

PLAYBOY

ENTERTAINMENT FOR

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SUPERMODEL **MAY ANDERSEN** BARES HER SOUL

20Q
CHRIS EVANS

PLUS

2012 BASEBALL PREVIEW

**THE INTERVIEW:
DAVID BROOKS**

**25 GREATEST RIDES
OF ALL TIME**

**FICTION FROM
JOSEPH WAMBAUGH**

**THE TWITTER
COMEDY TOUR**





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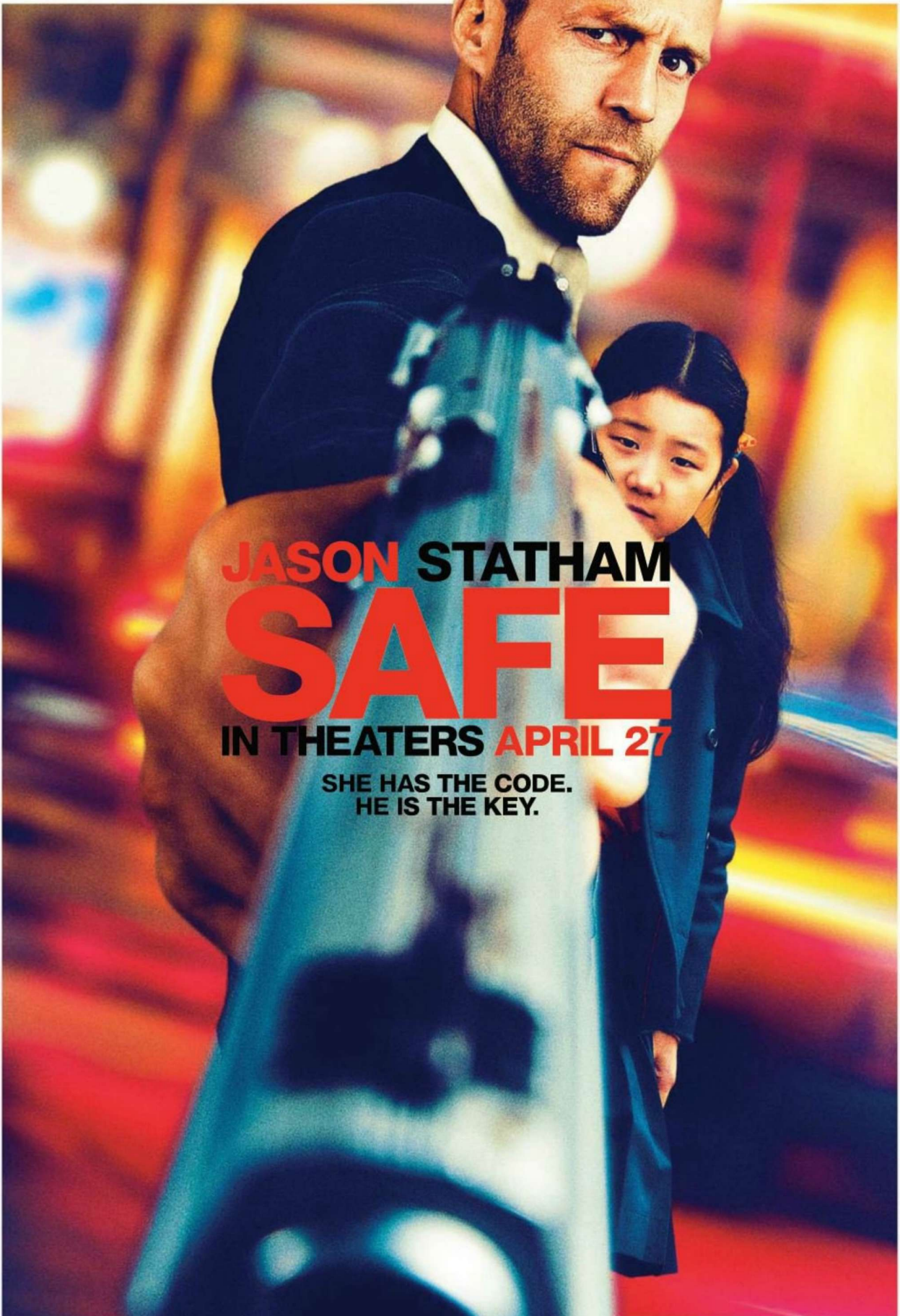
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PLAYBILL

It's time to plan your summer reading (besides *PLAYBOY*). The first book on our list is *Harbor Nocturne* by **Joseph Wambaugh**, the former cop known for his engaging and funny police novels. *Hollywood Patrol*, our exclusive excerpt, takes you on the beat with a colorful crew as they chase a fleet-footed thug and break up a brawl between guys dressed as superheroes. On the opposite side of the country, in Washington, D.C., another group of suspicious characters works hard to line their pockets with our collective cash. In *So You Want to Hire a Lobbyist*, former influence peddler **Jack Abramoff** offers an insider's account of what it takes to buy access under the Dome. Where is Captain America when you need him? **Chris Evans** knows. The actor, who reprises his role in *The Avengers*, discusses in *20Q* why he was initially reluctant to take the part that made him a star. Thank-



Joseph Wambaugh

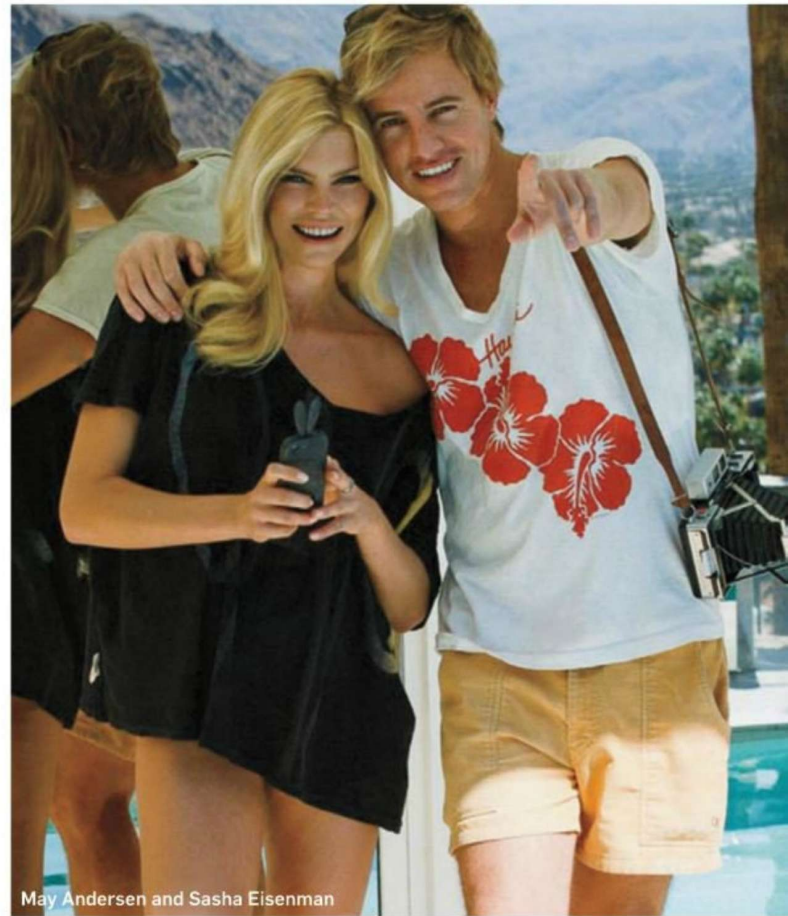


Jack Abramoff

fully **May Andersen** showed no such reluctance when we asked photographer **Sasha Eisenman** to shoot the most intimate photos yet of the Danish supermodel. (May has sisters named June and July—no, that's not true, but it would make for a memorable summer.) You'll love the pictorial *May Andersen*. **Alec Monopoly** is the new king of street art. Where does a creative mind like that set up shop? His L.A. crib is our *Playboy Pad* in *Art House*.



Chris Evans



May Andersen and Sasha Eisenman

Just as Monopoly is changing perceptions of street art, Alec Sulkin is redefining the comedy act. As **Jesse Pearson** reports in *#BorschtBeltRedux*, the *Family Guy* writer doesn't work clubs—he feeds one-liners to 365,309 Twitter followers. **David Brooks**, the author and *New York Times* columnist, is a bit less funny but no less sharp. In the *Playboy Interview*, he explains what it means to strive for moderate conservatism. Ever wanted to hit the reset button



Alec Monopoly



Jesse Pearson

on your life? A number of people do, by faking their deaths. In *Disappearance in the East*, **Lawrence Osborne** travels to Thailand to find out how it's done, and undone. What drives Batman? Superman? Wonder Woman? In *The Super Psyche*, **Grant Morrison**, the most important comic-book writer working today, offers insights into the heroes and anti-heroes he has reinvented with great success. He can't explain, however, why guys wearing superhero costumes would be beating on each other on a Hollywood sidewalk. You'll have to ask Joe Wambaugh about that.



David Brooks



Lawrence Osborne



Grant Morrison



euphoria
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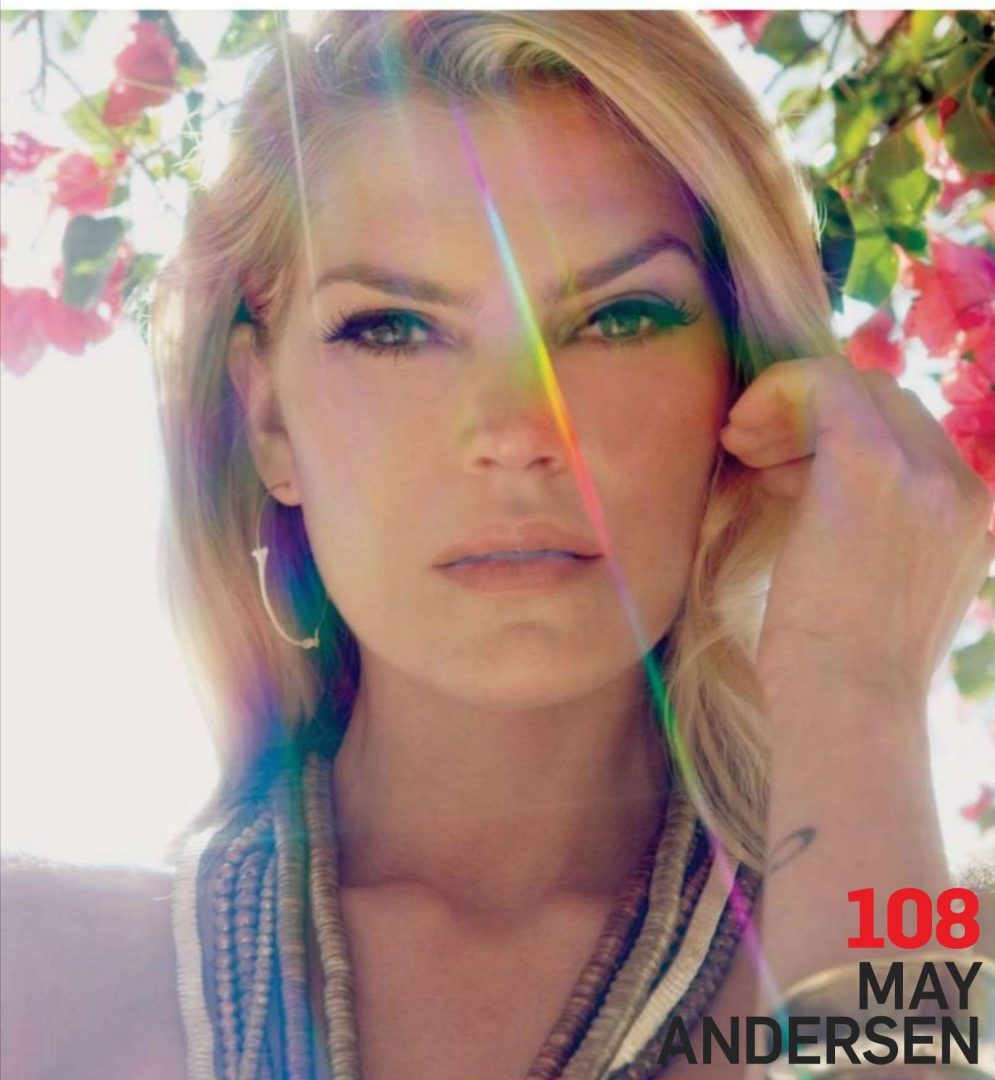
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PLAYBOY

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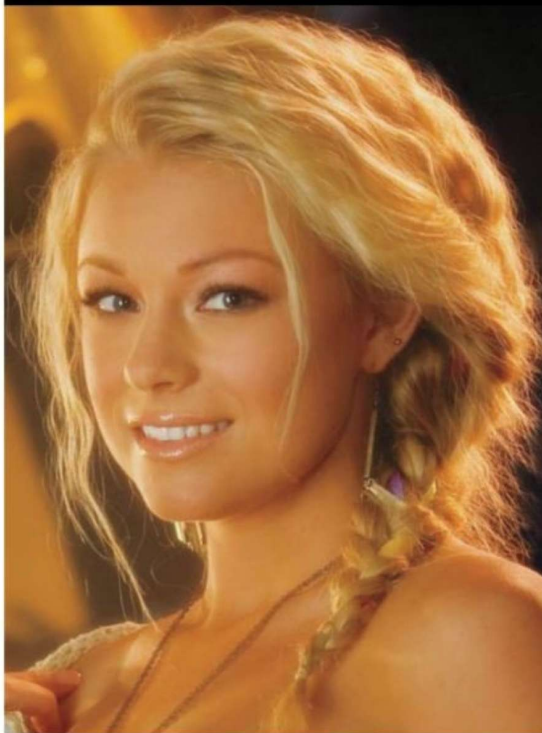
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SPREZZATURA

The word is an Italian idiom meaning "effortlessly cool." We'll take you there. By **JENNIFER RYAN JONES**.



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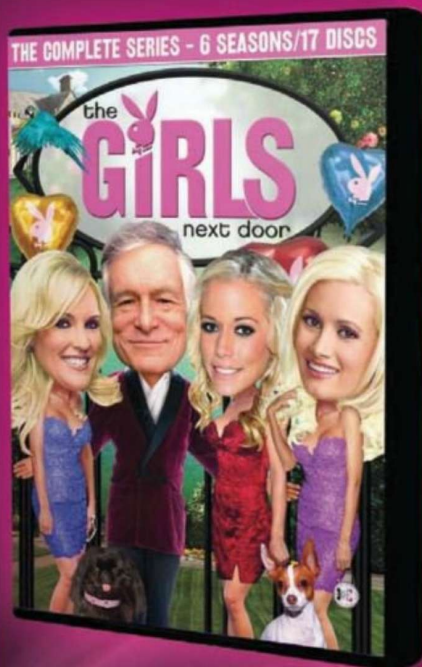
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The War Against Sex

Editorial by Hugh M. Hefner

Fifty years ago PLAYBOY fought alongside enlightened Americans everywhere on the frontlines of the sexual revolution. In the streets, in the courtrooms and in the pages of this magazine we beat back against legislators who were determined to control what you do in your bedroom—and who you do it with. Now, decades later, a new generation of repressed conservatives are pounding on America's bedroom door, their knock the beating of a war drum that sounds their intentions to again regulate our sex lives.

For months I have watched the rhetoric building. Last October, in an interview with an evangelical blogger, Rick Santorum promised to defund birth control on the grounds that contraception is “a license to do things in a sexual realm that is counter to how things are supposed to be.” He claimed in his argument that contraception led to an increasing number of babies born out of wedlock. Ron Paul was no better, believing that the birth control pill did not cause immorality but that immorality creates the problem of wanting to use the pill. Mitt Romney vowed to see a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage and to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. He later promised to eliminate Planned Parenthood. While wooing the conservative vote, these candidates revealed the ways a GOP-led government would decide with whom we can have sex and for what reasons—single or married, straight or gay.

These are battles we have already fought and soundly won. In 1961 police arrested Estelle Griswold, executive director of the Planned Parenthood League of Connecticut, and Dr. C. Lee Buxton, a Yale professor who served as its medical director. Buxton and Griswold were charged with violating a state law that banned sharing information about contraceptives—including with married couples. The U.S. Supreme Court voted seven to two to overturn the convictions. The justices clearly saw the affront: “Would we allow the police to search the sacred precincts of marital bedrooms for telltale signs of the use of contraceptives? The very idea is repulsive to the notions of privacy surrounding the marriage relationship....

We deal with a right of privacy older than the Bill of Rights.”

Victories like this helped us tear down the puritanical structures I questioned in the Playboy Philosophy, structures in which “our legislators, our judges and officers of law enforcement are allowed to enter our most private inner sanctuaries—our bedrooms—and dictate the activity that takes place there.” In 1965 I established the Playboy Foundation in part to appeal cases that now



seem amazing—consenting adults sent to prison for acts that were considered “abominable and detestable crimes against nature,” such as oral sex. In 1967, police in Massachusetts arrested Bill Baird for the crime of lecturing students about contraception and handing out samples of spermicidal foam to a female member of the audience who may have been single. Massachusetts argued that it had the right to protect morals through “regulating the private sexual lives of single persons.” It was the right of the state to hold over its citizens the threat of pregnancy and the birth of an unwanted child as punishment for fornication.

The Playboy Foundation helped fund Baird's appeal. In 1972 the court argued, “If the right of privacy means anything, it is the right of the individual, married or single, to be free from unwarranted governmental intrusion into matters so fundamentally affecting a person as the decision whether to bear or beget a child.” Later, we freed a young woman who was arrested, at her father's request, for fornication. I still recall the father's reasoning: “I'd rather see her in jail than debauched.”

All these years later I hear echoes of this same ignorance espoused by a new crop of self-appointed arbiters who are determined to oversee our morality. I heard it when Santorum backer Foster Friess said, “Back in my days, [women] used Bayer aspirin for contraceptives,” implying that if women held an aspirin between their legs, they wouldn't open them. I heard it when I learned about proposed anti-abortion legislation in Kansas that would protect doctors who conceal vital medical information from pregnant women. And I heard it when Rush Limbaugh called a Georgetown University law student a “slut” and a “prostitute” after she testified on Capitol Hill about allowing employers to avoid providing contraception for religious reasons. “If we are going to pay for your contraceptives and thus pay for you to have sex, we want something for it,” Limbaugh said. “We want you to post the videos online so we can all watch.” Fifty years of sexual freedom vanished in a sound bite.

I want to believe that what we are hearing is the death knell of a desperate minority clinging to a fading ideology, but I'm worried this could be the start of something more: an organized attack on our most basic human freedom. If these zealots have their way, our hard-won sexual liberation—women's rights, reproductive rights and rights to privacy—lie in peril. We won't let that happen. Decades ago, we fought back against these moral charlatans because your sex life, your fantasies and desires, your plans to have or not have a family—none of that is anyone else's business, especially not the government's. Welcome to the new sexual revolution.

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THE WORLD OF PLAYBOY

HEF SIGHTINGS, MANSION FROLICS AND NIGHTLIFE NOTES



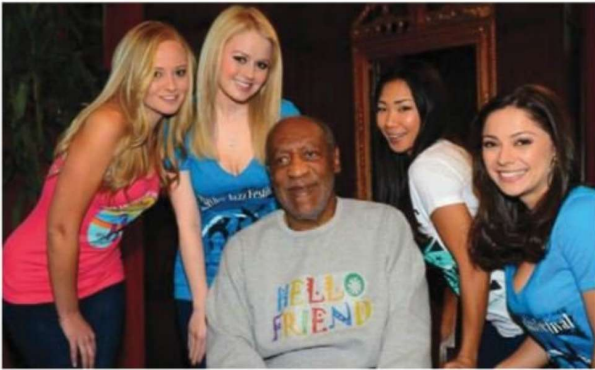
BIG AWARDS NIGHT AT THE MANSION

"We are especially excited that we will get to honor Mr. Hefner with our Humanitarian of the Year award for all his charitable efforts over the years," said Shimmy Mehta (second from right), the founder of Angelwish, a charity that makes the dreams of children with chronic diseases come true. Miss February 1990 Pam Anderson delivered the hardware on behalf of the charity at a post-Grammy party at the Mansion hosted by P. Diddy and attended by PMOY 1994 Jenny McCarthy.



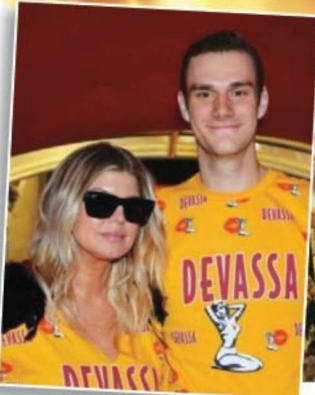
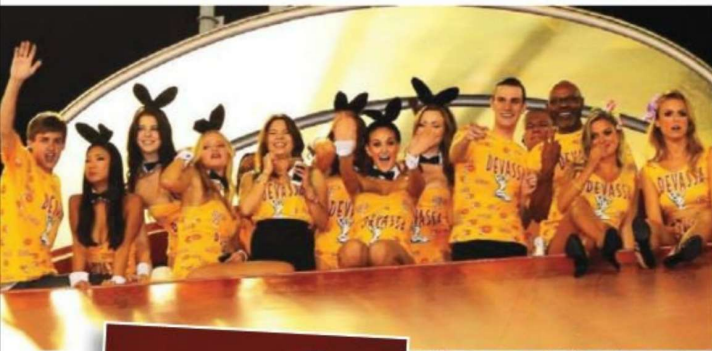
TRUMPETING IN THE 34TH JAZZ FESTIVAL

Bill Cosby, the MC for the Playboy Jazz Festival (June 16 and 17 at the Hollywood Bowl), announced the lineup—including Christian McBride Big Band, Robin Thicke, Preservation Hall Jazz Band and Ozomatli—wearing a favorite sweatshirt.



CARNIVAL IN RIO WAS GRAND

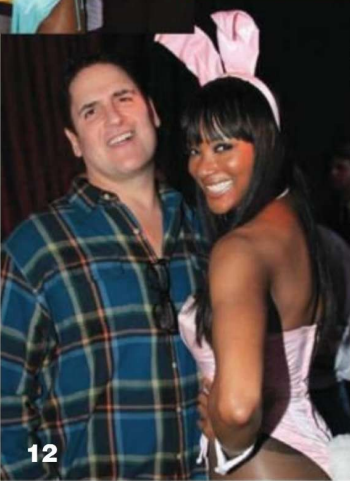
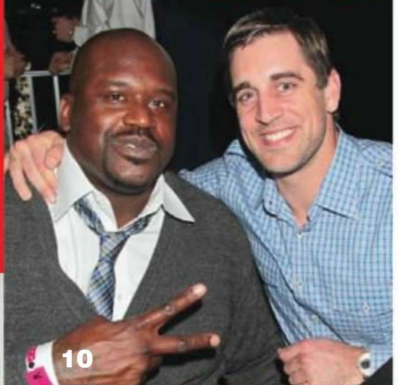
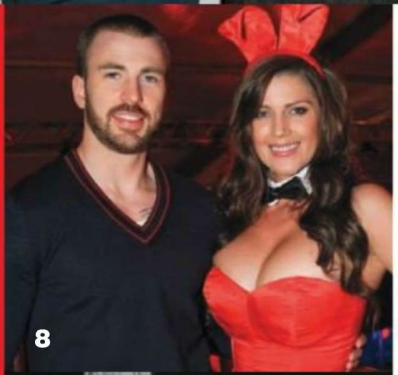
Devassa—a Brazilian beer whose name is slang for "party girl"—hosted Cooper Hefner and six Playmates during South America's biggest bacchanal: Mardi Gras in Rio de Janeiro. "It's my first time here, and it's remarkable," Cooper said. "It blows everything I've ever heard out of the water." He and the girls shared in the pre-Lenten party purge with the Black Eyed Peas' Fergie and hundreds of thousands of pleasure seekers; then Hefner named the new Devassa poster girl, who was handpicked by his father.



PLAYBOY SUPER BOWL PARTIES



To celebrate the apex of America's game, the Super Bowl, Hef pulled out all the stops with a star-studded event at the Bud Light Hotel in Indianapolis and a viewing party at the Mansion for friends, family and Playmates. (1) Shaquille O'Neal, Hoopz and Bunnies in Indy. (2) Mr. Don Draper: Jon Hamm and guest. (3) Ne-Yo, Miss February 1999 Stacy Marie Fuson and Miss February 2010 Heather Rae Young. (4) Hef and Miss November 2010 Shera Bechard hand Berry Gordy and Eskedar Gobeze their award for winning the PMW pool. (5) Back in the Midwest, Nick Lachey, Miss August 2004 Pilar Lastra and Miss January 2010 Jaime Faith Edmondson. (6) Billy Bush and Scott Wolf. (7) Guy Fieri, Miss July 2000 Nefertari Shepherd and Miss October 2005 Amanda Paige. (8) Chris Evans with Miss May 2009 Crystal McCahill. (9) Footballers DeAngelo Williams, Jonathan Stewart and Clay Matthews with Bunnies. (10) Shaq and NFL MVP Aaron Rodgers. (11) Kyle Busch and wife Samantha. (12) Mark Cuban with Miss November 2002 Serria Tawan. (13) LMFAO's RedFoo. (14) Playmates improve on Victor Cruz's touchdown dance.



WHY YOU THINK THAT WAY

As a psychologist who specializes in behavioral science, I'd like to reassure Neal Gabler that liberal genes will not be overwhelmed by conservative ones (*The Weird World of Biopolitics*, March). Research suggests DNA hardwires the brain to be liberal, conservative or blended, i.e., capable of being swayed either way by rhetoric, advertising and personal circumstance. DNA also hardwires the brain to be extroverted, introverted or blended, a condition that has not yet been studied by political scientists. Evidence suggests genes build four personality types: liberal extroverts (gammas), liberal introverts (deltas), conservative extroverts (alphas) and conservative introverts (betas). Liberalism vs. conservatism and extroversion vs. introversion are on a continuum, with the largest percentage of people near the mean; by providing swing votes, these independents are the glue that holds our society together. Conservatives appear to be in power even while liberals control government because conservatives naturally create strong hierarchal institutions such as corporations, militaries and religions. In fact, conservatives have been in charge since Constantine. It's only now that liberals are slowly gaining control.

Rick Jamrozy
Boynton Beach, Florida

LIGHT LUNCH

I am pleased to see that the March *Man-track* features 100-count bags of Island Creek oysters. The name comes from the company's location in a small village in the town of Duxbury, Massachusetts. Duxbury Bay shellfish farmers also ship their famous blue mussels in 10-pound bags. On a trip to the Virgin Islands a few years ago, I was served a plate of them from Duxbury Mussels & Seafood in Kingston, Massachusetts. They were steamed in chopped garlic, butter, olive oil and zinfandel, which is about what I do with them fresh from the farm.

Robert Enemark
Duxbury, Massachusetts

A WORK OF ART

You should make Brittney Palmer of the UFC (*Fight Club*, March) a Playmate before she sets up her easel on some remote beach and doesn't return.

Larry Blain
Spartanburg, South Carolina

THE PEN AS SWORD

Your profile of Peder Lund of Paladin Press (*The World's Most Dangerous Publisher*, January/February) should have been titled *The World's Most Courageous Publisher*. His efforts are bulwarks in the never-ending fight to protect the First Amendment against "progressive" forces who diligently work to destroy our Constitution, the greatest endorsement of unrestrained thought ever conceived by man. It will be

DEAR PLAYBOY

Whose Side Is He On?

Although he says he doesn't "do uplift well," *New York Times* columnist Paul Krugman strikes me as an optimist (*Playboy Interview*, March). Year after year, column after column, the economist points out, cogently and civilly, "that a lot of our political culture is completely insane," despite the fact that, as far as I can see, none of the powerful in this country pay any attention to him. If I were him, I'd probably have said to hell with them years ago.

Ralph Haygood
Durham, North Carolina

Yawn...Krugman. Always on the side of the employee, always on the side of the union member, never on the side of the consumer, never on the side of the taxpayer. He criticizes Walmart for its low wages, but the company has

interesting to see how many letters you receive from wimpy, piss-veined liberals self-righteously excoriating Lund.

Al York
Orinda, California

HOT, HOT, HOT

My wife and I spent 10 days in Aruba, where we saw the 2012 Lighting Parade. It



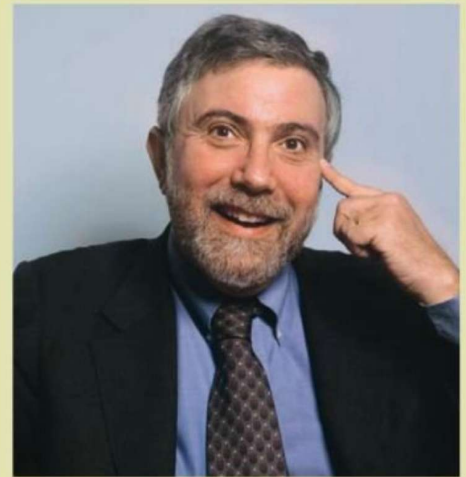
It's Carnival in Rio: "Follow me, boys."

featured many beautiful women, but none compared to the Brazilians in *Red-Hot Rio* (March). Rio de Janeiro has jumped to the top of my vacation wish list.

Rick Griffin
Jacksonville, Florida

MONEY TROUBLES

Paul Krugman and almost every other economist are misleading humanity by failing to advise our leaders that any



probably done more than any other to help poor people by offering predictable goods at low prices.

Mimi Gerstell
Stonington, Maine

attempt to maintain continual growth is doomed. Infinite growth cannot happen with finite natural resources. If our economy grows at 2.8 percent annually, it will double in size by 2037, double again by 2062 and so on. That isn't going to happen.

Jason Brent
Las Vegas, Nevada

*This is an ongoing debate—are we heading over a cliff, as Paul Ehrlich argues in his 1968 best-seller *The Population Bomb*, or will growth continue because the pressures imposed by finite resources force us to innovate? One sign of progress, some say, would be to replace the gross domestic product as a measure of well-being with proposed markers such as the Genuine Progress Indicator, Human Development Index or Happy Planet Index.*

Krugman is the first important pundit to call this economic meltdown the Lesser Depression. He shows a great deal of empathy for the plight of the average American worker, and he makes his points with erudition and wit.

George Hoffman
Stow, Ohio

Bravo! I hope the president reads your interview and in his second term names Krugman his secretary of the Treasury.

Lynn Watt Hansen
Napa, California

If those in power had listened to Krugman, we wouldn't be in this mess. The economy has improved somewhat since your interview was conducted, which is perhaps why the Republicans

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are again turning their focus to phony issues such as contraception. President Obama may not have been progressive enough on the stimulus and the health care plan, but given his centrism, he's far better than the lunatic fringe driving the GOP.

Roger Dobrick
Madison, Wisconsin

I would trust what Krugman says to the point of taking it to the bank. I'm a progressive and he is not, but he is a cool, clear economic voice.

Emily Dale
Orange Park, Florida

Krugman listens to Arcade Fire, Feist and the New Pornographers? They're all Canadians. Paul, come north! We need your wisdom here too.

Nick Volkow
Burnaby, British Columbia

CHRIS WALLACE

You try hard to portray Chris Wallace of *Fox News Sunday* as a right-wing personality (*Playboy Interview*, January/February), but he deflects each of your flailing blows.

Brian Sneeringer
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

The reason liberals don't like conservatives isn't because of a difference of opinion but because much conservative thought comes with heavy doses of inflexibility (e.g., the Tea Party), intolerance (toward minorities, gays, the poor and people who are not evangelical Christians), insecurity (as manifested by repeated attempts to use the government to force everyone to believe as conservatives do) and hypocrisy (all the while complaining about big and intrusive government).

John Stewart Jr.
Fayetteville, Georgia

THAT WAS THEN, THIS IS NOW

Vietnam is a poor country, and if it can make a buck off the mess that was the Vietnam war, more power to it (*Saigon Confidential*, January/February). Most of us who fought there did so because our nation asked us to and because we wanted to help the South Vietnamese. Veterans who want a more cathartic experience can get involved with the DOVE Fund (dovefund.org), which provides sanitation and schools to the neediest areas of the country.

Tony Brown
Winona, Minnesota

CLARIFICATIONS

Your article *Nightmare in South Beach* (January/February), which describes how two women in Miami conned Philadelphia weatherman John Bolaris, includes a photo of Bolaris with two women wearing swimsuits. The positioning of

the photo might lead readers to believe these women are the perpetrators. In fact, the photo was taken at a Philly radio station and shows me and another model, Victoria Cosplay. Neither of us has any connection to the crime that occurred in Miami.

Nicole Pressman
Centerville, Ohio

The photo was used to illustrate Bolaris's active social life, not to imply that either woman was involved in the crime.

In March's *Hangin' With Hef* you write that Ronnie James Dio threw an event at the Mansion. But the singer died in 2010. Was the photo mislabeled?

Angela Toth
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

It was wishful thinking. The event benefited the Ronnie James Dio Stand Up and Shout Cancer Fund (diocancerfund.org).

SMOKIN' JOE

Thank you for the excellent profile of Joe Frazier (*Smoke*, March). Katherine Dunn does a wonderful job of humanizing a man who was dehumanized by his



Joe Frazier takes some sting out of Ali in 1975.

most famous opponent. It has become fashionable for Muhammad Ali's apologists to claim that his prefight insults were made solely for publicity. But his comments were deeply personal and reflected Ali's own racial insecurities. As a result, many people unjustly remember Frazier only as the "gorilla" who gave us the Thrilla in Manila.

Paul Corning
Madison, Wisconsin

BOOZE CRUISE

Thank you for *The 20 Greatest Cocktails of All Time* (January/February). I accepted your challenge to walk away from potato-chip vodka and energy drinks and have been ordering a cocktail from your list every time I go out. I then re-create the drinks at home, which has helped me assemble a well-stocked liquor cabinet. Where would I be without PLAYBOY? Cheers!

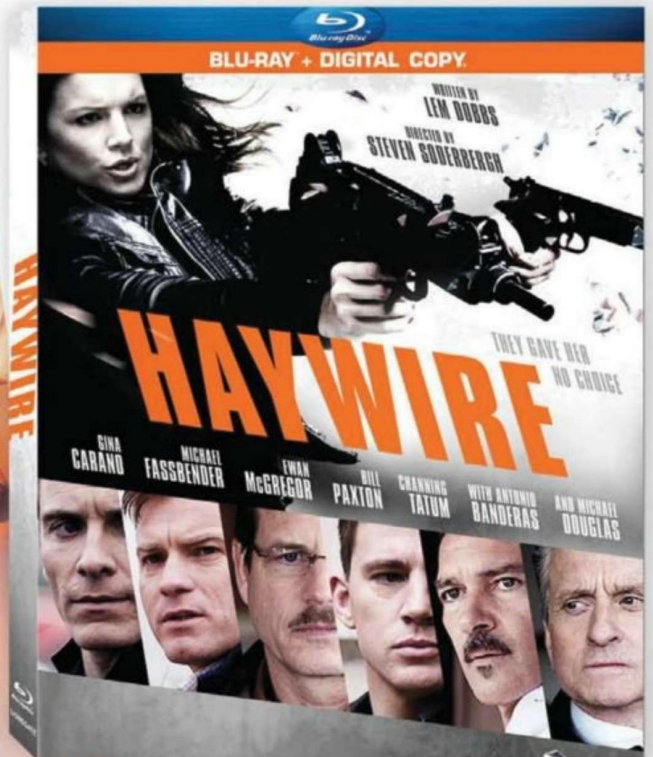
Frank Cruz
Ventura, California





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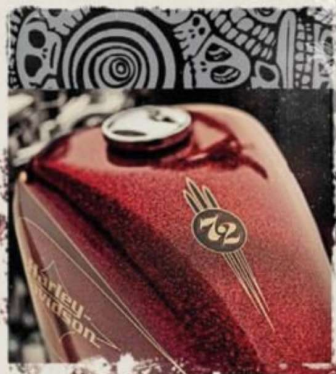
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PLAYBOY AFTERHOURS

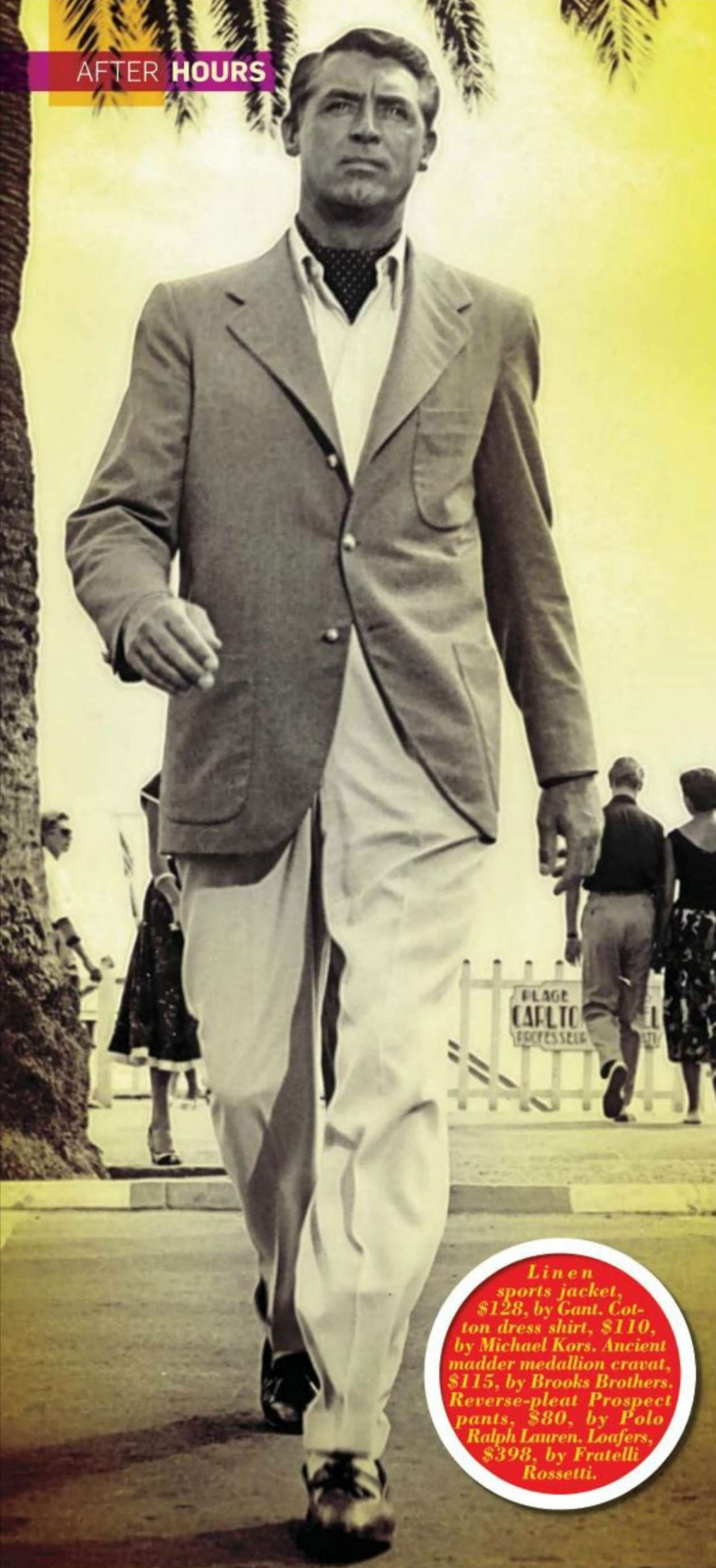
BECOMING ATTRACTION

INESSA TUSHKANOVA

Memorial Day is the year's great motor-racing weekend. At the Monte Carlo Grand Prix, the most exotic race in the world, Europeans gather to see men break the laws of physics in Formula One cars. Here in the States, the Indy 500 roars so loud you can practically hear it in New York. Can't make either? We offer Inessa Tushkanova of Ukraine as a consolation. A real flesh-and-blood race car driver, having competed in various minor league circuits, Inessa gets our engines running. *Vrooom.*



PHOTOGRAPHY BY
VITALY RUDENKO



Linen sports jacket, \$128, by Gant. Cotton dress shirt, \$110, by Michael Kors. Ancient madder medallion cravat, \$115, by Brooks Brothers. Reverse-pleat Prospect pants, \$80, by Polo Ralph Lauren. Loafers, \$398, by Fratelli Rossetti.

CLASSIC LOOK OF THE MONTH

NICE CANNES

Before it was a required stop on the Hollywood D-List Express, before TMZ sullied the red carpet, the Cannes Film Festival was très chic. Cannes was where larger-than-life celebs—from Brigitte Bardot to Pablo Picasso to Cary Grant, pictured here on the Boulevard de la Croisette in 1955 (he had just released *To Catch a Thief*)—gathered to drench their livers in champagne. Should you make the party this year (May 16 to 27), respect the age of glamour. See the caption above to re-create Grant's classic look.



INTERIORS • DESIGNING WOMEN

HAVE A SEAT

The International Contemporary Furniture Fair at the Javits Center in New York (icff.com) is the Sundance of the design world, which is a lot cooler than it sounds—and almost as drunken. From May 19 to 22, the leading lights of the furniture world will gather to show off their wares. What's in it for you? Free parties, a look at the future of design and access to the lovelies who work in the industry. Tell them you're an architect.

BARMATE
WORDS TO DRINK BY

STEFANIE JENNIFER

I WORK AT a hotel bar in South Beach. Generally hotel bars are infinitely more fun than regular bars, because people on vacation are way more carefree about everything.

EVERY DAY IN South Beach feels like a vacation, so it's tough to maintain a balanced life. My suggestion: Get a job like mine. I have the best of both worlds since I spend my days on the beach serving drinks. It's the perfect mix of work and play.

IF YOU WANT to pick up a girl at a bar, first and foremost you need to be outgoing. Engage her in a normal conversation, make her laugh and take a real interest in what she's saying. Of course it doesn't hurt to buy her a drink either.

PEOPLE DRESS CRAZY when they go out in South Beach. They'll wear everything from a thong to a fur coat.

WHAT WILL YOU see me wearing behind the bar? Let's put it this way: It's not a fur coat.



STYLE • SUNGLASSES

LIGHTEN UP

Why wait until the high-noon summer sun is blotting out everything within your sight line? Prepare yourself now for the unyielding glare of June, July and August with a pair of plastic aviators—a contemporary twist on the metal

version first popularized by General Douglas MacArthur during World War II. They certainly have been covering some famous faces recently—e.g., star of *The Aviator* himself Leonardo DiCaprio and style king Kanye

West. Nor do they have to be worn with serious intentions; Zach Galifianakis spent most of *The Hangover* with them guarding his bloodshot eyes. Below are a trio of the latest plastic aviators we like best.



DSQUARED (\$470).



KENNETH COLE (\$60).



DIESEL (\$180).



DRINKS • LATEST BUZZ

STAG PARTY

- 1 oz. Plymouth gin
- 1 oz. Encanto pisco
- ¾ oz. Licor 43
- ¾ oz. fresh lemon juice
- ½ oz. Saigon cinnamon syrup
- 1 egg white

Why go it alone? Allow the stag party, now being served at the Violet Hour, Chicago's mixology mecca, to keep you company. Shake all the above in a metal shaker. Add ice. Shake hard. Strain. Finally, garnish with four drops of Peychaud's bitters and three drops of Angostura bitters.



GRILLING • PINEAPPLE RIBS

MEAT AND BE MERRY

In anticipation of the barbecue season, we asked grillmaster general Chris Lilly, head chef of the Big Bob Gibson Bar-B-Q cooking team (bigbobgibson.com) and last year's winner of the Memphis in May World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest, for an original recipe. His succulent creation—Playboy Pineapple Ribs. “They are the perfect balance of sweet, spicy, hot and fruit flavors,” he promises. After thoroughly staining our shirt, we agree.

- 2 slabs baby-back ribs
- ¼ tsp. cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. white pepper
- Dry Rub**
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 4 tsp. garlic salt
- 4 tsp. chili powder
- 2 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. black pepper
- ½ tsp. celery salt
- ¼ tsp. pepper flakes
- Liquid Seasoning**
- 1 cup pineapple juice
- 1 tbsp. dry rub mix
- 1½ tsp. balsamic vinegar
- 1½ tsp. minced garlic

Remove membrane from backs of ribs. Mix rub ingredients well. Reserve one tablespoon rub for liquid seasoning. Apply rub to the front and back of ribs. Set up a grill for

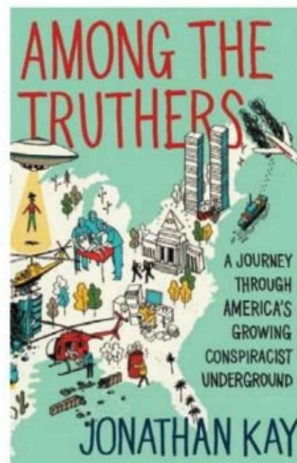
indirect cooking by placing the coals off to one side. Preheat to 250 degrees. Place ribs meat-side up on the grill, close the lid and cook with indirect heat for 2½ hours. Remove ribs and place each slab meat-side down on a double layer of aluminum foil. Mix the liquid seasoning. Pour half a cup of the liquid over each slab and tightly wrap them in foil. Place in the grill over indirect heat for one hour, then remove and unwrap. Brush with a finishing sauce of your choice on both sides. Place ribs in the grill for 15 minutes or until sauce caramelizes.



PHOTOGRAPHY • HERB RITTS

GENIUS ON DISPLAY

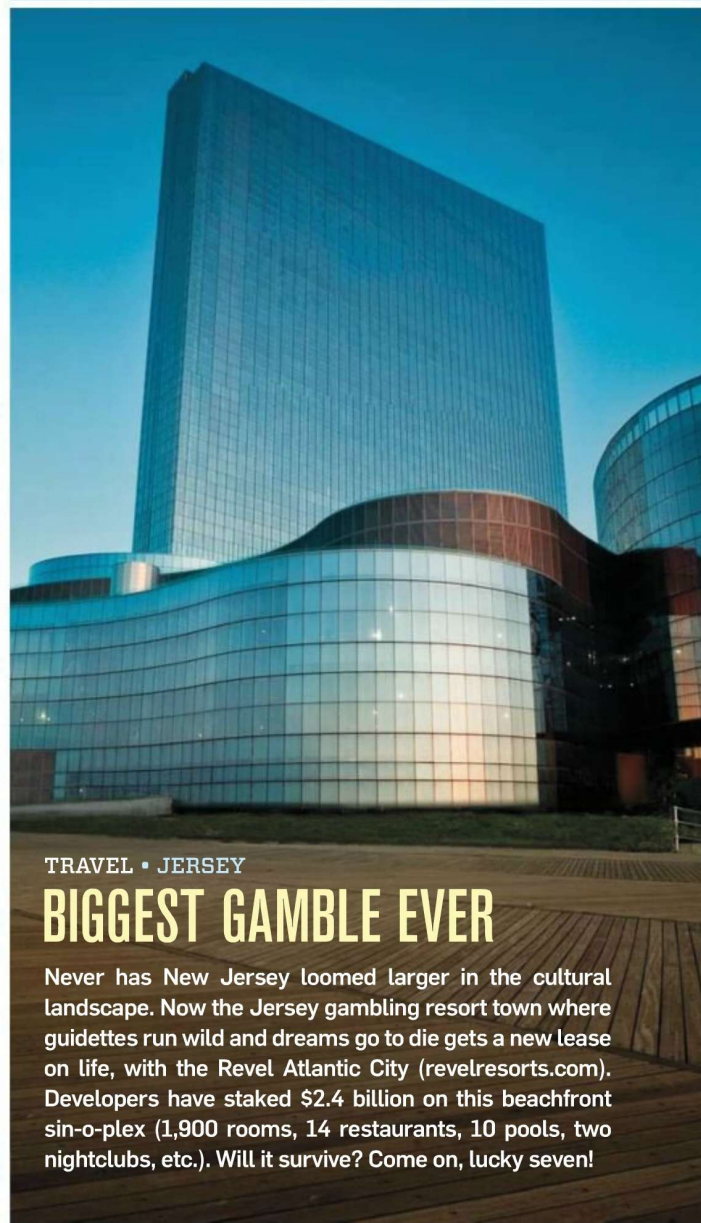
This year marks the 10th anniversary of the death of photographer Herb Ritts, who, for *PLAYBOY* alone, shot Cindy Crawford, Elle Macpherson and Stephanie Seymour. To celebrate Ritts's life and work, the Getty Museum in Los Angeles will exhibit his vintage prints, magazine covers and Polaroids from April 3 to August 26, showcasing his fine balance of art, commerce and pop culture.



