

WWE'S CANDYLICIOUS CHALLENGER

PLAYBOY

ENTERTAINMENT

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INTERVIEW:

**KEANU
REEVES**

THE ENIGMA
SPEAKS

THE
CONFLICT
BETWEEN
FAITH
AND
REASON

AND MORE:

ALL-STAR
CYBER GIRLS
HOW I CRASHED
THE MASTERS
KURT VONNEGUT
MICHEL
HOUELLEBECQ
ANDY MURRAY'S
FAVORITE MEALS

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We enjoyed an audience with one of America's foremost writers for our *Faith & Reason* feature. **Kurt Vonnegut**, author most recently of *A Man Without a Country*—and now, he says, a professional cartoonist—sat with us to talk about the battle between science and religion and to draw us a picture of his beliefs. In his admirable, characteristically brusque manner, the humanist discussed his distrust of science and his loathing of people who go ape over intelligent design. "I belong to an unholy disorder. We call ourselves Our Lady of Perpetual Astonishment," Vonnegut says. "There was absolutely nothing, not even nothing, and then there was this great big bang. And that's where all this crap came from. Evolution is so creative. That's how we got giraffes."



The controversial French author **Michel Houellebecq** is one of the few contemporary European fiction writers to be translated and widely read in America. In *Sex With Esther*, explicit sex leads to a higher truth. "There's a disparity between the insignificant visual appearance of sexual organs and the sensation of touch," Houellebecq says. "It's not a good idea to make films about sex. Literature is better."



"Regarding creationism, art speaks to me on a greater level because I find it difficult to express what I think in words," says **Cathie Bleck**. She used a scratchboard to create the artwork that begins our *Faith & Reason* feature. The piece will also appear in her book *Open Spaces*. Says Bleck, "When pondering creationism and art, go beyond what you know. Try to use your imagination a bit."



Our *Spring and Summer Fashion Forecast* was shot in Miami by **Antoine Verglas**. "We set up in Vizcaya, an estate that couples magnificent Italian gardens with a South Beach flavor," Verglas says. The clothes are as spectacular as the scenery. "Our color palette is inspired by Venetian glass-makers," says **Roberta Cocco**, president of Belvest USA. "The shades and reflections add freshness and energy."



Michael Ruse, a professor of philosophy at Florida State University and the author of numerous books on evolution, writes about the social struggle over intelligent design for our *Faith & Reason* feature. "This is the fight of our generation," Ruse says. "In this country we have more science and insight into human nature than ever before, and still it is obvious that America is a Christian nation very attached to its faith." Ruse finds the theology of creationists "ludicrous" but admits, "I'm not going to change the thinking of George W. Bush." Instead, he says, "I want to challenge young people to see the very narrow, ostrich-with-its-head-in-the-sand attitude not just of the intelligent-design people but of the whole evangelical right. We still have separation of church and state—for now."

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PLAYBOY

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From the church's repression of Galileo to intelligent design, religion has waged a ferocious and futile battle against scientific thought. Michael Ruse, author of *The Evolution-Creation Struggle*, surveys the ongoing conflict. Also, philosopher Daniel Dennett looks at the future of institutional religion, Kurt Vonnegut argues for more Sermon on the Mount and less Ten Commandments, and Lewis Black and Bart Ehrman speak up for reason.

72 OF MAUS AND SUPERMEN

Like jazz, which began as lowbrow entertainment, the comic book—or as it's known uptown, the graphic novel—has become a major cultural influence whose touch can be felt in Hollywood, literature and video games. If you haven't looked at comics lately, here's all you need to know about what's been happening with this distinctly American art form. **BY ROBERT LEVINE AND SCOTT ALEXANDER**

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Eat this up: Our gourmand—an accomplished chef, a restaurant owner and the brother of Bill Murray—will inspire you to charter a private jet with his mouth-watering recollections of his best meals around the country. **BY ANDY MURRAY**

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No golf tournament is more prestigious than the Masters, and none is more exclusive. In the face of restrictions and regulations, our intrepid reporter earns a green jacket for enterprise by penetrating the sanctum sanctorum that is the Augusta National Golf Club. **BY JONATHAN LITTMAN**

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A sexually adventurous 22-year-old actress becomes the object of a 47-year-old film producer's affections. When the beauty proves incapable of genuine intimacy, their heated encounters become fiery collisions. **BY MICHEL HOUELLEBECQ**

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Hunters, anglers and sportsmen who depend on wildlife and wildlands are forming coalitions with such unlikely partners as the Audubon Society and the Sierra Club to fight the damage the government's radical deregulation has inflicted on the outdoors. **BY DEAN KUIPERS**

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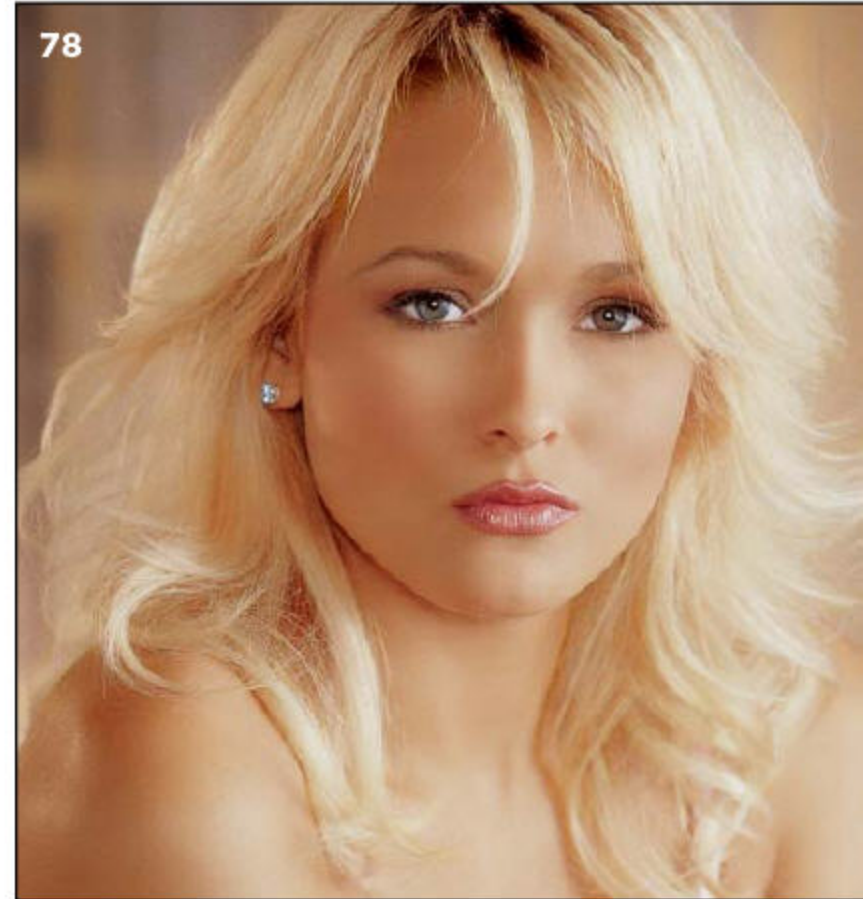
The multifaceted Scotsman has been an actor, as well as a comedian, producer, writer and director, and now he's the refreshingly unconventional host of *The Late Late Show*. Here he sheds light on his new novel, exposes former co-star Drew Carey and explains why he favors women who are "cheeky wee monkeys." **BY DAVID RENSIN**

interview

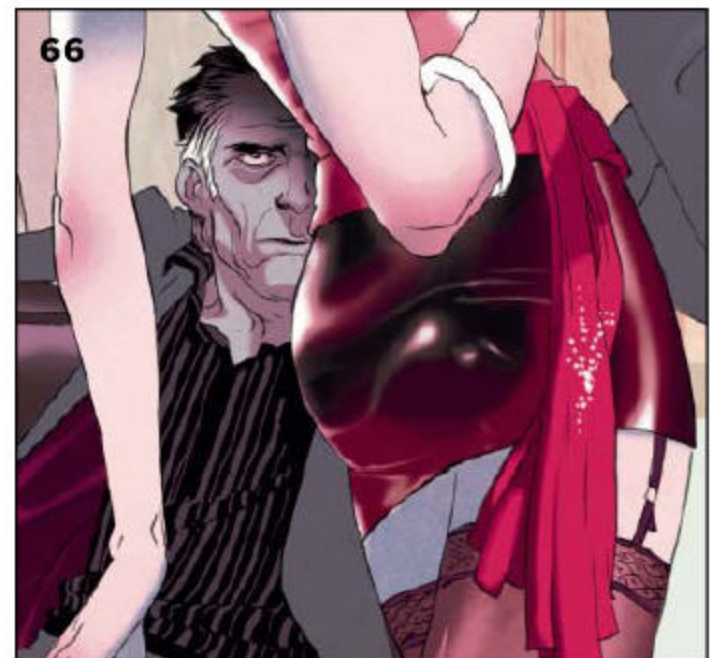
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His work in the *Matrix* trilogy established him as one of Hollywood's most bankable stars, but a fog remains around this reclusive actor who reveals little about his personal life. In a rare lengthy interview, Mr. Cool Breeze tells us if any injury will scare him off his motorcycle, why he gave up his second career in his band and how he keeps his inner peace when outrageous rumors about him fly. **BY MICHAEL FLEMING**

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COVER STORY

With her trademark Candylicious neck lock, WWE Diva Candice Michelle has the moves and the looks of a champion. Whether or not the sinuous wrestler defeats Trish Stratus in the April 2 bout for the women's title, she is welcome to pin us to the mat anytime. Senior Contributing Photographer Arny Freytag captures the silky side of this arresting athlete; our Rabbit lands below the belt.



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THE WORLD OF PLAYBOY

HEF SIGHTINGS, MANSION FROLICS AND NIGHTLIFE NOTES



THE KING, THE MAN AND THE GIRLS NEXT DOOR

Hef, Holly, Bridget and Kendra fielded questions from CNN interviewer par excellence Larry King on *Larry King Live*, in a provocative conversation that covered the foursome's unconventional relationship and the success of their hit E! Entertainment Television show, *The Girls Next Door*.



BULLETS OVER HOLLYWOOD

Hef and his girls showed up for a Prohibition party at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel following the premiere of *Bullets Over Hollywood*. The documentary, which Hef executive-produced, explores the enduring popularity of gangster movies and the fascinating connection between Hollywood and the Mob.

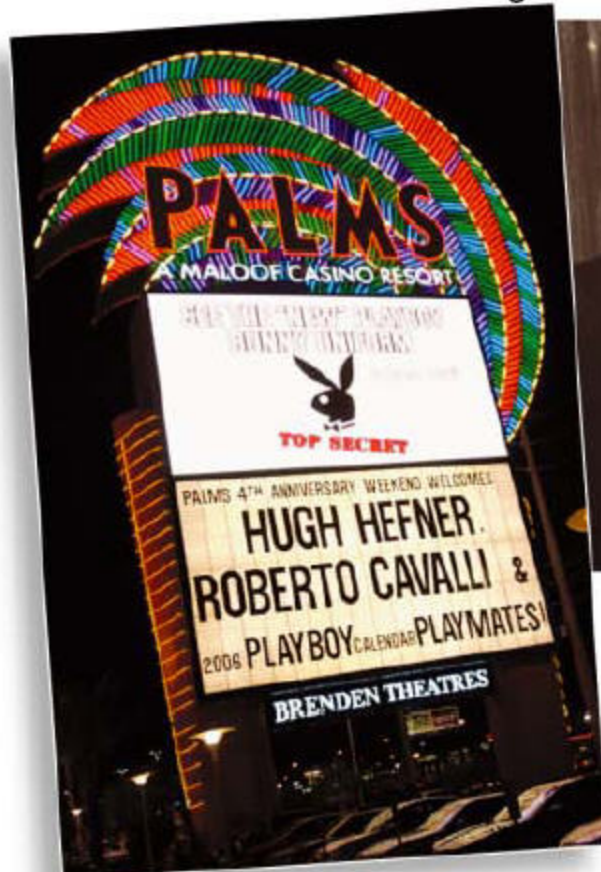
BARBARA, CHRISTIE & DR. RUTH

Playboy's Christie Hefner, with Barbara Walters and Dr. Ruth Westheimer, attended a VIP reception and dinner at the Museum of Television & Radio for *She Made It*, a series of screenings and seminars celebrating influential women, co-sponsored by the Playboy Foundation.



MODEL BEHAVIOR

Supermodel turned television hostess Tyra Banks had Hef and his girlfriends on her talk show, *Tyra*, to discuss the question "Is monogamy natural?" Although no definitive answer emerged, our man certainly came out on top.



NEW AND IMPROVED

Hef and fashion icon Roberto Cavalli joined Palms Casino Resort owner George Maloof (above center) to unveil the new Bunny costumes Cavalli designed for the upcoming Playboy Club at Las Vegas's new Palms tower.



HANGIN' WITH H&F



Always the center of the action, Hef, with his girlfriends, Centerfolds and celebrity pals, makes the scene sizzle. (1) British paper *News of the World* hops into bed with Hef and his girls on the arrival of their reality TV show in the U.K. (2) Actor Fred Dryer and his daughter Caitlin enjoy Thanksgiving dinner at the Mansion. (3) Mansion maidens all pretty in pink for AIDS Walk Los Angeles. (4) Surrounded by Marilyn Monroe impersonators at a Monroe exhibit aboard the *Queen Mary* in Long Beach, California. (5) Mike Tyson on Movie Night at PMW. (6) Paris Hilton with Hef and his girls at an American Music Awards afterparty at Privilege. (7) Ryan Seacrest at the afterparty. (8) Playmates Kara Monaco and Jillian Grace having dinner with Hef at Katana. (9) Teenage sons Cooper and Marston with Dad. (10) Courtney Thorne-Smith and Jim Belushi taping an episode of *According to Jim* with Hef at the Mansion. (11) The Girls Next Door are the highlight at Glamourcon. (12) A hug from Brande Roderick at Glamourcon. (13) An autograph for a fan.



KONG'S FORGOTTEN LOVES

The Loves of King Kong (January) provides a sense of almost lusty joy in all three versions of the movie's heroine. But you overlook another important woman in the story, Ruth Rose, who co-wrote the original *Kong* script. Strangely, while the 1933 film conveys a wonderful *Lost World* feel, it never gives Fay Wray's character as much spunk



Kong and his number one squeeze.

as Rose herself would have shown; she was a woman who shipped out on tramp steamers with scratch scientific expeditions. Did 1930s sexism keep Wray screaming? Jessica Lange and Naomi Watts chide and tease the big guy. Is that a sign of women's liberation or the steady emancipation of men? We still bellow and pant at beauty, but now we're much less threatened when a woman looks us in the eye.

David Brin
Encinitas, California

Brin is editor of the anthology King Kong Is Back!: An Unauthorized Look at One Humongous Ape.

After reading about King Kong's squeezes, we can easily understand why he loses control. As a columnist at KongIsKing.net, I want to make sure the "other woman" in his life isn't forgotten. As Kong rampages in the first film, he roasts a woman from her bed, then drops her to her death when he discovers she isn't his beloved Ann Darrow. The doomed damsel is played by Veronica Balfe, who appears under the screen name Sandra Shaw. Censors cut her scene in 1938, and it wasn't restored until the 1970s. But Balfe didn't have to wait that long for her own fortunes to improve. A few

months after the premiere, she married Gary Cooper.

John Michlig
Franklin, Wisconsin

MARK CUBAN

Mark Cuban's plan to release films simultaneously on DVD, in theaters and on TV makes sense (*Playboy Interview*, January). But as long as Cuban keeps letting those NBA referees have it, he's providing enough entertainment value for me.

Douglas Levy
Farmington Hills, Michigan

I would have loved to read Cuban's thoughts about his \$1.3 million investment in Swash, a \$549 bidet-like toilet seat that rinses and dries people's bottoms. It even comes with a remote control. Cuban is an old friend of one of the company's founders.

Louis Pipan
San Anselmo, California

LOOKING FOR LISA

Personal foul on PLAYBOY for lack of decent exposure of Lisa Guerrero (*Are You Ready for Some Lisa?*, January). She deserves at least 12 pages.

Matt Zivich
Whiting, Indiana

I was surprised to read that Guerrero is 41. Please show us more sexy mature women.

William Doheny
Brooklyn, New York

Your pictorial is a godsend for those of us who had to sit through Tom Arnold just to catch a glimpse of Lisa. But could you please publish a photo in which she isn't hiding behind a sheet or newspaper? We had to wait so long—why deny us now?

Gator Lanphear
Glendale, California

We always knew it; now we've seen it. Put me in, Coach.

Dean Smith
Mitchell, Indiana

Kudos to photographer Antoine Verglas for a beautiful pictorial. I should have watched more *Monday Night Football*.

Eric Schaaf
Sugar Grove, Illinois

REMEMBERING SHEL

Thank you for *The Magical World of Shel Silverstein* (January). When I was a

child, his poems were readily available at my Catholic school. My English teacher would not have considered depriving us of his beautiful and often humorous words simply because she or anyone there disapproved of his lifestyle. Silverstein made the world a better place.

David Cashel
Leominster, Massachusetts

I loved your tribute to Silverstein, but it had a glaring error. You say he was a Cubs fan, but he loathed the team. Instead, he loved the White Sox. My father grew up with him, and they remained friends for more than 50 years. Many nights he would be awakened by Shel calling to see if the Sox had won.

Daniel Axelrod
Chicago, Illinois

The first piece by Silverstein I ever read was *The Devil and Billy Markham* (January 1979). I shared it at the time with my Army platoon, and we all rolled on the floor with laughter. He is sorely missed.

James Peters
Tupelo, Mississippi

I have admired Silverstein's writing for years and always thought he had to be a cool guy. I was right.

Melissa Morrissey
Mount Vernon, Iowa

GODDESS OF THE MONTH

Athena Lundberg (*The Goddess Athena*, January) is the best Playmate since Lynne Austin in July 1986.

Galen Rhoad
Fredericksburg, Pennsylvania



The best gifts come in small packages.

If there were ever a blueprint for a woman, Athena would be it.

Nick Pepe
Everett, Massachusetts

Thank you, thank you, thank you for Athena Lundberg. It's refreshing to see a Playmate whose breasts aren't

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bigger than her head. We need more Centerfolds with perky Bs.

Steven Sayne
South Bend, Indiana

DESIGNATED DRIVERS

Your endorsement of the Pontiac Solstice in *2006 Cars of the Year* (January) is a mistake. I need to replace my Pontiac Fiero, which has 430,000 miles on it, so I took the Solstice for a test drive. Even my old Fiat X1/9 would run circles around it. You'd do better, on price as well as performance, with a low-mileage, two-year-old Corvette.

Art Bachman
Gum Spring, Virginia

The Hummer H3 is the year's best SUV? The Nissan Xterra can smoke the H3. You should get some actual testers instead of ranking vehicles by which one is prettiest.

Marshall Brinson
Pensacola, Florida

You missed the boat on the best sport wagon. The Subaru Impreza WRX is a much better choice than the Audi A3.

Preston Bear
Valley City, North Dakota

ROAD RAGE

I enjoyed *Car Wars* (January) but find the protestations of the Detroit managers hilarious. A real eye-opener to GM's cluelessness is Robert Lutz's belief that the auto business is like Hollywood: "What we need at GM are blockbusters." I work in the film business; that mentality is exactly what is wrong with Hollywood and is the reason studios are in trouble. Instead of funding innovative projects for respectable profits, they throw their money after imitative blockbusters, hoping to make up for all their losers. This is the business plan Lutz embraces? I feel for the UAW guys on the floor; they're the ones getting screwed.

William Stout
Pasadena, California

Lutz is nuts. In your interview, he says people will surely get lost using MapQuest. I use MapQuest all the time and never have problems. Maybe Toyota is now the leader because Lutz gets lost on his way to work and the folks at GM don't know what to do without him. In today's market you need to be creative with technology, which Japanese companies have capitalized on. It's all about bells and whistles these days. And it is just wrong for GM to propose taking health care benefits away from retired workers because costs are too high. That would be like my buying a GM car and trying to return it for a refund

when it starts to break down, because repair costs are higher than they were three years ago.

Andrew Van Winkle
San Antonio, Texas

If GM is so confident about quality, why doesn't it offer a better warranty? Hyundai brought itself back from the brink of disaster with a 10-year, 100,000-mile warranty as well as more standard safety features. I used to buy American, but after being burned several times I began to look elsewhere. In the late 1980s friends of mine bought a 1978 Toyota Celica with 180,000 miles on it. I thought they were nuts, but they said they just needed something to get them around. And it did—for another 150,000 miles on the original engine. This is the kind of experience American manufacturers are up against.

Chris Connolly
Bellevue, Washington

Japanese vehicles are crap. I say this as someone who has worked on cars for 35 years. Honda, Toyota, Nissan and other Japanese manufacturers make even the simple task of chang-



Detroit takes on the Japanese.

ing the oil difficult. Their oil drain plugs don't last. Their oil filters are close to impossible to reach; tons of plastic plates held up by plastic screws cover everything. Filter applications change every year, making inventory a nightmare. Give me a GM, Ford or Chrysler to work on anytime.

Paul Lopresti Jr.
Sewell, New Jersey

Car Wars overlooks an important point about the future of the auto industry. It can build the cars, but where are we going to get the gas?

Thomas Heil
Panama City Beach, Florida





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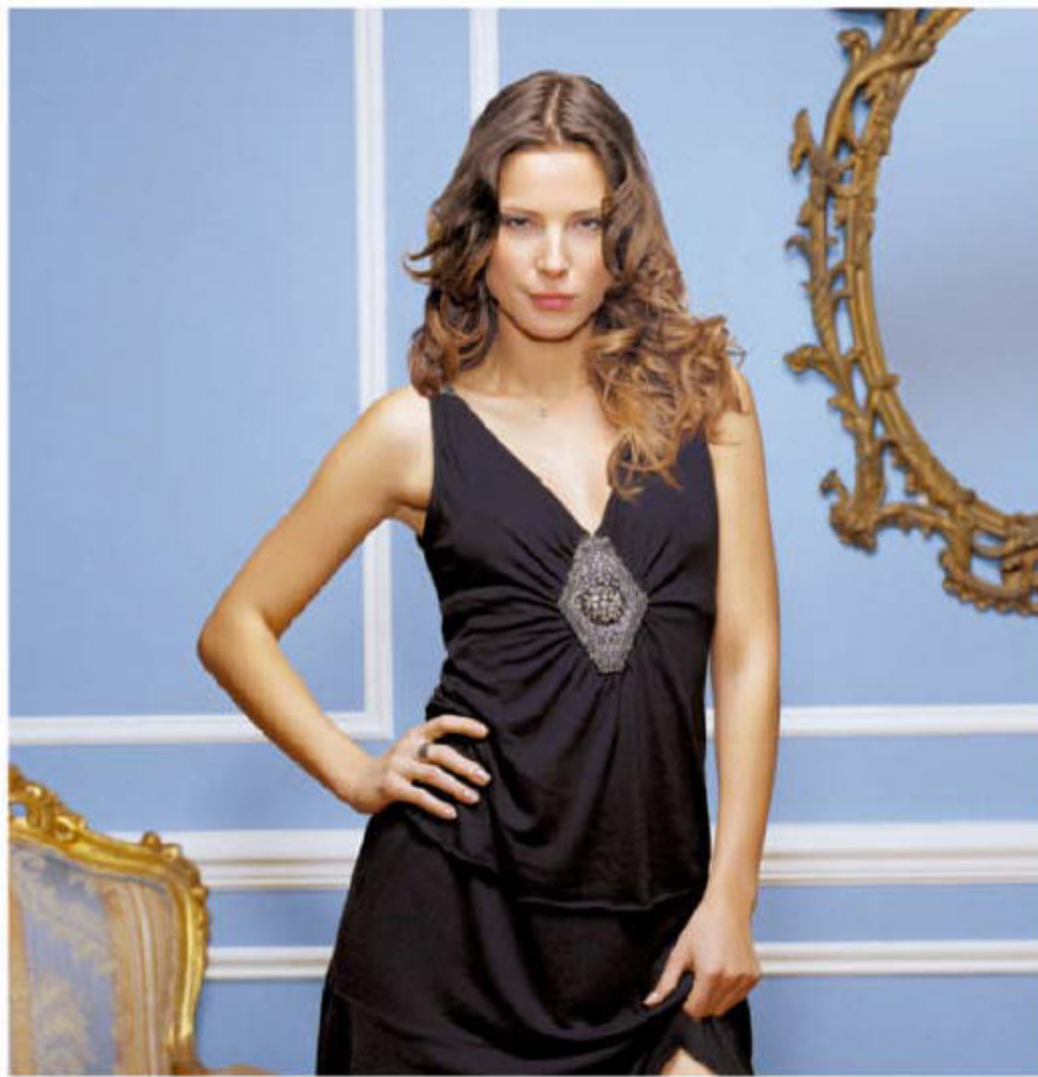


THE GAMEKILLERS

There are people out there whose sole mission in life is to cause you to blow your cool and lose the girl. They are, The Gamekillers.

THE PACE CAR

One incidental look can cause a huge wreck.

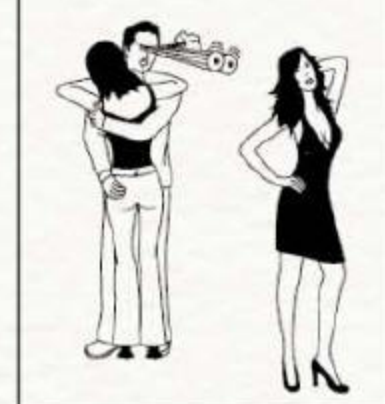


She's the overwhelmingly beautiful girl who leads the pack and who you can't help but look at. But be forewarned. While this bewitching Gamekiller may be in the same place, she's not in the same race. And there's no surer way to end up splayed across the pavement as dating-game road kill than by chasing someone who's way out of your league. When confronted with The Pace Car, The Axe Dry wearer keeps his cool—and his bulging eyes and pants—focused on the task at hand: the girl he's with.

Don't



Do



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P L A Y B O Y

a f t e r h o u r s

Babe of the Month

Melyssa Ford

BUNNY BUSINESS WITH THE 3-D JESSICA RABBIT

Melyssa Ford sits in her dressing room, wearing a tiny red silk robe. It hangs open in front, way down, so that we keep catching a glint of her navel ring. She makes no move to cover up—this woman is accustomed to being ogled. “I have a 20-inch waist,” she mentions, then glances at a paper cup on the makeup table. “I drank some coffee, so I’m a little bloated. It’s probably more like 23 right now.” Credit her insane proportions to DNA; for what it’s worth, she’s a rare mash-up of Russian, Norwegian and Barbadian heritage. A former hip-hop video vixen, Melyssa now hosts *BET Style* and pens a sex column for *Smooth* magazine under the name Jessica Rabbit. She earned the tag waitress at Diddy’s restaurant Justin’s. “I wore a dress that accentuated my best features, and before long, people were talking,” Melyssa recalls. “This girl said, ‘I’ve never seen a waist so little, and your breasts and your booty are so big. Your body reminds me of Jessica Rabbit’s.’ I’m not shy about my shape. I wear cutoff T-shirts to show how little my waist is and tight jeans to show how bodacious my booty is.” How does Melyssa take her men? “I like that football-player build,” she says. “My man’s got to have some monster thighs.” With this, we’re ushered out. It’s time for Melyssa to trade the red silk robe for black lace, and for us to take the Thigh-Master out of mothballs.



“My man’s got to have some monster thighs.”

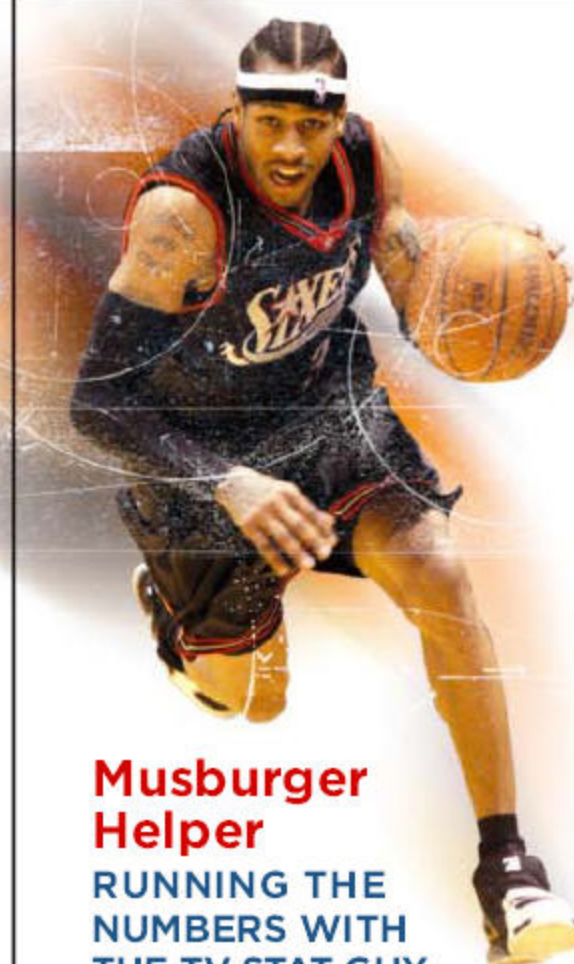


The Naked Truth: Bettie Page

MISS JANUARY 1955 IS READY FOR HER HOLLYWOOD CLOSE-UP

In April, the pinup queen at last makes the big screen in *The Notorious Bettie Page* (starring Gretchen Mol, left). We go back a long way with Bettie—here's a primer we whipped up.

- At Hume-Fogg High School in her hometown of Nashville, straight-A student Bettie seemed bound for the Vanderbilt scholarship awarded annually to the valedictorian. But she skipped an art class to practice for the school play and was penalized with a B, losing the full ride.
- Bettie was never into bondage. With photographer Irving Klaw "you had to do bondage or you didn't get paid," she told *Playboy.com*.
- She has mixed feelings about the picture that ran in *PLAYBOY*. "About a week before my period every month, my bust lost about two inches," she said. "It still bothers me that my breasts were down in my *PLAYBOY* Centerfold."
- Bettie and Klaw were subpoenaed by Tennessee senator Estes Kefauver in a 1955 obscenity inquiry. Klaw destroyed hundreds of Bettie negatives before taking the Fifth Amendment. Bettie waited outside the courtroom for 36 hours but was never called to testify.
- Bettie found Jesus on New Year's Eve 1959, but she has no qualms about her past. "God approves of nudity," she said. "Adam and Eve were naked as jaybirds in the Garden of Eden. If they hadn't listened to the devil, they could have been nude all their lives, happy as larks."



Musburger Helper

RUNNING THE NUMBERS WITH THE TV STAT GUY

During NBA games on ESPN, statistician Ethan Cooper-son spends his time feeding numbers to announcers. "You have to be quick," he says. "If you can't write your idea in 20 seconds, you miss the moment." Here he is, statistically speaking.

Least Useful Stat: "I don't care if a team wins when its star player scores a lot. I'd rather know if, say, the Sixers have a *bad* record when Allen Iverson has a great scoring night."

Favorite Hidden Stat: "I'm big on how many of a player's assists go specifically to one other player. If five of Chauncey Billups's six assists have gone to Rip Hamilton, that's significant."

Weirdest Stat: "During the 1996 Finals, Bill Walton wanted me to track how many times Dennis Rodman jumped and how often he got the rebound. By halftime he had jumped for 15 and gotten 10 of them. Walton actually used that on the air."

Boys on Film

BEASTIES FANS THROW CAMERAS IN THE AIR, WAVE 'EM LIKE THEY JUST DON'T CARE

Awesome: I Fuckin' Shot That!, the Beastie Boys' first feature-length film, opens this month. The footage was shot entirely by fans, all of it at a Madison Square Garden gig where the band passed out 50 handheld video cameras. We caught up with director Nathaniel Hörnblowér, a.k.a. Beastie Boy MCA, a.k.a. Adam Yauch.

PLAYBOY: What made you want to make *Awesome*?

YAUCH: The idea came from our message boards. One night some kid posted something he'd shot on his camera phone of us running out onstage, and it looked really cool. You were looking between people's heads. I like the idea that it's

from the people's perspective. If they're dancing, the camera is moving around. I sat on this idea for a month, and just before the concert at the Garden, I was like, Fuck it, let's do it.

PLAYBOY: How did you pick the cinematographers?

YAUCH: We posted a message asking if anyone with tickets was interested, then asked for people's seat numbers and used a seating chart to make sure we had people all over the arena.

PLAYBOY: Any cameras stolen?

YAUCH: No. We had taken kids' driver's licenses as insurance.



PLAYBOY: This was filmed right before the election, when you were dedicating "Sabotage" to George W. Bush. Did anyone capture negative reactions to that?

YAUCH: You're not going to get that in New York, but when we performed in certain places—the Midwest and the South—we'd sometimes get booed. But you've got to say it if you're feeling it.

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Ouch

MISERY NEVER TASTED SO GOOD

Is April the cruelest month? Undoubtedly. This otherwise nondescript stretch of 30 days has hosted the start of war in Bosnia and the Rwandan genocide, the Oklahoma City bombing, the Columbine High School shootings and the assassinations of Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King Jr. Throw in the famous showers and you're in a world of hurt for which a strong cocktail is cold comfort. We recommend this age-old concoction, as served by the Zombie Hut, a Brooklyn tiki bar favored by PLAYBOY editors when they just can't take it anymore.



Suffering Bastard

1½ oz. dark rum ½ oz. triple sec
1½ oz. light rum Splash of sour mix

Combine ingredients in shaker with ice, pour into cocktail mug, then dump in another ½ oz. dark rum for good measure. Decorate with citrus wheel, plastic palm-tree stirrer, little paper umbrellas or any other froufrou tiki swag you may have lying around. Serve with straw and knowing grin.

Tip Sheet

geidh \gā\ *adj.*, homosexual. The BBC's Gaelic radio service had to invent the word in 2005 in order to cover the issue of gay marriage. The Gaelic language already contained half a dozen terms for homosexuality, but all were derogatory or vulgar.

Five Simple Rules for Dating Hilary Swank

THE TWO-TIME OSCAR WINNER MAY BE BACK ON THE MARKET—NOW'S YOUR CHANCE

1. Start toning your abs *now*.
2. Sure, *Million Dollar Baby* was nice. But you'll show her you really care by telling her she was great in *The Core*.
3. When she dresses up for an awards ceremony, tell her she looks "feminine."
4. Never call bars and restaurants "swanky."
5. Let her jab all she wants. It's the hook you have to watch out for.



Employee of the Month

Beauty and the Deceased

GOTH GIRL SEREGON O'DASSEY SEES DEAD PEOPLE—FOR A LIVING

PLAYBOY: So what is it that you do?

SEREGON: I'm working in a funeral home while I pursue my acting career—I just appeared in *GhostWatcher II*. I do pretty much everything from embalming to dressing and makeup.

PLAYBOY: Does the job ever get to you?

SEREGON: Acting helps me to shut off my emotions at work.

PLAYBOY: What led you to work at a funeral home?

SEREGON: I'm into the Goth scene, which is all about the reality that we don't live in a happy-go-lucky world. The funeral business is reality too; it's literally life and death. I am also interested in the mystery of what happens to us after we die.

PLAYBOY: What other things intrigue you?

SEREGON: I'm interested in S&M and bondage. The Marquis de Sade is one of my heroes. I think people should be able to do whatever they please regardless of whether it's acceptable to society.

