

THE

SURREAL TIMES

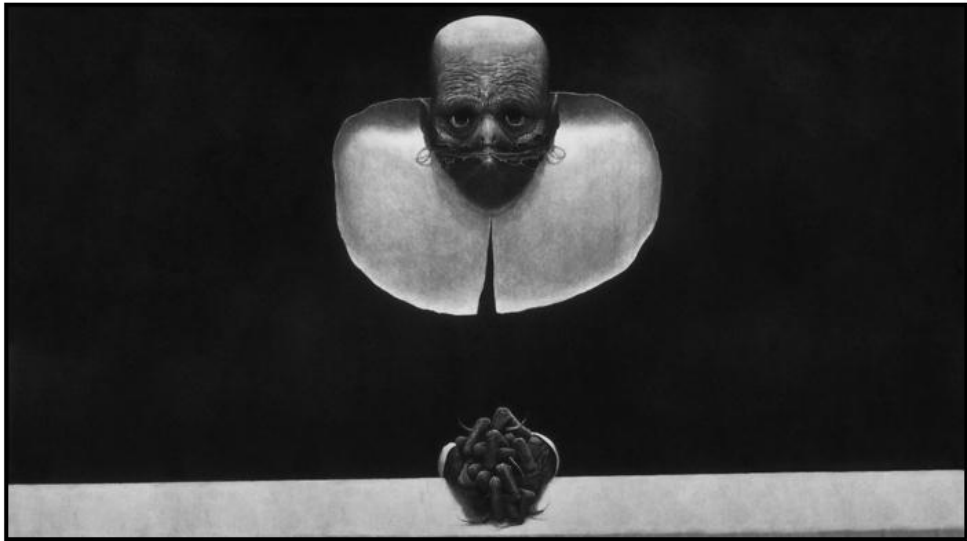
"Documenting the history
currently unfolding..."

October 31th, 2017 .:|. surrealtimes.net

Serving the citizens of the
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of the cicadas.

LOCAL BOY LEARNS NOT TO LIE

Somehow, somewhere, Slim Tim learned what happens when you lie. And not very good things come to liars. Page 3 tells a tale horrific and chilling to the bone.



FROM THE MOUTH
OF THE PIG:

By ARMÁDEIUS GALOUËI,
Times Senior Editor



"The feral lookout beckoned vertically."

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AT THE FOOT OF
THE ALTAR

By DOCTOR GOLDSTEIN,
Times Staff



"Here," he said to himself,
gazing up at the sky above.
"Here we will be free."

He turned to look at his people,
all waiting on his word.

He raised a fist, catalyzing a
roaring chain reaction of cheer,
spreading back as far as he
could see.

"No longer! No longer will we
be bonded by the chains of
sovereignty, the whips of
morality, or the cross of wealth.
No! These institutions that have
served no purpose but to retain
us cannot hold. We have grown
in numbers and in force. And
like an enormous wave
crashing down upon a levee, on
this day, we break free,
allowing it to crumble at the
heels of our feet.

Now, ladies and gentlemen,
now we turn our eyes to this
new land. This vast open
horizon, where the sky doesn't
look menacingly down upon us,
but we look sternly up at it.
And in this land there will be
nothing refraining us from
reaching it.

I believe that I speak for
everyone of us when I say that
freedom should be the only law
of this new land. And anyone
who impedes upon that right,
which is sown into this very
soil, shall be put to death for
treason.

And so, let us harness this
freedom, ladies and gentlemen,
and let it pull us in the only
direction we know to be true.
Up. We have been bound by
land for too long. If we seek
true freedom this is where we
must go. Not to the clouds, but
beyond them.

It is the duty of every man,
woman, and child to participate
in this divine task. So let us
express our freedom for all to
see."

And so for years this new
civilization slaved at the altar
of freedom, uninhibited by any
regulations that would
transgress their creed. It grew
upon itself, layer after layer,
until, as prophesied, it stretched
above the clouds.

"Yes! See how far we have
come!" He cried from atop the
altar. "See how much we are
able to achieve without the
tyranny of precept. We have
reached the clouds and we will
continue to go higher.

CONTINUED... See "AT
THE FOOT OF THE
ALTAR" on page 2.

SYMPTOMS OF THE NEW AVIAN FLU

An eyewitness
account...

By COLETTE,
Primary Eyewitness



"I stopped seeing his name pop
up on my phone," she said, "so
I gouged my eyes out."

