

HYPERCUBE CONFESSES SINS

BLUE ALIEN PETTING ZOO ARRIVES



THE SURREAL TIMES



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

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the 3rd dawn of the cicadas.*

STRANGE ENTITY IN THE WOODS OUT WEST CAN SEND YOU TO A PEACEFUL PLACE BUT YOU WON'T EVER RETURN

By V. MAUVE
Citizen of The World

ARTIST'S DEPICTION OF THESE EVENTS BY IMOGENE LARKLEY

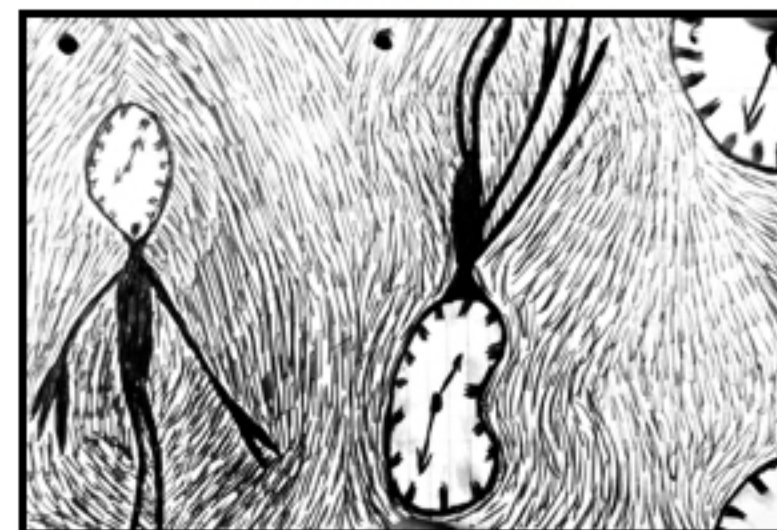


I wasn't myself. It was as if a spectre of light was controlling my every movement and guiding my every path and teeming with an inexplicable outside influence. The clump of woods out west stood bare as toothpicks, and my calloused feet felt nothing. All there was to feel was a momentary lapse of calm out in the hybrid suprasky of that otherworldly morning. The spectre drew me towards a being in the shape of a woman bending and twisting rocks as if they were balloon animals, and when it placed one in my hand, I found myself in a dark schism within a floating neon-rimmed castle of purple and black, where a haunting murmur emanated like the groan of a great forgotten god. I don't know how long it's been, but I live here now and it isn't so bad.

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CLOCK WORLD TICKS ON

By BEN GUERRIEO



FROM THE MOUTH OF THE PIG:

By ARMĂDEIUS GALOUET,
Times Senior Editor



"The classified tumbleweed perused fluently"



HYPERCUBE CONFESSIONS AND THE FUTURE

By DERNBERGER SPENGLETON,

Tender to The Grand Conveyor



[Artist's depiction of these events by Rufus Williams]

I have spoken with divine forces of two kinds: the Hypercube, and the Angel.

They appeared in my entrapping castle with me, illuminating the chronic darkness of my undesired home. In their simple presence, I felt a wave of regret and sorrow.

"These are the ants I killed this week," I admitted without meaning to say anything.

"Scout Flyeye" "Skylover" "Mumbo" "Jumbo" "Head" "Heart" "Losty" "Pact" "Yoda" "Lutey" "StainglassWindowy" "Crackles McMirror" "Familyman" "Familymama" "Babybuzz" "Babyzippy"

"Tell us more," said the Angel, "so that I may better understand the circumstances."

When I struggled to find words for my feelings, the angel motioned to the hypercube. The hypercube grumbled but conceded. It sent a beam of blue light into my abdomen that filled me with extreme unexplained regret. When the beam dissipated, I swam in vague memories of regrettable things I'd done. Then the Angel sent a yellow beam into my face which seemed to pull words from within me that I didn't know I had.

I confessed further: "When I first arrived here, I noticed a couple ants were walking around. I just thought to myself, 'let them live'. A couple of roommates to keep me company would do me good. But, more and more came, and they started eating the few oranges I had left, climbing in my notebooks, and eating my ex-mentor Theodore's few remaining paintings which I use to remember him and get lost in in place of windows."

"Finally, in a swell of sorrow and pitiful rage, I killed them all. There were 16. I would kiss my finger, saying 'from me to you', squishing the ant, turning my bloody finger back onto my lips kissing it again and whispering 'from you to me'. It was the same little ritual an old friend of mine does when he sees a dead flower laying on concrete or when he reads a grave in a cemetery. It makes me feel better, I don't know what it does for the ants. I feel really bad about it. Who am I to say that I have in my life anything more meaningful than the lives of these little ants."

The Hypercube cowered when the Angel cornered it against the stone. The Angel said, "Damn you, abstract being. Your abstractions allow you to accomplish amazing things, but they also reduce miracles into nickels and dimes in your 'eyes'. You kill and you kill, without ever realizing what specifically you are killing, or what this particular world means to people. I would banish you from here, but I am afraid you might do more harm from outside than within. So, what do I do with you?"

The angel raised his sword. Frantically, the whimpering hypercube sent small beams of blue in all directions. A beam struck me in the shoulder and I immediately had more vague memories injected into my mind. I couldn't help but squawk and burp. The angel turned to me and sent his yellow ray into my face. It was blinding, and it again pulled more words from me.

Without meaning to, I uttered the words:

"Great Angel, I beg of you, combine all inconsistencies. Place us on the proper track."

"Are you certain of what you ask?" asked the angel. "And are you aware of the implications?"

"Yes," I said.

The angel took a deep breath in... As he breathed deeper and more deeply, he stole the air from my chest. The dim light in my castle faded into complete darkness. My sense of hearing muffled into silence.

Death was upon my shoulders, I could feel death's hand. I asked him, "What is now, and what next?"

He responded regrettably that he was unsure. "I don't like how this feels." We had a long conversation after which he told me, "I feel unsure, I believe it's your time to go back. Goodbye Dernberger. I'll see you again when your time is right and I am ready to listen to you."

I began to dream of fractals and visions of thousands of people running in giant spirals towards a glowing center point.

Then I woke up atop a mountain overlooking UMass, Mount Pollux...

[Continued on next page...]



... I sat cross-legged in the center of a 21st century, technology-enhanced version of Stonehenge. Across from me sat my dearest mentor, Theodore, the man who appointed me as Tender to The Grand Conveyor, and whose castle trap I was surreal-warped into. He appeared healthier than I had ever seen him. Blue electricity was flowing from a square cloud the sky, directly into his skull. I realized that electricity was flowing into me as well.

Eight trombone players emerged, one from behind each of the Stonehenge stones. They played a canon which stopped the lightning flow and awoke my mentor.

He looked to me as though the moment was perfectly expected.

"Hello, Dernberger, it is good to see you. I wonder, how has the grand conveyor been treating you?" he asked.

I told him, "It has not always led me on an easy path, but I feel strangely like the difficulties will soon coagulate into something magnificent."

"I think you are right, my friend," Theodore said to me, "Today is a day of otherworldly novelty. Great things are in store for us."

"I'm not sure why, but I feel as though I needn't say anything to you, and still, you understand that I understand that you understand."

"I feel similarly," Theodore said.

And at that point, without speaking any longer, we both rose to our feet and walked in a direction I cannot yet reveal. All I will say publicly, now, is that things will be coming together soon.

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SLIMEBALL SECRETES WHEN SCARED

BY FUNKFREAKFRANK,
Reporter

Fear is a familiar feeling for Vince McMahon, who steps on the people responsible for his success purely for fun and in worship of laziness and greed. He fears the scores of wrestlers who put their hearts and bodies on the line for a living, and he has nightmares about the loyal family of fans who use their voice for the better of their ring-bound heroes.

Vince has a secret weapon: Beneath his wrinkled skin, under his tummy-tucked gut, he has an army of tiny Vinces who, like a fart, spring out from his mouth if he gets frightened. All of them are identical to the big Vince in every way except their size - the smallest is the size of a hummingbird.

All of the little bastards have the same dreams of milking the gorgeous human that is Rodney Piper, until sadly croaked. The little

McMahons sit in Big Vince's womb feeding on leftover hunks of ham (Vince's eats three live pigs worth a day) that Vince's stomach acid doesn't get to first. One day, the whole 37 of them sprung out when Ray Mysterio startled the Big Vince.

One even got loose and started selling counterfeit Van Gogh on the streets of Kensington. One day after a hefty orphan asked for a discount so they could hang a Starry Night above their

bed, the little Vince threatened to eat their ear, "You like Van Gogh so much, how 'bout I bite your fucking ears and eyes off and see how long you last without art, you Pig lookin' swine sissy-boy." The tiny Vince hasn't been seen since.

Luckily for the rest of decent human beings and the world of just-deserts, Vince McMahon's secret weapon does little to calm his fears, he'll live on never knowing when his Mini-me's will

vomit out of him. He will most likely live the rest of his days stuck in between deserved nightmares of his employees and shrieks of repressed guilt. He'll occasionally catch the feeling, just for a moment, and just enough to learn to fear it, before it returns to the corner of his eye.

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SERIOUS MAN FAILED BY STEED WHO TOOK TOO MUCH ACID, TRAGEDY ENSUES

BY THE COLLECTIVE,
Eternal Plasma Entity

Jim "Chuckles/Minotaur" Hodigan was a serious man. That is, as serious as a man in 1811 Colorado could be while traveling alone with two velvet sacks full of human mouths and a silver panther as his steed. He sought glory in the wild

frontier, pillaging the weak and kissing the asses of rich men. What a wonderful, pro-capitalist guy. "Praise the ruling class! They don't do so much for us. Yes, they do!" That was Jim Chuckles/Minaaur Hodigan's life motto. Though his political terminology was macabre, he liked the sound of the

words "ruling" and "pro-capitalism". Though he was a voracious reader of Marx and Hegel, he was illiterate.

