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PLAYBOY

ENTERTAINMENT FOR MEN

JANUARY 2008

**HOLIDAY
ANNIVERSARY
ISSUE**

EYES WIDE OPEN

**ADRIANNE
CURRY'S**
SECRET FANTASY

INTERVIEW

TINA FEY
WITHOUT GLASSES

PLUS:

20Q WITH
HELENA
BONHAM
CARTER

**BINGEING WITH
ARTIE LANGE**

FEAR-
MONGERING
WITH JIMMY
BRESLIN

TOASTING
WINE WITH
ROBERT
COOVER

**A TRAGIC
WAR
STORY**

AND PARTY
OF THE
YEAR



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PAGES OF BARE AND
BEAUTIFUL PLAYMATES

**SURPRISING REVELATIONS
ABOUT THE YOUNG
MIKE TYSON**

STIRRING NEW FICTION BY
JOHN UPDIKE



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America's sexiest Top Model, **Adrienne Curry** (far left), returns to our pages in a sultry pictorial, and this time she brought a friend, **Andrea Brooks**. The two posed for *Curry for Dessert*, set at a delicious *Eyes Wide Shut*-style party. "A misconception about me is that I was a big slut growing up," Adrienne says. "I hardly did anything, at least not with guys. Fooling around with girlfriends doesn't count, right? So I'm damn near virginal." Adrienne and Andrea have been inseparable since they were 12 years old. We can see why. "Adrienne and I have been through so much together that I think you can see the deep respect and love we have for each other in the pictures," Andrea says. The shoot was steamy enough that Adrienne didn't let her husband (remember Peter Brady?) on the set. "He can look at the pictures, but I don't want him getting any ideas."



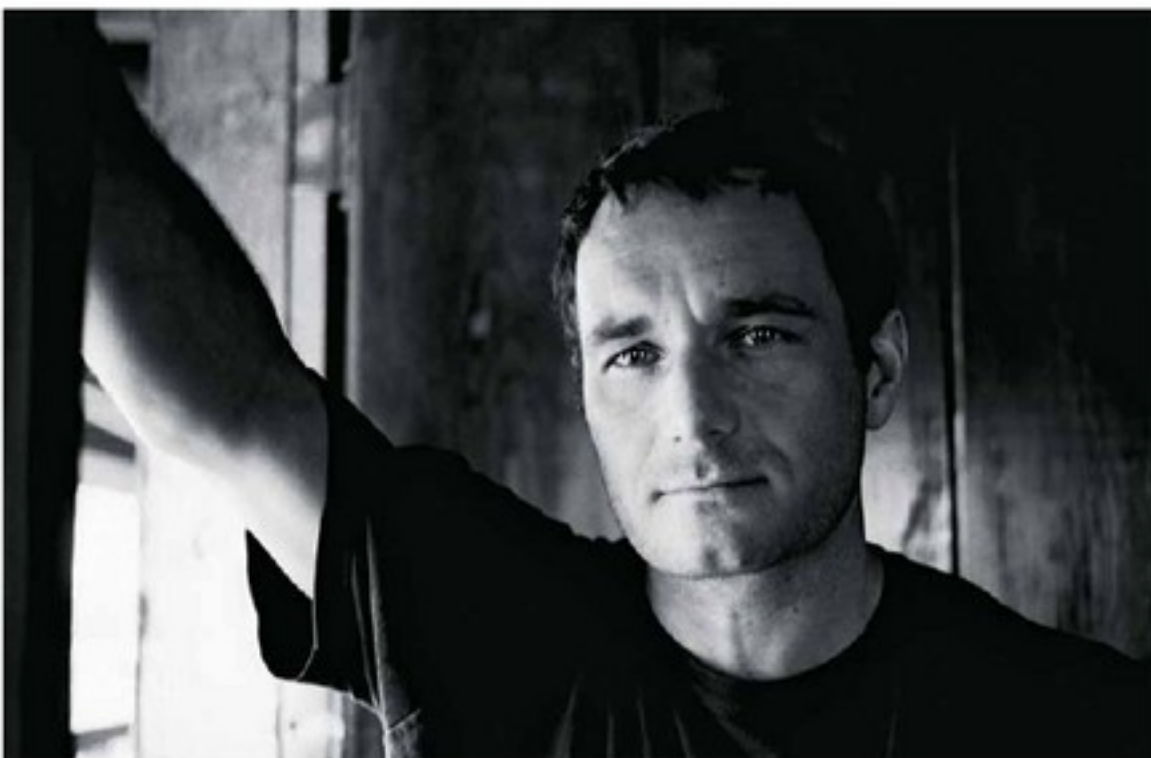
Jimmy Breslin, Pulitzer Prize winner and author of the forthcoming book *The Good Rat*, argues in *Land of the Free, Home of the Scared* that the Bush administration's McCarthyist tactics have frightened us, which is exactly the intention. "As long as we're afraid, they can do whatever they want," he says. "We've had a war going on for five years. Patton went from Calais to Austria in 11 months. This administration sickens me."



John Updike tells us that *Blue Light*, which is among his more intimate tales, "contains many of my personal truths." It also illuminates his feelings about craft. "Short stories now seem to just end, as if the writer ran out of typewriter ink or paper or something," he says. "I have this old-fashioned notion that stories should snap shut in the last line and throw light back to the first sentence."



"Artie Lange makes tons of money and is much loved, but his appetites are getting the best of him," says **Mike Guy**, who hung with the tragic comedian for *Riding High With Artie Lange*. "Like most comics, he has a bleak view of his situation. And in his case, I think he truly believes he's not going to make it. He is very open about that fact, yet he uses his problems in his act. Though the joke is on him, it's *his* joke."



Last year investigative journalist **Christian Parenti** attracted attention when he told interviewer Bill Moyers that his Afghan friend and translator had been murdered by the Taliban. For *Our Battles Joined*, Parenti returned to the Hindu Kush to uncover the strange story of how and why his friend was killed. "Ajmal Naqshbandi was a very good journalist, interpreter and fixer," Parenti says. "By fixer I mean he would set up interviews with Taliban officials for other journalists, and he was very aggressive in getting the story, no matter how touchy the subject. He thought the Taliban wouldn't kill him because he was a Muslim, and I always felt relatively safe with him because he was careful about taking risks. But to some extent he became too proficient at the task, and that led to his terrible end."

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PLAYBOY

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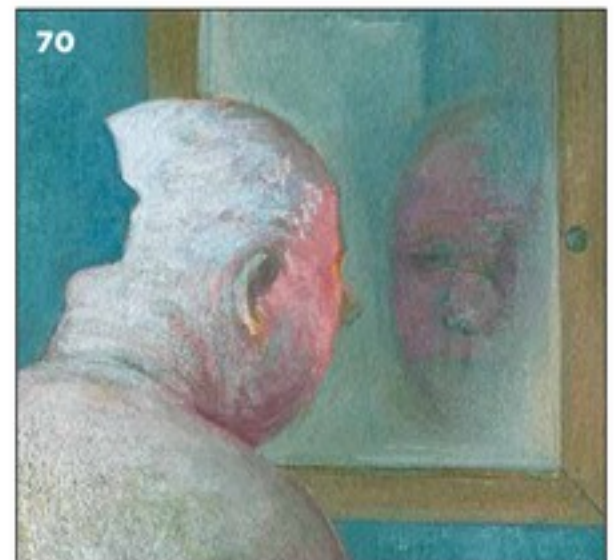
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COVER STORY

Adrienne Curry will say whatever she thinks, whenever she wants, and her views are usually as provocative as her looks. Now the opinionated blogger and star of VH1's *My Fair Brady* returns for her second scintillating PLAYBOY cover and pictorial. Senior Contributing Photographer Stephen Wayda captures the smoky allure of America's favorite Next Top Model; our Rabbit lends a helping hand.



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FASHION BY JOSEPH DE ACETIS

this month on playboy.com

THE 21ST QUESTION

A little more off the top with *Sweeney Todd*'s Helena Bonham Carter. playboy.com/21q

MAGAZINE BLOG

Inside perspectives from PLAYBOY editors. playboy.com/blog

BEST IN FIELD

America's Sexiest Sportscaster II poll: the results. playboy.com/sexiestsportscaster

SEX NEWS

Our roundup of scandalous and absurd news. playboy.com/sexnews

PLAYMATES IN ACTION

Get the facts on every 2007 Playmate from their Video Data Sheets. playboy.com/pmoy



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THE WORLD OF PLAYBOY

HEF SIGHTINGS, MANSION FROLICS AND NIGHTLIFE NOTES



LONDON CALLING
Lindsey Vuolo and Lauren Anderson joined Playboy chief Christie Hefner on Oxford Street in London to open the new Playboy store, sure to be a hit in the capital of posh.



AND THE WINNER IS...BRIDGET!

All for one and one for all! Hef, Holly and Kendra accompanied Bridget to the Fox Reality Channel Really Awards (above), where she was presented with the Favorite Hottie award (right) for her appearances on *The Girls Next Door*. We can only assume Holly and Kendra were close runners-up.



GOING TO THE MAT

Holmby Hills saw its first-ever mixed martial arts event when Hef hosted a 12-fight card headlined by top freestyle fighters Tetsuji Kato and Gilbert Melendez (above), who battled each other. Such stars as Ethan Suplee and Jaime Pressly (right) came out for the show, which Melendez won by decision.



RAPPIN' WITH THE STARS

Girl Next Door Kendra Wilkinson, a.k.a. K Dub, rocked the mike on MTV's *Celebrity Rap Superstar*, working her way up to the finals against actress Shar Jackson. Go, Kendra! Go, Kendra!

**HANGIN'
WITH H&F**



At the Mansion and on the town, the fab foursome lives life to its fullest. (1) Cuff 'em: Hef re-creates a classic whodunit for Bridget's murder-mystery birthday party at the Mansion. (2) Barbi Benton questions a suspect. (3) Bridget's sister Anastasia and her brother Eddie, on leave from Iraq, visit the Mansion. (4) TV legend Monty Hall hosts his Cedars-Sinai tennis fund-raiser at the Mansion. (5) Hef and Kendra dish with Perez Hilton at *Celebrity Rap Superstar*. (6) Yee-haw! Holly tames the mechanical bull at Saddle Ranch Chop House. (7) December cover girl Kim Kardashian and her mom, Kris Jenner, film their reality show at the Mansion. (8) Terrence Howard and Hef at Victoria Fuller's art gallery opening. (9) Hef and Kendra with former Bronco Terrell Davis at Mastro's. (10) Holly and Danny Bonaduce at the Fox Reality Channel Really Awards. (11) Elvira, Bridget and Hef at the same event. (12) Don "Magic" Juan and Bobby Brown with Mr. Playboy at the Urban Health Institute fund-raiser at the Mansion. (13) Holly and Hef celebrate their anniversary at Disneyland.



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KEITH OLBERMANN AT BAT

The popularity of MSNBC's Keith Olbermann (*Playboy Interview*, October) illustrates the influence of the growing demographic of aging peaceniks and whiners who, after all these years, still have their thumb in their mouth. The



Should Keith Olbermann stick to sports?

only issues on which Olbermann has a responsible and sensible stance are illegal immigration and protecting English as our primary language.

Joe Payton
Atlanta, Georgia

Olbermann gives Rupert Murdoch far too much credit. Fox News is a circus, and *The O'Reilly Factor* is simply its sideshow.

Alan Weinstein
Scottsdale, Arizona

Olbermann says that if the Vietnam war had not ended before he reached draft age, he would have "found a way not to go," and "the ones who didn't go are heroes as much as those who did." Guys like Olbermann fail to separate the honor of military service from the dishonor of two Democratic administrations that escalated Vietnam to the disaster it became. The key difference between Olbermann and Bill O'Reilly is that O'Reilly doesn't pretend he's a newscaster.

Larry Hayward
Santa Fe, New Mexico

I started watching *Countdown* long before K.O. became a media darling, because I liked his snarky attitude and pop-culture references. It was a bonus when he started letting go with the

pointed, elegant rhetoric that gave voice to my political thoughts better than I could. It's nice that he is now getting the attention he deserves, especially in a great interview like yours. I've enjoyed watching his Fox News-Al Qaeda quote ("Fox News is worse than Al Qaeda—worse for our society"), taken out of context, rattle around the far-right echo chamber. It's called hyperbole, kids. It's used to make a point. Lies and war don't get these people riled, but they seem to think Olbermann is Lucifer himself.

Becky Leibowitz
Chicago, Illinois

Leibowitz runs bloggingolbermann.com.

Olbermann comes across as frustrated, envious and unfocused. I'd say the score is ESPN 1, MSNBC 0.

Robert Mirrieles
Brownsville, Texas

Somehow I doubt Keith "Hell no, I won't go" Olbermann knows that his hero, Yankees great Jerry Coleman, gave up his best baseball years to serve as a Marine pilot in two wars.

W.W. Dubbs
Southern Pines, North Carolina

The October issue went into my recycling bin—I will not have anything near me with Olbermann in it. His tirades against Fox News are hilarious but also scary, in that some people may take him seriously.

Kevin Hewicker
Irvine, California

Thank you for recycling.

Your Olbermann interview reinforces my belief that the only classy ex-Fox News personality is Tony Snow.

Bart Schwartz
Phoenix, Arizona

Olbermann deserves his own Worst Person award for not allowing anyone on his show who disagrees with him.

Candace Serviss
Loda, Illinois

It's interesting that the allegedly "buffoonish" O'Reilly consistently pulls in three times as many viewers as the supposedly erudite and witty Olbermann. It's just a matter of time before he flames out at MSNBC.

Julian Moseley
San Francisco, California

Olbermann has Bush derangement syndrome. George Bush killed those innocent Americans? Joe Biden is eloquent? Fox News is worse than the

KKK? Olbermann is the male equivalent of Rosie O'Donnell: not credible.

Bill Morris
Oil City, Louisiana

Ultimately, Olbermann is as angry and self-righteous as his nemesis O'Reilly. They're slightly different shades of the same color.

Stephen Scott
Tulsa, Oklahoma

What a liberal nut job. I'm a Navy aviator who has spent plenty of time in the Middle East. Olbermann presents the same lame opinions you hear all the time from the left concerning Fox News, the Bush administration, the Iraq occupation and why the U.S. entered the region. At least the magazine surrounding the interview is top-notch. It's good to show what type of people walk among us.

J.C. Marlar
Gulf Breeze, Florida

WHO'S THAT GIRL?

Who is the amazing woman on pages 56 and 57 of the October issue (*Students on Students*)? We need more shots of her.

Blake Shulsky
Little Rock, Arkansas



Our mystery model: Cameron Haven.

That's Cameron Haven of Florida State. The other women are Davin Lexen of the University of Texas at Dallas, Reagan Yun of the University of Missouri and Anahi Casas of the University of Texas at El Paso with Ashlee Jae. See more of them at cyberplayboy.com.

BREWSKIS AMERICAN-STYLE

As a Colorado State alum, I can't comprehend why your top 10 college-town



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CAN'T WAIT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

microbreweries list (*Brew U*, October) does not include New Belgium Brewing Company's Fat Tire beer.

William Palmer
West Palm Beach, Florida

I'm a student at the University of Colorado and work at Baseline Liquor. Avery Brewing's brewmaster happens to be a customer. When I showed him the article, he was beside himself. You may have a new subscriber.

Kevin Lucas
Boulder, Colorado

Bell's Brewery of Kalamazoo, home to Western Michigan University and Kalamazoo College, deserves recognition. My personal favorite brew is Oberon, which has a slightly spicy wheat flavor.

Luke McGlynn
Detroit, Michigan

After reading in *Brew U* that doctors have traditionally fed stout to blood donors because of its high iron content, I became fascinated by the possibility of enriching my diet with Guinness. Unfortunately, its iron content is just 0.113 milligrams a liter. To reach the recommended daily dose of 18 milligrams, you would need to consume 160 liters, or about 450 12-ounce bottles. Bottoms up!

Jonathan Stewart
Newbury Park, California

ALI LARTER

No disrespect to the stars of the October pictorials, but Ali Larter (*20Q*) is the best-looking woman in the entire issue. She radiates sexuality.

Tommy Pullman
Bedford, Indiana

SPENCER SCOTT

At 18, I'm one of the youngest readers of *PLAYBOY*, so I was surprised to see that Miss October Spencer Scott (*Scott Free*) is even younger than I am, by a few months. She is stunning—easily the year's sexiest Playmate.

Christopher Kral
Placerville, California

FAN LETTER

I am a 29-year-old female subscriber who isn't sure you can still call the magazine "entertainment for men." Every month I look forward to four of my favorite things: (1) Olivia's illustration, which I promptly tear out and hang on my wall, (2) nude celebrities and *Grapevine*, (3) photos of Hef and the girls at parties and events, and (4) the Playmate. Please keep up the hip, fresh taste.

Jewels Willing
Ukiah, California

GIRLS OF THE SEC

I have been a *PLAYBOY* reader and fan for 18 years, and *Girls of the SEC* (October) is by far the best college-girls pictorial I've seen. Thanks to all involved for a job well done.

Michael Cole
Gilbert, Arizona

One girl steals the show: Whitney Leigh of LSU. She's gorgeous. One photo is not enough. Please bring her back for her own pictorial.

Cliff Ross
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Thank you for the perfect rear view of Maria Mills of the University of Mississippi. But you tease us with



Maria Mills: the other side of the moon.

the mention that she is a 30DD, while showing her only from behind.

Larry Meadows
Martinez, California

Sorry about that; here's a bonus shot. We also want to correct two errors in the pictorial. We switched the names under two photos: The Florida student on the upper left on page 112 is Neenah Dreslin, while the Florida student on the upper right on page 116 is Natasha Combs. Also, the photo in the middle of page 117 shows not Brittney Brookwood but Alyssa Tyler. You can see more photos of Neenah, Natasha, Brittney, Alyssa and other of our SEC beauties inside the Cyber Club.

Girls of the SEC is awesome, but where's the Vandy love? Vanderbilt has one of the most beautiful campuses anywhere, and it's not because of the trees. Surely we deserve more than one woman out of the 38 chosen.

Erwin Yap
Nashville, Tennessee

Read more feedback at playboy.com/blog.





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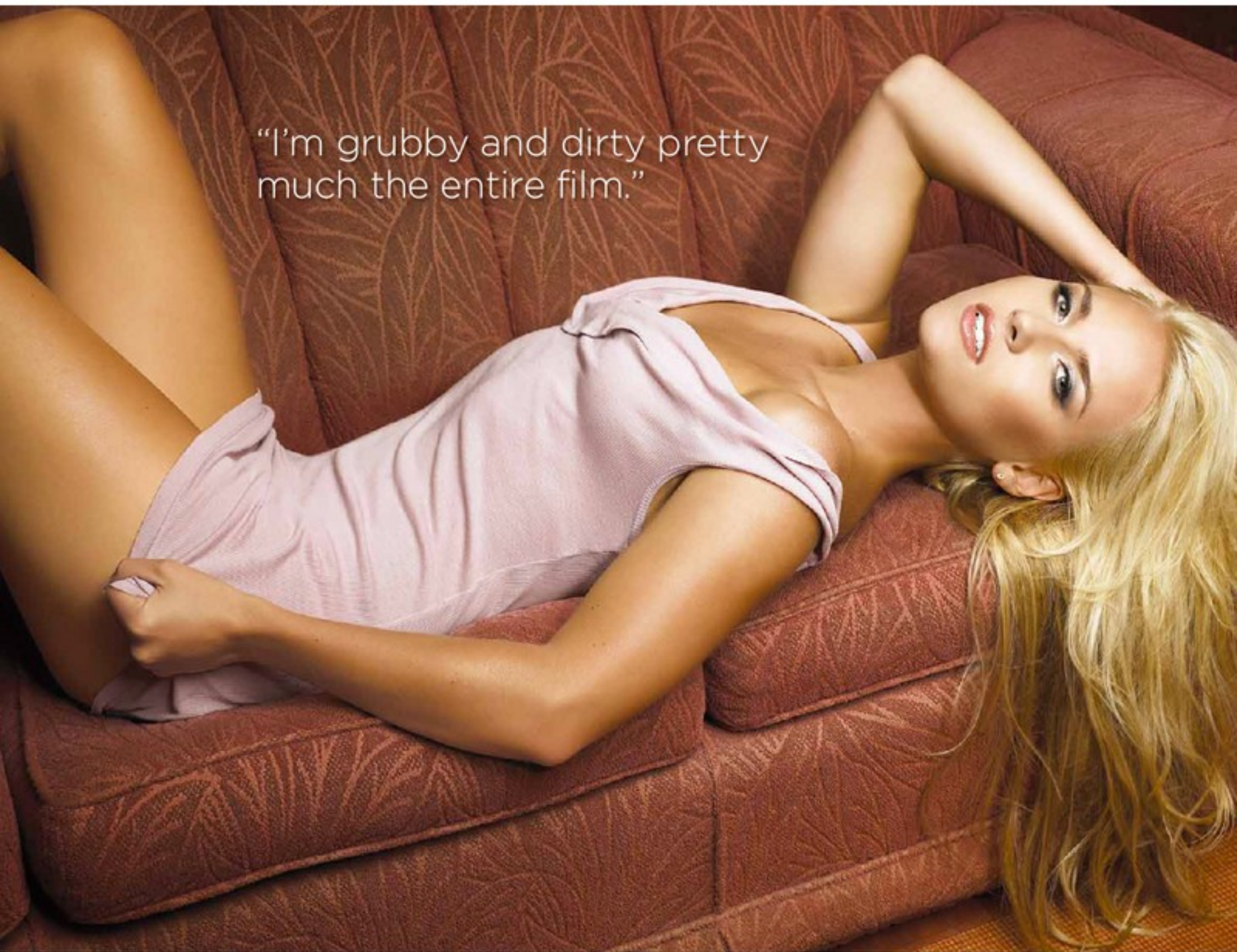


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a f t e r h o u r s



"I'm grubby and dirty pretty much the entire film."

babe of the month

Tania Saulnier

SLITHER'S NUDE SLUG SLAYER COMES CLEAN, AGAIN AND AGAIN

Vancouverite actress Tania Saulnier has a thing about cleanliness. It's not obsessive-compulsive disorder; she just keeps playing characters who are bathing or in need of a bath (and for that, kudos to the screenwriters and casting directors). In the alien-zombie horror flick *Slither*, Tania plays a teen heroine who is attacked by evil slugs while taking a bubble bath and must battle them in the nude—an iconic sequence that is the basis for the film's poster and DVD cover. If you haven't seen it, don't get too excited: She's always covered by strategically placed bubbles and props. Prior to *Slither* Tania did a stretch on the kids' series *Caitlin's Way*, but her cameo on *Smallville*, as the girlfriend of a supervillain whose touch causes victims to freeze to death, sounds more interesting. "He touches me in the shower," she recalls, "and I—again I'm in the shower—shatter into a million pieces." Tania's latest film is *In the Name of the King: A Dungeon Siege Tale*, in which she plays the filthy peasant girl Tawlyn. "Claire Forlani and I are chained in a dungeon," she says. "I'm grubby and dirty pretty much the entire film, and then in the last scene I'm cleaned up." And as you can see, she cleans up nice.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY WALDY MARTENS

ring it in

Five Ways to Midnight

NEW YEAR'S EVE
DESTINATIONS FOR
ANY BUDGET

For \$150, in Los Angeles...

Join the hallucinogenic circus that is the New Year's Eve Ball at the Hollywood & Highland Center: aerial derring-do, fire dancers, burlesque shows for a touch of ass and food by Wolfgang Puck. And as if that weren't enough—ladies and gents, Jeff Goldblum and the Mildred Snitzer Orchestra! daskproductions.com

For \$250, in Washington,

D.C.... Get tuxed up at Euronet International's 007 License to Thrill Around the World Gala at the Sheraton National Hotel. This affair is all over the map, with themed areas, food and cocktails evoking the exotic settings of a dozen Bond films. Martinis are shaken, not—well, you know. euronetinternational.com/NewYearsEveDC

For \$300, in Las Vegas... Walk into the Playboy Club at the Palms on December 31 and you'll be greeted by Playmates and stunning Bunnies (see our November 2006 pictorial). The cocktails flow, the DJ spins, and Playmates get down. At midnight, toast with Perrier Jouët bubbly and Playmates. By the way, there will be Playmates at the party. And did we mention the Playmates? palms.com/playboy_club_1.php

For \$6,000, in Miami Beach... Reserve a table for eight by the stage at the Miami Beach club Mansion. Sure, the music will be hip and current (last year's acts were DJ AM and Blink-182's Travis Barker), but the real attraction is the famous-for-being-famous element: Lothario without portfolio Wilmer Valderrama has played host for three years running. theopiumgroup.com

For free, in New York City... Stand in the freezing cold of Times Square among the very finest of New Jersey's drunken revelers. Like bungee jumping and light bondage, this is one of those activities you think you won't enjoy but try anyway just to be absolutely and forever sure. Don't be fooled by the free admission: A hotel room in Times Square can cost you \$1,000 a night—and don't expect to book just one night.

(Some ticket prices and event details may be subject to change.)



future imperfect

2008: A Look Back

TWELVE STORIES THAT
WILL SHOCK AND CONFUSE
US IN THE YEAR AHEAD



JANUARY: ExxonMobil makes enigmatic claim that all its oil derricks are "going green."

FEBRUARY: On eve of Super Tuesday, Hillary Clinton has Barack Obama deported.

MARCH: Dick Cheney changes name to ~~Dick Cheney~~.

APRIL: Yankees debut drastically revamped lineup—welcome back, Chuck Knoblauch!

MAY: In desperate bid to look tough, House Democrats pass resolution condemning Mort and Greg Walker for antitroops themes in *Beetle Bailey*.

JUNE: Tom Sizemore hosts talent contest—reality series *American Sextape*, on which untalented singers try to win fans by posting hard-core videos on the Internet.

JULY: Top summer film is *The InsurgAntz*, a grim Pixar tale of red ant-vs.-black ant civil war, in which the two sides' shared hatred of weevil occupiers results in a flaming pile of ant and weevil death with no uplifting finale. Kids love it.

AUGUST: Real estate lending crisis hits rock bottom and banks initiate mass foreclosures. Result is banks own a surplus of shitty houses and market has a shortage of gullible poor people to buy them.

SEPTEMBER: Surprise hit series of new fall TV schedule is the plodding, existential *Superhero Lady Beach Doctors*. Special powers allow lead characters to cure anyone of any illness—but should they? Vida Guerra and Jessica Biel star.

OCTOBER: Paparazzi snap open-legged shot of Britney getting out of a car, and she's forgotten to not wear panties.

NOVEMBER: Dennis Kucinich defeats Ron Paul in presidential election. Republicans suspect voter fraud in Florida, where RuPaul finishes third.

DECEMBER: Lame-duck president George W. Bush launches Operation Kiss My Ass, bombing Sydney, Australia for no other reason than to create a giant mess for the next administration to clean up.

drink of the month

Hare of the Dog That Bit You

THE MORNING-AFTER DRINK, IMPROVED

We gave up making resolutions years ago, and January 1 is no longer the day of reckoning in college football. But the New Year's Day tradition we never fail to observe is putting down a couple of bloody marys to ease the pain from the previous night's excesses. Something about the tomato flavor suggests the bloody is doing you some good even though it's just as toxic (or more so, if made well) as the cocktails you drank the night before. Here's a slightly different, surprisingly tasty, possibly more nutritious variation on the drink that may or may not be doing you any good on New Year's Day. (And though we admit a fondness for all things *lapin*, we did not name it. It was invented by mixologist and former PLAYBOY researcher Andrew Bradbury.)

The Hot Rabbit

2 oz. vodka

6 oz. carrot juice (fresh is best, but store-bought will work)

1 tsp. cayenne pepper

3 dashes celery salt

Shake well and serve over ice; garnish with celery stick.





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Canadian Club.



body language



Line block. (Not "Is that guy in the stands looking at my butt?")

Stealing Signals

VOLLEYBALL SIGNS AREN'T JUST GIRL TALK

Pro beach volleyball kicks off 2008 with a Hot Winter Nights event in Oklahoma City on January 10. Without a doubt, women in bikinis are quality sports entertainment. But what's with all the hand jive? As we learned from the recently published trivia tome *Take Me to Your Leader*, it's not nearly as sexual as we thought.



Crosscourt block/line block. (Not "He totally is. Should we take our bikinis off?")

No block/line block. (Not "I'll do my top but not my bottom. I'm a little stubbly.")

Line block right. (Not "Jesus, look at him! What a stud. I'd like a piece of that.")

Line block. (Not "Me too. Let's both get naked and see what happens.")

dig doug

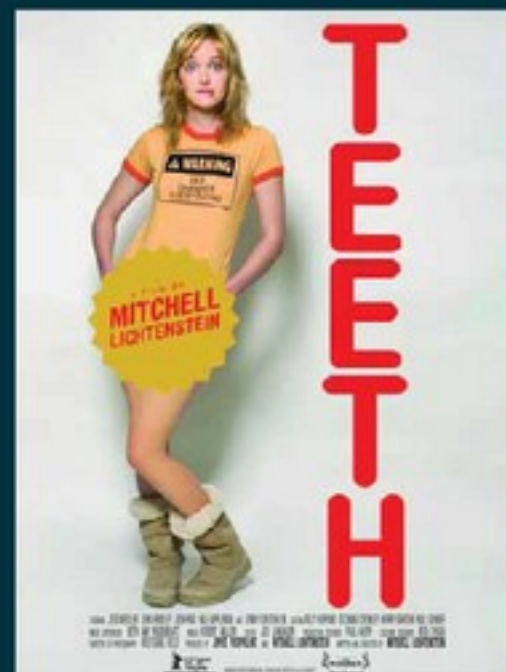
Stand-Up Stanhope

MORE THAN YOU CARE TO KNOW ABOUT THE MAN WHO TOOK THE MAN SHOW DOWN WITH HIM

What should people bring with them to a Doug Stanhope show? A Christian friend. It's fun to watch them watching me. What shouldn't people bring? Bachelorette parties. What's the most painful thing you have ever done to yourself? Hosting *The Man Show*. How much did you pay for that haircut? My girlfriend did it for free. But accounting for the cost of having a girlfriend, I've paid quite a bit. What's your most prized possession? A letter the school psychologist sent my mother when I was in seventh grade, saying I was "in serious need of professional help." What were you like as a child? Almost class clown, almost school shooter. What did your parents want you to be? Out of the house. What do they think of your act? My mother loves everything I do; my dad wishes he could hear it better from under six feet of earth. Have you ever been mistaken for anyone more famous? No, but once I was mistaken for my own opener and had a woman tell me at length how much the headliner sucked. When was the last time someone called you an asshole? Daily. Thanks, MySpace. How much porn do you keep in your house? I'm a 40-year-old porn addict, so that's like asking an elderly cat lady how many greeting cards she has in boxes in her basement. What material causes people to walk out of your shows? Good material. Unfortunately, people don't walk out on boring material often enough. What celebrity you thought would be cool turned out to be a dick when you met him? David Cross. But looking back, I can sympathize. What does the name Stanhope mean? Not much in show-business circles.

Doug Stanhope's Showtime special, *No Refunds*, is available on DVD.

fun with cultural anthropology



Weird Sex in Cinema

MORE MOVIES ABOUT UNCONVENTIONAL BELIEFS

In the indie film *Teeth*, Dawn is a young lady with a *vagina dentata*—literally, a vagina with teeth capable of unmaning any guy unlucky enough to venture in. The *vagina dentata* may be the most famous bit of sexual folklore, but other, more obscure beliefs and customs could make good films too. We found a few in Edgar Gregersen's *The World of Human Sexuality: Behaviors, Customs and Beliefs*. Are you listening, Hollywood?

Dairy Me—Roger and Christine are best friends, but everyone can tell they're in love. Yet there's a problem: They have drunk milk together. Their people, the Dard of Afghanistan, consider them "milk relatives," for whom marriage would be incest. Don't tell them not to cry over swilled milk!

Foxes—Teenager Cory is young, dumb and full of you know what. He's having nocturnal emissions, a sin in Chinese folklore, for which there is one explanation: Evil fox spirits disguised as hot babes are sapping his precious bodily fluids as he sleeps. How can something so wrong feel so right?

Baby Boom—Pregnant, horny Sandra keeps having sex. It's a no-no for the Kubeo people of Brazil, who believe continued intercourse will pile up fetuses within her, until one day she explodes. Now that's a bad blow job!

Mother Night—At his father's funeral, Danny is a wreck. Sure, he'll miss his old man, but he's more concerned about his seven stepmoms. Customs of the Chaga and Nyakyusa people of Africa dictate that Danny must have sex with them all—in one night. Thank you, Mom. May I have another?

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coed of the month

Baby, You Can Tune My Car

A QUICK LOOK UNDER THE HOOD OF UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA JUNIOR RACHEL LEE

PLAYBOY: What's your favorite thing about school?

RACHEL: The labs. I'm studying molecular biology and microbiology. I'm working toward going to med school.

PLAYBOY: That's new. Normally we hear "awesome parties."

RACHEL: I used to attend frat parties every night, but then I got a wake-up call. Now I unwind by working on cars.

PLAYBOY: Come again?

RACHEL: I'll invite a bunch of people over to the garage, and we'll drink beer and work on our cars. Doing installs, tinting windows and even fabricating parts. I've also had work-on-car dates.

PLAYBOY: Gearhead, eh?

RACHEL: Very much so. My mom thought I was going through a phase when I was younger, but I really love the lifestyle.

PLAYBOY: What do you drive?

RACHEL: I have a customized 2003 Honda Accord. I bring it to car exhibitions, where I also work as a model. Guys go nuts when I tell them I have a car in the show.

PLAYBOY: Did you lose your virginity in the back seat of a car?

RACHEL: No, but that would have been fitting. I do have sex in cars pretty often. I've been caught by the cops plenty of times.

PLAYBOY: What's your dream car in which to have sex?

RACHEL: I guess an Aston Martin Vanquish. There are many cars I wouldn't want to mess up because I respect them.

Want to be the next Coed of the Month? Learn how to apply at playboy.com/pose.



Love Lost and Found

IT WAS SPECIAL TO SOMEONE

Bill Shapiro has a fascination with love letters not written to him. In *Other People's Love Letters* he presents 150 missives—the long and the short, the profound and the very stupid—from his collection. Here are some of our favorite lines:

"Do you want to be my girlfriend? ___ Yes ___ No"

"Then I dumped Jim for Aquaman."

"Somewhere amidst all that talk of genocide, rape and pillage, a piece of my heart gave itself to you."

"You use too many adjectives."

"Except for your insanity, you are one of the coolest/funniest people I know."

"It does not seem that this relationship is made for anything other than what it is, and we have pretty much plumbed the depths of it."

"I miss you, Ben. You are never far from my thoughts. Now go fuck yourself."

"LIAR LIAR LIAR LIAR LIAR LIAR LIAR LIAR."

"Ravage me with your wine-drenched mouth and carpenter hands."

"On the occasion of my being made aware of the birth of our firstborn, a son, the biggest feeling within me was one of elation."

"You are charming, intense, challenging, and you have an excellent cock."

"Also, where do you stand on chains?"

calendar girls

366 Hot Dates

We loved the 2007 *Nerdcore* calendar, which featured naked women and retro video gaming, but the 2008 version may be even better. Again photographed by Playboy model Cherie Roberts, this new edition has a comic-book theme, with the ladies in (or, more properly, out of) skin-tight superhero garb. Order it at totallynerdcore.com.



behind the scenes



Bare-Assed in the Park

A NEW PLAYBOY TV SERIES PLUMBS PORN'S INNATE ABSURDITY

Playboy TV explores new territory with *Canoga Park*, a situation comedy about the fictional adult-film company American Insertions. Filmed in a semi-documentary style, it's like *The Office* plus nudity, with a light-hearted tone that recalls the soft-core film farces of the 1970s and 1980s. What you're looking at (left to right, top to bottom): 1. Porn starlets (Casey Parker, Andrea Lowell and Monique Alexander) in space-age garb lodge a complaint with Mitch Tanner (Brandon Gibson), founder and CEO of American Insertions. 2. Mitch and the ubiquitous Ron Jeremy host the Booty Calls telethon. 3. The Twins (Erica and Rachelle Drummond) show Tanner they've got what it takes. 4. Shorty Rossi pleads for more spe-

cific direction (background by Mikayla and Emilianna). 5. Tanner's assistant, retired porn star Randi Meadows (Erika Jordan), tries to cheer up the boss. 6. James Bondage, played by house stud Dirk Reemer (Anton Michael), prepares to be room-serviced by Nikki Benz. 7. Jelena Jensen is not going to fall for the banana in the tailpipe. 8. A dance number from American Insertions's musical *A Star Is Porn*. 9. Jeremy coaches Randi back into shagging shape. 10. Randi reflects on her comeback. 11. Security arrives to rescue Jelena and her large breasts from a snake. 12. *A Star Is Porn* star Samantha Ryan gets a lift. 13. A young production assistant tries not to stare while sizing up a nude Christina Jordan.

a night to remember

Toga! Toga! Toga!

HARD-PARTYING MEN AND WOMEN OF TROY, PLAYBOY U SALUTES YOU

When the University of Southern California threw its first Greek Week in nearly five years, Playboy U was there. We sent Cyber Girl Mallory Dylan and *Playboy U Radio Show* host Alisa Reyes to be emissaries of goodwill and general babeitude. Their report follows.

MALLORY: The party was at Avalon, and the club was packed—at least 2,000 people.

ALISA: They were decked out in togas or wearing mascot costumes. The track team showed up in spandex uniforms.

MALLORY: You could see everything. I thought, How can you go to a party in that? What if you're talking to a hot girl and...?

ALISA: The boys were so excited. They were going crazy over Mallory and me.

MALLORY: They were sweet—so young! The girls looked amazing. A lot of blondes in short skirts and low-cut tops. There were definitely some who could be Playmates.

ALISA: All those sexy outfits and C boobs.

MALLORY: Alisa and I had to get onstage, which made me a little nervous. But a couple of tequila shots calmed me down.



hot democracy

You're the Decider

TWO WAYS TO VOTE IN 2008

It's Playmate of the Year selection time again; don't forget to cast your ballot.

Method 1: Go to playboy.com/pmoy.

Method 2: For \$1.99, you can send a text message with the two-digit code that appears under your favorite's photo in *Playboy's Playmate Review* (page 131) to PLBOY (75269). You'll get a wallpaper image and, if she wins, a full pictorial of her in June.





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Hail Mary Jane



On theantidrug.com, a website for parents, one of the arguments presented *against* smoking marijuana is that "teens who use drugs are **5 times** more likely to have sex than teens who do not use drugs." Parents just don't understand.

Islamists Gone Wild

10% of the visitors to Domina, Israel's leading porn website, are Arabic speakers in Muslim countries.

you bet



Need a betting edge for the Rose Bowl? Keep an eye on Lawry's Beef Bowl. In the days leading up to the Granddaddy of Them All, both of the competing teams dine on prime beef at Lawry's restaurant. Last year USC, the eventual champion, consumed **630 pounds** to Michigan's **612 pounds**. In the 51 years of the contest **71%** of the teams that have won the Beef Bowl have gone on to win the Rose Bowl.

what they're thinking



According to a study by the National Sexuality Research Center, **30%** of women who meet a man online have sex with him on the first date.

Heavy Petting

79% of America's veterinary students are women.



Let's Go, Cougars

34% of women over the age of **40** date younger men.

Home, Sweet Home Page

The Japanese government says the nation has about **5,400** homeless who live primarily in 24-hour Internet cafes.

price check

\$8,000

Price paid for a fossilized penis from a species of walrus extinct for **12,000 years**. At **4½ feet** long it is believed to be the largest fossilized mammal penis yet discovered.



Look Out Below!

According to the State Department, North Korea has the largest submarine fleet in the world, with **78** subs.

Next Topic: Jumping Jacks

A British professor found that when the average woman jogs, her breasts bounce a vertical distance of about **8 inches**.

Now Split



80% of men who first married in the 1950s were still wed **15 years** later. Among men first married in the late 1980s, **61%** are still hitched.



Prison Shells

According to Marc Levin of the conservative Texas Public Policy Foundation, the number of activities that are felonies in Texas: **2,324**. Of those, the number that involve or require oysters: **11**.

In Spurts

A man ejaculates **14 gallons** of semen over his lifetime.





The 2008 Rolex 24 At Daytona.

**WHERE CHAMPIONS TEST THEIR
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DRIVERS IN THE WORLD.**

Over 75 champions from all facets of motorsports have competed against drivers from all corners of the globe in this grueling twice round-the-clock battle. When the sun rose in 2007, it was still anyone's race with three cars nose to tail for the overall lead in the final hours of the Rolex 24. The rest of the season continued in the same vein, with new champions crowned after one of the closest battles in motorsports, leaving two past champions hungry for more. The Grand-Am Rolex Sports Car Series presented by Crown Royal Special Reserve 2008 season promises to be just as thrilling, with the Rolex 24 At Daytona thrusting the season into high gear.

Check out www.grand-am.com for TV airtimes and the most up-to-date list of champions entered in the Rolex 24 At Daytona.



It's anyone's race!

The race for the 2008 Championship begins... Mark your calendars! January 26 & 27, 2008



R E V I E W S

m o v i e s



movie of the month

[CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR]

An impetuous congressman funds a rebel army

Charlie Wilson's War arrives loaded with Oscar-bait credentials, including high-powered cast members Tom Hanks, Julia Roberts and Philip Seymour Hoffman, estimable director Mike Nichols and an Aaron Sorkin screenplay based on the nonfiction best-seller by former *60 Minutes* producer George Crile. Hanks stars as the real-life Texas bachelor congressman fond of strippers, Vegas hot tubs and whiskey, who, in the early 1980s, worked his way into foreign policy by banding together with his wealthy commie-hating muse (Roberts) and a rogue CIA man (Hoffman) to arm the Afghan mujahideen in a covert war against the Soviets. "I'll stop short of calling the movie a comedy, but it's definitely a caper, a fun ride," says multiple Emmy winner Sorkin, best known for *The West Wing* and *A Few Good Men*. "Sure, some scenes take place in the Middle East and others in a refugee camp, so it's not *Fraternity Spring Break*. But nobody's asking people to eat their vegetables here. Tom is neurologically incapable of not being terrific. Philip is absolutely the real deal and delivers a great performance. Also it's Julia as we have never seen her before. The toughest job belongs to the guy designing the poster. How do you get people to see a movie about the arming of the Afghan mujahideen and their struggle against the Soviet invaders 25 years ago? But the movie is not a drag. I promise."

"The movie is not a drag. I promise."

—Stephen Rebell

now showing

BUZZ

Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street

(Johnny Depp, Helena Bonham Carter, Sacha Baron Cohen) Tim Burton interprets the Broadway musical about a sprung-from-prison barber who teams with a diabolical landlady to slay his false accusers. Notorious for selling "the worst pies in London," the landlady scores a hit with a new recipe featuring severed body parts.

Our call: The unholy marriage of Burton's Goth sensibilities, Depp's dazzling quirkiness and Stephen Sondheim's musical brilliance makes this a welcome nightmare just in time for Christmas.



Juno

(Ellen Page, Jason Bateman, Jennifer Garner) In this clever gem from director Jason Reitman (*Thank You for Smoking*), a 16-year-old slacker gets pregnant her first time out with her best friend. She meets a too-perfect childless couple after reading about their desire to adopt in the *PennySaver* circular. Comic brilliance ensues.

Our call: A whip-smart screenplay by Diablo Cody, supersharp direction and a peak-performing cast ought to ensure this film-festival favorite is the year's *Little Miss Sunshine*-size surprise.



National Treasure: Book of Secrets

(Nicolas Cage, Diane Kruger, Helen Mirren, Jon Voight) In this sequel to the 2004 hit *National Treasure*, Cage returns to hunt for the buried "truth" behind Abraham Lincoln's assassination, chasing clues provided by 18 missing pages from John Wilkes Booth's diary. The air is thick with Oscar-level stars in supporting roles.

Our call: One man's trash is another's treasure, so if the first flick was your idea of fun, your hunt for colorful escapist thrills involving kidnapping and international conspiracies ends here.



There Will Be Blood

(Daniel Day-Lewis, Paul Dano, Kevin J. O'Connor) Director Paul Thomas Anderson's strange and beautiful epic was inspired by Upton Sinclair's 1927 novel *Oil!* Day-Lewis plays a black-hearted Texas prospector who becomes a tycoon after creating a boomtown, which leads to clashes with a dangerous young preacher.

Our call: Overpowering tension, Day-Lewis's blistering performance, knockout cinematography and an impressive score add up to a towering experience akin to the works of Welles and Kubrick.



dvd of the month

[**BLADE RUNNER: THE FINAL CUT**]

"All those moments will be lost in time, like tears in rain," says a Replicant (a synthetic being) in Ridley Scott's 1982 sci-fi classic. Tears may wash away, but reverence for this seminal noir about a blade runner (Harrison Ford) hunting Replicants in a dystopian L.A. has only grown. Scott's

breathhtaking final cut features restored footage and preserves the film's core existential crisis, which still elicits tears of joy. Available boxed with four alternate versions and on HD DVD and Blu-ray. **Best extra:** The Ultimate Collector's Edition has a replica spinner car. **★★★★**

—Robert B. DeSalvo



TEASE FRAME



Emmanuelle Seigner fans the flames of lust in husband Roman Polanski's *The Ninth Gate* (pictured). Will she do the same in *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly*?

3:10 TO YUMA Gallows-bound outlaw Russell Crowe battles with rancher Christian Bale and his "virtuous" posse in a hail of words and bullets in this hit Elmore Leonard adaptation. **Best extra:** A peek into outlaws of the Wild West. **★★★**

—Bryan Reesman



GOLDEN BOY In this 1939 classic, William Holden shines as a violinist who moonlights in the lucrative boxing ring, nudged along by sexy Barbara Stanwyck. **Best extra:** *Kangaroo Kid* (1938), a cartoon spoof of the story. **★★★★½**

—Matt Steigbigel



BIG LOVE: THE COMPLETE SECOND SEASON HBO's polygamy drama nears genius as Bill Paxton's lifestyle jeopardizes his hardware biz and father-in-law Harry Dean Stanton feeds Paxton's dark side. **Best extra:** Too many wives, too few extras. **★★★★½**

—Greg Fagan



game of the month

[**MASSIVELY EFFECTIVE**]



Role-playing games can be a snooze if you're not the D&D type. Thankfully, the visionaries at BioWare have made a career out of reinventing the genre. Their latest, *Mass Effect* (360), blazes the boldest trail yet. This action-packed sci-fi saga turns on strange monoliths that harbor ancient technological secrets and a plot to destroy the human race, which has now spread across the galaxy. Along the way, there are 40-plus hours of galactic exploring to do, seasoned with alien political intrigue and heated shoot-outs. Combat styles are flexible enough that you can run and gun or use strategic squad commands to equal effect. But the real treats are its incredibly fluid conversation engine and how widely the game varies based on each choice you make. In this open-ended and graphically stunning masterpiece, a few loose words could touch off the next galactic war. **★★★★★**

—Damon Brown

UNCHARTED: DRAKE'S FORTUNE (PS3) Pretty, pulpy and packed with surprises, this action-adventure has you dealing with pirates (the modern kind), soldiers and more in your quest to recover a massive treasure cache. Strong writing and voice acting round out its ample charms. **★★★★½**

—Chris Hudak



KANE & LYNCH: DEAD MEN (360, PC, PS3) What happens when a professional criminal teams with a medicated psychopath for a series of audacious heists? Depends on how good you are with a controller. This bullet-happy romp also features interesting multiplayer modes that encourage double-crossing. **★★★★½**

—Scott Alexander



games in brief*

ASSASSIN'S CREED (360, PS3) Knock off knights as a Crusades-era hit man. Gorgeously gory.

