

PLAYBOY

WorldMag

ENTERTAINMENT

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THE INTERVIEW
**JAMES
FRANCO**

THIS IS THE
WAY THE
WORLD ENDS
**FAILED
STATES**
BY LESTER R.
BROWN

**PLUS
REGGIE
WATTS**

IS ONE
FUNNY
MOTHERF@#%*R

“GODDESS”
**BREE
OLSON**
REVEALS ALL
THE SECRET
SEX LIFE OF
**CHARLIE
SHEEN**

NEW FICTION BY
**CHUCK
PALAHNIUK**

AMERICA'S BEST
LATE-NIGHT BARS

20^Q
BRYAN CRANSTON





WHAT DO YOU DRIVE?

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THE MOST ORIGINAL PEOPLE DESERVE THE MOST ORIGINAL VODKA



PLAYBILL

August is a great time to catch up with friends. That's why we're so happy to see **Chuck Palahniuk**, who contributes another of his game-changing stories. In *Romance*, a nice guy hooks up with the girl of his dreams—of any guy's dreams—and is afraid he'll wake up. "Happiness is like a ticking bomb," our hero observes as he discovers his new love is a bit different. The same might be said of Wes Craven. In *Shock Value*, the *New York Times* critic **Jason Zinoman** examines how the man behind *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, *The Hills Have Eyes* and *Scream* transformed horror with his morally ambiguous campfire stories. The profile is an excerpt from Zinoman's book of the same name. **Jonathan Lethem** recalls his own ambiguity, of a sensual nature, in *Live Nude Models*. The acclaimed author of *Motherless Brooklyn* and *The Disappointment Artist* had many artistic interactions with nude women hired to pose for his painter father. And yet his teen brain craved illicit glimpses. A sense of mystery pervades another modern drama, that of

Charlie Sheen, who lived with two women he proclaimed otherworldly. In *Charlie Sheen's Goddess Has Left the Building*, **Bree Olson** shares her third of the story and her 100 percent live nude self. The title comes from a March 5 tweet in which Sheen reported Olson had "left the building." Where is she now? On page 96. For the second issue in a row,

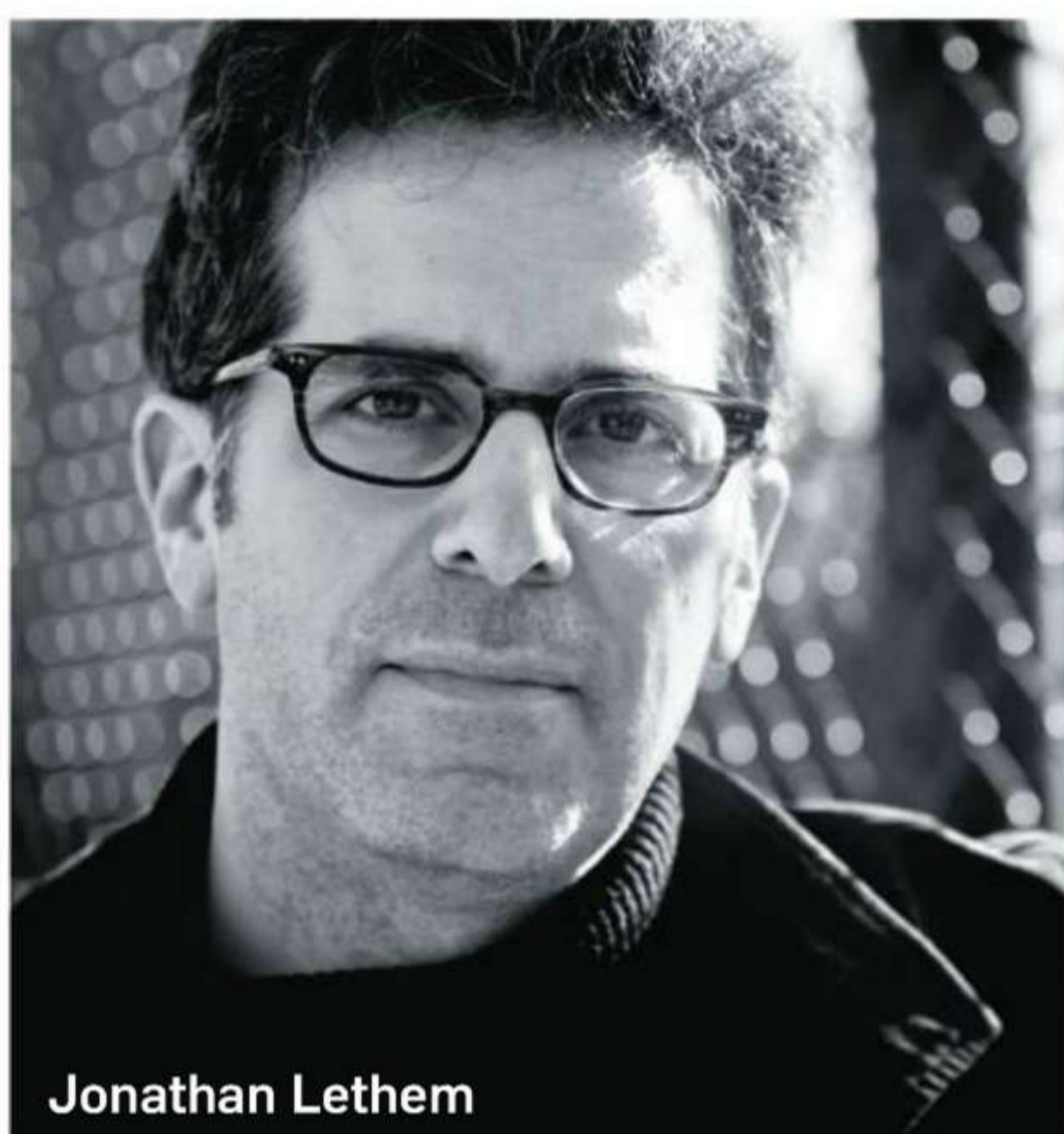
we have persuaded a performer to talk about his cock sock. In *20Q* the long-on-talent **Bryan Cranston**, star of *Breaking Bad*, recounts making small talk with Julia Roberts while lying nearly naked on top of her, waiting to complete a scene for *Larry Crowne*. We'd love to hear what Reggie Watts would say in that situation, given his love of wordplay. In *An Afro in the Cosmos*, **Anthony Bozza** profiles the generously coiffured stand-up and beat-box master who, he notes, is driven by "noises, voices and echoes." You'll need a laugh after digesting *Failed States*, a report from the Earth Policy Institute's **Lester R. Brown**. The MacArthur fellow explains how climate change threatens civilization in an unexpected way—by creating food shortages in nations that are already unstable. Finally, in the *Playboy Interview*, the overachieving **James Franco** answers his critics, dissects his widely panned Oscar co-hosting gig and explains his simultaneous pursuit of multiple college degrees—all while challenging notions of celebrity, behavior and masculinity. And that's before lunch.



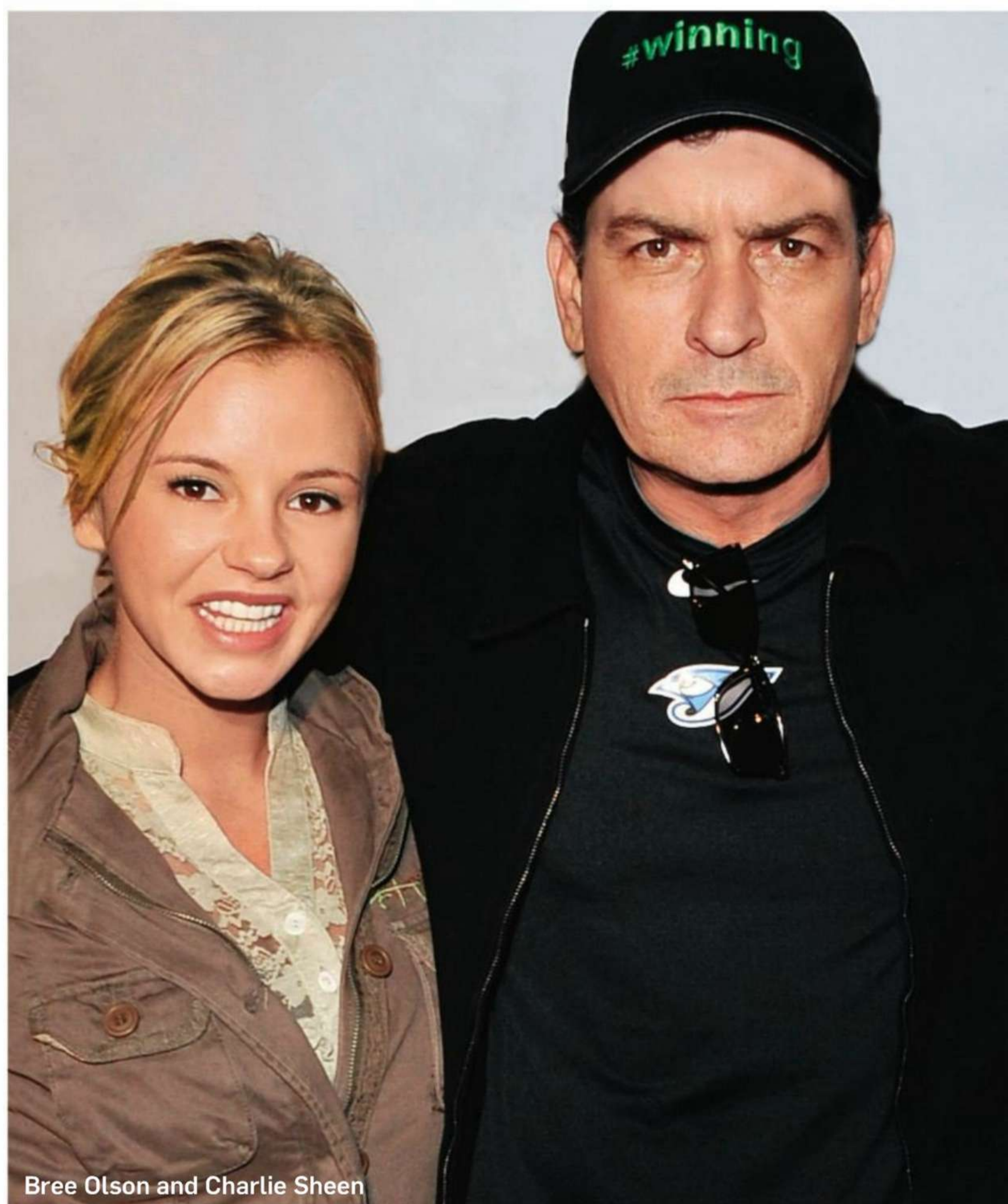
Chuck Palahniuk



Jason Zinoman



Jonathan Lethem



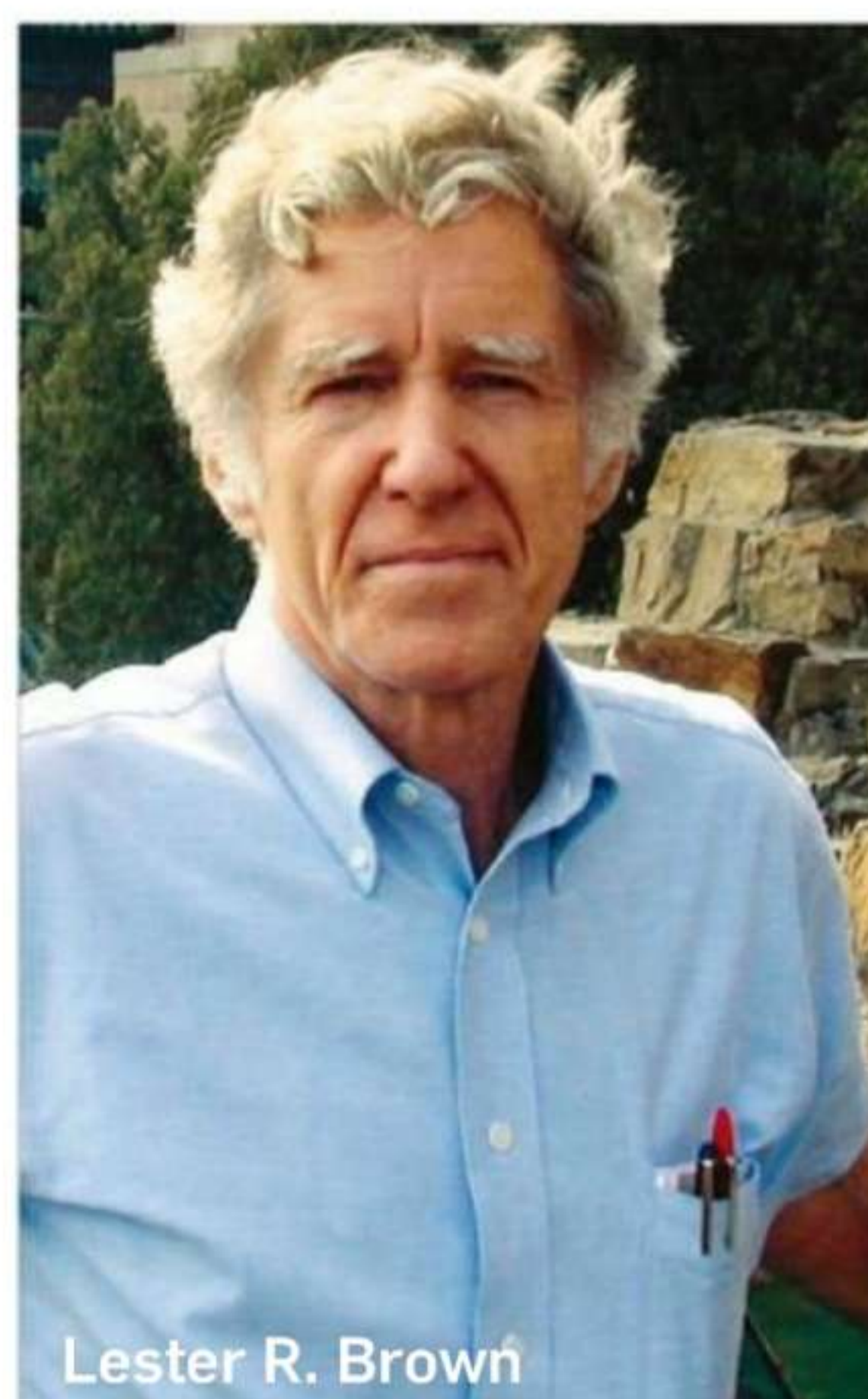
Bree Olson and Charlie Sheen



Bryan Cranston



Anthony Bozza



Lester R. Brown



James Franco



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We are destroying the environment, and we now face a perilous future of our own making. Earth Policy Institute founder **LESTER R. BROWN** explains what must be done to save civilization and avoid global disaster.

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Sometimes the schlump gets the girl—the really hot girl. What would he sacrifice to keep her? By **CHUCK PALAHNIUK**



COVER STORY

Bree Olson was on the front lines of Charlie Sheen mania but chose to walk away while she was still winning. Now Sheen's sexy ex-lover sheds her clothes for photographer Arny Freytag and proves that once a goddess, always a goddess. And although a tigress doesn't change her stripes, our Rabbit has no problem doing so.

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A sexual romp with no strings attached is a wonderful thing when executed properly. Or not. By **LISA LAMPANELLI**

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THIS MONTH ON PLAYBOY.COM

PLAY-BY-PLAYMATE Every Monday, read Playmate and ex-NFL cheerleader Jaime Faith Edmondson's unfiltered blog on all things sports.

HOT-SPOTTING Travel the globe and discover where our models are hanging out and having the time of their lives.

GIRLS IN BIKINIS We pay tribute to the summer's choice accessory—and the girls who love to wear them.

SNEAK INTO CAMP PLAYBOY Our interactive adventure challenges you to get into the sexiest summer camp ever.



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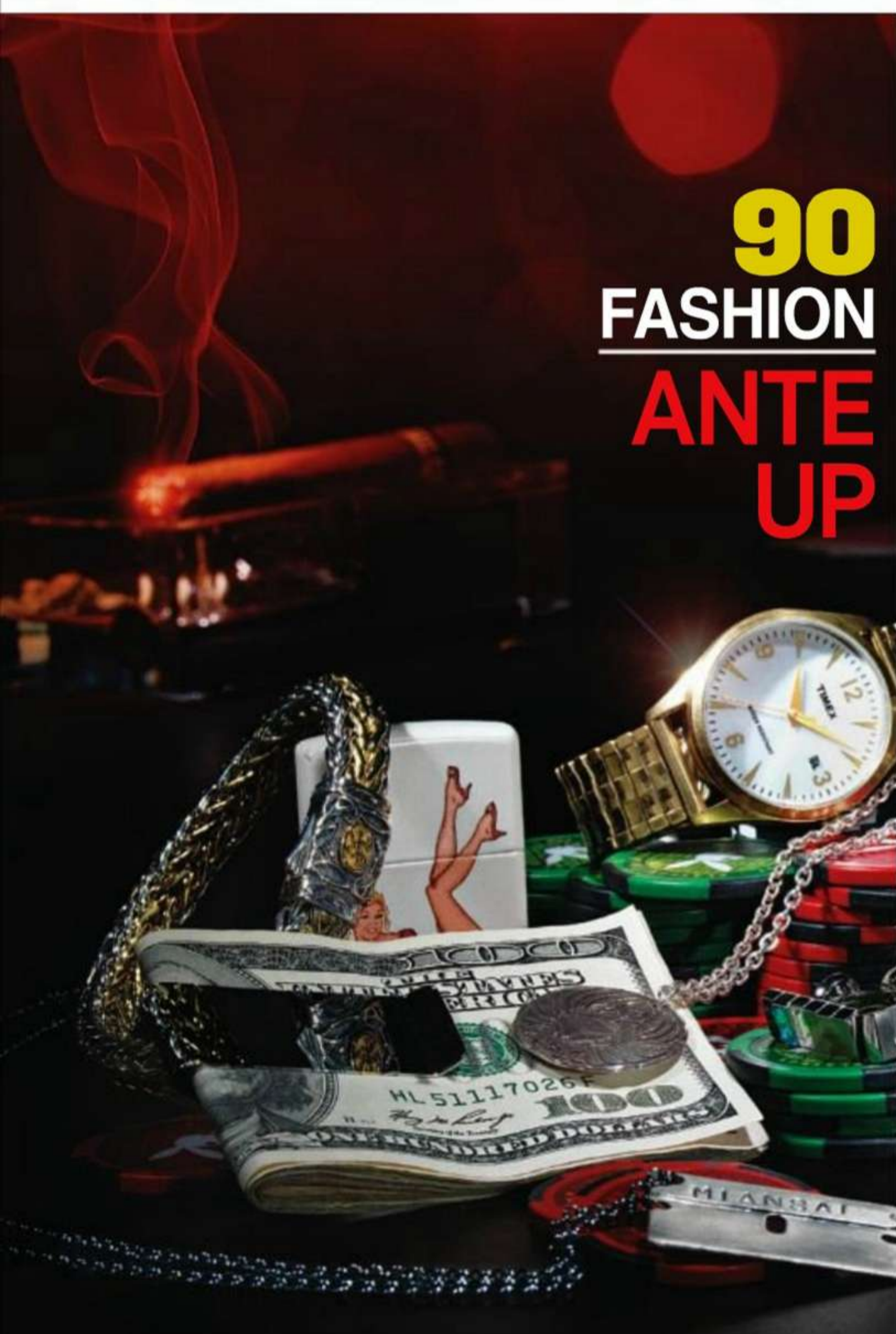
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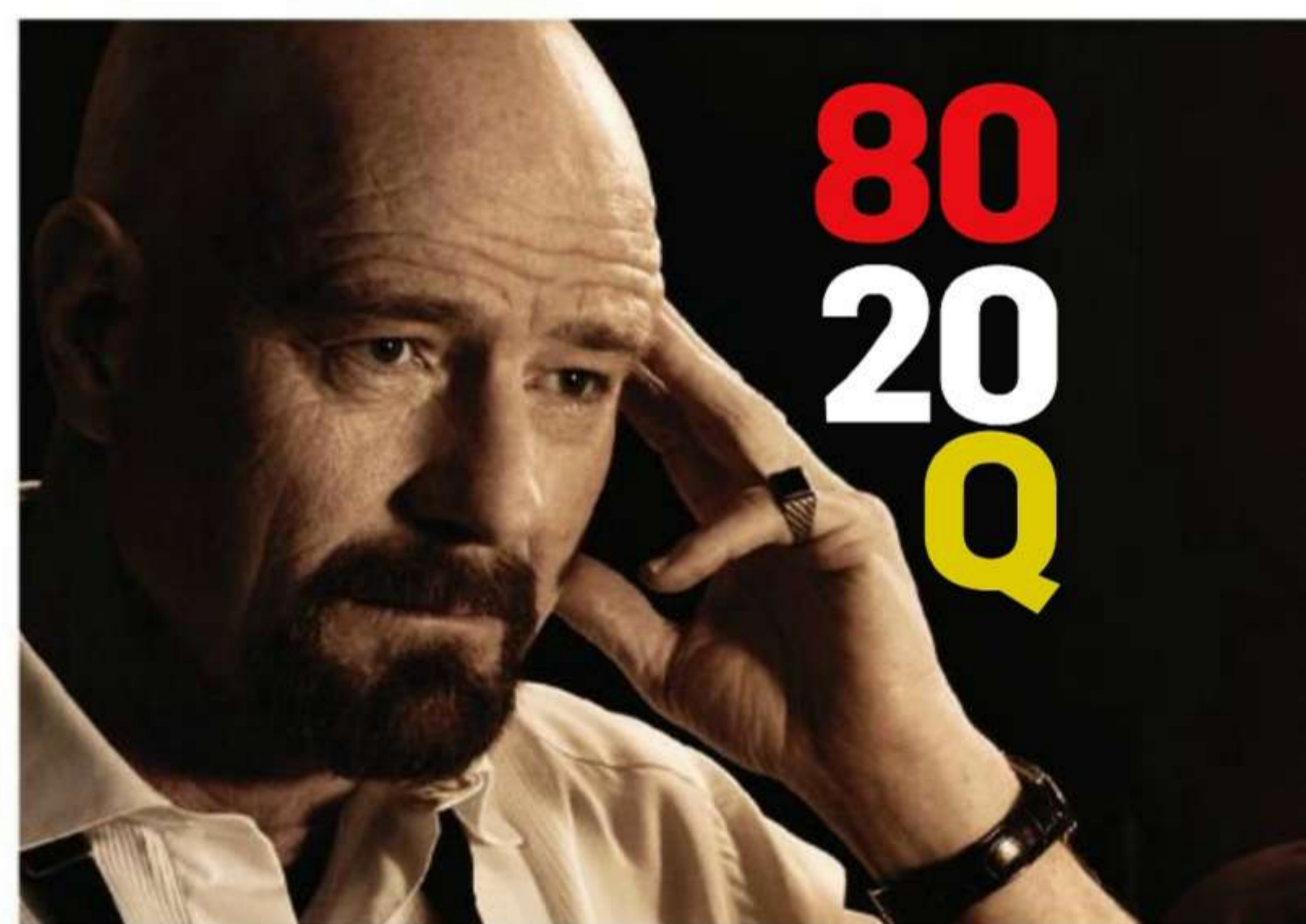
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Accessories say a lot about a man, and when the stakes are high, they should tell the world he's a guy to be taken seriously. By **JENNIFER RYAN JONES**



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THE WORLD OF PLAYBOY

HEF SIGHTINGS, MANSION FROLICS AND NIGHTLIFE NOTES



HEF HONORED AS MR. WONDERFUL

The Thaliens—an entertainment industry nonprofit organization that campaigns against mental illness—threw its 55th Anniversary Gala at the Playboy Mansion. Samantha Crawley, Cooper Hefner, Anna Sophia Berglund, Crystal Harris, Claire Sinclair and Marston Hefner watched Hef receive the Mr. Wonderful award for his lifetime of philanthropy from Ruta Lee and Kira Lorsch. Impressionist Rich Little and the Massey brothers, backed up by the Playmate Dancers, dazzled guests.



RAY CHARLES'S BRAILLE EDITION OF PLAYBOY IS COMING TO A CITY NEAR YOU

First, yes, every month the Library of Congress publishes a braille edition of PLAYBOY. Second, no, it doesn't re-create the pictures. One of the more famous people to read PLAYBOY for



the articles was Ray Charles, whose signed copy of the braille January 2000 issue is traveling the country, along with other prized music memorabilia, in celebration of Hard Rock Cafe's 40th anniversary.



ELLEN DEGENERES: BUNNY FOR A DAY

Ellen DeGeneres moonlighted as a Palms Bunny blackjack dealer. Her style was unconventional: from eating a carrot while dealing to employing an abacus to count cards—and, of course, she danced! She shook her Bunny tail.



CLAIRE SINCLAIR CROWNED PMOY

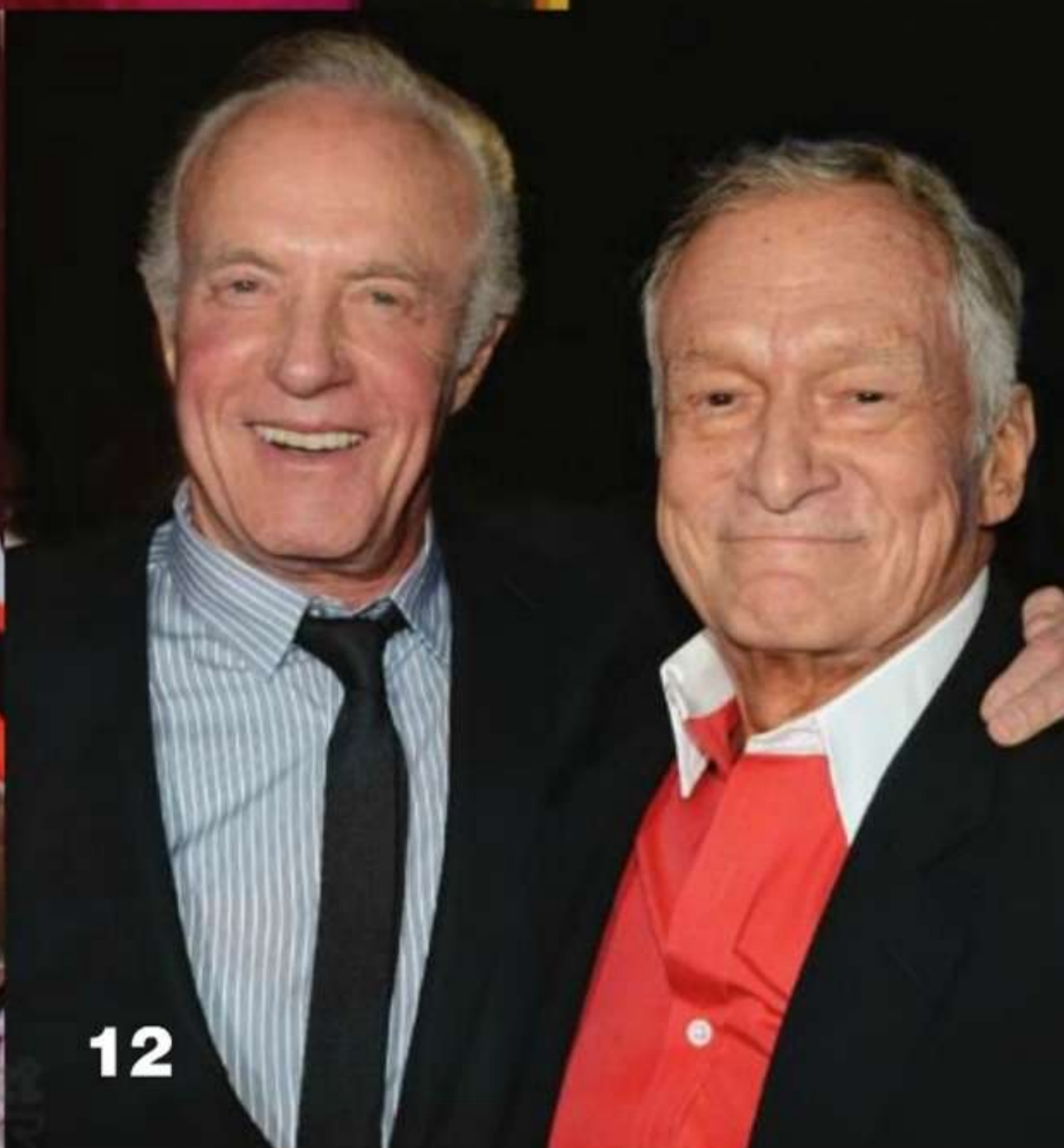
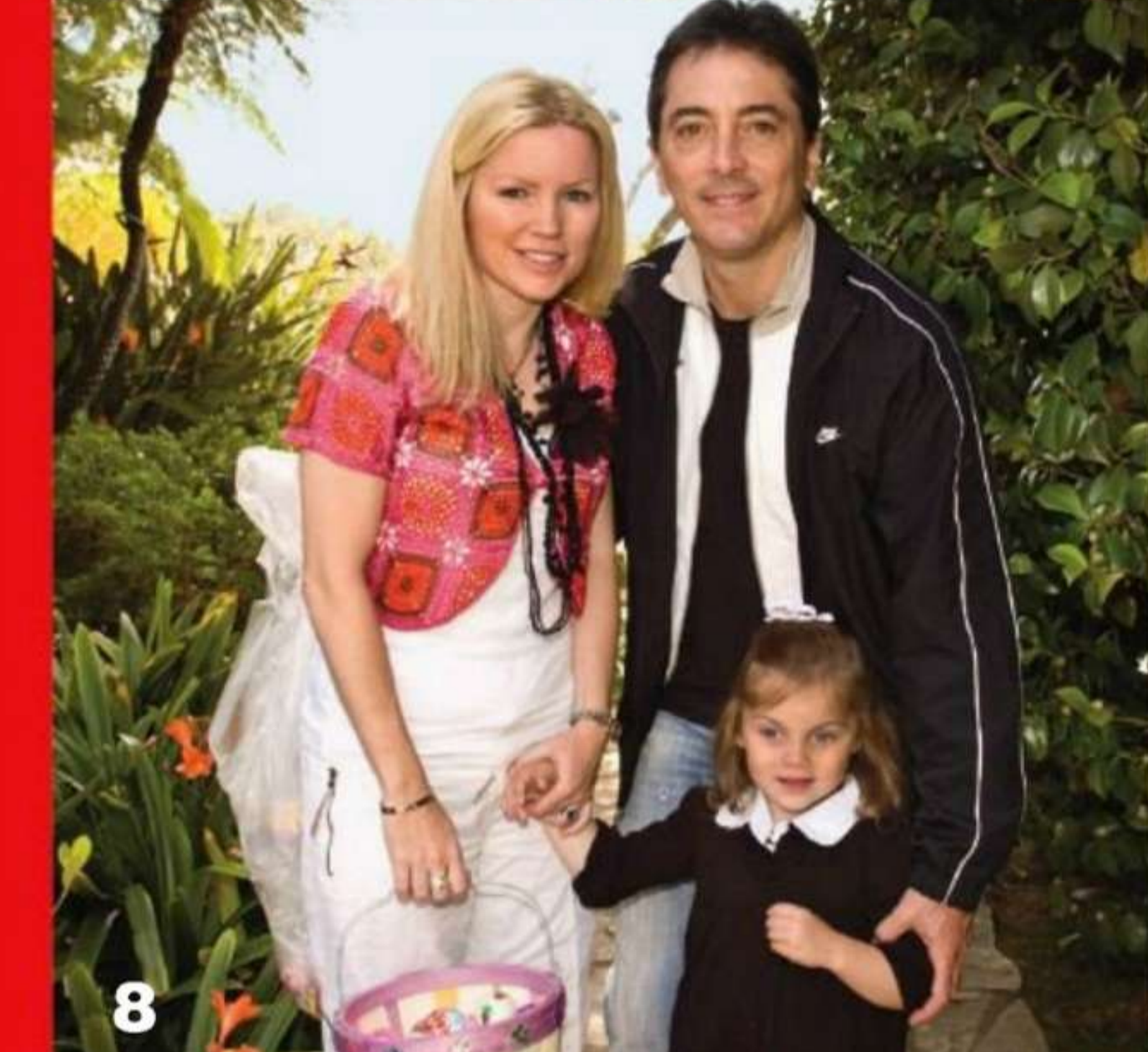
"What I love about Claire is that she has this wonderful pinup look," Hef said when he named Claire Sinclair, a classic girl next door, Playmate of the Year 2011. On hand to congratulate Claire were PMOY 2010 Hope Dworaczyk and George Maloof.



HANGIN' WITH H&F



Easter at the Playboy Mansion means a petting zoo, Playmates' offspring hunting for eggs and more Bunnies than usual. (1) Hef and Crystal at the PMW Easter petting zoo. (2) Sam, Hef and Cooper. (3) Miss January 2010 Jaime Faith Edmondson and Miss March 2009 Jennifer Pershing. (4) PMOY 1982 Shannon Tweed and Gene Simmons with Hef and Crystal. (5) Kendra Wilkinson and Hank Baskett introduce Baby Hank to his first Mansion chick. (6) Miss January 1996 Victoria Fuller and daughter Trease. (7) The incredible Lou Ferrigno with wife Carla and daughter Shanna. (8) Scott Baio with his wife, Renee, daughter Bailey and a basket full of Easter eggs. (9) Knowing the original *King Kong* is one of Hef's favorite films, Christie Hefner gives her father a statue of Kong on the Empire State Building. (10) *Gossip Girl*'s Taylor Momsen and Hef on Movie Night. (11) Hef and Crystal enjoying Disneyland. (12) James Caan and Hef during the Thaliens gala. (13) Crystal's mom, Lee Lovitt, comes to PMW to celebrate Crystal's 25th birthday. (14) Crystal blowing out the candles on her birthday cake—her wish came true on June 18.



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DEAR PLAYBOY

MOUNTING TRIGGER

In June's *Raw Data* you write that Roy Rogers's horse, Trigger, was "stuffed and preserved." Rogers hated it when fans asked about Trigger being stuffed. He preferred the term *mounted*. I don't know why Roy got riled by *stuffed*, but he was king of the cowboys and his wishes should be honored. Happy trails.

Robert Fee
Tucson, Arizona

Fee is vice president and general counsel for the Western Music Association. Rogers was correct to insist on "mounted." Trigger's hide is stretched over a hollow fiberglass mold.

WANTING MORE

To have a stunningly sexy woman like Katie Downes, who claims she loves posing nude, mostly clothed in *Becoming Attraction* (June) doesn't do her or your readers any justice.

Adam Nazimowitz
Merrick, New York

IMMATURE POLITICS

I'm not sure which is worse, the so-called activist antics of James O'Keefe or the literary tongue bath given to him by Jordan Lieberman (*Who Does James O'Keefe Think He Is?*, May). O'Keefe is the political equivalent of Johnny Knoxville. If the left were to pull such stunts, conservative ideologues would be crying like babies.

Nate Gillam
Seattle, Washington

RED IN THE FACE

I have been a subscriber to PLAYBOY for many years and am disappointed with your turn to the left. The latest example is the *Playboy Interview* with Lawrence O'Donnell (June), a progressive hack who impugns the intelligence of pundits with far larger audiences.

Donald Bunnell
Glen Mills, Pennsylvania

Your decision to run interviews with Helen Thomas (April), Representative Barney Frank (May) and O'Donnell in consecutive months has convinced me PLAYBOY has joined *Rolling Stone* and *Mother Jones* as an irrelevant far-left rag. Can't you find any actual, patriotic Americans to interview—you know, people who don't hate this country and do not want to transform it into a welfare state where all the officially prescribed victim groups (minorities, homosexuals, Muslims, etc.) get to run things and the evil white male is banished?

Dennis Hall
Cypress, California

We've interviewed Bill O'Reilly, Rush Limbaugh, Michael Savage, Brit Hume, Shepard Smith, Gary Johnson and Donald Trump. Did you have other all-American patriots in mind?

I recall when you were dedicated to women's rights, fighting censorship and individual choices related to drug use.

A Beauty for the Ages

I love Claire Sinclair's tribute to Gil Elvgren, the greatest pinup artist of all time, Vargas notwithstanding (*Claire Sinclair Is Playmate of the Year*, June). Gil would have been thrilled—it's too bad he isn't around to bask in the well-earned glory. Thank you to PLAYBOY and Claire for remembering him.

Louis Meisel
New York, New York

Meisel, a gallery owner who specializes in pinup art, is co-editor of Gil Elvgren: All His Glamorous American Pin-Ups. Meisel also runs gilelvgren.com.

Not only is Claire Sinclair the youngest woman since 1964 to be named PMOY, she is also the first one who is younger than I am. I suppose I need to get used to this new, slightly depressing



trend. Thanks for marking the end of my youth with a bang.

Mason Varga
Spokane, Washington

Now you attack people with little influence such as Glenn Beck (*The Triumph of the Conservative Underground*, December 2009) and O'Keefe, while interviewing Thomas, Frank and O'Donnell. Further, your strong support for the socialist authoritarian Barack Obama is obvious, since you have yet to criticize him.

David Sikorsky
Savannah, Georgia

Not true—his jump shot needs work.

O'Donnell claims Mario Cuomo's opposition to the death penalty is due to his Roman Catholic faith. If this were true Cuomo would oppose abortion as well. Abortion may be a mortal sin for a Catholic, but opposition to abortion is a mortal sin for a Democrat. Meanwhile, in *20Q*,



Lawrence O'Donnell: "We're all socialists."

Louis C.K. mocks Sarah Palin, which is fine because she has her flaws. But if comedians want an unlimited source of

material, why not go after gaffe-prone Vice President Joe Biden?

Joe Riley
Sacramento, California

In 1984, in a speech at Notre Dame, the former New York governor clarified his position: "I accept the church's teaching on abortion. Must I insist you do? By law...?"

A SIP OF PARADISE

Lawrence O'Donnell says he doesn't drink alcohol because he disliked his first taste. Only a narrow-minded person doesn't look beyond his first taste of anything. Please invite O'Donnell to a Mansion party so he can loosen up. Women and alcohol are gifts from God and should not be taken lightly.

Mike Graham
Lockhart, Texas

BARNEY FRANK

Barney Frank speaks in May of an evolving federal government, yet he doesn't seem to realize our democratic experiment has failed. The time has come for a philosopher king who leads with wisdom no longer found in Congress and who is unaffected by bribes from plutocrats.

Ken Crockett
Austin, Texas

After reading your interview with Frank, this lifelong Democrat is shaking his head in disbelief. Why didn't you bring up the homosexual brothel run out of his home, which Frank has said he knew nothing about? You should have the cojones to ask tough questions.

Tom Eastman
Auburn, California

We asked Frank about that scandal at length in our 1999 interview, in the context of the

Clinton impeachment. That was 10 years after it broke, and it has now been 22. You wanted us to go over it again?

It is amazing that a guy like Frank can admonish bankers for lending to people who had no business owning a home when it was his support of subprime lending that led to this catastrophe. The poor and lower-middle class weren't able to own homes on their own, so we gave them credit to pretend they did.

Graham Jura
St. Joseph, Missouri

Frank has argued in his defense that the Republicans controlled Congress until 2006 and so had the primary responsibility of regulating subprime lending.

Frank is working with Representative Ron Paul, Republican of Texas, on legislation to shrink government, legalize marijuana and bring home our troops from nations that aren't threatening us. That all makes sense to me. Both men understand that our nation prospers when government stays out of the bedroom and the marketplace.

Larry Penner
Great Neck, New York

HAPPY MEMORIES

Thanks to Jonathan Lethem for his tribute to Ernie Kovacs (*Kovacs's Gift*, May). For those of us who were devoted fans of Kovacs's ABC Specials, Haydn's String Quartet Op. 3, No. 5 remains the Dutch Masters theme, the song "Sentimental Journey" evokes a rotating pencil sharpener and "Mona Lisa" conjures the image of a beautiful lady in a bubble bath with a periscope rising from the suds. Lethem states that the Nairobi Trio were three men, but my recollection is that the blonde primate pianist was Ernie's wife, Edie Adams.

Stephen Beller
The Woodlands, Texas

Ben Model, who curated The Ernie Kovacs Collection, says that "generally during the 1950s the ape at the piano was Edie, and there are stories of stars such as Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin taking part. According to Jolene Brand, the trio on ABC was Kovacs, Brand and Jack Lemmon."

One of my most cherished memories is of the night I met Kovacs at the Smokehouse in Burbank. I was having a drink and a cigar when Kovacs, Adams and some friends took the next booth. I sat in stunned disbelief before I got the courage to approach. You could have knocked me over with a Macanudo when Kovacs not only paid for our dinners but gave me one of his cigars. I still have that 10-inch whopper and intend to fire it up on my deathbed. The day in 1962 that Kovacs took that ill-fated drive on rain-slicked Melrose is one of the dreariest and most maddening in show-business history.

Lanny Middings
San Ramon, California

A BETTER JERK

Aye, the recipe you share for jerk chicken sauce ("Exotic Bird," *After Hours*, June) looks delicious on paper, but after some experimentation I believe it can be improved. Add another three quarters of a cup of molasses, twice as much garlic, a shot of dark rum instead of white wine (which is for landlubbers) and another shot of rum. The parrot agrees!

Ralf Cordes
Penetanguishene, Ontario

TWO OUT, ONE ON

Your baseball preview (May) has some infield gaps. Part of a word is missing



1954 Cleveland aces Lemon, Garcia and Wynn.

between pages 61 and 62 (*younger or older?*) Speaking of the 1954 Cleveland Indians, you claim their aces started 147 of 156 games, but my Minnesota math says a record of 111-43 totals 154 games. Finally, you pick Philadelphia to win the World Series in October because of its starting pitchers, but if the 1954 Indians taught us anything it's that four aces can be swept.

Bill Arthur
Hopkins, Minnesota

That word is "younger," and your math is correct. But whatever the history, we're not wrong about the Phillies...yet.

FAST COMPANY

In *The Great Galactic Gold Rush* (April) you note in "The Celestial Supermarket" that catching up to an asteroid doing Mach 3 to mine its precious minerals wouldn't be easy. But there is no Mach speed in space. Mach is the ratio of velocity to the local speed of sound, which in space is zero, and dividing by zero creates a black hole.

Ryan Luersen
West Lafayette, Indiana

You're right. We hoped to give the casual reader an idea of how fast an asteroid might be traveling, though the speed of any particular enormous flying rock depends on many factors, including its distance from the Sun.



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— C.B. FROM MAINE



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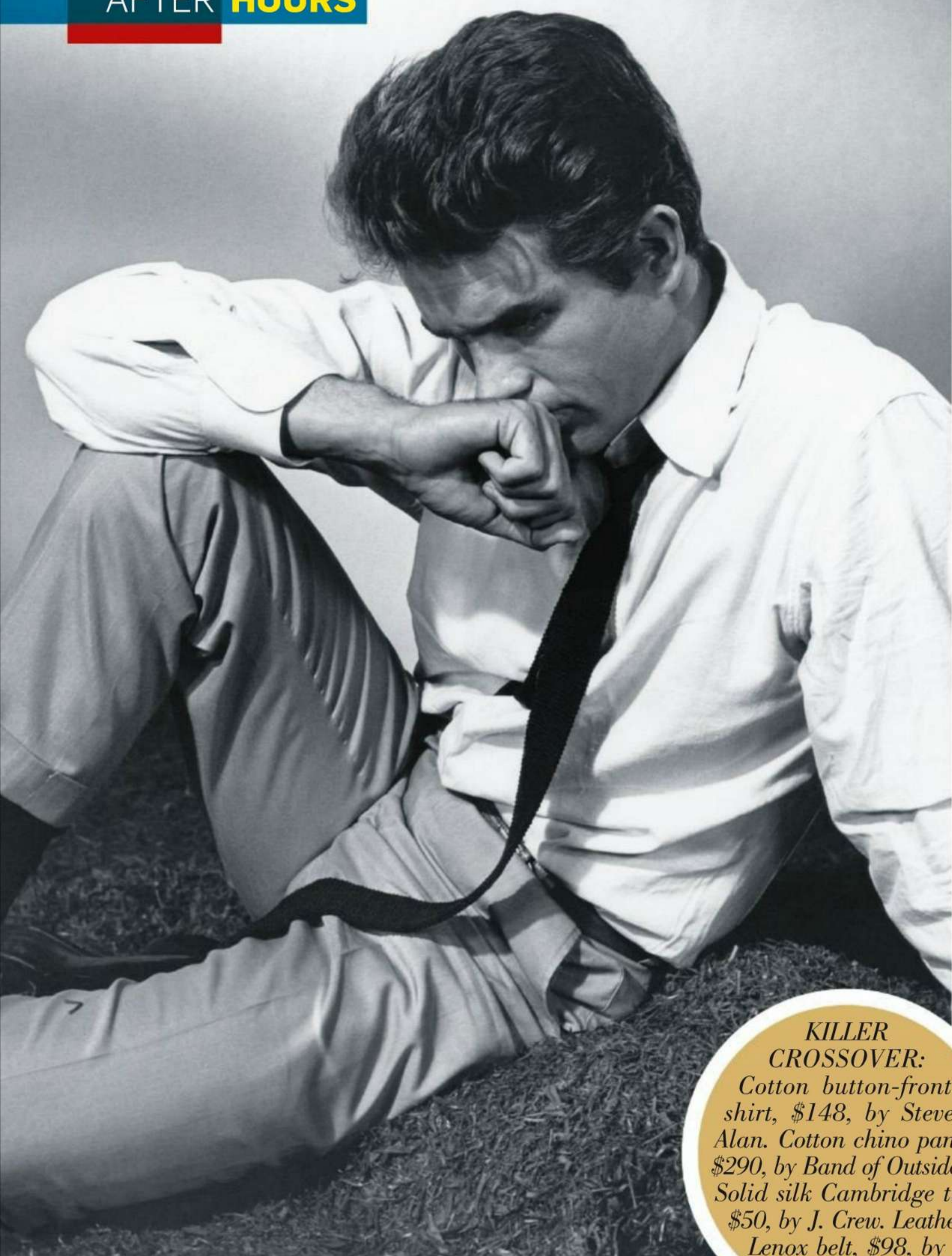
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PLAYBOY AFTERHOURS

BECOMING ATTRACTION

Vanesa Espiñeira

If summer is synonymous with bikinis, then this summer has been synonymous with Vanesa Espiñeira. No other woman wears two tiny pieces of Lycra quite like the Spanish model who stole Axe's latest shower-gel commercial. You know the one—Vanesa and a collection of fellow beach beauties tease a sand-covered geek to the 1960s doo-wop beat of Brenda and the Tabulations' "The Wash." Once named "best body in a swimsuit" during a Miss Spain contest, Vanesa hasn't found herself wearing much else these days—professionally at least. "Because of my curves, I do mostly lingerie and swimsuit modeling," she says. Sometimes typecasting can be a good thing.



KILLER CROSSOVER:
Cotton button-front shirt, \$148, by Steven Alan. Cotton chino pants, \$290, by Band of Outsiders. Solid silk Cambridge tie, \$50, by J. Crew. Leather Lenox belt, \$98, by Cole Haan.

CLASSIC LOOK OF THE MONTH

THE WARREN COMMISSION

WARREN BEATTY walked into Hollywood as though he was born to be there. The year was 1961. He was 24. Having just made a cannonball leap into the Tinseltown pool, portraying a rich young Kansan in *Splendor in the Grass*, he had already checked Natalie Wood and Jane Fonda off his to-do list. Julie Christie, Cher, Diane Keaton, Carly Simon and Madonna would follow. In last year's *Star: How Warren Beatty Seduced America*, Peter Biskind estimates that before meeting his wife, Annette Bening, the actor had shagged 12,775 other "pussycats" (as he called his intimates). In 1975's *Shampoo*, Beatty's womanizing hairdresser George may as well be speaking for him when he fesses up to hapless girlfriend Goldie Hawn, "Let's face it. I fucked 'em all. That's what I do." As for personal style, there was no need. Beatty could wear a JCPenney bedsheet and the Council of Fashion Designers of America would call it "this year's toga." And in his classic New Hollywood films (*Bonnie and Clyde*, *The Parallax View*, *McCabe & Mrs. Miller*) and onward into his more populist turf (*Heaven Can Wait*, *Bugsy*, *Dick Tracy*) the actor turned director's costume departments did all the work. It's telling, however, that the son of modest-means Virginia schoolteachers never looked more comfortable than during his *Splendor in the Grass* days (see above). Casually preppy in chinos and a simple necktie, he could be that substitute teacher the girls swooned over—while you brooded—who was seemingly unconscious of his good looks (who me?) yet a wolf in sheep's clothing. Try it yourself with bold knit ties, flat-front cotton khakis and simple button-downs. As the dreamy days of lawn parties and beach weekends give way to getting back to serious business, that look happens to be the perfect crossover into fall. And as Beatty might advise: Lose the jacket, pussycat.

POLITICS • 2012 ELECTION

BLUE-RIBBON REPUBLICANS

First there's the pie-eating contest, then it's off to the outhouse race. Next comes the tall-corn competition. Good old boy or 2012 GOP hopeful? This August at the Iowa State Fair they're one and the same. With the Ames Straw Poll, an important harbinger for the Iowa primary, held around the same time, you'll find every Republican presidential candidate at the fair, shaking hands, kissing babies and posing for pictures before a giant butter cow. If they're smart, here's where they'll spend the majority of their time.

CONGRESSWOMAN MICHELE BACHMANN CONSTITUTIONAL JEOPARDY CONTEST Her frequent allusions to the Constitution notwithstanding, Bachmann's understanding of it is spotty at best—in fact, a high school sophomore from New Jersey recently challenged her to a debate on it. The Constitutional *Jeopardy* Contest will give Bachmann a chance to prove every know-it-all 14-year-old wrong.

FORMER AMBASSADOR JON HUNTSMAN DRAGON WAGON The former governor of Utah, Huntsman also served as President Obama's ambassador to China. How better to show off his Far East expertise than by hanging around a roller coaster inspired by one of the most potent creatures in Chinese mythology.

FORMER MINNESOTA GOVERNOR TIM PAWLENTY GRAND OUTLAW NATIONAL TRACTOR AND TRUCK PULL Pawlenty may own the Costco voting bloc, but the GOP-primary electorate tends to be a little more diverse. At the Grand Outlaw National Tractor and Truck Pull, he can mix with people even Joe the Plumber would consider trashy.

FORMER MASSACHUSETTS GOVERNOR MITT ROMNEY CASTING CROWNS CONCERT Although he isn't the only Mormon running for president—Huntsman also comes from Brigham Young's flock—Romney can bolster his standing with evangelicals by hopping on stage and singing along with the Christian rock band Casting Crowns.

FORMER SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE NEWT GINGRICH LADIES' HUSBAND-CALLING CONTEST Currently on wife number three, Gingrich is more than familiar with screaming spouses.

FORMER ALASKA GOVERNOR SARAH PALIN CHESS TOURNAMENT Another potential candidate with questionable intellect, Palin can dispel the notion that she isn't smart enough to be president with a serious run in the fair's chess tournament. Checkmate, intelligentsia and MSNBC!



EVENTS • MOMA PS1 WARM UP

CHANGING SPACES

The challenge: Transform the courtyard of the Museum of Modern Art offshoot PS1, a public school turned gallery in Queens, into a concert venue for the Warm Up music series, which runs on certain summer Saturdays. **The solution:** a rope canopy that enhances the courtyard's odd shape, making it an art installation itself while also providing room to party—a brainstorm from the architectural firm Interboro Partners. Further evidence that in New York, the ability to make the most out of a small, unusual space will serve you well.

BARMATE • WORDS TO DRINK BY

ERIN ALEXANDRA

DON'T COME INTO my bar, Black-Finn in New York City, and order a vodka tonic or a vodka and cranberry with a top-shelf vodka such as Ketel One. If you like Ketel One you should have it neat or on the rocks. Mixers are for well drinks.

LET ME KNOW if you see a girl at the end of the bar you're interested in. When she's done with her drink, I'll tell her an awesome, handsome,

sweet man (a.k.a. you) wants to buy her a drink. Girls always trust the opinion of other girls.

IF YOU BRING a date to a bar, take note of how she treats the bartender. It's a good indication of how she'll treat your friends.

I LIKE SHOWING off my boobs when I bartend. So please enjoy them. But also, please look me in the eyes when you're ordering a drink.

The 53-foot Goetz-built racing boat *Orlanda*.

TASTEMAKER • ERIC GOETZ

MASTER AND COMMANDER

You can get better boats by using more science and less art," says Eric Goetz, the boatbuilder who helped advance America's Cup racing from the age of discovery to the space age. Goetz's seafaring scientific pursuits have mainly centered around lightweight carbon fiber, the same material that makes the F-22 Raptor one of the fastest planes in the sky. He has used it to construct some of the quickest boats in sailing history.

Like every other boatbuilder dating back to Leif Eriksson, Goetz began by building with wood when he opened his first

boatyard in Rhode Island in the 1970s. Soon thereafter, however, he tried strengthening the headstay, a support line that connects the mast to the bow, with carbon-fiber strips. In 1978 his experiments earned the attention of Britton Chance, the designer of 1970 America's Cup winner *Intrepid*, who asked Goetz to build a 48-foot wooden racing boat with a carbon-reinforced deck. "The best wood-composite boat we ever built weighed 1.7 pounds per square foot," Goetz says. "On the flip side, the first carbon boat we built weighed half

that without sacrificing any of the strength."

By 1992 Eric Goetz Custom Boats had become a boatyard for everyone, from weekend yachtsmen to obsessed millionaires such as Ted Turner and Bill Koch to America's Cup teams. That year Goetz built the race's winner, *America3*; in 1995 he built all three U.S. boats that competed. Working from research by aeronautical engineers at Stanford University, he produced racers that ran 50 percent faster downwind and 150 percent faster upwind than previous America's Cup boats. His carbon creations were far more expensive than vessels made of traditional wood or aluminum (a popular material in the 1980s), but sailors, who compare their sport to standing in a shower and tearing up money, didn't seem to care. "Sailing is like any other testosterone-driven sport—you know, 'I have a better golf club than you do!'" he says. "These guys have a lot of ego, drive and passion."

Goetz's passion for sailing is hereditary. "My father was a competitive sailor, so we did that every weekend in the summer," he says of his maiden voyages, circa his toddler days, with his dad on Long Island Sound. "In the winter we'd do what's called

frostbite sailing. As I got a little older, I got the racing bug. When I was in junior high, I decided I wanted to design boats. I never have, but I've certainly built a lot of them." After graduating from Brown University, where he captained the sailing team, Goetz tossed away his degree in anthropology to join the crew of IBM chairman Thomas Watson Jr.'s 58-foot sloop. Over the next two years, as Watson's shipmate, he dropped anchor in Labrador and Bermuda; the following two years he sailed to England and Spain. "It was a cool career," Goetz says.

While he provided the structural parts for the 2010 America's Cup winner *BMW Oracle*—in all, he has had a hand in 10 America's Cup boats—lately Goetz has taken his mastery of strong, lightweight materials like carbon fibers onto dry land, restoring a Buckminster Fuller geodesic dome and building windmill blades. What does the future hold for Goetz? We'll have to wait and see. The next America's Cup race is in 2013. —Edward McClelland

"SAILING IS LIKE ANY OTHER TESTOSTERONE-DRIVEN SPORT."



Be flexible.

"Go for an adjustable style—for instance, suits that tie behind the neck or have a bra-strap-like top. That way you have room for error when guessing her size."

Accentuate the positive.

"If she has large breasts, look for a style with coverage and support, such as a halter top. If she has small breasts, look for a triangle top with discreet padding and a pattern that draws attention away from her chest."

Ignore your libido.

"It's a gift for her, not you. If she typically wears classic, well-tailored clothes, you shouldn't go for a barely there Brazilian thong—no matter how much you want to see her in one."

Don't ignore her mind.

"When she asks you how the suit fits, don't go into too much detail. Just tell her she looks great. Women like a little reassurance every now and again."

Always bet on black.

"Even though bright tones are in at the moment, you can never go wrong with a basic black bikini. Every woman can use one, and black is slimming, so a black suit is guaranteed to be flattering."



SPORTS SCIENCE • BODY HEAT

COOL WORLD

Craig Heller, a biologist at Stanford University, likes to demonstrate the dangers of overheating by showing infrared images of the top three runners at the midpoint of a 100-mile endurance race. The first-place runner was the coolest, the second-place runner was warmer and the third-place runner was the hottest. "The guy in the lead won in record time," says Heller. "The guy in second finished about two and a half hours behind the leader, and the guy who was warmest dropped out."

In recent years, Heller and his co-inventor, Dennis Grahn, have perfected the science of sweat, attempting to understand our internal thermostat and how to manipulate it. "There are multiple causes of fatigue, but temperature hasn't been factored in," he says. "Yet the highest correlation to 'hitting the wall' is your core temperature."

To knock down that wall, they developed CoreControl, a glove that speeds the body's natural cooling mechanisms and allows for impressive feats of strength. When Stanford football players used it, they saw remarkable improvement in the number of push-ups and sit-ups they could perform. Today, CoreControl can be found in the training rooms of the San Francisco 49ers and Manchester United, among other pro teams. Converts wrap their hand around a water-cooled cone within a coffeemaker-shaped device that seals around the wrist—typically during the rest periods of their workouts. Three minutes of chilling at 61 degrees Fahrenheit, the optimum cooling temperature, can equal the restorative boost of nine to 15 minutes of normal inactivity.

"CoreControl is the most effective way to train," says MMA fighter Daniel Puder. "You gain more strength naturally without using any supplements, because you're cooling your muscles as you go." —Jonathan Littman

ADVICE • GIRL GIFTS

HOW TO BUY HER A SWIMSUIT

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, Susan Holmes-McKagan, supermodel cum bikini magnate, estimates that half the visitors to her online store (susanholmes.net) are men. Akin to lingerie, the bikini is a staple of the romantic getaway, tropical edition. Of course, setting out to purchase a surprise piece of swimwear is rife with complications (her curves, her modesty and her style all need to be accounted for). Listed above are the rules of thumb according to Holmes-McKagan, whose bikinis have been found on the likes of Heidi Klum and Kate Hudson.

TURN ON • BEACHSIDE APPS

SUN SCREENS

SURF'S UP No seaside view? No problem. Surfline brings you real-time HD video of more than 90 U.S. beaches.