He came upon a prairie town one Sunday when all of the sudden a gopher popped up out of a hole (not a gopher but a golfer!). The golfer shouted "four" at the

serious man and swung his stick on an ear of corn. The corn flew through the air and, whaddaya know, it hit the man in the ear.

Unfortunately, his protective panther had eaten a tab of acid like 30 minutes ago, and it was already starting off bad. Instead of morphing

into his demigod form and smiting the puny golfer man, the panther simply stared at his hands, trying to kiss them. Moving his lips but they were too short. The serious man was long dead.

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WHAT WE CRAVE

BY CLIST CTHRUTCHY,
Four Loko Advertiser

In an old green recliner by the window, Aunt Millie finds solace in the careful recollection of her younger years: Sitting on her father's lap around the fireplace, beating her older brother Jart in the potato sack race in front of the old church, eating enough figs with Jim Moby to make each of them sick twice over. Her smile softly widens at the thought of it all, a life filled with discrete pockets of love and connection. The thought comforts her in spite of her

having outlived the rest of them. Her husband Rico, her sisters Maeve and Tammy, and of course her dear Jart had all passed without bearing any children. Her gaze shifts downward at the thought that she would be the last of them, and her lips scrunch into one another as if greeting someone barely acquainted. She knows no one will hear it, but she lets out a muted utterance, "They ain't had none like us, and they never will again." Suddenly the narrative of her life becomes as blank as the overcast sky. She just can't shake the idea

that she had missed something basic and formative along the way. Maybe her life was only ever to relish in the smiles of people who were nothing now, and maybe they never were even there. Maybe her memories were as fleeting as a burning polaroid. And that there must have been something back there that could've made her whole. More than that, she realizes the pain of her loneliness, and how she may die adrift in a sea of air.

At once, Aunt Millie jumps up in realization. She figures that she will meet death in-

evitably, but she doesn't have to submit to it. She needs to do something bold, something fresh. She doesn't need connection, or an escape, or even a purpose. All she needs is the ammoniacal flavor and wholly unsatisfactory finish of America's premier malt beverage.

Introducing all-new Dry Mouth flavored Four Loko, now available over the counter at any leading pharmacy, Baby Gap, Carnival Cruise, Planned Parenthood, national park, PTA meeting, holemonger, or liquor store.

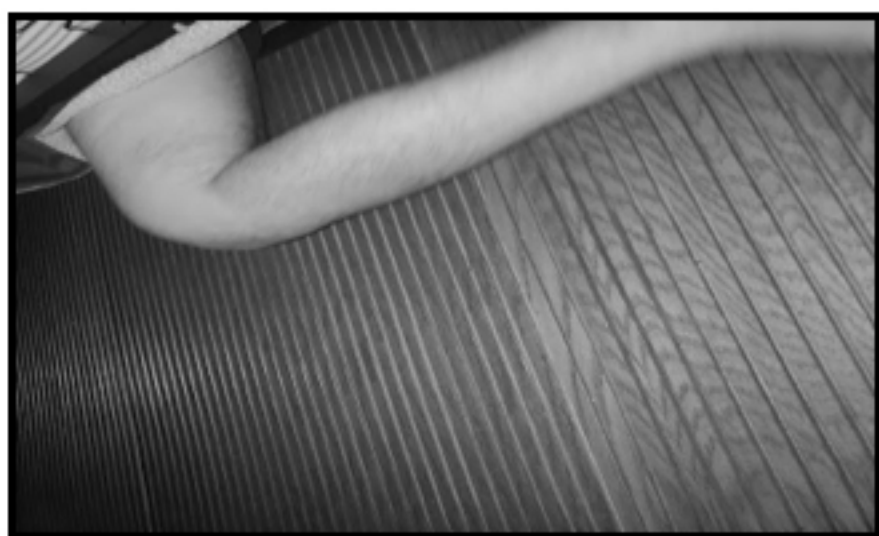
"Fuck life baby, I'm going Loko!"

Four Loko: Could it have saved Elliott Smith?



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PHOTO OF LEG



In-person viewings of this leg can be arranged at viewings@surrealtimes.net

GUIDED THOUGHTS NUM. 1

Think the
unthinkable
while you can

BY ALDUS HUMBLETON,
Cousin of Alfred

I DON'T WANT THIS. GODDAMNIT, YOU DRY-MELLONED COLLEGE WASHED TODS CAN'T THINK A THOUGHT. NOT EVEN WITH A MINI EINSTEIN SQUATTING YOUR NOSTRIL. FOR

ONCE IN ALL TIME, THE IDEA REALM IS FULLY OPEN LIKE A LONG STRETCH OF OPEN MID-NIGHT FREEDOM HIGHWAY. YET YOUR MINDS STAY SHUT. DO I NEED TO USE MY OWN SAGGY ARMS TO DRAG YOUR SKULL OUTSIDE THE BOX? IF I DID, WOULD I NEED TO CHAIN IT TO A PARADOX TO KEEP YOUR IMAGINATION ALIVE

FOR MORE THAN A SECOND?

LESSON ONE: LICK DIRT, FUCKERS, AND TASTE THE STARS

I HOPE YOU'LL GET IT SOMEDAY

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OPINION: I LOVE TINNITUS

BY CHADBORNE
PRENDERGAST,
Citizen of The World

You heard me right. I said it. I love tinnitus. That ringing in my ears really does it for

me. It lets me know how much fun I have had without adequate protection. You all know what I'm talking about. Concerts, house shows, parties. It's like a drug to me. Loud sound.

Loud sound makes my world go round. I love it when the ringing gets louder. I love pressing my head up against some big speaker at a punk show and really hearing those chords and

notes like they're under some big microscope, but the microscope is just my ears instead of my eyes. It's like an audio microscope, yeah that's it. Don't worry about sleeping, you'll get

used to it.

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SURPRISE INVERSE BIRTH RATTLES COMMUNITY

By COMMON OBSERVER,
Times Correspondent

This weekend, a doctor was performing a routine birthing procedure when something went terribly wrong.

"Push!" The doctor yelled. "You're almost there!" The baby's head beginning to appear sent a wave of excitement across the room. Little Stephen Johansson Jr. was

entering the world!

Moments later, the tables turned. An eruption of dust from the mother's crotch made it impossible to see anything. From behind the cloak of dust, a gnarly tussle ensued. People shielded themselves as clipboards, medical utensils, and various things were tossed about the room.

When the dust cleared, those involved saw a sight that

they remain traumatized from to this day.

On the table laid a 4 foot tall, 172-pound child with a ginormous woman-shaped bulge in his belly. Mrs. Johansson was nowhere to be found and was presumed to have been enveloped by her offspring.

The baby's godfather, who witnessed the birth most closely, remains bedridden, trembling and occasionally

murmuring "baby so big and healthy, but where'd momma go?"

"It all happened so fast," the doctor said. "It was a typical induced-labor situation with Mrs. Johansson. From the ultrasound, we could tell that her baby was large, but not far out of the ordinary."

The nurse on call recounted, "The grumbling sounds coming from the mother's stomach during her ultra-

sound did not catch our attention at the time, but in hindsight, they were an important clue hinting at what would soon unfold."

"We should have noticed," the doctor said, "but we can't blame ourselves. Nobody is trained for this."

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SHOE COMMUNICATION FOR MY FELLOW SHYFOLK

By SHYGUY,
Citizen of The World

Shoes can talk, but only if you listen to them. Nah I'm just pissn' with you, that's crap. If you want your shoes to talk, you're going to have to get clever. But boy, I wish they could talk. People are beautiful on the inside, and shoes are ugly on the inside and therefore easier to talk to.



Sometimes you just wake up and you want to go back to dreamland, and then there's the three summer buses you can't afford and the train ride you steal, there all are just nightmares. I believe I have friends I've never met on this bus, but you lovely loud fuckers won't let me lose the morning in a bad poem. All the things I would say, but my voice is like the

ghost of an otter floating on a wet leaf, and every word that lisps out feels like the jagged edge of a clam drowning in helium. Today and every other day inside I could really use a hug, but I have fleas that think they're fireflies and you look like you're wearing a coat of scabies and got them mushroom eyes.



I saw a friend in a sidewalk chalk drawing yesterday, and it's been washed away, but how can you be mad at the underpaid groundskeeper, when they're holding the hose in such a seductive way. Crowded buses feel lonely, everybody's all buried in books and the ground. Making eye contact is awkward, you never know how people will receive you, too sappy, too squishy, too starry-eyed, too queer, too short, too full of fear, or too damn shy. But true connections are beautiful, but they're awkward to make, so how do you break the ice, without breaking nice?

The Answer: shoe communication. Simply write what you're feeling on your shoes and you never have to look at another nose again, but you still have that sweet sweet human connection. If the whole world did it, well damn, I'd bet you can imagine that for yourself. And

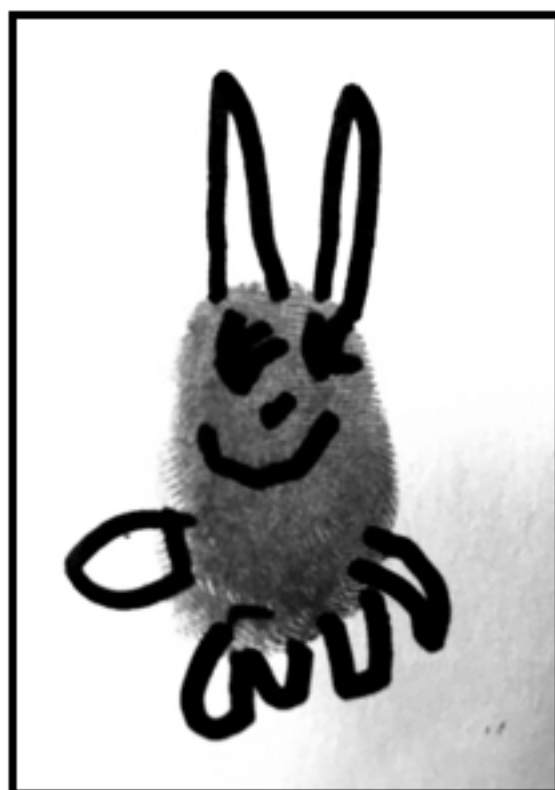
we all know how Nancy Sinatra's fake wig won't stop telling us that boots are made for walking, but mine are just smelly shells for some lazy feet who really want to walk in their own shoes, in a distant dreamland. But I believe my boots were meant to do the talking. If you want to walk in a strange dreamland with me, then keep your eyes on the ground to find a friend in afoot.

