

THE STONY BROOK

PRESS

VOL XXXI ISSUE 14

"NEVER STOP REMEMBERING
THOMAS EDISON'S NIGERIAN TRAGEDY"

MAY 12, 2010

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Also Inside: The Lit Sup

Student\$ Empowered by Innovations of Lawmaker\$

By Colleen Harrington

Defiant Southampton students along with local legislators are battling the cuts at their campus with a multi-pronged strategy, as the August 31 axe date looms.

Lawmakers had immediately requested an investigation into President Samuel Stanley's early April decision to scrap much of the college. Now, other options are being explored: the town where the campus is nestled has offered to buy the rights to the land, legislators are discussing the feasibility of Southampton becoming an independent SUNY school, and the displaced students are planning a legal battle to keep their campus fully operational.

"We have lots of pieces in play right now with hopes that at least one of them will hold and be successful," said Southampton student leader Liam Keating, 22.

On April 22, First District Assemblyman Fred Thiele stood before supporters at the Southampton campus' landmark windmill, flanked by State Senator Kenneth LaValle and several members of the Southampton town board. Together, the lawmakers announced their willingness to tap into millions of dollars that have accumulated in a Southampton Community Preservation Fund to purchase the development rights to the satellite campus.

The fund, grown by a 2% tax on most property transactions in Southampton, was designed for buying land in order to "preserve community character." Enthusiastic east end lawmakers said the fund would apply to the 81-acre campus.

Thiele asserted the money Southampton Town would pay Stony Brook for the rights would amount to well beyond the figure the satellite campus reportedly drains from SBU's budget. Stony Brook representatives have said that the Southampton cuts will begin saving \$6.7 million over the next 2 to 3 years, a small drop in Stony Brook's roughly \$1.9 billion annual operating budget.

"We will take the president at his word that this is an issue of money and finance," said Thiele. "We're providing an alternative that can help deal with that issue."

The legislators sent the offer to President Samuel Stanley and SUNY

Chancellor Nancy Zimpher. A May 6 meeting between the lawmakers and President Stanley yielded no negotiations. Stanley has said that he has no intentions to sell the campus, and that "plans are in the works for several other SUNY campuses to make productive and expanded use of Southampton's facilities."

In addition to the preservation fund proposal, some Southampton students are placing hope in a letter that Thiele and other Suffolk County lawmakers sent to Speaker of the New York State Assembly Sheldon Silver on May 3. The letter requests that the 2010 budget contain specific legislation that would keep Southampton open.

"The State University is making an ill-considered and perhaps illegal deci-

head. Leaders among the students are keeping most details about their legal effort under wraps, but have indicated a temporary injunction might be pursued to delay the closure until it can be investigated.

Meanwhile, the move to scrap Southampton appears firmly linked to the hotly debated Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act (PHEEIA). Passage of the act would allow SUNY and CUNY schools to largely set their own tuition rates instead of having them set by state legislature, as they currently are now. Additionally, the bill would allow money from tuition increases to be controlled by the schools, rather than invested into the state. A power struggle has erupted between the legislature and

playing out in April, SUNY Chancellor Nancy Zimpher strategically swooped around the state to promote her 6-point "Power of SUNY" plan. Zimpher's plan aims to "promote meaningful and lasting economic vitality" in New York State over 5 to 10 years. Passage of PHEEIA may prove critical to the effectiveness of Zimpher's plan, as the act could potentially funnel billions of extra tuition dollars into SUNY schools over time. Chancellor Zimpher has said that if enacted, the money from PHEEIA would enable SUNY to create more than 10,000 new jobs and invest \$8.5 billion in construction projects around the state.

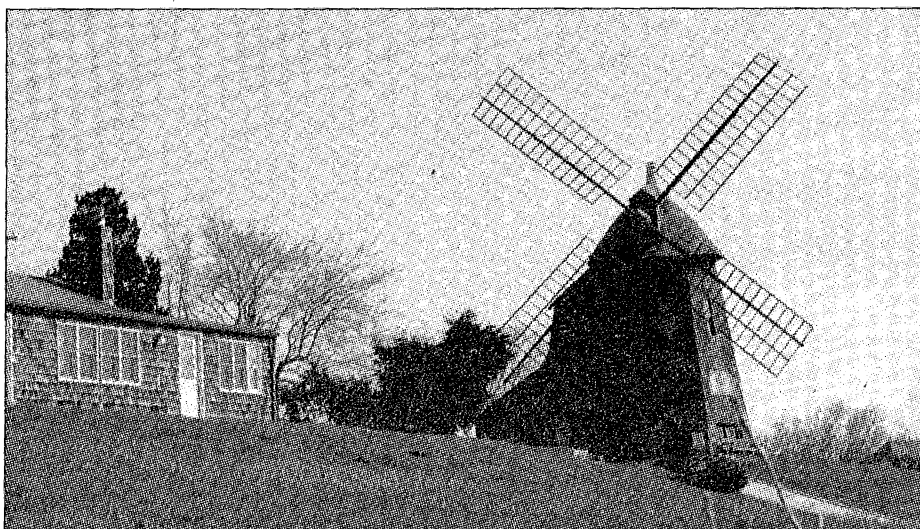
One of the six main goals of the "Power of SUNY" strategic plan is to work towards an "energy-smart New York" by eliminating at least 30 percent of SUNY's hefty energy consumption. SUNY spends nearly \$280 million in energy annually. The plan says the energy cuts will be accomplished by "becoming the nation's first system of energy smart campuses."

Southampton students complain that this aspect of Zimpher's plan stands at odds with the decision to cut their sustainability-centered campus, which already employs state-of-the-art energy saving technology. Instead, it seems to play in measure to PHEEIA that would allow all money from energy performance savings to go into a fund held by the state university. Such savings would amount to millions of dollars per year around the SUNY system.

Thiele and LaValle have said that closing Southampton seems like an orchestrated stunt intended to bolster support for PHEEIA. According to Thiele, "The future of Southampton has become a pawn in the Albany battle over these issues."

Stony Brook spokeswoman Lauren Sheprow and SUNY spokesman David Henahan both cited funding cuts and restrictions in setting tuition as the reasons for the Southampton cuts. Neither would directly address the allegations of the legislators.

Initially conceived when former governor Eliot Spitzer attempted to revamp SUNY, PHEEIA was included in Governor Paterson's 2010-11 executive budget, and a modified form of it remains in the budget resolution. The legislature has yet to solidify a budget or directly address PHEEIA, but reports out of Albany indicate the act may be in jeopardy.



sion to close Southampton," Thiele said in a press release. "The legislature needs to act on the future of Southampton."

Working alongside the Long Island politicians who want to save the campus are the students who stand to lose it. Some Southampton undergrads forfeited study time despite approaching finals to travel to Albany on April 27 to raise awareness of their situation.

"When we were up in Albany, we put a face to this issue for a lot of politicians," said Keating, who was among the group that made the trip upstate. "We spoke mostly to the Long Island delegation and they were very much in support of what we're doing here."

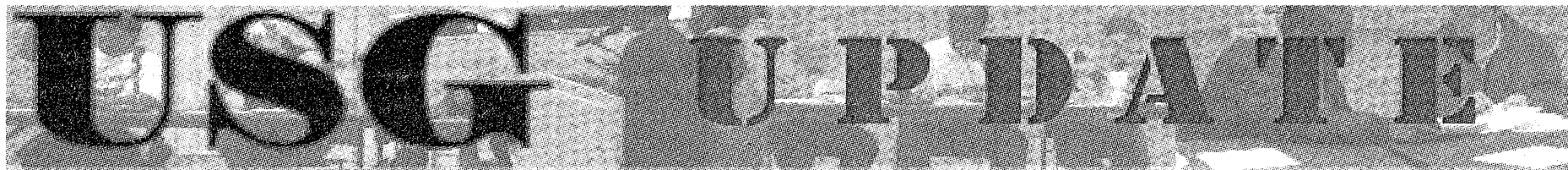
The students of Southampton are also frantically soliciting donations to fund a lawsuit against Stony Brook and SUNY that would challenge the closure. They held a benefit event on April 28 at an Amagansett pub and they have more fund-raisers scheduled, including a dinner at the Atlantis Aquarium in River-

SUNY who are both clawing at control over the funds generated by tuition.

Some student and teacher groups have blasted PHEEIA, warning it could privatize SUNY or drive up pricing. Others view the act as a lifeline to SUNY's ever-dwindling budget.

In an op-ed piece penned by President Stanley titled "Why We Were Forced to Streamline Southampton Operations," he said PHEEIA is vital to Stony Brook's future. "With so many millions of dollars slashed from our budget, and with passage of PHEEIA uncertain, we have to be extremely diligent and prudent." He went on to say that PHEEIA, "In one fell swoop, will strengthen public higher education across the state, save millions of taxpayers' dollars, and...improve the quality of life here on Long Island and throughout the state." Stanley has not addressed whether passage of PHEEIA in coming weeks could postpone or reverse the Southampton cuts.

While the Southampton saga was



The SAB Rift...and Le \$tate\$man

By Raina Bedford

The USG closed out the semester voting to expand their power with the passage of the Student Life Act on April 20. The act created a whole new structure for event planning on campus. The Student Activities Board still exists, but they exist to oversee a new agency called the Student Programming Agency.

The new structure also changed the executive board of the SAB placing the Vice President of Student Life, the USG Treasurer, the Vice President of Communications, a Residence Hall designee and a Commuter Student Services designee higher than they were in the old SAB. There is no Chair or Vice-chair of the new Student Programming Agency, just event planners and committee members who are appointed by the USG President and approved by the Senate.

President-elect Matt Graham has already made such appointments. Graham's selection for Director of SPA is Bryn Lartin, a member of the Society of Hispanic Engineers. Current Senator and Commuter Student Association President Kirin Mahmud has been appointed as the assistant treasurer. Additionally, Franck Joseph, a member of the previous SAB organization, and Neilish Mephta, a member of the Alpha Phi Delta fraternity, were appointed as Assistant Directors.

"This makes USG directly respon-

sible for staging campus-wide events, rather than delegating this responsibility to an agency that is structured as a club," said David Mazza, the VP of Communications, in a press release about the act.

The act cited several reasons for the changes, including that the USG found student life lacking on campus. The act also said that there existed no centralized agency to plan events, and that the advertising of events was disjointed, because the SAB and USG were acting as independent bodies rather than integrated ones.

Many senators said they felt that somewhere along the line the USG had lost control over the SAB. The prevailing view among senators was that the SAB functioned as a separate club that planned events independently of the USG.

"There is a shift in USG to move away from being the piggy bank of clubs and move on to have a presence on campus," said Moiz Khan, Treasurer of the USG. "USG has the ability to represent the whole campus while clubs only represent fragments of the campus."

The act represents a continuation of the "students first" movement, which seeks to take greater control over advertising and promotion of events and improve the overall image of the USG. There is a move in the USG toward a more centralized system of planning events. For example, the executive board of the new Student Programming Agency is already working with admin-

istration officials to brainstorm large events.

"We plan to make quite a splash," said Senator Dimitriadi. "Especially during homecoming week."

Frustrations about the way that the SAB functioned were also evident.

An executive board that consisted of a chair, vice-chair, treasurer and a secretary led the old SAB. Voting membership was extended to all students having attended three prior meetings as well as representatives from USG-recognized clubs. Ideas for events were pitched at meetings and those having voting power would vote on whether an event would happen or not.

According to Senator Alexander Dimitriyadi only one allocation for an event in the past two years has failed to gain SAB approval. He, and many others in the USG, felt that the SAB was just a rubber stamp for any idea good or bad that came to it.

The Student Life Act takes effect on May 21. Members of the old SAB, including SAB chair Da'Nashaja Davis, are very unhappy with the act. When the USG announced that the act had passed there was an audible gasp and the members of the SAB left the meeting causing a disruption.

"I feel the USG should write a letter personally apologizing to the members of the SAB," said Da'Nashaja Davis, student head of the SAB.

Many members of the SAB will not return to participate in the new Student Programming Agency, including Da-cosca.

"All the good events on campus were SAB events," she said. "I just don't understand what was wrong with SAB."

Most everyone in the USG wants the members of the old SAB to join the Student Programming Agency and participate in event planning, but many members of the old SAB are disillusioned with the organization.

Aside from structural changes in event planning, the senate voted to pass a revised budget that included restoring *The Statesman's* budget to roughly \$25,000. After failing to coordinate a budget hearing and operating with a \$29,000 budget deficit for the past two years, the USG sought to slash *The Statesman's* budget from \$27,000 to \$2,500 due to fiscal irresponsibility.

During the closing senate meeting, Editor-in-chief Frank Posillico had a revised plan on how to cut down on losses including the removal of student stipends and rolling back of operations.

Posillico's plan, which convinced members of the Senate including Treasurer Khan, focused on closing the gap between operating costs and revenue made. One proposal in the plan was to change the frequency of *The Statesman* from printing twice every week to now once every week.

The Statesman requested \$35,000 after an emergency budget hearing.

The USG has allocated \$40,000 to *The Press* for the 2010-2011 academic year. This is a 10 percent decrease from the 2009-10 academic year of \$45,000, which includes grants and fall revisions for that year.

Smokers Beware

By Alan Herschowitz

Attention cigarette smokers: you may need to find somewhere else to blow your smoke. Campuses across the nation have instituted some degree of cigarette bans on college campuses. There are over 365 campuses with some sort of cigarette smoking restrictions, and many other colleges are buying into the idea.

In 2008 Stony Brook University issued a restriction that students must stand at least 20 feet away from the building while smoking their cigarettes. But could the domino effect of cigarette bans at other universities reach Stony Brook? The idea is an unlikely one, but one that is being considered.

In an interview with sociology Professor Norman Goodman, an original advocate to restrict students from smoking closer than 50 feet away from residential buildings, he said that a complete ban would take some time. "The ban would have to take place over several years, and there must be educational campaigns and services to help students quit," said Goodman.

Nicholas Stephani, Stony Brook University junior and cigarette smoker for three years, feels that the ban would be unfair. "You would have to give students time to quit," Stephani said. "They would have to at least designate some smoking areas at first." One issue the new policy would have is how to enforce it.

Stony Brook University has not yet commented on the potential issue, since

the ban has not been thoroughly discussed.

Robert Rinck, Stony Brook University senior and cigarette smoker for two years, believes the ban would make for a much cleaner and healthier campus. "Being a smoker myself, quitting would definitely be rough," added Rinck, "but every where you look you see cigarette butts, it's pretty gross."

A ban could never take effect over night. Professor Goodman noted that "given the current state of the budget, I don't know if any action is really likely." Goodman believes second-hand smoke is a real public issue that must be dealt with more extensively than just a 20 feet away policy. "The health center would need to provide counseling and the proper tools to quit,



but I am certainly an advocate for stricter restrictions," said Goodman.

With campus cigarette bans instituted in over 40 states, it's an issue that has quickly grabbed national attention. Cigarette smokers beware, Stony Brook University could be next on the long list of universities trying to clean up the campus air.

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editorials

The One Year Check Up

This time last year, Dr. Samuel L. Stanley received a warm welcome from the campus community at the Charles B. Wang Center after being selected as Stony Brook University's fifth president. It may be premature but, we find it difficult to reflect positively on his inaugural year.

While some members of the Stony Brook community were relieved that Shirley Strum Kenny's administration would hit the road, the hopes and optimistic expectations that come with any change in leadership were crushed with the harsh realities that hit Stony Brook, and the way Stanley's new administration has handled them.

Early last fall, Stanley had announced plans to introduce a hotel project, one that he deemed a necessity for SBU to become a research conference center. The hotel would cater to conference guests and provide an option for visiting families of hospital patients or students. However, the hotel proposal was met with heavy resistance by Stony Brook's environmental conservationists, who didn't object to the hotel, rather the location—the forest from across the Administration Parking complex.

Though public meetings were held to address their grievances, Stanley's first true test as President of SBU proved unsatisfactory. Members of the Environmental Conservancy and Environmental Club pursued legal action to dispute the use of an expired lease (created in 1989) that was unpaid for in taxes as the site for a new hotel, according to George Locker, the trial lawyer representing the Conservancy. The case will be heard on May 11, past *The Press'* print time, in the New York State Supreme Court.

Then there was Stanley's unabashed and ardent support for Governor David Paterson's Public Higher Education Em-

powerment and Innovation Act (PHEEIA). This act, if passed, would allow University Centers in the SUNY system, such as SBU, to raise tuition prices largely at their own discretion. It would also allow a compounding systemic tuition hike, increasing tuition annually, which administrators say would prevent sudden double-digit increases in tuition and allow families to plan ahead when paying for school. SBU is among four universities within SUNY that stand to gain the most from passage of the act, which perhaps explains why Stanley and SUNY lobbyists are fighting so hard for its survival.

Without hesitating, Stanley jumped aboard the rickety cart of PHEEIA, traveling on unfinished rails, failing both the University and its students. As president, Stanley should continue fighting for increased state support and look for alternative means of revenue, rather than buying the PR spin of this "miracle pill." Understanding the New York budgetary situation—a \$6.8 billion dollar shortfall—such an argument could be criticized as weak and irrational, as Stanley has called in the past. But supporting tuition hikes and giving up on state aid abandons students and puts them on the chopping block of missed opportunity, especially when history suggests that tuition hikes result in additional cuts to state-aid. And the state budget "crisis" is the result of bad policy—like decades of indulgent tax cuts for the rich. If the decisions Stanley has made recently are indicative of his approach to running SBU, the thought of him having unchecked control over our tuition dollars is scary.

And then, there is the abrupt closure of Southampton, a PR nightmare that has bruised Stanley's short tenure and portrayed the University as hypocritical when it comes to sustainability. The Southampton closure, as painted by

Lauren Sheprow's Media Relations office, is a means to cut additional expenses from SBU as it tries to cut a remaining \$24 million out of a \$34 million shortfall.

But the timing couldn't have been worse. Besides the rising applications, expanding programs and extensive renovations, there are hundreds of Southampton students who, had they known earlier, would've applied elsewhere, and who are now facing attendance at a gigantic university they never applied to. The closing of the campus, effective August 31, will reportedly save roughly \$6.7 million over the course of two to three years. For all the negative attention it has brought, for the way it has impacted the students at Southampton, and for its overall impact on the shortfalls SBU faces, was it really worth it? Stanley has said that he will continue to put students first, but obviously *these* students don't count at all. They just wanted to go to a quiet school to study the environment, and now they're stuck in the trenches of a political war, all over control of students' money.

While the decision to create and keep Southampton sustainable raises its own questions—as it clearly wasn't planned out by President Kenny, nor Senator LaValle and Assemblyman Thiele, who are both in an election year—the ploy to cut Southampton appears to be a reprimand of both Thiele and LaValle, who have been reluctant to give their support to PHEEIA. Both lawmakers have historically strong ties to the Southampton campus. And to SUNY's leaders, every bit of support counts when the fate of billions of tuition dollars are at stake.

Overall, Stanley has had a tumultuous first year as President that has provided little benefit to neither students nor Stony Brook as a whole.

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The Stony Brook Press
Suites 060 & 061
Student Union
SUNY at Stony Brook
Stony Brook, NY 11794-3200
(631) 632-6451 Voice
(631) 632-4137 Fax
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540.

This year's Brookfest was lame.

So lame that even after awesome performances by Matt & Kim and a pretty good one from Wale (pronounced Wa-leigh), the short-lived run of Brookfest seems to have died.

Created in 2008 by the Student Activities Board, Brookfest is an all-day event which attempted to create a festive environment for students to enjoy the weekend before finals and the close of the spring semester.

The concert attendance over the past three events has plummeted by 75 percent, excluding the number of comp-tickets given at each event. The 2009 Brookfest that had artists like Fabulous, Keri Hilson, Ryan Leslie and HelloGoodbye garnered a total of 1,157 tickets sold. The 2010 Brookfest concert, that saw Matt & Kim and Wale perform, sold a pitiful 540 tickets. Non-SBU students bought 100 of the 540 tickets sold, according to the USG Ticket Sales Office.

While it sounds like an elementary math-problem, the answer to this question of decreased attendance and declining success comes from the growing rift between members of the traditional Student Activities Board and the newly formed Student Programming Agency.

The root of the rift draws back to the months SAB had spent dealing with an unreliable third-party source when looking to book artists for Brookfest. Around March, members of USG, including Vice President of Student Life

Keith Tilley, Treasurer Moiz Khan and President Jasper Wilson, had called for more USG involvement in the planning of Brookfest. Members of SAB felt their opinions were not being heard and they were being stepped over by the USG. At this point, the SAB decided they would remove themselves from planning the Brookfest concert, leaving that to be run by USG, and would plan for the carnival.

Whereas the SAB views itself as an independent entity, USG viewed SAB as an agency, and tensions spiraled to the point where SAB decided to boycott the Brookfest concert.

Now, with the SAB discontinued, and with the introduction of SPA, it will be interesting to see how things shape out. Members of SAB have experience running events, but have made it clear that they wish to take no part in SPA. Members of SPA, who directly represent USG, are faced with already having alienated a significant crowd of the Stony Brook community—including specific fraternities and sororities that have played an integral part to SAB and its former activities.

USG had their first attempt, though they had less time than desired, to run their version of Brookfest. The common concern that concerts and events like Brookfest cater to a fraction of the student population was only reinforced after last Saturday's event. Only this time, it was a different audience being selectively served.

In the past, booking artists like Nas and Fabolous would attract those with particular interests in hip-hop while little room was made for any other genre like, indie-rock. This year, the focus was on a strong indie-rock presence with one exception—Wale—who was favored earlier in the year by SAB, to appease the hip-hop audience.

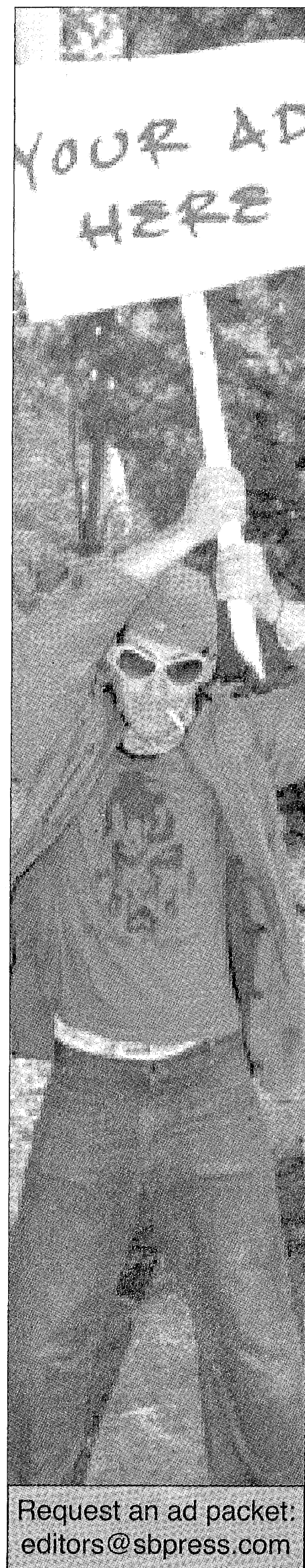
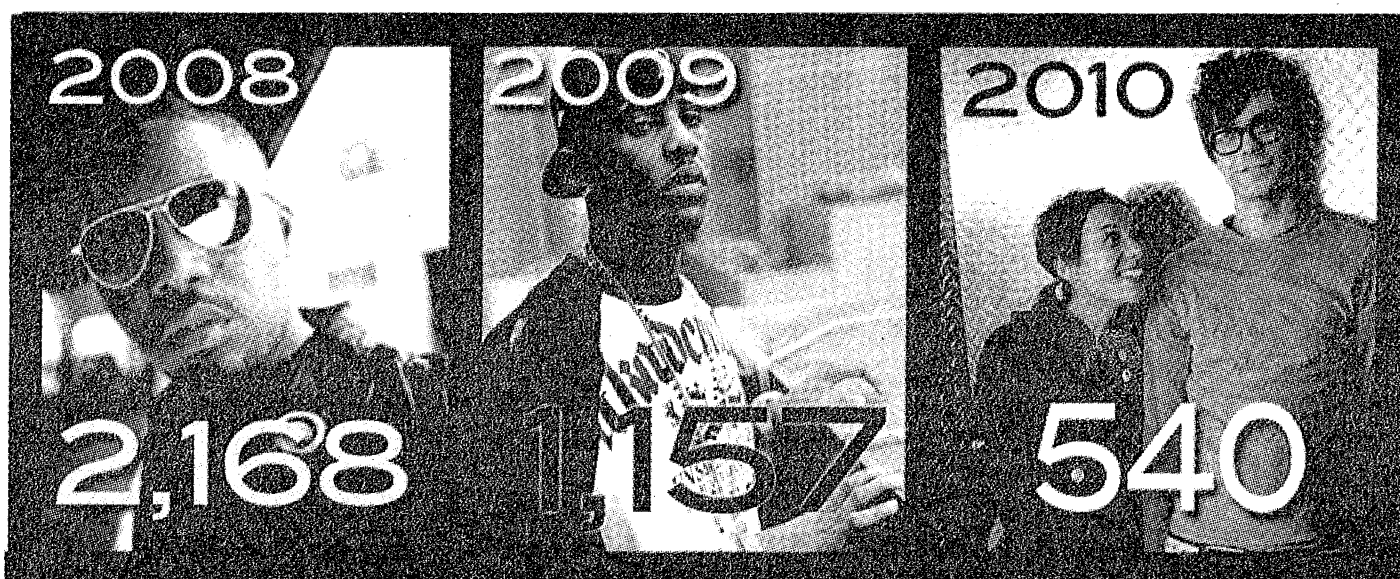
Meanwhile, this year's festival was terrible. Located in the boondocks of the West Apartments, the environment of someone on stilts, barbecued food and loud music didn't shout Brookfest as it has in the past. There wasn't even a Ferris wheel. Ironically, the SAB handed out free t-shirts that read "The Finale," printed well before the organization's demise.

Roughly \$35,000 was spent on a carnival, \$15,000 for Wale and \$30,000 for Matt&Kim, and another \$80,000 on reservation fees, staging and security.

\$160,000 later, both USG and SAB have failed in doing what they set out to do in this one particular scenario; to establish an event that brings the campus together. Depending on how both sides decide to handle it, the only tradition that seems to be building is poorly attended concerts and growing rifts among parts of the student body.

Maybe next year, instead of spending so much money on a poorly attended concert and flat-out depressing carnival, let's just have another flash rave.

Number of Brookfest Tickets Sold



Request an ad packet:
editors@sbpress.com

From China, With Love

By Carol Moran

As the lights dimmed in the Stony Brook Activities Center Auditorium one spring evening, and the chattering voices fell silent. All eyes shifted forward as Stephanie Long's jet-black hair bounced in smooth curls towards the front of the stage.

"Welcome to China Night 2010!" Cheers erupted.

Long, the president of the Chinese Association at Stony Brook, stood tall atop black heels just visible beneath her black slacks. A bow tie was perfectly aligned between the lapels of her jacket, in the James Bond fashion. After a few thank-yous and introductory remarks, it was show time.

Put on by CASB, China night is one of the largest shows of its kind at Stony Brook University. Meant to be a cultural and educational performance, it ties various acts from other student organizations into a themed play.

Filled with fun facts about Chinese inventions, a comedic imitation of a strict Chinese mother, acting, dancing, modeling and music, the almost three-hour-long James Bond-themed show was well worth the eight dollar ticket—that is, if you were fortunate enough to get one. Some students go the extra length of leaving class early to assure their place in line. This year, all 480 tickets were sold within one hour—a new record for CASB.

"I feel like we should have an arena," Long said.

As tickets are so limited, it is often those of Asian ethnicity or with friends in the show who make the effort to buy them.

"The crowds who make it to the box office are the ones who are most interested," Karen Lee, Multicultural Affairs Assistant, said.

Observe China night on the surface level, and it might seem to fall right into the evidence column supporting the prevarication that Stony Brook students are segregated by race, that they don't interact or diversify. It only takes a closer look, a thorough examination, to find quite a different tale.

There are some obvious standout details that tell a more complicated story of China Night, like the lead female actress's brown hair and light skin, or the comic relief's thick Spanish curls.

There's the fact that CASB's cabinet

isn't only comprised of Chinese or Chinese-American students, but includes students of various races, including Filipino, Korean and Palestinian students.

Then there are the few non-Asian audience members who attended out of sheer curiosity, such as Anielisa Jones, an African American student, and Nick Ela, a Caucasian student.

"We're trying to diversify," Jones said. "Why not get out there and support others? It's a good thing."

China Night is just one among many cultural shows on campus, and CASB is just one among many cultural groups that all do their part in spreading diversity among Stony Brook students. Other shows include the Philippine United Student Organization's PUSOfest, South Asian Student Alliance's Sholay Show, Korean Student Association's Korean Night, Japan Night, Diversity Day and the annual Multicultural Show.

Many of these bring students together for reasons apart from an interest in their culture, such as a passion for dance and performance.

Sarah Sabiniano's small stature did nothing to abate her energy as she bounced around the stage during China Night, microphone in hand, as the lead singer for the CASB Band. She was introduced to CASB through a friend, and has been a member of the band all four years she's been at Stony Brook. Sabiniano is Filipino.

"They accepted me for who I was and embraced the fact that we had so much more in common than the differences in our nationalities," she said in an email. "If you have this great chemistry with people you don't just shut it down because of visual differences. You really pursue it and connect with it," she said later.

Venture into the Benedict Atrium at night, and it's likely Tofu dance crew will be practicing their choreography



Roman Sheydvasser

alongside PUSO. Tofu is comprised of about 10 students from all different races and performs whenever the opportunity arises—PUSOfest and China Night included.

"We don't identify ourselves with a culture, we just dance," Tofu member Tomasz Turek said. "This is our common language."

Just twenty-four short hours away from PUSOfest and feet from where Tofu practices, the PUSO performers run through their hybrid finale, which combines choreography from PUSO's three dance sectors: modern, cultural and ballroom. They tap long bamboo poles on the tile floor and step rhythmically between them in a Filipino dance called Tinikling.

"A lot of non-Filipinos see us dancing, and we encourage them to attend the general body meetings," PUSO President, CJ Cancino said. He wore a cream-colored barong, a traditional button-down garment decoratively embroidered.

