

◇ Defenestration ◇

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Table of Contents

Iain Maloney, "A Swiss Holiday"	2
Susan Landon, "Cereal Ode".	3
David Gwilym Anthony, "To Die For"	4
Iain Maloney, "A History of Our Lord Rene Descartes"	5
Nicola Barry, "Coll, World's Most Adorable Pup"	7
Joseph Kim, "Crasher"	9
Charlotte Jones, "Family Tree"	11
Devon Lougheed, "Five Reasons Why My Housemates Hate Me"	12
Andrew Tibbetts, "My Gay Day With Attorney General Ashcroft"	13
Lynsey Calderwood, "The Listener"	16
Steve Langille, <i>A Strange Breed</i> Comic	20
Justin Barrett, "Carpool Tunnel Syndrome".	21
Kirk Kuenzi, "Holiday Cheer".	22
Contributor Biographies	23

A Swiss Holiday
by
Iain Maloney

He stood in stance as Jesus Christ
Who up a top the Olive mount
In peaceful garb did break the wave
Of future times to those below.
He drank the wine above the lake
From broken glass poured blood to mouth.
Communed with water, now as one,
Baptised in ice of Lac Lemman.
Immersed 'neath blue of mountain flow
Heroically he screamed his pain.
The miracle became erased:
The healthy man now lame becomes.
He calling forth the name of God
Did froth and foam like rabid dog.
The wine turned water soaked him through
And lo he needed cloth of new.
He staggered round from street to street
Like Leper in the Roman times
And mumbled incoherently
Like those in Glasgow, Friday night.

Cereal Ode
by
Susan Landon

Post Toasties

Tell me my memory is faulty,
that no crafty marketer invented
a rhyming name to fool
innocent children into
sampling dried cat food.

Special K

What's in a name?
Probably more than in the cereal.

Trix

Were these little red
balls designed to fool
a well-behaved child
into playing with her food?

Raisin Bran

We battled for the raisins,
the only cheer in the box.

To Die For
by
David Gwilym Anthony

Aunt Bessie has a talent: when she bakes,
the flavour drives you wild. My cousins say
their father Tim, a regular gourmet,
married her for love - of chocolate cakes.

Poor Uncle Tim was feeling far from well –
in fact, was on his deathbed - when the scent
of baking half-revived him. Off he went
to find the source of that seductive smell.

Each step was painful as he tottered down
to taste the treat. At last his feeble hand
grasped hungrily. Bess slapped it sharply, and
dismissed him with an irritated frown:

“Clear off to bed, and put the buns back too.
I made them for the funeral, not for you.”

A History of Our Lord Rene Descartes
dated 1999 AD [11]
by
Iain Maloney

The purpose of this essay is not an in depth discussion into the myths and legends surrounding Rene Descartes but rather an introduction for the uninitiated student of Cartesianity. All that will be discussed here are known facts, proven time and again by philosophers, with no embellishments or bias for any point of view.

Descartes was born after immaculate conception at the time of year we now refer to as Cartesmas Time around 2000 years ago in 0 BC²[2]. His mother, the Virgin Candy as the Roman Cartholics refer to her, was on her way to Tours for the annual Solipsist's Convention when the angel Gary came to her in a dream and informed her that she was heavily pregnant with the Son of God. Candy was delighted with this news as it meant that she could satisfy her biological ticking without dealing in all that 'messy business' and that her son would never fear unemployment. Hoping that she could still reach the convention she decided to continue driving for Tours but her labour pains began as she was passing through the village of La Haye. Pulling into the car park of the local Hilton she soon discovered that not only were there no parking spaces but there were no rooms available either. Left with no other alternative, the Lady Candy reluctantly gave birth to the Baby Rene in the back of a Ford Cortina. (I will not enter just now into a discussion upon her refusal to enter a hospital as I intend that topic for another paper but let it suffice to say that her revulsion with the health service of the time was more stubborn than that of any of the so called health fanatics today).

After a difficult childhood being raised by a single parent in those repressed times and suffering the stigma of illegitimacy, young Rene eventually realised the calling of his birth and entered into the Holy Order of Philosophers at La Fleche where he remained until it was felt that his education was complete. At the Order he became involved with a group of revolutionaries who called themselves the "Rationalists". These were twelve (Rene made up the thirteenth) students including a young David Hume who was later to turn Rene over to the "Empiricists", the sworn enemies of the Rationalists. Their philosophy was that the world is an optical illusion which could only be made sense of by the use of reason. Feeling the pull of spirituality that all in this Holy Order recognise as their own, Rene applied this philosophy and meditated upon the world. Thus, like an alchemist, he concocted his most famous theories: the abolition of famine by the division of two or three loaves and fishes amongst the third world countries; his treatise on the possibilities of walking on water and, perhaps most importantly, his realisation of the existence of the great malignant demon Santa. This demon, he theorised, came once a year among the mortals, entered their abodes through the chimneys and gave the occupants found therein false knowledge of the world.