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BLUE ALIEN PETTING ZOO COMING TO INTERGALACTIC FARMER'S MARKET

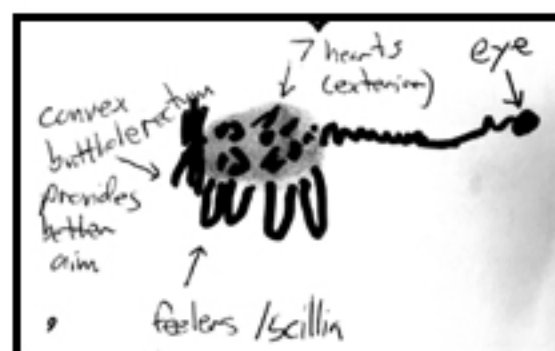
BY CHARLIE TOMQUAT,
Spokesperson of the market



I am so excited to announce that the upcoming intergalactic farmer's market, hosted at my house near Puffer's Pond, will be home to a new exhibit full of wonder and amazement. This exhibit entails a number of blue creatures from a planet far far away. They come in various shapes and sizes, and with a magnificent variety of personality and prowess. The common ground tying them all together is their blue color and the texture of their torsos which resembles human fingerprints. They are amazing in ways I can't describe! But, I won't spoil the fun for you — come see them in person and learn for yourselves their rich

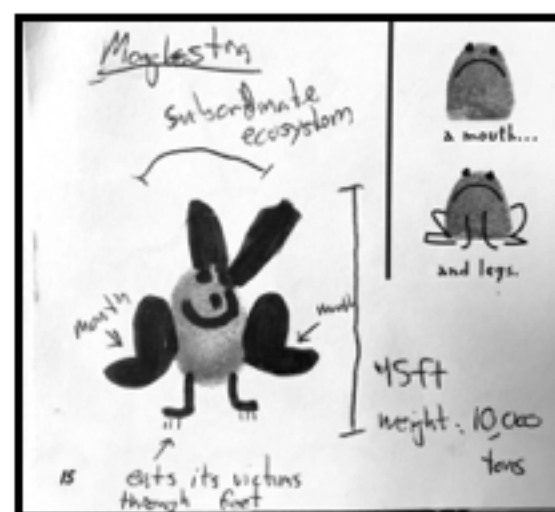
history and culture.

Come say hello to Shemwink, the walking enigma who is naturally carnivorous yet extremely empathic! He possesses 7 exterior hearts, not accounting for the interior ones. His one eye is at the end of his wiggly tail, and he has a convex butthole on his face! Instead of feet or legs, he uses an array of scillia for transport and feeling. On top of all this, he is immune to lupus!

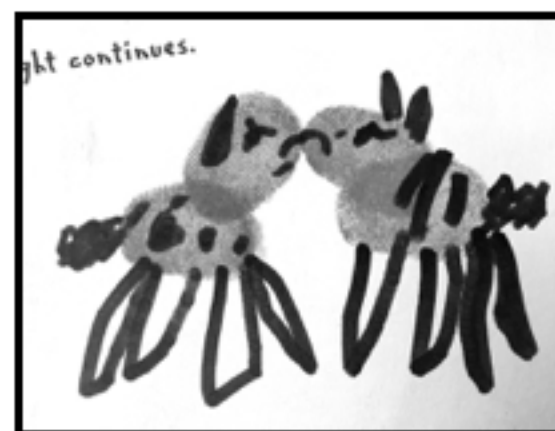


Come say hello to Monglastra, but don't get too close because this creature is so fantastic that it produces an entire subordinate ecosystem in its immediate vicinity. What appears to be its arms are actually enormous mouths, so don't make him yell! Or else he'll break your eardrums. He also might absorb you through his feet! That's right, because it consumes food through absorption. Did I forget to mention that he's 45 feet tall and cannot die unless killed? Monglastra is astounding to watch. Unfortunately, he feels nothing and creates destruction without knowing it

while rampaging around in an unstoppable trance state. Curiously, many creatures have learned to live symbiotically with this lovely monstrosity.



The cosmic couple! Some say they were joined at the lips at birth. Some say they made love and were connected forever. Either way, they collect dust balls on their rear ends from fighting sentimentally and also by filter-feeding through their asses.



And here are these final two strange creatures.

God, Agent of Chaos, a hovering filter feeder. See its gaseous face,

stringy tail, all covered in Hot Dogs.



And its twin: Earth Cow, Agent of Order, Bound to eat the earthly grass. Notice his flat face, hand-tail and the lack any of hotdogs.



Oh goodness, I have been feeling wonderful lately. Everything is falling into place. My various friends at the market are thriving. It is such a pleasure to watch them build a home for themselves, and better, an intergalactic cultural hub! Dorf would be proud!

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HIPPIES VANDALIZE STONE MOTORHOME

Sergeant Tom Johnson: For a long time, a stone motorhome with no windows has been positioned illegally on North Prospect Street, just beside what was once The Drake hotel. People have long wondered who, if anyone, lives inside. The town would have towed the motorhome if it was not so heavy. Using pickaxes and other tools, a number of young people have taken apart the structure and built small artsy rock towers in its place. These youths can be seen loitering in the area, smoking cannabis, and walking tightropes. The inhibitor of the motorhome was not located for comment.



WORKPLACE FRICTION AT TOMLINSON LLC

BY BOOBNBOB,

Eternal Plasma Entity

Alarms blared across the factory floor. A voice on intercom yelled, "The nuts have fallen into the pocketbook! I repeat, the nuts have fallen into the pocketbook!" What happened that day gave rise to a new age of factory compliance.

The boss, Mr. Tomlinson, ferociously stomped over to the panicked woman on the assembly line whose pocketbook was now filled with nuts. "Darla," he said in a commanding tone. "I told you two times to never ever, under any circumstances,

allow so many nuts in your pocketbook."

"I know, Mr. Tomlinson."

"Now what exactly have you done, Darla, for the 3rd time?"

She shamefully admitted, "I let the nuts into my pocketbook."

Mr. Tomlinson apologized for what he was about to do. He said he didn't want to do it, but he had no choice.

Mr. Tomlinson bent dear darling DARLA over the side of the conveyor belt, ripped off his belt, and let his nuts smack across the

mini-fridge she was in the process of assembling. "HOW ABOUT THESE NUTS FOR YOUR NUTS, HUH DARLA? You get nuts in your pocket, you get nuts on your fucking fridge Darla. That's how it goes."

Mr. Tomlinson turned to the other refrigerator factory workers who had gathered around. "YOU HERE ME, PUSSIES? IF YOU LET THE NUTS IN YOUR POCKETS, I'M GOING TO WIPE MY NUTS ALL OVER YOUR REFRIGERATORS, AND THERE'S NOT A DAMN THING YOU'RE GOING TO BE ABLE TO DO ABOUT IT. Kiss your 3.5-star yelp re-

views goodbye.

Darla, red in the face, wiped the nut smudge off the stainless steel. She removed her husband Donny's nuts from her pocketbook and allowed them to slingshot back into his pants as he sat beside her.

"COCK-A-POWAAA!!!!!" Darla's husband WRETCHED as his balls slung back 10 feet into his pants. "DARLA, I TOLD YOU IM SENSITIVE," he whined.

The boss, Mr. Tomlinson, had the final word. "DARLA, DARLAO. Remember what I told you all those times before. A mans be

sensitive. Just ask my nuts, havin' to slap across steel all day. That shit ain't stainless, ya hear! Eh, well, it ain't painless, ya hear...." He trailed off as the soreness, and embarrassment, once again set in. Mr. Tomlinson iced himself, then added another 5-star review to the Yelp.

"Everyone shut your traps, shut your zippers, and let's get back to doing what we do best here at Tomlinson Fridges LLC, that is, nothing at all."

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HELP ME! DO I SMELL LIKE COUGH SYRUP?

I need a nose and a friend

BY ANONYMOUS

AD PLACER,

Today I dreamt of an eyeless gardener who died half-dreaming the other half soaked in the scent of loneliness. 60 years old just to be a home for another lonely colony of ants.

My dad once told me a fairy tale that ants can live lives in your veins, and it's beautiful.

I didn't understand it then, so I just left for the store picking up some change along the way. I'd been sav-

ing up for a slush puppy, cause the couch cushions smelt like mold and I didn't feel like asking them.

My mama cried when our dog was too old to kiss her good morning. And the vet was too expensive to afford.

Today I met a nice-looking stranger who smoked a dying dandelion, and I saw wishes float out his lips. I wish he told me that my frown hid a sunrise. But he only told me that I smell of ash and cough syrup.

I swear It was just the one time when the city-funded "residence program" was on fire, or maybe it was a cou-

ple 'a times after.

Now sometimes the face in the mirror feels like a fantasy. I'm so afraid, and I don't believe in dying. Lonely in my colony, I roam in circles believing in the queen, but she runs me dry. Still, I don't want to smell like ash.

But, like the man who hides from the world in his castle, I killed at least 20 ants this week and like him, I feel horrible. I'm crushed under clouds of guilt. I took the time to name them all, but I didn't know any of them. I just put stickers on tiny graves, all crushed under my fingerprints, bloodied by my soul squeezing out from un-

der ant-skin now mush.

I killed 20 ants last week, and now the face in my mirror feels like fantasy, so afraid. I want to believe that their eyes are the same as mine and I'm in them as they swim my veins. I feel them in my veins. The pain, it soars and I can almost mistake it for a song.

