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PLAYMATE OF THE YEAR 2004

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The showdown over
your mutant dinner

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Wedding bells and
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By Gore Vidal

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sheds her
wings...and
her clothes

DEREK JETER INTERVIEW

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beat me—
at everything"

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Even on a team of superstars, **Derek Jeter** has long been the Yankees' main attraction. Then Alex Rodriguez came to town. Has Jeter's place been usurped? Not according to writer **Diane K. Shah**. "The thing about Derek—and I don't think this is true of A-Rod or any other ballplayer I've ever heard of—is that girls actually squeal," says Shah, who plays rhetorical catch with Jeter for this month's *Playboy Interview*. His Mr. Nice Guy image is for real too. "When I arrived at his house he said, 'Nice to meet you. How was your flight?' No other interview subject has ever asked me about my flight. Throughout the interviews his housekeeper, Jewell, was visible in the background and often laughed at Derek's answers. She would say, 'I wondered how he was going to answer that.'" Find out here.



Love and War in Las Vegas, by **Scott Dickensheets** and **Kate Silver**, uncovers the increasingly violent dirty tricks that chapels are using against their competitors in America's instant-wedding capital. "What first interested us," says Dickensheets, "was when a minister was beaten up and said it was by employees of a rival chapel. But the rival said somebody else had hired thugs to beat him up so they could frame this other chapel. The rising tide of weird incidents made clear that there was something worth pursuing."



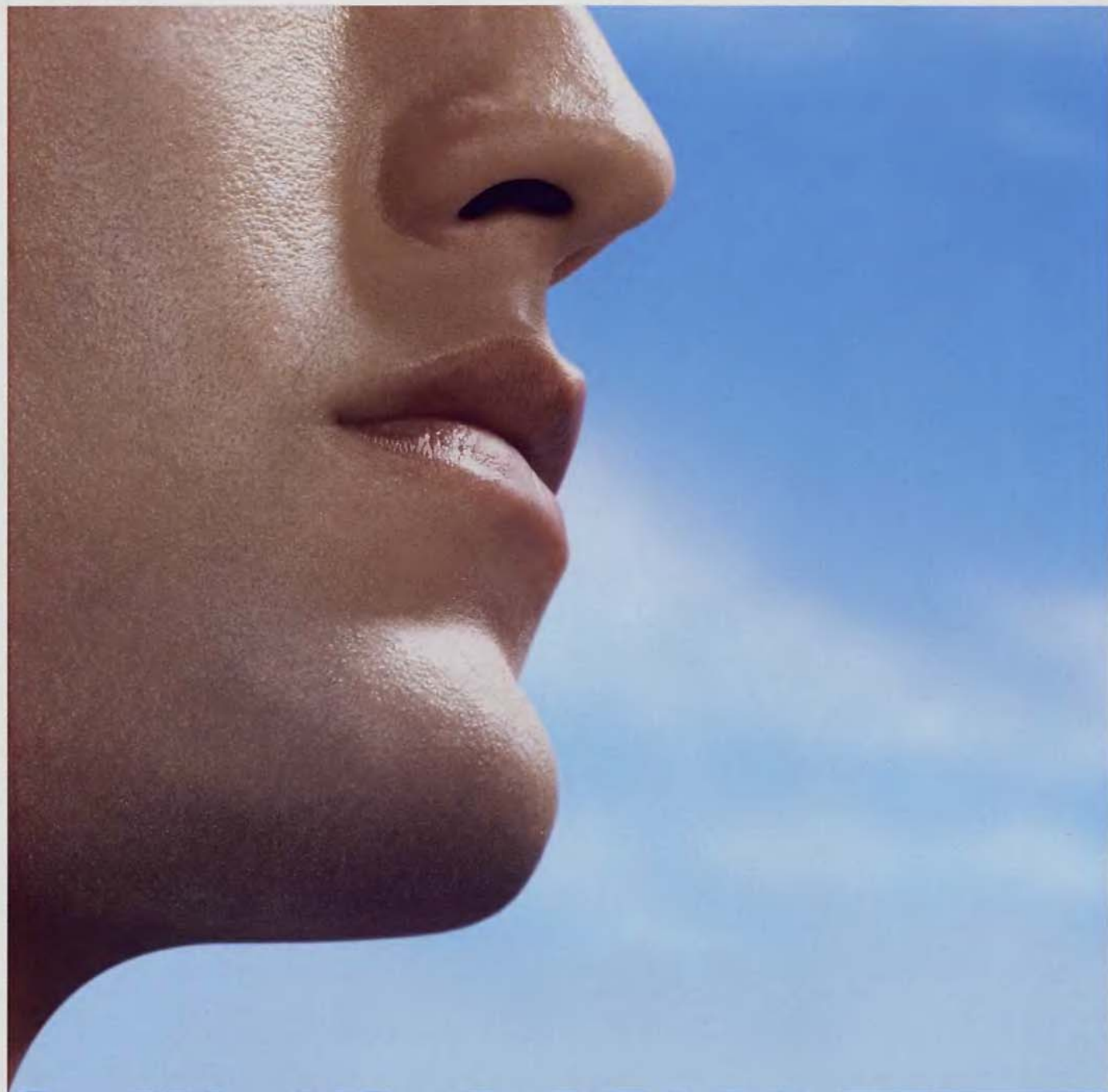
Paul Theroux, the author of this month's *The Blind Man's Wife*, is a longtime PLAYBOY contributor. "My first short stories began appearing in PLAYBOY in 1971," he says. "At that time I was living in Singapore, where PLAYBOY was banned. Banning the magazine of course made it very popular. I got the idea for this story from an old painting I had seen in a book—and I wish I could find that damned book again! It was a collection of Indian Mogul paintings, one showing a smiling man on a bench and, behind a nearby hedge, a man and a woman engaged in serious hunka-chunka. The title was *The Blind Man's Wife*. The notion began to obsess me."



The artwork for *Feeding Our Deepest Fears*, our look at the phenomenon known as Frankenfood, is by **Jim Ludtke**. "I took a Middle American landscape, and then I tried to make it look as ominous as possible," he explains of the image—a crop circle in the form of a biohazard symbol. "It's all digital. I work on Macs. The image is made with the same sort of tools you use for 3-D animation, which is my other passion. It's an amazing technology—almost too amazing. The uniformity of digital art drives me nuts, so I end up redoing every blade of grass. I really like the hand-made feel of a piece."



This month's *Forum* features "One Nation, Under God, Divisible," by **Gore Vidal**, much of whose illustrious career has been devoted to sparking debate about religion and its role in our society. This latest piece examines the current furor over the pledge of allegiance. "In the First Amendment to the Constitution," he says, "the Founders made it clear that this was not to be a sky-god nation with a national religion like that of England, from whom we had just separated. But the sky-goddess do not give up easily."



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In 1983 two scientists decided to shoot DNA into an onion with a pellet gun. What seemed like a bizarre experiment has evolved into a multibillion-dollar industry. Today 75 percent of all processed foods in the U.S. are genetically modified. These Frankenfoods, as critics call them, have the public guarding its plate. Are the fears justified? We predict the twists, turns and turbocharged turnips in the controversy's future. **BY DAN BAUM**

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Are you ready for a revolution? It's already here—futuristic digital gadgets are about to change the way you play. Check out a new DVD-Tivo combination unit, a remote control that programs itself and a DVD server that will keep you from ever needing to step outside again. **BY STEVE MORGENSTERN**

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BY PAUL THEROUX

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cover story

No actress better understands how much love bites than Chorismo Carpenter. Portraying Cordelio Chase, she drove stakes into the undead on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and its spin-off series, *Angel*. Photographer Russell Jones hypnotized Chorismo into taking off her demon-slaying tool belt and uniform. Our Rabbit gets all tangled up in this angel's hair.



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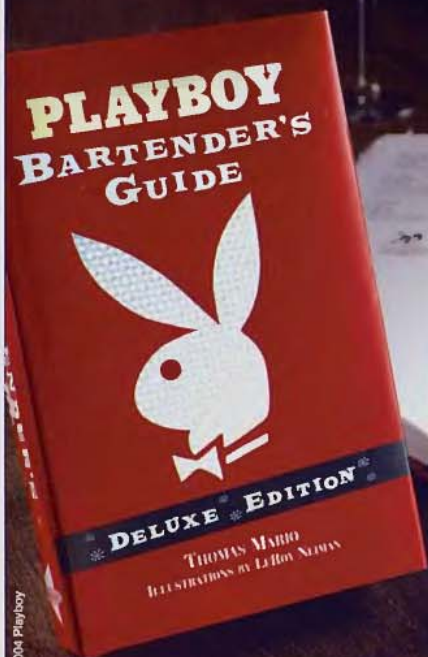
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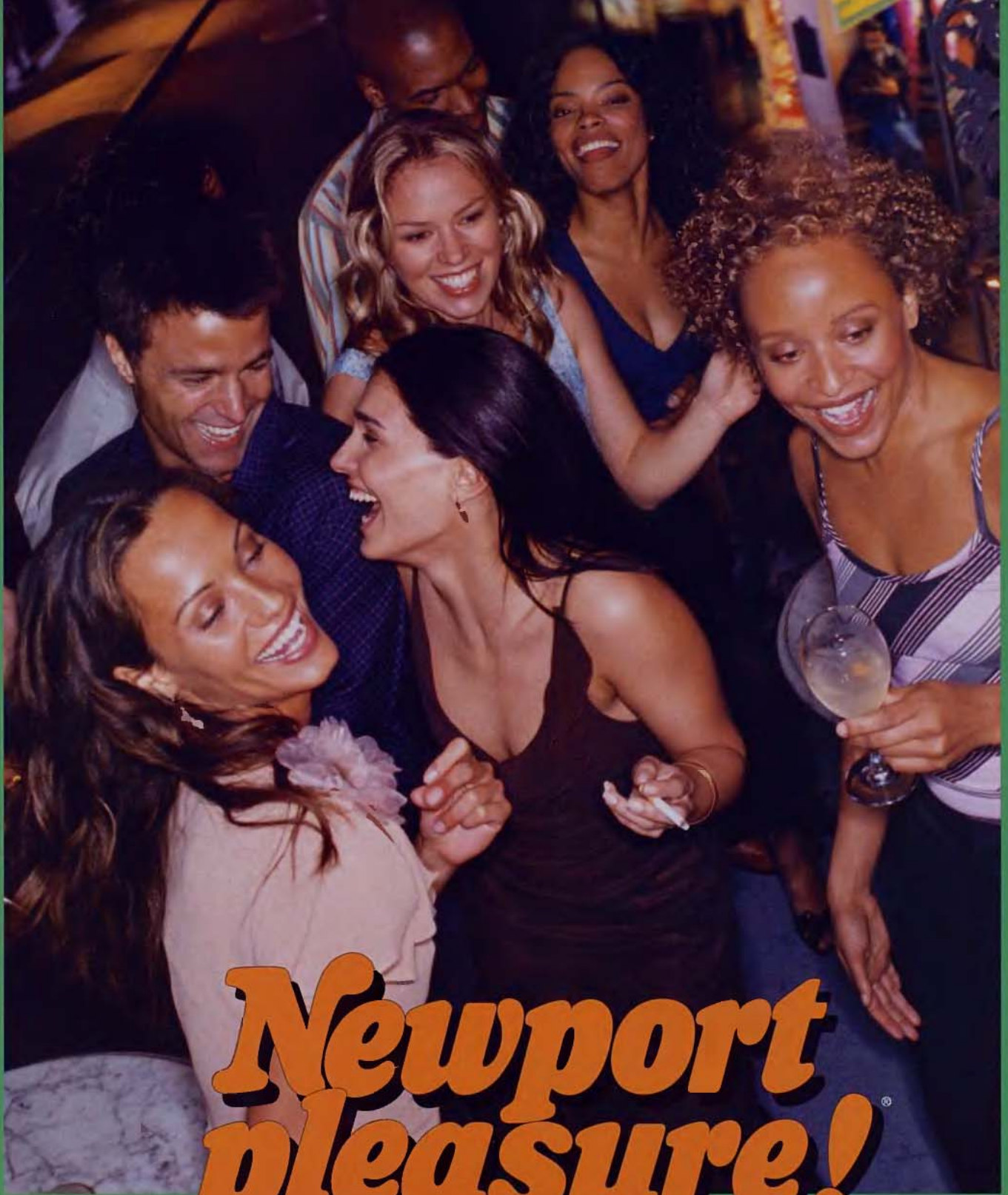
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HANGIN' WITH H&F



A month in the life of Mr. Playboy means Mansion madness and star-studded nights on the town. (1) Hef and his girlfriends being interviewed by a pajama-clad Sharon Osbourne. (2) Hef getting a hug from Paris Hilton at a Mansion screening. (3) Stephanie Heinrich giving her beau, country singer Joe Nichols, a tour. (4) A tribute to Don Adams and *Get Smart* with daughter Christa Adams and Eric McCormack at the L.A. Museum of Television & Radio. (5) Seen at Glamourcon: Dita von Teese with Hef, Cristal, Holly and Bridget. (6) PMOY 1976 Lillian Müller. (7) Barbara Moore. (8) With Carmen Electra at her wedding reception. (9) Bunny Bridget giving a tour to supermodel Kate Moss and friends. (10) Lit lit up *The Tom Leykis Show* at the Mansion. (11) Hef and Leykis on the air. (12) Holly and Hef at Cuba Gooding Jr.'s birthday party at Bliss. (13) A smooch from Shannen Doherty at Concorde. (14) WWE superstar Torrie Wilson. (15) Taping a guest appearance on *The Bernie Mac Show*. (16) Bernie with Holly, Zoe, Bridget, Izabella and Sheila.



50TH
ANNIVERSARY
INTERNATIONAL
Party



To celebrate our golden anniversary—and the fact that Playboy is a global empire with 17 foreign-language editions—editors, TV execs and licensees from around the globe gathered at the Mansion. (1) Co-hosts Christie and Hef. (2) Tom Arnold flanked by Bunnies. (3) Kimberly Stewart and Cisco Adler. (4) DJ Poet, with Bunnies on back-up. (5) Jeremy Shockey of the New York Giants and Jamie Foxx with a friend named Coffee. (6) Charisma Carpenter and Damian Hardy. (7) Nicky and Paris Hilton with Lindsay Lohan. (8) Playmate Cara Wakelin and Shane West. (9) *The O.C.*'s Melinda Clarke. (10) C.C. DeVille and Shannon Malone. (11) Lauren Michelle Hill, Jim Finn of the New York Giants and Rosa Blasi. (12) 50th Anniversary Centerfold Colleen Shannon on the turntables. (13) Nick Stahl in good company. (14) Dita von Teese teasing the crowd with her classic strip act. (15) Tara Reid and her siblings. (16) A lucky guest in the pool with Cyber Girls. (17) Centerfold celebs Christina Santiago, Pamela Anderson and Brande Roderick.



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WWE DIVAS

The Sable and Torrie pictorial (*No Holds Barred*, March) is one of the hottest I've seen in PLAYBOY. The only flaw is the last spread of the feature, which shows Sable on her stomach. You printed the photo over two pages and in turn split her beautiful butt right in half.

Jim Elliston
Delton, Michigan

Sable and Torrie can pin me any day. I just hope the count continues past three.

Eric Spudic
Mount Olive, Illinois



The slamming bodies of the WWE.

I was at a friend's place and swore to him that the Rabbit Head on my cover at home was in a different location than the Rabbit on his cover. After comparing the two, we realized you published two different covers. Mine has Sable standing up, and his has Torrie standing up. Why two covers?

Anthony Pellegrino
Aberdeen, Washington

We weren't sure who would win the naked showdown—and we still don't know.

DOG'S BIG BITE

The treatment of bounty hunting and bail bond agents in Kent Black's article on Duane "Dog" Chapman (*A Dog's Tale*, March) misses the mark somewhat. It's incorrect to suggest that bail fugitive recovery agents, as they're properly known, are throwbacks to the Wild West. Nearly every state has strict laws requiring that recovery agents be carefully screened and trained. An increasing number of states insist that the apprehension of a

fugitive involve a peace officer. While exaggerating the drama of fugitive recovery makes for fun reading, the work is usually no more exciting than watching an officer serve a warrant.

As for bail bonding, agents don't like to lose money, so they're cautious. Most do such a good job of assessing the flight risk of a defendant that there just isn't much work to go around. Of the 3 million bail bonds written each year, only six percent result in a "failure to appear." In addition, eight of 10 people who jump bail are caught, usually without the help of a bounty hunter.

Bail bondsmen play an important role by ensuring that defendants show up in court—and finding them if they don't. Whenever a bondsman bails someone out, taxpayers no longer have to pay for that prisoner's food and lodging. In New York, for example, every person released on bail saves the state \$265 a day.

Jerry Watson
American Bail Coalition
Washington, D.C.

Kent Black writes that Dog Chapman, Dog's son and a cohort—all of whom look like bikers—boarded a flight from Los Angeles to Guadalajara with Kevlar vests, shackles, handcuffs and a case of pepper spray in their carry-ons. This is LAX security after 9/11?

E.V. Magee
Vancouver, British Columbia

Dog said he was concerned that the team would be stopped by security or by Mexican customs but couldn't explain why they weren't. Providence?

GUTSY FICTION

Thank you for publishing Chuck Palahniuk's short story *Guts* (March). I saw Chuck give a reading in Beverly Hills. It was so explicit that people were passing out. What made me queasy was when he told us the three stories were based on real-life experiences. I hope more readers give his books a test-drive. They'll become novel groupies too.

Brandy Taylor
Rialto, California

I'm never going near a pool again.

Scott Minich
East Lansing, Michigan

Guts is one of the funniest stories I have ever read but for all the wrong reasons. Chuck, you are thoroughly disturbed—and I love it.

Abel Pinedo
Santa Ana, California

Palahniuk will someday be regarded as one of America's most brilliant, innovative writers.

Matthew Wunder
West Chester, Pennsylvania

WAR IS OVER

I hope William Gasser didn't pay too much for the tank he's standing in front of (*The Holy Grail*, March). You identify it as a German Panzer Mk IV. It's actually an American M47.

Larry Reavis
Medford, Oregon

Would you believe it's an American tank disguised as a German tank? No? Okay.

BEHIND CARREY'S MASK

Jim Carrey (*Playboy Interview*, March) doesn't "come off as a self-important asshole"—his words—but as a truthful human being.

Jay Lanfear
Nashville, Tennessee

Thanks for showing me how crazy Carrey has become. No wonder his recent movies have sucked. Carrey almost sounds as if he's in a cult.

Mike Thompson
Tucson, Arizona

I had no idea how insightful and spiritual this truly gifted comedian is or how hard he seeks beauty in this



Readers debate Carrey's spiritual side.

messed-up world. I wish more people, especially those in Hollywood, would look at life the way he does.

Kelly Sheridan
Towson, Maryland

I'd like to test Jim Carrey's sincerity. When discussing reality television he says, "A hundred grand means

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nothing." It so happens that I need a hundred grand to fund my spiritual quest. Can you help, Jim?

Dave Plunkett
Memphis, Tennessee

Carrey works in mysterious ways—but not that mysterious.

DOCTOR X

Having taught psychopharmacology at Georgetown University for 25 years and done animal research on MDMA, I feel qualified to evaluate Mark Boal's *The Agony and Ecstasy of Alexander Shulgin* (March). In addition to being well written, the article is fascinating, accurate and informative. If I were still teaching medical students, I would make it required reading.

Don Thompson
Gaithersburg, Maryland

I am an 18-year-old who just bought my first PLAYBOY. The Shulgin article pulled me in within the first couple of paragraphs. At first I was intrigued by the idea of a story about drugs. But



Tripping with the man who made ecstasy.

what ended up getting to me was that Shulgin was oppressed simply for trying to enlighten the world.

Patrick Kent
Danville, California

Shulgin must have already been indulging in his own special chemical combinations when he sewed his petty officer insignia on his right sleeve, as shown in the photo printed with the story. All the other soldiers have theirs sewn on the left sleeve, as regulations required.

Donovan Henderson
Grove City, Ohio

At the time that Shulgin served, petty officers in certain branches of the Navy wore their insignia on the right sleeve.

MARDI GRAS FANTASY

Is that Britney Spears sticking out her tongue and baring her breasts on the Playboy.com page (March)?

Troy Neff
Zanesville, Ohio

Sadly, it's not. But someday...

RISQUÉ COMICS

I got a nostalgic kick in the head out of your review of the book *Tijuana Bibles* (March). In the 1940s we called them fuck books. My favorite featured Superman and Wonder Woman. It doesn't take much imagination to guess what Superman's biggest muscle was. Screwing up enough courage to show the books to girl classmates was considered a dangerous rite of passage.

Lanny Middings
San Ramon, California

CYBORG DREAMS?

I couldn't help noticing that Rebecca DiPietro seems to be missing something (*Cyber Dreams*, March). You airbrushed out her genitals!

Brett Buckmir
Fairfield, Connecticut

We've been accused of a lot of things but never this. The photo was not retouched. It's simply an optical illusion created when Rebecca leaned forward during the shot.

CAMPAIGN FOLLIES

The illustrations for *Last-Ditch Stunt Politics* (March) are perhaps the most disturbing, twisted and hilarious images I've ever seen on your pages.

Stephen Lee Roldan
Alea, Hawaii

NOT LAUGHING

In February you printed a joke about two drunk drivers who guessed they were getting closer to the city because they were striking more pedestrians. I lost a good friend on his 21st birthday when a drunk driver struck and killed him. I have always thought of PLAYBOY as a very tasteful and sensitive magazine, but now I doubt that.

Justin Depasse
Worcester, Massachusetts

HOTTIE HUBBY

When my friend Sandra Hubby told me that she hoped to pose for PLAYBOY, I agreed to take a few Polaroids of her so she could send them in for consideration. Sandra left town soon after, and we lost touch. But after opening the March issue and seeing her dream of being a Playmate fulfilled, I wanted to let her know how proud I am of her.

Kim Kovalchie
Canton, Ohio



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babe of the month

Nicole Rayburn

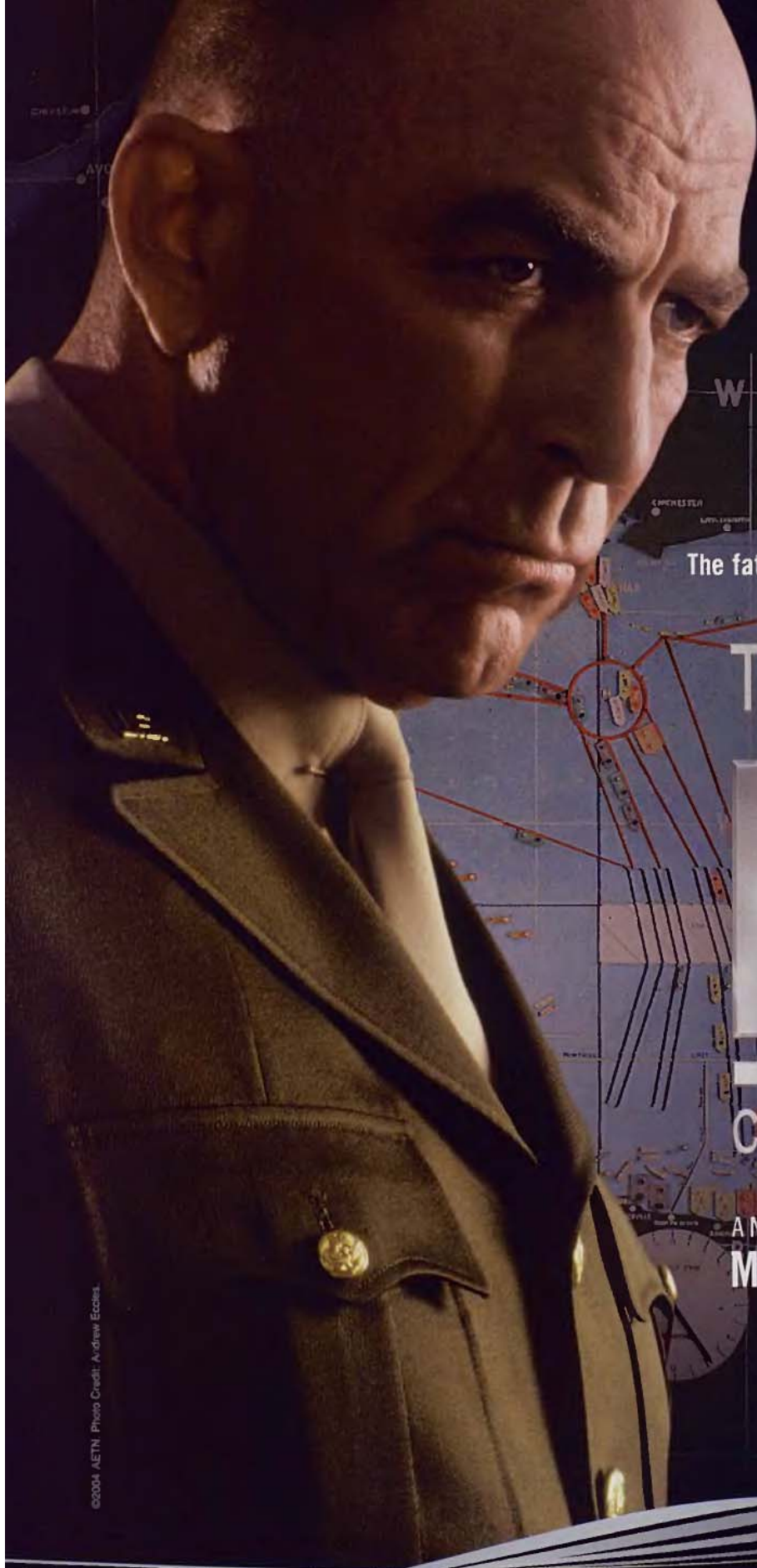
For this uninhibited starlet, *The Terminal* is just the beginning

Nicole Rayburn knows full well what five little words—"a film by Steven Spielberg"—can mean for an actress's résumé, so she's trying to keep an even keel about her role as a watch salesgirl in the Hollywood heavyweight's next movie, *The Terminal*. She even gets to snub Tom Hanks, who plays an airport-stranded foreigner applying for a job. "I'm like, 'Dude, you don't even have a Social Security number,'" says the 27-year-old Florida native. It's certainly a switch from her debut in the *Jackass*-like reality flick *Bar Fighter*, in which

"Sometimes it's more comforting and nurturing to be with a girl."

she instigates actual bar brawls. "I'm very levelheaded now, but oh, did I have spunk in me for a while," she says. "I'm definitely a lover, not a fighter." Even so, it's back to the dive bars in the upcoming pool-hall comedy *Kisses & Caroms*, in which her bisexual billiards-shark character doesn't seem much of a stretch. "I really love chicks," she says. "Sometimes it's more comforting and nurturing to be with a girl. One lucky boyfriend did get to have threesomes with me." Instead of regretting those dalliances, Nicole simply wishes she'd jumped into showbiz at an earlier age. "I sometimes get frustrated that things aren't moving fast enough," she says. "Then I think of how many actresses never even get that first role, so I know everything's moving on its own course."





The fate of millions rests on the fortitude of one.

TOM SELLECK

IKE

COUNTDOWN TO D-DAY

AN A&E ORIGINAL MOVIE EVENT

MEMORIAL DAY

8PM/7C

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The art of Entertainment™

barometer

IT'S JUNE AND...



...you're glad you're not graduating from high school this year. A UCLA survey found that college kids party less than ever and that 58 percent disapprove of casual sex. And if you are graduating? Reach for the sky—only you can make campus home to coed naked keggers again.

...you wouldn't think a man could compete with a horse in a cross-country race. Okay, man has yet to win the Man vs. Horse marathon in Wales (June 12), but four years ago the equine contender won by just 90 seconds—less time than it takes to read *Barometer!*



...you're revering the Greatest Generation on June 6. Observe D-Day's 60th anniversary with a long day of *The Big Red One*, *Saving Private Ryan* and, um, *The Longest Day*. Then give up your night to *Band of Brothers*. War is hell, but war movies are awesome.

...you're pumped to whip your neighbors at baseball. June 25 to 27 features interleague play: Mets-Yanks, Cubs-Sox, Giants-A's, Astros-Rangers, Dodgers-Angels and Royals-Cards. Up north, the Jays and Expos will wrangle for the coveted title of Least Cruddy Canuck Team.



...you don't have to know motorcycles to grasp that the new Triumph Rocket III is one unholy beast of a ride. Its 2,294 cc engine is the largest ever in a production bike, and its 140 horsepower matches the Celica and Miata—which, after all, are one-ton cars.

autoerotica



SEX DRIVE

TEACHING CAR GUYS TO FIND IT WITHOUT GRINDING IT

Since 1960 Haynes Publishing has issued nearly 2,000 guides to fixing Chevys, Hondas, Jaguars and crap on wheels like Citroën's 2CV. Now the auto-repair giant is sharing technical expertise of another sort with *Sex Manual: 16 Years Onwards, All Models, Shapes, Sizes and Colors*. Using graphs and illustrations common to car guides, the how-to tome covers the inner workings of the female machine, the proper maintenance of your own undercarriage and how all the parts fit together. Its pages speak a gearhead's language, with Q&A sessions, first-person tips from other drivers and—when all else fails—the cartoon adventures of a sassy, smirking condom. The "Carma Sutra" section begins with simple maneuvers such as the Back Seat 69 and the Secret Suction (receiving a hummer while driving) and then progresses to such tricks as the Sunroof Special. The best part? The simple yes-no troubleshooting quizzes. The one on erectile dysfunction covers all possible causes—from diabetes to spinal damage—and probes your relationship only as a last resort. Even then it exudes hand-me-a-wrench frankness: "Are you having an affair with someone else?" Like all useful writing, the Haynes guide knows that talk is cheap but service is golden. Your car may never feel the same.

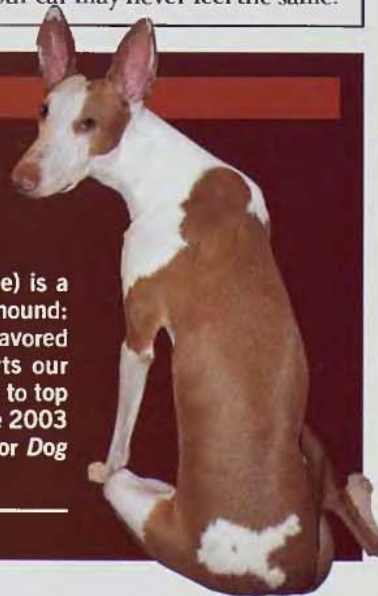
spot the bunny

HARE OF THE DOG

HER MARK IS BETTER THAN HER BITE

This Playmate of the Year (real name) is a party animal. First, she's an Ibizan hound: Her ancestors hail from the island favored by Euros gone wild. She also sports our Rabbit logo in brown and white. And to top it off she won the Hound Group at the 2003 Westminster Dog Show and posed for *Dog World* magazine—nude, of course.

Spot more bunnies at Playboy.com.



tip sheet

WE'RE PUTTING WORDS
IN YOUR MOUTHNOW YOU NO LONGER HAVE TO SEARCH
FOR SOMETHING TO SAY

Hiposuction: The process whereby something hip becomes so accepted by the mainstream culture that it loses its coolness, as recently occurred with trucker hats—and as usually befalls street slang such as *hiposuction*.

Study drugs: Ritalin, Adderall and other prescription ADD medications taken by college students who want to cram without coffee-induced jitters, pee breaks or halitosis.

Espresso sex: A quickie with someone you don't know well, if at all. A real rush.



Berkshire pork: A fatter, darker and tastier variety of pork that sells at up to five times the price of regular pork. Also called heritage, heirloom, rare-breed or pedigreed pork, it comes from pigs bred by traditional methods predating the movement that has seen pork become 30 percent leaner over the past 20 years.

Almond joy: The male version of the camel toe, occurring when your bits and pieces are squeezed into too-tight pants.

New Yorkie: Made-up name that some animal shelters use in place of *pit bull* in an attempt to make the breed appear friendlier and more adoptable. Frankly, the idea bites.

Retrossexuals: Men who forgo fashion and grooming, emphasize their heterosexuality and cultivate a conspicuous indifference to their appearance. No product, no couture, no manscaping.

Aimers: Gamer term for players who excel at first-person shooters.

Smokeasies: Private urban apartments that morph into illegal weekend cocktail lounges for drinkers who are unable to cope with antismoking ordinances.

NUMP/NUWT: Acronyms on party invitations indicating "no ugly men, please" and "no ugly women, thanks."



Whale tail: The Y-shape fabric formation visible on the lower back of a woman wearing low-rise jeans and a thong. For a proper whale tail, the sides of the thong must rise above the sides of the jeans.

pizza nut

LUST IN
THE CRUSTPACKED WITH APHRODISIACS,
PIZZAGRA REALLY SATISFIES

While a perfect night for many men would consist of pizza for dinner and sex for dessert, a large pie with extra cheese too often leaves us comatose on the couch. Could the need for some sort of sex-fuel pizza be more obvious? The cleverly named Pizzagra, dreamed up for hungry lovers by the English organic grocery chain Iceland, starts with tomato sauce but replaces libido-squashing toppings such as pepperoni with just about every reputed aphrodisiac known to horny man. A Pizzagra with the works may include red peppers (to get the blood flowing), onions (believed so sexy in ancient Egypt that priests were forbidden to eat them), artichokes (once the vegetable of choice among French nymphos) and asparagus (with vitamin E to spur the production of sex hormones). Then the ingredi-

ents really take a turn for the bizarre: banana slices (also good for hormones), chocolate (drives women nuts) and strawberries (Iceland calls them fruit nipples). A grab bag of libidinal spices further alters the flavor picture: garlic (sure), cardamom (well, okay), ginger (*hmm*) and eucalyptus (what?). "It tastes great," Iceland spokesman Steve Sweeney assures us, which is what he's paid to do. Notably absent are oysters and, despite the name, Viagra itself. Fact is, the company says its concoction is not an impotence remedy but a slice of horn-dog heaven. A none too subtle one at that—if you serve pizza with bananas and chocolate on top, she's bound to suspect something is up.

toys R them

NO-ACTION FIGURE

ONE DOLL'S QUIET JIHAD AGAINST
WESTERN CULTURE

To devout little girls of the Muslim faith, Barbie is a flesh-flaunting libertine of shameless vanity and vices. To the rescue: In-and-Out Razanne, a doll that hides her flirting flair beneath modest *hijab* attire. According to doll maker Noor Art, Razanne dresses in the latest fashions at home but wears a traditional *jilbaab* coat outside. "Razanne talks to Barbie," reports one parent in a website testimonial to the doll's virtue, "and tells her she should wear *hijab*." Yeah, but wait till Razanne gets a load of Barbie's decadent beach house.



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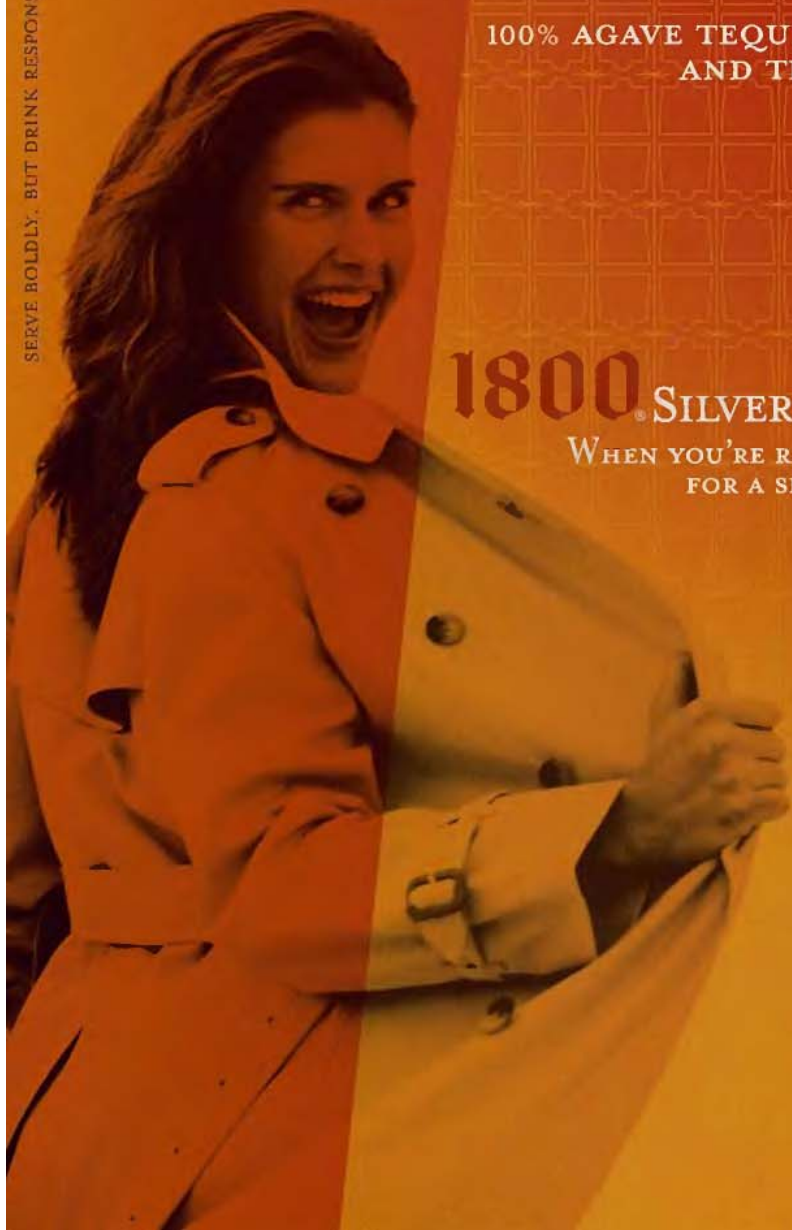


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grape expectations



JOHN MATTOS

THE NEW JUICE BOX
CAN GOOD WINE COME IN SQUARE PACKAGING?



Show up at a dinner party with a box of wine under your arm and you may earn a seat in the basement—until you tap the seal on Delicato's 2002 shiraz. Unlike most boxed wines, which are a mix of mystery grapes and sugar, the wine inside Delicato's Bota Box was awarded an impressive 90 out of 100 points by *Wine Enthusiast*. The plastic pouch is actually an improvement over a bottle-and-cork combo: Corks can spoil, and the oxygen inside a half-finished bottle can sour a mellow merlot in

days. In fact, the seal on the three-liter box is so sound that the vino pours out rich in esters, which means you should let it breathe a bit in an open decanter or a glass. Or a Dixie cup—old habits die hard.

fatal distraction



GOING IN STYLE
CRAZY CASKETS CHEER UP THE GRIMMEST OF REAPERS

If you sell shoes for a living, you may as well step into the hereafter in a giant wingtip. At least that's the thinking in Ghana, where a coffin is the last word in style. Fifty years ago a Ghanian angler shipped off in a seven-foot fish and started a trend; today there's an endless variety of silly, folk-art-y things on the market. Cabdrivers are buried in wooden taxis, preachers in Bible-shaped boxes and suds lovers in beer bottles. Want your own? Eshopafrica.com will put a giant reminder of mortality in your living room for a mere \$1,000.

employee of the month



CANNED HEAT

WASTE MANAGER JENNIFER RIOS IS AT YOUR DISPOSAL

PLAYBOY: So give us the dirt on your job.

JENNIFER: I work for a waste management company in upstate New York. We don't have actual garbage trucks. We're the middleman. Our clients call us, and we call the hauler. I do customer service work.

PLAYBOY: What's the office like?

JENNIFER: There are about 15 people, mostly female. We wear whatever we like, because we never come face-to-face with the clients. So we can work in our pajamas if we want.

PLAYBOY: Pajamas? Anything else?

JENNIFER: My bra and panties always have to match—no matter what I wear. It's usually a lace bra with a matching thong. I'm particular about lingerie.

PLAYBOY: What kind of junk can't you handle?

JENNIFER: One thing I hate is when I'm walking on the street and guys yell, "Hey, mami!" I talk about garbage all day, so I don't want a guy who talks trash.



Employee of the Month candidates: Send pictures to PLAYBOY Photography Department, Attn: Employee of the Month, 680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611. Must be at least 18 years old. Must send photocopies of a driver's license and another valid ID (not a credit card), one of which must include a current photo.



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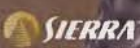
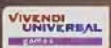
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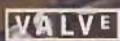
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Paint It Black and Blue

From 1997 to 2000, injuries caused by playing paintball tripled, from **926** to **2,780**.

Eat Our Dust

Percentage of drivers ticketed for speeding who were doing over **80 mph**:



Book of Pointless Records



Making Hiss-tory

9 Most live snakes stuffed in mouth, by Jackie Bibby of Whiskey Flats, Texas. He also holds the world record for sitting in a bathtub with the most snakes: **75**

Skip It Good

According to a team of French scientists, you will achieve the maximum number of bounces when skipping stones if your pebble hits the water at a **20-degree** angle.



Pepé Le Pew

Lyon—France's third-largest city—spends almost **\$600,000** annually cleaning dog (and other pet) poop off its streets. To raise awareness of the problem, the city littered the streets with **10,000** plastic turds. Inside each was a message suggesting that the **\$45** fines would be enforced more often if the Lyonnais didn't cut the crap.

The Bottom Five



Worst All-Time Strikeout Victims

Of the nearly 15,000 hitters who have ever swung a bat in a big-league game, these guys have whiffed the most:

| | | |
|---------|------------------|-------------------------|
| 14,603. | Willie Stargell | 1,936 strikeouts |
| 14,604. | Jose Canseco | 1,942 strikeouts |
| 14,605. | Sammy Sosa | 1,977 strikeouts |
| 14,606. | Andres Galarraga | 2,000 strikeouts |
| 14,607. | Reggie Jackson | 2,597 strikeouts |

Branded at Birth

According to the Social Security Administration, **298** newborn girls were named Armani in 2000. Also born were **164** Nauticas, **21** L'Oréals, **6** Timberlands, **7** Courvoisiers, **5** Celicas and **1** Xerox.

Price Check

Whiskey Business



\$33,000 Price paid for a bottle of 1926 Macallan single malt scotch sold at a recent auction—a world record for a bottle of hooch.



Breast Buy

Average cost of breast enlargement—**\$3,360**
Average cost of breast reduction—**\$5,351**



Money for Nothing

- hourly rate** job
- \$6** Keep garden hoses uninked for a lawn care company in Montana
- \$8.50** Act as human chew toy for police dog training in Vancouver
- \$8.50** Grill hot dogs at a nudist colony in Spokane, Illinois
- \$10.50** Listen to trial lawyers rehearse their arguments
- \$11** Ride shotgun for FedEx so that truck can use the HOV lane

ROCK the PLAYBOY MANSION



Enter for a chance to
WIN A TRIP TO THE MANSION'S
"33rd Birthday Party"



COLLEEN MARIE
Playboy Playmate
Miss August 2003

Go to RollingRock.com for a chance to join Colleen Marie and nine of her Playmate friends

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"Hey, maybe it's full of condoms!"

movie of the month

[TROY]

Homer's epic tale aims to make *Gladiator* look like a walk on the beach

In case you've forgotten your ninth-grade reading of *The Iliad*, the ancient world's weapon of mass destruction was a beautiful woman. Spartan hottie Helen (newcomer Diane Kruger) runs off with Trojan playboy Paris (Orlando Bloom) and sparks a total war on land and sea, with stalwart warriors Achilles (Brad Pitt) and Hector (Eric Bana) leading massive armies. Given that director Wolfgang Petersen and a hotshot young cast were in charge of all the civilization toppling, was the set a clash of the titans? "It requires arrogance to take on these characters," says Bana. "You can't play Hector and slump out of your trailer. You've got to walk the walk. But we all got along disgustingly well, with no scuffling over turf." Well, maybe just a minor scuffle when the cast-of-thousands combat came down to Achilles versus Hector. "I've got a small but real scar courtesy of Mr. Pitt," says Bana.

"You can't play Hector and slump out of your trailer."

"We made a pact that we wouldn't hold back, so if we ended up hitting each other, hey, we're friends. I got this decent whack across the nose from a sword handle. Get out a magnifying glass and you'll see the initials *B.P.* there." Since victory in these Greek games means your enemy's head on a sword, expect the on-screen spectacle to be much more brutal. (May 14)

—Stephen Rebell

now showing

BUZZ

The Clearing

(Robert Redford, Willem Dafoe, Helen Mirren) This low-key thriller pits rich industrialist Redford against ex-employee Dafoe, who holds him hostage in a remote forest. While they play cat-and-mouse games, Redford's frantic wife (Mirren) strategizes with the FBI to bring her husband back alive.

Our call: Kidnap thrillers are a dime a dozen; the suspense machinery here works best whenever the focus switches to Mirren's home-front dilemmas and the sadly creepy crook.



Shrek 2

(Voices of Mike Myers, Eddie Murphy, Cameron Diaz) The fractured fairy tale continues with the happy newlyweds accepting an invitation to meet Princess Fiona's parents, who freak to learn that the young marrieds are both ogres. The in-laws then spring some wacky surprises of their own.

Our call: Another dose of Hollywood-satirizing humor should please adult fans of the original blockbuster. What other cartoon would cast Larry King as the voice of the ugly stepsister?



Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban

(Daniel Radcliffe, Gary Oldman, David Thewlis) Things turn scarier in the third installment of the Potter juggernaut, what with an escaped murderer (Oldman) making a beeline for the little wizard (Radcliffe), a werewolf professor (Thewlis) and ghoulish "dementors" who specialize in soul sucking.

Our call: Director Alfonso Cuarón (*Y Tu Mamá También*) gives grown-ups reasons to be somewhat wild about this *Harry*—laughs, jolts and spooky imagery. Rent a kid if you need to.



Soul Plane

(Kevin Hart, Tom Arnold, Snoop Dogg) This comedy lifts off when Hart, after winning a \$100 million settlement for his dog's death, launches an airline tailored to urban fliers. *Airplane-meets-Barbershop* laughs erupt on the maiden flight, on which Snoop is the pilot and Arnold and family are the only whiteys.

Our call: Flygirl stewardesses? Hip-hop in the cockpit? Sounds like a funny late-night skit. But since this is a full-length movie, getting high before departure may be essential.



dvd of the month

[IN AMERICA]

A grief-stricken family gets its Irish up on strange new shores

Irish director Jim Sheridan's loosely autobiographical *In America*—by turns gritty, funny and ethereal—depicts an Irish family's immigrant experience in early-1980s New York City. Sheridan's doppelgänger is Johnny (Paddy Considine), a struggling actor who slips his wife (Samantha Morton) and two daughters (captivating sisters Sarah and Emma Bolger) into the States and sets up house in a pigeon-and-junkie-infested tenement. The clan lost a son to cancer in Ireland, and grief holds together their story of assimilation and survival. Sheridan wrote the screenplay with his own daughters, and domestic scenes radiate authenticity. Prepare to have your strings yanked: Even the relationship between the scary artist downstairs (Djimon Hounsou) and the wee Irish folk upstairs—melting-pot cheese on the surface—gets under your skin. **Extras:** Sheridan includes nine deleted scenes with commentary and minimal regrets—it seems he doesn't go for the whole director's-cut thing. **☆☆½** —Gregory Fagan



THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING (2003) If Frodo had fallen on that damn volcano one more time.... Yes, the *Rings* trilogy is one of the greatest feats in cinema history, but this 11-Oscar-winning final installment is not without exasperating moments. Still, the good stuff is incredible, including visual-feast battles, an eerie spider fight and director Peter Jackson's ability to mix human-scale emotion with thousands of CGI effects. Perhaps New Zealand's favorite son can lighten up with his

King Kong remake. **Extras:** The two discs offer no commentary or extended scenes (reserved for the special edition planned for the holidays), but you will find wide- and full-screen versions, three behind-the-scenes featurettes, TV spots and a preview of the EA video game. **☆☆☆** —Buzz McClain



CITY OF GOD (2003) Brazilians Fernando Meirelles and Katia Lund know the impact of realism in a crime flick, and by assembling a cast populated with local non-actors, the first-time directing duo whips up a juvenile-delinquent gang war in a Rio slum that shocks with the best of them. The based-in-truth drama's title refers to a housing project in which one friend grows up to be a photographer and the other a gangster who wields a brand of remorseless power that would make Tony Montana soil his polyester. When in Rio, stick to the beaches. **Extras:** no commentary, but co-director Lund's fine documentary on Rio's street gangs suggests Brazil as the ultimate *Survivor* locale. **☆☆** —G.F.



SCARY MOVIE 3 (2003) David Zucker (*Airplane!*) takes the helm of the genre-skewing series from the Wayans brothers and this time puts *The Ring*, *Signs* and *8 Mile* in the satiric crosshairs. After pals Jenny McCarthy and Pamela Anderson are done in by a malevolent video (no, not *that* one), newswoman Anna Faris investigates how the killer tape is connected to alien antics at farmer Charlie Sheen's place. The mercifully un-PC gags hit more than they miss, and if you don't like one, just wait a second for five more. **Extras:** a making-of spoof, a *Hulk*-versus-*Aliens* parody and enough deleted scenes—45 minutes' worth—to make half of the next sequel. **☆☆½** —Robert DeSalvo



sleaze frame



Moviegoers might expect to glimpse a bit more of **Kate Hudson** more often, what with her having a free spirit like Goldie Hawn for a mom and a fun-loving rocker like Chris Robinson for a husband. Don't count on it in the current *Raising Helen*, in which Hudson falls for a pastor. To see her almost naked, you need to see *Almost Famous* (2000). In her breakthrough role as a loopy, lovelorn 1970s groupie, Hudson dances around in a hotel suite and exposes more than just a new talent. Wretched rock excess has seldom looked so dewy fresh.

the library

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY If just the mention of Sergio Leone's sprawling, stylistic spaghetti Western triggers the sound of the whistled score in your head, this collector's edition DVD is for you, hombre. Such an epic really deserves commercial-free viewing, and even if you've seen it so many times you can re-create Clint Eastwood, Lee Van Cleef and Eli Wallach's climactic gunfight in your den, you'll want to check out the 18 minutes of newly restored footage.





