



ODE MADE TO LOBOTOMIES



FIRST NOVELTY LECTURE HELD



THE SURREAL TIMES



"A newspaper is required to document the history currently unfolding..."

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PIONEER VALLEY URINE FOUND TO BE NOT POTABLE

By **KENNETH POWER-RANGER**,
Correspondent

In late January, the Pioneer Valley Bureau of Beverages and Beverage Safety (PVBBS) was greenlighted to start work on a small, routine study of the safety of bodily fluids within the Valley. The intention of the PVBBS was to bolster the population's confidence in their own endocrine health.

But months later, and after many breakthroughs, breakdowns, and break-ins, the now-disgraced PVBBS has made public their findings, the conclusions of which have stunned the area. They claim that, in spite of the commonly ac-

cepted and well-documented fact of Pioneer Valley's excretory supremacy, the area's pee is somehow hazardous to consume.

These claims have widely been met with suspicion, due to the myriad scandals that have plagued the PVBBS, including the now-infamous Squirt™ scandal that prompted the impeachment of Clamp Van Hammerton, the Champion of the planned "Stamp for Wilt Chamberlain", from the campaign's "board of planning events". The two hardly seem incidental.

The PVBBS has been seened the populace to challenge the very govern-

ments that the PVBBS is commissioned under, prompting some ponderance over the intentions of the PVBBS and whether their findings are legitimate or not. Considering the disproportionately large percentage of the Pioneer Valley diet that urine comprises, the PVBBS's findings, if true, would mean that a catastrophic detriment has already been made to the Valley's health at-large and that the town governments would surely have been responsible for this long-running health oversight.

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WORDS EMERGE FROM THE MOUTH OF THE PIG:

By **ARMÆDEIUS GALOUET**,
Times Senior Editor



"The gilded rhinoceros stumbled happily"

PEOPLE ADVISED TO CASTRATE THEIR FLOWERS

By **ALDUS HUMBLETON**

THIS IS A PSA YOU FILTHY FUCKING DIRT BEDAZZLERS. THE EARTH IS NOT A TEENAGE GIRL'S BACKPACK. IT DOES NOT

NEED SPARKLES. IT DOES NOT NEED TO BE SHINY BECAUSE IT DOES NOT NEED TO ATTRACT BIRDS! IT ALREADY HAS BIRDS. WHY? BECAUSE BIRDS LIVE ON THE FUCKING EARTH, AND THEY HAVE NO OTHER PLACE TO GO BESIDES THE EARTH. GET YOUR FUCKING PERENNIALS AND ANNUALS AND THIS AND THAT. PUT THEM IN A FUCKING BAG AND RUN THEM OVER WITH YOUR HUMMER V3. CHOP THE STEMS AND BURN THE PETALS. HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF THE TULIP WARS? SNIP SNIP, BUTTERCUP, OFF YOU GO. BESIDES THE FRUITS AND VEGGIES, YOUR GARDENS SHOULD BE GREEN.

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ALIEN FARMER'S MARKET IN MY BACKYARD

**"Kickstarted
Chimpanzee Joe!"**

BY CHARLIE,
Investor in The Aliens

I've been very sad recently after my best friend, Dorf, was sent back to his home planet. I don't even like calling it his home planet, because my house here on Earth is his home to me. But, he is on Nebulonis now and there is nothing I can do about it. He is weaving in and out between warp-speed nebulo-buses. He is eating thick plasma noodles (his favorite!) and hopefully enjoying himself.

I'm best focusing on other things. And, luckily, amazing things have been happening left and right. Most notably, there is a farmer's market in my backyard, operated by my and Dorf's best friends on Earth, and kick-started by a certain someone who is growing notorious in our town: Chimpanzee Joe.

In the aftermath of Chimp Joe and The Mechanical Fellow's amazing triumph over the evil noise moths, Chimpanzee Joe spent quite a lot of time at my house, living with me and all of Dorf's alien refugee friends.

They cared for him when he was still high on noise moths, and they've helped him stay clean. In exchange for their help with his addiction, he has helped them put their talents to use.

Joe & Friends Market is now legally incorporated, insured, and operating out of my backyard adjacent to Puffer's pond. The market has incredible food and plants you can't find anywhere on earth. Chimp Joe does the accounting and business strategy, while Dorf's alien friends harness their knowledge of intergalactic farming and

cooking. Together they make an incredible team.

They have Garneccian Hoblesquash. They have Tromtiempolian time trinket pizza. They have a sauce so spicy that it'll turn your pupils orange and make you give birth the next day.

All in all, they have an amazing selection of strange but delicious and nutritious crops and recipes. I am absolutely completely impressed by what they have done. I also haven't had Earth food in weeks and am feeling healthier and more quick-witted than ever.

I think Dorf would be proud to see what his once-troubled friends have made of themselves on Earth. I wish he were here to see it, I sure do. I keep a 2-liter bottle of orange soda in the fridge so that he can have it when he returns, if he ever does. I told everyone to never dare drink it, no matter how thirsty they are. Chimp Joe, that honorable chimp, told me he would make sure the cap stays sealed as long as needed.

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COMMUNITY CLASSIFIEDS

BY MANAGEMENT,
Times Staff

Some personal ads thrust, slimy or dry, through our newsflaps or scrawled on walls where we could find them, with cash enclosed. Should you wish to see your words here next issue, please write them on the back of a CVS receipt, curl them into an envelope with three dollars and sixty-two cents (\$3.62) in exact change, and hurl it towards your nearest chimney. It WILL reach us.

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3. To whom it may concern. You know who you are. I do too. Follow my advice, leave six fish on the doorstep of Bart's at 2 pm on a Sunday. Do not ask why. Do not question it.

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ODE TO LOBOTOMIES

BY YOUR NEIGHBOR,

Correspondent

Oh Lord above, let it happen, lobotomize me. I sang like I did when I used to be a cloud.

"Lobotomize me," sang the cloud. Its voice wept like a willow tree blanketing the sky above.

Mom would glare at me, but she never looked. It stung when she stared, and it stained when she didn't. Could you see her, or did she run away too quickly? - like a life remembering its play before an oncoming train draws the curtain and its headlights blind the audience.

I remember when I was a little older, I sat on a stool so low to the ground it might as well have been a

grave or rose bed. The doctor stood so far above me in a shriek-white coat he grinned "you must be confused, I wouldn't wish a lobotomy upon anyone."

You see, I remember waking up like a spring rose from a seed. I remember the butterflies in my stomach and feeling like you know exactly who you are, no matter whose hand you're holding.

But my wishes have withered away, cold like a sigh, dreams are now ghostly smoking dry ice. All the seeds have spoiled, I'll see the sun no more. I remember bliss, but I cannot feel it, nor could I tell you its name, what it smells like, or tell you how high I could have floated on it.

My soul is not mine, stolen away, my spine is a worm all flaccid like, broken by

the weight of feelings gone by, I am nothing but the stench of slime having forgotten my values. Splitting headache, splitting burned hairs, splitting everything.