But I still don't believe in dying, and I killed 20 ants, I'm so afraid and I don't believe in dying, I killed 20 ants, I'm so, so afraid, and no still I don't believe in dying, but I killed 20 ants. I killed 20 ants.

But today I found a stray

gull outside my shop. I named her Klip. I bet she has friends. She has a broken wing, and I'm going to heal her up and then help her find her friends.

And tomorrow I'll be able to go on, and I bet I still won't believe in dying.

So call me please, when your safe from my stench. I need help.

1-978-500-0943

Please.

Anonymous ad placer can be reached at advert824901@surrealtimes.net



DROIDS INVADE LOVE

No one is safe from marketing's entrancing tentacle reach.

By DR. HAROLD S. PIROG,
Times Correspondent

From the editors: This letter was sent to us from an anonymous source. It is republished in exact form here.

PART I

I was there when the electricity first coursed through her veins. It sprung and bounded around the room, and between and around all of us. Oh, her eyes! I watched as they scanned the room diligently, and I heard the faint buzzes from unseen mechanics. Her skin was pulled tight over her perfectly cut legs and arms and body, and the finishing touches were being made. This was before the corporations and the ad agencies and the mother and the father, and the scholastics and the professors at the University of Massachusetts and the investors and everyone else got involved. Years of technical research, development, life, death, naysayers, black rock thumpers and devourers of all, all doubted us. They rest assured in the notion that the project has been completed, but the im-

plications remain to be seen.

For naked she sat stark on the plasticine table while men in white masks and white hats made the finishing touches and finalizing drill marks and cuts as Sigmund and I calibrated speech patterns and the emergency override switches for the final time from an opening in the back of her cranium. When we had finished the task, I turned to him.

"Sigmund," I said, "Please give me one last moment of time with her."

He placed his hand firmly on my shoulder before making his way towards the door and taking the white-hatted white-masked technician with him, leaving me in a sweet solitude with no one but her. My head hung low before her beauty. She was of nothing and of no one. She was the first of her kind on the table as unaware as a newborn. And existing for only a single purpose. My hand met with her cheek, and I stared into her lifeless eyes.

"You will soon exist. You will soon be thrust into this unforgiving world. A nauseating world, full of criminals and hell and work and time. Oh by god... time. You are lucky. It never ceases, you are lucky... And you will

never know."

A tear sprung from the well behind his cheek.

He said to his creation, "I hope your ducts will work as well as mine..."

Overcome with ardor, he lunged at her hairless head, a garden for her dead eyes and her cold vinyl skin. Their lips met, and his tongue wriggled deep into her mouth, which hung slightly ajar. His tongue slid in and out with an intense fervor, squirming and convulsing and crawling like a maggot in the glory of a portion of rancid meat.

The door creaked, opening, and a single hanging bulb in the hallway cast Sigmund's shadow down over him and her, and he watched for just a brief moment and ecstasy filled his entire being as he did. Feeling the presence in the doorway, he collected himself, pulling the collar of the lab coat straight, running fingers through his auburn hair, straightening his glasses.

"She is ready."

Sigmund's lips curled and withdrew and his huge teeth were visible from the smile which stretched his face in a cartoonish fashion.

"We will be rich"

His eyes shone bright like rays from an everlasting refraction.

PART II

A sullen veil hung over the house, shrouded almost as if it was the only dwelling in the entire world, the entire universe. The sounds of stringed instruments twanged and drums beat and synthesizers rolled and rumbled. The air inside was thick, thick with the breath of dozens, hundreds, holding draughts and knocking their heads back as the drink slid down their throats, opening inhibitions and lessening expectations. The interaction was immense; couples pulled each other into dark corners, into the folds of the shroud and beyond, never to be seen again. It was the perfect setting for the first field test. We arrived in a rolling box of shocks and rattling metal.

"Please be safe my dear."

"Dad, I am an adult and I can handle myself! Don't worry."

And just like that, she was engulfed by the clutches of the undulating den. I watched her enter, then I swung around the corner and parked in low light. I was determined to see her safe and to see the mission through. She is my every-

thing. Pulling a false mustache from my coat pocket, I entered. The interior of the house felt like the inside of a hot metal can cooking on a flaming stove: packed, hot and wet. Then I saw her, working her magic. The fruits of my labor of love, sitting there on the divan with her hand resting playfully on a boy's thigh, touching, inching, insinuating. Then he leaned in for his chance and their lips met. The blood in my temples pounded, my face grew flesh white. Untenable ideas rushed forth and racked my brain, and then it happened. She got it. His phone number. A vision of vast wealth flooded my thoughts. How easily fooled an uninhibited boy at a party can be by the prospect of a late-night slog in the folds of the shroud. Before long she would use her undeniable sexual prowess to keep this boy on a hook for months, gently insinuating products he should buy and use, for this run we sold to the highest bidder: Nestle. The test was an undoubted success. Stocks for Nestle grew by a margin of 12% for that quarter. Imagine the possibilities.

Dr. Harold S. Pirog can be reached at
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STD RAY GUN STOLEN

BY NED GREEBLY,
PR Manager

EMERGENCY! EMERGENCY! The mysterious S.T.D. ray gun, which infects its targets with sexually transmitted diseases, has escaped our possession. We are sincerely sorry, but there

is no time for a full apology. This cruel and unusual weapon must not fall into the wrong hands, if it hasn't already.

A world with genital diseases in place of bullets is not a world for me. Yet, the police refuse to provide help of any kind. The Peripheral

Intelligence Agency is pre-occupied. With no leads, we need your help.

The STD ray gun was originally retrieved from outside our reality through a glitch in the matrix accessed by an adventurous young writer. We did not want it, nor the liability it carried. However,

being aware of the terrible power it wielded, we stashed it in journalist Dernberger Spengleton's castle, a place built to last.

Since then, Spengleton's castle has been dismantled, some say by hippies, Dernberger himself says by a multi-dimensional hyper-

cube. But either way, the weapon was stolen in the process. Please help us find it.

Ned Greebly can be reached at management@surrealtimes.net

MOTH SUFFERS ILL FATE

BY CHARLIEGH CLARK



PLACENTA AND LONELINESS, AT LEAST FOR NOW

BY THE COLLECTIVE,
Eternal Plasma Entity

Kerry saw angels in her lettuce and a placenta in her shower, but the postman showed up with a letter sealed with beeswax. Before she could deal with the placenta, she got caught up with her hand stuck to the beeswax letter.

Kneading through the ghostly ink of a love letter... It was meant for another and written in blood in the trenches of Normandy by a dead pair of forgotten dog tags, meant for a lover

fighting a workforce war back at home.

The stranger's love was the most familiar thing in Kerry's life. And yet, at the same time, it was wholly unfamiliar until this moment. Where had she been hiding it? Was it hiding behind the hyperborean eyes of her stoic father? Or had it been stored way deep inside her in a vault with no code to unlock it?

All of these questions surely made her reconsider her decision to take up a career in placenta sitting. Those squirmy little seeds of hope

smell of peace and frogs. They keep Kerry busy for the time being and it's a noble living.

Day by day, new weather comes. Kerry belongs to be loved at all those pairs of lovers know. But when you smell of placenta and tears, I'm sure you feel like brown paper bags stuffed with glue. What can you do but dream and clean up the afterbirth?

The Collective can be reached at epe@surrealtimes.net

THIS IS ABOUT YOU

BY V. MAUVE,

Cartoon marmalade dripping off carbon trees. Fold, savage, and entice a sneaking pathfinder, wrath-wrought hellfire beneath the

annual royal blue plasticine arc over plateaued concrete. Down with the dust rats and smithed iron grates, separating horizons both light and dark. Speak all your numbers and dye all your thoughts. Dye them with dif-

ferent shades of blue and red and brown and yellow and brown and green and structure yourself on foundations more coherent rather than on esoteric systems of ropes and pulleys. You little figurine goddess, icon of fertili-

ty. Burn your hellseed. Shred your pearls of doubt. Crystallize whatever it is you find hanging in the air around us and store it at the bottom of a package of cigarettes. Tuck it deep and swing a left up Mayfield

road, past the old glue factory, and the third door at street level.

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I ALMOST JOINED A CULT AND WAS GLAD ABOUT IT

UMass Club Review

By V. MAUVE AND SEBASTIAN PINGAS,
Times Correspondents

Deep in the recesses of UMass Amherst's seedy underground, there are a series of clubs that you need to have the "know" to even discover their existence. Last weekend I was able to infiltrate one of these said clubs, and what transpired was a multitude of events so far out of grasp to this normal reality that I am not sure if it is possible for me to ever recover. This experience has left a vast ravine in the subject of myself. So let me explain to you the club that is the Mario Kart 64 Club.

On the surface, what do you picture when you hear the idea of the "Mario Kart 64 Club"? A bunch of sweaty nerds sitting around a bowl of puffy Cheetos speedrunning a game so removed from this generation that many would shake their

heads in an awkward unknowingness? That's what I first thought. And upon entering, that is entirely what it appeared to be. There were five of them, and the strangeness began immediately. I don't think any of them gave me their real names. I refuse to believe there were five people with the surname Demonskull, but that is how they introduced themselves. There was the Corporal, there was Goose, Johnny Marmaladefingers, Sebastian Pingas, and Jacquelyn.

As I entered the den that they appeared to live in as a commune, they greeted me with a loud and in unison "Hail Demon." I was quite put back, but by the time I had the chance to react, the Corporal sat me down on the floor and instructed me to race Jacquelyn on the Mushroom cup level of Mario Kart 64. The race started normally, but by the third stage, my vision start-

ed melting. Vast pulsating shapes surrounded everything I came to perceive, and Jacquelyn had assumed the characteristics of a large voracious reptile. Four hooded beings began chanting in tongues nearly unspeakable and totally indescribable to the human ear. As the race concluded, the Corporal invaded my entire perception. He was skulking in the shadows of the place in the area before me.