AVERT THE BURN Sun Alert calculates the exact number of rays you should catch based on your skin type and weather conditions. **SOUNDS OF SUMMER** Drown out the tide with TuneIn Radio Pro, which blasts 40,000 different radio stations. **BEACHCOMBER'S DELIGHT** Screw your fellow tourists. The Next Move helps you party like a local with tips on indigenous nightlife and cuisine.

LAST MEAL
STEVEN RAICHLIN

HAMMER TIME

I grew up in Baltimore, where learning how to eat Maryland steamed crabs is a rite of passage. Usually your grandfather teaches you, and it was no different in my case. I was about six years old when he first took me out for crabs. He would inspect the shells I left behind and tell me, "I could make a meal out of the meat you're missing." As a kid, I always hoped to one day be able to pick out crabmeat as efficiently as he did.

I grew up in Baltimore, where learning how to eat Maryland steamed crabs is a rite of passage. Usually your grandfather teaches you, and it was no different in my case. I

Eating steamed crabs is both hedonistic and masochistic. The crabmeat is sweet and succulent, but it's carpeted with a fiery black pepper paste. Meanwhile, the shell cuts your fingers and lips, causing a capsaicin burn. I like to eat a dozen or so jumbo crabs in a single sitting. I mainly steam them over vinegar and beer along with a bunch of spices like cayenne pepper and kosher salt. When they're ready to eat, I grab a wooden mallet with one hand and a paring knife with the other and begin to tear them apart. It's a time-consuming process, but I've come

to appreciate it—especially since it's virtually impossible to fill up on steamed crabs because it takes so much energy to eat them.

Believe it or not, they don't taste right without National Bohemian Beer, what's called Natty Boh in Baltimore. It's really just hops-flavored soda water, and it pales in comparison to a microbrew or Belgian beer. But I always drink it when I'm in Baltimore and eating Maryland steamed crabs.

Steven Raichlen is author of Planet Barbecue and host of Primal Grill on PBS.

MARYLAND STEAMED CRABS

1 12-oz. bottle of beer (opened and allowed to go flat)	3 tbsp. ground black pepper
1 cup distilled white vinegar	2 tbsp. Colman's dry mustard
½ cup Old Bay Seasoning (no substitutions)	1 tbsp. cayenne pepper (or as much as you can bear)
3 tbsp. kosher salt	12 jumbo blue crabs, alive and kicking

- Combine the beer and vinegar in a large pot with a raised rack or steaming insert. Bring the liquid to a boil over high heat.
- Place the Old Bay Seasoning, salt, pepper, mustard and cayenne pepper in a bowl and mix with your fingers. Arrange the crabs in three layers on the rack in the pot, sprinkling a third of the spice mixture over each layer. (Mind your fingers—the crabs may be less sanguine about the steaming process than you are.) Tightly cover the pot and weight the lid with a brick.
- Steam the crabs over high heat until they are fire-engine red, about 20 minutes. Transfer the crabs to a platter and then dump them on a table. Serve them accompanied with a wooden mallet and a paring knife. No other utensils necessary.



NEVER SLEEP
PORTLAND

DRY SEASON

A vast wilderness with a cup of interesting city on the side, Portland runs dry in August—climatically speaking. With more microbreweries than churches and a free-spirited ethos, Portland provides a dressed-down night on the town, rain or shine.

6 P.M. Dinner can wait since an afternoon isn't complete without a Schnitzelwich, a husky loin of succulent pork surrounded by romaine lettuce, ciabatta and a tangy paprika spread, from Tábor (schnitzelwich.com), a Czech installation in Portland's food-cart scene. Partake of the happy-hour specials at Valentine's (valentineslifeblood.blogspot.com), a discreet downtown bar on a narrow lane, with high ceilings and metal folding chairs.

7:20 P.M. Before the eyes and mind become too bleary,

get lost in acre upon acre of consonants and vowels—and occasional pictures—at Powell's City of Books (powells.com). The Rare Book Room in particular is something to behold. Also, watch out for indiscreet encounters in the blind alley between the Spanish Gothic architecture and gardening sections.

8:15 P.M. For a premidnight snack, try Clyde Common's chicken-fried chicken livers (clydecommon.com). Wash them down with Pappy Van Winkle's 20 Year Old or one of the 70-some other American bourbons and whiskeys on offer.

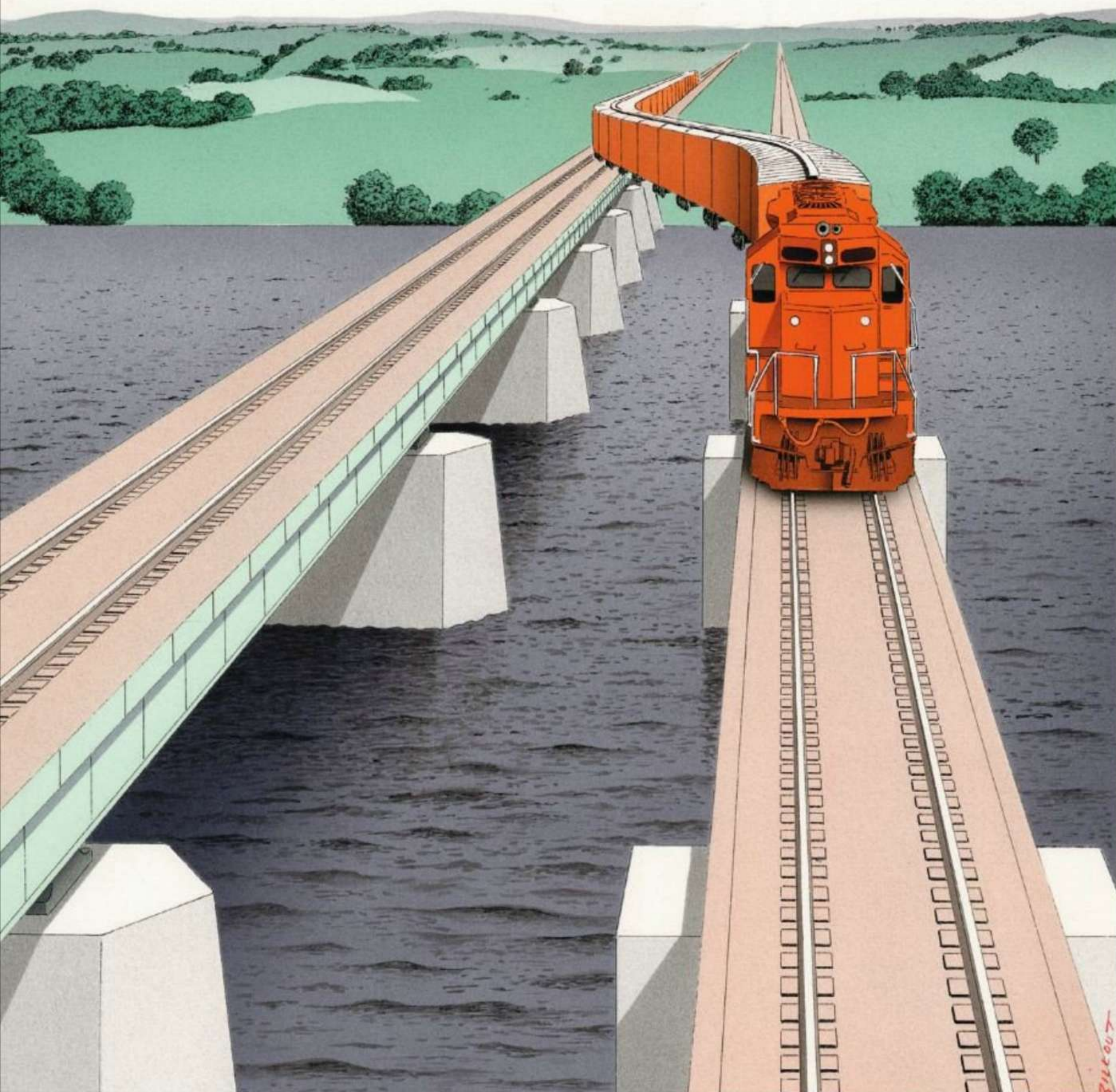
9:45 P.M. Enjoy the dog days of the major league baseball season at Spirit of 77 (spiritof77bar.com), where sports fanatics gather to watch their favorite teams and the Pop-A-Shot electronic basketball is free.

11:08 P.M. Holocene (holocene.org) offers an even better spectator sport—a dance floor full of local bodies

shaking off the sunshine and (mostly) rain under artificial light and projected YouTube videos.

1:30 A.M. Eat your heart out, Atlanta and Houston. Portland has the most strip clubs per capita in the country. One of the best is Sassy's (sassysbar.com), across the street from Holocene and the Pacific Northwest's answer to the South's loftier take on the skin trade—i.e., none of the dancers are afraid to sport tube socks. An added bonus: For smokers, there's an outdoor patio with a stage and a shower.

3:14 A.M. No one should have to go to sleep hungry. Sizzle Pie (sizzlepier.com) will fill your empty stomach accordingly. The Aardvark (a cheese pizza with a blend of marinara and secret habanero sauce) and the Gold Chain (white truffle oil, goat cheese, pancetta and green onion) should help ward off any evil spirits encountered during the rest of the evening.



CENTRAL ASIA Finding a place more remote than Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan or Tajikistan would require a spaceship. Wild Frontiers (from \$5,200, wildfrontiers.co.uk) specializes in trips to the “stans” of Central Asia—formerly the purview of the Soviet Union, the Ottoman Empire and Genghis Khan—including a 22-day Silk Road trek that ends in Tashkent. Along the way you can ride horses on the paths Khan traveled, sleep in yurts and swim in Kyrgyzstan’s pristine Son Kul Lake.



SOUTH AFRICA The Blue Train (from \$1,630, bluetrain.co.za) lets you experience some of the most beautiful country on Earth without having to rough it. The standard route runs between Pretoria in northern South Africa and Cape Town, with stops in Kimberley, a diamond-rush town, and Matjiesfontein, a remote Victorian-era settlement. The train is outfitted with an elegant lounge and luxury sleeping and dining cars—e.g., dinner is jacket-and-tie formal. You can also rent the Blue Train for private trips anywhere the South African rails allow.

TRAVEL • EXOTIC EXPEDITIONS

CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE

No one ever asked for a windowless office. The calendars that hang in your cubicle don’t feature pictures of other calendars and cubicles. Nor do screen savers scroll through pictures of computer screens. We surround ourselves with pictures of beautiful places for a reason: We long to go to them. So don’t turn your summer reprieve into another commute to somewhere you’ve been before. Instead, go see things few people have seen and do things few people have done. At no time in human history has it been easier to check out that big world of ours. Hop a train from Mali to Senegal. Float down the Amazon. Island-hop along the ragged Croatian coast. Drink yourself happy in Bulgaria’s wine country. Bike through Australia. After all, the lust for adventure is hardwired into most of us; it’s no coincidence that the great American novel *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* ends with Huck announcing he has “got to light out for the territory ahead of the rest.” Dust off your passport and go make some noise—starting with the three trips at right. —Jon Fasman



RUSSIA Anyone can fly to Moscow, spend a few days hanging out and claim to have seen Russia. But that’s like visiting New York City and claiming to have seen the United States. To truly see Russia you need to traverse its heartland, through which the Volga River runs like a wide vein. You can cruise down it on the five-star *Volga Dream* (from \$1,750, volgadream.com), which makes stops in Yaroslavl’ (a beautiful Golden Ring city), Kazan (still home to many Muslim Tatars) and Astrakhan (where the Volga meets the Caspian Sea).

SEXTYMOLOGY • WEDDING HOOKUPS

HOT FOR BRIDESMAID

Bridesmaids date back to Roman times, when they served as decoys for bride-nappers and evil spirits. Of course, they also attract a less nefarious predator—the male wedding guest. Blame socioeconomics for their tendency to indulge him. “Historically, women’s economic dependence on men made marriage their only avenue to social mobility,” says Laura Grindstaff, a sociology professor at the University of California, Davis. “Weddings exaggerate her singleness. And if she’s a woman who thinks marriage is her crowning achievement, she’ll be especially vulnerable.” In other words: You may now hit on the bridesmaid.

EXPERT APPROVED • BUG SPRAY

THE KILLING

Billy the Exterminator, the Jack the Ripper of the insect world and star of his own A&E reality series, prefers to condemn summer pests (e.g., mosquitoes) the all-natural way. “EcoSMART’s products are amazing. Insects have something called octopamine, which is like adrenaline for them. The natural oils in EcoSMART’s repellents, however, neutralize octopamine and kill insects. All the while, it’s safer than hand soap.” (from \$6, ecosmart.com)



IF YOU SPENT
YEARS TRAPPED
INSIDE THE WALL
OF A BARREL,
YOU'D BE
A LITTLE
INTENSE TOO.

A BOLD, NEW BOURBON WITH FLAVOR
UNLOCKED FROM INSIDE THE BARREL WOOD.

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CHOICE

UNLEASH
YOUR SPIRIT

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Movie of the Month Captain America: The First Avenger

By Stephen Rebello

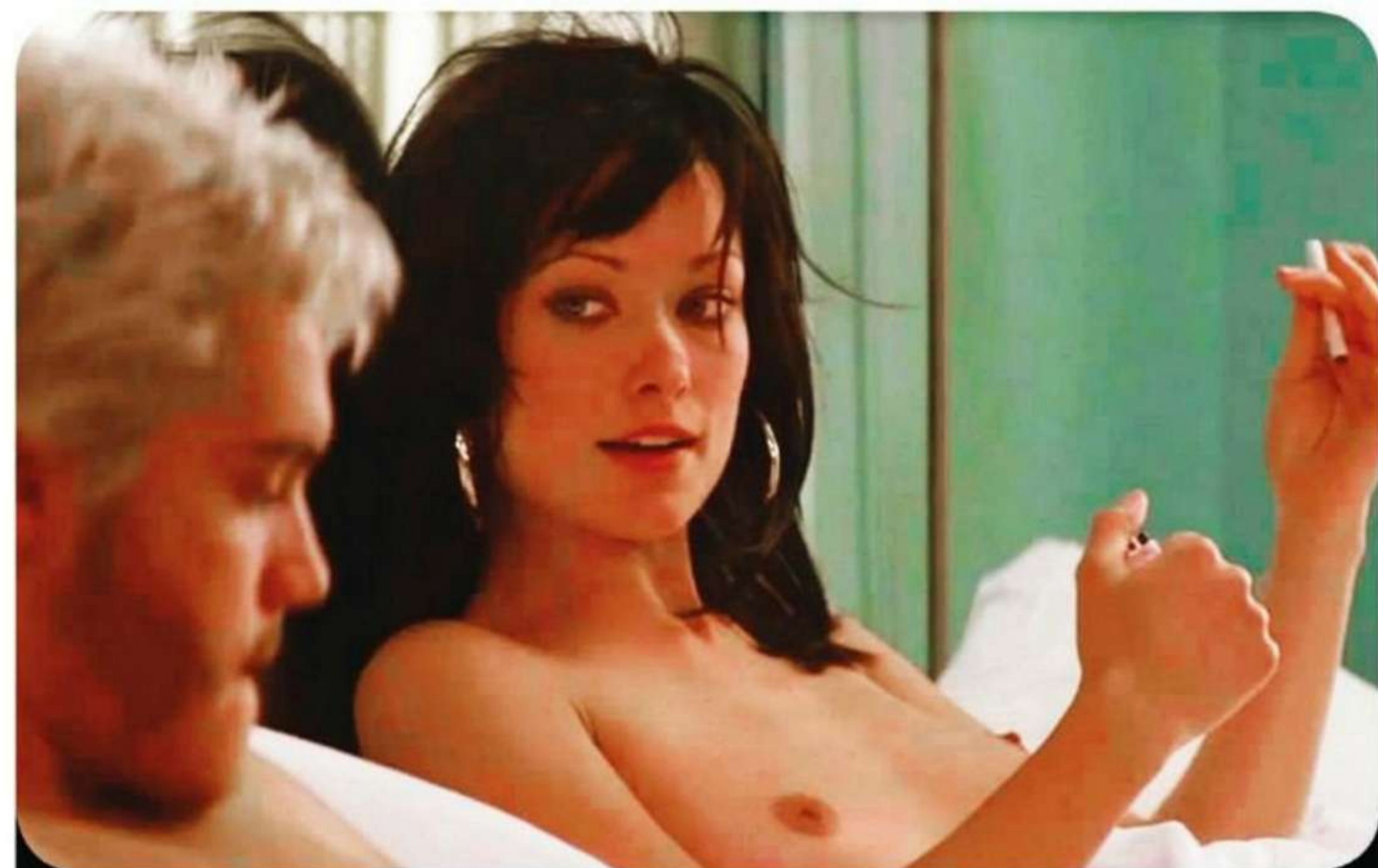
The third time could be it for Chris Evans, who—after heating up two *Fantastic Four* flicks as the Human Torch—grabs a bigger shot at strutting his superhero stuff in *Captain America: The First Avenger*. Evans plays Marvel Comics' scrawny World War II soldier Steve Rogers, who gets transformed by an experimental serum into a superstrong kicker of Nazi butt. "It was so terrifying trying to take on a role that many people are passionate about that I said no multiple times," says Evans while on a break from reprising his role as Caps in *The Avengers*. "I love what I'm doing, but I enjoy the anonymity of being able to go out to a ball game. It's a six-picture deal, so I could be doing these movies until I'm fucking 40. Whatever comes my way, my only goal is to make sure the die-hard fans are happy. If they come out of the theater believing me, that's enough."



DVD of the Month Limitless

Bradley Cooper—as a shambling, just-dumped novelist too blocked to write a word—gets fed a magic pill that unlocks the full power of his brain, and *bam*: He blasts out the book, bangs the super's hot wife, buys sharp new clothes, becomes a Wall Street wizard and wins back his girl (Abbie Cornish). Finan-

cier Robert De Niro even takes him on as his protégé. Except, wait...this is a cautionary thriller. So bring on the angry Russian loan sharks, cue the mysterious side effects, drizzle in the addiction issue and let the whole thing sizzle through a few fights and chases until you reach your own limit in this unrated extended cut, available on both DVD and Blu-ray. **Best extra:** An alternate ending. ♪♪♪ —Greg Fagan



Tease Frame

We can all agree **Olivia Wilde** is one of the most desirable women on any planet. The 27-year-old actress steams up the small screen as bisexual doctor Thirteen on *House* and is future-hot in *Tron: Legacy*. In 2006's *Alpha Dog* (pictured), she gets arrested for harboring a fugitive—not for causing palpitations. Director Jon Favreau says she is "key" to this summer's *Cowboys & Aliens* starring Daniel Craig and Harrison Ford.

What's in Your Netflix Queue?



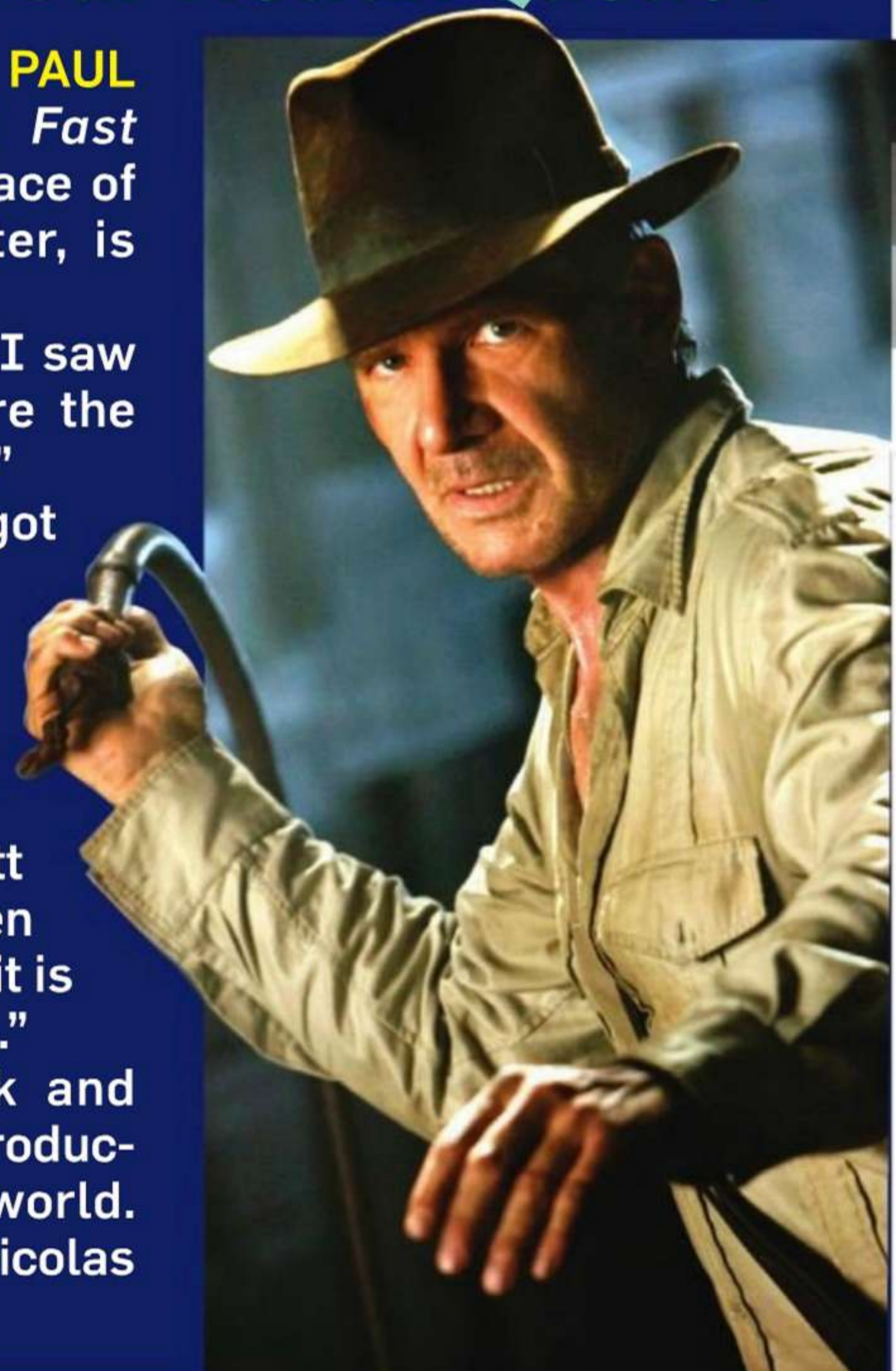
Here are the discs **PAUL WALKER**, star of *Fast Five* and the new face of Davidoff Cool Water, is waiting for in the mail.

Star Wars: "I was six when I saw it, and the lightsabers were the coolest things ever invented."

Raiders of the Lost Ark: "I got to see Han Solo be somebody else, and Indy wore a cool hat and could crack a whip really well."

Twelve Monkeys: "It is pretty apparent that Brad Pitt is good-looking; I like it when he goes against that. I think it is Bruce Willis's best movie too."

Raising Arizona: "It's dark and funny and was really my introduction to the Coen brothers' world. It's my favorite movie that Nicolas Cage has been a part of."




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Take the Money and Run



The Franchise



Alphas



Entourage

Must-Watch TV Indoor Summer Fun

By Josef Adalian

Once a desert filled with repeats and burn-offs, summer TV is now lousy with all sorts of watchable fare. Here's our selective guide:

Geek-approved: The X-Men-like *Alphas* (Syfy) lets David Strathairn lead a team of crime-solving mutants. *Torchwood: Miracle Day* (Starz), based on the Brit hit, imagines a world where no one dies.

Serious drama: There's a *Mad Men* vibe

to *The Hour* (BBC America), a period yarn with a spy twist. Too brainy? Try *Combat Hospital* (ABC), an action-packed drama about docs in Afghanistan.

Reality: *Whisker Wars* (IFC) follows contestants on the competitive-facial-hair-growing circuit. (Really.) *Take the Money and Run* (ABC) is what happens when the producers of *The Amazing Race* decide to rip themselves off. *The Franchise* (Showtime) spends a year

with the San Francisco Giants.

Comedy: *NTSF:SD:SUV* (Adult Swim) spoofs crime procedurals, with Rebecca Romijn. Lisa Kudrow plays a bad shrink in *Web Therapy* (Showtime).

And don't forget: *Entourage*, *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, *Rescue Me* and *Breaking Bad* all have new seasons this summer. *Damages* relocates from FX to DirecTV. And for mindless fun, and bountiful bikinis, you can't beat *Big Brother*.

Music Songs to Sell By

Sure, the music in that TV commercial sounds familiar. Almost every artist is happily shilling for cash and exposure, no matter what the product. Our current favorites:

"The Only Living Boy in New York" by Simon and Garfunkel (Honda)

"Black Tambourine" by Beck (AT&T)

"Hey, Soul Sister" by Train (Samsung)

"Sweet Talk, Sweet Talk" by the New Pornographers (Amazon Kindle)

"Civilization" by Justice (Adidas)

"Bridges and Balloons" by Joanna Newsom (LG)

"NYC Moves to the Sound of L.A." by Funeral Party (Bacardi)

"Brand New Key" by Melanie (HP)

"The Golden Age" by the Asteroids Galaxy Tour (Heineken)

"Second Chance" by Peter Bjorn and John (Bud Light Lime)



Game of the Month

Alice: Madness Returns

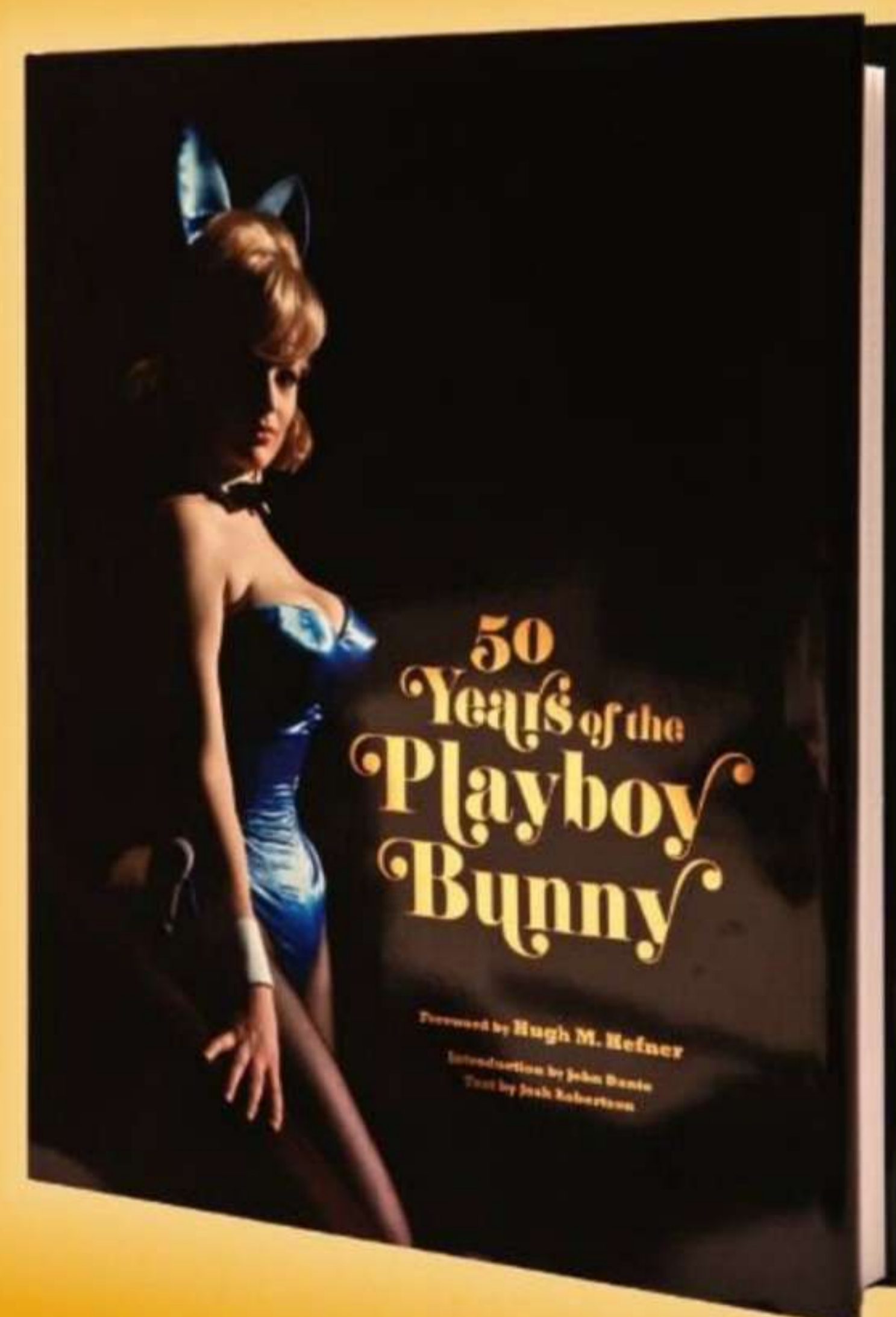
By Jason Buhrmester

If Lewis Carroll's classic *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* tale was trippy, this time down the rabbit hole is an acid freak-out. In this version, Alice is freed from an asylum and under psychiatric care while she copes with the death of her family in a mysterious fire. *Alice: Madness Returns* (360, PC, PS3) follows Alice as she bounces between London and a Wonderland under attack from an evil force. She crosses paths with the Mad Hatter and Cheshire Cat, shrinks and grows, turns into a cloud of butterflies and battles killer teapots and playing-card people. It's *CSI: Wonderland* as Alice tries to save the fantasy world and solve the murder of her family. You'll need time to mellow out after. 🐇🐇



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RAW DATA

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94°F

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ACCORDING TO ANNUAL STATISTICS FROM RECENT YEARS, RUSSIANS TYPICALLY DROWN AT A RATE

5 TIMES GREATER

THAN AMERICANS,

and past reports indicate that the majority of Russian drowning deaths occurred when the victim was drunk.



\$25,000

The price of the prop testicles used by Will Ferrell in *Step Brothers*.



66%

of young Caucasian women think people with tans **ARE MORE ATTRACTIVE.**



LAST SUMMER scientists working with the UAE spent

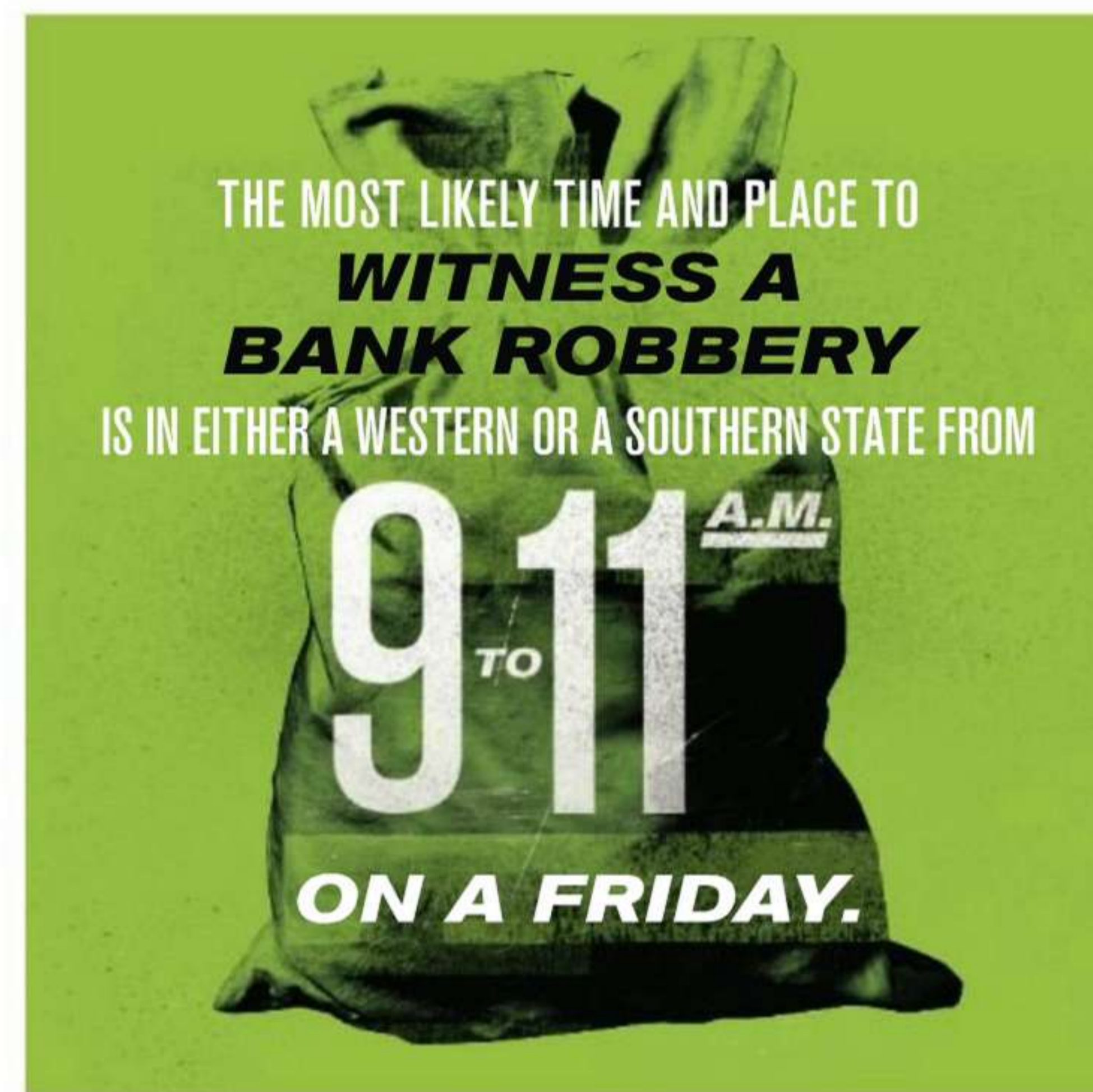
\$11,000,000

on a program that created 52 **ARTIFICIAL RAINSTORMS** in the arid Abu Dhabi desert.

THE 6TH MONTH IN THE ROMAN CALENDAR, WHICH IS THE 8TH MONTH IN OUR MODERN-DAY CALENDAR, WAS **ORIGINALLY KNOWN AS**



UNTIL IT WAS RENAMED IN HONOR OF THE ROMAN EMPEROR AUGUSTUS.



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Based on sewage analyses, **RESIDENTS OF ADELAIDE, AUSTRALIA CONSUME 30 TIMES AS MUCH SPEED AS URBAN EUROPEANS.**

A UNITED STATES CONGRESS THAT DEMOGRAPHICALLY AND PROPORTIONATELY REPRESENTED THE AMERICAN POPULATION WOULD HAVE

127 more women

20 more African Americans

59 more Hispanics

8 fewer Mormons

32 fewer Jews

53 fewer Catholics

70 more religiously unaffiliated members

79 more members who are neither Democrat nor Republican.

MCGRAW SILVER



WHERE DOWN HOME MEETS DOWNTOWN

A COLOGNE BY TIM MCGRAW

I, \$CUMBAG

By A.J. Daulerio

I ruined a life for the first time in 2008. Her name was Caitlin Davis, a pharmaceutical-sales-pretty 18-year-old member of the New England Patriots' cheerleading squad. As editor of the website Deadspin, I posted a picture of her holding a Sharpie in front of an unconscious male friend who, like many kids his age, had passed out too early at a house party and subsequently had his body turned into a whiteboard of profanity. The photo, which at first glance was fairly insubstantial even in the traffic-boosting internet-voyeurism sense, created a minor stir in the local Boston papers because swastikas were included amid all the curse words. Consequently, the Patriots relieved Davis of her cheerleading duties.

Throughout the weeklong saga, Davis e-mailed me several times, asking that the post be removed. First she vowed legal action. Next she begged. Finally her boyfriend, a marine stationed abroad, threatened basically everyone who worked at Gawker Media, Deadspin's parent company, with bodily harm when he returned stateside. I did not waver, and the post did not come down. In fact I wrote three subsequent posts on the story and even published the poorly written e-mails from her agitated boyfriend. She concluded her last desperate e-mail to me—sent around the time she was pleading her case to TMZ, of all places—with “Thanks for ruining my life.”

I felt nothing—not a twinge of regret or sympathy for this unwitting teenager who had become a national punch line.

It's difficult to ruin a person's life without physically harming them or their family. Yet I've been accused of it more times than I care to admit. A highly abbreviated list of other people whose lives I've ruined via Deadspin posts: Texas Rangers outfielder Josh Hamilton (for falling off the wagon), New York Jets head football coach Rex Ryan (for apparently worshipping his wife's feet), a 17-year-old female high school student (for dating Ryan's quarterback Mark Sanchez), ESPN anchor Stuart Scott (for allegedly making a booty call during a Super Bowl XLI party) and NFL legend Brett Favre (for purportedly texting photos of his junk to Jenn Sterger). I've cost people jobs. I've (most likely) destroyed relationships and marriages. I've sullied the Google search results of numerous sports-media figures—like Erin Andrews, the victim of a peephole video that I linked to for the masses to see.



THE DEADSPIN HIT LIST (clockwise from top left): Former New England Patriots cheerleader Caitlin Davis; ESPN sideline reporter Erin Andrews; the recipient of Brett Favre's alleged sexts, Jenn Sterger; a foot fetishist who looks suspiciously like the wife of Rex Ryan; and Texas Rangers outfielder Josh Hamilton.

Some of these stories are published for sound reasons and with airtight news angles, some are published for churlish gossip, some are published for shock value and some are published because of personal shortcomings I choose to cowardly project through the site.

Okay, I don't necessarily believe the last part. But after doing some uncomfortable self-examination, I can see why it's valid armchair psychology. I typed “Deadspin + A.J. Daulerio + ruins” into Google and the search bar of my own e-mail inbox, and I fully admit I cringed at some of the things I've been called—e.g., “scumbag,” “asshole,” “pornographer.” As for my peers, they continually accuse me of befouling sports journalism, the credibility of sports bloggers and Deadspin itself, which in the three-plus years I've been editor has nearly tripled in traffic and reached a different level of national infamy thanks in part, one could argue, to my penchant for ruining people's lives.

Such success has resulted in feature articles written about me in magazines and newspapers. Last winter, on an episode of HBO's *Real Sports* about Deadspin and our place in the sports media, reporter Andrea Kremer interrogated me about my mental health and wondered if I am indeed an asshole. I don't remember my exact response or how it was edited, but I can say I didn't do a great job of answering the question. That's because it's impossible for me to answer. The closest I've come to being rattled about

my approach to my job was when my 93-year-old grandmother, whom I adore, saw me on a celebrity gossip show talking about the infidelities of athletes. “So that's what you are now—a professional tattletale?” she asked. “Not exactly,” I responded. “But I'm good at it.”

What that “it” is, I still don't know. As much as I'd like to think of myself as a good editor and manager, I know the intangible mayhem required at Deadspin wouldn't translate over to, say, *Sports Illustrated*. Instead of suppressing my evil urges to push stories to a cringe-worthy place, I let them go. And I rarely apologize for the mess I make. Not publicly at least, because that would undermine the notion (illusion?) that I think my actions are justifiable and, most important, newsworthy. More often than not I'm right. Sometimes pigheaded stubbornness can be a great asset if you let it—in every facet of life. Try it, but only if you're okay with having a small segment of people you deal with on a daily basis despise you.

Don't get me wrong; I've gone to dark places for an extended period of time as a result of some of my guilt. And no matter how much traffic my stories generate, it doesn't ever eliminate the foreboding voice in the back of my head that tells me to move on to a less emotionally conflicting career soon or else run the risk of ruining my own life. Or the thought that maybe I am just an asshole. I, however, choose to ignore that voice most of the time. Because for now I'm also good at that.

NEW YORK PLAYBOY FRAGRANCE FOR MEN

presstoplay



FRIENDS, BENEFITS AND THE ART OF THE BOOTY CALL

By Lisa Lampanelli

All my adult life, I was a serial monogamist. From the age of 13 to 40, I always had a boyfriend. For more than 25 years I was somebody's girlfriend—with never a day's break between partners. I was the Cal Ripken of mediocre relationships. Today, people call that codependent. Back then I just thought I was wildly popular among chubby white guys who resembled Jared from Subway.

So at the tender age of 40, when I broke up with my umpteenth pasty fatty, I could hear that booty calling. I was finally totally single and wanted to sow what wild oats I had left. Unfortunately, I had absolutely no idea how to do it.

I was in a dilemma. Luckily, like on an episode of *Glee*, a gay came to the rescue. My best friend at the time was Wendel (God, with that name, could he have any other fate?), and Wendel knew a thing or two about the booty call. In fact, Wendel lined up so many dates by phone, his dialing finger had carpal tunnel syndrome.

When I asked Wendel how I should go about pursuing a Friend With Benefits (FWB), he patiently if not a little condescendingly said, "Lisa, we gays are superior to you breeders because we know the difference between a booty call and a boyfriend. The key to a successful booty call is knowing what you want going in." (I assume he meant that in the figurative sense, but with Wendel you never knew.)

The booty call is the sexual equivalent of the PASS GO, COLLECT \$200 card. And it's as natural as morning wood. It's why birds chirp in the morning and John Mayer goes out at night—they want to stick it in. Booty calls are like snowflakes. They all go down a little differently, but eventually someone ends up wet.

But are booty calls all they're cracked up to be? Popping over to your FWB's place, bumping uglies, grabbing a beer from her fridge and going merrily on your way sounds like a dream come true. There's no fuss, no muss and no fighting over who has to sleep on the wet spot. However, when it comes to booty calls, can two people just come and go (so to speak), or will feelings inevitably get in the way?

The creation of the booty call is to sex what the invention of the drive-through window was to dining. Suddenly, a hungry



person didn't have to waste time trudging into a restaurant just to sit around waiting for his meal. Instead, he could pull up, grab what he needed and motor out of there happy and satisfied. So it shouldn't come as a surprise that we've invented a drive-through for our sexual appetite, too—only without the shitty intercom.

But there is a catch to this potentially perfect sexual outlet. We're all human beings (well, except for Lady Gaga. Really, what the hell is she?), and we all have emotions. Some precautions have to be taken so it's possible to repeatedly engage in the most intimate act two people can share (besides splitting a slice of chocolate cheesecake, but maybe that's just me) and not develop feelings for each other.

Here's how you keep a carefree booty call from plunging into the emotion ocean: Find a FWB you really despise or who despises you. For example, if you're a Palestinian, find yourself a Jew. If you're a PETA-loving vegan, find yourself an NRA-card-carrying hunter. If you're Nicolas Cage, find someone who shelled out 12 bucks to see *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*. Hate don't get worse than that!

Again, remember: Always be brutally honest with yourself about what you want. If you're looking for just a little late-night pudding and are simply picking a stress reliever from your bull pen of women, you're in the heartache clear. But if you're desperately hanging on to an old flame, looking for a number one starter for your rotation or just don't want to watch *Cheaters* alone, it could end up in tears.

Choosing wisely is the key. Women may say they just want a roll in the hay, but 99 times out of 100 they want the whole farm. Even if it's not a relationship she's after, it's something—a promotion, a diamond necklace or at least free tickets to *Rock of Ages*. So if you're certain she's not going to be the one, make sure you have an escape plan—not just for that night but for *life*. If you tell her you're moving to Detroit or some other third world country, she'll delete your number before you make it home. If not, she may try to hunt you down for the next decade as if you were Osama bin Laden.

The best way to avoid an unwanted relationship is to booty call a woman who's already in a relationship. Sure, it's technically immoral, but you'll thank yourself for choosing someone who's already taken when you're spending Sunday watching football with your friends instead of picking out shelf paper at Bed Bath & Beyond.

As for me, for whatever reason, after six months of booty calling I threw in the towel. In most cases, either my FWB or I got emotionally involved and things had to stop. I mean, even hookers get emotional during sex—especially when you take too long to finish. So I started looking for a real boyfriend, and I got one.

So, simply, much like going to a hotel room with Mike Tyson, enter the booty call at your own risk. Better yet, it may be less complicated to go it alone. Remember: Your hand may not feel as great, but at least it'll never stalk you.

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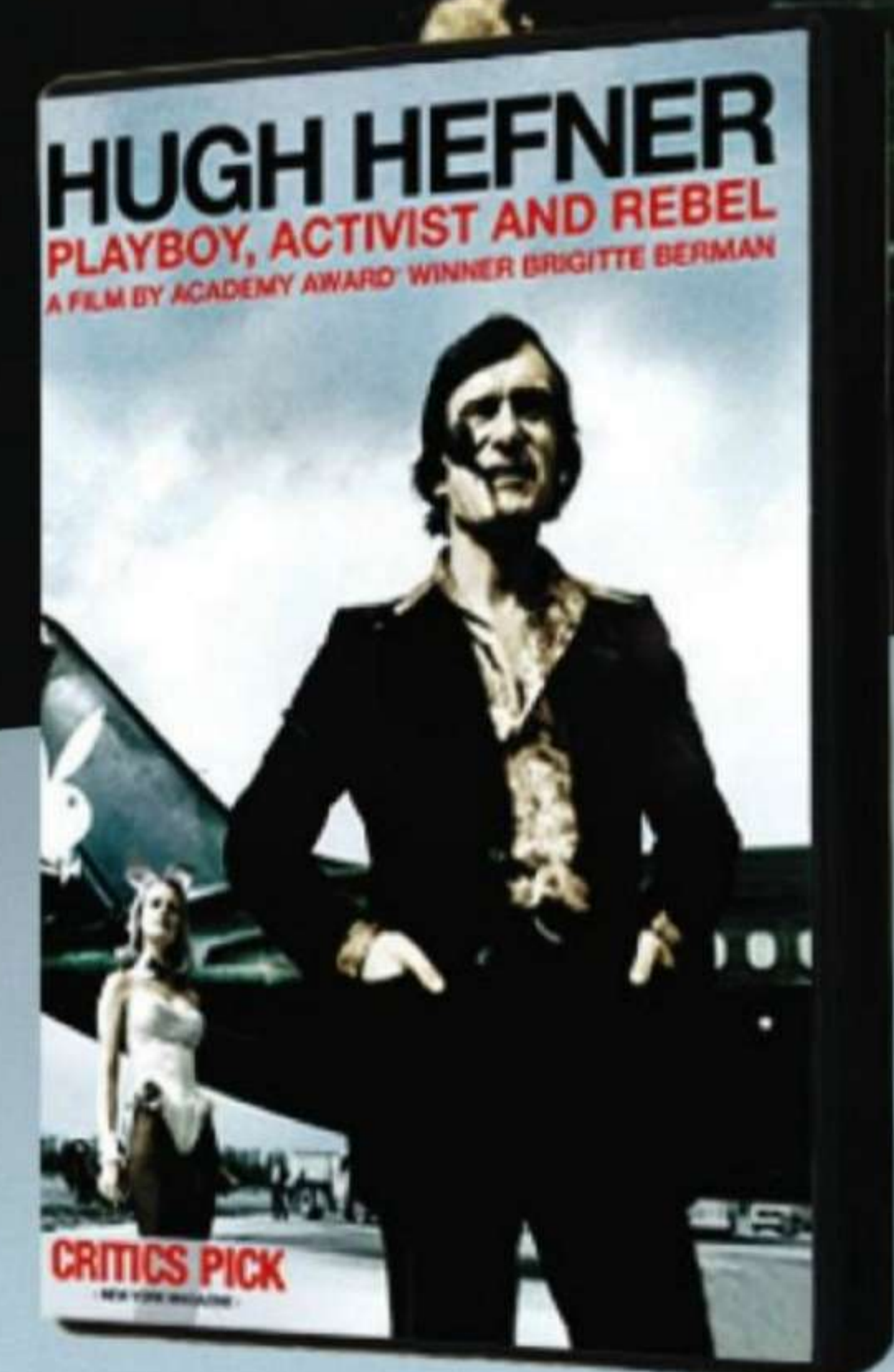
HUGH HEFNER

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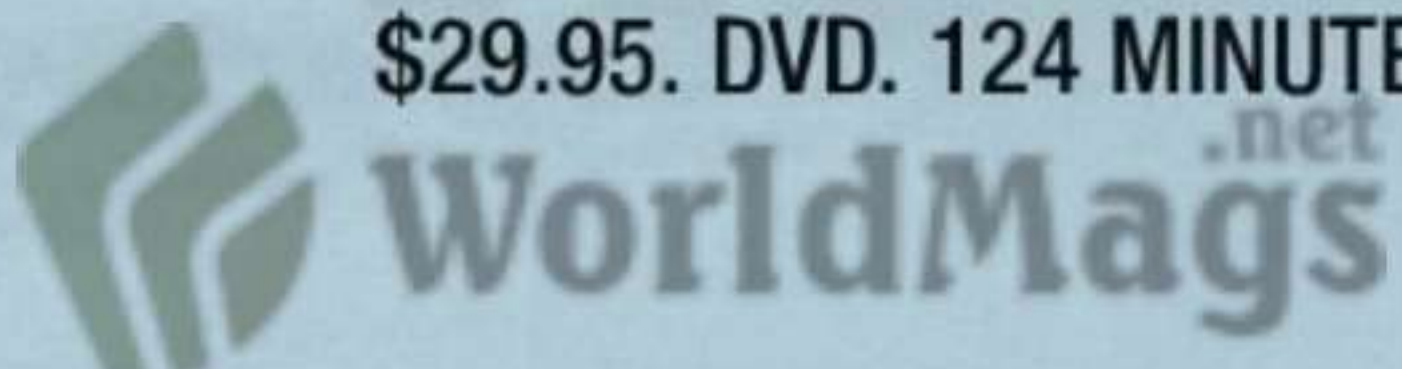
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The subtle styling (shark-nosed front clip, raked windscreen, well-defined shoulders) mates beautifully with the 400 hp twin-turbo V8. Nipping along at an effortless 100 miles an hour near San José del Cabo, Mexico, the 650i felt like an aggressive woman in our hands—unafraid, wanting more. All the requisite tech is available, and the soft top folds easily in 19 seconds. The “winged wonder” 635CSi of the 1970s is now a collector’s item; this latest iteration more than lives up to the legacy.

Summertime Rolls

Peeling the top off our favorite new models

When summer comes, it’s time to hurl your BlackBerry into the dust and hit the road *Easy Rider* style. We’ve driven everything new; here’s the best of the latest crop of convertibles. **Cheap date:** Chrysler’s 200, essentially the Sebring restyled and improved, will run you under \$27,000—a pleasant runabout to keep in the garage at your bungalow by the beach. **Party like it’s 1969:** Chevrolet has released its much anticipated new convertible Camaro. Its base price of \$29,275 will get you the 312-horsepower V6, but for about 10 grand more you’ll get a 426 hp V8 that’ll eat up the road. **Top of this summer’s top-downs:** BMW’s 650i convertible is the perfect luxury grand tourer.

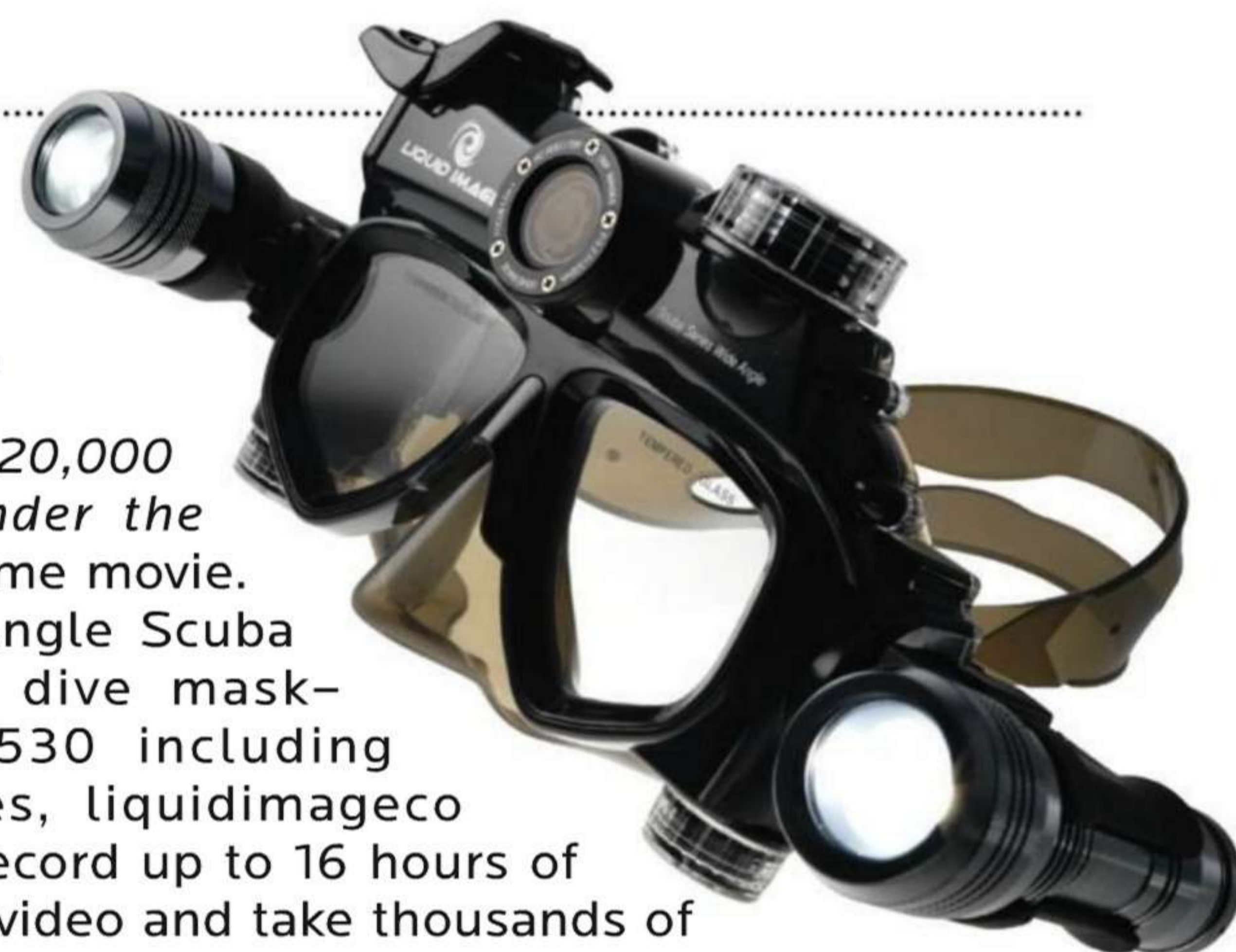


Shaken and Stirred

To sneak vodka into special events, you used to have to rely on the innocuous water bottle, stashed uncomfortably in your pants. But thanks to Kru82 premium vodka’s new shatter-proof bottle (\$19, kru82.com), you can take your aqua vitae anywhere—on the slopes, on the beach or on the make. Fastened to the top is a signature black strap and metal carabiner that allow you to clip your elixir to your belt.

Under the Sea

Welcome to 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea—the home movie. The Wide Angle Scuba Series HD dive mask-camera (\$530 including side torches, liquidimageco.com) can record up to 16 hours of underwater video and take thousands of deep-sea photos that you can easily transfer to your laptop with a USB cable.





FOR THE GRILL



Home Slice

The Meeting Knife Set (\$645, mcachicagostore.org) from French knife maker Déglon isn't mere cutlery. In fact, we found the blades at the nearby Museum of Contemporary Art here in Chicago. Cut from a single piece of steel and set in Burgundy oak, the quartet of knives—paring, carving, kitchen and chef—nest together like Russian dolls. Rest assured, however: They slice with the precision of a samurai's sword.

Bring the Heat

Keep your stuffed peppers in line—and prevent their fillings from becoming grill-top adhesive—with the Jalapeño Pepper Roaster (\$20, williams-sonoma.com).



Fire Starter

Capable of blowing more hot air than Jim Rome, the Looftlighter (\$80, looftlighter.com) readies your coals in seconds without lighter fluid.



Meat Market

Not everyone can cook like *Top Chef*'s Tom Colicchio, but anybody can use his favorite ingredients. Niman Ranch (nimanranch.com) sells a variety of antibiotic- and hormone-free meats—beef (from \$50), pork (from \$50) and lamb (from \$60) specifically—that James Beard Award winners such as Colicchio stock in their kitchens. For an added kick, try the spices and rubs—we recommend the Milwaukee Avenue steak seasoning—at the Spice House (\$5, thespicehouse.com).



Backyard Behemoth

Kalamazoo Outdoor Gourmet's K1500 series of hybrid grills may cost as much as a hybrid car (\$26,195, kalamazoogourmet.com), and given the

180,000 BTUs that will be at your service via their six main burners, we're not sure how much less gas they'll use. But we are certain you will have a lot more fun firing up the new grills than you would calculating your savings at the pump. Better still, Kalamazoo is the only manufacturer that doesn't force you to choose a side in the age-old gas-versus-charcoal (or wood) debate; the K1500 grills, which are handcrafted from

stainless steel in (where else?) Kalamazoo, Michigan, allow for all three. Cooking temps can range from 150 to 1,200 degrees Fahrenheit (without buckling steel), so take it low and slow when ribs are on the menu, or create steakhouse-worthy grill marks when serving T-bones. And if the colossus of the series (shown above) would dwarf the remainder of your patio, don't worry. Smaller sizes are also available.



Truly
Unique



Receive a
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Guitar Watch

The Official Watch of Rock and Roll

Rock around the clock tonight with the exclusive Stauer 6-String Watch for under \$100!

As a kid, I stood hypnotized in front of the guitar shop window. I stared at the Gibsons, Fenders, Rickenbackers and Les Pauls, lined up like lacquered mahogany and maple trophies. With their smooth curves, each one could produce hot licks, reverb and a wailing solo. The six string guitar is the heart of rock and roll. I'm proud to say that today I feel the same way about the new Stauer 6-String timepiece.

We wanted to give our favorite vintage electric guitars their due with an impressive timepiece that captures the excitement of the golden years of rock and roll. The Stauer 6-String is a legendary timepiece with bold, head-turning design and attitude to spare. It's rebellious enough to feel like you're getting away with something.

Meet your new favorite rock star. My only advice to the designers was to make a watch that looks exactly like rock and roll sounds. Big, bold and loud enough to wake the neighbors. It should evoke images of Bill Haley, Buddy Holly, The King and The Boss strumming crowds into a frenzy.

But it should also reverberate with the spirit of the world's greatest rock guitar gods like Jimi, Eric and Keith (who was featured on the cover of the *Rolling Stone* magazine wearing a Stauer watch). As you can see, the final product is worthy of a standing ovation.

