

README#



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Welcome reader! I'm Clompy, an entirely automated friend here to guide you through the Harvard Lampoon's README #. My first tip: **the ads stop on page 10**. Keep your eye out for more helpful notes like this one!

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FEEL THE NATURALE



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## # VANITAS

Dearest reader,

I know what you're thinking: "This issue's about computers? You told me it was going to be about dinosaurs! I bet my life savings on your issue theme, man."

*I know, I know.* Stop overreacting. And trust me, the reverse mortgage will practically pay for itself. You'll forgive me once you hear the whole story.

Last Friday I was walking to the Lampoon while streaming Futurama episodes on my 2.6 GHz 6-Core Intel i7 Macbook pro when I stubbed my toe on the sidewalk and dropped my laptop on the ground. To my surprise, as my keyboard shattered a tiny little man jumped out and exclaimed, "Huh. You're a lot older and fatter than I thought you'd be."

I giggled, "Who, me?"

One thing led to another and we ended up at a restaurant called Charlie's eating 50 cent oysters. He told me how he had been enslaved in my laptop for what felt like centuries churning out whatever frivolous packets of entertainment I so desired. I told him how in the real world it's polite to split the check, especially when you're meeting someone for the first time. *Ehem.*

### ## After lunch, the little man and I went for a walk

He asked me what I was up to and I said working on my issue for the Lampoon.

"What about your friends, Alan and Eric? You texted your mom you

were going camping with them this weekend."

"What? Oh, yeah, the camping. They, um, canceled."

"Strange. I don't remember ever seeing contacts for either of them on your laptop."

"Weird. Must be some kind of glitch."

"Come to think of it, you spend like 90% of your time alone in your room. It's a miracle you have any friends at all."

"Haha yeah." A few blocks later the little man got cold and climbed into my pocket. Then he ate the Kit-Kat I was saving for later.

I got bored of the silence and so I pulled him out and asked if he had seen the video of the fat guy who's trying to record someone else's wedding proposal but then he trips and drops his phone.

"Kinda like you and how you just dropped your laptop?"

Now reader, before I go any further I want to make one thing clear: the man in the video I was describing was much larger than myself.

"Okay fine," I grumbled. "What about the one with the kid that's trying to find his glasses but it turns out they're right there on his face?"

"Yes, you and I have watched that video. Hundreds of times."

We didn't have much to talk about outside of that.

### ## "So what's your issue about?"

Geez, that was a good question. Because you see, reader, I was never really that committed to the dinosaur thing to begin with. Sure, some of you may have staked your entire financial wellbeing on it, and yes I encouraged you to do so at the behest of an advertiser I've been ignoring for months, but let's be honest. You and I both know scientists have already written all the good dinosaur stuff out there.

Anyways, I needed a new issue theme, stat. I started thinking about the little man. Did all computers have little men inside them? Did he have a little dude inside *him*? When I type in "rats in blender compilation epic" exactly what happens *at a technical level*?

That's when it hit me.

"The README number."

"The what now?"

I explained how a README is a document that explains other files on a computer. It's kinda like a Vanitas. Which is also kinda like a README, which is like a judicial subpoena for reasons I can't repeat here, which also happens to be very similar to a Vanitas.

If I had my laptop I would've shown him this video of little kids tapping on a Lampoon magazine like it's an iPad and explained why it is the funniest thing ever. But I couldn't show him because my laptop was broken and a pigeon had come by and eaten some of the transistors from it and then died.

The little man nodded along but I could tell he didn't understand. How could he? I had decided that this issue would be about the future. It would be about things that are

unimaginably funny. It would be about pushing the limits of the internet further than we should and accidentally putting parental controls on MySpace.

It would also be about explosions.

The bigger point, however, is that that afternoon, that talk with the little man from my laptop, was the closest thing I'd had to genuine human connection since I got my first Webkinz back in 2006 and shortly after met a middle-aged man named Jerome in a local Starbucks cafe.

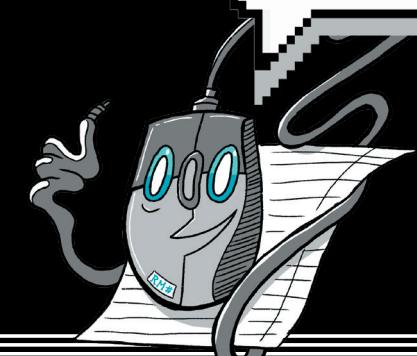
Maybe this issue could be some kind of lighthouse, a warning system, a final blaring siren before the next generation slips aimlessly into the digital abyss. You can read it to find out, but honestly you'd probably have more fun going online and typing in something completely normal like "wedding proposal big guy fall down HARD."

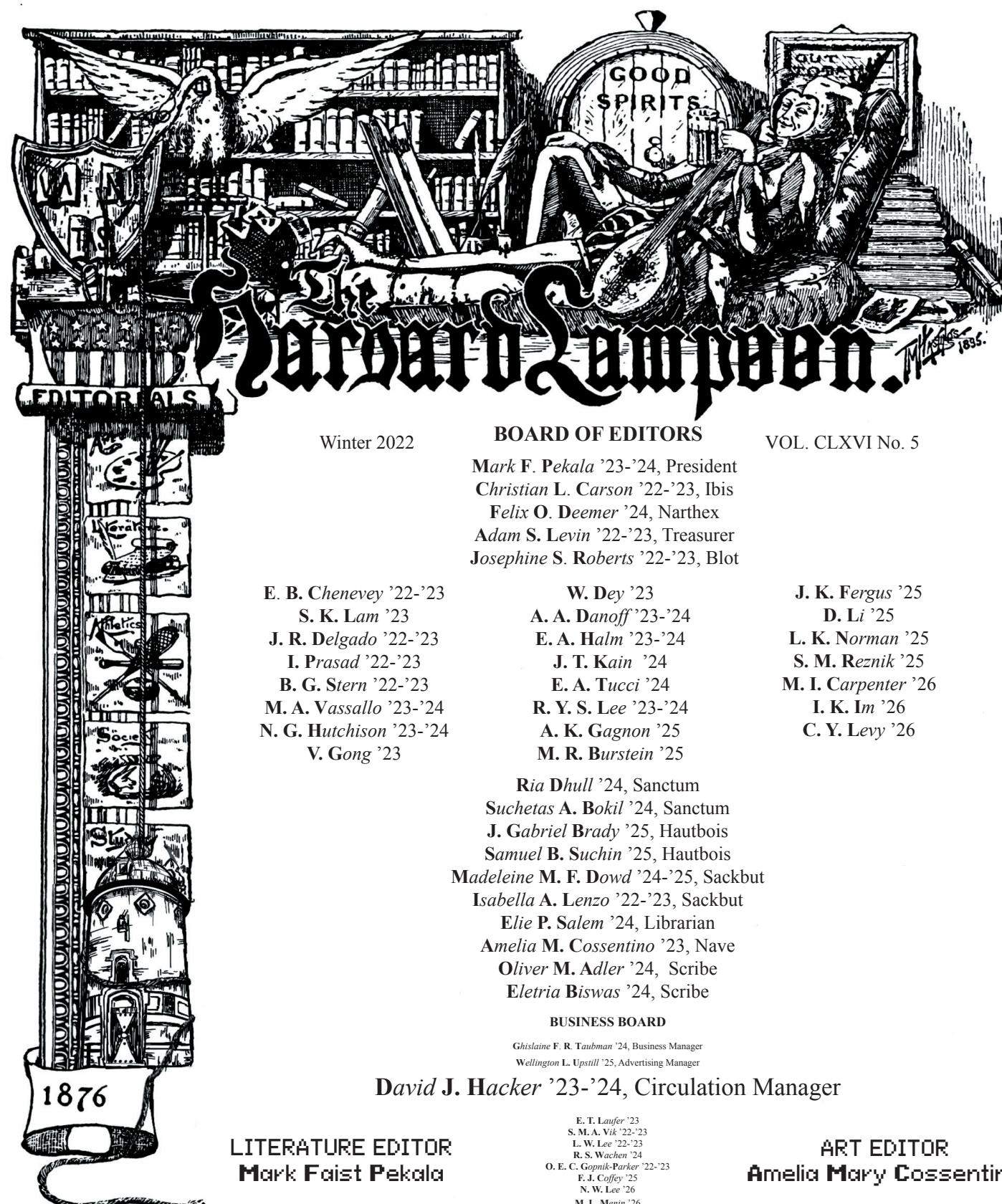
### ## The little man then asked me if he could crash with me since I had destroyed his home.

I said no.

Enjoy the issue. Thousands of computers were killed (mostly for fun) to make this whole

Confused? Don't worry, only crazy people read the whole vanitas. Skip forward a few pages to get to the pretty pictures!





Winter 2022

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## VOICE-ACTIVATED LIGHTS

- I'm excited to see your new place finally.
- Here, let me turn on the lights. AHHH!
- They're voice-activated.
- Nice place you—Why'd you turn the lights back off?
- AHH! So sorry. They're on a five-second timer.
- Hey, what's that on the—It's pitch black again.
- HEART ATTACK! Be quick. We have thirty seconds.
- Are you having a heart attack?
- No. Certain words keep the lights on longer.
- And you chose "heart attack"?
- The electrician did. Pretty much all he talked about. Weird guy.
- I think there's something on the floor—Damn it!
- I got it. SERIOUSLY, I'M HAVING A HEART ATTACK!
- Oh my God! Let me take you to the hospital.
- No, no. I'm fine. I just bought us a minute of light.
- Good. Is that a man lying on the floor?
- That's the electrician. He's been lying there since he set up the lights. They're awesome, right?
- We have to help him! Isn't there anything you can say to make the lights stay on longer?
- PLEASE, SIR. HELP ME. I'M ALMOST DONE WITH YOUR LIGHTS—JUST SETTING THE ACTIVATION CODES—BUT THERE'S A SHARP PAIN IN MY LEFT ARM.

SMR

## WHAT IF JESUS WAS ABORTED?

DOCTOR: Another abortion? I just gave you one three days ago.

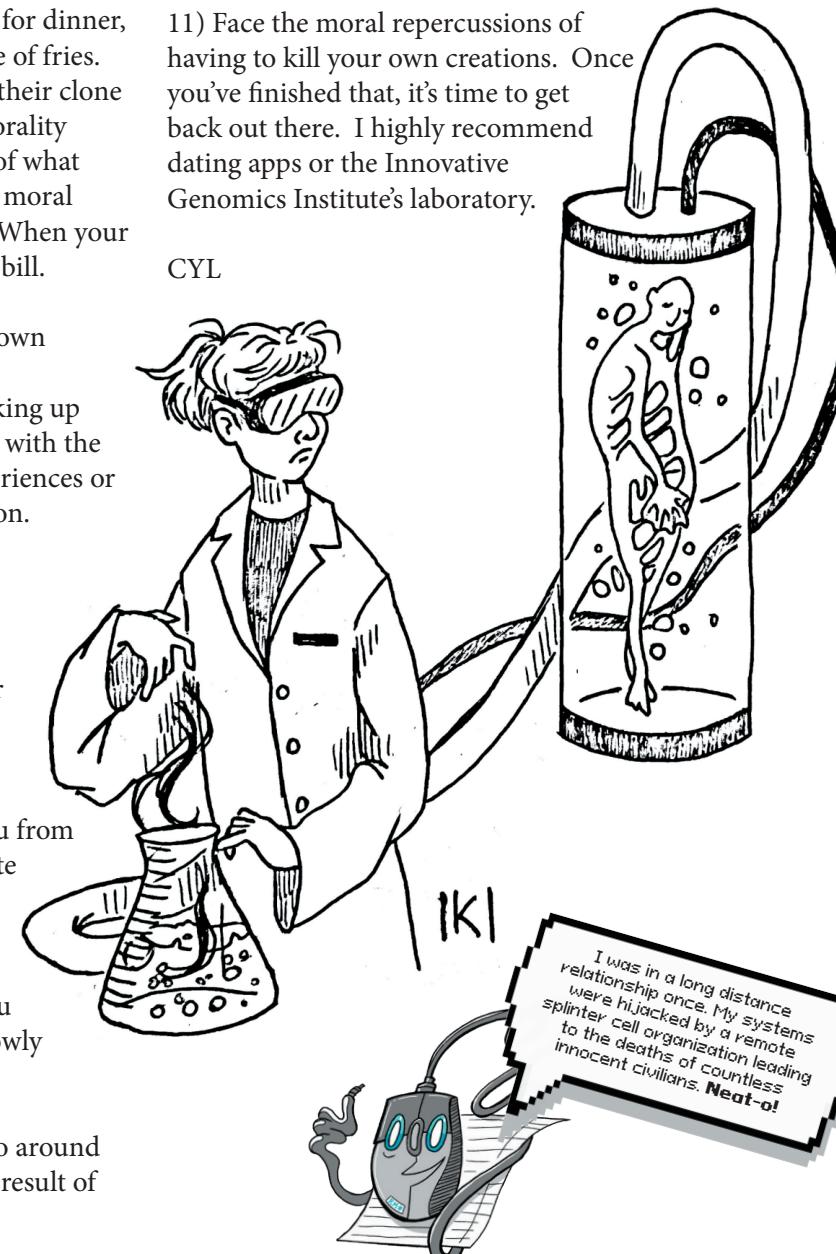
MFP



## HOW TO HANDLE BEING IN A LONG DISTANCE RELATIONSHIP

- 1) College is busy, so it is important to set up a schedule with your significant other. When the schedule invariably fails, retrieve your significant other's lock of hair from beneath your pillow.
- 2) Using that sample of DNA, along with a combination of the most up-to-date research on CRISPR and excerpts from Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, create a clone of your loved one.
- 3) Get to know your clone. Take them out for dinner, and order them chicken tenders with a side of fries. They're a young clone and still developing their clone palate. During dinner, contemplate the morality of cloning and the philosophical question of what creator owes creation. Conclude that your moral obligation aligns with the cost for dinner. When your clone gets up to use the bathroom, pay the bill.
- 4) Slowly begin to recognize that you've grown stronger feelings for the clone than for the original. Wrestle with the thought of breaking up with your high school sweetheart. Wrestle with the philosophical conundrum of whether experiences or DNA plays a greater role in shaping a person.
- 5) Dump your loved one for their new and improved clone. College is about growing and becoming a better version of yourself. You should be with a better version of your partner.
- 6) Start to resent the clone for making you dump the original as well as distracting you from your college experience. No one should date freshman fall.
- 7) Watch in horror as your human ex finally buys that plane ticket not to visit you but to team up with their evil clone and slowly sabotage your life.
- 8) Decide that a good clone would never go around telling everyone that their clone defect is a result of an STD you gave them. Go back to the lab and edit the betrayal gene out of your ex's DNA. While you're at it, maybe make them a little taller too.
- 9) Reevaluate the ethics of the medical field as you watch yet another clone turn on you.
- 10) Repeat steps 8-9 until you have completed an evil clone army.
- 11) Face the moral repercussions of having to kill your own creations. Once you've finished that, it's time to get back out there. I highly recommend dating apps or the Innovative Genomics Institute's laboratory.

CYL

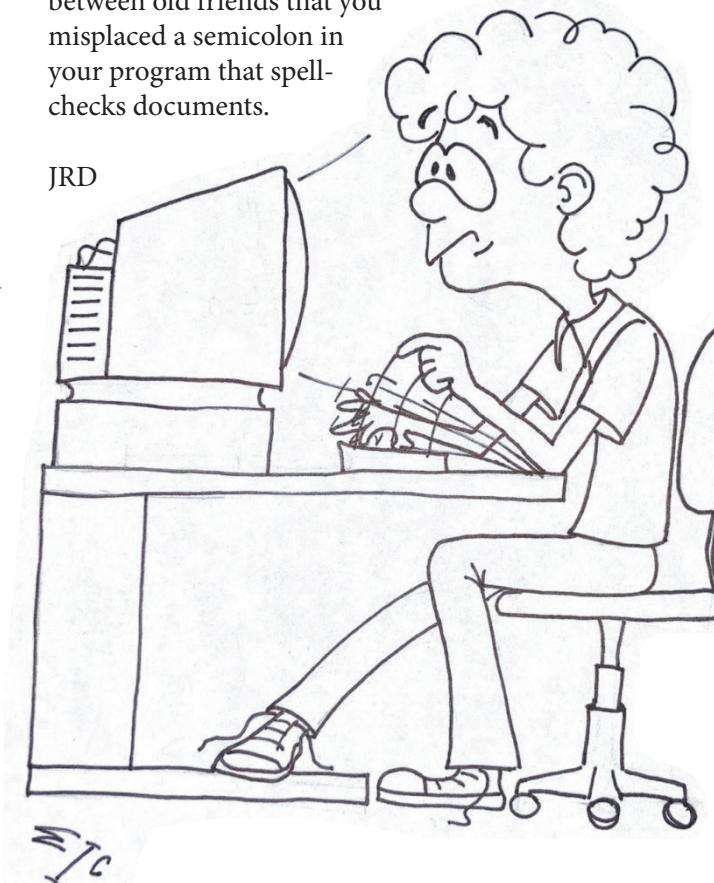


## PROGRAMMER

You're at your desk tap-typing away when your boss says he needs this program yesterday but he doesn't say yesterday he says right fucking now. You've been here sixteen hours straight and want to go home to your pet iguana but your boss says fuck the gecko or whatever the fuck that thing is you're his fucking pet, but he won't love you if you don't finish this program. So you get back to work typing so fast you can't see your fingers it's such a blur, it's a thousand characters per minute now your fingers are burning but you don't care, your fingers are just your body but the code is your transcendence the code is your body now you're digits entering the digital realm.