The girl speaking in the
opposite corner of the
bedroom, illuminated by
overlapping circles of colored

Christmas lights, her form
swaying through the eddies of
pink and blue and green and
post-sunset golden smoke,
looked at me. I thought at first,
struggling to separate her black
cotton shirt from the wiggling
shadows, that she was telling
the truth. There were two
round black holes in the center
of her face.

I shook my head, blew out my
hit, and leaned slightly
forward. "Sorry, what?" I said.

"I know you wouldn't fucking
believe me," she said. "Nobody
does. Nobody knows. You all
think you're all so different,
you all play pretend, tell each

other lies. Whispering." The
weed curled a little
unpleasantly in my veins.

"I admit that I did it," she said,
"the gouging. I did the final
stab of it, used the scissors
with the chipped paint handle I
found in a kitchen drawer.
Pushed until I felt a pop. I did
that part. But you all did the
rest. The whispering. The
texting."

She was rocking now from side
to side, like she was
relinquishing ownership of her
body to some méchant
fantôme, to a prophecy. The
darkness in her eyes deepened.
My ears were screeching

across the highest violin string,
no grease, ich, ich.

"Oooh, the texting! Never
again! Blood and worms! I'd
do it again! I'll do it again!"

"Jesus Christ!" I cried,
jumping to my feet. "Well have
you found it now in the
darkness?! Have you found
what you were looking for?!"

"You stupid bitch," she said,
disappearing. "I must feed my
hens."

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WILLIAM BLANKETT FOUND GUILTY
OF EXISTENTIAL MALPRACTICE

By J.D.,
Times Correspondent

William was in the deepest
cycle of REM, his eyes
searching blindly under his
eyelids. From the depths of his
consciousness across the
bounds of space and sky his
mind aimlessly wandered.
Flashing neon images of grid-
iron triangles tumbled through
his head. Flickers of soft stars
floated intermittently in this
lightless formless space.

"We here today do solemnly
affirm the guilt and conviction
of William Blankett," the chief
juror declared.

"Mr. Blankett will now be

escorted outside the courtroom
to await his punishment," the
judge replied.

"You scoundrel pig!" shouted a
member of the jury.

An ensuing montage of
William's own crucifixion on a
tow-truck tumbled through the
empty medium of his mind.

Reporters rushed to the purpled
foyer of the Courthouse. Law
enforcement officials stepped
in front of the assembling mob
of jurors, spectators, nudists
and reporters.

The crowd swelled like an
infected sore and oozed around
the parade of Mr. Blankett in

shackles. A police van awaited
the arrival of the convict.

In William's empty mental
medium, an image of himself
fell to the ground gasping for
air after the tow-truck man hit
him in the groin with a tire-
iron.

William Blankett was
convicted of existential
malpractice on Monday. After
a short but exhaustive trial,
prosecutors convinced a jury of
his peers to convict one of their
own for the sake of their
precarious existence.

Meanwhile, the tow-truck man
took his sledge hammer and
nails from the truck. He

manipulated William's body
onto the iron cross. SLAM! A
nail impaled William's
imagined wrist. WHAM!
Another nail to his feet.
Another through his belly
button.

The prosecutor lost the
evidence of Mr. Blankett's
existential malpractice on his
way to the courthouse.
Unfortunately for Mr. Blankett,
the prosecutor spit up salami
and sprayed the jurors with
tanning oil.

CONTINUED... See "W.
BLANKETT FOUND
GUILTY" on page 2.

(Continued) -- AT THE FOOT OF THE ALTAR

... There is nothing, no force, capable of stopping us. So let us build, and let us never stop building. With our freedom we have unlocked the gates of eternity."

All along the scaffolding of the structure, people intoxicated by the man's words, clambered to get to the top, to be part of the progress. They moved with the chaos of a boiling pot, pulling at each others shirt tails and legs in a violent display of patriotism, pushing up and forward.

Around the 800th story, a young girl fell and was trampled by the stampede of good samaritans, who pushed on with noble ignorance. Yet

one man, an infidel of freedom, stopped and knelt down by her side. He picked her up with tender hands, and for a moment, cradled her in his arms until he too was trampled by the feet of progress.

The chauvinists stumbled over the bodies of the man and young girl, creating a clot in the veins of this free flowing blood. But the masses pulsed with force against the obstruction, not wanting to stop their forward motion. They climbed over each other and pushed themselves off the scaffolding, plummeting to their deaths as martyrs of the cause.

Yet the blood continued to

coagulate, the weight of it ripping the scaffolding from the brick with a liberating groan. People leapt, with their eyes still fixed on the sky, trying to cling on to the structure decaying in their hands.