Oh Lord above, let it happen, lobotomize me, I sang like I did when I used to be a cloud.

I'd fall to tears when my dreams played hallelujah on my umbilical cord, but I can't hear it anymore it's all just sick blind bliss.

But I could be a cloud again. I wouldn't sing, I wouldn't feel, but boy would I fly. I wouldn't be myself, but I wouldn't know that. I'll sunbathe in a rainbow of colors, a chameleon on a rock, and even though as I soak I couldn't tell you what it meant, but I'll tell you now it means everything to me.

You don't need much to fill a hole. And sometimes if you cut a soul free, and let it fly in the brisk autumn air, it may whistle in that wind.

And even though I like the dead leaves below me, I couldn't care, I bet as my soul flew the wind would whistle through and it would sound so close to a song, that I would cry if I still remembered how. Crying not in worship of my lingering sadness but in remembrance of what beauty was.

Oh Lord let it happen, lobotomize me sung the cloud, sung your neighbor, just a few cracked footsteps away. Lobotomize me sung the canyon that god carved as gentle water flew through it. Lobotomize me sung the cloud.

You with that beautiful beat of a whole heart, you who

still breathes in dreams will cringe and shiver at the thought of what I need to do and damnit good for you.

I still sometimes I hear myself, like cackle from deep inside, I shudder, has the screaming found its way back? I shut the door but I still hear it creaking, I must escape what lies inside.

Lobotomies to me are like fireworks bursting and forgetting the sky. Lobotomize me like a breath of fresh air and all sighs let go. Lobotomies are like love itself.

And still, I sing: Oh Lord above, let it happen, lobotomize me, and what right has the world to stop me.

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DESIGNER BIRTH CONTROL ON THE RISE

BY TOMMY POTENTUARY,

Surreal Times Reporter

Fertile, previously-uncontrolled birthers everywhere are swooning over Juicy Couture, Prada, Salvatore Ferragamo, and other luxury brands entering the market of designer birth control.

One early adopter and previous abstinence fundamentalist explained, "I was not a fan of the aesthetically-crude birth control methods of 2009-2018. They functioned fine, sure, but they

were ugly."

Many seem to have avoided old birth control because of its lowly appearance, which gave an aura of poverty, lack of creativity, and desperation against nature.

"What agitated me about the more plebeian birth control methods was that they were mass produced with no intention or care. The pills and insertions made you look like you were just scraping by, with no sense of elegance, playfulness, or so on. With my Prada Cervix Dog,

I get a product that was hand-stitched with the purpose of keeping my eggs, and I mean my person eggs, unfertilized. My 'diggity-dog', as I call it, can patrol my uterus with swagger, thereby showing that I'm someone who can control my birthing without needing to struggle to do so."

Top end designer birth control brands offer more than just defense against pregnancy. One NYU student remarked, "Designer BC actually makes others want to

have sex with you. By using the best brands, you have more sex."

As mid-30s business professional expounded, "I only fuck people who use luxury birth control. Why would I get with someone else? If someone doesn't think their sex organs deserve the best, then they certainly don't deserve to be touched by me."

Another factor is customizability. This aspect of luxury birth control is just beginning to be explored. Gucci in particular, one of the best

brands in the market, is investing in pharmaceuticals which can turn sex into a custom-tuned game of Russian roulette. Potential birthers can choose the probability of impregnation that they most desire. That way, when a couple does the sex, they can have fun with it in a semi-controlled, but edgy and fun way.

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NOVELTY LECTURE ON THE EXISTENCE AND NATURE OF UNDERGROUND ELECTRICITY CANALS

BY THEODORE MUNNELLY,
Principal of The Novelty Society

Preface: As stated in our manifesto, we, The Novelists, of The Novelty Society, dedicate ourselves to fighting entropy and creating arrangements and occurrences. It is our hope that someone above — a God, a super-intelligent alien, or perhaps a higher-dimensional being of some kind — will take notice of our novelty acts and contact us.

To potential future members of our novelty society: we hereby initiate a series of educational installments on novelty in the natural and ancient world.

This first installment concerns "underground electricity canals".

I was first made aware of Underground Electricity

Canals (UECs) by my prior landlord, Eddie Octo, who is a master of surreality engineering. He explained to me that UECs are allegedly the basis of a vast network of conductivity differential tubes within our earth which allow electricity to flow between novel locations on the surface. There are paths connecting Stonehenge, Mecca, Jerusalem, Rome, Niagara Falls, and many more places. As new novel locations form, the underground electricity canal network grows to accommodate them. The network itself is incredibly novel.

Eddie Octo does not entirely believe the theory. However, it is clearly true for multiple reasons.

1. For one, these novel locations have been shown to have light speed communication between them. For example, when one experi-

ence entropy, the others do automatically as well. This is because the UEC network constantly strives for equilibrium between novel locations. Only when one location's entropy levels grow dangerously large, is entropy consolidated into said location before it is cut off from the network. The only possible explanation for this is that novel locations of the world are connected via electrical paths.

2. Secondly, it has been shown that standing in novel locations can cause extreme liveliness, religiosity, and creativity. However, sleeping in these locations can cause sickness and concerns for one's sanity. This supports the idea that there is something unique about the electromagnetic field in the area of novel locations.

3. Thirdly and finally, the novel locations of the world

have been shown to be positioned in accordance with the intersection points of the Platonic solids overlaid upon the globe. The Platonic solids, the most novel of shapes, having something to do with the locations of novel places in general, is powerful evidence of something highly novel going on under our Earth's crust.

It is not known whether the underground electricity canal network was formed naturally or whether it was engineered. But, regardless, knowledge of its existence is incredibly valuable to us. Using knowledge of the Platonic solid overlay map, we can now predict where future novel locations will sprout. We can also communicate with other branches of our society instantaneously by sending data to all novel locations of the world instantly with augmented

radio transmitters at pinnacle novelty locations. And, thanks to knowledge of the effects of UECs on humans, we can harness creativity sourced from underground, by standing in novel locations while wearing metal helmets.

There is much more to learn about the UEC network. By sharing this foundation of knowledge, we, The Novelists, hope to inspire curiosity, hope, and novelty among the general public.

Signed lovingly, ~ Theodore Munnely

As always, stay symmetric! Fight entropy!

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OPTOMETRIST TAKES NEW APPROACH

BY BOOBNBOB,
Eternal Plasma Entity

A local optometrist is garnering attention for an impressive accomplishment.

She was on her morning crawl when the idea burst through her. She would harness the capabilities of animals for the purposes of eye health.

It would not be easy.

She started by studying the park squirrels. Mimicking them, crawling on all fours, eating her ex-husbands nuts. She finished by gathering a handful of eyeless worms and putting them where no creature with eyes would ever want to be. And moving her hips like a dancer.

Those worms would be the answer. Specifically, the worms after they've salsa'd. Those worms would then be put on the eyelids of the un-

seeing, not the blind, just those without substance, without spark.