Though PUSO aims to preserve and teach others about Filipino culture, just as CASB does with Chinese culture, they have a reputation for quality, high-level dancing, which draws students from all ethnicities.

"They're accepting of other people," Ryan Messina, a Caucasian member of PUSO's dance team, said. "If anyone is going to go out for a team in general, I say go for it. Don't hesitate or hold back. Race should not be an issue at all."

There are many non-Filipino members of PUSO. Among them, DaQuan McCray, the vice president elect of the Korean Student Association. He is African American.

"We're taking baby steps and making progress towards becoming a more diverse group," Cancino said.

Cancino and Long are unofficial co-chairs for the Asian Student Coalition, a group designed to improve communication between the leaders of Asian American student organizations. Its twelve-or-so members meet during campus lifetime every week to discuss each other's events and, at the very least, eat lunch together. They support each other by attending one another's events, and have attempted in the past few years to improve collaboration between the groups.

"For the most part, the only Chinese-restricted aspect of [CASB] is its name," Hatim Othman, a Palestinian cabinet member of CASB said. "We cater our events to the general student body to educate them on Chinese culture, not only Chinese students."

All the opportunities are there, but without the motivation, the curiosity, the willingness to open up to something new, the race divide will never cease to exist.

"It's up to the individual to go seek it out, but there are clubs like PUSO and CASB that give them that opportunity," Cancino said.

Watching Films in a Science School

By Matt Calamia

Stony Brook University is known throughout the country—and even the world—for its medical and science programs. A program that often goes unknown is Cinema and Cultural Studies, which focuses on film rather than lab coats.

The program, which is administered by the Department of Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies (CCS), focuses on film as a form of expression in relation to other disciplines like literature, art and theater.

As of the 2009 fall semester, the program as a whole had just 46 students in the major, which in a school of over 23,000 students isn't much.

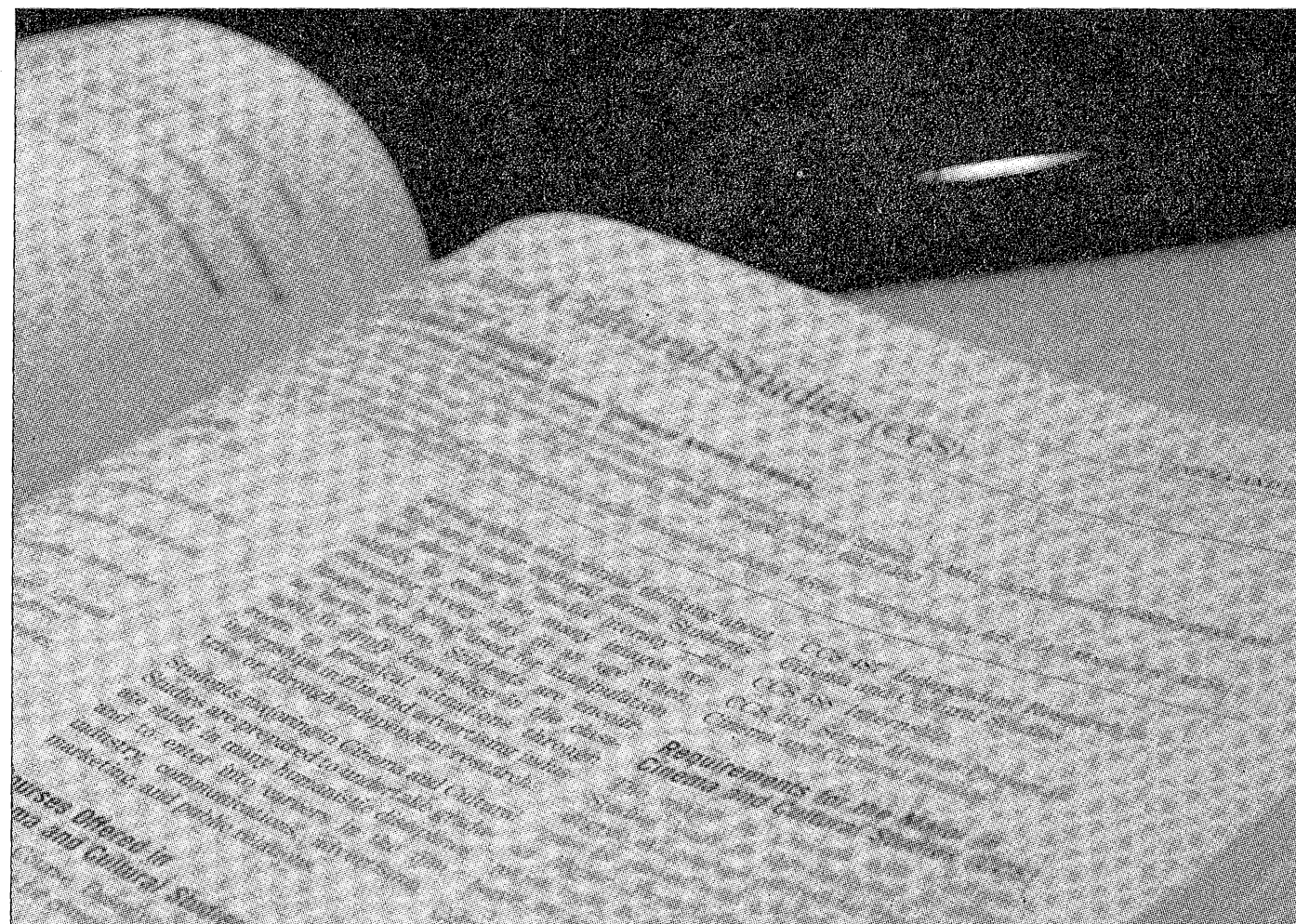
Although the department lacks the size of the more popular majors at Stony Brook, those involved feel that having a strong film and art program on campus is important.

"I think [film and art] is the strength of any school," said Sean Springer, a CCS graduate student. "To have diverse programs and not limiting itself to one program is important. The health of the university depends on all programs to be strong."

Next year, the major will introduce its Master's program, possibly in an attempt to expand the program. This comes three years after the CCS Ph. D. was introduced.

"In the fall of 2008, we revised the curriculum so that we could take advantage of areas of expertise covered by recent faculty hires," said Jacquelin Reich, Undergraduate Program Director for the CCS program. Professor E.K. Tan was hired to teach an Asian Cinema class.

The program has also drawn on



popular movies in society to create newclasses, such as *Gladiator*, *Troy* and *300*, which spawned a Cinema and the Ancient World course.

"I really hope that CCS grows over the years," said Frank Myers, a sophomore CCS major. "Some people say that since we're a science school, there's no point in having a strong humanities or CCS department, but what about students like me who came to SBU for a renowned program only to realize they hate it. Where do they go?"

Myers came to SBU as a history major, but quickly lost interest in it and discovered the CCS program. "During my second semester here, I was in a crappy history course that was making me seriously second guess what I

wanted to do," said Myers. "At the same time, I was in HUM202 (Film History). I loved 202 so much that I decided to change to a CCS major."

"Although this is a science school, a lot of people are really interested in participating in films," said Hector Fonseca, president of the Pull Off Your Shorts Film Club at Stony Brook. "I believe filming could be a great opportunity for Stony Brook University to shine on a different aspect that is non-science related."

Reich believes that a strong film program and culture on campus is fundamental for any school, especially Stony Brook. "Visual culture is a growing part of our everyday life," she said.

"In the CCS major, we put film in a wide interdisciplinary and global context, constantly drawing on the changing economic, political, social as well as cultural climate in which we live."

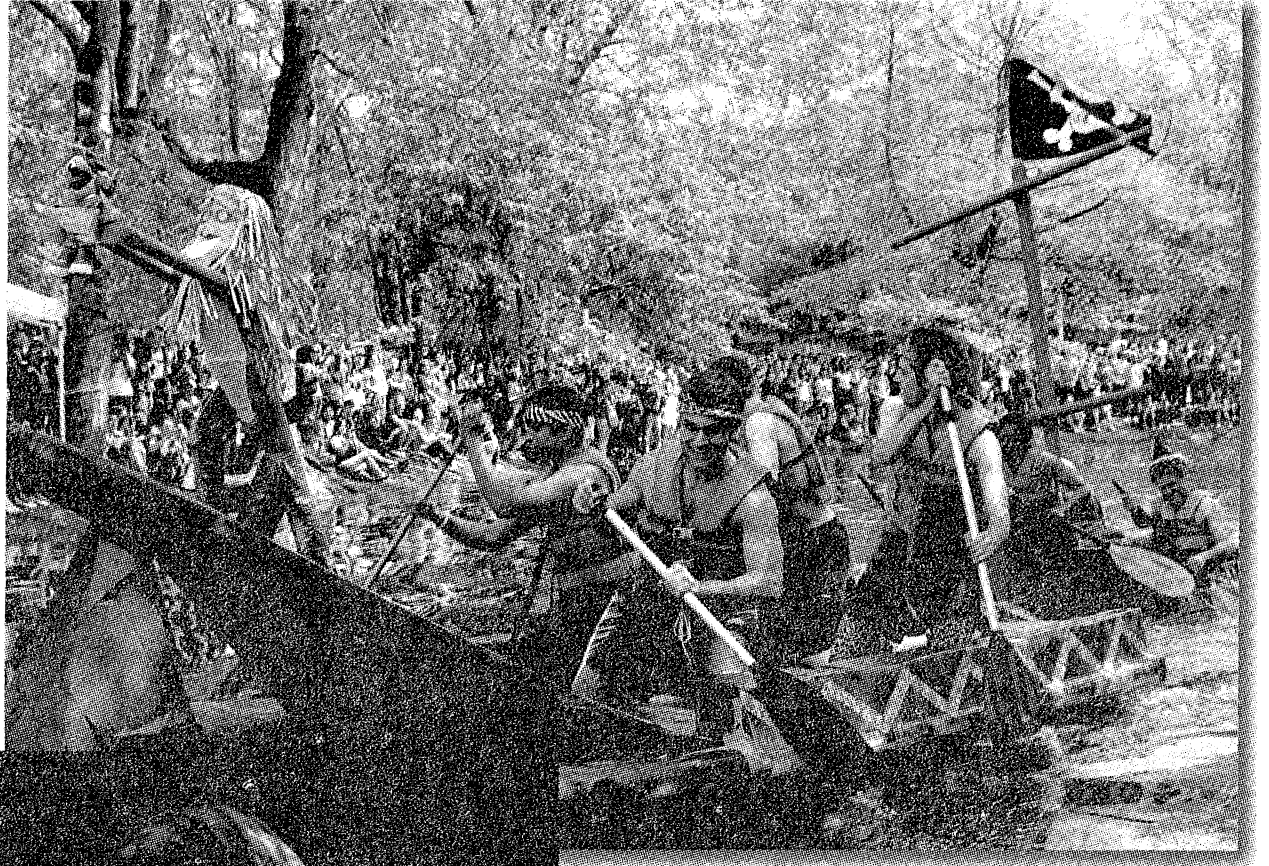
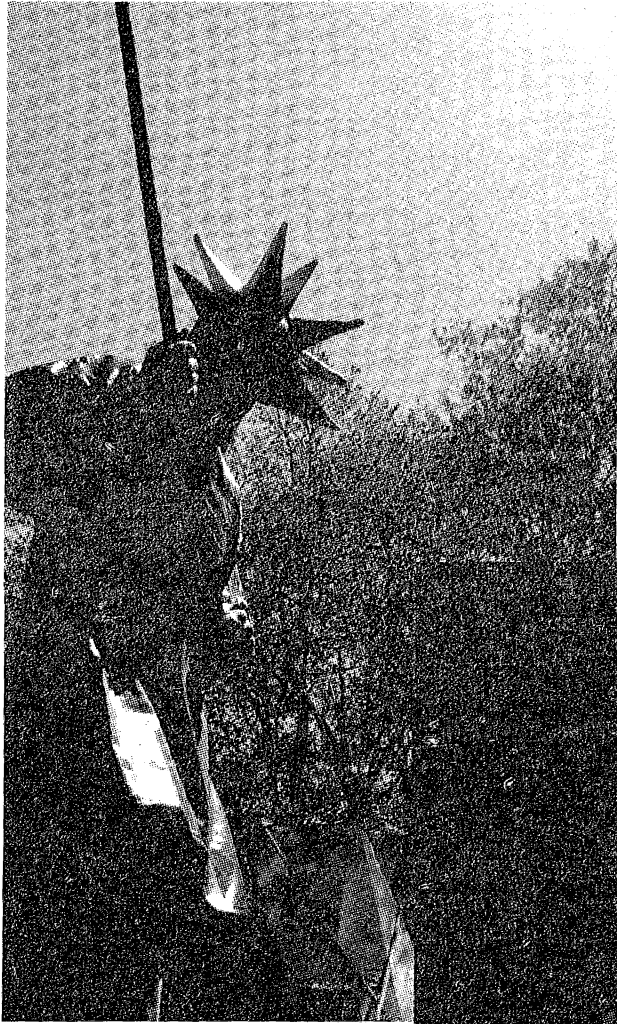
Reich said most CCS majors go on to work in the entertainment industry, including production and distribution, public relations, advertising and marketing.

Myers has hopes of making it big out west. "After graduation, I'd love to get a job in the cartooning industry," he said. "I'd love to hike out to California and get a job with Hanna-Barbera or Nickelodeon developing cartoons."

Do you want to know how
I got these scars?

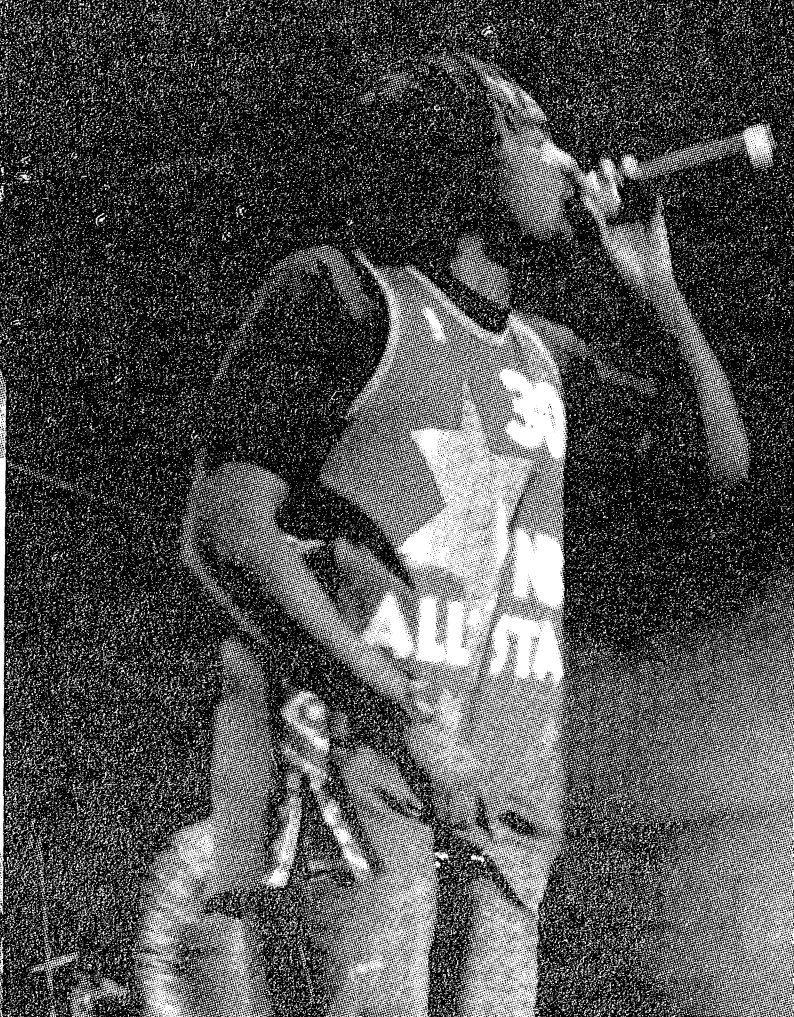
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Things That Happen At the
End of the Semester When
Everyone is Busy With Finals

Photos by:
Eric DiGiovanni,
Alex Nagler and
Matt Willemain



Some Asshole Forgets 9/11

By Ross Barkan

After thousands of daily exhortations to never forget 9/11, Stony Brook University freshman Christopher Wittleman actually forgot about 9/11 for seventeen whole minutes last Tuesday.

"Yeah, I was in comparative politics and we were discussing the Westminster voting system in great detail, and I just found the whole thing really compelling," the insensitive freshman said. "I mean, I know 9/11 happened and I was thinking about it, like, in the back of my mind but I kind of just forgot."

On September 11, 2001, terrorists piloted two commercial airliners into the Twin Towers, killing thousands – forever changing the nation and world. Countless people continue to mourn this atrocity today, and always remembering 9/11 and what exactly happened. Apparently, Wittleman isn't one of those people.

"I mean, I'm sorry," the insincere unapologetic sack of shit said. "I figured I could get away with it for a bit."

9/11 is unforgettable. On September 11, 2001 at exactly 8:46 AM, the first tower was hit. By a plane. It was hit and is etched forever in the memories of

everyone, symbolic of all the good and evil in the world. Then the other tower was hit and it fell. Never forget. 9/11. No one can forget this.



"Wittleman's blatant disregard for 9/11 memory is troubling," said Princeton University psychologist and crisis analyst Cynthia Wyckoff. "Every year, more and more people are having momentary 9/11 lapses. If the lapses continue at this rate, there will come a time,

say in a 150 years or so, when no one actually recalls 9/11 anymore. Then we will be doomed."

Wyckoff is a part of the growing "Never 4get 911" Washington-based think tank that seeks to promote "memory of the 9/11 variety forever and ever" so people never "stop remembering 9/11, sobbing, moaning, etc."

When asked if he had ever heard of such a think tank, Wittleman, an overall cocksucker, simply said, "Uh...no."

U.S. Marines stationed across the Afghanistan terrain immediately lost heart and surrendered to the terrorists when word reached them that a young man in America had not remembered 9/11. Thousands of troops died in a series of strikes that could've been prevented, if only America had not lost so much morale.

"God...God-all-Jesus-fucking-mighty, it's terrible," said Sgt. Dale Oliver as he outran a series of mortar blasts. "If only...if only Wittleman had thought, just remembered...that stupid fag...just remembered September 11, 2001. Is it really that hard?"

Apparently, Wittleman, who lists his interests on Facebook as "hanging with friends, listening to good music, Frisbee, girls ;), and Goodfellas," forgot to mention that he was soulless. He is

not a member of a single 9/11 remembrance Facebook group and has not seen either Oliver Stone's *World Trade Center* or the made-for-television movie *Flight 93*. He might as well be sucking Al Qaeda's fat demon cock.

"Yes, it is unfortunate that Wittleman forgot 9/11," said Stony Brook History Professor Benedict Wilberson, who lectures the comparative politics class in which Wittleman committed this heinous act. "I saw a lack of hellfire in his eyes, as if he was too engrossed in the lesson to remember the fallen heroes who sacrificed their lives in Christ-like fashion so miniscule fuckers like Wittleman can continue existing. However, I do believe he is sorry. He failed his last exam, evidence that he is preoccupied with what matters."

At the time of this issue's printing, Wittleman is reported to have been sentenced to nine months and eleven days of "memorial attendance," in which he visits a local 9/11 memorial daily to offer a moment of silence for all those who perished on that day. After the prayer, his testes will be stung with an electrified soldering iron.

"Yup, I'll never forget," said a bawling Wittleman after being shown the solder iron. "9/11 forever!"

How Does a CNS Stem Cell Know If And When To Generate a Neuron?

Wednesday, May 12th @ 3pm

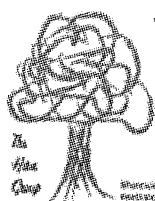
Wang Center: Room 301

By Dr. Nurit Ballas

Department of Biochemistry and Cell Biology
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ASIAN AMERICAN E-ZINE

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May I have the envelope please?

2010 P.H. Tuan - C.B. Wang Center Annual Photo Contest *Imagining the Wang*

"In the end my mind stopped working and I was actually numb." After looking through 549 entries from 57 contestants, that is how P.H. Tuan, architect of the Charles B. Wang Asian American Center, described the process of choosing the winners. But he was ecstatic at the quality of the submissions.

From those 549 he narrowed down to 25 for the exhibit, *Imagining the Wang*, that continues until May 22nd in the theatre lobby. But it still took him 3 more days to choose the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Prize winners.

Visitors to the exhibit during its opening 10 days also had the opportunity to choose. They got to vote on the \$250 People's Choice Award, a special award from Wang Center Asian/Asian American Programs.

Online viewers got to vote too, for the \$100 Global Choice Award, though unlike the exhibit, all entries could be voted on.

Of course, everyone's taste varies, so you may look at P.H. Tuan's choices and agree - the winners obviously did - or you may shake your head in wonderment. He expects the wonderment and readily admits his taste is "different."

But as you read his reasons you will get a better understanding of his choices. He was not just looking for architectural shots or pretty pictures. He looked at composition. In some he looked at the interaction of people with the building. In others he looked at the mood, the feeling it gave him.



1st Prize Winner Ezra Margono

But whatever his reason, check the entries out and come to your own decision. P.H. Tuan is the primary sponsor of this contest, and along with cosponsors [AA]2, AA E-Zine and Wang Center Asian / Asian American Programs, he wants visitors to look at his design in new ways, to see it differently.

1st Prize \$400 : Ezra Margono

Photo: B&W. Woman in Zodiac Fountain shadows
Camera: Canon EOS 40D

P.H. Tuan: I showed the picture to my friends and my family members. They said, how can you pick that one as the first winner, pick something else. But the more I looked at the picture, the more I liked it. You may not fall in love with it at first.

We designed this building with many things in mind. We wanted it to be light in any kind of weather. Also we provided space for the sun and for the shadows. That wall is blank. That was exactly its purpose. How it was going to react to the outside. So you look at the wall and you see a canvas.

Of course, this building is also for people and in this particular picture we also see a person. We see the connection between the building and people. This picture is black and white and emphasizes the wall and not being distracted by other colors.

Ezra Margono: I spent a lot of time in the Wang Center for the contest. This is one of the last shots I took on the last day. I saw this girl sitting there and I asked her if she wanted to be in my photographs and she said, "Sure, just make sure my face isn't really seen." So I carefully placed her in the shadows.

I've studied some architecture in classes. Unlike European architecture, I really like that idea of an empty wall and letting light emphasize the shadows.



2nd Prize Winner Katharina Schuhmann

2nd Prize \$300 : Katharina Schuhmann

Photo: Color. Rear garden and pool in the rain
Camera: SONY DSC-P72

P.H. Tuan: To be totally unbiased, I have no idea who has taken what picture. But I believed it had to be taken by an Asian person who had some understanding of a Suzhou garden because when you take a picture of a Suzhou garden you never do it in sunlight. It is always misty. And when you look at the picture, you must see poetry. When you look at this picture, you almost see a Chinese garden right here at Stony Brook.

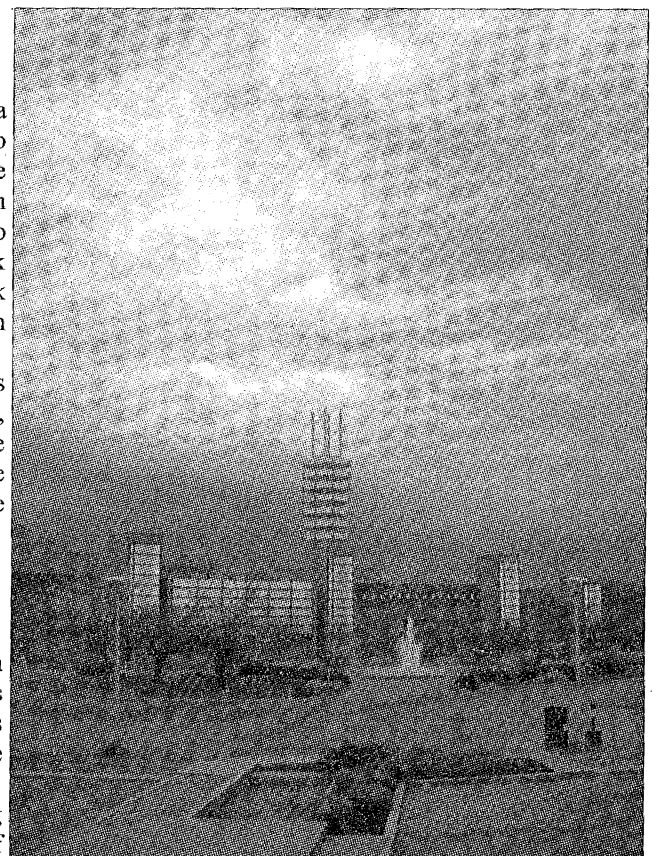
K. Schuhmann: Yes, I'm not Asian but I love this building. When we have visitors to our department, I always take them to Wang to impress them. One of the reasons I liked this picture was that the tree was just starting to bloom. I liked that it was the beginning of spring and a nice new beginning.

3rd Prize \$200 : Alex Wong

Photo: Color. Front exterior at dusk
Camera: Pentax Optio A 40

P.H. Tuan: In morning this building has a certain glow. In evening it has a certain glow. I think this picture is very moody. It speaks a lot about this building. On a cloudy day, I'm still there. People may not pay attention to me, but I am there.

Alex Wong: I was taking pictures of the building for a few hours and my camera was running out of batteries. This was the last picture I was able to take. I'm so glad the batteries didn't run out.



3rd Prize Winner Alex Wong

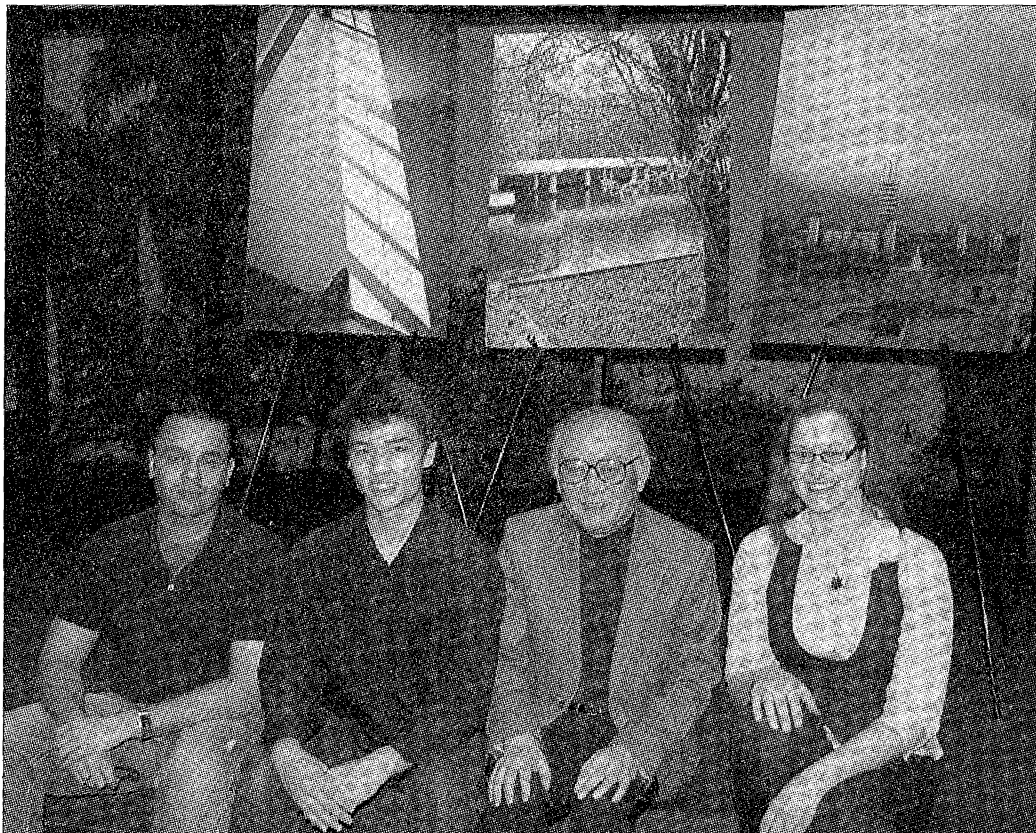
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Excerpts from www.aa2sbu.org/aaezine in SB Press Volume XXXI, Issue 14 | May 2010



ASIAN AMERICAN E-ZINE

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And the winners are...



Global Choice Award winner Aleef Rahman, 1st Prize and People's Choice Award winner Ezra Margono, Charles B. Wang Asian American Center architect P.H. Tuan, and 2nd Prize winner Katharina Schuhmann. Missing: Alex Wong, 3rd Prize winner.

Global Choice Award: Aleef Rahman

Photo: Color. 1st floor men's bathroom

Camera: Nikon D90

Aleef: "The reason why I took the bathroom shot was, it's like going to the urologist, everyone's embarrassed by it, but it's beautiful and when I walked into that bathroom it was like the best bathroom I had ever seen in my life and I wanted to be able to photograph it in a way that wasn't weird but was funny and showed off how amazing that bathroom was.

I couldn't have taken this picture without my buddy, Ezra, helping me. He's the one at the urinal and I'm the one behind the tree. We actually took the shot twice and reversed places. Mine came out better.

The way we did the green to make it even funnier, we used an off camera wireless flash with a green gel. I put my camera on a tripod and took the flash off of my camera and put it on top of the urinal and had Ezra stand in front of it.

The Wang Center is definitely the best place I've seen on campus. The architecture is beautiful, the lighting is beautiful. And this bathroom is a gem. Definitely visit it.

People's Choice Award: Ezra Margono

Photo: Color. Rear garden at night with long exposure

Camera: Pentax EOS 40D

Ezra: I spent a long time running around outside trying to find the right spot. Then I used a long exposure, 30 seconds, to bring out the effect of the lights.