PLAYBOY: Anything?

SEREGON: Anything.

PLAYBOY: We are required to ask this of all redheads. Does the carpet match the drapes?

SEREGON: Technically no, because there is no carpet. I had a little design down there, but I didn't have the time to keep it up. So now I'm bald. I think guys like it better that way.

Employee of the Month candidates: Send pictures to Playboy Photography Department, Attn: Employee of the Month, 680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611. Must be at least 18 years old. Must send photocopies of a driver's license and another valid ID (not a credit card), one of which must include a current photo.



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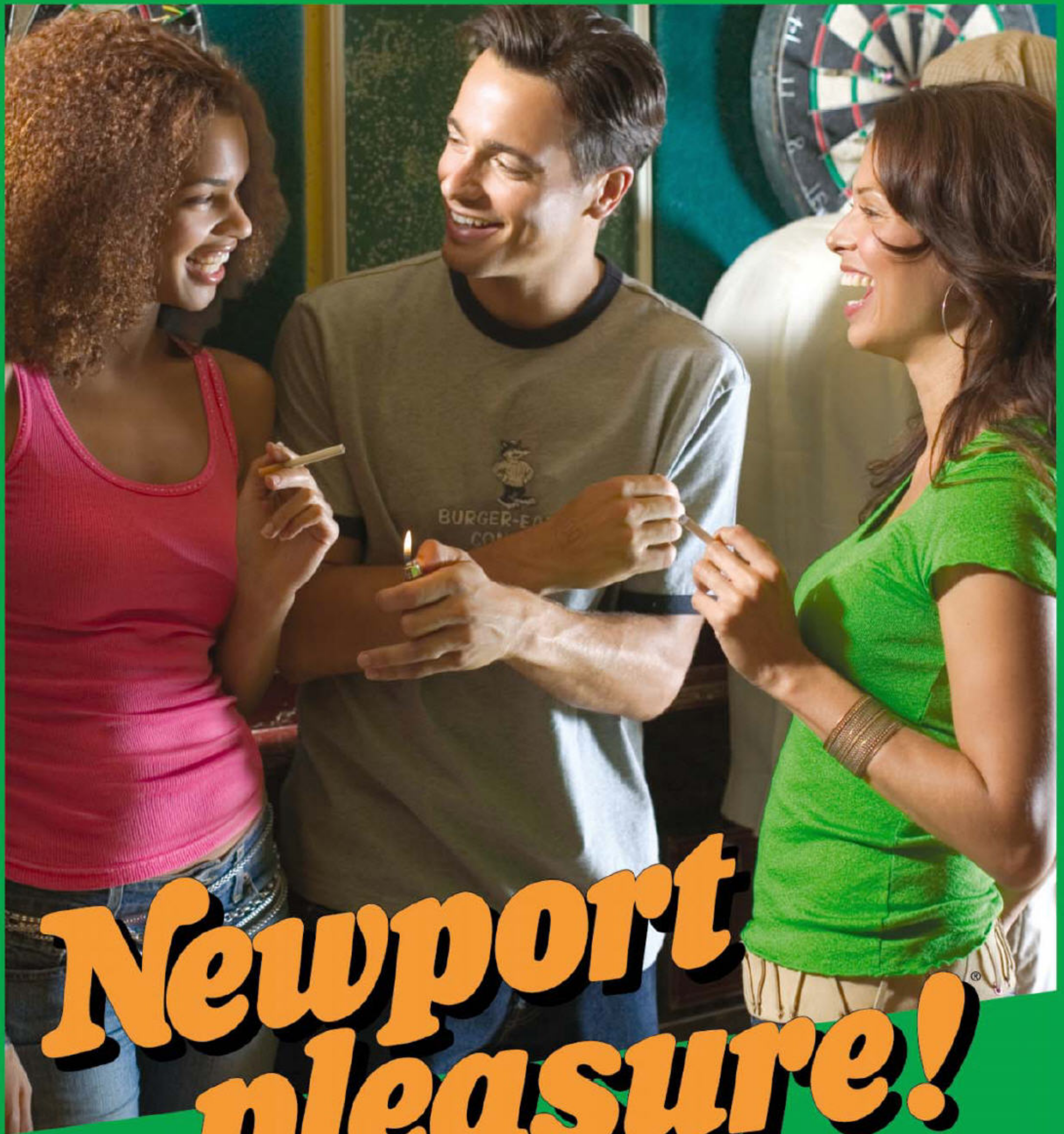
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R A W D A T A

SIGNIFICA, INSIGNIFICA, STATS AND FACTS



Abusing Company Property

32% of Canon copier technicians say they have been called to repair glass plates broken by employees trying to copy body parts during the holiday season. Canon has recently thickened its copier glass by one millimeter to combat the problem.

Looks That Kill

Kurdish tailor Recep Cesur estimates that a single celebrity client has provided him with **\$6 million** worth of free advertising. Long-time customer Saddam Hussein wears Cesur's custom suits in court, and whenever he opens his jacket to fetch a pen from the pocket he flashes the Cesur label to television viewers around the world.



Price Check



\$450,000

Paid at auction for two flags (one American, one with the presidential seal) that flew from John F. Kennedy's car the day he was shot.

Book of Pointless Records

Most Balloons Inflated and Tied in an Hour

520, by Shawn Lortie, an Oregonian who had recently quit working at a strip club to become a comedian, magician and balloon-animal artist.

Who's Your Daddy?

At least **1** in **25** fathers is unknowingly raising another man's child.

The Playboy Poll

Blushing Bride

Would you marry a porn star? What PLAYBOY readers said:

Yes 46% **No 54%**

readerpanel.playboy.com



Illin' Time

According to the staffing firm OfficeTeam, **80%** of American employees frequently show up to work when they should have stayed home sick.

Generation Sex

Percentage of Beijing residents having premarital sex:

In 1989 15.5%

In 2006 70%

Small Faces

An Ohio State University anthropologist reports the average human face has shrunk by **30%** over the past **10,000** years.

Wasting Away

Nature of fatalities on San Quentin State Prison's death row since 1977, when the California State Legislature reinstated capital punishment:

Executions: **13**

Suicides: **12**

Deaths from natural causes: **31**



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OR PREDICTED HE'D DRINK IT.
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R E V I E W S

m o v i e s



movie of the month

[BASIC INSTINCT 2]

Can Sharon Stone top her sexiest role ever?

Sharon Stone made *Basic Instinct*'s cop-teasing, coke-snorting, ice-pick-friendly, thigh-parting mantrap Catherine Tramell one of the most unforgettable characters in movies. Legal hurdles and other pesky obstacles stalled a sequel to the sexed-up 1992 thriller for years, but Stone finally takes a stab at *Basic Instinct 2*, minus Michael Douglas but plus new co-stars Charlotte Rampling and David Thewlis. This time Stone's character demonstrates her patented killer attitude and some lethal new moves in London. Under suspicion by Scotland Yard, she's assigned a hunky shrink (David Morrissey), with whom she tangles in every possible way—including horizontally. Insiders say the erotic acrobatics and mind games between the duo should steam up multiplexes. Stone explains, "Our characters show each other their awful, hideous underbellies and confront questions like 'Will you kill me?' 'Will I kill you?' It's like the great quote 'Real love is seeing the other person's insanity and agreeing to live there with them.'" To those curious about whether her character does anything to equal *Basic Instinct*'s epic leg-uncrossing police-interrogation scene, Stone advises, "Live in the moment, baby—we sure did. But don't worry, we tried to make this one a thrill a second, too." —Stephen Rebello

"We tried to make this one a thrill a second, too."

now showing

BUZZ

The Benchwarmers

(Rob Schneider, David Spade, Jon Heder, Molly Sims) In this Adam Sandler-produced comedy, three dweebs try to make up for athletically challenged childhoods by forming a three-man baseball team that takes on nine-member Little League teams, winning a loyal following of sad sacks and losers.

Our call: Sure, Heder may be dynamite, but producer Sandler apparently thinks it's never too late to have a happy childhood—or for pals Schneider and Spade to score big in movies.



Inside Man

(Denzel Washington, Jodie Foster, Clive Owen, Willem Dafoe) Spike Lee's latest joint depicts deadly cat-and-mouse games between Washington's tough on-the-ropes cop (is there any other kind?) and fiendishly shrewd bank robber Owen; they match wits in a tense standoff with hostages at stake.

Our call: Inside word says this thriller's smart plot twists, brawny action and swank cast (especially scene-stealing Foster) signal loud and clear that Lee's got game again.



Lucky Number Slevin

(Josh Hartnett, Morgan Freeman, Ben Kingsley, Lucy Liu) This neo-noir has Hartnett playing the classic wrong guy in the wrong place at the wrong time, as New York crime kingpin Freeman ropes him into a conspiracy to assassinate the son of Kingsley, a rival underworld boss.

Our call: A smart script, deadly cool violence and a showy cast could snuff out memories of 2004's *Wicker Park*, Hartnett's previous collaboration with director Paul McGuigan.



Thank You for Smoking

(Aaron Eckhart, Maria Bello, Katie Holmes, Robert Duvall, William H. Macy) Big tobacco, guns, liberals and double-talking politicians get smoked out in this satire featuring Eckhart as a morally bankrupt lobbyist who shills for a cigarette company while trying to keep things real between him and his son.

Our call: This fired-up movie version of Christopher Buckley's novel hits the funny bone while aiming for the jugular. The perfect fix for those who like their comedy unfiltered.



dvd of the month

[WALK THE LINE]

Reese Witherspoon plays the muse to Joaquin Phoenix's Man in Black

Just Google this film's title together with the phrase "this year's *Ray*" and you'll discover the particular line this superbly acted Johnny Cash biopic had to walk. The comparison is inescapable, and numerous critics have made it: recently deceased legend, humble beginnings, success, drug addiction and painful recovery. As in *Ray*, the actors elevate *Walk the Line* above its typically banal script. Unlike *Ray*, however, *Walk the Line* depicts an epic romance: hard-case Cash's long-running pursuit of wary country singer June Carter. Joaquin Phoenix and Reese Witherspoon mimic the songs adroitly, but more important, they capture the music this very public couple made privately. It's a darkly exhilarating love story, and director James Mangold shows admirable restraint in not pushing things too far. **Extras:** Deleted scenes, extended musical performances, a commentary track from Mangold and multiple featurettes. ★★★½ —Greg Fagan



Footlight Parade (1933), *Gold Diggers of 1933*, *Dames* (1934, pictured) and *Gold Diggers of 1935*. **Extras:** New featurettes, vintage cartoons and a phenomenal compilation of more than 20 musical numbers the Buzz directed. ★★★

—Matt Steigbigel



GET RICH OR DIE TRYIN' (2005) Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson's gangsta opus is a mildly entertaining hood-gets-out-of-the-hood tale that has been done better before—Eminem in *8 Mile* comes to mind. Inspired by Jackson's own life story, *Get Rich* is overlong and illogical, plus the rapper's vacant expression never changes. **Extras:** A documentary on director Jim Sheridan and Jackson. ★★

—Stacie Houglund



JARHEAD (2005) Unlike many war movies, *Jarhead* (adapted from former Marine Anthony Swofford's memoir) avoids politicizing its tale, which reveals the personal hell endured by U.S. Marines during the first Gulf war. This battle-free movie offers memorable performances by Jake Gyllenhaal and Peter Sarsgaard, but it lacks the visceral punch of *Full Metal Jacket* or the black humor of *MASH*. **Extras:** Deleted scenes, commentaries and documentaries about real-life Marines. ★★★½

—Bryan Reesman



GOOD NIGHT, AND GOOD LUCK (2005) From newsman Edward R. Murrow's opening salvo to the closing footage of Dwight Eisenhower defending the right of habeas corpus on national TV, director George Clooney's tightly wound drama is a fast-moving barrage of illustrated political concepts. Shot in black-and-white, with so much smoking it stings the eyes, the film features a crack ensemble—Clooney, Robert Downey Jr., Frank Langella—grounded by David Strathairn's daring Murrow. **Extras:** Commentary by Clooney plus producer and co-writer Grant Heslov. ★★★

—Buzz McClain



ACTION: THE COMPLETE SERIES—UNCUT & UNBLEEPED! (1999) Jay Mohr steals the show as a hack producer in the long-awaited DVD debut of this prematurely axed, hilariously mean-spirited TV series. After a box-office flop, he seeks redemption by attempting to make a hit movie. **Extras:** Featurettes, including "Trust Me: Useful Words and Phrases Every Producer Must Know." ★★★½

—Kenny Lull



THE BUSBY BERKELEY COLLECTION This incredible boxed set showcases the flamboyant movie work of iconic choreographer Busby Berkeley. During the depths of the Great Depression, Warner Bros. set him loose to design some of the sexiest and most surreal productions in film history, including the kaleidoscopic title number in the granddaddy of backstage musicals, *42nd Street* (1933). During the next two years he tore his way through 10 more movies, four of which are premiering on DVD in newly restored prints:

tease frame

Luscious **Salma Hayek** adds a welcome dash of spice to any movie. Her sizzling sex scene with Antonio Banderas is the real climax of *Desperado* (1995), her strip scene in *From Dusk Till Dawn* (1996) is the hottest thing on either side of the border, and she stretches more than her range as the blouse-busting beauty



opposite Will Smith in *Wild Wild West* (1999). But when Hayek plays pansexual painter Frida Kahlo in *Frida* (2002, pictured), we reach our boiling point. We can't wait to watch her as a Depression-era barmaid who is the object of Colin Farrell's affection in *Ask the Dust*.

lone star



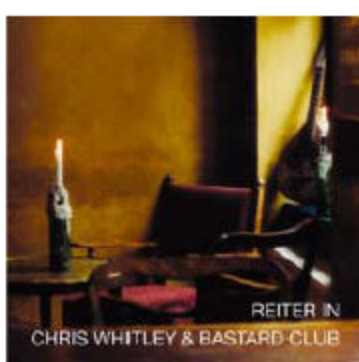
[SONG OF HERSELF]

The real Neko Case stands up

Alt-country adulation is a funny thing. Artists accused of having mastered the genre usually make a swift exit. Jeff Tweedy went art, Rhett Miller went pop, Ryan Adams went bat-shit schizo—we need not go on. It's time to admit Neko Case has flown the coop as well. As a part-timer with the New Pornographers, she's a near-perfect power-pop siren (the role we suspect she was born to play), and on *Fox Confessor Brings the Flood*, her latest solo album, she's simply one hell of a vocalist. There's very little twang here; in fact there's little to be said about the music at all. The best songs waltz along on a tapped cymbal, quiet piano and lonely guitar. As for the heroine, we could throw out a bunch of almost useful comparisons—she's a ballsier Margo Timmins, a moodier Patsy Cline, a new Hope Sandoval—but the fact is nobody sounds like Neko Case. When the God-given voice is this strong, you don't mess it up with a lot of virtuoso musicians or consign it to some niche genre. You sketch out a smoky hotel lounge or a starlit, treeless plain or even a laid-back hootenanny, and you let her fill the space with thick, sexy song. This is 21st century torch singing at its finest. (*Anti*) ★★★½ —Josh Robertson

CHRIS WHITLEY * *Reiter In*

Five months before his death, Whitley went into the studio with a strong band. As expected, there are plenty of intimations of mortality on this album. You'd be hard-pressed to name a more restless musician, but here Whitley returns to the blues. He goes out with a bang. (*Downtown*) ★★★ —Leopold Froehlich



THE HELLACOPTERS

Rock & Roll Is Dead

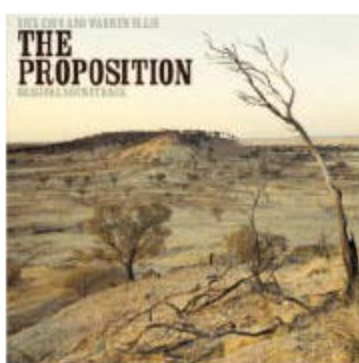
After 10 years, six albums and tours with the Stones and Kiss, this Swedish garage band now sounds more Mountain and less Stooges. But with sweat and backup singers, it proves something original can still be squeezed out of 1970s rock. (*Liquor & Poker*) ★★★ —J.B.



NICK CAVE & WARREN ELLIS

The Proposition

The Bad Seeds frontman wrote a violent Australian Western that pits British lawmen against outlaws. Most of the songs on this gloom-and-doom soundtrack, penned with fellow Seed Ellis, are piano-and-drum instrumentals as barren as the outback. Creepy and cool. (*Mute*) ★★★ —Jason Buhrmester



HERB ALPERT'S TIJUANA BRASS

Re-Whipped

Here's a surprise: a remix project that really works. With the old brass riffs drifting in and out of a dub echo or running atop a tropical break beat, this is perfect poolside lounge music to set the mood for spring sun. Another margarita, please. (*Shout Factory*) ★★★ —T.M.



WILLIE NELSON

Songs of Cindy Walker

This is a batch of old songs written by an old lady, recorded in an old style with an old-school producer, and it reminds us what was so damn great about early country music in the first place. Late Nelson is a hit-or-miss affair; this is a stroke of effortless genius. (*Lost Highway*) ★★★ —J.R.



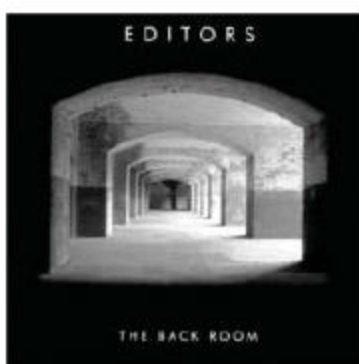
HARD-FI * Stars of CCTV

These guys create a compelling chug, sometimes with the syncopated throb of the Clash. They nod to dance music and throw in electronic blips to liven up their rock; they also use a lot of acoustic guitar and are clearly unfazed by the idea of doing all this within a four-minute pop song. (*Atlantic*) ★★★ —T.M.



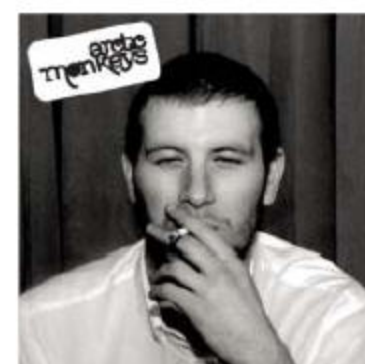
EDITORS * The Back Room

If Interpol sounds like a love letter to early-1980s British Goth—especially Joy Division—then this album by Britain's Editors is a flirtatious thank-you note. Intense vocals give this band a similarly dark edge, while the buzzing, chiming guitars at times provide the added effect of a dark Edge. (*Fader*) ★★★ —Tim Mohr



ARCTIC MONKEYS * Whatever People Say I Am, That's What I'm Not

New Brit bands can sound like infinite permutations of the same familiar influences. But you can forget the "next this" or "new that" tag here. These Monkeys are highly original: tight and fast like the Jam (but modern), with smart lyrics about rust-belt life. Great. (*Domino*) ★★★ —T.M.



game of the month

[A FAMILY AFFAIR]

Repeat after us: Leave the gun, take the cannoli

The long-awaited interactive version of Mario Puzo's classic tale is here, allowing you to step into the shoes of a Corleone soldier and try to work your way up to becoming don. The *Godfather* video game (PC, PS2, Xbox) takes place between 1945 and 1955 in New York City, where you perform seedy missions, starting with shakedowns and drive-bys, then escalating to bank heists and hits on rival Mob bosses. Each of your decisions, such as how much to pressure a shopkeeper for protection money, has lasting consequences throughout the single-player adventure. And while the game's underlying attributes—nonlinear missions, hijackable vehicles and the criminal underworld—may have a *Grand Theft Auto* whiff, a reverence for the source material along with far more subtle interactions between the player and the world makes all the difference, as do the voices of Robert Duvall, James Caan and Marlon Brando. ★★★½ —Marc Saltzman



DAXTER (PSP) The PS2 is home to some of the best platform-action games, including *Sly Cooper* and *Ratchet & Clank*, so we're surprised it took this long to create a good one for the PSP. Plucky "Ottse!" (don't ask) Dexter finally breaks away from his spotlight-hogging pal Jak in an entertaining romp featuring creative and varied gameplay and console-worthy graphics. Amusing writing, idiosyncratic characters and several tons of 'tude all add up to a winner. Finally. ★★★ —Scott Alexander



GHOST RECON: ADVANCED WAR-FIGHTER (Xbox 360) The year is 2013. The place: Mexico City. And you? You're fighting insurgents through its chaotic streets. You're outnumbered, but you're also equipped with far superior toys—from unmanned battle drones to sniper rifles that see through walls. Online you'll communicate with your Xbox Live teammates via voice chat, and you can see their viewpoints in small picture-in-picture displays. A visual feast on the 360. ★★★½ —John Gaudiosi



BLACK (PS2, Xbox) The psychos responsible for bringing *Burnout* into the world have now birthed the first gun-porn game. Quick gameplay hint: Shoot first. Then shoot some more. Forget the questions. Refreshingly, the game's all about single-player (there's no online play), and a killer physics engine and fragile environment reward the curious—hit a balcony with a rocket launcher and take out everyone standing on it. Great looking and ridiculously addictive. ★★★ —J.G.



FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3 (Xbox 360) You won't find flashing icons or health meters in this brutally brilliant boxing sim. Rather, you'll know your rival's ready for the old one-two from how much he's sweating and how badly he needs his cut man. Though the game is available on other platforms, its photo-realism on the 360 is astonishing. Connect solidly and see blood fly, jaws shatter and crowds roar as your opponents collapse. By unanimous decision, the new heavyweight champ. ★★★ —Scott Steinberg

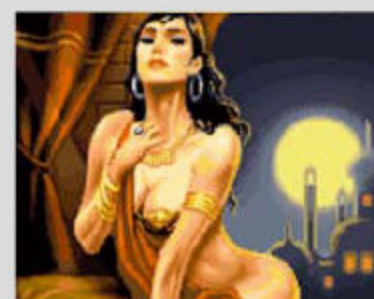


mobile gaming

[CELLING OUT]

Your favorite game machine may be in your pocket

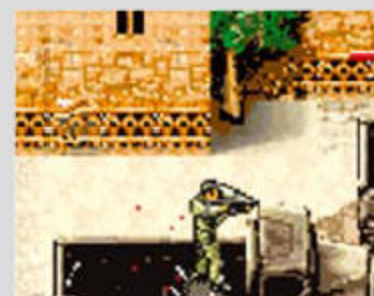
Imagine being on the phone but not talking. Nor having any desire to. After years of ignoring the weak-sister jumble of unenjoyable "games" jammed into our cell phones, we checked in recently and were pleasantly surprised to find that times have changed. Mobile mainstays like *Snake* and *Memory* have been replaced with full-color, addictive games that actually qualify as real fun. Our top picks follow; all require a recent and halfway decent phone.



Prince of Persia: The Two Thrones

The prince in this version of the fantastic console game may be smaller than the tip of your pinkie, but he can still wall-run, leap spikes and slash his micro-foes like a killer whirling dervish.

WordKing Poker Poker meets Scrabble in this single- and multiplayer game that's more about intellect than thumb dexterity. You draw a hand of letters and bet on being able to make the best word. Crossword addicts, beware.



SOCOM: Mobile Recon Yes, the revered military shooter now fits on your phone.

And surprisingly enough, the action is solid and compelling, even on the radically smaller screen of your cellie. Next time you're stuck in traffic, you can pull out your gun and start shooting without fear of being arrested.

Doom RPG All the original shooter's guns, zombies and hellhounds return, packed into a diminutive turn-based role-playing game. The RPG twist works remarkably well on the tiny platform, somehow removing the need to aim without destroying the overall concept.



Marc Ecko's Getting Up Your mission as the tiny tagger Trane

is to run around an exceptionally anal city, tossing up graffiti and laying down your name in increasingly complex styles while avoiding laser-shooting motion detectors (don't you hate those?) and exploding cameras. Vandalism was never this much fun. —Brian Crecente

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Rock On

The Island Records mogul behind Bob Marley and U2 wants to show you to his cave



CHRIS BLACKWELL HAS always had unassailable taste. In the 1970s he signed Bob Marley to his record label and introduced reggae to the world. Then he turned to pop music and groomed a jukeboxful of noteworthy acts, most prominently U2. Now Blackwell is focusing on the art of living well. The Caves, his Jamaican boutique resort, is a waterfront retreat built into a volcanic-rock cliff on the western end of Negril, with 10 cottages that start at \$655 (\$515 during low season) a night. Lacking a proper beach, the resort maximizes its location with sun decks and rock-carved staircases that descend to the surf. Though diving and windsurfing can be easily arranged, hammocking, sunning and massage are the go-to diversions, and the five-course dinner available in the candlelit grotto (left) ensures that your date will remember this getaway as the one that made her yours. Reserve at islandoutpost.com.

5 Rules for Traveling in Jamaica

1. Stay out of prison: Shooting the sheriff and chiefting ganja could land you in jail, which in Jamaica is not as nice as most of the hotels. **2. Don't treat the movies like church:** It is local custom to talk back at the screen. If you complain, you will be ridiculed and perhaps murdered. **3. Lively up yourself:** Jamaica's Blue Mountain coffee is some of the world's finest. Just make sure you're getting the real thing. **4. Avoid buggery:** Mosquitoes will suck you dry. Bring repellent or lavender oil. **5. Don't play the fool:** Along with the matchless beaches and vistas of Jamaica comes rampant bullshittery. Do not, for example, buy tickets to a Bob Marley concert or let anyone tell you the sheriff has it coming.



About Time

TO DATE, no fashion house has made a stylish underwater tuxedo. What's up with that? As for a snazzy underwater watch, we've got you covered. The Swiss-made Oris Der Meisterhaucher Regulateur (\$1,995, oris.ch) features a titanium case that's water-resistant to 1,000 meters, a precise automatic movement and a healthy helping of panache. Now for the cuff links....





Raising the Bars

BEHOLD THE NEW flagship Kawasaki sport bike. Set to roll onto American asphalt this month, the ZX-14 (\$11,500, kawasaki.com) is the most powerful production motorcycle on the planet, beating the Suzuki Hayabusa and the BMW K 1200 S. Pumping out a projected 200 bhp, with a raucous top speed of 186 miles an hour, this slim, compact, aerodynamic missile is available in passion red (pictured), ebony or "candy thunder" blue, though we doubt color will have much to do with whether you'll put one of these near your genitals. Happy motoring.



Lap of Luxury

ONE DAY WE'LL have built into our sunglasses more computing power than we'll ever need. Until then we're forced to compromise; our computers can be small or powerful, not both. Alienware eases our pain with its Area-51 m5700 (\$1,250, alienware.com), a six-pounder with enough horsepower to handle today's most demanding games and programs. It will record 200 hours' worth of shows from your TV, and it won't give you a hernia when you toss it in your bag.

Scents and Sensibility

SPRING FRAGRANCES ARE about breaking free of that cooped-up feeling one gets during winter. Rather than blanketing you in luxury, they pop with invigorating fruit and spice. From left: Nautica Voyage is the salty wind in a mainsail (3.4 ounces, \$58). Calvin Klein Eternity Summer for Men lays tarragon over cedar-leaf oil and musk (3.4 ounces, \$50). Z Zegna can make a subway platform feel like a beach (3.3 ounces, \$57). Bulgari Blu Pour Homme is a Tuscan hillside in a bottle (3.4 ounces, \$69).



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Broken Records

WE LOVE VINYL'S warmth, but we also acknowledge its fragility and plasticity. Vinylux turns those flaws into strengths with coasters and bowls made from classic but played-out LPs (\$20 and \$26, elsewares.com). When ordering bowls, you can specify if you're interested in jazz, rock, divas or crooners (extra irony points if you get a coaster from a record by the Coasters). This kind of recycling won't stop global warming, but it's still good for your soul.

Big Cheese

SO YOU'VE INVITED every starred name in your little black book to come over and rummage through your wine collection, and now you realize you'll have to feed these short-skirted beauties. For all the right *fromage*, hit Artisanal (artisanalcheese.com). Owner Terrance Brennan recommends varying the flavors and textures on your cheese board, suggesting (from left) Shropshire blue, sharp and firm, from the U.K. (\$23 a pound); Robiola Fia, a mild, semisoft leaf-wrapped goat cheese (\$25 a piece), and Parmigiano-Reggiano—the king of cheeses!—(\$25 a pound), both from Italy; and runny Epoisses from France (\$18 a piece). Of course you don't want your guests hacking away at your well-crafted selections all willy-nilly; someone might break a nail. Wüsthof's Classic Four-Piece Cheese and Wine Set (\$200, amazon.com) includes (from top) a Parmesan knife for superhard cheeses, a soft-cheese knife for fresh goats and gooey Bries, and a hard-cheese knife for old Goudas and firm blues. Bonus: A waiter's corkscrew is included.



A Winning Pair

THE GREATEST RELATIONSHIPS bring out the best in both parties. Bogie and Bacall. Gin and vermouth. Egg and foo yong. And of course, scotch and a cigar. Glenfiddich's new Gran Reserva 21-year-old (\$130, at fine liquor stores) is aged for three months in a Caribbean rum barrel. Its heather flavor and unique buttery finish pair beautifully with tobacco—say, a limited-edition 1495 Series Churchill from La Aurora (\$9 per stick, davidoffmadison.com), the Dominican Republic's oldest cigar company.



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SPRING FASHION

>>trend report

→ Spring Forward

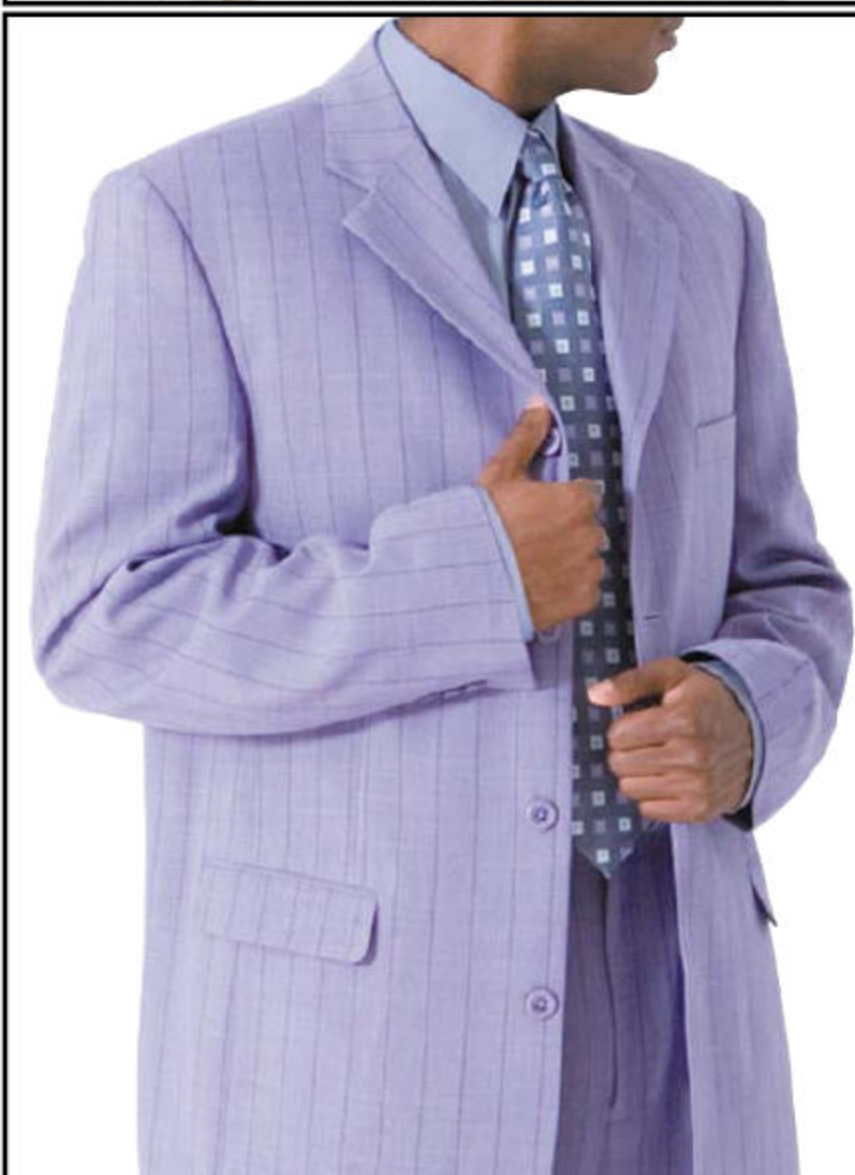
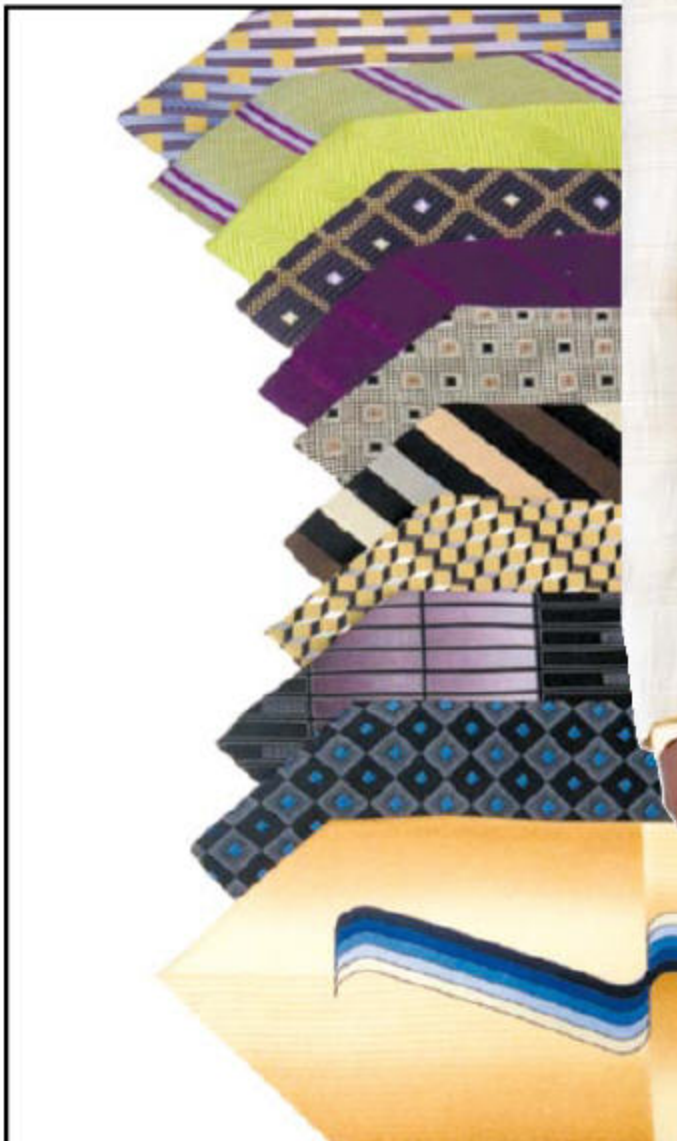
There's no better time than spring to inject new life into an aging wardrobe, and designers offered up a bounty of key trends this season. Which ones to jump on? The evolution toward tailored looks continued, with bold pinstripes and spirited colors giving suits a fashionable lift. Shirts and furnishings took a turn to the classic, away from all those multi-hued stripes of seasons past. And footwear embraced a measure of rockabilly chic—ideal for amping up your spring style.