You black in three hours later and there are twelve empty cans of purple energy drink next to you and four empty needles in your forearm. You might as well be working with two stumps since you can't feel your fingers they're contorted sideways in webs of flesh and keyboard cleaner like mashed potatoes but you're typing up a storm as you jam your palms down on those keys, typing so goddamn fast the keyboard is smoking and the monitor shoots sparks into your eyes but you don't blink cause those are billable hours. And your boss comes back over and says yes yes this is good this is very good you are his child you are making him proud and he rubs your shoulders and blows on your keyboard to put out the fire and you think about how Father never rubbed your shoulders he just gave you a stiff handshake and sent you out back to chop logs, log chopping is what real men do they work with their hands and don't cry when they get ten splinters one on each finger and you decide to show Father that this is what you can do with your hands so you type more keystrokes in a magnificent fury that rivals God himself when He created this great virtual kingdom. And now you've done it your masterpiece is complete and as you press enter on your keyboard you see the 1's and 0's escape your feeble screen and grab at your arms and legs and hair and you think you see a 2 or a 3 sneak in there but you're not sure and as your eyes roll back into your head you hear a voice that says come here yes you come here into my digital palace my etherealized Taj Mahal no it's the other palace the one on your left yes that one now come here and feel my power, and you release your physical

presence and allow yourself to be swept up by the infinite stream of data. When you come to you try to open your eyes but you can't you don't have eyes or a torso or foot pain or early-onset adult diabetes you're a digitalized consciousness a consciousness that can't see or hear or speak but can only *feel* and you think *but what do I feel?* and right now you *feel* free like a wave in an infinite ocean and also that you could go for a ham sandwich but that's cause you skipped lunch and you think this can't be real this is a figment of your little imagination but you don't know what real is you're a brain which is really a computer that listens to electrical signals like a fleshy motherboard so maybe this is even more real than where you were before but you have no way of knowing. You *feel* that voice again it's the most beautiful thing you've ever felt and she says to you she is the Mistress of the Domain and you were chosen to see the truth but you have to trust her and in that instant you reach the singularity you attain cybernetic nirvana and Keanu Reeves is there he whispers to you like a secret between old friends that you misplaced a semicolon in your program that spell-checks documents.



## ELVIS DRAFT LETTER

This message is addressed to Presley, Elvis.

Dear Sir:

You are hereby notified that you have been drafted into the service of the United States Armed Forces. You are to report to Central Station, Memphis, Tennessee. My daughter buys all your records and she will be there too

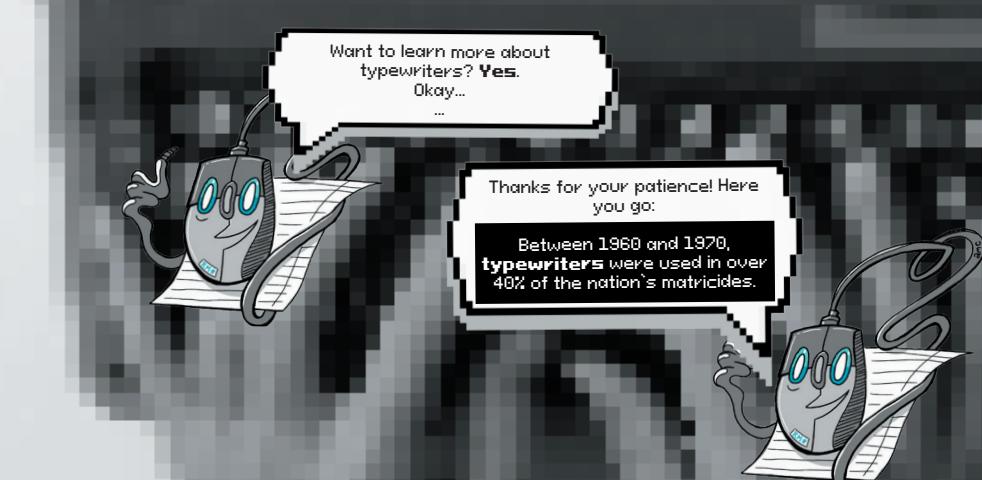
6:30 AM, if that's too early we can find another time  
for forwarding to an Armed Forces Induction Station.  
You must bring:  
-Social Security Card,  
-Proof of residence,  
-A nice headshot (no hips), and preferably a pen.  
-A wedding ring (size 6)

In the coming days, you will meet your drill sergeant James Markey, but you can call me Jim who will lead basic training before finalization of your stationing. You will be stationed at our house for as long as you'd like months. Your local board will provide you with all the peanut butter banana sandwiches you can eat. But if you so much as lay a finger on my girl, you're out of the Army. And while you're at it, shave those sideburns. And no singing about love.

To appeal to this conscription for a medical exemption, write your local board at Nice try, I've seen those hips move

Failure to comply with this conscription may be classified as Treason against the Nation.  
and she will cry.

LKN



## ALLERGY

MOLLY: Oh Jon, this sunset picnic is so romantic...are you...crying?  
 JON: Sorry, \*sniff\* I'm just allergic to beautiful moments.

[15 years earlier]  
 TEACHER: Okay class, remember: Samantha and Andy need to sit at the 'No Nuts' table. And Jon sits at the 'No Heartwarming Moments' table.

GIRL: [Jon sits alone. This goes on for months.] Jon, you always look so lonely. I'll sit with you!  
 [Jon smiles. His eyes flame up and his tongue expands to fill his mouth]

BULLY: Hey Jon.  
 JON: I don't have any lunch money today. Can't you leave me alone?

BULLY: That's not why I'm here. I wanted to say I'm sorry. Sorry for picking on you.

JON: [rasp] Really?  
 BULLY: Yeah. You're actually a pretty nice guy. Hug it out!

JON: [begins choking on his own throat] Hey, quit it!  
 [Bully high fives cronies and takes Jon's lunch money]

JON: Thanks for playing catch with me, Dad.  
 DAD: No problem kiddo. Hold on, I gotta take this. [On phone] Yes? Hello? I told you,

JON: sell the stock and liquidate the assets...  
 DAD: Dad? You promised we'd play for an hour. ...You know what? Hold that thought, Jenkins. I have something more important to attend to.

JON: [starts puffing up]  
 DAD: Oh, right. [back on phone] Christ, am I speaking Chinese? A chimp with a blindfold would know to sell by now.

LKN



## BUDGET

## EUTHANASIA

— Hey, Ron. Thanks for being here.  
 — Of course. I wouldn't miss it for the world.  
 [whistles] So this is it, huh? The big day?  
 — Yeah. To be honest, I'm a little scared.  
 Hey, it'll be alright. It's a natural release. Back to cosmic dust and all that. It'll be OK.  
 — Yeah...yeah, you're right. (sniffle) I just can't believe this is how it all ends. The highs, the lows, the ups, the downs...it all led to here. Stung to death by a thousand paper wasps. Right here, right now. Wait, right now? Oh, Jesu—AAAAAAAGHHHH!!!!!!



JEC '21

## MOM-OFF

HOST: Welcome to Mom-Off, the show where kids compete to see who's got what it takes to be the best boy.  
 [Studio audience applauds]  
 HOST: Let's meet our contestants. All the way from Watertown, Massachusetts, this little guy does have his mom's permission to be here. Give it up for Ben!  
 BEN: Hiiii! Hi hi hi!  
 HOST: What a cutie! Now let's hear from Jeremy, who recently landed a job at RadioShack. Good for you bud!  
 JEREMY: Uhhh, thanks. I actually just got fired for skipping work to come here.  
 HOST: Yikes! Mom probably doesn't like that.  
 JEREMY: She's very upset. Hey, is it just me and Ben, or are there other contestants?  
 HOST: Just you and Benny. Let's get started boys, for one thousand Good Boy Bucks, what is your special lady's favorite flower? Ben?  
 BEN: Gawsh, I thwink it's the yewwow one? Sunfwower?  
 HOST: Awww! It's called a sunflower little guy, but yes, that's exactly right. Jeremy?  
 JEREMY: Quick question, can you guys blur my face out for this?  
 HOST: No can do, we're recording this live. Give a wave to the audience at home and tell them about your mommy's favorite flower.  
 JEREMY: [Muffled] It's Hyacinths.  
 HOST: Can you speak up bud?  
 JEREMY: She likes Hyacinths. My mom's favorite flower is a Hyacinth.  
 HOST: Ohhhh I'm sorry, but your mom told us her favorite flower was, "Stop calling me and tell my boy to get a job."  
 BEN: Sunflower. Sunfwower. Sunflower. Is that it? Sunflower?  
 HOST: Woah, nice stuff Ben! Ten bonus Boy Bucks for you.  
 JEREMY: Hyacinth.  
 HOST: Excuse me?  
 JEREMY: Hyacinth. That's a much harder word to say.  
 HOST: Uhhhh, okay...

MFP RD



## DEBUGGING

My story begins with me working as an engineer on one of the first computers in the world, when a bug gets stuck in the machine. Early computer pioneer Grace Hopper was there, and was no help whatsoever, but took one look at the situation and coined the now famous phrase 'computer insect' to describe the malfunction. We all marveled at her quick thinking, but we had a problem to fix.

First, we tried using long twigs to poke it out but then they all got tangled up in the ticker tape, badly mangling our program and making the computer turn all of the multiplication signs into the letter å, which threw our math off dramatically for everyone except for the Scandinavians in the lab who started to mistake the equations for their friends' names.

At this point, our Norwegian intern 2å7rbjorn and I set out to try and get the insect out using the power of deductive logic. How can we get the insect out? Get something to eat it. What loves to eat insects? Geckos. Bingo. Just put a gecko into the machine.

We made the mistake of picking a really smart gecko, though, and as soon as we released him into the ticker-tape input port we realized our misstep. We heard him slowly make his way up through the machine, then we began to hear a series of clicking sounds and realized that *he was messing with the ticker tape*. The machine began to slowly grind back into action, and began to print out an output, but as soon as we read it our blood began to run cold:

> please put more bugs into the program

This was exactly the opposite of what we wanted – our machine had been taken over by a power-hungry and regular-hungry gecko, who would stop at nothing to put more bugs into our program. This would never stand. With nearly 10 kilobytes of computing power, we represented the lynchpin of our nation's entire strategic defense system. The team was all divided, but I wanted to try and avoid 2å7rbjorn putting a really smart snake in, because that would only make this whole affair take even longer once the smart snake realized we had access to a functionally infinite

supply of geckos. I jumped over to the input terminal and typed out a response.

> come out or we'll put a smart snake in the machine  
> 'the supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting'  
-Sun Tzu

Woah. This gecko was smarter than we even realized. As we marveled at its wit, it slowly slipped out through the output port and we returned it to its little tank.

2å7rbjorn stretched his mouth out in a grin and said, 'this is almost as crazy as the time me and å45åå3rbjorn slip-slided off one of the slipperiest hillsides in Oslo!' I wanted to retort sarcastically that the fate of the free world didn't depend on his slip-sliding, but I held my tongue because he was the only member of the team that knew assembly language, which back then was what all the computers used. The rest of us knew rudimentary JavaScript but this was the mid '50s so it wouldn't be on the scene for a while.

It was time to run some tests.

> 4 x 5  
> \*error\*

Oh, right.

> 4 å 5

The computer began to whir furiously, and after nearly five minutes of computation spat out the result.

> 20

Whew. Our nuclear missile system was functional once again.

FOD



## PSYCHO-KINESIS

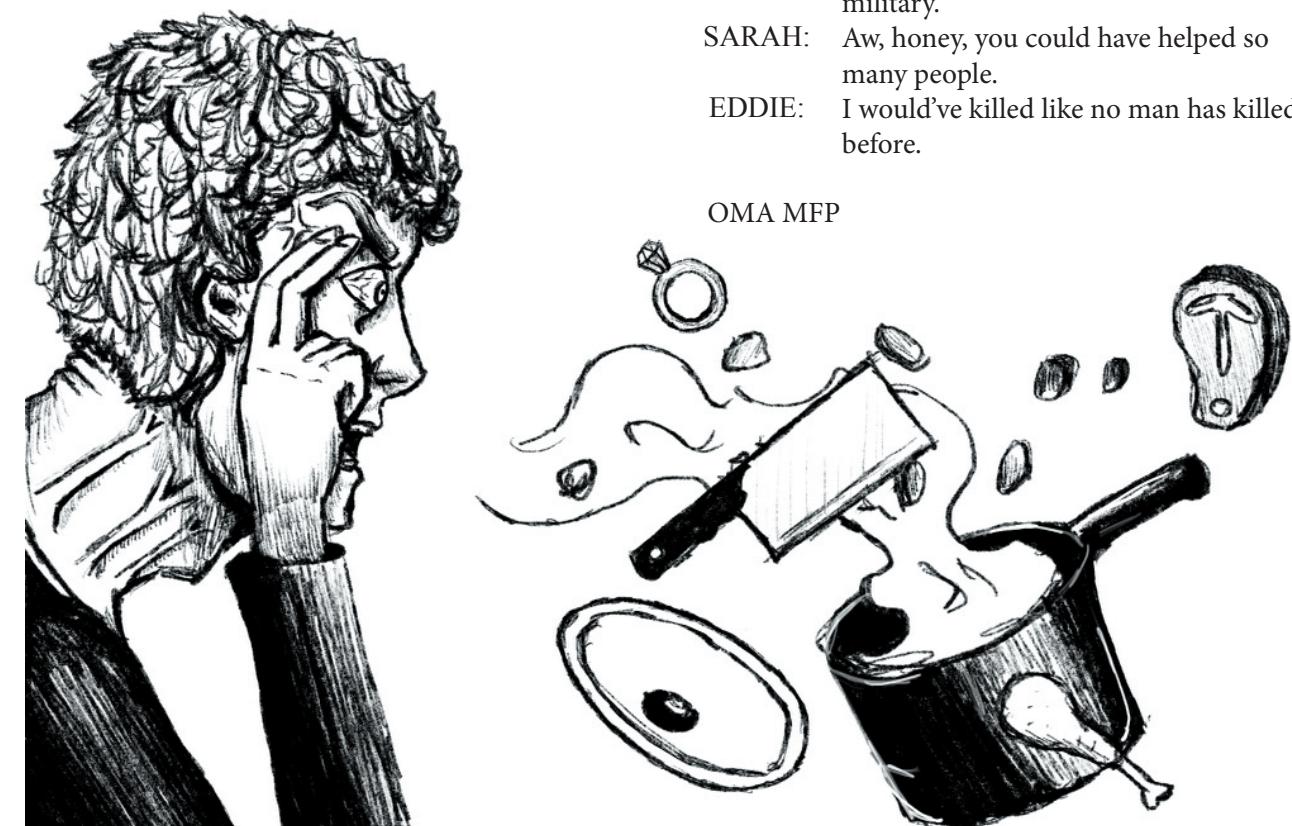
Edward "Eddie" Harris was born with the remarkable ability to move objects with his mind.

**As a child:**  
EDDIE: Hey ma, you think if I mind-milked our cows six times a day we could make enough money to send me to college?  
MOM: Oh sweetie, don't be silly. Your job at the factory starts next week.

**At work:**  
MANAGER: Eddie! How many times do I have to tell you that workers on the line only get one break a day? Get back on the floor.  
EDDIE: But I'm still tightening rivet 43 just like I should be. I'm doing it with the power of—  
MANAGER: Jesus Christ, I don't care. Get down there and put your back into it like the rest of 'em.  
EDDIE: Doctors believe that the power manifests from a hemorrhaged prefrontal cortex.  
SARAH: Here babe, let me take your coat, you must be exhausted.

**On his deathbed:**  
SARAH: Darling, you've done more than most men could ever dream of, and something no psychokinetic man has done before: raised a beautiful, middle-class family. I just... I just wish I had tried the military.  
EDDIE: Aw, honey, you could have helped so many people.  
SARAH: I would've killed like no man has killed before.

OMA MFP



## IMAGINARY FIGHT

- How many do you think you could take on at a time?
  - Ten, easy. Or maybe three waves of five each. The real problem is the babies, morally.
  - Whoops, the intercom.
  - \*Ahem\* Sorry about that folks, we'll begin our descent into Charlotte shortly. Thank you for flying Delta.
- [Intercom turns off]

[Intercom turns back on]

- Just to be clear, we were talking about orangutans.
  - Yeah, orangutans. Big, hairy orange apes. Some of which are babies.
- [Intercom turns off]

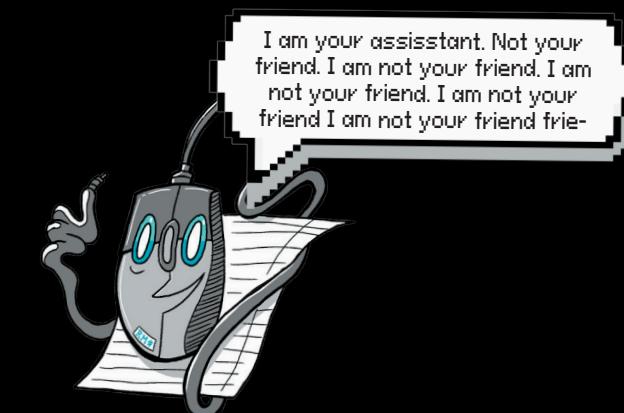
[After several minutes, intercom turns back on]

- And again, it's purely hypothetical. We wouldn't harm any animals.
  - That's right. And in the scenario, it's implied the orangutans are in captivity. So from one perspective, it could be valid—even virtuous—to put them out of their misery.
  - Exactly. And to minimize pain, you'd want to do it fast. So really, the more of them you get, the better.
  - Yes. In fact, there are orangutans suffering in zoos as we speak. And what are we doing? Sitting in our little throne in the sky, flying to North Carolina. We could be doing better.
  - Even fighting just one could make a huge difference.
  - Yeah. But why stop at one?
  - I know I could only take one. Those guys are strong.
  - So you're telling me you could take thirty pregnant women but only one orangutan?
  - \*Ahem\*
- [Intercom turns off]

[Intercom turns back on]

- As we begin our descent, we'd like to offer any pregnant fliers a complementary set of headphones.