BEOWULF (360, PS3) Guide the legendary hero to victory in this brutal movie adaptation.

RESIDENT EVIL: THE UMBRELLA CHRONICLES (Wii) Zombies! Shoot them! Quickly!

LEGO STAR WARS: THE COMPLETE SAGA (360, DS, PS3, Wii) Six movies, unlimited fun.

"MASTERPIECE"

-Game Informer

"It's one of those rare games that comes along every five or ten years, sucks you in, knocks your socks off, and haunts you for years after you've played it."

- Yahoo! Games

"One of the most playable, thought-provoking, and just downright impressive games to emerge on a home console since, well, ever. Easily one of the best games of the year."

- GamePro

"It's ingenious, enthralling, and a masterpiece of the most epic proportions. So without further delay, would you kindly enter Rapture so that you too can experience the best that video games have to offer?"

- Game Informer

10 out of 10 / 10 out of 10

- Game Informer

- Wired.com

5 out of 5

- Yahoo!® Games

5 out of 5

- GamePro

"I spend my career, and my gaming life, waiting for a moment when a game just astonishes me, when I can't believe what I'm seeing, what I'm doing. BioShock has five. An instant classic."

- PC Gamer UK

"More so than any other game in recent memory, BioShock is dripping with atmosphere and intrigue, and it's one of those rare titles where story, dialogue and character development are just as important as the action sequences."

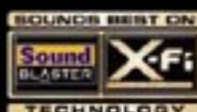
- USA Today



A genetically enhanced shooter.
bioshockgame.com / Available Now



Blood and Gore
Drug Reference
Intense Violence
Sexual Themes
Strong Language



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best boxed sets

[BUYING IN BULK]

Here's our year-end roundup of the year's best roundups

As the album format further becomes a relic for today's music lover, one form of physical product endures and even thrives: Boxed sets continue to roll off the assembly line. This past year saw a bounty of fantastic ones, and thankfully there is no end in sight. **The Heavy Metal Box** (Rhino) is a surprisingly vital four-disc survey of a musical form unfairly relegated to meatheads. From Blue Cheer to Hawkwind to Hanoi Rocks, this is thinking-man's sludge. **The Complete On the Corner Sessions** (Columbia/Legacy) presents more than six hours of Miles Davis's darkest, most impenetrable music in a manner that makes perfect sense. The five-disc set of John Coltrane's work from the late 1950s, **Interplay** (Prestige), reveals Trane's



versatility as both a sideman and leader. In 1938 Mário de Andrade ventured into the wilds of northern Brazil to record traditional music, now brought together and lovingly restored on **Missão de Pesquisas Folclóricas** (SESC São Paulo). These six CDs capture a lost time in a magical place. **People Take Warning! Murder Ballads &**

Disaster Songs 1913-1938 (Tompkins Square), a three-CD set of old-time savagery, serves to remind you that gunplay music didn't start with T.I. Check out Furry Lewis. **Bach Edition: Complete Works of J.S. Bach** (Brilliant Classics) is the perfect desert-island choice, with 155 CDs covering all the divine composer's music at a reasonable price. **Love Is the Song We Sing** (Rhino) is an extensive look at San Francisco-area bands in the era surrounding the Summer of Love, including hits (from the likes of Jefferson Airplane, Country Joe & the Fish, Janis Joplin and Moby Grape), as well as experimental sounds (Fifty Foot Hose, the Warlocks and Notes From the Underground). For more recent sonic adventures from the region, check out **7707 TM** (Crammed), a 30th anniversary boxed set from the seminal Bay Area postpunk group Tuxedomoon. **The Brit Box** (Rhino) collects all those great songs you know from *120 Minutes* and college radio from the past two decades, including a nice cross section of shoegazing, Britpop and Madchester, as well as 1980s innovators such as Jesus & Mary Chain and the Smiths. The Rounder label has always had a strong Crescent City collection, and the four-CD survey

City of Dreams: A Collection of New Orleans Music offers its best Louisiana R&B, from James Booker to Eddie Bo. **Vee-Jay: The Definitive Collection** (Shout! Factory) houses indescribably great blues sides, including Jimmy Reed, John Lee Hooker and Billy Boy Arnold. Pearl Jam is nothing if not



completist: **Live at the Gorge 05/06** (Monkey Wrench) is a seven-CD recording of three of the band's concerts from 2005 and 2006. **Billie Holiday: Rare Live Recordings 1934-1959** (ESP-Disk)—five discs of Lady Day, both live and on the radio—traverses a remarkable career from her first recordings with Count Basie until those made months before her death. **Sly and the Family Stone: The Collection** (Epic/Legacy) gathers on seven discs Sly Stone's groundbreaking work for Epic in the 1960s and 1970s. Sly changed the face of music. If the remastered albums don't convince you, the extra tracks will.

drop that bottom

[THE LADY TIGRA]

Half of the trailblazing Miami bass duo L'Trimm, she's back with a boom

When "Cars With the Boom" came out, in 1988, many wrote off the supercute girlie duo behind it as a likely one-hit wonder. But L'Trimm, which released three albums and then disbanded, in 1991, has stood the test of time. In fact, with the Miami bass sound continuing to enjoy a hipster revival, L'Trimm has become a source of inspiration for countless new artists, from Fannypack, Peaches and M.I.A. to current underground electro-hop favorite Uffie. Now Lady Tigra is bringing out an LP of her own, *Please Mr. BoomBox*. We talked to her about the album, which recalls the playfulness of her Miami bass work and updates it to brilliant effect.

PLAYBOY: It must be rewarding to hear so many new artists clearly influenced by your work with L'Trimm.

LADY TIGRA: It's humbling to think something I did so many years ago when I was so young is still inspiring really dope chicks. And seeing what they come up with—the technology and the way you write music are completely different now—while keeping that pure L'Trimmsound recognizable in there is mind-blowing.

PLAYBOY: Did you realize back then that you were doing something significant?

LADY TIGRA: It all started innocently. We were just teenage girls who went to the mall and checked out dudes' rides. There was no way I could have predicted at that age that we'd be having this conversation right now.

PLAYBOY: Your new LP is refreshingly eclectic and song-oriented. Some of the tracks are even sung or rapped in French. Are you bilingual?

LADY TIGRA: I'm half French and half Haitian, but I was born in the United States. I grew up speaking French, English and Creole.

PLAYBOY: You live in L.A. now after a stint in New York. Do you ever worry you'll lose your taste for the bass?

LADY TIGRA: No, it's one of those things. I still listen to each new song and say, "Yeah, this is dope, but can we throw a little more bass on it? Can we get an 808 sound in there?" I like to feel the beat in my chest. I want that bass.





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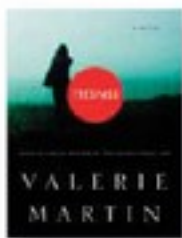
endorsements

[THE BEST BOOKS OF 2007]

Our favorite authors pick their favorites

Margaret Atwood
Trespass by Valerie Martin

What would Henry James write on the subject of blandly innocent Americans versus darkly experienced Europeans if he were alive today? Martin's gripping and powerful novel of tight-lipped manners and horrific atrocities.



Will Blythe
Tree of Smoke by Denis Johnson

A big American novel, line for line as beautiful as a lyric poem, peopled by the grieving, the murderous and the dead.

Junot Diaz
Dark Reflections by Samuel Delany
Delany is still the greatest living writer in the U.S. and, lamentably, the most undervalued. Here is a poet's life in reverse, from irrelevance to promise. This novel is profound and gorgeous.

Stuart Dybek
God Is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything by Christopher Hitchens

It is erudite, and the context of the times in which we live, dominated by fundamentalists of all stripes doing what fundamentalists do—fighting each other and taking the rest of society along for the madness of it—makes the book not only necessary but courageous.

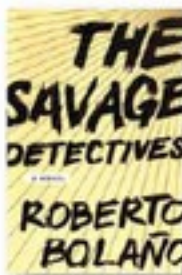


Eric Foner
Defying Dixie: The Radical Roots of Civil Rights, 1919–1950 by Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore

Gilmore takes us down previously hidden byways of Southern history, showing how the civil rights movement emerged from a radical milieu in which black and white socialists, communists and Social Gospelers mobilized to challenge jim crow and its injustices.

Samantha Gillison
The Savage Detectives by Roberto Bolaño

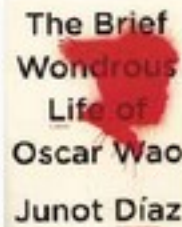
Like Rabelais and Henry Miller, the late Bolaño holds up a magnifying glass to the human animal and lets us glimpse eternity. This



classic of Latin American literature is sexy, funny and sometimes terrifying but always a visceral pleasure.

Laura Kipnis
The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao by Junot Diaz

What an amazing voice, what a dazzling and vital writer. These characters—Oscar, his family, the Dominican Republic itself—worm their way into your thoughts and won't leave.



Eric Klinenberg
On the Make: The Hustle of Urban Nightlife by David Grazian

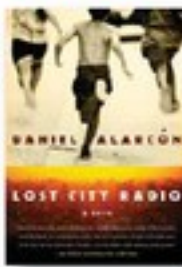
Grazian, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, asked undergraduates in his pop-culture courses to write field notes about their nights on the town. *On the Make* assembles these accounts to form a dazzling and sometimes disturbing portrait of young adults in the urban glamour zone. No other book reveals as much about sex, drugs and money off campus.

Jonathan Lethem
Remainder by Tom McCarthy

I liked this book so much, I blurbed it—and I'd been telling everyone I was out of that dirty game forever. I couldn't keep from endorsing the obsessive and singular imagination behind the story of a man trying to re-create the world as he would like to see it. A masterpiece of amnesia lit.

Richard McCann
Lost City Radio by Daniel Alarcón

A stunning, sobering debut novel. Alarcón's images of a country that has stripped its Indian villages of their original names and outlawed old maps are clear-eyed, shattering and indelible.



Walter Mosley
Brother, I'm Dying by Edwidge Danticat

As in the case of the great patriot Thomas Paine, it sometimes takes a voice seasoned in another land to allow us to see our own hearts. A harrowing and beautiful memoir.

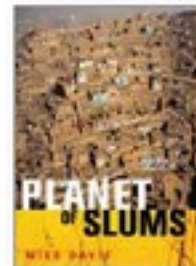
Chuck Palahniuk
Clown Girl by Monica Drake

A debut novel about a part-time clown

who is coerced into the tawdry world of clown sex work.

Andrew Ross
Planet of Slums by Mike Davis

We all grew up with the sci-fi depiction of cities of the future as gleaming steel-sheathed utopias. Shattering this vision, Davis shows us how and why the bulk of urban humanity is increasingly being warehoused in massive shantytowns.



Jane Smiley
The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism by Naomi Klein

This exploration of the disastrous effects of free-market economics is well documented, logical and riveting. It will change your understanding of the past 50 years.

Jess Walter
The Beautiful Things That Heaven Bears by Dinaw Mengestu

This lean, lovely novel follows Sepha, an Ethiopian immigrant who runs a convenience store in a gentrifying neighborhood of Washington, D.C. The sentences never overreach, mirroring the quiet heroism of Sepha and his immigrant friends, invisible men who battle every indignity with brash, senseless hope.



Garry Wills
Touch and Go: A Memoir by Studs Terkel

After more than 50 years of interviewing Americans of all ages, races and persuasions, Terkel tells his own story of immersion in American lives. This is the best book of the year because it sifts through all the other years of seeing America up close, savoring it, singing it, saving it.

Tobias Wolff
Leni: The Life and Work of Leni Riefenstahl by Steven Bach

A terrific book about that very interesting monster and filmmaker to the Third Reich, Leni Riefenstahl.



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Why not leave the noise behind?



Music can transport you and inspire you. But to fully appreciate it, you need to hear each note and nuance. QuietComfort headphones use acclaimed Bose technologies to reduce the noise around you, so your music sounds even more natural. And when you're not listening to music, you can detach the audio cord and still enjoy the benefits of Bose noise reduction.

Choose your favorite style: the on-ear QC3 headphones or the around-ear QC2 headphones. And discover the unmatched combination of noise reduction, audio performance and comfortable fit provided by Bose QuietComfort headphones.

Less noise. We originally engineered these headphones to reduce the engine roar on airplanes, and that's where you'll hear the most dramatic difference. But people soon started telling us how they were using them in other places, from commuter trains to homes, even to reduce distractions at the office. As *Ultimate Mobility* magazine reports, "Bose's noise-reducing QuietComfort headphones have been the gold standard for years."

Clearer music. These are our best-sounding headphones. Even delicate nuances, like the soft trill of a flute, are more distinct and natural. Writing about the QC2 headphones, *Travel + Leisure Golf* says, "Forget 'concertlike' comparisons;



On-ear
QC3 headphones.

Around-ear
QC2 headphones.

you'll think you're onstage with the band." The QC3 and QC2 headphones are also easy to take with you, since they fold flat for easy storage in a slim carrying case.

Two styles to choose from. The QC3 headphones lightly rest on your ears. The QC2 headphones gently surround them. Both offer the same

total (active plus passive) noise reduction and the same acclaimed audio performance. Your choice should be made on whether you prefer around-ear or on-ear headphones.

Try them risk free for 30 days. Simply choose your favorite style, and use our Excitement Guarantee to listen for 30 days. Order now and you'll receive \$50 toward an additional Bose product purchased at the same time. Discover all the

places your music can take you, with the noise reduction provided by the QuietComfort Acoustic Noise Cancelling headphones. From Bose, the most respected name in sound.

Purchase any QuietComfort headphone by January 31, 2008, and receive \$50 toward an additional Bose product purchased at the same time.*

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Ciudad by the Sea

A backpacker haven on the Mayan Riviera grows up

FOR SCRUFFY, SCUFFLING 20-somethings searching for the meaning of life, Tulum, Mexico has long played the part of paradise. The recent arrival of the sumptuous boutique resort Blue Tulum (rooms from \$550, eurostarshotels.com) shows the region has evolved into a luxe destination with rustic roots. Tulum is where you come to unplug, literally: The entire hotel zone is off the electrical grid. Properties in the region generate their own power, and some forgo it altogether. Two hours south of Cancún's airport, the hotel is bordered on the north by the Tulum ruins, a strikingly well-preserved pre-Columbian cliff-side city (pictured above) hugged by a strip of dazzling white sand. You owe yourself at least one beach lunch at the iQue Fresco! restaurant at Zamas (dishes from \$7, zamas.com), where you can curl your toes in the sand and drain a *michelada* (a spicy beer cocktail) or six. Set aside a day to venture inland to the jungle-covered ruins of Cobá (about \$35 for a guided tour) and spend another diving the cenotes, freshwater limestone sinkholes, for an otherworldly aquatic experience (cavern dives from \$60, cenotedive.com). Nocturnally speaking, dinner by candlelight is a must at Posada Margherita (entrées about \$30, posadamargherita.com), then get your ya-yas out at Mezzanine's bar (mezzanine.com.mx/bar), which holds the beach party of the week every Friday night. Trust us: After a few days off the grid, you'll be in no rush to climb back on.



Super Cars

AMONG THE HOTTEST vintage beauties on the block at Barrett-Jackson's Scottsdale, Arizona auction from January 12 to 20 (catch the action on the Speed Channel): 1963 Chevrolet Corvette Rondine (pictured, lot 1304) A one-and-only Vette designed by the great Italian coach builder Pininfarina, of Ferrari fame. 1963 Ford Thunderbird Italien Fastback Concept Car (lot 1306) The auction will be this one-of-a-kind automobile's first public appearance since it was shown at the 1964 New York World's Fair. 1935 Rolls-Royce Phantom II Coupe (lot 1312) Only 19 of these stunners were made. 1967 Shelby Mustang GT500 (lot 1318) Last year Carroll Shelby's personal 1966 Cobra Super Snake went for \$5.5 million. This Stang was once owned by Shelby's son Mike.

Male Call

BEFORE *PLAYBOY* HAD Playmates, Hef had the Sweetheart of the Month, and Marilyn Monroe was the first. We'll be forever grateful for those 37-23-36 curves. These novel cuff links are made from actual 32-cent U.S. Postal Service stamps mounted on gold-plated clasps (\$60, cufflinksdepot.com). Thanks to cancellation marks and other variations, each one is unique, like Marilyn herself. Just the thing to scratch that seven-year itch.



Thought Bubbles

IT'S NEW YEAR'S Eve. You say, "These are my three favorite champagnes." She says, "Why do we need three kinds?" You answer, "The Laurent-Perrier Brut Millésimé 1997 [right, \$60] is for our predinner aperitif. It's 52 percent chardonnay and 48 percent pinot noir, with a silky texture and a long vanilla finish. The rare Dom Ruinart 1996 [below right, \$170] is for toasting the fireworks. It's a *blanc de blanc*, 100 percent chardonnay, with hints of honey and toasted almond." She asks, "What's the Moët & Chandon White Star [below left, \$35] for?" You answer, "Bathing, naturally."



Opening Statement

SABRAGE, OPENING CHAMPAGNE with a saber, was popularized by Napoleon's cavalry, which celebrated its triumphs by cracking open some bubbly—literally. Use this sword from Laguiole Rossignol (\$325, broadwaypanhandler.com) to mark your own Austerlitz. Remove the foil and wire from a chilled bottle, grip the base and slide the blade quickly and firmly along the neck, striking the glass lip. The top will break away clean, taking the cork with it. *Magnifique!* For a tutorial, log on to playboy.com/magazine.



A Roe by Any Other Name

CAVIAR FROM THE Caspian Sea is banned in the U.S., but the American caviar industry has come of age in the nick of time. California's Tsar Nicoulai harvests from organically fed farm-raised native white sturgeon. Its California Estate Osetra (black, \$59 an ounce, tsarnicoulai.com) rivals its vaunted European cousin in taste and texture, while its American Golden Whitefish is both delicious and shockingly reasonable at \$10 for two ounces.

TIME CRISIS 4



**THE BAD GUYS LOOK GOOD,
BUT THAT'S JUST THE RESOLUTION.**

The First, Next-Generation Action Shooter. High-def and hardcore meet to propel the premier arcade adventure into your living room. Featuring all new FPS stages, revolutionary graphics and the most advanced light gun available, this is the game you have been waiting for.



PLAYSTATION 3



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GREAT TASTE THAT'S NEVER WATERED DOWN.

GOOD CALL.

The Playboy Advisor

I came home from getting takeout to find my girlfriend at my desk, trying to crack my computer password. When I asked what she was doing, she replied casually that she wanted to see what was on my PC and would I please type in my password. I told her she was nuts, which prompted a well-rehearsed speech to the effect that I could be a rapist, a terrorist or a serial killer. I told her a rapist, terrorist or serial killer would not leave evidence on his computer for his girlfriend/victim to find, even if she knew the password. She felt that anything not in the open, from my bank accounts to my e-mails, meant I had something to hide, which she said is a bad sign. She didn't stay for dinner. What is it with women and their snooping? And what's the best way to establish boundaries?—J.S., Columbus, Ohio

Your girlfriend is cool under pressure but not particularly resourceful. For less than \$50 and from the privacy of her own home, she could order an online background check that reveals your character. Bankruptcies, lawsuits, divorces, outstanding warrants, the FBI's most wanted—it's all there for the taking. You can't win here, because even if you opened up she would want continuing access to keep you in line. As you found, a good way to establish boundaries is to place a password on your computer. Then find a girlfriend who has secrets of her own.

When my best friend and her baby come to my house, she sometimes takes a nursing break in the living room. This makes my boyfriend uncomfortable, even though my friend does her best to shield the view. I am wondering if the Advisor thinks my friend is committing a faux pas, or is my boyfriend being too traditional?—N.H., Roseburg, Oregon

Your boyfriend will have to deal. Seeing a tit never hurt anyone.

What should you do if the police pull you over and ask you to take a Breathalyzer test? I've heard you should refuse. Should you also refuse other sobriety tests, such as walking in a straight line?—A.K., New York, New York

The officer isn't going to tell you this, but in nearly every state, field sobriety tests—e.g., finger to nose, one-leg stand—are optional. "Your chances of passing them are zero if the cop has already decided you're drunk," says Lawrence Taylor, a California-based attorney whose firm specializes in defending against DUI charges (duicenter.com). The officer may ask you to blow into a handheld device; in most states you can refuse this as well, although some require it of anyone under the age of 21. Finally, although it will annoy the officer, you should politely refuse to answer his questions about where you've been, where you're going, how much you've had to drink, etc. Once at the



station, you will be told you must take a breath, blood or urine test. Refusing at this point has severe consequences. Every state requires you to consent to a breath or blood test as a condition of getting a driver's license. So if you refuse, your license will likely be suspended on the spot. The prosecutor won't have test results as evidence, but he can argue that your refusal shows "consciousness of guilt." If you're found guilty after refusing, you may face a stiffer penalty (e.g., a license suspension of one year instead of four months). The best strategy, of course, is to avoid putting yourself in this situation.

The other day my wife was telling me she has a "somewhat guilty" personality that often leads her to do things just to make other people happy. When I jokingly asked, "So would you cheat on me if a guy guilted you into it?" she replied quite seriously, "I probably could." I glared at her and told her I found that response disturbing. She said I had misunderstood. To clarify things, I asked, "If we lived next door to a single guy who made you feel guilty because you wouldn't have sex with him, would you give in to make him happy?" She said, "I'm not in that situation, so don't worry about it." We left it there, but I still feel uneasy. It's not that I think it will happen, but I could have done without hearing her deadpan response to what I considered a joke. Should this bother me, or am I overreacting?—J.S., Manhattan, Kansas

Coulda, woulda, might, may, possibly, if. This is a ridiculous argument. Why not fight about money like everyone else?

A reader wrote in September to say she believes more girlfriends and wives are finding themselves unsatisfied sexually

because "the world is changing" and women's growing power has emasculated men. In reply you invited "a few of these exhausted men" to explain themselves. I'm one of those men, as are a number of my friends. One in particular used to be a wild man, but years of marital training under a demanding wife have diminished him. I wonder if this explains why our wives more often initiate sex. I am much more sedate than when my wife and I met, because it keeps the peace.—W.B., Indianapolis, Indiana

Are you sedate or bored? The letters in September and October prompted a number of passionate responses. You can read a sampling at playboy.com/blog under The Advisor, but here's a summary of the explanations they contain: (1) Husband is exhausted by domestic demands of postfeminist world; for example, instead of receiving a scotch, slippers and the paper when he gets home, now he must change diapers and do chores. (2) Wife got fat and/or let herself go. (3) Husband grew ambivalent because wife isn't adventurous enough to satisfy his instinctive need for variety, i.e., wife may want sex more often, but it's always the same sex. Notably, nearly every man who wrote said he valued the relationship despite his frustration and had no plans to leave. And then there is this view...

I don't see why these women who want sex more than their hubbies don't recognize the obvious: If your man wants it from you only once a month, he's cheating on you.—L.M., Madison, Wisconsin

On the contrary, a cheater usually steps it up in the bedroom, partly out of guilt and partly because he doesn't want his wife to think he's getting it elsewhere. This sudden change of habit is often what first makes the wife suspicious. In addition, as a general rule, the more sex you're having, the more sex you want.

For as long as I can remember, I have had a special interest in spanking and being spanked. Is this normal? Also, I am going to my first spanking party. Any tips?—D.C., Lansing, Michigan

An interest in spanking is unusual but hardly abnormal. There are spanking clubs in a few cities, including Chicago (Crimson Moon), New York (Spanking Club of New York), Seattle (Chastenwood) and Tampa (Florida Moonshine). Each club has its own rules, but the basic tips to keep in mind are (1) don't touch anyone without their okay, (2) if you need a break, just sit down, and (3) relax and have fun.

Is there any way to jazz up the traditional opening of champagne on New Year's Eve?—J.M., Portland, Oregon

If you want to go all out, hire a sabreur. Rick French has opened thousands of champagne bottles by sliding a flat-edged saber up the neck and knocking off the top inch,

with the cork intact. (See page 36 to get your own saber.) French explains the trick, which he learned while hanging out in France with members of the *Confrérie du Sabre d'Or* (Brotherhood of the Golden Saber), at champagnesabering.com. Given that bottled champagne has about 100 pounds of pressure per square inch, French urges caution. "I was introducing a resort guest in Santa Barbara to sabering," he says. "He deftly sliced off the top of the bottle, which sailed across the room at 45 miles an hour and shattered a \$3,000 bottle of cognac." That's why we keep our top-shelf booze in the fridge. *Happy New Year.*

I love my husband but feel I am not enough for him. At times he will ask me to blow him while he watches porn on his computer. I like to please him, but when I agree to do this I feel he is being turned on by the women on-screen rather than by me. I guess all the threesomes and anal and blow jobs don't count. Plus, he goes down on me maybe three times a year. He makes female friends everywhere, which drives me crazy; it's as if he wants to show me that other women like him. I have suggested marriage counseling, but he says he doesn't need to go. What should I do?—M.M., Wilmington, North Carolina

Go alone. When you find yourself serving as a fluffer for a guy watching porn, it's a sure sign that the marriage needs work or that you can do better.

I have a stubborn case of athlete's foot. I managed to get it under control by applying a spray each morning and changing my socks at least once during the day, but it keeps coming back. A friend told me the best way to get rid of athlete's foot is to urinate on the infected area while showering. Is he yanking my chain?—C.M., Martinez, California

Fungus is a bitch. Even after the rash clears up, it will return if you don't continue to apply antifungal cream for one or two more weeks. If the infection hasn't cleared up within a month, visit a podiatrist to get a prescription cream or pills. The medication works much better if you keep your feet clean and dry—studies have found that the rash disappears in 30 percent to 40 percent of people who have used only a mild antifungal but washed their feet twice a day. Peeing on yourself is an old Army remedy; urine and many antifungal creams share an ingredient called urea, but your urine doesn't contain nearly enough to do any good. Let's save the golden showers for the bedroom, where they belong.

Is there any way to kill a cat to make it look as though it died of natural causes? Fifteen years ago my girlfriend (now wife) and I moved in together. Soon after, she convinced me to let her adopt a cat she found abandoned in our apartment complex. Because I was still in the whipped phase of our relationship, I agreed. A year later she adopted a second cat. I figured they would live a year or two, but they're still with us. What would be the

equivalent of teaching a cat to smoke 10 packs of cigarettes, drink a gallon of whiskey and eat a quart of bacon grease every day?—D.L., Spring Hill, Tennessee

At this point you need to make peace with the felines because even if they died tomorrow your wife would just find two more to rescue. No pussies for her, no pussy for you.

My girlfriend and I are trying to spice up our sex life. I told her I have a fantasy about watching her mess around with another guy, up to (but not including) penetration: When he tries to go for it she refuses and makes him leave. Then she and I would have mad sex. She says she would be into experimenting as long as she doesn't have to fuck the other guys. Am I a pervert for fantasizing about this?—T.S., Dallas, Texas

Watching your partner have sex with someone else is a common fantasy, although that last-second refusal is an interesting twist. The challenge will be finding a masochist willing to suffer blue balls for your benefit.

In October you told a reader with armpit stains on his shirts to use "ammonia, white vinegar or, as a last resort, a bleach stick," which could be dangerous. You should never mix bleach with ammonia (which creates chloramine) or vinegar (which creates chlorine gas).—D.S., Valley City, North Dakota

That's a good thing to keep in mind. If there was confusion about our use of the word "or," we meant for the reader to try each method independently.

I work at a restaurant. Last week I slept with a co-worker. Earlier this week we were waiting around after our shifts ended, and I asked her out for a drink. She said she was waiting for one of the kitchen guys to finish because they had made plans. When I got upset she said I had no right to act like a jealous boyfriend. Although I know we're not a couple, I feel it's disrespectful for her to spend time with somebody else we both work with. How does the Advisor interpret the rules of dating here?—A.G., San Francisco, California

We're sorry to disappoint, but the rules of dating apply only if the woman agrees you're dating. She is free to work her way through the entire restaurant without consulting you.

What is the legality of absinthe? I have heard you can't buy it in the U.S., but is it legal to have it shipped in from another country?—D.K., Tampa, Florida

Although it is widely available in Europe, absinthe has been banned in the U.S. since 1912 because it was thought to contain a potentially dangerous amount of a substance called thujone, which is found in grand wormwood, a key ingredient of absinthe. But when chemist Ted Breaux reverse-engineered absinthes distilled in the 19th century, he found they contained less thujone than was widely believed. At the request of Viridian

Spirits, a newly formed importer, Breaux set about to re-create the famous green liquor with a minuscule (and legal) amount of thujone. The result is Lucid Absinthe Supérieure, which is distilled by hand in Saumur, France in antique copper stills. The 124-proof liquor was initially sold only in the New York City area and online but should now be stocked nationwide. Check drinklucid.com for availability. Absinthe is best sipped after it has been diluted with water and a pinch of sugar.

My husband thinks anyone who is in a relationship should not masturbate. He found my vibrator and freaked out, accusing me of cheating because I sometimes masturbate while he's at work. We have always had great sex, so I don't see what the big deal is. My vibrator went into the trash, but I still have the urge. I'm not sure if I should deny myself or continue behind his back. I've tried talking to him, but he is firm in his beliefs; I can't even use my hand. Any advice?—H.S., Paducah, Kentucky

Does your husband also believe the earth is flat, NASA faked the moon landings and you should pee on athlete's foot? He is completely wrong on this, and you can tell him we said so—unless he also doesn't know you read PLAYBOY. Ask if you can use a vibrator when you're together, and tell him he can hold it. Once he sees the reaction it induces, maybe he'll chill. The only problem we see with masturbation by people in relationships is if it becomes a substitute for a shared sex life—then you are cheating your spouse. That doesn't seem to be the case, so your husband is crazy to discourage you. Besides, it's impossible to resist these urges forever—we all have our needs. Get a mini vibe and hide it in your tampon box; he'll never look there.

A good friend and I have developed feelings for each other, but she says she won't get involved unless I quit smoking pot. I think she is touchy because her sister is a recovering drug addict and she's worried I'll get busted or become addicted. Is there any way to convince her it won't affect our relationship? I want to be honest; I'd never lie to her and smoke behind her back.—E.S., Washington, D.C.

It sounds as if you must choose between your friend and Mary Jane. When was the last time your bong gave you a blow job?

*All reasonable questions—from fashion, food and drink, stereos 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 in 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. The Advisor's latest book, *Dear Playboy Advisor*, is available at bookstores, by phoning 800-423-9494 or online at playboystore.com.*



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THE PLAYBOY FORUM

HOW THE WEST WAS RUINED

IT IS RECKLESS TO VIEW NATURE AS A SUBLIME FORM THAT IS ONLY BESMIRCHED BY THE PRESENCE OF HUMANS

BY JONATHAN RABAN

Here in the West there's an ongoing war (with real shots sometimes fired from real guns) between the metropolitan cities and their outlying rural towns. From the perspective of the small town, it's tempting to see every environmental initiative—to halt or restrict logging, mining and ranching on federal lands; to demolish dams on rivers like the Columbia, the Snake and the Colorado; to reintroduce the buffalo, wolf and grizzly bear—as the work of wealthy big-city hobbyists who show up in the countryside on weekends in hybrid SUVs laden with backpacks, fly rods and climbing gear. With their ready money, soft hands and unlined faces, the carbon-footprint-conscious invaders look like an alien tribe, zealots bent on the destruction of traditional rural livelihoods. From the perspective of the city, the country dwellers are too easily seen as lacking in education and enlightenment, hapless dupes of the timber and mining corporations, proletarian obstacles to the great mission of conserving what little is left of the American wilderness.

Important arguments about land use in the West are aggravated by class resentment and class condescension. This isn't just the result of the real disparity between rural and metropolitan incomes in the region. Something nastier and deeper is going on, and it's embedded in the DNA of the language in which we talk and think about wild nature.

Not all that long ago the kind of landscape now so prized in the West struck civilized observers as merely ugly and

useless—heaps of geological rubbish. In the 1720s Daniel Defoe made a tour of Great Britain and was repelled by the modest mountains (none much higher than 3,000 feet) he encountered in Scotland and Wales: “barren,” “impassible,” “frightful,” “barbarous,” “terrible,” “horrid” and “desart” were his words for them. It was only in the second half of the 18th century that the rage for the romantic sublime took

hold and it became fashionable to see mountains, cascades, precipices and impenetrable forests as objects of transcendent wonder and beauty. By 1805, when the Lewis and Clark expedition came within sight of the Rockies—which would soon prove to be an almighty headache for the explorers as they tried to cross them—Lewis was able to greet the mountains as an “august spectacle,” “picturesk,” “sublime,” “noble,” “beautiful” and “majestically grand scenery.”

That vocabulary, still relatively fresh when Lewis was writing his journal, has had an astonishingly long and resilient life in America, mainly because of the huge influence of John Muir, the sainted godfather

of the conservation movement, co-founder of the Sierra Club and prime mover in the establishment of the national parks system. At a time when the cult of the sublime was all but dead, Muir (1838–1914) brought it back to life, stamping it with his own brand of evangelical fervor. “Christianity and mountainity are streams from the same fountain,” he wrote to a friend, and his work combines acute and precise botanical and geological observations



with a kind of shivering religious ecstasy in the presence of nature's "divine truth." Muir was part scientist, part missionary, part hard-nosed salesman: Selling the wonders of the West to railroad tourists from the East, he wrapped the landscape in an irresistible package of expert natural history, lofty spirituality and old-fashioned poetry.

Rhapsody was his natural medium. Traveling through the mountains with Muir, one is exhorted in almost every paragraph to thrill to their sublimity, grandeur, majesty and nobility—words that dot his prose like currants in a bun. His message couldn't be more plain: In the craggy aristocracy of the peaks and woods, we commune with majesty and nobility and thereby rouse something noble and majestic in ourselves. In the national parks—"nature's sublime wonderlands, the admiration and joy of the world"—spiritual uplift goes hand in hand with social uplift: To hike through Yosemite is to enjoy a uniquely patrician experience in democratic America.

The distinct undercurrent of class and racial elitism that runs through Muir's writing has always, I suspect, been part of his appeal. In *My First Summer in the Sierra* he complains of the Mono Indians polluting the purity of Yosemite with their "dirty and irregular life" in "this clean wilderness" and goes on to remark that "the worst thing about them is their uncleanness. Nothing truly wild is unclean"—a sentiment worth dwelling on for its complicated tangle of implications. In *A Thousand Mile Walk to the Gulf* he sings the praises of Athens, Georgia, "a remarkably beautiful and aristocratic town," admiring the "many classic and magnificent mansions of wealthy planters, who formerly owned large *Negro-stocked* plantations. Unmistakable marks of culture and refinement...were everywhere apparent. This is the most beautiful town I have seen on the journey so far and the only

one in the South that I would like to revisit" (my italics). What impressed him most was the deferential behavior of the blacks he encountered in Athens: "The Negroes here have been well trained and are extremely polite. When they come in sight of a white man on the road, off go their hats, even at a distance of 40 or 50 yards, and they walk bare-headed until he is out of sight."

There's a connection here between Muir's infatuation with a hierarchical, aristocratic society—in which the lower orders know their place and doff their cap to their betters, and the lords and ladies exhibit their culture

frequently to absorb the majesty," and "Whitney's regal profile towered over us." The word *noble* is attached to trees ("noble giants"), silence, summits, bighorn sheep, bald eagles and, mysteriously, snipe and Chinese bicycles.

The words matter because they define the northern rim, as it were, of that great rift of sensibility dividing the nature tourists and conservationists from the majority of people who live and work in landscapes visitors cherish for their grandeur. Anyone who has driven through the mountainous West on twisting, unpaved forest roads and minor state routes knows the shock of arrival at the next town. For hours you drive through the furniture of Muir's sublime: dense, pathless forest; lone pines clinging to needle-like crags; plunging cataracts; jagged, snow-capped peaks; sheer thousand-foot drops from the edge of an unfenced gravel road—the landscape of conventional majesty. Then the gradient of the river-hugging road eases, the current slows, and the first speed-limit sign comes into view. From the T junction where the gravel meets the highway, you get your first sight of the town, and the



and refinement (all odd, coming from someone who was raised a Scottish Presbyterian)—and his rapturous exultation in the nobility and grandeur of the mountains. In the thin, clean air of Muir's beloved wildernesses lies a healing alternative to the plebeian jostle of the American city, where people live "mildewed and dwarfed in disease and crime." Visit the high places of the West, he promised, and vacation like a king.

Today Muir's language flourishes and sometimes runs riot in guidebooks, in the writing of outdoors columnists and, not surprisingly, in the newsletters put out by local chapters of the Sierra Club, where hikers and mountaineers report their adventures: "The view from the aerie perch was sublime," "I stopped

circuits of the brain go into overload as the eye tries to square what has gone before with what is to come.

It's a generic Western town—wide main street, single stoplight, a pair of competing motels, a pair of competing gas stations, a decaying mercantile block of brick and stucco dating from the 1920s, the off-pink cinder-block bulk of a Kmart, a strip mall with the adult video store next to the Mexican restaurant, a Safeway, a drive-through bank, a tavern, a school, a church or two—all this set in a grid of bungalows that fills the narrow valley like a moraine.

If there's an election on, yard signs in the side streets will supply you with the names of everyone running for sheriff, mayor or city councilman, for



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local democracy functions here with an enthusiasm and informed knowledge of the issues and personalities that put national politics to shame. The bungalows—apparently identical when seen at a distance—in close-up turn out to be entertainingly full of eccentricity and character. The town is well worth a wander, for it is, in its way, an American classic, an example of expressive vernacular architecture as distinct—and certainly as recognizable—as that of a Tuscan hill village.

But if you approach it with your head full of Muir-speak, it's an eyesore, a blot on the landscape, a square mile of schlock. Its massive, boldly painted chain-saw sculptures, far from being marks of culture and refinement, appear as brutal assaults on the sacred nature of old-growth forest; its neon signs are an affront, its broad streets out of all proportion to the low homes that line them. The one-story (and largely one-class and one-industry) settlement, which got its start in life as a mining or logging camp or an arbitrary railroad stop, is a world away from Athens, Georgia. In the elevated, quasi-aristocratic language of the decadent sublime, there's no place for the ad hoc democratic architecture of the working rural West. The casual visitor, fresh from his noble mountains, sees its glaring lack of nobility, wealth, beauty, antiquity and height and disdainfully regrets its existence—or would, if only he weren't running short of gas. Ghost towns, of course, adorn the view by reminding the romantic tourist of the mortal folly of all human enterprise when set against the enduring grandeur of nature, but the living towns tend to ruin it.

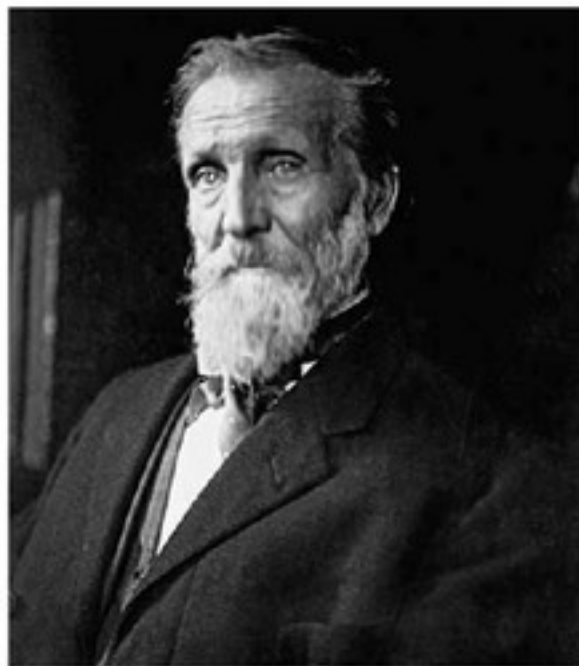
Consider Leavenworth, Washington, which in its heyday had a railroad depot with a roundhouse and a big sawmill but lost both in the 1920s. In 1965, after three decades of slow moldering and population loss, it did what Westerners are famed for doing and set out on a program of fantastic self-reinvention. Taking a cue from its setting on the eastern slopes of the Cascade Range, a two-hour drive from Seattle, it became a Bavarian alpine resort, the Berchtesgaden of Chelan County. The town has a draconian building code that governs roof pitches, the extent of overhangs, scrolled lookout beams, shutters, balconies, flower boxes, the proportion of timber to stucco and so forth and requires would-be developers to pore over such books as *Bayern in Bildern*, *Häuser in den Alpen* and *Wohnen in Alpenland*. There are cuckoo-clock

shops, German Gothic street signs, restaurants serving Wiener schnitzel and sauerkraut and at least one hotel where guests are awakened for breakfast by a *mädchen* tootling on an alpenhorn. The Leavenworth year is punctuated by fests of accordions, wine and beer and, just in time for the holidays, the *Christkindlmarkt*.

Kitsch, certainly, but not quite Disney: Leavenworth is too earnest a replica for that, saved from mere whimsy

THE WEST'S HISTORY HAS ALWAYS BEEN ONE OF RANCOROUS BATTLES BETWEEN MUTUALLY INCOMPATIBLE VISIONS.

by its ferocious attention to realistic detail and materials. Seattleites flock to it (so, apparently, do homesick German exiles) because the place reeks alluringly of castles, kings and prince electors, its architecture in tune with the lust for antiquity and nobility that goes with



John Muir's rhapsodic view of nature has hurt the environmental movement.

spending a weekend in the mountains. By artfully obliterating from view as much as it can of its own history, nationality, language and culture (there are no permitted exceptions; even McDonald's and Exxon have undergone Bavarian makeovers), Leavenworth has made itself acceptably picturesque. In the eye of the tourist focusing her camera on the conventionally grand alpine scene

beyond the town, there's no incongruity between the streets in the foreground and all the majestic stuff in the middle and far distance. The usual problem in these parts has been ingeniously solved, though a little forgiving myopia helps.

One has to admire the town's enterprise, and I've enjoyed my visits there, but one Leavenworth is quite enough. It's time to retire the language of the sublime, with its implicit class snobbery and muddling together of aesthetic pleasure with social hierarchy, and look freshly at the relationship between the ungussied-up townships of the American West and their natural surroundings.

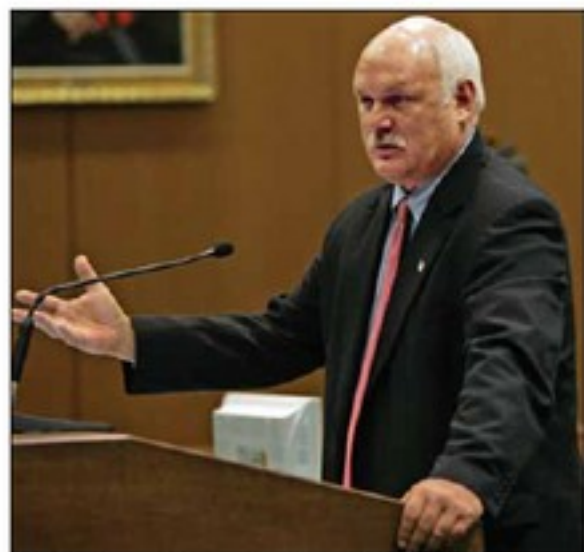
You can't move around the rural West without bumping into the stereotype of the environmentalist as someone who is messianic, impervious to argument and insufferably superior in his manners, with a lofty disregard for the lives, jobs and communities of ordinary people. ARE YOU AN ENVIRONMENTALIST OR DO YOU WORK FOR A LIVING? WAS a favorite bumper sticker in the 1990s timber wars here in the Pacific Northwest. As stereotypes go, it's crude but not entirely baseless. The environmental movement carries much antique rhetorical baggage, most of it directly traceable to Muir. There are powerful reasons to protect as best we can the federally owned forests and mountains from chain saw, drill and unregulated grazing—not for their majesty and grandeur or the recreational opportunities they afford visitors from the city but for their ecological necessity for everyone. It isn't a matter of mere aesthetics: The West, once seen as limitless in its myriad resources as the oceans were, is perilously delicate and vulnerable—not least to the lines of tourists trailing up its mountainsides. But the environmental case is lost, like the baby with the bathwater, as long as the countryside can be perceived in terms of the ennobling spiritual benefits of roadless hiking and the snobbish taste for natural beauty of the urban leisure class.

The region's history has always been one of rancorous battles between mutually incompatible visions of its use and future, from whites vs. Indians and cattlemen vs. sodbusters to our present multifront conflict between exploitation and conservation. We should at least remove from that debate, which is fought with righteous fury on every side, the outworn, undemocratic assumptions that covertly underpin our long, unthinking, sentimental attachment to the sublime.

READER RESPONSE

LAW AND OUT OF ORDER

Regarding "Prosecutors Gone Wild" ("Newsfront," October), the videotape that prosecutor David McDade is cir-



Ethical questions dog David McDade.

culating in an apparent effort to keep Genarlow Wilson in jail is not the real concern. Because of the ages of the video's participants, McDade should be arrested for distributing child pornography. That is the crime. I am sure most of us did things as teens that we regret, but let's be real: Distributing a tape of two minors engaged in a sexual act is against the law everywhere. Let McDade get a taste of what it is to be front and center on the criminal-justice stage.

Michael Corbitt
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

ISRAEL, RIGHT OR WRONG

Jonathan Tasini should be applauded for standing up for peace in the Middle East ("Israel Shouldn't Get a Free Pass," October). I appreciate his pointing out that many Israelis do not agree with American Jews or the U.S. government's policies regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. I have personally seen how one can be vilified for expressing an opinion about Israel's occupation of Palestine. In a country that espouses freedom of speech, it is unfortunate that people have tried to prevent the publication of John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt's book, *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*. I hope more politicians and members of the media will come out for peace in the Middle East and an end to the killing of innocent people in Palestine and Lebanon.