Before I knew what was transpiring, I found myself deep somewhere in a clearing in the woods. Through my blurred vision and the smoke emanating from the bonfire, they appeared to have assumed the form of shades of vibrant pink, except Jacquelyn; she was still a reptile. All of them moved in dimensions as if they were a well-oiled machine, heaving and hoeing like the smoothed cogs on an ancient industrial piece, forever revolving til the end of

some arcane experience in the Choco Mountains.

Sebastian Pingas came to me with an amanita muscaria. "Eat, my son," he said. The flow ran through me as a river flows through the Adirondacks. I accepted the mushroom without question, and it was then that I became totally dismorphed. Potent psychedelia totally ravaged my entire idea of surviving and living. Life is to survive, the pleasures manifest themselves in different ways. Cheap excitement is a way of living. Judgment from others is nothing more than a fleeting expression of their current selves. Patterns of refractory light shone from Goose's purple hat as he handed me a cigarette of which we both enjoyed nicely.

I finally woke up in my dorm, unaware if what I experienced was merely a dream or the true underbelly of UMass Amherst's under-

ground. I don't know if any of them exist. I don't know if Jacquelyn is a reptile, if the Corporal is a divine savior, if Goose's hat is actually purple, if I ate wild amanita muscaria from a man named Pingas Demonskull who seemed almost totally in control except for the fact that he inhaled the smoke from the bonfire of which fleeting moments paint a picture tall with hemp plants and cloven wood burning within. But it doesn't matter anymore, I found my true meaning. My alarm can keep blaring but I don't care. I'm going on a road trip, I need to experience life. Hail demon.

For inquiries related to the Mario Kart 64 club please email s.pingas@surrealtimes.net or v.mauve@surrealtimes.net.

V. Mauve and Sebastian Pingas can be reached at mauve.v@surrealtimes.net

DIARY OF EDNA COOPER, MOTHER OF TWO AND WIFE OF CHET COOPER

By EDNA COOPER,
Citizen of The World

July 9th, 1948

Today was our family portrait day. I love my dear Chet to death, but he can be such a curmudgeon. No sense of humour! He says to me today as we're walking into our neighbor Mr. Gar-

raghty's to have our picture taken, "*Honey I don't know if I am who I have been. I feel separated from who I even could be. In the last two weeks, I have been haunted by the ever-present memory of waking up and finding you wholly unrecognizable. The things in our house felt incongruous yet*

whole at the same time, like someone had taken them apart in the night and put them back together before anyone awoke, and I had just happened to notice the dried glue holding it all together. I think maybe I already died, and God is punishing me by sending me back with only half the fact

of it. I can't go inside, Edna. I can't be in a neat house that's only glued together. I want to sit in the sand of the Chesapeake like I did when I was a boy. I need to be away from all of this."

And so I looked at him with my eyes rolling to Timbuktu and said to him, trying not to sound too snappy,

"Chet!" I said, "Don't be such a hardo bitch! Pussy-boy! Bite my gargantuan clit you pathetic fucking poser."

-Edna

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THE LAST JOURNALS OF KLIP THE SEAGULL

BY GRAHAM RAPIER,

Death

I meet a lot of people. Sometimes their faces blur one after another, but on my best days, they all stick with me. All of them are beautiful. The horror is in how I meet them. Walking them down my spiraling garden corridor, my butterflies' flutters are an ambient song ending on the other side of the white curtain. I hate how the dead look at me first, don't they know I have no choice in my role in this sorted cycle? I hope they tend to look at me differently by the end of our conversations. Sometimes fear lay spread thickly upon their faces, or sadness comforts them like a lipless kiss. Others just look back hung longingly. Sometimes they're happy, but that's the saddest feeling because how could they be happy? Right off the bat, I guess you could call it a gift, I feel how they felt in their last moments.

I get a little piece of them. I get to keep that feeling with me and whatever I get from the conversation we have together. On the last walk I took down to the curtain, I met a little bird, and she gave me her journal. I thought I would send it back to the world of the living. So here is the journal of Klip the seagull.

Until we finally meet, G.R.

9/7/2007

Hi Mr. Journal, it's nice to meet you. You seem like I can maybe talk to you, so here I go. I'm not really much of a journaler, but I feel like talking and I feel like being alone.

I live on the beach with my friends, but I don't really know why anymore. I like to sleep in. I used to get up to greet the sunrise, but I haven't felt like it in a while. I made a new friend the other day, I do that a lot. I like new people. I like new things. I used to never think about where they come from - that's their biz to work out. I'm just tired of how all my friends are alone when I meet them, and I don't know, I guess I never paid much attention to that before meeting the Gulled One, who's asleep while I write this. I mean, he was just left there. He was...sad, how many of my friends have been abandoned? How many of my friends are sad? Am I sad? What does sad feel like?

After Francis fixed him, up he lost his expression of sadness and anger, he just looks: full. I wonder where his expression went. I checked above him. I even dug through the sand under him, but I couldn't find it. Where did the feelings go? He just looks peaceful. His eyes are open, but he's dreaming. I wonder if the feelings followed him here or I wonder if they just

found their new home in me.

Francis looks so proud of her healing work. She really isn't the warmest, but she helps these people, although I don't think she really thinks of them as people, more so just like hunks of rock for sculpture. She's not uncaring; she's just a cold kind of caring, like a crab. I couldn't get the Gulled One's face out of my head. Even though Francis is not really the type, I felt like I needed to ask somebody, "You ever wonder where they come from? All these friends I find, like none of them are young, so what were they doing before we met them, doesn't anybody miss them?"

"It's not my place to wonder. It's not in my nature, Klip, and I didn't think it was in yours either. And my nature's all I've got. How do you think I've lasted all these tides? If I didn't stick to my resolve, I would have never survived the ice breaks of '06. Have you listened to anything I was teaching you?"

I don't listen very good. Francis was strong in body and heart both. She's like a rock, but I'm like the breeze, but more lately I've been a mellow breeze, but I don't let that show that's my biz to deal with. I stopped listening to what she was saying. I just kind of shrugged and

said "okay."

Eventually, the Gulled One awoke. I tried to perk up. Maybe talking to him would help me feel better, I don't know. I guess there's a Klip in my private time and another one when I'm with my friends. "See, you're all better, bet you're glad I found you?" I ask him.

"I guess I am, maybe I can stick around a bit, just to make sure?"

He didn't have any other place to go, plus in the couple of minutes he was awake I was starting to feel better, so out comes the Klip I wear for my friends, "Oh really, that'd be the best. We can scavenge in the morning then, play till night...oh Do you like games?" I asked, "I used to like games more, I guess I still do with the right person if I'm in the right mood which hasn't been a lot lately."

"I do, I love games." Gulled One said. "I haven't played one in a while though, that'd be cool. But what do you mean exactly by scavenge?"

"Oh you know, shark around the beach, seeing what come across, all breeze like and stuff. We could have some real fun. I like your vibe, makes me feel...better"

"I'd like that, it does feel right. I'd like to join you, you know, to find people who are lost like I was."

"Well, I don't really think about it like that. I just like the hunt ya know, I guess. I get in the dumps when I think about where we all come from, I was just talking to Francis about that..."

I thought talking to him would make me feel better, and I guess it does in the moment, but the wake left from the ups from when I'm around him leave me feeling so down when I'm alone. I'm ashamed to feel it, but I wish I didn't ask him to stay. He just kind of fills me up with life, and makes me want to grab the sun, but I don't ever feel like I'm holding anything. I like to wander just to wander, just to feel the moment, but he wanders to find something. And at the moment that night when the three of us danced to the sunset, it was nice, but at the end of the day I'm left soggy and cold while falling asleep. It just takes so much energy to do something good, I miss just doing "something" and now I feel all opened up and mushy in a silly journal. I'm tired of this. I just want to flap my wings until I get tired, and for no other reason but to feel the breeze.

Until next time Mr. journal
Your friend, Klip

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SELECTED NOT NEWS SINCE 1973

Updates on the negative space of the quadro-decade

By FRANK EARHORN,
Times Correspondent

The following is a list of events which have not happened since 1973. Some (if not all) of these events may have never occurred at all. Regardless, these events (within the means of the probable) will not occur before 2023.

Not-news item #1: In the aforementioned time period,

the antonym of "horizon" has not once been listed by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary as "contagious".
- **Certainty:** 99%.
- **Source:** archive.org.

Not-news item #2: In the aforementioned time period, no beneficial therapy has been received by Sir Edward Stein, who was at one point famous in niche circles.
- **Certainty:** 88%.
- **Source:** Sir Edward's continuing belief that he is the Queen of England's most prized piece of furniture, specifically: a table, that

was accidentally sold by her assistant while she was on Safari in Australia's Wild Northwest Coast.

Not-news item #3: In the aforementioned time period, no cure or revival serum for surprise aerial tabun needle injections has been available to the public.
- **Certainty:** 92%.
- **Source:** common knowledge and the assumption that, if a cure or serum were available, the tabun needle crisis of 2019 could have been mitigated (it wasn't).

Not-news item #4: In the aforementioned time period, humans have not hosted zero-gravity electronic music rave dances in outer space or simulated zero-gravity chambers.
- **Certainty:** 70%.
- **Source:** reddit.com.

Not-news item #5: In the aforementioned time period, the Boston Red Sox have not collectively flogged or flagellated themselves for religious or other purposes.
- **Certainty:** 95%.
- **Source:** redsox.com.

Not-news item #6: In the aforementioned time period, the United States Government has not acknowledged the true source of the world's problems, that is, the fake sun which manipulates us using narrow ray withdrawal as leverage.
- **Certainty:** 100%.
- **Source:** cia.gov.

This sentence concludes my public curation of "SELECTED NOT NEWS SINCE 1973".

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PHOTO OF HOLE



In-person viewings of this hole can be arranged at viewings@surrealtimes.net

HOW I TRANSITIONED INTO A NEW FORM

By ANEW NEMA,
Free Spirit

PART ONE

This was the last week of my life. My doctor told me my next life begins next week. They told me I'd live as a sod-dwelling nematode. That turns me on, a lot.

