Archibald Cornelius Grinspoon the third and a half. He has a paunch that is maintained from many outings to McDonald's and more meat lover's pizzas you can count. But he's not sloppy fat. He carries his weight like he was meant to; he would look odd and deflated if he were a more socially acceptable size.

When you see him, you immediately think "professor". The carefully trimmed beard, the tweed jacket with unnecessary patches, the penny loafers...He has a constant twinkle in his eye, a joie de vivre, that makes you cringe. His voice wobbles like he has a gobbler dangling from his pudgy neck. His accent is faux patrician thanks to a long line of intermarrying.

Archibald is sitting in a lecture room at Harvard. He teaches on the weekends, ever since the Harvard Square streaking incident. Sufficient funds from the Grinspoon clan allowed him to continue teaching 'Introduction to Reproductive Organs'. The class is an elective, but is more than often a punishment for students on academic probation.

Archibald is writing his continued masterpiece, "Islam, the Big Mac, and the Phallus in a post-9/11 world". He started writing it on September 12, 2001, and the megalith counts in at 1,085 pages (not including footnotes). He should be writing lesson plans, but, 'that fodder is for nincompoops and perverts', he tells his students when they've threatened to report him.

Today is the first day of the lesson, and the usual hodge podge of students shuffles in. Archibald acknowledges only one; an 18 year old filippino boy wearing a lime green polo and khaki shorts. Archibald smacks his lips with his leathery tongue and winks. It comes out more like a twitch, and the boy doesn't notice.

Ten minutes after the class's start time, Archibald begins his lesson, staying seated. "Class, students, purveyors of knowledge and admirers of the human form", he begins. "I trust that you all know what this class is? Introduction to Reproductive Organs. Some of you kids call it Intro to Repro! Understand? Of course not. Here, you will learn the

glory that is the phallus and all of its supporting players. The testicles, the scrotum, and yes, even the vas deferens will get a cameo in this roller coaster ride of delectable factoids and inappropriate terminology..."

A girl with dreadlocks, wearing a glorified potato sac, stands up. "Excuse me?" she squeaks.

Archibald clears his throat. "Yes, woman?"

"So, um, this is like reproductive organs, right?"

"I see that you understand English!"

"Huh?"

"You had a question?"

"You're going to cover the *female* reproductive organs, right?"

"Come again?"

"Well you know, males, females, we both have them..."

"I don't quite know what you're getting at".

The girl plants her hand on her bony hip and rolls her eyes. "Are we going to study vaginas!" she shouts.

Archibald stands up. "Now listen, Missy", he roars, marching to her, within inches of her face. "I don't know what your hippie parents taught you while they were having anonymous sex and reeking of stale granola, but in my class, we revere the phallus. The

vagina is a hole, nothing more. Would you care for me to demonstrate?" Archibald traipses to the white board, pulls out a sharpie pen from his suit jacket, and draws two crude circles and a series of curls. "There you have it. The vagina. A hole as empty as your fragile, embryonic mind. And don't even get me started on those shriveled walnuts you call ovaries. Phalluses, the one, the only, the proud. Understand?"

The girl huffs and puffs, grabs her army green nap sac, and storms out of the room. "Farewell, Ms. Steinem!" Archibald shouts before she slams the door.

"Now then", Archibald continues. "Tomorrow we are going to have a delightful surprise! Let me tell you what it is. We are going to get my mainstay corpse in here, and we are going to examine a real life, in the flesh, phallus! Minus the potential lawsuits and unwanted erections of a live specimen, though believe you me, did I try to get that approved by the Board of Trustees!" The jaws collectively drop around the room. The filippino boy smiles to elevate the awkwardness. Archibald slinks over to him. "What's your name?" he purrs.

"Arnold", the boy replies in perfect English. He stretches his face like abused putty to show off his custard colored teeth.

