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# Bird Droppings: A review of Clay Pigeons

by Shan Mukhtar

It seems Vince Vaughn and Joaquin Phoenix just can't get enough of each other. These two currently omnipresent actors have teamed up once again for the who-hasn't-dunnit comedy "Clay Pigeons." They play a pair of unlikely friends, Clay (Phoenix) and Lester (Vaughn), one of whom is tragically unlucky, and the other, shamelessly charming but morally questionable. Guess who plays which character. That's right, not only did Vaughn and Phoenix "return to paradise," but they also returned to their respective roles: Phoenix, the brooding, dreamy-eyed nice guy; Vaughn, the wise-cracking, womanizing hack. But in this case, Vaughn's character is not only a little slimy, but rather is a grade A certified, serial-killing psychotic. Add a dash of Janeane Garofalo for sarcastic wit and realism, and you've got yourself a film that is at its best, amusing, but mostly just absurd.

The story goes like this: Clay, aside from his adulterous activities, is pretty much a do-gooder, small town boy. But when his best friend finds out that Clay's aforementioned affair is with his wife, he decides to kill himself in order to frame Clay for murder. If that wasn't enough, Clay's girlfriend (widow of the suicidal best friend) becomes suddenly, fatally possessive (paging Glenn Close) when he attempts to end their relationship. A few gunshots later, Clay finds himself involved in not one, but two deaths. And that's just in the first half-hour of the film.

Enter Lester, a trucker with a wicked smile and a little habit of killing young women. Needless to say, Clay's new found friendship with Lester further complicates his life as the body count rises higher and higher. In fact, there are so many dead bodies turning up in this sleepy town that the FBI steps in to handle the situation. And Janeane Garofalo steps in to bring the last half of this film to a rocky close. As Agent Dale Shelby, she is the calm voice of reason and sarcasm that whips this boys' club into shape. Her entrance marks a grounding of the dialogue and the plot at large, and sends Clay Pigeons into a gear that may have helped it avoid the over-the-top and often misogynist cliches of many so-called "dark" comedies.

The sad thing is that "Clay Pigeons" did not have to be just another pseudo-indie film. It packs some great acting potential as well as an interesting premise. You feel genuinely sorry for Clay. Phoenix plays his flawed hero in a way that is highly effective, and reminiscent of Sean Penn's performance in "U-Turn" (in which Phoenix also starred). Vaughn is at his best as the giggling red-neck psychotic, Lester. And Garofalo mends many a hole in the film with her astute comic timing and world-weary cynicism. But nothing can save Clay Pigeons from its inherent lack of development. Instead of focusing on the intriguing Id/Ego dynamic between Lester and Clay, director David Dobkin tries to amuse you by waving a lot of unlikely and lurid violence in your face. But the lesson that many indie film directors haven't gotten close to learning yet is that

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simply throwing sex and guns into the picture doesn't make a comedy "dark". It is only when "Clay Pigeons" finally strays from this thoughtless path that it starts to become viable and interesting. But by then, you've already given up wondering why you're not enjoying this film as much as the two teenage boys snickering in the seats behind you, and your mind is more occupied in trying to figure out just how tall Vince Vaughn is.

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## **Actors and Fascists and Thieves, Oh My!: A review of 'The Impostors'**

**by Shan Mukhtar**

"The Impostors" is the most recent installment from writer/director/actor Stanley Tucci, whose film *Big Night* won many a heart at the 1996 Sundance Film Festival. With *The Impostors*, Tucci sets out to emulate the over-the-top screwball comedies of the silent film era. The film follows two hilariously struggling actors, Arthur and Maurice (Tucci and Oliver Platt in a brilliant comic pairing), through a series of mishaps that land them on board a cruise liner full of sometimes scheming, sometimes suicidal, but almost always amusing characters. Since Arthur and Maurice are stowaways on this vessel, they are forced to take on a series of disguises to conceal themselves and elude their pursuers as well as the other passengers.

The pursuers and passengers that Tucci and Platt spend the majority of the film trying to escape, include indie film hall-of-famers Alfred Molina (*Enchanted April*, *Boogie Nights*), Steve Buscemi (*Living In Oblivion*), Lily Taylor (*I Shot Andy Warhol*), Hope Davis (*Daytrippers*, *Next Stop Wonderland*), and Billy Connolly (*Mrs. Brown*). The most notable of performances, however, come from Tucci's *Big Night* co-stars, Tony Shalhoub (*Antonio* from the sitcom *Wings*) as a bomb-wielding terrorist and Campbell Scott (fresh off of the success of *Spanish Prisoner*) as the fumbling, fascist head steward.

Still, other appearances, such as one by Isabella Rosselini (also a *Big Night* veteran), prove to be much less notable and unnecessary. It almost seems as if Mr. Tucci wanted to fill the film with more actors than he had viable roles. No doubt there is more talent present in this one movie than there was in all of the trendy teen horror flicks of late. But, in some instances, the characters aren't developed enough for the actors to reach their comic potential and for the film to keep the fast-paced tempo at which it works best.

Small glitches aside, however, Tucci and his tongue-in-cheek humor are hard to resist. The result is a sometimes slow but endearing comedy that never takes itself so seriously that it ceases to be enjoyable. And in the end, when the closing scene has the entire cast dancing in unison as they march off the set, you can't help but feel a bit cheeky yourself.

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From: Thart <geogre@shaft.shaftnet.org>  
Newsgroups: git.talk.social  
Subject: Re: Parties (was Re: Measurments....)  
Date: 4 Oct 1998 22:45:05 GMT  
Organization: Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta GA, USA  
Lines: 76  
Message-ID: <6v8tph\$guk\$1@news-int.gatech.edu>  
References: <6v5sn8\$fom\$1@news-int.gatech.edu> <6v5suc\$3l9@adric.mirc.gatech.edu> <6v5tnq\$i8l\$1@news-int.gatech.edu> <6v5tr4\$i98\$1@news-int.gatech.edu> <36167C58.7399@pop.prism.gatech.edu> <6v896l\$qrm\$1@news-int.gatech.edu> <3617A964.1600@pop.prism.gatech.edu> <6v8f12\$40s\$3@news-int.gatech.edu> <6v8kuo\$sen\$2@news-int.gatech.edu> <6v8lh1\$8\$2@news-int.gatech.edu> <6v8nlf\$24t\$2@news-int.gatech.edu> <6v8oqh\$2q5\$5@news-int.gatech.edu> <6v8r0b\$den\$4@news-int.gatech.edu> <6v8rcf\$dmh\$2@news-int.gatech.edu>  
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Xref: GT-News git.talk.social:97380

Crazyman blurbed:

> I pointed out elsewhere in that post that while drinking  
> can be good, it cannot be everything...

When did I say you have to drink to enjoy yourself?  
\*I\* never had a drink last night!

