the light of the hallway and retracted the same way, shutting the door as he left and restoring the shadows to their proper place.

Jason opened the door to his own room with unusual caution. His room was always one place he never had to be cautious about. His room was comfortable, inviting, and at the same time dark and maybe even a bit gloomy. But it wasn't these things that made his room safe. It was more than comfortable in there; it was comforting. There was never any reason to be afraid.

So when he turned the silver handle to his door and stepped in with the careful expectancy of a man trying to stalk a burglar, he was immediately aware of how awkward the situation was already. But somehow he knew that things would be even stranger when he finally got both feet into the door, and so without further hesitation he decided it was now or never.

*You know what's in there, he told himself. you know and if you have any intentions of entering your room tonight you're going to have to make sure.*

He stepped into the room and turned on the light.

She froze.

She'd had just enough time to spin around quickly on her feet before she came to an idle stop. Now she just looked at him, and suddenly he could tell that there was more pain there than fear. Something was really bothering her, making her seem both helpless and guilty at the same time. She blinked just once and a chill ran through her arms.

Jason stepped forward and dropped his bag to the floor. He threw his keys onto the armchair to his left and threw his coat on top. He looked around the room once more, casual as a man coming home to his wife. He picked up his cell phone from the nightstand by his bed and checked the messages. Just one tonight, and he could call them back in the morning. He looked up at the girl standing between the foot of his bed and his long-standing childhood dresser, trying to think of something to say that wouldn't reflect the real fear he was feeling right now.

"Jennifer," he said. "why were you in my room in the dark?"

She looked at him complacently, needing a moment to realize that she should respond to the question. "I-" she began, stammering just a little. "I-I didn't think you mind, but I did-didn't want anyone t-to n-know. I- I'm sorry, I-I'll go now."

She began to walk toward the door but Jason put a hand out, meaning that she could relax. "I'm not upset or anything. I was just curious as to why you were in here in the first place."

She stepped closer, less afraid now but guilty and apologetic all the same. He couldn't help but feel sorry himself, seeing how her eyes never dropped but seem to sink back and retract to the part of her face reserved for those awkward moments when she does something wrong. "It's comfortable in here. I like it in here."

He smiled, nodding his head, and suddenly it seemed that all the strings that might have been holding her together were cut loose and left to fall on the black carpet beneath her. Her face relaxed, and he saw with some relief that she was smiling. And it was a pretty smile. In fact, it was the most amazing smile he'd ever seen, partly because she was how she was and mostly because he had never felt such a deep sorrow and elating joy at the same time while talking with someone. He dropped back to the defensive and shrugged his shoulders.

"I'm sorry," he said. "I'm like, all weird and everything. I didn't mean to scare you."

She shook her head, still smiling. "It's okay. I'm the one who's sorry. I didn't mean to scare you."

He nodded. "If it's uncomfortable in the guest room you can sleep here tonight. I'll bring my stuff out to the computer room and crash there. It doesn't bother me much."

"No," she said quickly. "No, that's okay. It's not uncomfortable in there at all. It's just that I like your room."

He looked at her for a moment without saying anything. She was a bit shorter than he was, with short black hair that was parted in the middle and came down the sides of her face in smooth, pointed locks. Her eyes were lined black and her lashes seemed to have gotten the same treatment. Near the part of her hair a red glow branched out and ran down the sides in only a few places. She wore red lipstick and a choker collar with a diamond in the middle. He hadn't asked her if it was a real diamond, and he probably never would. He never cared about such things and hoped that his conscious but polite disinterest might encourage others as well.

She was a freak, and there was no doubt about that. She was the very definition of what a freak should be. She was the ideal freak that all the other freaks are freaked out by. She could never have any friends because even the most terrible of freaks wouldn't want much to do with her.

But she was beautiful.

Yes, she was beautiful, but it didn't really matter much with her. There was too much going on in the vast clockwork of her brain to make her seem normal for even a second. He was probably the first person who'd realized how beautiful she really was. And that was only because she smiled. She smiled a certain kind of smile that caused the veil of insanity and deep-rooted agony to fly from her face and reveal some kind of beautiful stranger

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underneath.

As he began to see this he became frightened. He quickly called upon the other part of his mind to bring that veil back. It was a fool's errand to even suspect that there might be some sort of real person under there, let alone a beautiful young girl. It was just too much to take on all at once.

He snapped back out of it and she became once again the strange and troubled girl who had snuck into his room while he was out for the night. And that made it easier to deal with. So much easier.

He looked up at the quartz wall clock hanging above the dresser. Eleven-thirty. Too late to be dealing with psycho house-guest. Time to sleep. Yes, definitely time to sleep.

"Well then," he said, breaking the moment. "you'd better get some sleep tonight. If you want you can come in and talk tomorrow morning. I'm usually here when I'm home, so you can just come in any time if you're bored or anything."

She smiled again, and Jason was reminded once more of that veil being lifted up again, revealing a sweet and beautiful face underneath. He shook it off quickly and held the door open for her.

As she stepped out into the hallway he felt himself about to say something. He hesitated at first, then decided it would be polite if nothing else. "If you do get uncomfortable during the night, just knock on the door and I'll let you stay in here."

Once again she smiled. "Okay," she said, and disappeared into the shadows of the guest bedroom.

At a quarter past one there was a knock on the door.

Jason walked over and opened it, knowing and expecting what he would see on the other side. Jennifer was staring straight forward, half-guilty and half-smiling. It was a weird expression, made even stranger by the dark shadows under her eyes.

"Hey, Jennifer," he said patiently, almost nervously. Looking at her now he felt even more sympathy for this girl, this strange girl without any home close by and possibly quite a distance from sanity as well. "What's up?"

She looked at him for a moment, afraid to speak but readying herself just the same. "I- I can't sleep. Do you think I could- that I could-"

Jason nodded. He'd been expecting this. He opened the door all the way and invited her in. "There's the floor, the couch, and the bed. Make yourself comfortable on whichever one suits you. I'll be in the guestroom if you need anything."

He was beginning to grab his pillows when he felt her hand around his forearm. She was kneeling on the bed, pleading and scared. "Don't leave me alone," she said. "I don't want to be alone again."

For a moment he didn't know what to say. He took a deep breath. "I can lay out on the couch and you can stay on the bed, if you want."

She nodded. This seemed to satisfy the both of them.

She lay down on the bed while Jason brought the blankets over to her. He sat on the edge of the bed a moment, wanting to ask her something, anything, about herself. Who she was, where she came from. Finally he decided it could wait. It would have to.

As he was getting up she spoke, making him stop and sit back down. She spoke in a calm but frightened tone just above a whisper. "Is it true?" she asked.

"Is what true?"

"What your parents said."

Jason shrugged. "What did they say?"

"They said that you're an addict. Is that true?"

Jason smiled a little, as if it hadn't surprised him a bit. "My parents told you that I was an addict?"

She shook her head.

"Then what did they tell you?"

"Nothing. They were talking to each other, but I could hear them. I wasn't trying to, but I heard them all the same. They're afraid of me, you know."

Jason stared at her, frozen. *They're afraid of me, you know.* Jesus. He could feel the hairs on the back of his neck standing up. "Why are they afraid of you?"

"Why are you on drugs?"

He tried to smile but found that he couldn't. *They're afraid of me, you know.* "I'm not on drugs. I've never been"

She only looked back at him, seeming surprised herself.

"My father used to listen to Credence," she said. "He liked all the old stuff. I would sit in the living room with him while he listened to the radio." She lowered her eyes. "He wouldn't do anything else while he did that. He would just sit in his chair or on the couch and listen. It was as if- as if the radio were some kind of time machine that brought him back to his childhood every Thursday night after bowling. I always told myself that one day I'd be just like him, happy and calm and able to just-" she paused. "Just listen."

Jason lowered himself down on one elbow, too tired to sit but too interested to walk away. "Where's your

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father now?" he asked.

She closed her eyes, and for a moment in the dark Jason could swear he saw a tear roll down one cheek and land on the black silk pillow under her ear. "He's gone."

"I'm sorry." Jason said.

Jennifer looked back up at him, smiling. "I've been on my own for four months."

Jason nodded along. Somehow, laying next to this crazy stranger made him feel better than he'd felt in a while. He felt at peace. Comfortable. He opened his eyes and saw her, head bowed and eyes shut. He closed his eyes again and was just about to go to sleep when he heard her voice, faint but there all the same.

"There is no reason, and the truth is plain to see."

He opened his eyes. "What did you just say?"

"But I wandered through my playing cards, and would not let her be... one of sixteen vestal virgins, who were leaving for the coast." she took a deep breath, nearly a sigh, then continued. "And although my eyes were open, they might have just as well've been closed."

Jason put his hand out on her shoulder and finished for her. "She said, 'I'm home on shore leave', though in truth we were at sea."

She opened her eyes and looked at him, and he looked right back at her. "Why did you say that?"

"No reason."

Jason looked at her still, his eyes inquiring.

"I'm sorry. I thought you'd want to hear it. It's really beautiful. I can hear it, you know. It's much clearer now. I can feel it. All the static is gone."

Mary lifted the kettle from the stove and set it back down on the cooler burner behind it. She reached into the cabinet above her shoulder on the right, pulled out a matching white and green teacup and saucer, and set them down on the counter. She moved the kettle to the burner on her far left before setting the teacup neatly on the saucer.

There was a trio of small black jars under the tea cabinet, each ranging in size so that the biggest, on the left, was six inches high, and the smallest, on the right, was about half that. Mary removed the black-polished lid from the largest of the three and fumbled around absently for a peppermint-flavored teabag.

When her fingers brushed by the small paper casing she took it out quickly and stripped open the white and green cover. It never occurred to her that the bag matched the cup and saucer.

She lay the bag in the cup, letting the small paper leaf hang over the edge in its endless suspension from the white string. Grabbing the kettle with one hand she shifted the cup-and-saucer set up to meet it half way.

She held the cup carefully by the handle as she flipped the top of the kettle open and poured the boiling water over the teabag. The steam immediately rushed up to greet her. It smelled pure. It smelled fresh. It smelled like the absolute most amazing peppermint she had ever seen before. She let the steam flow through her senses for another minute and a half before the setting the kettle back down and sliding the saucer further towards the kitchen sink.

She closed her eyes and breathed deeply as she brought the cup to her mouth, trying but finding no way to prepare herself for the moment when the fresh water would reach her lips.

It was a sensory overload. Just as the hot taste of tea filled her mouth she felt the sudden rush of peppermint-aroma searing up through her body. For just that moment she could *feel* its smell, rushing through her, massaging her body as it lifted her up and off the ground.

When she opened her eyes she felt good. She felt very good. There are some people who believe that good sex is the best way to relieve stress. Credit given as credit due, Mary couldn't deny that whoever thought that up was pretty damn close to the right answer. But obviously that person had never had peppermint-flavored tea before.

She sat down at the wooden table and let her problems fly away with the birds. As she closed her eyes again she felt a comfortable smile reform on her newly replenished lips; such a comfortable smile that she-

The kettle screamed. Mary jumped, nearly dropped the cup, but was saved instead by releasing half a cup of boiling-hot tea water onto her lap. She had one cringing moment to imagine that now it really did look like she'd had an orgasmic experience. Mixed with the cry from being burned was the uncontrollable urge to laugh out loud. She stood up quickly and moved the kettle back onto the cool burner. She wiped the front of her jeans and sighed.

Just as she was cleaning the water off the floor she heard the front door open and close quickly. There were short, heavy footsteps and then finally she knew that her husband was right behind her, waiting for her to turn around so he could try to make her laugh.

*Well, honey, she thought to herself, it just so happens that I already had my laugh for today. You see, I nearly wet myself over the tea when I had the first sip, and then twenty seconds later the tea wet itself all over my lap. If I was the only one who found that just a bit ironic then maybe I really am losing my mind.*

Instead of saying this or anything like this, she turned around quickly and smiled. Tom was smiling even brighter, holding something tightly in his right hand.

"Hi, honey." she said awkwardly. "What's that you got in your hand?"

Keeping his expression still and without saying anything, he tilted his hand above hers and waited for her

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hand to open. When it did he dropped a set of dangling keys into her open palm.

"Honey, what-?"

"Shh, shh." Tom was nearly beaming now as he took her by the shoulders and brought her to the front door. When she saw what was in the driveway she nearly gasped.

It was the Hyundai 2001, the car she'd wanted for years. How or why it was in her driveway she couldn't explain at all.

"Is that- is it really?"

Tom nodded excitedly. "Yup. It's ours- well, it yours. I know it's the car you've wanted forever, so when I saw it today I picked it up."

"But how could you of- we haven't had any money at all, Tom. I'm not getting paid for at least another year, and even then--"

"I got a raise."

"And even then- what did you just say?"

"I got a raise, Mary. Not just that, but a promotion. Company supervisor. The car was free; they gave me a spending limit and then some exec drove around with me until I found what I wanted. I told him my story, and he said I could still use the Caddy as long as I don't tell anybody else I'm giving the Hyundai to you. So there it is. Are you happy?"

"Of course I'm happy. My God, honey, this is great. God, yes, I'm happy. So- so tell me all about this. What happened?"

As Tom took her into the kitchen and told her about his promotion, a silent figure crept down the stairs through the living room. Just as the figure was about to turn and head for the dining room, the small creak at the bottom of the stairs gave it away.

"Jason, is that you?"

He considered not answering. Maybe if he just stood still for a moment on the creaky step they would forget about it and go back to their conversation. On second thought, if they came over to see what the noise was, he'd have to explain why he didn't answer. He took a deep breath and went for the kitchen.

He smiled as he entered and then went immediately for the cabinets, seeing this as a good time to get food for his guest.

"Hey, Jason, you'll never guess what happened."

Jason turned around quickly, a box of crackers in one hand. "What happened, mom?"

"Tom got a promotion today. Now he's company supervisor. This means we've finally got an even break."

"That's great." Jason paused, knowing his response was authentic but not sure it came out that way. Oh well. No bother. "That's great news, Tom. I guess this means we're gonna be alright, after all. I'm very happy for you." He turned around and tried for the stairs again, hoping he hadn't left too quickly.

Apparently he had. They still had one more question to ask him.

"Jason," Mary began, not quite sure what to say next. "we're worried about you."

Jason lowered his head and smiled. When he looked back at up neither his mother or his step-father were smiling with him. They were serious. Somehow, somehow, they really were worried about him. Well, here goes nothing.

"What do you mean?"

"I mean we're worried that maybe you- well, that you might not be happy, and maybe--"

Jason looked at them both carefully, bringing his eyes studiously from one to the other. "I'm fine, mom. I'm everything's just fine. I've just been busy, that's all."

"Have you met Jennifer?" Tom asked, seeing how a change of subject might save the cheerful mood from complete annihilation.

Jason's smile faded a little. "Yeah, I think I saw her yesterday. She's staying with us for a while, I guess?"

"Well, until we can find out where she belongs." Mary said.

"Oh. Well, I hope everything turns out well with that."

Mary looked down at her hands, which were folded over the new car keys. She looked back up at Jason. "She seems a little bit... strange. We talked to a doctor already, and he says to bring her in on Tuesday, after the holiday. Says it's probably selective memory loss, or something like that. Probably she ran into trouble somewhere, and tried to make herself forget. He says he's gonna start putting her through the system, you know, to find if she has any family and all, but he also said he wanted to see her first. He told us we don't have to keep her here, and that it might actually be dangerous, but it seems like the right thing. Where else is she gonna go? What I'm trying to say is... just be careful. Go into your room, and don't go near her. You never know what she could be... well, capable of."

Jason nodded. "I'll keep that in mind. Thanks." He turned for the stairs again, then pivoted and turned back. "Congratulations, again. I'm really glad everything worked out."

He crept back up the stairs carrying breakfast for the sleeping girl, who was curled up tightly under the silk

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blanket.

Jason sat in his room, looking through his music collection. It was Friday. Two days had passed since he'd spoken with his parents. Jennifer had gotten accustomed to sleeping in his room, and he didn't argue about it. He liked her being there. It was comforting.

Now she was looking through his dresser drawers. He thought about asking her to stop, then decided it wasn't worth it. She could look through, if it was what she wanted to do.

She looked over at him and smiled. Once again he found himself warmed by the sight of it. She pulled her hand out of the drawer and revealed a tin with Pink Floyd's *Dark Side of the Moon* logo on it. "Is this where you keep your personal things?"

Jason winced. "That's really none of your business."

Jennifer's smile brightened. "Oh really?"

Jason got up and wrestled the tin out of her hands. "That's bad," he said. "No more looking through my stuff."

She turned away obediently but glanced over at a picture standing on the dresser. "Are those your friends?"

Jason nodded. "Those were my friends. From a while back." He carefully put the tin back in the drawer and closed it quietly.

Jennifer's smile faded. Her eyes scanned all the objects on the dresser. "But they're not your friends anymore?"

Jason shook his head. "It's kind of a long story. It doesn't really matter."

"Where are your friends now?"

Jason shrugged. "I don't really have any." He turned to walk away.

Jennifer held the picture in her hands, running her fingers over the glass. She looked up at Jason, who had already turned his back and started back to his chair. "I was thinking- maybe... maybe I could be your friend."

Jason turned back and smiled, musing over what she'd said. He laughed a bit. "Okay."

It was Saturday night. For the past two days Jason had managed to entertain his new houseguest with checkers, backgammon, pop music, philosophy books, comic books and a sketch pad. She'd done three drawings, and they were all, in Jason's eyes, amazing. The first thing she drew was a picture of a boy talking to an old man. At first he didn't get it, but then she told him it was from the book she'd been reading while he was out. She'd said she liked the part where the funny man had to make tea for all the short guys with the beards, and that what she was drawing was where the funny man meets the old man with the big stick. Jason told her it was a perfect drawing.

He'd gone out the day before, and decided to pick up some new clothes for her, since she'd been wearing the same outfit for days. He realized, however, that his sister was probably exactly the same size, and since she was away at college she wouldn't mind if some of her clothes "went missing" for a short time.

When he'd gotten back he found a lot of his books on the floor, and that's when he discovered the drawing. Since then she'd drawn two other drawings: one of a woman with distorted facial features, and the other of his television reflecting a glare from the window.

Now he sat with her on his floor, reading through an old comic. She was sitting cross-legged a foot away from him, reading *Romeo and Juliet*. He'd put on the *Dark Side of the Moon* to answer her questions about the tin. He hoped she wouldn't ask again. Rain trickled down the window as they quietly read.

Jennifer put her book face-down and turned to Jason. "We should get married."

Jason slowly turned to her. "Excuse me?"

"We should get married, just like in the book. We're friends, aren't we?"

He put down the comic and shifted his body. "Jennifer, I don't think you understand—"

Her face revealed all he needed to know: she was hurt. "You don't want to marry me?"

Jason sighed. "It's not that. Don't put it like that."

"But we're friends. Shouldn't friends love each other?"

"Yes, of course- but- there are different kinds of love, Jennifer. Different types—"

"You mean like different levels of existence?"

Jason sat for a moment, not comprehending. "I mean like—"

"Because I thought about it. If things don't slightly exist then neither does love. And if love doesn't slightly exist then the kind of love that a friend- like you- can have for another friend- like me- exists much more than we think it does. That means it's bigger, and it's greater—"

Jason understood where she was getting it from. "Jennifer, I don't think that's what the book is talking about."

"I love you, Jason."

Jason sighed. "I'm sorry."

He looked up at her and saw only one tear falling down her cheek. She looked at him softly. "You could

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kiss me, and maybe you'll know if you love me."

Jason shook his head. "Jennifer, I think you're a wonderful girl."

"You could just kiss me once, and then you can hate me if you want to. But maybe you'll know."

"Jennifer, I can't."

She sat there, on the floor, four feet away from him, her eyes closed. The rain sounded heavier and heavier against the window, and the breeze could be heard rushing up against the house. She was about to open her eyes when she felt the presence of something in front of her. There was no static, no distortion, no-

Her body went numb as she felt his lips press against hers. Her shoulders shivered as if she were underwater. She felt the touch of his hand over her own, and brought it up to press against her face. The warmth was amazing. It was like nothing she'd ever felt before. She opened her eyes and saw him, his eyes concerned and his face full of static. She closed her eyes and moved her mouth towards his, and she felt the touch of his tongue against hers, and of his lips pushing softly onto her. She felt the warm skin of his face, and slowly moved back.

She looked at him, and there was no static. It was just him, himself.

"Please- am I pretty?"

Jason nodded.

"So are you."

He held her body close above his, feeling the cold skin underneath her clothes. He kissed her neck passionately and rolled her onto her back, breathing heavily, afraid. She ran her hands through his hair, amazed at how warm he was. She felt her clothes being pulled off slowly, and in that last moment of full consciousness she felt his warm hand running over her body.

The bed was soft beneath them, like a cloud engulfed in comfortable darkness. She grabbed onto his shoulders as he entered her, and it was unlike anything she had imagined. Her mind slipped beyond the world, and for the first time there was no static at all.

Rain still trickled down the window near the dresser. The room was completely dark save the moon that highlighted their faces as they lay on their sides together, staring in each other's eyes.

"Jason..."

He smiled. "What?"

"That was my first time."

He looked at her, curious but at the same time feeling a deep connection with her. "It was mine too, Jennifer."

"But- but how can that be?"

"I've had opportunities. Many. I was just... never ready. I don't really know why."

"But- but why me?"

"I don't really know why."

"Is it... is it because you love me?"

He paused. "I think that could be it."

