

◇ Defenestration ◇

Volume IX, Issue II

August 2012

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Hunting Andrews by **Julie Minicozzi**

1.

No one had made the connection before. But, faced with the facts, the correlation could not be ignored.

"25 Major Cities. 339 Murders. 4 weeks. 1 Common Element: *Andrew*."

The front page headline of the Times on June 20, 2010 was viewed by most with an appropriate vein of skepticism. But it was the *Times*, so surely the facts had been checked and re-checked. And after reading the article, all of us could see that the case was air-tight. Something had gone awry with men named Andrew.

Across the country, there had been an uptick in violence within a one month period, and every suspect was named Andrew. There were lethal incidents of domestic violence. There were drug-related murders. There were road-rage killings. And no one had previously connected the dots, because the incidents were so widespread, so unconnected in every other way.

2.

Several politicians called on the president to take action.

"All Andrews should be detained, quarantined, and examined," said Alfonse Francisco, the mayor of New York City.

"Let's not be hasty. We can't just lock up all Andrews. It's a violation of civil rights," said Governor Andrew Danforth of Oregon, before chartering a plane that day and leaving for an "extended vacation."

The president held a press conference and said, "There have been no incidents with Andrews under the age of eighteen. Thus, they are exempt from suspicion. All adult, male Andrews must be considered a danger to themselves and to others, and should voluntarily surrender to authorities immediately. Fear not; you will be treated with compassion and dignity."

The president's social secretary, Andrew Morton, was seen later that day boarding a private yacht owned by a Saudi prince.

3.

Tens of thousands of Andrews reluctantly surrendered at local police precincts. They were quarantined in school gymnasiums, since the schools were on summer recess. The National Guard (not including guardsmen named Andrew) formed search parties and rounded up Andrews. Some Andrews went underground, eluding the authorities by hiding in basements, sheds, and pool cabanas. When found, many became confrontational and had to be subdued, sometimes with lethal force. To aid the National Guard's efforts, the Federal

Government offered attractive bounties for the capture of renegade Andrews by private citizens.

4.

Unbeknownst to the general public at the time, the, "Andrew Camps," were overcrowded and unbearably squalid within a week. The media was not allowed access to film within the camps, but the wardens held press conferences, assuring all that the Andrews were "playing chess, smoking cigars, and enjoying their time off."

True Life Network launched a reality show, "Andrew in Hiding," which garnered ratings that eclipsed their former top show, "Thirteen, Pregnant, and On Drugs." *News Now* hired private detectives to hunt down politically-connected Andrews who had fled the country, so that they could be ambushed by news correspondents and shown fleeing the camera's watchful eye. *Rave News* touted a law that would allow for legalized Andrew hunting. In fact, several tree-stands were erected in towns across the nation on streets where Andrews formerly resided, on the off-chance that one might come out of hiding and try to go home.

5.

A month of hysteria, mass religious ceremonies, and twenty-four hour news coverage of the Andrew crisis had weakened the morale of the country. The main topic of conversation in coffee shops was "What do we *do* with the Andrews?" But it wasn't until ten year old Ben Sever of Pittsburgh asked an *ASABC* reporter, "What have all of the other countries done with their bad Andrews?" that we all stopped talking and listened.

It finally dawned on us: there hadn't *been* any "bad Andrews," in other countries. And we hadn't actually held any trials for the Andrews in question, so we couldn't be assured of their guilt. It might have all been a terrible coincidence.

6.

Organized protests for the immediate release of the Andrews were held in every major city the next day. The president issued an apology to the Andrews, called for a senate committee to investigate the incident, and declared that henceforth, June 20th was to be a Federal holiday named, "Andrew Day: A Day of Forgiveness," also known as ADADOF day.

Democrats blamed the Republicans, stating that they "fostered an atmosphere of oppression and hatred." Republicans blamed the Democrats, alleging that they "conspired with the press to doctor the initial casualty estimates in order to hinder the chances of Republican candidate Andrew Schmidt from securing a Congressional seat in next election." The media blamed the general public, saying that, "mob mentality emerged from nothing," and likened the incident to "the shame of the Japanese internment camps in the second World War." The public blamed the media for forcing everyone to watch that "darned 24/7 news coverage."