> I mean, there has to be some sort of entertainment...

Ever hear of this strange ritual known as "dancing?"  
It's very rare these days I assure you, but if ya  
try it, you might find it's worthwhile... play games like Twister.  
Do goofy things with glow-in-the-dark stuff. Be creative.  
Make out, have an orgy, put ice down people's clothes,  
throw around a green ball (not at the kitchen), hold  
a seance, read people's fortunes, wrestle, demonstrate  
your mad martial art skillz, put a rubber glove on your head  
and run around screaming "Hey, I'm a squid!," just run around,  
dress up in funny clothes, hell exchange clothes with your  
date, tickle someone till they pee, scare Mitch, watch Faff  
play with his hair, ask me to make a drink for you, give  
out massages, cook, clean, play a practical joke, make god  
awful jokes about Pizza and pizza, ask Carrie to write  
kanji all over you, put Jell-o in some girls shirt and try  
and eat it, spray whipped cream on people (not YOU Thompson!)  
then lick it off for them, dance on the tables, dance \*under\*  
the tables, hide under something/someone, fix our disco ball,  
ask Charles to be your conscience, take some Prozac or Viagra,  
yell out the windows and invite people up, tell jokes, life  
stories, play spin the bottle, truth of dare, tie people up,  
turn into a werewolf/vampire/undead thingey, invent a sudden  
initiation for the new people to do, talk to the new people,  
get them to be unshy, beat people with hockey equipment, put  
on a goalie mask and tell everyone your doctor is making you  
wear it for "precautionary measures," help Alice steal my chair,  
paint someone's fingernails, start speaking a foreign language  
to everyone, play "Bomb Shelter," put a bra on your head and  
scream "Hey, I'm a BUG!," ask Alex to explain something in

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the not-so-short version (actually that may not be a good one ;), tempt people with a shiny thing, have a war over pennies, attack phonebooks, wrestle in Jell-O or oil or mud or any other substance that pleases you...

Dammit! Do I really have to spell this out for you people?!?!?!?

Just don't get near or involve yourself with an electronic device less it's a stereo or lighting equipment. Or attract cops. Other than that, anything your fool mind can come up with is good/cool. And if it isn't, someone will quickly tell you otherwise!

> And i agree that video games/tv are Bad Things.(tm)

They are \*extremely\* bad! Parties are designed to for socialization and blowing off steam and what-not. This doesn't happen if you're staring at a freakin TV screen! Even if you are in a room full of people! You should be busy, busy, busy doing something or another. Parties aren't rest homes!

> However, I am unsure, barring both those two and any other game, what you  
> would do, other than drink and sit around shooting the breeze about  
> something...

Do that too when ya get tired for a moment! There's no law against talking to people!

And just so's y'all know, I'm not mad or upset or anything like that with anyone. Just amazed sometimes that most of you won't cut loose when the opportunity arises...

-geogre

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# 6ix

by Pravin Jeyaraj

Everyone knows about the seven sins: Gluttony, Lust, Anger, Covetousness, Sloth, Pride and Envy. But I think I have discovered the deadly sins of travelling: Envy, Disrespect, Sloth, Gullibility, Ignorance and Voyeurism.

Let's start with Envy! One of the more memorable artefacts in Ephesus is the statuette of the god Bes which was found in a brothel and dates back to the Roman period. It is memorable because of Bes' exaggerated penis. It does seem to support the Godzilla theory that size does matter, and I felt envious (not to mention slightly inadequate).

The Ancient Greeks were true masters of architecture. From the Greek homeland in Athens or Corinth to their colonies in Africa and Turkey, those columns continue to attract travellers from around the globe. The temples and fortresses provide a refreshing, nostalgic beauty in a world dominated by skyscrapers and grey office blocks, especially since all of them are in better condition than "your average neighbourhood".

But there is always an exception, namely Aphrodisius in South West Turkey. I visited the ancient city on a school trip, aged 12. Realising the merits of the flint knife of Stone Age man, I started to hack away at the walls that had stood the test of time. Is not travel suppose to take one back to one's roots? Or maybe I was following in the footsteps of the great Demolition Man himself (that's Heinrich Schliemann, discoverer and destroyer of Troy, not Sylvester Stallone). As my teacher said: "If Aphrodisius is still standing, it is through no fault of Pravin."

Having committed Envy and Disrespect, Sloth was soon to follow.

A couple of years after the Aphrodisius incident, the school organised another trip - this time to Greece. Being in ninth grade, 'lights out' was designated as 10pm, and this seems like just right for a nine o'clock start in the morning. But, at nine o'clock, the rest of the group were still waiting for my roommates and I to show up. We were still in bed.

Later that week, I discovered the fourth sin - Gullibility. I found myself with some friends in a little shop in Nauplia. Just as we were about to leave, we heard a voice shout at us in Greek. It was the shopkeeper. At first, we wondered why he was shouting and waving his arms about, but then it dawned on us that he was accusing us of nicking a bottle of perfume. At this point, I feel I should mention that even though we were all thirteen to fourteen years old, there was not the slightest hint of sexual confusion so common at that age. We tried to tell him this but it did not help that he

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knew no English and the only Greek I knew had died out with Odysseus. Eventually, realising that this guy planned to keep us prisoner until we coughed up, we each produced a one drachma note.

On hindsight, it is plain to see that this guy was a pro. He preyed on gullible tourists, strangers in a foreign land, to con as much money out of them as possible. Well, five drachmas is worth a lot in Greece. I can still picture the scene - the shopkeeper goes home to his beloved wife and says "Get dressed, dear, we're going out - I had a good day today."

The fifth sin is Ignorance. The Balkans were known as the "powder keg of Europe" in the years leading up to the First World War, but this description was more than apt in 1991. Growing up in London during the IRA railway campaign, bombs seemed like the perfect explanation for the various bangs and noises that were heard in the week following Easter Sunday. Definitely not firecrackers in celebration of Easter, which is one week late on the Greek Orthodox calendar.

The sixth sin is Voyeurism. Rome is another place with a lot of famous (and slightly decrepit) sights. First, there is the Colosseum where the Romans would have gone to see their version of Tyson vs. Holyfield. The Arch of Titus was another reminder of the vastness of the Roman Ego, I mean, Empire. St Peter's Basilica (okay, that's not quite in Rome) offers a breathtaking (after climbing millions of steps to the top) view of the city. And then, if you are a hormonal teenager, you would probably not forget watching the hookers in the street getting picked up, from your hotel room window.

In the film, *Se7en*, Brad Pitt is on the trail of a serial killer whose victims are perpetrators of the seven deadly sins. If the director is looking to make a sequel, then my phone is currently not engaged!