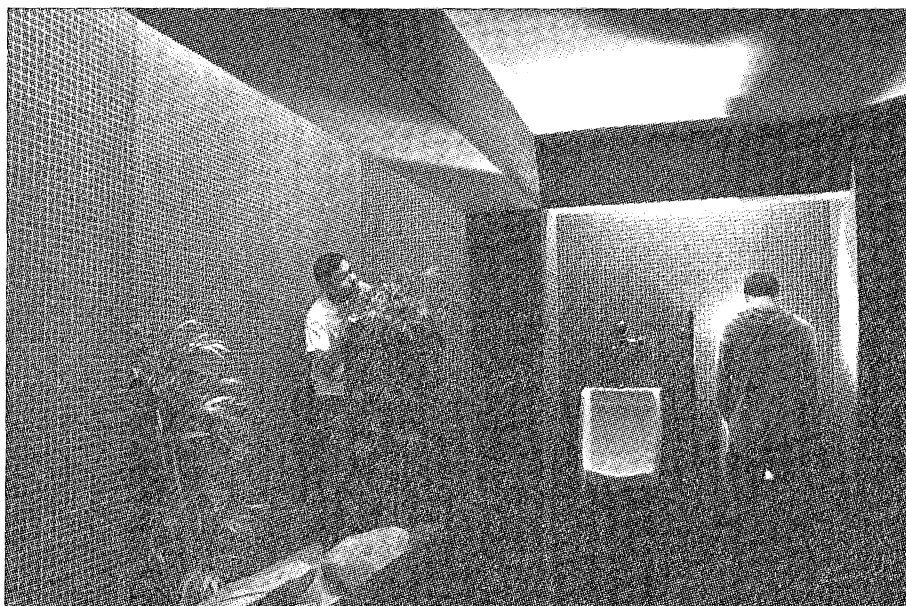
Imagining the Wang Exhibit & Entries

You can see P.H. Tuan's top 25 plus the Global Choice in the Wang Center until graduation, or view all entries online at

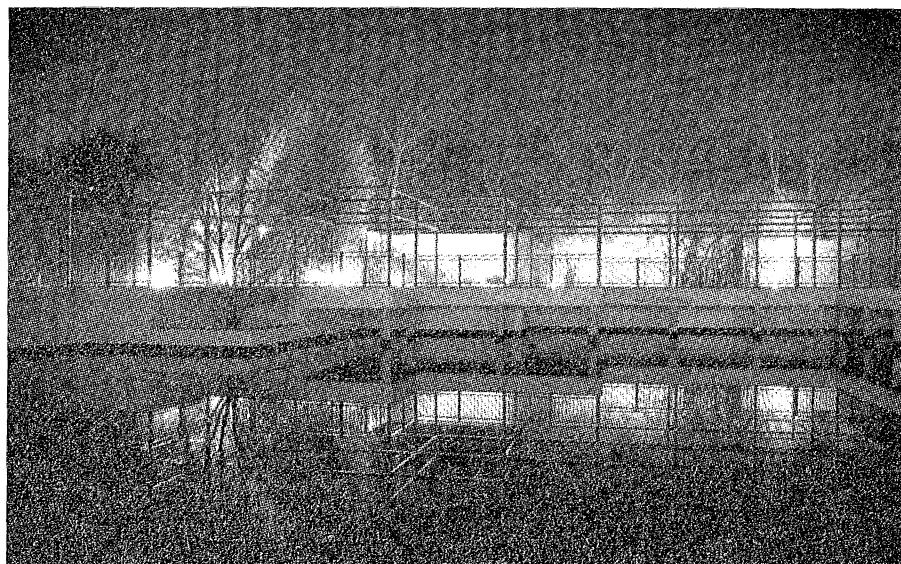
<http://aasquared.org/gallery/>

PHTuanCBWangCenterPhotoContest2010

The contestants were Madiha Abid, Ed Arzomand, Samantha Lynn Burkardt, Gordon Chen, Wanda Chen, Michael Chow, CW Chua, Cristina Cruz, Sumreen Dar, Eric DiGiovanni, Alexander Felicier, Thomas Feng, CS Fong, Ellen Gallagher, Carole Gambrell, Arlene Gervis, Narinder Gupta, Sachie Hayashida, Dan Hess, Kenneth Ho, Manami Hotta, Shiou Mei Huang, Desiree Keegan, Jessica Keough, In Seong Kim, Erin Kunz, Richard Lall, Jana Larsen, Vincent La Scalza, Winter Lee, Thomas Zhenxiao Lei, Brandon Leung, Yan Leyfman, Thomas Li, Eric Lohse, Vaughn Lombardo, Stephanie Long, Levy Lorenzo, Ezra Margono, Erica Mengouchian, Erica Miner, Madeline Queck, Aleef Rahman, Shazia Rahman, Mahrukh Riaz, Chris Rosenman, Roy Rubio, Natsue Sakurai, Katharina Schuhmann, Michael Sidorowicz, Diana Small, Caitlyn Sullivan, Chaomin Tang, Susan Tse, Soumya Ullas, Matt Vandegriff, Elaine Vuong, Ann Walsh, Xin Wang, Matt Willemain, Chris Williams, and Alex Wong.



Global Choice Award Winner Aleef Rahman



People's Choice Award Winner Ezra Margono

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Excerpts from www.aa2sbu.org/aaezine in SB Press Volume XXXI, Issue 14 | May 2010

arts&entertainment

Brookfest? More Like Rock Your Face Case x2

Nick Statt

Immediately upon arrival, you could tell the atmosphere was off. Instead of a collection of students and excited fans waiting outside the Sports Arena, there were enough cop cars and security guards to make you think this was the third Times Square bomb scare. After getting through multiple rounds of security and being told there was no re-entry (apparently inevitable safety measures that are still outrageously inconvenient), I made my way inside and was greeted by one disappointment after another. It became increasingly clear, as Saturday night went on and more and more people flooded out of the Arena, that this year's line-up was a disastrous mixture.

SBU's Brookfest 2010 was by no means a bad concert—on paper. They had the big names, they had the solid openers and they promoted the hell out of it. So what went wrong? Well, to boil it down to one sentence: by trying so hard to reverse the past, a time when Brookfest only catered to one or two select groups on campus instead of the whole student body like almost every other college-run concert, this year's organizers just flipped the intended audience and ended up with an even more horrible turn-out and a chaotic collection of musical tastes to go with it.

The audience was mostly comprised of all those kids who attend the Rock Yo Face Case and Stony Brooklyn. This would have worked out fine, given that both of the above-mentioned events are well-attended and put on by dedicated students who work their asses off to pull them together. But the Sports Arena isn't the size of the University Café, and *Wale*—no offense to him he put on a pretty good show—didn't really help to fill in that obvious gap left by drawing names out of a Brooklyn hat.

The most obvious problem was the lack of turnout. The Sports Arena is huge. It has a capacity of over 4,000. But when you made it through those front doors, you were welcomed by enough empty space to make you check your watch and contemplate the possibility that you might have gotten there three hours early. Also, the glaring cops and security guards who marked every fifteenth step didn't exactly put you in an



Wave your hands in the air and pretend that you care!

Alex H. Nagler

excited mood (they would prove later on to be way too intense in their response to crowd-surfing, by literally dragging kids over the barrier and kicking them out).

This year's Brookfest attracted slightly more than 600 attendees. Last year's broke 1,100. Even more polarizing, 120 people who attended the show on Saturday were there for free with a comp ticket. Part of the low turnout was due in part to a large riff created between USG and SAB.

Given that USG VP of Student Life took complete reign of this year's Brookfest, many members of the SAB chose to boycott the concert. Additionally, last year's Brookfest featured Fabulous, Carrie Hilson, Ryan Lelsie and the almost-comedic sore thumb, Hello Goodbye. But even with the obvious R&B/Hip-Hop tilt, almost double the number of people came out. For a campus that is just now starting to have a thriving music scene, the failure of Saturday's Brookfest really seemed to undermine all the progress that has been made in the last couple of years.

The first two bands to hit the stage were Breathing East and Neighbors, both campus-affiliated groups who've had their fair share of runs in front of an SBU audience. They both did great, and would have normally set the mood for the rest of the concert, but those guys would prove to have nothing on the weirdness that would later prevail—from the clashing of music tastes to the miniscule crowd.

After a Lady Gaga parody by the

LGBTa, which was actually quite well done, *Lion of Ido* hit the stage, all the way from Austin, TX. They were the first band to really start pushing things downhill with an annoyingly generic pop sound and an even worse persistent desire to get students to sign their mailing list.

The Frontier Brothers would have been great as a follow up if they didn't see almost half the crowd leave after *Wale* and a collection of bleacher-sitters watch some rather eccentric kids with their shirts off play a game of duck duck goose (That was not a joke. Thirty or so people were actually playing duck duck goose during their set).

It was clear that even *Wale* was in on the joke. At one point, he started chatting it up with the crowd about the different clubs he attends and how sometimes, he finds himself with a 'mixed crowd.' Starting out as pretty funny in that classic Dave Chapelle way, *Wale's* comic performance quickly went south as he proceeded to tell students that when he finds himself in those mixed crowd, he loves to get "real fucked up", making sure to extenuate the frat boy tone to a level of over-indulgence. What happened next can only be classified as strange...and maybe a little sad. He told the crowd to do the fist-pump, his idea of a hilariously embarrassing sign of being Caucasian. Either way, the crowd took it in stride. *Wale* seemed to be having a good time too.

By the time the main headliners *Matt&Kim* got on stage, the crowd had

dwindled. But it didn't stop the Brooklyn duo from putting on an amazingly energetic show. They really had a great time up there and it was sad to see such great performers have to end the night with such a small crowd.

Now, I have no idea how much work it takes to put these events on, and it's probably enough to make my head spin. The show's failure is not a testament to the amount of effort the organizers put in, because it's clear these people worked hard and faced numerous issues with booking and financing that clearly are out of their control. It's more of a problem with the mentality.

To go from three R&B/Hip-hop artists and one alternative rock group to a collection of Brooklyn names and a rather random rapper isn't fixing the injustice of years past. It's just doing it wrong in a different way. After students like *Patrice Zapiti*, who helped organizing Brookfest, and a mastermind organizer of most of the campus' live music gatherings, graduates this year, it's going to take nothing short of a miracle to save Brookfest from this apparent tug-of-war. We can only hope that one day we can compete with colossal events like SUNY Purchase's Culture Shock and reclaim the title, Berkeley of the East.

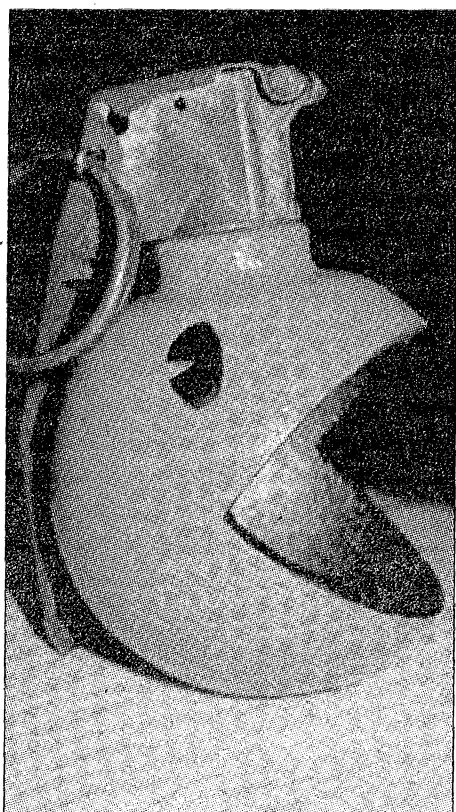
In the end, it takes diligence from students and organizers alike to make these things work. All it should take is a little more communication and balance and we should be able to steer Brookfest in the right direction.

Nerrrrrrrrrd Raaaaaaage

By Kenny Mahoney

If you've visited any video game related website or blog over the past week and half, there's over a 100 percent chance that you've seen an article attempting to rebut or refute a recent blog article written by film critic Roger Ebert, which discussed the merits of video games as art. As if to issue a proud "fuck you," Ebert has decided to come down off of his high horse and take a moment to spit in the flushed, acne-ridden faces of video game players everywhere by once again reminding us that video games are not, and can never be, art.

I'm not going to recount point-for-point Ebert's argument as to why my favorite past-time has no artistic merit, but instead I am going to address why Ebert's argument shouldn't even be considered, as well as my opinions on what I believe is ultimately a pointless debate.



First used by Bill Murray in Ghostbusters

I will be making this point as scholarly as I can, but will also include the crass egotism and unnecessary swearing that The Press is known for (thanks for clearing it up for us, Statesman!).

The first, and perhaps most obvious strike against him, is that Roger Ebert is an old-ass man. I would like you, the reader, to count on your hands the amount of elderly people that you can think of that are open-minded and well-versed on technologies that came to fruition after they were thirty-five years old. PROTIP: the correct answer is zero. It is in human nature to resist technological advancements that you were not born with or were not introduced to in adolescence. With this knowledge, it is apparent why Ebert has this opinion on games—he's too old to be accepting of the medium to begin with.

As a critic of film, Ebert is more than welcome to elaborate on his thoughts and opinions on film. His reviews have been appearing in the Chicago Sun-Times since the mid 1960's, and his name has become somewhat synonymous the words "film critic." But what about being a film critic makes him a trusted source on his opinion about video games? One could argue that his opinions about a certain form of art are applicable to all forms of art, but to that I offer this example. Take a chef—a world-class, five-star restaurant owning chef that only cooks French cuisine. He is an expert on French cuisine, and can tell you anything and everything about it. Now, ask that same chef to cook Japanese cuisine. Sure, his knowledge of cooking in general may be beneficial, and perhaps his passing awareness of Asian food might help, but his lack of knowledge of Japanese cuisine makes his cooking inferior to a



Mandibular glory days

professional Japanese chef. So while Ebert may have tremendous knowledge on the medium of film as art, that sure-as-shit doesn't give him the authority to make any assumptions about games. If I want to hear an opinion about the validity of video games as art (which I don't), I'll ask a game critic, or at least someone who has played one recently.

Now, if I haven't given you enough of a reason to ignore Ebert, I'll give you an even better reason to ignore this debate altogether. This is based on two simple facts; the very definition of the word "art" is open to interpretation, and an individual's concept of what materials can be considered "art" will never be the same as somebody else's. Put both of these together and it is easy to see why this debate is moot. Honestly, if we can't even come to a consensus on what art even is in the modern world, how do you expect to define anything on such shaky ground? Not only that, but to have this debate over the internet dis-

credits the validity of this argument even further. Because, as we all know, the internet has proven time and again to be a bastion of truth and equality perfect for airing grievances in a calm and collected manner and capable of producing insightful and thought-provoking feedback. It most certainly does not turn an ordinary human being into a raging, mouth-breathing Neanderthal who is certain that waving his fists and yelling the loudest will prove his point most effectively.

Then again, who is to say that I, a foul-mouthed twenty-one-year-old, am a better authority on art than Roger Ebert, one of the most famous and well-respected film critics of all time? Nobody, I guess. But I can tell you one thing, I've had more experiences with games than Ebert has, or will ever take the time to have. So the next time Mr. Ebert is looking for a buzzword to draw clicks to his blog, keep "video games" out of it.



Ben doesn't want you to join the Press.

Ben wants you to want to join the Press.

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When Friends Review Other Friends' Plays

By Josh Ginsberg

I have never seen a play before. Not since my mind-blowing performance as Turkey Lurkey in the first grade have I so much as set foot in a theater. My expectations were high with colorful titles like "Making Due," "Roughouse" and "Aurora Flame on 92." Unfortunately, the last play was replaced with one called "When the Stars Threw Down Their Spears." I was worried. The Blake reference got me shivering. I mean yeah, his art was okay I guess but he used capital letters, which all good scholars of e. e. cummings know is weak. But I digress.

The first play was about some Shrek style shit. I don't know what it was about really. But it was some Shrek style shit. Darryl Jemmont was funny in a bit role, but that was about it. The writing just wasn't there and the acting was just al-

right. The most impressive thing to me was when Kim Caracciolo and Mellisa Johnson hit the stage. Shit sounded like it hurt.

The second play was fascinating because it was billed as an original but was actually just adapted from Donald Kaufman's screenplay, you know, the psychological and emotionally overwrought one that made little sense. In all seriousness the play made an effort to present the psychology of a woman consumed with resentment and detached from reality in the wake of some abuse of some ambiguous nature. It's a hard theme to tackle in general and is potentially very poignant. A playwright writing about something of that ilk always runs the risk of failing at profundity and unfortunately for this rookie playwright, this play not only made little sense, but failed to strike any emotional chords. They tried to utilize the sparse staging in their favor, trading any sort of costumes for sharpie inscribed t-

shirts reading things like "Haunted," "Trapped" and "depparT," which suggested something about the emotional state of those who wore them. I can see the allure in what they were doing, but it was employed horrendously. The whole "Trapped," "depparT" thing was nauseating. The girl who wrote it was in some English classes with me. Seemed nice enough.

The third play was written by my close friend, Ross Barkan. I am sure my credibility will be attacked for praising his writing and panning the other plays, but shit, he is the only playwright of the three who knew how to write. His cast, which featured other Stony Brook Press luminaries, such as Liz "Feisty" Kaempf, who I was legitimately impressed by, and Sam Katz, the suave and mysterious Puerto Rican who dropped out of high school and into all of our hearts, was surprisingly adept. I honestly assumed Liz would be mediocre as hell, but she nailed the artfully convoluted lines

which are abundant in Fat Daddy Barkan's play.

"When the Stars Throw Down Their Spears" is a political commentary, but other than sort of broad satirical statements its substance wasn't all that clear or pointed. Honestly, the play doesn't blow minds with its scathing commentary or blinding insight. The play's strength is in the humor of its dialogue and in the charm of its cast. My only legitimate criticism of the act of "When the Stars Throw Down Their Spears" that Pocket Theatre put on is that it felt a little long. However, the brief moments the performance did drag were few and far between—always enlivened by the geniality and goofiness of the cast of the bitter spring of FDB's writing.

My biggest qualm of the night came about after I read the playbill. Pocket Theatre is spelled re and not er. This is America. Shit.

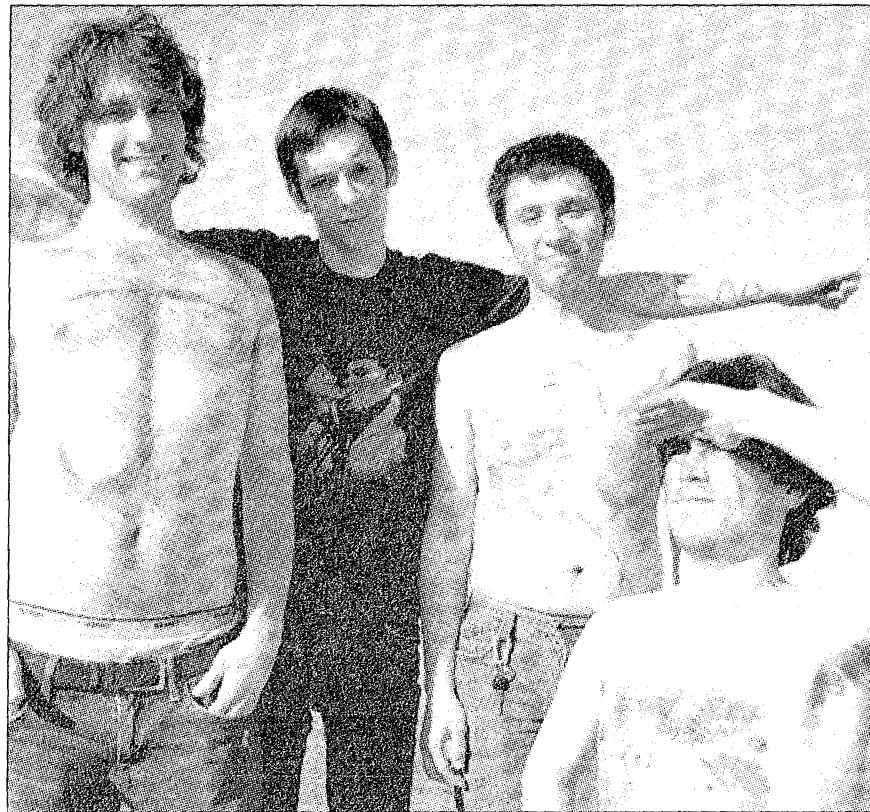
When Friends Review Other Friends' Bands

By Henry Schiller

Campus bands suck. Whether it's the shit-heap of bewilderingly well-received Suffolk County bands that can be seen at the U-Café on Monday nights, or the Red Hot Chili Peppers covers that spew from the drum room in the Tabler Arts Center, it's basically all worthless garbage. Slothbear is good though; actually, Slothbear is really good. They can be seen, two alligators, slouching around campus, antagonizing that guy who runs the Open Mic Nights, becoming analogous to stone walls on dreary Tuesday mornings.

Slothbear dropped an album and it is particularly lush and I really do love it. A single with the tracks "Don't Taunt a Tiger" and "Killed by Cars" was released late last year so I'm not going to labor over those songs here (tracks five and four respectively on the album), but really they're both sticky as shit – real brain candy that gets gummed up in your sinuses and doesn't leave.

The first track barrels in aggressively, but it's really almost forlorn, and every kick is lauded with vibrant pathos: it's called "No Dialogue." The track rat-



ties along and then the vocals come in and the lyrics are trapped with such catapulting imagery. "Your towering ifs are a criminal yawn" comes crashing down on you with a stunning enforcement not recognizable in many other college bands.

"Olio" scrapes the bones and the guitars are gnarled like driftwood scrapped by one thousand wolf shirts. Ginger Bear echoes in with chilly and low-lying vocals that crescendo into trumpeting roars at choral points. The song is catchy as all fuck, a hook, rushed

in by a weighty and nuanced drum fill, that forces its way out of your mouth even days after hearing the song.

"Fluoxetine" is almost danceable if Kragg will excuse my saying so. The drums stutter in with aggravation, the Peruvian horse rattling away at his glittering set; man does that bassline thud and man do those solos ring. The song breaks and reforms and the vocals slide through your speakers with a million desert sands storming into your mouth and eyes.

The first half of "Little Qid" rings like a foamy wizard pacifying a tempestuous ocean. It rolls on rather low for a while, almost whispered – guitar and bass just textures. Then the song explodes into its bridge and a bass line like you wouldn't believe, it is sick and it really vibrates in a strange way that definitely has to be heard; bassist Doug Bleek really did a stellar job producing this maelstrom of an album. And the vocals kick in with a banshees wail and fade out with thunderous yelps and growls. The vocal coda at its end could penetrate anything. Campus animals need to make more music like Slothbear, but I doubt any of them could.

Oh and the album is called Qids and it's free on vanity imprint's website and it really is fantastic.

LATE TO THE PARTY

Fallout 3: The Comrade Review

By Kenny Mahoney

Здравствуйте, Друг! When I'm not serving my fellow comrades in the greatest country in the world, I like spend time playing these new video games. I mostly look down upon these western gimmicks, whose main purpose is to exploit the working man for capitalistic gains. However, today I am going to tell you about a game that is actually deserving of Russian praise. Finally, these Americans have truly captured the essence of everyday life in Russia with *Fallout 3*. The game is set in the capitol city of those filthy pigs, Washington D.C., right after it was hit with an atomic bomb (which I will assume we dropped; high-fives all around!). The gamer takes on the role of one of the survivors of the nuclear fallout as they search for their father, much like the people of Russia are today. Really, there are more fatherless Russians than empty shell casings at a

Union of Russian Workers' rally.

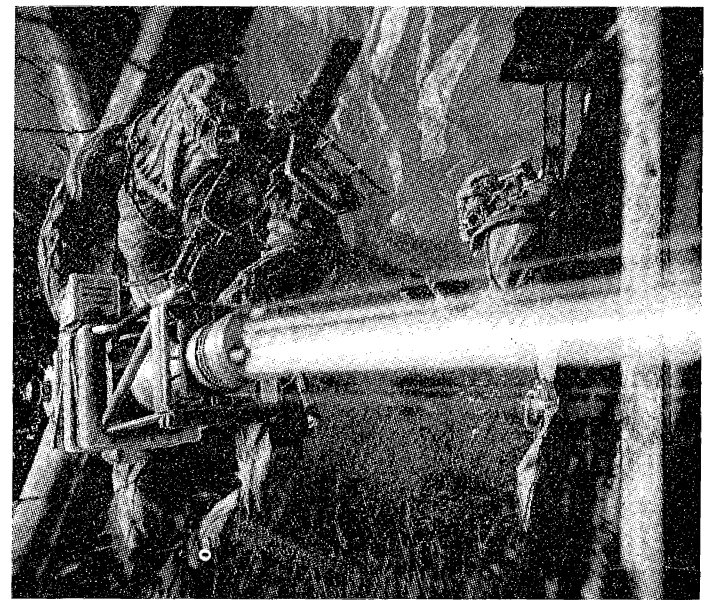
I was immediately struck by the authenticity of the landscape in comparison to the homeland. Really, had I not been tucked away in my lead-lined sleep chamber while playing, I would have sworn I was actually standing outside! The gray, irradiated haze over the horizon brought vodka-laced tears to my eyes, and the accurate representation of our native wildlife was as heart-warming as it was bloodthirsty.

Shortly after beginning the game, I stumble upon a town called Megaton. This town, what is built around an undetonated nuclear bomb, is the central home for the player as they explore the wasteland. What I don't understand is why so many people in town seem so upset by bomb's presence. In Russia, it is law that we build our hospitals and playgrounds around pieces of stagnant armament - what is big deal?

Another aspect of *Fallout 3* that I was taken aback by was the way that genuine effects of radiation exposure are seen. Most people living outside of

Russia don't know that Super Mutants and Ghouls actually exist! My neighbor, Viktor, is Super Mutant. He's actually a pretty nice guy as long as you don't look him in the eyes. And Ghouls have become somewhat of a fetish here in Russia. It's as if their lack of an external layer of skin makes them *even more* naked. Not

only that, but that radiation burned off the outer layer of hair and calluses that all of our Russian women have. I wouldn't know, but my buddy Mikhail is dating a Ghoul - he says it's like love making to a talking corpse. Which, in all honesty, doesn't really sound that bad. I mean, have you *seen* our women



lately? I'd rather make sex to an alligator - in the mouth.

Anyway, I must end it here. I should return to the factory where I work on assembly line building low-quality nesting dolls. So, if you are looking for game to teach you about life in Russia, *Fallout 3* is good choice.

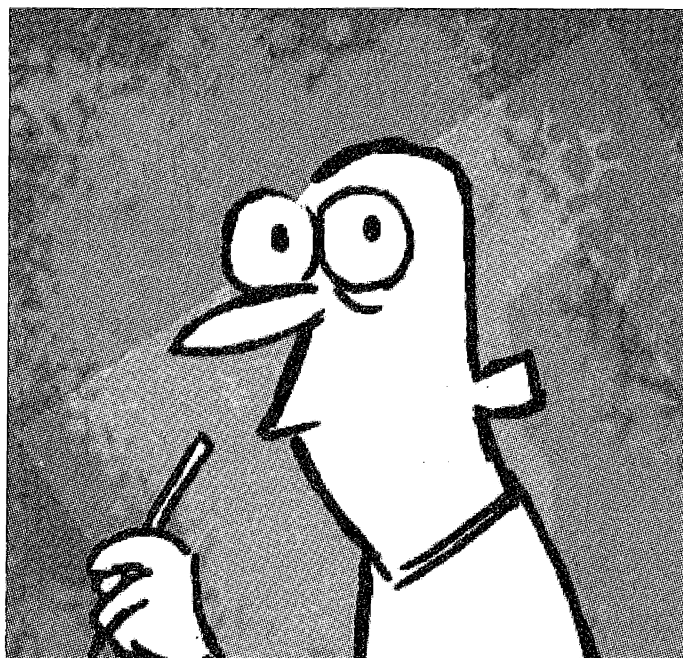
Review: The Book of Grickle

By Evan Goldaper

Graham Annable's *The Book of Grickle* is a curious thing indeed. I don't even know what to compare it to. It is a collection of short stories without any recurring characters or over-arching theme, and a writing style that doesn't easily compare to anything I've read. But this certainly does not mean that *Grickle* is a bad comic. In fact, it contains some of the most powerful stories I've read in a long time. Each of the seventeen short comics deals with a different part of life: the beauty of the mundane, the dreams of childhood, the dangers of ambition. Annable draws with a very simplistic style that at first looks like little more than just stick figures. However, the level of detail put into each expression is something that even the more "accurate" art of traditional comic books often fails to cap-

ture. The amount of deliberation in the scripting is also admirable. Annable makes excellent use of panels without dialogue to let these emotions gain more emphasis. A few stories lack any dialogue at all. However, the aforementioned strengths make these tales just as interesting.

The longest story in the book, "by necessity," is also my personal favorite. It has been a long time since I read a comic as moving as that one. What first seemed like a zany slapstick comedy quickly escalated into an emotionally charged tale of timing, changes and relationships. The afore-



mentioned use of character expressions sets a perfectly dismal and quiet tone that would not be achieved through just dialogue or even writing. The funny stories—of which there are quite a few—also

manage to similarly time the character's dialogue and expressions to add an extra punch to the jokes.

With that said, although *Grickle* is classified as a humor publication, less than a third of the stories in the book actually made me laugh. The others occasionally caused me to smile knowingly, but if you're looking for humor, *Grickle* might not be the right book to purchase. Really, I'd recommend this book to anyone who is even remotely interested in the art of comic books and comic strips; if you want to see how art, writing and pacing can work together for both comedy and drama, this is a good place to learn. Dark Horse has put together a nice, high-quality hardcover edition, and though there are no extras to speak of, a few of these stories are near impossible to find elsewhere any more. It may not have been what I expected, but it was still a worthwhile and enjoyable read.

Murder By Death Review

By Zach Knowlton

Adam Turla is one burly dude. Last year, after having a bit of a songwriting drought, he went to the Great Smoky Mountains by himself for two weeks. Hiking upwards of twenty miles a day and roughing it through almost non-stop rainstorms, he wrote all the songs that would become Murder By Death's latest album, *Good Morning, Magpie*. And the result: the band's biggest step forward and arguably their strongest album yet.

Murder By Death is known for its huge, dense concept albums, filled with battles with the devil, Odyssey-like journeys and plenty of whiskey-soaked sorrow. They could have easily written another dark concept album much like their last three releases and rabid fans, like myself, would have eaten it up. *Good Morning, Magpie* takes a step back from all of that, giving the songs room to breathe by freeing them from the constraints of a concept or narrative tale. Murder By Death jumped a bit into the abyss on this one, and it more than paid off for them.