>>trend report

SUITS, SHIRTS, TIES & SHOES

Suits and dress furnishings take a fresh approach to tailored elegance this spring, with vibrant colors replacing the muted tones of fall. Power pinstripes add a confident look to your wardrobe, while geometric graphics lend an Art Deco flair to neckwear. After an extended absence from the limelight, pleated pants made a stylish comeback on the runways of Milan and New York. The full effect? Dressed-up designs that convey the season's newfound sense of sophistication.

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>>trend report

→ SHOES

Put your best foot forward this spring with distinctive footwear that melds old-world craftsmanship with up-to-the-minute style. Whether it's a mod dress shoe or casual loafer, the season's best options encompass luxurious materials and creative flourishes. Look for glove-soft leather, an innovative color palette and high-tech finishing details, such as laser etching. So ditch your old kicks and add a polished final touch to your warm-weather looks.



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The Playboy Advisor

Are there any sexual enhancers my wife could take to get aroused? She says she gets turned on only by intelligent conversation. I have romanced her and tried to make her feel appreciated, but still nothing.—J.R., Norfolk, Virginia

Have you tried merlot? Relaxation is a key component of female arousal, as is her feeling a sense of security with you and the relationship. That's why the shoulder or foot rub is such a popular first move. There is no magic pill—at least not yet. Scientists experimented with Viagra but found that even though it sent more blood to the vulva, women said they didn't feel turned on. So the pharmaceutical industry is now in hot pursuit of drugs that directly stimulate the brain's sexual control center. The most promising is a nasal spray called PT-141. Women who have used it in clinical trials report feeling "genital warmth, tingling and throbbing," as well as "a strong desire to have sex." It had a similar effect on men and, if approved by the FDA, will initially be marketed to treat erectile dysfunction. Some therapists worry that because it is fast-acting, it could lead to the pursuit of the usually disappointing "five-minute meaningful encounter" among busy, tense couples, allowing them to avoid intelligent conversations about why they aren't having sex. We'll see what develops.

Are there actually uninhabited islands in the middle of the ocean, like those on *Lost* and *Cast Away*, that have never been owned or even discovered?—M.C., Dundee, Illinois

Satellite technology makes it doubtful that there are any deserted islands left to be discovered, according to Jeremy Weirich, a marine archaeologist with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. But it depends on how you define "island." In 1996 an expedition found a rock sticking out of the ice north of Greenland that measured 10 meters by 10 meters. Five years later it was still there, making it the northernmost documented point of land. It's safe to assume that every inhabitable island has been claimed. In fact, real estate agents such as Farhad Vladi (vladi.de or 902-423-3202) specialize in them. Vladi currently has 160 listings, ranging from the Lobster Islands in Nova Scotia (\$75,000) to Isla de sa Ferradura, near Ibiza, Spain (\$35 million). The best deals, he says, are near Sweden and Nova Scotia.

For a while my husband and I had an open relationship. He saw one girl for about a year. I allowed it because I trusted that our bond was strong enough to keep him from falling in love. The problem is, she did. When she tried to push me out, he dumped her. I also said good-bye to my boy toys. Now we are experimenting again, but the same problem is coming up. I like the girl he is seeing but also feel intimidated by her beauty and body. I am concerned that he may enjoy her too



much. Is this a terrible jealousy developing, or am I just cautious because of what happened last time? She calls him all the time, and he always goes into the next room and closes the door to talk with her. What do you think?—A.M., Farmington, New Mexico

Given your experience, it's natural to be concerned. But an open relationship requires primarily that you be open with each other, which means you must reveal any feelings of insecurity or jealousy so they can be discussed and, one hopes, resolved. That includes telling your husband that you feel shut out when he has private conversations in the house with his girlfriend. There is no guarantee he won't leave you for someone else, but a traditional marriage doesn't give you that either. As we've said in the past, open relationships would be much easier if there weren't so many people involved.

How do restaurants age beef? Can it be done at home?—A.K., Dallas, Texas

They store the beef for three or four weeks in the freezer, typically between 32 and 34 degrees Fahrenheit with 85 percent relative humidity. This allows the muscle fibers to slowly decompose, making the meat more tender. At the same time, it loses water, making it firmer and more flavorful. Most meat is wet-aged, meaning it is vacuum-packed in its own juices and stored only until it's sold and served. The meat becomes more tender, but its flavor doesn't change. Merle Ellis, who has been a butcher for 50 years, offers this recipe to dry-age a loin at home: Pat the meat dry with paper towels, then store it for a week with the fat side down, on the refrigerator shelf that has the best air circulation—usually the bottom one, which is also the coldest. The surface

will darken and dry, but that's okay. Check often to wipe away any moisture, or wrap the meat in clean white cotton dish towels and change them daily. After 10 to 14 days, cut steaks from each end and allow the rest of the loin to continue to age. "I'd be willing to bet that after dry-aging even under less than the best of conditions, the beef will be better than it was the week before," Ellis says.

Whenver I meet a girl I like, we usually have sex on the second or third date. Over the next week or two, we'll have sex every other day or so. The physical chemistry is there, and we always have good conversations until I start to hint that I want a monogamous relationship, even if it's not serious. The last three girls bolted as if I had proposed marriage. The girls range in age from 19 to 23, and the only thing they seem to have in common is an L.A. address. What is going on, and what can I do about it?—B.B., Los Angeles, California

You're being used. Enjoy it while you can. The next time this happens, don't drop the bomb so quickly. A monogamous relationship can't be anything but serious, and these are party girls. Be patient, take it easy and see how things progress. If a woman wants to be only with you, that will happen without your having to ask. If you're after a girlfriend, you need to go to places where the women don't expect to be picked up. That is, rather than collecting numbers at clubs, find a coed sports league, social club or other scene where a relationship can get started before the first date.

How can I get my girlfriend to stop looking at me while she's giving me a blow job?—E.S., New York, New York

Are you kidding? That's the best part.

In December a reader asked for an effective comeback for "Fuck you." The best retort I ever heard was from a judge after he sentenced a drug dealer to prison. As the convict was led away, he told the judge to go fuck himself. The jurist banged his gavel and said, "Motion denied."—S.F., Albion, Michigan

Judges always get the last word. More suggestions follow. We are surprised at how many readers hear "Fuck you" often enough to have prepared responses.

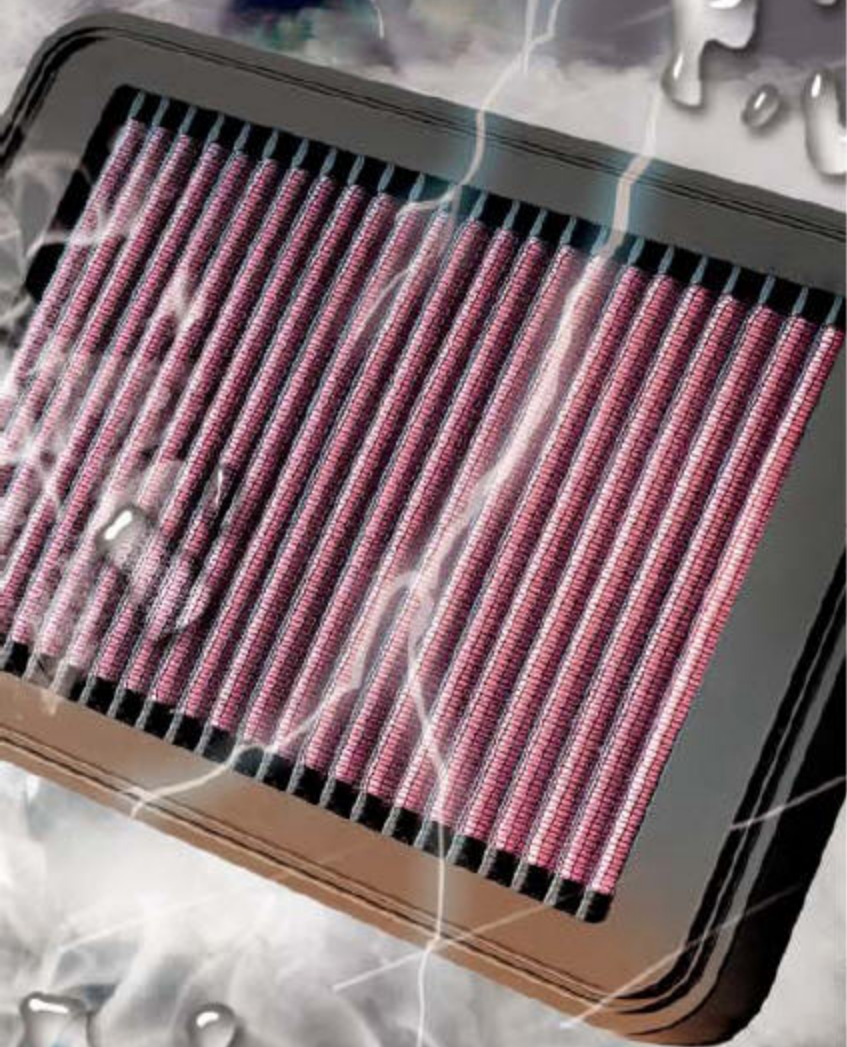
Try this response: "Five bucks, no kissing."—R.G., Grafton, Ohio

Or "You would fall in love, and I would fall asleep."—B.W., Enterprise, Alabama

How about "Fuck yourself—you'll get more pussy."—J.S., Bangor, Maine

When I worked as a chef, the bar manager once uttered the magic words to the kitchen manager. She replied, "You

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wouldn't like me. I just lie there." It broke the tension, and he could only laugh.—D.L., Los Angeles, California

That's too bad. He could have scored a double whammy with "So you're just like your mother."

If that reader needs ideas, he should spend a weekend driving badly in New Jersey. Growing up there, I regularly heard the classic "What? Fuck you, too, you fucking douche bag."—J.G., Boston, Massachusetts

On the rare occasions that I hear those words as a bartender, I reply with "You're welcome." That leaves people wondering if I misheard them, and they have to decide whether to repeat it. They could call over my supervisor to complain that I'm being a smartass, but what are they going to say? That I'm too polite?—R.B., Las Vegas, Nevada

I don't know if this is original, but as a teenager I used to say, "Fuck you back with a baseball bat and make your pussy go quack, quack, quack." The other person would either crack up or stare at me blankly.—S.S., Omaha, Nebraska

That sounds original. Our next reader challenge will be how to accept a compliment.

My girlfriend and I went to a casino this past weekend. As we walked in I gave her \$100 to gamble with. She turned it into \$600 at the slots. Should I expect my \$100 back or maybe half of her winnings?—B.E., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Would you demand your Franklin back if she had lost it? Seems to us the money was a gift. However, if your girlfriend has any sense, she will spend her winnings by taking you out for a night on the town.

What is the proper method to calculate the heart rate you should maintain for a good cardio workout? I've read that you subtract your age from 220, then multiply that by 50 percent to 80 percent, depending on the intensity of your workout. That equation gives me 139, which I reach almost immediately when I exercise. The trainer at my gym said to push myself slightly past my comfort level and keep that up for 30 minutes. When I did that I had a heart rate of 172 beats a minute.—J.A., Tampa, Florida

Many exercise physiologists instead suggest a different formula, known as the Karvonen method: Subtract your age from 220, then subtract your resting heart rate; multiply the remainder by the percentage of intensity and add your resting rate back to the result. But perceived exertion—your trainer's suggestion—is a better guide. That's because some people's hearts apparently push blood with speed, and others' use volume. For example, some Olympic rowers in their 20s have a maximum heart rate of 220, while others who are the same age and just as fit have a maximum of 160. Monitoring your heart

rate can be useful in checking for disease. Studies have found that people whose rate falls fewer than about 12 beats within a minute after stopping vigorous exercise are four times more likely to die within six years than those whose rate falls more rapidly.

My husband and I have been married for 10 years. When it comes to sex, I am usually the initiator. I don't feel he's as into me as he used to be. The other night I thought he had fallen asleep while I was giving him a blow job. I became upset and didn't finish, which made him angry. But that wasn't the first time he didn't touch me or show any reaction. We're too young for this to be happening. Can you help?—C.C., Tulsa, Oklahoma

Your husband is forgetting the first rule of receiving head—reinforce the behavior. The moment a woman feels she is servicing you, her engine will sputter. If he's able to relax during a blow job, you need to mix it up. You aren't a piston. Surprise him, suck his balls, explore with your finger, moan and groan, talk dirty. Find his weaknesses and exploit them. Finally, and most important, your husband needs to get with the program. This includes, obviously, playing a more active role in your mutual sex life. But before anything will happen, he needs to know the score. Write your next letter to him.

My boyfriend is 37, and I'm 23. When we're in bed, I like for him to pretend I'm someone from his past. I ask him first to give me details, such as how one of his ex-girlfriends liked to be fucked or who had the tightest pussy or the biggest tits. Then I pretend I'm her. While the sex is great, he is sometimes reluctant to do this, saying he just wants me to be me. I want him to do it every time we have sex, and I'm worried he'll get bored with it. He says he's never had any lover who wanted to play this game, but I am much younger and full of curiosity. Is this normal?—E.P., Carpentersville, Illinois

He's already bored. Your curiosity is understandable, but there is something to be said for being yourself. Role-playing once in a while is fun, but you're not learning anything about yourself or him by constantly revisiting old ground. The question you should be asking is, What did each of your exes do that turned you on? Gather some intelligence, then mix their best moves with your own and give him something to remember you by.

All reasonable questions—from fashion, food and drink, stereos and sports cars to dating dilemmas, taste and etiquette—will be personally answered if the writer includes a self-addressed, stamped envelope. The most interesting, pertinent questions will be presented on these pages each month. Write the Playboy Advisor, 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019, or send e-mail by visiting our website at playboyadvisor.com.



THE PLAYBOY FORUM

GREENS WITH GUNS

BETRAYED BY THE REPUBLICAN ASSAULT ON
NATURE, HUNTERS JOIN FORCES WITH THE GRANOLA SET

BY DEAN KUIPERS

We are 9,000 feet up in the Wyoming Range, south of Jackson Hole, glassing for mule deer along a snowy ridge, when my guide broaches a subject I'd long considered taboo in hunting camps.

"We're seeing a lot of deer," whispers Okee Von Seggern, putting down the binoculars and settling his horse, "but that's going to end if we don't make some political changes. This herd is under threat."

Political changes? In Dick Cheney's home state? That sounds downright environmentalist—not the kind of language traditionally associated with outfitters. I'm used to being the only environmentalist and usually the only Democrat toting a rifle on these outings, but big changes have come to America's outdoors.

The deer in the Grey's River area, Von Seggern explains, are among the big game that winter in the Pinedale Anticline, a natural-gas field due east of our location, first tapped five years ago. The oil-and-gas-friendly administration of George W. Bush and Cheney expedited leases there by removing many environmental hurdles, in particular winter drilling restrictions. Mule deer numbers are already rapidly declining in the wintering grounds. So Von Seggern, a shift commander in the Casper Fire Department, began accompanying his wife to Sierra Club meetings, looking for solutions. Now he sees conservation (the new preferred term) and traditional hunting-and-fishing alliances in a way that should make the extractive industries and the Republican orthodoxy nervous.

"I understand that oil and gas are here, yes, and they allow me and my state to have things," Von Seggern says. "But I also make my money off outfitting; it's also an industry here. Can you leave just one area alone?"

It's a new sagebrush rebellion, but this time it isn't confined to the West: Hunters, anglers and sportsmen who depend on wildlife and wildlands are forming coalitions

with such groups as the Sierra Club, the Audubon Society and the Izaak Walton League, unlikely partners only a few years ago, to fight the effects of America's swing to the right. The issues—such as the vast expansion of mining and drilling, the sale of public lands, the opening of roadless areas, the restriction of stream access, the destruction of habitat by private landowners and the softening of popular measures like the Clean Water Act—often pit conservative hunters against business and monied interests. These new coalitions embrace an older definition of conservation, one espoused by big-game hunter Teddy Roosevelt, forefather of the National Park Service, and are giving environmentalists rare "bubba power."

"Over the past 30 years there has been a drifting apart of conservationists who come to that avocation through hunting and fishing and conservationists who don't," says Bart Semcer, staffer for the Sierra Club's new Natural Allies hunter-outreach program. "We see ourselves as a group that may be able to bridge the gap and form a stronger conservation movement overall." Semcer notes that 20 percent of the club's 750,000 members report buying a hunting or fishing license in the past year.

"When you can get the Sierra Club and the National Wildlife Federation on the same page, that's saying something," says Tony Dean, host of *Tony Dean Outdoors*, an influential TV and radio show broadcast from Pierre, South Dakota that is a staple for sportsmen across the upper Midwest. "They've been an extremely strong coalition in South

Dakota, one I'm delighted to see." Dean doesn't often have a chance to endorse a Sierra Club proposal, but sportsmen are ready to consider it. At issue is a proposal to protect 71,000 acres of South Dakota's Buffalo Gap National Grasslands as federally designated wilderness. Hunting and fishing would still be allowed on this acreage, as they are in many refuges and wilderness areas, but access by all-terrain vehicles and trucks would be restricted. In the past, conservative



Nickel tailings in
Sudbury, Ontario, shot
by Edward Burtynsky.

ROBERT F. KENNEDY JR. IS MAD AS HELL

"SHOW ME A POLLUTER, I'LL SHOW YOU A FAT CAT"

By Ashley Jude Collie

hunters would have resisted such set-asides, but the new coalition behind this Grasslands Heritage proposal includes not only the rod-and-gun South Dakota Wildlife Federation but also Trout Unlimited, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers and even the Greater Dacotah chapter of Safari Club International.

In a similarly strange wedding, the National Rifle Association has hitched up with the Audubon Society and other environmentalists to fight for the Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge near Plymouth, North Carolina, where a planned Navy landing field threatens a vast waterfowl wintering site.

Weird politics, yes, but Democrats in particular are paying close attention. The rumblings of betrayal among traditional conservationists could be the sound of votes spilling over to Democratic candidates—even though Semcer and others deny this is a goal. The bubba effect, however, is real. Just ask the new governor of Montana, Brian Schweitzer, a Democrat who won the hook-and-bullet vote in 2004 and beat Bob Brown, a Republican fixture in state politics for more than two decades.

Democratic strategist David Sirota, who worked on the Schweitzer campaign, points out that Republicans and their conservative think tanks provided Schweitzer with plenty of ammo: Montana's GOP-controlled legislature had pushed privatization and property-rights regulations just as Republicans have all over the mountain West, attempting to sell off tracts of public land, accelerate mining and drilling and restrict access to hunting and fishing territory. It wasn't hard to spin that into an attack on traditional values. "There's a battle being waged by wealthy private landowners to try to essentially privatize rivers and public lands," Sirota says.

To cap it off, Schweitzer easily snatched the gun issue from his opponent. Even the NRA's Andrew Arulanandam acknowledges that the situation has changed drastically since 2000, with Democrats regaining the issue. Schweitzer is a hunter and rancher, and it took only one key TV ad touting his A rating from the NRA to swing the issue his way.

The rebellion, it would seem, is in full swing. "The Democrats are figuring out ways to wedge the Republicans, just as the Republicans have been wedging Democrats for years," Sirota says. "This is a place where Democrats are actually playing offense. I think it's going to be very effective."

Robert F. Kennedy Jr., son of the former attorney general and 1968 presidential hopeful, is a pioneering environmental lawyer and head of the Waterkeeper Alliance, a group founded to fight for the cleanup of the Hudson River. The organization has expanded to support watershed protection worldwide, while Kennedy's legal work has sought to redress a broad range of environmental and health problems.

PLAYBOY: As the father of six, what bothers you most about the environment?

KENNEDY: I have three sons with asthma. Ozone and particulates in bad air are the primary triggers of asthma attacks. The principal source of those materials in our atmosphere is a couple hundred coal-burning power plants. The Clean Air Act required that they be cleaned up, and the Clinton administration was prosecuting the worst 75 of those plants. But that industry gave \$100 million to President Bush, and one of the first things he did when he came into office was order that all those lawsuits be dropped. And then he abolished the 16-year-old rule that required them to clean up. I now see my kids gasping for air on bad-air days because somebody gave money to a politician.

PLAYBOY: Can environmental degradation be construed as a civil-rights issue?

KENNEDY: The most fundamental rights a human being has are related to

survival, and we need clean air and water. The commons are those assets—air, water, fisheries, wildlife and public lands—not susceptible to private ownership but by their nature owned by the community. Since Roman times they have been protected on behalf of citizens. They don't belong to the president or corporations. The best measure of how a democracy functions is how it distributes these assets. Does

it maintain them so that the poorest in our society have the same access to clean air and water and public lands as the wealthiest? Powerful entities within every society are constantly battling to privatize the commons, to steal the air from our children's lungs, to use our waterways as dumping grounds. It's an attack on democracy because it's a

theft of the most fundamental wealth that every citizen owns.

PLAYBOY: You also see pollution as an attack on free-market capitalism.

KENNEDY: Pollution is a subsidy. Show me a polluter, I'll show you a fat cat using political clout to escape the discipline of the free market. When a coal-burning power plant puts mercury in the air, which poisons our children's brains and makes it so we can't eat the fish—in 19 states it's now unsafe to eat any freshwater fish you catch—that's an act of theft from the public. It's an example of somebody cheating the free market by forcing the public to pay their cleanup costs. There is a huge difference between



free-market capitalism, which democratizes the country and makes us more prosperous and efficient, and the kind of corporate crony capitalism embraced by the White House—with the ideological support of people like Ron Arnold—which is as antithetical to democracy, prosperity and efficiency in America as it is in Nigeria.

PLAYBOY: Speaking of Arnold, how has the current administration co-opted the wise-use movement?

KENNEDY: The present administration is the embodiment of the wise-use movement, of corporate values over human values, of the attitude that we should treat the planet as if it were a business in liquidation and convert our natural resources to cash as quickly as possible to enrich a few corporate CEOs and their shareholders. Environmental injury is deficit spending, and our children are going to pay for this joyride with denuded landscapes, poor health and huge cleanup costs.

PLAYBOY: Do you see crony capitalism ruining more than the environment?

KENNEDY: It undermines our democracy. This happened before, in the late 1800s during the Gilded Age. But reformers like Upton Sinclair and Teddy Roosevelt fought for reforms and took democracy away from the corporations and put it back in the hands of the people. From the beginning of our national history, our leaders have railed against and warned us of domination by corporate power. Roosevelt, a Republican, said that America would never be destroyed by a foreign enemy but warned that our democratic institutions would be subverted by malefactors of great wealth who would erode them from within. In his most famous speech, Dwight Eisenhower, a Republican, warned Americans against domination by the military-industrial complex. Abraham Lincoln, the greatest Republican, said during the height of the Civil War, "I have the South in front of me and I have the bankers behind me, and for my country I fear the bankers most." Corporations should not be running our government. The domination of business by government is called communism. And the domination of government by business is called fascism. What we have to do is walk that narrow trail in between, which is free-market capitalism and democracy—to hold excessive government power at bay with our right hand and excessive corporate power at bay with our left. To do that we need a free, indepen-

dent and vigorous press willing to speak the truth. But we no longer have that here.

PLAYBOY: This past summer ABC ran an interview you gave detailing big pharmaceutical firms' use of thimerosal in vaccines. How did you uncover that?

KENNEDY: I got involved in the thimerosal issue almost serendipitously because I was fighting environmental mercury. I had mothers coming up to me, telling me, "If you're interested in mercury in fish, the biggest vector, the most damage, the highest concentrations are being caused by vaccines containing thimerosal, a mercury-based preservative." I got involved almost reluctantly and looked at the science on both sides. It became clear to me that there was a disturbing cover-up involving government agencies and the pharmaceutical industry. The science showed

that in 1989 the number of vaccines given to American children was dramatically increased, up to 22—when I was a kid we got three vaccines—and that these children were affected disproportionately by a range of neurological and other health disorders. Autism rates went from one in 10,000 children to one in 166 in that generation. In the U.S., thimerosal use is generally being stopped at the state level, and autism rates have begun to drop in those states where bans have been enacted. The problem is we're still giving thimerosal to children all over the world. Our government started exporting it to China in 1999, when autism was virtually unknown there. Now China has 1.8 million autism cases.

PLAYBOY: Can you suggest one easy policy change that could make a big difference?

KENNEDY: If we raised fuel-economy standards in cars by one mile per gallon, we could yield twice the oil that's in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. If we raised standards by eight miles per gallon,

we could eliminate 100 percent of Gulf oil imports to this country. That would be good for America because we could shield ourselves from price sharks in the international oil market and we could end our entanglements with Middle Eastern dictators.

PLAYBOY: How easy would that be?

KENNEDY: We had fuel-economy standards that would have gotten us to 40 miles a gallon by the turn of the century if they hadn't been rolled back by Ronald Reagan in 1986. They had succeeded in jacking up fuel efficiency from 18 mpg to 27.5 in six years. Now we're back to about 22.

BUSH TREATS THE PLANET AS IF IT WERE A BUSINESS IN LIQUIDATION.



MARGINALIA

RESPONSE OF WHISTLE-BLOWER

Daniel Ellsberg, who leaked the Pentagon Papers during the Vietnam war, to questions at a New Jersey fund-raiser about leaks concerning secret interrogation facilities in Eastern Europe: "I think there are more and more people saying, 'Who are we? And what are we becoming? This is not America.' It seems to me there's no way of remedying the wrongdoing without bringing it out. People should consider giving up their careers and taking the kind of risks our soldiers are being asked to take. I assumed that I was breaking the law. I assumed I would go to prison for the rest of my life."



FROM A 1977

television interview with former president Richard Nixon: "When the president does it, that means that it is not illegal. If the president, for example, approves something because of the national security, or in this case because of a threat to internal peace and order of significant magnitude, then the president's decision in that instance is one that enables those who carry it out to carry it out without violating a law."



FROM A LETTER on the Air Force's website, written in response to the new mission statement released December 7: "I read with great interest about the Air Force's new mission statement: 'The mission of the United States Air Force is to deliver sovereign options for the defense of the United States of America and its global interests—to fly and fight in air, space and cyberspace.' Ever since I came into the Air Force, I've heard 'Fly, fight and win.' Yes, the world has changed, but I'm sure that we're still supposed to win. If, as General Moseley wrote, 'Our mission is our guiding compass,' why is 'win' not a part of the new mission statement? Any military service with aircraft can fly and fight, but as the Iraqi and Yugoslav air forces learned in the past 15 years, flying and fighting don't equate to winning. Secretary Wynne wants to recognize U.S. Air Force leadership in the cyberspace domain, but he doesn't



mention winning there, either. The cyberspace domain is critical today and I welcome that addition, but this Air Force must win regardless of the domain. The taxpayers expect more of us

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READER RESPONSE

DARWIN, CARTMAN AND THE BIBLE

I'm glad that the Dover, Pennsylvania school board has been enjoined from corrupting students' understanding of science with its silly statement about intelligent design. Natural selection may not explain the entire picture we have of adaptation, but that is something that should be explored scientifically. After all, most of what we teach is an affront to someone's view of God.

Trevor Reid
Baltimore, Maryland

I have a question for Matt Stone and the rest of the so-called *South Park* conservatives described in the December *Playboy Forum* ("We Want Bush"). When the last strip club in your town has been padlocked, when the producer of your favorite adult video is looking at 20 years in a federal hellhole prison, when the last adult video company has spent its last dime on legal fees, and when even *PLAYBOY* has been consigned to the Jesus bonfire, will you then wake



South Park conservative? The party's still over.

up and realize that your fellow conservatives (i.e., real conservatives) are not your friends? Will you finally realize you've been played for useful idiots, or will you blame the whole thing on the stupid liberals?

Andrew Scot McEwan
Kettering, Ohio

After reading about Parents Against Bad Books in Schools ("Marginalia," December), I wrote the organization a letter pointing out that the Bible contains extremely graphic depictions of every kind of violence the group lists on its form. For example, Psalms includes a passage that glorifies the brutal murder of infants by bashing their head against a rock. Judges has a story about a man



More graphic violence—in the Bible.

whose concubine is gang-raped to death by a band of men who had intended to rape the man. There are vivid accounts of torture, executions, beheadings and crucifixions, as well as depictions of bestiality, incest, pedophilia and prostitution. I then asked why the Bible is not included on the group's list of objectionable books, given how poorly it fares according to its criteria. So far the organization has declined to respond.

Dusty Jones
Denton, Texas

Regarding passengers who read *PLAYBOY* on commercial airline flights: Michael Covell writes in January's "Reader Response" that "many Christians also fly, and they or their children may not wish to see the magazine as they walk the aisle." I am a Christian, I assume the writer of the letter is also a Christian, and it appears that we both read *PLAYBOY*. But this is not about practicing any particular religion; it's about being a censoring prude. Women are beautiful, and nobody should be ashamed to look at them. If you don't want to see them, then don't look at my magazine. In other words, mind your own business.

Richard Bergen
Livermore, California

MISSIVES RELOADED

I would like to thank Pat Jordan ("Stand and Fire," December) for pointing out the reason right-to-carry laws work: Most people have common sense. He used common sense when he decided not to use his weapon. Most critics of these laws rant and rave about how they will lead to shoot-outs in the streets. Law-abiding people are still law-abiding people even when they are carrying a weapon. We should have more faith in our fellow

citizens and trust that common sense is as widespread as its name implies.

Jordan von Schwanitz
Woodbridge, Virginia

On December 28, 2005, the first shooting to test Florida's Stand Your Ground law took place in Broward County. Two men fatally shot a third during a gunfight that broke out after an argument over a school-bus altercation between children from the men's families. Following the killing, Jim Leljedal, a spokesman for the Broward County Sheriff's office, said, "As far as we can tell at this point, those men had a right to be at that corner, they had a right to have guns in their pockets, and they may have been justified in returning fire."

Pat Jordan writes, "I reached under my shirt for the pistol in my belt and flicked off the safety." In my professional capacity let me say that the only thing that makes me giddier with anticipation than someone keeping a pistol in his belt is someone who fondles it while it's still in his belt.

Chuck Shepherd
Tampa Bay, Florida

Shepherd writes the syndicated column *News of the Weird*. We're happy to report that Jordan has yet to warrant coverage by him.

Deadly force does not always mean a firearm. If you have a black belt in karate and you disarm and kill someone who has attacked you with a knife, you have used deadly force. This Florida law just makes it clear to perpetrators that if



Deadly force does not require bullets.

they commit a crime and end up getting hurt, they have no recourse against victims who have decided to defend themselves with any kind of deadly force.

Steve LaRue
Ogden, Utah

E-mail via the web at letters.playboy.com. Or write: 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10019.

NEWSFRONT



Red Lantern District

WENZHOU, CHINA—Thanks in large part to a family business run by Wu Zhenwang, China has become the world's leading manufacturer of sex toys. Wenzhou Lover Health Product began when Wu, then running an electrical-machinery company, went to Beijing in 1992 to see China's first sex shop. Noting that most of the products were imported—and expensive—he set about acquiring permits and inked a deal with a Japanese business partner with design expertise and links to foreign markets. Fortunately for Wu (who controls about 60 percent of the domestic market) the Chinese government has thus far been too prudish to enter the sex-toy industry, allowing private firms to prosper as domestic demand has grown. Wenzhou Lover now plans to franchise 1,000 branded sex shops across China.

Adult Swim

BIRMINGHAM, U.K.—The first over-the-counter fertility test for men, called Fertell, went on sale in the U.K. earlier this year. Developed by researchers at the University of Birmingham, it is designed to detect fertility problems and thus cut the waiting time for treatments, the efficacy of which can be age-sensitive. Fertell is novel in that it tests sperm's ability to swim through a barrier designed to function like a cervix; most hospital analyses only count sperm and examine its movement rather than assessing its actual performance. And because a home test eliminates much of the embarrassment and inconvenience of having to produce a sperm sample in a hospital setting, British health experts believe more men will keep themselves informed.

Life in the Fast Lane

PHOENIX—After Phoenix police sergeant Dave Norton pulled over Candace Dickinson for driving alone in a high-occupancy-vehicle lane on Interstate 10, Dickinson pointed to her swollen belly and claimed the fetus in her womb represented her car's requisite second occupant. The officer still fined her \$367. The case attracted the attention of pro-life groups, which saw in Dickinson's contention a Rosa Parks-like test case. As Shane Wikfors, executive director of Arizona Right to Life, put it, "Apparently the officer did not see the other person in the vehicle. Nevertheless the other person was indeed in the vehicle, being carried by Candace in utero, of course." But in January, Phoenix municipal court judge Dennis Freeman

ruled against Dickinson. Significantly, his ruling did not address the question of the status of the fetus; instead the judge issued a "common sense" decision, ruling that "the law is meant to fill empty space in a vehicle" and thus for HOV purposes each person should occupy a "separate and distinct" space in the car.

They Call Her Tipper

SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA—U.S. district court judge Ronald Whyte granted an injunction against a California law that would have made it illegal to sell or rent violent video games to minors. The law, signed last year by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, was to



go into effect on January 1 and would have imposed a fine of \$1,000 for any infraction, but groups representing game makers and retailers challenged it on First Amendment grounds. In granting the injunction—a temporary measure while the challenge works its way through the courts—Whyte said the industry lawsuit was "likely to succeed." The California bill was one of many introduced following the discovery this past year of sex scenes in *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*. Nationwide in 2005, 80 bills seeking to restrict the sale of video games were proposed. At the federal level, Senator Hillary Clinton (D-N.Y.) has been leading attempts to limit video game sales.

MARGINALIA

(continued from page 45)

than just 'fly and fight.' Without 'win' the rest is meaningless. Anything less and we're just another group of people in uniforms who operate airplanes."

FROM A MARCH 14, 2002

Washington Times op-ed by Senator Rick Santorum

(R-Pa.): "Intelligent design is a legitimate scientific theory that should be taught in science classes."

From Santorum's comments on National Public Radio on August 4, 2005: "I'm not comfortable with intelligent design being taught in the science classroom."



FROM A REVIEW of Paul Bowman's *Nakedness and the Bible* on the website of pastor Jeffrey Bowman (no relation): "Bowman has carefully examined all scriptures relating to nudity and nakedness and has done so with the patience and skill of a neurosurgeon. Rarely does one find a book that treats a topic exhaustively. Even rarer is finding an exhaustive book on this topic. Bowman more than gives us his opinion; he substantiates it from the biblical text (English, Hebrew and Greek) and other historical documents from the biblical period. This book presents a very compelling case for what our society doesn't understand—that there is good nakedness. This is a must-read for every Christian."

FROM THE AGE OF REFORM,

written by historian Richard Hofstadter in 1955: "At the so-called grass roots of American politics there is a wide and pervasive tendency to believe that there is some great but essentially very simple struggle going on, at the heart of which there lies some single conspiratorial force, whether it be the force represented by the 'gold bugs,' the Catholic Church, big business, corrupt politicians, the liquor interests and the saloons, or the Communist Party, and that this evil is something that must be not merely limited, checked and controlled but rather extirpated root and branch at the earliest possible moment. It is widely assumed that some technique can be found that will really do this. All too often the assumption prevails among our political and intellectual leaders that the judgment of the people about such things must of necessity be right and that it is therefore their own business not to educate the public or curb its demands for the impossible but to pretend that these demands are altogether sensible and to try to find ways to placate them."



IS HIV MAKING INROADS INTO THE STRAIGHT COMMUNITY?

WE MAY NOT BE AS SAFE AS WE THINK

This past November the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released an analysis of 157,252 HIV infections reported from 2001 to 2004 in 33 states (not including California). The agency found that 44 percent of those infected believed they got the virus from male-to-male sexual contact, 17 percent from sharing a needle with another IV drug user and 34 percent from heterosexual contact.

