

PLAYBOY

ENTERTAINMENT FOR

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**GODFATHER
& SON**

**JOHN
GOTTI**

**AND THE
DEATH
OF THE
MOB**

**EXCLUSIVE!
THE NEW
FACE OF
GUESS**

**CANDICE
BOUCHER**

**UNDRESSED
IN AFRICA**

**ESCAPE
ARTIST**

**HOW TO LIVE
THE DREAM IN
OVER 15
COUNTRIES
AROUND
THE GLOBE**

**THE
INTERVIEW
SARAH
SILVERMAN**

**GERMAN
PLAYMATES**

**ON THE
PROWL**

**THE APOSTLE
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SURGEON GENERAL WARNING: Cigar Smoking Can Cause Cancers Of The Mouth And Throat, Even If You Do Not Inhale.

We all dream of getting out. Delivering a few choice words to the boss, draining the bank account and valiantly absconding to Panama. We'll tell you how to do it in *Exit Strategy* on page 82. But in a counterpoint, **Paul Theroux** reminds us we are authors of much of our own misery and that no matter how far you go, you always bring your worst traits along for the ride. Speaking of worst traits, how about the one that causes you to drink like a Russian bus driver? No matter what kind of misery you're in the day after, we have the remedy. **John Buffalo Mailer** (Norman's son) presents us with *The Playboy Cure*, a guide to regaining your equilibrium and absolving the sins of the past. It's a theme **Ariel Dorfman** knows well. The *Death and the Maiden* author delivers *Asylum*, a brilliant short story that's a meditation on love, language and lies and whose main character is hounded by ominous electronic voices out of history, hungry to take all he has left. We also feature **Candice Boucher** this month, albeit in a more pleasant form. Though you may recognize her from her Guess ads here in the U.S., the wild beauty originally hails from South Africa, giving us the perfect excuse to head out to the continent with lensman **Raphael Mazzucco** and shoot on the savanna. For this month's fashion spread, we slam from the wilderness back to the urban jungle, where renowned photographer **Nigel Parry** shot up-and-coming soul sensation **Mr. Hudson** showing off the latest in raincoat fashions. It's spring, damn it! Of course with spring comes spring fever, when our appetites reawaken. Since ours tend toward food, women and drink, we sent **Julian Sancton** to explore all three in the hedonistic paradise of Montreal, home to Au Pied de Cochon, a restaurant that goes through more than 70 kilos of foie gras each week. John Gotti Sr. was something of an extremist himself, though about honor. *Godfather and Son* is **Richard Stratton**'s insider account (he and the elder Gotti met in the joint) of the complicated, tragic and touching relationship between John Gotti Jr. and his late father. Finally, the *Playboy Interview* features **Sarah Silverman**, one of our favorite women on the planet (which is saying something). She's the ultimate triple threat: She's gorgeous, arguably the funniest comedian working today, and she has the biggest balls in the business. In this frank interview she opens up about her early traumas and failures, the truth about her relationship with Jimmy Kimmel and, of course, fucking Matt Damon.



Paul Theroux



John Buffalo Mailer

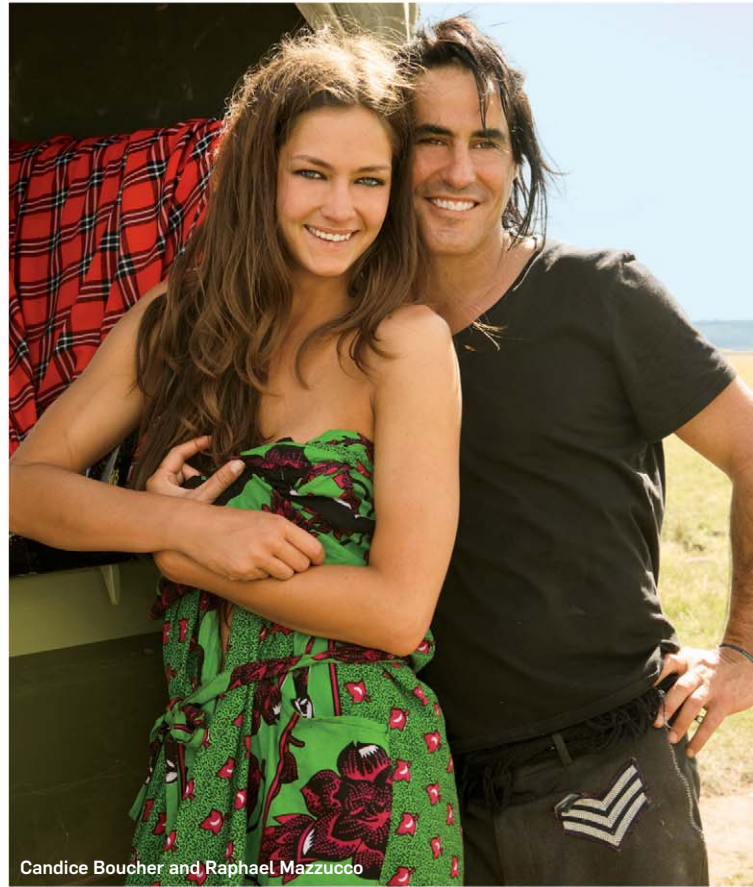


Ariel Dorfman



Nigel Parry

PLAYBILL



Candice Boucher and Raphael Mazzucco



Julian Sancton



Richard Stratton



Sarah Silverman

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Anonymous and ominous e-mails force a father to come to grips with his past before his son comes of age. Would you save a family in peril or preserve yourself for the sake of your unborn lineage? Hurry up—the boy's birthday is in a week. By **ARIEL DORFMAN**



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Will *MacGruber*—*SNL's* first spin-off flick in a decade—blow up or bomb? Funnyman Forte chats with **ERIC SPITZNAGEL**.



COVER STORY

We haven't slipped on a pair of Guess jeans since the Reagan presidency, but we never stopped monitoring their ads for Madison Avenue's best creation: the Guess girl. We sent Raphael Mazzucco to Africa to photograph the newest traffic stopper, Candice Boucher. And if you guessed her necklace forms our Rabbit, you're correct.

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Candice Boucher, the new Guess girl, strips off her grommated dungarees and frolics nude on her native Africa's savanna. Her wild animal side even turned a lion's head.



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THIS MONTH ON PLAYBOY.COM

STYLUS: MEN'S UNDERWEAR Ever wonder what hot Playboy models would look like in your drawers? They'll be a pair that you fancy.

DIRTY DOZEN *Chelsea Lately's* Whitney Cummings and others reveal their sexual secrets.

GIRLWATCHER Interviews and, of course, pictures of the hottest women on the web.

RABBIT EARS *TV Guide* is for your parents; we'll tip you off to must-see TV.

PARTY GIRL Suzy McCoppin, our stringer in the women's room, reports about nightlife and dating from the perspective of the fairer sex.



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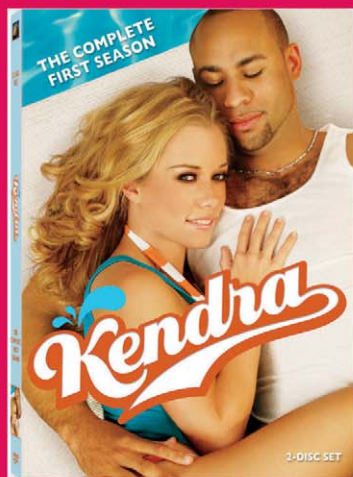
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THE WORLD OF PLAYBOY

HEF SIGHTINGS, MANSION FROLICS AND NIGHTLIFE NOTES



PAMELA ANDERSON AT HEF'S BOOK SIGNING

Fans lined up around the block at the Taschen store in Beverly Hills for the chance to have Hef sign their copies of *Hugh Hefner's Playboy*. His admirers included Playmate Pamela Anderson, who shared in the celebration of the marvelous six-volume illustrated anthology.

HEF DISCUSSES CENSORSHIP AT USC

Crystal Harris and Hef visited his eponymous hall at USC before his annual discussion with film students. Richard Jewell, who teaches the class Hef underwrites, says, "He's more than just a film buff. He knows the importance of preserving the legacy, and he puts his money where his mouth is."



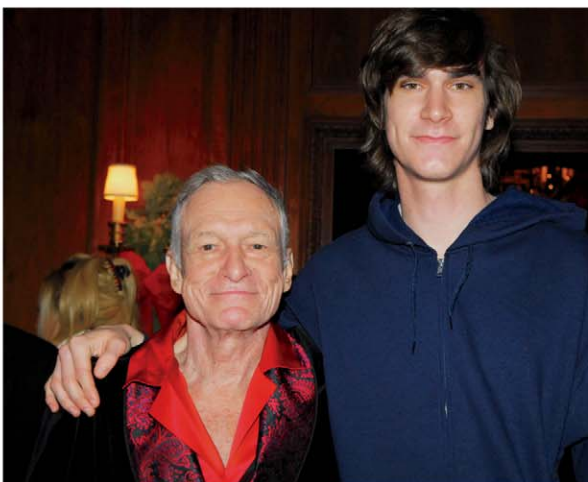
GUESS WHO CAME TO THANKSGIVING DINNER

Hef invited friends and family over for Thanksgiving. Among those he was thankful to host were Sara Karloff (with a Mansion statue of her father, Boris, as the Frankenstein monster), attorney Vincent Bugliosi and wife Gail, Ray Anthony and Marston Hefner.

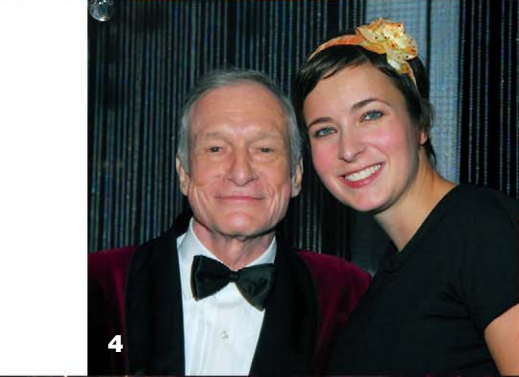


THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE PMW FOR THE HOLIDAYS

To get into the Christmas mood, Crystal and the Shannon Twins decorated gingerbread houses. Then on Christmas Eve Hef and his girls emptied their stockings and exchanged presents. Hef gave them Rabbit Head pendants with his name on them—because they were all both naughty and nice.



BLACK TIE AND LINGERIE



If you don't swing, then don't ring in the New Year at the Mansion. Celebrities and Centerfolds came to Holmby Hills to usher in the new decade. (1) Hef kicked off 2010 with three bona fide 10s: Crystal Harris and Karissa and Kristina Shannon. The girls are wearing their Christmas presents. (2) *Big Brother 11*'s Russell Kairouz and Lydia Tavera. (3) Mr. Playboy with PMOY 1976 Lillian Müller. (4) Oscar winner Diablow Cody raps with Hef. (5) Bridget Marquardt and Nick Carpenter. (6) Miss December 1968 Cynthia Myers and Miss September 1963 Victoria Valentino. (7) Painted Ladies serve up Jell-O shots. (8) Astronaut Buzz Aldrin with wife Lois. (9) Rapper Too Short poses with the Shannon Twins. (10) Hip-hop act Clipse gets down before the ball drops. (11) Actresses Terry Moore and France Nuyen are all smiles. (12) Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Playmate Candy Loving with Hef, whose New Year's resolution again this year is "More of the same!"



WARM THOUGHTS

I know PLAYBOY has a long and rich history of hard-hitting journalism, but you knocked it out of the park two issues in a row. First there was Thomas Frank's exposé of Glenn Beck (*The Triumph of the Conservative Underground*, December) and now Aram Roston reveals the bogus intelligence behind those federal terror alerts (*The Man Who Conned the Pentagon*, January/February). It's comforting to know investigative journalism still has a home.

Brett Lambert
Edmonton, Alberta

As a loyal reader for the past five years, I want to say how much I enjoyed the January/February issue. Tara Reid looks smoking hot (*The Notorious Tara Reid*), the *Playboy Interview* with Sean Combs is one of the best I've read, Playmates Jaime Faith Edmondson (*We'll Always Have Paris*) and Heather Rae Young (*Mountain Girl*) are gorgeous, and the *Playmate Review* is the perfect finishing touch.

Greg Boehmer
Sterling Heights, Michigan

THINKING INSIDE THE BOX

My first thought while reading *The Singularity* was, Very amusing, Mr. Kurzweil. Ray Kurzweil's "end of days" vision of the human mind captured as binary data—a sort of rapture for techies—tackles the fascinating question of whether consciousness can one day be uploaded. What is controversial about this idea is whether a silicon simulacrum of the brain can experience anything, can be sentient. Many scholars of consciousness answer with a surprising yes—provided the relevant parts of the brain can be mimicked, in particular the 25 billion nerve cells, 250 trillion synaptic connections and 100,000 miles of cabling of the cerebral cortex and its associated satellite structures. That doesn't mean this computer would have to look or feel like a brain, a three-pound organ with the consistency of tofu. What is necessary is that the causal relationships among this fantastically complex lace of neurons be replicated. According to this school of thought, any system with similar connectivity—whether biological or synthetic, evolved or designed, made out of nerves, muscle and bones or electronics and titanium—will show the same properties, including the mysterious thing called consciousness. So yes, one day our minds may be able to migrate to our machines. But for now, even the lowly roundworm *C. elegans*, a creature no more than a millimeter long, with a brain made out of 302 nerve cells, is beyond the ability of theoreticians to understand. For many decades to come, our minds will remain confined to our skulls.

Christof Koch
Pasadena, California

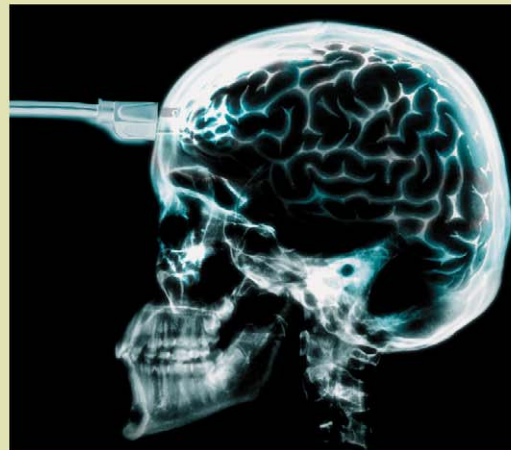
Koch, a professor of biology and engineering at the California Institute of Technology,

DEAR PLAYBOY

Can a Computer Be Horny?

Although *The Singularity* (January/February) is interesting, I am disappointed that Carl Zimmer fails to address the ultimate roadblock to downloading the contents of our minds to computers. The reason I "think" and my computer "computes" is that I have biological desires and evolutionary needs. I feel love, lust and greed. Until you can get a computer to covet the vision that appears on page 93 of the same issue, you'll never emulate the human brain.

Marvin Scott
Fallon, Nevada



is author of *The Quest for Consciousness: A Neurobiological Approach*.

TARA! TARA! TARA!

After all she has been through, Tara Reid shows a lot of courage posing for PLAYBOY. All the best to her in 2010.

Jean Dumoulin
Montreal, Quebec

Thank you for the best holiday present I have received in my 30 years on this earth. Not only did my issue arrive on Christmas Eve, but when I saw Tara Reid on the cover I started believing in



Tara Reid: "I'm in a good place in my life."

Santa Claus again. I have been asking him for this gift ever since the release of *American Pie*, and it took my favorite magazine to make my wish come true.

Chris Propst
South Padre Island, Texas

With her classic beauty and eyes you get lost in, Tara could launch 1,001 ships.

David Reagles
Sheboygan, Wisconsin

90 MILES SOUTH

In *Cuba Libre* (January/February), you suggest Americans visit Havana before the embargo lifts and tourists "ruin the place." I'm waiting instead to celebrate the day when the Cuban people are *libre*.

Tomas Mulet
Miami, Florida

KEEPING IT REAL

The Kate Moss Effect (January/February) is name-dropping waffle. She isn't from Croydon (which equates to Newark) but wealthy Sanderstead. And far from being "very much the architect of her own image," she was created by photographer Corinne Day, whose brilliant look of lesbian, rather than heroin, chic was hijacked, honeyed up and heterosexualized by Mario Sorrenti. Juergen Teller, who has been snapping Moss since she was 15, has said, "She is an extraordinary woman, so much fun and so energetic. But to get to be such an icon, to have exploded like a rocket—I don't really get it. She is beautiful, but so are many others." What's really sexy about Moss is her getting off a cocaine rap. While your writer skims over Moss's "little tabloid trip" following the infamous video of her using and sharing cocaine, Scotland Yard refuses to say why its investigation was so bizarrely inept. Doing so, I'm told, would be "contrary to the public interest." Now *that* is beautiful.

Fred Vermorel
London, U.K.

Vermorel is author of Addicted to Love: The Kate Moss Story, now in its second edition.

THAT JOKE SUCKED

I'm a 28-year-old woman who has defended my interest in PLAYBOY to many of my female friends. So you can imagine my dismay to see the headline "Grown Men Envy Hungry African Child" (*The Year in Sex*, January/February) under a

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photo of Salma Hayek nursing a starving infant. You manage to inform readers that Sierra Leone has “the world’s highest infant mortality rate” yet don’t think twice about exploiting a humanitarian crisis for a cheap laugh.

Meghan Mayer
Portland, Oregon

IN THE BEGINNING...

As a devout Christian, I take umbrage at the outrageous sacrilege depicted by R. Crumb in *The Book of Genesis* (December). Knock it off, goddamn it!

Bob Fulford
Clayton, California

The slickest way to lie is to tell only part of the truth. Genesis began as an oral history of the Jews. No people or nation is without this type of unethical past. American history includes slavery, genocide of Native Americans and other crimes. At least the Jews have the moral integrity not to whitewash their story. It also seems rude and in bad taste to attack the Bible in a “Gala Christmas Issue.”

N.D. Scheub
Grand Rapids, Ohio

Who’s attacking the Bible? Crumb just decided to illustrate it.

SLIGHTLY LESS HOT TUB

As a hot-tub owner for the past 15 years I feel compelled to add a note of caution to *No Reservations* (December). You say parties at the featured Playboy Pad often end in a hot tub “heated perfectly to 110 degrees.” Although 110 is not scalding, it causes painful redness similar to a sunburn. More important, any temperature higher than 106 degrees can cause heatstroke or drowsiness (especially in people who have been drinking alcohol), which has led to drowning. The Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends hot-tub temperatures never exceed 104 degrees.

Jason Smith
Greenwood, Indiana

Many people consider 104 to be lukewarm. However, as you note, it is prudent to limit your exposure, especially when imbibing.

WE’LL TAKE REASON

I enjoyed Thomas Frank’s thoughtful and studiously researched piece on Glenn Beck. The views of America’s leading Red hunter can be summarized by asking, “Should we choose our direction based on feelings or reason?” *The Daily Show* would surely miss him.

Alan Johnson
Enosburg, Vermont

ROAD TRIP!

In “Cold Play” (*Mantrack*, January/February) you suggest that anyone visiting Vancouver for the winter Olympics “quaff a local brew” such as Alexander Keith’s. Alexander Keith’s is brewed in Nova Scotia, which is on the other side of the country from British Columbia. That’s

like telling someone in New York to try Jack Daniel’s because it’s a local whiskey.

Ira Geres-Codd
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

As of last year, Alexander Keith’s is also brewed in Creston, B.C.

DIDDY ON THE RECORD

Rather than being epic, your *Playboy Interview* (January/February) reveals virtually nothing more than the identity of Sean Combs’s biggest fan—himself. Unlike the achievements of Barack Obama or Muhammad Ali, Combs’s biggest accomplishments seem to be making money and getting laid on a yacht in France. Thirty years from now the names Puff Daddy and P. Diddy will be blips on the cultural radar, closer to M.C. Hammer than to Frank Sinatra.

T.C. Brown
Virginia Beach, Virginia

Combs says the hip-hop generation is “probably” responsible for getting President Obama elected. True, the decline in society through this generation is partly responsible, but the media’s character assassination of conservatives had much more to do with Obama’s success. And since African Americans make up less



Last year Sean Combs made \$30 million.

than 20 percent of the population, a lot of white folks contributed their votes. Later, when recalling being cornered during his drug-dealing days, Combs says he “turned into a scared white Harvard student”—another example of the reverse racism that now dominates the culture. Certainly a white entertainer making a similar reference to a black person would take a hit to his career. It’s hard to believe Jennifer Lopez hooked up with this bobblehead.

Troy Spatafora
Metairie, Louisiana

Combs is proud of co-writing almost all of his new album? Wouldn’t that make his contribution less than half?

Jason Downing
Loveland, Colorado



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Testimonial

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- Joe Montana, Hall of Fame Quarterback



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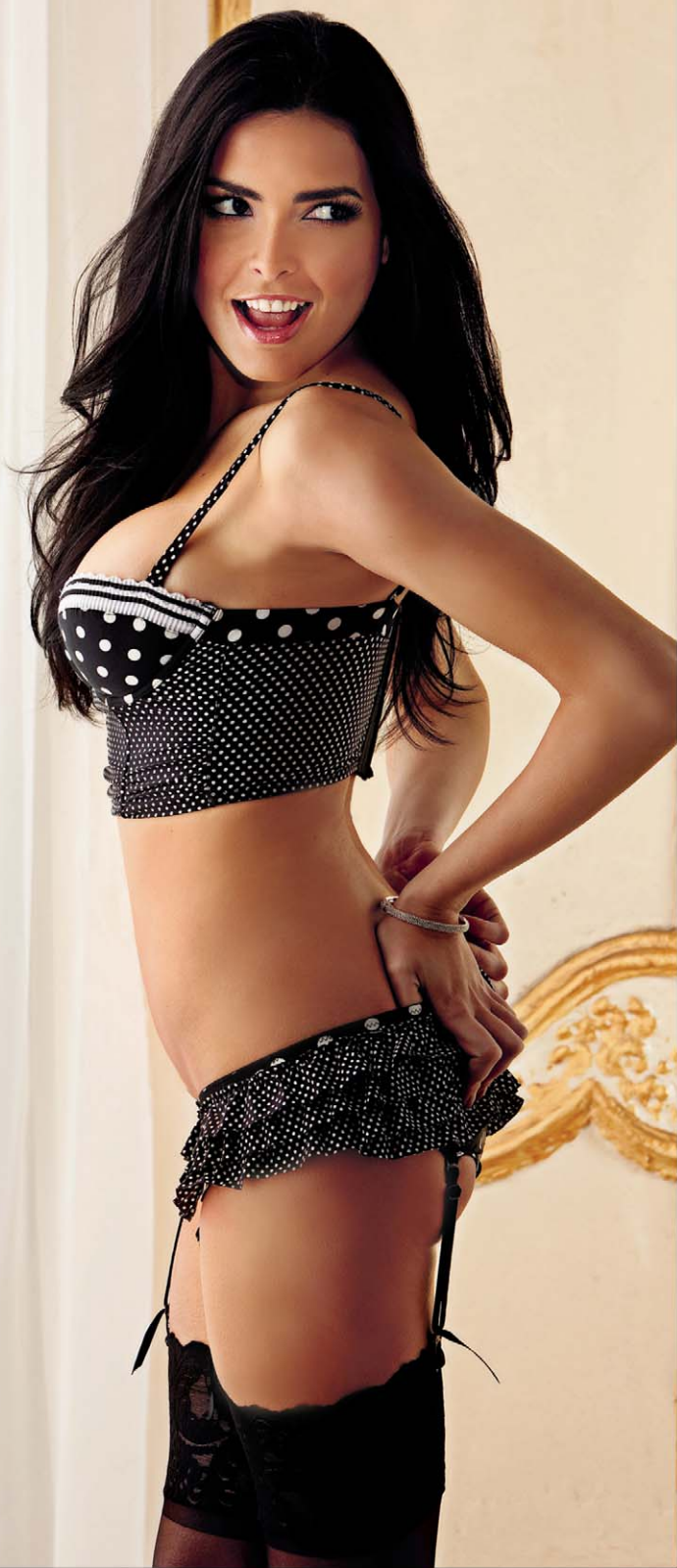
Brace yourselves. Hurricane Karina is coming in from the south.

BECOMING ATTRACTION

Karina Flores

Who's the hottest of all Brazilian models? The names Bündchen, Lima and Ambrosio are on the tip of your tongue, but consider this: All three of them are elbows-deep in diapers and baby formula at the moment. Those supermodels dominated the 2000s, but it's a new decade. Meet 21-year-old Karina Flores from the southern Brazilian town of Blumenau. She's ubiquitous in her country, where she has captured the imagination of menfolk with a couple of Brazilian PLAYBOY pictorials. All of which begs the question: Why hasn't she come to the U.S. yet? She has. She's shooting pictures in Miami right about... now. Buzz is building. Keep your eyes peeled.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SERGIO KOVACEVICK



Evening Wear Connect the Dots

What's black, white and red-hot all over? Brazil's Sasckya Porto, Miss December 2007, modeling this spring's coolest lingerie trend: pieces cut to fit today's bodies with patterns that pay homage to classic pinups. Pictured: Jezebel Pin Up Girl cami bra, \$36, and Ruffle Boyleg with garters, \$24, available at designerintimates.com.



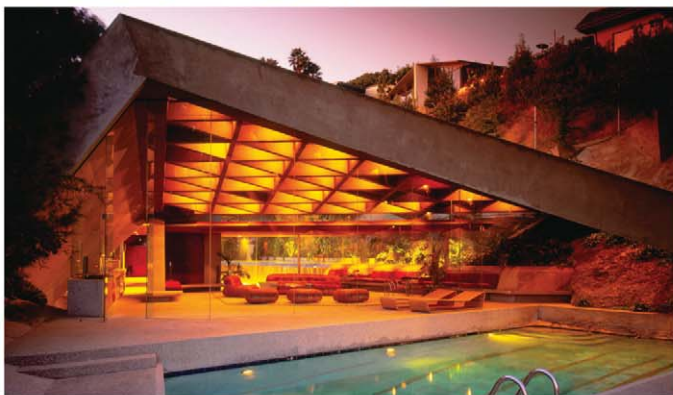
Hunsecker (foreground): suit, \$995, by Versace; white button-down, \$475, by Brioni; tie, \$195, by Charvet; pocket square, \$55, by Robert Talbott.

Classic Look of the Month Dress for Success

TCM kicks off its first film festival in Hollywood on April 22 (tcm.com). You'll see *Sunset Boulevard*, *The Graduate* and the oily classic *The Sweet Smell of Success* (1957), starring Burt Lancaster as the Walter Winchell-inspired J.J. Hunsecker and Tony Curtis as press agent Sidney Falco. The desperation and the wardrobe certainly resonate today. Wanna re-create the Hunsecker look? See above.

In the House California Dreaming

Los Angeles's modernist architecture is defined by the city's climate, opulence and clash of cultures (Asian, Latino, Hollywood Hebrew). Thomas Hines's new *Architecture of the Sun: Los Angeles Modernism, 1900-1970* (Rizzoli) is a thorough study of the work of Schindler, Neutra, Wright and the inimitable John Lautner. It's also a study in fine living. Chilled cocktail, anyone? Pictured: Lautner's Chemosphere House (below left, 1960) and the Sheats-Goldstein House (interior, below right; pool, bottom, 1963).





Party Flavors Pork Futures

La Quercia is no ordinary hog farm. Hailed by chefs from Batali to Trotter, the Iowa-based farm produces pork products of the gods. Order your own organic acorn-fed pig (yes, the whole pig) through La Quercia's Acorn Edition (\$3,000, laquercia.us), and come harvest, you'll receive fresh and frozen ribs and loin. Then, over the next year and a half, you'll get the rest of the pig cured—*guanciale*,

BOULEVARD
2½ shots Bulleit bourbon
1 shot Noilly Prat vermouth
½ shot Grand Marnier
2 dashes Angostura orange bitters

Shake ingredients with ice and strain into a chilled martini glass; garnish with a maraschino cherry.

pancetta, *prosciutto*, *lardo*, *coppa*, etc. The Boulevard (left) is a cool sipper out of Simon Difford's new *Encyclopedia of Cocktails* that, with its sweetness and temperature, goes nicely with prosciutto hors d'oeuvres.



Strings Attached Forever Young

Back in 1979 we first heard Neil Young's anthem on aging: "It's better to burn out than to fade away." Turns out the 64-year-old rocker refuses to do either. The Jonathan Demme-directed concert film *Neil Young Trunk Show* has been making the film festival rounds, and Young's first book, *The Neil Young Journal: 1945–1972*, will hit stores this spring. Old man, take a look at your life....

USA! USA! God Speed

Not since the 1960s—with Dan Gurney's Eagle Formula 1 cars and Ford's quest to win Le Mans—has an American racing team captured a mainstream homegrown audience while waging war at the pinnacle of international motor sport. US F1, based in North Carolina, will rally the stars and stripes as it kicks off its first Formula 1 season at the Bahrain Grand Prix on March 14. The competition will include the great Michael Schumacher, who comes out of retirement to race for Mercedes (car pictured). Catch most of the season on the Speed Channel.



Employee of the Month Jenny Thompson

PLAYBOY: Well, hello there. What do you do?

JENNY: I'm a hospice aide. I take care of patients' end-of-life journey.

PLAYBOY: So, sponge baths?

JENNY: Yep.

PLAYBOY: What do you find most rewarding about your job?

JENNY: Maybe not the sponge baths.... I enjoy not only the patients but also comforting the families. The biggest reward is knowing I've helped people during the toughest time in their life.

PLAYBOY: You have one of the most emotionally crushing jobs of all the women we've photographed for this feature.

JENNY: Well, I'd like to think I have a big heart that enables me to cope with that part of the job.

PLAYBOY: You are quite mature for a 22-year-old.

JENNY: Being a hospice worker has made me truly appreciate *living* life.

PLAYBOY: What do you do in your nonwork life?

JENNY: I love getting dolled up and going clubbing or getting dirty while riding sports bikes. How many chicks have you heard say that?

PLAYBOY: Now that's living. What do you try to accentuate when you dress for the clubs?

JENNY: I like to wear heels to show off my legs and my butt.

PLAYBOY: Do you have to wear scrubs and hide all that at work?

JENNY: Yes, thankfully—I wouldn't want to give anyone a heart attack.

SEE MORE OF JENNY THOMPSON AT CLUB.PLAYBOY.COM.

Movie of the Month

Clash of the Titans

By Stephen Rebell

Greek mythology gets a 300-style adrenaline supercharge in director Louis Leterrier's *Clash of the Titans*. Donning sandals in the CGI epic are Liam Neeson and Gemma Arterton, with Ralph Fiennes as Hades and Sam Worthington as the hero who battles creatures from the underworld. "I told everyone, 'This is going to be a tough movie to make'—remote locations, action sequences and huge special effects," says Leterrier. "After making *Terminator Salvation* and *Avatar*, Sam knows visual effects in and out. I could say to him, 'I don't have this actor or this monster for you to do your biggest action scenes. Do you mind acting with only a tennis ball?' Sam was battling the giant scorpions or Medusa, and he was fine acting with a ball. He made it so easy that at night everyone went home with a smile on their face."



KICK ME WITH YOUR BEST SHOT

The *Kick-Ass* comic book series is a foul-mouthed deadpan romp about a high school dweeb who dons a superhero costume and becomes a lead-pipe-swinging vigilante with the help of a pair of father-daughter psycho killers. It's so raw that some fans thought they'd never see it on the screen. Wrong they were, and star Aaron Johnson says the soon-to-be-released *Kick-Ass* movie is true to the source, keeping it grown-up with a never-ending stream of profanity and graphic violence.



DVD of the Month

Bringing a whiff of fresh air to the romantic dramedy is **Up in the Air**, a witty, thought-provoking and sometimes devastating look at a solitary lothario who cares little about interpersonal relationships or the baggage they bring. As a "career transition counselor," Ryan Bingham (George Clooney, in a career-best performance) flies cross-country firing employees for corporate bosses afraid to do it themselves (call it "inhuman resources") and enjoys the rarefied stratosphere of members-only status thanks

to his millions of airline miles. Things change when he meets his female alter ego Alex (Vera Farmiga: "Just think of me as yourself, only with a vagina") and an idealistic trainee (Anna Kendrick). Can and should a playboy finally settle down? Ask Clooney. **Best extras:** Both the DVD and Blu-ray have deleted scenes with optional commentary by writer-director Jason Reitman, but the BD has more of them, including "American Airlines Prank," storyboards, a Sad Brad music video and more. $\frac{3}{4}$ —Stacie Houglund



Tease Frame

Dutch actress **Carice van Houten** is fluent in Dutch, English, French and German but has lovely attributes that cross all language barriers. Her provocative role in the 2006 film *Black Book* (pictured) launched her international career and led to a part in *Valkyrie*. Next Van Houten stars as Jude Law's wife in the science-fiction thriller *Repo Men*, about organ purchases and repossessions in the near future.

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Game of the Month

God of War III

The first *God of War* (2005) was a blood-soaked sleeper hit that redefined action video games. Its follow-up, *God of War II* (2007), was the best game to come out on the PS2, period. And now the same writers, voice actors and coders who brought you the first two games offer the final chapter in Kratos's tragic, savage journey. If you are alive and you own a PS3, there's little to think about. You should buy this game. Today. Not only is it one of the PS3's most impressive offerings, but the brutal combat at the heart of the game is incredible—intuitive, addictive and satisfying. And its set pieces put most summer blockbusters to shame. The game opens where the last one finished, with Kratos scaling Mount Olympus astride an army of Titans, bent on overthrowing Zeus once and for all. We reiterate: That's where it starts. ★★★ —Scott Alexander



Also in gaming...

BATTLEFIELD: BAD COMPANY 2 (360, PC, PS3) There's more than a few military shooters out there, but this game's gripping storytelling, four-player co-op and likable, over-the-top personalities found a place in our hearts. Plus, you can destroy almost any object you see, the squad-based multiplayer is nuts, and the graphics are incredibly crisp and visceral. ★★★½ —Damon Brown



Heavy Business

In an industry dominated by shoot-that-guy-in-the-head simulators, it takes brass balls to make a game that explores the quiet moments in a person's life. *Heavy Rain* (PS3) has intense action and amazing visuals. It also has acting. And emotion that extends past adrenaline and into, yes, sadness.

Music

Erykah Badu Opens Up

On her CD *New Amerykah Part Two: Return of the Ankh*, Erykah Badu explores "the mind of a woman learning love."

Q: What do you know about love?

A: Men and women have different needs, different hormones.

That's why sex and monogamy are not the most important things in a relationship.

Q: Do you have any hidden talents?

A: I can shoot dice well. If

I'm in a tight spot and need some cash, I pull out the dice.

Q: Are people surprised when they find out you're funny?

A: Yes. When my first album was released I was described as a head-wrap-wearing, candle-lighting, incense-burning queen. The head wrap was bigger than I was.



Not Dead Yet

Dead people rarely make good music. (And they sure don't give good interviews.)

As his new album proves, Jimi Hendrix is the exception. The amount of music he released before dying in 1970, at the age

of 27, is as scant as his influ-

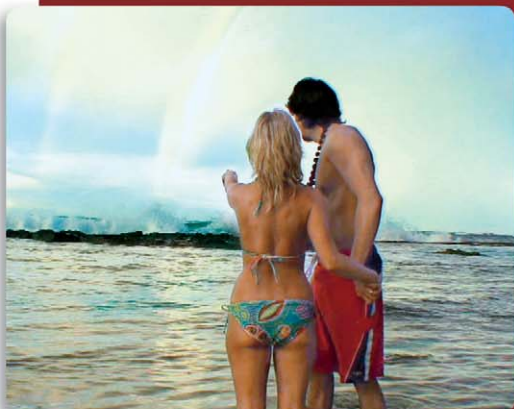
ence is massive: four albums, one of which was live, and a few singles. Because he died without a will (Readers: Don't die without a will! Especially if you are a guitar god), a variety of heirs have controlled his unreleased music, which one biographer estimated was a 600-hour trove. There have been more

than 40 additional Hendrix albums since 1970, making him rock's most prolific dead superstar, and by now you'd think the barrel had been scraped right through the wood. On *Valleys of Neptune*, a collection of unreleased recordings, several tracks

fade abruptly—these are unfinished songs. Well, so what? If you like electric guitar, this mishmash will leave you making an OMG face. The prizes include a version of "Fire" taken at stock-car tempo, the frolicking stereo tricks of "Lullaby for the Summer" and two of Hendrix's wildest, freest blues excursions, each longer than seven minutes and worth it. Only drawback: The sound is so sharp, you'll want to buy a new stereo.

—Rob Tannenbaum





69 Sexy Things 2 Do Before You Die

Date Night: Dinner and a Few Shows

Traditionally Friday night is for the boys and Saturday is date night. With that in mind Playboy TV is rolling out a Saturday-night lineup programmed for couples. Picture this: After dinner you ask her up to your place while the night is still young (nine P.M. ET/PT). You shake up a few cocktails while she flips on *69 Sexy Things 2 Do Before You Die*. You get to know each other by conversing about life aspirations and travel. Now she's moved closer and sensuously caresses your leg during the erotic *Jazmin's Touch* (9:30 P.M.). The brush leads to some light petting when the reality competition show *Playboy Shootout* begins (10 P.M.). After that, it's real daters vying for love and lust on *Foursome* (10:30 P.M.) to raise your heat level. By the time our late-night movie fires up at 11 your inhibitions and a few articles of clothing are gone. And your night is still far from over.



Jazmin's Touch



Playboy Shootout



Foursome

Playboy Radio on TV

Some were skeptical years ago when Playboy got into radio ("Ya can't see the girls!" they said). But we proved them wrong by having one of the most listened-to stations on Sirius. Now we're bringing the best of radio—and by far the best faces in radio, such as *Mansion Mayhem's* Pilar Lastra (below)—to Playboy TV. *The Playboy Radio Show* airs Sundays at 9:30 P.M. ET/PT.



Down the Rabbit Hatch

It's been 50 years since we opened the first Playboy Club. To toast the anniversary we are releasing three "cooler glasses" adorned with vintage Bunnies. You may recognize the tall drink to the left as art by Don Lewis, who began illustrating for us in the 1960s. "He often based his playful and flirty pin-ups on some of his favorite Bunnies from the original Chicago Club," says Playboy Art Curator Aaron Baker. The vessels are perfect for mixed drinks that call for a collins glass with a splash of flair. They retail for \$8 and are exclusive to Urban Outfitters. Bottoms up.



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SEVENTY-FIVE

THE PERCENTAGE OF AMERICANS AGE 17 TO 24 WHO WOULD BE REJECTED FOR MILITARY SERVICE FOR REASONS INCLUDING PHYSICAL UNFITNESS AND A CRIMINAL RECORD.

PRICE CHECK

\$53,775

The winning bid at auction for the gray fedora Jack Ruby was wearing when he gunned down alleged JFK assassin Lee Harvey Oswald.



A FEMALE VIAGRA IS COMING: Women who took part in a preliminary trial for the female-libido increaser flibanserin reported a 22% increase in satisfaction and a desire for more sex.

AS MANY AS **59%** OF AMERICANS HAVE CHANGED THEIR RELIGION AT LEAST ONCE.



SAMMY DAVIS JR.



THE AVERAGE TIME FOR WATCHING INTERNET PORN IS **15 MINUTES** PER SESSION.

WHAT THEY'RE THINKING

According to Glamour.com, women prefer foreplay to sex by **24%**



ELIN NORDEGREN

ACCORDING TO THE TRUTH ABOUT CHEATING **88%** OF MALES WHO HAVE BEEN UNFAITHFUL DON'T CONSIDER THEIR OTHER WOMAN BETTER LOOKING THAN THEIR SPOUSE.



JAIMEE GRUBBS

MICHAEL DOUGLAS



FORTY-THREE %

OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES SAY THEY HAVE KNOWN A CO-WORKER THEY SERIOUSLY BELIEVED WAS CAPABLE OF COMMITTING A CRIME OF MASS VIOLENCE.

\$89 THE COST OF A WHOLE PIZZA AT AMERICA'S FIRST MEDICAL-MARIJUANA DISPENSARY AND RESTAURANT, GANJA GOURMET IN DENVER.





Life in the Out Back

A bold U.K. company brings a whole new meaning to “working in the garden”

Working from home has many advantages, but sometimes you just need to get out. Into the backyard, that is. The premise behind the radical work space called OfficePOD (\$24,000, officepod.co.uk) is that while more and more people work from home these days, no one can be expected to do his best work in the place where he does his prime playing (our founder excepted, of course). We’re not saying it’s impossible, mind, just that staring down your home bar all day can be hazardous to both your employment and your liver. The solution? A high-design, productivity-centric “pod” that sits in the backyard. Custom installation is available (and recommended unless you’re a contractor in your spare time), and wherever possible the freestanding cubicle is made from recycled materials, letting you further burnish your green cred on top of all the gas you’re saving. It has a power hookup for lights and computers, as well as phone and Internet jacks if you need them (though we think wireless is a better idea), and there’s built-in HVAC and storage in the 56-square-foot work space. OfficePODs are on sale now in the U.K. with a U.S. release planned for a later date.



Digital Dreaming

These days the Internet is everywhere—even on your nightstand. Though Sony doesn’t call its new touch screen Dash (\$200, sonystyle.com) an alarm clock, it’ll be the best one you ever own, delivering Net radio, weather, sports scores and just about anything else digital, right to your bedside.

Tale of the Tape

Invisible information is all around us. Add some of your own with a Sonic tie from Texas artist Alyce Santoro (\$120, sonicfabric.com). It’s woven from discarded cassette tapes; if you pass a tape head over your chest you can still hear ghostly echoes of sounds from the past.



A Little Luxury

Driving a sports car in the city is like keeping a tiger on a leash: a wasteful extravagance bristling with power you can't truly enjoy. The idea behind Aston Martin's Cygnet concept car is to keep the luxury but lose the muscle. It's based on the Toyota iQ, a 1.3-liter four-cylinder car that gets upward of 50 miles to the gallon. Aston's engineers gave it a face-lift and slathered the cockpit with leather. Responsibility never felt so decadent.



Hack Your Life: Destroy Your Phone Bill

The Internet, fresh from beating up the music and film industries, is now thwacking the telephone companies. Ooma's Telo (\$250, ooma.com) is a device that plugs into your broadband connection and then uses your existing house phones to let you make unlimited domestic calls with zero monthly

fees. Combine it with the free Google Voice service (google.com/voice) to take complete control of your telephonic life, routing calls where you want them (home, work, cell), sending yourself voice-mail transcripts via e-mail or text and giving you access to your voice mail over the Internet.

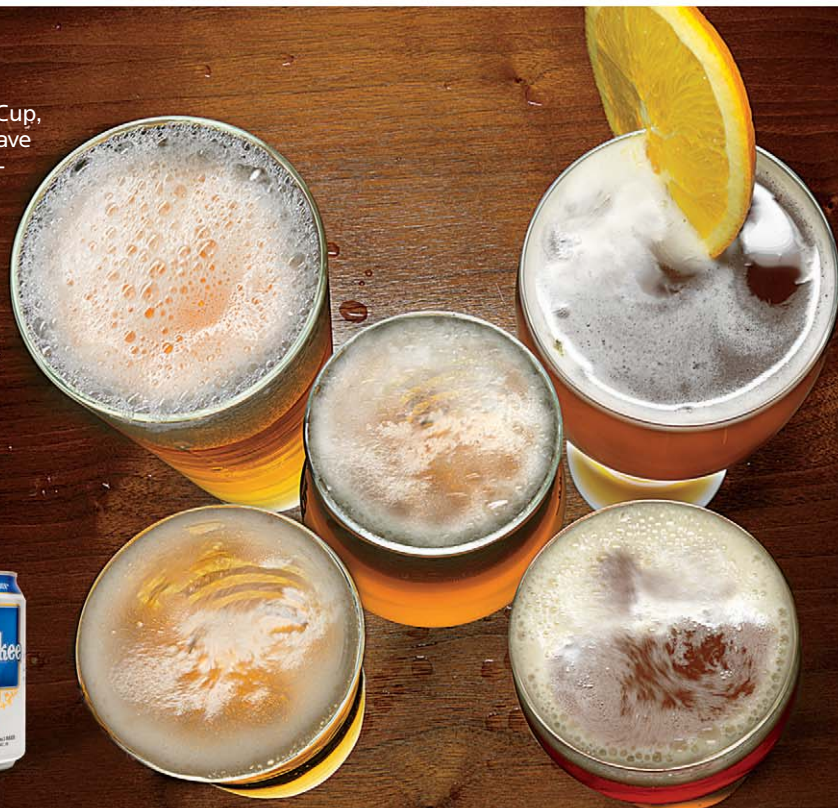


Art, Meet Sound

A good set of speakers does wonders for your musical appreciation, but as far as visuals go, most are about as interesting as staring at a blank wall. ELAC changes that with its De Stijl FS 247 speakers (\$2,100, elac.com), which are a functional homage to the abstract art movement that gave us Piet Mondrian.