"Hmm? I expected a more, dare I say it, *exotic* name. I'll call you Arn- that sounds Oriental, doesn't it? Anyhow, I can see that you have a zest for life, and for that positive attitude, I'm going to give you the first touch tomorrow! As long as you buy me dinner first. But I kid!" Archibald gazes at Arnold, pushing the limits of the personal bubble. Arnold giggles, his slick black hair flitting about in confusion. "Thanks!", he squeaks out. "There it is, then! Now take out your board approved textbooks. They contain crude drawings, and a load of bunkum I'm unwilling to acknowledge. Burn them, if you wish. I tried to get *my* book published, but politics, jealousy, and conspiracy interfered with that coming to fruition. Read it, if you wish, while I continue to scribble my genius". With that, Archibald plops in his chair and furiously scribbles with an antiquated fountain pen that dribbles and smears more than it writes. He is currently writing this passage:

What my mother instilled in me as a young lad was the fortitude, ambition, and l'abilite to achieve my dreams, no matter how strange they may seem to nefarious, ignorant, and putrid onlookers and naysayers. In the Post 9/11 world, the phallus has been grabbed by the balls (pun indented), and been vilified as the cause of terrorism, hatred, and bigotry across the world. When visiting Muslim countries, I found the men to be entirely unwilling to let me study their phalluses. It was on a purely platonic basis, and when I was interested in sexual adventures, I always offered a fair price. These men would curse me in their harsh, unforgiving tongue, shouting Allah at regular intervals and then shoving me out of their homes.

Why would they treat me so? A man of intelligence with an insatiable thirst for knowledge; I am a vampire lusting for a young virgin's blood, and my brain is only pleased when it can bask in the study of these noble human parts. I tried to not take it personally, despite their repeated beatings of my soul, integrity, as well as my physical being (the bruises have healed; my heart has not). Another sociological devil must be at play here; a diabolical puppet master, holding us all by the strings, to the will of Big Brother and all of the corporate big wigs that tear our spirits asunder.

One particular instance of Grand Frere's clever schemes is the Big Mac. This concoction was created in mass quantities to set all of America under its hypnotic spell. I succumbed to this in the 1980's, when I first laid my eyes upon the addictive snack. Try as I may, like an abused lover, I return for the masochistic pleasure that those two beef patties nuzzled in processed buns gives me. Sometimes I have questioned my passion for my life's work when in one of my fits of sandwich devourement. I have woken up on the sidewalk before, limp lettuce and crusty ketchup resting on my lips, surefire signs of my shameful addiction.

I revere it, and I loathe it. Nothing can tear me from it though it has made me a pariah at the finest institution on this planet (save for the Board of Trustees and their Hitlerian dictatorship): Harvard University. I have become overweight, lacking the confidence and vigor of youth, and for this, I am shunned. I refuse to join the jiggly, cellulite ridden masses! This sandwich will not make me one of them; I am I, alone, beholden to his beast and yet forever unwilling to surrender to that bastard clown, Ronald McDonald.

Muslims, Africans, and other simple-minded foreigners see this red headed menace as the representation of America. Red hair is, for certain, mon amour, the sign of the hooved, fallen angel Lucifer, and this mascot, emblazoned across pig pens throughout the world, has set these folk against us. I fear, in fact, I *know* that they take us for shape shifters and devil worshipers. This mascot put them in such a rage that they have made it their life's mission to destroy

everything that is free and American on this planet. I can't say that I blame them; only the simple animal desire for self preservation leads me to disagree with their quest for world domination (falafel may be delicious, but I would not be pleased if it became the staple American meal).

This brings me to why they, followers of Allah and eaters of camel, would not permit me to examine their phalluses in a public forum. They fear me as an American; they think that I am materialistic, and want to search their persons for weapons or fundamentalist literature. I could see the fear, hurt, and anger in those dark, mysterious eyes. And I understood their pain.

This passage took Archibald the entire 80 minute class period to write. He is pleased, smacking his lips and fingering his eyebrows as he always does when particularly proud of himself. Half of the students are gone. Archibald meditates, leaning his head back and within minutes, lets out a full-bodied snore. Arnold stifles a giggle, and encourages the other students to join in his glee. The students shuffle out.

Twenty minutes later, Archibald awakens to this empty classroom, and satisfied, picks up his satchel, brief case, McDonald's bag, and several prescription bottles, ready to start his 'real' day. As he's about to rush out, he notices Arnold, reading the textbook intently, pathetically optimistic and studious. He seems genuinely interested in the particular page he is on, detailing the development of the uterus during puberty. Archibald frowns, and his gut slumps in agreement.