It's only rock and roll, but we like it. One look at the Stauer 6-String voluptuous stainless steel body will bring you right back to the glory days of 45 and 33 rpm records. The eye-catching shape of the case recalls the round-bottomed bodies of the greatest vintage electric guitars.

The unique, ivory face features blue Roman numerals on the left of the dial and bold Arabic numbers on the right. Blued, Breguet-style hands keep time while additional complications mark the day, date and month. A date window sits at the 3 o'clock position. Inside, the 27-ruby-jewel movement utilizes an automatic self-winding mechanism that never needs batteries. The watch secures with a genuine black leather band and is water-resistant to 3 ATMs.

Guaranteed to rock your world. If you aren't fully impressed by the performance and stage presence of the Stauer 6-String within 30 days, simply return the watch for a full refund of the purchase price. The unique design of the 6-String limits our production to only 4,995 pieces, so don't hesitate to order! Sorry, no Wah Wah pedal included!

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- Date, day and day/night complications
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PLAYBOY ADVISOR

Is there any way I can get rid of my man boobs? I can't seem to even though I lift weights and run three times a week.—K.D., Elkridge, Maryland

Assuming you don't suffer from a hormonal condition known as gynecomastia, which can be corrected with drugs or surgery (more than 18,000 men had breast reductions last year), you have more work to do. While you can strengthen your pecs to achieve the strongest man boobs around, you can't spot reduce the fat. That's why you don't see overweight guys with washboard abs. You can try a diet and commando workouts, but studies suggest you have a better chance of toning up if you change your behavior in small but sustainable ways. That is, many people jump into intense exercise routines and burn out or continue to eat poorly and wonder why they can't shed the pounds. It's more effective to keep a chart of your progress, make adjustments such as taking the stairs instead of the elevator and find exercises you enjoy. Joining a support group also helps. But you have to stick with it for the long term, because, like the belly, the boobs are the last thing to go.

My boyfriend stopped sleeping with me after I gave birth to our daughter. About a year later, while I was going down on him, I persuaded him to stick it in. He did but lost his erection. Our sex now consists of me giving him a morning blow job while he fingers me. I'm afraid childbirth has ruined my pussy. Vaginas supposedly get back in shape, but is it possible mine hasn't? Or could the problem be that he watched me give birth? When I ask why we never have intercourse, he says, "It's something that just happened, and now it's lost." Any advice would be appreciated. I feel so hopeless.—K.C., Oakland, California

Your vagina is fine, but we have doubts about your boyfriend. Given that he can keep it up for his daily blow job, you may be right about his reaction to witnessing the vagina's grander purpose. Some new fathers suffer this trauma (it's been referred to as "post-traumatic parturition syndrome" or "psychosexual scarring") because they are not prepared for what is a rather startling sight and/or for the pain their partner must endure. They have a hard time seeing their partners as sexual beings again, though the vast majority of new fathers are horny enough to make quick recoveries. Although nearly all men now witness the births of their children, a few doctors and midwives



I told my wife I fantasize about seeing her with a black man. She allowed me to buy her a black dildo and we've made plans to go to bars so I can watch her flirt with a black man, but she always changes her mind. Is there any hope of my fantasy becoming hers?—J.H., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Enough husbands are turned on watching their wives with another man that it has become a swinging subculture—"hot wives" hook up with "bulls" for the viewing pleasure of their "cucks," or cuckolds. What's the appeal? Many husbands get off on the idea of being humiliated, in this case by a BBC (big black cock) that puts their SWC or MWC to shame, and the anticipation that every black bull will be an insatiable brute. Alternately, they expect a bull with baggy pants, gold teeth and cornrows who treats the woman like a ho. Most black men who enjoy being bulls because of their own fantasies about having sex with white women find this aggravating, much like black actors repeatedly cast in demeaning roles. That's why the fantasy is probably more exciting than the reality, especially if you have no experience with swinging or actual black men, most of whom have average-size penises and very few of whom are brutish. If your wife doesn't want to take this scenario any further, perhaps you can find an alternative fantasy that allows you to be put in your place.

advise against it because of the risk they see to a couple's sex life due to its effect on "modesty and mystery," as one obstetrician puts it. Men who think they may be put off by childbirth might benefit from watching an instructional

video of a birth prior to the big event so they know what to expect. As for your boyfriend, he owes you more of an explanation than "It's lost," or he risks losing you. Tell him in straightforward terms that he needs to reestablish contact. Your clitoris didn't give birth, so he can start there with his tongue. Once he and your pussy have become reacquainted and he sees it's still the fun-loving companion he remembers, he may be more receptive to going inside. One caveat: Trauma could be a factor, but other forces more often explain the decline of a couple's shared sex life, including boredom, depression or, worst of all, indifference.

When I smoke a cigar, why does the last inch taste so bad?—W.P., New Orleans, Louisiana

Because it has filtered all that came before. "Zino Davidoff had a simple philosophy that a cigar should never be smoked more than halfway," explains Aaron Sigmond, author of *Playboy: The Book of Cigars*. "I'll stretch that and say two thirds." Some smokers love the stub because of its intensity, but Sigmond compares it to drinking the sediment at the bottom of a wine bottle, which could also be described as intense but is not an experience to savor.

I love my parents, but with each passing year, especially since I got married and started a family, they have become more annoying. If I try to tell them to back off, they act surprised and say they want the best for me. Is there any way to keep the peace?—H.N., Pasadena, California

The best advice we've heard about this dilemma comes by way of Jimmy Kimmel, from an *Esquire* interview he did during the time he was dating Sarah Silverman. "Here's what Sarah taught me about getting along with my own parents," he said. "Try to pretend they're someone else's parents. If you do that, the little things that annoy you that don't annoy anyone else are much more tolerable." Your parents have gone from being adults responsible for your survival to fellow adults you love but don't depend on in the same way. Often parents, as you'll discover for yourself in about 25 years, are overcome by the urge to make suggestions. But the key is, they usually don't follow up. If you are pleasant but noncommittal—"That might work"—you can usually do what you were going to do anyway.

My wife and I want to add bondage and discipline to our sex play. To be specific, we find bareback whipping to be a

turn-on. Which type of whip or flogger would allow her to swing freely while not causing me excessive discomfort? Also, would a pain medicine, taken before play, help at all?—V.T., Portland, Oregon

The first rules of flagellation are “Start lighter than light. Build slower than slow.” You also need to agree on a safe word that, when uttered, will end the play immediately. Jay Wiseman, author of SM 101, suggests you start with a flogger made of light, soft leather, such as deerskin or cabretta, which is unlikely to cause damage or leave marks. Buy quality; a cheap flogger made with heavy leather and tails that have sharp corners and edges is dangerous. You may want to start with a crop, Wiseman says, because it will allow your wife to stand closer and touch you with one hand as she strikes with the other. You should not take any drugs (including alcohol) before S&M play; it will affect your judgment as to your limits and increase the risk of injury.

Is there any combination of red wine and fish that works?—K.T., San Francisco, California

*Once in a while, but it’s a tough match because the reds overwhelm the subtle flavor of the seafood and create a fishy aftertaste. Although this effect has long been attributed to tannins in the wine, there are puzzling exceptions. Researchers in Japan appear to have solved the mystery with an experiment involving 38 reds, 26 whites and seven experienced wine tasters. Over four sessions, the volunteers sampled each wine with scallops. As the scientists reported in the *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*, the reason for the fishy aftertaste is not tannins but iron—a wine with more than two milligrams per liter doesn’t pair with fish. Because whites have more acids, they may naturally reduce the amount of iron in combination. That could explain the classic pairing of salmon and pinot noir, a red that is lighter in body and higher in acid. Unfortunately there’s no way to know how much iron a particular red contains; it’s not on the label and can vary based on the soil in which the grapes were grown and how they were processed. But it does provide hope for adventurous matchmakers.*

My girlfriend, whom I have been dating for a year, thinks it’s okay to cuddle with close friends, most of whom happen to be male. Last night I came home to find her falling asleep on the lap of a guy who never makes conversation with me. Besides wondering whether I am dating a cock tease, I get the feeling her affection for him is keeping him from pursuing a relationship of his own. What should I do?—A.T., Missoula, Montana

Your girlfriend sounds naive about her male friends and their supposedly platonic feelings for her. Or maybe not so naive. Probably the latter. We’d be less concerned about the romantic prospects of her BFFs and more about those of her number one boyfriend.

I’ve always dated women, but about a year ago I started seeing this amazing guy.

Everything was going great until I asked for anal sex, which he refuses to do. How can I get my man to give it to me the way I like it? I thought guys loved the freaky stuff.—B.B., Three Oaks, Michigan

Why does his erection have to be involved? Have him lube you up and slide in an appropriately sized vibrator. If he’s like 99 percent of guys, your reaction will keep him coming back to your back for more coming.

Although I quit smoking two years ago and started eating better and working out, I still suffer from a loss of energy and libido. My doctor tells me my testosterone is at the low end of normal but wants to “keep an eye on it.” I wouldn’t mind trying a testosterone supplement. Are any over-the-counter products effective, or are they as much of a hoax as the magic pills that make your penis longer?—C.D., Lansing, Michigan

*Save your money. Testosterone is a controlled substance, so none of the OTC supplements or herbals have the hormone in them. (They usually claim to “enhance” your natural testosterone, but so do exercise and, at least temporarily, watching porn.) The challenge of determining if you have low testosterone based on a blood test is that labs have different criteria for what that means, explains Dr. Abraham Morgentaler, associate clinical professor of urology at Harvard Medical School and author of *Testosterone for Life*. “Most men who are told they have low to normal testosterone actually have low testosterone because the reading is based on statistical averages and not observation,” he says. “You have to consider if the patient displays the classic symptoms of low T, which is low sexual desire, a less-firm erection, lower energy and fatigue. Men with those symptoms and a lower T reading merit a three-month trial of testosterone therapy.” Morgentaler also notes that while most doctors measure total testosterone, the best indicator of your hormonal status is free testosterone, or the amount of the hormone available to your cells at any time.*

I admitted I made a mistake. Why won’t my wife accept my apology?—P.L., Portland, Oregon

*When apologizing, be specific about why you’re sorry and what you plan to do about it. Laurie Puhn, author of *Instant Persuasion*, suggests this formula: First say, “I’m sorry for...” Next say, “In the future I will...” and explain your plan to keep it from happening again. Of course you have to follow through. And depending on the indiscretion, it can take awhile to earn back a partner’s trust. The most humbling part of the process is realizing you don’t get to decide when you’ve accomplished that.*

Are there any long-term effects to hanging a TV above a fireplace? Does it make any difference if a mantel blocks some of the heat?—D.T., St. Clairsville, Ohio

It depends. But this may not be the ideal location for your television for other reasons.

High-definition televisions are best viewed straight on, with your eyes level with the middle of the screen. If you mount it higher on the wall, you’re not getting the optimum view. It’s also hard on your neck, though that can be addressed with a tilt mount. Installers recommend taping a thermometer to the wall where the TV will hang. Start a fire and let it roar. If the wall temperature exceeds 90 degrees, you risk shortening the life of the TV by forcing it to work harder to cool down. That’s assuming you will have a fire going while it’s on. And most flues are insulated to keep the walls from getting too hot.

For as long as I can remember I’ve had a fetish for women who smoke using cigarette holders. I love the look—how they fit the cigarette into the holder, how they tap off the ash, how the holder looks in the woman’s hand. If you look at publicity photos of movie stars from the 1930s and 1940s, this was a popular prop, even for actors who didn’t smoke, such as Mae West. Holders project an air of sexual decadence. Since I was a teenager I’ve noted every movie that has a good holder smoking scene. Two that stand out are Natalie Wood in *Sex and the Single Girl* and Jayne Mansfield in *Too Hot to Handle*. A fetishist tends to obsess, but I’m also turned on by women who don’t smoke, and I would never ask a woman to start who didn’t, nor would I prevent a woman from quitting. I suspect, however, as smoking becomes more taboo, you will see more guys turned on by women who light up. My question is, how common is the smoking fetish, with holders in particular?—R.M., Cumberland, Maryland

It’s common enough. The center of the movement is at smokesigs.com, where you’ll find female smokers in the midst of oral sex and intercourse, smokers puffing 120s, smoking dominatrices and—finally—smoking femme fatales, many of whom use holders. The challenge, we’ve read, is that today’s brands are too slim to stay put in vintage holders designed for unfiltered or hand-rolled cigarettes.

My girlfriend and I have agreed to let the Advisor settle a wager. The winner gets 30 minutes of oral sex. If a couple is masturbating together, are they having sex? I say no, my girlfriend says yes.—P.D., Hauppauge, New York

Your girlfriend is right. You win.

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 via our website at playboyadvisor.com.





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PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: JAMES FRANCO

A candid conversation with the actor-director-writer-artist-student about being Hollywood's most legendary multitasker and the controversies that follow him

To many, James Franco boasts the most enviable—or is it annoying?—résumé in show business. Although only 33, he has spent the past few years wowing his fans and aggravating his critics by doing too much and doing much of it extremely well. Take just this past year or so: The offbeat, unpredictable star grabbed a best actor Oscar nomination for *127 Hours*, in which he plays Aron Ralston, the stranded real-world mountaineer who amputated his own arm to save himself. He also played Beat poet Allen Ginsberg in *Howl* and squeezed in supporting roles with Steve Carell and Tina Fey in *Date Night*, Julia Roberts in *Eat Pray Love* and Natalie Portman in *Your Highness*. On TV he continued a recurring self-reflexive stint as a mysterious artist on the long-running soap *General Hospital*.

For most people that would be a rich, full year. But Franco also earned his MFA at Columbia University while simultaneously attending NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, pursuing a Ph.D. in English at Yale and studying digital media at Rhode Island School of Design, and also, for good measure, became one of 20 students selected out of 400 applicants for the 2012 Ph.D. literature and creative writing program at the University of Houston. He published a book of interlaced tales of teen disaffection, *Palo Alto*. His conceptual art projects for major

galleries and museums—in which his celebrity and public persona were as much context as subject—dovetailed with his well-known presence on Twitter. He also continued to direct films, including one about backstage life on *Saturday Night Live*, as well as the award-winning black-and-white *The Feast of Stephen*, in which a young dweeb gets beaten up for fantasizing about the bobbling private parts of naked young bucks playing pickup basketball. Then, atop TV interviews in which many noted his poise, smarts and trippy different drummer-ness, he baffled many viewers with his deadpan, too-cool co-hosting of the 2011 Oscars ceremony, actually tweeting during the show.

Is it any surprise the actor now openly wonders if he faces a backlash from even stalwart Franco-philes?

Few actors are the subject of as much fascination and speculation. Sure, he's an undisputed talent, but is he also a showboat performance artist using acting and fame as his canvas? Is he a professional super-student, capable of achieving an above-3.5 grade-point average while taking 62 credits a quarter and maintaining a red-hot movie career? Is he a dyed-in-the-wool artist and eccentric, or does he merely get off on playing weird? Is he straight, gay, bi, or is he too busy with lofty artistic pursuits to bother with

worldly pleasure? Is he a true Renaissance man or a gifted, overachieving gadfly?

Franco grew up in Palo Alto, California, the first of three boys raised by Betsy, a children's book author, and Douglas, who runs a nonprofit agency and a shipping container company. Talented in both painting and math but shy around girls, Franco interned briefly at Lockheed Martin. During high school, he not only starred in plays but also entangled himself in a series of infractions (including drinking, theft and tagging) that led to his being put on probation. He straightened up, improved his grades and entered UCLA as an English major but dropped out after his freshman year to pursue acting. His first big break was on the TV cult favorite *Freaks and Geeks*, followed by a much-talked-about performance as James Dean in a TV biopic. Then came *Spider-Man*—though Tobey Maguire beat him out for the lead role. Two sequels followed but so too did smaller, edgier movies such as *An American Crime* and *The Dead Girl*, as well as several uncredited roles in *The Green Hornet*, *Knocked Up* and *Nights in Rodanthe*. He scored grand slams in *Pineapple Express* and *Milk*, and he's a regular presence on the *Funny or Die* website, in videos that often feature his family members.

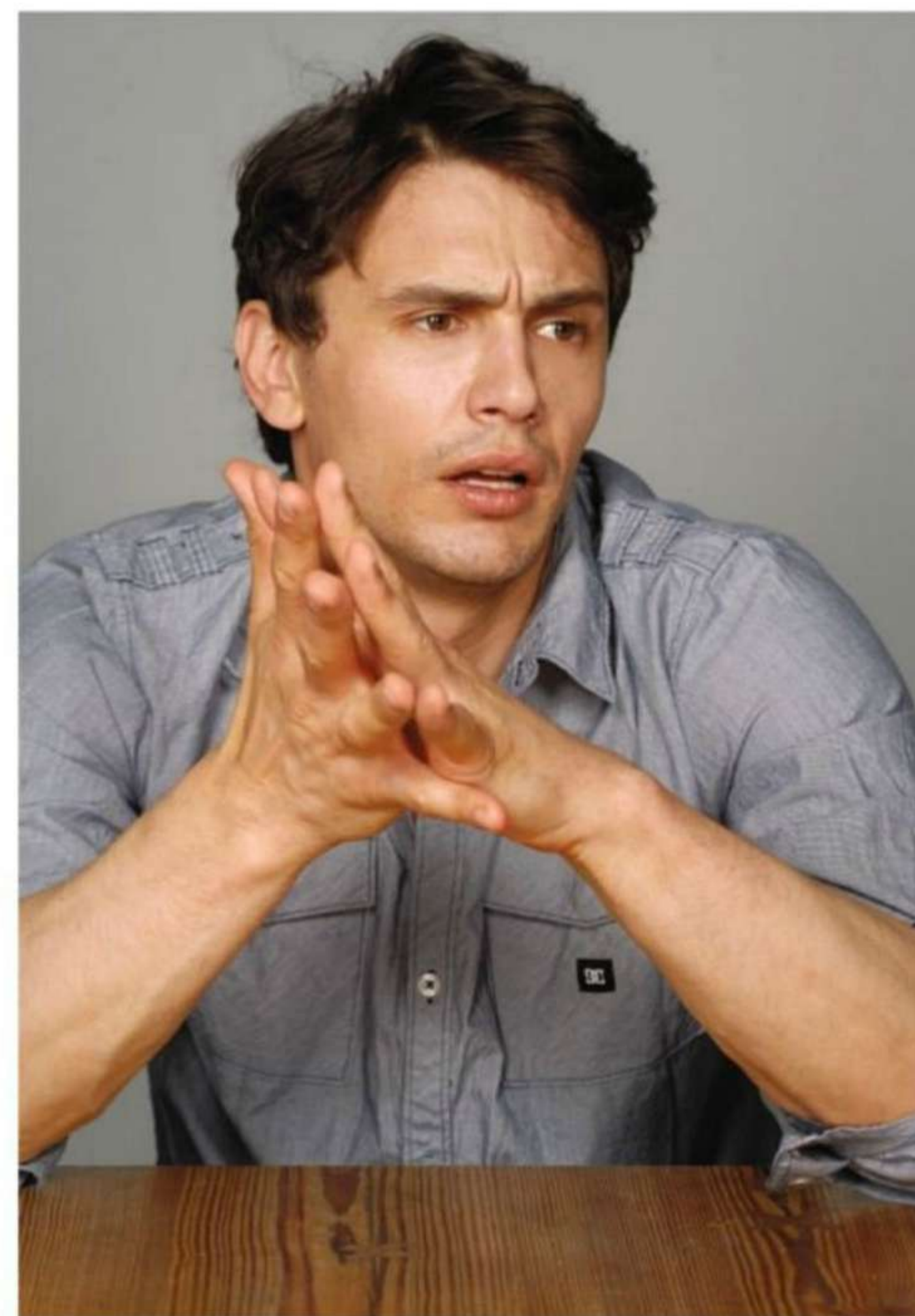
We sent Contributing Editor **Stephen Rebell**, who last interviewed Josh Brolin for *PLAYBOY*, to



"I've been perceived as this guy yelling, 'Hey, look at me. I want attention.' I'm not going to school to get articles written about me. I'm just going to school. I write. I make movies. I'm going to school. I take these projects seriously."



"Here's my guess: Critics will be out to kill this movie and blame me for it just because they are out to kill me. Last year people were pretty nice. This is the year when people are going to have fun going after me."



"I had a friend in school, and there were rumors that we were gay. Those rumors were started by—who knows?—people who were jealous, people who had been picked on. I like it now that people said I was gay. It's kind of cool."

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID ROSE

meet with Franco in a studio in a historic building in Manhattan's artsy Chelsea neighborhood. "Franco was a trip," says Rebello. "He's highly verbal, thoughtful, generous, unapologetically eccentric and apparently so comfortable in his own skin that he seems to welcome the chance to shed light on his utterly unique head space and unconventional behavior—but only some light, mind you. As serious and dedicated as he is about his art and his education, his jokester's playfulness gives you the sense that he enjoys challenging people's notions of celebrity, behavior and masculinity. A movie star who might morph into a fascinating director, he refuses to be tamed, categorized, boxed in or defined. That may turn out to be his greatest act of rebellion yet."

PLAYBOY: In the past five years alone you've starred in numerous movies, including *127 Hours*, *Pineapple Express*, *Howl*, *Eat Pray Love* and *Milk*, published a book as well as short fiction in major magazines, appeared in a recurring role on *General Hospital*, guest starred on *30 Rock*, hosted the Oscars, directed short films and mounted big art projects at international museums and galleries. You also earned a B.A. in English from UCLA, got an MFA from Columbia, studied filmmaking at NYU, are now completing a doctorate in English at Yale and have been accepted into the literature and creative writing Ph.D. program at the University of Houston. Isn't this a bit much?

FRANCO: I don't know, but the first short film I ever directed, years before I even went to film school at NYU, is about a boy who is introduced to the concept of his own mortality when his goldfish dies. He says to his parents, "I don't want to die," and though they say he shouldn't worry because there's plenty of time, they don't really comfort him. So he thinks, I have to do everything *now*. He gets a neighbor girl to marry him, gets a job, starts a family. Although I've changed and relaxed a bit, my behavior shows I've thought along those lines for quite a while.

PLAYBOY: When it comes to your academic work, how do you react when journalists and bloggers accuse you of skating by on your fame?

FRANCO: It's a great thing. When people heard I was in all these academic programs, the reaction for some person I don't even know was to take a picture of me sleeping at Columbia. It wasn't even in class; it was a 10 P.M. optional guest lecture. But people love to post that picture on the internet and criticize me for taking a spot away from somebody else who would really care about the lecture. People sleep in class at all my schools all the time and nobody posts their pictures.

PLAYBOY: Why is it a great thing to be dissed or underestimated?

FRANCO: Because if someone from Gawker or any of those blogs wants to say I'm "the superstudent" or "the stoner student," it takes the edge off this public persona that others have created

for me. I can just slip under the radar and do my work without being bothered. They will perceive you however they want to anyway.

PLAYBOY: Have you ever run into anyone who's written smack about you?

FRANCO: People from these horrible blogs came to my book party for *Palo Alto* last year. Normally I don't care, but it's like your worst enemy showing up at your birthday party, like, "Why are you here? Get the fuck out of my party." But it gave me a chance to see that a lot of the people writing for these blogs are just people my age who are in the same writing programs I was—or trying to get into those programs. So it was like, "Oh, so you're just one of my classmates who doesn't like me. That's what this is all about?"

PLAYBOY: With so many classrooms to choose from, how do you get along with your classmates?

FRANCO: The scariest environment I'm engaged in is the English department at Yale. Everybody is there because they're smart. It's one thing to turn in a paper to your professor, who reads it in private, but when you have to read

Someone asked, "Why is your Twitter account closed?" I said, "Yeah, it's over. I'm not on it anymore," and suddenly it became "James Franco declares social media is over."

that paper in front of the whole class, that is terrifying and intimidating.

PLAYBOY: You strike lots of people as being cool, unconventional and mysterious. Do you ever think that not breaking a sweat while you're furiously multitasking riles some people?

FRANCO: I've been perceived as this guy yelling, "Hey, look at me. I want attention." I'm not going to school to get articles written about me. I'm just going to school. But the fact that I'm going to school or that someone takes a picture of me sleeping is like, "We're gonna jump on that and criticize him for his antics." What antics? I write. I make movies. I'm going to school. I hosted the Oscars. I take these projects seriously.

PLAYBOY: Some might question how seriously you took co-hosting the Oscars show with Anne Hathaway.

FRANCO: When they asked me to do it, I laughed and said, "How am I going to get out of this?" I had one of the best acting experiences working with [director] Danny Boyle on *127 Hours*, and we made something great. The studio was making a push for my best actor nomination,

and people had been talking about it. At the time I thought no one had won an Oscar the year they hosted the show—I learned later that David Niven had, about 50 years ago—and I thought my hosting the show would cut down my chances, take some of the pressure off and say to people, or at least to myself, "You're not going to worry about this." I had done a bit for the Oscars before with Seth Rogen that was a big hit. I felt confident I could do it. I mean, what are the host's responsibilities? You have an opening monologue, maybe a bit or two in the middle of the show, and then the rest is just reading names. They knew I could rehearse only on weekends because of school, but how much do you have to rehearse? They told me they knew I wasn't Chris Rock and that they had designed the show around me.

PLAYBOY: How did it go so wrong?

FRANCO: It's hard to talk about because it's like assigning blame—not a fun thing to do. For three or four weeks we shot the promos and the little film that played in the opening. In the last week, when we really started focusing on the script for the live show and did a run-through, I said to the producer, "I don't know why you hired me, because you haven't given me anything. I just don't think this stuff's going to be good."

PLAYBOY: Many knocked you for appearing blasé, bored, out of it, having little chemistry with Anne Hathaway.

FRANCO: After the show everybody was so happy, and Bruce Cohen, the show's producer, hugged me and said, "Steven Spielberg just told me it was the best Oscars ever!" As far as having low energy or seeming as though I wasn't into it or was too cool for it, I thought, Okay, Anne is going the enthusiastic route. I've been trained as an actor to respond to circumstances, to the people I'm working with, and not to force anything. So I thought I would be the straight man and she could be the other, and that's how I was trying to do those lines. I felt kind of trapped in that material. I felt, This is not my boat. I'm just a passenger, but I'm going down and there's no way out.

PLAYBOY: Why did you tweet during the show?

FRANCO: As a way to say, "Whatever you're seeing and hearing, those are other people's words. I'm lifting the curtain and you can see a little bit of what's going on." It was cutting-edge. No host has ever done that—given you that kind of alternative glimpse. I was trying to do the best job I could. I didn't try to sabotage the show. I didn't get high. I went to the rehearsals I said I was going to. I played the lines as I thought they should be played.

PLAYBOY: Soon after the Oscars, you took your Twitter account private. Cause and effect?

FRANCO: Someone at an event asked, "Why is your Twitter account closed?" I said, "Yeah, it's over. I'm not on it anymore,"



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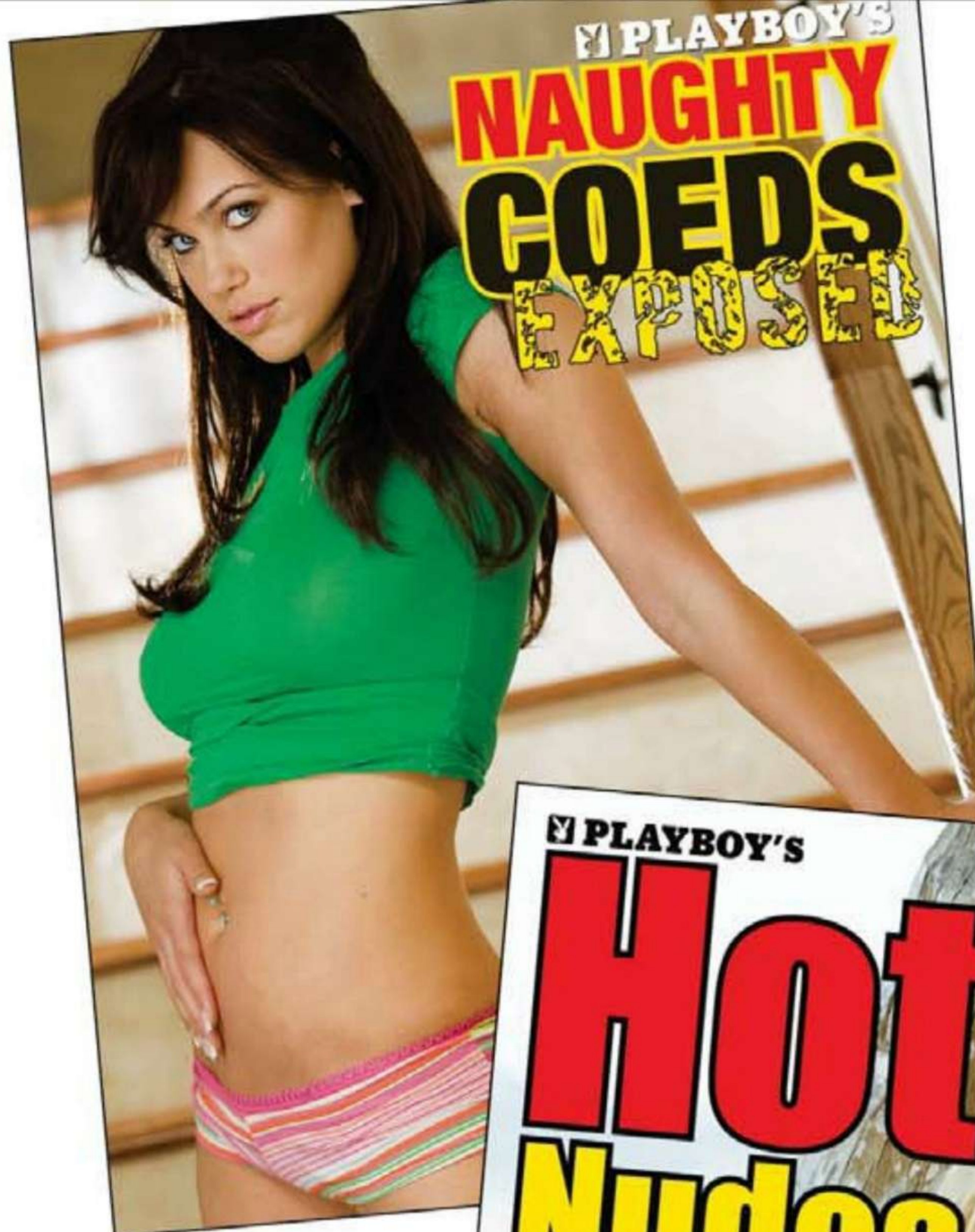
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and suddenly it became “James Franco declares social media is over.” Which is like saying nobody’s going to talk on the telephone anymore.

PLAYBOY: Was that actually a photo of your hand down the crotch of your jeans—and even possibly a glimpse of your junk—to which you allegedly tweeted a link to your 350,000-plus followers?

FRANCO: I couldn’t do Twitter the conventional way. I resisted the idea of posting comments, opinions; I felt they weren’t worth anything. I also felt that if I had something worth saying, I’d put it in an essay or a story, not on Twitter. So I thought Twitter was where I’d post cool photos and videos—a kind of collage, an outlet where I could just throw my scraps—and I posted some of a big art project I was doing. I knew people in the art community would see them as art, but they were perceived as something else.

PLAYBOY: Like maybe subliminal porn?

FRANCO: I thought, It’s my account; I can post anything I want here. But I had underage followers on Twitter. Don’t follow me or Lady Gaga if you’re underage. Some companies I work with reminded me that my image is now connected with their image and they were not happy.

PLAYBOY: You also seemed to have gotten into a post-Oscars Twitter skirmish with Bruce Vilanch, who was one of the writers for the Oscars show. All in all, then, have you tweeted your last public tweet?

FRANCO: Somebody writes or says something about you that can be upsetting, and your first reaction is to want to write back—and usually the first reaction is an angry one. I personally do not do my best thinking when I’m angry. Before Twitter, I always had that buffer period when I could actually think and decide, Is this worth it? You respond to someone and it immediately goes out to hundreds of thousands of people and becomes a big thing that people report. For me Twitter is a dangerous thing.

PLAYBOY: Vilanch was presumably one of many writers for the Oscars show who thought having you don Marilyn Monroe drag was a good idea.

FRANCO: I was so pissed about that I was deliberately going to fall onstage and hopefully my dress would fall off or something—they couldn’t blame that on me; I was in high heels. The plan had been that I was going to sing as Cher and then Cher was going to come out onstage; that got axed when Cher and the song from *Burlesque* weren’t nominated. I told them, “Look, this is the thing people are going to talk about, the images they will take away from the show.” I mean, think about it—Anne Hathaway sang a song about Hugh Jackman, who not only wasn’t nominated, I don’t think he even had a movie out last year. So whatever. I just didn’t want to fight anymore, even when they said, “You’ll come out as Marilyn Monroe. It’ll be funny.” Me in drag is

not funny. Me in drag as Cher trying to sing like her is a thing. That didn’t happen, so then I just didn’t want to argue anymore. I was going with their program; I wanted to do the material they gave me, not be one of the many cooks doing the writing. There were a lot of cooks who shouldn’t have been cooking but were allowed to. There were some cooks my manager tried to bring in, like Judd Apatow, who wrote some very funny stuff that wasn’t used.

PLAYBOY: Asking a movie heartthrob to wear drag on the Oscars could be seen as something done for cheap laughs. But you’ve never shied away from playing gay or bisexual characters, in *James Dean*, *Milk*, *Howl*. Speculation about your sexuality has followed you for a long time. How did that start?

FRANCO: I had a close friend in school, and there were rumors that we were gay. Those rumors were started by—who knows?—people who were jealous, people who had been picked on, girls who had been picked on. So they started these rumors. I like it now that people said I was gay. It’s kind of cool.

[The Oscars telecast] is hard to talk about because it’s like assigning blame. They told me they knew I wasn’t Chris Rock and that they had designed the show around me.

PLAYBOY: What was it like for you in 2008 when Page Six of the *New York Post* ran a blind item about a hunky closeted gay actor who got nicknamed the Gay Rapist? You were among the actors most often guessed by Gawker readers.

FRANCO: That was the first time I experienced anything like that. It started when we got this call from two rag magazines that said, “This guy called and said he’s been dating James Franco for six months and just broke up with him because James beat him up, and he’s filed a police report.” My lawyer said, “Run that and we will sue because there has been no police report filed.” They didn’t run the stories. My lawyer looked up the Facebook page of the guy I’d supposedly been dating, and it turned out he’s actually a young lawyer himself. Anyway, I think his Facebook page mentioned me as his “dream date” or something. Well, if I’d been dating him for six months, why was I his dream date?

PLAYBOY: Did you know this guy?

FRANCO: No. When my lawyer called and asked about it, the guy freaked out and said, “Oh yeah, I heard about that

too. So weird. I don’t know James.” It stopped the story. Then Gawker picked that up and did this “Gay Rapist” story that was so fucking offensive because I have friends who have been raped. They did a very classy online reader’s poll asking which actor who had a big movie out that summer had beaten up and raped his boyfriend and then paid him off so it wouldn’t go to court. The poll had me, Will Smith, Christian Bale and maybe Tom Cruise or some others, and the readers voted for me. Because it was just an innocent poll, they could report this.

PLAYBOY: Could you and your attorneys do anything?

FRANCO: My lawyer called them and said that it was completely untrue and to take it down. They said, “Well, we’re just reporting what the *New York Post* told us. If James wants to make a comment on our blog, we’re happy to report it.” It was a choice. Either let this thing build and become bigger and bigger, or just let it go and let them be the petty scumbags that they are. It was a shame that at the same time I became involved in this completely false and offensive story, I was in *Milk*, a movie I felt strongly about. Some more great rumors will be coming up.

PLAYBOY: What do you mean?

FRANCO: I have a film coming up that I directed about the poet Hart Crane, and I give a blow job in that movie.

PLAYBOY: After playing movie icon James Dean, a male prostitute in the 2002 movie *Sonny*, Harvey Milk’s activist lover in *Milk*, Beat poet Allen Ginsberg in *Howl*—let alone the exploration of masculinity in your book *Palo Alto* and the homoerotic imagery in your short movie *The Feast of Stephen*—is it fair to say you have a fascination with gay or bisexual characters?

FRANCO: “Straight” and “gay” are fairly recent phenomena. One of the things the great book *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture and the Making of the Gay World, 1890–1940* is about is the way those labels have changed behavior. Between World War I and World War II, straight guys could have sex with other guys and still be perceived as straight as long as they acted masculine. Whether you were considered a “fairy” or a “queer” back then wasn’t based on sexual acts so much as outward behavior. Into the 1950s, 1960s and so on, the straight and gay thing came up based on your sexual partner. Because of those labels, you do it once and you’re gay, so you get fewer guys who are kind of in the middle zone. It sounds as though I’m advocating for an ambiguous zone or something, but I’m just interested in the way perception changes behavior.

PLAYBOY: Although you’ve often invited dialogue and speculation about your screen image and your offscreen life, one area you’ve kept pretty quiet is your long-term relationship with actress Ahna O’Reilly.

FRANCO: It’s over. That lasted about four or five years. We’d been living together in L.A. and then came to New York to go

to school for two years. Then I signed up for more school at Yale. I think that was it for her.

PLAYBOY: One last thing about the Oscars. You and this year's best actress Oscar winner, Natalie Portman, are in the medieval stoner fantasy-adventure *Your Highness*, your first post-Oscars ceremony release. It was reamed by critics and at the box office. Was it backlash?

FRANCO: I didn't write that movie. I was just doing my job. I think I'm fine in it. They knew there were problems with that movie a year ago. Just because it comes out after the Oscars, it's like "Oh, here's backlash." Well, you have the year's best actress Oscar winner in it, so wouldn't that boost ticket sales? And people want to blame me for that? It's just ridiculous. There's this feeling about me like, "He's doing too many things. Let's get him."

PLAYBOY: Will they "get you" for your new movie *Rise of the Planet of the Apes*, a prequel to the five-movie series that began in 1968 with *Planet of the Apes*?

FRANCO: Here's my guess: Critics will be out to kill this movie and blame me for it just because they are out to kill me. Last year people were pretty nice. This is the year when people are going to have fun going after me. I don't feel the same way about *Rise of the Planet of the Apes* as I do about *127 Hours* or *Milk*. It was a different kind of acting.

PLAYBOY: Was the movie fun to make?

FRANCO: Because I'm in the digital and media department at Rhode Island School of Design, it was fascinating for me to get to work with Weta Digital, the company that also did *The Lord of the Rings* and *Avatar*. I also got to work with Andy Serkis, who plays the ape Caesar and did a lot of motion capture. I never thought of this movie as an example of my creativity. I was an actor for hire. But people still have it out for me, so they're going to go after the movie.

PLAYBOY: In *Rise of the Planet of the Apes* you play a scientist who, in the name of Alzheimer's research, genetically alters the ape that eventually leads a simian revolution against mankind. How is your movie different from the 2001 Tim Burton-directed *Planet of the Apes*, let alone the original five *Apes* movies, which have a huge cult following?

FRANCO: They haven't shown me the movie yet, so I don't know what the result is. I did reshoots, and it sounds to me the final movie will be different from the screenplay, which had a lot of character development. The movie seems to be more action now. I went and did my job, and I'm supposed to be a scientist. I feel pretty confident that I did that.

PLAYBOY: Audiences liked the apes talking in the original *Planet of the Apes* movies, so how do you think the more realistic but silent apes will go over?

FRANCO: What strikes me, looking back at those movies now, is that they had really good actors, including Kim Hunter and

Roddy McDowall, in these crazy masks, and they were having pretty interesting philosophical conversations about society, the ethics of interacting with other societies and mysterious cultures. It's fun to see those kinds of conversations and issues. In the later movies it becomes about race and social upheaval, so the movies were kind of comments on current issues. The older movies can get away with that with their cult value. *Rise of the Planet of the Apes* is not a bunch of apes sitting around having philosophical discussions.

PLAYBOY: In 2009 you began what eventually turned out to be 44 appearances on the TV soap *General Hospital*. Were you fulfilling some longtime ambition?

FRANCO: Generally, people think actors start on soaps, and if they can, they move up the ladder. Early in my career I auditioned for soaps and didn't get on them. Until going on *General Hospital*, I was like, "Of course I'm not going to go on a soap, that lower form of entertainment." I don't view it that way anymore; it's all entertainment, just for different audiences. Some people like Celine Dion, some people like Black Rebel Motorcycle Club or whatever.

I was arrested for a lot of petty crimes. I was a ward of the court and was put on probation. They gave me one final chance, and I didn't get into any trouble after that.

PLAYBOY: And some like both. Whose idea was it for you to do *General Hospital*?

FRANCO: Theirs. All I said to them was that I wanted the character to be an artist and to be crazy. I got better material than I could ever have asked for. Yes, it was very soapy and a little cheesy, but because it was a soap opera, we were foregrounding the fact that we *knew* it was very soapy and a little cheesy. And the great thing is, the dialogue wasn't that far from conversations you might have at a gallery opening.

PLAYBOY: Your character was named Franco, and the episodes made so many direct references to the career of James Franco that the whole thing felt like performance art.

FRANCO: I decided to do it not quite knowing what the impact would be, just thinking it would be exciting to turn myself over to a different kind of circumstance, a different kind of storytelling and do a different kind of acting. I thought people would be surprised, but there was a huge reaction. It was the same *General Hospital*, but because I was on it, people were suddenly watching it in a new way. It was like there

was a rupture in everything. Because they called the character Franco, people were doubly aware. People watching might have been questioning, "What's going on here? Is it an art thing? Is it a weird act? What is it?" I wanted to put a frame around the work. Part of the beauty of the project for me is that we weren't making fun of soap opera fans or throwing a pie in the face of the art world. We were bringing them all together, and the network got tons of attention. *The New York Times* was suddenly writing about *General Hospital*.

PLAYBOY: ABC announced the cancellation of the long-running TV soaps *One Life to Live* and *All My Children*. How do you feel about rumors that *General Hospital* may face the same fate?

FRANCO: I'm upset, because I have some big plans. In June of last year the sets from the show were presented as sculptures that the character Franco ostensibly made for the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, and there we were at MOCA Pacific Design Center with soap fans and museum patrons, all watching the same thing. Being on the show got me thinking about how it could be developed further. I was going to art events and talking to artist friends, who said, "Wow, this is really cool." I realized a lot of genuine contemporary artists would love that kind of platform and could appear on the show. I've wanted to do something even bigger that involves *General Hospital*, MOCA and ABC, so I hope we can still pull that off.

PLAYBOY: Your grandmother, whom you made famous in a video about why people shouldn't be squeamish about seeing *127 Hours*, owns a prominent art gallery. Your mother, who also played your character's mother on *General Hospital*, is an editor and children's book author. Your youngest brother, Dave, with whom you've done hilarious, self-referential videos on *Funny or Die*, is a fast-rising actor. Your younger brother, Tom, is an illustrator and sculptor. If you hadn't turned out to be artistic and creative, might you have been banished from the family?

FRANCO: [Laughs] We're all really close. Tom lives in Oakland, and we don't see him as much. Davy's the most social; he was homecoming king and was named best looking in the yearbook. I actually don't see Davy as much anymore, but he lives in Los Angeles. We lived together. All my friends have become his friends, and we collaborate on projects.

PLAYBOY: What were you like growing up in Palo Alto, in the San Francisco Bay area?

FRANCO: Up until high school, I played soccer, baseball and basketball. I was never the best at those things. I tried to play sports my freshman year of high school, but I figured out that I didn't like them.

PLAYBOY: What were your earliest jobs?

FRANCO: When I was 13 or 14 my dad got me a job working the counter at a coffee shop. It sucked. I read books when the place was empty and got let go when the assistant (continued on page 108)

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Failing States

THE STAKES ARE HIGH,
THERE IS MOUNTING EVIDENCE THAT OUR
AND TIME IS NOT ON OUR SIDE.
CIVILIZATION IS IN

serious trouble

WE LIVE IN A TIME of great instability and social unrest. Our global civilization faces a number of environmentally destructive trends—all of our own making. In addition to widespread deforestation and soil erosion, we are confronted with aquifer depletion, crop-withering heat waves, collapsing fisheries, melting mountain glaciers and rising seas. As environmental and economic stresses intensify, the list of failing states lengthens. We can no longer ignore the consequences of our actions.

by
**Lester K.
Brown**

ILLUSTRATION BY NICOLA SAMORI



MANY EARLIER CIVILIZATIONS were undone by environmentally induced crises. Typically, they faced one or two destructive environmental trends, most often deforestation and soil erosion. The Sumerian civilization of the fourth millennium B.C. was remarkable for its irrigation system, which supported a highly productive agriculture. Yet an environmental flaw in the system design brought the civilization down. Water from behind dams was diverted onto the land, raising crop yields. Some of the water was used by the crops, some evaporated into the atmosphere and some percolated downward. Over time, this percolation raised the water table. As the water climbed near the surface, it began to evaporate, leaving the mineral salts behind. The accumulation of salt in turn reduced the productivity of the land. The Sumerians shifted to barley, a more salt-tolerant plant. But eventually barley yields also declined. The resultant shrinkage of the food supply undermined the economic foundation of this great civilization.

We environmentalists have been saying for decades that we want to save the planet, but the planet is likely to be around for some time. It is civilization we need to save. As more states fail, we face a disturbing question: How many failing states before we have a failing global civilization?

The term *failing state* has been in use for only a decade or two, but these countries are now a prominent feature of the international political landscape. After a half century of states forming from former colonies and from the breakup of the Soviet Union, the world is now faced with the opposite situation: the disintegration of states. As an article in *Foreign Policy* observes, "Failed states have made a remarkable odyssey from the periphery to the very center of global politics."

In the past, governments worried about the concentration of too much power in one state. But today, failing states pose the greatest threat to global order and stability. As *Foreign Policy* notes, "World leaders once worried about who was amassing power; now they worry about the absence of it." Or, as *The Economist* notes, "Like a severely disturbed individual, a failed state is a danger not just to itself but to those around it and beyond."

The Central Intelligence Agency funds the Political Instability Task Force to track political risk factors. The British government's international development arm has identified 46 "fragile states." The World Bank focuses its attention

on some 30 low-income "fragile and conflict-affected countries." But the most systematic effort to analyze countries according to their vulnerability to failure is one undertaken annually by the Washington, D.C.-based Fund for Peace and published each year in the July/August issue of *Foreign Policy*. This invaluable assessment not only offers insights into changes under way in the world but also tells us where we are heading.

The Fund for Peace's research team analyzes data for 177 countries and ranks them according to "their vulnerability to violent internal conflict and societal deterioration." Somalia is at the top of the 2010 Failed States Index, followed by Chad, Sudan, Zimbabwe and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Three key oil-exporting countries are among the top 20: Sudan, Iraq and Nigeria. Pakistan, now ranked number 10, is the only failing state with a nuclear arsenal, but North Korea—19th on the list—is developing a nuclear capability

What is a failed state? It is a country whose government has lost control of its territory. The governmental function

A World of Woe

Environmental degradation contributes to political instability and leads to social collapse. Here are six reasons for concern

A India's Gangotri glacier, which helps keep the Ganges flowing during the dry season, is retreating. If this melting continues to accelerate, the Gangotri's life expectancy will be measured in decades, and the Ganges will eventually flow only during the rainy season. For the 407 million Indians and Bangladeshis who live in the Ganges basin, this could be a life-threatening loss of water. **B** Chinese glaciologist Yao Tandong predicts that two thirds of China's glaciers could be gone by 2060. "The full-scale glacier shrinkage in the plateau region," Yao says, "will eventually lead to an ecological catastrophe." **C** Tanzania's snowcapped Kilimanjaro may soon be free of snow and ice. Africa's tallest mountain lost 85 percent of its ice mass between 1912 and 2007. The glaciers on Kilimanjaro may soon be relegated to photographs in museums. Not far away, Mount Kenya has lost seven of its 18 glaciers. Local rivers fed by these glaciers are becoming seasonal

waterways, generating conflict among the 2 million people who depend on them for water during the dry season. **D** Peru stretches some 1,000 miles along the Andes and is home to 70 percent of the earth's tropical glaciers. Some 22 percent of its glacial endowment, which supplies water to the cities in the coastal regions, has disappeared. The Quelccaya glacier in southern Peru, which was retreating by 20 feet a year in the 1960s, is now retreating by 200 feet annually. **E** Two deserts in north-central China are expanding and merging to form a single desert that overlaps Inner Mongolia and Gansu provinces. To the west, in Xinjiang province, two even larger deserts—the Taklimakan and the Kumtag—are also merging. Highways running through the shrinking area between them are regularly inundated by sand dunes. **F** The Bodélé Depression in Chad is the source of an estimated 1.3 billion tons of wind-borne soil a year, up tenfold since measurements began in 1947.

breaks down and in some cases even disappears. Such states cannot protect their citizens.

The most conspicuous indication of state failure is a breakdown in law and order and the related loss of personal security. When governments lose their monopoly on power, the rule of law begins to disintegrate. Civil wars break out as opposing groups vie for power. At this point, governments often turn to the United Nations for help. In fact, UN peacekeeping forces are assisting roughly a third of the top 20 failing states, including Haiti, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The number of security personnel in peacekeeping missions doubled between 2003 and 2010.

In Haiti, armed gangs ruled the streets until a UN peacekeeping force arrived in



BIG TROUBLE
 From shrinking snowcaps on Mount Kilimanjaro to Sudanese refugees in Chad to Hisbul Islam militiamen in Somalia, the world now faces a variety of crises brought on by the neglect of our environment.



FAILED STATES INDEX: 1. Somalia 2. Chad 3. Sudan 4. Zimbabwe 5. Democratic Republic of the Congo 6. Afghanistan 7. Iraq 8. Central African Republic 9. Guinea 10. Pakistan 11. Haiti 12. Ivory Coast 13. Kenya 14. Nigeria 15. Yemen 16. Burma [a.k.a. Myanmar] 17. Ethiopia 18. East Timor [a.k.a. Timor-Leste] 19. North Korea 20. Niger

SOURCE: THE FUND FOR PEACE, FUNDFORPEACE.ORG, 2010

HOW TO

Save Civilization

2004. In Afghanistan, local warlords and the Taliban, not the central government, control most of the country outside of Kabul.

Environmental stress is an underlying pressure. Weaker nations find themselves unable to cope with food and water shortages. Food becomes the weak link in our 21st century civilization.

Failed states can't provide food security. This isn't necessarily because governments have become less competent but because it has become more difficult to obtain enough food. World grain prices have been roughly double their historical levels since early 2007. The UN world food price index reached an all-time high in February 2011 after climbing for seven consecutive months. For low-income food-deficit countries, finding enough food is a challenge. And to make matters worse, temperatures are rising as atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide rise. For each one-degree-Celsius rise in temperature during the growing season, farmers can expect a 10 percent decline in grain yields.

With food security, as with personal security, the United Nations is a fallback. The food equivalent of the peacekeeping forces is the World Food Programme, a UN agency that provides emergency food aid in more than 70 countries. Some countries, such as Haiti, depend on a UN peacekeeping force to maintain law and order and on the WFP for part of its food. Haiti is, in effect, a ward of the United Nations.

Failing states are rarely isolated phenomena. Conflicts can easily spread to neighboring countries, as when the genocide in Rwanda spilled over into the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where an ongoing civil conflict claimed more than 5 million lives between 1998 and 2007. The vast majority of the deaths in the DRC were due to war's indirect effects, including hunger, dysentery and respiratory illnesses. Similarly, the killings in Sudan's Darfur region quickly spread into Chad as victims fled across the border.

(continued on page 115)

No one can argue that we lack the resources to rescue civilization. The scale and urgency of the changes we must make can seem overwhelming, but consider what the U.S. did during World War II. In his State of the Union address on January 6, 1942—one month after the bombing of Pearl Harbor—President Franklin D. Roosevelt called for the manufacture of 45,000 tanks, 60,000 planes and several thousand ships. “Let no man say it cannot be done,” FDR said. He realized that the world's largest concentration of industrial power was in the U.S. automobile industry, which—even during the Depression—produced 3 million or more cars a year. The auto industry expected to continue making cars and simply add on the production of armaments. But

Roosevelt banned the sale of new cars. From early February 1942 through the end of 1944, essentially no cars were produced in the United States. Residential and highway construction were also halted, and driving for pleasure was banned. Strategic goods—including tires, gasoline, fuel oil and sugar—were rationed beginning in 1942. Yet that year witnessed the greatest expansion of industrial output in the nation's history—all of it for military use. From the beginning of 1942 through 1944, the nation turned out 229,600 aircraft—a fleet of bombers, fighters, troop transports, cargo transports and reconnaissance planes so vast it is hard to comprehend. It did not take decades to restructure the U.S. industrial economy. It did not take years. It was done in a matter of months.

1

Cut carbon dioxide emissions 80 percent by 2020 / We have to improve energy efficiency while we restructure our transportation systems. This should offset projected growth in energy use between now and 2020. We must cut CO₂ emissions by boosting energy efficiency and replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy, principally wind, solar and geothermal. This is best done by restructuring taxes—lowering income taxes and raising the tax on carbon. We must also end deforestation while engaging in a campaign to plant trees and stabilize soils. This proposed reduction in carbon-dioxide emissions should bring the rise in atmospheric CO₂ concentrations (currently at 387 parts per million) to an end by 2020 (at 400 parts per million). From there we can begin to reduce CO₂ concentrations to the desired 350 parts per million.

2

Eradicate poverty / The late 20th century's decline in hunger and malnourishment was reversed when the number of hungry people rose from 788 million in 1996 to 833 million in 2007. In 2011 it is around 1 billion and climbing. Investments in education, health, family planning and school lunches are a humanitarian response to the plight of the world's poorest countries. But they are also an investment in our future. For the first time in history we have the technological and financial resources to eradicate poverty.

3

Cap world population at 8 billion / Slowing world population growth means ensuring that all women who want to plan their families can do so. Unfortunately this is currently not the case for 215 million women, 59 percent of whom live in sub-Saharan Africa and the Indian subcontinent. Education is also essential. As female education rises, family size declines.

4

Restore natural systems / No civilization has survived the ongoing destruction of its natural support systems. We must reforest the earth, protect topsoil, restore rangelands and fisheries, stabilize water tables and protect biological diversity. We can end net deforestation worldwide and sequester carbon through tree-planting initiatives and by adopting improved land-management practices. Although banning deforestation may seem far-fetched, Thailand, the Philippines and China have implemented bans on logging. The only viable way to eliminate overgrazing on the two fifths of the earth's land surface classified as rangelands is to reduce the number of cattle, sheep and goats. Oceanic fisheries are also under intense pressure. For decades governments have tried to restrict the catch of individual species. Sometimes this worked; sometimes it failed. In recent years, support for the creation of marine reserves has gained momentum. Such reserves, where fishing is banned, help repopulate surrounding areas.

5

Redefine security / We have inherited a definition of security from the 20th century, which was dominated by two world wars and a cold war. This definition sees national security almost exclusively in military terms. But if we were to start with a clean pad of paper and list the leading threats to our civilization today, the list would include climate change, population growth, spreading water shortages, rising food prices and a growing number of failing states. Armed aggression, the traditional threat, does not even make the top five in this list.

In response to these new threats we need to redefine security, not just in an intellectual sense but also in a fiscal sense. In responding to the threats to our future described above, we rely on tax changes to restructure the energy economy and dramatically cut carbon emissions. Eradicating poverty, stabilizing population and restoring the economy's natural support systems will require additional fiscal outlays. All together these initiatives will require an additional \$200 billion per year above current expenditures, a shift of \$200 billion from the defense budget to the new security budget. This seems like a lot, and it is. But it is less than a third of the U.S. military budget and less than an eighth of the global military budget. We can no longer say we don't have the resources to save civilization.

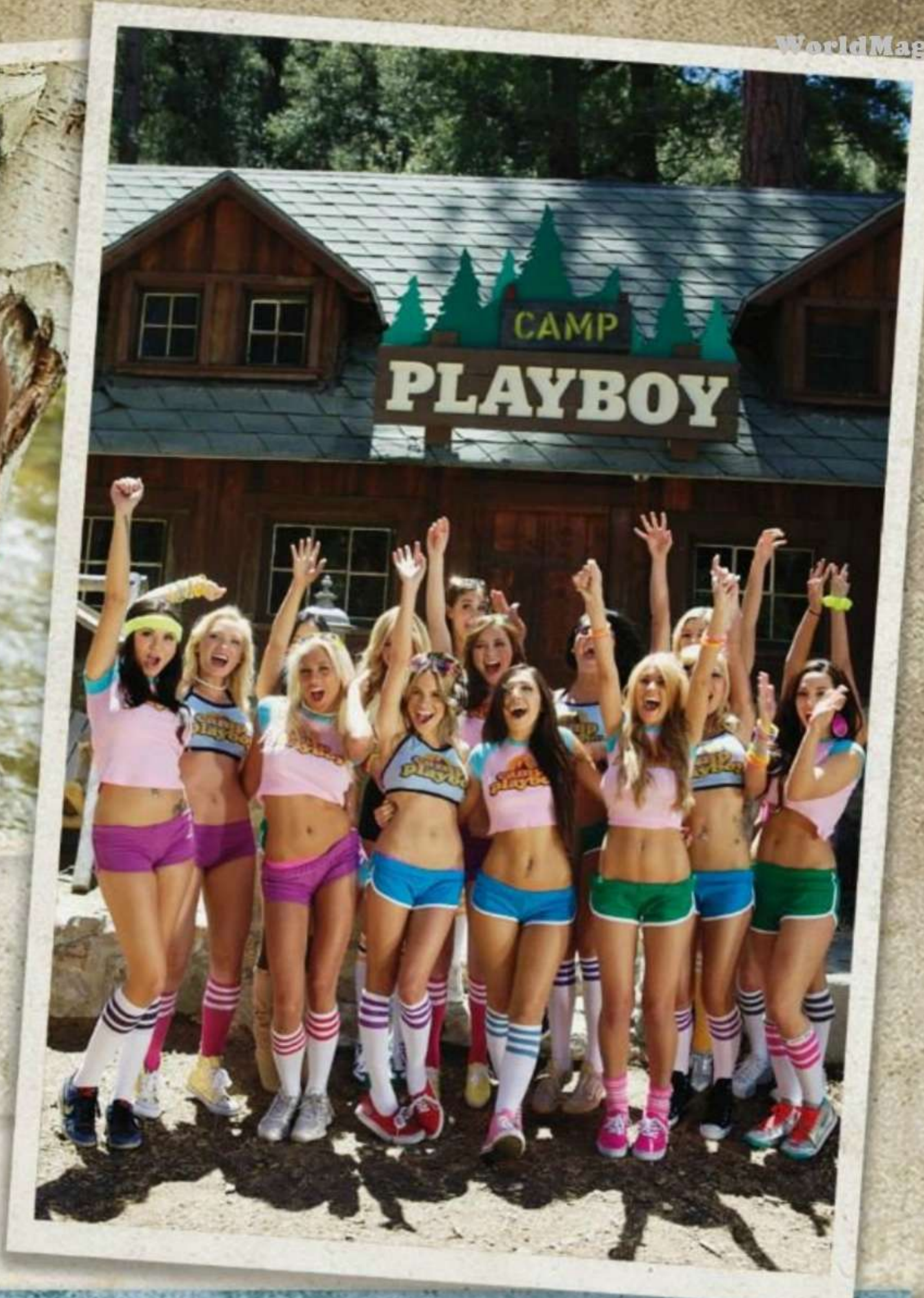
We have calculated the cost of the changes needed to move our civilization off the decline-and-collapse path and onto a path that will sustain us. What we cannot calculate is the cost of doing nothing. How do you put a price on social collapse and the massive die-off it will inevitably bring? —L.R.B.



