



ray solar

DRECK

magazine

quarterly

volume one
winter 2005
free to the freaks



photo by
kinsey oleman

the greatest thing since

xeroxed wonder bread!

literature * poetry * raves & diatribes * criticism * eye candy *
reasons to be beautiful

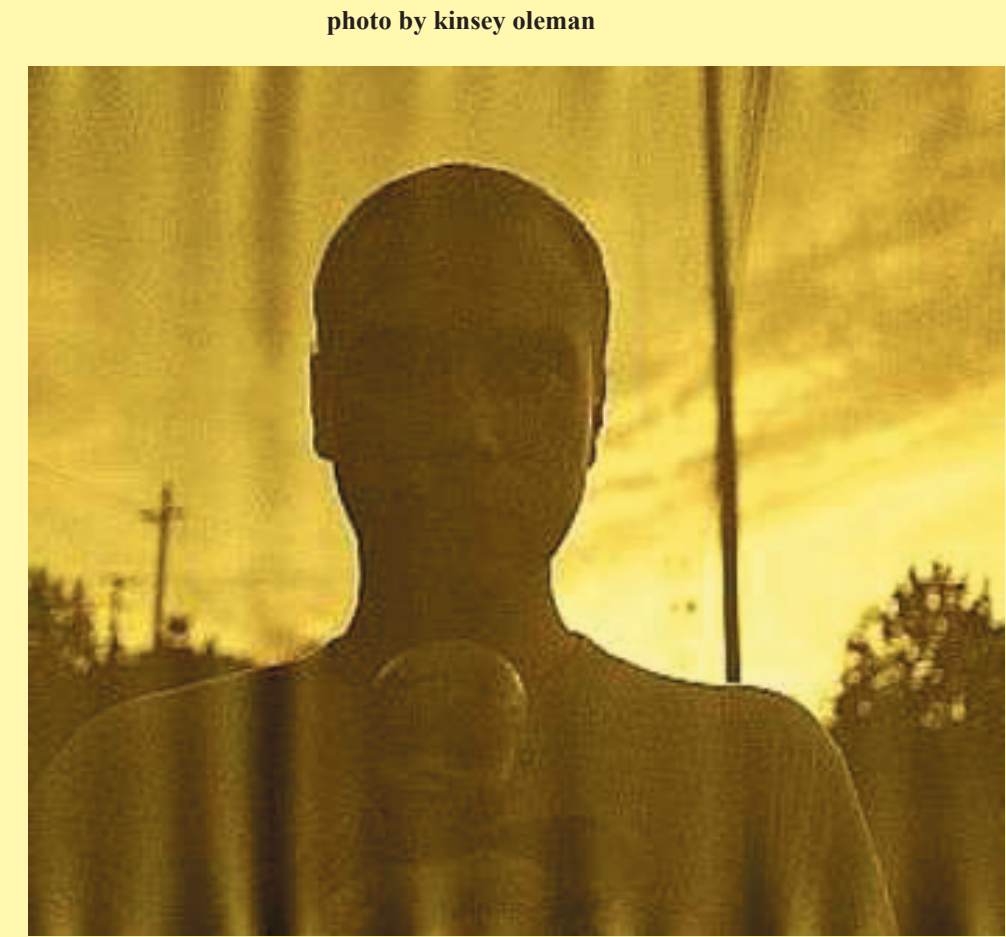


photo by kinsey oleman

DRECK

magazine

VOLUME ONE

PORTLAND, OREGON

WINTER 2005

SPONSORED BY GBUAPC

(GAY BOYS UNITED AGAINST
PROSTATE CANCER)

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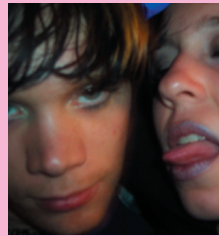
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“moth” by jayson batten

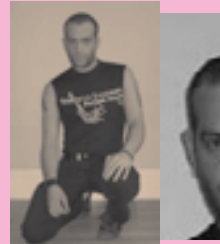
Meet the Dreckians!

to name just a few...



Caedmon McCarren

Enjoys being licked by friends. But what can be said about Caedmon that hasn't already been said about chocolate? He knows more about you than you do, which would be creepy, if Caedmon weren't so cute.



Charlie Vazquez

Charlie Vazquez is the self-published author of the novel **Buzz and Israel**, as well as other stories that get gooey when you read them. Charlie talks to himself often in three languages. He can be reached at his website, **www.firekingpress.com**



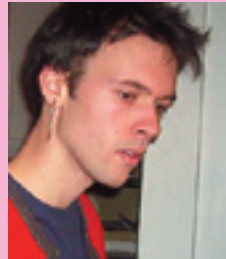
Ms. Zigzag

She exposes the unexposed with zigs and zags. You can find more of her at www.mszigzag.com. She is also a life coach, spoken-word poet, rock climber, hell raiser and tends to fall in love 7.9 times a day.



Frances Firecrotch

Should come with a warning label: DANGER - HIGHLY FLAMMABLE.



Dylan Benedict

Is an herbologist, licensed massage therapist, guitarist, songwriter, oil painter, amateur male knitter, and woodworker. In fact, Dylan has the best-looking wood in Portland.



Evan Dumas

Just a boy. A deviant but doesn't show it readily. Current interest: zombies.



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Tony le Tigre, Sushuma

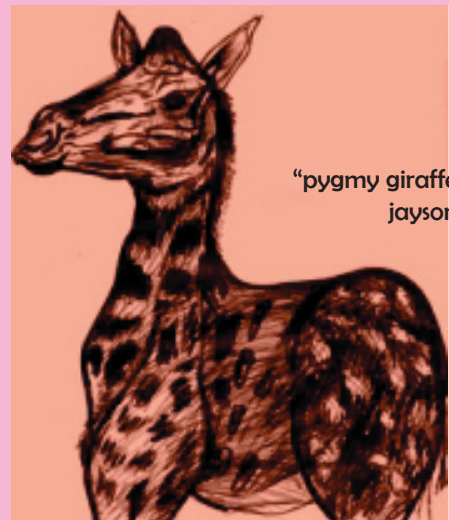
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Dedicated to all our mothers, without whose fabulous fallopian tubes none of us would be here.



“pygmy giraffe” by jayson batten



photo by courtney garrison

EXIT PRICE

affection, sexual intrigue in incipience
is a glorious match
poised before the firecracker
(illegal in some states
nothing is illegal in my california)

but flames are fickle or flames are denied
these same sentiments burning in solitude
sing a gaping hole through outer confidence
right through to the heart was better off in repose

passion introverted becomes inverted
and I'm stuck with this cursed tenderness to which I'm predisposed

I'd never expect you to be a saint
just never thought my allure would grow so faint
so fast in your eyes
(if I'm accurate in what I surmise)

eyes reveal conviction
your skin says socialism
now your hair tells of
the privileged men who will put their hands there

drunken on a pedestal
you lift your shirt to flash stomach
with a mischievous grin
would adore if I'd made it in
side to side, it's an abhorrent ride
not worth the exit price

-kevin langson



"The Morning After" by Damien Snakebones

dreck: n. Slang
Trash, especially inferior
merchandise.

[German, *dirt*, *trash*, and Yiddish
drek, *excrement* both from Middle
High German drec, from Old
High German. See sker-3 in Indo-
European Roots.]

drecky adj.



DON'T MAKE THE PARADIGM - BREAK THE PARADIGM

Hi, Humans! My name is Tony le Tigre (although on occasion I use the more human-sounding sobriquet of Anthony Lockwood), and I decided to start the magazine you now see because it was high time for me to overcome my antisocial tendencies, and I figured the best way to do that was to initiate a collaborative project here in this marvelous town where social gravity is at a minimum and creative insanity at a maximum. Once I took the first step I was amazed at how quickly things began to fall into place. Some very wonderful and enthusiastic people materialized almost immediately, and often just in the nick of time. My original concepts evolved with their input, and I'm sure will continue to evolve with their input. We hope this is the beginning of something great that will last as long (and be at least as much decadent fun) as the Roman Empire!

We of DRECK Magazine believe that in a town as weird, wonderful, and alternative as Portland there should be a queer-oriented publication that reflects the weird, wonderful alternativeness of our communities without compromise, conformity or sanitization. Notice I said QUEER-ORIENTED rather than QUEER. Although the current cultural definition of queer as gay or lesbian will certainly pervade our pages, we wish to embrace a broader definition of this tortured word as an adjective referring to a person who deviates from the societal norm in any number of ways.

We want DRECK to be a place where people can be as political or as apolitical as they want; and to have a core of seriousness and artistic quality beneath a healthy veneer of humor and frivolity. If you don't like what you see here, but you support our goals, don't just whine about it; help make it better.

This first issue is just 30 pages, but rest assured DRECK is bound to grow.

Oh, and although everyone is certainly entitled to their own political opinions, it is a fact that Gay Republicans suck dick.

Cheers for queers!

(Of every kind, shape and size.)



Portland, Oregon
November 2005

Feel free to send electronic submissions, correspondence, compliments, insults, and suggestions to dedril@hotmail.com (P.O. Box coming soon!)

GAY IS DEAD

LONG LIVE THE UNDERGROUND!

by
jack
malebranche



GAY IS DEAD.

The word ‘gay’ never truthfully described homosexual behavior; the word ‘gay’ was used to deliberately obscure the truth. Over the last decades, the word ‘gay’ was used to remove the sex from homosexuality, to whitewash sodomy. The word ‘gay’ was an ensign flown over a movement that sought not liberation, but submission and assimilation. The word ‘gay’ was used to victimize and emasculate, and to render palatable that which has been anathema to the masses for thousands of years. ‘Gay Rights’ became a cause *celebre* among entertainment industry do-gooders (ever in need of a cause *celebre*). The general public lapped up the sanitized, impotent stereotypes and sad clowns; young homosexuals adopted this vapid, pre-fabricated false identity. A generation gained sympathy at the expense of dignity.

But sympathy has its limits.

As ‘gays’, homosexuals infiltrated the mainstream and co-opted its most mundane niceties. Like good slaves, they sought approval and deferentially embodied what they imagined their masters expected of them. But they became brazen, and imagined themselves equals to their beloved whip-wielders. ‘Gays’ dared to suggest that their relationships were comparable to heterosexual monogamy, dared to suggest that they deserved equal and fair treatment under the law. ‘Gays’ demanded marriage ‘rights’, even as civil unions seemed inevitable. The cheeky cunts forgot their place, their status as undesirables. ‘Gay’ leaders in isolated, urban pockets of social enlightenment and stifling political correctness mistook sympathy and a polite condescension for genuine goodwill and acceptance.

On November 2nd, 2004, American heterosexuals in 11 states re-asserted their authority; the ‘gays’ were reminded of their place. In many of those states, even practical domestic partnership agreements are now in question. The push for ‘gay marriage’ fueled a backlash that now has the momentum to erode the hard-gained civil rights progress of the past three decades. And for what? For a word. ‘Marriage’. Even as ‘gays’ in one tiny Northeastern state now have the privilege (not right) to use that word, an entire nation is mobilized against the ‘gays’ in their midst.

The ‘Gay Rights Movement’ is dead. The ‘Gay Agenda’ (never the myth ‘gays’ pretended it was) has failed. It was doomed from its onset, because its objectives were at odds with powerful societal controls.

America has spit in the face of ‘gays’ who dared assert they were ‘the same as’ heterosexuals. They are not and never will be. Even if the ‘gay agenda’ were to succeed, success will be fleeting. The argument citing ‘crimes against nature’ is inseparable from homosexual behavior itself, and only waits to be used to ‘cleanse the population’ by the next generation in need of a convenient scapegoat.

With ‘gay marriage’, the ‘gay rights movement’ sought to normalize and institutionalize rational hedonism. The religious right recognized this, and built an empire of fear to combat a phenomena which would have made it seem all-the-more absurd. If hedonism became the rule, it seemed virtually assured that the stifling ascetic mandates of the dying dogmas which the righteous seek to impose on the populace would soon be completely cast aside in favor of decadent pleasure-seeking and self-service.

Rational hedonism is a threat. It is a threat to traditional order, to the Law of the Service revered by a race of willing slaves who cry out for imposed guidelines, codes of Good and Evil. Even those who have rejected religion impose moral codes, rights and wrongs; even atheists want to obey, to be ‘good’. The average man often fears his own carnal nature, fears a world without authoritarian controls. Rational hedonism is the code of the *übermensch*, the superman who transcends the slavish, death worshipping nature of the common man. The *übermenschen* are few, and they are natural outlaws and outcasts. This will be true no matter how the tide of public opinion fluctuates, no matter how ‘acceptable’ any form of hedonism becomes. In the absence of public approval, the hedonist will always enjoy a vibrant underground of counter-cultural delights. The Law of the Forbidden guarantees the draw of this shadow world for those who struggle to remain among the morally upright; forbidden pleasures titillate and torment those who dread the carnal animal that lies within--who fear that they, too,

