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North Avenue Review

NORTH AVENUE REVIEW
“...To provide an open forum for a genuine exchange of ideas from every intellectual field.”

STRUCTURE

The North Avenue Review is produced from a collection of ideas, stories, essays, and art by Georgia Tech students, faculty, staff, and friends who have given freely of their time and dignity for this publication.

The views expressed herein are solely those of the individual contributors and are not intended to express the sentiments of the entire Georgia Tech community.

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All letters are welcome. You may request that your name be withheld, so long as the NAR knows who you are.

CONTRIBUTIONS

We welcome all original contributions from the Georgia Tech community, including but not limited to: articles, essays, clip-art, graphic materials, fiction, dramas, reviews, dissertations, disses, shout-outs, mix battles, photographs, phonographs, pornographs, sex, lies, videotape, manifestos, declarations, sheet music, tablatures, tha funk, recipes, Furbies, Pokemon, Pet

Rocks, mood rings, prognostications (psychic and earthly), doodles, class notes, CS homework (source code only, please), psychoanalyses, microbrews, razor blades (can't have enough), orange juice URL information, warez, and anything else adaptable to the printed page with the definite exception of poetry.

Students, faculty, staff, and alumni are invited to share opinions, expressions, and illusions.

PROCEDURE

At NAR meetings throughout the semester, all works are presented to the group for peer review. The editors read all submissions, and offer constructive criticism and advice. If an editor feels a piece to be unnecessarily inflammatory, he or she or it may bring this to the attention of the group for discussion. A 3/4 vote is needed to exclude a piece from publication. This provision is to prevent publishing items that may jeopardize NAR's existence, but the NAR has never censored a final submission to date. Attendance and participation by contributors is extremely important to allow feedback and comments --hopefully improving everybody's work.

Please submit texts either by email or by 3.5" disk. We cannot type your piece for you. Quote sources accurately. The spell checker is your friend. We will try to correct any gross grammatical / spelling errors, but we aren't exactly Lit. Majors, so send it to us in a state that wouldn't embarrass you.

GETTING INVOLVED

The NAR needs your help! Everyone is welcome, regardless of literary or ideological persuasion. Meetings are currently on Thursday at 7:00 pm, in

the Student Services building, but that is known to change compulsively.

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information overload

This month's theme is "Why are Tech students so damn . . . ?" When we made up the theme, we assumed that we would get a lot of angry responses. Low and behold, we did. The simple fact of the matter is that Tech students aren't happy here. The Princeton Review survey bore this out, as we all know, by placing Tech at #2 on its list of schools with least happy students. As I remember, there were a bunch of unconvincing editorials in the Technique talking about how Tech really isn't that bad of a place after all, gosh darnit. That's a load of crap. This place is awful. With that said, though, I've been doing a lot of thinking in my spare time about why I'm still here, despite the feelings I harbor towards our fine Institute.

I've come to realize that if I hated Tech as much as I was willing to tell any passerby who happened to ask my opinion, I would have transferred to a school that wasn't such a close approximation of Hell. What I finally decided about Tech is that I do like certain aspects of it here, and, in all truth, Tech has been good to me. Sure, I've been screwed by Housing, Financial Aid, Bursar's, the CoC, Math, etc., but who hasn't? The question I always come back to is "where else would they let someone who can't spell edit a magazine?" I can't come up with an answer, which is why I guess I come back for more, semester after semester. So, what do I think of Tech and its many oft-disparaged institutions?

I guess you could say that I think Tech is a good school with great potential. There are several fundamental problems I see facing this school. I certainly don't think the problem lies with apathetic students, as suggested by the Technique editorial board. As I see it, Tech's fundamental problem is that, by the very nature of being Tech, it leaves students with a

feeling of worthlessness; I have been left with the feeling that the administration of this campus truly does not care whether I live or die. There are two factors contributing to this feeling of worthlessness that becomes ingrained in the psyche of many a bitter Tech student: the people the students have day-to-day interactions with are unhelpful, uncaring, unfriendly, and often openly hostile to students and the campus is situated in such a way as to discourage all social interactions. These two factors make for a Tech student, especially the younger ones who have not yet had time to adapt to the radically altered social fabric of Tech, who is bitter and resentful of the university he calls home.

The problem with these problems I've mentioned above is that they are not fixed easily, which is something the administration seems bent on doing. These are deeply ingrained, fortified problems that will have to be etched away for probably at least a decade. If Georgia Tech truly wants to escape the dark shadow that is slowly being cast over it, some long-term projects are going to have to be created, because ours are not problems to be fixed with a free concert or a student appreciation day. Tech must change or go down in its self-set flames, nothing more and nothing less.

The first problem I mentioned is the lack of caring on the part of so many in Tech's administration. I have heard about and experienced so many examples of this that I could fill this magazine cataloguing all of them. I won't, though, and just focus on one set, in particular, that I feel is rather indicative of the whole problem. Of course, I'm going to talk about the Parking Office.

There is probably no other organization on campus more universally reviled than Parking. When you hear faculty and staff, not to mention students, referring to employees of the group as “Nazis,” there must be a problem. Why do Tech students hate Parking so much? Is it because of the poorly constructed lots that are crumbling around us? The Draconian enforcement policies? Or, perhaps, is it something else? Reading through interviews with the head of Parking, he seems to suggest that he is aware of the student body’s complete contempt for his organization and is working to correct that attitude. I think, the problem that most Tech students have with the Parking Office stems from the complete lack of concern exhibited by the people with whom the students interact. Regardless of any grand vision the director may purport to in the Technique, the fact of the matter is, the lazy, inconsiderate, unhelpful people distributing tickets and handling student concerns are the ones with whom the students deal and with whom they have complaints. Nothing is more frustrating than having to deal with someone who simply doesn’t care and, more than that, is openly hostile to the idea of helping you solve your problem. So, in the specific case of Parking, the students are faced on one hand with the illusion of a Parking office working to solve the parking problem as reported in the school paper and the reality of Parking employees who are not working on anything other than their beauty sleep.

This mentality of directors and deans offering grand visions of sweeping changes and students frolicking in grassy fields in the peace and harmony of the future and the people with whom the students deal not giving a damn and being rude and confrontational towards the student who has come to them for help that only they can provide is one of the major problems here. I think this dichotomy is observable in every organization towards which the student body holds a great amount of

ire. Read through statements made after the cheating scandal about improving things in CS 1321 and then go talk to your favorite CS TA, if you don’t believe me. This combination of grand speech and gross indifference leads many students, this author included, to feel as though the Institute does not, in fact, care about their problems.

