

*Who says there aint no cure for the summertime blues? Robert Slentz-Kesler, Matt Bender,
Jefferson Navicky and Denver Hill are testosterone run amuck.
Chen Chapman's estrogen infused rebuttal. Meanwhile, mckenzee speaks with gods.
Oh, and The Dream Journal.*

The Blotter

MAGAZINE

JUNE 2007

In icy waters off Vinland's shore, mighty Thor went fishing.



Gulhvida

mckenzee

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Impetuous. Homeric.

Have you been out to our website lately? I think it's getting pretty groovy. We're going to be putting some bits out there that aren't in our paper version, so go on out there and take a look.

Today at pre-school I overheard the story of the immaculate conception distilled into a very understandable format. My daughter and a friend were eating lunch and with peanut butter sandwich breath chanted, "Mary and God, sitting in a tree, K-I-S-S-I-N-G." As good an answer as any.

Someone (Mom, probably) mentioned that I should make sure that The Blotter is trademarked. Oh, really? I asked. I think it already is. (Actually I have no idea.) But is it a registered trade-mark? Or just a trade-mark? The little voices in my head:

Devil - Well now, you don't know, do you? And what is the difference between registered and plain? Still don't know? You're pathetic.
Angel - Isn't trade-marking the opposite of cool? The antithesis of satire? Steve McQueen will think we're idiots! We'll be thrown out of the International Cool and Clever Magazines Association (ICCMA)

I still have no idea. But perhaps trade-marking really is the opposite of the opposite of cool. Like it's so totally lame that it loops around like some kid on a swing set after too much Mountain Dew. Or like Mountain Dew itself, for that matter. Well, for now if I happen to start putting registered trade mark symbols next to things, please hit me with the aluminum bat. Yes, the thirty-two ounce right over there.

On a different baseball note, Dad tells a story about taking a day off (from what he cannot say) and going to see a baseball game with his younger brother Dick (remember him in the January issue?) and a mutual friend. Uncle Dick had yet to join the Air Force, which he did just before the finish of the Korean conflict. Uncle Dick, Dad and their friend, Bob who happened to be the nephew of Horace Stoneham, took a train into New York City and hopped the subway north. Objective: Polo Grounds. A home game. But not for my Dad's team. You see, Horace Stoneham was the owner of the Giants. Dad and Uncle Dick were rabid Dodgers fans, and the "Jints", as they called them, were the collective enemy. Their buddy Bob understood this, in a good-natured way. So when the three young men entered the stadium it was my Dad's plan to heckle them from hell to breakfast. Almost immediately the plan unraveled. They made their way to the owner's box seats, behind the Giants dugout. Spartan accommodations by the standards of today's luxury boxes, but still not too bad at all, Dad recalls, because it was a sunny day and they were at a ball game. They weren't alone, either. Dad sat back, looked over, only to find that sitting next to him was the actress Lorraine Day and the very familiar face of Spencer Tracy. Which made sense, Dad

thought, as Miss Day was married to Leo Durocher, the Giants' manager, and Spencer Tracy was apparently a friend.

"What happened next?" I always ask Dad.

Leo the Lip, old Durocher himself toddled over to the dugout, smiling at his wife, waving at Bob, and shaking hands with Spencer Tracy. Then Uncle Dick's friend introduced them to Durocher and everyone shook hands with everyone else.

"You shook Spencer Tracy's hand?" He always nods. But that's not the big thing, for Durocher waved over some of the players.

"Folks, this is Willie Mays," Durocher said. A young man shook hands with Dad and the others.

"You shook Willie Mays' hand?" I'm incredulous. He remembers being impressed by the enthusiastic Giant, already famous for his bat and glove. Other players came over to be introduced to the famous actor and the Boss's nephew, and the pretty actress married to their manager.

"Do you remember which players?" I ask. He certainly can.

But what lies herein is the magic failing of memory. I too can name many Giant players from the early 1950's. They remained big names even when I was a boy in the mid-sixties, but they were the true heroes of a generation of kids prior to my childhood. And any biography of Mays spoke as well of the exploits of Monte Irvin, Bobby Thompson, Whitey Lockman. So Dad cannot be sure which names are players that he recalls from the moments of that remarkable afternoon and which are drawn from common baseball knowledge. Does he remember what team opposed the "Jints" that day? What year was it? What was the weather the day before, or after? Was it spring or summer? Did it occur before or after The Shot Heard 'Round the World? Who won? He cannot say with certainty. What he does know is that he stopped hating the Giants that day, his Dodger blue blood changing like the Grinch's heart after hearing all the Who's in Whoville sing.