He now entered the most important stage of his life. Upon realising that all knowledge was

1[1] After Descartes.

2[2] Before Cartesianity.

suspect to doubts he set off for the deserts of France and Belgium (at that time situated near the equator) where he would not be disturbed by others nor found by Santa. His aim was that, by eschewing reason, he should completely forget everything he knew and so begin his system of knowledge over again. Unfortunately, as any psychology student tell you, if a man spends prolonged time without the company of others, he will undergo a period of self-discovery. Rene realised that he had a split personality and that there were two distinct people living within his body. Finding that he could never be truly alone he began dialogues with the other and, instead of forgetting everything, he began to unearth hitherto unknown facts which, he argued, could not be doubted since his dwelling had no chimney for Santa to enter through. Thus came such foundations of our intellectual lives as the theory that all our thoughts relate in some way to our mothers and that man could not survive without the invention and integration of a system of politics. However the field to most benefit from Descartes' meditations was the field of mathematics. Just before his tragic death whilst protesting against the liberties being taken by carpenters and joiners, he stood up at a maths convention during a heated debate into which symbol should be used to signify "does not equal" and screamed "Cognito Error Sum". Now the language in which this is stated is unknown and is thought by many to be of Rene's own invention but we are assured that it can be interpreted as "I think like a machine therefore I can make no mistakes in mathematics". This idea instantly became popular with maths students who frequently quoted it in examinations until the departments were forced to allow it onto the syllabus. From this point on human understanding of mathematics progressed in leaps and bounds.

After this Descartes disappeared from public attention for a few years but eventually resurfaced, styling himself as an ageing hippy, and began protesting against many of the worlds inadequacies. This led to his death when, after chaining himself to a wooden cross in a bid to show the world that every man could be a carpenter and didn't have to pay their ridiculously high call out fees, he couldn't unlock the chains. He refused the help of a locksmith claiming that they were involved in a conspiracy with the carpenters. He died after the cross became rotten due to forty days and nights of rain; he had neglected to apply varnish and it snapped leaving him face down in three inches of water. Since his feet were chained and he could not walk upon the liquid he had no choice but to breathe deeply the *aqua vitae* and promptly drowned.

Coll, World's Most Adorable Pup
by
Nicola Barry

1) As a baby what did you want to be when you grew up?

Father of 7 pups. However, that is not going to happen now.
More of that later.

2) What changed your mind?

The vet in cahoots with my mistress.

3) What do you like about your day-to-day life?

The fact that I am my own boss and make all the decisions in the house.

4) Do you have time for hobbies?

Yes: eating, snacking, masturbating, chasing sticks.

5) Do you have a family?

My parents sold me off (into near slavery) My pedigree name is Aberdeen Prince Minata. I don't have any children, and, as I have already said, that is now unlikely, thanks to a certain party deciding on an operation I could, frankly, have done without.

6) What do you like on TV or radio?

The ads for dog food.

7) What do you like for breakfast to get the day off to a flying start?

A really good quality biscuit mix soaked in rich gravy. Sadly, she never seems to get it quite right.

8) What's your idea of a perfect evening?

Another bowl of biscuit mix, followed by chicken scraps, followed by a trot round the garden, alone.

9) What is your favourite film ever?

101 Dalmatians

10) Which international figures do you admire?

President Bush's Scottie.

11) What makes you laugh?

The contents of the laundry basket in this house. I laugh most when my mistress goes out for the evening.

13) What makes you cry?

When she comes back.

14) What makes you angry?

Being woken up when I'm dozing in front of the telly just to be sent to my bed.

15) What do you like about yourself?

Just about everything.

16) What would you like to change about yourself?

I would like my testicles back.

17) What has been your most treasured possession?

My testicles

18) What changes would you like to see in Scotland?

I'm really looking forward to the legislation forcing owners to clear up our pooh. Ha ha ha. Also, I'd like to see Scotland with more lamp posts.

19) What one thing would you like to change in the world?

I would like to see the day when cruelty to animals no longer exists.

20) How would you like to be remembered?

As a happy little dog who gave a lot of pleasure to people –
EVEN if he didn't have that much himself.

Crasher
by
Joseph Kim

For J.G. Ballard, who's simply smashing

I hit her with a light double-tap: boom-boom. Nothing major. Still, a whole rear-end will need to be replaced. Nothing is cost-effective anymore. I remain where I am, seat-belt fastened. And there she is! Alighting from her car—radiant and enraged, even more beautiful than when I saw her at the last intersection. She taps on my window. I roll it down.