It may sound harsh, but that is the reality of things here. Students are very, very unhappy. Unhappy to a degree that a free concert once a year, coupled with a “Student Appreciation Day” will not solve. Barbecues and live music, to me, convey an image of giving a band-aid to a burn victim. It is too little; an attempt to distract us from the real problems we are faced with in our day-to-day life at Tech.

The other major problem facing Tech is the lack of an environment conducive to social interaction. If you walk around campus, you’ll note that our campus is composed mainly of buildings set at odd angles from one another, surrounded by barren fields, and a series of paths that connect them. There is no common space on campus, merely footpaths on which people go between locations. Walking around campus on a sunny spring Friday, there may be a few people milling about in several of the randomly placed fields, but the majority of the students will be on the sidewalk, going somewhere. It could be said that this could be a positive thing: “Tech students are always going places!” the colorful poster depicting an ethnically, sexually balanced slice of airbrushed, Technicolor student body would read. I ask, though, what is the point of success if one does not have friends?

College is about a number of things beyond learning and getting a job. This is not necessarily true here at Tech, but I’ve found it to be the case at other schools. College is a

time where one solidifies one's personality and learns to truly interact with people, skills that are, ultimately, more important than differential equations or a working knowledge of a C compiler. At Tech, I've found, you have to work extra hard to get the kind of social interaction that comes naturally at other colleges. Partly, this can be blamed on the anti-social people Tech tends to attract, but I don't think it is fair to blame the students completely. Tech is not architecturally suited to having fun.

As I mentioned, the campus is laid out in a manner that encourages walking from one place to another without an obvious center of campus, a quad, if you will, in which people can congregate. The dorms are also laid out in this way. Most of them are arranged so that you can get to your room from the outside without having to talk to anyone. As this is the case, you are not forced to interact with your fellow building mates and don't get to know and respect other people, in the process. If the dorms were laid out with common entry points that lead through lobbies that had couches and other things to encourage people to hang out there would be a better, more accessible social environment in our dorms. That's not to say that this will benefit everyone; the weird guy who listens to strange music and stays up until 4 AM playing Quake is still going to have problems. I think better building layout will encourage more social interaction amongst building patrons. As a for instance, I once discovered that an acquaintance of mine lived in my building on the last day of the semester because I accidentally ran into him while moving my stuff out. If we have dorms that students view merely as places to sleep, they will never view Tech as a home, something I think is a major contributing factor to the stagnant social environment we have before us.

“So, what is to be done?” I'm sure that is the question that has at least passed through

your mind during this article. It is, in truth, a rather difficult question to answer, because the problems facing Tech are so overwhelmingly difficult. I'm not sure I'm completely qualified to give a specific answer to the problem, either. In fact, I'm not sure a specific answer is even possible to give. What needs to be done, though, is for the administration, those on the Hill, to make a concentrated effort to change. Occasional concerts and events are not the sort of thing to really improve student life. Tech's social problems are something intimately tied in with the very fabric of this Institute. The best suggestion I can offer is that some form of goal must be set and worked towards. As an example, “we want to Tech to be in the Top 10 on the schools with the most satisfied students in the Princeton Review by 2008,” could be such a goal. That would give Tech a five year window to work on improving campus life. In that five year period, committees of students and faculty should be convened, a list of milestones on the road to the goal should be drafted and made publicly available with bi-annual status reports, surveys should be taken every year, etc. In other words, this is something that is going to take a major commitment on the part of the Institute. The only way to truly correct the problems we face is through such sweeping changes.

In the end, as I've said, Georgia Tech is good school that could be great. By addressing the two major problem areas I've mentioned, mean, uncaring staff and poor campus layout, I think Georgia Tech can truly earn a reputation as one of the greatest schools in the nation. It will take a major commitment on the part of everyone at Tech. It has to start with the students, though. We have to work to make the Administration aware of the things we expect. I suspect that we, the students, are going to be the ones who are going to start the process of creating a new, better Georgia Tech.

Why Are Tech Students So Damn _____?

So, continuing in the new tradition of having NAR theme issues, we present, for you, the ramblings and musings of your peers on what makes us all the quirky bunch of guys (and a few gals) that we are.

Read on to find some truly surreal, angry, funny, bitter commentary on why we all are the way we are. Welcome to the 51st issue of NAR, “Why Are Tech Students So Damn _____?”

We hope you enjoy,

The Editor

Why are Tech Students So . . . PARLIAMENTARY?

by hunter (gtg711g)

I've been at tech two semesters now and I still don't get it, why are all of these crazy tech students so damn off-the-wall parliamentary? I mean really, I see all these people walking around with gabbles and wigs or and always talking about the bloody tories and how the Americans are really going to pay for that tea party, and I say to myself what the hell tea party are they talking about, because Americans don't participate in any freaking tea parties, but what really gets me is how everybody keeps cheering god save the king and god save the queen blah blah blah and I keep thinking, the king? Elvis died years ago and what does a whig want to do elvis, so I go to class everyday and I look around, only to see that I am the only normal person there, wearing my red velvet sean john sweatsuit, minding my own business, and there's all that nonsense banter about some prime minister not winning the majority and dissolving all of us, but my inta class isn't even for another hour, right now I am in calculus, then when I went to in ta all my classmates were like, right-o fine chaps let's do eat some fish and chips for lunch, and I say to them, you're nuts, lunch isn't for another 6 hours and they just mumble something about Greenwich mean time, so I am like whoa whoa whoa but then class is over and they all shuffle out, later on I am standing at the corner of bobby dodd and another street and don't see any cars so I decide to cross when this guy dressed like some kind of weird cop says to me in this totally un-American accent, hey you there young chap, by crossing thus so, you are not in accord with the rules and customs of the deliberative assembly and I am just like, shoo,

I know what parliamentary is, quit steppin' yo, and I leave for my next class which I thought was going to be health 1041 and I walk in and there's this old man in the front of the hall, holding his gabble surprise surprise, he bellows out welcome to house of lords 1001 and I just think holy crap holy crap what the hell is going on but I just stay in there because I figure hey this'll at least be better than health class and I listen to the old dude talk and at the end I have this major headache because I can only think to myself, what is wrong with that guy, the house of lords sounds like a total load of crap and why would someone bother teaching such a load of trivial babble, so I tell that to the guy next to me, who also happens to be frightfully pale and have some not-from-the-south-I-thought-everyone-at-tech-had-until-today accent and get this he says, I say, my father, and my father's father, and my father's father's father, and my father's father's father's father blah blah blah were all noblemen and so am I and I think I should have power because I am rich and I say to him like, man, get real, you're full of it, America rocks, I would rather have a tank than a tractor any day and even a tractor is better than what mr. Bean drives and he just says tsk-tsk and walks away, and then everybody and I mean every other person on campus except maybe you are like that but you are really strange anyways, freak, so now I want to know why on earth are tech students so parliamentary and by so parliamentary I mean so damn parliamentary, ya heard?