7.

In the weeks following the release of the Andrews, the families of Andrews that had been killed mourned – and then met with attorneys. The families of formerly detained Andrews rejoiced – and then met with attorneys, reality television producers, and literary agents.

Finally, after months of political wrangling, salacious finger-pointing, and seemingly endless players in the blame game, the "Great Andrew Crisis" was nothing but a future entry in updated volumes of history textbooks. The hullabaloo was over.

8.

The October 26, 2010 headline of the Times read, "16 Major Cities. 72 Fatal Accidents. 2 weeks. 1 Common Element: *Banana Peels.*"

A Pharmacist In Love
by
Jocko Benoit

The pharmacist is in love,
Sculpting pills into heart shapes,
Her tongue all homeopathic honey
As she names each of the sick in line,
All of their medicine mislabeled, the dosage
Written in poetry: "Take it all in
Slowly," "Apply until your eyes
See what has always been there."

The ill struggle with their zen
Prescriptions. The depressed man
Gets a four-hour erection harder
Than his life. The woman expecting
Her Ritalin gets instead a hit
Of pain killers so strong her eyes learn
Everything there is to know about
One tile on the ceiling that looks
Like the first boy she ever kissed.
And the old fella wiped out
By the latest bacterium gets speed
Three times a day until he runs out
Four weeks later at a craps table in Vegas,
Slumped snoring in the bosom
Of the dancer he's been seeing.

But soon the pharmacist regains
Her senses and has everyone
Back to normal again, getting healthy
In ways that are FDA-approved.

Lettuce
by
A@ron What

Despite my great desire, I could not have biological children. I lacked an available uterus to inseminate, so I downloaded an app. For a while, my daughter and I were happy. I would feed her lettuce when needed, as indicated by an alarm triggered by her digital algorithm. I brought her to the zoo, etc. and she was bewildered, etc. at the vast diversity of animals, etc. in this amazing world. Then she got hacked. I tried to recover her, but someone stole my smartphone. Fortunately, as all responsible parents do, I had backed her up.

But her backup program was never the same. Was the clone's DNA the same? Yes. Did I expose her to the identical experiences, to shape her development? Yes. But beyond her monochromatic, pixelated eyes, there was no sparkle, no excitement when I fed her lettuce, etc. I grew resentful of my daughter for not being herself, though I knew it was not her fault. However, like all responsible parents, I forced myself to go through the motions of fostering a loving and supportive educational environment, etc., even if my heart was not in it. After my daughter turned eighteen, and finally took off from our nest to find her place in the world, I was able to find peace with myself. Although I did not love her, I had emulated loving her, and she had learned to feed lettuce to herself.

Fascinations
by
Daniel Ari

The new iPhone fits into a pocket, and within it fits the sum total of your personal information, plus an immeasurably large portion of human knowledge including many of the observations gleaned through the sense-expanding machines of our ingenuity. Plus you can use the mic and camera to add to the burgeoning data terrain.

On the other hand, about 4 billion years ago, a single cell chanced to use a specific protein chain in combination with other chemicals to build what amounted to an energy net. This molecular device captured the energy radiating from the sun and turned it into food.

That said, I'd like a new iPhone.

The Urban Surfboard™
by
Rion Amilcar Scott

There was a woman. Seemed nice. A bit too friendly and eager to please. That phony off-putting demeanor so many adopt nowadays. Heavy-set. Hair in curls like my mother wore in the 1980s. Came to see me because she wanted to patent an invention: a surfboard with wings and wheels. *The Urban Surfboard™* she called it. I watched her prototype and plans as one would watch a carefully curled piece of shit on a dinner plate.

I have more inventions to patent, she said. But this is the big money idea. I want to start with this one. We can market it like this: OK. You know how they have those wolf hunts. Well wolves are fast. I know. I looked it up. A hunter can get on this thing and scoot forward, chasing those little bastards. Shoot them. Grab them by the tail. I'm talking the ones that got the nerve to wander into town. That's where the urban part comes in. This wouldn't work well in the forest with all the grass and trees and things. I'm working on another one for that.

I laughed loudly and then mentally chastised myself for rudeness and unprofessionalism.