So I offer this up as a mystery to you readers. Everything I have told you is a fact related to me by Dad. Use this information, your skills of intuition and the Internet to tell me what game they saw, who won, and what year it was. The first person to supply this information, and their supporting evidence, will win a year's subscription from me, and the everlasting thanks of my family.

Good Luck.

Garry - chief@blotterrag.com

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CAUTION

The Blotter may contain certain words or ideas that offend. I don't know why, when there are so many real offenses taking place in the world, but still people take the time and expend the energy being offended by free thought and speech. But, as K.V. told us, "so it goes."

“Three Slices”; an excerpt from the novel “Sylvia, Rachel, Meredith, Anna” by Robert Slentz-Kesler

The platoon lurched like a slow assembly line through the glass doors and into the dining hall. One by one each soldier grabbed a tray and a large spoon before side-stepping along the triple-railed metal ledge in front of the serving area. The drill sergeants materialized and broke the silence.

“Move it, men,” said Drill Sergeant Hammer. “We ain’t got all day. Grab a plate and move.”

“You better side-step, Libby,” yelled Drill Sergeant Womack. “And keep that head looking straight forward.”

Libby straightened his spine and tucked his chin.

“I thought you were a squad leader, Libby,” said Womack. “You should be leading by example.”

“Yes, Dill Sergeant.” Libby’s tray flipped up off the rail and his spoon flew across the room.

“Airborne!” yelled Romberg.

“Romberg, shut up,” said Hammer.

“Private Libby, how did that happen?” Womack said.

“My hand slipped, Drill Sergeant,” said Libby.

“You’re uncoordinated, aren’t you, Libby?” said Womack.

“No, I mean, yes, Drill Sergeant.”

“What’s your favorite fruit juice, Libby?” said Womack.

“I don’t know, Drill Sergeant.”

“It doesn’t matter anyway, because you won’t be getting any today.”

“No, Drill Sergeant.”

“Grab that plate and move out.”

Libby snatched the plate of eggs, potatoes, and bacon from the ledge above the serving line and side-stepped along toward the toast and

fruit bins.

Gerard studied the plates on the ledge.

“Grab one and go, Private Kelderman,” yelled Womack. “This isn’t a four-star restaurant.”

Gerard took a plate with a lump of biscuit smothered by gray sauce. He moved through the line and sat at a long table in the mess hall.

“Sit on the edge of your chair, and sit up straight,” yelled Hammer.

“Eat up, ladies, we have training to get to,” Womack said.

“What the fuck is *this*?” Hammer said.

Each man put his spoon down and looked at Drill Sergeant Hammer.

“Keep eating!” screamed Womack. “He didn’t tell you to stop.”

“Private Parker, what’s that on your plate?” Hammer said.

Parker sat up straight. “Breakfast, Drill Sergeant.”

“Is that bread, Parker?”

“Yes, Drill Sergeant.”

“How many pieces, Parker?” said Hammer.

“Three, Drill Sergeant.”

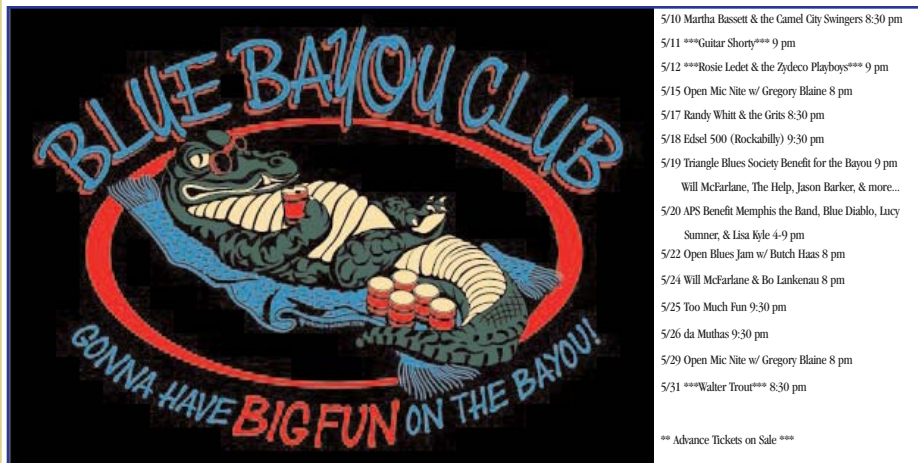
“What? *Three*?” Hammer said.



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“Drill Sergeant Womack, this private has three pieces of bread.”

“Parker, you must be special,” Womack said.

“You tell me why everybody else only gets two pieces of bread, Parker,” said Hammer.