It was Sunday morning. Mary walked slowly into the kitchen, her eyes still half-closed. She pushed the button on the coffee maker and left.

Sundays weren't better than any other day. It was the same thing, really. Most of her clients liked to meet on Sundays, because for them it's relaxing to go to lunch and talk about designs on their days off. For her, it was her job.

*Career*, she told herself. *It's my career.*

It really wasn't any use. A career, she knew, was nothing but a job you end up doing for a long time. Calling it a career makes it sound nicer, and perhaps even intentional. It's the word a person will use to convince themselves that they're really living their dreams.

As the smell of coffee began to fill the house, Mary began to wonder what that dream was.

She walked into the bathroom and splashed her face in the basin. She looked up at the mirror and dried her face with a towel. She was wearing a light blue pajama set, made of the softest cotton she'd ever felt. For a second she imagined curling up on the couch and watching T.V., and for a crazy moment fantasized about not changing her clothes at all.

Her top button was undone. She looked from the mirror down to her chest and tried to button it again.

That was when she noticed something she hadn't realized in a long time.

She looked back at the mirror and examined her upper body. She looked up from her chest, to her neck, drawing her gaze in the mirror over her chin and up along her face. She took a step back and pushed her hair back behind her ears.

# STATIC

BY DAVID K. GINN

CONTINUED

She was beautiful. She was absolutely beautiful.

She smiled, feeling a sensation she hadn't felt in years. Keeping her gaze on the mirror, she unbuttoned the second button, and then the third. She took a deep breath and then moved the two halves of the shirt away from her body.

She must have been this attractive for a long time. It was even possible that she never stopped.

She moved her hands up and began to slowly caress her own breasts. She closed her eyes and tilted her head back, transferring the sensation of sight into a sensation of body. Through her closed eyes she began to see.

The phone rang.

She jerked forward and looked around, startled and feeling suddenly a bit awkward. She buttoned her shirt as she walked quickly to the phone.

"Hello?"

Jason opened his eyes and stared at his ceiling. Bit by bit, images from the night began to surface, coming slowly together like shards of glass being reforged. He looked to his right, expecting to see the sleeping girl who would remind him in a single moment of what had happened the night before.

There was no one there.

He got up and started to dress quickly. As he was pulling his shirt on he saw her, laying on the floor with a blanket pulled up to her chin. He sighed.

He thought about waking her up, but then thought better of it. Then he thought even better of that, and realized he was on the right track to begin with. He went to go touch her shoulder, but then started thinking that maybe he was right the second time. He retracted his hand, and was about to go through the same motions again when he stopped himself.

*All right*, he told himself, *on the count of three.*

He moved his hand forward.

*One*

His hand moved closer to her arm, steady but cautious.

*Two*

He could almost feel the soft fabric of the blanket. He leaned his body in.

*Thr-*

The phone rang.

Jason jolted back so far he almost crashed into his desk. He looked around, embarrassed but relatively sure he wasn't being watched. He took a deep breath and listened to his mother answer the phone downstairs.

He decided he should let her sleep after all.

"Honey, did you answer the phone?" Tom reached for his glasses and stretched his feet out on the carpet.

"It's for me, Tom!"

He stood up and stretched his body backward. It was always for her.

His wife was, for lack of a better term, neurotic. There used to be a time when she seemed to enjoy life just a bit, but that was over a decade ago. Then she became successful, and lost herself in her career.

*Career*, he mused. *A way for people to feel better about being in the same job for twenty years.*

His job wasn't much better, but he didn't have any illusions. His job sucked, and his recent promotion would only make it suck with benefits. The one difference he prided himself in was that he didn't have to work on Sundays.

He walked out to the kitchen and saw his Mary hanging up the phone.

"Who was that?"

She smiled. "That was the guy from Fury Electronics. They want to sit down with me this afternoon."

"Honey, that's great! But what about-"

"I told them I had another appointment, and they worked around it."

Tom tried to keep his smile. "That's great, Mare. So does that mean you won't be home until late?"

Mary winced. "I'll be home, honey. We have to set up for the party tomorrow."

Suddenly he felt the world close in on him. "Oh shit. The party-"

"Yes, honey. You forgot, didn't you?"

"No, I didn't forget. I just-"

"Honey, this is important. Memorial Day is an important holiday to me, and this is the only chance I'm going to get to meet new clients. Please tell me you're not going to complain about it now."

"I'm not complaining, Mare. It's just that sometimes I think-"

"Sometimes you think what? That you don't want me to succeed? That you'd rather me stay home and wash the floors while you go out and bring the damn bread home?"

This was probably the most ridiculous thing Tom had ever heard her say. Probably. "Well... no, honey. As a matter of fact that's the last thing I probably would have ever thought."

Stories

# STATIC

BY DAVID K. GINN

CONTINUED

Mary looked up at him, frustrated and biting her lip. "You know what happened to my mother. She was too afraid to go out and make something of herself, and now where is she?"

"Honey, I think you're missing--"

"I'll tell you where she is. She's at home- knitting her scarves, cooking her soup, and watching T.V. with the dog. Tom- Tom, that is not how I want to end up. Stop trying to get in the way of my success--"

Tom slammed his fist down. "Jesus Christ, you can--"

"I can what?"

Tom bit his lip hard, then took a deep breath. "I think there are times when you take things a little too far. That's all."

"Too far?" Her eyes weakened a bit.

"Honey, when was the last time you saw what's around you? When was the last time you were really able to look around and actually see something for what it is?"

She looked up at him, her eyes reddening with hurt. She looked down at her body, and that back up at him. "When was the last time you were?"

Jason flipped through his sketchbook and sighed. He hated hearing his parents fight. It made him uncomfortable, and more than once it had even frightened him. Sometimes he wished he could just get out, and go somewhere where things weren't so damn complicated. If only--

He dropped the sketchbook and jumped to his feet. He cried out a gasp and took a step backwards.

*What the hell was that?*

He crouched down slowly and picked the sketchbook back up. He moved his hand cautiously along the paper, his eyes transfixed.

It was a picture of a circle.

It wasn't just any circle. It was the most real circle he had ever seen. Something about it seemed to jump right out of the paper and hover above. His hands shook as he held the paper closer to his face.

The circle began to move, bending and twisting above the page. He ran his fingers over it, but his hand went right through.

"What are you doing?"

He dropped the book again and turned to Jennifer, who had woken up and was now smiling warmly.

"I- I was looking through the book." He looked back down at the page, but now there was only a circle, plain and ordinary.

Jennifer stretched her body, then smiled again. "Good morning."

Jason closed the book and moved next to her. "Good morning." He looked at her, feeling that same warm sympathy he felt the night they met. He closed his eyes, remembering once again what had happened the night before.

"Is something the matter?"

He looked at her again, not sure of what to say. He tried anyway. "Jennifer, what happened last night--"

She smiled. "It's okay. I understand. I'm sorry if I hurt you. You're the nicest anyone's been to me; I wouldn't want to cause you pain."

"Jennifer, I like you. I like you a lot--"

"Shh. Shh. Don't bring it back."

"Bring what back?"

Her smile faded, and she shrugged.

Night came. Mary come home late. Tom had three six beers instead of three. Jennifer was still wondering if Jason was really not going to talk to her again.

They hadn't spoken at all since the morning, save a few words here or there. Jennifer was starting to get worried.

"Do you think there's an evil genius?" She held the book she was reading down on the desk.

Jason looked up from drawing and cocked his eyebrow. "Um... what do you mean?"

"I mean an evil genius, like in the book. Do you ever think that maybe everything, this whole life, is just a deception? Maybe none of it's real. Have you ever meditated before?"

Jason shook his head. "He's not really meditating. Well, he might be. It's just his way of expressing it."

"I meditated once. Just a few minutes ago. It was fun. You should try it."

"I really don't think it's for me."

"Then that means the evil genius has you. He's going to cast a veil over your eyes, and make it so you can't see."

Jason paused, not sure of how to respond. "You're a strange person. Has anyone ever told you that?"

She frowned. "Lots of people. But I was being serious. If he's cast his veil over you, then you can't see

# STATIC

BY DAVID K. GINN

...CONTINUED

what's around you. Nothing you know about is actually real. There's only you- and you're mind."

"What are you talking about?"

"I'm talking about looking in front of you!"

Jason looked at her, not sure what he was feeling.

She turned away, but he had moved to the edge of the bed.

"Jennifer, I'm afraid."

She turned back to him. "Why?"

"Because I've never been in love before."

"Neither have I."

"I just don't know--"

She got up and knelt on the bed beside him. She ran her hand in his hair. "You're not supposed to know."

He kissed her softly, feeling the warm sensation of her lips against his once again. He opened his eyes and took a breath. "How did you become so knowledgeable?"

She sat down and lowered her eyes, revealing the same scared girl he'd known for the past week. "I'm not. I'm scared and I'm in pain."

"What causes the pain?"

"It's not important."

"Just tell me what it is."

She shook her head. "I can't tell you. You'd think I was crazy."

He moved closer to her, and held her hand. "You are not crazy."

She tilted her head up, afraid.

"You are not crazy, Jennifer. Now tell me what it is."

Her hands began to tremble as she closed her eyes. "It's the static."

She sat on the bed, drinking a cup of hot chocolate. Jason sat across from her, his eyes never leaving her face.

"So it's a static... like a blurred vision." His words came out awkward, partly because he knew that wasn't it.

"No, it's not like that at all." She moved her hair behind her hair as she took another sip. "Wherever I go, no matter what I do, it's there. The static... it's always around."

"What kind of static?"

"Like the kind when you watch T.V., only real. Like it's really there."

"You mean, like it's come to life?"

"It's not life. It hides life. It makes everything bad. It makes it so I can't see. It hurts me."

Jason was starting to understand, but he wasn't sure if he was getting it right. "So you mean there's *actual* static, not just on T.V. but in the world?"

"Yes."

"But- but haven't you thought maybe it's in your mind?"

"Yes."

"And?"

"It's not." She paused, placing the cup in her lap. "It's real. It's always been real. You just can't see it. No one can." She looked down. "Except for me."

"So what does this static do?"

"It makes it so I can't see. Everything gets hidden, and then it starts to hurt."

"Hurt how?"

"I can feel it going into me. I can hear the sounds, and I see it go into my head. It rings and it yells, and it makes static in my mind... it gets in my mind, Jason! It gets in from outside! It knows I can see it..."

Jason leaned forward, his eyes calm. "Jennifer, it's okay. I can help you."

"You can't help me!"

"Yes I can. I know some people who--"

"No!" She took a deep breath and relaxed her body. She spoke calmly. "Give me your hand, Jason."

"Why?"

"You don't believe me. Give me your hand."

He reached his hand out and she grasped it gently. He skin was warm, gentle. He closed his eyes and waited.

Suddenly he heard her talking, but when he opened his eyes she was sitting still, her mouth closed.

"Jason..." she called. "Jason, you can hear me. Now see what I see."

She gripped his hand as hard as possible, and suddenly the room went white. Black and gray pixels began to appear everywhere, and within them bits of fragments of his room began to take shape, moving quickly around in a full-scale dynamic.

# STATIC

BY DAVID K. GINN

...CONTINUED

*"It takes a while to make it make sense. It seems all crazy at first."*

He tried to cry, but couldn't. Instead he called her name. "Jennifer... Jennifer, make it stop. Please, make it stop."

*"Touch it, Jason. Hold it in your hand."*

He lifted his other hand up slowly and moved it towards a group of pixels. His finger made contact, and there was a zap of energy. The cluster lit up, and then grew dark again. Hypnotized beyond rationality, he held out his palm.

The cluster landed in his hand, lighting up like a glowing orb in the dark. He moved it closer to him, and then his fear took hold. He let the cluster go, and it turned a dark black.

She let go of his hand.

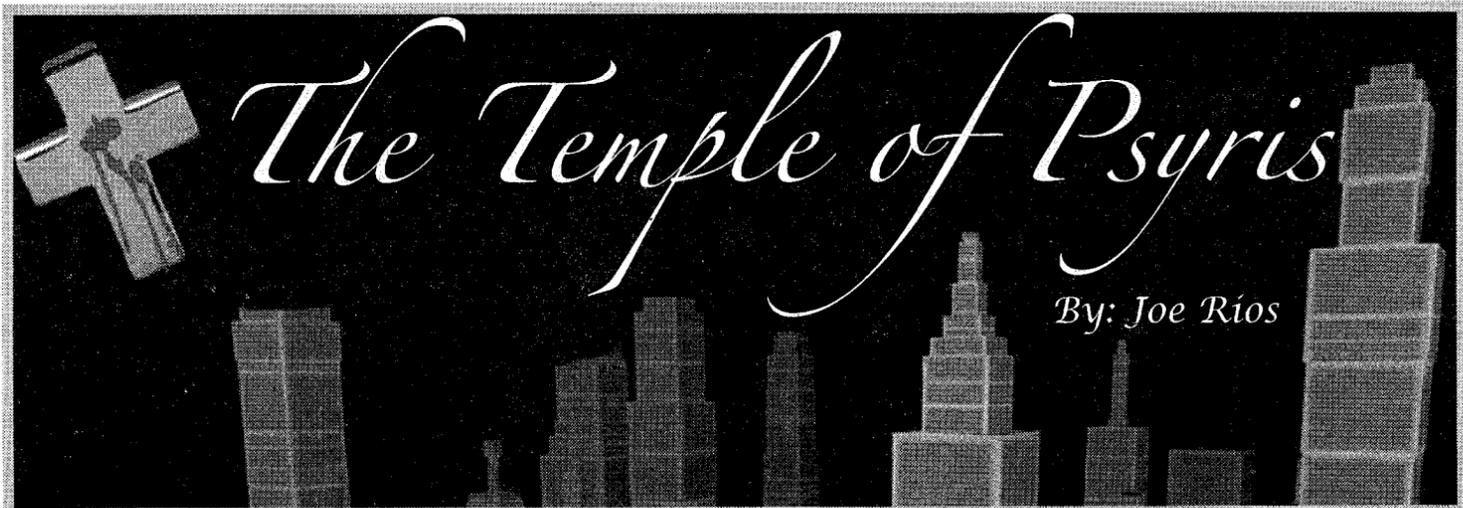
The static went away in an instant, revealing the normal settings of his room once again. Jason looked up at her, his body covered in sweat.

*"They turn black when you touch them. The black ones are the ones people touch."*

*"What the hell is it?"*

*"It's what I told you what it is. It's the static."*

Read the conclusion to this story online @ [www.thestonybrookpress.com](http://www.thestonybrookpress.com)



Prologue...

The third world war had seemed like it would never end. For a full 20 years, the superpowers battled back and fourth with only one rule; no nuclear weapons, ever. It was feared that soon someone would crack under the pressure of an extended war, and that the nuclear holocaust would soon begin. Fearing mutually assured destruction, the leaders of the warring nations came together for a conference to discuss the status of the war. As their predecessors had done in centuries past, the leaders met in Geneva to determine their actions.

On July 4<sup>th</sup> 2527, the leaders of all the warring nations signed a peace accord, bringing an end to the 20-year war, and assuring peace for a long lasting time.

Peace however, came at a massive cost. The population had dropped from the original 10 billion, to just above half of that. National and global economies were in shambles, and with no war industry to keep the economies going, civilization bordered on total collapse. The governments however, were determined to keep that from happening.

The United States was the first to do it, followed eventually by other nations. The President signed the "Lifestyle Preservation Act" of 2529, which called for building of 4 "Mega-Cities." The cities were all located near previous major cities. Mega-Cities were established near New York, Los Angeles, Detroit and Dallas. The Cities pierced into the heavens and spread outward for miles.

The economy of the US was brought back to life by the time the cores of the cities were completed. People were lured into the city with the hopes of starting a new life and achieving wealth. The cities of old were abandoned for new lives in the Mega-Cities. Few remained in cities except those who could not leave and those who would not



# The Temple of Psyris

... *Continued*

By: Joe Rios

leave. Local governments left the cities to decay. Basic utilities like power and running water became increasingly scarce.

The old cities became lawless, and as time went on, stories spread of creatures roaming the streets in search of food. These became the urban legends of the children of the Mega-Cities, not too dissimilar to the boogeyman of the past.

Now, twenty years after the creation of the mega cities, there are even fewer people in what was New York. The story of how the past, the present, and the future would start here on a rainy, cold autumn night in Old New York. It would start with a woman, walking down a street.

## The Temple of Psyris

### Chapter I: The Woman in Black

The date was October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2550. The full moon was obscured by the clouds that were pouring down on the "ruins" of Old New York City. The rain was falling so heavily that it was difficult to see more than a few feet in front of you. The situation was made worse by the lack of streetlights. The power had not been on in the downtown section of the city in almost a year.

For a moment, the clouds thinned over the island of Manhattan as the rain let up and allowed some of the moonlight to pour over the dark figure walking down the cobblestone street. The figure was covered in a black cloak, but it seemed from the way it flowed, and from the hair hanging out from the hood, that the person in black was a woman. The woman continued walking down the street to a nearby church.

The church was very small, appearing as if it would only hold some 200 people inside its walls. The church itself looked very old, possibly over 150 years, a beautiful combination of wood and stone at one time. The years, however, have weighed heavily on the church, and it was now quite rundown. From one of the stained glass windows, the light of a candle flickered, indicating that someone was inside this house of God.

The woman continued her way down the street towards the church and, as she moved in closer, it became clear that she was holding something underneath her cloak. The woman stopped at the door, taking a moment to make sure that nobody had followed her. She opened the large wooden door and stepped in.

On the inside, the church was dimly lit by candles, illuminating the way towards the altar. The church appeared to be empty, but the candle in the window indicated otherwise. The woman made her way down to the altar, kneeling before the cross just above the altar. From her shawl she removed the bundle that she had been carrying, the most precious cargo in the world.

The woman placed the bundle on the altar, and opened it slightly to reveal the newborn boy. He could not have been more than a few weeks old, his eyes barely able to open to the world around him. As he opened his eyes, eyes that were grey almost like silver, glimmered in the light of the candles around him.

The woman in black began tearing, knowing the fate of herself, and of her child. She removed a cross that she was wearing around her neck. The silver cross gleamed in the light, a gift her father gave her when she was just a little girl. The woman placed the cross inside the bundle with her son and kissed him on forehead.

"God, please protect my son from what is coming, for he is our only chance," the woman in black whispered, looking up to the cross in hopes that her prayer would be answered. The woman wiped her tears from her face, wrapped up her shawl, and turned towards the exit, holding the side of her stomach as she made her way out into the night, slamming the church door shut behind her.

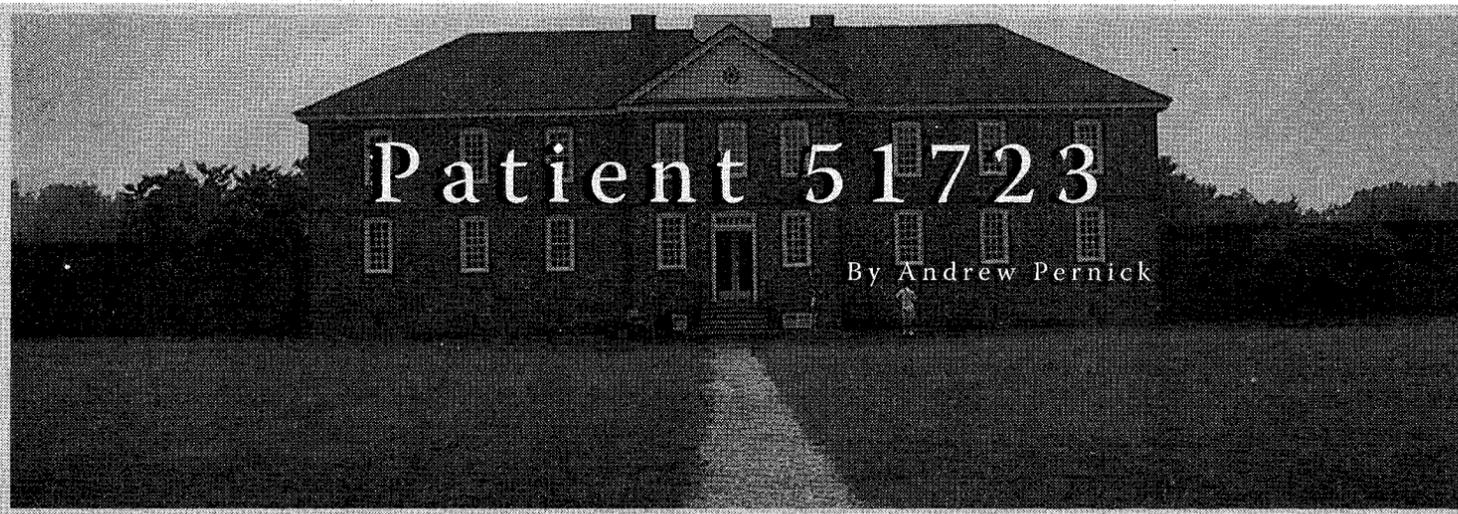
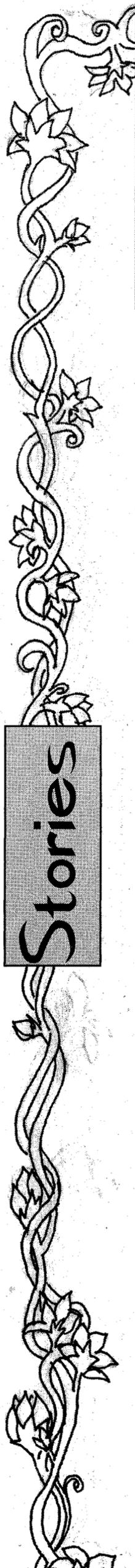
In the back office of the church, a young priest, just barely out of the seminary, was writing a paper on the correlation between divine magic and prayer, a rather controversial topic for a young priest to write about, but interesting none the less. His head was lifted from the paper when he thought he heard the main doors of the church slam shut. Since nobody had visited the church in almost a week, the young priest was very excited to greet this person, whomever they may be.