BOOKS • CONSPIRACIES

IN THEORIES

Forget about the Illuminati, JFK and Roswell. Instead of rehashing the tired conspiracies of yesteryear, *Among the Truthers* by Jonathan Kay (Harper, in paperback next month) delves head-on into modern-day paranoia—from the titular 9/11 Truthers to the internet's role in spreading unfounded rumors to the Obama birth-certificate insanity.



TRAVEL • JERSEY

BIGGEST GAMBLE EVER

Never has New Jersey loomed larger in the cultural landscape. Now the Jersey gambling resort town where guidettes run wild and dreams go to die gets a new lease on life, with the Revel Atlantic City (revelresorts.com). Developers have staked \$2.4 billion on this beachfront sin-o-plex (1,900 rooms, 14 restaurants, 10 pools, two nightclubs, etc.). Will it survive? Come on, lucky seven!

GIVENCHY



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SPORT



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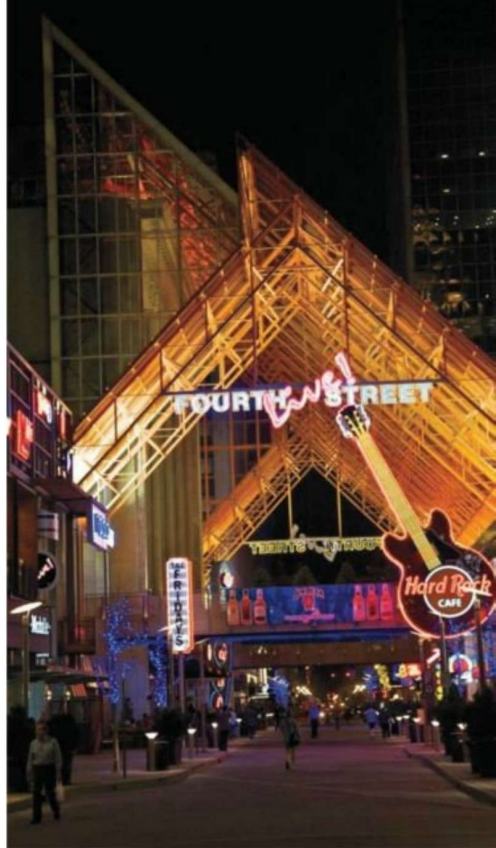
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SEXTYMOLOGY • THREESOMES

YOU PLUS TWO

Many people, maybe more than you imagine, have enjoyed three-way sex. In 1951 Bishop Fulton Sheen noted that "it takes three to make love": husband, wife and Holy Ghost. Those who have studied group sex say its success depends less on sexual gymnastics and more on how well participants communicate—brains, not trains. Perhaps the most infamous threesome dates to 1871. That's when it was discovered that the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher (the Billy Graham of his day) was sleeping with the wife of his best friend, Theodore Tilton. Beecher was shamed in newsprint by Victoria Woodhull, a free-love feminist who in 1872 became the first woman to run for president. Soon Woodhull was sleeping with Theodore Tilton, alone as well as in threesomes with her husband. After an introduction by Tilton, Woodhull took a new lover—Reverend Beecher.



NEVER SLEEP • LOUISVILLE

HORSING AROUND

Too Northern to be Southern and too Southern to be Northern, Louisville comes to life the first Saturday in May when the fastest two minutes in sports zip by at the Kentucky Derby. But along with fast horses comes an even faster night out.

6:18 P.M. The matchbook from dive bar the Back Door reads "From bikers to brain surgeons." Whatever your calling, the bartenders are quick to serve you. Drink like a local and order a bourbon, neat.

7:24 P.M. Go from dive to dapper at 610 Magnolia, the culinary home of *Top Chef: Texas* contestant Edward Lee. He takes a modern approach to Southern cuisine that's farm-to-table fresh and local.

9:32 P.M. For an ideal digestif, head to the beer-and-bourbon joints of gentrified Germantown (Nachbar, Four Pegs and Old Hickory Inn among them).

12:51 A.M. Meat, the city's newest speak-easy, is located in Butchertown. While the hunched-over bartenders who construct your cocktail with eyedroppers and lemon zest will try to tempt you into staying all night, trust us—one is enough.

2:36 A.M. You're just in time for the last drag show at the Connection, a large gay bar with a clientele that's mostly straight. Led by the Mistress of Mayhem, Hurricane Summers, the shows are anything but PC.

7:57 A.M. Expect to share turn three at Churchill Downs with 80,000 other infield dwellers. But getting there when the gates open guarantees you a front-row view of all the nearby action. You may not be able to see any horses run by, but you will witness flashing, Porta-John races, inadvertent planking and much more.



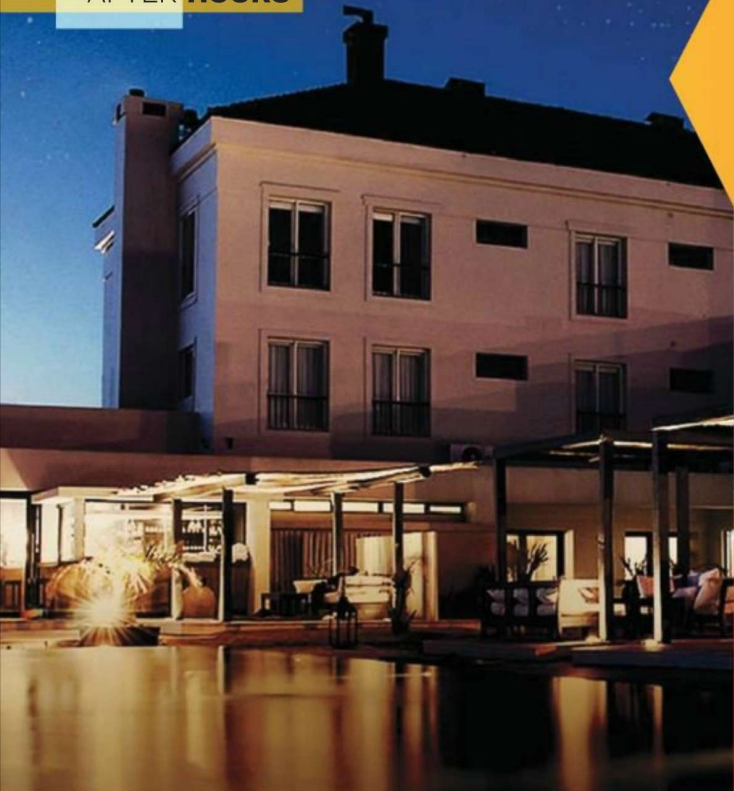
LIVE MUSIC • SÓNAR BARCELONA

SPANISH RHYTHMS

The Sónar music festival has been a favorite of knob-twiddling electronica aficionados for nearly 20 years. The three-day throw-down (with day and night sites), subtitled "Advanced Music and New Media Art," takes place in the third week of June each summer

and lures more than 80,000 fans to the sultry streets of Barcelona. After branching out into three other cities in recent years (São Paulo, Cape Town and Tokyo), however, the flagship Sónar event in Spain has turned slightly more mainstream, as evidenced by 2012's eclectic lineup, which includes electronic-music mainstays such as Fatboy Slim, Richie Hawtin and Amon Tobin but also the Roots, Lana Del Rey and Friendly Fires. Grab your earplugs and your dance shoes.

SCENES FROM THE SÓNAR BARCELONA MUSIC FESTIVAL



CHECK IN, CHECK HER OUT The Serena (serenahoteles.com) is the kind of boutique hotel Argentinean heiresses check into to get away from their polo-playing boyfriends. Another plus: It's situated smack-dab on the ocean. In fact, you're free to walk toward the action-packed southern end of the beach, where a mass of casinos and high-rise resorts dispense revelers onto the sand. The hotel is adults only, meaning all the babes you'll bump into will be wearing bikinis. Better still: The Serena offers heated indoor and outdoor swimming pools, more than compensating for the chilly ocean water found in Punta.

PARTY LIKE A VAMPIRE In Punta things start late and go late—as in vampire late—but they always start at the beach. At four P.M. park your towel on the La Barra neighborhood's Bikini Beach for the obvious eponymous benefits. Around six P.M. head to José Ignacio, where locals watch the sunset and listen to early-evening DJ sets. Then it's back to the hotel for a disco nap. You'll need it since dinnertime isn't until around midnight. During the high season, Tequila is the go-to dance club, but in the off-season, check out Moby Dick for its pints and expat-friendly vibe.

BEEF UP You're so close to Argentina, with its full-flavored grass-fed beef, that you owe it to yourself to drive to the nearby hamlet of Garzón, where Argentinean celebrity chef Francis Mallmann does amazing alchemical things with meat and a wood-fired oven at his El Garzón (restaurantegarzon.com). Order the Aberdeen filet mignon with *chimichurri* or the *magret* of duck with malbec sauce. If you're closer to the beach in José Ignacio, be sure to visit rustic-chic Parador La Huella (paradorlahuella.com). There, models nibble on Mediterranean-esque seafood dishes such as baby octopus and drink sangria-like *clerico*, the unofficial cocktail of Punta.

TRAVEL • URUGUAY

GO ESTE, YOUNG MAN

Every few years a new far-flung beach paradise enters the collective daydreams of men: Rio. Bali. Phuket. Ibiza. And now Punta del Este in Uruguay has burrowed its way into those sustaining fantasies of olive-skinned beauties, balmy temperatures and an itinerary with just two entries: sleeping off your hangover in the sun and building another later that night.

That's exactly what the well-heeled of nearby Argentina and Brazil do in Punta, a sexier, more

sophisticated version of Miami Beach. From Sinatra in the 1960s to Shakira in the 2000s, celebrities have been known to flock here in pursuit of the kind of endless summer only the southern hemisphere can provide. There was a time when such a rich and famous crowd attracted obnoxious glam-seeking tourists and clumsy overdevelopment. But these days Punta has found its sweet spot, with a string of towns offering a mix of thumping beach clubs, quiet retreats and just enough



KEEP IT LOCAL If you're cool with wiping out in front of the beach bunnies, book a surfing lesson through Sun Valley Surf Shop (sunvalleysurf.com). We, however, recommend you do what the locals do: Take a soccer ball down to the beachfront and play *fulbito* (translation: "mini-soccer"). If you're into more relaxing entertainment, ask your concierge to hook you up with horseback riding in Garzón. Or for a more interesting spectator sport, go to Chihuahua, which is primarily notable for having a *playa naturista* (translation: topless beach).

sweaty outdoor activities to break up the bacchanal.

Just where the hell is Uruguay, you ask? Due east of Argentina. In other words, near the end of the earth. Now is the perfect time to go—the temperature is still high, prices are dropping, and with the

ban on nude beaches lifted, it's the tail end of the South American summer in more ways than one. Sure, you could spend your vacation budget on a closer, lesser locale. But wouldn't it be smarter to spend your hard-earned cash on a tropical getaway worthy of your memoirs?



FROM THE DIGITAL ARCHIVE • iPLAYBOY

THE GRAND PRIX 

No one ever wrote about cars and speed with more poetry and panache than the great Ken Purdy, who scribed volumes in this magazine in the 1960s while following the circus of motor racing from one exotic locale to the next. To this day the Ken W. Purdy Award is the most coveted among automotive and racing writers. In *The Grand Prix* (May 1967), Purdy takes us inside a Formula One car during the sport's golden age, then moves us along at terrific speeds. "The Grand Prix car is the ultimate expression of the purpose of the automobile," he writes. "This is the instrument with which men play the most dangerous, demanding, scientific and expensive of all sports." (Pictured at left: the legendary Eau Rouge corner in Belgium, a downhill into an uphill S-turn that the best drivers took flat-out.) Purdy died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound in 1972. His writings, however, live on. Read all his brilliant PLAYBOY work at iplayboy.com.

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MOVIE OF THE MONTH

THE AVENGERS

By Stephen Rebell

Marvel Studios' *The Avengers* comes blasting into multiplexes on a tsunami of hype and hope fueled by writer-director Joss Whedon and his cast of superheroes: Robert Downey Jr. as Iron Man, Chris Hemsworth as Thor, Chris Evans as Captain America, Mark Ruffalo as the Hulk, Jeremy Renner as Hawkeye, Scarlett Johansson as Black Widow and Samuel L. Jackson as Nick Fury. The character tasked with uniting these prickly comic-book titans is that shadowy, ever-evolving authority figure Agent Coulson, played by Clark Gregg. "The threat in this movie is so enormous and fiendish that all these characters get called into combat," says Gregg. "It's not only an exciting comic-book movie with quirky characters but also shows how absolute power absolutely corrupts both the villains and those gifted with special powers. That makes it a potent metaphor for America these days. Joss is such an interesting writer-director and charming comic-book nerd that he's the anti-Nick Fury. All he needs is a cool leather coat and an eye patch."

FIVE STARS MIA FROM SUMMER HITS

Didn't land a job you really wanted? Don't worry. These big movie stars may feel your pain.



over and over again," said Adams. **Lindsay Lohan—*Dark Shadows***

Tim Burton didn't see Lohan as the luscious witch driven to vengeance when she is scorned by vampire lover Johnny Depp in the big-screen redo of the supernatural TV soap opera. Anne Hathaway and Jennifer Lawrence also auditioned for the role eventually won by Eva Green (pictured). Burton said he sees his characters as

Edward Norton—*The Avengers*

The Oscar-nominated actor played the angry green giant in *The Incredible Hulk* and was expected to co-star in *The Avengers*. Instead, Marvel Studios dumped him for Mark Ruffalo. A spokesman explained that they needed "an actor who embodies the creativity and collaborative spirit of our other talented cast members." Norton's agent called the statement "unprofessional, disingenuous and clearly defamatory."

Amy Adams—*Rock of Ages*

For the big-screen musical version of the hit Broadway musical set in the 1980s, Adams was courted to play a snarky journalist out to write an exposé on aging rock star Tom Cruise. She instead took the role of Lois Lane in the *Superman* reboot *Man of Steel*. "I come from theater, where people play the same role

being "in their own sort of world." Maybe Lohan's world seemed too far away—even for Burton.

Joseph Gordon-Levitt—*The Amazing Spider-Man*

Andrew Garfield snagged the role of web slinger Peter Parker in the franchise reboot, beating out Gordon-Levitt as well as Taylor Lautner and others. "There's a punk-rock quality to Peter Parker that's really irreverent and fun, and that's something Andrew embodies," said director Marc Webb.

Jake Gyllenhaal—*The Bourne Legacy*

The departure of Matt Damon from the *Bourne* franchise left the field wide open for a brand-new CIA operative. Who knows whether Gyllenhaal's action-hero stint in *Prince of Persia* hurt his chances, but the moviemakers opted instead for Jeremy Renner. —S.R.



DVD OF THE MONTH

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE

GHOST PROTOCOL

Scaling improbable new heights in Dubai and operating underground after being framed for a Kremlin bombing, Ethan Hunt (Tom Cruise) and his IMF peeps (Jeremy Renner, Paula Patton and Simon Pegg) race to prevent nuclear Armageddon. *M:I4's* orchestrated mayhem will pummel your senses, and the cheeky humor keeps it lively. Covert ops never looked so cool...or completely insane. (BD) **Best extra:** "Impossible Missions" highlights the incredible stunts and effects. ★★★ —Bryan Reesman



TEASE FRAME

English actress **Alice Eve** is coerced into sex for a green card in *Crossing Over* (pictured). We wish she would shout "Nevermore!" to her clothes as Edgar Allan Poe's fiancée in *The Raven*, which stars John Cusack as the macabre author.



WITCHER 2: ASSASSINS OF KINGS

GAMES OF THRONES

The latest role-playing games feel bloodier and sexier than ever. Call it the *Game of Thrones* effect. George R.R. Martin's blockbuster books and the HBO series based on them, about warring medieval clans engaging in murder, betrayal and even incest, gave game makers the freedom to play to an adult audience, one that wants to see the hero bed a damsel or two and send the villain to a bloody death with or without his head. Last year games such as *Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim* and *Dragon Age II* featured heroes navigating dark worlds filled with grisly violence, steamy sex and marriage—traditional and same sex. The latest in this line of hard-core gaming is *Witcher 2: Assassins of Kings* (360, PC), in which players lead moody sword-slinger

Geralt of Rivia on a hunt for an assassin who targeted the king. During the journey players stop at dingy bars (where they can shoot dice and get drunk), engage in battles with savage beasts and bed love interests, such as sorceress Triss Merigold (below), in full-frontal scenes. It's a long way from *The Lord of the Rings*. —J.B.



GAME OF THE MONTH

MAX PAYNE 3

By Jason Buhrmester

Somewhere along a path of wrecked cars and dead bodies, *Grand Theft Auto* became the greatest achievement of Rockstar Games. It's a shame, since Rockstar's series about dual-pistol-wielding Max Payne deserves credit for creating just as much wild violence and delivering it in a groundbreaking style that gave shooter games some cinematic street cred. *Max Payne 3* (360, PC, PS3) finds the former cop washed up and working a body-guard gig in Brazil. When kidnappers grab the woman he is hired to protect, Payne and his partner go on the hunt, gunning down thugs in packed São Paulo streets and empty soccer stadiums. Activate the slow-motion "Bullet Time," leap into the air and take down a room full of thugs all before hitting the ground. Afterward, the slow-motion replay shows every painful spot where a bullet landed. ♣♣♣

ALBUM OF THE MONTH

WATERHOUSE SPEAKS

Nick Waterhouse answers the question immediately: The peak year for music, in his opinion, was 1962. He names

some soul and R&B acts who made it so grand: James Brown, Jimmy McGriff, Arthur Alexander, Booker T. & the MG's, Solomon Burke. It was "the last year of American supremacy," he says, before the Beatles arrived and "fucked it all up."

Time's All Gone, the 26-year-old Waterhouse's new album, sounds as if it comes from yesterday. Like his horn-rimmed glasses and thin-lapel suits, it expresses a throwback aesthetic. Listen

to "Some Place": swelling horns, bluesy female backup vocals, finger-snapping beats. Reverb may as well be a member of his band.

Waterhouse grew up in Huntington Beach, California and played in bands in "the Limp Bizkit era," he says. "I was listening to the blues and garage rock. I was called a weirdo and a faggot. I got hassled and beat up."

He escaped to San Francisco, where he worked as a content editor for a website and deejayed. But he was depressed. "I was trying to lie to myself that I didn't want to be a musician," he says. He recorded "Some Place" as a 45, and soon it was getting airplay clear across to Europe. His depression lifted. That's the kind of elevating power music had 50 years ago, and Waterhouse brings it back to life. ♣♣♣ —Rob Tannenbaum



MUST-WATCH TV

GIRLS GONE WILD

Rush Limbaugh's head would surely explode were he to watch more than a few minutes of HBO's *Girls*. Created by indie-film savant Lena Dunham (*Tiny Furniture*) and produced by Judd Apatow, the second episode of this female-centric comedy begins with one character being (happily) covered in ejaculate and another forcibly transitioning her overly caring boyfriend from missionary to doggie mid-coitus. While such explicitness is hardly new territory for cable, what makes the sex in *Girls* more shocking than the sex in *Game of Thrones* or *Californication* is the ordinariness of its lead characters: This is your daughter gratefully (if awkwardly) agreeing to be covered in "come like a dirty little girl" by her

soulless fuck buddy. And yet, labeling *Girls* a show about sex is like calling *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* a river-set travelogue. This is a show about 20-somethings figuring life out and assembling the support team that will guide them. Early buzz tagged *Girls* a reimagined *Sex and the City* and a distaff *Entourage*. These are not inaccurate descriptors, but they don't do justice to what Dunham (who writes, directs and stars) has actually invented: the most honest and riveting TV coming-of-age story since Apatow's own *Freaks and Geeks*. It is not an easy show to watch, and its humor is not always obvious. But *Girls* is often brilliant, always compelling television. ♣♣♣ —Josef Adalian

RAW DATA

SIGNIFICA, INSIGNIFICA, STATS AND FACTS

Prior to March 2009, **DRUNK DRIVING** constituted a legal excuse for causing a car accident in Uruguay. Now, however, driving with a

BLOOD-ALCOHOL LEVEL OF

0.08

PERCENT OR HIGHER

IS CONSIDERED ILLEGAL.



While commonly thought of as a sexual act, a **MÉNAGE À TROIS** is actually a three-way relationship, from the French for "household of three."

21 OF THE 22

STREETS USED

in the board game Monopoly are in Atlantic City—save for one:

MARVIN GARDENS.



FOR HIS FIRST STATE DINNER, ON DECEMBER 29, 1963

PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON

HOSTED A TEXAS BARBECUE FOR WEST GERMAN CHANCELLOR LUDWIG ERHARD.

68 PEOPLE

HAVE BEEN ACCUSED OF PARTICIPATING IN THE

ASSASSINATION

of President John F. Kennedy,

INCLUDING SECRET SERVICE AGENTS, A MAN HAVING A SEIZURE

and, of course,

LEE HARVEY OSWALD.



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THE LONGEST ANNULAR SOLAR ECLIPSE LASTED 12 MINUTES AND 23 SECONDS. THE SHORTEST LASTED LESS THAN A SECOND.

The average **FORMULA ONE** driver loses

8 POUNDS

during a race due to **HIGH TEMPERATURES AND G-FORCES.**

BLINDED BY THE LIGHT



Staring at the sun for **AS LITTLE AS 100 SECONDS** can cause retinal lesions. However, no one has ever been permanently blinded from intense sun-gazing.

Sex WITH MS. Oscar

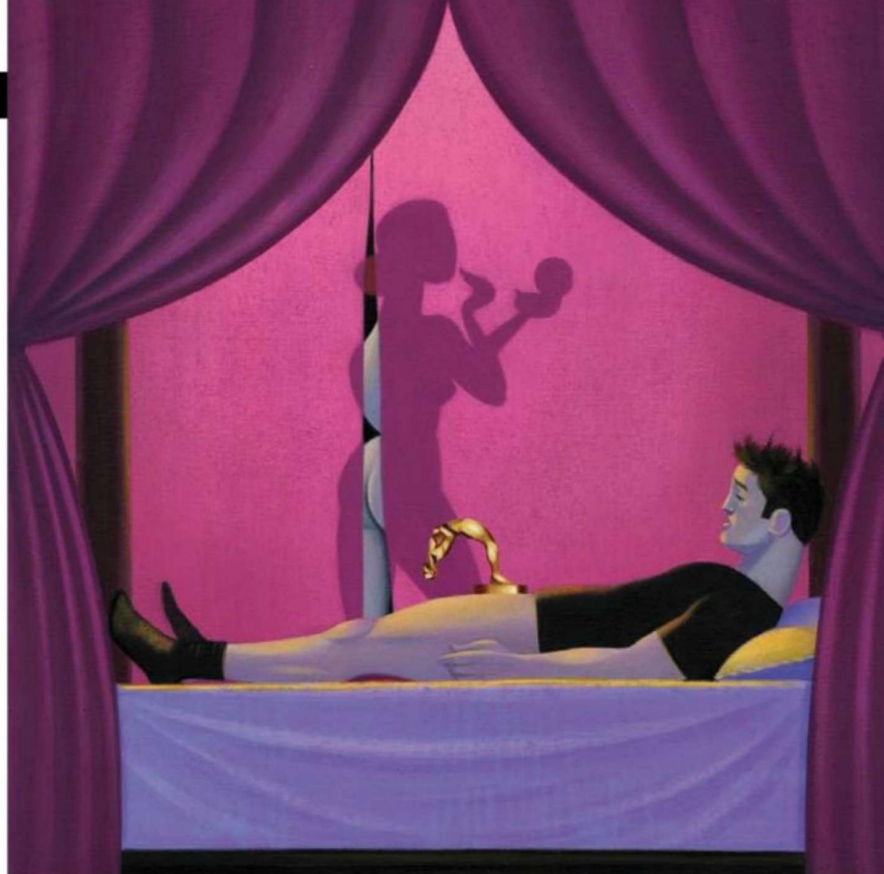
BY RICHARD LEWIS

Oscar, of course, is the name of the most coveted prize statuette in all of show business. Tragically, it also happens to be the name of a slave-driven servant of a famous Academy Award-winning superdiva who for one brief night became a sexual partner of mine and, yes, who was such a flaming narcissist that she'd actually convinced her live-in butler to legally change his name to Oscar...from Myron. Let me point out that in the realm of out-of-your-league womanizing, this sort of insanity plainly exemplifies what's known as a red flag (i.e., run for your life, otherwise only total destruction of your self-esteem awaits!). Nevertheless, I was so young and blinded by the prospect of screwing a famous actress that I didn't realize the scary level of delusion it took for this woman (let's call her Sally Stunner) to pull that off. The sex I had with her that night bombed big-time, but I swear on all my wasted sperm that the intercourse was *her* box-office failure and that my innocent yet eager to please cock never really had any business auditioning for her approval. At least I learned at a young age that in Hollywood it's better to screw famous people in bed before they have the chance to screw you over in life.

Still early in my career, I'd just begun figuring out that those millions of eyes seeing me fairly regularly on TV included the eyes of celebrated people. I learned via the generally bullshit Hollywood grapevine that this renowned actress had a huge crush on me—except it wasn't bullshit. She was expecting—*demanding*, really—that I call her as soon as possible. Quite honestly, being appreciated for my humor has always meant more to me than being desired. But when I got that starry-horny summons, all I wanted to do was fuck. The lure of major-celebrity trophy intercourse usually tended to overshadow whether or not the chick gave a shit about the nuances of my stand-up material.

When I called her she was instantly hotter than hell, scorching the receiver with sexual come-ons—except that throughout this steady gush of flirtation, her assistant kept interrupting our conversation to inform her of scheduling updates and requests for various meetings. (Hello again, red flag. Not that I cared—yet.) She clearly packed more into a day than I'd accomplished during a five-year span in my career. But even that imbalance didn't register enough for me to grasp how our romp would be just one more thing she packed into her, um, day. Anyway, most important, we were on! Two hours later I was buzzed in from the gate of her *Architectural Digest* wet-dream mansion, my nerves quaking not so much from the likelihood of fucking a superstar but because all I heard through the intercom were howls of crazed dogs sounding eager to rip the flesh from any stranger entering the property.

When I stepped inside the foyer, there was no sign of killer dogs—only her, draped in a white silk robe, completely glamorous with astonishing hair down to her waist, bathed in perfume that immediately inspired my cock to perform a hoedown in my pants. She then suddenly kissed me so sweetly that I actually felt my balls turning into Golden Globes. Luckily, she'd given her butler, Oscar-Myron, the night off and had also



just given sleeping pills to her pack of pit bulls, so it was just us and the anticipation of what was to come (and come, etc.).

I skipped the grand tour of her house, mainly because she had casually grabbed the erection from my pants and led me directly to her bedroom. The blinders on my vagina-goggles kept me from noticing much home decor (did I see a lot of postmodern sculptures, or was it mostly Native American stuff?), but the sex remains sort of a blur as well. (I confess I still TiVo her films, if only to remind myself that we actually did fuck.) I came too fast, since all during coitus she was talking to her agent on speakerphone, leading me to believe that she wanted me out of her, and my orgasm obliged. The bedside table was cluttered with so many creams and salves (including a “clitoris cleanse”) that I felt I was committing rape in the express lane of a drugstore. I vaguely recall her taking a time-out after foreplay to give herself a light makeover. When she did climax, I swear she screamed something along the lines of “I’d like to thank the Academy.”

By then I knew I’d become nothing more than a sex toy for her. Worse, when I woke the next morning she was gone. Her assistant called to explain that she’d taken a 5:30 A.M. limo to the airport for a quick trip to meet with a director in Paris and had not wanted to disturb my curled-in-terror fetal-position slumber. The assistant added, “Anyway, Mr. Lewis, she probably won’t be in dating mode with you again due to a former lover coming back into her life, which apparently happened during her Paris flight. Anyway, Ms. Stunner wishes you the best, thinks you’re hilarious and, in case she never sees you again, wanted you to know that during sex she *thinks* she had an orgasm.” Click.

And that was it. Star fucking (in the most literal sense) may be the most common of all our sex fantasies, but believe me, it rarely turns out to be worth the slightest bragging rights (unless maybe you need a fabulous reason to explain why you’ve decided to turn gay). With this special breed of narcissistic female, you will never be more important than the next man she decides to desire—serially, one after the other, never looking back. In fact, you won’t even be as important as the stylist and wardrobe consultant waiting in the next room while you’re fucking. But if you’re cool with that, just be careful if she guides you around her mansion using your dick as a leash, especially when climbing stairs too quickly or passing the sharp edges of priceless sculptures screaming to circumcise yet another clueless penis.



monogamy—like Dolly Parton’s face—is not natural or even realistic. And *nothing*—not working in a mentally castrating cubicle, not strapping yourself to a couch and watching a *Real Housewives* marathon—will change that. In fact, all relationships start out as just fucking, and then someone gets clingy or needs a ride to the airport and—voilà!—a relationship is born.

Monogamy without living together is the open-book test of the committed relationship. It’s that magical time when you’re a couple, you’re banging, but you can still get out of it without a moving van and a restraining order. If, after a while, you still think she’s awesome, you’ve passed the open-book test and you’re ready for the final exam—living together.

This step should not be entered into because you need a place to live or someone to tend to your pot plants. I know you’re saying, “Duh! No shit, Lisa. If I wanted that, I’d just stay in my parents’ basement.” But really, you need to be sure you’re completely ready, because the transition from hump mates to bunk mates starts gradually—her toothbrush in the bathroom, a box of Kotex under the sink, a bottle of zinfandel in your fridge. Then one day you wake up to find your closet stuffed with dresses, skirts and high heels—which can be very upsetting if you’re not Elton John. And other changes have to be made—that long, refreshing morning fart has to wait until she’s left the room, and your porn stash has to be hidden more securely than Anne Frank.

All I’m trying to say, guys, is be sure it’s what you want. Don’t be embarrassed about your trepidation over handing the spare set of front-door keys to her. Somewhere in the back of your mind looms the fear that a testicle or two are attached to that key ring.

Another thing to consider when wondering whether to commit is timing. Monogamy can lead to great happiness if you’re with the right person, but you have to make sure it’s the right time in your life. If you’re currently on a sexual roll, you might not want to throw it away. Five years, two kids and 45 pounds of belly fat later, you might not be able to get that hot streak back. On the flip side, if you’ve hit a cold patch, make sure you’re not jumping on the first vagina train that comes by. It might take you to a station nowhere near where you want to go—divorced in New Jersey.

Some men are reluctant to take a relationship to the next level because they’ll lose their own time and their personal space. Trust me, I fully understand that. But, men, seriously, what are you doing with all that time and space? Are you writing the next *Great Gatsby*, or are you scratching your balls on the couch while watching *Top Shot*? Yeah—that’s what I thought.

A great reason to be in a committed relationship is the consistent sex. No more going out every night pretending to be interested in conversations about shampoo to get laid. When you live together, it’s right there in front of you whenever you need it.

But sex shouldn’t be the only reason you commit. Sex may be constant at the beginning of a relationship, but then it becomes rarer than a pretty nun and more boring, repetitive and predictable than a Sylvester Stallone movie. That is, unless she’s a mental case. But what’s more important, “crazy in the bed, crazy in the head” or someone you can share a remote control—and a life—with?

A great man once said, “The only thing we have to fear is fear of commitment itself.” I may be paraphrasing, but you get the idea. When it comes to commitment, if you’re in love and have thought it through, why not push your chips to the middle of the table and go all in? What’s the worst thing that could happen? You lose half your shit. It’s always better to have new stuff anyway.

COMMITMENT:

The Other C-Word

BY LISA LAMPANELLI

Sometimes I can’t believe it took me more than 30 years to find “the one.” For years I’d heard people say, “When you know it, you know it,” but I was starting to lose faith. I’d just about given up when I met him, and he was everything I had dreamed of—smart and compassionate, and he couldn’t keep his hands off me. Most important, he knew it’s what’s inside a person that counts. Yes, I’d finally found a gynecologist I could commit to!

Commitment. It’s the second-scariest C-word out there. And there’s good reason for that. Let’s be real—it’s hard enough to find a dry cleaner, a barber or even a doctor you’re willing to be loyal to, let alone a significant other. We search and search for the right one, and for some reason, when we find him or her, “commitment” is a difficult thing to say. It’s like Mike Tyson trying to recite the “she sells seashells by the seashore” thingy. It doesn’t exactly roll off the tongue.

So let’s say you’ve found someone you think might be the one, but you’re afraid to ask her to be exclusive, move in or maybe even—*gulp*—marry you. You’re not alone, brother. Fear of commitment is something every single person has had at one time or another—like sunburn, pimples and the desire to tell Maya Angelou “Enough already.”

You can’t crack open a women’s magazine in the checkout line or get through a chick flick without hearing women bitch about men being commitment-phobes. What these women don’t get is that no man is wired for a committed relationship. Men are built to eat, shit, fuck, fight and die, and they think

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
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British Intelligence

At the wheel of McLaren's new masterpiece

It's not every day McLaren unleashes a new production automobile. The last one—the F1, with its strange center-positioned driver's seat and million-dollar price tag—appeared in 1992. Car freak Jay Leno called it the best ride he'd ever driven. So when we hit the road in the new MP4-12C (McLaren could have done better with the name) in Chicago and later at Auto Club Speedway in California, we had high expectations. The first thing we noticed: the shock that registers on the faces of passersby. Anyone will recognize this car's competition—a Ferrari 458 Italia or a Lamborghini Gallardo (both roughly in the same price range). This British car, however, is a mystery. The second thing we noticed: the drive! Consider that this automobile weighs about

200 pounds less than a Toyota Camry, with more than three times the horsepower. Consider that it can go from zero to 125 mph in about nine seconds and from there back to zero in 403 feet. McLaren was founded in the 1960s by Formula One driver Bruce McLaren, who died tragically in 1970 testing a new racing car. Were he alive today, this beauty that bears his name would make him proud.



Liquid Gold

Flowers are nice but clichéd. Yankees tickets won't do the job. If you want to surprise your lady in hopes of instant romance, nothing will pop her cork like a bottle of fine chilled champagne on a warm spring night. Pictured: the new 2003 vintage from Dom Pérignon (\$150, in fine wine shops)—floral on the nose, with brisk minerality and a candied-fruit finish.

About Time

Named for the same 1950s Mexican sports car race as the Porsche 911 Carrera, Tag Heuer's new Carrera Calibre 1887 chronograph (\$6,100, tagheuer.com) features a domed sapphire crystal face, a polished gold or stainless case and an understated elegance we adore. It's what all fine watches should be: a timepiece of timeless style.





Detroit Rock City

Three years ago Detroit had the bailout blues and General Motors was in bankruptcy. Today? Detroit is back and GM is once again the biggest carmaker in the world. Put some of that Motor City magic in your wardrobe with these stainless steel cuff links (\$60, cufflinks.com).



Groom Town

The idea behind the new grooming products from Imperial: "Made by barbers, made to work, and made in the USA." We'll buy that. From left: classic pomade (\$20, imperialbarberproducts.com), fiber grease (\$20), bergamot aftershave (\$10), pre-shave oil (\$12), glycerin soap (\$12) and gel pomade (\$20).

Talk of the Town

Look out, Apple. The phone competition is coming on strong. Sony's Xperia Ion (about \$250, sonymobile.com) runs Android and has two high-def cameras: one on the back for recording and one on the front for video chats. The sleek and angular Nokia Lumia 900 (about \$100, nokia.com) comes with an eight-megapixel camera and Windows Phone software. Motorola's Droid 4 (about \$200, motorola.com) slides open to reveal an edge-lit qwerty keyboard.



The Torch From Tupelo

You've got your hair slicked back, a beauty on your arm and the king of rock and roll in your pocket. Need a light? Here's a hunk of burning love, courtesy of this chrome Elvis Zippo, which comes with an accompanying blade (\$185, zippo.com).



PLAYBOY ADVISOR

My daughter is getting married. Her mother and I are divorced, so to keep it “neutral” she has decided she doesn’t want me to walk her down the aisle. She says she’s afraid her mother’s boyfriend will be upset if he can’t do it, and yet she has asked my son to escort her. I was on the road a lot while she was growing up, so maybe I wasn’t the best dad. But I told her that I am still her father and would like to walk her to the altar. Of course, she still wants me to pay for half the wedding! I’m looking for perspective. Can you help?—S.F., Fargo, North Dakota

Your daughter will regret this, if only because it will make her look petty. Most guests won’t understand why you aren’t doing the honors, since you’re standing right there and hosting the reception, and the explanation they hear won’t make sense. You can’t protect your children from every bad decision, so tell her you’re disappointed and you hope she’ll reconsider and leave it at that. Our hope is that when she comes to her senses, perhaps years from now, she remembers only that you were gracious, gave her a great day and love her still. Whatever your disagreements, we also hope your ex recognizes you’re the man for the job and explains to your daughter there will be enough drama that day.

I’ve done a lot of research and testing and found a new pleasure that involves stretching my scrotum with chrome-plated rings. It’s hard to describe the epicness of a loose, hanging scrotum slapping the butt and/or vulva of my lover. I have tried all the tie methods, including rubber lassos, shoestrings, etc., and nothing compares. But I worry—are there negative side effects from this practice? Would stainless steel be safer? I use shea butter to increase skin elasticity. Is that okay?—S.G., Tucson, Arizona

*From what we’ve read, yes. The world authority on this practice is Jarod Jasper Johansen, whose online FAQ will answer all your technical questions. It’s posted at secretleather.com, a U.K.-based site that sells steel rings, weighted leather “bull” bags, leather straps and other contraptions. (Some guys also inject saline, but that’s weird.) If the desire to have your balls stretched seems puzzling to your partner, ask her to gently tug on your scrotum, perhaps while she’s giving you a blow job. You’ll like it, though perhaps not as much as steel rings on the scrotum, which a musician says in the book *Modern Primitives**



I’m a bartender and often serve this porn-star sexy woman who I know has been around the block. Lately she’s been coming on strong. My worry is she will find me disappointing because she has slept with so many guys who are probably better than I am. What should I do? Practice? Not go through with it to avoid being embarrassed?—D.D., Queensland, Australia

We believe you are vastly overestimating the number of guys who are perceived to be good in bed. You’ll do fine if you follow the Advisor’s time-tested lovemaking technique (patent pending): (1) Treat her to a proper date by doing something novel (e.g., blading, bowling) during the day. This will get the endorphins flowing (increasing your attractiveness) and pique her interest. Don’t sleep with her yet, man slut. Whet her appetite. Let her anticipate your skills. (2) After the second date, when you give it up, pace yourself. If she brings to mind a porn star, we’d bet the knuckleheads she’s been with have been treating her like one—wham, bam, guy comes, scene! So undress her slowly. Work out her knots. Explore her curves. Make sure she comes first, second, third and fourth. Dive in there. Fingers, tongue, vibrator. You can climax between two and three and/or three and four. (3) Enjoy yourself. Make her laugh. It’s supposed to be fun. If it’s not, or you don’t think it will be, why bother?

feels “like having your balls licked and sucked and being played with by someone’s hand. You tend to have a semi-hard-on all the time when you wear them.” He also claims to have

seen photos of a man who had 14 rings that pushed his testicles to his knees, which would make it hard to wear shorts. Johansen believes men enjoy tugging because our testicles are designed to hang away from the body to keep the sperm factory at an optimum temperature, and as with everything, a few men always attempt to stretch any pleasurable sensation to its extreme. As you would expect, there are risks to racking your balls, and if you feel pain or more than slight discomfort, you’re doing it wrong. Your scrotum should not turn blue or feel cold, which indicates you have cut off circulation. As an aficionado known as the Bagman explains, “This is a gentle process, done with patience rather than power”—which happens to be the same advice we give for sex (see left). Just because a little tension is good, says the Bagman, a lot is not better. God forbid you ever hear an ER doctor ask, “What did you do to your balls?”

I plan to visit Africa. I will avoid drinking the water, but what else should I do to keep from getting sick while traveling?—T.W., Omaha, Nebraska

*Wash your hands often and watch what you eat, which is good advice even if you never leave the house. According to microbiologist Dr. Charles Davis, author of *The International Traveler’s Guide to Avoiding Infections*, most travelers who get sick suffer intestinal distress caused by exposure to foul water (including from teeth brushing and ice added to drinks), manure left on produce or the soiled hands of food workers. If you don’t have access to clean water, it can be purified by boiling, by adding iodine tablets or through portable filtration. For food, Davis cites the adage “Boil it, peel it or forget it.” Avoid salads, unpasteurized milk or cheese, raw or steamed shellfish and uncooked vegetables. Fruit is okay if you wash and peel it yourself. Eat only cooked food served very hot; avoid food from street vendors unless it’s piping hot and you watched it being cooked. Davis also suggests buying insurance through services such as Medexassist.com (800-732-5309) and InternationalSOS.com (800-523-8662) and bringing a personal medical kit, which can be bought through sites such as WildernessMedicine.com, AdventureMedicalKits.com and Chinookmed.com. Or you can assemble your own with routine prescriptions, pain relievers, antibiotics, oral rehydration solution packets, bandages, a digital thermometer, insect repellents with at least 30 percent DEET, sunscreen and*

sunburn treatment, permethrin-impregnated clothes and mosquito nets, syringe and needle kits (for use if you visit a local clinic), water-purification tablets and condoms (“if the need is anticipated or even possible,” Davis says). Some precautions apply to specific regions; for example, you face the greatest risk of malaria in sub-Saharan Africa. Davis’s book includes a list of suggested vaccines for various parts of the world, though he recommends all travelers be immunized against hepatitis A, hepatitis B and typhoid fever and receive boosters for diphtheria and tetanus.

Can a woman tell by feel during intercourse if a man is wearing a condom?—G.D., Los Angeles, California

This sounds like a carnival act at the porno circus. Step right up! Fuck my assistant! If she guesses wrong, you could win a baby or an STD! Or both. A woman can sometimes tell, but not because of the sensation inside her vagina, which has relatively few nerve endings. More likely she would feel the flange against her vulva or notice a lack of stimulation by the foreskin. But it’s a parlor game, and in practice the words “guess” and “condom” should never be used in the same sentence.

I’ve had dandruff since I was a teenager. I use medicated shampoo, but it doesn’t get rid of it completely. Do some people suffer from incurable flakes?—P.C., San Francisco, California

Dandruff can be stubborn, though most people keep it under control with over-the-counter shampoo—typically you scrub it in at least a few times a week and leave the lather on for five minutes. Dandruff is not dry skin; it’s marked by an oily, itchy scalp. In most cases the condition appears to be caused by a yeast-like fungus known as Malassezia, named for French anatomist Louis-Charles Malassez, who in 1874 proposed the connection. Shampoos such as Neutrogena T/Gel (which contains coal tar) and Selsun Blue (selenium sulfide) appear to slow the rate at which scalp cells die, though many people dislike them because of their strong odor. Denorex has salicylic acid, which loosens flakes so they are washed away. Head & Shoulders relies on zinc pyrithione, an antifungal. If nothing else works, a dermatologist may prescribe a steroid shampoo such as Capex. People associate dandruff with the scalp, but it can hit the eyebrows, the creases between the nose and corners of the mouth, the chest, the armpits and the groin. Rinse thoroughly, especially the groin, or you risk your partner associating your genitals with the Industrial Revolution.

My fiancée confessed to me that she has never had an orgasm. I was sure she was coming every time. I’ve tried my fingers and tongue, but she tells me it doesn’t get her excited. Apparently she likes hard thrusting, but no matter how long I go she never gets over the edge. (I tried for more than an hour once, even though I came several times.) Should I accept that she will never reach climax? Should I get a dildo or vibrator? Could it be a medical

problem? I love her and will do whatever it takes to give her the pleasure she gives me.—J.T., Salt Lake City, Utah

That’s what we like to hear. Your girlfriend needs to masturbate with a vibrator and determine the pressures, speeds and positions that feel best. Because a thrusting erection does not directly stimulate the clitoris, most women can’t come that way except in ideal circumstances (e.g., they are about to climax before insertion and a vibrator continues to be applied). The challenge for you will be holding off for five minutes, let alone an hour, as the buzz of the moment travels from her clit to her vaginal walls to every side of your cock.

I have some bottles of alcohol that have never been opened, yet the contents have partially disappeared since 2004, when I moved to Mississippi. A bourbon I received in 1975, an Old Grand-Dad from 1982 and a Captain Apple Jack from 2000 have each lost 10 percent. But bottles of tequila and rum and two others of Old Grand-Dad have lost nothing. Is the change in climate causing this? I moved from Virginia to Florida in 1989 and then here.—L.H., Florence, Mississippi

The seals have developed tiny leaks, which allow the booze to evaporate. They may have been jostled during your moves, but it’s not unusual for seals to be compromised by age, especially over decades. Alcohol lost to evaporation in the distilling process is known as “the angels’ share.” But rather than lubricate the heavens, why not enjoy the spoils with friends? The problem with legacy booze is that each year that passes requires a more glorious occasion to justify the ceremony. A distilled spirit does not age in the bottle, as long as the seal is true. If the seal is broken and the alcohol is exposed to oxygen, it starts to age again, and usually not in a good way.

Our daughter-in-law is blaming us for our son’s affair. As a result, she is severely limiting visits with our grandchild. My husband and I practice the consenting-adults sort of sexual tolerance (we’re long-time PLAYBOY readers), but she has twisted this to claim we raised our children in a “pornographic atmosphere” that led to the creation of a “sex addict.” We know we have no legal rights, but is there anything we can do to improve the situation?—P.R. and S.R., St. Louis, Missouri

Where is your son in all this? Without his support, you’re on thin ice because, as you note, you have no legal standing, and your daughter-in-law could cut you off. We understand her anger, but your grandchild should have the chance to decide from whom he is estranged. Until he’s old enough to do that, his mother should make sure he’s familiar with everyone who loves him, including his father, uncles, aunts and cousins. Like many grandparents, you’re in a tough position.

A female friend insists that flirting can be an innocent gesture—a woman might get a man’s attention and have a drink and casual conversation but think

nothing more of it. I say flirting is never innocent, because a guy always views it as a promising start. Can you settle this?—R.L., Los Angeles, California

You’re both right—a woman might not see an interaction as flirting, but if a guy finds her attractive, his brain scans for signs at the speed of light and always finds them. That’s why a woman can insist she wasn’t flirting, while a guy is mystified when his advances are rejected (“But she twisted her hair!”). The mistake we make is to affix value to any one sign; you need to see multiple signals over time. A woman at least needs to maintain eye contact and give you a broad smile. Women also apparently have a series of universal movements that indicate interest. The ethologist Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt documented this using a camera he could point one way while it filmed in another, so couples didn’t know they were being observed. The sequence, seen across cultures, is (1) smile coyly, (2) arch brow slightly, (3) quickly lower lids, (4) tuck chin slightly, (5) avert gaze, (6) place fingers on or near lips, (7) giggle and (8) extend neck. The sequence observed in men is summed up well by cultural anthropologist Conan O’Brien: “The first thing men notice about a woman is her eyes. Then, when her eyes aren’t looking, they notice her breasts.”