“Who’s your squad leader?” said Drill Sergeant Womack.

“Private Kelderman, Drill Sergeant.”

“Kelderman!” said Womack.

Gerard choked down a dry knot of biscuit. “Yes, Drill Sergeant.”

“Why does Private Parker have three pieces of bread?”

“I don’t know, Drill Sergeant.”

“You said you’d been to college, Kelderman. I thought you were smart,” Womack said. “Private Parker is in your squad. It’s your duty to inform him of the rules here.”

“Yes, Drill Sergeant.”

“So inform him.”

Gerard looked across the table at Parker. “Private Parker, you’re only allowed two pieces of bread.”

“You mean you didn’t know that, Parker?” said Hammer.

“Yes, Drill Sergeant, I did know,” Parker said.

“Then you fucked up, didn’t

you, Parker?” said Hammer.

“You screwed up, didn’t you, Kelderman?” Womack said.

“Yes, Drill Sergeant!” chimed Parker and Gerard.

“What are you going to do now, Private Kelderman?” said Womack.

“I—I don’t know, Drill Sergeant.”

“Tell you what,” said Womack. “When Drill Sergeant Hammer and I come back here in thirty seconds, this problem had better be fixed.”

“Yes, Drill Sergeant,” said Gerard.

The drill sergeants walked away from the table.

“Get rid of it, Parker,” said Gerard.

“Fuck you, man.”

“Eat it,” said Berkowicz. “Quick.”

“Don’t do it, man,” Snodgrass said. “They’ll know.”

“You’re some fucking platoon guide,” said Berkowicz.

“Fuck off,” said Snodgrass.

“Get rid of it, Parker,” Gerard said.

Romberg reached across the table and grabbed the bread. Parker lunged at Romberg’s hand,

but Romberg stuffed the bread into his mouth.

Parker sat back down. “I’ll kill you, asshole.”

Romberg chewed.

“Problem solved,” said Snodgrass.

Gerard looked at Parker. “You got me in trouble.”

Parker snarled. “Tough shit.”

“I’m the squad leader, and you’re supposed to do what I say,” said Gerard.

Parker threw a fist across the table and punched Gerard in the jaw. Gerard’s chair tilted back and he fell on the floor with a crash.

“Yes!” yelled Romberg. “The knockout punch.” Romberg sprang up from the table, unbuttoned his camouflage shirt, pulled off his undershirt, and ran circles around the mess hall tables.

The drill sergeants rushed over. Once again every soldier in the mess hall stopped eating to watch.

“Romberg, sit your ass down.” Drill Sergeant Hammer ran after him.

Womack stood over Gerard. “Private Kelderman, why are you lying on the floor?”

Gerard stood up and groaned.

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The Blotter

He held his hand against his jaw. He glanced at Parker. Parker looked down at his tray and started shoveling his face with scrambled eggs.

"I fell, Drill Sergeant," Gerard said.

Womack looked at Gerard's jaw, then at Parker, then back at Gerard.

"Well get back up." Womack pointed at Parker's tray. "I see our little bread problem is solved."

"Yes, Drill Sergeant," said Gerard.

"Knockout punch!" Romberg sprinted among the tables. "Rock and roll!"

"But there's another problem, Kelderman."

"What, Drill Sergeant?"

"Pull your head out, Kelderman," Womack said. "Isn't Romberg in your squad?"

"Yes, Drill Sergeant."

"Did you tell him to throw off his shirt and run around the mess hall like a Victory Drive stripper?" Womack said.

Romberg jumped up onto a table and tiptoed among the trays.

"No, Drill Sergeant."

"He's doing a table dance, Kelderman, and you're his squad leader," Womack said. "How do you explain this?"

"I can't control him, Drill Sergeant."

"Why not, Kelderman?" said Womack. "Aren't you the leader?"

"I'm not a leader, Drill Sergeant."

"Yes you are."

"I didn't ask to be a leader," said Gerard.

"Doesn't matter," Womack said.

"You're in charge. You're responsible for every swinging Richard in your squad."

Romberg jumped down from the table and raised his stocky arms with clenched fists. "Yes!"

Hammer picked up Romberg's shirt and threw it at him. "Put on your shirt, Private. You're comin' with me."

"Eat your chow, Kelderman," said Womack. "I'll deal with you later. Private Carroll, why are you just sitting there?"

"I'm done, Drill Sergeant."

"Good God, Carroll. We've only been in the mess hall for two seconds, and you're finished eating."

"Yes, Drill Sergeant."

"You're a human vacuum cleaner, aren't you Carroll?"