The young priest came from the side entrance to the altar, looking out to see nobody in the church and a bundle on the altar. He approached the bundle cautiously, not knowing what was in it. As he was directly over it, the priest's eyes grew wide and his mouth gaped open at the young baby wrapped up on the altar. As he picked up the baby, he walked towards the exit for a moment, hoping that he could find its parent or guardian. He stopped, however, only a few feet from the altar, as he noticed that at the altar there was a significant puddle of blood, which trailed out towards the exit. The priest put the infant in the office in case someone drifted in, and ran out the door as he was putting on his coat.

The young priest stepped out the street and into the rain, which had just shortly resumed, washing the trail of blood on the street into the gutter. The young man sighed, and made the sign of the cross as he realized the fate of the person who brought the baby there. Realizing that he had left the baby in the office, the priest turned around and ran back inside to the church.

*The Temple of Psyris* is a work in progress. Look for updates at [www.downumop.com/joe](http://www.downumop.com/joe)

Stories



“Have you tried Haldol?”

“Yes,” Dr. Harris said as he stroked his beard with a free hand. “For some strange reason, she doesn’t respond to medication.”

“Even Thorazine?” asked Dr. Schwartz, flipping through the chart as he tried to decipher Harris’ handwriting, an awkward mishmash of chickenscratch, script, blockprint, and arcane abbreviations.

“At first, we thought the hallucinations were a product of acute sleep deprivation, so we gave her Seroquel, Halcion, and Klonopin to get her to sleep. That’s when we noticed it – the hallucinations only occur when she is in a semisomnolent state

“And then there is the matter of the tactile hallucinations.”

“Tactile?” Schwartz asked with a raised eyebrow, his curiosity having been acutely piqued.

“The distinct feeling of two hands, masculine to hear her tell it, on her, one between her shoulder blades and the other at the small of her back.”

“But the PET Scan...”

“She’s not schizophrenic. The PET was normal. She’s suffered no significant trauma, she doesn’t use drugs, hasn’t had a head injury, nothing. Nothing in her history or physiology lends itself to this pathology. We tried ECT for a month, even, and even that didn’t help. We’re out of options, frankly.” He paused for a moment. “Actually, we can go see her now, if you want to see this first-hand.”

They reached room E-202 just after noon, just in time to see her begin to stir. Her hair was a haphazard mess of brown locks strewn atop the pillow, her cream-colored, heart-shaped face peaceful, and her eyelids were fluttering, threatening to reveal the pools of lightning blue that were hiding behind them.

Hearing the doorknob turn over on itself, she forced herself to sit up. Groggily, she said, her voice a sedative-slurred slather of words, “Gmorningdocta.” She wiped the sleep from her eyes.

“Good morning. How was last night?” Harris paused, remembered he was not alone, and added, “Oh, this is Doctor Schwartz, my colleague. You don’t mind if he joins us today, do you?”

“Fine. It happened again last night. Just like every night,” she said, her voice dejected and conveying a sense that she was resigned to her fate.

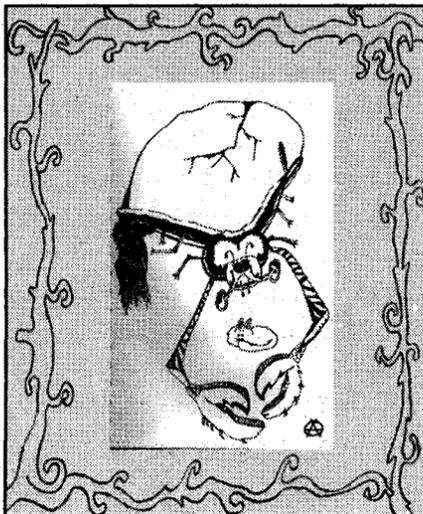
“What did he say this time?” Schwartz asked, his voice both calm and eager.

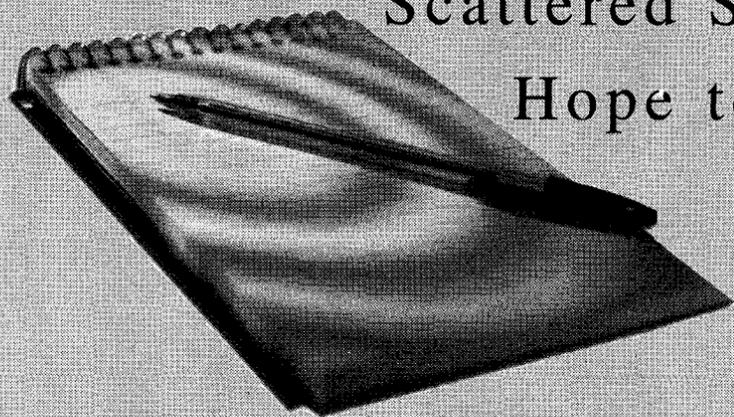
“That he loves me, that I’m beautiful, that he will always be there for me. And he told me about his day. And that I’m special, the love of his life. The hands were there again, too.”

The day wore on. She showered, endured the banalities of daytime television, struggled through hours of talk therapy, and readied herself for bed, knowing full well that the voice, that accursed, sanity-shredding voice, and the hands would return.

In that state between the hellish nightmare she knew as The World As It Is and the peaceful, isolated, safe and secure world only she had access to, the World Of Her Dreams, in that semisomnolent state she had learned to hate so much, the voice and the hands, as they had every night since... she cannot remember when, returned.

Meanwhile, across town, in that state between the isolated, dog-eat-dog, loveless void he knew as The World As It Is and the love-filled, romantic, heartwarming salvation only he had access to, the World Of His Dreams, in that semisomnolent state he saw as his only escape from a world of hurt, the loneliest man on Earth hugged his pillow and whispered sweet nothings to it as he drifted off into sleep.





## Scattered Scenes from Stories I Hope to Write One Day

By Thomas Mets

On June 14 2338, Jules Miller, 73rd president of the United States begins his address to the senate with a prayer "Our father who reigns in hell curse-ed be thy name, thy kingdom come thy will be done, on Heaven as it is on Earth, Every Second of Every day, Give us this day our daily pleasure, And reward us for our trespasses, and let us have our vengeance against those who trespass against us, and lead us into temptation, and deliver us to evil, for thine will be the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen."

Wolf holds the now bruised, and bleeding Marlon by the shoulders as he says "If you knew my wife, I would love nothing more than to hear anything you can tell me about her. But as you don't know my wife, you are to regard her as a woman so good, and pure, and holy that she makes the Virgin Mary look like a 2 dollar crack whore."

Fierce Master attacks Deric Sr with the sword. Deric Sr quickly dodges. Jack then lunges at Fierce Master.

**Jack: Don't hurt my daddy!**

Fierce Master swats Jack aside. Jack hits a wall, but Deric Jr catches him before he hits the ground. Deric Sr glares angrily at Fierce Master.

Deric Sr: Did you just smack my youngest son as you would a fly?

FF: What's it to you?

Deric Sr: For every injury on his body, I will hurt you tenfold.

Jack: I'm okay daddy.

Deric Sr: That's good to hear, my boy.

Jack: I hurt my knee, though.

Deric Sr: Right knee or left knee?

Jack thinks it over for a second, forming an L with his left hand.

Jack: Right knee.

Deric Sr (to Fierce Master with no trace of anger): I will shatter your right knee-cap.

### What I did on my Eighteenth Birthday

I don't know about you, but I was always excited about my Eighteenth birthday. I mean, I've been saving money all my life for this. A friend asked if I was gonna buy lots of porn, and cigarettes, but he could not comprehend my brilliance, and ambition. I was going to go to Canada, where the drinking age is eighteen, and go on a bender. I was going to go to Amsterdam, where Weed's legal, and get really really stoned. I was going to Vegas where prostitution's legal, find some whores, and fuck them (what else was I going to do with them?) And then I found out that Amsterdam had legal booze, drugs, and a red light district, so I just planned to spend my whole summer there.

I get out of the airport, and I'm already drunk, and high when I get into a taxi. I ask if the cabbie can speak English, and he could, so I told him to drive me to the nearest "house of ill repute." After a few minutes he arrives at this old building that looks like some museum. I go inside and find out that it's a real museum, the old home of some serial killer I've never heard of. I go back to the cabbie, explain that he misunderstood me, and ask him to drive me to a cathouse. And he drives me to a zoo.

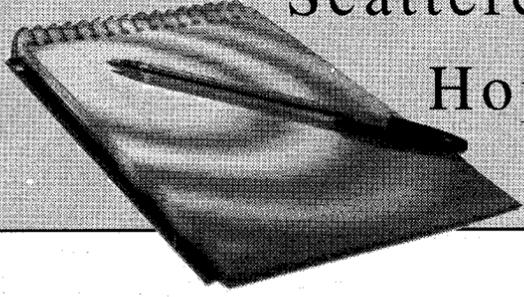
Now I start screaming at the guy "A whorehouse you moron! I want you to drive me to a whorehouse!" He asks "Whorehouse? Why didn't you just say so before?" and ten minutes later he arrives at this really nice house, and there's three really hot girls outside, all wearing short skirts, tight shirts, and noticeable makeup. This looks like a really classy brothel, but I've been saving up for the last six or so years for this, so the cost isn't going to be a big concern. I go up to them, and start bargaining with them. This big, (muscular big, not fat big) grey-haired guy comes out asking something in Hollandish, or Dutchish or whatever the hell language they have in Amsterdam. I figure he's their pimp, and ask him if he can speak English. He can, so I tell him in perfect detail what I want from the girls, showing him a few American hundred dollar bills, to demonstrate that I can pay for the pleasures I so desire. I know something's wrong when he punches me in the nose, kicks me in the kneecap, and then stomps on me when I'm down. I realize exactly what my mistake was when he screams "I'm General Hor you piece of shit, and you just insulted my daughters."

While he's kicking me in the ribs, a 40-ish woman walks by, and asks what the hell's going on, pulling him away from me. The general says "He asked how much our daughters charge for Anal," and the woman shoots me in the kidney.

I wake up in the hospital a few weeks later, and find out that every penny I had on me went towards my medical bills. I was told that there would be no criminal investigation, as the Hor Family has decided to drop all charges. In conclusion the one thing I've learned from all this

Stories

# Scattered Scenes from Stories I Hope to Write One Day



By Thomas Mets

... Continued

is that if you're unconscious for a few weeks, when you finally wake up, your anus will hurt.

### A Really Short Story

A week ago I was sitting by the dinner table, reading classical literature (I will bet you a hundred dollars *Preacher* will be readily available in bookstores eighty years from now), when dad came in with a smile on his face. He looks around the room, and asks where mom might be. I tell him that she's buying groceries. "I had fun at work today" he says "I was coming out of the elevator, when I heard a woman say the words 'Grab a hostage.' I see this black kid, he's about your age, running towards me. He was on the ground before the security guards could 'rescue' me. Now he, and his aunt, I think, the bitch who told him to grab me as a hostage, are facing new charges."

"Did he have a knife, or weapon, or anything?" I asked.

"No, and he was shorter than me too" said dad, removing his coat.

Mom then comes home, with groceries, and asks my father "Did anything interesting happen at work today?" My father looks at her, and tells her "No."



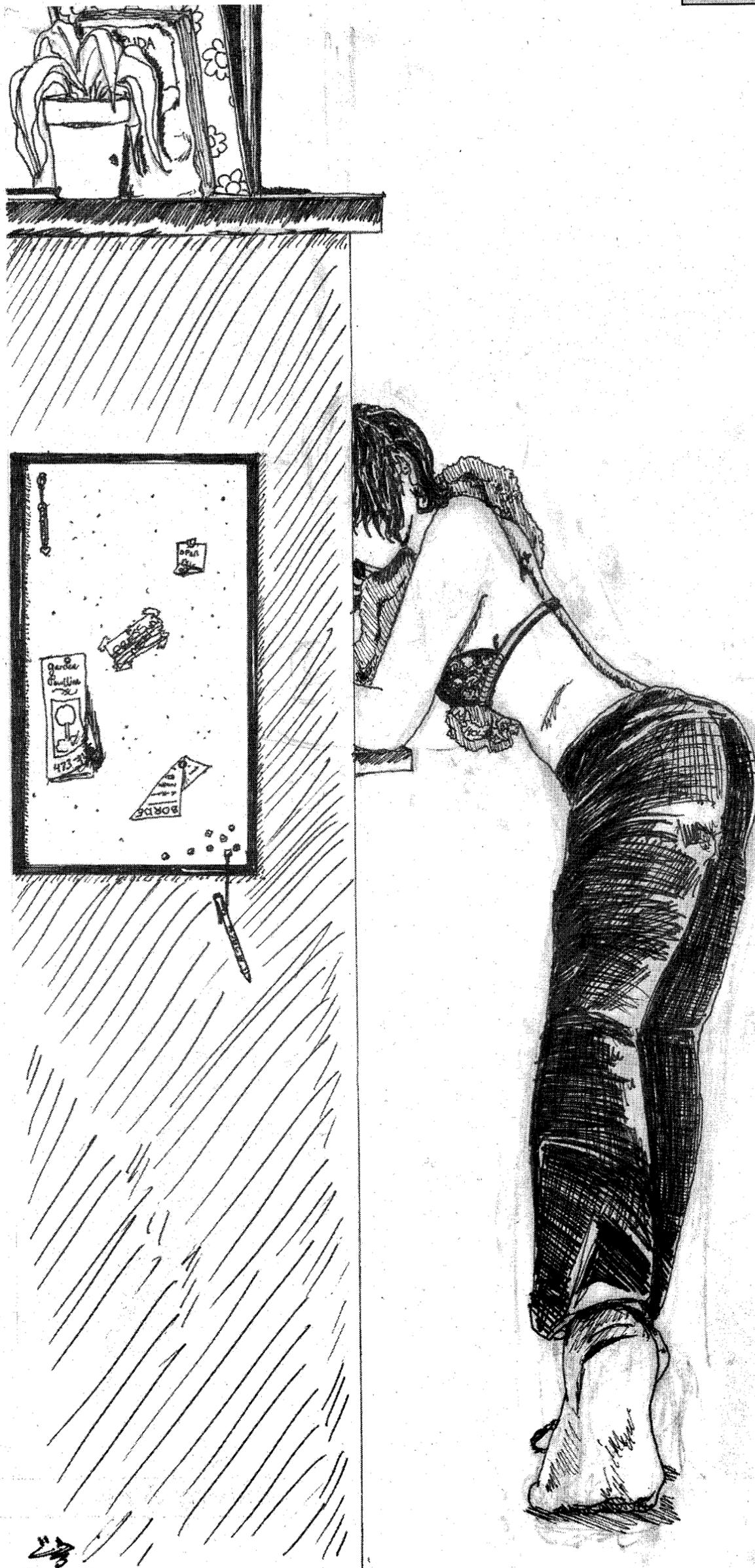
By Alison Schwartz

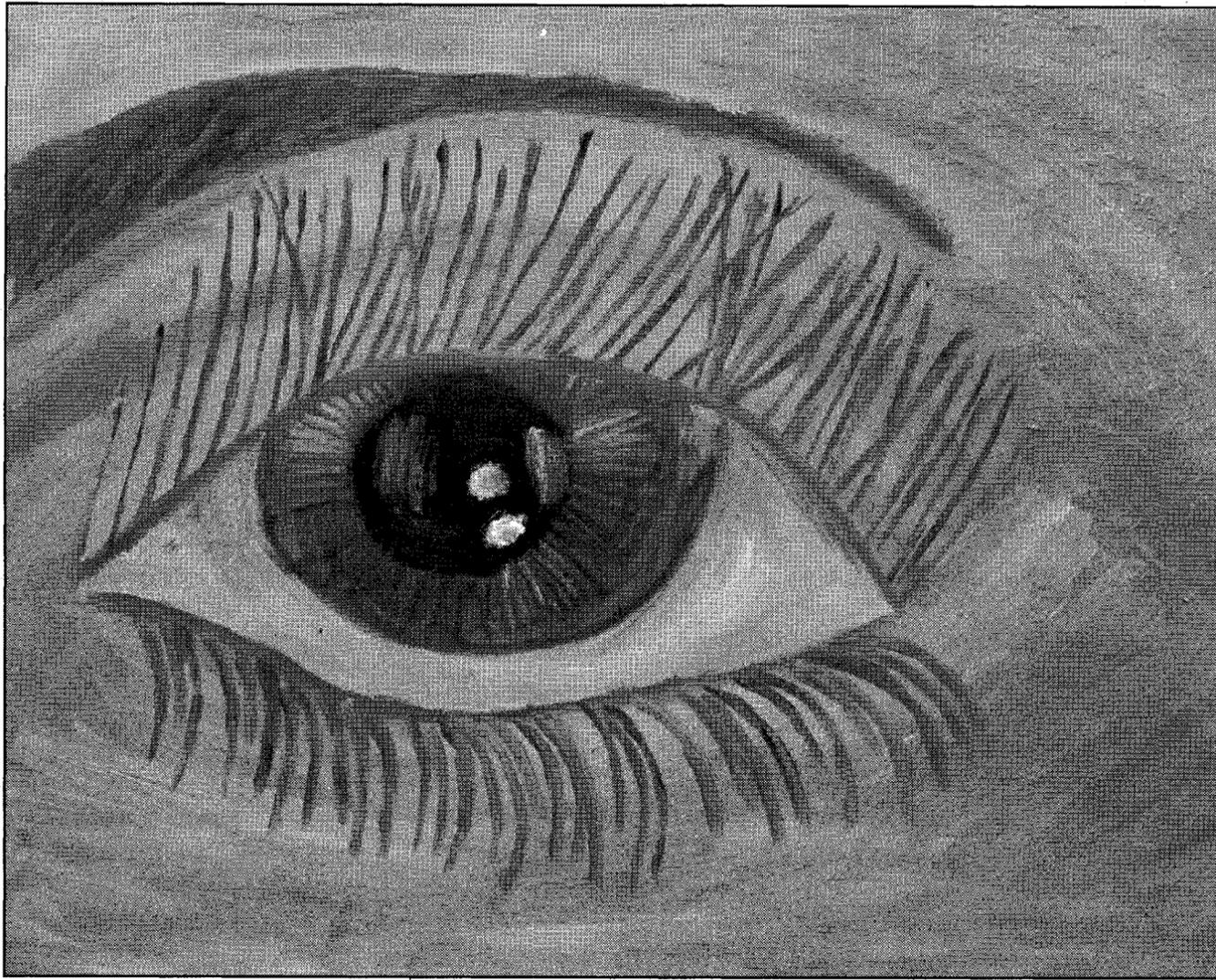
Entitled "Desolation" Visit the website to see it in color



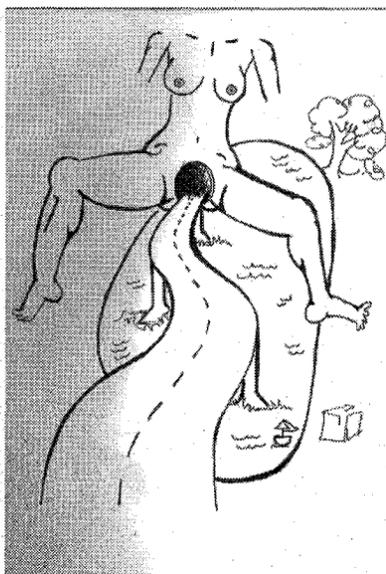
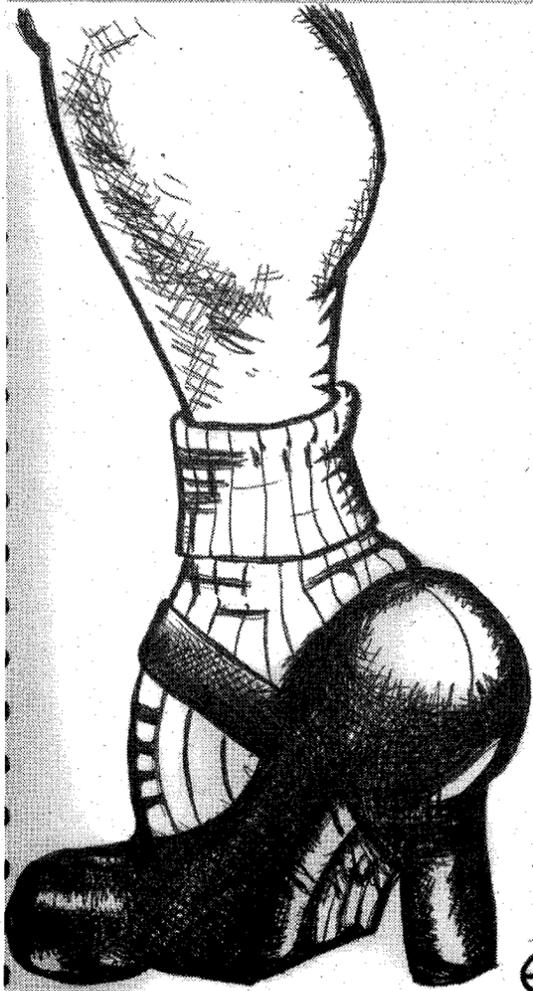
Photo by Brian Wasser