Rachel Haynes
Middlefield, Ohio

As an American Jew keenly interested in the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, I was disappointed with Tasini's commentary. When much criticism of Israel is laced with anti-Semitism—including tired charges of Jewish-Israeli participation in world-domination conspiracies, involvement in the 9/11 attacks and deception of the American government and public in promoting the war with Iraq—PLAYBOY does a disservice and panders to its readers by letting Tasini repeat former president Jimmy Carter's accusation that American Jews refuse



Criticism of Israel draws heavy fire.

to criticize Israel and, worse, that they hide behind the horrors of the Holocaust to shield Israel from a fair assessment. Most American Jews agree with most Israeli citizens that Israel should ultimately abandon most of the West Bank settlements. Furthermore, despite Tasini's insinuations to the contrary, most American Jews are willing to publicly and unambiguously voice these opinions, though they differ from the official pronouncements of the Israeli government. However, Jews worldwide are not willing—and should not be willing—to ignore the reality that Israel alone cannot end the Arab-Israeli conflict. Despite Tasini's simplistic claims, abandoning the West Bank settlements will not bring peace any more than abandoning the Gaza Strip and southern Lebanon did. American Jews understand that Israel and the United States cannot impose peace on a region that will not cooperate and that peace will come only when the Arab world is willing to accept Israel as a permanent, legitimate neighbor. PLAYBOY and Tasini would be better citizens and do a more honorable job of contributing to

the dialogue of peace by encouraging people to consider the transnational forces of fear, propaganda and hatred that fuel and perpetuate the Arab-Israeli conflict and too often color this important debate.

Brett Locker
Santa Barbara, California

Has Tasini heard of the Carter Doctrine, in which the then president stated we would protect our interests (read: oil) in the Persian Gulf region by any means necessary, "including military force"? We import more than 60 percent of our oil, and while domestic production will remain about the same, our overall requirements are expected to increase significantly. If we are shut out of the Persian Gulf by radical Muslims, our economy will take a nosedive. Israel is and must remain our foothold in the region.

Burl Estes
Mission Viejo, California

WELCOME TO WHEREVER

Eric Klinenberg's "What City Is This?" (September) strikes a raw nerve. My favorite small local restaurant was driven out by a new landlord who said Starbucks would pay more for the space. I tell my friends I could blindfold them and take them to any city in the U.S. and, because of Starbucks, Borders, Taco Bell, Subway, KFC, etc.,



This could be any town, anywhere.

they would not be able to tell what city it was. It's all part of the new America, contrary to what this country was about in the not too distant past.

Ken Clark
Los Altos, California

E-mail via the web at letters.playboy.com. Or write: 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10019.

NEWSFRONT



Saints on a Plane

WASHINGTON, D.C.—With the introduction of the Family Friendly Flight Act, in late September, Congress is seeking to extend its reach into airline cabins in order to censor onboard entertainment. The bill, introduced by Democrat Heath Shuler and Republican Walter Jones, both of North Carolina, essentially gives airlines a choice: ban movies originally rated PG-13, R, NC-17 or not rated (even if they have been edited for the airline) or create separate seating areas for children and their families. Currently, federal broadcast regulations do not apply to aircraft, and airlines are under no obligation to adhere to movie ratings. The legislators gave a few examples of complaints they had received. One was about a shooting scene in *Fracture* (pictured), and another was about a scene in *The Last Kiss* in which an attractive student flirts with a married architect.

STDs in the City

NEW YORK CITY—A report from New York City's Department of Health shows that during the past six years new cases of HIV among gay men under the age of 30 have increased by a third and, worse still, doubled among gay men between the ages of 13 and 19. The distribution of new cases shows a distinct color bias: Twice as many occur among blacks as among whites. The department found syphilis rates in the city increasing as well.

Can You Hear Me Now?

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Responding to a query from Congress in October, telecom company Verizon admitted it had shared phone and Internet data with federal authorities without warrants or court orders. The company said in a letter to investigators that it did not examine the legal basis of these requests before turning over records—which it did 720 times between January 2005 and September 2007. Verizon also revealed that the FBI was seeking data not only on specific persons but also on all the people those persons had called and all the people those people in turn had called. Verizon said, however, that it did not maintain such information, known as “two-generation community of interest” data. “The responses from these telecommunications companies highlight the need of Congress to continue pressing the Bush administration for answers,” said representative Edward Markey (D-Mass), one of the investigators. “The water is as murky as ever on this issue, and it's past time for the administration to come clean.” The telecom companies, many

of which—except Qwest, which refused on legal grounds—shared data with the National Security Agency, are seeking immunity from lawsuits alleging privacy violations.

Mission Creep

LONDON—In a disturbing trend, a number of U.S. allies are using the language and tactics applied to terrorism to address civil disobedience and peaceful protest. In July authorities in El Salvador arrested 13 protesters at a demonstration against a plan to decentralize the water system and charged them under antiterrorism laws. In August British police used stop-and-search powers granted in antiterrorism legislation to control crowds at a huge peaceful global-warming demonstration at Heathrow airport.



The Dukakis Effect

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Despite ever-increasing data on wrongful convictions and the suspension of the death penalty in states such as Illinois after startling DNA test results, every Democratic candidate for president except Dennis Kucinich and Mike Gravel is a supporter of capital punishment. Hillary Clinton even helped expand the number of crimes subject to the death penalty. As a result the 2008 election looks likely to follow the previous four, in which both major-party candidates favored death sentences.

MARGINALIA



FROM A COMMENT by Brad Dickson, a former writer for Jay Leno:

“When late-night shows are considered influential enough for Arnold Schwarzenegger and Fred Thompson to announce their candidacies on them, shouldn't these programs rein in material labeling people accused of crimes as guilty? Shouldn't they at least stop calling most of them guilty after their acquittals? Or perhaps we should do away with the Los Angeles district attorney's office and in court present Leno's monologues, which almost always do a far superior job of convincing people of a defendant's guilt than prosecutors.”

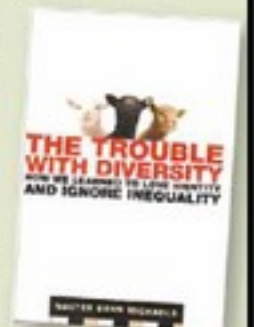
FROM A STATEMENT by Sdenka Silva, the co-founder of the Coca Museum in La Paz, Bolivia, as the government gears up for industrialization of traditional coca production: “Everything has its physical form, personality and spirit for indigenous communities.



The way we relate to everything around us is through coca. With coca there is no cheating or lying,

because it is sacred. With coca you are never alone, because you are always connected to the Pachamama, or Mother Earth.”

FROM THE BOOK *The Trouble With Diversity*, by Walter Benn Michaels, explaining how culture is used as a stand-in for race: “Two things make the notion of culture look like an attractive alternative for race. One is that culture is learned rather than inherited (it's on the nurture side of nature/nurture). The other is that culture is a looser concept than race; not all black people have to love *The Black Album* in order for it to be a part of black culture (and some white people can love it too). The problem is that the minute we call black culture black, both of these advantages disappear, since in order for a sentence like ‘Some white people are really into black culture’ to make sense, we have to have a definition of white and black people that is completely independent of their culture. Culture cannot replace our concept of race as a biological entity. Learning how to rap doesn't make you a black person; it just makes you a rapper. The problem with culture, then, is that it's utterly dependent on race. We can say what counts as white or black or Jewish culture only if we already know who the whites and blacks and Jews are.”



R

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PLAYBOY INTERVIEW:

TINA FEY

A candid conversation with TV's comic "goddess of the geeks" about 30 Rock versus SNL, having a filthy mouth and those disappearing sexy glasses

Tina Fey can't seem to shake her image as queen of the comedy nerds.

In the beginning it probably had something to do with the glasses. When she was co-anchor of *Weekend Update* on *Saturday Night Live*, her trademark black-rimmed glasses made her look like a cross between a naughty librarian and Velma from *Scooby-Doo*. But her geeky charm wasn't in appearance alone. Fey's caustic wit and wry delivery made it clear she wasn't another airhead comedienne willing to play dumb for laughs. If the world needed reminding that smart girls can be funny and sexy, Tina Fey proved it.

While she has often been called the thinking man's sex symbol, she would probably prefer something a little less pretentious. After all, this is a woman who frequently refers to herself as a supernerd. *Time* magazine came closest to summing up Fey's appeal when it crowned her "goddess of the geeks."

Fey rarely wears glasses since leaving SNL, but the nerd spirit remains. On the NBC sitcom *30 Rock*, now in its second season, she plays Liz Lemon, the head writer for a late-night comedy sketch show bearing more than a passing resemblance to *Saturday Night Live*. Liz is the antithesis of a perky, self-confident leading woman. She's insecure, clumsy, rotten at love and, above all, dorky as hell.

It would be easy to dismiss Fey's geeky persona as a carefully calculated veneer designed to win over fans. But Fey the Emmy-winning comic isn't all that different from Fey the shy and gawky teenager who grew up in Upper Darby, Pennsylvania. Born Elizabeth Stamatina Fey in 1970, she had a mostly sheltered upbringing with parents Donald and Jeanne and older brother (by eight years) Peter. By the time she got to high school she was already establishing herself as an outsider. Fey was a straight-A student and active in extracurricular activities such as choir, drama club and co-editing her high school newspaper.

She was also fiercely opposed to her school's culture of drugs and sexual promiscuity—which, by her own admission, made her unpopular with the cool kids. So she and her social circle—the "AP-class brainiac nerds," as she calls them—would sit in the cafeteria and make jokes about the more popular students from a safe distance. Although Fey admits she could be scathing and even cruel to her classmates, she was just as hard on herself. In a caption accompanying her high school yearbook photo, she predicted she would someday become "very, very fat."

After graduating from the University of Virginia with a degree in drama, in 1992, she moved to Chicago to join the legendary *Second City*, where she performed sketch comedy six

nights a week and met her future husband, musician Jeff Richmond. In 1997 she was hired as a staff writer for *Saturday Night Live* and a few years later became the first female head writer in SNL's then 25-year history.

In 2000 executive producer Lorne Michaels plucked her out of obscurity to become co-anchor of *Weekend Update*, first with Jimmy Fallon and then, in 2004, with Amy Poehler.

Like every breakout star from *Saturday Night Live* before her, Fey made the leap to feature films, with 2004's *Mean Girls*, a biting satire of teenage girls and the emotional violence they inflict on one another. Next up is *Baby Mama*, Fey's movie collaboration with her former *Update* co-anchor Poehler, about a single career woman (played by Fey) who hires an eccentric surrogate (Poehler) to have her baby. And if that's not enough to keep Fey busy, there's *30 Rock*, once marked for death but now one of NBC's most highly rated and award-winning shows.

We sent writer Eric Spitznagel to interview Fey at the Beverly Hills Hotel in Los Angeles, where they sipped coffee by the pool and talked for most of the day. He reports: "Tina is two very different women trapped in the same body, the yin and yang of comedy. Half her personality is what you would expect: She's intelligent and poised, like a feminist superhero. But the other half is an



"I wasn't really insecure. I was quiet and nerdy, and comedy was a way to ingratiate myself with people. I remember thinking, Oh yeah, I may not be superpretty. This comedy thing may be my best move."



"Will Ferrell tried to stab me once. It was SNL, so we were all hopped up on goofballs, out of our minds on quaaludes and horse antibiotics. I remember thinking, This guy's a genius. It would be an honor to be killed by him."



PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID ROSE

"What's unfair is when one woman tries to do comedy and isn't funny and it somehow reflects on all women. Nobody watches a terrible male stand-up comic and says, 'God, men just cannot do this.'"

introverted underdog who makes up for her lack of confidence with a biting sense of humor. If life really does imitate high school, then she's the hot cheerleader everybody wants to sleep with and the band geek who makes fun of you for being so shallow."

PLAYBOY: Did you want to be the star of *30 Rock*, or would you have preferred to remain behind the scenes?

FEY: My original deal was to create a show for NBC as a writer only, but when we came up with this idea, I figured, Why not? Let's take a shot. Well, not at first. Before I said yes, I talked to Amy Poehler and asked her, "Am I getting too old for this? Do people want to see me anymore?" She helped me think like a male comedian. When Ray Romano and Jerry Seinfeld got their shows, I don't think they had a moment like, Am I good enough to do this? I need to stop worrying so much about what other people think.

PLAYBOY: How much of *30 Rock* is based on your experiences at *Saturday Night Live*?

FEY: It depends. Some of it's personal to me, and some of it's personal to the other writers. I tried to remember what it felt like when I started at *SNL*, before I was comfortable managing people. It's weird to sit down with somebody my own age and tell them, "You need to try harder."

PLAYBOY: Can you remember a particular moment at *SNL* when you had to be the boss and didn't like it?

FEY: God, yes. Tim Herlihy, who was my co-head writer, threw me to the wolves in the most hilarious way. We had had a string of bad shows, and he said to me, "Okay, we have to tell the writers they're not cutting it." So we called this big meeting, and I was already a little nervous because I had been co-head writer for only a couple of weeks. We walked in, and Tim turned to me and said, "All right, go ahead." He made me scold the writers, who were essentially my peers. I was like, "Me? Wait, what?"

PLAYBOY: Did you have a lot of conflicts with the other *SNL* writers?

FEY: Not really, but we did an episode on *30 Rock* last year about Liz finding out a co-worker had called her the C word.

PLAYBOY: You mean cunt?

FEY: Yeah. That happened to me. Somebody at *SNL* called me that word, and my response was "No! My parents love me. I'm not some child of an alcoholic who will take that kind of verbal abuse!" It was such a strong out-of-left-field reaction, so it was easy to turn that into comedy.

PLAYBOY: Is it safe to assume Jack Donaghy, your fictional boss on *30 Rock*, played by Alec Baldwin, is supposed to be Lorne Michaels?

FEY: I would say he's Lorne Michaels-esque. There's a whole other corporate end of Donaghy that's nothing at all like Lorne. But he was definitely the inspiration. I may be the only *SNL* alumnus who has created a character based on Lorne who's not lying about it.

PLAYBOY: Who's been lying?

FEY: Well, maybe not lying but at least not advertising it. I've always wanted to do a special for Turner Classic Movies, screening all the films with characters based on Lorne. There's *Scrooged*, *Brain Candy* and the *Austin Powers* series. I



There are two big differences between my character and me. One is that her jugs are a lot bigger.

think there are a few more. When you work for *SNL*, Lorne is such a huge part of your life. It's like the movie *The Paper Chase*. The guy idolizes his professor and thinks the professor is messing with him. At the end of the movie the student finally has the courage to talk to him, but the professor doesn't even know who he is. That's what it's like with Lorne. Everybody wants this personal relationship with him.

PLAYBOY: Did you have that?

FEY: To an extent. We aren't best pals or anything, but I consider him a friend. Lorne always encourages you to enjoy the finer things in life. He's big on saying things like "You should buy a huge apartment because then you will come

home and be like, 'Wow, who lives here? Oh yeah, that's right. I do.'" It's kind of sweet the way he wants everyone to get rich.

PLAYBOY: Was Michaels intimidating to work with?

FEY: Sometimes. We would do dress rehearsals for a live audience on Saturdays at eight p.m., and each writer would go under the bleachers and watch his or her sketch on the monitor with Lorne. He would stand next to you, and it was terrifying. You're accountable for everything. The worst was if the sketch was dirty or had a lot of fart jokes. He would say things like "You must be really proud" or "Mmmm, call the Peabody board."

PLAYBOY: Is he aware he's a character on *30 Rock*?

FEY: Oh yeah. He doesn't always comment on it, but sometimes he will call me and say, "Boy, I was all over this week's episode."

PLAYBOY: What about Liz Lemon? Is she basically another version of you?

FEY: There are two big differences between Liz and me. One is that apparently my character's jugs are a lot bigger.

PLAYBOY: Really? We hadn't noticed that.

FEY: Yeah, whatever. I think our costume designer is trying to draw the viewers' eyes up until I lose the rest of this baby weight. I was doing a movie with Dax Shepard, and we were talking about *30 Rock*, and he said, "By the way, those things are blazing hot on your show."

PLAYBOY: And the other difference between you and Liz is...?

FEY: She's not married. I was saved by having met my boyfriend before I worked on *Saturday Night Live*. I was already dating Jeff, who is now my husband. Many times when I was at *SNL* I would survey the writers' room and

think, Oh, thank God I'm not coming to this job single.

PLAYBOY: The pickings were slim at *SNL*?

FEY: I could've gone on four weird dates with Colin Quinn. Or I could be married to Norm MacDonald and living in Arizona.

PLAYBOY: Liz briefly considered quitting her plush TV job in New York and moving to Cleveland. Have you ever been tempted to do the same thing?

FEY: Oh sure. Sometimes the struggle to live in New York makes you think you're really living your life, but you're actually only struggling to get from place to place. You say things like "I did two errands, and I got home!" But is this my dream life? I think everybody

occasionally has the fantasy of moving somewhere else. Sometimes New York gets to you. Some days I win, some days New York wins.

PLAYBOY: What's with all the *Star Wars* references on the show? Are you a closet sci-fi geek?

FEY: Not at all. I just think it's funny. For a while we tried to have at least one *Star Wars* reference in every episode, but somewhere along the way we dropped the ball. I think my character knows a little more about *Star Wars* than I do. I have basic girl-nerd knowledge, but I wouldn't be able to pull a name like Admiral Ackbar out of my butt the way Liz Lemon does.

PLAYBOY: Liz once described her sex life as "fast and only on Saturdays." Does that seem healthy to you?

FEY: I think it's an attitude everybody has sometimes. And it's not one I've seen reflected in the post-*Sex and the City* world. Especially for married people with kids, there is a lot of fake-it-till-you-make-it. "We're all exhausted. Let's just go ahead and do it." And then you think, Oh, that was a great idea.

PLAYBOY: You've done only a handful of kissing scenes on *30 Rock*, and you've always looked uncomfortable. Why is that?

FEY: I don't know. It wasn't a big deal with Jason Sudeikis, who plays Liz's boyfriend, because he's a buddy. We actually auditioned a lot of actors for that role. How can I say this so Jason won't be offended? The L.A. actors were what Amy and I call "L.A. tight." They're all skinny and ripped and don't look like real dudes. Jason will read this and ask, "What are you saying? I need to work out more?" But there's something too perfect about them. I like to keep it East Coast loose.

PLAYBOY: Were you a big fan of sitcoms as a kid?

FEY: Of course. The late 1970s were a sweet spot for half-hour comedy. There was one night of the week—I think it was Saturday, but I'm not sure—that had the best shows. There was *The Bob Newhart Show* leading into *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, or the other way around, and then *The Carol Burnett Show*. That was a big night. I remember getting into trouble once as a kid, and the only threat my parents used was that I wouldn't be allowed to watch that lineup. It was all they had to say: "We're withholding quality television from you." I was really sweating it.

PLAYBOY: Did you watch those sitcoms again when you were creating *30 Rock*?

FEY: Oh yeah. I tried to make *Mary Tyler Moore* the template for our show. I also watched a lot of *That Girl*, but mostly because there was a *That Girl* marathon on TV and my husband TiVoed all of it.

PLAYBOY: Was he helping you with the research?

FEY: I think he just has a crush on Marlo Thomas.

PLAYBOY: Well, who doesn't?

FEY: I know, right? Actually, every woman he's had a crush on has been a straight path to me. Marlo Thomas, Kristy McNichol and Julie Kavner when she played Rhoda's sister. It's a trajectory that leads right to me. The only one missing is Dustin Hoffman as Tootsie.

PLAYBOY: Did your daughter, Alice, get your comedy genes?

FEY: I think so. In our house the baby is the funniest, followed by husband Jeff, and I'm a distant third. I'm too tired. I'm funny, but I'm not room funny.

PLAYBOY: How has Alice demonstrated her sense of humor?

FEY: She has started doing spit takes. She will take a huge drink of water and let it dribble out. I guess it's not really a spit take, more of a *blerch* take. Even before we noticed and laughed at it, she was doing it just to crack herself up.

PLAYBOY: Does it matter to her if she has an audience?

FEY: Oh yeah. She's not stupid. She won't do it until she has your attention.

PLAYBOY: Were you a funny baby?

FEY: Not like Alice. She likes to engage people and make them laugh. I was more of the weird kid who came home after school, put on my colonial-lady costume from Halloween and did little skits for myself.

PLAYBOY: How long did it take before you realized you could make other people laugh?

FEY: I think it was in middle school. I remember thinking, Oh yeah, I may not be superpretty. This comedy thing may be my best move.

PLAYBOY: Was comedy a way of hiding from your insecurities?

FEY: I wasn't really insecure. I was quiet and nerdy, and comedy was a way to ingratiate myself with people. I had a buddy named Jimmy McDonough who was the class clown; he was louder and more outspoken than I was. I could never do that, put myself out there and be disruptive in class. I would sit on the sidelines, coming up with vicious burns about the popular kids.

PLAYBOY: You did an independent-study project on comedy in eighth grade. Do you remember anything about it?

FEY: I remember the only book I could find as research was Joe Franklin's *Encyclopedia of Comedians*. It was about old vaudeville guys like Joe E. Brown and Rudy Vallee. But I was way into comedy. I would watch *An Evening at the Improv* every time it was on. I miss the golden age of stand-up. I miss the brick wall.

PLAYBOY: Did you dream of becoming a cast member of *Saturday Night Live*?

FEY: Well, sure. But that's not a unique dream. Everybody wants to be famous when they're young.

PLAYBOY: When did you decide being a writer would be enough?

FEY: When I figured out it was an



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Funny Girl

Need more proof that Tina Fey is the wittiest woman we know? Here are some of her greatest bits

SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE, WEEKEND UPDATE

"At the request of the Catholic Church, a three-day sex orgy to be held near Rio de Janeiro was canceled last Friday. So instead I spent the weekend cleaning my apartment."

"Officials from the National Rifle Association met with a group of 200 high school students. There were no survivors."

"In the wake of the successful Iraqi elections, President Bush's job-approval rating has jumped to 57 percent or, as high school teachers call it, an F."

"U2 lead singer Bono met with President Bush on Wednesday and urged the president to help the world's poor, while the president urged Bono to get back with Cher."

"A new study finds that men who smoke are less likely to make a woman pregnant than nonsmokers. Especially if they smoke pole."

MEAN GIRLS

Mr. Duval: So, uh, how was your summer?

Ms. Norbury: I got divorced.

Mr. Duval: Oh. My carpal tunnel came back.

Ms. Norbury: I win.

Homeschooled Boy: And on the third day, God created the Remington bolt-action rifle so that man could fight the dinosaurs. And the homosexuals.

Janis: What is that smell?

Cady: Oh, Regina gave me some perfume.

Janis: You smell like a baby prostitute.

Cady: Thanks!

Coach Carr: Don't have sex, because you will get pregnant and die! Don't have sex in the missionary position. Don't have sex standing up. Just don't do it, okay. Promise? Okay, now everybody take some rubbers.

30 ROCK

Jack: Sorry I'm late. I was at a luncheon for Ann Coulter's 60th birthday.

Gretchen: I worked with Jack in plastics. He tends to approach everything that way. Locate the problem; isolate the problem; set the problem up with a lesbian.

Liz: You're not going to come to our crappy poker night, are you?

Jack: No, I'm not going to come.

Liz: [Relieved] Good!

Jack: I bluffed. I am coming.

Tracy: Here's some advice I wish I woulda got when I was your age: Live every week like it's Shark Week.

Jenna: Yeah, but this is different because I know Jack Donaghy. I know what he likes.

Liz: Yeah. So now you just have to make yourself 10 years younger and Asian.

Liz: Very funny, you bought a pager from Dennis. Will you take it off now, please?

Jack: I'm sorry. I can't. I'm expecting a call from 1983.

Liz: Hi. How did you get in here?

Jenna: Oh, Liz, if you dress well and enter with confidence, you can get in anywhere.

Liz: You showed the security guy your boobs, didn't you?

Jenna: Just one. It's not the White House.

Tracy: I'm gonna make you a mix tape. You like Phil Collins?

Jack: I've got two ears and a heart, don't I?

option. By the eighth or ninth grade a few English teachers were encouraging and helped me realize writing was something I could do. When I was in Chicago, doing improv at Second City and places like that, it seemed clear the closest I would get to *SNL* was writing for it.

PLAYBOY: You became *Saturday Night Live*'s first female head writer. Before you, *SNL* had a reputation for being a boys club. Do you think you changed that?

FEY: Well, there are still more men on the writing staff than women. But it has never been a woman-haters club, at least not when I was there. The more women around, the more integrated the comedy will be. People like what they like. If mostly guys are writing the show, then the material will skew toward jokes that guys like. It's not malicious or intentional. It's what makes them laugh, so that's what they write.

PLAYBOY: *Saturday Night Live* is notorious for being a competitive, cutthroat environment. Did you ever have a feud with anyone on the show?

FEY: Will Ferrell tried to stab me once. We had been up all night writing skits for the guy from *Dawson's Creek*—James Van Der Beek. And you know, it was *SNL*, so we were all hopped up on goofballs, out of our minds on quaaludes and horse antibiotics. I foolishly made a disparaging joke about Will's skit. I was like, "Really, dude? A hat salesman who's afraid of hats? That's the best you can come up with?" And he lunged at me with a letter opener. I remember thinking, This guy's a genius. It would be an honor to be killed by him.

PLAYBOY: Other than the occasional stabbing, how did the writers and cast members let off steam?

FEY: The usual ways. We tried to make one another laugh. There was a lot of same-sex fake rape.

PLAYBOY: What's your happiest memory from *SNL*?

FEY: Besides the same-sex raping?

PLAYBOY: Yes, besides the rape.

FEY: Well, a few days before a show, every sketch is read out loud in front of all the writers and actors, and you live or die in that room. Making everybody else in the cast laugh was always more satisfying than having something on the show. It happened for me only once or twice.

PLAYBOY: What's your worst memory?

FEY: The worst was probably in late 2001. I was sitting in my dressing room on a Friday night, working on my jokes for Weekend Update, and Lester Holt came on the news and said anthrax had been discovered in 30 Rockefeller Plaza, and I was in 30 Rockefeller Plaza. I stood up, got my stuff and walked out, right past Drew Barrymore, who was hosting. I didn't even tell her there

was anthrax in the building. I went to the elevator, walked up Sixth Avenue to Central Park West and went straight to my house, sobbing the whole way. Those were bad days.

PLAYBOY: Were you reacting out of fear, or were you angry you had been put in that situation?

FEY: It was fear. There was a palpable feeling that we were probably all going to die. That was before we knew, Oh, this is the kind of anthrax cats get.

PLAYBOY: Did you ever have a bad experience with a host that made you wish you were in another line of work?

FEY: Well, in late 2005 Paula Abdul did a guest bit on the show, and she was awful. I was pregnant at the time and probably a little moody, but I remember thinking, She's a disaster! I gotta prop this lady up and get her on TV.

PLAYBOY: How was she a disaster?

FEY: In the ways she generally appears to be. It was an *American Idol* sketch, and she wanted to change parts. So Amy Poehler had to play her. A year later I saw her on a flight. We both looked at each other like, Do I know that girl? And then we both had the same moment of recognition, and she was like, *Uuugggh*. I saw it register on her face that she had had a terrible time with us.

PLAYBOY: Since leaving *SNL* permanently, in 2006, you rarely wear glasses. What happened?

FEY: I still wear them and occasionally need them to see. They're not props, but I don't wear them all the time. Sometimes I use contacts. When I was auditioning for Weekend Update, I tried doing it with and without the glasses. One of the writers on *SNL*, T. Sean Shannon, watched my audition and said [*in a smarmy, vaguely Southern voice*], "You want the job, you oughta leave them glasses on." [*laughs*] So I followed his advice, and it kind of worked out for me. Getting rid of the glasses was rough. Even now I will go on a talk show and worry nobody will recognize me without the specs.

PLAYBOY: Which used to work to your advantage. It was like your Clark Kent disguise but in reverse.

FEY: Exactly. It helped for a while, but I don't think it's fooling anybody anymore.

PLAYBOY: So losing the glasses wasn't a conscious decision to change your image?

FEY: Oh no, not at all.

PLAYBOY: But you do know that by retiring the glasses, you're breaking a lot of nerd hearts?

FEY: [*Laughs*] Yeah, I know it's a nerd fetish that should probably be respected. Just like Mr. T should never show up in public without his Mohawk.

PLAYBOY: What do you think of your male fan following? There are websites devoted to you that verge on the obsessive. Is that flattering or creepy?

FEY: It's all good, I guess. As long as

they don't try to kill me. Everyone around me gets upset by it occasionally. But I prefer not to think about it or question it.

PLAYBOY: Why do you think your fans are so drawn to you?

FEY: Maybe because I seem very attainable.

PLAYBOY: Attainable? But you're married.

FEY: Not in that way. Attainable as opposed to a supermodel.

PLAYBOY: Some older male comics like Jerry Lewis have argued that women aren't funny. Does it piss you off, or is it easy to ignore?

FEY: The only people I've heard say that are Jerry Lewis and Richard Roeper. That's not a strong showing. Yeah, Richard Roeper is *hi-larious*. Remember his radio show? Me neither. It's irrelevant to me that Jerry Lewis doesn't think I'm funny. I'm not writing a movie for Jerry Lewis; he's not running a studio. It's not a thing for me. That's not a burden I need to carry. But what's unfair is when one woman tries to do comedy and isn't funny and it somehow reflects on all women. Nobody watches a terrible male stand-up comic and says, "God, men just cannot do this." There are just as many awful comedians who are men.

PLAYBOY: The late Michael O'Donoghue, the first head writer for *Saturday Night Live*, once said, "It does help when writing humor to have a big hunk of meat between the legs."

FEY: I do have one, but it's been flayed open to a vagina.

PLAYBOY: So you don't agree with that sentiment?

FEY: Well, the thing is, he said it, and then he died. So I don't know. Maybe he was wrong.

PLAYBOY: Was he just the product of a different era and a different way of thinking about women and comedy?

FEY: Probably, yeah. But if I had been at *SNL* during the 1970s, I think I would've gotten along fine with him.

PLAYBOY: Really? You wouldn't have come to blows?

FEY: He liked to be shocking, and I have a filthy mouth.

PLAYBOY: You do? Why are we learning this now?

FEY: Probably because I try to filter all the filth before saying anything out loud. But backstage I have an incredibly foul mouth. I've noticed this pattern, especially in comedy. There's a big difference between the men and women in the business. The guys probably attended college but didn't finish, and they have a problem with authority. Almost all the women attended a very nice college, they graduated and were always obedient, good students, but comedy was their one outlet for expressing themselves and not being so prim and proper.

PLAYBOY: Was that true for you?

FEY: I think so. Growing up, I was a very

good kid. I went to college. I didn't drink, didn't smoke, didn't do drugs. Comedy was the one place I was able to misbehave.

PLAYBOY: What's the secret to delivering a mean-spirited joke and making an audience love you for it?

FEY: I know there's a secret, but I don't remember it anymore. It has something to do with smiling a lot. I think you can't clamp down on a gag. There's something you gotta do: You can't look like you love it too much.

PLAYBOY: What about your comments about Paris Hilton on Howard Stern's radio show?

FEY: Oh right, that. *[laughs]*

PLAYBOY: One could say you were tough on Ms. Hilton. You called her a piece of shit and made fun of her hair.

FEY: Okay, here's the thing. I went on *Stern*, and they were very nice to me and, well, I think part of it was....

PLAYBOY: You were drunk, weren't you?

FEY: It was eight in the morning, so as always I was *looaded*. No, I think what was going through my head was, How can I protect myself? I don't want to talk to Howard too much about myself. I want to throw out some gossip steaks. That kicked in instinctively. I'm sorry I used such terrible language about her. Even my mom said, "Oh, that was awful." Not long after it happened, I went to my gynecologist, and she said, "Are you all right? I read what you said about Paris Hilton in the paper, and that's very hostile."

PLAYBOY: Now that enough time has passed, do you feel any different about her?

FEY: I regret sinking down to that level of discourse. But Paris is a terrible role model and a terrible young woman. She needs to be ignored. I work with people who have 12-, 13-, 14-year-old girls who are fascinated by her. They look up to her, and that's not great. You can buy videotapes in which you can see her bejanis.

PLAYBOY: Her what?

FEY: Her bejanis. You know, her lady bits. Her beholio.

PLAYBOY: Those are the most adorable pet names for the vagina we have ever heard.

FEY: Somebody told me that when she did *Larry King* she said she had never done drugs. Is that true?

PLAYBOY: It is. She also said she isn't a big drinker.

FEY: I don't know if she drinks, but she has done some drugs, y'all! There's a generation of girls in Hollywood who think they can say stuff in the press and make it true. It's not only Paris; a whole bunch of them do.

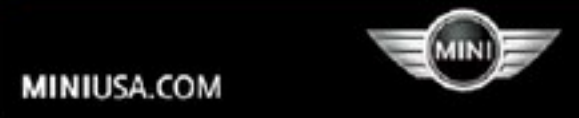
PLAYBOY: You don't seem to have much sympathy for the blonde Hollywood girls with bulimia.

FEY: When I was in high school, bulimia didn't even exist yet. Remember the



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movie of the week *Kate's Secret*? It came out in 1985 or 1986. I think somebody famous was in it.

PLAYBOY: Meredith Baxter?

FEY: Yeah, that's the one. When it came out everybody was like, "Wait, you can do *what* now?" It was such a foreign thing to us. Nobody had anorexia or bulimia when I was in school. That movie and when Karen Carpenter died were the first times anybody had heard of those disorders. But now everybody knows, and they all give them a shot.

PLAYBOY: It's like marijuana. Everybody tries it at least once.

FEY: Which, I would like to say for the record, I never did either. I never tried any drugs. I may as well get it in print, so years from now when my daughter is reading back issues of *PLAYBOY*, which I'm sure she will do, she will know her mother was drug- and bulimia-free. And here's the other thing. How can I articulate this properly? When I was growing up, to have a good body you actually had to have a good body. You know what I mean? You had your shape, and whatever your God-given shape was, that was your shape. But now—and this is what these young Hollywood ladies seem to do—even if you don't have a great body, you can lose a lot of weight and get superskinny, get a fake tan and fake tits, and you're in the game. Just get super-duper skinny. Some women are the real deal, like Jessica Alba. She has an amazing, gorgeous body. But for some of these other chicks, the closest they can get to a body like that is to remove everything that's there and add a little something on top. It's like the ladies you see in *PLAYBOY*.

PLAYBOY: Wow. You really want to talk about this here?

FEY: I don't want to seem like a bad guest, but I have a few gentle theories. If you look back at old *PLAYBOYS* from the 1960s and 1970s, the Playmates represented the girl next door, and some of them had maybe different-size boobies, perhaps with brown nipples or large areolas. There were even ladies with their actual hair or with hair that wasn't blonde.

PLAYBOY: Do you say this because you're a brunette? Are you lashing out against blondes for the dark-haired sisterhood?

FEY: I just take personal offense. Really, you would be so disgusted to fuck a brunette? It would make you sick? [laughs] It's the Joyce DeWitt part of it. I remember as a little kid watching *Three's Company* and thinking, Oh man, that's who is representing us? C'mon, can't Jaclyn Smith be the brunette? Joyce DeWitt was cute, but they gave her a bowl cut and made her wear a football jersey and panty hose. That look was rough. So yeah, I guess you could write all this off as jealousy.

PLAYBOY: Would it help if you dyed your hair?

FEY: No, it goes deeper than that. It's this weird fetish with ladies who look like erasers. Holes is holes, as I like to say, but I don't understand the cultural obsession with these weird mental children with orange skin and bleached-out Barbie hair and boyish hips and big fake choppers. They're so close to being trannies. I sometimes feel like, Who *are* these creatures? And they certainly don't exist only in this magazine. They're everywhere, and that's a reflection of our culture. It's like the difference in our food since the 1970s. It has become overprocessed with all the trans fats. Maybe we need to get organic with these ladies.

PLAYBOY: You are a feminist role model for a lot of young girls. Do you feel qualified to be that person?

FEY: Sure, why not? I could probably be a better-educated feminist. For my generation, we're all figuring it out as we go along. You have to follow your gut. The line in the sand between what's okay and what's not keeps changing. You can have a strong, empowered character—like a Carrie Bradshaw on *Sex and the City*, a show mostly for ladies—and sometimes she's in her underpants. It's easy to forget you can be both.

PLAYBOY: You were in your underpants, or at least your bra, in the opening credits of *Mean Girls*. Was that a statement about your empowered sexuality, or did you just feel the film needed some gratuitous nudity?

FEY: I don't think anybody was super-aroused by it, so I'm probably off the hook. But I will admit we didn't execute the joke the right way. It was better on paper. We should have cut it.

PLAYBOY: Your *Mean Girls* co-star Lindsay Lohan has been struggling lately with drugs and alcohol. Have you reached out to her and offered advice?

FEY: I haven't because I feel I know enough about addiction, from a distance, to say that only somebody who is truly and intimately close with a person should ever attempt to intervene. I made a movie with Lindsay four years ago. I don't know her. I genuinely like her, but you can't fix people from the outside.

PLAYBOY: You saw addiction firsthand with Chris Farley. He died a few months after you were hired for *Saturday Night Live*.

FEY: That's right. He hosted the show in October 1997, and he passed away in December. That was the only time I have ever been around someone and thought, This guy is gonna die. He looked really unwell. I guess that's a lesson learned. Sometimes if you see people who look like they might die, they might die. And again, it's not something you can do anything about. Because you have to be really close to



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them even to attempt to help, and ultimately only they can help themselves.

PLAYBOY: What about your *30 Rock* co-star Alec Baldwin?

FEY: What about him?

PLAYBOY: There was the scandal this past April when his irate voice-mail message to his daughter was—

FEY: That's separate from me.

PLAYBOY: You never talked with him about it?

FEY: Oh good lord, no. It's none of my business.

PLAYBOY: Even as one parent to another?

FEY: Oh my goodness. No, sir.

PLAYBOY: So you and Alec have a relationship that's 100 percent professional?

FEY: Absolutely. And I wouldn't want people in the office coming up to me and inserting themselves into my business.

PLAYBOY: I guess there's a perception that everybody in show business is family.

FEY: I know. Isn't it insane? They think everyone knows everyone.

PLAYBOY: It's hard not to laugh at the red-carpet interviews when somebody like David Duchovny is asked if he has any advice for Britney Spears.

FEY: It really is.

PLAYBOY: Has that ever happened to you?

FEY: Many times. I went to the opening of Martin Short's play in New York, and I was talking to a reporter on the red carpet. He said, "What brings you to the show?" And I said, "Oh, I think Martin Short's really funny." "That's great. So anyway, do you think John Mark Karr killed JonBenet?" And I was like, What? I guess there must have been a development in the JonBenet Ramsey case or something. But what does it have to do with me? I am not going to answer that! Because if you do—well, not as much if you're me, but if you're Ben Affleck and you say something—they're going to clip it on the news. "Ben Affleck thinks that guy killed JonBenet Ramsey!" And you're like, What the hell just happened? I've been sucked into answering those questions, but thankfully nobody cares what I have to say.

PLAYBOY: Being asked about JonBenet Ramsey is one thing. But Baldwin is someone you actually see and spend time with, so it's not unreasonable to think you may have an opinion about him.

FEY: But Alec and I have never really hung out. We've talked about trying to have dinner together for the better part of a year now, but we've never gotten around to it. And it's not only Alec. I don't have a social life with anyone on the show. There's no time. It's an unbelievably intense work environment. Sometimes I write for 10, 12 hours a day. Then at night I have huge amounts of homework: reading what everyone else is working on, going over outlines and polishing my own scripts. It's like a marathon.

PLAYBOY: A marathon, eh? So you need

to drink a lot of water, and sometimes when you're getting close to the finish line you fall apart physically?

FEY: Oh yes. And there's also vomiting and pooping in your pants. And the Ethiopians always win.

PLAYBOY: In your new movie, *Baby Mama*, you play the straight person to Amy Poehler's wacky surrogate mom. Is it weird to let somebody else get all the funniest lines?

FEY: Not at all. I love it. I'm not one of those actors with a big trunk filled with characters. I've got maybe two or three at most. I enjoy being the one who reacts to all the funny things happening around her. It's different when you're only an actor and you feel like, Oh, I have all the setups and everyone else has the punch lines. For me it's just as satisfying to write something for somebody else and watch them take it to another level and get the laugh.

PLAYBOY: *Baby Mama* is a comedy about, well, babies. Isn't there an old show-business rule about not acting with children or animals?

FEY: That's right. They will upstage you because they're adorable. The same can be said of Amy Poehler. I shouldn't have acted with Poehler. She climbs everything and curls up in your lap, and she's cuter than babies.

PLAYBOY: That's a pretty bold statement.

FEY: Amy Poehler is cuter than a baby and a monkey combined.

PLAYBOY: Now you're going too far.

FEY: I never should have done it. I never should have agreed to do this movie with her.

PLAYBOY: Could you ever give it all up? Just abandon the movies, TV and your comedy career and never look back?

FEY: I could definitely live a quieter, less work-filled life. It happens to everyone at some point. It doesn't matter if you're ready to give it up; it gives you up. No one stays this busy all the time. There's such a small window of time when I will be allowed to do this. Right now they fly me out to L.A., and I get to stay in nice hotels and get taken out to dinner. But in 10 years, and probably much sooner, I will be flying on my own dime, and it will be coach and I will be staying at a hotel near the airport. At that point I hope I realize it's over. I don't want to be on some horrible reality show just because I'm desperate to be on TV.

PLAYBOY: Will a small part of you be relieved when it's over?

FEY: It will be a sad day. Because the minute the camera stops and it's not pointed at me anymore, I will probably gain a hundred pounds.

PLAYBOY: Isn't this exactly what you predicted in high school? That you would become "very, very fat"?

FEY: [Laughs] That's right. I still say it all the time, so when it happens, I'm covered.



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PERHAPS PEOPLE JUST
WANT SOMETHING THAT DOESN'T
COME WITH INSTRUCTIONS.
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WHEN AJMAL NAQSHBANDI WAS DECAPITATED LAST SPRING
BY THE TALIBAN, HIS AMERICAN FRIEND FLEW BACK TO
AFGHANISTAN TO FIND OUT WHY HE HAD BEEN MURDERED

OUR BATTLES JOINED

BY
CHRISTIAN PARENTI

They killed Ajmal on Easter Sunday. I was at home in Brooklyn when it happened. My girlfriend was away, and I had slept in, awaking alone to the peaceful springtime view of the backyards on my block. As I had for almost a month, the first thing I did that morning was check online for news of Ajmal Naqshbandi. When the story came up that he had been murdered, I felt no shock or sadness or even disgust, just a sudden wave of nausea.

Here it was, the latest receipt from a hopeless war. It had always been a distinct possibility, and now it was a reality: Ajmal, a bright young man destined for great things, had instead been abused, humiliated and then rubbed out, his family left shattered by grief, his colleagues terrified, his best friends reduced to hollow shells.

Ajmal and I had worked together over the past three years, reporting on Afghan politics, corruption, the opium trade and the insurgency. During that time I had seen him mature from a good and ambitious young fixer to an ever more shrewd businessman and writer with a steady gig for a Japanese daily. He was about five-foot-eight with a stout build. His fashionable haircut was always moussed, but his goatee would be overtaken by a week's growth of stubble. He had bought a large Soviet-built apartment, was putting on weight and had married—all by the age of 25. But etiquette dictated that I not ask much about his wife or meet her or his mother.

On my first trip to Afghanistan, in 2004, I had stayed at Ajmal's small lodge, the Everest Guesthouse, though its squalor and the interminably slow pace of everything eventually drove me to more expensive quarters. Officially, the place had laundry service, but in reality you had to harass one of the eight young men Ajmal kept on retainer. All they did was sit on the filthy kitchen floor, drinking tea and playing cards. In about a week your clothes would show up in a heap on your bed, damp and not necessarily clean. Yet in certain ways I enjoyed the Everest's anarchic mix of foreign reporters, contractors and other unidentified free agents.

"AJMAL COULD BE A BRAWLER. HE LIKED THE NEAR MISSES."



Ajmal Naqshbandi (above, on a road trip with the author in Afghanistan) had become a valuable facilitator for many foreign journalists.

Everything has a price in Afghanistan, but the Everest was ruled by the old British maxim "You can never buy an Afghan—you can only rent him for a short while at a very high sum." It was a place where a brigadier in the Afghan National Police would slip in the front door and go upstairs with a girlfriend and a bottle of whiskey while the guard at the front gate did his afternoon supplications to Allah and oblivious European journalists watched Sky TV in the living room.

One day a cabdriver quadruple charged a foreign guest for a ride from the airport. Ajmal was incensed and told the cabbie it was outrageous; double charging unsuspecting new arrivals was enough. The driver was mocking and dismissive, so Ajmal punched him in the face. The police soon arrived and dragged Ajmal off to jail.

"It took a week to get out because they were demanding too much bribe money," said Ajmal. Eventually a fair price was agreed on, and Ajmal's brother bailed him out. But Ajmal was able to turn his stint in the clink into a networking opportunity, making friends with a hip young undercover police officer who had been jailed for a minor indiscretion. Ajmal and I later ran into the cop, who was nice enough to answer my questions (anonymously) about corruption and police tolerance of Chinese brothels.

The incident with the cabbie was not unusual; Ajmal could be a brawler. Once, high in the snow-covered mountains of the Hazarajat, a speeding jeep driven by locals clipped our truck in nearly a head-on collision. We were creeping up a steep track of packed snow while they were barreling down. A showdown ensued.

Soon the crew in the truck was joined by Hazara villagers who had been shoveling snow off the road. All of them wore small square sunglasses and cruel smiles, their heads and throats bundled in scarves. They had smashed our headlight while almost knocking us off the road, and now they wanted money. In his nasal voice, Ajmal excoriated the Hazara as thieves and liars. He was ready to throw down in what would have been a badly uneven fight. Finally I gave the head Hazara my business card and told him to have his boss get in touch with my boss to sort it all out. That seemed to save face for everyone. More important, it saved our asses.

When needed, Ajmal could also be cool. This came in handy during another near brawl when he slowly and accidentally ran over a teenager who was in the middle of a curbside fistfight. The fight spilled suddenly into the street, and in an instant we had rolled over the kid's leg. It was badly broken. The crowd that had been watching the fight was now encircling us. A second or two more and all hell would have erupted. Ajmal immediately loaded the wounded youth into the truck, and we took him to a hospital.