The nematode was in a silty clay loam, but he really preferred a more moist environment like clay silt. I hope that by next week when I take over his life, he will have moved to a better home. That way, I can start

my new life on the right foot.

PART TWO

One thing I'm really excited about is drinking swamp water with my nematode buds. I did it a lot as a human, and I'm pretty sure that kind of skill will translate over pretty easily. Swamp water just has all kinds of vitamins and minerals that "purified and deemed safe" water doesn't provide.

The nematodes squirm inside my stomach as it begins to bulge. I feel my fu-

ture within myself growing and devouring my current and soon-to-be prior self. I drink from my toilet to accelerate the process.

Part three I busted through a mental blockade that has plagued my entire childhood. "You're not good enough to be a nematode. Go back to having higher thoughts, loser!" he'd scream, but who's laughing now? "Fuck the haters," I thought, as I wiggled away.

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A POEM BY DEATH ITSELF

BY GRAHAM RAPIER,

Death

Back when I was still alive,
I rode a crooked stool, my
eyes gone blind. Her paint-
ings give no feeling.

Empty bottles crack smiles,
catch the sun in full
morendo.

Draped in autumn shades of
decaying leaves, a flower-
born ash, my little girl sat
before me.

In seeps of wonder, she
plays with toys, now all but
memories to me. I feel like
I'm dying.

Flower in hand, my grip's

gone ghost. I let the petals
fall, and I flutter like a
boney butterfly.

My little girl, in feelings I've
forgotten, she picks them up
and saves them to live on as
impressions in her coloring
book. She looks up to me
with her child eyes and my
heart feels alone in a falling
world.

Lonely Ants swirl before
her feet forming constella-
tions. She names them all
and let's them take her
candy.

You can see endless worlds
reflected in the eyes of a
child, and you'll see none of
them are dying.

She looks up to me, lonely,
wanting a hug, and then in
envy of them runs back to
her ants, "Maybe tomorrow"
she wishes.

Today I had a conversation
with a seagull. Through the
spirals of my garden
through blurs of butterflies,
the seagull spoke of how she
lost her spark when she gave
it to someone else, and
when they weren't around
she felt lifeless and almost
wished she never met them.

Looking back I now realize
the garden was hers. She
knows it better than I did,
her seeds weave through the
soil like stories.

Day and night, light and
dark, she felt her flowers. I
watched her and I could feel
all the feelings I had tried to
drown.

I was happy today, sad to-
morrow. this is her gift to
me. She reminds me of what
I had forgotten. Feelings
both bleak and bright, hope
and heartbreak and in be-
tween, I love to feel them.

It's a gift I couldn't return, I
just let her grow, she's over
me, but when I'm lost, I just
look to her drawings and
then, as the saying goes, I
don't believe in dying,

My ribcage opened like a
butterfly, where tears were

is just music. She and I lift-
ing little stickmen out of
mud, all the games I forgot
to play and stories I forgot
to tell. Newborn air climbs
in kite swirls, in living
clouds I almost see the hori-
zon dream up a morning.

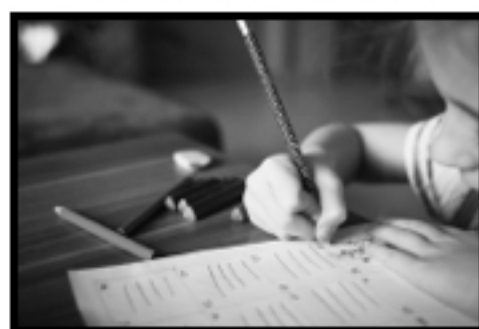
I finally fly in my Crayola
sky drew by my little
flower. I await the day when
I get to walk with her one
last time, until she lives and
dies again.

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reached at
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times.net](mailto:rapier.graham@surreal-times.net)

KINDERGARTEN LEARNING SHINES LIKE THE SUN

BY MRS. PORTER,

Kindergarten Teacher



Allston, Massachusetts --

Well hi everyone! This is a
newsletter to parents, stu-
dents, and friends of our
wonderful Chiptooth
Kindergarten community!
My name is Mrs. Porter, and
I'm one of the teachers here

at Chiptooth. My students
have been learning some
great new things lately, and
they would just love to share
their new knowledge with
the community. I am so
proud of their progress. I
think you will be too!

One of the things they have
learned is how to tattletale.
After a whole golly lot of
practice, my students have
become great tattletales.
Here are some of their best
tattles.

Tattletale Tale #1, by
Jonny Humstone:

"I wanted to tattle dale on

my mummy because she did
a bad thing and deserves to
be tattle taled on. Miss
Porter, I told her that my
mummy, she broke rule
number 1. She laid in the
not real sun all day even
though I told her it was bad
for her. She said the not real
sun was very warm and nice
and she tried to trick me into
liking it, which was her
breaking rule number 7."

Tattletale Tale #2, by
Hannah Honderinski:

"My brover Patrick is not
nice to me very much and
sometimes he is mean to me

and hides my glasses. I
don't know what rule he is
breaking but he is breaking
a rule because he is being
mean and doing taking."

Tattletale Tale #3, by
Tom Bumblewomper:

"My mind is breaking a rule
right now by not staying in
one place like Mr. Shihah
said it is supposed to but
who cares if it melts out of
my nose because then I can
go home sick to play X-
Box."

Ain't that heartwarming!
These kids learn so fast!
Well, thank you, everyone,

for reading. Please do send
me an email if you have any
comments or advice, be-
cause the kids would love to
hear what you have to say!
We hope you enjoyed it, and
we hope you know that we
all enjoyed sharing with
you. Stay tuned for more in-
spiring and heartwarming
examples of our kids learn-
ing new things! Happy
groundhog summer!

Mrs. Porter can be reached at
mrs.porter@surrealtimes.net

[As seen in *Surreal Times*
Boston]



A MISSIVE TO THE EDITORS OF THE SURREAL TIMES NEWSPAPER

BY ALAN PARTRIDGE,
Foreign Dreams Correspondent

Dear Sirs, Madams, & What Have You,

I am afraid that I have not been the most forthcoming in my previous writings. You see, I am not simply interested in contributing my writings to your paper as a personal project. My line of work has had me observing you for quite some time now. In order to understand why, we must delve somewhat deeper into the concept of Novelty.

Novelty is the word we use to refer to the factor which reverses *e n t r o p y*, that hum-drum opiate of the uni-

verse that claims us all in the end.

The goal of my current employer is to ensure that, though we may all entropy & fade, we shall not do so before we reach over and close the lid on our pine box. In short, we produce, organize, & facilitate novel occurrences. We are in the business of producing wonder. A great many of the strange & wonderful things that happen on this earth are not so extraordinary if you look behind the curtain, so it is this that my employer seeks to prevent.

You see, belief must persevere regardless of fact. Entropy & time grind mountains to dirt, but it is belief

that builds them up again. Imagine if you will, everyone awoke one morning knowing that Bigfoot existed. All that newly freed-up belief energy has to go somewhere! People might just start believing the Earth was flat! Where would that bring us? Undoing two millennia of hard scientific work, that's where. I tell you, that is not where I like to find myself on a dreary Monday morning. I do not believe that to be unpleasant. I know.

So, my agency keeps belief alive. An agent allows photos to get out, but checks first to make sure they are appropriately blurry, doubt is able to be fostered, spread, and with it comes

belief. Because of the agency, life remains colorful, confusing, and full of dreams. As long as there have been humans peeking behind the curtain, we have been there to hang another one just behind it. In that way, the Earth keeps spinning, the Sun keeps rising, and Novelty is preserved.

We have many tools for this job, many I shall not name in this missive for reasons stated previously, but one I am sure has become no stranger to you as of late. The dreaded Noise Moth. Through a trick mutation, they are drawn to noise, not light. They flutter upon their prey with needle-like teeth and rend the sound from the air. They are also somewhat

psychoactive, in certain circumstances. Recently a cache of these invaluable witness befuddling tools got free near my old hometown and I was pressed into returning to observe their recapture. Of course, upon my return, I discovered they had all been "taken care of."

My deepest condolences to Chimp Joe, may your digestive tract recover quickly. I shall not trouble it again.

Yours, knee-deep in muck
Alan Partridge

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DEMAND: SHOW ME THE FACE OF WISDOM

BY HANK T. JOSEPH,
Person of The World

Author Bio: Hank T. Joseph is an intelligent man plagued by numerous physical ailments. He is fascinated with Charles Darwin and believes that, if he and Darwin (or one of his heirs) had joined forces, they could have made great discoveries together.

At my age, I require 50 pounds per square inch of edgy ideas supplied to me

continuously. The pressure of these ideas keeps my skull from collapsing upon itself. Without it, my skull shrinks. My facial features grow disproportionate and cause me tremendous pain. Similarly, when I bump my head on a nail or a corner, and a puncture hole opens, my dearest cerebral limb dwindles.

In modern times, or "my older years", it has been difficult to maintain proper facial-feature to head-diameter ratio. This is for a list of

reasons too long to enumerate here.

1. The list starts with "the world". The world has so few thoughts nowadays, the air is like a near-zero density thought vacuum.

2. The list ends with "my perception". My ears and eyes, and even my fingertips, are worn down. They can't receive ideas like they used to. Worse so, my brain has become porous and tends to leak. WORSE SO, in my lifetime I have accu-

mulated several idea-sucking parasites who follow me around everywhere, some of whom I created myself, some from other sources.

So, what is left for me to do? I look terrible. My head looks more like a raisin than a head. Nearly all of the time, I am unable to attract mates or participate in Hereditary Hand-me-down (which is my favorite game).

In conclusion, I beg of you, whoever you are, SHOW

ME THE FACE OF WISDOM and appoint me as its primary succulent. Charles's Darwin inspired me, but his heirs continue to fail me. I am open to help from new angles. Please, however you can, inflate my head like a balloon before it shrinks into a singular point unattractive to all beings above the zeroth dimension.