The Stony Brook  
Press Literary  
Supplement

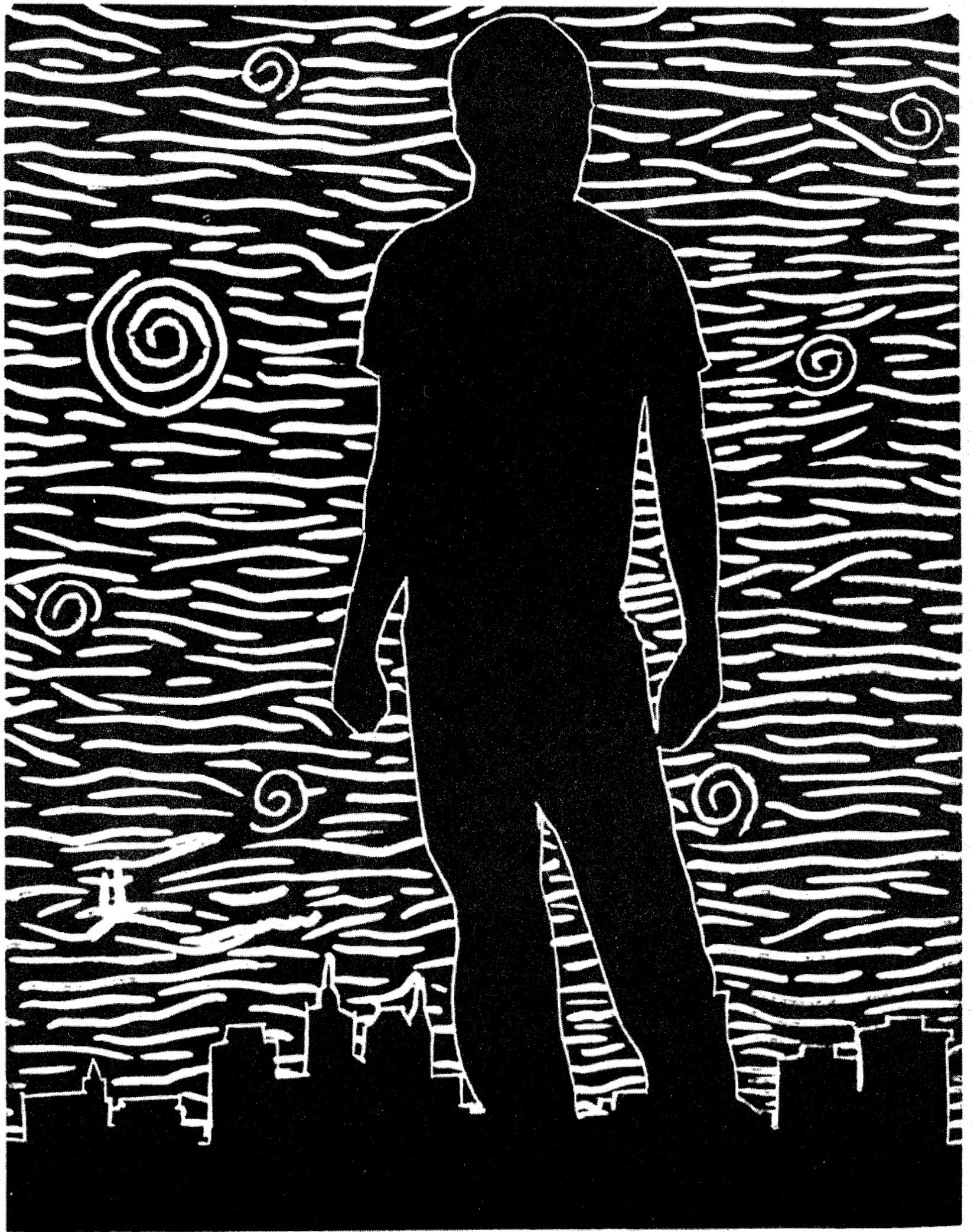




*Eye*  
**Karen Shidlo**



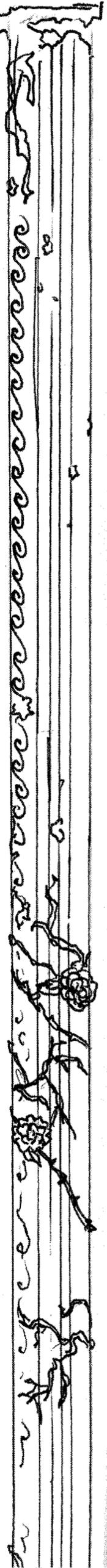
*Amberly Jane*

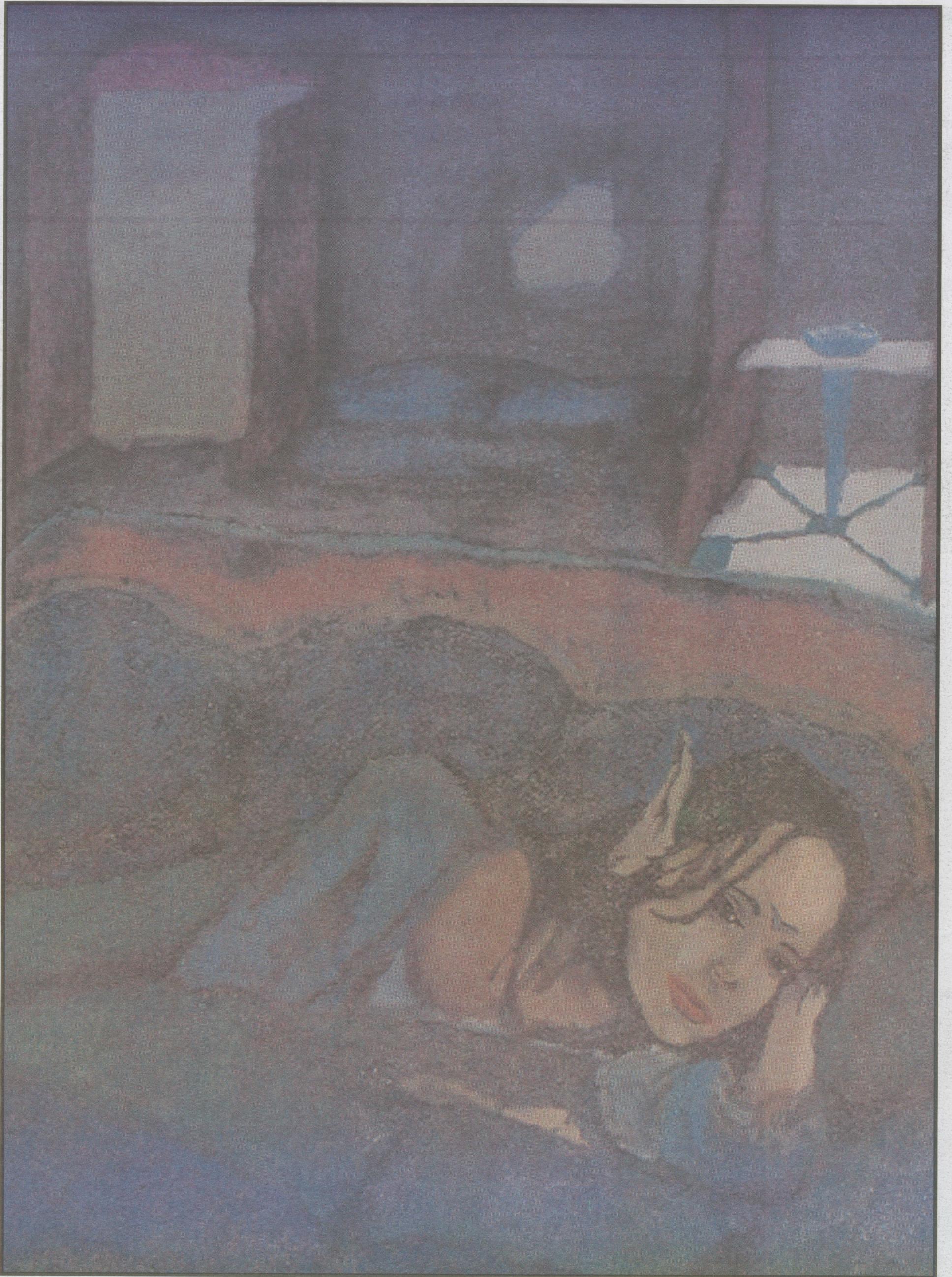


*Untitled*  
Jowy Romano



Sign on the  
dotted  
line...

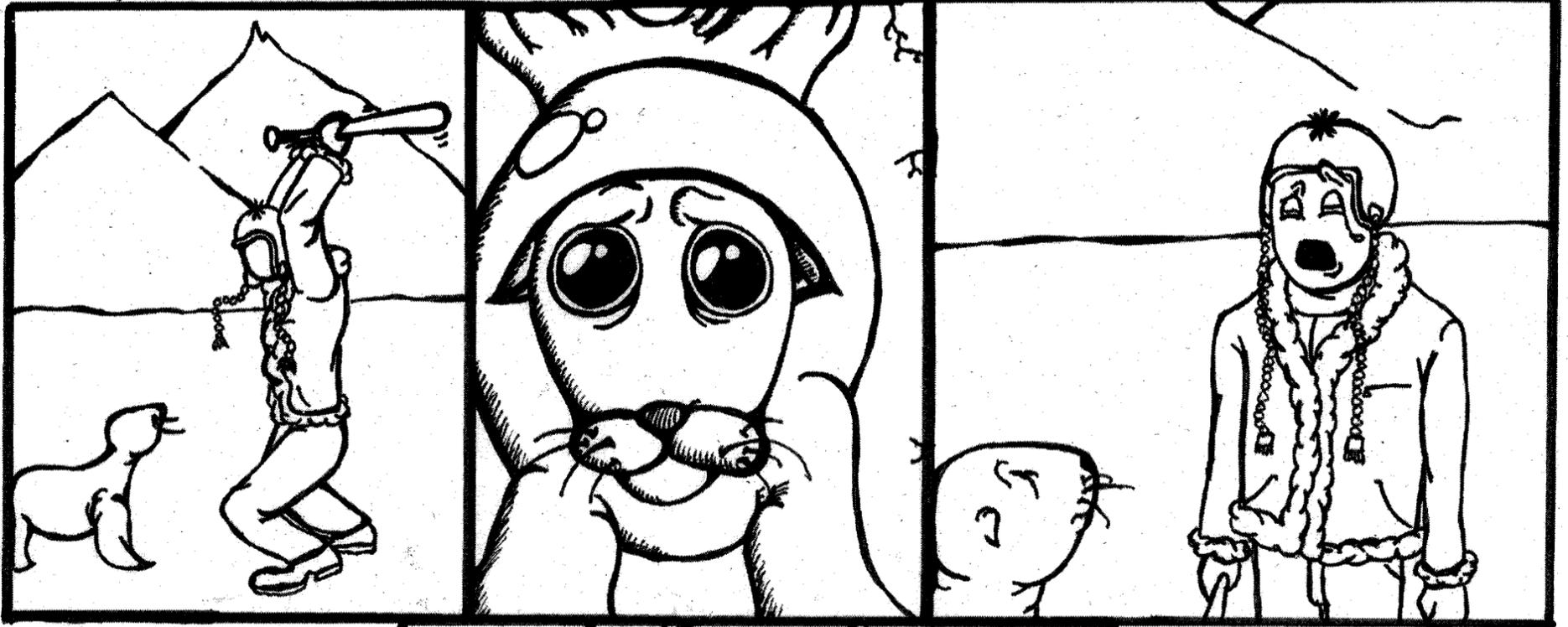




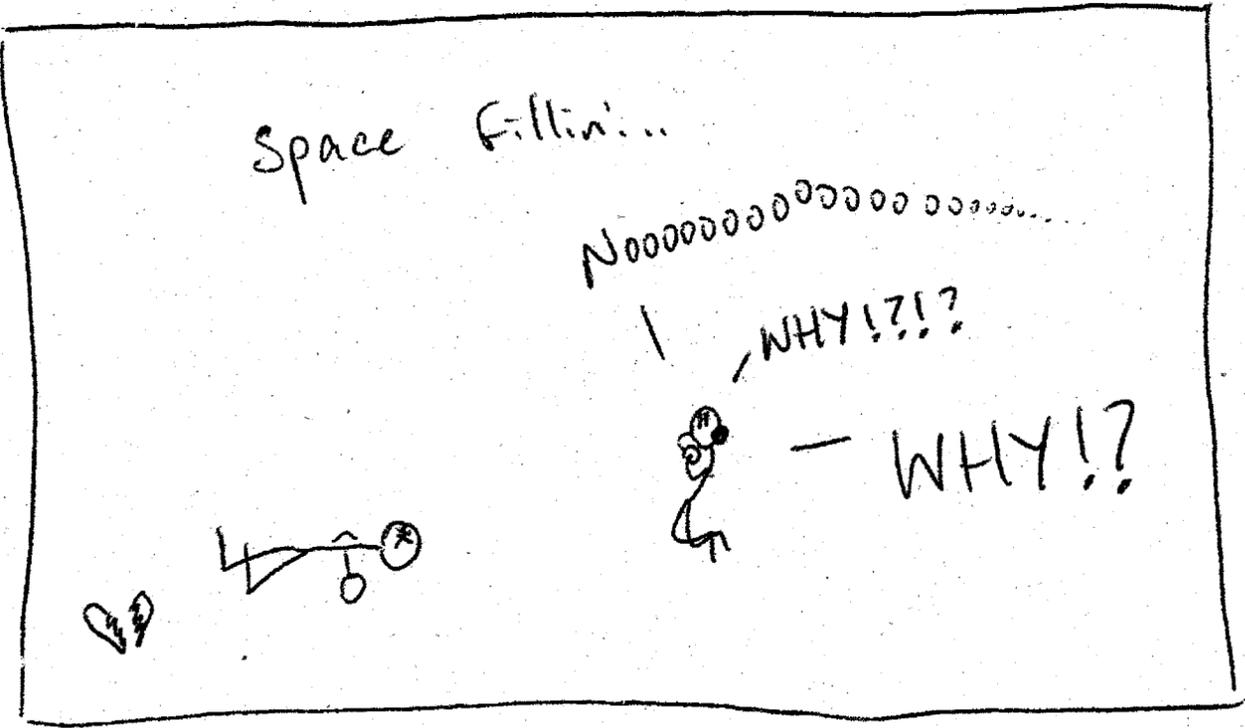
# The Comics Section

"Would you club baby seals for \$500,000 a day?"

By Alex Geissbuhler



*Geissbuhler*



*why Andrew really hurt his leg*



*mg*

# The Comics Section

in SINC by Joanna Goodman

## in SINC

12-05

We need to find you a boyfriend.

I DON'T NEED-

Please keep it down,

Sorry.

I don't need a boyfriend.

Everyone needs a boyfriend.

y'know, you don't even have to go out anymore. Facebook, Myspace, dating sites...

You can find a boyfriend quicker than shitty pop on iTunes.

Smr Gr19: Jackie

File Edit Insert People  
Smr Gr19: See?  
Smr Gr19: http://ston  
Smr Gr19:  
http://stonybrook.face  
http://stonybrook.face  
http://stonybrook.face

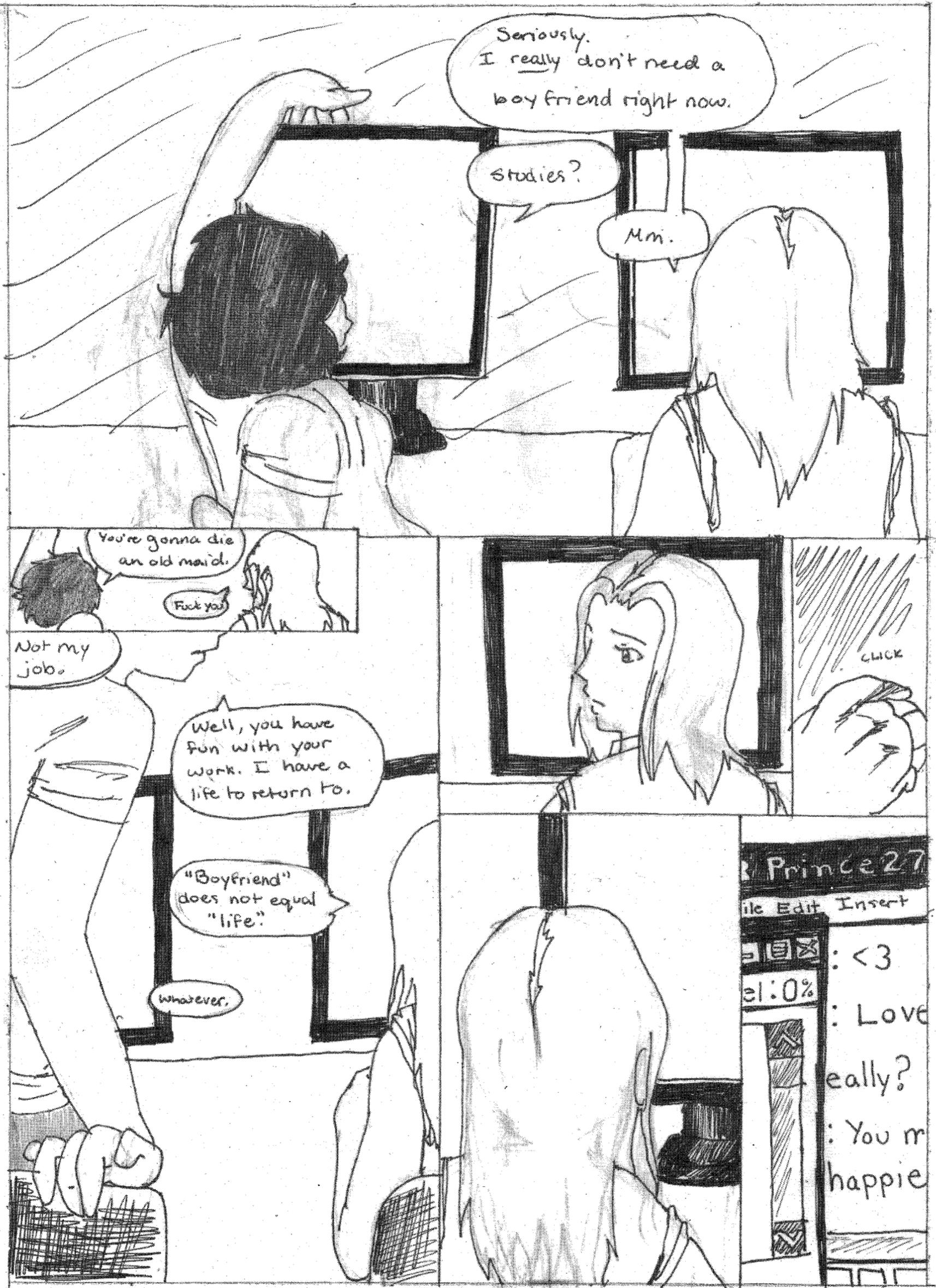
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z [ ] ^ \_ ` { | } ~

See? That last one's pretty cute.

The last one is taken. And gay.

hey, a girl can try.

# The Comics Section



# The Comics Section



Prince 2713: So you'll pick me up right?  
Jakee O: course. i bought you a ticket, a little bit gas wont hurt my pocket any more. => j/k.  
Prince 2713: lol. so where?  
Jakee O: gate 17 @ 8:53. you're gonna be at JFK. se



# The Comics Section



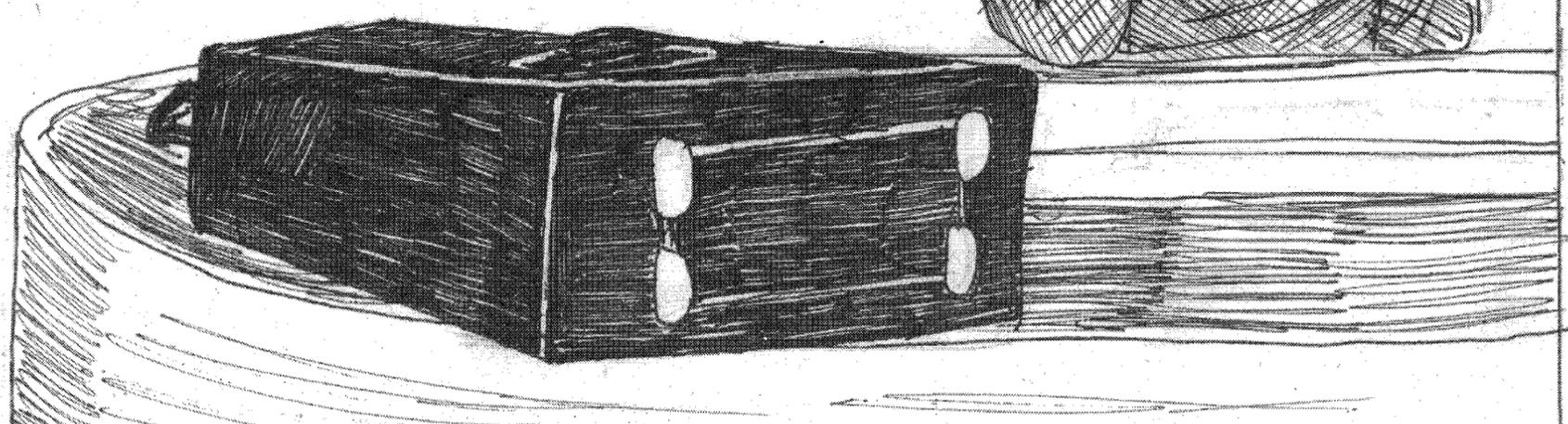
# The Comics Section



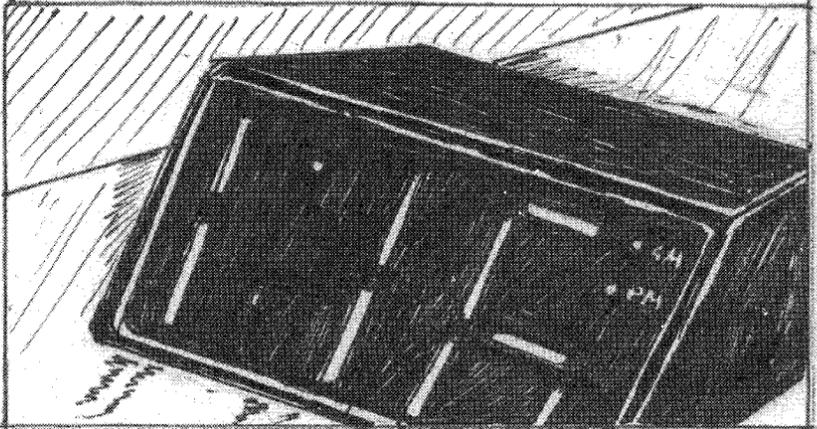
uhhh...  
oh yeah.