He liked the near misses. He told me that during one weekend in the Everest he had housed on one floor an American friend who was a former CIA agent turned Thailand-based contractor and on another floor—as a favor to a relative in Pakistan, no questions asked—a Chechen woman on a courier mission to Al Qaeda's safe haven in northwest Pakistan. "If either of them had known—can you imagine?" Ajmal asked me with a mischievous smirk.

Working with Ajmal involved numerous long road trips. We had driven across windblasted deserts, repaired flat tires and snapped chains on Ajmal's truck as snow closed in on us at the 10,000-foot Shibar Pass. We had eaten sheep kidneys with opium-growing warlords, wrestled the Afghan army's bureaucracy and coaxed an ex-Taliban commander turned parliamentarian to confess to his role in destroying the giant Buddha statues of Bamiyan Valley. (The Buddha bomber, Mawlawi Mohammed Islam Mohammedi, was mysteriously gunned down a few months after the story came out, but I suspect it had more to do with the opium trade in Samangan province than with desecrated statues.) We had joked, bickered and haggled with each other. We had traded humorous, boastful and embarrassing stories about our lives. In distant guesthouses we shared the *haram*, or religiously prohibited, pleasures of hashish and beer. On one afternoon, with our backs to a canyon wall in southern Afghanistan, we had stared down the barrels of Taliban rifles while doing an interview.

Although he was a journalist, Ajmal was apolitical. Perhaps because so much of Afghan politics has been reduced to simple criminality, he had a hard time seeing ideas as interesting. The programs and ideologies of various parties bored him. He answered my questions about these subjects as best he could, but ultimately he didn't care who won. He seemed to find my interest in historical and sociological matters taxing and let me know as much. His passion was dangerous and exclusive news. His approach to work was decidedly mercenary: He enjoyed the adventure, building his network of contacts, the status and making money.

On long road trips our conversation would frequently, as it often does among young people, turn to sex. This banter—private, frank and conducted somewhat absentmindedly—revealed more about the differences, similarities and misunderstandings between our two cultures than did much of my reporting. One time, on the way to Mazar-i-Sharif, Ajmal announced, "I am very interested in writing a book about the dancing boys in Afghanistan. One chapter for the different customs of each province." In Afghanistan many "commanders" (read: warlords) have a taste for young boys and teenagers. "They maybe have two wives, but they keep these boys like girlfriends," said Ajmal. "They buy them clothes, they take them to the wedding parties, and the boys dance for them." (Wedding parties are a huge part of social life in Afghanistan, but like all else, they are strictly segregated along gender lines. A big wedding is really two simultaneous parties: one for men, the other for women.)

"What if two men fall in love as equals?" I asked.

"Hmm, no. That would not be good." He seemed to find the idea perverse.

When Ajmal's strange business contacts passed through Kabul they often wanted to rampage in the big city. On one long drive he told me how a Kandahari he knew had picked up a young prostitute working the streets in a burka.

"A prostitute in a burka?" I was dumbfounded. "Why" (continued on page 161)



When the Afghan government refused to free several insurgents in exchange for an Italian journalist, Naqshbandi paid the ultimate price.



"Go to my room and come back without your clothes and your inhibitions."





Curry for Dessert

Adrienne Curry, hot and tasty

BY DAVID HOCHMAN

There's a reason God made Eve second," Adrienne Curry says with that mischievous super-model grin of hers. "He made Adam and went, 'Aw, shit. I can do better than that!'" One thing we've come to count on when in Adrienne's company: She will say whatever she thinks whenever she wants. Just ask her husband, former *Brady Bunch* star Christopher Knight, her partner in reality on VH1's *My Fair Brady*, which kicks off its third season in January. As she says, "I don't care how rich and famous he is. I'm half his age, so I've got time on my side. Even when he's 70, I'll still be smokin' hot, and that counts for something."

It certainly counts for us. Adrienne's second PLAYBOY portfolio (the first was in the February 2006 issue) is another opportunity for her to flaunt that independent streak of hers. We first saw it when Adrienne won the inaugural season of *America's Next Top Model* and (text concluded on page 169)

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN WAYDA







The

he blonde is Andrea, Adrienne's real-life best friend. Says Adrienne, "My chemistry with her is out of control."











See more of Adrienne at cyber.playboy.com.

The dermatologist was a tall and intelligent fair-haired man who gave the impression that of all the things that exist in the world the one that interested him least was human skin. Twice a year he inspected Fritz Fleischer's epidermis—plagued by psoriasis in childhood, then by sun damage in old age—glancingly, barely concealing his distaste. Nevertheless, he kept up with the latest developments in the field. "There's a new technology," he said at the end of one visit, "that flushes out precancerous cells. Before they turn cancerous. It might do well on your face. Blue light."

He spoke with a halting diffidence while averting his eyes from the sight of his nearly nude patient.

"Blue light?" Fleischer echoed.

"The same sort ordinary light-bulbs give off. No UVA, no infrared. Blue, only brighter. The skin is cleansed with acetone and then painted with delta-aminolevulinic acid. ALA. It sinks in and makes the cells respond. They shatter. It destroys them." A certain enthusiasm had entered his voice. His bills listed "destruction of lesion" and then some significant charge—\$290, say—for spraying a spot with a second's worth of liquid nitrogen.

"Destroys them?"

"The bad ones," the dermatologist insisted, defensively.

"The immature ones?"

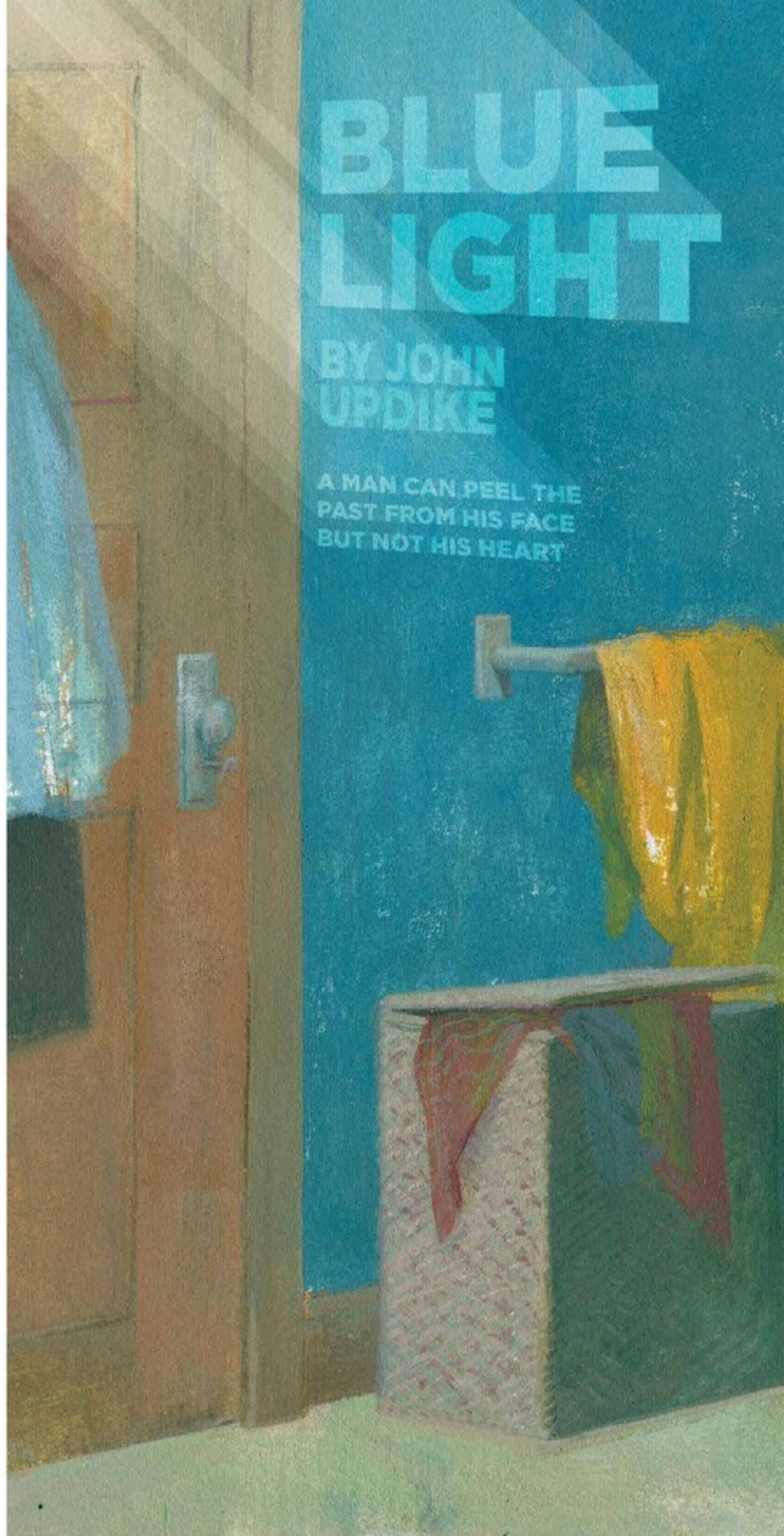
Fleischer had learned the term from his previous dermatologist, an older man who, before he in rapid succession retired and died, used to talk lingeringly, lovingly, about skin, tilting back in his swivel chair and closing his eyes as if peering into a mental microscope. Precancerous cells, he explained, have simply failed to mature, and the reactive ointments—Efidex, Dovonex, Elocon—that he prescribed helped them to mature. *Maturing* seemed to be a euphemism for *death*—an unsightly convulsion of cells that faded away eventually but not before making the patient look as spotty and insecure as a teenager. In his mental microscope, Fleischer's former doctor had seen a rosy future when the molecular secrets of skin lay all exposed for manipulation and cure.

The old healer's successor resisted the word *immature*, with its implied teleology. "The damaged ones," he clarified. He manifested a faint, hurried

BLUE LIGHT

BY JOHN UPDIKE

A MAN CAN PEEL THE PAST FROM HIS FACE BUT NOT HIS HEART





enthusiasm: "You'd be a new man. Look 10 years younger."

"A new man?" Fleischer barked out a greedy laugh at the thought, and the other man winced at the sight of the patient's oral membranes. "I'll give it a try," he said, as if snatching at a bargain.

The dermatologist bleakly nodded. "Let Sheela set it up. Mondays and Thursdays are the days we do it. Sixteen minutes and three quarters—that's the exposure time. Seems an odd time, but that's what's been worked out. Less doesn't do the job, and more doesn't seem to add anything. Good luck." While Fleischer was still drawing breath to thank him, the tall, fair man loped around a corner of the hospital's labyrinthine dermatology department and vanished.

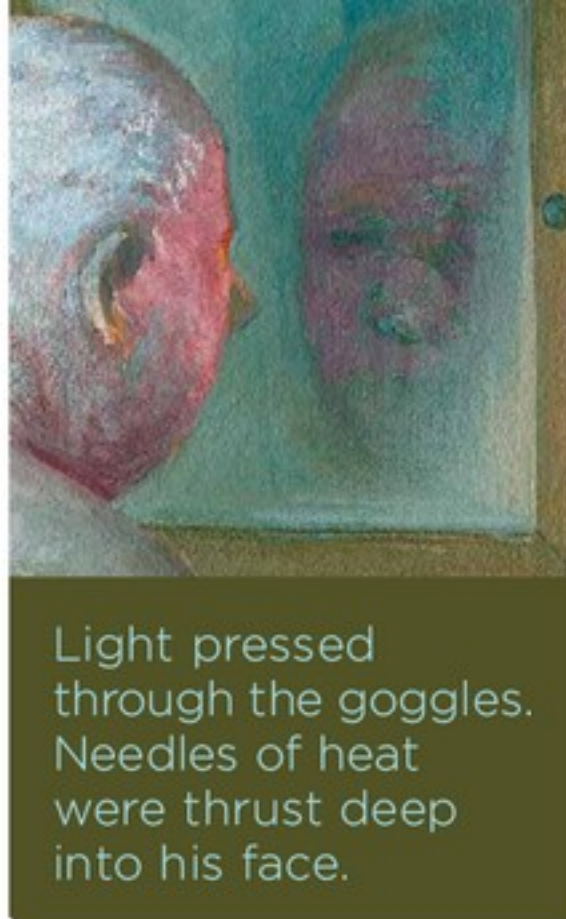
Sheela wore a sari, advertising the department's diversity. She was short, with dazzling round teeth and a skin of smooth Dravidian darkness. Towering awkwardly above her, Fleischer felt disgustingly mottled and leprously pale. "How undressed should I get?"

"Not one bit," she told him in her merry lilt. "Today it is just your face." Using swabs of cotton that felt like a kitten's paws, she stroked Fleischer's face with one colorless fluid and then with another. Her nostril bead glinted in his peripheral vision as she worked, moving around him as nimbly as an elephant trainer. "Now," she announced, "you must wait an hour, for the skin to absorb. Sit with a magazine." There were others sitting and waiting, men and women mostly as elderly as he, all of a northern European paleness and pinkness but with nothing conspicuously wrong with what of their skin he could see. We are all, Fleischer thought, victims of the same advertisements, the same airbrushed photos of 20-year-old models, the same absurd American dreams of self-perfection. He would become a new man.

He picked up a tattered month-old edition of *People* and read of celebrities getting divorced, getting pregnant, confessing to unhappy childhoods, adopting an African child. He had never heard of half these celebrities, but then he had been long locked in the financial world, poring over *The Wall Street Journal* and its columns of figures, its global rumors of collapse and merger. Now that he was retired from his Boston firm, he had begun to reread the classics of his college years and discovered that his callow initial impression that they were windy and boring was, surprisingly often, reinforced, with the difference that now he was under no academic obligation to finish them. He spent hours a day walking, with other retirees, the sidewalk above the littered beach, lined with condominiums, from which the brown skyscrapers of Boston could be seen shimmering in the distance.

The blue-light device, when he was ready for it, proved to be less elaborate than he had imagined. A large thick horseshoe shape, it half encircled his head and bathed his face in a humming brightness. His eyes were covered with small cup-shaped goggles; Sheela's voice kept him company in his blindness. "People tell me," she said, "the worst prickling is the first five minutes, and then the discomfort diminishes."

An underemployed investment adviser who had lived near a beach for much of his life, and vainly desirous of the deep tan he could never quite acquire, Fleischer had done more than his share of sunbathing—lying in the sheltering dunes in the windy spring, in the cool fall courting the dying slant rays, floating faceup in the soupy sea of high summer as bright buttons and sequins of reflected sun glittered and bounced all around him. Now, compressed into seconds, the sensations of those prolonged exposures to sun were revived and cruelly



Light pressed through the goggles. Needles of heat were thrust deep into his face.

intensified. Light pressed through the substance of the goggles and his eyelids to register red on his retinas. Needles of heat were thrust deep into his face. He could feel, at the tip of each, immature cells bursting like tiny firecrackers.

Sheela poured her lilting voice over his pain: "You've gone two minutes. How is it?"

"Exciting," Fleischer said.

"I can switch the machine off at any time and resume after a break," she said. "Many patients are grateful."

"No, let's get on with it." Fleischer liked talking while blinded; his conversational partner, unseen, filled the room, giving the burning radiance a voice.

"My offer is good anytime," the voice continued. "Many patients discover they cannot stand the sensations."

"Tell me," Fleischer said, as the fire consuming his cheeks and brow boiled deeper beneath his skin, "about Hinduism. Does it have a God, or not?"

"It has many gods."

"I mean," Fleischer said, as if his agony gave him the rights of a seeker—as if being blinded made him a seer—"beyond all that, Shiva and Shakti and so on, an overarching God, a Ground of Being, as it were." In his mind's eye the needles of light dug in like talons, each tipped with poison.

"We call that Brahman," Sheela's disembodied voice responded. "Not to be confused with Brahma. Brahma, with Vishnu and Shiva, is a major deity, though he has not generated the legends and temples of the other two. People do not love Brahma as they love the other two. But behind them is Brahman. He is what you might call Godhead, beyond describing. He is closest to your Christian concept of God. You have gone now more than six minutes. Almost halfway."

"Does anybody believe in Him? In It?"

"Millions and millions," Sheela assured him, her soft voice stiffening a little. "There are no disbelieving Hindus."

"Does He ask you to feel guilty?" Cell after cell, it seemed to Fleischer, was igniting within him, one microscopic sun after another.

Her voice became merry again. "No, we are not like Americans. We are still too poor for guilt. I do not mean to be flip-pant. Each Hindu feels set down in a certain earthly place and tries to fill that role. Each person from the maharaja down to the crippled beggar is doing what is prescribed. That is what Krishna said to Arjuna on the battlefield in the Bhagavad Gita. 'Be a warrior,' he said, 'and do not trouble yourself with the ethics of killing.' You have done over eight minutes. From now on, most patients assure me, it becomes easier. It will be downhill. Can you feel that yet?"

"At my age," Fleischer announced in his burning blindness, through lips numbed by his mask of inward-directed needles, "it's all downhill."

Each of Fleischer's three wives had borne one child—girl, boy, girl. They in turn had each produced two children, all boys, oddly. Odd too was the way they all, against the dispersive tendencies of American independence and enterprise, lived within an hour's drive of the suburban condo to which he had retired. Guilty about his inadequate grandfathering—unlike grandfathers in television commercials he never took his grandsons fishing or to a baseball game—he tried to visit each household once a month. In the weeks after his blue-light treatment, he would rather have hidden in his stuffy bachelor condo, its curtains drawn to keep out any further light, while in the corner the television set muttered and shuffled its electrons like a demented person playing solitaire. (continued on page 156)



“Would you like a little something with your champagne?”

THE FOUR S'S

WHILE THREE S'S MAY BE GOOD ENOUGH FOR THE MARINES, EVERY PLAYBOY MAN SHOULD ADOPT THIS ESSENTIAL FOUR-STEP ROUTINE

FASHION BY
JOSEPH DE ACETIS



"It's important for a man to take care of his skin. Nobody wants to rub up next to a guy with dry skin or kiss flaky lips. Besides, when I see that a man's bathroom is stocked with luxurious products, I can't resist getting into the shower with him."—**Playmate of the Year 2007 Sara Jean Underwood**

SKIN



When showering, men seem to fall into one of two opposing camps: soapers versus body washers. "With quality products that use natural ingredients, whether you use soap or body wash comes down to personal preference," says Tony Sosnick, founder of Anthony Logistics for Men. While Sosnick recommends exfoliating your face just once or twice a week to avoid irritation, you'll want to exfoliate your body pretty much every other day and follow with a moisturizer. Make friends with lip protection and eye cream while you're at it. Clockwise

from top: GAP MEN G7 WASH UP (\$9). BLISTEX LIP OINTMENT (\$2). LACOSTE ESSENTIAL SHOWER GEL (\$24). ANTHONY LOGISTICS ASTRINGENT TONER PADS (\$20). ANTHONY LOGISTICS MUD SCRUB EXFOLIATING BAR (\$12). BURT'S BEES BAR SOAP (\$4). LANCÔME MEN HYDRIX (\$30). SKINN FACE SCRUB (\$69). C.O. BIGELOW BARBER HAIR AND BODY WASH (\$10). BILLY JEALOUSY BAR NONE FACE WASH (\$18). RÉVIVE MOISTURIZING RENEWAL CREAM (\$150). ELEMIS TIME DEFENCE EYE REVIVER (\$65).

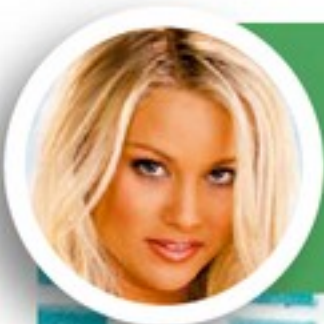
"A fragrance can tell you a lot about a man's taste and temperament, but I should be able to smell a scent only when I'm touching the person wearing it. Too much cologne is a turnoff. I don't want to smell a man before I can see him."—Miss January 2001 Irina Voronina



SCENT

Perfumaria fragrance consultant Jan Moran suggests selecting one scent from each of the four major fragrance categories: citrus, wood, Oriental and aromatic. "Citrus scents are fresh and brisk for warm weather and daytime wear. Wooded fragrances are warmer and act as a ballast for cool weather. Rich and spicy Oriental fragrances inspire passion for romantic evenings. Aromatics are balanced blends of citrus, wood, spice and lavender and are the most versatile," Moran explains. Other rules of thumb:

Use light scents for warm weather and daytime, heavier fragrances at night and in cooler weather. "A scent is meant to draw someone in," says Moran. "A spritz or splash on the neck and another on the wrists or forearms will usually suffice." Clockwise from top: ISSEY MIYAKE INTENSE (\$54). HUGO XY (\$65). BOND NO. 9 WALL STREET (\$190). VALENTINO V POUR HOMME (\$47). LANVIN ARPÈGE POUR HOMME (\$62). PIERRE CARDIN BLACK (\$25). GIORGIO ARMANI ATTITUDE (\$55).



"I spend time on my hair before a date and so should the guy I'm dating. A man's hair can look good in only five minutes, but the trick is to make it look as though he hasn't used anything. Hair shouldn't look overstyled, and everyone should avoid flaky gel."—Playmate of the Year 2006 Kara Monaco

STYLE



Tea Tree Shaping Cream*

Matching goo to hair is an art in some quarters. Creams work for all hair types to create a softer look; pomade or wax works best on short to medium hair. A lightweight gel goes well with long or thick hair, and a heavy holding cream can tame the curly stuff. "Rub a small amount between your hands and run it evenly through your hair to the roots," says Rebecca Stover, head stylist for Truman's Gentlemen's Groomers. "Start light. You can always add more if needed." Clockwise from top left: REDKEN FOR MEN THICKENING

SPRAY (\$11). LAB SERIES ROOT POWER HAIR TONIC (\$40). WOODY'S HEADWAX (\$16). JOHN ALLAN'S THICK SHAMPOO (\$18). REDKEN FOR MEN DEFINING POMADE (\$14). GÖT2B MAGNETIK TEXTURIZING POMADE (\$6). PAUL MITCHELL TEA TREE SHAPING CREAM (\$15). AUBREY ORGANICS MEN'S STOCK GINSENG BIOTIN HAIR GEL (\$10). CLUBMAN STYLING GEL (\$3). AVEDA MEN PURE-FORMANCE CONDITIONER (\$18). MATTE FOR MEN COMPLETE HEAD CARE LOTION (\$20).

"It's definitely a turn-on for me when a guy is clean shaven. Not only does it tell me he knows how to take care of himself, it feels awesome to kiss. But if I kiss a guy who hasn't shaved in a couple of days, it's the worst. It feels as if I'm getting rug burn on my face."—Miss January 2007 Jayde Nicole



SHAVE

Annet King, director of training and development for Dermalogica, recommends you start with a face wash in the shower, then apply a shaving gel, cream or soap and shave with the grain. (Preoiling helps you hack through thick growth.) Finish with a toner, balm or moisturizer. "Get your skin analyzed. Most spas and salons with a professional aesthetician on staff will give you a free skin mapping—a consultation to diagnose your facial skin—and prescribe the right products for your skin type." Clockwise from top left: KIEHL'S ULTIMATE BRUSHLESS SHAVE

CREAM (\$15). HOMMAGE MONACO SHAVE SET (\$390). ANTHONY LOGISTICS INGROWN HAIR TREATMENT (\$25). BRUT REVOLUTION AFTER SHAVE (\$20). PETER THOMAS ROTH AFTER SHAVE BALM (\$24). CLARINS SMOOTH SHAVE (\$16). THE ART OF SHAVING PURE BADGER BRUSH (\$50). DURANCE L'ÔME BOWL AND SHAVING SOAP (\$23). C.O. BIGELOW BARBER PRE-SHAVE OIL (\$12). GILLETTE FUSION POWER PHANTOM RAZOR (\$12). ÈSHAVE AFTER SHAVE CREAM (\$22). DERMALOGICA POST-SHAVE BALM (\$26).





HELENA BONHAM CARTER



**SWEENEY TODD'S CUTUP REVEALS ALL ABOUT HER BEST FRIEND, TIM BURTON,
HIS BEST FRIEND, JOHNNY DEPP, HER LIFE AS A WEIRD KID AND WHY WE SHOULD ALL
BE WATCHING HER BREASTS ON THE BIG SCREEN**

Q1

PLAYBOY: Your companion, Tim Burton, directed you as Mrs. Lovett, a baker who makes pies out of human meat in *Sweeney Todd*. Did he make you audition for the part?

CARTER: I auditioned and then there was five weeks of dead silence. It was hideous. All he said was "well done" at the end, and that was it. For five weeks I heard nothing—and we were *living* together. You can imagine the strain. Of course I should audition like anybody else, but we hadn't anticipated the strain it would put on our relationship. Luckily, Stephen Sondheim, the composer, had final approval, which took the pressure off Tim. Tim said he couldn't have cast me otherwise.

Q2

PLAYBOY: Had you ever sung in front of Burton before your audition?

CARTER: No. But literally from the day he said I could audition—with no preferential treatment—I went to a singing teacher. Then I was screeching every single day because I had to do these vocal exercises. Fortunately, we live in sort of separate houses. They're kind of joined now, but we have a good thick door that we kept closed while I did my exercises.

Q3

PLAYBOY: You have joined houses but live on separate sides. If we were to walk in, would we be able to tell which side is yours?

CARTER: Absolutely. It wouldn't take you long at all. Mine is the tasteful side, and his is his side. Mine looks like Beatrix Potter. It couldn't be more country and tweed. It's very country cottage and very cozy and homey and welcoming. He has dead Oompa-Loompas around and multicolored fiberglass alien lamps. But then he has some nice red-button sofas from *Sleepy Hollow*. So it's a funny and good mix.

Q4

PLAYBOY: Which side has the better Christmas tree?

CARTER: We do just one. He decorates it with dead babies and slime balls and things. It's his alternative Christmas. It looks lovely and glittery from afar, and then as you get closer you realize it's rather gory. But he loves Christmas. We do Halloween and Christmas really well. Easter, not so much.

Q5

PLAYBOY: Does your son, Billy, share the same sense of humor as you two?

CARTER: Billy and Tim are completely on par with their sense of humor because it's all poo-poo jokes. Billy is four, so it's perfect. Tim is 49, Johnny Depp is 44, and all three have the same sense of humor. Billy may soon mature past them. Not may, will.

Q6

PLAYBOY: Johnny Depp is Burton's best friend and your co-star in *Sweeney Todd*. Depp compared his own singing to the "mating call of a rutting stag." How bad was it?

CARTER: That's not bad. If you've heard a rutting stag, it's a big self-compliment. *[laughs]* No, he's got a beautiful voice. He sounds like himself, too. He's very cool. Whatever Johnny does, there's something cool about it. He's very hip. It's emotional and vulnerable, too, which makes it touching.

Q7

PLAYBOY: Depp is notorious for pulling pranks on set. Has he ever gotten you?

CARTER: No. He was pretty good to me because he knew I'd be in real trouble if I laughed. And I tend to laugh anyway. He was very well behaved, very focused, very professional. We had the usual poo-poo jokes and

everything. I was also pregnant halfway through, so my brain went with the pregnancy. I couldn't remember a thing. I could remember my lines fine, but I was so uncoordinated physically. And anything Tim told me to do I'd kind of forget instantly, which I'm sure was deeply psychological. So Johnny was always helpful off camera, pointing in the direction I had to look or reminding me of anything I'd forgotten to do. Johnny knew he had to save me.

Q8

PLAYBOY: You met Burton on the *Planet of the Apes* set. What attracted you to him?

CARTER: Hmm. Let me see if I can remember. [laughs] No, I do love him. To be honest, it took quite some time for our attraction to become apparent. We did a whole film together before we noticed each other, probably because I was in an ape costume and he's very private. We didn't have a proper conversation during *Planet of the Apes*.

Q9

PLAYBOY: Were you a quirky kid?

CARTER: My friend reminded me of something when I was auditioning for the part in *Sweeney Todd*. She said, "Of course you're going to get the part," and I said, "Yeah, everyone thinks that because I'm sleeping with the director." She said, "No, because you wanted to be Mrs. Lovett when you were 11—you even made us call you Mrs. Lovett." It's true! I'd completely forgotten about it. I didn't forget that I so loved *Sweeney Todd* I learned it by heart, but I didn't remember having the nickname Mrs. Lovett. I do remember going around with Mrs. Lovett hairdos. So I guess that is kind of similar to Tim. Most 11-year-old girls don't want to be Mrs. Lovett. They would rather be on *Charlie's Angels* or in *Beauty and the Beast*.

Q10

PLAYBOY: You won a poetry contest when you were 11 and used the money to place your photo in a casting catalog. What was the poem?

CARTER: It was weirdly about rumors, which is funny, given that I ended up becoming the subject of them. It was called "The Grapevine." It was a really crap poem. God knows how I won something. Someone stubbed her toe and by the end she was dead. I guess it was pretty grim. I probably had a pretty grim imagination. Maybe Tim and I are quite alike after all.

Q11

PLAYBOY: You play drug addict Marla Singer in *Fight Club*. When you were making it, did you realize what an impact the film would have?

CARTER: I thought it was a provocative

script, but I wasn't entirely sure. My mother put the script out the door and said it was a pollutant. [laughs] Then when she saw it she said it was a genius film that was going to last for ages. She was right. The film was very much misunderstood because it's essentially a black comedy. There's so much satire in it. They thought it was just about senselessly beating people up, but it was deeply intelligent and observant and socially responsible. So we got a bad reception, but my mom was right when she said not to worry, that the film would last a long time.

Q12

PLAYBOY: How many takes did you do of the orgasm scene in that film?

CARTER: Millions. It came pretty easily. Most of the time I was off camera, so I would literally be on set going, "Uh, uh, uh, uh, uh, uh." It was like, just press the button. The scene is actually digitized, so Brad Pitt and I spent a whole day with no clothes on and strange white dots on our bodies. It was weird. We laughed through the whole day. The director would say, "Annnnd orgasm!" It's quite amazing to orgasm on command.

Q13

PLAYBOY: Some movie fans have put your orgasm up against Meg Ryan's in *When Harry Met Sally*. How do you rank them?

CARTER: Oh, that's really flattering! Well, thank you. I have to write that down. I wish I had a certificate that said that for my wall.

Q14

PLAYBOY: You've played several drug addicts. Did you ever go through a drug phase?

CARTER: People seem to see me as that type, but I never did drugs. One director suggested I take them just to see what it was like. Just how clever was he? I'm not going to tell you who it was. I said no, thank you. I think I can use my imagination. The closest I ever came to drugs was postbaby, when they give you painkillers. Then I thought, Oh, I get it! It was so nice.

Q15

PLAYBOY: Your version of Bellatrix Lestrange in *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* is pretty busty in the corset. Is that all you? You are pregnant as we speak, and that can confuse the issue.

CARTER: I don't really have those. I felt I had to make an impression somehow. I'm on the screen for so little time, I needed to establish Bellatrix. I thought, Okay, I've got a little time. I have to be bold with my choices here. I'll go with teeth and breasts, I thought, then I'll stand out. And I did! Now a year later I have to do the next one. If my breasts stay as they are—because they suddenly popped out

for this pregnancy—then I won't need to use any chicken fillets. [laughs] Anyone who watches *Sweeney Todd* and pays attention to my breast size will see there's no continuity: The first half of filming I wasn't pregnant and the second half I was, and because we didn't shoot it in order I start off with huge breasts, and then I walk upstairs and suddenly I've got tangerines again. It's melons to tangerines.

Q16

PLAYBOY: We saw footage of an old Japanese beer commercial. Is that really you?

CARTER: [Laughs] It's hilarious. I don't remember much. I think I end up in a haystack with Julian Sands. I'm wearing strange clothes. I was so young. I think that was in my monobrow phase when I still had just one eyebrow. For the first 10 years of this career I was really confused. I had no idea what the hell I was doing. It took a long time to grow up.

Q17

PLAYBOY: Did you have a lot of boyfriends during this awkward phase?

CARTER: No. I didn't have many boyfriends. I was a very late developer. I was practically a nun. I lived with my parents until I was 30. I did see some men in my 20s. A few. [laughs] They found it tough that they had to see me at the parents' consistently.

Q18

PLAYBOY: Have you ever appeared in a movie Burton hated?

CARTER: Not any he's actually seen. When he was really in love with me he watched about three Merchant Ivory films back-to-back. It was an overdose for him because he'd never watched one in his life.

Q19

PLAYBOY: People have this conception of you and he as a dark couple. Do you have a goofy side?

CARTER: We're not that dark. All Tim's films have a great big tender heart. I'm definitely not dark. I'm fluffy, if anything. What I love about Tim is that he retains a certain innocence and a childlike quality. He sort of forgot to grow up. I think I've definitely forgotten to grow up, which is great. Great for Billy, probably. At some point he'll probably want parents. [laughs] He'll have to look elsewhere.

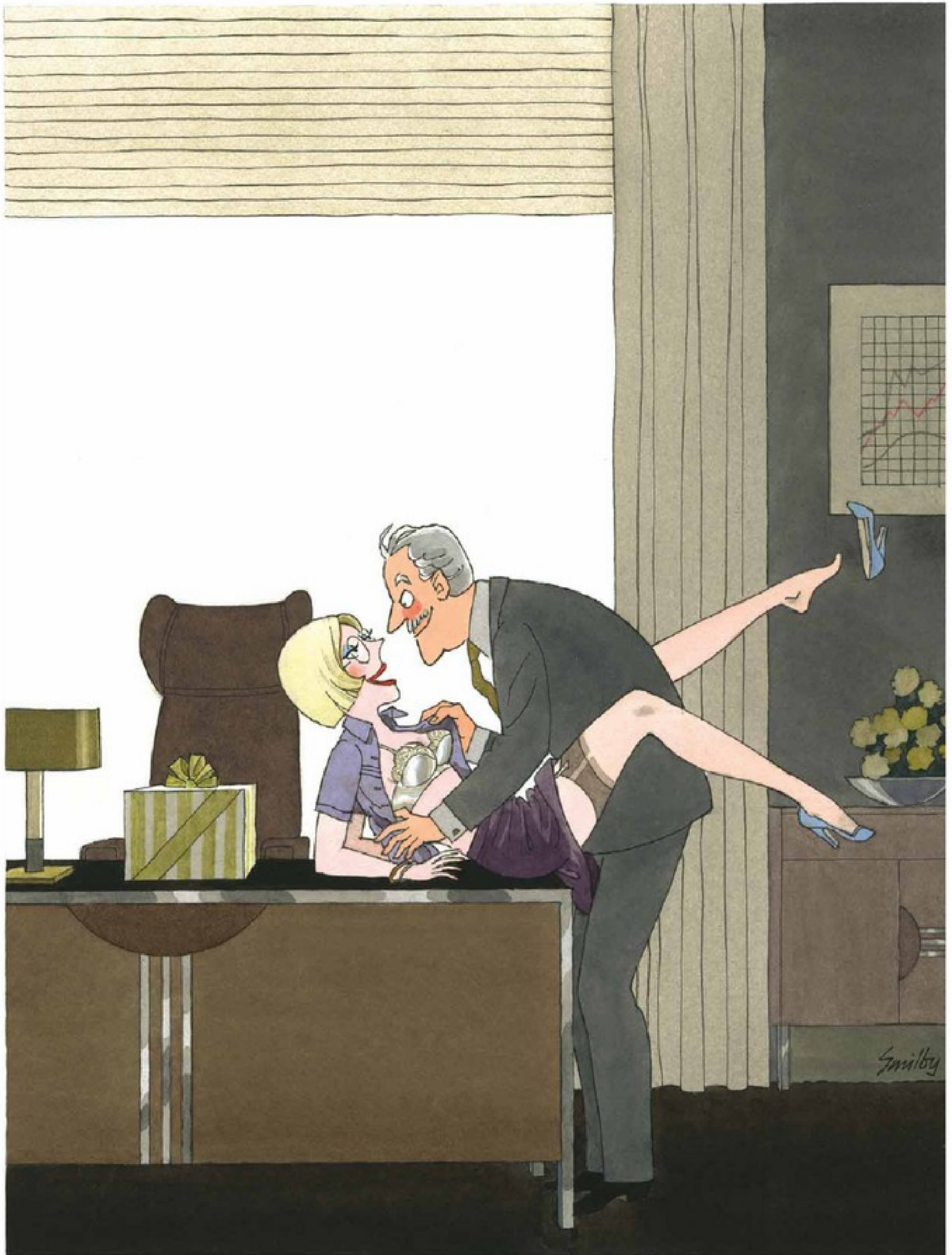
Q20

PLAYBOY: If you and Burton ever split up, who keeps Johnny Depp?

CARTER: Oh, Tim can have him! [laughs] They get the same poo jokes. Nothing will separate them.

Read the 21st question at playboy.com/21q.





"Steady, Mr. Birdsell—it's my present you're supposed to be unwrapping."

A TASTE OF PRIORAT

**A sojourn to a small
but significant wine
region sends an
acclaimed author's
head, heart and
glass swirling**

The Darling of 2008



*A Full-Bodied
Spanish Wine*

The 1960s: Living in my bride's hometown of Tarragona, Spain, once—as Imperial Tarraco—the western capital of the Roman Empire. Occasional trips up into the nearby mountains of Priorato (as Priorat was known in those days of the Franco dictatorship, when the Catalan language was forbidden) for the mountain air, the scenery, feasts of grilled lamb and rabbit with local artist friends, and the powerful, rough but mouth-filling local jug wine, drunk at meals by the rivulet from glass *porrones* lifted at arm's length and, at 18 percent alcohol, quite literally a back-country knockout. Best described perhaps as a kind of clumsy *ripasso*, tasty, dense, dark, with sour-sweet overtones, just about everything having gone into the vat. Always brought along gallon *garrafas* to be filled at the local bodega for a few pesetas, though back home in the lowlands the wine seemed to lose some of its power and clarity, or perhaps our own clarity returned and we could better judge it for what it was. Took a professional photographer friend along on one occasion to the ancient village of Masroig, said to have Islamic origins, though the area earlier had Iberian and pre-Iberian inhabitants, and among his many photos of the day was one taken in a small barren room with a tall window, a mirror on the wall and a wooden chair, on which I sat for the photo that appears on a couple of my early dust jackets.

1989: Generally acknowledged to be year one of the great Priorat wine revolution. According to the prevailing legend, that was the year the five famous pioneers of the new wave, having gathered together in the tiny mountain village of Gratallops (it was a kind of commune back then, they say, with shared winemaking facilities and something of a hippie atmosphere), produced their first experimental vintage. In their devotion, they resembled somewhat those old 12th century Carthusian monks of the Scala Dei (“Ladder of God”) priory—whence the region's name—who, praising their divinity, replanted the old Roman terraces, launching the “modern” era of winemaking in the area. The Gratallops Five managed to attach the same mystique to their wines that the monks enjoyed in their time, finding their divinity in the prehistoric convulsions that created their *terroir*. They would all very rapidly become international superstars: Alvaro Palacios of the Rioja Baja family (L'Ermita and Clos Dofi, later renamed Finca Dofi); René Barbier of the Barbier winemaking clan (Clos Mogador); Tarragona musician and journalist Carles Pastrana and his oenologist wife, Mariona Jarque (Clos de L'Obac); the Catalan viticulturist and professor José Lluís Pérez and his philosopher-oenologist daughter Sara (Mas Martinet), Sara now married to René Barbier Jr.; and Paris-born Swiss winemaker Daphne Glorian (Clos

Erasmus), drawn to the project by a chance encounter with Palacios and Barbier at an Orlando wine fair earlier in the decade.

2007: We are back in Tarragona, visiting the family for a week after a long absence, and impulsively we decide to rent a car and visit Priorat for the first time since the 1960s with the whimsical ambition of trying to find that barren room where the photo was taken and see if the mirror and chair are still there, and along the way perhaps walk the hills and vineyards and taste a few of the new wines. By now of course Priorat is the talk of the wine world, prices per bottle can run into the hundreds of dollars, Robert Parker with his consistent upper-90s scores is predicting the Catalan area will surpass La Rioja and Ribera del Duero as Spain's top wine region, and new wineries are popping up weekly, the number of Priorat bodegas rising from 20 in 2000 to more than 80 now, even though production of the entire Priorat wine district is smaller than that of some single Rioja growers, with many more wineries mushrooming at the more ample Montsant fringes. So this is not a journey of discovery but more one of personal inquiry—e.g., what makes

By Robert Coover

these opulent, full-bodied wines, made mostly of *grenache* and *carignan*, not the noblest of varietals, as good as they are? Why are they so expensive? Do they have aging potential? What has

been the impact of big money and new techniques on the locals?—and, as is always the case with wine, has been for millennia upon millennia, oldest story of the human race except that of story itself, one of pleasure.

We decide to post ourselves at the



heart of the uprising and book a room in Gratallops itself (pop. 250) at the little three-star country hotel perched high in the center, Cal Llop (“House of the Wolf” or “Wolf’s Den”). This turns out to be our most fortunate decision of the week. Not only is it an imaginatively designed little inn, fondly handcrafted from an ancient building whose origins are said to date back to the 13th century, looking out over the vineyards and the tumble of tiled roofs below, but its generous, laid-back owners, Cristina Jiménez and Waldo Bartolomé, refugees from the Madrid hurly-burly and the film-and-television world, are able to turn what was largely a flight of fancy into a more or less sensible project, organizing for us via their friends a two-day wine tour that ranges from the oldest to the newest, from community cooperatives and youthful garage-wine

makers to the commercial hustlers and dedicated superstars, and including the up-and-coming Montsant wine district, which embraces the more privileged Priorat—as a Montsant winemaker puts it later—as the flesh of a peach embraces its pit. And while Cristina sets up our tastings, Waldo, amused by the whimsy of it, goes to work on finding that room with mirror and chair, the primary clue being that we were visiting that day the local painter Jaume Sabaté.

At supper after our first day of vineyard visits, we also discover that the Cal Llop chef Angel Lopez Bellot is as talented and imaginative as the hotel owners, the accompanying full-bodied wine list like a directory of the region’s vineyards and itself an extension of our tastings. We are sharing the restaurant, originally the house stables, with the youngest of the serial René Barbiers and his guests from Château Mouton-Rothschild in Bordeaux, a dozen of them perched on a kind of platform just above us, and at the table beside us the romantic young garagist Fredi Torres (no relation to the well-known wine family), whose organic Sao del Coster wines we have sampled earlier in the day in his bodega at the bottom of town, a beat-up old building buried in the hillside rock and inhabited by the nurturing ghosts of winemakers past, the facility doubling as a location for disco parties, Fredi once having made a living as a DJ and still keeping his hand in. Tonight Fredi is entertaining a pair of voluptuous young Americans, their décolletage the subject of much ogling and comment from the distinguished winemakers above us.



Homage to Catalonia: Only a hundred miles from Barcelona, the Priorat wine district is a rugged, mountainous area that has recently become an international favorite for its amazingly robust red wines.

Having apparently learned from Fredi that I may be writing something for this magazine, one of the two women, sisters as it turns out, comes over to introduce herself and, squatting seductively at my feet, recites from memory the poem that she says won the 1988 PLAYBOY poetry prize when she was 16. It’s called “Orange” and is about licking, sucking, sniffing, stroking, etc., the fruit, then rubbing it all over her body; a classic, as you might say. “And I hadn’t even had sex yet!” she says, somewhat in wonderment at her own precociousness. She goes on to tell me her life story, which is not a wonderful one, she has had her share of hard knocks, but she is a chin-up sort of kid and always looks on the bright side.

In the line before Pliny the Elder comments in his *Natural History* on the choice qualities of the wines of Imperial Tarraco, much quoted by writers on

these local wines today (Pliny also has exemplary tales of erudite Roman entrepreneurs buying up land on the cheap, planting modernized vineyards and raking in fortunes), he points out that the land and the soil are “of primary importance, and not the grape, and that it is quite superfluous to attempt to enumerate all the varieties of every kind, seeing that the same vine, transplanted to sev-

eral places, is productive of features and characteristics of quite opposite natures.” *Terroir*, as it’s called in the trade, especially if restricted to the soil and weather, is indeed the secret to the peculiar power of the Priorat wines and is what distinguishes them from their Montsant neighbors and all others besides. The steep terraced hillsides, some of (continued on page 170)

UN POCO DE VINO Eight of Playboy’s preferred Priorats

● **2005 Alvaro Palacios Les Terrasses**
This vintage may be comparable to the fabled 2004. Terrasses is a good introduction to the complexity of Priorat. Lots of fruit, lots of oak (\$35).

● **2004 Clos Galena Galena**
From a relative newcomer, this beauty reveals abundant black fruit with nice tannins. Spicy, with tones of currant and black cherry (\$30).

● **2005 Les Brugueres**
A rare white *grenache* from La Conreria d’Scala Dei, with amazing intensity. A lush break from chardonnays and sauvignon blancs (\$30).

● **2004 Mas Igneus Vinyes de Coster**
An excellent example of new-style Priorat, using old and new vines. A union of red and black fruits (\$25).

● **2001 Capcanes Montsant Costers del Gravet**
Not a Priorat—we’re taking a few liberties here—but still a great Catalonian red. Full and lush (\$25).

● **2004 Clos Mogador Manyetes**
An eminently elegant wine with a remarkable finish. A fine example of high-end Priorat that shows the possibility of the varietals (\$90).

● **2005 Celler Cecilio Negre**
Now run by August Vicent, son of founder Cecilio Vicent, his vineyard produces a vibrant and spirited Priorat with fruit and mineral (\$20).

● **2004 Ardèvol Coma d’en Romeu**
A dense blend from the newcomer Celler Ardèvol, which makes the most of a great vintage. Surprisingly supple and ready for drinking (\$37).



"This is what the holidays are all about. Reconnecting with old friends."



MIKE TYSON ~ LAID BARE ~



HIS RISE WAS METEORIC

&

HIS FALL EQUALLY SO.

WHAT FOLLOWS IS AN ORAL HISTORY
OF THE TYSON YEARS,
PROVIDED BY THOSE
WHO KNEW HIM WELL

MARCH 1980: Mike Tyson sits in the passenger seat. Mr. Stewart is driving. Bobby Stewart is a counselor from the Tryon School for Boys. Mike is 13. He knows he could easily pass for 20. Sometimes he likes that, but mainly he doesn't. He has his cheap athletic clothes on, but they're an improvement over the stuff he wore in the Bedford-Stuyvesant and Brownsville neighborhoods in Brooklyn. Sometimes he had to put cardboard in his shoes. The memories are too bad. His mother hasn't been in touch since he's been in Tryon. She could have sent him a present. The only good thing is his sister, Denise. She plays him up as a tough guy, and he likes that. She says, "My brother is never 'Mike' or 'Tyson.' He is always 'Mike Tyson.'"