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# First Blood

by Deanna J (aka Findabair)

She walked in the early morning air, in the first few rays of sunlight. She walked, and watched, and waited. She shouldn't have to be doing this; the C.E.O. had not told her who her next assignment would be. But vendettas were vendettas. He was going to die.

Trusted, her former employer at the North Avenue Review. Before the company had taken her, mind, body and soul. And yesterday she'd seen him for the first time since the operation. And then he had done it, with no provocation or warning. He shot her; it was then she realised that he was a member of the Harris Hoodlums, would-be-assassins-in-training. Fortunately, it was only a flesh wound, nothing fatal. However, the shot had caused a small, faint, light pink stain where it had hit. The faint stain was on her They Might Be Giants shirt. This was truly unforgivable.

And so it was that she had to don the uniform of her career so early in the morning. Her denim jacket, stiff with being freshly washed (that last kill had been messy), her hiking boots clomping on the cement as she walked with purpose up the hill to The Center, where all the employees of the various companies congregated and went about their own various personal tasks throughout the day. Surely it would be there where she would find her unsuspecting victim. Too bad the SS-200 would be too conspicuous in such a busy place. But he wasn't there, much to her disgust.

Exiting The Center, she headed back the way she had come, donning her sunglasses against the bright glare of the now not-so-new morning as the sun topped over the buildings. As she neared the stairs near the Skiles Conglomerate (tm), she saw him, or did she? She lowered her glasses; yes, it was... He saw her, but showed no fear. Keeping as much composure as possible, she walked nearer. And then, she could no longer contain herself. With Metallica ringing in her ears, an evil grin crept across her face as she reached for her inner pocket. He suddenly realised what was going on, but he was too late as he drew his weapon. She aimed, shot. Dead hit on the chest, twice. He attempted a shot, but to no avail. First blood was hers. She could now wait for her next orders from the C.E.O. in peace....

...to be continued....

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# The Celestial Scientist

by Pravin Jeyaraj

Exactly 400 years ago, Nostradamus completed his literary work 'The Centuries', a collection of ten books that listed, in verse form, the entire 'future history' of mankind from then until the end of time. Today, he is famous for those predictions, but in his time, he was considered a gourmet chef, a great thinker, and a forward-thinking physician.

His grandfathers instructed him in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew and introduced him to astrology. However, Europe of the 1500's was full of Anti-Semitism. Many Jews were killed in the Inquisition in Spain, because Christians viewed them as murderers of Christ, while some escaped to Provence. There, the King gave them the choice of baptism or death. Nostradamus' family chose the former, and while maintaining their Jewish beliefs in private, publicly upheld Christianity.

Furthermore, The Church branded celestial sciences such as astrology evil - probably because they were of Jewish origin. Nevertheless, while being taught philosophy, grammar, and rhetoric at school, Nostradamus researched his 'illegal' hobby, which earned him the nickname "little astrologer". Off course, his family were worried that this would make him and them scapegoats of the growing tensions between Protestants and Catholics. They persuaded him to keep quiet, and follow a career in medicine, as astrologers were only tolerated if they were doctors in the main.

While studying for his medical degree at the University of Montpellier in 1522, he displayed amazing insight about the human body. He realised how dangerous bleeding can be to a sick patient, and often spoke up in favour of sterilisation and cleanliness - three centuries before Pasteur discovered the germ. However, his tutors were not happy with these thoughts, so he went along with such "backward thinking" and was awarded a degree in 1525.

On receipt of his medical licence, the newly-qualified healer returned to the country. Nostradamus turned his back on "traditional" practices and instead prescribed fresh, unpolluted water and air and herbal medicines. He followed the plague of the time like the plague from city to city, curing the sick.

His speciality were packed lozenges called "rose pills". These contained rose petals that were dried and crushed into a powder and mixed with a recipe of sawdust from Green Cyprus (1 oz), Iris of Florence (6 oz), Cloves (3 oz), Odourated calamus (3 drams) and Lign-aloes (6 drams). His patients were warned to keep it under their tongue at all times without swallowing. Clean water, bedding, and air along with a careful diet low on animal fat and moderate exercise helped most of the patients respond to the pills' strong doses of vitamin C.

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The doctor also moonlighted as an astrologer, a job that he was well suited for, and the European aristocracy flocked to his door to have their horoscopes read. Noble women sought his advice on cosmetics. He wrote "Trakte de Fardemens", a comprehensive guide to the doctors that he met throughout Europe. Eventually he returned to Montpellier University for his doctorate degree, after which the dean awarded him a professorial post for three years.

Nostradamus' love of cooking and thinking developed, thanks to his parents. As an adult, his speciality was fruit preservatives - even the Papal Legate of Avignon praised him for his quince jelly recipe. The philosopher Julius-Cesar Scalinger invited him to Agen where not only did the two gentlemen become fast friends, but Michel also met the girl of his dreams. They married and the girl bore him two children - a girl and a boy. For the next three years, he was as happy as he had ever been, surrounded by the greatest minds of Europe during the day and by a family that he loved at night.

When the plague returned - this time to Agen - Michel started practising medicine again. Once more, he was very successful at curing his patients. Unfortunately, when his own family fell ill, none of that seemed to matter as they died one by one. The news spread like wildfire, causing the patients to desert their saviour. His wife's family demanded the return of the dowry. Scalinger broke off his friendship following a quarrel. And to cap it all, he was called for trial by the Inquisitors. He escaped from Agen under the cover of darkness, avoiding his pursuers and re-discovering himself over the next six years.

Following a third bout of pestilence in which the doctor was spurred into action, Nostradamus decided to return to Salon and settle down for the rest of his life. At forty five years, he yearned a more relaxing life, married Anne Posart Gemelle, a rich widow, and was happy once again..

To the public, he was a good doctor and model Christian, but once he had kissed his wife good night, he would study the stars, to plot the night's course on a horoscope. Then, he would have trance-induced visions, which were dominated by years of religious war in France triggered by the death of the King in a jousting tournament.

Wanting to share these discoveries, but fearing persecution, Nostradamus eventually wrote his first almanac in 1550. It consisted of twelve four-line poems called "quatrains" which provided a general prophecy for each month of the year ahead. The almanacs were so popular that he was encouraged to write one every year.

Good Friday, 1554, the celestial scientist started work on his most ambitious project - 'The Centuries'. This book brought him a reputation as a genius among polite society and as an instrument of Satan among the peasants. 1558 saw the completion of 'The Centuries'. When the prophecy of the King's death was proved true in 1559, Nostradamus achieved Europe-wide fame. But as predicted, the death triggered a civil war between Catholics and the Protestants. Nevertheless, Charles IX awarded Nostradamus with the title of Counsellor and Physician in Ordinary, with the privileges and salary this implied, when he visited Salon on a royal tour.