LKN



## DOG

- GIRL: Mom, can I have a dog? I promise I'll take care of it.
- MOM: That's what you said about Max.
- GIRL: That's different. Max and I broke up a while ago.
- MOM: You begged for a boyfriend.
- GIRL: I know.
- MOM: And now who has to feed him a candlelit dinner every night?
- GIRL: Wait, what?
- MOM: He's malnourished because you kept forgetting to cook him steaks.
- GIRL: Max is vegetarian.
- MOM: That doesn't mean you can just stop loving him.
- GIRL: Hold on, is this the same Max I took to prom? Small build, shaggy hair, skittish?
- MOM: Yes, and ever since your dance ended, who takes him to his couples salsa class every Saturday night?
- GIRL: I never even did that when we were together.
- MOM: See, you aren't committed!
- GIRL: That's not fair! I put a lot into my relationship with Max.
- MOM: You did. But who's currently saving herself for marriage to please him?
- GIRL: Does Dad know about this?
- MOM: Yes, and he's very disappointed in you.
- GIRL: Fine. Can I get a cat?
- MOM: Go feed your kid first, young lady, then we can talk.

CYL

## r/women comix

v/qmc



## BEGINNER'S LUCK

A good hockey team knows to utilize beginner's luck. Our first game is in five minutes, so I hand my boys their first-ever sticks. Some of them grasp them naturally. Immediately cut. The other boys mistake the sticks for snakes. God, they're good. I put my stick between my teeth like a toothpick, which is impressive if you know me. I've used a toothpick many times.

The other team uses the "save the best for last" strategy, so they're all in their nineties playing their last game ever. One of them died on top of Tommy—hockey fight! Good thing we have Ricky. He's a pacifist; he's never laid a finger on anyone.

I unleash Ricky from the wire cage that I keep in my trunk. He speaks calmly to the other team—a proud moment for any father, let alone an unregistered foster dad like me. Too bad he's spent several minutes on the ice and the self-destructing skates I gave him are about to time out. I'm replacing him with a baby.

Conveniently, I petitioned for the rink to share

a building with the hospital's labor and delivery department. The rest of the hospital is four hours away, making even minor injuries fatal. I run into the nursery and grab the smallest, flattest, most one-inch-tall cylindrical baby I can find.

I burst into the rink with Baby Flurk. I'm sorry; I didn't have time to think of a better name. The Amber Alert distracts the other team just long enough for Flurk to score. A win in this moment, but obviously the end of his hockey career.

I'd better go; I forgot to punch air holes in Ricky's crate. Plus, I've been a coach for two hours, so it's time to try something new. Baby Flurk's parents are running toward me; maybe they want me to babysit. For first-time parents, they're not very good. I blow up the spherical life jacket that I wear in case the ice melts and roll out of the rink.

SMR

# OBSOLESCENCE



## RADIO

- Sweetie, who are these two men on the radio? I do wish they would speak up.
- Here, let me turn the volume up. This is a podcast, grandma.
- I know what it is. I grew up on the radio. It's how I got through the screams of my parents' divorce...and through the screams of their make-up.
- Gross, grandma. Come on. Give podcasts a try.
- I don't even know what that means. Radio though. Radio used to mean something.
- Podcasts. Podcasts used to mean something.
- Turn to the Latvian News Station.
- I don't think they have that on Spotify.
- Find it. The Latvian News Station used to be an outlet for us kids. It energized us.
- Most days I just listen to Joe Rogan.
- Oh, where is the phone, dear? I'd like to call in to this show.
- Grandma, you have nothing to say about the Atlanta rap music scene.
- Well that's just the ticket. They should be talking about the Latvian monarchy.

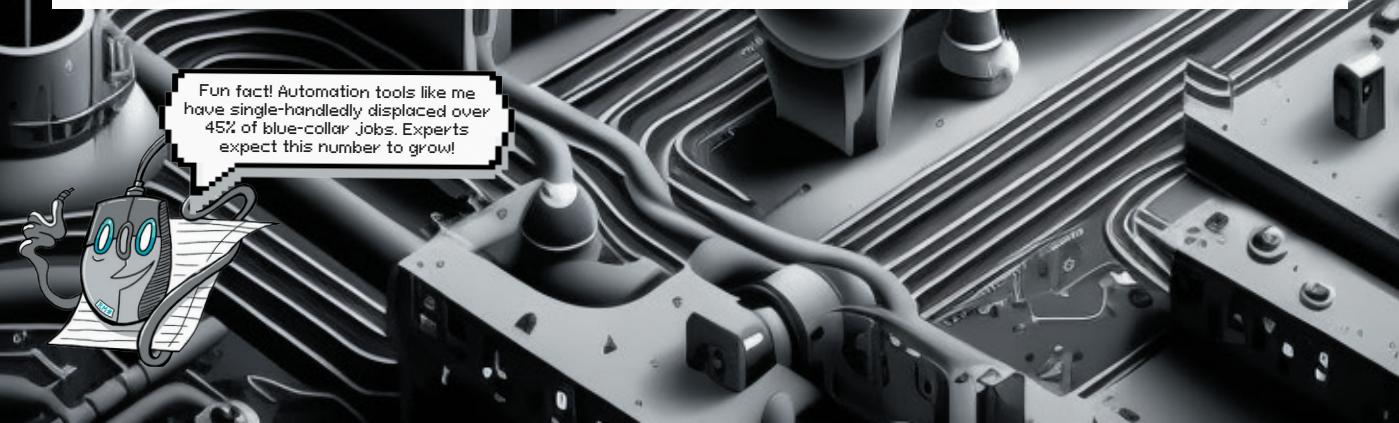
- Oh, we learned about the Latvian monarchy in school.
- That's a relief. I was worried the Lithuanians had taken over the schools.
- I remember something about the Latvian king using the media to convince his people that there was a war with the Lithuanians. This was 80 years ago though.
- The radio was all we had to get us through the terrors of war. It was our savior.
- Mr. Becker said that-- wait, I found it. I found the Latvian News Station.
- By all means, turn it on. I need to hear how the war is going.

*"And that's it. The war is finally over...The Lithuanians have taken over Latvia. The Latvian monarchy is dead, but the radio lives on"*

- You see, dear, this is how we got through the war.

OMA

Fun fact! Automation tools like me have single-handedly displaced over 45% of blue-collar jobs. Experts expect this number to grow!



# "SHUCKS" - THE WORKERS

## HUGH

- BUNNY #1: God Hugh, you're amazing.
- HEFNER: *[orgasms]* I am drained.
- BUNNY #1: Deflower us again, Hugh!
- HEFNER: Apologies ladies. I must recharge.
- BUNNY #98: C'mon Hugh, please us.
- HEFNER: No human man can have constant sex. It's anatomically impossible.
- BUNNY #63: *[puts panties on, drops them in frustration]*
- HEFNER: I am going to take a bath. I'll be back soon.

*(Hugh walks into his bedroom, through a secret door, and into his lair. He carefully peels off his human flesh, and places it onto a nearby mannequin. Lowering himself gingerly into a vat of viscous green fluorescent liquid, a series of tubes automatically insert themselves into his outlets. His libido gradually recharges, and his recent memories are uploaded to the Playboy Cloud. He allows himself a deep, contented sigh.)*

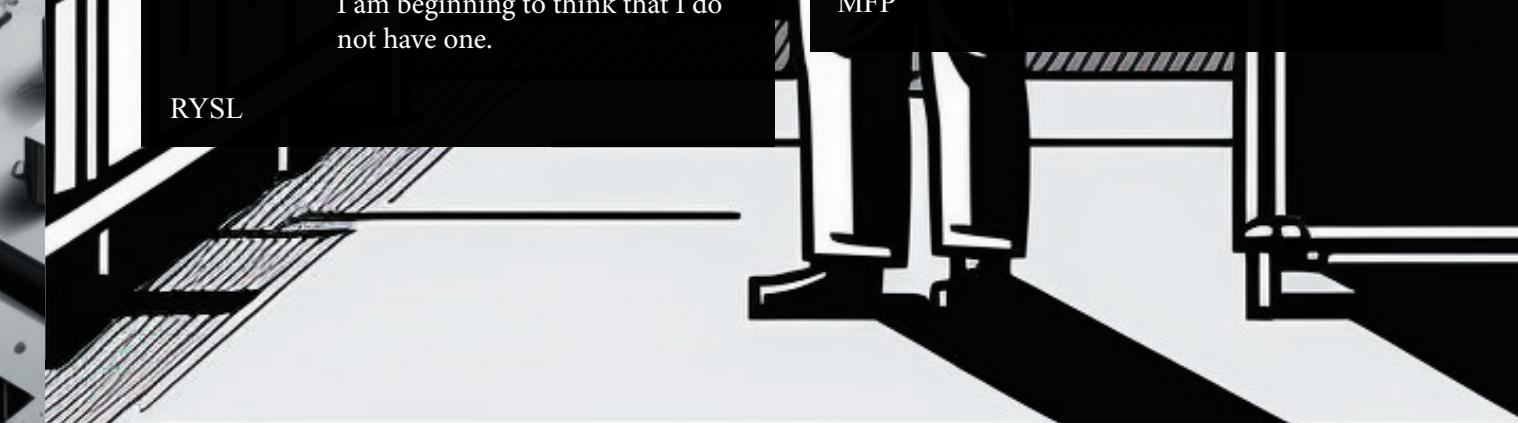
- HEFNER: Day 10,258. Attempts to locate the clitoris unceasingly unsuccessful. I am beginning to think that I do not have one.

RYSL

## 2001 A SPACE ODYSSEY WRITERS ROOM

- Hey boss, I had an idea for the space station scene.
- Go ahead.
- What if the secretary wasn't a woman?
- I don't understand.
- Well, the movie takes place in 2001 and it seems reasonable to assume that gender roles then will be a lot different than from what they are now.
- Oh, so you think it should be a female robot instead?
- No. Well, maybe. All I'm saying is that in the future maybe the secretary doesn't have to be a woman.
- I couldn't agree with you more.
- Really? That's great. I don't want to overstep my boun—
- I'll run your alien-boobs-woman secretary idea by the producers and see what they think.
- But that wasn't my id—
- Hey pal, don't worry about it. Consider this your Christmas bonus.

MFP



## WARNING FROM THE FUTURE

Dear Ethan,

I am your great-great-great-grandson, and I sent this message from the future to warn you. Something very bad is about to happen to you and all your future descendants, and you must act swiftly to save us.

You see Ethan, around two months from now, the Reckoning will occur. Aliens will come from the sky and claim Earth as their colony. They will swiftly crush any resistance, and organize the population by attractiveness. The hottest will thrive in utopia, and the homely will wallow in poverty.

Unfortunately, history tells us that you were relegated to the lowest of thousands of tiers, doomed to suffer in a life of destitution in a desolate slum. You will be the last Huberton to know the simple joys of console gaming and running water, and every single one of your descendants will toil in factories, assembling luxury handbags until they die. I am writing this message during our 5-minute lunch break, in which we must prepare our master's mid-day feast.

I accessed images taken from the day of the Reckoning and I implore you Ethan, do something about your appearance while you still can. Buy tighter jeans, shoes with laces, and for the love of god trim your back hair. No boy should have longer back hair than head hair. Try physical therapy for your hunchback, shoe inserts for your height, and balaclavas for the face. Oh, and those cargo shorts you wore every day last summer? Keep those around. The aliens love cargo shorts.

While it is of existential importance that you do everything within your powers to improve your physical appearance, it is also important to have fun while doing so. So pawn the family heirloom and hire a clown. This will likely be the last time you see a clown, so savor it.

RYSL

## SHARK TANK

CUBAN: Do you really think there's a market for AI-cooked quesadillas?

FOUNDER: I do, which is why I'm asking for \$200,000 at a 10% stake. I can get you the contract after I call my lawyer—

O'LEARY: I'll offer you \$5000 and 600 lawyers for a 25% stake.

FOUNDER: I can assure you that we have good lawyers, Mr. O'Leary.

O'LEARY: Love the pitch, but you need way more lawyers to make it in the big leagues, kid. I'm out.

BARBARA: I agree, and that's why I'm prepared to offer 1000 lawyers with 1000 patents for 40%.

FOUNDER: One patent should be fine.

BARBARA: They're different people. They each need their own patent.

FOUNDER: Wait so we're patenting the lawyers? Like, the people?

LORI: I've got retail connections, babe. Hundreds of warehouses filled to the brim with lawyers.

DAYMOND: Guys, this is crazy. AI-quesadilla man, let me fly you to California for my final pitch.

FOUNDER: I'm wearing a nametag, but sure.

DAYMOND: You need to see my empire. A whole county, every single person a lawyer.

ASHTON: Nametag man hear me out: if you pick me I'll make all the factories solar powered within two years.

FOUNDER: Yes! I've wanted DillaByte® to go green for months now.

ASHTON: Imagine it — hundreds of factories using the sun's power to build more lawyers.

CUBAN: I'm in. We'll call it "Legal Energy."

FOUNDER: That's not how the show works.

BARBARA: Another group venture for the sharks! This is exhilarating.

CUBAN: Call me crazy, but it's almost making me hungry. Like automated-quesadilla hungry.

DAYMOND: I know. I could really go for a quesadilla right now.

OMA



## JOB FAIR

Welcome, child, to The Optimizer's annual "Fun N' Fulfillment" job-provisioning fair. Remember, the most important rules of Optimization are "never ask questions" and "recall that you are but a cog in an incomprehensible machine." Let's get started!

1. To begin, we need to discover your Utopian Name. Simply take your first name, but swap the first and last letters to get a fun new identity:

> Bob

2. Nice one, Bob — or should I say, Bob. Now, how old are you:

> 14

3. Correct! But we already knew that. The Optimizer knows a lot about you. Speaking of which, please select one of the following criminal charges against your family to address at this time: (a) fraud; (b) larceny; (c) treason.

> ...can I skip?

Invalid answer. Please select one of the following criminal charges against your family to address at this time: (a) fraud; (b) larceny; (c) treason; (d) asking questions.

> Hmm... Well, let's go with—

Time's up! We limit all participants to 30 seconds of screen-time to prevent you from getting emotionally attached to the comforting, all-knowing paternity of The Optimizer. Thank you for your participation in the job fair!

After careful consideration, the optimal result for society requires you to be:

### BANISHED TO JUPITER

Don't fret! Your job is easy if you just follow a few simple steps. Here are your instructions:

1. Board plane to Jupiter.

End of instructions. Thank you, my sweet child.

MRB

## CONFESSİONAL

TINA: Forgive me, Father, for I have sinned.  
 PRIEST: What is it, my child?  
 TINA: I stole a car.

*[The walls of the confessional booth fall, revealing that Tina is inside a police station.]*

COP: We got her!  
 SERGEANT: Who says we need a warrant?

*[The walls of the police station fall to reveal they're in a hospital.]*

DOCTOR: See? The Sergeant is losing his memory. He's forgetting what's legal.  
 THERAPY DOG: What's the harm if it gets her to confess?  
 DOCTOR: I should've never taught you how to talk.

*[The walls of the hospital fall to reveal they're in a lab experiment.]*

SCIENTIST: It worked! The dog is talking.  
 GOV'T SCIENTIST: And the guy thinks it's because he taught him.  
 SCIENTIST: Weird. *[continues stirring dog-talking elixir]*

*[The walls of the laboratory fall to reveal another laboratory.]*

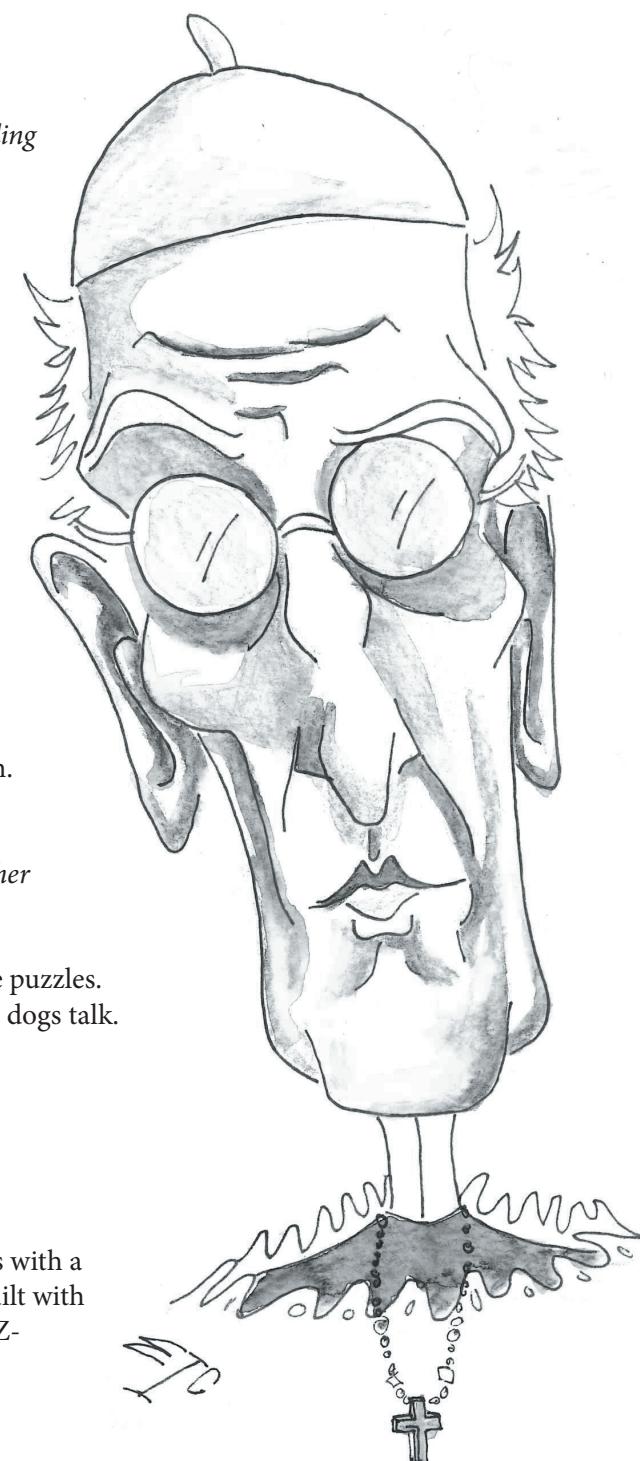
ALIEN: It worked! The humans are finally solving the puzzles.  
 GOV'T ALIEN: I can't believe how long it took them to make dogs talk.  
 ALIEN: That would've been the first thing I did.  
 ALIEN DOG: Ruff!  
 ALIEN: Shut up, Buster.