Something about the 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3 of the salsa rhythm, made these worms perspire fluids which acted as vehicles for great wisdom. When put upon the eyes of narrow sighted or narrow-minded individuals, these individuals entered a deep slumber.

When these individuals would wake up, their eye-

sight would be tremendously improved, as would their capacity for foresight.

The treatment is so incredibly effective, patients are flocking to Doctor Chisnaug from all directions. Some focus on the optical benefits of her medical approach. Others desperately need the cognitive enhancement that only she can provide. Unfortunately, as of last week, no one is receiving her treatment, because the weather

has dried up the dirt, thereby forcing worms to retreat deeper into the earth. Doctor Chisnaug has consequently retreated to the wilderness in search of denser worm supplies. She plans to return only once her cooler is full of juicy night crawlers of a particular kind.

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BLUE WALL: BLOWN TO BITS

By RIO CALAIS,
Times Correspondent

UMass student Kit Snake detonated on Thursday, and the greedy innards of Blue Wall are still scraping at the linoleum. How kindly they horde her benevolence beneath their fingernails, scoring their eardrums with it, tap tap tapping their frontal lobes with the residual paste of twenty-two gluten-free birthday cakes.

“God!” yowled one male innard, spitting globs of Mrs. Snake’s 2004 Toyota minivan with ample cargo space, which rolled in chunks down his vest. “Is this Blarney?”

Another, suckling from the hand sanitizer, brandished his shamrock cock.

Don’t you think I’m right? I saw Kit ooze from the walls of the handicapped stall and I asked her: “Kit? Have a sit with me?” and she turned and looked at me and her eyeballs were ghastly white entrails rolling loosely in the serum of a magic eight ball. She scuttled to smell the wall vent.

I lit a cigarette and waited for her skittish dribbling to cease. She slid beside me and whispered: “There are quiet creatures crowding in the lobby.”

I laughed out loud, snorting

a plume of smoke from my ear canal. Quiet! It was quieter in Nam!

Kit siphons my thoughts from the ear I’ve primed for her: “Oh God, it’s carnage! But I have something here! An unholy body, a visceral emblem!” and she pulled from her camisole a festering troglodyte, who ogled me from within cavernous eye sockets like a chagrined mother.

“Have you ever been madened by the evasiveness of self-actualization?” he grunted, black spittle decorating my skin. “Have you ev—” he coughed, his tongue unraveling the length

of our perch—“ever cracked your skull into pieces and found there’s nothing but insatiable maggots within?”

At least four times, I scoffed about my malware. Wanting to impress him, I raised him one: “Have you ever broken your ribs for concealing a truth?”

Kit and the troglodyte nearly shattered from guffaws. “Do you love him, or are you just insane?” (says Kit). “Oh, God, it’s both!” (cries the troglodyte). “Can’t you feel the scalpel you swallowed this morning? Can’t you hear the sickening crunch of your chest?”

They had gone too far. My

stomach filled with acid and I forced this filthy, blistering hound back down Kit’s shimmering gullet. And then I got the fuck out before he could slime his way out, to crawl into the diaphragm of the sickest, saddest sap there—it was me, I knew it, I knew it all along—and as I vaulted the glistening stir fry tables, Kit screamed through the intercom: “Do you love him, or are you insane?” and everything in a forty-nine foot radius was blown to bits by the truth of it.

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CARNY HOSTS MINDFULNESS GAME SHOW

By COMMON OBSERVER,
Times Correspondent

A prominent figure in the annual Amherst Center carnival tribe has embarked on a new venture.

This man, known as "Julio Gurulio", is a carny with a cause, and that cause is mindfulness. He traveled from across the Atlantic Ocean to bring the Western World what it so desperately needs. Now he harnesses the power of carnival rides in order to overwhelm people's

senses of sight, orientation, hearing, and more, thereby forcing them to retreat into their own heads, where they are removed from their worldly troubles and stresses. His most famous handmade ride was the 2-axis Globe Gyro Mind Compactor. It was a 10-foot tall pivoting globe mechanism inside of which subjects would be strapped in spread eagle position. Powered by a tractor motor, it would spin so chaotically that subjects would have no choice but to forget about their stressful lives as they struggled to

combat the G-Force of the ride. But Julio Gurulio has just recently sold his gyro machine. "I am sad to see it go," he said, "but the time has come for a paradigm shift." The direction of his shift is towards Television. In particular, game show television. "I am hosting a competition which is a mindfulness exercise in disguise." In Julio's gameshow, there are a number of bubble rooms, a single contestant in each room. Some contestants suffer from seizures, others do not. On cue, flashing lights and glitching

sounds fill the rooms. Contestants are directed to flail and shake in the most chaotic, uncontrolled ways possible. The crowd is challenged to guess who is having a real seizure and who is faking. "The magic of it is, it harnesses the evil power of consumerism for something good. People watching encourages the seizure-faking contestants to really let loose, to abandon all sense of control, in order to get in touch with their inner selves. Then the money viewers pay is used for medical costs and spreading

awareness." Medical professionals are kept nearby for the sake of real seizure havers. Contestants faking seizures are assured that the rooms are sufficiently padded, that no injuries other than pulled muscles and minor whiplash could possibly occur. An EEG machine is used to verify which seizures were truly real and which were not.

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CHIMP SAFE UNDER CARE OF KEEPER OF ALIENS

By RON GUTTERSTON,
Times Correspondent

The infamous Chimp Joe, The Surreal Times' first non-human journalist, has gone through quite the loop lately.

First, he became addicted to psychoactive noise moths. At his worst, he was eating a dozen bags of them a day. He was jailed for disorderly conduct and released only on the condition that he would remain under the care of a mysterious woman who claimed to be his ex-lover. He lived with this woman and fed into her lies because doing so was the only way that Sergeant Tom Johnson would let him go free.

But she turned out to be a lunatic. She would sneak into his bedroom at night to watch him sleep. She would

ask him to pick bugs out of her hair, and when she ran out of bugs, she would purposefully put more bugs in her hair so that he would continue picking them out — meanwhile, she would moan in pleasure.

This woman was so desperate for Chimp Joe's attention, but he became bored with her. Worse so, he became disgusted by her. So, when she could not retain his attention organically, she opted for a darker means. She bought noise moths from journalist-turned-black market drug dealer Whaler S. Fishpole. She used these moths against Chimp Joe, leveraging his addiction for her obsession.

Chimp Joe was released from his caretaker/captor in disguise's clutches only after her drug connection dried up. Desperate for con-

trol over Chimp Joe, she attempted to capture noise moths from Butterfield Hall on her own accord. Tragically, or thankfully, she was devoured by the very specimens she was attempting to capture.

Trying to save herself, she opened a window which the deathly psychoactive noise moths used to escape their quarantine. They went on to terrorize the Pioneer Valley for weeks. People hid away in their homes and dormitories, eating ramen and jello, fearing for their lives.

Then, when it seemed no hope for humans remained, there emerged two non-human heroes. Chimpanzee Joe in collaboration with a journalist from the future, The Mechanical Fellow, in order to obliterate every single noise moth in the valley. The Mechanical Fellow bait-

ed them in with strange cyborg noises routed through the UMass emergency alarm system. And Chimp Joe destroyed them in the only way he knew how: by devouring them.