"Arnold! My dear boy- you work yourself like a Bedouin's mule! Surely, this kind of effort is not necessary. With looks like yours, smarts may not be so important", he coos. Arnold politely smiles and gathers his belongings. "You're very nice, Mr.?"

"Oh! I didn't realize that I hadn't blessed you all with my glorious name", he monologues. "I am Archibald Grinspoon the third and a half, of the Grinspoon clan, originally from Gloucester in the United Kingdom, also known as Angle-land. You have heard of it, I presume? We are of the most noble and proudly inbred stock in all of this great United States of America! But my heart longs for the whispers of the trees and the tricks of the faeries, or 'Good people', as they are called, in my cherished homeland..."

Arnold avoids eye contact, biting his nails out of nervous habit. Archibald pops one of his pills, and swallows it without water to show off. "There are more things I can swallow than a mere capsule, my filipino siren", Archibald breathes into Arnold's face. The smell of onions that his mouth emanates is so powerful, that Arnold breaks into a fit

of coughing. "I'm sorry, sir, I really should go. It was nice meeting you!" he says as he walks backwards out of the class. Archibald wistfully sighs, putting his hand on his heart. "They always get me", he muses. "Only my beloved snack could ease the strain that these nubile mongoloid boys put upon my childishly beating heart. Big Mac, on y va, to chez moi!" With that, he whisks out of his prison.

Archibald's gait is dumpy at best. His hips sway from side to side, his mounds of flesh jiggling in sync. He looks euphoric whenever 'speed walking', his choice, and only exercise. He nods to students, leers at others, most of whom don't know who he is. He walks through the Harvard commons and to his illegally parked 1983 avocado green Volkswagen Rabbit. A handful of fluorescent orange tickets are crammed under his windshield wiper.

Archibald has owned this car since 1983, and it has had five transmissions to date. His driver's side seat is propped up by a plastic milk crate, and chunks of the foam padding are strewn about the interior. The speedometer doesn't work, so Archibald 'estimates' by driving at a comfortable crawl in the far left lane on the highway. The rearview mirror is nonexistent, with only its plastic shell remaining as a sad reminder. The backseat is filled to the brim with every possession imaginable; happy meal toys, dishes, past unfinished dinners, clothing, electronics. The most prized object in the car is his dearly departed mother Ethel's urn, duct taped to his dashboard, with hearts drawn across it.

Archibald has been pulled over on more than one occasion for the clutter obstructing his rear view. In one instance, a tall drink of water of a police officer tried to reason with Monsieur Grinspoon about this dilemma.

"Sir, do you realize that you have entirely obstructed the rear view of your vehicle?" he attempted.

"Oh, beautiful, succulent man of law, I sympathize with your concern", he began. "I outright adore you for it. But there are senses more important than sight that come into play when sensing dangerous fellow-drivers on these poorly maintained Massachusetts roads". The officer bent over to point a finger at Archibald. The man's thick Boston accent became abundantly clear in his next statement.

"I don't know what kinda shit yuh talkin', but the next time I see you with this crap hanging out yuh cah, yuh gonna get a citation and a swift kick to yuh ass. You unduhstand?" he spewed, spit flying every which way. Archibald trembled, but his ego wouldn't permit him to let this one slide.

"You are a serf, I know", he lectured. "Your father worked as a mechanic, perhaps? And so you feel dwarfish, insecure, like 'rien' in this world that has torn you asunder. So mayhaps you do not grasp that I, being of noble and bleu blood, have superior, almost cat like senses. Vision is no matter; the sensation of a car hurling itself into my bumper is more than enough for me to bob and weave about, the adventurous super human that I am! Catch my drift, capitaine?" The officer wrote him a \$200 ticket, which was added onto the 6 inch thick collection in his car.

Archibald spends his weeks in a Grinspoon family home in East Cambridge. His soul resides in Pittsfield, where he retires for the weekend. Being a Friday, Archibald starts his trek to the boondocks, blaring Donna Summer the whole way. He feels anxious, and even a little haughty, about his meeting with his Uncle Titus this weekend. They have much to discuss, publishing-the-masterpiece-wise. Archibald has been planning this meeting for months, down to the brand of Assam tea that Titus (Uncle Titty, for short) wants; he has been in love with it ever since a business trip to Delhi.