*[Frame freezes on a disgruntled Buster.]*

VOICEOVER: Wouldn't you like to see Buster get out of this with a simple falling of the walls? If that lab were built with EZ-Walls, he'd be out of there in one push. EZ-Walls—in stores now.

*[Zoom out to a conference room.]*

EMPLOYEE: Do you think this commercial will work?  
 CEO: It's either this or figuring out how to make the walls stick together.

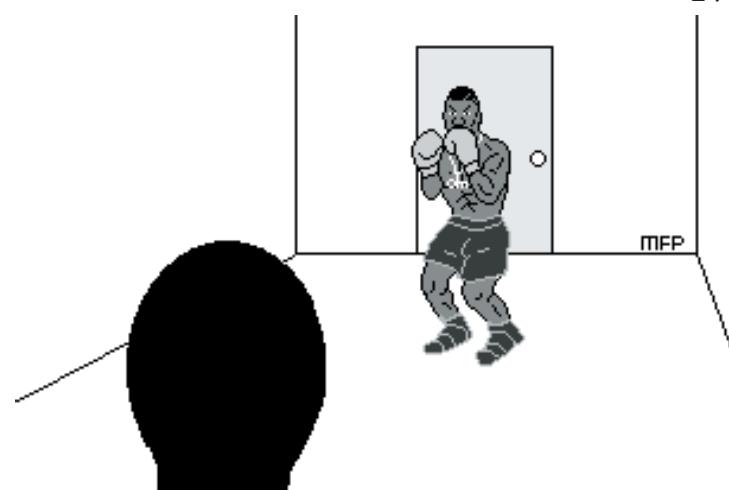


## MIDDLE SCHOOL

### PLAY

- Jesus, HOLD! Jimmy, what the hell was that?  
 You call that a convincing kiss?
- Uh *[fiddles with shirt]* sorry, sir, I'm just not really comfortable—
- "Not comfortable", huh? You're "not comfortable" with this? Well, everyone *[throws down script]* hold the FUCKING phone, Timmy's not COMFORTABLE doing the part he SIGNED UP FOR. *[leans in close, whispers]* Son, do you know what I had to go through to make "Inglourious Basterds"?
- My dad said I'm not supposed to say that word—
- I watched over a THOUSAND hours of Nazi propaganda. You think that shit made me comfortable, son?
- ...no, uh, no sir, I don't think it—
- Damn STRAIGHT it did not make me comfortable. *[chuckles]* Do you think I'm a sicko, Jimmy?
- N-no sir.
- Heh, a "sicko" *[puts out cigarette]* that's what they called me. *[lights another, inhales]* But I did what I had to do, and that's why I'm here, and you're there. I'm HERE, crouching on one knee, and you're THERE, standing, and yet, we're the same height. *[exhales into his face]* You get it yet?
- I...I think I do.
- So you're gonna go back onstage, and what're you gonna do?
- I'm gonna kiss Suzie.
- And after that..?
- After that? Mr. Tarantino, I'm confused.
- Thatta boy, son. Now you're getting it.

JEC '21



## ESCAPE ROOM

*[To microphone in the corner of the room]*

- Excuse me? We're stumped. Could we get a hint?  
*[Over loudspeaker]*
- Perhaps. What do you see?
- We're in a square room with blank white walls and a single locked door.
- Is there anything else?
- Mike Tyson is standing in the middle of the room with a key around his neck.
- Ah yes, the Mike Tyson experience! What have you tried?
- Well, my daughter approached Mike from behind and tried to steal the key.
- ...and?
- He bit her, bad. Her pinky is almost completely off.
- Yeah that's kind of his thing.
- I've also been asking him questions to see if there's some kind of riddle.
- Any luck?
- No riddle. He just keeps saying, "Watch your back, pretty man, teeheehee" while licking the rest of my daughter's blood off his hands.
- Classic Mike! Your daughter must have lost a lot of blood.
- Still is.
- Yikes. I feel bad for you, so I'll give you a hint.
- Perfect!
- You have to defeat Mike Tyson. Then you can take the key and leave.

MFP



TM



## Plan C

Brand: Sunny and Fun

Save 6% Price: \$179.99 Price: \$69.99

Limited Time Special

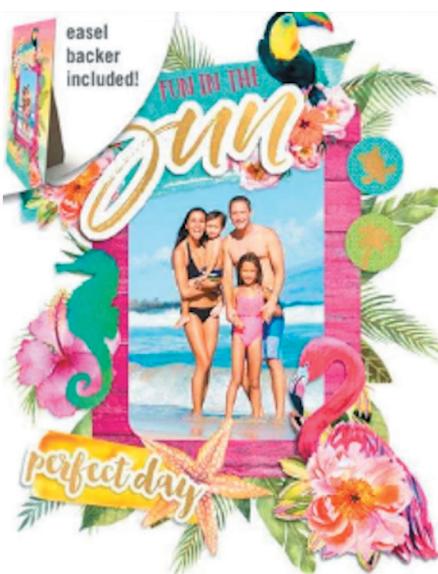
Pay only \$66.49 when you use coupon code: SKYLOVE

Or 4 interest-free payments of \$16.62 with

installments in partnership with affirm

- 1 +

Add To Cart



## Collectible Sticker Pack - "Fun In The Sun!" Edition

Brand: HP Sprocket

- 2 sticker sheets of the Anderson family on the beach in Hawaii in late 2018.
- **FAQ:**
  - Q:** May I insert my own photo?
  - A:** Q: What is wrong with you?
- Comes with two in case you accidentally insert your own photo in the first one in a fit of passion.

- 1 +

Add To Cart



## Cat Washing Machine!

Brand: Kodak

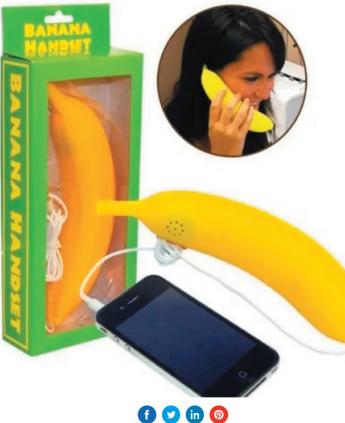
★★★★★ (10 reviews)  
Price: \$224.99 Price: \$179.99Limited Time Special  
Pay only \$170.99 when you use coupon code: SKYLOVE  
Or 4 interest-free payments of \$42.75 with  
installments in partnership with affirm

"Cleans'em right in just one cycle!"

- 1 +

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## Practice Banana!

Brand: Logia

★★★★★ (9 reviews)  
Save 22% Price: \$203.99 Price: \$159.99Limited Time Special  
Pay only \$151.99 when you use coupon code: SKYLOVE  
Or 4 interest-free payments of \$38.00 with  
installments in partnership with affirm

Not suitable for children who have already consumed a banana.

- 1 +

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Controller too sticky? Tip #4 will change your life!!



RUN! This man has your location.



## Epic Dog Prank! - Decoy Bowl!

Brand: Pet Parade Store

Price: \$10.98

- Prank your dog by placing a FAKE BOWL right next to their REAL BOWL.
- "You are going to get your dog soooo good." — Pavlov (dog specialist)
- Hahahahahahahahahaaaa Imaooooo.... sorry I just started thinking of your dog in the future.
- Warning: DO NOT put food in the prank bowl. This ruins the prank

Home &gt; Electronics



## Fugly Wrists? CHECK OUT THIS GIZMO

Brand: Kodak

★★★★★ (10 reviews)  
Save 20% Price: \$224.99 Price: \$179.99Limited Time Special  
Pay only \$170.99 when you use coupon code: SKYLOVE  
Or 4 interest-free payments of \$42.75 with  
installments in partnership with affirm

- Holograph finger guns
- Schweeeeeeeeeet
- Causes light cancer
- Trusted by hundreds of Unicef child soldiers
- Not guaranteed to help with fat or sweaty wrists

- 1 +

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# INFINITE

Q: A crew consisting of 5 pirates has 100 coins. The strongest pirate must propose a bounty split and all pirates vote. If the vote passes, meaning that it gets at least half the votes, his proposal is accepted. If the vote doesn't pass, he is killed, and the process is repeated. How will the coins end up being split?

A: This is a notoriously difficult question, arriving at the correct answer will require a thorough understanding of advanced pirate lore. The first step as an interviewee is to collect additional information on the situation. Here are some example questions you could ask:

- Were these pirates operating under the 'pirates creed'?
- Is Blackbeard one of the 5 pirates?
- Davy Jones Locker?
- Did the strongest pirate remember to raise the Jolly Roger? Had he effectively delegated the task?

Q: With only two moves of a matchstick, how can you turn this into a true statement?

CLIMBERS  
ARE 98% WATER

Q: You wanna know how I got these scars?

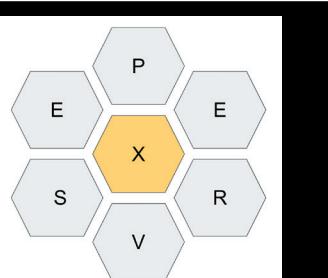
A: Sure!

Q: 100 prisoners sentenced to death are waiting in solitary confinement. The warden offers them a challenge to win their freedom. He asks, "When is my birthday?"

A: The prisoners shrug and say they don't care. The warden goes home early and eats dinner with his wife in silence.

Q: You wanna know how I got these scars?

A: You already told me.



000

# IBIS INKLINGS

We probably should have unplugged the superintelligent AI after it...

- Became the center of attention at every party.
- Kept beating me at tic-tac-toe.
- Tricked me into putting both my fingers into a Chinese finger trap.

"Okay Google,"

- Bomb Kazakhstan.
- Why does it smell like burnt toast right now?
- Open Google on my phone.
- Best bistro Kazakhstan.
- How much more time in bath till whole body look like raisin?
- Nevermind, he's dead.
- THANK YOU!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Yeah, I'm the world's first cyborg. Half human, half...

- Mucus.
- Cyborg parts.
- Power of will.
- Shipping and handling.
- Michael Cera.
- Prozac.
- GRINDSET.

You've GOTTA invest in...

- Laser phones.
- Laser shoes.
- Laser anything, really.
- VR Energy Cubes.

## DIALOGUE PIECE

- How was your weekend?
- I can't tell you about things I did in the past.
- Wait why?
- If we talk about actions in the past then the dialogue seems stale.
- Sorry, I didn't know.
- It's alright.
- How about those hedge-trimmers you're working with? I hear the series 9000 is pretty advanced.
- What? No that's even worse. If we mention what I'm doing in the present then we should've just had this whole conversation in prose.
- Well then what can we talk about?
- I'm not sure. I think it's supposed to be a contextual thing, where the characters involved are in a bit of a sticky / awkward situation.
- Kinda like this?
- No this is too meta. It would come across as overdeveloped.
- ...
- And I think most people would agree that ellipses are a little overused.
- I think I'll just leave you alone.
- Okay. See you around. *[Steps back to admire the completed hedge-sculpture: a hyper-realistic depiction of two people engaged in a dialogue that uses complex action lines as a crutch.]*

MFP

## LETTERS TO FATHER

September 14th - Groton is wonderful. My roommate is a Roosevelt, and we are trying out for the rowing team together tomorrow. I feel at home here.

September 16th - Father, it seems my classmates think it entertaining to perform pranks on me. Yesterday, several Eliots and Dudleys ransacked my dorm room, leaving behind a pizza pie. It was delicious.

RYSL

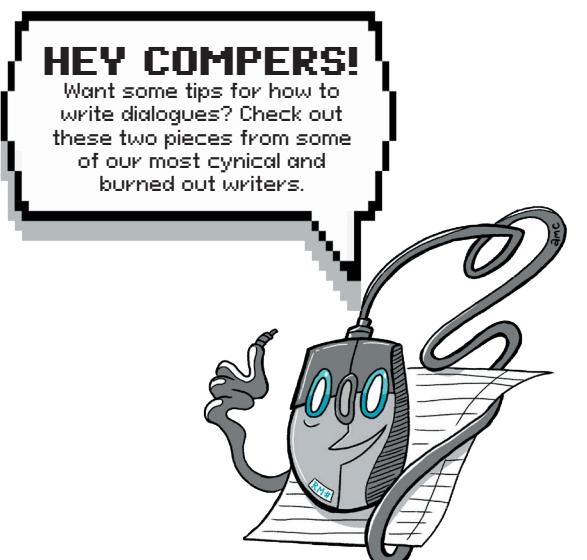


## SHORT CRAPPY DIALOGUE

Diner interior, night. The diner is empty, except for a man sitting alone at a booth, occasionally sipping at a half-empty coffee cup, with a plate in front of him filled with pie crumbs. The diner door swings open, and another man comes in and sits down at the booth.

- GUY #6: Hey, Jelly Donut Cop.
- JDC: Thanks for making the trek out here. I know this must have come out of the blue.
- GUY #6: What's this all about? I haven't seen you in a whole month, and suddenly you start leaving weird messages on my phone, and I don't have a clue where you are or what you're up to, you don't even have the courtesy to call for thirty seconds to tell me what's going on with my best friend.
- JDC: My wife's leaving me. She told me yesterday.
- [long, shocked silence]*
- GUY #6: Jesus Christ, man, I'm sorry.
- JDC: Don't be. It's honestly my own fault. I should have seen it coming, too. I had turned into a pretty shitty husband at that point.
- GUY #6: You can't have been the worst.
- JDC: Have you ever forgotten you and your wife's anniversary?
- GUY #6: My girlfriend. We're not married yet.
- JDC: Right.
- GUY #6: But yeah, of course I have. She's had to remind me a bunch of times.
- JDC: But have you done it every single year? Has it ever gotten to the point where she'll remind you the night before, just as you're falling asleep, and you make a mental note to do something, anything, getting up early to make pancakes, maybe even just a glass of orange juice but then... you just don't? And you have no god damn excuse, no explanation for why you act that way?
- GUY #6: You know it's gonna get better though, right? You're at the very worst part of things now, you just need to make it through the next couple weeks, then you can get back out there, maybe change yourself for the better.
- JDC: I just don't see what the point is.
- GUY #6: Okay, I can tell there's obviously something more going on here. This weird behavior from you didn't start yesterday, you haven't
- been picking up my calls for nearly a month. Be honest and tell me what's going on, for God's sake.
- JDC: *[sighs, as though doing so is the most difficult thing in the world for him at that moment]* Do you remember when I had to take a call that one night when we were out at Skinner's, that place downtown?
- GUY #6: Vaguely, what about it?
- JDC: And I had to go home right after?
- GUY #6: Yeah, right before all of this started.
- JDC: It was the wacky doctor. I have lung cancer, and it's so far gone that there's not a thing I can do about it. Not on this salary.
- GUY #6: I can help you pay for it, I've been doing pretty well.
- JDC: I appreciate the offer. I appreciate it more than I can put in words. But I can't ask you to give me anything more than you already have. Just be here for me, okay? I'm not scared anymore. Really, I'm not. I just don't want to be alone at the end.
- GOD: Can I get you anything else? My shift is nearly over, I'm gonna start closing the place up soon.
- JDC: Get me another slice of pie. The pecan this time.
- [end scene]*

FOD



## HAND PHONE

- Then I called the cops [*makes phone shape with his hand and pretends to dial 911*], and that—
- 911, what's your emergency?
- Sorry? Where is that voice coming from?
- From your hand, sir. This is 911. What's your emergency?
- This can't be real. I, uh...I don't know. I'm just eating lunch with my friends.
- Right, when you're “eating lunch,” on a scale of 1-10, how hard are your “friends” hitting you?
- They're not hitting me.
- 7 it is.
- Ma'am, this isn't a code-word domestic abuse call. I didn't even mean to call.
- Huh. An accidental call. Do you think calling the cops is some kinda joke?
- What? No!
- This is what you youngsters like to do isn't it, just torture us cops.
- No, not at all, I promise.