Nostradamus had reached the high point of his career as a seer, but he knew he did not have long to live. On 17 June 1566, after a severe attack of gout, he made his last will and testament, arranging for his wealth and possessions to be distributed to his wife, three sons, and three daughters. He made contingencies for twins as his wife was pregnant at the time and also for any unseen deaths of the daughters before marriage.

In Nostradamus' last almanac, he wrote of his own death, "Close relatives, friends, brothers by blood (will find him) completely dead near the bed and the bench." That is precisely how he was found on the morning of July 1st 1556.

As can be seen, Nostradamus was a gifted individual who was regarded as a genius by the educated aristocracy, yet in the eyes of the ignorant peasants, he was working with the Devil. Ignorance has a tendency to spread fear, of which Nostradamus said: "Fear comes foremost from unfulfilled desires...It creates war and all other activities. Fear makes plagues and illusions. Only fear. It is always so. People can only become more reasonable if they lose their fear of each other and of themselves." By choosing to do what he believed was right, Nostradamus achieved results which were impossible at the time.

It is still common for gifted individuals to be tormented by those who do not understand them. A person has a right to be happy. To be or not to be different, that is the question.

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# Me, Myself, and I

by Sara Willson

Two of the more interesting sides of my personality sat down for coffee to chat about life and fill up a bit of spare time. The following interview of FEMME by FLAMING LIBERAL took place 10/26.

FLAMING LIBERAL: You don't seem to be very assertive in making sure you get your fair share of time on display. Any particular reason?

FEMME: Well, I suppose there are two. The first is sort of inherent in my character. I'm not obnoxious, loud, outgoing, or forceful. I don't want to push my way to the surface. I only get time when I'm asked to take it.

FL: And the second reason?

FE: To tell you the truth, I'm not very popular out there, at least not with Her. I demure too much, take no risks, choose uncomfortable clothing, and speak too softly for Her taste.

FL: To what do you credit this unpopularity? Her upbringing, perhaps? Or peer pressure?

FE: Again, I'd have to say there are two things. One is a Natural (outgoing) character that is quite uncomfortable being shoved aside. The other is peer related.

FL: Expound on this "peer related" idea. Is this generational? Cultural? Tech?

FE: I know it's not Tech. I'm sure the majority (boys, I'm saying) would love to see Her let me out. Skirts, long curled hair, make-up, those would be very popular. It's not generational -- those characters still exist. See any Greek function for some great examples. I think perhaps it's cultural. Not Southern or University or even Urban. Just educated. Around other educated people, a FEMME like me isn't necessary because She is already accepted for her intellect. If She played down that intellect, She wouldn't fit in with the people She has chosen as a peer group.

FL: So are you saying you are obsolete to Her?

FE: No, not at all really. Let me put it this way. I'm like a tube of red lipstick. Every girl should have one, but I shouldn't be worn every day. I'm there for special occasions. My talents are perfect for circumstances that require a certain amount of delicacy and discretion.

FL: You look a bit devilish when you say that...

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FE: Goodness no! I'll admit that She doesn't bring me out for the noblest reasons sometimes, but why else would She submerge her Natural character unless She wanted to accomplish something interesting?

FL: Good point, FEMME. So in your brief outings at Tech, what's your take on the place? Where have you been and what have you seen?

FE: Typically, my outings are in one of two places, in the company of men or in the company of other FEMMES. The men seem to respond well to me in the sense that they talk to Her a lot -- though I suspect it's just because I give them the chance -- but they tend to talk down to Her because I don't give any indication of Her intelligence.

FL: Doesn't that make Her feel cheap and undervalued?

FE: Attention is attention, regardless of reason or source. Besides, She likes to practice flirting, my specialty, and it's a great way to get a lot of information She might not have access to otherwise. That's the point of my presence around other FEMMES. She would be out of the loop, ostracized among my characters if she went Natural. We tend to get catty and start whispering when we're around other characters.

FL: Isn't that terribly narrow-minded and rude? Don't you feel guilty?

FE: Goodness no! Guilt is exclusively split between FLAMING LIBERALS -- like you -- and PIOUS VIRGINS. You know that.

FL: Boy do I. Then aren't you at odds with me and PIOUS VIRGIN?

FE: You and I have always had an understanding. She prefers you because you are closer to Natural. As for the PIOUS VIRGIN, we don't conflict much except for my flirting and catty talk. But She prefers me to PIOUS VIRGIN any day, so there hasn't really been any competition.

FL: Well put, FEMME. And on that note, I guess we'll wrap it up. Thanks for your time.

FE: Oh it was no trouble at all...really it wasn't.

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# Second Blood - A Reply to First

by Fate

He approached the stairs by cover. There, in sight, just out of range, she moved towards the Skiles building. Flanking into the courtyard, he flew up the stairs; there was no time to lose, and every second took her farther away. He found himself on the second landing, a fresh corpse digging its nails into the concrete steps with its last breath. Her target, no doubt. Someone's revenge, someone's money. Someone else's. Not his. Turning, he saw the last remnant of her hair flick over the top of the staircase, confident she was safe.

Little did she know.

Not that it was really her fault. He was just bored, is all. Needed a new target to hone his skills. The past employers hadn't been in contact, and a freelance needed the practice. He'd been trailing her all morning, through the Center and back again. Now was the moment - she was going to go. And it wasn't going to be pretty. Soon, her mangled body would be found in the fountain by the Public Library, floating, bloated with death and stinking of chlorine. And then he'd get hired again. None would be able to ignore his skill - to kill an assassin, in broad daylight, by a busy road, without the least danger of getting caught. He'd have to get a job.

Flying up the steps after her, his foot found a pool of blood, and the blood slipped. Flailing his arms, he went down hard on the steps, cracking an arm and scraping his shoulder, and missing his chance.

Damn blood.

Next time, woman. Next time.

~ Carl (who only kills in his spare time)

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# Pet Human Peeves

By Nancy Yin-Ann Chen

Sometimes I just don't understand schools [not just Georgia Tech] but all schools in general. Professors [not teachers, mind you, since they don't actually teach anymore in college] expect students to do well in classes and on tests, yet the proper tools required for exceptional education are lacking.

