

◇ Defenestration ◇

Volume I, Issue III

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A Twist on Cliché
by
Brooke Bailey

Hey Prince Charming,
I'm glad your horse ate you
and while you're riding off into the sunset
in your stallion's stomach
I hope he decides
to regurgitate you,
that a cow mistakes you for its vomit
and decides to chew its ugly cud.

Chances
by
Bryan Thao Worra

In 1,000 years you are guaranteed
At least one perfect cup of coffee,
And if you have enough monkeys, (IF)
Almost the complete works of the Bard.
So what can a young man get with 80 and
an occasional trip to the zoo?

Infinity -- Thou Must DIE!
by
Gary Lehmann

We've had enough of you.
Be gone!

Look!
You're not even logical any longer.

As long as a start can be made
one-two-three
there is no point where the end arises
where there is no next number.

So, go away.

Maybe, back in the dark days,
we needed a word for the sky's height or the ocean's depth,
but no more.

Now we know these things -- or can aspire to know them.

We have no need for words that impede our imagination
by throwing up a silent screen.

We shall have measurement in feet or meters
quasars or photons
lightyears or strings.

So be gone infinity!

Our patience is not
endless
Shoo!

Culinary Misunderstanding

by
Damien Calis

It is not every day you are told by a flatmate to bring him a lemon from the supermarket for the purpose of sticking it up a small chicken's arse. This is cause for concern. For example, if the chicken is young, is it mature enough to have fruit stuck up its backside? How much consent has been given for this particular act of anal intrusion? And most of all; if there is a case of sexually molesting the animal, am I liable to be prosecuted as an accomplice for providing the implement?

I decide the most worrying part about the current crisis is the use of my computer. When I am away my flatmate frequently uses it. As far as I am aware this is to contact women in Australia, keep an eye on conflicts in countries I can't even pronounce, let alone point out on a map and buy books, which the man is addicted to. Now I am getting increasingly worried he may in fact have been using it to join an underground ring of sado-masochistic livestock abusers.

What if he has been recording images of himself in big yellow gloves stuffing wholesome greens in hapless animals and circulating these around the world? You don't know; there may be sites that offer such activities for a small fee. Before you know it a group of Americans will have been arrested on the charge of setting up such a site. Bound to be someone into this shit, and it's bound to be in Missouri.

They will trace these images back through cyberspace, and what will they end up with? My computer! They will do all their forensic experiments and find a screaming chicken with half a leek sticking out of its rear end. And how do I explain that? Tell them it was my flatmate? Something tells me they've heard that one before.

I wonder where he keeps the chickens. They must be under his bed, their legs duct-taped together, gagged and injected with a shot of rohypnol. He must have taken this up recently. Probably the same time he decided to shave his head but keep the beard. If anything, at least he looks more like a serial killer than I do.

It wouldn't be the first pets we have in the house, though definitely the first non-lethal ones. We already have a pet tarantula around somewhere. Last I saw it was watching telly while chewing on what was once an insect and telling me to fuck off. It is still pissed off I think. Its name was supposed to be Boris, you see. Unfortunately it's a girl and we thought it might sound silly for a girl tarantula to be called Boris. So she's called Spider now.

In the supermarket I always draw stares. Some from pretty girls who have previously witnessed me in the buff as they walked passed my window at the wrong time, but most from bemused shoppers who apparently find it hilarious to see me trying to remember what particular vegetables look like. Last time I was looking for asparagus I had ask what colour they were again.

Having found the lemon, which is small, yellow and roundish, I proceed to the proper food department and come home laden with pizza, beer, peanuts and the object of my flatmate's desire. He is eagerly awaiting me, wearing a kitchen apron and a pair of yellow gloves,

smiling broadly. I toss him the vegetable and tell him there is not a chance in hell he is ever allowed to use my computer again.

Then I rush out to the pub and order a refreshing lager. Hold the lemon.

Excerpts From A Fish's Diary
by
Dante Kleinberg

"... It rained food again today. I really don't understand why this happens, there's absolutely no pattern to it, no warning. Sometimes several days go by without anything at all and then all of a sudden -- tons of food, everywhere around me, filling my vision. It's all I can do not to gorge myself..."

"... I really need to clean out the castle, it's getting a little gamy, even for me..."

"... My friend, the Diver, seemed real sad today; even quieter than usual. He just stands out there, holding a spear, like he's waiting for something important to happen. I wish he'd tell me what's wrong; maybe I could help. I would at least try..."

"... When I woke up this morning, there was a fish in my yard, a really small one. He looked pretty harmless, so I ate him. Was that wrong of me?..."

"... What in the blue blazes is that tapping sound???? It's driving me crazy!!! It's everywhere all at once!!! I think I'm losing my mind!!!..."

"... I really need to get a job..."

"... Attempted to leave my yard again. The same thing happened: that other fish wouldn't let me by. He seems to know where I'm going next before I do, and then he's always there waiting for me -- waiting to block me with his head. He reminds me of myself in a way..."

The End

Mr. Crow, Volume 1
by
By Jonathan Redhorse

1.

A grandchild and I went to the carnival.