"Are you blind?" she asks, fuming.

"Sorry," I say. "I guess we better exchange phone-numbers."

She points to the parking lot of a strip mall at the next block.

"Follow me in there," she says.

"Okay," I say, heart racing.

The light turns green. I follow her. I would follow her anywhere.

We park and the pens and paperwork start to flow. She gives me her driver's license and provider card. Her name is Susan. She is 5'6", 120 lbs., lives in an apartment, and she wears corrective lenses—contact lenses apparently.

"Do you have stigmatism? That's what I have," I say, adjusting my glasses.

She glares me, "Well, it looks like you need a new prescription. This is so totally your fault."

"Yes, I know."

Then she gives me her phone number. And I give her mine.

"I'll call you," I say as she's walking back to her car, shoulders knotted.

She turns, her eyes squinty. I smile and wave. She gets into her car and pulls out, tires screeching. I think about Accidents of Fate. I think about how nothing's an "accident" when you plan it, how as a driver I control the Fate of Love. Susan...Susan...Susan... I'll call you tonight, send flowers tomorrow, and one day I will show up on your doorstep begging you to go out with me...just once...just once...just once...

Last week it was that Brunette in the Mazda convertible—I smashed her brake-light just as she was twirling a strand of hair out her window. Before that—the blonde in the Porsche whose door I dented. And before that—the mini-skirted beauty in the 4X4 whose tire I punctured and so on and so on...

In the last six weeks, my premiums have quadrupled. I've had to switch providers eight times. My car is a heaping wreck, mottled with primer spots and putty, dents and scratches, the bumpers have fallen off, the doors don't open and the hood looks like a Ruffle's potato chip. And if you were to look at me from behind you'd see an exoskeleton of duct-tape keeping the trunk closed and the tail-lights from disintegrating. But then again, Passion—real Passion always leaves its mark.

I smile when I think of all the beautiful women I'm finally getting to meet. My lines have been crafted over a landscape of disrepair: "Oops, sorry" "Golly, I didn't see you" "I feel terrible... it's my fault" "Chiropractor's are expensive. Let me give you a backrub" and "Here's my driver's license and telephone number. Call me. Please." My lights barely shine, but my engine is always running. I like to say to them, in my head, right before the moment of impact: As a walker, I am invisible to you. But as a driver, I am the wrecking ball into your heart. Stuff like that.

My tactics have yet to win me a bona-fide date. But the odds are in my favor. You can roll only so many snake-eyes.

I'm at 4th and Broadway when I spot another one. I have never done two in one day, but there's always a first time. She's taking a right down 5th gaining speed. I press down on the accelerator, my whole car jangling like a set of keys. Behind me, I hear the tailpipe fart. You can make it, I tell myself. Don't let her out of your sight. She's a beauty – a redhead, slender and svelte. I've never slammed a redhead. I need her. I'm driven.

I cut the corner, spot her cruising down the next block. I'm getting closer... closer when suddenly my head is flying towards my already cracked windshield. I hear the sound of broken metal breaking down. I slow to a stop, my rear wheels scrapping against a buckled frame.

I've just been hit.

I step out of the car, furious. I spot the redhead now three blocks away, disappearing from my life. I approach the car whose front-end is steaming. I can taste blood, blood from the cut on my forehead. I walk up to the driver's side of this whomever and scream, "Are you fucking blind!?" Not caring if the person behind the tinted window is a man twice my size or packing a gun. I'm so pissed.

The window rolls down—the person is twice my size. She must weigh 300 pounds, probably more. She's like some kind of giant Michelin woman stuffed inside a VW bug. And her face—it's pitted and scarred. How many accidents, I wonder, has she been in? Her eyes gaze over me—her intent is clear.

"Oh my!" she says, "We better exchange phone numbers!"

And then she puckers her lips.

All I can do is feel the horror.

Family Tree
by
Charlotte Jones

The labor pains are much worse than I expected, but Harry is steadfast, despite my screams. "It'll be over soon," he says and wipes my brow with a cool cloth. "Just breathe."

"You bastard!" A guttural roar emerges from my throat between heeee- heeee-heeee, hahh-hahh-hahh. "Why did I let you talk me into this?"

"OK, I want you to push now," the doctor says while the nurse hovers beside him. I can only see eyes above their masks and I try to read what they are thinking.

With a final screaming shove, it is over. I feel the warmth and relief between my legs. The operating room is silent. There are no cries, no spansks. The nurse swoons, drops to her knees and hits her head on the table. The doctor's eyes are wide, unblinking with a certain godlike fervor.