If Tech is packed with governmental funds and resources, how come there are so many screwed up things about Tech? Please let me illustrate in words:

1. How come the bathrooms doors [at least the girls'] are never aligned correctly to close, or that the locks never lock either. Who designed these damn doors, hopefully not a Tech architorture [see # 6] graduate!
2. How come people have to site in little cramped up chairs of desk [now you know that 2 in 1 is never a good deal] to take notes [ie, the political science class]. How do professors expect students to open the book, lay folders on the desk and still have enough room to write? Also, how the hell is someone like me [who is left handed] suppose to write well or even legibly on the 99% right handed desk with my left arm and elbow extended 75% in the air and off the desk while my left side shoulder and neck muscles cramp and ache in pain?!!
3. How come professors [in the math department, or maybe all the ones lucky little me gets] cannot speak English fluently? I'm from another country, but I learned to speak English to attend school as a student, yet nowadays professors are not required to do the same?! How bias is that?! How am I suppose to learn when the professor speaks worse English than ebonics [which is actually easy to decode after awhile]?! And people wonder why I'm doing terribly in math is because I cant understand the gibberish that professors are murmuring out of their mouths. It was difficult enough passing pre-cal without completely understanding the lessons, now I'm expected to pass without understanding at all. And yes, I have read the chapters, but I still don't understand...
4. How come the books we spend over 200\$ buying only get bought back [by Tech] for 20\$? Thus, I choose to get my money's worth in books by scribbling obscene pictures and scrawling rude sayings all over the pages! And finally, labeling them all with my initials. Yes, I even highlight everything I read, so that the next lucky person who gets it will have all the important notes done for them [although they might be wrong...]!
5. How come the fire alarm always chooses to blast off my ear drums and concentration either when I'm dozing off or studying for a major exam/test?! And why do the alarms sound consecutively when there is NO fire...does this mean where there

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IS a fire, there will be total and complete silence?! I finally have decided to never leave the building no matter where I am when the fire alarm sounds off because: 1. It's a waste of time, 2. There never is a fire [or smoke, and cigarette smoke doesn't count]!

6. How come professors always correct their errors AFTER they have handed out instructions/directions the previous day? And then they expect students to REDO the work, which we've already spend OVER 20 hours working on [this pertains to anyone in my architecture 1501 class]. I don't care for professors who are about three times older than me [19 years old girl here]. I think it's time for retirement boyz! Also, if professors want to be respected, you earn it like everyone else...nothing excludes you!

7. How come the average Tech person falls for the 'free tshirt or free waterbottle [like ya really need another item of those], let me copy your buzz card picture, # and signature, fill out five pages of personal and confidential information for a credit card you will never use application!' Gosh, in the 15 - 20 minutes it takes to fill out the forms, you're already late for your next class, and plus, you've just given half the information you've collected all your life to a stranger who lured you into getting 'something for nothing.' That's America for you!

8. How come if Tech is know for its technology and science, etc...the computer rooms are all filled with Macs [yes, I'm a pc'r] that have Netscape Navigator versions 3.x, and not 4.x or etc Internet Explorer 4.x [ok, so Microsoft is evil, but they make all the programs everyone uses]! How come no one takes the time to upgrade the systems, or better yet, get PCs and finally, mouses with two buttons!?! And while I'm at this subject, also get some damn mouse pads so the dust splattered magnetic like balls can roll around smoothly so I will be able to scroll with ease at the maximum speed of a snail!

Done ranting [for now]. Believe me, just because the world thinks Tech is great, doesn't mean it is, or isn't for that matter. But once one becomes a student here, life just blurs away, and the media doesn't even matter. I haven't been able to keep up with the news since that big fork cam flying out of the sky and stabbed my four toes!

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# My Summer Vacation

by Deanna J

(How many song titles / lyrics can you find.....?)

After radio killed the video star, we couldn't really get much higher (which means that we probably didn't start the fire). So now we're on the road again, running down a dream (missed that stairway to heaven 'cause we were running with the devil). But anyway, we still think that we're bad to the bone and hard to handle; we must truly be the unforgiven (even though, as some of us are chasing what they think are Barbie girls where the boys are only to find out that the dude looks like a lady, we're actually somewhat behaving in the club at the end of the street).

And now the day is fading fast (exit light, enter night) and so we'd better be rolling down the river to the next city. As we roamed where we wanted to, looking for some place to eat, we found the Hotels California and Heartbreak off of Exit 29. We had our bus driver, Trigger Happy Jack, drive by a go-go to get to a good restaurant. And as we sat, sipping out pina colodas and eating our cheeseburgers in Paradise Café with Tootsie Rolls for desert, we wondered if we'd ever make it to Margaritaville. Then discussion changed to other topics like bloody Sunday, radio-free Europe, and what it would be like to live in a yellow submarine.

Finally, we decided to see a rocket man go into space. Eventually, we made it to the launch site, just in time. We watched the launch from all along the watchtower, and saw Major Tom enter the Crystal Ship to go to the moon and back. We then decided it was time to go back to sweet home Alabama, hoping our new bus driver (he said to just call him Al) knew the way home. Our main problem was to not worry, but be happy, about returning in time for school (especially since one of our number was hot for teacher). So we took the school blue and whipped them, just accepting that we'd have to wait until the next quarter break to rock the cazbah. The End.

---

(All songs listed are in the order that they are found in the story.)

1. Video Killed the Radio Star - The Buggles
2. Light My Fire - The Doors
3. We Didn't Start the Fire - Billy Joel
4. On the Road Again - Willie Nelson
5. Running Down a Dream - Tom Petty and the HeartBreakers
6. Stairway to Heaven - Led Zeppelin
7. Running with the Devil - Van Halen

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8. Bad to the Bone - George Thorogood
9. Hard to Handle - The Black Crowes
10. The Unforgiven - Metallica
11. Barbie Girl - Aqua
12. Where the Boys Are - Connie Francis
13. Dude Looks Like a Lady - Aerosmith
14. Club at the End of the Street - Elton John
15. Enter Sandman - Metallica
16. Rolling Down the River - Ike and Tina Turner
17. Roam - B-52's
18. Hotel California - Eagles
19. Heartbreak Hotel - Elvis
20. Trigger Happy Jack (Drive by a Go-Go) - Poe
21. The Pina Colada Song - Rupert Holmes
22. Cheeseburger in Paradise - Jimmy Buffet
23. Tootsie Roll - 69 Boys
24. Margaritaville - Jimmy Buffet
25. Sunday Bloody Sunday - U2
26. Radio Free Europe - R.E.M.
27. Yellow Submarine - The Beatles
28. Rocket Man - Elton John
29. All Along the Watchtower - Jimi Hendrix
30. Space Oddity - David Bowie
31. The Crystal Ship - The Doors
32. To the Moon and Back - Savage Garden
33. Call Me Al - Paul Simon
34. Don't Worry, Be Happy - Bobby McFerrin
35. Hot for Teacher - Van Halen
36. Whip It - Devo
37. Rock the Cazbah - The Clash
38. The End - The Doors