"Let's ride the merry-go-round," it insisted, tugging me towards the circling horses.

Everywhere people held balloons. The grandchild wanted a balloon, and I'd gone from man to woman, brat to schmuck, looking for the salesperson distributing this inflated joy.

My inquiries were met with belligerent shouts:

"Get your own damn balloon!"

Insults:

"You senile cur!"

And non-responsiveness:

"..."

The horses were frozen in pose and I became disoriented riding them. I dismounted and tried to observe from the sidelines, only to be distracted by the balloons everyone held. A yellow balloon to my left, held by a child, came up to shoulder-height. The child was staring off into space, evidently distracted by the carousel. I knew this was my chance, so I discreetly plucked the balloon from the air, and attempted to hide it underneath my coat. Unfortunately the balloon was too large, and I realized I'd have to pop it, which I accomplished with a ballpoint pen.

A woman next to me screamed and fainted. The child burst into tears, and violently tugged the string. Everyone looked my way and I bolted, losing myself in the sea of balloons.

In the confusion I managed to acquire the deflated balloon along with the attached string. I stuck this in my pocket, only to realize that I'd lost my grandchild, and that it was probably a goner. Panicky, I fled into the fortune teller's booth. It was inhabited by a woman dressed as a gypsy.

"Hullo, hullo," she said, ushering me to sit down.

"I've a problem," I said.

"Yes I know," she said, "Can I have your name please?"

"Shouldn't you know that already?"

"Montgomery."

"Good work."

The fortune teller and I sat down at her table, which had a crystal ball on it.

"I've lost one of the grandchildren and I need to know how to get it back."

"Even worse," the fortune teller said, "You're going to die."

"Really?"

"Yes."

"How? When?"

"Doesn't matter how. But it will happen on Saturday."

"Cripes. It's Wednesday!"

"Is there anything else you want to know?"

"I guess not," I got up from the table, "Thanks I guess."

"No problem. Five dollars please."

My wallet was empty, save for a moth. It fluttered about and beat its wings in the dim light.

"Um," I said.

"Whatsit?" the fortune teller asked.

"I've got no money."

"Oh dear."

I realized that predicting death probably took a decent amount of work, so I made a deal with the fortune teller.

"How about this," I said, "I'll give you the gift of world renowned credibility after I die. You know... as payment."

"How's that?" she asked.

"Easy," I said, "I'll bury a treasure somewhere, and you can come to my funeral, and tell my family where it is."

The fortune teller placed a finger near her mouth, considering my offer.

"Hmm," she said, "... fair enough."

I started to write down my address, but she said it was unnecessary, and I nodded.

No one noticed me as I exited the tent, so the hullabaloo regarding the balloon must've died down. I made my way through the crowds, searching for my grandchild, but I found no one claiming me as a grandfather. I knew my son would be fumed if I returned empty handed, so I snatched a kid waiting by the restrooms and we were off.

The kid didn't make a peep or protest opting to stare out the window sullenly. This was fortunate since I needed to plan my last few days in peace. Any hostilities in the car would have probably caused me to crash into a tree and although I knew I'd live (it was only Wednesday), the child's fate seemed iffy.

First and foremost on my mind was getting revenge on Bobby Filtspotter. I began formulating several ways in which I could do this, deciding that I'd attack his business and punch him in the face. Time was of the essence.

My passenger began crying two miles from our destination. I implored that the wails stop, but to no avail. I even offered the deflated balloon, but the child shunned it away with its hands. Unable to tolerate this anymore, I pulled a U-turn to return the bastard to the carnival. Cars screeched and honked their horns. Various gestures were exchanged. The child giggled uproariously and I decided that maybe everything was alright, and so I pulled another U-turn and made more cars screech and honk their horns.

My son, James, and his wife, Marcie, were waiting at the doorway when we arrived.

It began snowing and all of the grandchildren were playing outside in the backyard. My second son, Burt, he came over with his wife, Melanie, and they brought their children and dumped them in the backyard. My third son, Edgar, also came over with his wife, Melissa, and they added some kids into the yard along with a big dog, who frolicked around and knocked the children down. James and Marcie's other children who had not accompanied me to the carnival were staring at their new sibling, prodding and poking.

"I should've known..." Marcie said, holding her head.

"It's alright. It's not your fault," James uttered, staring me down.

My son, Edgar, said:

"Come on now, James, you still have a few original ones left."

Burt was twiddling his thumbs in a corner and his wife, Melissa, was making dinner with Melanie. I decided my presence wasn't needed and so I went outside to berate my grandchildren. They were making snowmen, and lines of grass peeked through the white on the ground.

"What do you think you're doing?" I asked them.

All of the grandchildren were bundled up and more unfamiliar than usual.

"Mmph Mmph Mmph Mmph," one in a red snowsuit said.

"Why on earth are you doing that?"

"Mmummph" the red snowsuit's arms wiggled in explanation.

"What's so fun about snowmen?" I postured myself, preparing my speech, "They're the most tragic characters of life aside from us."