Grand Rapids, MN

Death in the viewfinder
closing in fast
pain is unbearable
please make it last

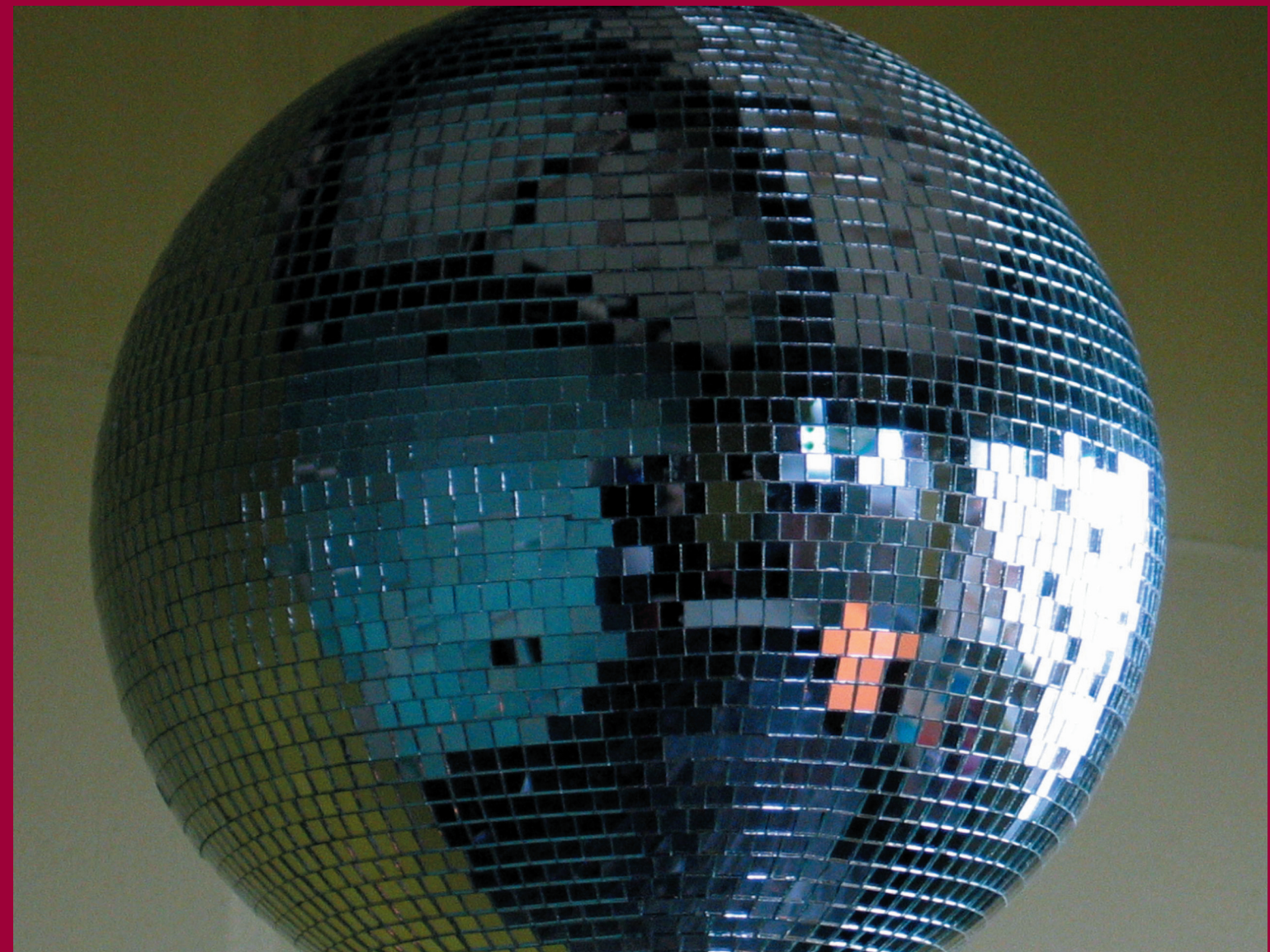
Kids are so loud
grate in my ears
wolf in my belly-
kid disappears

Death in the viewfinder
swift on the hunt
friends fall away
and I bear the brunt

Pills are so gentle
whisper of sleep
an ocean of vodka
my soul pray to keep

Mom in her wheelchair
sis in my bed
me in my Exile
better off dead

-tony le tigre



“Disco Ball” by Lukia Costello

Three Dreams

i.

can't run so fast on fine grain sand
with vultures screechscratching at your feet
dress torn to ribbons catching the wind
like a mane of streaming green
why is it that the invisible things
seem to matter the most ?

was it a walk thru someone else's nightmare
or perhaps a past life memory
or was it a small girl that i caught running out of the left corner
of my green eyes
i wonder where she was going to
“but the thing is kathryn
she really looked like you”

there was a pharos with a fire to light a dark sea
i could taste the brine at the moment when breathe in
so vivid so surreal
but stranger things will happen
prophecies are fulfilled everyday
so the psalms say

sand so soft and fine and white with sun-bleached bones and shells
something died here
something aged here
and which happened to me i could not tell
but i saw that queer small girl running
from shadow spectres across the bastendorf
and i could swear kathryn
it was your screams that came out of her

ii.

she said emily would not let her move the house
as i gazed out behind the venetian blinds thru the drizzle
and that porcelain face turned to stare back at me
thru the dollhouse window

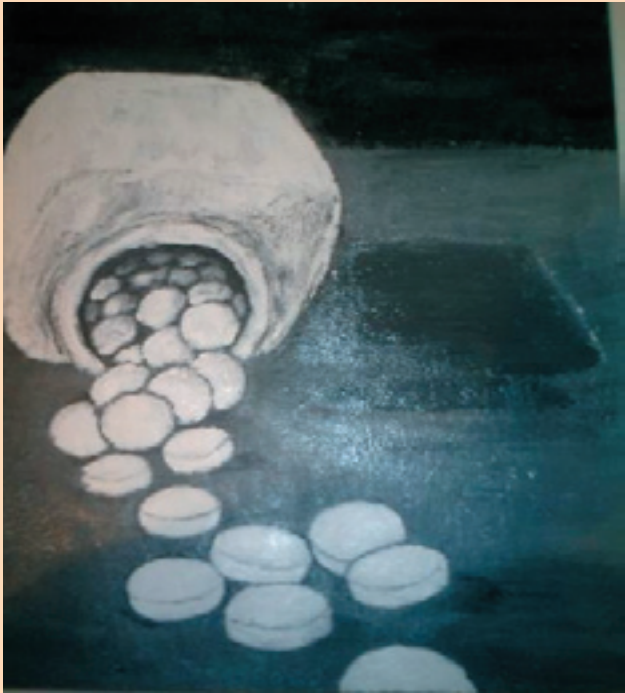
iii.

i tried to save them both
distracted by a newscast of a personal tragedy
with a commentary by an auspicious anchorman
then i heard the water running...
and my heart choked me in my throat
as i saw the two pinkish blue bodies
floating lifeless in their seconds-old bath
only one could be recessitated
and the mothers were both on vacation
while i stewed in my self pity
i forgot the world around me
and murdered my two babies
gypsy woman what does this mean?

-copyright St. Caedmon



“kill me pills” by Louise D.D.



might all too easily sink away into some sweet, sinful abyss. Like the anti-obscenity crusader who is all too familiar with the ins and outs of the obscene; those too concerned with the lifestyles of hedonists know well the debauched and wicked workings of their own conflicted minds.

In recent years, homosexuality and other counter-cultural ideas have been too quickly absorbed into the mass-market juggernaut, sanitized and fed back to the public as pabulum. Vital countercultures that thrived under the noses of the ‘morally upright’ masses became indistinct, lifeless, devoid of meaning. Homosexuality has always existed; there always has been and ever will be a homosexual subculture, a hedonistic demimonde that inspires great outsider art, sharp social comment and unbridled sexual satisfaction. It is an underground that cannot be destroyed, a zeitgeist that rises again and expresses itself anew in each generation. Homosexuals have ever been outlaws; our history is a history of subversive action--not the history of a downtrodden people or race. ‘Gay’ was an inadequate mask for this truth, a truth instinctually recognized by a fearful mob. It is just as well. The word gay was a sheepskin disguise for a pack of wolves, cutesy gift-wrap on a counter-cultural bomb. Because of the recent herd backlash, that bomb has again begun ticking.

‘Gay’ is dead.

Long live the homosexual underground!

Jack Malebranche
December 2004 C.E./XXXIX A.S.

The Selfish Bitch That I Am

by Ms. Zigzag

I was told from childhood to take care of those around me. “Told” through language and through observation, also I was “told” through social programming and by watching the women around me, namely my mother and grandmother. I watched my Polish-American mother cater to my father and grandfather, doing all the cooking, the cleaning, fixing my fathers woes and caring for everyone but herself. My mother and grandmother lost sleep fixing my sniffles and fixing everything between laundry and death.

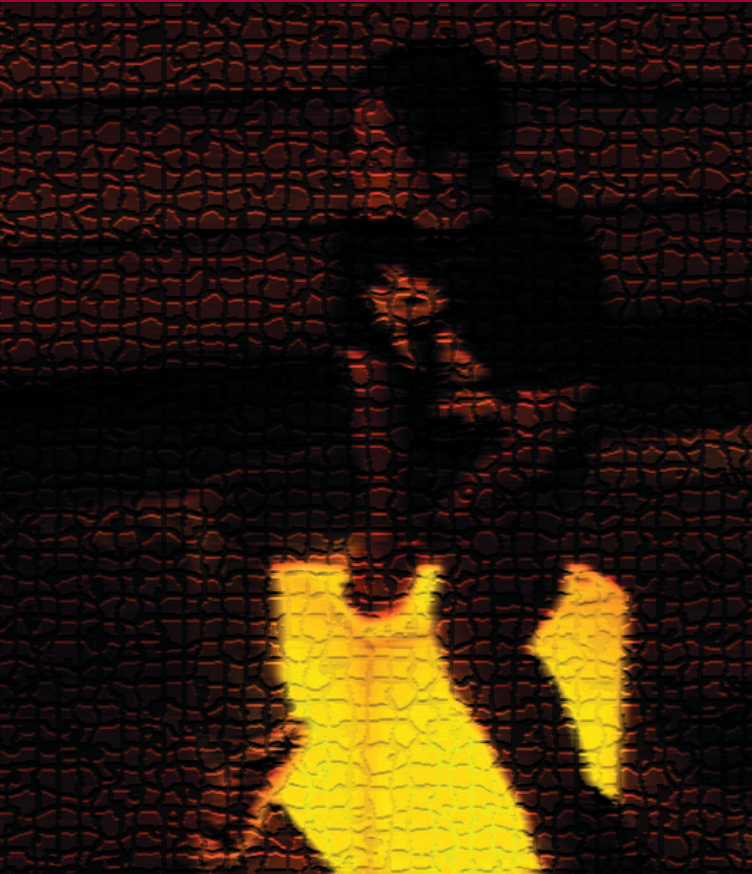
My mother and grandmother never said no and I was taught at a young age that, in a woman’s life, everyone else should come first.

So when I was called “selfish” recently by a former boyfriend, I immediately felt like a failure of some sort. No, it wasn’t because I wanted more sex, or because I ate all the Oreos, or because we only rented “my” movies. It went deeper than that. It was about not offering support. It was about me not being there, or showing enough love. And, truthfully, he had valid points. But the kicker was that I had some heavy shit going down in my life. I had my own heart to mend, and there was no energy left for me to take care of anyone but myself at the time.

But the word selfish haunted me for weeks. Selfish...me?...hmmmmm... .was it time for a wake up call? I mean after all, it’s my desire to serve others. I’ve been a teacher, a counselor and instructor to all ages, and I am currently a life coach and a writer, so I value the aspect of giving and helping others.

Then one of my uber-cool chick friends said magic words. She said, “Why were you selfish, because you were taking care of yourself?”

And it hit me like a ton of bricks. I stuttered , “Uh, yeah, ” and felt like a retard for not seeing the light (but at least I no longer felt like a selfish retard.)



It’s taken me 36 years to learn how to say “no.” Somehow I always felt obligated to say yes first, especially to people I love. However, over the course of about a year I’ve learned that “no” is the new black. It can actually feel good to say no, to clear up space in my head, to let go of feeling obligated to take care of others if it means jeopardizing my own mental / emotional health.

I don’t remember when I learned to speak, but “no” was one of the most important discoveries of my childhood. “Yes” is only a good word when it comes from the heart and if the heart speaks a few good yes’s it most likely needs to speak few good no’s to balance it out. I think the secret to the word no is making peace with saying it internally. Check your heart. If the no feels good, say it. In the long run your friends and lovers will respect you more for keeping it real. (And if that makes you a selfish bitch, so be it.)



HEY, I KNOW...

ASK SPITTLES!

Lovers, lovers...one at a time! Now, for the premiere of this column—as well as in toasting all things “Dreck”—I have good news. My patent on blood-favored chewing gum has cleared and we’ll begin production soon! The human flesh-flavored “suckers” weren’t a hit, but since they tasted like ham...oh never mind. And I thought I had no life. Well heck, maybe I thought I was you...we have a caller...talk to me, bitch...

Dear Spittles, (God of Blood and All Things Crimson):

I'm experiencing this ageist problem. I don't look my age so I attract younger guys—but as soon as they find out my age (50) they don't want to talk anymore—especially online. Do you think most young guys are afraid of what others will say if they hook up or date someone older [due to peer pressure] or do they really have a deep-down desire to get banged into the next parallel universe by an older man? I used to be younger and remember what it was like to be chased by older creeps (there are young creeps also!) but I challenged myself and had sex with older guys and realized it was a hell of a lot of fun. After all, young guys will one day experience being old, so don't you think they should experiment? What'll happen when they realize they aren't pristine chicken-headed twinks anymore? What do you think?

BEEF in BC

Dearest BEEF in BC:

So why not *lie* about your age? Shit, I would. If you're fifty and look forty, you *deserve* to lie! Plus they're just a piece of ass, right? I consulted the Lord on your quest and this is what the Prince of Darkness had to say... Yes, young people in general—and especially queers—are extremely insecure about their often fledgling sexualities. Personally BEEF, I've dated men of various ages during my fifteen-plus-year career as a sodomy artist and arrived at the same conclusion you've expressed. Sex with older men is hot! Can y'all hear me—HOT! Not only are older gents more experienced lovers—the Greeks figured that out millennia ago!—it's *inconceivable* to me to think that a young man can hone his lovemaking bravado with men in his age range alone.

But unfortunately BEEF, the media bombards the kind of boys you like with a sleek, cosmopolitan ideal of what a “man” should be—rich, bitchy, shaved, perfumed, shallow and selfish. (Um...sounds like a *girl* to me!) Yet this all seems strange to me, since when I was a younger chicken (POK-POK sound)—throughout my 20s especially—I openly dated older men, much to the cheers of my buddies! My advice to younger readers looking at this situation from the other side of the Looking Glass is this: Seek out that hot daddy fantasy—I *doubt* you'll regret it. *HONK*

Our next quest:

Dear Spittles:

I have recently started sexual role-playing and other “activities” that would fall under the BDSM umbrella. And though me and my “Master” have been having fun with what I consent to, there is a tendency on his part to creep outside of the activities we agree to during our brief negotiations. Last time we played, I felt a little violated and deceived. What would you do?

Toilet Baby Boy in PDX

Dearest Toilet Baby Boy:

What would *I* do? Well, let me try and relate to your situation firstly and then I'll drop a bomb of advice that might help you feel better about your toilet fetish. I do a monthly appearance at Queer Fetish in Portland (see: www.queerfetish-r.us) and this event involves a spanking/flagellation session of the party attendees that *wish* to be spanked. Well Toiletboy, I was ready to “bring it on” when a very *serious* lady brought her “friend” to me—to warm her “friend” up for her. I know this etiquette well as a clown top; if another dominant is nice enough to share a slave with you—treat the slave fairly. The “bottom” refused to speak to me (this happens often to clowns) yet instantly pulled her pants down to reveal teal-colored cotton panties.



continued from page 23

Jake stared back in disbelief. Was she saying what he thought she was saying? “You can have another beer,” he gulped.

Sam smiled big. “I could tell you was a *sensitive* man, Jake,” she said, patting his knee maternally.

Cleo burst from inside the house and called to Sam, “Girly, you gotta come here and listen to this phone message Carl left for me last night!”

Samantha dropped the dandelions, strode up the steps and into the house.

There was a silent, thinking moment. Then Ryland came out and sat by Jake. Jake said to Ryland, “She’s like a beautiful house with nobody living in it.”

Ryland laughed and rolled his eyes. “Dude, you’re trippin’.”