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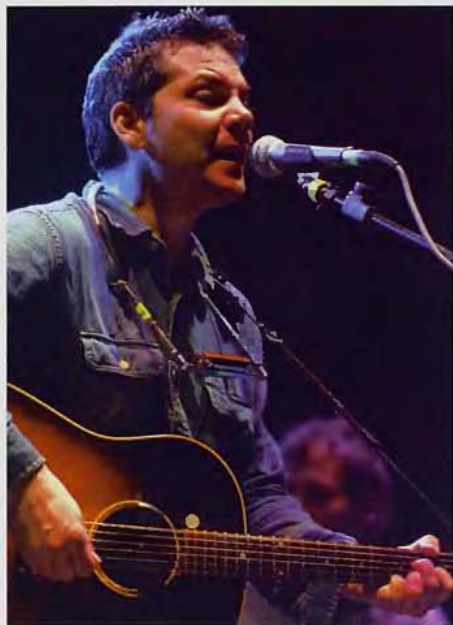
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cd of the month

[WILCO * A GHOST IS BORN]

Out with the twang, in with the new



Artistic evolution is a bumpy road. Dylan going electric? Earthshaking. Dylan going born-again Christian? Nice try. The jury is still out on Wilco, as the alt-country poster boys continue to transform themselves into a rural-route Radiohead. The band's latest will likely surprise even new fans who jumped on the critical bandwagon with 2002's *Yankee Foxtrot Hotel*. "Spiders (Kidsmoke)" is 10 spaced-out minutes of synth and disjointed guitar solos; elsewhere Wilco draws cues from the Beatles' *White Album*, whether repeatedly shouting "I'm a wheel" or investing "Less Than You Think" with 15 minutes of squealing feedback. By the last notes we know something is happening; we just don't know what it is. It's not that we mind the ride, but at some point we have to lean forward and ask, "Where are we going?" (*Nonesuch*) ★★★ —Jason Buhrmester

CONTRABAND * Velvet Revolver

The idea behind this Frankenstein of a supergroup was that Stone Temple Pilots singer Scott Weiland would fill the role of Axl alongside three former Guns n' Roses members (Slash, Duff McKagan and Matt Sorum). Instead, the reanimated monster is little more than a Pilots tribute band. If you're aching for Slash's bluesy guitar solos, stick with *Appetite for Destruction*. This creature needs a bit more work in the laboratory. (RCA) ★★

—Patty Lamberti



LENNY KRAVITZ * Baptism

The artist formerly known as Romeo Blue calls his seventh album "a musical and spiritual rebirth," but he sounds like the same funk-soul brother to us. Maybe Kravitz means he has awoken from a recurring dream in which he, Hendrix and Prince are hosting a deep-space rave. But how does he explain his Seussian rhymes ("I don't want to be a star / I don't need no fancy car")? Maybe the Cat in the Hat was at that rave too. (*Virgin*) ★★

—Alison Prato



JESSE MALIN * The Heat

This singer-songwriter has New York in his veins and a subwayload of respected fans including Bruce Springsteen and Ryan Adams. His debut, 2003's *The Fine Art of Self-Destruction*, was a stripped-down 180 from his punk rock days with D Generation; *The Heat* melds the best of both genres. A loud and richly produced gem, it's part Coney Island heartbreak, part Shane MacGowan drunkenness—and all rock-and-roll nobility. (*Artemis*) ★★★½

—A.P.



THE STREETS

A Grand Don't Come for Free

With his 2002 debut, *Original Pirate Material*, Mike Skinner (a.k.a. the Streets) created a true British hip-hop identity. This follow-up echoes with the sounds of his home turf: the tech pulse of U.K. clubs, horn riffs nicked from 1960s spy films, even a blues-rock shuffle from the British Invasion. And his laid-back flow—more slam poet than MC—is as striking as his studio wizardry. (*Vice*) ★★★

—Tim Mohr



phoning it in

[MELISSA AUF DER MAUR]

As a young bassist in Hole and then in Smashing Pumpkins, Melissa Auf der Maur held her own next to two of rock's biggest egos—Courtney Love and Billy Corgan. Her long-awaited first solo effort, *Auf der Maur*, is out this month.

PLAYBOY: Congrats on the new record.

AUF DER MAUR: Thanks. I'm secretly hoping that the girls like it more than the guys do. I want to seduce girls into devoting themselves to heavy rock music.

PLAYBOY: What did you listen to growing up?

AUF DER MAUR: I had a cool mother—a former Playboy Club Bunny, actually. She introduced me to the Stones and Dylan. She'd tell me, "This person is gonna change the world politically. This is who all the girls like." I think I just assumed I would become one of those fascinating people.

PLAYBOY: Give us a snapshot of your time in Hole.

AUF DER MAUR: The climate of that band was intense and dramatic. Courtney believed in me and made a space for me in her world. Her mission was to create a female presence in a male-dominated world, and she wanted me to be her partner in crime. I'm still thankful.

PLAYBOY: What do you think of Courtney's solo album?

AUF DER MAUR: I haven't heard it. I'm sure it will fall in my lap at some point. We haven't been in touch since I left the band, but I know her like a sister, and I can imagine the record in my head.

PLAYBOY: Has she heard yours?

AUF DER MAUR: Not that I know of. It's intense that I haven't run into her in five years. We obviously live on different planets.

PLAYBOY: Your record was made without a major label. Was that scary?

AUF DER MAUR: Definitely. I put every penny I ever made into creating my perfect musical world. I had no reason to believe it would be released. —A.P.



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RUSSIAN VODKA

game of the month

[FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR]

Gamer grunts finally earn their stripes

Any gamer with half the sense of Gomer Pyle knows that military games are all the rage right now. In the battle for shock-and-awe realism, *Full Spectrum Warrior* (THQ, Xbox) has an unfair advantage: The original version was a light-infantry training simulator created for the U.S. Army. In this game, designed for civilians, players act as the sergeant in command of two four-man squads charged with restoring order in a fictional country locked in civil war. Acting on your orders, alpha and bravo teams clear buildings and secure posts by moving in formation, engaging in firefights and using building corners and demolished cars as cover. Don't count on the comforts of your average shooter game—ammo is limited, and soldiers die easily. The action here is tactical, which may surprise some gamers accustomed to hitting the battlefield and laying on the trigger. You can't stay a greenhorn forever, kid. **★★★★** —Marc Saltzman



TOCA RACE DRIVER 2 (Codemasters, Xbox, PC) Playing as a Eurotrash racing hopeful, you floor it through dozens of international tracks while gunning for Grand Prix stardom. Interstitial movies tell the tale, highlighting rivalries and relationships while you grind gears through GT, stock car and street races. Forging physics makes the ride smoother, but beware the hair-pin turns and the fully destructible cars, which are harder on one's grille than British dentistry. **★★★** —Scott Steinberg



PSI-OPS: THE MINDGATE CONSPIRACY (Midway, PS2, Xbox) Lots of action games equip a hero with knives, pistols or shoulder-held plasma cannons. This one packs a more original weapon—the ability to launch psychic attacks. Main character Nick Scryer is a military experiment gone wild, with the power to use his mind to toss terrorists off cliffs and set them ablaze. Blowing away foes with bullets is fun; causing their heads to explode is, well, mind-blowing. **★★★** —John Gaudiosi



ONIMUSHA 3 DEMON SIEGE (Capcom, PS2) In the third installment of this series, samurai from feudal Japan find assistance battling demons in the unlikely form of cool French actor Jean Reno (*The Professional*). The two intertwining stories unfurl in 1582 Japan and 2004 Paris, as a weathered soldier (Reno) bands together with Samanosuke, an ancient warrior. The hack-and-slash action is helped by Reno's whiplike weapon and a well-designed fighting system. **★★★★½** —M.S.



WORLD TOUR SOCCER 2005 (989 Sports, PS2) The list of things we don't understand about soccer could fill a football stadium. An American football stadium, that is. Our latest question: How can this game be labeled 2005 when other sports games are labeled 2004? Anyway, this footsie fest includes more than 900 teams and multiple modes for quick matches or grueling seasons filled with trades, player contracts and those flimsy running shorts. **★★½** —Jason Buhmester



arcadeology

[ALIEN RESURRECTION]

Remembering the invasion

It has been 25 years since the Japanese first sent *Space Invaders* to herd us into smelly arcades, steal our quarters and ruin our eyesight. In remembrance of the milestone, here are six facts you didn't know about the video game incursion.

1. Japanese gamers stuffed money into *Space Invaders* machines in such large numbers that the country suffered a shortage of 100-yen coins and had to quadruple production.
2. The enemies in the original design were soldiers, but that was deemed politically incorrect, so the targets were changed to aliens.
3. To appease Japanese restaurant owners who complained about patrons playing the game instead of eating, Taito designed the first cocktail table version of a video game. And you thought they were built for lazy people.
4. The increased speed of the alien troops as their numbers decreased was not a planned feature. Fewer aliens allowed for more hardware memory, which sped them up. Developers left it that way.



5. In 1980 *Space Invaders* was released for the Atari 2600 and became the first game on the system to sell a million copies.
6. Texas residents attempted to have the game banned and took their case all the way to the Supreme Court. They lost: Space aliens 1, Texas killjoys 0.

wired

Wildseed/Curitel Identity (about \$200) Snap a new cover on the Identity cell phone and a chip alters the ring tones, screen saver, games and other features to fit your mood. Now Wildseed has teamed with Korn, Static-X and other groups to create custom SmartSkins covers, which load the phone with band photos and music—and send you instant messages when tickets go on sale.

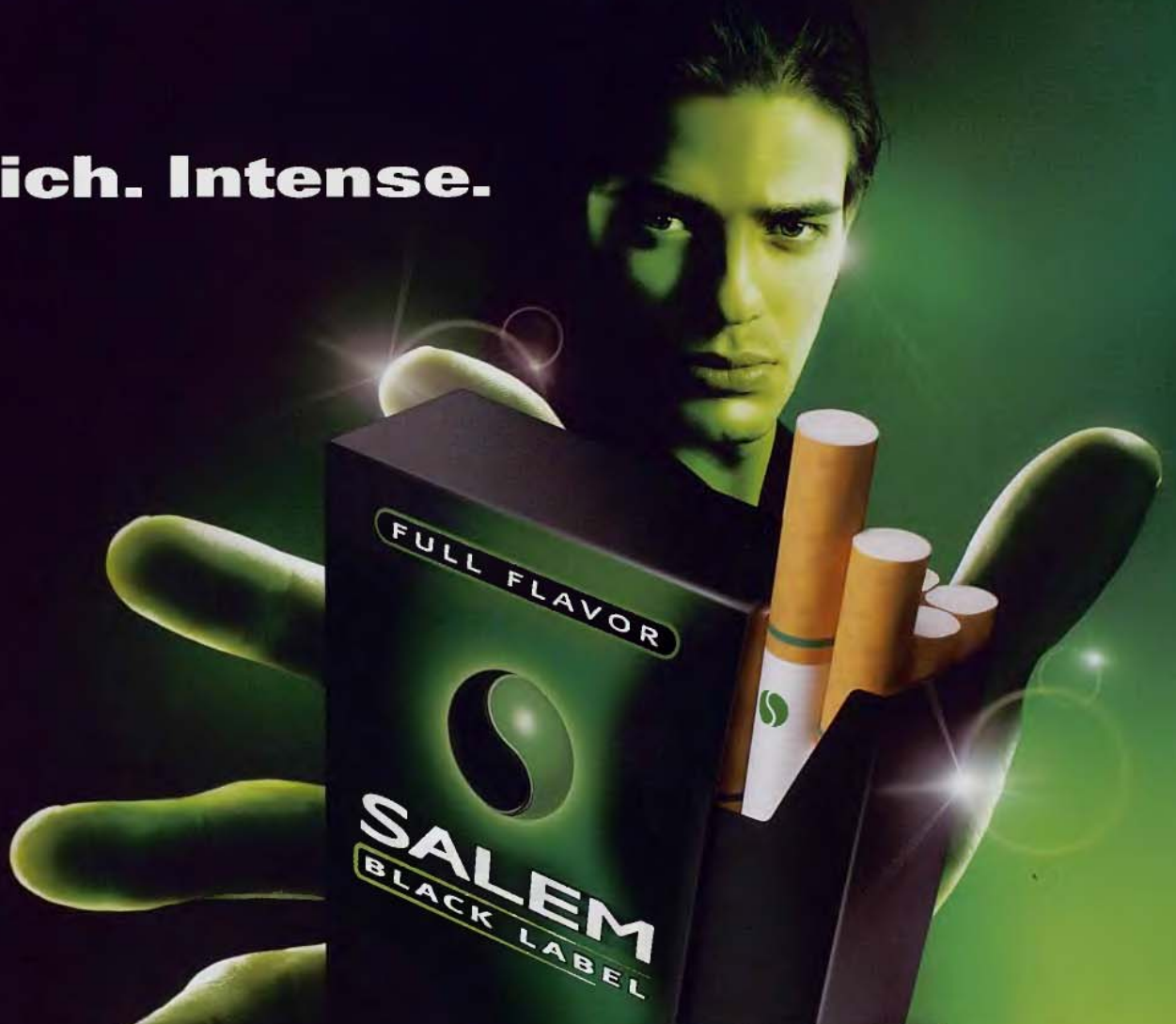


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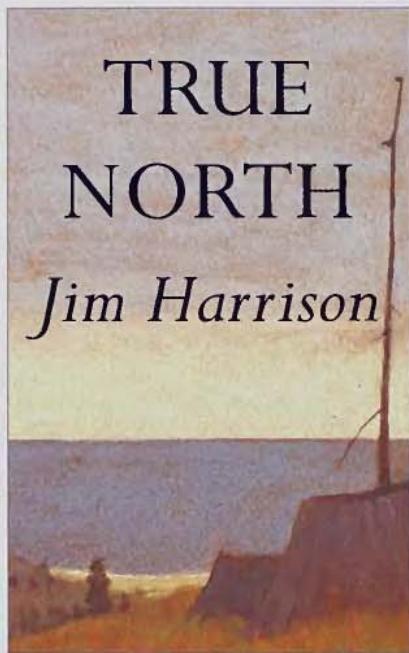
stir the senses

book of the month

[TRUE NORTH * JIM HARRISON]

Are the sins of a father always visited upon the son?

Maybe your father was impatient when he taught you how to drive. Maybe he even beat up your Little League coach. But at least he wasn't a timber baron who cut down half of Michigan, plundered your trust fund and molested a 13-year-old girl. In the latest Harrison (*Legends of the Fall*) ode to rugged individualism, David Burkett must deal with the world's worst dad. He first realizes his family has some problems as a teenager in the 1960s. His mother downs painkillers, and his sister has to rebuke Dad's advances. This dark plot is offset by vivid descriptions of that free-loving, heavy-drugging decade. Our hero eventually leaves town and gets married, but his wife divorces him because he doesn't want to sire children. (After all, they may carry the family curse.) By researching exactly how his father hacked up the land, Burkett faces the past and, ultimately, the old man himself. By the way, don't forget to call your pops on Father's Day. (Grove Press) **★★½** —Patty Lambert

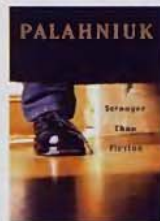


STRANGER THAN FICTION

Chuck Palahniuk

It turns out that the people who populate cult writer Palahniuk's real life aren't much more normal than the outlaws and reprobates who inhabit his fiction. In his first collection of essays, Palahniuk (*Fight Club, Choke*) hangs out with college wrestlers, farm-machinery demolition drivers and lonely submariners. It seems all he has to do is scratch the surface of acceptable society and out pop the weirdos who live underneath. The author also discusses his father's murder and wears a dog suit around Seattle. Each essay is a good read, and none reassures us that Palahniuk isn't as twisted as his subjects. (Doubleday)

★★½ —Jason Buhmester



PLAIN HEATHEN MISCHIEF

Martin Clark

After a sex scandal lands him in the slammer for six months, preacher Joel King is desperate for a new life. His former flock deems him "a damn disgrace," his wife wants a D-I-V-O-R-C-E, and he's being sued for \$5 million. Enter Edmund, an eccentric parishioner with questionable motives who takes King on a freewheeling road trip from Virginia to Vegas—and into a life that's even more corrupt. The author, a judge who also brought us the witty and interestingly titled *The Many Aspects of Mobile Home Living*, sentences readers to another suspenseful, charming read that is one part John Grisham and two parts Tom Robbins. (Knopf)

★★½ —Alison Prato



THE WICKED GAME * Howard Sounes

George Plimpton argued that "the smaller the ball used in the sport, the better the book," but he wrote those words before the recent deluge of navel-gazing golf-and-the-meaning-of-life tomes. This hefty book doesn't try to explain what golf means but instead what it represents. Unsparing bios of three links superstars—Tiger Woods, Jack Nicklaus and Arnold Palmer—take on the game's old-money establishment. While Sounes dishes about

Palmer's womanizing and Nicklaus's baroque business deals, he's hardest on Woods. Citing his icy demeanor and his gambling, and the way his dad, Earl, plays fast and loose with the truth, *Wicked Game* paints an unflattering portrait of the sport's most compelling and popular figure. (William Morrow)

★★ —Allen St. John



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HEF'S LITTLE BLACK BOOK

Hugh M. Hefner and Bill Zehme

Okay, it won't actually get you on the phone with one of Hef's girlfriends, but this part-historical, part-how-to romp through Hef's fabled love life, packed with wit and wisdom from the Man himself, will surely give you an advantage in finding a Saturday-night playmate of your own. (Harper Entertainment)





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I WANT MY H.Y.P.E. TV

At a time when a split second of exposed nipple on television results in congressional hearings, one might rightly fear for the world of hip-hop, in which raunchy imagery and kiss-my-bleep lyrics are the stock in trade. Enter Playboy TV, whose new hip-hop lifestyle programming, H.Y.P.E. TV (Hot Young People's Entertainment Television), is all about presenting uncensored videos and original shows. So what's on the roster? For starters there's *5 Deadly Videos*, on which guest DJs from around the country play today's hottest hip-hop clips, many of them never before shown on TV. The new, unexpurgated video for "Show Me Your Soul," from the *Bad Boys II* soundtrack—featuring Sean "P. Diddy" Combs, Lenny Kravitz, Loon, Pharrell Williams and enough beautiful ladies to fill a club—will be one of the first clips broadcast. "We wanted to make the soundtrack special," says Combs. "It was an opportunity for me to do some unusual collaborations. One of the people I always wanted to work with was my friend Lenny Kravitz, as well as Pharrell and Loon, my new artist. We hung out in Miami, having a good time and doing all kinds of scandalous things. We had a fun-filled weekend." Combs says the beauty of making the video for H.Y.P.E. TV was that he could do his own thing without worrying about getting censored at every turn. "With this no-holds-barred version of our video, you can drop it like it's hot," he says. "The concept is a dream come true: Party, dance, make music, drink all night and never go to work. It's decadence and positive energy. We're going to use adult language; we're going to take off our clothes and get butt-ass naked. We are definitely going to have extra asses shaking and have everything unclean, like how we felt it in the studio. We're letting it rock

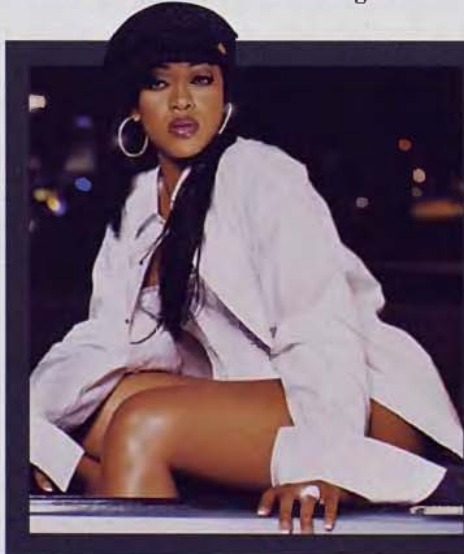
What's happening on H.Y.P.E. TV? Clockwise from top left: Lenny Kravitz and P. Diddy took a back seat in the uncensored version of the "Show Me Your Soul" video; the luscious H.Y.P.E. TV dancers get their freak on; there's no beating around the bush for Pharrell Williams in "Show Me Your Soul"; MAD TV's Aries Spears judges a heated strip-off on the reality show *Queen of Clubs*.



freely like that, and I think that's important for hip-hop." True that.

There's also the straight-up series *100% Proof*, which debuts with a raw and exclusive interview with Lil Jon & the East Side Boyz, including a voyeuristic peek into the rappers' wild sex lives, their favorite hangouts and everything in between. *Buckwild* is a hip-hop interview-and-variety show that features outrageous conversations with stars such as Snoop Dogg, OutKast, the Ying Yang Twins, Naughty by Nature's Treach and Busta Rhymes. Last but certainly not

least, the documentary-style *Queen of Clubs* features celebrities judging hot ladies of color in a heated strip-off. The winner gets cash, prizes and the opportunity to star in a platinum-selling star's next video. In the final segment of the show, each of the three booty-shaking competitors can do anything—yes, anything—to convince the judges she deserves to be the queen. Sound like your kind of television? (No, we're not talking to you, Senator.) The weekly H.Y.P.E. TV party kicks off on Playboy TV in July. Check playboytv.com for showtimes.



ALL HAIL THE QUEEN

It's easy to see why Playboy TV asked stripper turned rapper Trina to host *Queen of Clubs*—her brazen, no-apologies attitude, which embodies the spirit of H.Y.P.E. TV. Once christened the "New Queen of Randy Hip-Hop" by *Entertainment Weekly*, the Miami native first turned heads on Trick Daddy's 1998 release www.thug.com before busting out her own tales of Sunshine State street life on her 2000 debut, *Da Baddest Bitch*. On the record—and true to her name—she revealed sexcapades and personal controversies based on the rough times she endured in her

teens and early 20s. In the song "I Don't Need U" she traded nasty disses with old pal Trick Daddy. Trina's second CD, *Diamond Princess*, which features collaborations with Eve, Ludacris, Missy Elliott, Jagged Edge and Tweet, is even more over-the-top. This time it's about happiness, ultra glamour and maintaining one's edge. In the song "No Panties" she demands serious green before dropping her drawers. "I want people to know what's happening out there," she has said. "There's a lot going on that people won't rap about. I tell it like it is."

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SWISS

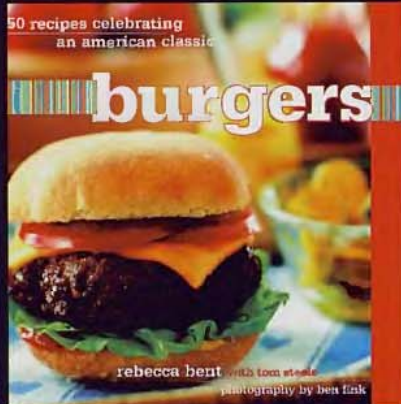
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MANTRACK hey...it's personal

Meat Me in St. Louis

It's a novel idea, really. You take a meatball, step on it and stick it between two slices of bread. That way you can eat your lunch on the run, leaving your other hand free to drink a beer or hold a gun to a bank teller's head. Some historians claim that the first American-style hamburger was served at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair, which would make the beef bomb a century old this year. How to honor it? Sample some of the wisdom in Rebecca Bent's *Burgers: 50 Recipes Celebrating an American Classic* (\$17, Clarkson Potter). The book features recipes for burgers and sides from chefs behind great joints and high-end restaurants all over the world, such as New York's Chanterelle and Dallas's Mansion on Turtle Creek. Not everything is noteworthy. (Frankly, the chocolate-encrusted cranberry burger



recipe is a kick in the stomach. What the hell?) But the "big juicy butter burger," which calls for four tablespoons of heart-healthy butter? The venison burger au poivre? The rich avocado ketchup and the Asian slaw? Fire up that grill!

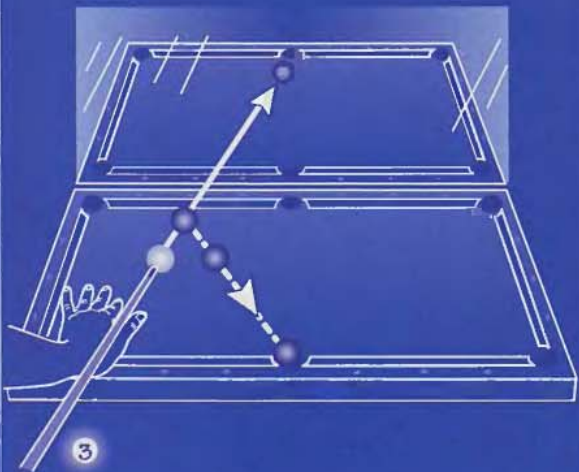


1 HOW TO BANK A POOL SHOT

WHEN EYEING YOUR SHOT, PICTURE A POOL TABLE DIRECTLY ADJACENT TO THE ONE YOU ARE PLAYING ON, AS IF YOU WERE LOOKING AT A MIRROR IMAGE OF THE TABLE.

2

AIM FOR THE "MIRROR IMAGE" POCKET AT THE FAR SIDE OF THE IMAGINARY TABLE, AS PICTURED.



3

USE A SMOOTH STROKE. KEEP THE TIP AND HANDLE OF THE CUE IN LINE. BALL WILL BANK INTO SIDE POCKET.

The Classy Drunk

Polish monks first made crude vodka more than five centuries ago. They called their new liquor *shiznennia vodka*, or water of life, and used it to cure the sick, as an ingredient in gunpowder and to drink themselves silly. How far has vodka come? This month—just in time for high martini season, not to mention Father's Day and graduation—Poland's Wyborowa (pronounced vee-BROH-vah) begins hawking its Single Estate (basically meaning "small batch") vodka dressed in a smashing bottle designed by superstar architect Frank Gehry (\$30). It's made from rye grown and hand-picked on a single farm in the village of Turew. The smooth 80-proof vodka can take on big guys like Grey Goose and Belvedere, depending on your particular palate. Want to liven up your vodka martini? Try adding a dash of orange bitters to the mix (this is called the kanga). Rinse and repeat as necessary.



MANTRACK



Swinger's Hangout

When God created summertime lounging, he intended for us to do it one way and one way only—in a hammock.

Sure, you can take a load off in a \$19.99 vinyl lawn chair, but if you think you're going to get the same level of comfort, the same backside cooling action, the same full-body ahhhhh factor, you're fooling yourself. The Nogs Head Cypress hammock stand (\$379, nogshead.com) will help you attain your goal of Total Suspended Relaxation (TSR), and it's aesthetically lovely to boot. Made from solid cypress in North Carolina's Outer Banks, the stand is designed to live outside (though Northerners will want to toss it into the basement during the winter), and with minimal maintenance it's sturdy enough to last longer than you will. Remember, when this hammock's swingin', don't come o ringin'.

The Write Time

Let's face it, the man who enjoys the finest things in life has no need for a watch. He'll have a six-foot naked beauty around just to tell him the time (as in, "Time for your blow job, sir"). For the rest of us, Montblanc's new line of luxury goods can add sweetness to the boring necessities of life. The Swiss-made TimeWalker self-winding wristwatch (\$2,950, montblanc.com) offers classic retro style—simple and elegant with a stainless steel band—and is water-resistant to 30 meters. The StarWalker fountain pen (\$365) is a perfect companion piece, encased in a nonslip rubberized body traversed by metallic diamond-cut lines. The Montblanc "snowcap" logo floats inside the cap's clear tip. A ballpoint (\$275) is also available.



Clothesline: Max Kellerman

The high-octane sports-caster, who recently made the leap from ESPN to his own half-hour daily show on Fox Sports Net, prefers the casual look. "For me the perfect outfit is a T-shirt, my Yankees hat, a pair of Nikes and some Phat Farm sweatpants. Phat Farm sweats are the best because they're thick and soft, and they have pockets everywhere, which is great because I always have so much stuff to carry around—like my credit



cords, which I still keep wropped in a rubber band. I don't like wallets." His all-time favorite piece of clothing? "Emanuel Steward gave me a boxing jacket from the Kronk Gym in Detroit. It's red, blue and gold, and on the back it says MAD MAX. Yeah, it makes me feel tough when I put it on. How could it not? Mad Max was the toughest guy around." What would Kellerman not be caught dead in? "Anything trendy, like a trucker hat. Not my style."

The Perfect Time...

To fend off a hangover: While you're drinking. In addition to the glass of water you guzzle between every other drink or so and the food you nibble on (duh), indulge in a tablespoon of honey or a glass of orange juice. Both contain enough fructose to burn off alcohol, according to Dr. Seymour Diamond, founder of a headache clinic and author of *Conquering Your Migraine*. Another tip: According to the National Institutes of Health (your tax dollars at work!), congeners—impurities found in brandy, whiskey, red wine and champaigne, for example—are more apt to leave you black-and-blue the next day. Gin has far fewer congeners than whiskey, and vodka has even fewer than gin. Bottoms up. **To schedule a flight arrival in Europe:** Late at night. Most folks fly to Europe overnight and arrive in the morning, thinking they'll save a travel day. But jet lag takes a heavier toll when you fly east than when you fly west. When you arrive in the morning after an overnight flight through numerous time zones, your biorhythm is telling you it's the middle of the night, so you're likely to feel like garbage. The point? You end up losing a day anyway. If you arrive in the evening, you can have a couple of drinks, sleep them off and wake up fresh the next morning.



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SKECHERS

The Playboy Advisor

I just bought an Xbox and a batch of Mature-rated games. I want to take it up a notch but haven't been able to find games with an Adults Only rating beyond a few Japanese anime PC games that are sold online. Can you recommend any hot titles?—J.A., Manitowoc, Wisconsin

They don't exist—at least not yet. Sony and Microsoft approve every game developed for their systems, and like Hollywood, they're more comfortable with explicit violence than explicit sex. Because retailers such as Wal-Mart and Target won't carry AO titles, the rating kills sales. Microsoft broke ground in 2002 by approving topless strippers in a Mature-rated BMX simulation for Xbox, but Sony said no for PlayStation. This is a touchy situation for game makers, because players want godlike control of avatars. Sims 2, just out, is expected to be the trendsetter. The new Leisure Suit Larry should also push limits. Our own entry, Playboy: The Mansion, a role-playing game coming late this year, will allow players to preside over photo shoots. Keeping an M rating while depicting characters having sex won't be easy—maybe party guests will be able to do it only in the Grotto, behind the bar or when obscured by bushes. That wouldn't be unrealistic.

I would like to ask out an anchorwoman from one of my local TV stations. I got her e-mail address from the station's website. She doesn't wear a wedding ring. If I ask her to meet me for lunch, will she think I'm a stalker, or do I have a chance?—F.L., Cleveland, Ohio

We know how you feel—our remote belongs to Rudi Bakhtiar of CNN. It can't hurt to drop your TV crush an e-mail; maybe she's adventurous. Tell her your name is Nielsen. If she turns you down—which seems likely—you'll have to be content with staring into her eyes as she tells you about the latest city council scandal or sanitation strike.

I'm 23 and the only one in my circle of friends who enjoys scotch. I have found that some girls are either intimidated or turned off when they see me drinking it at bars while my buddies down beers. What does the fact that I enjoy a good scotch and a cigar say to women in my age group?—J.W., Boston, Massachusetts

We hate to see discrimination against young scotch drinkers, but in your group you probably come off as a bit affected.

Supposedly a doctor somewhere is testing a device that can be implanted in your back to give you orgasms. Can that possibly be true? Where do I sign up?—L.T., Las Vegas, Nevada

You're thinking of Stuart Meloy, an anesthesiologist in Winston-Salem, North Carolina who may someday be remembered as Dr. Orgasmatron. A few years ago a patient



he was treating for chronic pain began moaning with pleasure when he directed electrical impulses to her spine. She told him, "You need to teach my husband how to do that." Meloy has since patented his orgasm stimulator and has recruited 10 women who had trouble climaxing to test it. (He says there's no reason it wouldn't have the same effect on men.) The FDA has approved the device to treat pain, so Meloy is confident enough to offer it off-label for sexual healing. For \$3,000 he will insert an electrode that can remain near your spine for up to 10 days before it must be removed to prevent infection. A nine-volt battery powers it. Looking for something more durable? Meloy will implant a permanent electrode under your skin and hand you a remote control for \$17,000, which covers the cost of surgery and equipment. He notes that the device doesn't create instant orgasms but instead "launches the events that lead to orgasm. It's not subtle." You can e-mail the doctor at info@nasfonline.com if you have cash to burn.

Soon after my divorce I began dating a stunning redhead. One evening, as we did sixty-nine on her new sofa, I felt a sting in my penis. Her upper denture had caught on the skin of my erection. She got the denture out of her mouth, but we couldn't remove it from my now-limp penis. We had to go to the ER, where a doctor used a wire cutter to get it off. I ended up with an inch-long scar and a memorable story for my urologist. The accident turned out to be a blessing in disguise, because from that point on her blow jobs were all toothless, which is a hell of a sensation. With all the people who wear dentures, it's hard to believe we're the only couple who have had this

misadventure. Have you heard of this happening to anyone else?—A.J., Ardmore, Pennsylvania

You're the first. Congratulations. We're sorry you had to go through that trauma to discover the joys of the gum job. Joan Elizabeth Lloyd, author of Nice Couples Do, has collected a number of anecdotes online about toothless sex, including one from a guy who wrote, "It wasn't until my wife had dentures that she was able to perform oral sex beyond a kiss on my penis. She has a small mouth, and oral sex had been too demanding. Now she says it's more sensual for her because she can feel on her gums what she never could with teeth." But one woman wins the prize for dedication. "Because my husband is so good to me, I decided that I would make all his oral sex special," she wrote. "I've had only one cavity since I was a child, but I eventually found a younger dentist who was willing to pull all my teeth without keeping records. Some people might find this perverse, but I believe that when two people truly love each other, sacrifices like teeth are worth any inconvenience." Personally, we prefer our blow jobs with a little danger.

I'm ready to start paying for the music I download online. Which are the best pay sites?—B.B., Dayton, Ohio

If you're talking selection and features, start with iTunes or Napster 2.0. Each has 500,000 songs, although the selection from major labels and bands can be spotty. On the upside, you don't have to worry about viruses, corrupt files or the RIAA. iTunes (apple.com) charges a buck for each song, which can be downloaded to a Mac, an iPod or a PC that has Windows 2000 or XP. Napster 2.0 charges the same, or \$9.95 per album, for music that can be saved to a PC or to any of 60 portable devices that play Windows Media (i.e., not an iPod, although a reporter at Rolling Stone found a work-around—he burned from Napster to a CD, then ripped his songs back to his computer and onto his iPod). In addition, Napster has a \$9.95 monthly service that allows unlimited streaming and downloading (but not burning) and offers 50 commercial-free radio stations. Another site of note is eMusic.com, which specializes in indie tracks.

My girlfriend likes to stick a dildo and anal beads up my butt while we make love. I'm worried that this might have long-term effects. Will it make my anus wider when I get older?—H.D., Melbourne, Florida

Not unless you leave them there.

Isn't the desire for sex supposed to fade as you get older? My husband and I have been married for 15 years, and we have more sex now than we did in college. We have intercourse at least four times a week, and I give him a blow job

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every few days, too. We even rush home for nooners. My girlfriends are astonished when I tell them this. Are we freaks?—W.C., Cody, Wyoming

You're superfreaks. There are many couples like you; they just don't ask for advice.

While serving in the Army, I had a few medic buddies who swore by IVs as hangover cures. I hate needles, but I'd be willing to put up with them if it would get me through a bender. Is it worth buying IV bags, or should I stick to water, aspirin and time? Or is there some other miracle cure you've heard about?—S.R., Milwaukee, Wisconsin

IVs are great if you can get them, but that usually happens only when you're found in a gutter. The drip works by quickly rehydrating your brain, but it's not something we recommend for home use. The latest of an endless variety of no-needle treatments is an herbal supplement called RU-21. Its manufacturer offers a charming story about how scientists developed the pill for the KGB so its agents could drink without getting intoxicated. It didn't work, but the pills allegedly lessened the severity of the operatives' hangovers. As with most hangover "cures," no reliable tests have been done to determine its efficiency. We've always said the best hangover treatment is to know your limits.

My boyfriend and I have been dating for a year and have great sex, but it could be better. I have fantasies that I'm not entirely comfortable with because of my Catholic upbringing and because they involve my high school uniform, which still fits me perfectly. The problem is, I think my guy is too nice to play them out, and I'm too shy to tell him what I want. How can I make him forget about being a nice guy long enough to bend me over and give it to me good?—T.C., Rutland, Vermont

Go for it. Ain't no guy that nice.

This girl and I were making out on a couch in a friend's apartment. After we had sucked on each other for a while, I made my move downstairs. A moan and a groan later she asked if I wanted her to kiss my penis. She sucked until I came in her mouth, then she lifted my shirt and spit the semen on my stomach. Next she pulled off one of my socks and used it to wipe up. She turned the sock inside out and threw it on the floor. Thank God I remembered not to put it on the next morning. Have you ever heard of this technique, or was she just fooling with me?—J.F., Mishawaka, Indiana

That's a technique? It sounds more like an audition.

Im ready to propose to my girlfriend. Do you have any suggestions?—R.B., Nashua, New Hampshire

Because the women in our lives always do the asking (without success, natch), we don't have any experience with this. So we called

Michael Webb, who solicited 7,300 real-life proposals for his e-book The Romantic's Guide to Popping the Question (online at theromantic.com). Webb's general tips: "(1) Don't do a public proposal unless your girlfriend is a public person. That is, if she does everything with her family and friends, she's less likely to feel on the spot if you ask her at a gathering. (2) Many guys ask around the holidays, but that's expected, and no matter what a woman says otherwise, she wants to be surprised. (3) Many guys think that the more money they spend, the more romantic the proposal. But women rarely mention the limo, the roses or the fancy dinner. They remember the personal details. The less money you spend, the more creative you tend to get to compensate. (4) The more complex the proposal, the more likely something will go wrong. Someone will forget their lines or, worse, squeal. A lot of guys plan a big weekend—if you do that, ask her on the first day, because you'll be nervous and it will make her think something's wrong. Assuming you get a yes, it also lets you enjoy the rest of the weekend together. (5) Learn from the mistakes of others. Examples: The guy who left the ring in the wet diaper of their baby, the guy who asked in front of the casket at his brother's funeral, the guy who had a messenger deliver the proposal and the romantic who presented the ring over a meal at McDonald's. (6) Finally, if you start the proposal by saying 'We need to talk' or 'You win,' reexamine what you're doing—quickly.'

Along with two other couples, my wife and I use a board game, with dice and cards, for foreplay and good times. After six months the women added cards that allowed them to play with one another. The game was going great until the women suggested that we add cards that would let the men play with one another. None of the guys wants this, but the women insist, and they've boycotted the game until we agree. How do we resolve this?—J.L., Tampa, Florida

In our book, as soon as someone feels uncomfortable the game is over.

Are there any rules regarding track lighting? Specifically, is it acceptable to use track lighting to accentuate a favorite painting by Thomas Kinkade?—J.B., Lockport, New York

There are no rules about track lighting. There are many rules, however, about owning a painting by Thomas Kinkade.

How do you tell a woman that her pants hang too low? I'm a manager in a retail store that employs everyone from high school seniors to retirees. I've noticed that many of the students wear hip-hugging pants with thongs or G-strings. The last time I asked one of them to pull up her pants (I did this in my office so as not to embarrass her), she looked at me funny. I don't want to have unhappy workers or invite sexual harassment charges, but I can't think of any better



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method than simply asking. What do you suggest?—J.P., Cincinnati, Ohio

This is the perfect time to pass the buck. If your boss agrees with your concerns, the company can clarify its dress code. If he disagrees, enjoy the show.

I've developed a wonderful new massage technique. I have my girlfriend lie on her back with her knees bent. I slowly slide my right index and middle fingers into her pussy and make a come-hither motion to stimulate her G-spot. I then place the heel of my left hand on her mons and stroke her clitoris. My girlfriend likes to raise and lower her knees while I do this. What do you think?—D.S., Los Angeles, California

Sounds like fun. Isn't that how they used to churn butter?

My older brother and I suspect that our younger brother is gay. What is the best way to ask him about this without ruining our relationship, which has never been that strong anyway?—A.M., Boston, Massachusetts

Unless you're planning to ask him out, we're not sure why it matters. If you ask and he's not gay, he won't take it well—or he'll lie, and you still won't know.

My boyfriend and I have started talking about marriage. The other day he came back from a two-week trip and called me at work to ask if I could "come out and play." It happens that I was finishing a big project, so I asked if we could meet later. He launched into a vulgar tirade that ended with his calling me a fucking cunt. I was horrified. I canceled a vacation we had planned and told him to leave me alone. He keeps calling and apologizing, telling me he was stressed out and overtired. I believe that in love or anger you will say what's in your heart. Do you think I did the right thing, or should I give him another chance? He has never done anything like this before, and I'm torn.—G.M., North Attleborough, Massachusetts

If this isn't a pattern, we would give him another chance. But then, we don't put that much faith in passion. Lovesick and angry people both say things they later regret, and both can be forgiven. This is not meant to excuse your boyfriend's behavior, but a few weeks without sex can turn even a nice guy into a momentary asshole.

All reasonable questions—from fashion, food and drink, stereo and sports cars to dating dilemmas, taste and etiquette—will be personally answered if the writer includes a self-addressed, stamped envelope. The most interesting, pertinent questions will be presented on these pages each month. Write the Playboy Advisor, 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019, or send e-mail by visiting our website at playboyadvisor.com.

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THE PLAYBOY FORUM

ONE NATION, UNDER GOD, DIVISIBLE

DOES THE DIVINE IN THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE VIOLATE THE SOUL OF THE FIRST AMENDMENT?

BY GORE VIDAL

Few of the founders of the United States could properly be called religious men, while their wives, excepting the vivid Abigail Adams, are not often on record. In the Federalist Papers—the notes that James Madison, John Jay and Alexander Hamilton made during the selling of the Constitution to the people—religion and God are hardly mentioned. When the Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution as its initial 10 amendments, the first declared that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion.” A principal objection to the king of England, from whom we had freed ourselves, was that he was the head of the Church of England, giving that organization precedence over all other religious groups to such an extent that England was obliged to fight a bloody civil war between the king’s church on one side and the Puritans and the rising classes on the other. The founders of the American republic feared the establishment of a state religion because they associated it with hereditary, one-man rule.

Two centuries later our Supreme Court, reflexively deferential to the original intent of our founders (except, of course, when it is restlessly whittling away at the Bill of Rights), is expected by June to have a crack at the First Amendment, which has been something of an annoyance to the five-to-four conservative majority. What prompted this? The invocation of God in a traditionally secular patriotic oath (“I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands: one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all”), which was declared unconstitutional by the Ninth Circuit Court in 2002 on the grounds that “a profession that we are a nation ‘under God’ is identical to a profession that we are a nation ‘under Jesus,’ a nation ‘under Vishnu,’ a nation ‘under Zeus’ or a nation ‘under no god,’ because none of these professions can be neutral with respect to religion.”

This decision was the result of an action brought by Michael Newdow, who said he went to court to protect his nine-year-old daughter from compulsory religious indoctrination. Following the lower court decision, the Supreme Court agreed to hear *Elk Grove Unified School District v.*



Newdow with some haste. This was not a surprise. Justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas, who lead the conservative majority, have links with Opus Dei, a politically reactionary Catholic group founded during Francisco Franco’s fascist regime in Spain and today politically active in many countries. Newdow, who is a member of the California bar, found a speech that Scalia had given to the Knights of Columbus (a proselytizing Catholic organization) in Fredericksburg, Virginia in January 2003. Scalia attacked those who objected to government sponsorship of religion as “contrary to our whole tradition.” At one point he noted a heckler in the crowd whose sign read GET RELIGION OUT OF OUR GOVERNMENT. The justice advised, helpfully, “If the gentleman holding the sign would persuade all of you of that,

then we could eliminate ‘under God’ from the pledge of allegiance. That could be democratically done.” This passes for mordant wit in Scalialand.

As a result of the Fredericksburg exchange, Newdow got Scalia to recuse himself from the case. So the Court may yet be tied four to four, which means that the Ninth Circuit’s decision would stand and “under God” would be dropped within its jurisdiction (California, Oregon, Washington, Arizona, Montana, Idaho, Nevada, Alaska, Hawaii, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands) but not in the rest of the nation. Meanwhile the Christian right is organizing, along with, oddly, John Ashcroft’s Justice Department, which has no business in this nonfederal matter. But then no swallow may plunge to earth unremarked by the attorney general’s sharp, God-loving eye. Apparently Mr. Newdow has brought on a confrontation between the Constitution and that phantom nation where, as Ashcroft has solemnly declared, “we have no king but Jesus.” Americans United for Separation of Church and State hailed the Ninth Circuit’s opinion on the ground that the original intent of the founders was that “a wall,” as Thomas Jefferson put it, must always be in place.

George W. Bush, a born-again Christian, predictably denounced the Ninth Circuit’s decision. He proclaimed that he would see to it that the government pursued an appeal. This despite the fact that for half a century the Supreme

GAY MARRIAGE: WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

WHY STRAIGHT GUYS SHOULD CARE ABOUT HOMOSEXUAL UNIONS

By Dan Savage

Court has struck down all attempts to make religious instruction mandatory.

It is nicely ironic that the pledge's "under God" (added by Congress in 1954) and our currency's "In God We Trust" (added in 1955) were duly blessed by President Eisenhower: "In this way we are reaffirming the transcendence of religious faith in America's heritage and future. In this way we shall constantly strengthen those spiritual weapons which forever will be our country's most powerful resource in peace and war." In 1952 a fellow West Pointer teased Eisenhower that he would, if elected president, have to start going to church for the first time since childhood. "The only way they'll ever get me into a church will be feet-first," Ike said grimly.

Those in favor of "under God" have made the point that the Declaration of Independence has three references to God and that it is a sort of second preamble to the Constitution. That's a nice thought, but it's not true. Thomas Jefferson was writing a specific indictment of King George III and of the notion that a hereditary monarch with an established church and religion could be the absolute master of a people 3,000 miles away with, potentially, many gods unlike the one by whom the king had been divinely anointed. God was on Jefferson's mind when he wrote his notification to the king that we were no longer his subjects.

Among the usual suspects who rally around the "under God" movement has been that famous gambling dude Bill "Bell-Fruit" Bennett, who feels that "it doesn't affirm much in the way of religious particularity to say the pledge of allegiance." But surely a sweeping generality is more dangerous than any particularity. By and large our monolithic media ignored the principal part of the First Amendment while exercising their right set forward in the last part—freedom to uphold anticonstitutional views—without understanding just what they were doing.

When I was a "working" politician in the mid-Hudson Valley of New York I heard hundreds of groups of schoolchildren and others recite the pledge. But it was not the same pledge we have been discussing. Inevitably the text would be popularly altered. "One nation under God, indivisible" became "one nation under God, invisible." The tribute to Lincoln's concept of an undividable nation would provide "liberty and justice for all," as the pledge was written, but it was recited as "liberty, injustice for all." So here we go again.

As a teenager I spent a lot of time reading *PLAYBOY*—way more time than my older brothers, from whom I swiped the issues. It helped shape not only my attitude toward sex and pleasure but also to some extent my attitude toward myself.

Did I mention that I'm gay?

It was in *PLAYBOY* that I came across some of the first pro-homosexual articles and editorials I ever read. The magazine not only helped me accept myself more quickly, it also helped my brothers accept me when I came out to my family at the age of 18.

What does any of the above have to do with the headline on this piece? And why should this magazine dedicate any *Forum* real estate to the increasingly contentious issue of gay marriage? Because, as Hef wrote four decades ago, all sexual freedom—gay or straight—is linked.

Your freedom to buy this magazine is intimately tied to my freedom to purchase *Blueboy* or *Freshmen*. That's because the same Bible-thumpers who want to stamp out gay rights wouldn't mind also stamping out erotica, premarital sex, easy access to birth control and reproductive rights. They don't much like masturbation, either. With few exceptions, people who oppose gay rights also oppose straight rights.

Which brings me to my point—four reasons straight guys should give a shit about gay marriage:

SOMETHING OLD The more men who marry men, the more pussy for you, right? *Har!* It's an old joke but still a good one.

SOMETHING NEW The 2003 Supreme Court ruling in *Lawrence v. Texas* that invalidated the nation's last remaining sodomy statutes was hailed as a victory for gay rights. But some of the same states that had criminalized gay sodomy had also criminalized straight

sodomy (and yes, many straights are dedicated sodomites). That's because sodomy laws in many states banned any sex act that couldn't potentially produce a baby. Straight adults throughout the U.S. can now enjoy oral or anal sex without fear of arrest, thanks to the gay-rights activists who sued the state of Texas.