All activity stopped as I eloquently described the lives of snowmen ("Snowwomen too," I added upon muffled objections from a few listeners). The children abandoned their creations and took in all I had to say. Even the dog, who'd previously been tackling the children, stood solemnly at attention.

"Snowmen consume, consume, consume," I said, "They eat up their surroundings and absorb it into their countenance with reckless abandon."

There was a muffled sneeze and a subdued Bless You.

"And for what ends do they do this consuming?" I gazed into each of their little foreign eyes, "To melt. They are burned alive. After marring the landscape by consuming the surrounding snow, they go about littering the area with rotting corpses."

One of the grandchildren began bawling. I did not stop. They had to know the truth.

"All the hard work you've put into them has disintegrated into mush. Your time is wasted and all you've left to show for it is a green lawn. What a slew of ungrateful twerps."

The children were incensed. They regarded their creations with anger, taking in the tattered snowscape. There were shouts. A multitude of young bodies suddenly attacked the hordes of motionless snowpeople. Decapitations occurred. Twigs used for appendages were torn off and tossed aside. Their torsos were knocked away with kicks and punches.

As the battle wound down, I surveyed the damage. I came across a greensuited lad who stared wistfully into the sky.

It had stopped snowing.

"Don't worry," I said, "There's still some snow left in the world."

I removed my cap and briskly shook my hand against my hair. Dandruff flakes swirled upon the child, slowly burying it in bits of dead flesh.

2.

"Hey... you!"

"Me?"

"Yes you."

"What?"

"I need your help."

Montgomery Crow was 68. He had never filled water balloons with bleach before and the proper method for accomplishing this proved difficult; he beckoned a neighborhood boy to help him with this task.

"What do you need help with?" the boy asked. He was 13.

"Do you have any experience with water balloons?" Montgomery replied.

"Plenty. What do you need?"

"I need you to assist me in tying these. My arthritis is really painful and I'm afraid that I'm going to get bleach all over my clothes."

The boy considered the scenario.

"Well I might get bleach on my clothes too. What will I tell my mom?"

"What would convince you, boy?"

"Sammy."

"Sammy?"

"My name's Sammy."

"Oh."

The boy, apparently very comfortable with negotiations, said:

"I would like money to buy a pack of gum and one of the balloons as payment."

Montgomery heartily agreed to the arrangement, and that is how he got his box of 36 bleach balloons, each numbered with a black marker.

**

(I)The next day, Montgomery promptly awoke at 5:00 AM.

(II) Methodically:

- (1) He tumbled out of bed.
- (2) He dressed in his:
 - (A) Black suit with:
 - (a) Green tie and
 - (b) White dress shirt.
 - (B) Black socks.
 - (C) Black shoes which:
 - (a) He tied in double knots.
 - (b) Spit shined.
 - (c) Reshined after dissatisfaction over aforementioned spit shine.
- (3) He manipulated his white hair into a careful combover.
- (4) Strapped on a black strapped analog watch which read six-eleven-eh-em.
- (5) He placed the following in his pockets:
 - (A) A black fountain pen (shirt pocket)

- (B) A leather wallet (right trousers pocket), containing:
 - (a) State ID.
 - (b) SSN card.
 - (c) TCBY discount punch card.
 - (d) YMCA ID.
 - (e) \$5,000 dollars in cash.
 - (f) Assorted credit cards.
- (C) A white handkerchief (jacket pocket).
- (D) A keychain (left trousers pocket) with:
 - (a) House key.
 - (b) Car key.
 - (c) Extra car key.
 - (d) Luggage lock key.
 - (e) Garage key.
 - (f) Room in the basement key.
 - (g) Undetermined use key.
- (6) Neatly and precisely placed:
 - (A) A black fedora on the top of his head.
 - (B) Smallish black aviator sunglasses on his nose.
- (III) Montgomery dove out the door into his black Cadillac which contained:
 - (1) A box of 36 water balloons containing sodium/calcium hypochlorite (bleach).
 - (2) Four seats.
 - (3) Four doors.
 - (4) A/C.
 - (5) CD/Radio.
 - (6) A working SRS.
 - (7) A Reliable ABS
 - (8) A flashlight for signaling SOS
 - (9) Five full gasoline containers.
 - (10) One steering wheel.
 - (11) One spare wheel.
 - (12) Five seatbelts.
 - (13) An automatic transmission.
 - (14) A sledge hammer.
 - (15) A briefcase with \$150,000.
 - (16) A shovel.
 - (17) Smoking paraphernalia:
 - (A) A car ashtray.
 - (B) A car cigarette lighter.
 - (18) Assorted crumbs.
- IV. The sunlight:
 - (1) Shined.
 - (2) Shimmered.
- V. Montgomery:
 - (1) Drove.
 - (2) Grinned.

**

Montgomery's first stop was at the house of his longtime friend, Maxwell Penny Eldridge.

The Cadillac slowly approached the sidewalk parallel to the front door of the house and stopped. Maxwell stood waiting on the porch.

Maxwell Penny Eldridge was 69 and dressed in gray trousers along with a disorienting plaid green shirt from which a minor gut emerged. He shuffled down the walkway and entered the front passenger door of the Cadillac.