I know a boy named after his father is a Junior, but what about a girl who is named after her mother?—N.D., Port Townsend, Washington

She can be a Junior, though it’s unusual. Anna Eleanor Roosevelt Jr. and Joan Crawford Jr. (later Christina) come to mind. The practice of using “Jr.” caught on here in the 18th century because the religious refugees who populated the colonies drew from the limited pool of names found in the Bible. That meant uncles, nephews, cousins and sometimes brothers shared a name, and “Jr.,” “II” or “2nd” would be used to distinguish them. It wasn’t until after the Revolution that the pool expanded to include such names as Franklin, Jefferson and Otis. Things get tricky if a name is common in a family, e.g., if John Jr. has a cousin John II who names his son John III, he’d be expected to name his own son John IV. What happens when a patriarch dies? Does everyone move up? That can be done, but it’s easier if the suffix isn’t part of your legal name. And while we understand the appeal of being promoted if you’re 50 and still called Junior, being bumped from III to Jr. probably won’t get you laid any more often.

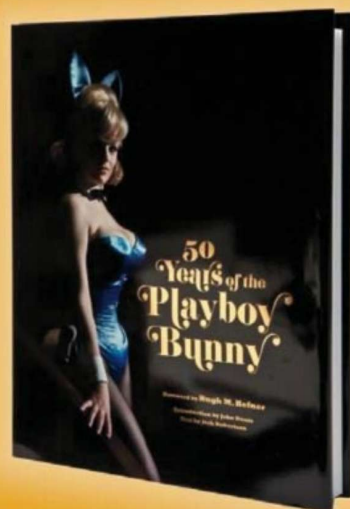
All reasonable questions—from fashion, food and drink, stereos and sports cars to dating dilemmas, taste and etiquette—will be personally answered if the writer includes a self-addressed, stamped envelope. The most interesting, pertinent questions will be presented in these pages. Write the Playboy Advisor, 335 North Maple Drive, Beverly Hills, California 90210, or send e-mail to advisor@playboy.com. For updates, visit playboyadvisor.com and follow @playboyadvisor on Twitter.





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PLAYBOY FORUM

REVERSALS GALORE

WHEN IT COMES TO EXPLETIVES, WE CAN'T MAKE UP OUR MINDS

BY PAUL KRASSNER

Nine years ago, Robin Williams, Penn and Teller, Margaret Cho, Tom and Dick Smothers, First Amendment scholars, lawyers and Lenny Bruce's daughter Kitty signed a petition addressed to New York governor George Pataki. Referring to Bruce's 1964 obscenity conviction over his performance at the Cafe au Go Go in Greenwich Village, it stated, "A pardon now is too late to save Lenny Bruce. But a posthumous pardon would set the record straight and thereby demonstrate New York's commitment to freedom—free speech, free press, freethinking."

Two months later, the governor was giving this obvious no-brainer "serious consideration." Finally, in December 2003, he granted Bruce a posthumous pardon. "Freedom of speech is one of the great American liberties," Pataki said. "I hope this pardon serves as a reminder of the precious freedoms we are fighting to preserve as we continue to wage the war on terrorism." Bruce would have been amused by the irony that the governor pardoned him in the context of justifying an invasion of Iraq, which Bruce would undoubtedly have opposed.

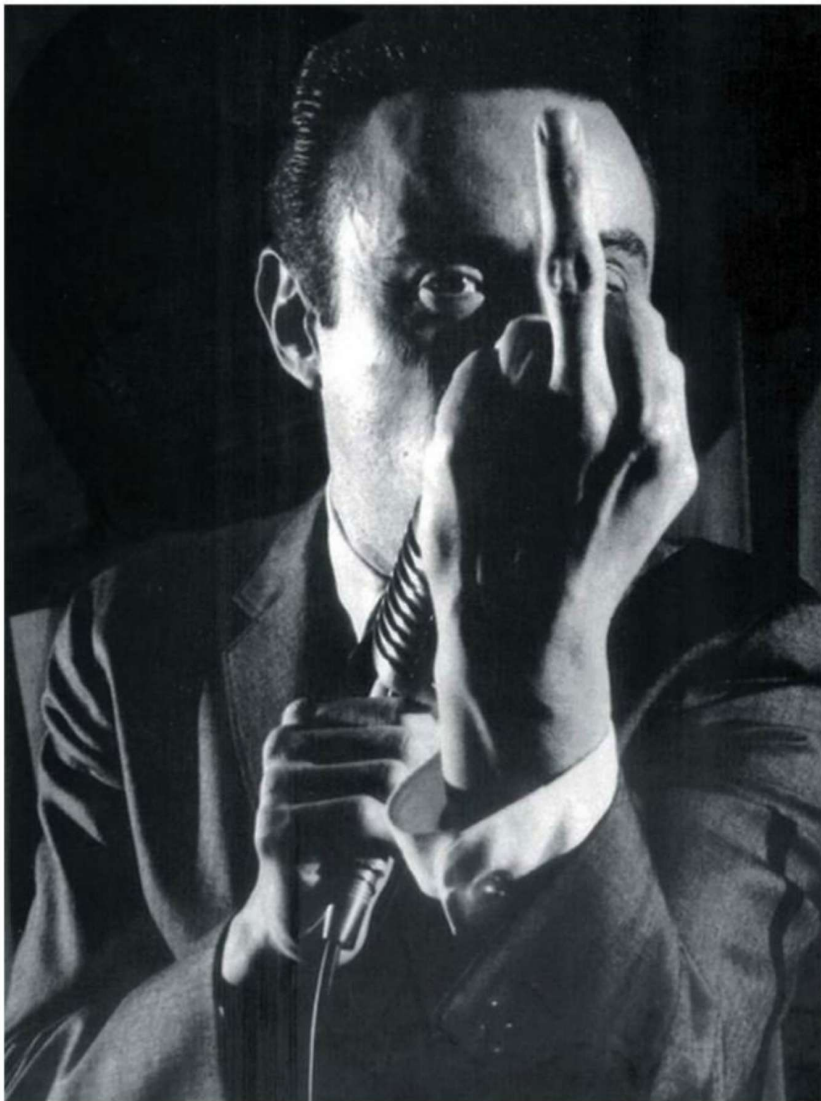
The Federal Communications Commission has declared *fuck* to be "one of the most vulgar, graphic and explicit descriptions of sexual activity in the English language," no matter the context. And conservative pundit Dennis Prager characterizes the fight over *fuck* as central to civilization's "battle to preserve itself."

Nevertheless, at the live Billboard Music Awards show in 2002, Cher responded to her critics, "People have been telling me I'm on my way out every year, right? So fuck 'em. I still have a job and they don't." The next year, on that same awards show, Nicole Richie recounted her experience on the *Simple Life* series: "Have you ever tried to get cow shit out of a Prada purse? It's not so

fucking simple." In both instances, the FCC ruled that Fox TV had violated its standards of decency because any use of the word "inherently has a sexual connotation." Each violation could result in a fine as high as \$325,000.

Also in 2003, when Bono received an award at the Golden Globes ceremony, he said, "This is really, really fucking brilliant." The FCC ruled Bono had not violated broadcast standards, because his use of the offending word was "unfortunate" but "fleeting and isolated." It was merely an "exclamative" adjective. The FCC did not consider Bono's utterance to be indecent, because, in context, he obviously didn't use the word *fucking* to "describe sexual or excretory organs or activities."

In 2004, in a duet with Janet Jackson during the halftime extravaganza at the Super Bowl, Justin Timberlake sang the lyric "Gonna have you naked by the end of this song," and in what was defended as "a wardrobe malfunction," he reached over and exposed Jackson's right breast for nine sixteenths of a second. I had never seen the media make such a mountain out of a molehill. Moreover,



that moment served as an excuse to crack down on indecency during an election year. The FCC reversed its decision on Bono, contending that his utterance was “indecent and profane” after all. But an appeals court reversed the reversal, and Bono was, once again, not guilty.

In 2007 a CBS lawyer argued that the network shouldn’t be fined \$550,000 for Jackson’s breast baring because it was fleeting, isolated and unauthorized. But a three-judge panel in a federal appeals court ruled in favor of Fox TV’s challenge against the FCC for indecent and profane language. During the live broadcast of that court hearing, C-Span viewers were treated to such uncensored words and phrases as *motherfucker*, *eat shit* and *fuck the USA*.

The court stated that “in recent times, even the top leaders of our government have used variants of these expletives in a manner that no reasonable person would believe referenced ‘sexual or excretory organs or activities.’” Indeed, Vice President Dick Cheney was caught on the Senate floor saying “Go fuck yourself” to Senator Patrick Leahy, who had complained about Halliburton’s war profiteering and President George W. Bush’s judicial nominees. On the same day, in a 99-to-one vote, the Senate passed legislation described as the Defense of Decency Act. The *Washington Times* reported that Cheney “responded with a barnyard epithet, urging Mr. Leahy to perform an anatomical sexual impossibility.”

Still, the Bush administration appealed the *FCC v. Fox* decision on “fleeting expletives,” and the case was argued before the Supreme Court in 2008. Justice John Paul Stevens wondered aloud if the word *dung* would be considered indecent. Solicitor General Gregory Garre warned that loosening indecency standards could lead to “Big Bird dropping the F-bomb on *Sesame Street*.”

Meanwhile, an appeals court ruled that the FCC had “acted arbitrarily and capriciously” in the Janet Jackson

case, observing that the flashing of her breast happened too fast to be considered “so pervasive as to amount to ‘shock treatment’ for the audience.” So the FCC asked the Supreme Court to appeal that ruling.

In 2009—six days after Fox News anchor Shepard Smith shouted on the air, “We are America! I don’t give a rat’s ass if it helps [get information from suspected terrorists]! We do not fucking torture!”—a Supreme Court ruling in the Bono case reversed the reversal of the reversal, and suddenly it was retroactively unacceptable for him to say “This is really, really fucking brilliant.” But then, in 2010, an appeals court struck down the FCC policy, because barring the use of “fleeting expletives” violated the First Amendment and could inhibit free speech. Thus, the reversal of the reversal of the reversal was reversed.

In January 2012—another election year—the Supreme Court heard arguments for invalidating the FCC policy that punishes broadcasters for airing those dangerous expletives.



What’s vulgar? Bono and the Edge at the Golden Globes.

The Court will consider the constitutionality of an FCC action against the television show *NYPD Blue* for showing partial nudity, as well as the naughty-language cases of Cher and Nicole Richie.

As for Bono’s casual use of such a hazardous word, if the Court reverses the reversal of the reversal of the reversal of the reversal of his right to say it on the air, then what could be next? Will former governor Pataki decide to revoke his posthumous pardon of Lenny Bruce? All I know is that when the little kids on my block are playing, they actually curse at each other by yelling, “Bleep you!”

PREPARE TO BE GROPED

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO OUR RIGHTS AS AMERICANS?

BY JENNIFER ABEL

America has a long record of warped attitudes surrounding sex and nudity—this magazine’s legal history proves that—but before the days of the Transportation Security Administration, the problem was one-sided: If you wanted to display your gender-specific parts or to have your sexy bits rubbed by someone other than your legal spouse, you risked trouble. But if you wanted none of that, the government backed you completely.

This all changed in 2010 when the TSA implemented its “enhanced pat-down” policy. Henceforth, any American wishing to fly must first play the submissive in a creepy S&M scene: Spread your legs, raise your hands and remain silent, still and perfectly respectful while the dom, wearing a TSA uniform in lieu of traditional black leather, reaches up between your thighs to braille out whatever is there.

They do this to kids too, though people who touch their own offspring like this are called pedophiles, and parents who protest might even get their names on a terrorist watch list. Subs can theoretically avoid the grope-down by posing for nude photos. You needn’t even disrobe: Just adopt that same submissive hands-up pose while a scanner emits potentially cancerous radiation that burrows through clothing and bounces off skin, letting the doms see what you look like naked. (And if they like what they see, they get to grope you anyway.)

Do you know the *South Park* episode in which wannabe supervillain Professor Chaos, plotting to destroy the town in a cataclysmic flood, turns his parents’ garden hose on full blast? Now imagine the government, citing terrorist-tsunami concerns, not only banning garden hoses but mandating the photographing or fondling of all travelers’ genitalia in case contraband hoses are coiled therein. That’s how the TSA reacted

to the would-be shoe and underwear bombers: All threats are created equal, plausibility be damned.

Not until nine years after the September 11, 2001 attacks did the TSA adopt sadomasochism as a guideline. The agency routinely violated our Fourth Amendment rights from the get-go, of course, but its early days were more like *Monty Python* than *Story of O*.

“No more nail clippers on airplanes! Okay, nail clippers. But no more shampoo! Okay, shampoo. But no more than three ounces! Okay, but just 3.4 ounces.” Before the molestation mandate, still willing to fly, I adjusted to the TSA’s capricious bans as best I could. Smuggling tweezers and other verboten grooming items onto a plane was easy—just shove them deep within a change purse, surrounded by coins. I wasted ridiculous amounts of time decanting personal cleansing liquids into three-ounce bottles because I grow my hair long for reasons of vanity and use lots of hair spray, styling mousse and other products that make men’s eyes glaze over when I discuss them at length.

Of course, I shouldn’t have to discuss them at all while discuss-

ing national security. But real security can’t be had from guardians who refuse to distinguish between a terrorist plot and a woman’s hairstyling regimen.

The agency took a darker turn after Christmas 2009, when Professor Chaos’s kindred spirit set his thigh on fire in a ludicrous bombing attempt. The TSA again lashed out at the public it supposedly protects, decreeing that during a flight’s final hour passengers had to stay in their seats

and keep their laps empty and hands visible at all times—no books, electronics or jackets would be allowed. As

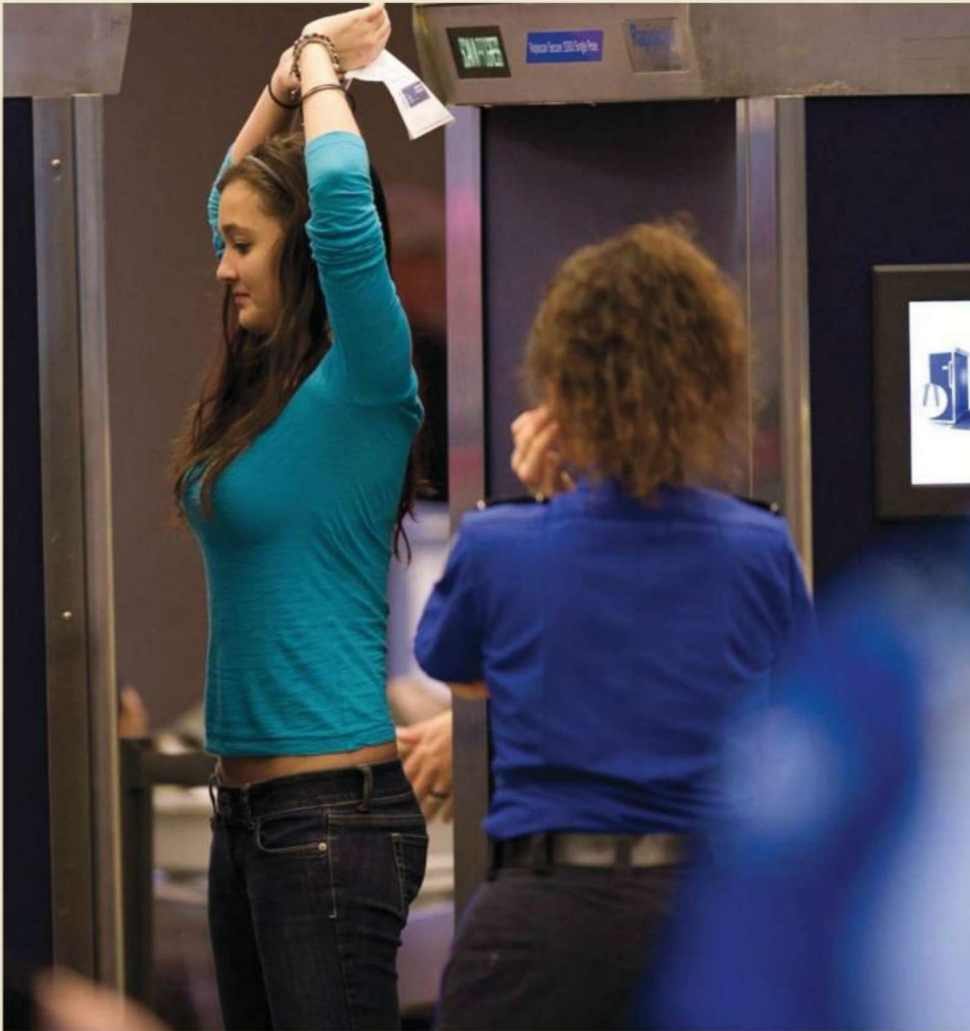
usual for the TSA, this did nothing to improve safety but merely expressed the agency’s bottomless contempt for such concepts as constitutional rights and basic human dignity. Convicted serial killers being shipped off to a supermax prison may need to travel by such rules, but ordinary Americans do not.

No matter how outrageously the agency behaves, apologists claim the TSA is the only thing preventing another terrorist attack. They’re wrong. Those hijackers

11 years ago exploited two loopholes that have since been closed by strengthening cockpit doors against forced entry and by letting passengers know that the old conventional wisdom (“In a hijacking, your safest bet is cooperating with the hijackers”) is wrong.

TSA apologists also say, “If you don’t like it, don’t fly,” as though the Fourth Amendment right against unreasonable searches did not apply to mass transit (which the TSA indeed believes). Its ominous Visible Intermodal Prevention and Response squads slither throughout the rest of

**APOLOGISTS CLAIM
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DON'T TREAD ON ME: A traveler submits to a full-body scan at Pittsburgh International Airport.

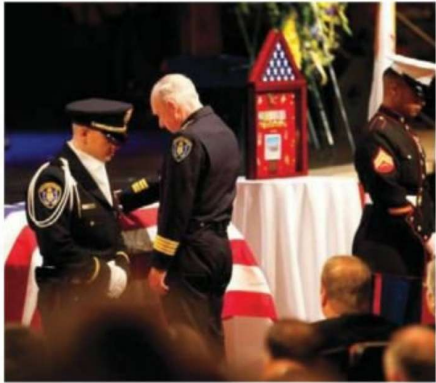
America’s transportation infrastructure: buses, subways and trains. If you don’t like it, stay home and think happy free-country thoughts.

And to hell with the claim that TSA agents are just poor working-class folks doing their jobs, undeserving of the scorn heaped on them. You needn’t be wealthy or well educated to know—and respect—the difference between securing transportation and playing grab-ass all day.

READER RESPONSE

THE HOME FRONT

On August 6, 2011 San Diego police officer Jeremy Henwood was shot dead in his patrol car as he waited at a red light. Henwood was a captain in the



Jeremy Henwood's chief pays his respects. Marine Corps Reserves and served three deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan. He was not "at war" with the community he served, and as a police officer myself, nor am I ("Cops at War," December).

Jessika Kynett
Livingston, Montana

It's not just local cops at war with their communities; federal agencies have for decades conducted senseless and expensive battles against drugs, terror, illegal immigrants—you name it, they are or soon will be at war with it. Although crime rates are dropping in most places, the number of law enforcement agents and their budgets are ever increasing.

Andrzej Kubis
Chicago, Illinois

WAGE SLAVES

Thomas Frank demonstrates in his commentary about the Tea Party ("Competitive Dissent," January/February) that he has no understanding of the Constitution, capitalism or objectivism. The founders hoped to limit federal power, not open a door for a welfare state. And no true capitalist would accept a bailout. Progressives are pursuing a form of slavery by forcing people to work against their will for the benefit of others. Eventually taxpayers will go on strike and the system will collapse.

Charles Mould
Merlin, Oregon

DREAM ON

Shame on Eric Klinenberg ("The Breaks," January/February) for dismissing the validity of the American dream.

Where would Hugh Hefner, among many other examples, be without it? Arguing that anyone should view the Breakers mansion or its original owners with resentment or shame is defeatist thinking that insults the principles of this great country.

John Ganz
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

BONG REMAINS THE SAME

In January 1969 you published a letter I wrote to Forum about an article I had read in *The Dallas Morning News*. Richard Dorsey, 58, a shoeshine-stand operator, was sentenced by a local judge to 50 years in prison for selling a matchbox of marijuana for \$5 to an undercover cop. You noted that the sentence was extreme but not unique and that state laws were all over the place. For example, while North Dakota punished possession with up to 99 years of hard labor, neighboring South Dakota until 1968 had a maximum sentence of 90 days. To my knowledge, this was the first time such information had been published in a widely read, national magazine, and it sparked a dialogue that continues to this day. This letter is to thank you for publishing that response so many years ago.

Richard Sadler
Memphis, Tennessee

Thank you for writing—both times. State laws are generally more consistent and less draconian today, though Texas remains a tough place to get busted. According to the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws, no state prosecutes more of its residents for marijuana offenses, and 97 percent of arrests are for possession alone. Other states to avoid include Oklahoma,



This was once worth 50 years in Texas.

Florida, Louisiana and Arizona. You can check the laws in your state at norml.org/states. Notably, Dorsey had been arrested before; a 1952 raid on his home included

an early example of a tactic that gives police a powerful incentive to continue the war—asset forfeiture. During the raid, Dallas police discovered "400 grains" of marijuana in Dorsey's 1948 convertible. They promptly seized the car, citing a federal court ruling that allowed them to confiscate automobiles used to transport narcotics. In fact, an officer boasted, it was the third car they had taken in raids that week.

OBAMA AT WAR

I am glad to see that PLAYBOY, one of the last honest magazines around,



St. Louis holds a parade for Iraq War vets.

continues to support our troops while exposing the fact that they are being put in unnecessary danger. The best way to support the troops is to bring them home. During World War II we had a clear objective, and in four years the troops came home to their families and jobs. Now, after 10 years, we have no objectives. President Obama failed on his 2008 campaign promise to end the conflicts—I've seen cars with END THE WAR and ELECT OBAMA stickers whose owners apparently fail to see the disconnect.

Liz Feola
Bethel, Connecticut

WHERE TO BEGIN

David Rothkopf blames capitalism for the huge income gap between rich and poor ("The Inequality Machine," March). But he makes the classic liberal mistake of confusing equal opportunity with equal results. Equal outcomes require socialistic policies and preferential treatment. Striving for equal results would destroy capitalism and lead to a lower standard of living for everyone.

Robert Walton
Englewood, Colorado

E-mail via the web at letters.playboy.com. Or write: 335 North Maple Drive, Beverly Hills, California 90210.

NEWSFRONT

**V1@gra Villains**

A team of computer scientists at the University of California investigated the origins of those ubiquitous e-mails that promise \$3 Viagra without a prescription. The researchers, who specialize in “spamalytics,” traced 365 million links found in spam e-mails to 69,000 sites operated by 45 companies, most of them in Russia. They also made 56 random purchases. Although 91 percent of the orders were filled, it was impossible to tell what was in the pills, nearly all of which originated in India or China. Most people delete spam, but a rogue operator can easily send so many e-mails (usually from home computers hijacked by automated “bots”) that he can earn thousands of dollars a day, even with a response rate of only 0.000001 percent. The California scientists estimate a spammer must unleash 12.5 million e-mails to sell \$100 worth of fake Viagra. Besides the fact that pills ordered via spam are unlikely to contain any or enough active ingredients, there are medical risks. Earlier this year doctors in Singapore reported in *The New England Journal of Medicine* that they had traced an outbreak of severe hypoglycemia to fake Cialis and herbal erection drugs. Of 149 victims admitted to hospitals over a five-month period, seven fell into comas and four others died.

Punked

BANDA ACEH, INDONESIA—Police in the Aceh province, which observes sharia law, raided a punk-rock concert and arrested 64 fans, shaved their heads, bathed them in a lake,



forced them to pray and sent them to a 10-day “moral rehabilitation” camp. The Muslim youth did not go quietly; a reporter noted that whenever commanders turned away during hours of military drilling, fists and peace signs appeared and shouts rang out: “Punk will never die!”

Four-Letter Fans

SAN DIEGO—While attending a Chargers game to cheer for the opposing team, an off-duty L.A. cop was ejected for telling two hometown fans to fuck off. The policeman filed a federal lawsuit, arguing that city and NFL bans on profane language at games violate the First Amendment. The city and the league say the restriction is necessary to maintain a family-friendly atmosphere, which online commentators noted could also be accomplished by not selling beer.

Balloon Theory

Bolstered by \$5 billion of American aid, Colombia has cut the production of coca, the base for cocaine, by 65 percent since 2000. Meanwhile it has grown 45 percent in Peru and nearly doubled in Bolivia. Scholars call this “the balloon effect”—when you squeeze in one spot it grows larger in another.

The One Percent

What does it take to be in the one percent? In the U.S. you need an annual income of

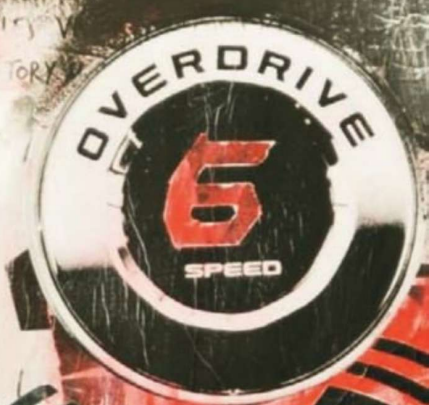
\$109,337. As a global citizen you need just \$34,000; earning \$3.35 a day puts you squarely in the middle class. But things are looking up at the bottom. The UN projects that by 2015 only 15 percent of the world’s population will live on \$1 a day or less, down from 42 percent in 1990, mostly due to growth in China.

Cloudy Judgment

SEOUL—A Dutch firm apologized after proposing a design for a pair of skyscrapers that resemble the World Trade Center’s Twin Towers after they were struck by planes on 9/11. The cluster of cubes jutting from the center of the buildings hides a sky bridge at about the 50th story and was supposed to evoke a cloud.



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PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: DAVID BROOKS

A candid conversation with the New York Times house conservative about why both Democrats and Republicans hate him and how he drifted from left to right

In a polarized America, it's common for political commentators to be hated by those on the right or left, but David Brooks is an equal opportunity target—he's loathed by both. He also has ardent fans from both parties; he's been called the left's favorite conservative and the right's sanest voice. *New York* magazine called him "the essential columnist of the moment, better than anyone at crystallizing the questions we face—ones for which there are often no good answers."

In addition to his twice-weekly *New York Times* column, Brooks is a ubiquitous presence on TV and radio (where he's a commentator on PBS, NPR and other news talk shows), the author of best-selling books and a sought-after public speaker. Though he's known to favor Republicans and is considered one of the *Times*' token conservative columnists, it's impossible to pigeonhole him. One minute he's taking on big government, praising Mitt Romney and virulently criticizing President Obama, and the next he's attacking the GOP and right-wing news itself. "The rise of [Glenn] Beck, [Sean] Hannity, Bill O'Reilly and the rest has correlated almost perfectly with the decline of the GOP," he once wrote in a column. Attacking back, Mark Levin, a popular conservative radio host, told *Politico* that Brooks is "irrelevant." Levin's wrong at least about that. Like

him or loathe him, it's inarguable that Brooks is one of the most read, quoted and debated commentators in America.

Brooks describes himself as a moderate conservative, which allows him a kind of freedom that other, more partisan pundits lack. He's definitely no party loyalist. Despite his current sharp criticisms of the president, last election he supported Obama, much to the chagrin of Republicans. Things are different this year. His columns have so enraged the White House that the president himself has called to complain.

Brooks's right-leaning politics are unexpected for someone with his background. Born in Canada, he was raised in Greenwich Village, New York in the 1960s. His parents were ardent Democrats. Brooks followed their liberal leanings until college, when, he says, "I came to my senses." It wasn't until 1984, when he supported Ronald Reagan's reelection, that he cast a Republican vote in a presidential election. His most recent book, a *New York Times* best-seller, is *The Social Animal: The Hidden Sources of Love, Character and Achievement*. Brooks, married with three children, lives in Bethesda, Maryland.

To grill Brooks about the coming election and other political and social issues, *Contributing Editor David Sheff* flew to Washington,

D.C. Sheff, who recently interviewed Congressman Barney Frank and wrote a remembrance of Steve Jobs for the magazine, filed this report: "For *PLAYBOY* I've interviewed commentators on both sides of the political spectrum, including, on the right, Bill O'Reilly, and on the left, Bill Maher, both fiery and adamant about their opinions. David Brooks was a rare exception. He was soft-spoken, thoughtful and even tentative. For him nothing is black-and-white. This isn't to say he doesn't have strong opinions that he expresses articulately. What may not come through in his columns and on-the-air commentary is that he's also self-deprecating, with a dry sense of humor.

"Our interview was held in the midst of the early wave of Republican primaries, when there was no clear winner, though Mitt Romney was ahead of the pack. In politics things change, often daily, but at press time it was likely that Romney would be the one to face off with Obama. Unsurprisingly, Brooks had lots to say about the election."

PLAYBOY: Okay, the million-dollar question: Will Obama be a one-term president, or is he destined to be reelected?

BROOKS: At the moment he's the slight underdog. He's doing better, though. It's hard for a president to win without



"People want that Norman Rockwell time again. Guys who played by the rules, went to high school, worked hard—they see all these assholes who didn't play by the rules getting rewarded, and they feel screwed."



"The weakness of both sides suggests an opening for a white working-class candidate in a third party. If Pat Buchanan ran with Ralph Nader, there could be such a strong left-right coalition behind them that they would get 30 percent of the vote."



"The family came under attack in the 1970s. Marriage offers a kind of stability that can help you. People struggle because they don't have that foundation. I think the ideal number of sexual partners to have in a year is one."

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KEN CEDENO

the approval of more than 50 percent of the country. In some polls he has hit 50. Bush, in his reelection, hit 48. A candidate can win within kissing distance of 50. He'll continue to look stronger if the economy gets better. However, Pennsylvania, a state Democrats have won five times in a row, looks challenging, and if Pennsylvania goes, Ohio goes. Then he would have to win Florida and Virginia, but if Romney, who I think will be the nominee, picks Marco Rubio as running mate, Florida becomes a challenge.

PLAYBOY: Conventional wisdom is that the economy is the reason for the low poll numbers. Do you agree?

BROOKS: The largest factor is that the economy sucks, yes, but that's not all of it. There has been a shift to the right in this country on all sorts of issues. When people saw Obama's activism, they pulled back.

PLAYBOY: You're arguing that Obama is too much of an activist? Many of his supporters, and especially former supporters, feel he hasn't acted strongly enough.

BROOKS: It all came from health care. There was a recoil because of that, and nothing's really changed since. The Republicans haven't picked up anything, but Obama hasn't regained anything. It was a mistake to do health care in the middle of the recession. People weren't interested in it. It's still unpopular. Beyond that and the economy, the fact is there are twice as many conservatives as liberals now, and a good third of the country is independent. He was right not to be a pure liberal, and liberals are upset about that. They'll vote for him, but his big problem is that he failed to present a coherent policy for independents. However, he basically spent 2011 with an open hand to the Republicans, saying, "Okay, let's make a deal. Let's negotiate." And the Republicans were saying no. That laid out a story that he was being reasonable and the Republicans were not. That story is lodged in a lot of people's minds, especially independent voters, who were hostile to him a year ago and aren't as much now.

PLAYBOY: What explains America's shift to the right?

BROOKS: To be a member of the white working class is to be in a bad place these days. Job prospects are pretty bad. Wages are pretty bad. You feel cut off from government. I think the main driver is a feeling that there is an American tradition we're departing from with too-big government, cultural elites who have no sympathy for them and values they don't recognize. As has been said, the Tea Party is using Abbie Hoffman means to achieve Norman Rockwell ends. People want that Norman Rockwell time again, even if in some ways it's an illusion. Guys who played by the rules, went to high school, graduated, worked hard, are carpenters or whatever—they see all these assholes who didn't play by the rules

getting rewarded, and they feel screwed, and they're mad about it.

PLAYBOY: Democrats would claim they're the party devoted to protecting the working class from the Wall Street fat cats, that they're trying to reel in the—as you call them—assholes who didn't play by the rules and were lavishly rewarded.

BROOKS: But people blame government more than Wall Street. In polls, when people are asked, "Do you trust government to do the right thing most of the time?" the number of Americans who said yes used to be 70 percent; now it's I think at nine percent. They're suspicious of government. The Democrats' problem is that they're the cultural elite or are at least perceived to be. If the white middle class has a choice between Harvard and Bain Capital, they'll go for Bain Capital. They don't like Bain, but they prefer it to Harvard. They feel slightly more at home with business capitalist values than so-called cultural elite values.

PLAYBOY: Does the middle class relate to the Occupy movement, which attacks the disparity of one percent of Americans having 42 percent of the wealth?

*George Bush was 60 IQ
points smarter in private than
he was in public. He doesn't
want anybody to think he's
smarter than they are, so he
puts on a Texas act.*

BROOKS: My guess is that they view the Occupy movement as a bunch of rich kids who majored in English and poetry. I also think they would differ on a core belief of the Occupy movement that people have become powerless against the corporations. Many middle-class Americans don't believe that. They still believe that you control your own economic destiny. Most Americans are still firmly convinced that if you work hard, you'll succeed. And they don't believe that the government is going to help them, which is why they support the capitalist ethos.

PLAYBOY: Still, there's evidence that there's no passionate support for the Republican side.

BROOKS: Actually, the weakness of both sides suggests an opening for a white working-class candidate in a third party. If it comes down to Obama against Romney, there's a huge opening. I was having coffee with a friend yesterday, and we were saying that if Pat Buchanan ran with Ralph Nader, there could be such a strong left-right working-class coalition behind them that they would get 30 percent of the vote, no problem.

PLAYBOY: Nader and Buchanan? Talk about an unlikely pairing. They represent extremes on the left and the right.

BROOKS: Actually, they agree on a lot. They agree on corporate stuff and are both against the Washington business oligarchy.

PLAYBOY: At the time of this interview there's no strong third-party movement. How much of a challenge does Romney face to get the nomination?

BROOKS: He has glaring weaknesses, obviously. Americans want a sense that they know where your character comes from, and they don't think it comes from politics. You'd better have a story about how your pre-political character emerged. For John McCain it was the prisoner-of-war story. For Obama it was the search for his father and the rise from his childhood to Harvard Law School. For Clinton it was also the traumatic family. You have to have a story to tell, and that's a problem for Romney. He can't say, "My dad was a millionaire and I'm a millionaire. I served as a missionary in France and tried to convert people in Bordeaux to give up wine." That's his story, but he can't say that. Peter Hart, the pollster, did a focus group in Ohio where he asked people who from their middle-school class the candidates reminded them of. Before the sexual allegations that caused him to drop out, Herman Cain reminded people of the funny, popular kid. Rick Perry reminded them of the bully. Romney reminded them of the rich kid with all the privileges. That's his problem.

PLAYBOY: And yet you think he can win?

BROOKS: Yes, because the general rule is that the second-term election is a referendum on the incumbent. Especially if the economy still sucks, the late deciders will say, "Let's go for something different." But it's getting tighter as things get a little better.

PLAYBOY: You've made it clear that you've been disappointed by Obama, saying you were "a sap" for believing in him. What has most disappointed you?

BROOKS: I still have personal admiration for him. But I was talking with my good friend E.J. Dionne Jr. of *The Washington Post*, who also admires Obama. I realized that we admire totally different Obamas. I admire the post-partisan guy who's going to rise above partisanship and unite the country. He admires the liberal community activist. I thought my Obama was the real Obama. He thought his was. In the past year, I guess I'd say he has more reason to think his Obama is the real Obama. Personally, I still respect him. He has remarkable skills and remarkable intellect. I thought he was the right person to change the tone and run an intellectually honest administration. In some ways he's lived up to that, but in some ways he's been way too political—stupidly political—and shortsighted.

PLAYBOY: Is your main complaint that he has been too liberal?

BROOKS: The basis of my conservatism is epistemological modesty, the idea that we can't know much. I'm suspicious of people in Washington thinking they can understand complex systems well enough to regulate them. Obama has a lot more confidence in technocrats to understand and solve complex problems. With financial reform, he gave a lot of power to regulators. In Medicare reform he gave a lot of power to a board of experts—more regulators. I think no one's that smart. I guess that's why he's a Democrat and I'm not. Democrats believe that if you get smart people in a room, they can solve a problem, and I don't agree.

PLAYBOY: You don't want regulation, but do you disagree that unbridled capitalism is at least partly responsible for the decade's economic disaster?

BROOKS: My general political philosophy is to use government to help the market function better. I'm not a libertarian. I'm not a liberal. I'm a Hamiltonian precisely for that reason.

PLAYBOY: Have you had any moral quandaries about calling yourself a Republican at a time when the party has gotten far more conservative, reflecting the influence of the Tea Party and the religious right?

BROOKS: They have a name for us now, RINOs—Republicans in name only—which I guess describes me. I don't mind being a rhino. They're strong, fierce animals.

PLAYBOY: Not all Republicans accept that as an option. Some say you're a traitor to their party.

BROOKS: If you talk to Rush Limbaugh, Sean Hannity or Laura Ingraham, they don't regard me as a Republican or a conservative. I think I am. I think I'm the original conservative. I guess I'd say I'm a conservative and not a Republican. I've never identified as a Republican, and that's because I'm a journalist, not a political activist. The fact is, if you look at Sarah Palin and Michele Bachmann, they're deeply *anti-conservative*.

PLAYBOY: They and their supporters would vehemently disagree.

BROOKS: They are, because they're ideological. Conservatives shouldn't be.

Conservatism should be all about context. For example, from a proper conservative point of view, it's insane to have a universal rule about taxes. If you need revenue, then taxes are an instrument to provide the revenue you need. They've turned it into this ideology where you never have tax increases. That goes against the whole grain of what conservatism is supposed to be about. I've written more columns than I ever thought I would that basically say a pox on both your houses, wishing for that third party.

PLAYBOY: Republican or not, other than Obama, in debates and your column you most often defend or advocate the GOP point of view. In the meantime, many Republicans espouse views you've

PLAYBOY: If Bachmann had become the Republican nominee, would you have switched sides?

BROOKS: I don't know if I'd have switched sides. We're not supposed to endorse candidates, but it's inconceivable that I would ever vote for Bachmann. Or Palin or Gingrich or Cain. I'm not going to vote for Ron Paul either. Of the seven or eight candidates who were vying for the nomination, it's inconceivable I'd ever vote for most of them. That doesn't mean I'd switch camps. I'm in a camp of moderate Republicans who probably all feel the same way about most of these candidates.

PLAYBOY: If you represent the true middle of the political spectrum, which you claim is unrepresented in the election, how

about you? Have you ever been tempted to leave journalism and become a candidate?

BROOKS: I was born in Toronto, so I could never be president. But anyway, no. On one book tour, I did 14 interviews and three speeches in one day, which is like being a candidate. I don't like people that much. Obama isn't quite like this, but Clinton and McCain—they never want to be alone, and they're perfectly happy. They feed off people. I've seen it a zillion times while covering them. That's how they get sustenance. It's not food and water they need, it's attention. Obama's a little more like me. He doesn't need people.

PLAYBOY: From the perspective of someone who spent time

with them both, how else are Clinton and Obama different?

BROOKS: I don't have anything new to say about Clinton. He's the most seductive and impressive personality. I ask people who were in both the Obama and the Clinton administrations who is smarter, and they have trouble saying. Clinton had the essential boomer problem, narcissism, and the lack of a big commitment to a big idea that he was going to accomplish. Clinton had the most political skills, though. I always look at candidates as pitchers in spring training: You look at who has the best skills, and that would be Clinton. Obama's pretty good, though.

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PLAYBOY: Has Obama changed since he's been president?

BROOKS: He's still basically smart and charming, an impressive guy who can talk about policy on whatever you ask him. The changes have come from learning the limitations of the office. I don't think he appreciated how little power a president has. The other change is his rising aggravation with Washington. He's thinking, I'm trying to be serious here, but I'm surrounded by jokers and assholes. I think there's a rising level of bile about that. I think it makes him less effective and less pleasant to be around.

PLAYBOY: Has he ever called you because he was angry about a column?

BROOKS: Uh-huh.

PLAYBOY: What's it like to be yelled at by the president?

BROOKS: It's not pleasant but not unpleasant. He'll say, "Let's put aside the six things that were morally offensive about what you wrote, and let's get to the issue." So he'll shove aside the things that bugged him, and then he'll want to have a serious civil discussion about the substance.

PLAYBOY: Which columns did he call you about?

BROOKS: The last time was a column in which I unfavorably compared his management style with Rahm Emanuel's management style in Chicago. That one set him off.

PLAYBOY: How does Obama compare with George W. Bush?

BROOKS: Bush also had political skills. You got the sense that he liked having debates, but he never got to have them because his staff didn't want to give him an unpleasant meeting. Bush was ill served by people who didn't allow him to be as good a president as he could have been. Dick Cheney and the others were tightly controlling what was said. Obama doesn't have that problem.

PLAYBOY: People made fun of Bush for his inarticulateness, malapropisms and underachievement at Yale, suggesting he wasn't as smart as many presidents.

BROOKS: He was 60 IQ points smarter in private than he was in public. He easily was the most voracious reader of any president in a while. They keep track of all the books presidents read. He read about 113 a year. For a president that's a lot, because there's a lot of other stuff to do.

PLAYBOY: Could that be a bad thing, suggesting that he was reading rather than running the country?

BROOKS: That could be, but if Putin was coming to town, Bush would have just finished reading a book on Peter the Great, and he'd talk about Peter the Great. He would never allow himself to do it in public, because his whole shtick was that he was the average Joe from Texas.

PLAYBOY: Was it a shtick?

BROOKS: It was an act but a deeply felt act. This is my pop psychology of Bush: He's a kid from Texas who goes off to Andover and Yale, then back down to

Texas and, to survive there, represses his real self. He doesn't want anybody to think he's smarter than they are, so he puts on a Texas act. It becomes so deep, it's part of him now. I've rarely seen a person whose off-the-record manner is so different from his on-the-record manner. And among the presidents I've interviewed, Bush was one of the most fun to be around. He had an atmosphere of "we're at the frat and we're going to have a good time" around himself.

PLAYBOY: Is that what you want in a president?

BROOKS: Not necessarily, but it's fun to be around. I would go to sessions with Bush and four or five other columnists, and he would go off the record and be completely candid, charming and funny. Afterward they would send us a transcript of the session with the off-the-record parts taken out. I used to say, "It's like a porn movie with the sex scenes taken out," because everything that was fun was gone. Bush would say of a world leader, "That guy is such an asshole." It's impossible to imagine Obama saying that, though he might *think* it.

One of the least pleasant shows I've ever done was Bill Maher's. It's 20 minutes of how evil everyone is who disagrees with him. I always think it's unfair.

PLAYBOY: What other politicians were fun?

BROOKS: There was nothing more fun than being around John McCain. He taught me how to shoot craps. In the middle of that last race, however, he lost all interest in the media. I've tried to interview him in the past few years, and his staff won't let me in.

PLAYBOY: At one point you strongly supported McCain. Is it accurate that you became disillusioned when he chose Sarah Palin as his running mate?

BROOKS: When he ran in 2000, I thought he was the closest thing to what I like, a Teddy Roosevelt Republican. He took on campaign finance. He took on global warming. He was willing to raise taxes but at the same time was fiscally conservative. Somehow when he became the head of the party and started getting love-bombed by the right, he became a much more orthodox Republican and was no longer the renegade Republican. Maybe you need to do that if you're heading a party, but I was disappointed in the campaign he ran.

PLAYBOY: Have you met any other presidents?

BROOKS: In some ways H.W. Bush was the most admirable of the presidents I've known. Very selfless, a servant. I like him now more than I did at the time. I briefly met Reagan, though I didn't really know him. I'd say Reagan had political skills, though he didn't particularly have intellectual skills.

PLAYBOY: You've said that the first Republican you voted for was Reagan.

BROOKS: I didn't vote for him in 1980, but I did in 1984.

PLAYBOY: As a lifelong Democrat, was it a difficult moment for you?

BROOKS: I remember having a weird, perverse smile on my face, like, Isn't this bizarre?

PLAYBOY: Did you keep it secret from your family of Democrats?

BROOKS: I may have.

PLAYBOY: At this point have your parents followed you and become Republicans?

BROOKS: I think I pushed them further to the left. I'm sure I'm the only non-liberal Democrat in my family since they came to this country.

PLAYBOY: Do they forgive you?

BROOKS: They tolerate it.

PLAYBOY: Not only did you grow up a Democrat, but you were in Greenwich Village in the 1960s, a center of the counterculture.

BROOKS: I have vivid memories of peace rallies and be-ins in Washington Square Park in the 1960s.

PLAYBOY: Did you have long hair and a beard?

BROOKS: I had a Jew-fro, which was the extent I could have long hair. If you look at my high school yearbook, it's me in a faded army jacket with a lot of liberal political buttons on it, so I was definitely left-wing through high school. On the other hand, my parents took me to a be-in in 1965. There were hippies there, and somebody set a garbage can on fire, and people threw their wallets in to show they didn't care about money. I was five. I ran over to the fire, reached in, grabbed a \$5 bill and ran away with it. That was my first step to the right.

PLAYBOY: What caused you to abandon liberalism and embrace conservatism?

BROOKS: I grew up in an atmosphere where all progress was associated with the left. My grandmother was president of the local chapter of the NAACP. If you were interested in civil rights, women's rights and peace, you were on the left. I grew up with the attitude that all progress was a morality tale of good progressive liberals fighting the reactionary Republicans. I kept it up through high school. I fell in love with Birch Bayh, who ran for president in 1976, and I had a big Hubert Humphrey poster on my wall. I passed out leaflets for George McGovern.

PLAYBOY: Then what changed?

BROOKS: As a freshman in college, I was assigned *(continued on page 116)*


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BY JACK ABRAMOFF

M



MANY PEOPLE ASSUME THE LOBBYING BUSINESS was born during the presidency of Ulysses S. Grant. The general, who loved his whiskey and cigars, would repair to the lobby of the Willard Hotel, which sits a few blocks from the White House. As soon as Grant lit his stogie, he would be set upon by mendicants and petitioners of all stripes—who had the kind of presidential access their lobbyist heirs can only dream about. Although that prestigious hotel assiduously promoted the mythic origin of the word *lobbyist*, the appellation was in use long before Grant's tenure.

The word is probably sourced from the lobbies in the House of Commons, where the British public could speak with members of the government, but the act of lobbying got its start as soon as early man figured out he needed something from someone else. In fact, its practitioners are often compared to those working in the world's oldest profession, though it's not clear who should feel more insulted. Because our politicians can't imagine a human activity they shouldn't control, their lobbyist friends, generally seen as snake-oil salesmen, seldom lack work.

The dysfunction of our national government does not result only from overregulation and unrestrained spending. A culture of corruption has long plagued our body politic. Moneyed interests on both ends of the political spectrum have employed legions of lobbyists, strategic advisors and public relations experts to control our national legislative and executive branches.

I should know, since I was one of them. For years I was able to get pretty much anything I wanted for my clients. In my case, scandal brought me down and ended my career. But casting me into prison didn't change how this game is played.