Head of the Class

We don't envy the hundred-odd judges in the World Beer Cup, which kicks off in Chicago on April 6. About 3,400 beers have been entered in 90 categories. While it's not open to the public, you can throw your own victory party at home (winners will be listed at worldbeercup.org). Among the defending champions are some of our personal favorites: Unibroue's La Fin du Monde, Blue Moon's Honey Moon, Trumer Pils and Odell's IPA. Oh, and Old Milwaukee Light (in the American-style light lager category).



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THE SWINGING SIXTIES



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PLAYBOY ADVISOR

My husband is in the National Guard and deploying to Iraq (again). I want to buy pocket pussies for his unit as parting gifts. Can you suggest a brand that isn't too expensive, because I will need 37.—D.N., Cleveland, Tennessee

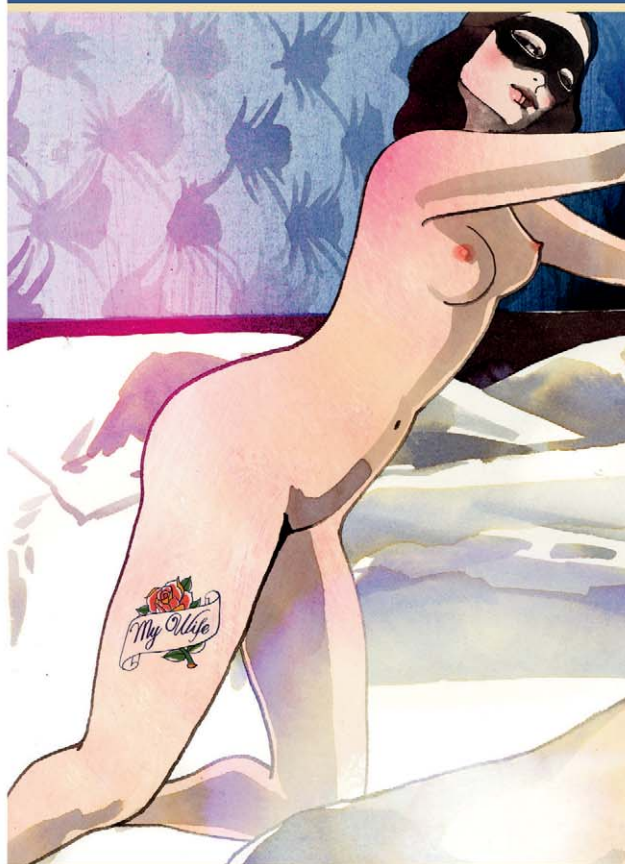
That's a generous gift—but are you sure the other women saying good-bye are cool with your distributing masturbation sleeves? These days you can find pocket pussies for less than \$10 at such unlikely places as Amazon.com, although how long they hold up to desert poundings is uncertain. A man in a bind can even make his own artificial vagina with five balloons filled with warm water, a pillow and a trash bag (see homemade-sex-toys.com/balloon-sex-bundle.html). But pocket pussies, like vibrators, have gone upscale, with such product lines as the Fleshlight (fleshlight.com; 888-804-4453), which can be customized with various orifices and textures, and the disposable Tenga (satistec.com; 877-836-4287). Since our troops deserve only the best, at our request Fleshlight has agreed to ship 37 of its made-in-America products to your husband's unit. They look like flashlights, so let's hope they get through. And don't tell the other wives where they came from.

I am having trouble choosing a best man. Should I go with my brother or my best friend, who last year had me stand as his best man? I don't want to hurt anyone's feelings. I hadn't thought to ask the Advisor until my fiancée suggested it.—R.K., Attleboro, Massachusetts

Smart woman. Go with your brother. Your friend will understand. Your family may not.

My wife is a Muslim immigrant. It was difficult to get her family to give her "permission" to marry me. I have a gay male couple in my circle of friends. My wife disapproves of homosexuality and feels uncomfortable when this couple kisses or holds hands, but she doesn't get upset. I'd like to have a party, but I don't think I can invite my friends and exclude the couple. I also can't not invite my wife's family. Should I tell my gay friends they're welcome but to avoid PDA or revealing to my in-laws they are a couple? I don't think my in-laws would figure it out otherwise.—M.C., Boston, Massachusetts

Alert your gay friends to the situation so they don't get blindsided. Good friends would cool it to avoid causing you any undue grief,



I came across a photo on an amateur porn site of a couple having sex in which the woman looked a lot like my wife. Her face was obscured, but she had the same build and, more telling, an identical tattoo on her leg. Should I confront my wife? If it is her, I'd like to know if the photo was taken before or after we were married. I've considered first e-mailing the person who submitted the photo to ask a few questions.—J.H., Kansas City, Missouri

What questions? "Have you ever or are you currently fucking my wife?" Unless the tattoo is of your face, this sounds like a coincidence; you don't have to search far online to find a woman of a certain build and with a nondistinct tattoo having sex. If it were your wife and the photos were recent, you'd probably recognize the guy. Is she a wild child who would not only cheat on you but allow someone to photograph it? Without more credible evidence, we see no reason to alert your wife to her doppelbänger. The best you could hope is that she'd burst out laughing—and then ask why you're cruising for amateur porn.

but we would never suggest they deny they are together. For the record, sexual orientation is not a choice. Your in-laws and wife can "disapprove," but nature pays no heed.

In the January/February issue you write that a couple becoming locked together during intercourse (*penis captivus*) is "so rare it's a myth." I have news for you, Advisor—it can happen. In fact, my husband has gotten stuck inside my vagina

twice, the first time for 15 minutes and the second for nine minutes. Both times I wasn't very wet. After 15 minutes of thrusting I had gotten off twice but was swollen. I made him stop for a minute at this point, and when we started again he couldn't pull out. Even after he began to lose his erection it took a few minutes and a bit of force for him to escape. We both found it amusing. My obstetrician said the dryness and swelling were due to a fertility drug I was taking.—S.S., St. Louis, Missouri

Your husband is messing with you.

You are flat wrong to say a woman can't lock a man's penis inside her vagina. A girlfriend once went to bed with me while in great anger. Her vaginal muscles closed around my erection like a fist, and her legs locked around my butt. I came, but to my surprise I didn't lose my erection. Her muscles gripped me so firmly I couldn't deflate. Only when she climaxed and relaxed was I able to withdraw. She also bit the hell out of my shoulder. It was not an experience I care to repeat.—N.L., Naples, Florida

This isn't captivus but a more common occurrence known as rapturus. Like many women, your ex had toned her taint muscle with squeezing exercises known as Kegels. (It's also notable that she held you in place with her legs.) There's nothing quite like intercourse with a woman who can suck your cock with her vagina.

I am a 37-year-old woman who has almost constant orgasms without being touched. I lead a regular life, but when I'm alone, wow! Is this normal?—C.R., Chelsea, Oklahoma

It's unusual but not abnormal. Does it bother you? For many women it's a nightmare, which has led the scientific community to identify this condition as persistent genital arousal disorder, or PGAD. The standard definition is "feelings of persistent, spontaneous, intrusive, unrelenting and unwanted

physical arousal in the absence of conscious thoughts of sexual desire or sexual interest." Many women apparently experience this but don't find it distressing. For others it can create severe mental distress, especially since reaching climax provides no relief. "Women are not having orgasms all day and night as has been exaggerated by the media," writes Jeannie Allen, who runs psas-support.com. "Most wait for privacy and hold out as long as they can until they feel they are losing their

minds.” *The good news is that a number of investigators are on the case, hoping first to discover whether PGAD originates in the brain, the genitals (“clitoral priapism”) or both. Scientists reported last year on a woman whose lifelong PGAD disappeared when she began taking varenicline, a smoking-cessation drug that regulates the release of dopamine in the brain. The neurosexologist Dr. Marcel Waldinger suggests PGAD be renamed restless genital syndrome because it appears to be related to overactive bladder and restless legs syndrome. Most of the women with PGAD he has interviewed say it gets worse when they sit down or wear tight clothing and that it rarely bothers them at night. This, he says, suggests hypersensitivity of the nerves that supply the clitoris and/or other areas of the genitals. Indeed, examinations of 23 afflicted volunteers revealed that simply touching their clits with a cotton swab could induce the sensations of PGAD, and three of the women came.*

The December fashion feature, “*Suit Up!*,” shows Josh Radnor wearing a jacket with a single red button on the sleeve. What’s up with that?—E.C., Anchorage, Alaska

The suit is by Paul Smith, who often adds unexpected color to his designs, whether in a button, lining or contrast stitch. It’s the same idea behind a colorful pocket square or tie—it adds a touch of personality that is distinctive but not distracting.

How do you develop a “killer” instinct? Some guys seem to have it, and some don’t.—R.L., New Orleans, Louisiana

*As basketball great Bill Russell once said, “If you sometimes wonder if you have killer instinct, you ain’t got it.” And he may be right; competitive fire appears to be determined by testosterone levels. The question is, does high testosterone lead to a killer instinct, or does a killer instinct cause higher testosterone? The answer is both, writes social psychologist James McBride Dabbs in *Heroes, Rogues and Lovers: Testosterone and Behavior*. You inherit a certain level of testosterone, but the hormone also rises and falls with each victory or loss, in sports and business. Idan Ravin, known as “the hoops whisperer” for his work with NBA stars, believes hypercompetitiveness can be cultivated if you grow up in a culture of success or pull yourself out of a tough situation, as many elite professionals have done. He has even broken killer instinct into six components: (1) love of the game, (2) ambition, (3) obsessive-compulsive behavior, (4) arrogance/confidence, (5) selfishness and (6) nonculpability/guiltlessness. By the latter he means “if a guy with killer instinct fucks up, he doesn’t feel responsible. For example, if Kobe Bryant misses a shot to win the game, he doesn’t say, ‘Sorry, guys.’ It isn’t a failure, because no one else could have done it. That outlook makes it hard to be friends with people you work with.”*

My boss went to a nice restaurant for dinner. When his steak arrived the waiter asked him to cut into it to make sure it was cooked to his liking. My boss says

the server should wait until the customer cuts into the steak on his own, then ask if it’s okay. I argued it’s good business to ask immediately so the situation can be corrected quickly. What does the Advisor think?—D.T., San Francisco, California

We have no preference when a server asks if we’re satisfied; what we don’t want is an argument over our definition of medium rare. One steakhouse review we read said a waiter who wanted to examine more closely the ratio of red to pink pulled out a flashlight, which we would have used to deck him.

A couple who engages in BDSM should agree on a safe word the bottom can use to end the encounter. But what if the top ignores the safe word? Could he or she be charged with assault?—K.J., Indianapolis, Indiana

This murky legal area will be in the news this year when the U.S. Supreme Court rules on a procedural appeal in the conviction of an S&M Svengali charged with, among other things, the “forced labor” of a female slave. A year into the relationship, while handcuffed to a wall, the woman had a moment of clarity and judged the situation to be abusive. In a 1998 case a man convicted of sexually torturing a woman for 20 hours was released on appeal when e-mails showed she had helped plan the encounter and immediately afterward proclaimed herself satisfied. More recently a former state politician in Missouri was accused of choking and beating a lover during rough sex. As he left he allegedly told her “You should have said ‘green balloons’”—their safe word. This is the sort of scenario that gives people who push the boundaries of pain tolerance the willies. Some even argue consent is a fickle concept. “Consent during and after but not before the act is seduction,” one dominant told a blogger who wrote about this issue. “Before and after but not during—that’s my sweet spot. But before and during but not after, that’s buyer’s remorse. There’s no crime in it, and for good reason.” As they say, it’s a fine line.

If my golf drives off the tee went straight they’d fly 300 yards. But I have a nasty slice to the right. I can hit my irons without issues. Is it possible that my swing is so powerful, the flex in my driver’s graphite shaft causes the head to lag and hit the ball open-faced?—S.E., Newcastle, California

*This is a common problem: A golfer improves his short clubs but still has trouble off the tee because he’s hitting for power and twisting his body to get it, which causes his arms to extend too far. You need a more traditional swing, says Andy Plummer, which he and fellow instructor Michael Bennett describe in *The Stack and Tilt Swing* (stackandtiltgolfswing.com). “Golf instruction has lost sight of what made the best swings in history work: Ben Hogan’s reverse tilt at the top, Jack Nicklaus’s steady head, Sam Snead’s straight right leg on the backswing,” he says. So, briefly: Straighten your right leg and keep your head stationary during the backswing so your body remains centered over the ball, and swing your hands*

well to the inside on the downswing. It’s such a simple game.

A reader complains in December about his cigar lighters failing within a month or two, and you recommend an S.T. Dupont. A Dupont is a work of art but an unnecessary expense. Before refueling your lighters, bleed them by depressing the valve with a small screwdriver until the hissing stops. My best lighter is a freebie I got with a box of cigars.—S.A., Wichita, Kansas

Butane lighters should be cleaned using compressed air. A scuba tank at 50 pounds of pressure can keep \$5 lighters going for 10 years and expensive ones forever.—M.L., Norman, Oklahoma

*If unnecessary expense were a concern, we wouldn’t smoke cigars. Aaron Sigmond, author of the forthcoming *Playboy: The Book of Cigars*, notes that after bleeding a lighter you can use a toothbrush to remove flint dust and other particles. Compressed air is an option—and required for torch lighters—but the cans available at any office supply store will suffice.*

My new girlfriend is on the pill and doesn’t want me to wear a condom. What is the common practice when it comes to finishing? Is it okay to come inside her, or do most girls still want you to pull out? If I pull out, is it okay to come on her, or does that happen only in porn?—D.T., Miami, Florida

Unless she says otherwise, it’s okay to come inside her. But you may want to continue to wear a condom or at least to withdraw. No method of birth control except abstinence is 100 percent effective. If she misses a pill, the odds of an unplanned pregnancy go up. You also risk STDs without a condom, especially since this is someone you don’t know well. She’ll be justifiably skeptical if you claim to prefer latex over her sugar walls, so just tell her, “I don’t want to be a dad yet.”

Itake exception to your dismissal in January/February of the pinkie ring’s fashion value. Many engineers wear stainless-steel or wrought-iron pinkie rings as part of a code called the Order of the Engineer (order-of-the-engineer.org).—B.F., Corpus Christi, Texas

So you retired the pocket protectors? We’re kidding, engineers. We love your bridges.

*All reasonable questions—from fashion, food and drink, stereos and sports cars to dating dilemmas, taste and etiquette—will be personally answered if the writer includes a self-addressed, stamped envelope. The most interesting, pertinent questions will be presented in these pages. Write the Playboy Advisor, 680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611, or send e-mail by visiting playboyadvisor.com. Our greatest-hits collection, *Dear Playboy Advisor*, is available in bookstores and online; listen to the Advisor each week on Sirius/XM 99.*



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PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: SARAH SILVERMAN

A candid conversation with the sexy shock comic about good Sarah versus bad Sarah, the breakup with Jimmy Kimmel and why directors think she's a bitch

Sarah Silverman, the eponymous star of *The Sarah Silverman Program*—now in its third season on Comedy Central—sometimes begins the show with a brief introduction to her life. Or rather, the life of her fictional doppelgänger, also named Sarah Silverman. “I’m just like you,” she once insisted. “I live in Valley Village, I don’t have a job, and my sister pays the rent!”

The joke, of course, is that she’s nothing like us. And not just for the reasons she offers. Silverman, or at least her on-screen counterpart, is xenophobic, arrogant, selfish and downright cruel. She has dabbled in bestiality, tried to sue the country of Mongolia for rape, given birth to a demon baby, had sex with God and walked into an African American church wearing blackface. In this past season alone she’s been a veritable blitzkrieg of poor taste, poking fun at everything from mental retardation to pedophilia to Auschwitz.

It’s comforting to think Silverman the comedian and Silverman the character have nothing in common but a name. But sometimes the line between the two can get a little blurry. Whether making a controversial joke about Asians on *Late Night With Conan O’Brien* in 2001 (the punch line was “I love Chinks”) or claiming in the 2005 documentary *The Aristocrats* that she was raped by talk-show host Joe Franklin—who responded to the mock charges by threatening Silverman with a lawsuit—she rarely winks at the audience to let us

know what’s real and what’s meant to be ironic.

Silverman—the real Silverman—grew up in Bedford, New Hampshire, the youngest of four sisters. Her parents, Donald and Beth Ann—a clothes retailer and a theater director, respectively—divorced when Sarah was six years old. She was, by all accounts, an unhappy child, having frequent panic attacks and sinking into full-on depression at 13. By 14 she was taking more than a dozen Xanax a day and struggling with a bed-wetting problem, which she documents in her new memoir, *The Bedwetter: Stories of Courage, Redemption and Pee*, to be published by HarperCollins in late April.

She started young as a stand-up, performing at nightclubs and restaurants in the Boston area when she was just in her teens. She dropped out of New York University after only a year and lasted just as long as a writer for *Saturday Night Live*. For the next decade she landed small roles in such TV shows as *The Larry Sanders Show*, *Seinfeld* and *Crank Yankers*, and movies such as *There’s Something About Mary* and *School of Rock*. It wasn’t until *Jesus Is Magic*, the 2005 concert film that combined Silverman’s stand-up act with short skits and songs—including controversial material about the Holocaust, AIDS and racism—that the world finally began to take notice of her.

But Silverman didn’t get her first taste of mainstream success until “I’m Fucking Matt

Damon,” a pseudo-confessional music video that premiered on the talk show of her then-boyfriend Jimmy Kimmel in 2008. It featured Silverman singing about her infidelity with Damon “on the bed, on the floor, on a towel by the door, in the tub, in the car, up against the minibar.” The video went viral, getting millions of hits on YouTube and becoming an Internet sensation.

We sent writer Eric Spitznagel, who has also interviewed Seth Rogen and Tina Fey for *PLAYBOY*, to meet with Silverman. He filed this report: “Silverman and I spent an afternoon in her West Hollywood apartment, lounging on the couch and smuggling with Duck, her 15-year-old Chihuahua-pug mix (he has a recurring role on *The Sarah Silverman Program* as Doug). She is exactly what you’d expect her to be and exactly the opposite. One minute she’ll describe how she and her comic friends enjoy saying the word raacaaaaape while belching. The next she’ll suddenly grow sentimental, talking about how much she believes in love. Spend enough time with her and you’ll realize the real Sarah Silverman exists somewhere in the middle—but you’re never really sure.”

PLAYBOY: Your new memoir, *The Bedwetter*, is an intimate portrait of your childhood battle with bed-wetting. Why write about something so personal?

SILVERMAN: I was so tortured about it



“When I was three years old my father taught me to how say ‘bitch,’ ‘bastard,’ ‘damn’ and ‘shit.’ Looking back on it now it’s pretty obvious why I do the sort of comedy I do. Is it such a surprise I’m a shock comedian today?”



“I love going to weddings. I’m not against marriage, but it’s just not for me. I’m a vegetarian, but I don’t have a problem if you want a hamburger. Marriage, to me, is like eating meat. I think it’s gross and fucking crazy.”



“You’re not going to believe this, but [my shrink] eventually had me taking four Xanax four times a day—16 Xanax a day, for a 14-year-old girl. She upped my dose every time. She should be in prison.”

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIZUNO

growing up. It was something I thought would always be the biggest secret of my life. When you're a kid that's how hopeless everything seems. But then I remember watching Johnny Carson one night, and the actress Jane Badler was a guest. She was one of the aliens in the original *V* miniseries in the early 1980s. She came out, and they talked about how she was a bed wetter as a kid. I couldn't believe it. For my little brain it was mind-blowing.

PLAYBOY: It never occurred to you that other people may wet their beds too?

SILVERMAN: Not somebody like her. She was a beauty queen and an actress. It meant the world to me that she could talk about it and not be embarrassed.

PLAYBOY: When did you realize you had a problem with bed-wetting?

SILVERMAN: When I realized my friends weren't wetting their beds. I remember going on a camping trip when I was 13 and hiding diapers in the bottom of my sleeping bag. Diapers! I slipped into them in my sleeping bag when everybody else was asleep.

PLAYBOY: How old were you when you finally stopped?

SILVERMAN: I was around 16. I think I just had to grow out of it. I didn't get my period until I was 17 and a half. So I think wetting the bed was just part of my adolescence. I went to hypnotherapy for a while, but it never worked.

PLAYBOY: Why not?

SILVERMAN: I wrote about it a lot in my diary. I just never felt I was hypnotized. I closed my eyes and tried to imagine all the things he was telling me. "You're in a meadow. You're in the forest." But it just felt stupid.

PLAYBOY: You wrote about this in your diary?

SILVERMAN: Yeah. My mom found it and sent it to me. She thought it might help me with the book.

PLAYBOY: Did anything in your diary surprise you?

SILVERMAN: I didn't realize how neurotic I was as a teenager. Every entry was like "Today I was depressed between 4:30 and 7:20, but I felt okay after that."

PLAYBOY: Has your mom read your diary?

SILVERMAN: She read it all. I think she loved it. It's all about her. It's weird. It's like I was obsessed with my mother. We were always fighting, and then I would miss her when she wasn't home.

PLAYBOY: Do you have a close relationship with your parents?

SILVERMAN: Oh yeah, definitely.

PLAYBOY: Are they fans of your comedy?

SILVERMAN: Absolutely. My father especially. All he cares about is having a hat or a T-shirt from some TV show that my sister Laura or I or Jimmy [Kimmel] was on. You know what he does? My step-mother keeps him from wearing all the swag we send him, because it's obnoxious, but sometimes he'll sneak it into the car and change when she isn't paying attention. Laura had a boyfriend who had the best joke. He said if Dad was ever a fugitive, he'd be easy to track down. The cops

would be like, "We're looking for a male, 70s, wearing a *Man Show* hat, *Crank Yankers* T-shirt, *Sarah Silverman Program* satchel, *Jesus Is Magic* water bottle."

PLAYBOY: Didn't your dad introduce you to dirty jokes?

SILVERMAN: He did, yeah. Whenever we went to restaurants, he'd take a napkin and...hold on. [*finds napkin and begins folding it*] Wait a minute. I can't believe I'm not remembering this. It's got to be like muscle memory.

PLAYBOY: Are you trying to make—

SILVERMAN: Tits? Were you going to say tits?

PLAYBOY: No. It looks like one of those origami fortune-teller things.

SILVERMAN: No, no, no. It's supposed to be tits. My dad would fold a napkin so it looked like tits. [*laughs*] He always did it at dinner. It's funny when you're a kid. I can't even remember it now. It's bothering me. Oh wait, hold on. [*tries again, finally creating something that vaguely resembles breasts*]

PLAYBOY: Is there a punch line that goes with it?

SILVERMAN: No, it's all visual. It's cerebral. It's like, "Hey, look, tits." When I was 12 my dad gave me these books, *Truly Tasteless Jokes* and *Truly Tasteless Jokes Two*. I

I do love poop. I can't help it. The heart wants what it wants. I enjoy being clever and pithy and political, but nothing's going to get me like dumb stuff.

remember reading them and thinking, I'm too young for this. They were *so* dirty.

PLAYBOY: Do you remember any of them?

SILVERMAN: I remember the very first joke. It was about Little Red Riding Hood. She's in the forest, and the wolf says to her, "I'm going to eat you," and Red Riding Hood says, "Eat, eat, eat. Doesn't anybody fuck anymore?" I don't know why I remember it. At the time I had no idea why it was funny, but I knew it was dirty because it had the word *fuck* in it.

PLAYBOY: Were you a funny kid?

SILVERMAN: I killed from a very early age. I was the youngest, so I was positioned to be the entertainer. I used to do impressions of all the characters on *General Hospital*, because that's what everybody in my family watched. And they would die. I remember—and it still happens—when I get a really big laugh, my arms itch. [*scratches arms*] I know that makes me sound like a crazy person.

PLAYBOY: You've claimed you started swearing as a child to please your father. Is that true?

SILVERMAN: It is. When I was three years old he taught me how to say "bitch," "bastard," "damn" and "shit." Looking back

on it now it's pretty obvious why I do the sort of comedy I do. As a kid I said swear words to adults, and they laughed wildly. Is it such a surprise I'm a shock comedian today? It makes total sense.

PLAYBOY: Do you consider what you do shock comedy?

SILVERMAN: Well, no, it's not that black-and-white. I don't write something and think, How can I be shocking?

PLAYBOY: Even though that's what people expect from you?

SILVERMAN: Yeah, but doing shock comedy, *real* shock comedy, is giving an audience what they *don't* expect. So I have to totally disregard their expectations.

PLAYBOY: Do you ever worry about how your jokes, especially the more controversial ones, could be misinterpreted?

SILVERMAN: I have no control over that. Once it's out there it's theirs to have. These jokes will be whatever they see in the context of their own lives.

PLAYBOY: So you don't care if people show up for your stand-up and think, I hope she does the one about the Chinks?

SILVERMAN: [*Groans*] Oh God, that's the worst. I had a boyfriend who called it mouth-full-of-blood laughs. It's when people are laughing at the wrong thing. One time the lead singer of a very popular band from the 1980s—I can't give you his name—came up to me after a show, and I swear to God, he goes, "You're my favorite comedian. You have the best nigger jokes." I was like, "I...I...didn't mean..." And he turns to his friends and says, "She's got the best nigger jokes!"

PLAYBOY: Would you give us a hint who it was?

SILVERMAN: I'll say just this: After that, I stopped believin'.

PLAYBOY: Are you still doing stand-up?

SILVERMAN: Not as much as I should be. I'm at a crossroads in terms of my act. Anything from *Jesus Is Magic* is done. I can't do anything from that movie anymore. I'm forcing myself to go out and do spots at comedy clubs when I'd rather be at the movies.

PLAYBOY: It's not as easy as it used to be?

SILVERMAN: It's a process. When you have an act that's polished and you're in the zone, you can't wait to get out there. But I'm in a place where I'm backstage going, "I have fucking *nothing*!" I just feel like a loser. But I've also realized I can't go out and keep doing the same fake racist metajokes anymore. Otherwise 30 years will go by and I'll be the guy onstage going [*imitates Andrew Dice Clay*], "Hickory dickory dock!"

PLAYBOY: You're thinking about a complete image overhaul?

SILVERMAN: It's scary to try something new. I just have to get out there and be willing to bomb and let people blog about how much I suck and not care. I have to remember not to apologize for myself.

PLAYBOY: You sound almost emotionally mature.

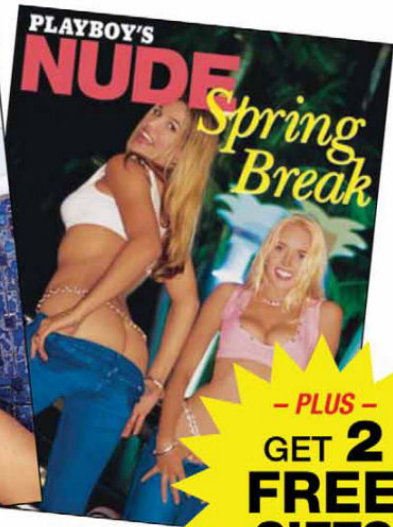
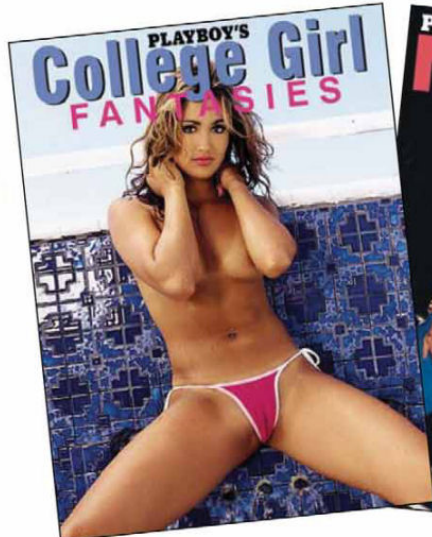
SILVERMAN: [*Laughs*] It's really kind of disgusting. Have I become New Age-y? Should I be out here with crystals?



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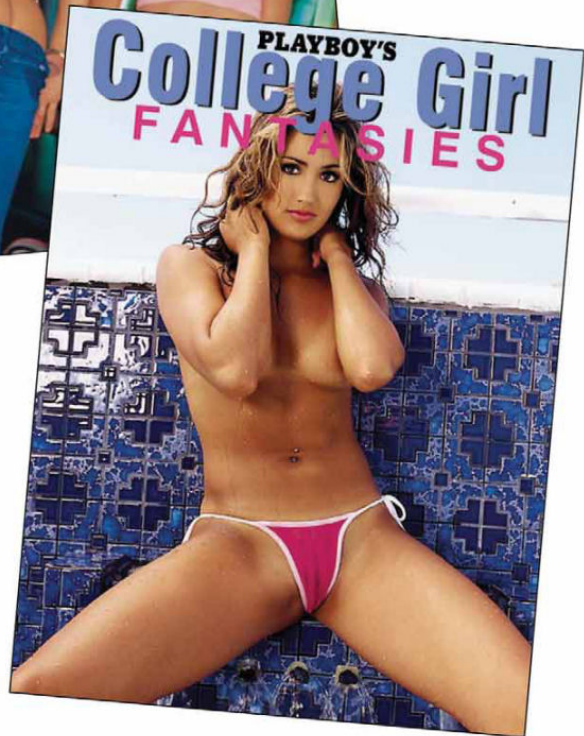
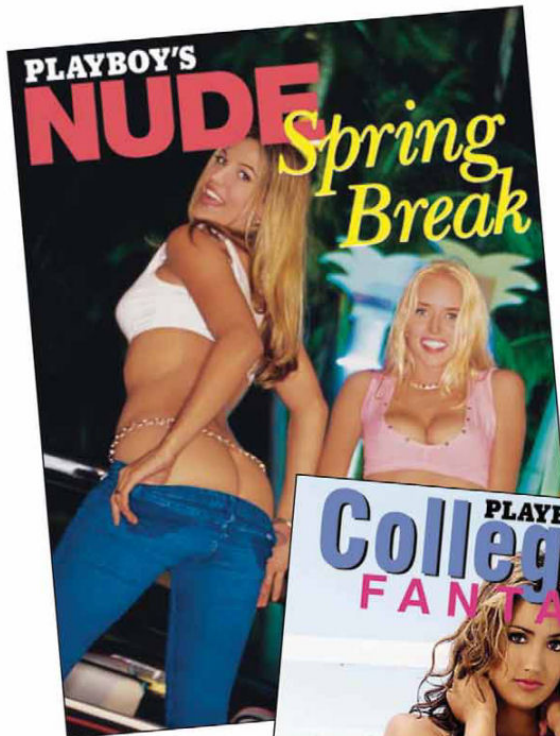
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That's What She Said

Sarah Silverman is pretty, witty, rich and entertainingly crass

I was raped by a doctor...which is so bitter-sweet for a Jewish girl.

I honestly can't remember the politically correct word for *Asian*. Is it *little people*?

My sister found out that the village in Russia my great-great-great-grandmother came from was raped and pillaged—I don't even know what pillaged means, but it was definitely raped by Mongolians. I, therefore, am part Mongolian rapist.

Jesus had a beard. Her name was Mary.

They put my name in all the papers, calling me a racist. And it hurt, ya know? As a Jew, you know, as a member of the Jewish community, I was really concerned that we were losing control of the media.

I dated a guy who was half black, but he totally dumped me because I'm such a loser. Wow! I just heard myself say that. I am such a pessimist.... He's actually half white.

I changed a baby's diaper today, and she had a totally shaved vagina. What a country!

Gay or bisexual, it doesn't matter, because at the end of the day, they're both gross.

I keep confusing 9/11 and 7-Eleven. Gotta stop going to ground zero for Nerds Rope.

Balls are like men's personal little Dorian Grays. What I'm trying to say, folks, is they're wrinkly.

Guess what, Martin Luther King, I had a fucking dream too. I had a dream that I was in my living room, and I walked through to the backyard pool, and as I'm diving in, there's a shark coming up from the water...with braces! So maybe you're not so fucking special.

People who say they're divas: You're not a diva. I'm pretty sure you're a cunt.

I love how Palestinians and Jews hate each other. It's so cute. Honestly, what's the difference? They're brown. They have an odor. It's like sweet potatoes hating yams.

It sounds like a crude joke to say I exploded from my father's balls and out his penis hole, but it's true. Amazing to think I was so thin.

People compare me to Lenny Bruce, and it's flattering. But really the only thing that's similar is the heroin and strippers.

PLAYBOY: You went through pretty severe depression as a teenager.

SILVERMAN: I did. I remember when it first happened. I came back from this camping trip, the one where I hid diapers in my sleeping bag, and it just washed over me like a cloud. It was like a cloud covering the sun. I remember the horror story I told myself over and over again: I'm totally alone in my body. Nobody will ever see through my eyes. I'm just completely *alone*.

PLAYBOY: Is that when you started going to therapy?

SILVERMAN: Yeah. My therapist wrote me a prescription for Xanax and told me whenever I felt sad I should take one. I returned the following week and was in the waiting room. It was this Victorian house in New Hampshire, the same place I had gone to see a hypnotist for bed-wetting. It was four P.M. in the middle of a snowstorm, and it was just pitch-black outside. My mom dropped me off, and I was waiting and waiting and waiting. I remember I read an entire *People* magazine, and I thought, What's going on? Then Dr. Graham, the hypnotist, came down, and his eyes were all red and teary. And he was like—I'll use a different name—"Dr. Riley hung himself!"

PLAYBOY: How old were you?

SILVERMAN: Thirteen. My fucking shrink hung himself at my second appointment!

PLAYBOY: That's horrible. How did you make sense of what happened?

SILVERMAN: I have no idea. I remember he had braces. And I was thinking, Wow, he didn't even wait to get his braces off. Braces are a sign of hope. You know what

I mean? Braces mean that someday you're gonna have new teeth. Braces are a symbol that tomorrow will be better.

PLAYBOY: Did you continue going to therapy after that?

SILVERMAN: My parents found this registered nurse in Andover, which is just outside of Boston, who they'd take me to before school. It was an hour away, so I'd have to get up at six in the morning. She would talk to me, and then her husband, who was a doctor, would write prescriptions for me. She just upped my dose every time. You're not going to believe this, but she eventually had me taking four Xanax four times a day—16 Xanax a day, for a 14-year-old girl. She should be in prison.

PLAYBOY: Did you at least feel better?

SILVERMAN: I just felt like a zombie. Finally, somehow, I went to this Mexican psychiatrist in Manchester. I think he was the only Mexican in New Hampshire. His name was Dr. Santiago. I don't know where he came from, but he literally saved my life. He found out I was on this medication, and he couldn't believe it. He brought my mother in and said, "This is a life-and-death situation. You can't just go off of this. You have to go half a pill less a week until you're at zero." So it took like six months. I remember that last half a pill so clearly. It was my sophomore year in high school, and I was at the bubbler in the hallway of my high school. I was myself again. It was just like that. The cloud lifted, and I was my old silly self again.

PLAYBOY: Do you ever worry the cloud will come back?

SILVERMAN: It came back six years later, when I was 22. I started taking Klonopin intermittently, which blocked the panic attacks, and I was able to work. A few years later I started taking Zoloft. I've been on it ever since. I've taken half a Zoloft every day since 1994.

PLAYBOY: At 22 you were writing for *Saturday Night Live*. Do you think the stress of writing for that show had anything to do with your depression returning?

SILVERMAN: I'm sure it was psychological, but it felt mostly chemical. It just came on all in one moment. You know how you get the flu in a second, where you just go, "Fuck, I have the flu!" It's that fast. I recognized the feeling right away, and it sent me into a huge panic attack.

PLAYBOY: Were you surprised when *Saturday Night Live* fired you after just one year?

SILVERMAN: I was. I didn't get anything on the show in my first year, but it never occurred to me I wouldn't be asked back. All the way up to August I was writing sketches, making plans. My manager and agent called me together from Los Angeles, and when they told me I'd been fired, I didn't believe it. I was like, "Awww, come on, guys! That's not funny!" I thought they were kidding. I was devastated, and I thought I'd never work again.

PLAYBOY: But you continued to do stand-up?

SILVERMAN: I did, but I wasn't sure I could still call myself a comedian. I had a full year of just "What the fuck am I doing with my life?"

PLAYBOY: Do you feel as though being a comedian is in your DNA?

SILVERMAN: I do. I'm lucky. I've always known. My mom found something I had filled out in third grade. It was a workbook or something, and on one of the pages it said, "When I grow up, I want to be..." and I had written, "an actress, a comedian or a masseuse."

PLAYBOY: You seriously wanted to be a masseuse?

SILVERMAN: That was because of my family. They would get me to rub their backs by saying, "You're so good at this! Your hands are so strong!" So I'd massage everybody, just to practice. It's kind of genius how they manipulated me.

PLAYBOY: Who was your first big comedy inspiration?

SILVERMAN: I loved Steve Martin. I didn't just love him, I was *in* love with him. On the ceiling in my bedroom where I grew up, where my mom still lives, I wrote "I love Steve Martin" in pencil. It's still there.

PLAYBOY: Did you want to be with him, or did you want to be him?

SILVERMAN: Probably a little of both. I can remember reading a magazine article about him; I can still picture everything about it. He's from Waco, Texas, and he does magic, and he loves some artist named David Hockney, so I convinced my mom to get me a calendar of David Hockney photographs from a museum. All of a sudden I loved David Hockney, who is an artist I had no reason to relate to at all. I had never been to California or the West Coast, but my walls were covered with all these images of gay men in swimming pools. I loved it because I knew *he* loved it.

PLAYBOY: What was it about his comedy that appealed to you?

SILVERMAN: I don't know. Maybe it was the mixture of silliness without mindlessness. But I assure you I couldn't have articulated that when I was a teenager. I just loved him because he was funny and beautiful.

PLAYBOY: *Silly* is definitely a word that could be used to describe your sense of humor.

SILVERMAN: Oh yeah, absolutely.

PLAYBOY: Another word is *scatological*.

SILVERMAN: [*Smiles hugely*] I do love poop. I can't help it. The heart wants what it wants. I enjoy being clever and pithy and political, but nothing's going to get me like dumb stuff. It's not *exclusively* poop jokes, and I won't laugh at *all* poop jokes. It has to be something special.

PLAYBOY: Can you give us an example of a really special shit joke?

SILVERMAN: When we were working on the show, we noticed [*Sarah Silverman Program* co-creator] Rob Schrab would always get cranky toward the end of the day. We found out it was because he had to take a shit and needed to do it in the privacy of his home. Then we moved into office space, and one office had a private bathroom, so we gave it to Rob. Comedy writers can be so lazy, but when they're motivated by something, they can do amazing things. The writers Chris Romano and Eric Falconer came in extra early the first morning and took a huge shit in Rob's toilet, and then Chris put a

toothpick with a homemade flag in the shit and wrote on the flag, "I know what you did last summer." [*laughs to the point of tears*] It's just so absurd and stupid. Why would you put "I know what you did last summer" on the flag? What does that horror movie from eight years ago have to do with their shit?

PLAYBOY: The work environment for your writing staff sounds like a fraternity party.

SILVERMAN: It can be, yeah. But [*head writer and executive producer*] Dan Sterling keeps us pretty focused. He made a rule that nobody can take out his dick until five o'clock.

PLAYBOY: Your writers have to be told not to expose themselves?

SILVERMAN: They do, because otherwise it would happen all the time. And the guys interpreted Dan's rule as "Take your dick out at five." It would be like [*glances at watch*], "Forty-five more minutes."

PLAYBOY: What's the context in which somebody might take out his penis?

SILVERMAN: Oh, there are so many! Chris started it. He takes his dick out all the time. And then Harris Wittels, the young one who is normally a very shy and nervous guy, started taking his dick out. It

*I grew up with no Jews
except for my family. I think
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okay, sex is good. There isn't
a stigma attached to it.*

usually happens when we're stuck on an outline or something. One of them will just stand up and pull down his pants and underwear and sit back down. It gets us out of the moment. It's a safe room, where you can just do anything. One time Chris came out of the bathroom and his dick was sticking through a napkin, out of his fly. I told him, "Chris, it isn't five yet!" And he said, "I can't help it. My dick just ate lobster." [*laughs*] I know these are not clever jokes, but I love them.

PLAYBOY: Did you grow up in a sexually open family?

SILVERMAN: Yeah, we were very open. I grew up with no Jews except for my family, but I think there's something about Jewish culture that says sex is okay, sex is good. There isn't a stigma attached to it. They really didn't shield me from anything. I became sexualized at an early age, although I didn't have sex until I was 19.

PLAYBOY: You were a late bloomer?

SILVERMAN: Not by choice. I went through puberty when I moved to New York. I remember my first stand-up act when I was 17. I did a really lame song about being flat-chested. I was doing it in New York,

and Kevin Brennan, the guy I lost my virginity to, was like, "That song doesn't make sense. You have tits."

PLAYBOY: Wasn't the song called "Mammaries"?

SILVERMAN: [*Long pause*] How could you possibly know that?

PLAYBOY: We have our sources.

SILVERMAN: Have you been reading my diary? I'm so embarrassed.

PLAYBOY: Do you remember any of the lyrics?

SILVERMAN: All I remember is [*sings*] "Mammaries are the goyims that I need." It was so fucking stupid.

PLAYBOY: It's not always clear if you expect an audience to laugh with you or at you. Is that by design?

SILVERMAN: I think it is. I like the ambiguity. I used to love experimenting with that idea. I was doing a set at the Largo [*a nightclub in Los Angeles*] one time. I wore these pale tan khaki pants and painted period blood down the crotch. I wore it onstage and never mentioned it. But I knew the audience could see it, and they just assumed I had leaked period blood. I did six minutes of jokes without mentioning it and acted as though I had command of the room. It was interesting to watch the audience, because so many of them were dying for me. They wanted to laugh at me, but they weren't able to hear anything I was saying. The blood stain was so distracting to them. Then at the end I pretended to notice it for the first time, and I was like, "Oh my God, you guys must think this is period blood. Of course you do. No, no, I just had anal sex for the first time."

PLAYBOY: Who's the fall guy in that joke? Is it you? Is it the audience for being embarrassed for you?

SILVERMAN: I don't know. Who cares? If it's funny, it's funny. We don't need to dissect it and ruin it, do we?

PLAYBOY: Do people sometimes assume they know you because of what they see on your show and in the movies?

SILVERMAN: All the time. One of the few guys I've dated since Jimmy, it was weird how much he thought he knew me. He was like, "Well, I know you don't believe in God, but I *blah blah blah*..." And I was just like [*shocked expression*], "What kind of person do you think I am? And if it's true, why would you be with me?" It's just.... [*laughs*] Oh, who cares? Nobody needs to know me. It doesn't matter to know me.