"Good morning," Montgomery said.

"Good morning," Maxwell said, buckling his seatbelt.

"Are you all rested up?"

"You betcha."

Louis Armstrong played on the radio.

"Is this Louis Armstrong?" Maxwell asked.

"Yes."

"On the radio?"

"No. On the CD.

Louis Armstrong played on the CD.

"Are you sure?" Maxwell examined the music console, "It says radio. There's even a radio frequency here..."

"Oh. Well I guess it's the radio then."

Louis Armstrong played on the radio.

Maxwell asked:

"What about lunch?"

**

The labels affixed to the sneeze guards of the buffets read:

Macaroni & Cheese

Fried Chicken

White Fish

Bread Dressing

Fruit Gelatin

Jo-Jo Potatoes

Mixed Lettuce

Strawberry Mousse Cake

Etc.

Monty and Maxwell sat at a booth, nibbling their piles of food with the assistance of dentures and forks. They faced opposite each other and stared at their plates while talking and eating. A crowd milled about the macaroni and cheese platter over by the buffet islands with a few shoves here and there. An old man with a hunchback, about yea-high (4' 7"), had his largesque hearing aid knocked from his ear amongst the pasta brouhaha.

"Wha? Wha!?" he said.

Monty and Maxwell nearly simultaneously wiped their mouths with their paper napkins. An old woman hobbled past them with a cane and a wooden leg that creaked with every move. Her husband puttered alongside her, his glass eye acting lazy.

Maxwell Eldridge, lettuce hanging off the side of his cheek, asked:

"So how are the grandchildren?"

"I still can't recognize any of them."

"Yes, I know what you mean," Maxwell said with a chortle followed by a bilious cough, "One of them gave me this shirt. They're spending the night so I had to wear it out today."

"It's difficult for me to eat around it... I keep getting fits of nausea."

"Same here. So how are your kids then?"

"They're doing alright I guess. James is upset with me."

"Why's that?"

"I lost one of his kids at the carnival."

"Oh, well I guess that's reason enough."

"I got him a replacement though."

"Well that's thoughtful of you. How're your other children then? Did you ever hear from uh..."

"Patricia?"

"Yes, Patricia. How is she?"

"I haven't heard from her for some 30 years. She ran off the moment she graduated high school."

"Oh. Too bad."

"Yeah, well it could've been worse. She could've got knocked up and made me tend to more grandchildren. I thought we were past the age of large families."

A graying woman with a hairnet and crinkly plastic gloves prepared and served banana splits next to the frozen yogurt machine. Some children kept returning to her counter, trying to attain more sprinkles for their desserts.

"Shoo, shoo!" she said, "I'm not giving you anymore. You've been back three times. Where's your parents? Shoo!"

Maxwell swallowed a spoonful of green gelatin.

"Why'd she run off?"

"We argued a lot. She accused me of being tyrannical and heartless. After her mother died she lost whatever support she had and left."

The dining pair chewed in silence. Maxwell considered the day's mission and had a pressing question on his mind.

"Have you ever tried anything like this? I mean, against Bobby. I know you're not all that fond of him, but isn't this a bit extreme?"

**

A few decades back:

"Um. Hello."

"Hi! How are you doing?"

"I'm doing okay ..."

"You must be Monty."

"Yes I am."

"I once had an uncle named Monty. We used to call him Mount Uncle."

"Um."

"Sorry, just trying to break the ice."

"I wasn't aware that was necessary in your profession."

"Oh, it most certainly is."

"Really?"

"Absolutely. I need to maintain my business contacts after all, and a cold demeanor would chase away a lot of customers. I'm trying to liven things up a bit. You know, set myself apart."

"Intriguing approach."

"Yes, and I find that it builds a nice trust between customer and salesman. I mean, I need to assure clients that if their targets offer to double my money, I won't turn around and kill them off instead. Ya know?"

"..."

"Cause what it's all about is love of the job. Most of the people I'm told to go after are scumbags. I'm fairly laid back. People should be nice and decent to each other, and if they're not then a quick bullet in the base of the noggin ought to do the trick I think."

"Yes, it certainly sounds like you enjoy your job."

"There's no doubt about it. So what can I do for you today Mr. Crow?"

"Well there's this fellow that I'd like to have... taken out, so to speak."

"Nixed?"

"Yes, nixed I suppose."

"I prefer nixed."

"Ok, fair enough."

"So who is he then?"

"Bobby Filtspotter."

"Wow. That's aiming a bit high isn't it?"

"Well..."

"I mean, people will notice when he's gone..."

"So wait, you're not backing out then, are you?"

"Absolutely not. He must've done something bad for you wanting to nix him off."

"Sure."

"Indeed."

"So um... when would you...?"

"How about right now?"

"Really?"

"Sure. Why not?"

"It just seems so sudden..."

"Don't worry, I've found it's better to get things out of the way before the client has time to think about it too much."

"I've had a lot of time to think about it."

"Even better."

"Is it okay if I tag along?"

"Why's that?"

"I'd really like to see the whole thing."

"It's a bit dangerous. I wouldn't recommend it at all."