The staples of Murder By Death's sound are still here—intense cello parts, loud and low bass filled with effects, Adam Turla's haunting baritone—but they are used differently on this album. Gone are the eight-minute epics that built and built and built, often getting to be too much by the six-minute mark. The tracks are fairly condensed, with only one going past five minutes. This may be the best decision the band made on this album. The songs have a clear path and they know how to get exactly where they're going. My urge to skip a song because it just goes on without doing anything is gone. Some reviewers have called *Good Morning, Magpie* Murder By Death's cheeriest sounding album. I have no idea where this notion



has come from. There are maybe two "cheerful" sounding songs, but a listen for the lyrics proves that not to be the case. Just because the Devil hasn't come to a small Mexican town to wreak havoc does not mean that the album is "cheery."

This album manages to get the best of all their previous work without many of the problems. It's much easier to pick out individual parts, especially with the bass, which in the past often became an atmospheric background noise. The same goes for the guitar. Songs such as "As Long As There Is Whiskey In The World" and "Foxglove" are driving without being overly heavy. The intensity of the music matches the intensity of Turla's voice and his lyrics. "As Long As There Is Whiskey In The World" is probably my new favorite Murder By Death Track. The transition from the quiet verses to the racing chorus is just perfect and it's also great for car sing-alongs with good friends. To me, that's the mark of an excellent tune. "You

Don't Miss Twice (When You're Shaving With A Knife)" is little more than an interesting drumbeat from new drummer Dagan Thogerson and low, growling cello courtesy of the brilliant Sarah Balliet. The sound is very different from what the band has done in the past, yet feels so familiar, it's a wonder they haven't written a song like that before. *Good Morning, Magpie* is an excellent example of "less is more," and it works amazingly for this band.

Lyricaly, Turla has done it again. His words evoke images of the Wild West or a time long before any of us were alive. The words are timeless, and could apply to almost anyone at any point. Murder By Death has never had a specific audience, other than those who like to drink quite a bit, and their lyrics may be a good part of that. Fourteen-year-olds could get the same thing out of it has a fifty-year-old, and that is not a knock, it's a mark of true talent. Also, holy fuck does Turla know how to tell a story. There are few other songwriters

out there who can write a narrative like him, and this album is just further proof of his ability. He wrote an entire song about shaving with a knife, the aforementioned "You Don't Miss Twice (When You're Shaving With A Knife)," and even that is amazing. I think that should be the new test for songwriters, lyricize about something mundane as hell, and if it's good, then you're a songwriter.

Good Morning, Magpie is Murder By Death's strongest album yet. It's not my favorite of theirs yet, but perhaps with more time. Regardless, this is an amazing disc, filled with strong songs front to back. It's a step in a new direction for the band, and so far, this looks to be a great decision. Pick up a copy of *Good Morning, Magpie* and support this incredible band. They will be playing the Bowery Ballroom May 4, although by the time you read this, it will probably have already happened.

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THOU SHALL NOT BE IN PAIN

By Samuel Katz

"What do you say to those who say that you are Frankenstein?" a radio host asks Dr. Kevorkian in HBO's new film *You Don't Know Jack*. The film, which stars Al Pacino as the infamous doctor, seeks to address the euthanasia debate from the point of view of the man who became synonymous with the procedure.

Dr. Jack Kevorkian assisted 130 people die their voluntary deaths, until the euthanizing of a patient on public television landed him in prison. Kevorkian believed that the responsibility of the medical profession is to relieve pain, and death is one such way to reach that end. With the help of his sister and some friends, Kevorkian diligently interviewed his patients who sought his help in dying to make sure that they had tried everything else. Kevorkian insisted that his killings were medical procedures and only a society with medieval ideals would frown on such an option. "You don't just let [people] whither away," he says.

Pacino delivers a riveting performance as Kevorkian. From his awkward quirkiness to his eccentric personality, Pacino manages to make us like the man most of us made up our minds about already. In one scene Kevorkian explains to his sister how "groundbreaking" his work is, but he insists that they need to find a better word for groundbreaking. Later, after an interview with Barbara Walters, he is convinced that Ms. Walters likes him. Yet all these personal tidbits are just the backdrop for *You Don't Know Jack's* biggest strength of turning an emotionally laden debate into a question of motivation and medicine.

In the beginning of the film, Kevorkian sits in library with his sister and together they bemoan the lack of death as an option for relieving pain. Kevorkian decides that he will have to be the champion for the cause. In the beginning, he sets up a contraption that the patient needs to trigger by pulling a string. This setup makes the death a suicide and it allows Kevorkian to walk a thin line on the border of our legal system. Since the patients were the ones who set the killing in motion, Kevorkian couldn't be convicted.

In the end, Kevorkian isn't satisfied with just enabling his patients to take

their own lives. Kevorkian wants to change the law so that it would allow for doctors, in certain circumstances, to end their patients lives. To achieve that end he records a videotape of himself euthanizing a patient. He sends the tape to Mike Wallace at *60 Minutes*. After the tape aired, Kevorkian was summoned to court on charges of manslaughter. He hoped to lose the case so that he could appeal it to the Supreme Court, forcing



them to consider legalizing euthanasia. He did lose the case, but the Supreme Court refused to hear it, and he spent the next eight and a half years in prison for second-degree manslaughter.

In the film, when Kevorkian approaches his lawyer, his lawyer assures him that they can win the case. After all, his lawyer says, "Courtrooms are theaters of conscience," and so is the movie, a giant theater of conscience where different parts of our emotions and sympathies compete for the final statement. Our ingrained fear of death together with our reflexive opposition to killing versus our sympathy for those in pain whose lives we know is unbearable.

Which do we fear more: pain or death? Kevorkian believed that enlightened people would fear the first more than the second. In one of the most moving scenes in the film, Kevorkian recounts how he watched his mother at the end of her life all caught in pain "like the worst toothache, only in all of her body." Kevorkian retells the story with visible difficulty. The terror of the

incident is painted all over his aging face. The terror that the idea of killing a human being incites in most of us is matched by the terror Kevorkian says he felt when he watched his mother in pain and knew, "there was nothing I could do about it." Perhaps Kevorkian is more emotionally sophisticated than most of us, feeling his patients' pain and not letting ideas about killing make him keep people living in agony against their

the bible (*Tirtzhach*) actually translates to murder, not kill. The prohibition in the Ten Commandments was actually on murdering. Murder implies a certain kind of killing under a certain kind of circumstances. Saying, "thou shalt not kill" says that all kinds of killing is forbidden. Murder is more nuanced, it's more difficult to define what it excludes. King James wanted to avoid that challenge, Kevorkian thought he resolved it.

When the radio host in the movie asks Kevorkian what he thinks about people who say he is Frankenstein, the name that became synonymous with science gone wrong, he responds coolly, "Well that's good, because if you read the book you know that Frankenstein was good, it was society that made the creature bad." Kevorkian was referring to the reading of the book *Frankenstein* that claims that what went wrong wasn't the scientist's attempt at creating life, but society's reluctance to accept the creature he created and that was the cause for all the evil that followed.

Frankenstein explains his thinking in the book, "Life and death appeared to me ideal bounds, which I should first break through, and pour a torrent of light into our dark world." Kevorkian must have thought the same. Kevorkian must have reasoned that getting rid of the darkness in some of his patients lives required breaking through some ideal bounds. Yet, it is this very idea, the fact that what they challenged was the "ideal bounds" with the justification that it pours light into a dark world that made it impossible for their views to be accepted. Many of us would prefer to not have those ideal bounds challenged even if it means living in a darker world. People like Kevorkian and Frankenstein prefer to challenge the bound of life, death and murder. Many of us, however, would rather take the King James route: accepting the rule of thou shall kill as simple, straightforward and without nuance.

Kevorkian thought that he presented people a choice between pain and death. In reality, the choice he presented was between a world where we have to rethink our relationship with death and murder and a world where we can assume that it's a simple question. Given these two choices, perhaps it's not that we don't know Jack Kevorkian and his ideas, it's that we don't want to know.

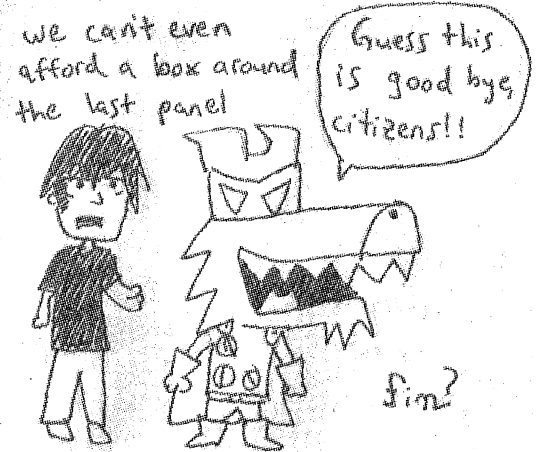
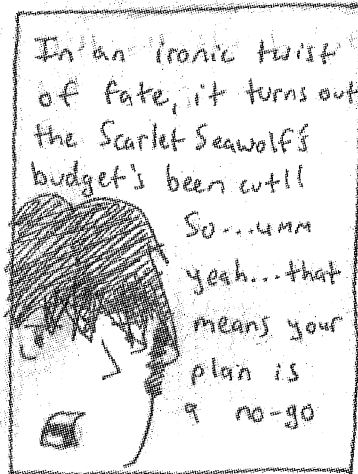
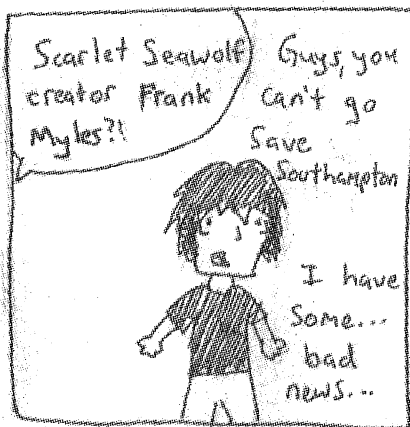
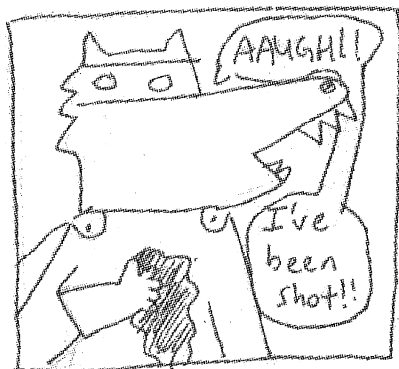
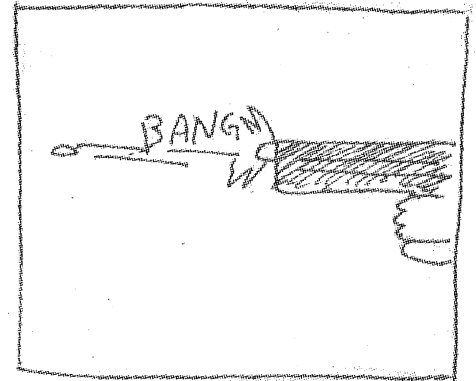
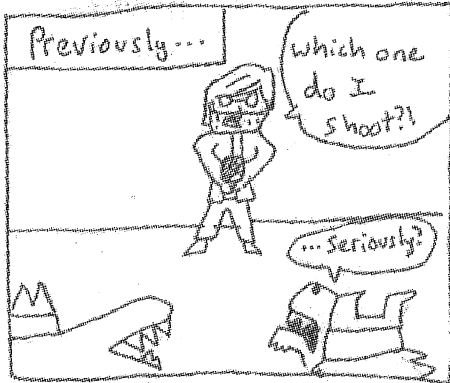
will. Perhaps he is less intellectually in control of his emotions, not understanding the complexity of allowing killing in society and in our legal system. He might be one of the two, somewhere in between or something else. What is certain is that in the theater of conscience he is one of its most compelling and convincing actors.

Kevorkian passionately crusaded his belief about euthanasia and its place within the medical practice. He dismissed those who disagreed with him as being disregarding towards human suffering. However, what he didn't realize was the inherent fear our collective conscience has of death, killing, murder and the undefined lines between them. Enlightenment usually challenges emotion with intellect; Kevorkian wanted to challenge emotion with emotion, and that was the problem

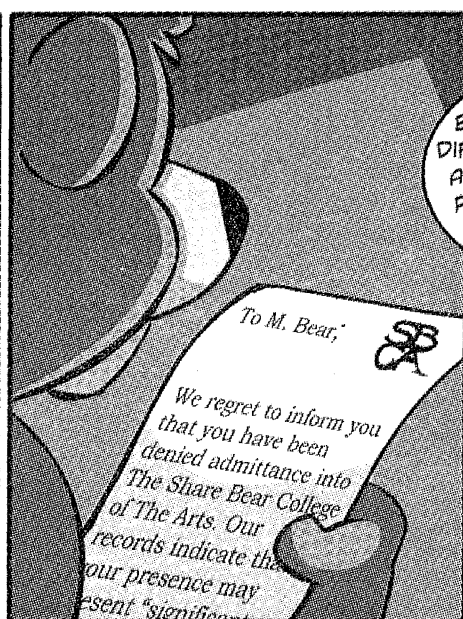
When the King James Bible was written, the sixth commandment was translated as "Thou shalt not kill." Scholars later pointed out that the Hebrew word used in the original text of

THE COMICS SECTION

The
SCARLET SEAWOLF
By: Frank Myles



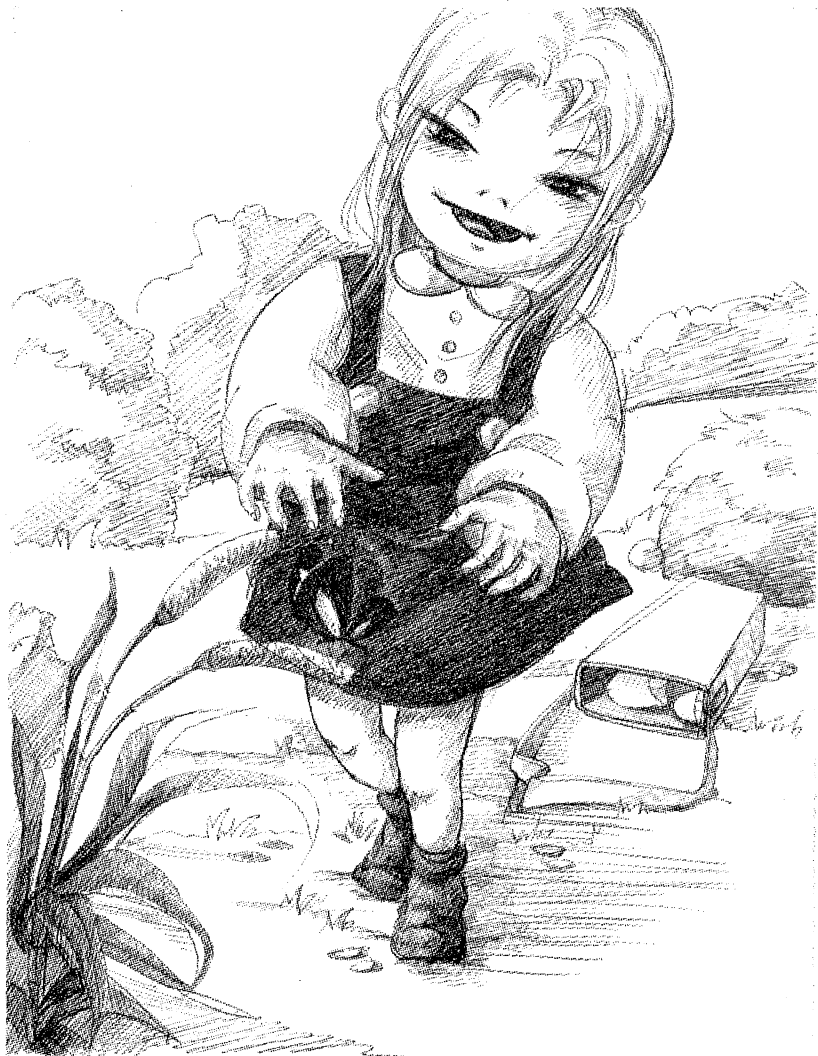
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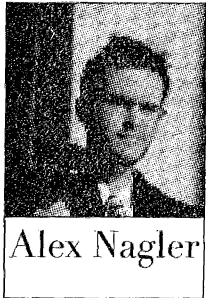
THE COMICS SECTION



By Yue Si



Making Love to a Sandwich



Alex Nagler

The Se-Port Deli Gasm: breaded chicken breast, covered in Russian dressing, topped with melted mozzarella cheese, crispy bacon and coleslaw and housed in

toasted garlic bread. You want to know what a good sandwich is? Go eat one of these. There's only one place you can have one of these things - in a deli on Route 25 North, halfway between Stony Brook and Port Jefferson. That's the only place. You can't get one in New York City—you need to be on the north shore.

There will be people I miss from campus, there will be places I'll miss, things I'll miss, events I'll miss, but there isn't that much in terms of food that I'm going to miss. There's nothing I can't get somewhere in the city that I can get here. Except for the Gasm.

Sure, I could take the individual ingredients and put them together, but it's not the same. I won't be waiting on line for several minutes while a guy behind a counter assembles the sandwich out of my line of sight and brings it over to me, wrapped in both paper and foil. I won't acknowledge its superiority over my digestive system and how I can only eat half of it at a given time, if I know what's good for me. It's lunch and dinner. The perfect day long meal.



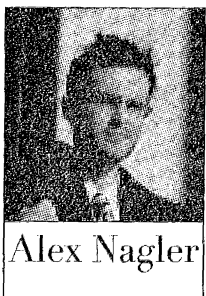
Se-Port, your sandwich is worthy of its name. The heartburn that sticks around for half an hour after you're done with it is its very own petit mort.

It's sex in your mouth, that's what it is.

In short, I think I'll miss you most of all Se-Port...even if your sandwich sounds more like a cause of death than

something to eat. But if Felix Faure can go down *delicato flagranto morto*, I could die happy with the sandwich.

Dear Stony Brook Beverage Distributator



Alex Nagler

Hi. It's me.

The guy who only buys Brooklyn beer, normally in growlers.

Same guy who reserved the two bottles of Black-Ops, under the assumption that

they'd sell out quickly due to the limited nature of the brew and the number of casks the wizard Garrett Oliver brewed. I guess I didn't have to: at the time of writing this letter you still have some bottles left. I may pick another one, but

it's a bit bitter for my tastes unless paired properly.

Anyway, I'm writing to thank you for the past four years. I know I've only "officially" been a customer of yours since last May, but I've been taking advantage of the fact that you always have every Brooklyn bottle in stock since I arrived on campus. Whether it was the light crisp taste of Pennant Ale or the debilitating experience of drinking too much Monster Ale over the course of an evening, your wide stock of Brooklyn bottled beers has kept me going through the entirety of my under-21 years. I suppose I shouldn't be freely ad-

mitting that, but hey, can't get tried for past offenses.

But more importantly, I want to thank you for the Growler Bar. This is something I only began to appreciate when I was legally allowed to. Over the past year, I've had Brooklyn Blast, Cookie Jar Porter, Cuvee de Cardoz, Sorachi Ale, Dark Matter, Intensified Coffee Stout, Black Chocolate Stout and a few things I probably don't remember. You always had what I needed, which was a comforting thing.

You see, I'm from Brooklyn and sometimes the dullness of Long Island infuriates me. But Brooklyn Beer always

reminds me of getting on the L, ignoring the hipsters, and walking to North 11 and Berry Street to the Brewery. Sure, I'm paying more than four bucks a glass, but I'm getting a familiar sense of out of the growlers. It pours like home.

If anything, you've made me experiment with my cooking, as I've had to pair the beers I've purchased with appropriate foods. Thanks for that. And thanks for everything these past 4 years. I'm going to miss you.

Your loyal customer.

Fight Club: The Most Important Thing

By Eric DiGiovanni

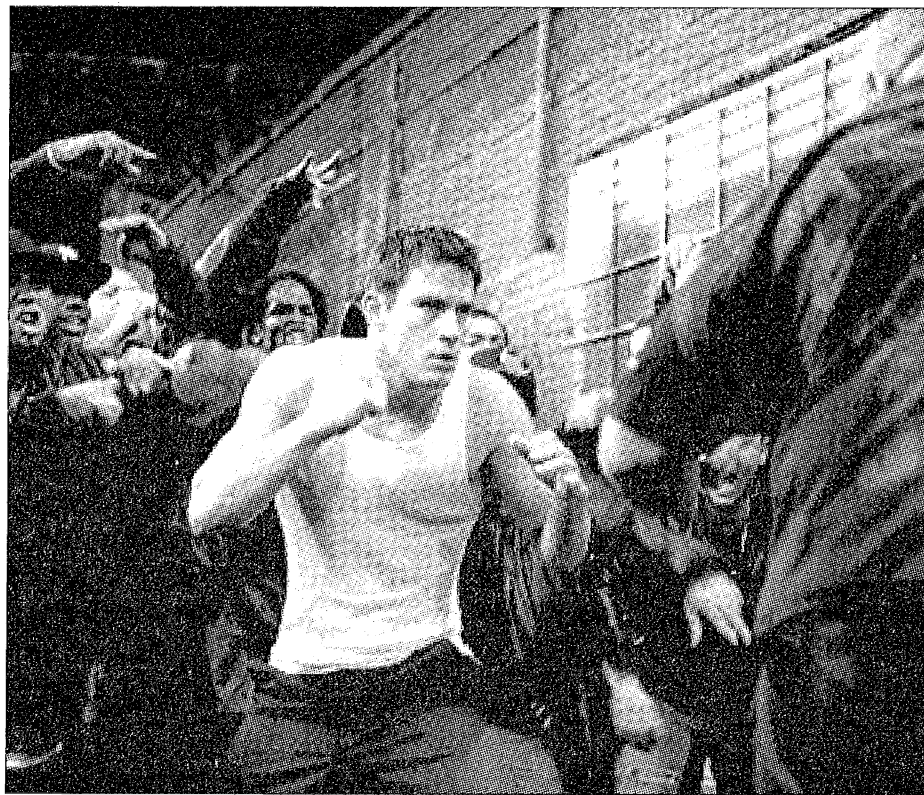
I was going to write about my experiences with Catch Wrestling after a recent practice session, but it would seem pointless, as it has been covered more extensively in the three-part series, "The History of Professional Wrestling." Instead, I'm going to write about the most important part of fighting - you.

You have no idea how much of an unstoppable ass-kicking machine you could be, or what a delicate meat puppet you are until you take up martial arts. It's not just the rush of adrenaline either; the best fighters in the world are all authorities on anatomy and physics.

For example, no matter what style you train in, the body still has the same weak points. The choke hold cuts off blood flow to the brain, giving the victim a feeling of drowning. All of your joints, from your ankles to your elbows, can be used against you if bent in the opposite direction on what God intended, overloading the nerves. Matt even managed to hit me right between my calf muscle and shinbone that hurts like hell when pressure is applied to it.

Fortunately, the human body is designed to adapt. When you lift weights, the muscle tears, and grow

back stronger than before. The same happens to bones. Muay Thai practitioners used to kick banana trees thousands of times a day. This repeated impact creates micro fractures in the bones, which calcify over time. The old adage proves true - what doesn't kill you makes your



stronger.

But if you have the capability of being so awesome, why don't you fight? Not just kicking ass, but trying in general?

Now, here's the point that makes my series' title more than just a con-

venient pun - how much do you really know about yourself if you've never been in a fight? I'm not just talking about a brawl in a bar somewhere or just being bullied as a kid, but conflict in general. Too often we take the path of least resistance just to get through the day, and life feels

comes over my place and...uh, back to my point. Where was I? Right, getting our butts whooped.

And that's the thing: we don't fight because we're afraid of losing or being wrong. However, when we lose, we learn what not to do for next time. I can understand fearing failure in class: if there are only three chances a semester (midterms and finals, maybe a paper), then there's not enough room for error to get things perfect. But what about everywhere else? I wish I had dollar for every time I said, "Then, why don't you?" and I got a half-assed mumbled reply.

One of the most interesting lines in the movie *Fight Club* was Tyler Durden's (Brad Pitt) "homework assignment" - "Pick a fight with a stranger and lose." If you follow Durden's logic, it makes sense. By getting these strangers in fights, they might learn a thing, or they might report the other guy to the police. It's like a win-win scenario - you get someone riled up enough to take action, and they get a boost in confidence.

I say it's time to drop this defeatist attitude. Start a debate, compete in a contest you might not win or challenge your professor. Either way, pick a fight, and don't be afraid to lose. You'll be stronger for next time.

like just waiting for the other shoe to drop. I'm guilty of this too, but as you've read over these past one and a half years, I'm not afraid of getting my ass kicked. In fact, I love it. I love it so much that on Wednesday night a woman named Lady Heather

Men's Lax Wins AE Conference

By Matt Maran

For those of you who don't know, the Stony Brook lacrosse team is awesome. Not only is this team awesome, but in my opinion is the greatest lacrosse team in the history of lacrosse teams.

Our offense is averaging 14 points a game and the Seawolves recently hu-

miliated Albany in a 15-0 shellacking—our largest win since 1989.

This past weekend, the Seawolves beat Vermont, and won their first America East Regular Season Championship. Then, they played Vermont in the America East Tournament, and beat them again. We'll no doubt be in the NCAA Tournament, which we'll also win.

Our top Attacker, Jordan McBride leads the nation in goals per game and

shooting percentage. Long stick midfielder, Steven Waldeck, leads all long poles in goals and assists. Midfielder, Kevin Crowley, is second in the nation in points per game. Junior Adam Rand has won 62 percent of his face offs. Did I mention how awesome we are?

This year's team is top 10 in six top statistical categories. We should be the ranked #1 in the country. If there was any ranking higher than #1, we should have that too.

The 2010 Seawolves lacrosse team is the greatest team in the history of team sports. They will cruise to a National Championship, and go down in history as the most amazing group of athletes assembled since the beginning of time.

Every game they play at this point is just one step on their way to their inevitable run to a National Championship.

2010 Dreisini: The Final Countdown

By Jason Wirchin

A stalwart on the Stony Brook intramural landscape since 2005, Dreisini has entered its sixth season as one of the university's longest-standing, student softball teams. Spawned from the mighty folk of Tabler Quad, the squad has one championship under its belt and a legacy that rivals those of Babe Ruth, Zeus and Paul Bunyan combined.

After their 2007 title run, unexpected retirements, disjointed leadership and a team fire sale led many to believe that the juggernaut had met its match. An early exit from the 2008 playoffs and a disappointing 2009 confirmed these feelings.

However, well into what many experts call the franchise's final season at the university, Dreisini's revamped lineup hopes to capture its second title in four years. New recruits have added a young flavor, mixed with veterans' sense of tradition and solid play. Here's a look at the team.



Tino "The Condor" Evangelou

One of the team's founding fathers, Evangelou has maintained his godly form throughout his entire playing career. At age 24, he is the team's most tenured player and its de facto captain. His 6'10" frame is no match for the competition, as are his gigantic strides. Do not let his presence intimidate you, though. Inside, Evangelou is a gentle soul who appreciates long walks on the beach and yelling obscenities from his car windows.

Ross "Ross City" Barkan

An offseason pickup after the team's early exit from the 2008 playoffs, Barkan brings life and fertility to the middle of the lineup. A solid five hitter, Barkan can usually be seen reading on the bench or fitting Little Leaguers for jock straps in his native Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. With his sandlot days behind him, he looks forward to an exciting

2010. "It's what I enjoy most in life," Barkan said, referring to his passion for softball. "That, and going to Final Placement concerts!"

Lionel "Rhino aka Best Friend aka El Lion 25" Chan

Since his rookie year in 2006, Chan has blossomed like a lotus flower. Once a Champ Bailey jersey-wearing hoodlum, Chan has become one of the greatest utility men in team history. Whether pitching, fielding grounders or chasing down fly balls, his never-give-up attitude has caught the attention of many a professional scout. In fact, he was recently offered a 6-year, \$90 million contract by the Kansas City Royals, but declined due to "personal reasons." The local press blatantly criticized him for this move, even though he said he holds a spot in his heart for Dreisini alone. Now co-captain, he is like a psychopathic supermodel – beautiful, but dangerous with a bat.

Mike "The Magician" Magistro

After losing to Dreisini in the 2007 championship game, Magistro joined his old nemesis in 2009, but only played part-time due to severe rectal ailments. In 2010, he's feeling fresh and ready to take on the world. Now the team's clean-up hitter, Magic Mike's sweet stroke is a sight to behold. His ability to drive the ball the opposite way, his cannon arm in the outfield and gritty base running are just a few of Magistro's



most prized assets. "After those intestinal sores held me back a few years ago, it's great to be back in the swing of things," he said. "If only I didn't have to apply that annoying cream all the time."

Jose "No Way" Pinales

Playing in his rookie season, Pinales has emerged as one of the team's finest outfielders. Quick on his feet and even quicker on the bases, Pinales has had opponents screaming "No way!" through the entire season. One of the

cornerstones of the team's future, Pinales is an avid dodgeball player and holds the Guinness World Record for consecutive games played without being hit. Expect great things from him in 2010.

Chris "Don't Miss" Mendez

Also in his rookie season, Mendez has made his home at shortstop. Putting Derek Jeter to shame, Mendez scoops up everything that comes his way, finishing each play with nearly perfect mechanics. Wearing number 23, he has developed into a solid top-of-the-order hitter. His trademark black thermal leggings are a fan favorite, and replica versions should hit retail stores by the end of May. You can find him signing autographs outside the SAC during campus lifetime and on weekends outside the Staller Center. Oh, and you know that lonesome port-o-pottie by the intramural fields? For some reason, Chris hangs out there a lot. We don't ask questions.

Geoff "Handsome" Bansen

In his second year with the team, Bansen is an infielder at heart with the glove of an outfielder. Coming off a stellar 2009 in which he had 37 homers, 98 RBIs and a .987 slugging percentage, Bansen was accused of taking steroids, HGH and amphetamines during the offseason. He was arrested by federal prosecutors last Christmas Eve, and will not be seen in the starting lineup in 2010. However, a district judge kept him out of prison, sentencing him to 400 hours of community service. That being said, you can find Bansen coaching third base during games. Like OJ, he still claims he is innocent.