Ma'am, I'm sorry, but no one is going to roll down the street on your Urban Skateboard—I'm sorry—Surfboard. I can't patent this. It's basically a skateboard. The next lawyer down the street is just going to take your money. I'm going to tell you the truth. This is not patentable. You will never, never, never be able to bring this to market.

She grunted like a nasty pig and called me all kinds of fools and motherfuckers and bid me all sorts of fuck yous while I held my composure. She was not the first to curse me, of course. I watched her fat shake and tried to understand why this was the most grating cussing I had ever received, even though others had done a worse job of showing their asses, so to speak.

Just leave, I said.

I stood and she followed me, waddling down the stairs and cursing me till something like pressure built at the top of my skull. Her words wedged themselves between my thoughts, ripping apart every new one that formed.

Finally I sputtered, Shut the fuck up!

You are not a real lawyer. Wait till the Bar Association hears of your misconduct, sir esquire.

She held her yellow and red (with blue flames) Urban Skateboard prototype under her arm and I felt the need—for some reason—to stand outside the office, shouting, Shut the fuck up, as if it were my mantra. There was freedom in screaming, but still a vice-grip of tension wrapped tightly around my torso. I could have simply closed the door of my office and walked back upstairs. They say you only regret the things you fail to do. So many times I had failed to stand my ground and others—lovers, family, even strangers stranger than even this woman—had applied a thumb of pressure on me as if they were mean kids and I an ant. And like an ant beneath a thumb I didn't just become squashed I disappeared.

How undignified of me. How unprofessional. How unlawyer-like. But still how necessary.

Bitch, no matter what you say, I will reply, *Shut the fuck up*.

I went silent and waited for her to speak and then responded, Bitch, shut the fuck up. The second time it was, Shut your fat ass up. The third time, Shut the fuck up, you cow-faced, cow-uddered, cow-bellied woman. So many variations one can think up in a few minutes time.

And when she was done and realized I had no intention of going back into the building, she hopped onto her *Urban Surfboard*[™] and struggled down the block, one inch at a time before toppling over. I laughed. She threw up her middle finger and I shouted my mantra. The woman got her fat ass right back onto that surfboard and I remained there for some time saying, Shut the fuck up, or some variation, until I was hoarse and she was a little dot in the distance.

Stumbling along a Road
by
Christopher Oie Keller

Two roads diverged, at least I mean
I think I had two options on that day
but honestly, I really can't remember, having seen
so many veer a bit north, but lean
just enough to go another way;

but anyhow, if I recall this right
I tripped while checking out this one girl's ass
and landed in a grassy patch. One might
say I fell for her, but by later that night
I couldn't even remember what she looked like.

Well, I'm pretty sure – no, she was a blonde,
because I thought her purple turtleneck
perfectly accentuated her ponytail. The pond
about a mile south must've been her destination
but I didn't follow; I'm a wreck

in real relationships. I don't know why.
And anyway, I ended up hopping a fence
to get wherever I was going...yet I –
I'm afraid I've yet to figure out why
any series of footsteps makes any kind of difference.

Sal and the Revolution by **Daniel Clausen**

If he tried hard enough, he could make sense of it all. Everything except the monkey. He was stark naked. That--he was sure—was something that happened quite regularly. The guy to his right saluting him with one arm, the other arm trying to hold his guts in place—he was sure he had seen him before in some kind of movie or something. And the guy in front of him, he was sure his name was Dennis or Donald.

"He's clean," Dennis or Donald said over a walkie-talkie.

The other man stopped saluting him and said, "It's good to have you back, sir."

Sal stood there naked. He was confused, but confident he could make sense of it all. "Okay," he said, thinking this would be a safe response. He tried very hard not to glance at the monkey who he was sure was picking his butt.

"So, what's up you guys?" Sal said, trying to sound casual.

"Oh, right," Dennis or Donald said. "They said your memory might be a little scrambled from the brain scrambler Dr. Goodspeed shot you with. I guess I should fill you in. You're the incredible Sal, the martial arts expert and leader of the revolution."

"Hmmm," he said, and tried to smile a little. "Sounds great. So, these people we're fighting..."

The man trying to hold his guts in place finished his sentence. "Dr. Goodspeed, sir. Actually, you just defeated him in an epic battle."