PLAYBOY: There is a great line in *Jesus Is Magic*: "I don't care if you think I'm racist. I just want you to think I'm thin." Was that the character talking, or was that you?

SILVERMAN: It did come from a very real place. Sadly.

PLAYBOY: You were responding to the controversy surrounding your "I love Chinks" joke on *Late Night With Conan O'Brien*. Were you surprised it caused so much outrage?

SILVERMAN: I was, yeah. I knew they weren't crazy about the joke at *Late Night*, but I didn't think it would turn into a media shit storm.

PLAYBOY: So the producers at *Late Night* knew about the joke in advance?

SILVERMAN: Oh yeah, you have to go over all your material beforehand. Originally the joke had the word *nigger* in it. The segment producer said that wouldn't work and suggested using *dirty Jew* instead. But it wasn't as hard because I'm Jewish, and that makes it okay. So then I suggested *Chink*, because it's got that hard *k*, and it's really racist. It had to be something hard. And the producer said, "No, but you can say 'spic.'" And I was like, "I can't say 'Chink,' but I can say 'spic?'" I decided to go with *Chink*, because it sounds funnier to me. It's a joke about saying the worst, most racist word you can think of.

PLAYBOY: When did you find out a backlash was coming?

SILVERMAN: I woke up the next day and had a message from my mother. "They're talking about you on *The View* and how you were on Conan and said 'Chink.' They showed a picture of you, and you looked gorgeous. You should wear earrings. Earrings always frame the face." And I was like, "Wait, *what* happened?"

PLAYBOY: When Guy Aoki, the president of a media watchdog group, accused you of racism, did you hope the controversy would just go away eventually, or did you try to put out the fire?

SILVERMAN: I immediately wrote this long, thoughtful letter to Aoki, thinking we could actually have an open conversation. But he was too jazzed about having a fight with me. I made the mistake of going on *Politically Incorrect* with him. He had 60 people in the audience who hated me, just *haaaaated* me. And they made me repeat the joke. I was like, "Please just replay the clip. If you have me repeat the joke it won't be funny, and I'm doing it to 60 people who hate me." They made me repeat it, and of course it got boos. Jokes need context.

PLAYBOY: Have you ever apologized for a joke?

SILVERMAN: I've apologized to people in person but never as a public thing. I don't really make jokes about specific people. Kathy Griffin does that brilliantly, but it's not something I do. I'm usually the idiot in my jokes. Unless it's a roast, and then it's brutal but done with love.

PLAYBOY: So why do you think you have a reputation for doing comedy that's antagonistic?

SILVERMAN: I don't know, but I hear that all the time. I've always wondered, Where is the evidence? I mean, other than all those movies in which I play the cunty girlfriend or the cunty roommate or the cunty best friend.

PLAYBOY: Do you feel as though you've been unfairly typecast?

SILVERMAN: I've certainly done enough of those types of roles. I'm the girlfriend in a comedy who is mortified by her boyfriend's hilarious behavior. "You need to get a job and straighten up your life!" I'm done with that. I don't want to be the glue for bad writing anymore. My spirit can't take it.

PLAYBOY: Have you tried to go after movie roles you really wanted?

SILVERMAN: I met with Ivan Reitman [director of *Stripes* and *Ghostbusters*] about a movie that ended up not getting made, but it was really good. It had a beautiful female part, this hippie free-spirited woman, that I really wanted to do. But he wanted me for the cunty girlfriend the main character dates before he realizes what love can really be. And I told him, "I can't play those parts anymore; they're killing my soul. But I love the hippie lady." And he goes, "Sarah, people will never see you that way. They will always see you in the bitchy role." I was stunned. I think I cried a little. But I look back on it now, and I just don't agree with it. I was the cunty girlfriend in *School of Rock*, and now that's all anyone will accept me as? Surely people have bigger imaginations than that.

PLAYBOY: You turn 40 this year. Are you ready?

SILVERMAN: [Rolls eyes] Oh yeah, I can't wait! Thirty-nine was the first birthday I didn't even want to get out of bed. It isn't fun anymore. I know I need to change my perspective, but it's hard. I feel so confident and awesome and sexy when I'm with people who are older than me, and I've always been surrounded by people who are older than me. But to be vital in comedy you have to exist in a world dominated by young people.

PLAYBOY: Don't you like being an elder stateswoman of comedy?

SILVERMAN: Not at all. It's weird. I've never been single and had people—strangers, really—know who I am. It'd probably be awesome if I was a dude.

PLAYBOY: Do you ever date noncomedians?

SILVERMAN: Rarely. I'm cursed with being attracted to funny people, and that limits it to fucking freaks like me.

PLAYBOY: Isn't that a good thing?

SILVERMAN: It's a great thing. But it's hard to date other comics, because I know everybody. Lately I've found myself drawn to really, really white Midwestern guys. It's so exotic to me. I've dated Jewish men, but something about them makes me feel as though I'm sleeping with my brother. I want somebody different from me. The last couple of people I've been drawn to at all are farmer-boy types. Actually, no, not boys, *men*. I like to be the young one, and I like to be the small one.

PLAYBOY: Is that how you'd describe your current boyfriend, *Family Guy* writer Alec Sulkin? Is he a white Midwestern farmer type?

SILVERMAN: Hilariously, not at all. Isn't that always the way? He's a tall skinny Jew.

PLAYBOY: How did you two start dating?

SILVERMAN: I had known him, barely, over the years. He was a writer at *The Late Late Show With Craig Kilborn*, and I remembered him from when I would do that show. Then I started following him on Twitter—get ready, this is a very modern story—and he was so funny. I saw that he followed me, too, which allows you to send messages directly. So I wrote him a note that said, "You're funny."



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PLAYBOY: Which in the comedy world is akin to flirting, right?

SILVERMAN: Maybe. We sent messages back and forth pretty much constantly, then exchanged e-mail addresses and wrote each other steadily for several days. When we finally met, he came over to my place, walked in the door, put out his hand and said, "Hi, I'm Alec." We've spent every day together since.

PLAYBOY: He doesn't feel he's in Jimmy Kimmel's shadow?

SILVERMAN: He does not care at all. He was the one who told me to watch Jimmy's "10 at 10" on *Leno* the day after he did that. He isn't ruled by ego; he's just himself.

PLAYBOY: Were you reluctant to go public about this relationship, if only because of what happened with you and Jimmy?

SILVERMAN: What happened with me and Jimmy?

PLAYBOY: Your breakup became national news.

SILVERMAN: Eh, I don't let myself get too caught up in the outside world or what strangers make of me. It doesn't make sense to. I mean, it's all superweird, but I figure I might as well answer your questions about it rather than act as though it's some big secret or mystery. He's a great guy. Swell, even. Really swell. Plus his mother will eat this shit up.

PLAYBOY: We should probably talk about Jimmy.

SILVERMAN: Do we have to? Nobody wants to hear about that.

PLAYBOY: Quite the opposite. People seem to have a lot wrapped up in your former relationship with him.

SILVERMAN: And my desire to please makes me wish I could say we're still together. When we first broke up and then got back together, we were walking down a street in New York and somebody ran over and said, "You're back together? Hooray!" It was so sweet. But you can't stay together because people who don't know you want you to be together.

PLAYBOY: So you're telling us it's totally over?

SILVERMAN: [Long pause] We were together for so long and tried our best to make it work. I can think of him now and I don't have that edgy feeling anymore. I just love him to pieces.

PLAYBOY: Didn't you meet Jimmy at the Friars Club roast for Hugh Hefner?

SILVERMAN: That's right. I totally forgot about that. [laughs] **PLAYBOY** is the reason I spent the past six-plus years of my life with Jimmy Kimmel.

PLAYBOY: Was it love at first sight?

SILVERMAN: He was married, so I met him and his wife that night. But I was totally impressed. I thought he was so great. He had a show called *Crank Yankers*, and he hired me for it. I remember in the beginning we kept going for the same joke. His brother Jonathan was producing *Crank Yankers*, and for some reason we were looking on the Internet for public-domain songs about a certain topic. Jonathan

said, "There are 3,000 results," and both Jimmy and I said at the same time, "Just give me the first thousand."

PLAYBOY: Before you started officially dating, didn't you and Jimmy watch a lot of movies together?

SILVERMAN: Yeah. This was after he separated from his wife. We were just friends, and he'd come over and we'd watch DVDs together. I can still remember our first kiss. We were watching *Broadway Danny Rose*. We were like nose-to-nose for what felt like 40 minutes. Neither of us wanted to make the first move, we were so scared. And then we just started kissing and making out and fooling around. It got all hot and heavy, and I was like, "Do you want to go to the bedroom?" And he's like [softly], "Okay." I walked down the hallway and into my bedroom, and I turn around and he's standing in the doorway, totally naked.

PLAYBOY: He stripped down in a matter of seconds?

SILVERMAN: I don't know how he got his clothes off in that amount of time. I'd never seen him naked before, so it was a little bit shocking. I was like [gasps], "Oh!" And he goes, "Well, we're definitely going

Sometimes loving each other isn't enough. You have to be responsible for your own happiness. You can't stay in a relationship because you're afraid of the unknown.

to do it, right?" [laughs] And I remember we had bonded over loving the same movie nobody else has ever seen, called *The One and Only*, and he quoted a line from it as he left. He was driving away, and he yelled to my window, "Don't worry about me. I keep my mouth shut!"

PLAYBOY: Why do you think the relationship didn't last?

SILVERMAN: [Long pause] Sometimes loving each other isn't enough. You have to be responsible for your own happiness. You can't stay in a relationship because you're afraid of the unknown. But I will always love him. Sometimes I think maybe we'll die together in our old age or something.

PLAYBOY: Are you one of those couples that made a pact to get married if the two of you are still single when you're 50?

SILVERMAN: [Scrunches nose] No, I'm not going to do that.

PLAYBOY: You have no interest in marriage?

SILVERMAN: I love going to weddings, and I love it when my friends get married. I'm not against marriage, but it's just not for me. I'm a vegetarian, but I don't have a problem if you want a hamburger. Marriage, to me, is like eating meat. I think it's gross

and fucking crazy. It's this superbarbaric, old-timey tradition that no one remembers we don't have to do anymore. First of all, why get the government involved in your love? And why would I become involved with something that doesn't include everyone? If you're getting married today, it's the equivalent of joining a country club that doesn't allow blacks or Jews.

PLAYBOY: What happens if gay marriage becomes legal? Would you reconsider marriage?

SILVERMAN: No, probably not. [laughs]

PLAYBOY: You just don't think love should be legally binding?

SILVERMAN: I don't. But I believe in love! I'd like to find that person. I think Jimmy and I had every intention of spending the rest of our lives with each other. I love love. It's my top priority. Jimmy will tell you. I'm a good girl.

PLAYBOY: You have a sentimental side?

SILVERMAN: I'm *all* sentimental side. I've probably been ruined by romantic movies, but I really do believe in love. I've experienced it, I've had it, so I know it's real.

PLAYBOY: You're talking about your fling with Matt Damon, right?

SILVERMAN: No. That was just about the sex.

PLAYBOY: The "I'm Fucking Matt Damon" video was such a monster hit for you. How did it originate?

SILVERMAN: It was supposed to be a surprise for Jimmy's birthday. Jimmy ends all his shows by saying "Sorry, Matt Damon, we ran out of time." Because when he started doing his show, his first guest would literally be the man with the longest leg hair, so he thought it'd be funny to name-drop the biggest movie star he could think of. And Matt Damon loved it. The first time he came on the show he told Jimmy, "I'll come on, but I don't want you to stop doing that bit." So Jimmy's cousin Sal, a writer named Tony Barbieri and I came up with the "I'm Fucking Matt Damon" idea for Jimmy's birthday. We went to Miami, where Matt Damon lives, and spent three hours shooting at the Delano Hotel. We just shot and shot and shot. It all happened that quickly.

PLAYBOY: Did Jimmy have any idea what you were doing?

SILVERMAN: He knew I was in Florida, but he thought it was for a stand-up tour. Even though I knew it was for his sake, I felt riddled with guilt. I hated lying to him. And then his birthday show never happened because of the writers' strike, and the video was on the shelf for months. Jimmy ended up doing his show's fifth anniversary just as the strike was coming to an end, and I was like, "Fuck this. I've been walking on eggshells for too long. I'm gonna show it to him tonight."

PLAYBOY: And you managed to keep it a secret until the video had its world premiere?

SILVERMAN: I don't know how, but I did. Before the show we were in his dressing room, both brushing our teeth, and he was like, "I'm so excited. Everybody says

(concluded on page 104)

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“I KNOW MY FATHER LOVED ME, BUT I GOT TO QUESTION HOW MUCH, TO PUT ME WITH ALL THESE WOLVES. THIS IS THE WORLD YOU PUT YOUR KID IN? SO MUCH TREACHERY. MY FATHER COULDN’T HAVE LOVED ME TO PUSH ME INTO THIS LIFE.”

—JOHN GOTTI JR.

GOOD FATHER

AND SON



IT WASN'T EASY GROWING UP THE SON OF THE MOST HIGH-PROFILE MAFIA DON OF ALL TIME. WHAT COMES FIRST, FAMILY OR THE FAMILY? THE EXCLUSIVE STORY OF JOHN GOTTI, JUNIOR GOTTI AND THE DEATH OF THE MOB

BY RICHARD STRATTON

To a gangster-adoring public he was known as the Dapper Don for his elegant wardrobe. To the media piranhas who feasted on his celebrity persona, he was the Teflon Don for his apparent invincibility to government prosecution. To associates in the Gambino crime family he was the boss. But to John Jr., his firstborn son and namesake, John Gotti Sr. was simply Dad.

"You look good to me, Dad," Gotti Jr. says to his father, who sits across a table in a meeting room at the U.S. Medical Center for Federal Prisoners in Springfield, Missouri.

It is February 5, 1999. John Gotti Sr. has recently been transferred from the super-maximum-security penitentiary

in Marion, Illinois—where he had been held in 23-hour-a-day lockdown for the previous six and a half years—to Springfield, where he underwent surgery to remove malignant tumors from his throat, mouth and face.

"You look much better than I expected you to look, I'll be honest with you," John Jr. says, wiping tears from his eyes. "What are you, about 175 pounds?"

"Me, no." Gotti leans back in his chair, pats his taut belly with both hands. "One sixty-five."

"You look bigger than that to me, Dad."

Gotti rips open his pale green prison jumpsuit and shows his

son the huge scar where doctors removed a chunk of flesh from his chest and grafted it onto his face—that famous face now a ghostly, hollow-eyed distortion of the defiant gangster mug that once graced the cover of *Time* magazine in an original Andy Warhol rendering.

John Jr. is shaken by the sight. "What? I don't understand it. Why?"

"That's what cancer does to you, John," his father answers.

John Gotti Jr., 34 years old at the time, was granted special permission from a federal judge to travel to the medical facility to see his father and ask his permission to plead guilty to federal racketeering charges. The indictment alleged that



Top left: Gambino boss John Gotti (in doorway) follows his underboss Salvatore "Sammy the Bull" Gravano out of the Ravenite Social Club in Little Italy in 1990. The crew is celebrating the Teflon Don's acquittal in an assault and racketeering case. Inset: Gotti Sr.'s mug shot from 1968 (the FBI arrested him for truck hijackings at JFK airport) and John Gotti Jr.'s mug shot from 1983 (arrested for petty criminal activity). Above right: Gotti Jr. (in black shorts) photographed in 1994 with friends in the Howard Beach neighborhood of Queens, New York. Right: The house in Howard Beach where Senior lived for many years.



Gotti Jr. had been named acting boss of the Gambino crime family by his imprisoned father.

One does not need to hear the dialogue to understand the dynamic between these two men: a dying father and his beleaguered son. It is apparent in the body language. Junior leans across the table like a supplicant. Or he sits back with his hand to his cheek like an inquiring acolyte. And he is burdened by the request he must ask of his father. To John Gotti Sr., what his son has come to ask of him is unthinkable.

Never plead guilty. Never admit anything. That is La Cosa Nostra code of *omertà*—silence—that John Gotti Sr. lived by.

John Jr. is there to ask his father's permission to rewrite the rules. And, in essence, to quit the Mafia.

"Joseph [Joseph Corozzo Jr., a family attorney] told me, 'John wants closure,'" Gotti Sr. says, sneering. "Closure? I said, 'Joseph, that word ain't in my son's vocabulary.' That's a word for over-educated underintelligent motherfuckers."

Junior has his answer. But just in case his son hasn't understood, the don goes on. "If they accuse me of robbing a church, and the steeple is sticking out of my ass, I'm gonna deny it, John," Senior admonishes. "Not because I'm a fuckin' tougher guy than you or anybody else. But because without rats and without guys taking pleas, these jails would be empty."

The godfather advises his son that if he fights the case and

beats the charges, that will be the end of it. The government can never again come after him for the same crimes. But if he pleads guilty and admits to racketeering, admits to being a member of La Cosa Nostra—an unforgivable breach of the code—they will hound him for the rest of his life.

"I'm telling you that as your father, not as your boss. My dignity, my pride means everything to me. Maybe I'm wrong, but that's the way I am."

There are other, more ominous concerns. Junior must also consider possible repercussions from the underworld. For Junior to plead guilty and go to prison will result in chaos.

This is advice from an expert. Gotti Sr. had defeated prosecutors at three separate trials between 1986 and 1990 before being convicted in 1992 and sentenced to life in prison with no possibility of parole. Only later was it revealed that Gotti's Teflon had come at a price: \$60,000 to bribe a juror in one case and a few threats to intimidate witnesses in another.

Gotti Sr. held himself as the embattled leader of a noble clan, a general at war with the formidable forces of the United States government as well as rival gangsters. In the visit with his son he refers to their 400 cousins and uncles and other "relatives" who would be affected by Junior's coping a plea—a cryptic reference to the Gambino crime family.

"If they want to know my feelings, John, you tell them, 'This is what my father (continued on page 94)



Gotti Jr. visits his father at a Missouri federal prison hospital in 1999. The son has come to ask permission to quit the Mafia and plead guilty to racketeering charges. It's the last time the two men will see each other.



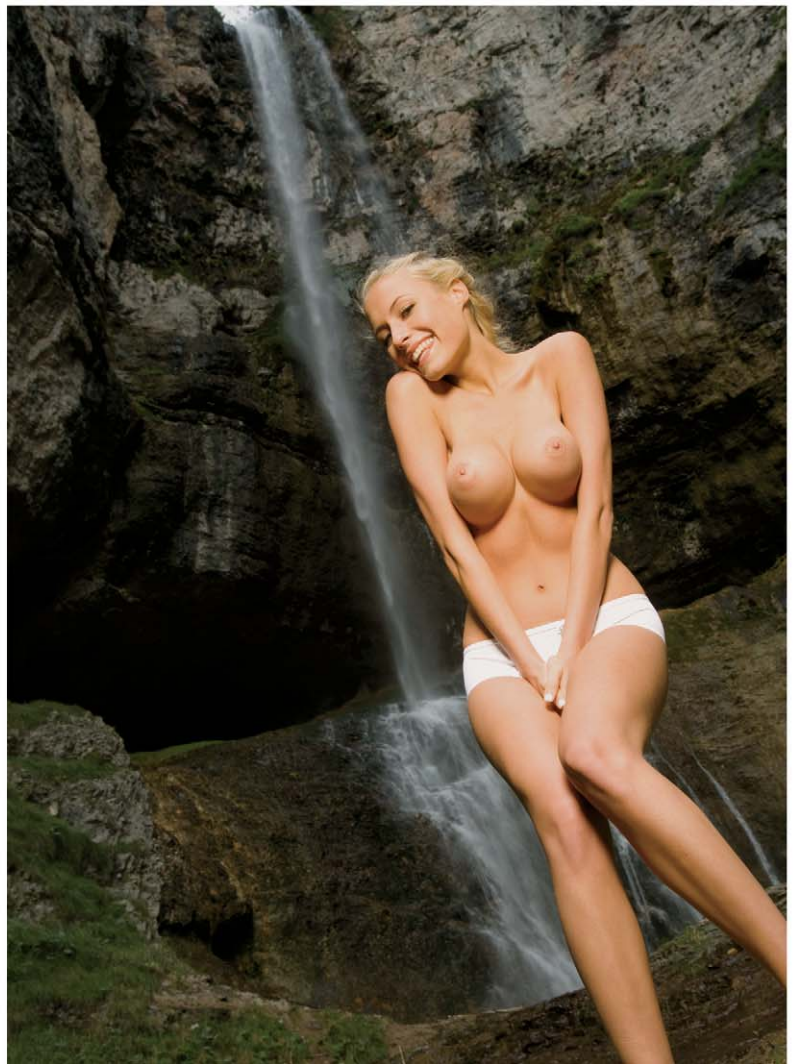
"Well, I can either write them off as an expense or claim an investment tax credit."

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FINE GERMAN ENGINEERING

In August 1972 we launched our first foreign edition with the premiere of German PLAYBOY. Why Germany? These are the people, after all, who make BMWs and Porsches and whose greatest celebration is devoted to the consumption of Bavarian beer. The eight stunners you see here represent our favorite German Playmates from the past two years. Whittling the list down to eight was a daunting task; we were tempted to declare a 24-way tie. The girls of the German edition are simply that *wunderbar*. In fact, three German Playmates have recently crossed the pond to become American Playmates, making *Deutschland* one of the few Playmate-exporting nations. Pour yourself a cold Optimator, sauté some *Jägerschnitzel* and enjoy these *fantastische* fräuleins. And those summer vacation plans you've been pondering? Ponder no further—you've just landed in Germany.





ALENA GERBER German PLAYBOY's Miss October 2008 was born in 1989 near Stuttgart just before the Berlin Wall fell. If she had a time machine, she says, she'd turn back the clock so she could meet fellow blonde and über-sex symbol Marilyn Monroe.







 **PEGGY WEISS** (left and above) Miss June 2008 was working for an insurance company when she became a Playmate. She says she likes a good massage.

 **MIRIAM SCHWARZ** (below) Miss December 2008 munched grapes for her Playmate shoot and laid her lithe frame over some wine casks. Makes us want to pop a cork.





LUCIA SITAVANCOVA Miss November 2008 is a Düsseldorf doozy with dreams of returning to her native Slovakia and opening a shop. We expect brisk sales.





SANDRA LATKO (above) Miss September 2009 counts Nutella, fast cars and "meinen Po" (her own ass) among her favorite things.

JENNIFER HENSCHEL (right) Miss January 2009 was born in a little town outside Dresden, but she shot her pictorial in her favorite city, Paris.

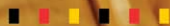
IZABELA KUCZERA (below) Miss August 2009 hails from chilly Upper Silesia (that's Poland). She's a boxer. Care to spar a few rounds?



See more girls of Germany at club.playboy.com.



DOREEN SEIDEL The German Playmate of the Year 2008 was born in Karl-Marx-Stadt. No joke. (The city is currently called Chemnitz.) Doreen says she's happiest when riding her motorbike on the open road—fast.







FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 40 YEARS, THE MEDICAL COMMUNITY IS USING PSYCHEDELIC DRUGS SUCH AS LSD AS THERAPEUTIC TOOLS, DOSING COMBAT-ADDLED IRAQ VETS AND DISEASED PATIENTS COMING TO GRIPS WITH THEIR IMPENDING DEATH. THIS IS THE STORY OF MEDICAL ADVENTURERS AND THEIR HIGH-FLYING PATIENTS

BY STEVEN KOTLER



THE NEW
PSYCHEDELIC
 RENAISSANCE



The room where they wait is a long rectangle. The floor is covered in thick green carpeting, so everyone calls it the “green room.” One wall of the green room is covered in books, the other three in paintings. In the center of the high ceiling is an old floral medallion—once the anchor point for a massive Victorian chandelier. When Mara Howell lies in bed she looks straight up at it. The flowers are braided into a wreath, and maybe it’s all that Victorian ornamentation distorting the image, or maybe the design was intentional, but either way, the results look less botanical

phone number. Then there were the meetings. At the first meeting Marilyn had several hundred questions, but Allan had several hundred answers. His knowledge was impressive, as was his willingness to take great risks for perfect strangers. Marilyn liked him immediately, which was a good thing because there were no other options.

Mara was 32 when doctors diagnosed her with colon cancer. That was a little more than a year ago, and it was an unusual diagnosis. The disease typically strikes the elderly—from 2002 to 2006 the median age was 71. On top of that, Mara is, to all who know her, “vibrant.” She rarely drinks, doesn’t do drugs, eats right, sleeps well, is

“WE ARE GOING TO HAVE AN ADVENTURE,” ALLAN SAYS. AND HE IS NOT LYING. AT 11:15 A.M. MARA SWALLOWS 110 MILLIGRAMS OF PHARMACOLOGICALLY PURE ECSTASY, LIES DOWN IN BED AND LOOKS AT THE ANGELS ON THE CEILING. “PLEASE,” HER MOTHER SAYS, “BE ANGELS OF MERCY.”

than celestial. The flowers look like angels. Mara hopes they are angels of mercy.

Marilyn Howell, Mara’s mother, and Lindsay Corliss, Mara’s close friend, are also waiting in the green room. Lindsay is nervously tidying up; Marilyn is just nervous. She walks to the window, glances into the street again and wonders, Where the hell is Allan? She doesn’t know much about Allan—though she knows he’s late and she knows that’s not his real name. Allan is an underground therapist of sorts, and the work he does, what he calls “his crimes of compassion,” remains very much illegal.

It took Marilyn some serious effort to even drum up his

ridiculously optimistic, always battles her weight but gets plenty of exercise. A month before her first major surgery she had been in Honduras gathering data on fish populations and earning a master scuba diver certification.

In the past year Mara has tried all the traditional drugs and all the alternative therapies. Wow, has she tried all the alternative therapies—massage, macrobiotics, Chinese herbs, Tibetan herbs, acupuncture, acupressure, the Feldenkrais Method, chiropractic realignment, the power of prayer. At a Catholic mass in Boston the priest read from the pulpit, “Blessed Virgin Mary, please intercede to heal Mara Howell.” Jews at the Aquarian Minyan in Berkeley chanted

“Mi sheberakh avoteinu,” while Buddhists in Hollywood tried *“Nam-myoho-renge-kyo.”* Twice Mara went to Brazil to meet the famed faith healer John of God. John of God has purportedly healed millions of people. But he couldn’t heal Mara.

About five weeks earlier Mara was forced to leave her apartment in Oakland for the home in which she grew up. So the green room, which was really the front room of her mother Marilyn’s Boston home, was converted into a sick ward.

Marilyn had heard rumors of Allan and the particular work he does, but broaching the subject with her daughter was not easy. The treatment is not only radical and illegal but also geared toward helping patients confront what’s politely called “end-of-life anxiety” and known to most as “mortal terror.” Mara’s reaction was hostile. “I’m not interested in discussing end-of-life issues,” she snapped. “Who told you about this? How could they be so insensitive?” Then she thought it through. She knew she needed a miracle, and this treatment, unlike all the others, had a history of spiritual transformation—that is, she also knew, if it didn’t kill her first.

Allan is an underground psychedelic therapist. Psychedelic therapy is built on the 1960s idea that psychedelic drugs—such as LSD and psilocybin (the “magic” in magic mushrooms), which are known to radically alter cognition and perception—also have the ability to produce profound insight at low doses and cathartic, life-changing experiences at high doses. Psychedelic therapists not only provide these drugs but also act as guides throughout the journey.

The drug Allan is considering for the first session is MDMA, known on the street as ecstasy and a latecomer to the psychedelic tool kit. First synthesized by German pharmaceutical

doctors. It’s dicey, they said, but doable. Marilyn and Allan decide on a low starter dose. Mara agrees to roll the dice. That was two days ago.

Today, the doorbell rings. Allan and that starter dose have arrived. Mara is excited. Lindsay is hopeful. Marilyn thinks she may throw up. Her mind won’t stop racing. This starter dose is just a best guess, right? Can she even trust Allan? But Allan is buoyant, gloriously optimistic, not patronizing like other therapists Mara has met. His demeanor calms everyone. As he walks into the room Allan takes the pills from his pocket and holds them up.

“We are going to have an adventure,” he says.

And he is not lying.

At 11:15 A.M. Mara swallows 110 milligrams of pharmacologically pure ecstasy, lies down in bed and looks at the angels on the ceiling. Marilyn follows her daughter’s upward gaze. She too spots the medallion and utters one final prayer.

“Please be angels of mercy,” she says. “Please, please, please.”



Though the work Allan does remains underground, that is now starting to change. We are teetering on the threshold of a major psychedelic renaissance. For the first time in 40 years, without resistance from the law, in countries all over the world and cities all over America, some of the most infamous substances in history are again being put to the test.

Scientists in Israel, Jordan and Canada are looking at the therapeutic potential of MDMA. In Brazil, Germany and Spain, researchers have begun untangling ayahuasca, a plant



AFTER TAKING ECSTASY, IRAQ VETERAN JOHN THOMPSON SAYS, “I WAS SHOCKED BY THE ACCESS I HAD TO MY MEMORY. THE NEXT DAY THE NIGHTMARES WERE GONE. I WAS GLOWING AND EXTROVERTED—FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE GETTING BLOWN UP.”

company Merck in 1912, MDMA didn’t hit the therapeutic world until the mid-1970s, when pharmacologist Alexander Shulgin heard from his students that it helped one of them get over a stutter. Shulgin dosed himself, reporting “altered states of consciousness with emotional and sexual overtones.” He also noticed the drug “opened people up, both to other people and to inner thoughts.” Ecstasy was criminalized in 1985 but not before it had been introduced to thousands of therapists.

Because Allan and Marilyn don’t want to compromise Mara’s palliative care, the MDMA will have to be administered in addition to all her other medications, and this is where the danger lies. Chemically, MDMA is an amphetamine. Because amphetamines increase heart rate and blood pressure and because Mara is already suffering palpitations, there’s a chance of inducing a heart attack. Neurotoxicity is another concern. A third problem is diminishing her emotional and physical reserves, triggering a slide from which there would be no return. But the greatest threat is ignorance. Allan consulted outside



that contains DMT—arguably the most potent hallucinogen on earth. In Switzerland, LSD is being used as a treatment for end-of-life anxiety. In Mexico and Canada it’s ibogaine (another powerful plant-derived psychedelic) for opiate addiction. Here at home, scientists at Johns Hopkins have concluded a long-term psilocybin study that examined the purported “mystical experience” people have while hallucinating. At UCLA researchers have completed an end-of-life-anxiety psilocybin study, and teams at NYU and Johns Hopkins are beginning studies of their own. At the University of Arizona it’s psilocybin as a treatment for obsessive-compulsive disorder. Researchers at Harvard have finished neurotoxicity studies on MDMA and peyote, plus LSD for cluster headaches and MDMA for end-of-life anxiety. In South Carolina researchers working with combat veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, among other trauma victims, have completed one study of MDMA as a treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder and are about to begin another. *(continued on page 114)*



Olivia

“Are you shaken or stirred...?”

WORLD'S HARDEST SEX



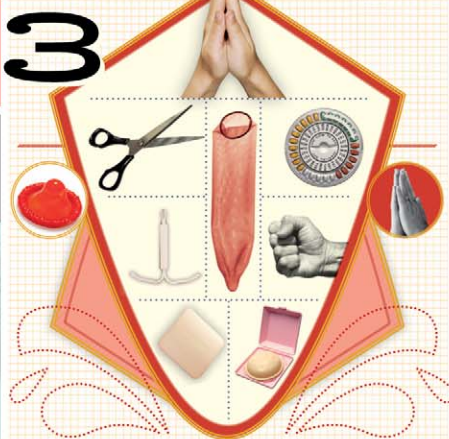
QUIZ BY **CHIP ROWE**

HOW MANY OF THESE ABSURDLY DIFFICULT QUESTIONS—EACH CULLED FROM THE PLAYBOY ADVISOR'S VAST LIBRARY OF CARNAL KNOWLEDGE—CAN YOU ANSWER? NO CHEATING, TIGER

1 THE HEAD OF THE CLITORIS IS TO THE HEAD OF THE PENIS AS THE LABIA MAJORA IS TO THE _____.

2 IDENTIFY THIS OBJECT:





PLACE THESE CONTRACEPTIVE OPTIONS IN ORDER OF HIGHEST TO LOWEST EFFICIENCY UNDER IDEAL CIRCUMSTANCES:
 CONDOM, PILL, VASECTOMY, SPERMICIDES, MIRENA IUD, DIAPHRAGM, PRAYER, MASTURBATION

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

4 HOW DID SUPREME COURT JUSTICE POTTER STEWART FAMOUSLY DEFINE OBSCENITY?

“ _____ ”

5 According to a study of **1,380** couples armed with stop-watches, how long does vaginal intercourse last, on average?

6 CHECK THE OBJECT THAT HAS NOT BEEN REMOVED BY ER DOCTORS FROM A PATIENT'S RECTUM, ACCORDING TO MEDICAL LITERATURE:



7

BELOW ARE THE OPENING LINES OF SIX FAMOUS EROTIC WRITINGS. NAME THE SOURCE.



(A) "Ours is essentially a tragic age, so we refuse to take it tragically."



(B) "I am living at the Villa Borghese. There is not a crumb of dirt anywhere, nor a chair misplaced. We are all alone here and we are dead."



(C) "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for your love is more delightful than wine."



(D) "I left England, wafted by a favorable wind blowing to the south, and found refuge in a little village in Provence, aptly named Languedoc—which, for those astute readers who are not fluent in the French language, is translated to mean 'Tongue Thigh.'"



(E) "There were 117 psychoanalysts on the Pan Am flight to Vienna and I'd been treated by at least six of them."



(F) "His was first. In my ass."

9 WHAT PERCENTAGE OF MEN HAVE AN **ERECTION** LONGER THAN **7.5 INCHES**?

10 WHAT IS THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF THE MALE GENITALS TO TATTOO?

11 How many men have breast reduction surgery each year?

12 What song prompted warning labels on albums with explicit lyrics?

13 DEFINE THESE SEXTING ACRONYMS:

ASL	_____
ATM	_____
BBBJ	_____
DATY	_____
MF'F	_____
NIFOC	_____
NSA	_____
TDTM	_____

14 WHAT MAKES A SWINGER "SOFT"?

15 IN WHAT PERCENTAGE OF MEN DOES THE LEFT TESTICLE HANG LOWER THAN THE RIGHT?



16

If you pulled the sperm tubes out of your testicles and unraveled them, how far would they reach?

17

What percentage of married couples have sex at least twice a week?



18

HOW LONG IS THE CLITORIS?



19

Anthropologists have found a common flirtation pattern among females of all cultures. Place the moves in order from the moment she spots you:

- Lowers her lids
- Giggles
- Arches her brows
- Smiles
- Averts her gaze
- Puts her hand on her lips
- Tucks her chin slightly



20

Faraway galaxy or between your legs?

- Ambartsumian's Knot
- Corona
- Dartos
- Fornax
- Pampiniform Plexus
- Prepuce
- Sextans
- Triangulum
- Tunica Albuginea
- Zwicky's Triplet



8

What is the English translation of the words *kama sutra*?



FOR ANSWERS, SEE PAGE 113.





VISA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Name
USIN
Passport Number
F2662489
Entrance
M
Annotation

07MAY

Sex
M
Birth Date
190CT19

03MAY2

MARIEL<<
22CHET

403830EN07

ARIEL DORFMAN BY


HESKYLUMMA

BARRERA SACRIFICED A LOT TO GET OUT OF COLOMBIA—INCLUDING THE LIVES OF OTHERS. HE THOUGHT IT WAS ALL IN THE PAST, BUT IN THE ELECTRONIC AGE, GHOSTS ARE ALWAYS IN THE MACHINE AND SINS GO VIRAL WITH THE TOUCH OF A BUTTON



Barrera liked to tell everyone that he hardly slept at night. No more than a few hours, a few winks, that's what he liked to report to his son each morning, with a smile on his face, almost triumphantly, as if the persistence over the years of that alleged superiority were a bizarre medal of honor, proof of poverty and *abandono*, by working that's how he'd crawled out of poverty and *abandono*, by working more, by sleeping less, not at all, hardly a wink. But now it had come true with a vengeance. *Si quieres que esto se termine, ya sabes lo que tienes que hacer.* Ever since that initial message in Spanish had appeared on Ricky's screen, not an hour. Nothing, *nada*. Not a minute, not a second, not a blink. He had stared at the words on his son's computer, automatically translating them in his head, not quite ready to articulate them out loud, something warning him to beware, but beware of what? "What does it mean, Dad?" "If you want this to end, you know what you need to do." Ricky looked at him quizzically. "How should I know?" "Who are they?" "Yes, Ricky, I read the subject of your e-mail, thanks, that's why I'm here, that's why you dragged me away from my work, probably it's just spam, or maybe one of your friends at school thought it would be fun to play a joke on me, a prank..."

ILLUSTRATION BY ALEX ZERBISCH



**WHO'S TO STOP THIS
MADMAN? WHO'S
TO STOP THEM FROM
SENDING THE MESSAGE
OVER AND OVER AGAIN?**

"You think it's a prank?"
"Spam or a prank. What else could it be?"

And then Barrera had reached down violently over his son's right shoulder and then past Ricky's hand hovering on top of the keyboard; Barrera jabbed down and pressed the delete button, watched the message disappear from the screen, erased, gone, gone forever.

"Hey, I wanted to answer that!"

"No, you wanted *me* to answer, you wanted me to—what?—what were you going to suggest that I translate? *Dear Comando Anesthesia, exactly who the fuck are you? And exactly what the fuck do you need me to do?* And then they respond, *Te dijimos que le preguntaras a tu papá*, and if you studied Spanish like I've been asking you to for—but that's not the point, the point is they'll insist again that I have some sort of answer, and then you'll respond that—though no, in fact, it'll be me doing the work, responding for you, I'm supposed to be the go-between here, right?, *mi papá no tiene la menor idea, my dad hasn't the foggiest idea*, and so on and so forth, back and forth, *mensajes estúpidos* come and go, some fools laughing their heads off at us, at me, wasting my time, wasting your time, even wasting their time, whoever the hell they are, the bastards."

"Okay, okay. I don't see why you're so upset. If it's only a joke, like you said...."

Ricky was right, of course: Barrera had overreacted. Later on, in his room, unable to close his eyes even for those few winks he always bragged about, Barrera had berated himself. Hadn't he been feeling for months that he was being locked out of his son's existence? Hadn't he been lamenting to the mirror just this

morning that the boy no longer seemed to need him, rarely came seeking advice, seemed to be growing more distant as his 17th birthday approached?

If you want this to end, you know what you need to do.

Maybe he should follow the advice offered in that silly message. If he wanted *this* to end, this discomfort between father and son, then he did know what he *needed to do*: Apologize to Ricky, offer his help, open wide the door he had just so rudely and imprudently slammed shut. He'd take care of it in the morning, at breakfast, after having made the kid his favorite, the buckwheat pancakes *tan norteamericanos* that Cynthia had taught him how to griddle to perfection, a subtle gift from the boy's dead mother, one more remnant of her aroma in their townhouse; yes, Barrera would execute that plan, he'd—no, better still, he'd retrieve the message on his own, rescue it from the deleted items and reply to it himself, explain that he would love to know what this was all about, even if it was a hoax or some such *tontería*, perhaps even confide in this Comando Anesthesia that he wanted to surprise his son with a detailed account, maybe the anonymous sender would commiserate with this father trying to impress a wayward son.

It was four in the morning, Ricky was asleep, now was the time.

Barrera logged on to his son's e-mail, slipped in the purloined password, waited for the in-box to fill up.

Another message from Comando Anesthesia was waiting.

IF YOUR DAD PRETENDS HE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO, THEN SHOW HIM THIS.

Barrera hesitated.

Erase this message.

That was the first thing that flared up in his mind—to be replaced quickly by—*no, I can't, I can't do that, one thing is to read his mail to keep tabs on the boy, keep him out of trouble, but this, I've never done anything like...not like this*, and immediately: *Even if I did, if I could, who's to stop this madman? Who's to stop them from sending the message over and over again, sending it when I'm not there to delete, when I can't eliminate the damn thing?*

He was saved from a further flood of panicked thoughts by the shadow of Ricky behind him. And then Ricky's voice.

"Open it, Dad."

Not even reproaching him for sneaking into that oh so private e-mail account, not even angered by his father's refusal to cooperate before, by this betrayal of trust now. Merely matter-of-fact, merely *open it, Dad*, only that.

Barrera double clicked obediently, almost sheepishly, and there it was, there it was.

Te vamos a matar como a un perro. No, como a un perro no, porque los perros merecen mejor suerte. Te vamos a matar como se matan a los seres humanos: lentamente, para que sepas lo que te está pasando.

"Tell me what it says."

"No."

"Perro means dog. Is it about the dog you keep saying you'll buy me—"


"No."

"...the dog you promised to buy me if—?"

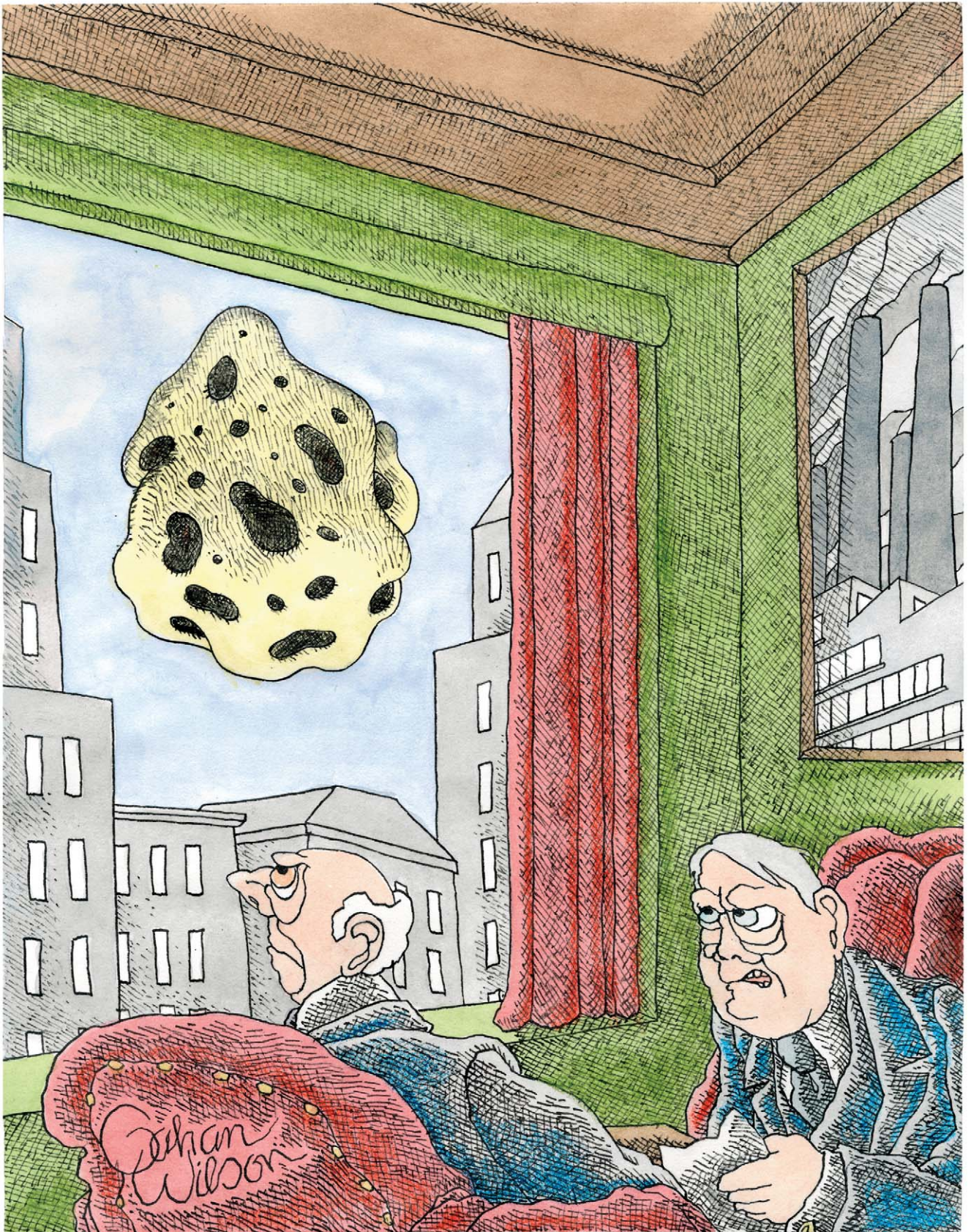
"If you studied Spanish. Which would have been helpful, right? You could be reading this nonsense on your own, right?"