"Then I may just have to kill him myself."

"Okay, let's not get rash here. Ask yourself. 'How many people have I killed?' None I bet. It's a real science. There's veins to know, and grips to learn. So, how about this. Call him up on the telephone and I'll take him down within earshot."

"It's not the same..."

"Sure it is. Trust me. It's worked for lots of people I've worked for."

"Oh."

"Very detailed. You hear the bangpop of the gun, and a loud thump. You'll enjoy it. I insist."

"Ok fine."

"Then it's settled! I'll call you up after I'm finished with the final billing charges."

"Sounds good."

"Do you have his phone number?"

"Yes."

"Good, good. Alright. Well bye. I'll talk to you in a little while."

"Ok. Bye."

"..."

"....."

Beep Bop Beep Boop Bop Beep Beep

"Hello?"

"Uh. Hi."

"Hello..."

"Is this Bobby?"

"Yes..."

"It's Montgomery."

"Oh, hello Monty. What a surprise."

"How've you been?"

"Oh... um... things are going well. And you?"

"Oh, I'm fine. I hear you and Elizabeth are getting married."

"Yes, as a matter of fact we are. How did you hear?"

"Oh you know... you're such a famous person and all. News travels fast."

"Yeah, it's a bit intimidating. My privacy seems to have melted away with my increase in fortune."

"Yeah I bet. So when are you two thinking about getting married?"

"We're thinking either July or..."

Ding-Dong.

"..."

"Oh you'll have to excuse me for a second. There's someone at the door. It will only be a minute."

"Okay."

"I'll be right back."

"..."

"..."

"..."

"..."

"..."

"Hello?" (in the distance)

Bang(!).

"..."

"..."

"..."

"Hello? Are you still there Monty?"

"... Bobby?"

"Yes it's me. I'm back."

"Um. Oh good."

"What's wrong?"

"Nothing, I... who was that at the door?"

"I dunno. I told my butler to tend to the matter."

"Uh..."

"What's the matter?"

"Nothing. It's just..."

"Just what?"

"It's just that I remembered I have to make another phone call. Could I call you back?"

"Sure thing. I'll be right here."

"It'll only be a moment."

"Ok, sure."

Click.

Bop Bop Beep Boop Beep Beep Beep

"Hello?"

"He's not dead!"

"What?"

"He's still alive. I talked to him on the telephone."

"Who?"

"Filtspotter"

"Listen here, Mr. Crow. I'm a trained professional, and I think I know when I kill someone. Remember? It's a science. I'm a scientist."

"You killed his butler."

"... what's that?"

"The man who answered the door..."

"In the tuxedo..."

"That was his butler."

"... crimeny. I guess I'll have to go back."

"Yes. Please do..."

"That one... jeez, I'm sorry. That one's on the house."

"Thanks."

"Ok, well I'll go do it in a jiffy."

"Alright."

Click.

Beep Bop Beep Boop Bop Beep Beep

"Hello?"

"Bobby?"

"Oh hi! You're back then."

"Yeah, sorry. It was an urgent call."

"That's no problem at all."

"So uh... you're thinking July possibly?"

"Yes, something like that... although who knows... maybe we'll just elope."

Ding-Dong.

"Is that your doorbell again?"

"Yes, it is. The butler will get it."

Ding-Dong.

"Um. Uh. So..."

"So what have you been doing with yourself? Frankly I'm surprised you called... after our little spat."

Ding-Dong.

"Bobby, after thinking about it, I decided there wasn't really anything to be mad about. I figured our friendship was more important than holding some useless grudge."

Ding-Dong.

"Goddamn that Godfrey. He's probably off pilfering the brandy again. Excuse me for a second Monty."

"No problem."

"..."

"..."

"Hello." (in the distance)

Bang(!).

"..."

"..."

"..."

"Hello, are you still there?"

"I..."

"I'm back."

"So you are."

"Nobody knows where Godfrey is, so the maid went and got it."

Etc.

"The cook saw to it..."

Etc.

"I had to call the gardener..."

Etc.

And thus ends the first part of Jonathan Redhorse's "Mr. Crow." The second part will appear in the next issue of Defenestration, due out February 20th. It only gets crazier after this...

Hi, is this Hitler?
by
Joseph Kim

There's always at least one Hitler in every city, sometimes even two or three. Believe it. What I do is order phonebooks from like different cities.

And I look up Hitler.

I remember the first time I called him . . .

"Hi," I said, "uh, is this Hitler?"

"Yes." He had no trace of an Austrian accent. It was a resonant but not manic voice, not a "1,000-year Reich" voice.

"So, uh, is this like *the* Hitler?"

"This is Gerald P. Hitler, if that's what you mean."

Oh, I thought, so now it's "Gerald P."—no more the Führer, eh? Then again—he had lost the war.

"So, Mr. Hitler," I said, "how are you?"

"Who is this? Do I know you?"

"No, but everybody knows you. You're like famous."

"Excuse me?" The guy was really in denial.

I said, "Yeah, I mean people still write and talk about you, dude. I mean *mister* Hitler."