"Epic, huh."

"Well..."

"To be honest," said the guy try to hold in his guts. "I was there, and I kind of skipped out to get a sandwich half-way through. But, I did get kind of curious as to how the battle would turn out, so I came back. Anyway, two and a half stars out of four."

"And...he took my clothes, or something? Hey do you need, like, a bag for that, or like some kind of medical attention."

"Don't worry about me, sir. I'm a bad ass. I can take extremely large amounts of pain if I have to. This is nothing. I did this to myself right before breakfast just to remind myself that if by some chance the revolution ended early, that I needed to go out and buy some fresh pineapple to make fruit salad for the party."

Sal smiled. "Yeah, fruit salad. Because that's the kind of world we're going to build together...a fruity one! Anyway, back on point. Apparently, someone took my clothes."

There was silence. It took Sal a moment to realize that both Dennis/Donald and the guy holding his guts in play either couldn't or didn't want to answer.

"Hey, whose ass do you have to kick around here to get an explanation, huh?" He gave a little laugh just to lighten up the mood. He tried to give the guy holding his guts in place a friendly elbow to the shoulder. But apparently this was one of his most dangerous martial arts moves because the man had to reach up to block his elbow and lost the handle on his guts.

Everyone, including the monkey looked at his guts spill out onto the floor.

"Yeah," Dennis or Donald said. "No one really knows why you don't wear clothes anymore. Something about a symbolic statement about us not having rank, or something. We couldn't really understand it ourselves. But it did have something to do with equality and freedom, or something."

Sal looked over the guys guts on the floor. "So we won, huh. Listen, I'm going to get you a bag for that."

The monkey couldn't stop picking his butt. The monkey, he was sure, was something he could account for. Things were starting to come back to him now.

"And I suppose that right there is a permanent side effect of the brain-scrambler device, Dr. Goodspeed shot me with."

"Well, sir," we can't see what you're pointing at, but yes, we're pretty sure that the brain-scrambler device that Dr. Goodspeed shot you with has now forced you to see a monkey that will occasionally try to assassinate you.

Sal swallowed hard. It wasn't so much that he was scared of the monkey trying to kill him, but that he couldn't stand the idea of the monkey not washing that one hand before attempting to do it.

Yes, things were starting to come back to Sal now. The nature of the revolution—to free the earth from the tyranny of a world controlled by therapists with various types of psychogenic drugs, to go back to simpler ways involving work and remaining in one's original body instead of constant plastic surgeons, and instead of popular magazines telling you how to dress, walk, and why you should feel bad about your bodily form, you would just hang out with your friends and periodically they would be dicks to you.

"As it turns out," Sal said, "Dr. Goodspeed's device has had one other dastardly side-effect. It has given me a strong urge to wear pants."

Symphonymphony
by
Christine Tsen

Desire between my legs –
A cello
Or is it?

A stick in my hand –
A bow
Or is it?

Darkly garbed in concert attire
My eyes scan the audience –
Opening notes spark
As I play a classical theme
Concentrating on shifts.

Slippery glisses –
There is no way to stop
As I clench the bow tightly
Music flowing out
In rhythmic bow mastery
Paradise streaming unabated
In a blind rush of infinite quavers.

Science Fiction
by
Kevin Dickinson

Just by the way the envelope felt in his hand, Lawrence Breton knew what it contained.

"Another rejection letter, of course," he said, tossing it unopened into the fire. This was not the fireplace with the white brick, the medieval logs, the eloquent wrought-iron grate, and the Kodiak rug: that was the one he thought he'd have by now. It wasn't that he couldn't afford it, but that he only wanted to buy it with book royalties. Lawrence Breton was arriving at the opinion that all publishers were soulless reptiles whose categorical genocide of science fiction writers was the greatest literary misunderstanding of the century. He did not write science fiction, and often told this to his toaster in disgust. His sole aspiration was the fireplace: catalog-pure, cabin-worthy, metaphysically warm. Readership, acclaim, and wealth to him were waning obsolete as he became daily more fixated on the idea of the fireplace. It would symbolize all that he had achieved as a writer, remind him like a trophy of its own cost in labor, be a manifest of his own brilliance. His current fireplace was forever consuming his failures, growing in ugliness and its permanence creeping upon him like poison ivy.