SOMETHING BORROWED What is marriage about? Is it about children? Obviously not, because many straight people get married but never have kids. Conservative pundit Andrew Sullivan has hammered this point home so thoroughly that he has persuaded some right-wingers to support gay marriage.

Modern marriage is about love and commitment. As citizens, gays and lesbians not only should be encouraged to make commitments but also should enjoy the same rights, responsibilities



Don't these vows deserve more respect than Britney Spears's?

and privileges that straight couples do (1,049 federal rights in all, according to a 1997 study by the General Accounting Office).

Let's say that, as a straight guy, you feel the "sanctity of marriage" includes children. Fair enough. Just over a third of lesbian couples and a fifth of male couples have children, either through adoption or insemination or from a previous marriage. That translates to anywhere from 166,000 to 300,000 kids. As Jonathan Rauch writes in *Gay Marriage: Why It Is Good for Gays, Good for Straights and Good for America*, "If you were the child of a same-sex couple, would you feel more secure with legally married parents or less secure? Gay divorce will look very much like straight divorce: complicated, wrenching and a real deterrent to breaking up." He adds, "What children need is protection from the bleak allure of a culture without commitment and a future without marriage. They need to grow up taking for

granted that love, sex and marriage go together—for everybody.”

SOMETHING BLUE I write a sex-advice column that both straights and gays read, and an argument I often hear against gay marriage is a rather peculiar, biological one. Two men or two women can't reproduce, so if everyone runs off and weds a member of his or her own sex, the human race will die off. Therefore, gay marriage should be discouraged. This argument presumes that

the only thing keeping every man on the planet from marrying another man is the ban on gay marriage. This is not an argument that you, as a straight guy, should embrace, unless you want people to think that the Defense of Marriage Act and Gary Bauer's frowning face are all that stand between you and a good ass reaming. You're straight because you love and fantasize about women, not because you can't marry a man. When someone makes the "Everyone will turn gay!" argument, don't stand there nodding your head unless you want people to think you're a fag. The fact is, the number of homosexuals is a constant; a reliably low percentage of the population is, and always will be gay. Homosexuality is not spreading or catching, nor is a same-sex wedding so appealing that men who love women will marry men because now they can.



A newly married couple in San Francisco.

Finally, if you're one of those straight guys who don't want to hear about gay people or gay fucking or gay marriage—if you just wish the issue would disappear—then you should support the immediate granting of full civil rights to homosexuals. Gay marriage, like interracial marriage and black people sitting at "white" lunch counters, will cease to dominate the news—or to be discussed in *PLAYBOY*—only after it's a done deal. And it will be. Even

older, more conservative people say they just need more time to get used to the idea. Stop fucking with gay people and you'll hear a lot less about us. One day I would like to live in a country where my long-term relationship (I have been with my boyfriend for nine years, and we have a six-year-old son) is afforded the same rights, protections and responsibilities as Britney Spears's 55-hour marriage. And maybe once gays and lesbians are no longer treated like second-class citizens we can all stop arguing about the sex lives and love lives of a small group of citizens and focus instead on issues that matter, such as the economy and the war and the new season of *The Sopranos*.

Savage is the author of Skipping Towards Gomorrah: The Seven Deadly Sins and the Pursuit of Happiness in America.

MARGINALIA




FROM THE VOCABULARY of 12.5-inch dolls offered by TalkingPresidents.com for \$30 each, along with the numbers sold: Bill Clinton (12,000): "It depends on what the meaning of the word is is." "Indeed I did have a relationship with Miss Lewinsky that was not appropriate. In fact, it was wrong." "I experimented with marijuana a time or two and didn't like it and didn't inhale." Donald Rumsfeld (8,000): "I believe what I said yesterday—I don't know what I said, but I know what I think, and I assume it's what I said." Ann Coulter (17,000): "Liberals can't just come out and say they want to take more of our money, kill babies and discriminate on the basis of race." "Why not go to war just for oil? What do Hollywood celebrities imagine fuels their private jets? How do they think their cocaine is delivered to them?" "Even Islamic terrorists don't hate America like liberals do. If they had that much energy, they'd have indoor plumbing." George W. Bush (70,000): "George Washington or, as his friends called him, George W." "Our priorities are our faith. Our priorities are our family. Our priority is a country we love dearly called America." "I come from Texas!"



FROM THE CONSUMER TRAP, by Michael Dawson: "Big businesses in the U.S. spend well more than \$1 trillion a year on marketing. This is double Americans' spending on all public and private education, from kindergarten through graduate school. It also works out to \$4,000 a year for each man, woman and child in the country. That \$4,000 is triple the annual per capita gross domestic product of the low- and middle-income countries where 85 percent of the world's people now live."

FROM A BILL introduced by Rep. Doug Ose (R.-California) that would require the FCC to automatically fine any radio or broadcast TV station that airs profanity. If passed, the act could not legally be read on the air: "Be it enacted that Section 1464 of Title 18, United States Code, is amended (1) by inserting '(a)' before 'Whoever'; and (2) by adding at the end the following: '(b) As used in this section, the term profane, used with respect to language, includes the words shit, piss, fuck, cunt, asshole and the phrases cock sucker, mother fucker and ass hole, compound use (including hyphenated compounds) of such words and phrases with each other or with other words or phrases, and other grammatical forms of such words and phrases (including verb, adjective, gerund, participle and infinitive forms).'"

(continued on page 59)

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|---|---|
| <p>T H E</p> <p>DEBUNKER</p> | <p>MYTH:</p> <p>WOMEN EARN 76 CENTS FOR EVERY DOLLAR EARNED BY MEN</p> |
| <p>REALITY: Comparisons between men and women with similar experience and life situations actually show little difference in earnings. A study by economics professor June O'Neill found that among workers ages 27 to 33 who have never had a child, women earn 98 percent of what men make. A survey of 25 business schools found that men and women receive similar median starting salaries across a variety of disciplines. And a 2003 report by the National Association for Female Executives cites the oft-quoted 76 percent inequity figure but also notes exceptions, such as female banking operations officers outearning their male counterparts by \$15,000 annually and female health industry managers making \$18,000 more.</p> <p>That's not to say that wom-</p> | <p>en haven't been discriminated against in the past. In 1960 the Census Bureau began compiling figures that revealed startling discrepancies among full-time workers, disparities that still exist in some fields. Female neurosurgeons, for example, earn 31 percent less than their</p>  <p>male counterparts, biology professors 38 percent less and physician's assistants 42 percent less. But today the 76 per-</p> <p>cent figure can be explained primarily by lifestyle decisions. According to a General Accounting Office report released last year, "women [generally] have fewer years of experience, work fewer hours per year, are less likely to work a full-time schedule and leave the labor force for longer periods of time," often for family reasons. (Notably, one study found that women who work part-time earn 15 percent more than male part-timers.) Women are also less likely to pursue degrees that lead to high-paying jobs, such as those in medicine, law, engineering, computer science and math and science education. One analyst notes, "The gap is not so much about employers discriminating against women as about women making discriminating choices in the labor market."</p> |

READER RESPONSE

TICKET TRAP REVENGE

Three years ago I was issued a \$108 speeding ticket by one of 14 traffic cops in New Rome, Ohio (population 60), a 12-acre hamlet west of Columbus. I was accused of driving 42 mph in a 35 mph zone on the short stretch of U.S. 40 that cuts through town. This would have been fair if the speed limit sign hadn't been all but unreadable—11 feet from the curb and just five feet high. A prominent 45



mph sign is posted just outside town.

I spent many days e-mailing state and federal transportation officials about this ticket trap. I also launched a site, newromesucks.com. I learned that in one 12-month period New Rome police issued 2,589 tickets, of which only 352 were for speeding. One of their tactics was to run random plate checks on motorists parked at businesses or waiting at New Rome's single traffic light, searching for any reason to write a citation—a cracked windshield, mud on the license plate, dim license plate bulb, etc. The tickets earned New Rome as much as \$400,000 annually, which amounted to 90 percent of the town's revenue.

I organized three protests against the village and provide directions on my site so motorists can avoid New Rome. I also pushed for a state law that dissolves tiny towns that repeatedly abuse police power, violate election laws or misuse tax dollars. The state auditor has targeted New Rome as the first village to be dissolved. Last year the Ohio Department of Transportation removed the town traffic light and said it would raise the speed limit to 45 mph.

No one is sure when in its 57-year history New Rome went bad. But when you give people a way to strike back, they will make their voices heard. That is what makes change happen.

Jim Bussey II
Columbus, Ohio

You may be right about the power of public protest against ticket traps. Another resident of Ohio, Mike Mullen, got tagged in Summersville, West Virginia (population 3,294) for a speeding ticket he felt was unjust. He established summersvillepolice.com in protest and discovered that a third of the town's income in a typical year comes from the more than 10,000 tickets written by its 19 officers. The National Motorists Association operates speedtrap.org, which lists a number of traps that appear to be designed less for safety and more for raising quick cash to fund small town budgets and salaries.

DISTRACTING VOTERS

You overlooked an important point in "Keep America From Voting Act" (February). Bullies, in this case the government, don't care whether what they are doing is "right." If there's a problem, they just start a war to distract the country from what's going on at home.

William Kelsee
Denver, Colorado

NUCLEAR DEBUNKER

You demonstrated an extreme lack of knowledge and insight with your "Debunker" item in February on the relatively high cost of nuclear power. The primary factor behind huge cost overruns was state and federal regulation of safety standards, engineering and the construction of every foot of the plants and support facilities—most to triple-redundancy fail-safe standards. One cannot begin to imagine the work that resulted from these ever-changing regulations after the 1979 Three Mile Island incident. Multiplied by the myriad reactor and plant designs utilities use nationwide, such rules made the process an



abyss that promulgated the death spiral of nuclear energy and led to the financial demise of utilities that had the best intentions, plans and outstanding operating

records. It was like building a new house that meets current safety codes, then having a code-enforcement geek show up at your door a year later to tell you the standards for tensile strength in your concrete foundation or wiring have been revised and you must replace everything to continue living there. Costly? You bet.

If nuclear power were not a cost-effective, efficient energy source, the military would not continue to use it to run its most massive, powerful and reliable machinery—submarines, aircraft carriers and the like.

John Crowder
Memphis, Tennessee

Safety features are expensive. But even a reactor done on the cheap wouldn't be economically competitive because of insurance and liability costs. If the problem derives from having to retrofit existing plants, why have no plants been built since Three Mile Island? Because it costs billions to build new plants, and it's not worth it. For plants that already exist, the idea is to try to earn some money against the massive investments sunk into them. That's where nuclear power stands today. As for the military, the free-market argument for nuclear power looks weak indeed if its best defense is "the Pentagon buys it." Besides, the reactors in subs and aircraft carriers are far smaller than those used for generating electricity. They also offer advantages not related to cost—they run silently, for example, and they eliminate the need for frequent refueling stops.

DISAPPEARED AMERICANS

Thank you for discussing the cases of Jose Padilla and Yaser Esam Hamdi ("The American Who Was Disappeared," March), the two men arrested on suspicion of terrorism and held without legal counsel, charges or trial. Every American, regardless of the circumstances, has the right not to be arbitrarily imprisoned.

Marc Cunningham
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

No one wants to see the American judicial system turned into a Kafka novel. But we're not talking about an ordinary citizen. Padilla is a terrorist. Anthony Lewis would respond that we have no proof of that. That's correct. The American public has no proof. But President Bush and Attorney General Ashcroft do, and that's good enough for me.

Albert Biagini
Fort Myers, Florida

E-mail: forum@playboy.com. Or write: 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019.

NEWSFRONT



Porn Watchers

KENNEDEALE, TEXAS—If you can't beat 'em, shame 'em. Volunteers from Oakcrest Family Church snap digital photos of vehicles arriving at nearby adult video stores, use the plate numbers to identify the owners (legal in Texas) and mail the photo printed on a postcard with the message, "Observed you in the neighborhood. Didn't know if you were aware there is a church in the area. We'd love to have you visit." Says the Oakcrest pastor, "If they come into my neighborhood, I have a right to go into theirs." In Las Vegas, meanwhile, members of a group called the Downtown God Squads pose as streetwalkers. When a john solicits a decoy, she hands him a note that reads, "This is a no-drug and no-prostitution area. What happens in Las Vegas will not stay in Las Vegas. Your picture may get published."

Dead Weight

PITTSBURGH—A driver who admitted she had been drinking crashed head-on into another car, killing a man and putting his wife into a coma. The driver received a 30-day sentence. She also agreed to deliver flowers to the man's grave on the anniversary of his death for the next five years and to carry his photo in her wallet. The mother of the victim provided a snapshot of her son in his coffin. When the woman protested, the mother said, "That's where she put him. I'd just shut my mouth if I were her."

Cruel and Unusual

SAN BERNARDINO, CALIFORNIA—Because his cousin couldn't read, Santos Reyes agreed to take the written portion of his driving test. Bad move. A jury found Reyes guilty of perjury. Because Reyes had two prior convictions (for a burglary in 1981 and a robbery in 1987), the test became his third strike. The judge gave him 26 years. In a similar case, a man caught shoplifting videotapes got 50 years.

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI—Soon after he turned 18, Matthew Limon had consensual sex with a 14-year-old classmate in a residential school for developmentally disabled children. Under state law, sex between teens who are close in age is a less serious crime than sex between a teen and an older adult. Unfortunately for Limon, the law applies only to heterosexuals, and his partner had been male. A judge gave him 17 years. (Had his partner been female, he would have received 15 months.) An appeals court ruled the sentence was justified because homosexual activity is not a part of

"traditional sexual mores" that are "important to the very survival of the human race."

Under the Influence

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA—When police stopped Democratic state legislator Alvin Holmes on suspicion of drunk driving, Holmes had a handy excuse. He told the officers that Alabama law prohibits police from arresting legislators for misdemeanors. "We couldn't do anything," the sheriff said. The law does allow police to detain legislators for breaching the peace, but Holmes's colleagues quickly introduced a bill to clarify the statute and close any loopholes.

Secretion Secrets

NEW YORK—A drug test popular with police, the FBI and customs officials has made its way to the workplace. When brushed across phones, keyboards, computer mice, calculators, door-knobs, armrests, coffeepot handles, faucets and similar items, the tester can detect minute



traces of illegal drugs that have been secreted from the skin. Global Detection and Reporting, which markets the test, charges small businesses \$10 per employee for a general sweep of the premises.

MARGINALIA

(continued from page 57)

FROM A LIST at EthicalConsumer.org of about 50 companies being boycotted by activist groups, along with their alleged moral violations: (1) Adidas, for using kangaroo skin to make some types of soccer boots. (2) Air Canada, Air China, Air France, American, Continental, El Al, Japan Airlines, Lufthansa and US Airways, for transporting monkeys for research. (3) Bacardi, for using its Cuban origins in marketing despite being active in anti-Cuba lobby groups. (4) Budweiser, because Anheuser-Busch owns Sea World, which uses captive orcas. (5) DaimlerChrysler, for its failure to pay adequate compensation for its use of slave labor in Germany during World War II. (6) Dior, for an ad campaign that features models who "look dead, drugged, greasy and are in or near cars," which activists say glamorizes drunk driving while eroticizing the victimization of women. (7) Janet Jackson, because of her duet with Beenie Man, whose lyrics advocate killing gay people. (8) KFC, for cruelty to chickens. (9) Lonely Planet, until its guide to Myanmar (Burma) is abandoned because of evidence that contractors building tourist facilities there have used forced labor. (10) Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, because of its involvement in the funding of the Three Gorges Dam in China.

(11) Royal Caribbean cruises, for dumping inadequately treated sewage into the oceans. (12) Nestlé, for marketing breast-milk substitutes in Third World countries. (13) Shell, until the peoples of the Ogoni region in Nigeria receive a fair share of profits from oil extraction. (14) Starbucks, for using genetically engineered ingredients.

FROM A REPORT in *American Journalism Review*: "On September 8 the Miller/Gordon story about the aluminum tubes appeared on page one of *The New York Times*. The information was attributed to unnamed administration sources. That same morning Vice President Cheney was interviewed by Tim Russert on NBC's *Meet the Press*. Cheney mentioned Saddam's efforts to 'acquire the equipment he needs to be able to enrich uranium to make the bombs.' Russert, familiar with the *Times* story, prompted Cheney: 'Aluminum tubes.' Cheney replied, 'Specifically aluminum tubes. There's a story in *The New York Times* this morning—this is—I don't—and I want to attribute the *Times*. I don't want to talk about, obviously, specific intelligence sources, but it's now public that, in fact, he has been seeking to acquire...the kind of tubes that are necessary to build a centrifuge.' When [CBS News reporter] Bob Simon heard about this interview, he smelled a rat: 'You leak a story to *The New York Times*, and the *Times* prints it, and then you go on the Sunday morning talk show quoting the *Times* and corroborating your own information. That takes chutzpah.'



THE BAR CODE IN YOUR BOOTY

TINY RADIO ID TAGS ARE SHOWING UP EVERYWHERE. HERE'S OUR A-TO-Z GUIDE
BY MARK FRAUENFELDER

Applied Digital Solutions: This firm makes radio-frequency identification capsules (RFIDs) that can be affixed to products or implanted in animals or humans for inventory control or identification. The size of a grain of rice, each capsule contains a microchip with a serial number. ADS hopes RFIDs will replace credit cards, medical bracelets and even keys. It has implanted them in only 30 people in the U.S. but has sold 6,000 for human use worldwide.

Baggage: McCarran International in Las Vegas this year will become the first airport to attach RFIDs to baggage.

Casino chips: U.S. casinos may soon use scanners to read the value of tagged chips and to monitor betting patterns.

Drugs: The FDA is studying whether RFIDs can be used to prevent counterfeiting by tracking pharmaceuticals imported from Colombia, Argentina and Mexico.

E-ZPass: This early use of RFIDs allows drivers to pass through toll-booths without stopping to pay.

Fish: The federal government has implanted RFIDs in 10 million salmon to study spawning. In Australia officials busted three poachers after scanning their freezer and finding fish that had been tagged by game wardens.

Guns: The Malaysian government has purchased the rights to RFIDs that may be durable enough to be placed in bullets, allowing them to be traced to the buyer.

Hitachi: The company has developed an RFID that measures 0.012 inches—smaller than the period at the end of this sentence.

Information society: Delegates to the World Summit on the Informa-

tion Society were surprised to discover that the ID badges of 50 high-powered guests had been embedded with RFIDs.

Jamming: One firm is developing a device that would jam RFID scanners by sending out fake serial numbers.

Kids: Last year Applied Digital Solutions launched a program in Mexico and Brazil called VeriKid that allows parents to implant RFIDs into their children.

Lipstick: Shoppers who bought Lipfinity lipstick at an Oklahoma Wal-Mart were not told that its package contained an RFID.

Money: The European Central Bank may embed RFIDs into paper currency to make money traceable to the person who withdraws it.

New Testament: Many fundamentalists associate RFID implants with the "mark of the beast" that the Bible says will identify nonbelievers when the world ends.

Over the border: A federal program provides access cards with RFIDs to 50,000 "secure" drivers who frequently enter and leave the U.S.

Prisoners: Inmates at Pima County Jail in Arizona wear RFID wristbands. Guards are issued RFID cards to access secure areas.

Quality control: The U.S. military, which has so far invested \$272 million in RFIDs, uses them to monitor 300,000 containers daily. An inventory job that once took sol-

diers three days can now be done in 20 minutes.

Readers: The San Francisco Public Library plans to add RFIDs to 2 million books to allow patrons to check themselves out.

Spychips.com: Consumers Against Supermarket Privacy Invasion and Numbering (CASPIAN) and 33 other groups have called for a moratorium on RFIDs in the marketplace.

Trash: Garbage cans in Sweden and British Columbia come equipped with RFIDs. Garbage trucks weigh and scan the cans, and the owner is billed.

Undies: After protests, Benetton abandoned plans to add RFIDs to its selection of panties.

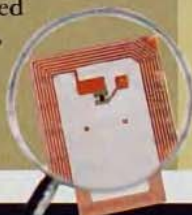
VeriPay: Instead of waiting in line, "chipped" customers will stroll past a sensor that calculates what they owe and deducts the sum from the bank account number on their RFID.

Wal-Mart: The retail giant has told its top suppliers to have RFIDs on each pallet of products delivered to its stores by 2005. The system could save \$8.4 billion annually by reducing labor costs and theft.

X-rays: CASPIAN suggests finding a vet or a chiropractor to let you X-ray products for RFIDs. It also provides instructions on how to disable them (basically, you crush them like a bug).

You: Save \$50 off the \$200 list price when you preregister to get chipped at 4verichip.com. The standard location is between the elbow and the shoulder of the right arm.

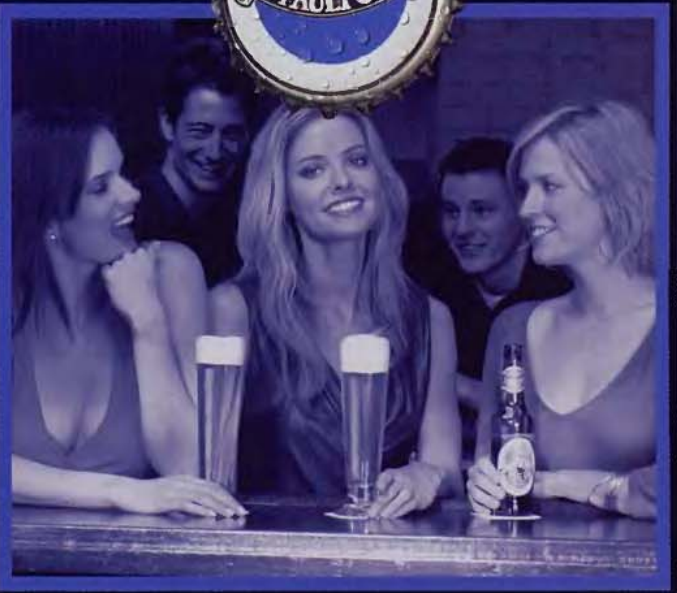
Zoology: Entomologists glue tags to insects to study behavior. Fifty million pets also have RFID tags.



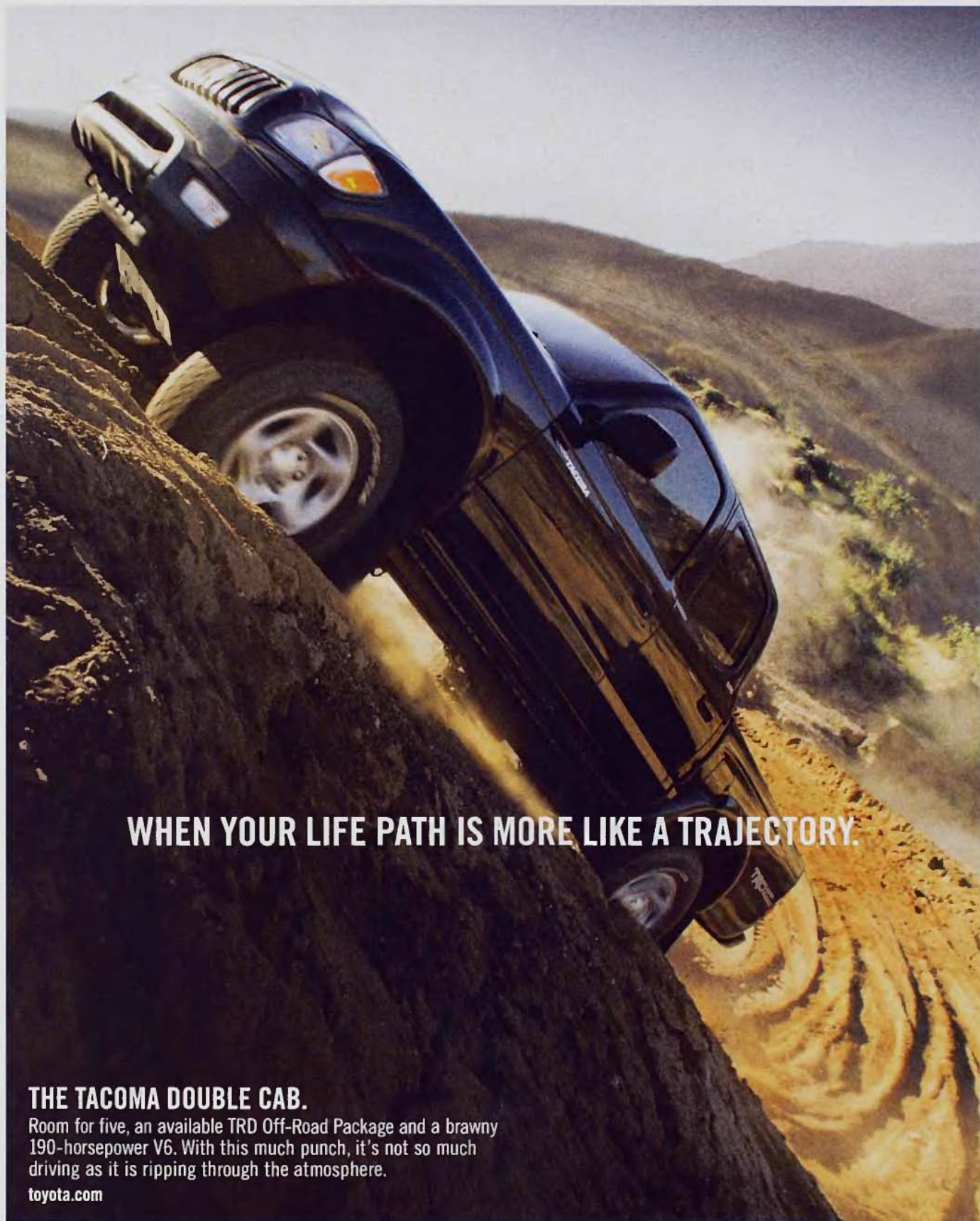
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Some just happen to be
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GET THE FEELING

TOYOTA

Vehicle shown with optional equipment. ©2003 Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc.

PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: DEREK JETER

A candid conversation with the Yankees star about coping with George, teaming with A-Rod and why he reads the gossip page before the sports page

In a sport oddly denuded of household names and true superstars, Derek Jeter stands tall. The New York Yankee is more than just one of the game's best players; for years he's been a media darling in the world's most fickle city. The 29-year-old shortstop turns up in gossip columns almost as frequently as he does in the sports pages. He has been linked to scores of beautiful and high-profile women. The New York Post recently ranked Jeter number one on its year-end list of the city's 34 most eligible guys. For denizens of the Big Apple, Jeter has been Mr. Baseball, pure and simple. Life's been good.

And then A-Rod came into town. In February, when the Yankees signed Alex Rodriguez, widely touted as the game's best player, sportswriters wondered what it would mean—to Jeter. Complicating the issue, the former Texas Ranger is a shortstop with two Gold Gloves (Jeter has none) who had to move to third base when he signed with the Yankees. More drama? The two men had once been the closest of friends, but they had a falling-out three years ago. For gossip-crazed New Yorkers, theirs has become one of the most closely watched relationships in town.

While A-Rod was voted last year's American League Most Valuable Player, Jeter is no slouch. Now in the fourth year of a 10-year,

\$189 million contract, Jeter owns a .317 career batting average. He has played in the postseason in every one of his eight seasons and often saves his best for October. In 2000, when the Yankees beat the crosstown Mets in the World Series in five games, he was named series MVP. And although the Anaheim Angels wiped out the Yanks in the first round of the 2002 postseason, Jeter hit .500. Last spring Yankees owner George Steinbrenner named him team captain, only the 11th in franchise history.

Off the field Jeter is also a player, known for his dalliances with Mariah Carey, a former Miss Universe and a bevy of models and actresses. As Yankees broadcaster Charley Steiner put it, "If the Yankees are the Beatles, Derek's the cute one."

The son of a racially mixed couple, Jeter grew up in Kalamazoo, Michigan and put on his first Yankees uniform when he was six. In 1992 he was named high school player of the year and was chosen sixth by the Yankees in the June free agent baseball draft. He was voted the American League Rookie of the Year in 1996, his first full season in the majors, and quickly established himself as one of baseball's best all-around players. Jeter's seasonal averages of 207 hits and 124 runs are extraordinary. Long considered the Yankees'

leader, he also has a knack for elevating the play of his teammates.

While he's one of baseball's most accessible players, he's one of the most private as well. Like a seasoned politician, Jeter carefully crafts his courteous statements—and sticks to them. Rarely does he lose his composure. "He's kind of vanilla," notes his agent, Casey Close. Conscious of commanding center stage, Jeter admits that he rarely lets down his guard.

We sent journalist Diane K. Shah to Jeter's winter home in Tampa, Florida, where she had to get past the guards posted at his gated community before tackling the more formidable guards in his head.

PLAYBOY: A lot has been made of your relationship with Alex Rodriguez. Until 2001 you referred to him as your best friend. Then, after he signed his \$252 million deal with Texas, he said some unflattering things about you through the media—that you never had to serve as a leader and that since you bat second, teams don't worry that you'll beat them. When reporters informed you of this, you said you'd call Alex and talk to him. What happened?

JETER: It was spring training, and he actually came over here the night that



"Alex and I weren't as close as we had been. But neither of us has had problems getting along with teammates before, so I don't see why we'd have problems now. It gives the media something to write about, though."



"I'll do everything in my power to beat you, and that started when I was a kid. My dad used to beat me at everything. We'd play checkers and he would beat me. He would never let me win. Never."



"Yeah, I'm confident. I don't like cocky people. Confidence is how you feel. Cockiness is how you act. I'm always confident. There are times when you struggle, but if a big game is on the line, I expect to do well."

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CJ WALKER

came out. Just came by. We talked about it, and that was basically the end of it.

PLAYBOY: We heard that he drove 95 miles from the Rangers' spring-training camp to your house and left phone messages you didn't return. Is that true?

JETER: No. When that stuff went public, I guess it was in the afternoon when I found out about it. We had a game that night, and he drove over while we were playing. So I didn't get the messages that he was at my house until after the game.

PLAYBOY: He was chilling in your driveway?

JETER: He was in the area, but he wasn't in the driveway.

PLAYBOY: Still, you were hurt.

JETER: Sure, it hurts anytime someone you're close to says something you question. But Alex was coming from Seattle and had signed this megadeal. He was on a platform that maybe he'd never been on before. I think he found himself having to defend the reason he got paid so much. Or he was asked, "If you get this, what's Derek going to get?" So he was comparing us, which I told him shouldn't even be an issue. I said, "You didn't pay yourself. You shouldn't have to answer that question. Let them ask the owner." I think he was saying things that maybe other people had said to him.

PLAYBOY: After that it appeared you two weren't close.

JETER: We weren't as close as we had been. We were still friends. The younger you are, the more time you have when the season is over. Now it seems you do more in the off-season than you do during the season.

PLAYBOY: How did you hear about the trade?

JETER: A couple of people in the organization called me.

PLAYBOY: What were you doing when you got the word?

JETER: No idea. Probably watching TV.

PLAYBOY: The last time you'd seen Alex, when you two were making a commercial, did you talk about the possibility of his becoming a Yankee?

JETER: No, because that was before Aaron Boone tore his ACL. It was right around the time when everything was happening with the potential trade to Boston, and he basically didn't know what was going on.

PLAYBOY: Once A-Rod signed on did anybody ask if you were willing to move to second or third?

JETER: That was never an issue. They approached him about playing third base.

PLAYBOY: Isn't it easier to move from shortstop to second than to third?

JETER: Nah, I wouldn't say that. Turning a double play is totally different from

second base than from shortstop. Your back is to first. So I would assume it would be easier to go to third base.

PLAYBOY: How did your teammates react to the news?

JETER: Everyone's pretty excited. You're adding one of the best all-around players in the game to your lineup, so it's only going to make us a better team.

PLAYBOY: Is it true George Steinbrenner ordered you to go to Alex's news conference in New York?

JETER: No, he called me and asked if I wanted to go.

PLAYBOY: Some news accounts reported that he demanded you go.

JETER: See, you can't believe everything you read.



I'm always conscious that people are watching. Say I want to dance on top of a table. I can't do that.

PLAYBOY: To what degree are you amused or bothered by the speculation that you and Alex can't get along?

JETER: Neither of us has had problems getting along with teammates before, so I don't see why we'd have problems now. It gives the media something to write about, though. I think it will eventually die down.

PLAYBOY: You've said you're very competitive. What kinds of things will you be competitive about with Alex?

JETER: Well, we're on the same team, so we really don't have anything to compete for. We're playing a team sport, right?

PLAYBOY: How about your batting average versus his?

JETER: No. I don't go into a season saying I want to bat higher than any one of

my teammates. That's not a goal. The goal is to win.

PLAYBOY: Who's funnier?

JETER: I think we're funny in different ways. I'm not sure you can rate us. You'd have to be around both of us to make that decision.

PLAYBOY: We noticed a book on the table in your entryway, *Patton on Leadership: Strategic Lessons for Corporate Warfare*, by Alan Axelrod. Any particular reason you own that?

JETER: Mr. Steinbrenner gave it to me after the 1998 season.

PLAYBOY: Was it meant to teach you, or was it meant to explain him?

JETER: I think both. A lot of what's in there are things he says: "If you're going to lead, you've got to sit in the saddle." "You've got to be willing to go out and do the things you ask of the people you're leading." It's pretty interesting.

PLAYBOY: He inscribed it, "To Derek. Read and study. He was a great leader just as you are and will be a great leader. Hopefully of the men in pinstripes." How would you describe your relationship with Big George?

JETER: It's always boss-employee. He's the boss. But I think we have a really good relationship. I don't know how it could be any better in terms of playing for him.

PLAYBOY: But last year, after he questioned your dedication and your late-night hours, you were pissed off. Was that the first time he publicly criticized you?

JETER: No, he mentioned my name, among other players, when the team was struggling a few years ago. He said some guys needed to start stepping it up. He meant me. But the whole thing last year was blown out of proportion. He mentioned a birthday party. How many birthday parties do you have a year?

PLAYBOY: So Steinbrenner was referring to just one party? Your birthday is in June; he's bringing it up six months later?

JETER: It was my birthday party before a day off. The next thing you knew, I'd been turned into a big party animal. Now you read that all the time—I'm the party animal.

PLAYBOY: Steinbrenner said more than that. He said you "always give 100 percent. I need 110 percent." And he said, "If I'm paying a guy \$16 million, I want him to listen."

JETER: The whole thing was made larger-than-life. That was the point of those Visa commercials. We got a chance to make light of the situation and put it behind us.

PLAYBOY: Does he expect you to work for him 24-7, 365 days a year?

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JETER: Probably. Rightfully so. When you're a Yankee you represent the Yankees at all times. You don't have days off. If I were to get into trouble today, the first thing you'd see is my name associated with the team. So I don't think you have 20 or 30 days off a year from being a Yankee. You're always a Yankee.

PLAYBOY: How about during the off-season? What if you wanted to go out and enjoy somebody's company until three or four in the morning?

JETER: Oh, I'd be out. I'm a grown man. In the off-season I can do whatever I want, whenever I want to do it. He wouldn't call me if he read I was out until such and such an hour in January. He wouldn't say, "You need to be home."

PLAYBOY: How often do you see Steinbrenner?

JETER: He hasn't been around as much as he used to be. Last season I saw him probably two or three times before the postseason.

PLAYBOY: You both spend your winters in Tampa. Does he ever call you and say, "Let's get lunch?"

JETER: It's happened maybe once or twice. We usually bet a dinner on the Ohio State-Michigan football game.

PLAYBOY: When you get together, does he have a message for you?

JETER: He always has messages. "Make sure you focus this year. I need you focused." Or he'll see me working out and say, "Don't get too big, because we need you to have agility."

PLAYBOY: In the first Visa commercial, in which Steinbrenner chastises you for being out carousing every night, was it your idea that he participate in the conga line?

JETER: No, but I was the one who had to persuade him to do it. It wasn't easy. He did it a couple of times, and then he called it quits. Fortunately they got a good take.

PLAYBOY: Is it ever fun seeing your name in the gossip columns?

JETER: Some of the stories are funny. Some of them amaze me. Like one time they said I was renting an island—some island I'd never heard of—for \$23,000 a day and that I was bringing one of three girls I'd never heard of for a birthday party. The thing is, people believe it when they read it. I was talking to Wayne Gretzky the other day about his time in New York. He said they made up things about him constantly. He used to get the newspapers and turn to the gossip pages, and when he'd read something about someone else he'd say, "Really? They did this?" But when he read about himself it was, "Where do they come up with this stuff?" I thought that was funny, because I do the same thing.


PLAYBOY: So you do read the gossip pages?

JETER: Even before the sports section. To make sure I'm not in them.

PLAYBOY: You seem to need to be a perfectionist on the field. Why is that?

JETER: Competition-wise I always want to be perfect. I can't stand losing in

Jeter









VS.

A-Rod



Who's the top man in New York? A tale of the tape in this battle of the egos

| HEIGHT | |
|--|--|
| 6'3" | 6'3" |
| WEIGHT | |
| 195 pounds | 210 pounds |
| BATS/THROWS | |
| Right/Right | Right/Right |
| NICKNAME | |
| Jeet | A-Rod |
| SHARES NICKNAME WITH | |
|  <p>Jeet kune do, the genre of martial arts street fighting created by Bruce Lee</p> |  <p>Hard-serving tennis star Andy Roddick</p> |
| SALARY PER INNING | |
| \$11,659 | \$14,403 |
| CAREER BATTING AVERAGE | |
| .317 | .308 |
| WORLD SERIES RINGS | |
| Four | None |
| RING PROBLEM | |
| Running out of fingers | Tried on Jeter's 1999 ring and couldn't get it off |
| FIRST CAR | |
| 1981 Datsun 310 | 1988 Mazda 323 |
| CURRENT CAR | |
|  <p>Hummer</p> |  <p>Range Rover</p> |
| FAVORITE CEREAL | |
| Frosted Flakes | Cocoa Puffs |
| FETISH | |
| "I think everyone is ticklish. You just gotta find the right spots." | Flosses obsessively: "I'm big into teeth." |
| HOSTED | |
|  <p><i>Saturday Night Live</i>. Guest star: David Wells in drag.</p> |  <p><i>This Week in Baseball</i>. Special guest: softball hottie Jennie Finch</p> |
| GATED | |
| Singer Mariah Carey | Volleyball star--model Gabrielle Reece |
| HUNK INDEX | |
| One of <i>People</i> magazine's 50 Most Beautiful People in the World in 1997 and 1999 | One of <i>People</i> magazine's 50 Most Beautiful People in the World in 1998 and 2001 |
| WORDS OF WISDOM | |
| "I have the greatest job in the world. Only one person can have it. You have shortstops on other teams—I'm not knocking other teams—but there's only one Yankee shortstop." Oh really? | "Why do people sing 'Take Me Out to the Ball Game' when they're already there?" |
| JETER ON A-ROD | |
| "I'm Alex's biggest fan. I brag on him so much that my teammates are sick of me talking about him." | |
| A-ROD ON JETER | |
| "He's never had to lead. He can just go and play and have fun." | |

anything. If you tell me you want to race down the street right now, I'm going to try to beat you.

PLAYBOY: We're pretty sure you'd win.

JETER: I'll still do everything in my power to beat you, and that started when I was a kid. My dad used to beat me at everything. We'd play checkers, and he would beat me. He would never let me win. Never. We used to watch *The Price Is Right*, and we'd play the showcase show-down. I didn't know how much a refrigerator or a new car cost—I was six years old. We'd sit there and he'd beat me, and then I'd walk to school.

PLAYBOY: Do you ever wish your dad had let you win?

JETER: No—I think my dad was teaching me lessons. Things don't come easily. People aren't just going to let you get your way. I mean, people aren't going to say, "Here, you can have this." You have to work for it.

PLAYBOY: You wrote in your book, *The Life You Imagine*, that you always try to envision something before you do it. Is that because you're conscious of being a role model, or is that just you?

JETER: I think it's me no matter what. When I was younger, before I'd do things I'd imagine what my parents would think. It's the same philosophy I apply today. But now it's more than my parents. Lots of people are watching.

PLAYBOY: It sounds as if you're always

watching yourself, like in an out-of-body experience.

JETER: Yes, and I'm pretty much used to it now. I'm always aware that people are watching. There are a lot of things I'd like to do that I can't—or that I choose not to. Say I'm out with some friends and I want to dance on top of a table. I know I can't do that.

PLAYBOY: Doesn't it get tiring, always watching yourself?

JETER: Yes, but I don't think it's a bad thing. When you let that guard down, that's when you get in trouble.

PLAYBOY: Last season was a strange one for you, full of highs and lows. Among the lows: In game six of the World Series you went 0 for 4, struck out twice and made an error that led to a Marlins insurance run. Series over. And you suffered three injuries, including a dislocated shoulder on opening day. Was that the most serious injury you've ever had?

JETER: It was the only serious injury I've had. I was out for six weeks.

PLAYBOY: You were heading to third; the catcher, Ken Huckaby, ran over to cover the base, and you slid into his shin guard. What was your first thought?

JETER: I thought maybe I had broken my collarbone, because I felt a pop.

PLAYBOY: Was there instant pain?

JETER: It didn't feel good. I wouldn't recommend it. I was kind of afraid to look at it, because I thought I'd see it

coming out.

PLAYBOY: Did they just push it back in?

JETER: They tried initially, on the field, but that didn't work. I just wanted to get off the field, because you have 50,000 people looking at you. It took a while for them to get the golf cart out there. Then finally we went inside and they popped it back in.

PLAYBOY: There was a bit of controversy, because it was reported that Huckaby tried to phone you to apologize but couldn't reach you. Then a day or two later he walked into your locker room to apologize, and you gave him an icy stare.

JETER: Not true. First, I never expected him to apologize, because I didn't think he purposely tried to dislocate my shoulder. Before the second game he told the media he'd tried to call me on my cell phone, I didn't answer and he left a message. That wasn't true. He doesn't have my cell number. If he wanted to get ahold of me, it's only a couple hundred feet from one clubhouse to the other. Or he could have called the trainers' room, because obviously that's where I was. It was all made up. What bothered me was how the thing was portrayed.

PLAYBOY: Late in the season, against Boston, you pulled a rib-cage muscle. How did that happen?

JETER: Swinging. We were facing a knuckleball pitcher, Tim Wakefield. I think I swung a little too hard.

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PLAYBOY: Did you finish the at bat?

JETER: Yes. Then I had another at bat and got a hit. I was on first base, and they took me out. I think I missed a week.

PLAYBOY: Then there you were in the first game of the American League Championship Series, Boston again.

JETER: I think it was the second or third inning. I dove for a ball and my hand rolled over, and I tore a ligament in my thumb.

PLAYBOY: Your left thumb.

JETER: It was a bad year for my left side. It takes three or four months for that to heal. They gave me shots before the games against Boston, but I couldn't feel my thumb. So in the World Series I just played with it. They put a little mold thing—a little cast—inside my glove to stop my thumb from moving around.

PLAYBOY: The rivalry between the Yankees and the Red Sox has reached epic proportions, especially with A-Rod now in pinstripes. It isn't just the fans, is it?

JETER: The rivalry has gotten more intense each year I've been in the major leagues. You have respect for the other team, I think, but it's gotten to the point where in the postseason you've got guys throwing at each other's heads and charging the mound. It's almost like the old days, when they used to fight all the time.

PLAYBOY: Some said that in last year's playoffs, the Yankees used up everything against the Red Sox—seven games, the last one going extra innings—and you had nothing left for the Marlins.

JETER: The series with the Red Sox was emotionally draining because all seven games were intense. But I don't think that's why we lost. We lost because Florida played better than we did.

PLAYBOY: Did it take long to get over losing the World Series?

JETER: Yes, I hate to lose. For a while I didn't like to be out and around a lot of people. I pretty much kept to myself. But you never forget it. I still think about us losing. You want to remember what it feels like, because you don't want to have that feeling again. That's what drives you to try to be better.

PLAYBOY: So not only have the Yankees gone three years without a championship, but to add insult to injury, several days after the series you were waiting to go into a movie theater and got heckled by a fan. "If you hadn't made that error, Jeter, you'd still be playing," she apparently said.

JETER: She was a young girl, and she was yelling about the error I made in game six. And then she said, real sarcastically, "Better luck next year." She seemed to enjoy it. She was probably a Mets fan.

PLAYBOY: How often do you have to put up with that stuff outside the ballpark?

JETER: In Boston, all the time. That's a whole other world. I actually think I'm public enemy number one there.

PLAYBOY: Considering that the Red Sox nearly signed A-Rod, do you think you'll have to fight him for that title?

JETER: Maybe he can share the load with me. That's what I'm hoping for.

PLAYBOY: Is it difficult for you to go out alone?

JETER: I don't go anywhere by myself, period. You never know when you're going to run into someone who's been drinking and is acting foolish. You like to know that someone is always watching your back.

PLAYBOY: Women recognize you on the street and they squeal. Do you like it?

JETER: It's flattering. It's embarrassing, too. But anytime you get recognized, it means you're being appreciated for some of the things you've done. I don't mind it.

PLAYBOY: How many of your teammates get squealed at?

JETER: They're all married.

PLAYBOY: Let's see, you've dated a Miss Universe, a Victoria's Secret underwear model and an MTV hostess. According to the *New York Post*, you demand perfection, at least visually, in your dates. Is that true?

JETER: She has to be a beautiful person. She has to be fun. I like to have fun. I'm always smiling. She has to have a sense of humor, because you've got to enjoy life. Intelligent. But I don't sit down and make a blueprint of how someone must look. I guess you just know. The more you get to know someone, you understand if you have things in common.

PLAYBOY: You were once linked with Mariah Carey.

JETER: I was a fan of her music, and then we ran into each other a couple of times in New York.

PLAYBOY: The papers said she stalked you.

JETER: I don't know where they would get that from.

PLAYBOY: The papers also had you practically engaged. Was it that serious?

JETER: We didn't date for as long as people think. I've heard all kinds of things. But it was really just a few months.

PLAYBOY: After it ended you said you realized you couldn't make a relationship work if the other person is famous too. Is that an ego thing?

JETER: Not at all. It's just tough when both people are in the public eye. I'm not saying it can't work, but there are a lot of rumors, a lot of gossip, different schedules.

PLAYBOY: You say you're eager to get married, but do you think you need to finish baseball first?

JETER: Not necessarily. I have to admit I'm at a selfish point in my life in terms of what I'm trying to accomplish. But there are times when you wish you had someone to share it with.

PLAYBOY: How do you ask a woman out?

JETER: Initially it'll be as part of a group. Like someone will bring their friends, and I'll have my friends. It's easier that way. Because when you do the one-on-one thing, that's when the media get so involved.

PLAYBOY: Have you ever had to explain



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to a date what you do for a living?

JETER: I say I have a night job.

PLAYBOY: That's it?

JETER: And that I'm in the entertainment business. [smiles]

PLAYBOY: Do you ever get rejected?

JETER: Everyone gets rejected.

PLAYBOY: Are you involved with anybody right now?

JETER: I'm seeing someone in New York.

PLAYBOY: You're in the fourth year of a 10-year contract worth \$189 million. You'll be paid \$19 million this year. What are your greatest extravagances?

JETER: I get things for other people. But for myself I have a Hummer, a Ferrari and a Mercedes 600. I got this house six, seven years ago, and I'm not planning on leaving. I have a nice apartment in New York.

PLAYBOY: The Hummer has a satellite dish on the roof.

JETER: I just had DirecTV put in. Only now it won't fit in my garage. I've got to build a bigger garage.

PLAYBOY: Did we spot a motorcycle in there?

JETER: A scooter. It was a Christmas gift from Gerald Williams. He used to play for the Yankees. Now he's with the Marlins, and he lives three doors down. He bought one for each of us, but when we tried to ride them in, the guard stopped us at the gate. You can't drive two-wheeled vehicles here. So we had to load them on a truck and bring them in that way. We ride them at night.

PLAYBOY: You're sure it's not a motorcycle?

JETER: [Laughs] It's a scooter. I'm not allowed to ride a motorcycle. It's in my contract. Actually, it's not even my scooter. It's a friend's.

PLAYBOY: Right. What else do you spend money on? Clothes?

JETER: I have a lot of suits. I have a tailor in Chicago. He's Michael Jordan's guy, too. But really, I'm not a huge spender.

PLAYBOY: What music do you like?

JETER: All I listen to is hip-hop and R&B—Jay-Z, 50 Cent, Beyoncé, R. Kelly. That's pretty much it.

PLAYBOY: Two full seasons have passed, but people are still talking about that miraculous play against Oakland in the 2001 division series. Some say it's the infield equivalent of Willie Mays's catch in the 1954 World Series. The Yankees were down two games to none. If you lost game three, your season would be over. The Yankees were ahead one to nothing. The Yankees were ahead one to nothing. Can you run us through it?

JETER: Jeremy Giambi was on first, there were two outs, and Terrence Long hit a long fly to right that fell in for a double. The second baseman, Alfonso Soriano, was the first cutoff man, and the first baseman, Tino Martinez, was the second cutoff man. But when Shane Spencer picked up the ball in right, he threw it over both their heads.

PLAYBOY: So you had Soriano down the right-field line and Tino near first base.

Giambi was steaming for home, right? And you were at short.