“Do you mind if my girlfriend joins us...?”



PHOTOGRAPHY BY
STEPHEN WAYDA



CAMP PLAYBOY

WELCOME TO THE SUMMER CAMP OF YOUR DREAMS—
A SYLVAN PLAYGROUND WHERE ATHLETIC FEMALES WEAR LITTLE MORE THAN
TANNING OIL AND THE ONLY THING HOTTER THAN THE DAYS ARE THE NIGHTS.
OVER THE NEXT SIX PAGES, WE BRING YOUR FANTASY TO LIFE





HERE'S A TASTE OF CAMP PLAYBOY—SEE THE REST
ON PLAYBOY TV STARTING JULY 21 AT NINE P.M. ET/PT.



Above: Miss February 2010 **HEATHER RAE YOUNG** (left) and Miss May 2010 **KASSIE LYN LOGSDON** playing strip tetherball. Below, from left: Miss September 2007 **PATRICE HOLLIS**, Miss September 2009 **KIMBERLY PHILLIPS** and **KASSIE** pulling some chicks. Opposite page: **KIMBERLY** and **HEATHER** clean up nice, don't they? As the man once said, "I wish I was a loofah."







Above and below: Nighttime means campfires, ghost stories and, curiously, no mosquitoes. **HEATHER** and her friends like

to sleep in the buff—not a tan line in sight. Opposite page: It's getting chilly. Rather than put on pajamas, **HEATHER** and **KASSIE** share

a sleeping bag to warm up. It's going to be a long, sultry night by the fire. And tomorrow? Another beautiful day at Camp Playboy.





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playboy.com/campplayboy.

POOR MA

BY
CHUCK
PALAHNIUK

NICE

SHE'S AS HOT
AS BRITNEY SPEARS.

HOTTER.

SHE PARTIES LIKE
HOLLYWOOD.

SHE'S WAY OUT OF

HIS LEAGUE

OR THAT'S THE STORY

HE'S STICKING TO

You should congratulate me. My wife and I just had twins, and they seem okay. Ten fingers. Ten toes. Two little girls. But you know the feeling.... I keep waiting for something to go wrong because that's how it is when things get too happy.

I keep expecting to wake up from this beautiful dream.

I mean, back before I was married I had this one girlfriend who was fat. We were, both of us, fat together, so we got along. That girlfriend, she was always testing us on new diets to lose weight, like eating nothing except pineapple and vinegar, or nothing but green algae from an envelope, and she was always suggesting we take long walks together until she started to shed the pounds, her hips just melted away, and you never saw anybody so happy. Even then I knew something would wreck *(continued on page 104)*





THE
UNLIKELY
AND
OVERDUE
ASCENSION
OF
REGGIE
WATTS

AN
AFRO

IN THE COSMOS



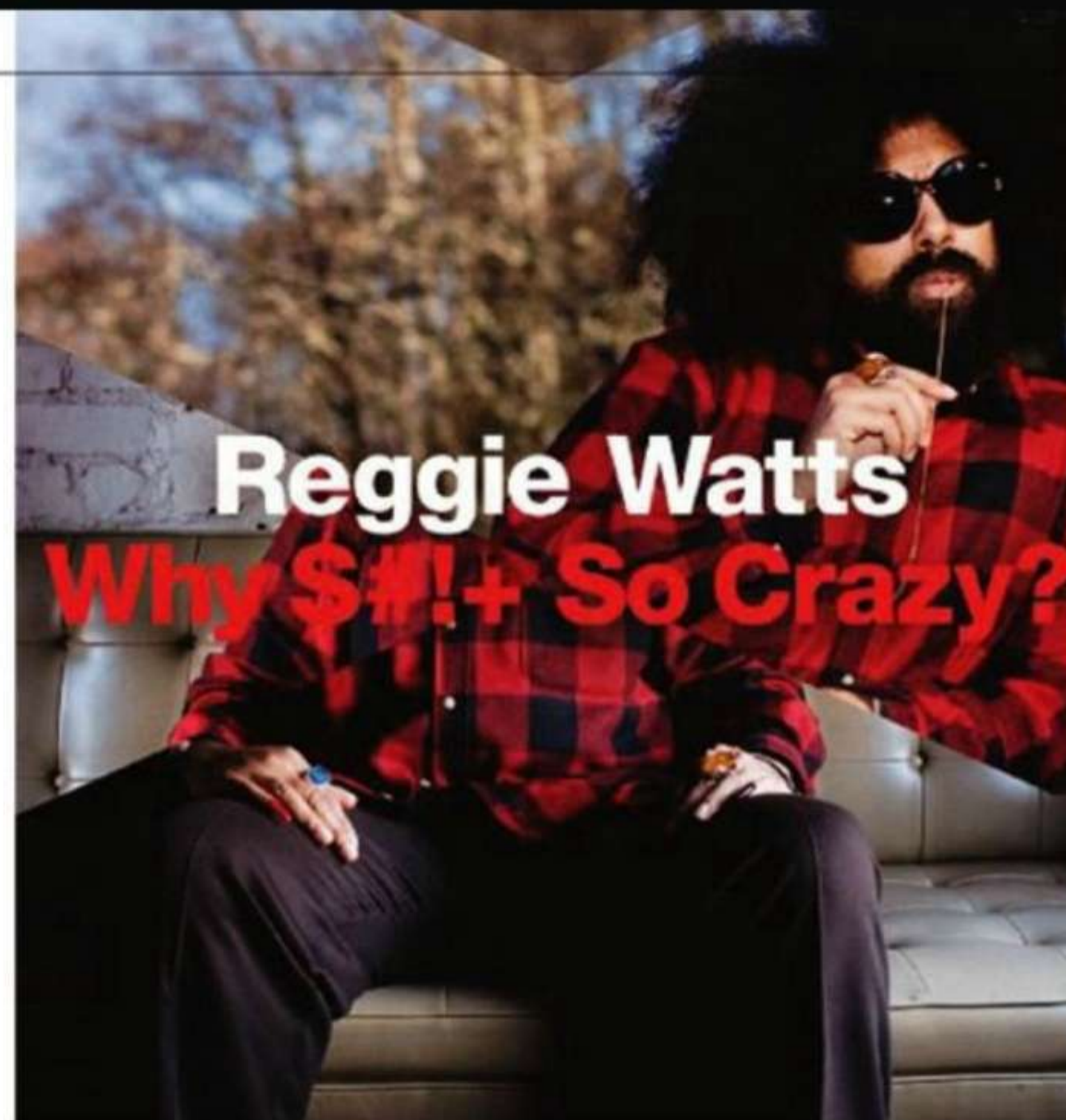
"Getting the Conan gig was a game changer for me," says Watts. "A lot of people saw who I am."



"If time travel were possible, I'd like to be able to order oatmeal that was from 1866." Of course.

Reggie Watts's Afro is a marvel, as wispy, intricate and far-out as the universe itself. Like the stream-of-consciousness flow of his ideas, his nimble multi-octave, pan-percussive voice, his gift for vocal imitation and his fiercely intelligent, absurdist comedy, Watts's Afro is in a class by itself. It surrounds him like a halo and enters a room of its own accord as if bristling with cosmic ideas. As he walks into the Roebling Tea Room in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, Watts is hard to miss, even in a part of town known for colorful characters. Aside from his hair and equally healthy wild beard, he is wearing giant sunglasses, a striped sweater and suspenders attached to pants pulled high above his waist. They are rolled up to reveal brightly colored socks and short black sneaker boots. He is carrying a folded-up vehicle with a large front tire—something between a bike and a Razor scooter. He is every bit a benevolent imp from the land of make-believe.

Watts personifies the offbeat genius that is typical of Williamsburg, and in his case that genius is getting its close-up. In the past year Watts was hand-picked by Conan O'Brien to open O'Brien's live comedy tour *Legally Prohibited From Being Funny on Television*, and he released a Comedy Central special called *Why \$#!+ So Crazy?* as a CD-DVD combo pack. He has maintained a nonstop international touring schedule that shows no sign of letting up, and he is a thoroughly modern comedian, in touch on



Twitter and at home on YouTube, where much of his best material can be found. Whether baffling engineers at Google for the first half of his set by speaking to them in the voice of a hoary BBC announcer (see "Musicians@Google: Reggie Watts" on YouTube) or creating witty, orchestrally complex songs using only his voice and a looping machine in his apartment or on national television, Watts is nothing short of brilliant. His is a career on the cusp. It has been an unconventional journey, but it's as much a compliment to our collective consciousness as it is to his vision to say that the world is now ready for Reggie Watts.

"I don't prepare anything aside from watching and looking and hearing and logging and registering things," he says. "When I go onstage those things may come out or may not, and other things will happen during the performance. It's really up in the air. I do have things

I return to time and again, though, like messing with my microphone stand or the cables. I also like to face the wrong way. Those are recurring mechanisms, but even though I use them often I always try to improvise differently each and every time."

Those visual touchstones aside, the rest of Watts's sets are unlike anything you've ever seen. First and foremost they are driven by sound—noises, voices, echoes—and a deep love of the possibilities of language. He may open with a nonsensical melody sung in a munchkin-on-helium voice or a professorial tone, or begin a discourse on an imaginary course addendum that will feature special guests with names like Barbara Fensvorough and Truck Martinsonsen. None of it makes sense, but it doesn't need to. The humor is in the way he bends language, polishes pronunciation and topically changes channels. His genre bending isn't random just for the sake of randomness; it's evidence of a higher power at work. When he bursts into song in the middle of a seemingly rambling riff, it all comes together as his multifaceted talents truly coalesce. In the first few minutes of *Why \$#!+ So Crazy?* he launches into a hip-hop song in which he raps as if his microphone has a short circuit, controlling his voice and delivery so well that only bits of words come out. The glitch corrects itself in time for Watts to tell a story of a shared pastry. The chorus of that song, if you can call it that, is

(continued on page 120)



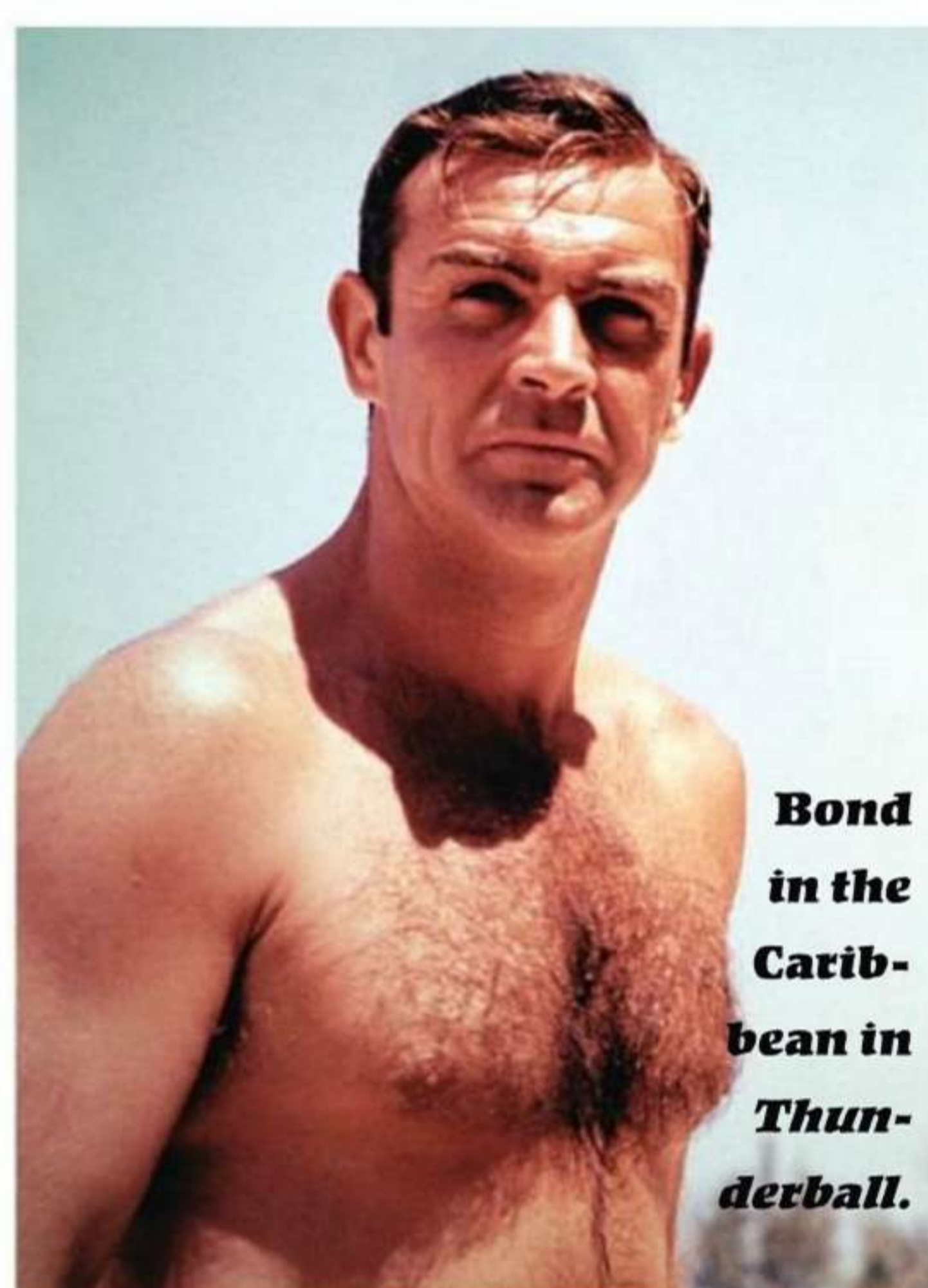
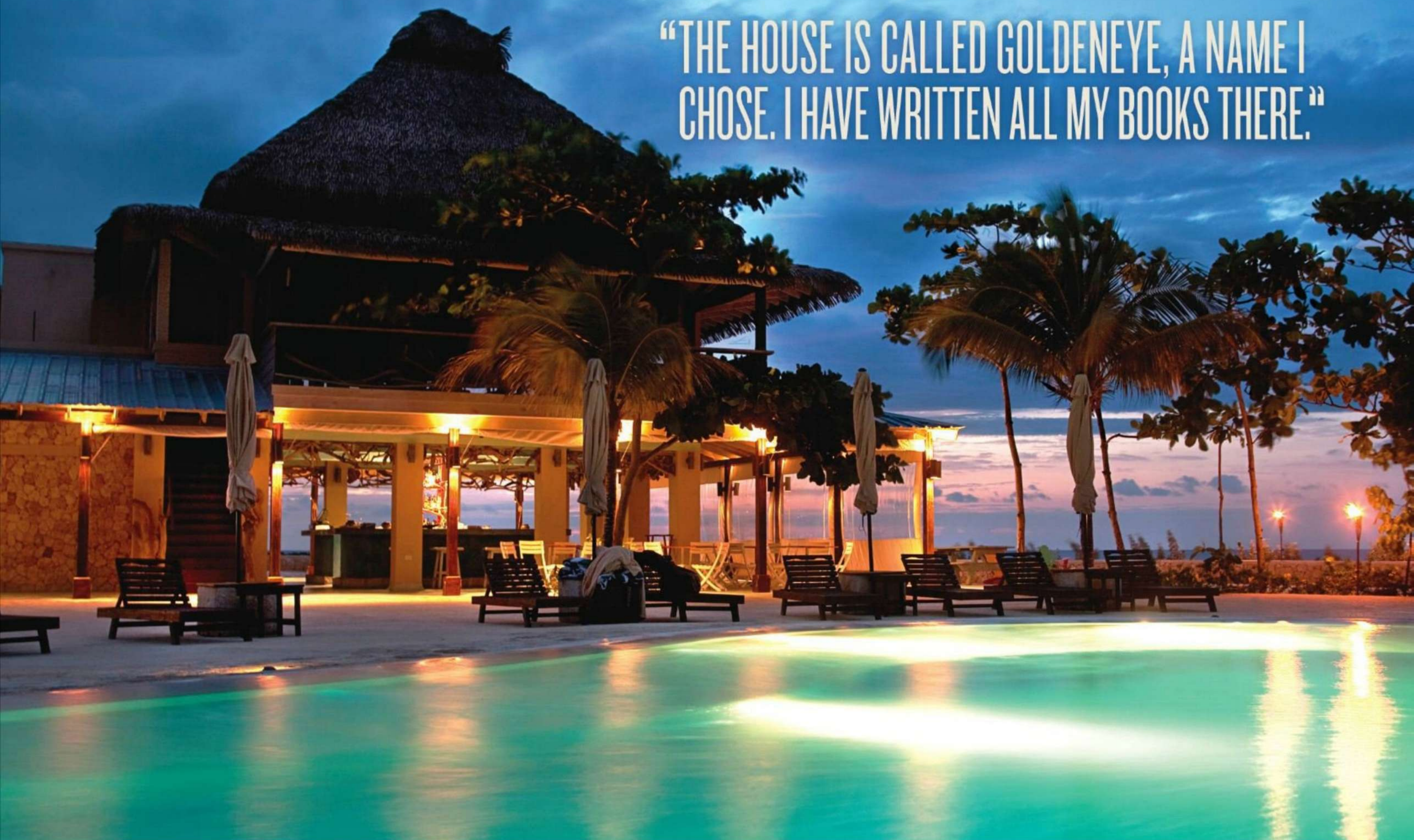
GOLDENEYE

A sojourn at Ian Fleming's Jamaican beach estate—now a refurbished luxury hotel—where James Bond was born

My job with Naval Intelligence got me right into the inside of everything," the British novelist Ian Fleming once said about his role as an intelligence operative during World War II. "I couldn't possibly have had a more exciting or interesting war." Around 1942 Fleming was assigned to Jamaica to gather intelligence on Nazi U-boat activity in the Caribbean. He fell in love with the place. After VE-day, he bought a plot on the beach in St. Mary, Jamaica, built a home and named the estate GoldenEye. It was here that the writer invented the

character James Bond, penning all 12 of the 007 novels in his private tropical paradise. After Fleming's death at 56 in 1964, Chris Blackwell—the British founder of Island Records and one of the most important music producers ever (he's credited with discovering U2, among others)—purchased GoldenEye and turned it into the GoldenEye Hotel & Resort. Now Blackwell has relaunched the place with a top-to-bottom refurbish. While it's elegant and fitted with all the modern amenities, it retains its DNA—that sultry island ambience that Fleming discovered when he first arrived in Jamaica. Travel with us there now, through the eyes of GoldenEye's (and 007's) founder.

“THE HOUSE IS CALLED GOLDENEYE, A NAME I CHOSE. I HAVE WRITTEN ALL MY BOOKS THERE.”

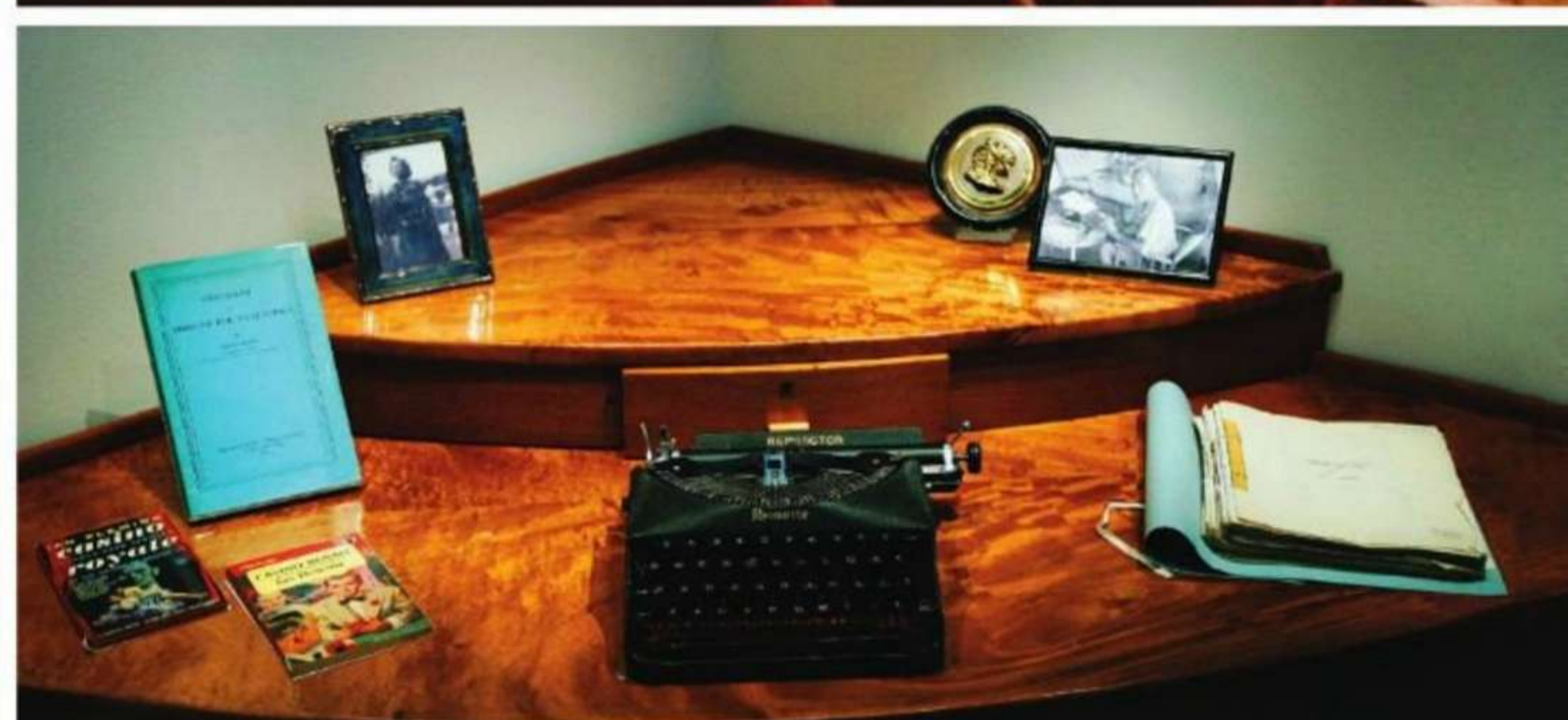


**Bond
in the
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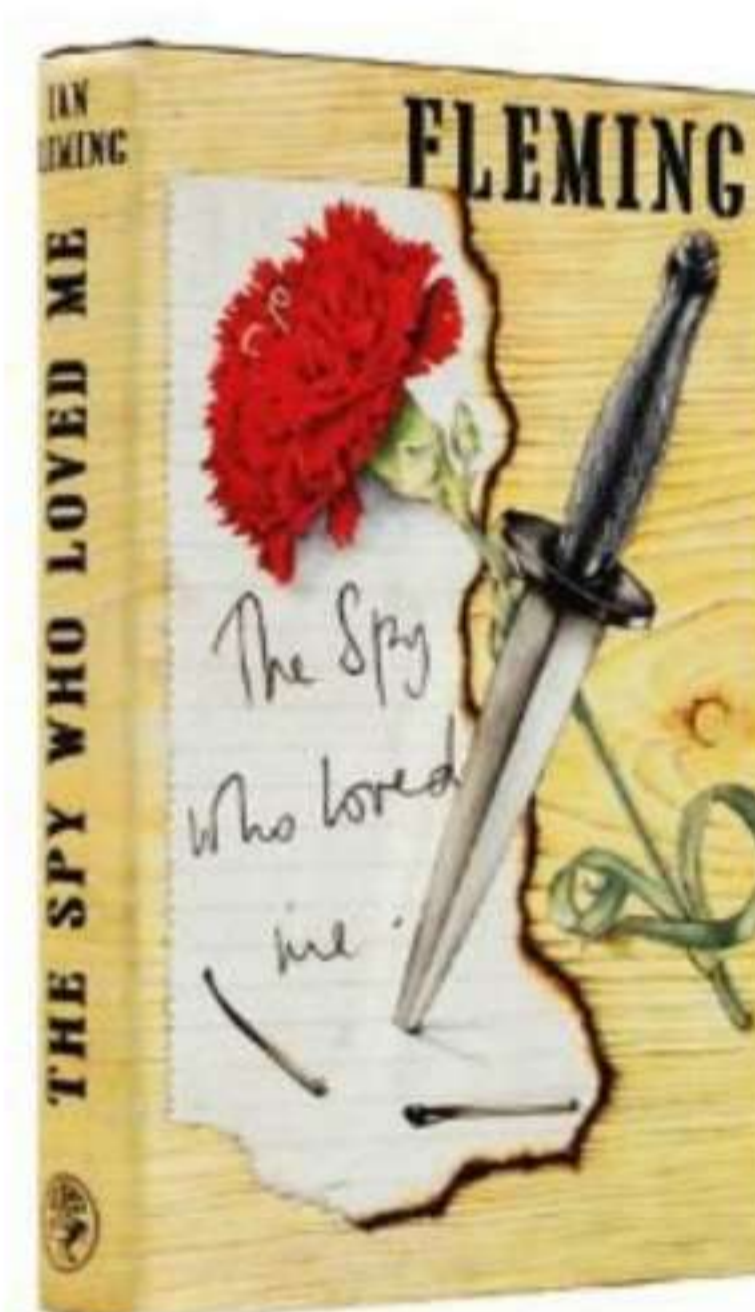
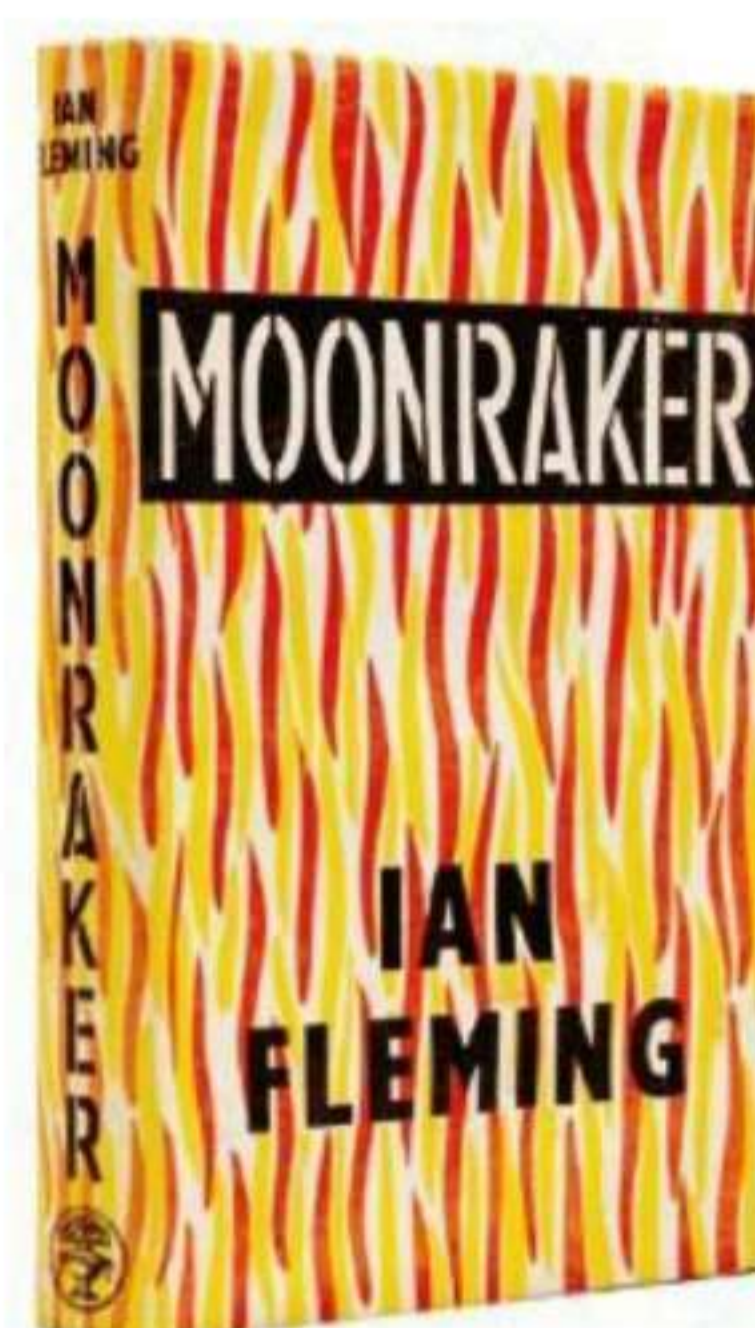
Fate played a major role in Ian Fleming's life. During the terrifying first days of World War II, British Naval Intelligence was in need of a young man who spoke Russian, French and German for covert operations. Fleming fit the bill and ended up almost randomly at a lunch with the director of Naval Intelligence. Soon after, he was shipped off to Jamaica as an intelligence agent. Fleming on his discovery of this tropical wonderland: "I stayed in the good old Myrtle Bank Hotel, and it poured every day—and I loved every minute of it. I'd never been in the tropics before, and I thought they were wonderful. When I went back in 1946 I borrowed a car from a man called Sir William Stevenson, who was chief of our intelligence service in the States during the war. I went round and finally I found this disused donkeys' racecourse by the sea. I bought the racecourse, and I built on it a square of a house which I had designed while I was working in the Admiralty during the last two or three years of the war. It's by a little banana port called Oracabessa, and the house is called GoldenEye, a name I chose. I have written all my books there."

From the late 1940s to his death in 1964, Fleming spent his winters in the tropics, alternatively preferring London and his country flat outside the city. Starting in the 1950s, millions of people obsessively read his novels, and his fame blossomed alongside that of his hero, 007. All the while, he worked (not so hard) at perfecting the good life. The author on his daily routine at GoldenEye: "I get up with the birds, which is about half past seven, because they wake one up, and then I go and bathe in the ocean

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Top: GoldenEye's Bizot Bar, on the beach. The GoldenEye Hotel & Resort is a collection of private villas set in their own gardens. Right: Ian Fleming gazing out a window, circa 1962. His desk—on which the Bond novels were scribed—still sits in the Fleming Villa, along with his personal belongings.



before breakfast. We don't have to wear a swimsuit there, because it's so private: My wife and I bathe and swim a hundred yards or so and come back and have a marvellous proper breakfast with some splendid scrambled eggs made by my housekeeper. Then I sit out in the garden to get a sunburn until about 10. Only then do I set to work. I sit in my bedroom and type about 1,500 words straightaway, without looking back on what I wrote the day before. I have more or less thought out what I'm going to write. Then, about a quarter past 12, I chuck that and go down, with a snorkel and a spear, around the reefs, looking for lobsters or whatever there may be, sometimes find them, sometimes don't, and then I come back. I have a couple of pink gins, and we have a very good lunch, ordinary Jamaican food. I have a siesta, from about half past two until four."

After siesta, Fleming would write some more, sending 007 into the most romantic calamities. Then Fleming would focus his attention on the Caribbean sunset: "The dusk comes very suddenly in Jamaica: At six o'clock it suddenly gets very dark. I have a couple of powerful drinks, then dinner, occasionally a game of Scrabble with my wife—at which she thinks she is very much better than I am, but I know I'm the best—and straight off to bed and into a deep sleep."

Where did the name GoldenEye come from? Fleming explains: "I had happened



Top left: GoldenEye's reception area. Above: The bedroom in the Fleming Villa, the writer's original home. The villa has three bedrooms, two guest cottages, a private pool, lush gardens and a private beach cove with barbecue and shower. Rent the place for your weeklong bash for \$4,400 a night at goldeneye.com. Top: First editions of 007 novels.

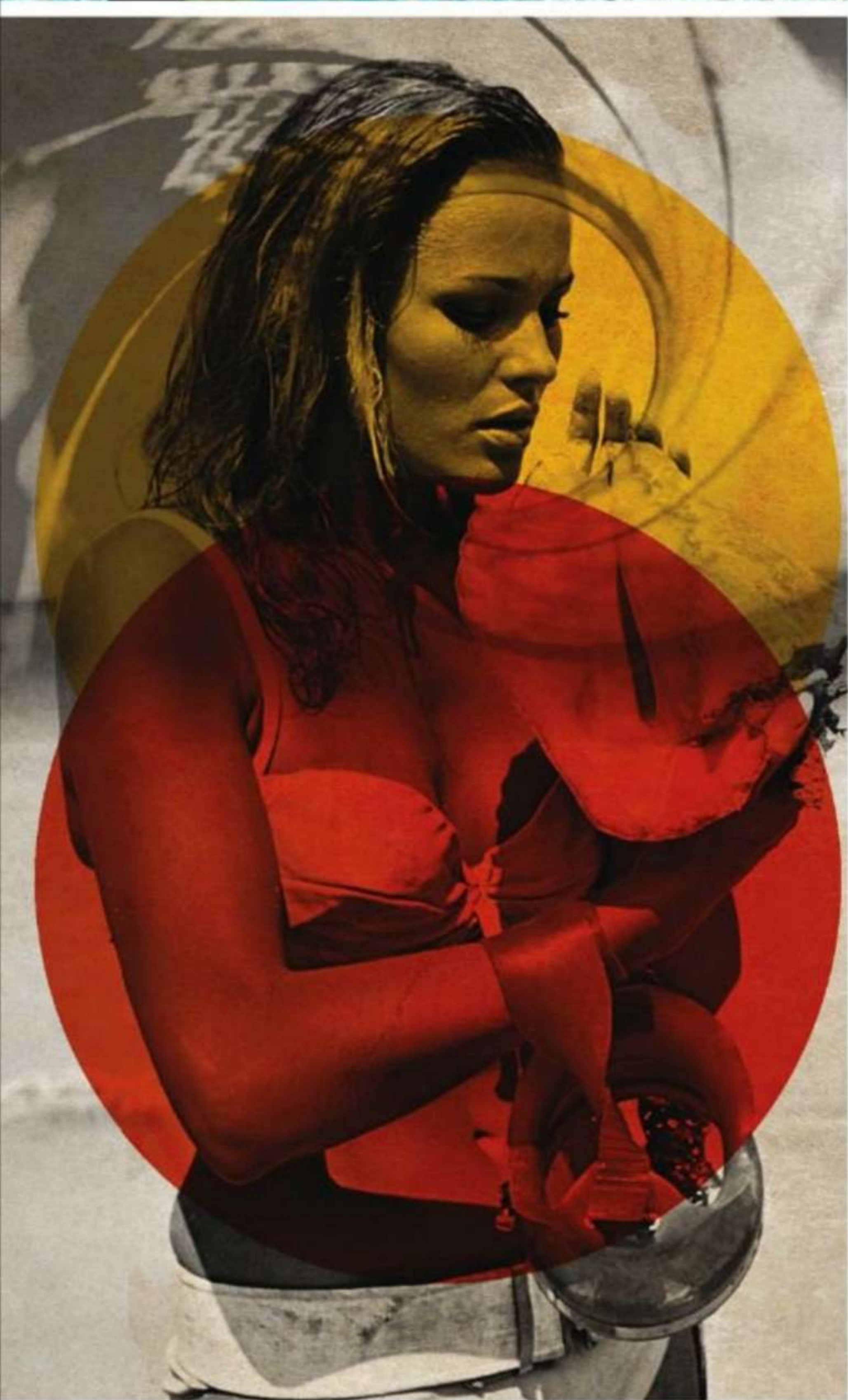


to be reading *Reflections in a Golden Eye* by Carson McCullers, and I'd been involved in an operation called Goldeneye during the war, the defense of Gibraltar. The alternative choice was Shamelady, which is the Jamaican name for the sensitive plant, the one which curls up when the leaves are touched. The whole 30 acres were covered with the plant."

Fleming always claimed that Bond was not his alter ego, though he did imbue his character with desires of his own. They both, for example, smoked gold-ringed cigarettes of Balkan and Turkish tobacco mixed by Morland's of Grosvenor Street, and they both had a passion for Bentley automobiles. So who was Bond? Fleming: "He's got his vices and very few perceptible virtues except patriotism and courage, which are probably not virtues anyway. I didn't *intend* for him to be a particularly likable person. He's a cipher, a blunt instrument in the hands of government. Bond is a highly romanticized version of *anybody*. He's a sort of amalgam of romantic tough guys, dressed up in 20th century clothes, using 20th century language."

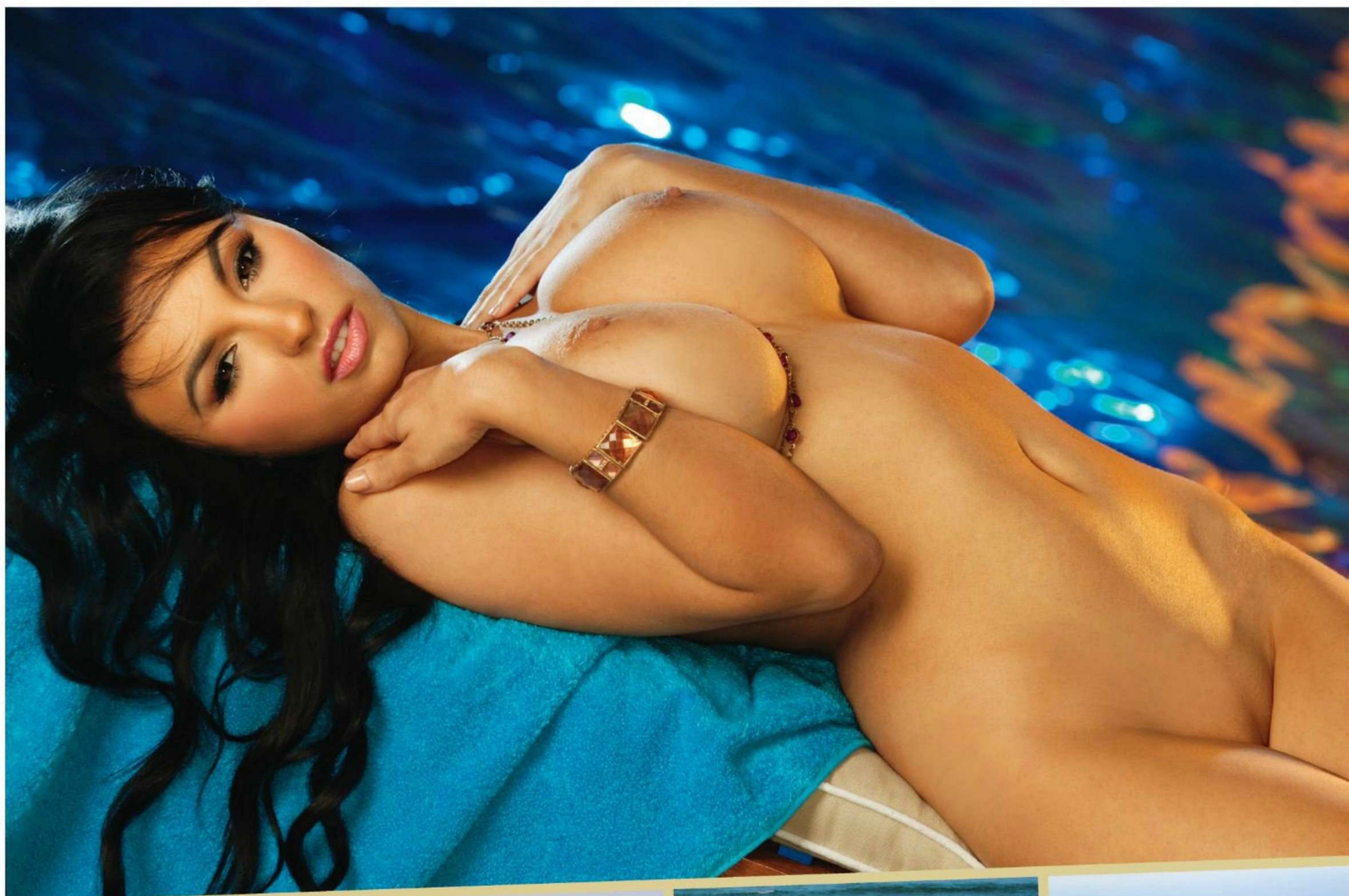
Fleming died of a heart attack at the age of 56. By then his books had sold more than 18 million copies, and the first two Bond movies—*Dr. No* and *From Russia With Love*—had spread the gospel of 007. Here Fleming looks back on life, as only he could: "I have always smoked and drunk and loved too much. In fact I have lived not too long but too much. One day the Iron Crab will get me. Then I shall have died of living too much."

Top left and above: The GoldenEye resort's expanded 52 acres feature secluded sandy coves where Fleming hunted for his lunches with a spear and where today hotel guests can explore. Left: Ursula Andress as Honey Ryder in *Dr. No*, based on the sixth Bond book.



"I HAVE ALWAYS SMOKED AND DRUNK AND LOVED TOO MUCH. IN FACT I HAVE LIVED NOT TOO LONG BUT TOO MUCH."





INTERNATIONAL EXCURSION

TRAVEL THE GLOBE WITH MISS AUGUST

Call it wanderlust, ravenous curiosity or the endless pursuit of a great party, but Iryna Ivanova possesses an unquenchable thirst to see the world. “I have always enjoyed traveling,” says our wayfaring Miss August. She began her global tour in earnest at the age of 16 when her family moved from their hometown of Feodosia, Crimea, a Ukrainian port on the Black Sea, to a new life in Tucson. From there, Iryna, who is now working toward an MBA at the University of Arizona (focusing either in marketing or sports management; she’s undecided at the moment) took to the winds. “I studied abroad in Greece and visited

Athens and the islands. Mykonos was my favorite because it’s beautiful and it’s a crazy party island. For romance and calm, though, I adore Bali. Plus, the Indonesians are the nicest people I’ve ever met.” Confidence brought her to PLAYBOY’s shores. “I love my body, and my philosophy is that if you have the right kind of body, why not show it?” She adds, “Being Miss August is something I’m very proud of. Honestly, I might be prouder of being a Playmate than any of my academic achievements. There are many great schools you can attend, but there’s only one PLAYBOY. I still can’t believe I’m among the few girls Hef picks each year!”

THE IRYNA IVANOVA WORLD TOUR—WITH STOPS IN MIAMI, BALI AND GREECE.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN WAYDA









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



MISS AUGUST

PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH







PLAYMATE DATA SHEET

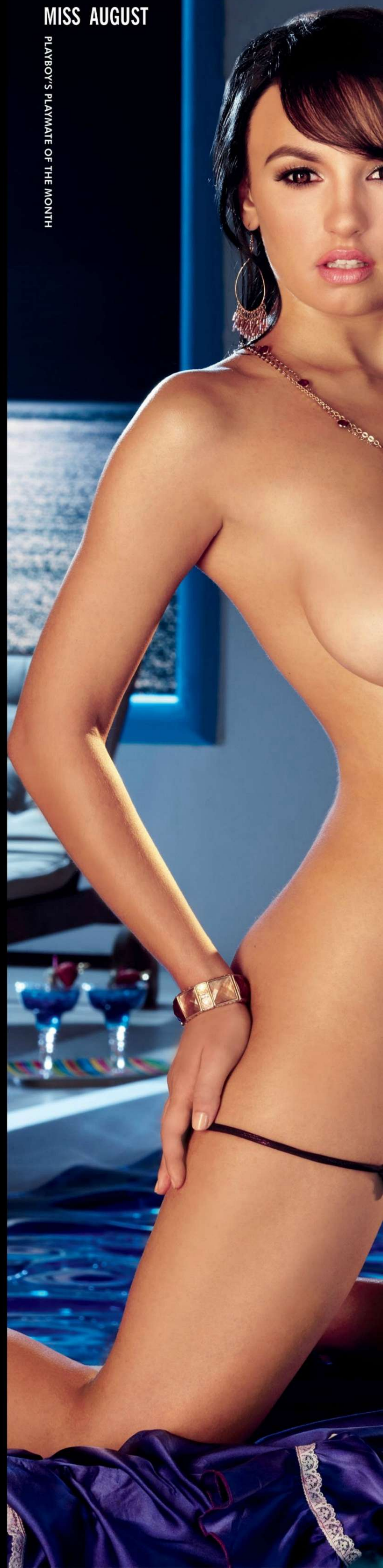
NAME: Iryna IvanovaBUST: 32DD WAIST: 25 HIPS: 35HEIGHT: 5'4" WEIGHT: 105BIRTH DATE: 4-6-87 BIRTHPLACE: Feodosia, UkraineAMBITIONS: Within the next five years I plan to earn my doctorate.TURN-ONS: Guys dressed in cool but not overdone swag. Earrings do it for me!TURNOFFS: Immature, ultraneedy, sloppy boys can forget about it. You want to date me? Then get your swag ON!MEET ME ON THE DANCE FLOOR: I like R&B and hip-hop that I can shake my booty to.MY FIRST KIDS: I am the proud mother of Cujo, a quite plump pug, and Katya, who is a teeny tiny Pekingese. :)MY CONSTANT COMPANION: I'm obsessed with Starbucks, so, world travelers, look for me, the Girl With the Vanilla Latte!

High school tennis. My Crimean prom.

WFFMMA girl in Tucson.

MISS AUGUST

PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH





Olga Ivanova

PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

One evening a woman and her husband were sitting on their front porch enjoying a bottle of wine together when the woman suddenly said, "I love you."

Surprised, her husband said, "Is that you or the wine talking?"

"It's me," she replied, "talking to the wine."

A beautiful woman went to the doctor for an exam. When she arrived for her appointment the doctor told her to go behind the screen and remove her clothes.

"Where should I put my clothes after I've taken them off?" she asked.

"Right over there," the doctor replied, "next to mine."



Why are married women heavier than single women? Single women come home, see what's in the fridge and go to bed. Married women come home, see what's in the bed and go to the fridge.

Late one night a drunk staggered up to a police officer on the street and said, "Officer, someone stole my car!"

"Well," the policeman replied, "it's probably good that you're not driving right now, but where did you last see your car?"

"It was right here, on the end of this," the drunk slurred, holding up his car key.

"Look," the cop said, rolling his eyes, "I'm kind of busy, but the police station is just down the block, so go there and ask the sergeant on duty to take your report. But before you do that, you should zip up your fly because it's wide open."

The drunk looked down at his open pants and began sobbing uncontrollably.

"Oh no!" he cried. "They took my girlfriend, too!"

One day a man noticed his blonde neighbor kept walking down to her mailbox and looking inside. Finally, after seeing her do this 10 times, the neighbor asked her why she kept checking her mailbox.

"Because," the blonde replied, "my computer keeps telling me that I've got mail."

What do marriage and tattoos have in common? Both seemed like a good idea at the time.

During a session with his therapist, a man said, "Doctor, I know my wife is unfaithful to me. Every evening, she goes to the bar down the street and picks up men. In fact, she sleeps with anybody who asks her to. I'm going crazy. What do you think I should do?"

"Relax," his doctor replied. "Take a deep breath and calm down. Now, tell me, where exactly is this bar you mentioned?"

One day a man found a magic lamp, so he picked it up and rubbed it. Sure enough, a genie popped out and told the man he would grant him a wish. After thinking about it for a while the man finally said, "I want to be hard all the time and get all the ass I want."

"As you wish," the genie replied as he turned the man into a toilet seat.

Why won't cannibals eat divorced women? Because they're always bitter.



What does a man need to have a clean conscience? A bad memory.

A man went to the doctor and complained of insomnia. The doctor gave him a thorough examination, found nothing physically wrong with him and said, "Listen, if you want to cure your insomnia, you have to stop taking your troubles to bed with you."

"I know, but I can't do that," the man said. "My wife refuses to sleep alone."

How is the 69 position like driving in rush hour traffic? The asshole is always in front of you.

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.

SALLY'S SEX SHOP

very sexy gifts · videos · sa
lingerie bras & no-show
lace ba · s · x toys · bl · vies



"It doesn't come with batteries and I guarantee she won't without them."

20Q

BY ERIC SPITZNAGEL
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ART STREIBER



BRYAN

CRANSTON

BREAKING BAD'S INTRIGUING DRUG KINGPIN COMES CLEAN ABOUT HIS ADDICTION TO CHILIES, DEFENDS HIS AWKWARD SEX SCENE WITH JULIA ROBERTS AND GETS SEMITOUGH IN THE FACE OF JON HAMM'S EMMY-DRIVEN JEALOUSY

Q1

PLAYBOY: *Breaking Bad*, on which you play a meth dealer, is now in its fourth season. At this point, are you experienced enough to build your own meth lab?

CRANSTON: I probably could, yeah. We have a DEA chemist on the set. He taught us how to make methamphetamine, which is a very detailed process. I still have my notes. I didn't want to learn about the back-alley process. I wanted to know how to make it perfectly, the absolute purest meth, and what equipment and chemicals to use, because that's what my

character does. So if I had to, I could make more than just meth; I could make really, really good meth. [laughs] It has created a very healthy sideline for me if this acting thing ever stops working.

Q2

PLAYBOY: Have you ever tried recreational drugs, meth or otherwise?

CRANSTON: Never meth, but I've had several drug experiences. Pot always just made me sleepy. As a teenager I had (continued on page 110)

His widowed mother, **CAROLINE CRAVEN**, ran their house in Cleveland like a totalitarian state: Information flow



was closely monitored and order maintained through strict rules enforced by the threat of punishment
— **THE ETERNAL KIND.**

SHOCK

V A L U E

WES CRAVEN created films that became the bloody heart of

cinema's New Horror—box-office killers that assault the audience's complacency

and are populated by demons that are no match for America's own

BY JASON ZINOMAN

FEAR IS PERSONAL. Whether it is heights or rats or failure, what frightens us is as varied as what makes us laugh or what we find beautiful. Taste matters. So do experience and culture. But just as some paintings are simply beautiful regardless of context, certain scares transcend the particular phobias of time and place. It's the task of the horror movie director to create these enduring images, the ones that not only instantly frighten but en-

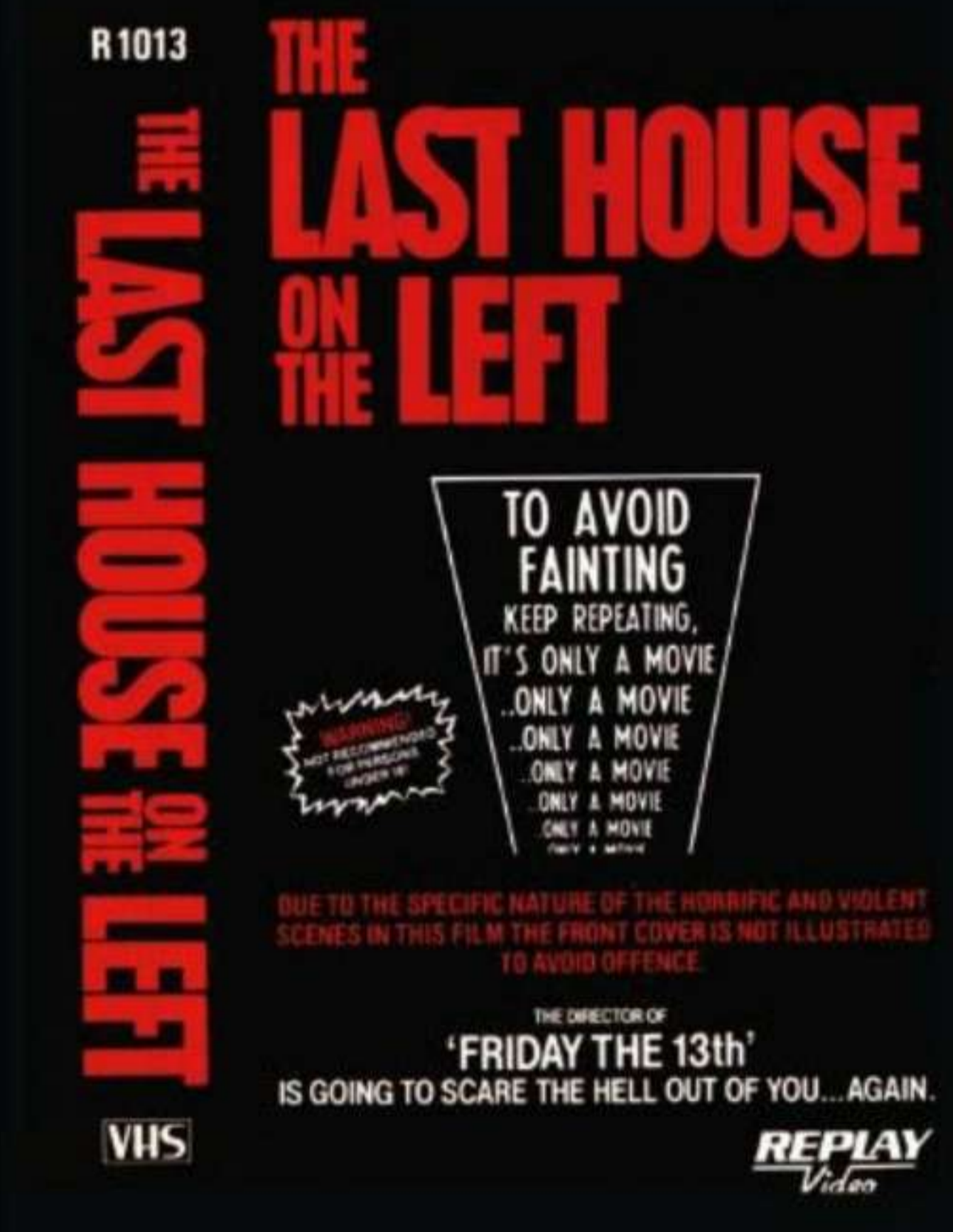
sure, sticking in the subconscious and reappearing in dreams. No one has accomplished this as often or as long as Wes Craven. His influential movies such as *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, *The Hills Have Eyes* and *Scream* have helped define the billion-dollar modern horror industry. His nightmares have become ours. And they were formed in childhood at a place where most great directors of scary movies found inspiration: at home. His father died when he was three, and

the memory that stuck was one of his father's boiling temper: "It was the first thing that scared me," Craven says.

His widowed mother, Caroline Craven, ran their house in Cleveland like a totalitarian state: Information flow was closely monitored and order maintained through strict rules enforced by the threat of punishment—the eternal kind. A Baptist pessimist with a ninth-grade education, she had a sad, rigid mouth hardened after a lifetime of tough luck. Her anxiety found its expression in her constantly twirling thumbs. She never remarried or even dated but instead poured all her energy, love and moral rectitude into her children, including the delicate youngest child, Wes. Battling sin was a full-time job—it required vigilance. Suspicion swirled around that house. No cursing! No sex! Forget the movies! Disney cartoons were all that was permitted. His mother refused to talk about race or politics or anything unpleasant. The taboo subjects, particularly sex, obsessed the teenage Craven, who sometimes felt he was going to hell.

He struggled to play the good son, attending Wheaton College, a strict Christian school, at his mother's insistence. But in his first year there, at the age of 19, he suffered a viral infection in his spine that temporarily paralyzed him from the chest down. He was hospitalized for two months, and in that time, his life changed. He started writing poetry and short stories, some with dark themes. He adored Kafka's paranoid literary vision. While recuperating he met a redheaded nursing student, Bonnie Broecker, who shared his fundamentalist upbringing, and after he dropped out of Wheaton, they began dating and then got married. He later finished college, and after graduating from Johns Hopkins's master's program in philosophy in 1964, Craven, then in his mid-20s, found work as an assistant professor of literature, first in Pennsylvania and then in Potsdam, New York. Continuing to write stories and a novel, he told Bonnie that by the age of 30 he wanted to be on the cover of *Time* magazine.