That last figure caught our eye. For many straight people, especially young adults suffering from what has been called condom fatigue, HIV is a distant concern, the property of gay men and needle users. Heterosexuals have had the occasional scare, such as when Magic Johnson insisted in 1991 that he could have been infected only by a woman, but for the most part the vagina seems to be a safe haven. And it may be, to a degree. With a diameter of 80 to 100 nanometers, HIV doesn't spread as easily through vaginal walls as through the rectum because the outermost cells of the vagina as well as those on the foreskin and head of the penis block particles with a diameter greater than about 30 nanometers.

But HIV is resilient and people like to have sex, so the virus has plenty of opportunities to find a breach. According to one leading hypothesis, the virus may get in via Langerhans cells, which lie below the vagina's HIV-resistant epithelial layer but have projections that approach or penetrate its surface. HIV may also find its way in through abrasions caused by STDs such as herpes (by one estimate, half of all sexually active Americans will contract an STD by the age of 25) or through tiny cuts (including those

caused by lack of lubrication). Studies have found microabrasions in a large percentage of women following sex and also frequently on the inner foreskin and head of the penis. The foreskin, in fact, provides a much larger area for damage, which may explain why uncircumcised men appear to have an increased risk of infection—and why female-to-male transmission appears to be lower in the West than in Africa, where many more men are intact. Scientists also wonder if HIV

the remaining transmissions but suggest that the number caused by shared hypodermic and dental needles has been underestimated. Deeply closeted homosexuality could also play a role. In rebuttal, three French scientists point out that HIV is rare in Africans younger than 15 but that the infection rate rises quickly for those above 15 and faster in women than in men. Among women ages 15 to 24, the percentage of those infected closely tracks the percentage of those having sex

and those becoming pregnant, which suggests a causal link—when women start having sex, they contract HIV.

A major challenge in preventing the spread of HIV is that many men don't immediately realize they have the virus. As it happens, HIV is most readily transmitted during the three to six months after infection. (It isn't as dangerous again until the months before death.) Two British scientists, Robin Shattock and John Moore, note that while antiviral drugs can reduce the HIV in semen and the

female genital tract to undetectable levels, the virus "can sometimes be found in semen even when undetectable in the bloodstream. So although some infected individuals pose little transmission risk, others could be supershedders and highly infectious."

That's one reason scientists hope that a cream or gel can be developed to protect women by creating a temporary barrier in the vagina. For example, Dr. Michael Lederman, director of the Center for AIDS Research at Case Western Reserve University, is studying how to prevent HIV from attaching to Langerhans cells. But, he says, a vaccine would be much easier.

—Chip Rowe

THE STRAIGHT FACTS GlaxoSmithKline hired Magic Johnson as the face of HIV for a campaign to sell antiviral drugs. Three years later fashion designer Kenneth Cole assembled a host of celebrities for an awareness campaign.

uses different methods to penetrate different tissues, which would make their search for a way to block it that much more challenging.

While most men in the U.S. who acquire HIV do so through gay sex or IV drug use, the majority of infections in men elsewhere are attributed to heterosexual transmission. In Africa 90 percent of all infections are linked to heterosexual transmission. Not everyone is convinced that figure is accurate. Reviewing the data for the *International Journal of STD & AIDS*, John Potterat and David Gisselquist conclude that only about a third of African infections occur during heterosexual sex. They don't break down

PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: KEANU REEVES

A candid conversation with the enigmatic star about picking the right roles, the Zen of riding and why the man behind Neo doesn't own a computer

Keanu Reeves is possibly Hollywood's most elusive megastar, an actor who has managed to remain mysterious on the big screen and even more so in real life. But keeping his fans and critics confused and off-guard has paid off handsomely. Reeves, 41, has packed movie theaters by playing an improbable range of characters in some of the most unforgettable films of the past two decades.

Take, for example, the legendary *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure*, a movie "just stupid enough to be endearing," as one reviewer put it. The role of Ted could easily have pigeonholed Reeves if the actor had not gone on to appear in parts as varied as a Shakespeare-quoting bisexual hustler in *My Own Private Idaho* (Vincent Canby called Reeves's performance "very fine") and a stoic cop in the highly caffeinated *Speed*, in which he uttered such lines as "Harry, there's enough C-4 on this thing to put a hole in the world!"

Then, of course, there are *The Matrix* and its sequels, in which Reeves's kung fu and slow-motion bullet dodging make Bruce Lee seem slothful. The three *Matrix* movies, released in 1999 and 2003, earned upward of \$1.6 billion worldwide. Of sci-fi films, only the *Star Wars* series has made more. Reeves, who shared in the trilogy's profits, took home more than \$150 million.

Along the way, there were flops—forgettable

(and forgotten) movies such as *Feeling Minnesota*, *Chain Reaction* and *Sweet November*—but there were far more hits, from *Much Ado About Nothing*, *River's Edge* and *Little Buddha* to *Something's Gotta Give* and *Constantine*.

Reeves was born in Beirut to an English mother and a father who is part Chinese and part Hawaiian; Reeves's unusual first name is Hawaiian for "cool breeze over the mountains." His parents split when Reeves was young, and he and his sisters were raised by their mother, mostly in Toronto, where he attended four high schools. He was a skilled ice-hockey goalie, nicknamed the Wall, who dreamed of a pro career—that is, until he discovered acting. He dropped out of school when he was 17 and worked steadily as an actor in Canada before moving to Hollywood at the age of 20.

At a time when his fellow stars are acting out in public as well as on film—Tom Cruise jumping up and down on Oprah's couch, Russell Crowe tossing a telephone across a hotel lobby—Reeves is low-key and silent. His characters say relatively little on-screen, and he says even less off. He has continually declined to comment on some of the most dramatic events in his life, including the tragedy that befell him and his girlfriend Jennifer Syme when their baby was stillborn weeks before its due date in 1999 and Syme's death in a car accident, in 2001. Because of his reluctance to expose his personal life,

Reeves remains strangely unknown for such a major star. His interviews are rare, and a lengthy one such as this is almost nonexistent. In addition Reeves avoids the paparazzi, stays out of the limelight and often refuses to answer interviewers' questions at all. That hasn't stopped the rumor mill, however; sketchy blog reports have alleged romances with everyone from Lindsay Lohan to Diane Keaton, his co-star in *Something's Gotta Give*. When asked about her supposed affair with Reeves, Keaton responded "with a disbelieving yelp," according to *The New York Times*.

One of Reeves's upcoming movies is *A Scanner Darkly*, based on a futuristic tale by author Philip K. Dick; the movie was shot in live action and then animated. Reeves plays a narcotics officer investigating his own alter ego, a drug-abusing dealer of a dangerous new hallucinogen. "Keanu threw himself into the role," says director Richard Linklater, whose movies include *Dazed and Confused* and *The School of Rock*. "There is a beautiful innocence about him, a direct line of empathy that the audience picks up. He feels things deeply and conveys them without saying anything or even displaying them in his face. I think when he looks in the mirror he doesn't see a leading man or even a good-looking guy. At different times he may see a hobo or a guy in an alley, snuffing through life with no food in



"As far as I can tell, devices meant to save you time and help you communicate actually take away time and give you an excuse not to communicate. People like e-mail because they don't have to answer it. I don't even have a computer."



"I still ride my motorcycle every day. If there's a good moon out, you can coast all the way down toward the ocean. It's not like I'm howling at the moon, but it's quiet, and you can hear and feel the breeze. There is a certain aspect to riding."



PHOTOGRAPHY BY JACK GUY

"*Brokeback Mountain* has been put on a platform as a love story. Is it a more open world because it's a story about love between two men? I guess, yes. *My Own Private Idaho* still holds up, by the way. I saw it recently. It has aged well."

his refrigerator." Reeves is also reuniting with Sandra Bullock, his bus-driver companion in *Speed*, for *The Lake House*.

PLAYBOY sent writer Michael Fleming, who most recently interviewed Jamie Foxx and the Rock, to meet with Reeves. His report: "When he arrived at Le Meridien hotel in Los Angeles, Reeves had longish hair and a substantial black beard ringing his boyish face. It almost seemed as if the growth were intended to give him something to hide behind. He wore a black blazer and gray scarf, never taking either off as we chatted for an afternoon.

"Reeves's intelligence may show through in his choice of roles and his measured performances, but boy, is he guarded. He shields his private life more than any movie star I've interviewed. I waited for him to open up, but whenever it got personal, he became uncomfortable and quiet. If not loquacious, he was at least gracious and polite—even, I noticed, fanning the smoke from his numerous cigarettes away from me."

PLAYBOY: In your new movie, *A Scanner Darkly*, you return to the genre of *The Matrix*, science fiction, this time with a hallucinogenic animation overlay. Are you a sci-fi, techno-obsessed, geeky kind of guy?

REEVES: Me? I don't even have a computer.

PLAYBOY: Neo from *The Matrix* has no computer?

REEVES: That's right. It always made [*Matrix* directors] Larry and Andy Wachowski laugh.

PLAYBOY: How have you avoided owning a computer in 2006?

REEVES: I'm more interested in people than technology. I'm not a gearhead.

PLAYBOY: How about a BlackBerry? Can you be a Hollywood celebrity without one?

REEVES: Yes. With all technology, I am interested in the ideas, what it means sociologically. I love reading about inventions, knowing why and how people use them—the Internet and the rest—but I'm far more fascinated by the human aspects. As far as

I can tell, devices meant to save you time and help you communicate actually take away time and give you an excuse not to communicate. People like e-mail because they don't have to answer it. You want to talk to people, but you get less time to do it. I prefer letters. I like to write them.

PLAYBOY: In longhand?

REEVES: On a typewriter.

PLAYBOY: Do you use Wite-Out for your mistakes?

REEVES: Nah. I put Xs through mistakes. That's part of the charm.

PLAYBOY: If *Star Wars* is the standard, where does the *Matrix* trilogy rank in the pantheon of science-fiction franchises? Financially, it's number two.

REEVES: I would say we're the new num-

ber one. Everyone has their own ranking, but *The Matrix* is definitely my favorite. I still get protective about it. I got so mad when *The Matrix* wasn't nominated for an Academy Award last time.

PLAYBOY: An Academy Award for—

REEVES: At least for the special effects. Are you fucking kidding me? Are you fucking insane?

PLAYBOY: The first *Matrix* movie came out right before the first *Star Wars* prequel. By comparison *The Matrix* was reviewed as fresh and cutting-edge. It developed a cult following and inspired fashion trends, and the entire series took in more than \$1.5 billion. When you first read the script, did you imagine it would become such a sensation?



I lead a very quiet life. I don't get out much. It's kind of sad, but—ah, well.

REEVES: I didn't, though I saw a great script and a great story. The ideas pushed the envelope in science fiction. I had never heard of anything like *The Matrix* before. I hadn't seen any of those ideas before—a guy living in a dream. They were going to slow down the action scenes, and there was this kung fu stuff. I loved all that. I knew it was going to be hard work—I recognized the effort it would take—but it excited me.

PLAYBOY: When you look back, do you remember the effort or the movies' success?

REEVES: It was very exciting to work on those films. I feel very grateful for how my life changed because of them—what I went through, the people I met. Neo has a relationship to humans, to machines

and to energy itself. What does he ask for? Peace. I think that's one of the best messages we can strive for. I have strong feelings about that message. That part of it helped me get through the experience.

PLAYBOY: Reportedly, you and numerous co-stars were injured while making those movies. How badly were you banged up?

REEVES: My knees aren't the same. They're just not. I have to get them scoped.

PLAYBOY: Because of the kung fu scenes?

REEVES: Yeah, though it was just movie kung fu, not the real stuff. We hit each other only a couple of times, so it wasn't that bad. But people broke things. Carrie-Anne Moss hurt her leg, and Hugo Weaving had to have a hole drilled into his hip to drain some fluid. I was taking ice baths and massages and trying not to cry at night. But would I do it again? Absolutely.

I'm still kind of tired from it, though. I'm still recovering. Five or six months ago I remember saying to a friend that I finally felt as if I'd processed the first *Matrix*.

PLAYBOY: Five months ago? That film came out in 1999.

REEVES: Yeah, but I'm a sensitive guy. The first shoot was eight months, and the second was 22 months. My stunt double told me I did more wire work than 90 percent of the stuntmen in the business.

PLAYBOY: After shoots like those, do you stay in touch with the directors and cast?

REEVES: Yes. I saw Laurence Fishburne just the other day. I bought him some artwork for his new house. I haven't seen Carrie-Anne for a while. I saw Hugo at a film festival a few months back. All the people we're speaking about are my friends. If I got married, they'd all be invited.

PLAYBOY: When it finally shuts down, how do you get an intensive shoot like *The Matrix* out of your system? Do you get lost for three weeks?

REEVES: Three weeks? Is that all I get? Normally when I finish work, I'm very tired but also restless. I look to reconnect with friends. I ride my bike.

PLAYBOY: Where?

REEVES: I mainly just ride around town, seeking sunsets and the ocean. I ride around the canyons or Malibu.

PLAYBOY: You've had several notable accidents. Have your injuries affected your riding?

REEVES: I still ride every day, pretty much.

PLAYBOY: Which is your favorite bike?

REEVES: A 1974 Norton Commando 850. It's an English sport touring twin. Comfortable. You can go up to San Francisco in a jump.

PLAYBOY: One of your well-publicized

spills temporarily messed up your face pretty well. Do you wear a helmet now?
REEVES: It's the law, so now I do, except when I'm in places that have no helmet laws.

PLAYBOY: A lot is riding on you when you star in a film. Are you contractually restricted from riding motorcycles when you're shooting a movie?

REEVES: Sometimes I have to state my position, to say whether I will or won't ride.

PLAYBOY: You have said you like going on what you call the devil ride. What is it?

REEVES: There are a couple of spots on Mulholland Drive in the Hollywood Hills, where, if there's a good moon out, you can coast all the way down toward the ocean. You shut off your lights and go. It's very quiet. You're guided by the moonlight. It's very pleasant. It's not like I'm howling at the moon, but it's quiet, and you can hear and feel the breeze. There is a certain aspect to riding. You're getting away and enjoying nature and riding. You can't daydream when you ride. You have to be here now.

PLAYBOY: Is the thrill, as well as the danger, part of the attraction?

REEVES: Well, I'm not looking to get into any mishaps.

PLAYBOY: What caused your accidents?

REEVES: I've had a few of them. I crashed a few times. Once a car pulled a U-turn from a parking space in front of me into my lane. The driver couldn't see me coming, and I couldn't get out of the way. That one is responsible for my fake teeth—my teeth replacements.

PLAYBOY: How badly were you hurt?

REEVES: I sheared some skin off my right shin. I broke my ankle and a couple of teeth. Not so bad.

PLAYBOY: Easy for you to say. And you have a scar on your abdomen. From what?

REEVES: That was from running into the hillside. I took a turn a little too fast and just ran out of road.

PLAYBOY: Do these accidents ever make you consider quitting?

REEVES: No. After an accident I just vow to go a little slower.

PLAYBOY: How quickly do you get back on the bike afterward?

REEVES: As soon as I heal up.

PLAYBOY: In addition to riding, do you work out?

REEVES: I guess it depends on the day.

PLAYBOY: Do you try to stay in shape? What regimen do you have?

REEVES: Eat right, get plenty of rest.

PLAYBOY: Do you go to the gym? Do any Pilates?

REEVES: Nah. I'm an old-fashioned guy. I lift some, and I run.

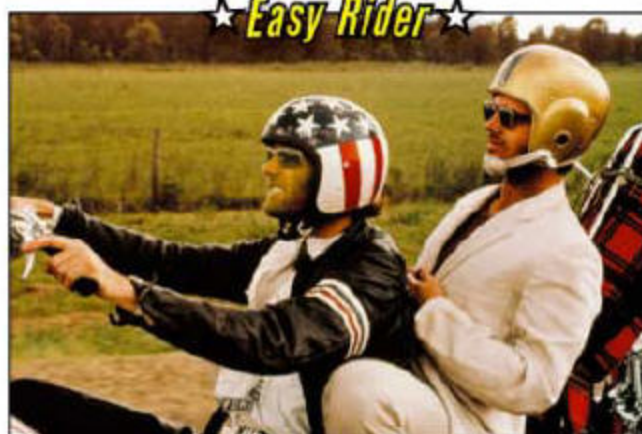
PLAYBOY: How about fashion trends? What do your long hair and beard say about you? Would you define your look as more slacker or fashion plate?

REEVES: I wouldn't describe myself as a slacker or a fashion plate. I visit both of those worlds. I like to get dressed up once in a while.

Up in Smoke

Playing a stoner can send a career sky-high

★ Easy Rider ★



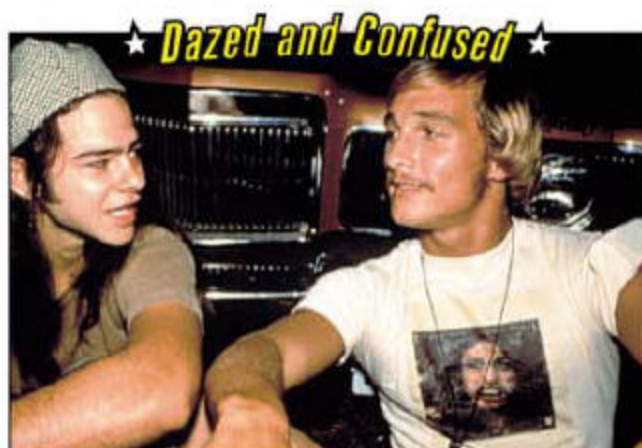
Jack Nicholson: a boozy ACLU lawyer and perpetual screwup who hits the road with motorcycling hippie freaks Peter Fonda and Dennis Hopper. **Drugs of choice:** Jim Beam and, later, grass, which was actually toked on camera. **Why the buzz:** Nicholson gave a career-making performance in this 1969 counterculture smash. **Downer:** He didn't win the best supporting actor Oscar that year.



Sean Penn: high school surfer dude and moron supreme Jeff Spicoli. **Drugs of choice:** buds, ludes. **Why the buzz:** Whether facing off with uptight history teacher Mr. Hand or nonchalantly ordering pizza during class, Penn makes Spicoli an icon by hitting every situation and line way out of the park. **Downer:** We'll pay good money to anyone who can find Penn's sense of humor today.



Keanu Reeves: the likably lunkheaded high school senior and heavy-metal band member who time-trips through ancient history along with his best bud to ace an exam. **Drug of choice:** Ted's most excellent obliviousness. **Why the buzz:** Reeves has never been funnier, especially when displaying his iffy grasp of history. **Downer:** A sequel and animated TV version ran this franchise into the ground.



Matthew McConaughey: a swaggering, muscle-car-driving sex machine too cool (and too old) for the high school crowd he hangs with. **Drugs of choice:** grass, beer. **Why the buzz:** McConaughey supplies so many of the yuks and so much of the pathos in this soulfully hilarious classic that it's no wonder the performance made his career. **Downer:** McConaughey hasn't scored this great a role since.



Mike Myers: the headbanging nimrod who broadcasts his own public-access TV show from his parents' basement with loser friend Garth (Dana Carvey). **Drug of choice:** Unspecified, but it's all in the subtext. **Why the buzz:** Myers and Carvey parlayed their Saturday Night Live chemistry into big-screen success, becoming 1990s grunge icons. **Downer:** The lame Wayne's World 2 is not worthy.



Dave Chappelle: hilarious double duty as Thurgood Jensen, a janitor at a drug lab, and pothead rapper and pimp daddy Sir Smoke-a-Lot. **Drug of choice:** Weed. Duh. **Why the buzz:** Whether trying to con his squeaky-clean girlfriend Mary Jane (get it?) or confessing that pot has made him impotent, Chappelle is hilarious. **Downer:** Where's Dave now when we need him? —Stephen Rebell

PLAYBOY: Do you wear a character around after the workday is over?

REEVES: I tend to bring it home until I feel I know the guy I'm playing. If I'm doing an accent, I may answer the phone in the accent. When I worked on Sam Raimi's *The Gift*, I was going to bars and hanging out, jumping into the truck and wearing thick clothes. I enjoy that process of immersing myself in a character.

PLAYBOY: How much of a stretch was it to play a wife beater in *The Gift*? He was a brutal guy. Besides the accent and clothes, did you bring him home?

REEVES: I said no a lot more than I usually do. I wasn't as polite as I usually am.

PLAYBOY: Hilary Swank played your wife and was the recipient of your brutality. How did it feel to summon that rage and bully a woman?

REEVES: A part of me was afraid of my violent side. Once Hilary and I were improvising in a trailer. I just kept saying, "You're lying. You're lying. You're lying." We were rehearsing this argument, and Sam said, "Every time you say, 'You're lying,' instead of saying it, just hit her." Hilary was like, "No, Donnie, I wasn't—" [makes slapping noise] "Donnie, I wasn't—" [slaps] Sam was like, "Grab her face." This went on until finally I pushed her up against the wall and started taking her pants off. I stopped, but it was very scary. It was like, "Oh shit. Okay. Now I get it. I get it." It was very frightening.

PLAYBOY: Did it help Swank prepare for her role in *Million Dollar Baby*?

REEVES: [Laughs] Yeah. And by the way, I also learned a bit of...well, that some of the ladies don't mind it, so.... Nah, that's awful to say.

PLAYBOY: In one of your next movies you're playing Hollywood mobster Johnny Stompanato. Catherine Zeta-Jones plays his girlfriend Lana Turner. Stompanato was a small-time L.A. gangster with a legendary temper. Turner's daughter, Cheryl, stabbed him to death to save her mother. Was he similar to the character in *The Gift*?

REEVES: I found it interesting that Stompanato had this temper but that he was trying to control and civilize it. He didn't want to be a thug. He didn't want to be Mickey Cohen's tough guy. I liked the struggle of a violent guy who tries to change his nature.

PLAYBOY: By the time of *The Gift*, you had become one of the highest-paid actors in Hollywood. It has been reported that you made more than \$150 million on the three *Matrix* films—one of the more lucrative movie-star paydays in history. Before that you had a reputation for living a modest existence. Does such a windfall dramatically change the way you live?

REEVES: Yes. It definitely changed the way I can live. Absolutely.

PLAYBOY: But has it? How?

REEVES: I can buy my mom a house,

which is great. Then I can do the renovation. And yes, I can expand my level of philanthropy. A lot of things in my life extended out. How I am personally isn't really affected by it, but my life is. I'm still pretty sparing, though. I haven't gone nuts. I haven't changed much of my lifestyle. No, I don't have a jet.

PLAYBOY: After having long been content to live in hotels, you bought a house. As you get older is it more important to put down roots?

REEVES: That's how I would put it. I guess I was looking for something more. Yeah, and this is after living in the Chateau Marmont for four years in the 1990s.

PLAYBOY: What's the best thing about living in a hotel for four years?

REEVES: Room service. Overall it was good fun, but the fun has to stop at some point. It was time to check out. Now it's nice to have a home.

PLAYBOY: Do you make your own bed?

REEVES: I do. It's good to make your own bed and do your own dishes.

PLAYBOY: Did you decorate your house yourself?

REEVES: Yes. It's kind of modern. Modern

Robert De Niro once spoke about the loss of his privacy, how he missed the ability to be a voyeur, to look at other people. As an actor, you don't want to lose that.

comfy, if that's possible.

PLAYBOY: How else has your life changed since *The Matrix*? Can you go out and be anonymous, or is that time gone?

REEVES: It's important to do it still. Robert De Niro once spoke about the loss of his privacy, how he missed the ability to be a voyeur, to look at other people. As an actor, you don't want to lose that. I can still walk around, do what I need to and not be bothered much.

PLAYBOY: How does it feel when strangers come up and act as if they know you?

REEVES: It's generally nice if people want to say hi. I can move around the world pretty freely. No one freaks out.

PLAYBOY: Can you still go to the mall—anywhere you want?

REEVES: Yeah, absolutely. I went to the movies the other night. It was fine. I got recognized a couple of times, but it's no big deal. You never get supercomfortable with that, but in my experience it's usually pretty much "Hi" and "Can you sign this?" which is fine.

PLAYBOY: After three *Matrix* films, you did *Constantine* and *Thumbsucker*, an art-house film about a guy with an oral fixation.

Upcoming you have *The Lake House*, with Sandra Bullock, and *A Scanner Darkly*—four utterly different types of movies. After the second *Bill & Ted's*, you played a bisexual hustler in *My Own Private Idaho*. Are you intentionally trying to mix it up? Is one film a reaction to the one that preceded it?

REEVES: One film isn't a reaction to the last as much as it is just finding something I'm interested in. At the same time, I don't want to become "that guy" or be known for any one thing. I'd like to be able to do any kind of role in any kind of film.

PLAYBOY: Was it difficult for you to shake the perception of being an airhead from *Bill & Ted's*? Did it make it harder to get the next job?

REEVES: It wasn't as hard for me to shake the perception as it seemed to be for other people. [laughs] I must have done a good job, because some people thought that was who I was.

PLAYBOY: Were you in high demand for roles that required an air-guitar solo?

REEVES: I never got that. People in the business never seemed to pigeonhole me because of the role, though sometimes I'd get it critically and socially.

PLAYBOY: Now critics finally seem to appreciate your work more than at any other time. Have you gotten better, or have they caught on?

REEVES: [Groans] Have I gotten better, or have they caught on? I feel like I've grown in my craft. I plan to continue that. In terms of catching on, I don't really know. Whatever.

PLAYBOY: You received good reviews for *My Own Private Idaho*. Your on-screen relationship with River Phoenix is as intimate and daring as the relationship in *Brokeback Mountain*. What was the reaction to that movie?

REEVES: *My Own Private Idaho* was well received, but the reaction had a lot to do with the film's structure. In the middle you have Shakespeare. You have street kids, homosexuality, father-son stuff. There is no straight, direct dramatic narrative.

PLAYBOY: If it had come out today, would it be embraced like *Brokeback Mountain*? Is there more openness to the depiction of homosexual and bisexual relationships now than when *My Own Private Idaho* came out in 1991?

REEVES: I think so. *Brokeback Mountain* has been put on a platform as a love story. Is it a more open world because it's a story about love between two men? Well, we've got gay marriage now. So I guess, yes. *Idaho* still holds up, by the way. I saw it recently. It has aged well.

PLAYBOY: And you? Are there qualities in your acting now that you're 40 that weren't there when you were 20 or even 30?

REEVES: I don't know. I don't look at myself like that. I just look forward to what happens next.

(continued on page 140)

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FAITH & REASON

AS THE INTELLIGENT-DESIGN CASE
IN DOVER, PENNSYLVANIA DEMON-
STRATES, THE BATTLE BETWEEN
SCIENCE AND RELIGION RAGES ON

Michael Behe is a modest-looking man—short, balding, bespectacled and given to wearing cloth caps that make him look like an escapee from a comic strip about the English working class. Racing pigeons, a snooker cue and a pint of bitter come to mind, but appearances are deceiving. Behe thinks he is the author of a scientific breakthrough equal to that of Copernicus, the genius who put the sun at the center of our universe. And although the whole American professional biology community thinks Behe is nuts, laypeople are starting to think he may have a point. He is in constant demand on the lecture circuit. He always pops up in the media, on radio, television and even the *New York Times* op-ed page. He testified as an expert witness at the Dover school district trial last fall in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, where advocates of so-called intelligent design were defeated when their theory was found by a U.S. district court judge to have religious intent. He has written a book, *Darwin's Black Box*, that has sold hundreds of thousands of copies. The president of the United States thinks Behe's ideas are worth exploring and has said they should be taught in the nation's science classes. In this pedagogical sentiment, our highest officeholder is joined by Bill Frist, the Republican leader of the Senate, a man with presidential aspirations of his own.

Behe, a professor of biochemistry at Lehigh University, is a main force behind the intelligent-design theory. Along with retired Berkeley law professor Phillip Johnson and mathematician and philosopher of science William Dembski, Behe has claimed that to explain the existence of animals and plants we must invoke something (or Something) beyond the usual laws of nature. The living world, Behe and his friends argue, is too complex simply to be the result of blind chance. Evolution is not enough. We must presume an intelligence behind it all. Although ID theorists pretend this intelligence does not necessarily imply

ILLUSTRATION BY CATHIE BLECK

BY MICHAEL RUSE

the existence of an intervening god, in this they are less than candid. For political reasons, they want to avoid running afoul of the Constitution's separation of church and state. ID theorists truly believe that the god of the Bible—the god of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the god of Jesus—has been an active participant in the material history of the world as it has unfurled since its earliest beginnings.

Karl Marx said history repeats itself first as tragedy, then as farce. I don't know how else to regard the intelligent-design controversy other than as something from the French theater at the end of the 19th century. A minor scientist proclaims himself one of the intellectual giants of the ages, and despite the scorn and opposition of the estab-

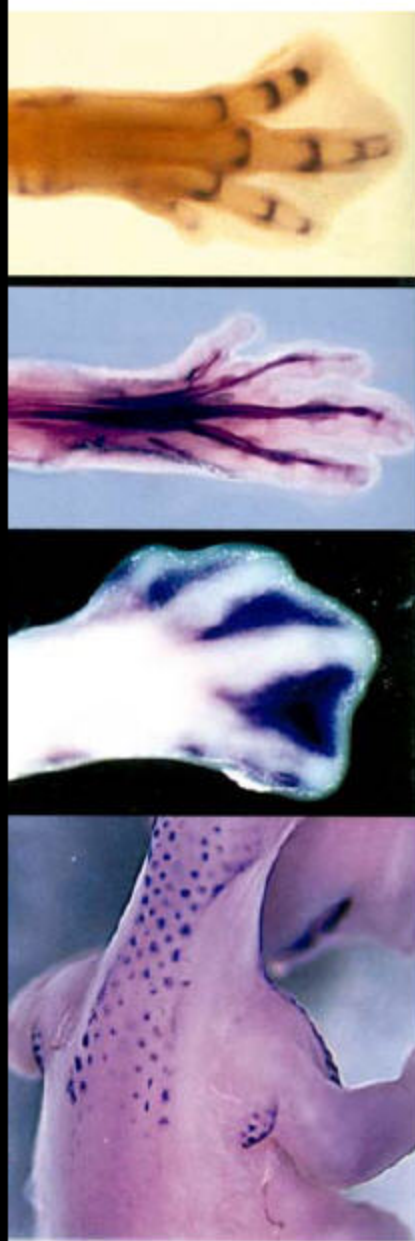
lishment—Behe's own colleagues posted a disclaimer on his department's website—within a few years the leader of the free world believes these ideas should be part of biology education. One looks for the cuckolded husband entering stage right, probably in his underpants.

History is certainly repeating itself. Eighty-one years ago, in Dayton, Tennessee, a young schoolteacher named John Thomas Scopes was put on trial for teaching his class that humans have simian origins and that this is part of an overall process. He told his students that in 1859 the English naturalist Charles Robert Dar-

win published *The Origin of Species*, in which he argued that all organisms, living and dead, are the result of a long, slow, natural process of development: evolution. Prosecuted by the Great Commoner, three-time presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan, and defended by notorious freethinker Clarence Darrow, who was fresh from saving child-killers Nathan Leopold and Richard Loeb from the death penalty, Scopes was convicted and fined \$100, although the fine was later overturned on a technicality.

In *Inherit the Wind*, the play and movie based on the Scopes trial, the encounter is (continued on page 128)

Above: The recent discovery of tool-kit genes has allowed evolutionary biologists to understand how a diverse animal kingdom can be made from a few building blocks.



The Future of Religion

Daniel Dennett, co-director of the Center for Cognitive Studies at Tufts University, is author of *Breaking the Spell: Religion as a Natural Phenomenon* (Viking).

We know little or nothing about the future of religion, which should worry us. Few forces are as potent as religion. Its complexities influence the major problems of the world—poverty, injustice, hunger, disease and environmental degradation, for instance. If we have a blind spot about religion, our efforts to solve these problems will probably fail and may make matters worse. Most people prefer to shield their religion behind a veil of sanctity, but the effects of religious activities and institutions are too important to take on faith. We wouldn't permit the world's food-producing interests to deter us from studying human nutrition and agriculture. If we don't subject religion to scrutiny now and work out together whatever revisions and reforms are called for, we will most likely pass on increasingly toxic forms of religion to our descendants. Here are five very different hypotheses about where religion is heading:

(1) The Enlightenment is long gone; the creeping secularization of modern societies that has been anticipated for two centuries evaporates before our eyes. The tide turns and religion becomes more important than ever. In this scenario religion soon resumes the dominant social and moral role it had before the rise of modern science, in the 17th century. As people recover from an infatuation with technology and material comforts, spiritual identity becomes their most valued attribute and populations become more sharply divided between Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism and a few major multinational religious organizations. Eventually—it may take another millennium, or it may be hastened by catastrophe—one major faith sweeps the planet.

(2) Religion is in its death throes; today's outbursts of fervor and fanaticism are but a brief transition to a truly modern society in which religion plays at most a ceremonial role. Although there may be some local and temporary revivals and even some catastrophes, the major religions of the world become just as extinct as the hundreds of minor religions that are vanishing faster than anthropologists can record them. Within the lifetime of our grandchildren, Vatican City becomes the European Museum of Roman Catholicism and Mecca is turned into Disney's Magic Kingdom of Allah.

(3) Religions transform into institutions unlike anything seen before on the planet: creedless associations that sell self-help and enable moral teamwork, using ceremony and tradition to build long-term fan loyalty. Being a member of a religion becomes more like being a Boston Red Sox or Dallas Cowboys fan. Aside from a rabid few, everybody appreciates the importance of peaceful coexistence in a Global League of Religions—different team colors, different songs and cheers, different symbols and vigorous competition. Religious art and music flourish, and friendly rivalry leads to specialization, with one religion priding itself on its environmental stewardship while another becomes famous for its defense of social justice and economic equality.

(4) Religion diminishes in prestige and visibility, rather like smoking; it is tolerated because some say they can't live without it, but it is discouraged, and teaching religion to children is frowned on in most societies and outlawed in others. Politicians who still practice religion can be elected if they prove themselves worthy in other regards, but few would advertise their religious affiliation. It is considered rude to draw attention to someone's religion, just as it is to comment in public about their sexuality or marital status.

(5) Judgment Day arrives. The blessed ascend to heaven while the rest are left to suffer the agonies of the damned as the Antichrist is vanquished. As Bible prophecies foretell, the nation of Israel's rebirth, in 1948, and the ongoing conflict over Palestine are clear signs of the end times, when the Second Coming of Christ sweeps all other hypotheses into oblivion.

Other scenarios could be described, of course, but these five highlight the extremes that are taken most seriously. Almost anybody would find at least one of them preposterous, troubling or even offensive, but every one of them is not just anticipated but yearned for. All but one (at most) are not just wrong but wildly wrong. Many people think they know which is true, but nobody really does. Isn't that reason enough to study religion scientifically?

Those who firmly believe in Judgment Day scan world news for evidence of prophecies fulfilled. They think there is a reason to investigate the future of religion, and they don't believe the course of future events lies within human power to determine. The rest of us have all the more reason to investigate religious phenomena, since it is obvious that complacency and ignorance could lead us to squander our opportunities to steer religion in benign directions. We owe it to our children and their children to look as hard as we can at the huge forces unleashed by religion to see where they might take us.

“One of the easiest ways to get into public office is to denounce Darwin as a scoundrel.”

—H.L. Mencken, 1931



New Science

Sean Carroll, professor of genetics at the University of Wisconsin, is author of *Endless Forms Most Beautiful: The New Science of Evo Devo* (W.W. Norton).