"No! What are you doing! Quick, secure the scaffolding, throw up the support beams! Don't let our freedom perish!" The man cried from atop as the altar crumbled, freely falling from above the clouds.

What a silly creature I have made.

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(Continued) -- W. BLANKETT FOUND GUILTY

... The prosecutor's performance alone convinced the jury that they too were implicated in his crime and would pay for it if they did not make an example out of him.

Unable to grasp at his chest, William felt a muscular explosion from within his heart. His body limped rightwards. Blood rushed to the bottom of his feet. He was drained.

Mr. Blankett was sentenced to sustained suffering for a period of 776 days.

Within the empty medium of William's mind an unsettling nostalgia filled this form with déjà vu. He saw himself on the street besides a tow-truck. Glancing around the corner he saw the tow-truck man with his tire-iron. Again?

Mr. Blankett will be revived from his medically induced psycho-scare coma 775 days from yesterday.

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CALL TO WRITERS

THE EDITORS,
Times Staff

This sentence and its containing section is a materialization of abstract gravitation, pulling you to email management@surrealtimes.net, enlisting yourself as a journalist for The Surreal Times. To fight this gravity is to keep hold of a hot air balloon destined to burst in the stratosphere.

Do you understand? If so, please, get in touch.

The Editors can be reached at management@surrealtimes.net.

AMHERST ANNUAL ORCHESTRA

FORECAST FOR HALLOWS EVE EVE

BY DERNBERGER SPENGLETON,
Times Staff

Jolly horns will burp spine-bending sounds, accented by pippen flute pipes and other instruments during the coming night of frights. Monsters, chained by their necks to street lamps and mailboxes, will be scraping their fingertips raw against the crumbling thick pavement, desperately trying to pry open the chest of the world and euphorically extract its heart. Kids will venture near and ask for yingalings and dandy pops. They won't understand why the monsters get so furious when interrupted. They won't understand why the monsters will pull their chains tight, rampaging after certain trick or treaters, trying to tear off the heads of any soul reflecting blue light.. but merely the arms of individuals wearing brown.. the fingers of those in green.. and plucking the peach fuzz of those in the lightest of greens.

Fortunately, young and innocent onlookers won't traumatize for long, because they will be occupied by the rising climax of Amherst Annual Orchestra, a grand band that plays just once a year and never again, over and over again.

It will go like this. Louder louder louder. Building, and ever impelling! A bassline, a drumroll, the sousaphones hollering a punchy groove, with

the saxophones, the clarinets, and the flutes all soloing wildly and far-reachingly simultaneously, giving rise to a great cathartic divine invigorating chaos. But the flutes will fade with the Doppler Effect. The clarinets will fall away similarly. The saxophones will wail a low tone as they fade. The sousaphones, in their great breadth, will make a whooshing sound as they fall. And the snares will conclude the matter with an Bah-duh-tsssss, before taking their final steps and rendering that as that.

The music will have stopped, its makers having dropped far down a most giant well of diameter 100 meters.

Immediately afterwards, the monsters will give up their attempts at accessing the chest cavity of the earth. They will lift their binding telephone poles, light posts, and mailboxes from the ground. A rainbow stream of brass and silver will flow up from the well, leaving instruments in the hands of all good children.

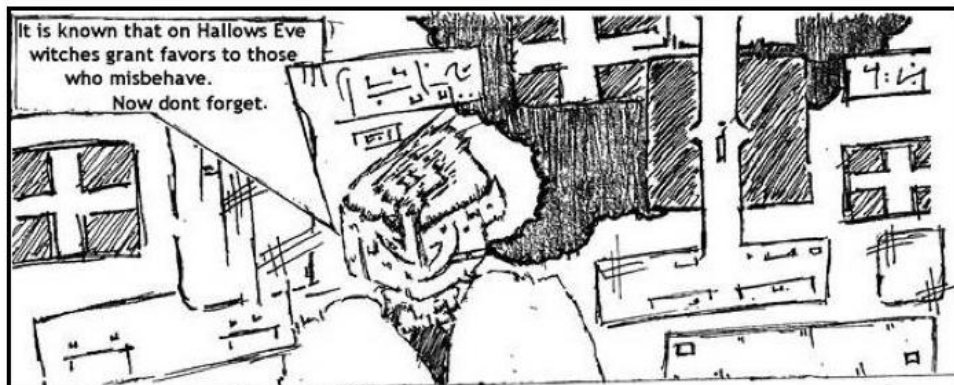
And the monsters will use their newly repurposed utensils as a conductor's sticks, regally molding an inspired generation of trick or treaters to become music performers.