"You want to know what I think, Dad?"

(continued on page 107)



**TE VAMOS A MATAR
COMO A UN PERRO:
WE ARE GOING TO KILL YOU
LIKE A DOG.**



"This meteor may have a really bad effect on the market!"

**PLATINUM BLONDE
AND DELICIOUSLY
BEAUTIFUL, MISS
APRIL PLAYS
HARD TO GET**

CHASING AMY



One morning not long ago, Amy Leigh Andrews awoke and checked her e-mail. “I screamed at the top of my lungs!” she now says. She found a note she had dreamed of receiving all her life. “Hef has approved you for Centerfold,” the missive read. “You can’t understand,” explains the tiny but voluptuous blonde who embodies both brains and liberated sexuality. “Some girls dream of becoming *The Little Mermaid*’s Ariel, but not me. Since I was very young, since the first time I saw a Playmate, I wanted to appear in this magazine.” Originally from Conyers, Georgia, Amy is currently earning her master’s in communications on her way to fulfilling another dream: becoming an entertainment news anchor. “I love school,” says the 25-year-old. “Knowledge makes you independent and confident.” She has also always loved classic rock, hanging on the beach and traveling. Her introduction to PLAYBOY came at an Atlanta casting call. She appeared in a couple of Playboy Special Editions, and she wrote a personal letter to Holly Madison, pleading her case. “I’d just decided I was going to make this happen,” Amy says. Her work paid off, and you now hold the results in your hands. “It’s surreal, crazy, amazing and fantastic,” bubbles Miss April. “A Playmate at last!”

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ARNY FREYTAG









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



MISS APRIL

PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH







PLAYMATE DATA SHEET



NAME: Amy Leigh Andrews

BUST: 34D WAIST: 24 HIPS: 36

HEIGHT: 5' 8" WEIGHT: 110

BIRTH DATE: 9-19-84 BIRTHPLACE: Conyers, GA

AMBITIONS: To travel the world, be an entertainment news anchor and do some acting and hosting. The sky is the limit!

TURN-ONS: Down-to-earth guys who are manly, adventurous, funny, polite, romantic and ambitious.

TURNOFFS: Insecurity, arrogance, bad teeth, cheaters, meatheads and narcissists.

MY PERFECT DATE: For my man to prepare a surprise candlelit dinner on the beach for me, complete with champagne (Veuve preferred!), strawberries and lobster.

WHAT MAKES A WOMAN SEXY: A hot pair of stilettos, intelligence to match and the passion to reach her goals.

THE GIRL IN MY LIFE: Layla, my fluffy white three-year-old Maltese.

MY IDEA OF PERFECT BLISS: To be on the beach in Cabo, a tropical drink in my hand, wearing nothing more than a tiny bikini!



Third grade, age nine. I was so shy then.



High school graduation. I'd found my confidence.



Spring break 2004. Partying at the beach.



MISS APRIL

PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH



Amy Leigh Andrews

PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

In a survey conducted earlier this week, 1,000 American blondes were asked if they would sleep with Tiger Woods.

Eighty-nine percent responded, "Never again."

Say when," the man said to his date as he poured her a cocktail.

She breathlessly replied, "Right after this drink."

A young man approached the counter at a convenience store and asked the female clerk, "May I have six contraceptives, miss?"

"Don't 'miss' me," she replied.

"Okay," the man said. "Then make it seven."



In simpler times people who committed adultery were stoned; today it's often the other way around.

His family isn't too pleased about our engagement," a coed told her roommate. "In fact, his wife is furious."

Sometimes a woman can attract a man with her mind, but it's easier to attract him with what she doesn't mind.

Two male centenarians were bragging about their sex lives while playing pool at the senior center, and one man asked the other, "Can you still have sex with your wife?"

"I have sex with my wife once a week," his friend replied. "How many nights do you have sex with your wife?"

The first man said, "Oh, we do it almost every night of the week."

Incredulous, the other man repeated, "Almost every night?"

"Yup!" he responded. "Almost on Monday, almost on Tuesday..."

The man who likes to lie in bed can usually find a girl willing to listen to him.

Before lecturing her class on heaven and hell, a Sunday school teacher asked the students, "Do you know where little girls and boys go when they do bad things?"

"Sure," a little boy answered. "The back of Kristin's garage."

A man and his wife were sitting around the breakfast table one lazy Saturday morning when he turned to her and said, "If I were to die suddenly, I want you to immediately sell all my possessions."

"Now why would you want me to do something like that?" she asked.

"I figure you would eventually remarry," he said, "and I don't want some asshole using my stuff."

The wife replied, "What makes you think I'd marry another asshole?"

Economists are baffled at how, despite the recession, a girl with the least principle manages to draw the most interest.



What do a hurricane, a tornado and a red-neck divorce have in common?

Each one costs somebody a trailer.

Am I the first man who has ever asked you to make love?" inquired the bachelor as he stroked her hair post coitus.

"Yes," answered the beautiful blonde. "All the others did it without asking."

I'm always amused by foreigners who don't speak the language very well," a man said to his friend. "The other day a Chinese hooker who wanted to applaud me for my sexual performance told me, 'I give you clap.'"

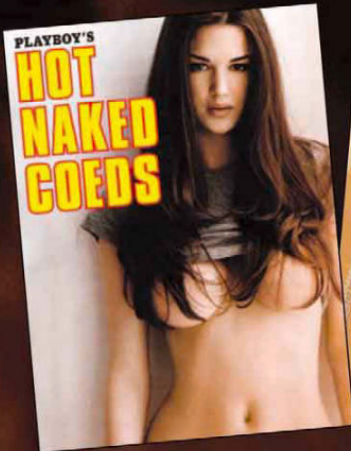
Send your jokes to Party Jokes Editor, PLAYBOY, 680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611, or by e-mail through our website at jokes.playboy.com. PLAYBOY will pay \$100 to the contributors whose submissions are selected.



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HERE**

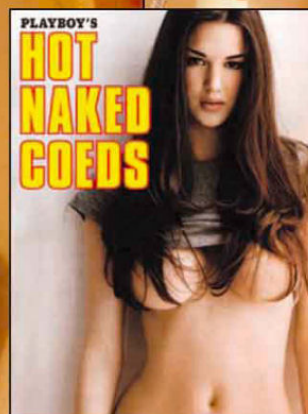
**GET 2
FREE GIFTS**

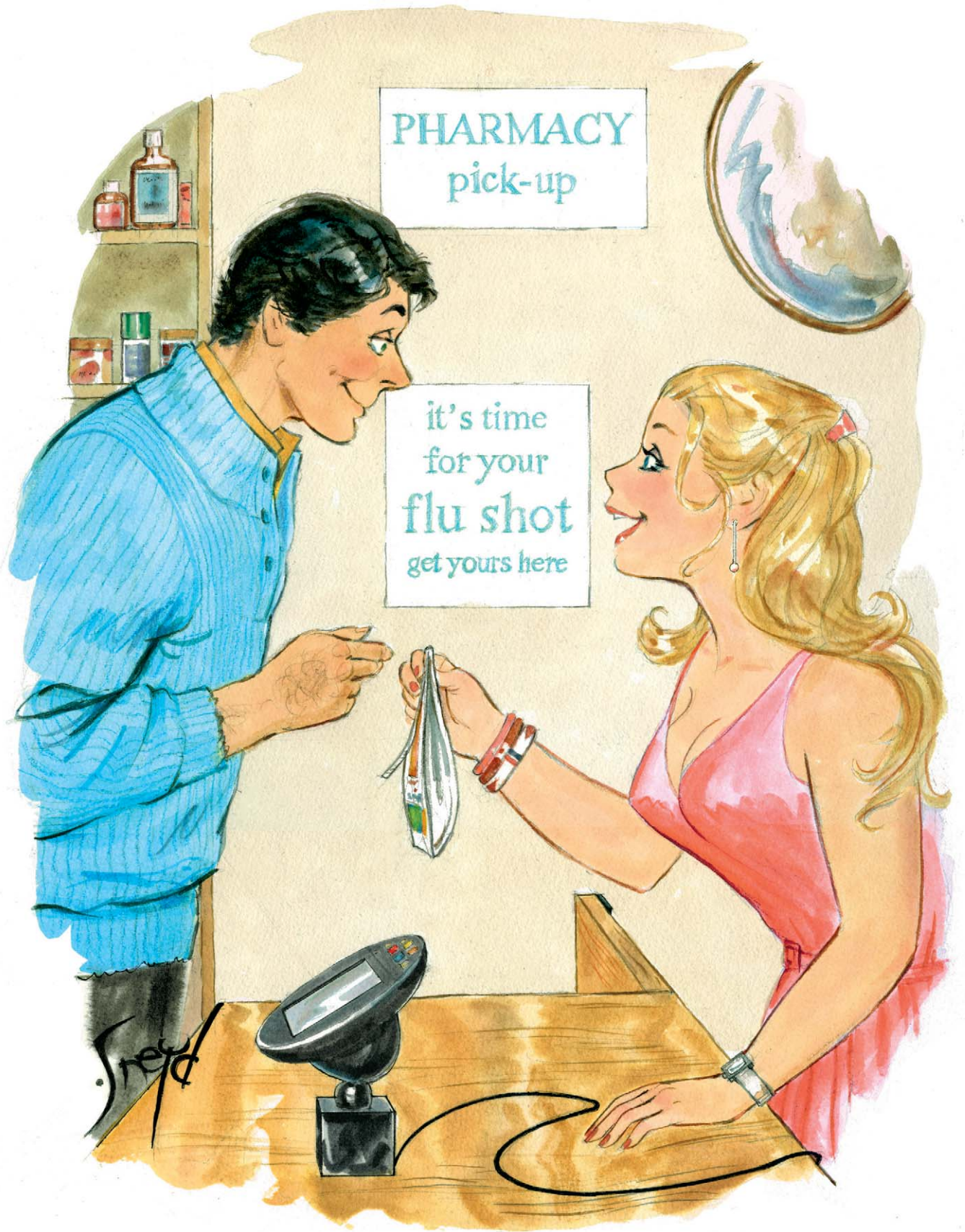
GET **2** FREE GIFTS

when you give

PLAYBOY
DIGITAL

**CLICK
HERE**
TO GIVE
A GIFT!





"Here's your prescription. Should you experience an erection lasting more than four hours, this is my home phone number."



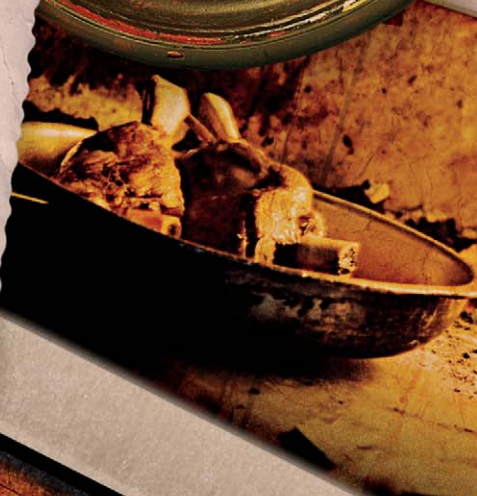
Picard's "hamburger de foie gras." His restaurant goes through 70 kilos of goose liver a week.



An evening at Au Pied de Cochon (literally "at the pig's foot").



"Fat is the vector for taste," says chef Picard. "If you have fat in your mouth, the taste will develop."



The pig's foot is browned in lard and draped with a seared brick of foie gras.



The Apostle of Indulgence

BY JULIAN SANCTON

GOOSE LIVER? SEX? VODKA? YES, PLEASE. MEET THE UNQUENCHABLE GENIUS BEHIND NORTH AMERICA'S MOST DECADENT EATERY

François Rabelais once wrote, "Appetite comes with eating, and thirst departs with drinking." If that is the case, then why am I sitting, eyes glazed over, in front of a half-finished plate of stuffed pigs' feet with foie gras over mashed potatoes and yet still quaffing beyond the point of inebriation? The reason I keep imbibing is because Martin Picard, the rotund chef and owner of Montreal's Au Pied de Cochon, keeps toasting: "*À la vie!*" ("To life!")

Already I have been served eight courses. As for the pigs' feet, they are expertly prepared: browned in lard, then cooked *sous-vide*, stuffed with a mustardy bread mixture, draped with a seared brick of foie gras and slathered with an exquisite sauce of mushrooms, onion, garlic and rosemary. But as a whole, the thing is gout on a plate. I exhale heavily. Picard pats me on the back as if to say, "Save room for dessert."

There is no place on earth like Au Pied de Cochon. Picard is the patron saint of gourmands, and his restaurant has become a shrine to indulgence since it opened two months after 9/11. Picard boasts that Au Pied de Cochon sells the most foie gras of any restaurant on the planet—70 kilos every week, he estimates, which amounts to more than four tons a year. It is served in every form imaginable: raw, fried, seared, in a pâté, in a terrine, with stuffed pigs' feet, over meatloaf, in a pie. It's no wonder patrons emerge from Picard's doors feeling like freshly *gavé* ducks themselves.



Chef Martin Picard

If he were an actor, Picard—with the outsize paunch he likes to expose, the scraggly au jus-encrusted beard and unkempt receding curls—could play Falstaff. If he were a writer, he'd be Rabelais. Even among chefs, perhaps especially among chefs, he is a legend. Chef Donald Link, whose New Orleans restaurant Cochon shares with Picard's the totem of the pig (Picard's logo is a chef raising a meat cleaver while riding a pig), calls Picard crazy. Fergus Henderson of London's revered St. John calls him, with British understatement, "spirited." Daniel Boulud lovingly calls him the ultimate glutton.

I had to meet him. When I visit his restaurant with my friend the writer Alex Shoumatoff, Picard tells me a story, pretty much unprompted, to illustrate how unbound he is by any sense of proportion or deference to a higher power. "Every night, Jesus gives me a blow job," he says in his Quebecois twang. "And he keeps coming back because I always forget to say thank you!" Picard believes in earthly things. He is among those Saint Paul warned the Philippians about, saying their "God is their belly." Taking the Lord's name in vain is the least of his sins. Over the course of my evening with Picard I keep a tally in my notebook:

GLUTTONY

Picard sins by proxy dozens of times a night by expecting his customers to eat and drink with the same hunger and thirst as he. From the exterior, on a quiet side street, Au Pied de Cochon has an unassuming elegance. It's bustling and brightly lit. But inside it smells like a musketeer's tavern—the aroma of pork fat, duck fat, butter and onions wafting from the stoves at the center of the room, behind the bar at which we sit. From that vantage, we overlook the kitchen and the team of young cooks. Picard, 43, is sweating over a stove, searing foie gras, drinking, laughing, playfully shoving a comely 20-year-old cook.

During the four-hour dinner and evening that will follow, I will drink enough—on Picard's insistence—that I would surely have died of alcohol poisoning had the beer and wine and champagne and vodka and assorted shots not been soaked up by 14 unfinishable courses. The dinner begins simply, with an unaccompanied pickled bison tongue (the tongue is not always bison; it depends on the deliveries), followed by a *cochonailles* platter (including a perfectly seasoned *pâté de campagne*, more tongue and a dark black meat gelatin reduced in stout), then by foie gras *cromesquis*, which are cubes of foie

gras breaded and deep fried. In the heat, the foie liquefies. We are instructed to put them in our mouth whole and be sure to close our lips lest the liquid squirt out when we bite down.

Vodka.

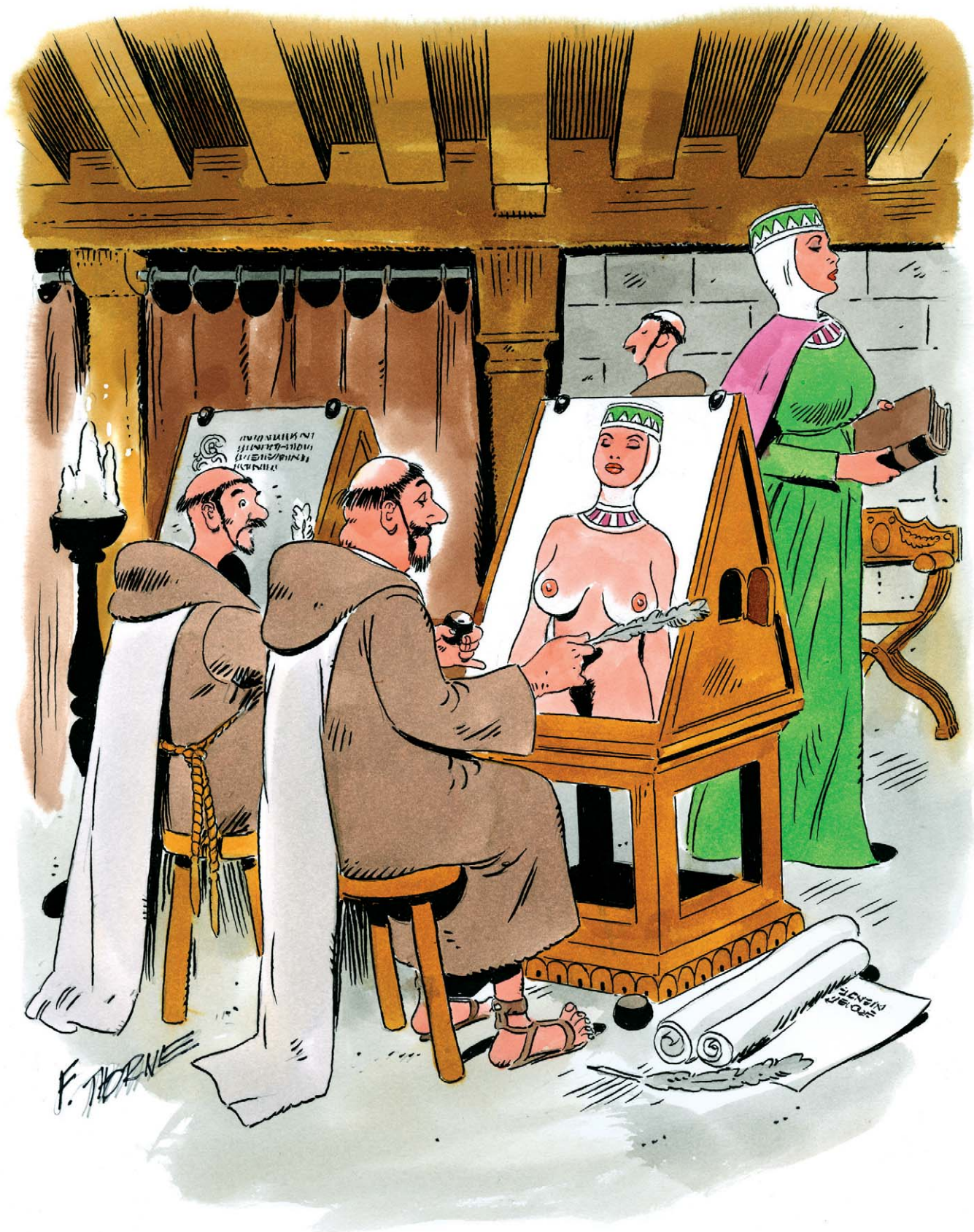
Even this early in the game we find ourselves begging for the refreshment of vegetables. The beet salad is piled four inches high, with beet discs alternating with slabs of goat cheese, and the endive salad is slathered in enough blue cheese to suffocate Mr. Creosote. Next comes a platter of flavorful duck carpaccio, likely from an animal whose liver we will soon be eating, topped with a raw, pepper-flaked egg yolk. Then arrives a dish of deep-fried headcheese croquettes, redolent of tarragon, over a bed of sautéed sea snails in *gribiche* sauce. To round out the appetizers—for these are still technically appetizers—Picard sends out an off-the-menu Japanese-style hand roll with spicy raw bison wrapped in rice and seaweed sheets.

More vodka.

At exactly 10 p.m. a bell rings. The cooks whoop and holler and put down their spoons: It is beer time. (They will all share a second one after the last seating, along with a staff dinner *(continued on page 112)*)

EMBARRASSMENT OF RICHNESS Chef Martin Picard, 43, in the kitchen at Au Pied de Cochon, along with some of his signature dishes. Several of Picard's most revered cooking colleagues have called him crazy, spirited, the ultimate glutton.





"Brother Aloysius, are you off your saltpeter again?"



20

BY ERIC SPITZNAGEL
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATTHIAS CLAMER

Will Forte

SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE'S LATEST CROSSOVER STAR EXPLAINS WHY HE'S NOTHING LIKE MACGRUBER, CONFESSES THAT HE MIGHT HAVE ACCIDENTALLY KILLED GRANDMA AND TALKS ABOUT THE JOYS OF FRENCH-KISSING FRED ARMISEN

Q1

PLAYBOY: Your new movie, *MacGruber*, is a parody of the 1980s TV show *MacGyver*. MacGyver and MacGruber could defuse a bomb with just a paper clip and some dental floss. Are you as cunning and resourceful?

FORTE: The only thing I have in common with those two is a fierce determination. I will not quit when I'm working on a project. It comes out mainly with jigsaw puzzles. I could probably put together something like MacGyver does, but it would take me three years and I would lose girlfriends and eventually get kicked out of my apartment. The rest of my life would go to crap.

Q2

PLAYBOY: You created the MacGruber character for *Saturday Night Live*, and you've given him

his defining feature, a mullet. Was this your first experience with the long-in-the-back, short-in-the-front hairstyle?

FORTE: I did have a mullet for a few years as a teenager, but it was by accident. I used to cut my own hair, and I'd cut the front part and think, Oh, that looks good; I'm all done! My friends never mentioned to me, "Wait, you're missing the back part. You should cut that too." They didn't say a word.

Q3

PLAYBOY: *MacGruber* has an R rating. Can we expect lots of gratuitous nudity?

FORTE: You will be no stranger to my butt after seeing this movie. You will feel as if you're old friends with it. I was surprisingly comfortable with being naked.

I think a few people on the movie crew probably wished I was a little more bashful. Between takes they'd ask me, "Would you like to wear a robe?" And I'd say, "No, I'm fine." In my defense, we were shooting in
(continued on page 105)



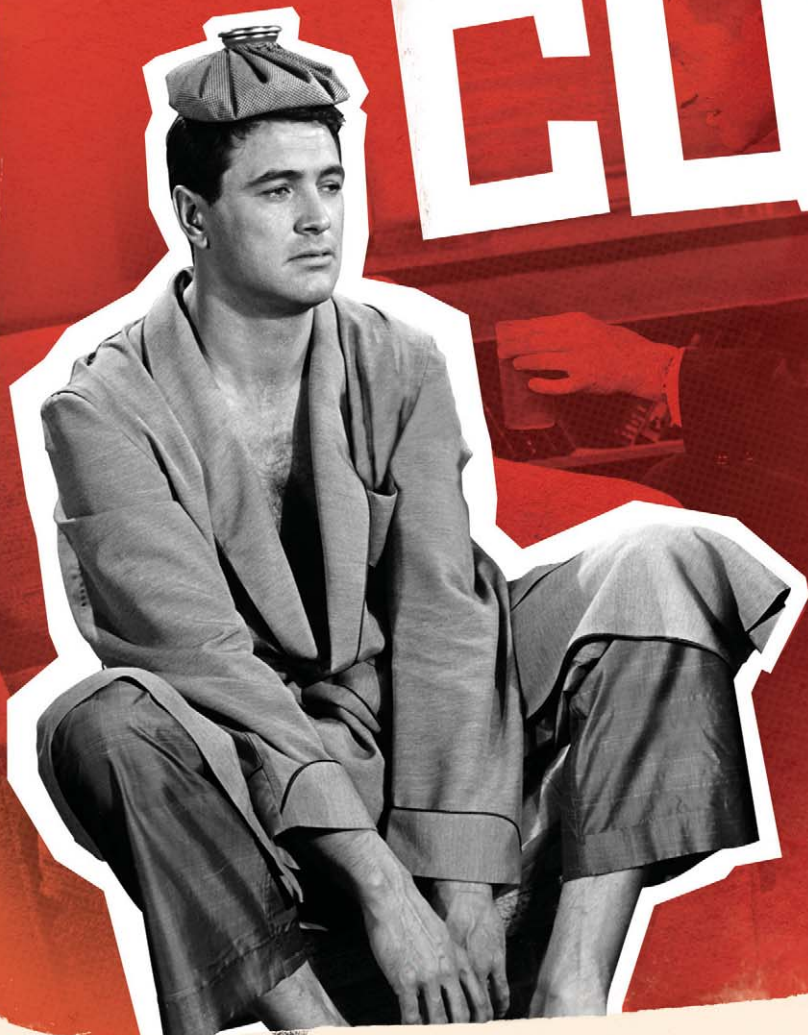
THE PLAYBOY

CURE

HOW TO SURVIVE THE MORNING AFTER

HERE'S YOUR BEST SHOT AT RELIEF:
A one-day detox that will help you
rejoin the ranks of the living

by JOHN BUFFALO MAILER



Ask what the best way to detox quickly from the bender of all benders is and you'll get a wide variety of oddly authoritative opinions. The answers range from taking Suboxone (a drug that helps heroin addicts kick the habit) to drinking copious amounts of alkaline water to guzzling a quart of green juice with garlic and ginger to lengthy yoga sessions. After polling experts in the fields of nutrition and internal medicine, we designed the perfect one-day detox regimen.

Suppose you get back from three nights in Vegas, celebrating at your best friend's bachelor party. It's highly likely you mixed libations (liquor, caffeine, a case of Red Bull), assorted powders, the odd little blue pill and the fragrant vapors of various dried plant matter. Whatever your poison, you have to face facts: You have too much toxic sludge in your system and you now need to get it out. You convinced your boss to give you Thursday and Friday off, assuring him you would take the time to prepare for Monday's presentation to those Chinese investors you've been courting for months. It's Sunday morning when you get back to your apartment. Will the feeling of nausea ever go away? How do you get the edges of all the objects in your room to stop rippling? You're in bad shape, no doubt about it. Here's what you do.



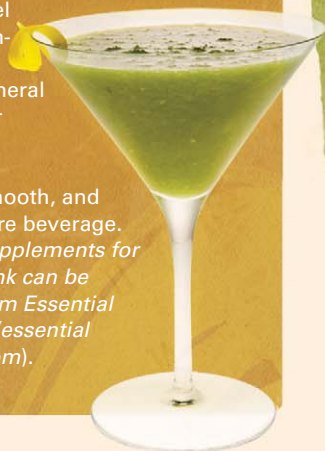
1/ Drink one eight-ounce glass of the most alkaline water you can get your hands on, at least once every hour. Fiji water has a pH of 7.5 and can be purchased in 24-packs at most major supermarkets.

2/ Prepare your stomach by taking one Prilosec, an over-the-counter antacid, to prevent heartburn and nausea. Do not take aspirin, caffeine or any type of ibuprofen. Instead take 100 milligrams of Pycnogenol, a natural plant extract from the bark of the maritime pine tree. This acts as an anti-inflammatory, antiplatelet and antioxidant and, when combined with L-arginine, has the added benefit of increasing libido. You'll never want aspirin again.

3 / Drink a cleansing smoothie. In a blender, combine:

- 4 oz. organic orange juice
- 4 oz. aloe juice
- 1 tsp. maca powder (an adaptogen that boosts energy and strength and acts as a libido lifter for men and women)
- ½ tsp. camu-camu powder (highest vitamin C content of any fruit on earth, anti-inflammatory, antidepressant)
- ½ tsp. mangosteen powder (antioxidant, anti-inflammatory)
- 1 tsp. freshly grated ginger
- ½ lemon peel
- 1 tbsp. Health-Force Nutritional Vitamineral Green powder
- 4 ice cubes

Blend until smooth, and down the entire beverage. All powder supplements for this green drink can be purchased from Essential Living Foods (essentiallivingfoods.com).



4 / Go back to bed and do not attempt to reenter the world until at least 11:30 A.M. Set your alarm every hour so you can pound more water. (Keep a glass and a bottle of water at your bedside to minimize sleep interruption.)

5 / Get up and urinate. Do not proceed to the next step until you do.

6 / Go directly to the nearest Russian or Turkish spa and take a lengthy *platza* oak-leaf treatment (a form of therapy, dating back to ancient Greece, that involves the highest level of a three-tiered sauna, cold water poured over you periodically and a large man beating you with oak branches dipped in warm olive oil). The leaves contain a natural astringent that opens pores and releases toxins from your body. For more information go to russianandturkishbaths.com/Platza.html. If Russian masseurs are in short supply, go to a local spa, preferably one that follows the Hollywood notion that every story should have a happy ending. Take a 30- to 60-minute session in a low-temperature sauna (105° to 130°) and follow with a 90-minute deep-tissue massage.

7 / Go home and shower with glycerin soap. Glycerin promotes the absorption of moisture, and your skin can absorb astoundingly more H₂O than your digestive system.

8 / For your first solid food of the day, eat three boiled eggs and two bananas. Eggs contain large quantities of cysteine, an amino acid that will break down the metabolism of bad substances you've ingested, while bananas will replenish all the potassium you've lost from peeing so much. For dessert, eat two slices of watermelon, which will bring your alkaline levels up, and go back to sleep until evening.

9 / As night rolls in, make one bull shot. A typical recipe is as follows:

- 4 oz. beef consommé or beef bouillon
 - ½ tsp. grated horseradish
 - 1½ to 2 oz. vodka
 - 1 tsp. lemon juice
 - Several dashes Tabasco sauce
 - Several dashes Worcestershire sauce
 - Pinch of celery seed
- Combine all ingredients in a cocktail shaker and pour over ice in a rocks glass.



In the right hands, a deep-tissue massage helps get the hurt out.

10 / Sit down in front of the television with your bull shot in hand and watch *Lawrence of Arabia* as a pick-me-up. The film's slow pace and its sweeping shots of gorgeous desert scenery will fit in nicely with your relaxed attitude and quenched body cells, which had been begging for some hair of the dog that bit you. Also, the unbelievable suffering of those poor people will put in serious perspective whatever depressing thoughts you have about how your life has turned out.

11 / Have one small bowl of spicy chili with cheese and whole-grain crackers. This will fill your stomach and help you sweat out the remaining toxins as you sleep.

12 / Take an antioxidant consisting of large amounts of vitamins B₆, B₂ and C. (We recommend OPC-3.)

13 / Drink one more eight-ounce glass of alkaline water and go to bed.

14 / Drink one more tall glass of water when you get up to urinate in the middle of the night.

15 / Wake up at a reasonable time and repeat step three to make another green antioxidant drink, followed by an eight-ounce glass of water. Pop another OPC-3 with a bit of green-tea extract and ginseng to stimulate your brain, then go to work and nail those Chinese!

EXPERTS CONSULTED

Dr. Steven Lamm, a practicing internist, co-author of *The Hardness Factor* and author of the upcoming *Stronger: In Defense of Your Health* (thehardnessfactor.com)

Dr. Richard Ash, internal medicine specialist and host of WOR News Talk Radio's *Sick and Tired of Being Sick and Tired* (ashcenter.com)

Kipp Stroden, vice president of business development, BeOn Holdings Inc./Essential Living Foods (essentiallivingfoods.com)



fashion by JENNIFER RYAN JONES
photography by NIGEL PARRY

PEACOCK BY BOSS BLACK, \$595.
CARDIGAN BY BOSS BLACK, \$195.
SHIRT BY HUGO, \$95.
JEANS BY HUGO, \$145.
SCARF BY PAUL SMITH ACCESSORIES, \$240.

FADE IN: KEEP THEM GUESSING


"I quite like the 'What the fuck?' factor, as in 'What the fuck is Hudson wearing?' At one festival I was Spock, Uhuru, Picard and Data all in one. It was *Star Trek* cross-dressing."

ASPHALT JUNGLE

THE KANYE WEST PROTÉGÉ AND ENGLISH GENTLEMAN MR. HUDSON PROWLs NEW YORK'S MEAN STREETS IN SEARCH OF THE PERFECT SHOT IN THIS NOD TO CLASSIC NOIR AND THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF WEEGEE. IT'S ALSO A REMINDER THAT IN THE CENTER OF ANY DARK TALE THERE IS INDEED A RAINCOAT

TRENCH COAT BY Z ZEGNA, \$695.
GLOVES BY FRATELLI ORSINI COURTESY OF
LEATHERGLOVESONLINE.COM, \$97.

TRENCH COAT BY UNIQLO, \$100.
SWEATER BY UNIQLO, \$40.
SHIRT BY UNIQLO, \$30.



FADE IN: AHEAD OF THE CURVE
"A year ago I wore a pair of Vivienne Westwood pants with the crotch hanging down to my knees. Kanye said, 'Why are you dressed as a homeless person?' But a year later that style is in. Everyone's wearing it now."

COAT BY MACKINTOSH FOR J. CREW, \$800.

SHIRT BY BEN SHERMAN, \$99.

TIE BY Z ZEGNA, \$115.

SUNGLASSES BY BOTTEGA VENETA, \$365.

PLAYBOY  FASHION



RAINCOAT BY PS
BY PAUL SMITH, \$910.

SHIRT BY PS BY PAUL SMITH, \$270.

HAT FROM NY HAT CO., \$47.

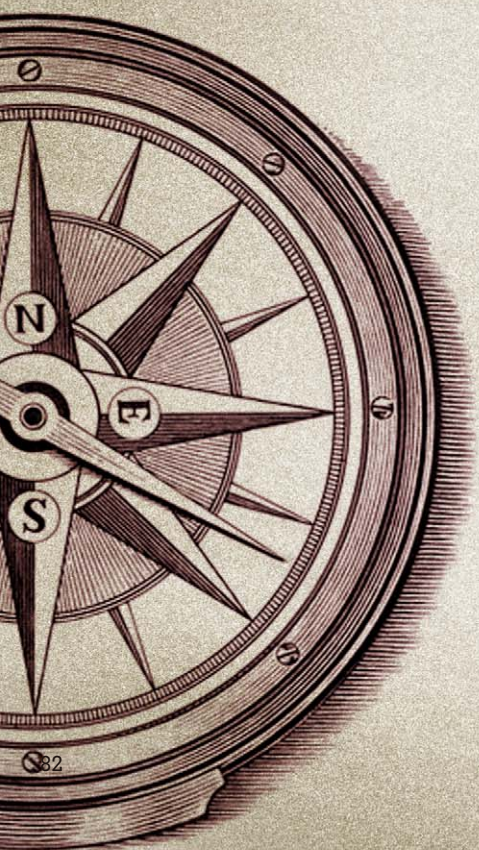


RAINCOAT BY CALVIN KLEIN COLLECTION, \$850.

SHIRT BY Z ZEGNA, \$260.

TROUSERS BY CALVIN KLEIN COLLECTION, \$395.

RING BY STEPHEN WEBSTER, \$1,195.



exit STRATEGY

IT'S EVERY MAN'S DREAM:

TO DROP OUT OF THE RAT RACE AND LIVE ON A
SUN-SPLASHED ISLAND WHERE THE WOMEN ARE
HOT, THE WATER IS COOL AND THE BEER COSTS A
QUARTER. OUR GUIDE TO MAKING THE DREAM REAL

BY SEAMUS MCGRAW



Ever since the economy did a swan dive off the roof of the AIG building in 2008, I've been hearing people talk about "the dream." Not the American dream—something quite the opposite, actually. And why not? Everywhere I looked there was bad news. It was as if we were bobbing on a raft made out of pieces of broken hopes. The dream is to find a slice of paradise someplace, figure out a way to make it work financially and walk off into the sunset.

I recently stumbled across the photo album of my honeymoon in Belize, and I began to think in earnest about the dream. I could still taste the salt air and hear the scratching of hermit crabs scuttling up the mangrove roots that twisted beneath the cottage we had rented. The dream beckoned. It would be just like another honeymoon, only a little more open-ended.

So I called my accountant, Ray. It was lunchtime, and I could hear him chomping on a sandwich. I was somehow reassured that he could still afford one.

"Is somebody after you?" he asked.

"No. Not really."

Ray understood the impulse to rebel against the crushing burden of day-to-day responsibilities. "You need liquid assets," he advised me.

There are two ways to fulfill the dream, money-wise. You can figure out how to earn while sitting on the beach (more on that in a bit). Or, if you have assets, you can leverage them. Ray and I came up with an equation that would result in a "magic number," a dollar amount you need to live the dream. It works like this: Make a list of your assets—how much money you'd have if you sold everything you own. Now, figure a four percent annual return if you invest wisely. There's your magic number, what you could live on without working and still break even (give or take a few bucks due to taxes and write-offs). While my magic number didn't have a Wall Street pedigree, it was a start.

What I needed now was a guru with a Gauguin complex who could help me fill out this picture. I found that guru in Domenick Buonamici. At the age of 26, the Cleveland-born Buonamici has become a merry evangelist for the



**"YOU CAN RUN
A BUSINESS
RIGHT FROM YOUR
LAPTOP FROM
ANYWHERE
IN THE WORLD."**

HOT PROPERTY

BOETICA, DOMINICA
 MORE THAN FOUR ACRES OF JUNGLE OVERLOOKING THE CARIBBEAN (PROPERTIES SHOWN COURTESY OF CARIBBEANLANDANDPROPERTY.COM) **\$95,000**



CRABBE HILL, ANTIGUA WORKING BAR-RESTAURANT WITH 60 SEATS AND 120 FEET OF BEACHFRONT A SHORT DISTANCE FROM JOLLY HARBOUR **\$475,000**



CAHUITA, COSTA RICA GORGEOUS BEACHFRONT HOTEL (GREAT SNORKELING) WITH RESTAURANT BORDERING A NATIONAL PARK...LOTS OF MONKEYS **\$575,000**

expatriate movement. He writes for several Internet sites, among them Escape From America. He's also an expert at picking up women in exotic locales (he co-wrote *The World Bachelor's Guide*). I threw my magic number at him.

"If you're single and willing to live frugally you could stretch that out for three years," he told me. Even with a wife and children, he assured me, I could do it. "I live on \$500 a month," he said (never in one place for long). But he also told me it was essential I keep a credit card with at least \$1,000 of available credit for every month I wanted to stay in paradise without working.

I had already done enough research to know I could buy a 700-square-foot flat in many prized areas of the South Pacific or South America for about \$100,000 with a comparatively small down payment. But if I'm going to dream the dream, I'm thinking about living higher. What if your dream is bigger than your magic number? You'll need to make some money.

The truth is, it has never been easier to earn money without going to an office than it is today. "There's a new thing on the block that wasn't widely available 15 years ago," Buonamici said. "The Internet. My advice to anyone is learn how to promote a business online. The business can be a traditional offline one with a simple website, or a 100 percent online business," he said. "Once you understand how to drive traffic to a site and sell online, you can apply

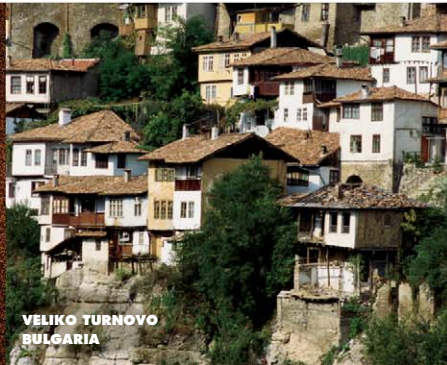
PARADISE FOUND

IF YOU'RE READY TO MAKE THE LEAP, HERE ARE THE TOP SIX PLACES TO START OVER NOW

PANAMA

AVERAGE COST OF A BEER: \$0.49
CIVILIZATION INDEX: 4.7 OUT OF 10

In a lot of ways, Panama lets you stay home while you leave home. English is widely spoken, and the dollarized economy is faring well, bolstered by a \$5.3 billion canal-expansion project. And since Uncle Sam plucked out Manuel Noriega in 1989, the place has been politically stable. What you get are pristine tropical beaches, cosmopolitan cities, mountain jungles and relatively affordable newly constructed homes. Check panamarealtor.com and commence drooling.



VELIKO TURNOVO
BULGARIA

BULGARIA

AVERAGE COST OF A BEER: \$1.61
CIVILIZATION INDEX: 5.1

Once perceived as the armpit of communist Eastern Europe, Bulgaria is still barely a blip on the tourism radar screen. But with a Black Sea coast, a Mediterranean climate in parts and phenomenally gorgeous women, it can be a great toehold in Europe. Bulgaria's economy has taken off over the past decade, but it still has some amazing land deals. Get a place near the pleasant resort of Varna and you can watch Russian oligarchs stride by with their surgically improved trophy mistresses.



HALONG BAY
VIETNAM

VIETNAM

AVERAGE COST OF A BEER: \$0.52
CIVILIZATION INDEX: 5.1

Sure, it's a communist state, but they actually kind of like Americans now. Vietnam's export-oriented economy sputtered in 2009, making it more financially attractive to immigrants. And with an exotic coastline from the Gulf of Tonkin to the South China Sea, it has plenty of beachfront property. Bear in mind that foreigners can only lease, not own, but that may soon change. If you're concerned about rising sea levels, you're advised to find a place up north, where the land lies higher.

that knowledge to any field. You can run a business right from your laptop from anywhere in the world.”

There is a reality, of course. People who long to escape the rat race tend to bring the rat race with them. There are success stories, however. Take Sharon Matola. In college, the Baltimore-born student developed an interest in mushrooms—all mushrooms, not just the happy sort. To make ends meet while studying mycology in Florida, she took a job at a local roadside attraction that boasted some sorry-looking wild animals. Through a series of unexpected events, she parlayed that job into a spot with a traveling circus in Mexico. “They were looking for a lion tamer,” Matola told me, and she was looking for a free ticket south of the border to collect mushroom samples. She ended up in Belize, where she looked after a British man’s collection of 20 animals, including a puma and a pair of endangered jaguars.

When the Brit was sent off to Borneo for his job, Matola was ordered to get rid of the animals. “I couldn’t just turn them loose,” she said. The only way to save them, she decided, was to start a zoo. Belize had never had one. Now, 27 years later, the Belize Zoo is one of the world’s foremost research centers for the study of jaguars. And Matola would never return to live in the States.

As for me? I have yet to put up the FOR SALE sign in front of my house. The dream is still a dream. But every day I’m a step closer.



THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DREAM

Be careful what you wish for, says the author of The Mosquito Coast

By Paul Theroux

It’s fairly normal, I think, this dream of fleeing to a paradise and living happily ever after under the palms with a sultry beauty. The poster child is Arthur Rimbaud, who gave up poetry at the age of 19 and ended up in the walled city of Harar in Abyssinia with a dusky mistress, became a coffee merchant and a gunrunner and never wrote a word again. Or Paul Gauguin, the stockbroker who abandoned his wife and five children and headed to Tahiti to paint masterpieces. He was for a while in heaven, indulging his genius with brilliant color and teaching 13-year-old girls the arts of love.

I have not met any geniuses in the Happy Isles or the scented tropics, though I have bumped into any number of escapees, Americans and Europeans, in the Pacific

Islands, in Southeast Asia and even in parts of Africa. All of them made money elsewhere, and many of them had settled down with a local woman—invariably one with parents to look after, brothers to educate, sisters needing support, and children.