"Is it...is it alive...?" Harry says.

"Well. Yes. I'd say it is," says the doctor. "Congratulations Mr. and Mrs. Johnson. You are now the proud parents of a live oak." He wraps the sapling in a blanket and places it on my chest.

"This was a crazy idea!" I yell at my husband.

My husband holds my hand and beams at me. "I tell you," he says, "this stem cell research is amazing."

Five Reasons Why My Housemates Hate Me

by
Devon Lougheed

1. I am much more attractive – All right, I'll admit that they might each have specific areas in which they are better looking than me (except for the shortest one, who I have nicknamed Ug Fug). But dude, just because you have that sexy shaggy hair doesn't mean that your hideously pockmarked face and British teeth are somehow rendered invisible. And does your friend there, the one with those well-defined muscles, really think that his sculpted abs cancel out his putrid body odor? Sure, you could grate cheese on them, but it would make stinky cheese, and nobody likes stinky cheese. I am certainly no Brad Pitt, but my general lack of repulsiveness pisses them off.

2. I have social skills – I blame this on their parents. None of these guys have mastered even the most basic of social conventions. Where more normal individuals like myself would follow the pattern of "when someone else says hello, you say hello back", these misanthropes believe the proper response is "scratch yourself wherever you are sweaty and try not to make eye contact". Luckily for Ug Fug, people are usually trying to avoid looking at him too, most times by dousing their eyeballs at one of those Emergency Eye Wash stations. Their jealousy at my knowledge of "a handshake" is the one of the most deep-seated cause of their hatred of me.

3. I am a nice person – I could excuse their lack of social skills if they were just misguided people who, underneath their rough-and-stinky surface, were quite nice. Unfortunately, my housemates are far uglier on the inside than they are on the outside. One time I saw Shaggy Hair British Teeth kick a puppy, just for the hell of it, and laugh menacingly for days afterwards. Stinky Cheese Abs is the one who keeps swearing around your Grandma. Ug Fug likes to spill his beer on girls, hoping that their clothes will become all wet and clingy. I don't really blame Ug Fug for being such a dick, if I was that ugly, I'd want to take it out on other people too.

4. I have a girlfriend – Maybe it is the combination of being nice, having social skills, and being attractive that got me this girlfriend of mine, or maybe it is because when I walk the streets with my housemates, I look like some kind of SEX GOD in comparison. The second theory can't be right though, because usually when we are walking the streets, I try and pretend I don't know them. But yeah, as they lie on their beds, masturbating grudgingly, getting angrier and angrier, I wonder if they understand the true point of masturbation.

5. I am omnipotent – Nobody else seems to mind the fact that I can do anything, be anywhere, make anything appear or disappear, blow things up just by thinking about it, or render myself invisible, which allows me to slip undetected into the bathrooms of various female celebrities while they shower. But for some reason, it really exasperates my housemates. Everyone else seemed to enjoy my vivid description of Cameron Diaz's strange bathing rituals, but not them. They just sat there, scratching themselves where they were sweating and trying not to make eye contact.

**My Gay Date With Attorney General Ashcroft:
A Log Cabin Republican Fantasy**
by
Andrew Tibbetts

My cousin's butcher is his brother's golfing buddy, so it was only a matter of time before we'd meet. Everybody who knows any middle-aged gay guy is eagerly playing matchmaker in these post-Will-and-Grace days. I've been on dates with half the Bush administration. It's a big country but a small country club.

I'd been told: he will want to go Karaoke-ing. I hate Karaoke. So it's the first thing I say when he calls, "No Karaoke."

"Damn," he says, "Are you sure I can't convert you? I go where you have to be good. We don't let just anybody in."

"No Karaoke."

"Would you go to a concert?"

"Sure!"

"Well, what's the difference?"

"The accompaniment, you Mondale! The background music to Karaoke is that crap saccharine goo with the synth strings and the cheesy living room organ percussion. It sets my teeth on edge."

"I never notice the background."

"To complicated political issues," I jokingly finish his sentence. He chuckles.

"Isn't there anything else you like to do? I'm up for anything! Really, except Karaoke."

Who in their right mind takes a first date to picket abortion clinics? If he didn't look so hot I would have left him on the sidewalk. He introduced me to his friends. They smelled. Maybe because they'd been out in the sun all day and were covered in spit.

"We're not staying long," I whispered in his ear as he passed me a sign with a picture of a fetus on it.

"We'll go after the first teen welfare mom bursts into tears and runs away," he promised.

Twenty minutes later we are in his car. The secret service guys wink at me from either side. I don't get to sit beside him. But he contrives to fondle my ass by pretending to look for his seatbelt down the crack.

