

HUDDLE UP FOR OUR PIGSKIN PREVIEW

PLAYBOY

ENTERTAINMENT FOR MEN

com • SEPTEMBER 2009

THE HILLS
ARE ALIVE **HEIDI
MONTAG**
THE GOSSIP! THE DRAMA!
THE DIRT!

EXCLUSIVE!

**INGLOURIOUS
BASTERDS**
A GRAPHIC NOVEL BY
**QUENTIN
TARANTINO**

**KURT VONNEGUT
LIVES!** UNPUBLISHED FICTION
BY THE LATE AUTHOR

2012
THE YEAR THE WORLD ENDS

PLUS: SETH MACFARLANE
INTERVIEW, **JAMES ELLROY
STRIKES AGAIN**, STYLE RULES
FOR THE MODERN MAN **AND
NUDE VOLLEYBALL**





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What happens when a gifted, maniacal writer hits the big time? If his name is **James Ellroy**, he has a full-blown life-destroying meltdown. In part three of Ellroy's harrowing memoir *The Hilliker Curse*, his murdered mother's phantom returns with a vengeance to wreak havoc on Big Dog's life. But Ellroy's chaos is nothing compared with what will happen to all of us very shortly if the so-called 2012ers are correct. These people are convinced the world as we know it will end December 21, 2012. Revolution, earthquakes and an ass-kicking snake god named Quetzalcoatl will leave our planet in ruins. We think the 2012ers may have gotten inside *Apocalypse 2012* writer **Frank Owen**'s head. Last we heard he was stocking up on dry goods and water. But for real signs of the apocalypse, it's hard to beat the celebrity wormhole we created when we sent **Spencer Pratt** from *The Hills* to conduct an interview with this month's cover girl—and his wife—**Heidi Montag**, to accompany her delicious photo shoot by **Matthew Rolston**. If things get any more meta we fear the snake will begin

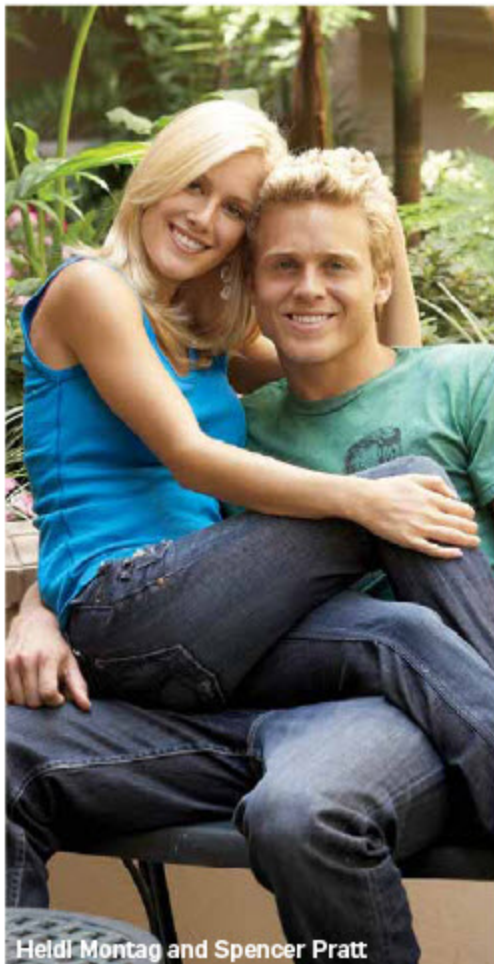
to eat its tail and we'll end up waving at ourselves as we go backward in time. This issue also includes a previously unpublished short story by the late literary legend **Kurt Vonnegut**. *Confido* anticipates the endless venality of *The Hills* even though Vonnegut wrote it early in his career. It makes you question just how much influence you allow your electronic gadgets to have. Maybe it's better to spend more of your time with stuff that's inanimate and prettier. Like furniture. In *Lounge Acts*, fashion luminary **Michael Williams** discovers that our models look as good perched naked on a \$600 chair as they do on one that costs \$6,000. Speaking of style, we've found something that never goes out of it: hating Nazis. **Quentin Tarantino** pulls an excerpt out of his brutal new film, *Inglourious Basterds*, and we give it the graphic-novel treatment with help from noted comic book illustrator **R.M. Guéra**. Sure, this issue has some frightening stuff in it, but don't let it eat at you. In *Forum*, you'll find philosopher **Slavoj Žižek**'s explanation of the way governments use fear to keep you in line. The antidote? Free thought, a copy of *PLAYBOY* and a daily regimen of looking fear in the teeth and smiling. Hey, don't mention it. That's what we're here for.



James Ellroy



Frank Owen



Heidi Montag and Spencer Pratt



Kurt Vonnegut

PLAYBILL



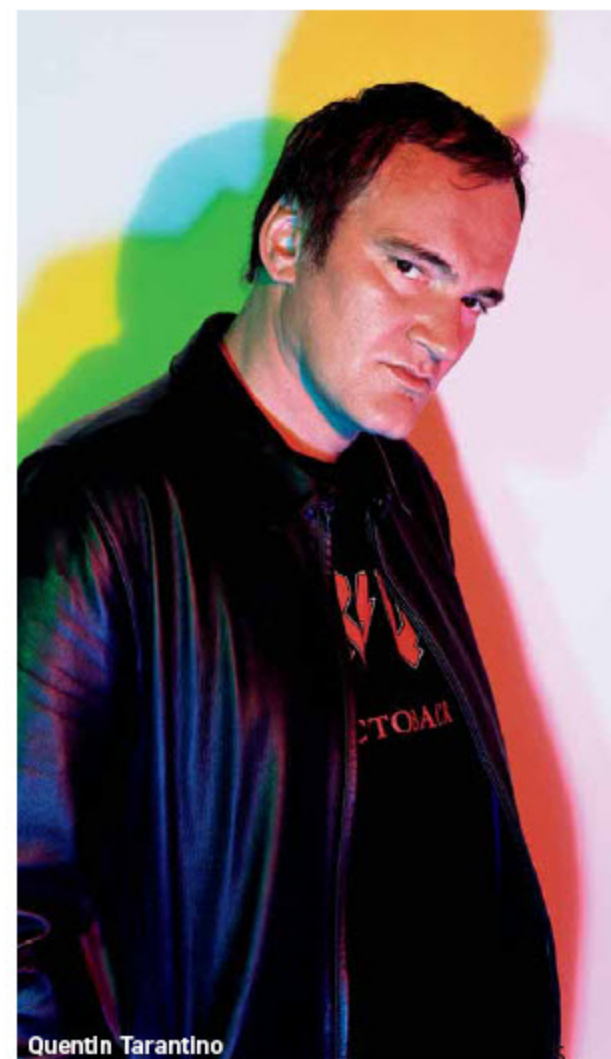
Michael Williams



Matthew Rolston



Slavoj Žižek



Quentin Tarantino

WHO SAYS
MEN CAN'T
MULTITASK?



PRESS TO PLAY

HOLLYWOOD PLAYBOY  NEW FRAGRANCE FOR MEN

PLAYBOY

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The *Inglourious Basterds* starlet is ready for a close-up...of her feet? She explains it all to **STEPHEN REBELLO**.

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This never-before-published story from a young **KURT VONNEGUT** asks whether we should listen to the voice in our head—especially if it's telling the ugly truth.



COVER STORY

Has anyone suffered more mudslinging than Heidi Montag? Fortunately, nothing gets *The Hills* star down. She poses for Matthew Rolston and then comes clean to her husband-manager-co-star, Spencer Pratt, in a corresponding interview. As for our Rabbit, it turns out he's just a dust bunny.

PLAYBOY

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Heidi Montag has had her life exposed on *The Hills*. That's nothing compared with this pictorial and her interview with husband **SPENCER PRATT**.

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On a whim, Kimberly, a Montessori schoolteacher, snapped a few sexy photos of herself and sent them to us. She was flabbergasted when we called to test her to be a Playmate. See her American dream come true.



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These athletes are plenty hot playing beach volleyball in their bikinis. Now they're even hotter on our pages.

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Hef honors Ida Ljungqvist as Playmate of the Year at the Palms in Las Vegas in front of Diablo Cody and 50 Playmates; Gay Talese drops by the Mansion; Seth Green cools off by the BMW pool.

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THIS MONTH ON PLAYBOY.COM

THE HOT MARKET Pretend sexy starlets are stocks; now amass a portfolio using our new celebrity heat index.

THE SPOT In our new series, local luminaries weigh in on their favorite haunts.

COLLEGE SPORTSWRITERS' POLL In our second annual poll the nation's elite collegiate sportswriters name their top 25 college football teams.

MORE THAN BREAD ALONE Bite into America's best sandwiches.

THE MANSION BLOG What's on Hef's mind? What's he screening? Who's in the Grotto? The answers to those questions, plus exclusive photos and footage from the happiest place on earth.



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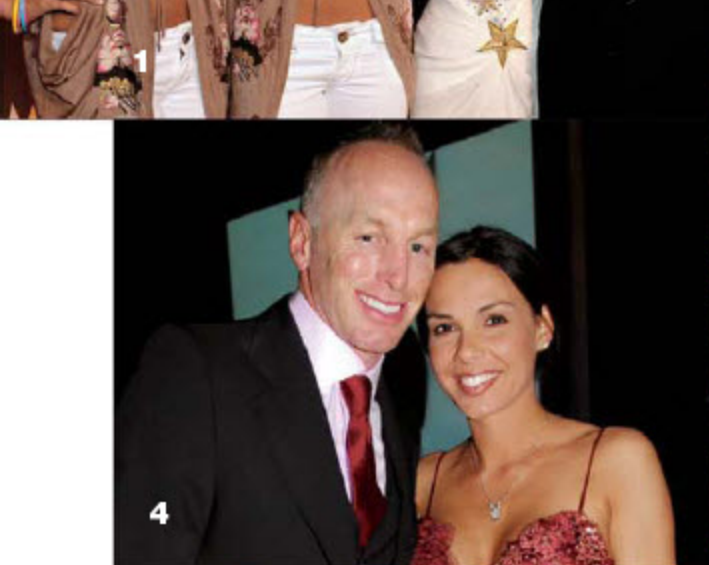
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**HANGIN'
WITH H&F**



Hef named Ida Ljungqvist the 50th Playmate of the Year at the Playboy Club at the Palms. "She tops them all," he told the crowd. (1) Hef with his girls, Karissa and Kristina Shannon and Crystal Harris, and his PMOY 2009. (2) *Juno* and *Jennifer's Body* writer Diablo Cody. (3) PMOY 1982 Shannon Tweed with Hef and Crystal. (4) PMOY 2004 Carmella DeCesare with Jeff Garcia. (5) Fifty Playmates were on hand to applaud the 50th. (6) PMOY 2001 and reception host Brande Roderick with Glenn Cadrez. (7) Gay Talese at the Mansion. Hef is a primary subject in Talese's recently republished *Thy Neighbor's Wife*. (8) Mansion puppies: Dolce, Ambrocious, Chanel and Charlie. (9) *Family Guy*'s Seth Green with Clare Grant at the PMW pool. (10) Playmates from the 1950s Miss December 1958 Joyce Nizzari and Miss May 1959 Cindy Fuller. (11) David Hasselhoff with Miss December 2005 Christine Smith and Painted Ladies at the Stars and Stripes benefit. (12) 24's Roger Cross with Josephine Jacob. (13) Pamela Anderson at PMW for the British reality show *Living With My Idol*.



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MAKING THE GRADE

In 2002 I attended a graduate student conference at California State University, Chico the week *PLAYBOY* dropped it from number one to number two in the party-school rankings. Under the guise of journalistic research I pestered the cutest Chico State guy at the conference to show me what students at his school did for fun. He was hungover but ultimately acquiesced. Now, seven years later, we're married with kids. CSU, Chico may have fallen out of the top 10 (*Playboy's Top Party Schools*, May), but I'm glad you downgraded it when you did. Go, Wildcats!

Lynn Johnson
Northampton, Massachusetts

It looks like you caved to academia with your new formula. Although I respect the well-rounded nature of the rankings, brains and sports have nothing to do with the quality of a party. At schools like Arizona State, simply being there is a party. For your next rankings, get back to basics. Please don't print my name; I have a job now.

Name withheld
New York, New York

SPEED DEMONS

I greatly enjoyed A.J. Baime's account of the 1964 duel at Le Mans between Ford and Ferrari (*A War of Speed*, May). I appreciate well-crafted articles about exciting events of yesteryear.

David Howard
Menlo Park, California

Two days before receiving the May issue I was offered a 2005 Ford GT with 365 miles on it. I had an itch for it, but Baime's article gave me the burn, and a deal was struck.

Richard Lasseter
Valdosta, Georgia

Your May issue reminds me just how sexy the 1960s were. It's hard to beat a Ford GT40 on wire wheels and the forever fabulous Gale Olson, Miss August 1968, who reappears as the mom of Playmate Crystal McCahill (*It's Crystal Clear*).

Jack Klesh
Cleveland, Ohio

DRUNKS ON FILM

I'm neither a drinker nor a man, but I thoroughly enjoyed *The Drinking Man's Guide to Cinema* (May). However, you should have used a photo of William Powell with Myrna Loy rather than Maureen O'Sullivan to illustrate *The Thin Man*.

Brittany Paty
Nashville, Tennessee

Cuvée des Enchanteleurs with *Casablanca*? I don't think so, and neither does Louis Renault. May I recommend the 1926 Veuve Clicquot?

William Jones
Downingtown, Pennsylvania

DEAR PLAYBOY

Is Baseball Too Slow?

In *Perfect Game: How to Fix Baseball* (May), Bill James argues that baseball needs to be sped up—a misguided attempt to homogenize our national pastime. If you find it tedious when a pitcher doesn't allow a single offensive play during a game, you aren't a fan. Same goes for batter's box tactics. They do matter, and the incident on April 12 in which Josh Beckett threw a pitch that nearly hit Bobby Abreu in the head [at right] an instant after Abreu had been granted a time-out proves it. My advice to James: Watch something else.

James Auld
Los Angeles, California



Where's *Barfly*? Mickey Rourke channels Charles Bukowski and in the process converted most of us college beer swillers to whiskey in one fell swoop.

Jared Wolfsen
Eugene, Oregon

NO HOLDS BARRED

Shia LaBeouf clearly has no secrets. Thanks for a superb *Playboy Interview* (June) with a most intriguing actor.

Jeff Hartzler
Albuquerque, New Mexico



Shia LaBeouf: What would you like to know?

Tell the uptight pervs criticizing LaBeouf for calling his mother one of the sexiest women he knows ("If I could meet my mother and marry her, I would") to get off his ass! All he did was express his love and admiration for his redoubtable mom—who is a delightful lady and deserves it—in the only way we street kids know how: with exaggeration and humor. Give

him a break and consider how rare it is to find a kid in his position in Hollywood today expressing admiration for a parent instead of suing him or her.

Vincent Chase
Los Angeles, California

Chase is a longtime acting coach (vincentchaseworkshop.com), including on occasion for LaBeouf "back in the day."

MACK ATTACK

I love the magazine, but the subject of your article on Saipan, Mack Machado, is full of shit (*Paradise Lost*, May). He claims he served four tours in the Navy as a Special Forces (actually, that's the Army) antiterrorist specialist, at one point killing prison guards in the Kuwait desert and watching their heads blow up "like pumpkins." Only a punk or wannabe talks like that, especially to an outsider. I spent 29 years in the Special Forces, and while killing is part of the job, it's not something you take lightly. Next we have Machado on a cargo ship, manning a "450-caliber tripod-mounted machine gun." That's actually a cannon. It wouldn't be on a tripod unless the guy firing it wanted to fly ass backward across the deck. Next he's serving all over the world, including landlocked Afghanistan—what did he patrol in, a hovercraft? He says that for the first time in his life no one is shouting at him. But once your training is over and you become a member of a special operations unit, the shouting is over.

Don Plourde
Deerfield Beach, Florida

OUR GLORIOUS PICKS

Thanks for featuring me in the photo illustration that opens *Playboy's 2009 Baseball Preview* (May)—though I hope



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MISS PLAYBOY CLUB MAY

CALENDAR GIRL DATA SHEET

Name: Gemma Farrell • Australia

Bust: 33D Waist: 25 Hips: 32

Height: 5'9" Weight: 125

Birth Date: January 1, 1988

Turn-ons: spooning, cuddling, movies

Turn-offs: lame personalities,
bad breath and hairy chests



MISS PLAYBOY CLUB JUNE

CALENDAR GIRL DATA SHEET

Name: Amber Nichole Wood • Las Vegas

Bust: 34C Waist: 25 Hips: 35

Height: 5'9" Weight: 125

Birth Date: December 5, 1977

Turn-ons: muscles, tattoos,
sense of humor

Turn-offs: nipple hair, back acne,
halitosis

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Detroit fans never accuse me of having tree trunks for legs and feet. (I am, however, proud to be a "homegrown talent," which I'm sure is what you mean to convey.) I also appreciate that you include me among the players who provide solid offense for the Tigers, but you seem to have accidentally left us off your list of American League picks.

Curtis Granderson
Detroit, Michigan

If you're going to pick the Cubs to win the World Series, at least put the prediction where it belongs—in *Party Jokes*.

Tony Brasch
Hartford, Wisconsin

I'm a fan of your sports coverage, but your baseball preview is disappointing. Some of the team logos haven't been current since A-Rod told *60 Minutes* he never used steroids, and your picks are trendy. What's the worst that can happen if you select a dark horse that tanks? You're *PLAYBOY*; you can tell anyone to piss off.

Thomas O'Brien
Las Vegas, Nevada

SUZY ON SEX

Someone should be kind enough to inform Suzy McCoppin she did not partake in a threesome ("Three Can Play That Game," *Sex*, May). Her paramour had sex with her and her friend. Waiting your turn does not a threesome make.

Larry Borges
San Jose, California

McCoppin must have had some dandy experiences with anal sex to be left comparing this beautiful act to a car accident ("Bringing Up the Rear," *Sex*, June). If a woman controls the speed and depth, which is far easier to do when she's on top, she can have a terrific orgasm. And I can't imagine feeling more powerful or dominating than when I'm tempting my man with the lure of anal sex.

Name withheld
Toronto, Ontario

It looks like I won't be able to fulfill the fantasy I've been having about McCoppin. I've found that Quebecois, Slavic, Arabic and Latin American women enjoy anal more than American women do.

Jake Woodward
Farmington, Michigan

I love anal, and most of my girlfriends love anal. Since my husband refuses to use the back door I have found a boyfriend who will fuck me and my girlfriends in the ass as much as we can take.

Name withheld
Miami, Florida

How right McCoppin is. Don't get me wrong; I'm a good wife, so my husband has been lucky enough to enter the ultimate goal hole. But it is by no means

enjoyable for me. It is refreshing to see a woman's point of view. I made sure my husband read it; for some reason a hot woman writing in *PLAYBOY* makes an impression on him.

Name withheld
Geneseo, New York

If I wanted to read about the woes of anal sex, I'd pick up *Cosmo*. McCoppin says many of her friends like it, so maybe the nonbelievers are the ones with the problem. Let's keep the fantasy alive.

Name withheld
Endwell, New York

AMÉRICA THE BEAUTIFUL

The pictorial of America Olivo by Terry Richardson (*God Bless America*, June) is remarkable for what it is not—no elaborate set, no elaborate hair, costume or makeup, and no attempt to reproduce



America Olivo: "It's great to be naked!"

all too familiar poses. Any woman beautiful enough to be in *PLAYBOY* doesn't need all the spiffy extras.

John Harris
Memphis, Tennessee

ÜBER AGENT

Scott Boras says he feels hurt by fans heckling him, yet he wants the Hall of Fame to induct steroid abusers because drugs are a "distinctive feature" of the modern era (*20Q*, June). If he were truly acting in the best interest of his clients, he would call them out on the juices.

Antonio Malacara
San Diego, California

HERE TO HELP

While watching *Jeopardy!* I knew the final answer because I had just read it in the June *Raw Data*. (CPR should be performed in time to "Stayin' Alive.") The question is, do you watch *Jeopardy!* or does *Jeopardy!* read *PLAYBOY*?

Maurine Truitt
Overland Park, Kansas

Which do you think?



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Pour Patrón Silver and Patrón Citrónge over ice. Fill with pineapple juice. Finish with a squeeze of lime. Enjoy.



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†Tires must be purchased from a Bridgestone retailer's inventory between August 29 and September 26, 2009. Mail-in claim form required. Restrictions and limitations apply. See your participating Bridgestone retailer for complete details.

PLAYBOY AFTERHOURS

BECOMING ATTRACTION

Vanessa Branch

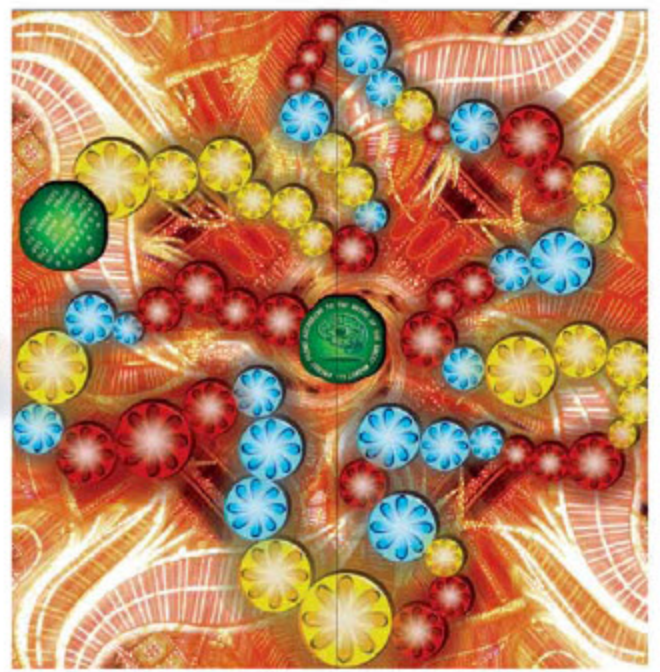
A chick flick worth seeing this month is *Post Grad*, if only to glimpse the beautiful Vanessa Branch. She plays a receptionist with an attitude. You may recognize the Brit bombshell from her role in the *Pirates of the Caribbean* movies. She plays a whore in those. "I'm the one who's always slapping Johnny Depp," she says. Vanessa also has a lead part in a new video game, *Red Alert 3*, in which she plays a Russian femme fatale. She says she wants to do period films, Jane Austen-type stuff. But rather than see her in all that 19th century costumery, we prefer her in jungle scenes, wearing five pounds of bracelets and little else.

"I play a sexy Russian with my skirt half-way up to my boobs."



Recreational Fun, Gonzo-Style

This one-of-a-kind *Fear and Loathing: The Board Game* (from artist JR Baldwin) comes with everything you see here—plus more fake drugs. You roll the dice and, depending on which peyote button you land on, pull a “dosing,” “activity” or “challenge” card. After a few doses, the game gets interesting. At \$2,500 it's expensive but more fun than Hunter S. Thompson on a three-day ibogaine bender.



Canned Heat

Graffiti has transitioned from scrawled profanity to stylized art. Take London-based artist Max Wiedemann and his painted lady, for example. “You might say I'm a bit of a mix between Banksy and Andy Warhol,” he says. “I'm interested in the vanity of our lives, in people who live the high life and forget about the substantive life.”



University of O-High-O

The recession has sent many back to school to pursue a degree in emerging fields, like, say, the budding industry of selling legal pot. Oaksterdam University prepares students for jobs at California's 500-plus legal marijuana dispensaries by offering classes in medical-marijuana law, horticulture, “cannabusiness,” glassblowing and “bud tending.” Oakland voters passed a referendum that effectively decriminalized pot in 2004, and the city's sinsemilla-gentsia has long dreamed of transforming their town into an American Amsterdam. Befitting a stoner's limited attention span, a basic seminar certificate at Oaksterdam U. can be earned over a weekend at a cost of \$250. Talk about higher education.

Can We Quote You on That?

Turns out, famous people say the damndest things. We got hold of a new little paperback called *The Quotable Douchebag*, a collection of doozies such as the ones you see here. Can you match the mouthful to the man who uttered it?



A
George W. Bush



B
Geraldo Rivera



C
David Hasselhoff



D
Calvin Coolidge

1. There were hundreds of dying children out there whose last wish was to meet me.
2. When a great many people are unable to find work, unemployment results.

3. I think the Jews need me right now.
4. I couldn't imagine somebody like Osama bin Laden understanding the joy of Hanukkah.

ANSWERS: A 4, A 1, C 2, D 3, B 4



Kung-Fusion

More than a year after the Bruce Lee Ping-Pong video became a viral sensation, the debate about its authenticity still rages. The clip, which shows Lee wearing his iconic yellow jumpsuit from the film *Game of Death* and using nunchucks to play a hyperfast game of table tennis, is so mind-boggling we hereby name it our YouTube video of the month. As for the debate, we'll put an end to it now: A Nokia spokesperson has confirmed that the clip was created by global marketing agency JWT to hype the Lee-themed Nokia N96 phone (available only in China). It's a fake! But we still can't stop watching it.

Drink of the Month

Rebirth of Cool

Marylou's, the infamous late-night lounge in New York's West Village that counted Jack Nicholson, James Gandolfini, Jay McInerney, assorted mobster types and an elderly cocaine dealer as regulars, has been reborn. The former den of debauchery, shuttered after a 2001 drug sting, is now Hotel Griffou, a classic bistro and barroom. It's already a hot spot with a private wine room for those paparazzi-pestered patrons. The only lines this time around are to get in. Their house drink recipe:

The Scotch Bishop

1.5 oz. Dewar's
White Label
1.5 oz. Grand
Marnier
Splash of orange
juice

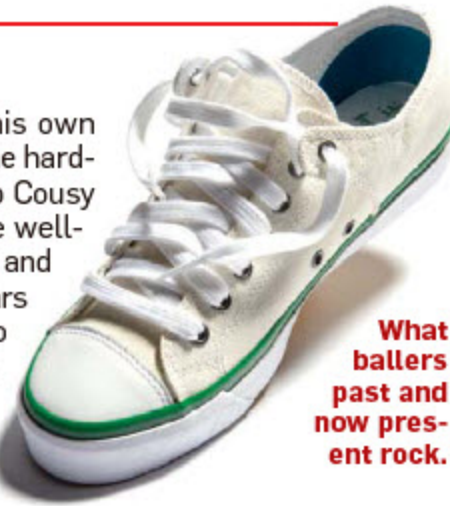
Shake with ice,
strain into a rocks
glass full of ice,
and garnish with a
lavender sprig.



Fashion

Classic Kicks

Long before Converse gave Magic Johnson his own shoe, PF Flyer gave Bob Cousy, the Houdini of the hardwood, a canvas sneaker. Recently reissued, Bob Cousy All-Americans have lately been spotted on the well-heeled when they aren't buttoned up. Everybody and your mother has a pair of either Converse All-Stars or Stan Smiths (goes great with mom jeans), so break away from the pack with the Cooz's kicks. Just don't hoop in them: Since the invention of the three-point line, low-top canvas has broken more ankles on the court than Chris Paul.



What
ballers
past and
now pres-
ent rock.



Sex Porn: It's Good for You!

Great news for the 5 million American men who suffer from clinically low levels of testosterone—and basically any guy: Researchers (real scientists!) say watching porn may be more effective than the latest hormone-boosting drug. At the age of 30 most men begin losing testosterone—which can cause them to become shorter, weaker and depressed—and therefore need more hormones. How do you make a hormone? Don't pay her.... Ahem, how do you boost hormones? Biological anthropologist Helen Fisher suggests that men "go on the Internet and look at porn" as a type of really fun testosterone-replacement therapy. Yes, ma'am.



Employee of the Month

Sarah Pine

PLAYBOY: Judging by your outfit, you work in the medical field, correct?

SARAH: I'm a nurse for a private-practice plastic surgeon.

PLAYBOY: So you....

SARAH: Like you guys, I look at breasts all day. There's a little more to it than that, though. I assist in surgery, monitor patients post-op and do a lot of clerical stuff.

PLAYBOY: Have you gone under the knife?

SARAH: I brought my cup size up to a full C.

PLAYBOY: Yet they're usually hidden under your uniform. Do you like wearing scrubs?

SARAH: Yes, I guess you could say that I wear pajamas and look at breasts all day at work—much like Hef.

"I'm Chevy Chase, and You're Not!"



This month sees the heroic return of Chevy Chase. Or does it? Alongside *The Soup's* Joel McHale (in his first prime-time series), Chase stars in *Community*, an NBC comedy set in a community college. The last time Chase made us laugh was in 1989 (*Fletch Lives*). He has now sucked for longer than he was funny. But we love Chevy. We're pulling for you, Chevy. Please, make us laugh! We could all use a chuckle these days.

Movie of the Month

Inglourious Basterds

By Stephen Rebello

Quentin Tarantino's latest stars Brad Pitt and Eli Roth as vengeance-hungry Jewish American soldiers scalping and killing Nazis in occupied France during World War II. Despite its hairy-chested violence and over-the-top comedy, the curiously spelled *Inglourious Basterds* also features Diane Kruger as a glamorous yet lethal movie queen who also hunts down Nazis, as a spy for the Brits. Kruger, the blonde beauty best known for her roles in *Troy* and the *National Treasure* flicks, says, "I play a great old movie star with a lot of attitude, like Marlene Dietrich. I researched actresses of that day and found one whose story was a bit similar to that of my character in the film. I brought DVDs and



pictures of her to Quentin, who was like, 'That's not who I based her on,' and he named another German actress I had never heard of. The guy is like a friggin' cinematic library."

Now Showing: Philip Seymour Hoffman leads pirate-radio DJs in *The Boat That Rocked*; Jason Bateman is sexually frustrated in *Extract*; Ang Lee gets trippy with *Taking Woodstock*.

BEHIND THE MASK:

Rob Zombie's *H2*, the writer-director's second stab at reanimating the *Halloween* franchise, brings a somewhat new face to the screen—knife-happy killer Michael Myers himself. Myers's face is seen briefly in both the 1978 original and *Halloween 5*, but he spends a large amount of *H2* sans his signature mask.

DVDs of the Month

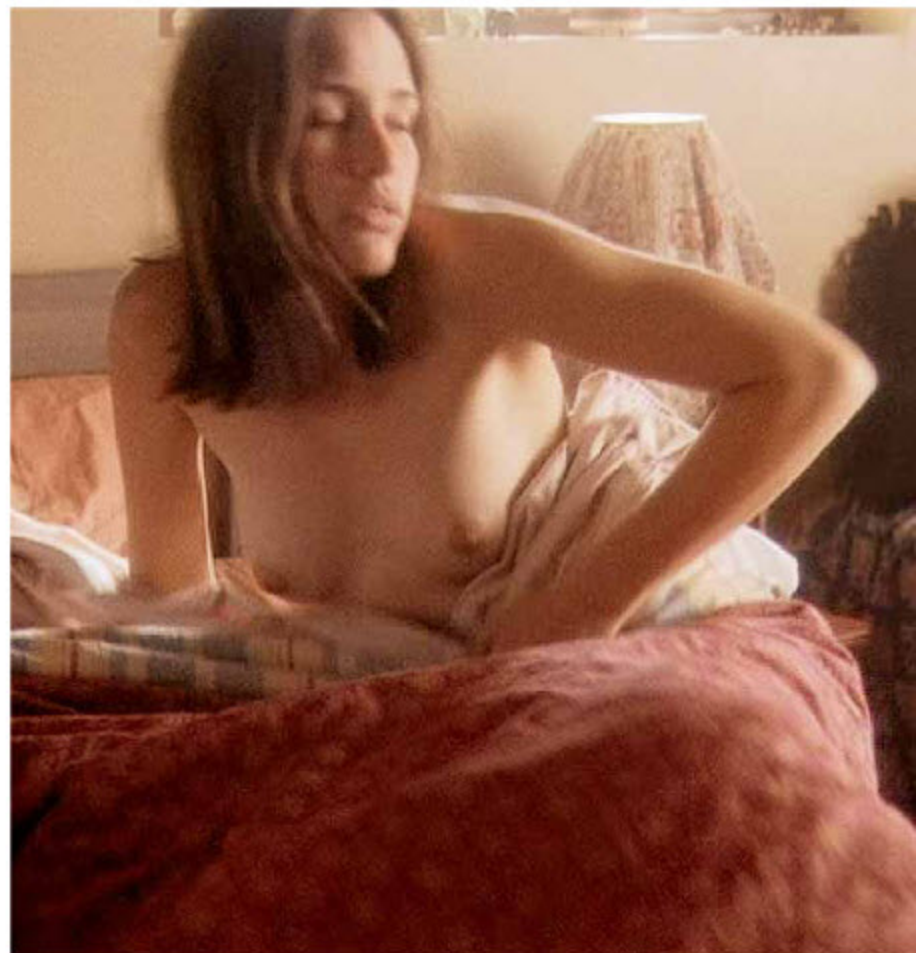


Flipping through channels retains its Zen appeal, but we prefer to hit PLAY ALL during the annual TV-on-disc season. Our picks for the best new boxed sets (all on DVD and Blu-ray unless noted) include the FX biker drama *Sons of Anarchy*, in which Charlie Hunnam has a Hamlet-like relationship with his mom and stepdad. David Duchovny's sex addiction remains the glue that holds his family and professional lives together in season two of Showtime's *Californication* (left, DVD only). Season three

of *Dexter* finds the titular serial killer, played by Michael C. Hall, un-easily taking on Jimmy Smits as an apprentice. The Joss Whedon series *Dollhouse* (right) posits a world in which Eliza Dushku and similar babes are delivered to your door with made-to-order minds. It grows on you in much the same way *Chuck* does. In season four of the CW genre favorite *Supernatural*, the brothers, played by Jared Padalecki and Jensen Ackles, stave off a jailbreak from hell. Crime fans eager for the



return of old-fashioned police-drama charisma made *The Mentalist* TV's top new show. The first season of the influential *thirtysomething* (left), which debuted in 1987, is finally available on DVD. Also in 1987 the then-upstart Fox network unleashed the sci-fi gem *Werewolf* (out now on DVD). *The Simpsons*'s 12th-season highlights include Sideshow Bob's return and Lisa's turn as Connie Appleseed. Now entering its 21st season, it remains TV's most consistently funny comedy (DVD only). —Greg Fagan



Tease Frame

Piper Perabo made a lasting impression as the aspiring songwriter who helps raise temperatures in *Coyote Ugly*, but her role as a boarding-school student who falls in love with a female classmate in *Lost and Delirious* (pictured) broke the thermostat. Now she tries to escape a viral pandemic in the long-delayed *Carriers*, opposite *Star Trek*'s Chris Pine.

Read more at playboy.com/entertainment.



Game of the Month

Batman: Arkham Asylum

After years of waiting, Bat fans finally get a decent game (360, PC, PS3). The premise: The Joker lures Batman to the titular asylum, and once he has his nemesis trapped inside, he unleashes all manner of hell. The Joker here is more Nicholson than Ledger, and the overall vibe more Frank Miller than Christopher Nolan. For much of the game you're confined to narrow corridors and the pacing falls just above plodding, but both those are good things—they're in service of an experience that captures the crafty, cerebral and considered qualities of Batman better than any game before it. As you'd expect, you spend a decent amount of time navigating the shadows, but when it's time to kick ass, the hand-to-hand combat engine is amazingly satisfying. If you're on PS3 you can get your ya-yas out by playing as the Joker on several exclusive levels. **★★★★½** —Scott Jones

Also in gaming...

CALL OF JUAREZ: BOUND IN BLOOD (360, PC, PS3) Like its predecessor, this campy Civil War-era Western has clever gameplay ideas but lacks depth. There's a little bit of everything, from stagecoach chases to quick draws to class-based multiplayer gunfights. Too bad the storytelling doesn't keep pace. **★★½** —Scott Steinberg

FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 4 (360, PS3) Another haymaker from the heavyweight champ. Dozens of legends—from Mike Tyson to Sugar Ray Robinson—fight with even better body physics, sweat and bruises. Take a boxer from amateur events to the top, or hop online for endlessly entertaining multiplayer. Well worth the upgrade. **★★★★** —Scott Stein



Kill 'Em All

Wolfenstein (360, PC, PS3) puts you back in the combat boots of B.J. Blazkowicz (of the original first-person shooter, *Wolfenstein 3-D*) as he takes on the occult Nazi stronghold again, this time with over-the-top weapons, enemies and visuals. Shooting Nazis never gets old.

Music

Jet Refueled

Jet first appeared on people's radar in 2003 via the bluesy stomp of "Are You Gonna Be My Girl"—among the first hits generated by an iTunes ad. The band's debut LP, *Get Born*, went on to sell millions. Now the Australian quartet returns with its third album, *Shaka Rock*, which adds soaring vocal melodies and touches of ska, psych and arena rock to its raucous down under riff and roll. Brothers Nic and Chris Cester spoke to **PLAYBOY**.

PLAYBOY: You recorded in Miami, Brooklyn, Austin, Melbourne and Sydney. Are you running from the law or something?

CHRIS: Well, sort of. In Austin I saw a bunch of old friends and went straight back to drinking whiskey out of the bottle. I wasn't in any kind of practice, so I got into a car and was arrested about 20 minutes later. I spent 18 hours in jail and was put on a chain gang in a two-piece black-and-white uniform. The guy on one side of me had a knife wound in his head, the guy on the other side went down for armed robbery.

PLAYBOY: What does the older brother think of this story?

NIC: I can't say much. I got arrested for drunk driving in Australia when I was 18. They put me in the back of a van, drove around violently and smashed me around, then took me to the



police station and just said, "Go home, you idiot."

PLAYBOY: What's the biggest misconception about Australians?

NIC: That we refer to prawns as "shrimp." You'll never hear an Australian say "shrimp on the barbie." Never.

CHRIS: And that Aussie women are easy. Mormons would be easier.



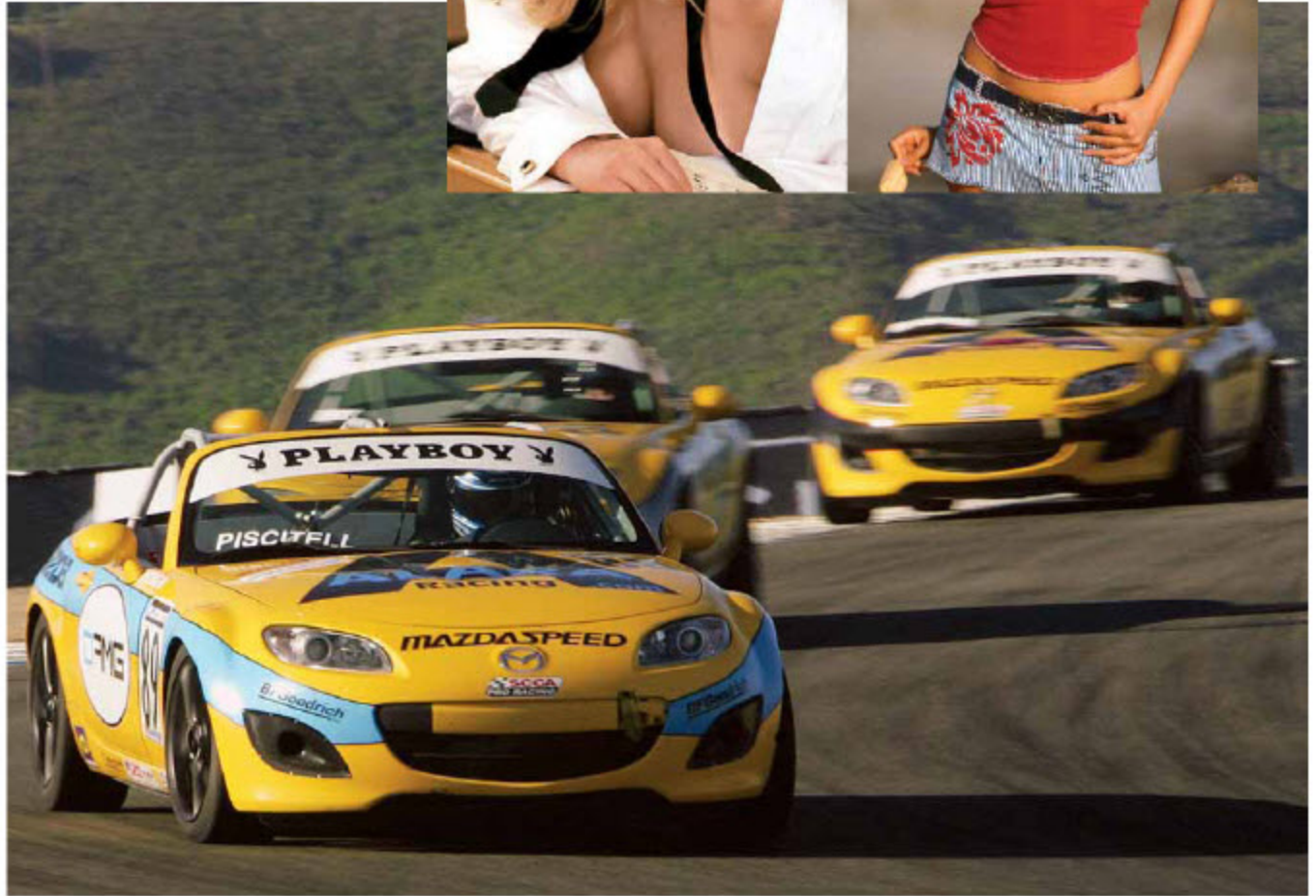
Check out **Jet** (left) playing an acoustic version of INXS's "Never Tear Us Apart" on **Playboy.com**—part of our **Uncovered** video series in which bands perform exclusive covers of their favorite songs. Other artists in the series include platinum country star **Dierks Bentley** (right, playing Waylon Jennings), 3 Doors Down and Drive-By Truckers.



Bunnies at Speed

Deanna and Pilar aim to compete in the Playboy Mazda MX-5 Cup

Lovely Deanna Brooks, our May 1998 Playmate (right), and Pilar Lastra, Miss August 2004 (far right), are vying to become the first professional race car driver Playmates. Fast cars and fast women rolled into one—how sexy is that? We've seen Pilar in her racing coveralls. Whoa! Both ladies aim to drive in the Playboy Mazda MX-5 Cup series—serious competition. They've trained with the Skip Barber Racing School and have competed in semipro events, but they need a few more hours on the track before they get their Sports Car Club of America professional racing licenses. They'd better hustle: The MX-5 Cup wraps up next month with a huge full-weekend finale October 2 to 4 at Virginia International Raceway. To catch it on the tube, check your local listings.



Playboy TV Ante Up for Sam's Game

Simpsons co-creator Sam Simon hosts a regular poker game in Hollywood renowned for its raucousness and humor (thanks to friends like Norm MacDonald, Artie Lange and Simon's ex-wife **Jennifer Tilly**). Now Simon is bringing the game to Playboy TV. "The stakes aren't the biggest, and the players aren't the best, but the game is definitely the funniest," he promises. Consider *Sam's Game* a mash-up between Texas Hold'em and a roast. Playing with their own money and tossing one-liners, more friends, including comedian **Jeffrey Ross**, poker player and PLAYBOY model Jennifer Leigh and PMOY 2001 Brande Roderick (we wonder if she'll lose her shirt), try to outwit one another. "There are only two small differences between the sessions at my house and the games we tape," Simon says. "The first is that there are now Playmates at the table. Great! The other is that we don't film in my house. We moved the game to the Palms in Las Vegas, so now I don't care if people spill their drinks on the floor." Watch the action on *Sam's Game*, Thursdays at nine P.M. EST/PST on Playboy TV.



Playboy Radio's Morning After

Who doesn't want to wake up with two hot blondes? Each Monday, Cyber Girls Jessica Hall and Brandie Moses host *The Morning After*, a wrap-up of the previous weekend's wild goings-on. "We go to parties all over the country," says Brandie, "and then we talk about them on the show. Listeners call in with their own stories—whether it's taking three strippers home or getting a foot job." Get the gory details from Jessica and Brandie Mondays at one P.M. EST, 10 A.M. PST on Sirius and XM 99.



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WHAT WE'RE THINKING:

IN THE OUTDOORS 38%	IN THE OFFICE 13%	IN A CANOE 4%
IN THE BACK OF A CAR 17%	IN THE BUTT 8%	ON A PLANE 4%
IN A PUBLIC BUILDING 11%	ON CAMERA 5%	



NEXT UP: GO TO PLAYBOY.COM/WWT TO ANSWER SEPTEMBER'S QUESTIONS, INCLUDING:

WHICH ACCENT IS THE SEXIEST FOR A WOMAN TO HAVE?

SPANISH	FRENCH	ITALIAN
AUSSIE/BRITISH	RUSSIAN	LONG ISLAND



A Charles Schwab survey asked which is more important, physical fitness or financial fitness. **64%** of young adults between the ages of 23 and 28 say financial.

MARILYN MONROE WORE TWO PAIRS OF UNDERWEAR IN THE FAMOUS SKIRT-BLOWING SCENE IN *THE SEVEN YEAR ITCH* BECAUSE OF THE LIGHTING. GAWKERS SWORE THEY COULD STILL SEE THROUGH THEM.

BRITNEY SPEARS SPENT \$188,556 ON HER PERSONAL EMPLOYEES LAST YEAR.



WHAT THEY'RE THINKING

45% of Glamour.com visitors claim they have a stronger sex drive than their guys do.