JETER: I could see that the throw was going over their heads. And I saw the runner wasn't home yet, so I thought if I could get to the ball and get rid of it quickly, we'd have a chance to get him.

PLAYBOY: From out of nowhere you suddenly materialized at first.

JETER: I fielded the ball between first and home and flipped it as soon as I got it.

PLAYBOY: You flipped it sideways to Jorge Posada at the plate—a perfect throw. Giambi was so shocked to see the ball coming that he didn't even slide. When you saw the highlight film, did the play look different to you than in your mind as you were performing it?

JETER: In my mind everything happened in slow motion. When I watched it later I just looked at it really as what I was supposed to do. We'd practiced that play in spring training.

PLAYBOY: But nobody recalls ever seeing such a play before. Is there a name for it?

JETER: They just call it the Play.

PLAYBOY: Two games later the same guy, Terrence Long, hit a pop-up into foul

I'm a grown man. I can do whatever I want, whenever I want. Steinbrenner wouldn't call me if I was out in January. He wouldn't say, "You need to be home."

territory at Yankee Stadium. And you did a belly flop into the seats behind third base and came up with the ball. Was that the second most exciting play you've made?

JETER: I think it was exciting to watch. I don't think it was exciting to do it, because it hurt.

PLAYBOY: What's been your most embarrassing moment on the field?

JETER: We were playing in Minnesota. I'm on third with less than two outs. Someone hits a deep fly ball that bounces over the fence. It's a ground-rule double, so you get two bases, and I automatically score. But I'm still standing on third, tagging up in case the ball is caught. When it bounces over the fence, I turn to go, trip over my shoelaces and fall flat on my face. Then they show it over and over on the Jumbotron.

PLAYBOY: You and Alex are among the most famous baseball players today. Probably fewer than 10 are easily recognizable nationwide, whereas the NBA and the NFL have many more. Why is that?

JETER: They market their sports a lot better. I filmed a commercial with Alex and the Marlins' Josh Beckett for Major

League Baseball. It's the first time baseball has done that. It's lagging behind the other sports, but I think now it's putting forth an effort.

PLAYBOY: Baseball also lags behind other sports when it comes to drug testing, especially for steroids. This season you'll be randomly tested. Should performance-enhancing drugs be banned?

JETER: Yes, without question, because they put everyone else at a disadvantage. There's also the public's perception. If someone comes back a little smaller or a little bigger, the first thing people wonder is, Did he take steroids before and isn't taking them now? Or is he using steroids now? I think the whole debate is putting a lot of questions in people's heads.

PLAYBOY: You grew up in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Your dad is black; your mom is white. How did they prepare you for your mixed ethnicity?

JETER: For me it was a normal situation. It was all I knew. We'd get funny looks from people. My parents tried to educate my sister and me about why people would stare. They would say it was because people were seeing something they hadn't seen before.

PLAYBOY: Kids can be mean. Did you have problems?

JETER: Not many, because I played baseball, which was primarily white. Then I played basketball, which was primarily black. So I had a lot of friends. But I remember going back home after my first year in baseball. I had just bought a Mitsubishi 3000. That was the greatest car in the world. So I was back home, and I was eating out with a friend. We went back to the car and were about to leave when some kids drove by. Someone shouted, "Bring that car back to your dad" and yelled some racial things. I was so proud to come home, and then you have to hear those kinds of things.

PLAYBOY: Do you feel closer to one race than the other?

JETER: No. My best friend is a white guy I've known since fourth grade. My trainer is Puerto Rican. The catcher on our team, Jorge Posada, is Puerto Rican. I was the best man at his wedding. Sean Twitty, a friend from the minors, is Jamaican.

PLAYBOY: You grew up rooting for the Yankees. Didn't you like the Tigers?

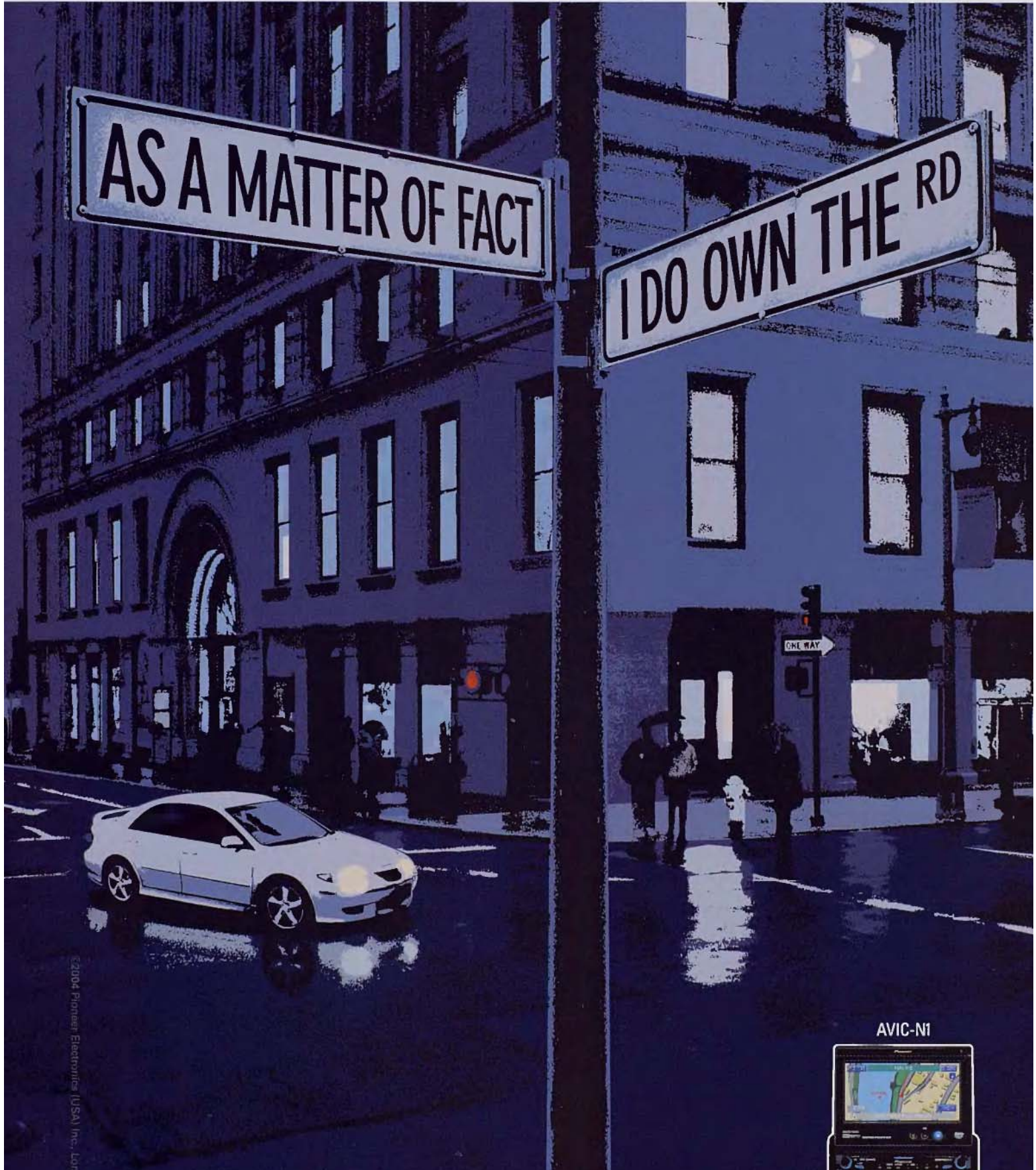
JETER: I was born in Jersey, and I used to spend the summers there because my mom had 13 brothers and sisters, and I had all kinds of cousins. My grandmother was a huge Yankees fan, and she turned me on to the team. Also, my dad liked the Tigers. Since we competed in everything, I couldn't root for the same team he did.

PLAYBOY: You've said you always wanted to play baseball because your dad played.

JETER: He played at Fisk University in Tennessee. Growing up I would watch him play in a softball league.

(continued on page 165)

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F E E D I N G O U R D E E P E S T F E A R S

:: HOW BIG AGRICULTURE AND THE U.S. GOVERNMENT BUNGLED THE BIOTECH REVOLUTION AND MADE A DEAL WITH THE DEVIL ::

— BY DAN BAUM —

I. THE SHOT HEARD ROUND THE PLANET

John Sanford, a 34-year-old Cornell University professor, had two things on his mind in the fall of 1983. The first was how to transfer DNA from one living cell to another—an urgent mission for his lab, since the U.S. Supreme Court had recently decided that life-forms could be patented, owned and marketed for profit. The second was how to protect his home in a leafy neighborhood of Ithaca, New York from squirrels, specifically the aggressive gray varmints that had been vandalizing his bird feeders and tearing up his flower beds. The usually gentle pollen expert finally broke down and bought a BB gun to hold his ground against the garden invaders.

Sanford was a pro at conventional greenhouse crossbreeding, but his first attempts at genetic engineering were failures. He tried zapping cells with tiny laser beams to cut holes in their walls through which genes could be moved, but he quickly realized that the process was too destructive. The autumn slipped away, and nothing worked at the lab. At home, however, he and his BB gun made satisfying progress against the squirrels.

Shortly before Christmas, Sanford ran into fellow Cornell professor Edward Wolf, a lab whiz who was also confounded by the genetic transformation problem. Both were wondering whether a piece of DNA could itself be accelerated fast enough to puncture a cell wall if it rode piggyback on something heavier, like a one-micron particle of, say, tungsten.

"How fast do you think the particle would have to travel?" Wolf asked.

Sanford, fresh from his latest squirrel siege, had an idea: How about 300 to 400 feet a second, the muzzle velocity of the average BB gun? At Fay's drugstore in Ithaca, Wolf bought an inexpensive Crosman air pistol and told Sanford and Nelson Allen, his lab's head machinist, to meet him in the clean room, a lab at the National Submicron Facility on campus.







“What if there really is a health problem with the beans?” asks farmer Doug Doughty, top, at his 165-year-old family spread in Missouri. Bottom: Greenpeace protesters destroy biotech crops in the U.K. in 1999.

Dressed in a white gown, booties and a hat and surrounded by millions of dollars' worth of state-of-the-art equipment, Wolf poured tungsten powder down holes they'd drilled in the barrel of the air pistol, while Sanford set an ordinary yellow onion on the lab table. They had chosen it because onions have large cells. Wolf pumped up the pistol, held the muzzle six inches from the onion and pulled the trigger.

An unholy mess of onion pulp sprayed the three men. Eyes streaming with tears, they reloaded, took a step back and shot again at the sundered bulb. They tried various muzzle pressures, moving forward and back until the onion was in pieces.

Wolf, bending over a microscope, could clearly see tungsten shrapnel lodged in living cells.

In the history of the genetic engineering of foods, this was Genesis. The shot heard round the world was the *pffft* of a

dime-store pellet gun ruining an onion. Sanford spent the next two years soaking tungsten particles in DNA, loading them into Allen's various high-tech modifications of the gun and shooting new traits into cells. By the winter of 1986 his invention could reliably make plants adopt the genes of alien species.

Nearly 20 years later genetically modified foods have profitably slipped into the American food chain. Three quarters of the soybeans and 30 percent of the corn harvested in the U.S. sprout from genetically modified seeds. They form the basis of three quarters of all processed foods, so whether you eat chips or tofu, you are probably at this moment digesting new man-made species. It won't be long before just-patented, fast-growing supersalmon and other animal miracles of bioengineering join them on the dinner plate.

Frankenfoods, as critics call them—though the preferred industry term is genetically modified organisms, or GMOs—are patented, lab-made organic inventions entirely owned by large corporations. Millions of consumers, small farmers and environmentalists find the practice of modifying the nuclear structure of food crops by inserting genes from other species to be imprudent, morally offensive or downright terrifying. Some worry about giving corporations even more control over the food chain. For others, the issue is genetic pollution of wild species or the emergence of fearsome, perhaps deadly man-made mutations. All agree that things are happening too fast, without controls or determinations of the long-term effects of what is sure to be the most profound, most lasting change in the way we live.

While the average American seems relatively unconcerned, citizens in Mendocino County, California voted in March to impose the nation's first ban on raising genetically modified crops, and activists in Vermont and Hawaii are considering ways to put similar measures on ballots in those states. Environmental groups in Europe, including Greenpeace, have tried everything from lobbying to physically destroying the sites where GMOs are developed. The European Union and a handful of other nations have practically banned genetically engineered foods altogether. In the U.S. even the National Academy of Sciences has weighed in with a stern warning: Slow down! Meanwhile the Frankenfood invasion continues in force.

“The risks of moving genes from one organism to another are too great. It can't be undone,” says Doreen Stabinsky, Ph.D., a geneticist for Greenpeace, which leads the political charge against genetically modified crops worldwide. “What are they doing to our food? Who gets to decide?”



II. WEIRD SCENES IN THE GRAIN BELT

Doug Doughty says he'll meet me in his cornfield on Missouri Highway U, and when he shows up he's driving a Case International combine the size of a two-story house. I climb up and squeeze into the jump seat. The floor is covered by two dusty, loose-skinned retrievers, who sit shoulder to shoulder against the cab's glass front wall, tongues adangle, eyes scanning the rows for rabbits.

“Go ahead,” says the 46-year-old Doughty, bobbing his chin toward the dogs, and I rest my shoes on their backs. They barely notice. Doughty throws a sequence of levers, and the fiendish steel maw beneath our feet comes alive, clanking, roaring and sucking in eight rows of corn at once. The dogs shiver with excitement.

Along with his father, Doughty farms the same rolling prairie land that his family was plowing in 1838, plus about double that much they've bought or leased over the years. With so much paid-for land, Doughty knows he has it about as easy as any grain farmer on the plains. So in the respites between hoppers, hail and interest-rate swings, he has the leisure to lift his eyes to

the future. What he sees in place of family farms is an artless landscape of corporation-owned outdoor grain factories seeded by scientists, patrolled by lawyers and tended by "human resources" instead of farmers. It has happened all around him. Chicken production has fallen to the likes of Tyson and Pilgrim's Pride, pork to Smithfield and ConAgra. Grain, our nation's largest cash crop, is still grown on family farms—but maybe not for long.

A rabbit darts out of the combine's path, and the cab explodes with feverish barking. Doughty grinds the machine to a halt, throwing a sparkling blizzard of chaff into the air. He quiets his dogs and sums up his worry: "I'm afraid pretty soon I'm not going to be working for myself," he says. "When you get right down to it, we've placed our fates in Monsanto's hands."

Monsanto, a \$4.9-billion-a-year company based in St. Louis, raced to the front of the biotech pack in 1996, offering farmers the first genetically engineered soybean seeds. Here was the gee-whiz technology the Midwest had hoped would finally tip crushing agricultural odds in the farmers' favor. Doughty joined the stampede to plant Monsanto's amazing product.

The new beans were supposed to increase yields and lower costs, but a decade into the experiment Doughty is getting the willies. Life is a little easier in the field—he can now spray one specially made herbicide (produced by Monsanto, naturally) instead of several—but the seeds complicate the business of farming in frightening ways. Intellectual-property attorneys now monitor Doughty's work. Seed choices are narrowing. And a specter is rising of whole continents rejecting American food.

AgWeb.com—an online news service for farmers—carries stories of a gathering storm of protests, government bans and attacks. When Doughty reads them he grieves to his agricultural marrow. "The idea that people are mad at their food..." he says with a shudder.

If the revolution stalls, it will be a pity, because genetic engineering has the potential to deliver miracle crops: rice loaded with the vitamins that millions of Asians lack, grains that save precious topsoil because they don't require plowing, African staples such as cassava and yams that can resist drought and grow in the continent's increasingly salty soil. But we may never get there. John Sanford, a deeply religious man who originally wanted to use the profits from his gene gun to give third world countries free access to the benefits of bioengineered food, found the costs too high for his nonprofit institute. Instead, aided by hardball U.S. trade representatives, greedy biotech companies have ignored important truths about the culture of food and have created a panicky backlash.

Forget the miracle crops for a moment. Not one of those tasty, vitamin-packed, drought-resistant, plow-obviating seeds exists outside the laboratory; they're all in the murky, bombast-laden realm of technological potential. For the moment genetically engineered crops fall almost entirely into two far less charismatic categories: those that resist certain bugs and those that let farmers use a single weed killer instead of many.

That's because Monsanto isn't a seed company; its expertise is in making chemicals. Some 40 percent of its sales derives from a single product, Roundup, a wondrous weed killer introduced in 1974. Roundup was the first herbicide to kill almost every plant it touched, and it worked in a way that made it practically harmless to people and animals. (It interferes with an enzyme that plants have but that we and our livestock do not.) Farmers no longer had to buy and apply a complex cocktail of expensive and dangerous chemicals on their land. In its early days Roundup was used primarily to eliminate vegetation in areas where farmers wanted to plant a new crop, an easy alternative to mowing and hoeing. But Roundup had one serious drawback—it was too effective for its own good. Farmers had to spray carefully; an unexpected change in wind direction could wipe out acres of apple trees, pumpkins or corn.

Coming Soon: Frankencritters!

Holy Mary Shelley! It's not just experimental anymore. These four genetically remixed animal combos may soon be on your couch or dinner plate

GLOFISH

Hypothesis: Americans will purchase these glow-in-the-dark fish because bright, shiny objects fascinate them.

How they did it: Sea anemone cells were added to a normal zebra fish embryo, producing fluorescent red-and-green fish.

The results: Success! In January the FDA allowed pet stores in most states to sell GloFish, which are flying from tanks at \$5 each.

Warning: Fish may get out into the wild. All of nature will glow; night-light industry will take a beating.



ALLERGEN-FREE CATS

Hypothesis: Since a single protein in a cat's skin and saliva triggers human allergies, removing it will produce an allergy-proof kitty.

How they did it: The sneeze-inducing protein was eliminated from a cat's cells, which were then deposited into an embryo that was implanted into a surrogate mother.

The results: Still trying, cats dying.

Warning: Cat owners will multiply.



SPIDER-GOATS

Hypothesis: Spider silk could be used to make body armor and artificial ligaments, but spiders can't squirt out enough for commercial products. Goats can.

How they did it: Spiders' silk-production genes were spliced into lactating goats.

The results: Mixed. Last November 214 spider-goats were euthanized for not squirting enough milk. The 500 that remain are doing much baaa-ter.

Warning: Goat-cheese salads will be used for security purposes during orange alerts.



SUPERSALMON

Hypothesis: The AquAdvantage salmon gains eight pounds in 18 months, half the time it takes a normal salmon to mature. Farmers can double their production.

How they did it: Wild salmon grow only during warm seasons, so scientists transplanted an "antifreeze" gene into the fish, allowing year-round growth.

The results: B-plus. The FDA is still a few years away from proclaiming the AquAdvantage salmon safe to eat, which would make it the first genetically modified animal to be sold as food.

Warning: In the wild, frankensalmon could breed with regular fish, creating freakish offspring that eat all the time.

—Patty Lamberti





Dale Whiteside, left, standing in a field of genetically modified soybeans, calls conventional farming a thing of the past. Top right: A researcher among genetic comstalks. Bottom right: Lord Peter Melchett, then executive director of Greenpeace, dumping soybeans in front of Tony Blair's residence.

In the mid-1980s Monsanto scientists, wanting to branch out, invested millions in genetic engineering. They adopted a variation of the Sanford gene gun and went looking for ways to make it profitable. Eventually they managed to discover the single gene that, when blasted into soybeans or corn—America's two biggest commodity crops—made the plants resistant to Monsanto's flagship herbicide, Roundup. Margaret Mellon, director of food and environment programs for the Union of Concerned Scientists, says the introduction of Roundup Ready corn and soy in the mid-1990s transformed huge swaths of land: "Suddenly 60 million or 70 million acres are being treated with Roundup that couldn't be before." At about the same time, Monsanto introduced corn, soy and cotton seeds infused with genes from a soil bacterium known as Bt. When certain insect pests eat crops containing the Bt toxin, they die, rendering unnecessary a whole range of insecticides—those from competing companies, naturally.

Monsanto licenses Roundup Ready and Bt technology to seed companies and charges farmers who plant the altered seeds a "tech fee." DuPont, Dow, the Swiss firm Syngenta and others market bioengineered seeds of their own, and Bt has been more

or less successful. Roundup Ready, though, is a blockbuster—by far the biggest genetically engineered product in agriculture. Between Roundup Ready and Bt, the U.S. has, in less than a decade, altered the genetic structure of more than 80 percent of the soybean crop and about 15 percent of the corn grown in the U.S. Depending on your perspective, that's either a stunning technological success or a terrifying leap into the biological unknown.



III. AMBER WAVES OF FEAR

In the summer of 1999 Peter Melchett, a 51-year-old British lord who ran Greenpeace U.K., found himself in the cab of a small tractor pulling a mower. About 80 fields of experimental biotech crops had been planted in secret locations around Britain, and Melchett was on his way to destroy one of them. Melchett had already helped run some clever Greenpeace campaigns. He and his activist friends had, for instance, dumped a ton of biotech soybeans in front of 10 Downing Street with a banner addressed to Prime Minister (continued on page 90)

— FUTURE SHOCK: SCIENCE VS. THE ESSENTIALS —

It's not just genetics. Man against nature is still the epic struggle. Here, three ways science tries to control the way we live



WEATHER: Hailstorms used to cost Nissan millions in damages when ice rained down on thousands of cars in the shipping lot of its Canton,

Mississippi manufacturing plant. **SCIENCE SAYS:** A hail-protection generator—a device that fires sonic booms into the air every five seconds when atmospheric conditions indicate a likelihood of hail—now disrupts the formation of hailstones within a one-mile radius above the factory. Result: customized good weather and pristine paint jobs. Too bad neighbors complain about the Metallica-like noise.



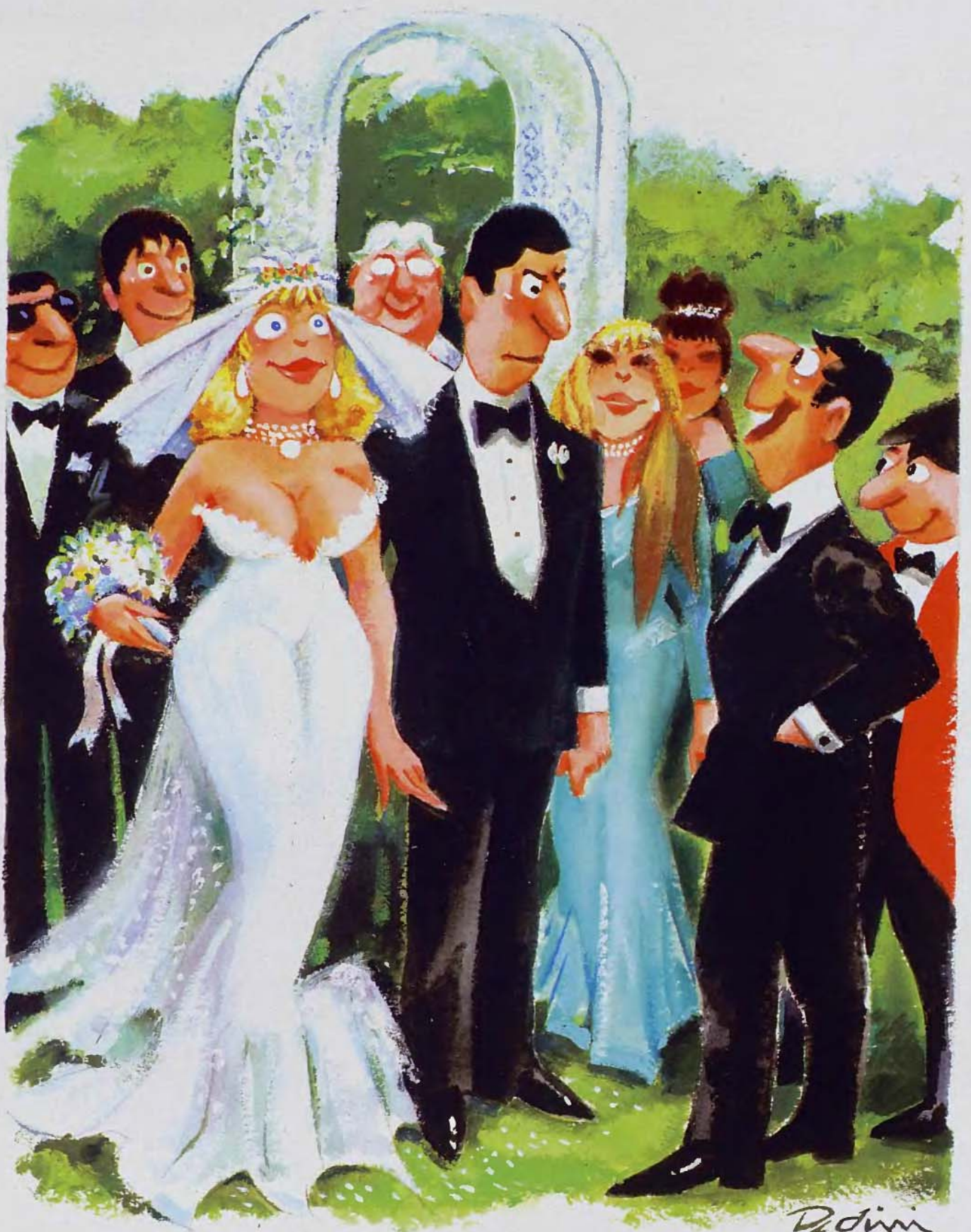
WATER: The Rock of Gibraltar has no source of freshwater, and its border with Spain has frequently been blockaded. The surrounding seas,

oceans and bays once taunted Gibraltarians as they waited for rain. **SCIENCE SAYS:** New high-volume desalination plants—including one powered by a garbage incinerator—produce the 4,500 cubic meters of freshwater that Gibraltar's 36,000 inhabitants need each day. The Rock achieved water self-sufficiency by turning the Mediterranean into the world's biggest well. Take that, Franco.



THE MIND: The brain has limitations: Degenerative diseases can reduce memory; body parts can't react to nerve impulses as swiftly as robotic equip-

ment can; learning to fly a plane takes years. **SCIENCE SAYS:** Brain-machine interfaces can translate thoughts into machine movements and may be able to enhance memory and load info into the brain. It's no joke: Monkeys can already move robots with their thoughts. With the defense industry involved, the emphasis may shift from restoring to augmenting functions. Think Terminator. —Tim Mohr



"Claudine and I go way, way back."



PLAYMATE OF THE YEAR CARMELLA DeCESARE

Hats—and clothes—off to readers' overwhelming favorite



As Playmate of the Year, Carmella receives two (count 'em!) new speedsters: the sporty black-and-chrome Mazda RX-8 she's showing off here and a sleek maroon Kawasaki Vulcan 2000. Turn the page to see our siren rubbing fenders with a vintage ride.

Carmella DeCesare. Her name rolls off the tongue like honey dripping from a spoon. By her moniker alone, the woman we've crowned Playmate of the Year 2004 could be mistaken for an exotic creature from a faraway country. Extraordinary? No question. But Carmella, whose roots are firmly planted in her hometown of Cleveland, is the girl who sits next to you in English class. She's the girl who makes your sandwich at the local sub shop. Hef would simply put it this way: She's the girl next door.

With this title Carmella joins PLAYBOY royalty, including PMOYs Jenny McCarthy and Anna Nicole Smith. Still, you get the feeling she'd be more comfortable wearing a baseball cap than a tiara. The

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ARNY FREYTAG AND
STEPHEN WAYDA



Life in the fast lane: "I'm not a good bawler," Carmella says, "but this was my favorite day on the shoot." You won't be seeing her on the cover of *Bowling Digest*, but you will spot her in print ads. "I'm apparently versatile. I've done ads for Pampers and Crest Whitestrips."





klieg lights of Hollywood are no doubt alluring, but for now she's keeping her day job. "I'm an account executive for a title search agency," she says poolside at the Playboy Mansion, where she's filming her PMOY video. "It's a good job. If I got a position elsewhere, I'd be willing to relocate, but I don't want to go someplace with high expectations and then be disappointed."

Carmella was at the aforementioned day job when she learned she had been chosen as PMOY, and although she was tempted to scream like a lunatic, she managed to refrain from disturbing her co-workers. "When I got the call I was in tears," she says. "Everyone was like, 'What's going on?' I had to say, 'Nothing.'"

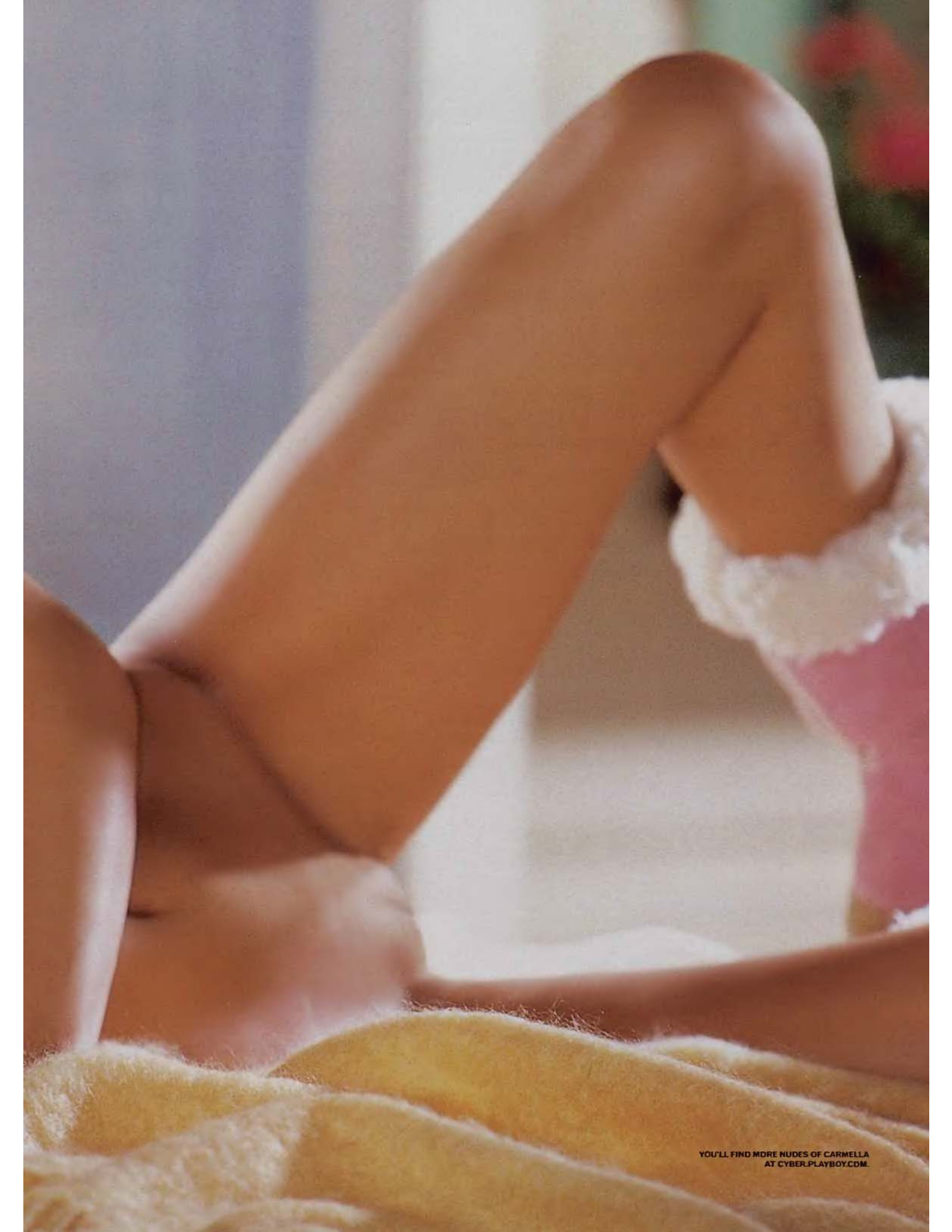
Carmella sums up Playmate life in one word: *busy*. "I've traveled everywhere," she says. "Sin City is the best." She's also partied with A-listers, but true to form she's kept her cool. "I've never been starstruck," she says. "One of my favorites is Drew Carey. He's from Cleveland, and you can tell. He doesn't act like he's above anyone."

In addition to being schooled in staying grounded, Carmella has become a pro at PLAYBOY promotions. "At first I was like, 'You want my autograph? Why? I'm not famous!' I didn't believe it was real. Now I realize how much Playmates are in the public eye. There's never a dull moment, and honestly, it's awesome."

Life in the fast lane, part two: "In L.A. anything goes. I've learned to adapt to different lifestyles. Hef takes us out on Wednesdays and Fridays. Friday is my favorite. We go to Bliss, this great nightclub." Eventually Carmella would like to get into hosting. "I'd love to do what Brooke Burke did on the E channel."







YOU'LL FIND MORE NUDES OF CARMELLA
AT CYBER.PLAYBOY.COM.



WELCOME TO THE MACHINES

In the future you'll carry your TV shows in your pocket and command your coffeemaker from your computer. The best part?

The future is now. A look at the best digital gear 2004

By Steve Morgenstern



One Sharp Little Laptop

We're completely besotted with the lithe, waifish figure of the Sharp Actius MM20 (\$1,499) and its ability to service us for hours without a break. Weighing only two pounds, the MM20 is just over half an inch thick when folded and packs a one-gigohertz processor, 512 megabytes of RAM and built-in wireless networking. Is it wrong to want to have sex with a laptop?



The Movie Mogul

The Kaleidoscope System DVD Server is a revolutionary home entertainment device with one small drawback: It costs upward of \$27,000. Fully loaded, it holds on eye-popping three terabytes' worth of DVD movies on 12 hard disks—enough to store approximately 440 films (or the director's cut of the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy). You can play as many as seven different movies on seven different TVs in your house simultaneously, complete with cover art and background information. Yes, ripping all those DVDs can get a little repetitive, but if you can afford this unit, you can also afford a team of trained monkeys to do it for you (plus, they make a mean mojito).



Got Game? Topwave's Zodiac (\$300) is a contradictory beast, ideally suited to both productivity and procrastination. As a full-featured Palm it holds your date book and contacts. As a gaming machine it has a joystick, shoulder triggers, hot 3-D graphics and *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4*, among other recent releases. Toss in MP3 and video players, and you've got the ultimate device for saving and wasting time.

Couch Surfer It's a computer! It's a stereo component! It's an MP3 player! It's a VCR! Actually the Gateway FMC-901 Family Room Medio Center (\$1,000) is a full-fledged PC that uses your TV as its screen. It has special software (Windows XP Medio Center Edition 2004) that allows you to pipe the Internet plus stored TV shows, movies, photos, music and whatever the hell else you want through your regular television.



Hot to Trot Imagine slopping a video screen onto the back of an iPod. Now make the hard drive 50 percent bigger (60 gigabytes) and swappable in case you run out of room. Then add an ejectable 128-megabyte mini MP3 player and the ability to download TV shows directly from your Tivo. What do you end up with? Your new best friend. Tight Systems' TAZ 1 (price not set) is about the size of a videocassette, boasts a bright four-inch screen and can hold 150 CDs' worth of music, 20 hours of TV programming and 20 films in its drive. With the TAZ's nine hours of video playback time per battery charge, that old iPod is starting to look soooo 2002.





Grab a Byte No room in the house is safe from the digital revolution. The Icebox CounterTop from Salton is the first multi-function medio player to colonize the kitchen, with a 12-inch touch screen that lets you watch DVDs or TV shows, listen to CDs or FM radio, surf the Internet and more. When paired with Salton's Beyond line of appliances (smart microwave, coffeemaker and bread machine) the Icebox provides command and control for the entire system. It will even remind you to put water in the coffeemaker. Oh, and it promises not to kill you in your sleep. Open the pod bay doors, Icebox.

Recording Star Tivo and DVD are the best ways to store TV shows. Get both in the same unit and TV is your bitch. Pioneer's DVR-57H (\$1,800) has a 120-hour Tivo hard-drive system for recording shows and a DVD burner for saving your favorites onto a disc. Plus, line-in recording means you can burn homemade porn off your camcorder. It's what Jesus would do.

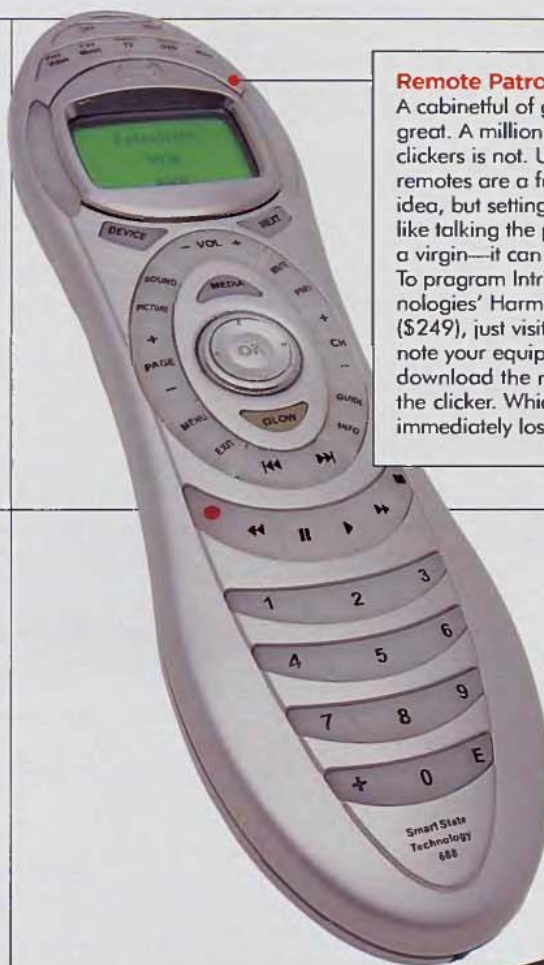


Tight Package The size of your stereo used to correspond roughly to the size of your wallet. Basically the bigger the chassis, the more power you got. But with the advent of digital amplifiers, good things are starting to come in smaller packages. Sharp's SD-PX2 home theater system (\$600) bundles a disc player (which can handle DVD, CD, SACD and DVD-Audio discs) and a 7.1-channel amplifier in a slim aluminum-and-Plexiglas component designed to be hung on the wall. Stereo-cabinet makers, consider yourselves downsized.





House Party Your old record collection took up half your home. Now you store it all on your computer, but how do you spread your tunes around the house? With Roku's M2000 SoundBridge Network Music Player (\$500; the smaller M1000 unit sells for \$250). Put SoundBridges anywhere you want to boogie, and hook all of them into your computer network—wirelessly, of course—for complete access to your MP3s wherever you are.



Remote Patrol A cabinetful of gear is great. A million different clickers is not. Universal remotes are a fantastic idea, but setting them up is like talking the panties off a virgin—it can take days! To program Intrigue Technologies' Harmony Remote (\$249), just visit a website, note your equipment and download the results to the clicker. Which you will immediately lose.



Get the Picture? Sony's sexy DSC-T1 digital camera (\$550) packs major picture-taking prowess—including razor-sharp 5.1-megapixel resolution and a high-end Carl Zeiss 3X optical zoom lens—into a 6.3-ounce camera small enough to tuck into the pocket of your jeans. Despite its slim body, the LCD screen measures 2.5 inches diagonally, bigger than most digital camera displays. Where do you use o snapper this tiny? Anywhere you want.



Watch This Rear-projection TVs offer big screens (yeoh!) at reasonable prices (oh yeah!) with some serious junk in the trunk (goddamn it!). With RCA's new Scenium Profiles sets, rear-projection technology goes slim and trim. We're talking cabinets less than seven inches deep and light enough to hang on the wall. Prices are still in the plasmasphere (the 50-inch model is \$8,999; the 61-inch is \$9,999), but they'll drop faster than your standards after that fifth shot of Jack.



FEEDING (continued from page 76)

"A Frenchman will eat a piece of unpasteurized cheese swarming with every cootie in the book."

Tony Blair: TONY, DON'T SWALLOW BILL'S SEED. But today's action was more serious. With Melchett in the lead, 28 activists were descending on fields belonging to a chemical company called Aventis, planning to mow down the offending crop, bag it and dump it at the Aventis office. Twenty minutes into the operation, though, the crop's farmer showed up with his two brothers and a tractor of their own. "They went completely crazy," Melchett says. "One of them tried to ram the press photographers with the tractor. Another went after our banner with a knife."

Norfolk County police eventually arrested the trespassers, but a funny thing happened at the trial. The activists argued that they were justified in destroying the crop to prevent it from doing greater harm to surrounding areas—and the defense succeeded beyond their dreams. Not only did the jurors quickly acquit all 28, they waited outside the courtroom afterward to hug and thank the Greenpeace raiders. "They said, 'You needn't have worried. There was no way we were going to convict you,'" Melchett recalls. "They'd supported us from the start."

During the past five years fear and hatred of genetic engineering has driven green outlaws to attack and destroy research sites from California to Maine and from Belgium to Scotland. In early September 2003, for example, an unknown number of people found their way to a hidden Monsanto-modified maize crop isolated in a forest in southern France and systematically destroyed it. A week later a mob descended on a Monsanto greenhouse in Bangalore, India and smashed it to shards. But the outlaw attacks are nothing compared with the peaceful victories. Last fall an estimated 35,000 people marched through the streets of Auckland to protest the New Zealand government's plan to lift a ban against genetically modified food, which it did in October. Last summer authorities in one of Italy's regional governments ordered almost 1,000 acres of corn destroyed because of suspicion that they contained genetically engineered plants, in violation of Italy's zero-tolerance policy.

Perhaps the most scathing wholesale rejection of genetically modified food has come from the European Union, whose countries import about \$6.5 billion a year in American crops. Five years

ago it placed a moratorium on approving new GMOs for import, practically slamming the door on some of America's biggest commodities. For the past two years it has been promising to lift the ban "soon"; rules for labeling and tracing genetically modified crops took effect in April. But the Bush administration, impatient and doubting, sued last year in the World Trade Organization to try to force the E.U.'s hand. The problem is, even if Bush wins, the decision won't make European consumers put the hated stuff in their mouths.

Given the attitude of the average European—86 percent of Britons, for example, report being unhappy with the idea of eating genetically engineered food—labeling will amount to extending the ban. In October 2003 Monsanto threw in the towel, shutting down its European cereal business and giving up the attempt to market genetically modified wheat on the Continent.

Giovanni Anania, an economist at the University of Calabria in Italy and an expert in how cultural preferences translate into agricultural megabucks, marvels at the hubris of a company and a nation that "thought they could push this entire thing through without a serious confrontation with consumers. It's really amazing how Monsanto blew the communication."

IV. CULTURE AND GREED

Associate professor Tom Clemente runs the eerily named Plant Transformation Facility at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. "When it comes to judging food safety, culture is bullshit," he says, as we walk into his lab. Clemente, an Italian-Lebanese American from eastern Pennsylvania, is a voluble Democrat amid a sea of taciturn Republicans. But when it comes to GMOs, he's a hard-core corporate booster. "A Frenchman will eat a piece of unpasteurized cheese swarming with every cootie in the book and then say genetically modified corn is unsafe to eat," he says. "The Japanese will eat a puffer fish, which if it isn't prepared exactly right will kill you at the table, but they won't touch a Roundup Ready soybean. It doesn't make sense."

Located in the middle of the corn-and-soy belt, Clemente's lab is one of the premier research sites for genetically engineering America's commodity crops. On a counter in one immaculate room sits a PDS-1000/He Biolistic Particle

Delivery System—the modern version of the Cornell pellet gun. A stainless steel box about 18 inches high, the PDS-1000 uses compressed helium to shoot DNA-drenched tungsten powder into plants. "The soybean has roughly 30,000 genes, so when you add a gene it then has 30,001," Clemente says, exasperated. He runs a hand through his messy dark hair. "You're telling me that makes it toxic? Come on."

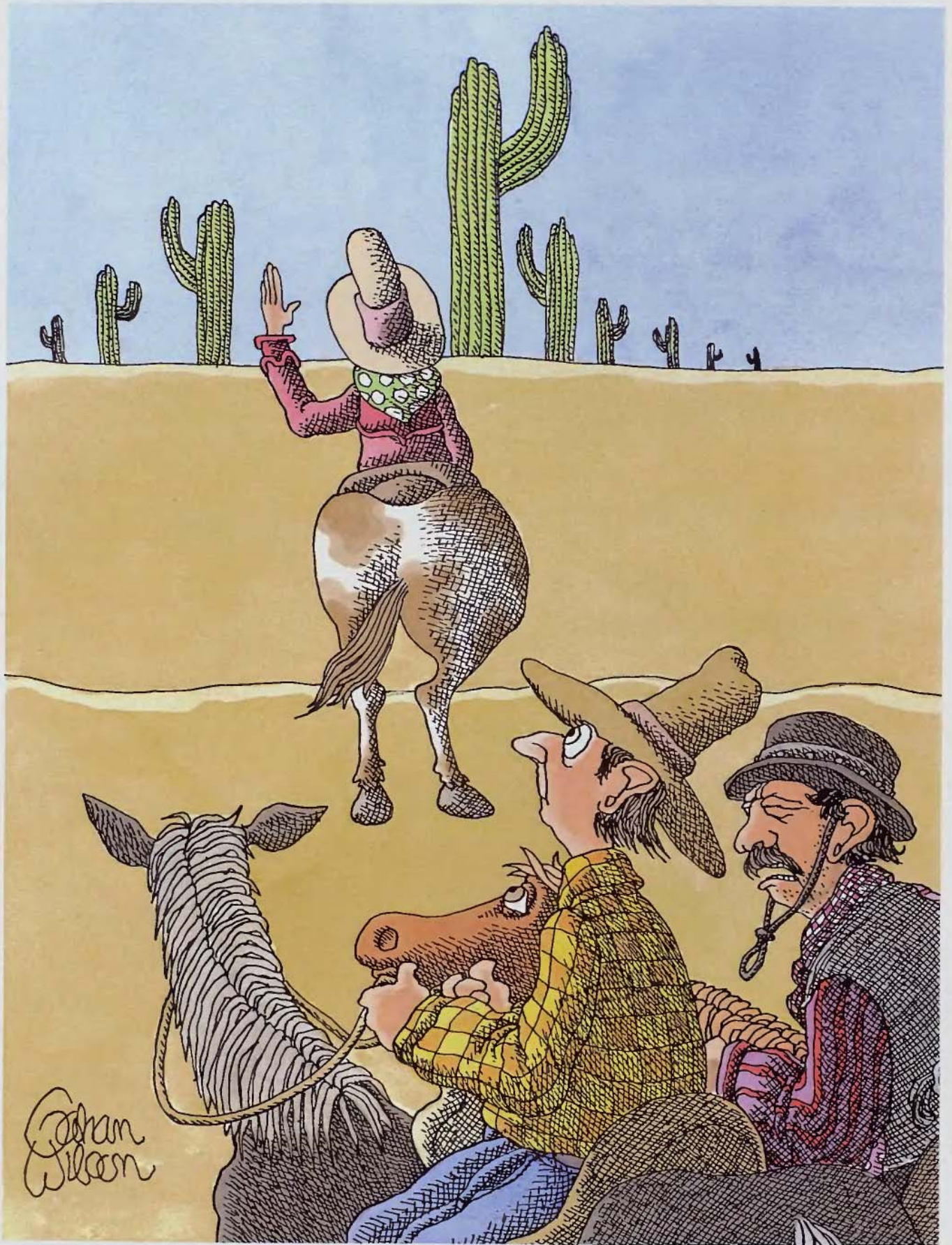
Clemente believes genetically engineered food is safer than conventionally crossbred crops. "When you hybridize you're moving enormous numbers of genes around to acquire one trait," he says. "You have no idea what other genes are coming over with the one you want. How is that better than moving a single gene and knowing exactly what it does?"

Clemente is chafed not only by European fear but by American ignorance. A Rutgers University study last fall found that fewer than a quarter of those polled believed they had ever eaten genetically engineered food—which is remarkable given the statistic that three quarters of all processed food contains components from genetically modified plants. However, Clemente says, "that doesn't mean you're eating the new gene. The DNA is only in the protein, not in the oil or, in the case of sugar, in the carbohydrates. You take a gallon of Roundup Ready soybean oil and a gallon of conventional, or a gallon of Bt corn syrup and a gallon of conventional, and you cannot tell the difference. The best lab wouldn't be able to tell which is which."

Nonetheless American consumers can hear the clamor abroad and are growing increasingly suspicious of biotech. Only about half the people Rutgers surveyed approved of genetically engineered food, and more than 90 percent wanted genetically modified ingredients labeled as such, a measurable increase in trepidation from earlier polls.

The folks who make our processed food aren't fools. For the moment there's nothing in biotechnology for them except heartache. Consider the high-tech spud. The same year that Monsanto introduced Roundup Ready soybeans, it released the NewLeaf potato, which was engineered to resist the Colorado potato beetle and therefore reduce the use of expensive and toxic chemical sprays. Farmers loved it; acreage grew fivefold in four years. But the engineered potato didn't do a thing for the people who eat potatoes—it didn't make them cheaper, less fattening, tastier or more nutritious—and the public said a collective phooey. Or, as a spokesman for the massive potato distributor J.R. Simplot

(continued on page 160)



"It's not a good sign when cowboys start waving back to the cacti!"