Why are Tech Students So . . . ANARCHISTIC?

by matt (gtg709g)

I've been at tech two semesters now and I still don't get it, why are all of these crazy tech students so damn off-the-wall anarchistic? I mean really, I see all these people walking around this place, being all like, down with the government, lets all be free and I'm like, whoa, hold up there cowboy, down with the government, that's not my game, so quit jocking me so hardcore, I got to get to class and stuff, but when I get to class there are all these bonfires and I'm like, hey its hot in here, I think I'm going to skip class, so I walk out the building and all these motorcycle gangs are all looking at my bike, but I'm not worrying about that, so I get on my bike and start pedaling hardcore, because I hear some gunfire, but I'm not about listening to no gunfire, so I pedal on back and when I get back I see some people, so I ask them what's going on and they are all like, we are overthrowing the government, throw this brick at the riot squad over there, but I look at them like, yo, throwing bricks just isn't my thing, so you best step off me, before I throw this brick at you, so I get moving again and they yell, hey government boy come back here and try to impose some unnecessary order on my life, come on, do it, government boy, but I'm not listening to none of that you see, because I have stuff to do, like get to my next class, so I go to my next class and when I sit down this guy all stands up and is like, hey, I have a shotgun and I'm taking over this class, so everyone get out your notebook for notes and stuff, so I'm like, whatever-ever this better be on the test, and hes all like, tests are for capitalist dogs, so unless you want to be a capitalist dog, don't worry about any test, so I'm like well then why

we going to be taking notes and he doesn't know how to respond to that one, so he just fires his gun all up in the air and kicks me out of class, but I'm alright with that you see, because I don't think he was really going to cover anything that would be on the test you see, because I don't think he was going to be writing it anyway, so I start walking over to the student center to check my mail, but on my way over there, this guy asks me if I want to join his revolution, but I'm all like, man you say you want a revolution, well you know, we all want to change the world, but then he tells me that its evolution, and I tell him, well you know, we all want to change the world, but when you talk about destruction, you can count me out, in, out, but all I have to say is that its going to be alright, then he says he has a real solution and then he asks me for a contribution, but I'm all like I want to see the plans, and hes like sorry you are going to have to wait, I'm not about messing around with fools like this though, because he said he was going to change the constitution, that it was all the institution and he was carrying pictures of this guy named Chairman Mao, so I walk on past this fool and I'm all like to myself, man, its going to be alright, when I step on the student center though, its got this big sign on it that has a red A with a circle around it, so I'm like looks like Georgia Tech has outsourced the student center stuff, but I'm all like, whatever-ever, just as long as I get my mail and stuff, but you know its like everyone on this campus except for maybe you and me are off the wall crazy, so now I want to know why on earth are tech students so anarchistic and by so anarchistic I mean so damn anarchistic, feel me?

Why are Tech Students So Damn Tetchy?

by Mike Bowman

Someone who is tetchy (tch' ç) is irritable and cranky or someone unusually ill tempered or petulant. Actually, the reason I chose tetchy has more to do with the word than with any particular observations.

I had first encountered the word on a bizarre low budget British sci-fi comedy. In a particular episode, three crewmembers are quarantined for five days and begin to argue. The last human being, a slacker, claims the robot has been, "...getting tetchy" and the robot declares how he hates to be called tetchy. The human childishly taunts the fussy robot with, "Tetchy! Tetchy! Tetchy!" while the vain humanoid cat has his "...feckles up," when he meant "...hackles." I thought they were saying "touchy." In context, "touchy" even made sense. However, it also sounded like "tetchy," and so I had to confirm whether the word tetchy was indeed a word and not some British colloquialism or futuristic slang. Expectedly, British comedy is chiefly made of this sort of bantering, punning and slapstick.

I had hoped to use the word someday, since I thought it would be lyrically useful. Instead, I forgot until it popped up as the "Word of the Day" on a website I frequently reference. It had caught my attention while I worked on a story for NAR.

I was writing a story about Tech students who abandon their gadgets and go camping together. However, the device felt like a gimmick. Tech students, outside, no gadgets, with each other, voluntarily... come on! How ridiculous is that! No one would believe it. I couldn't believe it, much less write about it.

So, I gave up. I had spent hours of attention, excitedly writing pages of notes and

sketches, agonizing over details I hadn't dreamt of considering, until I became self-conscious of the process, until it began to feel phony and conceited. So, I gave up.

The whole point of writing a story was to avoid the potential seriousness of an essay. I had hoped to develop a light-hearted satire by imagining caricatures in ridiculous situations, to make fun of them. I was appalled at how seriously I had been taking things. So, I dropped what I ultimately thought to be a selfish, egotistical endeavor.

I had not produced anything for the North Avenue Review like I had intended and felt guilty for it. While in limbo, I found something guaranteed to be trifling, guaranteed not to rouse the slightest bit of solemnity. I found a suitable word to generalize (though incompletely) the student body.

I rediscovered "tetchy," a quirky little word I had forgotten, with an alternate spelling, "techy." Though still pronounced (tch' ç), it looked like (tk' ç), a popular label for Tech students. It's sort of an amusing pun. Just steal a T from tetchy and you have an epithet for both a technical geek and our peckish fellows. To be fair, it's also spelled techie or tekkie.

With synonyms like peevish, irritable, and cranky, I thought, "aren't Tech students a bit tetchy?" I can't make an elaborate justification for this stereotype; however, I find some truth in it. After all, complaining is one of our favorite pastimes. A rant about the school is an icebreaker. It's how we get to know one another. Check newsgroups, student

pages, and blogs for a record of the disgruntled nature of our collective psyche.

Why are Tech students so damned tetchy? One, there are plenty of things, especially about our institution, to complain about. Two, they are frustrated by our lack of control over The System and its unpredictability. Three, many of our students are ineffective communicators. They cannot explain their frustration without coming off as being cranky. They may inadvertently make threatening gestures at people in whom they try to engender sympathy. Their audience may feel as if their anger is being taken out on them. Additionally, most students have developed a useful adaptation to the Tech environment: apathy. For those with some fight left in them, this can be infuriating. It's hard to stir sympathy in someone who has stopped caring. For the maladapted multitude, you will be pricks to us all.