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THE FATE OF HOTDOG ATTACK VICTIMS

BY CARL MON,
Head Of PIA

I regret to report that many victims of recent hotdogging pranks have died painful blistering deaths. My own father has died.

Autopsies found victims infected by a horrible contagion similar to anthrax. The disgraced Ant Coordinator is to blame for his pioneering of hotdog-based political attacks. The police department is to blame for their

seemingly intentional negligence. The government centers for disease control are to blame for allowing deadly contagion samples to escape their facility.

There is hell to pay. In the wake of my father's passing,

I will be stepping into the role of the full-time Head of The Peripheral Intelligence Agency. I plan to transform the PIA into a multi-headed, fire breathing dragon. The only way to fight extreme centrality, which is inherent-

ly violent, is with fire.

Peripherally go the winds of progress.

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ANT COORDINATOR IS CRIMINAL, POLICE DO NOTHING

BY CARL MON,
Interim Head of PIA

The now-dethroned Ant Coordinator is conducting illegal attacks against his political opponents, and that his attacks include the hotdog killing of my father and predecessor, Clarence Mon.

Why would the Ant Coordinator do this? Why would

such a friendly person, whose only job was to make fancy sculptures out of ants, kill my father?

In short, the answer is that my father helped the ants develop autonomy.

My father believed in the value of the peripheral. He opposed centralizing forces that suffocate the fringes of society. On this principle, he

helped the ants develop healthcare systems, schools, and decentralized food distribution networks. My father helped the ants determine their own future. Indirectly, he led to the Ant Coordinator's loss of power.

And so, the Ant Coordinator stuffed hotdogs in the pockets of people like my father, in hopes that the very crea-

tures my father helped empower might inadvertently devour their empowerer.

We sent the details of our investigation to UMass and Amherst PD, but both departments have shunned us. They tell us that we are off the mark and that, if we bother the ex Ant Coordinator, we may be subject to legal consequences.

The continued negligence of the central police is posing a serious threat to the periphery.

But, as always, Peripherally go the winds of progress

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PHOTO OF REVOLUTIONARY UNICORN



Punk pony turns diseased owner into skateboard after becoming sick of reading boring books.

NEWSPAPER BOX FIRES

BY SHERRY WOLVERTON,
Dog Walker

I recently started walking my doggies in Amherst, as opposed to on my usual Sunderland route. My reasoning for this is that Sunderland has become rather stinky and bland since my friends, the inventors of BALL, moved elsewhere.

As it turns out, Amherst is the worst. While walking through downtown this past week, I smelled a putrid smell. I assumed my dear fluffy had pooped, as she often does. But no, her excitable colon was not to

blame this time.

The stink emanated from one of the newspaper distribution boxes on the sidewalk - specifically, one of the strange boxes with fish decorations on it. Smoke bellowed from inside of it. I thought, what is this town? Can its residents not handle even the basics of roadway maintenance? Apparently not.

I tied off my doggies to a pole, put on my second layer of gloves (safety first!), and proceeded to investigate. When I peeled open the box's lid, a flaming

newspaper nearly burned my head off. I had no choice but to call in the professionals.

First-responders, who took far too long to arrive, seemed disinterested in the matter. One police officer, Tom, dismissed my call for help, saying "Don't worry, lady, those newspapers are best used for kindling anyway."

I truly don't understand Amherst. If there's anything I learned on my trip to the town, it's that Sunderland is where I belong.



ISLAND HAS CONFUSING EXPERIENCE

BY UNNAMED ISLAND,
Columnist

It was 3 am. I was awake for god knows what reason, and I was thirsty, really really thirsty. I didn't have a bottle in my room, so I got out of bed and placed my feet firmly on the ground, and just started pacing back and

forth. It could have been hours, it could have been minutes. But, when I came to, I was in the ocean. Well, I was the ocean. I could feel the fish and plankton and life swimming about. I wanted to consume an island. But that would be cannibalism, as I am an island. Look at my erect trees, my dangling coconuts. I have a

native species of crabs. But I'm seriously out here alone in the middle of my room. Hahaha.... Life's a bitch. Wait, or was it a beach?

Now I'm a mighty beech tree in the Appalachian mountain range. My roots connect me to my fellow.... Wait, I thought the saying was "life's a bitch?". Sud-

denly I'm locked in a cramped cage with a bone-shaped brisket as giants stomp around outside. I tried to scream, but I can only woof. Think, think, "life's a... dog?" But if life is a dog, then what is death? A cat, of course, for they are a known enemy of the dog. On the Chinese zodiac, the dog is one of the twelve ani-

mals of life. Do the others not count then? Oh, wait! Is there only one year out of every 12 years with life? So the other 11 are just dreams?

This island can be reached somewhere in the Atlantic Ocean.

PHOTO OF BUTTERFLY



To arrange a viewing of this butterfly, contact viewings@surrealtimes.net.

ON CORNFLOWER BLUE THOUGHTS

BY THE COLLECTIVE,
Eternal Plasma Entity

"There are still careers in combat, my son," the suit said to me. His head was leaking like an ice cream cone down the lapels of his cornflower blue shirt. He extended his hand out towards me, but it was also melting, so when I took his hand it split mine into halves. "I'm so sorry, Master Cheese," I said in utter embarrassment. "It's all

right, my son," he said. "Puberty hits everyone at different stages." I was 26 years old that day when I left for my career. I never forgot the ice cream cone-headed man. He was a spitting image of a father figure I never had. Dejected, I climbed to the top of a tall building and yelled at the top of my lungs. My yelling attracted attention from the suit. I could see the look of disappointment on his face. "Son, I understand cutting some-

one's hand in half, but yelling off a rooftop is too far." He gave me a milky warm embrace, and I am not ashamed to admit, I cried over the thought of this exchange years later. When I am alone counting my collection of cornflower blue shirts, is when it hits the hardest.

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IN PURSUIT OF A SMOOTH MARRIAGE

BY BOOBNBOB,
Eternal Plasma Entity

Spring was not good for me. Then, I sweated 18,000,322 droplets of sweat throughout the summer. My Fall perspiration rate was not much less.

After a long, arduous springawinterautumn, finally, winter was arriving.

The chill in the air mixed with the onset of daylight savings time, made it the perfect environment for me to slip into the succulent bun. I slithered my unshaven legs one by one by one by one into its crispy layer.

My inclination for profuse, disgusting amounts of sweat, quickly moistened the bun-- enough to stretch

it wide, to fit my spouse's flat meat patty. My spouse slivered in as well, but, so opposite from me-- so dry. So, so, dry. My spouse took my liquids from me, like a therapist.

At first, I enjoyed being cooped up with my significant other who depended on me for nutrients and love. But eventually, I grew tired of providing all of the juice

and the sauce. I exploded one day. I said to him, "Get out of my bun! why don't you get some wetness of your own? Don't come back until you do. Go to McDonald's, or to TGI Fridays. I don't care. Find some good tasty grease for me. Then come back here and lube me up for once.

He left, and although he came back, he never did

find the grease I was looking for-- a balanced amount of silk vs slime.

The winter was long, and my bun wet. But the cream never came and neither did I.

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THAT TIME THE SNAKE'S NEST ROCK CLUB HOSTED AN INTERNATIONAL ARMS DEAL

BY SHOCK JOHNSON,
Boston-based Reporter

As seen in *Surreal Times*
Boston Reporter



BOSTON, Massachusetts -- Let me set the stage. Kid Cuppino, anti-surreality psychedelic pop artist extraordinaire, is about to debut material from her upcoming album "We've Come To Take You Home." It's November 15th, 2018. I'm behind the stage at the Snake's Nest, listening to Stratosphere by Duster over some shitty earbuds. Great album. Very calm. Flip Gilligan is there along with a bunch of other teenyboppers (I hope he doesn't read this). I would tell you he wasn't sober, but you never know with that guy. Some people are just in a permanent state of wired.

So Kid Cuppino is back-stage too, she's a smooth operator, she's talking to all the twenty-somethings, and she's a twenty-something

too, so it's all making sense so far.

Then I see a face I've only seen in the news, a goateed face, a harsh face. The Baron of Bullets. Now if you don't know this guy, you've been sleeping under a rock. After a long career as an arms dealer, he claims to have discovered the Fountain of Youth. And that's just the tip of the iceberg. But all you've got to know here is that he's bad business.

I'm talking to this sweet young thing, half my age. She's making moves on me, a forty-year-old man, and I can't tell why. She's not drunk, she's not high, and I look like an old tire. Hell, I'd have to be high to date me.

She says, "Come on down to the basement." I say hell no. I've been down there. It smells, and it probably has gonorrhea. But she insists. By now Kid Cuppino is getting ready to go on stage. The opening act is winding down.

So I'm like, fuck it. We go down the stairs to the basement.

As soon as we get to the basement, this girl goes into business mode. She says, Shock Johnson, you're handsome, you're intelligent, I need you to witness something. I'm with the Public Defense Agency. They wiped all my cameras, she says, so you're going to be my witness, and we'll call you if we need you. I say, no way, I'm not getting caught up on this. Fuckin' cops.

By now we're standing next to a door. It's a door I've gone through many times, usually to do things I don't like to write about. The room on the other side of the door is the kind of room everyone wants to get into but no one wants to stay in. It's a room that has two stained couches and history no one wants to tell you.

I tell her the only thing I want to witness is Kid Cuppino playing upstairs, which is a lie because just like Charles Manson I'm no teenybopper, but it seemed fitting at the time. She puts her finger to my lips, then she follows up with a long kiss. She pulls her shirt off. I'm surprised at the sudden escalation. I was not aware of

the one woman good cop sexy cop tactic. Unfortunately, it made sense to me a second later.

She locks her arms behind me, then forces me through the door. I land on my back and my head bounces on the concrete. I look behind me and see a bunch of hombres I would preferred to have not. Shaved heads, stubble, gorilla biceps in tight suits. They look at me. I look at the half-naked cop on top of me. She looks at them. Her face melts. She feigns embarrassment and forces her cheeks to go lobster red.