PLAYBOY'S
**SUMMER
MOVIE**
PREVIEW

WE'VE GOT THE SCOOP ON THE SEASON'S MOST BUZZED ABOUT FILMS. YOU PROVIDE THE POPCORN

"Omgosh—is that Carson Daly down there?"



THE EVENT
SPIDER-MAN 2

YOU DON'T NEED SPIDEY SENSE TO KNOW THIS IS THE SUMMER'S BIGGEST MOVIE

Starring Tobey Maguire, Kirsten Dunst, Alfred Molina. Director: Sam Raimi

FAST PITCH: While Peter Parker's love life becomes an even more tangled web, his alter ego battles Doctor Octopus. (June 30)

ON THE SET: The megablockbuster success of *Spider-Man* gave Raimi great power, and with that power comes great sequel responsibility. While he has described *Spider-Man 2* as "more intimate," everything we've seen looks kicked up a notch, including a new foe to replace the somewhat goofy Green Goblin. Armed to kill as Doc Ock is Alfred Molina (*Boogie Nights*), who says, "Ock starts out with good intentions and, through a series of disasters, spirals out of control. It's terribly human. But even at his most horrible he has something witty to say." (Kind of like Dennis Miller.) Molina prepped by mastering wire-flying contraptions and rehearsing with puppeteers who manipulated his steel tentacles. All of which seemed even more odd when he shared an action scene with stage actress Rosemary Harris, who returns as Aunt May. "We were hoisted 60 feet above a concrete floor," says Molina, "so between shots I said, 'I've always wanted to work with you, but I imagined it would be in something a bit different. I can't believe I'm doing this.' In her impeccable accent she said, 'Neither can I, darling, neither can I.'"

WEBBED FEAT: Studio execs screened a not so rough cut in February, so Raimi has had plenty of time to polish, including, we hope, making Spidey's acrobatics less cartoonish. Then again, how can any special effect compete with a rain-soaked Dunst?

ANTICIPATION LEVEL:





"Honey, the landlord swears the heat is up all the way!"

THE BIG CHILLER

THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW

WHAT'S COOLER THAN COOL? AN ICEBERG-COLD DISASTER FLICK

Starring Dennis Quaid, Jake Gyllenhaal. Director: Roland Emmerich

FAST PITCH: Everybody talks about the weather. This doomsday saga makes it do flips, as a new Ice Age kicks planetary butt. (May 28)

ON THE SET: *Towering Inferno*. *Earthquake*. *Twister*. Are those disaster movies your idea of a good time? Writer-director Emmerich (*Independence Day*) has rolled them up into one big end-of-the-world blowout about climatological catastrophes that send Quaid to rescue his son Gyllenhaal from frozen-over New York. "Most disaster movies have warnings, such as 'Don't build high buildings when you don't know how to get the people out,'" says Emmerich. "The difference in my movie is that you can't do anything to stop it. You can only do what you can to survive. We do such a number on New York and Los Angeles that we don't need to have much plot." He says he isn't concerned that audiences may be skittish about watching graphic depictions of civilization crashing down around their heads. "When I came up with the idea, people told me, 'After September 11, I don't know....' But this is a natural disaster, not terrorists, and I think that's going to make audiences take the movie more seriously. Either it works or it doesn't. I can only make movies that I would like to see. Now I just have to hope somebody else likes it too."

FROZEN ASSETS: *Independence Day* showed that Emmerich has a way with global calamity. *Godzilla* showed that he doesn't always live up to the hype.

ANTICIPATION LEVEL:



ALSO SHOWING

ANCHORMAN

LOOK, UP IN THE AIR! IT'S COMIC RELIEF!

Summer's not summer without a raucous gut buster, and Will Ferrell—Hollywood's new sultan of inspired silliness—is here to help. Playing 1970s local TV news hotshot Ron Burgundy, a self-enchanted dimwit and unapologetic sexist, he declares war on an ambitious newswoman (Christina Applegate) when she refuses to cover fluff stories such as cat shows. Word has it that co-writers Ferrell and newbie director Adam McKay encouraged the cast (which includes Vince Vaughn, Paul Rudd and Maya Rudolph) to improvise like gangbusters, so count on a dose of left-field looniness and enough polyester to make the entire multiplex break out in a rash. With Ferrell really hitting his comedic stride, *Anchorman* should tickle more funny bones than half a dozen movies made from warmed-over *SNL* skits.

ANTICIPATION LEVEL:



"Hey, buster, there's no catnip up here!"



THE HEROINE TRIP

CATWOMAN

HELLO, KITTY! COMIC BOOK GEEKS GET CAT SCRATCH FEVER FOR THE SUMMER'S OTHER SUPERHERO FLICK

Starring Halle Berry, Sharon Stone, Benjamin Bratt. Director: Pitof

FAST PITCH: A lowly cosmetics-company employee inherits ancient Egyptian cat powers and cracks the whip on her evil bosses. (July 23)

ON THE SET: Gotham City has become Lake City in this \$100 million adaptation of the DC Comics franchise, but French director Pitof (yes, just one name) wants fans not to worry. "Even if the world is different, it's still Catwoman," says the former visual-effects supervisor. And he can't wait to show off the climactic catfight between Berry's Catwoman and the villainous Stone. "They are both very feral, but it's different from how a man fights. We didn't copy the action-hero movie with a man's perspective. It's sexy and fun." To help her mimic a feline's slinky acrobatics, Berry trained in capoeira, a limber Brazilian martial art. And to help attract male moviegoers, Catwoman's costume underwent a redesign to accentuate Berry's famed cleavage. The new catsuit unleashed a predictable Internet backlash, but Pitof thinks his meow mix looks just fine. "You can't dissociate the costume and the woman," he says. "They are one. I love how sexy the costume is, but what I love most is who is inside."



GIVING PAWS: Despite rumors, there is no Batman cameo. Whether we'll notice his absence is another matter.

ANTICIPATION LEVEL:



ALSO SHOWING

THE BOURNE SUPREMACY

MORE CLOAK-AND-DAGGER ADVENTURE WITH DAMON'S EVERYMAN SPY

When the European mean-streets cool of *The Bourne Identity* turned the espionage thriller into a surprise blockbuster, it wasn't hard to find material for a sequel: Author Robert Ludlum had already written one. Matt Damon is back as the resourceful secret agent, on the run again when a Chinese official's murder points to him. Naturally this also puts his spunky girlfriend (Franka Potente) in jeopardy. Politically minded director Paul Greengrass (*Bloody Sunday*) shot on location in intrigue-rich Berlin and Moscow. If the action and double-crosses live up to the original, even Bond may start feeling nervous.

ANTICIPATION LEVEL:



THE TERMINAL

SPIELBERG AND HANKS SEARCH A FLYER'S EMOTIONAL BAGGAGE

The question isn't whether the latest collaboration between Steven Spielberg and Tom Hanks will take off like *Saving Private Ryan* or *Catch Me If You Can*. It's whether Hanks will fly in a role that practically begs for—*gulp*—Roberto Benigni. Hanks, our most American star, is an Eastern European immigrant stranded for months at a New York airport after a coup back home. Instead of hanging out at Cinnabon, he falls for flight attendant Catherine Zeta-Jones. The movie is already being touted as cleared for landing come Oscar time. But to please audiences, it had better be the best extended layover ever.

ANTICIPATION LEVEL:



THE THRILL ON WHEELS

COLLATERAL

TAXICAB CONFESSIONS MEETS 24? START YOUR METERS!

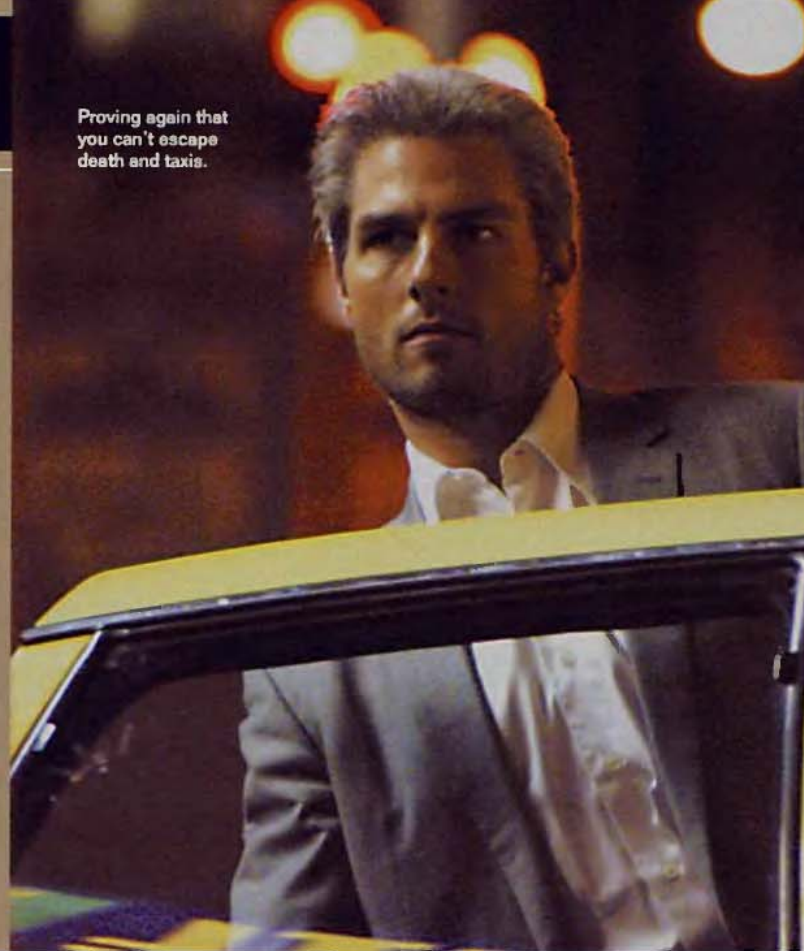
Starring Tom Cruise, Jamie Foxx. Director: Michael Mann

FAST PITCH: A hit man forces a cabbie to drive him around L.A. as he picks off his victims one by one. (August 6)

ON THE SET: Cruise as a contract killer? Believe it, says Mann: "He's a stone sociopath. The character does certain things that horrify us and yet are deeply funny in a dark way. Tom had a great time." And with funnyman Foxx as the hack forced to keep the meter running while Cruise systematically wipes out witnesses in a big drug case, Mann knew he had an offbeat but effective double act. "What interested me was the intensity of one night," says Mann, a noted visual stylist who had been itching to make a movie set entirely in a dusk-till-dawn City of Angels. "When there's a lot of atmosphere in the sky, the streetlights bounce off the bottoms of clouds and it's like a dark daylight. It becomes the world these guys are rolling through." Much of the film will take place inside a taxi, so the director had 17 cabs built, some without sides, some without backs. But as meditative as Mann's movies are known to get, he says to expect plenty of choreographed chaos, too—between the hits themselves and the authorities trying to cut Cruise's ride short. Says Mann, "I mean, he's here to kill people, and we have a lot of action. The situations are brilliant."

BUCKLE UP: Mann was much criticized for his overly somber *Ali* biopic three years ago. Now we get the sense he's ready to cut loose and have some hell-on-wheels fun.

ANTICIPATION LEVEL:



Proving again that you can't escape death and taxis.

THE VILLAGE

THE SCARIEST MOVIE SET IN 19TH CENTURY PENNSYLVANIA

M. Night Shyamalan (*The Sixth Sense*) isn't giving up his bent for surprises, as evidenced by the level of secrecy surrounding his latest supernatural blockbuster. It's his first period piece, set in 1897 in a rural hamlet where nobody wanders far because of an agreement with the beasts in the woods. When Joaquin Phoenix decides the truce is ye olde bullshit, will all hell break loose? Adrien Brody and William Hurt also peer through the fog. We don't know if Shyamalan has another twist ending up his sleeve, but we do know the movie will be spooky and atmospheric...and it had better have creatures less cheesy than the aliens in *Signs*.



ANTICIPATION LEVEL:



I, ROBOT

IF IT'S SUMMER, THE MACHINES MUST BE RISING

Set in a near future when humans are helpless without robot servants, this CGI-palooza, based on an Isaac Asimov story, casts Will Smith as a cop teaming with a "robot psychologist" to hunt for a scientist's killer. The trail leads to suspects such as a robot named Sonny, whose humanlike angst suggests that droids could be poised to stage a takeover. For this big-budget flick to soar, director Alex Proyas (*The Crow*) needs to conjure up a future world as jaw-dropping as *Blade Runner* and make us forget that man-versus-machine mayhem was all the rage *last* summer. It'll help if Smith is less robotic than he was in *Men in Black II*.



ANTICIPATION LEVEL:



THE CHRONICLES OF RIDDICK

A SCI-FI SEQUEL FILLS ITS TANK WITH MORE DIESEL

Vin Diesel famously ducked out of sequels to both *The Fast and the Furious* and *XXX* but did sign on to reprise his renegade character from the modest 2000 space thriller *Pitch Black*. A convict turned alien-squashing hero, Riddick is now five years older, still a target for bounty hunters and caught up in the plans of a warrior priest and his sect of Necromongers. (With a name like that, they can't be nice.) Like the light-dark extremes that created suspense last time, this version promises a planetary prison that swings between freezing cold and lava hot—and, thanks to a bigger budget, plenty of explosive action. In the tradition of Alec Guinness's and Ian McKellen's appearances in fantasy fare, Dame Judi Dench is on board to lend clipped British authority to the galactic roller-coaster ride.

ANTICIPATION LEVEL:





THE (NOT FIRST) DATE MOVIE

THE STEPFORD WIVES

YOU'VE UPGRADED YOUR STEREO AND YOUR TV. WHY NOT YOUR SPOUSE?

Starring Nicole Kidman, Matthew Broderick, Faith Hill. Director: Frank Oz

FAST PITCH: Puts fresh batteries in the creepy 1975 classic about a wife who discovers suburban husbands swapping their mates...for obedient robots. (June 11)

ON THE SET: Sure, men desire a beautiful wife who can cook a mean lasagna and turn up the heat in the bedroom, too. But not many would consider wedding an artificial life-form—or would they? This remake updates the original's hot-button issues, casting Broderick as the emasculated husband of network boss Kidman. “The first movie was a reaction to women’s lib,” says Broderick. “This version is more a reaction to women starting to overtake men. There’s something profoundly interesting in what men would do if they had the power to turn women into whatever they wanted.” Director Oz has to balance the material between moments of high camp and high creep. “There’s a square dance set in this Eisenhower-era universe the husbands create,” says Broderick. “Then things go terribly wrong with one of the robots, and Chris Walken comes in to fix everything. And Glenn Close calls the square dance.” Okay, now we’re scared.

TINKER TIME: There were reports of friction between director and cast on the set. But now everyone seems as happy as...robots?

ANTICIPATION LEVEL:



ALSO SHOWING

SKY CAPTAIN AND THE WORLD OF TOMORROW

CUTTING-EDGE COMPUTER GRAPHICS CREATE AN OLD-SCHOOL CLIFF-HANGER

Computer whiz Kerry Conran spent eight years developing an animated short about giant robots besieging 1939 New York. It landed him a \$70 million feature deal, and with his retro flick’s sets and effects on a hard drive, all his actors—namely Jude Law as a fighter pilot and Gwyneth Paltrow as his plucky girlfriend—had to do was emote in front of blue screens. It’s a CGI gamble that will either crown Conran as the new George Lucas or amount to a glitch-ridden goof à la *Final Fantasy*.

ANTICIPATION LEVEL:



BOMBS AWAY!

IT'S A SHORT SUMMER. DO YOU REALLY WANT TO RISK TWO HOURS ON THESE GUARANTEED DISASTERS?

Hollywood math says that for every summer movie that satisfies, a dozen more make you wish you'd watched an egg fry on the sidewalk instead. Most are just disappointments; others are so head-scratchingly ill conceived you can't believe someone, *anyone*, didn't pull the plug. And if we're wrong we'll wear an I LOVE GIGLI T-shirt for a year.

WHITE CHICKS

In this Wayans-clan comedy, Marlon and Shawn play FBI agents (that's not the outlandish part) who go undercover as...*debutantes!* Keenan directs, and we're sure he'll deliver all the comic subtlety of *Scary Movie 2*. More to the point, when Eddie Murphy played a Jewish man in *Coming to America*, at least it was a one-scene gag. This looks to be about as witty as the Hilton sisters pretending to be Amos and Andy.



ANACONDAS: THE HUNT FOR THE BLACK ORCHID

We can't quite recall audiences coming out of the slitheringly stupid 1997 snake flick *Anaconda* clamoring for a sequel. And after seven years we've erased all memory of the first one, except for a wet J. Lo, of course. That hissing you hear in the back row? It's not the snake.



THUNDERBIRDS

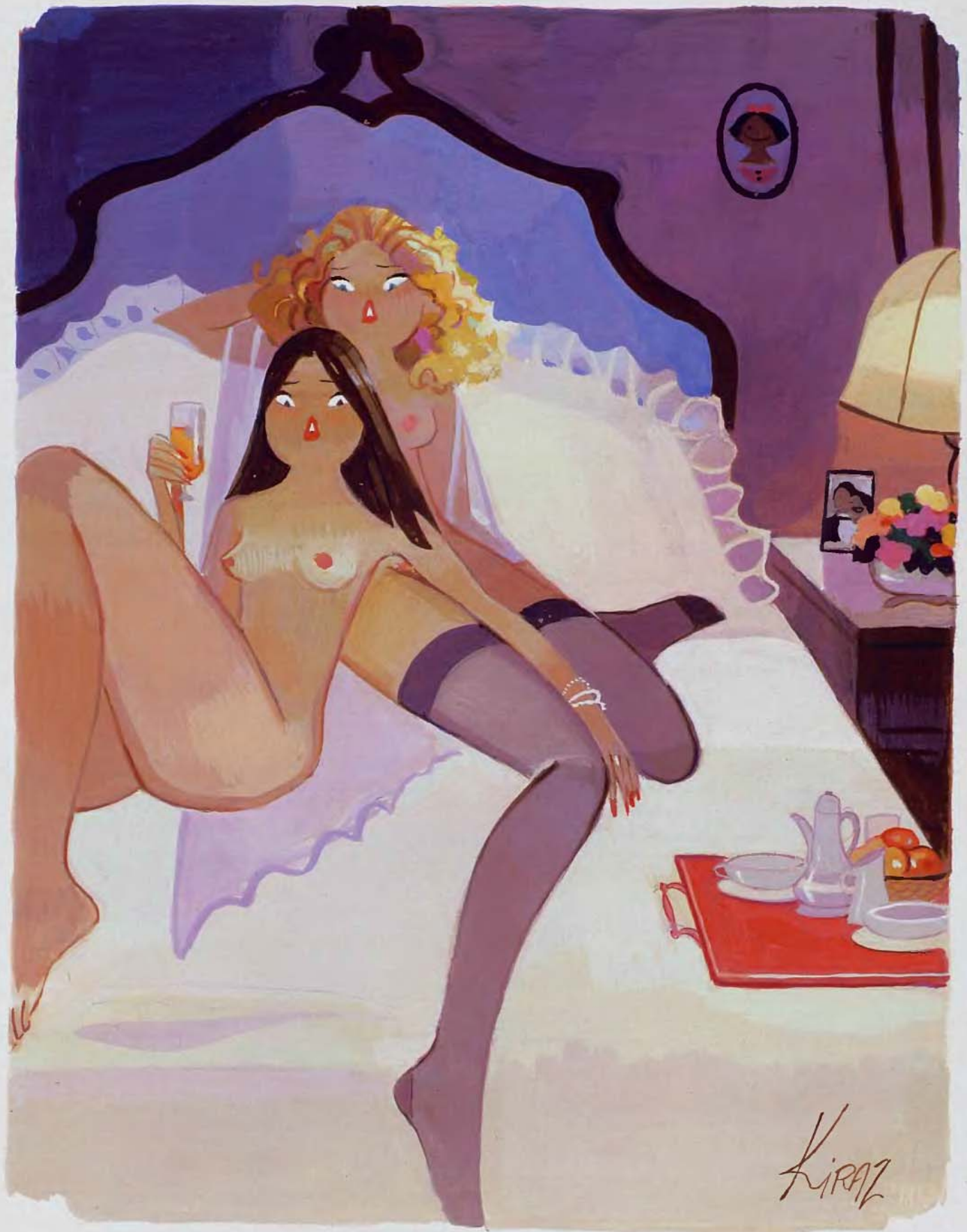
It started with marionettes. In space. The original *Thunderbirds* was a 1960s British kids' show about the adventures of an interplanetary rescue

family, acted out with wooden puppets. Now it's a \$70 million movie with Oscar-winning master thespian Ben Kingsley and lots of colorful space suits. We know: Now you're pumped! What's next, the Lucasfilm version of *Far Out Space Nuts?*

CHEER UP

Tommy Lee Jones as a Texas Ranger? Sure. Tommy Lee Jones protecting witnesses in the trial of a drug kingpin? We're with ya. Tommy Lee Jones going undercover as a cheerleading coach? Excuse us, your gimmick is showing. We're not sure anybody needs *The Fugitive* crossed with *Bring It On* or one more gruff taskmaster who learns to say "Rah, rah" from the heart. Smells like something way worse than teen spirit.





"I had a wonderful dream last night. I dreamt you had a penis."



THE BLIND MAN'S WIFE

IT WAS LOVE AT FIRST
SIGHT. THEN HE LOST HIS VISION
FICTION BY PAUL THEROUX

With the talk on the island that the astronomer and writer Willard DeWalt had lost his sight, no one asked him about his writing. Instead, people insisted on hearing a story. They were glad for the simplest thing of this gifted man, that he was alive, and were inspired by his stories, always uplifting, never about blindness. Yet there was a frown of unresolved crisis in DeWalt's features that made a crease of blame in his face, and the sour stillness in his house suggested the blurred stink of a sickroom.

He kept saying, "Look, I'm fine!"

He knew what they were thinking. The blind were not scribblers. They were celebrated in their evasions as storytellers and talkers. People patronized the blind, tried to propitiate them for their gloomy emanations, their supposed darkness; tiptoed around them, sat at their feet, feared them, asked them for stories, tried not to stare at the stains and crumbs on their shirtfronts, were jittery listeners, fearing what might come next.

"Of course, I dream much more," DeWalt said,

and it seemed he was talking about before and after. He had married late, a mature passion of the most romantic kind, a very beautiful woman. What had happened to her? people also wondered.

Telling his stories, DeWalt spoke with the detachment, the fatalism of someone very ill and, as he went on protesting that he felt fine, seemed to suggest that he was serene because he was so dangerous—what need for a strong man to be violent?

•

Willard "Wink" DeWalt, author of that singular book *The History of the Moon*, lived on Martha's Vineyard, near West Chop, in the lane on the bluff where the paved road ends. Even years ago, when he still had sight, DeWalt believed that the active part of his life was over. He accepted that no great event would befall him, that he would grow smaller, his life narrower, less accidental, and he would die here in obscurity, one of those small rainy funerals in an up-island cemetery of

old chewed-looking gravestones.

If that had been DeWalt's fate, there would be no story to tell.

For much of his self-imposed retirement, DeWalt seldom ventured out, he said, telling his story in the third person, and when he did he kept to the same safe walk. He was not seeking anyone, not looking for anything, just passing the time. He was supremely content, steadied by his indifference.

There had been one scare, but that was on his former route. An old wet-eyed pedestrian named Cabbage ambushed him, saying, "You're the writer they call DeWalt," and, feebly bullying him, invited him home. DeWalt praised the design of the house. "Got the plans out of *Popular Mechanics*!" DeWalt wanted to leave, but Cabbage detained him. "Want to buy it? It's less than a million. You could write another book here." The man seized a banjo off a tattered hassock; he said, "This is a little thing called 'Sleepytime Gal,'" and strummed a bit and began to cry miserably. "It's my wife," he said, his face streaming with tears. "Cancer took her. Thirty years we were married. You can't replace someone like that. Make me an offer on the house."

DeWalt fled. He changed his route. He believed that he was happy because he had conquered desire and was floating, having achieved some sort of Buddhist ideal of nonattachment, as he sometimes joked. He was satisfied with the work he had done, a major book, his history.

He had never married. "I'm married to my work!" He loved his house, which was built on the bluff from his own design. His old Toyota station wagon. "You can't get a better car." His Celestron telescope. "I can see dust storms on Procellarum." His book was still in print, still selling; he was constantly getting letters from new readers complimenting him, for his book was lunar history, lunar geography, lunar literature, astronomy, physics, philosophy, tours of the maria, chronicles of moonquakes. His life had been composed of many gestures, his work that became this book one great act of achievement. And the dumb luck of an inexpensive lot in West Chop years back that was now worth millions.

On good days he walked in the woods behind the lighthouse, loving the smell of the trees and flowers, the pitch pines, choke cherries, scrub oaks, the leaf mold, the squirrel-chewed acorns, the sun warming the long grass, hot tussocks of timothy and cushions of moss like dense velvet that made him feel weightless.

He stuck to West Chop because in

Vineyard Haven he saw women he had known years ago, swollen shapeless creatures like big bosomy men, and he realized that he had slept with them in his early days of fame, on the appearance of his celebrated book. He was chastened, for now they had come to look like him—solitary, unexercised, asexual, subtly mustached, unsteady, plodding like browsing animals, sad, anonymous except to him, who knew their history. He felt guilty and apologetic, for one he took to be a former lover, a misshapen woman in a familiar knit, was in fact a man he had never seen before and the sort of person he knew he would keep bumping into afterward at the post office and the market.

Everything changed for Willard DeWalt one end-of-summer day on the bluff of West Chop near the lighthouse when he saw a lovely woman standing alone. She faced him looking fascinated and then turned away from him and walked toward the tennis courts. DeWalt felt panic so deep in his throat

He had fallen in love with her, and he knew it was love because it was agony, the worst hunger, the sort you died from. He felt famished when he saw her.

it chafed his heart. He was hobbled. One look told him he needed this woman. Back home he pondered the irrationality of his desire for this young reckless-looking woman and concluded that she was the one person who had been missing from his long life.

Understanding this, he was briefly happy, then he was ashamed and finally sorrowful, knowing the despair of infatuation. He would wither and die without her; with her he would live. He now knew the reason he had taken the same walk every day. It was to meet this woman and have hope. This realization occupied him for one whole muddled day. If this was love, it was something terrible.

That night he lay in bed and could not call up her face. Her beauty was too subtle to remember with any particularity or to describe without his seeming smitten. He hungered to see her again. He wanted to hold her tightly, and not kiss her but devour her.

The next day he found her on the same spot, and she hurried away, her

suddenness like a flushed quail calling attention to her flight down the road to the set of mailboxes reading LOSS, TITLEY, OURS, LEVENSOHN, LEMPE. Which was she? In the days that followed he saw her twice more.

Self-conscious, he was reduced to being stealthy, glancing sideways to stare at her, to satisfy himself, but staring only made him hungrier. He became impatient, honest, even brutal. He was reminded of his distant past, of being small and poor, rather young, ignored by more powerful people while he toiled at his astronomy and felt fameless. His book's title, the very mention of moon, provoked his friends to patronize him, until the book was reckoned a masterpiece and was then the occasion of their envious jokes.

Now people asked, "How are you, Wink?"

He said, "I'm miserable," but misery made him truthful.

Speaking bluntly released his feelings of frustration and shame. In the past he had often said the opposite of what he meant. "You seem perky," to distracted souls; "Great talking to you," to laconic men; "I'll try to remember that," to pedants.

Now he would say, "People might call themselves perfectionists, but at the bottom of pedantry is an abiding laziness. They were against my book. Raise enough objections and you never have to accomplish anything. Pedantry is aggressive, it's obstructive."

This truthfulness gave him confidence, and the next time he saw the beautiful woman at West Chop he said hello.

"I was looking at that sailboat," she said.

The windjammer *Shenandoah* out of Vineyard Haven.

"Isn't she beautiful?"

With his customary bluntness he said, "I hadn't noticed. I couldn't take my eyes off you. You are so lovely." He wanted to add, You represent all the joy I've missed in my life.

Her laughter told him he had made an impression, and he could see she was gentle, kindly, even conversational. They talked inconsequentially about the ferry schedule. He said, "See you tomorrow."

That night he thought, *And I hate my face.*

He had fallen in love with her, and he knew it was love because it was agony, the worst hunger, the sort you died from. He felt famished when he saw her—her bright eyes, her full lips, her clear skin. She was like another species from the women he had known.

(continued on page 168)



"It's worse than you think...they forgot the anchovies!"



America fits Miss June just fine

In Japan, where curvaceous figures are not the fashion norm, Hiromi Oshima never entertained the idea of becoming a model. "I'm too buxom to be a Japanese model," she says. "There it doesn't matter if you have nice breasts or a booty. All the models are tiny and super skinny."

When Hiromi was growing up in Tokyo, her life revolved around one goal: being accepted into a strict private school to appease her parents. "I couldn't even go to McDonald's after class," she says. "If I wanted to hang out with other boys and girls, I had to change out of my

MADE IN JAPAN



school uniform so I wouldn't get caught." When she wasn't sneaking off or nose-deep in books, Hiromi took jazz dancing lessons. "Music and dancing have become more than just hobbies," she says. "They're my life. I dance to anything with a nice groove that gets my body moving—hip-hop, house, R&B."

Hiromi's life took a new turn when, during a trip to Florida, she had a chance meeting with a PLAYBOY photographer, who was impressed with her looks. Convinced she should make a go of it in the States, she graduated from college with a degree in communications, moved to the Sunshine State and posed in several PLAYBOY special editions before being picked as Miss June.

"I'm thrilled," she says. "I want to use my Playmate money to travel all over Europe—London, Finland, Germany—because I've never been there." Though she'd miss her family and friends back home, Hiromi would like to become a U.S. citizen. "Now I have to go back to Japan every three months because I don't have my green card. It's a long 18-hour flight. I don't think I'll stay in Florida, but I definitely want to live in the States. I'd like to settle down and build a nest. I've always wanted a Chihuahua, but my parents tell me I shouldn't get one right now because I travel too much. The separation would be stressful for both of us." And as for the guy who would share dog-walking duties with her? "Let's see," she says. "I like brawny guys. When they hug me I feel comfortable and protected. I feel so big when I hold hands with Japanese guys—they're so skinny. I had a lot of buddies in Tokyo, but I never had a steady boyfriend. They all treated me like one of the guys. I had to be tough and funny, hang out and do guy stuff. In America I definitely feel more feminine."

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN WAYDA





Hiromi is designing her own lingerie line. Considering her keen eye for style, does the budding fashionista have any advice for our readers? "Don't tuck your T-shirt into your pants," she says, barely able to contain her enthusiasm. "No, no, no! If you do that in Japan, people will look at you funny. I like seeing muscular guys in tank tops—not tucked in, of course."









See more of Miss June at cyber.playboy.com.



MISS JUNE
PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH

Niwoni Okamoto

PLAYMATE DATA SHEET



NAME: Hiromi Oshima

BUST: 34 WAIST: 22 1/2 HIPS: 34

HEIGHT: 5'4" WEIGHT: 108

BIRTH DATE: 1/6/80 BIRTHPLACE: Tokyo, Japan

AMBITIONS: To pursue modeling and be a successful model.

TURN-ONS: Intelligence, positivity, sweetness, a good massage, confidence.

TURNOFFS: Rude show-offs, bad breath

FAVORITE BOOK: "Catcher in the Rye," J D Salinger

WHO MAKES ME WANT TO DANCE: Outkast, Jay-Z, Snoop Dogg, Nirvana, Justin Timberlake.

MY MTV MOMENT: A music video by Nelly, P. Diddy and Murphy Lee: "Shake Ya Tailfeather."

PETS: I love cats & dogs, but I'm allergic :-(

FAVORITE FOODS: 寿司 (sushi!), Thai-Pad Thai & Tom Kha Kai, Pizza! (Who doesn't love it!?)



The little geisha ♡



Making a Wish - and it came true!



18 years old Not a wig, it's real!



PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

Three women were sitting in a bar talking about their new boyfriends, who all happened to be named George. To make the conversation easier, they decided to nickname each man after a drink. The first one said, "I'll call mine 7UP, because he's seven inches and always up."

The second one said, "I'll call mine Mountain Dew, because he likes to mount and do me."

The third one said, "I'll call mine Jack Daniel's. He's a hard licker."



An anthropologist visited a Native American reservation to interview an old chief. "Chief Two Eagles," the researcher said, "you have observed the white man for 90 years. You've seen his progress and the damage he's done."

The chief nodded that it was so. The anthropologist continued, "Considering all these events, in your opinion, where did the white man go wrong?"

The chief replied, "When we had the land, there were no taxes, no debts, plenty of buffalo and plenty of beaver. Medicine was free, women did all the work, and men spent all day hunting and fishing, and all night having sex."

Then the chief leaned back, smiled and said, "White man dumb enough to think he could improve a system like that."

Why do the sperm in a gay relationship get claustrophobic?

Because there's no womb to move around in.

THIS MONTH'S MOST FREQUENT SUBMISSION: A man called his boss one morning and said, "I can't make it in today. I'm sick."

The boss asked, "What's wrong?"

The employee replied, "I have anal glaucoma."

The boss said, "What the hell is that?"

The man replied, "Well, I just can't see my ass coming in to work."

PLAYBOY CLASSIC: A waitress at a roadside cafe was shocked to see three men masturbating furiously at one of her tables. "What the hell do you think you're doing?" she screamed.

One of the men replied, "Well, it says on the menu, 'First come, first served.'"

One saggy boob said to the other saggy boob, "If we don't get some support soon, people are going to think we're nuts."

A man took his rottweiler to the vet and said, "My dog's cross-eyed. Is there anything you can do for him?"

"Well," the vet said, "let me have a look at him."

The doctor picked up the dog and examined his eyes. Finally he said, "I'm going to have to put him down."

"But why?" the man asked. "Just because he's cross-eyed?"

"No," the vet replied. "Because he's really heavy."

What's the difference between a stalker and a washing machine?

After you dump a load in the washing machine it doesn't follow you around for a week.

A golfer stood over his ball for what seemed an eternity. He looked up, looked down, measured the distance and figured out the wind direction and speed. Finally his exasperated partner said, "What's taking so long? Hit the ball."

The guy answered, "My wife is up there watching me from the clubhouse. I want to make this a perfect shot."

His partner said, "Forget it, man. You don't stand a chance of hitting her from here."

A three-year-old boy taking a bath examined his penis and asked, "Mommy, is this my brain?"

The mother replied, "Not yet, honey."



Ally Neiman

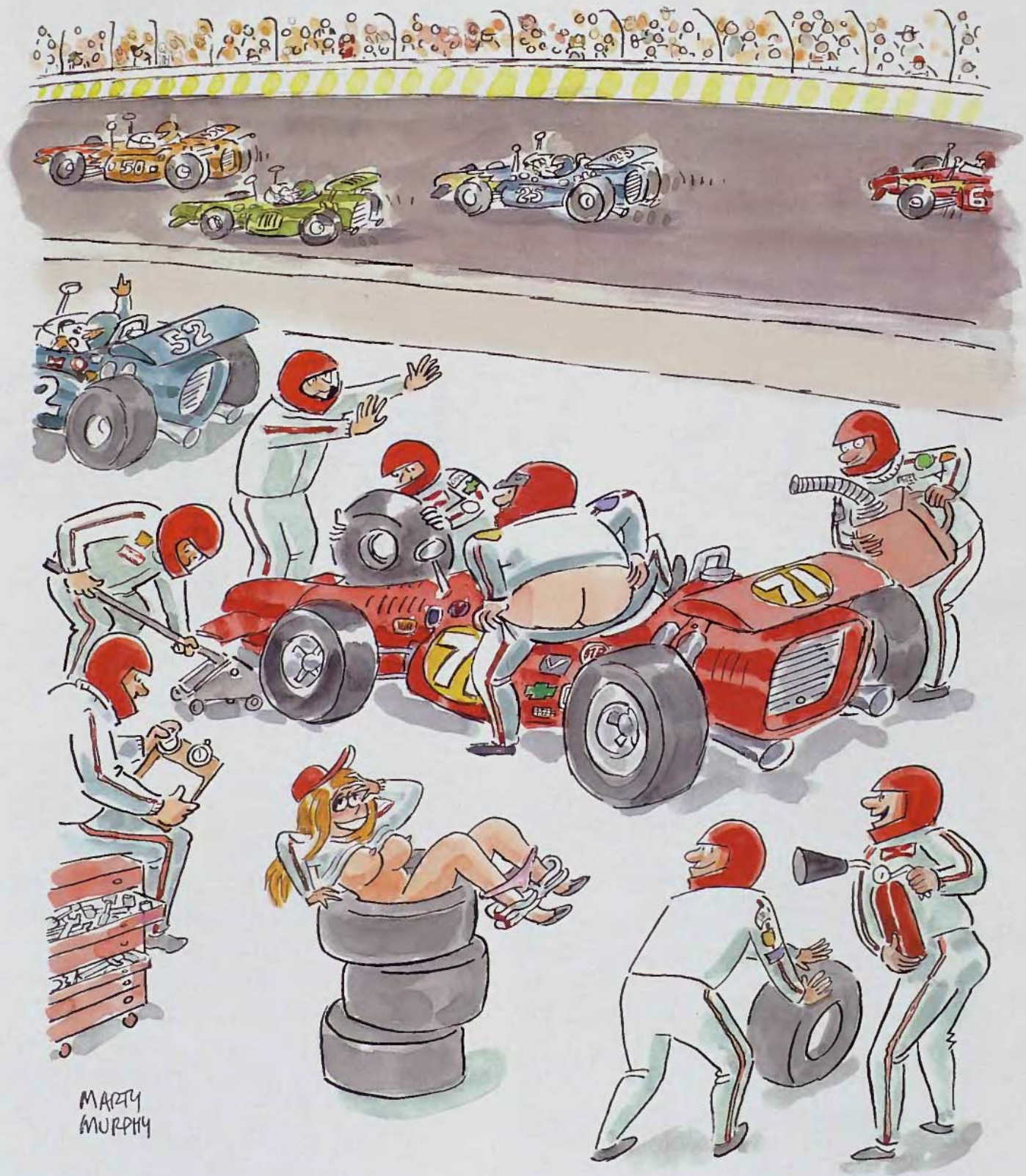
BLONDE JOKE OF THE MONTH: A blonde wife ran into her house and yelled, "Honey, someone just stole our car."

The husband asked, "Did you get a good look at him?"

"No," the blonde replied. "But I got the license plate number."

Two vultures boarded a plane. Each carried two dead raccoons. The stewardess stopped them and said, "Sorry, only one carrion per passenger."

Send your jokes to Party Jokes Editor, PLAYBOY, 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019, or by e-mail to jokes@playboy.com. \$100 will be paid to the contributor whose submission is selected. Sorry, jokes cannot be returned.



"Now that's what I call making the most out of a pit stop."

LOVE AND

A HOMELESS HIT MAN, A DEAD DOG, A PUNCHED-

WAR IN

OUT MINISTER. HOW CRAZY IS THE WORLD OF

LAS VEGAS

QUICKIE WEDDINGS? YOU HAVE NO IDEA

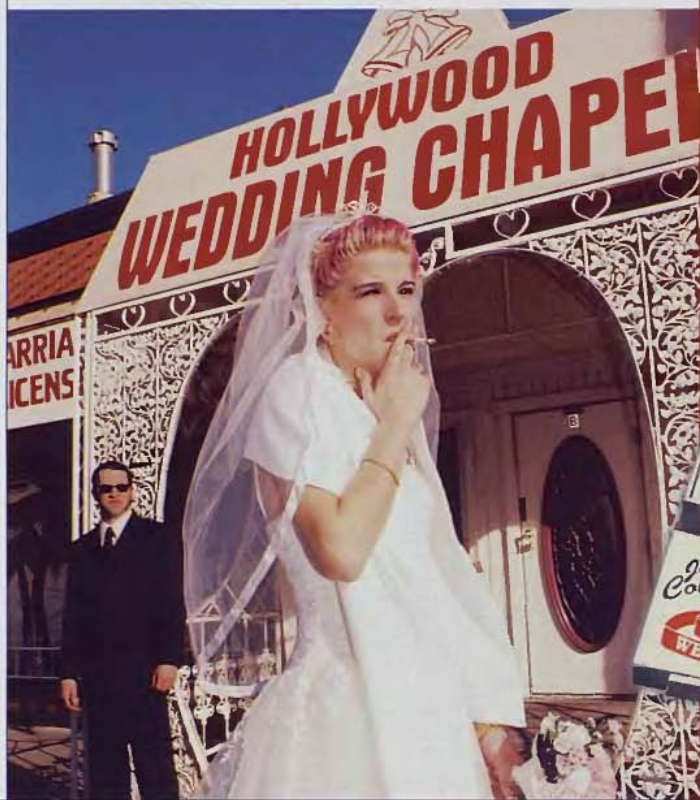


BY
SCOTT DICKENSHEETS
& KATE SILVER

Technically this is Las Vegas, but it ain't *Vegas*, baby. No high rollers or white tigers here. No Penn. No Teller. The Celine Dion gift shop might as well be in another city.

No, these are the drab asphalt flats of eastern downtown, miles from the upscale casinos of the Strip resorts. From here the swank Vegas of TV shows and movies exists mostly as a nighttime glow. The neon in this neighborhood advertises beer or vacancies, and if someone offers to valet your car,

Elvis lives—and marries—at Viva Las Vegas Wedding Chapel.



Here comes the bride. Andrea Skowronski takes a break from the proceedings at A Hollywood Wedding Chapel, where the slogan is "You'll love our Academy Award-winning service" and the ceremonies are named after famous Los Angeles streets.

drive away immediately. Sluggish traffic loafs through a neighborhood of rundown shops and exhausted old motels.

In one of those motels a self-proclaimed professional hit man and his associate show up at a \$30-a-night suite. The hit man is named Rip; the other is Milt. Rip heads to the bathroom to give it the once-over. Milt moves swiftly to look under the bed, checking it out, making sure it's safe. In their line of work a man has to take precautions.

They're there to meet Barb Ludwig, a stocky woman in her 50s dressed in unfashionable black pants and a maroon top. She stands by the doorway, shaking with fear. Hit men are not part of her usual social circle.

"People disappear," Rip tells Ludwig when they're all in the room. A tall, thin black guy, Rip wears a T-shirt depicting an M&M slashed in half. Because Ludwig has a reporter with her, Rip decides to hide behind the bedroom door. Apparently he's allergic to cameras. "Things happen permanently to people," he insists. "It's gonna get worse."

Rip claims to have been hired by a rival family to make trouble for Ludwig and her daughter Cheryl Luell. It seems Rip has had an attack of conscience and wants to come clean, cut a deal. But right now Luell is at work and Ludwig is in a tizzy. Whack her kid? This guy?

"I mean, if they call you up tonight," Ludwig says, her Wisconsin accent rising in pitch and volume, "and say, 'Here, I've got \$5,000 and I want you to go and hurt Cheryl, or hurt her husband...?'" She's in full, fluttery squawk now.

"Okay," Rip replies, his voice even, steady. "If you want me to turn over, then I need to be able to contact you."

"And what is that going to cost us?"

"Listen, if someone's paying \$5,000 to have somebody hurt, you understand for me to turn over and have my

client arrested, I'm not going to charge you just \$5,000. But the life you save may be your own. You figure out what your life is worth."

That challenge is posed in some form every day in Las Vegas but not often so nakedly. "Where I come from there's no such thing as limits," the hit man says urgently, upping the hard sell. He comes out from behind the door. "A hundred thousand dollars will get anybody to disappear."

Ludwig shudders from her dyed-red hair to her painted toenails. This could get ugly.

OR FOREVER HOLD YOUR PIECE

The city that gave us Bugsy Siegel, *Casino* and a cemetery's worth of shallow desert graves has another sordid tale to tell—a lurid melodrama of violent confrontations, beatings, out-of-town muscle and several guest appearances by the ghost of Elvis. It's a conflict with millions of dollars at stake, a threat to one of the town's big three tourist industries. No, not gambling. Not sex, either.

Welcome to the Las Vegas wedding chapel wars.

Marriage is money in Sin City, worth more than \$600 million a year. Business is

"People disappear," says the hit man. "Things happen permanently to people. You figure out what your life is worth."

booming, thanks in no small part to a recent wave of high-profile *Us Weekly*-ready nuptials. The town has close to 100 licensed chapels, from swank setups in the Strip casinos to wedding mills where you can be in, out and legally bound before anyone catches the bouquet. Downtown is packed with small chapels that have calculatedly romantic names—A Las Vegas Garden of Love, Stained Glass Chapel, the Little White Wedding Chapel, Wee Kirk O' the Heather—and marquees flaunting the celebrities who've gotten married there. Within these walls no fantasy is deemed too elaborate, too off-color or too embarrassing.

But all is not well in the wedding capital of the United States. Hostilities among these money-hungry family businesses, long simmering, finally boiled over last year. Things have gotten nasty—a full-on conflagration threatening to burn the whole quickie-wedding industry to its foundation. It's enough to make a bride cry. Or make Britney Spears think twice about where she gets married again.

The story of the chapel wars is about bad blood coursing through a cottage industry dependent on the glamorous lure of reckless behavior. Each year the exciting pull of a Las Vegas wedding brings in more than 125,000 couples from the world over, some looking for kitsch, some for class, all for expediency. The beauty of it for chapel owners? Every single one of these potential clients, from Britney to Jane Doe, funnels through a single doorway: the Clark County Marriage License Bureau in downtown Las Vegas. Outside that portal—a nondescript door near the metal detectors in the aging concrete county courthouse—the war begins. But first, a romantic interlude.

KISS AND TARANTELLA

Ken Mleccko and Nanette Szumski are crazy lovebirds from Palm Harbor, Florida who have pulled themselves from the gambling tables long enough to see just how weird and kinky matrimony can get. Fresh from the courthouse steps, certificate in hand, they find themselves at



A bride makes an entrance fit for Cleopatra at Viva Las Vegas.

the Viva Las Vegas Wedding Chapel.

"Dear friends, I am the Godfather, and I'm alive and well and here today to exchange the wedding vows of Ken and Nanette."

Outside the Viva Las Vegas chapel, the city goes about its Friday-afternoon bustle. The Thai restaurant up the street is getting ready for the dinner crowd and, later, the Thai karaoke crowd. The girls are shaking it at the strip club down the street, while the art galleries around the corner are getting their Brie together for a big event. At the nearby Econo Lodge someone is probably asking for the same room in which 9/11 hijacker Mohamed Atta stayed; over at the Oasis Motel someone is likely asking for the room in which actor David Strickland of *Suddenly Susan* hanged himself.

Inside the chapel Ken has set down his toy machine gun. He's standing expectantly beside the faux Italian cafe table—complete with Chianti bottle—that will serve as his matrimonial altar. He's wearing a pin-striped suit and an anxious grin. Chalk up any appearance of jitters not to cold feet but to the prospect of cold luck—he has been cleaning up at the tables and is eager to get back. The minister, a gaunt man dressed in black, is sitting at the table like a capo; an assistant, dressed as a waiter, stands beside him.

"Do you, Ken and Nanette, promise to let your love be strong so it overcomes all of life's obstacles? 'Cause if you don't, I may have to break somethin'."

Ken, 47, and Nanette, 45, have looked over the chapel's menu of wedding options and decided against the Intergalactic ceremony (officiated by "Mr. Schpock"). They've said no to the Western (line dancing, a Clint Eastwood imitator) and the Egyptian (a sarcophagus, Cleopatra's throne, male slaves). The tombstones and coffins of the Goth wedding? Uh, no. The Elvis-Blue Hawaii? Almost. But in the end Ken and Nanette opted for the Gangster package. Very Vegas. Ken hints mysteriously, "It fits in with my past a little." (He's in the auto business now.)

Time to get moving: The party ahead of them has filed out, trailing showgirls and an Elvis imitator, and the party behind them has already begun to gather. In Vegas happily ever after is a volume business.

The room, a high-ceilinged chapel with pews, potted palms and plenty of room for props, swells with "Here Comes the Bride." Out strolls Nanette, looking like a flapper in a beaded black sheath provided by the chapel. The minister

conducts the ceremony in a throaty Godfather rasp, complete with exaggerated Italian accent and comic by-play with the waiter.

It sounds like high-spirited fun, and it is. It will be a great story for years. But there's something indelibly sad about it, too. The happiest day of this couple's life has a temporary, express-lane feel. And aside from chapel

personnel, the only onlooker is the reporter from *PLAYBOY*. No family. No friends. All this playacting has been for themselves. It's a show without an audience, something not seen in this town since Robert Goulet's last gig.

At least no one got hassled or screamed at or told their marriage wasn't valid—all frequent occurrences in the wedding chapel wars. As the Godfather might say, they dodged a bullet.

"Do you agree to cook each udda a tasty plate of pasta, to always make sure the trunk of the Cadillac is empty and to always take care of each udda's violin cases?"

He does, she does, kiss, kiss, pose for some pictures, and 15 minutes later, ladies and gentlemen, Mr. and Mrs. Ken Mleczeko! The chapel limo whisks them back toward their casino before Ken's luck cools. Behind them the smooth crew at Viva Las Vegas has already removed the cafe tables.