The most succinct defense of evolutionary science I know of comes from the comedian Lewis Black, who explains why he no longer engages evolution's detractors: "We've got the fossils. We win." I certainly appreciate the sentiment. Ever since Darwin, fossils have been the most compelling evidence that life evolves. Trilobites, dinosaurs, Neanderthals and hundreds of thousands of less famous species document the 550-million-year drama of animal evolution. Paleontology, along with taxonomy and genetics, was a cornerstone of the so-called modern synthesis that organized evolutionary biology's basic principles in the 1940s. But until recently an important piece had been missing. Biologists could say with confidence that forms change and that natural selection is an important force for change, yet we could say nothing about the deeper mechanisms (continued on page 134)

Facts Are Facts

Lewis Black, comedian extraordinaire, is author of *Nothing's Sacred* (Simon Spotlight).

Evolution is a small thread in the large tapestry I like to call reality. Creationists are insane. I have been arguing this since I was 10 years old. (That's right, I was 10. Ask any 10-year-old—kids that age love dinosaurs.) There is no reasoning with people who think God created Adam and Eve and that was that. I admire such faith. I too believe in some sort of higher being, but unfortunately I also think. The Christian right would have you believe the world is only 6,000 years old. But we have scientific proof that it is much older. I would be more than willing to buy their whole concept if I were allowed to be on drugs for the rest of my life. These Christian zealots point to the book and say the word of God states that creation took place in six days. This was written in the Old Testament, which is the book of my people, the Jewish people. Our book wasn't good enough for them, so they came up with another one and said, "We have a great new book with a terrific new character, and you're gonna love him." They are constantly reading our book and interpreting it, but they don't understand it because it's not their book. Anyone who knows the Jewish people knows we are good at bullshitting. It was just a great story for people who were wandering the desert and needed to be distracted from the lack of air-conditioning. Now we have central air. I never thought this would happen in my lifetime, but the president said "the jury is still out" on evolution. What jury? The scary thing is, he wants to rope in a Supreme Court to stack a jury to back up his idiotic ideas. And it's not just him. According to a Harris Poll, 54 percent of adult Americans do not believe we evolved from earlier species. I can't fathom that—54 percent! I have to start thinking about moving. I believe more than half don't really care what other people think, but there are Christians whose gene pool is programmed to proselytize. They have come up with the concept of intelligent design, cloaking religion in the garb of science and trying to foist it on classrooms. Please! If science freaks them out, so be it. The concept of evolution doesn't take away from the concept of God. You'd have to be out of your mind not to see through the bullshit. You can buy into both without a complete loss of rationality. I'm not going to change their mind. There is no reasoning with these people—because they don't reason. We have the facts in carbon dating and fossils. I have tried to be nice, but I am exhausted. Fossils, fossils, fossils. I win. They really exist, and they are not the devil's handiwork. Facts are fucking facts.

Charles Darwin wrote that natural selection could be traced in the fossil record. Half dinosaur, half bird, the archaeopteryx (above) is a fossil caught in the act of evolution. What is the word of God? The scroll of Isaiah (right) was discovered in a cave in 1947. Even though it is the oldest group of Old Testament manuscripts ever found, it is still a distant copy of the original.

Literalism

Bart Ehrman, professor of religious studies at the University of North Carolina, is author of *Misquoting Jesus: The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why* (HarperSanFrancisco).

As a freshly minted 17-year-old born-again believer I headed off to Chicago to the Moody Bible Institute, a bastion of Christian fundamentalism and center of biblical literalism. At Moody we took the Bible seriously and read it literally. The Bible was inspired in all its parts and all its words. Even the creation story in Genesis. As biblical literalists we believed that when Genesis says God took one day to create light, another day to create the earth, another day to create animals and so on, it meant he took a day, 24 hours.

Those outside the faith—for example, apostates, secular humanists and liberal Christians—might think otherwise. But (continued on page 135)



The Joke Is on Us

Kurt Vonnegut, a humanist for the ages, is author of 25 books. His most recent is *A Man Without a Country* (Seven Stories Press).

PLAYBOY: Here we are, 81 years after the Scopes monkey trial, revisiting the same old issues, debating evolution. What happened in the intervening years to bring us back to where we were?

VONNEGUT: Nothing of consequence is going on this time. It's just fun, entertainment, with scientists as well as fundamentalists hamming it up, tearing their passions to tatters, to very rags. And I love it. I laugh like hell. Back then a high school teacher was going to be punished for teaching what the fossil record had demonstrated so unmistakably, that the forms of animals, including our own form, have for aeons been in a state of change from simple to complex. Teaching that was against the law in the state of Tennessee only 80 years ago. So much for freedom of speech, among other things. Can you believe it? No problem.

PLAYBOY: You say scientists are also hamming it up?

VONNEGUT: I have scientist friends, and all I have to say to them is "intelligent design" and they go foam-at-the-mouth bananas. Ridiculous.

PLAYBOY: You surely exaggerate.

VONNEGUT: Not by much. They're as tribal as anybody.

PLAYBOY: Tribal?

VONNEGUT: I don't mean to intimidate you, but I hold a master's degree in anthropology from the University of Chicago, so I know all human beings need tribes as much as they need food and water. Very few Americans, except for the Bushes and the Navajos, are born into a tribe anymore, and a nuclear family, with Mom and Pop and kids and a dog and a goldfish, is no sure survival scheme. So a scientist, like any other kind of Homo sapiens, will do anything to form or join an artificial tribe—in his or her own case most likely in his or her profession. And a tribe by its very nature urges like-mindedness, no matter how nonsensical, for the sake of cohesiveness. Fantastic exemplars of tribal balderdash, of course, are the neocons. Out of control! Going ape when somebody says "intelligent design" is nothing by comparison. No deaths, injuries or monster fuckups result.

PLAYBOY: Tribal or not, aren't scientists really concerned about the separation of church and state? Isn't teaching intelligent design in a science class in a public school system teaching a tenet of Christianity?

VONNEGUT: That's so humorless.

PLAYBOY: Humorless?

VONNEGUT: So something—I don't know what to call it, but I am amazed and enchanted and awed every day of my life by the intricacy, complexity and durability of my own body, its incredible successes, and so is every scientist and science teacher worth a damn. But if we say so in the presence of young people, does that make us Jerry Falwell?

PLAYBOY: Does George W. Bush have anything to do with where we are today?

VONNEGUT: Getting mad at him is like getting mad at a hot-fudge sundae.

PLAYBOY: Okay. So let's go back to scientists. Your brother, Bernard Vonnegut, a physical chemist eight years your senior, discovered among other things that he could turn super-

"It was the schoolboy who said, 'Faith is believing what you know ain't so.'"

—Mark Twain, 1897

cooled clouds into snow with crystals of silver iodide.

VONNEGUT: Because the crystals are shaped so much like ice. On his deathbed, about 10 years ago, in a hospice in Albany where he was allowed to keep his cat, he said to me, "If the superpowers decide to duke it out with silver iodide, I can live with that." Even as a teenager Bernie was so cocky about all the miracles science had worked and about the even greater miracles still to come. But when he heard we had dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima—and I was with him—he damn near died of shame. His spiritual death was damn near terminal. Because of him I had to major in chemistry at Cornell. He convinced our father, an architect and also a graduate of MIT, that any subject but science would be a waste—what he called purely ornamental. So I wound up flunking everything, writing for the *Daily Sun*, Cornell's morning paper, and getting a liberal arts education from my colleagues

there. Then I went to war, and luckily for me, I was captured. Otherwise I wouldn't have had anything to write about.

PLAYBOY: But you took a degree in another science, even though Hiroshima had happened by then.

VONNEGUT: Anthropology isn't a science; it's a form of autobiography.

PLAYBOY: Could we say you're anti-science?

VONNEGUT: Sure. The world is about to end because science has trashed the joint. As you may know, I make posters now—"suitable for framing." I like to say. And my newest one says, in capital letters, AS A HUMANIST I LOVE SCIENCE. I HATE SUPERSTITION, WHICH COULD NEVER HAVE GIVEN US A-BOMBS.

PLAYBOY: Not only are you a humanist, but you are honorary president of the American Humanist Association.

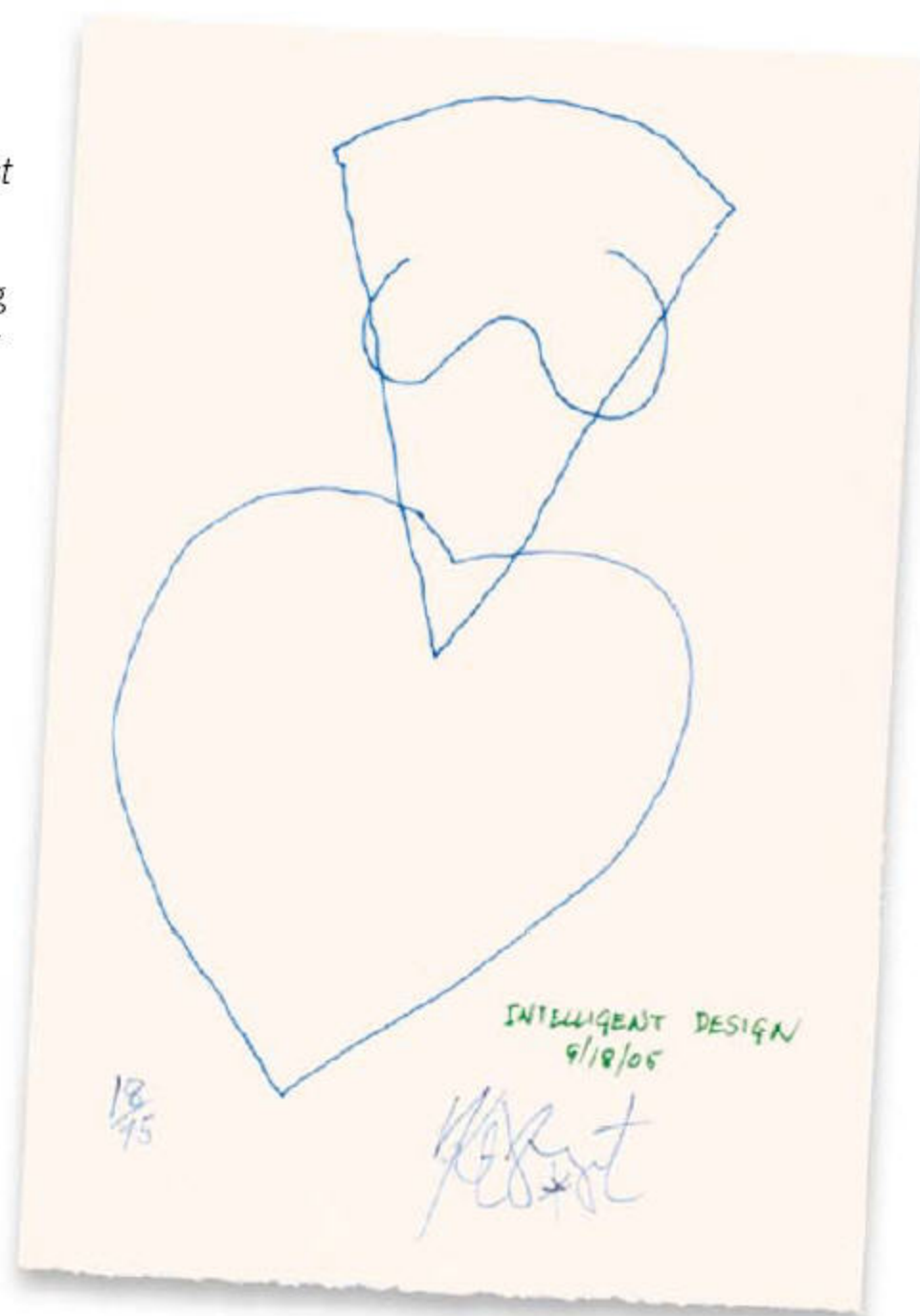
VONNEGUT: Having succeeded the late, great Isaac Asimov in that utterly functionless capacity. Asimov is up in heaven now, experiencing eternal bliss and smiling down on us. That's a humanist joke. We don't believe in rewards or punishments in an after-life. I wouldn't wish eternal bliss on my worst enemy.

PLAYBOY: From your vantage point as a humanist and an octogenarian, what changes have you seen in American Christianity?

VONNEGUT: Jesus became a Republican.

PLAYBOY: That's it?

VONNEGUT: That'll do.





Olivia

"If you knew what I'm thinking, you'd be smiling too...!"



SUPER CYBER GIRLS

An all-star lineup of
stunning beauties, brought
to you by Playboy.com



Month after month, year after year, PLAYBOY has brought you the most beautiful and glamorous women who walk the planet, shot in the nude by some of the most talented photographers ever to eye an aperture. Throw in great stories, a dash of humor and some political commentary and you have a recipe for the best magazine ever published. Still, some guys just can't get enough. For those of you who perpetually thirst for more and for anybody else who happens to be near a computer with a minute or two on his hands, we offer Playboy.com's Cyber Club, where a virtual heaven full of adorable angels lies merely a click away. Every week, a new model is posted on the Cyber Girls site with all her vital info, and the weekly beauty who receives the most votes earns the Cyber Girl of the Month title, complete with a new pictorial and her very own Playboy video. This month we're offering an informal introduction to some of our favorite ladies—and you don't even need to turn your computer on. Plenty of our past Cyber Girls have later graced our pages as Playmates, so don't be surprised if a few of these gorgeous girls end up coming back for more.

Opposite page: Sabrina Rose takes the wheel—sort of. This 24-year-old California girl aspires to be Wonder Woman someday. "Who would pass up an opportunity to wear a costume like hers?" This page, left: the lovely Amy McCarthy, 29, sister of Playmate and TV star Jenny. Talk about great genes. "I got in the best shape of my life for this photo shoot," she says. Her hard work paid off. Cyber Girl Tonya Berrios of Florida recently turned 22. There she is, above, wearing her birthday suit.





Opposite page: Florida native Shawn Hektor, 24, had never modeled before we photographed her. "At first I was nervous, but I loved it," says the aspiring musician. "PLAYBOY celebrates women in their most pure and beautiful form." This page, left: Our 2005 Cyber Girl of the Year, Amy Sue Cooper of Nebraska, was ecstatic when she learned that we wanted to photograph her on the beach in Jamaica. The exotic-looking 23-year-old does lingerie modeling and is a full-time nursing student. By the time this issue comes out, she will have graduated. How will she celebrate? "My family owns a chain of sports bars called Brewsky's," she tells us. "I'm going to throw a party in one. Free beer for as many people as possible!" Now that's our kind of girl. Georgia peach Nicole Bayard, 22, right, knows a thing or two about having a good time. "My ideal romantic evening? Take me shopping during the day, make me dinner at night, then take me to bed!"



Clockwise from above left: Twins Rikki and Vikki of San Diego make love to the camera. One is 25 and—what do you know?—so is the other. “Parties follow me wherever I go,” Vikki says. “Even to work.” We know the feeling. Mary Jane Scott, 25, hails from Houston. She looks great in scarlet panties and even better without them. Heidi Hanson, 25, was featured in our *Real Desperate Housewives* pictorial in May 2005. You voted the North Carolina stunner a Cyber Girl of the Week the following month. Chicago’s own Susie Christine, 21, has been collecting PLAYBOY magazines since the late 1980s. Her favorite pictorial? “Cindy Crawford,” she says. “I think she’s unbelievable.” (That’s our July 1988 issue, by the way.) Marijuana may be against the law, but this Mary Jane, of Shelby Township, Michigan, is 21 and perfectly legal. Smoking, don’t you think?





See more Cyber Girls
at cyber.playboy.com.





SEX^{WITH} ESTHER

FICTION BY
MICHEL HOUELLEBECQ

**SHE LOVES SEX, BUT IS SHE
CAPABLE OF LOVING HIM?**

during the first part of your life, you only become aware of happiness once you have lost it. Then an age comes, a second one, in which you already know, at the moment you begin to experience true happiness, that you are, at the end of the day, going to lose it. When I met Esther I understood that I had just entered this second age. I also understood that I hadn't reached the third age, in which anticipation of the loss of happiness prevents you from living.

With regard to Esther, I will just say, without exaggeration or metaphor, that she gave life back to me. Undoubtedly I had had the tendency in my relations with people (I almost wrote "in my official relations with people," and it was a bit like that, in fact) to overestimate my state of despair. Something in me therefore knew, had always known, that I would end up finding love—I'm talking about reciprocated love, the only one that counts. I was not, however, naive; I knew that the majority of people are born, grow old and die without ever knowing love. Not long after the epidemic of mad cow disease, new measures had been introduced to ensure that people knew where their beef came from. In the meat section of supermarkets, in fast-food establishments, small labels appeared, generally worded thus: BORN AND RAISED IN FRANCE. SLAUGHTERED IN FRANCE. A simple life, in fact.

If you look at the circumstances, the beginning of our love story was extremely banal. I was 47 when we met; she was 22. What's more, she was an actress, and it's well-known that film producers sleep with their actresses; some films even appear to have been created solely for that purpose. That said, could I be considered a *film producer*? I was a celebrated comedian. As a producer I had only *Two Flies Later* to my name and was about to produce *Motorway Swingers*. My treatment kept itself to one sentence: "To bring together the commercial advantages of pornography and ultra-violence." This was not a treatment; at most it was a pitch, but it was good; my agent had told me lots of young producers proceeded

like that today. I had become, without knowing it, a modern professional. I had also been sent three DVDs from the main Spanish artistic agents; I had begun to prospect for potential actors, indicating that the film had a “possible sexual content.”

I put a plate of *Arroz Tres Delicias* in the microwave and put a DVD at random into the player. As the meal heated up, I had the time to eliminate the first three girls. After two minutes the machine beeped; I took the meal out of the oven and added some pepper puree. At the same time, on the giant screen at the back of the living room, Esther’s trailer was beginning.

She was naked, standing in a room that was difficult to make out—no doubt an artist’s atelier. In the first image she was being splattered with a jet of yellow paint—the one throwing the paint was out of the shot. Then you found her stretched out in the middle of a dazzling pool of color. The artist—you could see only his arms—was pouring a bucket of blue paint on her, then spreading it over her belly and

breasts; she looked in his direction with trusting amusement. He guided her by taking her hand; she turned over on her front; he poured some more paint on the small of her back, spread it all over her back and her ass; her ass moved, accompanying the movement of the hands. There was in her face, in each of her gestures, a deeply moving innocence and sensual grace.

I knew the work of the artist Yves Klein. I knew there was nothing original or interesting about this happening on an ar-

tistic level, but who *still* thinks of art when happiness is possible? I called her agent the following day.

Our first meeting took place in a bar on Calle Obispo de León, a fairly big, typical bar, with dark wood paneling and tapas—I was rather grateful to her for not choosing Planet Hollywood. I arrived 10 minutes late. I sat down in front of her on the bench, experiencing something like the sensation I had had a few years previously when I went under general anesthetic: the impression of an easy, approved departure, the intuition that at the end of the day death would be a very simple thing. She was wearing tight, low-cut jeans and a clinging pink top that left her shoulders uncovered. When she stood up to go and order, I caught sight of her thong, also pink, showing above her jeans, and I began to get hard. With her light-blonde hair and her very white skin, she did not really look like a typical Spanish girl—I would have rather said Russian. She had pretty, attentive brown eyes, and I no longer remember my first words, but I think I indicated almost immediately that I was going to drop my film project. She looked surprised rather than really disappointed. She asked me why.

Basically I didn’t know, and I threw myself into a long explanation, which went back to when I was her age. It

emerged from the story that I had led quite a solitary life, marked by hard labor and intercut with frequent periods of depression. Words came easily to me; I was speaking in English, and from time to time she had me repeat a sentence. All in all I was going to drop not just this film but almost everything; I said I no longer felt the least ambition or rage to win. It seemed to me that at this point in my life I was truly tired.

She looked at me perplexed, as if the word seemed to her badly chosen. Yet that was it; perhaps in my case it was not a physical tiredness, rather a nervous one, but is there actually a difference? “I’ve lost faith,” I said finally.

“Maybe it’s better,” she said. Then she put a hand on my sex. Nuzzling her head in the hollow of my shoulder, she gently pressed my cock between her fingers.

In the hotel room, she told me a little more about her life. Certainly you could describe her as an actress; she had played in sitcoms and police series, in which she was generally raped and strangled by more or less numerous psychopaths, and a few advertisements as well. She had even taken the starring role in a Spanish feature film, but it had not yet been released, and anyway it was a terrible film. Spanish cinema, she claimed, was on its last legs.

Her skin was very soft, and soon I knew I was in another world, separated from the ordinary world by a few centimeters of fabric—indispensable social protection, since 90 percent of men who came across Esther would be seized by the immediate desire to penetrate her. Once her jeans were off, I played for a little while with her thong, noting that her sex quickly became moist; it was five in the afternoon. Yes, it was another world, and I stayed there until 11 the following morning—it was the cutoff point for breakfast, and I was beginning to get seriously hungry. I had probably slept for brief periods. For the rest, those few hours justified my life. I was not exaggerating, and I was conscious of not exaggerating: We were, at that moment, in the absolute simplicity of things. Sexuality, or more precisely, desire, was of course a theme I had touched on many a time in my comedy sketches; that many things in this world centered around sexuality, or more precisely, desire, I was as conscious of as anyone else—and probably more so than many others. In these conditions, as an aging comedian, I had occasionally let myself be overcome by a sort of skeptical doubt: Sexuality was perhaps, like so many other things and perhaps everything in this world, *overrated*; perhaps it was just a banal *ruse* dreamed up to increase competition among men and the speed at which the whole system functioned. There was maybe nothing more to sexuality than there was to lunch at an excellent restaurant or to a Bentley Continental GT, nothing that justified getting so worked up. That night would show me I was wrong and bring me to a more elementary view of things.

In the morning, the sun returned to Madrid. I called a taxi and waited a few minutes in the hotel lobby with Esther while she replied to the many messages that had accumulated on her mobile. She seemed to have a rich social life; most of her conversations ended with the expression *un besito* or sometimes *un beso*. I didn’t really speak Spanish; the nuance, if there was one, escaped me, but I became conscious at the moment when the taxi stopped in front of the hotel that in practice she did not kiss much. It was quite curious because, by contrast, she liked penetration in all its forms; she presented her ass with a lot of grace (she had pert buttocks rather like those of a boy), and she sucked without

(continued on page 137)



"No, I've never heard it referred to as an after-dinner mint!"



CRAIG Ferguson

**THE COMIC TURNED ACTOR TURNED TALK SHOW HOST TURNED NOVELIST
DEFENDS HAGGIS, EXPOSES DREW CAREY AND EXPLAINS WHY
JENNIFER LOVE HEWITT IS A CHEEKY WEE MONKEY**

Q1

PLAYBOY: After only one year on the job, you've discarded many talk show traditions. You start the show with 10 minutes of comic riffing instead of a scripted monologue. You share your private life. Your guests are not preinterviewed to prepare questions. You eschew the frat-boy antics of your competitors and attract a large group of female fans who never watched late-night talk shows before. Critics love you. Do you think you're wasted on late night?

FERGUSON: Do I think I'm wasted? I think I'm fucking lucky to be here. I never thought of that. I don't take offense at the question; it just never crossed my mind—and that's unusual. If you know me for more than five minutes, you know everything crosses my mind. Are you asking whether I want to move into an earlier slot? No. I think there's a lot of danger in earlier, more visible slots. I think I'll just stay here for now. Besides, the guys in there right now aren't going anywhere, so that takes care of it.

Q2

PLAYBOY: When and why did you toss the conventions?

FERGUSON: It started the night Johnny

Carson died. I was in a relationship with a girl who's still my friend. I was staying with her in an apartment in New York, and I sat full upright in the middle of the night and said, "I'm not telling any more jokes." She rolled over and said, "Delighted." And I said, "And I'm not wearing a tie anymore, either." She went, "All right, that's good to know." Then she said, "Please just go back to sleep." And under my breath I said, "And you're history as well."

Q3

PLAYBOY: You used to be a stand-up comic. What do you have against jokes?
FERGUSON: Trying to tell monologue gags made me nervous every damn night. I think a wee bout of revolution is never a bad thing. Plus I get to talk about whatever I like. I am the Saudi Arabia of unhappiness. I have reserves of unhappiness I can draw on for years. I also came to this job late. I was 42, so I'd been around a bit. I wasn't trying to impress people with my observations or talking about my analyst in comedy clubs when I was 18 years old. At that age I was fighting people or drinking in bars. I was living my life as opposed to reporting on it, and I think that helps.

Q4

PLAYBOY: You're always calling the audience cheeky wee monkeys, frisky little ponies and naughty little donkeys. What did you do, grow up in a porno toy store? What is a cheeky wee monkey anyway?
FERGUSON: It's not something I ever said before doing this show. When I started ditching the monologue scripts, I began to blurt out whatever I blurted. The cheeky wee monkeys thing is a combination of free association and panic. I think my granny used to say cheeky wee monkey. It's a term of endearment I've used with kids as well. It's like "You're naughty." It's an energy, I suppose. When people are having slightly illicit fun, they're being cheeky wee monkeys. Slightly illicit—I'm talking about hand-in-the-cookie-jar stuff, not big-time crazy perversion stuff. I'd call those people big-time crazy perverts. Maybe I'll try that tonight: "Welcome back, my big-time crazy perverts!"

Q5

PLAYBOY: You call some women cheeky wee monkeys but not others. Who makes the cut?

FERGUSON: Jennifer Love Hewitt is a cheeky wee (continued on page 122)

OF MAUS AND SUPERMEN

HOW A BAND OF MARGINALIZED LITERARY LUNATICS
STARTED A REVOLUTION IN POPULAR CULTURE

BY ROBERT LEVINE AND SCOTT ALEXANDER



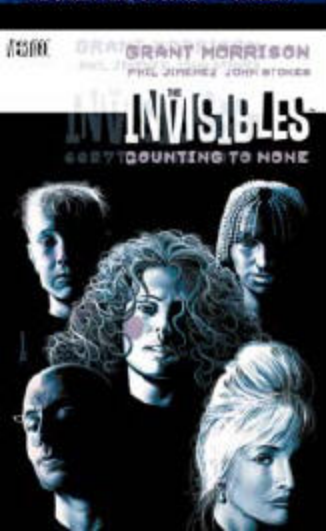
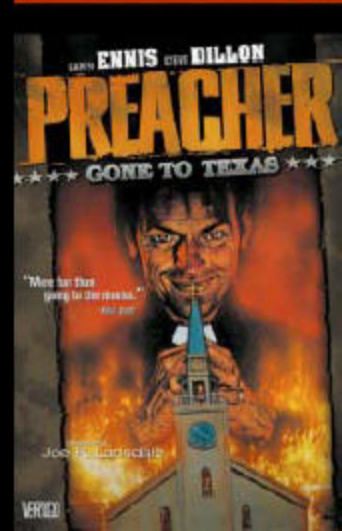
When the film *V for Vendetta* debuts this spring, viewers will discover a story of a charismatic terrorist whose motto is "People should not be afraid of their government; governments should be afraid of their people." The movie is set in London, the site of recent bombings, and arrives at a time when newspapers are full of stories about political corruption, illegal government espionage and official dissembling by the White House and Downing Street. It's not surprising when a popular film like *V for Vendetta*, with its questions about loyalty, freedom, control and dissent, holds up a mirror to the issues of the day. Thirty years ago, for example, Francis Ford Coppola's first two *Godfather* films and Alan J. Pakula's *All the President's Men* reflected in different ways the issues of power and corruption during the Nixon years. What's surprising is that *V for Vendetta*'s complex, ambiguous, challenging story was adapted not from best-selling fiction or nonfiction but from a comic book.

Did we say *surprising*? Sorry, that should have been *commonplace*. A glance around the media landscape suggests that comics have come to rule pop culture. In Hollywood, superheroes like Spider-Man, Batman, the X-Men and the Incredibles have routinely performed feats of box-office strength, bravely propping up studios and saving the jobs of imperiled executives. The graphic-novel-based indies *A History of Violence*, *American Splendor* and *Ghost World* have earned critical acclaim, and directors Quentin Tarantino and Robert Rodriguez have delighted us with plainly comic-book-influenced films such as *Kill Bill* and *Spy Kids*. On television—

besides the obvious comics-inspired hits like *Smallville*, *The Simpsons*, *The X-Files* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*—24 and *Lost* have become hugely successful by emulating the winning comic-book formula of action and serial cliff-hangers. Meanwhile a look at publishers' catalogs reveals such writers as Michael Chabon and Jonathan Lethem, whose novels are about people who love comic books; Neil Gaiman and Bruce Wagner, who cut their teeth writing comics; and Brad Meltzer and Greg Rucka, who split their time between writing thrilling novels and thrilling comics. Then there's the alternative hip-hop supergroup Gorillaz, who we're meant to believe is a crew of animated two-dimensional oddballs drawn by Jamie Hewlett, most famous for the cult comic *Tank Girl*. And don't get us started on video games or, for that matter, professional wrestling. (Muscular guys? Silly names? Spandex? All they need are secret identities.)

Indeed, even *The New York Times*, still the country's weightiest cultural arbiter, began publishing long-form graphic work each week in its Sunday magazine this past fall.

Today, says Alan Moore, "no one is surprised if a comic is intelligent or turns out to have social relevance." As well as having written *V for Vendetta*, Moore is the widely worshipped author of such imaginative comics and graphic novels as *Watchmen*, *Miracleman*, *From Hell* (which inspired an unfortunately flawed Johnny Depp movie) and *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* (which inspired an execrable Sean Connery movie). He points to *Persepolis*, Marjane Satrapi's 2000 cartoon memoir about coming of age in revolutionary Iran. "You can read the reviews



THIS PAGE TOP: IT TAKES MORE THAN A STREET FIGHT TO SLOW DOWN DIZZY, THE LATINA BADASS OF 100 BULLETS. OPPOSITE PAGE: NATTILY DRESSED CULT OPERATIVES HAVE FELLEDD THE INVISIBLES' RAGGED ROBIN. BUT RELAX, SHE'LL LIVE.





ABOVE FROM LEFT: THE DEVASTATING SUBURBAN DESPAIR OF *ICE HAVEN*; THE VELVET UNDERGROUND OF SMART COMICS, 1977'S *SUPERFOLKS*: "ONLY 10 PEOPLE READ IT, BUT THEY WERE ALL COMICS WRITERS," SAYS NEIL GAIMAN; MITCHELL HUNDRED, *EX MACHINA*'S GARAGE SUPERHERO.

without realizing it's a comic," he says. "That shows a measure of acceptance on a deep level. There's a casual acceptance of comics as an art form."

Why are we as a culture so infatuated with something seen for so long as a kids-only medium? Maybe we're hardwired to enjoy stories about adventure, evil and extraordinarily empowered individuals—maybe the Hulk is just an update of Hercules. Or maybe the skills of computer-graphics wizards have progressed to the point that we can finally see on-screen the superheros that used to live somewhere between the page and our imagination. Or perhaps it's because the comic book, as a medium not expected to be taken seriously, enables writers to take chances. One might recoil from yet another politician referring to "the horrible events of 9/11," but when the subject is examined in Brian K. Vaughan's *Ex Machina*, in which a superhero saves one of the towers and is elected New York City's mayor, it somehow feels fresh and even poignant.

Of course, it was not always thus. We're 20 years into a renaissance in this medium, one that began with a creative moment in 1986 when the superhero traditions established by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby in the 1960s collided head-on with the edgy sensibilities of Robert Crumb, Harvey Pekar and other practitioners from the underground "comix" scene. Prior to 1986 comics were by and large kids' stuff. The epic struggles between good and evil, between Spidey and Doc Ock or the X-Men and Magneto, reflect a view of a world populated by pathetically ordinary guys who secretly have amazing powers and really big muscles and by women with perfect breasts. The stories can largely be read as revenge

fantasies of outsider adolescents. But take Kirby's bold, cinematic illustration, extend Lee's superheroes-should-have-a-human-weakness approach until your characters have all the insecurities and venality we expect in human nature, and then toss in Crumb's willingness to damn the censors and go wherever the subject

Liberated from their adolescent audience, comics came into their own as a cultural force that would shape the next two decades of entertainment.

What made 1986 so significant? Simply this: Three unique, groundbreaking works were published in that single calendar year. First was Frank Miller's

Batman: The Dark Knight Returns, a comic that took the heretical step of completely reimagining an icon of the genre, the venerable Batman. Though a much beloved character, Batman had fallen on hard times. First the censorious Comics Code Authority cleaned up his noir exploits in the 1950s; then television turned him into a punch line in the 1960s. Miller, a pulp-fiction lover, rechristened Batman in the blood of young Bruce Wayne's murdered parents. His new Batman is a brutal, obsessive vigilante with enough emotional baggage to fill the *Queen Mary*; he has no literal superpowers, just intelligence, training and an indomitable will. The city where he acted as self-appointed judge and executioner also changed, to a grittier Gotham littered with violent, nihilistic gangs. Miller's vision was a sharp stick in the eye to the neutered, campy Batman and to simplistic superheroes and limp plots generally.

In the second seminal work from 1986, *Watchmen*, Moore also looked at superheroes, but where Miller saw dark, Moore saw boring. Superheroes had been there and done that. They'd all met their evil nemeses, chased their elusive love interests and been forced to fight their best friends several dozen times over. There was nowhere to go but down—and Moore was more than happy to take them there. In *Watchmen* he turned a Justice League-like band of superheroes into a group of aging sad-sack has-beens who come out of retirement when someone starts



THE LAST PICTURE SHOW: COMICS AND HOLLYWOOD HAVE A LONG RELATIONSHIP. ONLY LATELY HAS THEIR MARRIAGE BEEN A HAPPY ONE.

matter leads, and you have more than a renaissance on your hands. You have new stories that gleefully leap over the heads of young readers to portray transsexual disco-queen shamans, to imagine the creator of the universe returning to earth as a vengeful overlord and to create superheroes who are fearful, disillusioned and neurotic in distinctly adult ways. Before 1986, says Neil Gaiman, author of the landmark *Sandman* series, comics "attempted to do two things: tell great stories and make 15-year-old boys happy. The joy of Alan Moore's *Watchmen* is that Alan doesn't care about making 15-year-old boys happy."

ALAN MOORE'S NEW
LOVE, PROMETHEA.

assassinating their erstwhile colleagues. (Tracing the similarities with a certain recent Pixar film will be left as an exercise for the reader.) Normal citizens who dress funny and take the law into their own hands seem scary and unbalanced in *Watchmen* rather than heroic, and the one legitimate superhuman character (who gets his powers in an A-bomb experiment gone horrifically awry) is depressed, disappointed with the human race and unenthusiastic about his job as a one-man Cold War trump card. Not only did *Watchmen* upset the comic-book status quo, it also produced characters to whom an adult reader could actually relate, even if they wore their underwear on the outside. Dark, depressing and shot through with the pathos of lonely men past their prime, *Watchmen* made more than one *Simpsons*-esque comic-book guy take a long hard look in the mirror. Susanna Clarke, author of

2005's best-selling *Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norrell*, cites *Watchmen* as a favorite work, alongside Jane Austen's *Emma*. "The first time I read *Watchmen*, I could not put it down. It is simply virtuoso."

The third book in this revolutionary trilogy was *Maus*, Art Spiegelman's wrenching depiction of his father's experiences in the Holocaust, which fully displayed the medium's humanistic capabilities. Had *Maus* been written as a traditional novel, its graphic, wretched scenarios would have been difficult to take in, but by using a visual-language conceit—Jews are rendered as mice, Nazis as cats and Poles as pigs—Spiegelman insulates us just enough from the horror so that we can keep reading. With that layer of protection we are allowed to come close enough to true evil to smell its corpse-stained breath.