"Excuse me?" This was when he started to go on repeat.

"Uh, seig heil, bro," I said.

Then I heard the dial-tone. But I have his voice on tape. I got one of those phones with like the tape-machine in it? I bought it at Sharper Image. It's cool.

My friend, Larry? He says anybody stupid enough to have the name of Hitler deserves a crank-call. I'm not sure if that's right, but it sure is fun. Except for this one time when I called pretending to be a member of the American Nazi Party. That's not too cool. But, like, I wanted to draw him out – you know?

"Günten tag, meine Führer," I said, "I am Herr Röhr of the American Nazi Party. I'm, like, calling to get my orders, sir. I mean meine Führer."

"Your orders?"

"Yep, we have the panzers standing by."

"Good." His voice was like ice. It gave me the creeps.

"Uh, are you, like, ready for the blitzkrieg?"

"I was born ready." Now he was really freaking me out.

"Well, meine Führer. I guess you just need to give the word."

And he didn't back down. He said, "Kill `em all."

I hung up.

This last time I called? I got a girl's voice and she played along laughing sweetly. Pretty soon we were talking about all kinds of stuff—not 3rd Reich related—stuff like school (it's a drag), books (we both like *Catcher in the Rye*), and how we were both gonna make it big someday, somehow—in a *good* way I mean. It was a real-type conversation, you know?

So, now I'm dating Hitler. She's hot. When we get married her last name will be Stalin. Don't laugh. I'm not related.

- end -

Generation Gap
by
Stephen Swycher

Stephen Swycher in conversation with his granddaughter (aged 3 years & six months).

Grandpa: I'd like you to put your toys away and tidy up Milly.

Milly: I haven't got time.

G: You're going to bed soon.

M: That's why I haven't got time.

G: You're going to bed in five minutes.

M: Ten.

G: I said five minutes.

M: Ten.

G: What about seven and a half?

M: O.K.

G: When we get your nightclothes on you can have a choice of programmes.

M: What choice?

G: You can either watch the Rugby or the video of *Monsters, Inc.*

M: *Monsters, Inc.*

G: The Rugby is very good.

M: Are there monsters in it?

G: Well actually, there are some very large people; I suppose you could call them monsters. Some are in blue shirts and some are in white shirts and the referee wears an orange shirt. And they have scrums which are quite exciting.

M: I want to watch *Monsters Inc.*

G (Resigned): O.K.

M: Is the Rugby like the chocolate chips Mummy buys?

G: Why do you ask that?

M: They're scrummy.

G: Very witty. Come on now we've got to get you ready for your bath.

M: I'm not having a bath.

G: Why not?

M: I want Daddy to give it me.

G: Your Mummy and Daddy are out. I'm babysitting.

M: I am not a baby!

G: Then I am just sitting.

M: No you're not, you're standing up.

G: Now let's go and get your bath ready.

M: I am not having a bath!

G: O.K. you are not having a bath.

M: Why are you opening the cocktail cabinet?

G: I feel that I'm losing my grip.

M: Men don't wear hair grips.

G: I'm going to have a whisky.

M: Can I have a chocolate biscuit?

G: No, you've already had one.

M: You've already had a whisky.

G: So?

M: Then why can't I have another chocolate biscuit?

G: Because I'm grown up and you're not.

M: You'll get like Daddy.

G: How like Daddy?

M: Mummy says if he's not careful he'll be a colic.

G: You mean an alcoholic.

M: Can I have the chocolate biscuit now?

G: Alright I'll do a deal. You don't tell Mummy I've had two whiskies and I won't tell her that you've had two biscuits.

M: It's a deal.

G: Well if you're not having a bath we can switch on the Rugby

M: We're watching the video, *Monsters Inc.* No deals.

G (Resigned): No deals.

The Truth About Camping by **Todd Werkhoven**

Although I'm not what you would call an "avid outdoorsman," I do like being outdoors. Weather permitting, I enjoy hiking, kayaking, skiing, walking, swimming, and the occasional curling match. But there's one thing I can't tolerate: camping.

My wife loves camping. All of my friends love camping. I can't stand it. While everyone else thinks that it's because I don't like "being one" with nature (a phrase which always sort of creeps me out), it has a much simpler explanation: I don't like to pretend I'm homeless. Nothing against the homeless, but millions of years of evolution tells me that living indoors is preferable to living outdoors, what with the roof and walls and whatnot.

Again, this has little to do with enjoying the outdoors. The Pacific Northwest has a bevy of beautiful, varied terrain from the mountains to the desert to caves to the ocean, and I'm not saying that just because I like the word "bevy." There are thousands of inspiring natural features here, and I've enjoyed many of them. But really – there's no need to live there. That's why God made the Holiday Inn.

Because when you think about it, camping is more of a hassle than anything else. Have you ever taken a weekend camping trip? It takes a day to pack up and drive there (loading your gear into your trunk is like playing the world's worst game of Tetris), sherpa-ing all the gear to a camping spot ("No, no *this* piece of jagged, rock-hard dirt is far superior to that one close to the car."), unpacking the gear, setting up camp, pitching the tents (deciding which of the tent's icky canvas sides you would prefer stuck to your face by morning dew), while still allotting some time to be gnawed on by myriad gigantor woodland insects. You can enjoy maybe a day of nature, and you then have to pack up all the stuff you just brought there and go back home. It's really an inefficient use of time.