Bryant "Bronx Bomber" Meythaler

Another Dreisini rookie, Meythaler is one of the team's steady outfielders. With sprinter speed and more range than a ballistic missile, Meythaler is a fan favorite. His jersey is the highest-selling piece of team paraphernalia since replicas of Lionel Chan's protective cup went on sale in 2008. Meythaler also has three charities opened in his name and, upon completion of his softball career, plans on running for Congress. Of his new-found celebrity status, "I can't believe it," he said. "These two girls asked me to sign

their chests the other day, and then they gave me their numbers! This is the life, man!"

Jorge "We Must Protect This House" Reyes

Signed to a 12-year contract with Dreisini with a full no-trade clause,



Reyes is a force to be reckoned with. His full-throttle approach to both base running and hitting is what makes him a star rookie and superb athlete. Before each practice, Reyes massages his teammates for a nominal fee – the ultimate way to pre-game! He's off to a rip-roarin' start to the 2010 season, with 14 inside-the-park homers and 63 stolen bases. Expect him to shatter all expectations, along with the hopes and dreams of opponents.

Jason "Jackie Double D" Wirchin

Someone thought it was a good idea to let Wirchin interact with other people. That person is an idiot. A recent escapee from the Kings Park Psychiatric Center, Wirchin is the team's most perverted, clinically-insane player. A four-year veteran, he patrols the outfield with an iron fist and an arm that would make Raul Mondesi crap his pants. Aside from softball, Wirchin's interests lie in the adult film industry. On occasion, you can hear him reciting the names of his favorite male porn stars. Here's the genius on engaging his final season with Dreisini. "I was a freshman when we won it all in 2007," he said. "And I think we've got one more in the bag...I mean the trunk. Necro Money!"



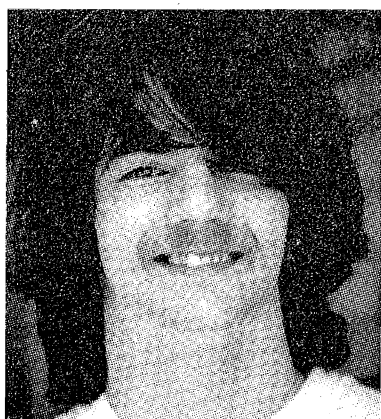
Tim "Nesconset Fresh" Chiraz

A mid-season acquisition, Chiraz joined Dreisini under precarious circumstances. Cut by his old team for selling knock-off handbags in the clubhouse, he was picked up by his current squad after promising to undergo behavioral therapy. A scrappy hitter with a fair share of pop, Chiraz's tiny stature is quite deceiving. Don't even think about moving in on this kid. He'll dink the ball over your head or, if you really piss him off, drive it to the wall. Simply put, he's a second basemen with a vengeance. "After the handbag incident, I never thought I'd be able to recover physically and spiritually," he said. "Miracles happen, I guess."

Andrew "Denver McNugget" Fraley

This is a mug shot of Fraley after his arrest for possession and distribution of crack cocaine in 2003. Caught by local authorities in Tijuana, Mexico, he was subjected to intense interrogation, which he botched miserably. Claiming the disembodied heads of Dante Bichette and Larry Walker drove him to the drug world, Fraley is an unstable creature with violent inclinations. During a probation period, he was ac-

cused of vandalizing the exterior of Coors Field, as well as several other



buildings in downtown Denver. We're not exactly sure how he's legally allowed to play on the team, but he's developed into a vital utility man.

Matt "Stone Cold Stunner" Maran

Dear Other Teams,

Do not mess with this kid! One false move and he'll bash your fucking heads in! In all seriousness, Maran has the body of a professional wrestler and the heart of a champion. A Dreisini rookie, he put his Smackdown career temporarily on hold to make room for

his first intramural title. A natural-born catcher, Maran is a brick wall behind the plate. He's an average hitter with great potential. And even though this photo of him is severely outdated, there's no doubting his unadulterated excellence.

Jason "Shankbone" Shank

Shank, pictured here at Tropicana Field in St. Petersburg, was actually drafted by the Mets in 2004. After moving through their minor league system, Shank was a call-up away from making his Major League debut. An unfortunate run-in with a transsexual hooker put a quick end to those dreams. Now in his third year with

Dreisini, Shank is prepared to take on the world. His role as an outfielder/second baseman cannot be overlooked and he is a tested veteran by all means. That being said, the hooker saga still haunts him, leading some to question whether or not he can make it as an intramural starter. His teammates believe in him, though. "They've got my back," he said. "Although they still make fun of me for that hooker thing."

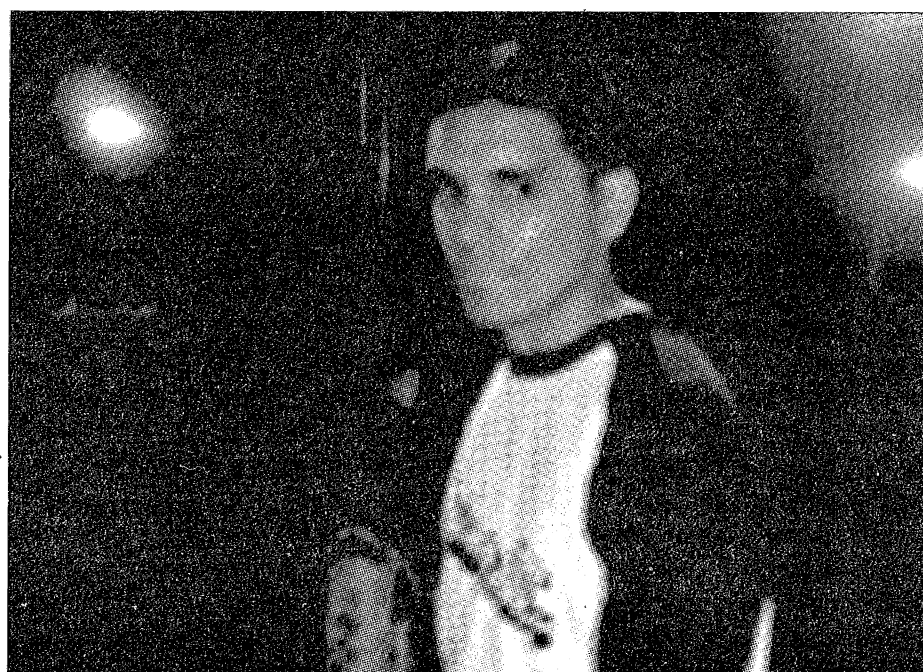
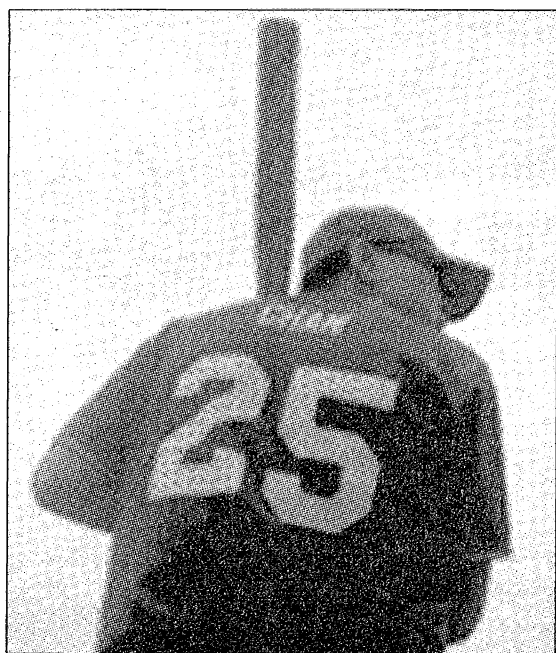
Pat "The Chosen One" Jacques

A gift from above, Jacques is a

beast. His intense workout regimen allows him to bench 435 lbs on a bad day, and that's about half of what he can do otherwise! An agile outfielder with great range, Jacques can get to a ball as quick as you can say, "That guy's fresh!" The Marlins are actually considering naming their ballpark after the first-year Dreisini slugger. I bet half of you didn't even know the Marlins were building a new stadium. Whatever. You're all dumb. Regardless, Jacques is here to stay and couldn't be happier. "I love my team," he said. "But that Jason kid keeps making weird advances on me. I think he's a bit off."

Steven "Dawnburgz" Dornberg

In his first season with the team, Dornberg is quite the utility man. Picked up as an unrestricted free agent during the offseason after his dodgeball career came to a crashing end, he's been working out every day since early November and has gradually acquired pre-gubernatorial, Schwarzenegger-caliber arm strength. From downtown Roslyn, Dornberg says he keeps in shape by downing Checkers burgers and 7-11 taquitos.

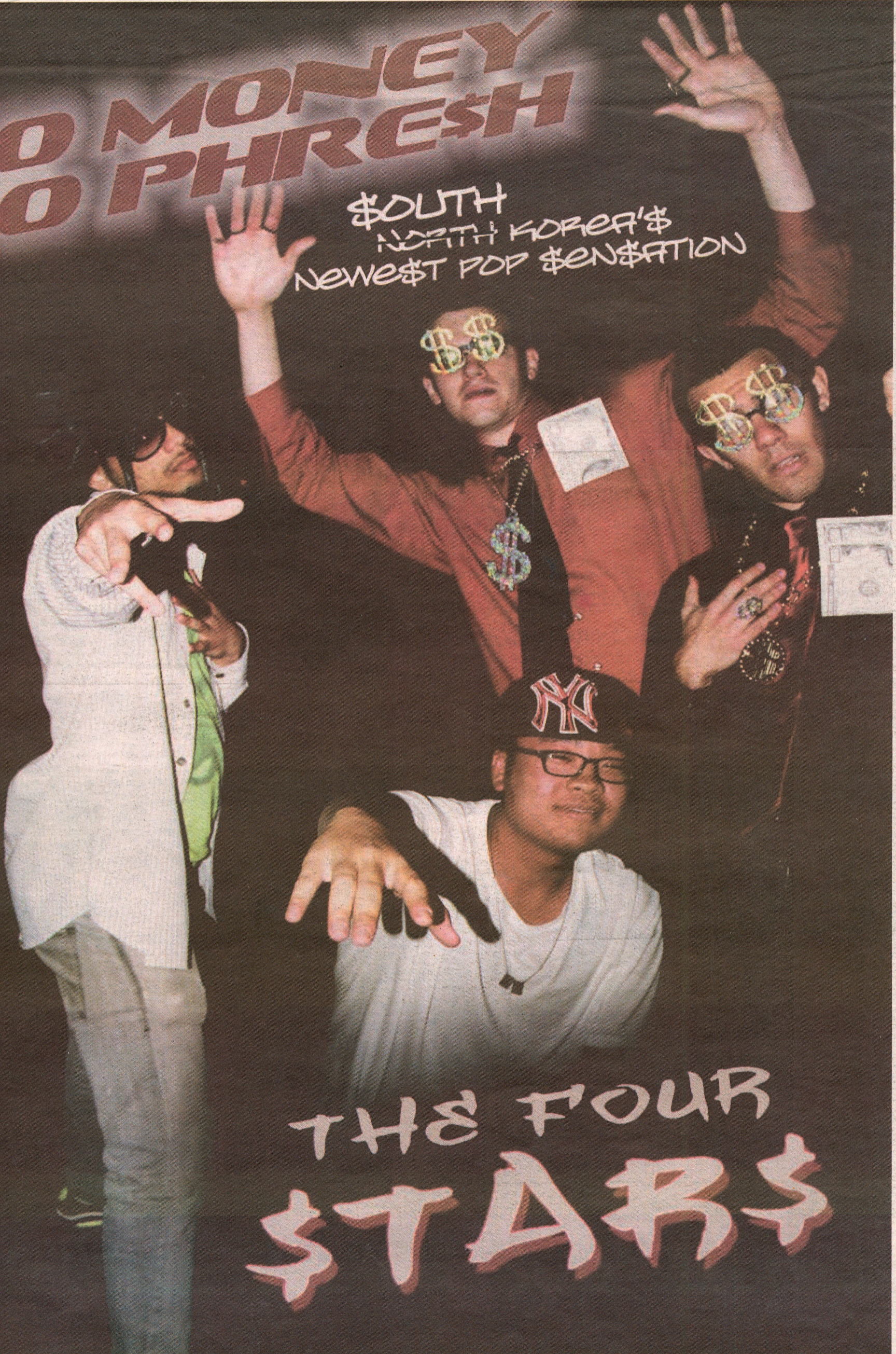


4-2 in Men's Recreational League

(Non-Competitive League)...SO PHRESH!

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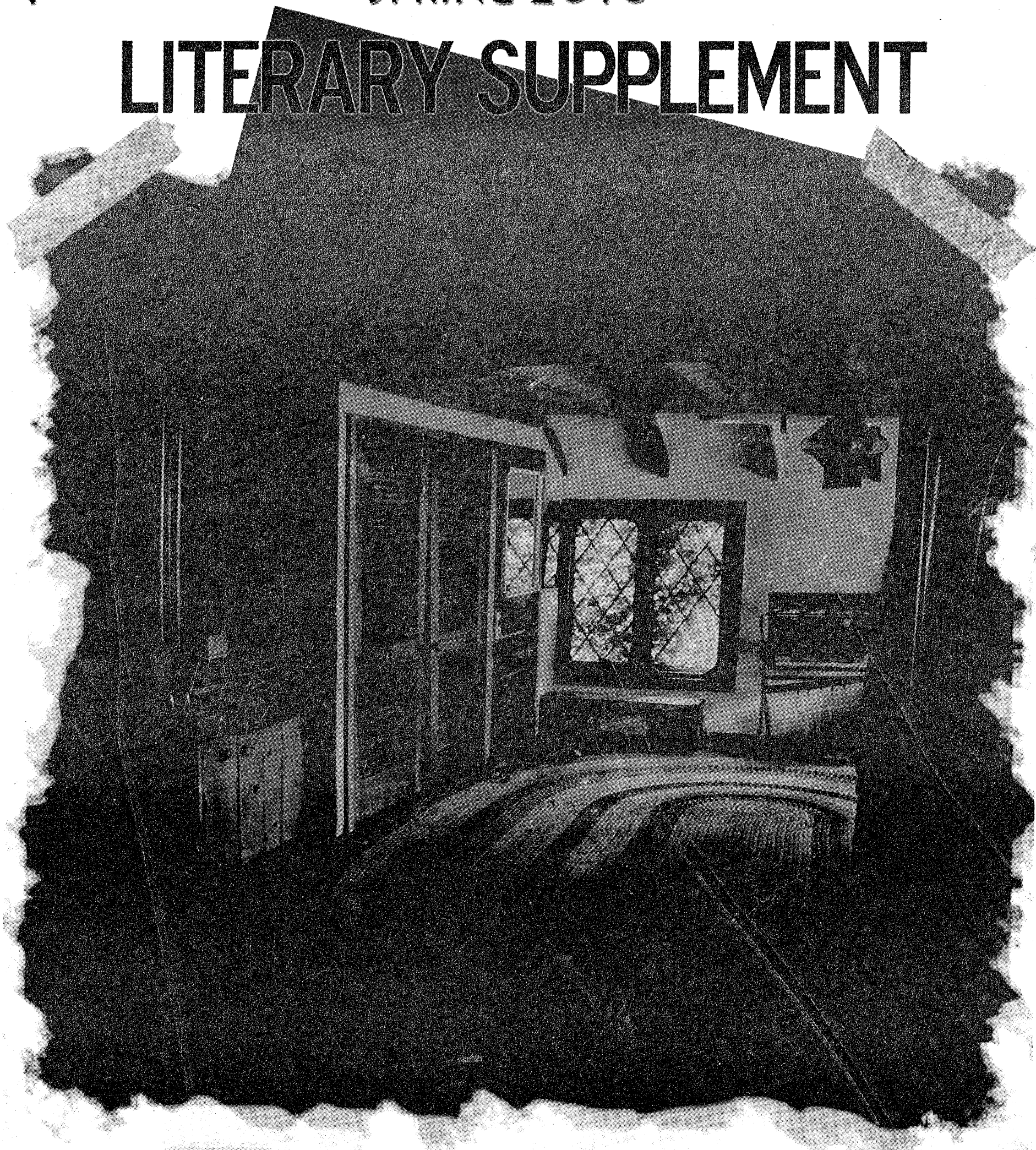
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PREPARE TO ENTER

STORIES FORMS
ARTWORK

THE STONY BROOK PRESS
SPRING 2010

LITERARY SUPPLEMENT



COVER SHEET

The Stony Brook Press Presents
The Spring 2010 Literary Supplement

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Editor
David K. Ginn

Featuring Work by

Ross Barkan
Josh Ginsberg
Liz Kaempf
Robert Moya
Eric DiGiovanni
Leila Dell
Ryan Rafferty
John Rapkiewicz, Jr.
Joseph Wysk
Samuel Katz
Frank Myles
Liz Erly
John Plaisted
Fairoz Syeda

Photos by
Amanda Denville

Front Cover and Poster by
Brian Wasser

Back Cover by Tia Mansouri

STORIES

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

By Fairoz Syeda

I slept in his room because I knew he was leaving for Buffalo University the next day. The night before, we talked for hours about how being eight hours apart wouldn't be so bad, how it was time for us to go our separate ways, and leaving each other would make us more independent rather than depending on each other all the time. My twin brother Abrar and I have always been together— from waking him up every morning so he wouldn't be late for school, to watching our favorite television shows together before we went to bed. For the past eighteen years I have spent more time with him than any person I have ever known. That is why the hardest moment of my life was when I had to say goodbye to my brother as we departed for college and went our separate ways.

I was always responsible for my brother. In high school if we had the same class; I would write down the homework and make sure to bring home the textbook because I knew he would rely on me. The truth was I would rely on him for a lot of things as well. Being by my side each and every day, Abrar helped ease my fear of being alone. The days he was sick and stayed home from school, I would have to walk to the bus stop by myself. In this short but lingering two minute walk, I felt lonesome and lost without him. It was strange for me to think how we would go to different schools, and how we wouldn't even be living in the same city, let alone live together anymore. My life would be totally altered. Thinking back to the days of my childhood, I remember laughter, love, and happiness. We would never be by ourselves. People would

refer to us as the twins, as we were one person, like we were united. My mother would tell us stories about when we were young, when life was simplistic and innocent and our biggest worry was getting punished by our parents. However, my brother and I are far from being alike. I was always outgoing and spoke to anyone as a child, while Abrar would be the introvert and mostly keep to himself. Even by our looks people would not be able to tell we were related sometimes. He is about six feet tall while I am five feet four inches, his nose and ears are much larger than mine. On the other hand, his brown almond shaped eyes are the only physical trait that he and I seem to share. With our different personalities and divergent looks, we are siblings and twins nonetheless.

Most of our experiences we shared together. The earliest memories of mine are the ones we spent in the brick apartment in Queens, where we would play and fight, laugh and cry. When I would get sick, he would sit by me even if my mother would tell him to stay away to prevent him from getting sick, Abrar didn't care. He would reply to my mom, "It doesn't matter mommy, we're twins, I'm going to get sick anyway." He spoke such inevitable words, because he knew that whatever happened to me would happen to him as well. Conversely, we were not those kinds of siblings that did no harm to each other. Abrar and I would fight continuously about the most absurd things. We would get into physical fights; I would cry, he would cry, but in the end we knew by the next morning everything would be okay. Abrar's witty nature made it hard

for me to stay mad at him. With little effort, he would make me laugh and all would be forgotten. All my anger would disappear until the next day when we would fight again. This kind of cyclic relationship we had continued on my whole life and still to this day, we fight for no apparent reason. Although our relationship hasn't changed much since we were young, I thought that the day we both would leave for college would end our relationship, and that everything between us would change.

It was approaching the end of August. It was hot summer morning yet breezy, cloudless skies, sun shining, those days people wish could last forever. By eight am, Abrar poked my face and walked out of the room. I woke up, went to the bathroom, and then it happened. I started feeling chest pains as I was brushing my teeth and all of sudden, tears started streaming down my face. I didn't know what was happening to me or why was I feeling this inexplicable feeling. My whole body physically just started hurting and my heart wouldn't stop pounding. I've never in my life felt this way before and I would never wish this feeling upon anyone, even my worst enemy. I went to my mother's room, shut the door and started crying uncontrollably. My mother joined me and told me I couldn't cry in front of my brother because he would be upset; I would have to be strong for him because he was the one going eight hours away from home going to a college where he didn't know a single person. He was the one to be anxious and afraid, and to be crying, not me. I told my mom how I wasn't doing this on purpose, the only emotion coming out of me

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

(CONT.)

I was sad and I am the type of person that can't hold in my feelings. I told her how my body was physically aching and every time I pictured saying goodbye, tears just came out of my eyes without any control. These were the feelings of loss, sadness, and fear that I'd hope I'd never have to experience until much later in life. By nine am, Abrar was all packed up and ready to go. We were standing on the hard wood floors in my dining room, and I remember the sun beaming through the windows, the smell of late summer in the air. It wasn't as humid as it usually was in August; the weather just felt right, a perfect day for a farewell. As I watched my brother hug my dad, tears started running down my face again. My mom gave me a look for me to stop crying. I really didn't want to cry in front of him; I wanted to be that strong sister he'd always known. The twin sister that had always made him laugh yet annoyed at any given moment. Most importantly at that moment I wanted to be there for him, and I realized trying to hold my emotions wouldn't make me seem strong. My brother is my best friend, he was with inside my mother's stomach and he will always be with me no matter how far away he goes.

Finally, it was my turn to hug him. He came to me and I instantly put my arms around his back, I put my head on his shoulders and started

crying, my tears fell on his shirt and then suddenly I heard him crying as well. I said to him, "Please don't cry, please stop crying." He replied, "I'm not crying." I looked at his face and it matched mine, a face filled with tears, and sorrow. I handed him a letter I wrote to him nights before; the letter was simple but heartfelt. I wrote how I was scared things weren't ever going to be the same anymore, and how he shouldn't become a different person. I loved my brother for who he was an admirable, respectable, loving person. I wrote how no matter how far he went I was always a phone call away, and that distance couldn't separate siblings like us. I wanted to make sure he knew he could tell me everything, and I wouldn't judge him. Most of all I wanted him to be careful, after all he was going to a school hundreds of miles away with not even a single person that knew him. I was scared to death for him because no one in Buffalo cared about him the way his family did, especially his twin sister. I knew I couldn't protect him like I always did in high school, I knew I wouldn't be able watch him all the time or know exactly what he was doing at any given moment which hurt me the most. I just thought that if I wasn't physically there with him, I couldn't be close with him.

So far, seven months have passed from that poignant day, and I've gained so much insight be-

cause of it. I realized that saying goodbye didn't mean that our lives would be over, because he was brother, my twin, my other half, and he is going to be a part of my life forever. In addition, he knew that we splitting up since last year; we knew I would be attending Stony Brook and he would be attending Buffalo University. There was a reason we picked schools so far away from each other, and it was because we needed to be apart. Our whole lives, we were dependent on each other, we needed to become our own person, not always be affiliated with each other because in the end we were two completely different people. As we grow older, life is bound to change and although I am not a big fan of change, it is inevitable. Even if Abrar and I went to the same college, we knew we would have to say goodbye to each other one day in the future. I've realized that being so far from each other doesn't mean that we wouldn't be close anymore; it just means that one chapter of our lives is over and a new one is just beginning. Saying goodbye to someone who wasn't just a sibling to me, who was more like my best friend was the hardest thing I've ever had to experience, but I've ever had to experience, but I've learned that suspension cannot stop relationships quite like ours even though we may not be together now, we'll always be siblings, we'll always be there for one another.



EXCERPT FROM A NOVEL

By Ross Barkan

Laurel clings to the guardrail of the overpass and digests her scream. The radical blue sky, pulsing with silver groans and cloudswept eyes, hugs her frailty. She looks up and down. The highway aches beneath her feet, wave upon wave of fume-choked rubber drowning out the sparrows, the pigeons, and the ballet of bicycles and rollerblades. She looks up and down. *There*, leaning into the seafoam, bent, blotched, more shadow than man, more light than man, but she knows, she's sure, she points, and the highway howls up and down. It's him.

The last time she looked at him he was throwing up the years. His lip was cracked and his eye socket was seaweed. Skin soft, black, and twisted, an orderly had struck him after a "disturbing outburst." All outbursts were disturbing. Extra medication for the patient. She told him to hold on but couldn't offer much else. Doctors are persuasive...

Down on the promenade he stares, quiescent, into the bay wind. The youth isn't dead in him, she can see that—the hair, blonde and tangled, descends over his small nose. He is still a collection of strings and wires, limbs sparking with action forever on the verge, on the precipice of unleashing...something. Half-lightning. He is quiet, he is not moving. And he is crackling.

Every step down rings up through her body. Pulses of the time, the moment. He hasn't moved. She thinks this all can't be real, that the tracks will be engorged with flame and he will burn and she will fall and everything she has built up here will be gone. She needs him now, needs her brother Schiller Marquard more than anything. He is finally more important than her own concrete existence. Being here, in this bucolic southwest pocket of Brooklyn, New York, is not

about self-preservation. Quillinger may come and devour her. But not before she and her brother are here, together.

"Not before," she whispers as she floats off the last step. The promenade spreads outward. As her lips part to mouth the syllables of his name, he turns to her. The flicker of his neck keeps her at a distance. And then he smiles.

She walks back and forth through the days and nights. She is twenty-six and sixteen and five and twelve, doused in agonies and joys, memories sprouting like limbs from her body, waving and shimmering, a centipede forever in flux. Like Schiller she can understand fracture, like Schiller she can understand unity. They are on the ballfield, together. They are at the ice cream parlor, together. They are on the promenade—she closes her eyes, sheds the past, and drinks what is now, the first great gulp of time she has savored. When her eyes open the landscape is golden fire and he is at the peak, smiling.

"Schiller."

"L—Lor? Lor..."

Galloping across the overpass are the broken blue shadows of NYPD officers, heartbeats catterwauling, eye opening for the *madman* they are supposed to catch. The one that matches the description, the new terror of Bay Ridge, this blonde-haired bearded creature that could be the same man who escaped an Indiana mental institution almost a month ago. Their grunts reverberate in the marshlands of their own thought. They can hear the sighs of a neighborhood, the back pats, the promotions, the manufactured bravery...and they know it's him on the walking path next to the water, about to—*holy shit lookit there*—strike the poor young woman, a rape, a murder, he's capable of anything when you don't

know anything about a person they are capable of absolutely anything.

Schiller is tilting his head to the right, his back to the water, a glorious *something* bubbling in his throat. Laurel throws her arms around him, digging her face into his withered, warm shoulder. She swallows her sobs. Only the dark of his shoulder, the lake of his body spilling over her.

He drops his head back and laughs. The bikers and joggers and speedwalkers and wanderers and fishermen and rollerbladers and toddlers and pot smokers and sungazers and police officers, yes especially them, stop for Schiller Marquard. He is laughing into the face of sky, a booming allegro, soaring. They don't know what to do with his laugh. People don't laugh *like that*, after all. There is no restraint. In this age of ethereal paranoia, no one is supposed to be this way. He is unguarded; he is raw. An explosion. He keeps laughing.

Seagulls erupt from the back of an algae-soaked rock, beating over their heads. Laurel is a little girl again and doesn't want to let go. Schiller will protect her. His draws in his breath and allows the laugh to sink into the stomach, percolating light through his tired body. She unwinds from him, gazes upward, and clings to these waning seconds. The furious blotches on the landscape are people, she sees, cops swimming toward them. They only want one thing.

"Schiller, the police, they're..."

"It doesn't matter. Just don't go anywhere."

"I tried to keep you safe, I really did. Someone, someone important, was supposed to help you."

"I'm here and I'm happy, Lor. It really doesn't matter."

"Don't say that. Those fuckers are coming to

EXCERPT FROM A NOVEL

(CONT.)

put you away again. They don't care. They'll kill you."

"I won't go back, I know that. So don't worry. Please, just listen to the water. It's beautiful."

"But Schiller—"

"Listen, Lor. Forget about all the rest."

She tries to do what he says but can't, not with the blue figures crashing down the steps, their limbs curved with token rage. This world of promenade and water where they can stand as brother and sister is collapsing. Whatever songs of the sea Schiller wants her to hear are meaningless now. They are coming to take him back. That is the only reality.

"Schiller, how am I supposed to do that? They're coming here now, they're going to arrest you and throw you away. The bastards...they don't care."

"Don't worry. You worry and they eat it up. You can't despair, Lor. I'm going to show them something they're not used to. Something they won't know how to handle."

"What?"

"Peace."

"Schiller, what're you—"

A long grin spreads across his face. He puts his hand to his mouth and coughs in short, rattling bursts. Laurel backs away. He leans against the railing, his neck craning into the sun. The coughs continue. He is still smiling at her between attacks, a soldier serene in no-man's land, absorbing volleys like rain drops. The eyes are wide and bright, drinking the sea and the sun and her, saccading softly to the men who have come to take him away.

"Lor...Lor."

"Yes? Schiller, are you ok?"

"Yes and no. Yes and no." A scarlet streak colors his cascading spit. Another. "Do you remember all those times we went to the park? I'd pitch to you until the sun would set. Boy, did I

have a lousy arm, huh?"

"God, of course I remember. It was the best. I never had a better time and you always threw strikes. Always."

"Did I? Maybe I did, Lor. I'll never forget picking you up and the sunsets. They run together for me, you and a setting sun, like one image, like tasting one thing..."

"I know."

"We had it good. I know that now." He wheezes and rubs his chest. "They loved us too, you know Lor? Dad and mom didn't always show it but they did. The day he did it, in the garage. He told me *I'm sorry*. I should've forgave him sooner, Lor. We both should've."

"Schiller, you seem ill. We should get you away from here."

"No," he smiles, the word breaking off his tongue between bloodier heaves. "I'm good here, I swear. With you. This is all I need. The water, it's gorgeous as hell, and you...I could never think so clearly. My mind is—it *is* peace. Not a word, it just is." His eyes close.

"I love you and I promise I'll—"

"Please, Lor, for my sake, don't dwell on promises and futures."