If you have a chance, dance your way to a mailbox and look inside. You might find an invitation.

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BIHEXICAL COMIC

BY RAKA,
Times Staff



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CATCHING UP WITH THE ARKANSAS HOWLER

BY JOE
KIERLSKEGRENGER,
Times Correspondent

Joe: So first things first - how would you describe your hobby to someone who's never heard of you?

Howler: Well, I scream. That's really it. They call me the Howler. I'm trying to get a single scream as loud as I can get it, and that's a pretty tough goal. Right now I'm peaking out around 118 decibels, which is just a few below the world record.

J: And how often do you scream?

H: Well, when I'm not working, about as much as I can. I like watching movies

too, but it's really not as good for me as screaming. It's like, when I come back home, I go to my special room and I start howlin'.

J: I've done some research for this interview. I heard you once described it as an obsession?

H: That's correct.

J: Has it negatively impacted your life?

(Pause)

H: I had a family. But I howled too much.

J: I'm sorry to hear that.

H: Yeah.

J: To end on a positive note, do you have any advice for aspiring howlers?

H: You gotta preserve your vocal cords. Howling is about a single scream as loud as possible. When I howl, I do warmups for about half an hour. And I never howl more than four times in a row.

J: That's sound advice. Thank you for your time, and I'll see you around Amherst!

H: It sure ain't Arkansas. (Laughs)

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

BY A CONCERNED MOTHER,
Citizen of The World

To whom it may concern at this "paper." Take your surrealism out of my family! And my community! And even my country! For too long good children, and hardworking adults, have dabbled in fantasy surreal lands. Games of Thrones. Star Wars. Mario. All fantastical, all surreal. What else could one call such an aberration? I say no more. Our feet should be firmly planted in the ground at all times, our eyes towards our work, and our minds on our family. Thank you and good day.

WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT LANGUAGE ANYWAY?

BY JOE,
THE CHIMPANZEE,
Times Correspondent

Nouns and verbs. Predicates and adjectives. Gerunds and participles and tenses and pronouns and conjunctions and conjugations. Who really needs these things?

Set aside the language I am using right now. This column is the final language. This is the language that argues for the end of speech. Sapiens, I really have to ask you: how has your language really worked out for you?

We chimps, I think we've got it

sorted out. Chimps don't libel or slander or spew hate speech or fuel witch hunts. We've got a few words, and you know what? I think we make the most out of them! Who needs "Hey, watch out! There's a leopard below you!" when you can just yell "Leopard!" In all the time you spend flapping your oh-so-

developed voicebox, you could be running away! I'm telling you, Noam Chomsky would like a bit more liked Noam Chomped-sky if he stopped to spew spit when there's a leopard about.

But you're a modern reader, and you're quite attached to

your language. After all, it's what separates you from the beasts. I can appreciate that. I'll put it to you this way: what makes you miserable? Your special someone arguing with you? Your boss screwing you over? Your professor pulling some bull crap on the test? Guess what the common

denominator here is. That's right, you got it - complex speech! Bye bye language, bye bye modern woes.

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LOCAL BOY LEARNS NOT TO LIE

By RAKA,
Times Staff



Somehow, somewhere, Slim Tim learned what happens when you lie. And not very good things come to liars. Here is a tale horrific and chilling to the bone. Ah, and so you remain? You have been warned.

"Eh, Timmy," his mother said, "will you fetch me a sour pumpkin from the yard?"

"Sour, Mama?"

"As sour as you can find."

"Ah, and here you are," he said

as he found one. He sniffed the air and smelled the aroma of Mother's boiling mystery soup mixed with the scent of squashed pumpkin. Tim's knife carefully carved a hole on the top, made sure it was big enough, looked into the eyes of the panther, and gently slid the blade into the ear of the family cat. The pumpkin screamed furiously when the hole was carved, but no one heard him.

The family cat died in the boy's hands. He gave a brief eulogy, mentioned that the cat had been Father's "best pal," and carefully shuffled the seeds inside the pumpkin so as to make a little coffin for the feline.

Tim gave Mother the pumpkin and she poured into it a stew from a large cauldron. She shut it tight and into the oven it went. Now the knife screamed

in agony of his friend pumpkin, but again nobody cared enough to notice.

- "Mum, a story?"
- "No."
- "Can I go out to play?"
- "No."
- "Mum, can I dance?"
- "No. Never dance."