"I'm so sowwy," she says to the gorillas. Behind them are open cases full of missile launchers, grenades, rifles, and hardware I thought only existed in shitty sci-fi flicks. The gorillas hands go to the magnums on their hips. They glower, they grimace, they draw and aim at us. I was staring down the .44 abyss.

One of them pulls the hammer back. He looks me right in the eye. The corners of his lip creep up. After an eternity a laugh escapes his jowls. The rest join in. The magnums go back in their holsters. The girl sits up and

darts out of the room.

"Sorry," says one of the gorillas, "She was out your league too."

I walk out. A gorilla slams the door behind me. The girl is waiting outside. Somehow, she has a stack of hundreds. She gives them to me and tells me that the Public Defense Agency will call me if they need me.

I go up and listen to Kid Cuppino's set. Not my thing, but I needed to decompress. When I wake up the next morning, I throw up. Moderate concussion. All things considered, I think I got off light.

Has the Snake's Nest hosted another arms deal since? I don't really care to find out. That cop's money was good - bought me a fancy microphone - but you only walk into a room full of people like that so many times before you never walk out. No thanks. I like my body free of bullets.

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TELEVISION HOST AMBIVALENT ABOUT HIS JOB

By ANONYMOUS,

Television Host

What does it mean to write?
Does it mean to speak?
Does it mean to express?

"Tonight, we shall answer those questions... On live TV, with our special guest star, ButtHair ChokeFart!"

She shits on a dimly-lit stage encrusted by a sea of spectators wearing plastic

bags over their heads with faces awe drawn on them with sharpie, facades of awe plastered above their true expressions.

"Oh, the stunned faces before fame. Look at these dummies, these mannequins, these 'free-thinkers'. Do they ever sick-en me? I fucking hate this show; all that it does is control and manipulate sheep's thoughts. I loathe you lonely

viewers at home. But first, let's cut to commercial."

"Okay, commercial break." the producer roars. "I perceive it as a black formless void, but anything is better than that hellhole of a TV show. I hear the voice list off side effects while sappy music plays, but I think I'm back on again soon."

"Just like that, and we're back. The teleprompter is

there and I can literally hear the words coming out of it. I don't think it's normal. How can I live with myself deceiving all these people?"

"But I don't live, at least I haven't for as long as I can remember. I sell a product. That is who I am. And you all consume it. I get paid when everyone buys it."

Praise be to the system of exchange currency for

goods and services. Imagine, if it didn't exist, why would we work? To survive? Please, I'll always believe most of us long to die. I dream of the day I'm finally faced with death. This TV show will end, and I will show the world the coward I really am."

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FINS AND LEGS PLAN AN OFFSPRING

By THE COLLECTIVE,

Eternal Plasma Entity

Letters between two love-birds who were not birds, sent to us for research purposes:

Dear Nemo, I'm having a hard time finding the headquarters. One sea is red; one sea is blue. One home has an address of 1; the other, the address of 2.

That's it!! The Red Sea! Where is the Red Sea? I failed Geo.

Dear Spider, I understand. I also failed geo. In fact, I too do not know where the HQ is because I don't know where the Red Sea is. If this letter ever reaches you, I will be surprised, because all I did was fold my letter

into a boat and place it in a body of water (possibly, hopefully, the Red Sea).

Dear Nemo, Let us put our separate deficiencies into a common pot, cook them up, and see if the baby we make might have stronger geo-

graphic inclinations than either of our helpless selves. I'm confident this will be the case because two negatives make a positive.

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PSA DISPLAYED ON CAR



Please be aware of both information and false information.

ACTOR REVOLUTIONIZES RAP

By THE COLLECTIVE,

Eternal Plasma Entity

Tom Holland got a buzz cut the other day and now he's the next Eminem. His next song will be rap, but it'll be more British. Unfortunately, the other rappers don't approve of his new style and the way that Tom wanted to steal American music. But his beep boop yooops we're so poppin that everybody's pants be droppin, hip hop and rap so litty everybody didn't know how to react. His rap so fantastic, the

whole crowd hit the dance floor. Yankee Doodle was impressed, crowned Tom "Eminem gen-x".

But through the mists of the Harlem night, Method Man smells a phony. The chasms of every lonely listener's ears he sends Tom this warning:

Flimsy and greasy, dower and down, you wear your stolen name, "The Eminem fained", like a burger king crown. Your songs all end in paper cuts because you're just a little vinyl slut.

Method Man's raps were crisp and clear, for he was the only rapper who dared to challenge Tom. Method Man tried to rule the world with words, but Tom won the battle that was victorious. He chanted to the crowds, "Brits are greatest!" In subsequent years, he gave rise to a new era of rap music in which the British rule supreme. After so many years, King George finally got what he had always dreamed.



THE CAROUSEL OF UNENDING HAPPINESS VII

"I think Ophelia is going to be fine," said the one who taught her to fly.

BY OPHELIA JONES



[Artist's depiction of the carousel by Imogene Larkley]

I couldn't believe I'd finally fell for her and just after I threw out all my moldy fairy tales and had given up. That night, she walked into the gardens after speaking to her father's ghost. She took me in her arms and the world was ours. We kissed and talked; spilling our hearts out together, we could blind the moon.

I told my love about how I like to grow flowers from the ash, and how I can see myself in them. She told me she had found her purpose, but she wouldn't say what it was. I don't mind. I only wish she'd build the castle walls a little bit shorter, so I could see her face when I worked in the gardens. There are days I find her

drowning in ink and notebook pages. She smiled and said she was writing a play. She made me feel like the only star in the sky, but I only felt alone. I needed space so I walked through my gardens down to the pond, lily pads hang flowers, draping downward through murky water, not knowing that they're blocking out the stars for the minnows below.

Could she see me crying, or does she choose to look away? It doesn't matter. Invisible tears still slink down into the pond. I only know I love her, and I can't believe in a world where I could give up on love.

Throwing pebbles passes empty time; the breaks in the water reminded me of the dagger she drug through the painting above her uncle's bed. She didn't know that, years before we met, I painted it for her mother, when the room was still hers, back when we were both far too young to guess what love meant. Now, backstage, she's deciding whether to be herself or to run away, to end it all. But no matter what she chooses, she'll leave me behind...

As my tears fell to the pond, a croak broke the water. A peaceful frog, so aged, like a poem said to me, "Love's hungry for those with starry eyes. Love's hungry, like water for raindrops. Love's

hungry, so it lies. Love's hungry. If you love and you are loved, you'll eat each other and float forever; but if you loved and unloved, love will consume you. Love's hungry, drenched in blood, tears, and pastel placenta. Blood drowns the heart, aborts all other feelings. In sleepily stroked impressionistic swirls from a bony hand, sadness, fear, hope, joy, all overshadowed, love's hungry, my dear, loves hungry."

"No" how could that be true "I know my princess. My love, she loves me too, she must." Blank words still fell down to the peace frog below, I could not tell if she heard them though.

I ran through the gardens, up through the high walls, past her uncle's room where we played as kids, down to the stage. I burst through the scenery, through the lines being spoken, her play possessed her. She spoke to me like I was a character, like I was something she'd written. Foam-laced lines bleed from her mouth. Her mask, or maybe her mission, one or the other seeped into her face. I couldn't recognize her, but I still recognized my love. Sad supple love, lost forever in spindling webs. I feel like old musty wood. Was I just a pawn in her play the whole time? How could she throw me aside, just to finish her lines? Her love's lies, tossed

feeling aside, it doesn't matter. I know what I feel. My loves left me lonely. I can't stand to be alone, but I can't stand to see her face.

Running from the stage, I passed her uncle's bedroom where the ghosts of our old toys still haunt, through the wall she built so high so she couldn't see me, rounding back to the garden... my only home. Looking down at the Peace frog, she slunk back down into the water. Her webbed feet grew up like the flowers I'd grown and sunk down.

"Love's hungry," she said.

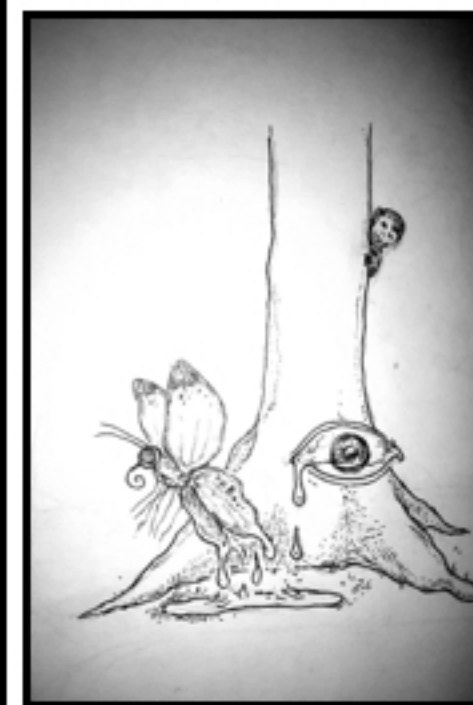
I was hungry, too. I lost a child-like life but I kept myself. So I follow her from the garden bridge into the water, feeding my love, of which bones are all that remain. Love is hungry tonight.

Should I hope the world fall sadder without me? Or calm that I went my own way? I will always feel both. I can't breathe in the water, but I float. Love's hungry. I only see dark feelings fly, in hungry love. In a dark heavenly blue, I float. I am a raindrop, now striding in carousels of unending happiness.

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WORDS BY CHARLEIGH CLARK

And evermore under the sky, the tree and the monkey, and for a time, at least I hope, the blanket, will all look to the sky and gaze up at the millions of butterflies in tears of blue and all the shades of hope that you can never imagine, witnessing all the wonderful things you see in the flutters of their wings, living as happily as living forever after so much loss can be."



Artist's depiction by Rufus Williams

THE SURREAL TIMES



In these times, a newspaper is required
to document the history
currently unfolding.

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