The clap of black shoes on mottled cement, the sweaty chins, the badges bleeding gold on flapping uniforms, the grunts. *Get him, get him*. They think about approaching slow, keeping it cool, not upsetting the balance of the promenade. Don't interrupt civilian dreams. One fixes his cap. The radios are set at a perpetual hiss, blithering with codes and alerts that are useless for the moment. Touch the gun. Don't use, touch. He's confirmed to be with someone else, young woman, he's dangerous, contain him get the woman to safety. Contain. Remember the courses, remember the manual. He's *not mentally fit*. Contain. Don't shoot but make him aware of the possibility. Let him know about that. Keep

him calm. A balance—power and passivity, what a struggle, glad we've got back-up coming, glad we won't be grappling with this dilemma alone. He has a history of violence. Keep low. Back straight, keep low. He has a history. She is probably his friend, who knows, maybe a lover. She is still in danger. Be delicate.

"I just want to think there is something else beyond you being in pain. I don't want to see you hurt. I want to see you doing what you want to do...I want to see you happy. I don't want to visit you in an institution once a year and look into a swollen face. I don't want..." her eyes are warm, wet, a trickle drawing slowly down her face. He coughs. He presses harder onto the railing, buckling under his weight. There is a pallor in his skin she just noticed, a dustwhite hue sweeping across the young body. He can't be.

"I threw that ball all right. Not that it mattered, I just liked being out on the dirt, walking through the field—*crunch crunch*, ha, you know. The smell of the hot dog cart not too far off. You smacked that ball all around, nearly took my head off—" He chokes on the rest of the sentence, a hand hiding the strings of saliva. The throat is throttled, the bones, heavy and worn. He sags lower on the railing. She puts her arm around him to support his collapse, his gradual descent into the sea. Nacreous whitecaps swoon off the old seawall. Out on the bay—Laurel remembers the proper term is *tidal strait*—they follow the oil tankers and sailboats and tugboats on their voyages to obscurity. A silence pulls them closer.

"Sir, you are being placed under arrest. You have the right to remain silent. Do not move."

There are seven officers, composed in different shades of anger, fear, and surprise. They expected a big raving lunatic, someone to thrash at them like a B-movie beast, all rage and ignorance, no tact. At least he's bearded, he got that much right. Otherwise he isn't playing the part for

EXCERPT FROM A NOVEL

(CONT.)

them.

Laurel turns and steps in front of them. Her muscles are tight.

“He didn’t do anything. You have the wrong man.”

“Miss, he matches all the descriptions of the person who assaulted two young men on Shore Road yesterday. We have over ten confirmed witnesses. Sir,” the officer points at Schiller as the others behind him gather their words, their movements, “you are coming with us. If you do not comply, there will be serious problems.”

“No,” she says. She feels Schiller’s tap on her shoulder. “*It’s all right,*” he says, and steps out from behind her.

“All right, let’s go.” The officer pulls out handcuffs and steps toward him. Laurel can’t understand why the grin hasn’t left his face. She can’t understand why the boy once so troubled and the man once so angry is accepting it all this way. He is walking to the handcuffs, surrendering utterly, coughs shattering from his mouth. The other officers fall in closer to see this supposed psycho actually give up so easily. They are not only surrounding him out of duty—there is curiosity, even awe. He holds his hands out.

“Remember, Lor, when you dropped your bat that one time, when I was about to pitch?”

“Yes.”

“You ran toward me and I opened my arms and you jumped in and I held you that afternoon.

I spun you around and put you down. My sister, Laurel“

“I was never happier.”

His eyelids sputter, sorrel lips submerging the coming cough.

“Lor, you think about that and you’ll always be good.”

“I will.”

Schiller takes one step and feels heavy and weightless, a paradox that suddenly makes sense, like a blinding white light that can only cool the body. He turns to his sister and allows the bustling panorama of highway and water and sky to recede into twilight shadow, dusk beneath his eyelids. He can see the sound dim and hear the color flicker, slip, and yawn into a long lightless ribbon...she is there and she is not, memory like a vapor cooling his heart, kissing him for the last time. A fading star, perhaps his pulse, is falling to a final tempo. Something waves just outside of his reach. It has no color, no texture, but he thinks he understands. A song? Once he knows, he no longer knows.

Laurel can’t stop him from falling to the ground. He is as swift and as certain as anyone she has ever seen, plummeting face first. The pavement mutes the flesh, leaving blood drops for the police to ogle. She grabs the railing and realizes just how cold it was before, just how unfathomably cold it could be on a summer’s day. The wind whips east, chasing the swollen shad-

ows of an approaching sunset. There are eyes painted to the scene, stupid bloated eyes that know nothing of the man splayed on the ground. There are voices, equally hollow. One of the officers spit *ambulance ambulance* into his radio and attempts some visage resembling the word sympathy. They have what they want; the neighborhood is rid of their nuisance.

Schiller Marquard isn’t here anymore.

Laurel would like to pick up a bat and drive a ball into the long tall grass. She would like to spend the rest of her life looking for that ball.

“Miss, are you ok?”

The wind is strong, oddly strong. Who knew the sun could, on a second glance, seem so sick? A thud in her skull, a widening, sinking hole. Where Schiller was. He won’t speak again.

Hit the ball, watch him smile, and go find it in the grass. Dig through the dirt, dirty your nails, tumble over the worms. Feel the sod on your palm, warm. Hear him laugh. Later on, you’ll get ice cream. Won’t you?

She takes his advice and listens to the water. She keeps listening, waiting for it to tell her something, some meaning, something other than the bullshit sound of gurgling foam and swishing seaweed. Anything. The police drop away into their deformed static, fireflies without light. *Call an ambulance, get help.*

The waters roll on and on, breaking over her ears with aimless fury. She doesn’t hear anything.



DEADLINE

By Eric DiGiovanni

A rat lay open on the table, guts on display. It was clamped down on the tray, its tiny heart beating rapidly with fear. The professor removed it with utmost precision. Blood started oozing out.

"Now, the only organ this process does not work on is the brain," he said. I scribbled down some notes in my pad. "However, even with that limitation, this can do some tremendous good." I took a picture with my camera.

Before my very eyes, it seemed like the arteries grew then formed together at the ends into a grape-sized lump. The lump began to beat again, as if nothing ever happened. "I don't believe this!" I said. "This will make a great story! Thanks, Professor West!" I took another picture.

"Yes, this is quite remarkable. In fact, even more interesting is that a minute amount of blood can cause the gene to transfer." He stitched up the rat and smiled proudly. The rat crawled again, as if nothing had happened. It stumbled a little, and moved much more slowly than before. "Well, the little bugger was cut open."

"Any chances of this working on a human?"

"Testing may start sooner than you think..."

"When?"

"Now." I was all ready to run to the exit, when he opened another door, revealing a man living in a spartan dormitory. He was very thin, and had a lot of scruff on his face. He looked at peace, sitting on his bed, reading a book.

"You see, Fred here was homeless man until he volunteered to help with my experiment. Figured he had nothing else to lose, yeah?"

"How long has he been here?"

"About a week," Fred said. "Best week of my life so far!"

"Are you ready for the test now?" Professor

West asked.

"Sure am."

"Good, good." I took another picture. "I'd appreciate it if you took no more pictures." He withdrew a needle and a vial, and injected its contents into Fred. He winced a bit, but after, he rubbed his neck and laughed.

"I'm gonna be fine, right?"

"Hopefully. Don't worry, though. We'll start minor. You still have your appendix, right?"

"Yeah, one of the only things I've managed not to lose"

"What if it doesn't work?" I asked.

Fred looked down and sighed. "It's OK. At least I'm going out with a smile." He plastered a big grin on his face.

"Failure is part of the scientific process" said West. He looked down at his watch. He started heading out the door. "Good. Good. We'll I'm off to yet another lecture right now," he sighed as he closed the door behind him. "If you really want to see something really amazing, come back tomorrow." I heard Fred say goodbye just as the door slammed shut.

The next day, I returned to Professor West's lab to find Fred on the table. His wrists and ankles were clamped down. Fred just sat there without a tear in his eye.

Professor West came in wearing a lab coat and very thick gloves. "Well, let's get started then, shall we?" He put Fred under with anesthetic. Fred turned his head and looked me right in the eyes just as he slipped into unconsciousness. I didn't say anything.

West made an incision and got to work. He opened it up a bit to show me. When he wasn't looking, I snuck a picture with my cellphone.

"This is so awesome," I whispered.

"Yeah, isn't it?" He put the appendix on the table and just stood there, arms crossed. "Now for the really awesome part."

Within minutes, the hole in the cecum, the pouch that connects the small and large intestines, where the appendix is located, started to close up. The covering drooped lower to form a small pouch.

"And that, my boy, is his new appendix"

"Wow."

"What do you say we take this one step further?" West removed Fred's liver. Normally the liver looks like a raw chicken breast, smooth and pink. However, Fred must have been one of "those" bums, since it was a brown, rough mess. West took it out, and again, a new liver reformed. The points at which the incisions were made turned from brown to pink, and tissue began to reform anew.

"And now Fred has a new liver!" He looked at me, but I stayed silent. West stitched Fred back up. "He'll come to in a few minutes."

I wanted to ask West some more questions, but with something this big, I was afraid of the answer. "So...why?"

"Why not? Disease and cancer would be a trillion times easier and safer to cure."

"How do you see benefiting from this?"

"Hell, do you know how much they work me here? They've got me in all these classes doing lectures for students who could care less, doing research for the University's sake, and all this other administrative bull I have to cut through, all for a meager salary. I'm going to sell it off to the highest bidder."

"Highest bidder?"

"I'd rather be on a pharmaceutical corporation's payroll than a University's" he said, rolling

DEADLINE

(CONT.)

his eyes.

"Wow. You guys put up with a lot, huh?"

"You know this project represents weeks and weeks of all-nighters? My hands are tied up in a hundred different other things during the day, so I work at night. But if Fred here wakes up, then I know all my work was worth it."

Fred woke up. He was groggy, but other than that, he was all right. Professor West laughed and dashed over to the table. "Easy now, easy. Can you speak?"

Fred smiled. "Yeah, I'm fine. Did it work?"

"Like a charm, old boy, like a charm!" He looked right at me, tears swelling up in his eyes. "I bet this will make great story for your paper, eh?"

"Great, great!" Fred managed to smile. He had a good smile.

However, his eyes rolled back into his head, and his gums started bleeding.

"God, he's going through convulsions! Go get help!"

I ran out as fast as I can, dialing 911 on my cell phone as I dashed through the halls. Luckily, campus paramedics were on the scene a couple minutes later.

"We got your call. Where's the problem?" I lead them to Professor West's lab. Unfortunately, neither of them were there.

"We need to find them!"

"I'll search the east wing, you guys take west!"

We dashed off, my trepidation growing. I had no stake in the matter, but I figured I'd see this story through to the end. I saw a woman on the floor in pain.

"Oh my god! What happened?"

"Some guy attacked me!"

"Who?"

"I don't remember too well. He had a beard, kinda thin and pale..."

Fred...

I got out my phone and called the paramedics over. I ran into the main hallway and tried to call them over. Unfortunately, she was gone by the time I turned around. The paramedics gave me a condescending glare. "Listen, sir. Is there anyone here who needs medical attention? Otherwise, you're wasting our time."

"I swear to God, stuff is going down. Everything is just moving so fast I-"

"Call us when you have a real emergency" They left, slamming the door behind them.

There's something going on, and my deadline is tomorrow.

As I walked out of the building, I saw another woman, just like before, on the floor holding her shoulder. I rushed to get help, but she stood up, went into a nearby office, and got a first aid kit.

"I'm fine, I'm fine" She wrapped the bandages around her arm quickly, and never once stopped looking at the wound.

"Are you OK?"

"Oh, someone just gave me a little cut." I was tempted to call the paramedics, but I didn't want to head down that road again.

"Let me guess... beard, kinda thin, pale?"

"No, no, she-"

"She?"

"Yes, it was one of the PhD students. You've seen her around, short, long dark hair, Asian..."

"Shit..." That was the girl Fred assaulted.

"Are you sure you're going to be OK?"

"I'm fine, I'm fine! I'll just get some water." She walked over to the fountain. As I watched her drink, I saw the water turn red. She felt her mouth, and ran to the bathroom.

-who can blame them?

They walk through asphalt cemete-

I took out my cell phone. It was West.

"Hello?"

"Needless to say, I don't want this pub-

lished..."

"What?"

"If word gets out about this, I'll not only lose tenure, but they'll probably give me the death sentence!"

"I don't care. I have to publish it. Lives are in danger."

"Can't you just say it works? Omit the side effects?"

"You know what? You said it yourself: Failure is part of the scientific process."

"Think of m-" CLICK.

The clock on my cell phone read 9:20 PM. Less than three hours to go.

The office to the school paper was on the top floor of the library. The elevator was taking forever. I dashed up the stairs, taking two at a time. This story just had to get out. I took another look at my cell phone: 9:30 PM. Two and a half hours to go. Without much time to spare, I burst into the room and threw off of any writer I saw dick-ing around on Facebook.

"Whoa, whoa, dude, what's your hurry?"

"I have something that's just insane. Don't bother me right now."

"What's it on?"

"You know how I said I was going to do an article on Professor West?"

"Yeah..."

"It's gotten a lot worse. Just let me type."

"All right. Some of us are going out to the diner if you-"

"No time."

He left.

10 PM. Two hours to go, and I still had trouble coming up with a headline. "Ah, let the editors worry about that one." I said.

My fingers flew across the keyboard as I hammered out possibly the only thing that could save everyone. The fluorescent lights flickered above, as the little clacks of the keys rang out

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(CONT.)

through the empty office. Suddenly, everything went gray. My eyelids shook uncontrollably as I fought to stay focus.

But it was no use.

The next thing I remember was looking at the clock, and being even more tense than I was an hour ago.

Just then, the editor walked in. "Listen, if you want, go home, get some rest, and you can send it in tomorrow morning. We don't publish until—"

"No time. It needs to be out as soon as possible."

"What's so important? Should I call the police or something?"

"Nobody would believe me."

He folded his arms and smiled. "You have sources?"

"Yeah."

"Pictures?"

"Yeah."

"All right, try me." He gave my article a quick glance. His smile fell. "All right. I see where you're

going with this. Whenever you're done, you're done. Just relax. The issues already gone to print, I'm sure it can wait till tomorrow."

Easy for him to say.

When we finally went to print, I took a good, hard look at everyone picking up the latest issue in the library. There I was, right on the inside cover. But they weren't shocked or scared, they were laughing. Some gave it only a sly smirk, others gave big hearty laughs and showed to their friends with an "Oh, shit! Dude, have you seen this?"

Without thinking, I leaped up on to the nearest table. "ARE YOU PEOPLE DENSE? HAVE YOU ACTUALLY READ THIS? DON'T YOU REALIZE HOW SERIOUS THIS IS?"

"Are you the guy that wrote this?" asked the girl whose coffee I accidentally knocked over.

"Yes."

"Oh, it's really good!"

"Did you even read the damn thing?"

"Yeah, man. It's hilarious! This Photoshop

work is sick!" said the guy sitting next to her.

"You, all of you, are goddamn illeterates." I snatched the paper from the girl and opened the cover. There was my article, right on the second page. Not a word out of place, every picture helping tell the grim story I witnessed in that lab.

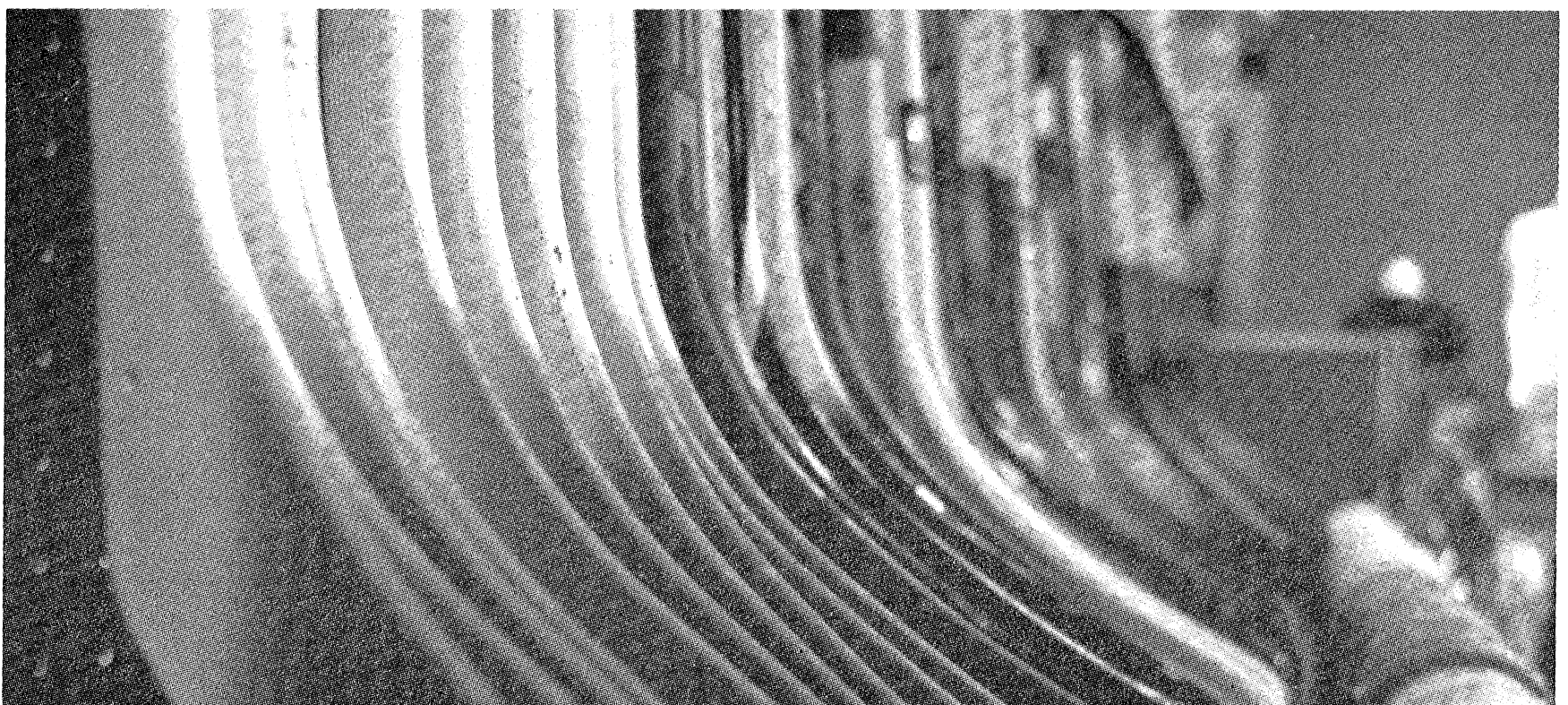
Then I looked at the date: April 1.

Once I opened my mouth, it went silent. Anything I said fell on deaf ears, even mine.

I banged my head against the wall. The padded asylum walls felt comfortable, even after 20 minutes. Sometimes they let me out of the straight jacket, and I can still see the blood on my hands. Dinner was the same as last night: a vaguely meatish product, a piece of bread, and cold peas.

The doctors haven't come around yet. I shuffled over to the cell door. It was silent, save for some faint groans. It happened to them, too.

All because my article on West's Zombie Pandemic came out a day late.



RESURRECTION, INC.

By David K. Ginn

Lydia woke up on the side of the road, naked, her stringy blonde hair wet and stuck to the sides of her face. She pulled it away, sickened by a pink gel that now covered her hands. She wiped it against the muddy ground, and then on the uneven edge of the asphalt. When she noticed the gel on the rest of her body, she panicked and swatted it off her legs and chest and stomach as quickly as she could.

There was nothing but desert around her. Without water or clothing, she had no idea how long she could survive. Follow the road, logic told her. But the road could go on for miles. It might be quicker to cut across.

Her deliberation was cut short by a glimmer to her left. She shielded her eyes from the blinding sun and saw the front of a white truck approaching in the distance. She crouched modestly and covered her breasts with one arm as she waved fervently with the other.

After a minute the truck was near enough to see clearly. Now it looked much more like an ambulance, but plain-white and unmarked.

It slowed to a stop next to her. The driver exited and walked around to the front of the ambulance, carrying a green garden hose and a white robe. He left the engine running.

"Can you help me?" Lydia said. "I don't know where I am, or how I got here."

The driver ignored her, and instead focused his attention on screwing the hose into a small spigot on the hull of the truck. He turned to her, eyes cold and unfazed. "Stand up," he said.

"Do you have anything I can wear? Maybe a sheet or a towel?"

"Stand up," he repeated.

She obliged, legs wobbling partly from nervousness and partly out of weakness. She did her best to cover herself, but her chest wasn't easy to

conceal with one arm. It stopped being an issue the moment the driver turned on the water, which hit her in sharp, stinging sprays. She held her hands out defensively, and in a moment it was over. He threw her the white robe, under which was a purple towel.

"What's going on?" she asked. "Who the hell are you?"

"Dry off," he said.

She did so, and slid the robe on with a sigh of relief. "Now what?"

"The back." The driver pointed to the back of the ambulance before walking back to the cab and getting in. Lydia ventured to the back, and was surprised to see the doors open. A man in a short-sleeve button down shirt and khaki shorts sat inside, a stethoscope dangling from his neck. Next to him was a green stretcher, which he patted welcomingly.

She climbed in and lay down as the ambulance began to move again. The attendant checked her vitals and marked up a sheet of white paper on a clipboard. He put it all on a table behind him when he was done, turning finally to look her in the eye with a warm smile.

"I'll bet you have some questions."

"What happened to me?"

"We'll get to that in a minute. You should feel lucky, you know. Someone paid a lot of money for you."

"Paid... money?" She sat up immediately, but he put a warm hand on her shoulder.

"Relax, it's not what you think. I'm referring to your husband. He paid good money to find you, so please don't make it all for nothing by jumping out of a moving vehicle."

"My husband?"

The attendant nodded. "Do you remember?"

"No. I don't know what I remember."

"You'll remember, in time. You can go home as soon as you're checked out, and it will all come back to you."

"How did I get here?" Lydia asked.

The attendant bit his lip. "It's best if we discuss that at the clinic. You've been through an experience, but you're perfectly okay now. It's important to take things one step at a time. Just relax for another minute or two. If you'd like, I can give you a shot for your nerves."

"No thank you, that's okay. Let's just get to this clinic."

"Excellent. We should be there in less than a minute."

They scrubbed her, rinsed her, poked and prodded, dried her hair. On the outside, the facility seemed like a one-story bunker in the shape of a giant nickel lying on the ground. Inside, it was a perfect cylinder that ended eleven floors beneath the Earth's surface. It was hard for Lydia to tell which part was the clinic, or if it was all the clinic, or if there was no clinic after all. Mostly, people in lab coats walked by, too busy to notice her and her escorts.

After they had finished their tests, they left her in a white room (they were all white) with several small tables and chairs. The top half of every wall was a thick window through which she could see the disinterested workers drone by. The only lively object in the room was a white vending machine with options for different flavors of soda, all from a brand she had never heard of before.

The door opened, and a handsome, black-haired man entered, smiling as he extended his hand. "Lydia, nice to meet you," he said, and

RESURRECTION, INC.

(CONT.)

pulled up a chair next to her. His cordiality was already discomforting.

Under his lab coat he wore a light-blue dress shirt and black slacks. Lydia, in her white tank top and gray sweat pants, felt underdressed by comparison. "Who are you?" she asked.

"Charles Lewis. I guess you can think of me as your handler, if it makes you feel comfortable."

It didn't. "Mr. Lewis—"

"Charles."

"What's going on?"

Charles opened a manila folder, on which her name, photograph, and other information had been attached. He crossed his arms over it and leaned toward her. "What do you remember?" he asked.

"Nothing. I remember my name, my date of birth..."

"What about your favorite breakfast food?"

"Pancakes with low-fat maple syrup. Why?"

"It's always breakfast food, every time."

Charles clicked his pen and began taking notes.

"Are you going to tell me why I'm here?"

Charles nodded, and his smile faded. He looked her in the eyes sincerely. "There's no easy way to say this, so I'll come right out with it: I'm afraid you died, Lydia."

"What?"

"First of all, relax; there's absolutely no need to panic. You're here, you're living and breathing just like me and everyone else. But for the past six months, that hasn't been the case." He removed a document from the folder and handed it to her.

It was a newspaper clipping— a half-page article wrapped around two grayscale photos— one of a sedan crushed against a tree, and the other a faded portrait of her own face. She slammed the clipping on the table and pushed it away. "You're screwing with me."

Charles shook his head. "Six months ago,

you were on your way to a convention when a truck cut you off on the highway. Your brakes locked up and you lost control of the car. You were airlifted to Saint Paul's Hospital, where you were pronounced dead on arrival. There was a memorial service, and they buried you at Montgomery Cemetery, just fifteen miles from where you lived."

Lydia was struggling hard to keep her composure. "That's impossible. I demand you tell me why I'm here."

Charles took her hands lightly in his. "You're here because someone paid a lot of money to have you back."

About a mile from the facility was a small gas station, and behind it a parking lot of identical unmarked ambulances. There was only one road, and in all directions nothing but desert. Inside the station, magazine racks and food shelves had been replaced by two rows of cushioned seats, and the cigarette counter had been converted into a reception desk. A slim, pleasant woman stood behind the counter, filling out paperwork as Lydia sat with Charles.

A white van pulled up to the station. It idled for a moment, and then a stocky, handsome man in an expensive sports jacket exited. As he neared the building, Charles motioned for Lydia to stand with him.

When the man in the sports jacket entered, he froze, his face whiter than the van behind him. Both his hands were shaking, and from his lips several incoherent attempts at speech fluttered out in a mass jumble.

"Take it easy," Charles said to the man.

"It's really you," he said, and took a step toward her.

"Who are you?"

"Remember what we talked about—" Charles warned.

The man nodded, then took another cautious step closer to Lydia. "Honey, it's me. Neil. Your husband."

"I'm sorry—"

"No. You have nothing to be sorry for. I—I can't believe you're really here."

Charles gave Lydia a comforting pat on the shoulder. "Most of our patients see their full memory return in a matter of days, and it happens much faster when surrounded by familiar people and places."

"She's okay, though?" Neil asked.

"Yes, everything is fine."

"She's not—?"

Charles shot him a reprehensive look. "No, she's not."

"I'm not what?" Lydia asked.

"What we do is very complicated," Charles said, unable to mask his reluctance. "As it is with any complicated procedure, sometimes there are problems. Those patients are referred to as Invalids. It's unfortunate, but it's also very rare."

"What sort of complications?" she asked.

"Nothing major, just little things. The blood work comes back different, or eyesight doesn't return. You answered the standard line of questions: name, birth date, breakfast. Invalids can only answer one or sometimes none of the three. Their memory usually doesn't return."

"What happens to them?" Lydia asked.

Charles bit his lip. "It's very rare. Something like 99.3 to one. You need to worry about you, Lydia. You're a healthy young woman who's been given another chance at life. Enjoy it."

"What happens now?"

"You should start seeing positive progressive development within a few days. Your husband and I have talked extensively, and he knows what to do. If you get confused, it's okay, but remember to trust him. Our only goal is to get you back into your normal life. Are you okay with that?"

RESURRECTION, INC.

(CONT.)

Lydia nodded. There wasn't much else she could do.

Their house was a one-story mansion that overlooked the water from atop a steep precipice. The estate was small and made up little more than a half-circle driveway and silver statuette of a polo player. Neil pulled the red sports car to the driveway's apex and climbed out to open Lydia's door.

"Thank you," she said.

He kissed her hand as she exited the car, and she retracted it instinctually. "I don't mean to rush you," he said.

"No, I'm sorry. You were just being kind."

Neil led her into the house, which sparkled from the marble countertop to the full-sized patio doors. "Something to eat?" he asked.

"What do I eat?"

"You love veal. Want me to make you some veal?"

"Okay."

He led her down a narrow hallway to a large room with two walk-in closets. A king-sized waterbed sat in the center, made up meticulously with a silk comforter.

"Remember?" Neil asked.

Lydia shook her head.

"It'll come back. Open the closet."

Lydia opened the nearest closet, revealing a full wardrobe of business and casual attire. She looked moved the clothing aside hanger by hanger, then turned back to Neil with a blank expression.

"They're yours," he said. "I kept everything the same after the..."

"Accident?"

"Yes." He shifted uncomfortably. "Honey, why don't you change out of those sweats while I make us some dinner?"

"Okay."

The smell of canola oil and cooked meat filled the kitchen. Lydia strode in absently from the hallway, dressed in a denim skirt, bright pink nylons, button-down sweater vest, blue blazer and white Panama hat. Neil almost dropped his spatula in the pan when he saw her. He turned off the heat and examined her from head to toe, stopping at her torso. She wore nothing under the checker-pattern sweater vest, and right above the low buttons he could see the sides of her breasts outlined against the dark cotton.

"Is something wrong?" she asked, buttoning the blazer and pulling the collars over her exposed chest.

"The doctors said you would have some... disorientation. This isn't what I expected."

"You said these were my clothes. They told me to trust you."

Neil walked over and put a comforting hand on her shoulder. "They were right, you should trust me. There's just a lot we still have to calibrate, apparently." He grabbed her hat by the rim and set it on the countertop. "Let's at least lose the hat, for now."

"I like the hat."

Neil narrowed his eyes. "You hate that hat. You only keep it around because it belonged to your mother."

"Oh. I guess I hate the hat, then. I'm sorry."

"Don't worry about it, babe. Just have a seat and I'll grab us some plates for dinner."

"I'll have a seat, then."

Neil smiled. "Thatta girl."

After dinner, Neil led her through the house on an informal tour. The living room was neatly furnished with a large flat-screen television, leather sofa and glass coffee table. A wooden mantle hung on the wall near the television; on it

were framed pictures of the two of them together.

In one, Lydia was wearing a purple sweatshirt and a wool cap. Neil had his arm around her. They both seemed very happy.

"This was taken just a few months before the accident," Neil said.

"We were happy." It was more of a question, but came out as a statement.

"The happiest," Neil said. "There was nothing we couldn't do together."

"I don't remember any of it."

Neil put his hand on her shoulder and pulled her closer to him. "Honey, you have to try."

"I'm sorry..."

"Maybe this will help." He grabbed her hand and pulled her face to his. In the same motion he pressed his lips against hers, and they stood locked in a single kiss for what seemed like an eternity. Finally he released her and they caught their breath.

Lydia wiped her mouth apprehensively.

"You don't remember that?" Neil asked.

Lydia shook her head. She looked paler than she had before.

"That was how I kissed you on our first date."

"I don't remember our first date."