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# Lessons

by Kelly Rhiannon Burroughs

I was just thinking, life is funny with its winds of perpetual change. Just when you feel that all is lost, the wheel turns and you are on the other side. Patience, it must be the key. Happiness is so sweet... I wish that I could bottle it and carry it everywhere I go so that I can give those who are sad a drop when needed. If only it were that easy. Once you find happiness... you must coddle it and nurture it, lest it flee. Happiness takes more effort than unhappiness, which explains its rarity. It is easy to wake in the morning and be grumpy and glum all day... and once in the habit... you feel stuck... because you start to draw the grim side of life into your being. The opposite is also easily done. Consciously decide everyday to make that day great... to roll with the punches, and let negatives slide off your back. In order to be happy, you have to surround yourself with positive people and things. Which, of course, are harder to find. Negatives are abundant; Positives are less apparent and must be sought after. However difficult the initial effort presents itself to be, it is worth it. Obviously, everyone wishes and hopes for happiness to fall from the sky into their lives. Few take the time for happiness in their lives... and it is those precious few that keep everyone else tied in knots of jealous rage. Sweet fleeting moments... that is really where happiness can be found. The laugh of a babe... the stare of a lover... the fluttering of butterflies...the first kiss. Time slips away all too soon... and if you are not ready and paying attention... you will miss it all. How sad to lay upon your deathbed with the regrets of yesterday! Why should it come to that? If we slow our hurried pace and look ... we can see moments of happiness unfolding all around. Why not take advantage? This moment will not pass through your journey again. Though, do not let impatience ruin it all... easy does it... blind leaping leads to falls. Cherish the moment... Enjoy the day... Notice the breath of the wind on your face... Bask in the warmth of the sun... Prolong the "warm fuzzies" of life. The newness inevitably wears off... considerations tend to fade... it is that constant effort that keeps things fresh. Listen to those in your life... they speak because they mean for you to hear and take notice. "First seek to understand, then to be understood." Be still and listen to the pulse of life... take joy in new discoveries... have patience with those you love, they mean well. People are so precious and irreplaceable... Don't you think? What would I do without my family, my friends, my love? Look past people's faults and into their heart and into their spirit. You might be surprised at what you find beneath the surface. You hold them dear in your life, why not hold them dear in your everyday, your thoughts, your words, and your deeds? Grace the pages of your loved ones lives... don't merely take up space like a common stranger. Speak up, Listen up, Act up... let them know you care. Why force someone to wonder your thoughts when they are just as easily spoken? Why wonder of theirs when it is less exhausting to ask? The point is... enjoy the sweet steps of life... don't blindly breeze past them. Feel blessed by life because you are lucky enough to breathe. Feel blessed by your loved ones because you are lucky enough to

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be cared for. Take time to enjoy the day, be glad that you can. Take advantage of the sweet fleeting moments... so precious and few. Getting lost is all too easy, and too often heartbreaking. Love purely and deeply. Feel the intoxication of a gentle caress. Stop hurrying through everyday trivialities and pay attention. There will come a time when you will wish that you did. Have faith in your heart... be mindful of your spirit... feed your soul

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# Taken From a Diary

by Claire Suzanne Bailey

I sit alone in this quiet room, eating yet another snack, wishing there were some noise in here, wishing I didn't have to do homework now, wishing I could talk to my boyfriend without his stupid brother hanging up the phone on me. I'm doing my recursive thinking and thinking too much about everything, again.

I wish I were sitting in my dorm room at college right now, thinking back on my high school days wishing I were back here. I wish I were out with my boyfriend instead of sitting alone in this room. I wish I could spend time with my parents and enjoy just sitting on the couch with them. But I can't. I can't go downstairs and just hang out with them. It's like what happens when your best friend moves away: everything is so great with the two of you until she comes back to visit 10 months later and everything has changed and you can no longer hang out with her because it is so awkward. It's like that. It's been so long since I went and sat down on the couch with my parents just to spend time with them that it's too awkward to go back and do it now, as much as I may want to. Instead I choose the comforting solace of this lonely and quiet room, with its lights that are too bright and its everchanging temperature. I await the moment that my Dad comes to say goodnight and I get a comforting hug from him that somehow makes life better.

I see how precious and fragile life is when my parents go to say goodnight and I don't hug them and tell them I love them. I start to worry that this could be my last chance to see them. I think about my friends and worry about which ones might commit suicide before I see them again and what was the last thing I ever said to them? Do they know how much I care about them and what they mean to me and how they keep me from falling to pieces? I wonder what would happen if my best friend was in an accident, or what if I was in an accident? Where does life go then? I wonder what life would be like after one of my best friends dies, and I realize that it would be just like this, me sitting alone in a room, too distraught to talk to anyone or spend time with anyone, me being too scared and too comforted here alone to really talk to someone else.

I wish I were alone in my room, listening to that song on eternal repeat, lying on the floor in the glow of blacklights. I wish I could ponder my existence and find an answer. I wish I could crawl into a hole and watch the world from there. I wish I could watch the world with me in it and see how I act. I wish I could see the world without me in it and see if I even matter. I wish I could understand the strangest people in the world. I wish I could understand myself.

I long for the day that I can sit in my dorm room with my best friend and be happy with life. I dread the day that I go to college and leave my best friend behind. I wish I could have it all, I'm sure I would hate that. I make an art form out of being unhappy, but

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when I'm happy I could conquer the world. When my mother shows me old pictures and says, "See that smile on your face? That's how I want you to be all the time," I realize my unhappiness isn't as masked as I thought. When she tells me that I have taught her that she doesn't have to be like everyone else and that she learns so much from me, I realize I do have some kind of meaning in this world. When she tells me she's proud of me, I can't begin to understand why.

So I turn on my cell-phone because it's after 10 and I pretend that someone is going to call me, but no one does. I wish that I didn't have to deal with people and all their problems, to add on top of all of mine. I wish that people didn't overanalyze everything and read into everything. I wish that I could completely not care about other people's opinions, instead of having to watch what I do or say for the sole purpose of not having to deal with other people's opinions which they will force upon me whether I care what they say or not. I wouldn't care at all if I didn't have to put up with the lectures and the arguments and the name-calling and the stuff that people feed me everyday for what I do. If I can totally accept myself and my actions and rationalize them in my own self, and my own heart and mind and soul, why should anyone else care? But they do, and they feel compelled to share this with me.

For all the time people spend worrying over and talking about the past and the future, obsessing over time and money and social status and society rules and everything else that ever happens, it doesn't even matter. In the whole scale of everything that really matters in this world, all the talk doesn't. We talk about everything but now, and we waste now talking about everything else. Time doesn't matter, hate doesn't matter, mass opinions don't matter either. Why can't we be content in ourselves and not question and doublethink everyone else's motives and actions? To them, they are correct in what they are doing, so let it go.

So I sit here in my lonely room, with no sound to comfort me, and only my thoughts to haunt me, and wish I were a thousand other places doing a thousand different things. I only wish most that I could spend all my time with the people I love and not worry over the world's opinions and cynicism and hate, and drop my worries and problems and enjoy life and for once be perfectly happy.