"Driver," he says, "the Gay Christian Rave on the double."

He looks over at me to see if I'm impressed. Tickets have been sold out for years. He can tell I'm pleasantly surprised and excited. He clicks his tongue on the roof of his mouth and

bobs his head from side to side. He sings, "I'm go-od, I'm go-od, I'm go-od." The secret service men bounce their heads to his infectious rhythm. I try to restrain myself. I have a small intestinal infection and don't want to get too sexed up and find myself in the sack with him, and having to keep running to the toilet.

We have to check our shirts and pants in the lobby. He looks bearish, all hairy-backed and flabby in his underwear. Luckily the lights are dim, except when the searchlights cross your path.

"I know," he says, "I need to work out."
"You're busy dismantling people's civil rights," I say.

He chuckles. I chuckle back. We chuckle together.

He surveys the dance floor and says, "Usually when I want to see a bunch of hunky half-naked religious zealots, I have to weasel my way around the Geneva Convention to impound them at a military base."

He's funnier than I thought he'd be and he can't keep his hands off my butt. I thought of wearing double underwear so for all intents and purposes I look clean.

He yanks a couple of Gilligan hats and glow-in-the-dark necklaces out of his drawers. We accessorize. He spins me round and presses his body into my backside. We sway on the dance floor, gyrating in synch, drenched in sweat within a minute. I shaved my back so he keeps sliding off me. But I can tell he's hard. I can measure a guy's contract-with-America with my ass pretty accurately. He's about seven and half. Don't let anybody tell you that ain't above average. Guys lie all the time about these things. Especially Democrats.

Suddenly he stops and whispers in my ear,

"I'm having a mild heart attack, do you mind if we call it a night?"

"And they say you don't have one! Is it because you like me?"

"Damn right, baby, you are heart-stoppingly hot!"

I'm glad about this turn of events because I wasn't sure how I was going to end up not sleeping with him the way things were going. Is there a hotter man in America these days?

He gets one of the secret service guys to take me home.

"Treat him right," he winks.

"Hey," I said, "I've been wanting to ask you something all night."

"Shoot."

"Is it true that on page three of "The Attorney General's Guidelines on General Crimes, Racketeering Enterprise and Terrorism Enterprise Investigations" it reads: 'A terrorism enterprise investigation may be initiated when facts or circumstances reasonably indicate that two or more persons are engaged in an enterprise for the purpose of... furthering

political or social goals wholly or in part through activities that involve force or violence and a federal crime...?"

"Yeah. So?" he says, suddenly not smiling.

"Aren't the terms 'reasonably' and 'wholly or in part' insidiously malleable?" I ask.

There's like a half a minute pause before we all crack up.

The Listener
by
Lynsey Calderwood

DEPARTURE POINT: KILWINNIN STATION

Yer staunin there, freezin yer ba's aff, waitin fur this train that's twenty minutes late. Yer fingers are nippin and yer nipples are like fitba studs, and all the auld man can dae is fuckin moan at ye as if it was yer fault.

'Ye should've wore a heavier jaicket, well,' says the grumpy auld cunt.

Ye want tae tell him that yer no a weatherman or a fuckin septic peg, but instead ye just say, 'Yon heavy jaicket makes me look like Paddintaen bear.'

'And yer mother knitted ye a guid jumper...' he goes on.

Nag fuckin nag. He's like an auld wummin. Ye hate that jumper. Big mad itchy thing. Pure new wool. Yev only wore it the once. The auld dear must've used hauf a sheep. Makes ye feel like yev got a cactus up yer dukes.

The auld man hums and haws and bumps his gums and every time he opens his mooth ye feel his hot breath scaldin the interior of yer lug. So, just tae wind him up, ye tell him that ye can still smell yon curry that he ate fur his dinner last night.

'Yer a fuckin liar!' he barks, 'Ah brush ma teeth.'

Ye hear a train rumbling up tae the platform. Before ye can even fart, he's got ye by the airmpit and huckled ye ontae a carriage.

'And don't phone,' he says. 'Get a taxi. Ah'm at the bowlin the night.'

Ye need a seat. Yer pegs are crippin ye. So ye tap yer way roon a corner. This train's no too busy, ye could fair swing a cat in here. Ye swing yer cane fur a laugh. CLUNK. What was that? Ye reach doon and run yer haun along the tap of a...

What IS this? Ye can smell the leather aff it. At first, ye think it's a suitcase but it's the wrang shape. It's right cauld and smooth and...Here, what's these wee metal bits ye can feel at the side...

'Do YE mind,' squeals a guy wi a voice like he's singing soprano. 'Don't touch my eenstrument!'