When the timer went off it cut the black smoke with a pair of scissors. Mother brought out a silver tray with the steaming pumpkin on one side and a ladle on the other. She gave a good whiff at the sticky air.

"Smell that, Timmy?"

"Mhm. Mhm."

"That's the smell of the gift your father has blessed me with."

"Oh, I smell it Mama. I do."

UNTASTEFULLY YOURS PROBABLY & THE A.R.G.

A peculiar occurrence...

By DERNBERGER
SPENGLER,
Times Staff



You may have noticed during a rainy or wretched day of late, the "for sale" sign, brown with white lettering, that was once upon a time erected on the foul-smelling lot across the road from Tony's Super Store. And you may have wondered what exactly was for sale. Because, in that big hay field, home only to a small, smoke-emitting tree, and a broken down fence encasing a potpourri of junk — the particular item intended for sale could be any of the countless items the area. It could be any old piece of hay, amongst broken down vehicles, war-torn snowblowers, rusted out trailers, and the occasional piece of circus equipment.

I was on a late night jog. It was four or so in the morning, when I found or made in the night this mysterious sign. I passed it by, but then I asked myself why? And I concluded: as a journalist, ignoring the sign would be to slap away the hand of charity after many meals missed. So I removed my shoes and trudged step by soggy step through the broken, septic moistened front yard.

I had hopes of finding a personality to taste, or a mindfulness gyro to steal. But I found neither of these things. Instead, what I found was an allure toward the backside of the tree whose silhouette we all remember.

Remember back to Thursday or

the previous, during one of your reluctant drives to the liquor store to buy wine for your friends. Do you remember seeing the tireswing? Do you remember the way it succumbed to being pushed rightward by the wind? And the way, when the wind withered down, it would swing leftwards, hit something that you couldn't see behind the tree (making a "thud") and bounce back rightward again, destined to be caught by the subsequent gust?

I circled in toward the periodic thud. I hopped from rock to rock in my shit averse bare feet. I eventually came to a doghouse shadowed behind the tree, and attached via chimney pipe into an owl hole. This small hut bore the brunt of each downward swing of the tire. It had no life inside. But a half-rotten, root-sprouting potato claimed the floorboards — along with a pair of boots, a spoon dirtier than the boots, a pot dirtier than the spoon, and a crumpled newspaper that looked like someone had wiped his ass with it.

Above the entryway, painted in red were the words: "Lost River Auto Body."

I'd say, if you are anything like the average modern bloke, then you never in your whole life ventured close enough to read the name of this place. I doubt you ever once read the fine print on the for sale sign either. What I mean by this is that you wouldn't have seen the little yellow footprints hopping from letter to letter across 'f'-'o'-'r'-'s'-'a'-'l'-'e', or the tiny map engraved within the colon following these letters.

You wouldn't have followed this map. So you wouldn't have known that the item for sale was the big giant paper mache foot the size of a van, bolted atop a de-roofed snowmobile

trailer. And you wouldn't have learned, seeing the letters 's'-'o'-'l'-'d' scraped into the lower end brown sign, that the foot had been sold. Or that it was destined for 'd'-'e'-'l'-'i'-'v'-'e'-'r'-'y' 'o'-'n'-'o'-'c'-'t'-'2'-'0'.

So, understandably, probably you along with a great many others, were PERPLEXED when a giant foot appeared beside your campus POND, towed there by a group of shagging leather-wearing HUNCHBACKS. Or when the hunchbacks scurried into the forest of books, and by early dawn returned hopping like pogos, each hunchback having severed his or her right leg and wiped slug slime mixed with blood over his eyes. Or when these one-legged hunchbacks cooperated to climb the giant foot, and to arrange each of themselves perched in their own unique position like a flamingos, with crates of books hanging from their necks, a stopwatch in their left hand, and open book in their right.

You probably had never heard of the Autonomous Reading Group, the group impelled by something or other to scan their eyes over as many words as possible before the you-know-what. You probably criticized the way they let the wind flutter their pages in such disorder... and the way they periodically tossed their handheld books to General Wingsoverman and his ducks in the pond... and the way the hunchbacks neverendingly picked new books from their respective crate until the end.

And you probably yelled at them to stop, interrupting their autonomous reading and stopping their hearts.

Asshole.

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"First our grace," she said. They held hands and looked somberly into each other's eyes. "We thank the lord for this beautiful meal and this beautiful family." Slim Tim nodded. "And although we miss Father very much so, we know his ghost somehow always lingers with us." Tim nodded. "And we are blessed all the same with a healthy crop, a healthy boy, and a healthy meal regardless of our luck."