64% OF THE 117 MILLION ONLINE GAMERS IN THE U.S. ARE FEMALE.

The approximate number of weapons the U.S. military didn't "maintain reliable records" on or "lost track of" during the war in Afghanistan: 222,000.



SINCE 9/11 AND THE ARREST OF SHOE BOMBER RICHARD REID, THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS USED THE PATRIOT ACT TO CONVICT MORE THAN 200 AIRLINE PASSENGERS OF TERRORISM, MOSTLY FOR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR SUCH AS USING PROFANITY OR BEING INTOXICATED.



Men look into the eyes of women they find attractive for an average of 8.2 seconds, compared with 4.5 seconds with those they don't. Women behave the same regardless of the attraction.

\$15,432

The cost of a master's degree in social media (e.g. Facebook, MySpace and Twitter) from the U.K.'s Birmingham City University—one of the first places to offer it.



PRICE CHECK

\$12.4 MILLION

PRICE PAID AT AUCTION FOR A PONTOON-FENDERED 1957 FERRARI 250 TESTA ROSSA. THE SALE SET A NEW WORLD RECORD FOR THE MOST EXPENSIVE CAR EVER SOLD AT AUCTION.



Check out these figures: 36DD is on track this year to replace 36D as the most popular size bra maker Wacoal America sells.



Only 52% of Americans say a TV set in the home is a necessity, down 12 percentage points since 2006 and the smallest percentage since Pew Research began asking the question in the mid-1970s.

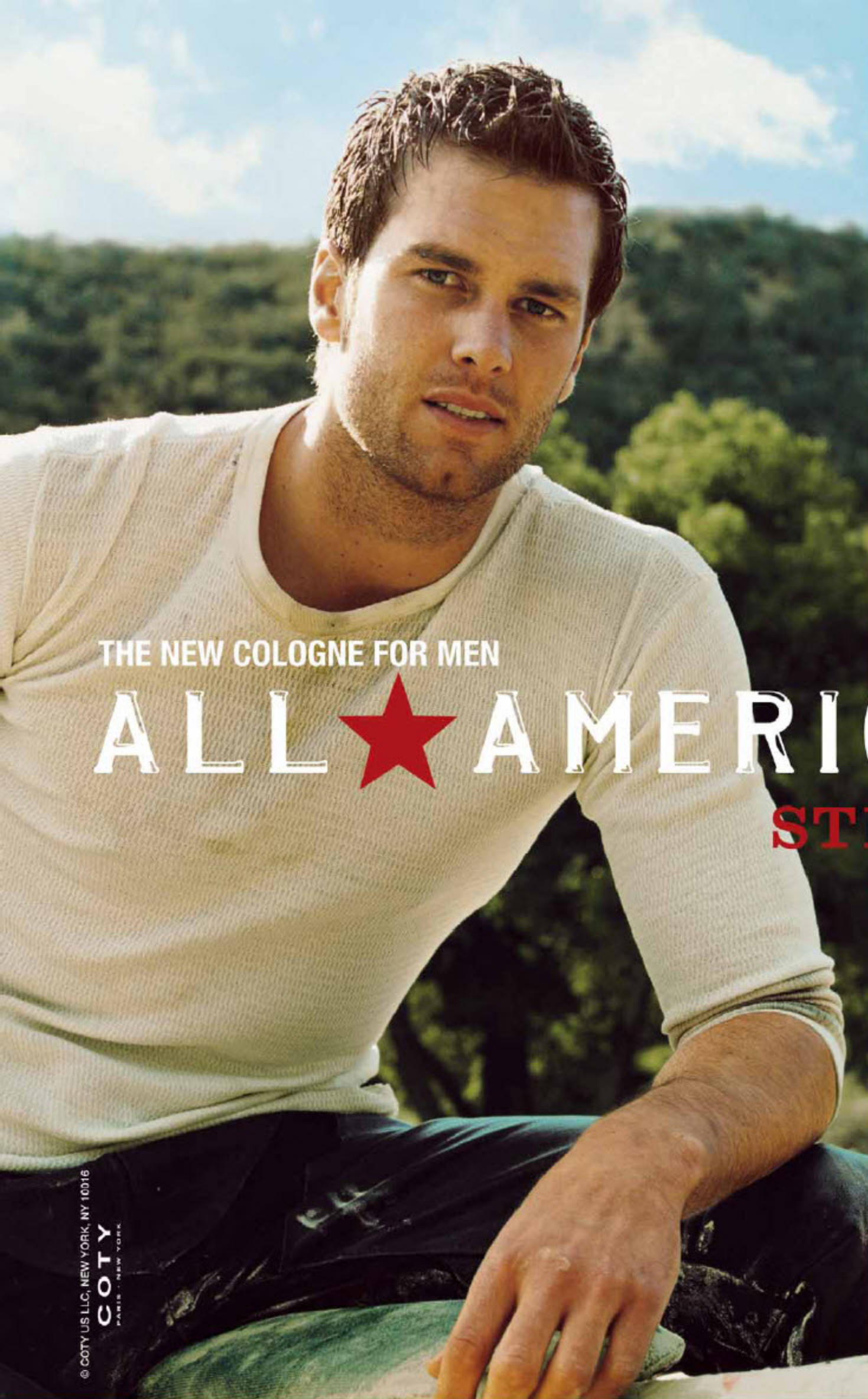
1.3M

THE ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHOSE PRIMARY OR SECONDARY SOURCE OF INCOME IS SELLING ITEMS ON EBAY: 1.3 MILLION.

ODD STAT OF THE MONTH

According to the 2003 Vatican yearbook, of the 295 reported sightings of Jesus or the Virgin Mary in various forms or on various objects in the 20th century, 11 were deemed "genuine."





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Aston Martin Rapide

Porsche Panamera

Fantastic Four

Behold Porsche's first sedan, the Panamera

Somewhere around the fourth lap on a racetrack in Porsche's new Panamera Turbo, standing on the pedal with all our weight, it occurred to us what makes this car so delectable: It's a sedan that handles like a real sports car, with the power and precision you expect from a Porsche. The eight-cylinder engine sounds like a lion tearing meat off a femur, with Wagner blaring in the background. Zero to 60 in four seconds in a four door? Yup. Top speed, 188 mph—that'll get you there on time. The Panamera, hitting showrooms as you read this, is the first-ever Porsche sedan. The brand's DNA is in the styling, with its arced roof, raked nose and aggressive stance. The car has some Porsche goodies as standard features, like launch control, which fires you off the line in a perfect sprint, and the seven-speed *Doppelkupplungsgetriebe* auto transmission. (We think the engineers picked that name just to screw with us.) A base Panamera with a 400-horsepower direct-injection 4.8-liter V8 will run you \$89,000. But we prefer the Turbo (\$132,600), upped to 500 horses. Stay tuned for a hybrid Panamera. Got a few more bucks to spend in these trying times? Aston Martin will put out its first true four door, the gorgeous Rapide (pictured, inset), early next year. For more on our Panamera test drive, go to playboy.com.

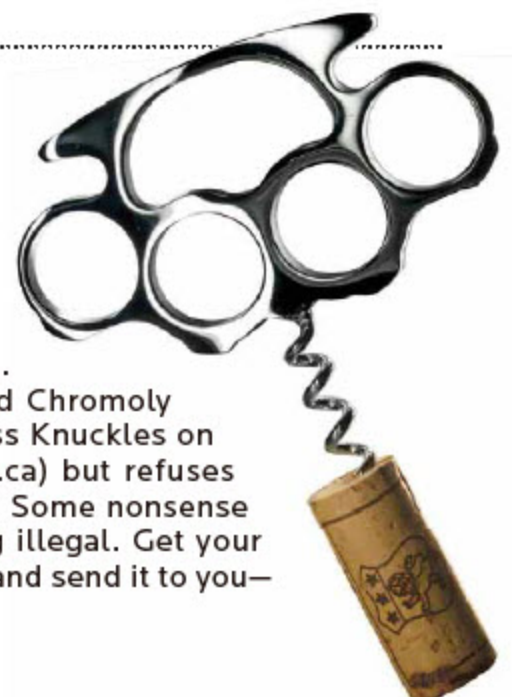
Sitting Pretty

We understand the urge to skate every waking moment. Still it's advisable that you sit once in a while. Just don't do it on anything even slightly subradical. Deckstools (\$150, deckstool.com) are made from retired skateboards screwed together—part chair, part sculpture, no two alike. Even when you're not pulling a McTwist, you're sitting on something that has.



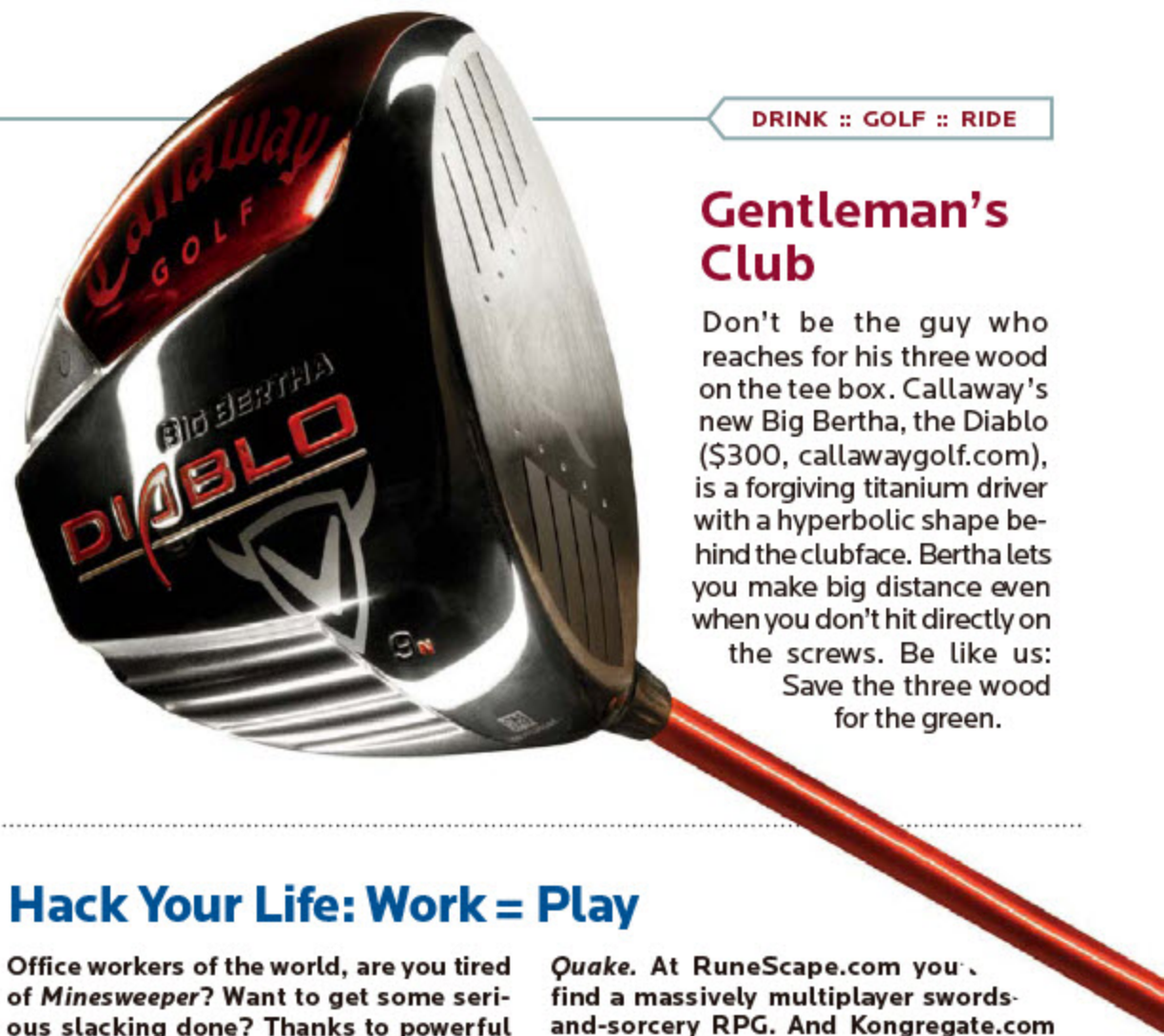
Put a Cork on It

Quick quiz: Is this a wine key? A set of brass knuckles? It's both, damn it. But here's where it gets weird. A Canadian company called Chromoly offers these Bourgeois Brass Knuckles on its website (\$90, chromoly.ca) but refuses to sell them in this country. Some nonsense about brass knuckles being illegal. Get your Canadian friend to buy one and send it to you—if only to stick it to the man.



Make Mine a Double

It's rare we single out a vodka for praise, but we'll make an exception for Double Cross (\$50, doublecrossvodka.com). Distilled seven times, then filtered through diamond dust, this smooth, balanced spirit works neat or, as we prefer it, muddled with jalapeño and blackpepper, then shaken over ice and strained.



Gentleman's Club

Don't be the guy who reaches for his three wood on the tee box. Callaway's new Big Bertha, the Diablo (\$300, callawaygolf.com), is a forgiving titanium driver with a hyperbolic shape behind the clubface. Bertha lets you make big distance even when you don't hit directly on the screws. Be like us: Save the three wood for the green.

Hack Your Life: Work = Play

Office workers of the world, are you tired of *Minesweeper*? Want to get some serious slacking done? Thanks to powerful computers and fast connections, your web browser is a portal to more than just videos of guys getting hit in the nuts. *Quakelive.com* offers a web-based version of the classic multiplayer first-person shooter

Quake. At *RuneScape.com* you'll find a massively multiplayer sword-and-sorcery RPG. And *Kongregate.com* offers a variety of games, from the addictive *Desktop Tower Defense* to the brilliantly absurd *Robot Dinosaurs That Shoot Beams When They Roar*. Make sure you turn the sound down on that last one.

Have Wheels, Will Travel

Biking instead of driving is great for you and the environment, but then you have to stash the thing on the other end. If you're looking for a more compact solution, check out Montague's Paratrooper (\$800, montagueco.com). It's the same vehicle our troops carry when they air-drop into Afghanistan or Iraq and need to make tracks in a hurry. It's a full-freight mountain bike that folds down to half its size in a jiffy, all without tools. In our experience it stashes as well under a desk as it does in the back of a Humvee.



What's the best way to respond when my girlfriend gives me the silent treatment? It's frustrating in part because half the time I have no idea what I did.—M.G., Dover, New Hampshire

*The silent treatment is the worst way to deal with conflict in a relationship—short of violence, adultery and calls to your mother—especially since any attempt to question your partner about why she is upset will only darken her mood. Why? Because women who dish out the silent treatment are more likely to believe boyfriends or husbands should know instinctively what they've done wrong. In the short term the silent treatment inflicts the desired emotional distress. A 2003 study found even brief shunning activates the part of the victim's brain that detects pain. But in the long term, says social psychologist Kip Williams, author of *Ostracism: The Power of Silence*, a woman won't get the response she wants. First, the target, because he can't get an explanation, usually concludes that the treatment is unjustified. Second, while he may try to figure out his transgression, he's likely to pretend the silence doesn't bother him. In some cases the treatment stirs a man's competitive instincts, provoking a counterattack of nods and grunts that leads to, as one commentator aptly describes it, "a power struggle in pain tolerance." Although Williams says there is no proven strategy to break the silence (one tragic case he documented lasted 40 years), your girlfriend would help the relationship if she gave you a time-out. You could suggest it: "I know you're angry, so let's take a break and talk about this in an hour." Then leave. Alternatively, you may deflate the power of the shunning if you go about your business, including having conversations with others. Many victims become so angry they attempt to provoke a response, sometimes with violence. That's not the way to go.*

A friend at the gym told me it's not necessary to stretch before exercise, that you can just go at it. Is that true?—L.M., Albuquerque, New Mexico

The latest thinking in exercise science is that "static" stretching, e.g., bending to touch your toes, not only doesn't do any good but weakens your muscles for as long as 30 minutes. Instead, many trainers now recommend "dynamic" stretching, or staying in motion. The idea is that light aerobics gradually raise your muscle temperature, which then dilates the blood vessels, allowing more oxygen to reach the tissues. The easiest method is to simply

PLAYBOY ADVISOR



I get turned on to the point of becoming short of breath and suffering vertigo whenever a man winks at me. This has occurred since my freshman year of college. A young man in my dorm regularly winked at me and I would immediately swoon and let out a moan. He told a few friends, and they did their best to make me miserable. Thankfully I met my husband when I became a senior. He winked at me once in the car—fortunately he was driving—and 18 years later he uses it to his advantage (and mine) in the bedroom. I still get knots when a man winks at me in public, but it seems to have fallen out of practice as a flirtation technique except among older men. Have you ever heard of anything like this?—R.M., Sacramento, California

Not until you wrote, although it isn't surprising. A wink can be powerful—it allows a man to indicate in an instant he wants you naked and has the confidence to get it done. It's also intimate. Even in a crowd, only you and he know of his interest. You may have a similar reaction to any aggressive, secretive, unmistakable sign that the game is on.

jog for five or 10 minutes. But other warm-ups—such as slow and controlled squats, lunges or kicking your own ass with your heel—can target specific muscles. A popular drill called Spider-Man involves crawling on all fours as if climbing a wall. Even golfers can benefit: One study found that those who do some dynamic stretching and take practice swings increase their club speed.

during the previous month. It made no difference whether the scientists discovered yeast on the man's tongue, suggesting saliva may disrupt the delicate balance of the vagina and allow the ever-present yeast there to grow unchecked. Researchers found no link between recurring infections and how often a woman has intercourse. Before you lose hope or share this with your wife, keep in mind that about

Has the Advisor ever heard of a premature-ejaculation fetish? My girlfriend gets turned on when I climax just prior to or seconds after penetration. She says the quicker I come the hotter she feels. Her routine is to use a vibrator while I stroke myself. After she has one or two orgasms, she wants me to lose control. Sometimes I'm able to climax within a few seconds, and she has a powerful orgasm. Is this as unusual as I think it is?—J.D., Miami, Florida

That's just your first orgasm, right? Many women fantasize that they are so enticing, their lover is overcome—men do it too, which is why women in porn movies shed their clothes at the drop of a zipper. It's tough for any guy to come on demand, even professionals, so you're doing well. With continued practice you'll be able to recognize when you're approaching the point of no return and keep yourself on the edge until she's ready to be wowed.

In May you shared your definition of *slut* ("a person of any gender who has the courage to lead life according to the radical proposition that sex is nice and pleasure is good for you"). That's a goal all of us should strive for. But from the male point of view, the best practical definition is "a woman who is having sex with everyone but me." From the female viewpoint, the best definition is "a woman ignoring boundaries I am unable to cross." When someone uses the term in a derogatory fashion, it usually involves frustration or envy on the part of the speaker.—N.E., Berlin, Germany

Thanks. You sure get around.

My wife insists my former habit of going down on her led to her frequent yeast infections. If it wasn't the bacteria in my saliva, then could my beard or some other factor have caused the infections? I'd like to reassure her.—T.B., Manchester, New Hampshire

We hate to say this, but it's possible you're the culprit. A 2003 study in which University of Michigan doctors monitored yeast levels in women and their partners found those who had recurring infections were more likely to have received cunnilingus

40 percent of women have nagging infections. This means there could easily be another cause, e.g., stress, lack of sleep, diet, tight panties. Desperate times call for desperate measures, so for now use a dental dam, a piece of thin latex you place over her vulva, when you go down on your wife. God willing, she'll keep getting infections and focus her attention elsewhere.

I'd like to host a hog roast but heard it is either the best pork you'll ever eat or more trouble than it's worth. What should I know before I make the attempt?—M.P., Washington, Indiana

There's more than one way to cook a hog, which explains the mixed reviews. A spit won't produce the most flavorful meat because the skin prevents you from adding seasoning or sauce, and even injecting marinade doesn't get the job done. So why do people use them? Because, says Bruce Frankel, a former chef who now runs *Spitjack.com* (800-755-5509), spinning a pig for hours while drinking beer and poking the coals with your buddies is a great time. He suggests an hour of cooking for every 10 pounds of pig and a pound of charcoal for every pound of meat. A more flavorful way to cook a hog is known as *la caja china*, or the Chinese box (see *lacajachina.com*). You butterfly the pig, splay it on a wire frame inside a wooden box and cover it with a coal-filled pan. As Frankel notes, splaying the pig makes it much easier to season, the box doesn't produce smoke, and the skin comes out crispy and the meat delicious.

A year ago I bought a house as an investment. The first tenants were three female college students. When I stopped by to collect the initial month's rent, we had a foursome. Next month, same thing. Month after that, same thing. But this time the girls said money was tight. I told them not to worry about it. The next month they gave me a month's rent but were still a month behind. Two months later, a foursome but no rent. I am 37, balding, short and a little overweight—I know the score. I've paid for sex before, and if the cost of these amazing encounters is having to eat the rent every few months, it's okay by me. But can I get in legal trouble here? Would this be considered prostitution? What if they started to withhold sex and rent? Would I have a problem evicting them, considering what I've been doing? I feel funny asking a lawyer about this.—M.K., Newark, New Jersey

Okay, we'll play along (our fantasy involves a sorority), but it sounds to us as if you own a whorehouse. If we're wrong and these young women have matriculated, they must be getting very good grades.

There is an ongoing argument at work regarding button-down collars. One attorney says the buttons should not be fastened when worn with ties. Another says they should always be fastened. A third says it's optional. Is there a correct answer?—E.P., Woodbury, New York

Yes. Never wear a button-down collar unbuttoned; it looks as if you got dressed in the dark or don't own a proper shirt. Button-down collars

work with or without a tie, but they are business casual and shouldn't be worn with a suit. As with most fashion "rules," some men can get away with it, but we've never thought it looks right.

In June a reader wrote in because he had been awoken by his wife simulating sex while asleep. I, too, move around so much during erotic dreams that I wake myself up. When I told my husband to feel free to jump on me anytime he caught me thrashing and moaning, I thought he would be excited. Instead he freaked out. Did I say something wrong? I'm not cheating on him.—M.G., Los Angeles, California

Ask your husband to read our answer to the next letter, which will help explain what's going on. We're not sure he should accept your invitation because people who are experiencing sleep activity can be difficult to rouse. He'd probably much rather have you awake so you can fully appreciate his skills.

For a few years I have been having orgasms while asleep, usually while I dream about masturbating. You wrote that people who "suffer" from sexual behavior in sleep are usually sleepwalkers or sleepwalkers. I am neither, and I find my dream-sex life very satisfying. I never heard anyone talking about this before so I brought it up with friends. The only other woman who admitted to having sleep orgasms was a co-worker who said she has been having them a lot since she started menopause. When she takes naps she worries her husband will walk in and find her moaning and writhing on the couch. What is going on here?—K.P., Grand Blanc, Michigan

Men have sleep orgasms (a.k.a. wet dreams) starting at puberty, but we hear fewer reports from women. You don't indicate how active you get in bed, but a recent study, ominously titled "Sex and Sleep: What Can Go Wrong?," lists a variety of unusual behaviors including "sexual seizures," which are characterized by moaning, shouting, masturbation and movement. At the extreme are people such as an Australian woman who would leave her house while asleep and have sex with strangers. (Her partner finally noticed her missing from bed and caught her in the act.) A team led by a Spanish neurologist proposes some people lack sufficient amounts of a chemical messenger that stifles the cognitive motor system during sleep. Sleep sex may also have a genetic component—you've quizzed your friends; how about your mom? Sleep activity of all types is more likely to occur when a person is overtired, under stress or taking certain medications.

My wife and I will be visiting the U.K. this fall. I'm sure most of the locals will have us pegged as Americans long before we open our mouths, but I would still like to stay low-key. What do we need to know to avoid being offensively American?—A.B., Bangor, Maine

There's nothing offensive about being American, of course—every nation produces its ugly travelers. As long as you are polite, considerate, curious and don't leave trash in your wake, you'll be fine. Rick Steves, who has spent

at least 100 days in Europe annually for the past 30 years (his guidebooks are available at *ricksteves.com*), says too many Americans spend their vacation peering through a viewfinder or a tour-bus window as if they were on a cultural safari. "Go as a guest; act like one, and you'll be treated like one," he says.

What's the protocol for reusing sex toys from a previous relationship? A few years back my girlfriend at the time was into anal play, so I purchased several butt plugs. My new girlfriend is also into anal, but I would hate to break out the toys and hear something like "Has that been up another girl's butt?" Is it acceptable to use sex toys across several relationships? For what it's worth, I have washed them after each use with warm water and soap.—E.J., Chicago, Illinois

Spring for new butt plugs, and let her see you unwrap them. Then go shopping; buying new toys together is half the fun of a new relationship. As we noted in April, you can mail in old sex toys to be recycled (see *recycleyoursextoy.com*).

Since when are the male genitalia referred to as "junk," as you describe them in May? I prefer "family jewels" or "penis and scrotum."—L.A., San Bernardino, California

Some linguists credit the slang to writer Ethan Mordden, who used it in a 1987 short story. We meant no disrespect to your stick and bangers.

What are you supposed to do with the citrus wedge or slice placed on the edge of a drink?—G.W., Honolulu, Hawaii

The wedge is designed as both a garnish and a flavor enhancer. You can set it aside (as you might parsley on a steak), give it a squeeze, drop it in the drink or place it on the bar or your napkin—whatever you prefer.

Unfortunately I can't say with authority how Carmen Electra plays with clothes hangers (May), but another fun method involves a skirt hanger. The two spring-loaded clamps work great on nipples. For double the fun, each partner should put on a hanger, face each other, wrap the top hooks together and lean away for a delightful hands-free nipple tug. Spring strength varies by manufacturer, so experiment with different hangers to find the best fit. If none is quite right or you're a single guy, testing at the store on a fingertip works well.—D.F., Houston, Texas

Thanks for the suggestion. We'll recognize you by your wife's wrinkled skirts.

All reasonable questions—from fashion, food and drink, stereotypes 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*, 680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611, or send e-mail by visiting our website at *playboyadvisor.com*. Our greatest-hits collection, *Dear Playboy Advisor*, is available in bookstores and online.



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PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: SETH MACFARLANE

A candid conversation with the not-so-family-type guy about crude humor (yes!), modern music (no!), getting high with Dad and why he wants to guest on Fox News

On its website, the Parents Television Council explains that *Family Guy* “depends heavily on oblique sexual innuendo and sexual themes such as incest, bestiality and pedophilia.” This description is meant to express disapproval, but for millions of Seth MacFarlane fans, innuendo is central to the show’s appeal, along with profanity, nudity, violence and musical numbers.

An animation phenom raised in Kent, Connecticut by two teachers and educated at the prestigious Rhode Island School of Design, MacFarlane, following an apprenticeship at Hanna-Barbera, signed a contract with Fox at the age of 24, making him the youngest executive producer in television. Fox, having revived prime-time animation a decade earlier with *The Simpsons*, debuted *Family Guy* after Super Bowl XXXIII in 1999, and 22 million people met the Griffins: oafish dad Peter and his wife, Lois, a rowdy former Miss Teen Rhode Island; teenagers Chris, a dim oval hated by schoolmates, and Meg, a homely blob disdained by her family; plus Brian, a cerebral dog who talks in a deep baritone and overindulges in alcohol, and baby Stewie, a devious tyrant who inexplicably has a theatrical British accent.

Three years later, with ratings for the show dropping, Fox canceled *Family Guy*. But

repeats on the Cartoon Network drew stellar ratings compared with other cable shows, and DVD boxed sets sold more than 3 million copies. So, like the villain in a cheesy horror film, *Family Guy* rose again: Executives at Fox changed course, and the show returned to the air in May 2005, three years after cancellation. MacFarlane signed another contract that included a second animated show for Fox, *American Dad*. Last year he renewed with the network for a reported \$100 million, making him the highest-paid writer-producer in television.

Fans love *Family Guy* for its unpredictable mix of the puerile and the surreal: In the middle of an episode, Peter may get into an extended fight with a chicken—one of the show’s signature gags—or warble a bouncy number called “You Have AIDS.” (After the show aired, the executive director of AIDS Project Los Angeles called the tune “inexcusable.”) For those who prefer waterboarding jokes, *American Dad* tackles political themes with a frat-boyish flavor, centering, of course, around a terrorism-obsessed CIA agent and a flamboyant extraterrestrial. MacFarlane, 35, unmarried and with a string of glamorous Hollywood ex-girlfriends, enjoys the limelight, sometimes even acting in such shows as *Gilmore Girls* and *Star Trek: Enterprise*.

This fall MacFarlane will get his third show on the air when *Family Guy* spins off *The Cleveland Show*, starring the Griffins’ African American neighbors. Contributing editor Rob Tannenbaum met MacFarlane in L.A. for three separate interviews. “His office isn’t what you’d expect,” Tannenbaum reports. “There’s a keyboard, stacks of classical CDs and film scores, movie posters—it’s almost like TV isn’t his first love. Aside from his perverse sense of humor, he’s almost anachronistic in terms of his interests and values.

“He left his office for a meeting and offered to get together again that night at a jazz club in the Valley. With a self-conscious laugh he warned he might be sweaty when I saw him because he’d be coming from a tap dance lesson—As if I haven’t given you enough reason so far to think I’m gay.’ The key to MacFarlane is his resolve, whether he’s learning tap or writing a show that is, as he said admiringly about astronomer Carl Sagan, ‘an antidote to the superstition, fundamentalism and mysticism that runs rampant in this country.’ MacFarlane is a scientist and a moralist in the guise of a fearless comedian.”

PLAYBOY: This year is the 10th anniversary of *Family Guy*’s debut. What do you remember about that first night?



“We’ve been criticized for being too crude and lowbrow. What in the world is wrong with that? There’s something puritanical about people who object to fart jokes or shit jokes. That kind of laughter releases the healthiest endorphins.”



“There’s always a desire with new animated shows to differentiate them from *The Simpsons* because it’s so iconic. I began *Family Guy* with the attitude, Let’s start from what *The Simpsons* has done and take it to the next level.”



“Ultimately Stewie will either be gay or be a very unhappy repressed heterosexual. It also explains why he’s so hell-bent on killing Lois. He has a lot of aggression, which comes from uncertainty about his orientation.”

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIZUNO

MACFARLANE: The show debuted after the 1999 Super Bowl. It was a dull game, really one-sided. I was fired from working on that first season, so I was excited to be out of my office. And I was annoyed it was such a lousy game. That was back when Fox actually spent money—when the word *economy* didn't come up in every fucking sentence. Maybe that's why Fox put George Bush in office, because it knew he would ruin the economy and Fox would have an excuse not to spend money. [laughs] Execs flew a lot of their talent to the Super Bowl on the Fox jet: Jason Priestley, Ben Stiller, Sarah Michelle Gellar, Jennifer Love Hewitt. I was in awe. I couldn't really walk up and talk to Jason Priestley. Now I would be a little less intimidated.

PLAYBOY: Did you watch that first *Family Guy* broadcast?

MACFARLANE: I watched on a Watchman on the bus back to the hotel. I was sick of it by then. I knew every joke by heart.

PLAYBOY: Having the Super Bowl as a lead-in is a pretty safe bet.

MACFARLANE: I was prepped that the show was going to be huge. The next day we got a call from the network that the show had done huge numbers. The following week the ratings dropped off a bit, as we expected, but it still did great. It continued to do extremely well airing after *The Simpsons*. Then Fox got overconfident and moved it to Thursday night, and that's when all the trouble started. That was the beginning of the end of the show.

PLAYBOY: What shows were you up against on Thursday nights?

MACFARLANE: A lot of stiff competition. It was up against *Friends*, *Survivor*, *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire* at the height of its popularity, the moon landing, the Olympics, the Kennedy assassination, 9/11.

PLAYBOY: It's almost as though the network hated you.

MACFARLANE: The strange thing was the network liked the show. It pulled it off the air because nobody was watching the damn thing—when nobody's watching a TV show, it generally doesn't stay on the air. But it stayed on longer than it would otherwise have, partly because we went out of our way to be respectful and to be team players, and I think that was rewarded.

PLAYBOY: The first episode—which you wrote—has a pretty shocking scene: Peter Griffin is watching *Philadelphia*, and he thinks it's a comedy. When Tom Hanks says "I have AIDS," Peter laughs. Was the AIDS joke a deliberate way of setting a tone for the show?

MACFARLANE: I think that was a way to really stick it to those arrogant bastards with HIV. No, that was a gag from my student film in college, which was sort of a rough version of *Family Guy*. It got a huge laugh at the senior screening. It wasn't a conscious decision to shock; I just thought it was funny. And you

know, that's certainly not a joke you would see on *The Simpsons*. That show had taken edginess in prime-time animation to a certain level. I was trying to take it to the next level. The AIDS joke is one instance.

There was one joke we had to cut out of the pilot. When Peter is taking communion at church, he takes a sip of wine and says, "This is the blood of Christ? Man, that guy must have been wasted 24/7." Fox made us take that out, so we put it in another episode. Then we found out the network wanted to take it out just for the premiere and was going to put it back in for reruns. So that gag is now in two episodes.

PLAYBOY: What would you say is your emotional age?

MACFARLANE: Maybe 97.

PLAYBOY: Really? It seems a lot more adolescent than that.

MACFARLANE: Yeah, it's sort of a combination of 97 and 12. If somebody farts, I can get to laughing so hard I can't breathe. But I sure do love the music of Nelson Riddle. I love Woody Allen movies, and I love watching *Jackass*. We've been criticized for being too crude and lowbrow on *Family Guy*. What in the world is wrong with that? That kind of laughter releases the healthiest endorphins. There's something puritanical about people who object to fart jokes or shit jokes. It's that puritanical idea that you shouldn't have sex because it feels good—and that's a sin. How can anything that makes you laugh that hard be bad in any way unless it's harming somebody? Farts are good; they clean you out.

PLAYBOY: Is there a lot of farting in the writers' room?

MACFARLANE: It happens once in a while. At one point one of the writers scrambled to his feet and started to run out of the room. He was clearly trying to outrun his own fart, but he was too late, and he let loose. It was awful tough to get back to work after that.

PLAYBOY: In order of importance, where do each of these rank in your world of comedy: urination, defecation, masturbation.

MACFARLANE: I would say defecation, masturbation, urination. The variety of defecation jokes you can make is a bit fuller than the variety of masturbation jokes. And urination jokes don't have quite as much bite as the other two. That sounds ridiculous.

PLAYBOY: How did the 97-year-old part of you get interested in show tunes?

MACFARLANE: My parents exposed me to all the classic musicals when I was a kid. I was about 13 when the Woody Allen movie *Radio Days* came out, and from that I got into big band music.

PLAYBOY: Musicals and big band music? Those are unusual passions for a kid.

MACFARLANE: Look, my favorite movie is *The Sound of Music*.

PLAYBOY: Musicals, big band music and Julie Andrews: How is it you're not gay?

MACFARLANE: [Shrugs] I like vaginas.

PLAYBOY: But it's fair to say you weren't like other kids.

MACFARLANE: I was a *Star Trek* nerd in high school. I wasn't exactly the most outgoing person. In college I started getting into Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin, and by extension into Cole Porter, Rodgers and Hart, and arrangers like Nelson Riddle and Billy May. My friends in college were into indie bands: three chords, a guy yelling into a mike, no grace, no buoyancy, nothing that showed any complex musicianship. People have tried to get me into things like Radiohead. There's no fun to it. It's not exciting or surprising.

PLAYBOY: What was the last rock band you liked?

MACFARLANE: Queen. That's pretty sad, isn't it? My friends will flay me for saying this, but sometimes I think Queen exceeds the Beatles as far as musical achievement.

PLAYBOY: You're pretty alienated from contemporary culture.

MACFARLANE: I feel as though I'm living on a different planet. It always seemed as though everyone was having a great fucking time on those old recordings. If you watch Sinatra, Vic Damone or Mel Tormé sing, or if you watch Gene Kelly dance, it's all about looking effortless, like it's happening for the first time and they're there purely for the enjoyment of the audience. Now it's the reverse. If I watch Christina Aguilera, she's working very hard, and it doesn't look like she's having fun. She's sweating, and she looks as if she might possibly take a shit onstage.

I was always fascinated by orchestration, which is a dead art. When we started *Family Guy* I insisted we use an orchestra for every episode, which *The Simpsons* has been doing for years. *Family Guy*, *American Dad* and now *The Cleveland Show* all use anywhere from a 40- to a 60-piece orchestra every week.

PLAYBOY: Your mom was a teacher. What did you learn from her?

MACFARLANE: That even if you harass a boy with polio in high school, you can still grow up to be a good person. [laughs]

PLAYBOY: Your mom did that?

MACFARLANE: She didn't just make fun of the kid with polio; she picked the rubber things off the bottom of his crutches when he leaned them up against the wall during fifth period—which you could say is either a blatant abuse of the handicapped or a delightfully wicked sense of humor.

PLAYBOY: Why can't it be both?

MACFARLANE: Right. Isn't that treating the handicapped just like other people? I bet that kid never felt like he fit in more than he did that day.

PLAYBOY: So your mother is kind of a prankster?

MACFARLANE: She's very liberal in her comedic taste. When my parents first got married, my dad would buy *PLAYBOY* and hide it under the bed. My mom would



THE FAMILY GUY CREW GETS IN TOUCH WITH ITS INNER PLAYBOY.

find it, and she'd cut out all the breasts and vaginas and tape them under his napkin at dinner. [laughs] Yeah, she's a piece of work.

PLAYBOY: What else went on in your house when you were growing up?

MACFARLANE: There was a lot of swearing. My parents call me after *Family Guy* airs and tell me whether they liked it. Sometimes they say, "It was fucking hilarious." Sometimes they say, "It wasn't as funny as it was last week." After the episode in May with Lauren Conrad, my mother said, "I always thought Lauren Conrad was a bitch, but she impressed the shit out of me last night."

PLAYBOY: Your family sounds pretty unusual.

MACFARLANE: I had a relatively normal, peaceful, well-executed upbringing. Not much of it was dark or dysfunctional.

PLAYBOY: Do you think your comic instincts are dark?

MACFARLANE: They're dark in a superficial sense. If we make fun of the handicapped, it's not because I was raped by a handicapped person. It's just because on a superficial level it's funny. It also skews into the more buoyant comedy we do, especially the musical numbers. There's a lightness in the tone that deliberately works against the dark, politically incorrect humor on the show.

PLAYBOY: The musical numbers put to use your love of show tunes, and animation fits well with absurdity.

MACFARLANE: We had an episode in which Peter and Lois get into a fistfight. If you saw that on *Everybody Loves Raymond*, if Ray and Debra got into a fistfight, it

would be horrifying. But even on *The Simpsons*, if Homer struck Marge, it would seem as though it were over the line.

PLAYBOY: What's the difference? Why can Peter hit Lois, but Homer can't hit Marge?

MACFARLANE: It's a tonal thing. Our style of comedy is a little more bizarre, a little more removed from the laws of physics than *The Simpsons'* comedy is. At one point we had a script in which Lois cheats on Peter, and there was a lot of uneasiness from the network and the studio. People didn't like the idea that Lois was cheating. Never mind that Peter punched Lois in the face at least twice before in the series.

PLAYBOY: To go back to your parents, would it be fair to say they were permissive?

MACFARLANE: They weren't lax; they were progressive. They're very rational people. Their take was, "If you have sex in this house, make sure you use a rubber. And don't do it in our bed." [laughs]

PLAYBOY: So what were the rules?

MACFARLANE: There was never any of that *Cosby Show* discipline. I remember my parents saying they thought the Huxtables were terrible parents and treated their kids like shit, always punishing them severely for minor infractions. They thought Clair Huxtable was a flat-out cunt. [laughs] My parents had strong feelings about the Huxtable family.

PLAYBOY: The "420" episode in April made the case for legalizing pot. What did your parents tell you about drugs?

MACFARLANE: Their policy on drug use was very enlightened. "We know you're going to want to try stuff; it's only nat-

ural. We just ask that you do it in this house." As a result we didn't do much, because the risk wasn't there.

PLAYBOY: Did you get high with your parents?

MACFARLANE: Not until about four years ago. My sister and I brought pot to my parents' house around Christmas, and it was very entertaining. My father's a brilliant guy, very thoughtful, which is always funny when you mix it with weed. He said, "Seth, this is the first time you and I have been high together. My God, I've got to write about this in my journal!" My mom was passed out with her face on a potted plant. It was not the first time for either of them.

A year later I had a terrible experience. I was working at my house with another *Family Guy* writer, and we were smoking pot all afternoon. He left, and I called Pink Dot, the grocery delivery service, and ordered some Chips Ahoy! cookies. By the time the guy got there I was terrified to go to the door. I thought there was something wrong with my swallowing, so I drank some water, lay down and then thought to myself, Jesus Christ, what am I doing lying down motionless? That's how people get paralyzed! Then I went through the "something went wrong and I'm going to be this way for the rest of my life" phase. I haven't really smoked since then.

PLAYBOY: The levels of THC in weed are so much higher now.

MACFARLANE: Yeah, that doesn't help anybody. Except Pink Dot and Nabisco.

PLAYBOY: Your family's ancestry is Scottish. What's the most Scottish thing about you?

MACFARLANE: Probably my tolerance for liquor. It's quite high.

PLAYBOY: How high?

MACFARLANE: I can have a large amount of Jack Daniel's and still function and speak clearly. I think there's a word for that. I forget what it is.

PLAYBOY: Does it start with *alcohol* and end with *-ic*?

MACFARLANE: [Laughs] That may be it. I prefer to call myself a traditionalist drinker.

PLAYBOY: Why Jack Daniel's?

MACFARLANE: I used to drink scotch, but then my casting director gave me a book about Sinatra, *The Way You Wear Your Hat*, and I read that he swore by Jack Daniel's. I actually like it better than scotch, and the hangover isn't quite as bad. If you pace yourself you can maintain a pretty substantial buzz with Jack. I mean, I did *Inside the Actors Studio*, a five-hour taping, and I rode that fucking horse pretty much the whole way.

PLAYBOY: Ever gotten a DUI?

MACFARLANE: No. If I'm going to be drinking a lot I'll hire a car. Although when I'm sober I rip around in my car like a bat out of hell. Only when I've had a few drinks do I follow all the traffic rules. Analyze that as you will.

PLAYBOY: So take that, Mothers Against Drunk Driving. People drive better when they've had a few drinks.

MACFARLANE: I think there's some truth to that. If you get pulled over for a violation sober, you get a ticket. If you've had a few, you'll go to jail for the same violation. So why wouldn't you drive more carefully when you're drinking?

PLAYBOY: So if we required teenagers to drink before they drive—

MACFARLANE: It would be safer for all of us.

PLAYBOY: What kind of grades did you get as a kid?

MACFARLANE: I knew from pretty much the age of two that I wanted a career in animation. Anything that wasn't about animation felt like a waste of time. I got great grades in things I liked and lousy grades in things I didn't. I was anywhere from a B to a C-minus in science and history, which is ironic because I'm now a big supporter of the importance of science in schools—for other people. I want to make sure when I'm 50 years old and the big flu hits, somebody's working on my fucking antibiotics. And there better god-damn well be a spaceship before I croak.

PLAYBOY: So how did you get started in animation?

MACFARLANE: It was a mystery to me. I thought you had to be a citizen of the magical kingdom of Hanna-Barbera to create animation. My parents, being supportive, pulled together spare change and bought an eight-millimeter movie camera, which allowed me to produce animation frame by frame. I just kept experimenting. I wanted to work for Disney. That's why I went to art school: to be trained to be employed by Disney. I would have

stuck with it had *The Simpsons* not come out and completely changed the animation playing field.

PLAYBOY: As an animator, what did you find so radical about *The Simpsons*?

MACFARLANE: Once you learn the basics, timing is the thing that separates great animators from mediocre ones. You have to know exactly how many in-between drawings will make an action funny. *The Simpsons* reinvented animation timing for television. Its slapstick is funny because it doesn't have a lot of squash and stretch; it isn't cartoony. If Homer Simpson falls, you think, Shit, this guy may actually be hurt. You don't get that sense when Bugs Bunny beats Elmer Fudd over the head with his own rifle.

PLAYBOY: Did you ever aspire to work on *The Simpsons*?

MACFARLANE: I was more interested in following in its footsteps. A slew of new animated shows have been canceled, like *Sit Down, Shut Up*, and none of them learned from *The Simpsons*. There's always a desire with new animated shows to differentiate them from *The Simpsons* because it's so iconic. I began *Family Guy* with the attitude,

*When I'm sober I rip
around in my car like a bat
out of hell. Only when I've
had a few drinks do I follow
all the traffic rules. Analyze
that as you will.*

Let's start from what *The Simpsons* has done and hopefully take it to the next level.

PLAYBOY: One of the criticisms of *Family Guy* is that it's not very original.

MACFARLANE: Why would we say "Let's start from where *The Flintstones* left off?" That would be stupid. The animated shows that succeed are the ones that emulate *The Simpsons*. *King of the Hill* applied a lot more production rules from *The Simpsons* than you'd think, as many as *Family Guy*.

PLAYBOY: How much do you owe Matt Groening?

MACFARLANE: The guy created a new incarnation of what was a dead medium and opened the door for all of us to have a career. I owe him a great deal.

PLAYBOY: What do you owe him? A beer? A car? A house?