In preparation of Titty's visit, Archibald has been overhauling the Pittsfield estate. At over 4,000 square feet, his housekeeper Consuela has spent the past two weeks on her hands and knees, scrubbing every last woolly burger and hiding Archibald's ten year collection of *Bad Puppy*.

When he arrives, the house is immaculate as a newborn's bum, save Archibald's bedroom, which Consuela has been expressly forbidden to enter. "It is my inner sanctum, dear Juanita...Not all of us live in a hovel with our ten babies and a chicken", he explained to her on her first day. Archibald storms in, basking in the cleanliness of the foyer. "You have outdone yourself, Carlita!" he beams, running to the kitchen to scoop her into his arms. Consuela is in her early forties, short, and round, with an uneven and mottled complexion. Her eyes are puffy from many years of unforgiving hard work, and she wears a pink sweat suit with '69' emblazoned in sequins on the rear end. She grins as Archibald cuts off her circulation with his bear arms. She has affection for him like a

woman has for her convict younger brother. "Meester Archibald, so nice to see joo! I usually see you all week, I've meesed you!" she gesticulates, her hands moving about wildly like a rooster's wings. "I missed me, too! My spirit is always floating in this paradise while I am away at the prison", Archibald laments. He tosses his bags onto the pristine granite countertop and races to his bedroom.

The stale smell of ritz crackers and cheese whiz fills Archibald's room. He has taken to sleeping with his old 'binky' (a tattered wool blanket he's had since infancy) by the brick fireplace that he had built. It doesn't have a chimney, so Archibald just puts a space heater inside it, with logs for decoration. Archibald plops himself on his bare mattress, and basks in the mildewy odor that only a rural environment can create. He stares at the ceiling, where a photo of Ethel is scotch taped. "Mama! Please, oh please, look down upon me when I meet with Uncle Titty tomorrow!" he says. "You know how much this means to me...my life's work, every fiber of my being has been injected into this chef d'ouevre. I know if you were here beside me, you would have been holding my hand, physically and metaphorically, as I shake and rumble with fear at this tete-a-tete with my loathsome Uncle! I have forgiven him, in part, for tipping off the cops about my public restroom escapades... I see that some lower minded creatures may not be enlightened to the nuances of sensuality and voyeuristic erotica...But no matter, I will have a chin up and my rump firmly planted in your favorite whicker chair, and make my dream a realite! Adieu, Maman!" he finishes. Archibald feels a rumble in his already full belly, and slides down the stairs, his backside thudding with each bump of a step.

"Maria!" he roars, with a crippling rage suddenly overcoming his being. "There are wooly burgers flitting about the place! What do I pay you two dollars an hour for!" he practically spits onto Consuela. "What are you talking about, Meester Archibald? I look everywhere, and I dust everyting! I promise", she pleads, clutching her swiffer wet jet. "My bedroom, you infantile centipede!" Archibald interjects, his argyle stretching to the brim as his chest heaves. "Meester Archibald, you told me not to go in there, remember? You say it's you sanctuary, and I no can enter without sincerity of mind and loyalty of heart...", Consuela explains. He sits on his favorite Lay-Z-Boy and ponders for a spell. He motions for Consuela to come closer by reclining in his chair; it is their secret code (Archibald is paranoid that his brother Phinneus has a closed circuit surveillance system;

the more cues that can be conveyed through body language, the better). Consuela shuffles to Archibald, her eyes cherry red with terror. "I forgive you for letting me forget about our bedroom agreement", Archibald says. "To be quite frank, I didn't even realize there were woolly burgers in my bedroom until I was whimsically thumping down those steps. It is this coming meeting that has torn my nerves to shreds. I am an incomplete human at this juncture, Esperenza...Pardon my brute tone, just now", he concedes. Consuela taps Archibald on the shoulder and squints her eyes. He grins and then turns his rump in the direction of the television. He puts on his favorite show: Cheaters. He tivos it every night, and saves the week's worth of compiled shows as his weekend treat. When he's feeling extra generous, he lets Consuela watch. "But no subtitles, mind you! They make me feel inferior", he would explain to her every time. And so he spent his entire night.