Some people give the argument of, "But I love being out there with the elements 'just me and nature,' it's so primal!" Really. Remember when our ancient ancestors lit their 100,000-watt lantern to hook up the propane flapjack griddle while they munched on their Ranch Bugles next to the fire pit? Or when they put their Gore-tex windbreaker on to settle into their padded folding chair next the ice chest and put microbrews in the chair's cup holders? If you really want to experience nature, I want to see you plunk yourself in the middle of nowhere without equipment wearing just a loincloth, ok Squanto? We'll see how well Mother Earth takes care of you.

Back to the issue of coming back home. You've "enjoyed" your day of nature, now you have to spend several hours putting the things you've just unpacked back into your car. And let me tell you, it's going to fight going back in. Somehow you now have three carloads full of crap instead of one, because the woods apparently multiply your possessions while you sleep. (And when I say "sleep" in regards to camping, I mean "when my body is 400 degrees in the sleeping bag, my head is 12 degrees outside the sleeping bag, and the stump I've accidentally set the tent on is getting a little too friendly.") And everything you cart back home including you has that "camping smarm" on it: that campfire smoke/dried sweat/sticky hands/forest floor/insect spray/dirt layer of filth that's coating you and everything you own. Once you're home you have to take all your stuff back out of the car,

put it away again (campers must love mundane repetitiveness), and do the 12 loads of laundry it takes to get the camping smarm off your sleeping bags and clothes. I feel relaxed and rejuvenated already.

The way I see it, to camp is to do a phenomenal disservice to our ancestors. Can you imagine going back a thousand or a couple thousand years and telling the people frantically burrowing into the side of a hill for warmth, "I've got a house, bed, pillows, blankets, fridge-full of food, chairs, couches, and showers. "But you know what? That's not for me. I'm 'outdoors-y.'" Good luck with that. After you recover from the punch in the face (or mace to the skull or blow dart to the neck or whatever they did back then), you will then be offered up to their gods as a sacrifice to ward off extreme stupidity. The people that came before us worked really hard for us to not live outside. We should honor their spirit.

Alf Lives
by
Peter Funk



Dateline Mariposa, Ca - Thanksgiving Day 2003.

On the day that Americans normally give thanks for their blessings a truly miraculous manifestation occurred. Defying the notion that cute puppet like TV star "Alf" has fallen into the trash heap of American pop culture, the cuddly alien's likeness appeared on the side of a stump in Mariposa, California. Excited fans of the witty raconteur flocked to the residence in order to bask in the glow of his likeness.

"That show was so funny," said Maria Ramirez of Turlock, Ca. "I mean he was an alien living with an earth family. I laughed every single time I watched that show. It would've been great if Alf and Bill Cosby had done some work together. Wow, the Coz and Alf!"

Noted expert in supernatural phenomenon Frank Gibbs was seen taking bark samples from the stump. "I definitely think we'll find some kind of isotope here or perhaps some of that goo like in the Ghostbusters movie," said Gibbs.

Heide McDonald was seen playing an acoustic guitar by the stump and appeared to be really "feeling" the vibe that this new hub of both sitcom and supernatural activity seemed to be giving off. This reporter watched as Heide swayed and gently strummed her guitar singing a refrain that went:

Alf on a stump
Alf on a stump
How you made us laugh
Now you're part of a stump.

The owners of the property were no less insightful into the mysterious appearance than the awed fans who gathered on their property. "I didn't watch the show much. I was more of a "Too Close for Comfort" kind of guy, but if these folks'll shell out 2 bucks for parking it's all OK with me," said Tom Tishup, proud owner of the impromptu shrine that has sprouted up around the stump.

The Park Face
by
Sascha Grant (Photograph)
and
Luigi Fairbanks (Text)



This disturbing photograph of what can only be described as some sort of giant doll-faced clown monster was taken by Sascha Grant, who was, as he describes, "wandering around Sydney (Australia) the day after our staff Christmas party, suffering from a hangover." While in her state of post-inebriation, Mr. Grant stumbled upon Luna Park by the Harbor Bridge ("Don't you think they could have come up with a better name than that?" he cries, and everyone nods and says, "Yes!"). Camera in hand, he proceeded to take this image.

While Mr. Grant claims this face is Luna Park's entrance (that's right, you walk into its mouth!), it is clear to me that it is really a sleeping giant, with a face of pasty acrylic and a wide network of connective tissue made from wooden beams, plaster, and tarps. Mr. Grant calls this "construction work hidden away behind the face," as the park is "currently being renovated," but no one can show me a picture of a giant clown/doll thing and tell me that it's not a living, breathing organism hell-bent on mankind's destruction.