Bobby keeps drilling him about how he should act when they get to the gym and meet this old Italian guy, Cus, and these other guys: Be polite. Always call them sir. But what's in it for Bobby? Maybe this is a con. Mike likes Bobby to an extent. He doesn't know if he can trust him, though. For a start, Bobby is white.

BY JONATHAN RENDALL

ILLUSTRATION BY JASON HOLLEY

Mike looks out the car window at the Hudson. His thoughts go back to Brownsville and the view from the roof where he kept his pigeons. They've probably all been taken by now, but he'll get them back if he ever gets out. Most of all he thinks about the fear. Denise doesn't know about that. Being scared every minute he was out there. Sometimes he would hide inside the walls of the derelict buildings. Inside them! That was pretty crazy too.



Michael Gerard Tyson grew up in poverty in Brooklyn. Incarcerated at the age of 12, he discovered he had extraordinary physical power. Plucked from the borstal by Stewart, a former boxer, Tyson was introduced to the maverick septuagenarian boxing trainer Cus D'Amato, who housed boxers in a remote Catskill Mountains home in the town of Catskill, New York. The house, like everything else, was in the name of D'Amato's companion, Camille Ewald. D'Amato had trained Floyd Patterson, the then youngest-ever heavyweight champion, nearly 30 years before. D'Amato's idiosyncratic methods were based on an intricate series of numbers that denoted each punch and defensive movement. The idea was to leave the boxer free of independent thought. D'Amato preferred his boxers to be as emotionally empty and suggestible as possible, so they could be rebuilt from scratch.

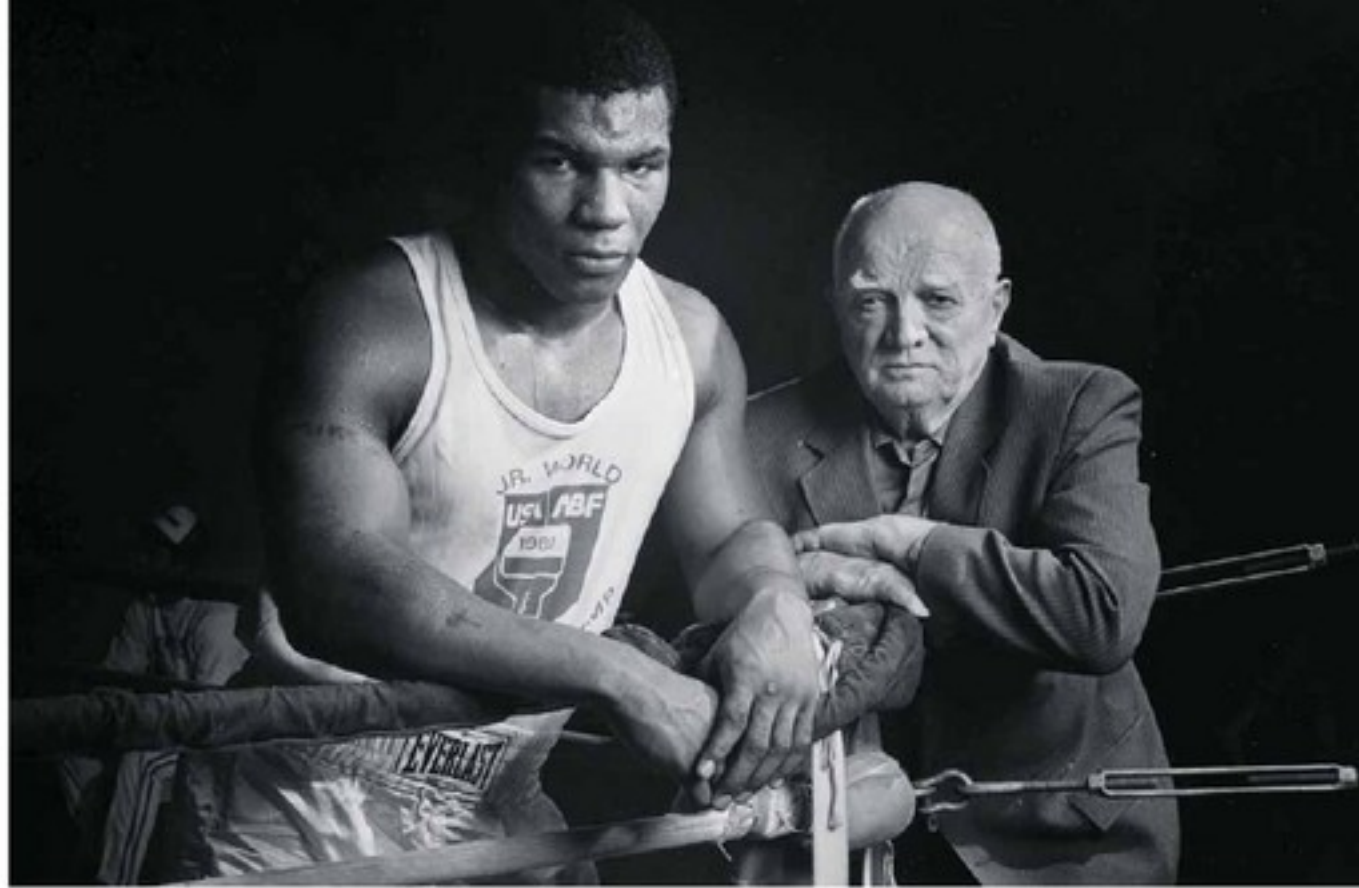
KEVIN ROONEY (Tyson's future pro trainer): Tyson was a street punk. Allegedly, he did all these crimes, but I don't believe that happened. I believe he ran around on the street and got arrested, and they shipped him up to a boys home. His mother and father weren't together, and he was stumbling through the streets of Brooklyn. So Bobby Stewart says, "I've got this guy you should check out." I was like 7-0 as a pro fighter at the time. I was the head honcho of the gym. So this kid Tyson is going to spar with Bobby Stewart, and I thought I'd better check it out.

TEDDY ATLAS (Tyson's amateur trainer): I understood where Tyson was coming from. He was in prison; he had nothing.

JOHNNY BOS (future Tyson matchmaker): I thought he was a bad boy from the beginning, but they made him out to be a lot worse than he was. He was bad but no worse than a lot of people. Where I come from, everyone got arrested.

DON MAJESKI (New York fight figure): I wouldn't be surprised if Tyson was sexually abused as a kid by people in the reformatories. When he was 11 or 12, these 17- and 18-year-old kids may have raped him.

ATLAS: He was 13 years old and 190 pounds, so there was a force of nature there, as far as his physicality. He was



MIKE TYSON WITH CUS D'AMATO IN CATSKILL, NEW YORK IN JANUARY 1985: D'AMATO MOLDED TYSON INTO A CHAMPION.

raw, didn't know much, but he was strong. After the second round he comes back with a bloody nose. I take a towel and wipe it and say, "That's it." I didn't want to see him get abused. I knew we were buying, so I said, "That's it."

ROONEY: After I won the Golden Gloves and wanted to turn pro, a friend said, "Talk to Cus D'Amato." So I talked to him, and Cus said, "Come live here, with free room and board. We'll set you chores around the house." I painted, mowed the lawn. Exactly the same with Tyson.

ATLAS: Cus had this thing about food. That happens when you have too much time on your hands and you don't have to work for a living. And because—and I'm half joking—all he did was sit around while I was in the gym training fighters, he wore his robe all day. He watched *Barney Miller*—that was one of his favorite shows, and the other was *MASH*. On Tyson's first day at the house, we had all the food there, and Camille said she wanted serving spoons. There was only one on the table. So she says, "Michael, get me a serving spoon." Well, he jumps so fast, to please and be a good boy, that his leg gets stuck under one of the underpinnings. He picks up the whole table, and everything starts sliding off it. Camille's yelling, "Oh my God," because everything's going to smash on the floor. And Tyson's going, "Oh!" So I'm looking at Tyson moving the table around as if he's moving a piece of melon. I look at Cus, and Cus goes, "What power! The next heavyweight champion of the world! My God, look at that. What an animal!" He called him an animal, just spontaneously. The truth was now coming out. I'm watching Tyson make out like he just killed a family, worried, and I'm thinking, What a fucked-up place I'm in.

STEVE LOTT (Tyson's former friend): Cus sees this kid and he knows he's bad, but

deep down that's not what he wants to be. It's the junk that covers him from having lived in Brooklyn. Mike came to that house a fucking mess.

MAJESKI: D'Amato was a genius. A brilliant guy but crazy. That's the problem. Like this mad doctor who went in there and concocted stuff and came out with Floyd Patterson. And then concocted Tyson. Tyson was a cunning guy. Everybody D'Amato got came out of reformatories. I think Teddy Atlas was in a reformatory. Patterson, Tyson. So everybody there, there was something bent about them.

ROONEY: For our roadwork we went right out onto Highway 385. I was the best runner. I let Tyson beat me so he'd have confidence, but every once in a while I'd show him who the real boss was. I could whip his ass, but he was a good runner, a fast runner.

NADIA HUYTYN (female boxer and future trainer for D'Amato): I was there the day they brought Mike in. He was 13 years old. We all said to Cus, "He can't be that age," and Cus said, "Well, I don't know. This man Stewart is my friend, so if he says he is, then he must be." Mike didn't know how to act with people. That was one of the things he never learned. He didn't have any social skills. But he was all right with us in the gym. Mike wasn't brought up properly. Even Camille would say he had nothing. He didn't know how to act. He didn't know about deodorant. He didn't know how to take care of himself.

ATLAS: I had come home from the gym and was putting my stuff away when Camille came down the steps. It looked like she was hiding. She said, "Don't say nothing to Cus." She was really crying. I said, "What's the matter?" She said, "I just told Mike he smelled and to wash, and (continued on page 142)



"Here's a toast to N'kzuxo for being our Christmas tree!"

SWEDE *D*REAM

Men on this side of the pond possess an almost mystical reverence for Sweden.

There are those meatballs and aquavit. There's the postcard scenery, the frozen tundra and the alpine wonderland. Don't forget Ikea. But Sweden's exotic women are what kick the imagination into high gear. Unforgettable Bond Girl bombshells Britt Ekland and Maud Adams and screen sirens Ann-Margret and Ingrid Bergman all hail from this northern promised land. Anyone who ever strode the streets of Malmö and Stockholm knows the women of this country live up to their rep.

Allow us to introduce you to the next great Swedish import, Miss January Sandra Nilsson. The 21-year-old model grew up in the village of Ystad and lived in Sweden with her family for 19 years before moving to New York City, where she resides today. Of course you know Ystad as the setting for crime writer Henning Mankell's novels featuring police inspector Kurt Wallander. (*Mördare Utan Ansikte* is our fave.) "My village has one traffic light," Sandra says. "It has a very different pace, a completely different style of life than that of America."

Sandra started modeling at the age of 18. She entered her first beauty competition and was soon working full time. A rising star, she knew it was time to go in search of bigger and better things. She left her Abba records behind and took the plunge, making her home in glamorous Manhattan. She has since modeled swimsuits, walked the runway and worked as a spokesmodel for Hawaiian Tropic. (You'll notice the deeply tanned skin, so



From the icy
hinterlands comes
steaming-hot
Miss January

healthy it glows.) "I was so scared when I first came to America, because my English was basically limited to 'Hello, my name is Sandra, and I'm from Sweden,'" she tells us in her adorable accent. "But I'm getting better and better every day." Clearly. When you start chatting with Sandra, she only gets hotter. She has a degree in education—plenty of brains behind all that beauty. When she's not working she likes to ride horses or cook.

Hef's brother Keith Hefner can take the credit for spotting Miss January. He discovered Sandra at the Cannes Film Festival and invited her to Los Angeles for a test shoot. Suffice it to say Sandra's session went

well. She was a hit. Her incredible sex appeal nearly melted our photographer's camera lens. "I'm very glad I made the decision to pose," she says. "So far it has been the best thing that ever happened to me. It has already opened so many doors."

Does Sandra plan to stick around the States forever? "My country is beautiful," she says, "but I couldn't live there right now. It's too boring. For now I want to focus on modeling and charity work for homeless children here in America. Maybe when I get older I'll want to move back." Does she go for those famous Swedish meatballs? "I've been a vegetarian for 11 years," she tells us. Her taste in men? "It doesn't matter what country a man is from or what industry he's in, as long as he has a good personality and he trusts me," Sandra says. "You need trust for a relationship to work. When I was younger I liked beautiful model-type guys, but I don't think that matters anymore. What is inside is the most attractive."













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





MISS JANUARY

PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH

Sandra Nilsson





PLAYMATE DATA SHEET

NAME: Sandra Nilsson

BUST: 35C WAIST: 26 HIPS: 35

HEIGHT: 5'9" WEIGHT: 123

BIRTH DATE: 2/17/86 BIRTHPLACE: Ystad, Sweden

AMBITIONS: I try to get as much out of life as I can every day. I like to help people and give advice.

TURN-ONS: I like a man who has good self-confidence, a unique personality and nice eyes.

TURNOFFS: When a man just talks about himself and when a man smells like old sweat.

WHAT I MISS ABOUT SWEDEN: My family and friends.

FOODS I WILL NOT EAT: All kinds of meat because I am a vegetarian.

HOBBIES I'D PURSUE IF I HAD MORE TIME: Yoga and home design.

PREVIOUS MODELING EXPERIENCE: Several beauty pageants in Sweden, promotions for Hawaiian Tropic and an appearance on Scandinavia's Next Top Model.

FAVORITE BOOKS/AUTHOR: The Harry Potter series by J.K. Rowling.



Middle school in Sweden.



I'm in the Swedish national costume before a beauty pageant.



A promotion for Hawaiian Tropic, 2006.

MISS JANUARY

PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH





Sandra
Missan

PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

Two aliens out in space were looking down on our planet. The first alien said, "It seems the dominant life-forms on Earth have developed satellite-based weapons."

The second alien asked, "Are they an emerging intelligence?"

"I don't think so," the first responded. "They have the weapons aimed at themselves."

A man on a business trip went to a singles bar, approached two ladies and offered each of them \$200 to spend the night with him. One girl stormed out in a rage, but the other remained cool, calm and collected.



I have to come clean," a guy said to his girlfriend. "While we've been dating, I've been secretly seeing a psychiatrist."

"No worries," she said. "I've been secretly seeing a lawyer, a car salesman and two airline pilots."

When a man found out his rich father was on his deathbed, he went to a bar, hoping to find a beautiful woman he could begin to spoil. "I may look like just an ordinary man," he said to a woman who could have passed as a model, "but in just a week or two my father will die and I'll inherit \$20 million."

Impressed, the woman went home with him that evening. Three days later she became his stepmother.

Doc, my wife has lost her voice," a man told his physician. "What should I do to help her get it back?"

The doctor thought for a moment and then replied, "Try coming home drunk at three in the morning."

A little boy hurt his finger and ran into the house to show his mother.

"Oh," she said, "let me get a Band-Aid for that."

"No!" cried the boy. "Cider!"

"Cider?" the mother asked. "What on earth do you want cider for?"

"Because," he explained, "Sis says whenever she gets a prick in her hand, she likes to put it in cider."

A cop pulled over a man who was driving a car filled with penguins.

"Sir," the officer said to the driver, "you can't have all these penguins in your car! You must take them to the zoo right now."

The man agreed and the cop let him go.

The next day the cop pulled over the same man with the same penguins in his car. When he approached the vehicle he noticed the penguins were wearing sunglasses.

"Sir," the officer said, "I distinctly remember telling you yesterday to take these penguins to the zoo."

"I did," the man said. "Today we're going to the beach."

A man went to a doctor for a simple vasectomy. When he awoke after the procedure the doctor was standing over him with a worried look.

"I have some bad news," the doctor said. "I completely botched your surgery, and we had to go ahead and give you a full sex change. You now have a vagina."

"Oh my God," the man said. "So you mean to tell me I will never experience another erection for as long as I live?"

"Oh, you will experience an erection," the doctor said, "just not yours."



What's the difference between the government and the Mafia?

One of them is organized.

A man and a woman were arguing about which gender enjoys sex the most. "Men obviously enjoy sex more," the man said. "Why do you think we're so obsessed with getting laid?"

"Well," replied the woman, "think about this: When your ear itches and you put your finger in it and wiggle it around, which feels better, your finger or your ear?"

Send your jokes to Party Jokes Editor, PLAYBOY, 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019, or by e-mail through our website at jokes.playboy.com. PLAYBOY will pay \$100 to the contributors whose submissions are selected.



Dave Coverly



WHEN YOU'RE ON TOP IN NEW YORK, IT'S A LONG WAY DOWN. THE DRUG-FUELED, BOOZE-SOAKED, LONELY WORLD OF A DANGEROUSLY FUNNY MAN

RIDING HIGH WITH

ARTIE LANGE

BY MIKE GUY

Times like this are really hard," Artie Lange says in a slow, tired, asthmatic rasp. "Now is when heroin really seems like a good idea. How else am I going to come down from this?"

Lange is sitting in the back of a black stretch limousine parked in the loading dock attached to Heinz Hall in Pittsburgh. Beads of sweat glisten in his thin corona of graying hair. He shifts all of his 305 pounds on the leather seat, trying to get comfortable. Not one to overdress, he's in loose Carharts and a stained sweatshirt. He just headlined a stand-up comedy show in front of 2,704 fans, who smothered him with love for close to an hour. Now there's a near riot in the street just on the other side of the loading-dock door, which is about to open. Lange sparks a Marlboro Light and puts the pack into a satchel alongside a prescription vial of Subutex, an opiate-blocking medication that prevents symptoms of heroin withdrawal.

The limo door opens. Lange's assistant, Teddy, hands him a \$72,000 check.

"Shit, man, I thought it was going to be a little more money," Lange says. "I mean, I'm not complaining. Seventy-two grand for an hour of work. It's really 20 years of work if you think about it. Anyway, I always have the feeling I'm getting fucked."

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES IMBROGNO

Lange starts in about the night. "Being onstage," he says, "in the eye of that storm, is like a drug itself." The more he talks about the show ("the Paris Hilton bit went over okay"), the more it's obvious he's not thinking about the show. He's still thinking about junk. It would be so easy to score. For a few bucks he could take a magic carpet ride back to the hotel.

The loading-dock door opens onto the street, and fans block the way. A 10-year-old boy knocks on the limo window, holding a copy of Artie's stand-up DVD *It's the Whiskey Talkin'*. Artie signs it and hands it back. A stunner walks up. She's a blonde with long, strong stems and enough lipstick on to paint a house.

"There's a possibility I'm your soul mate, Artie," she says, "and I hate you for it."

"Well, wait a minute," Artie replies. "Let's talk more about the soul-mate thing."

"Aw, Artie, you're too much of a man for me."

Lange rolls his eyes as if to say, Sweetie, I really doubt that.

It's a typical night in the life of Artie Lange. He spends a lot of time on the road. He's one of the highest-paid comedians in America. When he landed the most coveted seat in the business in 2001—that of right-hand man on *The Howard Stern Show*—he'd already starred on a network sitcom, ABC's *Norm*, and on Fox's improbably successful sketch show *Mad TV*. Since then he has appeared in the hit movies *Elf* and *Old School*. He has been a recurring character on Denis Leary's FX series, *Rescue Me*. In November 2006 he sold out Carnegie Hall in three hours, and this winter he sold out a night at the 1,500-seat Town Hall in Manhattan for a show called

Artie Lange: Fully Loaded and closed the New York Comedy Festival as the headliner at Lincoln Center. He's building a 7,000-square-foot weekend manse on the Jersey shore, and he's shopping for a yacht. He's a certifiable multimillionaire.

Not bad for a 40-year-old former Newark dockworker who barely finished high school.

But Lange's got problems. Big ones. They are, in descending order of immediacy: (1) Gross obesity, attained through eating everything but most notably cupcakes, Devil Dogs, pasta and Hawaiian Punch. He's put on a good hundred pounds in the past year. (2) Alcoholism, by means of Jack Daniel's and Patrón. (3) The aforementioned heroin. (4) Cocaine, preferably snorted off the bosom of a Vegas hooker. (5) Loneliness. Lange shares a two-bedroom apartment in Hoboken, New Jersey with a plasma-screen TV. When talking about Artie Lange, people always bring up the Belushi curse. His career trajectory follows the path by which portly comedians (John Belushi, Sam Kinison, John Candy, Chris Farley) take a tragic dirt nap at the peak of their career. There's even a website, *artielangedeathwatch.com*, about which Lange has remarked, "They're making a couple of very good points."

As the limo rolls through the streets of downtown Pittsburgh, Lange looks out the window into the dark night. Somewhere out there is the wrong girl and a sleazy hotel room with his name on it. Now is the time in Lange's career when he's supposed to wake up dead, and he knows it.

"'Hugs are better than drugs.' My mother used to say that to me as I left the house, and I believed her. I believed everything she ever said—until the first time I got high. I leaned

back and went, 'Wow, this is way better than when my Uncle Perry hugs me. What else has my mother been lying to me about? Am I not the most handsomest boy in New Jersey?' Hugs are great, but better than drugs? Come on. Let me put it this way: I never went to Harlem at four in the morning to pay someone to hug me. 'Hey, Carlos, here's 20 bucks. Just put your arms around me.'"

Everyone loves Artie Lange. He's one of the guys. Other comics flock to him, and he helps them out when he can—getting them gigs, promoting them. He signs lots of autographs. He's a big tipper. He knows everything about sports, celebrities, TV and movies. He wouldn't know an e-mail account from his bank card, but he reads several newspapers a day, dozens of magazines a week and the occasional book. He's renowned for his photographic memory, and he can recite the entire script of *GoodFellas*. Ask Lange about an obscure Belushi bit and he'll deliver it word for word, beat for beat.

Lange likes to think he's one of the guys, but the truth is, he's not anymore. When he's out in public—whether he's in Hoboken, Brooklyn, Pittsburgh, Vegas or outside Howard Stern's studio on 49th Street in Manhattan—mooks yell out his name, cops stop him to shake his hand, chicks with boob jobs blow him kisses.

"Yankees games are getting rough," says Lange, a rabid pinstripes fan. "That's ground zero for Stern fans. They send over drinks that cost \$12, and I feel obligated to drink them. Before long, there are 40 drinks in front of me and a line of Irish guys from Queens waiting to put me in a headlock. It's not fun for the people you're with."

Lange's sensibility is north Jersey Italian, 1958 vintage. A (continued on page 152)

THE BELUSHI CURSE



JOHN BELUSHI (1949-1982)

RISE: The *Saturday Night Live* star became a household name with his pitch-perfect imitations of Joe Cocker and Marlon Brando playing Vito Corleone. As Bluto in *National Lampoon's Animal House* and Jake "Joliet" Blues in *The Blues Brothers*, Belushi became a legend.

FALL: Found dead on March 5 of a cocaine and heroin overdose at Hollywood's Chateau Marmont.

AGE AT DEATH: 33

WEIGHT AT DEATH: an estimated 222 pounds, according to the coroner's report



SAM KINISON (1953-1992)

RISE: An evangelical preacher turned comic, he became a 1980s regular on the David Letterman and Howard Stern shows. Known for his trademark bloodcurdling scream, his misogyny and his bad wardrobe.

FALL: Killed by a drunk driver in California on April 10. Toxicology reports found traces of cocaine in his blood.

AGE AT DEATH: 38

WEIGHT AT DEATH: about 275 pounds



JOHN CANDY (1950-1994)

RISE: Canadian lovable loser started on *SCTV*, then hit the big time with *Stripes*, *National Lampoon's Vacation* and *Planes, Trains and Automobiles*. In *Stripes*: "My friends call me Ox. I don't know if you've noticed, but I got a slight weight problem."

FALL: Food and cigarettes were Candy's vices. He died of a heart attack while filming *Wagons East in Mexico*.

AGE AT DEATH: 43

WEIGHT AT DEATH: 330 pounds



CHRIS FARLEY (1964-1997)

RISE: On *SNL* he played a blubbery aspiring Chippendales dancer and a motivational speaker who lives "in a van down by the river." Starred in popular comedies *Tommy Boy*, *Black Sheep* and *Beverly Hills Ninja*.

FALL: Found dead of a cocaine and morphine overdose on the floor of his Chicago apartment on December 18.

AGE AT DEATH: 33

WEIGHT AT DEATH: 296 pounds



"I don't want to have sex with a complete stranger, either. So let's spend the next 10 minutes getting to know each other."

2008 Cars of

Today's schizophrenic auto industry presents a dilemma. On one hand, 400 bhp, 500 bhp, even 600 bhp sports models are readily available. As one industry pundit put it, "The good old days are now." On the other hand, high-performance hybrids, a resurgence of diesel technology and a conscious, even urgent desire to protect the environment have carmakers battling to come up with the cleanest, most efficient engineering ever. It's a time of change—when an Audi rivals a Porsche, when a Maserati is better and more affordable than any comparable Ferrari and when one of the cheapest, most fuel-efficient new models comes from luxury carmaker Mercedes-Benz. American automakers are fighting for their very lives, but there are encouraging signs from the Big Three as the Japanese grow stronger, the Koreans nip at their heels and the Chinese loom portentously on the horizon. As we do each year, PLAYBOY's editors test-drove every new car you could possibly want, racking up miles, talking with engineers and separating the wanna-haves from the also-rans so you'll know what to buy when it comes time to write that big check. Go to playboy.com/caroftheyear for the criteria used to select these cars, an extended photo gallery and a chance to vote for your favorite machines of 2008.



the Year

■ **BEST LUXURY SPORTS COUPE** In the current marketplace, at \$120,000, the new Maserati GranTurismo is a steal. It's a serious 2+2 in the Maserati 5000GT tradition. Styled by Pininfarina, with a luscious leather interior only Italians could create, it's a modern classic. We tore through Alpine passes from Balzano, Italy to Innsbruck, Austria, reveling in this elegant coupe's ability to straighten the most challenging curves. Sexy cars deserve sexy engines: The Maser's 405 bhp, 4.2-liter double overhead cam V8 packs 339 foot-pounds of torque. Perfectly mated to a six-speed paddle-shifted manual with normal and sport settings, the engine screams to a 7,100 rpm redline, rocketing to 60 mph in 5.1 seconds. Race-inspired 13-inch Brembo discs haul the GT down precisely. Honorable mention in this category goes to Bentley's 600 bhp Continental GT Speed. It's nearly a second faster to 60 mph but lacks that exquisite Italian sensuousness, and it costs nearly \$100,000 more.

By Ken Gross





■ **SMARTEST PURCHASE** We've seen them tucked sideways into impossibly small parking spaces in European cities and once watched a chic Frenchwoman apply her makeup while weaving through rush-hour traffic headed into Paris at 60 mph. No wonder Mercedes-Benz has sold more than 770,000 Smart cars since 1998. (Smart is the marque, but Mercedes makes them.) Finally, the Smart Fortwo is being imported into America. Make no mistake, the Fortwo is small. At eight feet eight inches long, it's nearly three feet shorter than a Mini Cooper. The 71 bhp three-cylinder power plant is obviously pint-size, but since the car weighs only 1,807 pounds it moves along, well, smartly. Zero to 60 takes 12.6 seconds, and you can hit 90 mph with the help of a tailwind. You don't want to drive a Smart car across South Dakota in a blizzard, but if you're looking for inexpensive wheels (from \$11,590) with great gas mileage (about 40 miles a gallon), this baby is no dummy.



■ **BEST SPORTS SEDAN** Cadillac's new CTS is a car you want to ride in all day long. No errand is too insignificant. General Motors proudly reports the suspension was tuned at Nürburgring. Whatever. To us it felt good from the cockpit. It goes fast, and it's nice-looking, a smooth melding of mechanical punch and visual panache. The CTS's base engine is a 3.6-liter V6 that develops 263 bhp. The 5.9-second zero to 60 is as fast as the upcoming high-performance Caddy CTS-V's. The base price is \$33,000, but loads of upgrades are available. A thousand bucks more gets you an optional direct-injection V6 that ups the ponies to 304. Six-speed manual is standard, but you can get a six-speed automatic with a manual shift feature. An additional \$1,000 gets you a Bose sound system and a 40-gig hard drive, among other juicy add-ons. Runners-up in this category: the Audi S8, BMW's 5 Series and Mercedes-Benz's C-Class sedans.

■ **BEST SUV** Outdoor enthusiasts have loved Land Rovers since the breed was born, in 1948. The vehicles were a little less comfortable back then but superior nonetheless. Land Rover's latest, the relatively diminutive LR2 (which replaces the short-lived Freelander), is the winner in this category. A 3.2-liter V6 gives the vehicle more than enough oomph (230 bhp) to make it what old Africa hands would call "a real cheetah chaser." Standard: all-wheel drive, a Terrain Response feature that adjusts the AWD and suspension for driving conditions ranging from rocks to sand or snow, not to mention Gradient Release and Hill Descent Controls for steepes (also offered in the LR2's big brother, the LR3). The LR2's interior is men's-club posh, as you'd expect. Base price: \$34,700. But you owe it to yourself to get the Technology Package (\$3,500, including nav system, audio upgrade, Sirius Satellite Radio and Bluetooth). Runners-up: Toyota's FJ Cruiser and the Lexus LX 570.





■ **BEST CROSSOVER** A Buick is the best crossover? Did a pig just fly past our window? No, nor has hell frozen over. The luxurious Enclave CXL with 19-inch wheels stunned us when we climbed in. The more time we spent in it—on Missouri back roads north of St. Louis—the more we were sure. The attention to detail is immediately evident, down to the leather-wrapped steering wheel that puts the audio and cruise controls at your fingertips. A base front-wheel-drive CX powered by a 3.6-liter V6 (275 bhp) costs about \$32,500 before you start licking your chops over options like all-wheel drive, a nav system with a rear backup camera, a DVD player with 10-speaker Bose surround sound and a luxury package that includes articulated headlights. Even 20-inch chrome wheels are available. Buick is no longer the preferred car of the set that can't drive at night. Runners-up: Acura MDX, Lexus RX 400h, Volvo XC90 and the Mercedes-Benz R-Class vehicles.



■ **BEST CONVERTIBLE** As rivals introduced convertibles with slick retractable hardtops, BMW designers waited for perfection. Three years in the making, the 335i's new three-piece ultralightweight steel roof retracts in 22 seconds at the touch of a button, then disappears under the trunk lid, which opens backward (front to rear) when the top does its meticulous mating dance. The windshield's carefully calculated rake minimizes wind rush on the rear seats when the top is down. As for driving this thing, its direct-injection three-liter I-6 pulls like a train (300 bhp, 300 foot-pounds of torque), with a delightfully muted whir of induction and gear noise. Thanks to a brace of low-inertia turbochargers, turbo lag is nonexistent. Zero to 60: 5.5 seconds. Japanese rivals have yet to master this degree of steering sensitivity. At \$49,875, you'd expect an alphabet soup of acronyms: ABS, DSC—it's all here. Honorable mention: For half the price, Mazda's MX-5 Miata is a nifty two-seater.



■ **BEST EARTH-DAY CAR** Hybrids may be fashionable, but contemporary diesels average 30 to 35 percent better mileage than comparable gas engines, use a fuel that in many states is cheaper than premium and offer boundless torque. If your image of diesel is a noisy, smoky oil burner, you're out of date. Mercedes-Benz E320 Bluetec, the 2007 World Green Car of the Year, runs about \$50,000 well equipped and packs a three-liter 210 bhp V6 common-rail turbodiesel that develops a staggering 400 foot-pounds of torque, streaks to 60 mph in 6.6 seconds and averages 32 mpg on the highway. We drove one 1,400 miles from Inner Mongolia to Beijing and loved its ability to hammer like hell. The Benz's exhaust system has three specialized catalysts and a particulate filter to erase nearly every last trace of smoke and nitrous-oxide emissions. Runner-up: For 2008 Toyota introduces the Prius standard model. At \$1,225 less than last year's, it's the new base model—hardly sexy but cheap and clean.



■ **BEST PINT-SIZE PERFORMANCE** The new Volvo C30 accentuates the youthful side of this all-too-serious Swedish brand. It cops an attitude with its feisty styling; in front it's clearly a Volvo S40, minus two rear doors and with 8.5 inches less overhang. We love the full-width glass hatch and clipped Manx bobtail. The C30's perfectly balanced 227 bhp turbocharged, intercooled I-5 engine, hooked to a six-speed manual, delivers plenty of punch. We turned heads on the streets of San Diego and barrel-raced down the Ortega Highway in this ride, loving every mile. It's surprisingly roomy in back, on a long-for-its-class 103.9-inch wheelbase, with fully independent suspension, 18-inch alloys and Pirelli PZero sports rubber. For a small cost your C30 can be personalized at the factory in Sweden from a choice of 17 exterior and 12 interior color combos. That's a lot of car for \$25,000. We'd opt for Version 2.0 with updated springs, shocks and sway bars. Runner-up: the VW R32.



PLAYBOY'S
CAR
OF THE
YEAR



■ **A THING OF BEAUTY** is a joy forever, wrote John Keats so gracefully, and he was talking about sheep and daffodils. Imagine the poetry he'd have spouted if he had gotten his mitts on the Audi R8, PLAYBOY'S Car of the Year. We knew it was a serious contender this past February when we drove one along Nevada's high-desert highways. On those stark roads the R8 exhibited vast amounts of power and incredibly precise steering. Later in the year we turned an R8 loose on Virginia's long and winding Blue Ridge Parkway, barely experiencing a fraction of the performance this incredible engine can deliver. That drive sold us. Now's your chance to turn the key and listen to the 420 bhp, 4.2-liter V8 symphony playing just behind your head. That's right, a mid-engined Audi sports car. No wonder Porsche is nervously checking its rearview mirror. Move the six-speed gated shifter into first (or opt for Audi's six-speed R tronic automatic trans) and experience a zero-to-60 time of 4.4 seconds, the quarter mile at 12.7 seconds and—if you can find the road—a top end of almost 190 mph. The R8's interior boasts polished leather and carbon-fiber trim, and the whole thing sits on 19-inch alloy wheels (go for the optional Pirelli PZero staggered tires). If you aren't quite sold, this technical info should do the trick: The R8 is fitted, of course, with Audi's quattro AWD, but you also get ESP with Electronic Differential Lock, speed-sensitive rack-and-pinion steering, double-wishbone front and rear suspensions and Audi magnetic ride. Some of the chassis's tech is borrowed from the Lamborghini Gallardo (both Lambo and Audi are part of the VW Group), but the R8's sonically crafted exhaust is an Audi original, as are those unusual side panels behind the air intakes. The R8 starts at \$109,000. Good luck finding one.



See more of our Cars of the Year at playboy.com/caroftheyear.





Here in the morning's start, I glance at the television, and there is the sudden notice:

IF YOU SEE SOMETHING,
SAY SOMETHING.
1,944 PEOPLE DID LAST YEAR.
CALL 1-888-NYCSAFE.

The Metropolitan Transit Authority put this ad on television.

I'm standing in the bedroom, and I'm thinking of an ad you see on T-shirts in the neighborhood of Brownsville, in Brooklyn: SNITCHES GET STITCHES.

I am much more comfortable with the defense policy of Brownsville than I am with this selling of fear by an official government agency.

Nobody in the city transit system knows how many calls resulted in arrests. Certainly there are no stories in Brownsville of any carnage caused by stool pigeons. Which is good, for the neighborhood is the historic district of the old Murder Inc. Things still happen.

On this morning, we try to train spies on our own streets, replacing the standard with which we lived so long and so famously, the wonderful standard to assist one another. Always, on any given day in the city of New York, there are so many—a million or more—who say "excuse me" as they get on or off a subway car. Now they want these people to say "He looks like a terrorist."

We gave so much of that away to this Bin Laden and his Saudi Arabian imbeciles. We did all our worrying about structures. There was the day when there suddenly appeared on Broadway a line of police cars—100 of them—and they pulled in front of Lincoln Center and parked diagonally. This is called the Surge, in which a line of cars appears unexpectedly at places around the city and parks, a river of metal, a warning to somebody who wants to blow up something. I was on Lenox Avenue in Harlem one day when the cars arrived. "It's the president," a woman said. When there was no president, she went to the next possibility. "They got big World Trade Center bombers still around here."

Terrorism, the word, causes outright fear and also complete insanity from the center of New York to any town outside it. This all started only a matter of hours after the fiery World Trade Center buildings collapsed in smoke that made the streets black and filled them with

body parts, computer insides, lightbulbs, window glass, desks, carpet and elevator cables. Immediately that brought these bright-red fire chiefs' cars from places like the Massapequa, Long Island fire department and patrol cars from the Cliffside Park, New Jersey police department, from everywhere in the towns around the

great city, anywhere big fat guys with badges jammed into official cars can rush to the scene in Manhattan. They sent up clouds of dust and made the sirens sound. Look out! Here we come to the catastrophe. There was no need for them, but they stopped and jumped out and stood ready for anything. They wore helmets and eager faces.

After them came the federals and also a retired firefighter named Bob Beckwith, who came from Long Island on the third day because his family didn't want him to go. But here he was standing atop a fire truck mostly submerged in dirt and wreckage. Karl Rove, a lackey in charge of lies, brought over George W. Bush, who was here on the third day because you could hardly get him out of the classroom in Florida where he froze on the day of the attack. He got up on that fire truck with a bullhorn and became the first cheerleader ever to be at a terrorist event.

If you worked, the day belonged to Local 40 of the Iron Workers and Locals 14 and 15 of the Operating Engineers. That day I knew we were turning over everything to the uniforms. When we had Pearl Harbor the country got angry. The World Trade Center created fear. And a government can take fear and control everything with it.

For instance, take the gum-ball machine in one corner of a store in Dover, New Jersey. People saw the glass puff up, and the gum balls inside became ominous. Small sounds made them seem threatening.

This put fear into the town of Dover.

LAND OF THE FREE HOME OF THE SCARED

BY JIMMY BRESLIN

PEARL HARBOR MADE US ANGRY. 9/11 MADE US FRIGHTENED. AND NOW WE'RE LIVING WITH THE CONSEQUENCES

There are perhaps 18,000 who live there, and a large number of them are Latino.

Somebody brought the matter to the Dover Council, and Alderman Frank Poolas was quoted as saying the gum-ball machine might be something terrorists could use to attack Dover.

Why would anybody want to attack Dover with a gum-ball machine?

Then Poolas and the Dover politicians said the Chinese could poison children with lead in the trinkets in the gum machine. Or they could outright put poison in the gum.

"I mentioned the terrorism after I brought up the Chinese threat to the gum machines," Poolas said.

He ended it sensibly by calling for licensing of the machines so we could monitor these terrible threats.

These small examples like Dover go unnoticed at first, but then they are noticed because they occur too often. Not too long ago a lifeguard was snorkeling in the Atlantic about 300 yards off Tobay Beach in Massapequa, when he spotted a metal cylinder sticking out of the sand. He picked it up and brought it to a policeman on the shore. He thought it was a bomb used by fishermen to knock blackfish and sea bass out of an

years ago—and there seem to be years ahead of us. Nobody really differs. Anybody in or around government says, "We must stop the terrorists in Iraq because they can come to New York or Chicago or Los Angeles."

Terrorists may come. What do they get if they bomb or destroy this place? You lose a beautiful building. Some people. Maybe even known ones. But there is no man or woman who is indispensable. Nothing stops. The subway under the sidewalk keeps rolling.

Out of fear, we have troops running in the streets with their rifles pointing as they practice for terrorists. Go to the funeral of soldier Luis Moreno, 19, at St. Francis of Assisi Church in the Bronx. The general sent to the funeral was leaving church in the rain when Jessica Corporan, a small Latina, so beautiful, so young, only 18, came up to the general and said, "I want to know something."

"Yes, ma'am."

"Why is my fiancé dead?"

She looked at him with deep brown eyes. She looked and he sagged. He went back on his heels first and then half a step as she kept looking, and he could say nothing and half stumbled

like? No matter. Giuliani had battalions ready to shoot them down like dogs. See the snipers!

Now I see Giuliani himself looking up. I know it was in the moments before the World Trade Center towers collapsed on that September morning. I was walking toward the fiery towers, and here was Giuliani walking away from them. He had his staff of—believe me—stumblebums with him, and he was looking for something only he could see: the future that was forming for him. This was the biggest disaster in America, and he was the only public official on the scene. As the buildings collapsed he was several blocks up and safe in a building in front of a television camera. Then he moved to a studio with cameras. Only he had the badge to speak for the city's wounds. He then went on television a couple of hundred times, during which he became America's Mayor, and now he's running for president on a platform that if you don't listen to him, your wife will get killed.

Probably the first thing he did was to cheer any proposals for more government wiretaps and eavesdropping. What we hear on our wiretaps is the clear

A government can take fear and control everything with it.

old shipwreck a few yards away and into waiting nets. Soon the bomb squad, the emergency-services unit and the marine and aviation units were on the scene. The bomb squad reported they had disabled the pipe bomb, which then was given to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, which sent it to a laboratory in Maryland. The beach, one of the busiest on Long Island, was closed.

The bomb was at a historic site. In June 1942 a German submarine, the *Innsbruck*, rested on the sand just offshore at Amagansett, just up from the Massapequa bomb site. Four Germans, sent here to sabotage, came off the sub and rowed to shore in a rubber lifeboat. A Coast Guardsman, John Cullen, 21, was patrolling the beach alone and unarmed; there were not enough rifles to be given to Coast Guardsmen at this time. For some weird reason, the Germans did not attack Cullen. One gave him \$260 and told him to forget what he saw. The Germans caught a train to Manhattan. Cullen ran to the Coast Guard station, but nobody believed him, particularly the FBI. Only when they combed the beach and found a crushed pack of German cigarettes did they listen to Cullen. The Germans were caught. Two were executed. Two were sent to prison.

You blame the World Trade Center attack on Saddam Hussein. That gave you an invasion of Iraq that was supposed to last 20 minutes, and that was

away. He was afraid of her, and we are afraid of the subject: young death.

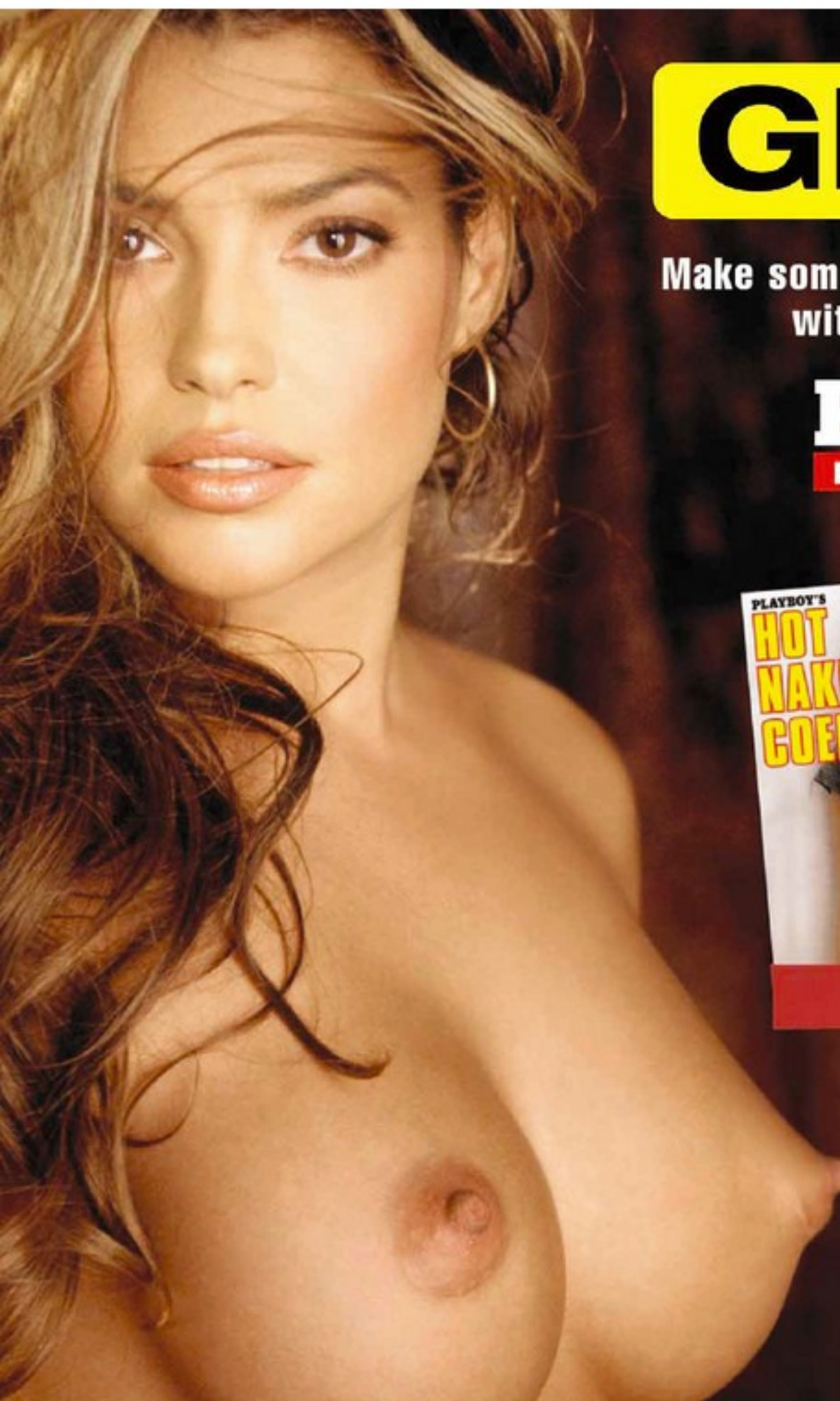
The soldier died because his government was afraid. See the next big headline: BUSH FEARS IRAN.

I am walking with a group of about 200 ragamuffins pushed into one lane on Broadway in 2001. They are demonstrating for Housing Works, which tries to find homes for the homeless and people with virtually no income, all of whom have HIV or AIDS. The marchers look like bones that came rattling out of the American Museum of Natural History. They limp right against the curb. A line of cops, about 500 of them, is making sure nobody moves out into Broadway, because then they may try to get across the street to City Hall. The thought of this terrifies Rudy Giuliani, then the mayor in City Hall. Look up at the roof where the police department's best snipers, with rifles outlined against a gray October sky, are ready to shoot and kill. What, am I crazy? I say to myself. No, you sure are not. Look at them. Those are real rifles. How marvelous! They are going to end AIDS. They are going to kill everybody who has it.