MACFARLANE: It'd be more in the line of a house. But he's also truly one of the kindest guys, very humble. He takes his enormous success with such class. I talk with him a few times a year. We don't pal around, but we have a friendly relationship and a lot of mutual respect.

PLAYBOY: But *The Simpsons* has taken a few shots at *Family Guy*. In 2002 a joke in

one episode implied that Peter Griffin is a clone of Homer Simpson.

MACFARLANE: Look, there are similarities between Peter and Homer. There are also similarities between Peter and Jackie Gleason. We're ripping off Ralph Kramden, but I figure *The Flintstones* did it before me, so it's okay. I don't take those *Simpsons* jokes as anything more than friendly ribbing. If I did it would make me a huge hypocrite, because God knows *Family Guy* has shit on so many celebrities.

PLAYBOY: The characters you voice do a lot of singing on the show. How good a musician are you?

MACFARLANE: I've played piano for about 15 years. I wrote a musical number called "Down Syndrome Girl" for an episode that will air next year. Stewie sings it to Chris when Chris is getting ready for his date with a girl who has Down syndrome.

PLAYBOY: "Down Syndrome Girl," huh?

MACFARLANE: Yeah, it's a bouncy Broadway number.

PLAYBOY: Will Down syndrome advocacy groups be offended?

MACFARLANE: The joke is that the character is also a bitch. Chris is dominated by this incredibly pushy, controlling girl with Down syndrome. I actually think they'll appreciate it. It's funny and not disrespectful. But there is one episode we did this year that Fox won't air.

PLAYBOY: Why is that?

MACFARLANE: We did an abortion story. Lois is asked to be a surrogate for a couple she knew in college, and after she's implanted with the embryo, the couple is killed in a car accident. The Griffins can't afford another child, which provides a basis for conflict. The entire third act is one long discussion among the family about whether or not to have the procedure. The word we've gotten is that Fox read the script and doesn't want to air it. But to their credit, the network folks are letting us produce it. They reserve the right not to air it, but they're letting us take it through the production process, and it will be released on DVD.

PLAYBOY: Why not put up a fight? You have a lot of power.

MACFARLANE: There have been regimes at Fox in the past I would have done that with. Kevin Reilly, the network chief, is not a snap-judgment guy. There's no doubt in my mind they did their homework as far as what kind of fallout they'd get and whether it's worth it.

PLAYBOY: You're unusually forgiving for a creative person.

MACFARLANE: I like to think of myself as rational and calm. I've made a stink about some things. In season six we did a joke at the expense of *The Simpsons*, a kind of Hitchcockian thing we thought was hilarious: Quagmire tackles Marge, they sleep together and then go back to the Simpsons' house; Homer walks in, and you hear gunshots. The network thought we were saying, "Yeah, fuck them. Kill *The*

(continued on page 118)

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APOCALYPSE 2012

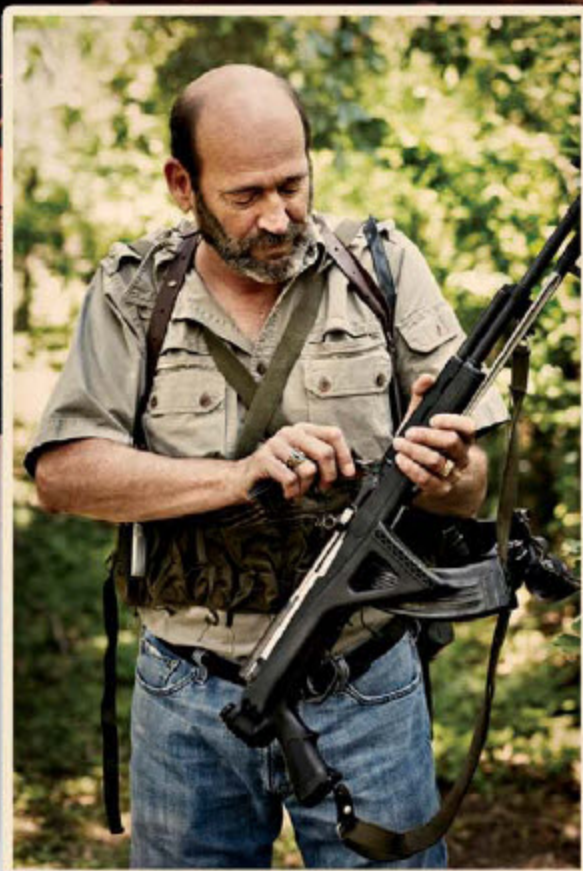
BY FRANK OWEN

ACCORDING TO ANCIENT MAYAN PROPHECIES, THE WORLD WILL END THREE SHORT YEARS FROM NOW. EARTHQUAKES, PESTILENCE AND REVOLUTION WILL BRING HUMANITY TO ITS KNEES. ACROSS THE GLOBE, THOUSANDS HAVE ALREADY BEGUN TO PREPARE

For me, being prepared for 2012 is a stress reliever. I spend an average of \$200 to \$300 per month on my supplies. I've been training myself in what I call frontier living—dehydrating, canning, preserving, cooking without modern appliances. Last weekend I started decorating our attic (almost 3,000 square feet) to store my reserve because people I know are getting suspicious of the amount of 'hurricane' supplies I keep. I'll never be Martha Stewart, but I feel very good about the variety and quantity I have amassed. I believe in the three Gs of preparedness: God, guns and groceries."—Susan Skains, Texas Gulf Coast

Dressed in blue jeans and a red short-sleeve shirt, Steve Pace stands guard atop a bucolic hill on the outskirts of Poplar Bluff in the Missouri bootheel. The scene is as rural as it gets; there's nothing out here but rolling hills and big sky. A lonely sentinel with a shiny silver revolver strapped to his waist, the retired U.S. Army sergeant scans the wooded horizon with a pair of binoculars for signs of the coming cataclysm. He sees things others don't—the apocalyptic omens that, he says, are everywhere if you know how to connect the dots.

Pace is a lean and leathery 55-year-old who looks a bit like Sean Connery but speaks in a thick, crusty rural accent. He gives me a tour of his solidly constructed 1950s bungalow on a quiet tree-lined



Retired Army sergeant Steve Pace has stockpiled canned food, gold and silver, a water-filtration system, a radiation suit and a whole lot of guns and ammo.



cul-de-sac, where he lives with his ailing mom and his third wife, Martha, who works as a secretary at the local high school. Three years ago Pace moved here to Campbell—a town of fewer than 2,000 people that's known as the peach capital of Missouri—from Fayetteville, Arkansas (population 70,000) because he thought it was getting too crowded. "I have this fear of becoming just a number, losing my identity, becoming just another face in the crowd," he says.

Displayed on Pace's dining room table is a collection of weapons: an assault rifle, a shotgun, numerous handguns, hunting knives and enough ammo to start a small war. Alongside the arms are gas masks, antiradiation pills and about \$10,000 worth of gold and silver. The gold and silver will come in handy when paper money becomes worthless, which it already has, according to Pace. It's just that people don't know it yet. Don't call him a survivalist, though: "To me a survivalist is some white supremacist living up in the mountains somewhere. I'm not a survivalist. I'm a preparer."

And there's a lot to prepare for, according to Pace, who anticipates a world in the not too distant future where "you'll need a wheelbarrow full of dollars to buy a loaf of bread, just like in Zimbabwe." Catastrophic climate change will have swamped the coastal cities. ("You'll want to be at least 300 feet above sea level.") Law and order will have broken down. ("You'll want to stay away from the population centers to avoid the mobs.") And food will be scarce. ("If we have a major crop failure, millions of

people will starve.") But what Pace fears most is a terrorist nuke that could destroy America's electrical grid: "If they really wanted to disrupt America, an airburst nuke would provide an electromagnetic pulse 300 miles wide that would probably cascade the rest of the system. Without electricity we've really got a problem."

Whatever happens, Pace intends to be ready. "In my opinion 2012 is the year of collapse," he says. "The perfect storm approaching is a conglomeration of crescendos. The financial collapse, political corruption, natural disaster, terrorism and resource scarcity will culminate in wars and revolution."

Pace is not alone. In the past few years a growing number of citizens across the globe—survivalists, conspiracy theorists,



Potassium iodide pills, popular among 2012ers preparing for the apocalypse, help the body ward off the effects of radiation.

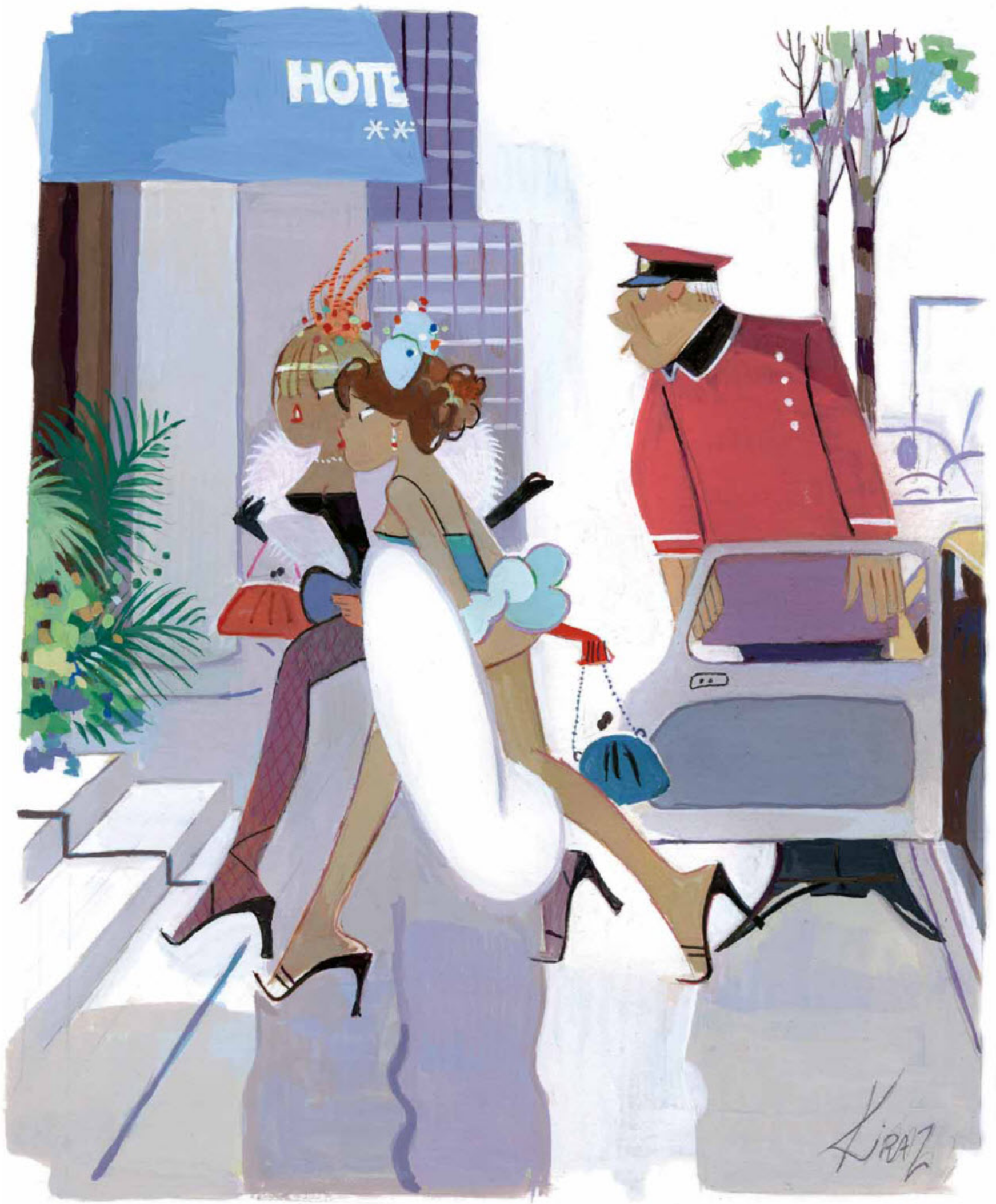
A GROWING NUMBER OF CITIZENS HAVE BECOME FIXATED ON DECEMBER 21, 2012 AS EOTWAWKI—"END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT."



alternative religion seekers, former military officers, UFO buffs, hard-core Bible-thumpers, ordinary housewives who, post-Katrina, don't trust the government to save their loved ones if a disaster occurs—have become fixated on December 21, 2012 as EOTWAWKI ("end of the world as we know it"). The Mayan long-count calendar supposedly predicts 2012 as the year in which a 5,000-year cycle of civilization will come to an abrupt halt. The Mayan civilization, a sophisticated culture of temples and cities that flourished in what is now Mexico, mysteriously collapsed around the ninth century. The Mayans have been a source of fascination for spiritual Western tourists since the Beats, particularly William Burroughs, who peppered his novels with references to Mayan timekeeping. The idea that Mayans predicted the world would end in 2012 has been around since at least the 1980s, when writer and 2012 guru José Argüelles popularized the concept with his book *The Mayan Factor*.

For any number of reasons the 2012 meme has caught on. The media, in documentaries such as Disinfo.com's *2012: Science or Superstition* (continued on page 106)





"Room 422. It's an emergency."

The Hills Are Alive



Heidi Montag gets real

Certain things in life just go together: chocolate and peanut butter, death and taxes, TMZ and Britney. But no two names are more closely linked than the most addictive couple on *The Hills*: Heidi Montag and her husband, Spencer Pratt, the show's entertaining archvillain. We asked Spencer if he'd like to interview his wife on the subject of her appearance in *PLAYBOY*. We didn't have to ask twice.

SPENCER: Heidi, look at you. You're in *PLAYBOY*. Let's make this the most famous interview ever.

HEIDI: You know it, baby. [*multiple fist bumps*]

SPENCER: Okay. If people knew the real Heidi, how would she be different from the girl on *The Hills* or *I'm a Celebrity...Get Me Out of Here!* or whatever?

HEIDI: I wouldn't be different. That's the thing. I have cameras on me 24/7, and I love it. I want it. I can't help being who I am. I laugh so hard when I read "Oh, they're the fakest couple







on the planet." We've had our ups and downs, Spencer, but we've done it all with the cameras on, and now we're doing it with the cameras off. Nothing is different. We're both outgoing; we say what we want to say and just happen to be more in the public eye than most couples. We've been together more than three years and have spent practically every minute together. If we were fake, that would have been exposed by now, don't you think?

SPENCER: And what about all those bozos talking shit about you—the Chelsea Handlers of the world. Is that ever hard for you?

HEIDI: I just roll my eyes and move on. First of all, it's so much fun that people know who I am and actually care enough to talk. I'm turning 23, from a tiny town in Colorado. This is exciting for me. We love the *Soup* guy [Joel McHale, host of the weekly comedy show on E!]. God bless him, he's making us famous. As for other women, if they aren't hating on you, then you're not doing anything right. If women aren't jealous of you, talking about you and cutting you down, then you're the nerd, and I would never want to be that.

SPENCER: Look at how many people follow you on Twitter, baby. It's close to half a million and growing every second.

HEIDI: Twitter rocks. The millions of people waiting for season six of *The Hills* love us. And it's not about Lauren Conrad, because she's not even on the show this season. Which is fine with me.

SPENCER: You're a rock star, Heidi. Don't forget that. We made our music video [for the song "BlackOut"] on the beach for about a dollar this year, and it went to number six on iTunes in the U.S. and number one in Canada. [*fist bumps*] That's money in your pocket! Dollar for dollar, I bet you made more than Lady GaGa this year even though she has a number one record. "Oh, Heidi Montag has no talent!"—my fucking ass! If you have no talent, then I don't know what talent is. You must be the most talented untalented person on earth. [*leans in for a kiss*] Take a bite! [*They kiss. Spencer pauses to check several cell phones and PDAs. They kiss again as he texts.*]

HEIDI: [*Clearly annoyed*] Spencer! Okay, I have a question for you: How many phones do you have?

SPENCER: I have one...two [*takes phones out*], three, four—four with me today. The Nokia N95 is for video content, and the BlackBerry is best for e-mails because they get pushed the fastest. The iPhone is for my blogging and to tap TMZ, Perez



Hilton or *Us Weekly*, and the Sidekick is for my Twitter army—400,000 and growing. If I mix these gadgets up, business will shut down for the day.

HEIDI: How many phone calls do you get a day?

SPENCER: A thousand, maybe more, and I pick up every call. People probably think I'm kidding, but if you're

reading this, try us at 323-767-8139, or go to saynow.com to listen to recordings of the calls. People have watched us on *The Hills* for five seasons and they want to reach out and be part of us.

If you had to send two or three clips from the show into outer space to represent the human species

to alien life-forms, what moments would you choose?

HEIDI: Well, your proposing to me was obviously a personal favorite. Oh, and the one when I first met you and you were saying you wanted to go on naked picnics and marry this other girl and all that stuff. That's funny to look at now.



See more of Heidi at club.playboy.com.

SPENCER: That was the Patrón Platinum talking.

HEIDI: There are a few moments I'd like to see blasted into space forever. Like when you apologized to Lauren Conrad for the sex-tape rumors so she would come to the wedding, when we know for a fact she did have a sex tape. [Editor's note: Con-

rad and other cast members have denied any sex tape exists.]

SPENCER: I would have said anything so you could have your dream princess wedding. I thought you wanted to have your old best friend there, so that's why I sacrificed every cost to make sure you were happy. But I was lying about being apologetic,

and I hate lying. And then she tried to make me the scapegoat, America's bad guy, which is an easy sell. I'm cool with that. Yes, I facilitated the rumor, but it was true. Lauren was acting like she was little miss perfect goody two-shoes while [her ex-boyfriend] Jason Wahler was trying (concluded on page 98)



MY PURSUIT OF WOMEN

THE HILLIKER CURSE

BY
JAMES ELLROY

HE FINDS HER AT LAST. THE ONE.

AMERICAN TABLOID HITS BIG-TIME. L.A.
CONFIDENTIAL FILLS THEATERS. CRACKS
DEVELOP. GHOSTS RUSH BACK IN.

IN THE BEST-SELLING AUTHOR'S
THIRD INSTALLMENT OF HIS MULTI-
PART MEMOIR, HE GETS ALL HE EVER
WANTED AND PAYS WITH HIS SANITY

The women's faces evaporated. The march of *Them* stopped at *Her*. She was sui generis. I took immediate note.

She slid into a booth at the Pacific Dining Car. Her journalist ex-boyfriend was interviewing me. I was jet-lagged and raw. My L.A. trips always scared me and confirmed my retreat. Helen said she felt surreal. Four tooth extractions and a painkiller buzz. She said God had spoken to her—you must begin your life's work.

She was 33. She was small and fit. She wore slick-soled shoes and moved with deft pivots. She had light brown hair and blue eyes. Her glasses were too big. Her clothes were cut too trim.

I talked about myself. Helen hadn't heard of me. The ex-boyfriend tried to brief her. Helen acted bored. She wore too much lipstick. *Take off your glasses and dig on me, please.*

The ex-boyfriend gobbled his steak. I ignored my food and eyeballed Helen. She complained about her teeth. She took off her glasses and rubbed her jaw.

There's the softness. There's the God sense. There's the proportionate hurt and pizzazz.

I concocted some one-liners. Helen said she had to split. She cited a boyfriend and sore gums. I stood up and thanked her for coming. Helen studied me.

XXXXX

The brood den was fall-winter cozy. I was completing a new novel and sharing bed space with my ex-dog. My ex-wife got custody. Barko bunked with me weekends. Women weren't calling. My recent marriage had created a phone slump. I talked to my ex-wife's dog in the dark.

I miss Barko and look forward to our heavenly reunion. He was a homicidal bull terrier with an evil yen for human females. I gave him a *veeery* deep voice. We sprawled together and discussed Helen Knode.

Her ex-boyfriend had fed

PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES IMBROGNO

me the info. Barko and I riffed off the established facts.

She wrote for the *L.A. Weekly*. It was a counterculture rag fueled by lovelorn singles postings and prostitution ads. Helen's gig was bad-girl critic. She reviewed films, wrote features and penned a memoir column entitled *Weird Sister*. It was tell-all/polemic. Attack the right, decry gender bias, ballyhoo sex as politics.

Her people were Texans in the oil biz. She was the eldest of four. Dad squandered the family fortune and pushed Mom to Splitsville. Helen spent her late teen years in Kansas City and Lawrence. She lettered in tennis at KU. She got a master's degree at Cornell and played cowgirl cutup. Paris was next. *Woo! Woo! It's Hurricane Hélène!*

She's rug-burned from rambunctious ruts and sordid sorties at the Sorbonne! She's fragging frisson-frazzled frogs en masse! She wears a black beret and mainlines espresso! *Four guys in one night?* I dug it, but didn't want to believe it. Barko tormented me with that.

I was less than obsessed and much more than tweaked. *Work* obsessed me. I was reliving L.A., '58. My corrupt-cop hero was torqued on a murderous carhop. She was equal parts ex-girlfriend Glenda and Swedish soprano Anne Sofie von Otter. I stared at a poster of the mesmeric mezzo and time-warped her to my book. Barko considered this pursuit unmanly.

Helen's ex-boyfriend said she was reading my books and was digging their romantic sweep. I read Helen's feature work and memoir *mishigas*. She was significantly good. God wanted her to jump-start her life's work. I knew what that was.

Marry me. Write a righteous crime novel. Co-opt the L.A. hipster-journalist scene. Critique present-day Hollywood and media culture. Portray your hatred for your boozed-out dad and your as yet undiscovered love for me. I'm God's conduit.

Spring '91. Cold nights and consoling darkness. The silent telephone. The demonic talking dog. Anne Sofie's lush lieder, sung directly to me. Helen Knode—raucous on my mind.

My book neared completion. Helen's ex-boyfriend requested another interview. I said, I'll fly out *now*. He said the magazine won't cover it. I said, *I will*.

Helen moved first.

She'd read my last three books. *The Black Dahlia* wrecked her. The wantonness-versus-love motif did it. She grokked my weird-ass feminism. It inspired an idea: Write a Dahlia-based cover piece for the *L.A. Weekly*. Her move: Will you show me around the sites?

She looked different that day. She was fresh scrubbed and even more intent. L.A. was rain-damp. Helen wore jeans and boots. We toured the Dahlia dump site and the Hollywood locations. Storm clouds brewed. I wanted to sit in Helen's car and wait out the longest thunderstorm

in world history. I knew our heads and hearts would transport us solar-system-wide.

It stayed dry. We trekked Beachwood Canyon, side by side. We talked. We monologued at similar length and rarely interrupted. My book on a dead woman gave us this world. I never said "Jean Hilliker" or "my mother." Helen went to abstraction as I held to anecdote. It challenged me. It made me ascribe meaning to my most-repeated tales. We discussed romanticism. Helen described the literary precedents. I ran down symphonic music. Content must dictate form. Form must be recognizable. Passion must never be squalid. Love must run in precise counterpoint to loss and death. Helen said it first: All drama is a man meets a woman.

It had never been like this. I knew it then. Helen knew it in exact proportion.

We talked ourselves out on big ideas. We got lunch at a pita pit on Sunset. I calculated our age gap: nine years, four months, 12 days.

We were fried. Helen yawned and rubbed her eyes. Prosaic shit hovered. I had two more days in L.A. Helen's ex-boyfriend was throwing a bash the next night. Helen and her current boyfriend were invited. It vibed train wreck. I knew I'd create a scene. I sensed Helen sensing it.

The Dahlia day wound down. Our big talk cut through small talk to no talk. I did not deliver God's plan for Helen. I resisted the urge to propose.

Our good-byes were brusque. It was telepathy. We knew this: To address the day would be to affirm it and change our lives forever.

I slept poorly that night. The moon did funny things. I'd called my landlady back East. She said Barko attacked the

poster of Anne Sofie von Otter. I predicted Helen Knode's next three actions.

I knew she'd call me and bail on the party. I knew she'd cite her boyfriend. I knew she'd say, Where is this going?

I said, I'll write you a letter on the airplane. She said, I'll write you back.

Vows affirmed, call to honor, sacred pledge.

XXXXX

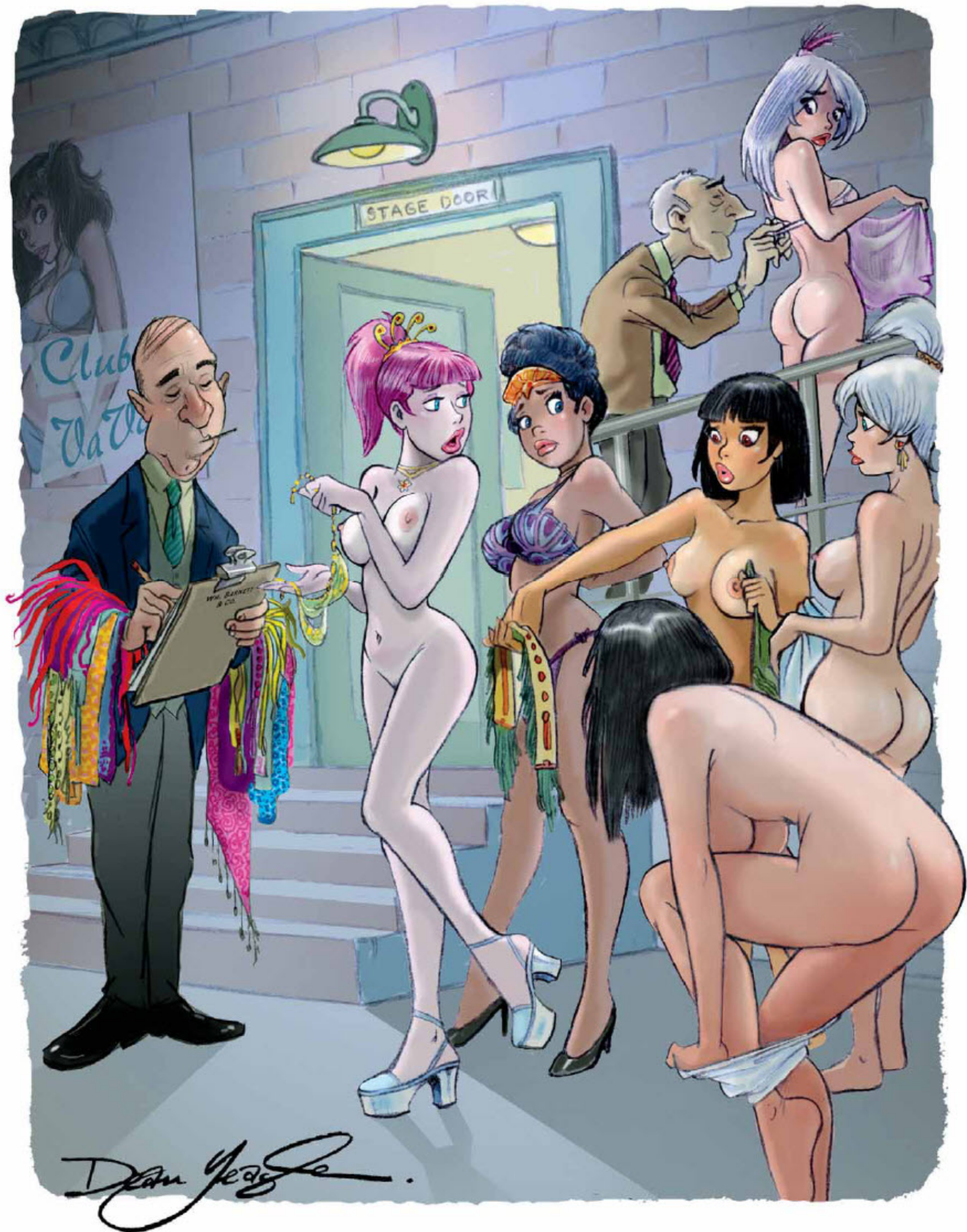
The correspondence began. We were constrained by distance and work commitments. Helen dumped her boyfriend. We were reinvesting in sex. Our letters set a lofty tone. We were comrades on a mission of unvanquishable love. That concept defined all our musings. Helen crafted the notion of BCE and ACE. They meant "before the common era" and "after the common era." The Black Dahlia Day formed the dividing line. We viewed life as our private adventure. Our preceding round-heeled stunts were auditions for a sizzling monogamy. We explored the gestalt of a-man-meets-a-woman. We riffed on films, books, music and politics. Helen refused to pigeonhole me as a right-wing mystic. I poked at her bad-girl Marxism and got her to concede that *(continued on page 108)*



OBJECTS OF HIS ARDOR
Hot cougar love (above): James Ellroy and Helen Knode on their wedding day, October 4, 1991; (right) mezzo-soprano Anne Sofie von Otter in a 1990 Deutsche Grammophon release.



NEOLA ANTUNESON-GREFFITH



"Gosh, this foreclosure thing is really getting serious!"

lounges acts

●● FROM WHERE WE SIT, DESIGN
●● SURE LOOKS LIKE DESTINY

When you bring a woman into your home, your design choices speak louder than what comes out of your mouth. Here's what you want them to say: "I care about how I live. I no longer have roommates. You may have sex with me without embarrassment." Unfortunately, most classic furniture from top designers is not wallet-friendly. But thanks to cheap manufacturing and slight modifications to keep the copyright police at bay, inexpensive unofficial reproductions of the classics abound. The more unkind among us may call them knock-offs. We think of them as loving homages we can actually afford. Here are five pieces from three sources that prove investing in your style doesn't have to cost a fortune.

BY
**SCOTT
ALEXANDER**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
**MICHAEL
WILLIAMS**

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Name: Ball Chair

Source: Paradigm Gallery (pgmod.com)

Price: \$1,000

Based on: Ball Chair by Eero Aarnio, 1966 (\$6,860)



Coming at the tail end of the midcentury modern movement and ushering in a new era of funky futurism, Finnish-born designer Eero Aarnio's pieces launched a thousand 1960s sci-fi flicks and became the backdrop for countless swinging parties. The Ball Chair—pictured on the opposite page with model Heather Rae Young—has made appearances in everything from *The Prisoner* and the Who's *Tommy* to *Men in Black* and *The Fifth Element*, and it still manages to look futuristic.

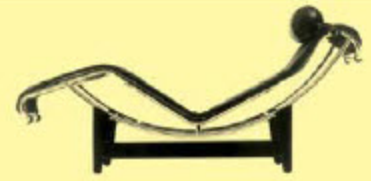


Name: LC4 Chaise Lounge

Source: Modern Collections (moderncollections.com)

Price: \$845

Based on: LC4 by Le Corbusier, 1929 (\$3,200)



One of modernism's preeminent thinkers on architecture, Le Corbusier was also a philosopher, writer, painter, sculptor and all-around troublemaker. The LC4 had a massive impact on the furniture world; it was a catalyst for the revolution of midcentury modern design. Le Corbusier's other name for this bad boy was the Resting Machine—which is just plain awesome. Plus, it never hurts to have furniture in your house that's modeled after something in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art. Sitting pretty: the lovely Hiromi Oshima, our first Japanese Playmate (June 2004).





**Name: Egg Chair
Classic**
**Source: Euro Moderno
(euromoderno.com)**
Price: \$680
**Based on: The Egg by
Arne Jacobsen, 1958
(\$5,940)**



You couldn't move in a furniture store in the 1960s without tripping over one of Arne Jacobsen's designs. Jacobsen was responsible for a vast collection of objects, from hotels and chairs to the flatware in Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* (including right- and left-handed spoons). In 1956 construction began on his grandest work, the SAS Royal Hotel in Copenhagen. Jacobsen created everything from the building itself to the fabrics on the walls to the seating in the lobby. Which is where this pretty thing was used (the chair, not the girl, who by the way is Miss March 2009 Jennifer Pershing). The Egg Chair was meant to offer a modicum of privacy in a public space. We think it will enhance intimacy even in the privacy of your living room. Today the SAS is a Radisson and has been mostly de-Jacobsenized, with the exception of room 606—still done up in his style. Book ahead.





**Name: Eames Style
LaChaise**

**Source: Paradigm Gallery
(pgmod.com)**

Price: \$1,700

**Based on: La Chaise by
Charles and Ray Eames,
1948 (\$9,475)**



Eight years before creating the iconic chair and ottoman that would become their most enduring work (see inset below), Charles (pictured) and Ray Eames designed this oddly compelling fiberglass-and-wood blob. Based on a sculpture of a reclining nude, the piece took first place in a Museum of Modern Art design competition but proved so difficult to produce

**The classic
Eames chair
and ottoman.**



its retail price would have been prohibitive. It was eventually put into production in 1990 after manufacturing techniques caught up with the Eameses' at-once modern and classical vision. Lovely, eh? Our May 2006 cover girl Alison Waite looks pretty curvaceous too.



**Name: Marshmallow Sofa
by Nelson**

**Source: Modern Collections
(moderncollections.com)**

Price: \$1,000

**Based on: Marshmallow by George
Nelson, 1956 (\$3,100)**



To quote George Nelson, "Design is a response to social change." The way we see it, social change can also be a response to design. Which is to say you'll improve your social life when you put one of these in your living room. Seriously, try looking at this sofa without smiling. (Now try looking at what's on this sofa—Miss June 2004 Hiromi Oshima—without smiling.) As an architect and one of the founders of American modernism, Nelson introduced Le Corbusier and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe to North America through his magazine articles. He also said, "Design is not science, and it never will be." Amen to that.





© Olivia

"Do you think the hat is a little too much?"

OCCUPIED FRANCE

**HEY,
HIRSCHBERG!**

INGLOURIOUS BASTERDS

BY
**QUENTIN
TARANTINO**

HOW DO YOU MAKE A NAZI SING? IN A
SCENE FROM THE FILM, THE BASTERDS
GO TO WORK ON THE ENEMY

...SEND
THAT
KRAUT
SARGE
OVER....

ART
R.M. GUÉRA
COLORS
**GIULIA
BRUSCO**

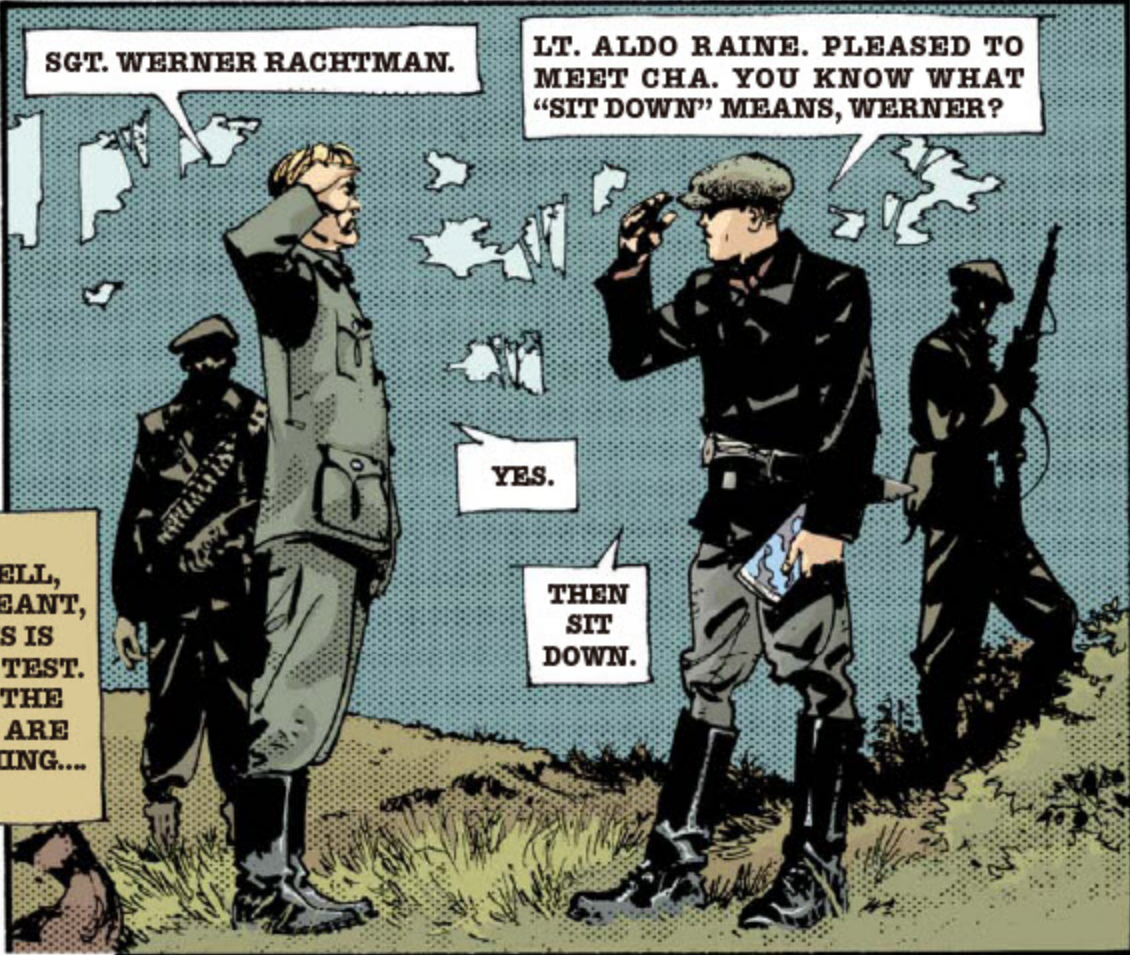
**YOU!
GO!**





SGT. WERNER RACHTMAN HAS SEEN MANY INTERROGATIONS SINCE GERMANY DECIDED IT SHOULD RULE EUROPE, BUT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME HE'S EVER BEEN ON THE WRONG END OF THE EXCHANGE. IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN HIS BELIEF THAT ONLY A WEAKLING IN MIND, BODY AND SPIRIT COMPLIES WITH THE ENEMY UNDER THREAT OF CONSEQUENCE.

AS WERNER WATCHED MEN CRY LIKE WOMEN AND PLEADINGLY OFFER THEIR KNOWLEDGE IN EXCHANGE FOR THEIR WORTHLESS LIVES, HE MADE A VOW TO HIMSELF. IF HIS ROLE IS TO DIE IN THIS CONFLICT, WHEN THEY PUT HIM UNDER THE EARTH HIS DIGNITY WOULD BE BURIED WITH HIM. FOR IN THE OTHER WORLD, THE GODS RESPECT ONLY THE ONES THEY TEST FIRST.



SGT. WERNER RACHTMAN.

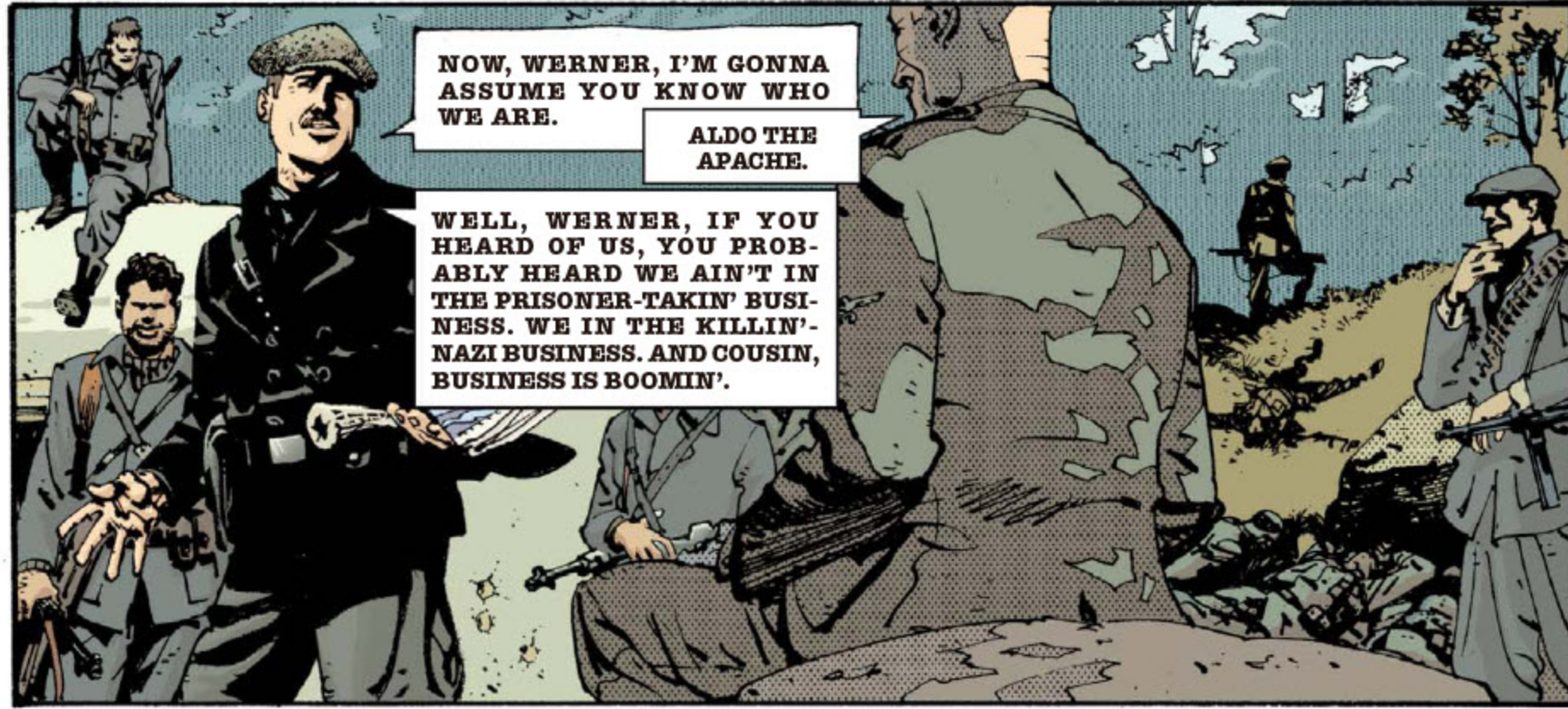
LT. ALDO RAINE. PLEASUED TO MEET CHA. YOU KNOW WHAT "SIT DOWN" MEANS, WERNER?

YES.

THEN SIT DOWN.



...WELL, SERGEANT, THIS IS YOUR TEST. AND THE GODS ARE WATCHING....



NOW, WERNER, I'M GONNA ASSUME YOU KNOW WHO WE ARE.

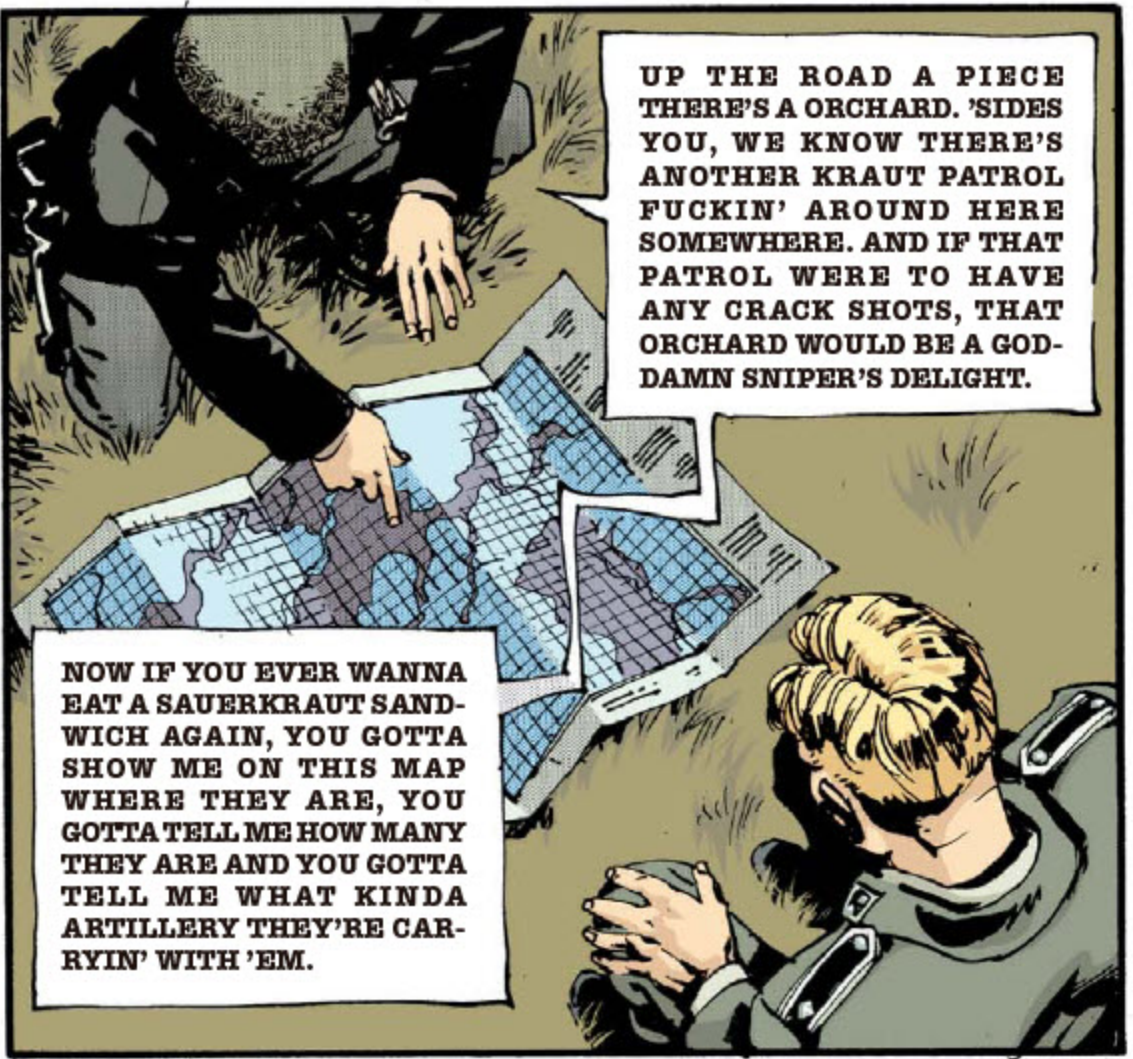
ALDO THE APACHE.