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# The Chronicles of Fate

by Charles Erwin Winchester III, Philanthropist and geocentric thinker

In the beginning, there was nothing. Then God said, "Let there be light" and there was still nothing, but you could see it. Later, when the entire primordial mix had stirred to a brimming, simmering sandwich of towers, cities, and other useless objects, and chickens, came Fate. Fate was one of those natural phenomena you expect to hear about on PBS, but never did. Rather like how actors always manage to have the best looks and how politicians never can seem to tell the truth. Not that it really matters, but then, what on PBS ever does? But to the point. Fate was. And because he was, he always would be. And since he always would be anyway, he always was. (He liked to cover the spectrum) And so Fate began interacting with everything that didn't matter, from actors to politicians to PBS, and he began accumulating a massive amount of pointless information, which he immediately forgot, and interfering with the uninformed, unenlightened, and understaffed of the head. So follows, a Chronicle of Fate.

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## The Storm - An Odic Chronicle

Blackening the sky above was a cloud. Many saw it coming and fled from the mere sight of it's rampaging flood of lights and booming cries, but one stood ready to feel the dismal impact of its strike. That one was not Odic Phase.

Odic at that moment had fled with the rest of the panicking crowd to the far ends of the spectrum of disjointed fears and uneducated guesses that the entire multitude agreed should be called "Earth". That Earth should be made of this same substance seemed no matter to any of those beings who called it that, and that such odd phenomena such as Mars also being made of earth posed no consideration on the parts of humanity above mentioned.

Even Odic was full of his own thoughts and such immaterial matters as these did not cross his rather wind-blown head as he cruised at a slight 133 mph towards a town not unlike those found in the bottom of fish bowls. There was a single dilapidated building, falling into a heap of rather interesting but wholly unsafe shapes, and without a soul in conventional sight. Seeing as the day was falling into a fast coma from the approaching storm, and that there was no way, despite the dealer's promise, the small beast of a car could "race the winds", Odic decided to stop forthwith at the building. In doing so, he neglected his common sense's frightened warnings, but rather, he strolled casually inside as though the day were as warm and breezy as one might otherwise wish it to be.

A quick scan of the interior proved that the building was in just as excellent condition inside as out, and just as uninhabited, unless one decided to take note of the small man

in a rather bare appearance sleeping soundly in a dusty corner of the place, perfectly at home with the cobwebs and film that seemed to float in the air.

Odic decided that one naked man was an excellent thing not to notice and was thus highly engaged in the prospect of not noticing him, when the small man unfortunately awoke. He rolled slowly through the dusty air and said in a slightly slurred tone, "Ugh". Having pronounced this facet of information, he fell fast asleep again on the floor and proceeded to strike some unnatural fear into Odic's heart; so Odic fled, and the unfortunate voyage away from the storm continued in a somewhat increased vigor.

There was very little doubt in his mind as he fled the rapidly approaching storm that everyone who resides in small, unclean apartments in the tenancy of roaches and other unsavory characters were irrevocably insane. But once the storm ceased to be approaching rapidly and instead was upon him, he forgot the instability of such tenants and focused more on the rather more instability of the car currently residing under his control. He accelerated very quickly as the rain caught the car in an icy fist and proceeded to swing it back and forth like a child with a new punch ball.

A countenance of a rather panic stricken yet handsome nature fired another shout of warning into the air. That no one was around to hear it, and that the air needed no such warning, did not enter the mind that sat behind the countenance. Instead, it simply commanded that countenance to restore the shout of warning, which sounded remarkably like abject fear, into the forewarned air. Unfortunately, no amount of shouting or turning the wheel furiously back and forth randomly brought that unfortunate piece of human machinery back under control, and the entire compilation of carefully crafted metal and fiberglass found its way easily into a much older tree.

Odic would have considered, at some point, the damage to be done to a tree by a car under these circumstances. It was rather unfortunate that such a beautiful object would be so destroyed by such occurrences. But in this particular incident, the safety of the tree was not on Odic's mind. Rather, Odic was turned to more selfish thoughts, and strove to keep himself alive instead.

The rain made an impressive setting to view the crash in. Would that one be standing nearby, one would note the incredible speed of the car as it raced to the tree, the slight rise in the altitude of that vehicle as it jumped the curb, the pelting of water droplets on the glass in front of a screaming face, and the amazing impact that not only left the car in three separate pieces, but left the tree disentangled into two individual trunks. Then the observer would hasten to note the figure emerging shakily from the vehicle and stumbling towards the road, and fall down in the pouring rain. Had there been an observer, Odic might have received some help.

Unfortunately, the observer present was not interested in helping Odic at all.

Odic stumbled blindly through the rain, falling occasionally in what was afterwards called "an uncannily graceful fall through a sea of troubles." And graceful it may have been, but if it were, it was certainly an awkward grace, the sort of grace a ballerina

would achieve in her first years of training. A sea of trouble it might have been too, but if it was a sea, then it was falling lightly through the air in a streamy packet. Then he fell. There is no poetic justice about that, just one big messy mud pile, with Odic in the middle. And a strange person standing over his until recently animate body.

Odic awoke some hours later to the sound of rain falling. His eyes opened and rolled slowly around his head, cascading off strange wooden paneling in the shape of twisted gargoyles and Smurfs. The eyes refocused: there weren't any Smurfs, the eyes informed him, just more gargoyles. Lots and lots of gargoyles. The eyes closed out the visage of a particularly ugly gargoyle just before Odic's legs swung off the bed, and swung Odic after them, and then the entire party stood up, and the eyes opened for a rematch. The gargoyle won out, and Odic fled screaming from the room through the sole doorway, and found himself into a much larger area. Rain poured down in a rainbow of universally unseen colors, such as transparent clear, clear, transparent, and non-opaque. This falling beauty did not interest the usually artistic Odic, as he was a stranger in a strange place, and just recovering from a fierce battle with a gargoyle. Glancing back through the flood, he failed also to notice the eyes watching him bumble quickly away from the small building.

Odic stumbled for a long time through the rain. Then the rain went away, and Odic simply stumbled. Later, Odic would remember a couple of times when he fell, and still others when he totally collapsed. One of these collapses must have cracked his ankle, or performed some other neither-world miracle of medical magic, as Odic stopped stumbling. He reached a small town with a large brick building, and walked inside, bedraggled and frightened.

The building was not very well lit, and nothing seemed happy in general. The floors were uncovered, the walls dirty, and the ceiling a mess of cobwebs. Odic conducted a lengthy search of the building and the surrounding grounds, but finding no one, simply shrugged off his disarrayed clothing and curled into a ball on a filthy sofa, and went to sleep, where he stayed for many hours, enjoying randomly beautiful scenery and people of the fairer sex, conversing intellectually stimulating conversations with these beautiful people, visiting them in bed for a little while, and conversing with them again.