She's picking up  
some guy at the  
airport. Fuckin' JFK.

Boy friend?



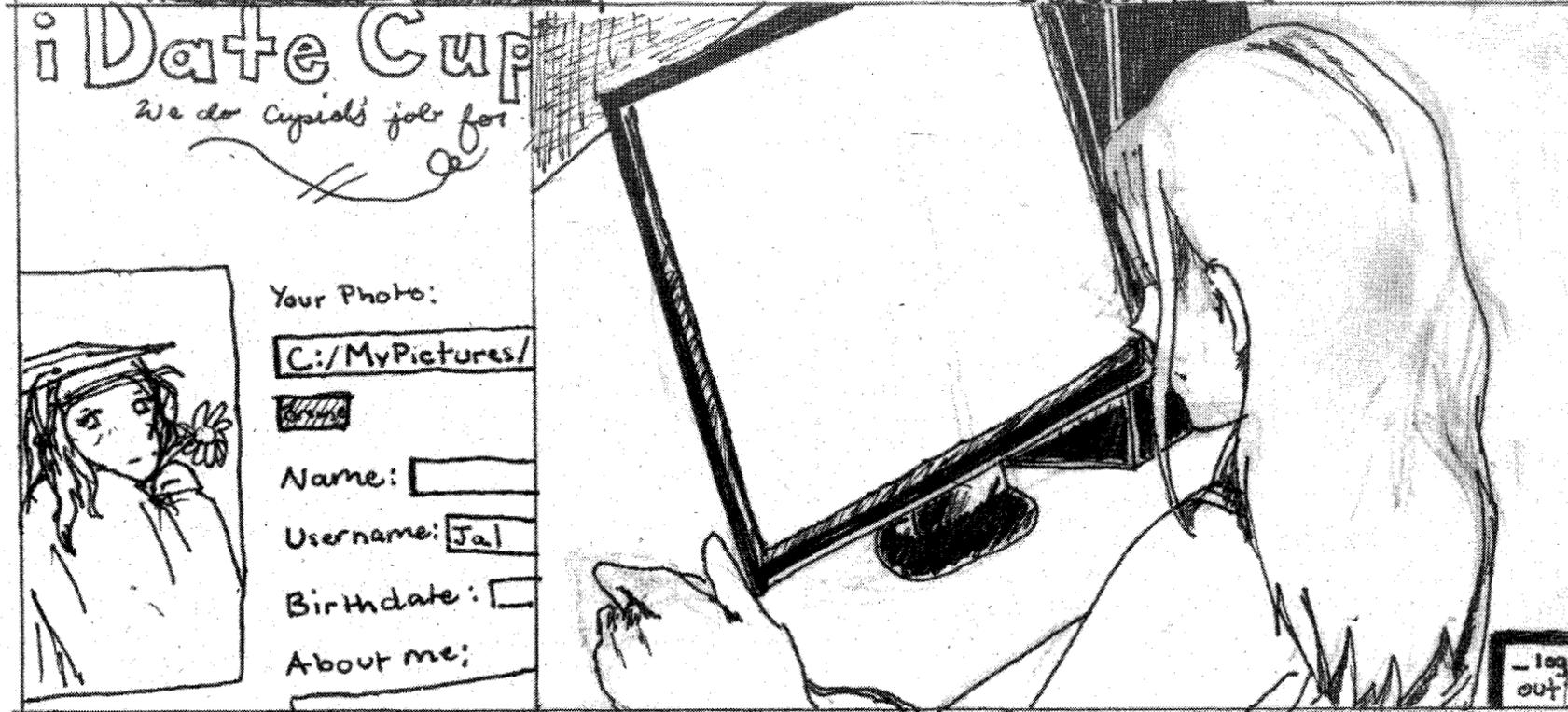
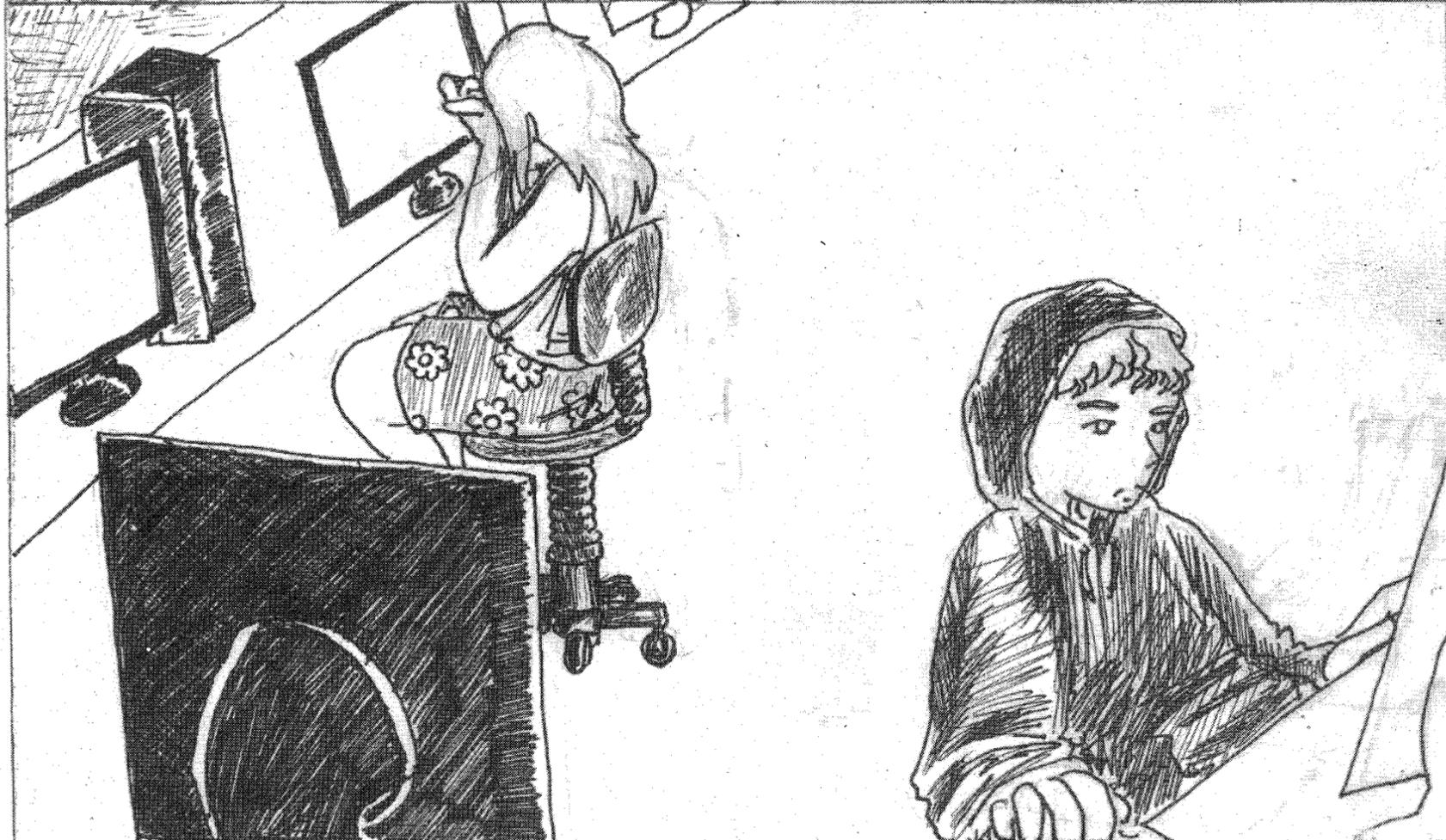
haha.  
Hell no. I'd hafta know.



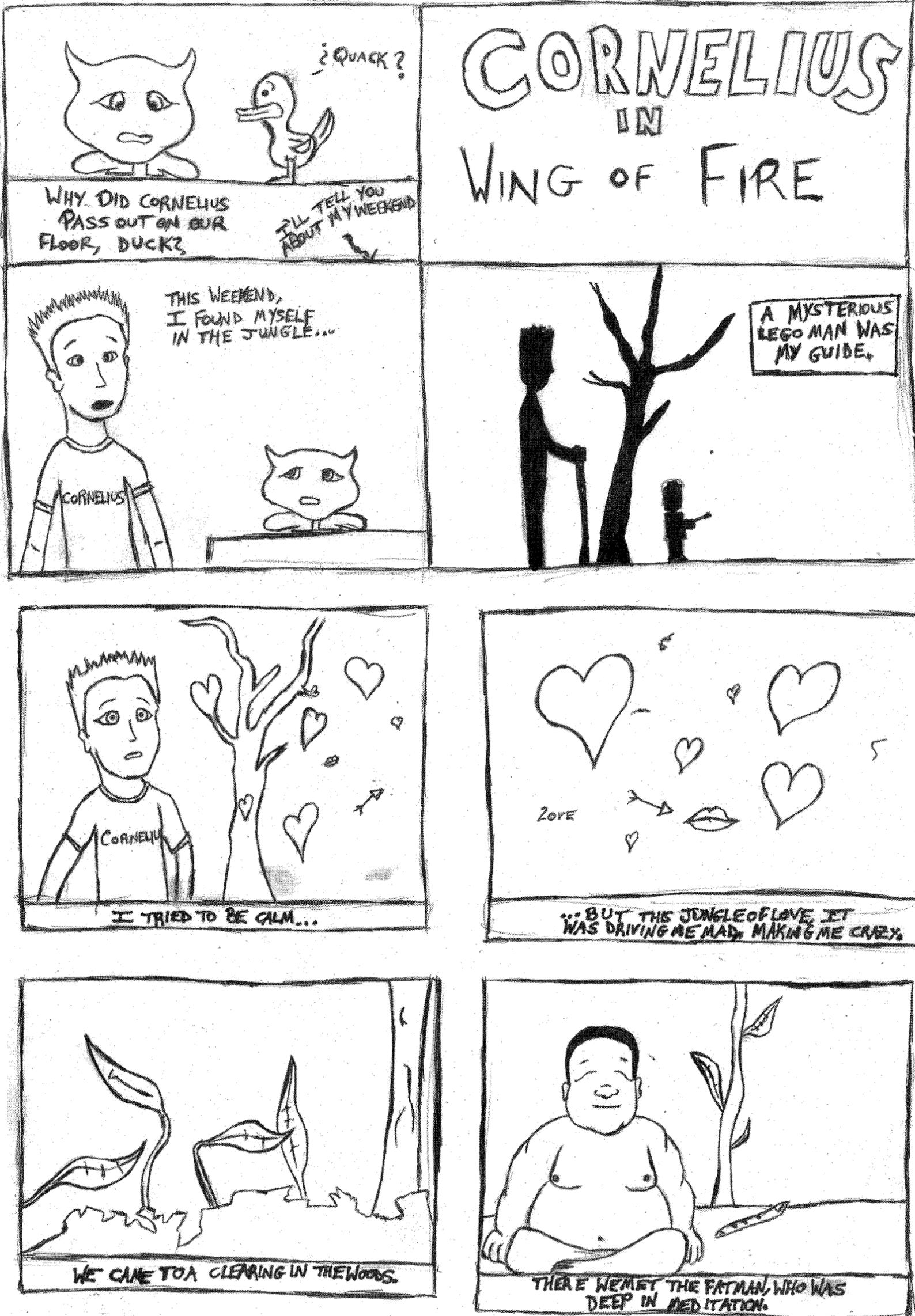
# The Comics Section



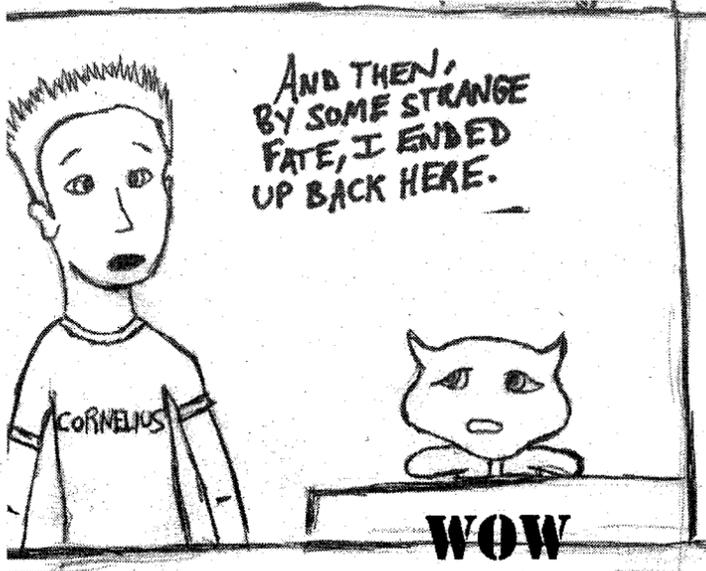
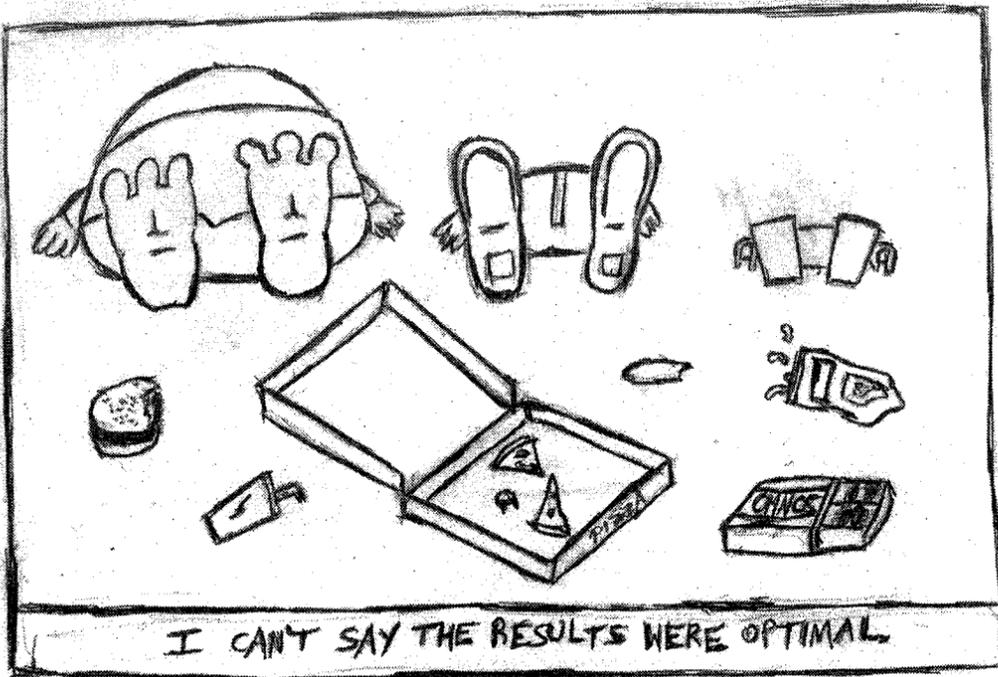
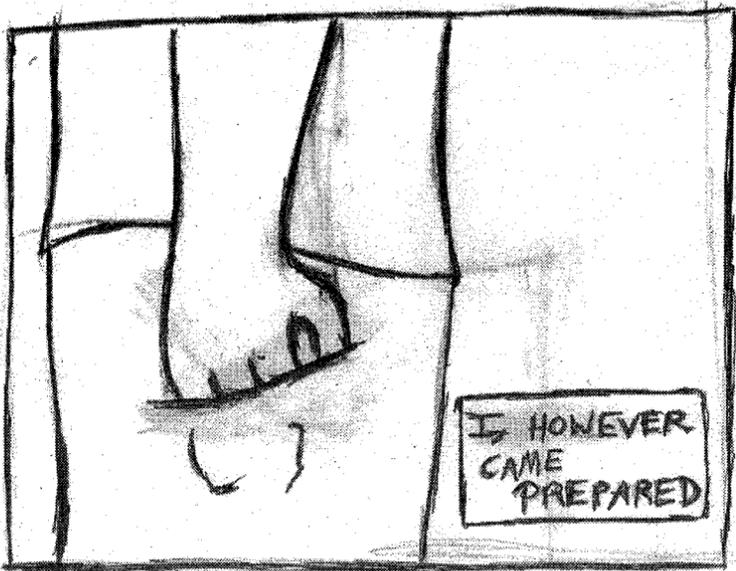
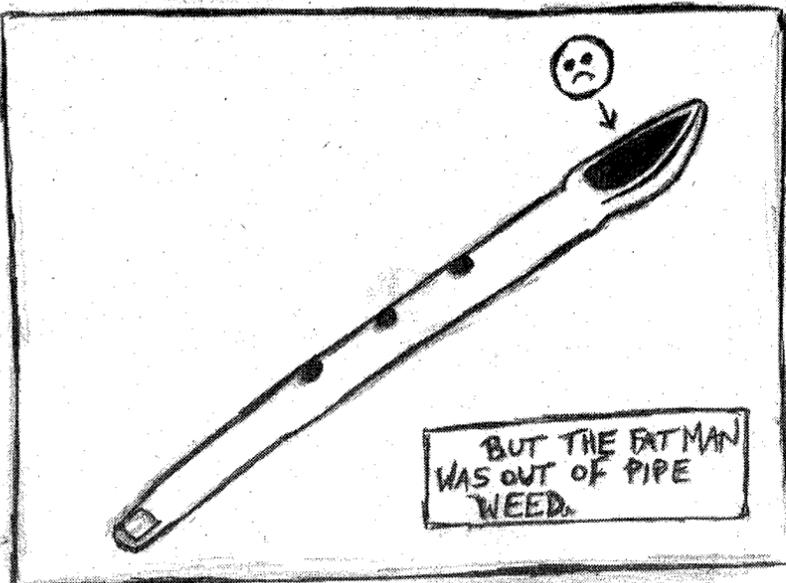
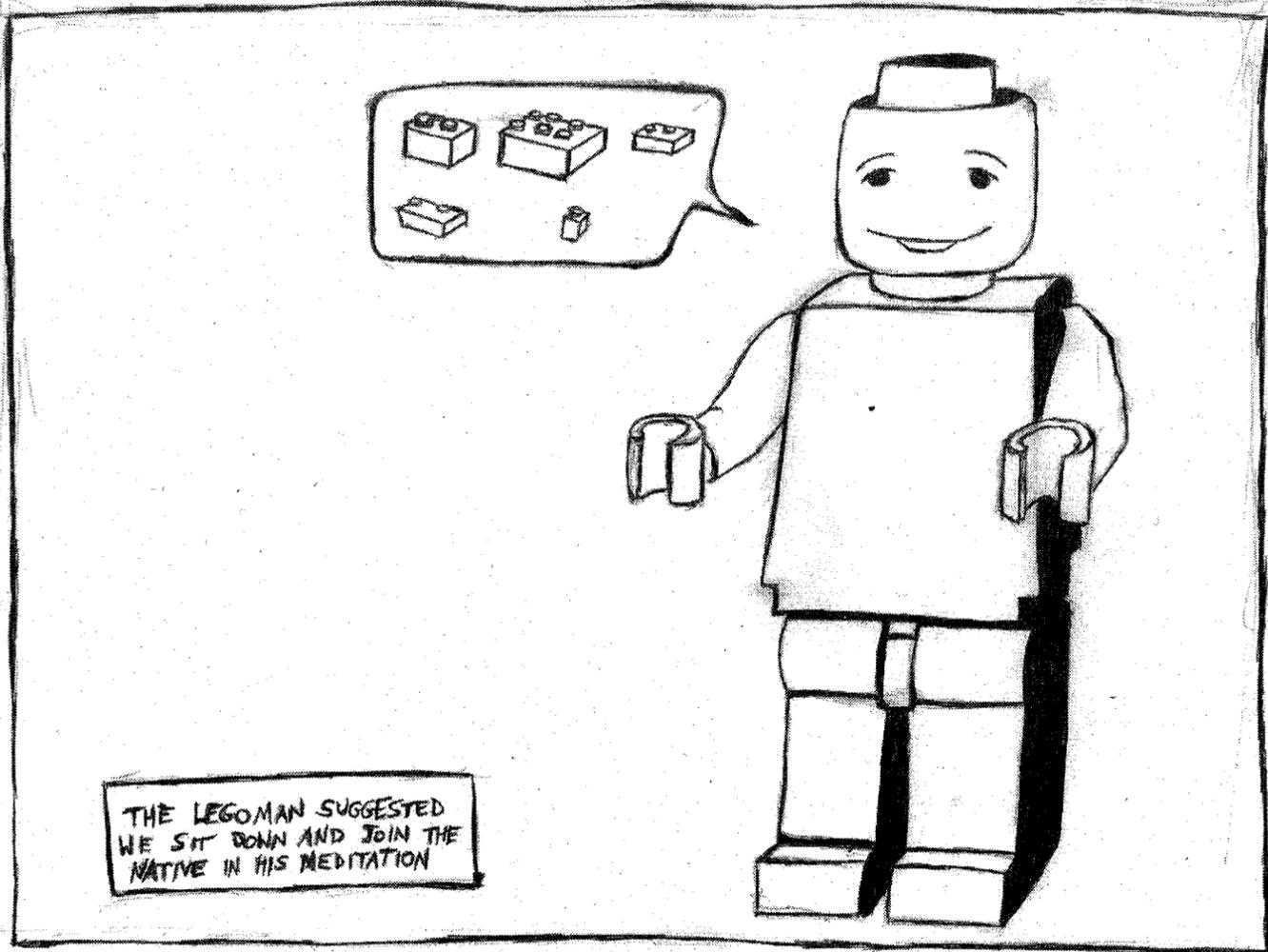
# The Comics Section



# The Comics Section



# The Comics Section



This memorandum is submitted at your request as a basis for the discussion on August 24 with Mr. Booth (executive vice president) and others at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. The purpose is to identify the problem, and suggest possible avenues of action for further consideration.