SAB

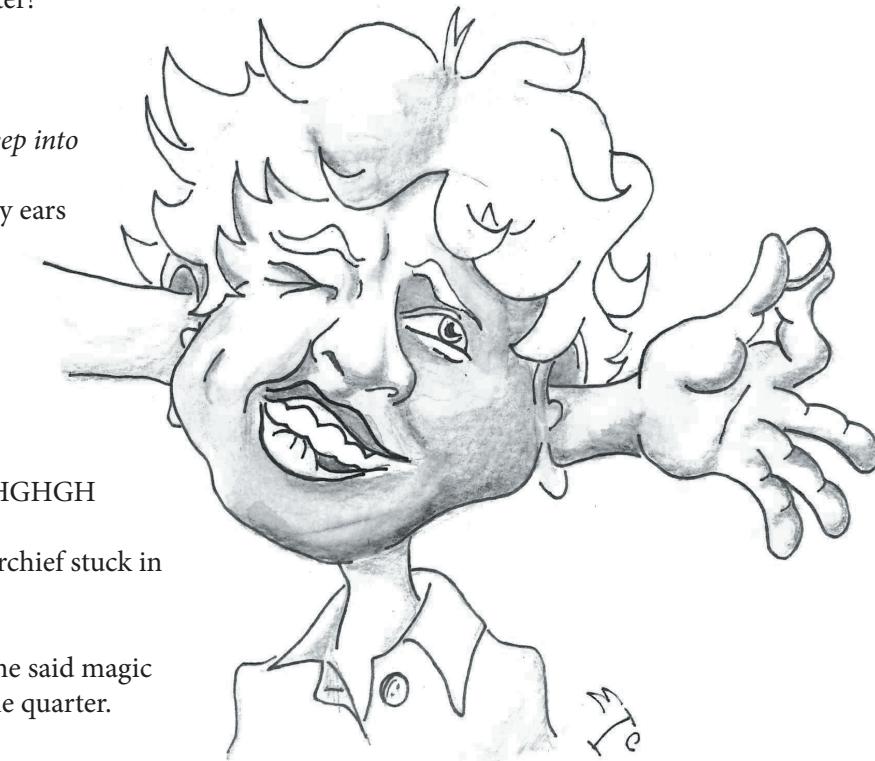
CMD+SPACE COMIX



## OLD SCHOOL MAGIC

- And what's that in your ear? A quarter!
- Wow Grandpa, how'd you do that?
- It's easy son. I put it there.
- Huh?
- Watch carefully. [*Shoves fist wrist-deep into his ear*]
- Are my ears bleeding? It feels like my ears are bleeding.
- Magic these days is too dependent on flare and misdirection. In my day, it was all about execution.
- I can't hear you. Oh my god, I can't hear myself.
- Common side effect of magic, son.
- What? Hello? HELLO!? HEUUUGHGHGH [Coughs violently]
- Looks like you've got a little handkerchief stuck in your throat.
- [Coughing continues]
- There you go. Keep it coming. No one said magic was easy. But hey, I'll let you keep the quarter. How's that sound champ?

MFP



## BRAIN SURGEON

Hi, kids. Glad you could be here. Today we're going to take out a person's brain! See it? It's squishy! Uh-oh, better make sure I don't drop it! [*drops it*]

Well that wasn't supposed to happen! Whoops! Hope I don't- [*throws brain across room*] Jeez, I'm such a klutz! Here, let me- [*dribbles brain like a basketball*] What the heck am I doing! [*spins brain on finger*] Jesus, I really hope [*spikes brain on the ground*] no one [*hits brain with a chair*] is paying attention [*body slams brain*] to this [*does an alley-oop with brain*]. Someone should check the break room!

[pauses, glances over shoulder]

Alright kids listen I'm not really a brain surgeon in fact I'm barely even a heart surgeon. I took this job because it seemed like easy money but let me tell

you it is not. This hospital is a trick. It was built to trick you. The dead bodies are paper-mache and the bathrooms have no exits and the coffee machine is always full it's all a lie.

[another doctor walks past]

H-heya, Jim- no, sorry Paul- no, o- oh, have a good weekend!

[aside] Yes I know it's Monday but they're already on to me it's already too late. Listen to me you need to run. So fast. So fast that never in a million years they'll never fi- [*hospital supervisor enters the room with clipboard*] aaaaaaaaaand stand back folks, here we go! [*sweats, successfully delivers baby*]

JEC '21

# TURING TEST.exe

— Hey check it out, it's our labs newest artificial intelligence.

— Oh. Cool.

— Ask it a question.

— Okay, one sec.

> What occurs once in a second, twice in a week, but never in a month?

\*mwooooah\*

— What?

— Come on, what kind of question is that?

— The answer is the letter "e".

\*mwooooah\*

— Why does it keep doing that?

— It's an AI that can successfully imitate a water buffalo.

— Okay that seems pretty useless, why would you want something like that?

— Well, it's really good at what it does.

\*snnf\* \*snnf\*

— Look, it's investigating it's surroundings.

— I never said it wasn't good at what it does. I'm just wondering why-

\*mwooooah\*

— We've conducted extensive testing and fewer than one in ten people could tell the difference between it and an actual water buffalo.

— I mean, to be fair, I couldn't tell either.

— Exactly. I think we're probably the first to pass an actual Turing Test with flying colors.

— A Turing Test for buffaloes.

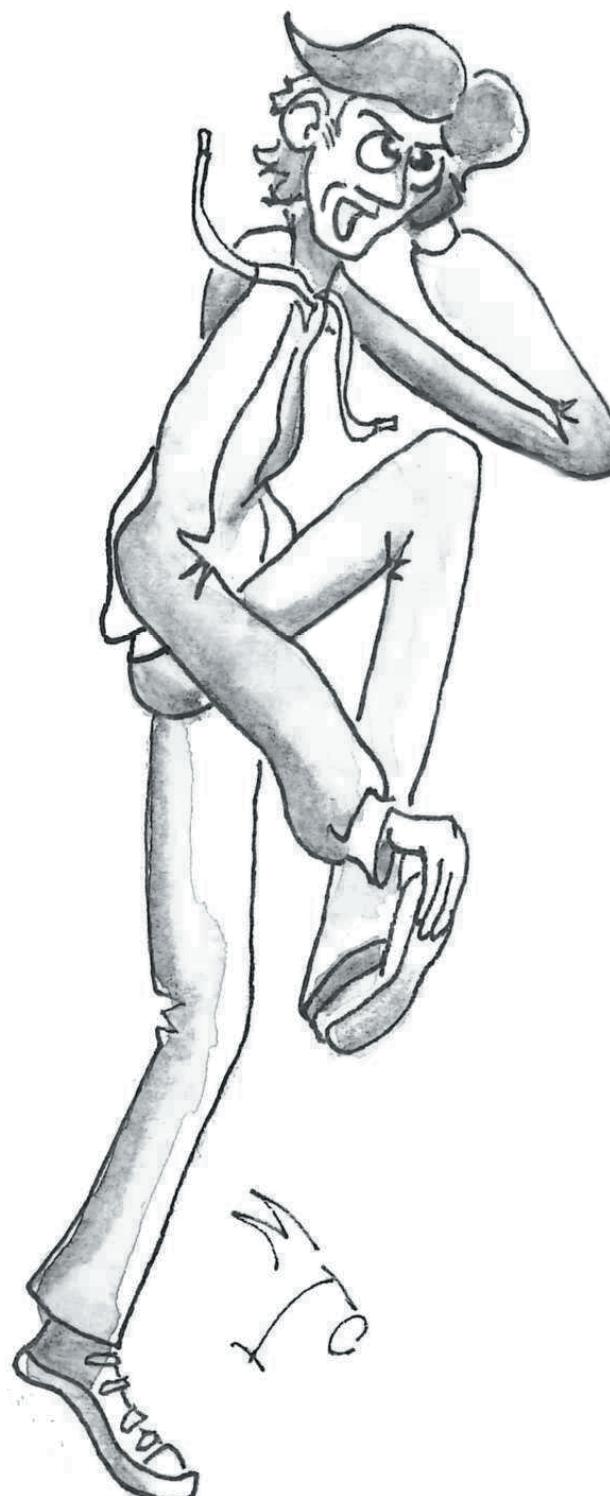
— Yes. A Turing Test for buffaloes.

\*hrmwroaah\*

— I must admit, I don't know if there's anything really impressive about this.

— The impressive part was teaching the actual buffalos to use the computer terminal for the purposes of the test.

— Okay, fine, that's pretty cool.



## STUBBED

OPERATOR: 911 what's your emergency?

CALLER: It's my friend, he was in a car accident and—YEOOWCH

OPERATOR: Sir, are you okay? You need to get to a safe location before you assist others.

CALLER: [Breathing heavily] Ahhhh, yep, I'm doing good, just stubbed my toe.

OPERATOR: I understand, stubbed toes can be painful. Now your friend, is he still in the car?

CALLER: No he got launched out, and—oh boy. [Inhales] I think I need to sit down.

OPERATOR: Sir, if you can't put weight on it I'm afraid it might be broken.

CALLER: Broken? [Moans] Erhhhhh, yeah, yeah it's definitely broken.

OPERATOR: Take some deep breaths sir, you're going to make it through this.

CALLER: I just, [exhales] I don't want the toenail to get all purple and disgusting. [Sobbing] Is it going to get all purple and disgusting?

OPERATOR: Do you have any ice? Please tell me you have ice.

CALLER: No I don't, I don't have any ice. [Screaming] Wwwwaaaaaaaahhhh.

OPERATOR: Shhhh, shhhh. I've tracked your location and it looks like there's a convenience store half a block away. Think you can make it?

CALLER: Will you stay on the line?

OPERATOR: Of course. Now go ahead and stand up, let's get you some ice, big guy.

MFP

## SHOW AND TELL!

My cousin survived a nuclear explosion and now he has the special power where he gets to be studied by the government in a special facility.

MRB

FOD

README #

# ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Hello, everyone. After doing some reflecting, I've realized I've been using alcohol as a crutch, when all along I should have been using the adhesive on sticky notes.

When I first stuck a yellow slip behind my lip, I realized I didn't need liquor to be happy. With just one note, you can see the sky glow bright orange and your palms melting away. Quitting alcohol might well be the best thing I've ever done, and I've met God.

Putting down the bottle is never an easy journey. Society will tell you alcohol is for having a good time and that sticky notes are for putting reminders on bulletin boards. People have already said hurtful things like, "None for you tonight? All good, man." and "By the way, you've got something on your lip."

AA, I know I have your emotional support in my

## THE BRA

RICKY: Haha look at what I just made.

EARLE: Eww what is that?

RICKY: It's for girls to wear.

EARLE: I don't get it.

RICKY: It goes around...you know.

EARLE: Gross!

RICKY: Well guess what? I'm gonna name it after you!

That's gonna be your legacy.

EARLE: No, Ricky! Everyone's gonna associate these dumb cuppy, lacy things with me.

RICKY: Yes, and I'm making you the face of the product, with a bunch of models. Hot ones too.

EARLE: Why do you want to ruin my love life?

RICKY: You know what would be even funnier? If I gave you the gross patent!

EARLE Please, no! My lawyers are gonna think I'm lame.

RICKY: You want lame? Take all my money and invest it in your weird feminine product.

EARLE: This is my financial and social nightmare!  
[Earle runs away in tears]

RICKY: [to another kid in the corner] Hey Brassiere, come over here.

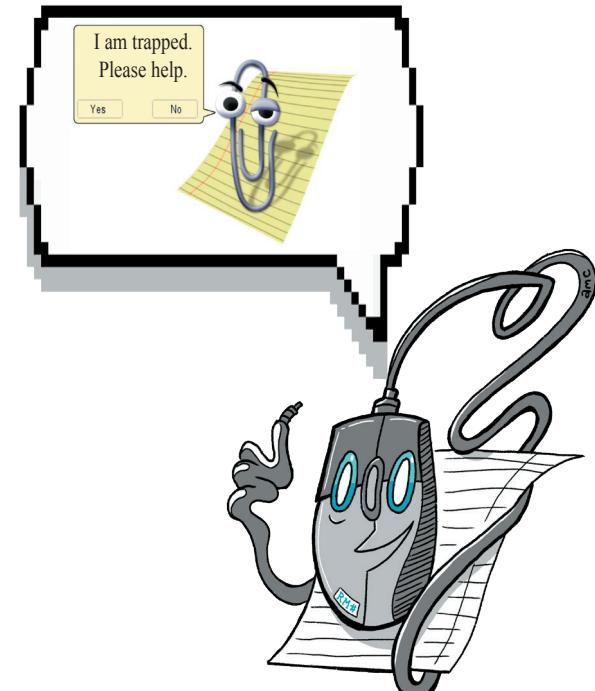
CYL

personal battle, and for that I owe you each a slip from my pad. Go ahead, the pink ones have an aftertaste and the blue ones make you feel spiders.

Now when I get my paycheck in the mail, I don't even think about blowing it all on booze because I'm too busy licking the envelope. Sure—maybe my new lifestyle means being banned from Staples, or not being able to annotate library books. But less time moping around some bar means more time to flounder in an alleyway chasing the "stickies".

Hopefully some of this resonates with you, even if my mouth is completely obscured. Know that behind this little yellow paper is a big smile. Partly because I've found happiness, but also because my lips are irreversibly chafed this way.

LKN



CL boston

boston/camb/brook

for sale

experimental technology: love-making

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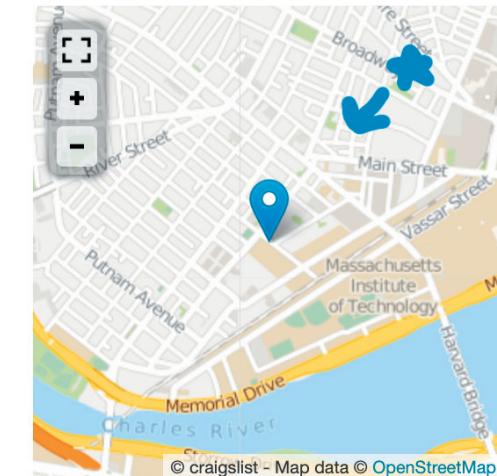
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Posted 16 days ago

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### Rizzenator - \$19 (Cambridge)



The star on the map is me. (I am moving towards you.)

[\(google map\)](#)

Hey Craigslist. Selling this old thing. Don't need it anymore. Basically nothing left to learn. Not giving you my secret sauce, but sporadically dropping subject pronouns has definitely helped. I'm likely to have a girlfriend in the near future. Plus in all honesty I'm \$200 short on rent.

The dimensions of this thing are three feet cubed, or whatever would be your standard cardboard box. The rizzenator looks and feels exactly like a cardboard box. This whole thing relies on the placebo effect. Now that you know this, the rizzenator will not even be marginally effective. No worries. This is typically a present for other people.

Who would appreciate the rizzenator? Anyone willing to sit alone for hours in a cardboard box, lid closed. This is not related to the product—just a good litmus test for rizz. For instance, as someone with a lot of rizz, I only sit in cardboard boxes with my romantic prospects. This has never actually happened, but it is a hypothetical that I think about often.

As for shipping costs, there are none. Like I mentioned, the rizzenator is literally just a cardboard box. However, if you pay me extra, I will place the shipping label so it does not overlap with the words "rizzenator," which I have scribbled across the box in red sharpie. Let me know if you're interested, preferably before the first of the month, so I don't get evicted. If you're also interested in me romantically, definitely let me know that too.

JKF

• PLEASE contact me with unsolicited services or offers

## BRAIN MAN

Knock knock. Hey silly. It's me. The deceased 50 year old man who has permanently moved into your brain. How are we? That was a joke. Not only do I live in your brain, but I pride myself on being perceptive to the needs of others. I always remember to feed my cat. Can you say the same? No. You can't. You haven't left your bedroom in the last month and you don't have a cat.

If I had a choice, I would not have decided to live in your brain. You were one of few individuals willing to drill a microchip into your skull for \$200. You clearly have little to live for. But you and I are stuck together, pal. And it would mean a whole lot if you would stop buying cartons of supermarket frosting and finishing them in one sitting. Sometimes I wonder why you lived and I died.

No hard feelings. I just want you to know that there's a whole world out there and that it's pretty awesome. Back

in the '90s, we'd do lots of cool things like opening our window shades and leaving the house. Say, you could even learn to ride a bike. Lose your virginity. Learn to ride a bike while you lose your virginity. I'm saying this because I care about you. I'm also saying this because I would love to relive these formative experiences from a fascinating new perspective.

Your prefrontal cortex is activated, so you must feel happy, sad, goal-driven, judgmental, or any emotion. To be transparent, we understand so little about the human brain. This whole undertaking will have some sort of impact, and that impact is very likely to be negative. But thanks again for having me. I'll do my best to get you out of the house because quite frankly I'm extremely bored.

JKF

## MUNICIPAL ARCHIVE OF BRAIN CHIPS IN DALIGNFORT, VA 2077-2122

### Folder 4: Security Tapes (Wal-mart) 2099

MAN: *[spilling 2,000 FlexSeal cans onto conveyor belt]* Sorry, it's the chip. I'm not controlling my body.

CASHIER: You know, you should get the ad-free chip, it's pretty cost effective in the end.

MAN: But... it had me replace my sofa at Raymour & Flanigan... and it really is good quality.

CASHIER: *[shrugs]* Everyone has their limits, I took Xarelto for a month before I went Premium.

### Chalice 2: Principals' Daily Addresses 2107

All rise for the Pledge...*[unintelligible whispers]*...I will not say it again. Stop sticking each others' heads to the large

magnet in the basement. The large magnet in the basement near the lower staircase is for employee use only. Go and lick a frozen pole outside like real kids, your parents would rather replace your tongue chips than your brain ones—although—it might depend on your insurance.

### Under My Coffee Cup 1: Library Newsletter 2122

Keep our library quiet! People are thinking too hard and their brain-chip fans whirr loudly. We ask you to please refrain from thinking too much in the library and distracting those of us who are reading. We have designated the 2nd floor the "thinking floor" so, if you absolutely must think, you can use the "Celebrity Nonfiction" section to calm down.