Lawrence Breton had to do something. He teleported to his kitchen and took a lunch pill, told his toaster to stop gossiping about the microwave, and strapped on his jetpack.

He uttered his mantra: "I'm not a science fiction writer." Grabbing his ray gun, he blasted off for Random House headquarters.

Three Poems
by
Jennifer Recchio

This is Not a Poem About How I Can't Write in Meter

The new coffee maker uses bean pods.
Complicated machinery to jolt
my eyes with butterscotch sunrise flavor,
preparing me for a day at the house
of opera, watching them belt arias.
I use tiny binoculars until I
head back to the motel, take off my jewels,
wipe down the bathtub with disinfectant,
wash rings down the sink, order Pizza Hut,
watch pay per view, then leave in my rental
car to find the outskirts of town and dance
with hobos, mosquitos, and fools in sun
glasses, drinking up the rain that falls slow
to the ground. I have wasted my sonnet.

Odeful

Oh, hallowed sun
in your hallowed halls
of sundom!
How you circle the earth
like a halo!
You shed your light
only for me,
like my nightlight
from yesteryear
when I wet the bed
with fear. Wait,
delete that part.

Oh cloudy cloud,
cover not my sun
for I need its light
to grow. I bask
in it like a lizard,
and if you cover
my sun I will be left
like a lizard
under a bucket
who eats its own tail.
Except I'll eat a protein bar
instead, because, eww.

Oh sky, blue sky.
You aren't really
blue right now.
You're more of
a clear-ish,
off purple color,
like an old blister
from bad shoes.

Rain down on me, sky!
Wash away my sins
and ex-boyfriends
who were really lousy-
wait, I'm out of lines?

Oil Change

My oil change two weeks overdue, I walk in to Wal-Mart
and ask the employee at customer service where to get an oil change.
She points me to the back of the store and I'm relieved to see a desk
with a sign saying, *Oil change: \$31.88*. I ask for an oil change
and the gray haired woman at the desk asks, "Weight and brand?"

I stare.
She stares.
"I need an oil change."
"Weight and brand."
"Oil. The normal kind."
She looks up the weight.
"But you need to choose the brand."
"What's the difference?"
She says words I don't understand.
"The cheaper one."
She asks for my keys.
"My car is in the grocery parking lot. Where do I need to put it?"
She gives me an I hate you look.
"In the back parking lot, behind the garden center."
I move my car, bring back my keys,
and settle in on a bench for my over-an-hour wait.

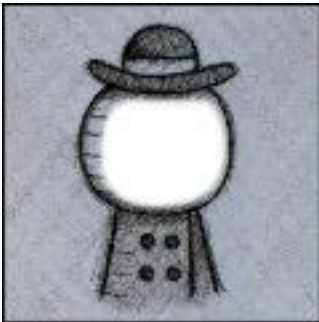
Five minutes later I remember
that my apartment is a two minute walk away.
I walk to my apartment.
I look through my purse.
I look at the door.
I look through my purse.
My keys are at the oil change station.
I go back to Wal-Mart.
The woman at the oil change station looks at me like
Oh my god she's back
what's wrong with this girl

is she missing a brain lobe.
I say I need my apartment key.
She gets me my key ring, I take my key off.
I think of saying, I just graduated with honors.
I don't.
I go back to my apartment
and watch my little pony.

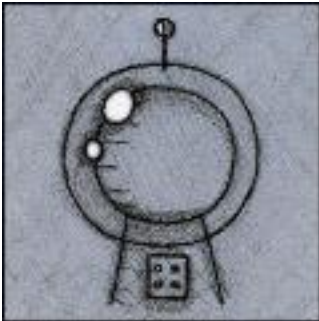
Contributor Biographies



Julie Minicozzi has had several poetry and flash fiction works accepted for publication at various journals recently, but her real mission in life is to collect and distribute clothing for naked squirrels residing in her neighborhood and all around the country. Aghast at the sheer number of squirrels who do not possess adequate attire, Julie has started a non-profit organization to help tackle this daunting task, named S.O.N.S. (Save Our Naked Sciuridae). Please, help these attire-challenged nut-lovers; adopt a squirrel today. (Warning—explicit photo attached. Viewer discretion advised.)