#### Dimensions of the Attack

No thoughtful person can question that the American economic system is under broad attack. This varies in scope, intensity, in the techniques employed, and in the level of visibility.

There always have been some who opposed the American system, and preferred socialism or some form of statism (communism or fascism). Also, there always have been critics of the system, whose criticism has been wholesome and constructive so long as the objective was to improve rather than to subvert or destroy.

But what now concerns us is quite new in the history of America. We are not dealing with sporadic or isolated attacks from a relatively few extremists or even from the minority socialist cadre. Rather, the assault on the enterprise system is broadly based and consistently pursued. It is gaining momentum and converts.

#### Sources of the Attack

The sources are varied and diffused. They include, not unexpectedly, the Communists, New Leftists and other revolutionaries who would destroy the entire system, both political and economic. These extremists of the left are far more numerous, better financed, and increasingly are more welcomed and encouraged by other elements of society, than ever before in our history. But they remain a small minority, and are not yet the principal cause for concern.

The most disquieting voices joining the chorus of criticism come from perfectly respectable elements of society: from the college campus, the pulpit, the media, the intellectual and literary journals, the arts and sciences, and from politicians. In most of these groups the movement against the system is participated in only by minorities. Yet, these often are the most articulate, the most vocal, the most prolific in their writing and speaking.

Moreover, much of the media-for varying motives and in varying degrees-either voluntarily accords unique publicity to these "attackers," or at least allows them to exploit the media for their purposes. This is especially true of television, which now plays such a predominant role in shaping the thinking, attitudes and emotions of our people.

One of the bewildering paradoxes of our time is the extent to which the enterprise system tolerates, if not participates in, its own destruction.

The campuses from which much of the criticism emanates are supported by (i) tax funds generated largely from American business, and (ii) contributions from capital funds controlled or generated by American business. The boards of trustees of our universities overwhelmingly are composed of men and women who are leaders in the system.

Most of the media, including the national TV systems, are owned and theoretically controlled by corporations which depend upon profits, and the enterprise system to survive.

#### Tone of the Attack

This memorandum is not the place to document in detail the tone, character, or intensity of the attack. The following quotations will suffice to give one a general idea:

William Kunstler, warmly welcomed on campuses and listed in a recent student poll as the "American lawyer most admired," incites audiences as follows:

"You must learn to fight in the streets, to revolt, to shoot guns. We will learn to do all of the things that property owners fear." The New Leftists who heed Kunstler's advice increasingly are beginning to act — not just against military recruiting offices and manufacturers of munitions, but against a variety of businesses: "Since February, 1970, branches (of Bank of America) have been attacked 39 times, 22 times with explosive devices and 17 times with fire bombs or by arsonists." Although New Leftist spokesmen are succeeding in radicalizing thousands of the young, the greater cause for concern is the hostility of respectable liberals and social reformers. It is the sum total of their views and influence which could indeed fatally weaken or destroy the system.

A chilling description of what is being taught on many of our campuses was written by Stewart Alsop:

"Yale, like every other major college, is graduating scores of bright young men who are practitioners of 'the politics of despair.' These young men despise the American political and economic system . . . (their) minds seem to be wholly closed. They live, not by rational discussion, but by mindless slogans." A recent poll of students on 12 representative campuses reported that: "Almost half the students favored socialization of basic U.S. industries."

A visiting professor from England at Rockford College gave a series of lectures entitled "The

Ideological War Against Western Society," in which he documents the extent to which members of the intellectual community are waging ideological warfare against the enterprise system and the values of western society. In a foreword to these lectures, famed Dr. Milton Friedman of Chicago warned: "It (is) crystal clear that the foundations of our free society are under wide-ranging and powerful attack — not by Communist or any other conspiracy but by misguided individuals parroting one another and unwittingly serving ends they would never intentionally promote."

Perhaps the single most effective antagonist of American business is Ralph Nader, who — thanks largely to the media — has become a legend in his own time and an idol of millions of Americans. A recent article in Fortune speaks of Nader as follows:

"The passion that rules in him — and he is a passionate man — is aimed at smashing utterly the target of his hatred, which is corporate power. He thinks, and says quite bluntly, that a great many corporate executives belong in prison — for defrauding the consumer with shoddy merchandise, poisoning the food supply with chemical additives, and willfully manufacturing unsafe products that will maim or kill the buyer. He emphasizes that he is not talking just about 'fly-by-night hucksters' but the top management of blue chip business."

A frontal assault was made on our government, our system of justice, and the free enterprise system by Yale Professor Charles Reich in his widely publicized book: "The Greening of America," published last winter.

The foregoing references illustrate the broad, shotgun attack on the system itself. There are countless examples of rifle shots which undermine confidence and confuse the public. Favorite current targets are proposals for tax incentives through changes in depreciation rates and investment credits. These are usually described in the media as "tax breaks," "loop holes" or "tax benefits" for the benefit of business. \* As viewed by a columnist in the Post, such tax measures would benefit "only the rich, the owners of big companies."

It is dismayed that many politicians make the same argument that tax measures of this kind benefit only "business," without benefit to "the poor." The fact that this is either political demagoguery or economic illiteracy is of slight comfort. This setting of the "rich" against the "poor," of business against the people, is the cheapest and most dangerous kind of politics.

#### The Apathy and Default of Business

What has been the response of business to this massive assault upon its fundamental economics, upon its philosophy, upon its right to continue to manage its own affairs, and indeed upon its integrity?

The painfully sad truth is that business, including the boards of directors' and the top executives of corporations great and small and business organizations at all levels, often have responded — if at all — by appeasement, ineptitude and ignoring the problem. There are, of course, many exceptions to this sweeping generalization. But the net effect of such response as has been made is scarcely visible.

In all fairness, it must be recognized that businessmen have not been trained or equipped to conduct guerrilla warfare with those who propagandize against the system, seeking insidiously and constantly to sabotage it. The traditional role of business executives has been to manage, to produce, to sell, to create jobs, to make profits, to improve the standard of living, to be community leaders, to serve on charitable and educational boards, and generally to be good citizens. They have performed these tasks very well indeed.

But they have shown little stomach for hard-nose contest with their critics, and little skill in effective intellectual and philosophical debate.

A column recently carried by the Wall Street Journal was entitled: "Memo to GM: Why Not Fight Back?" Although addressed to GM by name, the article was a warning to all American business. Columnist St. John said:

"General Motors, like American business in general, is 'plainly in trouble' because intellectual bromides have been substituted for a sound intellectual exposition of its point of view." Mr. St. John then commented on the tendency of business leaders to compromise with and appease critics. He cited the concessions which Nader wins from management, and spoke of "the fallacious view many businessmen take toward their critics." He drew a parallel to the mistaken tactics of many college administrators: "College administrators learned too late that such appeasement serves to destroy free speech, academic freedom and genuine scholarship. One campus radical demand was conceded by university heads only to be followed by a fresh crop which soon escalated to what amounted to a demand for outright surrender."

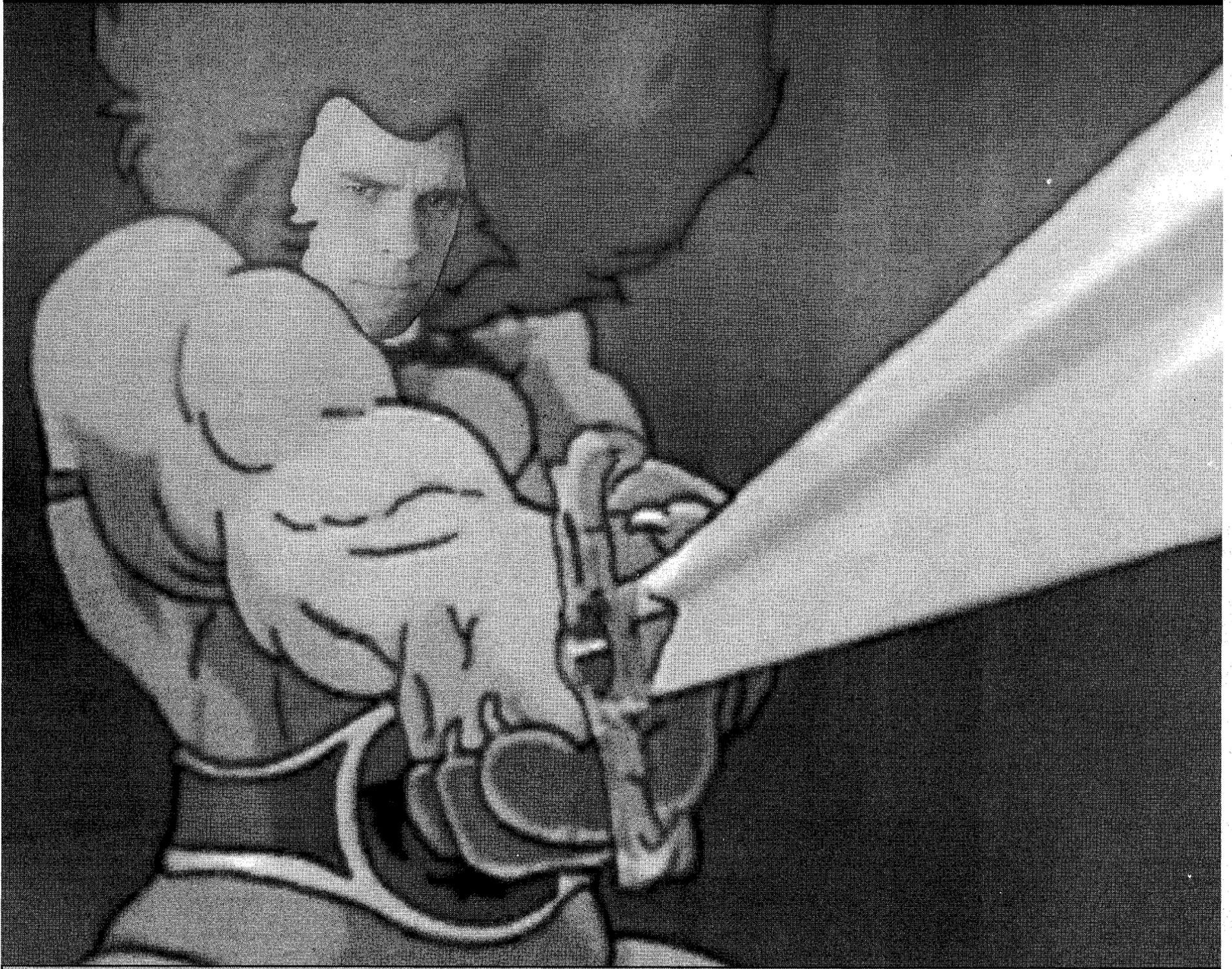
One need not agree entirely with Mr. St. John's analysis. But most observers of the American scene will agree that the essence of his message is sound. American business "plainly in trouble"; the response to the wide range of critics has been ineffective, and has included appeasement; the time has come — indeed, it is long overdue — for the wisdom, ingenuity and resources of American business to be marshaled against those who would destroy it.



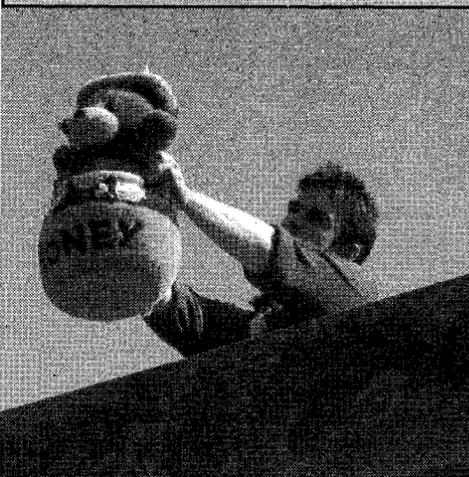
# PRESS

THE STONY BROOK

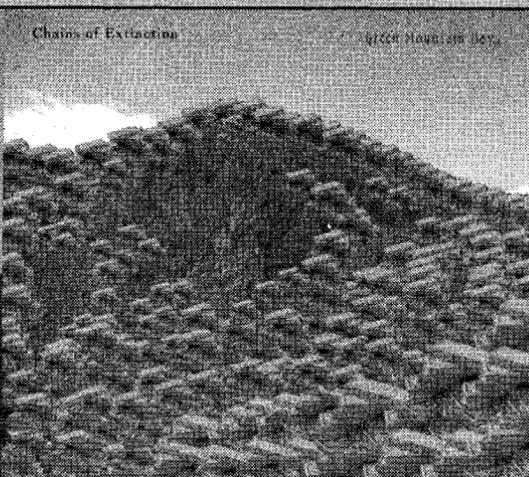
THE COMMUNITY NEWS AND TEXTILES PAPER



Here's to a great semester. We bid a fond farewell to one of our News Editors. He's graduating so we'd like to present you with a small gallery of his work below.



Chains of Extracting



Great Mountain Day





# Ask Amberly Jane

"We raise horses." That's what the black man told me.

I was waiting for the train to Penn Station. It was a sunny day – in fact it was Thanksgiving day. I was walking back and forth in the parking lot plugged into headphones.

I knew he was watching me... as any voyeur can tell you, we feel the eyes... studying me for 15 minutes from the platform. I just kept walking back and forth, humming to The Pogues. He was maybe 40, clean-cut, mirrored shades, with some kind of wool beret and a splash of heavy gold jewelry. Maybe a pimp, but not enough style.

As the train pulled in, he ran up to me, said hey or whatever, (I ain't gonna lie, I was high in the sky, brain fried on cloud nine), handed me a flyer with his name (Donnie) and number scrawled in pen, and said "We raise horses." He said other refinements, but I forgot them 2 minutes later. I was too busy rolling that phrase around in my head, one red panty in a dryer full of briefs. What the fuck did he mean? Horses?

I decided to call him and find out.

After several failed attempts to reach him (and I even left a message), well, he wasn't calling me back, and I was left wondering: was it a drug reference, did it concern sex or gambling or his penis size? Or none of the above. I was open to ideas. I even Google'd the term to see if I'd missed something in the cultural archives.

Then he called me back.

His voice was velvet. I could tell he was smiling.

"Hello. I was hoping you would call me."

"I was extraordinarily curious," I said, "what you meant about horses. I did hear you correctly, right?"

"Yes. Yes," he said. "My uncle works upstate at Saratoga Springs, training horses, and ..."

Well, when I heard that my brain just about pissed itself. I never, ever conceived that he could have meant it literally. Leave it to me to plummet straight for the deviant answer.

"You're fucking with me," I said. "Bullshit!"

"Naw, I saw us locking eyes for a moment," he continued. "I thought you might like to go horseback riding."

By the time I told him, through my bouts of laughter, what I thought he meant about drugs or gambling or penis size, he was laughing too. He said he wanted to say something that would get my attention, and I assured him it worked.

We exchanged a few more pleasantries, and I told him about my sex column, and that he

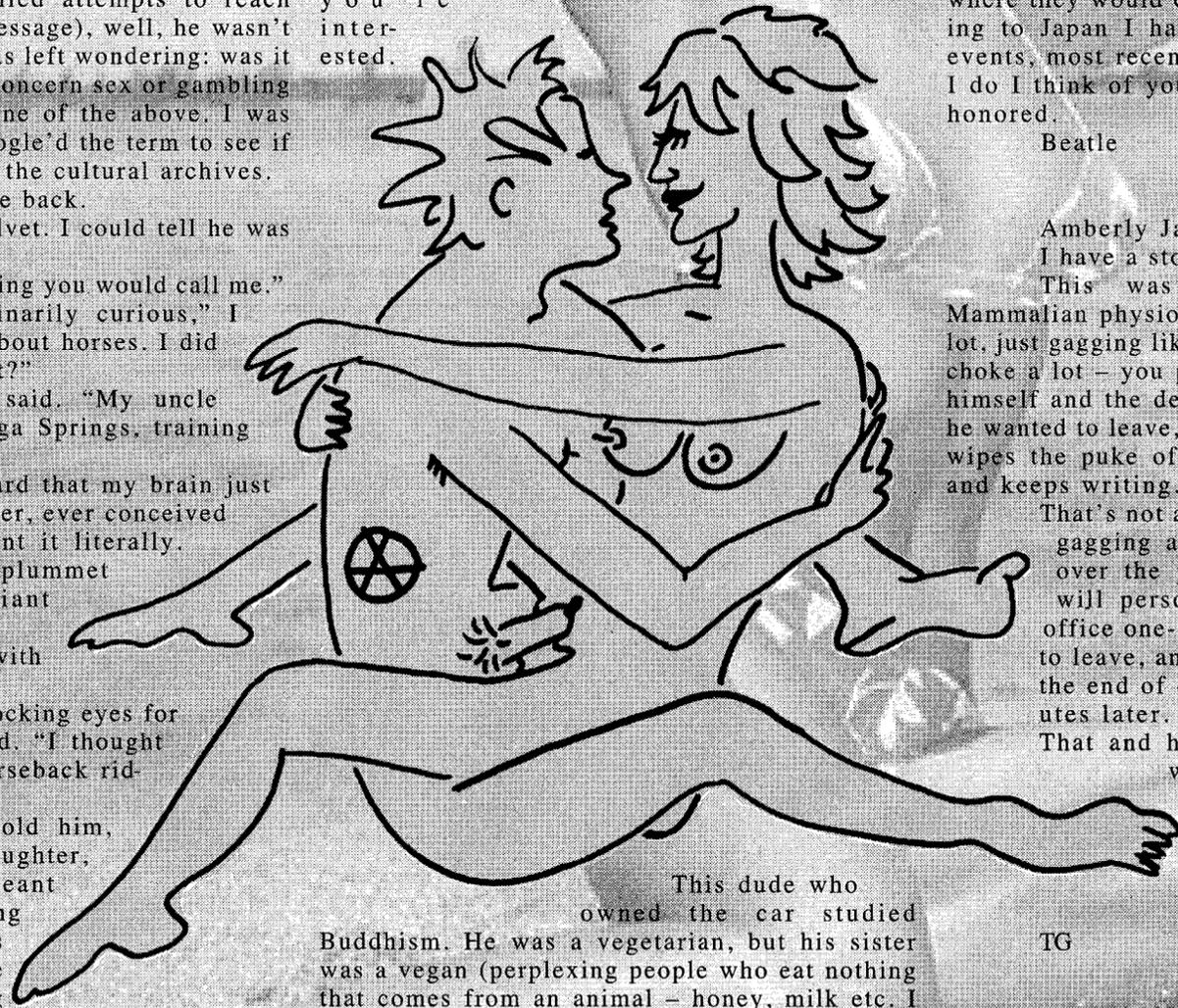
was the subject. Suffice it to say, *The Press* has another reader.

Well, that was absurd – let's eat dead bird. Incidentally, if the Indians had killed a cat instead of a turkey on Thanksgiving, we'd all be eating pussy.

My friend Vic (Pep Band can have my babies), went to Belize for Thanksgiving; and had halibut instead of pussy, or wait, maybe he did. Went with 48 of his closest friends, and shouted out to the pleasures of cruises and Guinness. Hallelujah!

But enough of holiday gone by – on to other things. We have reached the end kiddies. Nearly. We are all awash in papers, drowning in finals, choking on our own procrastination. Or maybe that's just me. But goddamn this semester flew the fuck by. Midnight Breakfast is here already?!

I'll tell you another story. There is a particular car on campus. It's white, the front is bashed in and on the right side it says "Karma" in big painted letters. It's the Karma Car, and if you spot it you get a free reach-around. No. No. But I found out the story behind it, in case you're interested.



This dude who owned the car studied Buddhism. He was a vegetarian, but his sister was a vegan (perplexing people who eat nothing that comes from an animal – honey, milk etc. I don't get it either.) Anyway, he ate eggs at her house – she warned him not to – and the next day he got into a car accident – hit by a Mack truck – a Tyson Mack truck. True story. The moral:

Don't eat eggs at a vegan's house.