While most Americans feel the system will never be reformed, recent media focus on congressional perfidy has invig-

SARTOR RESARTUS: Lobbyist Jack Abramoff talks about his peculiar journey of repentance and renewal in New York last December.

orated citizen activists bent on ending the rule of the elites in our nation's capital. Shocking reports of congressmen amassing wealth through insider trading and receiving sweetheart home loans have driven the approval rating of the legislative branch below that of Casey Anthony. Even the most obtuse representative is starting to notice the rumblings of discontent in the hinterlands.

A call is rising in the land to stop members of Congress from enriching themselves through public service. It's possible that reform advocates on both sides of the political divide will come together this year to push legislation that will prevent public servants from cashing in on their service by stopping lobbyists and their clients from making federal political contributions, mandating term limits for Congress and forcing legislators to apply to themselves all laws they pass for the citizens they represent. These reforms would level the playing field in Washington and undermine the dominance of moneyed interests.

Furthermore, a national consensus is building that our federal government is too big and controls our lives in too many ways. Even President Obama, who engineered the greatest expansion of federal control in recent times, has sought authority from Congress to eliminate redundant governmental agencies. Still, those advocating an all-encompassing nanny state often don't see that every time the Washington behemoth expands, more lobbyists and special interests flood the corridors of power to seek privilege.

There is no way to know whether these nascent efforts at reform will one day result in real change. We can only hope for the best. In the meantime we have to deal with reality—and reality means thousands of federal employees working over- time to complicate our lives. So what do

people do when their interests are about to be adversely impacted by a feckless congressman or his staff?

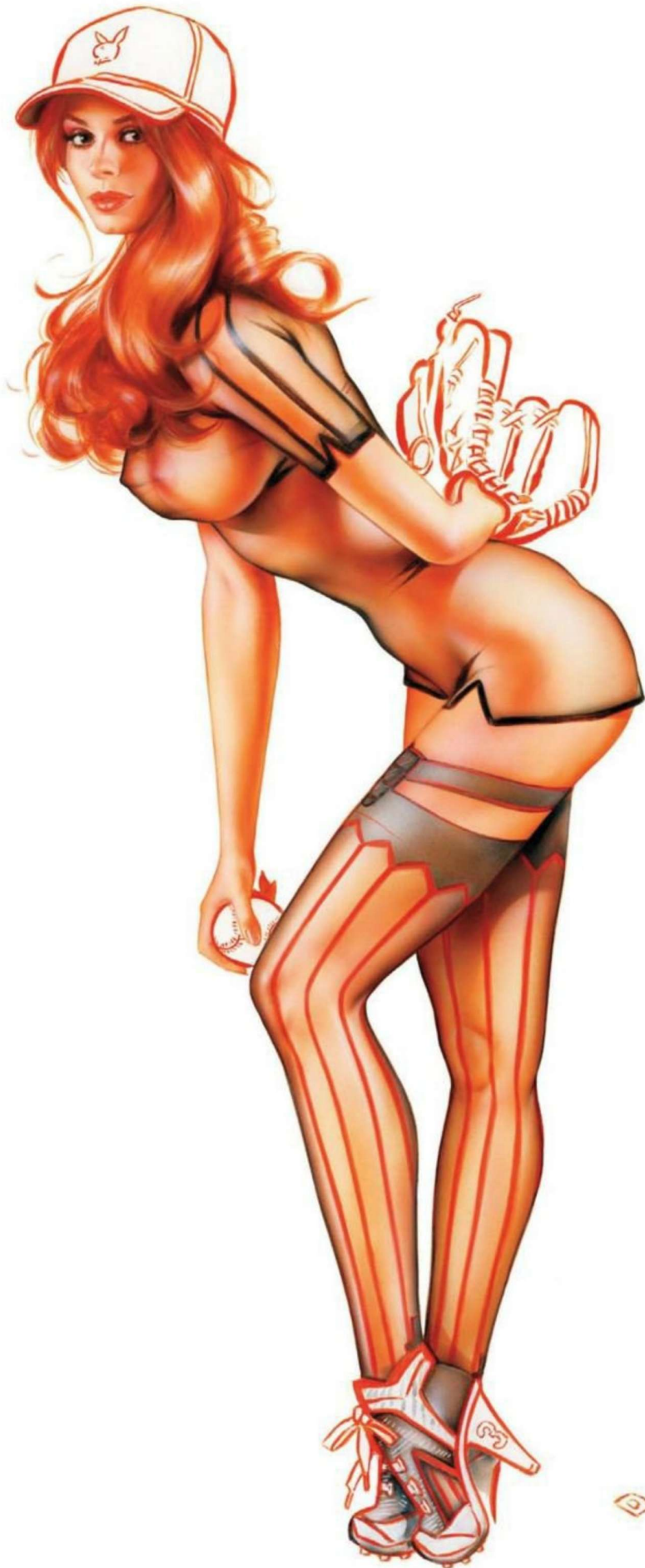
Let's say you own the Acme Picture Frame Company based in the Midwest. Your family has made picture frames for generations, and they're the nicest picture frames available. One day a septuagenarian senator from New England has his staff purchase a picture frame from a local emporium. They don't buy an Acme frame. They buy a cheap imitation, and when the venerable senator lifts it to hang a picture of his dog Fido, the frame comes apart, cutting his hand.

Being used to getting everything he wants in life, the senator throws a tantrum. When he is done fulminating, he knows what to do. A quick call to his legislative director is soon followed by the introduction of new legislation: the Omnibus Picture Frame Act of 2012. The act regulates every aspect of the frame-production business and mandates a process that requires Acme to close its factory and completely retool. In these recessionary times, that means your company goes under. What do you do?

One response might be to call your family and workers together, thank them for their years of dedicated service and ask the last one remaining to shut the doors and turn out the lights.

Another reaction might be to ignore these silly new laws and keep making quality frames, as you have for generations—and when the FBI kicks in your door and carts you away to the federal hoosegow, you'll have the satisfaction of telling the other inmates you didn't buckle to the Man.

Or you might realize your problem started in Washington and must be solved in Washington. You have as much luck getting your local congressman to focus on your problem as you do getting your teenager to clean (continued on page 122)



"He's a sucker for low and inside...!"



E T L H E C B T O R D I Y C

FROM ONE SIDE OF THE
LENS TO THE OTHER, THE
EROTIC ADVENTURES
OF MARLENA BIELINSKA

“Sexual women like to see themselves naked,” says photographer Marlena Bielinska. She should know. Born in Poland, Marlena (pictured right) came to New York on holiday in the late 1980s, signed with Elite models on a whim and never left. A veteran stunner on one side of the lens, she began experimenting on the other in 1993, photographing her fellow models from the Elite agency. Once she’d become a master with the camera, she turned her lens on her native Poland.



Here we take you into her world of exotic beauty. This page, from top left: Lingerie model Klaudia El Dursi “had a really expressive body,” says Marlena. “And she knew how to use it.” The pop star Doda is one of the biggest celebrities in Poland. In front of the camera, Doda is “absolutely uninhibited,” says the photographer. Monika Mrozowska appeared in Polish *PLAYBOY* in 2008. Opposite page: Polish *PMOY* 2005 Ela Korczowska smolders under the Egyptian sun.



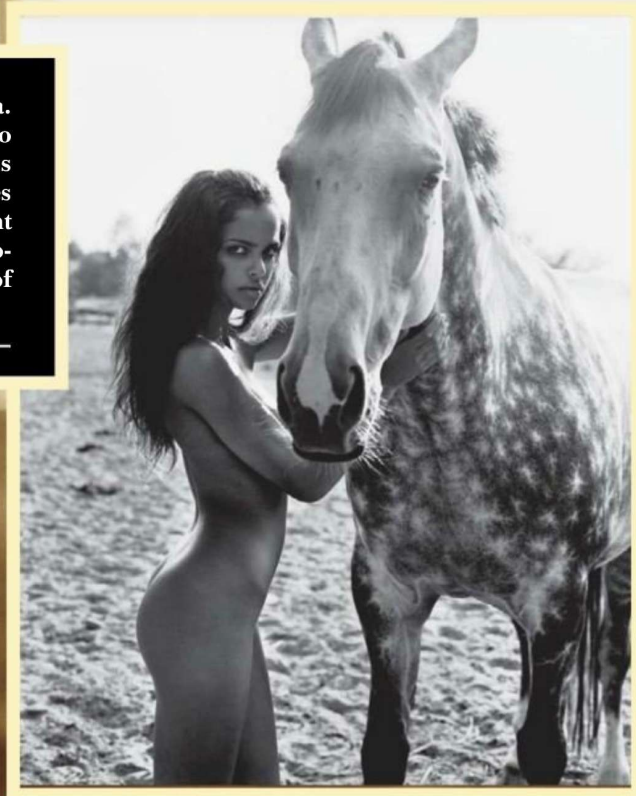


Clockwise from left: Marlena shot accomplished model Karolina Urban in Le Méridien Bristol, one of the oldest and most luxurious hotels in Warsaw. Sylwia Preiss has a different story. When she appeared in Polish *PLAYBOY* at the age of 18, she was expelled from school. *PLAYBOY* footed the bill for her private education. In this photograph, the rose in her lap symbolizes her blossoming into womanhood—the flower in full bloom. Here is Monika again (on previous spread with watermelon, on this spread with grapes, looking edible in both). “The sensuality of her body almost doesn’t go with her psychology,” says Marlena, “because she’s so modest, unassuming and extremely natural. I wanted to bring out her playful side. She’s a fabulous, natural woman, like Farrah Fawcett.” Sylwia again, in repose.

“I WANTED TO BRING OUT HER PLAYFUL SIDE. SHE’S A FABULOUS, NATURAL WOMAN, LIKE FARRAH FAWCETT.”



“Some models are actually better naked,” says Marlena. “But once you decide to show yourself nude, you have to have the will to do it.” Thankfully, Klaudia El Dursi was full-on with nothing on. At right, she seduces with her eyes before a bareback ride. Below, she’s captured at a moment of rapture. “I love the sensuality of this shot,” says the photographer. “She’s into her own moment and not aware of the camera. It almost feels like a cinema still.”







#BORSCHTBELTREDUX

Twitter offers the purest form of lulz today. And no one cracks wise in 140 characters or fewer like [@thesulk](#) (a.k.a. Family Guy writer Alec Sulkin), tweeting's king of comedy

We're in Los Angeles on a Saturday afternoon in a penthouse apartment 26 stories above the Miracle Mile. A man named Alec Sulkin sinks into an expansive couch. Clad in jeans and an aging New England Patriots hoodie, he alternates between fiddling with his iPhone and watching the Dodgers beat the Rockies on the TV in front of him. He has the floppy, basset-hound handsomeness of a *Rubber Soul*-era Beatle and lives

in what looks like a hotel suite that has been squatted by a lassitudinous college-age stoner. Modern Stormtrooper is the predominant interior design motif. The cannon fodder of the Galactic Empire looks down upon him from various posters and prints. Competing for pride of place are images of Peter, Brian and Stewie Griffin—understandably so since Sulkin is a staff writer and producer on the Fox animated series *Family Guy*.

BY JESSE PEARSON

 JUSTIN STEPHENS



The 39-year-old Sulkin peers at his iPhone with a momentary flash of purpose. He opens the Twitter app, taps out a few words, thinks briefly, taps a little bit more and hits the TWEET button. The following piece of pith goes up on his Twitter account: "Just once, I'd like to trigger an explosion while walking away from it." Instantly, his followers read it. There are 365,309 of them—an ever-shifting mass of strangers, friends, celebrities, stalkers and detractors. Within seconds, their responses begin to roll in. More than 340

Guy office—fellow writers whom Sulkin respects—who joined the site just to follow @thesulk, his *nom de tweets*. One of them, Gary Janetti (@GaryJanetti, 59,348 followers), is the boyfriend of stylist guy Brad Goreski from the Bravo series *It's a Brad, Brad World*. At some point, Goreski (@mrbadgoreski, 173,942 followers), who had something like 20,000 followers at the time, #FF'd Sulkin (that's Twitter shorthand for recommending another user to one's own followers). And presto, the next wave

ning cards." (61 characters.) Dorothy Parker: "If you want to know what God thinks of money, just look at the people he gave it to." (84 characters.) The same goes for the Borscht Belt comedians of yore, whose bam-bam-bam lines would have been RT'd like crazy. As Don Rickles (@DonRickles, 70,626 followers) recently told me via e-mail, "If Henny Youngman were alive today he would be having a field day with Twitter." Rickles is right. One of Youngman's more famous lines—"When I read about the evils of drinking, I gave up reading"—is a modest 58 characters. All the Borscht Belters kept it short and sweet. To wit, Jackie Mason: "Eighty percent of married men cheat in America. The rest cheat in Europe." (73 characters.) Or Joan Rivers: "A man can sleep around, no questions asked. But if a woman makes 19 or 20 mistakes, she's a tramp." (98 characters.)

"WHEN I READ ALEC'S TWITTER ACCOUNT, I THOUGHT, GOD, THIS COMPLETELY CHANGES THINGS," SAYS SETH MACFARLANE.

followers retweet the joke (or, in Twitter vernacular, RT it). Another 248 followers favorite it. "More mentions than minutes is a good rule of thumb," Sulkin says with a whiff of mantra.

Sulkin doesn't remember the day he joined Twitter. All he knows is that he signed up at some point in March 2009 only to let his account languish, as many people do. Mainly, he was unsure how to make Twitter a part of his life, as many people are. He does know, however, the exact moment he got serious about Twitter—a quick, unconsidered moment at home alone: "I was watching *The Net*, with Sandra Bullock, which is a movie I've seen many more times than it deserves. I was looking at her weird 1990s khakis, and I tweeted about that." The exact tweet, for historical purposes: "Sandra Bullock sports an unreasonably high-waisted pair of khakis in *The Net*. (I'm back!)"

Such was the inauspicious beginning of Sulkin's perfection of a new and strange sort of celebrity—Twitter stardom. The first wave of followers was composed of people around the *Family*

of followers for @thesulk. Over the next few months—through a combination of the right time (the dawn of Twitter), the right place (strategically perfect #FFs and RTs) and the right guy (Sulkin is deeply, naturally funny)—@thesulk found himself getting very, very popular. And that popularity has little to do with *Family Guy* or the fact that until recently he was having sexual relations with Sarah Silverman. Today, Sulkin is legitimately famous because of Twitter.

Writing a good tweet can be vexing—you try being memorably funny and cogent in 140 characters or fewer—but comedians seem adept at it. If nothing else, Twitter, a place where humor needs to be honed into a small, diamond-sharp shiv, reminds us that one simple joke can be vast in its relevance and depth. Look at some of the best aphoristic humorists and you'll see how much can be said in just a few words. S.J. Perelman: "To err is human; to forgive, supine." (36 characters.) Oscar Wilde: "One should always play fairly when one has the win-

Sulkin alternates between a few comedic approaches on Twitter. There's the blue material: "Not to be a dick but jizz! Jizz! Jizz! Drip. Piss." There are

AMONG AN ONSLAUGHT OF META-COMEDY, TWITTER IS A WILDLIFE PRESERVE FOR VAUDEVILLE-ERA ONE-LINERS.

lame puns: "Wrote a paper on big 90s boobs, but I was never totally satisfied with my Tiffani-Amber Thesis." (Annoyed friends have told Sulkin they are sure he suffers from Witzelsucht syndrome, a rare neurological disorder characterized by excessive, compulsive punning.) And then there are my favorites—the brutally self-deprecating put-downs: "Hiding weakness is one of my strengths." And "I disgust myself but I don't surprise myself."

"I have a lot of shitty months," he says, which is fine by me because the anxious, neurotic stuff is where Sulkin not only clambers to the top of the Twitter heap but also becomes a torchbearer of classic Jewish comedy. (Another of my all-time favorite Sulkin tweets: "Every time my Dad blows his nose, I kinda get why there was a holocaust.") Sulkin's wildly varied repertoire stems from his worry about being pigeonholed as a one-note comic. "Woody Allen (continued on page 131)



@THESULK'S GREATEST HITS

AS CHOSEN BY @SARAHKSILVERMAN



The crinkling snack wrapper made the heavy man ashamed until the crumb cake was in his mouth. Then, bliss. • I look tough when I walk around with headphones. The world doesn't need to know I'm listening to *Annie*. • I'm the song after the famous one in a musical. • The ocean is something that can kill you filled with things that can kill you. Let's bring the kids there! • Sunday makes some valid points about depression. • And then a saxophone solo came along and made everyone feel foolish for dancing. • Don't forget we're all slaves to what water wants to do. • Anne Frank should've just done that hold-still-in-the-pile-of-dolls E.T. thing when the Nazis came.



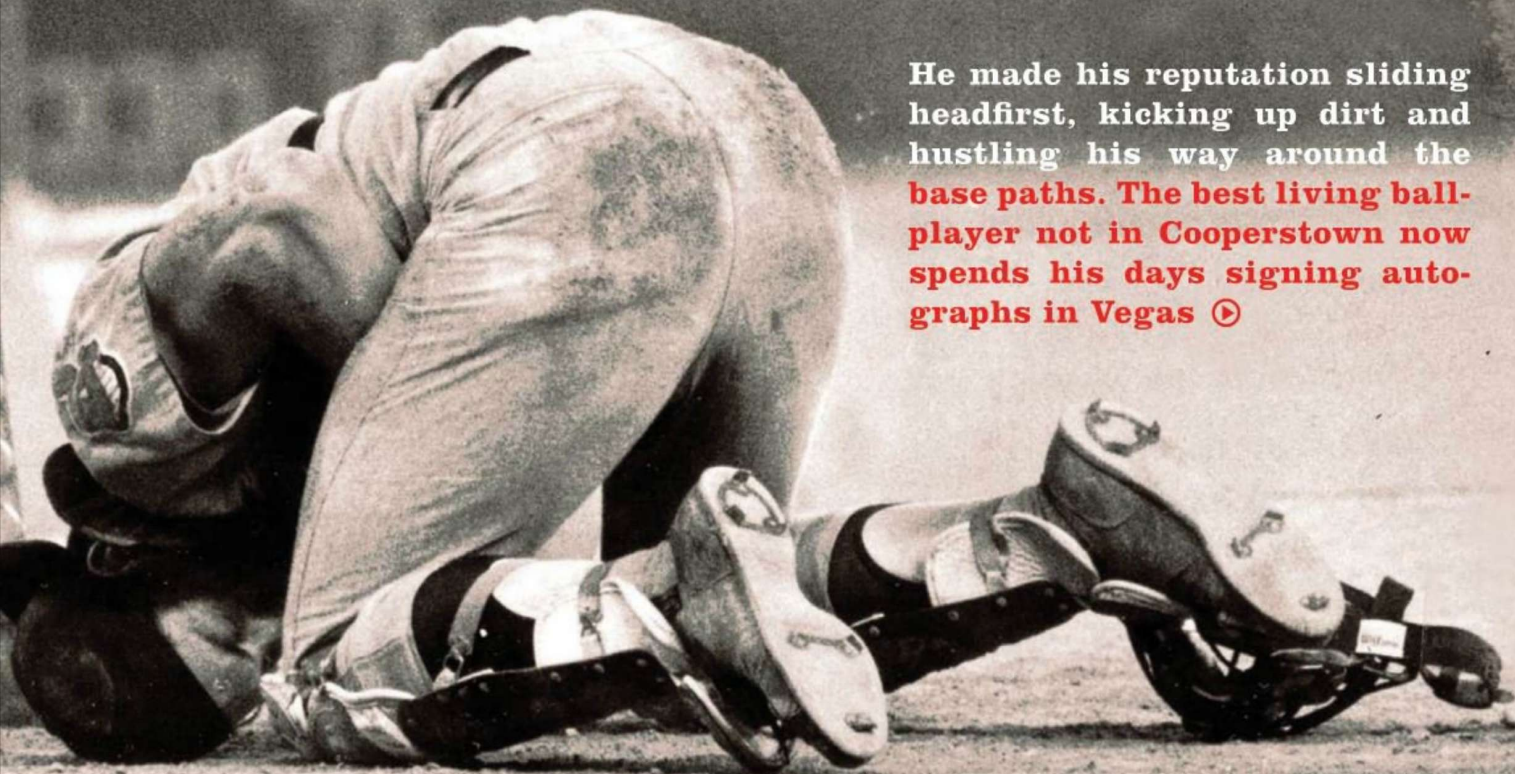
"You're not allowed to sit down in his presence unless it's on his face."



The
HIT
KING

By Michael Dolan

He made his reputation sliding headfirst, kicking up dirt and hustling his way around the base paths. **The best living ballplayer not in Cooperstown now spends his days signing autographs in Vegas** ▶



"It's going to pick up soon, watch," Pete Rose says, drumming his hands on a folding table. It's half past noon on Groundhog Day, and baseball's most prolific player not in the Hall of Fame is manning his post inside Antiquities, a memorabilia shop across from Victoria's Secret at the Forum Shops in Caesars Palace. Just about every day except Wednesdays, from noon to five P.M. Rose is on duty.



A night on the town for Pete Rose and Kiana Kim in August 2011.

Though his multiyear, seven-figure deal calls for him to sign autographs only 10 days a month, Rose worked 24 days in the previous month and plans to work 21 in February. Each day he punches the clock, ready to give the people what they pay for—an audience with the Hit King. The atmosphere is more late-night talk show than card show.

"Did you see the Pro Bowl this weekend?" Rose asks. "Are you kidding me? I mean, they weren't even trying. How could they do that to people? People paid good money for tickets to watch that game and you give them that? Let me tell you about all-star games."

Rose begins with one of the greatest hits of his illustrious career, a story he's told more than 4,256 times. He tells it each time with the same enthusiasm.

"People still talk about me running over Ray Fosse in the 1970 All-Star Game." In the game, which took place at Riverfront Stadium, Rose's home ballpark in Cincinnati, Rose bowled over American League catcher Fosse at home plate to score the winning run in the 12th inning of what was essentially an exhibition game. The night before, Rose had invited Fosse over to his house for dinner. Fosse has claimed he was never the same player after the incident, which has served over time to cement Rose—with his work ethic and determination—in baseball lore as the game's Charlie Hustle.

"Fosse played the next game. I missed the next three games after that collision. They want to say he was never the same? I think that's bullshit," he says as a young couple approaches the table with baseball and photo in hand. *(continued on page 134)*

PLAYBOY'S 2012 **Baseball** **PREVIEW**

Get ready for the 2012 season • By **TRACY RINGOLSBY**

READY OR NOT

During a 13-year playing career, Mike Matheny was often praised for his managerial potential. Still, when the St. Louis Cardinals selected him last fall to replace manager Tony La Russa, it was a surprise. Matheny had served the Cardinals as a catching instructor but had no managerial experience. The Cardinals are defending world champions. Can they repeat? The odds are stacked against them. In only 14 instances has a franchise won consecutive world championships, including six times by the Yankees. A National League team has won back-to-back championships only three times—Cincinnati in 1975 and 1976, the New York Giants in 1921 and 1922, and the Chicago Cubs in 1907 and 1908. Only twice has a world champ defended the title after a managerial change, and only four times has a rookie manager won a championship.

BUYING UNHAPPINESS

Prince Fielder and Albert Pujols were the big names on the free-agent market. Fielder signed a nine-year, \$214 million deal in Detroit after the Angels gave Pujols a 10-year, \$240 million contract. Other numbers worth considering: Pujols turned 32 in January; Fielder turns 28 on May 9. In the past 11 years teams have signed at least 28 players to contracts with guarantees of six or more years. Twenty-five of those deals went to position players. With youth, the odds are better of getting a return on the investment. Consider that 10 of the 28 deals were given to players who were 30 or older the first year of the deal. One went to Pujols and another to his former St. Louis teammate Matt Holliday, who has five years remaining on his seven-year deal. Of the other eight players over the age of 30 who were given deals, none met expectations.

LABORIOUS JOB

Over the years general managers were basically bulletproof. It was the field manager who took the hits for a team's failure. That is changing. The 2012 season opens with seven general-manager changes as well as seven managerial changes. It's only the 10th time in history that there haven't been more managerial changes than GM changes. All 10



In signing a nine-year, \$214 million contract with the Tigers, Prince Fielder altered the balance of power when he left the Brewers.

have occurred since 1972, the year that saw the first of eight work stoppages.

WILD WAYS

Is the best team the team with the best overall record or the team that wins the World Series? Rarely does the same team accomplish both. Since the advent of the wild card in 1995, only three times has the team with the best record won the championship—the Yankees in 1998 and 2009 and Boston in 2007. By contrast, wild-card teams have won five World Series.

The challenge for the wild card will be bigger starting this year when two wild cards in each league meet in a one-game showdown before advancing to the Division Series. That means the wild cards will use their best pitcher merely to get past the play-in game, which could alter their pitching depth for the next round.

THEY DID WHAT?

Colorado says it is building around youth and swears it didn't change its approach in the off-season, even though the team's opening-day lineup figures to go from an average age of 28 to 32. San Francisco's recent success has been built on pitching, which raises questions

about two recent moves. Last season the team dealt top pitching prospect Zack Wheeler to the Mets for slightly more than two months of outfielder Carlos Beltran. This off-season it sent lefty Jonathan Sanchez to Kansas City for outfielder Melky Cabrera. That left the Giants



Justin Verlander won the Cy Young, was named MVP and carried Detroit to the postseason.



Clockwise from lower left: Evan Longoria is our preseason choice for 2012 AL MVP. Starlin Castro, 22, is the best thing going for the woeful Cubs. Will Josh Hamilton's off-season problems affect his play in Arlington? Jose Reyes is \$102 million richer in Miami. Clayton Kershaw, 24, established himself in 2011 as the NL's best starting pitcher.



looking to Barry Zito as a fifth starter. He is the highest-paid player on the team, but in the first five years of his seven-year, \$126 million deal he was 43-61 with a 4.55 ERA. Then there are the Oakland A's. With moneyball having produced five consecutive nonwinning seasons, the A's shook things up. They took the strength of the team, the rotation, and stripped it down in a series of deals that netted only outfielder Seth Smith to help an offense that scored the third-fewest runs in the AL last year. When the wheeling and dealing was done, Brandon McCarthy was the only holdover from last year's rotation, and the major off-season addition was Bartolo Colon, who turns 39 in May.

TAMPA BAY

There is no Oscar-nominated movie that proclaims the greatness of the Tampa Bay Rays. But there is their track record, which speaks loudly for the approach taken by what is consistently among the lowest-budget teams in baseball. The Rays have made the postseason in three of the past four years, and they could be better than ever in 2012. Their pitching staff, which is the foundation for success, is virtually untouched from a year ago, and the lineup should be even better. The Rays avoided a mass exodus of free agents during the off-season. They return six of nine starters and are stronger at the other three. First baseman Carlos Pena returns as a free agent, replacing Casey Kotchman. Sam Fuld moves to the bench, opening up left field for Desmond Jennings, who hit 10 home runs in 247 at-bats last season. Jose Molina takes over behind the plate from Kelly Shoppach.

TOP 30

- (1) **Tampa Bay:** No fancy formula. Hard work, good scouting and success on a budget.
- (2) **Texas:** Two-time AL champ better with Darvish taking over for Wilson.
- (3) **Detroit:** Owner Mike Ilitch more intent on World Series than Stanley Cup.
- (4) **San Francisco:** Don't ignore a team with pitching depth in rotation and pen.
- (5) **L.A. Angels, Anaheim:** Will overspending on Pujols and Wilson pay off?
- (6) **New York Yankees:** Solid foundation, but the age factor is surfacing.
- (7) **Philadelphia:** Strong rotation, but bullpen questions start with fading Papelbon.
- (8) **Cincinnati:** Rebound year with help from addition of Mat Latos.
- (9) **Toronto:** Moneyball? Nope. Looking to follow the Ray way to title.
- (10) **Atlanta:** The overlooked omission? Retirement of scout Paul Snyder.
- (11) **Arizona:** Nobody builds a pitching staff quicker than Kevin Towers.
- (12) **Miami:** Gambling financial future of franchise on new stadium.
- (13) **Boston:** Changing of guard comes at a time when rebuilding is needed.
- (14) **Milwaukee:** Loss of Fielder compounded by scrutiny of Ryan Braun.

- (15) **St. Louis:** Tough without bat of Pujols and leadership of La Russa and Duncan.
- (16) **Colorado:** Will young arms evolve into solid rotation additions?
- (17) **Washington:** Simply spending money does not guarantee it is well spent.
- (18) **Minnesota:** Return of GM Terry Ryan underscores plan to refocus.
- (19) **Los Angeles Dodgers:** Hard to move forward while ownership was in limbo.
- (20) **Kansas City:** Farm offers long-term hope but not much short-term help.
- (21) **Oakland:** Tore apart one strength, starting rotation, in latest retooling.
- (22) **San Diego:** Counting on money from new TV deal to cure ills.
- (23) **Chicago White Sox:** Manager Robin Ventura has limited exposure since his playing days.
- (24) **Pittsburgh:** Facing completion of two decades without a winning record.
- (25) **Cleveland:** Onetime poster boy for building a franchise is stuck in a rut.
- (26) **Seattle:** False hope of two years ago gives way to long-term reality.
- (27) **Baltimore:** Players change, but failures and ownership remain the same.
- (28) **New York Mets:** Big market but small budget due to ownership ills.
- (29) **Chicago Cubs:** Quit looking for short-term answer to long-term failure.
- (30) **Houston:** There's no way to go but up for new owner Jim Crane's franchise.

AL MVP: Evan Longoria
AL CY YOUNG: David Price
AL MANAGER: Joe Maddon

NL MVP: Joey Votto
NL CY YOUNG: Roy Halladay
NL MANAGER: Bruce Bochy

AL EAST: TAMPA BAY
AL CENTRAL: DETROIT
AL WEST: TEXAS
AL WILD CARDS: ANAHEIM, NEW YORK
AL PENNANT: TAMPA BAY

NL EAST: PHILADELPHIA
NL CENTRAL: CINCINNATI
NL WEST: SAN FRANCISCO
NL WILD CARDS: ATLANTA, ARIZONA
NL PENNANT: CINCINNATI

WORLD SERIES CHAMPION: TAMPA BAY





Little is what it seems on
THE BOULEVARD OF DREAMS

HOLLYWOOD PATROL

The sun set over the Pacific, throwing burgundy and indigo light over Hollywood Boulevard, perhaps one of the few places on earth where the ubiquitous smog actually made the sunset more beautiful. And then, in just a few minutes, night had fallen on the boulevard and lights were turning on everywhere.

Even though the cops of Hollywood Station were cracking down on the costumed street characters who hustled tourists in front of Grauman's Chinese Theatre, the superheroes were out in force this Saturday night. Some of the tired older ones, like Superman, Batman and Darth Vader, were being replaced by newer superheroes, like Space Ghost, Mr. Fantastic and Iron Man, who was the object of intense jealousy.

What aroused the ire and envy of the other street characters posing for photos and accepting gratuities for their work was that Robert Downey Jr. had made Iron Man so sexy on film that his hustling doppelgänger on the boulevard was getting all the play and all the tips. There was a queue of tourists waiting for a shot with him while other superheroes, like Spider-Man, stood back and brooded. And then the web thrower decided he'd had enough of this shit.

Spider-Man stepped in front of the next pair of tourists and said, "Come on, folks, get your picture with a real superhero, not some pile of rusty nuts and bolts." *(continued on page 120)*

FICTION BY JOSEPH WAMBAUGH
ILLUSTRATION BY RYAN HESKA

20Q
BY
JASON
BUHRMESTER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY
MICHAEL
MULLER

CHRIS EVANS

**IT'S NOT EASY BEING A SUPERHERO.
JUST ASK CAPTAIN AMERICA ABOUT SELF-DOUBT,
BEING STARSTRUCK, DEALING WITH THE PRESS
AND WHAT HE'S LEARNED FROM THERAPY**

Q1

PLAYBOY: *The Avengers* is your second turn playing Captain America. After two movies in the red, white and blue costume, is there anybody on the Avengers team you would trade fashion statements with?

EVANS: God, yeah, absolutely. Pretty much anybody, though some days Robert Downey would have to get into the Iron Man suit, and that looks pretty difficult. But outside of that, the Thor costume looks pretty comfortable. The Hulk has a great deal. Whenever he Hulks out, he just wears those little green CGI jumpsuits. It looks comfy as hell.

Q2

PLAYBOY: You turned down the role of Captain America several times. Why didn't you want to do it?

EVANS: They wanted a six-picture deal, and the worry about a six-picture deal is that it can potentially be spread out over 10 years. So you're making a decision for the next 10 years of your life. Films typically work one at a time. If one movie explodes and your life changes, you're afforded the opportunity to take a break, if you need it, to get your head back on straight. The fear I had was that I was compromising this control. That's terrifying, man.

Q3

PLAYBOY: Is it true Robert Downey Jr. took you under his wing and helped you?

EVANS: When we started filming *The Avengers*, *Captain America* had not come out yet, and my big concern with *Captain America* was the press. I love doing one-on-ones. This feels like a conversation. This feels normal to me. But when you get on a stage, all of a sudden you feel like, man, there are 100 people just looking at you. It's a little bit of a strange feeling. Your heart starts pounding, and that's scary. Downey was good at just making me feel calm, saying, "Look, you're not alone in this," and helping my confidence.

Q4

PLAYBOY: This is the third time you've worked with Scarlett Johansson. Is it possible to be around her and not lust after her the entire time?

EVANS: She is a beautiful lady. She really got blessed. I love that girl, man. She's like my sister. I've known her for 10 years. She's just one of the smartest people I know. It's great when someone with a razor-sharp intellect wants to have fun. A lot of my buddies



who like to have fun are a little lowbrow, and that's fun. It's enjoyable, but you can laugh at only so many farts.

Q5

PLAYBOY: Aside from a long relationship with Jessica Biel, you always seem to be single. Are you picky, or are you just enjoying yourself?

EVANS: I guess it's a perfect combination of things. I'm incredibly picky, but that doesn't mean I look for perfection. I like strange things. I wish you could see some of the girls I have genuinely had crushes on in my life. They're not the girls you would assume. My friends cannot figure out the girls that, for some reason, I fall for. It's a unique blend of traits, and on top of that, I'm really enjoying myself right now. I like being able to do what I want to do. If I want to sleep until three today, I'm gonna sleep until three. If I want to go to Vegas this weekend, guess what—I'm going to Vegas. That's a tough thing to walk away from, and so it has to be the right person. The pickiness makes that an uphill battle.

Q6

PLAYBOY: So what kind of women do you like?

EVANS: I like girls who are self-deprecating. I like girls who make fun of themselves. If you can't poke fun at yourself, what are you? I love making fun of myself, so I need a girl who can do that and mean it. And I like generosity. I like compassionate people. I'm not looking for some businesswoman who's out there making millions and just here to take the world by storm. I just want someone with a good soul. That's about it. The rest I'm really flexible on. I like a good ass, though. I will say that. It's **PLAYBOY**, right? I can say that? I like a big ass.

Q7

PLAYBOY: Taking all of that into consideration, admit to at least one celebrity crush.

EVANS: I used to be in love with Sandra Bullock when I was growing up. Sandy B. was my girl. I remember seeing *Speed* when I was in seventh grade and just thinking, That's her. I can't say I know her, but from what I've heard, she's fantastic.

Q8

PLAYBOY: You grew up outside Boston. Your father is a dentist. How's your dental hygiene?

EVANS: People think, Oh, he's making you floss and brush your teeth. No, it wasn't like that; on the contrary, actually. I could complain freely. You could openly tell him when something hurt.

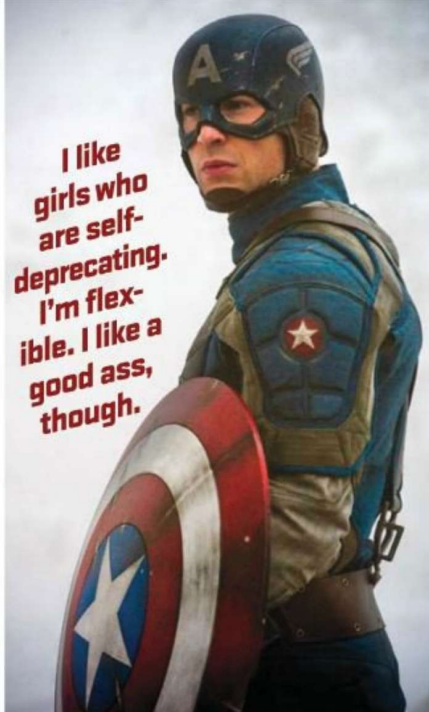
Q9

PLAYBOY: Your mother has been known to defend you on the internet when she sees you being slighted. Should Captain America have his mom fighting his battles?

EVANS: Yeah, she's one of those moms. She gets a little up in arms. The internet is a big place where a lot of people can voice their opinions, and my mother chooses to pick fights with random people from all over the world who don't have the nicest things to say about me.

Q10

PLAYBOY: You were involved in a local theater growing up, a program your mother still runs. Boston doesn't sound like the friendliest



place for a young boy who loves theater. How rough was it?

EVANS: I played sports as well, which helped. For the most part, when they wanted to give me a hard time, they'd come to my shows and heckle and razz. It wasn't as bad as it could have been, I'm sure.

Q11

PLAYBOY: Your brother is gay. Do you support gay marriage?

EVANS: Are you kidding me? It's insane that civil rights are being denied people in this day and age. It's embarrassing, and it's heart-breaking. It goes without saying that I'm completely in support of gay marriage. In 10 years we'll be ashamed that this was an issue.

Q12

PLAYBOY: You were a senior in high school when you lost your virginity. That seems kind of late for a good-looking guy.

EVANS: Look at pictures of me growing up. It wasn't always the way it is now. It was a bumpy road for me. But I think about that. There were kids doing a *lot* more than I was in high school. I just wasn't there, I guess. I lost my virginity senior year. It happened one time and only one time.

Q13

PLAYBOY: Before your senior year of high



EVANS WITH CO-STAR AND MENTOR ROBERT DOWNEY JR.

school, you moved to New York City by yourself to pursue acting. What was your plan?

EVANS: Prior to that summer I wrote letters to maybe six or seven different casting offices and said, "Look, I'm 16. I'm trying to learn. I'll work for free." A couple of places called back, and I got an internship. It was the casting office for *Spin City* back when Michael J. Fox was on. I spent the whole summer answering phones, setting up actors on auditions, and by the end of the summer I was pretty friendly with two or three agents I had talked with on the phone. I said, "Listen, I'm an actor. I know I'm just Chris from Bonnie's office to you, but I'm an actor. Can you give me five minutes to come down and read for you?" They said, "Fine." A couple of them were like, "Yeah, let's work together. Let's do this." But I had to go back to Boston to finish my senior year, so they said, "Hurry back. Get back for pilot season," which starts, roughly, in January. So I doubled in a couple of classes and graduated in January of my senior year. I went back to New York, got lucky and got a pilot.

Q14

PLAYBOY: How did the other kids react when you came back for your senior year after living in New York all summer?

EVANS: It was the greatest. Really, 1999 was such a good year. I graduated from high school, I went to New York, I got a pilot, we shot the pilot for *Opposite Sex*, the pilot got picked up. I came back home to Boston in March or April, done with school and waiting to go to L.A. in August. I would just stroll into school around noon and see who I could get to cut with me. It was great. I don't think it will ever get better than that.

Q15

PLAYBOY: Are you sure? Things sound pretty damn good right now.

EVANS: It's different, you know? Come on, I was making some horrible show on Fox, making not the best money in the world, but I was so happy, *so* happy. Things are different now, and I'm very grateful and very blessed. But man, that year was just—I don't know. There was something great about it. It was all brand-new. There were no consequences. There was nothing to worry about. You were free to make mistakes. It's all optimism. You're not jaded.

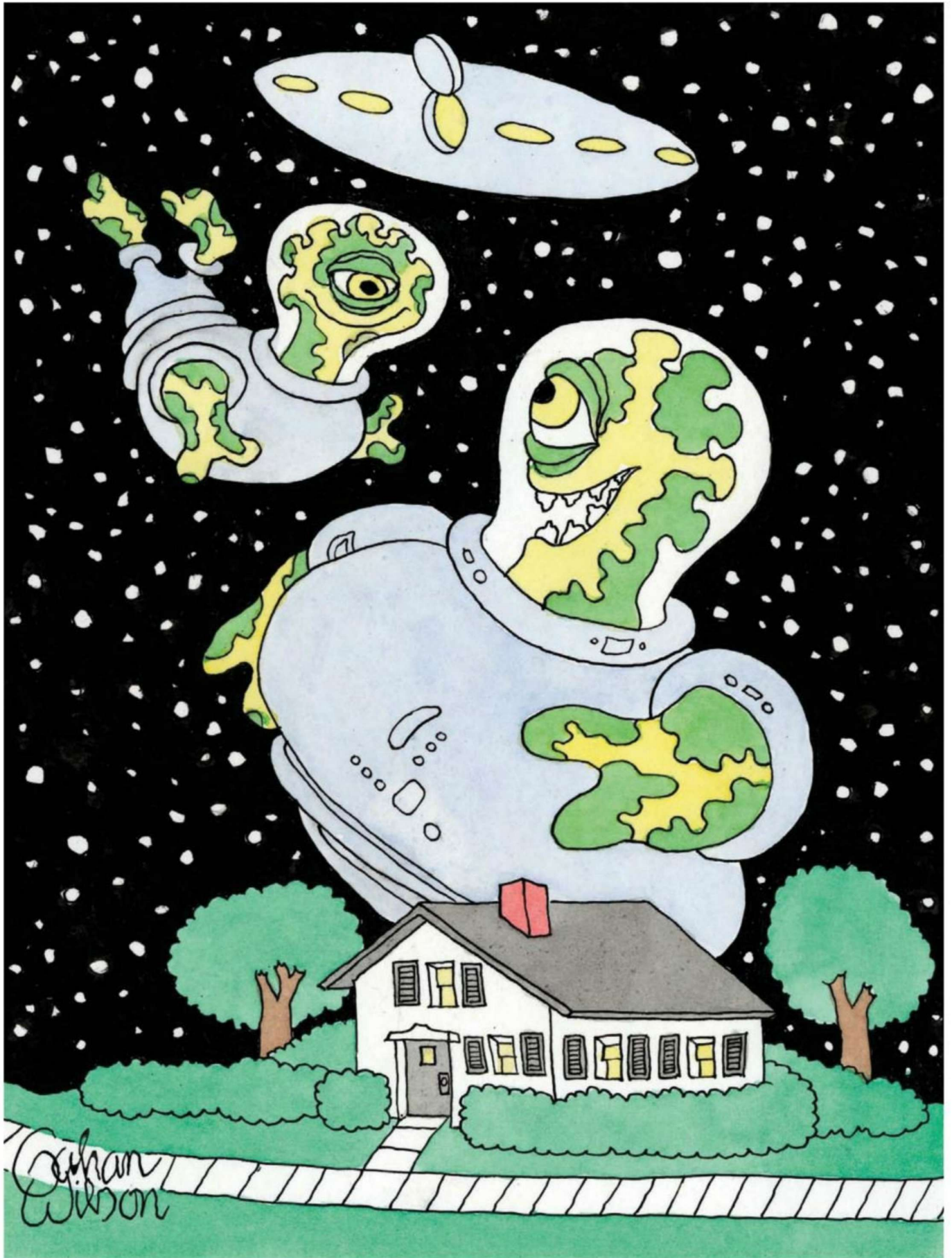
Q16

PLAYBOY: *Not Another Teen Movie* was your first big starring role. What was the first thing you spent money on?

EVANS: It's kind of embarrassing. I think it was a Sean John velour jumpsuit, which tells you a little bit about me in 2000. What an idiot. I think if you actually watch the *Not Another Teen Movie* DVD, we do cast interviews and I'm in a velour Sean John jumpsuit. If I showed up in that today, my publicist would say, "No, absolutely not." I think I took my two roommates and got them jumpsuits as well. It was so ridiculous.

Q17

PLAYBOY: Your big break came playing Johnny Storm in *Fantastic Four*. How bad did you want that part? *[concluded on page 122]*



"Here's another box full of yummy things to eat!"



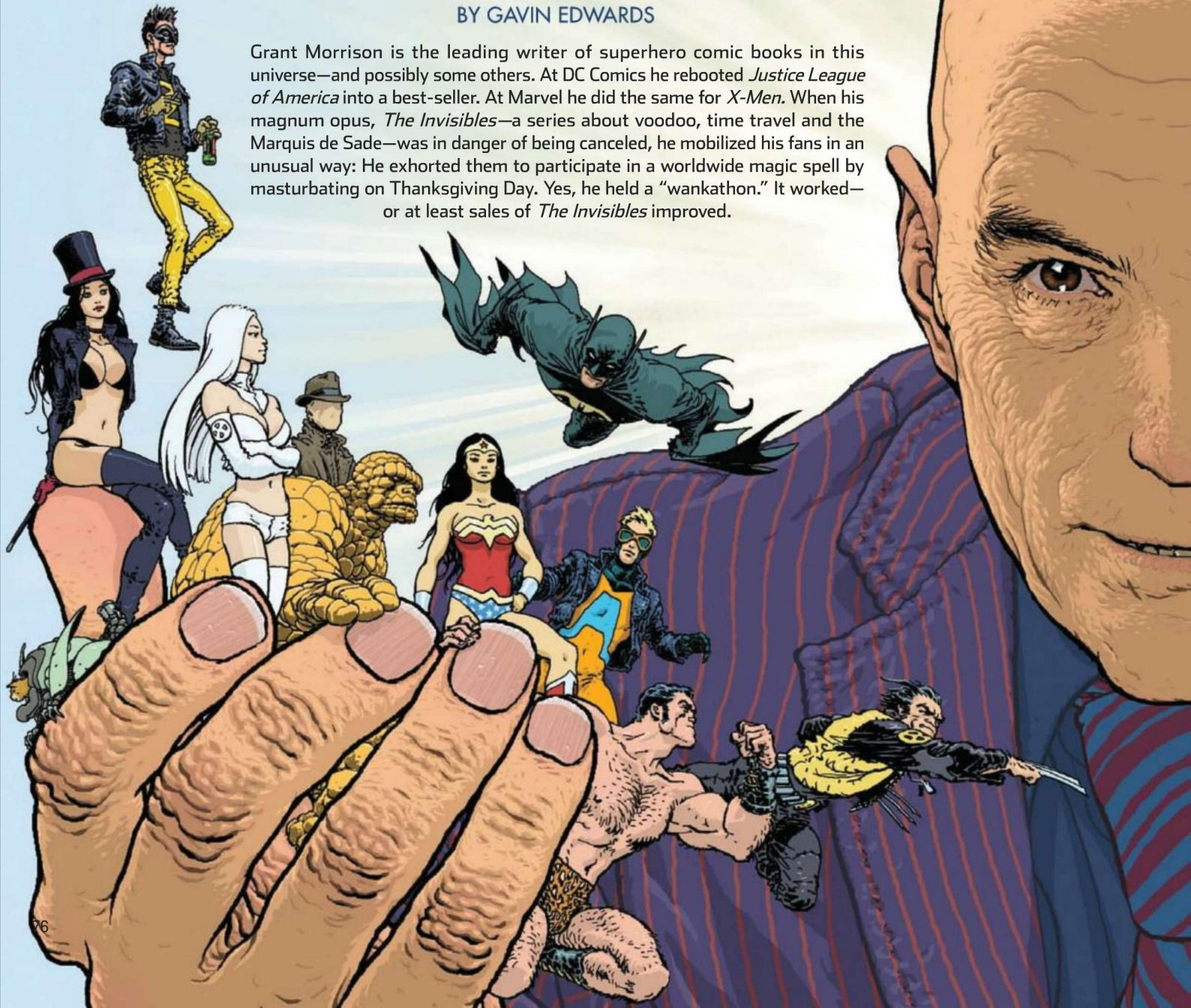
THE SUPER PSYCHE



A GUIDED TOUR OF THE SUPERHUMAN MIND WITH GRANT MORRISON,
THE MOST IMPORTANT COMIC BOOK WRITER WORKING TODAY

BY GAVIN EDWARDS

Grant Morrison is the leading writer of superhero comic books in this universe—and possibly some others. At DC Comics he rebooted *Justice League of America* into a best-seller. At Marvel he did the same for *X-Men*. When his magnum opus, *The Invisibles*—a series about voodoo, time travel and the Marquis de Sade—was in danger of being canceled, he mobilized his fans in an unusual way: He exhorted them to participate in a worldwide magic spell by masturbating on Thanksgiving Day. Yes, he held a “wankathon.” It worked—or at least sales of *The Invisibles* improved.