WEAPONS OF MATRIMONIAL DESTRUCTION

Back at the courthouse where Ken and Nanette started, happy couples-to-be emerge one at a time from a single doorway—revenue on the hoof. As they exit, a scrum of handbillers, expendable foot soldiers for battling chapels, sets upon them. These tend to be down-and-outers of some variety—homeless men, tweakers and boozers paid a small fee per couple to lure business to whatever chapel is employing them that day. There's an older man, a big guy with a gray beard and dangling gold earrings. A tiny Filipino woman. An Asian minister who looks very, very tired. They bark out their chapel's special attributes:

"Free limo ride...."

"Only half a block away...."

"I can walk you down there right now...."

"Forty dollars for a simple wedding...."

"We have Jewish people, people from Pakistan who come here...."

"Free parking...."

Free parking may not figure prominently in a little girl's dreams of the perfect wedding, but when you're one of a hundred chapels, you slack your every attribute. One chapel owner estimates that as many as half the people coming to Vegas to get married haven't picked a chapel. This makes a handbill the equivalent of a hand grenade.



Is this the face that could start a war? Cheryl Luell opened a wedding chapel last year, and her aggressive tactics fueled a blood feud that has rocked Sin City's marriage industry.

FIRST STRIKE

It all started when Cheryl Luell opened the Garden of Love chapel in January 2003. The 33-year-old had moved to Vegas from Wisconsin seven years earlier and immediately found work at various wedding chapels and hotels. Even in a crowded market she saw a niche. Along with her husband, Craig, and her spunky mom, Barb, she bought a place on West Sahara Avenue. To her the whole business was ripe for aggressive marketing innovations. The weapon of choice for her opening salvo? Limousines. The Garden of Love is two miles from the licensing office, while many of Luell's competitors are within easy walking distance. Luell sent limos to the courthouse to offer couples free rides to her place. According to Nevada law, limos must be engaged with a destination in mind; you can't use them to solicit business. Luell's flagrant use of limos idling in front of the courthouse outraged other chapel owners. Making matters worse, Luell undercut her rivals' prices. Within three months the Garden of Love's business exploded to 500 or more ceremonies a month, well beyond that of the competition.

Perhaps her boldest move was to ratchet up the hand-billing action during peak hours by stationing five or more marriage barkers in front of the courthouse. Chapels have employed handbillers for years but not with the numbers or ferocity that Luell brought to the party. (The city's handbilling ordinance allows workers to hand out literature, but they're not supposed to speak to potential customers or lead them anywhere—another law flouted.)

Tension on the courthouse steps mounted every day. Luell made enemies and none more formidable than Sherrie Klute, the owner of Stained Glass Chapel, established two years ago on East Ogden Street. Klute decided she wasn't going to lose ground to a newcomer. Her first step: In April of last year Klute hired 14 new handbillers to counter Luell's nine. She claims her goal was to have everyone recognize the folly of escalation and move toward détente. It didn't work. "You know what she did?" Klute asks incredulously. "She hired them away from me!"

The genteel world Klute had long inhabited began to unravel. She was appalled during one visit to the courthouse: "I was talking to someone, and a handbiller butted in and

said, 'You don't want to go to that trashy place. They've got dead flies all over.' They will say anything!" Shouting episodes, and sometimes shoving matches, between handbillers were breaking out almost daily.

The next major skirmish occurred when Klute's husband, the Reverend Stephen Smith—the minister at Stained Glass—went to the courthouse steps himself and offered to marry couples for the price of a heartfelt donation. Undercutting the undercutter! It led to an ugly confrontation. Because of the trauma and fear of further entangling himself, Smith declines to be quoted directly, but he manages to describe



Old guard chapel owner Sherrie Klute leads the opposition against the upstarts from her aptly named Stained Glass Chapel.

THE WEIRDEST WEDDINGS MONEY CAN BUY

In the strangest city in America, no wedding fantasy is beyond the realm of reason—or good taste

LOOK, IT'S LISA MARIE'S DAD

GRACELAND WEDDING CHAPEL



When you think Vegas wedding, you think the King (and not the bloated, drugged-out version, either, though co-owner Deidra Duffy says she does get requests for the "heavier Elvis"). Just about any chapel can provide a Presley to witness your nuptials, but at Graceland he can *perform* them—this is Sin City's only chapel with an ordained Elvis minister.

Price: \$55–\$595. Add Elvis to any ceremony for an additional \$145.

LIVE LONG AND PROSPER

LAS VEGAS HILTON



You're going boldly where you've never gone before, so why not get hitched on the bridge of the most famous starship that never was, the USS *Enterprise*? Starfleet brass perform the ceremony; Klingons, Borg and Ferengi can act as witnesses. The ceremony has to be in English, but you can have a Klingon wedding verse recited afterward.

Price: \$500–\$3,000. Extra characters \$100 each.

CAN I GET FRIES WITH THAT?

A LITTLE WHITE WEDDING CHAPEL



Want to get married but don't want to interrupt that lucky streak for more than a few minutes? At the Drive-Thru Tunnel of Love you don't even have to get out of your car. Owner Charolette Richards says she created the tunnel, complete with cherubs overhead, to make it easier for handicapped lovers to tie the knot. Packages include the biker's special and the no-frills \$40 special.

Price: \$40–\$799.

THE SPY WHO LOVES YOU

VIVA LAS VEGAS WEDDING CHAPEL



If your viewing of *Goldfinger* was a defining moment, this James Bond ceremony is for you. It comes with a Judi Dench-type M, a laser show, Bond-like processional music and performers from shows such as *Folies Bergere* acting as Bond girls. Sorry, you don't get to be 007; he's played by owner Ron Decar, who drives into the chapel in his Lexus convertible.

Price: \$189–\$16,000. Bond is \$1,100. —Martin Stein



The reigning queen of the wedding biz, Charolette Richards, is asking God to intervene in the chapel wars. She's given out free weddings just to calm nerves.

the misleadingly named Las Vegas Wedding Bureau. (Despite the official-sounding name, it's just another chapel.) "I was talking to a couple on the sidewalk, and one of Luell's handbillers physically got between me and the couple. So did Luell, and she said, 'Don't believe a thing he says.' And then she said, 'I'm going to give you a wedding for free just because he's such a liar!'"

Evarts's problems weren't limited to the courthouse steps. In July, he claims, one of Luell's handbillers entered Evarts's chapel to harass his customers, and Evarts filed trespassing charges against him. Evarts went to local courts

an intense scene indeed: Luell, whom he'd never met before, raced over and screamed in his face while half a dozen of her handbilling bruisers surrounded him. He returned to Stained Glass deeply shaken.

Shortly afterward, Klute says, a Stained Glass handbiller, a 64-year-old former homeless alcoholic, was severely beaten. Smith, after several days during which his car was vandalized, was also attacked. Assailant unknown, but there's no doubt in Smith's mind who bears responsibility: Luell.

Cliff Evarts claims to have been a victim too. He runs

two more times, pushing them to issue a protective order against Luell. He failed both times.

Things got stranger. After a tussle with Klute on the courtroom steps in July, Luell emerged with long, gouge-like scratches on her arm. She said Klute had attacked her. Klute insisted that Luell had scratched herself. As hostilities escalated during the summer, Klute hired armed guards to accompany her to the courthouse. She made her handbillers carry cell phones with 911 on speed dial.

Someone flattened all four tires on one of Klute's cars.

The Las Vegas city government, wary of the PR nightmare of having indigents slugging it out in front of lovesick tourists, formed a task force to investigate the troubles. Asked to comment on the intensifying conflict, a police spokesman was moved to say, "This whole thing is bizarre, and trying to get to the bottom of it is difficult."

DESERT STORM

Luell doesn't look like a goon. The owner of A Las Vegas Garden of Love is effusive in her jeans and unstyled hair; she exudes a bubbly Midwestern earnestness that invites immediate trust. She picks at her pasta and salad in a mid-city Italian joint, determined to set the record straight. "They think I'm the new kid on the block," she says when asked about the other owners' accusations. "But I've worked for five years in this business."

Luell can dish the accusations too. She recalls a day on the courthouse steps when she was ushering a couple to one of her now infamous limos. She says a handbiller from another chapel scurried up. "Don't go in there," Luell says the man barked at the soon-to-be newlyweds. "They sell crack, and they're gonna rip you off!" The couple stuck with her, though, and she threw in a free wedding video and photos to compensate for the trauma.

For her part Luell wears this conflict on her skin—she has eczema, which flares up in a pimply rash when she's stressed. She's been stressed and rashy a lot in the year since she opened Garden of Love. As you talk to her, it's hard to reconcile the reasonable woman before you—good-natured, presenting herself (continued on page 148)

CELEBRITY WEDDINGS GONE BAD



FRANK SINATRA AND MIA FARROW

Wedded bliss: July 19, 1966–August 19, 1968
Location: The Sands presidential suite

The 50-year-old Chairman of the Board did it his way when he married the 21-year-old actress (and when he later served her with divorce papers on the set of *Rosemary's Baby*). A witness, photographer Mike Gordon, said O' Blue Eyes didn't even kiss the bride. "I was the first person he spoke to after saying 'I do.' He said, 'I'm going to have a Jack Daniel's and water. How about you?'"



RICHARD GERE AND CINDY CRAWFORD

Wedded bliss: December 12, 1991–December 1, 1994

Location: Little Church of the West

Owner Greg Smith remembers someone calling at around seven P.M. and asking if the chapel would like to do a celebrity wedding. "We've got a Disney executive who wants to get married," said the caller. At 11:30 P.M., a scruffy Gere and a make-up-less Crawford showed up instead. Afterward the new couple headed to Denny's for their first meal as husband and wife.



DARVA CONGER AND RICK ROCKWELL

Wedded bliss: February 15, 2000–April 6, 2000
Location: Onstage at the Las Vegas Hilton

Who wants to marry a millionaire? Conger did, until she realized that it meant being wed to Rockwell. Still, Conger, a former nurse, got a \$35,000 ring, a free cruise, an Isuzu Trooper and a PLAYBOY pictorial for exchanging vows in front of 23 million people. Rockwell got this badly written haiku published: "Love on television/Not as strange as concept seems/But Darva present."



ANGELINA JOLIE AND BILLY BOB THORNTON

Wedded bliss: May 5, 2000–May 29, 2003
Location: Little Church of the West

With only a 20-year age difference between them and a mutual love of tattoos, what could go wrong? They ponied up \$189 for the ceremony and another \$29 for Jolie's ring. Both wore jeans, and no blood was exchanged—at least not in public. For an interesting sentimental touch, they asked for the Righteous Brothers hit "Unchained Melody" as their background music.



BRITNEY SPEARS AND JASON ALLEN ALEXANDER

Wedded bliss: January 3, 2004–January 4, 2004
Location: Little White Wedding Chapel

The one-day marriage between the princess of pop and some schlub from her hometown captured imaginations around the world. After whooping it up at the Palms' hip Ghostbar, Spears and Alexander had a quick wedding at 5:30 A.M. Following an emergency summit with Spears's handlers and her mom, the marriage was annulled the next day. *The Star* is still writing about it.



Rowland B. Wilson

"Somehow, I thought this marriage would be different!"

THE FETISHIZED WOMAN

THERE'S NO PART OF THE FEMALE BODY THAT CAN'T BE ADORED

By Chip Rowe

A fetishist is said to be a man who can't take in the entire woman at once. Instead he fixates on a single point. Inevitably these obsessives find one another. From head to toe, we survey the local scene.

NAVEL Button men are devoted to shows such as *MTV Beach House*. Found erotica: "I watched with lust as she sunk in her finger to the bottom of her nail and circled her erotic crevasse." Online navel fetish sites: 11. Dream girls: Catherine Zeta-Jones, Charlize Theron and Barbara Eden on *I Dream of Jeannie*—navels rarely seen.

STOMACH Chubby chasers pine for full-figured pinups such as Ambrosia (82-69-83). They dream of being engulfed in flesh. Found erotica: "I felt the top of her cool, blubbery belly push against my balls. I sent liquid heat through her cleavage to her chins." Dream girl: Kathy Kinney on *The Drew Carey Show*. Going too far: Being a "feeder" who plots to fatten up women.

TOES Toe men live for summer, when sandals expose cleavage. Found erotica: "Timber is out for a barefoot drive when a cop pulls her over. After taking her toe prints, he has to clean her feet, and you know where that leads." Going too far: (1) The woman whose husband wanted to fuck only her toes: "You know the way guys hold a pool cue?" (2) The man arrested at the USC library for painting women's nails (he would pretend to drop something under the table).

THROAT A throat man who visited a New York dominatrix with \$100, a flashlight and tongue depressors recalled spending a glorious half hour "gazing down her pink throat. She even let me touch it. The experience was more sensual than fingering a pussy." Throat men swap photos of women sticking out their tongues. Members of a group devoted to female uvulas: 1,037.

BREASTS In the world of breast expansion, in which boobs burst bras and fill rooms, Anna Nicole Smith is considered flat-chested. Found erotica: "She flattened her pleasure pillows against him, smothering his cock in her soft tit flesh. His shaft looked like a hot dog in a bun." Paid members of *bearhive.com*: 4,000. Going too far: When she topples over.

HEART Four Yahoo groups whose members are aroused by listening to women's heartbeats—particularly with stethoscopes and when the patient is topless—have a total of 1,463 members (a fifth group, with 392 members, denies that its interest is sexual).

VULVA Hard-core pussy men fixate on prominent lips or clits or, like pit men, the unshaven look. Found erotica: "Her bush jutted from her pubic mound in an awesome starburst, with the thickest hair forming a tail. It sprouted out of her ass crack like fine fountain spray." Dream girl: Sharon Stone. Photos posted at *ratemycameltoe.com*: 3,602.

FEET Goethe, the patron saint of foot men, observed that "a pretty foot is one of the greatest gifts of nature." Related interests include women crushing bugs or pumping gas pedals. Found erotica: "I moaned in pleasure as her silky feet slid from my balls and up to the tip of my cock." Sites devoted to the female foot: 3,000 (at least). Dream girl: Jennifer Aniston. Going too far: (1) The podiatrist who told the author of *The Sex Life of the Foot and Shoe* that he wore absorbent elastic undershorts to disguise his frequent arousal. (2) The intruder in Cook, Australia who glued his face to a sleeping woman's foot.

HAIR Hair men fantasize about caressing, shampooing, brushing and/or unleashing a woman's tresses. Bald porn progresses from scissors to clippers to razor. A common fantasy is of a woman ripping off her wig to reveal that she's "naked from the neck up." Hair sites listed at headscene.com: 279. Going too far: Cutting off locks to make a hair bed.

EARS A Japanese site posts photos of women pouring gooey liquids into their canals with funnels or cleaning their ears with Q-tips—some of which have depth markers to create erotic tension. Many ear men like stretched lobes; others are partial to women wearing headphones. One club gets off on double piercings but only on women over 40. Members of online ear fetish groups: 500. Dream girl: Jennifer Garner. Going too far: Saving her wax.

ARMPITS Many pit men enjoy axillism: The woman holds her elbow tight against her body, and the guy fucks her underarm. Found erotica: "Lisa, wearing a halter top, put her arm behind her head. I savored the sweet smell, catching hairs between my teeth and driving my tongue into the hollows." Sites devoted to the all-natural pits of Indian women: 1.

ARMS Many arm men dream about women who can lift buses. This has created controversy: Some devotees insist the Amazon fantasy should not include superhuman powers. Found erotica: "The exquisitely formed woman—her physique both powerful and feminine—sensually massaged herself with a power tool." Celeb-muscle posts at armfan.com: 2,470. Dream girl: Chyna.

FINGERNAILS Nail men are hand guys who like danger. Found erotica: "Clara positioned her hand so her fingernails rested underneath his shaft, then glided her talons up and down his dick." Photos posted at nailbytes.com: 16,620. Dream girl: Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio in *Scarface*. Going too far: Letting her nails keep you faithful. "She left my privates functional but warned me to stop womanizing."

LEGS Hard-core leg men focus on flexibility, length and/or power. Some prefer giantesses; others are content to watch the crossing of thighs. Found erotica: "Her legs were pumping like pistons. I pulled them to my chest as Rhonda's fingers danced across my nut sack. The next day I awoke tangled in legs." Going too far: Lustung after amputees.

KNEES The knee man never tires of a good squat; kneesocks are his push-up bra. Found erotica: "Marc isn't satisfied until he gets to unleash his load all over Tera's knee." Erotic knee groups: 2. Members: 90. Going too far: Taking a knee to the balls—and liking it.

EYES Descartes was an eye man—specifically crossed eyes, a fixation he blamed on the fact that his wet nurse had them. Found erotica: "The first time we made love she wanted to remove her glasses, but I promised not to smudge them. I loved looking at her minified eyes." Photos at joyofspex.com: 1,844.

NOSE At pinocchia.com, 58 nose men were asked what they would do if their lovers sprouted huge schnozzles. Fourteen percent would like her to "probe me with it." Members of nose fetish groups: 370. Going too far: Defacing Renaissance art by drawing fuckable nostrils.

HANDS Hand men get off on women palming basketballs, intertwining fingers or playing patty-cake. Average hand length of one hand man's last eight girlfriends, as posted at femalefingers.com: 7.7 inches. Going too far: "The touch of a beautiful hand immediately caused L. to get an erection."

BUTTOCKS Butt men relish size—and proximity. A few get off on panty wedgies, tan lines or women bending over in jeans. Found erotica: "She forced him between her damp cheeks." Face-sitting sites: 17. Going too far: When she doesn't stand up in time.



WET SUITS

TWO GIRLS FOR EVERY GUY.

AND A FEW SWIM TRUNKS, TOO

fashion by **joseph de acetis**

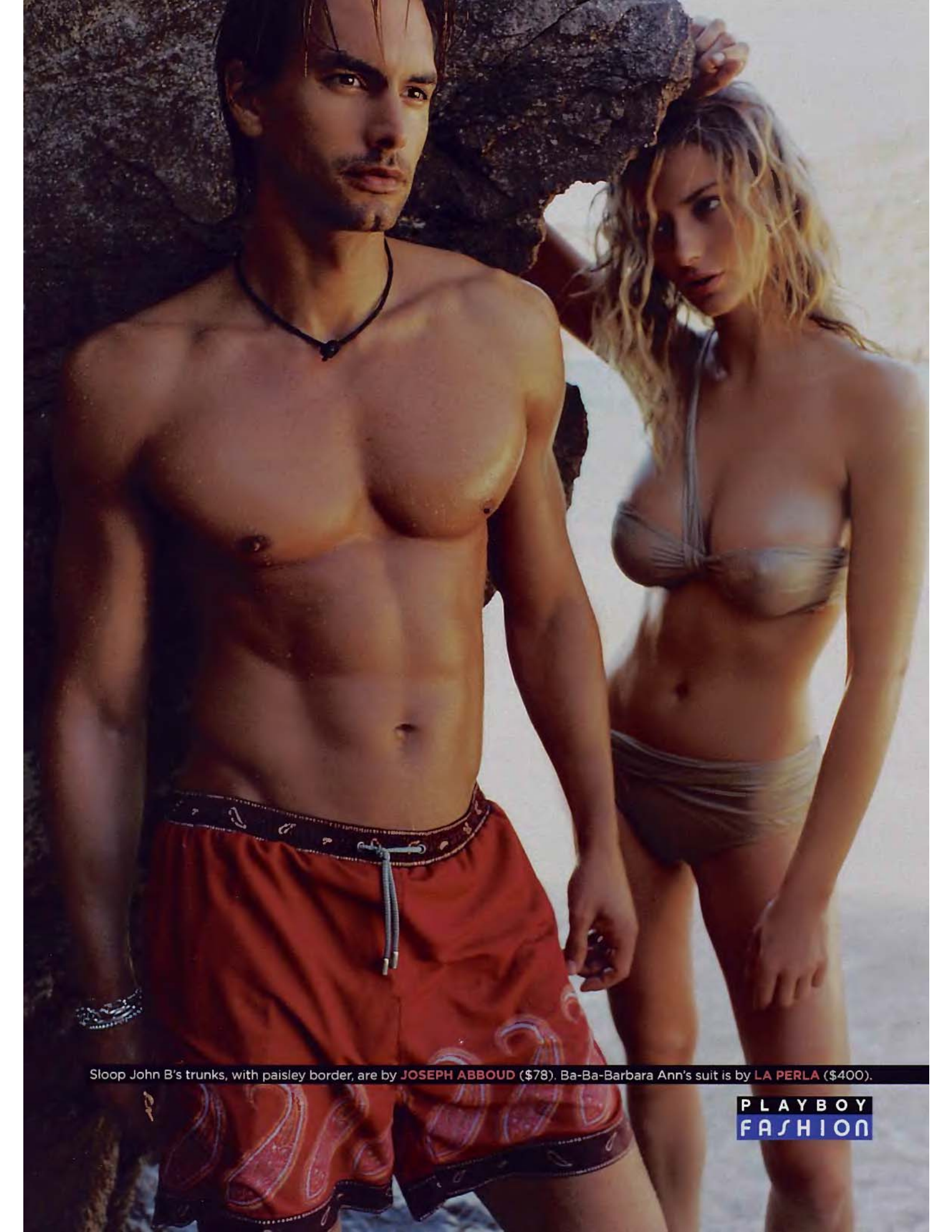
photography by antoine verglas

produced by jennifer ryan jones



Surf's definitely up. ABOVE: Enter Sandman. He's in a pair of trunks by **MOSCHINO** (\$95). Surfette, admiring the orange stripes down the side, is in a bikini by **D&G** (\$170). Helping him is Rhonda, in a lime bikini by **LA PERLA** (\$297).

WOMEN'S STYLING BY MERIEM ORLET

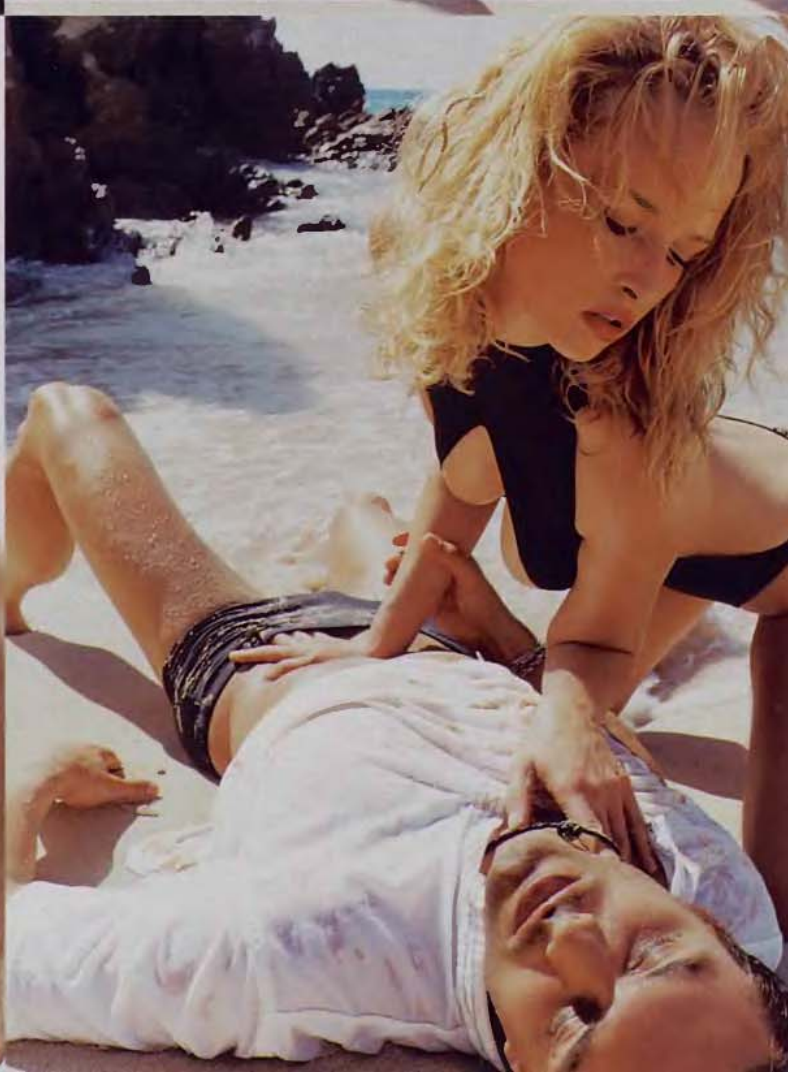


Sloop John B's trunks, with paisley border, are by **JOSEPH ABBOUD** (\$78). Ba-Ba-Barbara Ann's suit is by **LA PERLA** (\$400).

PLAYBOY
FASHION



ABOVE: At left, Mr. Riviera wears a pair of white trunks by **GANT** (\$45). Her suit is by **D&G** (\$170). At right, his luck continues in trunks by **TOMMY HILFIGER** (\$45) and a stainless watch by **SEIKO** (\$535). Her bikini is by **LA PETITE COQUETTE** (\$125).

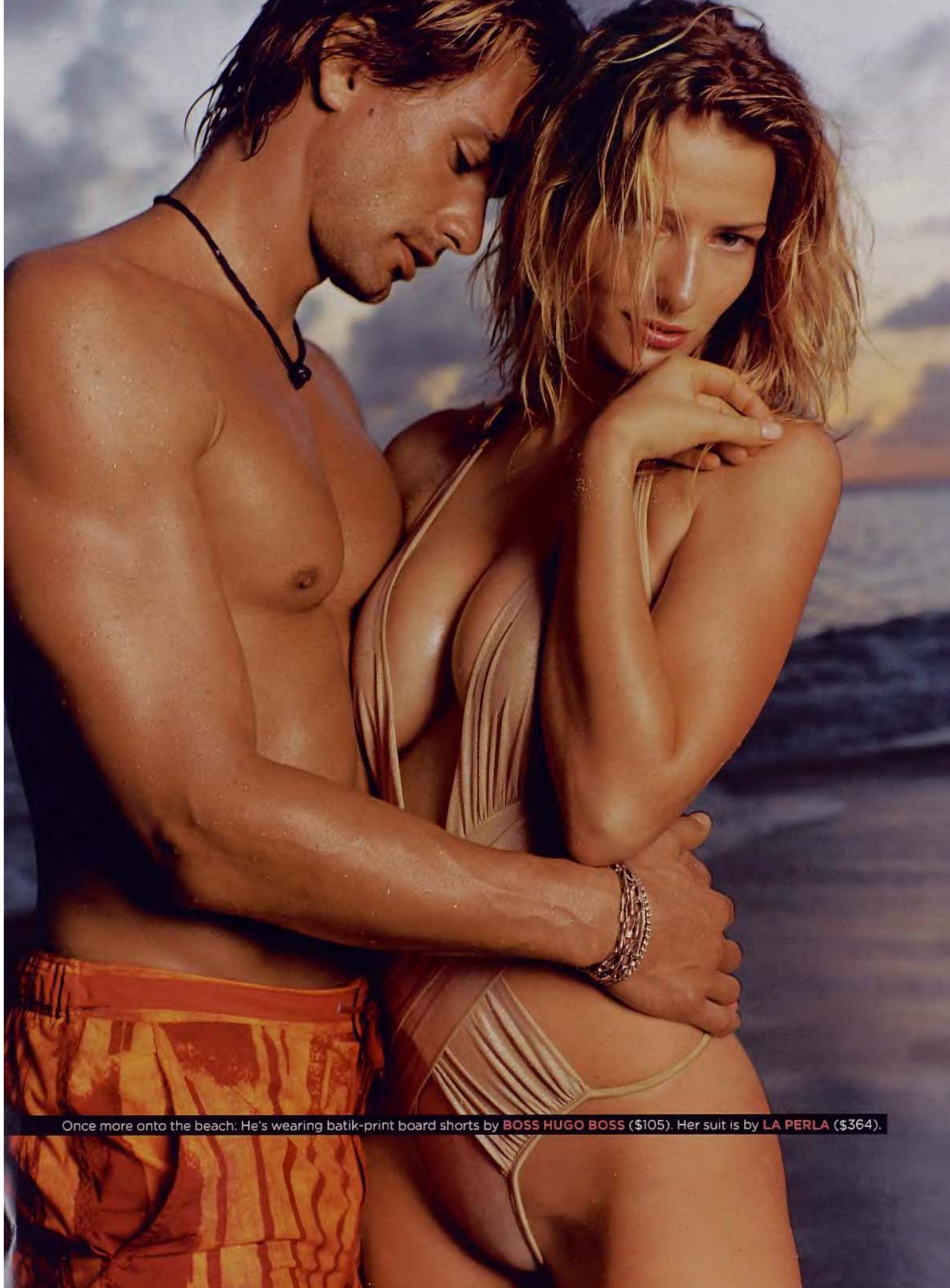




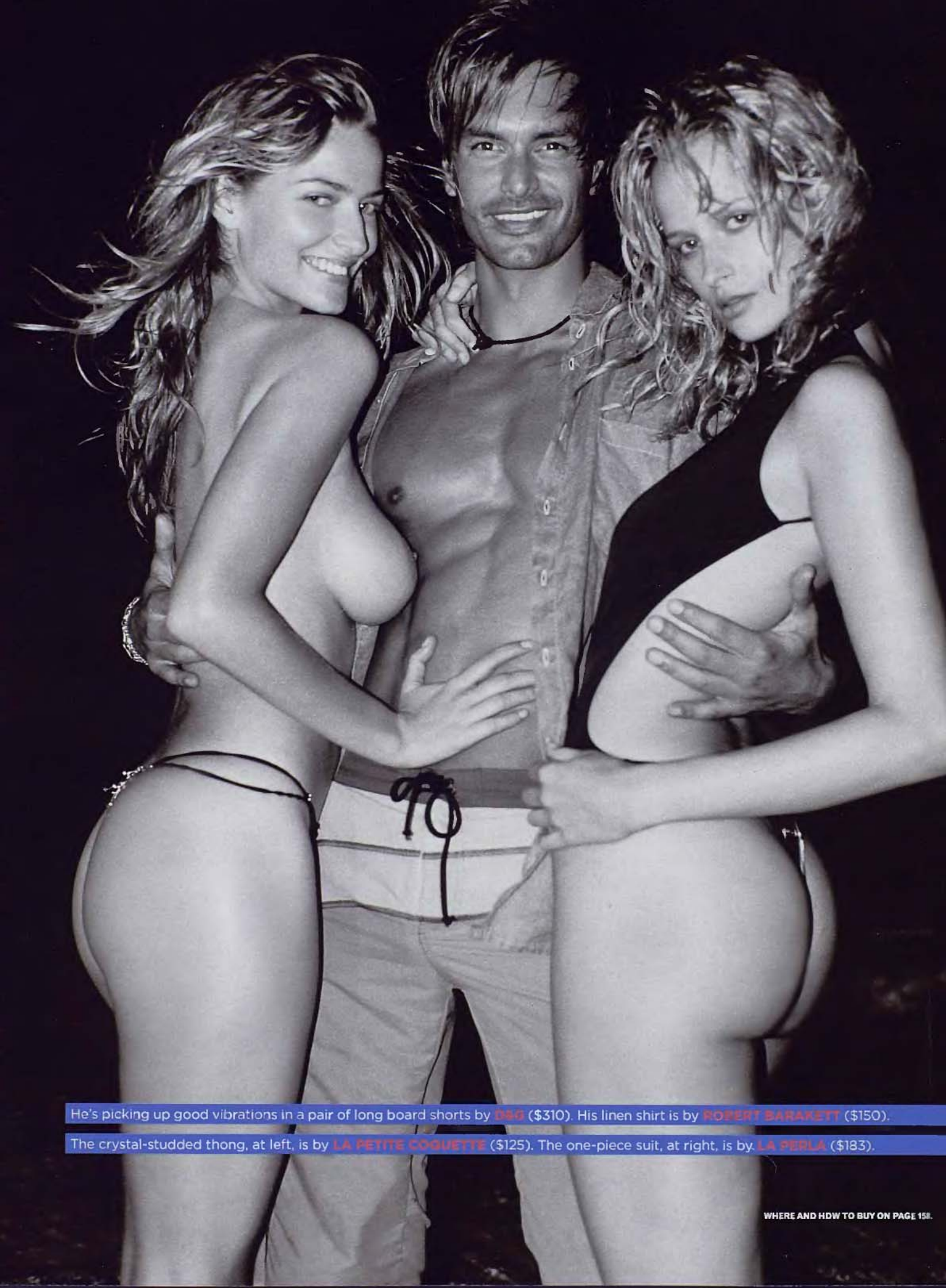
OPPOSITE PAGE: Bottom left, he's in purple drawstring board shorts by **ETRO** (\$180). The ribbed one-piece she's wearing is by

RUBIN CHAPELLE (\$550). Bottom right, he's in a shirt by **BOSS HUGO BOSS** (\$125) and a Lycra swimsuit by **MICHAEL KORS** (\$95).

ABOVE: His board shorts are by **PAUL SMITH ACCESSORIES** (\$85). Her suit is by **LA PERLA** (\$297); the watch is by **VESTAL** (\$75).



Once more onto the beach: He's wearing batik-print board shorts by **BOSS HUGO BOSS** (\$105). Her suit is by **LA PERLA** (\$364).



He's picking up good vibrations in a pair of long board shorts by **D&G** (\$310). His linen shirt is by **ROBERT BARAKETT** (\$150).

The crystal-studded thong, at left, is by **LA PETITE COQUETTE** (\$125). The one-piece suit, at right, is by **LA PERLA** (\$183).



MONSTER TREADS

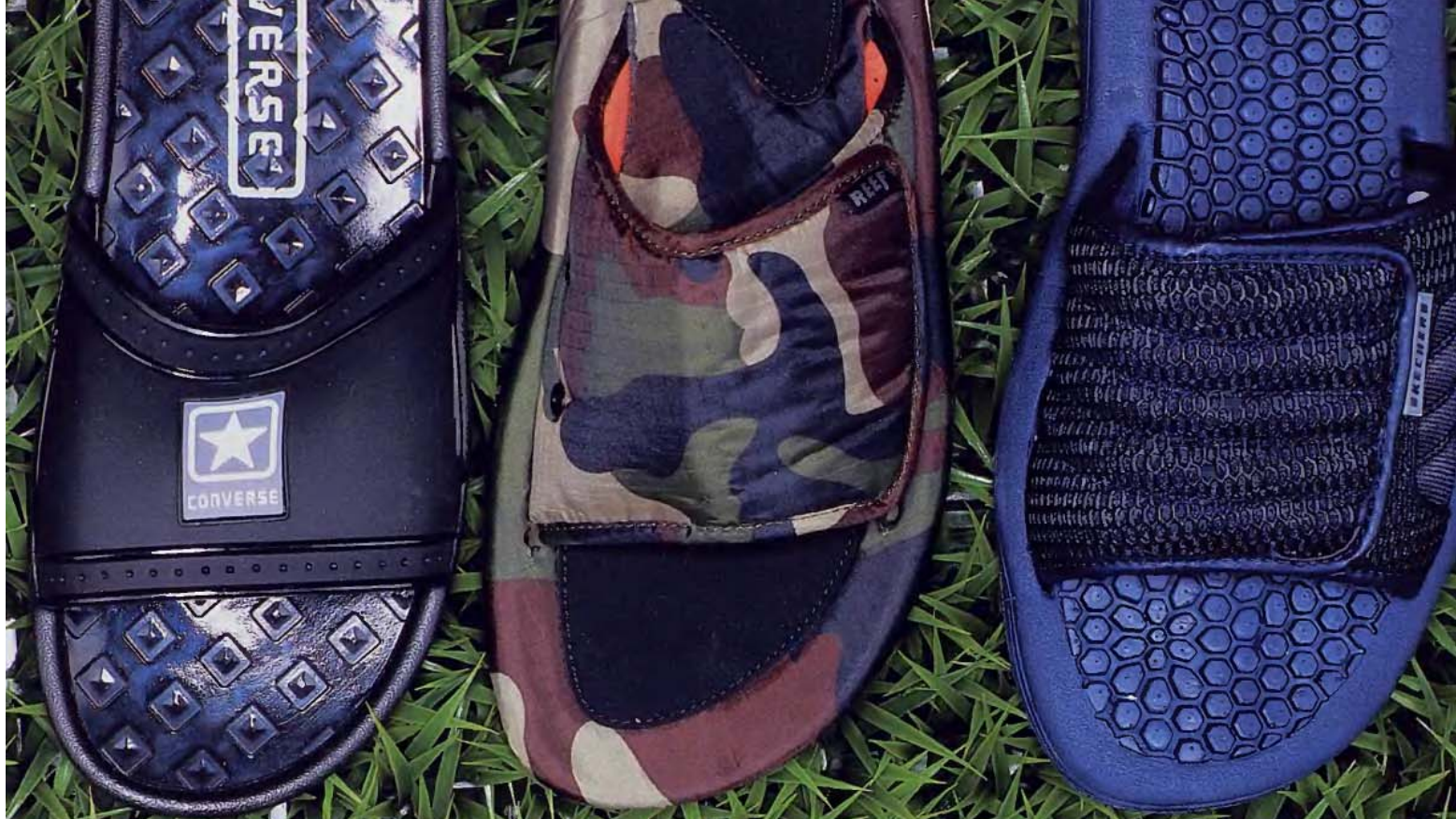
Kick-start your summer with open-toe action

Fashion by JOSEPH DE ACETIS
photography by james imbrogno

PLAYBOY
FASHION



produced by
jennifer ryan jones



Feet—we all have them, but not every guy likes to show them. It's time to change your ways and let your dogs run wild by funk'ing them up with a blast of rubber sole. Flip-flops, slides, sandals, mandals—never mind what they're called; just put them on. ABOVE, FROM LEFT: The blue-and-red slip-on is by **FILA** (\$20). Kick out the jams in the orange-and-black sandal by **NAUTICA** (\$25). Want a little flexibility? **BIRKENSTOCK** makes an adjustable two-strap sandal (\$60). The star logo makes this black **CONVERSE** slide unmistakable (\$20). The camouflage nylon slide with Velcro closure is by **REEF** (\$36). **SKECHERS SPORT** employs high-tech mesh for its blue sandal (\$25). BELOW, FROM LEFT: The rubber sandal is by **SENSI** (\$29). A cloth top distinguishes the sandal by **TYR** (\$20). **NEW BALANCE** calls its waterproof red sandal a shower slide (\$18). For the feel of terry cloth, try the two-tone blue slide by **COLE HAAN** (\$145). The black leather slide by **TSUBO** adds flash beneath your feet with its red leather insole (\$90). The rugged brown leather sandal is by **CLARKS** (\$75). They're like freeballing for your feet!





"I've got to go now, sweetheart—I've got the plumber coming."

CENTERFOLDS ON

SEX

TEASE TO PLEASE

A man can't just say, "I want to go down on you" and then—boom! I like to start a make-out session with lots of kissing on the neck, shoulders and nipples. He should tease parts of my body. If a man takes the time to do the teasing, he'll drive his woman nuts. Don't head right for the clitoris. Go all around it—lick and kiss everything but it. Then when he finally gets there, maybe 20 minutes later, I am so ready that I can have multiple orgasms. If a woman starts to move her hips a little bit or arch her back, go for the gusto. She's ready to have sex. One night, I had 10 orgasms. I just kept having more and more. It was magical. It felt like I was having a million brain explosions of endorphins and dopamine. I was like a pencil—there was a straight line of bliss from my brain to my boobs to my vaginal area. It was just waves of pleasure.

Charlotte Kemp

SHE LOVES NEW YORK

I used to date a New York City fireman. Sometimes in between fires he'd pick me up at my apartment. One time we had sex in the back of a fire truck. He just sat me up on the counter, pulled down his uniform and then—bam! The most exciting part was that all the other firemen knew we were doing it. I had at least seven orgasms because it was so dangerous and spontaneous. I've also had sex on a subway. It was two A.M., and no one was on the train except my friend and me. I sat on his lap, and we just started doing it. A subway worker spotted us and said, "If you two weren't the only ones here I'd have to arrest you. You can't do that on a train." I told him we were just having fun.





Jude Law

20Q

The British leading man isn't sure which is more dangerous—guns in America or tabloids back home

1

PLAYBOY: In this summer's *Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow*, you play a 1930s flying ace...battling giant killer robots. To be blunt—what the hell?

LAW: *World of Tomorrow* is a romantic action-adventure, but at the same time it's a tribute to the old serials of the 1930s and 1940s. It has elements of cutting-edge science fiction films and the edge-of-your-seat action sequences of today. It just exists in this slightly more old-fashioned world. I think there may be an appetite, even a need, for a film that comes from a less testosterone-driven, less aggressive point of view.

2

PLAYBOY: You're often compared to leading men from Hollywood's golden age. Are you enamored with the movies of that era as well?

LAW: I play Errol Flynn in Martin Scorsese's new Howard Hughes movie, *The Aviator*. I prepared by watching a lot of Flynn films. I was surprised by how entertaining the fight sequences still are. They have heart and are more approachable than a lot of what you see today. They have an innocence that we've moved away from.

3

PLAYBOY: Yet you've chosen mostly quirky roles in dark films, including a sadistic hit man in *Road to Perdition* and a literal sex machine in *A.I.* Do advisors tell you that if you'd gone more commercial you'd be Tom Cruise by now?

LAW: My choices have been about keeping me interested. It was never my agenda to be the highest-paid actor, just to make films I believed in and that fulfilled my needs and those of the public. I haven't tried to mirror anyone's career.

4

PLAYBOY: With hugely publicized movies such as *Cold Mountain* and *World of*

Tomorrow, though, you are going more mainstream now, right?

LAW: The proof is in the pudding, but I don't feel I've changed how I choose parts. I try to find ones that are different from what I've played before, and maybe this is a side I hadn't investigated. I suppose on paper these movies look more commercial, but they're still kind of quirky. Even *Lemony Snicket*, which is a children's movie I'm in, has a dark side.

5

PLAYBOY: The breakup of your marriage to actress Sadie Frost was front-page news in London tabloids last year. Are the media more invasive there or in the U.S.?

LAW: Oh, in England, without any fathom of a doubt. The problem in England isn't so much the paparazzi and journalists, though they are intolerably invasive and disrespectful. It has gotten to the point where that culture has infiltrated everybody. People on the street who think they've witnessed something—whether it's your dropping a bag or losing a key and not being able to get into the house—will call the press to sell the story. That's what I find most offensive about living there. It is a culture of spying on people in order to gossip and pick up a bit of cash.

6

PLAYBOY: How do you handle all that and still have a personal life?

LAW: I'm still trying to figure that out. I don't know quite how you handle it. You protect your children; you try to protect yourself. Unfortunately you build psychological and emotional fences, but how do you handle that deep down? I'm certainly not going to admit that the press gets to me. I've weighed the good and the bad, and the good vastly outweighs the bad. On another level you have to feel as if that kind of scrutiny is so base, so pitiful, that you can rise above it. In the end it

leaves you feeling stronger and secure in what you know is true about yourself and what means a lot to you.

7

PLAYBOY: You've been nominated twice for an Academy Award and lost both times. How do you keep a smile on your face when they announce some other bastard's name?

LAW: I went this time completely happy and clear that I wasn't going to win. The only thing that flashed through my mind when they were building up to my category was, Oh God, maybe I've made a terrible mistake and I'm going to be one of those schmucks who go up there with literally nothing to say. So it was a strange relief to lose and to feel honest, absolute, sincere delight that Sean Penn won. His performance was wonderful, and it was his time to get his due. Plus, I'd brought my mom with me and had so much fun seeing it through her eyes rather than seeing it cynically or taking it too seriously.

8

PLAYBOY: You did a nude scene in *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, but in *Cold Mountain* you did your first nude scene with a woman. Who was more nervous, you or Nicole Kidman?

LAW: We were equally nervous and hopefully professional enough to hide it. It wasn't choreographed, but we had a plan, and we were both clear on what would be required of us. There was also a sense that we would let something evolve out of the situation when we let the others in—the director of photography, the camera operators. You have to get used to those people, because that scene wouldn't be anything if it weren't lit right and filmed and directed in the right way. When you watch a lot of films, it feels as if they stop, you get your love scene, and then they start up again. We wanted this to feel like every other moment in the

film, wherein these two people are finally unpeeling and revealing their inner selves to each other.

9

PLAYBOY: You played a sniper in *Enemy at the Gates*, but you live in a country where it's hard to buy a gun. What do you make of America's fascination with firearms?

LAW: Unfortunately it seems that guns and the gun culture are a part of most world societies. What troubles me more is that people are shocked and surprised when tragedies like Columbine or the D.C. sniper shootings hit the news. Mix guns freely into a culture in which people are dealing with emotional problems and stress, and you end up with body counts because guns are so easy to operate. It is sad but inevitable, whether it's starting a war or cornering a nation or a religious faith into a position in which it feels it has to kick back to be heard. We know how humans react, just as we know how a gun works. So why are we surprised when it goes terribly wrong?

10

PLAYBOY: Did watching Arnold Schwarzenegger become governor of California leave you thinking that anything is possible for Hollywood actors, or did it leave you scratching your head about the power of celebrity?

LAW: A little of both. The most interesting theory I've heard was described as narrative politics—involving the audience in the process, letting them conclude a story. The idea that the people can make it possible for an Austrian bodybuilder turned movie star to become governor empowers them to create a great story. Just as it's a great story to vote in a president whose father was in the White House and who is a reformed alcoholic.

11

PLAYBOY: You were rumored to be a top choice to star in a new *Superman* franchise. Why wouldn't you take that job?

LAW: My greatest fear is that a role like that would define me. The closest I've come to that is with this *Sky Captain* character. We hope to do a couple more *Sky Captain* movies, but an original creation feels different. The big question for me at that time was, "Do I want to be known from here on in as *Superman*?" I'd feel the same way about being James Bond. They are iconic characters, and there is also pressure in stepping into someone else's tight.

12

PLAYBOY: You are starring in remakes of *Alfie* and *Sleuth*, playing roles that Michael Caine originated. Are you

basically trying to take over his life?

LAW: I wish I knew the secret to Michael's longevity, but there's no one actor I look to as a role model. You steal a little from all of them. Two people really inspired me early on. The first was Charlie Chaplin, the first performer I was really aware of. You could see what was in his head, and he was hugely entertaining to a kid. The other was Daniel Day-Lewis. He did two films consecutively, *My Beautiful Laundrette* and *Room With a View*, in which he seemed to totally disappear into two completely different roles. That just fascinated me.

13

PLAYBOY: *A.I.* was hatched by Stanley Kubrick and directed by Steven Spielberg. Why was it so harshly judged?

LAW: *A.I.* came out at a time when Steven was transforming from the Spielberg who delivered defining family entertainment to the Spielberg who made grittier films for a more mature audience. Maybe people didn't understand that this was an adult concept and thought it was for children. It was a curveball, because it wasn't what Steven was known for—delivering straight-ahead storytelling. *A.I.* required a little more of you. Kubrick's work had always been misunderstood and then rediscovered. Perhaps his involvement from the grave means this work has yet to be fully understood.

14

PLAYBOY: Charlize Theron uglified up for *Monster*, and you made yourself into a bald hit man with rotting teeth in *Road to Perdition*. Do attractive actors seek out such roles so audiences can get past their looks?

LAW: Very much so. The more you can layer on top, the freer you are to reveal more about the character. I've just done whatever a part has required. In *Perdition* I was up against Tom Hanks, who is a big guy, tall and well built. It didn't work to be muscle-bound, so I went another way. I had to walk around bald for three months, which was quite an experience for a 28-year-old guy.

15

PLAYBOY: Cleaned up, you must get propositioned by female fans. What has been the most inventive come-on?

LAW: I am rarely propositioned, maybe because I was married for 10 years and never really put that out there, to be honest. The propositions I've gotten have been as predictable as you could imagine.

16

PLAYBOY: After this interview, would we more likely find you at an art

gallery or draining pints with your mates at a pub?

LAW: What free time I have I nearly always spend with my children. Working on movies is hugely time-consuming, and I'm frequently in places where children can't go. So more often than not we'll go to a museum or the park. I love spending time outside with them because they're so happy in that environment.

17

PLAYBOY: You dropped out of school at the age of 17 to act on a British soap. Will you insist that your kids go to college?

LAW: It depends on what's happening at the time. My parents were both teachers, and they knew this was a career I was very set on seeing through. The opportunity arose, and they realized I felt it would be crazy to turn it down. They knew I could always go back to college if things didn't work out. I would like to think I would do the same.

18

PLAYBOY: Your work takes you to a lot of faraway locations. What has been your favorite discovery?

LAW: Probably Romania, where we shot *Cold Mountain*, because I had no idea of its beauty and very little knowledge of its history. I've spent most of my free time the past 10 years traveling in Southeast Asia. It started with a trip to Vietnam, because we were told it could be a wonderful place to visit. I loved it and have been to Cambodia, China, Malaysia and Bali. Now I'm intrigued to see places like South America or Africa. I like the idea of constantly discovering.

19

PLAYBOY: Do you have a hobby, like golf, that you pursue between films?

LAW: I haven't been able to give that side of myself a chance. It's something I intend to do but not this year, because I've been so busy. I wouldn't be on a golf course, though, because I have a phobia about golf. I do love football, or soccer as you call it, and I go every week I can with my oldest son. We've got season tickets to the Tottenham Hotspurs.