The first thing the exile learns is that he is not home. The most bewitching parts of Costa Rica are crawling with snakes, including the world’s deadliest, the fer-de-lance. The exile is also living under a new set of rules. The filial piety in paradise involves a lot of responsibility. Most villagers are happy to have a wealthy exile as a brother-in-law or a neighbor in his shuttered chateau as long as he continues handing out money.

This exploitation bothered Rimbaud in Harar, who got sick of the exotic fantasy and his neighbors. “Forced to speak their gibberish, to eat their filthy food and suffer a thousand aggravations caused by their idleness, treachery and stupidity!”

At the age of 54, in one of the most beautiful islands in the Marquesas, in a delightful village, with a quarrel with French authorities hanging over his head, the disillusioned and syphilitic Gauguin died miserably.

The place might be different, but we are the same person. That’s the paradox of travel, “a fool’s paradise,” Emerson wrote. “At home I dream that at Naples, at Rome, I can be intoxicated with beauty and lose my sadness. I pack my trunk, embrace my friends, embark on the sea and at last wake up in Naples, and there beside me is the stern fact, the sad self, unrelenting, identical, that I fled from.”



SIERRA DE VALLE FÉRTIL
ARGENTINA



GRAND ANSE BAY
GRENADA

ARGENTINA

AVERAGE COST OF A BEER: \$0.80
CIVILIZATION INDEX: 6.7

Yes, this is where the largest national-debt default in history took place, but in the wake of that dark chapter Argentina has come into its own. Buenos Aires is a cosmopolitan city, the South Atlantic beaches are divine, and the Patagonian mountains offer great skiing. Since the 2001 default the country’s economy has largely rebounded. Plus, the steaks are awesome, and the president, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, is pretty foxy for a chief executive.

GRENADA

AVERAGE COST OF A BEER: \$1.91
CIVILIZATION INDEX: 3.6

One of the nicest places we’ve ever invaded, Grenada is also one of the smallest countries in the western hemisphere and one of only a few low-profile Caribbean islands. Tourism is the main industry, so you’ll always have drunken Americans and Europeans to share your time with. Hurricanes are an issue (Ivan 2004, Emily 2005). That said, the median female age is 22.3 years, and the scuba diving is excellent. Not a bad place to open your own fish shack. Now hiring beautiful young island girls...

CROATIA

AVERAGE COST OF A BEER: \$0.94
CIVILIZATION INDEX: 5.4

The Croatian riviera—right across the Adriatic from Italy—is one of tourism’s best-kept secrets. In the good old days of the Cold War, Croatia was among Yugoslavia’s wealthiest republics. The Balkan wars took a brutal toll, but Croatia emerged independent (if poor and ethnically cleansed). And its coastline is once again safe and stunning. There may be no better place to buy your own island. Check out the inventory at croatia-estate.com.



Guess girl Candice Boucher appears on billboards modeling the company's latest wares. Here the wild child gets back to nature in Africa, wearing no clothes at all



*Photography
by
Raphael Mazzucco*

NAKED PREY

Like the word *Playmate*, the words *Guess girl* bring to mind an immediate connotation. You think of an impossible beauty shot in some cool locale: a gas station, poolside, stepping out of a 1957 Chevy. She's always cutting-edge, and yet there's a retro chicness about her, a nod to the great sex symbols of the 1960s. She is a timeless fantasy. The genius of *Guess* advertisements is the choice of woman and the sense of narrative, that the image is a window into some story line with an ending as yet unwritten. Therein lies the fantasy: Those clothes are meant to be torn off...by you...right now. Sure, we'll

buy a pair of jeans. Make that two pairs. Since the Marciano brothers founded the company in 1981 in California, they've had an eye for the youthfully provocative, finding women from around the world with fulsome curves and cheekbones sharper than knives. The ads, many shot by German lenswoman Ellen von Unwerth, are unmissable. And what a worldly mix of goddesses: Brazil's Ana Beatriz Barros, Germany's Claudia Schiffer, France's Laetitia Casta, Britain's Naomi Campbell (of Chinese-Jamaican descent), the Czech Republic's Eva Herzigova, America's own Anna Nicole Smith. And so we introduce you to the Marcianos' latest beauty, Candice Boucher, a raven-haired,







electric-eyed siren from South Africa. Not only is Candice a new face of Guess, she is also yet another Guess girl to appear nude in this magazine, following in the footsteps of Naomi, Eva, Anna Nicole, Victoria Silvstedt, Lauren Michelle Hill and Dora Baird (though, of course, some appeared in *PLAYBOY* before they became Guess girls).

Candice grew up in Durban, on South Africa's east coast. And though she has been enjoying Gotham City's nightlife recently, she now lives in her country's epicenter of beachside cool, Cape Town. "There are a lot of beautiful people here," she playfully allows, her deep accent shading every syllable. "We South Africans are proud of our country and have a lust for life. And being so close to the beach brings out the natural sexiness."

Hardly a girl next door, Candice has a body sculpted of long, lean angles and gentle curves. She's often sent to shoots in such exotic locales as Tokyo and India. What you see here is Candice against the backdrop of a private and remote lodge in southern Kenya. Photographed by Raphael Mazzucco (who has also shot three *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit covers), she showed great poise, working the camera as lions and elephants strolled behind her. Oddly, Candice explains, showing off her assets has not always come naturally.

"It's taken me a while to be comfortable in a bikini," she says. "It's a work in progress. I was one of the shiest girls you'd ever meet; I wouldn't even eat in front of people. My family kind of pushed me into the modeling thing so I would get more self-confidence. I never spoke in school. I was one of the shy girls in the corner." So shooting in the nude...? "Well, let's just say I never in my life thought I would appear in *PLAYBOY*. But I'm happy and excited by it."

The modeling industry has its pitfalls, she will tell you. According to Candice, the problem with being identified as a model is "men think you're easy, and women think you're dumb."

Despite all the cover shoots and ad campaigns, Candice admits she still sees herself as the shy girl in the corner. "I don't walk around thinking, Oh God, I'm so hot. I like to think I'm pretty much the same person I always was."

If you like what you see here, you're in luck. Candice will be making appearances on billboards in cities across the globe and in print ads, too. She is the new face and the new fantasy. We suspect she will sell the Marcianos many pairs of jeans.







*"We South Africans have a lust for life," says
Guess girl Candice Boucher. "Being so close to
the beach brings out the natural sexiness."*





See more of Candice at club.playboy.com.

FATHER & SON

(continued from page 42)

told me. When it comes to the government, I raise the black flag.' You know what that means, John? That means give no quarter. I kill you or you kill me. That's the end of the fuckin' story."

Gotti leans toward his son as if he wants to smack some sense into him. He's dying yet gesticulating like a prizefighter warming up to go another round. "You gotta have this, John." He pounds himself on his chest. "I'm telling you as your father, John. I'm not coming to you as your boss or nothing like that. There are standards I set for myself."

"I know, Dad, I know."

"What are these bums offering you, if you can tell me that?"

"Five and a half to seven years," Junior answers.

Gotti says of government prosecutors, "I don't blame them, John. *I hate them.*"

No one can defeat this man. Six and a half years of solitary—unheard of. A life sentence. Condemned to a slow inglorious death, yet he remains unbowed. Whatever else one can say about John Gotti Sr., he was a man and a gangster through and through. And he was no rat. He would go to his grave keeping his vow, standing up until they laid him in his casket.

"John, there's nothing in the world, nobody in the world I love more than you," the godfather says. Then he asks him, "Why? Why give up?"

Junior's answer: "Sometimes you gotta give them a pound of flesh." It's his love for his biological family, his wife and children, he explains. He believes if he takes the plea he can serve his time and be released before his own boys are grown up and lost to him. "The hardest thing in the world for me to do would be to say good-bye to my kids."

The son has just confessed the ultimate blasphemy in his father's eyes: His wife and kids mean more to him than the Mafia.

"If you became a rat or a fag or a junkie, I'd dog you till the day we both died," Senior says. "I'm talking like a father that's terrified for you. I'm gonna go to my grave with a smile on my face, John—as long as I know you're safe.... As your father, I want you to be happy. I want you to be safe. I don't mean physically safe. Mentally safe."

Gotti is talking about safety not only from prosecution but also from Mob retaliation. He goes on: "Where's your dignity? Where's your manhood?"

"I know your feelings, Dad," Junior says. "I'd follow you off a cliff."

Gotti gives his son his blessing. "If you're going to take the plea, make it what you desire, John." He reaches across the table, reaches out for his boy. "If you take this plea, John, I'm never going to see you again."

Prophetic words. This was the last time father and son would see each other. In 2002 John Gotti Sr. died—not of a lethal

injection or a Mob assassin's bullet but of the one battle he could not win: a revolt of his own cells.

The men stand, embrace, clap each other on the back.

"Stay strong" are the last words of advice Gotti will ever say to his son.

The meeting is set at Grimaldi's Pizzeria in Garden City, Long Island on December 7, 2009. John Gotti Jr. was just released from prison six days earlier, after his fourth federal trial—Gotti IV—ended in yet another mistrial. According to Junior's lawyer, Charles Carnesi, since his release, John has been hitting every pizzeria on Long Island.

"Welcome back to the world," I say when John stands and shakes my hand. "You look 10 years younger than you did a week ago."

It's true. I was in the courtroom when the jury announced it was deadlocked, split down the middle. I watched Junior, a young man of 45, as he sat in front of the world, waiting to hear if he was going to walk out of the courtroom and go home to his wife and six kids or if he would go to prison for the rest of his life.

When he exited the courthouse that evening, three TV news helicopters hovered above. U.S. marshals and court security officers manned barricades to keep the mob of reporters and cameramen at bay. The posttrial press conference had the wattage of a Hollywood premiere. After 16 months of lockup, Gotti was free on a \$2 million bond.

Now he's eating pizza. Gotti tells me to sit, order whatever I want. He is sipping a martini with a twist and a Diet Coke. He's dressed in a red warm-up suit and sneakers. He says he is the happiest man alive. He woke up this morning not in a prison cell but in his own bed, in his own home and surrounded by his children.

"I'm a simple man," Gotti says and holds up his cell phone. "I just bought this, the cheapest cell phone available. I'm a dinosaur when it comes to computers, cell phones. This is me. What you see is what you get."

Carnesi, who represented Gotti in three of his past four trials, sits across from John and explains they are not talking to the media on the record as long as the threat of another trial is hanging over their heads. (Not long after this meeting the government confirmed it would not try to prosecute again.) John says he has agreed to talk to me because "you knew my father. And your reputation precedes you."

For 10 weeks of trial during Gotti IV, I was in the courtroom every day. I interviewed and ate with the family and the principal cast in the courthouse cafeteria. I knew John Gotti Sr., met him briefly during my own sojourn through the criminal justice system. I could not fathom what it must have been like to grow up as the son of this man, to be named after him and to follow in his footsteps. Follow him into "the

life," as those in the Mafia milieu refer to a life of crime. Follow him into a courtroom. And finally follow him all the way into the inner sanctum of the prison system: solitary confinement, where father and son each had to confront his own demons.

The Gottis are the Kennedys of organized crime. Fiercely loyal, children shaped by the ambitions and obsessions of a domineering patriarch, living large in the intense glare of the spotlight. The name *Gotti* has taken on emblematic portent in the American lexicon; it has become synonymous with the word *Mafia*. Like the Kennedys, the Gottis are a family shadowed by infamy and tragedy. As JFK Jr.'s death brought down the curtain on Camelot, so too has Gotti Jr.'s renunciation of the Mafia come to symbolize the demise of traditional organized crime.

What Gotti really wants to do, he says, is pack up, take his family and move away from New York. Go to North Carolina. Buy a farm. Raise dogs and horses. Raise his family.

Gotti has already given the government more than nine years in prison. Against his father's wishes, John pleaded guilty to racketeering in 1999 and went to serve his time. John's father died while both men were locked up. Junior was denied permission to attend his father's funeral. Then, while serving his six-and-a-half-year sentence, the government indicted him again—"double banded," as his father would have said. The feds waited until the sentence was about to run out, then hit him with a reconstituted set of racketeering charges.

Between 2005 and 2006 the government tried and failed to convict Junior three times. The latest indictment, handed down in 2008, included allegations that John Jr. directly ordered or participated in three murders. In the four trials a huge majority of the evidence the government was able to produce to connect Junior to any of the charges came from testimony given by Mob rats who had made deals with the government. No physical evidence was presented. There were no damning audiotapes like the bugged conversations that convicted Gotti's father. And Junior, through his attorneys, presented a novel defense.

John A. Gotti, a "made" member of the Gambino crime family—indeed, the acting boss—maintained he had quit La Cosa Nostra. He claimed he saw the horror of his father's and his own life and withdrew from the family when he pleaded guilty and went off to prison in 1999. By the time the government indicted him again, in 2005, the five-year statute of limitations had run out.

It worked. Four juries deadlocked. To bolster his defense Gotti's lawyers entered tapes made during visits at Ray Brook federal prison. Gotti is heard telling family members and friends he wants out; he's disgusted by the treachery, the greed and lack of honor, particularly on the part of his uncles. The defense also played excerpts from the videotaped



"I can simulate an orgasm so well, I sometimes imagine I'm really having one."

conversation with his dying father at Springfield as proof that John had asked for the don's permission to give the government their "pound of flesh," plead guilty and leave the gangster life.

"You saw the video," Junior says to me. "When I bring up closure, that's what I'm talking about. You see my father's reaction. 'Closure?' He doesn't want to hear it. 'That's a word for overeducated under-intelligent motherfuckers,' he says. There's no closure for him. Except when they close the coffin."

In the end, John says, his father relented. "He wanted me to do what I thought was right. But that was not him. I realized I could never be him."

"Did you ever want to be anything else as a kid growing up? Did you aspire to be anything other than what you became?"

"Me? No. All I ever wanted to be was my father. More than anything in the world, I wanted to be that man."

John Gotti Sr. ascended to the top of the underworld by breaking the rules. While climbing the ranks of the Mob, Gotti allegedly ordered the killing of a made man, Ralph Galione, without getting permission, which enraged then *caporegime* Paul "Big Paul" Castellano. Then, just before Christmas 1985, Gotti and his right-hand man, Salvatore "Sammy the Bull" Gravano, pulled off the gangland slaying of the century. In a daring hit planned and executed like a military operation by Gotti, the upstart capo from the Bronx ordered the execution of Castellano, Carlo Gambino's brother-in-law, who had assumed leadership of the crime family when Gambino died.

Gotti had run afoul of Gambino leadership when the government began to assemble a case alleging that the Gotti crew, through Senior's trusted lieutenant Angelo Ruggiero and Gotti's brother Gene, were making a fortune in the heroin business. The Gambinos were not supposed to be dealing heroin. But the FBI had tapes of Ruggiero discussing junk deals over the phone from his Long Island home. After a high-profile

indictment of Gotti lieutenants on narcotics charges, Paul Castellano demanded to see transcripts of the tapes, which could have meant a death sentence for Ruggiero and possibly Gotti as well. Instead, Gotti killed Castellano and orchestrated a coup d'état.

The brazen late-afternoon murder took place outside Sparks Steak House in midtown Manhattan. Shooters—dressed identically in overcoats and Russian hats to confuse bystanders—gunned down the Gambino boss and his driver as they arrived for an early dinner meeting. Gotti and his future underboss, Sammy the Bull, coordinated the hit from a car parked down the street. Gotti got permission from three of the four bosses of the other New York Mafia families before killing the leader of his own *borgata*. The lone hold-out was Genovese family boss Vincent "the Chin" Gigante. And there were others who resented Gotti's relentless rise to power. From that day forth Gotti was a marked man. Agents of the law and rival gangsters both plotted his demise.

Not long after the Castellano hit, a car bomb in a Buick parked outside the Veterans and Friends Social Club in Bensonhurst, Brooklyn blew to pieces Gotti's first underboss, Frank DeCicco. It is believed that the bomb was intended to kill Gotti and Gravano.

"My father," Junior says, remembering the days following the attempt on the don's life, "you know what he did? He got in his own car—he had a Mercedes—and he drove. No driver; he drove alone. No bodyguards, just him. He went to every one of the clubs and spoke to his men. He was a general rallying the troops. He told them, 'Now is when we got to show who we are. We're not hiding. We're standing strong.' My father was a soldier."

Though he angered his peers and put a target on his back, Gotti became a folk hero. Born in the Bronx to a father who abused him mercilessly, he rose to become the boss of bosses. Movie stars and sports celebrities sought his company. Anthony Quinn and Mickey Rourke made appearances at his trials.

For much of Junior's early childhood—he

grew up in a modest apartment in the Canarsie section of Brooklyn—his dad was "away" (the Mob euphemism for doing a prison bid), serving a federal sentence for hijacking and, later, a state bid for his participation in the murder of James McBratney, an Irish hood who made the mistake of kidnapping the nephew of Carlo Gambino.

"The other kids used to tease me," John says over pizza at Grimaldi's. "I kept telling them, 'My father's coming home. He'll be home next week.' Then he wouldn't show up, and my friends, they'd say I was a liar, that I didn't really have a father. I was making it all up."

By the time Senior was finally paroled, his wife, Victoria, and the kids had moved. Senior had been away so long he didn't know where his family lived. Junior remembers how he was out in the street playing with his buddies one day when a big dark Lincoln with tinted windows pulled up. "You know, nobody had tinted windows in those days."

The electric window slid down and there he was, John's father, asking where the house was.

"I told him, 'That one over there, the one with the green awning,'" Junior says. "The Lincoln pulls into the driveway. My father gets out. He's wearing a light chocolate-colored topcoat. He was the most beautiful man you ever saw. Jet-black hair, in great shape, rock hard from being locked up. All the kids in the neighborhood just stood there staring at him. I was so proud. I really had a father. That was my father."

Once inside, John took his dad to his room to show him the New York Mets pennants he had plastered all over the walls. Gotti shrugged and said, "You know I've been a Yankees fan my whole life." When his father left the room, the crestfallen boy tore down all his Mets mementos. Young John would be a Yankees fan from that day forth.

"When did you first understand who your father was?" I ask him.

"We always knew; the whole family knew we were different. I remember my mother once took me to see my father while he was locked up in Lewisburg. I was about five, six at the time. It was around Halloween, and my father asked me what I was going to dress up as. I said I had a friend who was gonna let me use his policeman's hat and badge, and I was going to dress up as a cop."

Senior turned to his wife and bit his fist. "What's the matter with you?" he said. "What have you done to my kid? He wants to become a cop?"

"Johnny," she responded, "he's just a kid." "No kid of mine is gonna dress up as a cop."

"That was my father," Junior says.

When he was 14, Junior was sent off to boarding school at the New York Military Academy. One day he was watching TV with some fellow students. "The guy on the news says something about this rising alleged Mafia captain from Queens named John Gotti," Junior explains. "One of the kids goes, 'Hey, he's got the same name as you!' Then they show his picture on TV and all the kids are looking at me because they know that's my father; he comes to visit me. By that time I pretty much had it figured out who my father was."



"And as you can see, for a small car it has the kind of legroom most guys want."

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By his early 20s Junior had assembled his own crew. In every way except his choice of wardrobe, the younger Gotti mirrored the don. John preferred expensive warm-up suits and sneakers to his dad's custom-fitted De Lisi and Armani suits and Bruno Magli shoes. Operating out of the Our Friends Social Club around the corner from his father's Bergin Hunt and Fish Club on 101st Avenue in Ozone Park, Queens, John's crew included the sons of other Mafia dads from the neighborhood in Howard Beach.

"Where I grew up, my friends, all their fathers were in the life. Those were my friends. The life was all around us. It was...." Junior searches for the word. "It seemed normal."

On Christmas Eve 1988, at the tender age of 24, John Gotti Jr. became a made member of the Gambino crime family. In *This Family of Mine*, sister Victoria Gotti describes the night her brother was inducted in a secret ceremony John likened to joining King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. "This was one of the most important days of his life," Vicki writes. The ceremony was held in an apartment belonging to Joseph "Joe Butch" Corrao on Mulberry Street in Little Italy, just doors away from the Ravenite Social Club, where Senior took command after usurping control of the Gambino crime family. John Jr. was given a picture of a saint stained with a drop of his blood. As the saint's picture burned, John recited the ancient oath.

"If you should betray La Cosa Nostra, your soul will burn like this saint," he was warned. Everyone in the room began to chant. "Now you are born over. You are a new man."

After the ceremony John joined his father at the Ravenite. Junior "was the happiest man alive," Vicki writes. Senior did not attend the ceremony in order to avoid the appearance of nepotism, already a persistent complaint in Mob circles. It is also part of

Mafia lore that a father's presence at his son's induction brings bad luck to the family.

Present, however, was Gotti Sr.'s underboss, Gravano, who would go on to provide the testimony that helped convict the don and condemn him to die behind bars. Another budding wiseguy who got straightened out that night was Michael "Mikey Scars" DiLeonardo, who would rise to become a captain with close ties to the Gottis. Mikey Scars also became a government witness who testified against Junior in all four of his trials.

The curse was upon the Gotti family. Both the father's and the son's most trusted brothers in blood were poised to stab them in the back.

There was another Gotti son, Frank, the family favorite, who was run over by a car and killed in 1980 while riding a minibike. He was 12 years old. The Gottis were devastated by Frankie Boy's death. Privately, John Sr. was inconsolable.

"My room was right beside my father's study," Junior tells me. "I could hear him in there alone, late at night. He was crying."

At the wake Gotti showed no emotion. It was a crowded affair: mobsters, friends, family. In Junior's words, Gotti "showed nothing. He was like a statue."

"Your mother and your sisters told me it was hard for your father to show love," I say.

"Impossible," John answers. "Because he never knew it as a kid. He never felt it."

"But did you feel it from him? Did you know he loved you?"

"Yes, absolutely," John says. "In his way, our father loved us. We knew that. The way he protected his family, the way he provided."

Victoria Gotti told me she was a "zombie" for 10 years after her son Frankie Boy was killed; she blames herself for being unable to keep a closer eye on her eldest

son, John, who around that time started getting into trouble.

John Favara, the unlucky neighbor who ran over Frankie, was whacked with a two-by-four and thrown into the rear of a van by a group of unidentified men, a victim of what Sicilians call *lupara bianca*, the "white shotgun." Favara's body was never found. The Gottis maintain John Sr. did not order the death of Favara. Gotti and Victoria were away in Florida when Favara went missing. Some law enforcement sources claim otherwise.

Years after Frankie was killed, FBI agents put a tail on Gotti Sr. one Saturday to determine where he went each weekend morning before he made his appearance at the Bergin Hunt and Fish Club. They followed Gotti's car to a graveyard. They watched as the vicious mafioso placed a bouquet of red roses on Frankie Boy's headstone. Gotti then sat staring at his boy's grave for half an hour, quietly talking to himself and to his dead son.

Every year on the anniversary of Frankie's death, an announcement appears in the *New York Daily News*: "Frank: The pain of losing you never leaves our heart. Loving you, missing you, always and always hurting."

As the elder Gotti children grew up, married and moved away, the don and his wife stayed in their modest Howard Beach home. Gotti was at the height of his power and notoriety. He was untouchable. No court could convict him. No murder plot could capture him in the crosshairs. He was the most visible, best-dressed, handsomest, wittiest Mafia don ever.

In time Gotti became enamored of his own myth. Hubris reared its Gorgon head. The boss got sloppy, allowing himself to be captured on an FBI bug in the Ravenite Social Club and on a second chip hidden in an apartment above the Ravenite, where Gotti and his closest comrades discussed a mounting body count. On FBI tapes Gotti was revealed as a foulmouthed dictator with an explosive temper and a scatological sense of humor. He ordered the killing of Gambino soldier Louis DiBono for the crime of not coming in to report.

"You know why he's dying?" Gotti asked his underboss at the time, Frank Locascio. "He's going to die because he refused to come in when I called. He didn't do nothing else wrong."

Caught on tape complaining about FBI wiretaps after the feds bugged Angelo Ruggiero's house, Gotti lamented, "You know how they invade your privacy. Ya hear a baby crying, your wife crying. You say, 'It could be my house, my baby, my wife.' Where the fuck are we going? Maybe you wanna throw a fart in the bathroom; you hear it in open court. They hear you farting. Like that poor fuckin' Frank the Wop. His phone was in the bathroom. He's taking a shit, and he's talking. That's a fuckin' shame.... Then he goes, *Phpphhhh! Bing!* He said, 'I feel better now. I couldn't move.'"

Gravano cracked up. Gotti was laughing too, clapping his hands.

"In open fuckin' courtroom. *Madonna!*" Gotti went on. "You gotta get a heart attack."

The boss might have had a heart attack



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had he known the feds were listening in.

In 1990, just two years after John Jr. got made, he was elevated to the level of captain. That same year John married Kim Albanese in the most lavish Mafia wedding of all time. At the reception, held in the Helmsley Palace in Manhattan, each of the five New York families and the New Jersey family had their own table. The newlyweds received more than \$500,000 in cash in envelopes from wedding guests. They moved into a six-bedroom colonial mansion on three acres in Mill Neck, an exclusive community on the North Shore of Long Island, and began to grow their young family.

The Gotti regime reigned supreme. The life had been good to the Gottis. Or so it seemed.

Then it all came crashing down in a massive bust.

Just before Christmas 1990, Gotti, Sammy Gravano and Frank Locascio—the entire administration of the Gambino family—were enjoying an espresso at the Ravenite when FBI agents stormed the place. As he was taken into custody, Gotti, calm and collected, asked the arresting agents, “I got time to finish my coffee, right?”

He would never see the streets again.

With Gotti Sr. and Gravano locked up in the maximum-security unit on the ninth floor of the Metropolitan Correctional

Center in downtown Manhattan, a major rift divided the leadership of the Gambino family. The two most feared gangsters in the world were awaiting trial on 13 federal charges that detailed six murders, including the famous hit on Paul Castellano.

Then the unthinkable happened. Sammy the Bull Gravano flipped. When Gravano rolled, the news sent shock waves throughout the underworld. Gravano agreed to become a cooperating witness against Gotti after FBI agents played the Ravenite tapes aloud during a pretrial hearing. Gotti was outed on the wire calling Gravano a “mad dog killer,” criticizing him for being too greedy and creating “a fuckin’ army inside an army.” Gravano knew that even if he was to beat the charges, Gotti may still have had him whacked. So he turned. Gravano pleaded guilty to reduced counts of murder and racketeering, admitted responsibility for 19 killings and took the stand to betray his oath of *omertà* and summon the Gotti curse.

With his father locked up for good, Junior took over as acting boss. It had been a meteoric rise to the top of the underworld. Mafiosi both inside and outside the Gambino family questioned the wisdom of naming John, only 28 at the time, boss of the most powerful Mafia family in the country. An old Mafia saying has it that “the family is only as strong as its boss.”

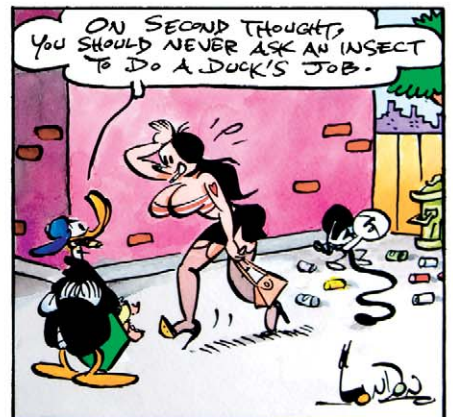
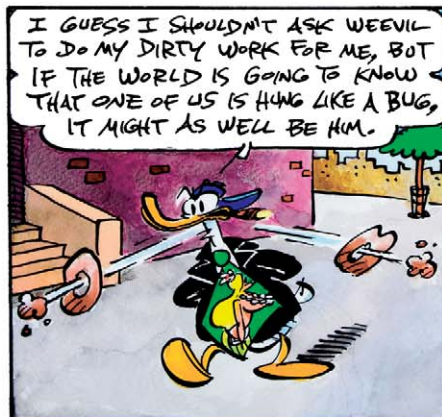
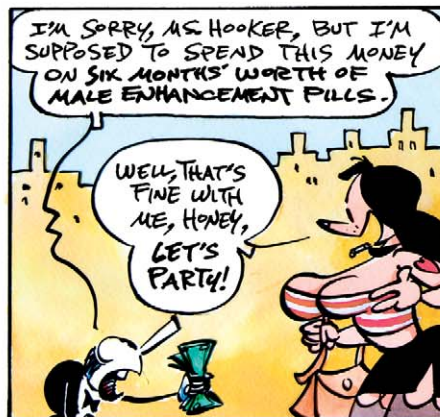
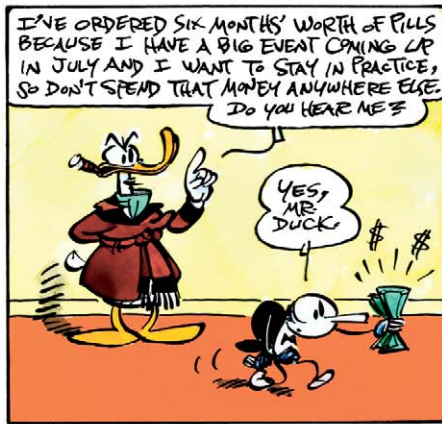
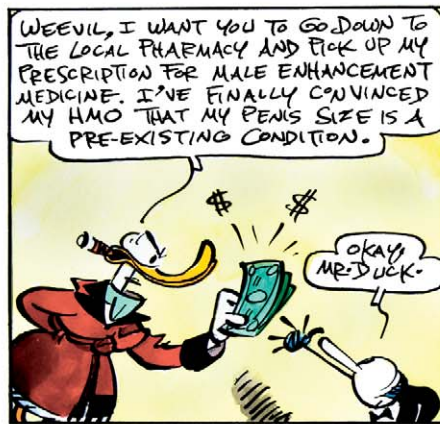
Soon after taking over, Junior changed his image. He started wearing expensive business suits in place of the warm-up suits. He donned a pair of wire-rimmed glasses. He came to appear more as a distinguished, sedate and businesslike version of his father. To those who were close to John, he began to reveal another, private side that was in stark contrast to Gotti Sr. He was emotionally devoted to his wife and children.

Defense attorney Jeffrey Lichtman, who defended Junior in his 2005 trial, told me when he first met his client in the law offices of Michael Kennedy, the young wiseguy struck him as “intimidating, sullen.” But when they met again six years later, after Lichtman had gone to work for defense lawyer Gerald Shargel, who represented Gotti Sr., Lichtman found that Junior had changed. John, according to Lichtman, had a sensitivity he found likable.

“We hit it off,” Lichtman says. “Gotti would plop down in a chair and we would talk for hours. I found him intelligent, caring. He would ask a lot of questions. He was introspective, human, sensitive, even warm, especially when he talked about his family. We bonded over a love for our kids.”

While locked up at Ray Brook federal prison, Junior confided in Lichtman that he wanted out of the life: “I’m out of the Mafia. I’m done, finished. I can’t stand it

Dirty Duck by Bobby London



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anymore. I can't stand these people. I've been done with it for a long time."

"He was complaining how it had destroyed his life," Lichtman says. "He meant it. Most of our conversation was dominated by his saying he was out of the Mafia." Lichtman says of Junior, "He changed his kids' diapers. All he cared about was his kids. After he went away to serve his sentence, he would call in to parent-teacher conferences from prison. I loved the guy."

Three trials and three hung juries later, it appeared some of Senior's Teflon had rubbed off on his son. At the conclusion of Gotti III in 2006, prosecutors told the presiding judge they did not intend to bring another case. But the federal government does not give up easily, particularly when your name is John Gotti. The FBI had unearthed a new witness, a college dropout and Queens coke dealer of Albanian descent named John Alite. Junior and Alite had been childhood buddies; Gotti had been Alite's best man at his wedding. Now, years later, FBI agents found Alite hiding out in Brazil. He faced a death sentence if extradited to the United States on drug-related murder charges.

Early on the morning of August 5, 2008, a dozen FBI agents, some in helicopters, swooped in on John Jr.'s Oyster Bay, Long Island home and took him into custody on charges originating out of Tampa, Florida, where Alite, as part of a deal to avoid the death penalty, had rolled and implicated Gotti. Gotti was held in New York in isolation, awaiting trial for more than a year. There would be no plea this time. In the solitary quiet of Junior's prison cell, the words of his dead father would come back to haunt him: "Raise the black flag....

Give no quarter.... Where's your dignity? Where's your manhood?"

Gotti IV was a study in comparison. A son was held up to be measured against the long, ominous shadow cast by his father. John entered the courtroom each day carrying an attorney's file folio stuffed with legal documents. A burly bodybuilder when he was on the street, he appeared smaller, diminished by the year-plus he had spent in solitary. Gotti had gone gray; not just his hair but his flesh too had taken on the dull patina of jail cell walls. He nodded, greeted his mother and sisters, the loyal Gotti women and family friends seated in the front of the courtroom. Then he took his seat at the defense table beside lead attorney Charles Carnesi.

"The defendant has killed with his own hands," Assistant United States Attorney Elie Honig declared in his opening statement to the jury. Government witnesses testified John stabbed to death a kid named Daniel Silva in a barroom brawl at a Queens pub called the Silver Fox. The killing took place in 1983, when Gotti was 19. On cross-examination, none of the witnesses could actually place the knife in Gotti's hands.

The man who aspired to become Junior's Judas, his Sammy Gravano, John Alite took the stand as the government's star witness. Alite admitted to committing murders, countless beatings, robberies, home invasions, kidnappings. He told of moving millions of dollars' worth of cocaine through half a dozen Queens bars; he admitted he lied as a matter of course in his career as a criminal. But now, Alite claimed, since becoming a government witness, he was telling the truth. He swore he participated in all these crimes in the service of the defendant, John Gotti Jr.

Alite testified John ordered him to

murder a drug dealer named George Grosso for using the Gotti name as sanction for his cocaine-dealing enterprise. Alite and another witness, a retired corrupt New York City cop named Philip Baroni, described how Grosso was taken for a one-way ride. Alite sat in the rear of the car behind Grosso. He shot him in the head, spit on him and called him a motherfucker.

According to Alite's testimony, Gotti Sr. gave responsibility for a hit on Gambino soldier Louis DiBono to his son John Jr. DiBono was found lying in the front seat of his Cadillac, parked in the garage under the World Trade Center, with bullets in his head.

Alite's word was the only evidence the prosecution was able to produce connecting John to either the Grosso or the DiBono hit.

"Three trials, there's no mention of any murders," Gotti says over pizza at Grimaldi's. "Now all of a sudden they find this Alite and I'm charged with three murders. Alite was a mad dog who got off the leash. He was an animal. Even the Mob didn't want him."

A DEA agent once said to me, when describing how a jury trial works, "We get up there and tell our lies; then you get up and tell your lies. It's just a question of whose lies the jury believes." That may be an exaggeration, but it would be naive to believe that every word uttered on the witness stand is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

After 10 weeks of trial the jury retired to deliberate. Once again prosecutors had presented no physical evidence to connect Junior with any of the alleged crimes. Their case rested entirely on testimony from cooperating witnesses, snitches who admitted to committing crimes and lying as a way of life. The strongest thing the government had going for it was the defendant's name.

He's John Gotti; he must be guilty.

"One thing you can say, Dad: I ain't a tenth of you, but I am you."—*John Gotti Jr. to his father at their last meeting*



"My tax returns were based on the assumption that the IRS was understaffed."

Fathers and sons. The relationship is as deep and at times as stormy as the Sargasso Sea. A son may love his father and seek his approval by following his example, as did John with his proud mafioso father. A son may resent his father and strive to be different, as I did with my father. Or he may hate his father and live a life fueled by anger, as did John Gotti Sr. for his father. Sons are shaped by the example set by their fathers. The influence is as inevitable as it is profound.

"I can tell you one thing," Angela Gotti, John's older sister and the firstborn of the five Gotti children, told me over lunch in the courthouse cafeteria. "My brother is nothing like our father. I loved my father. I worshipped the ground he walked on. He put that family before his family. For John, his wife and kids are everything."

"Johnnie [Sr.] was not a good father," Victoria Gotti, the Dapper Don's wife, added. "He was not a good husband. But he was a good man." Then: "He was one of 13 children. They were very poor. Johnnie grew up with nothing. My husband had 30, 40 pairs of shoes because, when he was a kid, he had

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to go to school with two different shoes. The other kids laughed at him.”

“There were 18 kids,” Vicki Gotti, the family biographer, corrected. “Eleven survived.”

After lunch Victoria and I rode up in the elevator together. I confided in her that I had met her husband while I was locked up in the Metropolitan Correctional Center. It was the mid-1980s. I was at MCC awaiting trial on charges of having been the kingpin of an international marijuana-smuggling enterprise. Gotti was jailed pending bail in the first racketeering case he ultimately beat by bribing a juror. I had become friendly with Gotti’s goombah, Angelo Ruggiero, who is John Jr.’s godfather and his middle name-sake. Angelo introduced me to the don. Gotti Sr. exuded gangster charm. He was quick-witted, cocksure. He carried himself with the strut and style of a matador—a born boss.

Victoria looked at me and appeared to relax.

“So you know the life,” she said.

“I thank God I didn’t have children then,” I said. “I used to see fathers in the prison visiting room with their kids. It broke my heart.”

“When I found out what Johnnie had done, that he led my son into that life, I was so angry with him I wouldn’t speak to him for two and a half years. I wouldn’t visit him; I wouldn’t have anything to do with him. I couldn’t forgive him for that. If I found out he had five mistresses, I wouldn’t have been as mad at him as I was when I knew what he had done to my son. When I realized how sick he was, I went to see him, and I forgave him. You know, I still loved the man.”

“What did your husband say when you confronted him?” I asked.

“Johnnie told me, ‘I did it to protect him. They would have killed him.’”

If his enemies couldn’t get to him, Gotti reasoned, his son made a likely target. By bringing John into the Gambino family, John Sr. believed he could shield his son from the treachery he knew only too well. But that could simply have been Gotti’s ego, the imprisoned godfather seeking to maintain control over his empire by foisting his son into leadership.

There is a tragic inevitability to John Gotti Jr.’s life passage; he was preordained to become who he was. How do you grow up in the orbit of the boss of all bosses, named for him and not become a wiseguy? You either renounce your father and his life—a virtual impossibility if your father is John Gotti—or you embrace it. In the end, John Gotti Jr. did both.

“The one thing I found totally unbelievable,” I say to Junior as we finish the last slices of pizza, “was the government’s claim that once you become a made member of the Mob, there’s no getting out.”

“Exactly. Says who? The government? There could be retaliation,” Gotti admits, “but I have to live with that.”

Joseph Bonanno, boss of the Bonanno family, quit and retired to Arizona to write his memoirs. His son Salvatore “Bill” Bonanno also walked away, as did Michael Franzese, son of legendary Colombo family capo John “Sonny” Franzese.

“You don’t think your father would consider what you have done to be brave? To make the decision you made?” I ask.

“My father?” says John. “No, not my father. Not that man. He lived and died by what he believed.”

The Gotti regime changed the face of the modern American Mafia. John J. Gotti and John A. Gotti broke all the rules. Between them they ripped the mask off the hidden visage of the Men of Honor. Now it’s mostly history. Of the five New York families, four are in chaos. Only the secretive Genovese family remains strong.

As I left my meeting with the self-exiled former Mafia chieftain, I thought I could feel the old pirate roll over in his grave. The black flag fluttered and fell; the white flag was hoisted in its place. “Okay,” Gotti murmured to the ghosts of the underworld, “let the kid be his own man.” Junior was safe—physically and mentally. Maybe now the boss would rest in peace.



“Actually, I work from home.”

SARAH SILVERMAN

(continued from page 38)

this video is amazing.” And I felt bad. I just felt his expectations were way too high. I said, “Jimmy, I don’t want to disappoint you. It’s a funny video, but that’s all it is.”

PLAYBOY: Little did you realize.

SILVERMAN: He tried to act angry when the cameras were back on him, but I watched him as he watched it, and he had this huge grin on his face.

PLAYBOY: It went on to become hugely popular on the Internet. Is that something you could ever duplicate?

SILVERMAN: I’m very proud of it, but it was definitely a fluke. When I did “The Great Schlep” [a campaign to get young Jewish people to encourage their Florida grandparents to vote for Obama], I knew the Jewish Council for Education and Research enlisted me because of the Damon thing. And I remember telling them, “I’m psyched to do this, but please lower your expectations. ‘I’m Fucking Matt Damon’ had a movie star in it. And it had a song with a catchy melody and the word *fuck* in it. That’s a formula I can’t repeat every time.”

PLAYBOY: It’s been said that all musicians want to be comics—

SILVERMAN: And all comics want to be musicians. Yeah, I think that’s true. There’s a part of me that wants to be a serious musician. I love songs about heartache and heartbreak. Do you ever listen to Patty Griffin? I just adore her. I wrote this song—nothing as good as Patty Griffin would write—but it’s more heartfelt than what I usually do.

PLAYBOY: Do you have any plans to record it?

SILVERMAN: Oh God, no. I would *never* do it. There’s nothing lamer than a comedian taking himself seriously.

PLAYBOY: Would you let somebody else record it?

SILVERMAN: I want to get one of those teen pop girls to sing it, like Taylor Swift or Miley Cyrus, because it’s about teen angst. It’s about a teen girl wanting to be an adult. If I did it, it’d just be lame. But I think it’d really be cool if people were like, “You know that new Miley Cyrus song? The comedian Sarah Silverman wrote it.” That would be awesome.

PLAYBOY: Does the song have a title yet?

SILVERMAN: Not really. I might call it “I Could Do That Too,” maybe. [*pauses, then breaks into embarrassed smile*] Naw, that’s not the name.

PLAYBOY: It sounds like the song exposes a raw nerve. Do you feel uncomfortable sharing too much of yourself without the comedy detachment?

SILVERMAN: Yeah, but I also think that as much as there are no rules, there *are* certain rules. The second you take yourself seriously or show you’re taking yourself seriously, it’s not funny. It’s a comedy killer.

PLAYBOY: But if you’re not trying to be funny, why does it matter?

SILVERMAN: I don’t know. [*long pause*] Some things are just for private, you know? It’s like people thinking I’m cold or this or that. It’s unfortunate, but I don’t need strangers to know I’m warm. [*laughs*] I don’t need strangers to know the real me.



WILL FORTE

(continued from page 76)

Albuquerque and it was hot. Nudity is nature's air-conditioning.

Q4

PLAYBOY: From *Saturday Night Live* to movies like *The Brothers Solomon*, you've proved to be a master of the vacant, emotionless grin. What goes through your head when you're playing dumb?

FORTE: I think that's what I look like when I'm sleeping. If I was sleeping and opened my eyes for just a minute and you took a picture, that's exactly what I'd look like.

Q5

PLAYBOY: Is it true your audition for *SNL* involved excessive profanity?

FORTE: I used to do a sketch at the Groundlings Theater in Los Angeles. I was a street performer who dressed entirely in gold and did robotic movements for money. I sing about what it's like to make a living on the streets, and I reveal that I suck cock for my gold face paint. The second half of the song is just the words *cock* and *face paint*. When I came out to New York for the *Saturday Night Live* audition, I did that song. When you audition for *SNL* you're alone on a stage, and [executive producer] Lorne Michaels and a bunch of other people are in the audience, and they don't really laugh at all. I was up there singing about cocks and face paint to complete silence. After it was over I walked toward the exit, and as I passed Lorne I said, "Sorry about all the cocks." [laughs] Two weeks later they hired me.

Q6

PLAYBOY: Andy Samberg gets all the credit for being *SNL*'s male heartthrob. Have you taken any steps to increase your sex appeal?