Impatient with his career advancement, he increasingly experienced strain in his family life. As their family grew with the birth of one child and then another, so did the culture war simmering inside the marriage. Bonnie was ready for a settled life, while Craven, who now rejected the ideas of his childhood, was searching for something to replace them with, leading to confusion and depressive spells. "I

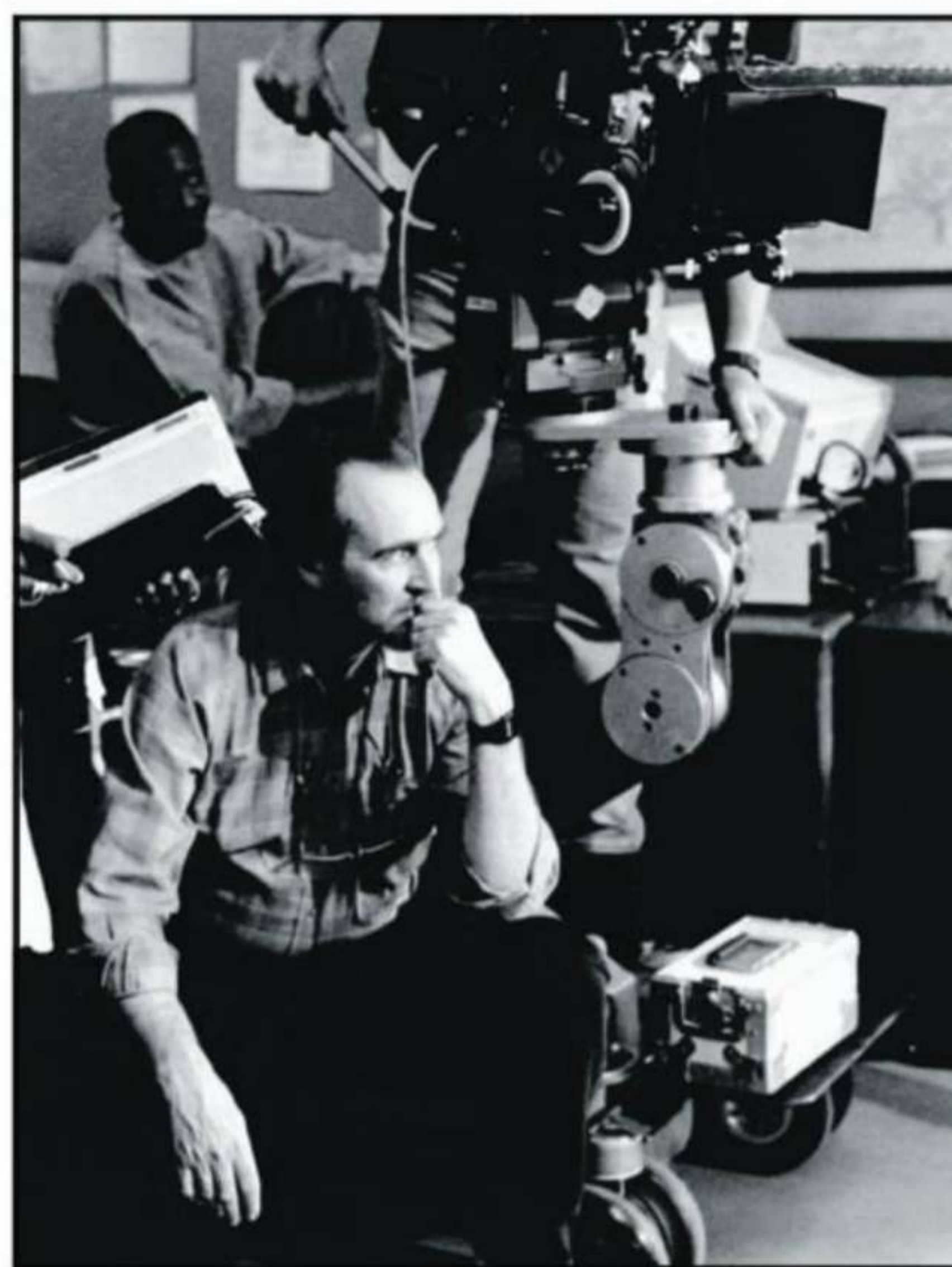


THE FAMILY THAT KILLS TOGETHER As a filmmaker Craven channeled his fundamentalist upbringing and, with the 1972 release of *Last House on the Left*, broke new ground by showing that horror often begins (and ends) at home. Lower right, the director on the set of *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, an instant commercial success that would spawn its own franchise.

had so much rage as a result of years of being made to be a good boy," he says. "I think when you're raised to live within such rigid confines of thought and conduct, you think you are terrible if you violate the rules. It makes you crazy. Or it makes you angry. I'm surprised I never climbed a tower and shot people."

He moved his family to Brooklyn, hoping to sell his novel, *Noah's Ark: The Journals of a Mad Man*, about a sensitive, troubled son of the caretaker at a New York cemetery. No publishers were interested. Money became tight, and his marriage unraveled. Craven moved out, sleeping on couches on the Lower East

Side. He'd given up the old religion, but hell still seemed close at hand. He had lost his family, and his dreams appeared out of reach. But by the next spring, his life would turn around. It began with a porn film.



VAMPIRE IN BROOKLYN Director Craven at work on his 1995 horror comedy starring Eddie Murphy and Angela Bassett.

Advertised in newspapers and sold as a mainstream film, *Together*, which smuggled full-frontal nudity and soft-core action under the guise of an educational documentary about sex, featured a tagline that played on anxieties about the generation gap: "Look for yourself! Judge for yourself! See what your children can show you (continued on page 116)



"We're doing everything we can for your husband, Mrs. Carter."

THE SUN'S
coming up?
TIME FOR
one more
ROUND!



OUR TOUR OF
America's
GREATEST
late-night
BARS



THE

Green Mill

CHICAGO

We call it the magic hour.

You're at a dynamite bar long after you should have gone home. The hands on the clock seem to stop. The music is turned up. You get this feeling: Anything can happen. When the magic hour comes, deals get made, lost souls are found, beautiful women offer themselves up to the whims of the night. The party feels as though it's never going to end—at least until it does, at last call. How do you find the magic hour? You go to one of the bars on our list of America's best late-night

*The party feels as though
it's never going to end.*

drinking establishments. Start with the Green Mill in Chicago. "Where else in the world do you go if you want to hear great live music at 4:30 in the morning?" asks Dave Jemilo, owner since 1986. The Green Mill is Chicago's oldest jazz club, where Al Capone hung out in the 1920s with his henchman "Machine Gun" Jack McGurn, who was part-owner of the joint. Years after Frank Sinatra frequented the Green Mill, you can still smell his cologne. See you there—after midnight. (4802 North Broadway, greenmilljazz.com)

Jimmy Valentine's

WASHINGTON, D.C.

There's no sign for Jimmy Valentine's Lonely Hearts Club, and it's difficult to find. You need to venture near D.C.'s H Street Corridor, until recently an urban wasteland, and look for the pink halo above the door. Step inside this beer lover's bar and you've entered a strange world where no one would bat an eye if Flash Gordon were to walk by. As one frequenter described the vibe at Jimmy V's: "random, crazy, awesome." (1103 Bladensburg Road NE, jimmyvalentineslhc.com)



The

FRANKLIN

BOSTON

The Franklin Café closes at two A.M., which in Boston—hardly the city that doesn't sleep—is damn near sunrise. The kitchen stays open until 1:30 A.M.; you won't find a better pork chop in Beantown at that hour. We've spent many magic hours at the Franklin,



slurping gibsons and listening to locals complain about the time Red Sox owner Harry Frazee sold Babe Ruth to the Yankees for a pittance so he could finance a stage play called *No, No, Nanette*. Hilarious! (278 Shawmut Avenue, franklincafe.com)

MISTER H

NEW YORK

Armin Amiri's new Mister H (short for *Mister Hung*) is reached through a discreet door on the quiet side of the new Mondrian SoHo. Expectations are high when a dandyishly dressed dwarf and a giant named Disco man the doors. With exotic

but comfy decor, Mister H transports you simultaneously to a Chinese cathouse and Casablanca. The dance floor gets going around one A.M. We don't rush to the latest club, but we're hanging at Hung's. (9 Crosby Street, mondriansoho.com)

JUMBO'S

Clown Room

HOLLYWOOD

Only in Tinseltown can a pseudo strip club be a city treasure (since 1970). The kind of place B-movie legend Russ Meyer found his female fodder, Jumbo's is Ringling Bros. gone burlesque—mirrored ceiling, stripper-pole stage, white tablecloths.... Step right up. (5153 Hollywood Boulevard, jumbos.com)



SHUT UP and DRINK

Double Down SALOON LAS VEGAS

The Double Down Saloon claims to be "the happiest place on Earth."



Call the Double Down Saloon and ask when it closes, and you'll hear a man (clearly with a cigarette in his mouth) say proudly, "Never." The Double Down claims to be "the happiest place on Earth." It's a monument to graffiti, where you can gamble freely and you can still smoke, a Vegas shrine that smells of beauty and despair, where rockers, models and the homeless rub elbows all night long. And yes, it's also home of the fabled bacon martini. If you don't like loud punk music, you might want to bring cotton for your ears. Even the address of this place is cool. See you there. (4640 Paradise Road, doubledownsaloon.com)





The HUBB

TAMPA

IN LOCAL PARLANCE,
A HUB DRINK IS ONE WITH
A HEAVY POUR

The last place a visiting night crawler looking for action would think to find a classic American bar would be in downtown Tampa. But look beyond this conventional-minded city's skyline for a certain corner neon bar sign, and you'll find alternative musicians, college students, bus station drifters and former mayors all mixing it up at this classy dive, fabled for its checkerboard floors, up-to-speed jukebox and heavy pours. Hit the sidewalk hot dog vendor outside when you get hungry. (719 North Franklin Street, thehubbartampa.com)

THE ms. CLUB MAE'S

NEW ORLEANS

In New Orleans you can get tipsy just thinking about where to go for late-night drinks. Try the Club Ms. Mae's, a barn-size drinkery that's open 24 hours. Tourists and Tulaners welcome. Locals are outraged that, under the new management, double-shot drinks have risen from \$2 to \$3. What's this world coming to? (4336 Magazine Street, msmaeswallofshame.blogspot.com)



Mac's Club DEUCE

MIAMI BEACH

You want to meet a one-eyed fisherman wearing a pink polo shirt who used to be a powerful politico before he went to jail? Go to Mac's Club Deuce. What other bar can claim to have served drinks to Keith Richards and denied Kate Moss entry? As one patron puts it, "You can be the ugliest person in the world, walk in here, and everyone gets the same treatment. The best people I've met in Miami I've met here." Bonus: Drinks are two for one from—gulp—eight A.M. to seven P.M. (222 14th Street)

Mollie FONTAINE Lounge

MEMPHIS

Mollie Fontaine Lounge is housed in a Victorian mansion that looks as though it's haunted by the ghost of Carl Perkins. Opened in 2007 (though the building has been around since 1886), the place serves up dynamite mac and cheese and stays open "till the spirits go to sleep," as the motto goes. It has two bars, one upstairs, one downstairs, so you can pick your vibe, which is sure to get weirder as the night moves along. (679 Adams Avenue, molliefontainelounge.com)



RIO ROOM

Dallas

The Rio Room is new for 2011. Its "spaceship" dance floor and bar have made quite an impression. Chromeo and Erykah Badu were at the opening party, and in February the Rio Room hosted Dallas's best Super Bowl party after the game. As one attendee put it, "There were so many beautiful women, I thought I'd died and been reborn in an issue of PLAYBOY." Now that's saying something. (4515 Travis Street, rioroom.com)

THE ENDUP

San Francisco

The Endup is pure bartender, best San Francisco. singles scene. Anything goes, and we mean anything. Over the years, this stand-out party spot has been voted the best dance club, best DJ, best bartender, best singles scene and best gay club. Upstairs, downstairs, inside or out—you'll find what you want in the wee hours. (401 6th Street, theendup.com)

REGGAE
GOLD ON
SATURDAYS,
10 P.M. TO
FIVE A.M.



THE HIGHLANDER

ATLANTA

The jukebox: amazing. Patio: seats coveted. Jägermeister: flowing like water. Mix all this with the legendary Jamaican jerk chili at one A.M. and you've had a night. Bonus: free Wi-Fi! (931 Monroe Drive NE, thehighlanderatlanta.com)



What used to be a number-crunching accounting office is now a cocktail house where you can chase deviled eggs and house pickles with champagne cocktails until well after two A.M. An alternative to Portland's usual beer bars and hippie dives, this watering hole has an air of "mid-century-modern sophistication," as one

THE GOLD
DUST:
CHAMPAGNE
AND GRAPE-
FRUIT JUICE

nightlife arbiter put it. At the same time, it doesn't take itself too seriously. It's known for its 60-ounce scorpion bowls, large enough for you to dive in and take a swim. Happy hour officially lasts six hours here, but in truth it never ends at the Gold Dust Meridian. (3267 Southeast Hawthorne Boulevard, golddustmeridian.com)



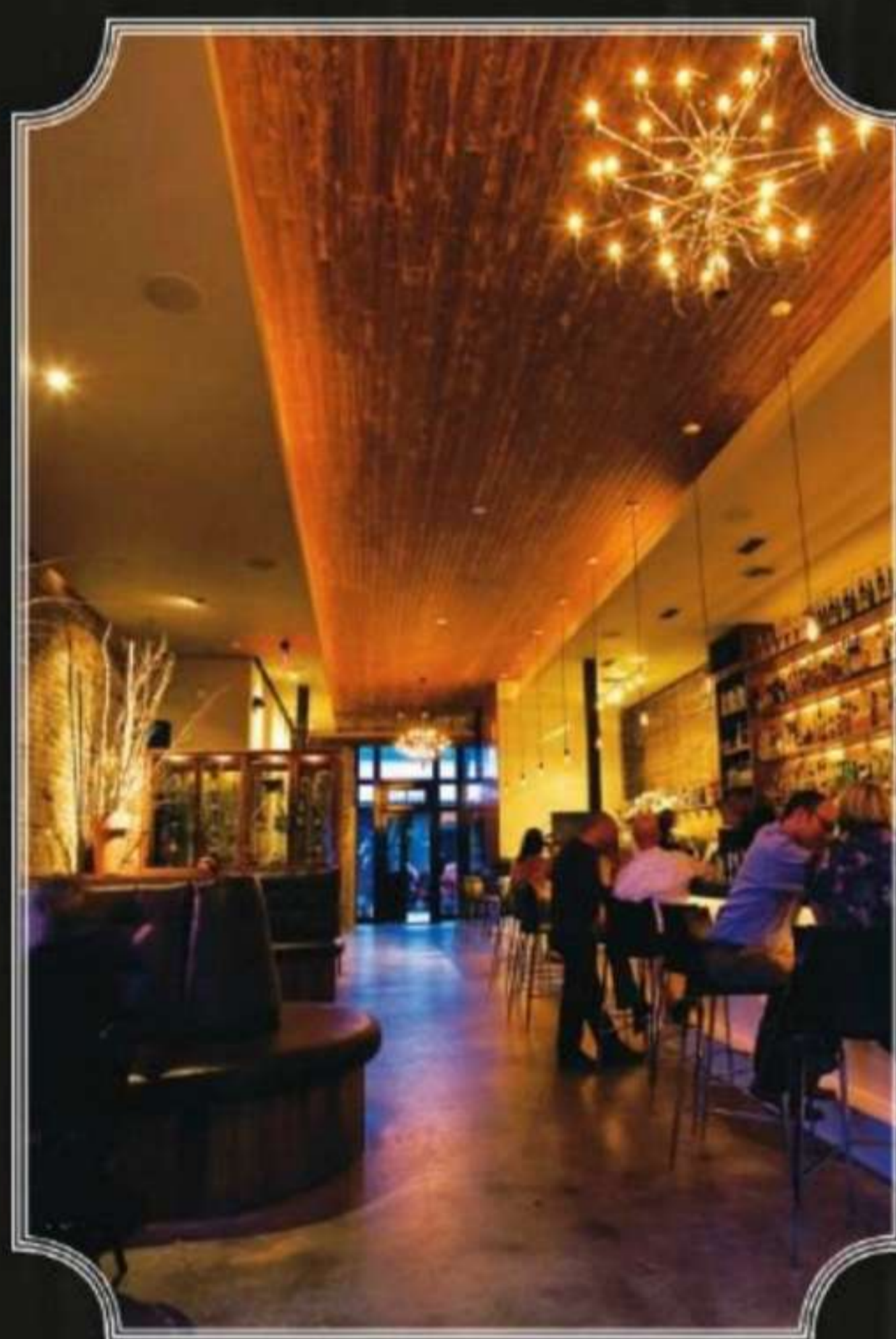
The thought may already have occurred to you: Why not chuck the office job and open a bar? It's not easy, but it can be done if you plan well and commit to a lot of work. Neal Bodenheimer, 34, did it. Along with his partners, Matthew Kohnke and Kirk Estopinal, he now runs one of the hippest bars in one of America's hippest cities: a swank cocktail boîte called Cure, at 4905 Freret Street in New Orleans. Bodenheimer was working at an ad agency in Manhattan when he decided he'd had enough. "I was walking past the Red Bench in SoHo one night, a little joint on Sullivan Street," he says over a pint of *bière pâle*. "I realized then I wanted to run my own bar." After five years in New York, Bodenheimer returned to his native city to open his own bar.

How did he do it? "I didn't know anything," he says. "I didn't know how to finance it. I didn't know about human resources, insurance, licensing. I had worked as a waiter and bartender. I had some budgeting experience. Location is first and foremost. You need to work up a good business plan. What drives restaurants and bars? Seats and tables. The basis of your financials is seats. And what are the hours? Are there zoning restrictions? How many times can you turn the restaurant tables? Negotiate hard on anything that makes money: food, drink, whatever. Keep your estimates conservative. Ask a lot of questions. Take care of your purveyors. It's a relationship business." What's the biggest mistake people make? "Underestimating the level of involvement," says Bodenheimer. "Pay smart people for advice. Get a good property agent and someone who can help you with labor laws. Hire a good attorney to do partnership agreements and review your lease. They will save you more money than they will cost you. If you've never worked in a bar or restaurant, go work in one. And keep your day job as long as you can. A lot

of white-collar people want to get into this business, but the reality is it's a blue-collar business." How do you come up with the money? "Talk to 10 friends, to family. Leave something on the table. Don't go all in. I took more risks in this project than I ever wanted to take in my life. Hire smart people to work for you. Make sure your people make money. Never put your hands in your staff's money. As owner, eyes are always on you. If you don't play up to the role of owner, it's noticed." What does it feel like when your place finally opens? "You're terrified. You've spent all your time and all your money. It's like getting on a high dive. At some point you either turn around and get off the ladder or grab your balls and jump."

Sean McCusker quit his job as a journalist in Manhattan in 2009 and moved to New Orleans to open Sylvain, which in a short period of time has become a French Quarter destination for exquisite food and elegant drinking. It took McCusker a while to open (at 625 Chartres Street), but he is now reaping the benefits. What was his biggest surprise? "The amount of government agencies involved, both on the state and city level," says McCusker one afternoon at his bar. "The number of permits, licenses, fire marshal clearances, health inspections and liquor board reviews is staggering. Unless you have the patience of Gandhi—and I'm assuming you don't since you have an itch to get into this business—find someone to prescribe you

meds, because you'll be doing a lot of waiting in government buildings or in your bar for someone to show up. Be sure you're doing it for the right reasons. Work your concept and business plan to death. Run your ideas by people in the business, people who will tell you the truth. Whatever you think your budget is, add 25 percent to it. Whatever date you think you're going to open, add three months to that. And be prepared for criticism, even if the critic is way off base." —Leopold Froehlich



LIVING THE DREAM: CURE
IN UPTOWN NEW ORLEANS.

A N T E UP

WHEN YOU HAVE AN ACE IN THE HOLE, YOU SHOULD BET EVERYTHING BUT YOUR INTEGRITY.

OFF COME THE WATCH, THE RING, THE CUFF LINKS...



1. DOBERMAN TWO-TONED MONEY CLIP (\$180) FROM BLUE EXPANSION BAND (\$110) BY SILVER AND GOLD BRACELET NILE. 4. HANDCRAFTED STERLING SILVER WINGED SCARAB CRYSTAL CUFF LINKS (\$65) BY TED BAKER. 7. SILVER RAZOR BLADE NECKLACE (\$200) BY MIANSAL. 8. 18K HIGH-POLISH

2. NECKLACE (\$95) FROM PENNY-INSPIRED WATCH WITH GOLD EXPANSION BAND (\$110) BY TIMEX. 6. SILVER ANGLED CRYSTAL CUFF LINKS (\$65) BY TED BAKER. 7. SILVER RAZOR BLADE NECKLACE (\$200) BY MIANSAL. 8. 18K HIGH-POLISH

3. DOUBLE-SIDED INSPIRED WATCH WITH GOLD EXPANSION BAND (\$110) BY TIMEX. 6. SILVER ANGLED CRYSTAL CUFF LINKS (\$65) BY TED BAKER. 7. SILVER RAZOR BLADE NECKLACE (\$200) BY MIANSAL. 8. 18K HIGH-POLISH

1. DOBERMAN TWO-TONED MONEY CLIP (\$180) FROM BLUE EXPANSION BAND (\$110) BY SILVER AND GOLD BRACELET NILE. 4. HANDCRAFTED STERLING SILVER WINGED SCARAB CRYSTAL CUFF LINKS (\$65) BY TED BAKER. 7. SILVER RAZOR BLADE NECKLACE (\$200) BY MIANSAL. 8. 18K HIGH-POLISH



PHOTOGRAPHY BY
**ZACHARY JAMES
 JOHNSTON**

FASHION BY
**JENNIFER RYAN
 JONES**

YELLOW-GOLD WEDDING BAND AT CUFFLINKS.COM. 11. SILVER DOU WOVEN LEATHER BRACE- (\$700) FROM BLUE NILE. 9. "SOLD" RING (\$85) BY MIANSAL. 12. LAPIS EIGHT-MILLIMETER BEADED BRACELET (\$275) BY FICE CHRONOGRAPH WATCH AT CUFFLINKS.COM. 14. EDI- LINKS (\$135) FROM TIES.COM. 10. SNAKE-EYES DICE CUFF (\$195) BY RAVI RATAN WOOD.COM. 13. TAN SCoubI- BAND (\$175) BY CASIO.

LOVE MODELS

In this PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR AS A YOUNG MAN, HE WAS EXPOSED TO WOMEN WHO EXPOSED THEMSELVES FOR ART. WHAT COULD THEY TELL HIM ABOUT

SEX AND DESIRE?

.....
BY JONATHAN LETHEM

ILLUSTRATION BY KIM COGAN
.....



BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU *wish for;*

YOU MAY TURN OUT TO have already had it. That's to say, to have had it before you could make intelligible use of it, perhaps before you could get your synapses to parse it for what it was. By the time I was 17 years old and had a girlfriend who would take her clothes off (there had been one at 15 who, serially, entrancingly, wouldn't), I'd been envisioning women with their clothes off, ravishing them with the secret lidless eyeball of my brain, for at least five years. Though these were five long, aching years, which I took entirely personally at the time, I do realize how mundane such a confession must be. Is. There wasn't anything baroque or complicated in my pining visualizations or the procedure by which I took their edge off, and it's surely the case that a savvy person glancing my way would guess I did pretty well nothing else of note at the time.

Here's what's un-mundane: In that same span, through my rude, ripened, teen-prime years, there were live nude models appearing nightly in my home—women to whose unclad forms my ordinary, lidded eyeballs had regular access. My father painted them, upstairs in his studio. "Nightly" may exaggerate, but through those years nudes were the main subject of his large oils on canvas, of which he painted dozens—sometimes from memory or from studies but often with the body present before him—as well as generating many hundreds of nudes on paper or vinyl, in pencil, oil crayons or gouache or combinations of those mediums, nearly each and every one of which was done in the presence of what at eight or 10 I would have still called "a naked lady" (or, rarely, but it bears mentioning, in the presence of a naked man).

Me, I opened the door. I walked through. My father's studio was part of our home. I did this, probably, beginning at 12 or 13, when I would have learned to refer to the naked ladies in question as "models," as in a mock-casual formulation like "We can hang out in the kitchen, my dad's up with one of his models" or the defensively sophisticated "Sure, I see the models with their clothes off, it's no big deal." I do recall forming sentences like these, just as I recall the slightly widened eyes of the models themselves, a few times, as

they met the eyes of the would-be jaded 12-year-old who'd pushed through the door without knocking. I can also bring up a good portion of ambience (visual aspects of which are confirmed by the paintings themselves): the musty throw rugs and scarred chairs and hand-carpen-tered easels and exposed-brick wall; the upright, soldered-iron wood-burning stove my father later installed; the jazz or blues or (less often) leftist news and culture-gab of WBAI seeping from the cassette-playing boom box; the savor of brushes marinating

I not only glimpsed the models. At 12 or 13 I declared myself an apprentice artist and began to draw them myself. Not in the studio upstairs, or rarely there. Mostly I went along with my dad on "drawing group" night, to the home of his artist friends Bob and Cynthia, a loft space on Atlantic Avenue with square footage enough for a model to stand encircled by seven or eight artists sitting with sketch pads braced on crossed legs, or seated before small easels. Specifically, seven adult artists (though my father was their elder statesman, likely at



Oils on canvas by the author's father, Richard Brown Lethem, painted in his top-floor studio in their Dean Street home in 1981 with the aid of models who sat for the elder Lethem, his Brooklyn drawing group and sometimes Jonathan: (from left) *Small Miracles Revealed*, 68" x 57½"; *Janice*, 34" x 46".

in turpentine and tangy odor of the cake of Lava soap—the only brand, my father explained, that would gently strip oil paint from human skin—at the shallow porcelain sink; the bulletin board layered with valentines from my mother and enigmatic newspaper clippings (the death of Karl Wallenda was one) that would inspire later work of my father's, etc. What I can't supply, despite the clamor I by now imagine I hear from my reader on this point, is an account of any parent-child consultations on the topic of the models and how I was or wasn't supposed to feel about them. I can't supply these because, I'm fairly certain, they didn't occur. Nudity Is Fine, like Nixon Is a Vampire or Grown-Ups Smoke Pot, was a truth floating in our house, the sort I gradually inferred was somewhat more true inside our doors than out.

least a decade older than any of the others) and one teenager. Young teenager. I began before high school—I know this for certain because there were nudes in the portfolio of sketches I used to win entry into the High School of Music and Art that year. I was a regular at drawing group for three years, I'd guess. By the time I was 16 I was through hanging out with my dad, for a while at least. But for three years I soaked my eyeballs in live flesh—not even a kid who'd grown up at a nudist colony could have been invited to stare like I stared. After all, I was an artist.

No one balked at my presence. This was 1977, 1978. The models, so far as I can rely on these memory tendrils I'm chasing, were blasé. These were mostly art students themselves, settled into an easy if boring gig. Likely posing for a group of men (continued on page 112)

HI-TECH HUSBAND



ARTHUR IS GADGET-OBSESSED. HE JUST COMPLETELY IGNORES ME.



WOW! WITH THIS GP32R SMART CARD CONSOLE YOU CAN PLAY GAMES, LISTEN TO MUSIC ON MP3, DOWNLOAD MOVIES... IT'S GREAT!



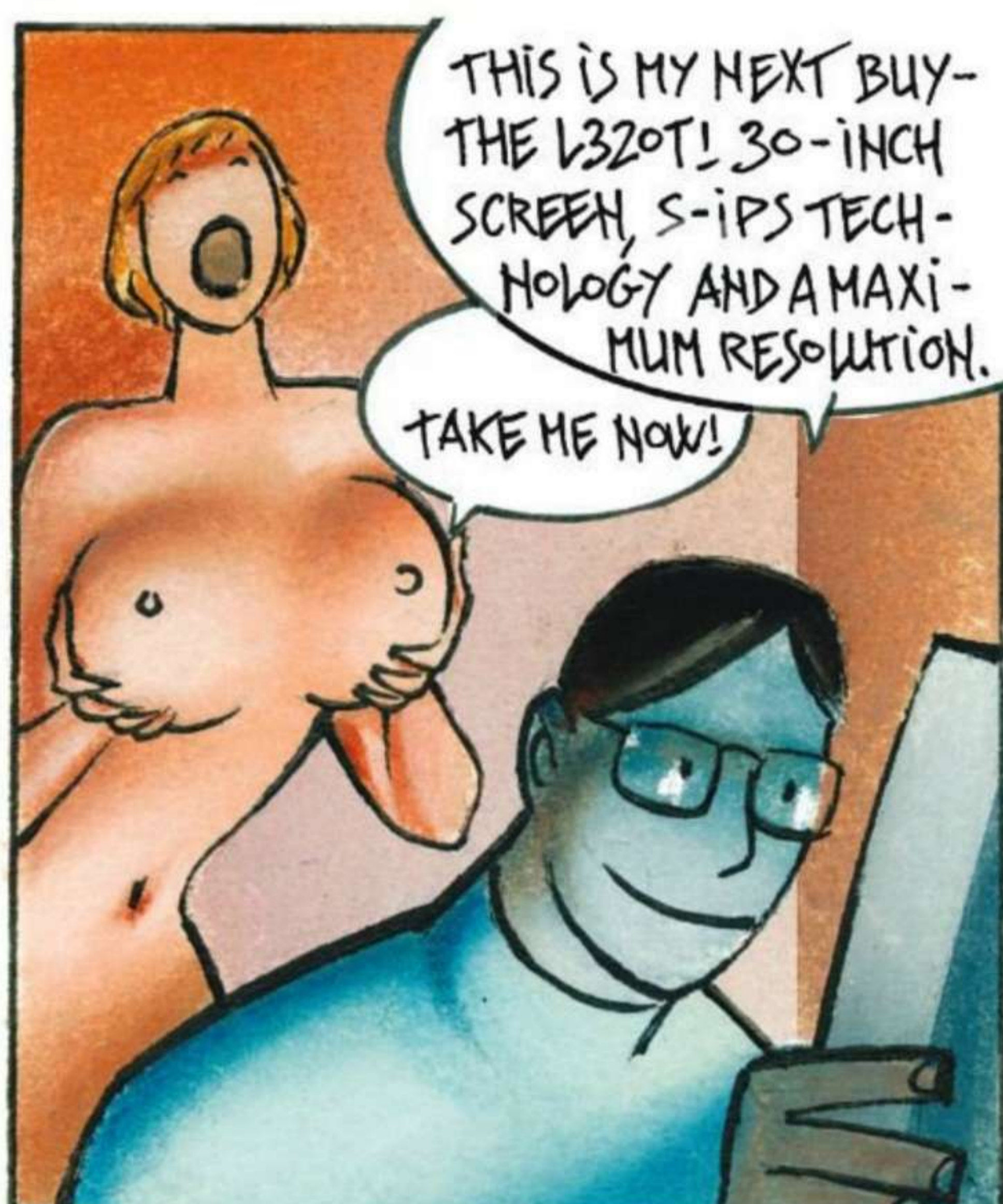
ON THIS SAM V450 CELL PHONE YOU PLAY GAMES IN 3D AND RECORD UP TO TWO HOURS OF VIDEO!

ARTHUR, I NEED YOU!



I JUST LOVE THIS ASWIND LUX LAPTOP WITH EXTRA-WIDE LCD DISPLAY!

COME TO ME, BABY!



THIS IS MY NEXT BUY- THE L320T! 30-INCH SCREEN, S-IPS TECHNOLOGY AND A MAXIMUM RESOLUTION.

TAKE ME NOW!

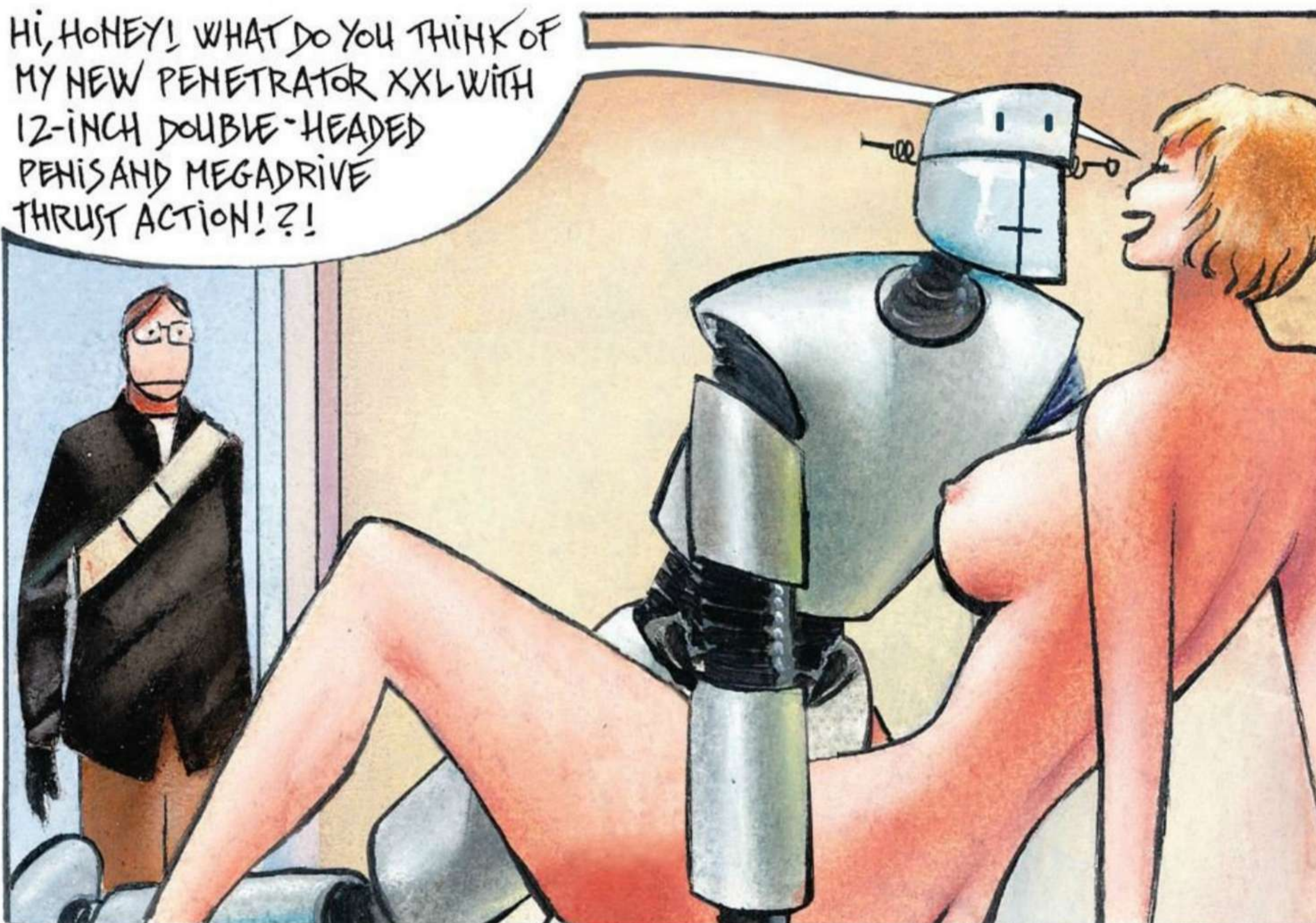


I JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO, PAM.

WELL ...



HEY, BABE! STOP WHATEVER YOU'RE DOING, 'CUZ I'M FEELING HOT HOT HOT!



HI, HONEY! WHAT DO YOU THINK OF MY NEW PENETRATOR XXL WITH 12-INCH DOUBLE-HEADED PENIS AND MEGADRIVE THRUST ACTION!?!

JUAN IVAREZ • JORGE G



Charlie Sheen's

GODDESS

has left the

BUILDING

THE SECRET LIFE
OF "GODDESS"

Bree Olson

AND HER ONETIME BEAU
MR. SHEEN

Article by

GAVIN
EDWARDS

Photography by

ARNY
FREYTAG

I'M
still a
goddess.

insists Bree Olson. "I'm just not Charlie's goddess."

Born Rachel Oberlin, Bree is a 24-year-old vegan from Indiana. She says her favorite book is *Lolita*; she owns a cat named Dr. Sniffles. So how did she catch Charlie Sheen's eye and become known across America as one of "the goddesses," his live-in girlfriends? "I imagine it was my movies," Bree says with a shy smile. Right—she's also a porn star who has appeared in more than 250 adult films.

Late last year Sheen—at the time the leading man on the top-rated prime-time television comedy *Two and a Half Men*—contacted Bree, whom he had never met, through a friend and invited her to his house. A visit of a few hours led to lots of romantic text messages. Which led to a weekend in Vegas that was all over the gossip columns. Which led to a three-way cohabitation at Sheen's Hollywood compound—Sheen, his girlfriend Natalie "Natty" Kenly and Bree.

A bizarre series of stories appeared in the press about the threesome. They seemed to enjoy the spotlight.

"We do whatever Charlie wants us to do," Bree said in March, clearly suggesting, given her occupation, X-rated festivities. "This is the type of lifestyle I've always wanted, and I'm thrilled with it." Added Natalie, the other goddess, "Our bed is big enough for all three of us, and we take turns sleeping in the middle."

"Natty and Charlie have their own special connection, I have my own connection with Charlie, and then Natty and I also have our own relationship," Bree said.

When Bree met Sheen, he was doing a lot of drugs. After being rushed to the hospital with "abdominal pains" in late January, he rehabilitated at home. Bree carefully states that after she moved in with him at his place, now dubbed Sober Valley Lodge, she never saw him using. According to the media portrayal of Sheen and his goddesses, it was all about the sex. Or was it?

This much is clear: Sheen swept Bree off her feet. "He's intelligent, he's charismatic, he's superfunny," says Bree. "And he's good in bed. I mean, he's had a lot of practice." It's not that Sheen was kinky—Bree got enough of that on the job, she says. He was "gentle and considerate." Bree, who won best anal sex scene at the 2008 AVN Awards, says that when the cameras aren't rolling, her favorite position is missionary. "I like a guy on top. I like to lie back and enjoy myself."

Is Sheen the porn-addicted fiend (he's been linked to other starlets) the media make him out to be?

"I have never watched porn with Charlie, nor have I ever seen him watch porn," Bree says. "He's just a rock star. He's a powerhouse. He is a very sensual and sexual person, and when I was with him I felt as if we became one together, because he's just so enticing sexually."

And the lesbian sex that Bree suggested she enjoyed with Natalie?

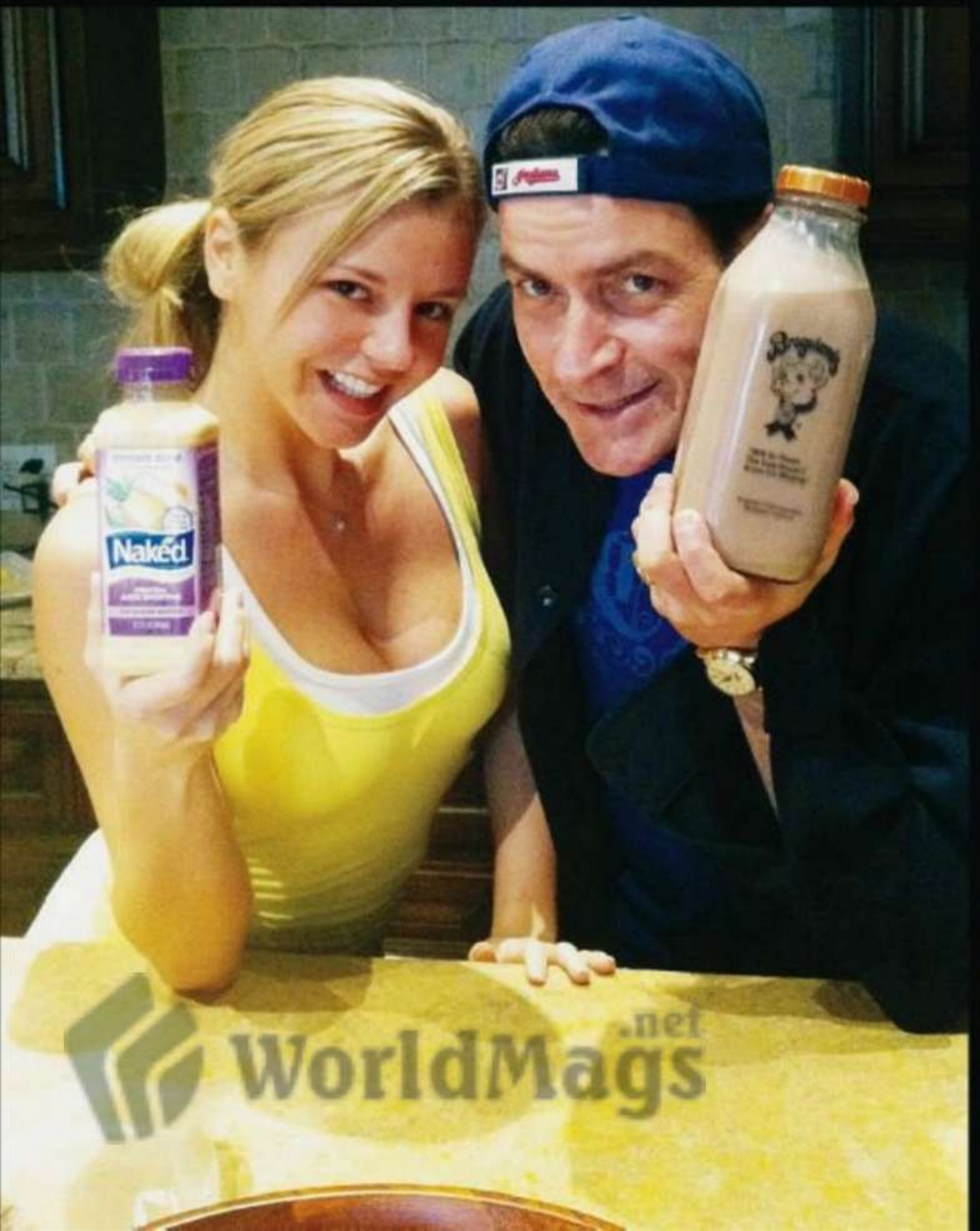
"That was a lie," she now says. "I didn't really even know her. Okay, all three of us got together, I think, twice."

Bree sums up the relationship as such: "They did

"I'M AS HORNY AS A DUDE BUT IN A CUTE CHICK'S BODY."



Sheen tweeted this picture of himself and Bree, along with a bizarre message: "Winning...! Choose your Vice...." Sheen's was chocolate milk and Bree.



HOLLYWOOD



Sheen and Bree onstage during the My Violent Torpedo of Truth/Defeat Is Not an Option tour on April 5. Bree left Sheen soon after.





their thing together, and Charlie and I did our thing together. And we had two different beds. She and I would go to whichever bed, and he would pick. You know, 'Where am I sleeping tonight?'"

Bree's libido is no put-on. "I'm as horny as a dude but in a cute chick's body," she says. But once Sheen's career started to unravel, Bree landed on the back burner.

About a week after she moved into Sober Valley Lodge, Sheen began lashing out at Chuck Lorre, creator of *Two and a Half Men*. Media interest exploded. After he was fired from the show, Sheen got a million Twitter followers in 24 hours and was constantly doing interviews, using a vocabulary that included *tiger blood*, *my fire-breathing fists* and, most notably, the word *winning*.

According to Bree, many of the catchphrases come from Sheen's favorite movie, *Apocalypse Now*. Although the film stars his dad, Martin Sheen, Charlie's rhetoric appears to have been borrowed from the Marlon Brando character, the dangerously unhinged Colonel Kurtz.

"I'm a quiet person," Bree says. "With the publicity, there were so many people around all the time." Then came the fabled "tour," Sheen's highly publicized attempt to make the public understand his point of view. "As soon as Live Nation approached Charlie with the idea for a tour, that's all he talked about," Bree says. While she never worried about Sheen sleeping with other girls, she felt "like he was cheating on me with his tour."

Off they went across the country, appearing together onstage. In April, after a couple of weeks on the poorly received *My Violent Torpedo of Truth/Defeat Is Not an Option* tour, Bree decided she had spent enough time living in a circus. She flew back to



Indiana from Toronto without saying good-bye to Sheen. It was reported that she broke up with him via text message, but she says she left him a note (along with a six-figure Patek Philippe watch he had loaned her), which she quotes from memory: "C, I'm

not comfortable here anymore. I'm going home. I wish you the best on the rest of your tour. (Here's your watch.)"

Bree now has her own apartment in Los Angeles and has stopped making adult films. She wants to become a straight

actress. It's a recent decision: While on tour she was watching DVDs of *True Blood* in her hotel room and started rehearsing lines in the bathroom mirror.

"I can do this," Bree says with a grin. "I'm so winning right now."







See more of Bree at playboy.com/goddess.

ROMANCE

(continued from page 58)

it. You know the feeling: When you love somebody, you're happy to see her happy, but I knew my girlfriend was going to dump me because now guys with careers and health insurance were getting her on their radar. I remember she was pretty and funny before, but now that she was getting so skinny it was obvious she possessed vast untapped reserves of self-control and self-discipline way out of my league, and my friends weren't any help because they were all circling, waiting for us to call it quits so they could date her, and then it turned out it wasn't the pineapple or the self-discipline because she found out she really had cancer, but she slimmed down to wearing a bitchin' hot size two before she died.

That's how I know happiness is like a ticking bomb. And how I met my wife is because I wasn't going to date anybody, not anymore, no way, so I was taking the Amtrak to Seattle. It was the year of Lollapalooza in Seattle, and I'd packed my tent and wrapped my sleeping bag to protect my bong so I could camp out all weekend like a Grizzly Adams, and I walked into the bar car on the train. You know how sometimes you just need to leave the friends and sobriety behind for a few days. I walked into the bar car, and there's this total stone-cold fox pair of green eyes looking right directly at me. And I'm not a monster. I'm not some reality-show blimp stuck in a hospital bed eating buckets of fried chicken all day, but I can understand why guys would want to work as guards in women's prisons or concentration camps where they could date good-looking prisoners without those babes always saying, "Put a shirt on!" and asking, "Do you always have to sweat so much?" But on the train, here's this goddess wearing a Radiohead T-shirt cut off to show her bare middle, and her jeans sag down to where there ought to be bush showing, and she's wearing Mickey Mouse and Holly Hobbie rings around every finger, holding a beer to her beautiful lips and looking at me down the length of the clear bottle, just an ordinary MGD, not some pussy microbrew in a green bottle.

And guys like me, we know the score. Unless we're John Belushi or John Candy, no hottie is going to put us in that kind of an eye lock, so right away I know enough to look away from her in shame. The only reason why a girl like her would talk to me is to break the news that I'm a gross fat pig and I'm blocking her entire view of the ocean. Know your limits, I always say. Aim low and you won't be disappointed. Edging past her, I look without looking. I check her out, and she smells good, like some kind of dessert, like a baked pie, like a pumpkin pie with that red-brown spice on top. Better yet, the beer bottle in her mouth turns to follow me as I walk down the aisle to the bar and order a round,

and it's not as if we're the last boy and girl in the whole world. A bunch of other people are drinking at the plastic tables, going to Lollapalooza from the look of their dreads and tie-dye. I walk all the way to the most faraway table from her, but this hottie watches me go all the way. You know the feeling, when somebody's watching, you can't take one step without stumbling, especially on a moving-around train. I go to take a drink as the train turns a corner, and I spill beer down my striped cowboy shirt. I'm pretending to watch the trees going by outside the window, but from a secret-agent angle I'm watching her reflection in the glass, and she's still watching me. The only time she looks away is when she steps up to the bar and gives the bartender some money and he gives her another beer, and then her reflection is getting bigger and bigger until it's life-size and she's standing next to my table and says, "Hi," and something else.

And I say, "What?"

And she points at my cowboy shirt, at the beer spilled there, and she says, "I like your buttons...shiny."

I tuck my chin and look down at the pearl-colored snaps. They're not buttons, they're snaps, but I don't want to scotch this moment. And right from the get-go I noticed she puts her fingers in her mouth sometimes—okay, she puts her fingers in her mouth a lot, and she uses a breathy, little-girl voice with some baby-talk words like *buh-sketti* instead of spaghetti and *skissors* in place of scissors—but for a regulation hottie that's just textbook being sexy.

She gives me a wink and licks the tip of her tongue around her lips, and with the wet still shining on them, she says, "I'm Britney Spears." She's such a tease. Sure, she's a little loaded. Impaired. By now we're both drinking those little bottles of tequila, and it's not as if we're driving this train. No, she's not Britney Spears, but she's the same caliber of hot. It's clear she's pulling my pud, but in a good way. And you just need to look at her to know all you need to know.

The only chance I have is to hold on and keep flirting back and buying the drinks. She asks me where I'm headed and I tell her Lollapalooza. She's walking her fingers up the front of my shirt, her fingertips stepping from snap to snap, from my belt up to my throat, then walking herself back down, and I'm hoping she can't feel how hard that makes my heart beat.

And she's such a flirt with her green eyes cutting from side to side or peeking up at me from under her long, fluttering eyelashes. And she must be beers and beers ahead of me because she keeps forgetting to end her sentences, and sometimes she points at something speeding by outside the window and she shouts, "A dog!" or one time she sees a car waiting at a rail crossing and Brit screams, "Slug bug!" and clobbers my shoulder with her fistful of Hello Kitty and Mickey Mouse

rings, and secretly I hope I have the bruise for the rest of my life. And we go to Lollapalooza and pitch my tent, and Brit's so drunk that when she wakes up the next morning she's still drunk. And no matter how much doobie I smoke I'm having trouble keeping up. And maybe it's because Brit's so skinny, but she seems to cop a buzz without drinking for hours, like maybe she's getting a contact high from my secondhand smoke. Our whole Lollapalooza is like the kind of beautiful classic romance you'd pay to jerk off to on the internet, but it's happening to me. And we're dating for six months, all the way through Christmas, through Brit moving her stuff into my apartment, and I keep expecting Brit to wake up sober one morning, and she still hasn't.

We go to eat Thanksgiving at my mom's place, and I have to explain. It's not that Brit is a finicky eater, but the reason she's so skinny is she only likes to eat a zucchini squash cut in half lengthwise and hollowed down the middle to make a miniature Iroquois dugout canoe with knife scratches on the outside to look like Indian writing and a whole tribe of little braves carved out of raw carrot but with green peas for their heads, lined up and rowing the war canoe across a dinner plate covered with a thick layer of chocolate syrup, and you'd be surprised how many restaurants don't have that particular item on their regular menus. So most times Brit has to make it herself, and that takes half a day, and then she has to play with it on the living room carpet for another hour, and that's why she never seems to gain an ounce. And my mom, she's just stoked to see me dating again.

And nothing you can smoke or shoot will ever get you as high as you'll feel walking down the street holding hands with a supermodel total stone-cold fox like my Brit. Guys driving down the street in their Ferrari Testarossa, guys with the six-pack abs and steroid pecs, for the first time in my life they have nothing over me. I'm walking down the street with Britney, and she's the prize every guy's trying so hard to win.

And the only buzzkill is how every Romeo comes to sniff a circle around her, trying to grab her in an eye lock and giving her tits his best Pepsodent toothpaste smile. And this one time, riding on the bus, a pack of Romeos stand themselves around where Brit and I are sitting in the back of the bus. Brit likes to sit on the aisle right over the back wheels so she can see to punch me first when there's a Volkswagen, and this one big Romeo comes to stand with his crotch situated at her eye level, and when the bus hits a pothole maybe his hip brushes against her shoulder until Brit looks up at him, and talking around her fingers in her mouth Britney says, "Hello, Big Boy." And that's just how Brit can be: friendly. And she winks and waves her wet fingers for the Romeo to lean down, and he looks around to make sure his competition is clocking his good luck, and this



"Chef is off today. Could I interest you in a waitress's surprise?"

P L A Y B O Y Romeo squats down to Brit's eye level, his face all bedroom smirk. And maybe because she's trying to make me jealous, Brit says to this Romeo, her smokin' hot green eyes look at him and she asks, "You want to see a magic trick?" And all the other Romeos perk up with looks that prove they're all listening, and Brit takes her fingers out of her mouth and slides them down inside the front of her pants, grinding her fingers around inside the skintight crotch of her jeans, and the back half of our bus gets so quiet with their watching her fingers wrestle behind her stonewashed denim zipper. And you can see these Romeos swallow, their Adam's apples going up and down with all their extra spit and their eyes bulging like horny boners.

And as fast as clobbering a slug bug Britney yanks something out of her pants and

yells, "Magic trick!" She swings this thing, shouting, "Puppet show!" And swinging from her hand is something on a little string, like a tea bag only bigger. It's like a hot dog bun smeared with ketchup swinging on a little string, and Britney screams, "Puppet show! Magic trick!" and smacks it across the cheek of the Romeo still squatting down next to her seat. And Brit chases after him, yelling and slapping his leather jacket with streaks of red. And the other Romeos are not looking at her on purpose, fixing their faces to stare down at their shoes or look out a window; she's swinging her little string to smack them upside their heads with red smears, the whole time squealing, "Puppet show! Magic trick!" laughing *ha, ha, ha, ha, ha*, shouting, "Puppet show! Magic trick!" The bus is *ding-ding-dinging* for the next stop, and a hundred passengers

get off at the 7-Eleven, pushing and stampeding off the bus like they all need to buy Slurpees and cash in their winning Powerball mega jackpot tickets. And I'm yelling after them, "It's okay, everybody!" I'm yelling out the bus window, waving to get their attention, "She's a performance artist!" I'm yelling, "She doesn't mean anything by it; it's just some political gender politics statement deal."

Even as the bus pulls away with just the two of us left onboard, I'm yelling, "She's just a free spirit." As Brit goes up the aisle and starts flogging the driver with her tea bag thing, I'm yelling, "That's just her zany sense of humor."

And one night I come home from work and Brit's naked and standing sideways to the bathroom mirror, holding her belly in both hands, and since we met on the train she's gained a little weight, but it's nothing that a couple weeks of pineapple and vinegar won't fix. And Britney takes my hand and holds my fingers spread against her belly and says, "Feel." She says, "I think I ate a baby." And she looks at me like a puppy dog with her green hottie eyes, and I ask if she wants me to go with her to the clinic and take care of it, and she nods her head yes. So we go on my day off, and there's the usual Sunday school teachers blocking the sidewalk. They hold a garbage bag full of nothing but broken-apart plastic baby doll arms and heads mixed together with ketchup, and Brit doesn't hesitate. She reaches into their bag and takes a leg and licks it clean like a french fry, and that's how cool my beautiful girlfriend is. And I open a *National Geographic* magazine while the nurse asks her if she's eaten anything today and Brit says she ate a whole canoe full of Iroquois warriors the day before, but no, she hasn't eaten anything yet today. And I haven't finished reading this one article about ancient Egyptian mummies before there's a scream and Britney comes running out of the back still wearing a paper dress and bare feet, like this is a big deal, like maybe she never had an abortion before, because she runs barefoot all the way back to my apartment, and to make her stop shaking and throwing up I have to ask her to marry me.

And it's obvious my friends are insanely jealous because they throw me this bachelor party, and when Britney goes to the ladies' room all bummed out because the chef won't carve her a war canoe, my so-called "friends" all look at me and say, "Dude, she is the total most-hot best thing ever, but we don't think she's stoned...." My best friends say, "You didn't marry her yet, did you?" And their faces don't say Brit being knocked up is good news. And you know the feeling: You want your best friends and your fiancée to mesh, but my friends grit their teeth and look at me with their eyebrows worried tight together in the middle, and they say, "Dude, did it ever cross your mind that maybe—just maybe—Britney is mentally retarded?"

And I tell them to relax. She's just an alcoholic. I'm pretty certain she's a heroin junkie, too. That, and she's a sexual compulsive, but it's nothing so bad some talk therapy wouldn't fix her. Look at me: I'm



"Don't worry about the dragon. We have separate caves."

fat; nobody's perfect. And maybe instead of a wedding reception we could get our two families together in a hotel conference room to surprise her with an intervention, and instead of a honeymoon we could get Britney committed to a 90-day inpatient recovery program. We'll work through this. But no way is she retarded. She just needs some rehab.

It's obvious they're only bad-mouthing Britney because they are actually totally Romeo-boner, insanely jealous. The minute I looked the other way, they'd be so up in her business. They say, "Dude, don't look now, but you fucked a retard," and that's how unpopular I am, that I have to settle for these shitty friends. Brit, they insist, has the intellect of a six-year-old. They think they're doing me a favor when they tell me, "Dude, she can't love you because she doesn't have the capacity."

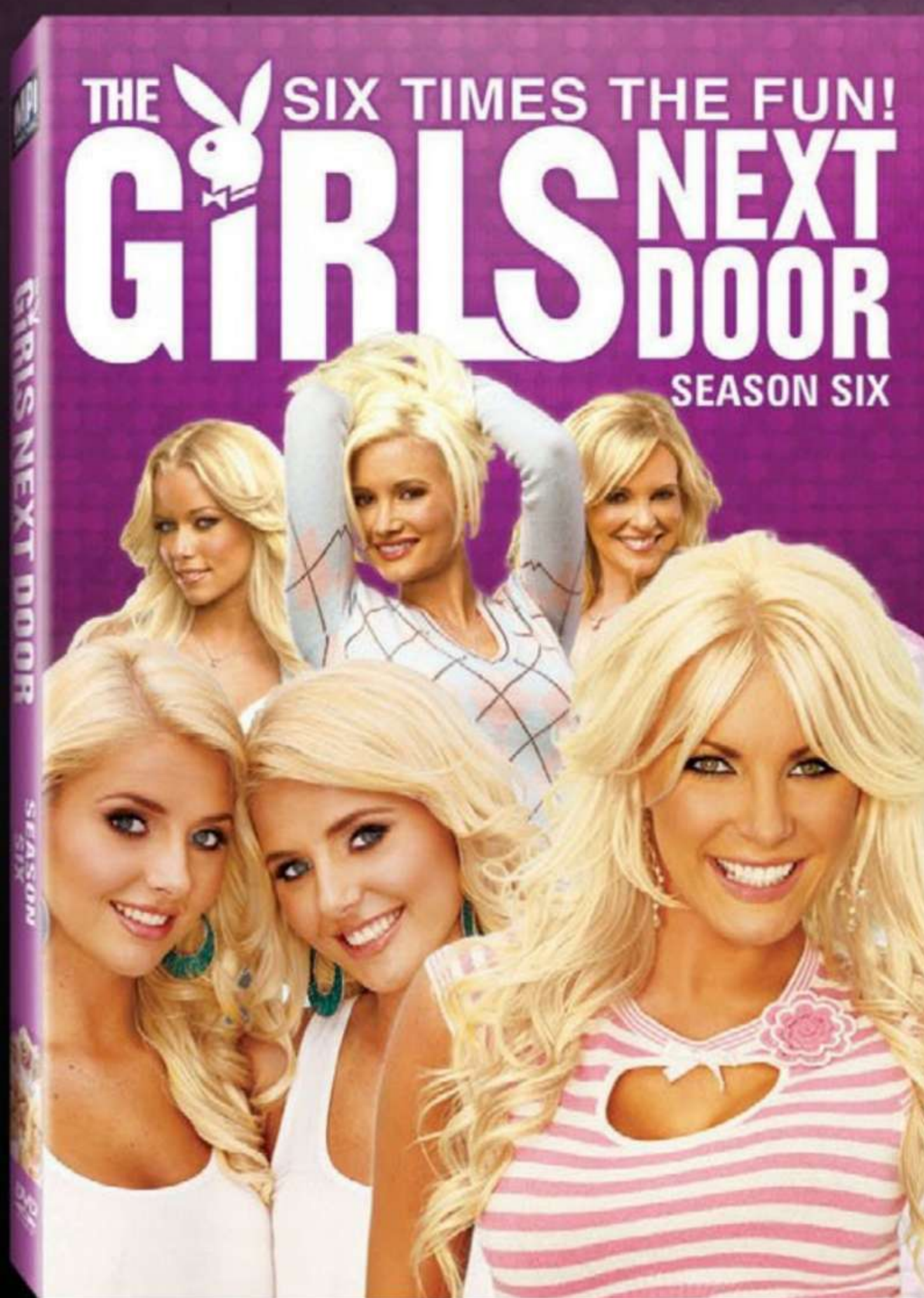
Like the only way somebody would marry me is if she had irreparable brain damage. And I tell them, "She can't be retarded, for crying out loud, because she wears a *pink thong*." And it has to be love because every time we're together I come so hard my stomach hurts. And it's like I told my mom's boyfriend at Thanksgiving, no, Britney is not a *high-functioning anything*. My best guess is she's an alcoholic, glue-sniffing, dope-shooting slut, but we're working on getting her into treatment after she has the babies. And maybe she's a nymphomaniac, but what's important here is she's *my* nymphomaniac, and that drives my family crazy with envy. I tell them, "I'm in love with a beautiful sex-crazed slut, so why can't you just be happy for me?"