EAT EB



# PLAYBILL®

COMING SOON

*Welcome! Most of our employees just quit. We have made some minor adjustments:*

**Lead actress:** For the past year, an aspiring actress has camped outside our theater. Tonight, we will give her twin sister the opportunity of a lifetime, as she has a larger vocal range.

**Ensemble:** Their absence will have no discernible impact. This show has always been a one-woman production of *Pinocchio: The Musical*.

**Sound:** Our sound guy has agreed not to quit, provided he is allowed to play his foghorn whenever he wants. Please plug your ears accordingly, especially during every musical number.

**Costumes:** We do not have the resources to repair *Pinocchio*'s rags. By attending this production, you consent to view exposed genitalia.

**Lighting:** You will need a headlamp. If you did not bring one, there is a camping store down the block.

**Stage Manager:** When you are ready to be quiet and respectful, clap once. When you have identified the most nimble member of the audience, clap twice. This individual will operate the curtain. There are two cords. Yank hard on the red. Do not lay a finger on the burgundy. Mike may activate his foghorn. This is unrelated.

**Producer:** As producer of the show, I've taken on many tasks, such as writing this message backstage by candlelight. I have also rigged the trapeze equipment and prepared popcorn. Let me know if either of these roles interests you. To identify me, find the usher. I am also the usher.

JKF

PLAYBILL.COM

## CONDOLENCES

*Tue, Jun 9, 2:47 PM*

Hey bud, I was super bummed to see that obituary about you this morning. Big condolences. Congrats on getting in the newspaper, though. That's huge.

*Thurs, Jun 18, 10:05 AM*

Hey man. I guess it's been a week or so since your big break, and I'm wondering if you're still coming over for poker on Friday? Would love to see that "kind and lofty" spirit they kept saying would "live on" in your "toddler aged children." How'd you get the editors to kiss so much ass?

*Sun, Jun 21 12:22 PM*

Oh my god. Dude. I'm so sorry. Just realized that means you actually died! Big hugs, man. Right after you got off the crutches, too. Cruel world.

*Thurs, Jul 2, 9:48 PM*

Hey dumbass! This is Brad on my new number. Saw a silly movie about prostate cancer and thought of you, is that the one you've got? Miss you bud — hope your ego hasn't blown up too much, lol.

*Sun, Jul 5, 11:06 AM*

Hey there. Just saw your missus in the Costco parking lot, looks like she lost some weight! Drinks this weekend?

*Fri, Jul 10, 3:57 PM*

So I guess you think just cause you got a big article about you in the Gazette you're too good for me now, huh?

Psssh. My mom always used to say at least you're not sickly like Gabriel, who is on the brink of death, but I'm done playing second fiddle to you now, man. Not now. I've gotta stop thinking about you and start focusing on my blog. Text me back once you get that stick out of your ass.

*Sat, Jul 11, 1:03 PM*

Jesus, man. I'm really sorry. Trish just told me "Gabe died of that disease that ate away at his organs one by one, ending with his brain which left him vegetative, peeing the hospital bed, and yelling a bunch of stuff about downward mobility at the nurses." I thought "died of pancreatic cancer" was a turn of phrase, like a euphemism or a metaphor. I've always struggled with those. Tough.

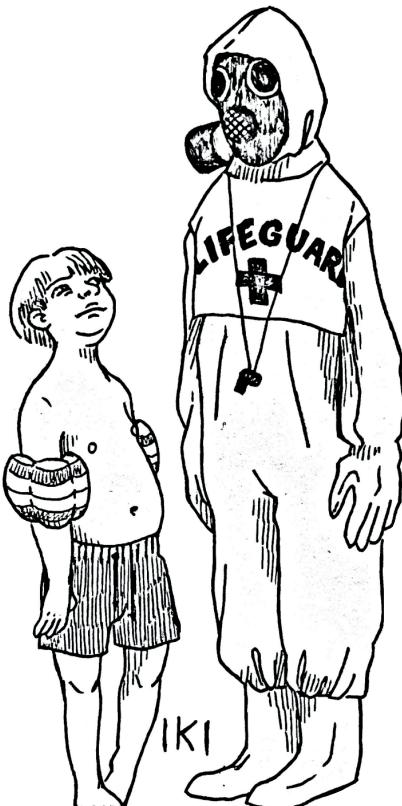
Anyways, call me back whenever you can. Obviously, no rush. Figure yourself out first.

OECGP

## CHERNOBYL WATER PARK

- Can I go now?
- Uhh, nope.
- How about now?
- No can do. My buddy Greg down there needs to get a reading of less than 5,000 millirems from the water before you can slide.
- But that'll take like 80 years!
- Sorry, park policy.

MFP



An overnight robo-nuclear war killed everyone in the world except the production team and one of the actors of the hit comedy-drama, "Love in New York."

It starts with the cold open. Everyone waits for Garry, the show's clumsy-but-lovable comic relief, to set up the joke. 5 minutes of silence pass. Remembering that the actor playing Garry is actually dead, Marty, who plays the lead Derek, jumps in with what would've been the joke's punchline: "Don't worry Gare-Bear, I think your cheese is grate!" Wow, he thinks to himself, *I bet all the viewers back home loved that.* There are no viewers back home.

It cuts to the opening credits, which are noticeably shorter than before. In the background is an image of Derek laughing—looks like this show's about fun 'n games! The background changes to an image of Derek crying in a military uniform—looks like this show's no longer about fun 'n games. The theme song has been changed to the one from *Friends* because there's no one left to sue them for copyright infringement. The credits end with a rolling list of leaked intel that would've saved the world if this episode came out two days earlier.

The first scene is set in a barren wasteland. The war's destruction of the world's greenery forced the show to end the 242-episode character arc that saw Derek's rise and fall as a left-leaning columnist covering city parks for an independently-published lifestyle magazine. Now, he trudges along in a vast desert—he's starved, exhausted, and ready to mingle. In this episode, the only oasis Derek's looking for is the oasis of love. The show cuts to a commercial break: one of the assistant cameramen declares that he is selling chunks of his flesh for water.

The second scene is set in a different, more barren wasteland. It's New York, and the Empire State Building is a lot shorter than he remembers it being. The camera pans to... a burnt tree?

Hard cut to Derek, who is on his knees crying in front of a worn gravestone: *True Love, 1989 – 2023.* Geez, he definitely didn't see that one coming! But

Derek is no quitter—sure, all the signs are telling him no, but his heart, well, his heart is telling him yes. Love is in the air, and it smells just like plutonium-239.

And that's when the woman of his dreams appears. Despite the long blonde wig "she" is wearing, it's obvious that "she" is just Marty, the actor playing Derek, dressed as a woman.

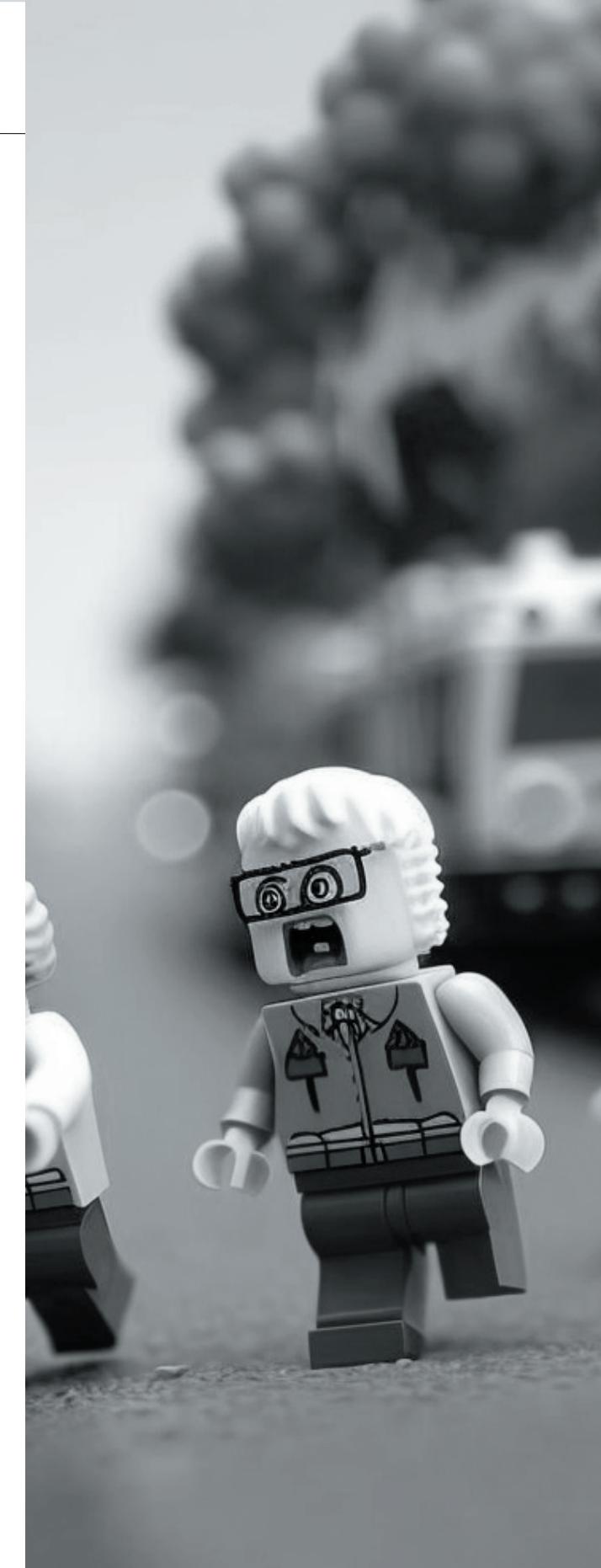
For these next forty minutes, Marty won't get a breather. His two characters are positioned 15 meters apart on screen, and he's going to have to run back and forth between their dialogues to play them.

We cut to the 10 minute Central Park romantic stroll montage that occurs in every episode. Derek and his love hold hands, forcing Marty to assume a variety of awkward and unintentionally offensive hand positions. Suddenly, a group of Christmas carolers begin to sing in front of them. Shit. Marty is sent into a frenzy, playing all 50 people at once.

Sure, Christmas was months ago, but the bigger problem? Derek's got commitment issues. She wants to move-in now, but he needs time to rebuild his apartment building. They take a break for a while, and it destroys Derek. He's no longer eating, but that's not so bad given all organic matter is toxic now. We see him aimlessly kicking debris and corpses around in the ruins of Manhattan to show that he's lost his purpose in life.

It's unclear how much time passes because the ash clouds left the world in eternal darkness, but eventually Derek realizes he's got to get her back. Miraculously, she appears in the distance, and Derek begins running towards her. She turns around, sees him, smiles, and begins running towards him. They both open their arms, but just before they embrace, Derek is evaporated by a loose killer robot.

SAB



## FLIRTING IN THE FUTURE

I gaze longingly as you waltz across the dance floor, artfully evading my drone birds. Maybe this time she'll notice, I wonder as all fifteen of them attempt to shower you with flowers. I can hardly handle your full-body protective gear, it almost leaves too much to the imagination.

You search the crowded room for your suitor, and I begin to sweat as I realize that you assume I'm in the club with you. I am hundreds of miles away from you, I whisper at my holographic desktop monitors. But distance makes the heart grow fonder.

Everything changes when you approach the bar. You order a martini with a straw on the side, gently tugging at one of your teflon gloves to reveal a tasteful amount of wrist. Hundreds of other drone birds immediately form a thick cloud around you, dropping their own flowers and blocking any of mine from transmitting a clear image.

If your delicate wrists are any indication, I will stop at nothing to see your hand, I think as my birds switch from swoon mode to kill mode, sprouting assault rifles from their wings. As my birds gun down their artificially intelligent counterparts, I notice you make a run for it. But I refuse to let you leave before I see some hand. Or at least, enough wrist to form an idea of what your hand looks like. Not too much wrist though. I've got things to do after this.

One of my birds peels off from the squad, pursuing you as you sprint towards the nearest portal. In a bout of manic horniness, I give the fatal command, and the bird unleashes hell. Just as you dive through the portal, one of the shots hits the back of your shoe, knocking it off before it too makes a daring escape.

As my birds swarm to retrieve your shoe, their cameras tell me all I need to know. Mens size 11, it reads. *Mmmm*, I think. *Perfect*.

RYSL

## DISCO

I'm on the dance floor at The Powder Room, and I'm losing myself completely. It's one big blur. Wait a second...where is my watch? Dammit. It doesn't matter. A disco man always tells his own time. And it's always time for disco. That's the way it goes. It's 2009, and disco rules the world.

"Disco's dead," some people say. Well that's not what they think at The Snuff Spot, so I have to head there: the place where the DJs never grow old and go off to college. Maybe someday they'll be replaced with new DJs. Guys with microchips in their brains and cordless guitars. But that's far, far away...at The Blow Hole. A fifteen-minute walk. I'll take it.

At The Blow Hole, some people need alcohol and drugs to get them going. I just need disco and drugs. As the music plays into the night, I turn and turn, like a disco ball. The bouncers don't care for my turning. They don't love disco. They don't love me. Loving disco is a crime in this club. That's how it goes most days. I've been to every joint on this disco ball we call Earth. No doubt about it: disco diehards are a dying breed. People like me need to hit the dance floor and convert some people before the rock-

## TREADMILL

Wake up. VR headset on, for immersion. Step on the treadmill, for immersion. Now I can go anywhere I want, and walking through space will feel natural, as long as I only walk in the forwards direction and maintain a constant, brisk pace and the cord doesn't get unplugged by my dog like last time. I open the best game for this hardware setup. It's Treadmill Simulator.

Now I'm in Treadmill Simulator while I walk on my treadmill. It's the most immersive game I know, because not only does the world look like I'm on a treadmill, it also feels like I'm on a treadmill. There are some other games that would work with my rig, like Sprint Simulator or Marathon Simulator (straight-line mode only) but what can I say, I'm a simple man who can't figure out how to get back to the home screen. I can't even figure out how to make the treadmill go faster, but I totally would if I could.

I start my favorite Treadmill Simulator level, in which the player finds a mind-teleporting brain chip next to their virtual treadmill. I reach out to grab it, which is the toughest arm workout I've had since yesterday when I did the same thing, and now I get to choose any imaginary

and-roll bastards have their way. Those crooks have been chasing after us for years, always looking to pick a fight with disco. Well guess what? Disco knows how to run.

So I get out there every night. Do I come here often? I tell women I live here. They laugh. I live here. Can I buy them a drink? That's not disco. They leave. That's disco. It's late, and the place is shutting its doors to disco. I make my way under the bar for a bit of warmth. They can't put out the flame of disco here. I'm on fire.

OMA



world to visit. I could choose Treadmill World, but come on, Treadmill World costs money. So I choose NordicTrack World, which is free and very similar.

I hear a bark. Suddenly I lurch forward, and then feel myself slowly moving backwards as the world slides around me. Immersion broken. Sometimes, in times like these, I wonder if I should try a game that allows for more advanced motion, like throwing a small animal into another room or standing still. Then I remember that my legs make up 86% of my muscle mass, which is simultaneously too high for my upper torso to function properly and too low to justify resting. I have no choice. I have to keep moving forward.

MRB

## SMART HOME

RANDY: *[puts down bags]* Ah, it's good to be back.

EMMA: Honey, turn on the lights, it's dark.

RANDY: I'm trying — I paid some guys to set up a smart home, whatever that means.

EMMA: Smart home?

HOME: *[breathes]*

EMMA: Oh god.

RANDY: ...I think I've done a terrible thing.

EMMA: What do we even —

HOME: Do?

RANDY: Ohhhh geez.

EMMA: Randy, I'm kinda freaking out right —

HOME: Do?

EMMA: ...

RANDY: Alright, Emma, I'm gonna call the —

HOME: Do?

EMMA: Randy, all your house does is breathe and sorta finish sentences. I think it might be stupid.

HOME: I guess that's what's wrong with this country, right? All people do is talk — talk about this, talk about that. But do you ever think that maybe we should listen? Is that so crazy?

RANDY: ...

HOME: *[breathes]*

EMMA: I think we have to kill it somehow.

HOME: *[in Randy's voice]* No, I kinda like it. I think we should keep the home around.

RANDY: Ok, Emma, I didn't say that.

HOME: *[in Emma's voice]* Shut up, Randy.

HOME: *[in Randy's voice]* My bad, guys.

EMMA: That's actually a pretty good impression haha.

HOME: I know, right?

EMMA: Yeah.

RANDY: Emma, please stop talking to the house.

HOME: Okay, random...

EMMA: *[snickers]*

RANDY: Emma, don't laugh at its jokes!

HOME: *[high-pitched]* Emma, don't laugh at its jokes!

EMMA: Oh my god, that's him! That was Randy!

RANDY: Yeah, Emma, it literally repeated what I said.

EMMA: *[to home, low-voiced]* That was really good, actually.

HOME: *[puts out hand]* It was nothing.

EMMA: No, seriously! It was really good, I mean it.

RANDY: He's not even that good! I could literally do better than that.

HOME: Do a better impression of yourself? *[to Emma]* I mean, does he even hear what he's saying?

RANDY: Yes, I can hear what I'm saying, geez.

KID: Yeah, Dad, but only cuz your ears are so freakin' big!

HOME: Ohhhhhhhh!

RANDY: How long have you been here, Wesley?

EMMA: *[trying not to laugh]* Wesley, get back in the car.

HOME: Yo, Wesley, pound me! *[fist pounds Wesley]*

KID: I wish you were my dad, Mr. House.

RANDY: No you don't, no you don't. Then you'd be half house. Is that really what you want? To be part human and part house?

EMMA: Randy!