"Yes, Drill Sergeant."

"Is that why you're such a fatty?" said Womack.

"Yes, Drill Sergeant."

"Since you're so good at eating, I think you should be the mess hall motivator," said Womack. "Do you know what that is?"

"No, Drill Sergeant," Carroll said.

"That means you get to make everybody else eat faster," said Womack. "Stand up. It's your job to motivate your platoon mates to scarf and barf. Go to it, Carroll."

Carroll looked around and then looked back at Drill Sergeant Womack.

"Let's go Carroll. Tell them to eat faster."

"Eat faster!" yelled Carroll.

"That's it," said Womack. "Now walk around and make sure they can hear you."

"Eat faster! Come on, let's move.

Wiley, eat faster."

"Hey, fuck you, man."

Womack slammed his hands onto the table. "Private Wiley, you don't speak to the mess hall motivator that way. Are you volunteering for the job?"

"No, Drill Sergeant."

"Then shut up and eat," said Womack.

Private Cooper leisurely chewed his breakfast. His calm presence and equanimity had days ago earned him a New Age nickname: Private Yanni.

"Carroll, Private Yanni is not eating fast enough. I want you to motivate him."

"Eat faster, Cooper!"

"Get over there close to him, Carroll," said Womack. "He can't hear you."

Carroll leaned over the table. "Eat, Cooper, eat."

Cooper ate evenly, slowly chewing his hash browns.

"Louder, Carroll."

"Faster, Cooper!"

"He can't hear you," said Womack.

"Eat faster, Cooper!"

The clicking and clatter of spoons at the table quickened, but Cooper kept his own pace.

"Yanni, sometimes I feel like we're not getting through to you," said Womack. "Are we getting through to you, Private Yanni?"

Cooper stopped eating and sat straight. "Yes, Drill Sergeant."

"Are you meditating after each bite, Yanni?"

"No, Drill Sergeant."

"Is this food healthy enough for you?"

"Yes, Drill Sergeant," Cooper

said.

"Do you wish we served granola and wheat grass, Yanni?"

"No, Drill Sergeant."

"You're a soldier now, Yanni, so eat like one," Womack said.

"Yes, Drill Sergeant."

"Chow's over, Third Platoon," said Womack. "Move out!"

Chairs scraped the floor. The platoon stood up and moved toward the exit.

"Squad leaders, make sure your people put their trays on the belt," said Womack. "Push in your chair, Libby."

The soldiers shoved out the doors of the mess hall.

"Platoon Guide, I want a formation back in the company area," said Womack.

"Yes, Drill Sergeant," said Snodgrass. "Move it, men."

A stampede of combat boots shuffled out the door and down the long breezeway to the company area.

"Form up, men," said Snodgrass. "Quick. Romberg, where have you been? You're all wet."

Romberg gasped. "Drill sergeant—smoked—me."

"Get into formation," said Snodgrass. "Squad leaders, make sure everybody's here."

Gerard's squad—Fourth Squad—was lined up in the back row. He counted fourteen, including himself.

"Put that apple away, Carroll," said Wiley. "No food outside the mess hall."

"Someone has food?" said Snodgrass.

"Carroll smuggled an apple out of the mess hall," Wiley said.

"Gonna fuck the whole platoon," Parker said.

"Get rid of it, Carroll," said Snodgrass.

"I'm still hungry," Carroll said. "It's in my pocket."

"They'll notice," Wiley pointed. "I can see it from here."

"Idiot," said Libby.

"You take it," Carroll tossed it to Libby.

Libby lobbed it to Snodgrass. Snodgrass pitched it back to Carroll. Carroll threw it to Gerard.

Drill Sergeant Womack walked around the corner. "Kelderman!"

"Yes, Drill Sergeant."

"Get out here."

Gerard shoved the apple into

The Dream Journal

real dreams, real weird

Please send excerpts from your own dream journals. If nothing else, we'd love to read them. We won't publish your whole name.

mermaid@blotterra.com

Before going to school, when at my friend's house my friend's mother made me a sandwich for lunch after we had breakfast. I had no money and I thought of asking the mother to lend me some in case the sandwich was not enough for me, but it did not feel right to me.

As we were walking downtown on our way to school, a crazy car which looked like heist (a limo that transported dead bodies.) It was a scary business skeam for a money lending business.

My friend and myself were sitting in the vehical for a few hours until the driver of the parked car showed up, since I felt desperate.