The New York Times Book Review called it "a remarkable feat of documentary detail and novelistic vividness," and for its profound subject matter, vision and bravery, *Maus* was awarded a special Pulitzer Prize,



signaling the beginning of the literary mainstream's acceptance of comics as a legitimate part of its world.

What followed in the wake of this wave of originality was an explosion of imagination. A world of comic-book freaks had just had their horizons obliterated, and the most original and ambitious of them sought to create the next phase of comics themselves. A swarm of talented young writers and artists descended on the industry and in short order produced books about travels in the earth's collective dreamworld (Gaiman's *The Sandman*), punk occult warriors with killer fashion sense (Grant Morrison's *The Invisibles*), a drug-addled Hunter S. Thompson manqué wreaking political havoc in the far future (Warren Ellis's *Transmetropolitan*) and a Super-friends analogue in which the characters modeled after Batman and Superman are gay lovers (Ellis's *The Authority*).

Key in this flowering was editor Karen Berger, who had worked with Moore when he was radically reenvisioning the exhausted *Swamp Thing* series as a horror franchise. After working with him, Berger had a hunch that Moore and other upstarts from the British Isles could teach Americans how to fully exploit a U.S.-born medium, as had happened with rock music. She recalls, "I said to myself, There's this whole world of untapped talent over there. Let's have these guys reinvent what we do." Moore remembers Berger asking him "if there were any more at home like me. I said I'd pass on their names. The first person who



NOT-SO-HEAVY METAL:
SHEN OF THE AUTHORITY.

MOVING PICTURES

WHEN TRAVELING IN THE WORLD OF THE GRAPHIC NOVEL, IT HELPS TO HAVE A FEW LANDMARKS TO STEER BY. CONSIDER THIS YOUR ROAD MAP

BLACK HOLE

Charles Burns's meditation on sex, drugs and 1970s teens takes a horror-movie approach to the topic of becoming an adult. Ten years in the making and worth every minute.

BATMAN: THE DARK KNIGHT RETURNS

In Frank Miller's grimy vision of Gotham, Batman gets his balls back—and no one's going to take them again.

EX MACHINA

Brian K. Vaughan's ripped-from-the-tabloids tale tells how an engineer with the power to talk to machines saves one of the World Trade Center towers and gets elected mayor of New York. Also worth reading: Vaughan's *Y: The Last Man*.

FROM HELL

Alan Moore and Eddie Campbell spin a complex literary detective story about Jack the Ripper. Aimed at those who don't believe in tidy solutions, the book goes so far beyond the movie you'll wonder why Johnny Depp bothered.

THE INVISIBLES

Never has a book had so much fun being deadly serious. The frightening thing is, Grant Morrison says the magic, time travel and freaky sex are autobiographical.

LIKE A VELVET GLOVE CAST IN IRON

A disturbing, paranoid masterpiece involving an estranged wife, a bondage flick and a cult, by *Ghost World* author Daniel Clowes.

LOVE & ROCKETS

Jaime and Gilbert Hernandez began by depicting outer space adventures and ended up writing about lesbian punk rockers. Come for the copious cheesecake, stay for the barrio realism. Start with the recent collection *Locas*.

MAUS I AND II

Two volumes that will slice you clean open. Art Spiegelman uses his father's horrific memories of living through the Holocaust to take us on a clear-eyed tour of the cruellest moments of the 20th century. Stunning.

100 BULLETS

Brian Azzarello's breakout hit gives beaten-down people a gun, 100 untraceable bullets and evidence of who screwed them over. A meditation on money, power and morality.

THE QUITTER

Harvey Pekar fundamentally does not like himself. Fortunately a lot of other people do. An appropriately prickly place to get to know the antihero of *American Splendor*.

SAFE AREA GORAZDE

In this pioneering work of comics-based reporting, Joe Sacco chronicles with pictures and words the Bosnian war of the early 1990s. Humanizing and heartbreaking, this is New Journalism with word balloons.

THE SANDMAN

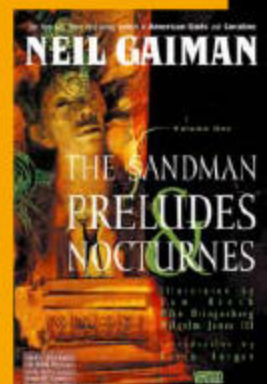
Neil Gaiman's long-running series made cool comics fantastical and fantastical comics cool. Collected in 10 volumes, *The Sandman* is a modern myth, as well as a précis on why the stories we tell matter so much. Start with *Brief Lives*.

TRANSMETROPOLITAN

Warren Ellis and Darick Robertson take a Hunter S. Thompson analogue and put him through a 23rd century wringer. It's angry political sci-fi, and it's funny as hell.

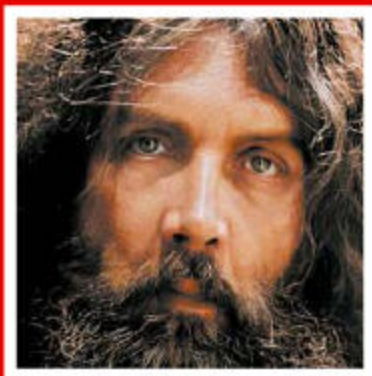
WATCHMEN

If you need to know why we're fans of Alan Moore's magnum opus, we put all our superlatives in the piece at left. Just buy it, for heaven's sake.



EXTRAORDINARY GENTLEMAN

A CONVERSATION WITH ALAN MOORE



Since the success of *Watchmen*, Alan Moore has tried his hand at crime (*From Hell*), pornography (*Lost Girls*) and metafiction (*Promethea*), along with upbeat adventure (*Tom Strong*) that he characterizes as "penance" for the gloom of his oft-imitated early work. Now in the process of retiring

from comics, he shares his opinions on his influences, his legacy and the films his work has inspired.

PLAYBOY Are you surprised that graphic novels are now being reviewed alongside serious literature?

MOORE There's something about this academic acceptance of comics that smells of death. I see all these beautifully produced books that give the masters of the medium the respect they deserve, with intellectual analyses of the work, and they look a bit like tombstones to me. The real energy in any art form has always come from the margins—the filthy, dirty, neglected edges.

PLAYBOY Much of your work involves examining and deconstructing genre conventions.

MOORE It's a bit more predatory than that. I've got a very good eye for weak points that other people have overlooked. *From Hell* came from the idea of doing a book about a murder from a different perspective. *Lost Girls*, which I started at the same time, was an attempt to do pornography—and I use that word instead of *erotica* because the only difference is the income bracket of the person reading it. If you're working-class, you read porn, but if you're middle-class and you understand the witty allusions in French, you read *erotica*. All of us have some sort of feelings about sex, yet the only genre that can talk about it is this grubby one. Is this the only way we can discuss one of the most important and glorious functions of our species?

PLAYBOY Did you think *Watchmen* would be so influential?

MOORE I was hoping *Watchmen* would lead to lots of people thinking, Well, that was a powerful and original work, so I should do a powerful, original work. But that's not how people think. My favorite American comic is Harvey Kurtzman's *MAD*. But rather than start a new age of creativity, it led to an endless succession of magazines named after some sort of mental illness: *Cracked*, *Sick*.

If you had to trace my early revisionist superhero stuff back to one place, it would be Kurtzman and Wally Wood's *Super-duperman*, which put Superman in a more realistic world played for humor. All we did was put the dial the other way and play it for drama and poignancy.

PLAYBOY How do you feel about movies made from your comics?

MOORE At the moment, I am pathologically disinterested in movies. Plenty of everything is vacuous rubbish, but not every medium takes \$100 million to make its vacuous rubbish. That's the budget of an emergent third world nation. I think art should be a bomb. It doesn't matter if it's a cheap comic book or a seven-inch single, as long as it does something to you. Art should be like amyl nitrite—it should have you flinging yourself off the sofa with your hair standing on end, or it hasn't done its job.

—R.L.



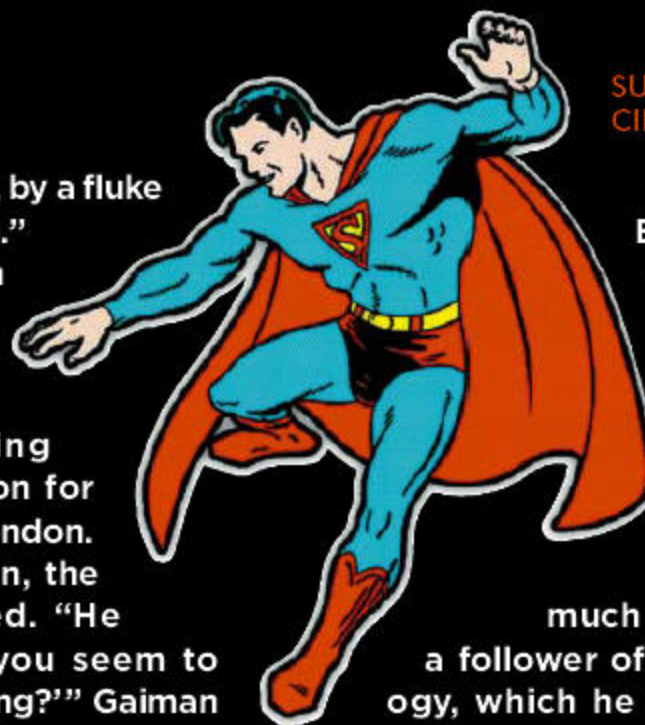
presented himself to me, by a fluke of luck, was Neil Gaiman."

At that point Gaiman was a 26-year-old freelance journalist who had written an article about the burgeoning graphic-novel revolution for the *Sunday Times* of London. When the piece came in, the editor seemed puzzled. "He said, 'These comics—you seem to think they're a good thing?'" Gaiman remembers with a smile. "I said, 'I don't think I can change the piece to be the way you want it. You've got a renaissance going on right now.'" Impressed by that attitude, Berger set Gaiman to work on what would become the epic series *The Sandman*, which spans vast eras of human history to follow Morpheus, ruler of the dreamworld, as he intercedes in the lives of the mortals who visit his realm each night. Startlingly original and unapologetically literary, *The Sandman* became a huge success; by the end of its run it was outselling *Superman* and *Batman*.

Its massive impact allowed Berger to establish the Vertigo imprint within DC Comics in 1993. Soon she had assembled a stable of writers that included Morrison, Ellis and Garth Ennis (author of *Preacher*). Before Vertigo, says Gaiman, "there was nothing in comics that was fantasy, that was horror, that was funky science fiction." With Vertigo, grown-ups finally had a comics publisher on their side. "We're the HBO of comics," says Berger. "We do smart, original stuff of a certain quality. People who like indie films, good music or contemporary fiction tend to gravitate to our stuff."

As it turned out, being the most influential publisher of comics for adults is good business. The 10 collections of Gaiman's *Sandman* series continue to sell. With each volume costing approximately \$20, it's not such a stretch to think of the series as one \$200 book bought in sections. Vertigo now has several of these almost-pure-profit machines reliably pumping cash into the company and allowing it to take chances on the kind of titles a sophisticated readership responds to.

Film, of course, has been one of the chief beneficiaries of comics' rebirth. Before the 1990s, movie adaptations of comics were almost guaranteed to be awful. The Christopher Reeve *Superman* movies were played for nostalgia, and even though Tim Burton's *Batman* had visual panache and Michael Keaton playing the caped crusader with a grim irritability, little of the ingrained psychosis of Miller's vision came to the fore. "I think Burton never really wanted to do a movie about *Batman*," says TV, film and comics writer J. Michael Straczynski. "He wanted to do a movie about the Joker."



SUPERMAN, CIRCA 1938.

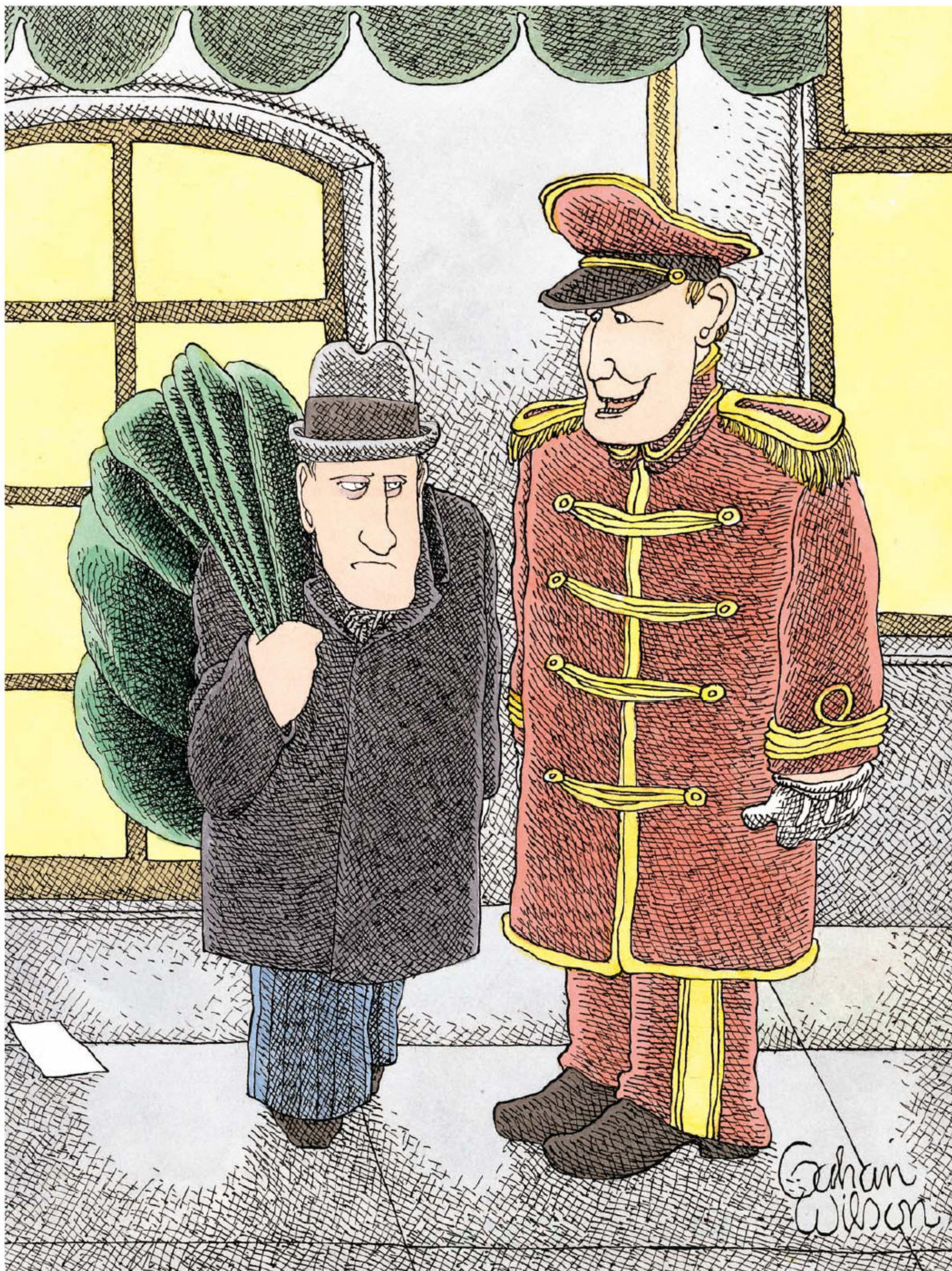
But starting with Bryan Singer's *X-Men*, in 2000, Hollywood began to get comics right. Hugh Jackman's *Wolverine* was really angry; Ian McKellen's *Magneto* wasn't so much pure evil as he was a follower of an opposing ideology, which he had ample motivation for advocating. Since then two *Spider-Man* movies have provided us with a hero we can relate to, along with visuals that for the first time really seem to capture the panel-exploding exuberance of their source material. Last year Christopher Nolan's *Batman Begins* foregrounded the tortured psychological drama that gives *The Dark Knight* its grit while showing the ties that link ordinary feelings and events to heroic behavior.

And it's not just movies about Super-friends. After helping *Batman* return to his roots in hard-boiled detective fiction, Miller went there himself in the 1990s and created the *Sin City* series, in which he used bold black-and-white graphics to explore the comic-book industry's origins in pulp fiction and film noir. His panels were sufficiently cinematic to be used as storyboards for the 2005 film. Last year's *A History of Violence*, nominated for a best drama Golden Globe, was directed by the always inventive David Cronenberg but began life as a graphic novel by John

(concluded on page 126)



BLACK-AND-WHITE AND BLEED ALL OVER: *SIN CITY*.



"Good evening, Mr. Harper, and how is Mrs. Harper?"



HOLLEY *goes* LIGHTLY

Miss April provides
a little Southern comfort



It's easy to lose track of where you came from in the City of Angels, but recent transplant Holley Ann Dorrough's Southern roots run deep. "Besides my family, I miss my sweet tea," says the even sweeter 19-year-old Alabama native and aspiring pop singer. "I guess I consider myself a Southern belle. To me that means a cute girl who gets along with everybody and aims to please." Holley has an irresistible Southern charm that instantly impressed Hef. "I got on the guest list for the Midsummer Night's Dream party at the Mansion and happened to be standing at the entrance when Hef walked in," she says, smiling. "I said to him, 'Hi,

I'm Holley, and my pictures should be in your office. So heads up—I'm your next Playmate.' I had to do it!" We love a woman who knows what she wants and isn't afraid to ask for it. Romance-wise, Miss April likes old-fashioned, down-home fun. Southern food is her specialty—corn bread, fried okra, chicken-fried steak—and she'd rather cook a meal for her date and cuddle on the couch than get dressed up and hit an expensive restaurant. Still, she does have one material wish worth mentioning: "I want a pink 1960s convertible with a white leather interior and PLAYMATE stitched across the backseat in pink." So long, Alabama; hello, L.A.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ARNY FREYTAG AND JARMO POHJANIEMI















MISS APRIL

PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH







PLAYMATE DATA SHEET

NAME: Holley Ann Dorrough
 BUST: 34 WAIST: 25 HIPS: 34
 HEIGHT: 5'8" WEIGHT: 115



BIRTH DATE: 8/12/86 BIRTHPLACE: Gradsden, Alabama

AMBITIONS: To be a successful model & singer, eventually a wonderful wife & mother.

TURN-ONS: Respect, passion, a great smile, blue eyes, a nice body, humor, nice hair.

TURNOFFS: Cockiness, smoking, drugs, players, bums, arrogance.

PREVIOUS MODELING EXPERIENCE: I have done promotions for SKOAL, Edy's & the U.S. Army at NASCAR races.

IF I HAD MORE TIME, I WOULD: Work out & shop more! And show off my homemaking skills.

MY BROTHER IS: A total cowboy! Boots, Wranglers, hat, big truck & all.

SINGER I ADMIRE: Mariah Carey.



First photo shoot ever, "glamour shots."



Snapshot of me in a dressing room.



Senior portrait, where it began.

PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

How is a thong like a barbed-wire fence?

It protects the property without obstructing the view.

Honey," said a husband to his wife, "I invited a friend home for supper."

"What? Are you crazy?" the wife replied. "The house is a mess, I haven't been shopping, and I don't feel like cooking a fancy meal."

"I know all that," he said.

"Then why did you invite a friend for supper?" she asked.

He replied, "Because the poor fool's thinking about getting married."



A mother asked her daughter what she wanted for her birthday. The little girl replied, "I want a Barbie and G.I. Joe."

"G.I. Joe?" the mother asked. "I thought Barbie comes with Ken."

The daughter replied, "No, she comes with G.I. Joe. She fakes it with Ken."

Why did God give women a belly button?

So there's a place to stash your gum on the way down.

One day George W. Bush was leading three cows into the White House. A Marine guard snapped to attention, saluted and said, "Nice cows, sir."

The president replied, "These are not just any cows; these are authentic Texas Black Angus cows. I got one for Laura, one for Barbara and one for Jenna."

The Marine again snapped to attention, saluted and replied, "Nice trade, sir."

Two guys were discussing attitudes about sex, marriage and family values.

The first man said, "I didn't sleep with my wife before we got married. Did you?"

"I'm not sure," the second replied. "What was her maiden name?"

A precious little girl walked into a pet shop and asked with a lisp, "Excuse me, mithter, do you keep widdle wabbits?"

The shopkeeper's heart melted, and he knelt down beside her and asked, "Do you want a widdle white wabbit or a thoft bwack one?"

The little girl replied, "I don't think my python gives a thit."

An old man went to the doctor for his yearly physical, and his wife tagged along. The doctor entered the examination room and told the man, "I need a urine sample, a stool sample and a sperm sample."

The old man, being hard of hearing, looked at his wife and yelled, "What did he say?"

His wife yelled back, "He needs your underwear."

A husband bought a new brand of condom named Olympic. When he got home he informed his wife of his purchase.

"Olympic condoms?" she asked. "What makes them so special?"

"There are three colors," he replied. "Gold, silver and bronze."

"What color are you going to wear tonight?" she asked cheekily.

"Gold, of course," said the man proudly.

"Why don't you wear silver?" the wife responded. "It would be nice if you came second for a change."

The movie *Brokeback Mountain* is ushering in a new wave of Westerns, but in this genre the good guys get it in the end.

A tour bus traveling through Nevada drove by the Mustang Ranch.

The guide noted, "We are now passing the largest house of prostitution in America."

To which a male passenger shouted, "Why?"



Three buddies went on a skiing trip, but the hotel was overbooked, so they all had to share a king-size bed in a single room. In the morning one guy said, "I had a strange dream last night that I was being jerked off."

"That's odd," another guy said. "I had the same dream."

The guy who had slept between them said, "Uh-oh. I dreamed I was skiing."

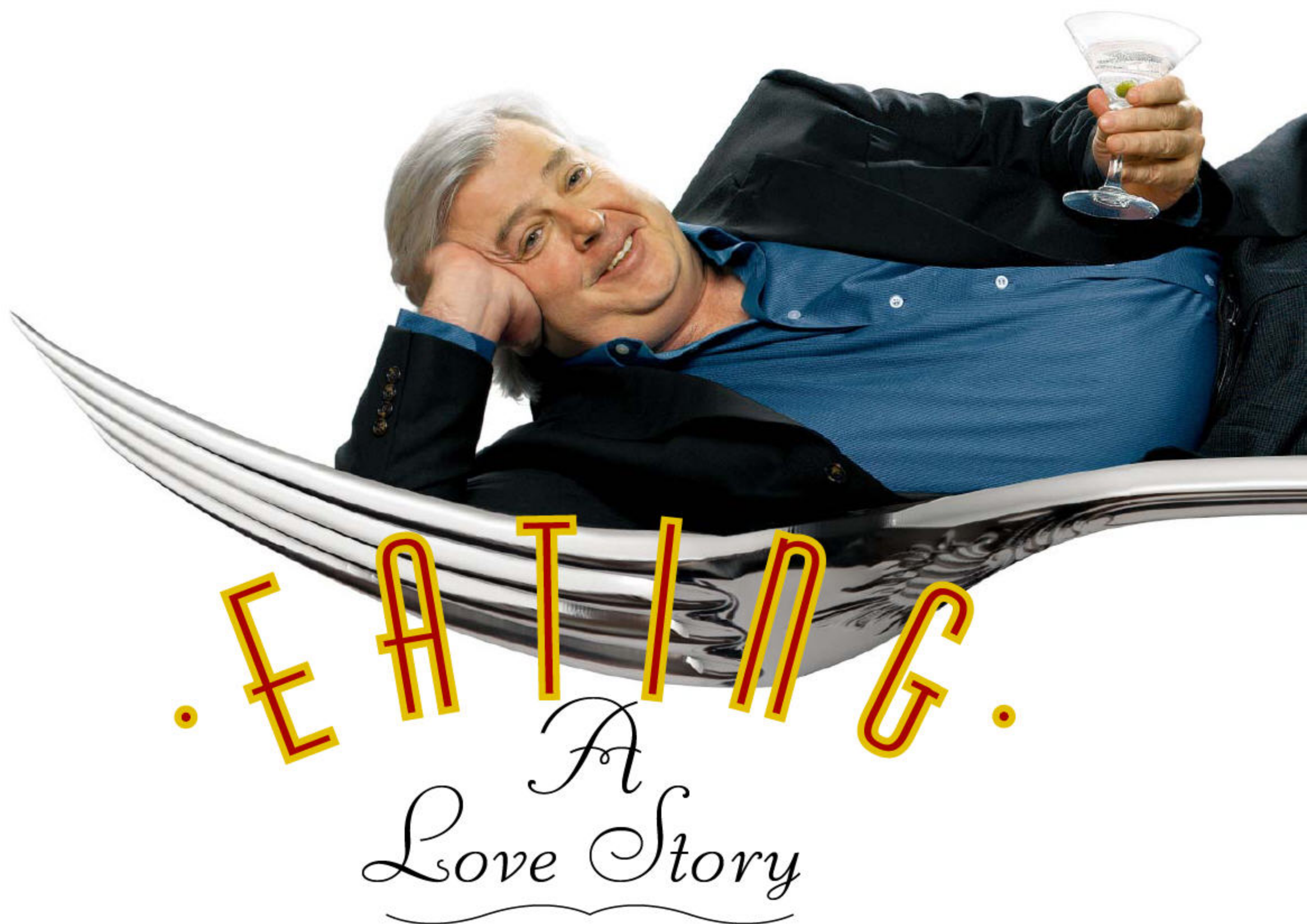
Why are there no smart husbands?

Smart men don't get married.

Send your jokes to Party Jokes Editor, PLAYBOY, 730 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019, or by e-mail through our website at jokes.playboy.com. PLAYBOY will pay \$100 to the contributors whose submissions are selected.



"You'll catch on. Think musical chairs."



The day he laid eyes on an apple pancake, it was love at first sight. But that was just the beginning

This is a story about how, to get the best fried chicken, you need a friend with an airplane. It's about how to find the finest steak you'll ever eat—by hanging around a crime scene. Truly great food rears its head in the most unlikely spots. Like love (or a bad oyster, for that matter), it usually finds you rather than the other way around.

I don't know about you, but for me, no matter what I'm doing, my day always revolves around my next meal. Considering most people eat three meals a day, that's more than 1,000 meals a year and, if you live long enough, something like 80,000 meals in a lifetime—not counting snacks and, of course, drinks, which can take the edge off certain memories or enhance them. The great thing about this quantity? A culinary lightning bolt can strike you at any moment. But it also means there's a lot of competition for anything to stand out as the best.

For most of us, a combination of things makes a meal great: the food itself, the people you're with, the atmosphere you're eating in and then the recollection. When the memory of a particular meal stays with you, something exceptional was going on.

What you're about to read is an instant replay of my finest food memories. Who am I? A man who has spent his life cooking, serving, eating and cleaning up. A man who has worked as a dishwasher, busboy, chef and manager and now owns a restaurant. A man who has been known to fly halfway across the country to have a Disaster omelet at a diner. (It had everything on it, and I could taste it for the next three days—a bumpy ride but well worth the trip.) If nothing else, my belt size alone makes me an authority. Consider this the longest menu you'll ever read.

STEAK: Sparks Steak House, New York City

When they talk about a great meal, people say they feel as if they died and went to heaven. The opposite happened to mobster Paul Castellano, who ran the Gambino crime family, when he was heading into Sparks Steak House nine days before Christmas in 1985. He was perhaps anticipating the lump-crabmeat cocktail, the sliced tomato and onion smothered with Roquefort dressing, the crispy hash browns and the boneless shell steak cut from prime beef, a.k.a. the New York strip, charred to perfection on the outside and blood-

rare on the inside. Maybe some oysters thrown in to start.

Just as Castellano stepped up to the restaurant, before he got to order or even make his way inside, John Gotti's henchmen gunned him down. Years later, the lead henchman, Salvatore "Sammy the Bull" Gravano, was arrested; he allegedly confessed he had planned the hit to coincide with a time when the streets would be filled with holiday shoppers, the better to cause confusion and make a clean getaway. He didn't say anything about the cruelty of killing a man before he could enjoy his last meal. Fortunately for the rest of us, Gotti didn't want our jobs, so we can



By Andy Murray

relax and enjoy what I think is the finest steak in New York or anywhere.

The first time I went to Sparks, long after the fireworks, I was working in New York, and my fiancée's father came into town for one of our first get-togethers. This was a man who spent most of his life going to fine restaurants on expense accounts, and I knew I had to take him somewhere better than good—especially since he was picking up the tab. At the time I was a sous-chef at Mortimer's, which had the dubious distinction of being named the rudest restaurant in America by *Money* magazine. Believe it or not, when you work in the restaurant business you don't have many chances to eat out, so I consulted some experts. The unanimous vote was for Sparks.

I walked into Sparks's packed bar that night a ball of nerves, and my prospective father-in-law, Arnold, was waiting. He was a silver-haired dapper dresser who had been a scratch golfer and even then, in his 70s, could shoot his age. All his suits were custom-made in Italy, and he knew a thing or two about the finer things in life. Meanwhile I had a ponytail and sang in a rock band. He was ready to be unimpressed by me.

After downing a couple of Smirnoffs on the rocks, Arnold saw a large man in a sports coat sitting at the end of the bar, eating what I could tell from 10 feet away was one of the greatest melons I had ever seen. It looked like the famous and elusive Hand melon at the height of summer, but this was the middle of winter and we were nowhere near upstate New York, the area it comes from. (The Hand melon is a melon insider's secret. It's a softball-size, orange-fleshed, sweet beauty that grows near Saratoga Springs, cultivated at the farm owned by the Hand family.) I gleaned Arnold's soft spot right then—he, who could stare down a Teamsters picket line without breaking a sweat, turned to mush at the sight of a good crenshaw. He sidled up to the man and said, "Who do you have to know to get a melon like that?"

The man straightened and said, "You have to know me. I own this place, and when we have it, everybody who wants it gets this melon." That was Pat Cetta, with whom I instantly fell in love. Everybody did. He was the kind of guy who becomes an immediate friend of the family; by

Christmas my now wife was baking him cookies, which he treated like a gift of precious gems.

Arnold and I took a seat and ordered. Our table, which was of the old-fashioned variety, was covered with not one but two crisp white cloths, allowing the attentive waiters to perform a sleight-of-hand trick and switch the tablecloth midmeal, keeping the cloth our plates were on perpetually spotless. The wine list had more than a thousand bottles—every one a standout, from the reasonably priced to the stratospheric. Every aspect of the meal was fantastic, but the highlight was the steak: the way it was aged and seasoned on the outside, the thinnest crust of crisply charred prime meat giving way to the buttery tenderness inside. Neither of us had ever experienced anything like it. And the tomatoes with Roquefort, the hash browns and the creamed spinach took that singular piece of meat to the next level.

That night I had the best steak and the best service of my life and, more important, so did my future father-in-law. Over melon and a great New York strip, we bonded.

The incomparable Pat Cetta is sadly no longer around, but Sparks is, and whenever I want the best steak of my life, I drop by.

BREAKFAST: Walker Bros. the Original Pancake House, Wilmette, Illinois

Read no further if you're on a diet or have a heart condition. Apple pancakes, when prepared correctly, start with a stick of butter. In case you've never counted the little blue lines on the wrapper, that's eight tablespoons. And then the sugar is added.

Taste in pancakes is something as individual as a fingerprint. Some people like pancakes in a stack with maple syrup; some like them with blueberries; some go for chocolate chips. But for me, the pinnacle is the apple pancake at Walker Bros. the Original Pancake House. Sliced apples are sautéed in butter, cinnamon and sugar, an egg batter is thrown on top, and then the whole skillet is tossed into the oven. Moments later out comes a huge, puffy, oozing creation that looks nothing like a pancake, coated in caramelized sugar so hot that if you eat it too quickly, it'll take the roof off your mouth and stick there like a caramel apple pulled from a blast furnace. You need a side of

the extra-thick bacon, perfectly crisp, to offset the sweetness, and a cup of coffee or a cold glass of milk to wash it down.

I first ate this pancake as a kid. My parents, my eight brothers and sisters and I would go to Walker Bros. after Sunday mass, usually on special occasions. Organizing a meal for nine kids was never easy. (If you remember the first scene in *Caddyshack*, you'll get an idea; my brother Brian co-wrote the film and based that scene on our family.) Taking nine kids out to a restaurant was even harder. We always had to wait for a big table, and that meant standing for 15 minutes or so, my eyes bouncing around like Ping-Pong balls as waitresses went by carrying trays of food. Did I want that? No, I liked that...or that!

In the end it didn't matter. Everyone ordered something different, and by the time it all came we had the entire menu covered. Our table was like an all-you-can-eat buffet, heaped with a jumble of plates of scrambled eggs, sausage, bacon and French toast—and those were just the basics. My sister Laura always ordered the incredible Dutch baby, which was like a giant popover filled with fruit and coated in a blizzard of powdered sugar; my dad was partial to the German pancake, sort of a naked Dutch baby that rivaled the apple pancake in size and sheer density; and of course two or three of us always had the apple pancake. This was the one place on earth where there was more food than 11 people could finish.

Every time I'm in Chicago I make a pilgrimage out of the city and up Green Bay Road to Walker Bros. If any of my brothers or sisters are around, they meet me there. It doesn't matter what time it is; there's no law against breakfast at any time of day. We still order one of everything, which is always way too much, and we still can't finish it. But it's not for lack of trying.

Unlike a lot of other places these days, everything served at Walker Bros. is real—no McFood. Real eggs, whole milk, real butter and, for the coffee, real heavy cream, the kind that floats on top like a pillow. Let's be honest: None of it is good for you, but who cares? If I'm going to go, I might as well go facedown in an apple pancake.

FRIED CHICKEN: The Lady and Sons, Savannah

There's nothing like fried skin when it comes on a chicken. It's crispy, seasoned perfectly and, on the rare occasions when it's done right, greaseless. I've tried KFC, Church's, Popeyes and, when desperate, Swanson, but the best fried-chicken moment I can remember occurred on a private jet.

As my brother Joel once told me, the next best thing to having your own swimming pool is having a brother with a swimming pool. A brother with an airplane is a variation on that. A couple of years ago my brother Bill treated a



Sparks's New York strip



Walker Bros.' apple pancake



The Lady and Sons' fried chicken



La Super-Rica's chicken taco



Matsuhisa's scallop tiradito

few family members to a ride on a tri-jet Falcon 50 to a nephew's wedding in Savannah. There we discovered Paula Deen and her two sons, better known as the Lady and Sons, which is also the name of their restaurant, an old Southern-saloon-style place housed in a brick building downtown. They make the best fried chicken in America and serve it up at an all-you-can-eat buffet, surrounded by mashed potatoes and gravy, biscuits, corn bread, and macaroni and cheese—but that's a whole other story. The fried chicken from the Lady and Sons is a story all its own.

The low-carb craze has everybody writing off fried food, and I think that's a mistake. I knew we'd hit rock bottom when Kentucky Fried Chicken officially changed its name to KFC. Does the company think if it removes the *F* word, people will mistake its food for chicken paillard? Great fried chicken is not ashamed of itself. It is confident in its identity. It is not greasy. It's light, the skin is crispy, not soggy, and the crust and skin are integrated into something sublime. That's what you get at the Lady and Sons. When it was time to take off from Savannah, we didn't want to leave that chicken behind.