This photograph will serve to many as a warning for the people of Australia, a warning of the giant clowns in their midst. Yes, I said clowns. Plural. Apparently, Mr. Grant's home of

Melbourne has one of these monsters as well. Ever the humble individual, Mr. Grant played off the importance of his photo, claiming, "I really liked this shot for a number of reasons - I really enjoyed the warmth in the colors and textures that the face and pillars on each side have, the detail that has gone into the design of the top of the pillars is fantastic and, despite the park being closed, I feel that I captured it's amazing ambiance (Hmm.. does all that make me a pretentious wanker?)."

Yes, Sascha Grant, it does make you sound like a pretentious wanker. The most heroic wanker of them all.

A Strange Breed Comic
by
Steve Langille



Contributor Biographies

Brooke Bailey says the following about herself (but we know she's lying): "I'm a double x-chromosomed geek-magnet with shy girl syndrome on a mission to shake things up with my writing and maybe score a few numbers in the process."

Lao American poet **Bryan Thao Worra** currently resides in St. Paul surrounded by snow and giant Snoopy sculptures. His work has appeared in many places, including impromptu placemats, birdcages, and underneath steaming drinks of cheap hippies hitting on beautiful women without a chance in the world. He also keeps a website at <http://members.aol.com/thaoworra> and gives a big thumbs up to everyone at the SatJaDham Lao Literary Project, <http://www.satjadham.org> (but still can't pronounce SatJaDham worth a damn. He also likes sea monkeys, hermit crabs and stroganoff.

Gary Lehmann is a writer, playwright and poet. He has worked with the Globe Theatre in London, the Smithsonian Institution, and a number of local museums including the Rochester Museum and Science Center, the Strong Museum, the Biloxi Cultural Center, and the Genesee Country Museum. Gary teaches at the Rochester Institute of Technology as a professor of writing and poetry, and as the director of the Athenaeum Poetry Group, a consortium of published poets. He has been the Writer in Residence at Roberts Wesleyan College and is currently interested in exploring antique methods of making shoes. We here at *Defenestration* think that means he's a gnome of some sort.

As a child **Damien Calis** was abducted by a stray haggis and raised in the Highlands along with a litter of haggis pups. Due to a lack of mirrors in this region he never realized the difference in size, shape and hygiene routines. He was discovered by sheepherders at the age of twelve and taken to the capital Edinburgh, where the learned elders at the university continue to educate and examine him. Negotiations over his amazing story are ongoing with the Disney Corporation.

Dante Kleinberg is a freelance writer living in Michigan, and if you're anything like him, then you're probably not wearing pants. If you'd like to contact Dante, just e-mail him at dantebk@yahoo.com and please put "ADD THREE INCHES TO YOUR PENIS!!" in the subject line.

Jonathan Redhorse is a student at the University of Denver. The other day he made the most fantastic quip about fish EVER, on the fly, to an unappreciative audience of one. The audience, who saw absolutely no genius whatsoever in the comment, made a quick exit from the scene, as it's doubtful that said audience even cared to analyze the clever pun of the statement and was instead more interested in keeping her thoughts on Midwestern Sushi to herself from now on. Had she laughed, Jonathan Redhorse would be a very funny man indeed. Alas.

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.

Stephen Swycher has been writing scripts for so long that his rejection slips have achieved the status of memorabilia. He recently appeared at the "Voicebox" with Hallam University creative writing MA end of the year show. His sketch "Satellite Navigation," was complimented on it's brevity. He is currently staging a reading of his fifty minute play "Friday Night" This is being presented at the "Kingfield Vestibule" Sheffield, by a leading caterer. The evening is in one act and two courses.

Todd Werkhoven - No animals were harmed in the making of Todd's vast mink coat collection. Except for the minks.

The Milestones of **Peter Funk's** Long and Mighty Life: Born in Washington DC. Went to College (English major). Became a bike messenger. Moved to San Francisco. Got a Masters in English. Started a messenger company. Got married. Had a kid. Found Alf in a stump.

Sascha Grant. 1971 to present... Born and bred in Melbourne, Australia. Currently wage slave selling Mac's (and yes, they ARE better than peeces) have a love (read passion) for photography, but not the budget (No, selling Mac's have kept me poor, but they ARE better... really... they are...) currently shooting with Sony DSC-P10 5M/Pixel Digital camera that I love (and, like me, is cheap to run). Studied photography for a year (15 years ago) and learned the basics of composition, layout and design - and then promptly forgot it all. Spent the last 8 years working part-time at Melbourne's Channel 31 (Community TV) doing everything from Camera to Floor Manager.

Luigi Fairbanks is currently employed as a scarecrow in a field somewhere in Nebraska, due largely to the fact that he's made entirely out of straw. Also, he's a figment of your imagination, so don't go looking for him or anything.

In addition to being able to draw toilets with preternatural skill, **Steve Langille** also has the ability to see just what those toilet seats are saying to one another.

Find more of 'Strange Breed,' at: <http://www2.hi.net/s4/strangebreed.htm> and look around. It's updated every Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday. There's also a big ole archive to leaf through.

Also, he said the following about us: "You guys %\$^*& ROCK!" We're not sure what word '%\$^*&' is, but judging by the quote's context, it could very well mean 'igneous.'