FORTE: I have, yes. I've been doing a lot of sit-ups and push-ups and.... [sighs] No, that's not true at all. I've accepted my place on the show. Andy is the sex symbol, and I get to do all the sex offender roles and the older pervy dudes.

Q7

PLAYBOY: Now that you mention it, you do play an awful lot of perverted characters. Are you more comfortable creeping out an audience?

FORTE: At some point last year we were working on a sketch about an overly polite sex offender, and it dawned on me that I'd played an awful lot of sex-offender-type characters. I thought, People are going to think I really *am* this creepy dude. I hope nobody thinks that.

Q8

PLAYBOY: Many of your characters have mustaches. Do you feel funnier with facial hair?

FORTE: Absolutely I do. I know sometimes it's not appropriate for a character to have a mustache, but I can't help myself. I got into a really tense mustache standoff with Lorne. My third year on the show I did a scene about a guy in a restaurant who forces his waiter to keep grinding pepper on his salad. "Grind it! Grind it! Grind, grind, grind!" I thought the character should have a mustache, but Lorne didn't agree. It became this major back-and-forth where I was pleading

with him, "Please, let me wear a mustache!" Obviously Lorne won that argument.

Q9

PLAYBOY: You took over the George W. Bush impersonations after Will Ferrell left *SNL* but were quickly replaced by Jason Sudeikis. How did you lose out on playing the president?

FORTE: It was definitely something I wanted. In general, I'm not good at impersonations, and Will Ferrell was doing Bush long before I got on the show. He made it such a wonderful, awesome character. When Lorne called me into his office to tell me I wouldn't be doing Bush anymore, 99 percent of me thought, Oh, yes, this is great news! And one percent was like, Oh no, what did I do wrong? But I think Jason is great at it. He does a wonderful Bush. [long pause] I still hate him for it.

Q10

PLAYBOY: During an *SNL* scene with quarterback Peyton Manning, he strummed your leg like a guitar. Was it frightening to be manhandled by a football legend?

FORTE: Peyton is much taller than I am, so when he pulled my leg up to play, it got very close to a groin injury. I'm not very flexible, but for him to play my leg effectively he had to pull it up to a dangerous level for me and my crotch. Thankfully I was fine, but it would have been an honor to have my groin injured by Peyton Manning.

Q11

PLAYBOY: We've heard a lot of wild stories about the postshow parties at *SNL*. Is it nothing but wall-to-wall celebrities and punch bowls filled with cocaine?

FORTE: I don't know what the parties were like in the 1970s and 1980s. I've heard crazy drug stories, but it's not like that anymore. It's kind of a family atmosphere...if your family is a bunch of shameless drunks.

Q12

PLAYBOY: Your real name is Orville. Why did you drop it? Isn't Orville a funnier name than Will?

FORTE: I'm the fourth Orville in my family. My full name is Orville Willis Forte IV. I don't know how the name got started or why it's still passed along, because none of the Orvilles in my family have gone by Orville. My dad goes by Reb, my grandpa goes by Junie, and my great-grandpa was Buster. Even though the whole thing seems crazy, if I ever have a son he's definitely going to be Orville Willis Forte V. Once it gets to number four you kind of have to keep it going.

Q13

PLAYBOY: You were a history major at UCLA. When did you first realize you may have made a mistake?

FORTE: Almost instantly. I somehow got good grades, but I wasn't a great student. I basically persuaded the other students in class to do all the work, and then I just memorized their outlines. To this day I've retained none of that information. I can barely hold my own in Trivial Pursuit; the history questions are way too complicated for me.

Q14

PLAYBOY: The memory loss may be explained by your other college experience,



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as a member of the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity. Did you have a few blackout drinking binges?

FORTE: More than a few. I was a mess in college. In my freshman year I gained 40 pounds, all from beer and vodka. My entire college drinking experience can be summed up with one story. I went with a friend to a sorority party with a Western theme, so I was dressed like a cowboy. We showed up, and after that it gets hazy. The next thing I remember is waking up at six in the morning in the back of a postal jeep. [laughs] I had no idea where the fuck I was—all I could see were postal jeeps. I walked around for almost four hours looking for a pay phone to call my date and find out what the hell I did last night. I was convinced the fraternity was going to find out and kick me out. My friend said, "Are you kidding? You might get elected *president* of the fraternity."

Q15

PLAYBOY: You played Barney Stinson's inept wingman on the sitcom *How I Met Your Mother*. Are you a little better with the ladies?

FORTE: I'm not the kind of person who can just walk up to a woman in a bar and strike up a conversation. But I think I'd be an okay wingman. If I'm approaching a woman for a friend, there's no pressure. Approaching somebody for myself, I'm a mess.

Q16

PLAYBOY: We've heard rumors that you owed Amy Poehler \$15,000. Care to defend yourself?

FORTE: Okay, here's the thing. When Amy was promoting *Blades of Glory* and going on talk shows, I told her, as a joke, "Let's get the Will Forte name out there. I'll give you \$100 if you mention my name on TV." And I think she misunderstood it as "I'll give you \$100 *every* time you mention my name." It was my fault

for not establishing the terms or making it clear that it was a one-time deal. She did a lot of TV spots to promote the movie, and my tab really started to run up. I think we reached a compromise that was charity-related.

Q17

PLAYBOY: A woman claiming to be your grandmother appeared in some hilarious Internet ads for your first big movie, *The Brothers Solomon*. Was that a stunt grandmother?

FORTE: No, that was my real grandma, Grandma Helen. She was a magical woman. I didn't know it at the time, but she was declining in health when we shot those spots. She had one of those oxygen tubes in her nose, and we had to take it away from her whenever she did her lines. [laughs] I felt bad. I kept asking her, "How are you feeling, Grandma? Do you want oxygen again?" But she was a trouper. There was one point when she admitted, "I think I need my oxygen now," but we were right in the middle of a take and my mom was like, "No, no, no. Get this one line first." [laughs] She was so great, so funny, and then two weeks later she died. A small part of me feels I might've been semi-responsible. I still have this memory of taking the oxygen away from her face so we could film her. "No oxygen for you, Grandma!"

Q18

PLAYBOY: You French-kissed fellow *SNL* cast member Fred Armisen on the air. How would you rate Armisen's kissing skills?

FORTE: It's funny you ask about that, because just last week we were working on a sketch in which I had to kiss Fred Armisen again. And it was a real deep, heavy kiss. I can say for the record that Fred Armisen is a great kisser. I'm happy for Lizzy [Elisabeth Moss, Armisen's wife and a co-star of *Mad Men*], because she's going to be satisfied in that department. I can vouch for him.

Q19

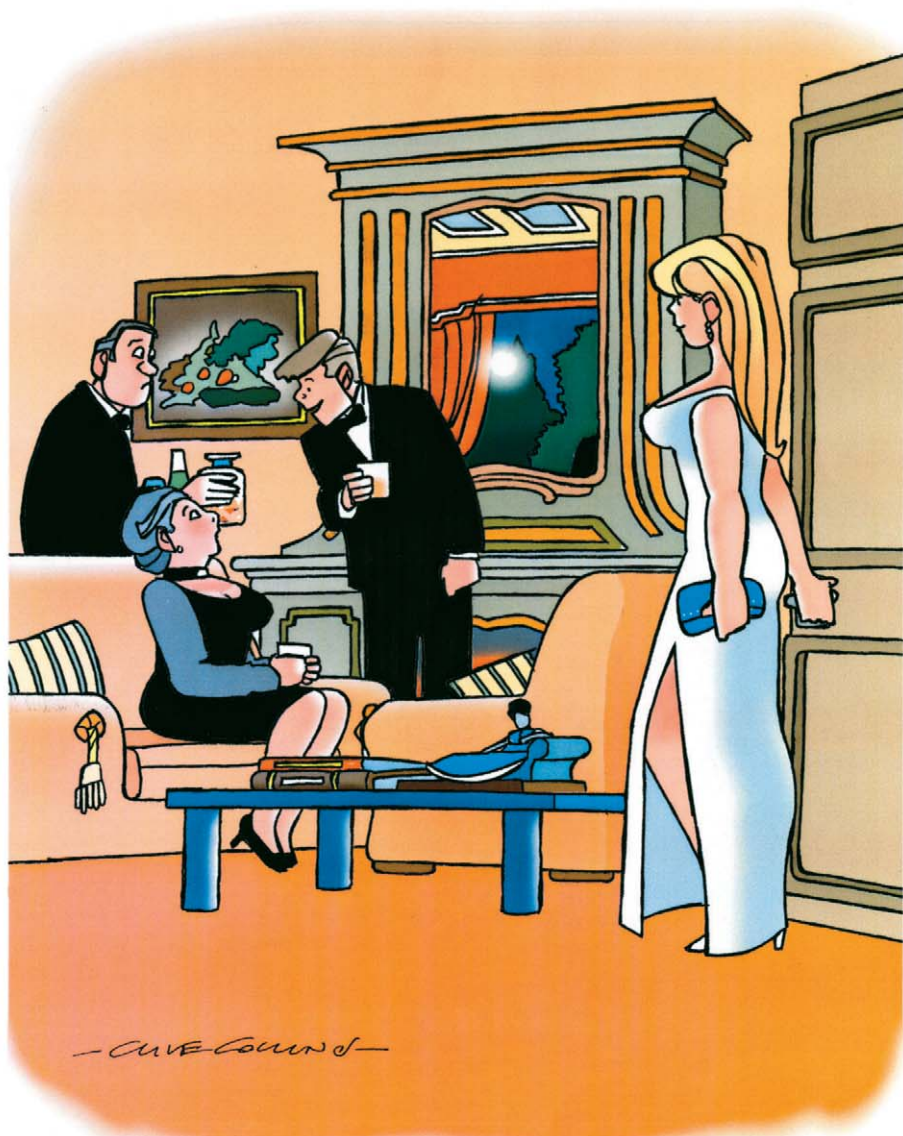
PLAYBOY: You videotaped your sister giving birth. How was that not weird and awkward?

FORTE: She asked me if I would videotape it because her husband, who was also at the birth, is a little squeamish. The idea was I would be shooting from the "good" angle—I'd be standing behind her, up by her head, facing down. But then my sister asked, "If you're comfortable with it, I'd love if you would videotape it from..." the red zone, I guess I'll call it. [laughs] She wanted me to shoot the birth head-on. It was amazing seeing a new little person come into the world, but the imagery was pretty vivid, I'll admit to that.

Q20

PLAYBOY: On *SNL*'s Weekend Update you introduced your "semi-celebrity" sex-tape sampler, in which you perform a naked ThighMaster routine and pour honey over your chest. What can we expect from an actual Will Forte sex tape?

FORTE: A lot of dissatisfaction on the woman's part. It will be really quiet, occasionally broken by mumbled apologies. And the woman will say things like, "That's all right, that's okay, don't worry about it." There'll be a lot of "Don't worry about it."



— Dave Coverly —

"Your daughter is the most beautiful girl I've ever met, Mrs. Beezley. I guess she gets her amazing tits from your side of the family. Am I right?"



ASYLUM

(continued from page 58)

"I'd love to know what you think."

"I think this Comando fellow—whoever is behind these messages, I think they want you to read it to me, that's why they sent it in Spanish, even if the subject is in English. I think it's meant for both of us, that's what. So—don't force me to show it to somebody else, Dad. It said to ask you."

"We are going to kill you like a dog."

Barrera heard his voice translating, *Isn't that how I make my living?*, what he had spent his *puta existencia* doing, the one thing he did well since he was a child, well enough so that he wouldn't have to do it forever in some godforsaken consulate near the stinking coconut-oil-infested docks of Buenaventura or close to the dangerous streets of Medellín, or even in air-conditioned quarters in Bogotá. Adroit and exact and rapid enough so he could graduate to an office in Washington and then to another more spacious one and ultimately a large room like the one he now occupied. Head of translators from and into Spanish at the Department, head honcho, his job now and then, pressing and crushing and cornering each word in Spanish until it exposed the nakedness of its meaning, squeezing all peril and murk and ambivalence out of the language of his mother as he transferred every sentence into the quiet, clean certainties of his father's gringo tongue. That was Barrera's job as a kid, building a daily channel between the dark woman from that port city who had given him birth and the tall blond foreigner who left them when Barrera was eight, making that man who was his father, had been his gringo *papá* for eight years, making him understand what the alien mass of sounds and syllables really meant, just like now he was going to make sure his gringo son understood, and just as he had helped her understand, the *hembra espléndida* who was to be his gringa wife, who had once been his wife. Barrera had been doing this all his life, and now here he was again, one more time, automatically translating those words that he should not be uttering, that he had not heard for almost 18 years, that he did not want his son to take to someone else, that Barrera wanted to keep under wraps, domesticate, make those words safe, anodyne and under control, yes, anesthetize them.

"We are going to kill you like a dog," Barrera's voice was neutral, almost remote. "No, not like a dog, because dogs deserve something better. We are going to kill you like a human being should be killed: slowly, so you know what is happening to you."

Ricky didn't react. Just like his mother, just like Cynthia to not give away her hand, tip anyone off to what she was thinking.

All they could hear in the silence of the night was the sullen whir of the computer, stirring codes or clicks or memories inside its spotless metal frame, deep inside its metal frame or maybe not that deep, maybe on the surface, all shiny and gleaming spotless.

Barrera knew that he was supposed to explode at the suggestion of this threat to the family, swear that he would call the

police, call security at the Department, hunt down the perpetrator of this madness, of this—that's what Ricky expected of him, that's what any father would do, that's what he couldn't bring himself to—not a sound, he who was so good at words and with words and at ease in two languages, abruptly transformed from head honcho into resident deaf-mute, that's what he was.

"What's going on, Dad? Who would want to hurt us?"

And before Barrera could answer, another message flashed into the in-box, another letter from Comando Anesthesia, another subject heading:

THIS IS NOT A THREAT. YOUR DAD KNOWS THIS IS NOT A THREAT.

Now it was Ricky's arm that reached over his father's shoulder, stretched a hand out and down to click twice on that message, revealing new words in Spanish:

Que tu papá te diga lo que sucedió en Colombia justo antes de que nacieras.

Ask your father to tell you what happened in Colombia just before you were born.

Barrera didn't translate it right away. This was crazy. Lots of things happened in Colombia, everything had happened in Colombia: his own birth, his bifurcated childhood, his fatherless adolescence, his tentative employment at the consulate in Buenaventura, his work ethic, his genius for interpreting, his hours at the U.S.-Colombian Friendship Institute reading every book on every shelf, his— That's how he'd answer the inevitable question Ricky was about to unleash, his whole life before his son had been born, that's what—though not what Barrera was thinking, not what he'd been thinking ever since the word *perro* had come up, *no, not like a dog, because dogs deserve something better.*

"What happened in Colombia, Dad? Before I was born?"

As if Ricky no longer needed a translator, as if that word, *Colombia*, that country where Barrera's parents had miraculously met and fallen in love and conceived him, as if that one word were enough for the boy to suddenly read and comprehend Spanish, as if he had not refused to learn it, to speak it, to acknowledge its existence.

"Nothing," Barrera said quickly, too quickly. A mistake. It was a mistake to deny anything that soon, when you're in a hurry all sorts of blunders have a chance to surface. What Cynthia had told him as she sorted out those who sought asylum legitimately from those who were faking it: *Always be suspicious of the ones who answer right away, who don't take their time.* But Cynthia was not around to counsel him about what to do now, not around at all, in fact, and Barrera couldn't help himself. He needed to slip out that one word, *nothing*, before *la mujer* who was sending these e-mails interfered yet again, continued her harassment and— But it couldn't be that woman, *esa mujer*, she didn't know English, she wasn't even— Maybe the computer, something inside the computer itself? Had the computer itself found a way to—? *Wait, wait, that's even crazier, this makes no sense, stop it, I've got to end this.*

End this. If you want this to end. Si quieres que esto se termine.

They waited, both of them, father and son, like twins caught in a mother's twisted

womb. They waited for guidance or a revelation or something else, anything else, a truce, maybe a truce.

It was dawning outside.

It was dawning outside and there were five days left before Ricky turned 17.

"I have to get to work and you—"

"Yeah, school."

"I'll drop you off."

"No need to."

"I'll drop you off."

The first thing Barrera did at work, before he had even stripped off his coat glistening with snow, before he tasted the coffee his secretary had poured for him, piping-hot Colombian Juan Valdez java always there when he arrived at precisely 8:45 each morning, before he even said hello to her, to anybody, the first thing was to log on and scuttle into Ricky's e-mail and—

There it was.

On his screen, floating like an eye in the sky of his screen, on his screen like an eye opening and closing.

Antes de que cumpla los diecisiete, lo tienes que hacer antes.

Before his 17th birthday, you have to do it before then.

He logged on to Ricky's e-mail account. *Was it also there, had she found a way to—?*

It was there, also there in the subject: *SOON HE'LL BE OF AGE.* And the same words in the message itself in Spanish, which the automatic translator inside Barrera kept repeating: *Before his 17th birthday, you have to do it before then.*

He clicked savagely on the reply button. *¿Quién eres?* he wrote. And then deleted the words in a rush. He knew who it was, who it had to be on the other end of the e-mail, the one person it couldn't be, that woman was—

Barrera drank down the coffee in one gulp, burning his throat, happy to feel his mouth and tongue and throat scalded, throbbing, proof that he was alive, that Ricky was alive somewhere in the same city and the same galaxy even if he was probably looking at the same words right now, *Antes de que cumpla los diecisiete, lo tienes que hacer antes.* And Ricky wouldn't show it to any of his classmates who spoke Spanish or any of his teachers, and he wouldn't mention it to Barrera when they met that night for dinner, not then, not ever, Ricky would make believe, just like his father, that nobody was sending these messages, nobody was erasing them.

Because Barrera did erase the next message, over and over.

The number 2,516.

When it appeared, at three in the morning, with Ricky slumbering in the next room and Barrera watching his son's in-box as if it were a wild animal about to leap out of the machine. One second after that number flickered inside the new message from Comando Anesthesia, his finger was there, stabbing it: obliterated, gone, gone forever. Though no, it came back, it returned from who knows where, the e-mail reappeared on the screen each time he erased it, and now, now, now the number was re-emerging directly on the screen, it did not come in a message, it did not tumble into the in-box, did not have a subject, not from anyone, not with a reply even feasible, just flashing on and off the screen, invading his screen and

Ricky's screen, *not a wink*, he responded to his son's unasked question the next morning, *I never sleep, you know that*.

Except this time it was true.

And this time Ricky was the one who pretended that everything was normal, everything was fine, this time it was the boy's turn not to say anything.

Not a word.

Not even to remind his father that his birthday was coming up, three days from now.

Barrera called in sick.

He heard Ricky pattering around the house, sitting at his computer and then getting up noisily and then sitting down quietly again. And Barrera didn't tell his son he should be going to school, didn't tell him anything, both of them secluded in the house as if a blizzard had descended in the garden, right there outside the door, a plague seething just beyond the threshold if either one of them dared to open the door.

Barrera looked at the empty screen, waited, tried not to close his eyes, closed them and instantaneously opened them again, because that woman was inside the in-box of his eyes, in there and out there and in here somewhere, *esa mujer*. He wasn't going to fall asleep, he couldn't afford to fall asleep.

His eyes strayed to the picture of Cynthia. Her last photo before she became too ill to go out, not a sign of what was gnawing away at her bones, a smile like heaven on her lips, and underneath, the words she wanted him to remember when things got rough, the words she had written in her flawless, tight script, *Don't ever look back*.

"Easy for you to say that," he said to her. And then shook his head. No, no, he wasn't going to

start speaking to Cynthia's photo as if it were a person of flesh and blood and limbs and ears. What came next? Talking to the screen as if it were—asking what would happen if these messages started to appear on every screen, everywhere, for everyone, if—

A todos, no, came the answer on the screen. *Sólo a tu hijo*.

Not everyone. Just your son.

Barrera tried to rub that one out as soon as it materialized, get rid of the son of a bitch. It didn't go away, it wouldn't go away until it was good and ready, those words came and went of their own accord now, regardless of what he did, regardless of the fact that now only two days remained until Ricky's birthday, neither of them mentioning this, calling in sick, father and then son—*yes, a bug is going around*—eating up the supplies in the fridge and the pantry, not venturing out even to retrieve *The Washington Post*, watching the papers accumulate outside like a dead dog in the snow, hardly acknowledging each other's existence, except at breakfast, except to say *thanks for the pancakes, Dad*, except to answer *just like your mother used to make them, hijo*, not mentioning that one day from now, tomorrow, it was going to be Ricky's birthday. The only difference between them: that the son slept at night and that Barrera had not slept for five days, for five nights. Not a wink, not for a minute, not for an hour. Now truly *nothing, nada*.

Staring at the night, staring at the night as if it were a screen, staring at his wife's photo as if it were a window into day.

Antes de que cumpla los diecisiete.

Four hours to go before his son turned 17.

Si quieres que esto se termine, ya sabes lo que tienes que hacer.

But he didn't, he didn't know what he needed to do.

¿Dime qué tengo que hacer?

What if he did ask the photo what to do, what was needed?

Don't ever look back, his wife's only answer, then and now.

¿Dime qué tengo que hacer, qué quieres de mí?

He didn't know anymore if he was thinking those words or saying them out loud, *What do you want from me?* The glimmer of a whisper that nobody present or far away could ever have registered, not even Barrera could have heard those words so faint so quiet, not with a tape recorder, not with a secret camera, Ricky couldn't eavesdrop on those words—that's how hidden Barrera's thoughts had become.

What do you want from me?

The screen said nothing.

Do you want to take my boy, is that what you want?

No answer, not a shimmer on the screen, before his mind foundered for lack of sleep, faltered into a sea of confusion, unable to distinguish anything anymore, having to comfort himself with those words written so many days ago they seemed a mirage, *This is not a threat, your dad knows this is not a threat*.

What do you want from me?

"What happened in Colombia, Dad? Before I was born?"

It couldn't be Ricky who was asking that again. He went to his son's room, and Ricky was blessedly asleep, smiling; the kid was smiling into the softness of the pillow, smiling as if hell did not exist, as if he would not have to awaken to his 17th birthday a few hours from now and find out that hell did exist.

"Nothing," he whispered to Ricky. "Nothing happened."

He left the room and went straight to his own computer and opened an e-mail addressed to his son. He typed in what he had just murmured to Ricky, spilled the black and quiet milk of denial onto the screen, a last desperate attempt to keep at bay the other words, the other words that had been simmering inside him since the message about the dog, the *perro* on the screen—*we are going to kill you like a human being should be killed: slowly, so you know what is happening to you—since then*.

"Nothing," Barrera wrote. "Nothing happened." And heard his voice say, "That's God's truth," and he began to write those words as well and then found his fingers erasing them, all of it, he discovered the blank screen once again there, the cursor blinking on and off and once again asking him to—asking him to... what, what did that woman want from him?

"Ricardo," he said those syllables out loud and then wrote his son's name on the screen. "*Querido Ricardo, Ricky mío,*" my Ricky, my Ricardo. And then was about to write: "We all do things in our lives that—" but no, it wasn't that. And then: "There was a woman many years ago who—" and it wasn't that either.

It was, it was....

It happened before Ricky was born.

"This happened before you were born, Ricardo. I like to tell myself that it happened so you could be born, so I could marry your mother. So I could come to this country and live a decent life without violence, escape



"Mmm, I love the way you handle that, Miss...."

from the fate of the father who abandoned me, the mother who made her living by selling what women sell. I knew that I would never leave you alone. I knew that I would stay by the side of the gringa I loved.

"I met her at the consulate in Bogotá, your mother. You know that much."

Barrera read over what he had written.

Yes, what he needed to do.

Si quieres que esto se termine.

His hands were commanding themselves, were flying solo, were flowing word after word onto the keyboard and through the screen and into this letter to his son.

"She liked me. I realized that she liked me because—well, there are things that men know, that women know, that don't need to be expressed with words. But she made her case, so to speak, by always asking that this new mulatto interpreter from Buenaventura by way of Medellín, that this man Barrera be the one to translate for her whenever there was a particularly complicated situation, a complicated person, someone whose visa we would have to deny, some pain that was being inflicted and that she couldn't avoid and wanted to share, and I was the employee she chose for that sharing. I was the one.... An ally, someone who would understand, even approve, perhaps forgive her hard choices.

"That morning, we...."

Barrera stopped. He erased the last three words.

"That morning when that woman came in, she...."

And again he stopped and again he removed the phrase.

"It started—what happened, I mean—it really started the night before. Your mother and I, we'd been out for drinks and intended to go dancing after dinner. She was trying a *sancocho de pescado*—but not me, no fish stew for me. Buenaventura had cured me of the sea—I was a steak man—and I can remember the precise moment when everything changed, when what was to happen the next day was set in motion.

"We were at a table on the sidewalk and two *gamines*—you know, street kids—they were watching us from behind a parked car. They'd been shooed away by the waiter and then the *maitre d'* and then some burly security guards, but the boys—waifs, really—kept on popping up, peering at us. One of them, well, he even winked at me and sort of smirked, a leer perhaps I'd call it, but his teeth were perfectly white, straight and perfect, as if he had been well nourished at home, as if nobody had ever beat him or punched him or raped him or forced him to roam the avenues of Bogotá. I knew that kid. I could have been that kid when my father left us in Buenaventura. I think that if I hadn't been blessed with English, with the certainty that I belonged elsewhere, I'd have taken to the streets myself, and I'm sure that my mother wouldn't have come after me to bring her son home. My mother was too busy sniffing for a substitute for her vanished gringo, my vanished gringo dad. So when the *gamin* winked at me, I knew what his lewd gesture meant. It was a wink of encouragement, that said, yes, I should ask the gorgeous redhead home with me, I should show her a good time, promised me that she would say yes—and how strange that

I should need his approval, from that lost child not older than eight, because I turned to her and said: *You know, I never sleep, but I think tonight will be different. Tonight I won't sleep due to another reason.* And she answered, as the street urchin had anticipated she would, she answered: *We'll see if you're right.*

"My response to that acknowledgment had been unexpected—not what she or I had been planning, I think, but maybe not unexpected for the two *gamines*. Because I stood up with my plate—half the steak was still on it and all the potatoes and remnants of a lovely béarnaise sauce—and I carried it with me to the kids and just gave it to them, plate and all, a reward for their witnessing of my triumph, what I had not dared to do or ask or dream of up till that moment, and somehow also a way of telling them, *You can also make it this far, like I have. I educated myself, I read every book in every library, I found a way. I'm going to make love to this wondrous gringa and then we're going to leave this stink hole of a country, and I did it all on my own. You don't have to stay behind. You can come along too. You can also change your life.*

"And I waited a bit, while they tasted the steak, munched at it in a much too leisurely way for two famished scamps, so I asked them how the meat was, if it was good, and the kid who had winked at me, he repeated his perfect smile with his perfect teeth, so out of place in that grimy, bedrugged face, he said, in Spanish of course, he said: 'The steak up the street, at El Barranco, it's better, free ranging cattle, more tender, juicier, you know.' And he deciphered the surprise in my eyes and added: '*Sobras.*' Leftovers. He and his pal had been scrounging in the garbage. They knew where the best meat could be found, and now he was acting as my culinary guide to Bogotá, my gourmet *gamin*.

"When I returned to the woman who was going to be your mother, she listened to my story and nodded in that bird-like wonderway of hers, just like you. From the moment I met her I was so taken with her ability to stop what she was doing, like a chachalaca, a bird you'll only see if you were to finally come back one day to Colombia with me. Think of a bird that can dance the cha-cha and then cease suddenly, Ricardo, well, that's how she looked at me, entirely still, as if she were wary of some assault from nearby. The very first time I laid eyes on her I realized how vulnerable she was underneath that show of toughness. And it wasn't just that we had to be cautious—in fact, as employees of the U.S. government in a country torn apart by civil war and narcos and the FARC and bombs, we'd make a nice morsel for anyone intent on kidnapping, her especially. I wasn't worth anything, not then, later yes, when I became a citizen, took on the country of my dad. Now yes, if someone were to kill me now.... But I was telling you about that look of hers, which came, I said, from somewhere other than fear of the immediate violence that could be done to us. No, it came from some older tremor, something else we shared. She looked at me when I came back from giving away my steak and said: 'You're too good to be true.' And then: '*Mañana.*' One of the few words in Spanish she ever learned, knew before she was sent to Colombia, the word everyone associates with Latin America and siestas, everyone assumes I represent when I tell them I was



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born way down south. Your mother repeated it in English: "Tomorrow. I'll come home with you tomorrow night. Because, first, in the morning, there's something I need you to do, first you have to do something."

"A test. That's what she had in store for me.

"It was a woman. Maybe you won't believe me, but I can't remember her name. Someday we can look it up, there must be files on her somewhere. Her husband was called Esteban, Esteban something. And he had been killed, headed a trade union, a coffee worker I think, maybe textiles, food workers? And his wife was seeking asylum, or a visa if asylum couldn't be granted. One for her, one for her son. Her 17-year-old son. Yes, 17."

Barrera stopped. He reread the last paragraph. He erased *Yes, 17*. Then he erased *Her 17-year-old son*. Ricky didn't need to know the age of that boy.

"That boy, that young man—name of Luis?, maybe Lalo, yes, Lalo I think it was, from Eduardo—Lalo had received a death threat. I had read it in her file. They were going to kill him like a dog. No, not like a dog. Yes, that's how they were threatening to kill him. Slowly.

"Before the woman came in for the interview, your mother left the room. Left me alone with her. On purpose. 'I want to see how you handle this, by yourself,' Cynthia said, stepping out the back door, adding, there on the threshold, almost as an afterthought, that I'd been selected for a training program back in the States. She'd recommended me, the sky was the limit. I remember those words, the sky being the limit, everything open for me, her and the country and the future and someone like you, the sky. She'd recommended me, your mother reiterated, but she wanted first to observe me, in action, she said, *one last crack*. I also remember those words, just as I can still remember, have been repeating to myself all these years the word for word of the death threat.

"That's what I was examining attentively when that woman entered the room and sat down without my invitation, just sat down and pierced me with the black coil of her eyes as I read the message written on that crude piece of paper scrawled by someone who did not mind if an expert analyzed the handwriting, if the criminal's fingerprints were smudged all over that scrap of paper, a person who was an expert himself, an expert at creating fear in others, not concerned about his own fear, that's what I understood as I read.

"Have you denounced this to the police?' I asked in Spanish.

"Two thousand five hundred sixteen.'

"¿Perdone? ¿Qué dijo?"

"Two thousand five hundred sixteen,' she said. 'The number of trade union members who have been murdered in the last 10 years, 2,515 plus one, my husband.' And she pronounced his family name, the one I can't remember now, she said Esteban, Esteban and that surname. And before I could comment, offer my condolences, say something, anything, she added: 'Do you know how many arrests there have been, how many culprits have been arrested?' And she answered her own question: 'One,' she said. 'One man has been arrested, a policeman, a policeman who should have been protecting people like my husband and instead was killing them.

One person, that's all, and he'll be out on bail soon and then he'll be up in the mountains with the *paras* and never be seen again.'

"Inside your mother's big broad desk, I knew a tape recorder was turning, registering every word of hers and mine, I knew that in your mother's office a security camera always recorded everything, every whisper.

"I answered: 'You can't expect us to take in every person who's threatened, who says she's threatened, who offers no more proof than a piece of paper whose origin we can't substantiate. Surely you can see that, ma'am.

No podemos aceptar a todos.'

"A todos, no," she said. 'Sólo a mi hijo.'

"Not everyone. Just my son.

"And then she winked at me.

"It wasn't really a wink, more like the flutter of an eyelid, a shuttering, the rapid deployment of a butterfly in her eyes, closing them just enough so I wouldn't catch even a glimpse of the promise of tears, because she was not going to give me or anybody else the satisfaction of seeing her cry. *She's cried so much there's nothing left*, and then the opposite thought, *She hasn't cried for years, is scared to start because she may never stop, like my mother never dared to let herself go, not ever*. And then that woman stood up, refused to sit down again, though I insisted.

"She didn't explain why, just stood there, brusquely said one word. 'God,' that's the word she said and added: 'God often comes to us from behind, remember that. He comes when we least expect him, from behind.' And again her eyes that opened and shut rapidly.

"And I don't know why—yes, I know why, of course I know why—I confused that fluttering again with a wink. It joined me and her to the *gammes* of last night, that night before the night you were conceived, and it wasn't me answering her, I forgot where I was, who I was, what I wanted to become, forgot who was listening to me from the other side of the back door. I forgot how often in the past I had taken the files and folders and papers that your mother would pass to me, how often I had closed them with a snap. And now it was open, that file, the death threat was lying in there, calling to me, asking me to read it again. And when I picked it up because I could not say no to it, deny it one last appraisal, what revealed itself, what had been hidden below that death threat, was the faded photo of her dead husband and also the prettified visa photo of her living son, one next to the other, her two men, and then, if only for a minute, it was just me and my sad beating heart, if only for a minute, and I said:

"*Naturalmente*, of course, we'll give you asylum, a visa, ma'am. *No le quepa duda*. Don't doubt it.'

"That's a promise.'

"And I said yes.

"And she said: 'Swear it on your son.'

"I don't have a son.'

"Swear it on the life of your unborn child.'

"And that's what I did, Ricardo. I swore I was telling her the truth, swore it on your life.

"I never saw her again.

"Because your mother came into the room as soon as that woman had gone.

"She looked at me. 'You really are too good to be true.'

"She did not say anything else. Just waited. Like you do, so often, let the silence

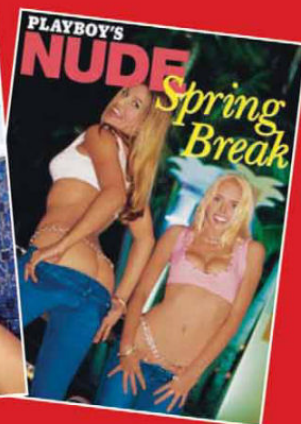
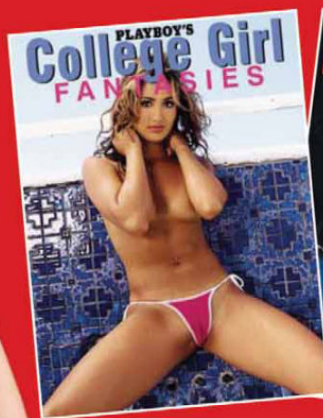


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grow until somebody like me, somebody who feels uncomfortable with stillness and has survived by filling the universe with words—since I can recall I would jump into the space yawning between my father and my mother. I would leap in, vault in, rush in to see if I could bring them closer, because I could tell they were going to separate, that I was the one who had kept them together. My existence had done that, my birth had made my father stay, and I spent the first eight years of my childhood going back and forth between them, saying in English to my dad what my mother meant in her Buenaventura Spanish, extricating from my dad's Ohio accent what he wanted from my mother, back and forth, *ida y vuelta*, giving them refuge in the common territory of my tongue, holding them to each other as I felt them drift apart. Their home, I had to become their home if they were to stay by each other's side, and your own mother knew this, merely by instinct and cunning and command, that she didn't need to do anything other than let me dangle in the silence of her puzzlement, her challenge that I explain myself.

"And I did.

"It took me less than a minute, not even a minute to close that file, snap it tightly shut.

"'Asylum denied,' I said. 'No visa for either of them. Not clear if they have terrorist connections.'

"She didn't say anything, again she just let me swing awhile in the dark sun of her gaze.

"'I just didn't have the heart to tell the woman,' I said. 'To her face, I mean, I just didn't have the heart.'

"And now Cynthia answered. 'Yes,' she said. Just that one word. She said yes to me.

"So that night... I like to think that was the night you were conceived, Ricardo, I like to think that something good came of this, not just our marriage and my training and my promotion and my future citizenship and my new country—you, I like to tell myself that you were born because I did what I did, because of what happened in Colombia, what the messages demanded of me, that I tell you. That's what I have to say, what I need to tell you before you are 17."

Barrera stopped.

Behind him he sensed his son, told himself

that the boy had been there for who knows how long, reading over his shoulder for who knew how long. And somehow this time Barrera found the strength not to turn around and address Ricky. He found the patience to swallow any word of welcome or of dismissal, was given the strength by someone, perhaps his wife, perhaps his mother, both of them dead, he discovered the strength to wait and let his son say something first.

"So who is it?" Ricky asked, finally. "Who is sending us, you and me, these messages?"

Almost as if he were a child asking a magician to explain how the rabbit could disappear, be cut to shreds and then reappear, one last moment of innocence before he outgrew it, one last chance.

"It can't be the husband," Barrera said, taking his time, "because he's dead, that man called Esteban."

"And the woman? The woman whose name you can't recall?"

"Not her," said Barrera. "And not her son, Luis or Lalo." And then added: "They were executed. The night before your mother and I left Bogotá."

"How did they die?"

"Not that," he said. And then, still without turning around to look at his son: "There are things you really don't need to know. Not yet."

"I don't need to know what was done to their bodies?" Ricky asked. "How slow it must have been?"

"You don't need to know."

Ricky didn't speak for a while. Barrera could barely imagine him there at all, thinking all this over. Then:

"All right. So who else knew what happened in that room, what you promised? A colleague, someone, anyone?"

"Only me," said Barrera, "I'm the only one who knows. From time to time, I ask your mother, ask her picture—not with words but with my eyes, you know, I suggest that maybe there could have been another way, that maybe we could have found a different.... Even if I know that she was also acting under orders, only following protocol. This Esteban had been fingered as sympathetic to the guerrillas, was a subversive. The son had been videotaped chanting slogans against the U.S., was a rabble-rouser at the

local high school. And above your mother in the pyramid of power there was someone else, and then the head of that department and the man above them, and somebody upstairs would have eventually seen the asylum granted and would have reprimanded her, maybe demoted her, maybe denied me my transfer or my residency or my citizenship one day. It was me or that woman, our son or her son, that's how things are—"

and by now Barrera was speaking to the computer, straight to the screen or what was inside the screen or beyond it. "All of us, just doing our job, just securing the border, just keeping our children safe, better to be safe than sorry. That's what I say silently to your mother, have said to her since she died."

"And what does she answer?"

"Nothing. Not a word. What could she tell us? What could she answer?"

"Unless...."

"Unless...." Barrera said.

But neither of them dared to add another word, tell each other what they were thinking, what they were both....

This was as far as he could go, this was the end.

Barrera sensed a sudden absence, was certain that his son was no longer behind him, that Ricky had decided to return to his room before dawn arrived, that's where he wanted to greet this day when he would be 17, when he would be of age.

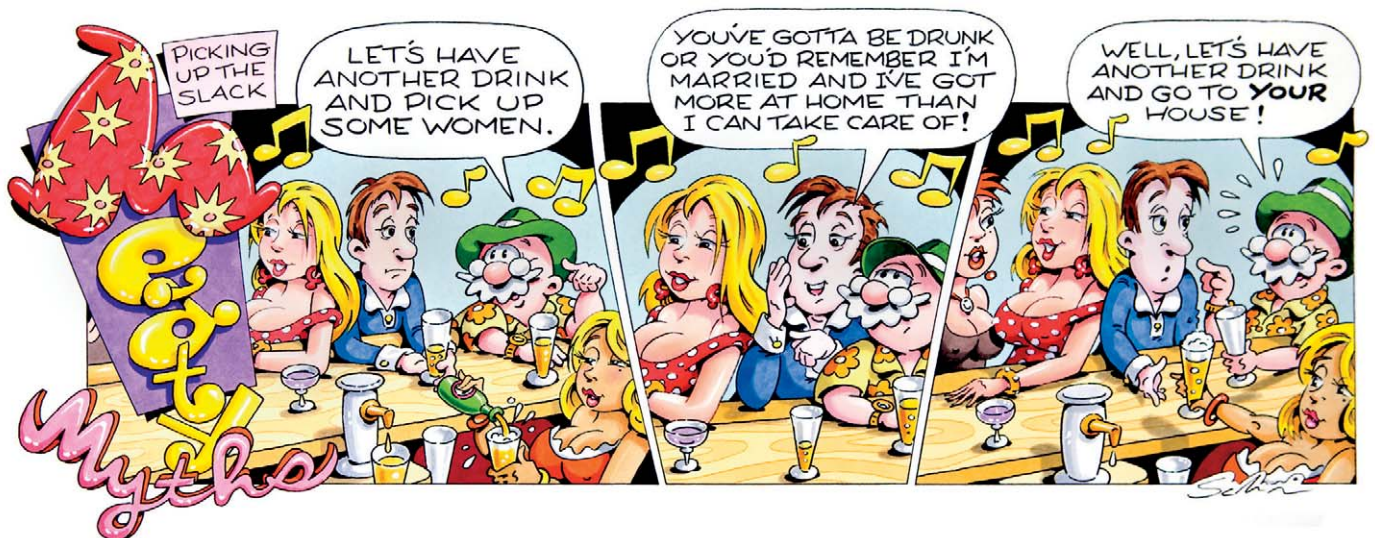
Barrera waited. He gave the boy time to cross the corridor, open the door to his room, sit down in front of his own computer. He waited until he was sure Ricky was ready, and then, without looking one last time at the letter he had written, without correcting one word of it, he pressed the send button.

It was on its way, his response, what he needed to do.

He prayed it would be enough.

And he wondered, Barrera also managed to wonder, as the sun began to rise into that foreign sky, if he would sleep well that night, if he would sleep at all in the nights to come.

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APOSTLE

(continued from page 74)

that, I'm told, is mercifully lighter than anything on the menu.)

On to the main courses. First, an off-the-menu croquet-ball-size pork-and-veal meatloaf on a bed of gnocchi; the dainty herbal subtleties of the meat are offset by the brick of seared foie gras draped over it. Then come those pigs' feet.

Double vodka shots.

Picard joins us for dessert. He orders us a bottle of champagne and toasts again: "*À la vie!*" Though the desserts are rich and outside, they're comparatively the most delicate courses of the evening. All of them are sweetened with maple syrup collected in the forest around Picard's new establishment, Sugar Shack, open only in the spring. (On the restaurant's wall is a painting by Marc Séguin of a woman with syrup taps in lieu of breasts.) We share a raspberry pie, a pecan pie, a *panna cotta* and a maple pudding *chômeur*, which

translates to "unemployed pudding," a throwback to a dessert popular during the Depression.

By the end of the meal, our back teeth are bathing, as the French expression goes. Thoroughly mellowed by fat, sugar and booze, we discuss Picard's upbringing in Repentigny, Quebec; his two kids; how, as a lost youth, he decided to study hotel management, then switched to cooking; his apprenticeship in France, Italy and Montreal. And we discuss his philosophy of food. "Fat comforts," he says. "Fat is the vector for taste. If you have fat in your mouth, the taste will develop."

Champagne. Vodka. Mix.

PRIDE

To Picard, the real sin in both cooking and economics is waste—he is a firm disciple of Fergus Henderson's "nose-to-tail" approach, which calls for using the entire animal, offal, bone and all. Another sin is incompetence. "You need to know how to cook the pig," he says. "You might be trendy, but at the end of the day you need

to take responsibility. I've worked hard, I'm competent, and I'm qualified, and that allowed me to personalize my style and convince people I could become a reference for others."

WRATH

Picard gets angry at anything that isn't concrete, tactile, sensuous, of the earth. That includes food blogs, which he calls *marde*. ("Do you mean *merde*?" I ask, referring to the French word for "shit." "No, *marde*. It's the Quebec version. It's like *merde* but more fatty.") His wrath is also aimed at Wall Street. He sees the collapse of the financial sector as a good thing: "There are two economies. There's the economy where I work, where I employ people, and it brings in money directly. And then there's the economy Wall Street created, where they make money with money. Today the second economy has deflated, and people have become more grounded. They may have less money, but at least they feel things. Before they didn't feel."