I called and asked, "What are the chances you could put together 60 or 70 pieces of fried chicken to go?" The first person I talked to was skeptical; she said that would constitute the entire contents of the restaurant buffet, but I persevered. Eventually I connected with the banquet coordinator, a honey-voiced Southern belle who understood a need for quantity.

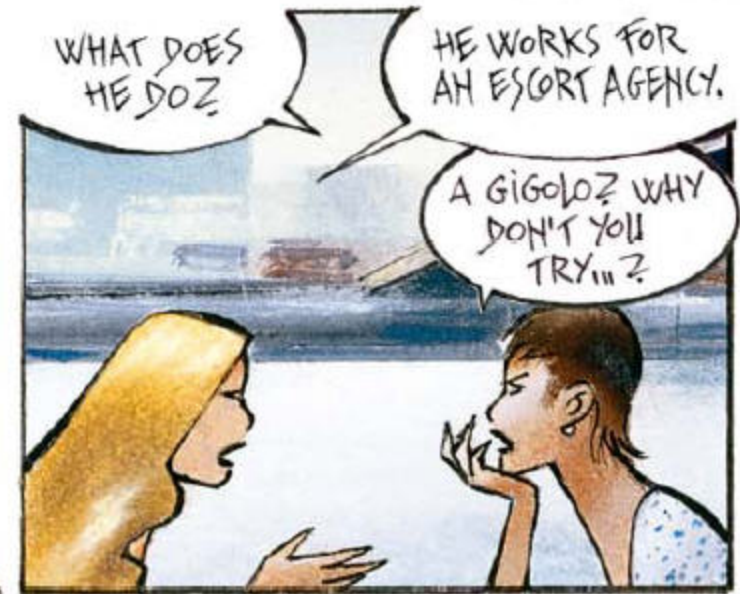
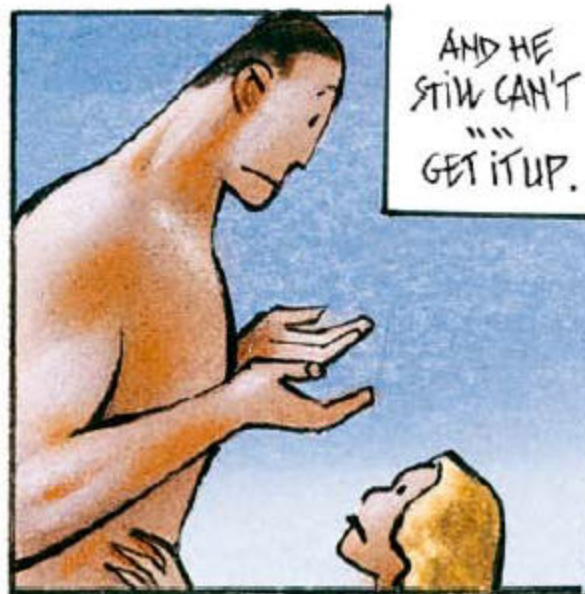
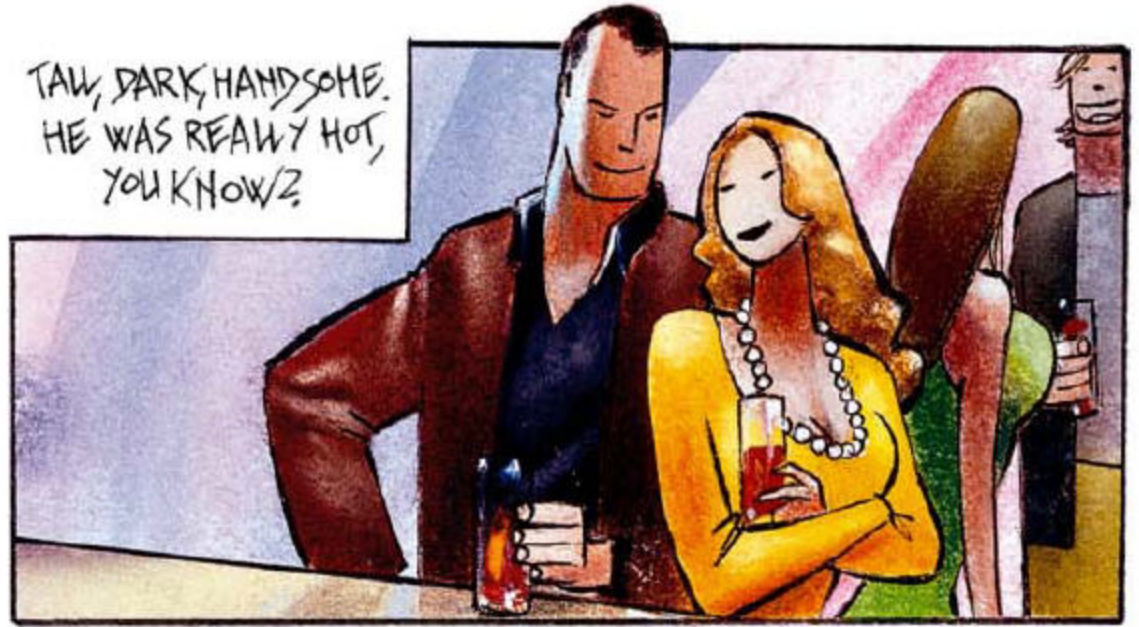
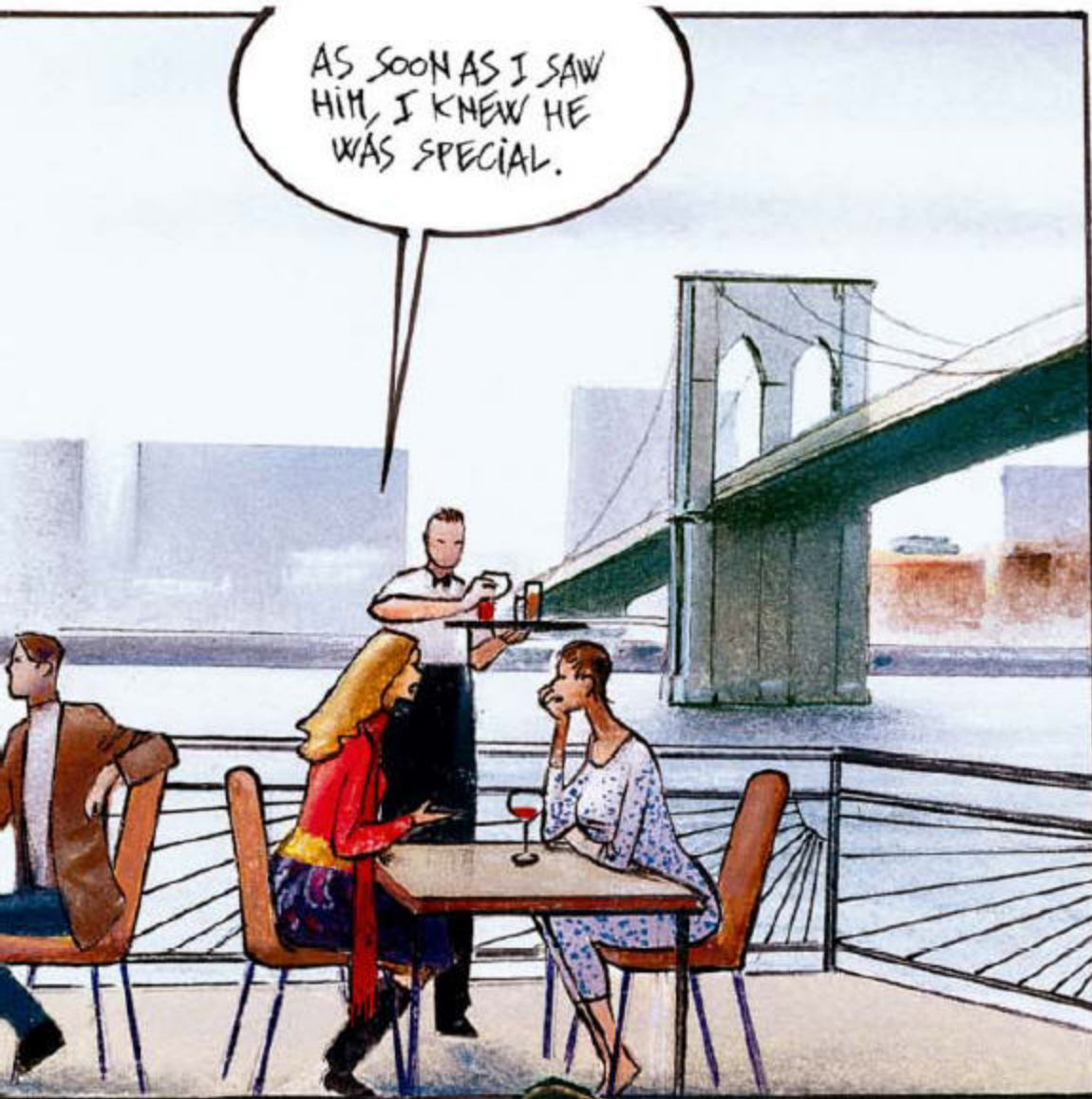
On the way to the airport we screeched up in front of the restaurant in a beat-up 1985 Dodge minivan; about eight of us were stuffed inside with our luggage. Deen's boys, Jamie and Bobby, were waiting with three giant pans, the kind you cook 30-pound turkeys in, full of chicken. The plan was to bring it back home, split it up and take it to our respective homes for dinner.

That chicken never made it off the plane. The smell of perfectly fried chicken wafted through the cabin. Bill had just come off location for a movie that required him to be in shape to work in a wet suit for six months. Let's just say he was hungry. First we had a few pieces.

Then we had seconds. Then the stewardess had to have some. Then the pilots came into the cabin. I have no idea who was flying the plane, but nobody seemed to care.

Then again, was it the chicken or the plane? When Bill and I travel back home from Chicago on a private jet, after opening day at Wrigley Field, for instance, we always swing by Mr. Beef and get a dozen Chicago Italian beef sandwiches, five or six hot dogs, some shoestring fries and a couple of large sodas and eat them until all we can do is fall asleep. With all the headlines about cutbacks in airplane food, this is good advice: Call ahead, get your taxi or car to pull over, and carry out. Especially if you have your own plane. Or better yet, your brother's. *(concluded on page 120)*

Stimulation



JUAN IVAREZ • JORGE G

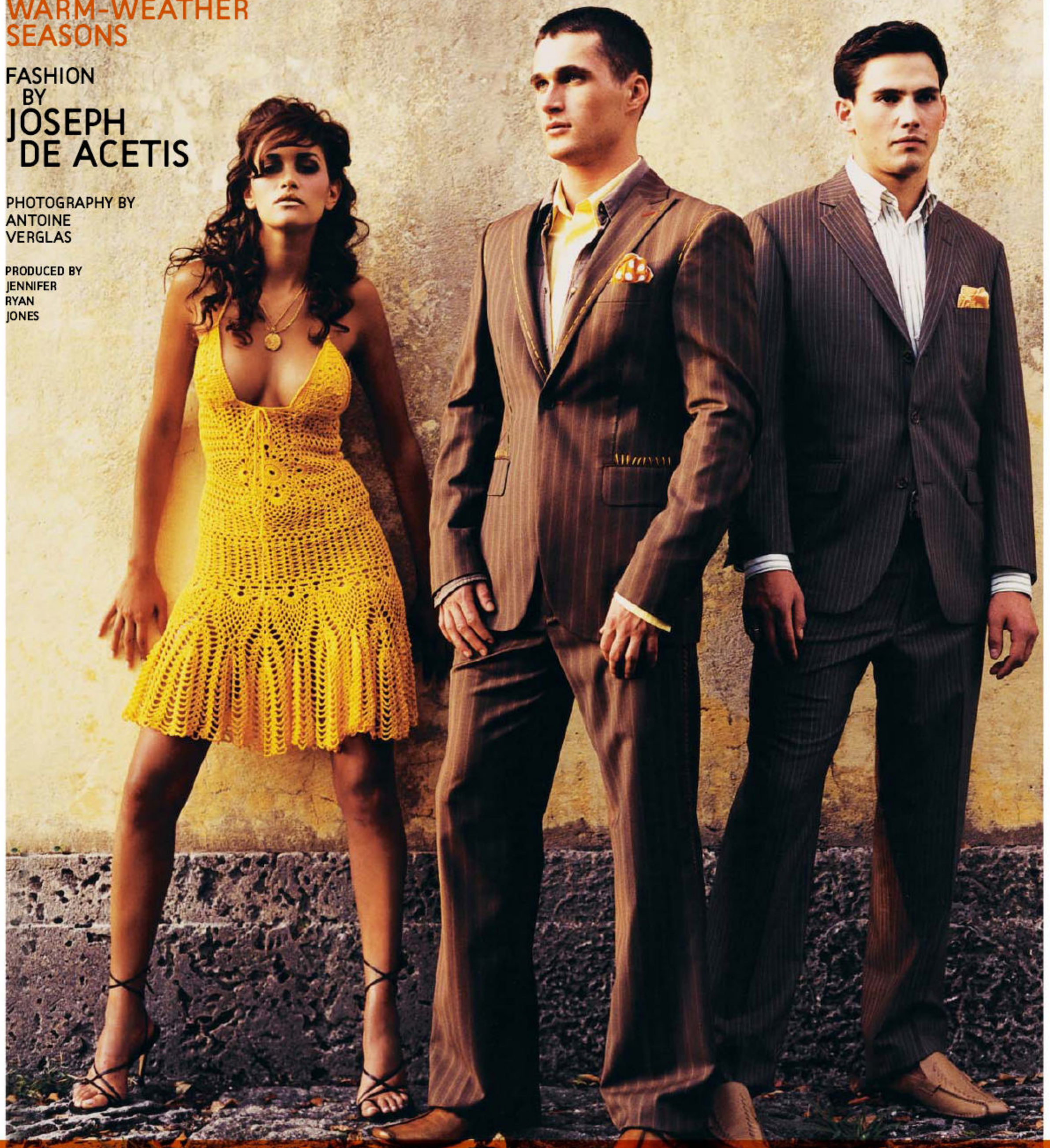
SPRING AND SUMMER FASHION FORECAST

STAY COOL IN THE
WARM-WEATHER
SEASONS

FASHION
BY
**JOSEPH
DE ACETIS**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
ANTOINE
VERGLAS

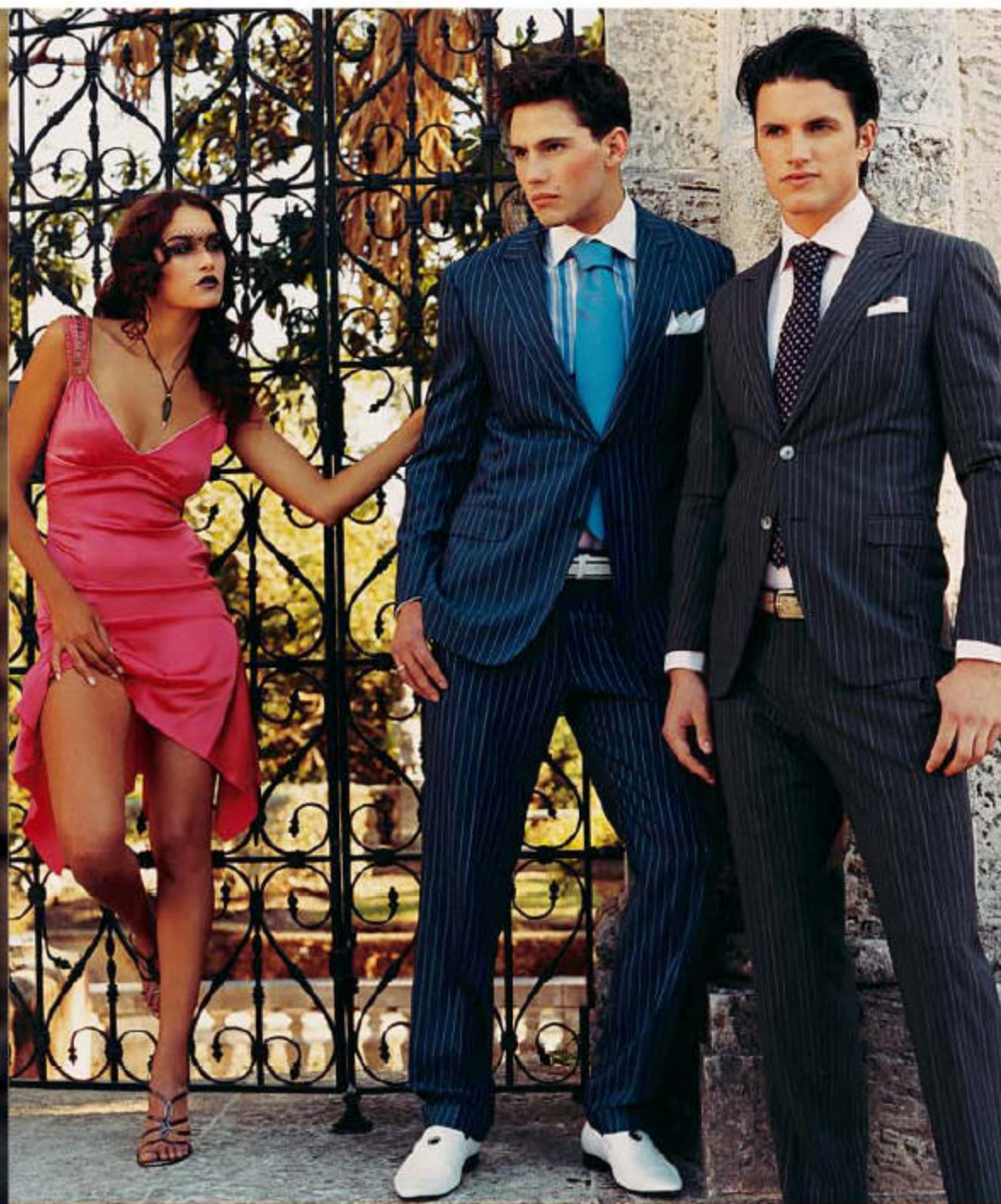
PRODUCED BY
JENNIFER
RYAN
JONES



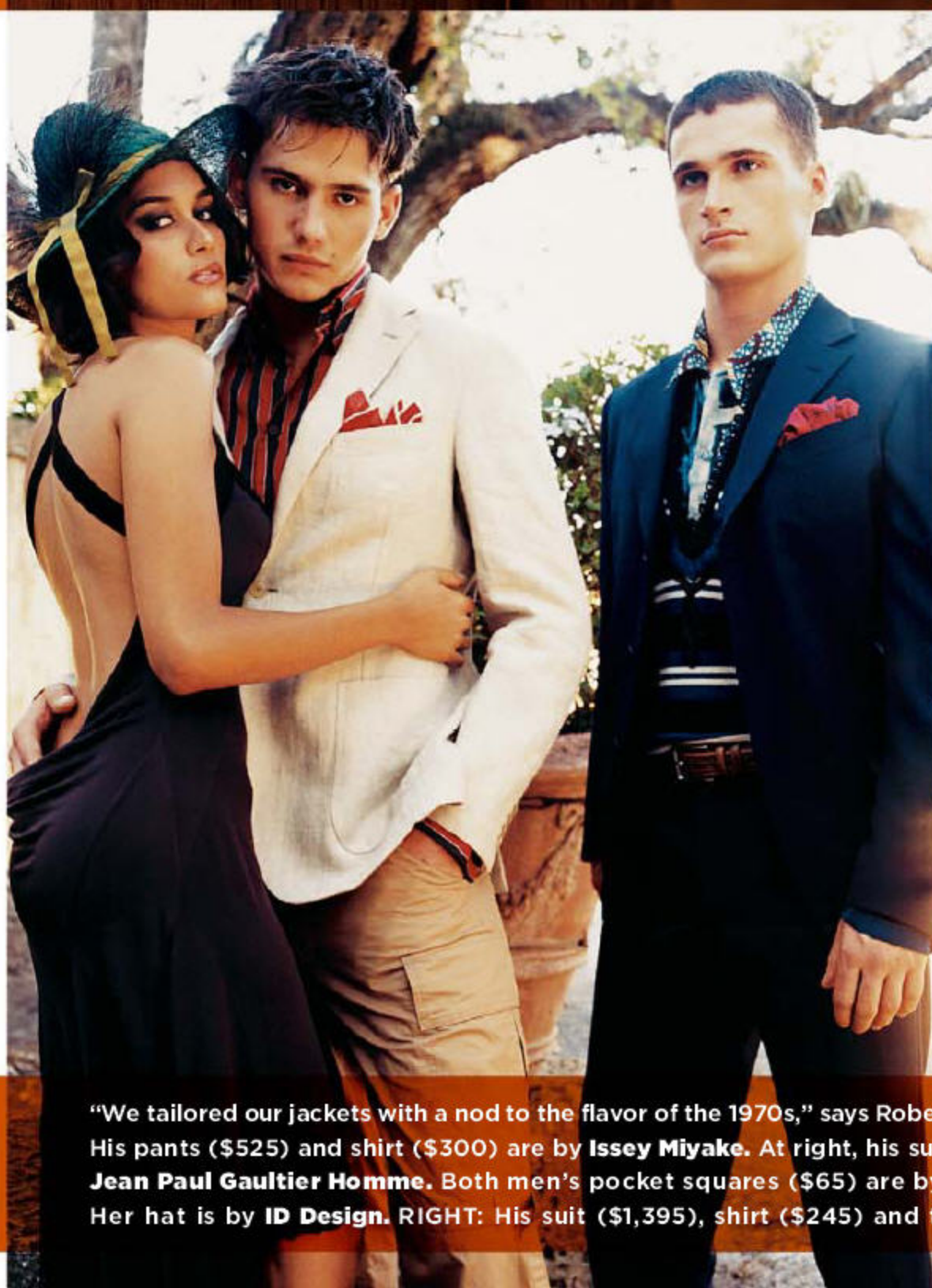
"Our new look is 21st century Rat Pack," says John Kallel of Southwick. "It is a look that young men will embrace and that older gentlemen will remember as having class." Center: His jacket (\$1,140), pants (\$480), yellow military-style shirt (\$330) and brown shirt (\$260) are by **Richmond**. The shoes (\$150) are by **Bacco Bucci**. Right: His suit (\$895) is by **Southwick**. The shirt (\$270) is by **Moschino**. Both men wear silk pocket squares (\$65) by **Best of Class** by **Robert Talbott**. Her dress (\$1,655) is by **Dsquared**. The necklace (\$350) is by **Tat2**. Her strappy sandals (\$225) are by **Stuart Weitzman**.



"We combined tailored looks with sportswear," says Marty Staff, president and CEO of Joseph Abboud. "It is traditional menswear with a twist, a fresh take on the classics." An overcoat allows a suit to function outside the office—for a lunch date behind a tree, for example. His trench coat (\$425), suit (\$895) and sweater (\$288) are by **Joseph Abboud**. His shirt (\$245) is by **John Varvatos**. The tie (\$110) is by **Canali**. Her dress (\$1,350) is by **Tuleh**. Her hair ornament (\$95) is by **Leah C.**, her bracelet (\$3,295) is by **Fortunoff**, and her shoes (\$330) are by **Stuart Weitzman**.



LEFT: His double-breasted suit (\$1,395), shirt (\$245) and tie (\$135) are by **John Varvatos**. His pocket square (\$65) is by **Best of Class by Robert Talbott**. RIGHT: Both men wear suits (\$1,895) by **Belvest**, shirts (\$220) and ties (\$95) by **Liste Rouge-Paris** and pocket squares (\$75) by **Best of Class by Robert Talbott**. In the center, his white belt (\$85) and shoes (\$235) are by **Mezlan**. At right, his loafers (\$365) are by **John Varvatos**. Her dress (\$730) is by **Richmond**. Her necklace (\$995) is by **Fortunoff**, and her shoes (\$205) are by **Stuart Weitzman**. The veil (\$95) is by **Leah C.**



"We tailored our jackets with a nod to the flavor of the 1970s," says Roberta Cocco of Belvest. LEFT: In the center, his jacket (\$1,595) is by **Belvest**. His pants (\$525) and shirt (\$300) are by **Issey Miyake**. At right, his suit (\$1,430) is by **Moschino**. His sweater (\$495) and shirt (\$380) are by **Jean Paul Gaultier Homme**. Both men's pocket squares (\$65) are by **Best of Class by Robert Talbott**. Her dress (\$440) is by **Richmond**. Her hat is by **ID Design**. RIGHT: His suit (\$1,395), shirt (\$245) and tie (\$135) are by **John Varvatos**. Her dress (\$800) is by **Just Cavalli**.



The changes in the suit jacket this season will project a more masculine fit than the boxy jackets of yesterday. Higher-cut armholes and waists broaden your shoulders and project a more slimming silhouette. The boxy look is also out in shoes; the toe of your dress shoe need not come to a blunt square. Both men's suits (price on request), shirts (\$450), ties (\$185) and pocket squares (\$70) are by **Brioni**. Left: His shoes (\$125) are by **Bostonian**. Center: His shoes (\$198) are by **Johnston & Murphy**. Her minidress (\$1,350) is by **Tuleh**, and her shoes (\$215) are by **Stuart Weitzman**.



Designers such as Hedi Slimane at Dior Homme are incorporating peaked lapels, a standard on double-breasted jackets, into their single-breasted models. The higher V-shape lapels broaden your chest and exude elegance. Normal sports coats are for a stroll in the park; peaked-lapel jackets make you look as if you own Park Avenue. His suit (\$2,045), pullover (\$185), shirt (\$380) and tie (\$175) are by **Dior Homme by Hedi Slimane**. His hat (\$180) is by **Bailey Signature**. Her dress (\$1,350) is by **Ramona LaRue**. Her hairpiece (\$250) is by **Leah C.**, and her sunglasses (\$265) are by **Oliver Peoples**.



"Last season was more colorful; this season we are showing a cleaner, more toned-down look, with neutral colors," says Mohamed Alladin of Andrew Harmon. "It's casual dressy, not casual Friday. Crisp linens and twilled cottons are just coming around again. I'd say it's a classic look, kind of like walking the beach in the 1950s. Picture yourself strolling around St.-Tropez, wearing loose trousers, slip-on sneakers and a white jacket with a sharp T-shirt underneath." His jacket (\$1,740), pants (\$489), gray shirt (\$408) and white shirt (\$375) are by **Andrew Harmon**.



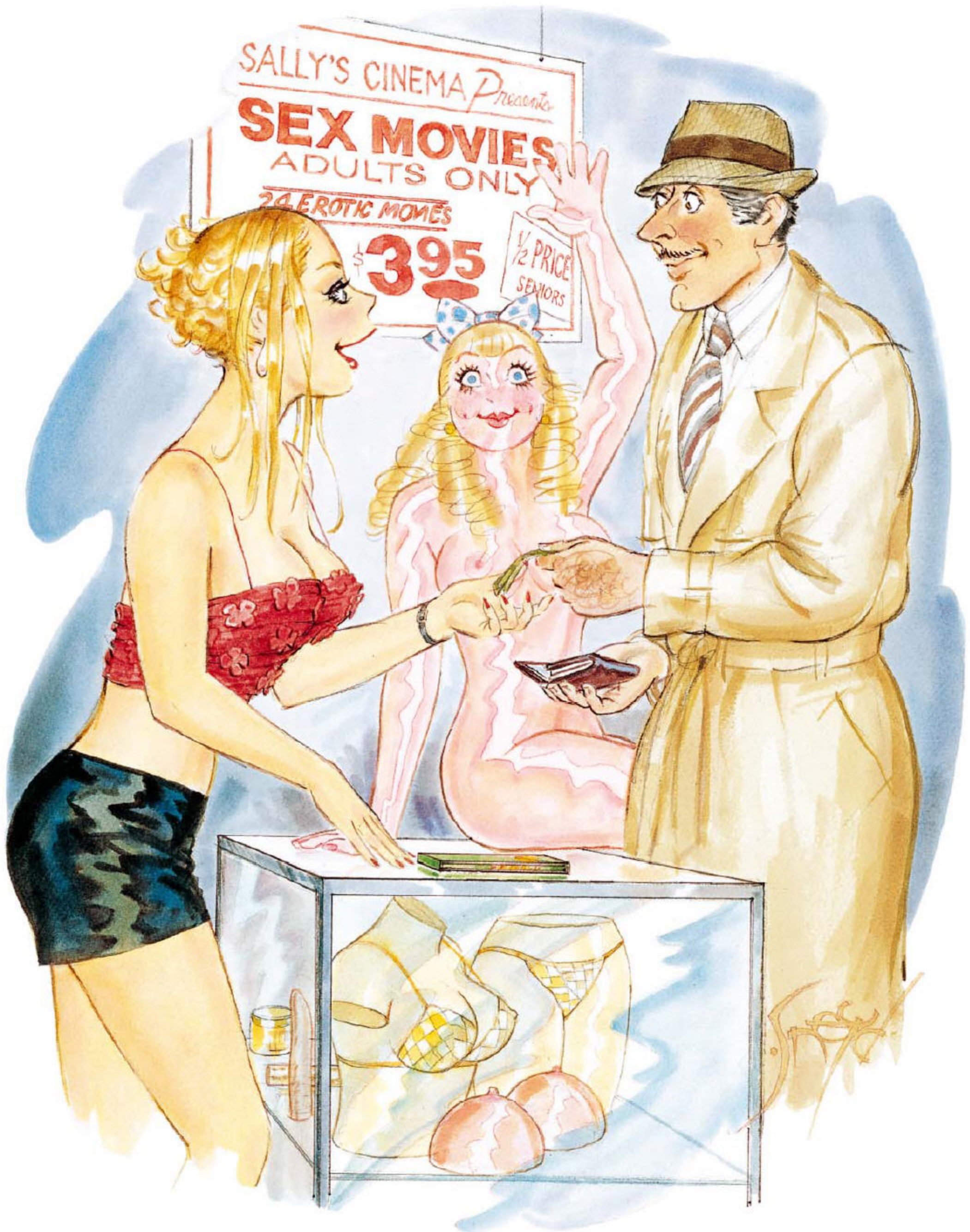
Layers are effective in creating a statement of sophistication without looking stodgy. Pairing different colors and textures allows you to present a number of looks with a limited wardrobe. Jeans are casual wear until you pair them with a smart white linen jacket. There are no ground rules when layering; just vary the fabrics you use and limit yourself to two patterns. His jacket (\$255), henley shirt (\$250) and jeans (\$440) are by **Jean Paul Gaultier Homme**. His mesh shirt (\$255) is by **Soleil by Jean Paul Gaultier Homme**.



WOMEN'S STYLING BY KATHY KALAFUT

WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 138.

Basic two-tone colors can work wonders during the warm seasons. When hues are subdued, the cut of the clothing makes the statement. Wearing a suit in the summer does not require you to wear dress shoes, so put on loafers to give yourself a cool, relaxed look and feel. His trench coat (\$1,840), jacket (\$1,920), shirt with tie at the neck (\$730), pants (\$450) and fedora (\$410) are by **Y's for Men Yohji Yamamoto**. His black loafers (\$198) are by **Johnston & Murphy**. Her dress (\$3,495) and belt (\$275) are by **Dsquared**. Her hat (\$125) is by **Leah C.**



"The thing I like about porno movies is there's always a happy ending."

CENTERFOLDS ON SEX

THE HOUSE OF YES

Carol: With my new boyfriend I have the kind of wild sex I never thought I'd have. We've done it in almost every corner of my apartment—in the kitchen, on the stairs, on the coffee table. This past week we had sex on the carpet in the living room; after we finished he was like, "Oh no, look at your knees." They were covered with rug burns, so he went out and bought me Neosporin. He felt so bad about it, he made my bed the next morning. What a guy! Friends have told me they like having sex on top of the washing machine because of the vibrations. I'll have to try that next. I'm 29, but I'd never had anal sex until now. Wow! It's amazing, especially when it's with a guy you really have chemistry with. You can relax enough to just let it happen. And I hadn't been able to orgasm from just oral sex until now. The last time he performed oral sex on me, I was shaking for an hour. I'm finally having the experiences I'd only read about!



It's the Love, Stupid

Darlene: If you ask me now about sex, I'll say something different from what I'd have said five years ago. Then it was lust. Now it's love. I have had wild sex, but just having sex with some hot guy isn't enough. This one guy really wanted to take me out on a date, but I wasn't interested, because I had just ended a relationship. Finally I agreed to a date. He pulled up in a limo at nine in the morning, and the next thing I knew we were in his private jet flying to Vegas for the weekend. I said, "money doesn't impress me. The soul of a person does." He said, "I didn't take you here for sex. I found out you like boxing. That's why I flew you out here." That softened me up, and we started talking, really getting to know each other. At some point I said, "The next time I sleep with a man, I want to marry him." So he proposed.



THE MASTERS IS THE MOST EXPENSIVE, EXCLUSIVE TOURNAMENT ON THE PGA TOUR, A FOUR-DAY GOLFPALOOZA OVERRUN BY CORPORATIONS, MOGULS AND WILY LOCALS. IN THIS EXCLUSIVE REPORT, A TRUE FAN REVEALS HOW YOU CAN SLIP THROUGH THE GREEN VELVET GATES FOR \$99 A DAY



CRASHING AUGUSTA

article by **Jonathan Littman**



I once shot 84 on a tough course and, like all duffers, dream that one day my errant drives will straighten and my wayward putts will fall effortlessly into the cup. Golf tempts us with the possibility of perfection, even for just a single hole, and this keeps us coming back after all the shanks and screams. Fanatical by nature, we golfers buy countless training gimmicks and videos and books in the vain hope that our swing might one day turn sweet. But perhaps I'm more fanatical than some. I've gotten on an airplane and flown cross-country in the faint hope that I might see, smell, hear and feel golf perfection in the presence of the sport's masters—in their own house of worship.

Against all advice and reason, I stand outside the gates of the world's most exclusive golf tournament—the National, as it's known locally, the most prestigious four days of golf in the world. Every reasonable person I know has told me it's absurd to attempt to attend the Masters if you're not a corporate executive or the guest of a corporation or happen to have several thousand extra dollars to blow. That I've made it this far is itself a miracle. I've actually secured a crash pad; last night I slept like a baby on an air mattress in the screened porch of a

little brick house I'm sharing with seven guys half a mile from the course in Augusta, Georgia. You can't beat the price; my share of the week's lodging and a golf cart (rented on impulse from a local) comes to a bargain \$425.

But here's the real challenge: The badge, or tournament pass, for the Masters costs \$3,500 to \$5,000 or more and is harder to come by than a Super Bowl ticket. Price alone does not convey the Masters' exclusivity. Here in the Deep South, where a courtly deference—"Yes, *suh!*"—fills the air like the pervasive scent of magnolia blossoms, Northern principles do not apply.

Headed by chairman William "Hootie" Johnson, the Augusta National Golf Club is defined by its own rules. When the thunderous drives of a certain gifted player began soaring over the sand trap on 18, the National expanded the trap and lengthened the hole. As for Hootie's headline-grabbing preference for excluding women, "Well, we've adopted a new policy," he proclaimed during his annual Masters news conference in 2005. "We don't talk about club matters, period," he explained, flanked by a lineup of mute members wearing the traditional green jackets. "I said we have a new policy. We don't talk about club matters, period." This is a pretty good idea when

**Hi, Mom.
I'm in!**





The history, the glory, the tradition of Augusta. Above from left: the par-three contest in 1992; four-time Masters champ Tiger Woods tees off at the 10th in 2004. Below: the National's access badge—only for the select few.

your organization excludes all women and counts just a handful of blacks as members while wholeheartedly embracing billionaires (10) and the nation's richest, most powerful white men.