It was an indelible, mythical morning—but like all mornings it had to end. Chad and Tommy and Jake and Rusty and Hillary left to drive back to Evergreen. They caught a last glimpse of Samantha and Cleo sitting on Sam’s bed, wrapped in their private conversation as they said goodbye and swept out the door. There was still the stack of unpaid bills on the living room floor. Ryland still needed to find a

job; but first he needed to sleep it off. He curled up on the couch like a cat and slept.

Things on Witch Hazel Lane went downhill rapidly. Cleo called in “sick” one too many times and was fired. Samantha went to work drunk and was let go shortly thereafter: People were starting to talk and Omar had to end their affair. She blew all her money on booze and couldn’t make rent for June. Ryland got a job at a bakery, but it was too little, too late. Sam and Cleo met some smooth-talkers from California and went down to LA with them for a few days, which turned into a week—then two weeks. Ryland reluctantly sold a bunch of guitar equipment to pay rent, but the other bills remained unpaid.

Garbage bags gathered, uncollected, in the front yard; the unwashed dishes in the kitchen remained unwashed. The stray cat they’d taken in got knocked up and gave birth to a litter, and soon hungry kittens were swarming all over the house, meowing plaintively. Ryland looked down and saw their hungry desperate faces and beady eyes and he hated them. He’d never wanted them in the first place.

Finally, in mid-June, Sam and Cleo returned to pack their things. Sam was going to LA, to either become a famous actress or carry her self-destructive tendencies to their inevitable conclusion. Cleo, with nothing better to do, was going along for the ride. On their last day, Ryland and Jackie were reclined on the couch, high on heroin, and some bitter words were exchanged. Jackie called Cleo a bitch and a user; Cleo called Jackie and Ryland junkie losers—fair enough, on both sides. Samantha remained mute, but left a note for Ryland (which he found later, in her bare bedroom with the empty mattress). It was an apology note, saying it was true she was a user, that she didn’t mean to hurt him, that if she had money to leave him she would. It ended with some poignant advice: Don’t spend your life chasing dragons.

Ryland crumpled it up and threw it in the trash can, yet the next day he retrieved it, smoothed it back out and put it away in a box he was packing for when he was to move, at the end of the month. On the day Ryland moved out, he saw a sticker that was stuck to the wall above Samantha’s bedroom door. It bore a quote from a Dorothy Parker limerick:

*Drink and dance and laugh and lie
Love, the reeling midnight through
For tomorrow we shall die!
(But, alas, we never do.)*

At Union Station, on the eve of their departure, Sam and Cleo checked their suitcases and made a beeline to the adjoining Wilf’s Bar. They had an hour before it was time to board their train—time enough to suck down a few drinks for the road.

“Oh shit, I left my bong at the house!” Cleo cried, as the waiter set two whiskey sours down on the table. “Should I try to call them?”

“You think Jackie’s gonna jump in her van and drive it down to us?” Sam laughed. “I don’t think she likes us enough to do that.” She tasted the drink and it was just the way she liked it: eighty-percent whiskey, twenty-percent sour.

When it was time to get in line for the train, they threw some bills down on the table and hightailed out of the bar. They felt bad that they couldn’t leave more of a tip, but it was going to be a long train voyage and they would need more drinks before the night was done. It didn’t take long for the waiter to clear the table after they’d gone. Just a couple glasses smeared with lipstick, and some ashes in a tray.

The End



FOR THE RECORD

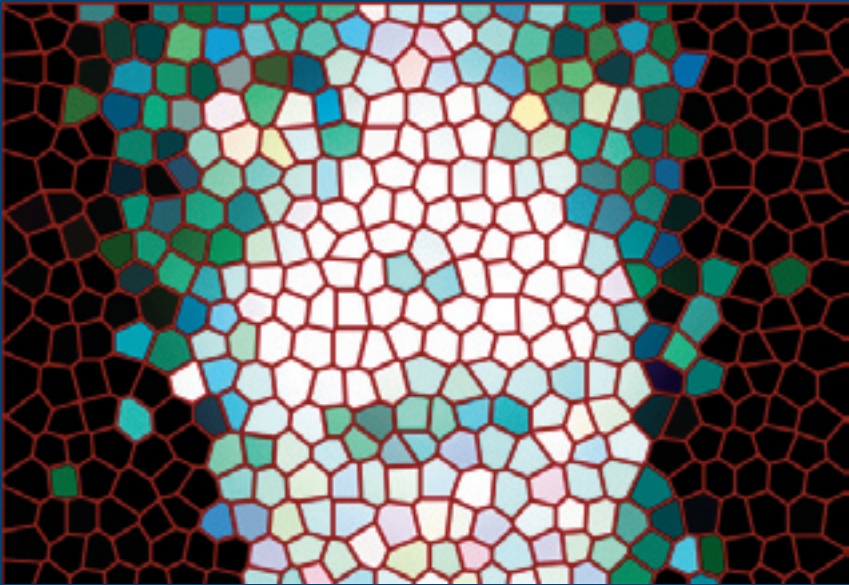
by dylan benedict

Zbigniew Preisner Requiem For My Friend

Zbigniew Preisner’s “Requiem for my Friend” is one of the most beautiful and intense pieces of music I’ve ever heard. Both stark and dynamic, it employs choral and solo voices, organ, piano, strings, saxophone, percussion and flutes. Most people would classify it as classical music, but it defies simple classification. Seamlessly it weaves together elements of metal, goth, jazz, new age, opera, experimental, and classical to create a portrait of tragedy. An overwhelming sense of loss and regret pervades it’s entirety allowing us to feel the immense impact this friend had on Priesner. It is not all sadness though. The peace and resignation that must come with death, of a life that no longer has any worries, is here as well. This amazing piece of music has been lost to me in a forgotten dusty tape box for four years! I encourage you all to find a copy of this and listen to it over and over and think about the beautiful pain and tragedy that is present in all of our lives.

Wolves in the Throne Room

Wolves In The Throne Room.... Rule! They are a great semi-local(Olympia) metal band. They have two self-released “ demo” c.d.’s. I use the term “demo” loosely because they are both long and well-recorded, packaged etc... They have a full length coming out on Vendlus records in 2006. The band consists of Aaron on drums and Rick and Nathan both playing guitar and singing. It’s all here, the false harmonics, the sweeping arpeggios, unrelenting drums, big beautiful chords, guttural screams, acoustic breakdowns, great solos, crushing riffs, this shit is epic (twenty minute songs). In my opinion they are the best American metal band outside of S.F./Bay area playing this style of metal (a blend of Doom and Black metal). I think you can purchase CD’s from their website (<http://wolves.satanosphere.net>), otherwise catching them live is a must, they play Portland fairly regularly (Hotel, Foodhole, etc). Go see them play, buy their merchandise, and support this world-class Northwest band.



As the beating began, we held a microphone by the bottom’s mouth and he (or was it she?) unleashed a series of grunts that rattled the tiny room with terror and uncertainty. I began with light patters and slowly built up to sizzling stings. I gave him/her a sharp “sizzler” on the right cheek and asked *did you like that?* There was a vague response of “yes” on his/her behalf and we continued with sharp slashes of my whip. I noticed that my subject exhibited—what seemed like—involuntary seizures and I attributed this to *excitement*. I decided we were done and gestured for him/her to step off the stage. *You, off the stage right now and thank you very much*, with a hand on his shoulder—gently guiding her in the right direction. He/she squirmed out of my gentle grip and threw his/her hands toward the sky and drooled and moaned—like a moose—like really LOUD. And then I realized somebody had played a horrible joke on me!

One should never put a disabled or mentally-challenged individual in the hands of a sadomasochist clown. I *had* to question the motives of the other dominant. And though you may have a hard time believing that a butt-beating clown such as I can be ethical Toiletboy, always remember this: The Bacchanalian Rites of Lore are only permissible betwixt those of *consensual agreement*: Never under any circumstances trust someone who wants to play outside of that basic contract—especially when you’re just getting to know them. Meditate on the concept of TRUST and how that applies to your Master—some Masters are simply *losers*. Apply this to all aspects of your life and you’ll discover a new you....

Love and blood darlings!

xoxo Spittles

(Send quests and bloodmail to: askspittles@yahoo.com)



“Converse Shoe” by Louise D.D.



Kill Me, I'm Beautiful

by tony le tigre

Samantha was having the most heart-wrenching dream, about Mike, and was glad for once when the alarm went off and made her conscious. She'd been crying in the dream and was surprised her pillow wasn't soaked like a sponge. She pressed Snooze once, then twice, and finally rose from the mattress, feeling like the Bride of Swamp Thing. Orange-yellow sunlight splashing through her single tapestry-clad window made her blink, and for a moment, under the residual disorientation of the dream, she thought she was back in Chico. In her Dad's house, maybe the day he put a loaded gun to her head and told her she could either leave his house and never come back, or he would splatter her brains all over the wall. But this was not the house she'd grown up in (and eventually fled from), and the state outside the window was not California, but Oregon. Portland, Oregon; the City of Roses and Raindrops; the city where, as Sam herself had vociferated to the cab driver who brought her home after the bar closed the night before, "Everyone is fucking nuts!" Portland, the haven she'd stumbled upon in her flight from Chico—in the wake of her breakup with Mike—determined to drink herself to death, and to look damn good doing it.

Which was why the one thing she had was clothes.

Her bedroom was pretty much just that: a bed and a room. It was like a room in a cheap hotel: a place to crash for the night; a room for someone who didn't plan on staying long. No frame and no foundation, just a mattress on the floor, an assortment of magazines strewn beside it and a poster (of Beck, besmirched with lipstick kisses) above it. A little pile of books and mementos sat in another corner and a brilliant (literally, in the morning-light) sunburst tapestry was the room's only decorative flourish.

But then there was the closet—the skirts and dresses and blouses and pants and shoes and accessories overflowing it, a material explosion in the midst of a Spartan desert of self-denial. There was a pair of fringed cowgirl boots next to a stack of Dolly Parton cassettes next to a copy of *The Portable Dorothy Parker*. She'd only read one story out of it, "Big Blonde," but she'd read that story a dozen times. Sam had been on a major drinking binge since she'd broken up with Mike and left Chico. But she'd broken up with Mike and left Chico because she'd been on a major drinking binge.

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30th
The Moon is conjunct with Pluto as it moves into Capricorn. A good sense of humour is essential to your survival today. Be resourceful when it comes to solving predicaments that abound, and remember where you were a year ago. Roommates will no doubt get under your skin today. Clear the tension by leaving silly notes. Indulge both the saint and the sinner in you today. Psychedelic rockers The Out Crowd take over Berbaty's this evening - a perfect compliment to this bizarre day.

31st
We end the year with a New Moon in Capricorn which forms a sextile with Saturn. Mercury is conjunct with Pluto. Don't bother with your resolutions until a few days from now. Intense conversations permeate the atmosphere. Don't allow yourself to fall under the dark clouds that loom. Get exercise this morning to combat the gloom, either by jogging through Washington Park or heading on down to your gym. Make alternate plans, just in case. Get everything in writing - having a list is a good idea for yourself today. Go over your affirmations. Chant in the shower. One of my favorites is: "Aum Kamine Namah", which is an adoration to Ganesha, asking him to fill your world with Love. Things you say will be taken with more gravity you intend, so choose your words wisely. Oh, and don't drive drunk my gorgeous creatures! You are so much wiser than that.

My advice for the coming year is simply this: Plan ahead, and forget not the path behind you. Never stop congratulating yourself and those around you. Keep your eyes on your dreams, for they are more possible in the coming months than ever before. Never doubt your ability to conquer the world. Love you all. Until next time - Mwah!

ST. CAEDMON



“Plate, Curtain, Couch” by Lukia Costello



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a bottle of beer with a lighter. Samantha stood on the sidewalk at the foot of the stairs looking up at him. Jake had the feeling (more powerful than ever) that she was a sorceress and a shape-shifter. She didn't say anything, but he knew she wanted a beer.

Pretending ignorance, he took another gulp and made some inane comment about how lovely it was outside. Samantha walked into the wild grass of the yard and came back with a bouquet of dandelions, which she twined, one by one, into her hair. She came back to the foot of the stairs and struck a pose of supplication, smiling up like a pagan princess: beseeching brown eyes, beautiful face, green-and-gold flower tiara. Suddenly, she was Goldberry from *The Fellowship of the Ring*, a timeless enchantress born of the River. She was too beautiful to be refused. Jake handed her a beer.

She took it like a starving person and drained half the liquid—in one long and greedy guzzle.

“Wow,” Jake said.

“I was thirsty,” she explained, wiping her mouth, very ladylike. Then, she unleashed the loudest burp Jake had ever heard. He was afraid dogs would start barking and riled neighbors would come buzzing out, like jostled wasps. Instead Chad came outside holding a steaming cup of tea. “Jeezus, that was loud!”

“I do apologize for mah *rewd-ness*...” Samantha genuflected in a charming southern belle accent. “That was not very ladylike at *awl*.”

Chad and Jake both looked at her.

“I wish we had a camera,” Jake said. Then he told her, “You should be an actress.”

Samantha laughed—a long laugh that started quietly and built to a loud whoop. “Sweetie, I am an actress,” she said in answer to their questioning looks. “Haven't you figured that out yet?”

“Well, I mean, an actress in a play,” Chad clarified.

Sam raised her eyebrows and her hands, palms up. “Isn't life itself kind of one big play?” she asked, and batted her long lashes.

The boys stared in silence. Chad ran inside again, leaving Sam alone with Jake.

She came and sat by Jake on the top step, took another guzzle and turned to him. “I need to do...*something*...so bad,” she confided. Her eyes were black hole magnets. “I haven't done...*something*...for so long.”

Oh, vicious circle.

“In ten years Sam will either be famous or dead,” Jackie said the other night, after an all-night coke-a-thon in that very house. “I like how, when I'm with her, shit's always *happening*.”

Within three years Jackie herself will be dead of a heroin overdose.

Samantha put on her work outfit—black slacks, white shirt with a black jacket over it, shiny black shoes, very smart—and combed her hair in the bathroom mirror. Cleo was sitting on the living room couch scraping resin from her pipe (a morning bowl doesn't mean *cereal* in this house). A pile of mail, mostly unopened bills, sat on the coffee table. The girl's third housemate, Ryland, a lanky boy of few words with a mass of black hair rivaling Edward Scissorhands, sat near Cleo playing with his septum ring, watched the cat stealthily creep through the cracked door of Samantha's bedroom. There would be Hell to pay. When Sam came around the corner and saw the charcoal-colored cat's tail disappearing into her room, she charged forward, grabbed the cat and threw it to the living room floor—where it landed with a squawk before darting through the open door of (more tolerant) Cleo's bedroom.

“I don't know what I'm going to do with that cat,” Samantha grouched. She looked pained; her eyes, glassy and bloodshot, were devoid of all last night's inebriated sparkle.

“I'll tell you what you're gonna do girl, you're gonna sit down here with me and smoke a bowl,” Dr. Cleo prescribed.