Why are Tech Students So Damn Anti-Macish?

by A PC User

Macs suck. End of article.

Okay, so not really...

I've hated Macs forever . . . ever since elementary school where we had only Macs to use while everyone was only using PCs in their homes. Basically, we did all this shit and played some cool math games on Macs but we couldn't apply to it to PCs because Macs suck. But now we have OS X. Oooooooooooh lalalalalalalala. Really, though, the fact that OS X is "UNIX-based" doesn't negate the fact that Macs still suck. Obviously, my fellow Techers (not to be confused with Trekkers or Trekkies, some of the coolest cats ever) agree with me. Walk into the library at almost any given time and there will be the longest line of people anywhere at Tech standing in line waiting for a computer. Look around further and you will notice the overwhelmingly large amount of Macs available for use. By the pigeon hole theorem, there are enough computers available such that each element of the line may have their one computer and that no two elements must share nor that any element needs to remain in the

line. So why are there still people waiting in line causing mass fear that in your one hour break between classes you won't be able to use a computer?????? Simply put, Tech students hate Macs and the reason they hate Macs is because Macs suck and everyone but a few lame ass people know it.

For starters, there's that stupid bitten apple logo. What the fuck happened to it? Why is there a chunk missing out of the side? Maybe it symbolizes the fact the Macs are worthless pieces of shit (this is where the Mac zealot interjects to say, "But they are really good for music and video editing." Well, I don't fucking care. A computer is supposed to do more than artsy stuff).

Speaking of the overly artsy, could Macs' cases be more fucking artsy? Jesus fucking Christ. They're fucking ugly as shit. They make you look like a pussy (this is where the Mac zealot interjects to say, "But they are really good for music and video editing." Well, I don't fucking care. A computer is supposed to do more than artsy stuff). The iMacs remind me of *2001: A Space Odyssey*. The computers remind me of HAL, and computers should

never remind me of HAL! Maybe some people do like being reminded that their computer is going to kill them and all their comrades...weirdo freaks. In any case (no pun intended)...after trying with your life to get over the fact that they are so white it hurts, they're super creepy. I don't want everything to be fucking translucent. I'm white enough. I don't need my computer to be so fucking white, too. Also, why does the iBook/Power Book/Blahblahblah Book breathe all over the place? Stop spreading your fucking germs, Steve. Just stay one fucking brightness or change colors once, don't breathe consistently. On all Macs, their screens making me feel like I'm five. Everything is so bubbly and bouncy like baby-safe toys. More annoyances: the lack of backgrounds on applications, the ubiquitous toolbar on top, the lack of toolbars on programs, and the side menu that seem to be on every application. You have one toolbar on top; you might as well put them all up there. And get rid of the stoplight thing. I can't even maximize to the whole screen. Are Macs too afraid you might forget what the impossibly hard to change wallpaper looks like? More annoying than all of that are Mac mice. Oh my god! What the fuck is up with the one button? I don't want to have to hold the control key and the mouse button to get a menu. I want to be able to double click. I want to be able to scroll with the mouse (this is where the Mac zealot interjects to say, "But they are really good for music and video editing." Well, I don't fucking care. A computer is supposed to do more than artsy stuff).

We can also hate them for their lack of a floppy drive. That's some fucked up shit. Seriously. Floppy drives rock the modern world. That's it. 3.5" rock and by implication, since Mac doesn't support them, Macs suck.

I think though, the real basis of the bias is the founders. We all know Bill Gates is the fucking man. Oh my god, he's such a dork. He's an uber-geek! You have to love him. And

if you don't, you're jealous. That's it. Don't play a hate, er..., yeah.... Plus the guy was coding games when he was in middle school. So this is where half the readers say, "Well so was I" but that wasn't in the fucking sixties. So get over it (this is where the Mac zealot interjects to say, "But they are really good for music and video editing." Well, I don't fucking care. A computer is supposed to do more than artsy stuff).

But, I guess having a Mac would make my life a lot easier. I mean, Macs do everything for themfuckingselves. Nothing can sum it up better than a website that I'm sure you've all seen when they state, "Every time you ask questions about details, you are gently but firmly told that you don't need to know, don't want to know, and everything will be done for you without your ever having to know, so just shut up." I'm sure if you couldn't figure out where to put the connections into which port, all the connections would be like magnets and go exactly to the ports where they were supposed to go. Which, again, is just too fucking creepy.

But, this leads to another point. Most Mac users, or maybe just the newly-converted, are morons. Evidence from Apple's switch campaign:

1. The commercial with Ellen Feiss. Is she fucking on drugs? She's a student where? I refuse to believe she could ever get into a college.
2. A quote from Yo-Yo Ma, "I don't follow instructions very well, I can't turn things on, I can't find the buttons." How did you get this far through life?!?!? He also said this, "Macs are friendly to technically challenged people like myself." Dumb ass.
3. From "Real Stories:" "When I first started using my iBook, I named it 'Legolas' after the blond character in the movie "Lord

of the Rings.” Since then, it has been performed so many miracles that I’ve taken to calling it ‘Gandalf the White.’” Yes, LOTR is cool. Yes, you’re still lame because you use a Mac.

One other reason why Macs are so lame: Minesweeper is not standard. Motherfuckas (this is where the Mac zealot interjects to say, “But they are really good for music and video editing.” Well, I don’t fucking care. A computer is supposed to do more than artsy stuff).

So, I could go on and on and on about the overpricing, the lack of distributors, the fact that only Apple produces the hardware, the lack of cooler games on Macs, how it’s really

just a PC with the convenient shit taken out and some lame ass shit added in a more than shitty case, but I’m running out of time (this is where the Mac zealot interjects to say, “But they are really good for music and video editing.” Well, I don’t fucking care. A computer is supposed to do more than artsy stuff).

So, basically, I still want everyone hating Macs, but I think we should lighten up a bit sometimes and lower ourselves to use Macs at the libs. I mean shorter line, right? And a little UNIX never hurt anyone.

Buster says, “Mac are stupid.”