SUPERMAN

FIRST APPEARANCE:

Action Comics #1 (DC Comics, 1938).

CREATED BY: Jerry Siegel, art by Joe Shuster. **GRANT MORRISON VERSION:** His definitive take was in the 12 issues of *All-Star Superman* (2006–2008).

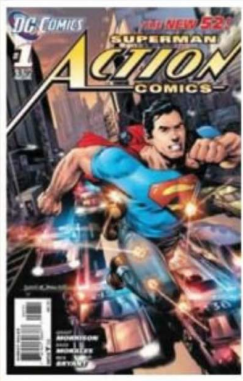
If Morrison's personal history includes magic, wild experiments with consciousness-tweaking substances and reported alien visitations, why does he keep writing about square-jawed guys with capes? "We're running out of visions of the future except dystopias," Morrison says. "The superhero is Western culture's last-gasp attempt to say there's a future for us." Sitting in his drafty house overlooking Loch Long, an hour outside his hometown of Glasgow, the 52-year-old writer smiles. "The creators of superheroes were all freaks," he says. "People forget that—they were all outcasts, on the margins of society." And then, inevitably, he shifts from the third person to the first. "We're people who don't fit into normal society."

All the more reason comic book writers have offered a fascinating perspective on mainstream society. We asked Morrison to dig deep into his shaved head, where heroes, antiheroes, magic and punk rock make a frothy metaphysical milkshake. Who are these—to use the title of Morrison's most recent book—supergods? And why have they captured the imagination of the masses, some of them for generations? Herewith, an exploration deep into the psyche of the superhuman.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY FRANK QUITELY

MORRISON: "When Superman was created during the Great Depression, he was the champion of the oppressed and fought on the side of the working man. He was lawless. If you were a wife beater, he'd throw you out the window. If you were a corrupt congressman, he'd swing you from the rooftops until you confessed. I think it appealed to people who were losing their jobs to machines: Suddenly you had Superman wrecking machines and punching robots. But his popularity has declined—nobody wants to be the son of a farmer now. American writers often say they find it difficult to write Superman. They say he's too powerful; you can't give him problems. But Superman is a metaphor. For me,





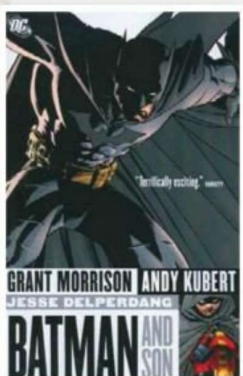
Superman has the same problems we do, but on a Paul Bunyan scale. If Superman walks the dog, he walks it around the asteroid belt because it can fly in space. When Superman's relatives visit, they come from the 31st century and bring some hellish monster conqueror from the future. But it's still a story about your relatives visiting."

BATMAN

FIRST APPEARANCE:

Detective Comics #27 (DC Comics, 1939). **CREATED BY:** Bill Finger, art by Bob Kane (disputed). **GRANT MORRISON VERSION:** He's been writing overlapping Batman series for DC since 2006.

MORRISON: "I got interested in the class element of Batman: He's a rich man who beats up poor people. It's quite a bizarre mission to go out at night dressed as a bat and punch the hell out of junkies. And then he goes home and lives in this mansion. There's an aspirational quality to him—he's an outlaw and he can buy anything. He's very plutonian in the sense that he's wealthy and also in the sense that he's sexually deviant. Gayness is built into Batman. I'm not using gay in the pejorative sense, but Batman is very, very gay. There's just no denying it. Obviously as a fictional character he's intended to be heterosexual, but the basis of the whole concept is utterly gay. I think that's why people like it. All these



women fancy him and they all wear fetish clothes and jump around rooftops to get to him. He doesn't care—he's more interested in hanging out with the old guy and the kid."

WONDER WOMAN

FIRST APPEARANCE:

All Star Comics #8 (DC Comics, 1941).

CREATED BY: William Moulton

Marston, art by Harry G. Peter. **GRANT**

MORRISON VERSION: He's currently working on a stand-alone Wonder Woman graphic novel for DC.

MORRISON: "William Moulton Marston, the guy who created Wonder Woman, was a noted psychiatrist. He's



the guy who invented the polygraph, the lie detector. He was one of those bohemian free-love guys; he and his wife, Elizabeth, shared a lover, Olive, who was the physical model for Wonder Woman. What he and Elizabeth did was to consider an Amazonian society of women that had been cut off from men for 3,000 years. That developed along the lines of Marston's most fevered fantasies into a lesbian utopia. Although they're supposedly a peace-loving culture, all these supergirls' pursuits seem to revolve around fighting one another, and this mad, ritualistic stuff where girls dress as stags and get chased and tied up and eaten symbolically on a banquet table. The whole thing was lush with bondage and slavery. Wonder Woman was constantly being tied up or



shackled—and it was hugely successful. When Marston died in 1947, they got rid of the pervy elements, and instantly sales plummeted. Wonder Woman should be the most sexually attractive, intelligent, potent woman you can imagine. Instead she became this weird cross between the Virgin Mary and Mary Tyler Moore that didn't even appeal to girls."

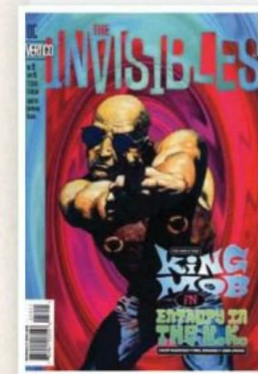
KING MOB

FIRST APPEARANCE:

The Invisibles #1 (Vertigo, 1994).

CREATED BY: Grant Morrison, art by Steve Yeowell. *The Invisibles* ran on and off from 1994 to 2000.

MORRISON: "When I was writing *The Invisibles*, I thought, If I'm going to be sitting in the house writing all day, then on weekends I want to look like this cool comic character so more girls will like me. I shaved my head and dressed more like King Mob. It was an art thing, and it was also an occult thing. I could make things happen by putting King Mob through



certain things in the comic, like a voodoo doll. If he met a certain girl, three weeks later she would turn up in my life. It became hard to tell his life and my life apart. It got out of control—I ended up in the hospital because of it. In the comic, King Mob's cheek is eaten away by something; within three months, I'd gotten an infection that ate right through my cheek. I was conjuring these scorpion gods, and I got stung by them. That's not to say scorpion gods are real, but you can make things happen by believing in them hard enough."

THE JOKER

FIRST APPEARANCE:

Batman #1 (DC Comics, 1940).

CREATED BY: Bill Finger, art

by Bob Kane, concept possibly

provided by Jerry Robinson.

GRANT MORRISON VERSION:

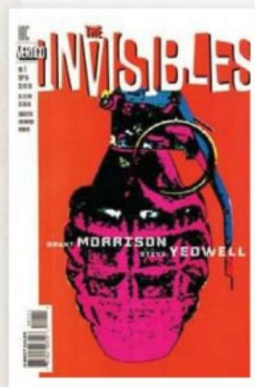
Many appearances in various overlapping Batman series for DC (since 2006).

MORRISON: "I identify with the Joker to a certain extent—at least

the way I write him, which is as this cosmic fool. He's Batman's perfect opposite, and because of that he's as sexy as Batman, if not more so. When the Joker was introduced in 1940, he was a scowling homicidal maniac. Then they took out the violence and death, and he became the chuckling clown, driving around in his Joker-mobile. Then he was the giggling mental-patient version from the TV show: Cesar Romero with his mustache covered in greasepaint. Suddenly in the 1970s he was killing his henchmen again. And in the 1980s he was a gender-bending transvestite. I said, Okay, we've had all these varied versions of the Joker. Let's say it's the same person who just changes his head every day. I rationalized that by saying he's supersane, the first man of the 21st century who's dealing with this overload of information by changing his entire personality. I quite like him, because he's a pop star—he's like Bowie."

THE SUPERCONTEXT
FIRST APPEARANCE: *The Invisibles* #1 (Vertigo, 1994). **CREATED BY:** Grant Morrison.

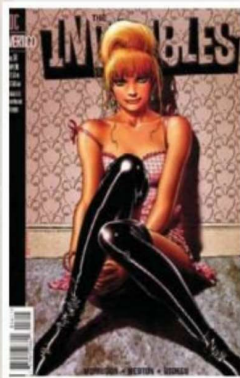
MORRISON: "In Kathmandu there's this temple with 365 steps, one for each day of the year, and apparently if you can go up in a single breath, you're guaranteed enlightenment. It's easy to do if you're young and fit. I just took a deep breath and ran up. Three days later I was visited by five-dimensional aliens. (I'd



eaten a bit of hash, but honestly, it wasn't a drug trip. I ate a lot of things afterward to see if I could make it happen again, and I never could.) I was in this azure blue space, and there were grid lines of silver flashing through it, but the beings looked like chrome blobs. And they were just moving about, plugging into these grids and exchanging information. I saw the entire universe from beginning to end: You had Shakespeare over here and the dinosaurs over here. Time became space, and I was bigger than both of them. Later I put that in *The Invisibles* and called it the Supercontext."

LORD FANNY
FIRST APPEARANCE: *The Invisibles* #2 (Vertigo, 1994). **CREATED BY:** Grant Morrison, art by Steve Yeowell.

MORRISON: "When I was doing *The Invisibles*, I was spending all my money from *Arkham Asylum* [Morrison's hit graphic novel about Batman's enemies] doing all the things I'd never done as a Presbyterian boy. You freak out, take tons of drugs. It was about the systematic derangement of the senses, as Rimbaud said. So I came up with the



wander down streets in this ridiculous state. I didn't look like a girl, but I looked like a good tranny, so it was okay. I did it for four or five years before I got too old for it. I still have some of the clothes, but they mostly got destroyed doing insane rituals and climbing hills in high heels and stuff."

MAGNETO
FIRST APPEARANCE: *X-Men* #1 (Marvel, 1963). **CREATED BY:** Stan Lee, art by Jack Kirby. **GRANT MORRISON VERSION:** Morrison's run on *X-Men* lasted from 2001 to 2004.

MORRISON: "Magneto's an old terrorist bastard. I got into trouble—the X-Men fans hated me because I made him into a stupid old drug-addicted idiot. He



notion of an alter ego who was a dodgy, freaky girl [Lord Fanny, pictured]. I can't smoke tobacco—it hurts—but she could. I created this persona, and I'd contact demons and

wander down streets in this ridiculous state. I didn't look like a girl, but I looked like a good tranny, so it was okay. I did it for four or five years before I got too old for it. I still have some of the clothes, but they mostly got destroyed doing insane rituals and climbing hills in high heels and stuff." I had started out as this sneering, grim terrorist character, so I thought, Well, that's who he really is. [Writer] Chris Claremont had done a lot of good work over the years

to redeem the character: He made him a survivor of the death camps and this noble antihero. And I went in and shat on all of it. It was right after 9/11, and I said there's nothing fucking noble about this at all."

JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA
FIRST APPEARANCE: *The Brave and the Bold* #28 (DC Comics, 1960). **CREATED BY:** Gardner Fox, art by Mike Sekowsky. **GRANT MORRISON VERSION:** Morrison revived the JLA for DC from 1997 to 2000.

MORRISON: "The Justice League is like the pantheon of Greek gods. Hermes made more sense to me as the Flash. Wonder Woman means so much more to me than Hera or Aphrodite. I could make a much quicker connection with the archetype of Zeus in the form of Superman. Aquaman is Poseidon, of course. Batman is Hades, the god of the underworld. People like Aleister Crowley have written down rituals for summoning Hermes, because if you want to contact the spirit



of magic, you've got to talk to Hermes. But doing magic, I would use the characters from the comics because they meant more to me. Because I do magic all the time, it's part of my normal life. I know for most people it's outlandish and impossible. So I tell people that if you are truly skeptical, do the rituals and prove to yourself that it doesn't work. And you'll get the shock of your life."



ON THE ROAD

Get lost
in America
with
Miss May

The most cosmopolitan flower child you'll ever meet, Nikki Leigh is always ready to grab her bags and hit the open road. "I'm a gypsy of sorts," says our 23-year-old Miss May. "Instead of staying cooped up at home, I would rather be traveling and taking in everything a new place has to offer." As comfortable sleeping in a tent as in a luxe hotel suite, the SoCal native is a veteran world traveler. "Thanks to my mom, who has been a flight attendant for more than 30 years, I've been everywhere from Beijing to Tokyo to Paris," she explains. She also spent one semester abroad soaking up the culture and sights of Rome and Florence. "The paintings and sculptures in Italy are stunning," says Nikki, a sociology major who will graduate with honors this month from California State University. "They took my breath away." So too does her status as Miss May. "It's something I never expected but always wanted—to be a sex symbol with brains. More than anything, though, I want to make the world smile. I love walking up to girls on the street and saying, 'You look so beautiful today!' It's unbelievable how much such random acts of kindness mean to people. So if being Miss May gives me another way to spread happiness, that's awesome. I'm all set to travel and do whatever I can to be an incredible ambassador for PLAYBOY. In fact, I can't wait!"



PHOTOGRAPHY BY
STEPHEN WAYDA







MISS MAY

PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH

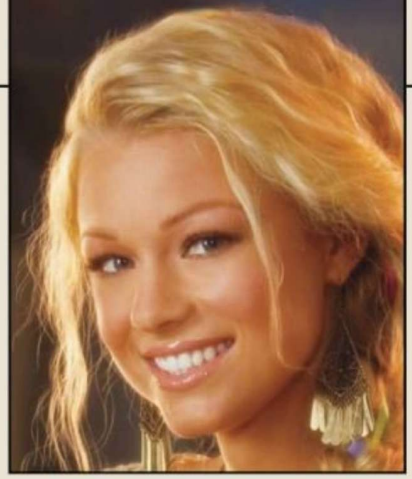






Sikkiehigh

PLAYMATE DATA SHEET



NAME: Nikki Leigh

BUST: 34c WAIST: 26" HIPS: 32"

HEIGHT: 5'3" WEIGHT: 112

BIRTH DATE: 9/13/88 BIRTHPLACE: Cypress, CA

AMBITIONS: To attack all the opportunities coming my way with fearlessness, fun and Class. ♡

TURN-ONS: A thoughtful goofball with a contagious smile. OH... and a tan muscular back NEVER hurts!!!

TURNOFFS: (1) A guy who can dish it but not take it. (I'm fun but FEISTY!!) (2) Men who think they are God's gift to women. Take a hike, dudes - I'm NOT impressed.

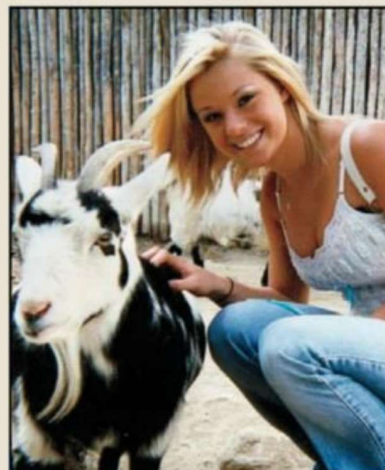
MY SECRET TALENT: EATING! No lie. Some girls say they can outdrink you, but I'll outeat you! Steaks, sushi, pasta, Cheesecake... you name it, I'll eat it!

MY ADDICTION: Laughter-let's cuddle up and watch a triple feature of Bridesmaids, The Hangover and Dumb and Dumber.

MY WINGMAN: Kodi, my Pomeranian stud who is about to travel the Playboy world with me this year. Buckle up, buddy!



Working a bikini top.



At a petting zoo.



At the NBA store in NYC.





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

PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

A man was shocked to see his beautiful divorced neighbor knocking on his door one Friday evening.

"I'm so horny that I can't stand it," she said. "I want to go out, get drunk and get laid. Are you free tonight?"

"Yes!" he replied enthusiastically.

"Wonderful," she said. "Would you watch my kids?"

An angry wife met her husband at the door. He had alcohol on his breath and lipstick on his collar. "I assume," she said, "there's a good reason for you to come waltzing in here at six o'clock in the morning?"

"There is," he replied. "Breakfast."



How do guys at a gay bar settle disputes?
They take it outside and exchange blows.

A father sent his beautiful but naive daughter to intern with his political party during the election. Before polling she saw two handsome young delegates striding toward her group at a rapid pace.

"Why are they in such a rush?" she asked another female intern.

"They're going to caucus," the intern answered.

"Oh my," the blonde said. "All of us?"

Why don't men have midlife crises?
They stay stuck in adolescence.

The manager of a restaurant approached his headwaiter and asked, "Have you been fooling around with the new waitress?"

"I swear I haven't," the waiter replied.

"Good," the manager said. "Then you can fire her."

A woman was sipping a glass of wine while sitting on the patio with her husband. "I love you so much," she said, "I don't know how I could ever live without you."

"Is that you or the wine talking?" her husband asked.

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

Why do sharks circle before they attack?

So they can scare the shit out of you before they eat you.

Since the beginning of time women have been saying that giving birth is more painful than a guy getting kicked in the testicles. Here is proof that they are wrong: A year or so after giving birth, a woman will often say, "It would be nice to have another kid." But you'll never hear a man say, "I could go for another kick in the nuts."

What do you give the woman who has everything?

Antibiotics.

A wife was berating her husband. "You know, our neighbor gives his wife flowers all the time and takes her to nice places," she said. "Can't you do something like that?"

"Honey, I've wanted to for years," he answered, "but I was afraid you and he would be upset if I showered her with gifts and took her on a vacation."



A man wanted to ask his waitress for a date, but every time he was able to catch her eye she scurried away. Finally, he followed her into the kitchen and blurted out his invitation.

To his amazement, she said yes. "Then why have you been avoiding me?" he asked.

She replied, "I thought you wanted more coffee."

After extensive testing, a doctor told his patient he had some bad news.

"Unfortunately you've got Alzheimer's and cancer," the doctor said.

To which the man replied, "Well, thank God I don't have Alzheimer's!"

Send your jokes to Party Jokes Editor, PLAYBOY, 335 North Maple Drive, Beverly Hills, California 90210, or by e-mail through our website at jokes.playboy.com. PLAYBOY will pay \$100 to the contributors whose submissions are selected.

Favorite Positions

IT MUST BE GREAT TO TRAVEL SO MUCH. DO SEXUAL POSITIONS DIFFER ACCORDING TO COUNTRY, DO YOU THINK?

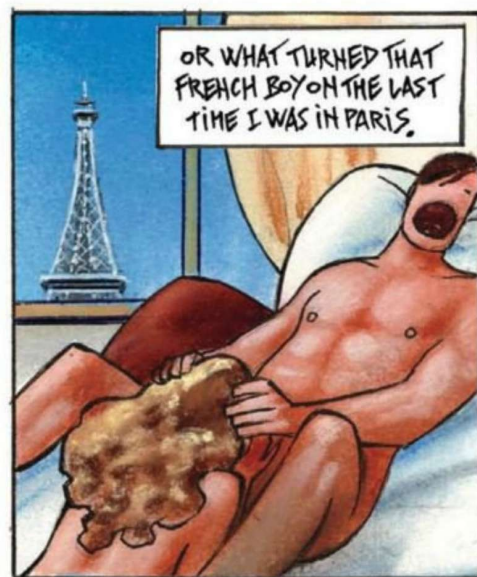


WELL ...

I MET A HAWAIIAN LAST YEAR AND I STILL REMEMBER WHAT HE LIKED



OR WHAT TURNED THAT FRENCH BOY ON THE LAST TIME I WAS IN PARIS.



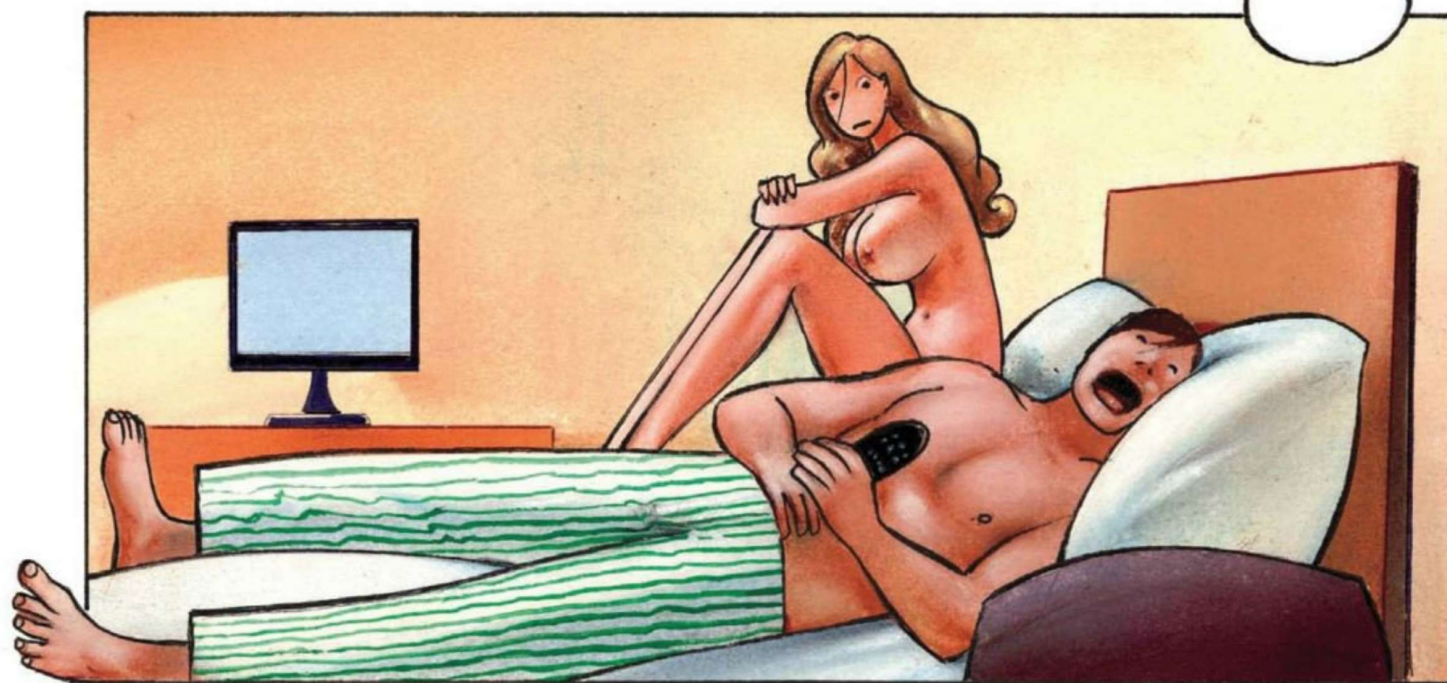
MY GREEK DATE LOVED TO DO IT FROM BEHIND.



AND WHAT DO YOU THINK AN AMERICAN'S FAVORITE POSITION IS?



AN AMERICAN'S ?



JUAN AVAREZ • JORGE G



PLAYBOY PAD

ART HOUSE

Inside L.A.'s contemporary Warholian Factory, genius and hedonism go hand in hand



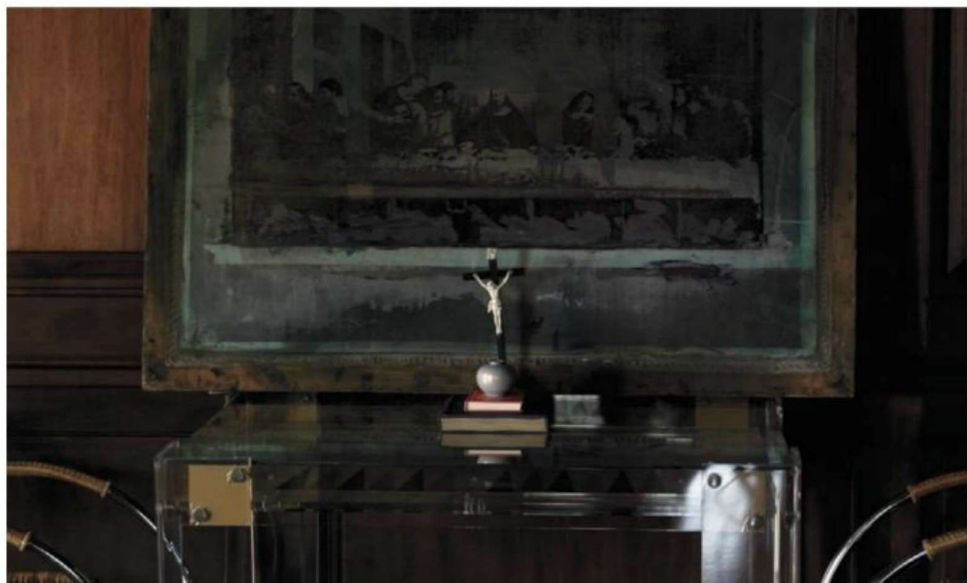
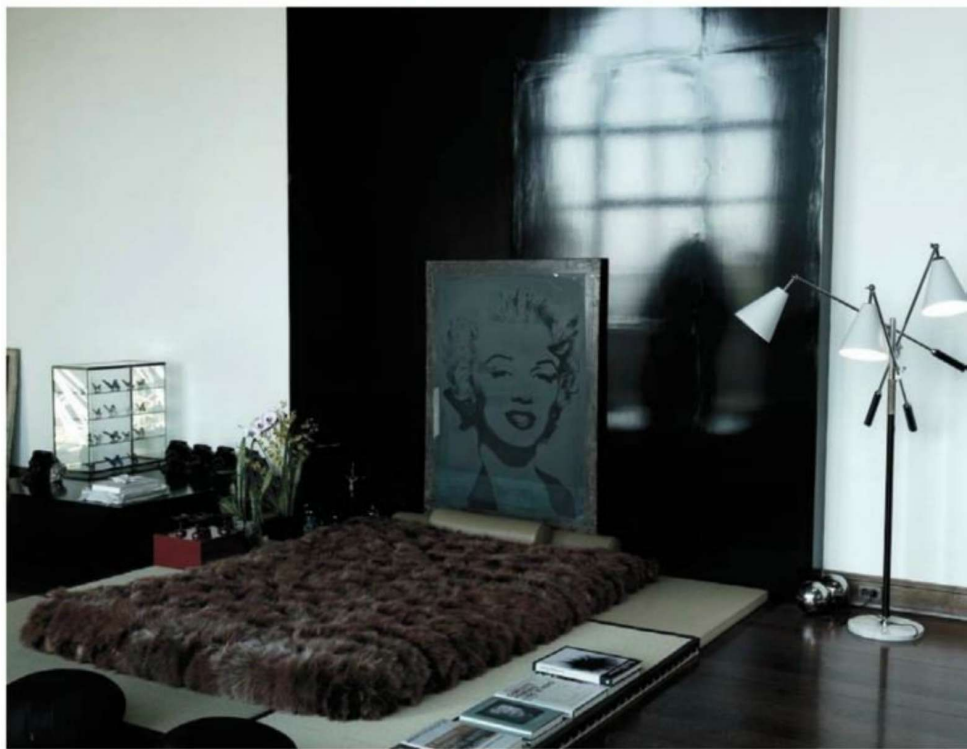
WHEN YOU PULL UP to the gates of Michel Comte's Mediterranean revival-style mansion in the hills above Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles, it's impossible to find fault. Even the vintage Bentley in the circular drive seems not so much parked as curated; it is beluga-black, all the better to reflect the grand cypress-tree-flanked entrance and the gently burbling fountain. You might bump into a naked model by the pool. That's because Comte, who was born in Zurich, is a major fashion photographer and 92shoots many of his spreads at this estate.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHEL COMTE

A year ago, Comte opened the doors of this sun-drenched redoubt to 25-year-old itinerant street artist Alec Monopoly to use as his home and studio. By day this is where Monopoly (who, like the street artist Banksy, keeps his real name and identity secret) paints his pop art images of the Monopoly Man, Jack Nicholson and Bob Dylan, which are collected by the likes of Robert De Niro and Seth Rogen. By night Monopoly descends into the city to plaster billboards and construction sites, using L.A. itself as his gallery. Join us on a rare tour of this high-low mash-up of an art house, courtesy of Comte's magical lens.

ARTICLE BY HUGH GARVEY

Michel Comte's Beverly Hills house is the quintessential retreat of a gentleman artist, melding a distinctly California vibe with classic European style. Behind the stately stuccoed walls, Comte has filled the grand oak-paneled rooms with an eclectic world-class collection of art and iconic midcentury modern furniture. The house is a refuge designed to inspire—both for Comte and for graffiti artist Alec Monopoly. "Being surrounded by all this art is amazing," says Monopoly, seen at right painting one of his signature portraits. "I'll just wander the halls, and around every corner there's a piece from one of my heroes." Like Joan Miró, for example, and Alexander Calder.



While any high roller can buy a print of Warhol's *Last Supper* or one of his Marilyn Monroe images, Comte has the silk screens used to produce them (right and above right). "It's a crazy contrast," says Monopoly. "I'll be out all night hitting downtown with my prints and bumping into homeless people having sex. Then I'll come here and forget I'm even in Los Angeles."



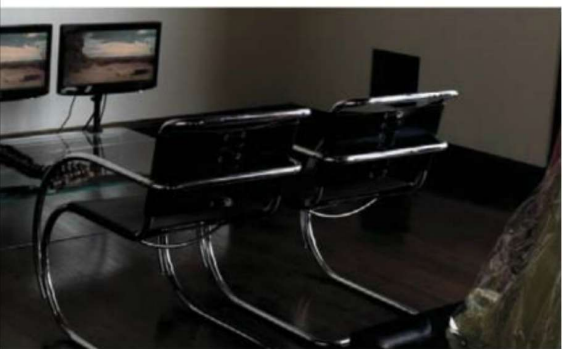
Two years ago, Monopoly was climbing through a garbage chute beneath a Manhattan hotel, eluding capture by the NYPD's vandal squad. Today he's ensconced in this Beverly Hills mansion, a self-styled Warhol descendant with mainstream gallery success. When he first moved to L.A. in 2009, he couch-surfed, gaining notoriety for his art and his unique style of guerrilla marketing. Then he met Comte, in

whose home he now lives and works. Monopoly says he used the Monopoly Man at first as a commentary on recent investment-banking scandals. "He represented corporate greed and Bernie Madoff," he says. Monopoly has since produced images of the character behind DJ turntables and holding a spray-paint can. "I'm making fun of myself," he says. "Now the Monopoly Man has come to represent me."





This page, clockwise from left: The lounge features a Japanese shade, cleverly blocking the sun with a symbol of the sun itself. Monopoly stands with a model in front of one of his paintings—a butterfly, inspired by Comte's forthcoming 3-D feature film tentatively titled *The Little Girl From Nagasaki*. A pair of Mies van der Rohe chairs face TV screens in the most understated screening room in Beverly Hills. The pool forms a perfect backdrop for Comte's fashion shoots.



Opposite page, clockwise from top left: Monopoly enjoys the company of a model (seen here spreading her wings) as he works on another butterfly painting. Next to him are his portraits of Travis Bickle (Robert De Niro) from *Taxi Driver*, another example of how the artist melds pop culture into his work. Throughout the house, windows and doors open onto a view of the City of

Angels with its palm and cypress trees. Notice the white Eames chair, classic midcentury. Featured prominently in the study is the original screen Warhol used to print his Brando portrait from the film *The Wild One*. Nearby sits a rabbit sculpture created by the Japanese artist Momoyo Torimitsu (it would fit nicely in the Playboy Mansion). Above that, Monopoly is seen working on another

piece. While some street-art fans take issue with his nontraditional graffiti style, Monopoly is the first to admit to the pop nature of his work in an otherwise gritty corner of the art world. "The fact is most of the people who are going to see my work in the city aren't street-art fans," says Monopoly. "I just want normal people to be able to recognize and relate with the images."

fashion



sprezzatura

sprez-zà-tu-ra (n) an Italian idiom, meaning "effortlessly cool"

Since the Dark Ages, the nation of Italy has worked at the forefront of modern aesthetics. Architects, painters, sculptors, designers of royal carriages and, later, sports cars, cordwainers, suit makers, all the way to the great 20th century filmmakers—the

Italians seem to birth endless generations of geniuses and trendsetters who smile nonchalantly in the face of praise. "It was easy," they will tell you while fingering a cigarette. Thus the quintessential Italian term *sprezzatura*. From *The Book of the*



FASHION by Jennifer Ryan Jones
PHOTOGRAPHY by Sergio Kurhajec
STYLING by Kathy Kalafut

Courtier, written by Baldassare Castiglione in the 16th century, *sprezzatura* is (in the author's words) "a certain nonchalance, as to conceal all art and make whatever one does or says appear to be without effort." *The Oxford English Dictionary* defines *sprezzatura* as "studied carelessness."

It is the ultimate skill possessed by the master courtier. Herewith, we celebrate Italian design with this summer's coolest wares, clothes that wrap a man in *sprezzatura*. We've thrown in some of our favorite vintage Italian machines—and beautiful women, naturally.



OPPOSITE PAGE: Suede jacket, \$2,295, by BOSS SELECTION. Cashmere polo, \$1,600, by BOTTEGA VENETA. Slim-fit pants, \$280, by ACNE at MR PORTER. Aviator sunglasses, \$395, by BOTTEGA VENETA. Her sunglasses, \$325, by MARC JACOBS. Motorcycle: 1959 DUCATI 175 SS, courtesy Ducati.net.

THIS PAGE: Slim-fit suit, \$1,745, by DOLCE & GABBANA at MR PORTER. Shirt, \$175, by BOSS BLACK. Tie, \$125, by Z ZEGNA. Linen handkerchief, \$65 for box of three, by BROOKS BROTHERS. Car: 1966 MASERATI 5000 GT, courtesy MotorcarGallery.com.



THIS PAGE: Printed shirt, \$245, by Z ZEGNA. Pants, \$395, by Z ZEGNA. Straw hat, \$54, by NEWYORKHATCO .COM. Silk pocket square, \$95, by Z ZEGNA. Chronograph watch, \$4,350, by ORIS RAID. Suede loafers, \$750, by JIMMY CHOO at MR PORTER. Paparazzo: Trench coat, \$795, by BOSS BLACK. Pants, \$680, by BOTTEGA VENETA. Loafers, \$575, by JIMMY CHOO at MR PORTER.



THIS PAGE: Linen sports jacket, \$1,810, by PAUL SMITH at MR PORTER. Gingham checked shirt, \$495, by BRIONI at MR PORTER. Pants, \$200, by MARC BY MARC JACOBS at MR PORTER. Printed pocket square, \$85, by DRAKE'S at MR PORTER. Chronograph watch, \$4,350, by ORIS RAID. Sunglasses, \$395, by BOTTEGA VENETA. Car: 1966 FERRARI SUPERFAST, courtesy MotorcarGallery.com.

DISAPPEARANCE IN THE EAST



ILLUSTRATION BY KAKO




FAKE YOUR OWN DEATH,
CASH IN A BIG
 LIFE-INSURANCE POLICY AND
LIVE HAPPILY
 EVER AFTER IN A TROPICAL PARADISE?
IT CAN BE DONE—
 AND IT'S MORE COMMON
THAN YOU MAY THINK

PHILIPPINE IMMIGRATION

// BY //
**LAWRENCE
 OSBORNE**

Name: JOHN JONES
 Address: 123 MAIN ST
 City: NEW YORK
 State: NY
 Zip: 10001
 Country: USA
 Boarding Pass

Name: MARY JONES
 Address: 456 PARK AVE
 City: NEW YORK
 State: NY
 Zip: 10017
 Country: USA
 Boarding Pass

—  —

HOW TO DISAPPEAR

SEVEN STEPS TO YOUR NEW LIFE



GET A BIRTH CERTIFICATE



ORDER A PASSPORT



BUY LIFE INSURANCE

The more policies the merrier.

FIND A PLACE TO DIE

Thailand and the Philippines are popular.



GET A BODY

You'll need it for a death certificate.

COLLECT LIFE INSURANCE

You'll need an accomplice.



ENJOY

But remember: You can never go home.

YEARS

ago, while flying from Bangkok to Phnom Penh, I read what could be called a local novel by a Bangkok private investigator named Byron Bales. *The Family Business* was written with an entertainingly maniacal attention to detail and a world-weariness perfectly matched to its material: an American couple who plot to stage the husband's death in Manila in order to claim insurance money back in the United States. The British call this kind of faked death "doing a Reginald Perrin," after a 1970s sitcom hero who stages his own suicide and then comes back to life to start all over again. The British, after all, can never forget government minister John Stonehouse, who disappeared on a Miami beach in 1974. Stonehouse was later found in Australia, using a forged passport under the name Clive Mildoon. It's the ultimate travel experience: reincarnation in a distant place as an insurance scam. Insurance agents call it "pseudocide."

Bales spent more than 30 years as an investigator, 10 of them in Bangkok, tracking down people who had disappeared, faking their own deaths in order to dupe America's gullible and often chaotic insurance companies (it's an industry in decline, he insinuates). I learned from the back cover of *The Family Business* that it was based on several cases that Bales himself had investigated. So people really do disappear, I thought, and they really do collect the money.

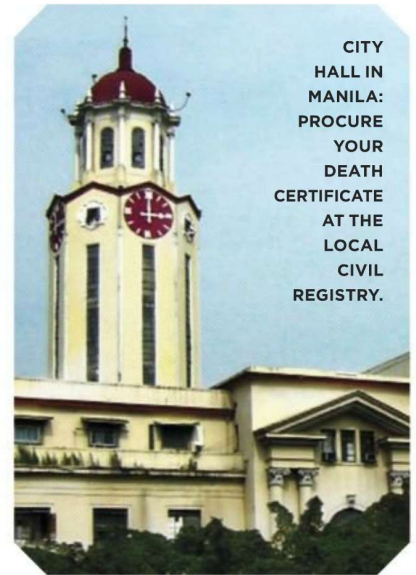
It's a travel idea you can't resist. You fly to an exotic country, check into your hotel and then you die. Having died, you do a Reginald Perrin. You get paid hundreds of thousands of dollars by a clueless corporation 8,000 miles away and then carry on living in the country where you were vacationing. Certainly, you'd never see your children or your old mother again. But look on the bright side. You'd have no debts and you could start again, and if you were lucky you'd have turned a profit.

For years I wondered if this were really possible. In many bars in Bangkok, Vientiane and Phnom Penh I would run into characters who claimed they had run away from their lives. Some had changed their names; others wouldn't admit how they had gotten there—they would tap their noses and say, "I'm not the man I was." I've always thought there was a dark pleasure in being an impostor, like traveling on a train and telling people you meet that you are an invented character. When I was a child traveling on English trains I used to tell strangers that I was "Prince Prinzapolka," and it was always satisfying to see them buy it. These grown men had done the same.

But how many of them had staged their own deaths? It seems like a stunt that would be both disarmingly easy and inexpressibly complicated, even in Bangkok. Bales had pointed out that as soon as you were "dead" you could no longer use a credit card. You could not walk insouciantly down a city street or make a phone call to your family. In a social sense, you really would be dead, and you'd have to adapt to the fact. Crossing borders loaded with cash would be nerve-racking, airport security would be an ordeal, and your intimate relations would have to begin at ground zero.

Yet real-life cases of insurance-fraud disappearance are not hard to find in the public record. One of the cases Bales worked on several years ago was that of the Kongsiris, a Thai-American couple who traveled to Thailand from their home in Easton, Pennsylvania to enjoy a vacation in the mother country. There was nothing remarkable about Lee and Phatcha, an American retiree and housewife on a tour of the northern provinces in 1995. They rode elephants and appreciated sunsets. They visited relatives. But while enjoying these innocuous pursuits, Lee Kongsiri was rumored to have gone on a sudden spree of "drinking and womanizing," as the press later described it. He overdid it to such an extent that after a succession of such ecstasies he suffered a fatal heart attack, much like a famous president of France. Some dry souls might call it an ignominious death. But what made him go berserk?

What role Phatcha had played in the priapic excesses of her husband was unclear, but she had no difficulty obtaining a death certificate from local authorities and using it to obtain a Death of an American Citizen Abroad document from the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok. Lee's was just another death on the tourist circuit. There were thousands like it: overdoes in cheap hotels, suicides on remote beaches, sextap slayings at the hands of bar-girl boyfriends (a particular specialty of Bangkok). The wild East, as a matter of fact, is a commodious place to die.



CITY HALL IN MANILA: PROCURE YOUR DEATH CERTIFICATE AT THE LOCAL CIVIL REGISTRY.

(continued on page 124)



"How embarrassing! I just slipped out to pick up our paper and that cute guy in 3C saw me without my makeup."



25. PONTIAC FIREBIRD TRANS AM

IT WAS THE dream car for the generation of American men who came of age in the 1970s—the ultimate expression of masculinity, like driving a fist down the road. When the Trans Am debuted in 1969, it came in one color: cameo white with blue accents. Price: \$3,887. Engine: a Ram-Air 400-cubic-inch V8. Pontiac made the Trans Am until 2002, but its ultimate expression was the 1977 TA Burt Reynolds drove in *Smokey and the Bandit*. Worldwide Auctioneers sold Reynolds's personal black Bandit mobile in 2011 for \$57,750.

24. BMW 2002

THE LATE DAVID E. Davis Jr. launched this car's (and BMW's) fortunes in North America with his rousing 1968 *Car and Driver* article headlined **TURN YOUR HYMNALS TO 2002**. This Bimmer (1968–1972) could outcorner the era's British roadsters, with four aboard and Blaupunkt blasting. Early cars are the best (go for a fuel-injected 2002tii), around \$20K today.

23. CHEVROLET BEL AIR

THE 1957 CHEVY is an American icon—a stylish ragtop with frenched headlights, pert fins and an attitude that says "Cruising or racing, I've got you beat." With its panoramic wraparound windshield, gold-anodized side trim and proud V8 badges, the Bel Air was the desirable ride in the Dinah Shore days. At \$113K for a top example today, it's still "the Hot One."

THE BEETLE HAS dubious beginnings. When Adolf Hitler took power in 1933, he turned a nation ravaged by the Depression into an economic juggernaut by empowering Germany's auto industry. The Volkswagen ("people's car"), brought to life by lead engineer Ferdinand Porsche, was part of Hitler's plan. Had he lived, he would have eaten his rug on seeing the car appropriated by peace-loving hippies in the 1960s. The Bug to have today? An original from the first year of production (1946), notable for its split rear window. Expect to drop about \$37.5K.

22. VW BEETLE



All prices, unless otherwise noted, are #2 condition levels from *Hagerty Price Guide*, January to April 2012.

the 25 greatest rides

COUNTING DOWN
the most
INFLUENTIAL
& desired
AUTOMOBILES
of the postwar
YEARS

by
KEN GROSS
AND
A.J. BAIME

21. MAZDA MIATA

THE BEST-SELLING two-seat sports car of all time, the Miata (or MX-5) was unveiled in 1989. It was an affordable, lightweight Japanese sports car inspired by the great 1960s British roadsters (the Lotus Elan in particular). Today the Spec Miata is the best entry-level SCCA competition car money can buy. Pick up a 1990 convertible for \$7K and go racing.

20. PONTIAC GTO

OKAY, SO ITS actual name is Tempest LeMans GTO. Bypassing a General Motors edict on engine displacement in midsize cars (330 cid was tops), Pontiac's engineers stuck a 389 cid V8 into a 1964 Tempest, and voilà—the muscle car was born. Some say the GTO is still the greatest muscle car of them all. A 1964 Tri-Power (three carb) today will run you a mere \$71.5K.

19. CHRYSLER 300

BUILT TO BATTLE the new Corvette and Thunderbird, Chrysler's first 300 (the C-300) was the fastest American production car of its time (1955). The race-proven hemi V8 could power this baby over 130 mph, and bodywise she was a stunner. Only 1,725 C-300s were built. More powerful Chrysler "letter cars" followed, but the 1955 is the purest and the best—about \$78.2K today.

18. DATSUN/NISSAN Z

THE "Z" BLAZED a trail for Japanese autos in America when it appeared in 1969. The original 240Z had a raked Ferrari-like nose, plenty of agility and a price (\$3,500) within reach of the masses. The Z continues to blaze; the 390, the seventh iteration, is rumored to debut next year. But the simple, elegant lines of the original 240 still delight. Expect to drop about \$24K.

17. FERRARI 458 ITALIA

A MODERN CLASSIC, the 458 is the current mid-engine rocket in Ferrari's lineup, a singular sports car that's an amalgam of all the technology amassed by the most exotic of motoring companies in its 65 years of production and racing. Cornering in this car, with its 562-horsepower V8 screaming in your ears, makes you feel superhuman. The Pininfarina-designed body is as luxe and Italian as can be. Like a gorgeous model, however, the Italia is a tease. Only the super-rich get their hands on this \$230K supercar.



UNVEILED AS A 1967 model by GM chief Pete Estes (who called it "a four-passenger package of excitement") on June 29, 1966, Chevy's Camaro was created for one reason: to topple Ford's fast-selling Mustang. The pony-car wars have been with us ever since. Our pick of the Camaro litter is the first-year 1967 Z28 with a 302 V8 (602 were made), built for customers to race in the Trans Am series. The original sticker was \$3,226. Today it'll cost you about \$67K.

16. CHEVROLET CAMARO

15. FORD SHELBY MUSTANG

CARROLL SHELBY WAS at the peak of his fame in 1967. Shelby American had won the 24 Hours of Le Mans, something no American racing team had done before. The Shelby Cobra (just then finishing production) had won the FIA sports-car world championship and had captured the imagination of a generation. Although the Shelby Mustang debuted in 1965 and is still with us today, the 1967 Shelby GT500 is our pick for the coolest Stang of them all. It came with wide Goodyears and a 428 Ford engine "bigger than king size," as *Road & Track* put it. Nothing on the road drew as much attention, especially from the cops. Get yours for about \$137K. Don't think about the miles per gallon. Gulp.



14. MG TC

BRITAIN'S MG WAS "the sports car America loved first." When it arrived after the war, the right-drive-only TC was a charming anachronism on spindly wire wheels. Driving a TC today (model years 1946–1949) is an adventure. Slow at highway speeds, the roadster thrives on winding lanes with its crisp shifter and throaty exhaust. You'll drop \$37K for one in good condition.

13. FERRARI 275 GTB/4

A SLEEK SHARK, the Pininfarina-designed GTB/4's pointed nose, tight cabin and impudent tail hint at its 160 mph capability. Its V12 howls like a demented coyote when you rev to the 7,800 rpm redline. This race car for the road was state-of-the-art in the 1960s. A GTB is still capable of showing up modern sports cars. A 1967–1968 example runs \$1.3 million and climbing.