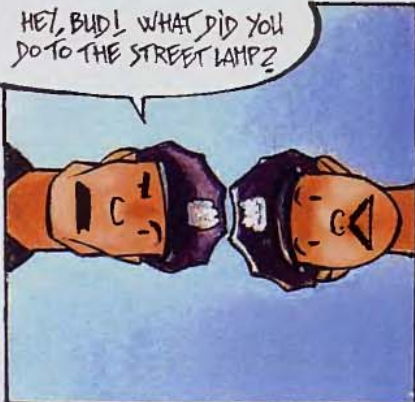
20

PLAYBOY: Recent war epics such as *Braveheart* and *The Patriot* have cast the English as cold-blooded villains. Are Brits getting a bad rap?

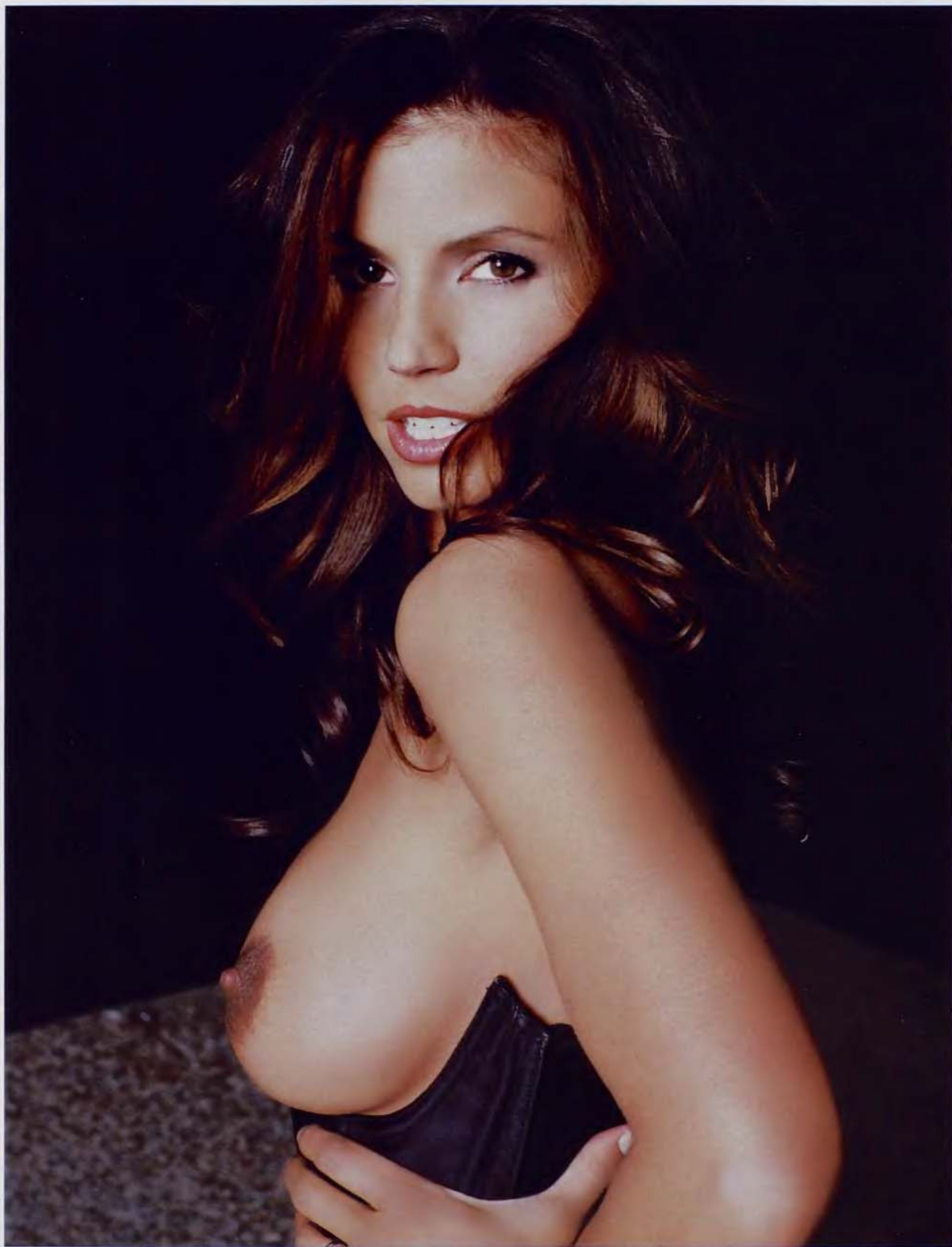
LAW: I think we deserve a lot worse sometimes.



Jogging

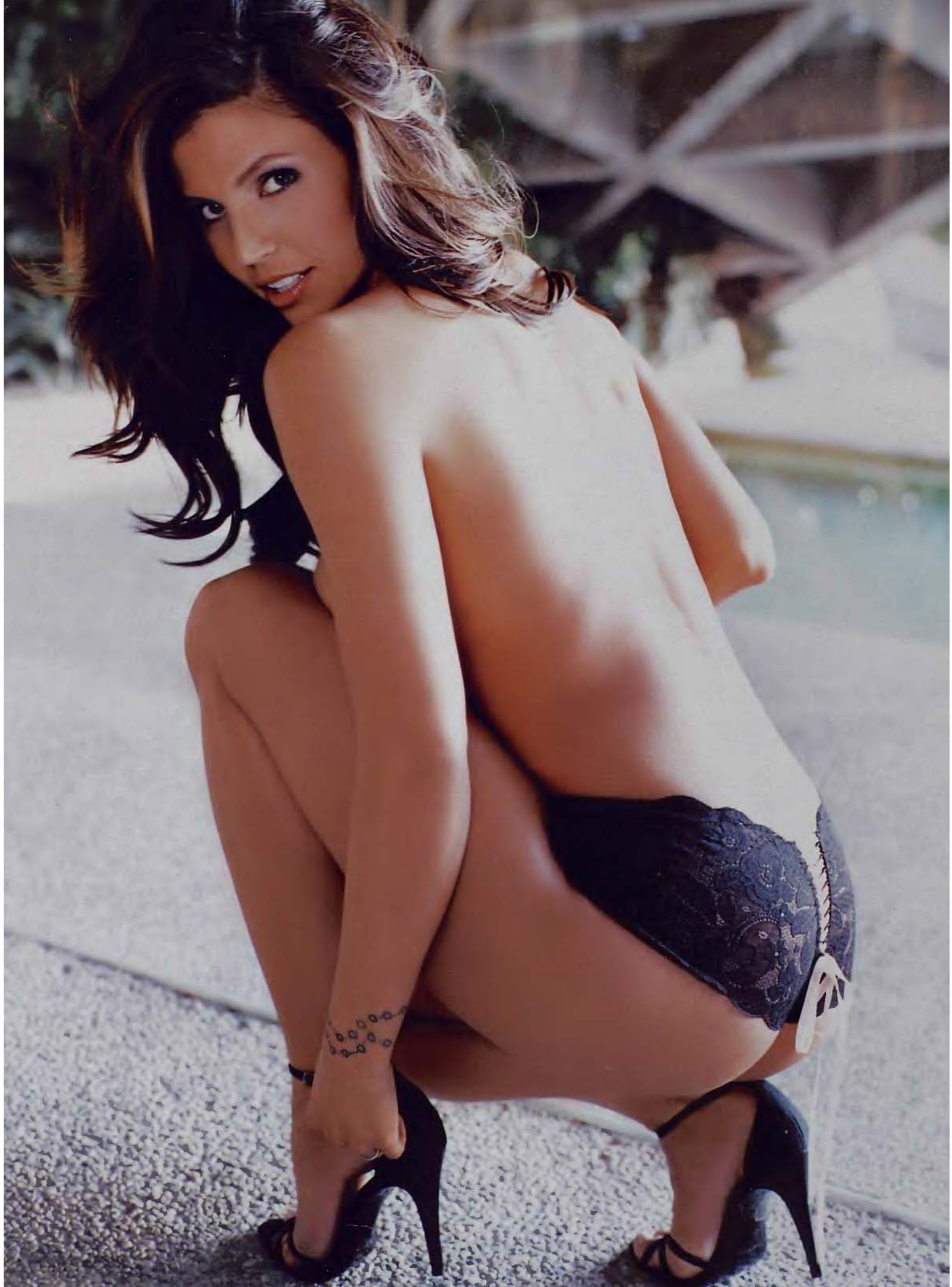


JUAN IVARREN • JORGE G



EARTH ANGEL

Angel star Charisma Carpenter gives us a glimpse of heaven





ON-SCREEN CHARISMA

Charisma went from battling the undead on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (below) to running a supernatural detective agency for one of them on *Angel* (above, with David Boreanaz). At least when she trades quips with Alicia Silverstone on *Miss Match* (right) she doesn't have to worry about getting bitten on the neck.



W

hen Charisma Carpenter first appeared on the *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* TV series, she played a character fans loved to hate. As self-obsessed knockout Cordelia Chase, she spent as much time ridiculing the show's heroine as she did reluctantly staking demons. But by the time she jumped over to the spin-off series *Angel* (bringing along a legion of male viewers with her), the character had mellowed, and when Cordelia perished during *Angel*'s current, final season, fans mourned. Since half the show's characters are technically dead anyway, have we really seen the last of Cordelia if a reunion special or movie version comes to pass?

"I've learned during my time in Hollywood never to say never," says Charisma. "But I can say fairly absolutely, with mild reservation, that no, I would never go back. I think all the stories for Cordelia have been told. As an actress I was getting really comfortable, so it was time for a change."

Charisma, who tried out for the role of Buffy before being offered the part of her acid-tongued rival, was initially reluctant to play a character similar to her first regular role, on Aaron Spelling's *Malibu Shores*. "I didn't want to get pigeonholed, but it was the best decision I've ever made," she says. "I wanted to be the nice girl and didn't know how to be a bitch. The *Malibu Shores* casting director told me, 'Heather Locklear is one of the nicest people we've ever met—but she plays one hell of a bitch.' So I read my lines over and over with a friend and just found the bitch within."

Charisma was born in Las Vegas, and yes, that's her real name, inspired by a 1970s Avon perfume that her mother liked. "It doesn't smell very good, but it was a good name," Charisma laughs. "It was either that or Prissy, because my dad loves that name. I asked him if that was going to be short for Priscilla, and he said, 'No, just Prissy.' Thankfully Mom won out." Living up to her magnetic moniker, Charisma started performing with a song-and-dance troupe at Vegas venues (think Travelodge, not Caesars Palace) when she was nine. Later her family relocated to a suburb of San Diego, where her dance skills landed her work as a Chargers cheerleader. But Charisma wasn't destined to remain on the sidelines long and, while waiting tables to make extra money, was spotted by an agent. "I had no idea what I was going to do," she says,



“Posing in PLAYBOY is about finding joy, liberation and warmth. I’m shy, and I really came out of my shell. My husband was like, ‘Honey, they’re not shooting now. You can put your robe back on.’”







recounting that she had also taken jobs as an aerobics instructor, a property manager and an English teacher. "Life is weird that way. I was just floating, and I floated into acting." And what if the winds of fortune hadn't blown in that particular direction? "Well, if I had nine lives," says Charisma, "I think one life would have been as a professional tennis player, and another one would have been as a rock star. I would have loved to be a Gwen Stefani. Except that I can't sing, of course."

After seven seasons portraying Cordelia, Charisma most recently played opposite Alicia Silverstone on several episodes of *Miss Match*, a role she hopes to reprise. "My character's relationship with Alicia is that they went to high school together and are 'frenemies,'" she says. "They're friendly but not really friends, so I rib her all the time. I start dating her father, played by Ryan O'Neal. I didn't think I'd

have chemistry with him, but we have one hell of a connection. I never see people in terms of age, and something about this *Miss Match* thing has gotten me going toward older men. Someone like Colin Farrell doesn't do it for me. I think I would have lots of chemistry with George Clooney—I like that salt-and-pepper vibe. But don't tell my husband, okay?"

Charisma and her husband, Damian, have a young son who is now center stage in her life. Even so, she is intent on stretching herself in her profession. "I think the goal as an actress is to get as far removed from yourself as possible and to explore the unknown," she says. "You have to know what motivates you and what turns you on. If you have to make love to somebody in a scene who has bad breath and acne, you've got to make him Viggo Mortensen in your brain. You have to be in tune with yourself."





SEE MORE PHOTOS FROM THIS
PICTORIAL AT CYBER.PLAYBOY.COM.

**“I think the goal as an actress is to
get as far removed from yourself as
possible and to explore the unknown.
You have to know what turns you on.”**



LAS VEGAS *(continued from page 120)*

"I'm asking God to change her life. She has put a dark cloud over the wedding industry."

as the victim of a coolly coordinated smear campaign—with the hellion described in more than a dozen affidavits presented in court. In one, a former employee says he witnessed her offering a man \$50 to beat up a rival.

Lies, Luell says, driven by envy, fueled by greed. She's doing more bookings than other chapels, and they're striking back. The dirty tricks attributed to her? Con jobs, shell games, frame-ups. Klute and others perpetrate even dirtier tricks, Luell says, and she gets the blame.

Klute and her team find the charge laughable. "What she's done is change the marketing dynamic," says John Cur-

tas, a lawyer who represents Klute and several other chapel owners, sitting back in his office far from the downtown slugging grounds. "It's always been a friendly little business, and now it's become a cutthroat price war. We can criticize her tactics, and some of them have been brutal and may be criminal. But on the other hand, they recognize that there's a way to get business here, and instead of doing it the old, nice, mutually respectful way, they think, Let's get in there and elbow our way in front of everybody else and we'll get a bigger slice of the pie."

Whereas Luell is talky and gesticulative, Sherrie Klute is a model of quiet

composure as she eases into Curtas's small office on a chilly Vegas afternoon. Her pink makeup matches her pink dress, under a helmet of immobile blonde hair, possibly a wig. Everything about Klute is deliberate. Her eyes don't dart. She keeps her voice carefully modulated; no moment of outrage wills it toward a hysterical register. She has brought her husband, the bearded and haggard Stephen Smith, who today looks just a few bad breaks away from being one of the street people the chapels employ.

"I was dropping off a family at the courthouse," says Klute, "and Luell walked up and said, 'You know, you're not really married.' She is a street person, and I can't get down to that level."

And the city task force? "This went to the task force, to the police, to the district attorney, and nothing's been done," Klute harrumphs. "They're never going to do a thing because this is such a huge money industry."

"Her instructions to her employees are, explicitly, 'Do not let Stained Glass Chapel get any weddings,'" Klute says with a deep sigh. "They go out there in bands and harangue people. We call them 'the crew' out there. I think she personally hates me."

To Charolette Richards, reigning queen of the Las Vegas wedding biz and owner of the Little White Wedding Chapel, where Britney Spears flirted with expiration-date matrimony, the wars are an industry embarrassment. A small, matronly woman with a habit of calling on Jesus, she blames Luell for the whole shebang. "I'm asking God to change her life because of what she has done to the wedding industry," says Richards. "She has put a dark cloud over it."

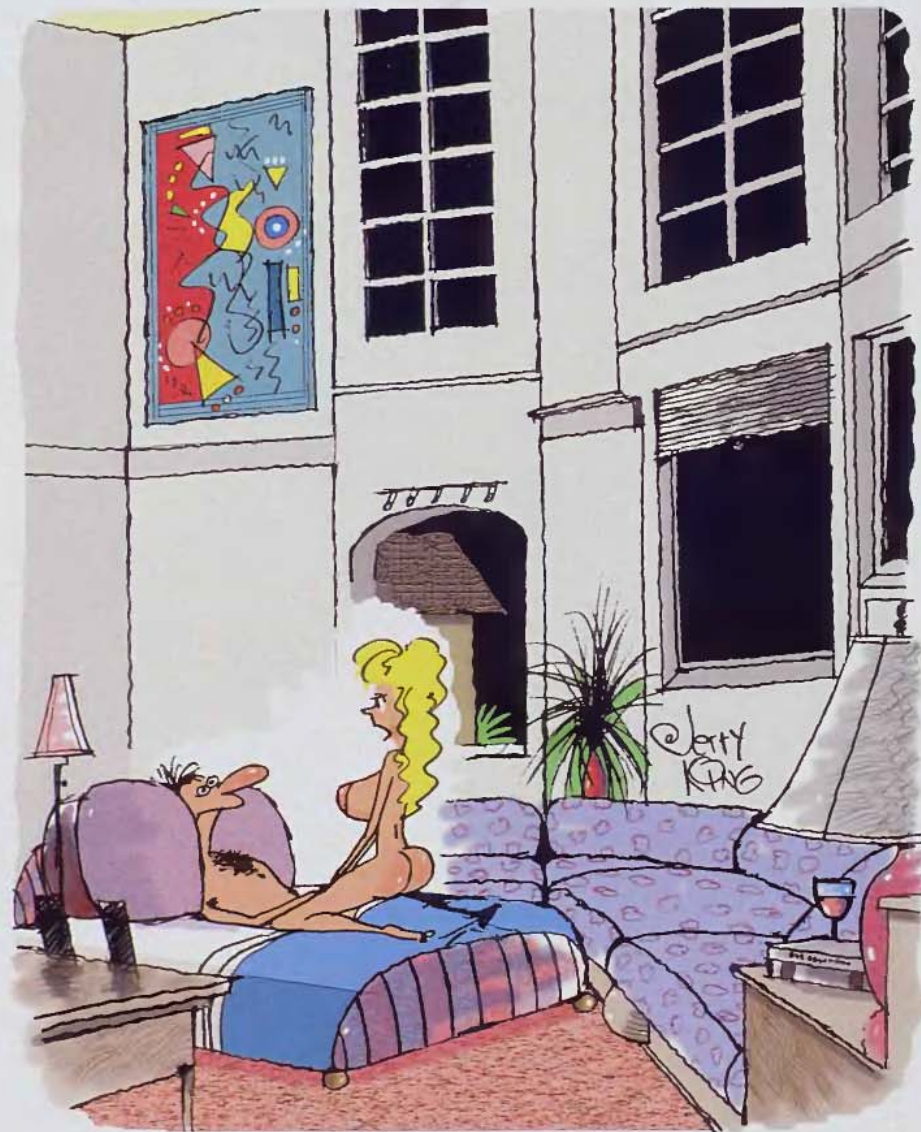
Richards says she has given free weddings to crying brides simply to ease the emotional pain they suffered in front of the courthouse. She has vowed to form a kind of God squad to clean up the industry's mess.

THE HEAVY ARTILLERY

One sweltering afternoon in late summer 2003, Luell hurries past the faux Roman benches and fake climbing ivy of her chapel and into her office. Fast-food boxes clutter the room, and her sister-in-law is working the phones. When Luell hits the play button on her answering machine, she's in for a surprise.

"You're a liar, you're a cheat, you beat people up, you rip people off, cut their tires and everything, all lies," a slurred male voice says, audible above the bubbling of the chapel's waterfall. "You had your game, okay? This is nationwide now. I'm gonna get hold of Jeb Bush. I went to school with him, okay? We're gonna do what we have to do nationwide, because this is the capital of the world for being married, okay?"

Things were getting serious. Soon she



"Actually, I'm glad I slept with you. Now I know what to write under 'turnoffs' on my Playmate Data Sheet."

"Your bed is ready, sir."



G.M.A.
1997

gets another call: A man known as Milt, who says he used to work for Klute, wants to talk about what is really going on—how Luell is being framed. It's the promise of vindication she has been waiting for, and she is so eager for someone to believe her that she breaks down in tears.

THE MAN WITH THE LIST

Two days later Milt shows up. As two weddings are taking place in the chapel's marrying rooms, Milt sits in the banquet hall among half a dozen tables set with white linen and real plates and silverware, a small, nervous man marooned

amid the trappings of elegance. He tells Luell he is scared. Two nights ago a guy broke into the hotel room where Milt was living and beat him. A bruise on his cheek and scratches on his nose and ear seem to back him up. A teary Luell, emotions dialed to 10, hugs Milt and thanks him for coming forward.

He shuffles constantly. He says the beating terrified him and he wants to leave town. He says he knows the guy who is being paid to perpetrate acts of vandalism that get blamed on Luell. "The guy with the list," Milt calls him.

"Do you know what's on the list?" Luell asks.

"You guys are actually going to burn down one of the carriages [owned by a rival chapel]. You're going to throw paint on the chapel."

She listens to Milt ruminate nervously for two hours. He's well-spoken, an intelligent man who has fallen on bad times. After a while he calls to check on his mom, who also lives in Vegas. Screams echo from the cell phone as his mother informs him his hotel room has just been broken into again.

TILL DEATH DO US PART

The next day Milt calls. The guy with the list—who turns out to be Rip, the self-described hit man—is willing to meet. Rip has just been baptized, Milt explains, and wants to fess up. It seems the hit man has a soul. Or does he? Even Milt, who claims to be the hit man's confidant, tells Luell he is skeptical about Rip's motivation: "Is he telling me the truth, or am I just getting set up because I left Stained Glass?" Then again, Milt doesn't have much left to lose.

Luell agrees to put the men up in a motel for three nights. She clears it with the city task force, ensuring that no one will accuse her of bribing them if this meeting is as fruitful as she hopes. She had planned to go and meet the guy with the list—this mystery man, this purported killer—but hey, business is going gangbusters. So she decides to send her mom instead. She sends Barb.

Milt and Rip act wary in the \$30 motel room. The second-floor suite is separated from the rest of the hotel—perfect for some kind of unspecified funny business. Rip positions himself behind the bedroom door, away from any lurking cameras, while Barb Ludwig stands in the middle of the living room.

"I'm being paid to do certain things to this particular person and blame them on y'all," he says. Without Rip saying so, everyone assumes "this particular person" must be Klute.

"Why did she pick you?" Ludwig asks. "Because that's what I normally do. In other words, I get paid to do things."

"What have you done for her?"

"I've scratched a couple of cars. I did interior damage to the church."

"To her church?"

"Yeah, and it's been blamed on y'all already."

Rip has a stoic, matter-of-fact delivery: The hit man says he has netted about \$3,000 so far and has paid his associates to beat up a minister. Milt sits on a couch, staring out the window. His bruises stand out in the light slipping in from outside, but his discomfort seems more than physical. He stands, runs his hands nervously through his hair and asks urgent questions about bodily harm.

From behind the door Rip's voice remains calm, but his ulterior motives are becoming clear.



"Well, so much for the tall, dark stranger."

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"Okay, that's three champagne cocktails, two cans of smoked oysters and four chocolate truffles. Then there's me, of course."

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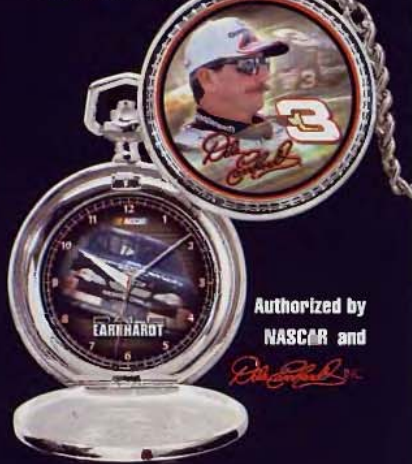
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"The only thing I would do at this point—if it came to where I was paid enough to turn the other way or turn to the other side—is to be wired or have them set up to where they could be videotaped passing money or what have you. Then it'd have to be worth it to me, and I'd have to be able to walk out of there."

Has the situation gone too far?

"It's getting ready to go too far."

"See, then you're telling me that you're here because you have a conscience," Ludwig says.

"No. Understand something. If I have to leave Nevada, I can't do it with nothing in my pocket. If I have to disappear and go somewhere else, I couldn't do it for free." Ludwig is worn down, drained by the threats and the reality of it all. She's out of questions. Rip walks slowly back into the room and stands in the brown kitchenette, glowing under the fluorescent lights. He gives his word that he won't hurt Luell. He seems sincere—for a killer.

"Hopefully we won't ever see each other again," Ludwig says, heading for the door. She doesn't bother to look back, but if she had, she would have seen Milt and Rip exchange sudden conspiratorial smiles. Milt's jitters are gone, and he looks very much in control.

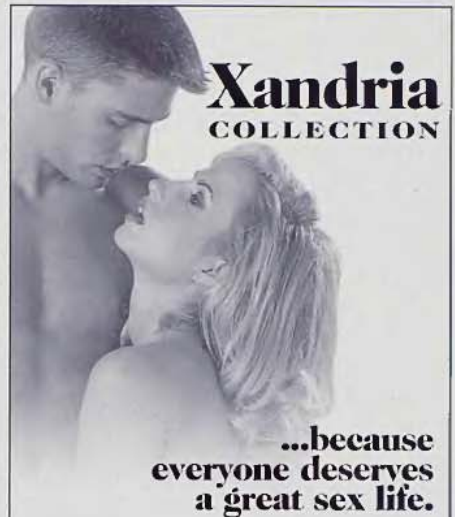
Urban theorists will tell you that what makes Vegas the strangest city in America is that, instead of tangible industrial or agricultural products, it sells experience, spectacle, illusion—copies invested with more drama than the real thing. Maybe Rip and Milt are who they claim to be. Maybe they're a couple of guys trying to scam easy money by throwing a scare at an embattled businesswoman. Maybe the whole thing is a play within a play that Luell has arranged to bulwark her own story. Or maybe it's just another manifestation of the free-range weirdness that makes Vegas so alluring to the 40 million visitors it sees each year.

ARMED GARDEN

Back at Luell's chapel, Ludwig alternates between tears and nervous, hysterical laughter as she explains the motel conversation to her daughter: "I've always told you I'm never afraid of what's going to happen, and I'm scared. I really am." Luell's mouth drops open, but nothing comes out. From the chapel, prerecorded organ music pours forth, sealing the moment's gothic feel. They agree not to tell Luell's father—who drives a limo for the chapel—what happened. "It would kill him," Ludwig says.

Ten minutes later Luell's dad walks through the door. They spill their guts.

He stares off, but his stoic pose doesn't hide the angst of a worried father. He sits quietly while the women buzz about, rehashing the episode—asking if they should close the chapel, wondering what to do and where to turn.



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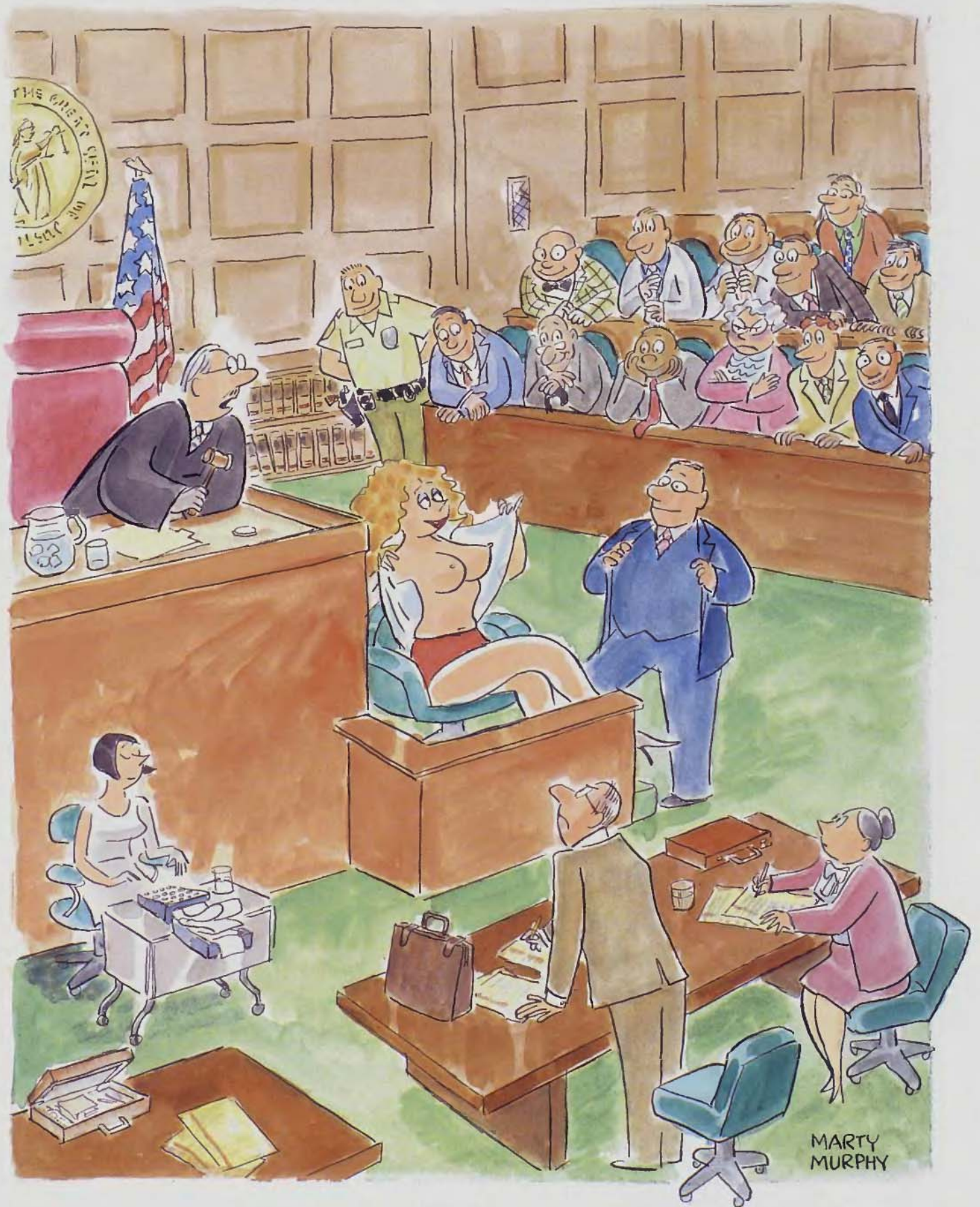
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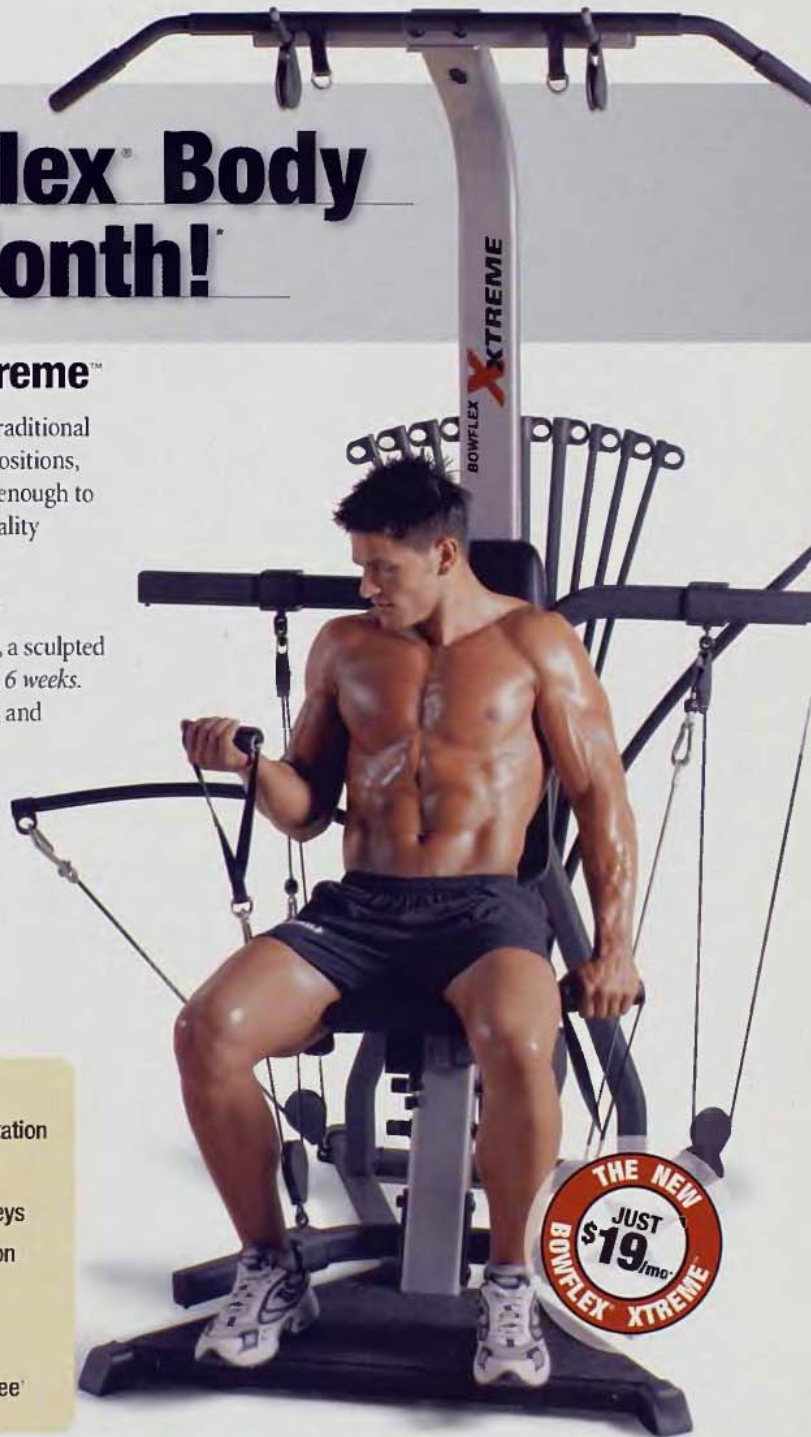
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WHERE



HOW TO BUY

Below is a list of retailers and manufacturers you can contact for information on where to find this month's merchandise. To buy the apparel and equipment shown on pages 38, 45-46, 86-89, 124-129, 130-131 and 179, check the listings below to find the stores nearest you.



GAMES

Page 38: *Capcom*, capcom.com. *Code Masters*, codemasters.com. *Midway*, midway.com. *989 Sports*, 989sports.com. *THQ*, thq.com. *Wired: Wildseed*, wildseed.com.

MANTRACK

Pages 45-46: *Burgers: 50 Recipes Celebrating an American Classic*, in bookstores now. *Montblanc*, montblanc.com. *Nags Head*, nagshead.com. *Wyborowa*, wyborowa.com.

WELCOME TO THE MACHINES

Pages 86-89: *Beyond*, beyondconnectedhome.com. *Gateway*, gateway.com. *Harmony*, harmonyremote.com. *Kaleidescape*, kaleidescape.com. *Pioneer*, pioneerusa.com. *RCA*, rca.com. *Roku*, roku.com. *Sharp*, sharpusa.com. *Sony*, sony.com. *Tapwave*, godoplay.com. *Tight Systems*, tightsystems.com.

WET SUITS

Pages 124-129: *Boss Hugo Boss*, 800-HUGO-BOSS. *D&G*, 713-521-0804. *Etro*, etro.it. *Gant*, gant.com. *Joseph Abboud*, available at Saks Fifth Avenue and Neiman Marcus. *La Perla*, 866-LAPERLA. *La Petite Coquette*, thelittleflirt.com. *Michael Kors*, 212-691-1750. *Moschino*, available at Saks Fifth Avenue. *Paul Smith Accessories*, 212-627-9770. *Robert Barakett*, available at Saks Fifth Avenue and Nordstrom. *Rubin Chappelle*, 212-647-8636. *Seiko*, seikousa.com. *Tommy Hilfiger*, tommy.com. *Vestal*, available at Barneys New York.

MONSTER TREADS

Pages 130-131: *Birkenstock*, birkenstock.com. *Clarks*, clarksusa.com. *Cole Haan*, 800-201-8001. *Converse*, converse.com. *Fila*, fila.com. *Nautica*, nautica.com. *New Balance*, 800-253-SHOE. *Reef*, reef.com. *Sensi*, sensi.com. *Shechers Sport*, shechers.com. *Tsubo*, available at Barneys New York. *Tyr*, tyr.com.

ON THE SCENE

Page 179: *Lotus Cars USA*, lotuscars.com.

Meanwhile the phone rings continually, and Luell alternates between taking care of business ("Hello, A Las Vegas Garden of Love!") and crying over the possibility of mayhem ("She'd really hire someone to kill me?").

In the background a bride straightens her tiara in the mirror. One of the chapel's ministers whispers that no one's going to hurt Luell because he's a ninja. And her 14-year-old cousin grabs a sheathed knife and says he won't let anyone hurt his family.

It's all industrial-strength bullshit to Klute. "I don't believe it really happened," she said early this year, her features a mask of exasperation and disdain.

HAPPILY EVER AFTER?

That peak of absurdity marked the end of the wedding chapel wars—sort of. As the president might say, the major fighting has ended. But that doesn't necessarily mean peace is at hand.

Ludwig and Luell never paid Rip a dime, and he eventually disappeared without killing anyone. Milt is gone too, and word on his fate is almost as vague as word on Rip's—it's said that Milt was arrested and extradited to the Pacific Northwest, where he was wanted under another name for charges no one can quite confirm. Two other handbillers were also extradited, to the East Coast for outstanding warrants. The city task force, after months of appearing to do nothing, made it official: It was doing nothing.

Vegas by its very nature has provided events to distract the warring factions: Britney Spears and her prank wedding; Michael Jackson, who led a drooling media pack on a bizarre chase around Las Vegas immediately after the latest charges were leveled against him.

But the handbillers are still downtown, still pouncing, and the hot emotions haven't dissipated. Casualties continue to mount: Luell's three dogs became mysteriously ill not long ago, and one died—poisoned, she insists, another victim of the chapel wars. A few weeks later one of Klute's handbillers, an older man, got jumped and beaten badly enough that he needed crutches and a knee brace; no amount of urging will get him back to the courthouse steps. It appears a homeless guy with a quick fist and a mean streak can still find a place in the wedding business.

Back in the high, ferocious moments of this controversy, Garden of Love minister Chip Bendel tried to put the cutthroat goings-on in perspective. "It's all about the dollar. That's what it all comes down to," he spat. "Personally I wish they'd outlaw all chapels, but it'll never happen."

Probably not, but there are signs that business is returning to normal: Luell recently acquired a capuchin monkey and is teaching it to walk up the aisle.

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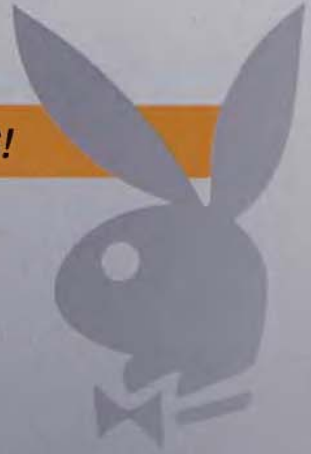
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FEEDING

(continued from page 90)

put it, they "expressed concern," which was all the big potato processors had to hear. In 1999 McCain Foods, which makes a third of the country's french fries, announced that "in response to consumer demand" it would no longer buy NewLeaf or any other genetically engineered food. Four months later McDonald's and Frito-Lay—titans of the potato-buying world—finished the job of strangling NewLeaf in its cradle by asking their suppliers not to buy genetically engineered potatoes.

"They could have done anything to those seeds," says a financial analyst who follows the agriculture industry. "They could have crossed a potato with corn and gotten a vegetable with both eyes and ears. They haven't even scratched the surface of making crops more nutritious or better tasting."

Scientists can already engineer soybeans whose inexpensive oil contains high levels of the beneficial monounsaturates that olive oil has—and that health-conscious consumers pay a premium to get. Once products like that start hitting the market, says Clemente, the irrational fears, as he calls them, will disappear. "The trick is to improve people's nutrition without their having to change the way they eat," he says. "People are going to love that."

"The science and technology have potential, but we really screwed it up in the beginning," says Richard Rominger, who was Bill Clinton's deputy secretary of agriculture at the time the first biotech seeds were introduced in 1996. Rominger recalls a meeting with Monsanto CEO Robert Shapiro: "He said to us, 'We're doing God's work. The world will think we're saviors.' They didn't think about consumer reaction. People thought only Monsanto was benefiting."

V. NOBODY'S SICK, BUT THE WEEDS ARE BACK

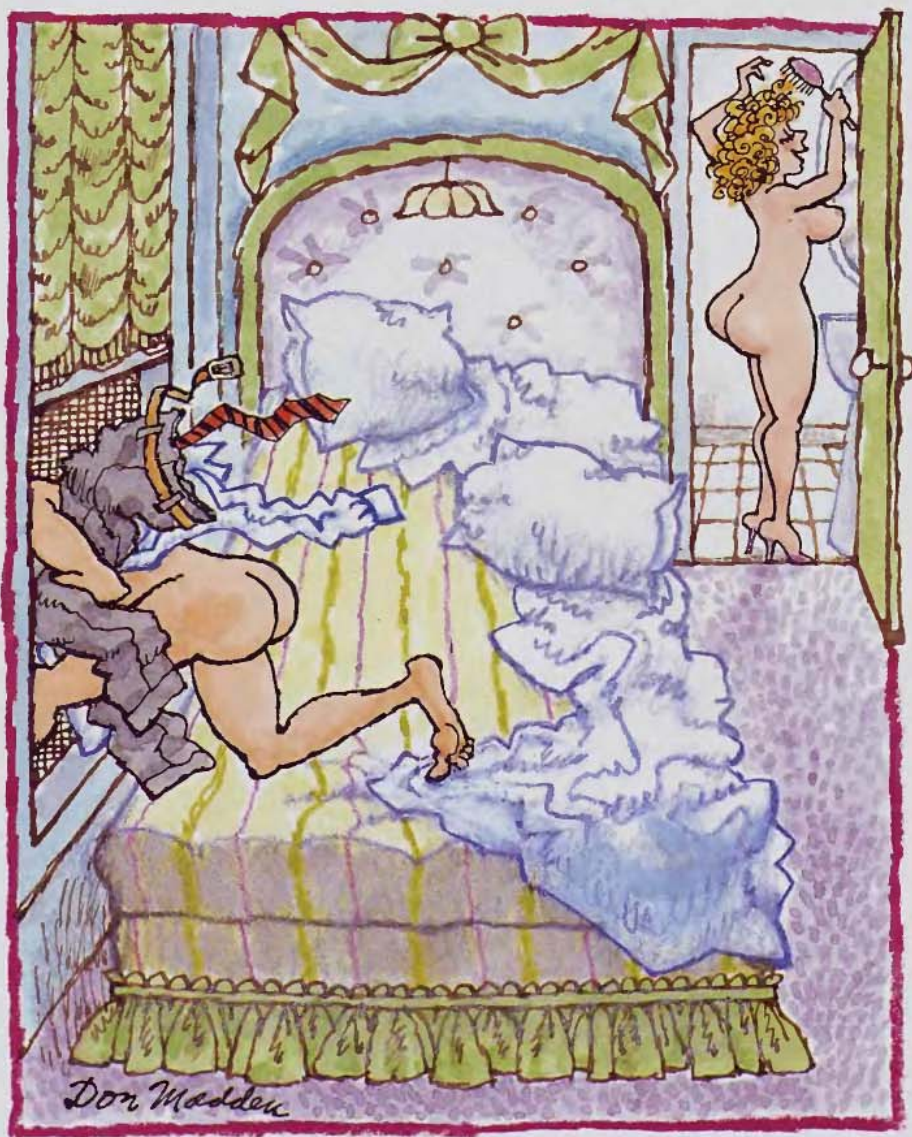
As the bumper sticker says, shit happens. In 2000 a load of genetically modified StarLink corn that was approved only for animal feed ended up in Taco Bell taco shells, among other human food, touching off a massive recall and the destruction of hundreds of tons of corn. StarLink contained a protein—with the lilyingly bucolic name Cry9C—that the EPA suspected might cause serious allergic reactions in humans. That nobody got sick was cold comfort to the critics of genetically modified food. What about next time? The law of unintended consequences, after all, has never been repealed. The national "grain stream" is so huge and moves so fast that biotech seeds cannot help mixing with conventional ones. Field trials have shown that genetically modified DNA can contaminate organic crops and even wild plants when pollen from biotech species is carried on the breeze.

And as though rising from a perfect nightmare for Monsanto and farmers, the few weeds that are resistant to Roundup are starting to take over in corn and soybean fields. Evidence is emerging that other weeds are developing tolerance to the herbicide too. About one weed a year shows resistance. "Everybody predicted this," says Bill Johnson, a weed scientist at Purdue University. "But the way big business works, it's quarter-to-quarter profits."

VI. BITTER HARVEST: FARMER VS. FARMER

Dale Whiteside, 73 years old and wizened by a lifetime of farming, is lying under a dump truck in the rain when I arrive at his impressive spread south of Chillicothe, Missouri. He's known as an unreconstructed advocate of the biotech revolution, and by God, he announces, emerging to shake hands, he is the real thing. "How in the world are we going to feed the population of the world if we stifle technology?" he asks as he leads me inside for coffee. A fourth-generation Missouri farmer, Whiteside was a Republican legislator in Jefferson City for nine years and remains an enthusiastic member of the Farm Bureau, the voice of Big Ag. As we sit in his elegant farmhouse, he offers that biotech opponents "can't get out of their shell. They're living in the past." As for conventional soybean farming, "there's no use to ride a dead horse any longer. It's not going to work."

But as Whiteside talks, a few doubts surface. He praises Europeans for having "an allegiance to their farmers that we don't have," which makes it possible for traditional family farms to survive. Though he defends biotech science, he's not a wholehearted booster of the business. "If you could trust the large corporations, there'd be nothing wrong with it," he says, letting his voice trail off, as though he is afraid to consider a world in which corporations aren't trustworthy. A shadow falls across his face. "The large corporations are gradually taking



Don Madden

"I hope you're not one of those men who disappear at the sound of the word commitment."

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"The food sucks...and frankly, so do I!"

over agriculture," he says quietly.

Whiteside knows this from personal experience. He used to be a hog farmer. Now the hogs in the buildings behind his house are owned by Smithfield, a giant pork processor based in North Carolina. The company delivers the piglets, pays Whiteside to raise them and collects them for slaughter—which makes Whiteside a kind of hog custodian. Life may be easier, but he misses his old independence. "Eventually it will happen with grain and beans," he says. "It's not like owning it yourself. You're locked in. At the end of the contract period they could say, 'We're not going to need you anymore.'"

Now that species are intellectual property, the companies that invent them are as tough on piracy as the recording industry was on Napster. Monsanto has been particularly aggressive. Its rules require farmers to abandon the ancient practice of saving seed from one year's crop to plant the next. Instead they must buy new seed every year. Monsanto's huge legal department keeps an eye on every farmer, comparing seed purchases with the amount of Roundup a farmer buys, trying to ferret out discrepancies. They sometimes send inspectors to microsearch fields for unpaid-for proprietary DNA. Monsanto maintains a hotline, 800-ROUNDUP, to encourage farmers to rat one another out. The company has sued dozens of farmers suspected of saving seed.

Troy Roush, whose family has been farming in Indiana since 1832, started planting Roundup Ready soybeans in 1997 and loved the ease of weed control. In 2001 Monsanto wrongly sued him for saving seed—he suspects a neighbor falsely accused him—and by the time the company dropped the lawsuit, the fight had cost the Roush family \$390,000 in lawyers' fees. The experience taught Roush how a seemingly useful technology can destroy the culture of farming.

"It lets you farm more acreage, so you *have* to farm more acreage—and that puts farmers at each other's throats," Roush says. "We used to help each other out, but now we're competitors for any land that becomes available. One of our neighbors got us to be 400 grand lighter, so the next time a farm comes up for sale, we can't compete."

Roush doubts his teenage daughters will grow up to farm. "I've watched the guys farming 200 acres get forced out. I've watched the guys farming 500 acres get forced out. And now the guys with thousands of acres are getting forced out," Roush says. "Genetically modified crops are destroying the social fabric of our rural communities."

Monsanto's early successes with Roundup and Roundup Ready crops have narrowed farmers' options. Roundup has dominated agriculture for so long that basic research in other types of herbicides has withered. "As Roundup

loses its effectiveness, there's nothing in the pipeline to replace it," says Purdue's Johnson. The same can be said for basic crop research; it's now almost entirely geared toward genetically modified seed. "Until recently bakers could reasonably have assumed that they would have the option...of buying biotech wheat or nonbiotech wheat," reads a position statement of the American Bakers Association. "Recent events have indicated that assumption may not be correct.... Bakers may not have the option of buying nonbiotech wheat."

Roush probably couldn't go back to conventional crops even if he could find good conventional seed; once Monsanto's DNA is in your field it's almost impossible to get it out. And with the corporate DNA police abroad in the land, farmers can't afford to take a chance. So it looks as though there's no turning back from a future in which Monsanto and a handful of other companies own the genetic building blocks of the world's food supply. "I'd put the genie back in the bottle in a heartbeat," says Roush.

Across the county from the Whiteside farm in Chillicothe, Doug Doughty parks the combine and leads me to the airy modern farmhouse he shares with his wife, his stepson and a regiment of dogs. Few farm families live on farm income alone; Doughty's wife, Barb, is working at the dining room table, transcribing medical records. So Doughty takes me down to his basement study, where he has hung a framed copy of *Sports Illustrated* from 1968, open to a two-page photo of the St. Louis Cardinals. Roger Maris, Curt Flood, Lou Brock and the rest smile smugly at the camera. And why not? "They were the highest-paid team in baseball that year," says Doughty. "Look here," he points to the caption. "The whole team made \$607,000 that year—together!—and at the time that was considered big money." He sighs. "That's before money and the corporations ruined everything." Then he laughs; he realizes he's been stuck on that theme all day.