These pleasantries of another land, however, were suddenly exited when Odic's ears perceived the banging of a door. He rolled over, and being slightly lost mentally from his recent trip, managed to utter a single syllable, "Ugh", and then watched the single frightened man flee from the building in a fearfully frantic state. Odic heard the roar of a motor, and listened as it faded into the distance. Then he laid back down and tried to book the next passage back to sleep.

Odic's second trip to sleep proved much less rewarding than his first, and he was plagued by the constant euphoria of being in a place he knew to be false. He found his heart twisted into complex knots of happiness too great to bear, and consequently he grated his mind on the knowledge of its very falsehood.

The center of this metaphysical reality folded around a single person, a person of such

beauty and greatness that Odic knew in his heart he would never have her. She radiated perfection with the raw power of a nuclear plant sprung from the mind of an industrial genius and fertilized with the tender hands of a million loving horsewhipped slaves.

Her hair spilled from atop her smooth brow like a waterfall, cascading down her trim back and splashing into a silvery-brown pool at her waist, leaving an amniotic river of peace and joy in her wake whenever she chose to move in any particular direction. The clear eyes pierced through Odic's yearning heart with the speed and efficiency of an arrow or dart, and then they flew away and danced gaily with the flowers to the Mother's beautiful music. And then she was gone as well, frolicking with the tree's shivering laughter and laughing with the sky's steady smile.

And then it was all gone.

And Odic was awake.

And Odic was cursing. His toes found the floor cold and restless after his sleep, and they tried with increasing earnestness to stay mounted to the bare-board's random rocking motion. Finally, Odic forced them to give the battle and sat back on the couch among the dust and rags and beetles of the broken house.

It was still raining outside, and Odic was still naked, and so he decided to stay inside and search for some form of covering lest a second or (dread the thought) third person should come to this otherwise vacant building. With this goal he started musing through the many of the building's various rooms, uncovering mysteries lost the eyes of the sun for many hundreds of years, but not at all interesting to Odic, as none of those mysteries were cloth.

In the far corner of one room far back in the building, hidden by a door shrouded with the markings of time, dust, cobwebs, and secured with a deadbolt lock, which was rusted through, and duct tape, which still held securely as ever, Odic found a storehouse of clothes and food. The food was rotted to a pulp that made the ground more earthy than carpet, but the cloth was still good and well stitched, and Odic found some of which the colors appealed to him and took them. And because the rain had fled to some other land possibly more susceptible to it's fierce pouncing, Odic left the ragged building to whatever fortune Fate had planned for it, and went in search of the fortune that Fate planned for him.

(If you like this Odic Chronicle, and wish to read more about Odic and Fate, please write to the editors of NAR. If you hated this Odic Chronicle, and wish Odic would die, please write to the editors of NAR. The writer would like to know if anyone reads this at all. PLEASE! PLEASE WRITE!!! WE NEED SUBMISSIONS OR EVEN OPINIONS!!!!)

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# Accessory to Murder

By Thompson Claire Jennings

Is it easier to kill or to help a killer? In this in-depth interview, I shall examine the unusual mind that drives an accessory to murder. Names have been changed to protect the innocent and the not so innocent. I have taken the time to meet with "Jade", a woman who was kidnapped by an acquaintance and made into a mindless victim of sheer cruelty.

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PSYCHIATRIST: How did you come to know Robert?

Jade: Robert worked for the same company as me. Accounting was the department, I think. He used to hang around my desk a lot. He'd ask strange questions that I would never know the answers to. I always thought he was a little strange.

PSYCHIATRIST: So he noticed you at work. Did he ever invite you to social gatherings or dates?

Jade: Never. Besides, I have a strict rule against dating co-workers. It's just never a good idea. I didn't see him outside the office until that moonless night, three years ago.

PSYCHIATRIST: What happened that night? Was that the night you were taken?

Jade: He kidnapped me. I don't remember all of what happened, it is just now coming out under hypnosis. It's so hard to go back to that time. I barely could breathe when the lawyer asked me about Robert. It was like my tongue was glued to the back of my throat.

PSYCHIATRIST: Let's try to go back to that time. Pretend that I am Robert, just before he was captured by the police on murder charges. What would you have said to him?

Jade: I hate you for all of the evil and damnation that you brought into my life, but I need you for the cruel things that I can't bring myself to do. You burn churches and lie naked in the middle of the supermarket. How could I not love you?

PSYCHIATRIST: What did I do to change you so?

Jade: As slap in the face, c'mon, you can do better than that Robert. You bound me hand to foot, blindfolded and gagged, and brought me home with you. Then you worsened. I stopped dreaming that night. I finally relented, though. I even asked for more, during the rare moments when you'd stop. Make me beg for mercy with my thousand watt screams. Torture me some more, not like I have a choice anyway. It is as if the thing known as love was little more than a myth to us. And I will say here on my

knees until you do as you wish. Naked and cruel is the thump of this heart. Infested with demons like the lick of leaches on my back.

PSYCHIATRIST: Why did you stay so long? Even after I unbound you?

Jade: I need you for the cruel things that I can't bring myself to do. You poke me with fire, and pour chocolate into my wounds. Lick, Lick, the wielding feel of damage, you lick this broken skin. Skilled for the kill, but not to me. More fun to commit treason against this little slip of a girl, than to make the screams stop. You dream this scream, like the red tiles of your bathroom floor. I saw you stoop there and lick the blood. His wounded skull, his spirit freed there.

PSYCHIATRIST: My memory dulls, what happened to the hitchhiker?

Jade: Robert, you wanted a new friend. Don't you remember? You wanted to see the blood again. You wanted my help. I had no choice. You threatened to bury two bodies. Two bodies, including mine. I had to live, even for the edge of your waxy kiss. I had to live. We buried the body that night in the wild wood, where the dogs would not even dare to tread. You buried the body inside of me. Inside of ME! INSIDE OF ME! And you thought your tortures were only skin deep, but they were buried deeper than my skin. I can't howl when you kiss me. I can't even speak or dream.

PSYCHIATRIST: So the darkness prevailed over everything. Why did you love me when I was so cruel?

Jade: I need you for the cruel things that I can't bring myself to do. You stir the disquiet with a rusty lead pipe. A simple shot of poison, and a shank of meat to quiet the mixing moods. There is nothing to soothe this aching soul, but the lust and the stammer. How could I not love you? You pray in the subway, and kill in the church. You mock me with your eyes, and brutally punish me with your fist.

\*BUZZZZZZZZ\*

PSYCHIATRIST: I'm sorry, Jade, our time is up for today. This was a very important session. You have made some progress, but we still have miles to go. The attendants will be right here, in a minute or two, to take you back to your room. I think it helps to express these deeply driven emotions. Do you feel any better?

Jade: Oh, yes. Thank you doctor. It has been hard adjusting to "normal life" again. I'm sure that I will be released when I am more able to cope with freedom.

PSYCHIATRIST: I will see you tomorrow at the same time.

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