12. JAGUAR XK120

JAGUAR DAZZLED POSTWAR sports-car buyers with the world's fastest production car in an era when Britons were still digging out from World War II rubble (1949–1954). Although its fadeaway fenders aped a 1940 BMW roadster design, Jag's three-liter six put out 180 horsepower. Clark Gable bought one of the first XKs in California. Phil Hill (the only American-born driver to win the Formula One title) started his career in an XK. The first 200 alloy cars go for \$310K today. Steel roadsters are \$130K, and they'll keep going up.

11. LAMBORGHINI COUNTACH

THE WORD COUNTACH is an Italian expression of shock used upon seeing a beautiful woman. A pioneering icon of blistering speed, the mid-engined machine was made from 1974 to 1990. Its cockpit sat near the front axle, and the doors scissored open like a woman with her legs in the air. We like the original 1974 LP400 with a four-liter V12. Expect to drop \$477K.



TRY TO FIND a midcentury sports roadster prettier than a BMW 507. Designed by Count Albrecht von Goertz (he also penned the Datsun 240Z), the 507 was more expensive than a Mercedes-Benz Gullwing. Only 253 were made between 1955 and 1958, making survivors rare. The 507's side vents were redesigned for today's BMW Z4. Enthusiasts have discovered the 507, and it's nearly a \$900K car now. Get the hardtop and Rudge knockoff disc wheels if you can.

10. BMW 507



9. LAMBORGHINI MIURA

FERRUCCIO LAMBORGHINI, an air-conditioner and tractor maker, went into the supercar biz in 1963 because he thought he could make a better car than Enzo Ferrari, whose factory was nearby. The Miura, named for a Spanish fighting bull, shocked when it first bowed in 1967. A four-liter V12 was transversely mounted right behind the seats. Over time, Lamborghini souped up the engine and added spoilers; the Miura SV from 1971 is the fastest and most expensive today at \$906K.

THE SEXIEST THING ever to appear in a Bond film was not Ursula Andress as Honey Ryder but this Aston, the first and greatest 007 mobile. (We've sat in an actual Bond DB5. Yes, it does have machine guns in its fenders.) Offscreen, it was the real thing. Aston Martin was riding high after a 1959 Le Mans victory when the DB5 appeared in 1962, with a four-liter in-line six and top speed of 145 mph. While today's Aston Martins are among the most beautiful cars ever penned, the DB5—worth about \$522K now—is still the benchmark.

8. ASTON MARTIN DB5



7. CHEVROLET CORVETTE

CORVETTE'S HIGH-REVVING fuel-injected V8 took the boulevard out of American sports cars when it appeared in 1953, gave GM a racing raison d'être and powered a new generation of hot-rodders. Our favorite: the 1963–1967 Sting Ray, especially the 1967 L-89, a 435-horsepower, 427-cubic-inch big-block racer out of the box, worth about \$304K today.

6. MCLAREN F1

THE MCLAREN F1 was a novel concept: A company known for Formula One excellence set out to make the ultimate street car. When the F1 appeared in 1992, with its middle-situated driver's seat and 242 mph top whack, it proved to be the ultimate driving machine of its own and perhaps any era. As put by Britain's *Autocar* magazine, "The F1 will be remembered as one of the great events in the history of the car." Only 106 were built. Pick one up today for about \$3.5 million.



5. MERCEDES-BENZ GULLWING

BARELY SEVEN YEARS after World War II, Mercedes-Benz engineers led by Rudolf Uhlenhaut designed a radical German sports coupe with vertically opening gullwing doors, fully independent suspension and a three-liter fuel-injected six cylinder. The 300SL became an instant classic. Enthusiasts love the 1957–1960 convertible, with its improved suspension and disc brakes, but 300SL coupes from 1954 to 1957 still cost more. Plan on at least \$704K.



4. JAGUAR E-TYPE

THIS 150 MPH projectile transformed Jaguar from an interesting British sports-car purveyor into a serious Ferrari challenger. Like a stiletto heel on wheels, the E-Type's six-cylinder engine came from Jag's legendary D-Type Le Mans racer. Purists covet Series I coupes and roadsters (1961–1964). Restored examples fetch about \$107K—more than 20 times their original price.

3. SHELBY COBRA

LE MANS CHAMP Carroll Shelby was a broke ex-racer with a bad heart when he came up with the idea to match the chassis of a British AC roadster with a lightweight Ford V8. The Shelby Cobra (1962–1967) became the fastest production car in the world. A Cobra with a small-block 289 engine will run you \$519K today, more for authentic competition models.



AMONG THE CARS on this page, only one is actually attainable. Porsche this year unveiled its seventh-generation 911, a delight to all five senses. How do you pick a favorite from 49 years of 911s? Not easy. Here's ours: the 1973 911 Carrera RS Lightweight, a race car for the road. In fact, the RS (Rennsport, or "race sport") was not approved for road use in the U.S., but it was street legal in Europe. It had a lighter body shell, almost no insulation, even thinner windshield glass (to reduce weight) and a 240-horsepower fuel-injected 2.7-liter flat six. Top speed: 149 mph. Figure on \$390K today for the most iconic early 911.

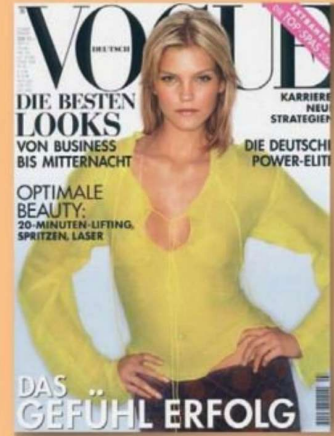
2. PORSCHE 911

1. FERRARI GTO



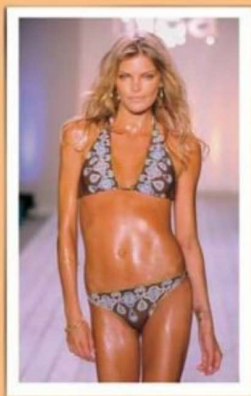
THE MOST COVETED Ferrari of all, and the most valuable postwar sports car in the world today, the GTO (for Gran Turismo Omologato) beat all comers in its day. Only 39 were built, between 1962 and 1964. The GTO, which turns 50 this year, won everywhere it raced, often beating more powerful cars, thanks to its impossibly

shapely, aerodynamically sound ultra-lightweight alloy body, high-revving three-liter V12 engine with six carburetors and snap-shifting five-speed tranny. Fakes abound, but every one of the real GTOs is accounted for. The last one up for auction sold for more than \$35 million. The price is probably double that now.



MAY ANDERSEN

The wild child Victoria's Secret supermodel has no secrets anymore



When ex-Victoria's Secret model and *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit stunner May Andersen says she wants to meet us at a hip, contemporary art gallery in downtown Manhattan, we're admittedly a little wary. May's reputation is wild child Danish supermodel. Who knew she was a connoisseur? Should we hit the library first and brush up on our Klimt and Kippenberger?

As she guides us through the space, however, identifying and describing in detail each piece we pass, it's clear she knows what she's talking about. In fact, it turns out she works at the gallery full-time. As in "May Andersen is an assistant director at one of New York's most respected avant-garde galleries."

We have to ask, What the hell is she doing here?

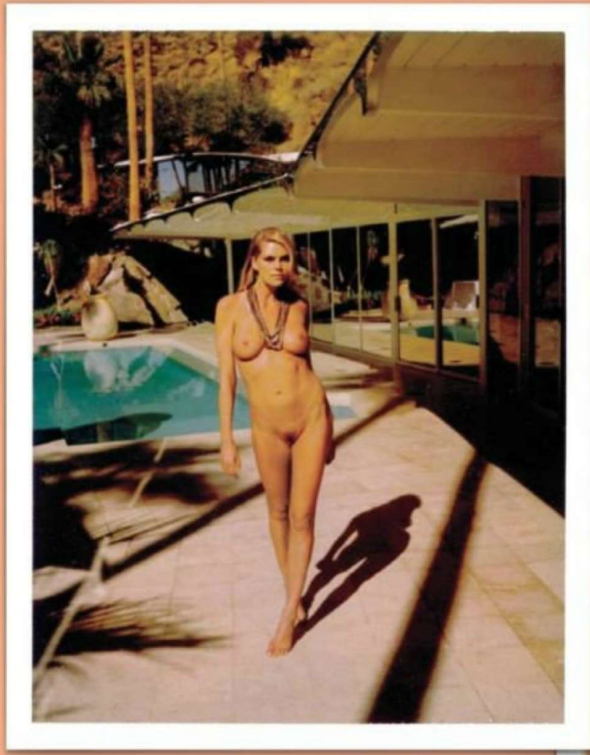
By now May has arranged herself on a bench in front of a life-size Barry McGee sculpture of a graffiti artist perched precariously atop a trash can, mid-tag. Her black micro-miniskirt, snug angora sweater and vertically striped garter-belted stockings make it hard to maintain eye contact.

"Basically, I'm 29 now, which is old in model years, and around the time I started thinking about what I wanted to do next, this opportunity came up," she says softly,



***Photography by Sasha Eisenman
By Christopher Tennant***





her accent lending a sing-song quality to the words. "After several years in the city, I'd gotten to know a lot of people in the art scene and felt it was something I should pursue. I started out as an intern here, and one year later I'm an assistant director. I'm really serious about it and so grateful and honored to be able to work with all these great artists. Not everyone gets to do that."

No, they certainly do not. In fact, it's quite an unexpected twist in an otherwise familiar fashion industry narrative. Discovered on the street in Copenhagen at the age of 13, May was shipped off at 15 to New York, where she rocketed to fashion stardom, hooked up with a string of Hollywood *bons vivants*, landed in the gossip columns and partied her proverbial pants off. Pictures of May in all manner of repose—looking incredible while making out nude with another female model and in various other situations—made their way across the globe via the net. Needless to say, a career as an art dealer wasn't likely in the cards.

"It probably sounds ridiculous, but it feels as if I've already had two lives," she says. "Everyone has their 20s or whatever age when they go through craziness. I just happened to be in a world that was very public. That's the only difference between me and everyone else. What can I say? It was bizarro world."

While the art world isn't exactly a paragon of propriety, at least she's getting to bed at a decent hour.

"I love the nerdiness of my job now. I love to go home with my textbook and sit there and drink tea. That's what I do now for fun," she says, and we almost believe her. "I'm really happy and just focusing on myself. This proves that anything is possible, and love changes everything. I'm so excited for what's ahead."

Remember, gents: It's never too late to start collecting.









May on supermodeldom:
"What can I say? It
was a bizarre world."



See more of May Andersen at
club.playboy.com.

DAVID BROOKS

(continued from page 50)

Reflections on the Revolution in France, by Edmund Burke. At first I loathed it. Burke says you're unwise to think you can think for yourself, and you have to show reverence for the things that have lasted. As a college freshman, you don't want to hear that. As I read more, I came to see that that was true. Next, after college I worked as a reporter in Chicago, covered some bad neighborhoods and fell out of love with liberal welfare programs, which I thought enabled the drug culture and the breakup of families.

PLAYBOY: How so? Liberals claim that's exactly what they were trying to fix by taking on poverty.

BROOKS: One of the programs involved the replacement of slum neighborhoods by good-natured people who didn't understand that when they tore down slums, they were tearing down social networks. They created horrible places. It was bad social planning. In the meantime, the family came under attack in the 1970s, and there was an idea that bourgeois institutions were part of some old reactionary culture, which I didn't believe. A lot of damage was done by that. Democrats don't talk that way now, but at the time there was a sense that we should try to get as many people on welfare as possible, and we shouldn't worry about old family structures.

PLAYBOY: Are you critical of the sexual revolution that also defined that time?

BROOKS: Overall it was a good thing but bad for those who didn't have structures within which to police themselves.

PLAYBOY: Meaning?

BROOKS: The part that was bad was the attack on the family. That was a loss for most people but a tragedy for people who have no positive life script.

PLAYBOY: A life script that would have them do what?

BROOKS: You go to high school, you get married, you have a kid. The life script got changed: You have a kid and then maybe later you get married. That was a horrible change.

PLAYBOY: Why was it horrible?

BROOKS: If you grew up like I did, there was a set of guardrails. There was a social structure surrounding you, guiding you pretty much in the right direction. Now a lot of people live with no social structure, no guardrails, and it's a lot harder. They have to figure it out as they go, and they're set up for problems. They think, Well, I've got to make some money, have a job, establish myself, then I'll get married. That's a screwed-up life script. You should get married first and then establish yourself.

PLAYBOY: Isn't that simply part of an old-fashioned and restrictive value system?

BROOKS: But there's value in the old structures. They evolved for a reason. Marriage offers a kind of stability that

can help you, whatever else you do. It's a foundation. Part of the reason people struggle so much now is because they don't have that foundation.

PLAYBOY: Do you relate the changes to higher divorce rates? For a while there was also a backlash against monogamy.

BROOKS: I do. I don't think it serves anyone, least of all children who grow up in disorganized families and communities. I think the ideal number of sexual partners to have in a year is one.

PLAYBOY: One? Presumably some of our readers would disagree.

BROOKS: There's a lot of research that supports my view. I often tell my liberal friends that the American women who have the most orgasms are evangelical Christians.

PLAYBOY: You're joking, right?

BROOKS: It's true. They have more sex. They're in monogamous relationships a long time. They have sex with one person.

PLAYBOY: Wouldn't that lead to less sex, not more? Most people assume that, for a variety of reasons, married couples have a lot less sex than people who are single.

BROOKS: The research shows they have more fulfilling sex lives than the people who are swinging.

PLAYBOY: You've said the most important decision anyone makes is whom to marry. Doesn't that mostly come down to luck?

BROOKS: Some of it, maybe, but it's worth thinking about before you get married. If you get two optimistic people together, they're going to look on the bright side of everything. You get two people with temperaments that clash, it's probably going to be a problem. Recently I did something called Life Reports, asking readers over 70 to write in about their lives. There were about 4,000 or 5,000 responses. The people who had the best marriages were happy, no matter what else happened in their lives, and that, I think, was luck. I don't think anybody knows how to choose a marriage partner. Maybe they are just the sort of people who are agreeable to be around, and they happened to marry other agreeable people. That's what they should teach in college.

PLAYBOY: What else accounted for happy lives?

BROOKS: Unfortunately there was no easy relationship between depth and happiness. A lot of the people who were impressive at writing about their lives were pretty unhappy. It's like in *Annie Hall* when Woody Allen walks up to this incredibly good-looking couple and asks, "How come you guys are so happy?" The woman says, "Well, I'm incredibly shallow, and so is he." Maybe that works. None of us would choose that, but maybe it works.

PLAYBOY: If the sexual revolution did away with the guardrails, and marriage is even better for long-term sex, why was the sexual revolution positive, at least on balance?

BROOKS: Women were unhappy in the 1950s, and guys were repressed, so I

would say that was a net gain. And also, by the way, we overestimate the degree to which people in the 1950s were not having sex. We think they were all repressed. We think that PLAYBOY came along and everybody changed, but in fact it was World War I and World War II. It was the act of going to Paris, people getting out of their farm towns, going abroad and coming into contact with different lives. The wars were also a time of separation of men and women. When men returned, there were celebrations.

PLAYBOY: Back to your evolution from the left to the right. After witnessing the results of welfare and the breakup of the family, what finally led you to vote Republican for the first time?

BROOKS: College, for me, was living in the fourth century—I studied a lot of ancient Greek. But I began to shift, and I always had a bourgeois-immigrant thing inside. Margaret Thatcher was elected in 1979, and I sort of liked her. I think I'm typical of everybody in that politics is less about the ideas than the personalities you like. As I said, I came to like Reagan.

PLAYBOY: And now you're the conservative voice on the *Times* op-ed page. Is it a lonely place to be?

BROOKS: As I've said, being a conservative on the *Times* op-ed page is like being chief rabbi in Mecca—yes, it's lonely.

PLAYBOY: Did your fans and foes switch when you wrote and spoke positively about Obama?

BROOKS: I guess so. There's a lot of "He's the liberals' favorite conservative." But I was a defender of the Iraq War, and *Times* readers didn't like that. There was a lot more hostility the first few years, but today it's still surprising. A lot of conservatives don't regard me as a member of the team anymore, but a number of people on the left don't seem to see a difference between me and Ann Coulter. I get a lot of hate mail. It's not the majority, but people come up and tell me how much they hate me.

PLAYBOY: Literally?

BROOKS: Yeah.

PLAYBOY: Does it bother you?

BROOKS: No one likes to be hated. Not long ago I was at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and a stunningly beautiful woman walked right up to me and said, "I hate you." You don't like that, but it's part of the job. After my first six months on the job, I cleaned out my e-mail folder, and there were 290,000 messages with the core message "Paul Krugman is great; you suck." For the first six months on the job, I was bothered by it. I'd never been hated on a mass scale before, but my skin got thicker. I'm still bothered by it, but that's part of the job.

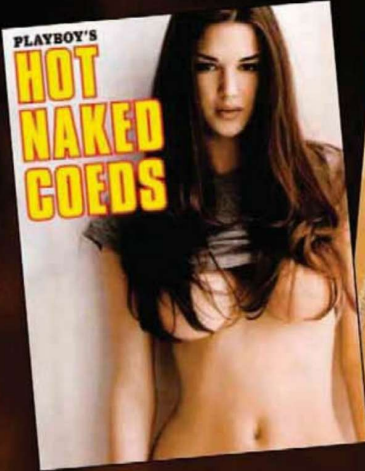
PLAYBOY: Do you feel you can have a different kind of influence than, for example, Ann Coulter or Rush Limbaugh, because they're preaching to the choir, whereas in writing for the *Times* you're injecting another perspective into



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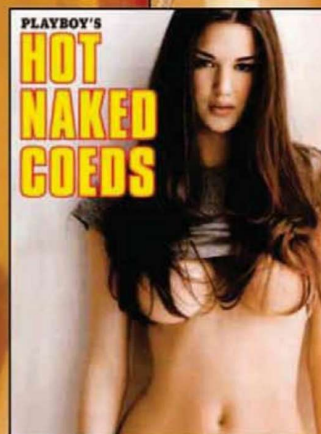
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"Make yourself comfortable, Miss Quinn. Feel free to put your feet up on my desk."

the dialogue between many who aren't in your choir?

BROOKS: Coulter and all of them accuse me of being a coward and a sellout, and I counter that by saying, "You're in a little ghetto where everybody agrees with you. How brave is that?" At the same time, I get plenty of appreciation, so I don't feel I'm in the wilderness. Actually, I don't feel far from many *Times* readers. If Ann Coulter were writing at the *Times*, that would take more bravery than I have.

PLAYBOY: Do you also feel isolated from the far right?

BROOKS: Very few things about the job give you sheer pleasure, but when Rush Limbaugh goes after me, I feel happy. Or on the other side, when MoveOn.org goes after me, I feel happy. I'm happy to have them not like me.

PLAYBOY: You're frequently on talk shows, including some that get contentious. Does it bother you that so much of politics on TV is shouting matches in which few people get to finish a sentence?

BROOKS: I don't do those shouting shows. Nothing like Laura Ingraham or even Rachel Maddow. Rachel is plenty smart, but she's in a fundamentally different business. She's in the provocation and rallying troops business, and in that I put her a level above most. I've never met this guy Ed Schultz, but I don't think I'd like to be on with him or Keith Olbermann.

PLAYBOY: What was the hardest time you've been given on a show?

BROOKS: One of the least pleasant I've ever done was Bill Maher's. He has a big audience. When you do his show, for months afterward people say, "I saw you on *Real Time With Bill Maher*." But I really did not like being on his show. It's 20 minutes of how evil everyone is who disagrees with him. I always think it's unfair, and his critiques are never about policies; they're about which so-and-sos are right-wing yahoos. Maybe they are, but that's not why I'm in the business.

PLAYBOY: Does it concern you that some people get their news only from Fox on the one hand and Jon Stewart on the other?

BROOKS: People who watch only Fox have certain beliefs that are factually false. There's more of that going around than before. That's troubling. To be fair, the Pew Research Center does surveys of who knows what, and the Limbaugh audience is pretty well educated. Rush's audience and the NPR audiences tend to be at the top. Whether they have a distorted view of the science on global warming is another thing. And how much clout do they have? Limbaugh spent five years attacking John McCain, and McCain still won the Republican primary, even among Limbaugh's audience. They listen because it's entertaining. People like Jon Stewart, but that

doesn't mean they're passive receptors of everything they hear.

PLAYBOY: Do you feel about Stewart as you do about Maher?

BROOKS: With Stewart and Colbert I feel there's humor and poking at the left, but there's a genuine compassionate, admirable thing inside both those guys, and I don't feel there is in Maher.

PLAYBOY: These days you seem to be everywhere: in the *Times*, on NPR, on PBS, on *Meet the Press* and other shows, on the *Times* blog, at speaking engagements and in your books. How do you pull it all off?

BROOKS: It can be overwhelming. If I can have a day when I have nothing to do, I'm happy. I regret a lot of the commitments I have. I do spend a lot of time with my kids, but I don't spend much time with my friends, and I don't spend any time watching TV, except for some sports. I used to play golf, but I don't do that anymore. So it's basically work, drive kids to practice somewhere and go to bed. Bruce Springsteen is touring Europe this year, and I want to go to that. I'll make a few exceptions for Springsteen.

PLAYBOY: You mentioned that you had 290,000 e-mails over a six-month period. In the days before e-mail, there would have been far fewer letters, because readers had to sit down, write them and mail them. Now it's the era of reader and viewer comments, many anonymous and many harsh. Do you bemoan the civility that's lost when there are so many unrestrained voices talking about every small and large issue?

BROOKS: I think it's good that people are talking, even if I don't always like what they say. I think it's heartening that, in spite of predictions, the *Times* feels healthier than it did a few years ago. The readership is climbing. More people are willing to pay for it. A couple of years ago I thought we were in the whaling business and it was going off the deep end. But now I don't think that. There are enough people who want some authority, and so we'll be fine. Newspapers are closing, but there isn't less news. If you go out on the campaign trail, there are more reporters than ever, and somebody's paying them. I think we're in a golden age of long-form journalism. There's a lot of great stuff out there. I don't think we're in a crisis or a decline.

PLAYBOY: In addition to your political columns, increasingly you've been writing about psychology, sociology and brain science. What's pulling you in that direction?

BROOKS: A zillion people write about politics, but relatively few write about the social and cultural implications of this field, and it's a hot area that is exciting to be witness to.

PLAYBOY: Because of your interests in sociology, psychology and science, do some of your colleagues in the political world look at you with curiosity?

BROOKS: There was a little "Are you having a midlife crisis?" There's also a message that politics is the real stuff—tax rates—and the other stuff is sort of squishy. I have the opposite attitude. I write about politics because it's my job; it's like eating your broccoli. The how-we-live stuff is more important, and readers like it. Still, there's a definite sense that if you're writing about



"You just had to push that top button, didn't you?"

lifestyle or culture, it's because you had no good political subjects to talk about, whereas it's the opposite for me.

PLAYBOY: You've written that one problem with American politicians is that they have little understanding of people's emotions. Why?

BROOKS: Washington is the most emotionally void city in America, or maybe the world; you feel it in the way people dress—including me—and the way people talk.

PLAYBOY: You've criticized the Occupy movement as a bunch of poetry majors, but you claim to value poetry and the arts and bemoan the fact that they're being pushed aside in favor of practical study that leads to jobs.

BROOKS: The point is that a lot of the research I looked at shows that the things that seem so squishy are hard and practical. I firmly believe in arts education, music and majoring in English and history. But I was just with a bunch of CEOs, and they talked about the difficulty they have finding employees with technical skills. How do I reconcile the firm belief that the humanities are important to leading a good life with the fact that if you look at who earns the highest incomes, it's not even close? Education majors and communications majors have bad incomes, whereas general computer and tech majors have much higher incomes. I wrestle with this with my own kids.

PLAYBOY: How do you advise them?

BROOKS: My eldest son is a history major. The best advice is to major in what you want to in college, but understand you'll probably have to find some technical skill, some actual market-savvy skill, afterward. Get that layering of understanding narrative, stories, background and history, but realize that's not going to be sufficient in the marketplace. It's also important to remember that money isn't what makes people happiest.

PLAYBOY: Besides whom they marry, what else does?

BROOKS: One of the clear themes of the Life Reports was that people are good at knowing how to talk about their professional lives and bad at knowing how to talk about their personal lives. Yet those able to talk about their emotional lives, who were more connected to their family and friends, expressed much more satisfaction. Their emotional lives gave them more happiness than their intellectual lives.

PLAYBOY: And yet, despite writing *The Social Animal*, much of which is about our emotional lives, your wife said that you writing about emotion is like Gandhi writing about gluttony. You told *Time*, "I'm not good at moments of intimacy with family or friends." How do you reconcile that with the message of your book and the Life Reports?

BROOKS: You can know the right things but be unable to live them.

PLAYBOY: After your research, do you try harder with your relationships?

BROOKS: The sad part is you can't consciously change just by wanting to. You can if you change your environment and your habits, but the happy part is that you have within you flows of information and resources, some going back to American culture, some to your family, some to your religion, some to your genetics—there's incredible richness inside each of us. But it's so rich and deep and unconscious, it means you can't actually change it all that much.

PLAYBOY: Are you regretful?

BROOKS: I have the same regrets everybody has. I've worked pretty hard on my career—I still do—and spend less time having fun. I have friends. I go to hockey games, baseball games, dinners. I went hiking with a friend in Berkeley who took a bunch of his buddies out to Zion National Park. Eight guys just went out and did a hike. I don't do too much of that stuff, so I regret not working harder on friendships.

PLAYBOY: Twelve years ago, in your book *Bobos in Paradise*, you made fun of the kinds of people who go hiking in the woods.

BROOKS: That's true. Well, as I get older I find I write fewer nasty pieces and fewer cynical ones. I don't know whether I'm just older and more fuddy-duddy, or maybe I *have* learned some life lessons. I have regrets, but I'm not stopping. I care about all the stuff I write about. I think it's important whether Barack Obama or Mitt Romney wins the election, because people are affected, the country is affected. It can be frustrating and overwhelming to do this work, and you give up something to do it, but you feel you're part of the debate, and it's worthwhile.



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(continued from page 71)

"Hey, Sticky Foot," Iron Man said, "no poaching."

"Chill, Tin Man," Spider-Man replied, "or you might get your fenders dented."

Iron Man, who had seen his namesake's movie 14 times and was feeling invincible, said, "Crawl back in your web, you fucking insect, or you might get my iron upside the head."

And with that, he whacked Spider-Man across the skull with an iron gauntlet, except that the iron was really molded plastic. Spider-Man responded by kicking Iron Man in the groin, sending him crashing to the pavement on top of Judy Garland's handprints, preserved forever in the forecourt cement.

Spider-Man, standing over the fallen superhero, said, "Better borrow a monkey wrench to loosen those nuts, Iron Man."

The Wolf-Man asked Spider-Man, "How would you like it if someone did that to you?"

Spider-Man flexed and replied, "What's your problem, Fido? Either butt out or bring it on!"

The Green Hornet, who was probably the sweetest and gentlest of the costumed panhandlers and was certainly the gayest, came to Iron Man's aid and scolded Spider-Man, saying, "That was unkind, cruel and totally unnecessary."

Spider-Man said, "Buzz off, Hornet, or you'll get swatted next."

That sent the Green Hornet scurrying, and Marilyn Monroe—a.k.a. Regis the plumber in another life—let out a scream at the sight of Iron Man writhing in pain. Captain America was the first to draw a mobile phone from his costume pocket and call 911.

It was not the first time a PSR had some fun with this kind of broadcast. The businesslike LAPD radio voice said, "All units in the vicinity and 6-X-46, a 4-15 fight in the forecourt of Grauman's Chinese Theatre, between Spider-Man and Iron Man. Person reporting is...Captain America. Six-X-46, handle code two."

"How exciting," Fran Famosa said in disgust after rogering the call. "A street character bitch-slapping."

Chester Toles just raised his pale eyebrows a notch, adjusted his aviator eyeglasses and scratched his rubbery bald scalp before turning north on Highland, but he didn't increase his speed by even one mile per hour. "Maybe if we give the young hotshots a chance to jump the call, we won't have to handle it," he said. "They might think a TV crew is going to roll on this one and they'll end up on the news at 10."

Usually, Fran Famosa would utter an objection to Chester's goldbricking, but when it came to a street character donnybrook she was in his corner. Superhero rumbles usually did bring out a TV news team, and when that happened the mob of tourists with cameras seemed to replicate itself, since everybody in Hollywood wanted to be on the big or small screen. The vehicular traffic on the boulevard would slow to a stop so motorists could rubberneck, and the

cops would have a mess on their hands.

"Yeah, take your time, Chester," she said. "I'm not up for dealing with freak show panhandlers."

When, four minutes later, they arrived, Chester said to her, "No worries, mate. The situation is well in hand."

There were already two units from Watch 3 at the scene, both radio cars manned by eager young coppers who would love to handle a superhero squabble in front of an audience of hundreds, especially if a news team showed and the audience grew to potentially hundreds of thousands on the nightly news. Chester and Fran stopped in the red zone and made the obligatory gesture of officially handing off the call to the cops of Watch 3, who hadn't handcuffed anyone and were still mulling over the culpability of Spider-Man for the injurious groin kick after witnesses had concurred that Iron Man had struck the first blow.

In fact, Chester and Fran had just gotten back to their shop when a tourist in an L.A. Dodgers cap yelled, "Hey, that guy just grabbed my wife's purse!"

The thief was a slope-shouldered guy in a long-sleeved black hoodie that hid his face. He wore dirty jeans and running shoes, and he was fast. He zigzagged across Hollywood Boulevard, causing several cars to brake and blow their horns at him. He was nearly out of sight before Chester had time to start the engine, with Fran Famosa ready to bail out and give chase on foot. That is, if her fat partner could get the fucking car moving.

"Come on, Chester!" she said. "The dirtbag's getting away."

"Okay, Fran, don't get your knickers in a knot," Chester said, pulling into traffic with his light bar on, tapping his horn to cut into the lanes of westbound traffic and across the oncoming eastbound traffic.

Fran put out the broadcast that they were chasing a 484 purse snatcher westbound on Hollywood Boulevard from Grauman's, and in a moment the PSR relayed the information to all units in the vicinity. While this was going on, Chester had to blast the siren in order to squeeze through the eastbound number one lane of cars, whose confused and panicked drivers didn't understand what the driver of the black-and-white wanted them to do.

The purse snatcher turned south at the first corner, and by the time they got across Hollywood Boulevard, he'd vanished.

"Maybe he ran into the parking structure," Chester said. "He could hide behind a car and we'd never find him without a K-9."

"There he is!" Fran said.

He'd been momentarily hidden from view by the darkness and a dozen young people walking north toward Hollywood Boulevard for an evening of fun and frolic. The runner turned, saw the black-and-white coming his way and ran even faster.

"Damn, the dude has an extra gear. He can really move," Fran said, broadcasting their location for all units.

Chester meant business now, and with his headlights on high beam and his light bar flashing and his siren yelping, he mashed down on the accelerator. When the purse snatcher was all the way to Sunset Boulevard and turning the corner eastbound in

front of Hollywood High School, he tripped on the uneven pavement. He did a tumble and roll across the sidewalk, and the purse went flying. By the time he got up, 6-X-46 was stopped at the curb on the wrong side of Sunset, facing oncoming traffic, which had slammed to a stop at the sight of the black-and-white bearing down with its red and blue lights winking and its siren howling.

There was an instant traffic snarl on Sunset Boulevard when Fran Famosa and Chester Toles, who was moving faster than Fran thought possible, got out and took off after the limping thief, who wasn't going to go peacefully. He turned and threw a roundhouse punch at Fran, who ducked and grabbed him around the middle as Chester got him in an LAPD-nonapproved but usually effective choke hold. It took the thief to the pavement, with both cops on top of him. His hoodie slipped back and his long black hair fell across a scowling face, brown as saddle leather. Fran saw that he was wearing aviator glasses like Chester's, and they went soaring when he broke free of Chester's choke hold.

He was older than they'd originally thought, maybe mid-30s, and he was strong, far stronger than Chester. He got to his knees, taking Fran up with him, and he stomped hard on Chester's hand and kicked the baton away just as Chester was getting ready to unload with an LAPD-nonapproved head strike. Then the thief whirled and flung Fran Famosa off him, and he started to run again as they heard a welcome siren headed their way.

Fran had a Taser in her hand, but Chester was between her and the thief with handcuffs in his left hand, and she saw the guy grab for Chester's Beretta. Both men lurched into her, and she lost the Taser. Chester didn't even realize it when his pistol clattered to the sidewalk along with his handcuffs. That's when Fran delivered a nonapproved kick to the face of the thief and followed it with a blast of pepper spray, which caught him in the back of the head instead of the face, and then he was up again and trying to run, with Chester Toles hanging on to his left ankle.

Fran Famosa picked up Chester's lost baton and struck the thief once, twice, across the right knee, to no avail. Saying "Fuck this!" she tried a nonapproved head strike, but he threw his arm up and took the blow across the wrist.

It sounded like the muffled pop of a firecracker, and he yelled in pain, then said, "I'll kill you, you cunt!" That's when she saw the knife.

And that's when Chester yelled in desperation, "Shoot him, Fran!"

Fran Famosa was trying to do just that, drawing her Glock .40, retreating a few paces, then taking a combat stance.

But she heard a familiar voice yell, "Drop that knife!"

Hollywood Nate, followed by Britney Small, both with their pistols drawn, were running at the thief, who threw down the knife and raised both hands to the top of his head. She'd been so into the adrenaline-charged moment—sound had ceased and all motion had slowed way down—and so close to killing the thief that she had never heard 6-X-66 squeal to the

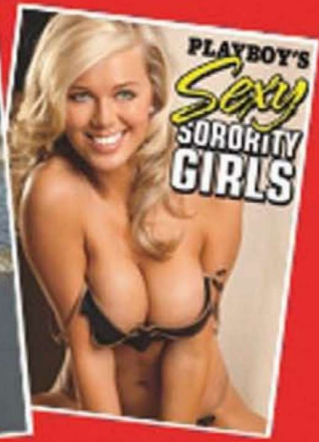


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curb in a brake-locking slide, its high beams lighting up the life-and-death struggle. And she never really registered Hollywood Nate and Britney Small's arrival until Nate was handcuffing the purse snatcher's hands behind his back.

Britney said quietly, "Holster your weapon, Fran. We've got him controlled."

"Ooooh, my frigging back," Chester Toles said, struggling to his feet with one hand pressed against the small of his back, looking for his glasses, his baton, his OC spray and his dignity. Everything was strewn around the sidewalk, including the victim's purse and its contents: wallet, keys, lipstick, compact, tissues and coupons for Pizza Hut.

Then Chester said, "I'm too old for this shit."

Just then, 6-X-76 rolled up and Mel Yarashi jumped out with Always Talking Tony Doakes, and A.T. started jawing.

"This is some cluster fuck," he told Nate when Fran and Britney were out of earshot, walking the thief to Fran's shop. "This is what happens when you put a chick with a fat old slacker like Chester. They're lucky they didn't get scalped."

Only then did Nate notice that the purse snatcher appeared to be an American Indian. A.T. picked up the knife by the tip of the blade and said, "Uh-huh, a trophy taker. Wonder how many hanks of hair he's got hanging from the lodge pole in his tepee. They should always put someone like me with someone like Chester. 'I'll catch 'em, you clean 'em,' that's my motto. I would have run that red man's dick into the dirt."

Mel Yarashi, who was accustomed to A.T.'s garrulous ways, said, "Hey, partner, let's police up the sidewalk here. There's property scattered everywhere."

A.T. nodded but, still wanting to chatter, strolled over to the black-and-white where the purse snatcher was strapped into the backseat with the door open and said, "Dude, you are one lucky Injun. The LAPD's head-shot record with a handgun is 63 yards. If I'd been the closer here, I would have just let you get 64 yards in front of me and broke that record."

"Go fuck yourself," the exhausted Indian said.

"Are you talking to me?" A.T. responded. "And when exactly did you have your lobotomy?"

"I'm not an Injun. I'm a Native American."

"Really?" A.T. said. "Which casino?"

"I want my glasses," the prisoner said.

A.T. said, "I was gonna look for them, but now I have reservations."

He looked around to see if anybody appreciated his Indian humor, but they were all busy talking on radios or cell phones, gathering scattered evidence and waving off more arriving black-and-whites by holding up four fingers, meaning code four, no further help needed. There were already too many coppers milling around the fight scene, but more kept coming.

"I need my glasses, goddamn it," the prisoner said.

"What's your name?" A.T. asked. "And let me guess. You're a parolee, right?"

The prisoner did not deny his parolee status but said, "My name's Clayton Lone Bear. Now go get my glasses, you mud-shark nigger, or bring one of the white cops over here."

"Now you just played the stupid card and made a mortal enemy of this noble buffalo soldier," Always Talking Tony said, thumping his own chest with a fist. "You want a white cop, try smoke signals." Then he turned and said, "Hey, Mel, come over here and babysit Mr. Lame Bear for a minute. I gotta go talk to Chester and Fran. If he tries to go all Little Bighorn on you, gimme a holler."

Mel Yarashi trotted over to Fran and Chester's shop to guard the prisoner, and A.T. walked toward the searchers, who were sweeping the sidewalk with their narrow flashlight beams.

"Isn't it great to be saddled with safe little baby flashlights," Chester Toles said to Fran Famosa. "In the old days I could have lit up the whole freaking scene all by myself with my five-cell monster." Chester was squinting nearsightedly when he spotted a dark object and said, "Hey, the guy had a gun!" Then he moved closer and squatted down, saying, "Wait a minute. This looks like my gun!"

With the adrenaline overload of the

fearful street fight, Chester Toles had been unable to obey the street cop's first commandment: *Watch their hands*. He hadn't realized the thief had jerked his Beretta from its holster before losing it.

Chester picked it up, holstered it and said to Fran with a shiver, "We came close to a bagpiper on the hill." Meaning an LAPD funeral complete with a lone bagpiper playing a dirge, an LAPD custom since the 1963 funeral of Officer Ian Campbell, himself a piper, who was kidnapped from the streets of Hollywood and murdered in an onion field north of Los Angeles.

A.T. strode up to them and said, "Hey, Chester, no big surprise, but I think this PLMF is a parolee at large. Way to go, cowboy." Everyone knew that *PLMF* meant "parolee-looking motherfucker," but Chester Toles was too old and too sore right then to give a shit.

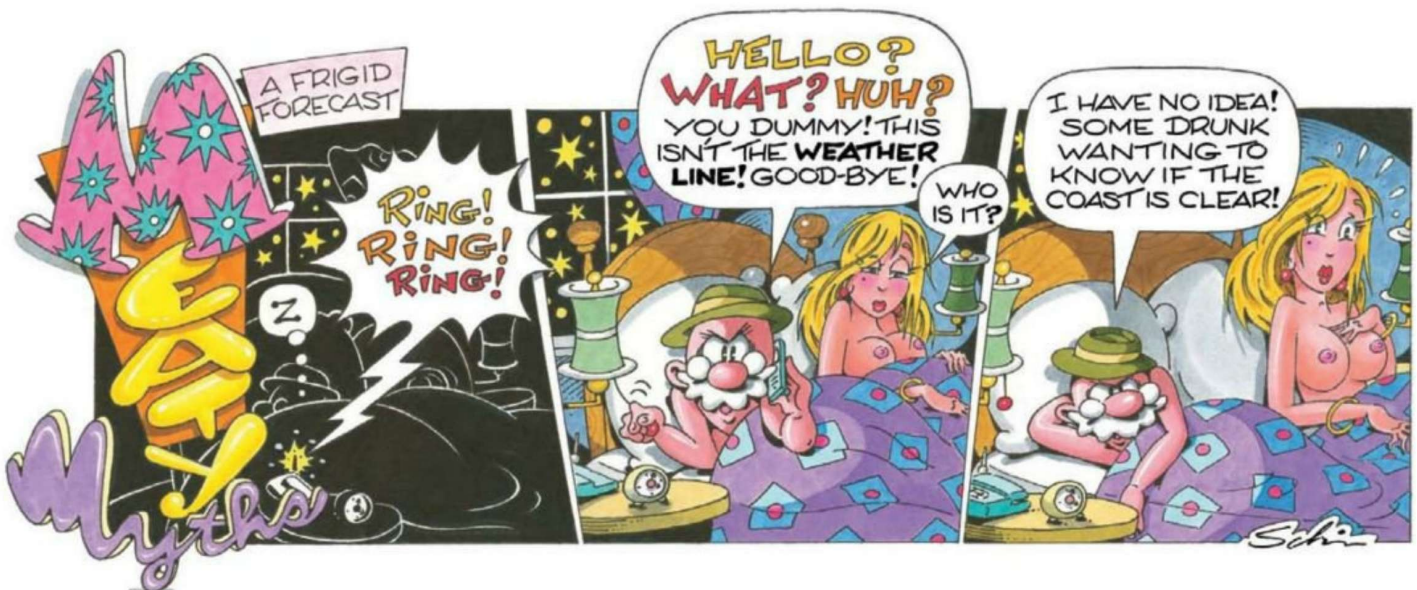
While A.T. was walking back along the curb to his shop, something glinted in his flashlight beam, and he recognized the prisoner's glasses lying in the gutter beside the curb. He glanced around and saw that everyone was occupied with his or her own tasks, so he turned off his flashlight and strolled over to the gutter in the darkness. And he surreptitiously stepped on them, crunching and grinding the glass and metal into the asphalt.

Mel Yarashi was waving the traffic past the scene when Sergeant Murillo pulled up, parking behind Nate and Britney's shop to take over supervision and make notification to Force Investigation Division about a "categorical use of force."

That was when A.T. saw Chester Toles approach the prisoner and hand a pair of glasses to Fran, saying, "Here, put these on his face. I don't know where the hell my glasses are."

"Yo, partner!" A.T. suddenly yelled to Mel Yarashi. "Code four. We're not needed here. Let's bounce."

Excerpted from Harbor Nocturne by Joseph Wambaugh. Printed with permission of the Mysterious Press, an imprint of Grove/Atlantic, Inc.



CHRIS EVANS

(continued from page 74)

EVANS: Oh, pretty bad. I had a couple of bad auditions for that one. I went in one time and just blew the audition and left. I called my agent, and he was like, "Yeah, it's not going to go any further," and I said, "No, I need another audition." The first one I just screwed up, you know? That's what happens sometimes. My fault. The second time, I got in there, and five minutes into the audition, the director had a call on his cell, and he was like, "It's okay. Keep going," and he went out and took the phone call. I was reading the scene with the casting director and the video camera, and I was like, "Well, this isn't right either." But I got one more shot at it, and luckily it worked out.

Q18

PLAYBOY: Are there any roles you lost out on that really upset you?

EVANS: I remember I really wanted that movie *Fracture* that Ryan Gosling ended up doing. I had a really good audition, and the director and I had gotten along incredibly well. He called me and said, "Listen, you're my guy for this thing." But Ryan was on the way up as well, and I think he just read it and liked it. And Anthony Hopkins was in it. You can't beat working with him.

Q19

PLAYBOY: You're a die-hard Boston sports

fan. Has your celebrity afforded you access you only dreamed of as a kid?

EVANS: Sports is the one thing I get giddy about. I get really excited. I do not keep my composure well when I meet athletes. I can meet any actor in the world and say, "Hello, how are you? Nice to meet you," and maintain a level of sensibility. I met Kobe once and did not play it cool. I met Michael Jordan once. I don't even know if he'll remember it. It was like the best experience of my life. I was at Atlantis in the Bahamas one weekend doing some celebrity bullshit, whatever it was, and a party was going on at one of the clubs. This is right after *Fantastic Four* had come out, and on the edge of the VIP section was Michael Jordan. He had his little table there, and he just went, "Hey, hey!" He kind of got the bouncer's attention and said, "That kid's okay." He waved me in, poured me a drink and said, "My kids love you." I did not play it cool. Thank God I wasn't too drunk at that point, because I might have gone in for a hug or something.

Q20

PLAYBOY: You went into therapy after agreeing to play Captain America. What did you learn about yourself?

EVANS: What did I learn about myself? Well, that I'm not the only one who feels overwhelmed. Everyone deals with these feelings, at some level or another, in some way.



LOBBYIST

(continued from page 54)

his room, and since you can't relocate to the nation's capital and quickly build relationships with the power players, you have one choice: Hire a lobbyist.

A lobbyist's existence revolves around solving problems like this. He has probably spent a lifetime building relationships and knows how the legislative process works. Although the cost of hiring a lobbyist isn't included in your company's operating budget, it is a relative bargain if it saves your business. After finding a suitable clothespin for your nose, you set out to engage in the malodorous game of lobbying.

You first need to figure out what kind of lobbyist you need. If the assault on your industry has been building for years and has spread like a cancer through Congress, you might need to engage one of the bigger lobbying shops. Often, powerful lobbying operations are housed within law firms. They usually include several former congressmen and senators on the roster and undoubtedly cost a fortune—especially if the effort requires many lobbyists working many hours. Since most law firms bill by the hour, the cost is likely to be exorbitant.

As for our fictional Omnibus Picture Frame Act of 2012, let's posit that our redoubtable senator is still steamed about his cut hand and has it in mind to move the bill when he gets around to it. But since he's a senior senator and probably chairman or ranking member of some prestigious Senate committee, he has been occupied with other responsibilities. The threat remains, but for now it can probably be dealt with by a smaller, less expensive lobbying shop. Your task is finding the right one.

Having been a member for decades, you contact the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and ask for advice. It gives you the names of three smaller lobbying shops, and you send each an e-mail outlining your issue. After they reply, you get on the phone.

The lobbyists seem like normal people, and even intelligent. So much for stereotypes. They all outline the same basic plan. The first phase is research and intelligence gathering. That means they'll pick up the phone to the senator's staff to see what's in the senator's head. Then they'll study the Omnibus Picture Frame Act to see where it is vulnerable to attack. The second phase is to prepare written materials that support your position and refute any arguments supporting the act. The third phase is for the lobbyist to meet with the senator's staff and, if necessary, the senator. If they can kill the bill with an appeal to reason, great. If not, they will need to mount a more extensive and more expensive campaign to combat the legislation before it spreads throughout Congress.

You want the bill killed at that first meeting, of course, because you want to sleep at night and you don't want this lobbying effort to eat all your profits. So now that you understand what the lobbyists need to do, whom do you hire?

One of your potential lobbyists is an expert on how to make picture frames and knows every nuance of the business. Another is an expert on the legislative process and is able



"Gotta run, Bob. I'm getting a nibble."

to recite the names of every congressman and senator for the past 40 years. The third is less certain of the legislative process and wouldn't know a picture frame from a windowsill but plays golf with the senator and has been one of his main sources of campaign funds for more than a decade.

If all you want is to amend the bill, the expert on picture frames might be the best negotiator. If you need to tie up the bill in the labyrinthine legislative process, the second lobbyist would know just what to do. But you need to get this thing killed fast, so you hire the golfer.

After several phone calls, your lobbyist seems to understand your business—at least enough of it to have an intelligent conversation with the senator. He then explains to you the way Washington really works. He asks you to contribute to the senator's campaign and political action committee to the maximum extent allowed by law and to get your spouse and any other adult you can convince to do the same. The more, the better.

You need a shower to wash off the political filth, since this is the very thing you disdain about politics. But far too often this is how it works in our nation's capital. The lobbyist serves two masters: his client and the legislator. The corrupt game is played in virtually every office on Capitol Hill. Access is granted to those who raise the money. Lobbyists raise money from any source they can, but their most reliable source of donations is their clients, who need results.

Within a few days you courier five \$2,000 checks for the senator's reelection

committee and two \$5,000 checks for his leadership political action committee. Leadership PACs are one of the many smarmy loopholes in the campaign finance law. When it comes to money, everyone in Congress is a leader.