LUST

After dinner I join Picard, his *chef de cuisine*, his *maitre d'* and his beautiful hostess (all the women who work at Au Pied de Cochon are thin, stylish, attractive and likely not eating à la carte at the restaurant) for a night on the town. Our first stop is a high-end strip joint called Kamasutra. Montreal is riddled with churches, and almost every street is named after one saint or another, but since casting off conservative Catholic rule during the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s, it has become one of the most permissive cities in the world. In this Olympus of hedonism, Picard is Dionysus, recognized and back-slapped wherever we go. "Ehh! Martin!"

A stripper once told me that food and sex are the only two human activities that stimulate all five senses. Picard, who by this point has unbuttoned his shirt entirely, agrees. "It's a similar pleasure," he tells me. "Fucking is always with someone. It's concrete. And food is always concrete too."

Bottle service arrives.

The same stripper also said that, in terms of the excitement that both food and sex can provide, "less is more." From my foggy recollection of my night with Picard, it's hard to imagine him agreeing with that part. My most distinct memory of the evening—confirmed in my greasy, progressively illegible notes—is sitting on a VIP-room banquette next to Picard as his *maitre d'* pours a bottle of champagne down my throat and two gorgeous, fully naked young Quebecois go bilingual on each other, in every permutation, on the chef's lap.

He raises a glass: "*À la vie!*"

That leaves three capital sins of which Picard is most certainly not guilty. When he's not sweltering over a stove at one of his restaurants or writing a cookbook or tending to his pigs or visiting his purveyors, Picard hosts a show on



"Excuse me, guys, but I'm starting to feel a little like a third wheel."

Canadian Food TV, *The Wild Chef*, which follows his gastronomical journeys across the country. (He recently cooked up an impromptu dish of mussels and seal fat when dining *al molto fresco* among the Inuit.) So much for sloth. As for greed and envy, no one can accuse a man who serves such copious portions, who relishes the company of others, who gets hurt if you don't drink with him and who gives such enveloping drunken bear hugs...of hoarding and withholding.

Gluttony had been tested to its limit that night, as had my stomach lining. I didn't feel quite like the guy who was fed to death in *Seven*, but I wasn't far. A night with Picard is a test of endurance, even for Picard: "You can't just eat fatty in life," he says. "You can't just eat only for pleasure—you need nourishment as well."

Indeed, no evening is more riotously, competitively gluttonous than when famous chefs get together. Daniel Boulud, who makes a point of visiting Picard every time he's in Montreal, recalls many such indulgent affairs, when Picard would open the best wines in his cellar. "These Quebeckers," says Boulud, "always taking their shirts off." He recalls the most outrageously excessive night of eating as being his own 50th birthday, when he hosted a \$2,200-a-plate charity dinner for 24 friends, including many of his former sous-chefs who had gone on to run their own restaurants and who each supplied a course. Robert Parker, the world's foremost authority on wine, provided the booze.

Over the meal's seven hours, according to Boulud, they ate 16 courses and drank a million dollars' worth of wine, about 85 bottles spanning the 20th century. On another occasion, this one also from the peak of the flush times, circa 2004, Boulud hosted a white-truffle tasting menu for Japanese friends, movie producers and journalists. Halfway through the dinner, chef Masayoshi Takayama—who now owns Masa, the most expensive restaurant in New York—showed up. After everyone had shaved about five grams of a glorious \$1,500 one-pound truffle onto their dishes, Takayama whiffed the mushroom and ate the whole thing like an apple, to the stupefaction of the table. Perhaps he had been drinking?

Two days later Takayama returned to Boulud, tail between legs, to apologize, with a new white truffle in a plastic can as a token of expiation. "I think he wanted his friends to be stunned," says Boulud. That level of conspicuous consumption, both financial and esophageal, was testing the limits, even in this culinary subculture.

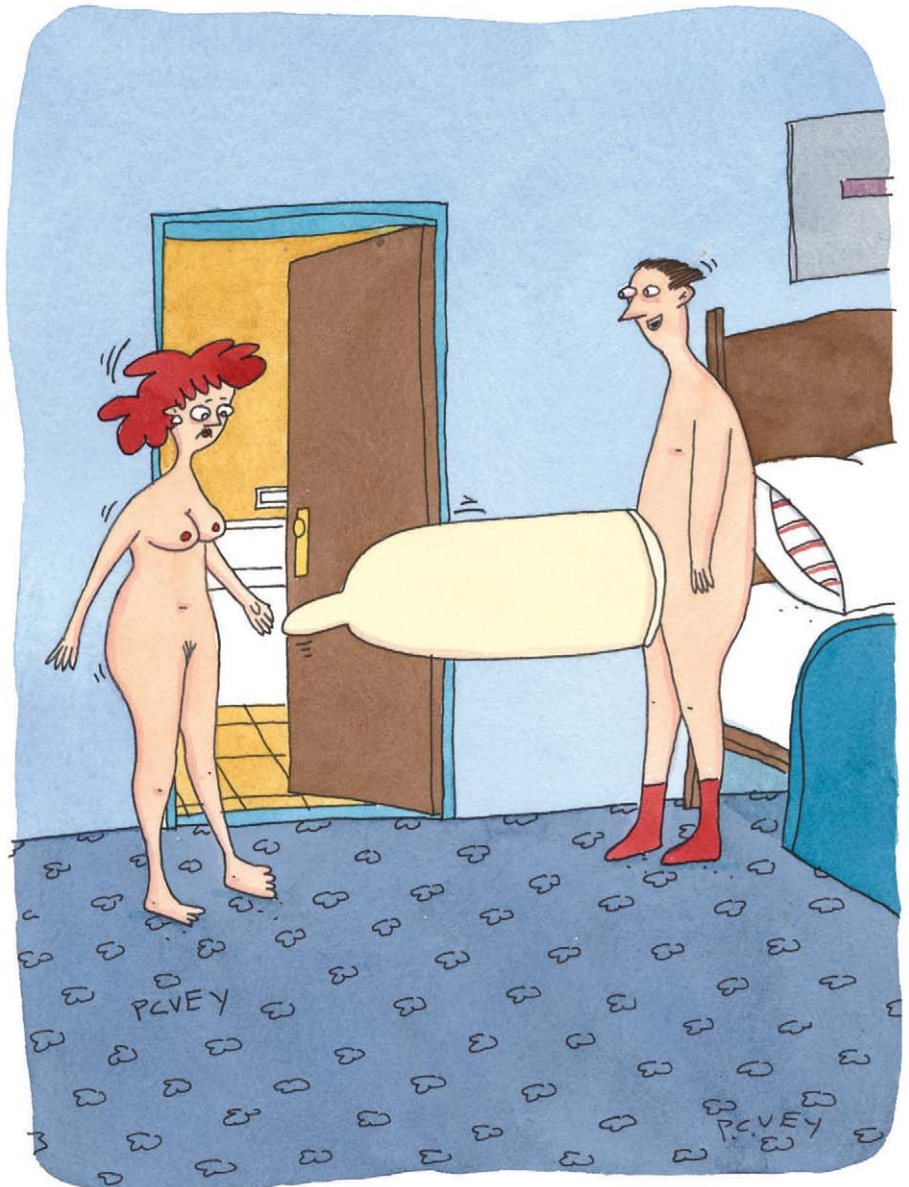
Yet perhaps Picard himself defines gluttony best by throwing Catholic dogma on its head. Instead of defining gluttony as deriving excessive pleasure from food and drink, Picard says true excess begins "when pleasure is no longer there."

SEX QUIZ

(continued from page 55)

- (1) Scrotum. In each case the parts are developmentally homologous, meaning they arise from the same fetal tissue.
- (2) It's an iron chastity belt lined with silk, probably from the 16th century.
- (3) Masturbation, vasectomy, Mirena IUD, pill, condom, diaphragm, spermicides, prayer
- (4) "I know it when I see it."
- (5) 7.3 minutes
- (6) The gerbil—an urban legend that has never been documented
- (7) (A) *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (D.H. Lawrence); (B) *Tropic of Cancer* (Henry Miller); (C) Song of Solomon (Old Testament); (D) *The Autobiography of a Flea* (Anonymous); (E) *Fear of Flying* (Erica Jong); (F) *The Surrender* (Toni Bentley)
- (8) Sex treatise. *Kama* can also mean pleasure, desire or love.
- (9) 2.8
- (10) The underside of the shaft
- (11) 18,000
- (12) "Darling Nikki" by Prince
- (13) Age-Sex-Location, Ass to Mouth, Bareback Blow Job (no condom), Dining at the Y (cunnilingus), Male-Female-Female (three-some), Naked in Front of Computer, No Strings Attached, Talk Dirty to Me
- (14) A soft swinging couple does not have intercourse with other people, only foreplay.
- (15) 85
- (16) A quarter mile
- (17) 40
- (18) The erectile tissue of the clitoris extends up to 3.5 inches into the body.
- (19) Smiles, arches her brows, lowers her lids, tucks her chin slightly, averts her gaze, puts her hand on her lips, giggles
- (20) Ambartsumian's Knot, Fornax, Sextans, Triangulum and Zwicky's Triplet are galaxies.

For citations see playboy.com/sexquiz.



"Don't worry, it's mostly filler."



PSYCHEDELIC

(continued from page 52)

Moreover, the majority of scientists involved say the government no longer frowns on their work, and entering the field is no longer the easiest way to be denied tenure. "For three decades, just proposing human research with a psychedelic was an academic career ender—the electric third rail for any serious scientist," says Roland Griffiths, a Johns Hopkins professor of behavioral biology and neuroscience, and a psychedelic researcher himself. "But that's just no longer true."

"The difference," says Rick Doblin, "is we're getting it right this time." And Doblin would know. With a Harvard Ph.D. and as founder of the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies, or MAPS—a nonprofit drug company whose goal is the eventual manufacture of psychedelics—Doblin sits at the forefront of this new movement. For the past 27 years he has worked to get governments to reconsider their stance on psychedelics, to get these drugs back into the laboratory and to help design experiments rigorous enough to force even the most adamant opponents to reevaluate their position. Doblin is 56 years old, with a strong, stocky frame, curly brown hair, a wide forehead and a face creased with laugh lines. His demeanor is mostly high school guidance counselor, but his stories are often Burning Man.

What Doblin means by "getting it right" is not just a reference to experimental execution but also to overall attitude. "We lost this battle the first time around because of arrogance," he says. "Tim Leary wanted LSD to bring down the establishment. Terence McKenna said psychedelics are inherently opposed to culture. That was the arrogance. Theirs was an entirely romantic notion but also isolationist and uncomfortably superior. I'm trying to reverse that trend. I want to mainstream psychedelic medicine. My motto is 'Tune in, turn on and go to the bake sale.'"

On the day I meet Doblin, just after getting breakfast at the local bagel shop, we walk back to his house. He lives in Belmont, Massachusetts, a town so idyllically quaint that neighboring Cambridge—home of Harvard and MIT—seems I.M. Pei-modern by comparison. Belmont is tree-lined and plaid-friendly, one of the last places one could describe as revolutionary. But looks can be deceiving. A woman stops Doblin. She's in her late 40s, well dressed, a poster child for overprotective suburban mothers.

"Rick," she shouts from down the block, "did you see that great special on LSD on the History Channel the other night?"

What follows is a 10-minute discussion about the current state of psychedelic affairs. The woman knows much about this work. After she leaves, Doblin tells me he belongs to one of the most popular temples in town.

"And that," he says with a smile, "was the rabbi's wife."

"The who?"

"I don't ever hide what I do. It's a small

community. Everybody knows everybody's business. Most people are really supportive."

Doblin believes the support he gets is the best kind. "It's based on knowledge, compassion and social justice," he says. "OCD and end-of-life anxiety—these are very difficult conditions to cure—but the research clearly shows that psychedelics can help with both. We've got vets coming back from Iraq with intractable post-traumatic stress syndrome. The government doesn't know what to do for these people. But MDMA-assisted psychotherapy works for them as well. Cluster headaches are also called 'suicide headaches' for the level of pain they produce and their frequency of occurrence. They're another incurable. But treating them with LSD looks really promising right now."

Doblin raises a hand and sweeps it around the neighborhood.

"People around here know all this. Belmont is a small part of the future I'm working toward. This may be the only town in America where it's not unusual to find people discussing the benefits of psychedelic therapy at a PTA meeting."



Mara grits her teeth and stares at the angels. It's been more than an hour since she took ecstasy, and all that's happened since has not been pleasant. Her pain level has risen. Her noon dose of methadone didn't help. It's now one P.M. Everyone in the green room begins to discuss options. At 110 milligrams, Mara's starter pill is 15 milligrams shy of the standard therapeutic dose. In most studies patients are given an initial hit of 125 milligrams and 75 more an hour later. Allan believes that doubling that starter would be safe. Mara swallows another 110 milligrams of MDMA and asks, "Is spiritual transformation ever easy?"

The reason Mara believes psychedelics can produce spiritual transformation has little to do with her own story and everything to do with her mother's. Marilyn had been born with a congenital deformity known as pectus excavatum, a dent in the center of her chest roughly the size of a golf ball. Her organs were pushed to one side and her rib cage jutted out. In her early 30s Marilyn met psychotherapist and pioneer of mind-body medicine Ron Kurtz. He opined that the dent was the result of trapped childhood emotion. Release the emotion, he said, and the dent goes away.

Marilyn tried everything to release the emotion, and then she tried LSD therapy. Her session also took place in the green room, also beneath the angels. She had a blindfold across her face and a "sitter"—the technical term for someone who stays sober and guides the trip (a scaled-down version of the job Allan now does)—by her side. Half an hour after taking the drug and much to her surprise, Marilyn began to wail. Primal screams came pouring out. Eventually the screams softened to chants, and for the next four hours Marilyn made spontaneous repetitions of the sound *aaaaah*—though, in those moments, calling her Marilyn may have been something of a misnomer. "I no longer perceived any boundaries separating

me from my surroundings. I was sound and love and peace. Every emotion I had ever felt seemed insignificant by comparison. At that moment I knew what was meant by mystical experience, by transcendence. For me it had nothing to do with faith or religion or belief in God. I had experienced God."

And when she was done, the dent in her chest was almost gone. Her rib cage flattened, her organs shifted toward their proper spots. What Marilyn experienced is known as spontaneous healing, and it is classified, at least in the Judeo-Western traditions, as a miracle. This was why Mara dropped that second pill; this was the kind of miracle she was after.

On a small side table in the green room, Lindsay has arranged a display of gifts from Mara's former students, a seabed of crystals, carved stones, colorful beads, all encircling a bronze statue of Ganesh, the elephant-headed god regarded as the "remover of obstacles" in the Hindu canon. Ganesh carries an umbrella. An hour after Mara takes her second pill the afternoon begins to slant through the windows. Sunlight spotlights the umbrella. Ganesh glows gold. Maybe it's a sign, maybe it's the drugs, but for the first time in a year, Mara's pain is gone.

George Winston is on the stereo. Mara closes her eyes and floats off with the music. Lindsay sees peace on her friend's face for the first time in...well, she doesn't remember how long. Marilyn glances at the angels on the ceiling.

"Thank you," she says. "Thank you, thank you, thank you."

Just over an hour later the MDMA's effects are fading. Mara doesn't think she needs Allan's help any longer.

"That was great," she says. "I think I'm ready to go deeper next time."

Everybody hugs, and Allan walks out the front door. Mara watches him go, the sight of sunlight giving her an idea. It's been more than a month since she's been outside, and she now wants to go for a walk. She and Lindsay cross the street and sit on an iron bench in a small park, under the shade of a towering oak. They talk about boys, their first sexual experiences and Lindsay's upcoming wedding. Mara doesn't feel sick. She just feels like herself—a feeling she was not sure she would ever have again. Lindsay has something of a contact high.

Two hours pass, and they head back inside the house. Mara has an appetite for the first time in weeks. She eats a large meal, takes her pain meds and, a little later, feels a slight jolt—either a wave of anxiety or her heart skipping a beat. She begins to sweat. Nausea comes next. And then pain. Marilyn helps her upstairs to the bath. Warm water doesn't help. More methadone doesn't help. Mara's palpitations return. Tics and twitches arrive. Now her body feels like a marionette, some madman pulling the strings.

A bad night passes. In the early morning, Lindsay heads to the airport. She lives in Oakland and has to fly home to get married. Mara can barely say good-bye. Ten minutes later Marilyn checks Mara's heart rate again—which is when she decides to take her daughter to the emergency room.

When they leave the house both of them wonder, Will Mara come home again?

We now suspect humans learned about psychedelics the same way we learned about most early medicines—by copying animal behavior. Everywhere scientists have looked they've found animals who love to party. Bees stoned on orchid nectar, goats gobbling magic mushrooms, birds chomping marijuana seeds, rats on opium, mice, lizards, flies, spiders and cockroaches on opium, moths preferring the incredibly hallucinogenic datura flower, mandrills taking the even stronger iboga root. So prevalent is this behavior that many researchers now believe "the pursuit of intoxication with drugs is a primary motivational force in the behavior of organisms," as UCLA psychopharmacologist Ronald Siegel writes in his book *Intoxication: The Universal Drive for Mind-Altering Substances*.

For millennia, psychedelics sat at the center of most spiritual traditions. The Eleusinian rituals of the Greeks, for example, required drinking *kykeon*—a grainy beverage containing the rye ergot from which LSD was later derived. The Aztecs prayed to Teonanácatl, literally the "god mushroom," while the sacred Hindu text the Rig Veda contains 120 verses devoted to the rootless, leafless plant (a.k.a. "mushroom") soma, including, "We have drunk soma; we have become immortal; we have gone to the light; we have found the gods."

All of which is to say that one of the least understood facts about psychedelics is how well understood these drugs actually are. Ralph Metzner, psychologist and pioneering LSD explorer, points out, "Anthropologists now know that by the time our modern inquiry into psychedelics began, humanity had already accumulated an encyclopedia's worth of knowledge on the subject."

In 1887 Parke, Davis & Company began distributing peyote to doctors who were curious. Many were curious. By the turn of the century mescaline—the psychoactive inside of peyote—had been isolated, jump-starting three decades of phenomenological investigations into what Hunter S. Thompson called "zang." As in, "Good mescaline comes on slow. The first hour is all waiting, then about halfway through the second hour you start cursing the creep who burned you because

nothing is happening...and then ZANG!"

In 1938 Albert Hofmann, a Swiss chemist working for Sandoz Laboratories, went looking for a new way to boost circulation and ended up synthesizing LSD. Sandoz began distributing LSD free of charge to scientists around the world, listing two possible uses in the accompanying literature. First, LSD had potential as a psychotomimetic—a drug that mimics psychosis, thus giving researchers a better way to understand the schizoid state. And second, perhaps it could be used as a therapeutic tool.

By the mid-1950s, not long after Aldous Huxley told the world about mescaline in *The Doors of Perception*, psychiatrist Oscar Janiger—appropriately nicknamed Oz—was giving acid to such celebrities as Cary Grant and Jack Nicholson in hopes of learn-

after taking these mushrooms [than] in the preceding 15 years of doing research in psychology." Over the next few years, Leary dosed hundreds, maybe thousands of people, including author Ken Kesey and the rest of the Merry Pranksters. By the time that party was over—LSD and psilocybin were federally banned in 1968, though most point to the 1970 Controlled Substance Act (and the resulting export of U.S. drug policy to the rest of the world) as the real end—dozens of books had been written and more than 1,000 papers published about research conducted on more than 40,000 patients.

"Nixon shut it all down," says Doblin. "He called Leary the most dangerous man in America. That's what we remember. But all this work was the beginning of modern brain science: the serotonin revolution, our first real picture of the subconscious, potential cures for some of the most serious conditions in the world. It's kind of incredible most people don't know this."

Marilyn takes Mara to Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. By the time she checks in most of her symptoms have subsided. The initial ER examination report reads, "Awake, alert and in no obvious distress." But tests come back with problems, and she ends up staying two weeks. When she's finally discharged, she's 14 pounds lighter and on 15 different meds. The first thing she wants to do is take more ecstasy.

Her mother isn't so sure, though she understands the logic. "Some of this is Mara's search for a miracle, but mostly it's about the pain. On MDMA, she didn't hurt. She

could move; she got to be herself."

Again Marilyn consults with Allan. Together they try to backtrack the crisis. MDMA could have triggered Mara's symptoms, but they both feel methadone is the more likely culprit. Mara is now taking significantly less methadone, which seems to be a good sign, but she's on twice as many meds as before. Allan consults outside doctors. The main issue is Lovenox, an anticoagulant. MDMA increases blood pressure, and combining it with Lovenox increases the chance of a hemorrhage. They think stopping Lovenox the night before the session should cure the problem, but there's another concern: Mara still wants to go deeper, which means a stronger dose of MDMA. Could it kill her? No one knows for sure.



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ing more about creativity. At the same time Humphrey Osmond, a British psychiatrist who coined the word *psychedelic*, first suggested LSD might be used to treat alcoholism. Says NYU's Dr. Stephen Ross, "Addiction was the number one reason psychedelics were administered during this period. Thousands of people were involved. All the research showed the same thing: Afterward, addicts tended toward abstinence. Sometimes sobriety lasted weeks, sometimes months." Addiction remains the primary public health concern in America, and yet most of this research has been buried for 40 years.

Most date that burial to 1960, when Harvard psychologist Timothy Leary traveled to Mexico to try magic mushrooms for the first time. He would later say he learned more about the brain "in the five hours

In her master's thesis on outdoor adventure education, Mara wrote, "Risk is an essential element in adventure programming.... To shelter youth from reality, with all its dangers and uncertainties, is to deny them real life." And she practices what she preaches.

A week after checking out of the hospital, as June sweeps into July, at 10:45 A.M., Mara drops 130 milligrams of MDMA, adding a booster pill of another 55 milligrams a couple of hours later.

"Buy the ticket," said Hunter Thompson, "take the ride."

Rick Doblin was born Jewish, in Oak Park, Illinois and raised, he says, "under the shadow of the Holocaust." This produced a teenager who eschewed sports and girls for books about civil disobedience. By the age of 14 he had already devoted his life to social justice. By the age of 17, he had decided to become a draft resister, meaning he would always have a criminal record and "couldn't be a lawyer or a doctor or do most of the things a good Jewish boy was supposed to do."

Instead, Doblin enrolled in New College of Florida. "I had yet to speak to a girl," he says. "I thought the Beatles wrote silly love songs." To this day he has never

drunk alcohol or coffee, smoked a cigarette or tasted a fizzy drink. Back in 1971 Doblin believed the hype. "Acid scared me," he says. "I was sure one hit made you crazy." Then he got to school and discovered a nudist colony at the campus pool and psychedelic dance parties going on all night. It didn't take him long to get over his fear.

"LSD was an eye-opener," he says, laughing. "When I was younger, like everything else, I took my bar mitzvah very seriously. I had all these questions about religion that I wanted answered. I expected a spiritually transformative experience. When it didn't happen I got really pissed off at God. A decade later I did psychedelics for the first time, and all I could think was that LSD is what my bar mitzvah should have been like. This was what I wanted."

Doblin was instantly obsessed. There were more trips and more research. He stumbled across Dr. John Lilly's *Programming and Metaprogramming in the Human Biocomputer*—Lilly's attempt to map the mind while on acid and inside an isolation tank—and Dr. Stanislav Grof's *Realms of the Human Unconscious: Observations From LSD Research* (Grof was one of the main LSD researchers during the 1950s and 1960s). "Psychedelics were exactly what I was looking for," Doblin says. "Here was a scientific way of bringing

together spirituality, therapy and values. You could journey deep into the psyche and come back with important moral lessons free from prejudice. Talk about a tool for social justice. I thought then, and think now, psychedelics, used properly, are a powerful antidote to Hitler."

Antidote or not, Doblin was too late for that trip. "The drug war had shut everything down. Researchers were moving on to dreaming, meditation, fasting, chanting, holotropic breath work—ways to alter your consciousness without drugs. And it wasn't the establishment's fault; it was our fault, the counterculture's fault. We had it in our grasp and lost it." So Doblin dropped out of college, took more drugs, raised a wolf as a pet, underwent intensive primal scream therapy, learned to build houses for grounding purposes—whatever he could do to distract himself from the fact that psychedelic research was the only thing he wanted to pursue.

In 1982 he caught a break. MDMA had just arrived on the scene, and Doblin was enthralled. "It was a great tool to liberate inner love, to promote self-acceptance and deep honesty. I knew immediately it had amazing therapeutic potential, but it was already being sold in bars. Too many people were doing it. Obviously, a government crackdown was coming. But I knew that if we could get out ahead of that, this was our chance to make up for all that arrogance; this was our chance to do something different."

The DEA's MDMA crackdown began in early 1984, but Doblin was ready. He had met Laura Huxley, the widow of Aldous, and through her he learned about a psychedelic community he never knew existed. "It was then I realized psychedelic researchers hadn't disappeared, they had merely gone underground." He used these newfound connections to initiate a number of serious research studies and, in hopes of winning the PR battle, began sending MDMA to the world's spiritual leaders. About a dozen of them tried it. A 1985 *Newsweek* story titled "Getting High on Ecstasy" quotes famed Roman Catholic theologian brother David Steindl-Rast about his experience: "A monk spends his whole life cultivating this same awakened attitude MDMA gives you."

One of the studies Doblin was then trying to get the government to approve involved his own grandmother. She was dying and suffering from bipolar depression along the way. He wanted to try treating her with MDMA, but his parents refused to let him break the law. "Here was this very sick old woman who desperately needed help," recalls Doblin. "We had a drug that could help her—a drug that thousands of other people had already taken safely—and a law that prohibited it."

In 1986 Doblin started MAPS and, in an attempt to keep ecstasy legally available to doctors, helped sue the government. He lost that battle. In 1988 the DEA added MDMA to Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act, alongside heroin, PCP and other drugs "with high potential for abuse" and "no currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States." This meant that if Doblin wanted to reverse that decision, he had



"A whole new life opened up for me the moment I put your grandma's clothes on!"

to convince the FDA that MDMA was both safe and medically useful.

Doblin finished college and decided to go to graduate school. But this was 1988, and no graduate schools were interested in letting him study psychedelic research. "I realized the politics were in the way of the science," he says, "so I decided to study the politics." He enrolled in Harvard's Kennedy School of Public Policy, eventually getting his Ph.D. But before that, in 1989, the FDA had made an internal decision that forever changed the fate of psychedelic research. "The agency underwent a sea change," says Doblin. "It decided to depoliticize its work and review psychedelic drugs based strictly on scientific merit."

"Rick figured out the secret," says Mark Kleiman, director of the Drug Policy Analysis Program at UCLA and, before he switched universities, one of Doblin's professors at Harvard. "He discovered that the FDA was going to play it straight." And for the first time in decades, psychedelic research was no longer a pipe dream—suddenly it was in the pipeline.

Mara's second MDMA experience goes deeper than her first. She talks about her issues with intimacy, her fear of losing control, her dread of betrayal. She begins to speak about her recent refusal of medical updates. "I could find out, but I don't want to be defined in those terms—as a lost cause. Whatever happens, cancer gave me an opportunity to seek God."

But the MDMA does not help her find God. By early evening the drug is wearing off. Allan will be out of town for a few weeks, so more work is on hold—but Mara's disease is not. She is two months away from the date doctors do not expect her to live past. Allan and his psychedelics seem like her only hope, but MDMA isn't getting the job done. Mara wants to switch to stronger stuff.

Allan has LSD, but he feels the kind of breakthrough Mara desires requires a breakdown of her emotional defenses—and that could trigger a greater fear of death. Mara has rarely spoken of that fear, though she once told Lindsay her concern wasn't dying. "I'm an only child," she had said. "I'm terrified of leaving my parents. I'm terrified about what will happen to them if I die." Even so, for their next session, Allan feels mushrooms are the better idea.

Though there remains quite a bit scientists don't know about the medical uses for psilocybin, one surer thing is its efficacy in treating end-of-life anxiety. Freud believed existential anxiety is a primary motivational force in humans. In 1974 Ernest Becker won the Pulitzer Prize for arguing that the flip side, which he called the "denial of death," is the reason for all our behavior—the reason we created society in the first place. A long line of scientists have also pointed out that there's only one cure to end-of-life anxiety: Attach the finite self to an infinite other. This, they believe, is one of the biological purposes of religion—a way to ease our fear of death. It may also explain why psychedelics can ease the human condition. Psychedelics are known to produce a mystical experience known as "unity." Exactly

as it sounds, unity is the undeniable feeling of being one with everything. If you're one with everything, death becomes irrelevant.

Mara drops mushrooms for the first time on a muggy day in early August. An hour passes. Two hours pass. Not much is happening. Mara wants more mushrooms, but Allan has a suggestion. He's also brought along marijuana, which can enhance the effects of psilocybin. Mara decides to try it but can't tolerate hot smoke in her feeble lungs. So Marilyn becomes her daughter's "water pipe." She takes sips of cold water, breathes marijuana smoke into her mouth, then puts her lips onto Mara's and blows. Suddenly, for the first time since their last MDMA session, Mara's pain is nearly gone.

"There is some pain," she says, "but I don't feel so uptight about it. It's there, but it's not me."

Then Allan asks about her disease.

"There's a snake in my house," is her chilling response.

The rest of the session passes without incident. Mara is disappointed. She wants more, wants to try LSD, but Allan has to leave town again. Mara will have to wait until he returns for that session. The waiting is difficult. There is, after all, a snake in her house.

It took 10 years for Doblin and his associates to convince the government that ecstasy may have therapeutic potential. That victory came in 1992 when the FDA approved the first basic safety and efficacy study in humans. At roughly the same time, Doblin had more ambitious plans. He'd teamed with Dr. Michael Mithoefer, a psychiatrist with a specialty in trauma and an interest in psychedelic therapy, to explore a radical idea. "Therapists had already figured out that MDMA helps people confront traumatic memories—memories with a deep component of fear and anxiety—and get past them," says Doblin. "Michael already had experience with post-traumatic stress disorder, and PTSD is exactly that kind of problem. It seemed like a perfect fit."

Doblin wrote the first paper to appear in the scientific literature about MDMA and PTSD. It ran in the *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs* in April 2002. That was also the year Mithoefer received permission to begin his formal study—which is how he met John Thompson (not his real name).

Thompson, 40, now lives in Missouri, but in his younger days he was an Army Ranger. During the second Gulf war he was chasing insurgents in Iraq when an IED blew up beneath him. He broke his back and both his feet and suffered traumatic head injury. "I've been in fights," he says. "I've been shot before, but the trauma of getting blown up—it's a soul shaker."

Almost immediately, Thompson developed PTSD. He had nightmares every night. Every piece of trash on the road was enough to set off an episode. After about a year, with no respite, he was searching the Internet for cures and found a link on the MAPS website to upcoming studies, including Mithoefer's PTSD trial. "I'd never done MDMA before," says Thompson. "I smoked a little pot when I was younger and when I was in my early



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20s tried acid once. At the time I was already a Ranger, already a well-trained, hardened killer, but on LSD I thought I was a disciple of Christ. That was pretty unusual.”

Mithoefer’s study was intensive. Patients were given lengthy pretrial counseling. This was followed by three eight-hour MDMA sessions, each with two therapists present (most psychedelic therapy sessions involve two therapists, one male, one female). For a week after each session, for integration purposes, there was daily phone contact and a weekly in-person meeting.

“Almost immediately,” Thompson says, “I was shocked by the access I had to my memory. I started recalling parts of the experience I didn’t remember. I really went deep. It was completely cathartic. The next day [after just one session] the nightmares were gone. I was glowing and extroverted—for the first time since getting blown up. MDMA gave me back my life. I hesitate to use the word *miracle*, but I’d definitely call it a sacred molecule.”

And Thompson wasn’t the only subject to find relief. Mithoefer’s patient population included war veterans, crime victims and child abuse victims. Although he has yet to publish his data, Mithoefer has already presented it at conferences, saying, “With MDMA (instead of placebo) we had a very

clear reduction of PTSD—well into statistical significance. And it’s been a year or more after the last MDMA session—in some cases up to five years—so the effects appear to last, at least for many of the people. I think the treatment holds a lot of promise.”

Doblin will go further. “Eighty-three point three percent of our patients saw their PTSD cured. It took 22 years to get this study done. If that’s all MAPS ever does, it’s enough.”

Thompson goes the furthest. “I think MDMA is a gift to mankind. I think every vet, when they leave the service, should go through MDMA therapy. I think it should be part of the formal discharge process.”



It is late August. The phone rings. Allan is back in town, and he has quite a cocktail in mind. The next day Mara, Marilyn and Allan are again assembled in the green room. Allan has brought LSD, MDMA and marijuana. LSD is one of the most powerful mind-altering substances ever discovered. The fear is still that a bad trip could increase Mara’s anxiety, but Allan explains, “When MDMA combines with LSD, it can soften the experience, smooth out the overwhelming visuals and help maintain a train of thought.” He also says marijuana deepens the trip, allowing them to use a lower dose of

the psychedelic. Mara is game. At 4:20 P.M. she swallows 300 micrograms of LSD.

By six P.M. Mara says that not much is happening. At 6:30 she wants to try more LSD, but 300 milligrams is already a substantial dose. Allan decides to go with the MDMA instead. An hour later Mara’s pain has diminished slightly but is still not completely gone. At eight P.M. Mara smokes pot through a vaporizer. Within minutes she begins to shake. Tremors are now ripping through her body.

“The pain,” she says, “it’s burning, it’s burning. But it’s amazing how good the rest of my body feels.”

Not much happens after that. At nine P.M. Mara wants to go to sleep. The session is over. Marilyn can’t hide her disappointment.

“No glorious cure,” she says. No dramatic end to the pain, no spark of enlightenment and no talk of what to do next.

A week later Mara tells her nurse she’s losing her resolve. “I’m worried about my parents,” she says. “I suck at good-byes.” A week after that her will has broken. “I can’t do this anymore. I want to go fast.” But there is one thing she wants to do before she goes—more MDMA.

That session takes place in early September. At 2:35 P.M. Mara lies in bed, stares at the angels and swallows 135 milligrams of MDMA. An hour later she doubles down and takes another pill. Soon afterward, her breathing calms, the spasms subside and her pain is gone. By 4:30 Mara is alert.

“Call Dad,” she says.

Marilyn and David Howell divorced years ago, but David lives in the area and has always been close to his daughter. Most nights he comes by and reads to her. Most nights Mara worries about him, worries about him more than she worries about her mom. Tonight, the moment he arrives, she starts to well up.

“It’s so special,” she stammers. “I get to have my mother and father with me....”

But Mara can’t finish the sentence.

Instead, she decides, if there was ever a time for indulgence.... She sends her father to the store for chocolate. Marilyn goes to the kitchen for a moment. With her parents out of the room, Mara looks at Allan and starts to cry.

“I’m their only child....” But she can’t finish that sentence.

David returns with Dove bars. Such a glorious indulgence. The music is lively. The Temptations are singing “My Girl,” and Mara wants to dance. Her mother lifts one arm; her father takes the other. They move her body to the beat, swaying in time, one family together, one last dance. Finally Mara can finish that sentence.

“How beautiful it is to die,” she says, “with my mother and father with me.”



It’s a cold October night in 2009. Rick Doblin is in his kitchen, eating dinner with his wife and their three children. He’s telling a story about the time Lilah, his 13-year-old daughter, won a writing contest at school that was sponsored by DARE (as in, “DARE to Keep Your Kids Off Drugs”). His youngest, Eliora, 11, was concerned about him. “She thought everything was going wrong



“My customers are always out of there before I can even write a receipt.”

in my life," he remembers. "My teenage son wasn't doing drugs. My eldest daughter had just won a DARE contest. She took my hand and looked me in the eye and said, 'Daddy, I don't want to do it now, but in the future, I promise, I'll smoke lots of pot.'"

Then the conversation turns to Mara Howell and her treatment. Because the psychedelic community is small, Doblin has heard about Mara's story. "I wish it was legal," he says, "but I like the fact they're doing it in the home, that it's integrated into her hospice care, that they have co-therapists and are not limited by treatment protocols to one substance at one specific dose. They're using the entire psychedelic tool kit at the levels the situation demands. That's the future."

How long until we get to the future is another open question. The majority of current research is in phase II trials, but phase III trials are required to actually legalize these drugs. These are multi-centered trials with large patient populations. The main reason trials take so much time has nothing to do with the government. "The greatest problem," says Grof, "has always been recruiting patients." Doblin points out that while a few scientists may be aware that a psychedelic sea change has occurred, that information has yet to trickle down to mainstream doctors. But it will, and soon.

Doblin finishes his dinner in a hurry. He needs to pack. Tomorrow he leaves for Israel, where he's consulting on a PTSD/MDMA study, and then to Jordan, where—"Talk about peace in the Middle East," he jokes—they're doing more of the same. On his way out of the kitchen he tells a story about an aerobics class he used to attend, where the teacher always showed up stoned and encouraged her students to do the same. His 11-year-old interrupts him.

"But, Daddy," she shouts, "I don't want to do stoned aerobics."

Doblin shakes his head and smiles.

"Story of my life," he says.

An hour after Marilyn and David dance with their daughter, the ecstasy begins to wear off and Mara's symptoms return. Everyone in the green room tries to figure out what to do next. MDMA's effects can be prolonged, so some psychedelic therapists will provide ongoing low doses during life's final stages

both for pain relief and lucidity. Marilyn and Allan go a different route. They decide to alternate sedation days with drug days, for what they believe is the maximum physical, emotional and spiritual benefit. On his way out the door, Allan leaves enough MDMA for another session.

Mara spends the next day asleep. She can no longer eat or drink. The following morning Marilyn can't wake her, but her daughter's pain is obvious. At noon Mara awakens slightly. Marilyn asks if she wants more MDMA. It takes Mara a long time to answer.

"Yes," is all she says.

Marilyn puts a tablet under her tongue. Mara falls back asleep. After two hours her breathing steadies and her muscle spasms cease, but Mara still isn't awake.

"All too often, unconscious or dying people are treated as 'things,' as though they were not there. But often they are very much there. Although a dying person has fewer and fewer means of expressing what he feels, he is still open to receiving communication. In this sense the very sick or the dying person is much like a child: He cannot tell us how he feels, but he is absorbing our feeling, our voice and, most of all, our touch.... To the 'nobly born' as to the 'nobly dying,' skin and voice communication may make an immeasurable difference."

Nobly born is a phrase from the Tibetan Book of the Dead, which argues for the great importance of one's state of consciousness and transcendence at the time of death. Back then Marilyn didn't know what to think. She was in the green room,

beneath "those fucking angels," beside her dying daughter. "And for reasons I still can't fathom," she says, "I'm reading to her from Laura Huxley."

And then her daughter starts to move.

Mara slides her right hand out from beneath the covers and places it inside her father's palm. Then she lifts her chin, opens her eyes and turns straight toward him. In the past year she has lost so much weight that her skeletal aspects have been showing through, but in that moment they vanish. David watches the transformation and can't believe what he's seeing.

"She became angelic," he says later. "She looked radiant." He also says, "I knew exactly what was going on. She held my hand for about 15 seconds, and then

this look of absolute relief came over her face. Absolute peace. And then she died."

David had experimented with drugs in his younger days and was never too keen about Mara's decision to try psychedelic therapy. "I'll be honest, I had a lot of misgivings about the whole thing," he says.

But not anymore.

"It was a gift," he says, "to get to spend that little bit of time with her."

And her death?

"I don't know what to say about that. I think her death was a miracle."

Special thank-you to Marilyn Howell, who is completing her own memoir of these events, Honor Thy Daughter.

SEXY IS IN THE AIR

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SEXY BARE ESSENTIALS

Cover Girl TRACI DENEENE
Drops Her Arms & Reveals Everything on Page 4

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Marilyn calls Allan for advice, and he suggests giving her a second tablet. Marilyn takes his advice, but two more hours pass and Mara remains comatose. Marilyn calls David and tells him to come over. When he arrives, she says, "I don't think she's going to wake up again."

They spend the next few hours holding their daughter's hands, telling her stories. Then Marilyn is seized by a peculiar notion. On his deathbed Aldous Huxley had himself injected with LSD, believing the drug would facilitate "a good death." His wife, Laura, administered the dose. A few weeks back Allan had dropped off a copy of Laura Huxley's *This Timeless Moment*, her memoir of Aldous's life and his passing. Marilyn picks up the book and begins to read aloud.



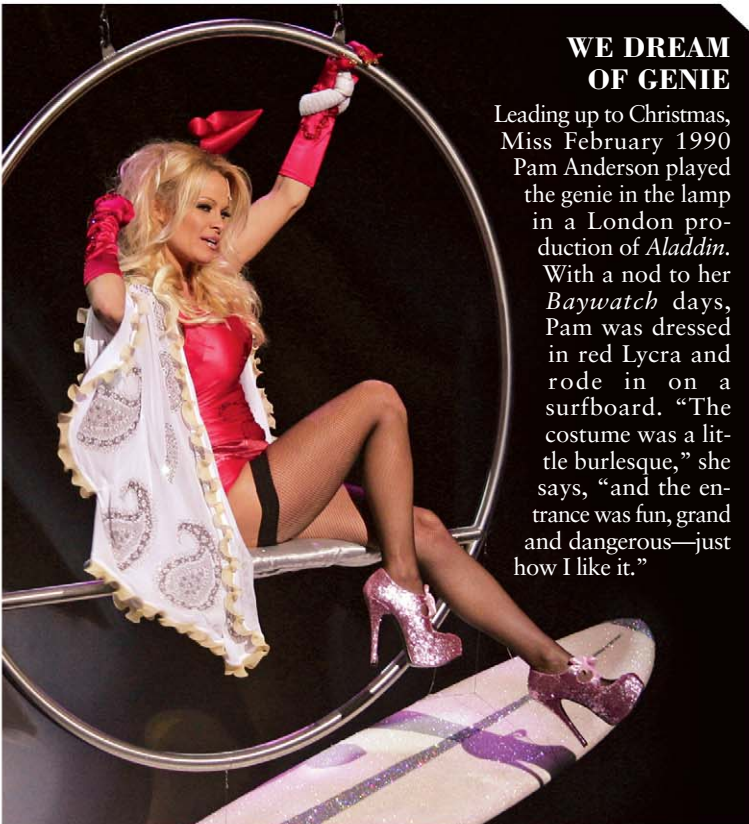


PLAYMATE NEWS



HELP A PLAYMATE SAVE ORPHANS IN HAITI

For years Susie Scott Krabacher (Miss May 1983) has been doing angel's work in Haiti through her foundation, Mercy and Sharing. Before the earthquake hit in January, the foundation had been focused on improving the lives of abandoned children in the poorest country in the western hemisphere. In an instant its mission changed to simply keeping those orphans alive. At press time 32 of the children under the foundation's care were still missing. Please go to haitichildren.org and help her continue the good fight.



WE DREAM OF GENIE

Leading up to Christmas, Miss February 1990 Pam Anderson played the genie in the lamp in a London production of *Aladdin*. With a nod to her *Baywatch* days, Pam was dressed in red Lycra and rode in on a surfboard. "The costume was a little burlesque," she says, "and the entrance was fun, grand and dangerous—just how I like it."

FLASHBACK



Ten years ago this month we had the pleasure of naming the new blonde *Baywatch* babe: Miss April 2000 **Brande Roderick**. (Speaking of which, isn't that Playmate-arrific program due for a revival? We hear Hasselhoff is available.) Brande became PMOY 2001 and continued to film TV shows and movies. She represented the Playmate sorority well last year through her efforts on *Celebrity Apprentice*, where she often displayed her wit. Currently she hosts our reality competition *Shootout* on Playboy TV.

Want to SEE MORE PLAYMATES—or more of these Playmates? You can check out the Club at club.playboy.com, access the mobile-optimized site from your phone or go to playboy.com/pmblog.