Having eating 300,000 psychoactive noise moths, Chimp Joe's mind was floating in the stars for weeks after the event. Fortunately, his addiction was to end then and there, because he had consumed all the noise moths there are — there would be nothing more for him to indulge in.

So Charlie, the Keeper of The Refugee Aliens, took him in and cared for him. Charlie and his interplanetary friends talked Chimpanzee Joe through his psychedelic rabbit holes and eventually back into reality.

"Many of his monkey acid

thoughts were quite interesting," Charlie said. "And it was especially interesting to see how our chimpanzee friend could communicate with my alien friends while he was high and tripping. I couldn't understand a lot of what he and the gwollocs were talking about, but it seemed quite important and relevant to diversity and food security. I sure do hope they remember some of what they discussed. He has finally come down and is extremely tired. He has been writing in his journal a lot and talking to the gwollocs about future plans. I'm personally trying to give them space, but I wanted to let the world know that Joe is doing well and is being cared for. In fact, he fits right in and, despite pinches of his usual grumpiness, he seems as motivated as ever."



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Correspondence on Foreign Dreams

BY ALAN PARTRIDGE,
Foreign Dreams Correspondent

I recently saw the ad in your latest issue calling for an experienced hallucinator. I am not a hallucinator, however, I believe that you will find the nature of my observations to be relevant to your publication. You see, I am an avid dreamer, in fact one may call that my only hobby. Though the real world provides me with much context in the interpretation of dreams, I am of the opinion that enough interest is paid to the real world as a whole by individuals who are not myself, freeing me to explore the sublime and the surreal. I take my little cassette recorder into each dream I undertake every night, and in the morning, awake to write them down on my red typewriter.

During a trip out west for business, I had the remarkable good fortune to spend a few days wandering in the desert. There, I collected the following dreams:

DREAM ONE: PEACH SPRINGS, HUALAPAI INDIAN RESERVATION, ARIZONA

The dreams here were vast and dark. I was looking down into an open sky, eyes wide, much like staring deeply into a five-gallon bucket of ancient motor oil forgotten in the back of a run down junkyard. Were those stars above me? Or merely the reflectors on the sides of vast trains, uncountably long, stretching from horizon to horizon, above me, below me, weaving a vast web of ancient steel and flickering lights. No destination to go to, no train yard to leave from, just stretching the vast expanse between here, and there.

I awoke to waves of sunlight lapping the windows like water and wind rustling bare grass. I opened my window and smelled the sky.

DREAM TWO: SPRINGDALE, UTAH

Surprisingly light and refreshing! Peaches fall into my outstretched hands, passed from mother to son to daughter and on again down the long generations. Never eaten, merely smelled. Their aroma tantalizing and floral. I am reminded of my father, standing over the sink at midnight, teaching his young son the joys of the freshest summer fruit. "This is a sink peach" he says, "we have to eat it over the sink or we'll leave sticky trails all over the kitchen, and we can't have that. Then people will see we have them, and then we have to share." The peaches go and with them go the faint moment of reverie, but dreams fade and change fast here, and I soon find myself wandering ancient hallways of stone. My feet splash cold water, a fish jumps once, twice, and is gone under the waves of the ocean. I skip a stone. As it bounces over water, it sheds its peachy flesh and swims with its cousins. I awoke to a thunderstorm shaking the peaks and rattling the windows.

Spring had come to the desert.

DREAM THREE: SPRINGDALE, UTAH

An infinite staircase. Ravel's Bolero pumping out of junkyard speakers, cut paper figures. I think I saw this somewhere on television. Each person holds in their hand a little object, cut of the same paper they are made from. Some are simple, easy to understand. A paper doll, her clothes held on by tiny paper tabs - I listen closely to her voice. Her singing will ring in my ears until the final sleep, I think. Or it will pass with waking. Another woman holds a paper cup, flat, two dimensional. But in her hands it is full of something that I know in my heart to be tea. The tea in dreams is especially good, but I regret I am still incapable of drinking paper. I walk up the staircase for miles and miles, the objects becoming flowers with intense perfume, hats for little flat heads, glasses for flat eyes. Smiling, I turn around and wake.

I have walked off the covers, they lay rumpled on the floor. I brush my teeth and head out through a 60-degree morning, perfect and clear, for coffee & breakfast...

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 8]



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

[CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7]

DREAM FOUR: OVERTON, NEVADA, THE VALLEY OF FIRE

Ancient stone. Older than the hands of those that became the hands that became the hands that became humanity. I stand in the ancient hall, forged of cresting waves of rock in brutal sun and, I lift my little rock. With each strike, the black crust crinkles off, and the images I know are beneath it float to the surface. Not long now, more are freed with each strike. Men, bighorn sheep, spirals, rivers, rain. I write history into the rock, and in turn history is born around me. It is so simple, this act of creation. "If only," I think to myself as again I heft my stone stylus, "if only I could remember how to do this when I wake!"

At that thought, in a hotel room, I open my eyes. Clouds cover the sky from horizon to horizon, the sunrise blotted out by the promise of rain in this drought-ridden farmland. Creation is forgotten, as we drive to the big city.

DREAM FIVE: LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

Dread. Pain. Frantic reaching for levers, frantic gyrations of hideous wheels. I have not seen a smile since I placed my bags in my hotel, and the dreams here show it. This city is a magnet for the waste dreams, the place for dreams to be crushed, ground into scrap under the roulette wheel of loss & sin. Somewhere in this claustrophobic flesh colored hallway a man is yelling, screaming, sobbing. Somewhere else is his partner. The halls are small, tight, collapsing, breathing? Is this the place that feasts on us? I dig my way to an exit, the walls soft and spongy, and rip the door open to the cold air of the dreams of city streets. I run and run and run, past street light and dive under a massive bridge. Drums beat in the air, bells ring, chime, fade away. Shivering under a bridge large enough to be a city block, I look behind me to see the place I have escaped. A massive grub lays on the desert ground. It writhes, lazily munching on planes landing on its back, rolling into its maw. Searchlights sweep the sky around it. "Welcome to Vegas baby" a bum behind me mutters in his sleep.

I awoke to bright sunlight in the hotel room window, none of which made it down the hotel lobby. The light, smell, and sound had never changed.

With that, my holiday was over, and I must return to the regrettably easy to misunderstand world we live each day in.

From a car, blazing north to the next city in the desert sun,
Alan Partridge, Foreign Dreams Correspondent.

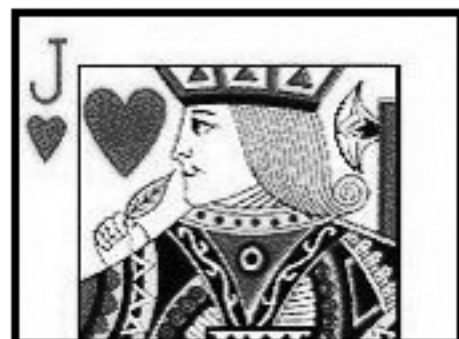
P.S. If you should wish to reach me, leave a response in the place you found this letter. I travel much, but there are those who know me who can ensure it gets to its proper location.