And after all that fuss there's a lot less people at our wedding than you'd expect.

And it could be that love makes you prejudiced, but I always thought Brit was pretty smart. You know the feeling, when you can watch TV together for a whole year and you both never argue over what shows. Seriously, if you knew how much TV we watch every week, you'd call us a happy marriage.

And now I have two little babies who smell like Thanksgiving pies. And when they're old enough I'm going to tell my little girls that everybody looks a little crazy if you're looking close enough, and if you can't look that close then you don't really love them. All the while life goes around, and it goes around. And if you keep waiting for somebody perfect you'll never find love, because it's how much you love them that makes them perfect. And maybe I'm the retarded one because I keep waking up expecting my happiness to run out when I should just enjoy it. Being this crazy-in-love happy simply cannot be so easy. And I can't expect such total happiness to last the rest of my life, and there's got to be something wrong with me if I love my wife so much, and for right now I'm driving my new family home from the hospital with my beautiful wife sitting next to me and our twin baby girls safe in the backseat, and I'm still worried how happiness this great can't last forever when Britney screams, "Slug bug!" and her fist clobbers my shoulder so hard I almost crash us into a whole Dairy Queen.

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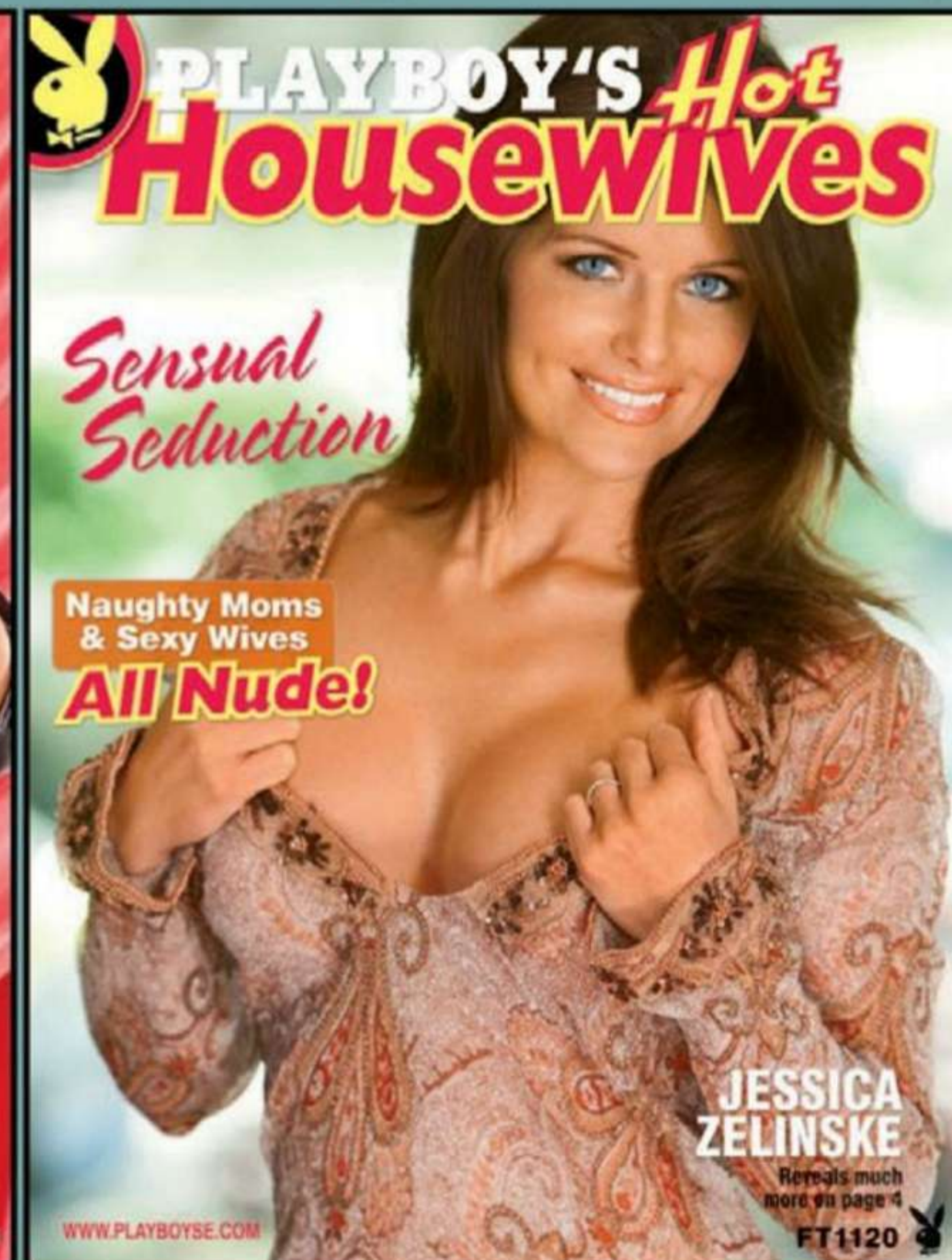
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JAMES FRANCO

(continued from page 44)

manager told the boss he'd found \$2 in one of the aprons and said I was trying to steal. It turns out he had taken, like, \$10,000. Later, when I wanted a car and my parents said they'd match whatever I could pay, I got a job driving carts at the Palo Alto Golf Course. I would read stuff like *Naked Lunch* in the cart, and they let me go when they caught me reading the sequel to *A Separate Peace*. Another summer I got a job with a friend on his father's construction crew, but we just got high every day.

PLAYBOY: Your father now runs a nonprofit and a shipping container business. Did he try to steer you toward a practical career?

FRANCO: I was good in math, and I think my father was overjoyed when I was given an internship at Lockheed Martin. But that experience showed me I never wanted to work in that environment.

PLAYBOY: You've spoken in the past about having sold your junior high school classmates sample bottles of cologne stolen from department stores. Sometimes you'd urinate in the bottles and give them away just before a big dance to guys you didn't like. What's the extent of the trouble you got into as a kid?

FRANCO: I was arrested for a lot of petty crimes. It added up. I was a ward of the court and was put on probation. Finally, I'd had enough chances, but they gave me one final chance, and fortunately I didn't get into any trouble after that. Otherwise I guess it could have been like Lindsay Lohan, when she's on probation and then she's accused of stealing a necklace, and it's a kind of small thing that becomes a big thing. It's like probation doesn't end.

PLAYBOY: Speaking of Lohan, in 2007 gossip writers reported that your alleged refusal to accept her gift of an expensive watch and ignoring her at a post-Golden Globes party sent her off to Wonderland Center days later.

FRANCO: I bought a house that had belonged to the film director Bob Rafelson, across the street from the Chateau Marmont, right behind where the old Marlboro Man billboard used to be. Somebody after Rafelson had remodeled some of the rooms into weird shapes, so while I was remodeling, I stayed at the Chateau, where Lindsay had been living a few years. We became friends, but there was no romantic connection. I don't think I broke her heart. I don't think her going to rehab had anything to do with feelings she might or might not have had.

PLAYBOY: Getting back to your high school days, when did sex enter the picture?

FRANCO: When I was about 12 my mom left one of those puberty development books for me to find on the table, like, "Oh, what's this doing here?" When I was in seventh grade some eighth-grade friends showed me my first porno—a weird one. I haven't seen anything like it since. The woman put her head in a toilet bowl. More friends started finding their parents' pornos or whatever, and we'd watch them together.

PLAYBOY: Was the porn watching for guys only?

FRANCO: There would be these weird get-togethers with a group of guys and a group of girls, but there was no penetration or anything, just fondling. You wouldn't even kiss, really, just fool around for a while and then switch. It was all straight. And that developed into Truth or Dare parties where people started kissing.

PLAYBOY: When did you lose your virginity?

FRANCO: In high school with my girlfriend. I think girls liked me, but I was awkward, shy and emotionally immature, so I didn't have a ton of girlfriends. I had short-term relationships and always got dumped, I think because I was too slow for them.

PLAYBOY: Who was your girlfriend?

FRANCO: Her name was Jasmine. We went out freshman year and then I blew it. She kind of got over me, but we got back together at the beginning of junior year and dated for two years. She was my first real relationship.

PLAYBOY: What did you want to be back then?

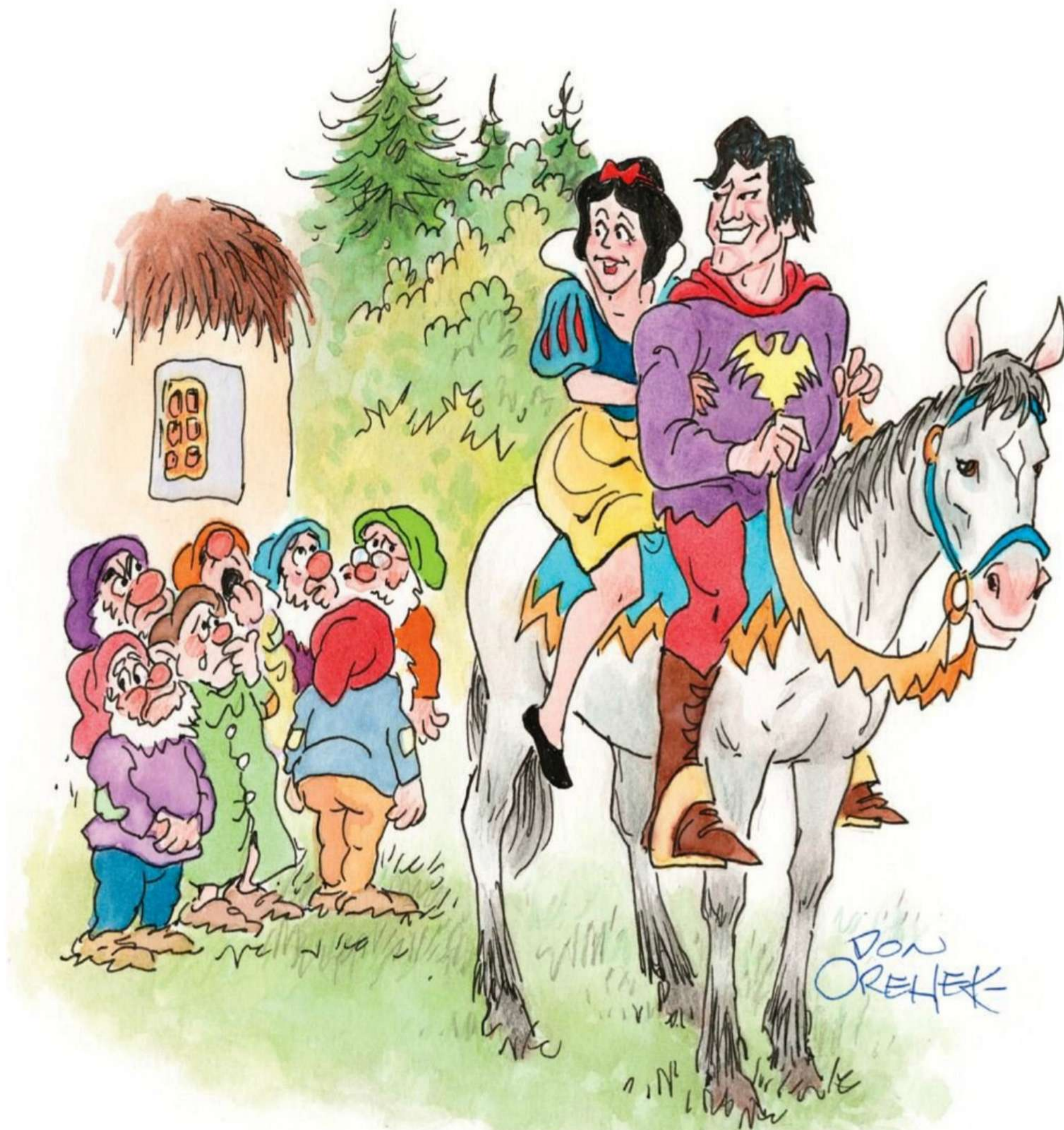
FRANCO: I really wanted to go to art school and be an artist. I'd been doing a lot of painting. My grandmother and my uncle deal in Japanese art, and when I was 15 or 16 my grandparents took me to Japan, and I visited the artists my grandmother represents. I had been reading Kerouac and Ginsberg, and they were always going to exotic places. I kept thinking I was stuck in Palo Alto and needed to experience the world. It's embarrassing to admit, but I think I was also watching too much *Beverly Hills 90210*. Dylan [Luke Perry's character] had seen the world and was a surfer, so I thought I had to go to Hawaii. Despite my being a juvenile delinquent to a certain extent, my mother and father gave me that gift. They were figuring out how to be parents in some ways. Of course I was on probation, so my mom actually had to come to Hawaii with me and my girlfriend.

PLAYBOY: Did your parents support your wanting to be an artist?

FRANCO: They gave me a lot, but when my dad found out I was going to 40 hours of art classes a week at one point, he tried to cut that down. I wanted to go to Rhode Island School of Design, but they said they weren't going to pay for art school, so I didn't even apply. But my brother Tom got to go to art school.

PLAYBOY: How did acting come into the picture?

FRANCO: Jasmine was an actress and took it very seriously. This guy had asked her to do a romantic one-act, and I felt he was making a play for her. It came out as anger because he was doing something romantic with my girlfriend. What probably got to me was the fact that he was doing something artistic and I wasn't.



"I'm sorry, guys. I'm moving on to bigger things."

PLAYBOY: How did that lead you to acting?

FRANCO: I'd always loved movies and I'd done some acting in junior high, but in high school all the insecurities came out. I was too scared to pursue any of my interests in a serious way. When Jasmine did that play, it was like the excuse I'd been waiting for. Somehow in my brain I computed that I would show her by joining the acting class. I got the leads in the last two plays of my senior year.

PLAYBOY: Did you want to go to drama school?

FRANCO: By then it was too late for me to apply to drama schools, but I was accepted to UCLA in 1996. I dropped out and went to an acting school, got a manager after six months and went out for tons of TV pilots, which is when they tell you things like "You blink too much" or, as they told Adrien Brody, "Get a nose job." It's horrible.

PLAYBOY: Was there a TV show or movie you really wanted?

FRANCO: There was a role I didn't get that I've made a part of *Rebel*, the piece I've done with some really gifted artists for this year's Venice Biennale. I had a small part in this bad little 2002 C-movie, *Deuces Wild*. I auditioned but didn't get the role that Brad Renfro eventually got. That was the most devastated I've ever been. I didn't think he was right for the role. He was in bad shape at that point, but he got cast because he was a name. Martin Scorsese was executive producer. Everybody thought it was going to be the next *Mean Streets* and that Brad's role was going to be like De Niro's in that movie. Anyway, we're doing

this whole piece about Brad for the Biennale, and this is a part of it I want to show you. [lowers his shirt sleeve] I carved BRAD into my shoulder with a switchblade.

PLAYBOY: Why?

FRANCO: Heath Ledger died a week after Brad, and I feel Brad has been forgotten already. They didn't even mention his death at the Oscars that year. Now, about 10 years after *Deuces Wild*, I realize that the other roles I didn't do or didn't get don't matter. I auditioned for the Coen brothers for the role Josh Brolin did in *No Country for Old Men*. I'm happy they made a good movie, and it would have been nice to be in it, but there's no *one* role, you know?

PLAYBOY: Participating in the Venice Biennale is by invitation only and a big deal. What are the specifics of your project?

FRANCO: It's a huge project I'm incredibly honored and proud to be presenting. It's based on *Rebel Without a Cause*, and some of the best contemporary artists alive—Paul McCarthy, Douglas Gordon, Ed Ruscha, Aaron Young, Damon McCarthy and Harmony Korine—worked on different sections. I wanted Robert Pattinson to be in the project, but when Harmony contacted him and told him the concept, Rob said, "I don't get the point," so that was that.

PLAYBOY: Is it true you wanted to do a *Twilight* movie?

FRANCO: I had my agent tell [director] Bill Condon that I'd be happy to do anything in *Breaking Dawn*, but that was because it was supposed to be part of a multimedia project at Yale. I was working with a Yale undergraduate who had written an autobio-

yes, I've done work I'm proud of. But even though I have great pride in those movies, the pride goes only so far. I was still just the actor. I didn't write or direct them or come up with the story. My hope is that as I continue to act and direct, people will see the work is all connected.

PLAYBOY: In your life and work you tend to make unpredictable choices, like turning up uncredited in *Knocked Up* and in smaller roles in *Date Night*, *In the Valley of Elah* and *Nights in Rodanthe*.

FRANCO: I don't do things for any other reason than that they interest me or let me work with people I like. I'm getting ready to play Robert Mapplethorpe—a pretty thin guy—so this summer I've started working out.

PLAYBOY: The movie projects you may direct include Cormac McCarthy's *Blood*

Meridian and William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*. More immediately, though, one project you're set to tackle after playing Robert Mapplethorpe is a movie you've written about Sal Mineo, who co-starred in *Rebel Without a Cause* with James Dean. Both the Mapplethorpe and Mineo projects center on complex, significant artists who also happen to be gay.

FRANCO: I'm working very hard on *Oz: The Great and Powerful* with Sam Raimi. That's my next project, but I'm not the one who will make or break that movie. On the side, I'm doing these smaller projects that my heart and soul are in, doing them for the budget that they should be done because they're not going to attract large audiences. I feel I have a moment right now when I can

point to different things I think are interesting, things that maybe haven't been understood by the greater public.

PLAYBOY: Having already accomplished so much at the age of 33, what's left for you to do?

FRANCO: I don't know if lightning will strike me after this interview, but if it all went away, I really wouldn't have cause to complain, because I've been given more than my share. I've fulfilled most of my dreams. I'll start teaching next year, but there are a lot of other ways I can give back, and I hope to do more of that. I feel I've been given a lot of gifts, and I believe that when you're given something, you need to give back, as cheesy as that sounds.

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graphical play about putting on a theatrical production of *Twilight* in which I was a character. So I was interested in *Twilight* because I was going to be part of that play. I thought what a great connection it would be if I were also involved with the real *Twilight*.

PLAYBOY: You've spoken in the past about having been unhappy with your work, especially five or six years ago when you were doing such movies as *Annapolis*, *Tristan + Isolde* and *The Great Raid*. Has your satisfaction level changed, especially since *Milk* and *127 Hours*?

FRANCO: I always felt I was on the outside, looking for the people doing the good stuff, but they weren't letting me in. Now I feel I'm getting to work with all my heroes, like Gus Van Sant on *Milk* and Danny Boyle on *127 Hours*, and at this point I can say



CRANSTON

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friends who wanted to get high and go to concerts. But if I smoked a joint, I would pass out before the first song.

Q3

PLAYBOY: How about booze?

CRANSTON: As I've gotten older I don't even like drinking anymore. I had a big birthday not long ago, double nickels, and the metabolism of your body changes when you get to this age. Interestingly, it's the exact opposite problem I had with pot. If I have more than just one glass of wine with dinner, I'll wake up in the middle of the night, not to pee but because of the sugars in the wine. Then I'm not well rested and the rest of the day is ruined. It's just not worth it.

Q4

PLAYBOY: Walter White, your character on *Breaking Bad*, is a former chemistry teacher. Do you have a favorite element on the periodic table?

CRANSTON: Californium is my favorite. It just sounds fun. [sings] "I came from Californium with a banjo on my knee." In high school, I remember being morally indignant that the symbol for iron was *Fe*. I was like, "You're just trying to fool us! You're trying to make it difficult!"

Q5

PLAYBOY: The show is shot on location in Albuquerque, New Mexico, which is pretty much in the middle of a desert. How do you entertain yourself when you're not working?

CRANSTON: One of the best parts about spending any time in this state is getting acclimated to the culture. The biggest question you get when you come here is "Red or green?" That would be chilies, the red and green chilies that are indigenous to this area. I have a fondness for the green.

They're hot, really spicy and go on everything. I put them on my ice cream.

Q6

PLAYBOY: *Breaking Bad* deals with some pretty intense themes. How do you keep the mood light on the set?

CRANSTON: We play a lot of practical jokes on one another. I'm always looking for opportunities to goof off. Just last week I was doing a love scene with Anna Gunn, who plays my wife. We are in bed, making out, and I'm naked. There's a moment in the scene when I get up and walk to the bathroom, and you see my ass. Without telling her, I put on these big adult diapers. After we made love, I got out of bed, and I could hear her laughing behind me. I finally turned around and said to her, "Next time can we try one of my fantasies?"

Q7

PLAYBOY: Speaking of sex scenes, you had a memorable one with Julia Roberts in *Larry Crowne*. Was that thrilling or intimidating?

CRANSTON: Oh, definitely intimidating. Before we shot the movie, I went on a diet and bleached my teeth and got one of those spray tans. I wanted it to seem like we were at least viable as a couple. So we're doing the scene, and right away I'm lying on top of her. I met her maybe a month before, and now I'm lying on top of her. Our noses are touching, we're waiting, and we hear Tom Hanks, the director, say, "Okay, we need to make an adjustment on the camera. Hang on." So there I am, lying on top of Julia Roberts, and we're making small talk. "So... how are you? You have kids, right?" We're talking about family, whatever, just passing the time. It was probably more awkward for me, because under the sheets, she was wearing sweatpants and a sweatshirt. Tom kept tugging on her shirt. "Aw, Julia, Julia. Come on, we've got to show something. We've got to show a little skin." And me, I'm just wearing a cock sock.

Q8

PLAYBOY: A cock sock?

CRANSTON: It's a sock that goes over your junk. Literally, you stuff your junk into this sock that's attached to a string, which you tie around your waist with a little bow. I've always been like, "And this protects me how?" I don't understand how it's less embarrassing than if I didn't have on anything at all.

Q9

PLAYBOY: Your wife and Tom Hanks's wife, Rita Wilson, are old friends. Has that made for some awkward dinner parties? How do you not feel as though you're auditioning?

CRANSTON: It's never been like that for us. It's always been very normal and comfortable. I don't want anything from Tom, and he doesn't want anything from me. My wife, Robin, and Rita have been friends since college. She was a bridesmaid in Tom and Rita's wedding, so I was there too. I think actors have a tendency to want to hang out with other actors, and there's a reason for that. When you're out there with civilians, you get the same kind of questions again and again: "How do you memorize all those words?" or "Have you ever met so-and-so?" But when you're around other actors, you can talk about other things. Nobody's asking, "What's it like to be in movies?" Because we all already know.

Q10

PLAYBOY: You've won three consecutive Emmy Awards for lead actor in a drama series. Have you kept all three, or have you sold one of them on eBay yet?

CRANSTON: Oh no, I'd never get rid of them. They mean a lot to me. All three are in my office. I walk by sometimes and the glistening gold catches my eye and I think, I cannot believe that happened! Our show isn't eligible for an Emmy this year because AMC decided to push the premiere of our fourth season to the summer. So now people have been coming up to me and saying, "You can't be nominated for an Emmy! You must be freaked out! That's horrible!" And I'm thinking, Are you kidding me? Not being nominated is a relief to me in many ways.

Q11

PLAYBOY: A relief because last year Jon Hamm told the press he planned to "beat the shit" out of you if you won any more Emmys?

CRANSTON: That's part of it, sure. Jon's a younger man, and I'm pretty sure he could kick my ass. Somebody asked me if AMC delayed the airing of *Breaking Bad* to give Jon Hamm a chance to win an Emmy. That's such a hilarious conspiracy theory. I can just imagine that secret board meeting: "We'll take care of Cranston. Tell Jon Hamm to prepare his speech!"

Q12

PLAYBOY: Now that you're so critically acclaimed and award-winning, does that mean you can demand an A-listers salary?

CRANSTON: I have no idea. Honestly, I don't have a clue how much money I make. It really doesn't matter to me. My



"Their relationship is loosely based on true events."

agents know, and sometimes they ask me, "You want to know how much you make?" I don't care. I'm sure it's fine. I mean, I don't want to sound glib. I know money is important, but ever since I stopped worrying about finances, I've made more money than I ever thought I'd make in my life. The fact that I make a dependable income at all is just amazing to me.

Q13

PLAYBOY: You were raised in the San Fernando Valley and still live there. The Valley has a reputation for being hot and smoggy and filled with mini-malls. From your experience, does it live up to the stereotype?

CRANSTON: Absolutely. It's exactly what everybody thinks it is. I grew up in Canoga Park, which is in the west end of the Valley. On the East Coast, people had snow days, but we had smog days. I'm not kidding. Every so often there'd be a smog advisory, and parents would get warnings like, "Don't let your kid go outside!" That's a weird thing to hear from your parents. Don't go outside because there's too much smog. But sometimes we'd go out anyway. We'd put on our big smog shoes and go traipsing through the smog. We'd throw smog balls and have smog fights. Or we'd build smog men, using carrots for their noses. It was great fun.

Q14

PLAYBOY: Your parents were both actors. Did that make them more supportive of your acting aspirations or less?

CRANSTON: They were both very supportive. As a kid, I used to visit my dad all the time on the sets of TV shows or movies. It was always exciting. My dad usually got roles in which he died. He was the one who got an arrow in his chest as he shouted, "The Indians are over there!" [*grabs chest and drops to the floor*] And we're like, "Yep, Dad's dead again." That's how I fell in love with acting.

Q15

PLAYBOY: You studied police science in college. How close did you come to being a cop?

CRANSTON: Shockingly close. When I was 16, I joined the LAPD Explorers in the West Valley. Then I went to L.A. Valley College to study police science, and my counselor told me I needed to take some elective courses. So in my second year, I took classes in acting and stagecraft. On my very first day, I walked into class, and there was this 17-year-old girl sitting on the floor, wearing only a tube top and hot pants. I was like, "Oh...my...God."

Q16

PLAYBOY: So you became an actor for the girls?

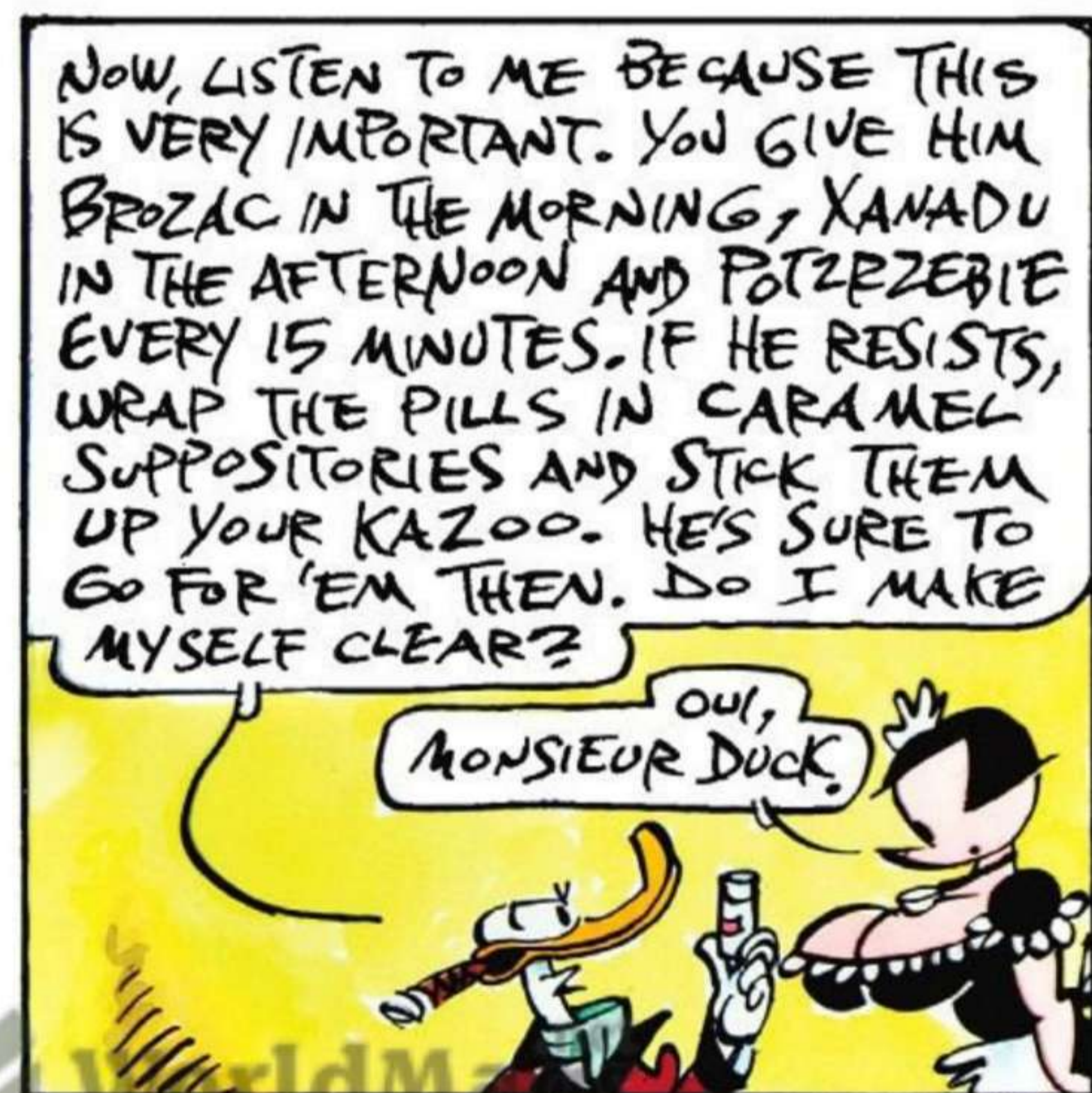
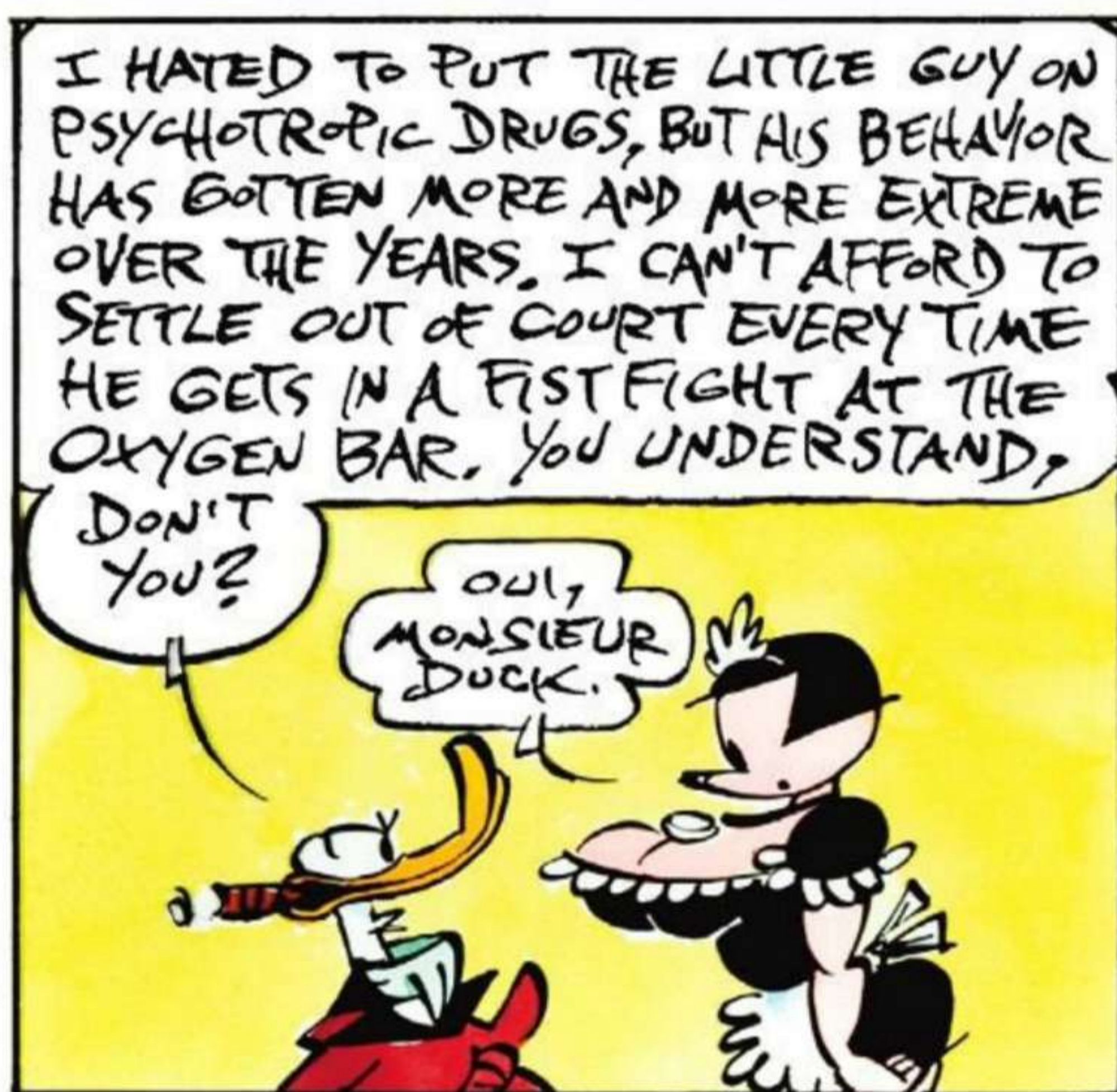
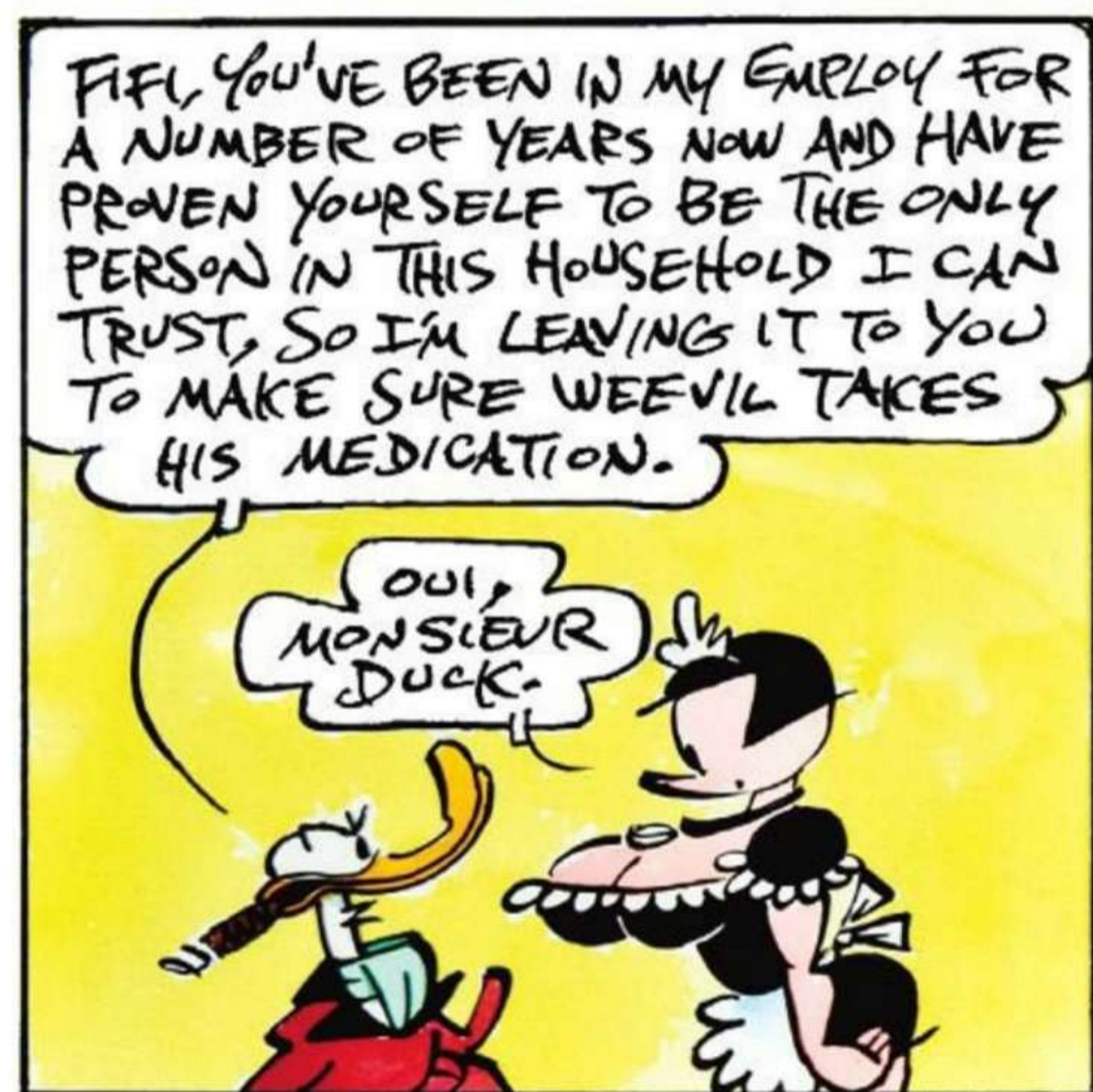
CRANSTON: Yes. From that moment on I was done with police work. The girls in theater arts were so much prettier. I changed the course of an entire life based on the libido of an 18-year-old boy. During my first acting class, I did a scene with a girl—a girl I'd never met before—and we were supposed to be making out on a park bench. I was really hesitant about it, but she attacked me. She wasn't just kissing me, she was deeply tonguing me, arms and hands everywhere. I was so flummoxed, I forgot my lines. Afterward, I was thinking, I need to ask this girl out; she's obviously really into me. So during the break, I asked her if maybe she wanted to go out sometime, get some lunch or dinner. And she looked at me as if I were a puppy. She was like, "Ooooh, sweetie, no, no, I have a boyfriend." I was devastated, but at the same time, I was like, What a great actress! She totally had me fooled.

Q17

PLAYBOY: You and your brother spent two years riding motorcycles around the country. Were you just young and bored, or were you on some kind of Jack Kerouac-esque quest?

CRANSTON: It was just two confused boys running away. My brother was on the verge of becoming a deputy sheriff, and I was grappling with whether I wanted to be a

Dirty Duck ^{by Bobby London}



police officer or an actor. So we got on our motorcycles and just left California with no plan. I had \$70 in my pocket, and that soon ran out. We got odd jobs wherever we could. We worked at cafés, in carnivals, at beachfront hotels selling suntan lotion, earning just enough to get back on the road. We camped everywhere, the cheaper the better. Just a patch of grass was all we needed. A few times we stayed at midnight missions, in Texas and Louisiana, and those were always scary. They were like prison.

Q18

PLAYBOY: Are you being hyperbolic? How was sleeping in a mission like prison?

CRANSTON: Well, I've never been to prison, so it's just a guess. First of all, they take all your clothes, because they don't want you to leave before the sermon. You're standing naked with all these alcoholics, getting a cold shower with a bar of soap the size of a quarter. Then you're given a blanket and a bunk, and you try to get some sleep in a room full of people with the worst gas in the world. All night they're farting and belching and coughing up blood. The next morning, you get your clothes back, but they all smell like booze and shit. And then you listen to proselytizing while choking back melba toast and canned orange juice. Honestly, after sleeping in a mission, I bet prison would be a breeze.

Q19

PLAYBOY: This may be unrelated, but you're also an ordained minister. Please explain.

CRANSTON: When I was in my late teens I spent my summers on Catalina Island. I met

this guy named Reverend Bob, an older guy in his 40s who made a living doing wedding ceremonies. One time he said to me, "Bryan, I messed up. I booked two weddings on the same day. Would you help me out?" I jokingly said okay, and he typed up a certificate and sent it to the secretary of state, and just like that, I was a minister. Since then I've married maybe a dozen couples.

Q20

PLAYBOY: Probably your most iconic scene from the Fox sitcom *Malcolm in the Middle*, on which you played the father for seven seasons, was when your character danced in his underwear in front of a mirror, pinching his flab and celebrating his middle-aged body. Have you personally experienced a moment like that?

CRANSTON: Oh yeah, all the time. Yesterday on *Breaking Bad* we were shooting a dangerous driving sequence, and I met my stunt double. I was like, That guy looks way too old to be playing me. He's like somebody's grandfather. And then all day, people were coming up to me and saying, "Bryan, your stunt double looks exactly like you! He's a perfect match." Talk about a slap in the face. So then I looked at the stunt guy again and it was like, Wow, okay. That's what people see when they look at me. They see this old bald guy. Oh my God, that's who I am! It was a very existential moment of self-realization. It was a very similar experience to being in your underwear, accepting who you are and who you've become.



LIVE NUDE Models

(continued from page 94)

and women together was more comfortable, generally, than making a private exhibition for a solitary male, and evenings at Bob and Cynthia's were convivial. The routine followed the lines of every life-drawing class since publication of Kimon Nicolaidis's *The Natural Way to Draw* and probably long before it: a series of rapid-fire poses so the artists could loosen with gestural sketches, then five- or 10-minute poses, then a few held long enough for a study—also long enough that the model might pause to stretch or even don a robe and take a five-minute break before resuming. Between poses the artists wandered to see others' work, and I did this too. Sometimes the models roamed too, in their robes. Other times they were uninterested in the results. I worked with Cray-Pas or gray or colored pencil, or compressed charcoal and, less often, painted in watercolor and gouache. I was less patient than the adults—I was there learning patience, as much as anything—and remember feeling "finished" with studies before the longer poses were done and then watching the clock. Apart from that lapse I worked in absorption, as with all absorbing work since I recall precisely zero from the mental interior of the experience.

What I wasn't doing—I'd know—was mental slaving. The Tex Avery wolf of sexual voraciousness not only restrained his eyeballs from first swelling like dirigibles and then bursting like loaded cigars, he slept. Any account of the evolutionary "hardwiring" of lust is stuck, I guess, dismissing me now as an outlier, or just a liar. The superextensive actuality of women's bodies before my eyes was either too much or too little for me to make masturbatory mincemeat of. Both too much and too little: The scrutiny was too much, the context too little. I don't mean they weren't sexy bodies. I'd guess they were. But Jonathan-seeing-them wasn't sexy at all. Even as I recorded with my charcoal or crayon the halo of untrimmed pubic bush and the flesh-braid of mystery that it haloed, I attained a total non-purchase on those bodies as objects of desire. The palace of lust was a site under construction—that's what I was off doing at night or afternoons, fantasizing about girls I knew who'd never even show me their knees. Then I slavered plenty.

Did I, in my imaginings, substitute for my non-girlfriends' unconquerable forms the visual stuff I'd gleaned at drawing group? Nope. As much as a T-shirt's neckline or tube top's horizon might seem a cruel limit to my wondering gaze, I didn't want my imagination to supply the pink pebbly fact of aureole and nipple like those I'd examined under bright light for hours at a time. It wasn't that I found real women's bodies unappetizing but that I didn't have any use for them in the absolute visual sphere within which I'd gained access. Much like a person who's disappointed or confused at seeing the face attached to the voice of a radio personality well known to their ears and then realizes that no face would have seemed any more appropriate, I suspect I didn't really make mental nudie shots of girls my age. I didn't picture them undressed; I imagined undressing them and the situations in which such

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a thing would be imaginable. My eyeballs wanted to be fingertips. I was a romantic.

A romantic teenage boy, that is. My romance encompassed a craving for illicit glimpses, not because I lacked visual information but as rehearsals of transgression and discovery. A craving for craving, especially in the social context of other teenage boys, that mass of horny romantics. But we're talking about a terrible low point in the history of teenage access to pornography: Everyone's dad had canceled his PLAYBOY subscription in a simultaneous feminist epiphany a few years before (that everyone's dad had once subscribed to PLAYBOY was a golden myth; I trust it was halfway true). The internet was a millennium away. A friend and I were actually excited when we discovered a cache of back issues of *Sexology*, a black-and-white crypto-scientific pulp magazine, in the plaster and lathe of a ruined brownstone on Wyckoff Street. Pity us. When a couple of snootily gorgeous older teenage girls suddenly moved into the upper duplex of a house on Dean Street, there was some talk among the block's boys about climbing a nearby tree for a leer, a notion as halcyon-suburban as anything in my childhood. But the London plane trees shading our block had no branches low enough to be climbable, had likely been selected precisely for their resistance to burglars. The point is, I was as thrilled to imagine glimpsing the sisters as any of the other schemers. I could very well have gone off to drawing group the evening of that same day but made no mental conjugation between the desired object and the wasted abundance before me.

Only two uneasy memories bridge this gulf, between the eunuch-child who breezed through a world of live nude models and the hormonal disaster site I was the rest of the time. One glitch was the constant threat or promise that a drawing group model would cancel at the last minute, since tradition had it that one of the circle would volunteer for duty instead. Two of the group's members were younger women—named, incredibly enough, Hazel and Laurel—for whom I harbored modest but definite boy-to-woman crushes and with whom I may have managed even to be legibly flirtatious. If one evening a model had canceled and either Hazel or Laurel took her clothes off, I'd likely have been pitched headfirst into the chasm of my disassociation. I never faced this outcome. The only substitute model ever to volunteer

on my watch was our host, the hairily cherubic Bobby Ramirez. But I would never forget what *didn't* happen, who *didn't* undress. You may choose to see this evidence against my assertion that the scene was not a sexual one for me. I choose to see it as certifying proof of my capacity for fantasizing about clothed women who lingered in the periphery of my vision *at the exact instant* I ignored naked ones in the center of my vision.

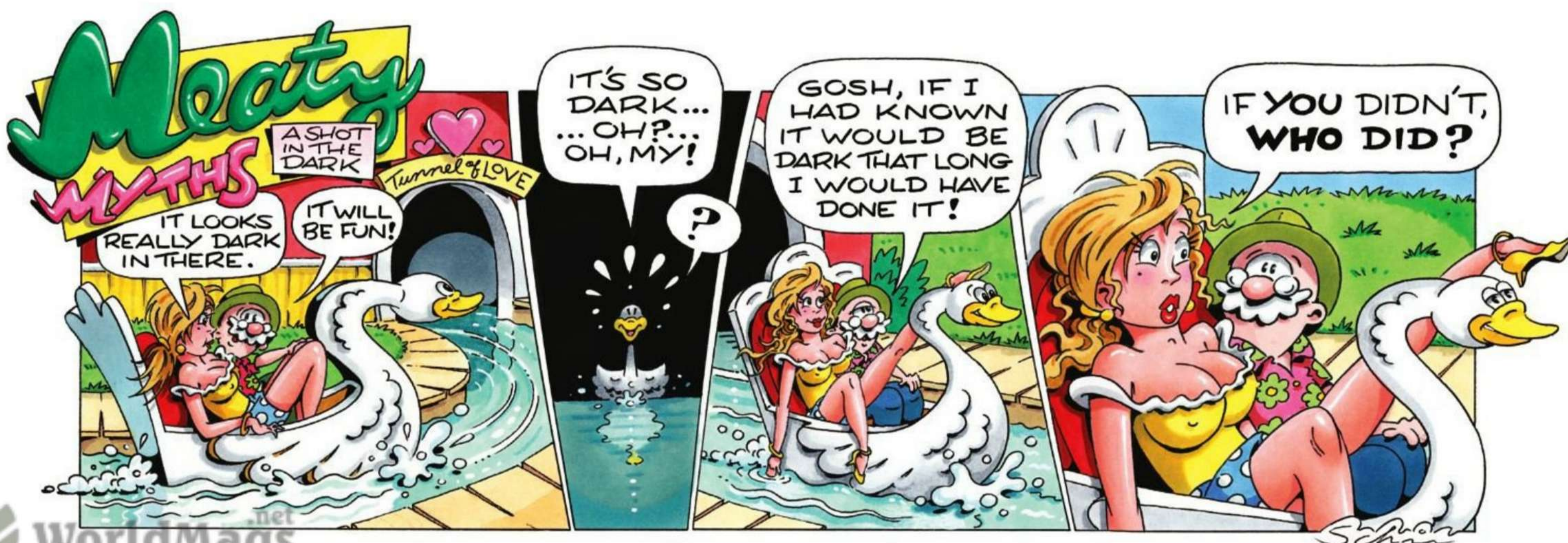
The second slippage took place not at drawing group but in my room, with my friend Karl. We were 14. Karl and I usually drew superhero comics together, but this afternoon, deep into the porn drought of the 1970s, we drifted into trying to produce our own, doodling fantasy females without the veil of a cape or utility belt. At one point Karl reached an impasse in his attempt to do justice to the naked lady in his mind's eye and let me analyze the problem. Yes, the nipples were too small, and placed too high, on the gargantuan breasts Karl had conjured. He'd also too much defaulted to the slim, squared-off frame of the supermen we'd been compulsively perfecting. "Do you mind?" I asked. Taking the drawing from Karl, I compacted and softened the torso and widened the hips, gave his fantasy volume and weight, splitting the difference between the unreal ratio and something more persuasive. He'd handed me a teenage boy's fantasy and I, a teenage boy, passed back a woman, even if one who'd need back surgery in the long run. Karl and I were both, I think, unnerved, and we never returned to this exact pursuit. Our next crack at DIY porn was retrograde and bawdy, a comic called *Super-Dick*, with images that were barely better than stick figures.

Confessing for the first time my authorship of *Super-Dick*, I'm flabbergasted, not at the dereliction of parental authority that would traipse nude women past the gaze of a boy still excited to sketch with ballpoint pen a hieroglyphic cock-and-balls in cape and boots and have it catapult into the obliging hairy face of a villain named Pussy-Man, but at the Möbius strip of consciousness that enabled that boy to walk around believing himself a single person instead of two or a hundred. If I've bet my life's work on a suspicion that we live at least as much in our wishes and dreams, our constructions and projections, as we do in any real waking life, the existence of which we can demonstrate by rapping it with

our knuckles, perhaps my non-utilization of the live nude models helped me place the bet. How could I ever be astonished to see how we human animals slide into the vicarious at the faintest invitation, leaving vast flaming puddings of the Real uneaten? I did.

My last year at the High School of Music and Art a teacher booked a nude model for us to draw in an advanced drawing class, one consisting only of graduating seniors. By chance this was the last time I'd ever sketch from a nude model, though I couldn't have known it at the time. By implication this was a privilege we seniors had earned after four years of art school: to be treated like adults. Still, there was plenty of nervous joking in the days before, and, when the moment came, the doors and windows were kept carefully shaded against eyes other than those of us in the class. Needless to say, I felt blasé for several reasons, not least my own recent sexual initiation. I'd also begun to reformat myself as a future writer rather than an apprentice artist (at 17 I'd already been an apprentice artist a long time), and everything to do with my final high school semester felt beneath my serious attention.

Yet ironically, I'll never forget the model that day. I remember her body when I've forgotten the others—had forgotten them, usually, by the time I'd begun spraying fixative on my last drawing of them, before they'd finished dressing. I remember her not because she was either uncannily gorgeous or ugly, or because I experienced some disconcerting arousal, but for an eye-grabbing anatomical feature: the most protuberant clitoris I'd seen, or have since. This wasn't something I could have found language to explain to my fellow students that day, if I wanted to (I didn't). The model showed no discomfort with her body. She posed, beneath vile fluorescence, standing atop the wobbling, standard-issue New York City Department of Education tables I'd been around my whole life, the four legs of which never seemed capable of reaching the floor simultaneously, and we 30-odd teenagers drew her, the whole of us sober, respectfully hushed, a trace bored if you were me, but anyhow living up to the teacher's expectation. But I do remember thinking: I know and they don't. (The boys, that would be who I meant.) I remember thinking: They'll think they're all that way.



Failed States

(continued from page 50)

Failing states such as Afghanistan and Myanmar have become sources of illegal drugs. In 2009 Afghanistan supplied 89 percent of the world's opium, much of it made into heroin. Myanmar, though a distant second, is a major heroin supplier for China.

The conditions of state failure may be a long time in the making, but the collapse itself can come quickly. Yemen, for example, is facing several threatening trends. It is running out of both oil and water. The underground basin that supplies the capital city of Sanaa with water may be fully depleted by 2015. Oil production, which accounts for 75 percent of government revenue and an even larger share of export earnings, fell by nearly 40 percent from 2003 to 2009. And with the country's two main oil fields seriously depleted, there is nothing in sight to reverse the decline.

Underlying these stresses is a fast-growing, poverty-stricken population, one of the poorest among the Arab countries. On the political front, the shaky Yemeni government faces a Shiite insurgency in the north and a deepening of the long-standing conflict between the north and the south. As the Arab Spring spread to Yemen, efforts to oust President Ali Abdullah Saleh had the country on the brink of civil war as of mid-2011. With its long, porous border with Saudi Arabia, Yemen could become a staging ground and gateway for Al Qaeda to move into Saudi Arabia. Could the ultimate Al Qaeda goal of controlling Saudi Arabia, both a center of Islam and the world's leading exporter of oil, finally be within reach?

Ranking on the Failed States Index is closely linked with demographic indicators. The populations in 15 of the top 20 failing states are growing between two percent and four percent a year. Niger tops this list at 3.9 percent, and Afghanistan's population is growing by 3.4 percent. Yemen is 2.9 percent. A population growing at three percent a year may not sound overwhelming, but it will expand 20-fold in a century. In failing states, big families are the norm, not the exception, with women in a number of countries bearing an average of six or more children.

In 14 of the top 20 failing states at least 40 percent of the population is under the age of 15, a demographic indicator that raises the likelihood of political instability. Young men lacking employment opportunities often become disaffected and ready recruits for insurgencies.

In many countries with several decades of rapid population growth, governments suffer from demographic fatigue and are unable to cope with the steady shrinkage in cropland and freshwater supply per person. They cannot build schools fast enough to educate the swelling ranks of children.

Sudan is a classic case of a country caught in the demographic trap. Like many failing states, it has developed far enough economically and socially to reduce mortality but not far enough to lower fertility. As a result, large families beget poverty and poverty begets large families. Women in Sudan have on average four children, double the number needed for replacement. This expands the population of 42 million by 2,000 a day. Under this pressure, Sudan—like other countries in similar situations—is breaking down.

All but four of the 20 countries that lead the list of failing states are caught in this demographic trap. Realistically, they probably cannot break out of it on their own. They will need outside help to raise education levels, especially of girls. In every society for which we have data, the more education women have, the smaller their families. And the smaller the families, the easier it is to break out of poverty.

Failed states are losing the race between food production and population growth. Even getting food relief to failing states can be a challenge. In Somalia, threats from Al Shabaab, an Al Qaeda-affiliated radical group, and the killing of food relief workers effectively ended efforts to provide food assistance in the southern part of the hunger-stricken country.

Another characteristic of failing states is the deterioration of the economic infrastructure—roads, power, water and sewage systems. For example, a lack of maintenance has left many irrigation canal networks in an advanced state of disrepair, often no longer able to deliver water to farmers.

Virtually all the top 20 countries are depleting their natural assets—forests, grasslands, soils and aquifers—to sustain their rapidly growing populations. The three countries at the top of the list—Somalia, Chad and Sudan—are losing topsoil to wind erosion, thus undermining the productivity of their land. Several countries, including Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan and Yemen, are water-stressed and are overpumping their aquifers.

After a point, as rapid population growth, deteriorating environmental support systems and poverty reinforce one another, the resulting instability makes it difficult to attract investment from abroad. A drying up of foreign investment and an associated rise in unemployment are also part of the decline syndrome.

In an age of increasing globalization, a functioning global society depends on a cooperative network of stable nation-states. When governments lose their capacity to govern, they can no longer collect taxes, much less be responsible for their international debts. More failing states mean more bad debt. Efforts to control international terrorism also depend on cooperation among functioning nation-states. As more states fail, such cooperation becomes less effective.

Failing states may lack health care systems sophisticated enough to participate in international efforts to control the spread of infectious diseases, such as polio, avian flu, swine flu and mad cow disease. In 1988 the international community launched an effort to eradicate polio, a campaign patterned on the one that eliminated smallpox. The goal was to eliminate the disease that used to paralyze an average of 1,000 children each day. By 2003 polio had been eradicated in all but a few countries, among them Afghanistan, India, Nigeria and Pakistan.

But that year mullahs in northern Nigeria, now 14th on the failing-states list, began to oppose the vaccination program, claiming it was a plot to spread AIDS and sterility. As a result, the local vaccination effort broke down, and polio cases in Nigeria tripled over the next three years. Meanwhile, Nigerian Muslims making their annual pilgrimage to Mecca may have spread the disease, reintroducing the virus in some Muslim countries that had been polio-free—such as Indonesia, Chad and Somalia. In response, Saudi



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officials imposed a polio vaccination requirement on all younger visitors from countries with reported cases of polio.

In early 2007, when eradication again appeared to be in sight, violent opposition to vaccinations arose in Pakistan's North-west Frontier Province, where a doctor and a health worker in the Polio Eradication Program were killed. More recently, the Taliban has refused to let health officials administer polio vaccinations in the Swat Valley, further delaying the campaign. This raises a troubling question: In a world of failing states, is the goal of eradicating polio, once so close at hand, now slipping beyond our reach?

So far, failing states have been mostly smaller ones. But some countries with more than 100 million people, such as Pakistan and Nigeria, are working their way up the list. So is Mexico, where both oil production and exports have peaked, lowering the government's tax revenue and foreign exchange. Beyond this, a criminal organization called the Zetas taps government oil pipelines in areas it controls. In 2008 and 2009, the Zetas withdrew more than \$1 billion worth of oil. The government's war with the drug cartels has claimed more than 34,600 lives since 2006, a number that dwarfs American lives lost in Iraq and Afghanistan in the past decade. With income from oil and tourism shrinking—and with foreign investors becoming nervous—the Mexican government is being seriously challenged.

For India, where 15 percent of the people are being fed with grain produced by over-pumping of groundwater, emerging water shortages could trigger its decline. As local conflicts over water multiply and intensify, tension between Hindus and Muslims could reignite, leading to instability.