DID YOU KNOW?

Miss February 2010 **Heather Rae Young** appears in prom-dress ads in this season's *Teen Prom* magazine.

Miss June 2008 **Juliette Fretté** wrote for Examiner.com about how Obama has helped women in the workforce.

Who likes a blanket with sleeves? PMOY 2008 **Jayde Nicole**, that's who. She is a proud owner of a Snuggie.



Miss February 2008 **Michelle McLaughlin**: "I love girls, but I am not bisexual. I think women are beautiful, but I'm all about...well, you know."

MY FAVORITE PLAYMATE

BY AMY VITALE

—pro wrestling diva



"My favorite Playmate is PMOY 1985 and Miss December 1984 Karen Velez, not only because she is my aunt but because she is a true natural in front of the camera."

HOT E-CARDS

The e-card business used to cater to your mother and your irretrievably lame co-worker, until PMOY 2007 Sara Jean Underwood co-founded HottieGram.com. With her service you can send friends HottieGrams with personalized messages from Sara, Miss November 1998 Tiffany Taylor and Miss December 2005 Christine Smith (like we said, they are not your mother's e-cards). These ladies know how hard it can be to tell someone how you really feel,



so they'll do it for you—either topless or with a PG-13 approach. There's no better way to say "Sorry that you are going gray," "Happy April Fools' Day" or "Congratulations on your vasectomy." Plus, if you're bored, just type your own name and listen to Sara say it in her impossibly sultry voice.

WUNDERBRA

On the comedy site FunnyOrDie.com German fitness guru Gurda (Miss January 2001 Irina Voronina) promises that "you will have sex partner desire" if you follow the MüllerCize system. Irina made the over-the-top videos with Reno 911's Thomas Lennon and Robert Ben Garant. Here Irina models MüllerHosen. Take that, lederhosen.

Miss July 2004 **Stephanie Glasson** was a red-carpet guest at P. Diddy's Good Life Tampa Bay party.

PLAYMATE GOSSIP

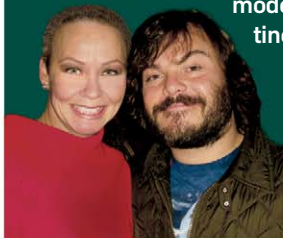
It's better to give than to receive—and if you are the receiver, isn't it more desirable to have

Playmates making the delivery? For Playboy's Toys for Tots drive, Centerfolds **Tiffany Selby, Christine Smith,**



Hiromi Oshima, Kimberly Phillips, Heather Rene Smith, Jayde Nicole, Serria Tawan, Shannon James, Pilar Lastra and Deanna Brooks played Santa's helpers, presenting marines with hundreds of toys collected through the generosity of Playboy models and employees. (Christine also brought a large pan

of homemade lasagna for the buffet.) Playmate dancers Serria, Hiromi, Deanna and Heather performed an impromptu routine for the marines.... While in Los Angeles for the



Mansion's New Year's party **Candace Collins** ran into movie star Jack Black as she dined at the Polo Lounge in Beverly Hills.... Meanwhile, on Central Time, **Hiromi** was dressed in her Bunny costume to celebrate New Year's in Chicago. Playboy's Midwest countdown took place at the Chicago Hilton and was headlined by Pitbull.... Playmates also came out en masse to West Hollywood for Jermaine Dupri's new line of watches called Nu Pop Movement. Here are a few Playmates, including **Stacy Fuson** and **Hiromi** (man, that girl is everywhere) with Bridget Marquardt and jeweler Pascal Mouawad.



Miss April 1989 **Jennifer Lyn Jackson** passed away in her Ohio home in January. We will miss you, Jennifer.

DID YOU KNOW ?



Gurda!



RUSSIAN STANDARD PRESENTS

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MISS PLAYBOY CLUB JANUARY

CALENDAR GIRL DATA SHEET

Name: Shannon Kelly

Bust: 34 C Waist: 28 Hips: 32

Height: 5'6" Weight: 120

Birth Date: September 26, 1984

Turn-ons: Sense of Humor, muscles,
personality

Turn-offs: Bad Breath, bad teeth,
stale personality



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PLAYBOY FORUM

HOW THE CITY LOST ITS SOUL

AMERICAN CITIES ARE SAFER THAN EVER BEFORE—BUT AT WHAT COST?

BY SHARON ZUKIN

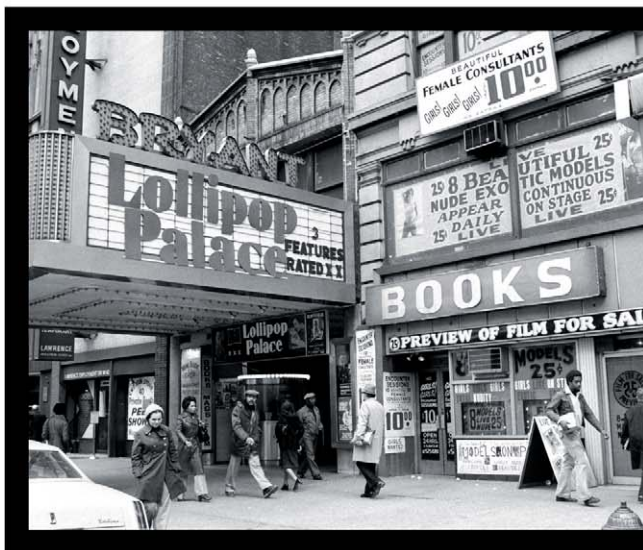
When I was 17 and left my parents' house in Philadelphia for a college dorm in upper Manhattan, I found a cultural melting pot that fed my fantasies of urban life. Crowds on every street! Neon nights, makeshift clubs, poets and writers hanging out in dingy cafés! Times Square was a crazy theater of the absurd, and in the East Village hippies were running wild. The city offered space for us to be different—and to make common cause with others who wanted to be different too.

This was no less true for earlier generations of cultural migrants. From the actress-protagonist in *Sister Carrie* to Ayn Rand's architect-hero Howard Roark, fictional characters of the early 1900s came to the big city—Carrie to Chicago, Roark to New York—to pursue their dreams. Zora Neale Hurston and W.E.B. DuBois fomented new forms of liter-

replaced by young investment bankers, college students doubling up in railroad flats and recent art school graduates. We felt the mood shift after 9/11, when our elected leaders' pre-occupations turned to shopping and security.

Money made a big difference. With capital flowing like Cristal, real estate investors, many of them from overseas, colonized the city with corporate entertainment venues and upscale condos. Mayors oversaw the crafting of a wholesome public relations image to attract smug suburbanites and uptight foreign visitors fearful of the city's graffiti, dirt and crime. Within a few years sleazy districts were Disneyfied. The new Times Square sprouted a Disney store and theater, as well as a Hello Kitty shop, an ESPN Zone and the corporate headquarters of both Condé Nast and Nasdaq.

It wasn't just Mayor Rudolph Giuliani who did us in, though



ary and political expression in Harlem in the 1920s. During the 1950s, first in New York and then in San Francisco, the Beat generation thrived on the city's sexual freedoms. The lonious Monk reinvented bebop at the Five Spot downtown. Bob Dylan fled Minnesota for Greenwich Village.

Artists who came to New York when I moved there in the 1960s gave us "happenings" and galleries in SoHo. Punk rockers sharpened our sense of irony at CBGB on the Bowery and Max's Kansas City near Union Square. Andy Warhol and the later East Village artists showed us New York was the place for endless self-creation. The whole experience taught us that Cities = Art and Art = Life. When did cities lose this feeling? Was it Reaganism or AIDS, as the musical *Rent* suggests, that took the Shangri-la of Avenue A out of our grasp?

New Yorkers saw their city tighten up in the 1980s, when homeless people were chased out of town and hippies were replaced by yuppies. We found it getting more expensive during the dot-com boom of the 1990s, when working-class families who had lived in our neighborhood for years were

his name became synonymous with New York's repressive revival during the 1990s. More-focused policing helped drive down crime rates; the AIDS and crack epidemics abated. Many dangerous urban areas—where people had gone slumming over the years in opium dens, jazz clubs and dive bars—were pacified by arrests followed by imprisonment, most often for sales of illegal drugs. Dicey neighborhoods were gentrified by affluent home buyers and stabilized by community organizations that took charge of affordable housing.

New York City lost its soul then, but it was just a flash point for what happened everywhere. Though American cities are cleaner, safer places than they were 30 years ago, they have lost the air of freedom that over the years lured so many to escape the boredom and conformity of mainstream culture. The unique constellation of raunch and glitz is gone.

There are still dive bars and expensive restaurants, factory ruins and desolate piers, illicit marketplaces for drugs and sex. But the city as we knew it has been homogenized, suburbanized and domesticated. Some critics look at the

WHERE ARE THE JOBS?

THE FINAL INTERVIEW WITH HISTORIAN HOWARD ZINN

new upscale neighborhoods and blame gentrification. Local officials lusting after investment dollars praise revitalization. Tourists call it fun. If you're a longtime city dweller, though, you're in denial. You still have urban space in New York, Los Angeles and Chicago, but you see downtown turning into an urban shopping mall, private guards patrolling local business districts and—despite the recession—housing prices continuing to rise. Cities are too expensive and too predictable to enjoy.

At the same time, travel and technology have changed the way consumers cater to their vices. You can fly to Vegas for a weekend almost as easily as driving downtown. You can watch porn online instead of going to an adult-video store. Video games absorb youthful energies that used to be spent prowling the city's

CITIES ARE TOO PREDICTABLE

darker corners for excitement. New York has led the way to the safer city. But the East Village punk scene is dead, Harlem and other black neighborhoods are gaining white residents for the first time in years, and the indie music clubs of Williamsburg are threatened by rising rents and new condo towers (though, thanks to stalled financial markets, most of these are in remission). Zones once made toxic by industry and crime grow Whole Foods Markets, trendy restaurants and bars that wouldn't be out of place in any college town. It's not all bad. New York's murder rate is lower than it has been in decades; the subways are no longer marred by graffiti. Parks run by private business-improvement districts offer farmers' markets, free movies and picnics on the grass. But these don't replace the authentic city and its bohemian districts. There is no space where we can flaunt our differences. Both the creative bohemian city and the city of neighborhoods are fading.

It's time to change local redevelopment priorities and take a stand against the tastes fostered by corporate culture. No more chain stores or mass-market entertainment venues! Low rents, less media exposure and fewer face-lifts for downscale districts! Instead of patronizing upscale cupcake bars, let's protect those small and dirty spaces where we have always cultivated difference.

*Sharon Zukin, professor of sociology at Brooklyn College, is author of *Naked City: The Death and Life of Authentic Urban Places*.*

Howard Zinn was the greatest anti-authoritarian historian of his time. PLAYBOY'S Sanhita SinhaRoy talked with the teacher, progressive activist and author of *A People's History of the United States* (which has sold nearly 2 million copies) shortly before his death in January at the age of 87. In this last conversation, Zinn discussed our economic crisis and why big government is good for America.

PLAYBOY: What's your take on our jobless recovery?

ZINN: We need to go beyond what was

to solve unemployment, it gave them a salary. They lived in camps around the country. They did enormously useful work restoring forests and cleaning up rivers and building bridges. The federal arts program was part of the WPA. We need an arts program in which the government will pay musicians, directors, actors, poets and writers to produce operas, murals, plays and books. There's nothing like that in the Obama plan. It would take that kind of bold program to begin to solve the problem of unemployment.



Fisher Body Plant 21 in Detroit: Government can't rely on businesses to create jobs.

done in the New Deal of Franklin D. Roosevelt, which was a jobs program the government unabashedly used to create the Works Progress Administration. The WPA created 8 million jobs. In proportion to the population today, a measure like that would mean new jobs for at least 15 million Americans. The Democratic Party is stuck, and President Obama is stuck, in the idea of doing things through the market and depending on private businesses to create jobs. It's like easing home owners' problems by giving money to the banks or giving subsidies or tax benefits to employers in the hope they will then create jobs. This will not happen. The government needs to guarantee jobs to everybody willing to work. If private enterprise won't hire people, the government must. The government hired people in the 1930s. It hired hundreds of thousands of young people in the Civilian Conservation Corps. Instead of drafting them into the Army

PLAYBOY: With the November midterm elections around the corner, it doesn't appear likely the president will get behind such a plan.

ZINN: When government begins to do things for the poor or the middle class, the cry goes up, "Oh, this is big government!" The Obama administration has been timid in the face of such cries. It hasn't come directly to the American people and said, "There's nothing wrong with big government." The whole idea of the Constitution was to create a government strong enough to do the things the founding fathers wanted it to do. In fact, Republicans want big government; the war lovers want big government. We're paying more than \$630 billion on a military budget, and no government is bigger than when you go to war. But the big government that exists works on behalf of the elite, of the wealthy classes. Obama needs to educate the American people about the

necessity for government to do things private enterprise will not. Look at Social Security, Medicare, the post office and the G.I. Bill. There's historic precedent for the government doing things private enterprise won't. If you fight for policy, even if you then lose the election, it's hard to dislodge those policies. The argument for being so cautious is that it's important for Obama to win the next election. But that's not as important as putting through economic policies that will be hard to dislodge no matter who is elected.

PLAYBOY: Now that the Democrats have lost their filibuster-proof supermajority in Congress, what will this mean for financial reform and jobs creation?

ZINN: The Democratic Party isn't a fighting party on economic issues. Its reforms are so modest and timid that even if they were passed over the filibuster, they wouldn't be fundamental reforms. I don't put as much stock in the importance of the filibuster as I do in the state of the Democratic Party, which is rather pitiful. I haven't seen it propose a real jobs bill. The economic stimulus that Obama proposed and that Democrats supported is a small step in the direction we need to go. We have a serious unemployment problem. The 10 percent statistic underestimates the real situation because it doesn't account for people who have stopped asking for unemployment insurance and people who have been discouraged from looking for work.

PLAYBOY: Is the term *jobless recovery* an oxymoron?

ZINN: The problem with the language of economics is that it's based on the stock market. If businesses and stockholders are doing well, and if the Dow Jones average goes up, it's assumed you have economic recovery. But you have to measure a recovery not by how people at the top are doing but by how people at the bottom are doing. If the indexes show a recovery but people are still unemployed or still losing their homes, then you don't have economic recovery. They ought to stop giving the Dow Jones average every night on television. Instead they should give figures on unemployment and foreclosures.

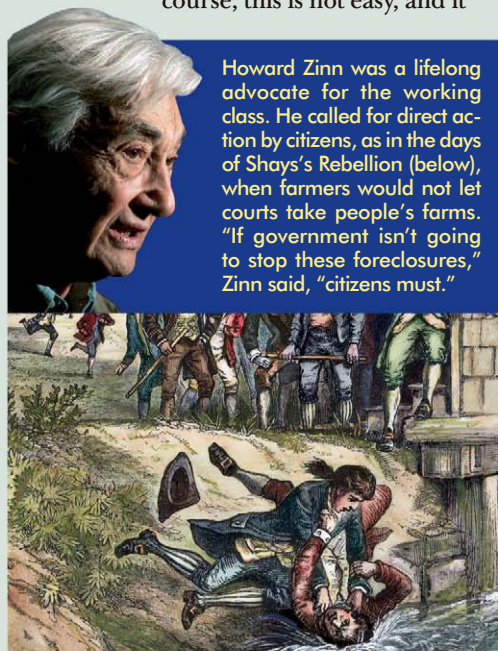
PLAYBOY: What should government do about foreclosures?

ZINN: The government has to step in and declare a moratorium and declare that people won't lose their homes if they can't pay their mortgage. Instead of giving a trillion dollars to financial institutions and hoping they will then make it easier for people to pay their mortgages, the government has to help people directly. The Obama administration's reliance on the private sector is really the trickle-down

theory—the idea that if you give people at the top a bailout of \$1 trillion, they will use that money to help people in need. But the people at the top won't do that, because their motive is profit, not humanitarian concerns. Such bailouts should be replaced by direct aid to people in trouble.

PLAYBOY: What can the average American do?

ZINN: Not much individually. The only time citizens can do anything is if they organize, if they act collectively. The trade union movement is an example of that. Citizens need to organize in such a way that they can present members of Congress with demands and say, "We will vote for you if you listen to us." Of course, this is not easy, and it



Howard Zinn was a lifelong advocate for the working class. He called for direct action by citizens, as in the days of Shays's Rebellion (below), when farmers would not let courts take people's farms. "If government isn't going to stop these foreclosures," Zinn said, "citizens must."

won't happen overnight. But we have to start at some point, and the starting point is people getting together to create organizations. Neighbors can get together to stop evictions. This can be done at the local level. This was done in the 1930s when neighbors stopped the evictions of people who weren't able to pay their rent. Tenants' councils were formed, and when people were evicted from their tenements, their neighbors gathered and put their furniture back in the house.

PLAYBOY: There has been some of this at the local level. Local law enforcement has suspended evictions, and nonprofits have engaged in civil disobedience in front of foreclosed properties.

ZINN: Direct action by citizens is exactly what's needed. This goes back to the 18th century in Massachusetts, when thousands of farmers gathered around courthouses and would not let the courts take away people's farms. If citizens would simply not permit homes to be taken away from

their neighbors, the government would recognize it has to step in and do the same, but do it efficiently and legally.

PLAYBOY: What will prolonged unemployment mean?

ZINN: It will mean the already great gap between the superrich and everybody else will be greater. Maybe the growth in unemployment will finally lead people to organize in a way they haven't before. If something terrible is happening in the economy, you hope it can at least impel people to become angry and militant and do what was done in the 1930s. But certainly the continuation of unemployment will not be a good thing.

PLAYBOY: Many European countries have unemployment rates hovering around 10 percent. Why is it wrong if the U.S. has the same?

ZINN: France has a high unemployment rate, but unemployment benefits in France last several years, and the unemployed there get between 60 and 75 percent of their salary. Our unemployed get nothing like that. The government has a responsibility to make sure unemployed people have an adequate standard of living by giving generous unemployment benefits over a long enough period of time. Also, in other countries you get free health care whether you're employed or not. This is one of the scandals of the Democratic Party: It hasn't fought for true universal health care—free government-organized health care—as they have in Canada and France. The World Health Organization ranks the U.S. about 37th in health care. Here we are, the richest country in the world, and we're 37th in health care.

PLAYBOY: How is this economic turmoil different from those we've experienced in the past?

ZINN: It hasn't gotten as bad as the 1929 Depression, when one third of the labor force was unemployed. Of course, we now have a higher unemployment rate than the statistics show. When they say there's 10 percent unemployed, it really means there's 20 percent unemployed. So it's not as bad as it was in 1929. What we call an economic crisis is when things get very, very bad. In normal times, one out of five kids grows up hungry, people lose their jobs and homes are foreclosed. That's normal. When that situation exists, they don't call it an economic crisis. We have to understand that when you have an economic system in which wealth gravitates to the top and you have a permanent underclass of people living in poor homes and without health care, then you are in constant economic crisis. You have to rethink the kind of economic system you live under and take bold steps to change that.

READER RESPONSE

FOR OTHERS BUT NOT US

Malise Ruthven's apology for the hijab worn by many Muslim women ("Decoding the Veil," January/February) contains a number of flaws, but two stand out. First, Ruthven ignores coercion. After a period in the 1950s and 1960s during which women across the Muslim world took off their veils, the religious right fought back. The resurgence of the veil in the past three decades is the outcome of a shift in values initiated by a male-dominated movement



The veil: more than meets the eye.

that tells Muslim women the veil is a nonnegotiable requirement of their faith. Ruthven refers in passing to acid attacks in Afghanistan but ignores far more widespread and powerful forms of inducement. The veiling trend has empowered a new generation of young men to exert many forms of social pressure on women, including making veiling a condition of marriage and harassing nonveiled women in the street. In this context, it is hard to see the turn to the veil as a free expression of resistance to Islamophobia or liberation from the tyranny of fashion. Second, Ruthven suggests veiling is the product of an old association of bare skin with slave girls. But advocates of veiling do not invoke slave girls. Instead, they cite ambiguous passages in the Koran, such as one enjoining women to "guard their private parts [*furuj*]." Perhaps unwittingly, Ruthven takes the Islamist position by translating this phrase as to "be modest." The demonization of Islam in the West is a serious problem. But to oppose it by justifying the veil is to buy into the false dichotomy between freedom of dress and Islam. (Indeed, some women in the Muslim world, such as rural women in Algeria, historically never wore the veil.) Ruthven's essay continues a tradition of Western authors justifying the

application of customs to others that they would not adopt for themselves.

Marnia Lazreg
New York, New York

*Lazreg, a sociology professor at Hunter College, is author of *Questioning the Veil: Open Letters to Muslim Women*.*

Ruthven notes that free women often wore the hijab, while slaves did not. Are there parallels to the controversial practice of female genital mutilation? If I understand the rationale, veiling is an attempt to avoid tempting men, while mutilation is an attempt to "desexualize" women.

Albert Wang
Fort Collins, Colorado

It was far more likely for a free woman to be mutilated, as it was viewed as a sign of sexual purity that distinguished her from a prostitute or slave.

Discussing Muslim attitudes toward women, sexuality and appropriate dress is the intellectual equivalent of arguing about how many angels can dance on the head of a pin. It is pointless to attempt to reason with religious believers.

Richard Vidan
Los Angeles, California

PLAYBOY ON THE TRAIN

I was reading the January/February issue on a commuter train to Boston when the conductor walked by, stopped, tapped my magazine and said, "You can't read that on the train." I can see why he would caution me if the train were packed and I had unfolded the Centerfold, but I was reading *After Hours* and no one was near me. Even when others are around,



It's safe to read PLAYBOY on Boston trains.

it's not as though I advertise my reading material. Were my rights violated?

Michael Mackey
Rockport, Massachusetts

A train? We're used to fielding complaints from readers who have been told they can't

read PLAYBOY on the plane. It's a murky legal area. A commuter train and airplanes are "common carriers," but the courts have ruled they can place reasonable restrictions on travelers. As a practical matter we suggest that, if asked, you politely put the magazine away and let us know what happened. We'll alert the carrier of your complaint. For the record, the airlines, and now the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, assure us they have no policies banning PLAYBOY.

LOOKING FOR ANSWERS

When I was 17 I found myself in the precise situation described by Joshua Tepfer in "Untrue Confessions" (November). After hearing I was being sought by the Chicago police, I went to the station to sort things out. That turned out to be the biggest mistake of my life. As soon as I arrived I was placed in an interrogation room and asked



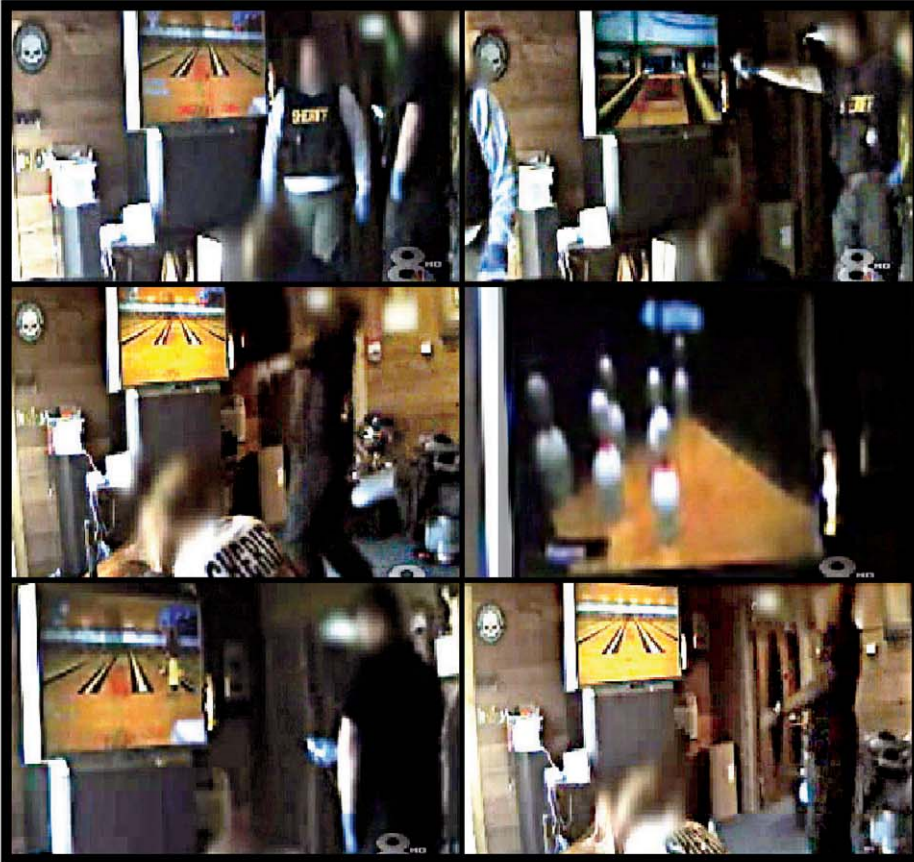
Why would the police lie?

about a young man who, six weeks earlier, had been fatally shot by a group of Hispanic men. After two nights of questioning and being falsely accused of the killing, I started to believe that maybe I had done it. Why would the police lie? I tried to envision myself doing everything the three detectives said I had. I was truly confused. Maybe I had done it but blacked it out. I felt hopeless. I was convicted of murder and given a 50-year sentence based on "eyewitness" testimony. I kept my wits during the interrogation by telling myself that even if I had done the crime and blacked it out, I would have remembered going to and from the scene.

Matthew Echevarria
Menard Correctional Center
Menard, Illinois

E-mail via the web at letters.playboy.com. Or write: 680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611.

NEWSFRONT

**Strike Force**

Like Native Americans who believed photographs captured their souls, police officers continue to be sensitive about having their images or voices recorded. (See “No Photos Allowed,” November.) In Tampa a team of 16 officers raided a home, looking for drugs and weapons. Within 20 minutes a security camera had recorded a few of them powering up the home owner’s video-game console to play Wii Bowling. “That is not appropriate conduct at a search warrant,” Sheriff Grady Judd said, although he quickly added it had been executed properly “from a legal sense.” In Boston, police have started detaining bystanders who record arrests with cell phones, accusing them of illegal wiretapping. (It’s against the law in Massachusetts and 11 other states to tape someone without his or her consent.) Finally, in Hollywood, Florida an officer who rear-ended a motorist was recorded by his dashboard camera at the scene discussing with four colleagues how to frame her. When the chief said he planned to fire the officers, a union official dismissed the plan as a “public lynching by a few elected city officials for their own political agenda.”

Secular Jesus

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Christian cross is no longer just for Christians, according to Antonin Scalia. While hearing arguments in a First Amendment case, the Supreme Court justice expressed surprise that a cross planted in a war memorial on public land couldn’t also be seen to honor Jewish, Muslim or atheist soldiers. After all, it’s “the most common symbol of the resting place of the dead” and thus secular by default, like Santa Claus and bagels. The other justices seemed to favor giving the land to a private group to avoid the question.

Right From Wrong

AUSTIN, TEXAS—Turned back in their efforts to teach creationism as science, right-wing lawmakers are targeting more recent history. The state board of education has tentatively approved a plan to require history teachers to give lessons on key figures of the “conservative resurgence” of the 1980s and 1990s. The board voted to add Phyllis Schlafly, the National Rifle

Association, the Moral Majority and the Heritage Foundation to a list of topics students must know, while excluding Senator Edward Kennedy and Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor. Board member Don McLeroy, who proposed the change, said current standards are “rife with leftist political periods and events.”

Aiming for the Heart

WIXOM, MICHIGAN—Trijicon, a company that makes rifle sights used by U.S. soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan to fight insurgents and train local Muslim forces, has for years added coded Bible verse citations such as 2COR4:6 and JN8:12 to the serial numbers. The military prohibits proselytizing by soldiers to prevent accusations the U.S. is waging a Christian Crusade. The scopes allow the Taliban and Al Qaeda “to claim they’re being shot by Jesus rifles,” said Mikey Weinstein of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation (militaryreligiousfreedom.org). Faced with

the prospect of losing \$660 million in federal contracts, Trijicon said it would not include the markings on future scopes.

Black on Black

SALTERS, SOUTH CAROLINA—Two black students who said administrators did nothing when they were violently bullied by black classmates for “acting white” won a \$150,000 settlement. An uncle testified his niece was targeted because the family was “churchy” and “upright.” The students’ attorney said he knew of no other federal civil rights case involving intraracial harassment at a school.





She's Perfectly Claire

CLAIRE DANES is a supporting actress in *Me and Orson Welles* but walked the red carpet at the London premiere with no support whatsoever. That's one way to steal the spotlight.

PHIL LOFTUS/CAPITAL/AD MEDIA/SIPA PRESS



ERRO/RETOTCA-ARCHIVES.COM

Fine-Looking Woman

With no defining trait other than her overwhelming charisma, IVETA deserves to be introduced with words from D.H. Lawrence: "Beauty is not a fixed pattern or an arrangement of features. It is something felt, a glow or a communicated sense of fineness."



FEZZA SA/ANAT/STARBACKPHOTO.COM

Breaking Surf

The question used to be whether tennis player SERENA WILLIAMS was most vulnerable on grass, clay or hard courts. But after seeing this double fault in Barbados, it turns out she slips on the beach. The new question we ask is "Why does she need the extra flotation device?"



ISLANDPUSH/ASH NEWS

More Than a Singular Sensation

ELISABETTA GREGORACI is a triple threat as a dancer, an Italian TV personality and a Wonderbra model. After seeing the above photo, the San Diego Chargers are considering converting her into a placekicker.

Queen of Hearts

A line from EMILIE AUTUMN's song "Thank God I'm Pretty": "I'm truly privileged to look this good without clothes on." Courtney Love's "anarchy violinist" has moved to front stage and is currently touring with this crazy-hearts encore.



KEN SETTLE



Peaks and Vallejos

Here's where you may have seen TAMMY VALLEJOS: *WWE \$250,000 Raw Diva Search*, *Any Given Sunday*, *Lingerie Bowl* or a Dallas Cowboys cheerleader calendar. Betcha she knows about sports.

ISABELLE RUEN



MAXI ENERGIC/POPSTARSPICTURES.COM

A Double-Blonde Study

A UC Santa Barbara study determined (scientifically) that gentlemen do prefer blondes and that they are the most aggressive women. Here's AGNIESHKA, a take-charge blonde we love.

Hello, Old Friends

We think JENNIFER ANISTON is more alluring now than when she popularized the Rachel haircut. Here she is walking onto the set of *The Bounty Hunter*, starring Gerard Butler and her nipples.



ANDREA RENAULT/POLARIS

Cute Coed

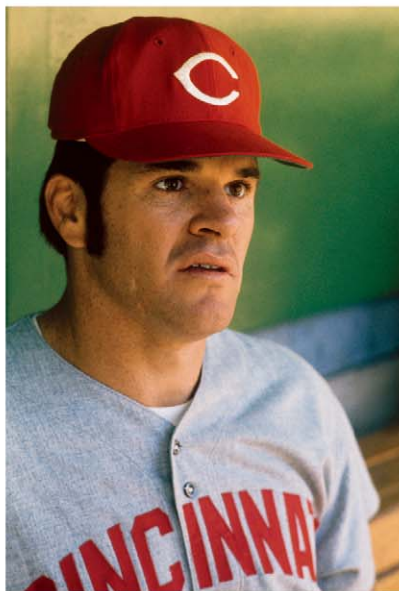
Is anything sweeter than looking into the eyes of a precocious college student? Take this photo of NICOLE, for example: She needn't be wearing bobby socks or carrying a trigonometry book for you to see she's a supple but mature 19. No, her eyes and student body don't require any props—that's a real college girl.

BRIGHAN FIELD/WARETCOM





MADMOISELLE DUPRÉ



BASEBALL WHEN THE GRASS WAS FAKE.



ARE THEY EVER NOT PARTYING IN BRAZIL?

NEXT MONTH



MOST DAPPER CASTAWAY, SIX YEARS RUNNING.

ASHLEY DUPRÉ—SAY WHAT YOU WILL ABOUT ELIOT SPITZER, BUT HE DIDN'T GO DOWN IN FLAMES FOR ANY LOW-RENT FEMME. GIVEN THE CHOICE BETWEEN HAVING MS. DUPRÉ AND BEING GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK, WE'D HAVE TO GO WITH ASHLEY.

BASEBALL UNPLUGGED—BACK BEFORE CABLE AND THE INTERNET, THE NATIONAL PASTIME WAS A LOT WILDER. HALL OF FAME WRITER **TRACY RINGOLSBY** COVERED THE GAME BEFORE THE AGE OF CELL-PHONE CAMERAS AND MEDIA TRAINING, AND HE SHARES SOME OF HIS SALTIER STORIES. PLUS OUR PICK FOR WHO WILL WIN THE 2010 WORLD SERIES.

FICTION BY ETHAN COEN—THE WRITING HALF OF THE COEN BROTHERS TAKES ON THE MATING HABITS OF ACADEMICS IN THIS SEND-UP OF SWINGERS AND INTELLECTUALISM.

THE NEW JAMES BOND—INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES USED TO TRAIN SPIES AND SEND THEM INTO THE FIELD. NOW THEY RECRUIT THEM THERE. **PHIL ZABRISKIE** GOES TO LONDON ON THE TRAIL OF THE NEW BREED OF SECRET AGENTS WHO PERFORM THE DARKEST OF DARK OPS.

DAVE BARRY—THE PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING HUMORIST TAKES ON ONE OF A MAN'S MOST DELICATE DECISIONS—THE BIG SNIP. HERE'S HIS GUIDE TO SURVIVING A VASECTOMY WITH A MINIMUM OF EGO TRAUMA.

FASHION—WHEN IT COMES TO INTERNATIONAL SPORTSMEN, FORMULA 1 DRIVERS ARE THE PINNACLE OF COOL. WE HIGHLIGHT SOME OF THEIR PRE- AND POSTRACE FINERY, SHOT ON LOCATION AT THE BRAZILIAN GRAND PRIX.

ORIGIN OF SPECIES—ALMOST 40,000 YEARS AGO HUMANS MIGRATED FROM AFRICA TO EUROPE, WHERE THEY ENCOUNTERED THE NEANDERTHALS. NEW STUDIES SUGGEST THE TWO SPECIES MATED, WHICH MAY SAY A HELL OF A LOT ABOUT HUMANITY TODAY.

PLAYBOY PARTY SCHOOLS 2010—YES, IT'S A SCIENCE. WE'VE PERFECTED AN ALGORITHM BASED ON GIRLS, SEX, PARTIES, SPORTS AND ACADEMICS, YIELDING A MARCH MADNESS-STYLE BRACKET. WHICH SCHOOL WILL TAKE TOP HONORS?

POLICE STORY—FOR 20 YEARS, CHICAGO POLICE COMMANDER JON BURGE ALLEGEDLY TORTURED SUSPECTS TO MAKE THEM CONFESS. **JOHN CONROY** AND **HILLEL LEVIN** BLOW THE LID OFF A WINDY CITY SCANDAL.

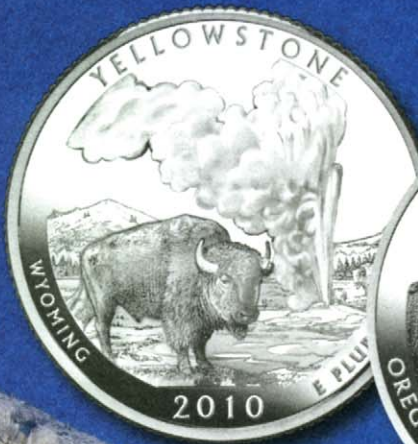
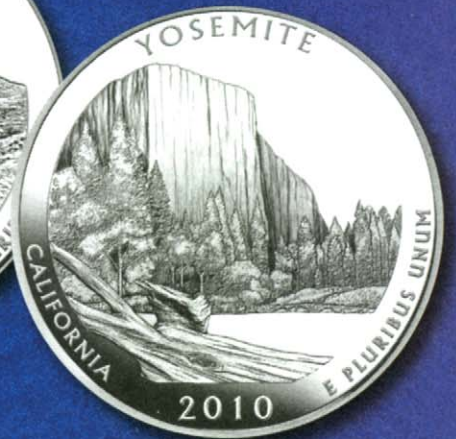
MATTHEW FOX—IN THE *PLAYBOY INTERVIEW*, THE WHITE-HOT STAR OF *LOST* OPENS UP ABOUT WORKING WITH JENNIFER LOVE HEWITT WHEN SHE WAS 16 AND HOW HIS SHOW ENDS (KIDDING!).

PLUS—THE ULTIMATE HOME KITCHEN, THE ORIGINS OF NEW ORLEANS'S JAZZ SCENE AND PLAYMATE **KASSIE LYN LOGSDON**.

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It took an Act of Congress to protect America's national treasures for future generations. Now – for the first time ever – Congress has voted to preserve them on our nation's coinage!

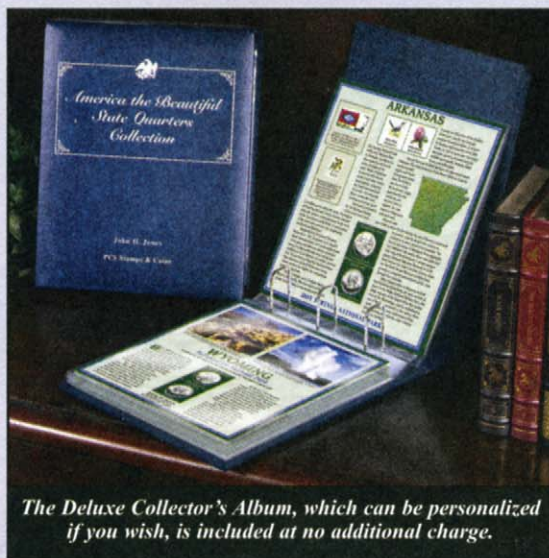
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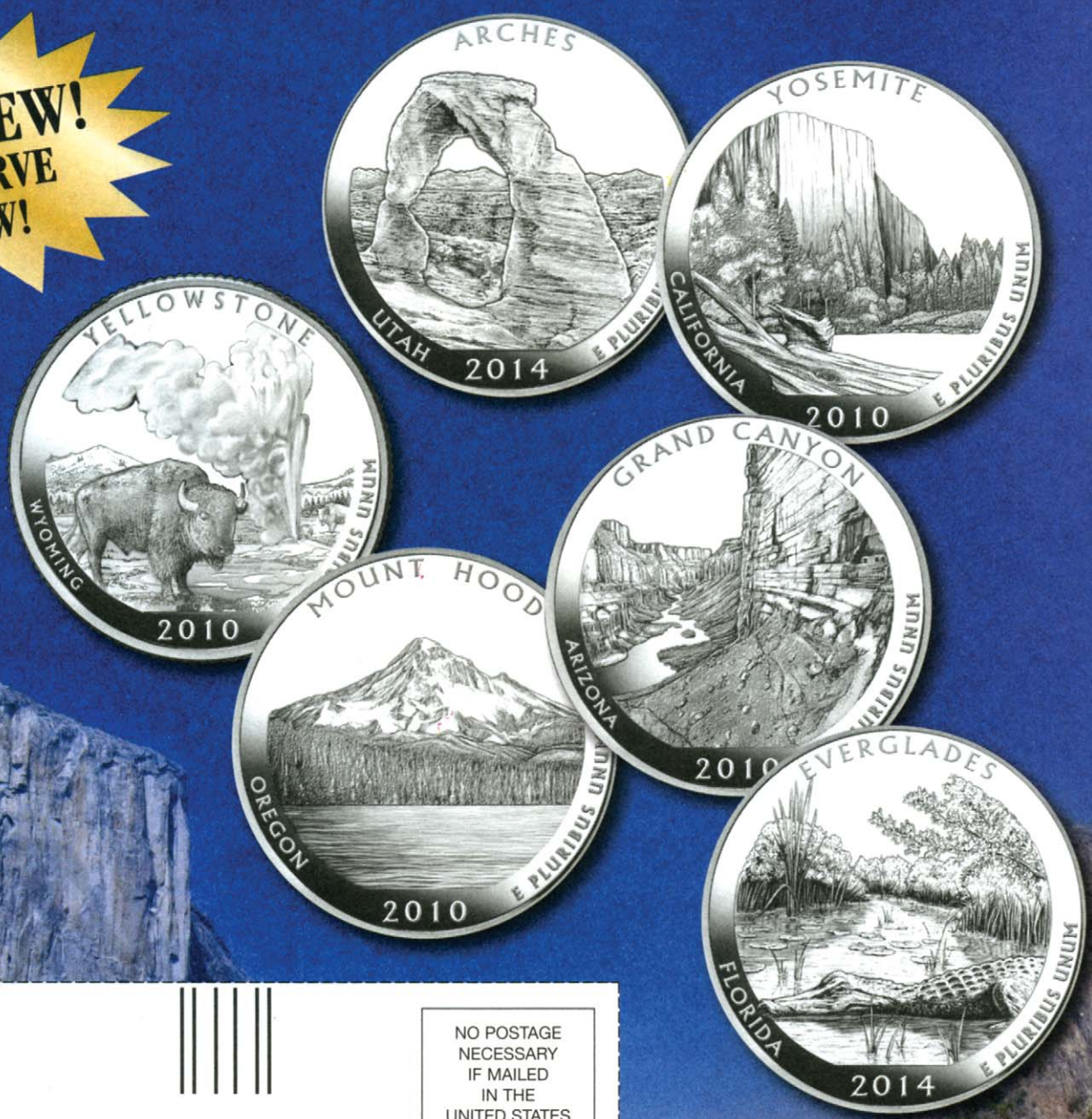
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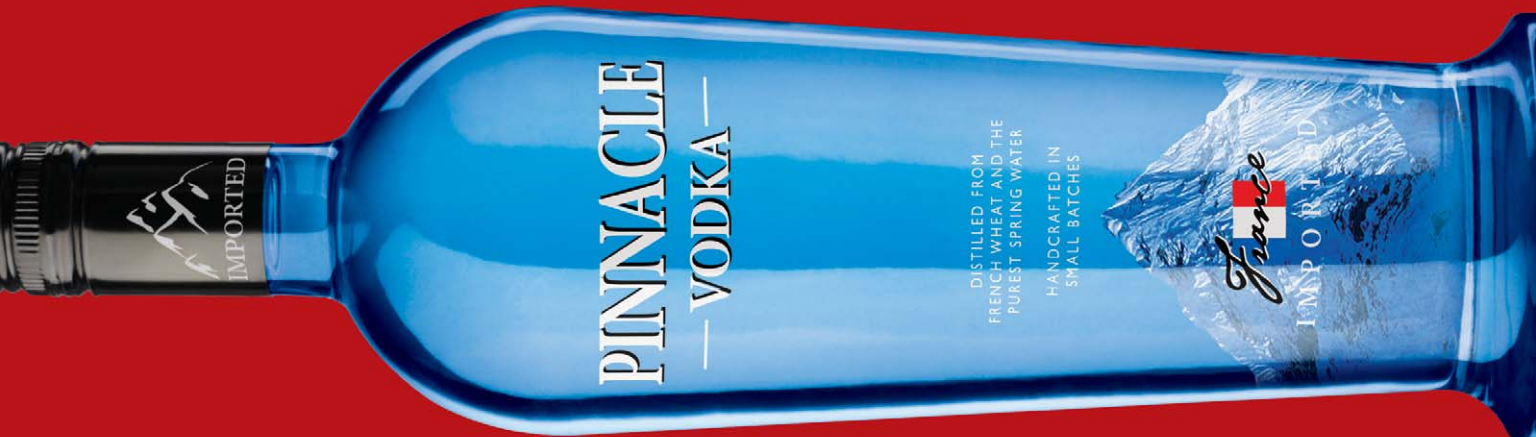
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