They smoked a pipeful of resin in their work outfits—Sam's suave Server ensemble contrasting with Cleo's shabby Concessions uniform. Then they made their way out the front door toward the bus shelter, to catch the #6 downtown, since neither of them had saved enough money from yesterday's tips to afford a taxi.

Work wasn't so bad for them. A trained monkey could've performed Cleo's concessions job, and as a server and hostess at the Portland Center for the Performing Arts' dining room, Samantha got to hone her acting skills, which helped pass the time. Her boss Omar—a bear-like, laconic man in his thirties who bore a passing resemblance to her fallen sweetheart Mike - was tolerant of her occasional tardiness and long smoke breaks. He had good reason to be.

Life was one incredibly long movie without a script. Sam had to improvise all her lines, but they just seemed to come—especially at work—where all it took was a little charm, a few well-chosen compliments and a big phony smile to coax twenty-percent from most of her tables. Sometimes it was more difficult; some people didn't have a sense of humor and went through life perpetually disgruntled and scowling—there was nothing she could do for such people. Sometimes however, she got delightful people with whom she could really turn on the sass—like the hot raven-haired S/M couple she'd had once. A man and woman flirting with her and a forty-percent tip!

After work, she and Cleo shared a cab home. Cleo didn't get paid for another week and concessionaires made paltry tips, so Sam paid the fare with some of hers. She made the taxi drive through Burgerville for cheeseburgers and hazelnut shakes. “Do you mind if we smoke?” Sam asked the driver. Not only did the cabbie not mind, he bummed a cigarette.

“Why the hell do we live so far out?” Sam wondered, watching the meter creep past \$15 as they merged onto Martin Luther King Boulevard.

“Cuz rent's cheapuh in da' hood,” Cleo jived. She was a pudgy cherub-faced girl of Pacific Islander extraction. Skin the color of coffee with lots of cream. Her ambition was to move to Jamaica and be a jungle-mom; to make love with her hot “MAY-uhn” in the surf, plucking

coconuts down from the trees—living the dream of tropical sunlight and infinite ganja. In the meantime, she was settling for Portland rain and resin scrapings.

The cab passed King Liquors and Samantha yelled at the cabbie to turn and circle back. She pulled out her trusty fake ID—it said she was twenty-seven and the photo looked nothing like her—and strode into the headachingly-lit liquor store, still wearing her elegant work outfit. She imagined the cracked concrete was red velvet and the flickering fluorescent tube a bank of press cameras flashing. “Fifth of Kessler's Whiskey, please,” she told the unsmiling and unshaven man at the counter, with a *blink-blink* of her movie-star eyes and a foxy-lady smile.

He looked at her for a moment, chewing on his toothpick. “ID?”

She set it on the counter. He picked it up, didn't even look, handed it back. Turned and searched the shelves of bottles filled with every kind of sweet poison.

“It's there on the bottom shelf,” Samantha pointed. Sure enough, bottom shelf it was. Kessler's Whiskey, 750 ml bottle, \$9.95. No one could accuse her of being a liquor snob.

“Remember that time we smoked crack all weekend with that guy up in Seattle?” she asked Cleo, climbing back into the cab.

The cab pulled up outside their narrow and unremarkable one-and-a-half story house. She could hear Elvis Presley's voice in her head singing “In the Ghetto.” Ten years later, this block will look very different—the whole neighborhood more upscale, gentrification stretching its tentacles into the inner city. Ten years from now a family will live in this house; the backyard will be fenced for the protection of the family puppy; a set of wood chimes will hang outside the front door. The lawn will be mowed, the shrubbery trimmed. White children will play with toy monster trucks on the sidewalk.

But on this late winter day in 1996, curtains blocked out windows on both sides of the street and a suspicious silence reigned—broken occasionally by gangs of black teenagers drifting through, or a hobo pushing a shopping cart full of his life's possessions, arguing out loud with himself (or with some invisible assailant). Many houses were in disrepair; some half-burned, standing like survivors of a dragon attack. The lawn of this house (on Witch Hazel Lane) was wild and unkempt, the grass thigh-high in places: It wasn't a family dwelling, it was a madhouse. A party pad gone berserk—a house without clocks—where dirty dishes cluttered the kitchen counters and where the refrigerator was full of 40s and empty of food. The air was so thick with different kinds of smoke, flies died upon entering. Samantha, breaking her unspoken vow never to self-analyze, wondered for a moment, *How did I wind up here?*

She'd had an apartment much closer in, in the Union Arms building on MLK, which she'd shared with Jason, who had moved up from Chico with her. But Jason was in love with her and she couldn't return that. Her drinking career was very time-consuming. When it got too much for Jason he split back to Chico—leaving her unable to cover the rent alone. She worked with Cleo, who told her a room was available in her house, and it was that simple. Sam left most of her stuff in the Union Arms apartment; she took only her clothes and a few other oddments and sacrificed the deposit to the cleaners. How nice to be able to move in one cab ride!

As soon as the girls stepped inside, Cleo took a baggie of weed out of her purse and unrolled it. She closed her bedroom

HORRORSHOW

by Jordan Lester

High Tension: 4/5 Newtons

Synopsis: Hoping to prepare for their college exams in peace and quiet, Alex and Marie decide to spend a weekend in the country at Alex’s parents’ secluded farmhouse. But in the middle of the night, a stranger knocks on the front door. With one twist of the doorknob, an endless night of terror ensues.

Review: I thought this movie was a breath of fresh air to the Slasher genre. In the late 90s, we were plagued by teen slashers such as I Know What You Did Last Summer, Urban Legends, Scream sequels, etc., but this movie is a completely different ballgame.

Once the man arrives, you are put through 30 minutes of pure carnage and nail-biting suspense. After systematically killing all of Alex’s family with a variety of implements, he carries the bounded Alex to his truck and locks her in the back while Marie watches in the shadows, trying to figure out a plan. Before she can get Alex out of the truck, he unknowingly locks Marie in as well and takes off. Their bloody journey takes them to a gas station, where Marie flees the vehicle and tries to get help, before the ones involved are disposed of as well, and an abandoned set of greenhouses located deep in the woods (high speed car chase, anyone?), where the movie resolves into what made me take off a newton. The ending.

We all love surprise endings, but some just aren’t meant to be when they change the whole concept of the movie. Twists are always nice, but just not when they don’t make any sense. It is as if they had filmed the entire movie, and suddenly changed the ending because they weren’t satisfied enough with the one they had. Perhaps they were trying to hard to make it a “perfect” movie. It just didn’t work, unfortunately. (Some of you may enjoy it though! Calling all M. Night Shyamalan fans!)

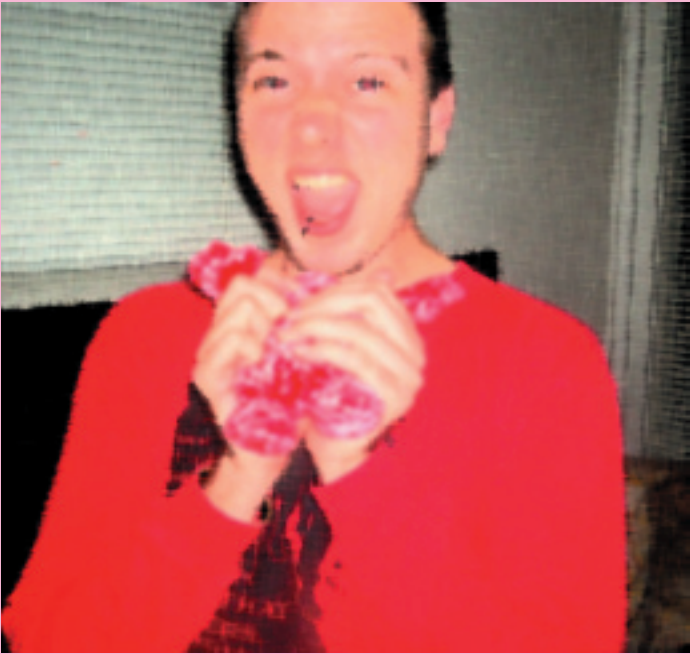
Other than that, High Tension is a fun, diabolical movie for anyone that enjoys thrillers & gore.

(Also, look for the unrated French version, “Haute Tension”, which contains 2 extra minutes of materials deleted from the US version!)

Sequel: Worth Mentioning:

Sequels are often looked down upon, rightfully so, as many of them contain the same elements as their originator. But sometimes there are a few diamonds in the roughage!

Friday the 13 Pt. 2 (1981) - One year after Pamela Voorhees’ head went rolling, so did a sequel. The movie takes place in a nearby camp 5 years after the occurences at Camp Crystal Lake. This time the killer is Jason Voorhees, who is in mourning for his mother. With cloth-sack over head, (similar to the killer in The Town That Dreaded Sundown), this isn’t the zombified Jason most people have come to know. He comes off as a serial killer, not a invincible monster, which is a good thing. Bye-bye horny teenage campers! Friday the 13th Pt. 2 is filled with great, tense chase scenes and has a superb ending, and characters that you can actually find likeable!



Evil Dead II (1987) - A sequel/remake of the film The Evil Dead. Ash returns to the secluded cabin and accidentally plays a tape of demonic passages which wake up the dead. His girlfriend becomes possessed, and it doesn’t get any better when the professor’s daughter and her entourage show up at the cabin. This movie is basically the Evil Dead remake, although it is known for being a more polished, wittier version of the first with more plot. Chainsaws, shotguns, flying eyeballs, and possessed furniture are among many things featured in this comical, yet frightening sequel!

Exorcist III (1990) - 13 years after the horrific Exorcist II: The Heretic, William Peter Blatty made a dark, creepy sequel to redeem the franchise! The Gemini Killer haunts the streets of Georgetown, is he perhaps connected to the events that happened 15 years ago in The Exorcist? Absolutely. The past movies are not mentioned if that is what you are expecting. It’s a completely different story, the only connection being the demon Pazuzu. Exorcist III is packed full of memorable scares and gruesome imagery that will send chills down your spine.

Look forward to:

Wolf Creek (January 2006) - A few back-packing friends make way across an Australian highway only to break down in the middle of nowhere, known as Wolf Creek. They feel helpless until a nice stranger offers his assistance, which is a good thing until his true intentions are revealed. Based on the murders committed by Ivan Milat in the early 90s.

Did you know:

The Texas Chain Saw Massacre (1974) was originally entitled “Headcheese”, but was changed right before the release.



HOW TO LIVE IN PORTLAND ON 3 DOLLARS A DAY (my coming film)

by Nomde Plume

How I made \$9 in 20 Minutes Panhandling on NW 21st street in Portland:

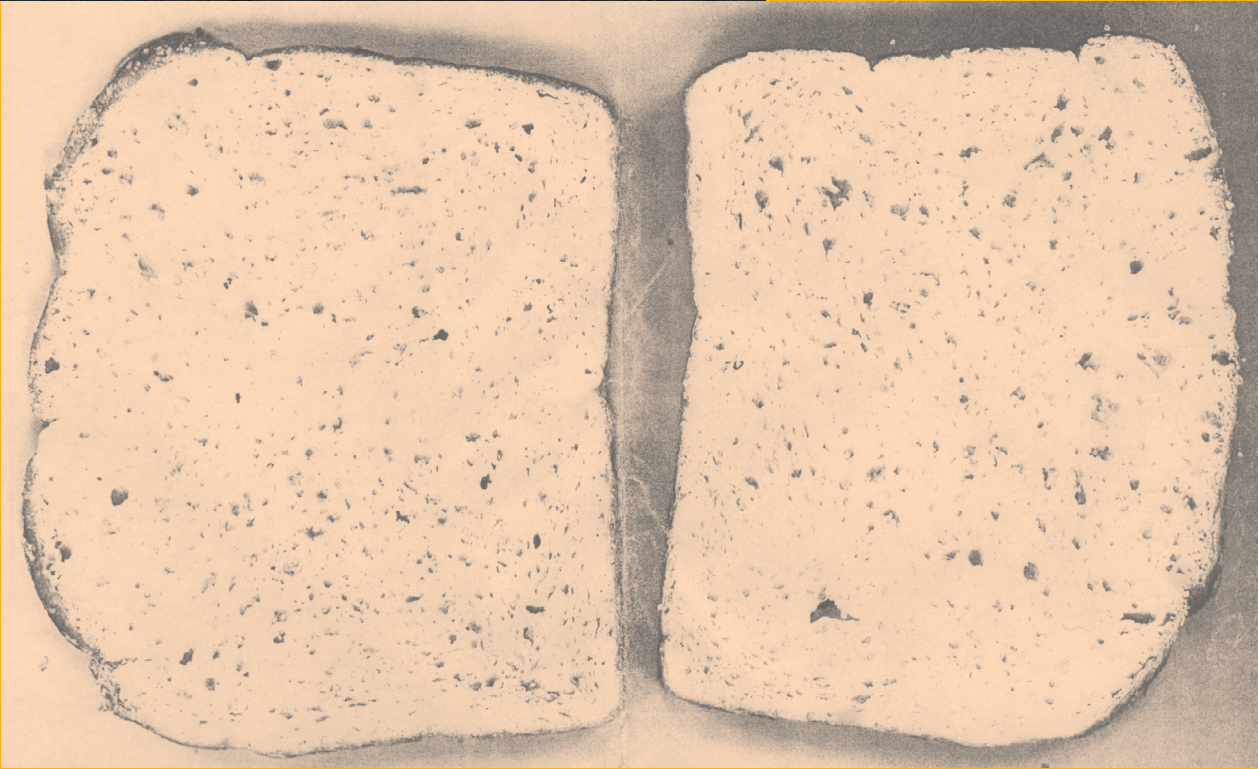
It was Halloween Night 2005 and it was raining on and off. The Usual Black Crazy guy sitting on top of black newsrack was begging out in front of the convience store next to MUU MUUs saying, “Can you spare a little Change...Can you spare a little change –just a little.” People were giving him spare change.

I wanted in on his action. I put on some mickey mouse ears and went over to the extreme corner at the convience store near where the other guy was begging and took with me a big empty white five gallon food service bucket.

As people passed by I started saying, “Can you spare a lot of cash? Can you spare a lot of cash please.” One woman dressed in a nurse outfit gave me a five dollar bill and people were pouring change into my bucket.

In less than 20 minutes I had over 9 dollars in cash. I was out begging the professional crazy beggar. Just goes to show that it always pays to ask for more.