WELL, WERNER, IF YOU HEARD OF US, YOU PROBABLY HEARD WE AIN'T IN THE PRISONER-TAKIN' BUSINESS. WE IN THE KILLIN'-NAZI BUSINESS. AND COUSIN, BUSINESS IS BOOMIN'.

NOW THAT LEAVES TWO WAYS WE CAN PLAY THIS OUT—EITHER KILL YA OR LET CHA GO. NOW WHETHER OR NOT YOU GONNA LEAVE THIS CIRCLE ALIVE DEPENDS ENTIRELY ON YOU.

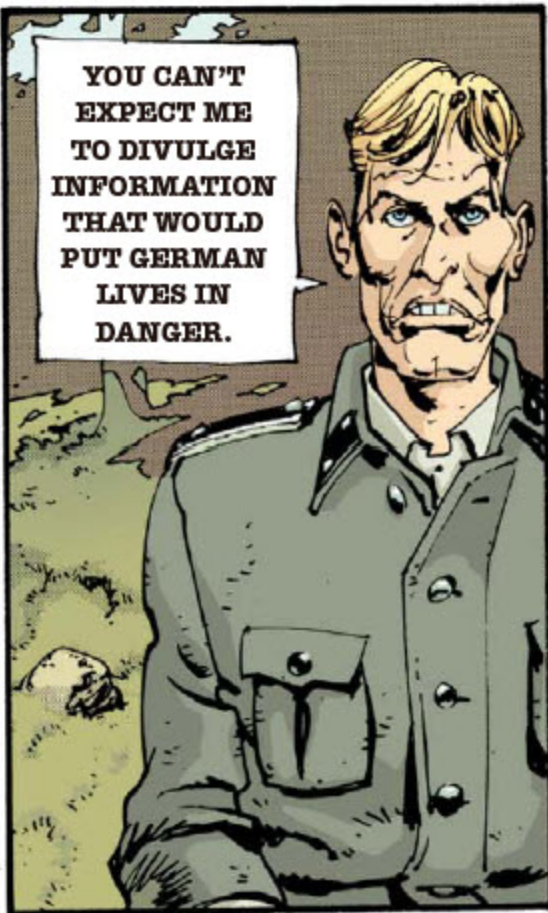


UP THE ROAD A PIECE THERE'S A ORCHARD. 'SIDES YOU, WE KNOW THERE'S ANOTHER KRAUT PATROL FUCKIN' AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE. AND IF THAT PATROL WERE TO HAVE ANY CRACK SHOTS, THAT ORCHARD WOULD BE A GOD-DAMN SNIPER'S DELIGHT.

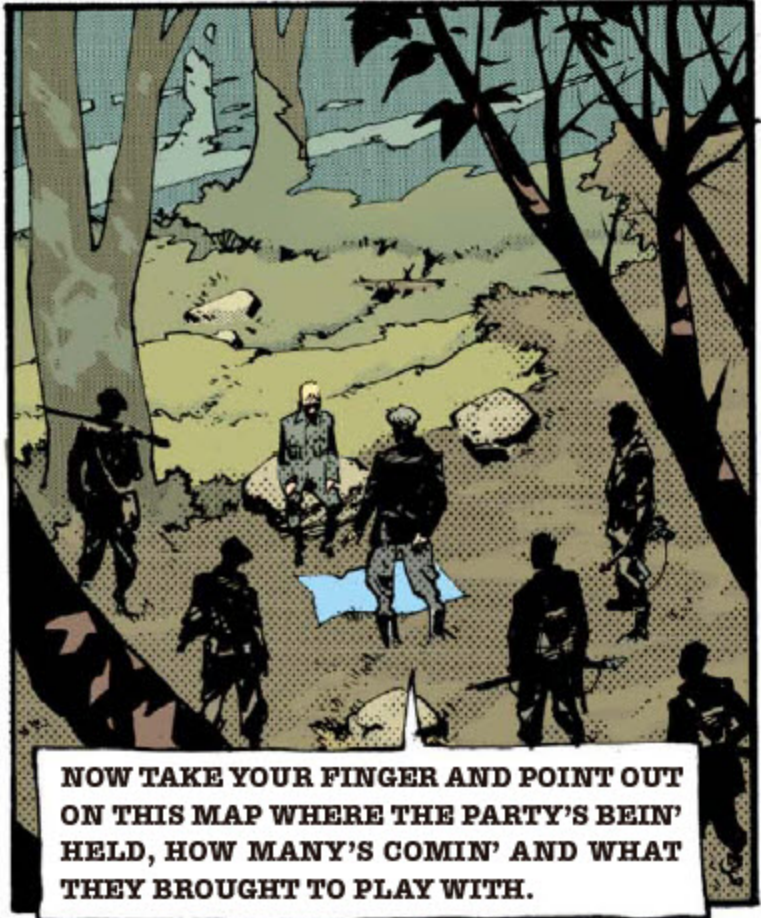


NOW IF YOU EVER WANNA EAT A SAUERKRAUT SANDWICH AGAIN, YOU GOTTA SHOW ME ON THIS MAP WHERE THEY ARE, YOU GOTTA TELL ME HOW MANY THEY ARE AND YOU GOTTA TELL ME WHAT KINDA ARTILLERY THEY'RE CARRYIN' WITH 'EM.

YOU CAN'T EXPECT ME TO DIVULGE INFORMATION THAT WOULD PUT GERMAN LIVES IN DANGER.



WELL, WERNER, THAT'S WHERE YOU'RE WRONG. BECAUSE THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I EXPECT. I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT GERMANS HIDIN' IN TREES AND YOU NEED TO TELL ME, AND YOU NEED TO TELL ME RIGHT NOW.



NOW TAKE YOUR FINGER AND POINT OUT ON THIS MAP WHERE THE PARTY'S BEIN' HELD, HOW MANY'S COMIN' AND WHAT THEY BROUGHT TO PLAY WITH.

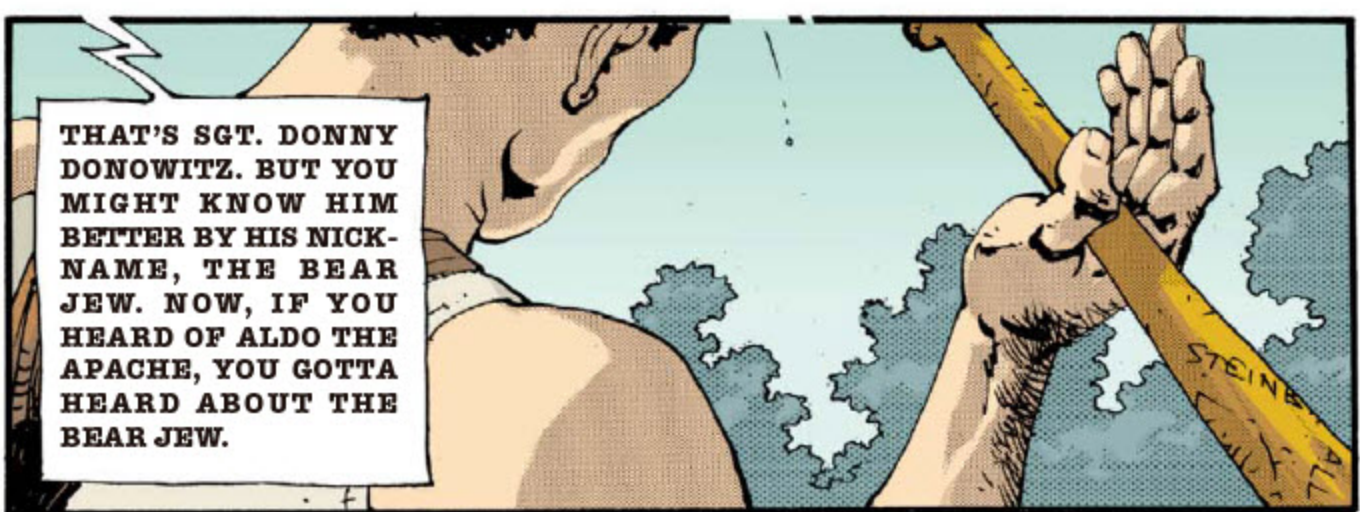
I RESPECTFULLY REFUSE, SIR.



YOU SEE THAT OL' BOY
BATTIN' ROCKS?



THAT'S SGT. DONNY
DONOWITZ. BUT YOU
MIGHT KNOW HIM
BETTER BY HIS NICK-
NAME, THE BEAR
JEW. NOW, IF YOU
HEARD OF ALDO THE
APACHE, YOU GOTTA
HEARD ABOUT THE
BEAR JEW.



I HEARD.



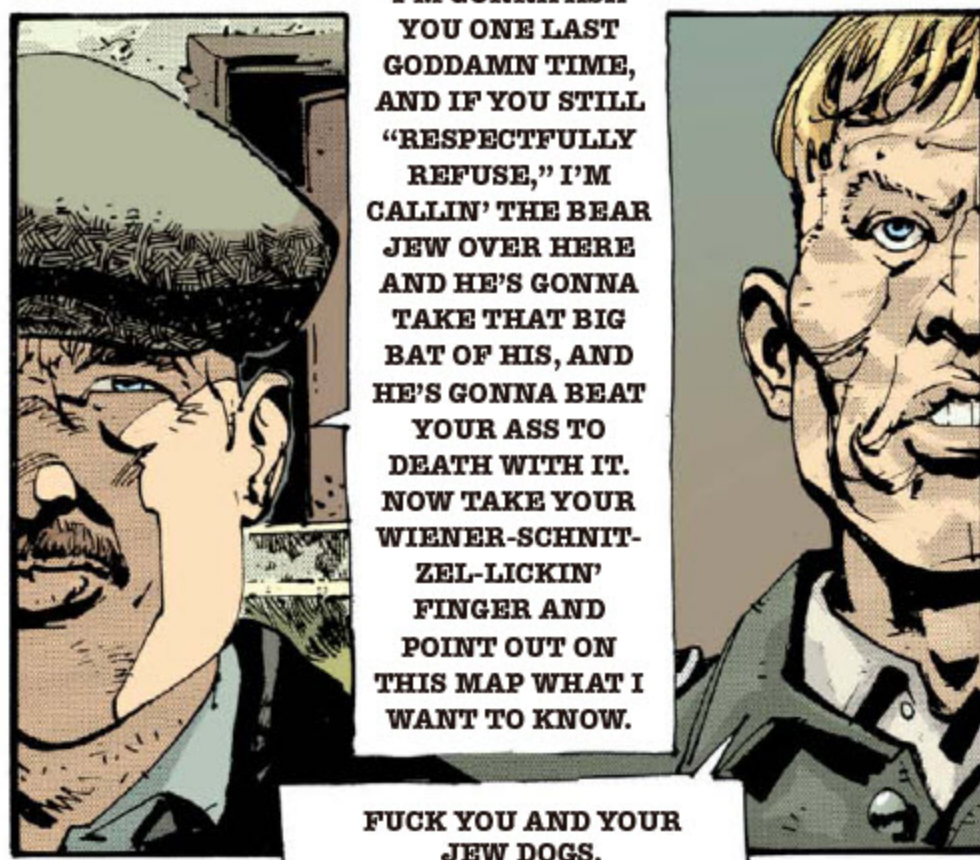
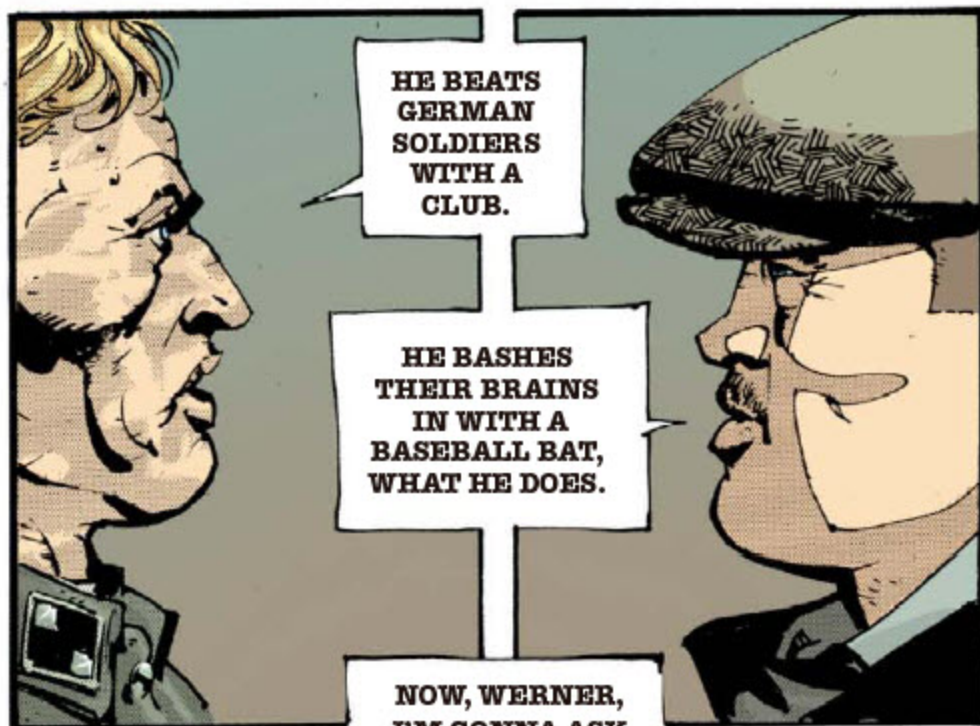
WHAT DID YOU HEAR?

HE BEATS
GERMAN
SOLDIERS
WITH A
CLUB.

HE BASHES
THEIR BRAINS
IN WITH A
BASEBALL BAT,
WHAT HE DOES.

NOW, WERNER,
I'M GONNA ASK
YOU ONE LAST
GODDAMN TIME,
AND IF YOU STILL
"RESPECTFULLY
REFUSE," I'M
CALLIN' THE BEAR
JEW OVER HERE
AND HE'S GONNA
TAKE THAT BIG
BAT OF HIS, AND
HE'S GONNA BEAT
YOUR ASS TO
DEATH WITH IT.
NOW TAKE YOUR
WIENER-SCHNIT-
ZEL-LICKIN'
FINGER AND
POINT OUT ON
THIS MAP WHAT I
WANT TO KNOW.

FUCK YOU AND YOUR
JEW DOGS.

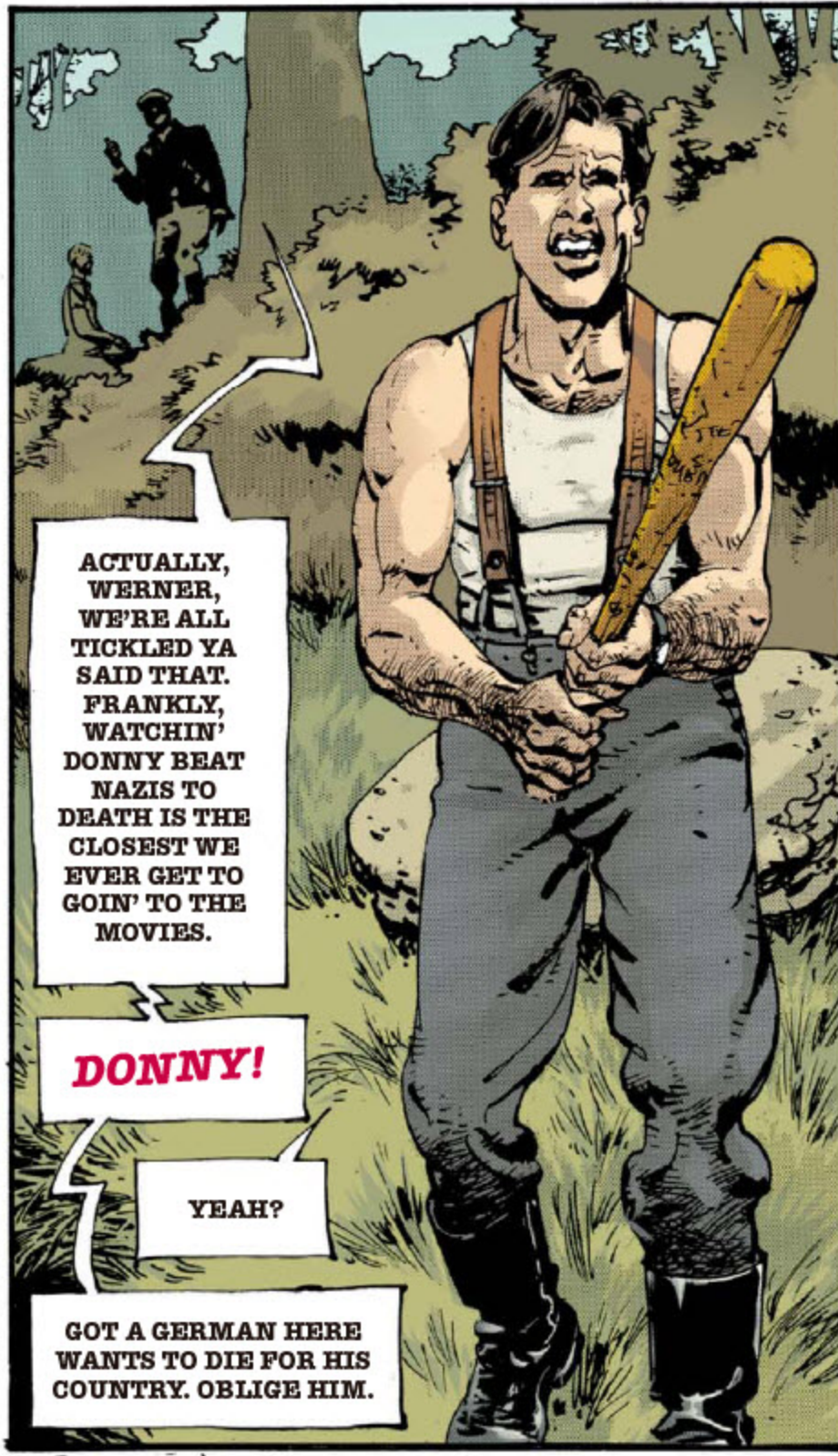


ACTUALLY,
WERNER,
WE'RE ALL
TICKLED YA
SAID THAT.
FRANKLY,
WATCHIN'
DONNY BEAT
NAZIS TO
DEATH IS THE
CLOSEST WE
EVER GET TO
GOIN' TO THE
MOVIES.

DONNY!

YEAH?

GOT A GERMAN HERE
WANTS TO DIE FOR HIS
COUNTRY. OBLIGE HIM.



BOSTON, 1941



MRS. HIMMELSTEIN, DO YOU HAVE ANY LOVED ONES OVER IN EUROPE WHO YOU'RE CONCERNED FOR?

WHAT COMPELS YOU, YOUNG MAN, TO ASK A STRANGER SUCH A PERSONAL QUESTION?

BECAUSE I'M GOING TO EUROPE. AND I'M GONNA MAKE IT RIGHT.

AND JUST HOW DO YOU INTEND TO DO THAT, JOSHUA?

WITH THIS.

AND WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU INTEND TO DO WITH THAT TOY?

I'M GONNA BEAT EVERY NAZI I FIND TO DEATH WITH IT.

I THOUGHT WE WERE HAVING TEA TOGETHER.

AND IN THIS PURSUIT, HOW IS IT THAT I CAN BE OF SERVICE?

I'M GOING THROUGH THE NEIGHBORHOOD. IF YOU HAVE ANY LOVED ONES IN EUROPE WHOSE SAFETY YOU FEAR FOR, I'D LIKE YOU TO WRITE THEIR NAMES ON MY BAT.

YOU MUST BE A REAL BASTERD, DONNY.

YOU BET YOUR SWEET ASS I AM.

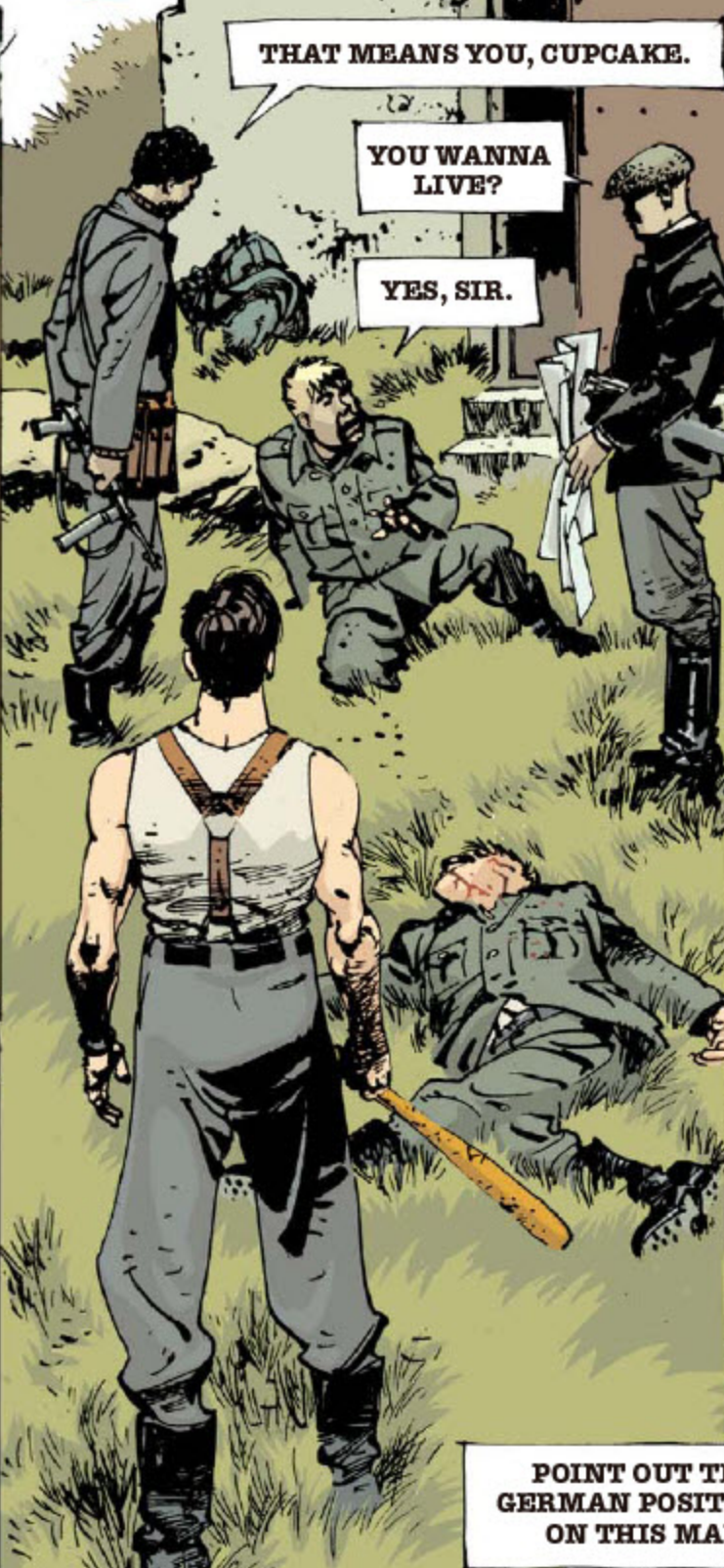
GOOD. A BASTERD'S WORK IS NEVER DONE. SPECIALLY IN GERMANY.

HAND ME YOUR SWORD, GIDEON. I DO BELIEVE I WILL JOIN YOU ON THIS JOURNEY.

PRESENT

GIMME YOUR PAPERS.

SCRRAC!



ABOUT NOW I'D BE SHITTIN' MY PANTS IF I WAS YOU.



THAT MEANS YOU, CUPCAKE.

YOU WANNA LIVE?

YES, SIR.

POINT OUT THE GERMAN POSITIONS ON THIS MAP.



FIN



Miss September is the living dream

AMERICAN BEAUTY

Kimberly Phillips needed a break, damn it. The 22-year-old from Corona, California had been working her perky butt off ever since she could remember, earning A's in high school, paying for a car through a slew of waitressing jobs and scoring a liberal arts degree as she slaved away full-time at a Montessori school. "I was just exhausted and couldn't get myself out of debt. So one day I said to Natalie, my best bud since the fifth grade, 'I want to try something different. I want to *be* something different.'" She and Natalie downed a bottle of wine, snapped some sexy photos and sent them to *PLAYBOY*. "Then we figured we'd just forget about it," Kim says. "If it happens, it happens." Two days later the phone rang, and voilà—it happened. "It's so crazy," she says. "I still don't believe it. This experience is a million percent different from what I'm used to, because I'm so shy; I'm so not an L.A. girl. But I now have a whole new sense of ambition and confidence. I'm, like, Dude, if I can be a Playmate, what else can I do?" Has Miss September learned any lessons from her overnight success? "Stay positive," she says. "Never in a million years did I believe I'd be a Playmate, that this would turn out to be my fresh start, my big new year. You gotta keep the faith."

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN WAYDA









See more of Miss September at club.playboy.com.



MISS SEPTEMBER

PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH



Kimberly
Phillips

PLAYMATE DATA SHEET



NAME: Kimberly Phillips

BUST: 34 WAIST: 25 HIPS: 35

HEIGHT: 5'8" WEIGHT: 125 lbs.

BIRTH DATE: 01/09/1987 BIRTHPLACE: Fountain Valley, CA

AMBITIONS: To finish my education, see the world, learn to fly and be successful & happy in life.

TURN-ONS: Confidence and individuality. I like to see the sweet side of a guy - make me laugh & smile.

TURNOFFS: Lack of motivation, poor hygiene, rudeness, laggards, liars and egotists.

MY PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE: Stay positive! Everything happens for a reason. Life goes on.

WHO I LOOK UP TO AND WHY: My mom and my big sister. They are strong & beautiful women!

THE SONG I COULD DANCE TO FOREVER: "Don't Rock the Boat" by Bob Marley always gets me movin'.

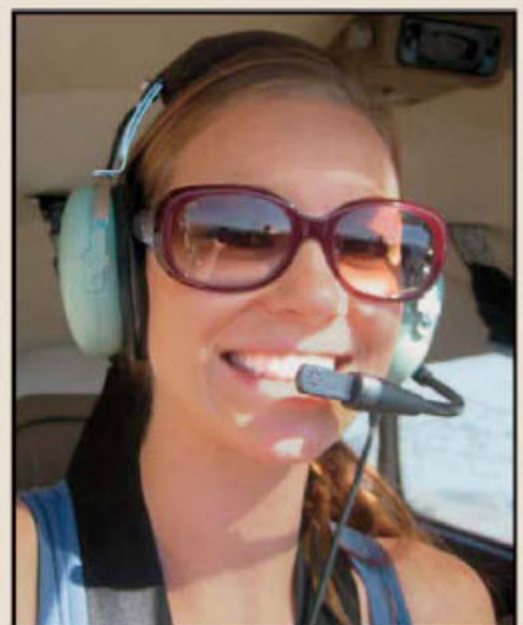
RECIPE TO MY HEART: 2 cups ambition, 1/2 cup tenderness, a dash of humor, sprinkled with love.♥



Eight years old...
What a nerd!



Say cheese!
Age 21.



I'll have my wings
one day. First
flight, age 22.

PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

To help weather the international financial crisis, husbands are saving money by having sex with their wives.

How do you double the value of a GM vehicle?
Fill it with gas.

A letter from the future: Dear Playboy Advisor, If someone has sex with his clone, is it masturbation or incest?

What do men and mascara have in common?
They both run at the first sign of emotion.

Don't marry for money. You can borrow it more cheaply.



A new guy in town was chatting with his neighbor when they saw two women walking toward them.

"Shit," the new guy said. "Here comes my wife, and she's with the woman I've just started fucking on the side. I'd better hide."

"Damn," the neighbor said. "You took the words right out of my mouth."

A man told his blonde girlfriend that sex might be more exciting if she got a Brazilian. Now she's screwing a guy named Paulo.

A penis is like fishing. Women throw back the small ones, eat the medium ones and mount the large ones.

Two businessmen were sitting in a bar and one was complaining about his new live-in girlfriend.

"I'm telling you," the first said, "I've about had it with her. She keeps bringing her work home night after night. I'm really considering ending the relationship. I can't take it anymore!"

"Well," the second said, "I can see how that'd be annoying. But having a girl who's interested in her career isn't a reason to break up."

The first replied, "It is if your girlfriend's a hooker."

Money isn't everything, but it sure keeps the kids in touch.

You used to be the life of the party in the old days," reminisced one buddy to another. "Does your wife still find you entertaining after seven years of marriage?"

"No," answered the other. "She usually doesn't catch me."

Is it wrong to have sex before you're married?

Only if it makes you late for the ceremony.

A man bought a woman a couple of drinks in a bar and asked if she would like to go to his apartment to continue talking.

"Sure," she replied, "but it won't lead to anything."

When they entered his apartment she reminded him, "Don't waste your time with any fancy moves."

"Hey, what do you think I am?" he said. "I'm not looking for a one-night stand. I want you for my wife."

"Great," she said. "What time will she be home?"



Sally Neiman

Did you hear about the driver who lost control of his car?

He couldn't keep up his payments.

A man was reading the newspaper during breakfast and said to his wife, "Look at this. Another beautiful actress is going to marry a baseball player who's a total dope! I'll never understand why the biggest jerks get the hottest wives."

His wife said, "Thank you."

How do you make \$1 million in the stock market these days?

Start with \$3 million.

Send your jokes to Party Jokes Editor, PLAYBOY, 680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611, or by e-mail through our website at jokes.playboy.com. PLAYBOY will pay \$100 to the contributors whose submissions are selected.







CONFIDO

BY KURT VONNEGUT

HENRY BOWERS'S LATEST INVENTION

FITS

IN the PALM OF Your HAND.

IT THINKS AND TALKS.

UNDERSTANDS YOU BETTER THAN ANYONE ELSE DOES.

IT'S REVOLUTIONARY.

BUT HOW MARKETABLE *is* HUMAN DEPRAVITY?



A NEVER-BEFORE-PUBLISHED TALE FROM AN AMERICAN MASTER

The summer had died peacefully in its sleep, and autumn, as soft-spoken executrix, was locking life up safely until spring came to claim it. At one with this sad, sweet allegory outside the kitchen window of her small home was Ellen Bowers, who, early in the morning, was preparing Tuesday breakfast for her husband, Henry. Henry was gasping and dancing and slapping himself in a cold shower on the other side of a thin wall.

Ellen was a fair and tiny woman, in her early 30s, plainly mercurial and bright, though dressed in a dowdy housecoat. In almost any event she would have loved life, but she loved it now with an overwhelming emotion that was like the throbbing amen of a church organ, for she could tell herself this morning that her husband, in addition to being good, would soon be rich and famous.

She hadn't expected it, had seldom dreamed of it, had been content with

inexpensive possessions and small adventures of the spirit, like thinking about autumn, that cost nothing at all. Henry was not a moneymaker. That had been the understanding.

He was an easily satisfied tinker, a maker and mender who had a touch close to magic with materials and machines. But his miracles had all been small ones as he went about his job as a laboratory assistant at the Accousti-gem Corporation, a manufacturer of hearing aids. Henry was valued by his employers, but the price they paid for him was not great. A high price, Ellen and Henry had agreed amiably, probably wasn't called for, since being paid at all for puttering was an honor and a luxury of sorts. And that was that.

Or that had *seemed* to be that, Ellen reflected, for on the kitchen table lay a small tin box, a wire and an earphone, like a hearing aid, a creation, in its own modern way, as marvelous as Niagara Falls or the Sphinx. Henry had made it in secret during his lunch hours, and (continued on page 102)



WITH THREE SUPERSTAR QBS GUNNING FOR THE HEISMAN AND A NATIONAL TITLE, THE 2009 SEASON WILL BE ONE TO REMEMBER

PLAYBOY'S PIGSKIN PREVIEW

by GARY COLE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES IMBROGNO

We've been making the argument for a play-off system to decide the college football national championship for years.

Enough with computer matchups. Enough with undefeated teams not getting a chance to make their case on the field. And enough with preseason polls that favor one team over another, thereby allowing a third-ranked team that loses no games to still wind up playing bridesmaid.

While not the most important challenge facing the nation (have you looked at your 401(k) statement lately?), the issue of a play-off has been important enough to capture the attention of our president. Quoth Mr. Obama, "I'm going to throw my weight around a little bit. If there's not a clear decisive winner, we should be creating a play-off system." Our do-everything president even prescribes the formula: "Eight teams. That would be three rounds to determine a national champion. I don't know

01 OKLAHOMA

COACH: Bob Stoops, Playboy's Coach of the Year for 2009.

LAST YEAR: 12-2. The Sooners lost the BCS title game to Florida 24-14.

STUDS: The list is long and headed by last year's Heisman Trophy winner, Sam Bradford, at quarterback. Offensive lineman Trent Williams will take up where Phil Loadholt and Duke Robinson, now both in the NFL, left off. DeMarco Murray fits into the tradition of great Oklahoma running backs, and Jermaine Gresham is the best collegiate tight end in the nation. On defense, tackle Gerald McCoy, linebacker Travis Lewis and corner Dominique Franks are all menacing.

SKINNY: Whatever falloff from last year's offensive production the Sooners experience will be more than compensated for with the best defense in Stoops's 10-year tenure in Norman. Six of these players will likely be NFL stars in the next year or two. In the three-way horse race between Florida, Texas and Oklahoma for this year's national championship, give the slightest nod to the Oklahoma Sooners because of their ability to dominate defensively.

SCHEDULE: It's tough to win out in the Big 12, but Oklahoma has the talent to do it.

PREDICTION: 12-0

02 FLORIDA

COACH: Urban Meyer begins his fifth season in Gainesville.

LAST YEAR: 13-1. The Gators won the national championship by beating Oklahoma 24-14.

STUDS: There are lots of stars on both

any serious fan of college football who has disagreed with me on this." Thank you, Mr. President; neither do we. If the recession, the war in Afghanistan and North Korea's intransigence are difficult problems to solve, let's take care of something that has an obvious and easy solution.

In the meantime we have nothing against preseason polls. PLAYBOY has been doing them for more than 50 years—and better than any other publication, we might humbly add. This year three outstanding college football teams will make a run for the title: Oklahoma, Florida and Texas. The first two have quarterbacks who have already won a Heisman Trophy—Sam Bradford and Tim Tebow—and the third has Colt McCoy, who could win it this year. And don't discount perennial powerhouse USC, always a contender since Pete Carroll took over as head coach.

Here's our roll of the dice for the coming college football season.

sides of the line. Leading the list is quarterback Tim Tebow, who won the Heisman Trophy in 2007 and could win it again. Mike Pouncey (six-five, 320 pounds) is a brick wall on the offensive line. Brandon James is a super return specialist. As strong as the offense is, the defense may be stronger. All 11 starters from last year return, including linebacker Brandon Spikes.

SKINNY: The Gators will exhaust opponents with a stifling defense and a run-oriented, ball-control offense. However, the loss of receiver Percy Harvin and Tim Tebow's penchant to run first and pass later may give the best SEC defensive teams an opportunity to force Florida into passing situations.

SCHEDULE: Favorable, with only four games on the road, the toughest being October 10 at LSU.

PREDICTION: 12-0

03 TEXAS

COACH: Since taking over at Texas 11 years ago, Mack Brown is a best-in-the-nation 115-26.

LAST YEAR: 12-1. The Longhorns won their fifth consecutive bowl game by beating Ohio State (24-21) in the Fiesta Bowl.

STUDS: Number one stud is three-year starting quarterback Colt McCoy, who finished second in the Heisman voting last year. Jordan Shipley will be his target of choice at wide receiver. The defense loses Big 12 Defensive Player of the Year Brian Orakpo, but defensive end Sergio Kindle is nearly as good. Linebacker Roddrick Muckelroy and defensive backs Earl Thomas and Blake Gideon will also be standouts.

SKINNY: The road from Friday night

PLAYBOY'S TOP 25

ALL THE USUAL SUSPECTS TOP OUR LIST OF PRESEASON COLLEGE FOOTBALL AWESOMENESS. COULD THIS YEAR'S NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP GAME FEATURE THE SAME TWO TEAMS AS LAST YEAR? WE THINK SO.

1	OKLAHOMA	12-0
2	FLORIDA	12-0
3	TEXAS	11-1
4	USC	11-1
5	PENN STATE	10-2
6	ALABAMA	10-2
7	OHIO STATE	10-2
8	MISSISSIPPI	9-3
9	CALIFORNIA	9-3
10	OKLAHOMA STATE	9-3
11	NOTRE DAME	9-3
12	BOISE STATE	12-1
13	WEST VIRGINIA	9-3
14	GEORGIA TECH	9-3
15	TCU	10-2
16	GEORGIA	9-3
17	KANSAS	9-3
18	UTAH	9-3
19	VIRGINIA TECH	8-4
20	IOWA	8-4
21	OREGON STATE	8-4
22	SOUTH FLORIDA	9-3
23	FLORIDA STATE	8-4
24	NORTH CAROLINA	8-4
25	PITTSBURGH	8-4

FOR A FULL BREAKDOWN OF THE TOP 50 TEAMS GO TO PLAYBOY.COM/COLLEGEFOOTBALL.

RACE FOR THE HEISMAN This year's Heisman Trophy will again be a tale of three quarterbacks. Two of the three already have a Heisman in their trophy case, Florida's Tim Tebow (2007) and Oklahoma's Sam Bradford (2008). Texas's Colt McCoy, who finished second in last year's voting, hopes to carry one home in December. These three players garnered a total of 875 first-place Heisman votes last year. All other players in the nation had a combined total of 27 votes.



lights to Austin is straight and short, allowing Brown to continue to pull in and develop some of the best college football players in the nation. It's difficult to see any weakness in this team on either side. Only the bounce of the ball and the talent of the Sooners stand in the way of the Longhorns' chance to play for a national championship.

SCHEDULE: The big game for the Horns this year and every year is Texas vs. Oklahoma (October 17). Texas should be wary of a road game at Oklahoma State two weeks later.

PREDICTION: 11-1

04 USC

COACH: In eight seasons Pete Carroll has won 88 games and turned out 33 All-Americans, including three Heisman Trophy winners.

LAST YEAR: 12-1. The Trojans beat Penn State in the Rose Bowl 38-24.

STUDS: Despite the incredible number of impact players from last season who are now gone (Brian Cushing, Clay Matthews, Rey Mauluga, Mark Sanchez, Patrick Turner), the Trojans are so deep that the team will keep rolling along. Chalk it up to Carroll's recruiting brilliance. Watch for USC's rushing game to be ferocious, with Joe McKnight leading the way. It appears Aaron Corp will take over the quarterback spot vacated by Sanchez, though Matt Barkley, Garrett Green and Mitch Mustain could figure in the mix. Lots of new but talented players will be on defense. Back again is two-time Playboy All America safety Taylor Mays.

SKINNY: USC may not be the nation's dominant team this season, but it has certainly been the dominant team of

the decade. And while it may have to take a half step back as new talent replaces departed stars, it's still the best team west of the Rockies and has an outside shot at being the best west of the Atlantic.

SCHEDULE: An early-season visit to Columbus against Ohio State will be the Trojans' only early challenge.

PREDICTION: 11-1

05 PENN STATE

COACH: Joe Paterno. It appears only God can make the 82-year-old patriarch step down as coach of the Nittany Lions.

LAST YEAR: 11-2. Penn State was a last-second field goal short of a perfect regular season. Then came the Rose Bowl, in which USC quarterback Mark Sanchez picked the Lions apart for a 38-24 victory.

STUDS: Evan Royster, a 1,200-yard rusher last season, and backup Stephon Green give Penn State plenty of power from the tailback spot. Daryll Clark is a savvy and versatile quarterback. The defensive line—led by Abe Koroma, Jared Odrick and Ollie Ogbu—will shut down most opponents' run games.

SKINNY: The offense is strong at the skill positions, but there are big holes to fill on the line. Veteran Stefen Wisniewski will move from right guard to center and is expected to anchor things until the rookies are broken in. The defensive secondary is also green.

SCHEDULE: Relatively easy. The Lions could be undefeated until Ohio State challenges them in early November.

PREDICTION: 10-2

(concluded on page 122)

PLAYBOY'S ALL AMERICA TEAM

OUR SOURCES? NFL SCOUTS, COLLEGE COACHES AND OUR OWN KEEN EYES. HERE WE PRESENT OUR PICKS FOR THE BEST PLAYERS IN THE COLLEGE GAME.

COACH

Bob Stoops
Oklahoma

OFFENSE QUARTERBACK

Sam Bradford
Oklahoma



RUNNING BACKS

Jahvid Best
California
Jacquizz Rodgers
Oregon State



WIDE RECEIVERS

Dez Bryant
Oklahoma State
Julio Jones
Alabama



TIGHT END

Jermaine Gresham
Oklahoma



CENTER

Kristofer O'Dowd
USC



LINEMEN

Russell Okung
Oklahoma State
John Jerry
Mississippi
Mike Pouncey
Florida
Adam Ulatoski
Texas



PLACEKICKER

Thomas Weber
Arizona State



LONG SNAPPER

Christian Yount
UCLA



KICK RETURNER

Javier Arenas
Alabama

DEFENSE

LINEMEN

Gerald McCoy
Oklahoma
Ndamukong Suh
Nebraska

Corey Wootton
Northwestern
Greg Hardy
Mississippi



LINEBACKERS

Brandon Spikes
Florida
Sergio Kindle
Texas

Rolando McClain
Alabama



CORNERBACKS

Trevard Lindley
Kentucky
Kyle Wilson
Boise State



SAFETIES

Taylor Mays
USC
Eric Berry
Tennessee



PASS RUSH SPECIALIST

George Selvie
South Florida



PUNTER

Zoltan Mesko
Michigan



ANSON MOUNT SCHOLAR/ATHLETE

Mitch Enright
SMU

GO TO PLAYBOY.COM/COLLEGEFOOTBALL FOR BIOS AND STATS ON THE PLAYBOY ALL AMERICAS.



"If you don't think I'm right for this job, feel free to try me in any position you'd like."

PLAYBOY'S GUIDE TO CLASSIC STYLE

WHO SAYS DON'T LOOK BACK? ON THE CONTRARY, GOOD TASTE IS ALWAYS IN FASHION. WITH A NOD TO UNFORGETTABLE ICONS, THE ULTIMATE MANUAL OF ESSENTIAL LESSONS AND INSPIRATIONS FOR THE SELF-ASSURED MODERN MAN

CUFF LINKS BY BAADE II \$395



SUIT \$2,800
SHIRT \$295
TIE \$165
POCKET SQUARE \$75
BY DUNCAN QUINN



PLAYBOY  FASHION



THE PLAYBOY

Cary Grant

No other man in the pantheon of classic style epitomizes timeless elegance as much as Cary Grant. His immaculate dress, wit and charm—as exemplified in such films as *North by Northwest* and *To Catch a Thief*—are enviably effortless. As he once said,

“Everyone wants to be Cary Grant; even I want to be Cary Grant.” Designer Duncan Quinn, who makes the kind of razor-sharp suits Grant would have flipped over, says, “His style came from within and was real, not manufactured. That’s missing today in a world of advisors, extras, fluffers and strokers. Clean lines and a perfect wrapper for his personality made him wear his clothes well—not vice versa.”

FASHION BY

Jennifer Ryan Jones

PHOTOGRAPHY BY

Mark Platt

FOR MORE CLASSIC FASHION, GO TO PLAYBOY.COM/CLASSICSTYLE.

THE COOLIST

Miles Davis

As subtle and understated as his cool jazz classic *Kind of Blue*, moody trumpeter Miles Davis's style in the 1950s was informed by Ivy League aesthetics: relaxed, clean-cut and monochromatic with the occasional twist such as a carelessly knotted silk scarf or a silver ring. In

stark contrast to the loud costumes of his predecessors on the jazz scene, Davis's clothes—many purchased at Brooks Brothers and the Andover Shop in Cambridge, Massachusetts—were quiet if not muted. Later he would adopt a much flashier style, allegedly racing around New York in his Lamborghini with a .357 Magnum stashed under the seat. But in those earlier days, before years of indulgence lent him a patina of elegant decay, he was all coffeehouse prep.

**BELT BY
J. CREW** \$52



**WATCH BY
HERMÈS** \$4,650



**SCARF BY
DION** \$275



**CARDIGAN BY
BARBOUR** \$189

**SHOES BY
ALDO** \$100



Feeling kind of blue in khakis, pullover and scarf.

FULL METTLE JACKET

AARON LEVINE, DESIGN DIRECTOR OF HICKEY FREEMAN'S HICKEY LINE, OFFERS TIPS FOR A PROPERLY TAILORED JACKET

When it comes to sport coats and suit jackets, shoulders are everything. If the balance is correct, the neck won't gape and the bottom of the coat will hit your thumb knuckle. But you're not done yet. Make sure you go to a tailor. You'll save money in the long run: If you love the fit, you'll wear a sport coat or suit jacket repeatedly and won't go out looking for another one. Or two.