"Ay-men."

Mother carefully took out the pumpkin lid with a green glove. She poured two bowls, the first beholding a floating blue eyeball with an exploded pupil, and the other, sharp claws and teeth tainted with blood.

"Eat up."

They ate in silence until Tim started getting nauseous and said "Mum, this is making me sick."

The knife was getting disgustingly sick as he gazed at the corpse of his friend pumpkin completely incinerated and black. Is it necessary to remind the reader that to this no attention was paid? Yes, it is. But, they ate and ate until Slim Tim could no more, and until he vomited a yellow liquid.

"That must have been the pumpkin. You picked it wrong, Tim."

"No. It was the best. It was sour, it was sour."

"Now you know what you get Tim. I would have hoped your father wouldn't let you forget what happens when you lie."

"But I didn't lie. I'm not lying. I'm sorry. Not the piss! Mumma, please!"

But Mother had already started. She dragged him by the collar and said, "Yes. Yes. The grumble it is."

The knife screamed: "Not the grumble. He's just a kid. Please. Please. He's just a kid!" Once, and for the last time, no one could hear a solitary knife sitting on the counter. But he heard mother lock the door to the basement and give Slim Tim the piss.

And Tim learned not to lie, although he never did.

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OFF-CAMPUS APARTMENT EVICTS TENANTS

By WES SIZEMORE,
Times Correspondent



NORTH AMHERST --- Two roommates were left homeless after discovering their Puffton Village apartment is self aware. This realization occurred around 10:31 PM on Friday, October 13, while the renters were preparing for a night of partying.

"We were sitting there getting high, my roommate and I, when all of the sudden I thought I heard somebody scream, 'GET OUT OF ME!'" said Vance Voorhees, a tenant of 666 Puffton. "I thought I was hallucinating, but I saw a sick look of fear on my roommate's face. I said 'bro, did you hear that?' and he was like, 'yeah bro what the heck?' then we heard it again," Voorhees described a dark force that overcame him and his roommate Miguel Myers. They were both sent, along

with their paraphernalia, tumbling out the front door, shattering the waterpipe and bottles of booze.

"We didn't know what to do, the bus was coming at 10:42 so we had to go or we were going to miss the party," said Myers. The roommates got back home around two in the morning to find that their apartment was locked and their keys would not work. After attempts to force the door open, the tenants said they heard the same voice they had believed a hallucination.

"Go away, you people have destroyed my insides. You play obnoxious music, and never fail to get urine on my precious toilet seats."

The tenants say the source of this voice was the apartment itself. The personified unit 666 broke its' windows and began to attack both Voorhees and Myers by utilizing the staircase handrail as an appendage.

The boys called the police during the assault, but Emergency Operators dismissed it as drunken antics. Police did not arrive on the

scene until nearly an hour later after receiving noise complaints in the same area. Officers showed up to 666 Puffton where they were met with the bodies of Myers and Voorhees, lying lifelessly underneath their reanimated spirits.

Voorhees commented on the transition into his new ghost form, "It's going to take some getting used to. Everytime I go to sit down I fall through my seat to the floor, but at least since I'm dead I don't need to go to class anymore. Since Miguel and I are spirits though, our possessed apartment is letting us back inside!"

Puffton management gave no comment other than an expression of grief for the deceased and their family. The apartment has since been boarded up and scheduled for demolition by November, followed by an exorcism in December.

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A PECULIAR CHASE OF MUTTS AND BOLTS

By J.D.,
Times Correspondent

FREEDOM, MA - A reporter could not speculate or even identify the original conflict that produced the inane chase on Tuesday, leaving the town's inhabitants utterly bemused and mildly distracted. Nonetheless, it all began when Shorty, the town feral dog, scampered down Blackboard Avenue at high-noon and zeroed in on his prey.

Hauling ever-emptying shelves, a rabid refrigerator made its way around the corner of Blackboard Avenue and down a side-street. Diners on

restaurant patios, drowsy from a noon-day drunk, seemed not to notice or protest the minor occurrence happening on their streets. Determined to get his fill and wink his waggle, Shorty sprinted after his runaway prey.

The refrigerator, acquainted with the side-streets during its misspent youth, threw its clattering metal panels around another corner and shot toward Main Street. Foaming from the mouth and clanking down the street, it felt relieved as it perceived itself to be momentarily safe.