Can you spare a lot of cash? I have not been back to disneyland in years. Send a lot of cash to: UFOM-pob 6056 pdx OR 97228-6056



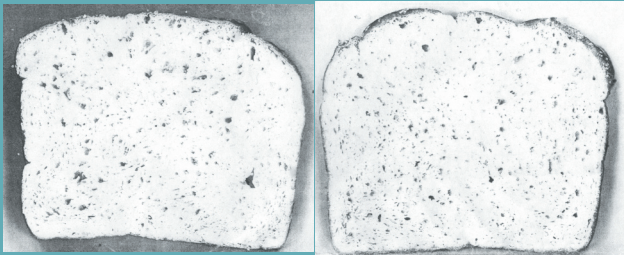
xeroxed
wonderbread

by nomde
plume

PREGUNTA ME!

tony le tigre interviews nomde plume

publisher of Portland's "Bad Karma News"



Tony le Tigre: Hi Nomde. Love the name. So, let's get right down to it. When I was a kid I used to go to the local convenience store (the first place I ever got arrested for shoplifting!) and they had ice cream and I was obsessed with the blue ice cream. It was called Blue Moon and I would always get it even though I didn't like the flavor much, just because of the color. Can you relate at all to that?

Nomde Plume: Oh yes I can relate to blue ice cream, which if blueberry would not necessarily require any added artificial color. But having blue ice cream is nothing compared to Lobster ice cream, a culinary delight that I invented after spending time in Boston. When I was an R&D Chef of Haught Cuisine [sic] I sought to find out if it were possible to master savory non-desert ice creams. Lobster Ice Cream turned out to be a natural. Not a food science wonder like blue ice cream and very un-kid friendly. My best Lobster ice cream is somewhat yellow due to the importation of saffron. Children are expected to want to eat things just because of the color which is why there are so many EPA laws against Lead Paint.

TLT: I think Lead Paint laws are like the Drug-Free Zones in town, don't you? A little Draconian. If a kid wants to get lead paint and eat it, he's going to find it somewhere. When I was a kid, the way I learned not to put my hand on a hot burner was by putting my hand on a hot burner.

NP: I looked at the Drug-Free Zones in the Oregonian today, as a matter of fact, and noticed that the rest of the city that was not labeled "DFZ" had no label. What are those, the Drug Zones? I used to enjoy paint chips. I can't wait for McDonalds to add Budweiser to their menu in the USA. Maybe they could put it over crushed ice? This might make me an American Visionary.

TLT (laughing): Well, you're a Portland visionary anyway. You publish the Bad Karma News, right? I remember stumbling across that once last summer and thinking it was hilarious. Tell me more!

NP: Bad Karma News is now on the corner of 21st street on one side of Cinema 21. It's now shocking orange. It had been near PICA, across from the Oregonian on Broadway, across from Willamette Week and the library. I have moved it around quite a bit...I only have one. It was in WW almost immediately after I first put it out on the street a few years ago.

It's called Bad Karma News because the coin slot no longer works and people can open it without putting in any cash as required. If they take stuff out without paying they get what they steal and all the bad karma that goes along with that. Bad Karma News is what you ordinarily read in the paper. People thrive on exploitation in the news and everything else in most papers is not entertainment but fear-mongering, advertising or political propaganda which are all forms of exploitation and bad karma anyway you read it. Karma is not a faith-based religion: it does not matter if you believe or disbelieve: your present actions do have an effect on your karma.

TLT: I think what karma needs is a brand and a marketing plan. A product associated with it. How 'bout Karma Corn? Pop corn for the spirit. Hey, what do you make of the whole Creationism vs. Evolution hullabaloo?

NP: I am a creationist. Al Gore invented the internet and he is no ape. I did not evolve to my present status because some prehistoric fossil beast laid my egg. Darwin's Theory of Evolution is an insult to my biblical sensibilities. Have you ever wondered why cockroaches never protest against Darwin but only humans do? How long do you think cockroaches will have to evolve before they can get up and fight for Creationism? I'm a Creationist but I don't believe in Intelligent Design. God did not create all those prehistoric creatures in his design lab. No, God created everything at once including the fossils as a temptation to doubt the true faith. Darwin went straight to Hell for what he did and if you want to follow him just go ahead and believe in Evolution.

TLT: Oh dear. Perhaps we should steer to lighter shores. I like the pseudonym Nomde Plume. It's funny.

NP: Thanks. I love a good Nom de Plume Farce. I have a number of fictional lives and a number of real ones. I like "get a fictional life." So many people absorbed in books never write any. It's like people absorbed in collecting art or just going to art museums who are strangely attracted to subject mater [sic] they really have no direct understanding of. I once took a friend to the Art Institute of Chicago and he was amazed that the actual paintings he had seen prints of before, or in books were there. I am a living breathing artist and no one much cares. But if they have just seen a picture of something that they later recognize they can go though the motions of being excited. I think the art museum is being transformed into a sort of religious center for memory recollection. Maybe we need a new museum that gives people fictional lives? I aim to bring my art into real life situations with con-art and mind control. Blurring fact and fiction is part of that game. In the past I have tried to create a whole new artist but could not find a front man to become him. I wanted to find some boy genius-looking actor then to go into galleries and charm them in a way I can never do lacking that sparkle in the eye actor thing. We would split the profits then. Artists all want to be wild self ego-centered virtuosos and it's really hard to find quality collaborators in this field. Their art is suffering because they don't see the power of working as a team.

TLT: Food for thought. Speaking of food, I love the xeroxed Wonder Bread.

NP: Thanks. Although I'm not sure Wonder Bread really qualifies as food. You want to go get a Lobster ice cream cone with me?

TLT: Oh Nomde I would, except...I'm allergic to the idea of eating lobsters.

continued from page 8

blinds, rummaged around for a pipe.

"I thought you were broke!" Sam smirked, slipping off her work shoes and bouncing onto the bed. Cleo's room was the main "house" hangout. They would sometimes descend to Ryland's vault in the basement late at night, but during the winter months, the cold was prohibitive.

"Got Jorge to front me a bag today at work," Cleo said with her Cheshire Cat grin. This was like winning the lottery for her; if winning the lottery was a weekly occurrence.

"Ryland must be out job-hunting," Samantha said, rolling a smoke from some tobacco and papers she'd found on the floor at the foot of the bed.

"Could still be sleeping," Cleo laughed, loading the water-bong.

Cleo's friend Rose came over with a couple hippie-zombie dudes in her wake. The guys were on speed but Rose was just a harmless pot-head. Samantha disappeared into her bedroom and closed the door. Ryland came home carrying a bag he'd gotten from the food shelf, the one material success of his day's efforts.

"I lost my ID," he told Cleo, his voice despondent. "Now even if a place wants to hire me they probably can't. I don't know



what I'm going to do. I'm going to have to sell some effects pedals to pay rent."

But Cleo was floating on a pleasant cloud of green smoke. "Sit down and smoke some pot and let your troubles drift away!" she urged him.

"I can't even get high anymore...I smoke so much," Ryland griped. Nonetheless he took the bong.

Later, a burly man in a leather jacket pulled into the driveway in a sleek pickup and came to the front door. It was Omar, PCPA's dining room manager. "Is Samantha here?" he gruffly asked the tweaker who answered his knock.

"Uhhhh, I don't think so, I haven't seen her. Oh wait..."

"YES, I'M HERE." The door to the side bedroom opened and out stepped Samantha. She was wearing a beautiful red and black sleeveless dress and shiny obsidian heels. Her golden hair was done up in two Princess Leia-style seashell spirals on either side of her head. Closer to Lillian Russell than Calista Flockhart, she verged on pleasantly plump, but remained marginally slender. Her lips were the color of intoxicating red wine, her lashes mascara'd, and she carried a shiny eggplant-colored purse. No doubt about it, she was fucking gorgeous. Next to her the others in the house looked like a wayward group of unwashed children. Without a word she followed Omar out the front door, which slammed behind them.

Late one night, Cleo and Ryland were roused from virtual slumber by voices and feet on the front steps, knocking at the door. Two men they didn't know were standing on the porch, each holding Samantha by an arm. Samantha was a crumpled mess, her head lolled forward. They carried her into the house and put her in bed.

"She's fucked outta her mind," one stranger explained to the bewildered housemates. "I don't see people that sloshed very often. I hope she doesn't have alcohol poisoning."

"I think she's more than drunk," the other stranger said.

"Maybe someone drugged her," Cleo conjectured.

"Or she drugged herself," Ryland said cynically (but perhaps more accurately).

The next morning Ryland came up from his basement sepulcher to toast a bagel. As soon as he walked into the living room, the foulest smell hit his nose and it didn't take much investigation to determine that it was coming from behind Samantha's bedroom door. "Oh, man, that is foul." He opened the front door, sat on the front step and ate his bagel. Cleo came out—glaze-eyed and little-girlish in her rosy robe, blinking in the morning sun.

"What's that *smell*?"

Ryland replied, "I'm not sure I want to know."

They decided they should at least make sure it wasn't the stench of Sam's decaying corpse. So, with clothespins on their noses they creaked open the bedroom door. And there lay Sam on her bed; her negligee askew, her hair fanned out on the pillow. Beside her—starting on the edge of the mattress and sliding off onto the carpet—was a *pile* of shit. (Except that “pile” is too solid a word for the half-liquefied mass of excrement that met their disbelieving eyes.) Steaming in the morning-light and stinking to High Heaven (and Low Hell). They quickly backed out and closed the door.

“She’s cleaning that up herself,” Cleo said shaking her head resolutely. She marched straight back into her bedroom and closed the door.

Out on the porch, Ryland tried to write a new song on his acoustic guitar, but the melody he could hear in his head wouldn't work its way out to his fingers and onto the frets. Finally, after noon, the infamous door opened and Samantha emerged—looking like a Salem witch who had narrowly escaped drowning or burning at the stake. She wasn't beautiful and neither was her personality. Depressed and not wanting to talk, she went about cleaning up the appalling carnage of her overboard night. She threw away the blankets and sheets rather than cleaning them. Every window in the house was opened to air the place out. They never got the real story from her – if she remembered any story to tell. It was pretty well-established by that point that fucked up things happened in their house—this house of people doing everything they could to fuck themselves up.

Cleo and Ryland first rented the house on Witch Hazel Lane in September of '96, with a girl named Kari, who was a friend of Cleo's. Kari, who had a trust fund and was a painter, had been the only semi-responsible and grounded member of the household from its inception. She moved out abruptly in November and Samantha moved in—thus, the downward spiral was set in motion. Cleo and Sam were a party that never wanted to end; they never went gently into the night, but raged and raged, often until the morning-light, goading one another to ever-greater heights of lunacy. They were rarely sober. Sam was either hung-over, drunk, or blacked-out at all times and Cleo's normal state was “stoned” to the point of retardation. And they both supplemented their steady diet of booze and weed with occasional doses of pretty much any other substance that came within an arm's reach. They went to work just enough to pay the most urgent bills and keep their mad merry-go-round perpetually whirling.

There was no shortage of eccentric guests on Witch Hazel Lane. Ryland would have his bandmates over to do noise jams—a couple times a disgruntled neighbor came over to pound on the door and demand they turn down the amps. Samantha would bring home unsavory characters from the bar or whatever boy she happened to be using at the time. Cleo was always entertaining her fellow stoners in her opium-den-of-a-bedroom. Inevitably, given the lack of boundaries and restraint that characterized its inhabitants, what started out as a relatively innocuous party pad took on a darker tone.

A hard-living lesbian drug-addict named Jackie became a frequent guest. She was one of Cleo's pot connections but she also sold, or had sold, cocaine and crystal meth—she'd been an addict since early adolescence. Jackie was unpretentious and completely self-destructive. She and Samantha got along famously. Both appeared locked on a sure course for self-annihilation; two bruised and battered



victims of a cruel and crazy world, who had simply had enough and whose attitude was *fuck it*. The difference was that Samantha had her bizarre charade of dress-up and make-believe, the boozy-debutante persona that she wore all the time – dressing up fancy, dating her boss, disappearing mysteriously for days at a time – until you wondered whether it was a persona. Jackie, by contrast, was the opposite of an actress. She had the personality of a brick wall: solid, unyielding, and completely without decoration. They were good foils for one another. Jackie would provoke Sam to one of her loopy outbursts, until Jackie was literally rolling on the floor with laughter. And then they'd get more fucked up on whatever drug they happened to be doing that day, and start the cycle over again.

Ryland, who had moved west from Ohio the year before—with the intention of starting a band—seemed to slowly unravel in Portland, descending into his own private *Bell Jar* since he'd moved into the Witch Hazel Lane house. He read William S. Burroughs and listened to The Velvet Underground and Sonic Youth; he stopped writing songs and went for pure, unfettered Noise. In January, during one of those cold and gray phases in Portland where it seems to rain every day for a month, he smoked opium for the first time, brought

into the house by one of Cleo's stoner buddies.

“It's kind of like heroin that you smoke,” the guy told him. “It's not nearly as strong as injected heroin, but it's a nice mellow high.”

In February, just before his twentieth birthday, Ryland expressed the desire to try heroin for the first time. Jackie – who at one point had studied to be a phlebotomist – had been talking to him about it. She knew where to score it—Jackie could score any drug. Samantha had done smack before in Chico; Cleo hadn't but shrugged and said she would try any drug once. On the night of February 22nd, Ryland's birthday, Jackie brought over what looked like a large melted raisin in a little plastic zip-bag and a ten-pack of orange-capped syringes. The sticky brown blob didn't look like much, but it got them all high for the night—and when the high began to wear off Jackie drove out in her rickety white van (it seemed held together with Scotch tape and riding in it was often a near-death experience) to cop some more. Ryland felt strange and a little nauseous the next day, yet pleasant, still floating a ways above the world on the rapidly-disintegrating magic

over and under

overXrated

Andy Whorehole? Warhol
everywhere I travel there is an Andy Warhol retrospective or worse,
his posters are plastered on Gallery walls
I don't want to sound envies but I am an artist still alive wanting/needing
that wall space that's occupied buy this copycat -- copy machine fetishist
Not everyone is an artist only a very few
everyone might be creative but that doesn't mean it has to be plastered on G-walls
and I don't want to have to make a cock sucking movie to get my 15 minutes
of fame -- no thanks, thanks for nothing Andy
may you rest in your Cocaine peace

-Ray Solar

KISS: OVERRATED.

Those fuckers couldn't rock to save their lives. They were the mothers of the power ballad for god's sake. The words “power” and “ballad” should never be next to each other. That's close to an oxymoron. They also tried too damn hard to look the look and walk the walk. Their glam-rock outfits were annoying, if anything, and their make-up was ridiculous (one dude looked like a cat). Furthermore, Gene Simmons' “huge” tongue is also overrated. It's totally beaten out by Mick Jagger and Steven Tyler's huge mouths. Even Aerosmith rocked twice as hard as Gene ever did, and Aerosmith sucked too.

-Daniel Sharkey

MANUFACTURED IDOLS: (Over-AND Under-rated)

I'm frankly in awe of the recent amazing/nauseating trend of manufacturing stars on national television. While I sit back shaking my head as American Idol, Rock Star INXS, America's Next Top Model and other shows create international icons out of thin air, they are making millions thru mega-advertising due to the enormous ratings, and the sales of the records, the concert tours, the product placement and sponsorships. In an overly-capitalistic society, this is truly brilliant. Whoever thought this up deserves all the tax cuts the Bush clan is handing out to the wealthy, I suppose. But at the same time I'm sickened by “butt-rock” nature of their stardom; it's truly manufactured by the corps who have put it all together.