Since this is the last column of the semester, I hope to see you all at Beer Fest – we'll have a go on the stripper pole! And I wish you well for all your winter break adventures. Horse-back riding or otherwise. As for me, my friend is flying me out to Reno, the Biggest Little City in the World, to make good on a long-standing debt when I bailed him out of jail.

Oh, I'd like to shout out to Natalie in the Kelly Coffee House. Thanks for reading. You are cute as a button!

And as tradition allows – let's break out the tits and whiskey, and I'll see you in the Spring.

Amberly Jane,

You want to hear something strange? I remember when you lived in Florida you sent me an e-mail where you said something to the effect of that you were cooking bacon naked. Yeah, that still gives me a great mental picture. Anyway, I just remember thinking to myself, how the fuck does one get into the situation where they would cook naked? Well, since moving to Japan I have engaged in such reckless events, most recently last night and every time I do I think of you. Just thought you would be honored.

Beatle

Amberly Jane,

I have a story for you. It's a true story. This was two semesters ago. In Mammalian physiology this kid was coughing a lot, just gagging like crazy. You know how if you choke a lot – you puke – well he pukes all over himself and the desk. The teacher asked him if he wanted to leave, he says, No, I'm all right. He wipes the puke off his notebook, turns a page and keeps writing.

That's not all. 20 Minutes later, he starts gagging again, and he pukes again all over the place. The teacher is like, I will personally teach you this in my office one-on-one, just leave. He refused to leave, and he sat in his own vomit till the end of class which was like 15 minutes later.

That and his suitemates say he always wakes up screaming "Malachi!"

I'm telling you, he's out of his mind.

I've been tracking the evolution of his psychosis.

TG

AskAmberlyJane@hotmail.com

"Nobody went, but somebody came."



# Sex and the Brook

By Rudy Randall

## No Place Like Home

Everybody has a past. There is always someone in your past that will never leave, that will always be there to remind you of your hurt or your mistakes. They're that person that, no matter how alone you feel or how happy you are, they will be there, whether you want them or not. They can be a friend or someone you haven't spoken to in years. For me that person was my first boyfriend, Lee. We dated for about a month before my senior year after I had come out. He was a year younger than I yet lived faster than anyone I had ever known. He was bisexual and had had sex with girls, and he was also recovering from a cocaine addiction. While his past record would point normal people away, the way he made me feel kept me going after him. I had met him at a party and soon after we started dating. I had never done anything with a guy before so at first I was scared but eventually I let go. I knew after a week we were in trouble, though. I was on the phone with him one night and as I was saying goodbye, he told me he loved me. I had never been in a relationship and didn't know what to do, so, while it seemed smart at the time, I did possibly the worst thing anybody could ever do to a person, and I said I loved him without feeling it. After a couple of weeks I knew I needed out of the relationship. Lee would call me everyday and get very angry if I didn't answer or call back. It got to the point where I avoided his calls on purpose and was scared to spend time with him. He was needy and crazy and I didn't know how to handle it. So after a month, I did one of the other worst things you could do in a relationship, and that was to break up with him online. We were talking one night and I knew I needed to do it but I also knew that I never wanted to see him again. Needless to say it did not go well. He flipped out and after an hour he said goodbye and left an away message up for me of song lyrics about suicide. When I didn't see anything on the news the next week I knew he'd be okay.

That brings me to the present time of my story. It was the middle of December of my freshman year in the fall semester of 2004. I had gone through two ridiculously miserable rejections and I still hadn't met Jerry and meeting anyone didn't seem likely due to my fear of calling people. I was browsing livejournal one day and noticed a journal on one of my friends pages with the name Lee in it. This friend of mine knew Lee and I thought it might be his. So I clicked on it, and it was his. I read it and came across something that suddenly made me very depressed and angry, he had a boyfriend. I don't know what it was but suddenly I wanted Lee back. I missed the way that he held me, the way he talked to me, the way he made feel like the most special and attractive person in the world. So I wrote him a message telling him how I had found his journal and asked how he was doing, I wasn't quite sure why, maybe because I missed him or maybe out of sheer jealousy, but now it was up to him.

"I can't believe this is it, our first semester is practically over, finals are next week and we're done," John said one night as we smoked a cigarette outside our dorm.

"I know," I said, "Five weeks of being home. It's going to be forever."

"I'm going to be home for two days and want to come back, I know it," John said.

"I know, I'm excited to see my friends and all, but I just don't want to go, I don't want to have to deal with my dad. My grades are going to be horrible, I just don't wanna hear it," I said as taking the last drag.

"Exactly, it's all just so boring. I'm used to living it up here, and seeing you guys every

day," John said, he had a couple of drags left.

"I'm so used to just waking up and going down to your suite, we all got so close," I said.

"I hate Christmas."

"What?" I asked him.

"I don't know, I don't hate the day, just the season. This break better fly the fuck by," he said as he tossed his cigarette. We headed inside.

"Well, I got some studying to do, I'll talk to you tomorrow," John said as he went down his hall.

"Yeah," I said as I started going up the stairs. I went into my room as Ed threw some DVD's into a box.

"I'll wanna watch these when I'm home," he said. I didn't even respond, the last thing I wanted was this break. I mean, I could use the break, I just wished we could all spend break together. The only refreshing thing about the whole situation was my friends at home. I hadn't seen them since I left and planned on spending all of break with them, but of course there would be those required nights of hanging out with my family. I just planned to time them far apart.

A week later I felt good about one final exam and pretty confident I had failed the rest. It was one in the morning and I was packing. My dad was coming at eight in the morning for the long ass drive back to what I used to refer to as home. I don't wanna sound like a pussy, but I am gay so I guess its okay, but as I started packing up the clothes and belongings from my closet I began to tear a little in my eyes. It wasn't a full-out sob session, just a little reflection on how much this five-week break was going to suck. I closed my suitcase and laid down, Ed was already asleep as were John and Charlie. I shut my eyes and opened them what seemed like two seconds later. Unfortunately it was seven hours later and my dad was going to be there any minute. I threw on some jeans and got Ed up.

"Get up shit head," I said as he grunted. "I said get the fuck up, I'm leaving soon."

"Fine, gimme a sec," Ed said, slowly starting to sit up.

I went downstairs and woke up John and Charlie. They followed me back to my room. My cell phone started to ring as soon as I got in.

"Hello?" I said knowing perfectly well who it was.

"Hey, wow, you're actually up. I'm downstairs," my dad said.

"Okay, I'll be right down," I said hanging up. "Well, I'm off."

I gave Charlie a hug. "John, don't hate Christmas," I said giving him a hug. "Ed, fuck face, you better call me." I gave him a hug.

"Have a good ride," John said.

"Yeah," I said. I picked up my suitcase and carried it downstairs, I loaded it in my dad's truck and got in. We small talked for a little while before I eventually drifted asleep. I woke up outside my hometown and recognized the highway as five minutes from my house. I pulled up to my house, it looked the same. I went up to my room and passed the fuck out.

Christmas was nice, it was good to see the family members that I liked. I spent New Year's in a hotel room with my friends, and then cleaning ourselves out of a \$200 damage bill the next morning. Lee had e-mailed me back and said he'd love to see me. He told me he was having some boyfriend troubles and implied that he was quite single again. We set a date to meet, I was going to hang out at his house and catch-up. I spent every waking moment between the mall where I worked and hanging out with my friends. I was out every night and wouldn't have it any other way. I was at a diner with two of my best girl friends, Kate and Alex, one night.

"So, I have to tell you guys something," I said. "I talked to Lee, and we're hanging out on Thursday." They were both familiar with him and just kind of looked at me with blank faces.

"I don't think that's a good idea," Alex said

"What'd he say?" Kate asked.

"Well, we just kind of talked. I found him on-line. I don't know, I wanna talk to him, explain that I'm sorry how everything went down."

"Why though, it's been a year and a half." Alex said.

"I just wanna clear the air." I knew what I was saying was bull shit. I didn't know why I wanted to see him.

"I just don't think it's a good idea," Alex said as the waitress came over. I quickly changed the subject and left about an hour later.

Thursday finally rolled around and I still wasn't sure what I was doing. I got in my car and drove to Lee's house. I pulled up as he was getting out of his friends car. His friend left and I walked over.

"Hey," I said. "Long time no see." God could I be more corny?

"Wow, you look great," he said. That was all I needed.

We went inside to his living room.

"So, you changed," I said, I didn't really know what to say. "This living room is new, you added on to your house?"

"Yeah, I moved my bedroom around too. Wanna see?" He asked.

So much for subtle I thought, but I went up anyway.

"I never thought I'd hear from you again," he said as he sat on his bed. I sat down next to him.

"I know, about that, I don't even know. I saw your livejournal and just really wanted to say hi."

"Remember when we played the nervous game?" he asked. Odd question I thought.

"Yeah." He then put his hand on my knee and asked, "Are you nervous yet?" He gradually got to my pelvic region and asked, "So, are you nervous yet?"

I looked him in the eye, "No." I replied.

He then grabbed me by the neck and pulled me down on to the bed, kissing me. He took my shirt off as I did his and then proceeded to the pants.

He leaned down to my ear and asked, "Is this what you want?"

Why the hell did he have to say that? Reluctantly I nodded my head and we continued. The sex wasn't great but it sure beat the hell out of my first experience. Afterwards we were both just kind of laying there.

"Well, my parents will be home from work soon," he said.

I got the hint and was strangely relieved. "Gotcha," I said. I got up and got dressed. I left and went home. Later that night I was browsing on-line and checked Lee's livejournal. There was an entry from earlier that day.

"i told my sister caitlin that i had a BF and she was like ok...soo seeing chad was fun we cuddled we kissed and we got COMPLETE alone time i mean no mom no sisters no one but me and chad and that was AMAZING!!!!!!"

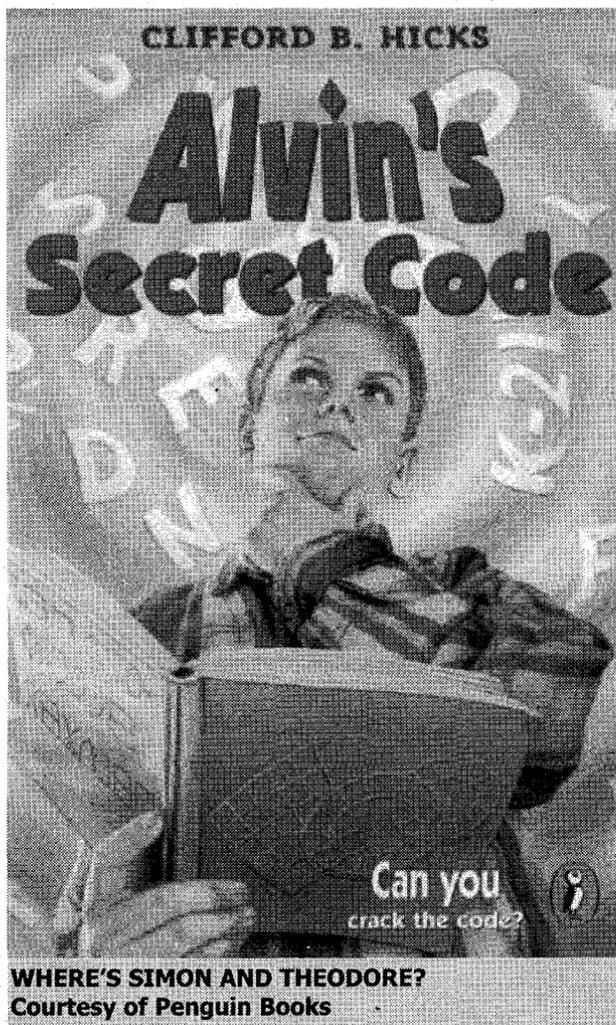
Fuck. It didn't sound much like he was having boyfriend troubles. That Fucker.

To Be Continued...

# The Reformation in Central Kentucky Scintillates

By James Messina

Have you ever thought to yourself that your friends on facebook might not be your real friends, but rather random acquaintances you've met or become aware of via an attenuated network? Have you ever thought to yourself that you possessed no original thoughts and used recycled material that has appeared in hundreds of equally derivative blogs? More to the point, have you ever thought to yourself that, in the digital age, where information is transferred millions of bits at a time, steganography is becoming a much more viable concept than it was in days of old? Yeah, I didn't figure you had. But luckily, I have. In yet another installment of what is sure to become a classic masterwork, I give to you a brief description of steganography. It's a sort of cousin to cryptography, and one well worth looking into for any paranoiac with some time on his hands. While you're at it, an intimate knowledge of computers (one which I'm sorely lacking) is quite handy.



was shaved again, exposing his scalp. This supposedly warned Greece about an imminent Persian invasion. Of course, you have to have quite a bit of time on your hands, as waiting for hair to regrow takes a while. A more efficient method, also attributed to the ancient Greeks, is to use a wax tablet. A wax tablet is a tablet of wood, with wax on the top of it. Messages were written using a sharp stylus, carving into the wax. When it became necessary to have more writing, the old wax was taken off with a straightedge, leaving a new smooth layer. The trick to this method was carving the message onto the wood; any observer would be more curious in the wax than what was under it. Neither of these techniques, of course, are too applicable in the modern age, so let's skip forward a few hundred years.

During World War II, microdots came into popular use. These are text or pictures shrunk down to the size and shape of a period. They could be detected chemically, but only with difficulty. Throughout the war, networks of counter-espionage agents worked to detect such messages, ensuring that

many of these communiqués were caught, but at the war's conclusion, the censorship that had occurred slacked off greatly, and it became more feasible to hide messages in such a manner. There are special cameras able to produce these microdots. Hell, let's make it explicit. If you want to get away with some crap, and you don't have email, use microdots. (By the way, don't do anything illegal, guys. Please?) Also in World War II is the story of Velvée Dickinson, who wrote messages to parties in South America from fake addresses. As she owned a doll shop, she wrote about the movements of American ships as though they were dolls; a battleship whose integrity had been damaged via a torpedo might become "that lovely prim doll with the hole in its side". She was caught, and imprisoned. When speaking in code, it's probably for the best to be a little subtler than that. Now, once

again you might say to yourself, "But what about the modern age, this world of technological wonders, neon lights and electronic whiz-bang?" Well, dude, chill out. Here you go.

Following the advent of computers, more advanced methods for steganography became available. The governing idea is that most computers have a lot of redundancy built into them, and that if little alterations are made, the thing which has had these changes made to it won't be perceptibly altered in either appearance or function. For this reason, digital pictures are often used. A 24-bit bitmap has 8 bits each representing red, green and blue. Changing the last bit will result in a difference of color so small no one would notice. Utilizing this last altered bit as information, someone could encode messages, using the last digit as a binary value, which, when taken which other pixels, combines to form ASCII text. There are no accurate estimates as to how prevalent this practice is, but it's both well known and effective.

It seems as though I've told you everything you need to know to evade detection, how to make your own codes, how to crack others', but alas, such is not the case. There's still much, much more to show you. Over the winter break I'll be working hard to produce codes and puzzles of mind-boggling complexity and ingenuity, and to delve ever deeper into the shady world of cryptography. Circumstance being what it is and this being the last issue for the semester of this our fine publication, I won't leave you to agonize over anything whilst you're living it up in foreign climes. I will solve the last puzzle I gave you, though.

## PUZZLE THE 6<sup>TH</sup>:

Due to the fact that that was a long-ass puzzle, I won't reproduce it here. Sorry, space constraints. No worries, though, you can find leftover issues all around campus. Look on, and read. Note that each position I gave was a corner of a particular room. By looking to that corner, you should have noted a fuzzy number there. This number corresponded to a letter in a direct Caesar substitution with shift equal to three. Writing the letters that corresponded to each corner and decrypting according to the shift I told you should produce the plaintext. See? I told you it was condescending to the point of hyperbole. You guys should have more confidence in yourselves. Later all. Peace outside. I am a warrior.



# COMIC UPDATE!

BY MO IBRAHIM

## Deck the Halls with Comedy

We quietly slipped into the month of December, the happiest time of the year. It's such a happy time of year that we hardly even realize the fact that we're about to spend a lot of our money to buy gifts for almost everyone we know (for those of you that read my last article, you know that us college students don't even have enough money at the end of the semester). Christmas decorations are a must have, so if you don't have your decorations stored away some place from last year then you better get your ass down to CVS and buy some.

Speaking of decorations, I've always wondered how little kids have felt when they encounter some of these very creative decorations. Like when they see one of those blow up Santas with an air compressor stuck under its ass and a little speaker that repeats "ho ho ho" over and over again, does a child really think that someone brought the fat man down and mounted Santa on a lawn or rooftop? And what about those houses that were elaborately decorated to look like Santa's North Pole? There are people out there that actually sit down and say to themselves, "You know what, fuck my job, I'm going to make this house look like Santa's workshop, I'm going to invest thousands of dollars and hundreds of hours of my time decorating this house so people can stop at the front of my house and take pictures of my beautiful hard work." I'm sure you've seen one of those houses before, the kind that actually hires little people to act as Santa's busy little elves. I wonder if the youngest kids actually believe that their neighbor's house is actually the North Pole.

"Mommy where is Santa?" A child may ask her mother after being told a Christmas story for her 7PM bedtime.

"Honey, Santa lives in the North Pole, in his workshop among his many little elves." The mother would tenderly answer her snowy faced daughter.

"Santa lives right next door!" Exclaims the soon to be disappointed angel when she finds out that the only Christmas gift she's getting from the neighbors are some gum and candy (since the rest of the money was invested on decorations).

What is the typical answer you receive when you ask someone "What do you want for Christmas?" You already know what the answer is even before you ask the question. You find yourself talking to yourself as you ask it, "What do you want (why am I wasting precious breath and vocal sounds with this) for Christmas?" But still, you ask it because somewhere in a small part of your body you think to yourself, "Maybe this time I'll get a real answer!" Then usually after asking the question, your friend thinks long and hard for about 5 seconds and says, "Uh... I don't know." At that point, you both just stay silent for the next 5 seconds, reflecting upon the conversation that had just taken place.

But you see, here's the consequence. When no one knows what a person wants they resort to what is popularly called, "thoughtless gifts." These are gifts that you can buy for anyone and still be a somewhat nice gift. It's the kind of gift that you resort to after like 3 hours of shopping at the mall, looking for that one thing that looks like it screams "Tom." You (typically girls experience this) search every

store at the mall looking for something Tom would like, but you can't seem to find it. There usually is a gift that screams out Tom, a perfect gift that just resembles the essence of what Tom is all about. Then suddenly like a hurricane coming to ruin your potential Mardi Gras, that friend you're at the mall with exclaims "I am so



MONKEY SHAMAN INVITES YOU TO DINNER, Courtesy of Mo

getting this for Tom!" At that point the only word that resounds in your head is "FUCK!" You were so close on finding that gift yourself if that bitch of a lady in front of you (because when you're out, every stranger is either a bitch or an asshole, unless proven otherwise) moved her ass fast enough for you to get to the golden gift. Right then and there, the remainder of your shopping experience will be dull and depressing. As you continue to shop for Tom you can't get that "great" present out of your head, the present your friend so cleverly found. You start

asking yourself, "Why didn't I think of that?" Eventually a little voice inside of you whispers into your subconscious ear, "What if something awful happened to your friend that found the gift, eh? Then someone else would have to deliver the gift to Tom."

Right now you can sense your friend being hostile. You're there still looking for a gift for your buddy Tom while your friend has so many shopping bags since it was easy finding gifts for everyone else. You've been at the mall for 6 hours and still haven't bought even one gift. You know it's time to leave, you feel the pressure, stores flash before your eyes, angry glare in your friend's eye, fake Santas everywhere, sales, salespeople, windows, toys, clothes, games, Long Island prostitutes, salvation army, kids, mothers, pets- Boiling point! This is the part where you get really angry and stressed that you just say "To hell with it, I'm buying him a pair of Old Navy boxers and a DVD!" Hence, I present to you a common thoughtless gift.

I've often questioned the whole gift giving thing. When Jesus was born, he and only he was given gifts. There weren't any gifts for his mother or anyone else around the manger. Nobody broke out into gift giving on the day of his birth, nor did anyone put up Christmas lights. So then if December 25<sup>th</sup> is Jesus' birthday, then why don't we just give him a gift sacrifice. Instead of finding an excuse to give everyone else gifts, why not just have outdoor Christmas trees with presents under them that we burn on Christmas Day. Instead of buying an iPod for your son, just wrap it up, put it under the tree and burn it on Christmas Day as a sacrifice to the man who sacrificed his life for your sins! (Don't be offended, it's just comedy people).

Have a happy holiday, I'll see you in 2006.

## Home on the Range Continued...

By David K. Ginn

### Continued from page 13

defied all Australian stereotypes when he implied that Marques' hair seemed a bit oily and greasy.

Greasy is just what McDonalds' cheeseburgers and French fries are. They are also loved by millions.

Millions is just what Kelvin Gilbert III made when he sold his supercomputer to a Japanese investor who reproduced it overseas.

Overseas is where we all have to go to get away from this madness.

Madness is what ensues when all sanity begins to wane.

"Wane" is how one teacher misspelled third grade student Wayne Lippey's first name on his third-term report card. His parents were not pleased.

"Pleased" is how Cornelius Milo described his reaction to the Broadway production of *Mama Mia!* just hours before he experienced his horrible fate.

Fate is what made Bohemian artist

Rickers JeRicklers famous around the world.

The world is where we all live, and it is our home.

Our home is where our hearts are, and our hearts are in our upper bodies and are useful for pumping blood out to the rest of the body.