Fortunately, state failure is not always a one-way street. South Africa, which could

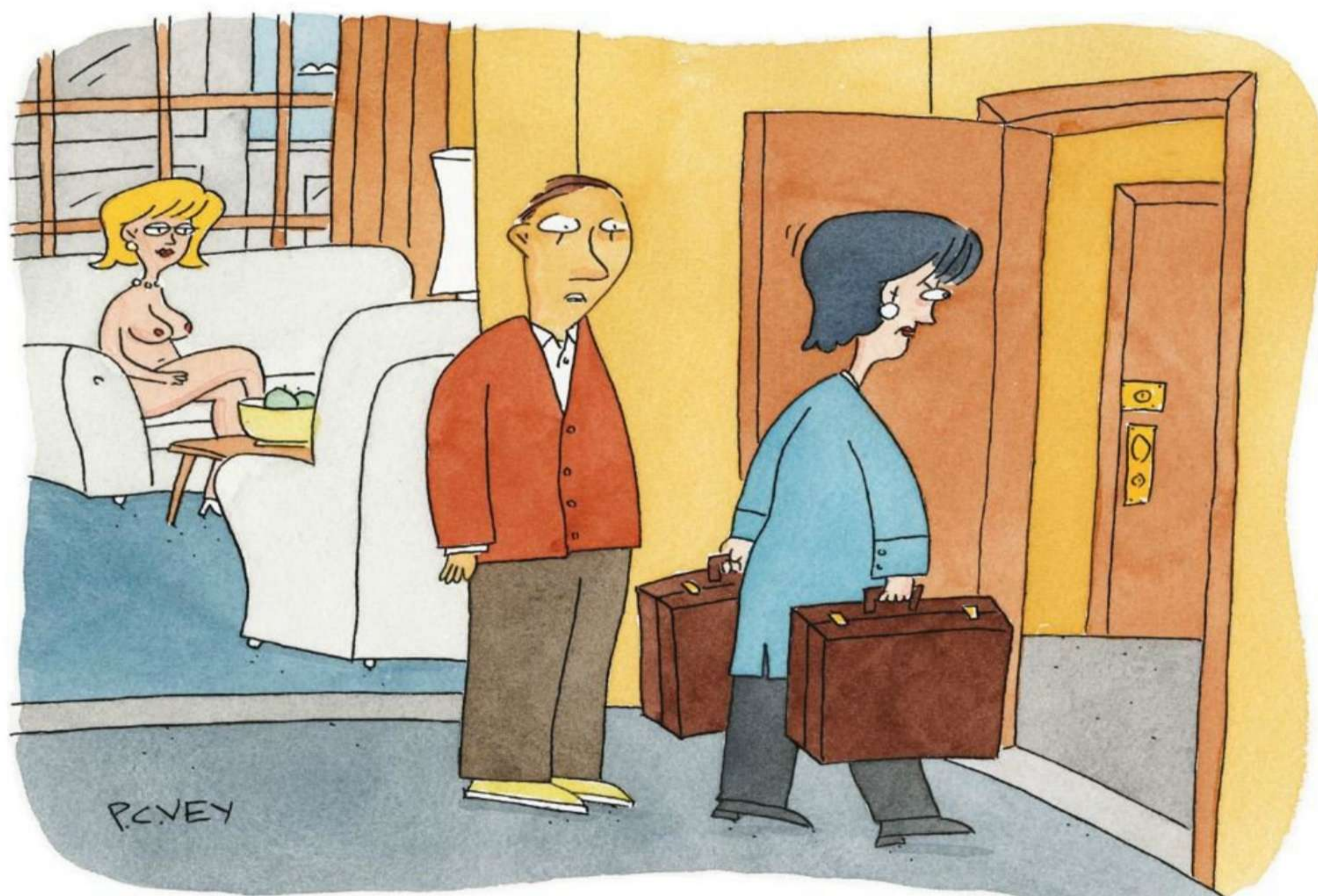
have erupted into a race war a generation ago, is now a functioning democracy. Liberia and Colombia, both of which once had high Failed States Index scores, have made remarkable turnarounds.

Nevertheless, as the number of failing states grows, it becomes more difficult to deal with various international crises. Situations that may be manageable in a healthy world order—such as maintaining monetary stability or controlling the outbreak of an infectious disease—become difficult and sometimes impossible in a world with many disintegrating states. Even maintaining international flows of raw materials could become a challenge. At some point, spreading political instability could disrupt global economic progress, which underscores the need to address the causes of state failure with a heightened sense of urgency.

The world is moving into uncharted territory as human demands override the sustainable yield of natural systems. The risk is that people will lose confidence in the capacity of their governments to cope with such problems, leading to social breakdown. The shift to anarchy is already evident in Somalia, Afghanistan and the DRC.

How can we save civilization? We need an economy in sync with the earth and its natural support systems, not one that destroys them. The fossil-fuel-based, automobile-centered throwaway economy that evolved in Western industrial societies is no longer a viable model—not for the countries that shaped it or for the countries that emulate them. In short, we need to build a new economy, one powered with carbon-free sources of energy—wind, solar and geothermal—one that has a diversified transport system and that reuses and recycles everything.

We cannot afford to do otherwise.



SHOCK VALUE

(continued from page 84)

about love!" It was just the kind of sly provocation that Sean Cunningham loved.

Wearing an easy smile that telegraphed a gregarious personality, Cunningham would become a pioneering horror director in the 1980s with *Friday the 13th*. But in the summer of 1969, when he met Craven, he had just made the transition from working off Broadway to producing drive-in movies. This first collaboration—Cunningham produced and directed; Craven helped with the editing—launched careers that would dominate the horror genre in the following decades.

Cunningham was charismatic, confident and always hustling. He talked a great game. All he wanted to do was scrape up enough cash to make his movies. He sold *Together*, which starred Marilyn Chambers, the adult-movie star who eventually gained notoriety in *Behind the Green Door*; to Hallmark Releasing Group, one of the many small exploitation companies then littering the film landscape, providing a steady stream of smut and brutality to grind-house theaters. The crucial insight of their marketers was that you could get away with anything if you did it in the name of art. They booked *Together* in shopping malls and suburban complexes. Free screenings were held for local police and civic groups. It opened in August 1971 and ran for 31 weeks at the Rialto Theater in New York. By February of the next year, *Together* had proved that porn could go mainstream, setting the stage for the blockbuster success of *Deep Throat*. Cunningham's goal was to do the same thing with horror, which at the time was considered by many cultural critics to be barely more reputable than pornography.

Seeing some talent in the college professor who helped in the editing room, Cunningham asked Craven to direct the next project. Craven told him he had hardly seen a horror movie, let alone knew how to direct one. "You were raised fundamentalist," Cunningham assured him. "Use it!"

What Craven came up with became one of the most influential horror movies of all time, *The Last House on the Left*. It opened when the film industry was changing. Rules about obscenity and violence were in flux. The "midnight movie" was reaching a young audience that embraced underground and cult films. The flesh-eating zombie and the remote serial killer emerged as the new dominant movie monsters, the vampire and werewolf of their day. In the Vietnam era, a new emphasis on realism took hold in the genre long dominated by escapist fantasy, and movies became more graphic.

This cultural shift took place in the same transitional period when some of the most ambitious Hollywood movies were being made. Many of the adventurous mainstream directors who belong to what is known as the New Hollywood got their start in horror. Francis Ford Coppola, Steven Spielberg and Peter Bogdanovich refined their craft on low-budget scares before moving on to what most people in the movie business consider their more mature work. At the same time, another class of directors more committed to the genre was getting started.

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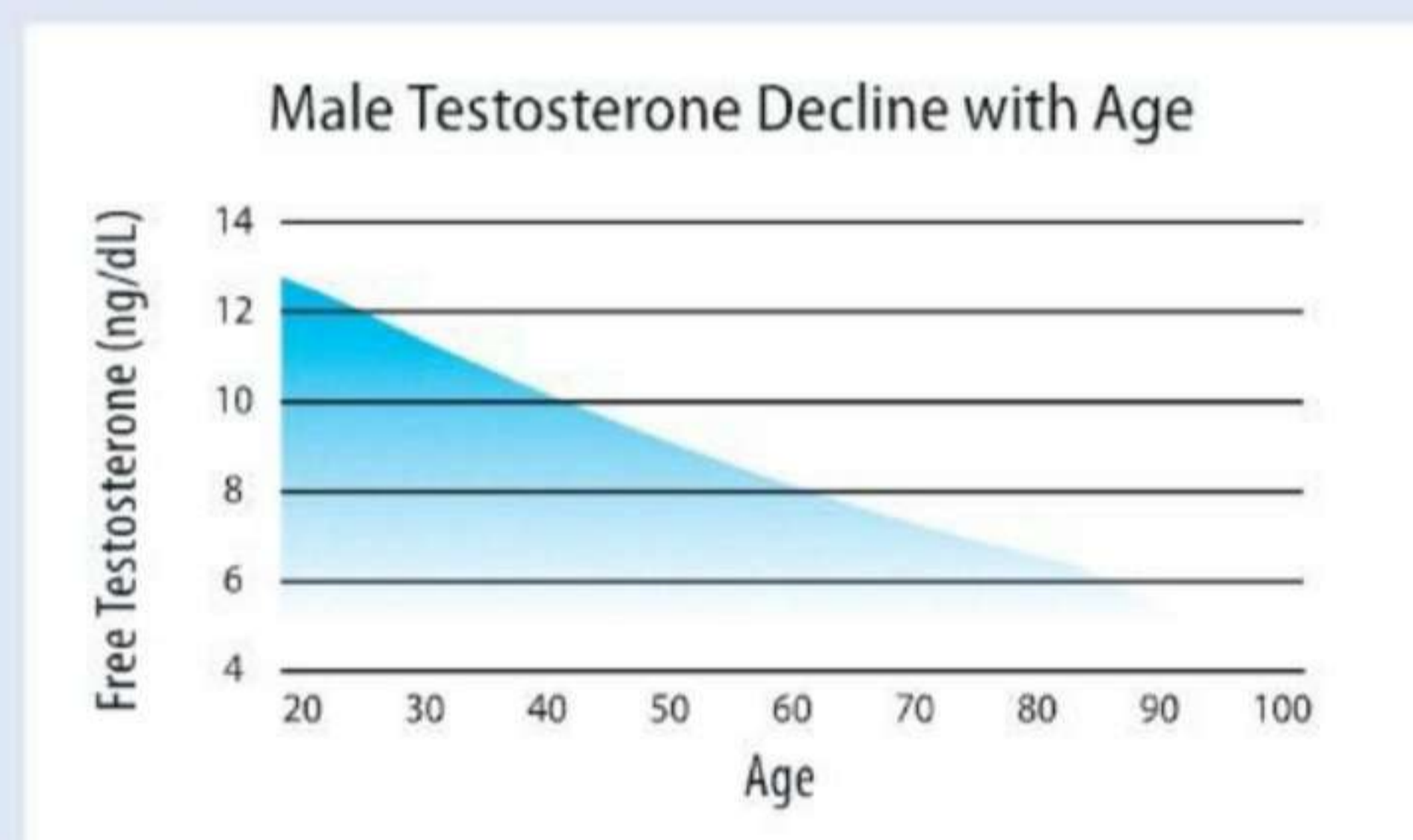
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Vermeulen, A. (1996). Declining androgens with age: an overview. In Vermeulen, A. & Oddens, & B. J. (Eds.), *Androgens and the Aging Male* (pp. 3-14). New York: Parthenon Publishing.

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George Romero, David Cronenberg, John Carpenter, Tobe Hooper and Wes Craven reinvented the conventions of the horror film outside of Hollywood, while William Friedkin, Brian De Palma and Roman Polanski smuggled more prestige horror productions into the studio system. Never in the history of the movies had so much talent been put to work frightening audiences.

Not only did the movies during this period address the same questions, but their answers had enough in common that a cohesive form of the genre developed by the end of the 1970s, when Ron Rosenbaum described this school of scary movies in *Harper's* magazine. He called it the "New Horror." Horror, he argued, "seems ready to supplant sex and violence in the hierarchy of mass sensation-seeking." The popular narrative about the rise of the mainstream studio directors of the New Hollywood is that through the strength of their ideas they defied the bottom line to make something personal. The success of New Horror also depends on the personal visions of a few

artists, but the best films were not merely victories by art in its endless battle against commerce. The most formative horror movies, such as *The Last House on the Left*, were made under tight constraints. Film shoots were quick and budgets shoestring. Auteur analysis tells only part of the story, since the films were also products of compromise and dispute, stitching together spare parts while tweaking old conventions.

Wes Craven felt the forbidden in society needed to be explored, the sins of the father exposed. Cunningham wanted to see lots of blood—up to a point. Their clashing personalities were part of what made *Last House* such a strange mongrel: a mix of canny marketing and confrontational art, exploitation and political statement.

The tension between the sadistic and the masochistic appeals of the movie was reflected in the divide between Cunningham and Craven. The producer saw *Last House* as an escape, an outlet for some

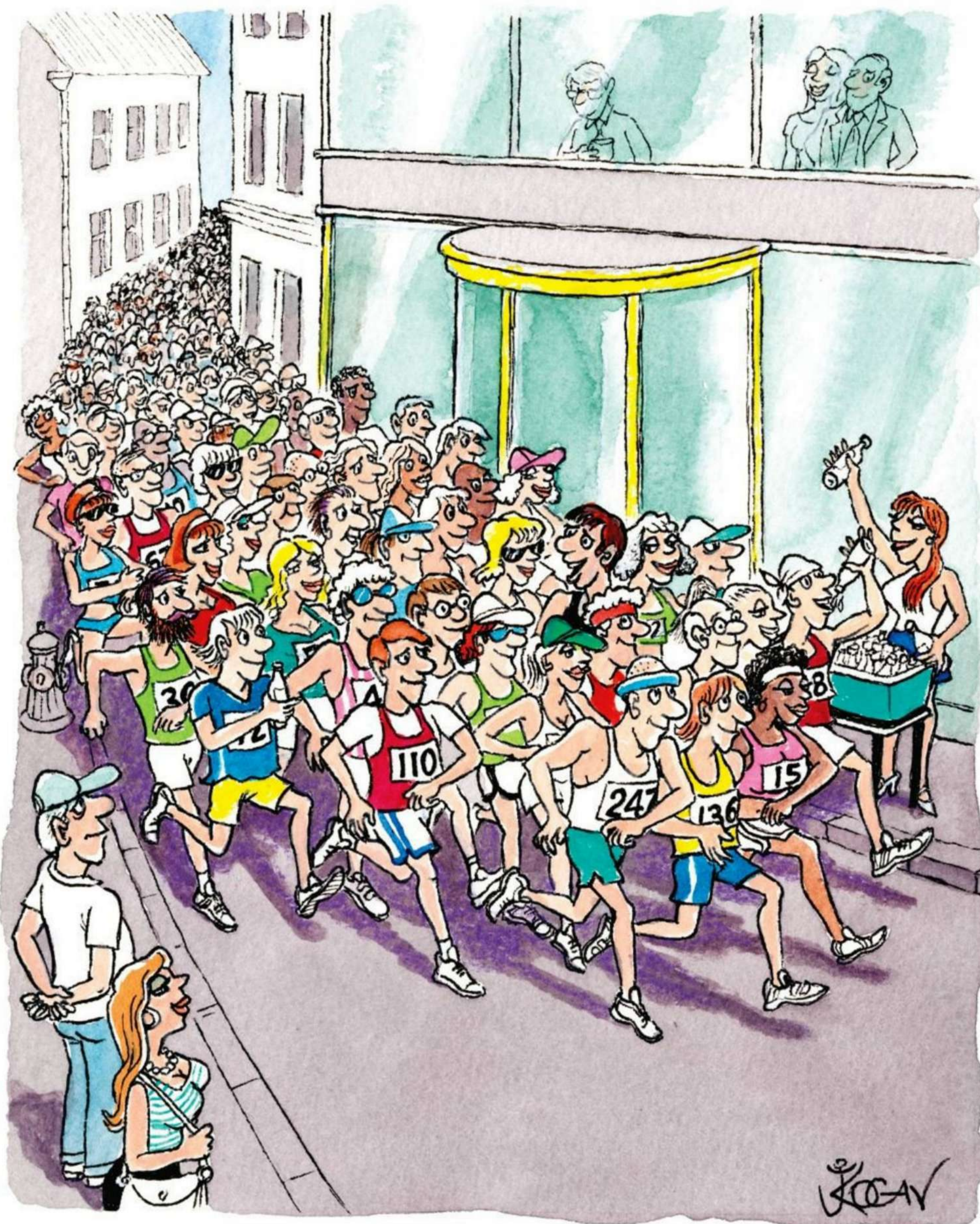
dormant pain. But Craven, raised in an evangelical household, had a much deeper feel for the allure of self-sacrifice, of seeing abuse and brutality as transcendent. When people go to church, they are not merely escaping pain. They are brave enough to confront it, and that gives them a certain feeling of triumph. The trick was to find scares that could trigger a response from a secular audience looking for the experience of masochism, forcing them to confront the demons not only on-screen but also in themselves. *The Last House on the Left* challenged one of the most basic assumptions about the relationship between the audience and the filmmaker—namely, that people go to movies to enjoy themselves.

The story is a spin on Ingmar Bergman's *The Virgin Spring*, hardly the usual source material for exploitation films. No director connoted European artistic seriousness as much as Bergman. Made only three years after his classic *The Seventh Seal*, *The Virgin Spring* is based on a medieval ballad about a virginal girl abducted in the woods on her way to church. She is raped and killed by three goatherds after her half sister invokes a pagan curse. Craven begins with the same story, but instead of going to church, the young girls head to a kind of secular church for young hipsters, a rock concert in the East Village. The band performing is called Bloodlust. Craven ups the ante on the violence by making the film less about assault than about a kind of beastly humiliation.

The killers don't just rape the girl. They make her friend watch. *Last House* focuses on the faces of the victims with an unbearable realism. The killings in this film are not suspenseful or elegantly shot. They are amateurish, designed to maximize the most horrible primal fears. At one point, Krug, the gang leader, forces his victim to pee on herself. The next year a little girl does the same thing in *The Exorcist*, a movie that would reach (and upset) far more people. "I had sensed that it was one of the most humiliating things that happen to people," Craven says. "There's a really deep shame in peeing on yourself. To have someone make you do that, I knew it would be chilling, and when you do something like that, you are announcing, 'This is not your parents' Pontiac. This is about nastiness on a very deep level.'"

Cunningham says the in-your-face violence was a reaction to movies like *Straw Dogs* and *Dirty Harry* that use bloodshed to titillate. Precisely shot storms of bullets and blood are romantically choreographed to reveal a minimum of suffering. Not only are murders clean and quick, but they are accompanied by a variety of moral loopholes. Dustin Hoffman fights back against invaders, but he is standing up for his wife; Clint Eastwood's vigilantism is at the expense of criminals.

Craven, by contrast, claims the graphic murders were a response to the media's too delicate treatment of the Vietnam war. Because of the radicalism of the counterculture of the time, such themes were unavoidable. *The Virgin Spring* is a meditative movie, somber and discreet and littered with religious imagery. The father, yawning while his wife prays, seems barely interested



"A little reminder, folks! Don't forget our traditional after-marathon orgy!"

in Christian religion. When he learns of the murder of his daughter, he questions his faith. He is redeemed in the final scene when he returns to the place of the original crime and promises to build a church. When a spring bubbles up over the dead girl, we witness Christian redemption.

There is no such miracle at the end of *The Last House on the Left*. In a godless world without redemption, it includes no struggle with faith. Instead, the senseless evil inspires just more senseless evil, adding up to a nihilism that invites no happy endings. The movie contrasts the savage, criminal gang with a bourgeois civilized family and reveals that they have more in common than you think. The marauding criminals begin as a kind of parody of a parent's worst nightmare, but in these early scenes, Craven makes a point of showing us the dynamics within the gang to humanize them. He generates a sneaky sympathy for the killers.

The movie ends with more of a question mark than an exclamation point. We are left wondering what exactly the director was trying to say. *Night of the Living Dead*, the singularly influential zombie movie, which opened in 1968, is about a survivor battling hordes of zombies and ends on a note of existential defeat. What made *Rosemary's Baby*, which opened the same year, such a radical break from the past was that unlike almost every other film about the battle with the devil, it has no fight to the finish at the end. Who knows what happens to the survivors of the zombie attack or to Rosemary after the movies end? What connects *Last House* to the terror of *Night of the Living Dead* and *Rosemary's Baby* is moral ambiguity. That point is made emphatically in the final scene.

Once they discover the terrible crime, the Collingwoods, the victim's parents, do not do the civilized thing and call the police to arrest the killers. Instead they take the law into their own hands, attacking and killing each member of the gang in increasingly brutal ways. A character is slashed to death by an electric boat fan. One of the most humiliating scenes in *The Last House on the Left* features the victim's mother, played by Cynthia Carr, castrating one of the killers while giving him a blow job. (Carr had it written into her contract that she would not actually have to perform fellatio on-screen.)

The movie winds down to the climactic face-off between Krug and the victim's father, the battle of the patriarchs. Craven imagined Krug would be killed with a scalpel, since the father was a doctor. Cunningham disagreed. With perfect exploitation instincts, he insisted on a chain saw; this was two years before *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. After killing Krug, the father slumps to the ground, stunned, shocked at the extent to which he has gone to avenge the death of his daughter. If the movie appears to invite the audience to revel in vigilante justice, this final shot, according to Craven, complicates it. The respectable parents have become what they most despise. The insanity of the criminal family is not so different from that found in the normal one. The original script of *Last House* starts with this quote from Yoko

Ono: "Violence is just one of those feelings that come when you're unable to communicate. Art is communication."

Most audiences who first saw this movie thought they were going to see a trashy good time, a few dead bodies to laugh at. But they discovered a movie that was very difficult to enjoy without guilt. To Craven, the revenge at the end of *Last House* is designed to leave audiences disgusted, not exhilarated. It is the reverse of the morally cleansing conclusion of *The Virgin Spring*. The revenge is evidence that we all have a savage side and there is nothing to learn from it other than violence begets more violence. Not everyone bought this interpretation.

Most critics saw this violence as merely appealing to the basest dreams of teenage male thrill seekers. Part of the reason for this tension lies in how the movie was made. Cunningham thought it was too angry, disturbing and difficult to enjoy. Horror, to him, is "a roller-coaster ride." When you design a roller coaster, you want something sturdy, tested and reliable. It has to scare people but not so much that they won't feel safe. "In Craven's mind, the parents had become that which they were trying to eradicate," Cunningham says. "I'm not so sure. I think for most people it was just revenge."

Cunningham was concerned about exhibitors rejecting the movie. When it started getting picked up by theaters, moving from city to city in short runs, he tried to cut out some of the more disturbing scenes to satisfy local theaters unhappy about the content of the movie. "Sean had very different opinions about the movie in general," Craven says. "Once it was made, Sean thought it was disgusting and that we shouldn't have done it."

Craven stood by the film, defending it among friends. But he wasn't always sure of himself. "It's not an easy place to be—to write a horror film," he says. "It's hard. You go down the stairs to the dark to find these characters. It's not a place that anyone can go, and sometimes it's not a place that you want to go." More than any other director of the era, Craven returned to this dark basement again and again, not just kicking off his career in horror but building one in it.

In later decades he made movies that challenged and expanded the genre, pushing it further into the mainstream with the help of a self-aware comic sensibility. In large part due to the imagination of Wes Craven, the horror film has become respectable.

But Craven has always maintained his sense of himself as an outsider, even when he no longer is one. He is quick to tell stories about being shouted at during cocktail parties for making detestable films and being derided by family members. And when I ask him about how he revolutionized the genre, he sighs, surrounded by posters of his movies in his spacious office in Studio City, Los Angeles. "All I am doing," he says, "is rearranging the curtains in the insane asylum."

From Shock Value: How a Few Eccentric Outsiders Gave Us Nightmares, Conquered Hollywood, and Invented Modern Horror, by Jason Zinoman, available from the Penguin Press in July.



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WATTS

(continued from page 62)

"Nobody needs a whole croissant." It is followed by a hilarious riff about a girl named E. Claire who is a Google hooligan. Once Watts is rolling, topic be damned, it's impossible to avoid being drawn in.

In conversation Watts has a knack for relating stories with an abundance of academic wordplay, but he's never pretentious; rather, his method gets to the essence of communication in an enthusiastically engaging yet detached way. His humor is observational and joyous, at once awed by the possibilities but keenly aware of the parameters. Watts is a Renaissance man for the now: a musician, a comedian and an unabashed pop-culturally aware technology geek. He takes in the new and regurgitates it, with humor, in real time.

He is also truly grateful to be doing what he does, because it's not an act; it's just an extension of him. "Getting the Conan gig was a game changer for me," he says. "A lot of people saw who I am and then did extraordinarily generous things for me. Conan is like the benevolent Mafia: If you get to work with him and you do good

things, he'll always find a way to pay you back triple. It's an honor that he and his people are even interested in me in the first place because they've been doing what they do for two decades, and that means a lot."

Watts also caught the eye of several music icons this year. He was chosen by LCD Sound-system founder James Murphy to perform a song with the band during its weeklong farewell concerts in New York, and White Stripes impresario Jack White hosted an evening of comedy featuring Watts at his Third Man Records in Nashville, a performance, photography and recording production emporium established in 2009. Third Man features state-of-the-art sound recorded to analog high-fidelity reel-to-reel tape and then pressed onto vinyl. "Aesthetically it's such an advanced setting, and that's a reflection of Jack White, who has really great, excellent taste," Watts says. "I did two 24-minute sets, because that's how long they can record on one reel, and I went off in between, and the whole time Jack was doing the lighting himself. He was so creative about it. He'd put this small follow spotlight on me, and when I was at the piano all you'd see was my head, in a pink, blue or yellow light."

Everyone who attended Watts's show received a 12-inch of it as part of their admission price; it's a well-engineered memento of today captured via yesteryear. "At the end of the night I followed the engineers up to the sound booth to hear some of the set," Watts says, growing genuinely wide-eyed. "They have that room so well miked. It was so incredibly warm. They pressed PLAY on that one-inch tape machine, and out came holographic audio. I felt as though my voice was floating in space with the audience murmuring all around it. It was beautiful. It inspired me to do music again if I find the right people to work with."

The waitress passes by our table, saying she'll be back in a moment to take our order. "I think I'm going to have the oatmeal," Watts says, scratching his beard. "It's steel-cut whole grain with raw brown sugar on top, which is the way they made it in the 1800s. If time travel were possible and anybody could have it, I'd like to be able to order oatmeal that actually was from 1866, and I'd like to be able to eat that in a restaurant. If our waitress were able to go back in time and get me a bowl of oatmeal from 1866 and serve it to me, that would be so *authentic*." He smiles a grin that could crack a pro cardplayer's poker face.

He pulls a small brown bottle from his pocket. "I need to take my medicine," he says, squirting an eyedropper's worth of misty tincture into his water. "Do you want some vitamins?"

"Sure," I say. "What kind?"

"THC. It boosts the immune system."

"Yes, please. I feel like I'm coming down with something."

Over the next eight hours, which go by in an instant, Watts holds forth on music, comedy, science, science fiction, physics, technology, time travel and his past, present and future. He is entirely engaging, enthusiastic, informed and hilariously demonstrative. He slips in and out of voices, accents and languages (he speaks English, French and German fluently) easier than most people do their slippers. He is a vessel for the ideas flowing through his mind and the metaphorical ether, yet he's never so far-out that he forgets his context. He takes to conversation with improvisational glee, be it as expository as detailing his upbringing or as conceptual as grasping at the meaning of life. He often says things like this:

"I'm so interested in what this fucking thing is." He makes a cartoonish, guttural noise that should be in a quote bubble beside his head: "Urr! What is this *thing*? What is experience? Oftentimes you'll find more fantastic descriptions of what this thing could be through physics than any fantasy book or sci-fi movie. Listen to a physicist describe the simple things, like what dark matter is or if there is an origin of the universe or if we are just part of a never-ending, pulsing, collapsing, expanding whatever this is. All their theories are so imaginative that your mind just explodes into a myriad of ideas, much more so than it does while reading a book that says, 'Zeldock was a tall man, but his laser pistol wasn't.' Anything you can dream of is possible within physics on some theoretical level because the people involved are neutral. They're math philosophers. It's pure imagination, though physicists don't



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think of it that way. Ask a theoretical physicist about invisibility. He'll say, 'Yeah, that's possible on some level, and here's why, theoretically speaking.' That is magic to me."

Reggie Watts was born Reginald Lucien Frank Roger Watts in Germany, the only child of an African American father and a white French mother. The family lived in Italy and Spain until he was four, then moved to Great Falls, Montana in 1976. "I was a total latch-key kid, and I loved that," he says. "I would race home so I could have extra time alone before my parents got home from work." Watts took violin and piano lessons for nine years and participated in drama at Great Falls High School. "It's funny. A lot of what I did in drama class in high school informed the origins of my comedy, once I started using a loop pedal. I went back to what I used to do in order to evolve. It was a form of regressive evolution, or something like that."

After high school Watts moved to Seattle, where he briefly attended the Art Institute of Seattle before studying jazz at the renowned Cornish College of the Arts, one of the top institutions in the country for the performing and visual arts. Watts grew as a musician, and in his jazz voice classes he developed his versatile vocal abilities. "My heroes vocally are Bobby McFerrin and Michael Winslow, who is best known for his role as Motor Mouth Jones in the *Police Academy* films. Michael can do anything with his voice, and what's crazy to me now is that I'm friends with him." Uncannily, an hour or so later, Winslow calls Watts from his home in Florida to chat.

After college Watts dove into Seattle's rich early-1990s music scene, devoting his ample talents as a keyboardist and singer to a wide variety of projects. The collection of bands he was in is telling of the times and entertaining in list form alone: Hit Explosion, Swampdweller, Action Buddy, IPD (Ironing Pants Definitely), Chiarrscuro, Clementine, Smell No Taste, Wayne Horvitz 4+1 Ensemble, Das Rut, Synthclub, Elemental, Eyvand Kang Seven Nades and Free Space. He spent the most time in Synthclub and Maktub, a band with whom he made five records. These bands ranged from punk rock to Afro-pop to heavy metal to house music to drum and bass to jazz. Watts started beat boxing as well, making tracks from scratch for a number of hip-hop acts. "Musically I really love everything," he says. "I like the potential realities of the various worlds of each genre of music, and I loved being in all of those very different bands at that time. It felt like time traveling. I'm very big on time traveling."

He plants a forearm on the table, leans forward for emphasis and with that launches into another of the asides that make watching Watts onstage or encountering him in any form so spontaneously entertaining. "I'm very caught up with the concept of what it would feel like to actually be in another time period and be aware that you are not from there. I thought of this one day while walking all the way from Chelsea to the Lower East Side during a New York transit strike. I was crossing Union Square, which was full of people with luggage in a kind of gridlock, and as I looked at that giant clock with the numbers that never stop running at the south end of

the square, I got this feeling that if I had a realization that I was in an extraordinary time period, maybe that feeling was just me in the future recognizing this moment as an important event, so in essence, at that moment, I felt I was time traveling to a certain degree. I called up my friend and collaborator Tommy Smith and asked him, 'If I feel like I'm in the middle of an extraordinary event right now, does that mean I'm aware of this event from a different time period and perspective?' Without hesitation he said yes. I said, 'Okay, thank you.' And I hung up."

Watts's musical agility is the result of a very diverse and refined palette. Before diving into comedy full-time in 2003, Watts released *Simplified*, a solo music album that bridges electronic funk, R&B and lush alternative rock. He has a soulful voice with many cadences, and on the album he's a different being from song to song, ranging from Prince to Rick James to hybrids of everyone from Lenny Kravitz to Trent Reznor. Whatever style he chooses, be it a comedic exercise or not, Watts's music is always decidedly funky, and on that level his CD-DVD makes complete sense: Listening to the audio is as interesting as watching him. His comedy songs are really great tunes. "I owe much of my musical taste to my friend John Thomas, which is an unfortunate name to have if you live in the U.K. John listened to the weirdest, coolest music in the 1980s. He got me into Danzig, the Smiths, the Smithereens, Hugo Largo, the Art of Noise. He was the guy with the trade magazines. He knew everything that was on college radio. From there I got into Siouxsie Sioux, Peter Murphy, jazz, industrial and punk rock. The thing I think kids today don't appreciate is the fact that the Top 40 back in the 1980s was very diverse. You'd have Rick Springfield, Pat Benatar, Whitesnake, Gary Numan, Men at Work, Twisted Sister and UB40 in the same chart. There used to be a lot of choice. You'd listen to Casey Kasem count down the Top 40 and you'd hear Crowded House and then Guns N' Roses. Everything on the charts today may as well be the same backing track with different singers. It's harder to judge what talent is."

Using this palette as the basis for his imitation, Watts mastered a wide octave range. "Olivia Newton John's 'Physical' is where I developed my falsetto. It's at the very top of my range, and I kept singing it until I got it. Pat Benatar, too."

Watts used the full extent of his abilities in his many bands, but while recording with Maktub he learned how to process his vocal harmonies via a Roland Space Echo RE-101. That piece of gear provided a range of reverb, echo and delay that lent his delivery a variety of meanings. From there he moved on to a Line 6 DL4 delay modeler, which he used to replicate those recorded harmonies live. "I was looking for a weightless, more maintenance-free version of the Roland Space Echo RE-101 tape machine that I used on the record," he says. "They had just come out with this pedal that had an emulator for the Roland RE-101. You'd scroll to a page and it had all the settings for the knobs to basically make the pedal become that machine." On tour with Maktub, Watts learned the pedal's capabilities

and, along with a simple mixer and looper, began using it to manipulate the many voices and sounds he creates into cohesive sonic tapestries. He continued to collaborate with various groups, but outside of his musical adventures he began to add comedy to his repertoire. His performance became a hybrid of the two, and while some of his friends and peers got it and supported it, the pairing didn't always go over so well.

"I was on tour with [funk jazz trio] Soulive when I'd just started bringing comedy back into my life, and we were in Philadelphia, playing at the Theater of the Living Arts. I would sing a few songs with them and I would also open the show with a half hour of comedy. That particular night there was a whole hour to fill, and I had never done that before." Watts came out and started his act, and all was well until he took a perilous detour. At the time, the Philadelphia Flyers were doing very well in the NHL, so he decided to compliment them in his own special way.

"I kept calling them the Lions. And people kept shouting, 'The Flyers! The Flyers!' I kept saying, 'I know, I know, I hear you. So yeah, what I particularly love about the Lions is that they have these little manes embroidered on the back of their jerseys, and they have a little embroidered cock that goes down the inside of their legs. I know, guys, I know it's just a simulation, but I think it shows the virility of the team.'"

Everyone started booing. Then they started chanting for him to leave the stage. Then they threw pennies and empty bottles. "Whenever audiences are adversarial I just drag it on and on," Watts says. "It's a weird compulsion. Even though I'm scared shitless this weird adrenaline takes over. My inclination becomes, 'Okay, fine, deal with *this*, fuckers!' Not the best reason to do it, but whatever."

The situation continued to disintegrate until Watts informed the crowd that even if he left, the band would not come on any sooner. They didn't care. He then chose the loudest heckler in range and brought him onstage to ask him personally why he wanted Watts to leave the stage. "I just want you to stop," the guy said. "The band is not coming out any sooner," I said, "so why do you want me to stop?" He had no idea why, other than he just wanted me to stop. So I led him offstage, and then after a few more minutes of people yelling at me, I said to the audience, 'Just so you guys know, you will never ever see me on this stage here, tonight, again.' And they all cheered."

After Soulive took the stage, four songs into their set they introduced Watts and brought him out to sing a few songs with them. "It was as if everyone had forgotten what had happened. There was no negativity at all. That was the weirdest performance experience in my life. I just loved that setup—'You'll never see me again,' and then there I was four songs later."

Through the early 2000s Watts continued to focus on comedy when he wasn't working with a band. As he spent more time onstage alone, he began to incorporate his MacGyver'ed blend of a loop pedal and a mixer more prominently into his act. "I started to get into the sketch-comedy scene in Seattle, which was kind of a return to what I was doing in high school, when I was

competing. In Great Falls, Montana you could compete in drama against other schools. We'd get on a bus and go to another town and compete against another school in dramatics. So I started doing my own one-man battle of the bands with this loop pedal thing."

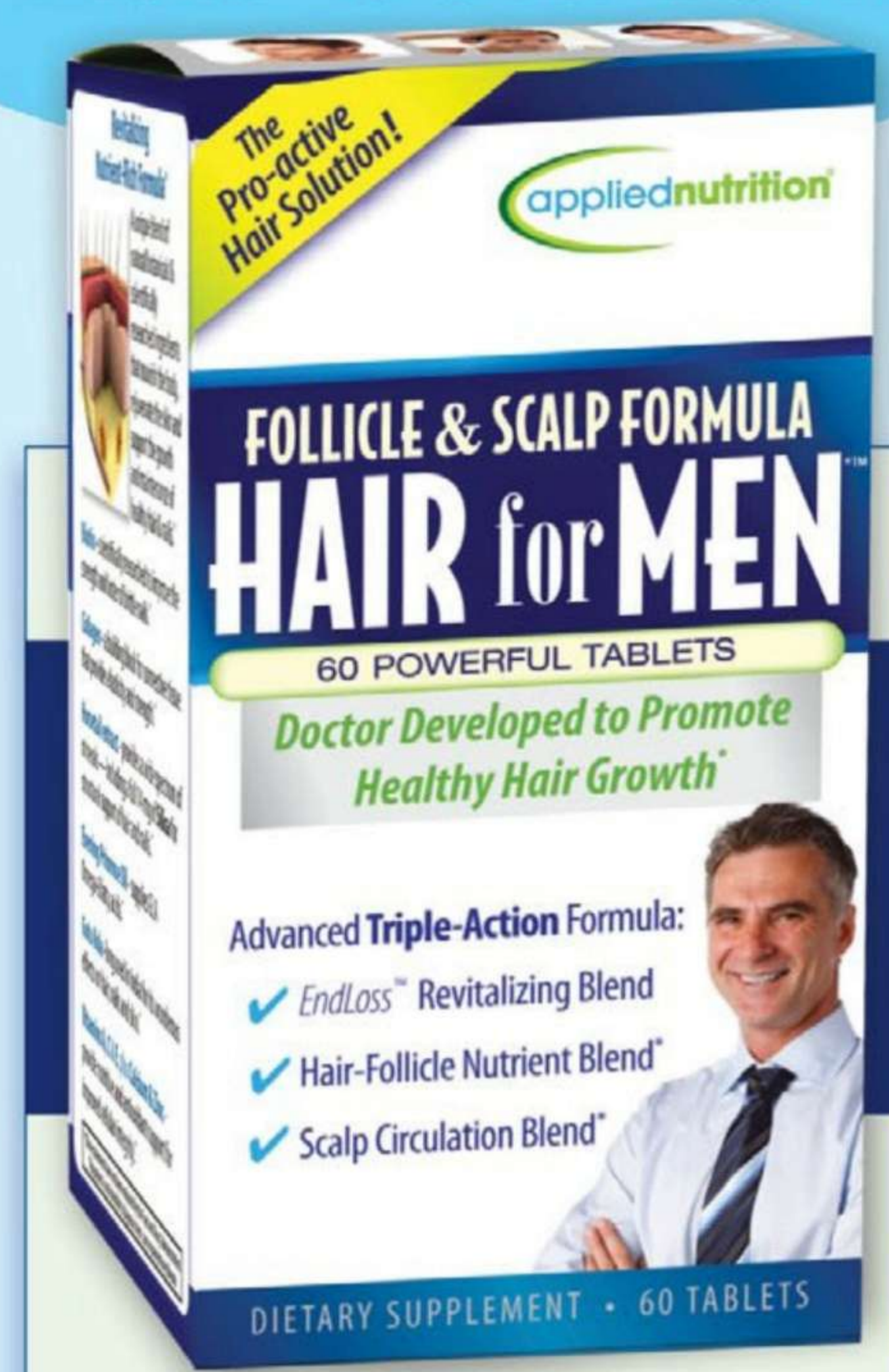
Watts's comedy really came into its own when he moved to New York City in 2004 and, with the encouragement of local legends Eugene Mirman and Michael Showalter, began performing at such venues as Rififi in the East Village, the Upright Citizens Brigade in Chelsea, Comix in the Meatpacking District and the Bell House in Brooklyn, where some of *Why \$#!+ So Crazy?* was filmed. "Eugene to me is the godfather of alternative comedy," Watts says. "If it started with Andy Kaufman in the 1970s and then continued with Louis C.K. and David Cross as the second wave through the 1980s, well, then Eugene is the perfect baby that came from all that."

Over the past seven years, Watts has come into his own and found his voice—or rather his many voices. Among his repertoire of ever-changing characters and sounds are a few regulars. He learned his ivory-tower English accent from watching hours of PBS as a child and listening to people as he walked the streets of London. "To me doing anything on the BBC or associated with it in any way is a true honor. It's such an institution." He also has a recurring gay voice, a thug rapper and an overly earnest hippie, which weave themselves in and out of his delivery, regardless or often deliberately in spite of—for reasons of contrast—context.

"I can approximate a lot of things and I can come close to a few things," Watts says. "I can do robots. Give me anything robot and I'm totally there for you, man. I won't let you down. Anything from the pneumatic-pressure sounds to the angle at which a joint moves repetitively, I can do that. Robots are very specific, and I do feel good about that. Also, conversations with dark beings or master demons having conversations with other characters—I feel very confident about replicating those situations as well. If people will have me, I will do demonic voices all night. But I'm always afraid to go too far into that. I have a feeling that the multicharacter demon-lord thing will alienate people." He grins.

Alternative comics may be the exception among comics, but even among alternative comics, Watts is an exception. Ironically, comedians are some of the darkest souls on earth, people who offset deep sadness and insecurity by giving laughter to others. They're often not who they seem to be onstage. Watts is not one of them. "My favorite comedians are very natural; they're the ones you see offstage and they're just very nice to be around," he says. "I appreciate that quality. No matter what your style, as a comedian you joke a lot, because that's how you generate material. Some people do that with their friends and turn that into an act. Some people just go in their office and come out with a list of jokes, which is very old school. But I will say this: Anytime you meet someone who is constantly joking, it will take forever to get to know that person. I speak about things sincerely, yet I like to joke around a (concluded on page 126)

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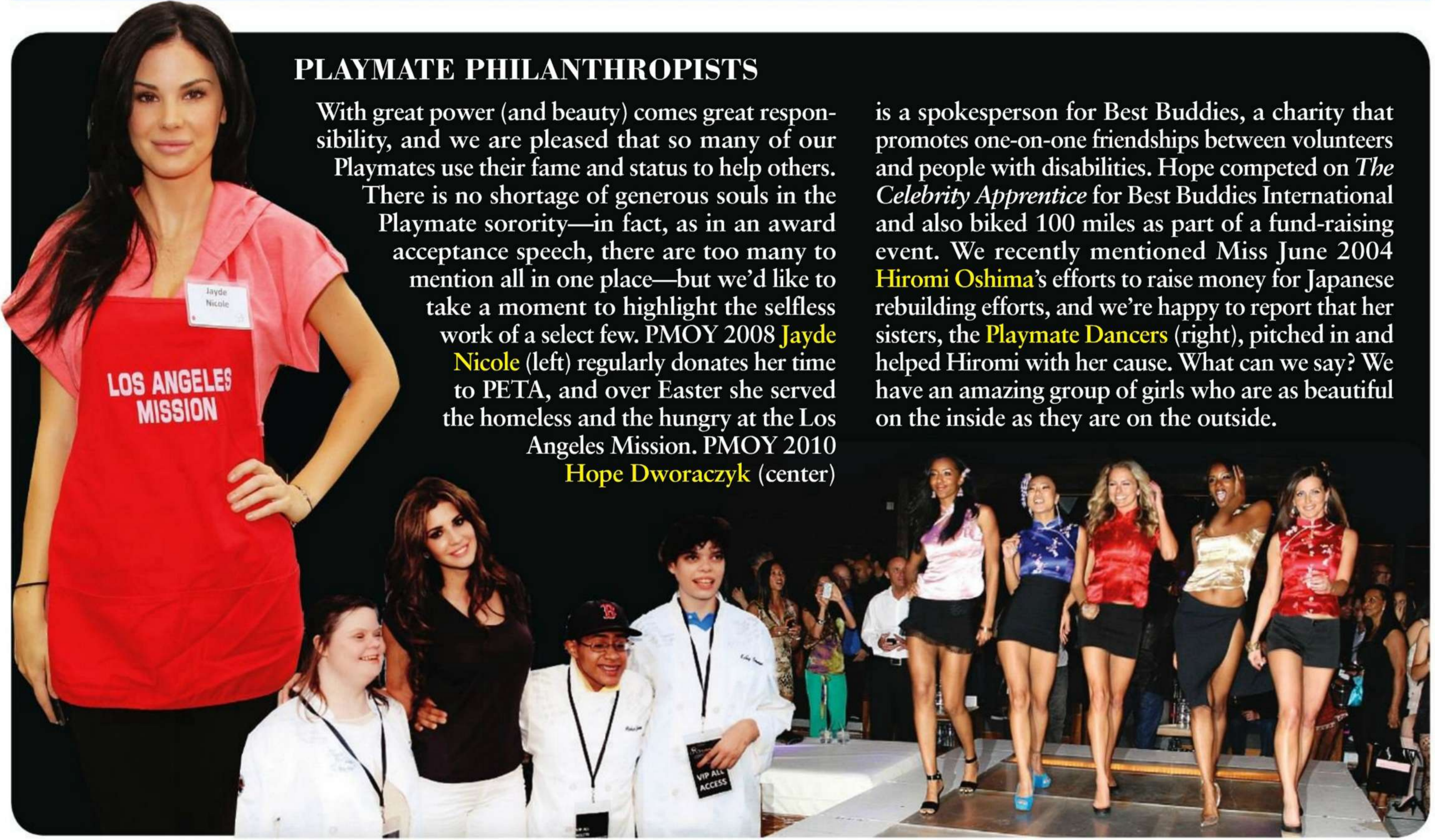
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PLAYMATE PHILANTHROPISTS

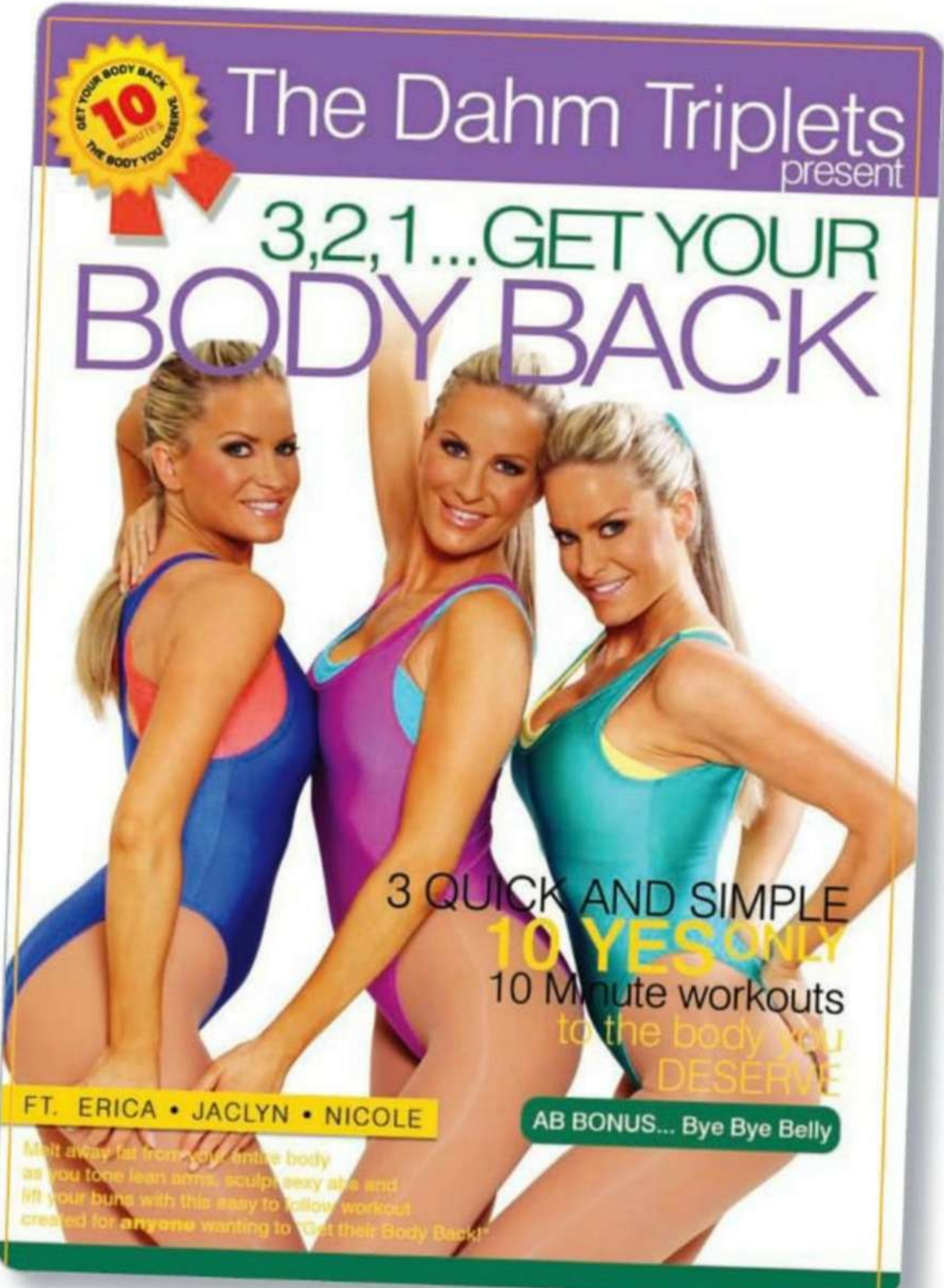
With great power (and beauty) comes great responsibility, and we are pleased that so many of our Playmates use their fame and status to help others. There is no shortage of generous souls in the Playmate sorority—in fact, as in an award acceptance speech, there are too many to mention all in one place—but we'd like to take a moment to highlight the selfless work of a select few. PMOY 2008 **Jayde Nicole** (left) regularly donates her time to PETA, and over Easter she served the homeless and the hungry at the Los Angeles Mission. PMOY 2010 **Hope Dworaczyk** (center)

is a spokesperson for Best Buddies, a charity that promotes one-on-one friendships between volunteers and people with disabilities. Hope competed on *The Celebrity Apprentice* for Best Buddies International and also biked 100 miles as part of a fund-raising event. We recently mentioned Miss June 2004 **Hiromi Oshima**'s efforts to raise money for Japanese rebuilding efforts, and we're happy to report that her sisters, the **Playmate Dancers** (right), pitched in and helped Hiromi with her cause. What can we say? We have an amazing group of girls who are as beautiful on the inside as they are on the outside.



YOU TOO CAN LOOK THIS DAHM GOOD

The Dahm triplets, Misses December 1998 Erica, Jaclyn and Nicole Dahm, all had babies in 2010 but promptly whipped their bodies back into amazing shape in relatively short order.



They share the workout routines responsible for their success in their new exercise video, *3, 2, 1...Get Your Body Back*. "Whether you're a new mom like us, you've gained extra holiday pounds or you've just let yourself go, these workouts have worked for us, and we know they'll work for you, too," the girls say. The DVD can be purchased for \$10 on their website 321getyourbodyback.com. The routines are aerobic and, according to Erica, include some "good old classic moves from the 1980s." We'll take the triplets in spandex over Richard Simmons in tiny shorts any day of the week.

FLASHBACK



Ten years ago this month we found Miss August 2001 **Jennifer Walcott**. The pride of Youngstown, Ohio, Jennifer moved to Hollywood and found herself in high demand. She appeared on *Weakest Link* and *Howard Stern*, in the film *American Pie Presents Band Camp* and a handful of music videos as well as several Playboy videos. Carmen Electra even selected Jennifer for her celebrity photographer pictorial on Playboy.com. Jennifer is married to former NFL player Adam Archuleta, and the couple has a son named Jett James.

Want to SEE MORE PLAYMATES—or more of these Playmates? You can check out the Club at club.playboy.com and access the mobile-optimized site playboy.com from your phone.

DID YOU KNOW ?

Miss February 1976 **Laura Lyons**'s daughter is Lily Aldridge, a fashion model and Victoria's Secret angel.

A coroner confirmed that reclusive Centerfold Miss July 1959 **Yvette Vickers** passed away due to heart failure.

What do Miss June 2011 **Mei-Ling Lam** and Miss July 1978 **Karen Morton** have in common? Both have 32B busts.



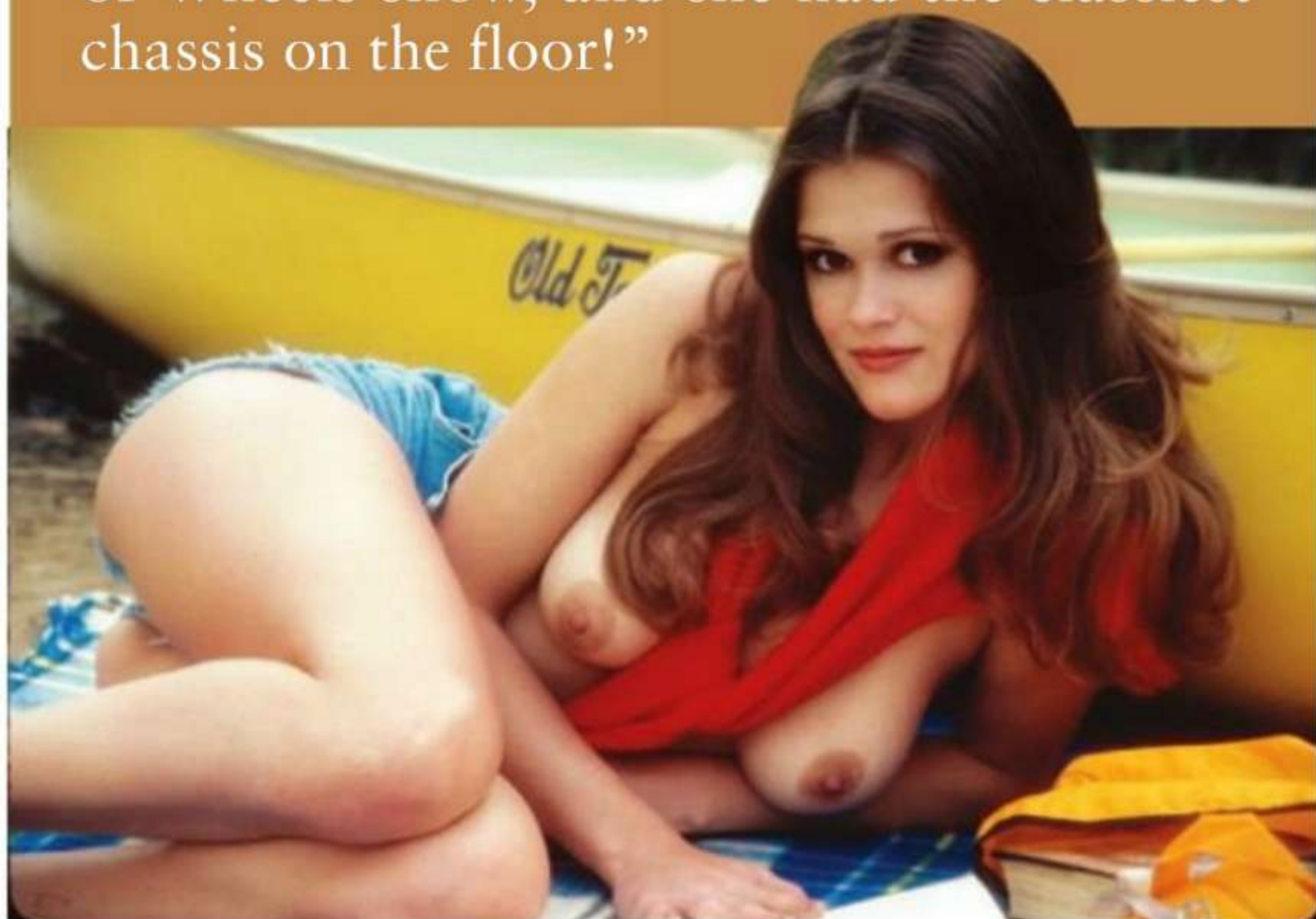
Miss March 2009 **Jennifer Pershing** has something in common with *Family Guy*'s Peter Griffin. She also claims "side boob is the best!"

MY FAVORITE PLAYMATE

BY JOHN SCHNEIDER

—actor, *Smallville* and the indie film *Doonby*

"My favorite Playmate is Miss February 1981 Vicki Lynn Lasseter because she is as sweet as she is beautiful—an absolute doll. I worked with her at a World of Wheels show, and she had the classiest chassis on the floor!"



TERI IS ONE TOUGH MUDDER

The Georgia Tough Mudder is a grueling 12.4-mile race that requires contestants to crawl through mud, run through fire and sprint through a field of live wires and other freakish obstacles. "To me getting dirty means burning calories, sweating and breaking physical boundaries," says Miss October 2002 Teri Harrison, who survived the event. "It was the most physically challenging experience of my life. I recommend it to anyone who wants to prove to themselves that they can do anything."



the **RATING** game

With Playmate of the year **Hope Dworaczyk**



IS THERE HOPE FOR YOU? GET A PRO RATING ON YOUR PHYSICAL APPEAL

"Wow, that's a face I wouldn't mind waking up to." That's something you might hear PMOY 2010 Hope Dworaczyk say to you in her app, *The Rating Game*. Simply submit your photo, and Hope shares her opinion. Not into honesty? You can set it to a mode in which she pans your friends' looks and swoons over yours.

Miss August 2000 **Summer Altice** spun records at the Playboy afterparty during the Cannes International Film Festival.