-Spike PDX

ADULT SWIM. Overrated. I'm talking current Adult Swim (Tom goes to the Mayor, 12 oz mouse, Squidbillies, Robot Chicken, etc.) It's just not funny any more. Why'd they put Venture Bros at the end of the night? Where's new ATHF? Everybody loves Adult Swim, but maybe they loved the old Adult Swim and just haven't realized they can choose to not watch the new and horrible programming. I'm not saying I hate Adult Swim, I've just gotten a little pickier. I'm not “hipper than thou,” I just dont understand why a poorly animated mouse is funny.

-evan dumas

DAVID BOWIE. Overrated (slightly).

Maybe I've just hit my saturation point. The guy is great, has received lavish outpourings of praise and is enshrined by the hipoisie as one of the coolest figures in rock history; but he took his glitter ideas from others before him, like Marc Bolan and Andy Warhol (whose first play Pork influenced Bowie's decision to go glam). I thought it was really hypocritical of Bowie to balk at the gay content in Velvet Goldmine between “Brian Slade” and “Kurt Wild,” when a big part of Bowie's own initial notoriety and fame was due to announcing to the press that he was gay.

-Tony le Tigre

Cleo went out the front door and came back in and told Samantha, “You need to take a step outside, you won’t believe how fucked up you are!”

They migrated outdoors, the boys returning to earth from their trip, the girls just going up on theirs. The splendor of the rising sun provided a majestic backdrop for their mad chemical pageant.

“I’m kind of hungry,” Chad said rubbing his churning belly. “I don’t suppose there’s a store around here that would be open at this hour?”

“There’s a Safeway on Juniper Avenue, within walking distance,” Ryland said pointing southwest. “Open twenty-four hours.”

Chad turned to the girls - two beautiful babbling lunatics in pajamas standing in three-foot-high grass. “You guys should come with us to Safeway!”

Cleo objected. “We can’t go in our pajamas!”

“Why not?” Jake asked, suddenly loving the idea. “Yes, please, you have to! It will be *so* funny.”

I wish you had been there.

Cleo and Sam like something out of a Betty Boop cartoon, flip-flopping down the street at 6AM. The boys trailed several yards behind them, thoroughly enjoying the moment. Coming around the first corner, they met a swarthy man with horror-movie teeth walking in the opposite direction, holding a PBR tallboy. This cheerful drunkard, who obviously had a sense of humor, saluted Samantha - resplendent in her flannel nightwear – “Top of the mornin’ to ya!” – and cracked open the can of beer. Not one to turn down a drink of alcohol under any circumstance, Sam took the proffered tallboy and had herself a hearty swig, handed it back without breaking stride.

They found Safeway—yet this time for the boys, in the light of day and in present company, it was more slapstick comedy than paranoid hallucination. In the produce section, Samantha reached into a bin of oranges and began groping and feeling them up as if consumed with a physical passion for fresh fruit. In the checkout aisle, the bemused clerk asked, “You guys just wake up?” The boys were having a gas watching the questioning looks the girls were getting from the other store patrons, especially Samantha. But Sam, with the un-selfconsciousness of the virtually insane, didn’t take the slightest notice. It was as if she were unaware that it was unusual to be seen in public wearing pee-jays at six in the morning—particularly in their neighborhood.



Then it was back to Witch Hazel Lane with a grocery bag full of munchies, oranges, and juice. When Samantha noticed Jake carrying a six-pack of Apricot Ale, she gravitated closer to him and Chad. They asked her about her waitress job and she launched into the schmooze routine with which she hoodwinked her wealthy theater-patron customers, delivered in the most ass-kissingly saccharine tone of voice.

How lovely of you to come out to dinner with us this evening! I do hope you enjoy your meal! Can I get you some refreshments to start off with? Adorable little girl there. Such a cute dress! Just let me know if there’s anything else I can get for you! Enjoy the program, and do come see us again!

By now the sun had risen and all trace of night was banished. Everything was gold and orange—the kind of light you want to film a meaningful movie scene in, the kind of light in which everything looks its very best. And the silent stillness of the surrounding neighborhood conveyed the illusion that they were all alone in the world. All they had for company were the singing birds and the dewdrops glistening in the uncut grass; and it was all they needed. Chad went inside to make tea for everyone. Jake sat on the front steps and opened

carpet that had carried him through the night.

It was love at first shot.

At first it was just once a month. Then once every two weeks—suddenly he was looking forward to every Friday night because that was the night Jackie would come over and they would get high. Cleo tried it once but didn’t care for the high and thereafter abstained—there were some limits after all. Samantha let Jackie shoot her up a few times, but dope wasn’t her main gig. She preferred to kill herself more slowly—and socially acceptably—with alcohol. And she loved cocaine. “I can drink all night on that stuff!” she would rave about coke, like a demented child bragging about her favorite doll—a more beautiful and expensive doll than the other children could afford.

Samantha was a fucked-up bitch—but she was beautiful—so she got away with it. Early on in the heroin honeymoon, before things went too far, Jackie brought some dope over and they all got high together. The Velvet Underground emanating from the speakers provided the perfect seedy soundtrack to their death-tripping decadence. Jackie had a bitch of a time hitting Sam’s vein. “Your veins suck,” she cursed more than once. The next day Sam had several bruises in the crook of her arm.

But that night was beautiful.

Sam and Jackie made out for hours. Jackie un-selfconsciously nude from the waist up, like a man. Sam barely sported a bra and hot-pants—a tawny-haired temptress with black magic eyes. She was like an oversized little girl possessed by some lustful, rapacious spirit; the sultry perma-grin on her face belying the depravity within. When the chiming, music-box intro of “Stephanie Says” started to play, she laid her hand on Ryland’s shoulder and stared into his eyes and solemnly intoned, “This is my *favorite* song in the entire world.”

As always it was hard to tell if her gushing sincerity was genuine or part of the act. Safest bet was to just play along.

“It’s a beautiful song,” said Ryland.

And it was.

But the epic Highs were always followed by equally epic, and longer-lasting, Lows. In March, Ryland lost his job at a downtown movie theater because he wouldn’t acquiesce to his manager’s demand to take out his lip ring. “He hired me with the lip ring, so why should I have to take it out now? It’s fucking stupid,” he vented. Shortly after losing his job he lost his ID card, which created all sorts of problems. Getting hired would be a hassle since he had no legal picture identification. He had to sell some of his effects pedals and one of his father’s guitars to pay April rent.

One night, Ryland was alone on Witch Hazel Lane, entombed in his basement domain, when he was awakened (sometime between very late and very early) by the eerie feeling of a presence in the house. Cleo and Samantha were gone to some all-night party; it wasn’t them. He was loath to leave the locked solitude of his basement room—but he had to pee—and the only bathroom was on the ground floor. Reluctantly, he pried the door open and stepped into the dank dungeon beyond.

The floor was cold and he had the creepiest sensation that he wasn’t alone, that some hostile force shared the house with him. Nonetheless, he started up the stairs and had gotten no further than halfway, when the presence became a Presence. It rushed at him in a flash of white light that he saw in his mind and felt in the fibers of his body. He was forced back down the stairs. He closed and locked his bedroom door, pissed in an empty plastic bottle and got back into bed. The house never felt safe to him after that. Ryland dreaded being alone at night; he only wanted to wrap himself again in the warm Utopic blanket of heroin.

Late that month, a stray cat “adopted” their doorstep after Ryland put a saucer of milk out for it. It quietly joined the household. No one minded it much except Samantha, who resented any challenge to her position as Queen Bitch of Witch Hazel Lane.

And then there was The Great LSD Pajama Party.

In the middle of May, Jake, a friend of Ryland’s, who was attending The Evergreen State College in Olympia, decided to visit for

the weekend with several of his Evergreen buddies. Ryland said they could spend a night or two—as long as they could tolerate cramped quarters, which meant sleeping bags on the floor for beds and not much in the way of “board.” (He couldn’t remember the last time they’d actually cooked a meal in his house.) Inwardly, he was tickled by the idea of a group of serious-minded college students rubbing shoulders with his insane, dissipated roommates. It would be a real-life comedy of manners—or more correctly—a comedy of personalities.

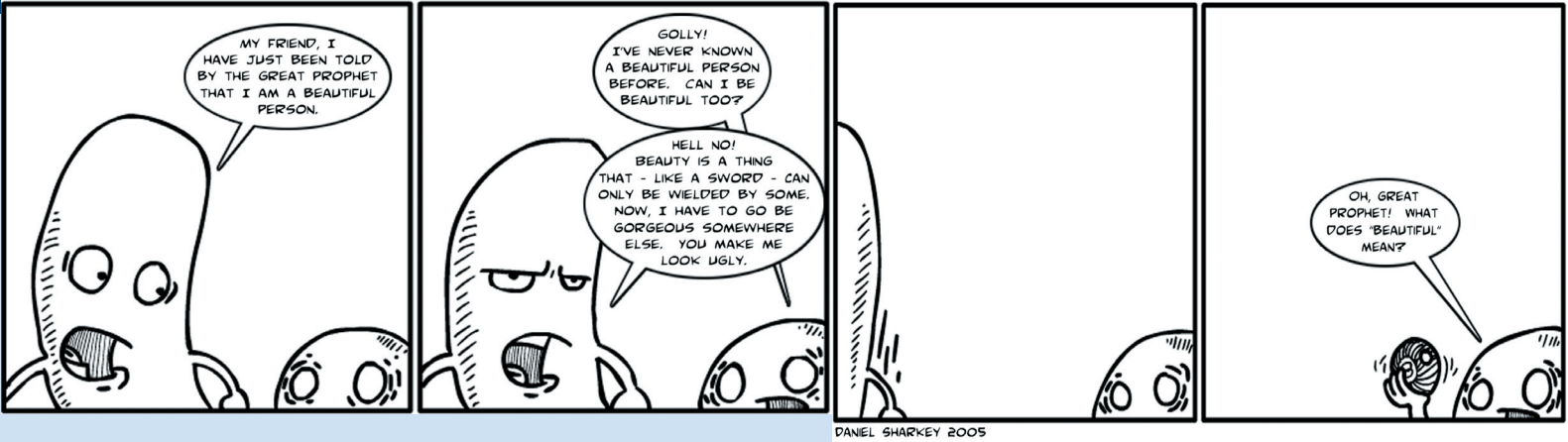
When Jake and his crew arrived in Portland, they decided to check out Saturday Market. Ryland made plans to meet them at 3 PM outside Powell’s Books. At the appointed hour Ryland stepped off the bus with Cleo and Sam. Sam wore a pretty little scarf tied in her hair and a comically large pair of round mahogany brown sunglasses; she looked like a movie star traveling incognito. Ryland and Jake embraced for a long moment, but the girls continued straight for the Powell’s entrance. A homeless-looking man came at them and practically yelled, “Do you read books?” just as they reached the threshold.

“On occasion,” Sam murmured.

Cleo muttered, “Man, this town is full of fucking crackheads.”



“Dreck” stencil by Memo of the Gay Stencil Project



Jake’s friends consisted of a boy with crazy hair named Rusty—who hailed from the San Juan Islands, close to the Canadian border; an Evergreen art student with intense brown eyes named Hillary; Tommy, a good-natured geek with a surprisingly sharp sense of humor; and Chadwick, a kind of intellectual British pixie with glasses, who had created his own class at Evergreen on Anarchist Theory and seemed possessed by an inexhaustible supply of energy. Chad, Rusty and Hillary wanted to explore Powell’s Books, which was a whole new treasure trove for them. Jake and Ryland cut out on their own to talk. They went to the O, a punk label/record store/coffee shop further down Burnside and flipped through some records, sat down at the coffee bar.

“Double vanilla latte,” Jake instructed the barista. “Whatcha want?” he asked Ryland.

“Oh, uh, I don’t really have any cash on me...”

“It’s cool, I’ve got financial aid. Whatcha want?”

Ryland ordered a glass of guava juice. “I really need a job,” he told Jake after taking a drink. “I lost my ID card, too.” Ryland’s eyes were deep and dark wishing wells with no coins in them.

That night, back at the Witch Hazel house, Chadwick prepared a salad with some fresh produce from the market and Jake tried to talk them all into taking acid. Chad did a little drug-dealing on the side, but only “good” drugs, soul- and mind-enhancing drugs like pot, peyote, LSD, mushrooms—occasional ecstasy. He’d even brought some pot and LSD-spiked sugarcubes with him from Olympia, on Jake’s recommendation. Hillary and Rusty declined (feeling sleepy) and took their sleeping bags down to Ryland’s room to turn in early. Samantha and Cleo were at work and going to a party afterward—they wouldn’t be home until late. Chad dosed with Jake. Tommy declined, saying he would be the designated driver if they decided to go anywhere.

Ryland hesitated. “I don’t know if I’m in a good place right now to be going on an intense psychological journey.” But, having nothing else to do, he gave in and took one. They listened to the Pixies’ *Doolittle* and it seemed as exciting to Jake as when he’d first heard it years before, during a summer stint in Yellowstone Park. Chad looked like a bright-eyed little chipmunk to him. The always-mellow Tommy seemed content to hang out and get a second-hand thrill from their psychedelic encounter. Ryland was like a turtle drawn into its shell, just poking its head out once in a while. He told Jake about trying heroin, showed him a little bruise inside his arm. Jake saw an image in his mind of Gollum from *The Lord of the Rings*. He was glad his Evergreen friends were along.

Right around the time they were peaking, they decided to go to the grocery store. Tommy drove them all the way downtown (they could’ve gone someplace closer, but they were in the mood for adventure). They chose the Safeway on Columbia Street, just a block up from the infamous Park Blocks, where all sorts of riffraff, drug dealers, drifters and other creatures of the night were wont to congregate. Safeway was a trip in and of itself. The lighting was painfully bright and the produce looked like plastic or wax replicas. Cucumbers and zucchinis looked like green penises of the earth; there were shiny wax apples and fake oranges. Tommy pointed things out that seemed inexplicably strange, enjoying his dual role as sober guardian and merry prankster. Ryland picked up a banana, peeled it and began to eat it.

When they got to the checkout lane, the cashier glared daggers at them. “We have to have the whole banana to weigh,” she snapped. Her eyes turned red and her blonde hair fanned out like a cobra hood.

The parking lot seemed like a jailbreak at a nearby lunatic asylum. A twisted goblin of a man limped up and said he’d lost his foot in the War (which war he didn’t specify) and asked if they could spare some change. Chad, Ryland and Jake all emptied their pockets. An old craggy-faced hobo came up and spouted some gibberish at them. His eyes freaked Jake out; there was nothing behind them—they were like a monkey’s eyes. Another man in a big padded coat stood with his legs spread and his hands pointed in front of him—in the shape of a gun—declaring to no one in particular, “I’m going to shoot my mother!”