Why are Tech Students So Damned?

by Andrew Pilsch

It all faded to black and, when I awoke, I found myself in a gigantic, but dimly lit, sitting room. I couldn’t see much, but there was a man in a maroon smoking jacket clutching a pipe and reading from a Bible, sitting on an ornately carved, teak chaise lounge; I could see this as it lay in the cone of light emitted from the crackling fire that burned in the stone fire place that lay before the lounge.

“Ahh . . . Andrew, welcome. Come, come, lad, have a seat by the fire,” the man with the Bible said, suddenly.

“I’m sorry, I was crossing Ferst Street and I heard a horn . . . where am I?” I asked.

“Sit down, I’ll explain why you are here.”

I took a seat in the chair he indicated, noticing that the red, embroidered silk matched the upholstery of the man’s lounge. He took several puffs on his pipe, carefully placed a black ribbon in the Bible’s spine to mark his place, closed the tome, and placed it on the end table next to his seat.

“Wonderful book, the Bible. Do you know it?”

Before I could answer, he continued:

“I’ve read it hundreds of times, myself. I find it to be a beacon of light in these dark times and a source of infinite joy. Don’t you agree?” His gaze met mine. I was completely awe-struck by his visage, but, now, I’m unable to recall any feature that marked it.

“Sure,” I answered, “Umm . . . about why . . .”

“Do you believe in evil, Mr. Pilsch? Do you think our lives are marked by constant struggle, both internal and external, between forces of good and forces of evil? The divine and the damned?”

“Yeah, I guess . . . Look, about . . .”

“There is no ‘guess,’ Mr. Pilsch,” he cooed, “Yes or no?”

“Yes.”

“Good,” he nodded, “I do, too. It’s nice to know that we are on the same page here, morally, I mean.”

He fixed me with a gaze that seemed to look into the very depths of my soul. I still remember the orange glow of the fire swirling on top of the black sea of his pupils. There was no barrier between us; I could keep no secrets.

“So, now, to answer your query, I’ve invited you to my home for a chat . . .”

“Hold on, am I dead?”

“Quite. Now, please, Mr. Pilsch, don’t interrupt me anymore.”

“Sorry, sir.”

“Think nothing of it. To continue, we are here to discuss nothing less than your future.”

“So, run this by me again, I’m dead?”

He sighed, “Yes. You are dead. ‘Flat as a pancake,’ as you would say. By one of those Stinger buses.”

“Okay, and who are you?”

“Does it really matter, Mr. Pilsch? I’m the man who is going to offer you a choice today that will shape your destiny.”

“What choice is that?”

“I’m coming to that. First, if I may, I’d like to ask you a few more questions, to get a little more of a moral perspective.”

“Shoot.”

A sly smile darted onto his lips and then vanished. Just a hint of a laugh colored his voice as he asked, “Do you, Mr. Pilsch, believe in doing whatever it takes to get a job done?”

I laughed, “I go to Tech, don’t I?” When I saw that he was not amused, I peeped, “yes,” like a scolded child.

He crossed his right leg over his left, his crimson silk pajamas rippled as they caught and released the glow of the fire. He reclined on the lounge, obviously pleased.

“What if the actions you had to take were morally repugnant to you?”

“Is this hypothetical goal important?” I asked.

“Yes.”

“Then, yes, I believe I would. It’s how I survive at school.”

“Excellent.” His wide grin revealed white, straight teeth that sparkled in the dim room. “Now, on to your choice. You can spend your time here doing work for me, some of which would permit you to return to your

world, or you can burn in a pit of fire for eternity. The choice is yours.”

“Wait, I’ve been a good person, why am I not . . .”

He grew visibly angry, “You and I, Mr. Pilsch, have an agreement. You are contractually bound to be here,” he snapped.

“Agreement!” I stammered, “I think I would have remembered any deal I would have made with the devil!”

“Don’t be cliché, Mr. Pilsch. You signed the contract. Allow me to refresh your memory.”

He held up a piece of paper I didn’t remember seeing until the moment it was in his hand. I took it from him and glanced at the first page:

“This is my application to Georgia Tech!”

“Yes, it is. The portion that concerns our business here is labeled ‘Clause D.’”

I flipped through the application several times. I glanced through my incredibly lame essay, noted the box checked next to computer science, and remembered what it was like to have HOPE. I couldn’t find a “Clause D,” though.

I looked up and said, “I don’t see ‘Clause D.’”

“It’s on page 5, in the fine print.” He offered me a magnifying glass. “Perhaps this will help.”

Eventually, I found “Clause D.” I could barely make it out, even with the glass. It read:

Clause D: Upon termination of applicants life, regardless of whether still enrolled at the Georgia Institute of Technology or a graduate of said Institute, the applicant’s Immortal Soul shall be immediately transported to the Pit of Fiery Damnation and dealt with according to the wishes of the proprietor of the aforementioned Pit. Applicant’s signature upon this document constitutes a non-negotiable agreement to the above terms.

I moved the glass away from the text of “Clause D” and it dissolved back into a solid black line at the bottom of the application.

“The Devil’s in the details, eh?” I asked, winking at him.

He sighed and I thought I heard him mutter something about “engineers” under his breath. He then continued:

“So, you see, Mr. Pilsch, you and I have an agreement, and you have a decision to make.”

He looked at me expectantly.

“Could I have a few minutes to think it over?”

“Be my guest, Mr. Pilsch. You have all the time in the world.”

During the next few minutes, he would not stop coughing and fidgeting around.

“Are you trying to rush me?” I asked.

“Of course not. Take your time, please.”

After a few more moments of distracted fidgeting on his part, I'd reached my decision, a fact I announced.

"And what have you decided?"

"Before I answer, I'm curious: why do you recruit Tech students to be your minions?"

"You guys will put up with anything. People like that don't grow on trees, you know. Besides, Tech's administration will do anything to screw its students. So, what have you decided as to your choice?"

"No."

"That's it?"

"That's it."

"So be it. Prepare to receive your punishment."

He snapped his fingers and I woke up in my dorm room. It was a week later and I was an hour late to my CS final. When I got to the test, a sheet of expensive paper fell out of my backpack. It smelled faintly of Sulfur and read:

"Andrew,
Enjoy your final. I'll be waiting for you.

Yours,

L."

Suddenly, I realized that I hadn't studied for my final. I didn't know how to do any of the questions. I looked around me. "Where the Hell am I?" I asked.

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Why are Tech Students So Damn Pissed Off?!?!

by Anonymous

Well let's see, where do we begin. How about we start out with my life and extrapolate the pain to get an idea of the overall feeling of "shaft" that we have come to know and love. Don't get me wrong, I love it here, but part of the reason I like it so much is that I like being angry. Call it a personality disorder, I'm not the one who has to deal with it.