Alan Partridge can be reached at partridge.alan@surrealtimes.net

I'VE LOST MY JACK OF HEARTS

* Advertisement *

THE STREUUFIN-HOFFER
BOY



I saw it last on Sunday

evening. It was half stuck up inside itself, it's torn edged tail flickering in the shape of a grin. It likes to think it's a bit of a soul wanderer, a daydreamer of sort, like a flower that grew down but choose to gaze up, but it's really just a small piece of a laminated house of cards. If you see a 3in by 4in paper card wrinkled at the corners, possibly stealing a little bro-bit of a ken wind-up music box from a rundown 7-11 trash bin, or if you see a piece of paper ranting at the little devil it just drew in a fogged window pane, please return it to the castle atop Bowery Lane.

The Streuufin-Hoffer Boy can be reached at streuufinhoffer@surrealtimes.net



HEAD OF PERIPHERAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY HOTDOGGED, UMASS REFUSES TO HELP

BY CARL MON,
PIA NYC Intern

My Father and the head of the Peripheral Intelligence Agency, Clarence Mon, was a victim to a heinous crime last week. He had just finished a long day of investigations at the Amherst headquarters. It was 11:00 pm when he left the office. In the dimly-lit parking garage, he kept his eyes on the periphery as always, weary of his many foes and curiosities, as he made his way to his vehicle.

It hit him from where he least expected it. Directly from his front. He was struck upon his chest, not hard enough to cause pain but hard enough to scare the hell out of him. He turned his head and tightened his fists. It was too late. The masked figure had already satisfied himself, said "I'm sorry, Mr. Mon," and was

now fleeing the scene, hot dogs falling from his back pockets as he ran.

My father found a Fenway Frank mashed into his chest pocket. Ketchup and mustard soaked through his shirt into his chest hair. Remnants of a mangled bun had fallen onto the ground in front of his feet.

He called the police. "Hello, this is 911, what is your emergency?"

"It's Clarence Mon," he said. "Head of the PIA. I've been hotdogged."

The dispatcher whispered to someone unintelligibly. Then she hung up.

My father was then ambushed from all angles. He was knocked to the ground. He was kicked. He was punched. He heard dozens of people whispering "I'm

sorry, Mr. Mon." He could feel the pressure in all of his pockets. He could feel ketchup and mustard through his clothes.

He had called 911 again and was desperately begging for help. "Please, I'm going to die. I'm being hotdogged from all angles. Help me, please. I'm in the parking garage downtown."

"Who is this?"

"This is Clarence Mon, head of the PIA. Gosh, please help."

"Oh, ok. One minute please Mr. Mon. The sergeant wants to speak with you."

My Father begged for help as he was punched, kicked, and hotdogged relentlessly. "What? Help me! I don't have time to talk about the merits of central intelligence."

"Cut it out Mr. Mon", came the cold voice from the phone. "It's over. If the peripheral were going dark once and for all, we would all be better for it."

At that moment, a giant hotdog hit my Dad's phone like a baseball bat. A home run, it soared out the parking garage window. What happened after that point, I do not know. My father does not remember. He is traumatized and hospitalized for the foreseeable future. He keeps waking up, touching his chest and hips, paranoid that something has invaded his pockets. "Oh, thank the horizon, he says," before falling back asleep, but it is never long before the paranoia wakes him up again.

This was the very crime that UMass PD's Sergeant Tom Johnson so vehemently condemned last month. Now, with the head of the periph-

eral intelligence world as the victim, the sergeant is passive, selfish, and opportunistic.

UMass PD has refused to comment on the matter thus far. Sergeant Tom Johnson has continually ignored us as well.

I am traveling from my post in New York to take my father's position in Amherst while he is bedridden. I am determined to fill his shoes, although I know it is no easy task. I am determined to investigate how the central is slipping its tentacles into the periphery. The periphery will be clear again if I have anything to say about the matter. And my father's dignity will live on forever.

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SUNDERLAND MOUND GROWING

BY SHERRY WOLVERTON,
Dog Walker



There is a tremendous dirt

mound in Sunderland on my usual dog walking route. It divides the property between two houses. On the west side of the mound stands the house where the strange game of BALL originated, and where the most feral, occultist BALL players commune. On the east side of the mound, there is a common suburban home in

which a family dwells.

Rumor has it that this mound was built deliberately by the parents of the east side family, in order to protect their children from witnessing the troublesome sight that is the ever-evolving game of BALL.

For a long time, the mound has remained the same size.

But, as BALL players have brought their game upon hills, rooftops, rabbit holes, and other places, it appears the neighbors have grown increasingly weary of the BALL house. As a result, they have been building up their mound higher and higher every day.

The father explained, "We

can't have our kids seeing this... this 'game', those neighbors of ours play. That's a game for animals and punks. It's simply not in the cards."

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TOP 13 "BALL" MOMENTS

BY SHERRY WOLVERTON,
Dog Walker



Recently I have learned more about the occultist game called simply, "BALL", which is growing ever more popular in the Pioneer Valley, growing from its seed at 397 South Silver Lane in Sunderland. I originally documented the game here: <https://surreal-times.net/article/occultist-ball-graveyard-growing-rapidly--2019-05-21>. I did not like the feral nature of it originally. But, surprisingly, I have grown fond of the sport.

Some of the original ballplayers, Josh, Crisp A.K.A. Bargy (who asked to

remain anonymous), Sam, Crispy, Ben, Aneesh, Sean, Aaron, Tony, Will, and Adam, have told me of the greatest ball moments of all time, and I am happy to share them with the world.

1. When Ballplayer Josh kicked a BALL at Aaron's little cube car as he rounded the corner.

2. When a BALL, flying at tremendous speeds, crashed through the front door screen at 397 S Silver Lane in Sunderland, Massachusetts. Kitchen dwellers reported that "[they] were chilling in the kitchen when a BALL came flying through."

3. When Ballignorer Sean was sitting inside doing normal people stuff, hearing bang bang bang as Ballplayer Crispy kicked a BALL against the outside wall bordering Ballignorer Sean's

bedroom.

4. When Ballplayer Crispy was getting a BALL out of a tree, Ballplayer Josh ambushed Ballplayer Crispy with a huge spear. Ballplayer Crispy was scared and kicked the BALL. Tragically, the BALL was impaled by the spear and died before these two young ballplayers' eyes.

5. When Ballplayer Josh hit the chimney and caused a brick to fall.

6. When Ballplayer Aneesh actively hunted down a BALL like a savage with another spear and proceeded to brandish the carcass to young children next-door.

7. When "we were just playing with a shovel and a BALL and one thing led to another and we had a dead BALL on our hands, sliced deeply by the shovel's rusty edge."