Shorty's sharp black nose sniffed out its dinner. He darted around the corner and followed the path of scrapes in the tar toward its prey. The refrigerator noticed Shorty while it was waiting for traffic to stop long enough for a safe passage.

Shorty shouted, "I've got you this time, you mangy mutt!"

"Go get a house, you animal!" the refrigerator gargled...

CONTINUED... See "A PECULIAR CHASE OF MUTTS AND BOLTS" on page 4.

THE BIHEXICAL SEARCH

By ARMĂDEIUS GALOUEI,
Times Senior Editor

This maze is dedicated to my future wife, "Gladys".

From management: *An important task is encoded over this maze by a spectacular isomorphism between mazes and the universe. By solving it, you do good for the world. For solving it, you get a secret prize. Email your solutions to management@surrealtimes.net.*



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A PECULIAR CHASE OF MUTTS AND BOLTS

(... Continued from previous page)

... Meanwhile, police officers donning pink-velvet uniforms emblazoned with psychedelia, stood at the corner of First Street and Main adjacent to the chase. The police officers saw the frothy refrigerator and drew daffodils from their holsters. The police called for cosmological assistance. To their dismay, no immediate assistance arrived. They resorted to shouting mantras and hexes in attempt to ward off the poisonous froth from this iron beast. "Kiwis and cucumbers! May you be gone again Satan!"

To no avail, the chase continued past law enforcement down Main Street. The refrigerator bolted down

the street, dodged a car and skipped over a crosswalk to an intersection.

Shorty matched each step, until WHAM....POP! The refrigerator lay strewn across the intersection. Its grimy metallic innards scattered and fluttered like confetti. An ice-cream truck had nailed the refrigerator a moment before Shorty got his paws on him.

Shorty understood defeat and fled the scene of the accident. Law enforcement officials cordoned off the intersection. The refrigerator rested gently as an empty sum of its strewn parts.

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PSYCH. TESTING

May be of concern to Amherst...

By RAKA,
Times Staff

On Hallow's eve, it is no surprise strange occurrences have been happening in the small town of Amherst, Massachusetts. Most recently a number of students of local universities have reported strange signs in places where they should not. They read: "Silence. Testing in progress." Signs of this nature have been found on all sorts of places ranging from public buildings, banks, laundromats, and even private residences.

The latest report came from Dimitri White. He is a student at UMass Amherst, currently enrolled in a few courses in the psychology department. "The signs. Oh. The signs. Yes. That should have been my first clue," he said. He expressed he had been severely affected by the signs in Tobin Hall, for reasons he would not disclose, and would tear them apart everytime he saw them. But the next day, as always, there they were: "Silence. Testing in progress."

On Oct 24th, two days after the initial sightings, White claimed to have seen spider monkeys and chipmunks running around the Tobin hall. An advocate of mind over matter, and a dedicated apprentice, he refused to either see a doctor or miss a day of class. Yet, when leaving Psych 334: Paranoia in the 1850s, he spotted a classmate with a black squirrel in his lab coat. After bringing this up, he was rejected, laughed at, called a scoundrel, and disinvented from the study group.

On Oct 25th he tore up the same sign he had torn for days in bitter rage and found that on the opposite side, in chalk, was written: Day IV. "At that moment I felt my heart boil;

bubbles starting to pop in my veins." That same day, whilst taking the elevator, he found a skunk wearing a tux, probably pretending to be a butler. He stood with moist towels and cologne and said, "What floor sir?" The bitter rage consumed White and he savagely scared the animal off before he could point it out to anyone. The paper cannot be sure this event happened.

The PIA was contacted by White on Oct 26th when the sign re-appeared. After a thorough investigation they came to the conclusion that White was in fact being over-dramatic. There was evidence of pest infestation, but they concluded their efforts would be better invested elsewhere. After this, White called them "quacks," and a few other words of bad taste.

On the night of Oct 27th White, who was recently nicknamed "Shakey" for his lack of control over his vibrating limbs, entered his Psych 421: Victorian Surveillance, and found that his classmates were all dogs in student clothing taking notes. It is worth mentioning that they were all different races. The Professor was a St. Bernard in a green pinstripe suit. At the sight of this White attempted to leave but found the door locked and, again, the white sign taped up: "Silence. Testing in progress." As is known, dogs can smell fear; White's lack of control maddened the canines and the whole thing turned into a show. When the PIA arrived, they found thousands of the signs in the room, White on the floor, and the dogs quietly studying their books.

Any information or sighting of animals in clothing, strange signs, or White, should be reported to The Surreal Times and subsequently the authorities.