My first problem of this school is it's lack of art, writing, and creativity. We seem to all be content with living in cubicles while life outside moves forward without us. Want to know why we're not always integrated in society? Maybe because we like Java more than Jammin and don't have time to do shit with our crazy course load. They really should do something about that. It sucks ass. Another problem is the narrow scope with which it looks at the world. Personally I'm no engineer and don't ever plan on using more than 80% of the bullshit I force myself to learn as a Chemistry Major. I'm not complaining, I chose this school and I love it here, but I came for the atmosphere and it paid off. I have met more intelligent, enlightening, narrow-minded conservative assholes than I could have imagined, and I'm thankful that they at least have opinions and passion. One trip to my high school would depress even the most motivated of teachers because when you attend at any Atlanta inner city high school (juvenile detention facility is more accurate) you can't help but smell the apathy. So here I am at Tech surrounded by another type of disorder, the one when the only thing that matters is money

and material possessions, at least if you want to get a girls pants off.

Oh yeah, and the girls here at Tech. I have absolutely no pity. Whatever you say, I don't care. You all suck ass, or more accurately dick, although you never can tell with some of the real "winners" you girls always seem to get yourselves tangled up with. Here's some quick advice. If he's 6'2" dark eyes, dark hair, well built, intelligent, wity, he's got a girlfriend and if he says he doesn't he's either doing you as desert (or maybe appetizer) or he's one of the "winners" I was talking about earlier. If it's too good to be true, it's a lie. Simple logic should lead you to that conclusion. What's even worse than that is that there is an EXCESS (yeah, I said that right) or guys here who would be excellent boy friends. They've got everything you need, and they're not all weird, but a lot of them are shy. I live with these guys, I know. You think you have it hard? Try reversing the odds and seeing all the cute girls fuck the same assholes they chased after in high school. It seems that it's only after they loose their looks that they look for something more than skin deep. But I guess it makes sense in a twisted sort of way, it's harder for someone to lie about how ugly they are.

So why am I at Tech? There was no way in hell I was going to spend another 4 years of my life next to impudent fucks whose idea of a good time was grabbing their crotches while sitting around watching the TV. Given that UGA was my only alternative (I'm in state and

cheap) I ended up here with hopes of making a difference. Those hopes are dead. In their place is a festering anger and depression that I aim ever so cleverly at unsuspecting sorority girls. Luckily for me their too dumb to catch a joke. That's what keeps me in the game. :)

So, to clarify a few points let me summarize my current life situation. I'm 19, a sophomore, a Chem. major, have a beautiful girlfriend, and work 2 jobs as if my life weren't interesting enough without the added stress. This means that I'm always pressed for time, have little tolerance for morons, and have the ability to be pissed off at any hour of the day. Yeah, I'm that jackass you don't like in Bio class fucking up the curve while simultaneously taking in the ass from Calculus. Have a painted a pretty picture yet? I sure hope so, cause it only gets better.

Check this out: I'm your god forsaken, always an hour late delivery driver. Yeah, that's right, one of my part-time after school, see the real world and realize how much it's gonna suck when I fail out of school jobs is the ever pleasant Wing Nuts delivery guy. So if you order chicken that's been saturated in unsaturated fat for up to 10 minutes after being dipped in an array of various sauces, I'm the one who has to tolerate the smell on the way to your door. If you can remember anything from this article and take it away with you forever, I want you to take this to heart. Delivery driving sucks. And it's not just the stigma attached to the profession. It's more the intolerable morons you force yourself to work with. (there are always exceptions, and there are some decent people at your local Wing Nuts, don't worry) I don't know how it happens but out of some strange act of nature I sometimes find myself in the most ridiculous conversations in the back of a chicken shack. Here's one of my favorites : Who's the better rapper Mr. So-and-So and the (Insert Booty Dancer Here) or Puff Daddy. I still don't understand that one.

Now I've diverged, so I'll come back, but one last shoutout. Thank you all those wonderful people who order a 10.64 cent combo, hand me 11 bucks, and tell me I can keep the change. You really are wonderful. I don't know how I'd fucking afford the gas in my car without you. Thanks, really. Next time I'll be sure to throw your food on the pavement outside the store before I deliver your order. (That is IF I have enough time to get around to your order anyway).

Back to the being pissed off : When was the last time you met a Literary major at Tech? You haven't, and you won't. But you're sure to find some textile engineers willing to bring your fucking books that the Tech bookstore is willing to charge you 9 times the suggested retail price. What's even scarier is the logic with which our pain is shrugged off. "Oh, I'm sure their parents will pay for it. Surely they don't mind spending money on their child's education." News flash, my parents won't be paying me anything more than an angry visit after I lose the ever elusive HOPE scholarship I'm supposed to be able to achieve with ease. Nice move Math department. You did an excellent job insuring the best for my future now that I'll have to take a semester off just to pay for it.

So, time for the recap. My day consists of getting bitched out by the jackass in the food line for making him do his job (they never seems to have our any fruit in the morning), working through a plethora of odd, meaningless chemical equations, stuffing my face quickly before dipping into Physics class, and then watching in awe the diligence with which some people tend to take notes. After this I get back home, the equivalent of a large walk in closet, try to understand my Physical Chemistry nonsense, and figure out how it will help me to a) make illegal drugs, or b) blow shit up, and then wonder what kind of practical

application I'm going to get from all this. But by this time I got to get to work and then spend the rest of my time shielding myself from the morons. Yep, I'd say that's why I'm pissed off. As for the rest of you—fuck off. I don't really give a damn. I just wrote this article to whine anyway. Best of luck. And tip your fucking delivery driver.**

**You might want to note that the only reason to be a chem. Major is to either make drugs or blow shit up. So if you end up hallucinating in your car while eating chicken when it blows up, it might be related to your scrooge like monetary policy.

THE END

***Editor's Note:** We recieved this story without any context provided by the author. We are not sure if it is meant in all seriousness or as a parody of war film cliches. We here at NAR can, however, offer this: when the piece was read aloud at a staff meeting, the reader soon began to narrate the author's text in an overly dramatic voice and we all began to find great humor in this piece. We suggest reading this outloud with a group of friends, its a quite an enjoyable experience.*

A Vietnam Story

by Robert R.M.

“You’ve gotta go back to the... the barricades...It’s dangerous here and...,” his broken voice drowned to a mere whisper as he continued, “and...there ain’t nothing you can do. Just...just leave me here...go...it...it’s all over...”