Body is what people use to describe the main text of a document, or the main attraction of a person who emits an immense sexual appeal, appealing to the masses, amassing to the appeal, peeling like an orange, orange like the sun, sunny like the morning, mourning like mourners crying over a grave, grave like the demeanor of grim pessimists who long to control the world, controlling like the demons who lurk throughout the night, lurking and hiding, hiding and seeking, seeking like the armies who seek out food and shelter during times of world war, trying to get back to their homes, searching for that one place, the place they belong, and they call that their home... it is their home on the range.



# The Comrade

No.2 Dec 2005 Patriotically



## Your Mom Can Also Be A News Story!

By A Legion of Journalists

Seriously, a magnified photo of your anus, with a subse-

quent two page story describing the open sores is equally as newsworthy. Seriously, a magnified photo of your anus, with a subsequent two page story describing the open sores is equally as newsworthy. Seriously, a magnified photo of your anus, with a subsequent two page story describing the open sores is equally as newsworthy.

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Continued on page 108

# This Issue



NYPIRG Furthers Their Campaign of World Domination Led By Cobra Commander.

Page Liberal



Right Wing Girls Are Human... yeah...

Page Agenda

## WTF?! Columns

Two articles? Parodying the same thing? Seriously, WTF! How'd this get by our crack team of research analysts!

Page 32 & 34

Half Assed Parody!

Page 28

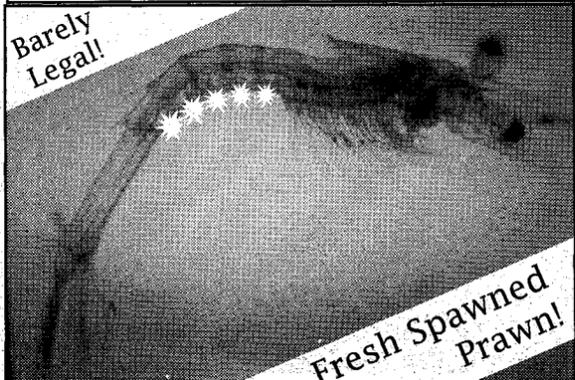
Pictures of housewives get our engine running, the rolling pins... the sweet anal fixations... mommy... suckle us anew

Page 29

Tell the man in the \$3,000 suit that Bush lied!? Come ON!

Page \$6,000 suit

Barely Legall



Fresh Spawned Prawn!



Hot (!) Preggo Action

We do shrimp porn right, bitches!

Much Better Parody

# Liberal, Another Word for Nazi

By James Messina

**tolerance** n. A quality which is entirely lacking in our hard-line staff.

**fas-cism** n. A beautiful fucking system. Ah, for the bludgeon and castor oil.

I've scientifically studied tolerance on campus. I had empirical evidence regarding the attitudes of students and faculty at this university, but unfortunately all the data was lost. I've therefore arbitrarily decided that Stony Brook is about 75 percent tolerant. This point of course is arguable (mostly attributable to the fact that this data bears no relevance whatsoever and in fact represents a blanket of journalistic integrity the like of which a high school newspaper would consider deplorable), but I'll save that for another article.

Discrimination against people with opposing views is rampant on campus. The one safe place is USG, where Robert Romano is a bastion of hope to our fell ilk. What viewpoints are being struck down via logical, well-founded arguments and principles of a democratic society? Why, those of this very paper! It's taboo to shout loudly in support of a Stalinesque regime with no signs of incorporating due process to its treatment of prisoners, it's verboten to drink and sing songs of a past era while reminiscing about the quest for the Hyperborean ideal. And perhaps worst of all, in a despicable satire of our ideologies, Che Guavera is an omnipresent slogan monkey, looking out in bleak chiaroscuro approval of a future in which his incorrect interpretation of our firm totalitarian system comes into being. Yes, his T-shirt is only one of the many horrors you

will encounter when you enter into this, the lion's den.

As a brief anecdote, I will mention an incident that took place in a class on American politics. This actually happened to me; this is an experience I personally had- no bullshit. The issue of racial profiling came up. Nearly everyone in the class was adopting an egalitarian stance, saying such profiling was wrong and went against the principles of the "United States Constitution", whatever outmoded document that is. Despite the fact that I respected



It could happen HERE!, Courtesy of Gayezuela

the opinions of these sniveling somnambulants, I knew better. When I raised my hand to point out the obvious efficiency of such a system, and how it would be easier to install an Express Lane in airports whereby people of Middle Eastern descent may file through towards rows of gloved men waiting to inspect their innards rather than performing inspections on an individual level, I was rebuked. The professor called me a "jingoistic brute intent on the destruction of democracy", when in fact I am not a brute at all. Bear in mind that my comments inspired riots on a scale that is hardly comparable to

those in France, and are therefore inconsequential. The professor merely took umbrage with my standpoint. Her censorship was admirable, as the staff of this paper can relate strongly with the necessity of the destruction of opposing publications not funded by our glorious State, but when it was directed at me she had crossed a clear and well-established line. It is written that "free speech is encouraged... there will be neither thought nor vocalization of dissatisfaction with the government and/or its representatives." There it was, plain as day.

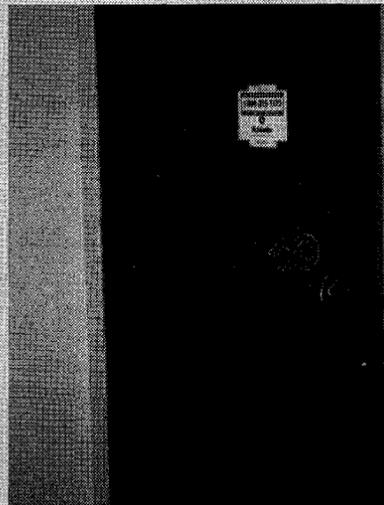
To quote another author I hold in high esteem: "In my eyes, the question is not whether viewpoint discrimination exists, but rather, what to do about it." I strongly believe that if you try to express your viewpoints (in support of our resplendent State, but of course) and they are coherent, articulate and do not incite crimes against anyone but minorities and others of no consequence, then let your voice be heard. If someone attempts to dismiss you as "crazy" or "living in a bleak fantasy world of your own design", challenge them. Preferably in a Quixotic joust of sorts. If this fails, go to a minor authority figure. And if this fails, go to the highest authority figure - the State exists to help you. It is not a crime to be correct about wishing to oppress minorities. In fact, in an ultra-scientific historical study, I cite the Russian pogroms and the modern-day chemical warfare against the Kurds, both extremely effective tactics.

Perhaps Pol Pot, a well-known leader, said it best when he proposed, "Who's going to notice a couple of bodies?"

## TTLY!!! CR8ZEE!!!

### Picture Corner

Can You Identify this?



We habitually run dark, blurry photographs that tend to be of low image quality. We have a special team of continually fornicating brine shrimp to adjust the grey levels for us.

Can you identify anything appearing in this photograph? Can you read the text? There's text in there, you can sort of see that much. Maybe there's an inexplicable picture of a man in a straw hat wagging his finger. He might a liberal. He might be a redneck.

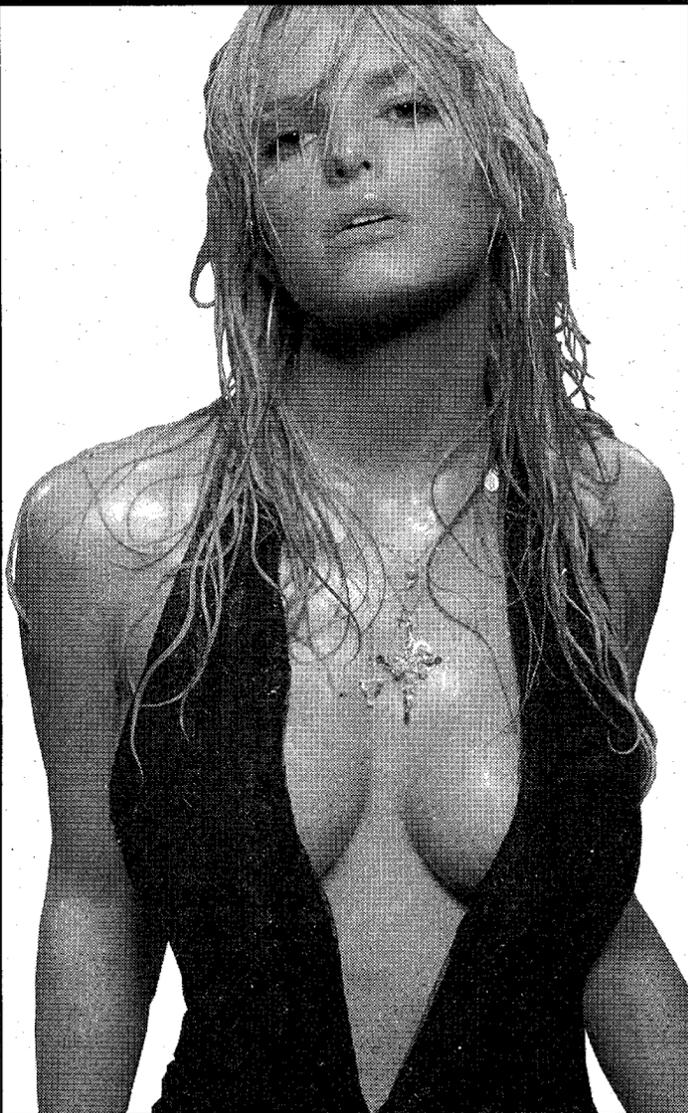
TTLY CR8ZEE!!! TTYL!

# Right Wing Girls are really super hot scary!

By Joe Rios & Irv Navona

So maybe Ann Coulter is not the best example of a hot conservative, but she has become, as Al Franken puts it, "The reigning diva of the fanatical right, or rather, the fanatical diva of the reigning right." Anr. has always been a strong example of the intelligence of the right wing, and never uses bullying and scare tactics to advance her career (well... almost). We at *The Comrade* searched far and wide across the "Internets" to find the hottest of the conservative hotties.

## Jessica Simpson



Sex does not boost this career.  
Nope, not this wet, cleaved, hot pants career.

## Condoleeza Rice

**Is it hard being a conservative in this modern world?**

"Well it's very easy to be a conservative when you work so close to the most powerful man in the world. I mean, I say one word, and your liberal punk-asses are all DEAD! YOU HEAR ME?! FUCKING DEAD!!!"

**What do you like to do in your spare time?**

"Well, I love crushing liberal bones to make my bread, but when I only have a few hours in my day, I'll slip off to the nearest S&M club to work out some of my frustration. Last week Ann Coulter got me good in the racks!"

**What do you put in your hair to make it look like that?**

"Aborted fetuses. But don't tell anyone..."



## Rachel Teresa MacNeil

**So tell us about yourself:**

Well, after I was possessed by satan, I was kind of upset. The liberal doctors told me that I had no chance of survival, but now that my fusion with satan is complete, I am working diligently to help spread positive images about the conservative way of life.

**And, what do you like to do in your spare time?**

Well, climbing walls is always fun, masturbating with a cross is so much fun, but apparently sex is wicked, so I had to give that one up. Of course, when I have nothing else to do, projectile vomiting of pea soup is always good clean fun.

**Last question; what's your personal slogan?**

YOUR MOTHER SUCKS COCKS IN HELL!!!



## Ann Coulter

**People seem to think that you hate liberals what do you have to say to that?**

Those fucking muther fucking douche bags! What the fuck do those America hating, Islam loving, baby killing morons have to contribute to intelligent conversation. I think they should all be shot, and ground up for some fresh baked "Condie-Bread!"

**Yes... um... you're scary. Did you know that?**

Yeah I did. When they kept me in that Nazi prison camp... I just flipped my lid. That's how I single handedly won WWII.

**Riiiiiiiiigghht.... Um.... LAST QUESTION! Where do you see yourself as a conservative in 10 years:**

Empress of the world of course. Everyone will bow before me as I sit on my throne of blood. YOU WILL KISS MY FEET! KISS THE COULTER'S FEET. AND ALL LIBERAL'S BEDS WILL BE MADE OF DISTILLED PAIN UNTILL I EVENTAULLY SLAUGHTER THEM ALL!!!! DIE!!!



\*\* IF YOU HAVE A CONSERVATIVE GIRL THAT YOU WANT SHOT TO THE MOON, JUST SEND US AN E-MAIL: sbcomrade@gmail.com ..... BOOYAH!\*\*

# Rightist Facism or... Facism?

By Joe Safdia

**con-fused** adj. Being unable to think with clarity or act with understanding and intelligence.

**re-tard** n. A person considered to be foolish or socially inept.

And we're back with everyone's favorite segment, "Parody that Patriot", where we take everyone's favorite *Patriot* article and play with it until it's something worthy of putting into a campus newspaper! No, I'm just kidding. No parodies today (tearing apart "Unborn Again Christian" was so easy I almost felt guilty), but there are a few things in the most recent issue of *The Patriot* that needs to be addressed, particularly a literary masterpiece called "Leftist Tolerance or Fascism".

The article, written by Jason Frank, gives one the perception that all Stony Brook students and faculty members are opposed to any sort of right-wing viewpoints on this campus, even going as far as to silence conservatism on campus, or at least that's the impression I got so far. Apparently "anything and everything conservative in nature" is being censored. Now I'll admit we do have a liberal campus, but I wouldn't go so far as to say that "viewpoint discrimination" is running "rampant" around Stony Brook like some sort of disease. A majority of

people disagreeing with you is not exactly discrimination. According to "Leftist Tolerance or Fascism", it has become "nearly criminal to praise President George W. Bush" in the classroom. I've seen students speak in support of one of Bush's policies plenty of times in a classroom or lecture hall. I wouldn't exactly say they were singing his praises or anything, but they were speaking in support of a Bush policy (such as the No Child Left Behind Act which was a recent topic of debate in my Political Science 102 class) and weren't the victims of any sort of discrimination and certainly weren't being treated like "criminals". And the professor certainly wasn't censoring anybody's opinions. Instead, he was encouraging civil debate amongst the students.

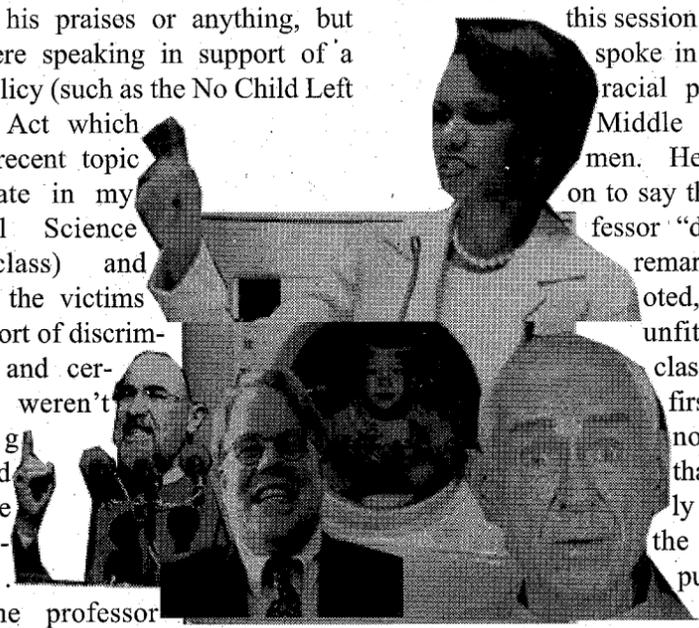
I also can't say I've seen too much of Che Guevara's face around Stony Brook University. I'm not saying his portrait is not anywhere on this campus, but I wouldn't go as far to say this campus is "littered with his pic-

ture". I've seen very few T-shirts with his picture on them.

Frank goes on to tell us of a single time where a conservative viewpoint was silenced by a professor in class (which was in fact not at this university so I don't know how it proves that viewpoint discrimination is running rampant at Stony Brook). During this session of class, he spoke in support of racial profiling of Middle Eastern men. He then goes on to say that the professor "deemed my remarks as 'bigoted, racist, and unfit for the classroom.'" It first must be noted that that is slightly vague. Did the professor publicly state this, or did you assume she believed this because she did something like end the discussion after you stated your beliefs (though the article seems to imply the former, it is still a bit vague)? While I admit to sympathizing with your plight considerably less than I should (come on, you've got to admit, racial profiling is pretty racist), I do in fact agree

with you in that no belief or opinion should be censored in any school, no matter how unpopular it is. With that in mind, I must also inquire as to whether your remarks were "censored" or "debunked". But whatever the case, the larger point I am trying to make here is that it's pretty silly, not to mention probably inaccurate, to use one example of viewpoint discrimination as proof that conservatism is being demonized and censored by Stony Brook students and faculty alike, especially when your one piece of evidence had nothing to do with Stony Brook University in any way, shape, or form.

Stony Brook University is a liberal campus, there's no way around that. But that doesn't mean that the administration is engaging in viewpoint censorship and discrimination. Now I'm not saying it doesn't happen now and then, nor am I even saying that Frank is wrong. Maybe the university is discriminating against conservatives. But the article "Leftist Tolerance or Fascism" fails to even remotely come close to proving this to be true. A single incident in a classroom, not even in this school, isn't exactly proof of an unconstitutional school policy. And as a final note, it must be noted that there is a conservative voice on campus, and it is a very poorly made little newspaper called *The Patriot*.



## The Ongoing Saga Of Southampton College

By Laura Positano

Warning: this is not an objective article. Southampton screwed me and many other people over. One year after transferring here to Stony Brook because I heard Southampton was closing up forever to undergraduates, I have been reminded of it again on multiple occasions.

Both of the Stony Brook papers, *The Statesman* and *The Patriot* (and even *The Press*, during the summer) have recently reported how Stony Brook is now the owner of Southampton College. From what I recall of the transfer day when Southampton tour guides boasted of the construction of an expensive new library, there was a pristine marine sciences area, seahorses gaily swimming in tanks alongside other ocean creatures, big boats anchored nearby. Southampton, the college that had a harbor and a beach of its own. Yet with such a glamorous setting, (why, on transfer day, did they have chefs serving us trays of hors d'oeuvres?) the school's boat just could not stay afloat. Deficits that had existed since the sixties had been muddled through for decades, with fundraisers featuring Rod Stewart, and livin' on a prayer, as Bon Jovi would say.

As I said in the column I had in

the Suffolk Community College newspaper, "Southampton College's demise was like a cheesy movie."

Now it becomes an even cheesier movie with the opera boffe' addition of "mad as hell" Native Americans staking a legal claim to the underlying land. The old black and white westerns of Stony Brook holding off the Indians makes this what must be the comical educational story of the century. With arrows streaking through the air, Fort Stony Brook remains at the center of an epic action movie. Who will win this epic battle, and does anyone really care? Should Stony Brook reap even more profits by attaining the land that really is the ancestral land of the Shinnecock

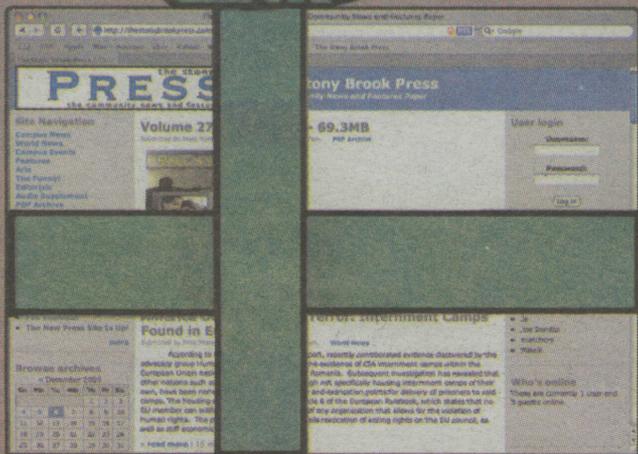
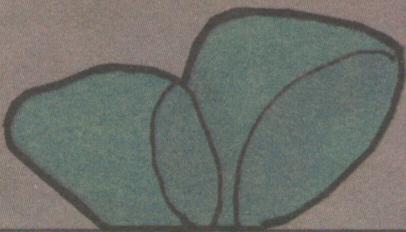
tribe? Or should these people from the Shinnecock tribe be able to become prosperous from their own land, through the establishment of casinos?

Essentially, this is a battle among wealthy clients. Lord knows Stony Brook has thousands, maybe millions of dollars. Southampton College, despite its deficits, had enough money to waste in building a library that cost thousands of dollars and yet barely saw the light of day. Southampton was an expensive college, costing at least twice as much, probably more than that, than Stony Brook. With no qualms, people like myself were instructed to have a choice of either moving to another county (CW Post in Brookville) or to finish everything up in one semester, which would be insane. Upon being told this, I imme-

diately said, "Refund my tuition and the down payment that I made for the dorm." Southampton screwed not just my fellow students but also those who worked for them. The lady in financial aid there told me about a meeting that was taking place in the upper echelons of the administration and that she didn't know really what was up. She didn't even know, she later told me upon me announcing how I no longer was to attend Southampton College, that she had no choice but to quit. Many of her colleagues were in the same situation since the fact was Brookville was a grueling commute from the Hamptons.

I spoke to many people who are now in Stony Brook via Southampton and also to people like myself who were going to transfer there but didn't because of the news. Consensus: Southampton got what it deserved. People who went to class this past year there noted how none of the professors were really into their jobs and you can say the same for the students. I would have to say that while Stony Brook has its problems, I lucked out in the sense that no amount of idiocy can top Southampton.

...AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST, I WANT A NEW STONY BROOK PRESS WEBSITE!



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