Jocko Benoit is the author of two collections of poetry, *An Anarchist Dream* and *Standoff Terrain* (Frontenac House, 2010). His poetry has appeared or will appear in *Gargoyle*, *Poet Lore*, *The Malahat Review*, *Grain*, and *Queen's Quarterly*, among other magazines. Rumor has it that 'Jocko Benoit' is merely a brand name to which several poets contribute lines and phrases they have cut from their own poems, making the Benoit poem a kind of literary hot dog.



A@ron What is a top-ranking agent of The Deception. His or her talents include insincerity and misdirection.



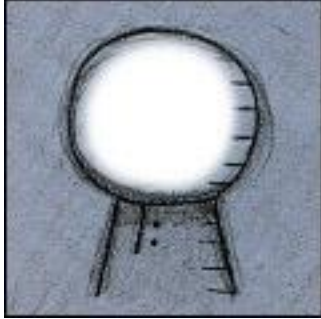
Actively engaging both poetry and comedy since the late 80s, **Daniel Ari** writes and publishes extensively online and in print. *Writer's Digest*, *Conscious Dancer*, *McSweeney's Internet Tendency*, *Ceramics Now*, *Turbulence* and *Jack Magazine* have recently published his writing. He also performs solo work based on favorite poems and still does stand-up every once in awhile, though rarely these days because he never got as famous as, say, Patton Oswalt, and when you're doing open mics after many years, it's depressing. Try it and see.



Rion Amilcar Scott writes fiction all over the damn place, tweets [@reeamilcarscott](https://twitter.com/reeamilcarscott) and somehow received an MFA from George Mason University. He wrote a book called, *Wolf Tickets*, from which this piece is taken. Other wolf pieces here: <http://forgottentunneltv.tumblr.com/WolfTickets>.



A number of these facts about **Christopher Oie Keller** are false, and the rest are true: He is months away from marrying his former Victoria's Secret manager. He was brutally critiqued on television for *So You Think You Can Dance*. He once was in face-licking distance of Morgan Freeman. He can breathe in space. He sold bras to a Hannah Montana impersonator on several occasions. He does know Jack. His Adam's apple is more kumquat-like. His work can be found in places such as public restrooms, private board rooms, and bored pub rooms.



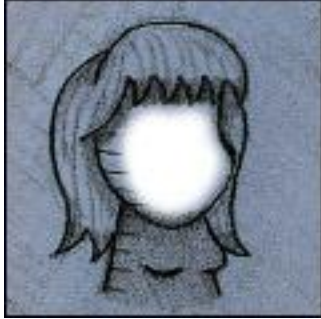
Daniel Clausen is a man of great industry and upright moral character. One day he plans to run for city comptroller. His work has been published in *Slipstream Magazine*, *Leading Edge Science Fiction*, and *Black Petals*. His third book—*The Ghosts of Nagasaki*—will be appearing in November. You can read excerpts and sign up for the emailing list at: ghostsofnagasaki.com



Christine Tsen is a published cellist and poet. Her symphonic experiences are rich with poetic inspiration, and her poetry has put the muse back in her music. Her poems are in *The Camel Saloon*, *The Weekenders Magazine*, *THRUSH Poetry Journal*, and *The Bark*, among others. More: www.ChristineThomasTsen.com.



Kevin Dickinson, founding editor of the dormant *Writers' Bloc* (writersblocmag.org), is trying to determine what he wants to be when he grows up. It's definitely not Bridge Painter or Yurt Builder. Or Cat Technician. He cannot find any openings for Senior Gold Bullion Receiver. He has been published in *Bartleby-Snopce*, *LITnIMAGE*, and *Foundling Review*. He enjoys rain but not cheese



Jennifer Recchio is a creature who dwells in the darkness of her parents' basement and lives off Cheez-Its. When the weather warms, the Jennifer has been known to chase squirrels and run screaming from birds. It has been rumored that the Jennifer has a college degree and a job at a pharmacy like a respectable person, but she denies it adamantly. She's weak against cookies and glitter pens.