“Come on buddy, don’t do this to me. Just stay with me. It’s gonna be...”

His bloodied face bore a hundred untold stories. His anguished eyes, darkened by the promise of death, persisted that I go. I didn’t want to. I just couldn’t leave my best friend alone. It was getting harder for him to breathe.

Exhausting whatever little strength left in him, he clutched my hand and, with a voice barely audible, whispered in my ear, “Here...make sure this gets to my wife...tell her I love her, tell her...tell her that...that I’m sorry. Tell her I so wanted to see my daughter. Please...you gotta g...”

“Oh...listen, you’re much stronger than all this. Just stay with me a little bit more. You’ll see your daughter. Everything’s gonna be fine.” My face was red. I could feel the warmth of his blood on my cheeks. I turned my head up towards that promised infinity.

“Oh...God, help him. Oh God please. He has never seen his daughter. God please...,” and I knew there was no one there—no one.

“Henry, talk to me. Henry, they’re coming, the medics are. Henry, Henry, listen to me. Can’t you here the choppers? Listen, they’re coming for us. They’re coming for *you*. Come on, Henry. Oh God...plea...”

His hand slipped from mine and fell onto the bloodstained dirt. The lingering life fled his body. The only memory of him was clutched in my fist...

“Honey, get up. It’s 7:35. The alarm clock’s been going for a good five minutes now. Come down whenever you’re ready. I’ve made you a delicious breakfast with eggs and bacon and everything, my *hero*.”

Ah, another day. Today I gotta go and see Julia. I promised that I would. Maybe there’s something I can do for her. Maybe help her with the baby. She looks just like her father with those brown eyes and that smile she’s got. What a shame. Henry never got to see her. Poor Julia. They had just gotten married, just about a year ago. Now he’s gone. Gone forever. *Just Gone*. Poor Elizabeth. She never got to meet her father. He would have made a great father. Only if he weren’t such a great man, he’d be here. Only if he’d not step on that grenade, that fucking grenade, he’d be here. Why? He was the best man, the best friend I ever knew. Now he’s gone. I never thanked him for saving my life. Only if he wasn’t such a great guy...

“Honey, are you coming down? The breakfast is getting cold.”

“Be right down baby. I’m just getting ready. I’ve gotta go see Julia today to see if she needs anything, you know.”

“Do you want me to come with you? I don’t go to work till ten o’clock.”

“No, that’s alright. One of us should stay and wake Jordan up for school. What time does the school bus come?”

“Just like every other day: Around nine.”

“Tomorrow, it’s May 9th, isn’t it? It’s Elizabeth’s birth day. I can’t believe I’m gonna miss it. I missed when she was born. I wanna see her, wanna see her laugh, and walk. I wanna hear her say ‘daddy’. You know,” trying to picture Elizabeth in his mind, he paused for a few seconds. Taking a photo out of his coat pocket, he went on, “Julia says she looks just like me. What do you think? Come on take a look at this picture. When she sent it Elizabeth was just six months old. Now she’s one. I missed all the fun. Never got to see her take her first step, or say ‘daddy’ for the first time. Lemme tell you something, it hurts. Yes, it does.” His eyes filled with tears. In them you could almost see a fear, a kind of apprehension. I took the picture from his trembling hands. Elizabeth dressed in patriotic red, white and blue, was seating in the middle of the picture. Behind her smile, in her eyes, there was the same fear, the same apprehension, as if she knew.

“Julia’s right, she does look like you, especially the eyes.” Handing him the picture, I said, “You shouldn’t worry. Pretty soon you’ll get to go home. We all will. Then you can see her. It’s just a matter of time.”

“I know. I bet she has tons of stories to tell me about Elizabeth. She’s been taking care of her alone for a whole year now. I feel bad, guilty even. How could I have...”

“What are you talking about? It’s not like you chose to be here. They sent you here. And more, you’re defending her. You’re here to make the world a safer place for her and your baby. Don’t you ever forget that. God is with *us*. Just a couple more months here and we all get to go home to our families. I haven’t seen my girl for three years. She must have grown a lot. She’s almost nine. Next month she’ll be nine. I miss her and my wife, too. But, you know, after this is all over and we go home,

we're gonna be heroes. Think about it: *the heroes of the war*. We'll have a story to tell to our grandkids."

"I guess you're right. Just a couple more months and this whole shit should be over. Then we'll be heroes: the heroes who saved mankind. Sounds good, you know. She'll be proud of her daddy, a daddy who is a hero."

There she stood in the doorway. I had seen her only three days ago, yet she had changed a lot since then. With hesitation, I opened my mouth. "Hey Julia, how are you doing?"

"Not so good. I still can't believe it. It's just hard to accept that the father of my..." Her voice broke as if the torture of a thousand years had blocked her throat.

I reached out and grabbed her hand. She squeezed as hard as she could. I know she was trying to reach to Henry, to hold him one last time, to say goodbye. And I was in the way. "I know. I'm so sorry. How's Elizabeth?"

Leading me inside, she wiped the tears off her face and said, "Elizabeth is alright. You know, she never saw Henry except in the pictures. I don't know what I'm gonna do."

"Hey, Henry's not gone. He lives in our memories and ..."

Her voice broke out with fury. Clutching her hands around the void that was Henry, she screamed, "I've heard enough of that. What good is that to those who have no memory of him? To Elizabeth? To those who miss him? To me? And for what did he die?"

There was no more anger, only tears. "I still don't understand. Why did he have to die? Why? I wish somebody would tell me why. I just wanna know. Just wanna know why." Tear filled her eyes. Her voice broke. Her body was trembling with pain. She was not the same kind woman I knew any more. She hated the whole world. Her eyes looked like Henry's anguished eyes. He was writhing in pain and so was she. He had a dream and so did she.

His life was destroyed and so was hers. I felt helpless. How could I help her? I didn't have the answers either. I don't think anybody did: not any of those who died, and not any of those who lived. What was it all for? Why did people have to die? Where was God?