The following day, Archibald is frenzied. Consuela got him up at 7 am as he had requested. He tossed his Teddy Ruxbin at her several times before he coalesced, walking naked as the day he was born. "Carmen, I feel a light in my spirit like never before. It must be the way you felt when you came to this great land by a boat made of cow dung and leaves of the indigenous plants of your land", he mused. He patted Consuela on the head as she made his favorite, chocolate chip pancakes with ketchup. She turned her head out of his line of vision and rolled her eyes. "I am from Guatemala, Meester Archibald. I didn't come on boat", she replied.

"It's all right, mamacita. I understand the shame you feel for being an illegal, but I don't hold it against you. Your secret is safe with me." Archibald winked, then devoured his breakfast.

He wore his Saturday best for the meeting with Uncle Titty. He laid out his khaki pants, argyle sweater vest, and moccasins, just to mix it up. He stared at the fleshy mound he calls his body, and made a series of obscene gestures. This was his usual 'prep work' he would engage in before meeting with Uncle Titty. He explained it like this to his mother Ethel, three years prior: You see, mother, I hate Uncle Titty more than stalwart vaginas. I must act upon this hatred through the mirror, and engage in a gladiator sort of fight with him in my mind. Two naked men, wrestle to display our valiant manhood, in the throes of carnal suppression. When I am finished with this, I feel pure at heart and willing to mask my rage with the most docile of smiles and gentle of handshakes".

Archibald continued this naked mirror game for around two hours. The doorbell ring stopped him, and he hurriedly put on his outfit, his sweater on backwards. He rushed down to greet Uncle Titty, swinging the door open and waving his arms in the air, a la Judy Garland. "Uncle Titty!" he shouted, echoing throughout the foyer. He gave his uncle a wholehearted hug, nearly turning him blue. Uncle Titty was around 90 years old, but still didn't need a walker. He wore a Charlie Chaplin-esque cap, and a well-pressed tuxedo with tails. His mouth was perpetually in a sneer, but this only became more pronounced when in Archibald's company. He was here as a favor for his beloved nephew Phinneus, Archibald's brother. They both have a love for croquet, hunting game, gin rummy, and hating Archibald. Many strings have had to be pulled over the years to keep Mr. Grinspoon out of the press. So on occasion, Uncle Titty gives his pity visit, to lift Archibald's spirits so that he doesn't succumb to 'The Madness' again.

"Archibald, you are looking plump as ever", Uncle Titty said, plunking him on the head with his shriveled hand. "Your Mexican help is feeding you well, I see", he croaked. "Oh, she's a dream, my dear Uncle! I would lend her out to you if I weren't a complete emotional cripple!" Archibald joked. Uncle Titty replied with a steel glare. Archibald skipped and lead his Uncle to the 'English tea' gazebo. It was decrepit but well meaning, with a general theme of "flowers and pigs". The circumference of the structure was outfitted with every type of swine paraphernalia imaginable, including unopened copies of "Charlotte's Web" and "Babe".

There was the "Archibald" chair, indicated with his trusty label maker. To its left sat the "Mother Ethel's memory" chair, and finally, ten feet away, the three "everyone else" chairs. Archibald plopped himself upon his whicker throne, and Uncle Titus elegantly reclined. "Oaxaca!" he belted, setting off Tity's hearing aid into a fit of screeching. Consuela promptly waddled out, with a tray of English tea sandwiches and Crystal Lite lemonade. "You're a doll!" he roared, and slapped her on her ample hiney. Archibald scarfed down three sandwiches while Titty tore his into acceptable bite sizes. "I brought you your favorite, beloved Uncle Titty- assam tea from the furthest reaches of Injia!" Archibald attempted. Titty rolled his eyes, his traditional affirmative response.

"So, dear oncle", he began. He crossed his legs, creating a pronounced crotch pooch in his khakis. "I presume that you have read over my masterpiece. Whether it be

Doubleday or Bantam, I must have complete and utter creative control! I shan't give preference to any Harvard publishers, simply because they have me bound at the hip, sucking on their dry, crusty nip for sustenance. I have standards, by jove!", he thundered. Uncle Titty laughed for a solid thirty seconds, while Archibald became immersed in the butter on butter sandwich. "Your ego is as ample as your waist, putrid nephew!", Uncle Titty lectured, lemon lavender dainty in hand. "But your mind and talent, I am afraid, are as miniscule as your loins. Were I to even begin to 'edit' your turd of a book, as you have endeavored to call it, no way in Dante's hell would I be able to convince any self respecting publishing house to distribute it!" Titty bowled over with laughter, almost ruining his perfectly coiffed toupee. "Phinneus begged me to get you off of his back for a spell, so I agreed to this pissing contest of yours with him. What, in that shriveled walnut in your cranium, compelled you to write 225 pages on the semiotics of big macs and testicles? You, regrettable blood relation, should have swirled down the turlett while poor Ethel had the chance!" he punctuated with a thump of his foot.