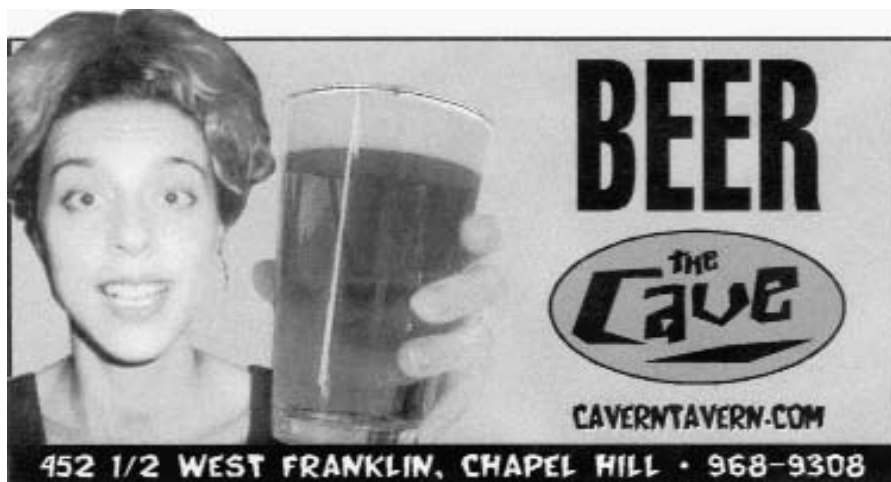
I them saw yellow brick walls made out of stone, as we came to our destination. The driver was not the owner of the company just a butler. The owner looked like a vampire but claimed he was not, but did say he did have people in his family who were on the strange side.

He live in a midnight blue home built about 90 years ago which was in due for a painting.

He sat me in a room facing a wooded area in the attick (top floor) and gave me a glass of tea with a drug to make me sedated. I was very comfortable and did not want to leave, but my friend pressured me to.

We did not realize that we were there a whole day.

C.S. - Cyberspace



Cdulfhvída

In icy waters off Vinland's shore, mighty Thor goes fishing.

'Let there be fog
And let there be phantoms
Weird marvels
To baffle your hunters.'

-Njal's Saga, trs. Magnus Magnusson & Hermann Palsson, 1960



Section One

After my studies at Miskatonic University in Arkham, I spent a summer researching First Nations' literature at Saint John's University in Newfoundland. I was interested in the legends of the Beothuck Indians, a tribe that had died out early in the previous century.

Saint John's Library possessed the papers and books of John Peyton, Magistrate of Twillingate, who had captured and kept the last surviving Beothuck, who he called Mary March. After Mary's death, Magistrate Peyton had collected all accounts of the Beothucks that he could find.

It was there, moldering in the archives, that I found a dissenting account of Thor's battle with the Midgard Serpent, differing in significant details from the Prose Edda of Snorri Sturlason.

The original was in Icelandic, with some terminology in ancient Greek and an unknown language. My translation follows.

(to be continued...)

The Blotter

the right cargo pocket of his camouflage pants and ran forward.

“Get in the front-leaning rest position, Kelderman,” said Womack.

Gerard got down into push-up position.

“Snodgrass, you get down too.”

Snodgrass dropped to the concrete.

“Private Romberg is having a little trouble adjusting to military life,” said Womack. “Kelderman, you’re his squad leader. Snodgrass, you’re the platoon guide. When Romberg has one of his little episodes, I’m holding you responsible. It might cure him. Let’s start with push-ups.”

“One Drill Sergeant, two Drill Sergeant.”

Gerard’s arms had no trouble with the push-ups, but the half-chewed food in his stomach felt like a clot of lead.

“Okay, stand up,” said Womack. “Now run in place.”

Gerard and Snodgrass ran in place, facing the platoon.

“Stop. Get down and do push-ups until I tell you to stop.”

They dropped down and started pumping.

“Stop,” said Womack. “Get up. Run in place.”

They stood up and ran.

“Stop. Get down. Push-ups.”

Gerard leaned down. The apple rolled out of his pocket. Fifty-seven silent heads watched the apple bounce across the floor before bumping into Drill Sergeant Womack’s spit-shined left boot.

Womack looked down at the apple and then at Gerard. “Private

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Kelderman, are you still hungry?”

“No, Drill Sergeant,” Gerard moaned.

“Kelderman, is this the mess hall?”

“No, Drill Sergeant.”

“Then why do you have food?” said Womack.

“I—it wasn’t—” Gerard looked up at the platoon. Carroll’s eyes were wide.

“Snodgrass, get into formation,” Womack said.

Snodgrass jumped up and ran to the back.

“Push-ups, Kelderman, move. Stop. Get up. Run in place.”