If possible, the march of taxi drivers looked worse. There were maybe 150 of them, and a thousand cops were herding them along. Again Giuliani was terrified. He called them "taxi terrorists." The taxi drivers were small and looked like complete bums. Ever look into the front seat of a cab and see what the driver looks

sound of a terrorist's defeat. Nowhere has anybody mentioned that the number of people who mishear things is astounding. People are in prison or out because the agent reporting the wiretaps had them saying "late" when they actually said "snake." But the listening went on because we are afraid even of writing on a T-shirt. Raed Jarrar was at Kennedy Airport in New York for a flight to Oakland, California on JetBlue. He was wearing a T-shirt with Arabic and English letters saying WE SHALL NOT BE SILENT. An airline security man asked him to change the T-shirt. He said people were feeling uncomfortable about the Arabic. Jarrar, who is an Iraqi consultant for the American Friends Service Committee and one of its bloggers, would not change the shirt. Finally, they bought him a new one and he wore that over the filthy Arabic script and flew to Oakland. He is in court to fight for his rights for the reasons that he is still angry and feels he must fight for rights that are everyone's.

This sounds a trifle romantic until you fly yourself. I don't even want to do it anymore. The day that did it was on a stormy morning at Kennedy Airport when all those going to the gate left puddles. I did not want to take off my shoes. "The floor's wet," I told the woman at the gate. Oh, a pushy, disdainful woman. "You must remove your shoes," she said. (concluded on page 156)



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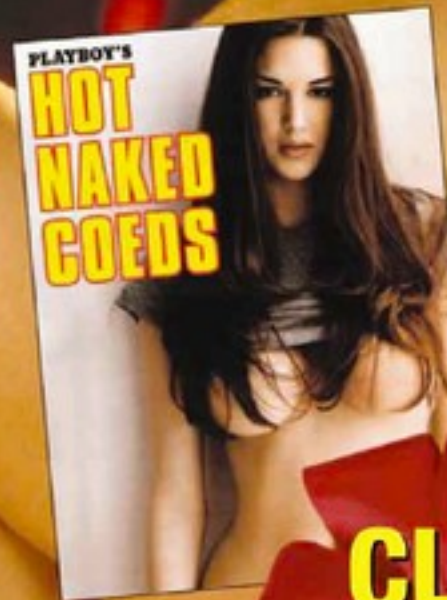
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**GET 2
FREE GIFTS**

GET 2 FREE GIFTS

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A GIFT!

European Style



JUAN IVAREZ • JORGE G

PARTY OF THE YEAR



INSULTS, INFIGHTING AND INNUENDO ARE SO OUT WHEN THE ONLY IN THAT COUNTS

Counterclockwise from middle front: 8:05 P.M. Jocks swap sad stories. Baseball's new king of clout, **Barry Bonds**, wonders why nobody loves him, while soccer's **David Beckham**, the latest limey to conquer America, can't stay on the field. 8:45 P.M. Brawl! **Donald Trump** and **Rosie O'Donnell** head back to the mat, this time over...who cares? 9:33 P.M. It's *Celebrity Oz Live!* **Paris Hilton**, **Nicole Richie** and **Lindsay Lohan**, once tempting morsels of jailbait and now hardened ex-cons, tell **Michael Vick** how to make friends in the slammer, while he admires the gripping jawline of **Tinkerbell**, Paris's Chihuahua. 10:04 P.M. A round of Twisted Celebrity Twister breaks out, as addled shock jock **Don Imus** inserts his foot into his mouth, which **Senator Larry Craig**, using his extra-wide stance, takes as an invitation to play footsie. 10:15 P.M. Hey, fellas, what's the rush? The night is young and the administration has a year to go, but **Karl Rove**, the



IS AN INVITATION TO JOIN THE FAMOUS AND INFAMOUS OF 2007 FOR ONE LAST BASH

White House's answerless resident genius, scampers for the parking lot, followed by **Scooter "the Commuted" Libby** and **Alberto Gonzales**, who can't recall whom he came with or how he's getting home. 10:49 P.M. EXTRA! HEADLESS EXECUTIVE IN TOPLESS BOARDROOM! Promising naked arbitrageurs on page 3, **Rupert Murdoch** peddles his newly acquired *Wall Street Journal*. 11:15 P.M. Is it better to flame out or fade to black? *American Idol* oddity **Sanjaya** turns on the TV only to find somebody has pulled the plug on the **Sopranos** finale, the most chewed-over piece of film since Zapruder's. 11:45 P.M. Gushfest! "No, **Marty**, you waited so much longer for your Oscar." "Yes, **Peyton**, but you had to spend all that time in Indianapolis waiting for your Lombardi." 11:57 P.M. Realizing her singing isn't getting her any attention, **Britney Spears** gives the world a wink. 11:59 P.M. Boom! Is that Ahmadinejad setting off fireworks? No, it's Baby 2008, busting in.

THE YEA

More triumphs for gay



WHAT IF THIS WERE YOUR MOM?



Paris won't be PUTTING ON THE RITZ in prison

THE SCOURGE has the inside scoop on what the flake has in store. From the California Department of Corrections to the Ritz, Paris Hilton is the most notorious inmate in the state. Paris can expect the same routine - 15 hours a day in a 2,000-square-foot cell, no visitors, and a diet of...

Lindsay is So Misunderstood!



GIRLS GONE WILD
 What's a sure sign a sex symbol is headed for a fall? Flashing a bald beaver. In late 2006 (1) Britney Spears, (2) Paris Hilton and (3) Lindsay Lohan were all snapped going commando. Lindsay's 2007 was rehab-tastic. Before going to jail, Paris was the subject of (4) sculptor Daniel Edwards's *Paris Hilton Autopsy*, cautioning teens against underage drinking. And Britney? Poor Britney. Once the alpha Lolita, she has lost her sexual mojo and may lose her kids as well.



I totally did that.

Paternity suit THREATENS 'ER' star's marriage
 Goran Visnjic & wife just adopted baby of their...

Did I do that?

You sure did.

Spice Girl Rose EDDIE AND I PLANNED THE BABY
 Eddie Brown says he's not the father of Tracey Edmonds' daughter, but he is the father of her son.



I didn't do that.

DNA DADS
 Larry Birkhead cheered when DNA testing proved he (and not lawyer Howard K. Stern) had sired Anna Nicole Smith's baby, Dannielynn. Croatian actor Goran Visnjic (*ER*'s Dr. Kovac) agreed to testing when Mirela Rupic (inset) claimed he had fathered her infant girl, but then he failed to show up for the court date. The lab also fingered Eddie Murphy, new fiancé of Tracey Edmonds, as the dad of Melanie "Scary Spice" Brown's daughter.

Oh, yes you did.



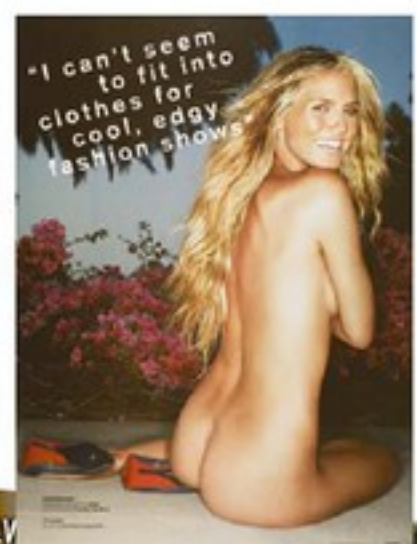
RINSEX

social conservatives



HATE THE SIN, BE THE SINNER
Bible-thumping, gay-bashing Reverend Ted Haggard was forced to resign as president of the National Association of Evangelicals after Mike Jones claimed they had had a three-year affair. Three weeks of treatment for sexual addiction later, a board of four ministers pronounced Haggard "completely heterosexual."

CELEBRITY SKIN
This year's famous doffers included a bare-arsed and curvaceous Heidi Klum, who lamented in *Arena* magazine that she can no longer squeeze into sample sizes, and Alicia Silverstone, who took a carnal path to pushing vegetarianism in TV and print ads.



'JUICE' WENT OUT OF BONDS' SEX LIFE



THE SPORTING LIFE
A year for physical feats! From left: To mark Barry Bonds's new home-run record, we connected you with his ex-girlfriend Kimberly Bell. Alex Rodriguez and his MVP stats were often spotted with *Playboy Casting Calls* model Joslyn Noel Morse. The L.A. Galaxy paid a fortune for David Beckham; months later aspiring actress and alleged fling Rebecca Loos headed to Tinseltown.

THE YEAR IN SEX



the year's most watched clips on YouTube. The fad kicked off with (1) Amber Lee "Obama Girl" Ettinger, then spread with (2) Giuliani Girl, Adelina Kristina, (3) Hyla "I wanna have sex with Kucinich" Matthews and (4) Taryn "Hott 4 Hill" Southern.

FIRST BABES CLUB

Is it icky or okay to have a trophy wife in the White House? As the primaries begin, the cameras can't get enough of second and third wives Jeri Kehn Thompson (below left, husband Fred's junior by 24 years) and Elizabeth Kucinich (below right, fully half her spouse's age).



GIRL POWER

The race is racist on the Internet. Unofficial and semiserious video salutes to candidates were among



STRANGEST BEDFELLOWS

Fat-cat and union endorsements are so last election. Now porn stars are flashing their campaign colors. Jenna Jameson (left) says she'll vote for Clinton, while Savanna Samson's ballot box (right) belongs to Giuliani. Samantha Sterlyng (above) uses her body as a canvas to express contempt for all things Bushie—not that you needed her to tell you Rumsfeld is an ass.



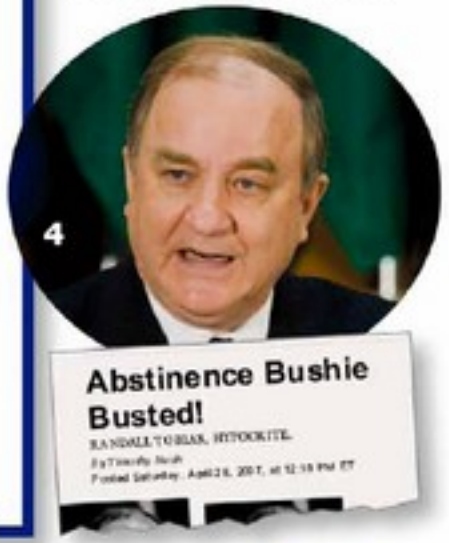
EUROS DO IT BETTER

For sexy stunts in the political arena, the Old World still wins. Belgian fringe candidate Tania Derveaux offered blow jobs for votes, while a Polish magazine depicted its country's leaders suckling at German chancellor Angela Merkel. And only in France could the president get away with copping a feel while pinning a medal on a yachtswoman.



YOUR KISS IS ON MY LIST

(1) With his wife standing awkwardly by, Louisiana GOP senator David Vitter apologized when (2) his name showed up on the list of clients kept by alleged D.C. madam Deborah Jeane Palfrey and (3) he was ID'd as a former client by ex-hooker Wendy Ellis. (4) Bush administration abstinence advocate Randall Tobias also fell victim to Palfrey's bookkeeping.



CAUGHT OUT OF UNIFORM

Air Force staff sergeant Michelle Manhart resigned after losing her stripes over a PLAYBOY appearance. How is that supporting the troops?



100% HETEROSEXUAL

Craig denies lewd advance



STALLED CAREER

Idaho Republican senator Larry Craig, long an outspoken opponent of homosexual rights, was busted by officer Dave Karsnia after Craig sent suspicious stall signals in a Minneapolis airport men's room. The john has since become a popular tourist attraction.

THE YEAR IN SEX

NO FCC IN WAY

Unhindered by government regulation, premium cable networks are airing the hottest dramatic series in TV history. These steamy tableaux are from (clockwise from top left) *The Tudors* (Showtime), *Entourage* (HBO) and *Rome* (HBO).



too old to be in an anti-aging ad

OLD AND IN THE BUFF

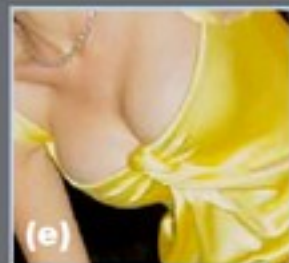
First, TV censors banned Dove's spots featuring mature nudes; then "pro-family" groups branded the ad campaign as exploitative. C'mon, be nice to Granny.



BREAST TEST 2007

Girl talk is a turn-on. Girls talking about those hypnotic glands we call hooters is better. And Hollywood sex symbols talking about their flawless fronts? Off the chart. We're giving you six cleavage shots, six quotes and the names of the six stars who said these things about their things. You know what to do. Perfect score? You watch too many awards shows.

1. "I am so fascinated by breasts because my mother didn't have them either."
2. "Maybe after having kids, if my boobs dropped down to my belly button, I would get them lifted."
3. "I'm proud of my breasts. I call them my girls."
4. "My breasts have a career of their own."
5. "I'd get really, really large breasts, really big knockers."
6. I was nervous to show my bits because, after two children, not everything is in the same place."



A. Jessica Simpson, B. Jennifer Love Hewitt, C. Scarlett Johansson, D. Kate Beckinsale, E. Sandra Bullock, F. Kate Winslet

ANSWERS:

1-(b)-D, 2-(f)-A, 3-(e)-C, 4-(d)-B, 5-(c)-E, 6-(a)-F

KISSED OFF

By enthusiastically smooching Bollywood actress Shilpa Shetty at a New Delhi AIDS-awareness event, Richard Gere earned an arrest warrant, which India's Supreme Court later suspended. If the authorities found this offensive, Gere can thank his lucky stars they never saw *Runaway Bride*.



TITS AND MISSES

The past year was a mixed bag for beauty contestants: Miss Nevada USA Katie Rees (far left) lost her title when breast-licking, ass-baring shots of her and her girlfriends made the rounds; Amy Polumbo kept hers as Miss New Jersey despite the release of chest-chewing photos with her boyfriend (above). We take a different view: Isn't this a great tool for promoting pageants?





GOING OUT WITH A BANG
After 10 years *Jane* magazine ceased publication with an issue featuring, among other celebs, Serena Williams (left) and Kate Dillon (below), taking it all off for charity.

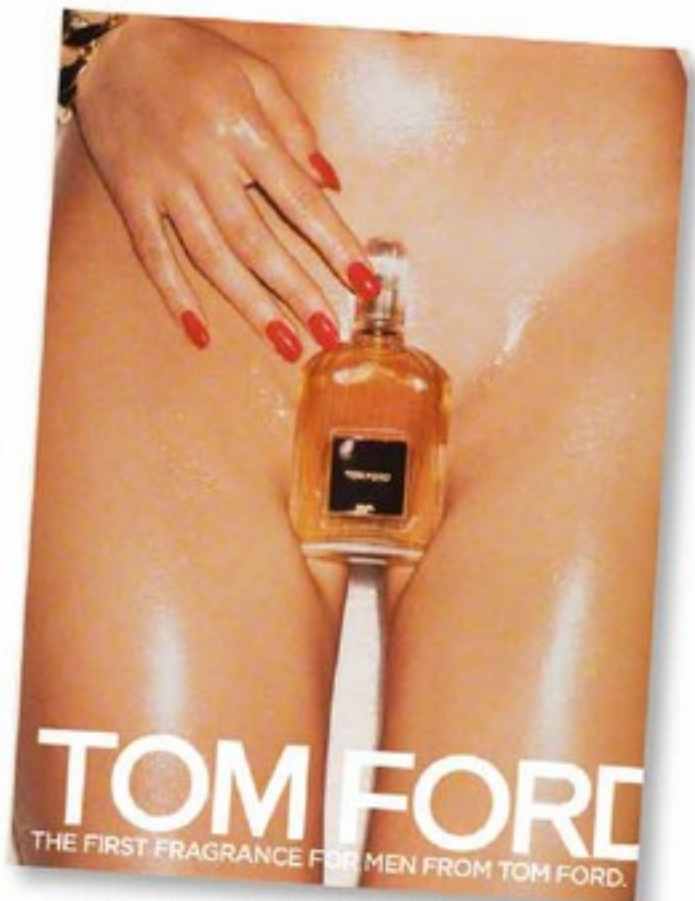


ALLAH BIG MISUNDERSTANDING

PLAYBOY Indonesia editor Erwin Arnada, facing 32 months in jail on indecency charges, was cleared. The magazine, which is pictorially as racy as a Victoria's Secret catalog, incensed radical Islamists when it launched in 2006.



Playboy Editor Cleared in Indonesia
JAKARTA, Indonesia — Playboy Indonesia's editor-in-chief has been cleared.



SMELL ME, I'M TOM

We're shocked—shocked—at designer Tom Ford's over-the-top sexy advertisement for his own fragrance. After all, this is the guy who put pubes in an ad for Gucci and a real live schlong in one for Yves Saint Laurent. Ladies, don't let this image give you the wrong idea: The bottle does not take AA batteries.

OH, WAS THAT CAMERA RUNNING?

Kim Kardashian (below) insists she wasn't involved in releasing the video of her and ex-boyfriend Ray J's romantic exploits, but she reportedly got a big-bucks settlement. Top British pinup Keeley Hazell (right) is more than just a perfect chest. As her unauthorized bedroom clip demonstrates, she gives pom-star-quality fellatio. Dustin "Screech" Diamond, of *Saved by the Bell* fame, earned scathing reviews for his performance in *Screeched* (inset).

Sorry, a rumored sex tape of Eva Longoria turned out to be a hoax.



LAGER? WE HARDLY KNOW HER
Belgian brewer Brouwerij Huyghe introduced its Rubbel Sexy Lager. The space-age label features a model whose swimsuit melts away when the image is rubbed.



Party girl Kim's \$1 MILLION SEX TAPE



THE YEAR IN SEX

But wait... there's more!

JUST AS AL GORE WARNED

Bulgarian bordello owners have been forced to hire temps, and they're blaming global warming. Their "elite girls," they say, are off working in ski resorts, where the lack of snow leaves tourists with little else to do.

GOOD VIBES

The Talking Head vibrator has a built-in MP3 player to play music or sweet nothings from an absent lover.

BAD VIBES

"Not for use in Cyprus" reads the ad for Love Bug 2, a vibrator from Ann Summers. The island's military is concerned the gadget's electronic waves will disrupt army radio frequencies.

EARLY BIRD'S DELIGHT

In Germany, the graying of the populace has inspired Köln's famed whorehouse Pascha to offer pensioners, age 66 and up, half off for sex from noon to five daily.

MASTER OF HIS DOMAIN

After Conan O'Brien mentioned the fictional college-mascot website



CALLING IT QUILTS

When a racy billboard (above) for a Chicago law firm's divorce services proved controversial, city officials ordered that it be taken down, citing a technicality: The attorneys reportedly hadn't applied for the proper permit.

BOOK NUTS

Librarians vowed to ban the Newbery Medal-winning children's book *The Higher Power of Lucky* over the appearance of the word *scrotum* on its first page.

SAFE SEX AND THE CITY

New York City began distributing its own official condom.

ARE YOU JELLIN'?

An Asian men's health group issued a report classifying four different levels of erectile hardness: cucumber, banana, peeled banana and konjac jelly.

REPTILE DYSFUNCTION

Flora, a Komodo dragon at the Chester Zoo in the United Kingdom, gave birth to five hatchlings without having had any known contact with a male partner.

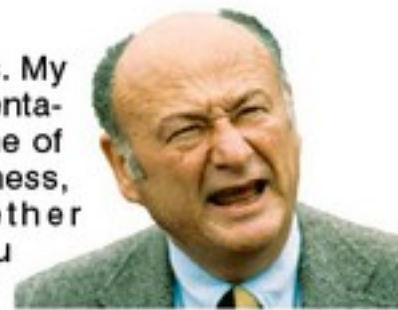
NO GOOD DEED GOES UNPUNISHED

When Pakistan tourism minister Nilofar Bakhtiar completed a parachute jump to raise money for victims of the country's 2005 earthquake, she celebrated by hugging her instructor. Her wanton behavior earned severe punishment: She became the target of a fatwa issued by Islamist clerics and resigned from her cabinet position. She was also sacked as head of the women's wing of the Pakistan Muslim League.

KOCH OFF GUARD

Time Out New York's Alison Rosen to ex-New York mayor Ed Koch: "Are you gay?" Koch: "When was the last time you performed oral sex on your boyfriend?" Rosen: "Well, I'm single now, so it was a long time ago." Koch: "See, I don't think you should answer that question. It's an improper question, and

so is yours. My sexual orientation is none of your business, and whether or not you performed oral sex on your boyfriend is none of my business."



TOO LITTLE SUPPORT

In Heteren, the Netherlands, Fitworld gym's first Naked Sunday, when members can work out in the nude, was attended by just 12 people—all men.



TINKER MY BELL

The Walt Disney Company is now offering—we're not making this up—Fairy Tale Weddings for gay couples at its resorts and on its cruise ships.

LUST IN SPACE

The embarrassing space-age love triangle that entangled Air Force Captain Colleen Shipman and astronauts Lisa Nowak and Bill Oefelein grabbed the nation's attention mostly because the married Nowak (allegedly wearing an adult diaper to avoid pit stops) drove from Houston to Orlando to spritz her rival with pepper spray. Charges are pending.



HEADED FOR A FALL

On its website *Us Weekly* magazine issued the following warning to the often conspicuously braless Victoria Beckham: "Keep shunning that bra and in five years you'll end up with pendulums hanging off your clavicle that hubby David Beckham might mistake for soccer-ball bags."



Hornymanatee.com on his show, NBC was forced to buy the domain's rights in order to avoid potential liabilities.

GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS

When Hugh Hefner donated money to animal shelters in the Florida Keys, where feral felines are killing rabbits of the species *Sylvilagus palustris hefneri*—which was named after him—the shelters' director dubbed her handsomest cat Hef, then had him neutered.

THE PRICE OF WRONGS

The U.S. Catholic Church has paid victims of clergy sexual abuse at least an estimated \$2.3 billion since 1950—nearly half of it in the past year.





"...On Prancer, on Dancer, on Samantha!"

HEF'S PLAYMATE

YOUR PLAYMATE

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MISS JANUARY—01

PLAYBOY'S *Playmate* REVIEW

Twelve beauties, but there is only one Playmate of the Year

It's time again for you to vote. No, not for president—for your favorite Playmate from the class of 2007. Go to playboy.com/pmoy to make your voice heard. Or, for a \$1.99 charge, send a text message with the two-digit code that appears under your pick's pic to PLBOY (75269) and receive a wallpaper for your phone. That's democracy in action.

Pick your Playmate of the Year at playboy.com/pmoy, or text message your vote to PLBOY.



MISS FEBRUARY—02



MISS MARCH—03



MISS APRIL—04



MISS JUNE—06



MISS JULY—07



MISS AUGUST—08



MISS SEPTEMBER—09



MISS OCTOBER—10



MISS MAY—05



MISS DECEMBER—12



MISS NOVEMBER—11



Miss April

GIULIANA MARINO

Giuliana, 21, was already a Playmate in Germany before she became Miss April and appeared on our October 2007 cover. She's a full-blooded Italian born and raised in Germany, and now she has returned to Deutschland. She had planned to become a police profiler but changed her mind; it's a tough field to break into. "I can't see very well," she says. "I need glasses, and in Germany that's reason enough to disqualify people. Now I want to study biology and specialize in human genetics. I'd like eventually to get my doctorate." Can you picture this brainy beauty in a white lab coat? We can.

Miss November

LINDSAY WAGNER

As a ring girl for the Omaha Fight Club, this 19-year-old Nebraska knockout is used to roughhousing, but she didn't anticipate taking some knocks while filming her Playmate video. "I fell and sprained my ankle on the set," she says, "but I kept on filming." Take note, guys: Here is a Playmate willing to suffer for her art. Show her some love! Lindsay is currently taking a break from school in Nebraska so she can devote more time to Playboy. "I want to move to Los Angeles eventually," she says. "I'm interested in modeling."

But first she's interested in becoming Playmate of the Year.





Miss June

BRITTANY BINGER

This California transplant has a heart of gold to go with that sun-kissed skin. In addition to shooting an upcoming Playboy Special Editions cover and appearing on *The Girls Next Door*, Brittany, 20, has been focusing on charity work. "I did some events back home in Ohio," she tells us. "I also sell my head shots on MySpace, and 100 percent of the proceeds go to a charity called School of Hope. Giving makes me feel so good!" Speaking of giving, will Brittany get your vote? "There are 11 other beautiful girls to choose from," she says. "It would be a great honor!"

Miss January

JAYDE NICOLE

Our Canadian Miss January has had a busy year on both sides of the border. "I'm filming a pilot for a reality-TV show, and I'm in the finals for being cast on *Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader?*" the 21-year-old tells us. "I've also teamed with a couple of other models to write a book about how to be the best you." We got bags of letters from readers about this small-town brunette's sizzling pictorial, leading us to believe she's got a great shot at becoming Playmate of the Year. Tattooed just below her navel is the word *respect*. She's won ours for sure.

Miss February

HEATHER RENE SMITH

Miss February is still in school, doing a lot of homework in airports as she travels to do promotional work for Playboy. She has journeyed as far as Estonia and even Auckland, New Zealand, where she helped christen a new Playboy store. "I've gone to so many places I never thought I would go," says the 20-year-old California goddess, who is a former competitive gymnast and can contort into pretzel-like shapes. "My life is the same," she giggles, "only now it's a little more hectic!" When she's not working, Heather likes to see live bands and tinker with old cars. We're in love.





Miss March

TYRAN RICHARD

The response to this Louisiana lovely's Cajun-flavored pictorial has overwhelmed her. "All my friends say I'm still me," she says, "but other people are like, 'Wow, you've been to the Mansion! How are Hef, Holly, Bridget and Kendra? What have you been doing?' It's been great." The 25-year-old divides her time between modeling for Shirley of Hollywood and numerous Playboy events you can read about on her MySpace page. "I handwrite a note to each person who sends me a fan letter," she says. "I like to add that personal touch." We're huge fans of Tyran. You don't see eyes any bluer than these.

Miss December

SASCKYA PORTO

Take a good look at this picture. What a world-class beauty. We're seeing stars. We couldn't help noticing Sasckya at last year's Playmate of the Year luncheon. Heads kept turning whenever this 23-year-old Brazilian bombshell sauntered by. Will she be the one to step up to the podium this year? "I think all the women of 2007 are incredibly beautiful, and they're all waiting to get the title," Miss December says. "I would be so happy to represent Playboy as Playmate of the Year. It's competitive, and it would be such an honor for me."





Miss July

TIFFANY SELBY

Miss July knows her way around an airport—that's where we caught up with the blonde model as she waited to board her next flight. "I've been going from city to city, attending such Playboy events as golf scrambles, a major league baseball party in San Francisco and a lot of club appearances," Tiffany says. She has also worked for the SEMA car-show convention in Las Vegas and is now a spokesmodel for Budweiser. She's willing to devote more time to Playboy, of course, if you shower her with votes for Playmate of the Year. The 26-year-old Florida native loves rock and roll, and she's no fan of tan lines.

Miss August

TAMARA SKY

Tamara is going places. The 22-year-old native of Puerto Rico is a DJ with a skyrocketing career. She is recording two albums. She was recently the headlining DJ at Donald Trump's birthday party, hosted by Carmen Electra. She travels constantly. "When I lived in Puerto Rico," Miss August says, "I never traveled anywhere. Now I'm all over the place, and I love it." London is her favorite. "In the U.S. everything looks the same," she says. "Latin America is a little different, but it all reminds me of Puerto Rico, where I'm from. When I'm in London it's like going to another world."

Miss May

SHANNON JAMES

Howard Stern fans will remember Shannon's debut. She appeared on his show to tell the world she wanted to be a Playmate. We gave her a shot, and once in front of the camera, she blossomed. "I've always been comfortable with my sexuality and my body," she says.

After becoming Miss May she returned to Stern's show. "They were all so sweet, and I was able to joke around more with them because I was more confident—and clothed," she says. The 20-year-old beauty still lives outside Philly and travels as often as three times a week for Rabbit-related functions.





Miss September

PATRICE HOLLIS

Patrice says her family and friends have given her nothing but support since her PLAYBOY issue hit newsstands. During her excursions to places like South Dakota, Miami, New York and Russia, doing Playboy-related work, Miss September has gotten closer to her Playmate pals. "I would like to say good luck to all the girls," says the 26-year-old Vegas native. "I've made some great friends, like Tyran Richard and Sandra Hubby." Patrice has put her career as a child-development assistant on hold so she can focus on Playboy in anticipation of becoming Playmate of the Year. Will she snag your vote?

Miss October

SPENCER SCOTT

Miss October is the youngest of the class of 2007. After her PLAYBOY issue came out, the 18-year-old returned home to Georgia from Los Angeles, where she recently moved, to promote the magazine. "I did a signing in Athens," she says, "which is close to where I'm from, and I got to see all my friends. The magazine had been out only two days at the time, and I started getting all this attention on MySpace. I was like, Are you kidding? After two days? That's insane!" And what if she becomes Playmate of the Year? Is she ready for that kind of spotlight? Her answer: "I'm so up for it!"

For more photos, go to cyber.playboy.com.



MIKE TYSON (continued from page 88)

He wanted to fight Spinks because he was so angry. Half the boxing writers thought Spinks would win.

he said, "Fuck you, you piece of shit."
ROONEY: That's bullshit. I never heard that Tyson called Camille that. And Atlas says Cus is in his robe and just watching TV? Get the fuck out of here. Atlas is trying to turn the whole thing around. Instead of paying tribute to Cus, he's stabbing him in the back.

JOSÉ TORRES (former light-heavyweight champion trained by D'Amato): When Cus told me this kid would become champion and explained why, it wasn't so surprising. Because Cus was a complex guy, I expected a convoluted explanation. He said when he found out Tyson used to get on public buses and wait until the people were warned about pickpockets before he would pickpocket them, he knew Tyson could transfer that into the ring. He knew it would be easy for Tyson because he was an intelligent kid. I boxed with Ali in 1971, in a gym in Miami. Tyson would have been a dangerous fight for Ali. Tyson was a smart, fast puncher. But if I had to bet, I would have bet on Ali.

HUJTYN: Mike is a child. He wanted a whole life he never had. He tried to find a way to re-create it, but you can't. He wanted a mother and father and the right home life. Mike often used to sleep on the couch in the living room, not in his room. I remember lots of times going over to the house to watch the fights, and he'd say, "Would you tuck me in before you go?" That's where he slept, the back of the couch. It was the closeness around him. Very childlike. I think it was because he never had it as a child and was desperate for it.

1982: *D'Amato asks Atlas to leave the Catskill house after Atlas holds a gun to Tyson's head. Atlas believes Tyson has behaved lewdly toward a relative. Tyson is returned briefly to the Tryon facility. According to Atlas, Tyson was running scared and was returned there for his own safety. Rooney takes over Atlas's training responsibilities, as Tyson, having failed to make the Olympics, prepares to turn professional. His first pro fight is in March 1985.*

ATLAS: I left Mike because of certain things. Cus thought I left after I put the gun to Tyson, but I was still around.

ROONEY: When Tyson allegedly made a pass at Teddy Atlas's relative, Teddy pulled a gun on him. Tyson came down, saw Teddy and thought everything was going to be okay, and then Teddy put a gun to his head. Tyson just looked at him. Teddy said, "You think I'm kidding?" That's when he shot the gun up in the air. Tyson goes back to Cus's

house and tells Cus, "I'm going down to Brooklyn. I'm going to get my boys to come up here and kill him." Cus shipped Tyson back down to Bobby Stewart in Tryon to simmer down. Cus really helped Teddy, because Tyson was going to get his boys.

HUJTYN: Teddy did hold the gun to Mike's head, but Mike didn't do anything that bad. Don't get me wrong. Mike is terrible in regard to women, but at the time, he wasn't that bad. And Teddy was weird. He was a head case even back then. He tried to kill himself several times. Nobody knows that. You have to put up with this great respect for this individual. I know him. I know what he did to me. I know what he did to Cus. I know what he did to Kevin Rooney. As much as I don't approve of Kevin's behavior now, the only reason Teddy was here, the only reason he has the job he has now, is because he was Kevin's best friend. Teddy was in Rikers Island for armed robbery. Kevin begged Cus to intervene and get Teddy up here so he could fight and train at the gym. You had to watch Teddy all the time because you never knew what kind of mood he was going to be in.

JAY BRIGHT: (nonboxing resident of the Catskill house and future Tyson cornerman): Cus had a whole bunch of Jimmy Jacobs's fight films up there, and Mike's job later on, when I was at college, was the films. You had to get the pieces and glue them together and splice them, basically. Certain nights everyone would sit around and watch the fights. We had a bedsheet on the wall, and then Cus eventually got a projection screen.

ROONEY: Me and Mike were like brothers. Jimmy Jacobs was the guy he looked up to, and Bill Cayton, Jacobs's partner, was the brains behind the whole operation. Bill was brilliant. Mike was closer to Jimmy. Jimmy came from Cus.

FRANK MALONEY (Lennox Lewis's former manager): I was intrigued by it all. I thought it was clever matchmaking. The way it was done—taking him up to the Catskills, taking him out of society, really. If you can develop a heavyweight who's the biggest draw in boxing, you have a license to print money. He was brilliantly marketed and brilliantly matched. He never fought another fighter who was in his prime, except for maybe Michael Spinks, who was terrified of Tyson anyway.

NOVEMBER 4, 1985: *Cus D'Amato dies,*

officially of pneumonia. His death, however, is shrouded in secrecy. Tyson is said to be distraught but goes back into action almost immediately, dedicating his victories to D'Amato's memory. After 27 consecutive wins Tyson signs on to fight Trevor Berbick, a tough Jamaican. If Tyson wins, he will become the youngest heavyweight champion in history, at the age of 20. On November 22, 1986 Tyson beats Berbick in a second-round technical knockout for the World Boxing Council heavyweight championship.

ROONEY: Jimmy and Bill were at a meeting with the TV executives. They offered \$12 million to fight in this title-unification tournament, and Jimmy jumped at it. Bill said, "Hold on. We've got to think about that." And that \$12 million became \$26 million.

LOTT: Months and years went by, and Mike was a six-round fighter and then an eight-round fighter and then a 10-round fighter.

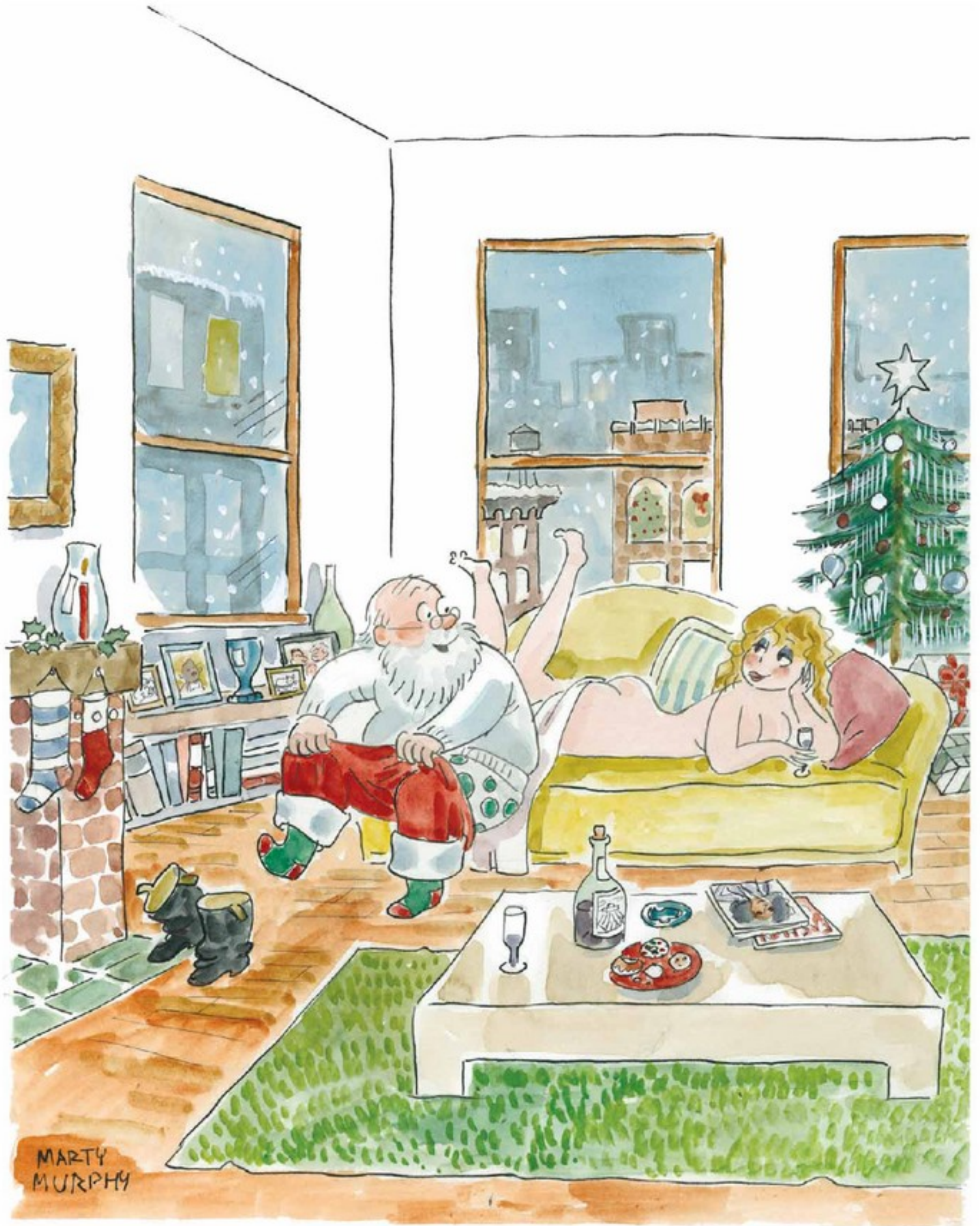
ATLAS: You know, I always thought you couldn't win the title without character, but I had to stand corrected after Tyson won it. I was wrong. You can win it, but you can't keep it for long.

HUJTYN: He knew the right thing to do, because Cus had a plan for every situation. It's not like we didn't tell Mike. The Tony Tucker fight in 1987 was scary. Mike didn't look good in that fight. He was already losing desire. He never figured out what he was supposed to do. He didn't really want to fight. He hasn't wanted to fight for almost 20 years. The only reason he wanted to fight Spinks was because he was so angry. At least half the boxing writers thought Spinks would win. Mike was furious because anybody with a brain and an eye could see that shouldn't be possible. Spinks is a small man. He can't hurt Mike. How was he going to win?

ROONEY: Spinks was scared. Cus always used to talk about that. He said, "Fear is your friend if you can control it."

A few months before the Spinks fight, Tyson marries Robin Givens. He is clearly besotted and believes her to be pregnant with his child. The witness to the wedding is Tyson's biographer and friend José Torres. As Tyson prepares to defend his titles against Tony Tubbs in Tokyo in March 1988 in another multimillion-dollar bout, the marriage descends into recriminations and turmoil, mainly centered on money. Even when living at their new mansion in Bernardsville, New Jersey, Givens is almost always accompanied by her mother, Ruth Roper. As the marriage begins to disintegrate, Givens goes on national TV with allegations that Tyson is a violent manic-depressive. Tyson, who is present, appears drugged.

LOTT: Robin Givens was the moment. She sprang that wedge. Around October 1987 Mike told me he was seeing her. In January 1988 she said, "I'm pregnant by Mike." I didn't even know



"Now I must go and bring joy to the rest of the world."

this. He asked me what would I think if he married Robin. I said, "Great, terrific," because at that stage she seemed kind and caring. But she's been called a liar now for 20 years. Right after they got married Robin went to the offices of Merrill Lynch while Mike and I were in Tokyo. She was with her mother, demanding money. José Torres came over about two weeks after we were there, and the first thing he said was "Steve, we got trouble." I said, "What? Everything's great. Mike is training well." He said, "Robin is driving me crazy. She's going to the bank." I knew something was amiss. One time in Tokyo, maybe a week before the Tubbs fight—Robin was there for a couple of weeks but then went back—Mike came into my room. He had just gotten off the phone with her or something, and he was sitting on the bed and said, "I don't feel so good." I said, "What's up?" He said, "It's Robin." He was defending the title in three days, and I had to decide what to do. He said, "I should never have got married." I said, "Mike, I guarantee you everything will be fine." He said, "You really mean that?"

TORRES: I was the best man at the wedding. I was one of the guys telling him to marry this girl. I thought she would straighten him out, but then I found out he was overwhelming her. He would push her around and slap her. I called him up and said, "If I'm sitting next to you and Robin, and I see you abusing her, I will hit you with a baseball bat. And if I kill you, I kill you, and I'm not kidding. You hitting that girl is so embarrassing for me. You're the heavyweight

champion. Are you crazy?" But Tyson was very cooperative with the biography, and I liked everyone in his group. The only one I didn't like was his mother-in-law, Ruth Roper. She loved the attention. I thought Tyson really loved Robin. It was one of his first experiences. But then he also started to lose control in the ring. Without that fault he would have been the perfect champion of the world. I didn't see Robin as a gold digger. I thought she meant well for Mike. I hate to say this, but I thought it was her mother's influence on her, not Robin. I thought she would put some control on Tyson's lack of control.

BOS: I thought Torres's book, *Fire & Fear*, was basically Torres grandstanding a lot.

MAJESKI: All of a sudden Robin Givens comes in and Tyson falls apart. It's the virgin-whore syndrome. She's a whore and a virgin at the same time. You look at her as some kind of angelic figure, and at the same time you want to have sex with her. So you're trapped. That's what happened with Tyson. And boxing-wise he climaxed with Spinks. It was like Joe Frazier. After Frazier beat Ali, that was it. Physically, emotionally, psychologically, he reached the point where he couldn't go any further. With Tyson, he beat Spinks and he could never be better. The fame gets overwhelming. It's insanity. You talk about Hemingway, Fitzgerald or Marlon Brando and Elvis Presley—they reached a point where that iconic fame got to them. It makes you crazy.

1988: Tyson is involved in a series of violent incidents. He crashes his Bentley in New York after Givens reaches into his pocket and finds

condoms. He has a street fight with a former opponent, Mitch "Blood" Green. He drives another car into a tree outside the Catskill house and is knocked unconscious—an event portrayed in the media as a suicide attempt. Police are called to Bernardsville after Tyson smashes up the house, believing Givens to have had a sexual dalliance with Donald Trump.

HUJTYN: Robin was such an obnoxious bitch. Flat-out. She didn't like Mike, not one iota. Obviously, it wasn't worth the money. If it was really worth the money, she would have had a child. That's the general route to get the money. So it wasn't worth that much to her. And yes, she would have liked to see him dead because of the thing with the car and the tree. But Mike was gaga over her. Before that he was "No girls will ever like me." So he was in awe of her. Givens and her mother were worse than Don King. They went to Camille and said to her, "You've left the house to Mike, haven't you? You really should, you know. He's like your son." And she said, "Oh no, this is my house. This house is going to my sister." But they had the gall to approach her. They were horrible people.

ROONEY: On the plane on the way back from the Tubbs fight, I saw Robin had a tight belly, but she was supposed to be four or five months pregnant. When my ex-wife got pregnant, you could see it almost right away. So I said, "Robin, you look great! Your stomach looks great." And she said, "What do you mean?" She was a bitch. Ruth was a little warmer, but she was still playing the game. They were both chasing Mike's money, but Bill Cayton had hooked it up so Mike was the only person who could get the money.

After the Tubbs fight—with his mother, Lorna, long gone and the death of D'Amato still recent—Tyson is bereaved again. This time it is Jimmy Jacobs, the co-manager he apparently cherished. The official reason for Jacobs's death is given as lymphocytic leukemia, but rumors abound relating to D'Amato and Jacobs having lived together for years in a New York apartment before D'Amato hitched up with Camille and Jacobs met his wife, Lorraine. The only remaining members of the team D'Amato put in place are Kevin Rooney, Jacobs's partner Bill Cayton—who expects to take over the reins—and Tyson's aide-de-camp and friend Steve Lott. Aware of Tyson's lack of fondness for Cayton, however, Don King is now hovering. Although uninvited, King somehow inveigles his way into Jacobs's funeral. In a shock move, Tyson then sacks Rooney, Cayton and Lott. Lawsuits ensue, but King now has control of Tyson's career.

ATLAS: The truth is far from what you get with a lot of people who have agendas, and you could say I have mine. But Cus died under strange circumstances. He died of pneumonia. Jimmy died afterward. They said it was leukemia, but nobody ever documented that. They both died in the same hospital. Pneumonia nowadays usually accompanies the



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last stages of AIDS. All I know is their records were kept confidential and hidden. They took no visitors. The hospital staff was very closed and secretive.

HUJTYN: I definitely thought Jimmy was homosexual. I thought the wife, Lorraine, was just a front and that he actually died of AIDS. I never thought that about Cus, though. But as for Jimmy kissing Mike on the lips after fights, I don't think that has anything to do with it. Mike wanted that. He's a baby. He never grew up. He wanted all the love and affection.

MAJESKI: Tyson conned everybody—Jacobs, Cayton, D'Amato and the people in prison. But when he got to King he met his match. Nobody plays Don King except maybe the devil. King played Tyson. King knew how to handle him, and he trumped him at his own game.

ROONEY: Cus and Jimmy were not lovers. That's total bullshit. Cus loved Camille. She was his woman. Jimmy married Lorraine. She was his woman. But yeah, when Tyson fired me, I was shocked. I had no inkling. People say Mike was stupid, but he wasn't. He was smart. What surprised me even more was that he got into bed with King.

HUJTYN: Everybody behaved in a certain way for Cus. I don't think Jimmy was the person everybody thinks he was. I don't think he was a good, idealistic guy. Cayton had the money, for sure. Jimmy acted in a certain way because he thought he should, and I think he cared more than Cayton, who treated you like a possession, not a person. But they didn't rip off Mike. They showed him the books, they tried to explain what they were doing, but Mike said, "That's your job, not my job. I'll do my job, and you do yours. I don't need to know about it."

LOTT: Then Mike had an about-face. He broke up with Robin Givens over the Barbara Walters show, and then he came back to the office and apologized to Bill Cayton about having said those things with King. Bill said, "Forget that. It's history. What's important now, Mike, is you." And Bill said he was going to

get him some fights while he got his life together after Robin. That was where I made my big mistake. I wasn't smart enough to stick with him and say, "Mike, life is gonna be great again." Instead he said, "See you guys later," and walked out the door. Don grabbed him the next day, and that was it.

HUJTYN: Brian Kenny, who now works for ESPN2 with Teddy Atlas, interviewed me after Mike left us. He asked, "What's going to happen?" I said, "Mike is going to lose." He had just fought Spinks. And Kenny said, "Well, because I know you and respect you I won't laugh, but everybody else is going to laugh." This was before the Bruno fight. And Kenny said, "Why do you say that?" I said, "Because

request the chief second is Jay Bright, a friend from the Catskill house not known for his boxing expertise. When Tyson's eyes begin to swell from Douglas's jabs, the appropriate equipment isn't in the corner, and Snowell attempts to reduce the swelling by applying a condom filled with cold water.