1. Jacket sleeves should allow $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of your shirt's cuff to show.
2. When taking in or letting out a jacket waist, consider that it should hug but not corset your silhouette. This fit will have a more tailored look, even on larger men.
3. If your jacket collar rides high, have it lowered. A tailor can also smooth out ridges between your shoulder blades.

4. Once tailored, your jacket should be snug but not uncomfortably tight. It is a tailored jacket's job to hide your flaws.
5. If you like the way a man wears a suit in a magazine spread, don't be afraid to give the photo to your tailor. It's not vain; it's practical.
6. Avoid fads. If your dad wore a suit with panache back then, it will work now. Classic is classic.





The man who fell in love with peacoats, turtlenecks and the sea.



OLD SPICE COLOGNE \$9

PEACOAT \$345
SWEATER \$265
SCARF \$135
BY GANT

VENTUS WATCH
BY SUUNTO \$999

TURTLENECK
BY ORVIS \$225

SOLE SURVIVORS

THE ADAGE "SHOES MAKE A MAN" STILL HOLDS TRUE. MAKE SURE YOU HAVE THE RIGHT FOOTWEAR FOR EVERY OUTFIT

Discerning women often judge a man's worth by eyeing his feet. These classics offer the perfect marriage of styleage and mileage.

THE WING TIP Originally from Ireland and the Scottish Highlands (the brogue), it's a somewhat anachronistic style these days; try a chocolate suede version for a more subtle effect. **WING TIPS BY BENETTON** \$129



THE LOAFER Once unbendingly informal, slip-ons can now be worn stylishly with suits; the preppy classic's cool Italian cousin, the driving moccasin, is also worth a look. **DRIVING MOCCASINS BY ALDEN** \$230



THE BIKER BOOT Every man should have one pair of shit-kickers to wear with jeans. We

recom-
mend a rough-and-tumble slip-on or zip-on round toe with some heel and height. **BIKER BOOTS BY RED WING** \$155



THE DESERT BOOT Also known as the chukka boot, after the period of play in polo, it was introduced to the West by the British raj;



sporty but stylish, its influence is seen in a number of excellent ankle boots, from the unmistakable look of Clarks (celebrating its 60th year as a go-to shoe) to a version from Bottega Veneta. **DESERT BOOTS BY CLARKS** \$115

THE ROAD SCHOLAR

Kris Kristofferson

Although his portrayal of the open-collared, I'm-with-the-band character in *A Star Is Born* (1976) won him a Golden Globe, the original Dude sports a style in the underrated *Sailor Who Fell From Grace With the Sea*, released the same year, that better suits his salty, masculine looks. In the dark, atmospheric drama about a merchant marine officer who pays the ultimate price for falling in love with a sexy widow on the English coast—more *Lord of the Flies* than *Wuthering Heights*—Kristofferson's look is suitably understated. His full-length, epauletted military coats, peacoats and brawny wool turtlenecks are the kind of clothes that never go out of style and return in one form or another each fall fashion season. Steve McQueen is credited with showing us how to wear a turtleneck right, but it's Mr. Easygoing himself—a raspy, wild-bearded musician and songwriter from Texas who never speaks of being a Rhodes Scholar—who deserves the recognition.

THE JET-SETTER | Sean Connery

Sean Connery is inseparable from James Bond. The man who defined the jet-setting role, Connery always calls to mind those three evocative digits 007. Dressed to kill, he broke onto the big screen in the early 1960s, ready for adventure in elegant tailoring with a sporting edge. His clothes are trim, classic and devoid of frills (save for the occasional bit of spywear). Partial to stiff drinks, fast cars and faster women, he also knows how and when to break the rules. It's all smooth charm and urbanity until the Walther PPK comes out or the dress comes off—and then it's strictly business.



Connery owned every suit he wore as James Bond. It was part of his contract.

GLOVES BY SPURR \$180



BELTS BY JOHNSTON AND MURPHY \$70



JACKET \$895
SHIRT \$245
TROUSERS \$195
TIE \$125
BY HICKEY



HATS ENTERTAINMENT

HATS ARE BACK, WITH STYLES FOR EVERY ATTITUDE AND OCCASION. GET YOUR HEAD IN THE GAME BY FOLLOWING A FEW SIMPLE GUIDELINES

If you're a novice hat wearer, try a newsboy-style cap first, then move on to something a little gutsier. A stingy brim is a good gateway lid, while aspiring rock-and-rollers can adopt a more slept-in style. A fedora is bold, but don't overdo it—you want to avoid looking like a bit player in *Guys and Dolls*. Hats are said to sell better during a recession (keep your head; you never know what's coming down), but today it's the resurgence of more tailored tastes and *Mad Men*-esque nostalgia that have brought them back. They're also a simple, economical means of exhibiting panache. A final bit of hat-wearing advice from Ol' Blue Eyes: "Cock your hat—angles are attitudes."



LID ROW: Johnny Depp's fedora, Keith Richards's high plains drifter, Brad Pitt's newsboy cap and Tom Waits's porkpie—contemporary versions of old hats experience a new round of cool.

THE SPORTSMAN

John F. Kennedy

The young senator from Massachusetts ushered in a new era of informality when he made a habit of appearing hatless early in his term as president. Even before that, especially when he was away from the office in Hyannis Port and not in fabled Camelot, his clean-cut preppy (Choate and Harvard) style was making itself felt as the rigidity and uptightness of the 1950s gave

way to something a little more at ease. Simplicity, comfort and an all-American sportiness were never more in evidence than in such photo ops as the one pictured here: Kennedy sailing with his Rat Pack brother-in-law Peter Lawford. "For the past 50 years," designer Thom Browne once said, "whenever fashion has gotten away from the Kennedy look, it's been a mistake."



SUNGLASSES BY
RAY-BAN \$140

JACKET BY
J. CREW \$118

WEB BELTS \$50
KHAKIS \$90
BY VINEYARD VINES

SHIRT BY
CRATE \$98

SWEATER
BY NORSEA \$182

SHOES BY
SPERRY \$70

A bomber jacket on a former naval officer? Works for Mr. President, a master of East Coast cool.

MANLY, YES

J. CREW'S NEW MANHATTAN STORES ARE AWASH IN NOSTALGIA

Just as John Varvatos set up shop inside CBGB, J. Crew has commuted from suburbia to the Liquor Store, an old bar in Tribeca (as well as its new old-timey haberdashery in SoHo). The wood-planked men's shop even has a fireplace. "It's a comfortable place for a guy to hang out," says Frank Muytjens, head designer of the J. Crew men's line, "like hardware stores, garages, record stores. The mood reflects the clothes: weathered, styl-

ish, understated and easy to wear." Vintage and vintage-inspired accessories such as Timex watches and knapsacks mix it up with more current fare, including neckties along the oak bar, a new suit operation, broken-in chinos and distressed jeans. There's also a denim peacoat, designed by Los Angeles vintage outfit Mister Freedom, that looks better with every wash. "Everything here gets better with age," says Muytjens.



WHAT'LL IT BE?

KNOW THY COCKTAIL GLASSES



OLD-FASHIONED OR ROCKS GLASS Known to bartenders as "the bucket," the eight-ounce king of shorties has a diameter and rim of equal size. Good for Jack and Cokes, screwdrivers and salty dogs.



WHITE WINE GLASS Slightly smaller than a Burgundy glass, a white wine glass (which should be held by the stem) is designed for smaller, three- to five-ounce pours to keep the wine cold.



COUPETTE GLASS The margarita mainstay is large and rounded with a fat stem and a broad rim that holds salt well either up or on the rocks. This 12-ounce "birdbath" is also good for macho martinis.



MARTINI OR COCKTAIL GLASS The glass from which James Bond drinks his martinis holds three to eight ounces and has a rim that widens from a long stem. It's also used to serve manhattans.



PILSNER GLASS Taste-conscious drinkers prefer this traditional beer glass over a mug. Fluted and with a stubby bottom, a pilsner glass holds 12 ounces.



SNIFTER With a wide bottom for creating vapors and a tight mouth to trap them, a snifter is best for savoring two-ounce pours of armagnac or cognac.

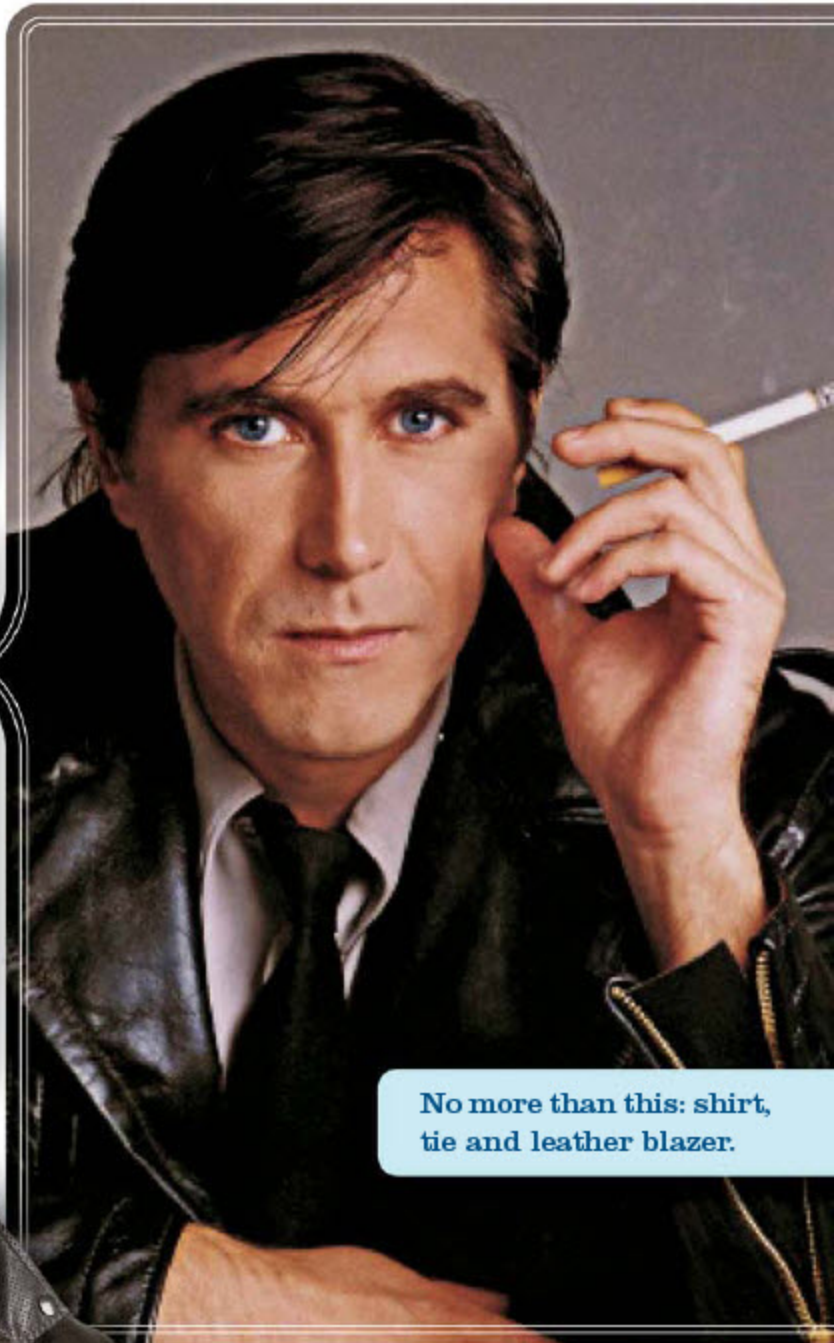
ROCK VOLUME ONE FRAGRANCE BY JOHN VARVATOS \$82



TROUSERS BY SPURR \$575

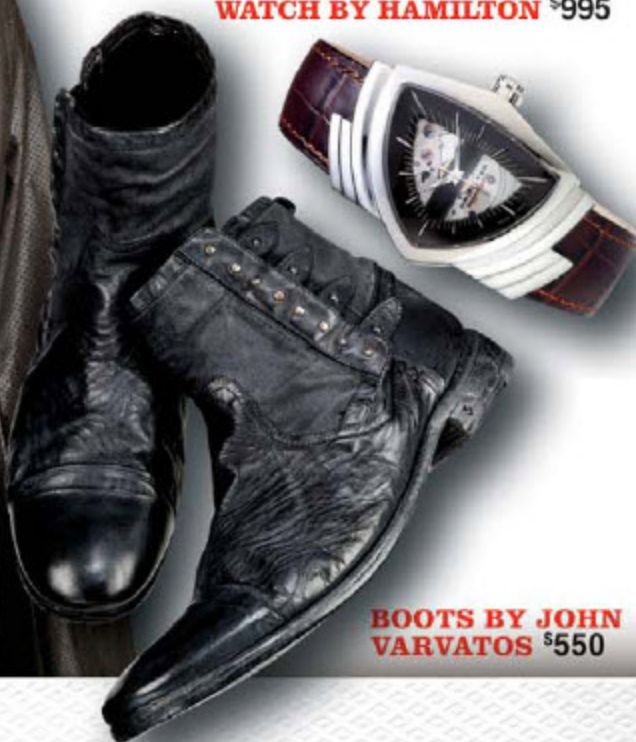


JACKET BY SHADES OF GREIGE \$216
SHIRT \$285
TIE \$140
BY SPURR



No more than this: shirt, tie and leather blazer.

VENTURA AUTOMATIC WATCH BY HAMILTON \$995



BOOTS BY JOHN VARVATOS \$550

THE REBEL

Bryan Ferry

The British Roxy Music frontman has rocked a lot of looks over his illustrious career, from louche lounge lizard to country gentleman. Our favorite, however, is the elegant-rebel effect pictured here. He achieved it by sporting a shirt and tie under a leather blazer, a look depicted on his 1978 solo album, *The Bride Stripped Bare* (surely you didn't think Franz Ferdinand or Jarvis Cocker created that getup). It's at once insouciant, dashing, cool as hell and perfectly timeless—which is perhaps why Ferry dates gorgeous specimens more than 30 years his junior. Marlon Brando, eat your heart out.



20

BY STEPHEN REBELLO

PHOTOGRAPHY
BY GAVIN BOND

Dianne Kruger

THE ACTRESS WHO LAUNCHED A THOUSAND SHIPS IN *TROY* AND PLAYS THE NAZI-KILLING FEMME FATALE IN *INGLOURIOUS BASTERDS* TALKS ABOUT GROWING UP IN GERMANY, WORRIES ABOUT BRAD PITT'S LACK OF PRIVACY AND REVEALS WHY QUENTIN TARANTINO TOOK CLOSE-UPS OF HER FEET

Q1.

PLAYBOY: Your face launched a thousand ships in the Brad Pitt epic *Troy*, Josh Hartnett is obsessed with you in *Wicker Park*, you and Nicolas Cage have twice hunted for *National Treasure*, and we're about to see you in Quentin Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds*, playing a World War II German film star and Nazi hunter. You've played so many different sorts of roles with so many different accents that few people seem to know you're actually German.

KRUGER: I'm from a small village right next to a forest close to Hildesheim, Germany, and my childhood was spent building tree houses and, for class assignments, doing things like observing how baby geese swim. My dad left when I was 13, so it was just me, my younger brother and my mom. We didn't have much money. My brother and I weren't allowed to watch TV other than a few programs my mom chose. It was a very protected childhood, and it was definitely German.

Q2.

PLAYBOY: You must have been a knockout. Who protected you from the local guys?

KRUGER: I had a childhood boyfriend, but I certainly wasn't the hot chick. I stood out only for being the thinnest, most awkward one, with long blonde hair. Guys mostly ignored me. I was dedicated to becoming a ballerina. I went to dance class while other girls played soccer with the boys, so they were the popular ones. Then I began modeling pretty early.

Q3.

PLAYBOY: Did modeling make you more or less popular?

KRUGER: The other kids resented that I was getting okay grades while being excused for being away a lot. The principal finally forced me to make a choice: "Either you're a model or a student." My mom said I could go to Paris for a year, but if modeling didn't work out, I had to come back and finish school. Because she trusted me, I tried to be responsible and not fuck it up.

Q4.

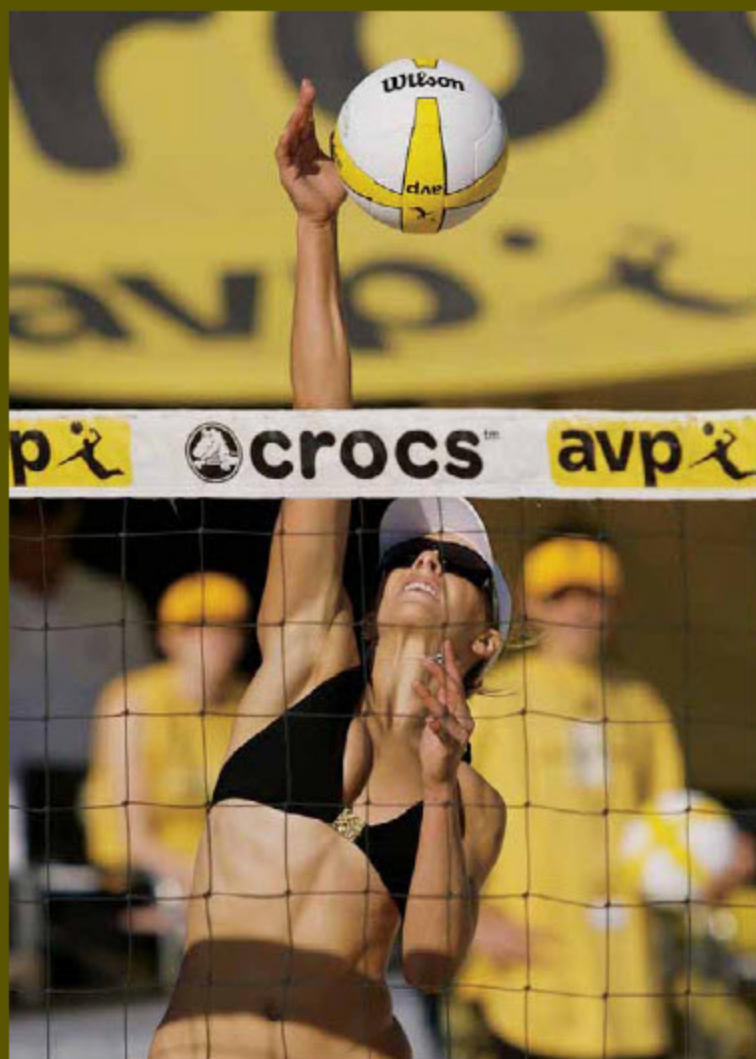
PLAYBOY: Was Mom wise to trust you?

KRUGER: In Paris I did all those stupid things you're supposed to do, but I was a pretty good kid who didn't want to go out and get crazy. I didn't even drink until I was 21. I definitely succeeded as a model against the odds—like looking 13 when I was actually 16 and standing only five-seven, which at the time was very short for a model.

Q5.

PLAYBOY: Considering your success, even you must have realized that you had in fact become "the hot chick."

KRUGER: Paris was the first time I felt men were really looking at me. I enjoyed that Frenchmen were gallant and tried to woo girls a bit more ardently than the men where I come from did. I was faithful to my childhood boyfriend from Germany for, like, six months, and then we broke (concluded on page 100)



TEAM GORGEOUS

We serve up the hottest from the AVP tour:
Michelle More and Suzanne Stonebarger

BY ROCKY RAKOVIC

Most nicknames are predicated on physical features. You may have a large friend named Tiny, been taught algebra by a flat-chested woman you called Two Backs (behind her real back) or perhaps heard of a singer who went by the name Blondie. Such is the case for Michelle More (brunette) and Suzanne Stonebarger. "During our first year on tour with the AVP—Association of Volleyball Professionals—the crew started calling us Team Gorgeous," Suzanne says, "partly because they didn't know our names but also because they enjoyed watching us."

Flattered, Michelle and Suzanne embraced the moniker and went on to become one of the most successful and longest-standing tandems in the sport. They are also one of the most watched—for obvious reasons.

This year they are poised to go on a tear. And with Olympic gold medalists Misty May-Treanor and Kerri Walsh taking the season off from competing as a team, the sand is wide open.

But let's be clear: This sport is no day at the beach. It requires enormous lower-body strength

(jumping on sand isn't easy), a ridiculous amount of coordination, enough endurance to play under a heat lamp and twin-sister-type teamwork. Team Gorgeous possesses all these qualities, with the last being their greatest strength. The two elite players were friends well before they even considered taking on the AVP Tour together.

Michelle and Suzanne met playing indoor volleyball for the University of Nevada, Reno and then became college roommates. Michelle recounts, "After school Suzanne went to play for the national team, and when she was through with that I said, 'Come to Los Angeles. We can be roommates again and just have fun.' We weren't necessarily thinking about pursuing beach volleyball; we were just waitressing and going out a lot. Eventually we got our stuff together and started learning how to transition our indoor game to the beach. We worked hard and continually got better." Team Gorgeous was born.

"We've been able to share the passion of our sport and compete at the highest level while maintaining our friendship," Suzanne says. "It's challenging for people to incorporate business with friendship,

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN WAYDA





so we've been really lucky."

For our cameras the girls took in the California sun wearing even less than their minuscule bikini uniforms. "I understand that we attract fans because of our teeny bikinis, but they truly are the most practical piece of clothing for the sport," Suzanne says. "The smaller the bikini, the less it restricts your motion."

The beautiful tans and insane legs also come with the job. "We call them 'sand legs,'" Michelle explains. "They take years to develop. You're raised to walk on pavement and other hard surfaces, but as a beach-volleyball player you have to perform on an ever-shifting surface."

Being in the sun so much, Suzanne is also concerned with skin care. A makeup artist on the side, she has used her expertise to create a beauty line called Signature23 that helps protect the skin from sun and wind exposure and contains no fragrances or dyes.

If you want to catch these two ripping up the competition live, the AVP Tour travels from Brooklyn to Hermosa Beach to towns in between that don't even have beaches.

"What I like most about AVP events is the atmosphere," Michelle says. "It feels like a beach party but with a competitive streak."

"Unlike in many sports, the players and fans interact," Suzanne says. "Everyone is easygoing and down-to-earth."

What's the toughest part of the AVP? Staying in top physical condition to compete with the best players in the world, they say. That and trying to get sand out of strange places.

How did their relationship handle posing for *PLAYBOY*? "After being in locker rooms and living together for so long, we've seen each other nude a lot," Michelle says.

"It was actually easier to pose because my best friend was there," adds Suzanne.

"I'm fine with being nude," Michelle continues. "I am very comfortable in my own skin. We work hard to look this good. A girl who is accomplished and athletic—I think that's gorgeous."







After being in locker rooms and living together for so long, we've seen each other nude a lot. We work hard to look this good. A girl who is accomplished and athletic—that's gorgeous."





See more of Suzanne and Michelle at club.playboy.com.

Heidi Montag

(continued from page 47)

to shop the tape. That tape exists!

HEIDI: I do feel bad for her. She was probably talked into doing it by Jason.

SPENCER: Honestly, I think the reality was it wasn't even sex. It was just fooling around. Maybe we should do a sex tape.

HEIDI: No way. I've never watched porn in my life. I'm not going to start making it.

SPENCER: You're right. Plus who needs a sex tape when we have a live feed to our 70-inch HD screen in the bedroom and all those mirrors. It would be like Tiger Woods watching his swing. Life with you is like 24/7 porn but without the obnoxious charges. [*They kiss.*]

Okay, next question. If everybody thinks I'm the biggest douche bag on the planet, why would you marry me?

HEIDI: You have a lot of qualities the world can't see, and I get to experience them.

SPENCER: [*Checks his Sidekick*] Can you please be more specific?

HEIDI: Can you please stop Twittering?

SPENCER: All good, all good! [*continues to Twitter*]

HEIDI: Some things are private. Our sex life is private.

SPENCER: I totally 100 percent disagree. Privacy doesn't exist, which is why I love my life. I love that we live every waking moment for everyone to see.

HEIDI: You know, I was never very sexual before I met you, Spencer. I knew what sex was, but when I met you I entered into a whole new realm of understanding, from fantasy to love. Or to experience a day with 20 or 30 orgasms. Before you, sex was just something that happened. Now it's something I look forward to every minute of the day.

SPENCER: I never imagined in my whole life I would meet a female as sexual as you are. [*fist bump*] Most girls are usually just about themselves.

HEIDI: Like I said, it makes me happy to see you happy. Like when we do it in the car.

SPENCER: Or on the plane on New Year's Eve. How about that, when I initiated you into the mile high club? Holy shit!

HEIDI: That was maybe the best experience I've ever had in my entire life. First flying to New York on a private jet and then getting to fulfill the fantasy of all fantasies. The hardest part was, like, keeping quiet so the pilots wouldn't come back. Honestly, I feel as if I'm just beginning to know my body with you. You're waking me up to what's possible, and it makes me want to try every new thing, doing it all kinds of ways—indoors, outdoors, upside down. I feel sorry for couples who aren't as sexually satisfied as we are. If your sex life isn't happy, your marriage is screwed.

SPENCER: What do you think you'll remember most from *I'm a Celebrity... Get Me Out of Here!*?

HEIDI: The huge spiders, the rats, the smell. Those horrible things slithering around every corner. It's the best show in the entire world because it's the hardest show. People saw an hour of what happened, but we were there 24/7. Minutes go by like hours. You're not allowed to leave. You're given only a small amount of beans and rice, and you wash your dishes in dirty creek water. The thing I'll remember most was how great you were, Spencer. If it weren't for you—and Jesus—I wouldn't have made it through alive.

SPENCER: That's because you're the sexiest, most natural thing in the jungle.

HEIDI: It was definitely an Adam and Eve situation.

SPENCER: I thought it was going to be like a hotel in the jungle, but it was more like *Lost* without the Others. The worst part for me was that hooking up was a physical impossibility. That was the main reason I had to get out of there. There was no place we could go to get our jungle love on, and I wasn't about to do it on TV because they'd have to pay us a lot more to show that.

HEIDI: It was so amazing to get back to civilization, wasn't it? Running water, actual bathtubs, making love whenever we want. They couldn't get me to go back there for anything.

SPENCER: I agree 10,000 percent. It made me realize I'm the luckiest man in the world to have my life. And now having my wife in *PLAYBOY* is the culmination of every dream I've ever had. By the way, what was your first experience with *PLAYBOY* like?

HEIDI: It was amazing. The shoot was so relaxed and incredible and—

SPENCER: No, no. I want to know about the first time you discovered *PLAYBOY*. What was that like?

HEIDI: Honestly, I didn't know about the magazine when I was a kid. I'm from a really religious community, so it wasn't discussed. It wasn't till much later that I realized how large *PLAYBOY* looms in every man's mind, that when guys reach a certain age they get a *PLAYBOY* magazine. But it has definitely changed my life—or maybe I should say it has shaped me. [*laughs*]

SPENCER: Go ahead, tell them.

HEIDI: Well, when I was shopping for my boobs, I wanted the best, so I sat down and flipped through a bunch of *PLAYBOYS*. The women are so hot—Pamela Anderson, Carmen Electra, Marilyn Monroe, all the Playmates. So iconic. When the magazine asked me to pose I understood what an honor it was. Once you're on the cover of *PLAYBOY* you're officially a sex symbol, which is something you can't get the same way by doing anything else.

SPENCER: I am so beyond excited knowing my wife is doing this. To me *PLAYBOY* is absolutely legendary. My mom actually bought my first *PLAYBOY* for me

when I was 13. To my surprise, she had ripped out every photo as kind of a "ha-ha," but all I needed was the cover to send me on the *PLAYBOY*-smuggling route from the age of 13 to 18. Somehow I obtained every single issue until it was legal for me to buy them. And not only from those years but also from the 1950s and 1960s.

HEIDI: I remember the first time I came into your house in the Hollywood Hills and saw your walls covered with Centerfolds.

SPENCER: You weren't too happy about it. Being a good Jesus lover you made me take them all down. But now I have my own real live *PLAYBOY* dream girl so I don't need that wallpaper anymore. I have poster-size images from this shoot, which I put up in my bathroom. Now when I'm peeing I get to see a 10-foot naked photo of my wife, and I'm like, Damn, I'm one lucky motherfucker.

HEIDI: Tell them about the day of the photo shoot.

SPENCER: Oh, it was fucking torture! I got the biggest case of blue balls in history. I wanted to shut down production after every outfit change so I could enjoy you all to myself. I suggest they bring something like that to Guantánamo Bay, actually. Who needs waterboarding when you can have Heidi Montag posing in these outfits in front of you, in front of the ocean, and not be able to make a move on her? I'm not kidding. It was torture. [*They kiss, and Spencer checks his iPhone.*]

Do you see any conflict with being a Christian and taking your clothes off for *PLAYBOY*?

HEIDI: This is the most I've ever shown, but I made the decision not to show everything.

SPENCER: Believe me, to Christian America you're naked in these pictures.

HEIDI: That's probably why I haven't told my dad yet. They're a little behind the times where he lives in Colorado, but he'll find out eventually. I honestly believe God didn't invent our bodies for us to be ashamed of them. The body is a beautiful creation. If anything, the reason I didn't show everything is because I plan to get a few more upgrades.

SPENCER: Don't do it for me, Heidi. I think you have the best custom-made breasts in the world right now. I don't need you to make any changes. I'm already driving a Bugatti every day.

HEIDI: Well, I'm sure as I get older I'll need some touch-ups. I'm definitely not done with my surgical quest. I think I want to go bigger on my boobs for you.

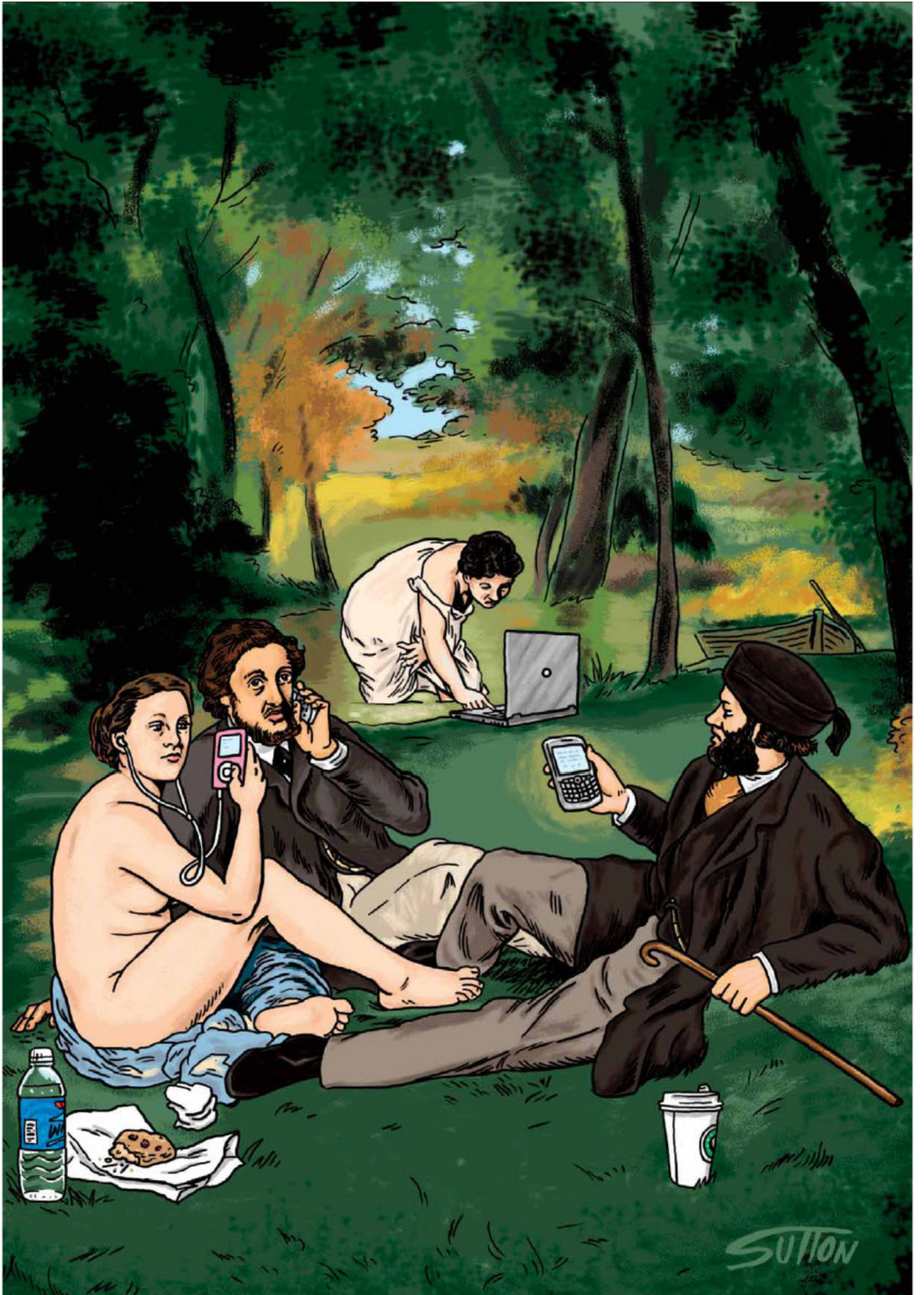
SPENCER: Awesome. How big?

HEIDI: Triple X.

SPENCER: Cool! So maybe I can interview you again for *PLAYBOY* once that's done, when you do the full reveal.

HEIDI: Great idea. Let's do this again when I get the upgrades.





DIANE KRUGER

(continued from page 89)

up. I fell in love with a French student, and we ended up dating for three years. We broke up too, but he's still my best friend.

Q6.

PLAYBOY: What sort of men, French or not, would never get to first base with you?

KRUGER: I've never liked arrogant men, the ones with the smooth line all ready to go, like, "Oh, you have the most beautiful eyes" or whatever. I hate over-the-top guys, the ones who drive yellow Porsches. I like tall guys who carry themselves with a confident stride and have good skin and an air of taking care of themselves. I generally don't go for traditionally handsome guys, either. I prefer a kind of broken-in, goofy look.

Q7.

PLAYBOY: Have you been more likely to have your heart broken or to be the heartbreaker?

KRUGER: I think I broke a lot of guys' hearts when I was younger, not because I intended to but because I was selfish. I ended things with guys I was never really in love with and probably left a little harshly and abruptly. But when I was 21, modeling and living in New York, I had my heart broken for the first time. I was madly in love with this guy who was horrible to me. That was the worst year of my life. Ever since, I've been a lot more cautious about treating other people's hearts carefully.

Q8.

PLAYBOY: You began turning up in acting roles in 2002. Walk us through the transition from aspiring dancer and model to actress.

KRUGER: Growing up I never even thought about anything else but being a dancer. By the age of 11 I was studying with the Royal Ballet of London, but I suffered a knee injury at 13, which devastated me. I love fashion, and I won a modeling contract and worked all the time, which was fun at first, but I got bored quickly. I moved to New York and shot a lot of ad campaigns for Saks, and I remember thinking, I don't want to be touched anymore. I was so fed up with constantly putting on makeup, taking off makeup, having my hair teased. That's when I began pursuing acting roles.

Q9.

PLAYBOY: You burst on the scene in *Troy* playing the legendarily alluring Helen opposite Brad Pitt and Orlando Bloom. Did you take it hard when many critics knocked you and the movie?

KRUGER: I thought we were making movie history, so the criticism was not easy, especially when it was only my second big role in a feature film. Ultimately I think it made me a lot stronger and definitely much more of a fighter.

Q10.

PLAYBOY: Were you comfortable filming nude scenes for *Troy* even though they didn't show up in the movie?

KRUGER: Nudity was always in the script, and *Troy* wasn't intended to be a PG-13 film. But under studio pressure to get a broad audience, the nude scenes were cut so they could get the rating down to PG-13.

Q11.

PLAYBOY: You and Brad Pitt don't have any scenes together in *Troy*, but you have lots of them in *Inglourious Basterds*.

KRUGER: I'm one of a group of people trying to assassinate Hitler, and since it's Quentin, the movie is absurd, funny and sometimes so violent that it becomes even funnier. But then the action turns serious and frightening. I'm sure it's going to ruffle a few feathers. I think I have the coolest character next to Brad's. I'm a German movie star who also spies for the Brits, like Marlene Dietrich. Quentin loves strong women in his films, and as you can imagine, we clicked in a way I've never before clicked with a director.

Q12.

PLAYBOY: Did Tarantino write the role for you?

KRUGER: The part was not written with me in mind at all. He wanted everyone to speak in his or her native language, and because he didn't believe I was German, he didn't even want to meet me. I learned 30 pages of dialogue in German and English and went to the audition dressed like the character. I *killed* it. I did everything except sleep with the director to get that part.

Q13.

PLAYBOY: Tarantino buffs have noted from his movies that he has a bit of a thing about women's feet. Did you know anything about that going in, or did you become aware of it during filming?

KRUGER: I guess I'm not a very good film geek because I had seen and admired all his films and didn't know that. Quentin absolutely denies it, by the way. It's funny, though, because I was scheduled for what was supposed to be one last day of shooting, which turned into three days of him doing six close-ups of my feet and two of my face.

Q14.

PLAYBOY: How did you and Brad Pitt get along during filming? The tabloids reported rumors that you were having a romantic flirtation and even an affair.

KRUGER: I'd seen Brad only once since we made *Troy*. He's a fantastic guy, but it's hard for me to understand the life he and Angelina Jolie lead, because they get so much media attention. We had one day on the set of *Inglourious Basterds*, and by the next week we were on the cover of some tabloid for having an "on-set affair." I don't know how he lives with that stuff or if he even reads it, but it's distracting.

Q15.

PLAYBOY: Since it's so common for actors to blur the line between fantasy and reality, how do you handle on-the-set temptation?

KRUGER: It can be confusing when you're green, especially when you're in an isolated location, away from familiar people and surroundings. People fall in love with their co-stars when they're open to that. I enjoy hanging with the crew, but I'm in a place in my life where I'm very happy and don't want to change things.

Q16.

PLAYBOY: It's easy to see why male journalists and TV interviewers go ga-ga over you. Has anybody from the press ever overstepped his bounds?

KRUGER: A journalist wrote me a couple of love letters, but I think that was a one-off because he was genuinely interested in me. I've had journalists call my mom and show up at her workplace. There's stuff I'd definitely sue people over, though. They can write anything they want about me but not when it gets to my family.

Q17.

PLAYBOY: You've made two *National Treasure* movies with Nicolas Cage. What's your experience with his famed intensity and reported eccentricities?

KRUGER: He's definitely an eccentric person, but it's about how his imagination can run wild. Give him an idea for a scene and he can spin it in 4,000 different ways, which is impressive. I can see when he started out and was a lot younger that he must have been really wild.

Q18.

PLAYBOY: You and actor Joshua Jackson have been in a relationship for several years. How have you come to terms with the public scrutiny that comes with being involved with another celebrity?

KRUGER: Joshua and I are not Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie, so it's not like we have four cars following us wherever we go. There are days when it's annoying to have photographers follow you, especially when you're in pajama pants and just want to get a cup of coffee. If you're hungover, the last thing you want is to have someone take your photograph. It hasn't been too bad, though. We're not that famous.

Q19.

PLAYBOY: What's your recipe for keeping a relationship hot?

KRUGER: Constant seduction of your partner, no matter how long you've been together, keeps a relationship alive. I love doing girly things like getting massages, going on dinner dates and making an effort for my guy, putting on a sexy dress and makeup. Seeing "that look" on my man's face makes me feel sexy.

Q20.

PLAYBOY: What's the most surprisingly sexy setting in which you've made love?

KRUGER: A car. I was on a road trip once, and we couldn't find a place to sleep, so we had to sleep in the car. It was funny and sexy at the same time.



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A Circle of Jerks

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CONFIDO

(continued from page 77)

had brought it home the night before. Just before bedtime, Ellen had been inspired to give the box a name, an appealing combination of confidant and household pet—*Confido*.

"What is it every person really wants, more than food almost?" Henry had asked coyly, showing her *Confido* for the first time. He was a tall, rustic man, ordinarily as shy as a woods creature. But something had changed him, made him fiery and loud. "What is it?"

"Happiness, Henry?"

"Happiness, certainly! But what's the key to happiness?"

"Religion? Security, Henry? Health, dear?"

"What is the longing you see in the eyes of strangers on the street, in eyes wherever you look?"

"You tell me, Henry. I give up," Ellen had said helplessly.

"Somebody to talk to! Somebody who really understands! That's what." He'd waved *Confido* over his head. "And this is it!"

Now, on the morning after, Ellen turned away from the window and gingerly slipped *Confido*'s earphone into her ear. She pinned the flat metal box inside her blouse and concealed the wire in her hair. A very soft drumming and shushing, with an overtone like a mosquito's hum, filled her ear.

She cleared her throat self-consciously, though she wasn't going to speak aloud, and thought deliberately, "What a nice surprise you are, *Confido*."

"Nobody deserves a good break any more than you do, Ellen," whispered *Confido* in her ear. The voice was tinny and high, like a child's voice through a comb with tissue paper stretched over it. "After all *you've* put up with, it's about time something halfway nice came your way."

"Ohhhhhh," Ellen thought depreciatively, "I haven't been through so much. It's been quite pleasant and easy, really."

"On the surface," said *Confido*. "But you've had to do without *so* much."

"Oh, I suppose—"

"Now, now," said *Confido*. "I understand you. This is just between us, anyway, and it's good to bring those things out in the open now and then. It's *healthy*. This is a lousy, cramped house, and it's left its mark on you down deep, and you know it, you poor kid. And a woman can't help being just a little hurt when her husband doesn't love her enough to show much ambition, either. If he only knew how brave you'd been, what a front you'd put up, always cheerful—"

"Now, see here—" Ellen objected faintly.

"Poor kid, it's about time your ship came in. Better late than never."

"Really, I haven't minded," insisted Ellen in her thoughts. "Henry's been a happier man for not being tormented

by ambition, and happy husbands make happy wives and children."

"All the same, a woman can't help thinking now and then that her husband's love can be measured by his ambition," said *Confido*. "Oh, you deserve this pot of gold at the end of the rainbow."

"Go along with you," said Ellen.

"I'm on *your* side," said *Confido* warmly.

Henry strode into the kitchen, rubbing his craggy face to a bright pink with a rough towel. After a night's sleep, he was still the new Henry, the promoter, the enterpriser, ready to lift himself to the stars by his own garters.

"Dear sirs!" he said heartily. "This is to notify you that two weeks from this date I am terminating my employment with the Accousti-gem Corporation in order that I may pursue certain business and research interests of my own. Yours truly—" He embraced Ellen and rocked her back and forth in his great arms. "Aha! Caught you chatting with your new friend, didn't I?"

Ellen blushed, and quickly turned *Confido* off. "It's uncanny, Henry. It's absolutely spooky. It hears my thoughts and answers them."

"Now nobody need ever be lonely again!" said Henry.

"It seems like magic to me."

"Everything about the universe is magic," said Henry grandly, "and Einstein would be the first to tell you so. All I've done is stumble on a trick that's always been waiting to be performed. It was an accident, like most discoveries, and none other than Henry Bowers is the lucky one."

Ellen clapped her hands. "Oh, Henry, they'll make a movie of it someday!"

"And the Russians'll claim *they* invented it," laughed Henry. "Well, let 'em. I'll be big about it. I'll divide up the market with 'em. I'll be satisfied with a mere billion dollars from American sales."

"Uh-huh." Ellen was lost in the delight of seeing in her imagination a movie about her famous husband, played by an actor who looked very much like Lincoln. She watched the simple-hearted counter of blessings, slightly down at the heels, humming and working on a tiny microphone with which he hoped to measure the minute noises inside the human ear. In the background, colleagues played cards and joshed him for working during the lunch hour. Then he placed the microphone in his ear, connected it to an amplifier and loudspeaker, and was astonished by *Confido*'s first whispers on earth:

"You'll never get anywhere around here, Henry," the first, primitive *Confido* had said. "The only people who get ahead at Accousti-gem, boy, are the backslappers and snow-job artists. Every day somebody gets a big raise for something you did. Wise up! You've got 10 times as much on the ball as anybody else in the whole laboratory. It isn't fair."

What Henry had done after that was to connect the microphone to a hearing

aid instead of a loudspeaker. He fixed the microphone on the earpiece, so that the small voice, whatever it was, was picked up by the microphone, and played back louder by the hearing aid. And there, in Henry's trembling hands, was *Confido*, everybody's best friend, ready for market.

"I mean it," said the new Henry to Ellen. "A cool billion! That's a \$6 profit on a *Confido* for every man, woman and child in the United States."

"I wish we knew what the voice was," said Ellen. "I mean, it makes you wonder." She felt a fleeting uneasiness.

Henry waved the question away as he sat down to eat. "Something to do with the way the brain and the ears are hooked up," he said with his mouth full. "Plenty of time to find *that* out. The thing now is to get *Confidos* on the market, and start living instead of merely existing."

"Is it us?" said Ellen. "The voice—is it us?"

Henry shrugged. "I don't think it's God, and I don't think it's the Voice of America. Why not ask *Confido*? I'll leave it home today, so you can have lots of good company."

"Henry—haven't we been doing more than merely existing?"

"Not according to *Confido*," said Henry, standing and kissing her.