They got back into the car and locked all the doors. “Take us home!” Tommy started the car. On the way back, Bob Dylan sang from the car speakers: *Everybody must get stoned!*

Back on Witch Hazel Lane they began to come down. Jake played some soothing Cocteau Twins music and they turned the lights out, lit candles. Chad watched the cat with fascination, weaving its mellifluous way in and out of the room. And the night might’ve wound down and ended on that low-key note, with no further excitement—except that around four in the morning, Samantha and Cleo suddenly, and loudly, came home.

They’d been to several parties by the look of things and burst through the front door like a Category-5 Hurricane. On came the lights.

19th
Mercury squares Uranus. Other squares involve the Moon and Mars and the Moon and Jupiter. The Moon also opposes Neptune and brings it full circle by trining with Mercury. Follow your intuition closely. Don’t spend frivolously. Others may offer suggestions that force you to examine your true values on the given subject. Don’t cave in to pressure; though it won’t matter a few days from now.

20th
The Ice Planet (named for the God of Precious Metals and Jewels within the Earth) trines the Moon. Remind yourself today all the gorgeous and priceless qualities in yourself. Congratulations are in order for another year survived and you’re stronger and more amazing than you ever have been! Praise others for their accomplishments and more latent beauties. “Unclutter” your home and devise new creative methods of saving money.

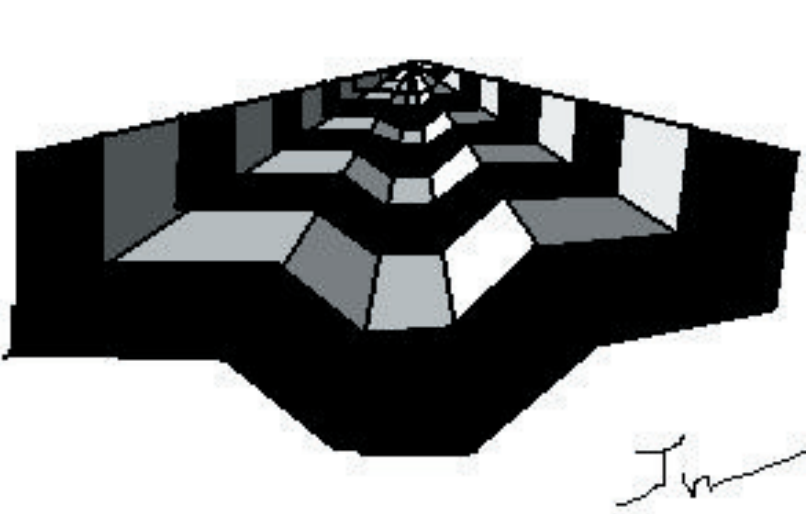
21st
The Sun moves into Capricorn, while the Moon enters Virgo. Trines today between the Sun and Moon, the Moon and Mars—as well as Mercury and Saturn. Moon opposes Uranus. The heavy Earth energy will influence your desire to stay at home, to be domestic and to work on projects. You may be called on to deal with unpredictable emotions that may appear as nervous tension. It may require conscious effort on your part to maintain a responsible role, especially when dealing with domineering personalities. However, if you can remain staunchly congenial and forward-thinking, it should be easy to stay on task. Capricorn ushers in a period of reflection and rebuilding structure. Patch a leak or do something crafty. You can rely on the memory of your close associates.

22nd
The Waning Moon squares Mercury and makes a little sextile with Jupiter. You’re going to make some irrational decisions today: it’s okay, loves—I promise. The Jupiter aspect suggests that the lessons will be worth the duress. You may find your peers disagree with your family. If the predicament is dire, I would seek the advice of a paternal figure. If alt-country is your thing, you may want to check out RyeHollow this evening; another Mississippi Studios event.

23rd
The Last Quarter of this Moon moves into Libra to square Pluto, the Sun, and to trine Venus. Combat loneliness by simply throwing yourself into a social setting—either by popping up at a friend’s place unannounced or checking out a new dive you have yet to haunt. Take a serious look today at patterns you fall into and how they are blocking your progress. Where are the roots of these negative habits? A sour mood can be remedied simply by changing the colors in your room, or even the lighting. Warmth will come to you in abundance if you are ready to receive it.

24th
Our Lady Venus goes retrograde today, which will last until February 3rd, 2006. She governs romance, marriage and other partnerships, capacity for humor, and the pursuit of pleasure. During a retrograde period, the things Venus influences will be less apparent or of less concern to the world. The beautiful freaks tend to be less freaky and our color sense tends to be muted. Not the best time to try out a radical hairstyle or invest in some new bijous. Redecorating or refurbishing homes or business should also be avoided, though decisions that have been made earlier can still be allowed to come to fruition during this period. With the Love Goddess dancing backwards, the pace of relationships slows down. So it’s not the best time to pop the question or throw toga parties (it’s too cold anyway). Since Venus rules diplomacy, slowdowns in all sorts of negotiations can be expected, including industrial disputes, legal issues and diplomatic endeavors. The lunar sextile with Saturn reinforces the presence of unfinished business we are now called upon to attend to once again. The deep feelings often associated with the present have their origins in past events. They are activated on an inner level and the Moon sextile with Mercury may make it easier to convey these emotions.

25th
Sextiles today between Mercury and Uranus, the Moon and Pluto. Be thankful for your teachers. Challenges today include persistence and self-discipline. Combat fatigue with ginkgo and your old Dahlia discs (they are playing the Doug Fir for New Years, by the way!) Call up close friends (those who know you better than even yourself) with advice, if you are having issues at work. Jazz and blues at The Blue Monk tonight.



26th
Moon moves into Scorpio, making it a good night for prowling, studying the Kabala and finding secret treasures. Luna squares it off with the now retrograde Venus and Saturn, as well as forming a sextile with the Sun and a trine with Uranus. Mars also opposes her. You may feel “all over the place,” emotionally today. Conducive to new art projects, writing letters, and checking out a new restaurant. If you haven’t tried the baked ziti at Wonder, I highly recommend it. Love karma creeps up. A good way to keep yourself in check is by simply sharing your appreciation for the beautiful people in your life unabashedly. Avoid a potentially violent argument this day by biting your lip and taking a step back. Ask yourself, what can I learn from those who stand in my way? What do the obstacles in your life reflect in your own personality?

27th
The Moon forms a conjunction with Jupiter and a square with Neptune. Clear up your environment, for you will feel very sensitive to your surroundings today. Acquire new art for your home or workspace. Be skeptical about any gossip that finds its way to your ears. “Mamma Mia!” opens at Keller Auditorium tonight.

28th
Mars squares Saturn and the Moon squares Uranus. The Moon moves into Sagittarius to form a sexy sextile with Venus. You find yourself feeling bitter and apathetic. Count on people flaking out on you, so have a plan B. Be clear with your affirmatives and your no-thank-yous. Rather than feeling left out, just jump right in! Your social graces may be put to the test, but if it’s booty you’re looking for, remember that “Earth Signs are Easy” today...

29th
Sextiles today involve the Moon and Neptune, the Sun and Uranus. Moon trines Saturn and is conjunct Mercury. Today you’ll have the opportunity to teach someone something that will make their life much easier. Keep company with your more “logical-minded” comrades. Be kind to yourself and accept criticism with an open mind. You’re not failing, you’re just figuring out the formula. Once you find out what X equals, everything will fall into place. Be respectful of traditions. Don’t let your emotions and your intellect contaminate one another. Have black tea instead of coffee.



“In Orbit”
concluded
on page 24

“On Swear Word:”
By Evan Dumais

There are no effective swear words left. “Shit” is everywhere, and is as potent as lukewarm tap water. “Damn” is no longer damming. “Fuck” might raise an eyebrow if uttered in a Lutheran church during a funeral, but otherwise it’s the verbal equivalent of salt when it comes to seasoning sentences. “God,” “Jesus,” “Allah,” “Christ,” “Jehovah,” and other blasphemies are only shocking to such a minute few that they are outside the scope of this essay. “Cunt” isn’t used too frequently, but it isn’t actually shocking or insulting, some even wear it as a glistening badge of pride.

A good swear word makes people grimace. It makes them wish they didn’t hear it, or that they didn’t associate with the company that used the word. A good swear word is vile and conjures images that are about as welcome as fresh dog shit on your good boots. A good swear word should be used sparingly. I’ve attempted to come up with such a word.

The word I’ve come up with is “Cush.” Pronounced like “Hush” with a ‘K’ instead of the ‘H.’ It’s got the makings of a good swear in that it’s monosyllabic, has four letters, and is not harsh on the tongue. It’s short for the phrase “cunt flush” from which you can probably guess it’s meaning. “Cush” is that wonderful mixture of sloughed-off uterine lining and clotted blood that are expelled from the female body during menstruation. Tasty. Sadly this purely natural gooey red stuff is the last vestige of nastiness that I could think of (excluding going the political route and calling someone a voting/donating Republican). Here are a few example uses include calling someone a “cush bucket,” or exclaiming “I just cushed my pants.”

Use it, spread it, love it, but do so infrequently. Or else pick up a dictionary and diversify your cushioning language already.

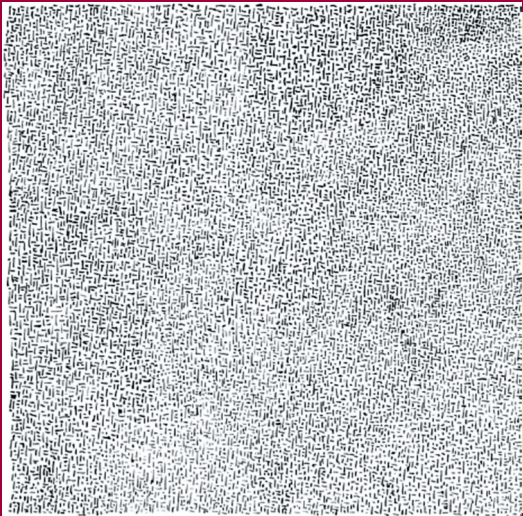
My mediocre day so far,

By Dan Dullman

I woke up around 10:00 a.m. today, my bed was warm but the room was cold so I decided to keep sleeping. At noon I woke up, got dressed and read my email and news on the internet. It was ok, nothing special. I had some tea and toast, looked outside but decided to not go out as it was a little chilly. The toast didn’t turn out perfect because one slice got done before the other, and I had to retoast it. After that I watched some TV, SciFi I think, I wasn’t not sure. The couch was moderately comfortable, but the water in my bottle was warm and smelled of feet.

It still looks nice outside, but I have no reason to go out. Maybe I’ll step onto to the deck, but I’ve seen the trees before, and my feet would probably get cold. My library books on old men’s hats were due today, so I renewed them over the phone. Their automated system was slow, but it gave me time to clean out the bits of fuzz in my cellphone’s speaker hole. To celebrate I cleaned off the “library books” line on my whiteboard to-do list. Now we’re up to speed, and I think I’ll tape a nap.

By Courtney
Garrison



tiny lines

by el zombie

Samantha staggered in like a drunken dragon, kicking off her heels and flinging off her fluffy black coat. Cleo burst with the joy of finding other people in the house that were still awake; yet the wide-eyed acid freaks sat on the couch staring, laughing, and not knowing how to react. The contrast between those with hypersensitive boundaries (acid) and those with no boundaries at all (drunk) couldn’t have been more extreme. Samantha, in her rather skimpy, glittery silver dress—like a disco ball pressed into the form of a garment—her golden hair a mess, collapsed and began groping the carpet in search of a half-empty pack of cigarettes she swore had been there before she left.

“Girlfriend is deeeeeee-runnnnnnk!” Cleo howled, pointing at Sam.

“I like your dress,” Chad told Sam, but he may as well have been talking to the wall.

Sam found a pack of Drum tobacco on the living room floor, but it was empty. She tore it once, twice, three times, into smaller and smaller pieces. “Doesn’t anybody in this house have a cigarette? Look at me, I’m goin’ crazy here!” she roared, as she tossed the torn pieces up into the air. The living room snowed confetti. The boys on the couch were scared. Her eyes had the same crazy vacancy as the people in the Safeway parking lot. She wasn’t there.

“I think there’s a full pack of Drum downstairs in my room,” Ryland said, trying to avert a full-scale catastrophe.

Cleo ran downstairs.

“Careful, there are people asleep on the floor,” they called after her.

Sam fidgeted in the chair, humming crackpot tunes to herself. She winked at Jake.

“So...you’ve had quite a bit to drink tonight?” Chad asked her.

“Oh, I’ve had a good deal to drink tonight!” she assured them. “It’s all about focus!” She cackled (shades of Janis Joplin), then craned her neck to peer around the corner, in the direction of the basement stairs. She was a trip.

Cleo returned with the Drum. Sam grabbed it out of her hand before she’d taken her second step into the room. In less than five seconds Sam had rolled a perfect cigarette and was sucking on it like a baby animal drawing mother’s milk. When it was gone she immediately rolled another.

“You boys are awful quiet tonight!” the girls observed of the shy couch boys.

“We’re on acid!” Ryland said, and the boys all laughed. It was funny.

Cleo’s eyes lit up like an elevator button. “Ooooh, you got some acid?” She and Sam traded a look. “Let’s take some acid, baby!” They barked at each other: “Yeah! Yeah!” Then turned to the boys: “How much for two hits?”

“Five dollars each,” said Chad, reaching into his magic jacket pocket.

The girls ran off to their respective bedrooms and came back with handfuls of coins. “This is all we got!”

Chad took pity on them, shook his head. “Are you sure you should be tripping after being out all night and drinking so much?”

Cleo and Sam exchanged a look and burst out laughing. It was so funny it melted the walls.

Chad looked at Ryland, who shrugged as if to say, “That’s how these girls roll.” Chad doled out two sugarcubes. The girls took them and ran to the kitchen for water. Then they disappeared into Sam’s room and closed the door. Their insane hyena laughter emanated through the closed bedroom door, growing ever wilder. Suddenly a torn-out page from a magazine appeared through the crack under the door, followed by wild whoops of laughter. Chadwick had finally had enough. He got up, went to the kitchen and came back with a glass full of water.

“Dare me to go in there and splash them?” he asked.

Everyone was silent. Then Jake said, “Yes.”

Chad opened the forbidden door. There was a splash followed by a chorus of ear-splitting screams and Chad came flying out like a torpedo with an enraged Samantha in hot pursuit. Her foot caught his ass just as they reached the kitchen and he fell forward onto the linoleum floor.

The boys on the couch laughed and clapped. “It’s like *I Love Lucy!*” Jake raved.

“You mean *I Love Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds,*”

Chad corrected. “Those girls belong in Andy Warhol’s Factory.”