ATLAS: Along came a guy called Buster Douglas, who didn't sign on the dotted line. For once it was "He's going to have to vanquish me." You see, Tyson never really vanquished people. They vanquished themselves.

BRIGHT: I've taken the heat for the Douglas fight for years. Basically, the misconception most people have is that I was the cut man. I wasn't. Unfortunately, the cut man didn't have the endswell [a

small ironlike contraction to treat abrasions] and what was needed to control the cut and the swelling. But I take the heat, and that's it.

ROONEY: Jay Bright was a slob. He didn't come into the picture until after Cus was dead and Tyson left me. Aaron Snowell came from Don King. He was another asshole.

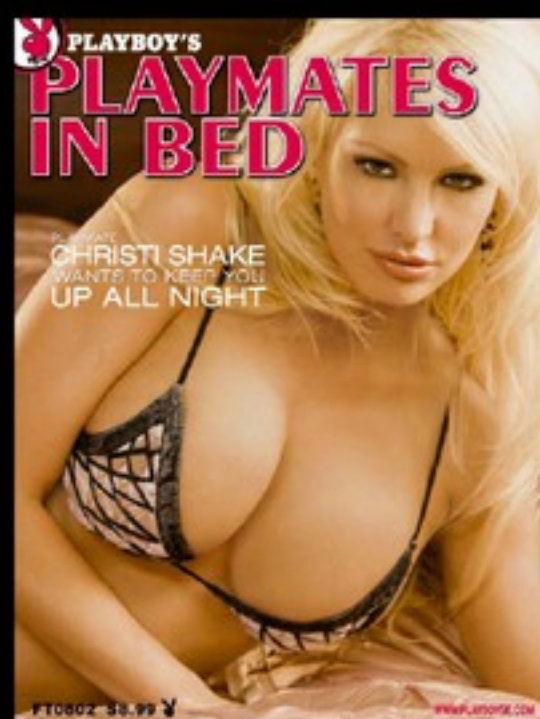
LOTT: I should have gone to Bill Cayton and said, "Write me a check for \$100,000 so I can take him down to Brazil for a couple of weeks." I should have said, "Bill, he's in bad shape. Let's take him down to Rio, let him get laid about 66 times a day, and after four weeks his mind will be off Robin." But instead of Rio it was Buster Douglas in Tokyo. Don got him when he was an emotional

wreck, took him up to Cleveland, and then it was "Mike, let's take a look at those contracts." It's very difficult for the public, even the boxing public, to understand that he was emotionally drained when he went in against Douglas. All that stuff was reverberating around in his brain. And Douglas was the most relaxed opponent he had faced. By round two Mike was totally drained. It was the Robin Givens-Don King one-two, followed literally by the Buster Douglas one-two.

ROONEY: If Mike had still been with me, he would have knocked Douglas out in a round or two.

LOTT: If Kevin Rooney was still his trainer when Mike went to Don King, he

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Cus said it. And Mike knows Cus said it, and he knows what Cus said is true. Cus said, 'A person who compromises his principles, who compromises what he believes in, cannot succeed.' So therefore he has to lose." Mike knew it, just like he knew everything else Cus said was true.

Following a shaky display against the limited Frank Bruno, Tyson's 10th-round defeat to Buster Douglas on February 11, 1990 is catastrophic. It is made worse by King's attempt to have the result reversed on the grounds that when Douglas was floored in the eighth round, the count was long. During the fight Tyson's corner work is shambolic. King has brought in a new trainer, the inexperienced Aaron Snowell. Presumably at Tyson's

would still have lost to Buster Douglas. If Mike thinks he's hated or despised, he won't be able to fight. He's so sensitive to how people think about him, he will not produce in the ring.

Despite a couple of easy knockouts, Tyson is frozen out of the heavyweight-title scene. Buster Douglas, in abject shape, loses his titles by knockout to Evander Holyfield. Don King has no promotional options on Holyfield, either and, to his dismay, finds himself in the heavyweight wilderness. Tyson remains the biggest draw in boxing, but to get the big TV fights, King has to match him with the dangerous Donovan "Razor" Ruddock. They square off twice in Las Vegas, with Tyson winning each time but absorbing plenty of punishment. On the way back from the second Ruddock fight, in mid-July 1991, Tyson stops off in Indianapolis for the Miss Black America beauty contest. With his current girlfriend, the rap star B Angie B, temporarily unavailable, Tyson, who has been drinking all day, invites one of the pageant contestants, Desiree Washington, to his room at the Canterbury Hotel at two in the morning. The next day Washington charges that Tyson has raped her. Tyson is tried, convicted and sentenced to 10 years in jail, four years suspended.

HUJTYN: I have a theory about the women. With boxing you get an adrenaline high, and there's only one other place to get it. You're looking to feel better, but that lasts only so long. You have to do it again so you feel better again. Mike is all about how he feels. You can talk to him, you think he's very sensible, and then he goes out the door and something happens and he gets upset. He does whatever it takes to make himself feel better and completely forgets what you were talking about. It was all about money. If you watch the case, you'll see Mike's body language. He was trying to get away from Don King. King had to control the heavyweight division. If Mike left him and continued to fight, there would be all that money not under King's control. Of course Mike went back to King when he came out of jail—he had no money, and King had power of attorney. King had two choices: Kill him or put him in jail so he can't fight and can't make money for anyone else.

As far as the rape is concerned, Mike is what you call a coercer. He isn't going to grab you and forcefully throw you down on a bed or whatever, and if he did, you would have bruises. You would have marks. He's like, "Oh, come on. You know you want to." He's not mean and vicious. Way back when, he didn't want you to get mad at him. He never wanted anybody to be mad. He wanted everybody to like him.

While in prison at the Indiana Youth Center, from September 1993 to March 1995, Tyson converts to Islam. A few days before his release, in a move that surprises many, he agrees to re-sign with King. King assigns two "friends" of Tyson's, Rory Holloway and John Horne, to be his managers of record.

Dr. Monica Turner. Portrayed in the media as a respectable and benign influence on Tyson, Turner was previously involved with a notorious drug dealer and crime figure. Nevertheless, Tyson, under King's aegis, reunites with the heavyweight title in 1996, even if it carries only a glimmer of his first meteoric rise. Beating a series of fighters regarded as "cheese champions," Tyson is once again the man. He commands \$30 million a fight. There are only two bouts left for Tyson to prove his mettle: against the teak-tough Georgian Evander Holyfield, who had been due to square off against him before the rape trial, and Lennox Lewis, the towering, athletic former Olympic champion from Canada, now based in the U.K.

MAJESKI: I lived through the 1960s and the Muhammad Ali era, and we now have made Ali into America's secular saint. Tyson is America's secular demon. Neither one deserves the title imposed on him. I think Ali is a far greater person than Tyson, but we've changed him into something he never wanted to be, never said he was. We just invented this image of Ali, like he's Mahatma Gandhi or something. How religious a Muslim is Mike Tyson? He's got Mao Tse-tung tattooed on him, a communist, as bad a killer as Hitler. He's also got Arthur Ashe tattooed on him. I don't think Tyson knows what he wants to do. He's in search of an identity; that's the problem.

ATLAS: I ran into Tyson a couple of times later on. We had a couple of situations. He was shooting a Japanese beer commercial at Gleason's Gym, in Brooklyn, while I was training a fighter there. I'm not a genius, but I do know the time of day, and I kept a steel bar in my locker. I just had a feeling—the hair on the back of my neck, whatever you want to say. I was at my locker, about to turn around, and at the last second I took the bar and put it right against the door of the locker, where it was easy to grab. Just as I turned, Tyson was there, and he'd gotten as close to me as he could without my turning. I turned around, there was nobody else in the place, and he was the heavyweight champion of the world. I stared at him. He stopped, 147

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MALONEY: When Tyson was in jail, you had to feel sorry for him in a way. You had to wonder if some stuff was maneuvered to get him into jail. I think certain people wanted him locked up. Maybe he was becoming uncontrollable.

As Tyson begins his comeback, his appearances become characterized by antiwhite vitriol led by Holloway, Horne and a character named Crocodile, who dresses in combat fatigues and spouts insults at prospective Tyson opponents. Tyson admits to taking antidepressants to control his anger, and rumors abound that he also takes recreational drugs. At press conferences to promote fights Tyson is surly and uncommunicative, allowing Holloway, Horne and King to do the talking. He gets married again, to

and he stared at me. I had to assume he saw me walk in. But maybe he was going to the bathroom. I don't know. We didn't have much chatter.

LOTT: There's been nothing, no contact. It was brilliant of King to put those people around Mike when he came out of jail. The more Mike was around them, the more he acted like them: "White people are no good." Don is brilliant at it.

ROONEY: Tyson in some respects became an asshole; that's what happened. So for me it was like, "Fuck you. If you want to be an asshole, be an asshole." King had Holloway and Horne for his Tyson plan, and then it was totally downhill.

MAJESKI: Really, decadence set in. Horne and Holloway were cruds. Money didn't mean anything to Tyson. If he wanted to give these guys half a million a year, so what? It was insanity. King cut Tyson 50 percent. King put his daughter, the wife, the whole family on the payroll. Tyson was just a cash cow to exploit. And because Tyson was the most famous and the most affluent, King was able to do it more so than with anyone else.

Tyson fights Evander Holyfield in Las Vegas on November 9, 1996. Despite being

a huge underdog, Holyfield hands Tyson a sustained boxing lesson. However, such is the money generated that a rematch is immediately ordained. This time what ensues is sensational. Tyson, again being outboxed, bites both of Holyfield's ears in third-round clinches, on one occasion spitting a piece of ear to the canvas, and is disqualified.

ROONEY: If the referee hadn't stopped the first Holyfield fight, Mike would have been knocked cold. He was staggering, and the referee jumped in. Then they had the rematch, and he got in better shape.

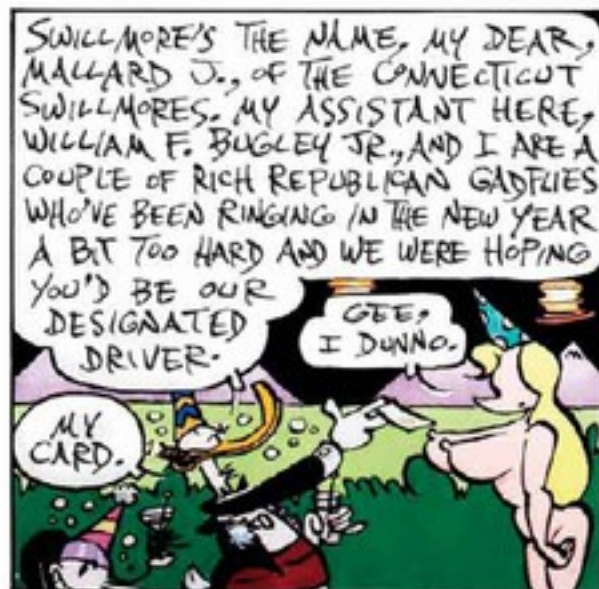
ATLAS: With Holyfield he became a game-quitter. He stopped trying to win. The second time against Holyfield he knew he would actually have to be a fighter. Two nights before the fight, I said he would have to foul to get out of it. Tyson was a fractured, scared, incomplete person who could not face a man. He would not have entered that room against Holyfield again if he didn't know where the exit was.

With his career apparently in a downward spiral and his aura evaporating, Tyson faces other problems. His second wife has left him, saying he is impossible to live with. Tyson leaves King, Horne and Holloway and sues

them for millions of what he believes to be embezzled earnings. The case is settled out of court. Tyson hooks up with Shelly Finkel, a veteran boxing manager. He has more run-ins with the law, precipitated by a 1998 road-rage incident that lands him back in jail. He serves additional time for violating his parole. One big fight is left for him: a showdown with Lennox Lewis. In the meantime Tyson goes on the road, boxing a series of mediocrities in Europe.

LOTT: When he got out, in about 1999 when he was still in Vegas, I went to visit Mike, to pitch him about coming back. He had called me out of the blue, so I called him and said I was going out there to see my uncle and could I stop by to see him? He said, "Sure, stop by." I picked up every picture I had of him and us from the good days—every fight, every press conference, a stack like that—to get his mind back. I showed up at the house and showed him these wonderful photographs. I was there for an hour, and he had strange people in the house. The guy who fixed the gloves, Panama Lewis, was there. [Lewis was banned for life from boxing for removing the stuffing from the gloves of one of his fighters,

Dirty Duck [®] by Bobby London



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Luis Resto. Resto's opponent, Billy Collins Jr., was maimed and had to retire. Many believe his drunk-driving death to be suicide.]

HUJTYN: Don King took all the money while Mike was in jail. Plus, Mike wasn't smart with any of it. There were ex-wives and children, and he had to pay for all these children. I wouldn't know if he stays in touch with them. I know he liked the last two, and he brought them to Camille's house on occasion. He used to make comments that he ought to do better things because he has these children, but it didn't last longer than saying it, unfortunately.

ROONEY: He's trying to make out as if he's a family man. I'm sure he loves his kids, but he ain't no family man. He likes fooling around with girls. Horne and Holloway fucked the money out of Tyson. All he had to do was resist them. And Monica Turner was no Goody Two-shoes. She got a couple of million. She's set.

LOTT: When I was in Vegas visiting Mike, I get this call, and as soon as I pick it up I know who it is: "Hi, Shelly." So I know what happened. Someone in Mike's house called Shelly Finkel to tell him Steve Lott was out there in Mike's room, talking to him. Shelly says, "Steve, what are you doing in Vegas?" I said, "I'm talking to Mike." He says, "What about?" So I said, "I'm talking about him coming back to Bill, Kevin and me." And he goes, "No, I have a contract." I said, "Shelly, it has nothing to do with you. Let's do what's best for Mike." "No, no, no! I have a contract!" I said, "Shelly,

contracts are easy. We can work that out." It was somebody in the house, the same way Don always had someone around, reporting back to him.

Tyson fights Lennox Lewis in Memphis on June 8, 2002. During a prefight press conference, a brawl breaks out between the two camps. Lewis throws a punch at Tyson, and in the ensuing melee Tyson bites Lewis's leg. In the fight itself Tyson receives a sustained beating and is knocked out in the eighth round.

MALONEY: When we got to the Lennox Lewis weigh-in, Tyson was sitting there twirling his hair between his finger and thumb like a lost little girl. He wasn't paying any attention. Crocodile was shouting and screaming, and Tyson didn't pay any attention to him, either. It was as if he was on a different planet. It seemed to me either he was still on the pills—although I don't know if he was—or he was hypnotized. He was sort of in a semi-trance, and everyone around him was trying to keep him calm and make sure he didn't blow his fuse.

ROONEY: In my opinion he just laid down against Lewis.

MALONEY: Before the fight, I wanted Lennox to get beaten because of the bitchiness in me after the fallout I had with the new Lewis team. That fight would have been my pension. I didn't make any money at all out of that fight. I was watching Tyson on the TV monitor, getting ready in his dressing room, and his crazy antics, smashing the wall like a mad raging bull again. Then I looked at Lewis getting ready, and I went, "You

know what? I would put my house on Lennox Lewis winning this fight."

JUNE 2005: After two fights against the journeymen Danny Williams and Kevin McBride result in abject defeats, Tyson announces his retirement from boxing. Arrested for possession of cocaine, which he freely admits, Tyson faces more jail time. He is also said to be some \$30 million in debt, mainly to the IRS but also to various Las Vegas jewelry stores. He embarks on a speaking tour of the U.K., but it is not a success. Meanwhile, on Broadway, Robin Givens is cast in the musical *Chicago* as Roxie Hart, a glamorous murderess who evades the death penalty by falsely claiming she is pregnant.

ROONEY: He just laid down again in the McBride fight when he was ahead on the scorecards. He quit like a pig. He took the money and ran.

ATLAS: The last two fights were just more of him being exposed. They were just ordinary kids. The Irish kid was more ordinary. Tyson doesn't have character. He would be a comet that maybe flashes for a moment but whose future was always going to be short and inconsequential. Budd Schulberg said anyone who stayed with Cus had to be an incomplete individual and would never develop a complete personality or an identity for himself.

MALONEY: I don't think Tyson's a sympathetic character. I don't know what to make of him. A man who earns all that money and loses it all—you can't feel sorry for him. He's either mentally disturbed or just doesn't put any value on anything.

MAJESKI: All D'Amato's boys wound up broke or in debt, so maybe money did mean nothing to them. That unconscious thing he put in their heads: Money is something you use when you have it.

HUJTYN: Cus used to say, "I will have succeeded when he becomes independent of me." But Mike needed guidance much longer. I would actually say forever. To me, Mike will always be a hurt child. He never wanted the responsibility of being champion of the world.

TORRES: Now, I feel sorry for Tyson. I don't want to get involved with him, because he can bring trouble. But if I can help him, I will.

ATLAS: Cus had a story from when he was a boy: A monster lived near his school. People believed this. They would walk home a different way to avoid it, even though going past the monster was the quickest way. Then one day Cus is late and he knows he's going to get a beating from his father, so he goes the quick way. He's scared. He turns the corner. As he does so, he sees the first claw. Then he sees the second claw. And there it is: nothing but an old tree swinging in the wind. Tyson was just the tree in the end. Cus's guy ended up being the tree.



"Take this pill and shove it."



“My Boyfriend’s **SECRET** ... for Amazing **SEX!**”

As a faithful reader of your magazine, I just had to tell your readers about a recent experience I had with my boyfriend. First, let me just say he is a great guy. *But, after dating for six months, it seemed he was having confidence issues in AND out of bed.* It was having a real negative effect on his sexual prowess and let's face it, with any new relationship, it usually doesn't last very long without a real strong sexual connection. My dilemma was that I really liked the guy.

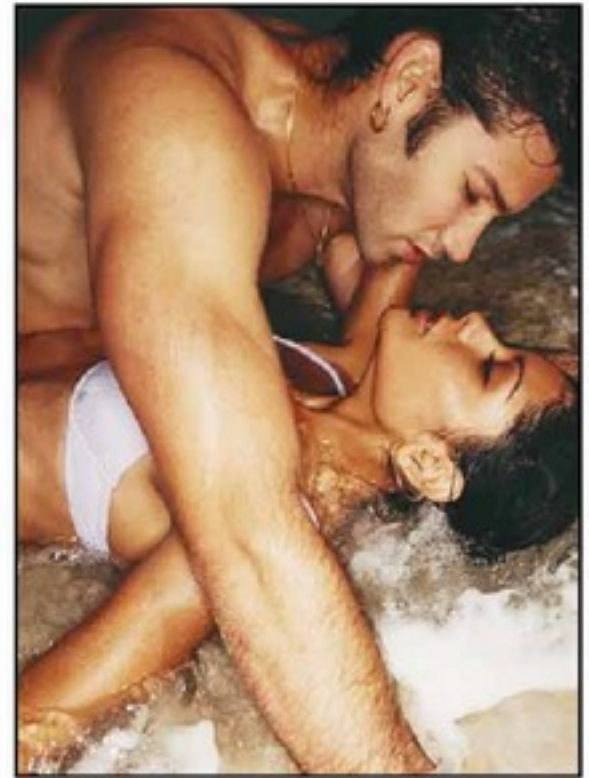
Thankfully, I didn't have to make a difficult decision because everything changed a few days ago. I came home from work and he basically tore my clothes off before I even made it through the door. Confident, aggressive, he made all the right moves. I definitely felt sensations I'd never felt before ... in places I forgot existed. We made love for what seemed like an eternity. I never knew what some of my friends meant when they said the earth moved from having sex – I do now. *I can honestly say it was the best sex I've ever had in my entire life.*

When I asked him what was going on – what brought about the change – he wouldn't answer me. So I did what any red-blooded American woman would do, I started snooping. It didn't take me long to figure out his secret. In his underwear drawer under the “men's magazines”, was a tube of **Maxoderm CONNECTION**. After reading the fine print and finding the website, I went online to www.maxodermct.com to discover more about this magic in a tube.

Maxoderm CONNECTION (of which I'm having my boyfriend buy a lifetime supply) is a lotion that is applied topically to the most “intimate areas”. *A delicate blend of ingredients, it helps improve stimulation directly at the source – that's when amazing things start to happen. He achieves harder, stronger erections and my orgasms go through the roof!* We aren't into taking pills of any kind – not even aspirin – so I was relieved to find he was using something topical without any systemic side effects. Unless you want to think of great sex as a side effect, because that's definitely what's going on at our place – ALL the time!

So ... please print this letter. Anyone who wants to experience mind-blowing intimacy has to try **Maxoderm CONNECTION**. They need to tell their boyfriends, husbands or partners about this product. Or just “accidentally” leave a tube lying around for them to “accidentally” find. I really want to thank the woman who developed **Maxoderm CONNECTION** – only a woman could design something that feels this good.

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TJ
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“I felt
sensations
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AJMAL

(continued from page 58)

did he stop for that pale-blue sheet and not another pale-blue sheet?"

"She was moving her leg somehow abnormally, shaking it, putting it forward a little. It was a sign."

Only in Afghanistan.

The last time I saw Ajmal, in autumn 2006, he was evidently commanding more respect among the Afghan press corps. It was also apparent that he was getting more involved in the dangerous business of fixing high-risk interviews. When the Taliban regrouped after the 2001 invasion it was difficult to make contact with them. For several years access to the insurgents was controlled by a handful of rival fixers, most of whom were themselves ex-Taliban. One of these men, Nawab Moman, traded in his turban and robes for dark tailored suits and became a journalist for Tolo TV, Afghanistan's first private television station. Tolo's studios were across from the Everest, and true to form, Ajmal made friends with Moman and did special favors for him, such as scoring whiskey through NATO connections and allowing the short-term afternoon use of empty rooms at the guesthouse. In turn Moman began to let Ajmal in on the Taliban-access trade.

In the Middle East conflict zones, one of war reporting's dirty secrets is that access to insurgents is often sold for cash. Sometimes the price is low. To interview and film Taliban fighters, I paid \$800 to cover transportation, police bribes and fees to Moman and Ajmal. But ambitious and flush BBC and Korean TV crews, among others, regularly dished out thousands of dollars for face time with the bad guys.

In addition to seeking interviews, journalists also look to buy video. On my most recent trip to Afghanistan, my colleague filmmaker Ian Olds and I reviewed exclusive footage from the guerrilla leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar of Hezb-e-Islami, as well as some Al Qaeda-shot combat footage showing the corpses of U.S. Navy Seals along with war booty such as American GPS devices and M4 rifles. And though it rarely makes it on the air, footage of brutally slow beheadings is always for sale. Someone even offered to sell me the video of Ajmal's decapitation. They said his killer wore a gray tunic and Ajmal struggled to the very end. I declined.

In Afghanistan this is how much of the news is made—like sausage from grisly floor scraps collected during back-room deals wherein the spectacle of war is bartered for cash over glasses of Johnnie Walker. It was just such a deal that led Ajmal into the heart of Taliban country. When it all went bad it was easy

to blame him as a fool. But it wasn't quite that simple.

The first indication that something terrible had happened was a text message from my girlfriend: "A translator named Ajmal has been kidnapped in Afghanistan. Hope that's not your guy." Around the Hindu Kush the name Ajmal is as common as the name Jason is around the Rockies. So it seemed unlikely that the kidnapped person was my friend Ajmal Naqshbandi. I sent him an e-mail, but he didn't write back.

As the story evolved, things began to look worse: The Taliban had captured an alleged British spy traveling with two locals in the southern Afghan province of Helmand. But the alleged spy turned out to be Daniele Mastrogiacomo, a stocky 52-year-old correspondent for the Italian daily *La Repubblica*. I had met Mastrogiacomo over morning cornflakes several years back at the Everest. Ajmal frequently worked with him; months before the abduction Ajmal had told me he had new and important Taliban contacts in Helmand.

La Repubblica soon confirmed that Mastrogiacomo and Ajmal had gone south to interview Taliban commanders, most likely Mullah Mohammed Dadullah, who was then the insurgents' chief military leader. Ajmal and I had done a similar interview with Taliban fighters only two hours from where Mastrogiacomo had disappeared. This was all too close for comfort.

About a week and a half into the drama the Taliban released a video of Mastrogiacomo calmly but intensely imploring Afghan president Hamid Karzai and the Italian government for help. Off camera, someone prompted Mastrogiacomo to say more. Ajmal's unmistakably nasal voice was translating. The person I knew best in Afghanistan was shackled in a mud hut somewhere near the Pakistan border.

Next came news that the third man, Mastrogiacomo's local guide and driver, Sayed Agha, had been peremptorily killed. Soon thereafter another video was released. It shows Mastrogiacomo and Ajmal kneeling, bound and blindfolded. Around them stand a dozen Taliban fighters. The camera pans over to Agha as he is forced down and decapitated on the rough desert ground. Then Mastrogiacomo stands weeping in front of the camera, begging for his life.

The Taliban demanded an exchange of five of their imprisoned commanders for the two remaining captives. An international crisis began to unfold. Italy's center-left government, which had already pulled its troops from Iraq, was on the brink of collapse. If Mastrogiacomo and Ajmal could not be freed, Italy's prime minister, Romano Prodi, could face a no-confidence vote over the increasingly unpopular war in Afghanistan. If the gov-

ernment fell, Italy's 2,000 troops in Afghanistan could be pulled out and its development projects stopped. The whole NATO mission in Afghanistan, the government of Afghanistan and, by extension, the international war on Islamic radicalism would take a major hit.

But all that was avoided, and two weeks later Mastrogiacomo stepped off a plane in Rome, flashing the victory sign as if he'd just won a cycling race. He had been swapped for five Taliban. A prominent left-wing Italian nongovernmental organization called Emergency had managed the delicate negotiations and prisoner swap; the first images of a liberated Mastrogiacomo were taken at Emergency's hospital in Lashkar Gar, the capital of Helmand province.

But Ajmal—who was supposed to be part of the deal—was still being held by the Taliban. Surprisingly, the man who brokered Mastrogiacomo's release—Ramatullah Hanefi, the director of Emergency's hospital in Helmand—was now in the custody of the Afghan secret police, accused of being a Taliban operative.

Two weeks after Mastrogiacomo's release the Taliban decapitated Ajmal. Shortly after that, Emergency, which had demanded Hanefi's release, closed its entire Afghan operation: three major surgical hospitals, each with scores of beds and multiple operating theaters, a major maternity ward and 25 fully equipped health clinics. Over seven years Emergency had treated 1.5 million Afghans with free high-quality health care. In war-ravaged Afghanistan these resources were desperately needed.

To understand this debacle and to bid my friend good-bye, I returned to Afghanistan. The story I discovered there, the story of his murder and the incompetence that surrounded it, embodies everything wrong with this famously forgotten war and forgotten country. The truth is never easy to pin down, particularly in Afghanistan. The last time I had worked with Ajmal he mentioned his new contacts in Helmand. They were, he said, facilitated by "Emergency, the Italian hospital," in Lashkar Gar. Then, in October 2006, Emergency negotiated the release of Gabriele Torsello, an Italian photojournalist and Muslim convert who had been kidnapped by the Taliban.

Ajmal had never been to Helmand and had no family or friends there. According to his younger brother Munir, whom I met several times in Kabul, the interview in Helmand was supposed to be with Taliban supreme military commander Dadullah. The rendezvous was reportedly set up by Sami Sharaf, one of those Taliban-connected fixers at the top of the Afghan press-corps food chain. Ajmal's main contact in Helmand was Hanefi, the administrator at Emergency's hospital. This set of connections would bridge the infinite political distance between Kabul and Helmand.

I meet Sharaf at the Gandamak, a Kabul lodge named for the fictional 19th century address of author George MacDonald Fraser's literary hero Harry Flashman. Sharaf's manner is agitated. He refuses to be videotaped or to comment directly about Ajmal. In fact, he agrees to the interview only because suspicions about his possible role in Ajmal's death are steadily mounting among Ajmal's male relatives. Sharaf has missed the important *ros chel*, a ceremony on the 40th day of mourning. It was Sharaf who first told Ajmal's family about the kidnapping, even before it was in the press.

Sharaf got his start in reporting during the last days of the Soviet-backed regime of Dr. Mohammad Najibullah. When Najibullah fell to the U.S.-backed mujahideen, civil war broke out among the victors. From the ensuing chaos emerged the millenarian zealotry of the Taliban. By 1996 these insurgents controlled most of southern Afghanistan. Made up of poor rural Pashtuns—the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan—the Taliban have always been as much an ethnic movement as a religious one. They see as their enemies *kafirs*

(nonbelievers) and foreigners but also the Tajiks, Uzbeks, Hazara and other ethnic groups populating Afghanistan's northern half. From their first days to the present the Taliban have received covert support from elements in Inter-Services Intelligence, the Pakistani intelligence agency. Pakistan uses them to keep its neighbor weak.

"I was the only one who could report from Kandahar," brags Sharaf between hurried gulps of tea. As a freelancer in and out of Taliban-controlled southern Afghanistan, he did a thriving business selling footage to CNN and other networks during the Taliban regime. This was a time and place in which photography was largely illegal, but Sharaf was allowed to sell video. He tells me he split his time between Pashtun areas of Pakistan and Taliban country across the border. In Pakistan he studied journalism and then went to study sharia, Islamic law. To survive, says Sharaf, "you needed good connections. Anything is possible with connections."

That's what Ajmal was always after, particularly new connections with the Taliban. He had done well building links

with Taliban commanders in eastern Afghanistan, but Helmand was the deep south, the tribal Pashtun heartland.

Many of Ajmal's friends see Sharaf's shifty behavior as proof that he set up Ajmal and the high-priced Italian to be kidnapped. After all, only the Italians pay. Kidnap an American and all you get is a corpse and a Taliban snuff film. But an Italian could be a useful chip for the Taliban, or so go the conspiracy theories circulating in Kabul. Although I dislike the beady-eyed Sharaf, that scenario doesn't make sense, nor is there much evidence to support it. To plan so elaborately would have been too risky for Sharaf and unnecessary for the Taliban.

On the morning of March 5—with the interview in Helmand arranged—Mastrogiacomo and Naqshbandi set out. Just before leaving, Ajmal told his father and wife that he was going to research women's rights in Herat, a relatively safe city in western Afghanistan. But to his younger brother Munir, he gave the real details of his trip: They were meeting a trustworthy Taliban commander in Helmand; everything would be fine. It was Ajmal's custom to tell his wife and father a cover story but to call Munir at the last minute with the truth.

Reached by phone in Rome, Mastrogiacomo recounts the story as he experienced it. He knew nothing about how the interview was arranged and simply trusted Ajmal. (Ajmal and I had often rubbed each other the wrong way over this issue: I would demand to know exactly how everything worked, and he would testily push back when he felt I was prying too much.) At dawn Mastrogiacomo and Ajmal flew from Kabul to Kandahar. There they met Sayed Agha, a local man from Lashkar Gar, Helmand, the next province over. The three of them drove to Lashkar Gar, where Mastrogiacomo and Ajmal waited two hours in the offices of an Afghan NGO while Agha went to fix the final details for the interview. Then all of them drove into the desert.

Just outside town, in Nad Ali, they picked up a boy. As Mastrogiacomo later put it, "Agha seemed to know him." They traveled a short way over a bridge and turned right, through poppy fields. Then the road dead-ended. Realizing their mistake, they turned back, whereupon they met six armed Taliban riding three motorbikes.

"Immediately they arrested us," says Mastrogiacomo in his thick Italian accent. "They tied our hands with weak rope and blindfolded us. We are so confused. I am demanding, 'What is this? It is a mistake! We are here for an interview. It is normal. Why this?'" In his indignation he broke free. "The rope was weak. I demanded to speak with someone in charge. And then they just beat us with Kalashnikovs. My head is cut bad. And now Ajmal is saying, 'They are serious. Daniele, be quiet. They think we are spies.' At that point he becomes very scared."



"You're right, Miss Hopkins—there is something you can give to the man who has everything."

After five hours in one house the three captives were moved for several hours through the desert, with Mastrogiacomo locked in the trunk of Agha's car. Next they met a truck filled with Taliban. "Like 15 or 16, and from there we travel many hours through the desert down toward the Pakistani border," Mastrogiacomo says. After that the hostages were moved every night.

Just after the three men went missing, Sharaf found Munir and explained that Ajmal had been kidnapped. Sharaf said he had learned this through Samiullah Yousoufzai, a Pakistani journalist close to Dadullah. The news broke the next day when the Taliban issued a statement from somewhere in Pakistan.

As Mastrogiacomo explains to me, for the first eight days of their captivity he was together with Ajmal and Agha. "But it was hard to talk," he says. "Every time we spoke English the Taliban would demand to know what we were speaking about. Ajmal would say, 'Shut up. Don't talk. They really think you are a spy.' He was like, 'I don't understand. Something has changed in the Taliban policy.'" Though chained together, the men were psychologically isolated. "The Taliban were always soft, then strong, then soft."

The Taliban occasionally beat their hostages with hoses. During the first days the Taliban accused them all of being spies. But then other commanders showed up, among them Haji Lalai, a close lieutenant of Dadullah's. The Taliban finally seemed to accept that their hostages really were journalists. "They said, 'It's okay. We know you are not a British spy. You're a journalist, and many Taliban have called to say that Ajmal is okay, he is not a spy,'" recounts Mastrogiacomo. But suspicion continued to turn on Agha. "Ajmal kept saying, 'It's not us, but they don't know about him.'"

In fact, Agha had worked briefly with the British. A Western intelligence contractor with regular oversight responsibility for the National Directorate of Security, or NDS, part of the Afghan secret police, told me he was under the impression Agha had passed information to Afghan government agents.

On March 13 the Taliban separated Agha from the other two. A day later they brought in a young Taliban with a video camera to record a statement from Mastrogiacomo. "He was a nice guy who spoke a little English," says Mastrogiacomo. "When it was over we chatted, and then they said, 'Wait, some other people are coming. We want to make another video. We have to tie you up again.' Then they brought out Agha, and someone read a paper. Ajmal started to cry, saying, 'They have condemned us to death. They will kill Sayed today, me tomorrow, you the next day.'" The Taliban had given Italy and Karzai three days to make a deal.

To Mastrogiacomo's horror his captors proceeded to decapitate Agha. The video of his murder was later sold to journalists and broadcast on Italian television. In it one sees Ajmal looking down into the rag across his eyes while Mastrogiacomo tips his head back to peer under his blindfold toward Agha. The Taliban tied Agha's head to his body and dumped his corpse in the Helmand River. News of the murder caused Agha's pregnant young wife to lose her unborn child.

I meet Sayed Agha's brother and brother-in-law when they come to Kabul to visit Ajmal's father, a rugged old mujahideen vet named Ghulam Haidar Naqshbandi. We sit in the second-story guest room of the Naqshbandi home, a small walled compound on the dusty plains of southwest Kabul. Yellow afternoon light filters through the room's high square windows while the shadows of pigeons circling outside flutter across the guests. As the light fades, Agha's family tell their story.

As soon as Mastrogiacomo's party disappeared in southern Helmand, Agha's family sent out several uncles and cousins to search for their relative. Once it was clear that Agha was dead, they looked for his body, eventually finding their headless kinsman in a shallow grave by the river.

"In one of the villages where they were held, people saw Ramatullah Hanefi," says Agha's brother-in-law Khan Zaman, referring to the administrator from Emergency who fixed the interview and managed the negotiations. "Ramatullah went to where they were held, and the villagers saw Sayed and Ramatullah argue. After that the Taliban separated Sayed from Ajmal and Daniele. Then, a day later, they killed him because he knew too much." This account seems implausible. When I run it past Mastrogiacomo, he dismisses it. Perhaps the elders in southern Helmand told Agha's relatives what they wanted to hear: Their relative died defiantly, confronting the man who had allegedly sold him out.

On Monday, March 19, five days after Agha's murder, the Taliban told Mastrogiacomo and Ajmal they were to be freed. "They broke our chains," says Mastrogiacomo. "Ajmal washed and got new clothes. Then I washed and got new clothes. We were put in a car and brought to the Helmand River. We got there maybe about noon or one, but it took several hours of moving and stopping. Then we found a big group of Taliban and local elders, maybe 50 or 60 people. The Taliban were shooting their guns in the air to celebrate. When Ajmal and I were separated we said, 'Okay. We'll be arrested by the NDS when we get back, but that is normal. They will need to talk to us, but then we will be

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free.' We talked about how I would help Ajmal get to Italy, because after this it would be impossible for him to do his work. And we hugged. We were like, 'See you tonight in Lashkar Gar or maybe the next day in Kabul.' Ajmal went off one way. I met Ramatullah Hanefi. He seemed anxious to go, like maybe another group might kidnap us again. And we go off in the other direction in two cars full of elders, for protection. In maybe two hours we are in the hospital."

Around five or six that evening Mastrogiacomo and Hanefi reached the Emergency compound in Lashkar Gar and were greeted by Gino Strada, a surgeon and Emergency's founder and executive director. Mastrogiacomo was checked by medical staff, took phone calls from his family and several Italian politicians and then began to write an account of his capture. The next morning he would fly to Kabul.

While writing, Mastrogiacomo asked Strada about Ajmal. Strada explained he was safe in another room, taking photographs for the Emergency website. Another Emergency staff member subsequently told Mastrogiacomo that Strada had misspoken; Ajmal was somewhere else, maybe on his way to Kabul but not at the hospital. Later, on Italian television, Strada explained that he had wrongly assumed a young driver was Ajmal. In reality Ajmal was either still under Taliban control or soon to be retaken by them. The infuriated Agha and Naqshbandi families are convinced Ajmal was at the hospital. It's unclear whether he was retaken from the hospital or never released at the Helmand River, but it seems likely he was never released.

The next day at dawn Hanefi—the man who had set up the interview turned kidnapping—was picked up by the NDS. A few days later Munir and Ajmal's father received a phone call from the Taliban. They put Ajmal on. He told his father that he was "in the same place as before" and that the family needed to lean on Karzai. In a few days the Taliban released another video. "You have forgotten the Afghan journalist," said Ajmal in an angry appeal to Karzai. "You are worried only for the foreigners, and you are not worried for Afghans." Again, Ajmal's back was to a mud wall. Then, on April 8, Easter, after two more weeks in Taliban custody, he was killed, a full day before his captors' own deadline.

What happened at the Helmand River? What was the plan for the prisoner exchange? Was Ajmal supposed to be at the hospital? Emergency and Strada refuse to say. Instead, Emergency spokespeople give vague, legalistic, often implausible answers. When I press for an interview with Strada, I am told he is too upset to talk to the media. According to Emergency, its involvement in the Mas-

trogiacomo case began only on March 6, when Italian prime minister Romano Prodi asked Strada to facilitate negotiations with the Taliban. Strada in turn asked Hanefi to contact the insurgents. Emergency denies that either the organization or Hanefi had relations with the Taliban before the kidnapping.

To anyone familiar with Afghanistan, that assertion doesn't ring true. Emergency had already managed negotiations for the release of another Italian journalist, in November 2006. Elements of the NGO's local staff certainly had a *modus vivendi* with the insurgents, who, after all, control most of Helmand province and have networks of spies and supporters in Lashkar Gar. On at least one occasion U.S. forces raided the hospital to extract wounded Taliban.

To understand this story one must grasp something of Emergency's origins and the charismatic nature of Gino Strada. In 1989 Strada began working in Afghanistan, Rwanda, Somalia and Bosnia. In 1994 he founded Emergency; his eloquent, down-to-earth lectures were widely broadcast, and money flowed in. Since then the organization has performed thousands of lifesaving operations free of charge on civilian war victims.

Over the past 14 years Emergency has become a more political version of Doctors Without Borders. Rather than just rendering humanitarian service in war zones, it actively protests war. Strada's tale of adventure and altruism has been the subject of several documentaries. His memoir, *Green Parrots*, sold almost half a million copies.

Emergency's lifeblood is public relations. But spinning complicated bad news is not its strength. It prefers the simpler moral tale: photos of smiling Afghan children maimed by old Soviet mines but regaining their lives thanks to your donations and Emergency's hard work. The murder of Sayed Agha and Ajmal Naqshbandi—and the apparent connection in these crimes of Emergency's representative Hanefi—sent the organization into a panic. Strada and Emergency professed Hanefi's innocence. They demanded his immediate release and attacked the Afghan government. After staging protests in Rome and Milan, Emergency even suggested it might have to leave Afghanistan and accused the Karzai government of managing a secret campaign to drive it out.

Afghan pride, nationalism and revenge culture being what they are, the government did not bend to the great surgeon's will. In fact, the Afghan president's office felt betrayed. The two sides dug in, and things went from bad to worse.

On April 10, two days after Ajmal's murder, the normally reticent head of the NDS, Amirullah Saleh, told an Italian daily that Emergency was an organization that "supports terrorists and also Al Qaeda men in Afghanistan," which Emergency

has denied. The next day, Emergency pulled its international staff except for a skeleton crew of five. A series of increasingly bitter press releases charged that for-profit medical clinics in Helmand were pushing for Emergency's ouster so as to scoop up its clients (never mind that many of those patients have nothing with which to pay). Emergency later claimed the Afghan government had intentionally driven out the group so Karzai could better cover up the fact that British and American forces were killing civilians during their bombing offensives against the Taliban in Helmand and Kandahar. But other NGOs also report civilian casualties, and Karzai himself has repeatedly condemned NATO's killing of civilians.

The war of words finally got so hot that the Afghan police raided Emergency's Kabul hospital, demanding the passports of the NGO's remaining foreign staff. The five Europeans were extracted under diplomatic immunity by the Italian ambassador and taken to the airport. Emergency then suspended its Afghanistan operations. In late May the government told the NGO it was free to stay if it was willing to obey Afghan law; otherwise Emergency's facilities would be given to other agencies. Emergency dispatched a few more press releases, and then Strada lapsed into a strange self-imposed silence.

In the end, what seems to have happened is this: The Taliban wanted the government to release five high-profile prisoners; key among them was a top Taliban spokesman known by his nom de guerre, Dr. Mohamed Hanif. Hanif had recently been captured while crossing from Pakistan. The Afghan government, under intense pressure from the Italians, was ready to make a deal. But when the day of exchange came, one of the prisoners, believed to be Hanif, refused to be freed. Why?

When pressed about what had happened, the head of the NDS said one prisoner had "refused to go." The truth was already apparent to those who looked closely: Hanif had broken under interrogation and given the NDS and NATO

lots of information. This had been briefly reported in the press in January, but until Hanif refused to leave his cell the news of his confessions was largely dismissed as Afghan government lies. Had the reported snitch Hanif been liberated at the Helmand River, the reunion with his robed and bearded brethren would not have been a happy one.

By all reports the negotiations were chaotic. The Italians and Karzai were poorly coordinated. In consideration of frequent assassination attempts, Karzai lives as a prisoner in the presidential palace. He didn't check with the rest of his government or with the NDS. Everything had to be kept secret and in particular hidden from the Americans, who

mant—went ahead with the plan, or a version of it. It had five other prisoners. In place of the missing Hanif the NDS offered Mansoor Ahmad Dadullah, Mullah Dadullah's younger brother. The man who had to explain all this to the Taliban at the final moment was Emergency's director, the very unlucky Ramatullah Hanefi.

Left holding the bag, Hanefi did his best. Since Karzai and the Italians came through with most of their promises, the Taliban gave up their most valuable chip, Mastrogiacomo. Perhaps this explains why Mastrogiacomo spent so much time waiting at the river before he was released, to allow for last-minute negotiations between Hanefi and the Taliban commanders.

Several days after the exchange, Dadullah sent to an Afghan news agency an audio recording in which he explained that he had demanded Hanif but got his brother Mansoor Ahmad instead. Thus, he would continue to hold Mastrogiacomo's interpreter.

One last question remains: Why did the Taliban kill Ajmal 24 hours before their own deadline? A few weeks after Mastrogiacomo's release two French nationals and three Afghans were kidnapped while doing aid work in Nimroz province. The U.S. rounded on Karzai, condemning the deal and making a formal complaint to Rome. Chastened,

Karzai told journalists he "regretted" the deal. Shortly thereafter Karzai held a press conference in which he said such prisoner exchanges "will never be repeated." The Afghan foreign minister, Dr. Rangin Dadfar Spanta, told journalists that even if he himself were kidnapped, he would not want any Taliban exchanged for his liberty. The message was clear: no more deals.

But other pressures were building behind the scenes. The double standard—"You are worried only for the foreigners, and you are not worried for Afghans," as Ajmal had put it—was untenable. The two main Afghan journalist associations and several prominent politicians were

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adamantly oppose deals for hostages.

Apparently the Karzai government, notoriously corrupt as well as incompetent and disorganized, overlooked Hanif's cooperation. When at the last moment the NDS was confronted by the dilemma of a cooperative high-value prisoner who didn't want to be freed, it decided to punt. "I think they said, 'Oh fuck, what do we do now? Carry on and hope nobody notices,'" says the Western contractor who works regularly with the NDS.

The strategy had been that the five imprisoned Taliban would be freed and their identities verified. Then Mastrogiacomo and Ajmal would be released. So the NDS—short one top Taliban infor-

mounting a campaign; supporters of Ajmal camped in front of the presidential palace. The Committee to Protect Journalists beat the bushes, and soon faxes, e-mails and letters from around the world poured in on the Afghan government.

Shortly after Karzai's no-deal pledge, the Taliban called Munir, telling him they would kill his brother on Monday if the government didn't come through. And because Ajmal was now a cause célèbre, the Taliban wanted three prisoners. Desperate, Ajmal's father demanded and received a meeting with Karzai on Saturday, April 7. He recounts the meeting to me in his living room one late afternoon.

Ghulam Haidar Naqshbandi had served with the famous mujahideen commander Ahmed Shah Masoud and had been one of his main urban operatives during the anti-Soviet jihad. That struggle cost Ghulam his right leg. Squinty, weathered and with close-cropped hair and a beard, he is an Afghan nationalist and Sufi fundamentalist who runs a traditional family. I never met or even saw any of the Naqshbandi family's many female members. Munir or another young male relative would shoo them away before male guests entered or exited the inner sanctum of the *mehman khana*, or living room. About a year ago I had asked to interview Ghulam about his view of the current situation in Afghanistan, but he declined.

"Sorry," explained Ajmal, who had acted as the go-between. "My father says, 'One spy in the family is enough.' He told me, 'You work with the foreigners, but not me.'" In the wake of Ajmal's death

Ghulam is more open to his son's foreign friends. Between stifled tears and understated tirades against the Italians and the government, he tells his story.