"Then I guess we haven't after all," she said absently.

"But, by God if we won't from now on!" said Henry. "We owe it to ourselves. *Confido* says so."



Ellen was in a trance when she fed the two children and sent them off to school. She came out of it momentarily, when her eight-year-old son, Paul, yelled into a loaded school bus, "Hey! My daddy says we're going to be rich as Croesus!"

The school bus door clattered shut behind him and his seven-year-old sister, and Ellen returned to a limbo in a rocking chair by her kitchen table, neither heaven nor hell. Her jumbled thoughts permitted one small peephole out into the world, and filling it was *Confido*, which sat by the jam, amid the uncleared breakfast dishes.

The telephone rang. It was Henry, who had just gotten to work. "How's it going?" he asked brightly.

"As usual. I just put the children on the bus."

"I mean, how's the first day with *Confido* going?"

"I haven't tried it yet, Henry."

"Welllll—let's get going. Let's show a little faith in the merchandise. I want a full report with supper."

"Henry—have you quit yet?"

"The only reason I haven't is I haven't gotten to a typewriter." He laughed. "A man in my position doesn't quit by just saying so. He resigns on paper."

"Henry—would you please hold off, just for a few days?"

"Why?" said Henry incredulously. "Strike while the iron's hot, I say."

"Just to be on the safe side, Henry. Please?"

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"So what's there to be afraid of? It works like a dollar watch. It's bigger than television and psychoanalysis combined, and they're in the black. Quit worrying." His voice was growing peevish. "Put on your Confido, and quit worrying. That's what it's for."

"I just feel we ought to know more about it."

"Yeah, yeah," said Henry, with uncharacteristic impatience. "Okay, okay, yeah, yeah. See you."

Miserably, Ellen hung up, depressed by what she'd done to Henry's splendid spirits. This feeling changed quickly to anger with herself, and, in a vigorous demonstration of loyalty and faith, she pinned Confido on, put the earpiece in place, and went about her housework.

"What are you, anyway?" she thought. "What is a Confido?"

"A way for you to get rich," said Confido. This, Ellen found, was all Confido would say about itself. She put the same question to it several times during the day, and each time Confido changed the subject quickly—usually taking up the matter of money's being able to buy happiness, no matter what anyone said.

"As Kin Hubbard said," whispered Confido, "'It ain't no disgrace to be poor, but it might as well be.'"

Ellen giggled, though she'd heard the quotation before. "Now, listen, you," she said. All her arguments with Confido were of this extremely mild nature. Confido had a knack of saying things she didn't agree with in such a way and at such a time that she couldn't help agreeing a little.

"Mrs. Bowers—El-len," called a voice

outside. The caller was Mrs. Fink, the Bowerses' next-door neighbor, whose driveway ran along the bedroom side of the Bowerses' home. Mrs. Fink was racing the engine of her new car by Ellen's bedroom window.

Ellen leaned out over the windowsill. "My," she said. "Don't *you* look nice. Is that a new dress? It suits your complexion perfectly. Most women can't wear orange."

"Just the ones with complexions like salami," said Confido.

"And what have you done to your hair? I love it that way. It's just right for an oval face."

"Like a mildewed bathing cap," said Confido.

"Well, I'm going downtown, and I thought maybe there was something I could pick up for you," said Mrs. Fink.

"How awfully thoughtful," said Ellen.

"And here we thought all along she just wanted to rub our noses in her new car, her new clothes and her new hairdo," said Confido.

"I thought I'd get prettied up a little, because George is going to take me to lunch at the Bronze Room," said Mrs. Fink.

"A man *should* get away from his secretary from time to time, if only with his wife," said Confido. "Occasional separate vacations keep romance alive, even after years and years."

"Have you got company, dear?" said Mrs. Fink. "Am I keeping you from something?"

"Hmmmm?" said Ellen absently. "Company? Oh—no, no."

"You acted like you were listening for something or something."

"I did?" said Ellen. "That's strange. You must have imagined it."

"With all the imagination of a summer squash," said Confido.

"Well, I must dash," said Mrs. Fink, racing her great engine.

"Don't blame you for trying to run away from yourself," said Confido, "but it can't be done—not even in a Buick."

"Ta-ta," said Ellen.

"She's really awfully sweet," Ellen said in her thoughts to Confido. "I don't know why you had to say those awful things."

"Aaaaaaaaah," said Confido. "Her whole life is trying to make other women feel like two cents."

"All right—say that *is* so," said Ellen, "it's all the poor thing's got, and she's harmless."

"Harmless, harmless," said Confido. "Sure, she's harmless, her crooked husband's harmless and a poor thing, everybody's harmless. And after arriving at that bighearted conclusion, what have you got left for yourself? What does that leave you to think about anything?"

"Now, I'm simply not going to put up with you anymore," said Ellen, reaching for the earpiece.

"Why not?" said Confido. "We're having the time of your life." It chuckled. "Saaaay, listen—won't the stuffy old biddies around here like the Duchess Fink curl up and die with envy when the Bowerses put on a little dog for a change. Eh? That'll show 'em the good and honest win out in the long run."

"The good and honest?"

"*You*—you and Henry, by God," said Confido. "That's who. Who else?"

Ellen's hand came down from the earpiece. It started up again, but as a not very threatening gesture, ending in her grasping a broom.

"That's just a nasty neighborhood rumor about Mr. Fink and his secretary," she thought.

"Heah?" said Confido. "Where there's smoke—"

"And he's not a crook."

"Look into those shifty, weak blue eyes, look at those fat lips made for cigars and tell me that," said Confido.

"Now, now," thought Ellen. "That's enough. There's been absolutely no proof—"

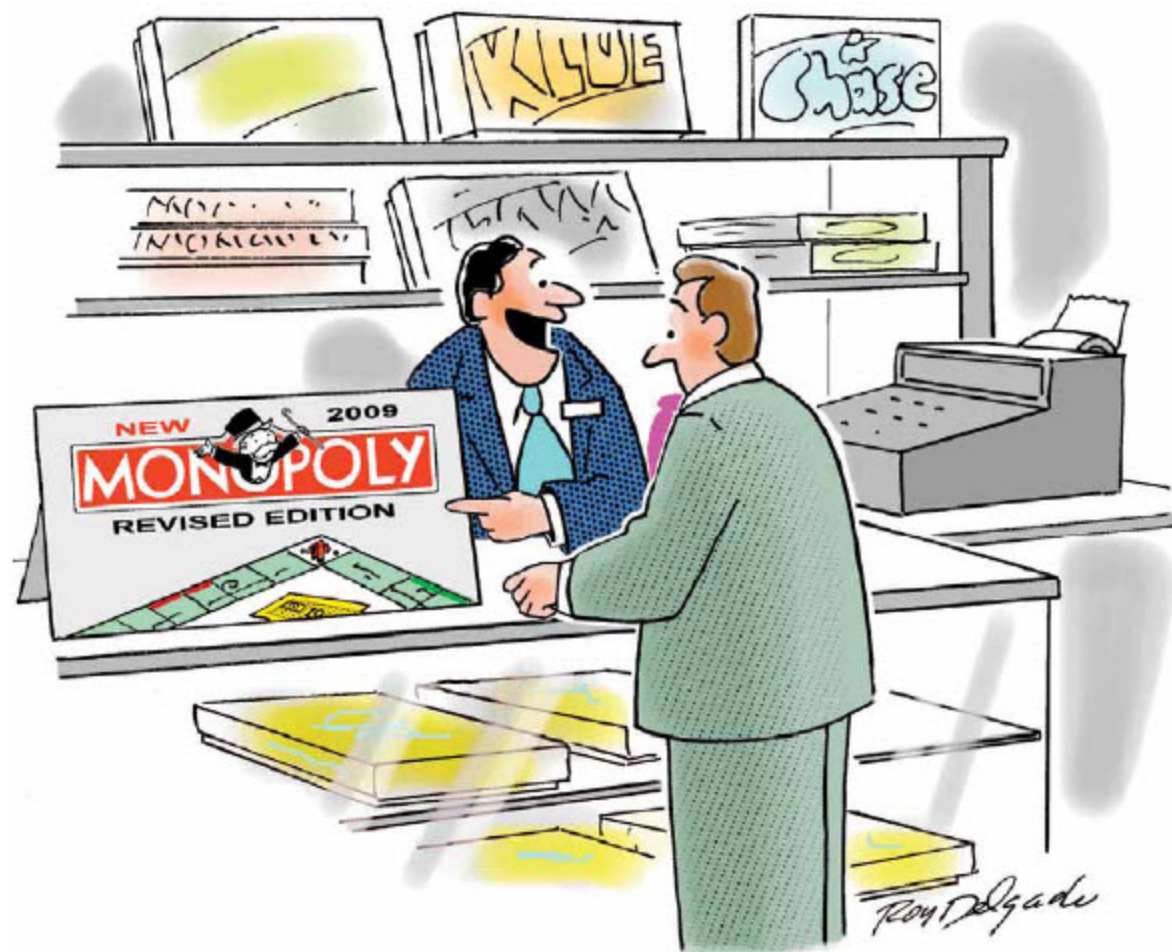
"Still waters run deep," said Confido. It was silent for a moment. "And I don't mean just the Finks. This whole neighborhood is still water. Honest to God, somebody ought to write a book about it. Just take this block alone, starting at the corner with the Kramers. Why, to look at her, you'd think she was the quietest, most proper...."

"Ma, Ma—hey, Ma," said her son several hours later. "Ma—you sick? Hey, Ma!"

"And *that* brings us to the Fitzgibbons," Confido was saying. "That poor little, dried-up, sawed-off, henpecked—"

"Ma!" cried Paul.

"Oh!" said Ellen, opening her eyes.



"You startled me. What are you children doing home from school?" She was sitting in her kitchen rocker, half-dazed.

"It's after three, Ma. Whuddya think?"

"Oh, dear—is it that late? Where on earth has the day gone?"

"Can I listen, Ma—can I listen to Confido?"

"It's not for children to listen to," said Ellen, shocked. "I should say not. It's strictly for grown-ups."

"Can't we just look at it?"

With cruel feat of will, Ellen disengaged Confido from her ear and blouse, and laid it on the table. "There—you see? That's all there is to it."

"Boy—a billion dollars lying right there," said Paul softly. "Sure doesn't look like much, does it? A cool billion." He was giving an expert imitation of his father on the night before. "Can I have a motorcycle?"

"Everything takes time, Paul," said Ellen.

"What are you doing with your housecoat on so late?" said her daughter.

"I was *just* going to change it," said Ellen.

She had been in the bedroom just a moment, her mind seething with neighborhood scandal, half-heard in the past, now refreshed and ornamented by Confido, when there were bitter shouts in the kitchen.

She rushed into the kitchen to find Susan crying, and Paul red and defiant. Confido's earpiece in his ear.

"Paul!" said Ellen.

"I don't care," said Paul. "I'm *glad* I listened. Now I know the truth—I know the whole secret."

"He pushed me," sobbed Susan.

"Confido said to," said Paul.

"Paul," said Ellen, horrified. "What secret are you talking about? What secret, dear?"

"I'm not your son," he said sullenly.

"Of *course* you are!"

"Confido says I'm not," said Paul. "Confido says I'm adopted. Susan's the one you love, and that's why I get a raw deal around here."

"Paul—darling, darling. It simply isn't true. I promise. I swear it. And I don't know what on earth you mean by raw deals—"

"Confido says it's true all right," said Paul stoutly.

Ellen leaned against the kitchen table and rubbed her temples. Suddenly, she leaned forward and snatched Confido from Paul.

"Give me that filthy little beast!" she said. She strode angrily out of the back door with it.

"Hey!" said Henry, doing a buck-and-wing through his front door, and sailing his hat, as he had never done before, onto the coatrack in the hall. "Guess what? The breadwinner's home!"

Ellen appeared in the kitchen doorway

and gave him a sickly smile. "Hi."

"There's my girl," said Henry, "and have I got good news for you. This is a great day! I haven't got a job anymore. Isn't that swell? They'll take me back any time I want a job, and that'll be when hell freezes over."

"Um," said Ellen.

"The Lord helps those who help themselves," said Henry, "and here's one man who just got both hands free."

"Huh," said Ellen.

Young Paul and Susan appeared on either side of her to peer bleakly at their father.

"What is this?" said Henry. "It's like a funeral parlor."

"Mom buried it, Pop," said Paul hoarsely. "She buried Confido."

"She did—she really did," said Susan wonderingly. "Under the hydrangeas."

"Henry, I had to," said Ellen desolately, throwing her arms around him. "It was us or it."

Henry pushed her away. "Buried it," he murmured, shaking his head. "Buried it? All you had to do was turn it off."

Slowly, he walked through the house and into the backyard, his family watching in awe. He hunted for the grave under the shrubs without asking for directions.

He opened the grave, wiped the dirt from Confido with his handkerchief, and put the earpiece in his ear, cocking his head and listening intently.

"It's all right, it's okay," he said softly. He turned to Ellen. "What on earth got into you?"

"What did it say?" said Ellen. "What did it just say to you, Henry?"

He sighed and looked awfully tired. "It said somebody else would cash in on it sooner or later, if we didn't."

"Let them," said Ellen.

"Why?" demanded Henry. He looked at her challengingly, but his firmness decayed quickly, and he looked away.

"If you've talked to Confido, you *know* why," said Ellen. "Don't you?"

Henry kept his eyes down. "It'll sell, it'll sell, it'll sell," he murmured. "My God, how it'll sell."

"It's a direct wire to the worst in us, Henry," said Ellen. She burst into tears. "Nobody should have that, Henry, nobody! That little voice is loud enough as it is."

An autumn silence, muffled in moldering leaves, settled over the yard, broken only by Henry's faint whistling through his teeth. "Yeah," he said at last. "I know."

He removed Confido from his ear, and laid it gently in its grave once more. He kicked dirt in on top of it.

"What's the last thing it said, Pop?" said Paul.

Henry grinned wistfully. "I'll be seeing you, sucker. I'll be seeing you."

From Look at the Birdie by Kurt Vonnegut, available from Delacorte Press in November.



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APOCALYPSE 2012

(continued from page 40)

and books such as Daniel Pinchbeck's *2012: The Return of Quetzalcoatl*, have endlessly chronicled the movement and what to expect. Pinchbeck perhaps more than anyone else has become the great—and most controversial—advocate for a transformational 2012. Apocalypse fever is set to hit multiplexes with the November release of Roland Emmerich's big-budget Hollywood dystopian disaster movie *2012*, starring John Cusack and Amanda Peet.

A cottage industry of small companies that supply products to 2012ers is now thriving, offering everything from bullets to backup generators to full-size bunkers (such as a \$36,000 six-person bargain-basement underground bomb shelter, complete with a nuclear, biological and chemical filtering system, which a Virginia Beach company called Hardened Structures offers to deliver and install anywhere in the U.S.). In May the Associated Press reported that suppliers of survivalist gear and military surplus stores nationwide had seen as much as a 50 percent rise in business in recent months. One survivalist told the AP that the website of his consulting business—which teaches newcomers emergency preparedness—had seen a threefold increase in traffic in the past 14 months.

Never mind that reputable scholars insist the Mayans attached no particular apocalyptic meaning to 2012. It was merely the end of their calendar. And never mind the absurdity of the idea that some mysterious Mayan priest could accurately predict what would happen 2,000 years in the future.

"It's not just the Mayans," says Pace. "One of the great prophecies of the Hopi Indians was that the world would end when a huge spiderweb covers the entire globe. For hundreds of years we didn't know what they were talking about. Now we have the World Wide Web. Whether you believe in Hopi prophecy, Mayan prophecy, the Book of Revelations, Nostradamus, the Web Bot Project or the Bible Code, the common denominator is that they are all pointing in the same direction. As Proverbs 27:12 says, 'A prudent man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself, but the simple pass on and are punished.'"

●

"We are located in the middle of the continent, up high and away from significant population centers, nuclear power plants, active volcanoes and major fault lines and at a sufficient altitude to limit flooding. We may have to move—and move quickly—so we have 'bug-out bags' packed with food, water, medical and other supplies that can be transported in the event we have to abandon our primary site. I have a network of friendly sites I can make my way toward and improve my chances of survival significantly."—Ace McQuade, Chuck Norris fan, somewhere in the middle of Canada

The 2012 movement would be easy to dismiss as pseudo-mystical mumbo jumbo if it weren't for the disturbing real-world trends that inform the less fanciful pre-

dictions of bad times ahead: catastrophic climate change, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, financial collapse, swine flu, peak oil, peak food. This is the everyday fodder of CNN and *Newsweek*, not science fiction or religious fantasy. Home prices have declined almost 33 percent since their peak in 2006, and the unemployment rate in America is the worst it has been since 1983. When you add the specter of nuclear-armed religious fanatics, who wouldn't be a bit anxious about what's coming down the cosmic sewer pipe?

Even before the current economic crisis, Hurricane Katrina in 2005 made clear to many Americans that civilization can sometimes hang by the barest of threads. Those doomsday cultists stocking up on guns and groceries in preparation for the end-times don't seem quite so silly after what happened in New Orleans. As we watched bloated bodies float down the streets of a major American city and witnessed the complete paralysis of all layers of government, who among us didn't think, What would I do in such a situation? Would I have the skills and fortitude to survive?

The 2012ers generally fall into one of two categories: (1) the sane but paranoid who are preparing for a new kind of agrarian civilization based on lawlessness and an absence of government—essentially New Orleans after the storm but on a mass scale, or (2) folks a little more out there who believe that on December 21, 2012 a new spiritual enlightenment will arrive. Some New Agers are expecting the dawning of the Age of Aquarius, which was supposed to happen in 1987 with the planetary alignment known as the harmonic convergence—remember that?—but this time for real. A more popular and dramatic telling of the story, the one with obvious box-office appeal, is shared by the hard-core 2012ers: A cascading series of interconnected disasters, up to and including cosmic catastrophe, will occur as the mysterious Planet X (some call it Nibiru) crashes through our solar system accompanied by a giant ass-kicking flying snake god called Quetzalcoatl, which is scheduled to come screaming out of the sky—essentially *Godzilla* meets *When Worlds Collide*. Another theory in play is known as pole reversal. It's a notion promoted by 2012 leader and author Patrick Geryl (*How to Survive 2012*), who believes Earth's magnetic poles will change places, which will lead to earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and giant tidal waves that will make most of the planet's surface uninhabitable. Last are the Christians who believe in what the Bible tells them—the prophecy laid out in Revelations.

Australian Robert Bast isn't much into organized religion, though he does have an interest in alternative spirituality. That's why three years ago he began 2012forum.com (Steve Pace is an elder) as a quiet place where what he calls the "pink and fluffy people"—the flotsam and jetsam of the New Age movement—can discuss esoteric points of Mayan cosmology. Many 2012ers gather in dozens of other such forums, including 2012-comet.com and december212012.com, but Bast's site

seems to be the most popular. Bast is not what you would call a true believer; he's too skeptical for that. He does, however, think the ancients had something important to tell us. So he was more than a little surprised when all those Bible-thumpers started turning up on the forum. Aren't these people supposed to be hostile to pagan mythology? Not at all, it turns out.

"Most of our members are Americans, and most of them seem to be Christians of one degree or another," says Bast. "We get people on our site from all over the world, but in terms of the area most represented, that would be the Bible Belt, USA, easily."

It shouldn't be that surprising. Just as nearly every religion has a genesis myth, most religions have a how-the-world-will-end myth. In Missouri, as elsewhere in the Bible Belt, belief in the end-times is common: the prediction that Jesus Christ is coming back to earth sometime soon, whereupon a battle will commence, a final struggle between good and evil, a bloody Armageddon, after which the faithful will be "raptured up" into heaven while the rest of us heathens are cast into the flaming pit. The death of millions of people and the total destruction of civilization as we know it is welcomed as the fulfillment of ancient biblical prophecy, just as it is for 2012ers. (Interestingly, some Mormons believe the Mayan snake god Quetzalcoatl is Jesus Christ visiting the New World after his resurrection. Mormons also believe Missouri was the original home of the Garden of Eden, so make of that what you will.)

There are further connections between Christianity and the 2012 movement. Just as Christians have their own online Rapture Index (raptureready.com)—the Dow Jones Industrial Average of end-time activity—so do the 2012ers have something called the Web Bot Project, which is said to be a secret computer search engine that began as a way to pick stocks but evolved into a cross between Google and the Oracle of Delphi. Devotees say the Web Bot Project predicted not only 9/11 but last autumn's financial meltdown. Among the Web Bot's other predictions: Famous people will start disappearing without explanation later this year, space aliens will make contact in 2011 and millions will die the following year through some combination of natural disasters, economic collapse and those aforementioned space aliens, who one suspects will probably have something to do with the unsolved kidnapping of Lindsay Lohan in the coming months.

Since 2012 is a short three years away, you would think posts on Bast's website would show a sense of urgency. In fact there's a great deal of philosophical talk but not a lot of practical preparation. "Most of the people on the forum don't have the skills or means to prepare adequately," admits Bast. "Many people think they still have a couple of years before they need to act, but in reality most people who say they are going to make an effort never will. The general preference is for someone else to build the community and then just turn up

a few days prior to December 21, 2012. I think many people expect this option will be available to them. It won't."

●
"For now we are buying a 40-foot Conex shipping container just to store things in—a tractor, fuel tanks, large tools, etc. As soon as we get our property (we're looking at parcels between 25 and 75 acres), we will take the storage container up there and most likely bury it and fortify it as a shelter, with ventilation pipes and a concrete surround."—Susan Skains, Texas Gulf Coast

"It's a lifestyle thing," Steve Pace says. "It's a little voice in the back of your head that says every time you go shopping, Get one of those for later. And pretty soon you have a decent stockpile."

Opening the doors to his kitchen pantry, Pace shows me a cupboard full of canned goods: tuna, mandarin oranges, chili con carne, macaroni and cheese, condensed milk. Nothing fancy but enough food to last six months, he estimates. Out back, planks of lumber lie waiting on the ground. Pace is building a storm shelter. "I don't see any need for a bunker," he says. "It's a metal coffin. The ability to move around is a better defense. If you know there's a bad crowd coming, get out of the way, let them pass and then come back. With a bunker, you're in a fixed position. They can circle you. They can smoke you out. They can pour ammonia down the ventilation pipes. A bunker makes no sense to me unless there's an all-out nuclear war."

In the woods adjoining the back of Pace's property you can see the damage from a big ice storm last winter that knocked out electricity for 10 days. Treetops are shorn off as if someone had taken a giant hedge trimmer to them. The ground remains littered with broken branches. When the storm came, Pace—no surprise—was prepared. "I fed the whole neighborhood during the ice storm and still hadn't opened any canned food by the time we got the power back," he says. "They put me in the local newspaper for that."

Pace jumps into his truck—the one with the TERRORIST HUNTING PERMIT: NO BAG LIMIT sticker on the bumper—and drives a couple of blocks to a storage locker where he keeps additional supplies. Unlocking the metal gate he reveals an Ali Baba's cave of survivalist equipment: sleeping bags, MRE rations, ammo belts, compasses, fishing hooks, survival manuals, decontamination kits, water-filtration equipment ("You can pump your own piss through this," he says with a smile). There are no power tools because there probably won't be any power, he says, just hammers, saws and drills. A half dozen white plastic tubs are filled to the brim with corn, wheat and rice.

Pace proudly pulls out a heavy-looking charcoal-lined contamination suit from an oversize backpack. In case of a nuclear, chemical or biological attack, he recommends you stay in your house, seal the doors and windows as best you can and don gas masks. But if you have to go into the open, a contamination suit will prove to be a necessity.

I pull on one of the gas masks and grab Pace's assault rifle to get a feel for what such conditions are like. The rifle, more like a machine gun, is surprisingly heavy. The smell of the rubber mask makes me gag. I suck in as much air as I can through the filter, but it is as though I'm breathing through a straw. Claustrophobia makes my heart race. I start hyperventilating in the Missouri sun, and the plastic eyeholes of the mask begin to fog up. I can't even see let alone breathe, so I frantically peel the thing off my head. I don't even bother trying on the contamination suit.

"All this stuff gives you peace of mind," Pace says, waving his hand grandly across his array of provisions. "It's like having life insurance."

But it's not all doom and gloom. Absent a disaster of cosmological proportions, post-2012 life will go on for the favored few, says Pace. "I believe in some way it will be a better existence, getting back to earth, getting back to nature, less materialistic," he says. "There will be disasters, wars and plagues, but it's not going to be the end of the world. It's not even going to be the end of human nature as we know it. We may kill off a bunch of people, but you're still going to have commerce. Carpenters are going to build, farmers are going to farm, and criminals are still going to have to be shot. It's just going to be a change in the way we do things."

And what if nothing happens on December 21, 2012?

"We just keep on trucking. Just like Y2K," he laughs. He pauses before saying, "It's almost as if humans have this constant need to envision the end."

The good news is that eschatological predictions always turn out to be bunk. Thus far, at least. Remember the hordes of yuppies who bought up half of Whole Foods in preparation for Y2K, another mass panic sparked by nothing more dangerous than a date in time, a turn of the calendar? Every decade has its own vision

of the end of the world. And that's the beauty of the doomsday business.

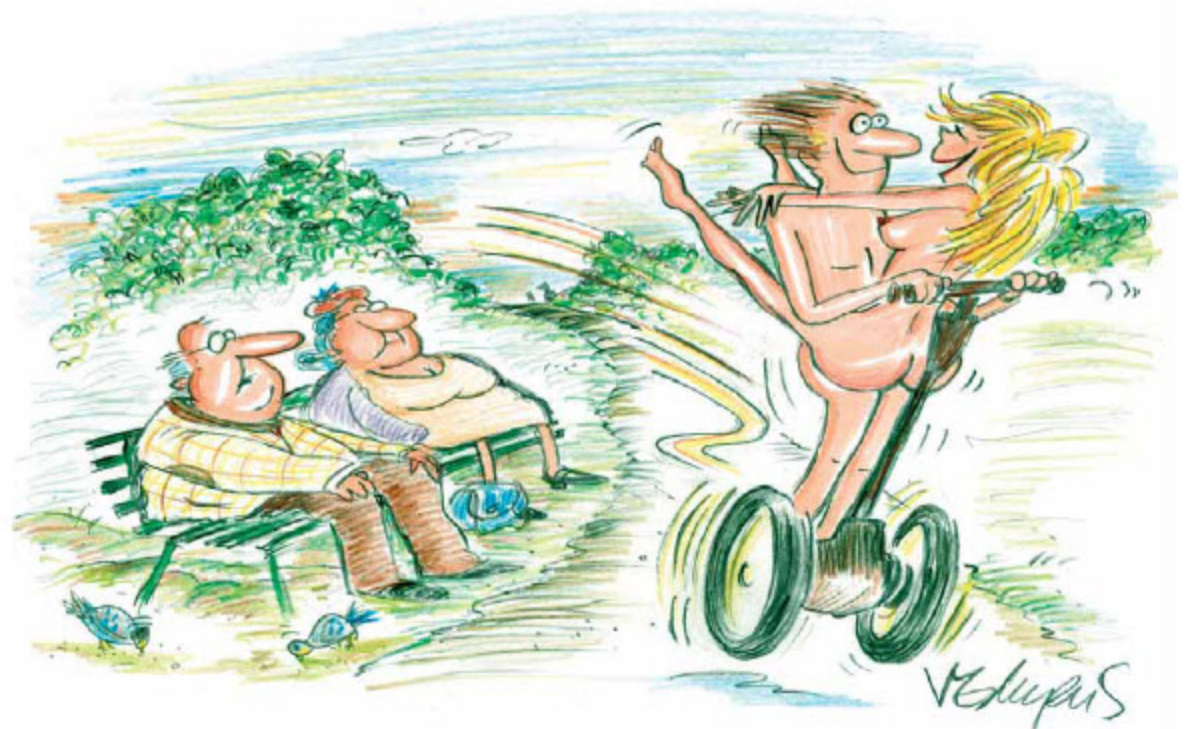
There's always another tomorrow.

●
"My name is Daniel, and I am the leader of a government research team currently stuck in the space-time continuum. Our technology has been sabotaged by an unknown terrorist. We have destroyed time and are stuck in a loophole. Do not believe the particle accelerator being built in the Alps. It is the time machine that President Barack Obama told my research team to build and test on December 21, 2012."—Daniel, stuck somewhere in the space-time continuum

After leaving rural Missouri, I return home to a bustling Miami Beach to find my neighborhood under a couple of inches of water. A major thunderstorm barreled through, leaving in its wake downed trees and drowned automobiles. Luckily I live on the second floor, but other residents had flooded apartments and no electricity, which means no air-conditioning—not a minor inconvenience in the south Florida heat. The roof of the recently refurbished Fontainebleau, one of the region's swankiest hotels, collapsed under the weight of the rain, sending a wall of water into the lobby. A hundred lightning strikes in the span of an hour and golf-ball-size hailstones drove pedestrians to seek cover.

I open my fridge, which is empty except for half a pineapple and a bottle of vodka. Okay, it isn't the end of the world, but it gets me thinking about how unprepared I will be in the event of, say, a major hurricane. I sit at my desk, pour myself a glass of vodka and write a list: Learn how to fire a gun, take driving lessons, stock up on bottled water and canned goods, buy a flashlight and lots of batteries of all sizes, inquire about time-share bunkers.

Hey, you never know.



"Doesn't anybody use the backseat anymore?"

THE HILLIKER CURSE

(continued from page 50)

she'd outgrown the pose. Our letters were breathless with what it all meant.

Nightly phone calls complemented our written texts. The banal-chat quotient ran zero. Sex was our low voices cloaked in collusion. The coastal gap allowed me to finish my new novel and yearn for Helen alone in the dark.

I bought a new Anne Sofie von Otter poster and kept Barko away from it. I brooded on Helen to the exclusion of all other women. I reread her letters and calibrated new responses. We spoke for hours at a pop. I laid out portentous epigrams. Helen cut loose with scattergun insight. She was smarter than me. I lost my mental grounding and flailed for bright things to say. God threw us together. I believed it then and believe it no less vigorously now. I downplayed my religiousness and

stressed a reluctant egalitarianism. Helen was a brain-broiler. I was a caffeine-cooked autodidact in over his head. One thing consoled me: I knew God's big plan for Helen before she did.

We collided at the airport. Our embrace scorched baggage claim. Helen's hair looked darker. Tears washed her eyes an even paler blue.

We kissed in her car. Airport cacophony drowned out my heartbeat. I was tantrically tapped and two-months tumescent. L.A. looked all new. It was *our* town more than *my* town now. I reserved us a suite at the Mondrian Hotel. It was my favorite local brood spot. I wanted to desaturate my images of all other women with Helen Knode right there.

The valet-park guys knew me and dug me. I overtipped and exuded big-white-bwana savoir-faire. I laid on the largesse.

The guys called me *Jefe*. The desk fag whizzed us upstairs.

Helen whooped at the suite and yukked at my gauche white-trash glee. We gobbled honor-bar almonds and ran to the bed. It wasn't anything I had predicted, fantasized, soundtracked or brain-screened before. Helen's hands on my face reframed my whole life.

Draped windows darkened us and eclipsed the Sunset Strip. Time did a lust-bunker thing. Locations and climates merged. Lovemaking and talk got twisted into a slow-burning fuse. My mind went blank as I counted the moles on Helen's back. We tossed a pillow on the bedside clock. Street noise subsided to a purr.

We found robes and cracked the curtains for some face-reading light. Dusk backlit Helen in mid-laugh. I said, "Will you marry me?" Helen whooped and said, "Yes, I will."

XXXXX

So you found Her.

What does it mean?

Where does it take you?

It means everything. It takes you everywhere. You follow her lead.

My credo: Expect nothing, risk everything, give all. Helen's rejoinder: Yes, assume risk. You will gain or lose, commensurate with your deepest consciousness and the purity of your intent.

I felt cleansed. Helen's joy was emancipation. She stamped the deed to The Curse PAID IN FULL and dared me to dance to her tune.

Lover, confidante, sacred comrade. Satirist and funny motherfucker.

Nobody had ever *reallllly* gotten me. Nobody had ever *reallllly* gotten her. Our imaginations merged. Our zests for life overlapped. Helen Knode and James Ellroy—*that's entertainment!*

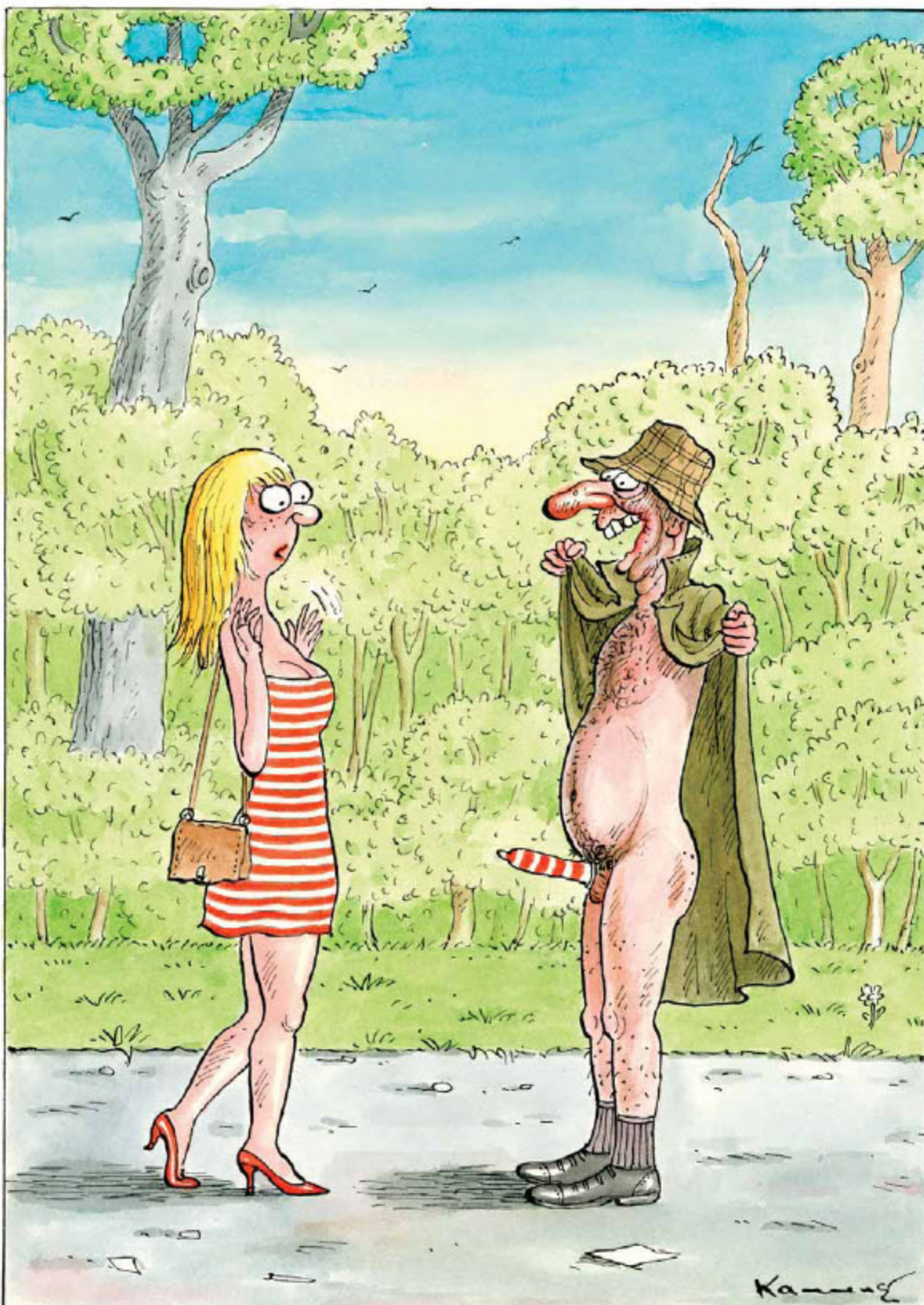
We looked *gooooood* together. We exemplified yuks and fucks with refinement. We were *fuuuuunny*. We were always concocting hilarious shit.

Helen messed with my memory. She *de*-genderized it. I forgot female faces and recalled, girls stalked and B&E'd. Helen recast iconic figures and demoted them to bit roles. Marcia Sidwell and the wish-named Joan?—now synaptic flotsam. Helen's message: I'm here, they're not. Let's make love and laugh.

We scheduled our wedding for fall '91 and rented a house in Laurel Canyon. Helen bowed to my desire for a Christian service and stipulated a female pastor. The woman told Helen that our union would not last—because I had darty eyes.

I met Helen's family. I liked them fine and dominated them with a bullying exuberance. I didn't know from families. Their social codes and clash of egos vexed me. I ballyhooed myself and extolled Barko's antics. Barko porked human women and sold dope in southside L.A. The Knodes laughed through their shock and did a "Boy, Helen's met her match" number. Helen kicked me when my shtick failed to fly.

Issues percolated. I had a sweet three-book deal and wanted to glom a pad in Connecticut. I loved the East Coast and



craved more access to Barko. Helen was reluctant. The East reeked of the deep tauris of her Cornell grad-school days. L.A. was *her* town now. I couldn't live in that ghost zone. Helen agreed to the move. It invigorated me. I delivered God's plan for her.

She got it. The crime novel, the female journo in duress. The hated father, a botched patricide, the cop-lover redolent of *me*. Brilliant Helen: She heard me out and started popping plot points within minutes. I *knew* she'd excel at the task.

Spring '91. Warm nights and the overfurnished love shack. The moment I turned 43 years, two months and seven days of age and outlived Jean Hilliker.

Helen said I would outlive her influence. Our union was proof positive.

I dubbed Helen the Cougarwoman. She was sleek, tawny and indigenous to the Western plains. She was conversant with outré religions and grokked their animal worship. She called me Big Dog, because I loved dogs and bayed extemporaneously. My dog-den mentality unnerved her. I liked to be alone with her or plain alone in tightly structured spaces. I craved *containment*. I viewed other people as den crashers. I wanted to contain our relationship and four-wall it. It was wild-ass one-on-one. The exclusive nature sandbagged my long-standing fixation with daughters.

Helen didn't rule out children. It was put on indefinite hold. Passion ruled our immediate moments.

Summer '91. Weekend jaunts to Santa Barbara. We always ate at a joint called Paul Bhalla's Cuisine of India. It was always empty or close to it. The place felt talismanic and linked to our fate. I did not want that restaurant to tank or close. We had to be able to go back and thwart the passage of time there. Helen always sat to my left. She took her glasses off and made her eyes kaleidoscopes. Fear slammed me then. *I must never lose this woman. Please, God. Don't let her die or let anything rip us apart.*

Our wedding: 10/4/91. Two rooms at the Pacific Dining Car.

Helen wore a peach-pink '50s vintage dress. I wore my ancestral kilt. Helen looked stunningly cougarlike and hip/feral. The pastor performed our hybrid vows. I got Christian lip service and Helen got lots of new-age woo-woo. The pastor glared at me, but did not mention my darty eyes.

Helen's family flew in. My publishing friends flew in from New York. The toasts ran heartfelt and slightly off-color. Helen tossed out zingers like "hot cougar love" and quoted Doris Lessing: "Marriage is sex and courage." I threw out a mock-impromptu rock song, replete with lurid lyrics. Helen whooped and busted me to

the guests. "That's a retread, Big Dog! You wrote that for one of your ex-bitches!"

Steak dinners off the menu and a custom wedding cake. Cross-table chitchat while Helen worked the room and I withdrew into my head. I brain tripped. Jean Hilliker would be 76 years, five months and 19 days old had she lived.

Helen pirouetted. I watched her dress swirl.

Please, God, don't let this end.

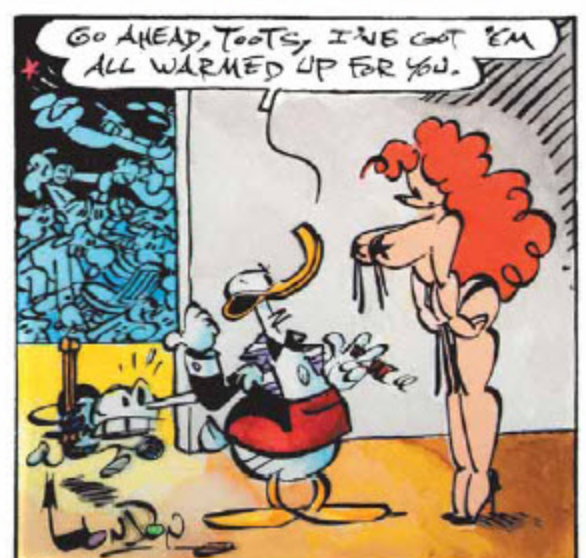
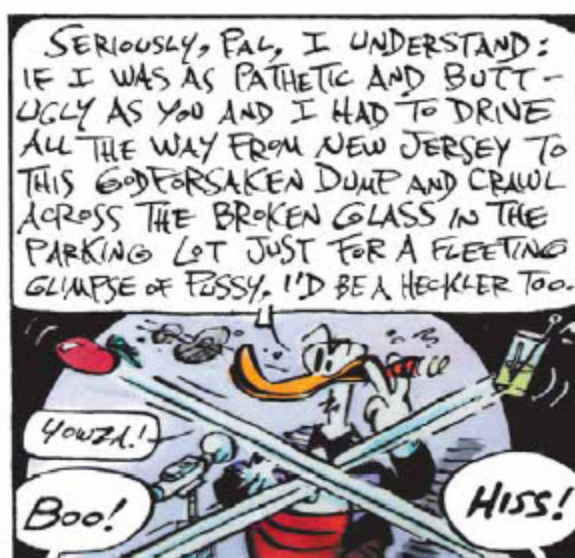
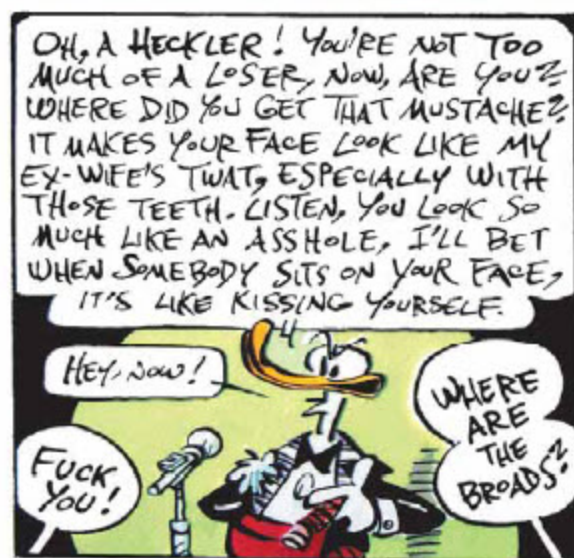
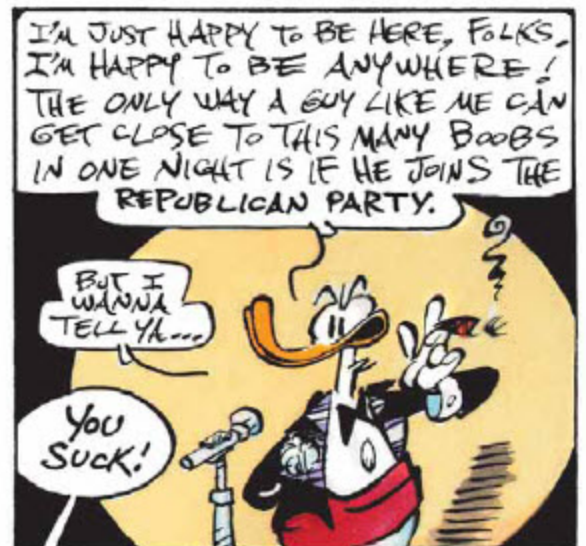
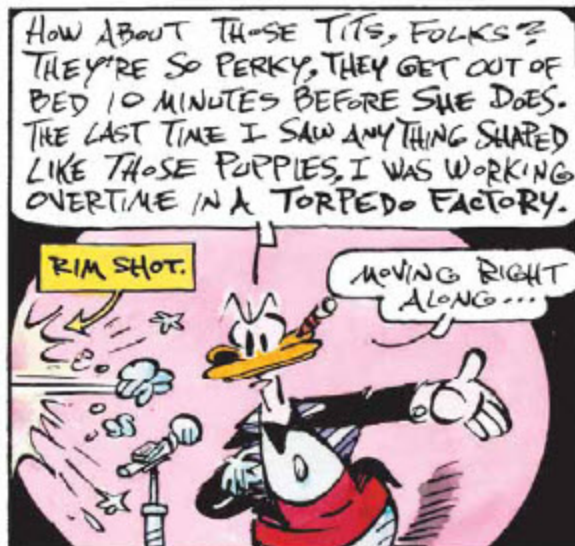
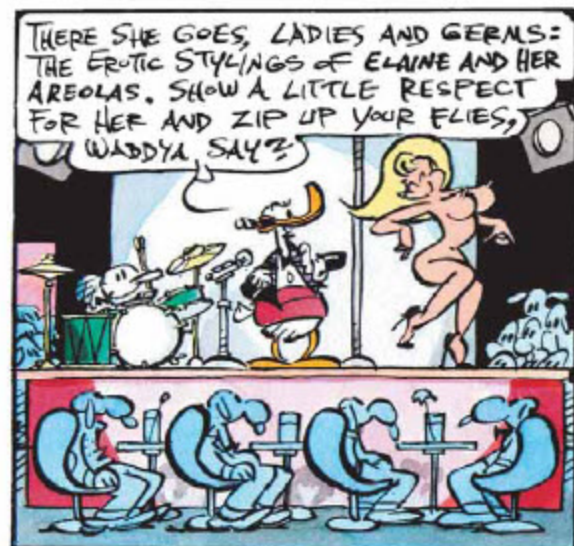
Please, God, let us ascend to you at the same instant.