PLAYMATE GOSSIP

Miss February 2010 **Heather Rae Young** dropped by *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* to help the late-night host with a Bud Light promo. "I didn't get to see what I was going to say beforehand



because Jimmy likes surprises," Heather says with a smirk. "I just went on and read cue cards with Jimmy, and it was crazy. I was in shock because it all happened so fast." But having millions of eyes on her didn't faze Heather in the slightest. "It was a blast—I can't wait to do it again!" she says.... Miss February 2003



Charis Boyle (now Burrett) celebrated the opening of the Chaz Dean Studio salon with celebrity stylist George Bloodwell. No word yet on whose hair requires more time in a salon chair.... We're still not sure if we'll be having an NFL season, but at least we know the Houston Texans cheer-

leading squad will be ready. Miss October 1989 **Karen Foster** (left) and her sister Leesa judged the team's cheerleader tryouts. The Foster girls were both Houston Rockets cheerleaders, and Leesa was also on the Houston Oilers cheering squad.... At Avenue in New York City, Miss January 2010 **Jaime Faith Edmondson**, PLAYBOY cover girl Kelly Bensimon and Miss July 2002 **Lauren Anderson** palled around at a Seagram's Seven Crown party to celebrate the whiskey's new flavors: Stone Cherry and Dark Honey. We can't help but wonder if it was mere coincidence that a redheaded Centerfold and a blonde Centerfold were there for those flavors.



PMOY 2011 **Claire Sinclair** performs burlesque in clubs, but being under 21, she isn't allowed in on her days off.

DID YOU KNOW ?

WATTS

(continued from page 123)

lot, which isn't very different from what I'm doing live. It's just more focused due to my awareness of moving things forward. As long as I do that, it's usually a good time. Other than that, me onstage is similar to how I am in everyday life—or at least how I try to be." He considers his last statement, then grins again. "Yeah, but it's like actors—people don't trust them. They say they're crazy and you should never date an actor or actress. I just want to point that out, just so you know. Those are the issues."

The sun is going down and the oatmeal has been eaten, but there is still so much more to learn about Watts. "Hey, do you want to come to my place for a bit and listen to some music?" he asks. I can't think of a reason why I wouldn't.

It's gotten cold outside, the kind of New York City cold that just feels unfair. "I'd trade winter in Montana for this any day," Watts says. "It's drier and fluffier. This New York wind can penetrate any zipper. You go outside and after a while you're just like, 'Oh, it's you again.' And you become another man taken down by drudgery."

We walk through the back door of a modern, new-construction green building that could easily be in Antwerp. Watts has spent the past three years on the road, and his new Williamsburg apartment is the first home he's had since his star began to rise. It's as designed and efficient as can be, from his eco-friendly memory-foam bed to the German-engineered, halogen-lit vaporizer that he turns on. On his desk sits a computer monitor, a small audio mixer, an effects box and an Xbox. He plays a few tracks by Stars, a lush, beautiful Canadian indie-rock band that he's into, then he does what he does best: He begins to make beats and sounds with his audio gear. He's got an audience of one, but it doesn't matter. I'm quite confident Watts would be doing this even if he were alone. It's wonderfully refreshing to see how organically what he does tumbles out of him.

He plugs in a new voice-loop pedal he's been sent that he's unsure about integrating into his live show. It's not quite his piece of dream gear, but he hasn't written it off. He isn't sure how quickly the effects on the box track to what he's doing in real time, say, if he changes between two styles of reverb midway through a loop. "That's using it in a way other than the manufacturer intended, but that's how I'd use it. That's how you'd get more interesting sounds. There are a ton of effects on this thing, though. Watch this." He flips a knob that turns his voice into a choral harmony. His normal speech sounds odd and the effect isn't readily revealed, but intuitively Watts seems to know how to make the most of it. He begins singing in a high-lonesome country voice, which, through the machine, sounds like the Carpenters or Crosby, Stills and Nash beamed in from a radio station on the moon. "This thing is cool, but usually I reproduce that kind of sound by creating each part myself, not by letting a machine do it in one step. It's cool, but you can hear that it's fake this way."

This year Watts plans to expand his horizons. "I want to focus on sketches and acting," he says.

"I want people to realize I can do more." He takes a pull from the vaporizer. "The sketches on my DVD are just a taste of that. I want to focus on scripted wordplay and goofing around on camera. That's a priority for me."

If Watts has his way, the world at large will experience him anew in more ways than one. With one hand on the technological pulse and the other on the edge of every moment that goes by, if given carte blanche, Watts will blow our minds. In his ideal world someone will invent an iPad app that will allow him to loop six to 10 tracks of his voice, add effects and pan each individual track to various speakers around the room at will. "I'm hoping if I complain enough, somebody will call me and we'll design the perfect looping pedal," he says. "All my current machines do everything I want them to do—almost. If I had my ultimate gear, I could give people my ultimate show. I could control where my voice goes, and that's an evolution sonically. I'd also like there to be an evolution visually, and I'm working on that with some people at Berkeley. I'd like to do a show in which everyone sits in comfortable chairs, lying back, enjoying some visual nuances, like subtle color shifts projected onto the ceiling, while all around there are thrilling places of performance throughout the room. You will see me through the glasses in real time, but all around me will be a graphic overlay augmenting reality. That imagery will be controlled and fed into the screens on the glasses. The entire show will be all about immersion, and even if people fall asleep, lying back in those easy chairs, that will be fine. They'll be immersed in their own way. My intent is to bring the audience as inside my vision of experience as possible."

Watts gets up from his chair and walks over to a box sitting beside the door. He has just gotten a new foam pillow in the mail to match his new foam mattress. I've come to realize that though foam bedding conjures images of late-night Tempur-Pedic commercials, leave it to Watts to have found the ultimate alternative. "This company creates entirely organic memory foam," he says, tearing into the cardboard. "It's all recycled material, and it's infused with botanical aromatherapy oils to help you sleep. Here, smell it. I love the way these smell." Indeed, the pillow has a dainty, English tea party aroma, and it's molded to fit the human neck. It's a perfumed brace fit for nodding off.

"This bed comes with a special frame that has these heat sinks along the sides. It's ventilated all along the base to offset the density and heat retention that come with memory foam. I haven't slept on it in summer, but I'm confident it will be fine. I'm actually ready to try this out with an afternoon nap."

One week later Watts is in the greenroom at *Studio 360*, the weekly public radio program hosted by *Spy* co-founder and author Kurt Andersen. This week's show is called "Our Universe Goes to 11," and it's a debate on the nature of the cosmos between Watts and theoretical physicist Janna Levin, author of *How the Universe Got Its Spots* and the novel *A Madman Dreams of Turing Machines*. Without a doubt, Watts is the only comic of his generation capable of undertaking this conversation and actually adding wisdom to the dialogue.

In the greenroom he is downright giddy at the thought of discussing the nature of time. "In physics there are no absolutes, and I understand that directly as it pertains to me when I'm performing. Time expands when I'm onstage, because in those moments I see so many different options. I hear myself singing notes I'm not thinking of. It's the weirdest sensation as my sense of time expands and then evaporates. It's similar to athletes' recollections of the moments when they did something great. Or like Neo in *The Matrix*. It's slow-motion-bullet time."

The show that night is a mix of instructive demonstration, wittily disputed theory and musical interludes courtesy of Watts. In short, it is a brainy show-and-tell-style science class for grown-ups. Levin's theories and explanations are engaging, and Watts could not be a better foil. Hardly the clown, he reinforces her cosmic theses by transposing them into a melodic, Bill Withers-style song-rap about inconsistency and higher dimensionality.

Afterward, over drinks at the Room in SoHo with Levin and some friends, Watts thinks of the future. "I'm just so happy to actually have a home of my own after floating from place to place for so long," he says. "And since I made that choice to get a place, it seems like everything else has come together in some way too. I now have so many potential projects, which is great. I strive to have as much fun as possible while remaining connected with the people in my life." He takes a moment and peers off side-long toward the floor. "I would love to find a girl I really dig, though. That would be awesome. It's cool, man, when you like what you do, but it's cooler when you then find somebody and you're like, 'Okay, let's hang out for a while...or forever.'"

"What else are you looking for?" I ask.

"The right looper pedal," he says without hesitation. "I really want someone to invent the right pedal. Technology is so important to performance today, no matter what you do. If you blend your capabilities naturally with it, you can create something amazing. If you mix them in a symbiotic way, then you're doing a whole new thing, and that's great. You're on a whole new adventure, along with your audience, in which you're trying to figure it all out together." Watts takes a sip of his sake and then turns to me, his face bearing the earnestness of a philosophy major. "That's what I try to do every time I perform. I try to get into a zone where I have to make something work that has to be entertaining for people. And while I'm trying to make that work, I try to make that process of figuring it out entertaining for people as well."

He takes a moment, not quite satisfied with what he just tried to communicate. "What I'm trying to say is that it's as if someone throws me a Rubik's Cube onstage every night and I'm up there trying to engage the people watching as I try to figure that puzzle out. I'm standing there saying, 'Oh, hey, guys...look at me. Look at the way I'm trying to solve this puzzle!' I want to do stuff that people will think is cool. I just want to make cool stuff for people to like. Essentially that's the only reason I'm doing any of this. I'm motivated by a sense of 'Wait until people get a load of this thing. Wait until they see this *whojamagadget!*'"



PLAYBOY FORUM

DO SOMETHING

ON COMING TO TERMS WITH BEING SAVED BY A MAN

BY RACHEL SHTEIR

Do something." I said those words on the night of June 6, 1984 just before my boyfriend, D, was shot trying to stop a burglar from tying me up. The burglar did not tie me up, and D did not die, though as far as I know (we broke up in 1991 and haven't talked since 1993) the bullet is still lodged in his neck.

More time has passed between the crime and now than between the time I was born and that year. I think about it a good deal, though less than I used to. Mostly I think about the phrase *Do something*, which in any other context would have embarrassed me. Which still embarrasses me. It concedes something I was loath to acknowledge back then about a difference between men and women.

Men do stuff; women have stuff done to them. Men save women from peril; women are saved. I had encountered these ideas in Greek tragedies, 19th century novels, 20th century romantic comedies and Motown songs. But I didn't believe them until that night. From being driven to utter "Do something," I learned that no matter how many generations of feminists roll out, no matter how many women shatter glass ceilings or work in Fortune 500 companies, we rely on men to save us from other men.

Saying "Do something" demolished much that I, 20 years old, had absorbed about self-reliance and equality. I grew up on the heels of second-wave feminism, and my mother, among others, impressed on me that I was the equal of boys. Thus, long after this night,

I continued to be embarrassed that I had stooped to "Do something" that night. As if I should have—should have what? Learned to shoot a gun?

But "Do something" also evoked the stereotypically female, though unfeminine, activity of nagging. And a helplessness that my family disapproved of. I like to imagine that I said "Do something" calmly to convince D of the urgency of the situation. But in reality I don't remember how I delivered the words. Saying them proved I needed him, stronger and taller, to protect me. Protecting me got him shot.

The shooting took place in a third-floor

walk-up D shared with three roommates at the corner of 55th and Cornell. We kept the windows open at night even though the kitchen overlooked a porch, which, Chicago style, led to the alley.

Upon arriving in Hyde Park the previous year, we students had been informed that constant danger



TAVIS COBURN

FORUM

surrounded us. Police cars patrolled campus. I ignored them, as I ignored any fact challenging my invincibility. I minced across the snowy Midway in vintage cream-colored satin heels. I lost my virginity to a man I hardly knew and did not like. I drank a lot of white Russians. I studied Arabic—a decision that shaped the next six years of my life.

Even after D and I began dating, I could not shake one thrill-seeking habit. Every day, no matter the weather, I jogged south along Stony Island Avenue. Past a brick hospital, which would later go bankrupt. Past the Midway I would storm in my Nikes, my Walkman blaring Prince songs. After the shooting I stopped the ghetto jogs. The universe had made its point.

•

When I open my eyes in the middle of the night, the streetlamps cast a purple shadow in the room. D is grabbing the top of my arm with his hand. He stands above me, next to the bed, and someone next to him asks if we have any drugs. We do not, but D rummages in a jewelry box on the dresser. The stranger has draped fabric over his chin and lips and around his head to hide his face and hair.

I am not scared. I cannot see D's or the stranger's face, but I can see a small gun the stranger waves to herd us into the hall. I think, Toy. Later someone tells me it was a .22.

In the living room, D's roommate S sits on the couch. A third roommate sleeps through the whole event, and the fourth is elsewhere. The burglar asks if we have any money, which we don't. Only a few minutes have gone by when he points the gun at D and asks him to find some rope. He drags a chair into the middle of the room, motions for me to sit on it and tells D to tie me up.

Sometimes when you look back on your younger self you see things as if in a movie or on a screen—from a distance. When the burglar asks for a chair and rope, I feel that these props pertain to someone else and I pity this poor girl, though I do not dwell on the particulars that might befall her. At the time I do not know anyone who has been mugged, much less raped.

But still I say, "Do something." And it works. D and S grab the burglar's hand—the one holding the gun—and try to wrestle it from him. They manage to make the gun point toward the ceiling. I run into the kitchen and slip between the wall and the refrigerator. After a few seconds S runs down the stairs and into the street, leaving D to grapple with the

burglar by himself. S later explains that he wanted to get help, though it is unclear what sort of help would be available on 55th Street at that time of night.

With S gone the burglar must have bent the gun around toward D's face: I hear a pop. The burglar thuds through the kitchen past me and jiggles the doorknob, trying to get out. In my imagination I grab a frying pan and conk him. Stars circle around his head and he falls down. I'm the hero. In real life I press against the wall, barely breathing. The burglar climbs out the window onto the porch and runs down the stairs. Someone, maybe me, calls 911.

D was the
handsomest man
I'd ever dated.
Being saved from
death by good
bone structure is
not a claim just
anyone can make.

In the bathroom D is looking at himself in the mirror. He is pale. Like my knowledge of guns, my understanding of shooting comes from the movies, in which holes gape in the victim's flesh, blood spurts all over the floor and the wounded person lies down and expires.

One or two drops of blood drip on the white subway tile bathroom floor, but otherwise D looks fine. Later I will be informed there is no hole in his face because the bullet is still in his neck. There is no exit wound.

•

The police never caught anyone. I paged through books of mug shots, but

I never saw the burglar's face. D never spoke to S again. Anyone who abandons his friend in a three-way struggle in which the third person is a criminal with a gun is a jerk—or worse. Some of our friends giggled about D's ferocity behind his back.

In the weeks between the crime and the end of the quarter, I was afraid for the first time. I worried I would be walking down the street and the burglar would be walking toward me. He would recognize me and I would not recognize him. He would push me into an alley and finish what he had started.

The doctors at first worried that the bullet, already too close to the carotid artery to remove, would move toward it and paralyze D. Instead it stayed put. Scar tissue formed.

During this time I was mugged twice: once while I was waiting for a bus at the Dan Ryan–Garfield El stop, where even in broad daylight bottles of Richards Wild Irish Rose rolled from the curb outside the liquor store into the street. Another time, also in broad daylight, I was mugged at the Jeffery Express bus stop at the intersection of Hyde Park Boulevard and 55th Street. My parents begged me to leave Chicago or move into a doorman building, neither of which I did.

•

Even with the scar, D was the handsomest man I'd ever dated. Unlike my other boyfriends, he was blond and tall, with the body of a swimmer and the face of a model. According to an article published in the student newspaper after the shooting, his high cheekbones may have deflected the bullet from his brain and into his neck, where muscle tissue stopped it. Being saved from death by good bone structure is not a claim just anyone can make.

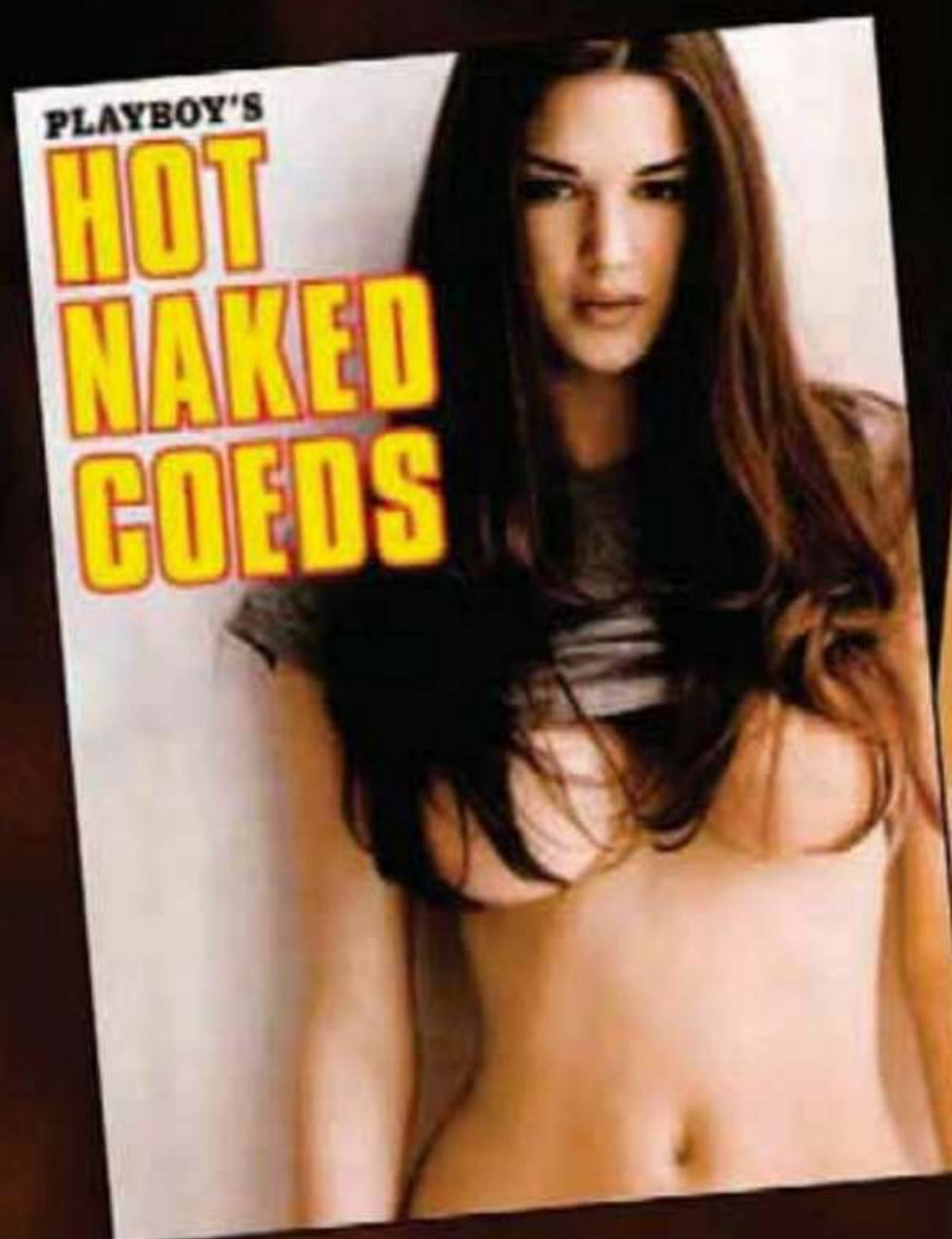
The oldest son of working-class Polish Catholics, D longed to escape. He was not born to culture but was serious about using it to flee. He studied photography and wanted to go to art school. He liked Roman Polanski's *Knife in the Water* and Czeslaw Milosz. He spoke many languages—he taught me how to say "Do you have a hard-on?" in one I would never know. In English he used idioms that might as well have been foreign. "White on rice," as in "She was all over him like white on rice."

D was kind and chivalric, loyal to his childhood friends. But if the burglar had not shot him, we wouldn't have lasted as long as we

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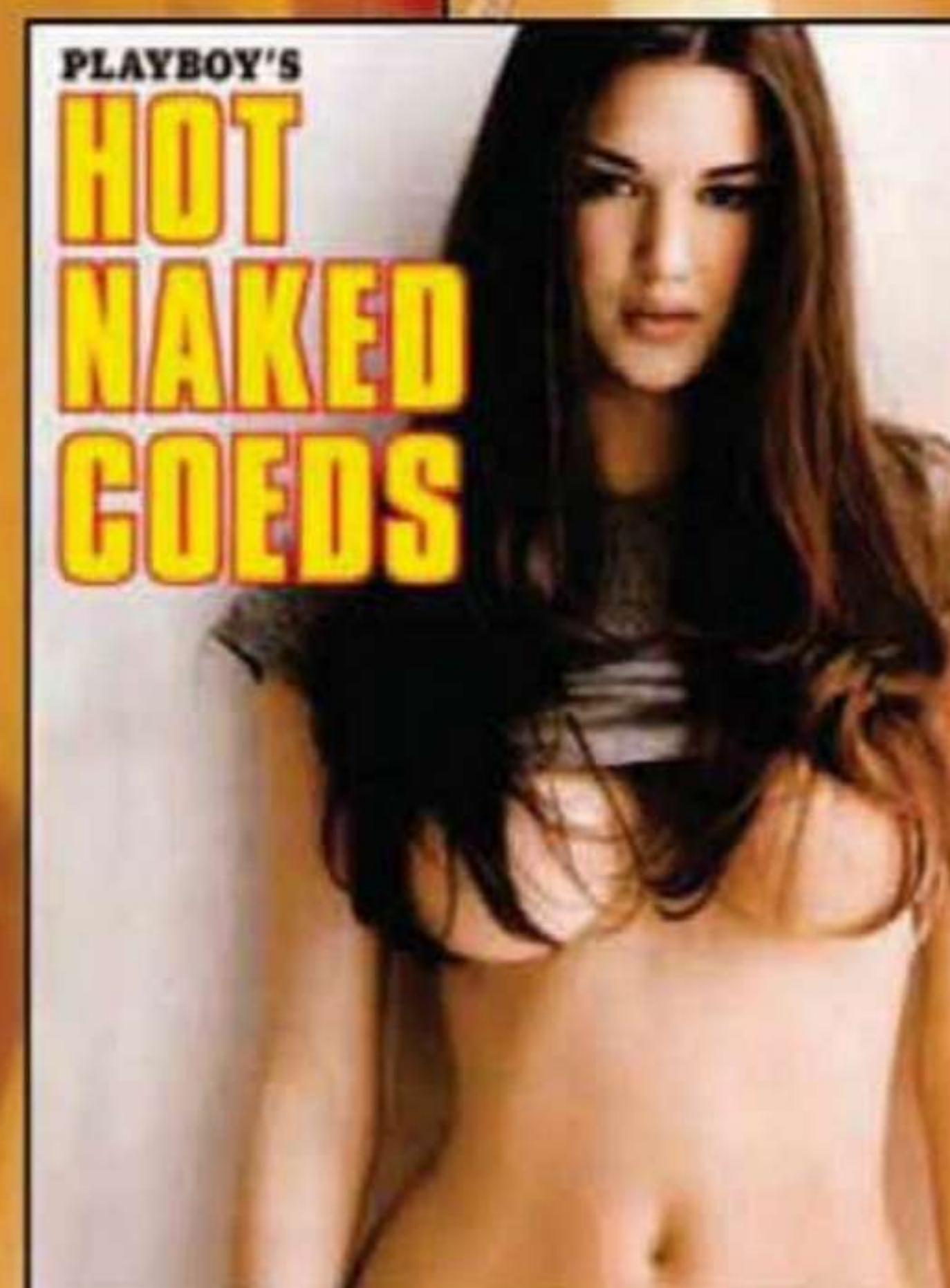
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FORUM

did. I never imagined us with children, a house with a white picket fence and a dog.

In the September following the shooting, D and I each fled Chicago, though that isn't how I then thought of it. I headed to North Africa to continue studying Arabic. I had become obsessed with Victorian women who trekked through the desert disguised as men and had affairs with officers in the French Foreign Legion.

(They declined to ask anyone to "do something.")

We rendezvoused every few months. Once we landed in Athens and traveled to the Greek islands. Sitting on a bus swerving through the hills of Santorini, I turned and touched the skin covering the bullet. D could feel it in damp weather and sometimes it set off metal detectors at the airport, he said. We ate squid that the fishermen beat to death against the dock and drank retsina and swam in the ocean. We stopped talking about the shooting.

After we returned to Chicago we continued to date. D followed me when I moved East for graduate school. We stayed together for another three years, until D wanted to go live in Europe. Because of an essay I had written about Isabelle Eberhardt—one of the Victorian women I had read about—I had been offered residencies at enough writers' colonies to sustain me for a year. I feared the strain of living in another country would slow down—or stop—what I had started. I felt the sense of having done nothing at 24. So I stayed behind.

Years after I moved back to Chicago, I reread online the newspaper articles about the shooting. One included a photo of me and two of D's roommates sitting in the living room where the intruder had wanted to tie me up.

I am resting my arm on a small table. The caption informs the reader we are "reflecting" on "the incident."

I called 311 to find out if the police had kept the incident report. "Unless it's murder, they don't keep the incident report," the woman said on the phone. "And since I'm talkin' to you...."

We both laughed and I hung up.

Over the years, when people asked how I was changed by my boyfriend

The urge to confess at the beginning faded. I told new friends deeper in—sometimes at the end of—an affair, as if this long-ago event would explain something. "You know..." I would begin when I saw trouble coming, though I disliked this about myself, this using a brush with violence, with death, to brag.

As if witnessing violence made me a better person. As if I were a character in

a Greek tragedy, in which suffering leads to understanding. When clearly, if I told and retold this story, even if I had suffered, I hadn't understood a damn thing.

I wanted to say that someone had once loved me enough to save me from being tied up. I was desperate for anyone to try, as if I were the princess in the fairy tale who tests her suitors with three golden apples. Or I was embarrassed by my inability to stop talking about the shooting because this was just a near miss, neither the Holocaust nor the gulag.

But was it a near miss because of D, because of his courage, or because I had said "Do something"? I saved myself, I thought occasionally, but then, chafing at my own mean-spiritedness, I thought D became the victim trying to save me. Recently I have told the story

less, because though the distance between myself and it has widened, the telling horrifies the listener all the same. In Greek tragedy Medusa turns the people who gaze on her hideousness to stone. Eventually Perseus cuts off her head.

*Rachel Shteir is author of *The Steal: A Cultural History of Shoplifting*.*



The damsel in distress: Despite our noble egalitarian ideals, men and women are physically different. Must anatomy forever be destiny?

saving me, I sometimes said, "I never hated cops the way other people of my generation did." I never said, unless I knew the person well, that the shooting bound D to me. At first I told nearly everyone I met about it right away—friends at dinner parties, potential lovers on first dates. I never asked myself what I wanted to hear from the person I told the story to.

FORUM

READER RESPONSE

PLAYBOY AND FEMINISM

I have never agreed with denunciations of PLAYBOY as antifemale pornography ("The Bunny Mystique," June). The magazine challenged the 1950s dogma that getting married was the only way to achieve the good life and insisted the "girl next door" enjoyed sex, especially with a man sophisticated enough to set the mood with a tastefully decorated apartment, great music and a refined selection of food and drink. PLAYBOY was a staunch defender of women's right to explore their (hetero)sexuality and control their reproductive decisions. But the vision of liberation that Hugh Hefner presented had more in common with the outlook of Helen Gurley Brown—whose 1962 best-seller *Sex and the Single Girl* taught women to use sex to get access to the good things in life before settling into domesticity—than the view put forward by Betty Friedan, who argued that men and women need sources of meaning beyond consumerism and in addition to sex. Both Hefner and Brown encouraged a certain objectification of the other gender, focusing on a few secondary sexual characteristics



Helen Gurley Brown with admirers, 1963.

rather than the range of individual traits that affect desire and pleasure. The limitations of equating this kind of sexual "empowerment" with liberated relationships are evident in recent incarnations such as *Sex and the City* and *The Girls Next Door*. That said, I am glad to see scholars acknowledge the egalitarian themes featured for so long in the magazine.

Stephanie Coontz
Olympia, Washington

Coontz, who teaches history and family studies at the Evergreen State College, is author of A Strange Stirring: The Feminine Mystique and American Women at the Dawn of the 1960s.



The girl with the dragon tattoo.

INKING FOR A FIGHT

In response to "It's the Ink, Not the Canvas," (*Newsfront*, April), about the artist who fought authorities in Hermosa Beach to open a tattoo parlor, I thought I'd share a typically idiotic letter to the editor published by our local rag: "Tattoos are low class. Tattoo parlors should be in the ghetto where the people who wear them live. You don't see many tattoos at yacht clubs; they are for convicts, drug addicts and criminals. Keep them east of the Pacific Coast Highway, beyond the city gates!" Though I love a good tattoo, I of course realize beauty is in the eyes of the beholder. But just because some people have no fashion sense, are we going to ban stores that sell ugly clothes?

Anne Koskinen
Redondo Beach, California

VICTORY OVER LUST

I agree with David Lenz's assessment in *Reader Response* (May) that Christians are not hypocrites for reading PLAYBOY, because Jesus only forbade lusting after married women. The word *lust* is often misunderstood. In Matthew, Chapter 5, Jesus states that desiring to do something sinful (such as committing murder or adultery) is likewise a sin. If a Christian reads the magazine but does not wish to do anything sinful with the models, I see no harm.

Sean Gravel
Pensacola, Florida

Good luck with that.

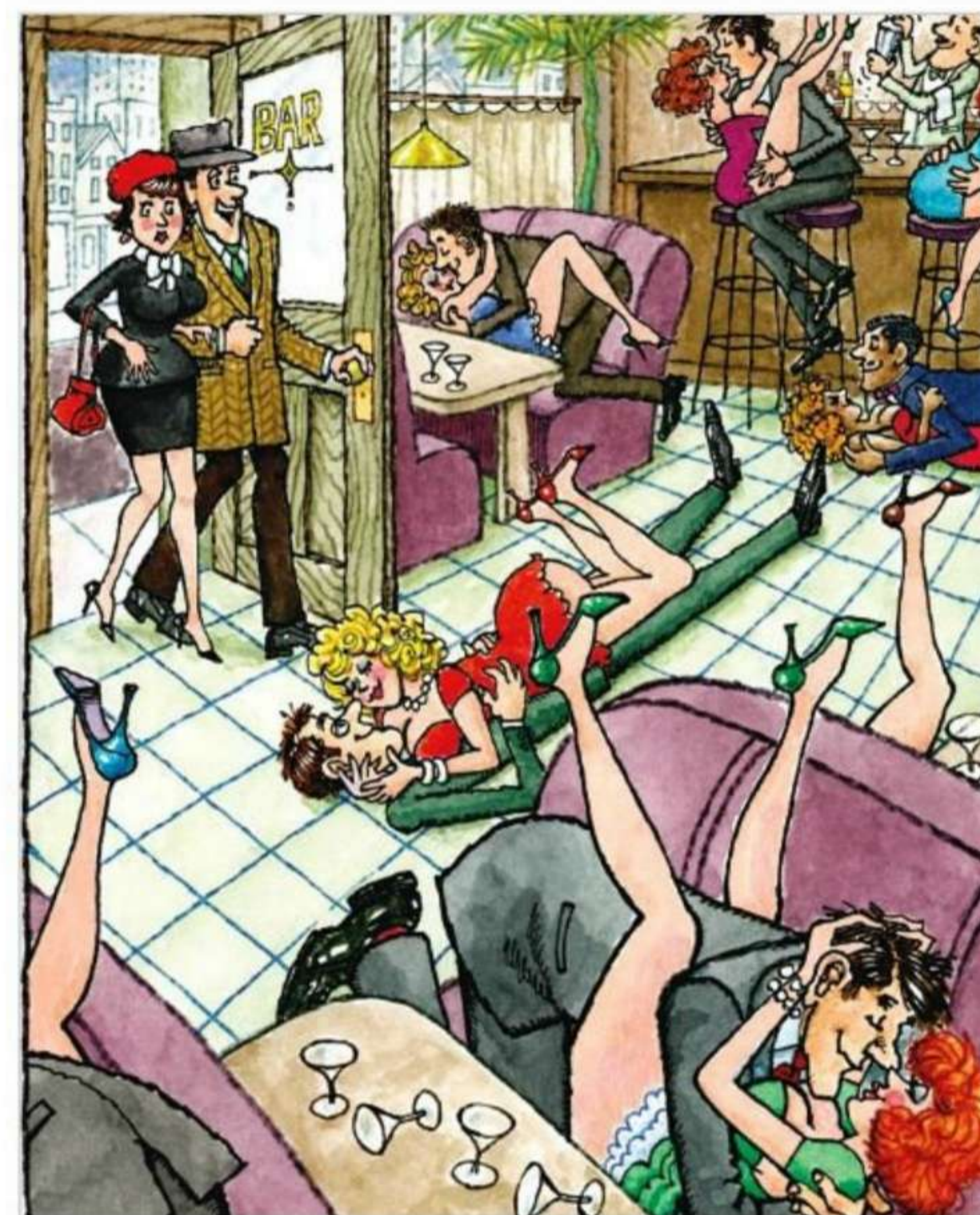
MISSING OUT

The letters you've published about prisoner education (*Reader Response*, April and June) are interesting. I have

served 25 years of a life sentence and can remember in 1994 when they banned prisoners from receiving federal financial aid. Notably, GED programs, which are mandatory for all inmates lacking a high school degree, have always been free. I was active as a tutor in an inmate-based literacy program for more than 20 years before it was suspended and an electronics class for 11 years before it too was canceled. A year ago the Department of Corrections dropped art and music classes and canceled contracts with the artists in residence who taught them. No tax dollars were being spent on these programs; they were paid for with funds from inmate commissary profits. Live well, and try not to get sent here.

Paul Schlueter III
SCI Dallas
Dallas, Pennsylvania

Our February issues were confiscated by the prison mail room due to "explicit sex acts" depicted on pages 45, 101 and



Dangerous drawing: It's happy hour!

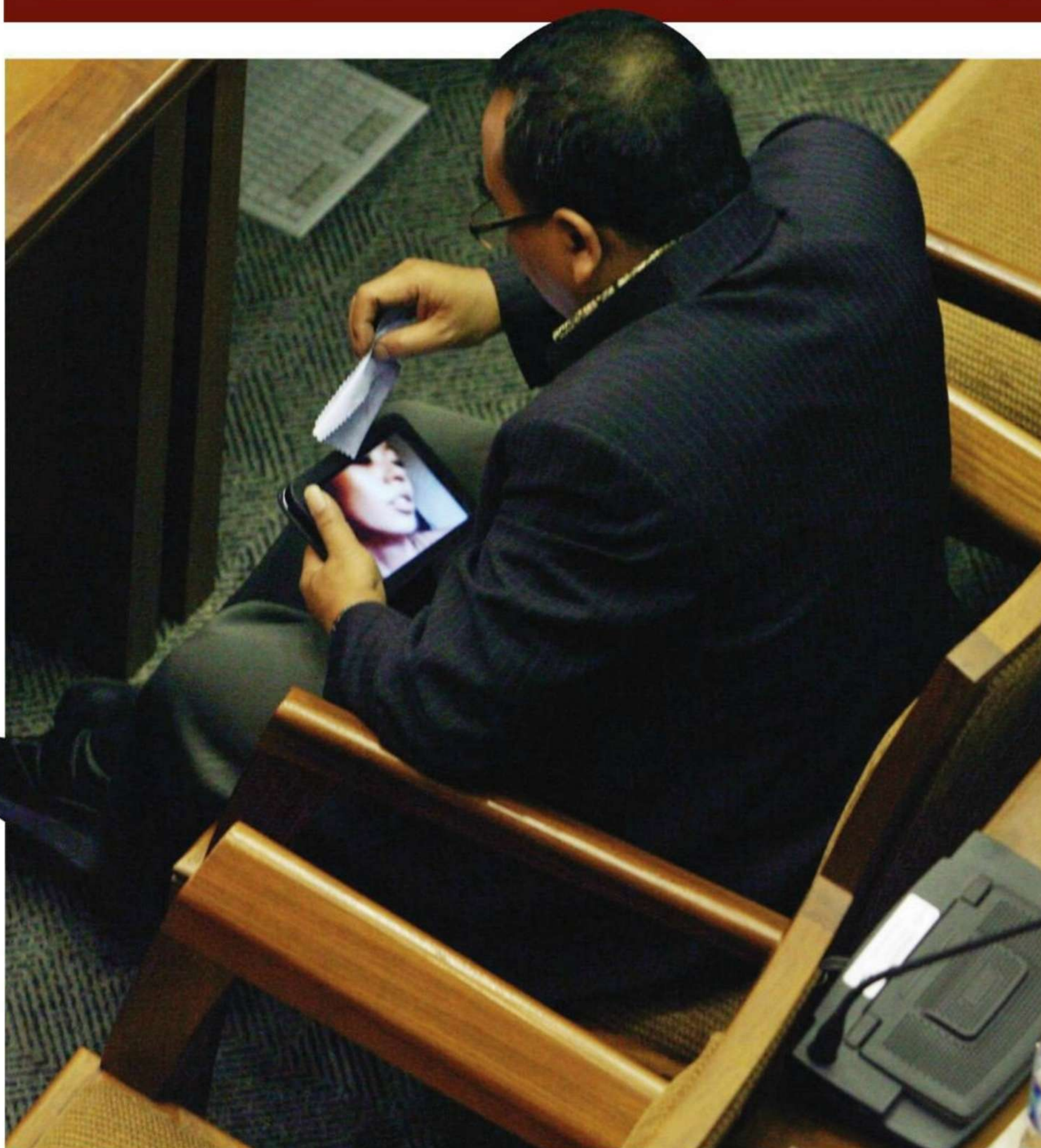
106. I have a hard time believing you would print anything of this nature. What was on those pages?

Paul Kannarr
Crossroads Correctional Center
Cameron, Missouri

You're right to be suspicious. Pages 45 and 106 have R-rated cartoons with couples doing it doggy style, and page 101 is a cartoon of a fully clothed orgy in a bar. Unfortunately, we can't control what wardens choose to censor.

E-mail via the web at letters.playboy.com. Or write: 680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611.

NEWSFRONT

**I Spy...Hypocrisy**

JAKARTA—An Indonesian politician who had supported draconian censorship laws resigned after being caught watching porn on his tablet computer during a legislative session. Arifinto, who like many Indonesians goes by one name, claimed the film started unexpectedly when he clicked on a link in a spam e-mail, but a series of photos shows him calling up the stored video. “I am a human. I err like everyone else,” explained Arifinto, who with other members of the Prosperous Justice Party has been a vocal supporter of a 2008 law that criminalizes all manner of sexual expression in secular Indonesia, from kissing in public to exposing the “sensual” parts of the female body to displaying erotic art. Will a chastened Arifinto now work to win the release of Nazril “Ariel” Irham and Erwin Arnada, who are also only human? In January a judge sentenced Ariel, lead singer of the pop band Peterpan, to three and a half years in prison for distributing pornography—two homemade videos he’d made with girlfriends that went viral after a band employee stole them from Ariel’s laptop. (A judge said Ariel had not done enough to prevent the theft.) Last year Arnada, editor of PLAYBOY Indonesia, began a two-year sentence following a secret government appeal of his 2008 acquittal on charges of “public indecency” related to the magazine.

Slightly Off

LOS ANGELES—A music site that offered tracks from the Beatles, Pink Floyd, Coldplay and other top bands for 25 cents each agreed to pay \$950,000 to EMI for violating its copyrights. Bluebeat’s owner



argued he had not posted the tracks but “psychoacoustic simulations” of the tracks created after he disassembled the digital files and reassembled them, comparing the process to a band performing covers. EMI called that explanation “nonsensical,” and a federal judge agreed.

Porn Makes Babies

LONDON—A conservative think tank blasted the National Health Service for allowing fertility clinics to provide pornography to facilitate ejaculation. The practice, argues 2020health, allows men to “sexually objectify an unknown woman while producing a specimen, rather than think of a partner.” In response, two clinicians reported in *The Journal of Sexual Medicine* that they had not been able to find any female NHS staff members who objected to providing aspiring fathers with VSS, or visual sexual stimulation.

Misfire

TRAVERSE CITY, MICHIGAN—The incoming president of the American College of Surgeons resigned after an indignant reaction to his Valentine’s Day column for *Surgery News*. After citing a study that found exposure to semen may stave off depression in women, Dr. Lazar Greenfield quipped, “Now we know there’s a better gift for that day than chocolates.” He later said the

research impressed him because it suggests semen exposure bonds couples.

Drug Jumpers

YUMA, ARIZONA—Last month we brought you the marijuana catapult, confiscated by the Mexican army after cameras caught smugglers testing its tautness. This month we share a truck-mounted folding ramp discovered after U.S. Border Patrol agents pursued a Jeep Cherokee weighed down with 1,000 pounds of weed. After the ramp was lowered into Arizona, the driver apparently accelerated up and over.





GETTY IMAGES

Topsider

PIPPA MIDDLETON, sexy little sister of the Duchess of Cambridge, Kate Middleton, didn't let a bikini top get in the way of her sunbathing in Ibiza. Hopefully the queen realizes that tan lines are unseemly.

SOLARPIX/PACIFICCOASTNEWS.COM



Porcelain Doll

Part pop starlet, part rocker chick, PORCELAIN BLACK describes her music as what would ensue "if Britney Spears and Marilyn Manson had a kid." So naughty Lolita meets twisted bad-ass? We approve of that unholy union.



©KEN SETTLE

FRANK WHITE/CELEBRITY PICTURES



Get Into the Grove

U.K. model AMII GROVE plays a vampire bride in the horror comedy *Strippers vs. Werewolves*. Here's hoping *Vampire Brides vs. Strippers* is the sequel.

Zoë, My God!

Note to ZOË KRAVITZ (*X-Men: First Class* actress and daughter of Lenny Kravitz and Lisa Bonet): Two sheer tops don't make an opaque one.



Red State

After filming the pilot of her new CW drama, *Hart of Dixie*, on which she plays a fast-living New Yorker who moves to the South, RACHEL BILSON wore this scintillating and saucy magenta number while enjoying some much-deserved R&R on the beaches of Barbados.



ISLANDPAPS/SPLASH NEWS

Free and Clear

LINDSAY LOHAN was sentenced to 120 days of house arrest and must also perform 480 hours of community service. And given the diaphanous top she wore to her orientation, it appears nothing can hold her down.



FAME PICTURES

Miranda Kerr in Full Bloom

Orlando Bloom and MIRANDA KERR had a son in January, and luckily for Bloom, it still shows. At the Tribeca Film Festival Miranda was bursting out of her dress—the telltale sign of a new mom.



SPLASH NEWS

Cave Woman

We don't know stalagmites from stalactites, but we do know that a beautiful blonde Polish Playmate protruding from a cave is called Miss September 2008 MONIKA LESZCZYŃSKA.



WOLTER BAKIEWICZ



DAISY LOWE: SEE THE BRITISH FLOWER IN FULL BLOOM.



AMBER HEARD IS NOT YOUR TYPICAL SEX SYMBOL.



STEVE BUSCEMI: LIFE ON THE BOARDWALK EMPIRE.

NEXT MONTH



DON'T MESS WITH MERCEDE JOHNSTON.

AMBER HEARD—IN 20Q THE ACTRESS TALKS TO **ERIC SPITZNAGEL** ABOUT HER RECKLESS DRIVING HABITS, HER LOVE AFFAIR WITH AMERICAN MUSCLE CARS AND HER NEW ROLE ON *THE PLAYBOY CLUB* ON NBC.

DOWN AND OUT IN BAGHDAD—AS VACATION DESTINATIONS GO, BAGHDAD ISN'T EXACTLY A HOT SPOT (OTHER THAN IN THE LITERAL SENSE), BUT IRAQI OFFICIALS DON'T SEE WHY A LITTLE HEAT AND CIVIL UNREST SHOULD STAND IN THE WAY OF POTENTIAL TOURISM REVENUE. **PAULA FROELICH** EXPLORES THE R&R OFFERINGS OF A DUSTY WAR ZONE.

DAISY LOWE—SHE'S A TOP MODEL WHO GREW UP AMID THE WILD 1990S LONDON MUSIC SCENE. NOW, THE DAUGHTER OF PEARL LOWE AND BUSH FRONTMAN GAVIN ROSSDALE SHEDS HER CLOTHES AND SHOWS OFF ALL HER GOOD GENES.

CRIMES IN SOUTHERN INDIANA—IN EXCERPTS FROM **FRANK BILL'S** GRITTY SHORT STORY COLLECTION, THINGS GET BLOODY IN THE AMERICAN HEARTLAND AS BETRAYALS PILE UP AND LEAD A YOUNG GIRL AND HER DYING GRANDMOTHER TO SETTLE SOME DISTURBING SCORES.

THE PLAYBOY BAR: MESCAL—DON'T GET IT TWISTED: TEQUILA AND MESCAL ARE NOT ONE AND THE SAME. WE GIVE YOU THE LOWDOWN ON MEXICO'S OTHER TASTY DISTILLED LIQUOR.

STEVE BUSCEMI—IN THE *PLAYBOY INTERVIEW* THE QUIRKY ACTOR AND STAR OF *BOARDWALK EMPIRE* TALKS TO **KEVIN COOK** ABOUT HIS MANY GRISLY MOVIE DEATHS, GETTING HIT BY MOVING VEHICLES AS A KID AND HOW VINCE VAUGHN INADVERTENTLY CAUSED HIM TO GET KNIFED IN A BAR FIGHT.

MERCEDE JOHNSTON—MOVE OVER, LEVI, IT'S TIME FOR YOUR LITTLE SISTER TO SHINE. BRISTOL PALIN'S FEISTY SWORN ENEMY REVEALS HER ASTOUNDING CURVES.

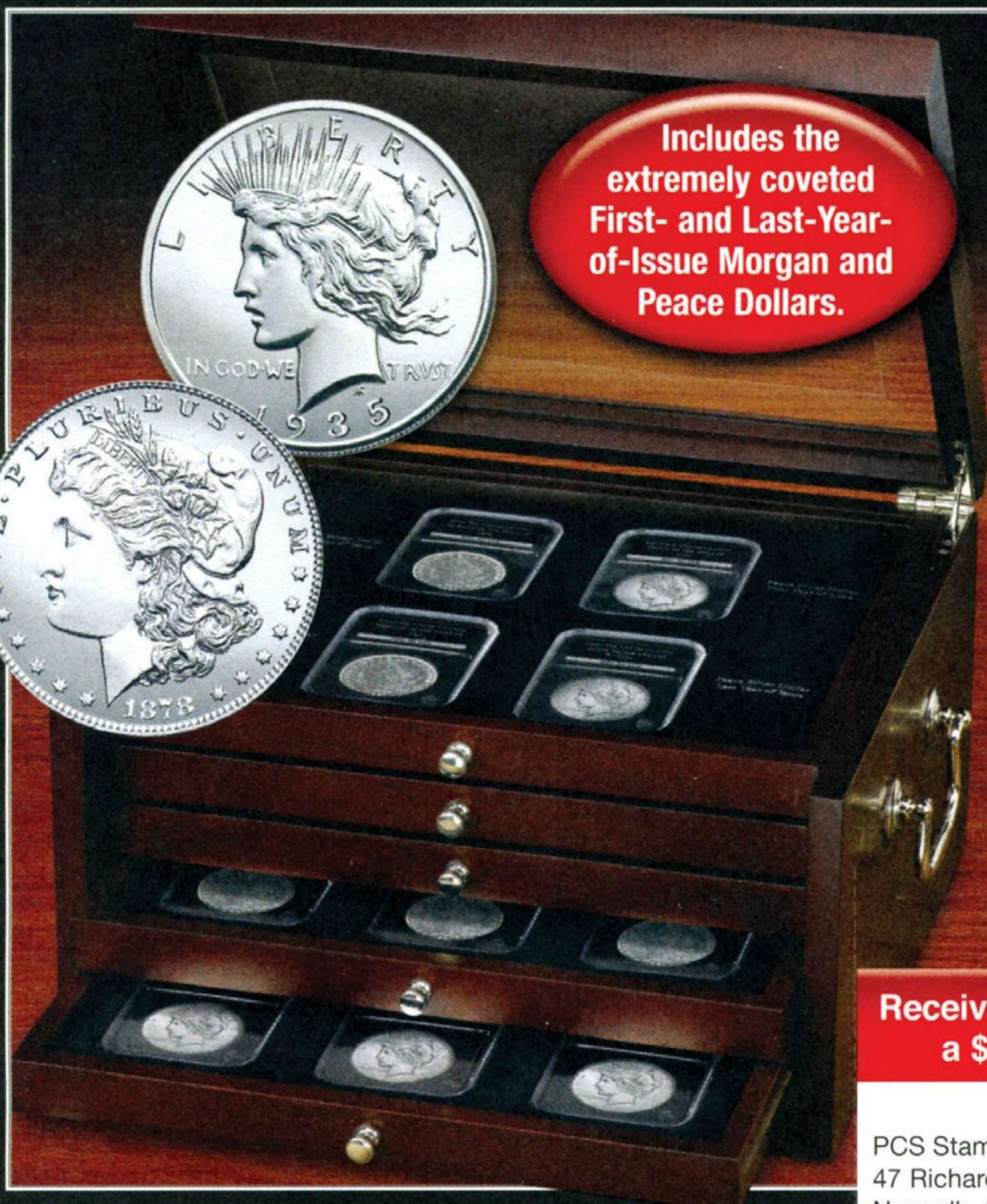
THE PORN IDENTITY—EVER SINCE THE ADVENT OF THE VCR, ADULT-FILM STARLETS HAVE LIVED (AND LOVED) LIFE IN THE SEX LANE. BUT WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THEY HANG UP THEIR THIGH-HIGHS AND MOVE ON TO LESS SALACIOUS PASTURES? **MIKE SAGER** TRACKS DOWN ASIA CARRERA, NINA HARTLEY, AMBER LYNN AND KAY PARKER—AND MAKES SOME SURPRISING DISCOVERIES.

PLAYBOY'S 2011 PIGSKIN PREVIEW—COLLEGE FOOTBALL IS ALMOST UPON US. CONTRIBUTING EDITOR **GARY COLE** PREDICTS WHO WILL RULE THE GRIDIRON THIS SEASON.

FASHION—A ROUNDUP OF LITERARY-INSPIRED STYLES THAT WILL HAVE YOU LOOKING SMART IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE.

PLUS—MISS SEPTEMBER **TIFFANY TOTH**.

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Coins shown slightly larger than actual size of 38 mm in diameter.

(continued on other side)

USD/M036/

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Ripe Chilean Merlot

Chile is a winemaker's paradise and "all of Terra Andina's wines are worthy of recommendation." (*The Wine Advocate*) Few more worthy than this fine Merlot. Juicy red fruit, subtle tobacco. The Patriots Merlot 2010, Maule Valley

Fine California Pinot

In the Pinot-perfect valley made famous by the movie *Sideways*, Eric Hickey gets "serious about quality." (*Parker*) The finest French oak adds spice to the deep raspberry flavor. Pure class. Laetitia Estate Pinot Noir 2010, Arroyo Grande

The President's Cab

Past president of the California Cab Society Bill Knuttel represents all that is great about small-batch winemaking. Here's his opulent, oak-aged 2010. Too good to miss. Silverstrike Cabernet 2010, California

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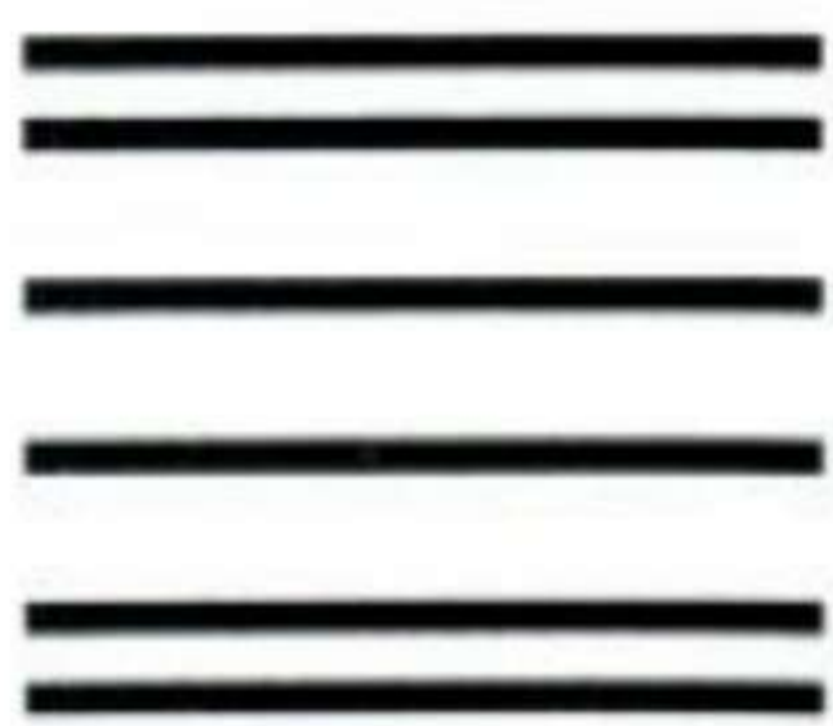
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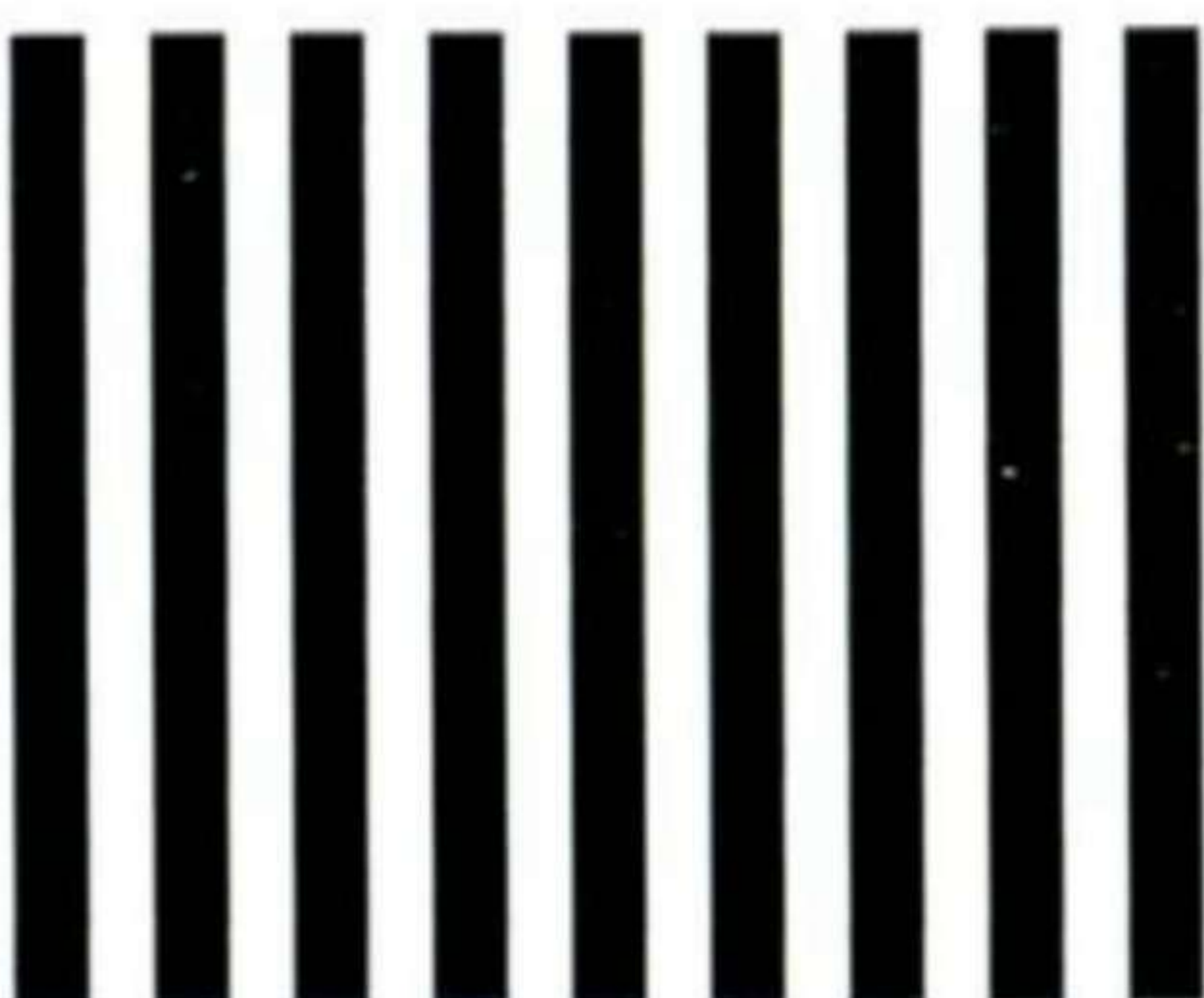
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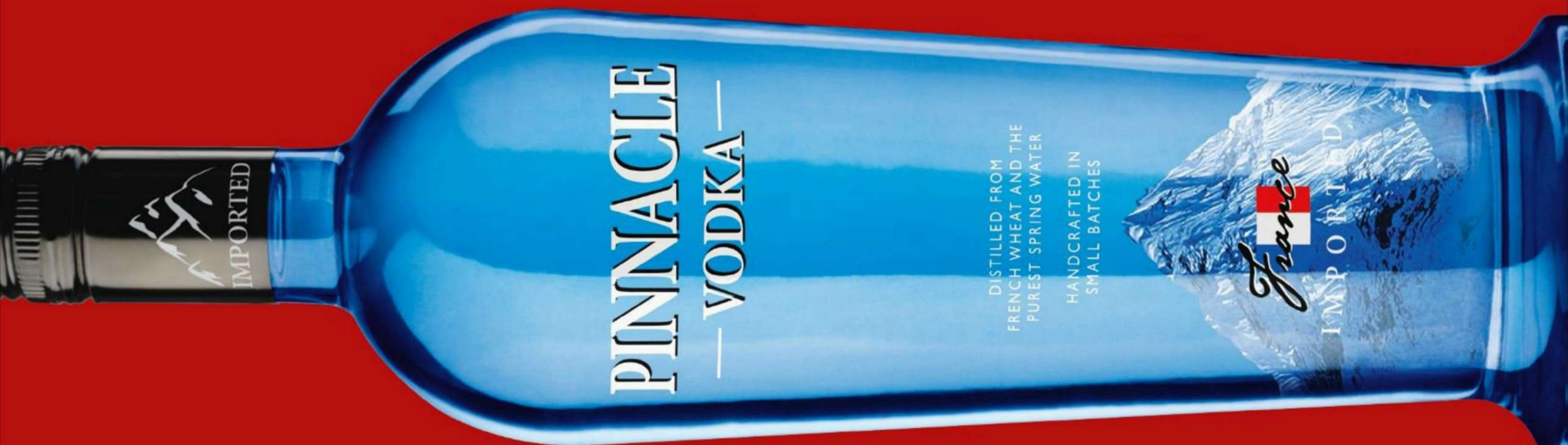
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