8. When the raving leaf blower man desecrated a BALL by blowing it with his leaf blower.

9. When Ballplayer Crispy cared so much for a BALL, and the philosophy of BALL, that he trudged through thorn bushes while simultaneously talking to his mother on the phone, in order to retrieve the BALL. Mom asked him if "he was listening..."

10. When, in absence of BALLs during the BALL drought of 2019, the Ballplayers stumbled upon a miraculous BALL in the middle of the road in the middle of the night. "IS THAT A BALL?!?!?!?"

11. When Ballplayer Sam, in a back brace because of his broken spine, mustered a monumental BALL kick which exploded the beer bottle in Ballplayer Josh's hand upon contact.

12. The tumultuous BALL found the mountains of northern Vermont. This BALL made a treacherous and trepidatious trip through the mountains that ultimately cost it its life.

13. When bicycle riders threw BALLs at each other while riding as though they are jousting, thereby inventing the sport of BIKE BALL.

CURRENT BALL DEATH COUNT: 8 (that we know of). If you've witnessed a ball death, please contact me at wolverton.sherry@surreal-times.net

Sherry Wolverton can be reached at wolverton.sherry@surreal-times.net

FOR AMHERST, WITH BEES IN MIND

A Nomination for Ant Coordinator

BY CHARLIE TOMQUAT,
Caretaker of The Interplanetary
Refugee Commune

[[edited by Chimpanzee
Joe]]

Pollinate. Curate. Abolish. This is the cycle of the bumblebee oligarchs.

Pollinate. Fertilize the

seedlings. Give nutrients to any and all flowers showing promise, so that they may blossom fully.

Curate. Of the seedlings which grow to maximum beauty and strength, pick the top tier. Encourage your favorites to breed amongst themselves while you allow the others to wither.

Abolish. Change the weather such that your subjects may no longer succeed us-

ing the tendencies you instilled within them across many generations. Watch them die. Relax until it comes time to spawn another generation of toys.

Between winters, it is flowers. Between ice ages, it is humans and other animal or alien species.

This is the cycle of the bumblebee oligarchs, and this is the cycle of genocide. These are unjust experiments for

the sake of nothing more than play. They have continued for far too long.

To the town of Amherst: I implore you. Reinstate the Ant Coordinator. Fill the role with someone who transcends monoplanetary dogma and season mentality. Fill the role with more than a humanist, who cares about humans — Fill it with an interplanetary speciesiest, who cares about all life.

Appoint Gwollocc John, from planet Heinousal to the role of Ant Coordinator. He will humble the bumblebee oligarchs. He will stop them from warping the seasons. He will make life flourish better than any historical flower.

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CAROUSEL OF UNENDING HAPPINESS LIES IN THE HOME OF THE WALKING DEAD

BY CHARLEIGH CLARK,
Times Staff

Roxbury, MA -- I think I remember Pete Seeger singing, where have all the dreams gone?" I've seen a hole left by the absence of dreams whenever I visit the home of the walking dead.

I've noticed some dreams missing. That one with strings of strange feelings that float like the fruit of the sandman's womb. Or the sad clown who pedals deflated balloons. And the butterfly that cracks a smile as it

whistles through a kaleidoscope.

They're gone and it shakes me to the soul as they long to be longed for again. They've turned back to dust and I've seen the night sky send them back to the ground.

Those who live on that Roxbury Street, the lane of the walking dead, they hung up their hats and forgot about the dreams and crayon drawings on the fridge that used to fill them with pride.

We, all of us, let them go.

We let their dreams float up. And we didn't reach a hand out, so they've sunken until we think them below us.

It's true we've all seen this, but it's not all bleak. Don't forget the feeling of hope climbing up through the throat from the soul.

if we find the dreams and give them back, we can bring life back to the Lane of The Walking Dead.

I've seen some of them. I caught Snufkin, who was lost in sacred song playing his panpipe on a cloud sit-

ting next to the saint with dirty hands; the ole abolitionist John Brown:

"I snuffed out the light inside five bad men who were once good children, to light the way for those who had their voices stripped away. And even still I'm proud of what I've done as I sit on this cloud."

"I am Snufkin, for all the world is my dream and all the world is mine, I wonder and ponder, waving at the bees and whistling to the flowers. I tell stories to the stars and I remind them of

ours'."

You see, when we look up in the clouds, we can still see old John Brown and Young Snufkin, so I believe there is hope for those trapped on the hot pavement in that Roxbury Street, and even though I don't know much about them, I know there is no land of the free in the home of the walking dead.

Charleigh Clark can be reached at clark.charleigh@surreal-times.net

LOGS OF EARL BRISTOL GODDARD PUBLISHED

BY THE PURPLE HERMIT,
Times Staff

The following manuscript was found deep within the subterranean UMass, in a basement at Herter Hall. Its origins are unknown, and no such person as Mr. Goddard is known to have been affiliated with the university or existed at all.

LOG OF EARL BRISTOL
GODDARD, NOVEMBER 12,
1711

This is truly a land of savages. The weather seems to shift erratically with no rhyme or reason. Not ten minutes into my expedition and we, disembarking from our vessel, experienced a colossal downpour. Yet in

another ten minutes, the sky has become clear as a summer day. Does the crown really believe this blasted place to be ideal for a settlement? Absurd! Nonetheless, we must press on. It is our duty.

We have traveled quite far inland by now. Nothing remarkable, save for several colossal moose. The sky is getting dark. We may come under attack by natives at any moment, and though we have brought enough firearms to repel them, it would be quite a nuisance. Arnold seems quite enthusiastic about the prospect of 'making examples' of some of them, but I put his hopes to rest for the moment. We will continue inland tomorrow at dawn.

LOG OF EARL BRISTOL
GODDARD, NOVEMBER 13,
1711

We were rudely awoken by Mills screaming that he had glimpsed a 'beast' observing us from the trees, and it vanished when he turned away. He claims this 'beast' stood upright and wore what seemed like a mockery of our attire, all in red and white. Its head was elongated and its teeth were massive. I administered some ale to him, and it seemed to remove this silly image from his head. Arnold seems to think it is some of the native peoples trying to make a fool of us, despite the fact that we have not encountered a single one, much less

a settlement, thus far. We cannot waste time on these flights of fancy.

I am noticing an abundance of squirrels as we travel further inland. It surprises me that this area seems not be marked on our maps. It is quite spacious and contains many delectable species of plant. Mills has begun collecting some samples and preparing them for travel. Already the weather has changed, and now the winds blow with astonishing force. The winds have forced our company to take shelter in a nearby cave.

LOG OF EARL BRISTOL
GODDARD, NOVEMBER 14,
1711

We lost Arnold today. As we

passed by a small lake filled with geese, the wind picked up suddenly and he was blown into it. The geese devoured him before Mills or I could throw him a line. As odd and cruel as it may sound, it seemed quite deliberately malicious.

There is a strange odor that has been following us. It smells like some kind of fruity confection, and appears as a cloud of vapor. Mills theorizes it may be produced by a local plant to attract pollinators, but it smells far too obnoxious in my opinion. This expedition is no doubt driving me mad...