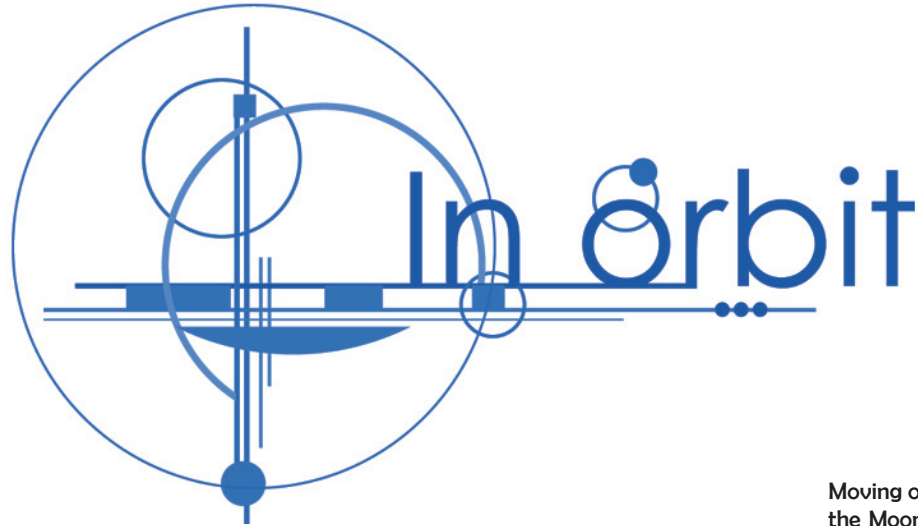
“Yeah, but they’re like that all the time,” Ryland replied wearily. Clearly for him, as their roommate, the thrill had worn thin.

Eventually, the commotion died down and they all gravitated to the Siren’s lair. Samantha and Cleo had both changed out of their party-wear into adorable little-girl pajamas. Cleo’s were pink cotton with a scalloped collar and ruffled sleeves and Sam’s were baby-blue flannel perfectly sculpted to buxom form. They huddled side-by-side on the bed paging through magazines – pointing, laughing, making catty remarks—either about the celebrities in the ‘zines or people from the parties they’d been to, or both intermingled.

Chad knew a trick where a subject was rested face down and had their arms lifted up slowly and then brought down—in a way that made it feel like they were melting through the floor. He performed it on Cleo and Sam and soon both were shrieking in lysergic banshee delight.

Tommy pointed to the tapestry over the bedroom’s sole window. “Sun’s rising.” Sure enough, the first rays of morning had begun to turn the tapestry fabric to fluorescent vermilion.





For this December, my beautiful boys and grrrls, the overriding themes are going to be balance and incubation. Squares abound, so we're all going to have to figure out how to be a little more flexible with our plans and expectations. Keep in mind as you read on, that everyone around you is affected by the same aspects, only in slightly (or some cases more dramatically) different ways. As a friend of mine once put so eloquently "We're all in this bath together." Bath I'm sure being a creative euphemism for the universe.

The squares of which I speak:

Jupiter has it out with Saturn: The energy of the King of the Sky can be summed up in the keyword "expansion", while Saturn, the Celestial Taskmaster, is a force of consolidation. We begin the second phase of this aspect on December 17th, with Jupiter in Scorpio and Saturn in Leo. The struggle is of Power. You may find that the projects you've been trying to force into reality have been more difficult than usual to manifest. Keep it up, though, kids. The payoff is good. I always say, ride the wild wind. My advice to you during this time would be to do more things that scare you. Put yourself in uncomfortable situations in order to force new adaptations. You may find yourself in the spotlight, without cue cards, so start practicing in the mirror today.

The Ominous Fixed Sign T-Square: A T-square is a planetary pattern of imbalance that resembles a three-legged square table. If pressure is placed upon the unsupported angle, the table falls over. The legs of this particular table are Mars, Saturn and Jupiter and will be in effect from the end of November through December, 2005. This T-square is comprised of three individual transits. They are:

---Mars squares Saturn. Mars (Aggro Incarnate!) happens to be running backwards in retrograde when he meets up for a skirmish with Saturn for the third time this year. You'll feel the blow the heaviest on the 27th. Good day to keep your mouth shut, as the things you say (especially where egos are involved) may have longer standing effects than those you can currently perceive.

---Mars opposes Jupiter: On December 4th, and then again on January 25, 2006. Soaring energy levels can either get you into sticky situations (which can be fun) or help you to be über-productive. The difficulty here may lie in maintaining judgment and restraint in the face of mounting desires and extended possibilities, but the more conscious you can remain of your human-scale capabilities, the smoother your surfing will be.

---Jupiter squares Saturn. Jupiter comes into its first exact square to Saturn on December 17th. Again, we're talking about power, here. Take a look back on all your accomplishments this year. Maybe even write out a list. What small countries have I conquered? Could I possibly have been sluttier, with more finesse? Should I call that friend I stopped speaking to earlier this year, since they keep popping up in my dreams? Am I making the money I deserve? Before you can be successful, you may need to update your vision of success.

With Your Host,

SAINT
CAEDMON

Moving on, I'd like to turn your attention to our Lovely Pale-skinned Lady, the Moon. Specifically, the days where she is void, of course. Simply put, anything that is started when the Moon is void, doesn't pan out. So, don't start a new business, don't make an official engagement, avoid pushing the send button on that e-mail and put off printing those flyers until the aspect is over. (That is, unless, you don't care what happens.) On the other hand, fretting over a possible negative outcome for a court case, an STD (is it or isn't it?) or what-have-you. The definition of void, of course, still applies: nothing comes of it.

Can you override the effect of a void Moon? Go ahead and try, honey! Double your efforts and slip on your best shoes. You can avoid hang-ups and disappointments by just checking your calendar. And now, because I'm such a nice guy, I'll go ahead and list those times for you here:

Dec 2, 10:17 AM, Dec 2 8:42 PM, Dec 4, 1:56 PM, Dec 4, 10:36 PM, Dec 6, 4:58 PM, Dec 7, 12:44 AM, Dec 8, 11:16 PM, Dec 9, 4:02 AM, Dec 11, 5:50 AM, Dec 11, 8:46 AM, Dec 13, 1:46 PM, Dec 13, 2:59 PM, Dec 15, 12:11 PM, Dec 15, 11:01 PM, Dec 16, 7:33 PM Dec 18, 9:18 AM, Dec 20, 8:08 PM, Dec 20, 9:39 PM, Dec 22, 11:30 PM, Dec 23, 10:26 AM, Dec 25, 10:53 AM, Dec 25, 9:04 PM, Dec 27, 2:26 AM, Dec 28, 3:43 AM, Dec 29, 10:01 PM, Dec 30, 6:35 AM, Dec 31, 4:09 AM, Jan 1, 2006 7:14 AM.

So let's break this month down now, yes?

1st
Moon squares Uranus. The Sun is conjunct with the Moon, which also trines with Saturn. Today is made for invention and flexing your genius muscles. You're going to get thrown some curveballs today, which is always easier to handle if you're wearing your favorite sweater. You may feel very self-possessed today and up for the challenge. Break out any random numbers written on bits of napkins, in your wallet, and call them.
2nd
Moon makes a sweet little sextile with Neptune and courteously conjuncts Pluto. Follow all your hunches today, babes. Let your intuition be your sole guide in all of your decision-making. If you have yet to begin your



dream journal, it might be a good time to start one (after the moon passes out of her void, that is). Go "Shut up and Dance" with DJ Gregarious at the Fez tonight and groove out all that surplus energy.
3rd
Moon moves Capricorn, whilst sextiling (I just made that word up) Uranus and Jupiter and trining (I made up that one, too) Mars. Sun is also trine with Saturn. A lot of things are running backwards today. Have you ever tried to talk backwards? That might be an amusing way to clear the tension in the air. Great wit and a little generosity go a long way today. Send a "Thank-You" letter or two. You know you've been meaning to. Accept the extra responsibility given to you today with grace. Pour your heart out every chance you get.

4th
Mercury goes direct! Buddha says Yaaaay! Breathe easy, some of those communication issues should settle down today. Make phone calls—and if there's some peculiar toilet-stall graffiti, with digits on it, that captures your attention, you should so call that bitch for a good time—even if just for a good laugh. The Moon forms a conjunction with Venus, which makes it a fabulous day for "booty". The Mercury sextiles with Moon and Venus add to the love is in the air vibe.

5th
Mars opposes Saturn, which the Moon also opposes. The Moon moves into Aquarius only to get ninety-degree-like with Mars and Jupiter. Random fact: Sarah MacLachlan has an Aquarius moon. Try invoking her today, or whichever Lilith Fair act most accurately represents you. Invest in future karma today with some kind of charitable act. Incidentally, you might want to check out David Queen spinning fantastic yarns (read: stories) at Dante's tonight, along with a performance by the fabulous Storm and the Balls. Laugh 'til you pee!

6th
Sun makes a sextile with the Moon, who happens to be making a separate sextile with Pluto. The Moon is also conjunct with Neptune and squaring it with the guy with wings on his shoes. Get rid of something today. Clean out your e-mail inbox. Take out that trash you've been piling up. Girl, you know you ain't never gonna wear that wig again, give it to the Salvation Army. There are Hurricane Katrina victims who need those throw pillows more than you do. They never matched your couch anyway. I foresee a David Lynch aspect to the day. End the night with Morcheeba at the Crystal Ballroom. And you know....always pass to the left!

7th
The Moon swims into Pisces. Sextiles today, between the Sun and Neptune, The Moon and Mars. The Moon also forms a trine with Jupiter and finds herself conjunct with Uranus. (Go ahead and say that last bit out loud.) The typical interpretation for almost any Moon-Uranus aspect is "expect the unexpected". Pisces urges to "just let the current take over". Confrontations with the law should be handled with care. Meditate on what Christmas wrapping means to you.

8th
The Sun squares the Moon which squares Pluto. You're going to have to deal with some serious issues today, like an adult. I would avoid the DMV. You might find you change your mind today on a belief you've held for a long time. It is a good day to remember those who are not in our lives anymore, however our paths have parted. Pluto always goes retrograde today, until the 22nd, which I understand to mean that a decision you make today will dramatically alter your future. Not that these moments don't happen all the time! Just be aware of the gravity of each situation you find yourself in.

9th
On the Moon's agenda today is a trine with Mercury, a sextile with Venus and a shift into the sign of The Ram. The Moon is peregrine here, to borrow a phrase from another astrologer. So maps are helpful today. Make sure to get good directions. The best thing (in my humble opinion) for you to do today, is to keep yourself very busy. End up on a live recording tonight at Mississippi Studios, with Gregory Douglass's "Acoustic Minds."

10th
Mars goes direct! You'll find your throat clears. You deserve to feel optimistic about your future. Moon trine Saturn indicates it would be a good day to repair things around the house, or get to those more menial projects you've been putting it off. With the sextiles between the Moon and Neptune, Mercury and Venus, today would be a great day to write a letter to an old friend, or journal in Laurelhurst. A colorful outfit will perk up anyone's mood, especially if you work in the service industry (which most of us do). The amount of sleep you're getting may be directly related to any health issues.

11th
Moon trines Pluto; Moon squares Venus and moves into Taurus. In this sign, the Moon is in what we (astrologers) like to call the "exalted position". Try to overcome the Venus-square-influenced tension with your lover by suggesting a few exalted positions of your own. Emotions run high today. Situations may have the tendency to erupt, so be cautious about that without being hesitant. A fantastic day to give up a bad habit!

12th
Speedy Mercury moves into Sagittarius, endowing us all with the Centaur's philosophical and athletic gifts. Electric is a good word to mediate upon. The waxing Taurus Moon is a strange conductor, however—it makes several aspects between Uranus and Mars more favorable, as well as Jupiter (opposition), Saturn and Neptune (squared). If you really want something to manifest today, focus not on financial or material concerns. Today isn't about setting goals or checking off your to-do list. It's about making crystal clear the distinction between what you want and what you need. The greatest comfort comes from the littlest things, like a book (which, today, will give you the best kind of reassurance you've had in a while).

13th
The Moon moves into Gemini to trine Venus and oppose Mercury. Good day for polygamy and breaking in that new hat. A few of my friends have the lovely habit of creating affirmations for themselves ("I am beautiful", "I am resilient", "I am capable", etc.) on brightly-colored paper and posting them in places they'll see them often—like the bathroom mirror! Take a cue from Lauren of Ethereal Clothing and Charisse (who helped bring us the Fire Jams under the Bridge) and create your own affirmations today. The Dandy Warhols play the Wonder Ballroom tonight, which all the fabulous people (including myself) shall attend. Take notes today, as your memory may be clouded by your daydreams.

14th
Moon squares Uranus and forms a sextile with Saturn, bringing an inner-link with the outside world. Global issues may feel more personal. If you find yourself bored at all, do a little research into an issue that concerns you. Let the fierceness of the great rebels of yore inspire you. Get under the hood today. Make repairs and renovations. Listen to punk rock records—even if you just can't appreciate the whole aesthetic.

15th
The Full Moon in Gemini trines Neptune and opposes Pluto. Venus moves into Aquarius. Get ready, Portland, cos it's going to be one hell of a night. A line from Lou Reed comes to mind: "It's the beginning of a new age." He also mentions in that song about how it's my fancy to make it with Frank and Nancy. I'll leave that judgment call up to you. Liberate yourself from any inhibitions and speak your mind clearly. Journal your dreams from last night, you may find the synchronicity eerie.

16th
Moon moves into her natural home, Cancer, to form favorable aspects with Uranus and Mars. This is a day for nostalgia, as well as for updating your Myspace/Blogspot/Friendster/Tribe page. Call your mother or grandmother today (or perhaps your lover's mother). Be gracious and compassionate and you may be surprised by how far that takes you. The Sun, center of our universe, forms a conjunction with Pluto, the outermost planet. Opinions are intense, and authority figures may appear dictatorial: Take it all in stride and keep in mind that everything in life is impermanent and subject to change, at any moment. This thought can be more liberating than it sounds.

17th
The Moon trines Jupiter, while Jupiter squares Saturn. That's a pretty interesting aspect you have there. To be really literal, it means that the world beneath the surface is undergoing a favorable expansion process, while being guided and blocked by karma and laws. In a less esoteric sense, legal matters and employment should be approached in a very professional way, (tho situations that may present themselves will be emotionally charged). Let the logical part of your brain be in charge today. I also foresee weird phone calls, which in my world, are always a welcome surprise!

18th
Brilliant Leo rules today's Moon, which opposes the Love Goddess's current position. "Rock star" egos abound, but if you happen to be a megalomaniac, you may get a little smack with reality, when people aren't so impressed with your stunts. Quarrels in relationships erupt—over what can be distilled to primal dominance displays. Step above that, cos you are simply too fabulous to get weighed down by petty dramas! A good day for a long stroll. You might be amazed at how cathartic starting a fire can be. Finish off your night with Northwest darlings Death Cab For Cutie, at the Crystal Ballroom.

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