Checks in hand, the lobbyist dons his green-checked pants and yellow-striped polo shirt and hits the links with his friend, the statesman with a recently acquired animus toward picture frames. By the time they make the turn to the back nine, the lobbyist has convinced his friend to drop the silly Omnibus Picture Frame Act, and the senator has banked additional contributions for his already assured reelection. In fact, since the golfing event is now a fund-raiser, the lobbyist can pay for the greens fees too. If there was a conversation that probably crossed the legal line of quid pro quo, neither would

ever admit to it. Just another day at the office in our nation's capital—even when that office is a golf course.

But let's say it is not so easy. What if our New England senator took the draft of the Omnibus Picture Frame Act of 2012, circulated it among his colleagues and garnered co-sponsors? Let's say he also called his state's congressional delegation and asked them to push the bill in the House of Representatives, and they introduced it with some modifications that make the approved manufacturing process even more complex. At this point the local Capitol Hill media hear about the bill and start writing articles, which are replicated as "public interest" stories in *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*. Soon the articles are picked up by the Associated Press and you are reading them in your

costly. It will need to send legions of lobbyists to Capitol Hill to combat the spread of the bill and to lobby members who have signed on as co-sponsors to remove their names from the legislation.

Every stage of the effort is expanded, starting with the intelligence gathering. Instead of having to understand the motivations and plans of one senior senator from New England, the lobbyists now need to comprehend the ruminations of scores of members. The lobbyists will need to canvass Congress (both houses), take a vote count and launch an effort to thwart the bill. They also need to know every detail about your industry. A good lobbyist will constantly pressure his client for more information, since smart lobbyists recognize that the hooks needed to win are in those details.

While they're working Capitol Hill, the lobbyists will need to make sure your industry isn't being vilified in the press, which would ensure additional support for the act. They may need to subcontract with a public relations firm to handle this, depending on how much press the issue attracts.

If the lobbyists are creative, they will work with you to expand your coalition, bringing in not only other frame makers to help foot the bill but also vendors who sell your companies the goods and services they require. For example, your company might buy a boatload of timber each month. Who are the suppliers in the chain of delivery? The interests of each are affected by the act, and they need to weigh in. A smart grassroots campaign, in which the vendors

are organized to call their representatives, can have a powerful impact.

When the lobbyists hit Capitol Hill to meet with Congress, they will be armed with extensive research materials that show how many jobs the bill will kill and how it will ultimately serve the interests of frame makers overseas, perhaps in China. They will employ their powers of persuasion to stop the act. Tying their efforts in to national consensus positions will pay serious dividends. The goal will be to peel off one by one any supporters the senator has enlisted. They will likely have their own golfers on staff who play just as regularly with senators and congressmen, and they will undoubtedly raise even more money than the sole practitioner in our first scenario.

The request for campaign funds will be the same, only it will go out to everyone affected by

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For openers, you are not able to afford a full Washington lobbying campaign alone. The cost will have jumped from five to six or possibly seven figures. You need to form a coalition. Surely other picture frame producers in America are as upset as you are about this bill. You need to find them and get them to commit funds. You need a war chest.

You now must go with one of the larger lobbying firms. Its plan will be grand and

this act. Instead of a few thousand, the coalition will become a pseudo political party, raising enough money to become a political force.

If you hire a powerful lobbying firm, most of the lobbyists will have migrated to K Street—the lobbyists' lair—from Capitol Hill, having themselves served as congressmen or congressional aides. They will have social relationships with virtually every congressional office. When I was lobbying, we knew we could count on more than 100 of the offices in a pinch. Beyond that, we had strong relationships with almost 300 members and their staffs. This is average for a major lobbying firm.

If you pick one of the powerhouse firms, these relationships are renewed almost daily through social and political events such as meals, fund-raisers, sporting events and of course golf. A lobbyist who doesn't spend countless hours creating new relationships will have little access, and that lobbyist will lose in a scrum with competitors who keep their relationships fresh.

An effective lobbyist will not only get to know your industry and issues but will know how other industries with similar challenges fared in the same legislative arena. He or she will know when to recommend a frontal attack and when to suggest political legerdemain. Knowing how much pressure to bring (and when to bring it) is a vital talent you want in your lobbyist. When it comes to lobbying, being a heavy-handed *omadhaun* is as ineffective as being timid.

The most successful of the elite lobbyists are the least lazy. It seems incomprehensible that top lobbyists might be lazy, but some are. The best in the field take advantage of this weakness.

The lobbyist who works out a plan for victory is generally considered well prepared for the battle. But lobbyists who war-game both their own and their opponents' likely moves are the ones most likely to prevail. When I was lobbying, we were rarely defeated because we not only created our own game plan—with countermeasures geared to blunt our opponents' responses—but also created our opponents' plans as if we were in their shoes. There were no imaginable (or even unimaginable) eventualities we didn't consider. In fluid legislative battles, overpreparation is essential.

A winning lobbyist will also not stop fighting until the final bell is rung. Often legislative fights are lost in the last moments because one side declares victory too soon. The right lobbyist will stay vigilant to the end, which usually means the congressional recess.

In today's climate, the right lobbyists can get almost anything they want. Whether it is protection for Acme Picture Frame, a special tax break for a corporation, a sweetheart contract for a labor union or the expenditure of billions of dollars on bootless federal programs, the lobbyist who knows how to play the system and who has access beyond the ken of the average citizen can have more control than many elected officials.

That might work to your benefit if the federal government is harming your interests, but this kind of special interest is ultimately harmful to our republic and to our future. We can only hope the American people send more Mr. Smiths and far fewer future lobbyists to Washington.



DISAPPEARANCE

(continued from page 102)

A death certificate is usually treated at face value by many embassies, as Western functionaries have little idea how easily they can be forged in Asian backwaters. But Lee Kongsiri had purchased \$1,886,493 in life-insurance policies from nine different insurance companies in the U.S. His "widow" collected \$1,586,947 of it—two companies, Allstate and Prudential, suspected fraud and launched investigations.

Newly rich—in Thai terms, anyway—the Kongsiris bought a condo in Bangkok and another in the provincial town of Phetburi. They scarcely bothered to conceal themselves in Bangkok. They had reinvented their lives, and there was no reason for them to fear retribution or even discovery. Bangkok is a city of almost 10 million people, and unlike Western cities it is not stifled by surveillance systems and prying bureaucracies.

The list of insurers the Kongsiris hit up is impressive: Aetna Life Insurance (\$404,858), Bankers Security/ReliaStar (\$302,980), American Guardian Life Assurance (\$300,677), Ohio Life Insurance (\$300,454), Cigna Group Insurance (\$146,970), Central National Life Insurance of Omaha (\$100,000) and Cuna Mutual (\$31,006). These companies paid up on the basis of documentation issued by the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok, and that might have been that had not the Kongsiris committed an act of superlative foolishness.

In 1996 they greeted a party of relatives at Bangkok's Don Muang airport without informing them of Lee's "death." The relatives filmed the whole thing, and the tape made its way into investigators' hands. The FBI asked Thailand for an arrest, and the hapless couple was extradited after the Pennsylvania attorney general's Insurance Fraud Section filed charges that eventually imprisoned them. The Kongsiris had shown how easy it was to defraud American insurance companies out of astronomical sums of money by faking one's own death and disappearing. As for the unhappy pair, they each received 14 years.

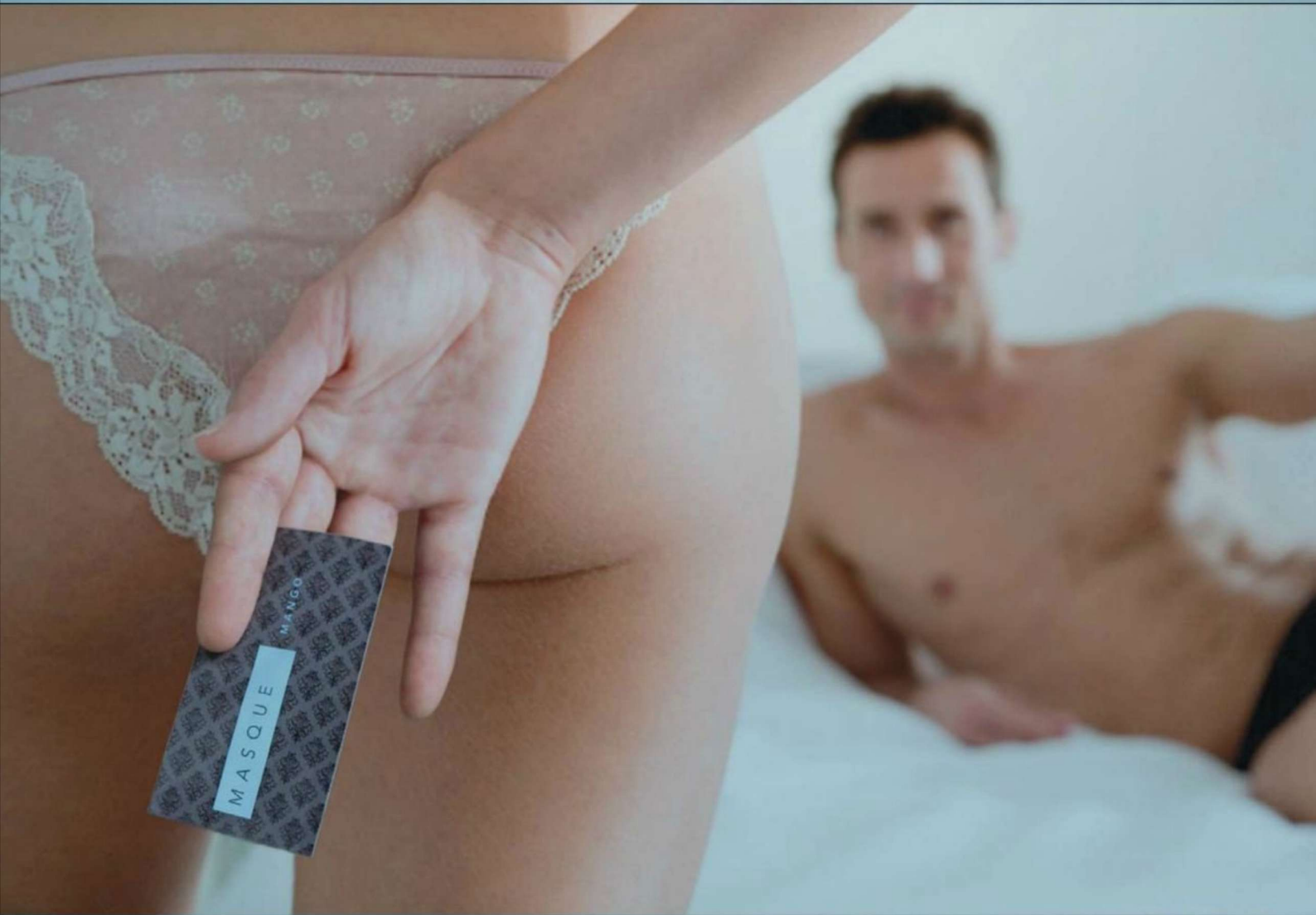
There was a twist in this story, however. It turned out Mrs. Kongsiri's real name was not Phatcha but Silivai. She had changed it after staging her own death in Thailand in 1985, claiming a modest insurance payout and then disappearing back to the U.S. Having performed the scam immaculately once, she decided to repeat it with the husband she had remarried under her new name. The statute of limitations had run out on the 1985 fraud, and Phatcha was never tried for it. She and her husband kept the money.

Bales is a Bangkok character. A former marine born in 1942, he has become perhaps the definitive investigative expert on vanishing and its psychology, at least in Asia. He founded his own investigation firm, called First Services, in 1979 and ran its Asia bureau in Bangkok between 1989 and 2004, working out of Los Angeles for the last five years before retiring. I tracked him down in a seaside Thai village called Ban Krut, which is where he ended up with his Thai wife, Kasama. They run a small New York-style



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pizzeria that bears her name. There's nothing in Ban Krut except a *wat* on a hill, a few desultory resorts for overweight Germans and a distant view of the hills in Burma.

It's an unlikely place for a private eye to retire to, one of the sedate family resorts that punctuate the coast south of the royal beach town of Hua Hin. There's a Victorian train station straight out of *Mary Poppins* but no Radissons or girlie bars with names like Sex for You and Press My Buttons. It's a fine place for a man who is sick of Bangkok, and perhaps a fine place for a man who is sick of people in general. It is the kind of place to which a man who has seen too much retires. It implies a gentle dust.

The Baleses bought land behind a laid-back resort on the beach road and built a villa alongside a creek. It's the expatriate's dream. A self-built house, a patch of tropical water and jungle, a corner of the world utterly still and stagnant and fertile. There are a couple of beach bars with cheap Singha beer and no *farang* tourists. Inside the house are walls covered with Marine Corps memorabilia and yellowing snapshots of a younger Byron sporting a shoulder holster in *Starsky & Hutch* poses. I've always found it strange the way people make these disconcerting collages of their past lives, displayed in offices and kitchens, with a younger self peering out at the present as if to challenge its credibility. It made me curious about what Bales remembers of his professional life in Asia. Did the expat dream, for example, have anything to do with the dreams of disappeared people who went to live in far-off countries offering a more enjoyable way of life? The answer was swift.

"Maybe it does," he says. "Why would you want to retire somewhere *other* than Thailand? It's the easiest country. You're going to retire in the United States? Good luck."

Bales is a fast-talking charmer with something still faintly military about him: The cropped white hair, the crisp manners and the rapid deployment of statistics suggest a

man more comfortable with concrete realities than abstract arguments.

He drifted into investigation work because, he says, he liked the idea of decoding human nature by following the behavior of fugitives. He began in the 1970s investigating corrupt cops and drug dealers and then moved into traveling the world to pursue insurance claims. First Services now has offices around the globe. The company runs on foot soldiers known as "men on the ground," snoopers who are not quite good enough to be investigators but who do the humdrum work of informants.

One hundred and seventy countries over 20 years have yielded a bizarre panorama of human vice and folly. In Syria, for example, Bales investigated a Damascan businessman who put out contract killings on his two sons to collect the life insurance, and succeeded. In Taipei people had their relatives bumped off for a handy dividend, and in Manila you could have someone killed for 5,000 pesos, about \$115. People would insure imaginary brothers and aunts and get away with it. They'd pack caskets with rocks and stage elaborate funerals for people who didn't exist. They'd insure their own children and declare them dead to collect the cash.

"The thing to remember about criminals," Bales explains, "is that they are always being criminals. A scammer is always scamming, no matter where he is. His behavior will always betray him in the end."

His moral response to this incontrovertible proof that humans will stop at nothing to procure money without working for it is a needle-fine gallows humor mixed with an Asian fatalism that leaves room for a certain amused patience. Parents killing their children for cash—why not? Hundred-dollar assassinations in a city of 14 million—why be surprised? Faking your own death is mild by comparison.

"How many do it?" I ask.

"Who knows? It's a conspiracy of silence. No one wants to talk about it very much."

The statistics of staged vanishings and

insurance payouts are difficult to determine because insurance companies are reluctant to admit how much money they lose each year—and how they lose it—through such scams. The private investigators they hire to track down disappeared people are a tiny fraternity of tight-lipped operators whose livelihoods are threatened by the most trivial disclosures. Even anonymously, they rarely comment on cases. Predators and prey—investigators and scammers—are locked in a battle that neither side wants to elucidate to an outsider. "I'm talking to you," Bales says, "because I'm retired."

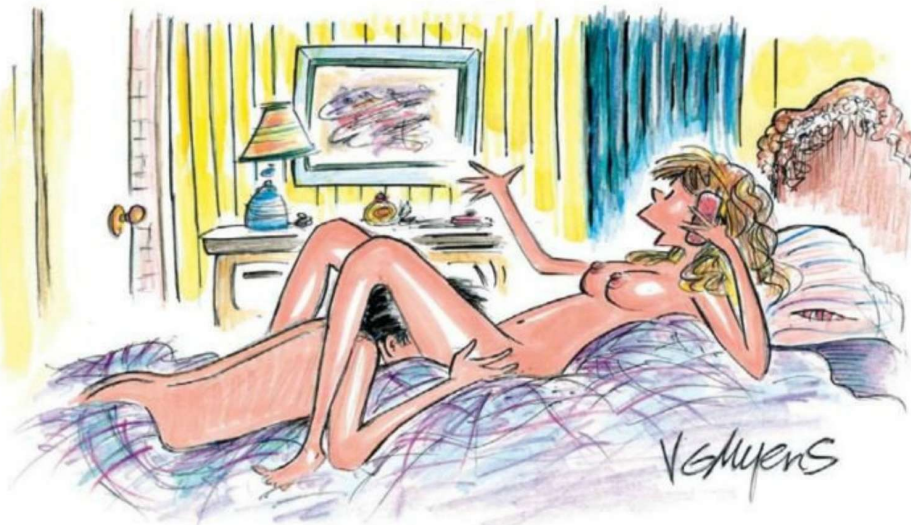
First Services estimates that prior to 1999 it was handling up to 20 cases a month (it's more like one a week now). The trade was global. Scammers operated out of many African countries, as well as the Middle East, until new immigration laws in the U.S. and 9/11 stemmed the flow of fraudsters flowing into the country to file claims. Now, however, new cases are on the rise again. It's possible—and it's anecdotally suggested—that the financial crisis will see more troubled souls doing what former hedge fund manager Samuel Israel III did, writing a suicide note on his car and disappearing from Bear Mountain Bridge in New York on June 9, 2008, only to reappear wretchedly a few days later. His pithy note, drawn from the title of the *MASH* theme song, was "Suicide is painless." Which is certainly true if you don't actually commit it.

One retired FBI agent, who now runs a restaurant in Bangkok, says that during 20 years of duty specializing in Indonesia she heard of disappearance cases only through the grapevine. "We knew they were there, but they were sort of underground. We knew people came to Asia to do it," she says. Another FBI agent based in Manila tells me his office is focused mostly on terrorism issues, not disappeared people. "But we hear about such cases from time to time. There's usually little we can do, however."

Bales explains how a case might look. Let's say an American salesman who has lost his job decides to fake his death. Usually it's a husband-and-wife team because someone has to cash in the claim. It is pretty much impossible to collect your own life insurance in person.

The couple live in Maryland, so they start by looking for a courthouse in the continental U.S. that has burned down. It doesn't matter where, so long as they are certain all birth and death certificates have burned as well. According to Bales, they are quite easy to find. Courthouses burn down all the time.

The salesman finds someone who has died from that courthouse's jurisdiction and whose family has moved away, preferably someone who died young. He writes to the present courthouse and requests a duplicate birth certificate. When he gets the duplicate, he applies for a passport. This too is surprisingly easy. Equipped with a new passport, the prospective disappearer begins to develop a second persona. The second persona has to have some affinity with his real persona, or he is likely to slip up at critical moments (unexpected interviews at security checkpoints, visits to hospitals, etc.). It takes about two years for all these elements to fall into place, and by that time he has eased himself into the mind-set of his invented person. He



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has learned to think differently, to answer to a dead person's name.

He will need a death certificate, but in some instances he will also need a corpse to back it up. There are a number of ways to acquire one. In the wild East, he can discreetly approach a cop in one of the big cities and make an offer: For, say, \$2,000 he can request that the cop find him a Caucasian corpse more or less the same height as himself. It's the height that counts, Bales says. You can mutilate the corpse or have it quickly cremated, but it will always be measured first. The corrupt cop on the American's books can switch IDs, grease the wheels and make sure no one pokes their nose too deeply into the scam, but he can rarely avoid having the body measured. You can fake anything except a body's height.

How does someone get a body in the first place? No problem, Bales says. It's called body shopping. "In Bangkok we used to have a *farang* death in the city's hotels almost every week. We used to call the Dynasty Inn on Soi 4 Nana, where all the sex tourists go, the Die Nasty Inn. We'd get a white corpse there quite reliably most weeks, and any corrupt cop could have switched the IDs. I'm not saying they ever did. Not on the record, anyway."

It is the same in Manila and Phnom Penh. Cause of death could be anything. "There are," he adds, "a lot of deaths in resorts. Who knows why?" Maybe it's the food or the all-around merriment.

But if a convenient-size corpse doesn't show up on time, you can always have one custom delivered for \$10,000 and often for much less. In this scenario the cop will actually go out and kill someone for you. It's a dirty business, murdering a total stranger who happens to be the same race and height as yourself. But for a payout of \$1 million, people will do it. No one knows how many people disappear every year from body shopping, and

Bales is grimly agnostic: "It's more than you think." Dozens a year? "Impossible to say. But it really does happen."

The cop on the body shopper's payroll will plant his ID on whatever corpse he has selected. Two people, in effect, will have disappeared: the shopper and his body double. What is left is the shopper's invented persona, who is now free to thrive as he likes. He is the dejected American salesman in a different envelope.

Meanwhile, the grieving wife puts on an act for local authorities and for the slackers at the local embassy, and she ends up with a shiny new death certificate. There was a time, Bales claims, when the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok was handing them out like candy wrappers. This is no longer quite as true, however. The Philippines, he says, offers better hunting grounds.

What happens next is in some ways even more bizarre. Scammers target American companies because there are so many of them and because their underwriting is so haphazard. When it comes to investigating claims, they compete against one another. There is no digital cross-referencing system, and—according to Bales—insurers, investigators and immigration authorities in the U.S. do not collaborate in any meaningful way. This makes for a criminal's paradise.

Recently, a man in Pakistan insured himself with 37 different American companies for a minor hospitalization and billed all of them at once for a huge sum. He was paid. Insurance companies have recently scaled back hospitalization and disability policies, and there is a two-year waiting period in the case of suicides before payment is made. "But at the same time," says Bales, "insurance companies hate publicity, so they are inclined to pay if things get sticky. And every con man knows it."

Armed with a death certificate from a country like the Philippines, however, the

scammer's wife has little to do but wait patiently for the check—provided, of course, the company doesn't hire someone like Bales to hunt her husband down. "I can usually find them," he says. "I have the nose and I know when something isn't right. It's only when they collect, however, that things get dangerous for me. A scammer who has collected can be prosecuted."

But what about the American salesman and his body double?

"They didn't get the money. But they nearly did. Because no felony was committed from the insurance point of view, nothing was investigated. No one was murdered."

It would be fair to say Bales's richest territory has been the Philippines. Sprawling, difficult to traverse, spectacularly corrupt, the archipelago is the perfect place to fake a death, disappear or have a body double cremated as you. The Philippines, he says almost with admiration, is unlike any other place in Asia or even the world. It's even cheaper than Thailand, and it's English-speaking. The girls are gorgeous and the cops even more delightfully corrupt. Where better to vanish?

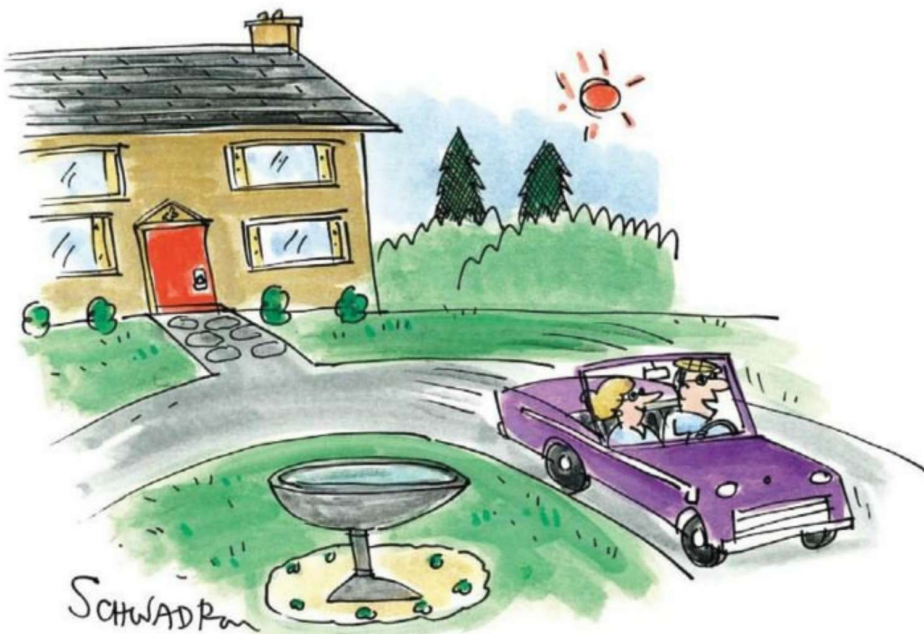
Once he was sent to the Philippines to track down the wife of an Australian citizen who had supposedly died of cancer at the age of 27 and whom the husband had insured for \$750,000 with American companies. Her death had been reported in the local papers, and there had been a seemingly bona fide burial. Bales went to the cemetery, where the headstone carried a photograph of her, as is usual in the Philippines. But the plate on the stone itself was obviously fake. Bales ripped it off easily and then went to the National Statistics Office to see if her name had been registered as a death. It turned out they hadn't registered because they wanted to bring her back to life—with her own name.

Now knowing she wasn't dead, Bales set off to the Visayan islands, where she was originally from, hopping from island to island looking for a girl called Lolita. Her husband was at home in Australia, and she certainly wasn't there, so Bales found her home village near Roxas City, settled in and began asking the inhabitants if anyone had seen her.

"In the Philippines everyone knows the insurance-scam game," he says. "They even have a phrase for it: *tago ng tago*, 'hiding and hiding.' When I asked them if they had seen this girl, they all just winked and tapped their noses. She had been there six months after death, all right. But could I find her myself?"

He never did find her, but he was able to disarm the claim. Since nothing was collected, Lolita and her husband were not subject to prosecution, and Bales is certain they tried it a second time. Scammers know they won't be prosecuted without collecting the money, and so they have no hesitation in repeating the same stunt until they get it right. In this case, at least they didn't kill anyone.

As the sun went down we retired to an open-air beach bar. Bales drifted back to the stories that really grip him, tales of fraud that seem to illustrate a part of the human mind we wish weren't there. Like the businessman in Syria. Or the eeriness of disappearance itself. Take Richard Bingham, seventh Earl of Lucan, who disappeared in 1974 after his



"I know money can't buy happiness, so I prefer to dwell on all the positives that it can buy."

nanny was found murdered in the Lucan house in London. There have been countless sightings of Lord Lucan all over the world since, including one involving a man living in his car in New Zealand who was actually investigated by a detective. There is a cottage industry devoted to Lord Lucan sightings, much like Elvis and the Loch Ness monster. And yet Lucan has never surfaced. He had the nerve to stay disappeared.

"It seems counterintuitive that anyone can disappear in today's world," says Bales, "so when they do, it makes the world seem more primitive, more dangerous. It make us think our security is an illusion—and it is."

Consider a recent example of exactly this kind of planned disappearance. In 2002, a 51-year-old former teacher and prison officer named John Darwin, living in a small beach town near the holiday resort of Hartlepool in northeast England, disappeared in the North Sea while canoeing by himself. He was a noted amateur canoeist, and he disappeared on a calm day, in perfect conditions. Darwin was subsequently declared dead without evidence of a corpse or foul play. His wife, Anne, assumed it was suicide, and this was ruled as a possibility. In April 2003 an inquest recorded an open verdict and formally declared that Darwin was dead. The life insurance paid out. The mortgage was cleared, his debts were erased—and his wife was left in possession of two substantial properties and a pension from the prison service of £8,000 a year.

But Darwin was still alive. For five years he lived in a cubbyhole in his wife's house, cultivating an alternate identity under the name of John Jones and going for midnight walks on the beach dressed in a shabby overcoat and woolly hat. He was seen occasionally in the tiny town, but people assumed he was a homeless man or an eccentric they didn't know. The wife eventually sold the house and disappeared. The couple moved to Panama and, with the insurance money, bought an estate they intended to develop as a tourist resort. Locals who met them described them as a normal, affable couple with a good sense of humor and a love of the good life. Like the Kongsiris, they seemed mightily pleased with themselves and remarkably at ease in their new, improved life.

The Darwins' scheme was a smooth

success, and they were caught only when John began to miss his two sons, whom he had not informed of his scam. He flew back to the U.K. and turned himself in. It's a classic pattern. Disappearing is relatively easy, but staying that way is not. The question, though, is how many cases do we not hear of precisely because they are perfectly executed? How many Lord Lucans are out there, men who have vanished overnight and who have made their peace with that fact?

After talking with Bales, I was naturally curious to see how easy it is to be declared dead. I didn't want to disappear, but I was fascinated by the idea that I could. What would it feel like to see one's name on a death certificate and know that one's demise was officially recorded in a government database?

Because I have a long association with Thai-

American would come here to disappear.

Not knowing where to begin, I started going out to bars in Makati. I trawled the KTVs (a sort of karaoke lounge cum brothel) in the Mile Long Arcade—places like Pharaoh, which seemed a likely hangout for off-duty cops, or foreigner joints like Handle Bar on Polaris Street in Bel-Air, where the outside tables were a fluid scene. One night I went to the infamous Air Force One by the airport, with its economy, business and first-class massage parlors staffed by "flight attendants." I hung around waiting for the after-work official of my nightmares to come strolling up to ask what I wanted. But he didn't.

Eventually, within three nights of this lone bar-hopping, I was approached in the trendy M Café in the Ayala Museum by a young man who could have been a fashion

designer. He asked me inoffensively why I was in Manila. I lied, and he then asked me what I wanted that night. It's a common question in Asia, and there is the understanding that if you simply say what it is you want it will be furnished without much complication. I said, "I'm shopping for a death certificate." Entirely unsurprised, he asked, "Real one or fake?"

I thought I would try the fake one first. They manufactured them on a certain street where it was not safe to go, and you could get birth certificates, credit cards, records, anything you wanted. I gave my new friend my address, and two days later a motorbike drew up outside my building and an envelope was sent up to my unit. It was a certificate of death with my name misspelled and the cause of death noted

as "massive heart attack." Cost: \$10.

The problem with forged certificates is that they are not registered with the government. This means a scrupulous insurer, or its investigator, could easily prove their illegitimacy. It might work for smaller scams, but for big money I'd need a real death certificate registered with the local civil registry. In Manila, that means the registry in Manila City Hall. I would have to go there and try to turn a clerk. This is what many a scammer has done in the past. But it was possible that times had changed. Bales had told me all you needed was charm and a crisp new bill.

City Hall stands at the junction of Alameda-Lopez and Padre Burgos Street in the old part of town near the Spanish core of Intramuros. It's a decaying neoclassical pile with a polychrome Jesus in front and bamboo scaffolding

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land, I didn't want to try there. Instead, I flew to Manila a few months later and sublet an apartment in Makati City behind the imposing fire station on Ayala Avenue—one of Manila's most upscale and internationalized but suitably anonymous neighborhoods. The apartment was in a high-rise tower, and outside the front door was an unremarkable side street.

Manila is different from Bangkok. It has a gun culture with a more violent, reckless streak. There is a greater feeling of corruptible chaos. The Philippines is one of the most bureaucratic countries in the world and therefore one of the easiest in which to get things done with the right tip. It's also much more Americanized. English is spoken as much as Tagalog among many classes. And most important, Manila is a megalopolis, with a population of 12 million. I could see why an

everywhere. Many of its windows are blocked with irrational cinder-block walls or plywood panels, and by the gates are countless notices announcing NO FIXERS ALLOWED, which I thought was rather a shame because never would a fixer have been more useful.

I went through the courtyard in sunglasses and was directed by the armed police to the registry. It was packed with people seeking birth certificates. As I waited to see a clerk, I wondered what the prison term was for bribing them or whether it would all be brushed off in good humor. Eventually, one way or the other, I had my clerk: a youngish man in a nice shirt with blade-like creases. When he asked me what I wanted, I said, "I am doing research on statistics and was wondering if I could meet you for coffee outside."

There was no reaction of surprise. An hour later we were walking through the Central Terminal Station nearby, through dark arcades of fast-food outlets and vendors of *empanadas especiales*, the clerk in his pressed shirt, me with slightly shaking hands. There was a dingy eatery called Manileno, where horse races were being broadcast, and we sat there because no one would pay us any attention. I bought him lunch with a glass of milky *buko* juice, and he ate his squid balls slowly. We gazed out a little mournfully at a pawnshop called Palawan and a blind busker strumming a fake Stratocaster.

"So what are you researching?" he asked. I said quite bluntly that I wanted a death certificate.

"What for?" he said. "That's my business."

"No, actually, it's my business too." I said I wanted to claim the insurance money. I figured any other explanation would sound false, and that he knew perfectly well what I wanted it for.

"I see," he murmured and calmly gave me the price. It was 1,000 pesos for the certificate and 1,000 for himself. That made about \$50 in total. I agreed, but as we sat there I felt he was changing his mind. He wasn't sure about me, and there was something, perhaps, in my manner that was not genuinely desperate. Then I realized I had forgotten to haggle. A real criminal always haggles, even over a \$25 certificate. I should have pushed him down to \$15.

It was a mistake, and as we walked back to City Hall along Villegas Street and through the tropical park next to the university, I felt he was getting cold feet. Finally he said he couldn't do it, but he asked for my number all the same. He could ask someone to ask someone to ask someone, and perhaps they could help. He smiled the whole time, with the gentle irony of the Filipinos, and there was no judgmental distaste in his refusal. It was too risky for him to undertake. I said I was sorry, and he said, "No problem."

Two days later the phone rang. A cheerful woman's voice. She asked me what I wanted. I gave her my details, and then she asked, "When did you die? And how?"

"Yesterday," I blurted out. "I died yesterday and I think it was a heart attack."

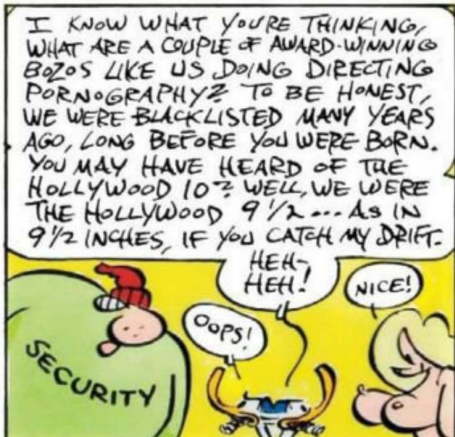
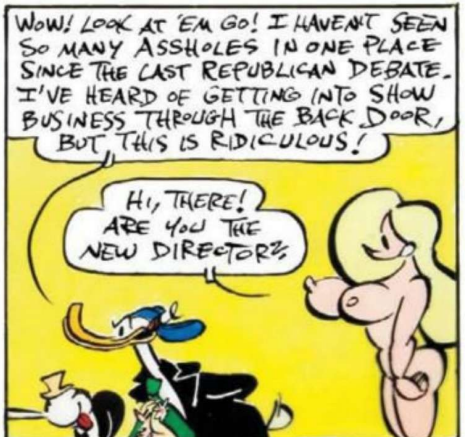
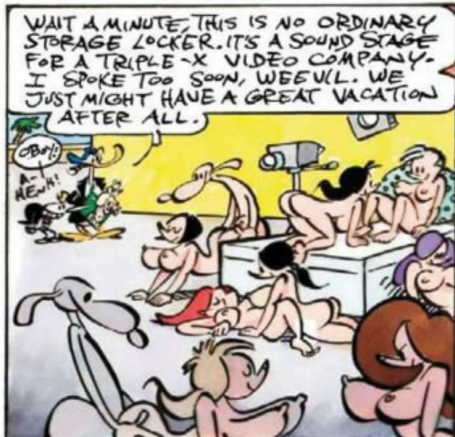
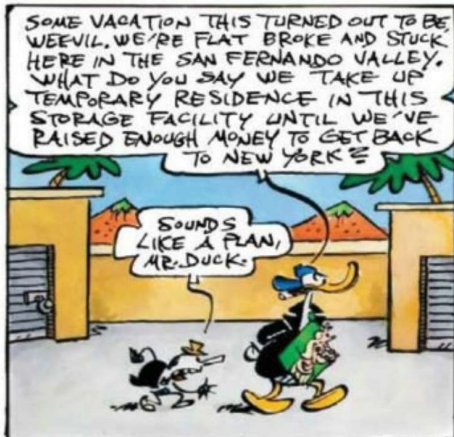
"You think?" "I wasn't there," I said, and she laughed. "I'll see what I can do," she concluded. "It's 1,000 pesos for the certificate, and you can give me the same if you like."

The next 24 hours felt like my last on earth, or at least how my last 24 hours of normal life would feel if I were about to disappear. There was the slight fear I had blundered too far and that a police car would arrive downstairs looking for the gringo insurance fraudster.

But nothing of the sort happened. Instead, the same woman called me back and told me my death certificate was ready and would be delivered to my apartment by a courier who would anonymously leave it at the front desk of my apartment block. I would see no one and ask no questions.

As I went down to collect it I thought of Steven Chin Leung, the Hong Kong national who had managed to have himself named as one of the 650 Cantor Fitzgerald employees who had perished in the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. What had gone through Leung's mind as he saw himself plastered over the national media as a dead person?

Dirty Duck by Bobby London



Glee, ecstatic satisfaction or unnameable dread? He later claimed he was using his death certificate to avoid a prior offense related to obtaining a U.S. passport, but there might well have been more to it than that. For myself, there was an acute anticipation at the idea of being declared nonexistent. I was sure it was going to feel like walking through an open door on the far side of which lay a possibility that could be savored without being seized. My own certificate was in a pale blue envelope stapled at both ends. I took it upstairs with a morbid unease.

This was an official death notice signed by a doctor in a hospital in the Sampaloc neighborhood in Manila, and it bore official government stamps. I was identified as a Catholic who had succumbed to a condition named as “pulmonary acute,” and my body was designated as ready for burial. My closest relative was named at the bottom of the form as one “Jasmin Osborne,” my “auntie” whose delicate signature appeared above. I wondered how they had guessed that far from having a weak heart I do actually suffer from acute and chronic emphysema. I had died at midnight, needless to say.

It was then that the mentality of *tago ng tago*—hiding and hiding—finally set in, and I felt strangely emboldened to assume the pleasures of fakery and pseudocide. Like Reginald Perrin, I started to go out under an assumed name, telling people I met in bars and clubs that I was John Jones and worked as a banker at a Singapore firm. I could have said Prince Prinzapolka and they would not have batted an eyelid. It was easy to tell people whatever you wanted. It was disturbingly easy to imagine carrying on like this indefinitely. The pleasure, deep down, was not that of making illicit money but simply of no longer being who you had been.

It's a fantasy, and a dangerous one. A male fantasy, perhaps, that involves not only a repressed desire for nomadism and vagrancy but also a knowledge of how expendable and cheap one's life really is. One's disappearance might not matter much.

I kept my death certificate by my bedside for a long time, glancing at it every night before sleep. I remembered a story Bales had told me on our last night together in Ban Krut. He had often traveled to Nigeria to search for disappeared people. Once, he had driven the dangerous road between Lagos and the oil town of Port Harcourt. It passed through immense sugarcane fields where cars were often ambushed by bandits and made to disappear. People, spare parts, traces of blood—they all vanished into thin air. Bales stopped at a shantytown in the middle of these cane fields for a beer, and there was a terrifying screeching of brakes as two cars nearly hit each other.

“At that moment,” Bales said, shivering at the memory, “everyone in the shanty started screaming at exactly the same pitch as the sound of the brakes. It went on for minutes, and the Africans told us it must be some kind of mourning for the disappeared. It's like when people disappear we have to deal with it in some way. They were acknowledging them, and although it made me afraid, I understood the feeling. Every disappearance makes us superstitious.”



Twitter

(continued from page 64)

is a great example of someone who has smart jokes and silly jokes,” he says. “He pays homage to Groucho Marx, but a lot of his other jokes are incredibly sophisticated and nuanced. Some of his movies are barely funny. They're tragic. I try to do that in some of my stuff. If I'm feeling sad, I'll tweet something sad. I don't care that it isn't a joke.”



Allow me to humbly propose a theory about comedy on Twitter: We have become too immersed in postmodern humor—mockumentaries, shows within shows, unreliable comedic narrators, knowing glances to the camera. Comedy has become like one big William Gaddis novel. And that's great: It's advanced; it makes us sophisticated. Yet where does the simple, pure joke live in that jungle of referential complication? All this cleverness risks suffocating the kernels of stupid truth that are at the heart of everything funny. But not on Twitter—a wildlife preserve for one-liners, puns and double entendres. At its essence, Twitter is a mode of comedy that resists too much cleverness. And comedians, as in real-life comedians, are thankful for it. “Meta-comedy is so goddamn annoying,” Norm Macdonald (@normmacdonald, 365,258 followers) told me not long ago. “Comedy isn't important enough to be meta. To me, the best joke ever is ‘Take my wife, please.’ It's a three-word setup and a one-word punch line.”

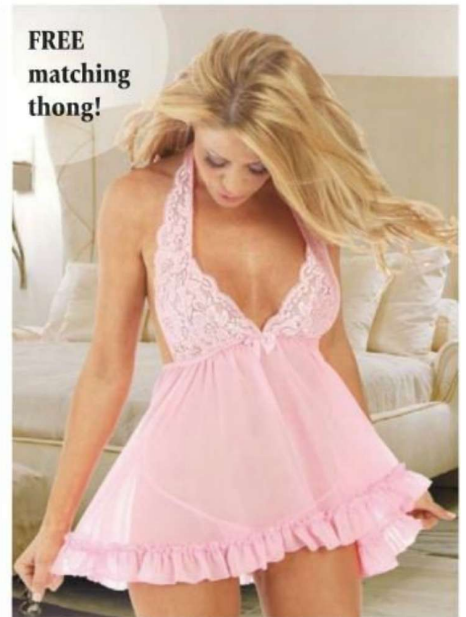
Even meta-comedy masters like Garry Shandling, the co-creator of *It's Garry Shandling's Show* (Old Testament meta) and *The Larry Sanders Show* (New Testament meta), are enlivened by Twitter (@GarryShandling, 168,256 followers). His feed is full of odd spellings, inventive grammar and nonsensical thoughts. It's warty and only occasionally funny, but it's weirdly compelling. He treats his followers as if they were the manifestation of a Hydra that follows him around his house. He frequently says good night on Twitter, and his fans say it back to him—kind of like a twisted, digital version of *The Waltons*. Meanwhile, he still manages a hysterical gem now and again (e.g., “eHarmony matched me up with a gun”).

“Some of my tweets are just silly,” Shandling explains. “They don't make sense on the surface, but my followers start to sense this punchy guy. That's hilarious to me. Sometimes they'll go, ‘Are you drinking tonight, Garry?’ The answer is always no, because I don't drink. But I get loose, and I think they're not used to people being so loose on Twitter. I work Twitter like it's a big room. A comedian working a nightclub can lose the room, but on Twitter you can actually lose the whole world.”



The first published jokes to spring forth from Sulkin's mind appeared in a much more analog venue—*The Circle*, the more subversive of the two newspapers at his tony Massachusetts prep school, Middlesex. The humor, while not dripping with nuance, at least attempted to push buttons. “We once published ‘The

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Top 10 Worst Things About Our School Librarian,” he tells me. “It was mean—things like ‘You’re old, and your life is sad.’” The piece caused such a stir that Sulkin found himself standing before the school’s headmaster, treading carpet and begging forgiveness. Later, during Sulkin’s senior year, the school appointed a new headmaster, an Asian American woman. Again, he published a list—this time of “names one shouldn’t call” the new hire. Each was a ridiculous Wild West insult (“Lily Liver,” “Chicken Gizzard”). Among the gags was “Yellowbelly.” A PC shit storm ensued due to the headmaster’s ethnicity, and Sulkin spent graduation day in a disciplinary meeting facing bizarre charges of racism, which were later dropped.

He spent the next four years at Connecticut College, where he majored in pot smoking. “I’m sure the classes and teachers were great,” he says. “But I never went.” (Sulkin’s love affair with THC continues today, and some of his best tweets have been about weed—e.g., “Kids, don’t smoke pot. Unless you want to be like the Beatles” or “Kids, never mix pot, alcohol and vicodin unless you want a severe case of the fucking wonderfals.”) As a senior, Sulkin scored an internship at *Saturday Night Live*. “Chris Farley was there,” he recalls. “David Spade

was there. It was the remnants of the Adam Sandler–Mike Myers era.” After graduation, he parlayed the internship into a job as a writers’ assistant. Mainly this meant gofering, but from time to time he put actual words to paper. “I sometimes would write those little ads with that week’s host saying, ‘Hi, I’m so-and-so. I’m hosting *Saturday Night Live*, with musical guest so-and-so.’ Then they would do a quick joke, which was mine. It was exciting.” Norm Macdonald, who was still doing “Weekend Update” at the time, remembers Sulkin, though just barely. “He hardly ever spoke,” Macdonald says.

After being replaced at *SNL* by Regis Philbin’s daughter (weird), Sulkin drifted into stand-up comedy. Though he professes to have hated every minute of it, he continued to tell jokes before a live audience for the next three years, dragging himself on stage to somnambulate his way through a set of static material for minuscule crowds who didn’t give a shit about him. “I remember all my terrible jokes,” he says. “It was around the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta so I did something about the Jewish Olympics with events like the ‘oy vey-vault’ and the ‘shot-put that down before you hurt yourself.’”

Salvation came in 1999 when he was asked to audition for a writer’s position on *The Late*

Late Show With Craig Kilborn. (Remember him?) After getting the morning paper and quickly submitting 50 jokes about the news contained therein (an exercise not unlike Twitter), Sulkin got the job. Also on Kilborn’s staff was Wellesley Wild, an old friend from Sulkin’s Marijuana U days at Connecticut College. “Wellesley and I decided that we would partner up,” says Sulkin. “We mainly wanted to get into sitcoms because you can only make a certain amount of money writing for late-night television, thanks to union rules.” One of their early spec scripts landed them on the 2003 Fox series *The Pitts*, which had the lifespan of a mayfly. But the show’s writing staff included *Family Guy* creator Seth MacFarlane. Guess where that led.

But first, the Sarah Silverman part of the story. On Christmas Day 2009, Sulkin was sitting in a New York City hotel room when he got an automated e-mail that read, “Sarah Silverman is now following you on Twitter.” It was immediately followed by a note. “She sent me a direct message that said, ‘You’re funny,’” Sulkin remembers. “I started writing her back right away. Initially, I was a little bit of a dick. I was kind of like, ‘Oh, you’re famous. I can’t talk to you.’ She bristled at that, so I realized it wasn’t the way to go. Within two days, though, we were exchanging dozens of messages. I was still in New York, but I felt that something was going to happen. One night soon afterward, I was back in L.A. and Sarah sent me a direct message saying, ‘I’m not feeling well. Will you come over and feel my forehead?’ I went to her house instantly. That was the night before New Year’s Eve, and from that day forward, we didn’t spend a night apart for months. It was really intense and great for a long time.”

Over e-mail, I ask Silverman why she felt compelled to contact Sulkin. (They have since broken up—very amicably, thank you.) “I read his tweets, and they were so funny, dark and beautiful. He’s like this sardonic, honest, hilarious poet.” As for why she thinks Sulkin is so good in 140-character nano-quips: “Twitter isn’t based on politics or selling yourself in a room. It’s straight-up talent. No one owns it. There are no notes or executives; there is just one cook. And Alec baring his cynical soul is undeniable greatness.”

Another undeniable result: All the cynical soul baring has turned him into a veritable Twitter crush. Female followers randomly send him messages like “ur the only man id ever let put it in my bum. i trust u being my soul mate so much im willing2sacrifice my sacred hole.” “There are times,” Sulkin says, “when I get an @ message from someone and I blow up their avatar photo and think, Is the person who wrote this suggestive thing hot? And do they live in Los Angeles? And are they over 21?”