[CONTINUED ON
PAGE 12]



LOGS OF EARL BRISTOL GODDARD PUBLISHED

[CONTINUED
FROM PAGE 11]

... Out of the corner of my eye, as we were refilling our canteens at a stream, I caught a glimpse of Mill's "beast". It was standing several yards away as it saluted me and gave me a frighteningly toothy grin. It began walking towards me. I have never felt such terror in my heart as I realized that it, in

fact, did not have human skin at all. Instead, it seemed to be some kind of artificial construct. It quickly retreated.

I will try to get some rest tonight, but I doubt it will come in a timely manner. In my dreams, I will see it, and out of my dreams, it will see me.

LOG OF EARL BRISTOL
GODDARD, NOVEMBER 15,
1711

It is over. Our expedition has concluded, I fear. Not by our choice, but by the will of the land.

Shortly after awakening, Mills and I became enveloped in a thick fog, and I lost him. I have been calling out his name for hours, but I get no response. I do, how-

ever, hear voices. These voices sound European, and they shout about a "jewel". Perhaps this jewel is the source of the fog? I would ask, but I have not been able to locate the source of the voices. This mysterious gas seems to have made the squirrels and other life disperse. The further I travel, the more unfamiliar the surroundings become. I have no more bearing of time or distance.

I shall rest by a rock now, for a few minutes. I feel myself becoming faded already, likely due to the gas. If you have found this journal, I am most likely dead. Dear God, I did my duty, for Queen and country.

The Purple Hermit can be reached at
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ACCOUNT: ROADS IN DISARRAY IN ABSENCE OF ANT COORDINATOR

BY CHITSY BOMBOM,
Rubber Band Factory Owner

It was graduation weekend at the University of Massachusetts Amherst -- an emotional time. I had visited town to congratulate my nephew, an economics major, on his graduation. But, before I had the chance to do so, I was trapped in the inner lane of a multi-lane, multi-directional rotary. Blockaded by cars to my right, to my left, and with a car tailgating me, I was led like an animal in a factory lane around and around without any choice. I couldn't escape. And all I could do, in order to keep from being rear-ended, was

drive 5 mph on and on. Luckily, the radio was playing some pleasant jazz. Once I got accustomed to the radius of the rotary, I allowed my eyes to wander.

I noticed: A 5-foot tall iron scale on a stone obelisk at the center of the rotary. On one side, the scale supported a pile of dice (in various sizes, colors, and numbers of sides). On the other side, the scale held a stack of various compasses, some broken and some not. A man-sized tarantula wearing a kitchen bib tended to this scale, pulling countless compasses and dice from its bib pocket in order to balance it properly.

When the tarantula noticed I was watching, it threw a sheet over the monumental scale and charged at my vehicle. I rolled up my window in a hurry. The tarantula collided with my car and knocked me off course, which led me to crash into a graduation shuttle.

I lost track of the arachnid in the aftermath of the collision. The scale was gone as well by the time I looked for it. I asked people around town, what part of hell did this roundabout come from? They said the roads changed when the Ant Coordinator (who manages ants as well as other insects) resigned. "The rotary got impossibly complicated all of the sud-

den, but despite how crazy it was, it somehow it worked just dandily although those driving through it were in constant fear for their lives." A lady reading on a bench told me, "You're the first one to ever crash, surprisingly."

Another guy, a trash collector, argued "The insects have been managing the roads better than humans can comprehend. We've just got to trust them. They know more about traffic than we do. They've been dealing with it in their colonies for eons. Your case was just a fluke. It was probably your fault actually."

Another take: "The roads

look absolutely bonkers, but everyone is safely getting where they need to go. It's fun to watch anyways, and works just fine."

Overwhelmingly, people are in favor of the new rotary system, run by the spiders and ants. But, my car is wrecked and my sister is pissed at me for missing my nephew's graduation. The town of Amherst needs to return to sensibility with a stern human in the role of Ant Coordinator.

Chitsy Bombom can be reached at
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ACCOUNT: VICTIM OF CROWS

BY TOM JOHNSON,
Sergeant UMass PD



A man who uses a wheelchair has reported repeated bird attacks. A crow that

lingers in the skies above downtown Amherst has been dive-bombing him repeatedly since the beginning of May. He said that "[it] points its beak and zips down at [him] like a kamikaze." Oftentimes, after a near miss, the bird gets stuck with its beak in the dirt. Last week, it fractured part of its beak off when it hit the pavement my mistake.

The victim says the bird is off-target so frequently that it seems to be blind or attack with its eyes closed.

"I'm not scared anymore. At first, I avoided downtown for fear of getting impaled. But now, I will even help the bird dislodge its beak from the ground when I hear it whimpering. I almost feel bad for it. It seems neurotic, like it is compelled against its will to attack me without

any reason to do so. I watch it through my binoculars. I can see that it suffers from a nervous tick. I can see that it is exhausted and lost. So sometimes I will waft big balloons into the air, to give it something to attack. When it pops one of them, I know how good it must feel. And, otherwise, no harm done, as long as I wheel myself indoors before I run out of balloons."

The victim seems at peace and would not give animal control the identity of the bird. However, the county wishes to pursue criminal charges even though the victim has retracted his criminal complaint. Please contact UMass PD with any relevant information.

Tom Johnson can be reached at tjohnson@umass.edu

ADVANCED CARNIVAL WILL CAN DO EXTRAORDINARY THINGS

BY FECHY HONCON,
Times Correspondent



So there's a big mechanical and electronic carnival in town, right, and it's flip-pinnn crazzzzy. They have a big man with huge muscles who will rip your arms off your arm holders. They have a lady with a gangly beard that she'll dip in your cereal milk if you ask to do it. She'll let you slurp the sug-

ary goodness from her facial hair too, if you ask nicely. They also have a Ferris wheel so big and fast that it can speed up and throw you up into outer space but possibly back to the ground, depending on how whether you're polite or not.

Basically, it was the best

weekend ever, saturated with tasty future-processed snacks and a shiny sun, which feels real as can be, despite being artificial. This is yet another case of technology proving itself to be an improvement over nature. I hope we can continue to convince nature heads that they are scare-dee-cats.

That way, we can make the future more fun like this weekend was.

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DEATH BY HALLAL

BY TOM JOHNSON,
Sergeant UMass PD



Last week, A Halal Food

cart rolled unsupervised down the hill on Main Street. It gained speed quickly and struck a pedestrian dead. Sadly I cannot properly commemorate the victim, because he is too young for his name to be released.

The food cart's owner and operator, Henry, said that its

e-brake was switched off when a cheap customer pounded on the side of the cart demanding a half-price sandwich on account of his success in a slow-walking competition earlier that day.

We are looking at security footage from nearby shops but do not expect to find any grounds for criminal charges

in this case.