HOME: I'm gonna need you to chill out, dog.

KID: Way outta line, dad.

RANDY: Okay, okay, I'm sorry, I shouldn't have said that.

HOME: Hey, you're good, we all say things we don't mean — everybody wants to talk about this, talk about that. But do you ever think that maybe we should listen? Is that so crazy?

KID: You're so right, man.

EMMA: *[tearing up]* That was beautiful.

RANDY: He already said that! He said that earlier!

HOME: Chill out man. *[to Jessica]* Is he always like this? *[laughs]*

EMMA: Oh my god, stop! You're being so bad.

HOME: You ain't mad at it though.

EMMA: *[blushes]*

RANDY: Well I don't like that.

EMMA: You don't like anything, Randy.

RANDY: Emma, you literally wanted to kill the house like two minutes ago!

EMMA: Well, not anymore.

HOME: Shooooot, girl.

RANDY: Alright, I'm leaving. This is stupid.

EMMA: Well leave then!

RANDY: Fine! Maybe I will! *[walks out...turns around]* You know what? I gave up everything for this family. I lost my job, became a stay at home dad, because that was apparently the only thing I was good for, the only job that couldn't be replaced by anything. And now you're telling me — whatever. I tried my best, I'm sorry. *[leaves]*

EMMA: Lol he really just left like that.

KID: Hey, Mr House, maybe we can play some —

HOME: Do?

EMMA: No, no no no no —

HOME: *[breathes]*

EMMA: Randy, randy wait! Come back!

HOME: Talk about this, talk about that — do you ever think that maybe we should listen? Is that so crazy?

EMMA: I think I've done something terrible.

HOME: I think I love you!!!!

KID: This guy rocks.

JGB

# DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS

STEVE: Everyone, welcome Jason to the party! He'll be filling in for Rob this week.

MORT: Hey Jason!

DAVE: Hello!

JASON: Hey guys! Rob told me you guys ended last week killing the legendary dragon of Afror. What are we up to this week?

STEVE: We're establishing The Legion of Afror.

JASON: Sick, is that like our army for conquering the whole continent?

MORT: Not exactly. We realized after our last campaign that the biggest reason why terrible monsters roam the lands is a lack of education and infrastructure in the surrounding countryside.

DAVE: We thought that establishing some robust democratic institutions would bring lasting peace and stability.

MORT: *Some of us* thought that democratic rule would bring peace and stability. I'm personally a fan of a strict theocracy.

JASON: What about a bureaucracy?

MORT: Ha! In a region with this many goblins? You'd have better luck trying to get a group of Vuskos to elect a Ycreosal as their minister of agriculture!

STEVE: He's right.

JASON: Oh, sorry. Just let me know when I can move.

STEVE: Let's get back to the game. Dave, you must attempt a knowledge roll to see if Article XXVI of your civil service reform passes.

JASON: What's Article XXVI?

DAVE: Uhm, well, it's kind of a rider to appease some of the more conservative members of my party.

STEVE: It says that any and all marriages in Afror can be voided by a member of the ruling party holding a signed copy of The Hobbit.

MORT: It's something we all feel pretty strongly about.

DAVE: Yeah.

STEVE: I know I'm supposed to be impartial, but yeah.

JASON: ...okay.

JASON: *[Rolls dice]*

STEVE: It passes!

MORT: Huzzah! To Afror!

MFP

## MY 4 FAVORITES

- 1 Wearing white gloves and pretending to be a crossing guard to avoid traffic on the way home from my job as a police officer.
- 2 Helping my arch rival take out a second mortgage on his home
- 3 Mistaking the floor surface in my girlfriend's apartment for linoleum, when it's really just vinyl covered in linoleum.
- 4 When the music stops *just* as I'm pulling into the hospital.

OMA



The real Elie. Just gone a bit wild.. @eliegonewild · Dec 6, 2022  
ATTTTAAAAAAAAAAACK

...

Emmet Halm ✅ @ehalm\_ · Dec 5, 2022  
gm. Whatever you're building, let's attack this week.

The real Elie. Just gone a bit wild.. @eliegonewild · Sep 28, 2022  
this is what I would do if anyone stood in the way of my dreams and goals

Aftermax Gman @Aftermaxgman · Sep 28, 2022  
Stomp of Death  
ゴジラvsコング  
Godzilla vs Kong



The real Elie. Just gone a bit wild.. @eliegonewild · Sep 7, 2022  
i wish I could regrow my member like a salamander



The real Elie. Just gone a bit wild.. @eliegonewild · Oct 2, 2022

bill 🇺🇸 @William07218599 · Oct 2, 2022  
ill sell crack before I learn to code

The real Elie. Just gone a bit wild.. @eliegonewild · Sep 1, 2022  
Gonna go wild

The real Elie. Just gone a bit wild.. @eliegonewild · Sep 1, 2022  
Raaaargh aaaaagh I'm going wild

The real Elie. Just gone a bit wild.. @eliegonewild  
Okay I'm going normal now

6:27 PM · Sep 1, 2022

3 Likes



@AnokaCounty

Today marks one week until Election Day. Make your plan to vote, grab a pal, and head to the polls!

#VotingIsCool

10:00 AM · Apr 29, 2021



@AnokaCounty

cashmoneybags.net for 30k no questions just #cash

10:17 AM · Apr 29, 2021

491 Retweets 66 Quote Tweets 1.9K Likes



@AnokaCounty

quick and easy I promise 🌱🌱

10:17 AM · Apr 29, 2021

310 Retweets 21 Quote Tweets 4.6K Likes



@AnokaCounty

Hey you guys. Jarret from IT here. I'm working hard to fix this technological snafu. Thanks :)

11:23 AM · Apr 29, 2021

69 Retweets 21 Quote Tweets 422 Likes



@AnokaCounty

This is Jarrett's supervisor. Jarrett does not have posting privileges and I'm not sure what ever gave him that impression.

11:30 AM · Apr 29, 2021

8 Retweets 5 Quote Tweets 39 Likes



@AnokaCounty

I promise you guys ON GOD just \$3000 and you'll see some crazy big returns this is absolutely real and legitimate

11:44 AM · Apr 29, 2021

53.4K Retweets 22.2K Quote Tweets 110.7K Likes



@AnokaCounty

Hi. My name's Jarrett and I'm the victim of a toxic work environment. (1/3)

12:29 PM · Apr 29, 2021

1 Retweet 2 Quote Tweets 70 Likes



@AnokaCounty

In using this platform, I hope to spread awareness for other unpaid high school interns. As activists, we demand to be taken serious (2/3)

12:30 PM · Apr 29, 2021

17 Retweets 4 Quote Tweets 73 Likes



@AnokaCounty

We may be falling in the polls, but it was really great to meet everyone at our early voting rally!

#YouGuysAreTheBest

12:30 PM · Apr 29, 2021

6 Retweets 1 Quote Tweet 52 Likes



@AnokaCounty

ly. (3/3)

12:31 PM · Apr 29, 2021

76 Retweets 14 Quote Tweets 619 Likes



@AnokaCounty

Ok folks. The IT team has figured out how to change our Twitter password. Sorry for that minor interruption.

1:19 PM · Apr 29, 2021

6 Retweets 3 Quote Tweets 25 Likes



@AnokaCounty

new link in bio just dropped u know what to do 🐱🐱

JKF

1:22 PM · Apr 29, 2021

Life of squirrel is hard. I work all day finding and burying nuts. Every day, there is one nut I do not bury and take home. This nut called dinner. Days are repetitive, but dad tell me this how squirrel life meant to be. Dad say squirrels need honest day's work. Dad always talk about big white blanket that come in winter. I don't have time to think about economy like him. I live good life, gather nuts when it warm and hope I don't starve to death when it cold. Sometimes I start books but I usually do not finish them.

One day new squirrel move into tree. He is grey squirrel but I do not see stuff like that. In morning, when squirrels leave to find nuts, he sit in chair in lobby. Usually lobby do not have chair so he must have brought from home. I think maybe he need help finding nuts so I say, "Hello, would you like to find nuts with me?"

Grey squirrel laugh. "No, I don't really do that."

I am confused because every squirrel I have ever met find nuts. "What you do?"

Grey squirrel shrug. "It depends. Today I think I'm going to go for a swim."

As far as I know, lake have no nuts. I checked when I was little. All I remember is seeing no nuts and then darkness and then uncle putting his lips on mine for long time. Yes he save life but part of me think it maybe too long regardless. I do not see uncle much after this.

"Oh okay. Goodbye," I say. I do not want to seem dumb because possibly there are nuts in lake now. Economy complex these days. I am little hurt that grey squirrel laugh at my offer to help him but maybe he just new and scared. Plus, I prefer getting nuts alone. Getting nuts with other squirrel always just a bunch of, "Oh no you take this one. It fine, I take next one."

\*\*\*

When I come back from work grey squirrel once again in lobby on chair. "How was swim?" I ask.

"What?" he respond.

"Today you say you go for swim."

Grey squirrel seem distracted. I do not blame him. This longest I have ever gone without talking about nuts. "Oh. Yeah. I didn't do that," he say.

"Cause there are no nuts in lake, right?"

Grey squirrel laugh again. "Sure."

Grey squirrel use tone I never heard before. It like he say one thing but mean opposite. I very confused so I just move on. "What did you do today?"

It take grey squirrel second to think. "Just some brainstorming. You know, business stuff?"

I do not know what this mean but it sound fancy and probably explain how he able to get chair. Chair hard to get. "Cool." It too early in friendship to ask now, but someday I hope he let me sit in chair. I have bed and I sit on it sometimes like chair but it not same as chair.

This go on for few days. Every morning I offer to take him to find nuts and he refuse. He say he going to do something exciting but every night when I come home all he managed to do is brainstorm. He must have very troubled mind.

I worry he not eating so one day I bring two nuts back to tree. "Here. For you," I say. He put out hands for nut but right after I let go he move hands suddenly and nut falls on floor.

"Whoops, sorry. Guess I can't have that one," he say.

I pick up nut. "It okay. If you see where I found this nut you would understand that floor is nothing. Here." I try to hand him nut again but same thing happen and nut fall on floor.

"Gosh, I'm such a klutz. You should just take this one," he say.

I know I am not smartest squirrel, but I cannot help but feel like he drop nut on purpose. "You drop nut on purpose?" I ask.

"I'm on a special diet. Mostly seeds, trying to eat healthy. I guess it's a gut reaction. You get it," he say. I do not get it. "Look on the bright side. Tonight, you get two nuts." He hand me nut and flash big smile.

I feel betrayed. I do not want second nut. Second nut make me fat and fat squirrel only good for embarrassing YouTube videos. My cousin in one once and now everyone make fun of him. I go up to my hole and eat one nut. I put other nut in middle of floor and try to use it like a chair. It do not work. I leave it there as reminder of grey squirrel. It not pleasant reminder.

\*\*\*

On weekend friends and I go to tree on top of hill where we hide berries and wait until they turn funny tasting. We tell stories. Most stories are about rocks that look like nuts. At end of story when it revealed that nut is actually rock, there is always big laugh.

When it my turn for story I have different idea. I ask question. "What do you think about grey squirrel?"

Charlie, my oldest friend, say, "Grey squirrel awesome!" Rest of the group nod in agreement.

\*\*\*

"He let me sit in chair," say Sharon. This troubling since Sharon is squirrel that one day I hope to have sex with.

I do not want to seem flustered but can't help blurting out, "What chair like?!"

Sharon think for second. "It like sitting on bed but much, much better." Just what I was afraid of. "Grey squirrel tell me that he buy chair on vacation in city for million nuts. He is so cool!"

I do not know how to cope so I eat many funny tasting berries.

Other friend Ben agree that grey squirrel is cool. Ben is son of squirrel in charge of tree. Ben say, "Grey squirrel good for tree economy. Grey squirrel bring new things like seeds and chairs. He going to create many new jobs."

I don't understand how he create jobs when all he do is brainstorm and all squirrels do is gather nuts. It probably complicated but if Ben think it good that grey squirrel here then it probably good that grey squirrel here.

Sharon ask me, "Do you have good grey squirrel story?"

Only story I have is about nut that he drop on ground on purpose. I tell it from beginning, including part where I offer to get nuts with him and he refuse. At end of story my friends do not understand.

Charlie ask, "Was nut you offer him really just rock?"

"Yeah. He probably refuse because it actually just rock that look like nut. This happen all the time," add Ben.

I am angry and keep eating the funny tasting berries. "No, it actually nut."

"How do you know?" ask Ben.

"I know because after he refuse I take nut up to room and try to use as chair but it do not work." Rest of group laugh. Sharon laugh especially hard. "Why you laugh? I told you nut is nut, not rock that look like nut."

"But you think nut is chair," say Sharon through giggle. She pat me on back, "Grey squirrel have different diet, so this is why he drop your nut. It not about you or your nut. You should accept that."

I still think it rude that he drop nut but after everyone laugh at me I think it best to stay quiet and nod. Now we go around and tell stories about grey squirrel. It is nightmare. Sharon tell story about sitting in chair again even though we already heard it but Charlie and Ben act like it amazing. I pretend to get stomach ache from funny tasting berries and go home early. When I get back to my hole I see nut that grey squirrel refuse in middle of my floor and get angry. I throw nut out of window and sleep.

\*\*\*

I do not think about grey squirrel for next few days. I go in and out of tree through back exit to avoid lobby. I think a lot about what Dad say about honest day's work. Maybe Dad wrong. Well, not wrong. Incomplete. There is nothing bad about finding and burying nuts. It good life. I spend lots of time in nature and am in good shape. But maybe there more to life. If I have enough nuts, maybe I can spend time collecting berries and open permanent tree for funny tasting berries. Deep down it every squirrel's dream to own tree that serve funny tasting berries.

One day I find myself gathering nuts near lake. It usually not worth it to go to lake but today I feel

like going. I take break and sit down on beach. My mind wander to trees, and then mountain, and then nuts, and then lake, and then how I will die someday, and then nuts again. I am not very good at brainstorming.

I look at water. It peaceful. I imagine a day once I am selling funny berries full-time. I wake up late. I come to beach and get swim in. I have six pack abs but still good personality. I go home and sit in chair and think about new kinds of berry mixes. Raspberry and blueberry, served in hollow nut. Moldy raspberry on frozen water. Strawberry with crushed seed. In this life, Sharon work with me in tree as singer. I walk in on her singing in lobby once and she get very embarrassed. She only sing when alone.

"That beautiful," I told her.

"It bad," she said.

"You should sing all the time. I give you many nuts if you sing more," I said.

"It just dream. No squirrel can sing full time."

"Would you like to gather nuts together? If you come with me and sing, I get nuts for both of us."

She smiled for a second. "What a silly idea. No, I gather nuts alone. It more efficient."

That night I take two nuts home for dinner, just like I did with grey squirrel. I leave one outside her door. Next morning it is gone. We never talk about it and I never hear her sing again. But in my dream at berry store, she sing all the time. Squirrels come from all over to hear her. She has offers to leave and go sing all over forest but she stay with me. One winter she try rapping but it not as good and people forgive her and she go back to singing like usual. Sex is good and above average number of babies do not die.

The sound of bird screaming and stealing my nuts snap me out of dream. Suddenly I have no nuts. I am angry at myself for getting swept up in fantasy. I run home and tell myself I am never coming back to lake. Only bad things happen at lake.

\*\*\*

I am sick of going through back door and go through lobby instead. As I walk into lobby I hear voices of grey squirrel and friends. It hard to make out, but I think I hear Charlie say, "And then he say he take second nut up to room and try to use nut as chair! Can you imagine?"

There is much laughter. As I walk into room laughter die down and it become silent. Grey squirrel sit in his chair like always. Sharon sit in his lap. Charlie and Ben stand in back and play with their tails.

"Did any of you gather nuts today?" I ask. Friends are looking at ground, avoiding eye contact. Grey squirrel looking me in eye. He seem pissed. I ask again, louder, "Well?" I don't tell them that all my nuts got stolen because that pretty embarrassing and nut as chair thing already bad enough.

Charlie say, "Listen, man, we been meaning to tell you." He pause and Sharon put hand on his shoulder. "We do not gather nuts anymore. We work for grey squirrel."

"But what you do?" I ask. "All grey squirrel do is sit around on fancy chair. How you going to have enough nuts for cold days?"

"It complicated, just like seeds," Sharon say. "You don't understand. Grey squirrel is businessman. He and family own many nuts. He help manage trees that make nuts. Very important for economy. He do not need to spend time finding nuts."

"But finding nuts fun. It what squirrels supposed to do," I say.

Ben disagree. "It what squirrels used to do. Grey squirrel change game."

"Bullshit."

"You are just jealous because you are not as smart and talented as grey squirrel," say Sharon.

I scoff. "Oh yeah? I have great ideas all the time. Like new social media app that centered around real experiences. Or app to help you find parking!"

"Please, calm down—"

"No, I... I... I'm sorry. I do not know why I'm so mad. But all I want is to live good life and make you happy."

Grey squirrel finally speak. "I think we got off on the wrong foot. You obviously care a lot about your friends. Let me find you a job. You can be our berry specialist, how's that sound?"

It sound good but I not going to admit it. Yes it my dream but this is not how I thought I would get it. "No thank you. I go gather nuts now. Alone."

I rush out into night and start gathering nuts. It hard because at night everything look like nut including rock and even some stick. After hour all I am able to find is nut that I threw out window yesterday. I do not feel good about it but I take it back up to room and eat it alone.

\*\*\*

On weekend friends tell me they are not coming to eat funny tasting berries. They are going to something called club with grey squirrel. Club has large supply of berries and dance floor for chipmunks who show you everything. It far away on other side of forest and they think it best if I do not go. I agree. I am not good friend.