Neil grabbed her by the forearm and led her to the couch. They both sat silently for a moment, then Neil gripped the collars of her blazer and began to slide them down her pale arms.

"What are you doing?"

"Trying to get you to relax. Do you think you can do that for me?"

"Okay."

She leaned back and let him slide the blazer off. Without hesitation he began unbuttoning the front of her checkered sweater vest. Her arms and legs were stiff, her chin pressed against her clavicle as she monitored his actions.

He pulled aside the two halves of the vest,

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(CONT.)

revealing light skin and the subtle pink indentation of her navel.

"I don't know how they did it," he said, "but you're really here. *All* of you. Every last bit."

He pulled the top of the vest over her breasts and let the dark cotton edges rest on her shoulders like the open wings of a butterfly. He caressed the bottom of her left breast, taking it in his palm like a ball of gel and squeezing hard.

"Does that hurt?"

Lydia shook her head.

Neil leaned his face close to her chest, and suddenly she felt her leg twitch. Her knee jabbed into Neil's stomach, and he swore as he doubled over.

"I'm sorry," Lydia said, buttoning the vest and pulling the blazer back on. "I don't think I'm ready for this."

"It's okay," Neil said. "I understand. I tried to rush you. I shouldn't have done that."

"It's not that I don't want to—"

"It's that you're not comfortable."

Lydia nodded.

"What would make you comfortable?"

Lydia thought about it for a moment. "Um... pancakes."

"Pancakes? Just that?"

"And low-fat maple syrup."

Neil eyed her curiously. "You just ate dinner."

"I'm hungry again." She lowered her eyes sheepishly. "I've been hungry ever since we left."

Neil kissed her forehead. "I'll go out and get you some pancakes. Stay here, relax, get comfortable. Everything's going to be okay."

Lydia nodded. "Thank you."

"Anything for you."

It had been over half an hour since Neil had left. Lydia didn't know where he went to get food, but it must have been far. She spent most

of that time sitting on the waterbed, surrounded by her clothes and holding the framed picture of her and Neil in her hands.

She rolled onto her side and smelled the black rubber of the waterbed. She grabbed the sheets and pulled them inch by inch to her nose like a magician pulling handkerchiefs from a hat. She set the sheets down and smelled her clothing, first the jeans, then the dress slacks, and then skirts and blouses and blazers and undergarments.

She threw the clothes on the floor and looked closely at the picture, eyes dense with frustration. In the photograph, the sun shone above them like a yellow lamp, illuminating the sides of their faces. Neil's T-shirt had the logo for Lester Bancorp printed across the chest. She thought that might be where he worked. There was nothing on her sweater but the tiny brand logo on her left lapel. She squinted her eyes and peered closely at it.

The label was backwards.

Her heart sank. She dropped the picture to the floor. Before she knew what she was doing, she was running into the living room, bare feet pattering quickly against the carpet. She took each picture from the mantle and studied them closely, looking for flaws. A shadow off here, the lighting just shy of perfect there. And in all of them, behind the happiness, there was a hint of isolation.

As if they were photographed miles away.

She ran back to the bedroom and tore his closet door open. Inside were several expensive suits, shoes, and a few silver lockboxes. She tore the lockboxes down, and then the house phone rang. She looked around for it, but this wasn't her house. She had no idea where the phone was. After three rings it stopped.

She grabbed a screwdriver from the top drawer of Neil's dresser and began to work on the first lockbox. Her stomach twisted and cried

out at her. She was working up an appetite. She had never been so hungry in her life.

After a few minutes the lock flew off with a metallic clank. She pushed the lid in and out until it popped open.

Inside were newspaper clippings. They were like the ones Charles had shown her, detailing the night of her accident. Underneath the clippings was a four-page packet stapled in the corner and folded in half. She opened it from the bottom and scanned the first page.

Likes

Swimming

Tennis

Jogging

Food

Fried veal

Broccoli and cheese

Pancakes and syrup

Clothes

Casual

Jeans

Sweater

T-shirt

Pop Culture

Lucio Giordano (sports personality)

The Adventures of Lion and Ginger (television)

Space Quest (novel series)

Dislikes

Video games

Opera

Milk

Panama hat (see page 3, "Family")

She stopped there. There was no need to turn the page. The phone rang again. She didn't bother looking for it. Instead she tucked the box

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(CONT.)

back in the closet, cleaned the room and stared at the inside of her closet for what seemed like ages. These were her clothes, but this was not her house. This was her body, her life, but she had no idea who the man who lived here was. She was certain she had never met him before, not even when she was alive.

He was right. She was wearing too many layers. It was time to relax.

Neil shut the door behind him, glad to be out of the night air. He walked into the kitchen and set the white paper bag on the table, syrup and vegetable oil soaked through the sides.

"Honey, I'm home."

There was no answer.

"Lydia, darling? Where are you?"

He set his jacket across one of the kitchen chairs and noticed the answering machine was blinking red. He pressed the "Play" button and started down the hallway. "Honey, are you okay?"

"Hey Neil, it's Stevens in accounting. Just wanted to talk to you about your trip next month. Upstairs says it's okay, so you've got the go-ahead. Give me a call in the morning and we'll flesh out the details."

Neil reached the end of the hall, poked his head through the doorway and froze.

Lydia lay across the bed wearing a silk, lace-trimmed nightgown. She tossed her hair as he

entered, and smiled a schoolgirl smile when she saw the look on his face.

"This... is unexpected," Neil said.

"Just a friendly reminder from your neighborhood library. Remember to vote 'yes' on the new proposed budget next Tuesday. A better budget means better reading. Better reading means a better tomorrow. Visit your local library for more details."

Lydia beckoned him with a single finger. He followed as if he were being dragged on ice. When he approached the bed she grabbed onto his belt loops and pulled him onto his back.

"Honey, I—"

"Shh, it's okay, darling. It's all better now." She climbed over and straddled him across the waist. She could feel him bursting through his clothes, rubbing at her thighs involuntarily with his muscle.

"Neil, this is Dr. Lewis from the clinic. Please call me back as soon as you can, it's very important."

Neil looked up at Lydia, who was smiling dreamily as she stared into his eyes. "Honey, that was the clinic."

"They'll call back eventually. This is our moment now."

Neil laid his head back and tried to relax. She was right. There was just no fighting it, not with her body firm on his, riding him in rhythm with the rolls and bounces of the waterbed. He closed his eyes.

"Neil, this is Dr. Lewis again. Please pick up if

you're there. New blood tests came in. I'd rather not say this over voicemail, but I'm afraid it's very urgent. There's no easy way to put this- your wife... she's an Invalid."

Neil opened his eyes. A slow drip of saliva fell onto his cheek. Lydia was positively glowing with excitement.

"I'm just so hungry, Neil." She wiped her mouth with one finger. "I'm just so goddamn hungry."

"Stay calm and don't leave the house. We'll have someone over soon. Remember, don't panic."

Neil threw his arms out in protest, but there was no stopping it. Her jaws sank into his neck with every ounce of energy from her body. She tore from his flesh ferociously, screaming in glee as blood sprayed and splashed against the wall, against her pale flesh, and against the rolling black rubber of the waterbed.

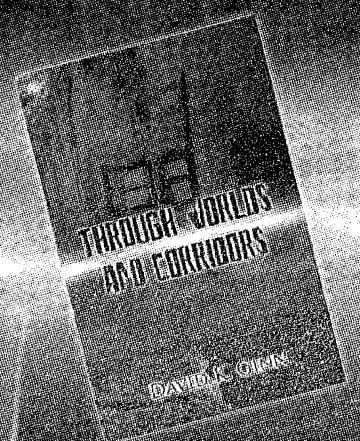
His screams came out as a gurgled mess. She arched her head in and continued to eat. His hands shook and jittered, sending tiny rushes of blood through the open hole in his body. She slid lower and took off more, and soon he lay still. She burrowed her head in his flesh- ravenous, insatiable- eating to fill her bottomless hunger. She breathed deeply, hands shaking.

"Don't panic, Neil. Someone's on their way. Just stay calm, and everything will be fine."

The machine clicked. The tape rewound. There was silence.

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BRIAN WASSER

APPARATUS LIMBO

By John Rapkiewicz, Jr.

I've counted the squares on the ceiling about 347 times; at least that's when I lost count 7 years ago. It was 7 years since the accident, 7 years since my body went numb and still, and it's been 7 years since my mind has been locked in prison in my very skull. This is my prison; a hospital room with IVs and feeding tubes. An oxygen apparatus and flowers decorated around the night stand. There are cards that say "Get well soon" and "God bless you", even ones that say "Happy Birthday". Yet the one card that gets to me the most was my first Father's Day card from my son who was born just two months after the accident. 7 years have passed and I have never held my son.

At first I wanted to live, I thought I would get better. My family and doctors would fight near my bedside, debating if I were brain dead or not. I wanted to scream "I'm Alive! I'm Alive!" but my jaw did not move, my voice did not pierce the air. I just stared, helpless, as if I was in a limbo. I couldn't even cry a tear to show emotion. I just lay there and stared for 7 years. At first I wanted to live, I wanted to live when I saw my son for the first time. I truly wanted to live, for the thought I would get better. Yet as year after year went by I was numb and still. It was when my son was five that my will to live died. My wife and son came to visit during one father's day. My wife held my son close to my bedside, and he reached out to touch my arm. I felt nothing- no warmth, no pressure, not one single sensation to tell me I was alive.

What makes a person alive? I couldn't eat, breathe, or feel. All I could do was see things like a ghost envying the living- then again a ghost has more freedom to move than I did. The doctors and family were keeping me there in limbo. I couldn't blame them, especially my parents. They loved me, they believed I was alive. I was alive but I was dead at the same time. My mother didn't want to lose her baby, but personally I was suffering more and more. Within 7 years my mother died at 63 of a heart attack. My father broke the news to me. I wanted to die even more so I could see her. It might seem selfish leaving my wife and son but what was I anymore? The bills were a burden to them to keep me in limbo; my wife couldn't even stay in the room without crying. I wanted to die not just for me, but for them. My wife could move on and get rid of the anchor that kept her from living. I was her anchor. She could remarry and have a real father for my son. At age 7 my son asked his mother "Who's that guy, mommy? He never moves. Is he real?" I couldn't have answered even if I had wanted to.

347 times I've counted squares on the ceiling until I lost count. I watched the sun rise and dip under the horizon and through the tree line. I would hear a car alarm and the birds sing in the morning. I could also hear the monitors beep beside me, and hear the nurses chat as they cared for me. I watched the wind blow through the window and saw the curtains dance so freely. This was my life; this was my prison until

my brother visited that one last time. He always visited me on Thursdays after work. He was younger than me so he had school and an entry-level job to juggle. But he still had time to see me and chat about his life and what was new. But this night he was crying heavily and tears were something that I was used to. Yet this time he managed to see me long after visiting hours, He must have snuck in or something. He spoke soft and told me he loved me, he added that this wasn't a life for me. After he sobbed and talked to himself for a bit, he finally asked if I had been suffering. I was angry. All this time I couldn't do anything and my brother had the nerve to ask like he expected something out of me.

I wanted to scream, but my prison bottled up my emotions like an airtight tank. In my limbo my vision began to blur, as if water had rushed over my eyes. I knew that tears were trickling down my face without being able to feel them. My brother saw it and he knew then the answer to his question. He cried as he whispered gently into my ear and said "Be free like the open sea," a lyric from a song my mother used to sing to us when we were young as we got ready for bed. "Be free like the open sea; cast a dream where you wish to be." As he continued to sing he lifted the oxygen apparatus out of my throat. As the dark room became darker my mother came through the door way and reached out for my hand... I could feel again.



LOVE LETTER TO SLEEP

By Leila Dell

February 23, 2010

8:34pm

Dear Sleep,

I'm sorry it didn't work out between us. I miss you sometimes. I know, I know; I was the one who ended it. I just couldn't deal with how *needy* you were, y'know? You took hours of my day that I couldn't spend on *anything* else. No, when Sleep is around, Sleep gets all your attention. It's hard to be with you and anyone else at the same time, Sleep. Even if we're together in your presence, we might as well be apart, for all the time you give us to interact with each other.

You're a very dominating personality, you know. You tug and tug and tug until whoever you're chasing gives in, and then they're not allowed to notice anything else until you're done with them.

Just the same, it's hard to function without you. If I haven't gotten enough time with you, it's hard to focus on anything else. It's hard to *think* without you, Sleep. I grasp for words I can't find, and I can't make decisions quickly, and I react emotionally to everything. All I can focus on is when I might see you again.

Not getting enough of you is crippling, but I just can't handle all the demands you make on my

life. I even started drinking to try to forget you, but, darling, all the Rockstars in the world are no substitute for the comfort of your embrace.

I can't take you back, Sleep, not full-time. I can't handle that kind of commitment, and you wouldn't like how dull I'd become if I tried. I'll tell you what, though: I'm free for a couple hours on Tuesdays, and my roommates have class. We could meet for a little, and no one would have to know. Come find me. I'll be in bed waiting for you.

Love,
Me

RAIN

By Ryan Rafferty

Rain. Rain is coming our way. It can't be stopped and if mother nature wishes for it to rain, it's gonna rain. Rain is like an immovable force, unbreakable. You can do whatever you want, but it is still gonna rain. There are those few, the Native Americans still left or descendants of Native Americans, that believe rain can be stopped or started by a rain dance. The rain will come down in torrents, or perhaps a light drizzle or misting. The buildup that comes before the storm. The gathering of dark clouds in the sky blocking out the sun. The wind picking up gusting about angrily. People head back to their dorms, into buildings where there classes are. No one lingers anymore like when the sun was out. Everyone rushing about trying to avoid the rain. Now you start to see people moving about with umbrellas in their backpacks, or under their arms. Then an unmistakable roar of thunder. BOOM. You count. One mississippi. Two mississippi. Three mississippi. Four mississippi. Five mississippi. You count to five mississippi and you recall that

the storm is a mile away for every second you count, although you don't really know if this is true and where this trick came from. BOOM. One mississippi. Two mississippi. Only two seconds this time. The storm's closer. The wind is even faster and stronger now. Now there is practically no one left outside. You are alone with mother nature. The sky lights up brilliantly and you see the forked bolt of lightning miles off reach down to the earth. Won't be long now. BOOM. More thunder, barely lasts a second long. The sky flashes spectacularly again and another bolt reaches down to the earth. As you peer up to the sky and marvel at all the amazing things that are happening, you feel something on your cheek. You bring a finger to your cheek and feel moisture. A water droplet. Then you feel it again on your arm. Than it starts to come faster. You can feel each drop as it touches your body. Than it comes faster even still and you can no longer distinguish between each droplet. It starts to rain. It picks up and it is quite the magnificent

storm. You are the only one witnessing this great marvel of nature but you are not quite alone. The storm emits the feeling of having a life of its own. Rain pouring down from the sky as if the heavens above just opened up. The lightning being thrown into the sky as if it were Zeus himself. The rain and the wind mixed with thunder and lighting. As if the gods were battling in the sky where only yourself, a mere mortal can witness such an event. As the storm climaxes and you are thoroughly soaked through yet do not pay it any attention as you are completely engulfed in such an event, the rain tapers off. The wind starts to dwindle. The darkened clouds seem to disperse, and beams of light pierce through the clouds down to earth. Almost as if god himself were peering down at you. Then people start to come outside. More people come into the mix and you are now just another face in the crowd. You start to walk back to your dorm, the rain is gone. Rain.

SO IF YOU'RE LEAVING, WALK SLOW

By Liz Kaempf

A desperate wind blew through the window of the car and grazed Rusty's cheek. It seemed like the last breeze of a once peaceful summer. His straw hat remained unmoved on his head where it was placed, tilted just over his eyes. In his trance he dreamt of raspy blues music; of a run-down bar with at least one attractive waitress to feed him shots of whiskey; of the days when Darla didn't destroy every moment of peace with her insatiable appetite.

"I wonder if I'll ever see that house again," he thought. "The one with the pale yellow shutters on all the windows, the chimes that hung from the porch, and the ocean's breeze whistling through the tall grass and blowing the spores from the black-eyes susans to the neighboring town."

A woman slowly opened the screen door and propped herself in the doorframe. She had curves in all the right places. Her black curls floated in front of her eyes while the hem of her linen-white dress danced along her knees.

"Get on inside," she said, "I miss you, Russ."

Rusty's daydream was shattered by the slam of the car door. The smell of cigarettes and sex wafted up into his nostrils as he took his hat off.

"Did you miss me, Russ?" she asked with a smile. She brushed her messy black hair out of her face and checked her lips in the rear-view mirror. They were unusually red, and there were bite marks along her neck and down into her chest.

"I told you a hundred times not to slam the door closed like that. You'll break the damn thing."

"That doesn't answer my question."

"You said you'd be back by two, Darla."

"Yeah, so?"

"It's 3 'o' clock, Darla."

A conniving grin swept across her face. It was a woman's smile. "I got, caught up in somethin'."

"I hope he's still breathing at least," Rusty remarked and placed his hat snugly back on his

head. She placed a gentle hand on his face and slid her fingers along the lines of the four-day old scruff on his chin.

"Oh, come on, Russ. You know me. I wouldn't hurt a fly," Darla replied, and she jammed the key into the ignition. If it weren't for the obviously deviant laugh that followed, he almost would have believed her.

Darla drove slowly for the kind of girl she was. She was quick to drink, quick to shoot, and quick to get into somebody's bed. But in the car, she liked to take her time and soak in her surroundings. Rusty always thought it was because she was looking for the best routes to dodge the cops. No one ever knew for sure.

He gripped the harmonica in the chest pocket of his shirt. He felt like putting it to his mouth, but Darla hated the sound, and he didn't want to hear complain.

"Here we go," Darla whispered about thirty miles down the highway as she started pulling over.

"What's that, sugar?" Rusty asked quietly looking up.

"Hey! You guys havin' car trouble?" she called out of the window.

Rusty followed her gaze to see a young couple sweating under the hood of their car. It was a mild-mannered, four-door automobile. Nothing fancy. Nothing particularly exciting. But the girl looked well fed.

"Darla, don't do this, ya hear?"

She turned and stared at her companion with a sinuous smile. "Oh, Rusty. This will be fun, I promise. Besides, I thought black men liked white meat," she laughed. She got out and skipped over to the broken car. Rusty took off his hat and followed her out.

"What's it, the engine, hun?" she called.

"Uh, yeah. Yeah, I think so. It just burnt out on us," replied a decent enough looking young

man. He seemed about twenty-four and nervous.

"Let me have a look at it," Darla told him in a voice too sweet to be real. He nodded and stepped out of the way as she bent over. The boy glared at Rusty as he wandered over. "What's your name, hun?"

"I'm Jimmy. And this is my gal, Susan."

"Jimmy and Susan, huh? I'm Darla, and this is my, uh, confidant, Rusty."

"How do you do, Miss Susan?" Rusty said tipping his hat. Jimmy put a protective arm around Susan and kissed her head.

"Ya know what, sweetheart? This is busted. I don't think you can fix it at all. Why don't you let us take you to the next town over? Then you can figure out what to do next," Darla said politely enough, as if she were about to do these kids a civil service.

Jimmy walked hesitantly over to the car where Darla was stooped over. "I, uh, I don't know. It really doesn't look that bad. I'm sure I can find a way to—"

"Hush!" Darla interrupted, "Ain't no reason for you to be stranded out here. It's an 85-degree day. S'no good. You guys just come on with us and we'll take care of ya."

Jimmy kept a suspicious eye on Rusty as he pulled Susan aside to talk it over with her. Although, her eyes were more focused on the slender body of Darla, who was licking her lips like a dog finishing his dinner. Susan nodded sheepishly in agreement.

"Yeah. Yeah, ok," replied Jimmy. "I guess it'll be alright. But just the next town over. It's real nice, o'ya to do this for us, and we don't wanna put you outta your way."

"Hardly. C'mon now. Get in. That poor girl's burnin' up out here," Darla finished and shepherded the couple into the car.

"Miss Susan," Rusty said quietly as he held the back door open for her, and she shuffled in

SO IF YOU'RE LEAVING, WALK SLOW

(CONT.)

with her head down.

Jimmy and Susan kept close and uncomfortable for the ride. Darla had an unreasonably determined look upon her face, and Rusty was as nervous as the two kids in the backseat.

"Keystone is just up ahead. Pull over soon," Rusty told her, and the boy in the back seemed to breathe a sigh of relief.

"Don't you worry your head about it, Russ. I'll stop soon enough."

The sign for Keystone came and went and Darla didn't seem to notice an inch of it. On the contraire, she seemed more than content to continue on her way.

"Uh, miss? You, uh, you said you were gonna stop at the next town. You just missed it," Jimmy said poking his head up from the backseat and in between the odd couple in the front seats. Rusty shifted slightly and put a hand on the harmonica in his pocket. Or on his heart. Darla appeared not to hear him. She just continued on with the same slimey grin on her face. "Please, miss, we just wanna get goin'. We promise we won't tell nobody," he added losing face, and Susan nodded. She was shaking like the last leaf on a winter-burnt tree.

Jimmy opened his mouth to plead again, but Darla quieted him right quick with a gun to his lips. Rusty refused to look, but rather kept his eyes glued to the changing scenery outside.

"Just sit back and enjoy the ride, honey," Darla whispered to her prisoner, and he sat back to exchange glances with Susan, looks that made them think this would be the last sunny day they would ever see.

Darla was the kind of person with a variety of usual haunts. She always had a place to take someone. It was all based on how much privacy she needed. With the gun on the dashboard she drove for an extra hour before taking the car off the road to a beat up, makeshift barn. It looked grossly out of place. The paint was worn and chipped, there was barbed wire on the fences, and there was no fertile land for miles.

"Abandoned plantations were always your specialty," Rusty whispered uneasily to Darla, but she was already forcing her captives out of the car.

"NO! Please, God, don't do this! Please! No!" Susan cried as Darla dragged her by her hair toward the door of the barn. Jimmy followed unwillingly obediently at the point of a gun and Rusty, with his hands dug hopelessly in his pockets, dragged his feet behind them all. Darla kicked open the door with her boot-clad foot and dust flew into all their eyes. She threw Susan to the floor and directed Jimmy to a rickety wooden chair with the wave of her piece.

Susan sobbed furiously as Jimmy clapped his hands together to beg Darla to let them go. Rusty found a corner to retreat to, what Darla did wasn't much of his business these days. She was hard to control and even harder to stop.

It looked like she used this place as a hide-out, or a torture chamber, a few times before. There were scattered red splotches across the walls and the floors, most likely arterial spray. Ropes and chains hung all around the space and there were several chests and toolboxes that undoubtedly acted as homes to a myriad of instruments of pain. Darla grabbed a frayed, dirty rope off a hook and, stepping over a distraught Susan, looked to tie up her prey. Jimmy struggled temporarily, but Darla had a fire in her eyes that Rusty hadn't seen in a long time. She kned Jimmy in the stomach, and when he dropped to the ground she continued her beating on his face. He yelped in agony and crumpled at Darla's feet. She dragged him back into the chair and bound his wrists and feet, this time with no opposition.

For a long time she just stared at Susan's listless body curled up on the floor. She would smile and slide her tongue along her lips and then laugh a scary little laugh.

"Don't get any ideas now," Rusty called to her from his corner. He was trying to keep himself out of the way of her chaotic break.

"Heh...too late," Darla replied quietly, and

her sinister smile slowly crept back to her face. She seemed too relaxed for such a painful series of events. She seemed like she'd done this before.

"You stay away from her! You hear me! You bastard you keep your hands off Susan!" Jimmy belted out, waking from his delirium and staring daggers into Rusty.

Darla burst out into laughter. "He thinks he's funny. You hear him, Russ? He thinks he's funny." She laughed again, pulled out a pack of cigarettes and lit one. Rusty cringed. The smoke always made him sick. "Boy," Darla said standing up off the floor near Susan, "It's not Rusty there that your girl has to worry about it. He won't lay a finger on her pretty little head. It's me who's gonna wreck her," and she flicked the ashes of her cigarette into Jimmy's face.

She took her time walking back over to the girl on the floor, stepping with one foot in front of the other. Darla crouched down behind her and pulled her hair back from her face to reveal her neck. "Come on, Susie," she whispered in her ear, "We're gonna have some fun," and she licked the length of the neck of Susan who cringed and cried out for help.

Darla tore at Susan's dress and stroked and grabbed her legs and followed them all the way up. She would always give a sideways glance to the restrained boy in the chair as she closed in on Susan's crotch or her breasts. "She'll never let you touch her again," Darla told him, groping the whimpering girl. "You're the reason this is happening. It's all your fault. You're supposed to protect her. You're supposed to protect and you didn't!" Darla's temper flared and she seized Susan's throat and pushed her into the ground. "No one ever protects us," she leaned over and whispered into Susan's ear, her lips just barely touching the girl. "No one ever protects us, and this is what happens."

Rusty just scrunched his eyes shut until it hurt. Maybe if he kept them closed long enough the screams of Jimmy and Susan would disappear with the summer air. He grasped his har-

SO IF YOU'RE LEAVING, WALK SLOW (CONT.)

monica and was suddenly transported back to that serene day outside of the house with yellow shutters on all the windows, where the black-eyed susans didn't cry out in pain, but sailed back and forth in the wind.

"Rusty, are you ever gonna get inside? Dinner's gettin' cold."

The sound of his harmonica floated in the air around him. The woman in the linen-white dress sat down on the porch steps next to him. She laid her head against his shoulder and closed her eyes. He stopped playing.

"Why'd you stop?"

"Connie, do you think I'll ever be able to get back here?"

"Of course. You get back here all the time."

He laughed. "Sugar, I need to see you again. I can't be a part of this life. It ain't for me."

"Then come back to me," Connie replied simply, and placed a gentle hand on his cheek.

"I want to. I want to so much it hurts." A small tear, the first in years, slid away from Rusty's eye.

"Then come back to me. Dinner's gettin' cold after all."

Jimmy had been averting his gaze from the scene he couldn't stop. He exhausted all his pleas. It was all fruitless. And he still couldn't look up when he heard the gunshots ring out. They probably echoed for miles, and no one was around to

hear them.

"Wh-why?" Susan choked out, and Jimmy found the strength to turn his head.

"Miss Susan, you try and forget all this, okay?" Rusty said to her, and taking one last look at the lifeless body of Darla he picked the car keys from out of her pocket and walked out of the barn.

"I know you'll wait for me Connie," Rusty whispered into the air. He stared at the sun as it fell back into the horizon. "I'll find you. I'll finish that last song and we'll have that dinner I left gettin' cold. Just you wait, sugar. I'm comin' home."

SOLITUDE IN A FISH BOWL

By Robert Moya

At the blooming age of 27, she had already scaled the slopes of Mount Everest, rescued a litter of kittens from a burning building, shot photographs of the World's only albino lion for the Geographic, coincidentally put a stop to the 1999 Yellow Scare in India and even kissed the Pope on the cheek. But Cynthia had never owned a fish, let alone a pet. Cynthia's parents did not believe in pets.

Cynthia was sent home with a broken arm.

At the counter of the colorful pet shop sat an old lady with moist eyes whose tiny size gave off the impression she had shrunk in the laborious passing of time. They exchanged 'hellos'. From a tank full of families of goldfish, the old lady with her moist eyes could barely reach in to catch Cynthia's very first goldfish.

That night, the goldfish cried and cried and Cynthia wondered how the fish bowl had filled itself the next morning.

Cynthia, overly enthusiastic about her new

goldfish, fed it constantly. The water took on a light hue of orange. The orange walls of the apartment told Cynthia otherwise. Unable to see the frown on the goldfish's tiny face, Cynthia mistook her happiness as the goldfish's and decided to visit her parents several towns away.

The goldfish shrunk until it finally vanished.

A confused and sad Cynthia returned to the colorful pet shop and the old lady, remarkably smaller than Cynthia last remembered, had so much trouble reaching into the tank full of families of goldfish that Cynthia gladly performed the deed herself.

Coincidentally, Cynthia's second goldfish was put in the same orange water the first goldfish had vanished in.

Cynthia, still bothered by her first goldfish's disappearance, kept a vigil on her new goldfish and noticed unmistakably what appeared to be a goldfish scale swimming in the fishbowl. How pretty, she thought.

In a moonlit slumber, Cynthia dreamed of goldfish, families of them, swimming happily in a fish bowl the size of earth. In the fish bowl in her apartment, the same was taking place. There were now two goldfish swimming in the fish bowl, both so full of energy and bliss that the fish bowl began to inch towards the edge of the kitchen counter.

Cynthia awoke to find the two goldfish lying motionless on the kitchen floor, pieces of glass scattered about, and the orange color of the water now apparent in the first rays of the sun. In awe of the sight, she stood and stared in silence. She thought about the dream of families of goldfish swimming in the gigantic fish bowl and finally understood the beauty of it all. She decided to take a photograph.

Several blocks away, the old lady with the moist eyes vanished behind the counter, no longer able to bear the solitude.

DO VOICES

By Josh Ginsberg

Shifting Angles:

Let's talk about fireworks.

And how young and flowering, our skin's a lime-green color, our hair an incandescent coral. We'd step in between the ashes spit from the heavens, streams of exhaust that taper into droplets that upon collapsing (against any given surface) lose their shapes. Back in those times, we would throw our heavy heads back. We would laugh and laugh, our hands mashed together, fingers meshing with fingers, like particles weaving between particles, as electric yarn, each texture enraptured, each fiber splitting into an infinite web of flesh-tone double-helices. We keep on: the laughter only ceasing for the odd, bleary yawn. We amble in and out of our hours, our months and our decades and the climax grows more and more intense as sensation becomes more and more distant from the trajectory of our ambitions. Back in the summertime, our joy would splash and our ebullience would flicker. The two of them sat hand and hand on benches, fingers speckled, but inside were like a fucked up, 24-hour arcade. Bleeps and whirrs, an unflagging sense of twirling gets nausea. And my nausea gets erotic. It culminates in vomit pouring out like strawberry flavored mud: striking and purifying.

"Youth unbridled!!!"

She's got that tattooed, riding a green, euphonic mist, atop nearly-symmetrical, milk hued breasts. Pale pink areolas are more radiant than the sun and they are casting beams of light into the purple summer heavens. They are interrupted very briefly by a pale-blue that curves like a J, tangential to the limits of pink, of heightened intensity. The syntax is distended, poorly wrought, but something about those words and something about that context just nullifies the kiddy giggles that have made peppermint my breath. They come out in feeble gasps, my mouth agape and eyes agog. It was almost sobering, except for the

fact I had never yet felt so arrested by a lengthy, sustained flash of flesh.