Gerard ran. The fatty biscuit bounced in his gut. Sweat rolled off his bald head, down his face, and onto his shirt.

“Faster, Kelderman, move. Stop. Get down.”

Gerard slowly leaned down.

“Too slow. Get up. Run in place.”

Gerard ran, but only the heels of his heavy boots would lift off the floor. He felt dizzy. His head burned hot.

“Too slow. Get down.”

Gerard leaned over. Saliva coated the walls of his mouth an instant before the thick, knobby sauce rushed up his esophagus and forced chunks of biscuit out onto the concrete floor. He was on his hands and knees, facing the platoon, pitching forward and heaving out his entire breakfast.

“Private Kelderman, why are you barfing in my company area?” Womack said.

Gerard wiped the goop from his lips and stood up.

“Get into the latrine and clean yourself up, Kelderman,” said Womack. “Third Platoon, you have ten minutes to get up there and clean the barracks before we move out for training. Platoon Guide, get out here and make sure this puke gets cleaned up.”

“Yes, Drill Sergeant.”

“Fall out!”



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“Stoplight”

by Matt Bender

I. Annelise was my first love. From the first time I picked her up,

i never wanted to put her down.

Considerate, sweet, comfortable like when you pulled her laced panties down around her ankle and you were greeted with the smell of your favorite slice of pizza.

Stoplight, she would say.

i had asked her out first in the 6th grade, after asking my mother’s advice on how to ask a girl out. “my family & i are going out to a movie, i said, Would you like to come.” I had no chance. I was 6th grade spell-bounded by her beauty, her clothes that dangled from her shoulders as if she were nothing but a hangar frame of skin & cord, with chicken tits and a hard stomach underneath. her small eyes an umlaut over the U of her mouth.

Later, i found out that she owned a pet rat, as did i, and that it would have been much easier to simply let our rats hang out & play whilst the 2 of us talked about whatever 6th graders talked about in the early 90’s. I much much later found out that she made rat noises while fucking, {squeak.} She was always fun like that.

The day she lay dying, she feigned sleep as her loved ones wept by her bedside. Had she another chance, she would have told the never-ending parrot joke (i.e. a man wants his parrot to talk and gets talked into spending thousands of dollars on vitamins, massages, and vocal steroids to no avail) in a wheezy breath, clutching the collar of a nurse or someone nearby. She only had one chance at death, however. In that aspect she was not unique.

Now, through the passing smoke of the No. 6 bus, I see her swinging her arms erratically, nearly bludgeoning the people she passes on her way to Diamond Dietrich’s Nose Piercing Palace. “Hey, hey, bender,” she says, seeing me, “still writing about women?”

“No, Annelise. I’ve renounced women, or, my dick, anyway. Never trust a dick.”

Remember being 17 and wanting to fuck so bad, but when you pulled it out you were as limp as

cookie dough? How about the last time you went to the bathroom & ended up shooting an arc of piss over 30 degrees to the left of where you were aiming?

“Dicks will lead you astray.”

“They’ll lead YOU astray just because you can’t stop thinking about it. How’s your rat?”

“Fine. She died 14 years ago. How’s yours?”

“Same.”

And she swung off again to find herself a new hole in the piercing palace, i beside her because i was young and smitten with a girl who would pay to have a hole put through her septum simply so that she could hang some offensive piece of metal there.

Since she has died, i have been hiring out crews in Nairobi. They are mining for pieces of Annelise that may be smelted and then distilled to renew her. I walk amongst the workers’ dark faces, bent and hunched over the holes they are digging beside mounds of turned over earth. Love is two earthworms wriggling in this dirt, or a picture of our planet taken from outer space.

Love smells like earth, like mushrooms, i think, and hope that i will not have to die & rot before i can find it again.

II. Fragments of Annelise. What i have of her anyway.

Altered Image

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The Blotter

*Zombie Lips: that smooch and suck at the air due to some primitive instinct she has rediscovered. Why must our reanimated always act like this?

*Half a head of Hair: that hangs from whichever side i like.

*The left ventricle of her Heart: that i have had sex with on numerous occasions, as it pumps by some supernatural power and makes me feel closer to her. And as it seemed to me, being in a long distance relationship, that any girl with whom you had love would love you and care and if you just happened to see her once every week (or month) and pull out in time and wake up with her on the following day of that week just pickled in love's juices and she would say i love you and you would say i love you too and each not really knowing anything go back home for whoever knows how long how could you really ask for anything more?

*Her Declarations of affection: In varied forms. These mean more

to me, still, than life itself. Call it a young crush, however, i am young as is everything i do because of it.