Most likely, anal virginity is being offered to Sulkin because of his fame and relative fortune—as opposed to the hoary chestnut about women being attracted to a man’s sense of humor above all else. But there is something going on with Twitter, a new kind of star-to-fan relationship that allows a person’s followers to feel closer to him than they would a guy who was just a successful writer or comedian. “Twitter is an intimate



“Rather unusual, Mr. Wembley, but our research department assures us this is your coat of arms.”

thing,” Sulkin says. “When I read a Steve Martin tweet, it’s like I can hear his voice. And if you read my stuff carefully and you’re smart, I think you could figure out a lot about me. More people now know me from Twitter than have ever known me for anything else. It’s insane how many people are following me. I feel like the biggest part of my existence is spent trying to continually feed these people.”

I’ve started to believe that tweeting well is a form of seduction. You can’t come on too strong, but at the same time, you have to give the object of your desire (your needy, fickle followers) the right amount of attention. They want to feel special and feel like they’re part of something when they follow you. All the while, you don’t want to seem desperate. These days, Sulkin’s life is scheduled around striking this delicate balance. “It sounds ridiculous,” he says, “but if I know I’m going out for the night, I’ll tweet right before I leave. Then I know I’ll have at least a three-hour cushion to do whatever the fuck I want. It’s like clearing space in my schedule.”

The headquarters of Seth MacFarlane’s animated comedy empire are next door to the building where Sulkin lives. (“Less than a one-song walk door-to-door,” he says.) The windows of Sulkin’s corner office are tinted to thwart the perpetual L.A. sunlight, and his walls are bare save for a corkboard. In one corner, a framed, signed Larry Bird jersey leans against the wall. In another corner, there’s a guitar. On this day, three other *Family Guy* writers are gathered inside. Two of them—Artie Johann (@DearAnyone, 52,042 followers) and Shawn Ries (@shawnrises, 15,564 followers)—are prolific tweeters themselves. The third, a very funny man named Ted Jessup, should be on Twitter but is not. He tells me, with a weary sigh, that he fears it would become another “onerous obligation.”

Their task is to figure out how to close out a scene in which the show’s lovable ESL housekeeper character, Consuela, has somehow found herself directing traffic at a busy intersection. “Okay,” Sulkin says, looking down at the script in his hand, “I guess we’re good through when she says, ‘No, no, no, no!’ We can do whatever we want after that.”

To get in the right mind-set, everyone starts channeling Consuela by quietly repeating her catchphrase—the word *no* in a heavy Spanish accent with a teasing falsetto. “We could have her stop to squeegee someone’s windshield,” Ries says.

“One of those hot-dog trucks could come by. The guy could give her a hot dog while saying ‘That’s \$2’ and she could say, ‘No!’” Jessup offers.

“Maybe she does four ‘nos’ and then says to the next car, ‘Sí, you come,’” Sulkin suggests. “When it comes forward, she could say, ‘You give me ride home?’”

The idea is met by laughter and starts to branch off into a more developed riff. “So she gets in the car,” Sulkin continues, “and the guy sighs and goes, ‘Okay, where do you live?’ And she says, ‘I don’t know.’” Now, the other writers pitch in again, each speaking in Consuela’s voice.

“...is by Enterprise Rent-A-Car.”
 “...is by check-cashing place.”

“...is by the check-cashing Chinese food restaurant.”

“Have you seen that place?” Sulkin asks the room, placing the riff on hold. “When you come back from the airport, there’s a place that’s check cashing, Chinese food, chicken wings and doughnuts.” A mini-discussion of racial stereotyping in the urban retail world begins. More tangents bloom, until eventually we’re so far off topic that Jessup is explaining—in quite an erudite way—the American buffalo’s path to extinction and the etymological origin of the phrase *You’re fired!*

As they wind down, I check Twitter on my phone and see that Sulkin tweeted just a few minutes ago, apparently using sleight of hand. (The tweet: “You from LA? ‘Yup. Bored and bred.’”) Later, when I ask him about it, he tells me, “I’m constantly monitoring Twitter.” He pays close attention to how many followers he’s gaining or losing at any given moment and how many people are mentioning him. “I’m tweeting all the time—at work, in the middle of the day, whenever.” Johann tells us that, for his part, he keeps a Stickie on his computer desktop where he logs potential tweets. “I looked at it the other day,” he says. “It was all dick stuff.”

The tweet-heavy work environment doesn’t seem to bother their boss, Seth MacFarlane (@SethMacFarlane, 1,962,406 followers). “For me, Alec completely legitimized the whole idea of Twitter,” MacFarlane says. “Each medium has its own style and its own requirements, and Alec invented his own writing style for this medium. When I read Alec’s Twitter account, I thought, God, this completely changes things.”

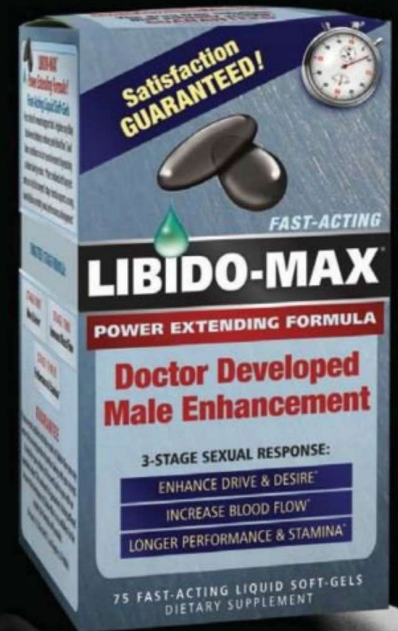
“Most Twitter feeds are strings of gobbledygook—oftentimes they don’t even make sense. But it’s a perfect format for Alec because he has an observational mind that’s unparalleled. I was watching reruns of the old *Dick Van Dyke Show* the other day, and it occurred to me that Alec is a modern-day Morey Amsterdam. He’s the guy who just stands in the room and reels off strings of impossibly quick and impossibly clever one-liners. He really is the 2012 version—in his hipness, relevance, progressiveness and edginess—of the old-style Jewish comedian.”

On a Thursday night in West Hollywood, I meet Sulkin at a bar on Santa Monica Boulevard. A variety of stand-up routines are scheduled to begin shortly in the bar’s back room. Sulkin, wearing a blazer-and-tie combo that gives him the look of a down-at-the-heels prep school English teacher, had told me beforehand that the Twitterati (his phrase) will be out in force. Now, he introduces me to a bunch of them as they stand in a scrum in the middle of the room. Their faces mean nothing to me, and as we shake hands, neither do their given names. But when they tell me their Twitter handles, there is a jolt of recognition. They are, in no particular order:

@GuyEndoreKaiser, 26,711 followers, comedy writer. Sample tweet: “Taking an Italian person to The Olive Garden is like taking a black person to 1864.”

@DearAnyone, 52,042 followers, *Family Guy*’s Johann. Sample tweet: “I’m just

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smart enough to be frustrated with how dumb I am.”

@DamienFahey, 42,234 followers, one-time Carson Daly replacement on MTV's *Total Request Live*. Sample tweet: “The worst iPhone app ever would be one that sends you a text message anytime your dad gets a boner.”

Though I'm meeting them for the first time (excepting Johann), I already know their senses of humor. And if any of the great psychological theories on humor are to be believed, I therefore could easily extrapolate their deepest anxieties and fixations. That's partly why I'm so interested in Twitter users who aren't necessarily professional jokesters—my personal Twitterati. (Every Twitter user has such a list.) The comic musings of the everyday tweeter serve as a sort of prism into their lives. It's a kind of compelling, hilarious autobiography, and it makes other people's mundanity totally interesting. Take, for instance, @tracy_marq, 10,611 followers, a 20-year-old cashier from the L.A. suburbs. Sample tweet: “Someone go downstairs and see why my mom was crying for two hours and then get me a granola bar and bring it upstairs.” Or @IamEnidColeslaw, 35,972 followers, a mysterious and vulgar 26-year-old clerical worker from Chicago. Sample tweet: “Just ate McDonalds after working out, which is the same as taking a shit after a shower.”

Here's where the egalitarian nature of Twitter really shines through. Write enough funny tweets, and it doesn't matter if you're a garbage man or a plutocrat—eventually you'll start getting followers, accolades and that strange, addictive Twitter fame.

Back at Sulkin's Miracle Mile apartment, I ask him if he ever thinks about the end of

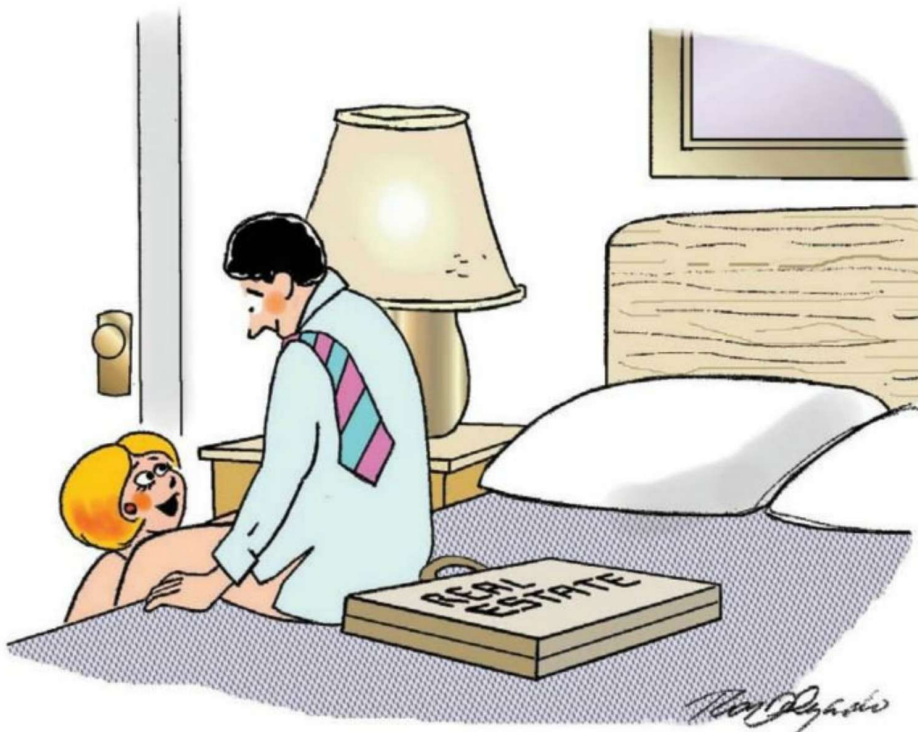
Twitter. The question feels strangely solemn, as though I'm asking about the end of the world. But really, how long can Twitter be sustained until it becomes something radically different? Everything on the web is always just a nascent form of its next version anyway. “Sometimes I get a little bit tired of it,” Sulkin says. “And I think, Maybe I should just cap it at 5,000 tweets, which is coming soon.” (His self-imposed retirement from Twitter never occurred, obviously. As of press time he has surpassed the 5,000-tweet plateau by almost 1,000 tweets.) “But then I also think, Fuck that! Stopping now would be like saying, ‘I'm not funny anymore.’ And I do think that I can still be funny, poignant or sad in a way that's entertaining. I never want to give that up.”

I don't think Sulkin could stop tweeting even if he wanted to. In the drafts section of his iPhone's Twitter app, he has 320 potential tweets lined up. And on his computer, there is a tweet file that is hovering around 16,000 characters. Tweets come to him when he's in the shower, when he's walking across the street to work, when he's on planes. Basically, life hands tweets to Sulkin because he's hardwired to receive them. Like most funny people, he's a full-time observer. Twitter is made for his breed.

“So it never ends?” I ask.

Sulkin laughs. “It might have been Seth MacFarlane who asked a while ago, ‘What do we do now? Do we tweet every day until we die?’”

Sorry, @thesulk, but the answer, probably, is yes.



“So much for the bedroom, Mr. Rafferty. Now let me show you the rest of the house.”

HIT KING

(continued from page 68)

“Where you folks from?” Rose asks.

“Pittsburgh,” the man replies.

“Listen to this,” Rose says. “True story. The other day a woman walks in with huge boobs.” Rose holds his hands out past his chest to approximate the size. “And she's wearing a little T-shirt. I say, ‘Where you from?’ She says, ‘Tittsburgh.’” Rose howls and slaps the table with his hand. “I said, ‘Where is that, in Tenssylvania?’”

After he meticulously signs the ball and photo and poses for a photo with the couple, the woman says, “I love it when you sign your balls I'm sorry I bet on baseball.”

“That's a true statement, ma'am,” Rose says, smiling.

“Was that Bart Giamatti that suspended you?” the husband asks.

“Yes. I had a great relationship with him. People thought I was mad at him, but I loved Bart. Do you know his son? Have you ever seen *Cinderella Man*? Or what's that movie about the wine? *Sideways*! That's his son, the actor Paul Giamatti. I would love to meet him someday and tell him how I feel about his dad. Listen, take care. Have a good stay, okay?”

Doodling on the white paper in front of him, Rose draws an X in the center. “See here? That's Cincinnati. To the left is Indianapolis. To the right you've got Pennsylvania. Down here you've got Kentucky. Over here you've got West Virginia. We used to have fans come from miles around to watch us play. I don't think we ever had a rainout when I was playing for the Reds. You had some people driving hours to get to the ballpark. We didn't want to disappoint them.”

Now they come from all over the country to see Rose. The business model is the brainchild of Rose's business partners, Bob Friedland and Joie Casey. Rather than have Rose travel the country and appear on weekends at memorabilia shows, they set him up in Las Vegas, where the average tourist's stay is three days. “Pete's job is being Pete Rose,” says Casey. “And he's the best Pete Rose there is.”

Every three days, a new group of people comes looking to strike it big at the tables. And as they wander Caesars either to stop the hemorrhaging at the craps table or to enjoy the fruits of their good luck, for the price of a hand of blackjack they can walk away with a souvenir of Dad's favorite player and a funny story to tell their parents or grandkids.

“Where you from?” Rose asks a woman with white hair. “San Antonio,” her group of four says in unison. “Your team's getting old!” Rose says, playfully jousting with the group about their hometown NBA team. “Would you like to take a picture?” Rose asks. As the senior citizens circle around behind the table, Rose continues to engage. “Sir, are these your daughters?” he asks the only male. The women laugh. Another woman says, “We're from Texas, so we know when to wear our boots.” The group laughs and Rose laughs the loudest.

He playfully squeezes the thigh of one of the women as she sits next to him. “When are you going to get into the Hall of Fame?”

she asks. "Well, ma'am, the fastest way for me to get there is to die." Then Rose lets out a genuine guffaw, slapping her like a teammate on the thigh. The senior citizens, with signed jersey, bat and ball in hand, leave with souvenirs for their grandkids, a story to tell and a photo to prove it. "Did you know my biggest demographic here is women in their 40s through 60s?" Rose knows, and he knows one other thing with certainty: You have to give people their money's worth.

It's rare that a person walks by Rose in Las Vegas and doesn't want to talk about the Baseball Hall of Fame. It feels much like standing in purgatory and offering passers-by directions to heaven.

"Once in a while you get a crazy person who won't buy anything," Rose says. "They just come in here and yell, 'You cheated!' First of all, what's the point? Second, who did I cheat? I didn't cheat anyone but myself. Those guys that took steroids, they cheated Hank Aaron, they cheated Willie Mays, they cheated Babe Ruth. They cheated the game, the fans, everything. None of them are banned. Not one."

In 1989 he was accused of betting on major league baseball games via a bookmaker, a violation of the major league rule that prohibits baseball gambling of any kind. Rose was suspended as manager of the Cincinnati Reds, a team he had helped guide to four straight second-place finishes.

After an investigation by major league baseball, Rose signed an agreement with then commissioner A. Bartlett Giamatti that rendered him permanently ineligible to participate in the game, with the right to apply for reinstatement in one year. (A facsimile of the document is available at the store in a copper binder with Rose's signature and the inscription "I'm sorry I bet on baseball" for \$500.) Eight days after signing the agreement, Giamatti suffered a heart attack and died at the age of 51. Rose believes Giamatti's death ended any chance he might have had for reinstatement. Baseball then lobbied the Hall of Fame to put Rose on the permanently ineligible list. To this day he remains in exile both from the game he loves and from the institution where the majority of fans feel he belongs.

"Look, I understand I'm the reason I'm in the situation I'm in," Rose says. "I've got no one to blame but myself. I made a mistake and paid the price for that mistake. The one thing that upsets me is that I was never given a second chance. This is America. I know if I was a drug abuser or a wife beater or a steroid cheater, I would have gotten another chance to come back. For whatever reason, people think gambling is a worse crime than that. And everyone knows that I only bet on my own team. No one's ever accused me of the other thing, because they know it's not true."

The fact that Rose cannot even bring himself to say the words "bet against my own team" is perhaps his greatest defense. But the fact that he now spends several hours a day in Caesars Palace probably doesn't fit with baseball's notions of a reformed gambler. "Let me tell you something," Rose says. "I wish baseball would follow me around here. They'd

see I don't get off work and head down to the casino. I'm probably the only guy in this town who isn't betting tonight."

Rose has always lived his life with a defiant streak and an unflinching confidence. In many ways it was what drove him to become the holder of several records in America's most cherished pastime. "I think I have the record for most records," he says.

And while many former players maintain only a passing interest in the game, Rose remains an astute observer, often watching as many as three games a day. Should the ban ever be lifted and he could manage again, no one would question his knowledge of big-league rosters. "What's amazing to me about the game today," Rose says, "is how much people accept mediocrity. If the manager accepts it, then the team accepts it. Then the fans accept it. That's why you have guys eating chicken and drinking beer in the clubhouse. Are you fucking kidding me? Baseball is a six-month-a-year occupation. You work two and a half hours a day. How hard is it to put the effort in? Don't get me wrong, you've got some guys who are great players today who bust their asses. Jeter works hard. Pedroia works hard. But if I were playing today, it would be too easy to take second on an outfielder who doesn't hustle after the ball. Some teams don't care. You know who they are. There are about 10 teams in the major leagues that have no chance to make the playoffs unless all the other planes go down."

Winning is something Rose had known throughout his playing career. At the store he sells a signed jersey that lists his various major league records on the front. He points to one record, "Most games won."

"See that?" he asks. "I ask kids when they come in here to pick out the most important record. They always point to the hits. I always point to the most games won. That's why you play the game. To win."

Early in his career, Rose's burning desire to win was at times thought to be more theatrical than necessary. It was when Rose ran to first after a walk that Whitey Ford of the Yankees labeled him Charlie Hustle. That term was meant to be derogatory, but Rose has worn it as a badge of honor for nearly five decades.

He still believes he brings that same work ethic to Caesars Palace every day. "I'd work here every day," Rose says. "What would I be doing if I wasn't here? I'd be home watching TV. Here I get to talk baseball with the fans. But I also know what it takes to make the bosses money."

Without a strong throwing arm or great size and speed, Rose wasn't viewed as a serious prospect as an amateur. Ineligible for baseball while finishing high school ("I hated school, but that was my fault," he says), Rose considered playing college football when no pro-baseball organizations showed interest. If not for an uncle who was a scout with the hometown Reds, Rose may never have been signed to a contract. Once in the organization, he impressed coaches with his positive attitude and tireless passion for the batting cage. If he couldn't leave a dust cloud with fleet feet, he would make one diving head-first into a base.

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When he finally got the call to the big leagues in 1963, his veteran teammates shunned the optimistic rookie. "You've got to remember, the team won the pennant in 1961," Rose says. "In 1962 they won 98 games and finished third. Those guys all thought they were going back to the World Series." The team had a steady second baseman named Don Blasingame, who was a favorite among the veterans on the team. To them, Rose was a brash kid who was confident without having ever done anything at the big-league level. Yet manager Fred Hutchinson believed enough in Rose to make him an everyday starter. The veterans gave Rose the cold shoulder for taking their friend's job.

"The only guys that would hang out with me were Frank Robinson and Vada Pinson," Rose says, remembering the two African American stars of the team. "Frank and Vada took me under their wing. I remember one night we were out on a West Coast trip. They took me to a club in Oakland, and I was the only white guy in the place," Rose says, laughing. "And no one was going to fuck with me, because they had to deal with Frank. He was as tough as they came. That's when the front office told me to stop hanging out with the black guys on the team." Did he? "Fuck no. Those guys were great to me. They were my teammates. No one was going to tell me who to hang out with. You know that Frank Robinson was the only man ever to pinch-hit for me? I can live with that."

"Sit down, sir. Where are you from?" Rose says as two men in their late 40s wearing T-shirts and jeans approach the table. There are two distinct levels of treatment that Rose distributes to the people who traverse the store. The window-shoppers who gawk and look for a free interaction get a polite wave and maybe a "Hi" every third or fourth time. The paying customers receive a royal audience with the Hit King.

"New York," the two men say. One of them slides a photo of Rose across the table. The photograph was taken in Yankee Stadium during the 1976 World Series, when the Reds swept the Yankees. It captures Rose's headfirst slide into third as third baseman Graig Nettles awaits a throw.

"New York," Rose says. "We whipped your ass in there. Get out the broom. The sweep is here." Rose personalizes the photo and signs it for the New Yorkers. For the \$75 price of the photo, Rose will inscribe it as the customer wishes, so long as the inscription is respectful. When people don't specify an inscription, Rose usually adds "Hit King" and "4,256 hits" on the memorabilia for an extra flourish.

"The next year, the Yankees got Don Gullett and won the World Series," one man says.

"Let me tell you about Don Gullett," Rose says. "This is a true story. Did you know in high school, in the football state championship game, he scored 66 points? Ran for 11 touchdowns. Isn't that something? Don Gullett, from Lynn, Kentucky."

"Who do you like in the Super Bowl, Pete?" the other man asks. "Don't know," Rose fires back before the guest can complete the question. "Don't need to know until 3:37 P.M. on Sunday."

"Do you live near here, Pete?" the man asks, trying to keep the moment alive a bit longer. "I live 1.1 miles from here," Rose says. "It's faster for me to get home than it is to get to my car. I timed it the other day. It takes me three minutes to drive home. It takes five goddamn minutes to walk from here to my car."

"Well, this was a pleasant surprise," the other New Yorker says, gathering his memorabilia.

"Take care, guys," Rose says, shaking hands. "Enjoy your stay, okay?"

As the men leave the table, Rose opines a bit on the strategy of headquartering in Las Vegas six days a week. "See, those guys are from New York. But a lot of the people we get in here come from North Dakota, West Virginia, Kentucky, Indiana. This is a big trip for them. They're not used to seeing a celebrity, and when they do, they don't even get a chance to talk to them. Here, they can take pictures, ask questions, whatever."

In this, Rose is selling more than just an autograph. He's trying to sell a memory. And as you see the people who file into the store, they all have different memories they want to take away—a father who wants his son (wearing a baseball uniform) to meet the guy who always ran to first base. A couple who went to college in Cincinnati who want to meet the hometown hero. A woman from Philadelphia who wants to surprise her dad with a signed ball from his favorite player.

In one instance a group of women who look as though they arrived from central casting for *Mob Wives* darts into the store. Though it's only 1:30 P.M., their blood-alcohol level seems more appropriate for 1:30 A.M.

"Oh my God, Pete! Remember me? You called my dad last year," says the ringleader of the group, who is wearing a shirt more suitable for a five-year-old boy and carrying the plastic cup of choice for sorority keg parties.

"Didn't he have back surgery or something?" Rose asks.

"That's right! Can you talk to him?" she asks.

"Nope, can't do it. Someone else just asked me to talk to their son and I said no. I've got to be fair."

"Oh, please?"

"Sorry," Rose says.

A store employee quickly escorts the women toward the back of the store, hoping they might buy some merchandise in an effort to sway Rose.

"What's he thinking?" Rose asks. "They ain't buying anything. The only time I'll get on the phone with someone is if they're really sick. Had a woman come in today, she brought her dad here a few years ago. I took a picture with him and signed it. He died a few weeks ago and they buried him with the photo in the casket. She just started bawling."

"Take a look at this. Isn't she something?" Rose says. While waiting for the next customer to arrive, he scrolls through photos on his iPhone. Shifting from the default photo, the quintessential image of Rose,

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helmet flying, diving headfirst into third base, he hustles into the gallery of his girlfriend, Kiana Kim.

Kim, a 27-year-old model and actress who owns a hair salon in Los Angeles, has been dating Rose for the past four years. "Most people think it's only been two years," Kim says. "That's because a website ran a photo of us at a fight here in Vegas two years ago. They said I was a \$20,000-a-night call girl." To which Rose adds, "Everyone knows that none of that shit on the internet is true."

The two met in Valencia, California, where Kim lives during the week with her two children. She mentioned to Rose that she owned a salon in town but that the economy had been tough on business. Rose offered to make a personal appearance and sign photos for the first 500 people who came to the salon. After that, they began spending more time together as friends. Soon they became a couple.

"She thought I was a football player," Rose says. "She didn't know who I was, but she knew who Steve Garvey was, right?"

"Shut up," Kim says, smacking him on the arm. "I grew up in Los Angeles, and my dad was a big Dodgers fan, so I knew who Steve Garvey was. Dad knows who Pete is, and he is happy for me. One time Steve was signing where Pete used to work, and the fans were like, 'Oh my God, Steve Garvey!' And they just walked right past Pete."

"I know Steve well," Rose says. "He was a good ballplayer. He was a nice guy. Do you remember the year he knocked up a couple of girls? I said, 'Steve, let me tell you one thing. I bet on the Breeders' Cup, but you won the son of a bitch.'"

As Kim exchanges pleasantries with a store employee, Rose flips through a variety of provocative shots of Kim until he settles on one baseball-inspired image. "Look at

this," he says. "Isn't she something?"

In the photo, Kim peers over her left shoulder with her back to the camera to show off Rose's iconic number 14 jersey. The jersey has been shortened to just above the small of her back. Replacing the traditional white baseball pants are a pair of lace thong panties that reveal more than they cover. A Reds hat, bat and ball complete the ensemble.

"What are you doing, Pete?" Kim asks, hearing her name mentioned.

"I'm just showing him some of your photos, babe," Rose says. As he continues to scroll, he settles on a fully nude photo of Kim and hands her his phone. As she sees the photo, she gasps and looks at us in horror.

"Pete! What are you doing? Did you show him this?"

"No, but that's the photo you took for PLAYBOY a while back. It's not like anyone hasn't seen it." Then Rose starts giggling. "What's the big deal? You look great, don't you?"

"I can't believe you," she says, smacking him on the arm, then smiling.

"Check this out," Rose says. "We go out to eat in Cooperstown with some of our friends up there. We start talking about reality shows. They're like, 'Every famous couple has a name, like Brangelina. What's yours?' Then they start making stuff up. What about Hits and Tits?" Rose starts laughing as he recounts the monikers. "The inmate and the playmate? Melons and felons? Perjury and surgery?"

Rose and Kim start laughing uncontrollably. "That's the thing people don't realize," she says. "People make a big deal about our age difference, but we make each other laugh. I buy him gag gifts all the time. Once I bought him a machine that made different fart noises. He had a ball."

"One time," Rose says, "we're laying in bed. True story. She had me laughing so hard, we both couldn't stop. I was laughing so hard I couldn't stop farting, and she pissed the bed."

Kim covers her face, mortified. Then she peeks up over her hands. "That is actually true," she says.

"Look, I don't feel or act my age, and she's older than you would think judging by the way she looks," Rose says, looking longingly at Kim. "If you're happy and I'm happy, who gives a shit what anybody else thinks?"

As Kim leaves to run some errands, Rose turns his attention back to customers. A woman is about to purchase a signed jersey for \$400. Rose slaps my leg as he watches Kim walk out the door and says, "Do I look unhappy to you?"

During a break in the action, Rose doodles on more paper. He draws a series of lines and symbols. "Do you know what that is?" he asks. "That's my autograph in Japanese. How many other guys do you think take the time to learn other people's cultures like that? Don't they go crazy when they see that, Francine?" Rose playfully slaps the store's assistant on the thigh.

"They go crazy, Pete," she replies with no emotion.

"See, there's no better ambassador for the game than me," Rose says. "How many guys are out there five hours a day talking baseball with fans and promoting the game? No one. Hank doesn't do it. Willie doesn't do it. There's just me. And I love it. I'll do it every day."

The conversation moves back to the Hall of Fame. This year, Barry Larkin, another homegrown Cincinnati talent, will be inducted into the hall. "He's my first player being inducted," Rose says, referring to the time he was Larkin's manager. "I love Barry. Great guy. But let me ask you this: If Barry was eligible next year, do you think he'd be a Hall of Famer?" Rose is referring to the loaded 2013 Hall of Fame ballot that includes several controversial candidates such as Barry Bonds, Roger Clemens, Sammy Sosa and Mike Piazza. "See, I don't understand that shit," Rose says. "Either you're a Hall of Famer, or you're not."

At this stage, Rose continues to be in the not category. To Rose, that means baseball's all-time hit leader will be excluded from the hall forever, unless he is inducted. The reason? Business.

"Look at Jeter," Rose says. "Great player. He's got close to 3,100 hits, okay? He's 37 years old. He still has another 1,100 hits to go. Even if he's healthy and he can keep playing at a high level, is someone going to pay him \$20 million a year when he's 44 or 45 years old?"

Even at the age of 71, Rose pines to come back and manage. When I broach the subject of whether he would accept a compromise from baseball, perhaps a job in which he couldn't influence the outcome of the game as a manager, he says, "Well, how would you feel if you did something and you were sorry you did it? You made a mistake. And they said, 'Well, let him back in, but don't let' (concluded on page 141)



"I gotta go, Doris. My show's about to begin."



PLAYMATE NEWS

LMFAO MY! PLAYMATES SHUFFLE IN THE SORRY FOR PARTY ROCKING VIDEO

The infectious electro-hop sounds of LMFAO are inescapable. Be it on the radio, in a club or at a get-together, the party rockers are always on the playlist for their distinctive ability to put women in motion. In their latest music video, "Sorry for Party Rocking," the duo holds a rager. When RedFoo spits the lyrics "Poppin' bottles in the house with models in the VIP" the camera finds Miss June 2004 Hiromi Oshima, Miss July 2003 Marketa Janska (both pictured) and Miss November 1998 Tiffany Taylor grooving in a hot tub while rocking tragically hip



metallic animal prints. "I met LMFAO last year when they performed at the Mansion Midsummer Night's Dream party," Marketa says. "I am a huge fan of their music, and they are so fun—they really rock the party."



FLOWER GIRL

You never know what you're going to find on e-commerce website Etsy.com. We found Miss May 2010 Kassie Lyn Logsdon, who has her own e-shop, May Flowers Jewelry. "I was trying to think of a name, and since I'm making flowers, it just seemed fitting," Kassie explains. Of her current offering of rose earrings, she says, "They're made out of clay with my own two hands. I dye all my own clay and never use a mold, so each creation is one of a kind." Buying women jewelry can be daunting, but you can't go wrong giving the gift of Miss May's flowers.



FLASHBACK



Twenty years ago this month we introduced Miss May 1992 **Anna Nicole Smith** to the world. Anna was an instant star. Her formidable body stood out against the heroin-chic waifs of the period and made curves sexy again. Anna's life played out as a tragedy, from the highs of screen roles and modeling for Guess to personal lows that provided much fodder for the tabloids. But if there is ever a Mount Rushmore of sexual icons, Anna's bust will be up there.

DID YOU KNOW?

Want to play video games against Miss June 2011 **Mei-Ling Lam**? Her Xbox gamer tag is BeautifulFlower8.

Miss November 1992 **Stephanie Adams** won a \$1.2 million settlement against the NYPD for its use of excessive force.

Melissa McCarthy, of *Mike & Molly* and *Bridesmaids* renown, is PMOY 1994 **Jenny McCarthy**'s cousin.

What is Miss August 2010 **Francesca Frigo's** fantasy? "My



perfect day," she says, "would be spent on a deserted island where I can sunbathe, roll around and play naked in the sand."

MY FAVORITE PLAYMATE

BY GILLES MARINI

—actor, ABC Family's *Switched at Birth*



"My favorite Playmate is Miss June 1989 **Tawnni Cable**. My father collected PLAYBOYS and kept them at his bakery. All the boys in the neighborhood came over to look at them, and Tawnni was the first I saw. I grew up in France, and we're a little more relaxed



about nudity there, but it was also probably great business for the bakery."

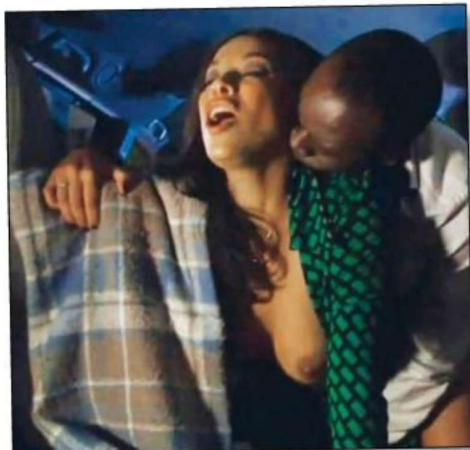
INSIDE KELLY WEARSTLER'S MELROSE SPACE

When Miss September 1994 Kelly (Gallagher) Wearstler posed she told us her ambition was "to own my own marvelous design and furnishings business." In less than 20 years—including time spent designing for the Viceroy Hotels, being a judge on *Top Design* and having a line at Bergdorf Goodman—Kelly has opened her eponymous flagship store. At Kelly Wearstler on Melrose in West Hollywood her glamorously brazen design touches enhance her rakish fashions. The store is a grommeted scarf's throw from her office, so she's going to use it as a testing ground for her new styles.



LYNNSANITY ON HOUSE OF LIES

Showtime's *House of Lies* follows Marty Kaan (Don Cheadle), a shark for hire with one weakness. On the series premiere Kaan and Alisette Kauffman (Miss July 1997 Daphnee Lynn Duplaix) meet when their adolescent children quarrel. Kaan takes one look at Kauffman, concedes his son's argument and they later work something else out in the school parking lot.



PLAYMATE GOSSIP

Gisele Bündchen certainly had a strong opinion about the Super Bowl, but Bud Light Hotel correspondent Leila Mahadin sought out Miss August 2004

Pilar Lastra, a model whose understanding of the gridiron is more Xs and Os than XOXOs. Rather than reflect, Pilar looks toward the next season. "The Texans have a solid shot at making the Super Bowl for the AFC. I love their schedule, and if they stay healthy it could be the year for this young team. As for the NFC, the



Giants, Packers and Saints are all solid. If the Giants pick up a few key players on defense, they could go back-to-back to the Super Bowl."... It wasn't Miss July 2008 **Laura Croft's** sweet 16, but her 29th birthday at Sugar Factory in the Paris Las Vegas certainly was decadent.



Decked out in a tiara and a shimmering turquoise-and-gold Betsey Johnson dress, the queen for the day told the *Las Vegas Sun* that she likes "to keep it simple."... Two Playmates with quite the sizzle reels (*Baywatch*, *Singled Out*, *Dancing With the Stars*, *General Hospital*, *Two and a Half Men*), PMOY 1994 **Jenny McCarthy** and Miss April 1997 **Kelly Monaco** watched the L.A. Matadors box the Milano Thunder at Avalon Hollywood. Also



along for the girls' night out were Cheryl Burke and Julie Benz.... PMOY 1982 **Shannon Tweed** and husband Gene Simmons were minding their own business at a Vancouver Canucks hockey game when the kiss-cam (or in this case, Kiss-cam) found them. The couple locked lips for more than a line change, and when they pulled away Simmons demurely covered his mouth.



WANT TO SEE MORE PLAYMATES?

Or more of these Playmates? You can check out every one of them in the full magazine archives at iplayboy.com.

HIT KING

(continued from page 138)

him write anything.' Would you be okay with that?"

"How much are they paying me to come back?" I ask.

"Fair question," Rose replies.

"Let me tell you something else," he says. "I can say this. I think Hank Aaron would say this. Babe Ruth would say this. Ty Cobb, Ted Williams, Mickey Mantle. I never watched myself hit on video and I never hit a ball off a tee, and I got 4,200 fucking hits. I mean, a guy strikes out on a ball that bounces in front of home plate, and he runs back into the dugout to watch it on video. Why the fuck would you put yourself through that?"

"I get texts from Joey Votto. Sometimes I'll watch his at-bats to see what he's doing. I used to get texts from A-Rod a few years back. A-Rod would say things like 'I don't know what's going on, Pete. I'm hitting inside the ball.' I would say, 'Alex, I have no idea what the fuck you're talking about.' I see him in the dugout fidgeting around, practicing his swing. Would you fucking relax? You're going to fail seven out of 10 times and you're going to go to the Hall of Fame. You can't think about hitting all the time. Calm down! I would tell him that you've got to just get a pitch and hit the fucking ball hard somewhere."

At what point, I ask, does the dream die? When will he be too old to suit up and travel around the country to teach young men making millions how to relax and make the unnatural experience of beating an object moving at 95 miles per hour with a stick feel natural? "Shit, I love to travel," Rose says. "I don't feel my age at all. Sign me up tomorrow."

•

At 4:30 P.M. the store employees do one last scan of the surrounding area to make sure there are no potential customers. No need to leave any money on the table today. After the signing, Rose and Kim invite me to join them for dinner at Old Homestead, a steakhouse that has just opened in Caesars Palace.

"I'm sorry, I can't seat you for another 15 minutes," the hostess says. "The servers are all in a meeting and we don't open until five. What's your name?"

"Rose," he replies. "R-O-S-E." We sit at a side bar table until we are called. "I can't believe we can't sit at a fucking table," Rose says. "Watch, as soon as the manager realizes I'm here, they'll come over and kiss my ass."

Rose shows me a photo of his grandson, Petey's boy, who's now seven. Rose's son is now a minor league manager in the White Sox organization. "This seven-year-old can play. You've got to see him hit. Now take a look at this!" Rose scrolls through his photos to find a picture of himself at a similar age. They look astonishingly similar, as though it could be the same person. "Isn't that something? You've got kids?"

"I do," I say. "I have a son who is five. He didn't want to get on the school bus today. He tried to convince his mother it

was a bad idea. The train is much faster. He's very smart."

"That's a kid after my own heart. Does he play ball yet?"

And this is what makes the Rose experience so successful. I've seen it with other people all day, but now I experience it firsthand. Rose can crank out the greatest hits on his personal jukebox on demand—the collision with Fosse, the fight with Bud Harrelson, the Big Red Machine—but it's when he shows a natural curiosity in you that he's at his best.

No one understands the tradition of baseball, passed from grandfather to father to son, like Rose, and certainly no one has ever monetized it this successfully as an individual. His curiosity about people makes every person for whom he signs an autograph feel more like a friend and less like a business transaction. It's part of the hustle of being Charlie Hustle. As great a storyteller as Rose is, he's an equally deft listener. And if you come back to the store a year later, he's likely to remember the conversation you had.

As we are seated in the practically empty restaurant, Rose and Kim talk about the future. Kim is pursuing an acting career. "I was just in a Roger Corman movie," she says. She shows me a revealing photo of herself wearing a 1970s wig. "I play a Vietnamese stripper. It's about guys fighting a war, but it takes place inside a video game. I went to nail salons to tape the Vietnamese women to get the accent right."

She has also just read for a part on *CSI: Miami*. "One of the producers of the show is from Cincinnati," Rose says. "She invited Kiana to come read for a part."

The unlikely couple has also filmed hours of footage that they hope will become a pilot for a reality show they are shopping to various networks. A camera crew followed them around for several days, including a trip to Cooperstown during the Hall of Fame weekend last summer.

"It was crazy," Kim said. "We filmed a bit in front of the museum, and as soon as people saw the cameras, they started to come over to see what was going on. When they saw Pete they went insane."

"I didn't go inside the hall or anything," Rose says. "I didn't want to cause any trouble."

"The one thing that bothers Pete the most is the alienation," Kim says. "When I go to Cooperstown, I feel it. When they have the ceremony and the guys are all together and he's not included, you can feel it most."

"The thing that alienates me more is that I never got a second chance," Rose says. "Hell, the guy who shot the pope got a second chance, for Christ's sake. The guy that shot the freaking pope!"

"People say, 'Why is he still gambling?'" And I know you say you're not doing anything illegal," she says looking at Rose, "but for your specific case it doesn't look good."

"Listen, I'm here because my job is in Las Vegas," Rose says. "This is the only city in America where this would work. If my job was in Hoboken, I would be there seven days a week."

"But they still see you in the race book."

"Watching a game? I can't watch a game in the race book anymore?"

"Babe, why do you think I'm always watching Twitter?"

"Are you back on that shit? Every time someone says something, it's the truth?"

"People see something and they put it on Twitter. What if Bud Selig sends someone down to watch you?"

"I hope he does!"

"But what if they see you going up to the window?"

"So it's okay if A-Rod comes in to make a bet? And he's going to make a hell of a bigger bet than I am. Or Jeter?"

"Your case is different. They're not looking for a second chance. You are. This is why I never talk to you about this. You have your point of view. Other people have theirs, and Bud has his."

"I'm not around undesirables and I'm not doing anything illegal. She's like all the guys that lecture me. You have to change your life to bow down to them. It's like Bill O'Reilly told me. He said, 'They're going to make you grovel.'"

"But if that's what it takes, you do it! People have this conception that because he's in Las Vegas all the time, he has this direct relationship to gambling. It's so not true. He watches TV most of the time. But if people see him in Caesars Palace, it's like, 'Oh, I saw him in the casino.'"

"I don't look at Facebook and all that shit, because it's bullshit."

"The world looks at it, Pete."

"That don't make it right. How many times has there been stuff on there about me that was untrue? Ninety percent of the time."

"He just won't do what it takes," Kim says. "When it broke that A-Rod had used steroids, the next day he has a press conference. 'I'm so sorry.' But there's no way Pete will do that. He's got too much pride. He's so stubborn. He'll ruin things in his life because he's so stubborn. I think people think he's this grumpy, bitter guy, but he's not. Stubborn, yes, but happy. He's completely carefree and he'll go with the flow. And for his friends, guys like Mike Schmidt and Joe Morgan? He'll do anything for them."

The manager comes to the table. "Mr. Rose, did you enjoy your dinner?"

"Yeah, it was great," Rose says. "We tried to come here the day before New Year's Eve, but you were all full."

"That's when you call me," the manager says, handing Rose his card. "If there's anything you need, please call me right away."

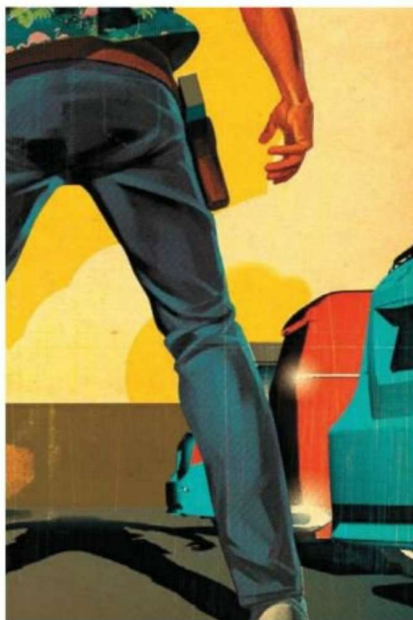
"Look, the bottom line?" Rose says. "I'd rather be in baseball. I'd be having fun. I'd be making several million dollars too. But look at my life. I'm doing fine. I'm making a good living. I can't see myself ever being with another girl. Kiana's the last one for me. I enjoy talking baseball every day. I've got a good life. I can't control any of the other stuff."

The check comes and we pay, and Rose and Kim walk me through the casino toward the elevators. He'll make the 1.1-mile drive home in three minutes and will likely have Fox News turned on in six. With that, Rose and Kim bid me farewell. "Listen, good luck with your son," Rose says. "Make sure he gets on the bus and goes to school. School's important. Enjoy the rest of your stay, okay?"





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HE'S GOT IT VLAD—A MAN IS ASKED TO PREPARE A HILLSIDE MANOR FOR AN EXILED BALKAN NOBLEMAN, VLADIMIR RADU. MASTER STORYTELLER **CARLOS FUENTES** SPINS A MEMORABLE TALE OF MODERN HORROR.

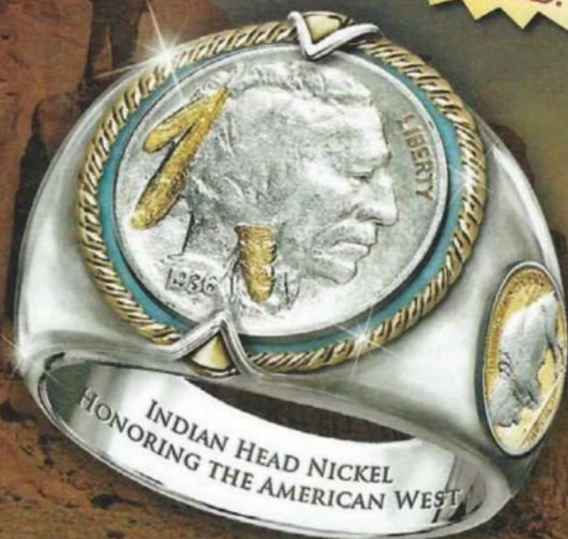
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
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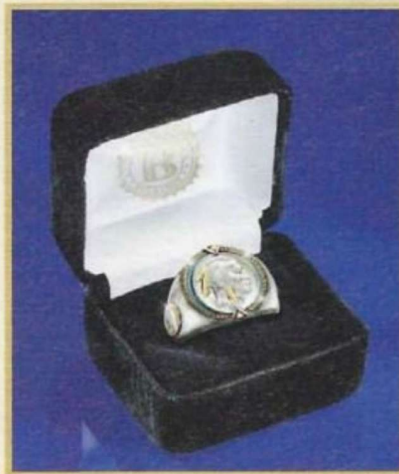
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Trophy Merlot

"All Terra Andina wines are worthy of recommendation" (*The Wine Advocate*). Few are more worthy than this "powerful, full on, plummy" Merlot — a trophy-winner at the *2011 What Food What Wine Awards*. **The Patriots Merlot 2010, Maule Valley**

Silky Pinot Noir

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 California class and famously good. **Laetitia Estate 2010, Arroyo Grande**

The President's Cab

Past president of the California Cabernet Society Bill Knuttel represents all that is great about small-batch winemaking. His opulent, oak-aged 2010 is smooth enough to enjoy on its own and even better with rare roast beef. **Silverstrike 2010, California**

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BIG Aussie Shiraz

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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tony Laithwaite".

Tony Laithwaite
Founder, Laithwaites Wine

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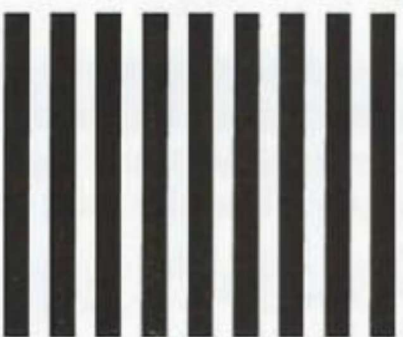
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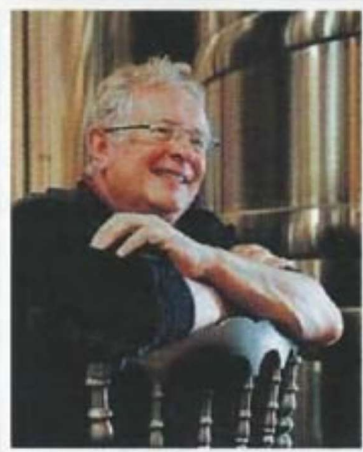
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