Doughty's off-the-farm job is umpiring high school and college baseball games, calling balls and strikes with Show-Me State equanimity. I've asked him to tally the pros and cons of genetically modified crops, and he pauses, trying to be fair. "They are about a wash financially," he says finally, "but they've created all these other problems—Europe, the concentration of power in Monsanto's hands, not being able to save seed." He gazes at the television for a few minutes, at a Viagra ad with the sound off. "In the back of your mind you're always thinking, What if there really is a health problem with the beans? We have to hope the FDA gets it right, but they've gotten it wrong before. I don't know. I think we've made a bargain with the devil."



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DEREK JETER (continued from page 70)

If someone comes back a little bigger, the first thing people wonder is, Is he using steroids?

PLAYBOY: And because he was a shortstop, you had to be a shortstop. Apparently you were clocked throwing 93 mph in high school. Didn't you ever want to be a pitcher?

JETER: I pitched a couple of times in high school, but my arm used to hurt afterward. Plus, I liked to hit. And the shortstop is involved in everything. Shortstop is like quarterback.

PLAYBOY: How much pressure did your dad put on you to excel?

JETER: He never put pressure on me. He always said, "If you want A, B or C to happen in your life, you have to do certain things. He was tough on us in school. We had to sit down and do our homework for an hour every night. Even if we didn't have homework, we had to sit down and do something school-related for an hour. Obviously it worked. I got good grades.

PLAYBOY: And baseball?

JETER: My mom and dad never pushed me into baseball. For me it was fun. I used to drag them out of the house to help me out. If my dad wasn't home, my

mom would throw Wiffle balls in the backyard. The high school was over the back fence, so we'd go to the baseball field. The only thing they said was, "If you're going to do this, you're going to have to work, and if we don't see you working at it, then it's going to be time for you to find something else to do."

PLAYBOY: You were picked sixth in the 1992 draft. You dreamed of being a Yankee, but wasn't it a long shot that you'd become one?

JETER: It was luck. I mean, the draft is a crapshoot. I thought I'd be selected by Houston or Cincinnati.

PLAYBOY: Speaking of Cincinnati, do you think Pete Rose should be eligible for the Hall of Fame?

JETER: Pete Rose is a Hall of Fame player no matter how you look at it. What he did on the field—there's no question about it. It's just basically how you view what he did off the field. I wouldn't want to be the one to make that decision.

PLAYBOY: After four full seasons with the Yankees you had 795 hits, more than Pete Rose, Ty Cobb, Hank Aaron and Stan

Musial had in their first four seasons. Yet unlike most hitters, you don't pay attention to what pitchers are throwing. You just check the radar gun.

JETER: Basically you go on instinct. I just want to know how hard a guy is throwing. Then you have to recognize what kind of pitch it is so you can know if it's going to end up in the strike zone.

PLAYBOY: You have less than a second to do that.

JETER: You can tell from the rotation of the ball. If it's a slider, it's spinning a little differently than a fastball. If it's a two-seamer, you'll see two seams.

PLAYBOY: Which indicates if it's going to be low and outside or over the plate.

JETER: That's the plan. Of course, it doesn't always work.

PLAYBOY: Your father once said, "Derek has more inner arrogance than anybody I've ever met." And during games you look pretty sure of yourself. Is that how you really feel?

JETER: Yeah, I'm confident. I don't like cocky people. Confidence is how you feel. Cockiness is how you act. I'm always confident. There are times when you struggle, like I could be 0 for 100, but if a big game is on the line, I expect to do well.

PLAYBOY: Other than Pedro Martinez, which pitcher has given you the most trouble? Someone we might not think of?

JETER: Roy Halladay of Toronto. He had a great year last season, winning the Cy

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Young Award. But he's always been tough for me. He throws a real hard sinker. Also, Derek Lowe of the Red Sox.

PLAYBOY: How did you do against Roger Clemens when he pitched for Toronto?

JETER: He hit me a lot. We'd joke about it. He said I leaned over the plate and he was just brushing me back. Rocket is the type you hate to play against but love to have as a teammate.

PLAYBOY: Were you surprised that he signed with Houston three months after supposedly retiring or that Andy Pettitte signed with Houston too?

JETER: I thought Andy would be back. I wasn't completely caught off guard when he signed with Houston, because I knew it was in the back of his mind that one day he'd get an opportunity to pitch at home. We didn't expect Rocket to come back. But who's to tell you when you should stop doing what you love to do?

PLAYBOY: What's a typical day for you during the season?

JETER: I get up around 10, eat breakfast and go to the gym to lift weights for an hour. No treadmill, because we run too much during the season. Then I'll return home, maybe go back to sleep and get to the ballpark around 3:30.

PLAYBOY: Do you have a personal trainer?

JETER: Year-round. He goes where I go. He travels with me to East Coast cities.

PLAYBOY: You're one of those guys who consider their kitchen no-man's-land. Do you live on snack food? Or fast food?

JETER: I can't cook; that's the bad thing. I go to the grocery store and stock up on cereal, oatmeal, Eggos and stuff, and then when it goes bad I'll go back and get more. Otherwise I eat out. My agent got me a chef as a Christmas gift a couple of years ago. He'd have something waiting for me, and I would warm it up. I think I might have to have him come again.

PLAYBOY: You've got a golf course out back. Why haven't you played more?

JETER: My shoulder injury. I messed up my AC joint, so I had to stop playing golf.

PLAYBOY: Is that why you keep grabbing your shoulder? You've been rubbing it the whole time.

JETER: Really?

PLAYBOY: Does it hurt?

JETER: No. It could be a habit, because it used to hurt all the time. Or it could be old age.

PLAYBOY: Have you given any thought to what you might do after baseball?

JETER: I would love to own a team.

PLAYBOY: Like Michael Jordan? Purchase a percentage of a team?

JETER: No, I'd have to be a majority owner. I'd have to make the decisions.

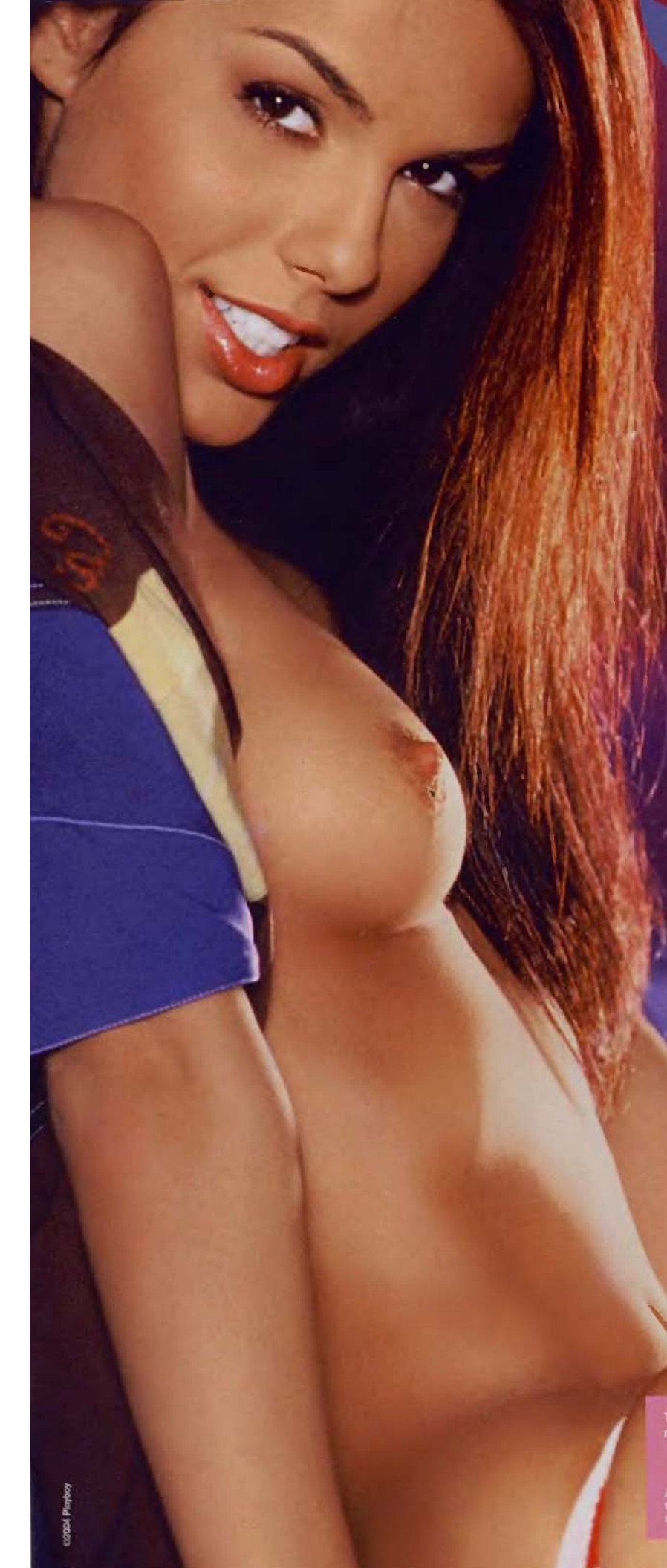
PLAYBOY: You'd probably need to get your hands on a lot more money.

JETER: Probably.

PLAYBOY: How are you going to do that?

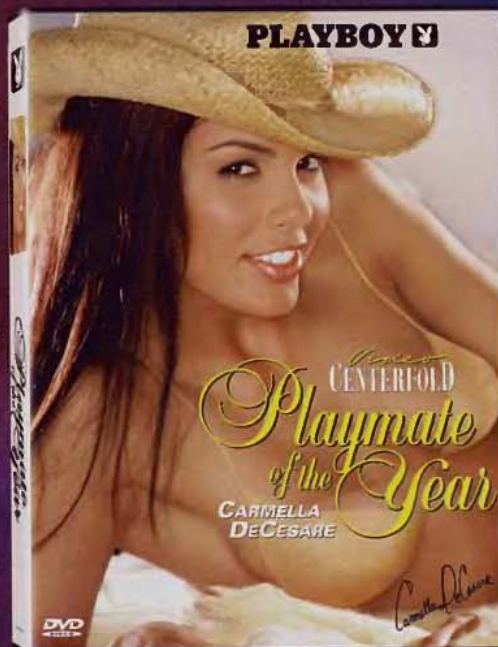
JETER: [Smiles] I haven't thought about it yet. But I will.






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BLIND (continued from page 100)

He was now confined to his house. What had been a vantage point on the universe was now his tiny prison.

He sought her out and felt humiliated by his longing for her.

To his delight, he began to run into her everywhere—at the drugstore on Main Street, on the beach below the lighthouse, walking along the ferry landing, in the bagel cafe and in the camera store where he was buying a pair of binoculars. Melanie Ours was her name.

These encounters took the form of an old-fashioned courtship in the open air. He wooed her, doing most of the talking. She encouraged him to describe his book. He pointed to the bright crusted moon and made a narrative of its barnacles. Melanie was simple, soft-spoken, appreciative and loving. One day she was clutching a small dog in the crook of her arm, nuzzling it and cuddling it in a way that suggested, *I could treat you like this.*

"It's not mine," she said. "It's a friend's."

Wondering what friend made him unhappy. But he saw Melanie Ours again and loved her more. He mentioned to her that he was older than she by more than 20 years. She said, "So?" He feared she might want children. She smiled and said, "I want you."

Nothing could have been simpler. They married, she moved in with him, he was joyful. They lived together in his house on the bluff behind West Chop.

He sometimes mentioned places where they had bumped into each other.

She said, "I knew you'd be there," and explained that she had known his movements and had contrived deliberately to appear at these seemingly chance encounters. He laughed shyly, feeling desired. She said, "I found you fascinating." It had been an adventure, an achievement more satisfying than his book.

haps nothing except that he learned she was devoted to him, responsive and loving, forgiving as only a friend can be.

"I'm sorry, darling," he said, early on, in bed, feeling futile.

She held him, kissed him, and he wanted to weep with gratitude.

Months of bliss. He sometimes became alarmed when she was out of his sight. Setting eyes on her, he fell in love with

He regarded this as good news—the promise that after his operation he would see better and be bathed in the glow of his lovely wife. But why before the operation was he asked to sign a waiver?

The doctor said, "There's less than a one percent chance of the operation going wrong."

After the operation, still bleary-eyed and groping, he was given drops for his eyes. Melanie helped him apply the drops, and his eyes became scorched and infected; he lost his corneas, got a transplant and more drops. The transplant failed. He howled.

As though rehearsing his defense in a malpractice suit, the doctor sternly reminded him of the odds: "Someone had to be in that one percent."

Because he had signed the waiver DeWalt could not sue, he was not compensated—he did not need money anyway. He wanted his eyesight back, even the feeblest sort, as on the days when he had said, "I can see your face, sort of dark, but not your features." He would have settled for that.

Blind, he could not bear to be away from Melanie. Yet even when she was with him he was not consoled. He spoke to her—she did not seem to hear him. He reached for her but was seldom able to put his hand on hers. Something wintry in her manner—why? He had never sensed it before, perhaps because her adoring eyes, her face, her

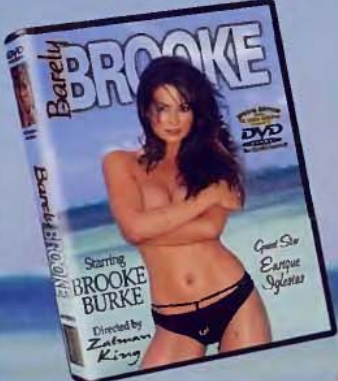
luminous skin had always overwhelmed him. Now he was aware of her as a different presence—her thumping footsteps, she was clumsy; the sharp odor of her body; her harsh voice.

When she touched him her hands chilled him, he was appalled; her fingers felt reptilian even as she said, "Of course I love you." Or, he thought, is it me? Sometimes, as though to keep away from him, she used the juicer—juiced every piece of fruit in the rackety thing. "Can't hear you!" and gave him juice and told him he was ungrateful.

He was now confined to his house, and the house that had been a vantage point on the universe was now his tiny prison.

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Photo by Richard Hume

her all over again and blessed his luck. She was a light to him. Her flesh glowed, her eyes, her hair; she was his moon now. "I thought I knew what happiness was." He was reminded that in the early, active part of his life he had been deluded.

This clarity of vision—his life now—was philosophical but a paradox, for he found that in fact his eyesight was failing. He had trouble reading, even with glasses. He could not drive at night without being dazzled by the headlights of oncoming cars.

He had his eyes tested. He failed the exam. "It's to be expected at your age," the doctor said. "But new glasses won't help. You have cataracts."

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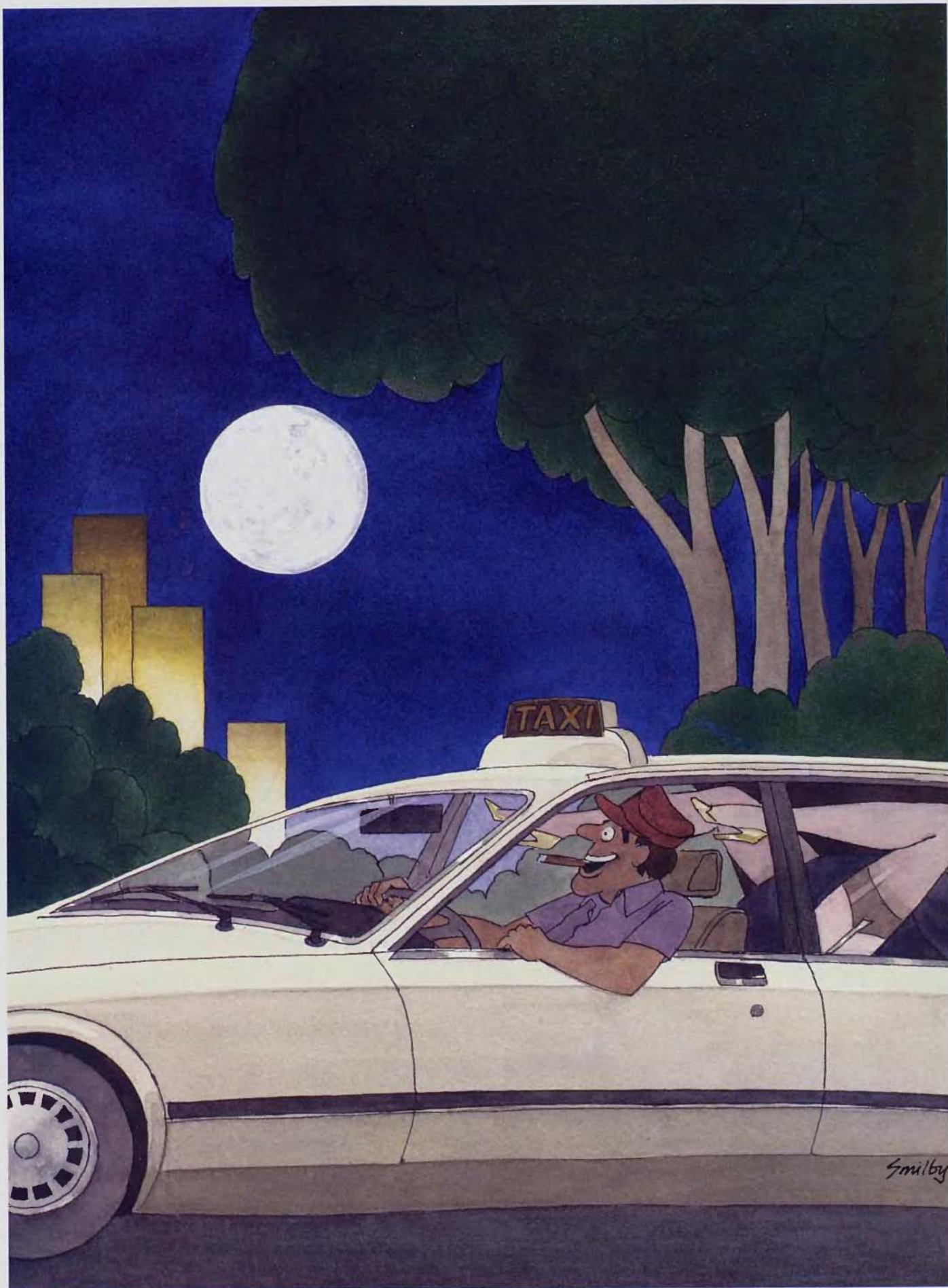
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He was bewildered in it, in rooms like obstacles. He tripped over his telescope and broke it. So what? He couldn't use it. He could not go anywhere with her, yet more and more she was absent.

"I need to shop—everything takes longer when you come along."

Shop for what? She had never shopped before. He began to ask her where she had been.

"Getting my nails done," or "Having my hair colored," or "At the dress-maker's."

But why? He could not see the nails, or the hair color, or her clothes.

"It's for me," she said.

He was confused by the mingled smells of her perfume, her nail polish, her shampoo, her new clothes. His blindness had wakened his other senses—he was hyperalert, sensitive to all stimuli. "I smell ginger," or "Smoke—tobacco smoke—in your hair."

He smelled a man, he smelled sex, something humid, doglike and a roughness like razor burn on her chin. He was too sad to kill her. *Instead, I'll kill myself.*

What kept him from it was that she was sadder, and tense, as though she had received some bad news.

"What's wrong?"

"Please, leave me alone."

He heard her on the phone, speaking with the sort of childlike urgency that a person uses with a doctor, as he had spoken to his own eye doctor—and he was struck by the way she listened, with respect and self-conscious impatience.

She was gone all the next day. She returned spent, emptied of all her vitality. "I must lie down."

He said, "If I didn't know better, I would have guessed you've just had some sort of medical procedure."

She said nothing, yet she smelled of antiseptic and cheap soap.

"Something like an abortion."

"I'm too weak to argue with you."

"You're never home."

"I was sick! You don't care!"

After all that time, their first argument—she insisted that she loved him but was like someone else, someone cruel, a stranger. He knew nothing about her. After she raged and frightened him she disappeared for a day more. She returned with a new smell on her. These odors overwhelmed all other impressions and became like colors and shapes, some of them as layered and complex as unanswered questions.

Was he missing something because he was blind, or was he seeing her as she really was? There was that voice. Sometimes, speaking to him, she seemed a little formal and overinformative, as though she were also addressing someone else; and a little too obvious, trying to prove a point, as though she had a lis-

tener she was teasing with scripted detail and a sort of mocking pomposity.

"I certainly would not expect someone like you to understand the priorities of a woman whose primary goal is to find some sort of focus to give a balance to her life."

"What's that noise?"

He was still, stifled by unfamiliar creaks in distant parts of the house.

"I didn't hear anything."

One evening at a party DeWalt felt awkward and lost in the house, so he stood to the side, out of the way of guests, waiting for Melanie to bring him a drink. Brushed by a stranger, he inhaled a familiar odor.

"You've been sleeping with my wife," he said without thinking.

He was surprised when a woman snorted and pinched his arm and said, "You're imagining things!"

Guilty people in farces recited that platitude, but farce was so near to tragedy. He saw that he was becoming shrewder; he had a clear vision of that woman's drunken face, purple, putty-like, with weepy, reddened eyes.

He was nimbler in his house—he knew the phases of the moon. Melanie stumbled in the dark, she banged doors, she fuddled with simple things like the telephone and the bath plug, and she faltered in corridors where now to his astonishment he was completely at home. There was someone else lurking; he knew it clearly one new-moon night, in the big cluttered front room that looked onto the Sound. He had become accustomed to the dark. The other person was lost in it and made an uncertain doglike shimmy, a backing up: someone making way for him.

"Who's there?"

"Who do you think?" And she laughed in that overprepared way as though she had an audience and was laughing on someone else's behalf.

"A man."

She jeered much too loudly, attempting a convincing denial, a bit of theater.

Using his fingertips he traced his way through the room, surprised by how well he knew the route, and went upstairs, where he paused and heard the front door click shut. Then he heard his wife unsteadily on the stairs.

"It was a woman. That's why you laughed that way."

Memory helped, the moon helped, desperation helped, blindness did the rest. He could see with his teeth, with his tongue, his lips, his face, his whole body. He knew later that the two must have been making love—an unmistakable vibrato—the specific sounds, irregular like a lapse from ordinary life, and not like sex between a man and a woman, a pattern of slaps he knew, a familiar



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rhythm, a top and bottom, an act writhingly echoic, but instead a tussle of equals, the percussive kisses, the whap-pity-whap of two women: a sudden sandwich with no filling.

From believing that he was always alone, he began to understand that he was never alone. Even when there was no conversation he was aware of another presence, a muffling physicality that filled a space in the room and blunted the sounds he made, something molecular and clothlike. No darkness at all, only light that was loosely or tightly woven, always revealing a coarse or helpful light. What people called darkness and feared, for him had a face and features: He now knew the whirl of human atoms.

Smells, too, perfumes that pierced his eyes, duskier aromas in his nostrils, a further fleshier suggestion that he tasted on his tongue, the distinct earthiness of swallowed food. Another person—had to be a woman; a man would have been less circumspect.

He tried to follow these smells, to account for them.

"I don't smell anything."

If she believed that betraying him before his blind eyes was working, she was wrong.

"It was a man last week, but this week it's a woman."

She laughed again, the conspiratorial, informing laugh, and her laughter roused an unmistakable movement that jarred the room.

"Or two women"—guessing that was why she laughed.

Sometimes the sound of kissing was like the sound of a certain sort of secret eating, furtive snacking on overripe fruit, and at other times the lovemaking resembled two soft bodies plopping through heavy clouds, encountering turbulence; or like a single person sleeping badly. They were bold in daylight but even bolder in the dark, believing that because they could not see they could not be seen. It was all desperate and deathlike, the eroticism of solitude, the opposite of the crackly randomness of ordinary life.

People held in the rapture of sexuality were trapped animals. He shamefully remembered, *I'm sorry, darling.*

"I know what you're doing."

To test her he pleaded for help and he found himself alone. It was a ruse: He knew his way around the house, but he could expect nothing from her. In the daylight he understood much; at night he understood almost everything. He was not confused by the shadows: He thought of night as a friend, blindness as a gift.

His dead eyes made his wife reckless. He was not fooled. He knew her better, knew that she had taken lovers, thieved his money, his blindness her opportunity; but he was not deceived.

There was worse to come. At another



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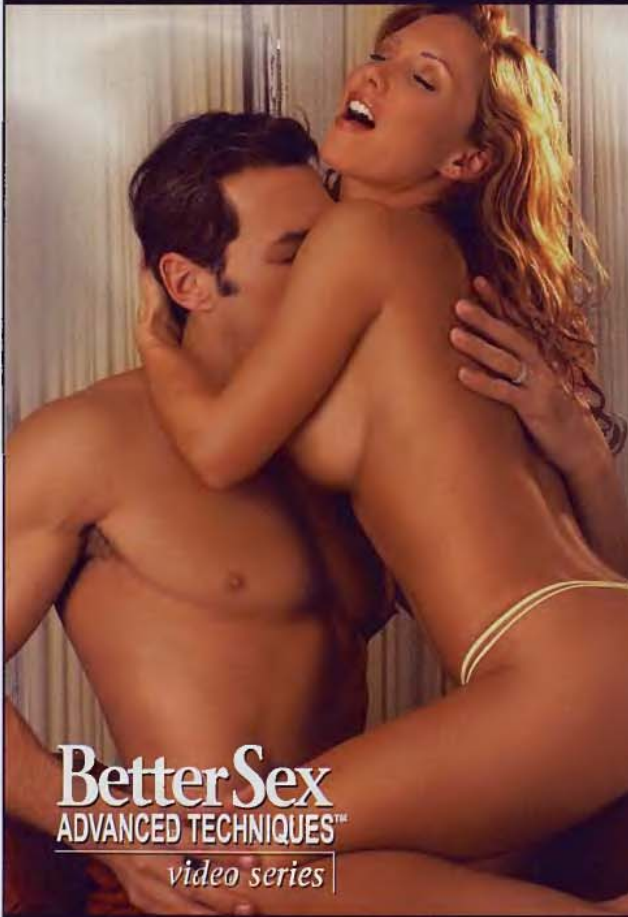
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party he sniffed at a vase of flowers and said, "That water smells of my eye medicine."

"You wouldn't want to put that in your eyes," the hostess said, and she explained that the chlorine in the water kept the flowers fresh longer by killing the bacteria.

Now he understood exactly who Melanie was and what she had done to him. She had the Evil Eye, but that was not unusual: Everyone who had eyes to see had the Evil Eye. She was the one who sounded lost and said in the dark, "Who's there?" The woman was simple, greedy and obvious. He knew her and pitied her; he knew himself with a kind of hatred. The paradoxes of his recent past exhausted him.

All the beauty he had once known was false; he conceded that the world was an illusion. His book was false, history was false, what you saw was false. His life was not a tragedy but a revelation of unanswerable facts. He now knew what it was like to be dead, to be a specter, to see everything without being seen. What did you do with this enlightenment? You understood why. You became obnoxious, truthful, stubborn. You went mad.

A man said, "I've been on a diet."

He replied, "You've got a long way to go."

The editor of a magazine introduced herself. He said, "Not at the top of my reading list, I'm afraid."

"That is hateful," he said to a boy in Oak Bluffs in a convertible listening to Missy Elliott singing "Get Ur Freak On."

Explanations were pointless, understanding was like torture. It did not help that he now saw clearly his wife's crime—not the dallying but her plot against him, her blinding him. How the woman who had plotted to marry him, whom he had loved, had substituted another solution for the one that had been prescribed to counter his eye infection. She had blinded him with the drops. He had lived through a mystery. He had solved a crime. Would anyone believe him? He interested a lawyer in the case, demanding secrecy, and rid himself of Melanie Ours.

The man Cabbage, who had accosted him and played the banjo and wept over his wife? DeWalt met him again on the road, and Cabbage was happy, pitying DeWalt for his blindness, and was over his bereavement—indeed he had remarried

and was delighted that he had not sold his house. "We're sitting on a fortune here." The old misshapen women friends that DeWalt had shrunk from before he now saw as contented souls, healthier than he was. "I am so sorry, Wink," they said.

He sometimes wished for his sight back so that he could be calm, generous and benign. He was not pathetic, he was powerful; another life was beginning, but a harder one—he had no faith. He read nothing. He did not believe the lies of written history, the daily news or the consolation of friends. His own book he regarded as little more than a lunatic fiction. Every written word was fiction or a half-truth. The worst of the visible world was bearable only because of its deceptions and the way its truth was always hidden. But as a blind man liberated by a selfish woman, he saw everything, and so he suffered, not from blindness but from clear-sightedness.

He had an answer: He would leave the island and live in a place where no one could identify him as blind, yet he knew with sorrow, having told his story, that a kind of hideous fame awaited him.



Dirty Duck

by Bobby London



PLAYMATE NEWS



Why should we wait until 2005 to release our new calendar? We wanted you to have it ASAP.



CALENDAR GIRLS

Step aside, overrated *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit calendar, with your exotic locales and high-maintenance models (yawn). *Playmates at Play* is now making waves on bookstore shelves, and it's not your father's swimsuit calendar. "We want to give *Sports Illustrated* a run for its money," say the geniuses behind the eye-popping product, which features more than a dozen Centerfolds modeling the summer's hottest bikinis at—where else?—the Playboy Mansion. Bathing beauties Carmella DeCesare (2004 Playmate of the Year), Lauren



Michelle Hill, Sandra Hubby, Marketa Janska, Pennelope Jimenez, Krista Kelly, Karen McDougal, Hiromi Oshima, Christina Santiago, Colleen Shannon, Serria Tawan, Irina Voronina and Cara Wakelin convened at Hef's house for three days of sunbathing, splashing around in waterfalls and who knows what else (what happens in the Grotto stays in the Grotto). Here's a sneak peek at the action, and you can see even more in the making-of DVD, available at playboystore.com. Our prediction? *Sports Illustrated's* going down.

15 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

"I'm junk as an actress," **Tawnni Cable** says in her June 1989 pictorial. Even so, she later appeared on a few TV shows and in the TV movie *Marilyn & Bobby*. Casting directors were likely impressed by her charisma, about which photographer Arny Freytag articulated after her Playmate shoot, "Tawnni is one of the sexiest women I have ever met. Fully clothed she has such a style and presence."



LOOSE LIPS

"I got really tired of the fat jokes. What upset me most was when Howard Stern had a bunch of callers be rude and say, 'Anna, get on the scale. We know you weigh 300 pounds.' It was really hurtful."—**Anna Nicole Smith** on her 69-pound weight loss

BLONDE ON RED



Once and for all, they do have more fun—especially on the red carpet. From left: Dalene Kurtis at the Super Celebrity Fashion Extravaganza Super Bowl party; Anna Nicole Smith modeling Heatherette on the runway; Brande Roderick on the Super Celebrity catwalk; Lisa Dergan at the Best of L.A. party; and Pam Anderson at the Stella McCartney store opening in L.A.



HOT SHOT



SERRIA TAWAN

THREE THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT JAIME BERGMAN

1. Before marrying former *Angel* star David Boreanaz, she dated Michael Bay, director of *Armageddon* and *Pearl Harbor*.



Jaime and husband David.

2. When she played sketch artist-model-lifeguard B.J. Cummings on the TV show *Son of the Beach*, Jaime said, "We're too busy busting whorehouses and solving murders. That's what makes the show so funny."

3. Her next role? Alice in the movie *DysEnchanted*, in which seven story-book heroines meet once a week to process their issues in group therapy.

POP QUESTIONS: HEATHER CAROLIN

Q: You're shown here with David Draiman of the band Disturbed, and you appeared in a video for the Calling. Are you as big a music fan as you appear to be?

A: Yep. There's something about tattoos and guys in bands. I want someone who will go to a show with me and go crazy in the mosh pit. I'm not a stay-at-home girl.

Q: What will your next adventure be?

A: I still want to be a race car driver, and I would love to do a celebrity grand prix for PLAYBOY.



MY FAVORITE PLAYMATE

By David Carradine

"My favorite would have to be Miss August 1979, Dorothy Stratten. At the time of her death I was putting together a film, *Karate Is a Thing of the Spirit*, and



she was my first choice for the female lead. Right in the middle she died, which froze the movie and my emotions about her. I also know Monique St. Pierre. She actually lived in my house for a while."

PLAYMATE GOSSIP

On *Larry King Live* Anna Nicole Smith revealed that she'll appear with John Travolta and Danny DeVito in *Be Cool*, the sequel to *Get Shorty*.... Angel Boris (pictured) stars in the Sci Fi Channel original movie *Dragon Storm*.... The VH1 special *100 Hottest Hot-ties* included guest commentary by Jennifer Walcott, Jodi Ann Paterson, Nicole Narain and the Dahm triplets.... Layla Roberts has launched a clothing line, Ro Ro. Everyone's talking about its "Got Cancer?" T-shirt, which benefits the American Cancer Society....



Pennelope Jimenez and **Colleen Marie** (pictured below) hung out with the Blue Man Group in Las Vegas. Colleen is in PLAYBOY's Rolling Rock ad campaign.... Want to meet Pennelope, Colleen and several other Playmates, including Shal-lan Meiers, Divini Rae, Stacy Fuson and Lani Todd? Party like Hef at our traveling 50th Anniversary Club Tour. For info go to Playboy.com/50th/clubtour, or buy tickets at tickets.com.... Look for 50th Anniversary Playmate **Colleen Shannon** in the flick *Reflections*, a supernatural thriller.... **Pamela Anderson** told *E! News Live*, "I don't want to be an actress. I never did want to be an actress. It's been very fun and silly, but I have retired." Now she's working on a novel to be titled *Star Wood Lee*, named after



My Angel is o Sci Fi stor.

JENNY'S NAKED TRUTH



Fans of the irreverent, high-energy tell-all *Jen-X: Jenny McCarthy's Open Book* will be elated to know that the PMOY has penned another tome—*Belly Laughs: The Naked Truth About Pregnancy and Childbirth*. With chapters such as "Honey, Your Sperm Really Does Work!" "I Can Either Pee on You or You Can Get the Hell Out of My Way!" "Holy Shit, I Think I Hard-Boiled My Baby!" and "Barf-O-Rama," you don't even have to be knocked up to enjoy it.

BELLY LAUGHS



Jenny McCarthy



Bunnies and blue men: only in Vegas.

her dog and the street she grew up on. "In other words," Pam says, "it's my porn star name. I've got a lot to get off my chest!" Does she ever.

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Drink Responsibly - Captain's Orders! • Visit captainmorgan.com



Jamie Ireland is a freelance writer in the areas of sex, fitness, romance, and travel.

Hot Spot

the inside story on

Great Sex!

by Jamie Ireland

Learning "The Ropes"...

This month I got a letter from a reader in Texas about a "little secret" that has made her sex life with her husband absolutely explosive. (Those Texans know their stuff, let me tell you.)

Tina writes:

Dear Jamie,

Last month my husband returned from a business trip in Europe, and he was hotter and hornier than ever before, with more passion than he has had for years. It was incredible. He flat wore me out! And the best part of all—he was having multiple orgasms. I know what you're thinking... men don't have multiples, but trust me he was, and his newfound pow! pow! power! stimulated me into the most intense orgasms I've ever had. So, before we knew it, we were both basking in the glow of the best sex of our lives!

We tried tantric stuff in the past, and the results were so-so. But this was something new and exciting, completely out of the ordinary. I asked my husband what had created such a dramatic change in our lovemaking and he told me he'd finally learned "the ropes."

On the last night of his business trip my husband spent an evening dining out with a Swedish nutritionist and his wife of 20 years. The couple was obviously still quite enamored with each other, so my husband asked their secret. The nutritionist told him their sex life was more passionate than ever. Then he pulled a small bottle from his satchel and gave it to my husband. The bottle contained a natural supplement that



the nutritionist told my husband would teach him "the ropes" of good sex.

My husband takes the supplement every day. The supply from the nutritionist is about to run out and we desperately want to know how we can find more. Do you know anything about "the ropes," and can you tell us how we can find it in the States?

Sincerely,

Tina C., Ft. Worth, Texas

Tina, you and the rest of our readers are in luck, because it just so happens I do know about "the ropes" and the supplement your husband's Swedish friend likely shared.

The physical contractions and fluid release during male orgasm can be multiplied and intensified by a product called Ogoplex Pure Extract™. It's a daily supplement specially formulated to trigger better orgasmic experiences in men. The best part, from a woman's perspective, is that the motion and experience a man can achieve with Ogoplex Pure Extract can help stimulate our own orgasms, bringing a whole new meaning to the term simultaneous climax!

The term used by the Swedish nutritionist is actually fairly common slang for the effect your husband experienced. The enhanced contractions and heightened orgasmic release are often referred to as ropes because of the rope-like effect of release during climax. In other words, as some people have said, "it just keeps coming and coming and coming."

As far as finding it in the States, I know of just one importer—Böland Naturals. If you are interested, you can contact them at 1-866-276-1193 or ogoplex.com. Ogoplex is all-natural and safe to take. All the people I've spoken with have said taking the once-daily tablet has led to the roping effect Tina described in her letter.

Aren't you glad you asked?

Jamie Ireland

PLAYBOY

on the scene

WHAT'S HAPPENING, WHERE IT'S HAPPENING AND WHO'S MAKING IT HAPPEN

COMING TO AMERICA

Colin Chapman, the late, legendary founder of Lotus Cars, insisted that weight is the enemy. His legacy: ultralight, superb-handling sports cars that have won countless Formula 1 races. The company's latest masterpiece is the agile, minimalist Elise, which has been inciting unrequited lust in American autophiles for years. (It has been available in Europe since 1996.) Considered one of the best-handling cars in the world, this

wicked speedster is finally available stateside. The lissome Elise is smaller than a Mazda Miata. Its high-revving (8,000 rpm!) 190-horsepower twin-cam four-cylinder engine rockets you to 60 mph in less than five seconds, and its sophisticated suspension system lets it glide around curves like Halle Berry's loofah. All that at 32 mpg and a base price of (whoa!) less than \$40,000. Is it any wonder there's already a waiting list at most of the 38 U.S. Lotus dealers?



Bumpers? A spare tire? Who needs 'em? The Lotus Elise features a superlight race-inspired aluminum chassis that's riveted and bonded like a fighter plane's. With acceleration like this, the oversize ventilated disc brakes will come in handy.



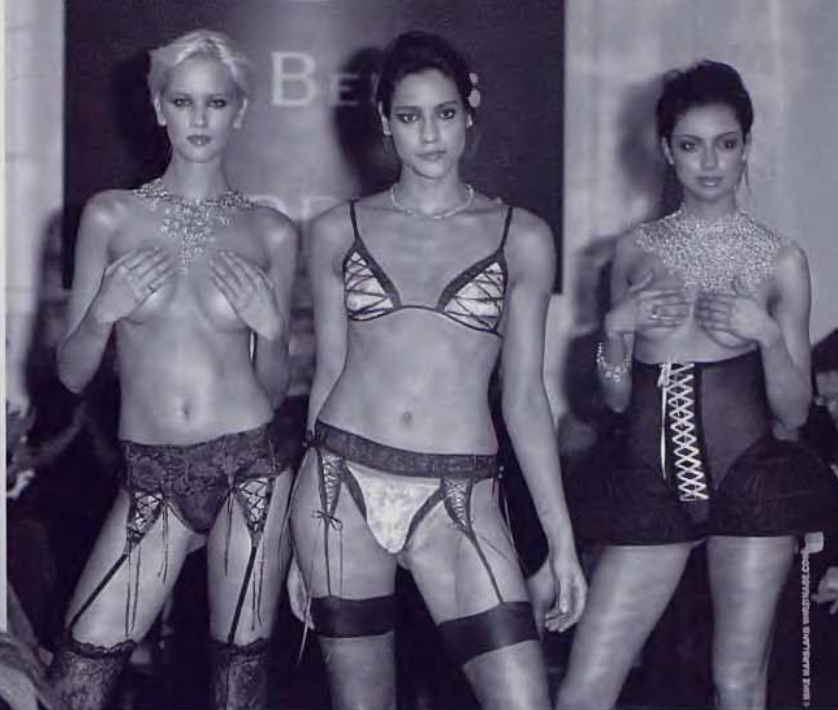
This cockpit is so small that roadside romps can be a problem. But the drive itself will get you off. At your fingertips: a slick six-speed manual transmission, lightweight alloy wheels, Yokohama performance tires, a CD-radio and a soft top. A small upgrade gets you a dashboard MP3 player.





Silverstone Bullets

We liked ALICIA SILVERSTONE in *Clueless*, but we love her braless (at the Critics' Choice Awards). The former Aerosmith video queen can also be seen on *Miss Match*, playing a matrimonial attorney who doubles as a matchmaker.



America's Next Topless Models

It's said that the length of one's arm from wrist to elbow is equal to the size of one's foot and that a lingerie model's cupped hands are equal to the size of her breasts. We made up that second one, but the La Perla show makes a good case study.



Aloha, Akiko

Hawaiian beauty AKIKO TREMMEL's experience includes swimsuit modeling and appearing in a local calendar, *The Women of Hawaii*. Insert your own lei joke here—we're too distracted to think one up at the moment.



Bared Claws

Hollywood is making tracks to rapper-actress EVE, who was a cutup in *Barbershop 2*. Next she sizzles on-screen with Danny Glover, Ja Rule and Queen Lati-fah in *The Cookout*.



Runway Revelation

If you weren't in the front row at Italian designer Chiara Boni's spring-summer fashion show, here's what was poppin'. No worries—we'll keep you abreast.

24 Heaven

Our only complaint about Fox's *24* this year? That sexy ELISHA CUTHBERT spent too much time in a dowdy blazer. At least at this Stella McCartney store opening she got to bust out of the role.



We See Paris, We See France...

We see COURTNEY LOVE's underpants! The feisty rocker and her fellow publicity magnet, PARIS HILTON, were caught getting frisky at a Grammys party. It's not nirvana, but it'll do.

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Potpourri



HOT AND HEBREW

The Jewcy line of men's and women's clothing is the hippest update to Judaism's image since Adam Sandler's "Chanukah Song." The clothes are aimed at members of the tribe who were reared on bagels and Beck. Hipster hebes can proudly wear the SHALOM MOTHERFUCKER T-shirt (\$25) or, better yet, put their honey in one of the company's pink thongs (\$15) to bring out her inner Shalom Harlow. Maybe they're even sexy enough to get Woody Allen off the shikasas, for Christ's sake. Visit jewcy.com.



WHAT A RACKET

Talk about your unfair advantages. The original black prototypes of Prince's Experimental racket line debuted at last summer's U.S. Open in the hands of the people who needed it least: Juan Carlos Ferrero, Guillermo Coria and Jennifer Capriati. Now the Tour NXGraphite and Tour Diablo (\$170 to \$200, princetennis.com) are available to give us non-titleholders a fighting chance. The rackets are made of two halves glued together, so the holes that hold the strings aren't drilled into the frame. Point? Less twist, giving you better spin and more power. Air channels in the handle act as a suspension system to reduce vibration. And on top of it all, the frame is stronger. Or as we like to call it, McEnroe-proof.

MULTIPLE O'S

Most wineglasses are self-destruction machines. Tip one over and the bulb, which starts from a height, has ample time to pick up momentum before crashing. Now Riedel has come up with an alternative: Lose those pesky stems entirely. The new "O" bowls (\$10 to \$12 each, riedel.com) are casually elegant tumblers that feature Riedel's signature varietal-specific designs. They can even right themselves, Weeble-style, if you set them down askew.



THE SWEET SMELL OF EXCESS

Now you can turn women on *because* you smell like a martini, not despite it.

Infusion is a new fragrance made from the same botanicals as Bombay Sapphire. It's available only at duty-free shops, packaged with bottles of the real thing (and other gift items). Finally a cologne that mixes well with tonic.



LICENSE TO SHOOT

To truly be a man, you need a little James Bond in you. (The same goes for being a Bond girl, but that's another story.) If your karate chops have gotten rusty over the years, you can always rely on a little gadgetry to get you by. The JB1 (\$100, thinkgeek.com) looks like a Zippo, but it's actually a tiny digital camera capable of holding up to 300 shots. In surveillance mode it can take pictures on its own at the interval you choose for up to 19 days. Download the snaps onto your PC and let the blackmail begin.



PARENTING, STRAIGHT UP

"When asking about garnish preference the child should sweetly inquire, 'Olive or twist?'" Now *that's* parenting advice. Christie Mellor's *The Three-Martini Playdate* (\$13, Chronicle Books) may seem like a joke, but it's packed with real advice on how to get a kid to shut up, go to sleep or rub your feet. It also offers a lemonade recipe that, after the kid is served, goes great with vodka. Make ours a strong one (the drink, not the kid).

THE THREE-MARTINI PLAYDATE

*A Practical Guide to
Happy Parenting*

By Christie Mellor



CITY SLICKERS

Hair spray is for chicks (and guys in Great White tribute bands). A good pomade, though, is tough and will hold your do in place through a vicious switchblade fight—or just a tense office meeting. Our picks: Fekkai Pomade Cristal (\$19, sephora.com), Jack Black pomade (\$16, getjackblack.com) and Sharps Guck-in-a-Puck (\$14, sharpusa.com)—great for adding chop to short hair, slicking back long, flowing locks or rockin' that pompadour, Pony Boy.

GO FISH

Remember the first time you saw *The Simpsons*? You were hooked. As will be the fightin' bass at your local trolling spot with Relic Lures' funky and functional renditions of TV's most realistic family (\$13 to \$15, reliclures.com). Other Relic Lures include two-inch beer cans and a *Reservoir Dogs* set—differently hued fish with sunglasses and bullet holes. And you thought fishing was boring.



BETTER THAN RAID

Little Ms. Muffet sat on a tuffet, admiring her gigantic breasts. Along came a meanie, who pulled down her bikini and took two slugs right in the chest. So yeah, Ms. Muffet has grown up a bit since you last saw her. This nine-and-a-quarter-inch-tall reincarnation of the fairy-tale character is one of a series of limited-edition hand-painted Fairy Tale Pinup statues from Steve Varner's Varner Studios (\$69, varnerstudios.com). Others include Beauty vs. Beast (she's also packing heat) and the Not So Little Mermaid.



Next Month



IF YOU DON'T SWING, DON'T RING.



SUMMER FASHION: BEST IN SHOW.



NAKED PAPER CLIPS: READERS WAX POETIC.



SEEING FIREWORKS? IT'S MISS JULY!

THE LAST RUN—IN JANUARY 1998 AN ALASKAN FISHING VESSEL WAS DESTROYED IN THE MOST HORRIFIC ARCTIC TEMPEST IN YEARS. AS FIVE FISHERMEN DRIFTED IN 38-DEGREE WATER WITH NO LIFEBOAT, THREE RESCUE HELICOPTER TEAMS BATTLED 10-STORY WAVES AND 140-MILE-AN-HOUR WINDS TO SAVE THEM. **TODD LEWAN** SPEAKS TO THE FISHERMEN AND COASTGUARDSMEN WHO SURVIVED TO RE-CREATE THIS AMAZING TALE OF COURAGE.

THE NAKED PAGE PROJECT—IN OUR 50TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE, NOVELIST **JONATHAN SAFRAN FOER** SHARED HIS COLLECTION OF BLANK PAPER FROM FAMOUS WRITERS. THEN HE ASKED READERS TO CUT THE EMPTY PAGE FROM HIS ARTICLE AND MAIL IT IN. WE GOT HUNDREDS OF THOUGHTFUL, FUNNY AND JUST PLAIN WEIRD RESPONSES. FOER SHEDS LIGHT ON THE PAPER TRAIL.

THE SWING'S THE THING—DON'T CALL IT WIFE SWAPPING. WHEN IT COMES TO SWINGING, THE LADIES ARE IN CHARGE. (IN OTHER WORDS, ONE MAN IS NOT ENOUGH.) WE WENT TO A NEVADA CONVENTION AND FOUND THE HOTTEST BED-HOPPERS THE LIFESTYLE HAS TO OFFER. MEET THE EXHIBITIONISTS IN A SWINGING PICTORIAL.

MICHAEL MOORE—THE CONTROVERSIAL FILMMAKER, AUTHOR AND PROVOCATEUR DEEMS NOTHING SACRED IN THIS INCENDIARY ELECTION YEAR. HIS TARGETS? BUSH, BILL O'REILLY, ANN COULTER AND, OF COURSE, THE NRA. ON THE FLIP SIDE YOU'LL NEVER GUESS WHO HE HAS THE HOTS FOR IN THE U.S. SENATE. A RABBLE-ROUSING *PLAYBOY INTERVIEW* BY **DAVID SHEFF**

POWDER—AFTER A VISIT TO AN ECCENTRIC ACUPUNCTURIST, A STRUGGLING COPYWRITER, CLOVIS, BECOMES ADDICTED TO THE DOCTOR'S MAGICAL FUJI POWDER. SO WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE STRANGE DOC CAN NO LONGER BE FOUND? FICTION BY **THOM JONES**

SUPERCARS—WE'VE GOT THE WORLD'S MOST LUXURIOUS RIDES, AND WE'RE NOT HORSEPOWERING AROUND. GOT A COOL \$2 MILLION HANDY? YOU CAN OWN THEM ALL! OR LIVE VICARIOUSLY THROUGH OUR GUIDE—JUST REMEMBER NOT TO READ AND DRIVE!

PLUS: TEST YOUR PATRIOTIC CHOPS IN OUR AMERICAN HISTORY QUIZ. SUMMER FASHION GOES TO THE DOGS, CENTERFOLD **SERRIA TAWAN** ON THE ART OF MAKING OUT, AND MISS JULY, **STEPHANIE GLASSON**, BLASTS OFF.