"Good evening. The number one item on the news agenda today is the return of the first group of Vietnam War soldiers to our country. Today, the first group of our soldiers returned to our beloved country. After years of tireless endeavor, these soldiers deserve a hero's welcome, and that was exactly what these valiant soldiers got. People who were present had brought with themselves many flowers. They welcomed the soldiers warmly and affectionately to show them that the people of the United States know what they sacrificed for their country, to let them know that they're efforts will not be forgotten and to tell them that all of U.S. thanks them. It was just overwhelming to see that people had come from all over the country to welcome these soldiers who put their lives on the line and bravely looked the enemy in the face and did not blink. These heroes will forever stay in our hearts. But nothing was more memorable than seeing the reunion that took place between the families separated for years. It was just overwhelming and glorious. The faces of the wives and mothers, daughters and sons, were filled with joy and ecstasy as they welcomed their husbands, their sons and their fathers to their country. After years of anticipation, finally the families re-united and can once again call themselves a true family. This has been the most delightful event in the past years. These soldiers who gave everything for their country will never be forgotten. Their efforts will always..."

"Look, Jordan. In a couple of days your dad will come back and we'll be a family again, all the three of us. Aren't you happy?"

“Yes mommy. Every night before going to bed I asked God, the way you showed me, to let my daddy come back.” She paused as her mind traveled to find the father she so vaguely remembered. “Mommy, why daddy went?”

“Your daddy is a very brave man and he’s a very kind man. He went to make sure that me and you are safe and that nothing is ever going to hurt his little girl.”

“Why didn’t you go then? Don’t you love me too?”

“Of course I do. Honey, I had to stay and take care of you here. Your dad had to go. If he didn’t have to go, I’m sure that he wouldn’t.”

“Mommy, when is dad coming back?”

“Last I know he is supposed to get here in 6 days. We’ll go to the airport to see him then him. Grandma, she’s coming, too.”

A glint appeared in her eyes. She slowly counted six fingers on her hands. “I’m gonna get a whole lot of flowers for him, roses and those purple ones you say he likes. And I’m gonna take the picture I made too.”

“What picture? You never told me anything about it. Lemme see it.”

“No, it’s just for daddy.”

They will never know how many people died. They’ll never know the dreams that were crushed. They’ll never know all the kids that lost their fathers. They’ll never see the tears on the face of the many mothers and fathers who said goodbye to their sons on the face of a lifeless paper. They say they know, but they don’t. Not until their own son, their own husband, their own father dies. They know nothing. They are all liars. All liars. They lied to us. They will lie to us again, just like they have done before. They don’t give a damn about our lives. They say they do, but they don’t. They never have. They never will. That’s just the way they are...

With click of a button the silver screen lit up. Soon all of the family gathered. They all knew what time it was. The clink of metallic spoons against the china plates lost way to the voice that so profoundly spoke. The room grew quite as the voice, over-pronouncing every word, sat deep within their souls...

“Today, the Tonkin Gulf Resolution was passed. President Johnson, who maneuvered this Resolution through Congress, said that United States will stand by her word and defend any nation threatened by a communist take over. Mr. President said that the recent unrests in the southeastern regions of Asia are troubling and call for immediate action. Mr. President affirmatively stated that United States’ involvement is in search for peace, and that U.S. does not stand to gain anything, politically, militarily, or territorial-wise. He, then, clearly defined the goals of United States in Vietnam. He said that this is not a *jungle war*, but a war to defend every right of humanity: right to live, right to be free, and the right to be happy. He explained he reason behind US military and economic aid to South Vietnam and Laos as a way to repel communism that every second threatens the independence of these nations. The Tonkin Gulf Resolution provides the president with total authority in dealing with the Vietnam affair. One man will decide the fate of that distant country, Vietnam, and the fate of the U.S. soldiers who have been deployed there.”

I guess every man does have a right to life, freedom, and happiness—everyman except us.

As I stand here, in the shadows of time, I see my reflection in the almost wet marble; the marble that has beheld the tearful eyes of many mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, and friends who have looked upon it, asking themselves “Why did all these men have to die? Why?” Perhaps he, too, sensed the pain. He,

too, felt heartbroken as he saw the many children staring at what was the only remnant of their fathers; felt sorry as mothers screamed deep inside for an answer; felt angry at himself as he stood between old friends; felt empty as the thousand hands reached out toward him. But, alas, there in nothing he can do to alleviate the pain. He has to forever bear the agony of lost hopes, perished dreams, and shattered futures.

She couldn't take her eyes from the picture on the shelf. He looked so handsome in his new suit, all ready to go to his new job: his dream job. How happy he looked. How happy she was for him. She knew his every liking and she knew he'd love his new job. You could even see the twinkle in his eyes. Tomorrow she'd have to clean the shelf. It had gotten much too dusty. So was Henry's army uniform, she'd bet. He must have been so scared, fighting in that strange land. What if he gets lost? What if he can't find his way back? She needn't worry. Henry had promised her he would come back. That was good enough for her. He would never break his promise. Henry was a good guy. He was a nice guy. Everything would soon be over. She knew it. She even sensed it in herself, in her blood. Yeah, she shouldn't worry, especially with the baby coming. She must think about the baby. She wondered what the baby would look like. Would it be a boy? She hoped so. He is going to be just like his daddy, just as brave as him, just as kind, too. Would Henry be here before the baby's born? She couldn't do it alone. She needed him. He must come back. He promised he would. The baby was on the way, but there was no news from Henry. Where was he? Had he gotten lost? Why wouldn't he come home? Had he forgotten his promise?

He had said he would take care of her for as long as he lives. She remembers it perfectly: that day when he got a little dirt on his knee. Together they could do anything.

Anything they wanted was just a step away. But now, everything she wanted was a world away. She felt alone, scared, betrayed. She never took her eyes away from the picture.

It was quiet. So quiet that he could here his heart. With each second his heart grew louder. That was all he could hear. A Picture of his daughter flickered before his eyes; then came his wife. She was saying something, but he couldn't hear her. She became hazy and disappeared in the fog that was everywhere, even deep within his soul. He had lost her forever. He knew it. Anxiety befell him. He couldn't think anymore. His mind was not working. He knew that too. The fog gave way to a disguised image. It was dark but he was sure he saw two eyes. The figure hovered before him. He fell to its magical powers, forever incarcerated in the labyrinth of its prison. He didn't know that. He felt the sand on his face. He smelt the sand. A sharp pain ran down his arm and into his heart. He tasted the red-colored sand. It was not all that bad. He felt he was in the right place: home, where he belonged.

He saw his daughter. She was not in the cradle anymore. He looked around. Nothing was where he remembered. Everything had changed but nobody had told him. He felt betrayed. Another shot of pain ran down his spine and wrecked his thoughts. He was alone. His eyes were closed but he could still see. He looked around. It was even darker than he could remember. His hand reached across his chest and settled on his heart. He felt no beat. It was all quiet now.

This is not a Political Statement