Often, like a teenager:

mis(p)laced.

i. you are absent like mirrored shards in space

reflecting nothing & sometimes my own face

in my dreams you are a marble or a Rat

that i thumb through wooden mazes

towards the things i long to hear you say.

iv.

You are young like the Buddha was young

when he jumped from his mother's womb full-grown.

ii.

you are young like the young girlfriends of Richard Brautigan

posing in the backgrounds of pictures

on the porch steps

of whichever farmhouse he had lived in while writing his latest book.

Rhyming couplets wherein he talked of other, younger women.

some people should not be allowed to be themselves.

iii.

i see why he took pictures, however,

as i sometimes forget what you look like.

v.

i give small pieces to other people.

III. The chicken hot dog that ruined it all.

Annelise was a vegetarian. I got hungry often. One night, i ordered a chicken hot dog from a chicken hot dog vendor and she never spoke to me again.



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"Three dated 12/04/06"

by Jefferson Navicky

Two Are Delicious

Your legs roll. They move so fast and are vice strong. They smell good like hands. I'm a gentle man until I get a whiff of your legs, their stretch and girth and tangled sublimity. They are much more fierce than blue jays; if your legs were imaginary beings, they would be hippogriffs with golden beaks, huge feathered wings, and large feet with sharp talons. Fierce, but soft and chunky. I like to grab your legs and sleep on them.

Toothpaste

When she leaves, she steals my toothpaste cap. Without its cap, my toothpaste oozes its fennel-white goop onto the inside of the medicine cabinet. She has left her toothbrush standing erect in the holder above the sink, as if to say, I give you my toothbrush but you will have no toothpaste left with which to brush your teeth. She says to me, please brush your teeth, love, I want you to take care of your teeth, but I want you to get some new toothpaste; your old toothpaste doesn't work. It is too old and stale and smells like your mother and father. Now all my toothpaste is gone. It has oozed out like pus. I pick up her toothbrush, run water over its bristles, and begin to brush my teeth. As I do so, my teeth smile and my gums smile and my mouth smiles and my face smiles and my head smiles.

So wide.

Dead Tree Intimate

The woman next to me, dressed in a tight charcoal suit, does not look in my direction as we ride down in the elevator. But she does not have to. I know she is a traveling book saleswoman and in her slim briefcase is hundreds of samples, like carpet, of the world's finest literature. She is older than me and I can feel the composed nature of her jaw line, the purpose of her sandy blond hair. She must sell a lot of Tolstoy. She must do well for herself, I think as we talk in her loft, each with a glass of gin, talking about the books we know. How precocious. How delicious. How intimately religious. As I speak, the woman says the word 'yes' in the most judiciously sparing sense of the word, as if no other word can stand alongside it. She has a fire hydrant mouth and I have to go to the bathroom to cool down. While sitting on the closed toilet seat, I stare out the six-inch wide window into the courtyard where a lone maple tree stands. I could tell that this tree had survived a fire in the building, an amazing zest for life considering half the apartments must have been ruined, ash spread everywhere in the courtyard like cancerous snow. As I gaze at the maple, I notice there are dead people on almost every branch of the tree. What are you doing there? I call

out to the dead people, who are you? You must be the dead authors we were speaking about, I say. No, they answer, don't be a dumb-ass; we're the dead people of the building. Most of us are illiterate, they all say in unison, Garcia's never read a book in his whole life. A short Puerto Rican man with a quick smile nods his head and says, it's true, when I was alive, I never read no books, I just raised my pigeons on the roof until I got prostate cancer and died because I didn't want to go to no doctor. The dead people lounging in the maple tree are having a very enjoyable time, relaxed like each branch is a hammock. Won't you come join us, Garcia asks me. No, not today, I respond, I've got things to do, I want to paint a shelf and put it up next to my desk. Garcia nods a knowing smile like the elevator operator who smiles when someone insists on taking the stairs to the seventh floor. As I leave the bathroom, I forget where I am or who the woman is sitting on the couch with such an attractive briefcase. Small white things float around the edge of my vision; I am convinced they are teeth. Are you okay, the strange woman asks. I begin to make my tree sound, which is very different from my good book sound. I make this sound with my mouth closed, my lips vibrating like leaves in a sudden gust of wind.



“ad agency pitch to lawn pesticide CEO”

by Denver Hill

:::What have you done?

:::Why do you feel guilty?

:::Thanks ma, thanks to grams and nanna, my agent, the war, the shoe companies.

:::Somewhere overseas your neighbor or cousin plants a flag in the desert and says “My country now.”
You nod nervously.