'Nae danger,' ye say. Ye ver' near shit a brick and build a fuckin opera hoose. He sounds like a right gay boy. Ye sit wi yer arse clenched tight, right up against the back of the seat fur the rest of the journey. Yer no letting him anywhere near ye wi his instrument.

Ye can hear the fitba clowns singin and clappin in the next carriage, bevvied before they even get there. It's Rangers versus Celtic and thir slagging a wee lassie who's apparently wearin a Rangers tap. Fuckin animals. Yev got all this tae look forward tae on the way back.

The ticket guy comes roon and gies them intae bother. They settle doon. He's staunin right in front of ye so ye haud up yer pass, but he doesnae even acknowledge ye. Ye know he's there but, cause ye can hear him wi his wee clicker thing, clickin the tickets.

FIRST STOP: DALRY STATION

The sound of fields. Moo fuckin moo, a big posse of coos traipse by. That's the population of Dalry. Naebody goes there. Naebody wants tae. Ye got aff the train there one time by accident cause some clown announced it was Kilwinnin. A bloody hour ye had tae wait.

The soprano gets aff wi his instrument. He's probably one of they poofs from the Harbour Arts Centre. Fuckin long haired arse bandits the lot of them. Good, ye can move up next tae the windae seat, noo.

GLENGARNOCK

The hills are alive wi the sounds of shaggin. There's nothin else tae dae here.

LOCHWINNOCH

The doors swish open. A pair of high heels click-clack on by. A wummin sits doon facin ye. She's got a wean wi her. A wee lassie. Ye can hear her gigglin and jumpin up and doon on the seat.

'Mummy,' she's sayin, 'That man's got a big stick.'

Ye can hear the wummin shooshin her and threatening her wi nae sweeties.

'Sit nice,' she says, 'What've ye been told? Bee-have. Leave the man's stick alone.'

'Aw, it's o.k.' ye tell her, 'Weans are weans. Ah was the same.'

SURPRISE STOP

Eh? What's goin on? What are we stoppin fur? Better no have broke doon. Ye sit fur a minute, digging yer nails intae the furry seat cushions. At this rate, yer never goin tae get there. Ye must have miscounted. And they didnae even announce the station. That's it, as soon as ye get back, yer goin tae write a letter of complaint.

'Scuse me, could ye tell me what station this is?'

'Howwood,' says the miscellaneous wummin wi the high heels.

Aw fuckin Howwood. Fuckin bam. When did they build a station here?

'Right, cheers.'

The wummin's nice. She tells ye that she's just taken the wean tae a nature walk in Lochwinnoch. The wee lassie's called Lolly, short fur Louise. Ye shuffle in yer pockets and take out a smooth cauld coin. Feel roon the edges. Fifty pee.

'Here, this is fur a wee sweetie, after ye eat yer dinner.'

MILLIKEN PARK

The wummin and the wean get aff the train.

JOHNSTONE

There's fuck all at Johnstone. It's just all neds that live there.

NEARLY THERE: PAISLEY GILMOUR STREET

The train stops at Paisley. Ye can aye tell when yer at Paisley cause there's a fish'n'chip shop right next tae the station. A big whiff of fish supper gets on the train and reminds ye that yer starvin. Ye think ye might have a bit of chewing gum left so ye delve intae yer shirt pockets, airms stickin out like a chicken, but ye canny find the bastard.

There's somebody just came on wi a cat, they've probably got it in one of they boxes, maybe takin it tae the vet. Ye hope they don't sit next tae ye cause it's bad enough that the auld man dumped ye right next tae the pishy toilets, but yer no havin a fuckin mingin cat next tae ye as well.

Ye hear two lassies cluckin away at yer back. One of them smells like French vanilla ice cream and when she sits next tae ye, she brushes against yer airm.

Ooh la la! That fair warmed yer cockles.

'Oh, watch ye don't step on that bloke,' says the other lassie.

'Sorry,' says the vanilla girl.

She sits doon next tae ye, nudges yer knee wi hers and then sighs before goin back tae her interesting conversation. She's got a voice like a velvet dream and ye could fair eat her up...covered in melted chocolate...Yer trying tae imagine what she'd look like, dressed in a sexy black French maid's uniform. Black knee high stockings, sheer stretch nylon, satin finish - Ye wouldnae mind gieing her one wi yer French stick!

Ye turn yer back tae her and lick yer finger on the sly, flatten doon that wee bit of hair that aye sticks up then ye manoeuvre yerself just a wee bit closer and stretch one airm tae kid on that yer yawnin, so's ye can hear better. Then ye slide yer cane doon the side the seat, just so's she doesnae see it.