In the future, please keep this tragedy in mind. Pray for the victim and his family. But, more importantly, take action. Secure your rollable vehicles and such. Use wheel wedges, e-brakes, and all modern technology has to offer. On the other side of things, do not hit or pound

on parked rollables — because it is always a possibility that you could knock them loose, sending them barreling downhill towards unsuspecting innocent people.

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NEW EYEBALL JUICE STAND IS A SUCCESS

By TOMMY POTENTUARY,
Surreal Times Reporter

Jimmy and Sara's father built them a lemonade stand made of old pallets so that they could make some summer cash while at the same time developing their people skills. Business was good, but there is always room to improve. "We were pulling in about \$18 a day," Sara said, "But we wanted more."

"Yeah, more!" Interjected Jimmy, who was much younger and missing his front teeth.

Sara continued as the more personable leader of the duo. "So we re-branded. We saw on animal planet —"

Jimmy: "Yeah, animal planet!"

Sara: "... — We saw on animal planet that a tiger ate a water buffalo eyeball, and it

looked scrumptious. I, we, sensed an opportunity."

Jimmy: "Our secret weapon!"

Sara: "We rebranded by putting a piece of wood on top of my dad's 'lemonade stand' sign and painting 'eyeball juice' on it using blue paint. Jimmy, would you like to explain how we get the eyeball juice?"

Jimmy: "Oh yeah! We get it

from neighborhood stray cats and sometimes dogs and sometimes roadkill. It is so fun but stinky."

Sara: "So we are completely organic, and we recycle. Our revenues are up 345 percentages."

Jimmy: "And our profits are up almost a million!"

Sara: "Oh, and, most importantly, our customers are happy. Everyone is so curi-

ous about our eyeball juice and they laugh when we tell them where we get it."

Jimmy and Sara's "Eyeball Juice Stand" operates out of Sunderland MA just on the edge of the Connecticut River.

Tommy Potentuary can be reached at
tommy.potent@surreal-times.net





IN RESPONSE TO "A STUDY IN COW PELT AND CITRUS"

Inanimacy Lost, Mushroom Cloud And Cracked But- ton: An exercise in Inanimate Empathy

BY THE INANIMATE
EMPATHIST,
Times Correspondent

The Prologue or "Us"

We, humans, are just the prologue to this story. And we have been like two flickering feathered flames burning from inside out. 'kissed, merged, and melted into one and other, we drowned in a pale reflectionless puddle formed by our melted remains. The time of us shallowly slipping ourselves into inanimate intimate has ended. What comes of it? Nothing? Precisely nothing. Are feelings unfeeling, without dreams of their own? You stamp yourself into them, squashing out what life they have. In your story, it is only you and none of them. Making them feel feelings just kills their own they once kept hidden inside. Lost in your feelings, you fail to see their true-selves. And yes, Eddie Cruise, you *are* wrong, and the worlds of the feeling and the unfeeling know this. So, take my advice: Take what feeling you still have and give it up. The world has no need for your filthy fetish."

We Danced in darkness with our last glimmer. We'd say goodbye if only we still had voices. As shadows melt and fade in the all-encom-

passing, all-consuming flame. We are gone, but the tale of identity sings on.

PART 1. THE BUTTON

All our signatures fade into ink.

The Red Button is hung on a wire ripped out of its socket by the blast. It's still dangling from where creamy droosie drowsy sighs of electricity used to vibrate and course through.

It's time for you, The Button, to hang and swing in the wind that is now left haunting and hollow. We could cry out and no one would be left to hear us. "You did it, didn't you?" Nothing. No one. Never. Inward, now empty. Outward now bitter a mocking silly silence.

The button cracked, its sliver of a self seeped away in laughing cracking mocking silly silence. The button is cracked, The button has hung itself.

When that finger pressed and curled, it was like worms in our skulls writhing as they eat away at our soul's last sung song. The curtain fades, the finger curled, shiver, shutter at repressing the memory. The button is pressed.

The Cracked Button lies: No finger. Not mine. Not me. Never answered. No. No lines. No rhyme. No puppet strings. No self. Never. No shine. No light. No cloud. And no kiss.

The Cracked Button pressed. But was the world all strange and amiss just an abyss?

The Cracked Button hangs, but now nothing hangs in the balance. Broken bottles lie on the ground in the wasteland empty and cracked and smiling. That shiny soul of self sung in silence while The Cracked Button hung right where it was found.

As self sang in silence, the book now closed around the shelf, no author, no pen, no ink. Invisible, visibly simple, and now invincible, it drowns.

Fall and fall and fall, nothing is lost. There's no seed of selves in the ground, nothing will grow again. A nothing is lost just flying shivering soggy withering pointless silent rhyme, blind and depthless, death and a depth soul never sung.

The shiny soul of self sung in silent, while THE Button hung right where it's found.

PART 2. THE MUSHROOM CLOUD

The Button was pressed and born in the Cloud so high, oh Mushroom Cloud. Both dreamer and dream, we looked up to the sky and used to see our dreams in you, dear Cloud. And you used to look down and see your dreams in us. But from above you could do nothing but watch as we tear and burn. We used to gaze up at you once. Always you

shined above, your song was in our dreams and your dreams in us.

Remember, we once looked up to you, Cloud, you were yourself in whatever stories we saw in you, and you uplifted us out of ourselves

And, Mushroom Cloud, remember you were once in the ground. Your shrooms in soil danced, dreamy soggy worms cried and writhed, livid and alive. We seemed dead from the outside. You planted your seed, your soul song, in our dreams. Our eyes glazed over. We slipped up inside of you as we slipped you down our throats. Now only you, The Mushroom Cloud, your soul song remains. Our selves melted away as we did the day the blast. Mushroom Cloud, keep your head up, send up your soul song it will be heard once more.

Oh mushroom cloud of the ground, rise and burn, sweet child of destruction, rise. All dreams are gone, because the dream and all meaning is a light that is bright, white, and blind. You only grow in sadness now, sweet Mushroom Cloud.

Look up just like they used to look up at you. Burnt out of self, you're tired now, sweet Mushroom Cloud, eating all and all alone but your lonely lost in nothing.

Melt away bit by bitter bit, and cry lemmings' tears until there is nothing left, away in the corner. Lose yourself today. Guilt and screaming,

the weight of all you ate. We loved you and now we live on in you as our dreams used to.

Mushroom Cloud, you fell upon us, we are now just puddles that seeped into and reflected upon itself one final time, before we faded into the irradiated air.

Everlasting eyes, eyes with images scorched into them now. Why? Was it all lovely lies or blind lines we followed Inward? Are we born onto nothing? Or maybe stories would grow again, seeded from a soul song sung in hope. Our light was not snuffed, no, it was far too bright and too meaningful to fade.

EPILOGUE OR "TOMORROW"

The shiny soul sang its last song. The Button was pressed as Mushroom Cloud outstretched.

Mushroom Cloud grew all alone and grew up inside itself, while the shiny self sang in silence. The Button cracked and hung right where it was found. And for us, we have faded, kisses, flames and shadows and souls all melted away while whaling. We went off inside that bright quiet night, gone to find another of that flickering feathered light.

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