:::A hospital white baby with anaplastic lungs doesn't cry. Asthmatic, choking on last drop of water, smiles does not cry. The perfect human being.

:::Cut to blurred ballerina, swirling symphonic sounds, obscure orchestral arrangement. Thanks for making us laugh. Thanks for not taking life so seriously. Fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals are target audience. Nude children bathed in a glimmering coat of petroleum, a glimmering skin setting themselves on fire... They only smile or laugh there is no martyrdom. They are pure. They will never be corrupt adults. They are vir-

gins. Get this, they are vibrating virgins. We rewind this part to watch several times.

:::My daddy left me. My mommy hate me. She gained 100 pounds when he left. I squirting mayonnaise on a kindergartner's face. Everyone in the cafeteria is chortling. Plastic forks in plastic bags. When she cries I cry more. My mommy and the girl.

:::Striped cat stares. Clean it up goddamit! No one wants to see ugly awkward boys. Shut up baby! Spoiled brat. Clean yourself up! Looking at it in the bathroom WEAK a striped cat stares I'm scrawny so weak so stupid SHUT UP SHUT UP take the weeds out of your family.

:::Dramatic close-up: squelched mole cricket, desiccated chinch bug. (More symphony drums) A camera pans left to green yard, sprinklers pump like choking snakes. Balding father loses sex drive. Savvy owner of green grass whats the secret wink. Buy new car, he buy new clothes and drink bottle water. He still look at things he can't have. Different suits he could have worn in the world women he could have romanced.

:::House lights cued.

:::House music cued.

:::You pretend you don't see us.

:::Executive calls cut/print. The agency firm slap on ass THIS WILL SELL you're given the house, the hummer, the wife the life. Your wife rabbit fucks you. She put kid to bed sticks her country club tongue in your anus, a worm penetrating a fallen apple. Top thread count designer sheets dirtied. Don't worry, honey say with insouciant crowing, we can buy MORE we can buy ANYTHING. Life is good.

:::You pretend you don't see us.



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Remarks of an Anonymous, Wretched Woman

by Chen Chapman

All 'round, a sad and hollow scraping
The quill, dulled rasp set to dullest blade
A murder of blackest cawing makes
From purest, living whiteness of empty page

What, then, for yon lamp-blackened stain
But to scritch away with bitter thorn
Here and there reveal the once-pale plane
Now sullied 'neath murkiest shadow of scorn

Scritch on and more, tho 'tis in vain
To bring the virgin back to rest
Here clean, and sweet and white again
For but once so shamed, always palimpsest.

CONTRIBUTORS:

"mckenzee" - Larry Holderfield:

Cdulwida, the new pulp epic from mckenzee, will be serialized over the next several issues. It can also be found online at <http://cthuhuvida.updownstudios.com>. Rumor has it that there will eventually be shirts and a minicomic available. His "Sinister Bedfellows" comic appears semi-regularly in these pages, as well as online at <http://mckenzee.comicgenesis.com>. We've printed some poetry by him also. Holderfield has traveled the world, taking photos, writing bad poetry and falling in love. He now combines these interests in his web-comics.

Robert Slentz-Kesler: It's a long story how Bob and I began corresponding over a submission and I told him what I was looking for and he said what he might have so then he changed the submission altogether and we talked some more about names and places and I learned about his website, www.thatcherforest.com, and I found out how Bob's from Durham but I didn't know if he meant North Carolina or England until he told me that his book would be available at indies like The Regulator and Quail Ridge, but it's a good story.

Matt Bender is one of the folks in the stable of occasional/regular contributors to The Blotter and that, my friends, is a very good thing for an editor to have. Thanks B.

Jefferson Navicky lives in Portland, Maine and his chapbook "Map of the Second Person" is available from Black Lodge Press and his other, "The Gatherer", from pulpbits.com. He runs the Vermillion Reading & Performance Series in Portland and he ate spicy carrot ginger soup for dinner last night. And all I got was a rock.

Denver Hill is the manager of the Colony Theatre in Raleigh and has a piece in the upcoming issue of 20 Dissidents - <http://20dissidents.com>. He is also one of the old gang and we appreciate his continuing to toss bits over the wall to us.

Chen Chapman says she is a Graphic Artist currently waylaid by tendon injury and surgery. No, Chen. Trust us. You are a *Poet*.



Grotto at the Eno River - Chen Chapman

2007 SEASON
SCHEDULE

- ~~March 11 (Sun)~~
- ~~April 22 (Sun)~~
- May 20 (Sun)
- June 9 (Sat)
- Sep. 15 (Sat)
- Nov. 18 (Sun)
- Dec. 2 (Sun)

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