"Aurora borealis," some old man mutters, as he in his entirety begins to shift from wrinkling, feeble meat into stark, oxidizing, rod-iron math equations. The variables have seven subscripts, and are sitting unanswered...unread for only seconds until they too (reflective of the same inevitability that all matter, all concepts and the such are invulnerable to) break down, into a musty, American dust. There's something tragic about it, but who has time to cry? Who has time to lament anything at this hour? All that was formerly formless has erupted from migraine-rapt thought into an aroma, a cloud whose entire visual presence consists only of the fact it is apparently devoid of anything, no intellect, no conscious thought, but everything and nothing, in a ripe contradiction that turns pages, that tires eyes. It is in this way that it (the aroma) is starkly different from the evening's air, which is now very, very apparently burdened with all the melancholy exhalations from many minty cigarettes [puffed from the fanciful, nubile lips any of the dissatisfied youngsters who run around summer fairgrounds, perpetually pouting: praying, praying! that someone, whose intentions are less than pure will enrapture them in their vermilion gaze and will tear them, if a bit too violently, at least decisively, from their pusillanimous state: that awkward age when a young man or woman doesn't feel secure at all with his or her body and diction without a thesaurus or iPhone app nearby.] and the like. Every mote of dust creates a prism in the air. And in these prisms, the light from the fireworks erupting mid-sky forms even more delicate, visual spectra. Me: my sneakers are drenched. I'm tearing and tearing—from my seams and from my eyes.

Holy Christ, I think for a single secular moment. I'm in this cymbal washed company, one

that doesn't resound with any clear frequency anymore. I don't know who she is or he is or I am, just that we're really famished, really looking forward to chips and beer and wine, and that we were all once sweating barefoot, thinking about swimming pools, and that we've never left the outdoors, we've always been a part of this carrot-colored-honey-textured-sweat-flavored-wonder. Lying back on a merry-go-round of lawn, there are convulsions...twitching, exploding, withering and finally, with the likes of a diminished chords reverberating in my head, I sit up, wide-eyed, lucidity gently rising from its grave.

I remember these archaic wooden castles. Me in a tire swing for a fleeting while. I would shout and shimmer on a sea of sooty, little rocks, pittering and pattering, with giggles, like a day-glow memoir. I imagine a ratty guy with a Mohawk. He talks like Kim Gordon on "The Sprawl."

"Man, she and I, her and me, we love these crazy beachside carnivals. From the pavement to the grass to the sand, HA, it was always the most fantastic. There were these crowds too, old people, young people, barbecues. The joke was everywhere and it was titillating."

My uncle's down by this rickety raft and he's white-haired and diabetic. He's reaching forward his blue-veined hand and between crumbling figures, rests an orange creamsicle, dripping off its stick. His shirt is reddish lavender. It looks coarse and starched. His teeth got yellow. Then he coughed.

Parallel Line, in Isolation:

Hear it rustle in the woods. You get scared. You don't know what it is that's grunting and breaking leaves. It's hiding in that tall, dark foliage. And you don't know for a half a second what the fuck that thing could be! Its teeth are gnashing, you are certain. There's a stench like sugar-coated rubber bands. And then from inside

DO VOICES
(CONT.)

of the darkness, inside of the obscurity you see these adorable cartoon kitten eyes. They are big and tearful and you realize as this hell-raiser shuffles bow-legged from the hollow, that it's nothing at all—Just a childhood, memory, with a winsome smile. It stands before you quivering, faded, with half its weight on a wooden crutch.

Well the first thing this little critter has the mind to tell you is about all those lusty fire trucks. They were parked right at the edge of the short lawn. But that is how it was etched into the easel of memory and that is how it shall remain, despite a total disregard for rational thought. The kitten cowers, wheezing, its fractured rib has pierced its lung. But it goes on. There's a whisper or howl that I can't remember one way or another. And I'm nice and comfy in my mother's arms. I think there might have been a thin layer of paint on my face, but any time I ask my memories, the little bastard don't tell.

Grandpa was there, his hands jammed in pockets, seeming compact yet loose, as if he was letting all of himself, whatever auxiliary aura he might have once possessed, permeate into the open space around him giving it as much room as he could without ending it in his unraveling. I remember a steep profile, a perfectly straight slope of nose. It was like that old hay-stack, potato-sack small town fair and that massive slide. And an angle something like 55, at an age something like 60, he had tiny crow's feet about his eyes, reaching wider and farther than the toothless smiles that had gotten 'em started in the first place. Each one of them it seems, to a very sleepy me-at-the-time, represents a different joke made, a different sort of laugh that fell in reverse up his throat. His eyes were like a robin's ovum, that pale blue, mellow almost comatose, but still so vividly alive. His head was bald and a reddish white. It's funny, that I sat there then in my mother's arms, like a porcupine hugging a tree, peering around at him. My hair was thick and burnt yellow in some curls and feathery feathers. It's funny that it still is now. But somewhere be-

tween my celestial shadow on some cloud outside of time, me in a violet shirt and plaid shirts ransacking a playtime castle and me right here, right back there just then, and now, somewhere between all of us we know we'll all be bald just the same way some time. His hands were stout and wiry, fingers' nubs thick and slow. I know he never would've, but I can imagine false-teeth clenched on a dark cigar.

He's standing there on the fourth of July. Across the lawn from the police, the firemen, the Americans, whose parents he once saved a long time ago from a boat in the Pacific. It must've meant more to him than to it does to me now, even though Se and Al have been with the Afghans something on a year now (Taking heroin, taking shots, digressing into quasi-illuminated thoughts, fingers crinkling around the cold steel barrel of a rockslide or fate that catches like the Spanish Influenza; it caught my brother in this nasty gut of ennui doubled twice by frustration, a set of skin that felt like a peeling paintjob, an inside heart that only shows itself in foggy tantrums. What about his nose? Whole lot like granddads but caught in brackets amid coy smiles and lechery...). Grandpa must have gotten a whole lot more from America than I do now or ever did, but America isn't the point this time. I think I could be in Swiss mountains where the girls have hips with lines that spiral like anemone and enclose you in the warm, pale lightness, and the toys don't lose their cool veneer, and I could feel the same.

In the beginning things weren't so rotten. There was a sweetness yes. But never one which seemed to fester as it now does. The seeds are leaking: little black slivers. I believe the children are our future. But right about now, I've got my one working eye fixed on where they're lolling, languid on the ground. And I'll tell you one thing Rick. And I'll tell you another, Chuck: I am fucking terrified.

The time changes again. I'm undressed to my waist on some ancient desert, some mowed-

over savannah. And there, beneath the sky, which looks like a glass of Mountain-Dew (diluted with authentic mountain dew) spilled over a glow-in-the-dark projector, there's this being gallivanting. Her body is a sieve. Any and everything that could weigh her down is simply pissing through the holes. And all that weight which she diminishes in herself is coming out and burdening the rest of us. Or would be. If it weren't just me. She's got me feeling this sensation. It throbs, it grates. I've been chiseled in the gut. I've lost my shit. I am eviscerated. But I am completely fulfilled. (Litotes)

Her cheekbones cut like arrows. Her eyes are robbed like jewels. I was sitting, grease-mouthed and terrified in her wake, shoveling little oily triangles of a sliced up pizza into my mouth.

((But as I write, it seems the font gets smaller and smaller and the chances of publication, well they increase something exponential! But I don't have time. I don't have time. I don't have time. And. I don't have fun.))

Helices:

Got an inbox from an insect who never had the porch she deserved. She's been seeing in this fog and the world is like Impressionism. It's nice when you look at things like the sun over water, lilies on a pond, but you get this feeling (sick, withdrawn) like you're taking something that belongs to too many people already and trying to find meaning in it yourself. She's lost a lot and what she's gotten in return has not been fair. Well flesh, yeah there's that alright, but there's nothing in the vein of love or progeny. Work she's got it. Nice warm voice and flitting fingers, warm, red hands. She sent me a letter. It's for that that I write.

I feel it in my gut and it makes me so sad for the total loss of what we wanted life to be, in our most innocent heart of hearts....true happiness.....it has been twisted into a delusion of the masses..they succeeded at creating an image of a pseudo happiness which is devoid of any heartfelt emotions and intertwined with a lust for financial success.....they have twisted it into a phony reality show,

DO VOICES (CONT.)

where the winners are truly the losers....those sharks are feeding off the creativity and hearts of the truly talented and imaginative souls who still embrace simple truest-pleasure of just loving, just feeling the breeze on your skin...just enjoying the laughter and innocence of a child...saddest part of it all, was it was created by the generation that was supposed to be the counterculture,,,,back when i dreamt about wanting to be a hippie

My eyes get cold when I look at the sun. It's all this simulated blindness that I can't articulate, that I can't articulate, so why do I try?

I've been walking quite a lot, seeing grass and trees and branches being flowered anew and they remind me of cool carnivals where people drink and people laugh. They remind me of the entropy that lives inside my heart, but also of the terror that drives me away from it toward the bah-humbug-clusterfuck of pseudo-security and proto-serenity:

an image of sharks are feeding the breeze on your enjoying the laughter truestpleasure was supposed to be the counterculture truestpleasure saddest part

I lie whistling in the dark while a fan creates this icy cacophony. I've just woken by her snores,

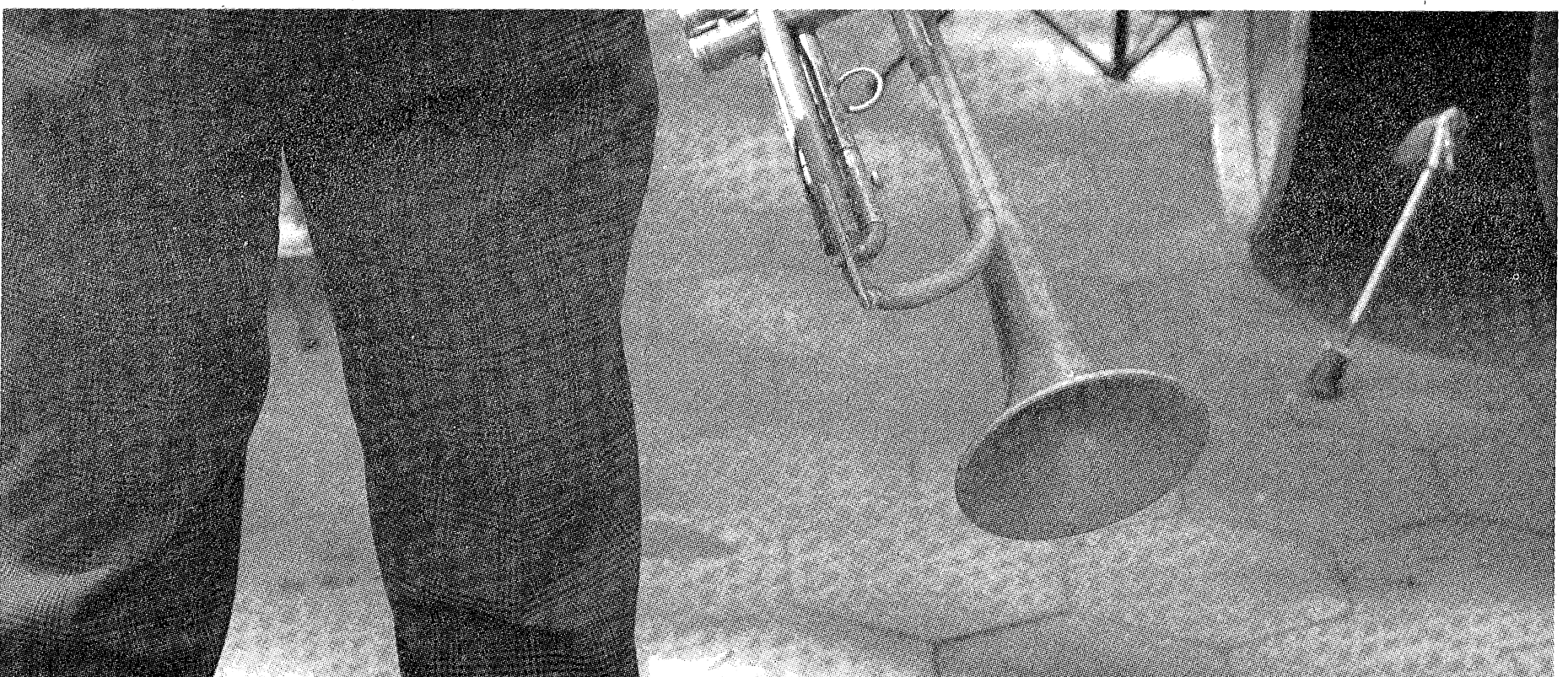
roused from a state of peace, my feathers ruffled, but only in order to inhale, to imbibe, to bask in the greatest meaningless murmur my ears have ever known. Better than the cool reprieve of sleep is the worn out satisfaction of young love.

an image of truestpleasure sharks are feeding the breeze on your enjoying the laughter truestpleasure was supposed to be the counterculture an image of sharks ar truestpleasure e feeding the breeze on your enjoying the laughter truestpleasure was supposed to be the counterculture an image of sharks are feeding the breeze on your enjoying the laughter truestpleasure was supposed to be the counterculture an image of sharks are feeding the breeze on your enj truest-pleasure oying the laughter truestpleasure was supposed to be the counterculture an image of sharks are feeding the breeze on your enjoying the laughter truestpleasure was supposed to be the coun truestpleasure ter-culture an image of sharks are feeding the breeze on your enjoying the laughter truestpleasure was supposed to be the

counterculture an image of sharks are feeding the breeze on your enjoying the laughter truestpleasure was supposed to be the counter truestpleasure culture an image o truest-pleasure f sharks are feeding the breeze on your enjoying the laughter truestpleasure was supposed to be the counterculture truestpleasure truestpleasure truestpleasure

The trees are thinning or at least that's what I thought, when I realized it was just that the sun had risen higher and higher and higher until it had flooded the window of a massive house. I hadn't gotten back to sleep, but only grown burnt out from exhaustion in the dark. My arm had fallen asleep from being under her, where I was pinned of my own volition. I had reached the citadel and now the only thing that I was thinking about was some kind of numeric balance or pattern to which I could relate the occasional shudder, twist or sigh.

an image of truestpleasure sharks are feeding the breeze on your enjoying the laughter truestpleasure sharks



L'CHAYIM

By Joseph Wysk

For a man such as Nathaniel Green, "almost" was the most painful word in existence. We all know our share of it; how we almost made it on time, how we almost got the promotion, how we almost didn't fail. For Nathan, "almost" was just a painful indication of how close one came to success. In his entire life Nathan had never succeeded in any sense...and this snapshot we take of his life is no exception. In the pale light of a perfectly sunny morning, we find Nathan Green sitting beside his father's hospital bed. Holding desperately onto his father's hand, Nathan watches as the last slivers of life ebb from his father's eyes.

For the past three years Nathan endured the two hour trek from his small home by the beach to his father's bed in the metropolitan hospital. It wasn't nearly as hard when he had company, but on days that he did not he clung to a small segment of the shoreline for inspiration. It was isolated from the rest of the beach by an enormous boulder, too massive to easily scale, that gave it a feeling of seclusion and safety. When he was a child he could remember how his father would wake him before sunrise and they would slip away to that secret shore. Sometimes they would fish, sometimes talk, and every now and then, they would silently watch as the sun peaked above the horizon and morning rays of sunlight danced across the water. Despite being a great deal smaller now, the shore remained much as he remembered it. The old birch tree still leaned out over the water as if it were about to jump in and talk a swim and the sand still gave off an inexplicable snowy white glisten. Nathan had lived in the same home for all forty-four years of his life, but had only recently come to appreciate the existence of such a place.

In the mornings he would walk past the shore and the fond memories it conjured gave him the strength to push forward. On his return trip, the shore was something pleasant to look forward to. Nathan had always pondered why he did not see more people in such a lovely place. Thus it should not have surprised him when today he caught out of the corner of his eye a man sitting where he had for most of his childhood. The man was on in years, well past the golden age of his life. His hair was sparse and white and it amazed Nathan that it could keep his head warm at all in the chilly breeze. He wore a tattered brown jacket, patched so that barely half of the original fabric remained. Nathan passed by this lonely beach so often and had grown so accustomed to it being empty, that the sight of someone sitting there was mesmerizing. So much so that for several long moments Nathan just stood on the sidewalk in a daze until a bicyclist zoomed past and forced Nathan to step onto the path to the shoreline. "Not now," said Nathan to himself. "I can't now... not today, but perhaps tomorrow." So Nathan walked back onto the sidewalk and began his slow and somber walk home.

Nathan walked up his driveway to the front of his home, passing the void once filled by two dependable vehicles. Stepping inside he quickly discovered an absence of electricity when he went for the light switch. For several lingering moments he flicked it on and off in the hope that he simply hadn't flipped it all the way. Turning around Nathan saw that day's mail looking up at him. Amidst the usual sundry articles lay his final paycheck, crumpled slightly from when the mail man stuffed it through the door. He quickly snatched up his paycheck before it had a chance to disappear and held it tightly in his hands. Sort-

ing through the rest of the pile he threw the advertisements in a nearby trash bin and then dropped that month's bills on a nightstand, next to those from the month before. Nathan ran his hand along the edge of the nightstand until it came to rest on the base of cherry wood picture frame. Picking it up he gazed into the eyes of himself and his wife twenty years younger. He remembered the day the photograph was taken just as vividly as his memories of the shore. The sky was a wondrous cobalt blue, endless and serene. He had convinced Victoria to take the day off and they had spent it laying on the soft grass in the back yard and guessing the shapes of clouds. When he would look over, he could catch the light trapped by Victoria's flowing red hair.

Pulling himself back to the present Nathan became aware of the ever growing and fading twilight in room, caused by the sun sinking below the horizon. Without another source of light he realized his time was running out, and thus made his way into the dining room, where he set down his satchel and proceeded to work. First he pulled out several blank pages and sunk into one of the chairs, grabbing a pen as he did so. His words flowed from his mind to the page with increasing urgency. In a mild panic he calmly rushed to inscribe his thoughts as they welled up inside of him, afraid to miss a single thing. As the last remnants of light crept from the room Nathan placed the final punctuation on the page, at which point he carefully creased each page and placed them inside an envelope.

Tucking the envelope in his inner jacket pocket Nathan slowly reached into his bag to retrieve a slim black folder. Setting it on the table he shakily opened it, reveling two documents: the first a letter of foreclosure and eviction notice,

L'CHAYIM (CONT.)

the second a signature page for divorce. Solemnly he spread them across the table, and as he signed the page that rescinded vows intended to be forever, he was forced to steady one hand with the other. At that moment sadness flooded his heart, like gasoline flooding an engine, slowing it by several beats. Forcing himself to stand despite his quaking knees Nathan dumped out the final contents of his bag. Among them was a package of twisted manila rope.

As he wound the rope around itself to form a noose Nathans mind emptied and his dexterity returned. Throwing the finished work over an exposed support beam above the dining room table he wondered what his last thoughts would be. Setting up onto a chair Nathan slipped the noose over his head and winced slightly as it tightened around his neck. As he kicked the chair out from under him, time seemed to slow to a crawl. He watched as the dining room before him was slowly overcome and replaced by the darkness of

his eyelids. As his eyes shut he could feel the rope pulling against his skin, but instead of seeing the backs of his eye lids, or the pitchfork of the devil, of the wings of an angel, he vividly saw the image of that old man on the beach. The tranquil look on that man's face washed over him as the waves of the sea console all life within it. "I want to go there," he said in the back of his mind. "I want that sense of peace. I will go tomorrow." In his mind Nathan foolishly told himself that, but he knew that there would be no more tomorrows. Nathan knew that all he had was today. It was in this moment of remorse that the tension in the rope reached its climax, and then, the force against Nathan's neck dissipated and he fell to the floor. When he regained consciousness Nathan pulled the rope from around his neck and looked up to discover the rest of it, broken and unraveling.

Nathan had never seen the moonlight serenade the waves of his little cove before. It was a

sight that left him utterly without words. The old man was gone by this point. It was likely the cold had spurred him inside. Nathan sat on the beach and sifted the white sand through his wrinkled fingers. He reached into his tattered brown jacket thrice mended and pulled out the letter he had written. He reached over and slid off his wedding ring, placing it in the envelope to wait it down. He then wound back his arm and flung it into the sea. In the next moment a passerby would have seen something most strange and wonderful indeed. Tossing sand high into the air out of pure jubilation, Nathan ran the length of the beach until he was out of breath and then took off his shoes to place his feet in the soothing ocean water, looking for interesting pebbles and buried treasure as he did so. When he grew tired he lay back and gazed up at the stars, trying to make out one constellation after another, thinking all the while: "I have today, and tomorrow, and all the days there after to live. L'chayim."



POEMS

Blood

By Samuel Katz

I turned my blood into ink
and spilled it on a vienless sheet
and I sent it to through the bodiless
channels called mail.

I peeled my bruises and
shaved my scars
and put it into an envelope
with no sensory glands
as I painted my burns
on a sheet drier than bones.

But it will not satiate the vampire's hunt
For not all blood is equally blue
and not all ink is equally red.
Not every burn sits on a plate
and not every scar can be fed.

I prepared a meal,
to serve the Beast
that worships pain.
I told him of the journey
where I started with baby skin.
And the road that made me hairy
and rouged, till I lost
the soft flesh of infancy.

But the competition
that measures fruition
is not fair with its count.
For the ease
of taking the disease
assumes that all was peace
before the start.

For some
the scar is skin
and the flesh is a sin
that isn't told.
And the ink needs first
to become blood
that runs under the scalp.
And the bruise is the body,
and the face is a burn
of the first degree.

For those, the peeling skin is whole
and the broken bone is complete
And the pain is felt
when the limbs melt
to become like an infant child you see.

But that kind of pain
doesn't make a meal
for the diner gets to decide
which sorrow is real.
A broken bone is something to show
while a whole body is something we all know.

So my vein's ink doesn't dry
and the surgical procedures I endured
are no story to tell.

For scissors that mend
are not like scissors that cut.

All that is left is the corridor
with the feast to its right,
and its reserved seats
for those
whose blood is white.

Roosevelt the Beautiful

By Frank Myles

"Roosevelt the Beautiful"
O beautiful construction guys,
For somber waves of grey,
No water or electricity
Among the mounting pain!
Roosevelt! O Roosevelt!
God shed his help on we
And down thy road with snow and mud
From Stimpson to Greeley!

Muse

By Liz Early

You whisper in my ear
reading my soul,
divining my purpose.
Grant me the words
to say what rests in my heart.
They come, your gift to me,
creating beautiful melodies.

Can We Live Our Lives Like This?

By Liz Early

Can we truly live our lives like this?
As mere shadows of ourselves?
Going into the sun and being harshly
burned instead of gently warmed?
Walking as if in a fog, on a clear spring day?
Can we suffer so beautifully and despairingly?

Place Description

By Liz Early

The bookcases loom, filled to bursting with tomes, novels, theses, dainty stories and epic tales. The lights flicker overhead illuminating the table tucked in the corner, covered with scattered papers and notebooks. People occasionally walk by, stopping only when they need to pick up a book. The solitude makes the air feel old, but the light keeps it from being oppressive. Dust particles dance through the air, pushed around by turning pages. A single figure sits with her back to a shelf, completely absorbed in her reading.

By Jon Plaisted

The Garden

If I ever kiss you
and my tongue, like a hand
reaches into your mouth
as through an open window,
to grasp an empty vase,
to cradle it in your garden
and fill it with water, then drink
with lips on the faucet, without guard,
the hard metal, strong against your cheek,
water spilling like wine,
while in the red dusk
a bluebird flashes across the rooftop
and turns to a cardinal,
a lady bug climbs your shoulder
at the press of your blouse to my skin,
even your sandals are wet—
take them off,
walk in the grass
and finally lay down, the vase
full in my hand,
feel the tall, green stems,
the turn of petals, curling, purple,
feel my tongue within you,
my breathing out
my breathing in.

Mmmmmm

Manson, Mao, Marilyn Monroe,
Martyrs of mayhem, how far will we go?
Methedrine, Mai Tai, sweet Mary Jane,
Mindless numbing, we must ease the pain.
Malls, Mail Order, Mercedes-Benz,
Material greed, want with no end.
Mister, Ms, Grand Madame,
Manifold titles that just hide the name.
Mammon, Messiah, Maitreya, Mab,
Marxist morphine, the drug that God gave...

Our culture of murder,
It denies holy madness.
Preferred masturbation,
Beloved mediocrity,
The intimate media,

This is the way to hell.

Prayer to the Power of Writing

Introit
Now I set me down to write,
I pray the muse my soul enlight.
And if I scrib for goodness sake,
I pray the publisher my work to take.

Adoration
Force of recording, power of letter and word,
Thou who art G.B. Shaw in the west,
Tsan-Chien in the east,
Willy the Shakes in the north,
And Thoth in the land of sand,
Thou art mighty alone,
Bringing your gifts of fable and folk tale,
Prose and poem.
Thou fillest the hours and the mind with
Dream and nightmare, hope and fear,
Knowledge and laughter.
Power of alphabet, word, phrase, and paragraph
All rest in thy holy hand.

Exhortation
I beseech Thee, power of pen, plume, and brush,,
Grant me patience to pick and edit,
Wisdom to see that not all I write is crap,
And the wherewithal to perhaps,
By your great kindness and guidance,
Turn the tale of my darkening days
Into a really nifty short story
In the sword and sorcery vein.

Exorcism
This I ask in honor and reverence,
And I release you to do my will.
If you don't, I will come looking for you...

By John Rapkiewicz, Jr.

Summer Sun Dress

A pretty pure white
summer sun dress
glitters from a distance
As all eyes gaze.
It reflects the light
with an appearance of a divine glow.
The lovely lady fits it well.
Beauty difficult to conceive.
She then smiles
now there is something brighter
then her her pretty pure white
summer sun dress

Spaced

Dream
Dream a little dream for me.
Cast out the line and float endlessly.
Close your eyes on guiding wings
Drift away from dismal things.
Glaze upon the bright filled sky.
Glide alongside a celestial tide.
Place
Place your fingers against the strings.
A strum of a chord means everything.
A world obscured, lost, and empty;
Sparks desire to make it all plenty.
A pulsing sound from a single note,
Dissolves all hindrance to a tiny mote.
Play
Play a little song for me.
Hear the sound of another key.
There you see a broken sun.
Hard to get any work done.
We all carry these heavy stones,
All of them breaking our fragile bones
Take
Take time away
It's making us all old and gray.
Running around like a lunatic
Bending backwards is a silly trick.
If you think you can ride the biggest wave.
You'll find yourself in an early grave.

Tree Life

We grow from seeds
Fall in love like leaves
Part ways like branches
We grow from seeds
Stand firm by our roots
Cut down to our stumps.
We grow from seeds
Sheltered in bark
Eroded by fungus.

Gas On E.

The gas is on E.
Running on fumes
Amazing we actually got so far
The wrong turns and arguments
really spent the milage.
The gas is on E.
Yet we're at a station
we fill up and head back on the road
The wheels still spin and turn
We can make it.
The gas will sometimes be on E.
But we can always fill it.

The Sleeping Beauty

Prom dress in her closet.
Letters from colleges on her desk.
The sun begins to rise.
But she'll never wake up.

As she slept that morning.
Her head quaked inside.
Her breath slipped away.
and she'll never wake up.

They found here lying there
A call to 911 and C.P.R.
Rush to the hospital.
But she never wake up.

Tubs and monitors.
Tears and hopes all in a room.
Waiting for her eye to open.
Yet she'll never wake up.

Hearts together in prayers.
Hand clutched tight.
A pulled cord; a flat line
She never woke up.

The Long Road

As the fog comes crawling on asphalt
As if a pale white ghost longs for the
warmth of life,
I drive through that night with you in
my mind.
Rest well there, as the notion of hold-
ing you bursts with light
force me to smile with delight.

About six hours in my drive home,
My ends eyes fall heavy as if anchors
weigh them down.
But with strength I hold well thanks to
caffeine
My hands bound to the tiring wheel
I cruise safely through our ordeal.

Wait for me this night
as I drive the long road back to you
please stay awake for my kiss
an fall to sleep together in bliss



My last Haiku War
I mean I'll still submit them
After I leave here

David, I'm not sure
That word you coined, "sucklement"
Sounds like a bad thing

Oh my god you guys
They insulted Kenny's mom
You friggin bastards

roman sheydvasser:
poetry virtuoso
j k ur a fag

Have you considered...
Dietary sucklements?
Yeah, I got nothing

You're just mad because
We are all saying what you
Were always thinking

people really like haikus
sometimes they write them on purpose
sometimes not, you know?

He let out a sigh
Continued on page who knows
Look, I'm The Statesman

I am sending this
To the street addresses of
All of your mothers

haikus: proto-tweets.
brevity is essential.
'cuz nobody cares.

I can't write Haikus
Only 'bout video games
That is all I do

Whatever, who cares
I can count syllables, dudes
That's all Haikus are

i rap best in east
two too can tu-tu can sam
lambskin tame-beat, beast

Malbec is perhaps
the best I've ever had, yo.
Just fifteen pesos.

Number thirty four
You say you are thirty five
But your bat moves slow

Too afraid to fail
Never brave enough to try
What am I doing here?

That wasn't profound
Round two will be much more deep
Kenny's mom is hott

Was that Ortiz, Matt?
He ain't a top 20 bat
Maybe "Top Hundred."

You should just call this
"Literary Sucklement"
Because it sucks, dude

That's not surprising
Since his mom is a classy
15 dollar date

plagued by graphics woes
apple picked a good weekend
there goes my thesis

The people are the
Heroes now; Behemoth pulls
The peasants plow. Boop.

Who's My biggest fan?
That would be Kenny's mother.
Gentlemen, that's all.

i was trying to
be william s burroughs
oh geez, did it fail?

Have you considered...
Dietary sucklements?
Yeah, I got nothing

Who is this Kenny?
Why's his mom so expensive?
15 bucks? Too much.

Is there life on Mars?
Life that you would want to meet?
Or only spiders?