That English burd has a really annoyin accent. Manchester or somethin. Ye hate the fuckin English. It's the way they talk. She keeps sayin 'Me mam this' and 'Ar Tony' that. 'Ar Tony' just moved intae one of those new independent living flats by himself. 'Ar Tony' just got a dog. 'Ar Tony' is finding it a struggle on his own but he's coping. Ye wish she'd just shut up about 'Ar Tony'. He sounds like a right sad case.

'Ar is the tai chi classes comen along then?'

'Aye, good,' says vanilla girl, 'I can dae seven new positions.'

Ye smile tae yerself. Ye want tae turn roon and tell her that there's nae need tae try and impress ye.

ARRIVAL: GLASGOW CENTRAL

Ye can tell that vanilla girl really fancies ye by the way she keeps leanin in and touchin yer leg. Ye want tae ask fur her phone number but her manky pal's there so ye decide tae just leave it fur the day. Ye put yer haun up yer sleeve and feel the silver bumps on yer watch. Five tae seven. Ye were supposed tae meet that guy on the platform twenty-five minutes ago. What's the chances he'll still be there?

Ye wait till the lassies get aff the train then run yer haun doon the side of the seat. Shit. Yer cane's no there. Ye get doon on yer hauns and knees and start pattin the clatty...

'Ex-scoose meee,' says the ticket clown, 'Is there a problem?'

He knows fine well ye canny see but makes nae attempt tae try and help ye. It's the same clown that treated ye like ye were invisible when he was clickin the tickets, earlier. Ye tell him that ye canny find yer cane. He stamps away then comes back about five minutes later.

'It's not on the train,' he says.

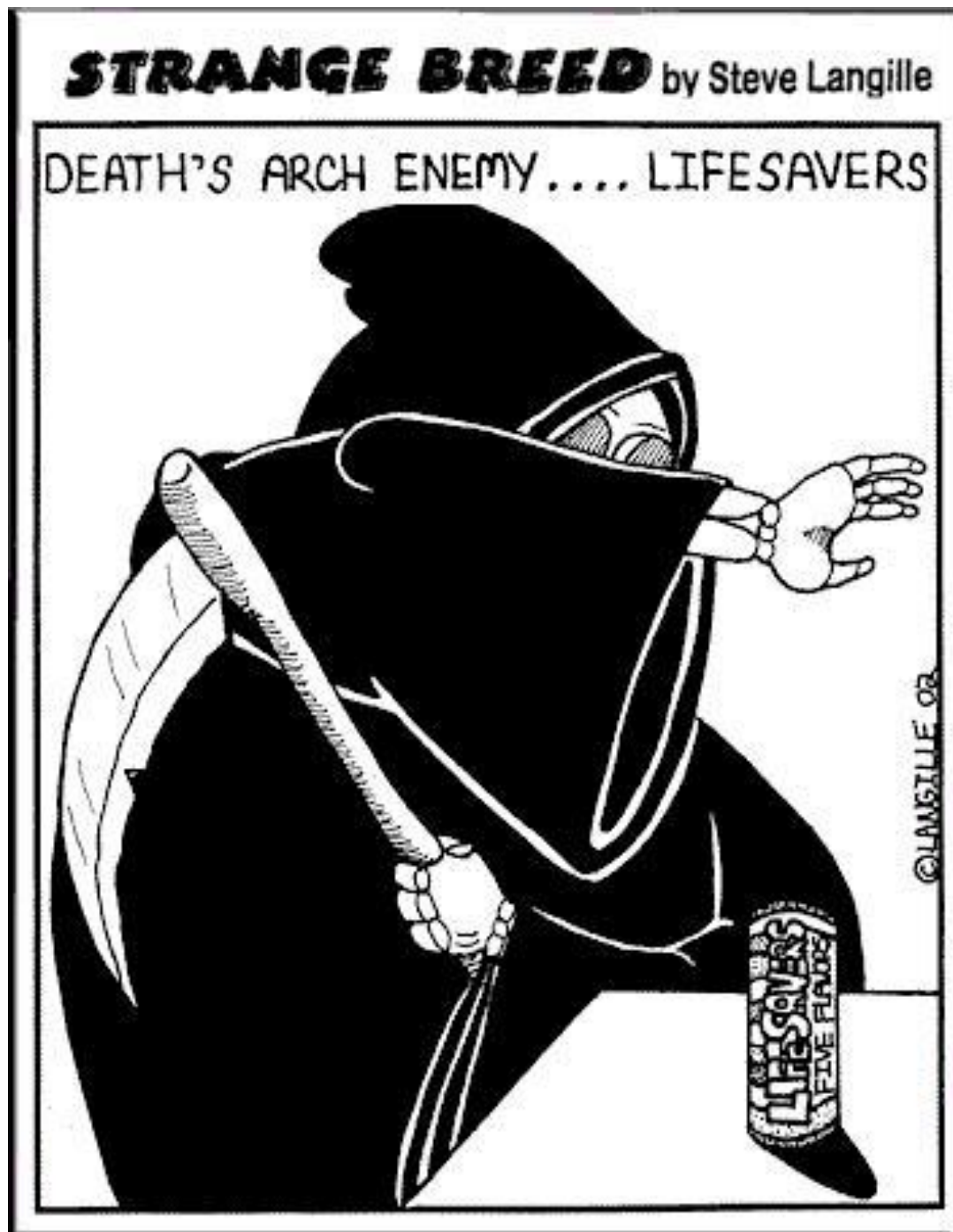
'Ah had it on the seat, it must've rolled...'