During this entire monologue, Archibald's face was swelling and turning cherry red with irrepressible rage. His claws clasped onto the wicker with a vengeance. He hurled the tray and all of its contents at Titty's face. Flustered, his uncle mashed the disheveled sandwiches with his hands and smeared them on Archibald's prized piggy bank. Archibald undid his belt and unhooked his suspenders, as he always does when a need to defend his pride arises. "You! Foul uncle of the netherworld, are two breaths away from an embalming!" he spat. "I am amazed that your trollop of a wife doesn't keep a bottle of formaldehyde by her bedside! Ignorance from the Grinspoon clan, I understand. When I decided to get my PhD in Chinese calligraphy, you all scoffed. When I fancied to live amongst cannibals in New Guinea, you dared to question my sanity! And even when I pursued my love of barely legal south pacific boys in public restrooms, you pushed me to the wayside! No more, Uncle. Persecution wears many faces, and in your case, it is that of the grim reaper! Except he wore a fashionably acceptable cape!" These monologues may seem socially inappropriate and long, but they're a sort of tradition in the Grinspoon family. It's their version of Scrabble.

The two decided to have a resting period and went to their respective corners to ponder more soul crushing insults. Archibald cuddled his favorite piggly wiggly while Titus wiped off the sandwich fragments from his face, along with his remaining scraps of dignity. This mutual hatred had existed since Archibald's second birthday party. Archibald was nude, as his mother Ethel preferred. She thought that nudity was next to godliness; she also never quite took to doing laundry. Titus and Ethel had never gotten along. Titus was Archibald the third's brother, and he never approved of him marrying someone half Heugenot. 'Protestantism and hairy armpits have never been, and never shall be, a holy combination!", he professed at their wedding.

The party had the usual traditions of cake, merry making, and 'pin the tale on the peasant". Not being potty trained, Archibald promptly defecated while sitting in his Uncle's lap. Titty had raised twelve children himself, but had escaped changing diapers, washing, or holding them. This act of fecal rebellion greatly offended Titus's pride and delicate, well-bred nature. He never forgave Archibald for the faux pas.

Archibald responded by constantly pulling pranks on Titty. These included novelty 'ball sack' birthday cakes and canings. The most frequent was formulaic, but a classic. He would call Titus between 7 pm and 9 pm, his usual bedtime. In a fit of theatrical frenzy, he would scream, "Dear Uncle Titty, your beloved wife, Aunt Petunia, has expired! She had a heart attack right at my doorstep, as she was about to send me a fruit basket! I am sorry to be the bearer of such traumatic news." This may have had an effect were Aunt Petunia not always lying in bed next to Titus during all of these phone calls.

These memories swirled through Archibald's mind as he stared down his elderly uncle. They sat in this deadlock for a spell. Titus pulled an envelope from his breast pocket. "This is for you, malodorous hell spawn", he said, handing it to Archibald. He tore it open and read its contents. The letter read:

Dear Archibald Grinspoon the Fourth,

Your father, Archibald Grinspoon the Third, has recently written his final will and testament. He is bequeathing his son, Phinneus, all of his assets, including the home in which you currently reside. Mr. Grinspoon has informed me that you two have been estranged for some time, and that you, 'Are the foulest son, the sum of nightmares that should have been stored in a sociopath's mind. When you lose even the shoes on your feet, perhaps you can become a cashier at McDonald's, your preferred dining establishment. Would you like fries with that?' It is, of course, within Phinneus' power to transfer to you whichever assets he deems fit. Your father,

however, has communicated to me that he wishes to make no further changes to his own will. He would like me to relay to you that although the restraining order has expired, he will be hiring 'Big Mac sniffing dogs', should you see to it to attempt to visit him at his cottage in Southern France. You may contact my secretary if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Adolphus Grinspoon, Esq.