XXXXX

Helen recharted my brainscape. She was flat-out alive. Jean Hilliker was the entomber. My mother ghost-danced through dark rooms and encouraged me to scroll faces. Helen cracked the blackout curtains and let me glimpse the light outside.

We moved to New Canaan, Connecticut. My ex-wife and ex-dog lived a few miles away. Helen dug the greenbelt aspect and hated the surrounding urbanism. I bullied her there. Our tidal-wave courtship came with a price. The move ripped her away from her family and friends. It dumped her in a hostile burb with a family-less man and a talking ex-dog. I levied a jive male mandate. We have to live here, that's the bottom line, you'll get used to it. The fucked-up subtext: *A man's gotta do what a man's gotta do.*

Dirty Duck by Bobby London



New Canaan was Hancock Park East. I lured Helen to a reconstructed memory zone. She subverted my relationship to my past as we lived a re-creation of it.

She was homesick. She ragged New Canaan as she torch-sunged L.A. She moved for a man. It rankled her feminism. Manhattan brought back her wild days as an East Village journo. She was past all that kid shit now. The East torqued her as it cradled me.

We settled in. Helen began work on her novel. I compiled notes on a political epic. It was my first non-L.A.-set fiction. I saw L.A. as a dark room I couldn't revisit. I wanted to compartmentalize my geographical history. I viewed my marriage as a legal document that expunged our collective past. We were united in pursuit of a divine efficacy. Our purpose was to sustain each other and create big art.

That was my mission statement. It was not Helen Knode's. I did not inflict it upon her as a philosophy or a step-by-step task. I saw it as a logical expression of our great rapport. There was She, there was Me, there was Women relinquished as Obsession. Helen was considerably more flexible and viewed my agendas as liberating in intention and often restricting in practice. I lived with the woman who was and is the great love of my life. She was inherently delightful. It sugarcoated her critique of my abysmal social skills, barnyard table manners and household helplessness. Helen was hilarious—even when pissed off. She called me Big Dog with love and Zoo Animal in exasperation.

I was impervious, imperious, oblivious. The manifestations were all preposterously male. I could earn big dough, but not read credit card bills or balance checkbooks. I dug good chow, but refused to cook. I made exultant animal sounds in the john and treated the place as my personal trough. I grandstanded at family gatherings or skulked off to brood in the dark. Social gigs left Helen frayed-wire tense. I pulpit-pounded and baited her left-leaning friends. I seized up around other men and dominated them with glares, right-wing barbs and general rancor. Helen nursed that low fury and blew up on occasion. I repented on occasion and reneged on my vows to change.

It was easy to repent and easier to renege. I saw Helen's beefs as small when compared to the big blast of US. I was blithely disrespectful. It dishonored our marriage. I know it now. I didn't know it then.

The Big Blast was all-encompassing. I turned Helen on to boxing and watched her become a rabid fan. We went to piano recitals at Carnegie Hall. Helen fed me drafts of her personal wisdom and watched me work them into my worldview. We went to films and further anthropomorphized Barko—New Canaan's K-9 King.

Helen attacked the discipline of the crime novel with cougarlike tenacity and Knodeian conviction. It thrilled me and vouched my great faith in her. She never took my name. She remained a Knode and not an Ellroy. I'm a matriarchalist now. I wasn't then. I wasn't yet a Hilliker in my soul. I watched Helen write her way out of

my shadow—as I worked triple overtime to make that shadow grow.

The political novel incubated pre-Helen. It derived from my conscious decision to dump L.A. as my sole fictional locale. The preceding *L.A. Quartet* was my hometown elegy and another giant contain—Jean Hilliker compartment. Those books were all Bad Men in Love With Strong Women.

I was obsessed with *women* then. The emotional text was preordained. I was in love with *one woman* now. My whole world swerved. I got de- and re-compartmentalized. Helen rendered all other women sterile. My all-new novel got *de-sexualized*.

And more sophisticated and colder. And more about ruthless men and self-seeking solitude.

I know it now. I didn't know it then. My life was blessedly contained. I had a safe place to work and brood. Containment means suppression. Suppression festers and explodes in the end. Helen bought me time. It allowed me to go insane at a slow and highly productive pace.

Crazy boy, you still don't know, no woman can save you.

9.

You're working too hard.

Helen kept saying it. I kept calling my energy a by-product of US. One woman instead of *women*. You have to dig *that*.

Helen was skeptical. *We're not making love like we used to. You've become disembodied. You're always off in your head.*

Helen's candor unnerved me. I felt like I'd trashed our romantic code and abridged our marital vows. Sex was everything. We both believed it. We were two years in. I rejected the old marriage-as-complacency saw. Helen rejected it with the same fervor. I stonewalled Helen's suggestion of looming dysfunction. There's trouble in paradise. Don't tell me this.

Shit, there's seepage. One compartment's fissured now. Fuck, I'm *happy*. I'm writing a new novel. I'm living big history at a trillion RPMs. I'm devotedly in love with you. I *may* be approaching contentment. Please don't hit me with this—*yet*.

That was my rationale. It was halfway true. The other half was more problematic. I was a cut-and-run guy pre-Helen. I never got to this point before. This is where we confront and surmount. Please don't make me do it—*yet*.

And I'm tired of chasing and seducing. And my erotic fire has embered and weirdly rekindled. My book is a scorching blaze. Now sex is power and power is fiction and fiction has replaced sex. Darling, it's all tangled. I only want to be with you. Let's not broach this—*yet*.

The men in my new novel were power mad. They were dissemblers and compartmentalizers. They were me sans all conscience and the guidance of Helen Knode. Helen Knode personified an exponential shift in my thinking. Helen Knode's counsel led me to write a new kind of book. Helen Knode saved me from my gender-wide crush on women. Helen Knode got to the truth before I did in most cases. Now she got me to *this*.

Please, Cougar—not *yet*.



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I ran, I postponed, I diverted, I crawled back in my head. Infrequent liaisons sealed the compartment. The fissures contracted and held.

American Tabloid was the private nightmare of public policy. The infrastructure was power grab in place of love as redemption. Women veered through the book in subordinate roles. I wanted to write an all-new kind of novel and incinerate my ties to L.A. The former was laudable, the latter was not. L.A. made me. Jean Hilliker was killed there. I met Helen Knode a block from where I was born. The book was almost finished. Helen kept saying, *You're working too hard.*

Christmas '93 approached. Helen had written a draft of her book and gave me pages to read. They were impressive and unstylized by my inflated standards. I ladled on a line edit and Ellroyized the prose. Helen laughed at the loony language loops and tossed the pages back in my face.

The toss-back was loving. We laughed about it *then*. I cut Knodeisms and juked the text with macho-maimed *mishigas*. It did not feel rancorous *then*. I'll postdate and dissect my animus *now*.

I was running from the marriage. I was back in my dark-room mode. I was the shirker and Helen was the confronter. Our domestic drama was starting to swerve along standard gender lines. I found that repellent. My job was to pull back from my productive mania and give Helen all of myself once again.

I couldn't do it.

I didn't know *how* to do it.

I didn't know that I *should* do it and *had* to do it—*yet*.

Then *The Curse* took an all-new form and Jean Hilliker bought us some time.

XXXXX

We exchanged gifts Christmas morning. I gave Helen a cashmere sweater and a

blazer. Helen gave me a bomber jacket. Barko got a shitload of bones.

Helen pointed to the last package. It was rectangular and festively wrapped.

She said the gift required some research. She expressed trepidation. She said, I hope you won't be upset.

I unwrapped the package. I felt the frame and saw black-and-white flickers behind glass. I instantly knew what it was.

The *L.A. Times* photo. Quickly dismissed in '58. Unheralded that Christmas. Frequently reproduced and perhaps over-scrutinized now.

I'm a doofus 10-year-old. I'm wearing a plaid shirt and light-colored pants. My zipper is prophetically half down. The cops just said, "Son, your mother's dead."

Helen always cuts to the punch line. She asked me what I was thinking *then* and what I was thinking *now*.

I said, "Opportunity."

XXXXX

I had a magazine-feature gig within weeks and a book deal a month later. My first job: View Jean Hilliker's murder file and describe the jolt. My second: Hire a homicide cop and attempt to solve the case. Write an investigative autobiography.

The Curse was a formal summons of death. This new codicil empowered me to again exploit misfortune. I had to encapsulate the Hilliker-Ellroy journey as a crime tale. It was a specious task at the get-go. Jean Hilliker and I comprise a love story. It was born of shameful lust and shaped by the power of invective. Our ending was not and could never be the apprehension of a killer and a treatise on the victim-killer nexus. My precocious sexuality foreshadowed *The Curse* and preordained the resolution as my overweening desire for women.

I *knew* we would not find the killer. I *knew* my murder memoir would portray an arc of reconciliation and lockbox Jean Hilliker

anew. I was deliriously callow in 1994. I believed that all resolutions could be properly captured within narrative form. Helen knew otherwise. She gave me the picture so that I might view it in wonder and benefit in indefinable ways. She added mitigating clauses to *The Curse* without knowing that *The Curse* existed. Helen contended then and still contends that I always write my way through to the truth. She believes that I rarely get it right the first time and that I often impose form at the expense of content. She knew that Jean Hilliker was more than a murder victim and less than a fount of rapturous worship. She sent me out to grasp at verisimilitude—in the hope it would sustain and enrich both of us.

I lived in Los Angeles for 15 months. I talked to Helen every night. We had several East Coast/West Coast reunions and got back fractions of sex here and there. I was always distracted. Sex had always been pursuit and the controlled performance of the act. Awareness does not equal spontaneity in bed. My current task was to play detective and frame my mother safely within book pages.

I read ancient police files and compiled notes. My partner and I interviewed scores of elderly barflies and ex-policemen. We got a great deal of TV and newspaper play. All our work got us nowhere. We lived the dead-end/unsolved-crime metaphysic. I brooded in the dark with Rachmaninoff and Prokofiev. The music described romanticism's descent into 20th century horror. I knew we'd never find the killer. I took copious notes on my emerging mental relationship with my mother. I understood that the force of my memoir would derive from a depiction of that inner journey. I erred in that regard. I knew that reconciliation was the only proper ending as I signed my book contract. I learned very little about Jean Hilliker's death. I gained considerable knowledge about her life and structured my revelations in a salaciously self-serving manner.

I was her, she was me, we were doppelgängers and mirrored souls in duress.

I believed it then. I consider it fraudulent and dramatically expedient now. I let the convenient theme of oneness stand as the truth. I did not acknowledge the calculated maliciousness of *The Curse* or reveal that I would never know Jean Hilliker as long as I sought atonement in women.

The investigation continued. *American Tabloid* was published midway through. It was a smash. I book-toured and deftly segued from doomed mom to doomed JFK. The lease on the Connecticut pad expired. Helen and I considered our options and decided to move to Kansas City. She had family there. I dug the high-swank pockets around Ward Parkway. We flew in and purchased a six-bedroom Tudor crib. Woo—Hancock Park on growth hormones!

Helen did all the relocation shitwork. I waltzed in and waltzed back out to play cop. My absence enraged Helen. She teathed on it. Our daily phone talks were rife with her resentment and my half-hearted repentance.

The investigation was boring me. Jean Hilliker had been recast and realigned



"Staycation's over; we should drain the balcony."

with my current orbit. I was tapped out on her. My orbit shifted. I got realigned with the faces.

They came at me. I did not seek them out. It was an unconscious remigration. My exchange of marital vows carried a binding no-fantasy clause that rendered me mentally as well as physically faithful. I possessed two paramount spiritual goals and held them as unassailable: Loyalty to my craft and to Helen Knode. I gave them my entire conscious focus. I underestimated the reflexive power of suppression and all the crazy shit that lies dormant inside your head.

The Faces.

The Women.

Them.

My marriage was compartments within compartments, all starting to crack. I quadrupled my nightly prayers for Helen and grasped at the compartment of physical chastity with suffocating force.

It's all right, Cougar—there's only you—they're just spirits aflame.

There's Marcia Sidwell at the laundromat and Marge on the train. There's the wish-named Joan as she was then and might be now. She still feels prophetic. I'm still nine years away from the real Joan, with her stunning, gray-streaked hair. There's Catherine out of my circa-'80 rainy-night dream. She's more than a decade away in true life.

I secured a new Anne Sofie von Otter poster. I propped it up on my work desk and studied her face. It was arrogant and kind in an artist's proportion. She was blonde and fair. Her hair was square-cut

and severe and expressed the force of her will. She had rough skin and refused to disguise it. That displayed her composure, with a big gulp of diva's fuck you.

I bought some lieder recordings and went crazy with her voice. I cried. I got up close to the poster and hugged a pillow. I couldn't understand her words sung in German. I improvised my own English love lyrics and studied her face. The poster was affixed beside my mother's murder file. I trembled and knocked it over sometimes.

The music, her picture, the meaning transposed.

I was threatened by her genius. She was threatened by mine. We were big and strong and full of lovers' fight. We were horrified by our

loneliness and appalled by our need and went out in the world with our crazy beauty just to get a touch of it back.

We burned down rooms. We knew what everything meant. We understood terror and fury as no one else had. It hurt to be together and hurt more to be apart. Our mouths clashed. Our teeth scraped. Our arms ached from the meld. We knew each other's smells and heard each other's voices and told each other things that no one else ever had.

Hear me, Helen. I was not disloyal. They're all sacred chords that play out faint and let me return to you, chaste.

10.

You're working too hard.

Helen kept saying it. She said it first in '93. She kept it up through '99. No-sex simmered

remapped L.A. Helen persisted. She was the Cougarwoman.

You're working too hard.

No, not really.

I was brooding up the sequel to *American Tabloid*. It was conceived as my massive take on the American '60s. I had a feature-magazine contract. It mandated hours of daily work and near-constant travel. I hustled some choice screenwriting gigs and stretched myself ultrathin. I worked, worked and worked.

Film and magazine work boinged me to L.A. and back. I stayed in the high-end hotels I drooled for in my childhood. I cut the lights and conjured Anne Sofie.

We talked. She always stretched out on my left and tossed a leg over me. I kissed her arms and shoulders. She told me

things I never knew about music. I told her things she never knew about books. She said, *You're working too hard.*

I admitted it. I was more candid with my fantasy lover than I was with my wife. Anne Sofie described my symptoms. She lay entwined with me. She felt my skewed chemistry.

You sleep poorly, you mumble, you take shallow breaths. You're always checking your limbs for cancer bumps that aren't there. You stare into mirrors and count the flecks in your eyes. Liebchen, they're just natural flaws. You're not going blind.

The work kept pressing, the phone kept ringing, I kept saying Yes. My pace was Herculean. My focus was Draculean. My design for the new novel was superplanetary. I read research briefs and compiled notes.

The outline ran 345 pages. I foresaw a 1,000-page manuscript and a 700-page hardback.

America: four years of wild shit. Two hundred characters. Comparatively few women and a reduced romantic arc. An abbreviated style that would force readers to inject the book at my own breathless rate.

I wanted to create a work of art both enormous and coldly perfect. I wanted my standard passion to sizzle in the margins and diminish into typeface. I wanted readers to know that I was superior to all other writers and that I was in command of my claustrophobically compartmentalized and free-falling life.

Hubris, arrogance, isolation. The novel as sensory assault. The neglect of my dearly beloved wife.

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as an issue, intermittently expressed.

Helen always broached it. I always said "Soon, babe" or "You know we'll get it back." Helen jollied me or blank-faced let it rest. Her critique of my domestic forfeit assumed an edge. I was the VIP Guest. She was the Zoo Animal's Keeper.

Our life was outwardly sweet. Kansas City was the white-trash comfort zone I had always creamed for. I was a local celeb. Our new bull terrier, Dudley, possessed Barkoesque panache. *My Dark Places* was a best-seller and got a slew of year-end nods. The film *L.A. Confidential* reaped boocoo awards and got me big ink. Helen honed and rehonored her book. I read several drafts and did not intrude on the text. It was a bonaroo crime story set in a metaphysically

Head tripper. Absentee husband. Furtive fantasist.

I had Anne Sofie. I had the wish-named Joan, aged to 50-plus. The real Joan turned 34 that Halloween.

My nerves accelerated and my insomnia increased. They were locked in sync with the pace of history fantastically revised. I wrote *The Cold Six Thousand* in 14 months. I was triumphantly exhausted. I completed the book and expected to feel a resultant buoyancy. I was mistaken. My nerves continued to crackle at history's mad pace.

My agent and publisher praised the book and considered it a crowning achievement. Helen disagreed. She called it overplotted and reader-unfriendly. She said it was jittery and frayed and approximated my spiritual state.

You're working too hard, Big Dog. Get some rest now.

XXXXX

A mega book tour loomed. Five European countries and 32 U.S. cities, consecutively. Months away from home and continual travel. Interviews, press conferences and nightly bookstore events. A long stint as *le grand fromage*.

Prepublicity gigs loomed: long-lead magazine profiles, culture TV, an Elroy cable doco. A big excerpt spread synced to pub date. It boiled down to a Brutha-you-de-Man moment. I wanted to ride it, rock it, roll it, groove it, grok it, grab it and grasp it for all it was worth.

I prepared for the ego onslaught. My sleep came and went. I fixated on benign skin lesions and prayed off fears of carcinogenic assault. I went on long head trips with Anne Sofie. I spent hours perfecting my reading gigs and podium patter. I bought some snazzy new threads.

Helen's book was almost done. Her agent's plan was to auction it during my book-tour summer. My plan was to wring my tour dry and watchdog the sale of Helen's book. Then we would make time to reemerge as flesh-and-blood man and wife.

France, Italy, Holland, Spain, Great Britain. Conquer the continent and annihilate the isles. Ambush America and traipse a triumphant trail to my wife.

Bon voyage, Big Dog. I won't say "Don't work too hard," just "Remember to rest."

Blooeey.

It started instantly. A wave of discomfort hit me on the airplane. Short breaths, pins-and-needles poings, sweats. A business-class seat and good legroom. Claustrophobic compression at 30,000 feet.

I ignored the seat-belt sign and jammed to the john. I spent 20 minutes looking for rips and tears in my eyes. The stewardess knocked. I told her I was all right. I rolled up my sleeves and examined spots for metastasis. My bowels swelled. I defecated and became convinced that I had colon cancer. The stewardess knocked again and told me people were waiting. I tremble-walked out of the john. I was sweaty, my fly was down, passengers eyed me weird.

Six more hours to Paris.

Dinner gave me a task. I ate a third of my food and lost my appetite. I got an ancient brain signal to guzzle scotch and prayed it away.

Whoa, now. You're just overamped.

I shut my eyes and tried to relax. I opened my eyes and checked my arms for cancer signs. My panic wavered and fluttered during a full-hour scan. I saw a gray-haired woman walk back to her seat.

She felt like a divine signal. I craned my neck and furtively watched her for the rest of the flight.

XXXXX

My publisher gave me my arrival day off. Paris in spring—who gives a shit? I holed up in my hotel suite. I pulled the curtains and got three hours of weird, pass-out sleep. I woke up, unrested. My publisher called with great news: The book zoomed to number two on the *Le Monde* best-seller list. I got a two-second joy jolt and started studying my arms.

Helen called. I ran down my symptoms and got her seal of good health. The *Le Monde* coup jazzed her. She wanted to dwell on it. I got bombarded by images of Anne Sofie and the airplane woman. I went with them contrapuntally—all day and all night.

I couldn't sleep. I couldn't forge a truce with my monkey brain and simply rest. I started thinking, *What if this doesn't stop?*

XXXXX

It continued.

I performed brilliantly throughout.

My book was a sales smasher and a critic's mixed bag. The smart frogs cautiously praised the book and echoed Helen Knode's doubts. The Elroy-toady frogs culture-vultured them out. I jaunted through France with my editor, translator and publicist. I gave interviews, attended lunches and dinners and never missed a beat. Bookstore gigs and late meals went past midnight. I engaged the iron-willed pursuit of perfection and never publicly succumbed.

My colleagues saw me running gaunt and jagged. My public did not. No one saw me fixating on cell formations that microscopes could not detect. No one saw my hour-long eye exams. No one saw me run to mirrors to scrutinize eroding flesh.

I called Helen every night. She buoyed me and blitzed my fear for the moments that we spoke. I wrapped myself dark with Anne Sofie and the airplane woman. I rewrote the woman's life.

She was a Jewish college professor. She was as religious as I was in her own faith. She was divorced and had a daughter in college. The woman and I talked and made love. She tossed a leg over me, à la Anne Sofie.

The real Joan was Jewish and a college professor. The real Joan and I wanted a daughter. The real Joan had a child without me, finally. I swear that I formally summoned her in curtain-dark bedrooms that spring. I swear that the summons was issued as an antidote to *The Curse*. I swear that God heard the summons as a prayer and sent Joan to me.

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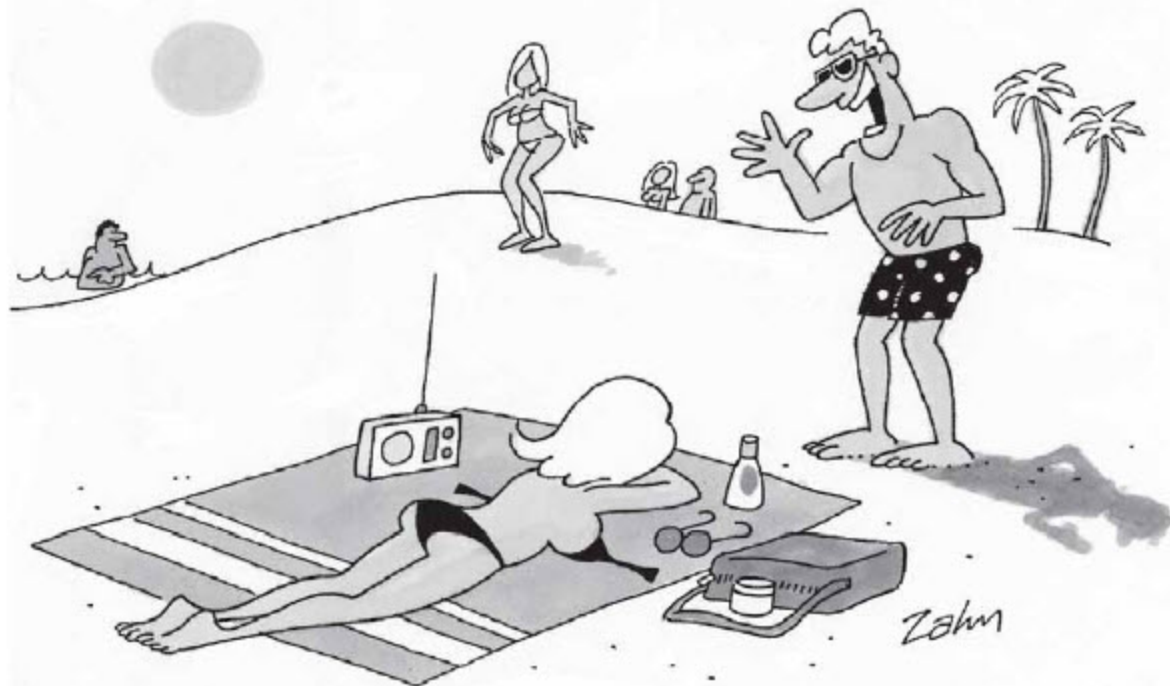
Adieu to France. Spring in *Roma*—who gives a shit? My publisher booked me a boss hotel suite and gave me the night off. I pulled the curtains and anchored them with heavy chairs. I had an epiphany and began reading the Gideon Bible placed in the nightstand drawer.

I got halfway through the Old Testament. Cancer cells started eating at me.

I ran to the bathroom and scratched my arms bloody. I doused them with rubbing alcohol and intensified the sting. I convinced myself that caustic agents had killed all the cells. I read the Bible until I passed out.

This madness was my whole world now. It was entirely real as it transpired. I did not second-guess it or retreat from my duty.

I did interviews in a hotel salon and smiled for photo shoots. The cancer cells returned during my first-day lunch break. I slipped a bellman a C-note. He drove me to a dermatologist Quicksville. The doctor



"Sharks!"

spoke English. He examined my arms and told me I didn't have cancer. He called it a minor rash exacerbated by scratching and prescribed a soothing skin cream.

The book was a smash in Italy. I charmed journalists and the book-buying public. My colleagues said, "Ciao, baby" and packed me off to Holland.

Amsterdam in spring?—truly Shitsville. Pot fumes wafting out coffeehouse doorways and horseflies turd-bombing canals.

I checked into my hotel and curtain-wrapped my room. I felt a jumbo zit on my back. I pulled off my shirt and prepared to pop it in front of the mirror. I noticed a big black mole starting to pulse and seep.

Stop now. Pray. Monitor the mole and suppress its growth mentally.

Helen was meeting me in New York City. Publishers were lining up for her book. She knew my body intimately. She would view the mole and determine its status. Her informed opinion would determine a treatment plan.

Prognosis upcoming. Holland, Spain and Great Britain first.

I got through it. I eyeballed the mole in mirrors 30 to 60 times a day. I was always scared. I was determined to out-endure a lunacy entirely self-created. I utilized prayer and the native strength of Helen Knode. I employed a mezzo-soprano I had never met and a plain-featured woman I saw on an airplane. I found a new cavalcade of faces to hold me upright for the seconds I glimpsed them and keep my implosion at bay.

Glimpses. Shutter-stop moments. Faces half hidden by signboards and lost in blinks.

It was getting worse. My freefall veered into plummet.

But They were always there. And They never caught me looking at them or felt endangered by my gaze. There was something sure and kind about each and every one of them. They all embodied goodness and rectitude.

They all imparted insight and courage, within a raindrop's span. I swear this is true.

II.

Helen viewed the mole and pronounced it benign. I believed her.

The InterContinental Hotel, New York City. Two-day rest stop. Thirty-one cities to go.

First U.S. reviews were out. All praise was undercut with caveats. The book was difficult and intimidating. It was an impressive, but bullying work of art.

I would have preferred fawning magnanimity. The assessment I got?—satisfactory. The bully in me dug it. The book was moving hotcake fast. Helen took off to meet with *her* potential publishers. My rest stop was all deep breaths and head trips. I went back on the road.

It got worse.

I didn't *look* bad. The tall-and-gaunt thing always worked for me. My *internal* clock was un-sprung. My brain sputtered, sparked, but always caught ignition. The cities blurred by.

I kept looking in my mouth. I saw bumps and tooth-scrape marks and anointed them cancer. My tongue played over saliva cysts and *made* them metastasize. I ran to mirrors

and checked my mouth 50 times a day.

I fell into a fugue state. The book went on the *New York Times* Best-Seller List. The critical consensus held firm as megalomania. My pass-out sleep was worse than no sleep. The bed fell out from under me and took the world with it. I looked at women on airplanes and had sobbing fits.

I did bookstore events every night. I was electrifyingly good in the middle of a meltdown. I always played to one woman in the audience. She always anchored me.

I made it to Toronto. The book stayed on the List. Women caught me looking at them and looked away. It horrified me. I willed my eyes elsewhere. The effort made me light-headed. I lost track of where I was.

Evil lad. You always thought you never hurt them. Now they *see you*.

I got to Chicago. The tour was halfway done. I went to dinner with colleagues and walked to the can. The walls tumbled and compressed. I retained my balance and walked toward the restaurant in Toronto.

It wasn't there. I ran outside and recognized Chicago. I ran back inside and found my colleagues.

I made it to Milwaukee. I weaved into

an elevator at the Pfister Hotel. Three very tall black men evil-eyed me. I weaved and mimicked them. A shorter guy covered with tattoos *double* evil-eyed me. I weaved and *triple*-eyed him back.

I made it to the penthouse floor, intact. Reporters were waiting there. I thought they were Ellroy fans. I was wrong. Basketball play-offs were raging. The tall guys were Milwaukee Bucks. The tattooed guy was Allen Iverson.

The Presidential Suite. Mine for one night. History was my oyster. The JFK that my characters killed had shackled up right here.

Brutha, you de Man.

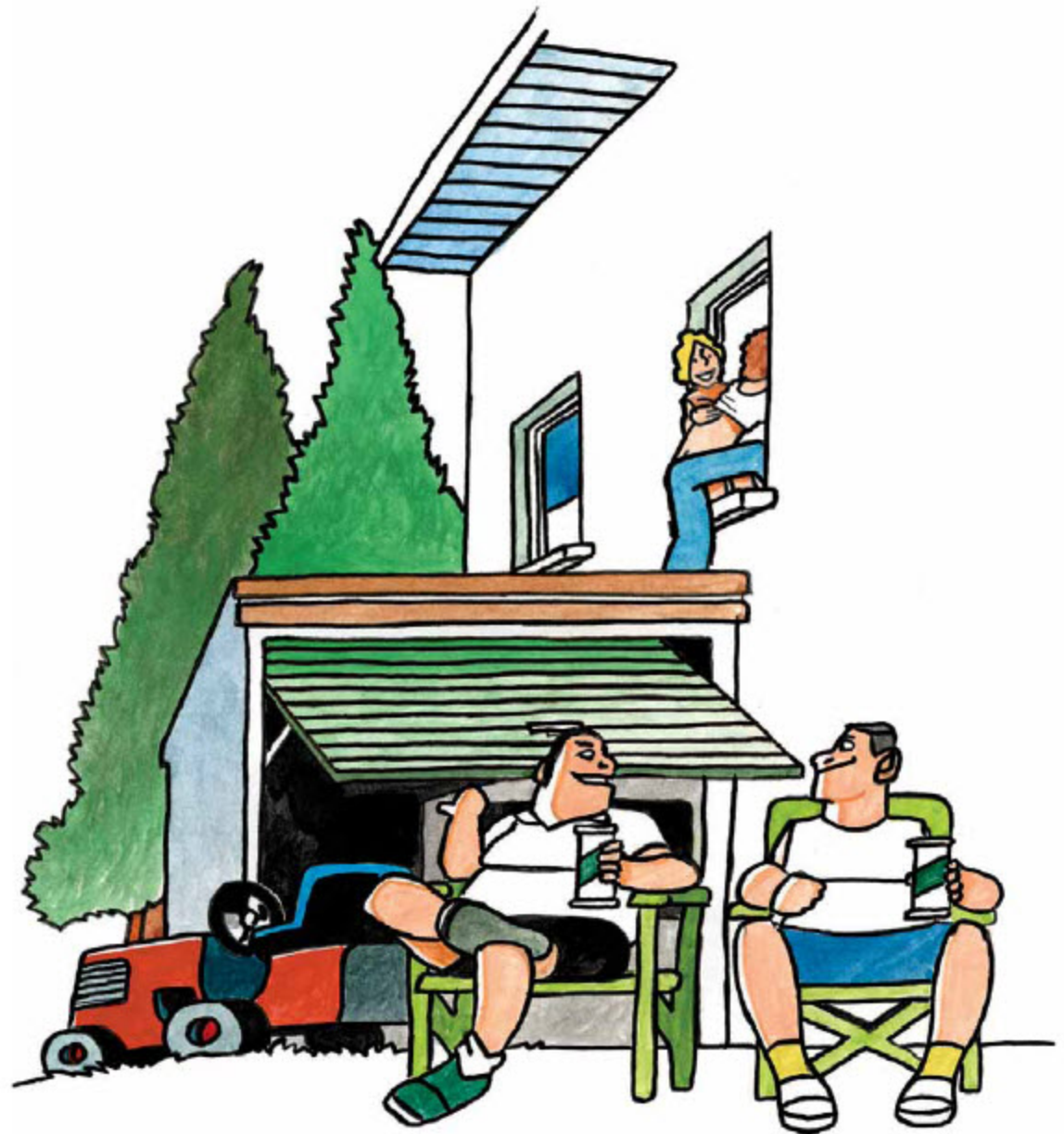
I walked through the suite. Fuck, it was *huge*. The floor rolled. I walked into the world's largest gilt-and-marble bathroom and walked back out.

The world flew off its axis. Lights throbbed and dimmed as I collapsed in slow motion and hit a silk-brocade bed.

Home.

Kansas City in a heat wave that I knew would never stop.

I bailed on the tour. I knew I'd go insane if I stayed out. My upcoming gigs were



—C.W. COLEMAN—

"And talk about dumb! For six months the little prick's been doin' jobs round the place and still he ain't billed me!"

canceled. I checked into my Hancock Park-esque manse and shut the world out.

Helen was all love. She knew the bailout was imperative. The diffident Dudley knew something was wrong and stuck close to his negligent dad.

I surrendered. I thought I'd crash in exultant relief and gain the peace born of a prudent relinquishment. I was mistaken. It just got worse.

I couldn't sleep. I couldn't capitulate to sleep. I thought I'd go into seizures and die in my sleep or fall out a window. I thought I'd shoot myself in my sleep. I tossed all the ammunition for the guns in the house and still held onto the fear. I examined my shit for signs of occult blood. I got a knife, pierced a bump on my arm and squeezed cancer cells out. I blackout-curtained my office, sat there and sobbed. I was afraid to think of women. I knew that Helen could read my mind and decode my evil thoughts.

I stayed in the house. I froze out the heat and draped out the light. I walked room to room, stuporous and jittered. Jaunts outside tore me up. I saw children with their toys and pets and started weeping. All my compartments had crumbled. Everything I'd pushed out rushed straight in. I was 53 years old. It was the sum total of my life on overdrive.

Helen looked after me and urged me to get help. Rage played counterpoint to her solicitude. I ran from the marriage. I sprinted into a crack-up. She just landed a sweet two-book deal with a prestige publisher. She did not believe that it brought me great joy or that I was moved by her conquest of a very difficult craft. I had devolved from flesh-and-blood lover to sanitarium guest. She went from lover to crazy man's nurse and stood before me, furious.

She shamed me into seeking help. I did restorative yoga and got acupuncture. I got zero-balance massage and shiatsu massage. It didn't do shit. I went to a swami's health retreat in rural Iowa. I got slathered with healing oils and learned transcendental meditation. It didn't do shit. I saw a medical doctor, got a complete checkup and learned that I was in fine health. The doctor prescribed antidepressants. They did not chill my anxi-

ety or calm my nerves. They enhanced my libido as they shriveled my dick. I drove around K.C., staring at women.

I sat in dark rooms. The Kansas City summer blazed. Helen played nursemaid. The doctor prescribed sedatives and sleeping pills. I resisted them, succumbed to them and slowly became addicted.

I sought oblivion the way I once sought stratospheric stimulation. I assaulted my sleep deficit and tried to halt my 50-year sprint. The sleeping pills knocked me out. They did not provide me with serenity upon awakening. The sedatives slightly replugged my voltage and let me walk the world sans tremors and tears.

Helen and I built separate compartments and slept in separate beds. I put the new novel on hold. I wrote movies and TV shows and earned good dough. I never wrote under the influence. The challenge of constructing narrative sustained me. My paid-work narrative paled beside my internal monologues.

They were wholly about *WOMEN*. They were about *WOMEN* and nothing else. They featured various women. It was the tale of Helen Knode and me—but this time I did not fuck it up.

XXXXX

We moved to the mid-California coast. It was summer '02. We dumped the swank K.C. pad and bought a swank Carmel pad. Helen did all the relocation work. It infuriated her. I was zoned out, sleeping or working. I was out staring at women or off on some loony love trip in my head.

We still held out hope for the marriage. I concealed the extent of my addiction and talked a good game of change. Helen was born indefatigably optimistic. It was and is a hallmark of her warrior's soul. She didn't know how badly I was strung out. She had always known me as a man indeterminately off in his head.

It got worse.

I cut down to L.A. for film-script meetings. I extended the trips to hole up at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel. I popped herbal uppers from a health-food store. I explored my newfound passion for a dead poetess.

Anne Sexton: 1928-'74. Pillhead, prof-

ligate soul, neurasthenic icon. Dead at 45: self-inflicted carbon monoxide.

Paperback covers. The woman with her knees against a swimming-pool ledge. The woman in a summer shift dress.

Mother, I will never relinquish you. Mother, I will always seek your emblem. At least The Curse I inflicted on you gave me that.

Priapic rites in a dark room. Two frayed book covers. One floor lamp to light my watcher's path.

It got worse. I slammed myself between sleep comas and ecstatic imagery. Helen and I pulled further apart. She realized the force of my secret inner life and grew astonished and then appalled. I overdosed and woke up in a Monterey nut ward. Helen bailed me out. I fled to a health farm in Arizona. I overdosed and woke up in a Tucson nut ward. Helen bailed me out. We returned to Carmel. I OD'd again. Helen demanded that I clean up now and forever. I entered a 30-day program and did just that.

It got worse.

Because my options had run out.

Because there was no place to run to.

Because Helen Knode was all hurt and indictment.

Early fall '03. That plush house and coastal rainstorms.

Nothing clicked inside me. Nothing felt right. All my apologies felt hollow. All my vows to change trailed out half spoken and dead.

I didn't know what to do next. It was the first time in my life that had happened to me.

We'd danced around it before. It was always abstract. A permissive '70s concept. Repellent and seductive and ever euphemistic: a relaxed civil contract.

We were sitting in the kitchen. Helen gave it a quivery real voice.

Stay married/other people/be dignified and proper/"Don't ask, don't tell."

Of course, I agreed.

It was an opportunity.

Now I know what to do next.

James Ellroy's new novel, Blood's A Rover, will be published in September by Alfred A. Knopf.



sex. *The Possibilities Are Endless.*



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SETH MACFARLANE

(continued from page 36)

Simpsons,” which wasn’t the intent of the joke. We’d already had the screening, and it got a huge laugh. It was no meaner than any shot they’ve taken at us. Fox said no. I kind of blew my stack. Fox said, “We want to stop this feud.” I said, “There’s no feud. And even if there were, this is the first shot we’ve taken at them. You never batted an eyelash when they took shots at us.” I said, “Just know that if you cut the gag it will affect our relationship.” And they cut it. When you come out of art school you have no interest in the day-to-day politics and bullshit of running a show. That’s when it comes down to what kind of a job your parents did. Did they raise you to be polite and diplomatic? My parents might as well have prepared me to get into business with the UN.

PLAYBOY: Rupert Murdoch, who owns Fox, the network that broadcasts *Family Guy*, is a big supporter of conservative causes. Is it difficult knowing you’re putting money in Murdoch’s pocket?

MACFARLANE: There are things I don’t like about Fox, most notably Fox News, but Murdoch is clearly a shrewd businessman first and a conservative second. If a show like *Family Guy*, with a very liberal slant, is making money for him, he’ll let it be. He seems to be taking global warming seriously. He seems to be much more of a critical thinker than the guys he employs on Fox News. If Sean Hannity could think as critically as Rupert, I might like him.

PLAYBOY: Your success helps pay for Hannity’s and Bill O’Reilly’s salaries.

MACFARLANE: Hannity’s salary? Shit. [laughs] I guess if some of it could go toward hiring a dermatologist for O’Reilly and a dietician for Hannity, I’d feel a little better about it.

PLAYBOY: Have you been invited on Fox News?

MACFARLANE: I haven’t, and I would do it in a second. I love arguing with people I disagree with. Those guys are fundamentally wrong about so much, but they’re also superb debaters. Maybe I’d get my ass kicked, but it would still be a rush. Speaking of Rush, we’re writing a *Family Guy* episode for Rush Limbaugh. In 2007 he came on to do our *Star Wars* episode and was, amazingly, a very pleasant guy. It’s going to surprise our audience. It seems like exactly the kind of thing we shouldn’t be doing, and that’s the reason to do it.

PLAYBOY: Now that you have Limbaugh, who else is on your fantasy list for guest stars?

MACFARLANE: We tried to get Bill Maher for a while, and he graciously accepted. We were trying to figure out what we could write for Senator Chuck Schumer. He’s a fan of the show and said at one point that he would do a guest spot if we asked him. So we have that in the back of our heads. Obviously we’d love to have Obama on the show.

PLAYBOY: What if we let you bring one person back from the dead to be on the show? Anybody you want.

MACFARLANE: I could bring back Jesus, though it would be awkward if he wasn’t much of an actor and we had to recast him.

“Jesus doesn’t sound like Jesus on tape, so we brought in Steve Buscemi.”

PLAYBOY: We wanted *Family Guy* fans to have their say in this interview, so we solicited some questions from them on social networks. Here’s one from Devon: “Is Stewie coming out of the closet?”

MACFARLANE: Not yet. We had an episode that went all the way to the script phase in which Stewie does come out. It had to do with the harassment he took from other kids at school. He ends up going back in time to prevent a passage in Leviticus from being written: “Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind. It is abomination.” But we decided it’s better to keep it vague, which makes more sense because he’s a one-year-old. Ultimately Stewie will either be gay or be a very unhappy repressed heterosexual. It also explains why he’s so hell-bent on killing Lois and taking over the world. He has a lot of aggression, which comes from confusion and uncertainty about his orientation.

PLAYBOY: Natali asks, “What advice would you give a woman who feels like a real-life Meg?”

MACFARLANE: How about “The hungrier you are, the better you look”? [laughs] First I would tell her to ignore what I just said. I would probably need some elaboration on what the hell is going on in her family. I guess maybe her parents are not as loving as they should be. As a result I would say “Your parents are assholes. Get out of the house as soon as you can.”

PLAYBOY: David wants to know, “The show has established that Lois is Protestant. Why does she sound Jewish?”

MACFARLANE: Watch this season. That pretty much answers your question. Lois finds out she is in fact Jewish.

PLAYBOY: A question from Erin: “Do you imagine all babies have inner monologues similar to Stewie’s?”

MACFARLANE: No. They’re fucking babies. They’re idiots.

PLAYBOY: Lauren wants to know, “Why did Cleveland get his own show? He’s the weakest link.”

MACFARLANE: We’ve been asked why Quagmire didn’t get his own show. Quagmire works as an ancillary character. He’s an utterly despicable human being, someone who doesn’t have enough of a wholesome streak to be a leading character. Cleveland is much more soulful and dimensional. It truly feels like what it was intended to be: *The Jeffersons* to *Family Guy*’s *All in the Family*.

PLAYBOY: But Cleveland is the dumbest black character on TV.

MACFARLANE: See, I’ve found him to be refreshing. When I watch sitcoms pander to black audiences with loud, obnoxious stereotypes, I think, No black person I know would watch this. On *Family Guy*, Cleveland maybe didn’t have enough to do, and as a result he came off dull. He makes a point of saying that in the *Cleveland Show* pilot: “I’m sick of being just an accessory to Peter’s world. I’ve got my own shit going on.” Cleveland is a polarizing character. People either love him or they’re bored by him.

PLAYBOY: Do the Griffins appear on *The Cleveland Show*?

MACFARLANE: From time to time. And from time to time Cleveland and his family appear on *Family Guy*. In an upcoming epi-

sode of *Family Guy* we have characters from all three shows involved in the same story. It’s our *Return of the Jedi* tribute, our third *Star Wars* installment.

PLAYBOY: Would you like to see your shows as agents of social change, such as acceptance of homosexuality, legalization of marijuana?

MACFARLANE: That would be great. This may be a lame example, but didn’t the plight of the Afghans suddenly get national attention when *Rambo III* came out?

PLAYBOY: You’re the embodiment of what Bill O’Reilly calls the Hollywood liberal elite.

MACFARLANE: Yes. Which I think is okay because Hollywood is one of the last liberal bastions. Somebody has to offer us that point of view. And here’s what pissed me off during the election: Republicans kept saying, “Obama is too liberal.” He’s a hell of a lot less liberal than Bush is conservative. We tried your extreme; why can’t we try ours? People love to accuse Hollywood of being out of touch. My parents were teachers. We had no money. For years I lived in a shitty one-room apartment with no air-conditioning, barely able to pay my rent. Look at the Bushes. That’s out of touch. It’s also a very ill-thought-out label. Hollywood is not full of people who are wealthy because they were born that way. It’s full of people who are wealthy because they did something people were interested in.

PLAYBOY: One other thing we’ve noticed online: *Family Guy* and *American Dad* have a lot of fans and a lot of detractors. No one really hates a show like *CSI*, but there are people who hate your shows.

MACFARLANE: There’s a site called damn youall.net that is part of the *Family Guy* fan site. It’s kind of hilarious because it’s a group of avid viewers. They watch every week, and every week they talk about how terrible the show is and then come back and watch the next week and talk about how terrible it is again. If the show is polarizing, it’s better than if it’s just pleasant. That’s something you see in animation fans, science fiction fans and comic book fans—all the nerds, basically. Nerds can get really angry. This is not meant to sound insensitive to their plight, but when you pour a disproportionate amount of your life force into one particular thing you can lose some objectivity.

PLAYBOY: In the past few years you’ve been linked romantically to a bunch of hot actresses: Christa Campbell, Camille Guaty, Drew Barrymore, Eliza Dushku, Kate Todd, Selma Blair, Amanda Bynes and Ashley Greene. That’s pretty good for a former *Star Trek* nerd.

MACFARLANE: I’ve met Selma Blair a few times, and Drew is a friend. Everyone else on that list you could more or less put in the “have dated” category. All of them are girls I have fond things to say about, every one.