'It's nowhere on this train.'

Ye want tae ask him if he's got any idea who'd steal a fuckin cane because ye had it five minutes ago when those lassies were here. Ye feel like greetin but ye don't want tae gie the bastard the satisfaction. This has been a shite day, yer late fur yer appointment and yev nae idea how yer getting hame. The ticket clown has just farted, ye can smell it.

He clears his throat, 'Sir,' he says, 'This is the last stop.'

A *Strange Breed* Comic
by
Steve Langille



Carpool Tunnel Syndrome
by
Justin Barrett



J39

Bob's friends had no idea that their new route to work would trigger a violent outburst of his Carpool Tunnel Syndrome.

Holiday Cheer
by
Kirk Kuenzi



Contributor Biographies

Iain Maloney is a writer who spends his time trying to convince publishing companies of this fact. When not explaining to people why he hasn't won the Booker prize yet he sits in a darkened room rocking back and forth listening to Radiohead and planning his speech for when the people of the world finally ask him to take over and run things with an iron fist. His list of those to be first against the wall will be published in seventy-two pop-up volumes in time for Christmas.

Susan Landon has won three Honorable Mentions in the Wilory Farm Poetry Contest and Honorable Mention in the Sunday Suitor Poetry Review Contest. In 2001, one of her poems won the "Spare Change" Poetry Prize; this spring, she won a Cambridge Poetry Award for "Best Modern Poem". We are intimidated by her long list, and so we stopped it here because quotation marks scare us.

David Gwilym Anthony has a website. No, he does! Look!
<http://www.davidgwilymanthony.co.uk/>

Also, he's back by popular demand! Our demand, anyway. We're not very popular. Sorry.

Nicola Barry is 21 years old, has been for a long, long time. Although she has won a staggering number of press awards, the rumour that she's slept with more awards judges than you've had hot dinners is simply that - a vicious rumour.

Nicola lives in Scotland 's capital city, Edinburgh , with her partner, Alastair and their farting dog, Coll, who also ekes out a living as a writer. The nutty trio have a house in a graveyard and are known locally as "the mad folk on the hill".

Joseph Kim is over-sensitive, over-zealous and over-the-top. He's also just a human trying to survive a ridiculous world. A bay area native, he is currently a grad student and hopes one day to maybe find the cure to Evil. Or failing that, just find a nice deserted island somewhere to live. He also admits that when he sits down to write he feels like chemist in a room full of volatile ingredients -- "You never know what's gonna happen. It might be good or could just well blow up in your face." Despite numerous burns to his physiognomy, Mr. Kim continues to go to the "lab" and has so far avoided setting off a thermonuclear detonation.

Charlotte Jones has never given birth to anything except for a few peculiar ideas. Her friends who have trees tell her that the teenage years are the worst. "Those young whipper-saplings start fruiting all over the place. They drop leaves at the wrong time of year, and entertain unsavory characters like squirrels and woodpeckers. Sadly, some even begin to experiment with fire." She and her husband are relieved to not have a bunch of twiglets running around.

Devon Lougheed is a student at Queen's University. He likes beers and leaning back on chairs even though adults tell you not to. He wrote a book that you can buy if you email him: devon@showerheadmusic.com

Andrew Tibbetts lives, secretly, somewhere in Canada as part of the Karmic Protection Program. In all previous lives he has ended up married to Shirley MacLaine and is hoping to

avoid that fate in this one. As a fat, poor, forty-year old gay man with flourishing nose hair he has so far not drawn her amorous attention. So far.

Lindsey Calderwood has forgotten more about dialect transcription than anyone else will ever learn.

This issue of *Defenestration* also features artwork by **Steve Langille, Justin Barrett,** and **Kirk Kuenzi.**