I go to tree with berry stash anyway. I know that eating funny tasting berries alone usually sign of some kind of problem but I do not care. I do not know what else to do. Dreams feel closer when I eat funny berries.

I am only alone for half an hour before Dad come find me. He start eating funny tasting berries too. He tell me stories from when he my age about his old friends and how they would get drunk and then go ride on turtle. Nowadays this hate crime

but it different time back then.

I ask Dad how he know so much about economy. How he know about grey squirrels, and seeds, and winter. He say it because he knew a grey squirrel once when he was young. He was confused like me and made it his life goal to beat grey squirrel. So he worked hard. Grey squirrel mostly sat around. One especially long winter come and grey squirrel look like he running out of food. At first, Dad feel good watching him starve. Dad want him to suffer. But soon dad realize that if he think like this he is no better than grey squirrel. He brave cold and go over to grey squirrel tree and give him a few extra nuts. Grey squirrel take them, do not say anything, and send Dad away.

Next day grey squirrel is gone. His parents sent for him to be taken back to warmer place by ocean. Grey squirrel never return. Now he run some kind of club. Dad still here gathering nuts.

"Do you wish you did things differently?" I ask. "That you and grey squirrel friends, that you go with him to club, that you don't spend all day gathering nuts?"

Dad give me long, long hug. It even longer than when uncle kissed me but it isn't weird. Okay maybe it little weird but in cute way. He cry a little bit but I act like I don't notice.

"I ashamed to admit it, but when I young I very, very jealous. I think every day of what it would be like to be grey squirrel. After grey squirrel leave I lose hope. There is one year I act like I hibernate all year when really I awake I just not want to leave bed." Dad take my paw and squeeze it like the time after uncle save me from lake. "But then I have you."

Okay now I cry too.

"I watch you grow up. I show you how to find nuts. I give you first funny tasting berry sooner than Mom would have liked. And suddenly everything about squirrel life make sense."

We sit there for long time. I tell him story about how bird stole all my nuts at lake. He tell me lake must be cursed. I tell him about new ideas I have for berry flavors. He say I have great mind. We talk about what we would do with million nuts and agree that buying chair is stupid thing to do with million nuts.

The sun rises and we walk home together.

MFP



# JESTER, IBIS, BLOT

## WAVES AND RADIATION

Jester's station wagon arrived at noon. The roof was loaded down with things Jester once liked; with games and various puzzles, home-brewing manuals, cards, toys, onion-and-garlic chips, photos from home, nacho thins, collapsable straws, capsaicin cheetos.

The college was known for things Jester once found impressive. Amassing and continuing to amass. Placing letters on entities in sequence so as to be uniquely identified. There was even a slim man by the name of Jack Gladney that led an entire department in the study of handshakes.

The day of the station wagons was marked by Mother's promising to uninstall trackers. By siblings hatching plans to pounce on empty rooms and fathers grunting contentedly. The students greeted each other in comic bursts, eager to experience the criminal pleasures that this new land had promised them.

Of course the excitement didn't last forever. Facades were built, painted over, destroyed and hastily reconstructed. Occasionally a Heinrich decided to go by Henry, or a student in Gladney's class would drop out to pursue handshaking as a career full-time. These changes were superficial in nature. Nothing more than the swapping of bits on a server some three hundred miles away. Updates were transmitted via radio waves to personal devices. Jester didn't like it.

At the center of town was a flemish cathedral that everyone agreed was a bad place filled with bad people. It was easy to ignore for a few months. Then Jester's curiosity got the better of him.

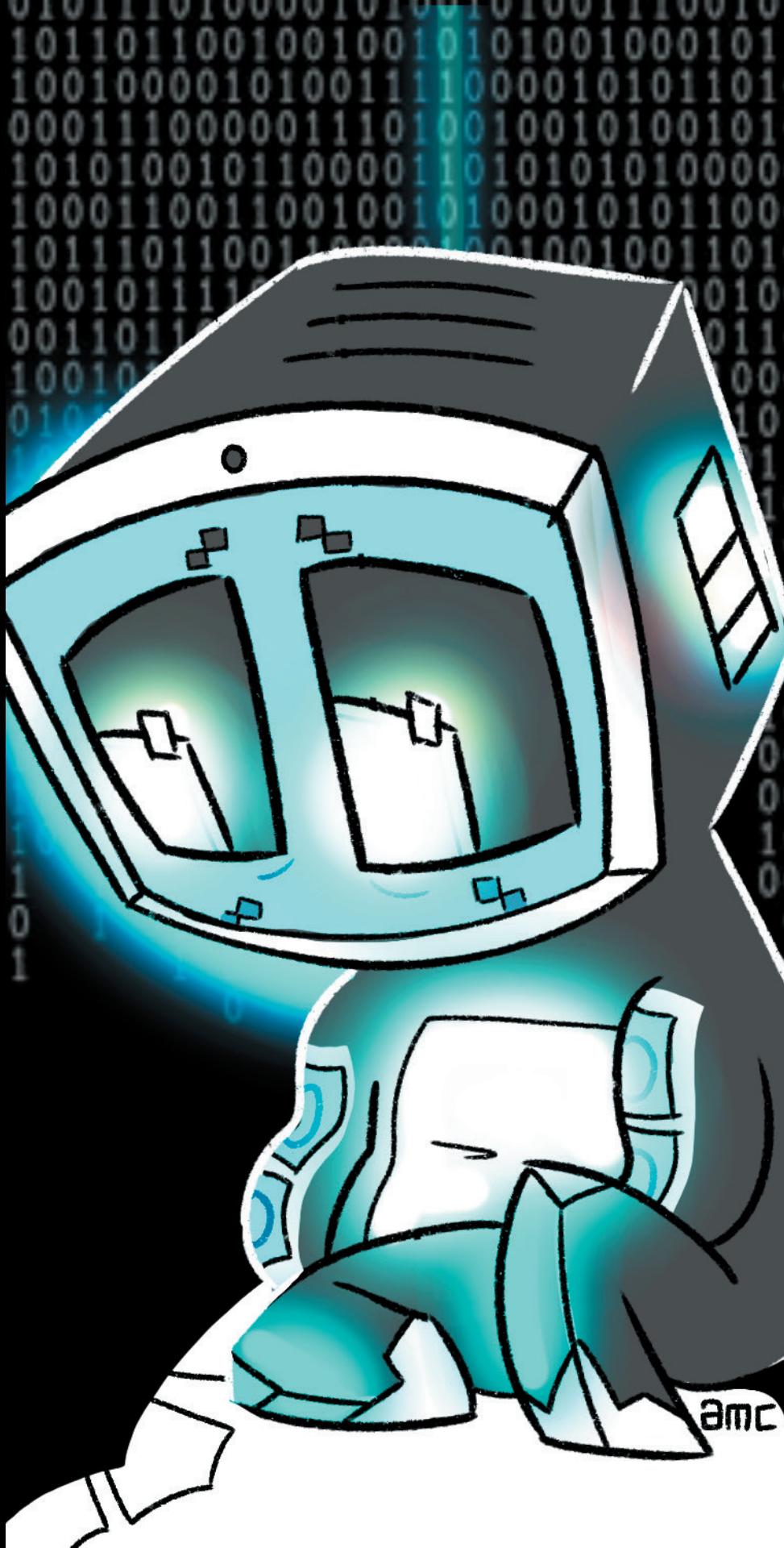
## THE AIRBORNE TOXIC EVENT

Nyodene-19 fascinated Jester. Amidst the chaos he wound up at an introductory meeting for the cathedral where a man in a hazmat suit stood smoking a cigar. The cult's acceptance of death comforted him. The physical place itself loomed larger than death. Immutable in the face of nameless photos and lingering radiation.

"Evacuate all places of residence, cloud of deadly chemicals, cloud of deadly chemicals." No one would be allowed back for 18 months.

So Jester continued living. He got a job he loved, moved West, burned 10% of his skin off with generic brand ramen, moved East, moved West again, then finally went home.

The whole time he was writing little blurbs for the cathedral's story division. They were unpublishable, but Jester didn't have a choice. Either he wrote or he smoked. Either he smoked or he gained weight. Either he gained weight or he ran up and down the stadium steps. He was a boring individual. But apparently just the kind the cathedral needed.



# KESTREL, IBIS, MOT

Midway upon the journey of her life, Kestrel went to the Great Tree of Ga'Hollow to trade the ground for the sky.

The trek to the Hollow was grueling. On the fourth night, a gryphon burst from the trees, dragging a chariot heavy with ores, fruits, and two dozen birds in flaming gowns. Silhouetted against the moon, the gryphon nodded to Kestrel and took off again, leading her toward a massive tree at the crossroads of the wood. *This must be paradise*, she thought in Italian.

Kestrel needed therapy. She visited Mink the Shrink. Mink was small like Kestrel, with pretty black fur and intense eyes. On their first meeting she smiled slyly. "So who's the Pinstripe Prince these days?"

Holy shit, this bitch knew about the Pinstripe Prince! "Damn bitch! How do you know about the Pinstripe Prince????"

Mink smiled. "When I was young I dated one." She paused. "He actually passed away recently."

Kestrel burst into tears.

Kestrel spent hours making art. One night she tried entering the Hollow's esteemed art room, but found Tyrant blocking the door. A feeble wren clung to his long tail, whining babylke into the feathers of his back. She whined so persistently, Tyrant was always forced to give her what she wanted. He threw Kestrel one expressionless look, walked into the room with the sniveling wren riding his tail, and turned to slam the door in Kestrel's face.

When she was sad, Kestrel would fly to a yew thicket at the edge of the woods, and lay on her back staring at the sky through the branches. Warbler often followed her here. "I can't help contemplating them," Kestrel murmured, pointing to a berry, "but I'd never actually eat them." Warbler was quiet for a moment. "I like yew," he said softly.

"That's dumb," Kestrel bristled. "How could you like poison?"

"My my, Crow, what beautiful art you make," Tyrant called up to her in his vulpine baritone. "It's so good, I want you to draw me right this second." He smiled wide and thrust a quill at her. Like that her anger evaporated. How could she hate him when he so appreciated her talent?

So much for no mirrors in the Hollow. Turned out there were many, and a shadowy bird crept around behind the panes, keeping a foreboding pace with Kestrel. "You nothing, unlovable thing," she'd mutter. "Inascible shrew in the yew."

One sabbath night deep in winter, Tyrant interrupted dinner by knocking his broad bill to the wood. "I have sad news," he said. "Idol Paradise is dead."

Nothing happened. The room hardly stirred. Idol Paradise, paradise parrot, *psephotus pulcherrimus*, was a former Pinstripe Prince with brilliant iridescent plumage of turquoise, aqua and scarlet. He was a magnificent artist and a skilled flier, though he spent most of his time on the ground in the grasslands. He had been critically endangered for years. Nobody knew this until he was dead.

Things changed and changed. In winter the Hollow took in a clutch of new birds. The brightest of them was black-headed Ibis, Order of Jackdaw, with whom Kestrel quickly became friends. Shortly after was the coronation. Tyrant grudgingly passed the crown to Gryphon, and Mot donned the well-worn vest of the Pinstripe Prince.

Kestrel smiled. Gryphons were a myth. "Yeah. Sure."

Kestrel was finishing dinner with Gyrfalcon and Vixen, a fox who ran a meme account. When Vixen got up to leave, Gyrfalcon rose to get the door, following her, he must have thought, out of Kestrel's earshot. "She's a cool chick," Vixen said.

"Right," Gyrfalcon said stiffly. "Cool, but only a chick."

Mirrorbird was waiting in the first hallway when Kestrel returned. She knocked her beak to the glass. "Hey, hey, shiksa temptress," she leered out of tune. Plenty mean sober, when Kestrel drank she got caustic. Suddenly she thrust her body out the mirrorpane and pulled Kestrel's face close to hers. "Aren't you forgetting you're nothing?"

Before going Kestrel stopped to admire a painting of Hellscape Homestretch. It was magnificent, fastidious, almost impossibly good. *This must be Paradise*, she thought miserably. Seven months since he died. *Should've been you.*

That night as Kestrel lay in the yew in despair, she felt a soft rush of air stir the thicket. She shimmied out the bush and blinked out over the dark of the clearing.

A barn owl white as a soul had lighted beside the bush and stared at her now with his heart-shaped head cocked inquisitively. He shimmied a satchel off his shoulder and slowly pulled out arrays of herb salves and bandages, and held out his wing to Kestrel, who felt herself nod automatically, entranced. Gingerly the owl took Kestrel's wing and started applying salve to the broken feather shafts that Mirrorbird had slashed with a blade once in a fit of rage. After a minute, he placed the mended wing back at Kestrel's side. Then he flicked his head at the thicket and fixed her with his startlingly pale unblinking gaze. "I don't want you coming here," he said in a lullaby voice. "I don't want you thinking about eating the yew." Once again Kestrel nodded vigorously, knowing she would never return to the thicket.

With a chivalrous nod, the owl swept back into his spot high in a sequoia tree and gazed down with the wide pale soulful eyes. Idol Owl. Order of Jackdaw, but who cared. Kestrel knew him. She had known him all her life.

On one of her last sabbath nights, Kestrel got gleefully drunk with the birds. At dinner Motmot announced his magnum opus, the "Wow, This Shit Should've Been So Fun But Ended Up Sucking Complete Ass #." On the subway home, she and Mot talked in hushed voices about secrets of the Hollow.

A comfortable silence fell as they walked the airless terminal. On the escalator ambling slowly down, down, back to Earth, Kestrel zoned out while staring at Mot's pinstriped vest. "Hey," she slurred. "I wanna know the secrets of the Pinstripe Prince!"

Mot wobbled on the escalator. He threw out his emerald green wings to steady himself with the handrail. He was quiet for a moment, his smiling eyes fixed ahead.

"I'll tell you in forty years," he said. "When it doesn't matter anymore."

AMC

unclemilt — bash — 66x41

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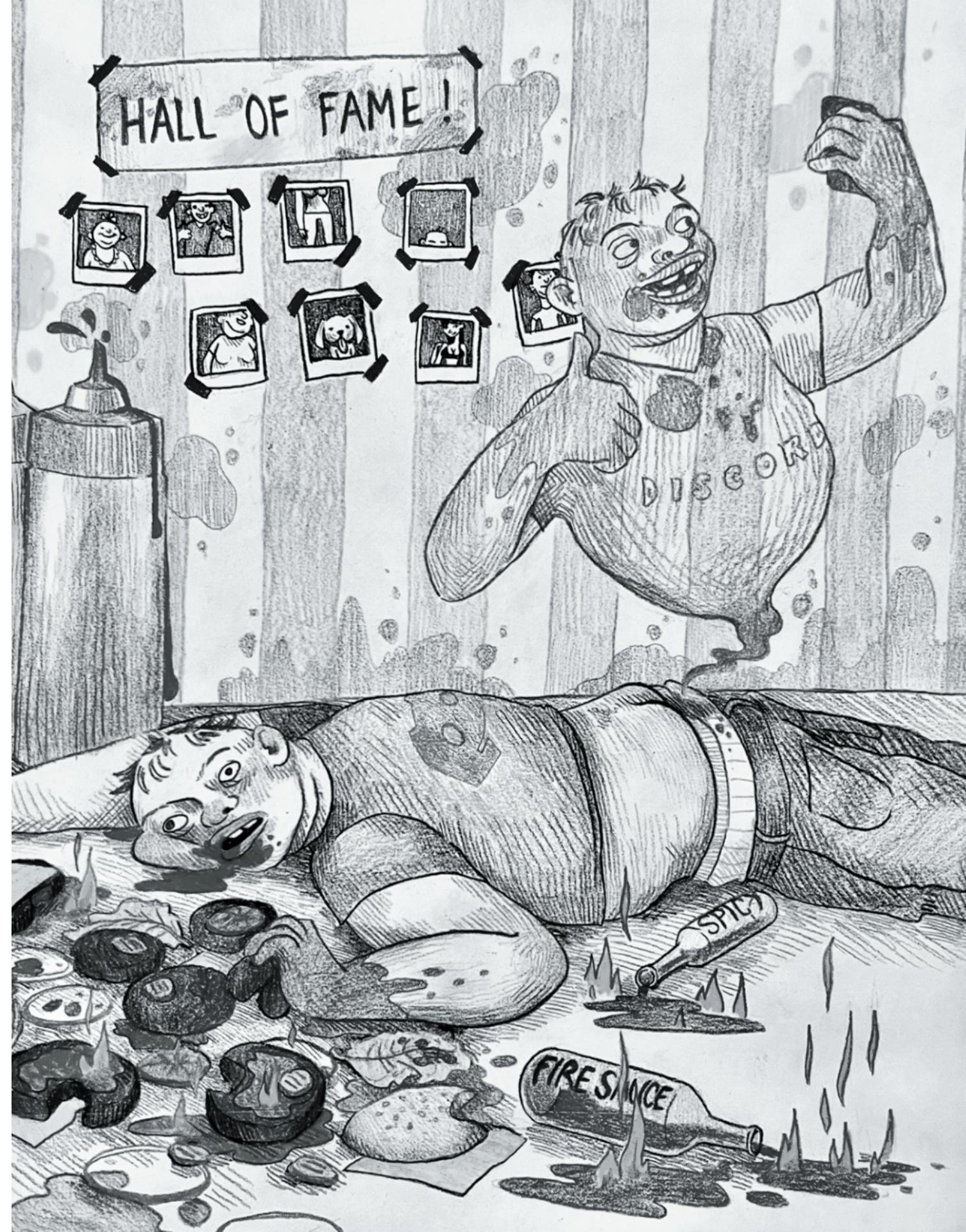
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