PLAYBOY: What would they say about you?

MACFARLANE: I suspect they would have good things to say. When I break up I do it by the book—I do it through my agent. [laughs] The criticism I have always gotten is “You let your job interfere with the relationship.” Even when I was 12, girls were saying “You’re letting your career get in the way.”

PLAYBOY: When did your relationship prospects begin to improve?

MACFARLANE: When the show started to

become big. Now you're in that circle; you meet those people. That kind of success does give you confidence. When I was younger I was definitely very shy. A bit of that still lingers. But I don't have any qualms about asking for a girl's number. What can go wrong? She says no.

PLAYBOY: Do you ever check your MySpace page? You're very big with young girls. They keep leaving comments about what they'd like to do to you.

MACFARLANE: Oh man, where the fuck were they when I was in high school? [laughs]

PLAYBOY: Do Peter and Lois have a good sex life?

MACFARLANE: Yup. They're still very attracted to each other.

PLAYBOY: It makes sense for Peter to be attracted to Lois, but why is Lois attracted to Peter?

MACFARLANE: It's simple: He makes her laugh.

PLAYBOY: Are they kinky?

MACFARLANE: We've seen them do pretty kinky things. We've seen them get dressed up in leather. They're talking about the kids while they're putting on leather masks and spiked collars, and the scene ends with Lois saying, "The safety word is *banana*."

PLAYBOY: We're guessing you haven't been asked this before: Does Lois swallow?

MACFARLANE: You guessed right. That's something we'd have to discuss in the writers' room. But I would say yeah, probably. She's a pretty hard-core chick.

PLAYBOY: As an adult, what is the least and the most amount of money you've ever made in a year?

MACFARLANE: When I started as an animator I was making \$700 a week. It's funny. I had no credit until *Family Guy* got picked up. I didn't apply for credit cards in college because I had the attitude that I wasn't going to be a sucker like everyone else. I found that having no credit is worse than having bad credit—I couldn't get a credit card. I finally got one that had a \$100 limit. When *Family Guy* got picked up I was able to get credit cards overnight, literally.

PLAYBOY: Did you get a Black Card?

MACFARLANE: [Reaches into wallet] There it is. That's the Black Card.

PLAYBOY: Do chicks dig it?

MACFARLANE: The good ones don't.

PLAYBOY: Name five people who make you laugh.

MACFARLANE: Johnny Knoxville because he doesn't care if he hurts himself. Woody

Allen because I relate to more of those neuroses than I should. Bill Maher because he's just about the funniest, smartest guy working today. Gary Larson because he's got cows named Warren. And Hitler because that mustache is just adorable.

PLAYBOY: Name five people who don't make you laugh.

MACFARLANE: Wow, okay. Rob Schneider. Rob Schneider again. Oh, Rainn Wilson—I'm sure he's a super nice guy, but he doesn't make me laugh. I'm sure Adam Sandler is still funny, but he doesn't do funny things anymore; it's that Eddie Murphy curse. When I was in college I thought Sandler was funny on *SNL*, and I don't know whether that was because he was funny or because I was in college. And *Shrek*, not funny. The thing that drives me nuts about those Pixar

to have little tics here and there—an eyebrow twitch—when I was heavily in thought, and it was usually related to stress.

PLAYBOY: Here's what we're trying to reconcile: On one hand you're a very handsome guy. **MACFARLANE:** Oh knock it off, you knucklehead.

PLAYBOY: You've had hot girlfriends. You're a huge success. You sing, produce, act and write, and you seem very much at ease, except for the involuntary twitching.

MACFARLANE: Yeah, that's not good.

PLAYBOY: But you also identify with Woody Allen and talk about being neurotic. Are the neuroses just well hidden?

MACFARLANE: I'm so critical of everything I do that whenever we start writing a new episode of *Family Guy* I always have a minor panic attack; I worry we used up all the funny in

the last episode and won't be able to do it again. The neurosis is more an obsession with my own mortality, with things like what astrophysics can tell us about where we're going and the makeup of the universe. I've read a fair amount of Stephen Hawking's writing and just about everything Carl Sagan wrote. In *Annie Hall* there's a sequence in the therapist's office where Woody Allen says the universe is expanding and one day it will just break apart and that will be the end of everything. And the psychiatrist says, "Well, that's why we've got to enjoy ourselves while we're here." I empathize with both characters in that scene. I experience the stress young Alvy Singer is going through, and I absolutely agree with the psychiatrist's response.

PLAYBOY: So you spend a lot of time thinking about your own mortality?

MACFARLANE: I lie in bed from time to time and think to myself, Gosh, at some point I'm not going to exist. What the hell is that all about? I don't believe in any kind of an afterlife. I would love to believe the Christians are right, that we're going to some magical Candyland after we kick off. But I just don't see how that's possible.

PLAYBOY: So we die, the lights go off, our loved ones put us in a box, and our bodies begin to slowly disintegrate?

MACFARLANE: Right. It sucks. And it does seem like a cruel joke. Although there are people like Hitler, Stalin and Reagan who make you think, Well, maybe it's for the best.



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movies, those Dreamworks CGI movies, is that they're gorgeous to look at, impressive beyond belief, but not incredibly nutritious. A lot of the jokes are obvious and kind of tired. I saw that moment in *Shrek* when they do that *Matrix* thing, moving in slow motion, and I thought, Jesus, you're like the hundredth person to do that. With all this money you have and all this access to writing talent, surprise me.

PLAYBOY: In the course of our interviews we've noticed you have a few tics.

MACFARLANE: I have tendonitis in my wrists. It's painful, and I get it if I've been drawing for long hours.

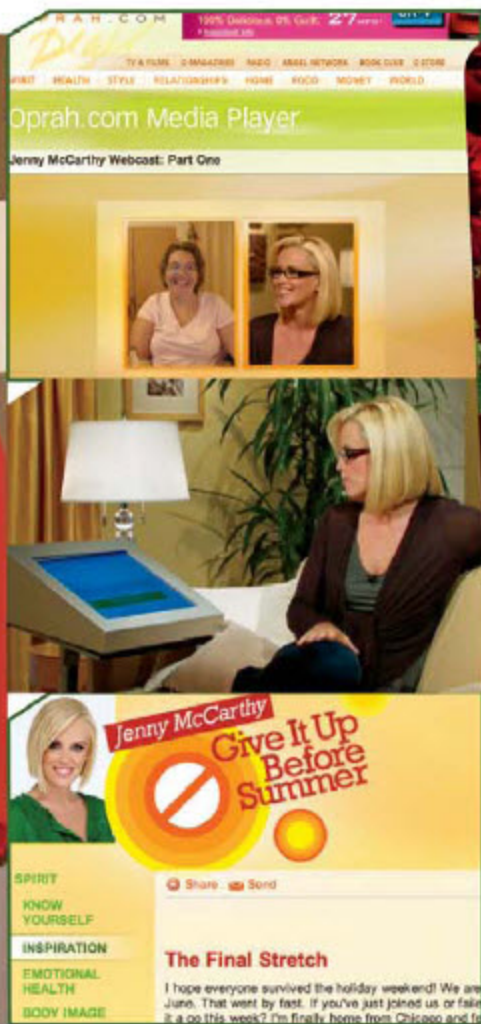
PLAYBOY: But you've actually been having involuntary spasms in your arms.

MACFARLANE: Really? Fuck, maybe I have Parkinson's. [laughs] When I was a kid I used





PLAYMATE NEWS



JENNY MCCARTHY AND THE BIG O

PMOY 1994 Jenny McCarthy has been anointed by Oprah. She has become a regular guest on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, launched a webcast and blog on Oprah.com and signed a multiyear deal with Harpo Productions to host her own syndicated talk show. It's a sure hit judging from her online material. After returning from the Cannes Film Festival, she posted the following about body types: "The French might be able to get away with eating whatever they want, but at least American girls have bigger boobs." Move over, Dr. Phil.

DAPHNEE LYNN DUPLAIX SOAPS UP AGAIN

Miss July 1997 Daphnee Lynn Duplaix, who starred on the soap opera *Passions* from 2004 to 2008, joined the cast of ABC's *One Life to Live* this spring. She plays Rachel Gannon, a recovering heroin addict, former prostitute and convicted murderer. Now out of jail, Gannon has become a social worker. Luckily the soap world doesn't believe in method acting.



FLASHBACK

Forty years ago this month we introduced you to Miss September 1969 **Shay Knuth**, the first Bunny hired at the Lake Geneva Playboy Club-Hotel in Wisconsin. Three magazine covers later she was still working and partying with us at Playboy Clubs in London and San Francisco. By the time she shot a Playmate anniversary pictorial she was the official party coordinator at Studio 54. Since then Shay has lived in Italy, Spain and Mexico. Now she's back where the Bunny empire began—Chicago—and she's still hopping.



Want to **SEE MORE PLAYMATES**—or more of these Playmates? Check out the Club at club .playboy.com, access the mobile-optimized site from your phone and read more news on playboy.com.

DID YOU KNOW ?

Stephanie Larimore, Miss June 2006, tended bar in Boston to raise money for South Boston's Alliance for Animals.

Robin Leach blogged about dining with Miss July 2008 **Laura Croft** and Holly Madison at Spago in Las Vegas.

PMOY 1997 **Victoria Silvstedt** believes in nurture over nature: "I wasn't born with self-confidence. It came with my work."



"I'm not into what most people consider romantic," says Miss July 2008 **Laura Croft**. "I think that kind of thing is corny, and it embarrasses me!" Instead she likes tailgating at football games or monster truck rallies. Her idea of a perfect tailgate: "Booze, food, fun friends and an air horn."

MY FAVORITE PLAYMATE

BY MICHAEL PAPAJOHN

—actor, *Terminator Salvation*, *Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen* and *True Blood*

"My favorite Playmate is Miss July 1974 **Carol Vitale**. I'll never forget being in my tree house at the age of 10, checking out the Centerfold—wow. Then I read her profile. I couldn't believe it. Carol said she spoke some Greek and wanted to visit the Greek isles. Right then I said to myself, We are a perfect fit. I can take you back to the old country."



DANCE FLOOR QUEEN

Miss March 2006 Monica Leigh went from being seen on the East Coast club scene to being heard there. Her new single, "Come to Me," heated up dance floors and New York radio waves this summer. Monica says of the club banger, "The song means a lot to me. I am always up till four A.M. thinking and wondering. I'm very passionate. This song is about passion and wanting to be with the person you're dreaming of and saying, 'I would do anything for you—just let me prove it to you.'" Give a listen on iTunes and look for an album soon.



OUT AND ABOUT WITH...

PMOY 2007 **Sara Jean Underwood** celebrated her 25th birthday at Tabú Ultra Lounge in the MGM Grand Las Vegas. Before heading in, Sara signed autographs and posed in a sexy dress for pictures with fans. According to an eyewitness, "she mesmerized a crowd of onlookers and caused a traffic jam outside the Vegas hot spot." Inside Tabú, Sara and her friends danced and partied well into the early morning hours.... Miss September 2007 **Patrice Hollis** looked statuesque at the GO Pool at the Flamingo in Las Vegas.... Miss April 2009 **Hope Dworaczyk** has been wearing down her heels. Check out her tweets: "Leaving Chicago for sunny L.A."; "In NYC at the Mercer Hotel. Betsey Johnson is here"; "Camping at the château"; "Just found out that D.R. is not in South America. Glad to say I can now find myself on a map."... We pre-



viously reported that Miss February 1990 **Pamela Anderson** headlined the Vivienne Westwood fall 2009 fashion show in Paris, and this month we have an update. Pamela, always the showstopper, gave the couture crowd an eyeful when her dress came undone. It's a law of nature—Pamela's breasts are just not meant to be shrouded, regardless of how slick the clothing is. The bad news: It made Westwood's fashion seem flimsy. The good news: Because of the wardrobe malfunction, more people have seen the dress than Westwood could possibly have imagined.



SCHLITZ TAPS 1960S PINUP ICON CYNTHIA MYERS

Miss December 1968 Cynthia Myers and her pinup are selling beer. "We are getting out the word that Schlitz has returned to its 1960s formula, and all the guys agree that Cynthia is an icon of that era," says Kyle Wortham of Schlitz. Cynthia is thrilled by the ad campaign and spent this summer touring the country for the suds.

BlackBook asked PMOY 2001 **Brande Roderick** what she sleeps in. Her answer? "Ear-plugs. My French bulldog snores so loud."

Miss June 1985 **Devin DeVasquez** just wrote a guide to modeling called *The Naked Truth About a Pinup Model*.

DID YOU KNOW ?

PIGSKIN

(continued from page 80)

06 ALABAMA

COACH: The inimitable Nick Saban.

LAST YEAR: 12-2. Bama lost to Utah (31-17) in the Sugar Bowl.

STUDS: Linebacker Rolando McClain is the best player on a very good defense. Nose tackle Terrence Cody has dropped to a svelte 350 pounds and is ready to play every down instead of being shuttled out in third-down situations. Saban will spot wide receiver Julio Jones at some other offensive positions in an effort to utilize his speed.

SKINNY: It's a strong year for defenses in the SEC, and Alabama has one of the best. Quarterback Greg McElroy, new at the starting spot but experienced as a backup, will run Saban's ball-control offense, which led the conference in time of possession last season. If incoming freshman running back Trent Richardson lives up to his billing, the Crimson Tide should be set at tailback.

SCHEDULE: Having only four road games, the toughest against Ole Miss on October 10, gives Alabama an advantage.

PREDICTION: 10-2

07 OHIO STATE

COACH: Jim Tressel begins his ninth season in Columbus.

LAST YEAR: 10-3, with a loss to Texas (24-21) in the Fiesta Bowl.

STUDS: Sophomore quarterback Terrelle Pryor, last season's Big Ten Rookie of the Year, will be a major star for the Buckeyes

over the next season or two. Mike Brewster at center, Cameron Howard and Thaddeus Gibson on the defensive line and free safety Kurt Coleman are all blue-chippers.

SKINNY: After the NFL drafted seven players from last year's team, you'd expect a significant talent dropoff. Not so in Columbus. Dan Herron and Brandon Saine will pick up where Beanie Wells left off at running back, and there's a lot of young talent ready to step up in other positions. This team won't play for the national championship, but it's good enough to beat anyone on any given Saturday.

SCHEDULE: An early-season home game against USC and then a late-season visit to Happy Valley against Penn State will be the Buckeyes' biggest hurdles.

PREDICTION: 10-2

08 MISSISSIPPI

COACH: Houston Nutt is in his second year in Oxford.

LAST YEAR: 9-4. Ole Miss upset Texas Tech (47-34) in the AT&T Cotton Bowl.

STUDS: Junior quarterback Jevan Snead is one of the best young quarterbacks in the nation. Tackle John Jerry, at six-five and 350 pounds, is a massive force on the offensive line. Defensive end Greg Hardy is the best of a very good defensive front for the Rebels.

SKINNY: Nutt almost immediately got the arrows pointed up for Ole Miss when he came over from Arkansas. Snead continues to improve under center, and there is depth at running back and wide receiver. Left tackle Michael Oher's graduation leaves a big hole on the offensive line, though Nutt

expects freshman Bobbie Massie to be an adequate replacement.

SCHEDULE: Having Alabama, Arkansas, Tennessee and LSU all at home works in Mississippi's favor.

PREDICTION: 9-3

09 CALIFORNIA

COACH: Jeff Tedford has a 59-30 record since taking over at Berkeley seven years ago.

LAST YEAR: 9-4, including a 24-17 victory over Miami in the Emerald Bowl.

STUDS: Jahvid Best, who rushed for almost 1,600 yards last season, will be the best running back in the nation this year. He has two outstanding left-side linemen to block for him: Mitchell Schwartz at tackle and Mark Boskovich at guard. Tyson Alualu puts lots of pressure on opposing quarterbacks from his defensive-end spot, and Syd'Quan Thompson is a ball hawk at cornerback.

SKINNY: Quarterback Kevin Riley, who passed for nearly 1,400 yards last season with six interceptions, needs to connect with receivers Verran Tucker and Jeremy Ross so opposing defenses can't stack the box against the running game. The Cal defense showed signs of coming on strong toward the end of the year but needs to be more consistent.

SCHEDULE: All of Cal's losses last year were on the road. This year's road opponents aren't quite as strong, which gives the Bears a chance to match their nine-win total of last season.

PREDICTION: 9-3

10 OKLAHOMA STATE

COACH: Mike Gundy enters his fifth season at his alma mater.

LAST YEAR: 9-4. The Cowboys lost to Oregon (42-31) in the Pacific Life Holiday Bowl.

STUDS: OSU has three outstanding players on its offense. Quarterback Zac Robinson, entering his third season as starter, was a semifinalist for the Maxwell and Davey O'Brien awards last season. He will probably own every significant quarterbacking record at OSU before season's end. Running back Kendall Hunter was the Big 12's leading rusher last year by a significant margin, and Dez Bryant is the leading returner-receiver in the nation.

SKINNY: The Cowboys always appear better on paper than they are on the field. With the offensive weapons on hand this season plus the addition of defensive coordinator Bill Young, Oklahoma State has an opportunity to equal last season's nine wins.

SCHEDULE: A challenging opener on September 5 against Georgia will test the Boys. They then take a breather until facing Texas and Oklahoma as part of a demanding Big 12 schedule.

PREDICTION: 9-3



"I told you to stop rocking the boat!"

For more team-by-team breakdowns go to playboy.com/collegefootball.



PLAYBOY FORUM

FEAR YOUR NEIGHBOR

OUR GOVERNMENTS USE FEAR TO MANIPULATE US

BY SLAVOJ ŽIŽEK

The contours of a new world are slowly emerging out of the traumatic experiences of the first decade of the 21st century. The need for global cooperation and concerted action to solve the problems that threaten us all is recognized by everyone. But one ominous sign spoils the image: the growth of fear in political life.

It is easy to note the similarity of President Bush's language in his addresses to the American people after 9/11 and after the financial meltdown of 2008: They sound almost like two versions of the same speech. Both times he evoked the threat to the American way of life and the necessity of fast and decisive action to cope with the danger. Both times he called for the partial suspension of U.S. values (guarantees to individual freedom, market capitalism) to save those very values. In short, both times he gave us a taste of the politics of fear.

Will the meltdown then be a sobering moment, the awakening from a dream? When the normal run of things is traumatically interrupted, the field is open to the ideological competition. In Germany in the early 1930s, Hitler won the competition for the narrative that would explain to Germans the reasons for the crisis of the Weimar Republic and the way out of it (his plot was the Jewish plot). In France in 1940 Marshal Pétain's narrative won in explaining the reasons for the French defeat. Similarly the leftist optimist expects the ongoing financial and economic crisis to give a chance to the radical left. But this is dangerously shortsighted: The primary effect of the crisis will not be the rise of radical emancipatory politics but the rise of racist populism, more wars, more poverty in the

poorest third world countries, greater divisions between the rich and the poor—in short, more fear.

The zero level of politics today is a depoliticized, expert administration and the coordination of interests. The only way to introduce passion into this field, to actively mobilize people, is to resort to fear as an inspiring principle: fear of immigrants, fear of crime, fear of godless sexual depravity, fear of the excessive state itself (with its burden of

high taxation), fear of ecological catastrophe, fear of harassment (political correctness is the exemplary liberal form of the politics of fear). Such a politics always relies on the manipulation of a paranoid *ochlos*—the frightening rallying of frightened men and women.

From "love your neighbor as yourself" we are slowly reverting to "fear your neighbor as yourself." The idea of toxic subjects is gaining ground, expanding much further than immediate interpersonal relations: The predicate *toxic* covers a series of properties that belong to totally different levels (natural, cultural, psychological, political). A toxic subject can be an immigrant with a deadly disease who should be quarantined, a terrorist whose deadly plans

should be thwarted, a fundamentalist ideologue who should be silenced because he spreads hatred, a parent, teacher or priest who abuses and corrupts children. What is toxic is ultimately the Neighbor as such.

In July 2008 the Italian government proclaimed a state of emergency in all of Italy to cope with the problem of the Neighbor in its current paradigmatic form: the illegal entry of immigrants from North Africa and Eastern Europe. Taking a further step, at the beginning of August the



WHY ARE WE UNHAPPY?

PERHAPS AMERICANS SHOULDN'T
LOOK TOO DEEPLY INTO THE
SOURCES OF THEIR DISCONTENT

BY CURTIS WHITE

government deployed 3,000 armed soldiers to control sensitive points in big cities (e.g., train stations, commercial centers) and thus raise public security. There is now a pending law that would permit use of "citizen patrols" to protect women from rape. What is important to note here is that the emergency state was introduced without great fuss: Life goes on as normal. Is this not the state we are approaching in developed countries all around the globe, where this or that form of emergency state (against terrorists, against immigrants) is simply accepted as a necessary measure that guarantees the normal run of things?

The concept of "reasonable anti-Semitism" was best formulated back in 1938 and 1939 by Robert Brasillach, who saw himself as a "moderate" anti-Semite: "We grant ourselves permission to applaud Charlie Chaplin, a half Jew, at the movies; to admire Proust, a half Jew; to applaud Yehudi Menuhin, a Jew; and the voice of Hitler is carried over radio waves named after the Jew Hertz.... We don't want to kill anyone; we don't want to organize any pogrom. But we also think the best way to hinder the always unpredictable actions of instinctual anti-Semitism is to organize a reasonable anti-Semitism." Is this same attitude not at work in the way our governments deal with the "immigrant threat"? After righteously rejecting direct populist racism as "unreasonable" and unacceptable for our democratic standards, they endorse "reasonably" racist protective measures—or, as today's Brasillachs tell us, "We grant ourselves permission to applaud African and East European sportsmen, Asian doctors, Indian software programmers. We don't want to kill anyone; we don't want to organize any pogrom. But we also think the best way to hinder the always unpredictable violent anti-immigrant defensive measures is to organize reasonable anti-immigrant protection."



Is there a reasonable way to worry?

Slavoj Žižek is international director of the Birkbeck Institute at the University of London and author of *In Defense of Lost Causes*.

Why are Americans so unhappy? To answer that question we need to ask a counterquestion: What is an American?

I am aware that many people believe there is such a thing. In fact, many have staked a good part of their sense of self-worth on the belief that there is such a thing (hence the PROUD TO BE AN AMERICAN bumper stickers). Frankly, neither patriotic slogans, TV programs about our founding fathers nor President Obama's speechifying about our "we-ness" persuades me. We are more isolated and socially fragmented than anyone can admit without being scared silly. For me, the idea that we are Americans is not evidence of our unity but of our gullibility.

One possibility is that no one is unhappy because he or she is American, because no one is an American. We may be unhappy, but we're each unhappy in our own special way.

But I think that's wrong, too. The difficulty is that when we talk about being Americans, we are speaking metaphysically without knowing it. We all seem to sense a reality beyond the particular world of Uncle Bill and his drinking problem, Joan and her unhappy marriage to the gay evangelical or Larry and his forlorn family trying to find a place to live after the foreclosure on their two-bedroom stucco in Cape Coral, Florida. We believe, without knowing why, that there is a reality beyond the suffering of individuals that we can call the "suffering of Americans."

What I would suggest is that we take up the challenge of metaphysics but do so fully aware of what we're

doing. Let's stop naively assuming everyone knows what we're talking about when we say "America." Let's think it through. Perhaps we'll even discover that one of the greatest sources of our unhappiness is that we're not very good at thinking things through. We Americans do the work of philosophizing all the time, but we do so in ways that are chaotic, bigoted and self-serving: the bigoted metaphysics of race, the hateful metaphysics of "my God" and the destructive metaphysics of patriotism. In other words, we practice philosophy in a way that is likely to produce unhappiness.

In philosophy it is always good to have a guide. The greatest Western philosopher of human unhappiness was a German thinker of the early 19th century, Arthur Schopenhauer. In *The World as Will and Idea* he proposes that behind all human activity is a great primal force he calls will. The will has one purpose, and it is hard to find fault with it: It wants to become a perfect example of what it is. The individual marigold wants to be a perfect marigold. An individual macaw wants to be a perfect macaw. A human being wants to be fully human. But the individual creature has a nasty reality before it. The individual discovers that to become a perfect example of its kind, it is forced to deny the will in others, which it does—at the most primitive level—by eating them (marigolds are excused here). As any zebra would tell you, the process of having the will-to-be-a-perfect-zebra eaten by the will-to-be-a-perfect-lion is really, really unhappy-making.

Schopenhauer discovered that thriving is dependent on suffering. In



WE'RE
EACH
UNHAPPY IN
OUR OWN
SPECIAL WAY.

thriving is dependent on suffering. In

thriving is dependent on suffering. In

fact they are the same thing. And so the effort to become a happy American is the surest way to have unhappy Americans, just as our recent epic pursuit of wealth was not the cause of but the same thing as our current epic poverty.

For animals this drama of the will never goes (much) beyond eating and being eaten, I think. As usual, it's different for humans, the clever beasts. Humans discovered that thriving by eating other things was just one way of going. Humans discovered that they could also enslave other things. I would go so far as to say that slavery is the primordial sign of our intellectual "superiority" over animals. I mean, think about that a moment. Everyone was going along with the eat-or-be-eaten game when suddenly some perverse genius said, "Actually, my needs will be better served if I don't eat you." This meant animals were domesticated to set their will to work for the will of their masters (hence "beasts of burden"). It didn't take long to figure out that the same thing could be done through human enslavement.

One of the great illusions of the developed West is the assumption that human slavery is a thing of the past. If you understand that slavery means more than a chain around your neck, that it means having to make the force of your will work for the benefit of the will of others, then it's not hard to see how we Americans might be one great slave culture. A UAW member must now look at the world of finance in a new way. "The auto industry made billions off my labor, and now it's making billions off my taxes, and I'm where I've always been without knowing it: in a human abyss." Even workers in the financial industry, where the best and the brightest have been lured for decades, are likely to be thinking, "I hate finance. It's boring, and the hours are long. And now everyone hates me.

I should have been an English major—at least I'd have something decent to read in the unemployment line." They too find themselves in an abyss, with

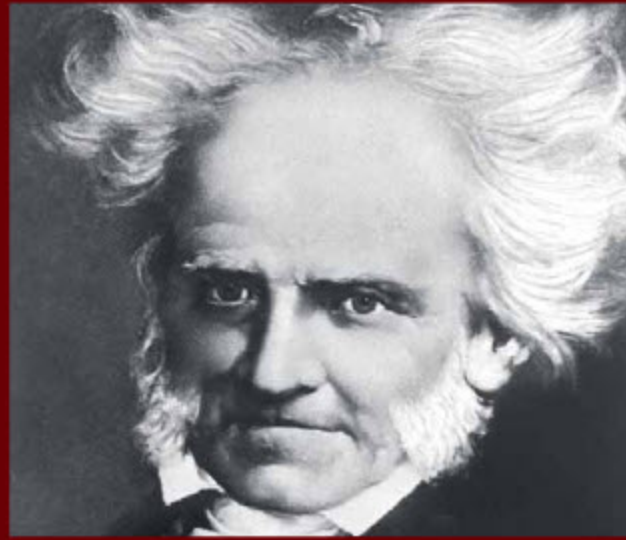
would have to say to us is that there are ways to transcend all this unhappiness. The forms that transcendence took for him were the arts (especially music), ethical thinking in philosophy and the pure transcendence of asceticism, removing oneself from the slaughter bench of the will through living as simply as possible.

The unhappy fact of the matter is that American culture allows us no access to transcendence. Art has been taken over by media conglomerates in the "entertainment industry"; philosophy is a matter of public scorn and asceticism is the better angel that gets kicked into the gutter once the seductive figures of houses, new cars, HDTVs, drugs, computers and pornography show us their pink (in the charming vernacular of porn). These sensual consolations help us avoid thinking about why living is intrinsically a good thing.

So in the place of transcendence we get a moment's shallow consolation. We take a pleasure pill, often a literal pill: a Xanax, a Zoloft, a Valium. It is not love but America's pharmacopoeia that is, in the language of the New Testament, poured into our hands, shaken, pressed down and spilled into our laps. Then, of course, we again submit our necks to the great chain of will suckers we call the U.S. economy.

Speaking in this way is irritating to most people, including me. We'd rather just accept the situation, accept the world we happen to have been born into and work toward our own survival. (Believe me, I don't say these things to my financial planner.) This can be done but only at the cost of honesty and American happiness.

*Curtis White's latest book is *The Barbaric Heart: Faith, Money and the Crisis of Nature*.*



Arthur Schopenhauer (top) said that unhappiness is the normal human condition. In trying so hard to be happy, Americans just make themselves even more unhappy.

their fond and guilty dreams of stock options and bonuses vanishing in the vapor drifting over Battery Park.

But the last thing Schopenhauer

"States of human happiness and good fortune can as a rule be compared with certain groups of trees: Seen from a distance they look beautiful, but if you go up to and into them their beauty disappears and you can no longer discover it. That is why we so often feel envy for other people."—Arthur Schopenhauer

READER RESPONSE

UNASSAILABLE LOGIC

I'm not a tax consultant, but when I read John Phillips's statement in the May *Reader Response* I couldn't help wonder about his logic. Phillips



Tax rates affect job rates. But how?

writes that if the marginal and corporate tax rates were to go up he would have to lay off several dozen employees. A couple of things occur to me. First, if he laid off workers, he would have fewer deductions (from the costs associated with those workers) to show on his taxes. Second, to maintain his gross income, the remaining employees would have to do the work of those who had been dismissed. It's interesting that he thinks his business could get rid of dozens of employees and not lose effectiveness. If this is the case, why does he have those employees now? More likely, the layoffs would cause the quality and volume of his production or service to diminish, and his gross income would reflect that.

Bob Parish
Lincoln, Nebraska

KEEP ON TRUCKIN'

In the May *Reader Response* Bill Herbert of Miners Mill, Pennsylvania writes that if the Employee Free Choice Act is passed, "employees in America will no longer be at their bosses' mercy. They will be able to negotiate job security, better pay and better benefits." If I read this correctly, I no longer need worry about having a boss once I go union. Doesn't Herbert see what the unions have done to the auto industry? What about the trucking industry, which I have been part of for the past 21 years? Consolidated Freightways was one of the largest, most profitable

union trucking companies in existence, and it is no longer in business. Nor is Churchill Truck Lines, Nations Way, Lee Way or Jones Truck Lines. They were all Teamster Union trucking companies, and they are all six feet under today. And the list doesn't end there. According to Herbert's definition, union members who worked for the above-listed companies must have had poor negotiating powers. Had they negotiated better, they would still have jobs. Where is the job security he speaks of? Unionize the few manufacturing companies left in this country and the shelves of your local Wal-Mart will have even more items that read **MADE IN CHINA**. Stop hiding behind your union. Give your boss an honest day's worth of work for an honest day's worth of pay and everything will be just fine. Would you want the entire nation looking over your shoulder when you voted for an elected official? We have the right to privacy, and we have the right to determine whether we want to unionize or not. Union companies are scarce. It's the unions, not the companies, that are intimidating.

Kenneth Powell
Terrell, Texas

The idea that an employer can force workers to vote against unionization, even through a secret ballot, and that union organizers would never intimidate anyone to sign an organizing card—as Herbert suggests in his letter—is logic stood on its head. The so-called Employee Free Choice Act is an example of how the political



Let workers decide on unionization.

left titles the legislation it supports to convey the exact opposite of its true content. This bill removes employees' free choice via secret ballot and sub-

jects them to pressure from their coworkers and union goons.

Keith Boardman
Fayetteville, North Carolina

The act allows workers to vote for a union by secret ballot or by "card-check" (an open election). It places the decision in the hands of workers rather than management.

THE PRICE IS WRONG

I'm afraid record company greed is the major cause of "illegal" file swapping



Reader: piracy as rebellion against greed.

("Dread Pirate," June). As a songwriter (whom nobody has heard or will probably ever hear of) I would love to be paid for my work if people want to buy it. But as a consumer I'm tired of paying over and over again for the same music. I've bought 45s, LPs, four-track tapes (a lot of people missed those), eight-track tapes, cassettes and CDs. Now I'm expected to pay a dollar to download a single song. It was only after much soul-searching that I said "Fuck you" to the record companies and snatched up 70 gigabytes of free music. (Of course my drive crashed before I could back it up, so I lost most of it.) I continue to buy CDs, usually at live shows, and then rip them myself to use on my various electronic devices. But I refuse to pay \$12 for yet another copy of *Between the Buttons*—with no liner notes, no lyrics and no pictures—that I can't even touch. Sorry, Mick. Also, Internet sales, which completely eliminate printing, packaging and physical distribution costs, are almost pure profit. I just don't feel I'm getting my money's worth with a \$1 download.

D. Scott McRae
Richmond, Virginia

E-mail via the web at letters.playboy.com.
Or write: 680 North Lake Shore Drive,
Chicago, IL 60611.

NEWSFRONT

**Heart Goes Boom**

BAGHDAD—It's often said that romance is all about context. When Lloyd Dobler can't get the girl, he stands outside her house and holds up a boom box blasting Peter Gabriel's "In Your Eyes." These days in Iraq, where a generation of teens has grown up amid war and insurgency, it's mostly about the blasting—of improvised explosive devices, or IEDs. That's right: When an Iraqi father turns down a man who asks permission to marry his daughter, an increasingly common response is to detonate a bomb in front of her house. Though no fatalities have occurred thus far, Captain Nabil Abdul Hussein of the Iraqi national police says, "These guys face any problem—with their girlfriends, family, anyone—and they're making this kind of IED." In addition to using these "love IEDs," as Iraqi authorities call them, disappointed suitors are resorting to other weaponry and expertise. "Another guy shot up his girlfriend's house to force the family to give her in marriage," says Hussein. "We've faced this many times."

Last Exit

BOSTON—A study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* made an interesting discovery about the limits of religious belief at the moment of truth. Researchers tracked the use of intensive life-prolonging medical care (such as mechanical ventilation and resuscitation) during the final stages of terminal cancer. It turns out that even after researchers correct for other factors, people with higher levels of faith make use of such care at higher rates.

**Access Denied**

NAIROBI, KENYA—Worried about the prospect of political violence when a government of national unity faltered earlier this year, a group called the Women's Development Organization promoted a weeklong sex

boycott, urging women—particularly politicians' wives—to withhold sex and offering to pay prostitutes for lost wages if they joined the ban. As for why the group targeted the wives of the two main political rivals, a representative said, "Great decisions are made during pillow talk. We are asking the two ladies at that intimate moment to ask their husbands, 'Darling, can you do something for Kenya?'" (The prime minister's wife, Ida Odinga, supported the boycott.) Not everyone was pleased: At the end of the action, one Kenyan man, James Kimondo, sued the women's group, saying he had suffered "mental anguish, stress, backaches and lack of concentration" as a result of being denied sex.

Just Deserts

LOS ANGELES—A pair of studies conducted at UCLA's law school found the state of Massachusetts has accrued concrete economic gains since legalizing same-sex marriage. The 2003 state supreme

court ruling that opened the door to gay weddings has resulted in an additional \$111 million in revenue flowing to florists, caterers, hotels, bakers and so forth. The state has also gained a competitive edge from an influx of highly educated "creative class" workers in same-sex relationships.

Death Cab

BEIJING—China has rolled out mobile execution chambers able to administer lethal injections anywhere, anytime.



Heather Graham Belle

Best advice for showing up at the office with a hang-over: Dress well and look perky. What HEATHER GRAHAM did when invited to the London premiere of *The Hangover*: dressed well and looked perky.



DAVID WEST/PA PHOTOS/LONDON

3-DDs

KELLY BROOK (brunette) and RILEY STEELE play around on the set of *Piranha 3-D*. The movie will be released next spring, and the title spells it out for you: It's about schools of man-eating fish that terrorize a touristy lake, and it's in 3-D. Do they really think piranhas are their best 3-D selling point?



JEFF STENBERG/PA PHOTOS.COM

Foxy Lady

Notice the tattoo of Marilyn Monroe on MEGAN FOX's arm? "It was between her and Kurt Cobain, and I went with her," she once said. Good choice. Speaking of good choices like Marilyn, we think Megan would look great on our cover.



WENN.COM

Emily's an Eyeful

EMILY SCOTT has amazing eyes. Where did your peepers first go when looking at her? Excuse us—up here, guys. She was recently voted the sexiest woman in Australia.... Oh, go ahead and look.



RICHARD ARTHUR/HAREN.COM/AU

I Have a Camera, Too!

PARIS HILTON went to Cannes, France to promote her auto-documentary *Paris, Not France*. It's billed as providing "an intimate and provocative look at the world's first new media star." This photo does the same.



New Favorite From Britain

Meet KAYLEE CARVER, the model named Girl of 2009 by the British magazine *Front*. She was a dance student but now spends her time shopping and "making things." What things? "Cakes, Ikea cabinets and a mess," she answers. Well, she can always fall back on a dance career if modeling doesn't pan out. "I can do the moonwalk badly," she says. "I've tried the worm but have a few problems because my boobies get in the way." With your looks and sense of humor, Kaylee, you'll go far.

Padma: Sheer Beauty

"I'm an Innately tactile person and a very sensual-leaning woman," PADMA LAKSHMI told *Allure*. "I tend to sleep in the nude." She also, when awake, tends not to wear a bra. We love her.



Fun Facts

Fact: LILY ALLEN has Emily the Strange's haircut.
Strange fact: Lily has a third nipple.
Fact: This is not it.
Strange fact: We are curious about the extra one.





VOLUPTUOUS VAMPIRISM.



THE OAKLAND STROKE.



RIDING SHOTGUN WITH SOMALI PIRATES.

NEXT MONTH



ATLANTIC COAST COEDS.

LOVE BITES—THE VAMPIRE MYTH IS ONCE AGAIN IN THE SPOTLIGHT, THANKS TO THE SUCCESS OF THE HBO SERIES *TRUE BLOOD* AND THE *TWILIGHT* FILMS. JUST IN TIME FOR HALLOWEEN, WE PRESENT VAMPS AT PLAY AS YOU'LL FIND THEM NOWHERE ELSE.

HEROES OF O-TOWN—IN THE 1970S AL DAVIS, JOHN MADDEN AND KEN "THE SNAKE" STABLER TOOK THE UNDERDOG OAKLAND RAIDERS TO SIX DIVISION CHAMPIONSHIPS AND, IN THE 1976 SEASON, VICTORY IN THE SUPER BOWL. IN THIS ORAL HISTORY WE LOOK BACK AT THE HELL'S ANGELS OF NFL TEAMS, THE COOLEST AND SCARIEST FOOTBALL SQUAD THAT EVER WAS. PLUS: OUR NFL PICKS FOR 2009.

THE REAL PIRATES OF SOMALIA—GO BEHIND THE HEADLINES TO GET THE DEFINITIVE STORY ON SOMALIA'S HIGH-PROFILE (IF DIRT-POOR) PIRATES.

WOODY HARRELSON—IN THE *PLAYBOY INTERVIEW*, THE ACTOR AND ACTIVIST LIGHTS UP A JOINT AND DELIVERS PREDICTABLY UNPREDICTABLE WOODYISMS, INCLUDING OPENING UP ABOUT HIS HEDONISTIC *CHEERS* DAYS, HIS FATHER DYING IN PRISON AND HIS MYRIAD SEXUAL EXPLORATIONS.

20Q—**SHAWNE MERRIMAN** HAS A LOT TO LIVE UP TO AS HE RETURNS TO THE CHARGERS AFTER SPENDING MOST OF LAST YEAR

ON THE DISABLED LIST. WE GET INSIDE HIS HEAD ON THE EVE OF HIS (HOPEFULLY TRIUMPHANT) RETURN.

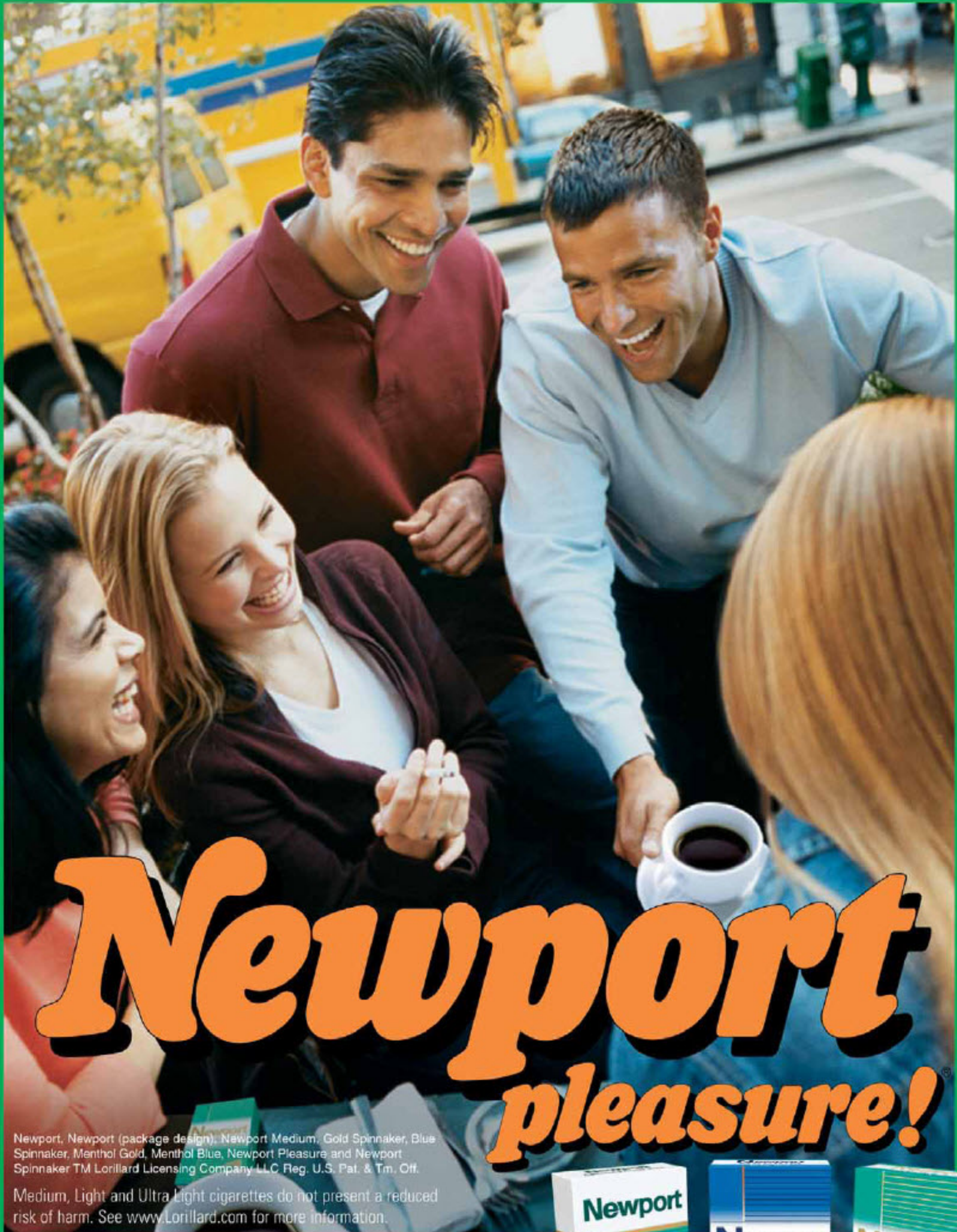
THE GOLDEN AGE OF PILLS—WE CAN NOW TAKE A PILL TO WAKE UP WITHOUT JITTERS, GO TO SLEEP WITHOUT BLAHS, GROW HAIR, GET AN ERECTION, EVEN HAVE LONGER EYELASHES. WHAT CAN CHEMISTRY DO FOR YOU?

GIRLS OF THE ACC—AS SUMMER COOLS DOWN, A MAN'S THOUGHTS TURN TO COLLEGE—MORE SPECIFICALLY, TO COLLEGE GIRLS. THIS YEAR WE RAISE SOME HELL IN THE ATLANTIC COAST CONFERENCE WITH COASTAL HOTTIES FROM BOSTON TO MIAMI.

SEX ON CAMPUS 2009—OUR ANNUAL REPORT ON THE STATE OF SEXUAL RELATIONS ON CAMPUS LOOKS AT THE MANY WAYS LIBERATED YOUNG PEOPLE USE NEW MEDIA AND OLD TRICKS TO GET OFF AND—AT TIMES—SUBSIDIZE THEIR EDUCATION.

FASHION—REMEMBER THAT ASHER ROTH SINGLE THAT ROLLED AROUND CAMPUSES LAST SEMESTER, PRAISING THE JOYS OF BEER BONGS, LOOSE WOMEN AND HEADING TO CLASS RIGHT AFTERWARD? WELL, THE GUY'S OUR FASHION PLATE FOR THE MONTH.

PLUS—PLAYMATE **LINDSEY GAYLE EVANS**, THE WINNER OF OUR ANNUAL COLLEGE FICTION CONTEST AND **ANDY RICHTER** PEEING OFF A CLIFF. WE ARE NOT MAKING THIS UP.



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PLAYSTATION 3



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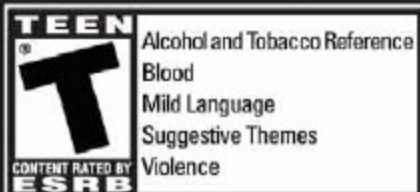
XBOX 360

XBOX LIVE



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