THE LOST STORY OF MR. JOHNSON

By PRAA PARA,
Times Correspondent

His credit card didn't work. His phone couldn't call. His keys worked, sure, but when he called his work on the land line, they reported something strange. The secretary, Jess, had put him through to his manager, but they had no papers on him. He was puzzled, but it had not yet dawned on him. And so he worked his way up through the various institutions on his land line. The YMCA. The post office. The local registrar and notary. Higher. The state police. None had any information on him. Finally the embassy.

"It's very strange, Mr. - eh, what was your name again?"

"Johnson."

"Well you see Mr. Johnson, I've just tried to check your social security and your passport, and I can't seem to find any current files on you. Nor can I find any older versions or records of files for you."

"Did someone delete them?"

"That's not possible. They're gone, I'm afraid."

"Well, what am I supposed to do?"

"Mr., eh, Johnson was it? I must say I'm not thrilled with you about all this. To waste my time and all that. I'm going to let you go now."

"No, wai-"

"No, listen. Don't play silly jokes like these again. There is no Howard Johnson, 20 December, 1983, and there never was. There is no trace of such a person in any government records, and as far I can tell, any record ever. Good bye."

Johnson dropped the phone. In a society of laws and receipts and passports, he was a foreigner. Worse than foreigner. Someone to be arrested and deported. What do they do to people who don't have an identity, he thought. What do they do to people who aren't people?

Johnson looked down at his house phone on the floor. He was bending to pick it up when he heard the loud knock on the door.

It was as though the person at the door banged his fist directly into Johnson's lungs, because with each knock, he lost all of his breath. He would breath halfway in, before having his inhale cut short and spun silly.

Johnson wondered what to do. To hide in the basement? To call to police? To call his mother? To board up his windows? Or to dig from his dirt basement to the other side of the planet?

Despite the possibilities, he wound up knocking his fist against the inside of his front door.

He knocked, and subsequently came a gasp. He knocked harder, and from the other side of the door came a grunt. He

punched the door with all his might, and a scream shivered his spine.

"Stop that!" Yelled the voice from outside. And then the man on the outside kicked the door. Johnson's left lung collapsed. And he fell to the floor. "Do you see how it feels? Just open up!"

Johnson pondered for a moment, and then he saw his son's heavy baseball bat on the counter. He grabbed it and charged at the door. And he smashed a hole through the crappy fake wood. Through the busted hole, he saw a man in a suit on his knees, asphyxiating and drowning in his own tears, holding his chest.

The man struggled to say, "it is perfect!"

Johnson was confused...

"And why do you give me that look, eh?"

Johnson spine turned into a snake. The snake obsessed with uncontrollable hiccups. He could not for a moment believe his eyes or the ones in front of him. The baseball bat slipped and knocked on the ground. Maybe someone confused it for an ordinary knock, checked their door and saw nothing.

"Ah, Mr. Johnson; be reasonable, why don't you."

But he could not.

The man in the ironed suit also wore a red cap with the inscriptions I.S.R. He cleared his throat as if to speak but said

nothing.

"So," said Johnson. "Who exactly are you, and why do you look like a copy of me?"

"Don't you mean to say that you look like a copy of me?" he responded.

The snake rattled and gave him hell. And the likes of the rest of his body were not very kind as well.

"Ha!" the man laughed and laughed. "It's perfect. Reasonably perfect. Perfect like marmalade on the beach."

"You were manufactured"

"Nonsense," he hissed back.

That's not the right word.

They looked at each other.

"WHY ARE YOU HERE WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME?" He screamed at the the man who looked like him. "You're not asking the right questions," he thought.

The man who entered this home. The man whose home he'd entered into.

The more he thought about it the less sense any of it made. The projection of his life on the screen was distorted by the fact that the screen was ripped off and was now projecting on a pool of blackness.

He cried.

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A CAWL FOR MANY "CERTAIN WAYS"

By ALFRED HUMBLETON,
Times Correspondent

Fathom not, can I, in the wake of monumental unaccidental civilization,, humanity's impending succumbtion to the

entropic flu Puup Brown, which encircles us like a thousand grim Deaths setting a perimeter and half-closing. Coming with their scythes, but prior to and in place of our clean decapitations, tossing us

into a large cauldron, drinking their very own excretions, and finally with the butt ends of their sticks.. stirring us and awl of our colors into one fat homogeneity.

I cannot fathom, but I may say: Act with internal intention. Toss the mirrors away. Dance eyes closed, and be a flavour today! ~ Best wishes.