"After the Taliban called I told Karzai about the new deadline," Ajmal's father says as I listen and sip green tea. "He had been out of the country, and when he came back I went to the palace. I told Karzai he was just a tool of the foreigners. He cleared everyone out of the room and said, 'You are right. I do not have much power.'" The father's grief seemed to have an effect on Karzai. The Afghan president called the governor of Helmand to try to open channels to the Taliban, demanding that the NDS find out who and where the requested Taliban were. Ajmal's father left under the impression that the insurgents' demands would be met and his son's life spared.

But the next morning, the Taliban put Ajmal into a truck and drove him to meet a man with a knife and another with a video camera. When they were done they dumped his body in the desert. They simply said the government was not talking so they killed Ajmal a day early.

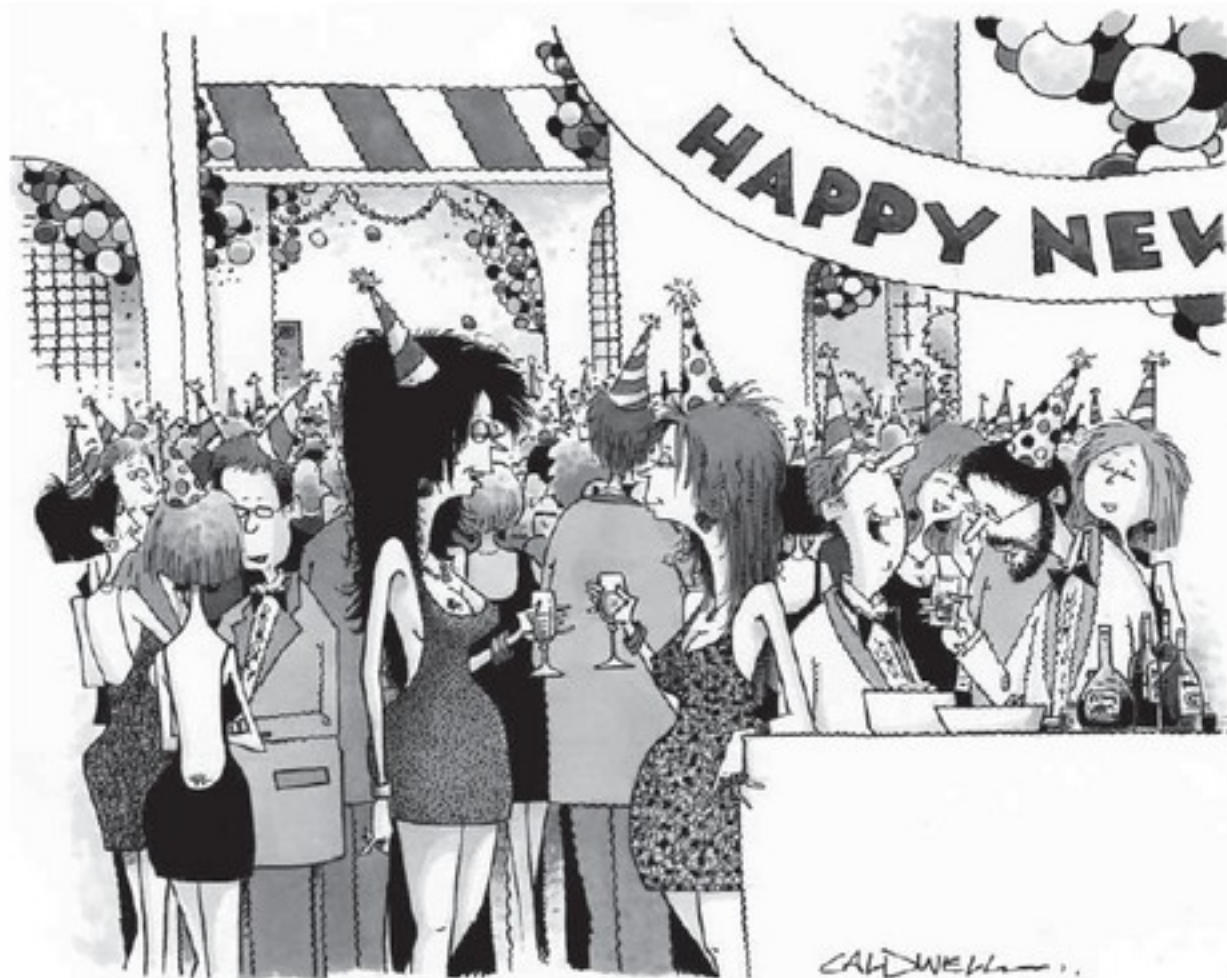
My friend Nawab Moman, the ex-Taliban turned Tolo TV reporter, had another explanation. Moman had introduced Ajmal to the Taliban and had fixed and accompanied Ajmal and me on the Taliban interview we had done a year before the Mastrogiacomio kidnapping. He had been a Taliban commander on the Shomali plain north of Kabul and had worked in the Taliban Ministry of Information. When the Taliban fell he reemerged as one of free Afghanistan's

TV journalists, but he has maintained contact with the insurgents.

I meet with Moman several times in Kabul. In a quiet shaded corner of a hotel garden he explains what happened. "Pakistani intelligence called Dadullah and told him, 'No deal. Just kill the prisoner now.'" Moman had heard this from a spokesman linked to Taliban leader Mullah Omar and the Taliban leadership in Quetta, Pakistan. "The Taliban and Pakistani intelligence saw the big problems this was creating for Karzai. He would end up looking worse if Ajmal was killed. It was worth more—a bigger victory than getting three Taliban. That's why they killed him."

Ultimately, what really killed Ajmal was a perfect storm of political chaos that took the form the various interests gave it. The entire debacle is an example of what my friend the intelligence contractor calls "the fuck-up theory of history." It is the inverse of the conspiracy theory of history and explains much of what goes on in Afghanistan—a place, a war, where incompetence rules the day. The layers of error upon error have multiple causes. If it isn't a basic language barrier, it's the short-term thinking of foreign powers. If it isn't the factionalism of the Afghan government or the profound corruption of all its institutions (which means nothing ever gets done), it's the rosy-eyed foolishness of NGOs that want radio stations for women before anyone in isolated valley A or B even knows what journalism is. In that regard it's the reason Afghanistan under NATO is a failure, just as it was under the Soviets and the British before them. As always, the Afghan people—32 million of them, the Naqshbandi clan among them—pay the price, stuck in underdevelopment, their politics ruled by criminal networks, religious fundamentalism and foreign powers.

The last time I visit the Naqshbandis on the outskirts of Kabul, Munir takes me and two other friends to see Ajmal's grave. We cross a wide dusty boulevard and walk up a low hill into a dense neighborhood, where we find a small graveyard. The ground is barren and penned in by mud-brick homes. A pack of grimy little boys flies kites nearby. Cheap green cloth and plastic cover his grave. At the head some ragged prayer flags whip in the wind. "One of the journalist associations said they would build a cement monument on the grave," says Munir somewhat absently. "It will be in the form of a notebook and pen because he was a journalist." We stand at the grave, then Munir kneels in prayer. I bow my head and think of my departed friend and of other friends who died young. But I don't feel Ajmal's presence, and the mound of dirt over his corpse looks strange: It isn't wide and short like Ajmal Naqshbandi. It looks too narrow, too cramped.



"It's not even midnight and I've already blown five resolutions and half the band."



PLAYMATE NEWS



CENTERFOLDS KNOW WHAT BOYS LIKE

In the upcoming movie *I Know What Boys Like* Anna Faris plays a Playboy Bunny, Shelley, who lives at the Playboy Mansion with Hef, Holly, Bridget and Kendra until she is kicked out. Sticklers will note that Bunnies don't live in the Mansion, but we're willing to grant artistic license

in the Mansion are like," Lauren relates. "It was hilarious to see Anna portray us." In addition to meeting Faris and Sandler, the girls got to log time on the set with actress Monet Mazur and Arizona Cardinals QB Matt Leinart, who also appear in the film. "The most fun part was being



Monet Mazur (far left) and Anna Faris (center) with Sara, Lauren and Hiromi.

to Adam Sandler and his Happy Madison production company, who, in a bid for authenticity, shot on location with the help of Hef, his girlfriends and several Playmates, including Sara Jean Underwood, Hiromi Oshima and Lauren Michelle Hill. "The movie is an exaggeration of what people think the Playmates and life

able to work with all my Playmate friends," Hiromi enthuses. Director Fred Wolf was particularly grateful for the unique opportunity. "If we had been unable to work with Playboy," he says, "we'd have had to invent something like *Playtoy* magazine, run by Rue Cefner." Look for the film in theaters later this year.

10 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

Miss January 1998 **Heather Kozar** grew up in a modest Christian family in Ohio. Appearing nude in *PLAYBOY* was a shocking move for the 21-year-old. It paid out dividends when she became Playmate of the Year in 1999 and later booked gigs with St. Pauli Girl and BMW. She has also broken into TV, notably as a Barker's Beauty on *The Price Is Right*.



LOOSE LIPS

"Sex is nothing to shy away from or to frown upon. Sex is beautiful, and I think we should embrace it more instead of hiding it away and pretending it doesn't exist."

—Sara Jean Underwood



LES BELLES DE NUIT

From left: **Tiffany Fallon** rallies at the *American Idol: Idol Gives Back* event at the Walt Disney Concert Hall in L.A.; **Brande Roderick** hangs at the Financially Hung party at Vice in L.A.; **Carrie Stevens** indulges at Eat in L.A. **Cassandra Lynn** heats up the Bench Warmer fete at Area in West Hollywood; a winning **Shanna Moakler** at the MTV VMAs at the Palms in Vegas.



HOT SHOT



TAYLOR JAMES

MY FAVORITE PLAYMATE

By Paul Feig

—writer and director

"For me it was Miss September 1980 Lisa Welch. I wasn't the most advanced teenager

when it came to sex, but I loved

looking at pictures of naked women. She was the kind of girl who would be really nice to my parents but who would also be cool enough to help a dork like me lose his virginity. Sadly, we never met, and I had to wait."



POP QUESTIONS: HELENA ANTONACCIO

Q: You recently published a book called *What's Your Secret?* So what is it?

A: The book is mostly about health and beauty. It came about because I still pose nude and people regularly ask me "What's your secret?" when they hear I'm 58. I include pinup pictures, tips and exercises, but the most important subject is healthy eating.

Q: Why did it become a priority for you to take such good care of yourself?

A: When you're a Playmate you're in the limelight. I have always liked the attention, and I found eating well

keeps me looking young. I guess it makes me feel good, too.

Q: That makes perfect sense. What was it like to write your first book?

A: Well, I just sat at my computer and typed away. Each time I got an idea I would turn it into a section. The hard part was finding a literary agent. Finally, I read about iUniverse, a self-publishing company, and I went that route. It took eight years altogether, but

now my book is available at barnesandnoble.com, amazon.com and my website, helenaantonaccio.com.



MONACO'S META MOMENT



Did Kelly Monaco make the cover of *Star* magazine? No, but her character, Sam McCall, did—kind of. *General Hospital's* production designers mocked up a faux issue when Sam secured some notoriety in soapland. Apparently she saved a few lives when terrorists blew up a hotel. Sam was then offered the host's chair on a talk show for her bravery. All the while, her boyfriend was wrongly on trial for murder. Follow? Neither do we.

PLAYMATE GOSSIP

Catching everyone by surprise, Miss February 1990 Pamela Anderson wed Rick Salomon in Las Vegas this past October.... Miss January 2004 Colleen Shannon continues to deejay around the world, but she was recently spotted closer to home, working the turntables at the launch party for the NBC series *Chuck*.... Miss November 2001 Lindsey Vuolo, Miss July 2002 Lauren Anderson and Miss October 2001 Stephanie Heinrich all appear in segments on *Reality Rox .TV*.... Play-



Colleen Shannon deejays NBC launch party.



Miss May 2007 Shannon James rocks out.

mates were stationed at Guitar Center stores across the country to sign new Playboy limited-edition guitars. Miss May 2007 Shannon James covered the Manhattan location, while Miss February 2005 Amber Campisi, PMOY Sara Jean Under-

wood and Miss August 2001 Jennifer Walcott were stationed in the Dallas, Hollywood and Chicago locations, respectively.... Los Angeles A-listers including Jim Carrey and PMOY 1994 Jenny McCarthy attended a party to welcome David and Victoria Beckham to Los Angeles.... Catch Miss January 2001 Irina Voronina in the DVD releases of *Reno 911! Miami*, *Epic Movie* and *Balls of Fury*.... Miss May 1996 Shauna Sand appeared on an episode of *Sunset Tan* and is auctioning some of her sexy personal items like panty hose and shoes at giganticauctions.com.



Carrey and Jenny at the Beckhams' welcome party.

MORE PLAYMATES

See your favorite Playmate's pictorial in the Cyber Club at cyber.playboy.com or download her to your phone at playboymobile.com.

Adrienne Curry

(continued from page 61)

called out host Tyra Banks for not giving her the prizes she said she was owed. Later she went public with her bisexuality and her battle with drugs. Most recently Adrienne caused a stir when she wrote on her MySpace blog that Black History Month should be abolished. Her point was totally misunderstood, she claims. "Our country's down the drain if we have to set apart time to honor black people," she says. "We're all descended from the same four tribes in Africa. We should celebrate Black History Month every freakin' day of the year!"

At our meeting in an upscale Los Angeles burger joint, Adrienne wears a stretchy *Sgt. Peppers* tank top and jeans, and she sports that inviting grin of hers. Why wouldn't she be smiling? Brought up in suburban Chicago, she scarcely imagined she would have a modeling career, let alone a TV show. This month sees the premiere of *Chris & Adrienne: From Russia With Love*, a documentary-style account on WE tv of the vodka-fueled adventures she and Knight shared while hosting the 2007 Mrs. World beauty pageant in the kingdom of the Kalashnikov. "How a girl from Joliet ended up on the Black Sea in front of a bunch of mobster types who look like they want to kill you, I have no idea," she laughs. "Russian guys don't know how to talk to women. They addressed only my husband and my manager. They wouldn't even look at me. I was pissed."

Getting people's attention isn't usually an issue for her. In another new eye grabber, she's spearheading a sexy online venture called Nowlive.com. It allows users to host their own call-in shows via a combination of chat rooms, live radio broadcasts and webcam views. Adrienne runs a couple of provocative programs on the site; she calls it "social networking on crack." As for her own social network, Adrienne definitely likes hanging with friends—and not just the 120,000 friends on her MySpace page. Accompanying her to the PLAYBOY shoot was her best girlfriend, model Andrea Brooks, whom Adrienne lassoed into the spread. Andrea is the blonde in the pictures. "It was really hot for me because we've done everything together since we were 12, and this just topped it all," Adrienne says. "My chemistry with her is out of control. People in the room got all hot and bothered watching us together." To answer the obvious question: "Andrea's a men-only girl," she says. "I was obviously interested in her because she's so fucking hot, but it never happened. She's the one that got away. I had sex with a lot of her girlfriends but not her." "Our love is on a much higher level," Brooks explains. "This doesn't represent a typical sleepover back in Joliet."

The photographs also reveal a new look for Adrienne. "I've always wanted bigger boobs, and I finally got them," she says, biting into a bacon cheeseburger. "My doctor was really kind because he made them

so versatile. I can go out and make them look all sophisticated in a dress, or I can wear a big padded push-up bra like I'm sporting DDs. Thanks, Doc!" The road to boobville is just one of the new adventures this season on *My Fair Brady*, but mostly it's the same old story: "Chris and I fight and fight and fight, and then we make up," she says. The secret to surviving the first year of marriage? Twice-a-week sessions with a couples counselor. "Mostly it's about learning to communicate, because my husband's from another generation," she says. "I'll say something people my age won't blink at and he'll get offended. Like I'll call my close gay friends fags and Chris will go crazy on me. He doesn't get that it's just talk. Now we try to laugh at how different we are."

Speaking of laughs, Adrienne and Knight thought it was hilarious when rumors started swirling last fall about

the actresses who played Jan and Marcia Brady having a lesbian fling back in the *Brady Bunch* days. "Where do people get their sources? Sam the butcher?" Adrienne says, laughing. "I'll put my money on my husband screwing Jan. Don't get me wrong. I wish Jan and Marcia were doing it, because that would be superhot, but I think we're all fucking dreaming here."

There's that sly smile again. Adrienne knows she's being provocative. She can't help herself. As she puts it, "I'm offensive, but at least I know my heart. So many people out there try to be politically correct, but then they get behind closed doors and say what they really feel. I think that's retarded. I've been through too much shit not to say exactly what I think. I want to enjoy this life. Every moment. I want to die knowing I have no apologies for being exactly who God wanted me to be."



PRIORAT

(continued from page 84)

them originally created by the Romans, if not the Greeks before them, are composed almost entirely of layered gray slate known locally as *llicorella*, most of what we think of as dirt—the organic stuff—having long since been blown or washed away. Virtually nothing but grapes *can* grow here, and they, as one grower said, “are made to suffer.” Rainfall averages about 24 inches a year, which is enough, but the summers are dry and hot (though often cool at night), and slate’s good drainage means that vines have to reach deep to find the pooled water; their roots’ little tendrils meanwhile nibbling at the slate all the way down, picking up those trace elements that have made these wines so famous. Which in turn means that old vines with deeper roots have the edge here, and these are the plantings, mostly abandoned over the years because of low production, that the Big Five and their bandwagon successors have been snapping up and reviving. *Grenache* typically makes a soft, fruity wine often lacking color, tannin and acid. *Carignan*, though meatier, is responsible for some of the worst wines on the market. But both varieties seem to achieve real stature when grown on the very old low-yielding vines planted long ago

in these mountainous slate soils of Priorat, their marriage in the vats bringing on the final epiphany that has so enriched their matchmakers and delighted the wedding guests. In all the wines we tasted, if not overly oaked, it was the special mineral characteristics of the slate soil, together with the concentrated intensity of old-vine grapes, that distinguished them.

Of course, the vinification processes have changed too, and that’s what makes these wines different from the “Priorato” of old, and also more expensive to produce. These people are not local farmers fermenting age-stained caskfuls of squashed grape juice in the family manner; they are university-trained oenologists using modern equipment and scientific methods, and though it may be less fun drinking with them, they are creating quality site-specific *vins de terroir*, as they say in these hills, unlike any grown elsewhere in the world. They sometimes make judicious use of recently planted “foreign” grapes like syrah, merlot and cabernet sauvignon for added structure and aging potential, each with their own recipes, and they each have their own individual philosophies about fermentation and barrel-aging time, etc., but they all focus on low-yield old vines of native varieties (both the *grenache* and *carignan*, now common everywhere, originated in Spain), letting the grapes

ripen to full maturity and then laboriously hand-selecting them at the further expense of quantity. Many also adhere to organic methods, eschewing chemical fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides, their vineyards delightfully alive then with poppies and asters and other wildflowers, insects and small creatures, but also requiring more personal attention. And the more care they take, of course, the higher the production costs: probably at least double that, per bottle, of, say, Bordeaux, Burgundy or Napa, Piedmont or the Rhône, and vastly more than lowland high-yield plonk. Quality Priorat, whether or not it’s the equal of other prestige wines, will always be, necessarily, relatively expensive.

And is it the equal? Well, these wines are truly delicious and strikingly distinctive, but their impact on the palate, while intense, tends so far to be up-front and fairly short-lived, explosively mouth-filling but lacking back-of-the-throat complexity and a long finish. Which may in the future mean more syrah and cab in the mix when those new plantings grow longer beards. Older wines from the 1990s tasted on other occasions seem not to have matured into something new but merely to have decorously declined, though I’d be pleased to be offered a sip of an exception, and am well aware that these winemakers, committed to craft and jealous of their fame, are working on this. On the other hand, middle- and lower-priced Priorats uniformly outclass their equivalents in Bordeaux or Burgundy—or Rioja, for that matter—which are often these days massively disappointing. Wines made from grapes grown in this *terroir*, if carefully made, are from first flowering something special and, if affordable, are virtually guaranteed to gratify. As demand increases and more new vines are planted on irrigated terraces, the quality difference between the original blockbuster wines and lesser newcomers will increase, but for now the staggering cost of the big-name bottlings will probably not seem justifiable to any but the very rich, willing and able like emperors of old to squander fortunes on nuance. For the rest of us: We sample what we find on the shelves at the lower price ranges a bottle at a time and hope for big surprises, grabbing a bunch of it when we find one.

On our final night, while pontificating about all this in the little Cal Llop hotel bar in company with others, including Cristina and Waldo and Angel and Fredi and his girls (more poetry), Waldo tells me that, through his own doctor in Masroig, the only one in Masroig, he has learned that the painter Jaume Sabaté has died (“Yes, eccentric fellow, said he never needed doctors, and I buried him...”), but his niece Carmen, whom we recall as an effervescent teenager with a youthful artistic talent of her own, is still in town, and she remembers well our visit of 40 years ago and would love to see us again.

So, the following day, before dropping down out of the mountains, we meet up with Waldo at the doctor’s Masroig office



“I think Ms. Milford could use a break.”

during his lunch break and walk over to the niece's house, discovering en route that the doctor went to med school with the son of my wife's cousin, and so there are more stories to be traded before the doctor leaves us in the niece's hands. As it happens, we cannot see the room with chair and mirror (anyway, Carmen says, it is all different now) because the deceased painter's brother, alive still but in his late 80s and quite dotty, is having his siesta and it would be a major mistake to disturb it, but we all enjoy a beer at her kitchen table, surrounded by her own occasional artworks on the walls, and she fills us in on the years that have passed and gives an account of her uncle's final years, and those of others whom we met and are gone as well. She tells us that once, some years ago, the president of the United States came here to her house in Masroig and she showed him my book and he said that, yes, Bob Coover (he called me Bob!) is an important American writer. She was very impressed. The president's name, she says, was Peter.

Her husband, Felip, turns up, a wine-maker himself with the Masroig cooperative, and over a glass of his nephew's own unlabeled bottling, the last of our mountain tastings, we talk about the downside of the invasion of the big-time wine entrepreneurs, how it may be improving the wine but, as the lands are bought up by strangers and the wine transformed into a high-end product for the international market, it is also bringing an end to the Priorat of old and is impoverishing as many as it is enriching. Among the wineries we have visited is the cooperative of Capçanes (best known for its special sideline of kosher wines), whose members decided a decade or so ago to band together and hang on to their lands and winery rather than sell out to the intruders. To survive, they had to expand and modernize, and that cost a lot of money in the form of a steep bank loan, meaning they all had to mortgage their property, houses, cars, whatever they had, a great risk, and only three months ago was that loan at last paid off, so we found them in a celebrative mood, doing well, and able still to sell many of their authentic if modest Priorat wines at supermarket prices. Felip says yes, they are to be congratulated and they serve as a model for others, but one not easy to follow, for they went through some very painful times and there were years of bitter disputes and deep unhealable rifts, provoked by the fear of losing everything. Few others will go that hard route. The corporate wine giants are headed this way, and the landgrab is on. Most will either sell up or become small producers for the big wineries. But, he shrugs, what can you do, life moves on. The only thing that never changes, we all agree, is change itself, and we lift a glass to that—or maybe, because all change, even as something new is born, is a kind of death, to be mocked maybe but not to be cheered, just to the lifting of glasses.

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 28, 35-36, 74-77, 82-84 and 174-175, check the listings below to find the stores nearest you.

GAMES

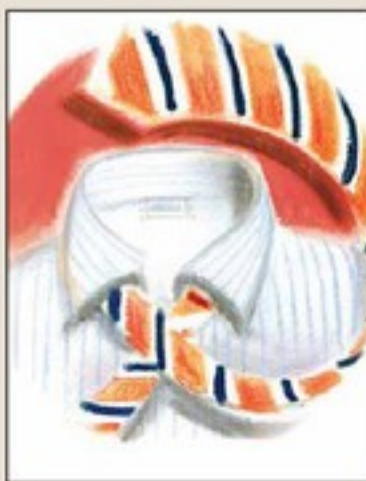
Page 28: *Assassin's Creed*, ubi.com. *Beowulf*, ubi.com. *Kane & Lynch: Dead Men*, eidos.com. *Lego Star Wars: The Complete Saga*, lucasarts.com. *Mass Effect*, xbox.com. *Resident Evil: The Umbrella Chronicles*, capcom.com. *Uncharted: Drake's Fortune*, playstation.com.

MANTRACK

Pages 35-36: *Barrett-Jackson*, barrett-jackson.com. *Blue Tulum*, eurostarhotels.com. *Cenote Dive Center*, cenotedive.com. *Champagnes*, available at fine wine stores nationwide. *Cufflinks Depot*, cufflinksdepot.com. *Flavour Design Studio*, flavourdesign.com. *Jaquet Droz*, jaquetdroz.com. *Laguiole Rosignol*, broadwaypanhandler.com. *Mezzanine*, mezzanine.com.mx/bar. *Nikon*, nikon.com. *Posada Margherita*, posadamargherita.com. *iQue Fresco!*, zamas.com. *Tsar Nicoulai*, tsarnicoulai.com.

FOUR S'S

Pages 74-77: *Anthony Logistics*, anthony.com. *The Art of Shaving*, theartofshaving.com. *Aubrey Organics*, aubrey-organics.com. *Aveda*, aveda.com. *Billy Jealousy*, billyjealousy.com. *Blistex*, available at all major food and drug stores nationwide. *Bond No. 9*, bondno9.com. *Brut*, available at drugstores nationwide. *Burt's Bees*, burtsbees.com. *Clarins*, sephora.com. *Clubman*, available at drugstores nationwide. *C.O. Bigelow*, bathandbodyworks.com. *Dermalogica*, dermalogica.com. *Durance*,



durance.us. *Elemis*, timetospa.com. *ÉShave*, eshave.com. *Gap Men*, available at Gap stores nationwide. *Gillette*, available at food, drug and mass merchandise stores nationwide. *Giorgio Armani*, giorgioarmani.com. *Göt2b*, available at food, drug and mass-market retailers. *Hommage Monaco*, available at Barneys New York. *Hugo Boss*, available at Hugo Boss boutiques. *Issey Miyake*, available at fine department stores. *John Allan's*, johnallans.com. *Kiehl's*, kiehls.com. *Lab Series*, labseries.com. *Lacoste*, available at Bloomingdale's and Nordstrom. *Lancôme Men*, lancome.com. *Lanvin*, available at Neiman Marcus and Nordstrom. *Matte for Men*, matteformen.com. *Paul Mitchell*, paulmitchell.com. *Peter Thomas Roth*, peterthomasroth.com. *Pierre Cardin*, perfumania.com. *Redken for Men*, redkenformen.com. *ReVive*, available at Neiman Marcus and Bergdorf Goodman. *Skinn*, skinn.com. *Valentino*, available at Saks Fifth Avenue and Nordstrom. *Woody's*, mugonline.com.

A TASTE OF PRIORAT

Pages 82-84: *Alvaro Palacios*, europeancellars.com; rarewineco.com. *Andèvol*, boutiquewines.info. *Capçanes*, samswine.com. *Celler Cecilio*, samswine.com. *Clos Galena*, samswine.com. *Clos Mogador*, boutiquewines.info. *La Conreria d'Scala Dei*, europeancellars.com. *Mas Igneus*, samswine.com.

POTPOURRI

Pages 174-175: *Camden Toboggan Company*, camdentoboggan.com. *Casio*, casio.com. *i-Sobot*, isobotrobot.com. *Orka*, amazon.com. *Orvis*, orvis.com. *Playboy: The Complete Centerfolds*, playboystore.com. *Razer*, razerzone.com. *Whiskeys*, at select liquor stores.

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Grapevine



T-Shirt, Paintbrush, etc., Not Pictured

How does **TRISHA LURIE** do it? She paints, plays punk rock and designs her Lurie Lurie T-shirts yet still makes the time to look this great naked.



CHRIS WATSON/REX USA

Dr. Filigree

You just saw her in this space in November, but here's **LEILENE ONDRADE** again, wearing little more than a smile and an intricate latex doodle. This could become a habit.

MARK GOLDSTEIN

Begg on Bended Knee

"Speed-skating pictures are always the same: skater, skates and skinsuit," says world in-line champion **NICOLE BEGG** of New Zealand. "I just made it a little more interesting by removing the skinsuit from the equation." No doubt Begg-ing to be different will win her sport more fans.



MARK OF US SPLASH NEWS



TRENT WARKER'S TARTAGRIDPHOTO.COM



ELI ARON LIPPMAN'S SPLASH NEWS



Get Ahold of Yourselves

Here's a question every guy has pondered: How would it feel to be a woman for one day? Would you feel different about relationships and sex? Would you feel pangs of lust for Jimmy Choo shoes and Kate Spade handbags? Probably not—you'd be too busy feeling your own breasts. As JODIE MARSH, MARISA MILLER and LISA RINNA would agree, it's fun to squeeze your own Charmin.



BOY GEORGE

That's Right, We Said It

What's the use of risqué couture when the models wearing it are bony waifs only gay designers find sexy? Boy George was having none of that with his B-Rude collection—if you're gonna flash a boob, flash a boob.

MATT CONRAD'S PHOTOGRAPH



She Is the World

One-woman melting pot MONIQUE MINOR describes her heritage as Vietnamese, Puerto Rican, African American and Irish, but we don't believe in labels. Whatever's in there, it's all good.

Potpourri

PALBOT 9000

According to futurists from the 20th century, by this point in the 21st, robots should be either serving us dinner or hunting us for sport. Somehow no one anticipated the urbane robot. Programmed with hundreds of actions, words and phrases and fitted with fully articulated joints, the i-Sobot (\$300, isobotrobot.com) can jam on air guitar, throw martial arts moves and flatter you with compliments. In short, he's more fun to be around than a lot of your friends.



GET THE SKINNY

Never underestimate the power of thin. The EX-S880 (\$250, casio.com), Casio's latest pocket point-and-shoot camera, packs a powerful eight-megapixel snapper into an impossibly slim chassis that slips easily into a shirt pocket. Numerous presets let you instantly adjust to shooting conditions, and effortless video recording (including a new YouTube mode) means the best moments of your New Year's Eve party will be ready for broadcast the minute they happen.



A SLIPPERY SLOPE

Like another Native American conveyance, the canoe, the toboggan is simple, beautiful and damn near perfect. Once used to cart supplies across snowy meadows, it is more associated today with blasting down white slopes with whoever is mad enough to accompany you. Camden Toboggan Company of Maine handcrafts authentic toboggans out of native ash in six-, eight- and 10-foot sizes (from \$250, camdentoboggan.com). And when you're not sledding they add a rustic touch to the walls of your country cabin.



NO GIFT WRAP REQUIRED

It's a holiday tradition: When buying a gift for a male friend, you shop at the last minute. In a liquor store. Apart from a car, motorcycle or plasma TV, nothing beats good whiskey anyway. New to stores this winter: Cask No. 16 from Canada's most acclaimed distillery, Crown Royal, is well worth the \$100 price tag. It's Crown as you know and love it but finished in rare cognac barrels from France. A nutty opening leads to spicy fruit and a long butterscotch finish. The Balvenie's new SherryOak 17-year-old single malt (\$90) is like all of this Scottish distillery's output—complex, perfectly balanced and great for one dram or 10. Finished in Spanish sherry barrels, the liquid offers hints of spiced apple and pear, almond and orange peel.

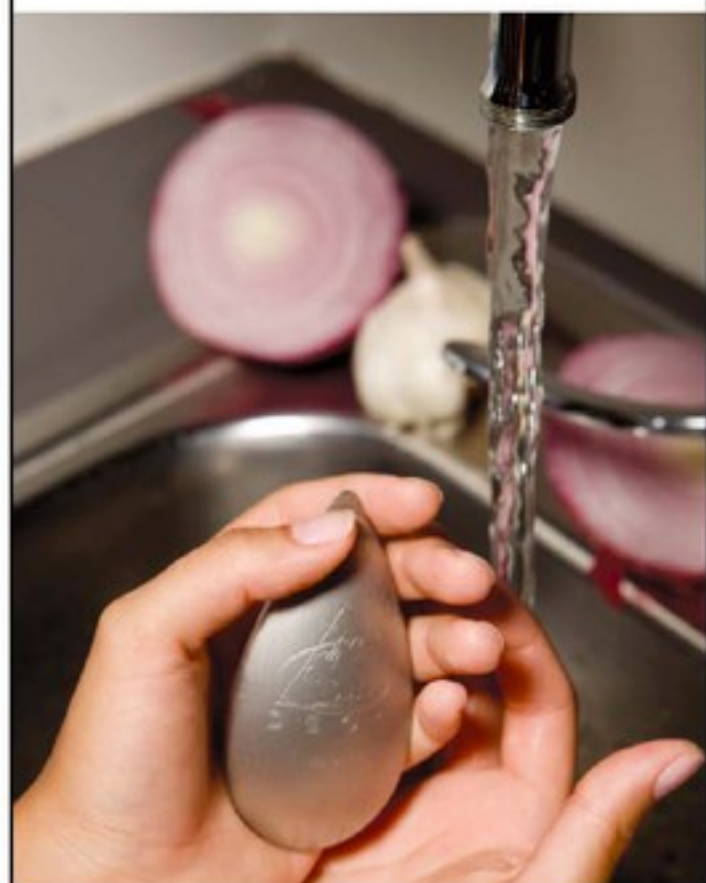
THE IN SOUND FROM WAY OUT

One reason many computer speakers sound bad is that they usually sit on desks whose hard surfaces bounce sound around and create interference. THX and Razer teamed to address this with their Razer Mako speaker system (\$400, razerzone.com), which uses downward-firing speakers to turn the entire desk surface into a resonating board that generates rich, enveloping sound.



ODOR EATER

Shrewd move, cooking for her. But seduction is a hard sell when your hands smell like garlic and fish guts. Soap doesn't always get rid of strong odors, plus it can chap your skin (bark hands—now that's sexy). The answer: Orka Deos steel soap (\$10, amazon.com) neutralizes the stink through a process called oxidoreduction. Just run under water and rub. Then rub.



ANGEL IS A CENTERFOLD

Long ago it became a rite of passage: A man picks up the magazine, unfurls the Centerfold, turns it 90 degrees and falls in love. *Playboy: The Complete Centerfolds* (\$500, playboystore.com) collects more than 50 years of this magic. Every Centerfold is here, with text by Robert Coover (on the 1950s), Paul Theroux (1960s), Robert Stone (1970s), Jay McInerney (1980s), Daphne Merkin (1990s) and Maureen Gibbon (2000s). The book weighs 32 pounds and is the size of a guitar case. We'll never forget the first time we laid eyes on Miss September 1967 Angela Dorian. Or Bebe Buell in November 1974. Or Colleen Shannon in the 50th Anniversary issue. They're all here, beauties for the ages.



TOUGHER THAN LEATHER

Remember when a man could fix his own dislocated shoulder while guzzling a beer between plays? Those were the days. Revive a bygone era with Orvis's hand-sewn replicas, made to the exact specs of old-time sports collectibles (from \$40, orvis.com). Bonus: Orvis donates five percent of its annual profits to environmental preservation efforts, so you can keep a clean conscience while playing with your balls.

Next Month



WHAT A HOOT.



ANOTHER ROUND FOR F.X. TOOLE.



RACHEL BILSON GROWS UP.



1 BURGER IN PARIS.

SEX IN AMERICA—READ THE RESULTS OF A FASCINATING NEW POLL THAT DISSECTS SEXUAL ATTITUDES ACROSS POLITICAL LINES. WHICH PARTY IS THE MOST SEXUALLY ADVENTUROUS? WHICH CANDIDATE MOST DESERVES THE NICKNAME "TIGER"? WHICH STATES, RED OR BLUE, ARE THE UNION'S HOTTEST?

THE WOMEN OF HOOTERS 2008—AFTER ALL THESE YEARS OF MENTALLY UNDRESSING THE HOOTERS GIRLS OVER MOZARELLA STICKS, *PLAYBOY* GETS THE SAUCIEST ONES TO SLIP OUT OF THOSE TRADEMARK SHORT SHORTS. CHECK, PLEASE!

RACHEL BILSON—SHE PINES FOR THE PARTS OFFERED TO GIRLS NAMED SCARLETT AND NATALIE. WILL HER FIRST FILM PROJECT SINCE *THE O.C.* NOW TURN HER INTO A BONA FIDE MOVIE STAR? 20Q BY **STEPHEN REBELLO**

THE FORCE OF THE FUTURE—LAPD CHIEF **BILL BRATTON** IS A NO-NONSENSE REFORMER, BUT WHEN **JOE DOMANICK** HITS BRATTON'S HOME TURF, HE DISCOVERS AMERICA'S TOP COP RECOVERING FROM THE TOUGHEST INCIDENT OF HIS CAREER.

MATTHEW MCCONAUGHEY—THE MAVERICK TEXAN IS AMONG THE BEST-LIKED AND MOST BANKABLE STARS IN THE BUSINESS. IN THE *PLAYBOY* INTERVIEW MCCONAUGHEY EXPLAINS WHY, NOW MORE THAN EVER, HE JUST HAS TO KEEP LIVIN', MAN: L-I-V-I-N. BY **MICHAEL FLEMING**

PEACE THROUGH POLE DANCING—WRITER AND COMEDIAN **PATTON OSWALT** ADVANCES THE REVOLUTIONARY THEORY THAT THE SUREST PATH TO MARITAL HARMONY LIES IN HAVING AN AFFAIR WITH A STRIPPER.

THE SEXIEST COMMERCIALS OF ALL TIME—TO CELEBRATE THE BEST PART OF THE SUPER BOWL—THE COMMERCIALS—HERE ARE THE FRISKIEST 15-SECOND BLOCKS IN TELEVISION HISTORY, FROM BROOKE AND HER CALVINS TO PARIS AND HER BURGER.

DESIGNER OF THE YEAR—*PLAYBOY* IDENTIFIES THE FASHION VISIONARY EVERYONE WILL FOLLOW IN 2008.

HOLY MAN—WHAT KEEPS MOTIVATING A PERPETUALLY DOWN-AND-OUT BOXING TRAINER? THE PROMISE THAT SOMEWHERE THERE IS AN UNFORMED CHAMP WHO CAN LEAD HIM TO THE TITLE. A POSTHUMOUS MASTERPIECE FROM **F.X. TOOLE**, THE TRAINER AND WRITER BEHIND *MILLION DOLLAR BABY*.

CIGARS—THAT'S A WRAP: WE SELECT THE BEST STOGIES AND PUFFING ACCESSORIES THIS SIDE OF HAVANA.

PLUS: MISS FEBRUARY **MICHELLE MCLAUGHLIN** WARMS YOUR WINTER, AND SEXY ATTORNEY **CORRI FETMAN** MAKES A COMPELLING CASE FOR DIVORCE.

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Charming design...four glittering diamonds.

Meticulously crafted of sterling silver, this stylish pendant is exquisitely fashioned in the shape of a key, embellished with a romantic heart motif. The pendant glistens with the dazzling splendor of four hand-set diamonds. A sterling silver 18-inch chain is included.

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the Danbury Mint

Supplement to
Playboy Magazine

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★ ★ **EVERYONE CAN DO SOMETHING.** ★ ★

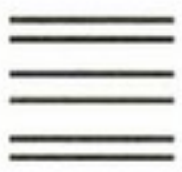
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A unique twist on the Valentine's Day gift all women love...

A Dozen Roses

DIAMOND PIN

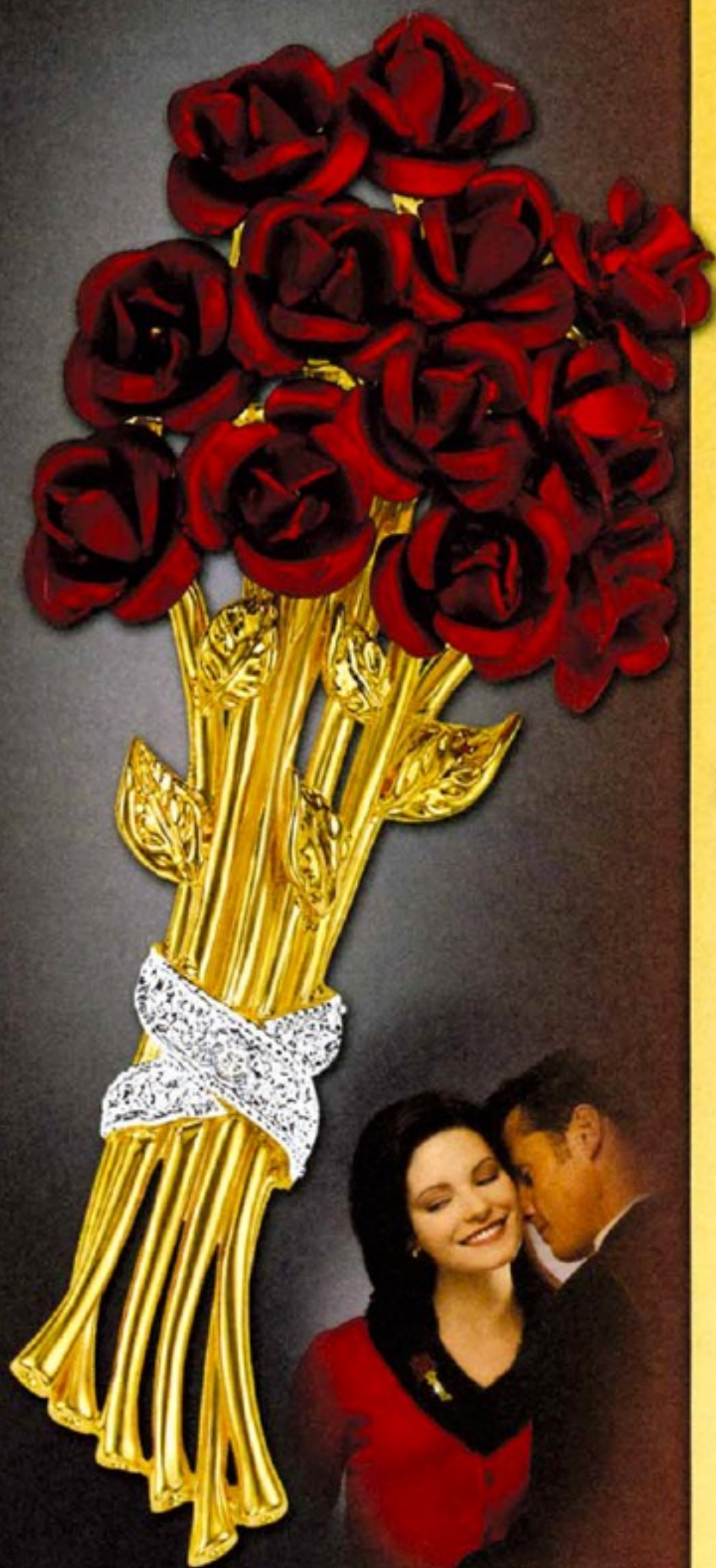
There's nothing like receiving a dozen long-stemmed roses. But soon those blooms will fade and wilt. This Valentine's Day, you can give her roses that will last forever! Presenting... *A Dozen Roses Diamond Pin*, a cleverly designed work of art featuring red enameled, long-stemmed roses and a genuine diamond!

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Orders subject to acceptance

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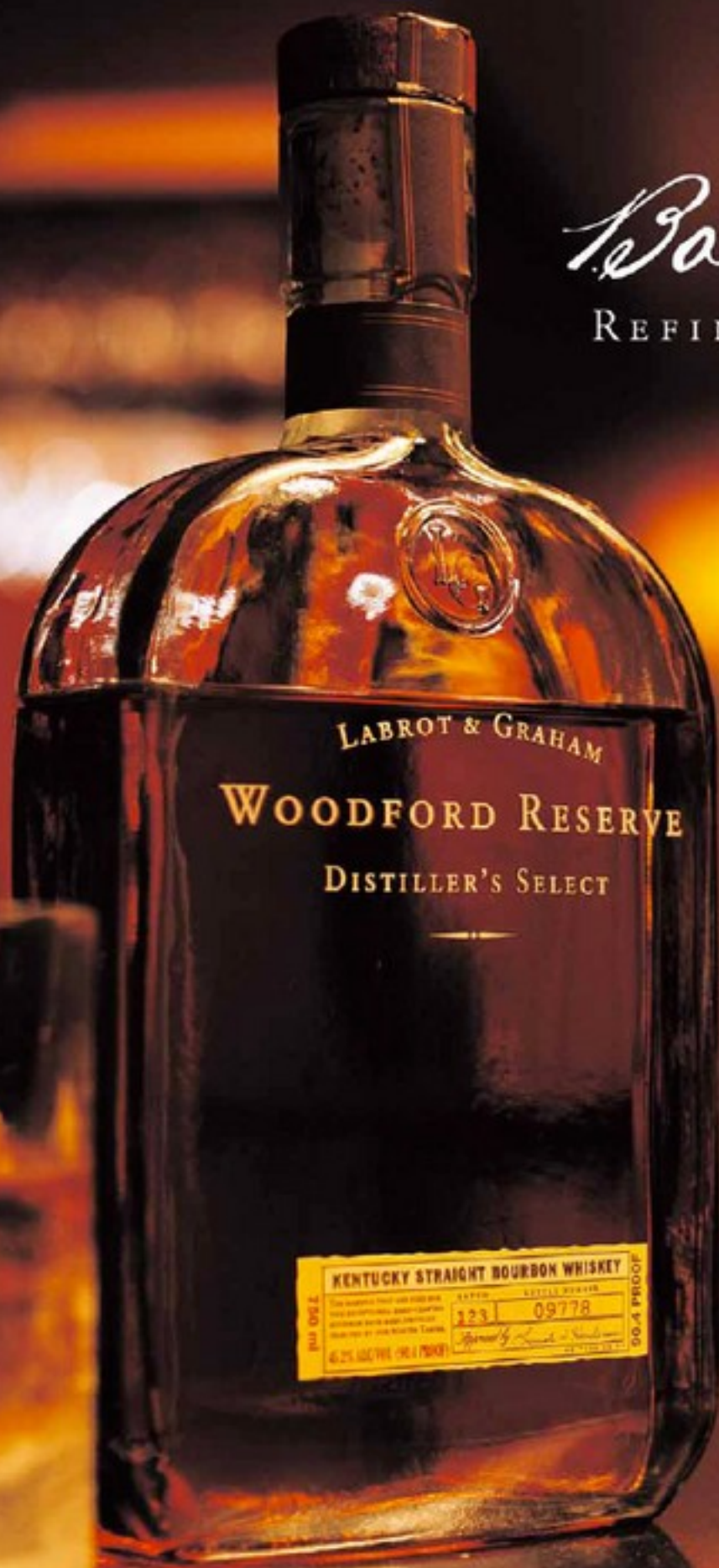
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