The Masters is more than a sporting event. Augustans are proud of their golf, but they also love telling tales about those other popular Southern pastimes, guns and violence: the one about the time long ago when "some blacks were shot" for having made the mistake of fishing in one of the course's creeks, or the time a drunken lunatic crashed the main gate, roared up famed Magnolia Avenue and at gunpoint took five hostages in the pro shop, demanding to see the visiting President Reagan. But most of all, practically everyone in town wants to tell you about Allen Caldwell. In 1997, the year of Tiger Woods's first Masters triumph, Caldwell became the local partner of a hospitality club directly across from Magnolia, took in hundreds of thousands of dollars in advance from prospective customers for tournament passes and watched in horror as prices skyrocketed to an unprecedented \$11,000 a ticket. When he couldn't meet his obligations, he walked into his yard on the first night of the tournament and put a shotgun to his head.

Shotguns aside, I'm not paying \$11,000, let alone \$3,500, for a badge. Hootie isn't about to ask me to join the National, nor do I have a chance in hell of getting onto the Masters' patron list, a classically Southern system of vetting fans that began in 1934 when legendary co-founders Bobby Jones and iron-willed Clifford Roberts launched the tournament. Masters patrons receive an unheard-of license in modern sport: lifetime tickets to an internationally celebrated event. Once christened a patron, you have the opportunity each year to purchase for a nominal fee—not long ago it was \$100; now it's \$175—a tournament, or series, badge, which provides the holder with entry to the four days of competition, from Thursday to Sunday. (Passes to the Monday through Wednesday practice rounds are distributed through a weighted drawing with its own set of rules.) Early in its history the National sought patrons by soliciting members of golf clubs within 225 miles of Augusta. At first, during the Depression, it was tough to find takers, given that only the rich could take weekdays off to watch a golf tournament. Indeed, though the patron list remained exclusive (the working classes rarely belonged to golf clubs), tickets were practically being given away down on Augusta's Broad Street until television and Arnold Palmer made the Masters a must-see event in the early 1960s.

Who are these patrons? The National has turned its secrecy into an art form, and on this subject, as with virtually all else, it wisely remains mute. This much the



club will say: In 1934 a formal patron mailing list began, and in 1967 the tournament enjoyed its first sellout. Five years later the patron list was closed, and by 1978 the waiting list had become so long that it too was shut. (It opened again briefly in 2000 but then shut once more.) The patron list is a brilliant method of guaranteeing control and standards of behavior. At the top of the list are the members,

about 300 rich, supremely connected individuals, all men and nearly all white, who enjoy the privilege of a playing membership at the National. They are knights in this kingdom of golf, with Chairman Hootie Johnson their undisputed king. A long step down are those patrons who, like vassals—their medieval counterparts—receive their badges as grants from a lord. That grant, given to tens of thousands of privileged golf fans, is a lifetime charter to walk the hallowed grounds for four days each April as long as they live—and as long as they remain in the National's good graces. Just as lords required faithfulness from their vassals, so too does the National demand that patrons obey its ironclad rules. Every badge has a number, and if you or anyone using your badge violates the code of conduct laid out by Jones and Roberts, your badge will be taken away forever.

The National clears many millions a year from souvenir sales and television revenue. At the same time, the club promotes the (continued on page 142)



"That's not what I meant when I asked if you two didn't have something better to do."

Candice

WWE Diva
Candice Michelle
hits the big time



Above left: Candice Michelle (in all pink), with blonde Torrie Wilson and Victoria, toying cat-and-mouse-style with Maria in New Jersey in January. Above right: Candice being all she can be—rallying the troops in Afghanistan during the holidays. Talk about a knockout.

BY DAVID HOCHMAN

Candice Michelle has a wicked little fantasy. Wearing a lace-up bustier, tight shorts and thigh-high leather boots, she enters a dark room full of strangers. Another woman approaches. Candice pounces, wrapping her thighs around the woman's neck, gripping her tight. There are variations. Sometimes they struggle, sometimes they scream, but it always ends the same: Candice walks away with the woman's belt and, lo and behold, the championship title in World Wrestling Entertainment's women's division.

Candice may just win that title on April 2, when she enters the ring in a live pay-per-view extravaganza in Chicago. She's not lacking in confidence: "When I take something on, I don't hold back," she says. "Women's wrestling needs more sex appeal, and becoming champion is the fastest way I know to make that happen."

You have to love a woman who has her goals all mapped out. And Candice certainly has a knack for turning her dreams into reality. She was only 19 when

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ARNY FREYTAG





she told her mother she was leaving her small town in Wisconsin to become a big star. "I packed up the blue Mustang and drove cross-country to Los Angeles," she says while reclining at a waterside cafe in Marina del Rey, California, near her home. "I just kept thinking, Life is too short to be ordinary."

Not that Candice could ever be considered ordinary. Look at her: At the age of 27 she's arguably the foxiest Diva the WWE has ever seen, and with that trademark neck lock of hers—better known as Candylicious—she is tough to contend with in the ring or anywhere else.

Whether Candice becomes the champ or not, she's already won our approval. Perhaps you recall a certain television commercial that aired during last year's Super Bowl and another that was broadcast during this season's NFL playoffs. Let us refresh your memory: Candice is dressed in a dangerously skimpy top emblazoned with the GoDaddy.com logo. The commercial does have a plot, but who cares? The only thing anybody noticed was how adept Candice was at keeping those pesky spaghetti straps from popping off under all that pressure.

Apparently the spaghetti straps couldn't take it anymore. "Another one of my dreams has always been to pose for PLAYBOY," Candice says. It's hard for the busboys not to marvel at her credentials. Why else would they be elbowing past each other to keep her iced-tea glass filled? "I started reading PLAYBOY when I was 17 or 18, and I thought, This is the epitome of a certain kind of beauty and class. It's the beauty of being a woman and of being truly free-spirited."

Candice's journey from Wisconsin girl to PLAYBOY model wasn't always easy. "My first year in L.A., I cried myself to sleep every night," she remembers. "I couldn't find a job, I didn't have any friends, and I hated the freeways." So she did what every starving young fame seeker does at moments like those—she started waitressing. "This wasn't just any restaurant gig, though," she insists. "It was this place called Dublin's on the Sunset Strip, and they make you submit a head shot with your résumé."

The skills that scored her huge tips from customers are the same ones that make her so successful in the ring and in such movies as *Dodgeball*, in which she played a cheerleader. "I'm a tough, flirty kind of girl. That's just who I am," Candice says with a glint in her eye. "I use that flirty energy to help me

(text concluded on page 136)















Nobu had studied in Peru, and he uses Peruvian chili paste and other things you don't often taste.

MEXICAN: La Super-Rica Taqueria, Santa Barbara, California

Heading north on the 101, pull off at Milpas Street in Santa Barbara and you'll see a ramshackle, 1950s-style white shack with turquoise trim, a hard plastic awning and cheesy plastic outdoor furniture. Don't blink or you'll miss it. The place used to be an Orange Julius (remember Orange Julius?). Today it's a Mexican joint run by the Gonzalez family—Isidoro, his brother and their parents, in their 80s, who still work there. The first thing you notice: the line, a mile long at any time of day. In that line, waiting patiently for as long as it takes, may be carpenters on break, movie stars, yuppies, tattooed bikers, sports stars, billionaires and lots of smart locals, including in her day the late Julia Child. (After she got older and became wheelchair-bound, Isidoro delivered to her upscale retirement community. One of her favorite meals was Super-Rica's banana-leaf tamales.)

You find a parking place and join the line, reading the menu scribbled on the giant blackboard behind the grill, which is directly behind the counter. Hopefully you'll remember your high school Spanish. You can see the line cooks hand-pressing corn tortillas one at a time, and as they hit the grill you can smell the onions and the different meats going onto the flat-top for the tacos and the tamales—the carne asada, the pork, the chorizo. On Fridays there are seafood tamales. Everything is served on paper plates, with paper napkins and plastic forks.

True, every Mexican place has this food, but there is nothing like the version served at Super-Rica. The homemade tortillas make a world of difference. Everything tastes homemade because it is; it's made right there while you watch. "I got my inspiration from the food vendors on the streets of Mexico City," Isidoro will tell you.

What if you're not in Santa Barbara on the 101? I used to live in Los Angeles, nearly two hours away. A friend who did sound for Smokey Robinson was in town once for some golf with the Motown great, and he dropped by and asked where we should eat. I think he had something on Rodeo Drive in mind. But since he was from New York, I told him he needed to see the central coast. He said, "Aren't we in southern California?"

We headed north.

It was going on dusk when we arrived at Super-Rica to find it was closing. I felt like crying, and they must have noticed. We didn't ask, but they started sending food out to us on the patio. I don't think that happens often, but it was one of those days when everything goes right. We slumped happily over our paper plates on the plastic furniture under the hard plastic awning, the table precariously overloaded with seafood tamales, *alambre de filete* with vegetables, chorizo *especial de queso*, tacos *de chuleta*, guacamole (no chips! Super-Rica does not serve chips. I don't know why), and vegetarian tamales—all served with gobs of fresh salsa. A six-pack of Dos Equis and we were livin'.

SUSHI: Matsuhisa, Beverly Hills

My friend Don, who is a great chef, came to L.A. one year to work at the American Wine & Food Festival, a fund-raiser sponsored by Wolfgang Puck. This is a blockbuster culinary event that supports the Los Angeles chapter of Meals on Wheels. It's held on the Universal Studios back lot and is one of the most incredible food events in the country. Fifty chefs and more than 60 vintners from all over the world are showcased for charity. This particular year, Nobu, the now legendary sushi restaurant, had just opened in New York City, and Don was working at Tribeca Grill, which is part of the same restaurant group. I'd worked at Tribeca Grill with Don, so I immediately offered my services.

If you haven't heard of Nobu Matsuhisa, he is without a doubt the greatest sushi chef in the world. Today he has restaurants in London, Tokyo, Malibu, Aspen, Beverly Hills, Vegas, Miami Beach, Milan, Dallas, Mykonos (seasonal only) and the Bahamas, but at the time, he wasn't as well-known, and on this particular occasion he was working in the booth next to Don and me. We fed thousands of people that night. The crowd moved from booth to booth, with people stopping four or five times at Nobu's. We never saw Wolfgang. He had an impenetrable crowd around his booth.

When it was over, around 11 at night, I looked at Don and said, "We need a drink." Nobu looked over at us and said, "You come back to my place to eat. I'm going to fix you some food." I have to admit, we were thinking about liquor, about the afterparty,

but Nobu was insistent. He has a smile people can't resist, and that is no small factor in his success. Half an hour later we were seated at Matsuhisa, his restaurant on La Cienega. It's a sleek, modern Japanese place—very simple and comfortable.

Nobu put Don, me and three other chefs from the festival at a table and disappeared into the kitchen. The place was just about empty, ready to shut down for the night. I looked at Don and said, "Did we make the right move, or should we go on to that party?"

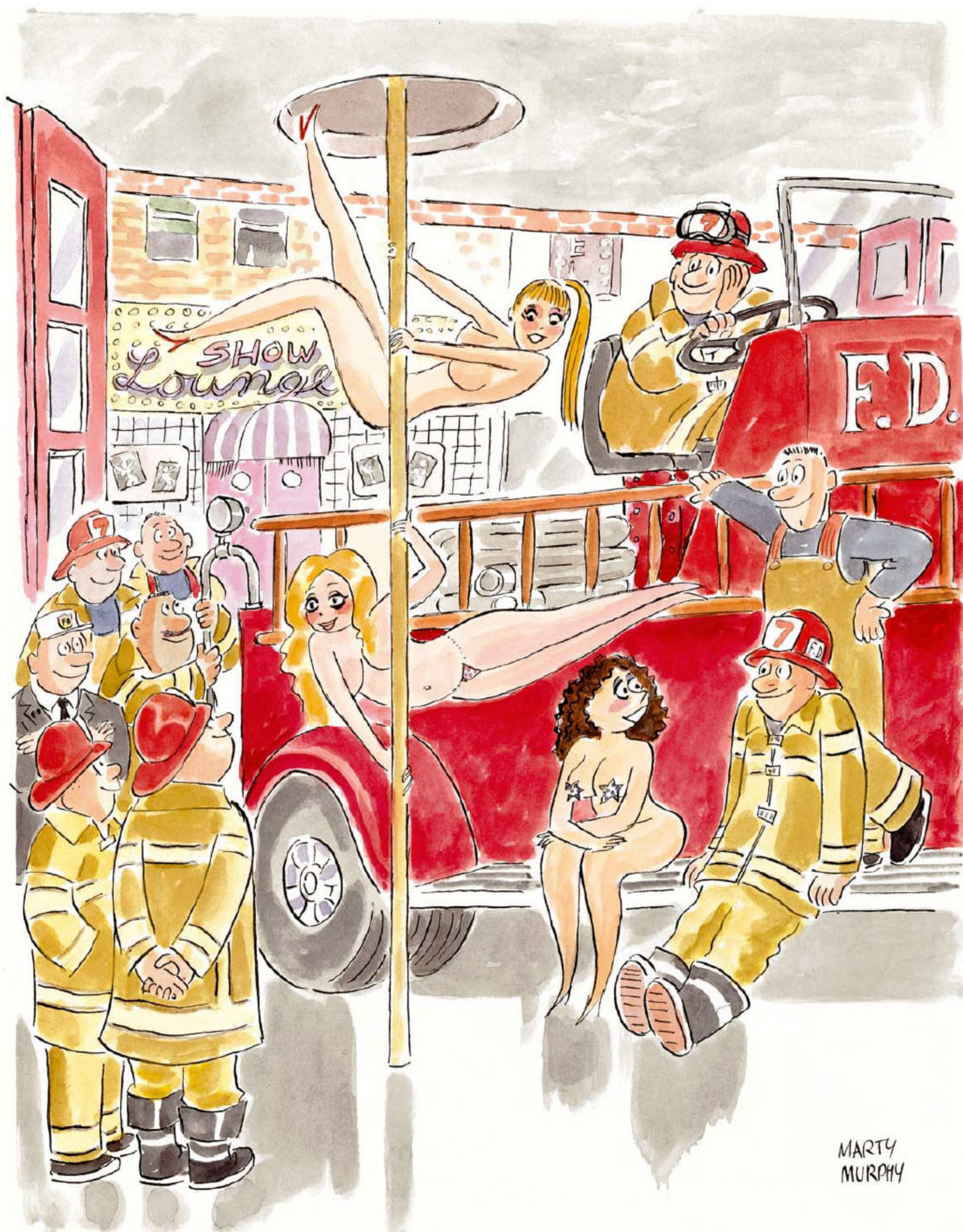
Don, who knew Nobu from New York, said, "Just relax. You're going to go for a ride."

Within seconds bottles of cold sake came out in bamboo containers, which were never empty for the rest of the evening. The sake was so refreshing, our tiredness evaporated, and you could sense an energy, as if something wonderful were about to happen. Then the sushi and the sashimi started. Nobu sent out salmon, *toro*, tuna, yellowtail, Spanish mackerel and Chilean sea bass. The fish couldn't have been fresher, and the vinegared rice underneath was the perfect complement. There was a hint of wasabi but no overkill. Nobu had studied in Peru, and he uses Peruvian chili paste and other things you don't often taste. He did a sashimi salad that broke all the rules and blew our minds in the process. More dishes followed, each one a piece of art: a flower-shaped plate of perfectly sliced red snapper arranged in a circle, baby-squid tempura, then grilled octopus and all sorts of wonderfully fresh, briny oysters with different sauces.

Every once in a while you heard a few grunts or moans. Nobody at the table was capable of carrying on a conversation, we were so submerged in the food. It was like an out-of-body experience, only edible. Nobu was the perfect host, and he kept going back to the kitchen to tell his chefs to send out specific dishes. Don told me Nobu insisted on the highest-quality ingredients on the planet, no matter what the cost, and it showed. With him it was all about perfection, something he actually managed to achieve. For a finale he served a huge plate on a mirror; on it were a couple of lobsters, cut up and fanned out in the shape of the sun. It was so beautiful, it was a shame to eat it. But that didn't stop us.

That night I experienced flavors and foods I'd never even thought about eating before, even with years of experience in the restaurant business, working at places that had garnered their own sets of stars. But this was different. This was it: the greatest meal I've ever had.





"You guys are really sweet to let us practice over here."

FERGUSON

(continued from page 71)

I don't need any more ex-wives anywhere. I've had a few problems in that area. But who hasn't?

monkey. I think she's quite a naughty wee girl. Well, I hope she is. I don't know her at all; I've just sat across from her and interviewed her. She's an attractive woman, no doubt about it. And women like Maria Bello, Mary McCormack, Amy Yasbeck and Sharon Stone—sparky, funny, independent, smart women. I'm not interested in meeting women I can't call cheeky wee monkeys.

Q6

PLAYBOY: Your Maureen Dowd interview was almost flirtatious. What was going on? Can you have as much fun with Ann Coulter?

FERGUSON: I adore Dowd. I find her endlessly fascinating, endlessly sexy. She's very female, and I like that. But one of the things I like most is that when I challenge her on something, she seems delighted. It's what makes her such a good writer. Coulter thinks everyone who disagrees with her has a political stance contrary to hers. She's strident and seems angry about something. Maybe it's just an act, but she has kept it up every time I've met her.

Q7

PLAYBOY: When you know you're hitting it off with a female guest and there's a date in your future, how do you handle it?

FERGUSON: I've never dated anyone on the show. I'm like a doctor: I've seen people socially outside, but I've never actually...well, that's not true. I've dated people on the show, but before they were on the show. Well, actually, no.... No, wait a minute. I have dated people who have been on the show but never that night. [laughs] That was the sound of a man wriggling. No, I've never followed anyone back to the dressing room and asked for a date. I wouldn't do that. If ever I go out with a female guest, usually what happens is she calls me or in some way lets me know.

Q8

PLAYBOY: When you play Larry King, Prince Charles or any other celebrity in a skit, what's with the hairpieces?

FERGUSON: I am so uncomfortable in a makeup chair. The last movie I did before I came here was *Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events*. I was almost completely cut out of that movie—that was one of the unfortunate events. But the other thing was the makeup job we had to endure, for which the makeup people subsequently won Oscars. It took two and a half hours every fucking day.

I hated it. When I came here and they said, "We want to try a sketch with Larry King," I grabbed the nearest wig, threw it on and said, "That'll be it." They said, "No, no, that's terrible." I said, "Hey, they know it's me anyway. If they're going to like or not like the sketch because of the wig, that's atrocious." They know it's me dressed up as Larry King or as a cartoon of Larry King. That desire not to sit in a makeup chair became our style.

Q9

PLAYBOY: The guy who replaced Craig Kilborn before you is now a superstar. Are you feeling lucky?

FERGUSON: I didn't even notice that. I was on Jon Stewart's show as a guest, and he said, "You know, we have something in common." I said, "I don't know what it is." He said, "We both took over from Kilborn." I'm a big fan of Stewart's. I'm feeling lucky to have this job. I don't think anyone, including me, expected it. I was a guest on Kilborn's show, and I guess I did okay—I got his job.

Q10

PLAYBOY: The legendary Peter Lassally, who produced *The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson* and *Late Show With David Letterman*, is your boss. Just how scary is it working with the godfather of talk shows?

FERGUSON: Lassally is the reason I took the job. He's the reason I still love it. It's pretty much Lassally. He'd seen me as a guest on the show, and he asked me to come in and guest-host. I thought that would be fun and a lark. I was in the green room the night before I guest-hosted—I had come down to watch someone else host so I could see how things were done—and I met Lassally for the first time. I said, "Thanks for asking me. This should be a lark." He looked me in the eye and said, "No, no, this is not a lark. This is what I do. And if I'm right, you're the lightning in the bottle. You're the one-in-a-million guy who actually does this." I said, "Are you fucking crazy?" He said, "Maybe I am, maybe I'm not. But this is what I do. I spot this. This is my talent." I went, "Oh my God." I actually thought he was just a little nuts. You meet a lot of nutty people in show business, and I thought Lassally was another one. But within 30 seconds of guest-hosting the show, I thought, I fucking love this. I still don't know why. Maybe it's the utter freedom of the genre and the every night of it. I don't even get notes from the network. Not a damn thing.

Q11

PLAYBOY: Every night you come out and say, "It's a great day for America." How did that come about?

FERGUSON: Not every night. I didn't say it the night Tookie Williams died. I thought that would have been inappropriate. I think there's a little bit of OCD with these things. You get them, they become habits, and then you start to feel unlucky if you don't say them. I'm a little bit of a throwback. I have a 19th century immigrant mentality. I'm like, "This is America. This is the New World. Thank God I'm here." I'm very enthusiastic about America, and I guess that's why I say, "It's a great day for America." I'm not particularly right-wing. In fact I'm not right-wing at all. You can love America and not be right-wing. That was hijacked for a while by a lot of people.

Q12

PLAYBOY: You used to work with the American Dance Theater. When are you lightest in your loafers?

FERGUSON: I did it because somebody asked me to and I'd never done it before. It was an unpaid position. I danced with them in the evening, and I worked on a construction site in Harlem during the day. I didn't ask any of my construction buddies to come see me dance, nor did I invite any of the dancing guys up to the construction site—although they asked. No, not really.

Q13

PLAYBOY: When you were drinking, what kind of scotch impressed someone from Scotland?

FERGUSON: The best scotch in the world, bar none, is a whiskey called Highland Park. It's the only whiskey made in the Orkneys, a bunch of islands off the north coast of Scotland. To my mind, Highland Park is much smoother than even the Macallan. They actually call it a woman's whiskey because it's so easy to drink. It's beautiful. When I drank whiskey, that's what I drank. I stopped drinking on February 18, 1992, but take it from someone who has investigated them all.

Q14

PLAYBOY: While you were going through a divorce, you wrote a novel, *Between the Bridge and the River*. Was that good therapy or a form of revenge?

FERGUSON: The novel is romantic and quite rough in places. It's about love and death, which is what all books are about. It's about drinking and fucking and fighting. I don't know if it's meant to be funny. I was going through a divorce, which is fucking painful. It's utterly horrendous. And I have a young child. It wasn't a particularly vicious divorce; it was just sore. My heart was broken. That fueled the writing. But I'm not

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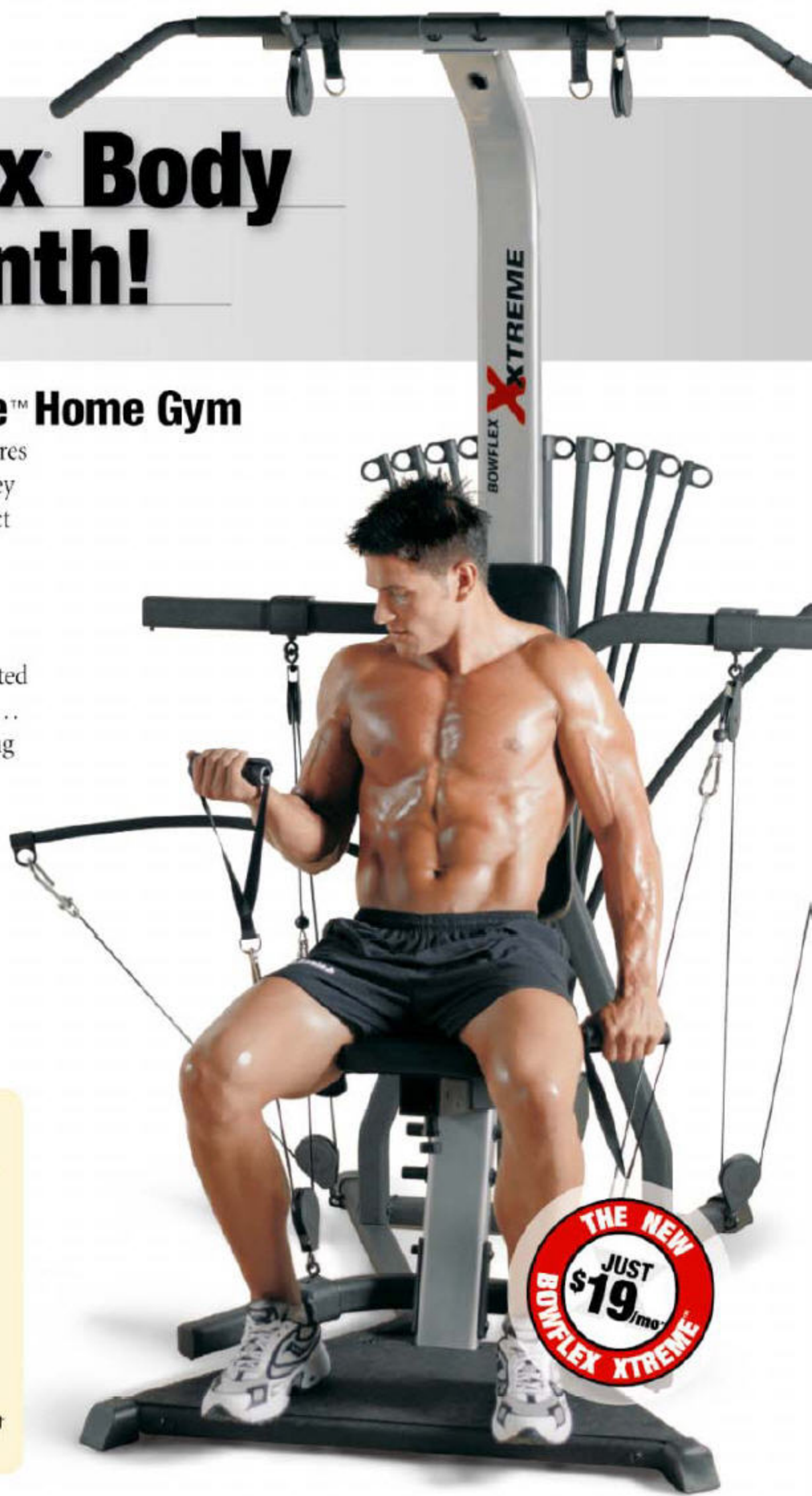


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OF MAUS

(continued from page 76)

Wagner. A testament to the strength of the material is that Cronenberg had no idea the screenplay was based on a graphic novel until after he began shooting. Another filmic contemplation of violence and its effects, 2002's *Road to Perdition*, directed by Oscar winner Sam Mendes and starring Oscar winner Tom Hanks, also came from a graphic novel. Both Daniel Clowes's *Ghost World* and Harvey Pekar's *American Splendor* became indie faves.

It helps that today, as Straczynski puts it, "you have executives who understand comics." It also helps that graphic novels, with their smaller budgets and ease in finding niche audiences, offer would-be filmmakers something of a safety net. The bidirectional crossover potential between comics and movies is illustrated by the saga of *The Fountain*, a tale about the fountain of youth written by Darren Aronofsky, the daring director of the critically acclaimed films *Pi* and *Requiem for a Dream*. When interviewed in April 2005, Aronofsky said of *The Fountain*, "If Hollywood gives me a problem with it, I'll make a comic book out of it." It did, and he did. Then suddenly the film was back on. The graphic novel is available now, with the movie scheduled for later this year. Both take place in the same world but feature different, complementary plotlines. "Screenwriting is a particularly frustrating trade sometimes," says Paul Levitz, president of DC Comics. "A lot of the writers say, 'Oh, there's this other field that's visual where my work actually comes out.'"

Something about comics seems to

encourage versatility. Since *The Sandman*, Gaiman has come to personify comics' influence on the mainstream. He has become a best-selling novelist (*Anansi Boys*), children's-book author, (*The Wolves in the Walls*) and screenwriter (he wrote indie favorite *MirrorMask* and co-wrote Robert Zemeckis's adaptation of *Beowulf*), and he is slated to direct a film from his comic *Death's Day*. He also still writes comics. When he returned to the *Sandman* world with the *Endless Nights* collection in 2003, the book instantly hit the *New York Times* best-seller list.

A flood of celebrated writers from television, film and books are now happily plunging into what was once a mocked medium, including Joss Whedon, the man behind *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, who has written two years of *Astonishing X-Men*; best-selling author Brad Meltzer, who wrote *Identity Crisis* for DC; and director Kevin Smith, who scripted issues of *Daredevil* and *Green Arrow*. Novelist and culture critic Douglas Rushkoff just started the Bible-themed *Testament* for Vertigo. Greg Rucka wrote two superb thrillers, *A Gentleman's Game* and *Private Wars*, based on the *Queen and Country* comics, and is now writing *Supergirl* for DC. Michael Chabon oversees a title based on the *Escapist*, the hero he invented in his Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay*, and Jonathan Lethem, whose novel *The Fortress of Solitude* delves into the instrumental role comics played in a childhood friendship, is set to revive *Omega the Unknown* for Marvel. Says DC's Levitz, "Thirty years ago novelists would write comics by another name. As comics have moved to be perceived as

a more literary art form, people are comfortable saying, 'On Monday I worked on my comic book; on Tuesday I worked on my novel.'" Straczynski, who created *Babylon 5* and now writes *Squadron Supreme* and several Marvel superhero titles, says, "I put comics on such a high pedestal. I had worked in TV for years, on *The Twilight Zone* and *Murder, She Wrote*, but when I sold my first comic I was jumping up and down."

So what does a world transformed by comics look like now that we're 20 years down the road from 1986's annus mirabilis and the holy trinity? Well, the beauty of a revolution that has only just turned 20 is that its instigators are still working. Moore's recent *Promethea* is a dazzlingly imaginative piece of metafiction. Miller received a co-directing credit on 2003's *Sin City* movie and recently revived his black-hearted muse for *The Dark Knight Strikes Again*. Spiegelman put out the slim, powerful *In the Shadow of No Towers*, a meditation on the 9/11 attacks. In other words, they've all still got it.

But a new generation of authors on the newsstands owes a great debt to them. In the brutal characters, lowlife situations and lyrical, streetwise dialogue of Brian Azzarello's *100 Bullets* (for our money, the best currently ongoing series), you can sense echoes of Miller. The revisionism of Straczynski's *Supreme Power*, which retells Superman's origin story in an alternate world where the government—rather than Ma and Pa Kent—first discovers baby Kal-El, bears the unmistakable mark of *Watchmen*. And every couple of years we're treated to a new book from Joe Sacco, chronicling his firsthand experiences in war zones by employing a generous eye and ear that don't flinch from devastation, torture or the banality of evil. He'd be a Spiegelman for today's readers if we didn't already have one.

Though it seems everyone loves comics these days, not everyone is thrilled about their induction into the mainstream. "You miss the energy of the gutter," Gaiman says. "One of the things that allowed me to do *The Sandman* was that nobody was looking and nobody cared. We were making pop music for the long-haired people who turned up that evening." Of course, we hear this complaint any time an underground medium is discovered, but whether their creators like it or not, thousands of copies of *The Sandman* and *Watchmen* are sold to newly minted fans each year—they're now ultra-popular masterpieces, ubiquitous as *Sgt. Pepper's* and *Dark Side of the Moon*. Back when these books were written, though, the key players didn't think they were doing anything significant; they were just trying to do something interesting. "I knew Moore was raising the bar, that he was doing intelligent work, that he was treating comics like any other form of contemporary fiction," Berger says. "But we didn't know he was transforming this industry, which is what he did." Here's to that, and to the next 20 years of kickass comics.



"Take me back. I've learned some new tricks."



someone who can write misery for too long without putting some form of levity in, so that's the way it came out. When I finished, I thought, This is exactly what I wanted to do. I've never had that experience with a movie. I've never watched a movie and thought, That's exactly how I would have had it. But I read the book now, and I think, This is exactly what I wanted to do. It's only me.

Q15

PLAYBOY: You played Drew Carey's boss, Mr. Wick, on his sitcom. Now that it's over and he can't make any reprisals, what's the deep, dark Drew Carey secret you've always wanted to reveal?

FERGUSON: Drew would probably not want you to know just how sensitive he is. He's quick to cry and very emotional, a very sentimental man. Sad movies, a picture of a puppy—he cried at my wedding. He may have known what I know now, as I'm divorced, but he cried. I think he was the only one.

Q16

PLAYBOY: You often talk about your former marriage on the show. You live a couple of doors down from your ex-wife. Is there anybody else's ex-wife you'd like to have a couple of doors down on the other side?

FERGUSON: I don't need any more ex-wives anywhere. Relationships with women are worth pursuing because I like women. But boy, I've had a few problems in that area. But who hasn't? I'm going to keep trying. What's the alternative, *Brokeback Mountain*? It's not an alternative for me. It's difficult sometimes, but I'm friendly with my ex-wife. And I'm friendly with everyone I've gone out with. Everything else in the universe has a beginning, a middle and an end, yet there is this lie that love shouldn't have a beginning, a middle and an end. Love is somehow valid only if it is endless. I don't agree at all. It's unnatural.

Q17

PLAYBOY: Speaking of what's unnatural, defend the Scottish delicacy haggis.

FERGUSON: Delicious. Haggis is sausage with bad press. I'd rather be a haggis than a hot dog. Are you kidding me? Actually I wouldn't. It's a sheep's lungs, liver and heart cooked in a sheep's stomach lining. What the hell is a hot dog? The horns, hooves, ears, feet and chewing gum from the slaughterhouse floor, bits of old crap, anuses and stuff from the cow, cooked in plastics and synthetics with E343 food dye. Haggis is probably better for you.

Q18

PLAYBOY: If you were on a desert island, which book, movie and magazine would you want to have?

FERGUSON: The magazine would have to be *PLAYBOY*. You've got a couple of different needs met with it: You can read, but you don't have to read. The book would be either *The Master and Margarita* by Bulgakov or *The Brothers Karamazov* by Dostoyevsky. I like the Russians because they're very much like the Scots and the Irish—they're literate drunks. If I had time, I'd love to learn to speak Russian, to read the Russian authors in their native language, because I'm sure it's even better. The movie? *This Is Spinal Tap*. I could watch it again and again and it would never stop making me laugh.

Q19

PLAYBOY: Not too many people know that in your comedy routine you used to play a character named Bing Hitler. What happened to him?

FERGUSON: Bing Hitler was the first character I did in stand-up, like a Guido Sarducci. I did it for 18 months, from when I was 24 until I was just past 25, and it was enormously successful in Scotland. Basically the character was a rampant, enthusiastic Scotsman for whom if it wasn't Scottish, it was crap. It was a very parochial thing. It had nothing to do with either Bing Crosby or Adolf Hitler, but I thought the name would get noticed on billing. Twenty fucking years later, yes, it gets noticed. It did occur to me when I was doing Bing that if you were really named Hitler, you'd have to change the name.

Q20

PLAYBOY: If you could be a Bond villain, who would you be?

FERGUSON: A Bond villain who harks back to the old days of the Bond villains, when you had a midget with a hat that could kill when he threw it at you. The Bond villains now are all Eastern Europeans with designer stubble. I'm not frightened of guys like that. Fuck off. No, I want a guy with a false hand, an eye patch and maybe an owl—an evil owl that might peck Bond's eyes out. Oh, and whatever side you dress on, that's the side you wear your owl.



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Science and Religion: A Time Line

1543 Copernicus publishes *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium*, which states that the earth revolves around the sun.

1632 Galileo publishes *Dialogo Sopra i Due Massimi Sistemi del Mondo*, supporting Copernicus's heliocentric theory. Tried under the Inquisition, he utters the phrase "Still, it does move" and is sentenced to enforced residence in Siena. Galileo's conviction is rescinded in 1992.

1650 Anglo-Irish archbishop James Ussher publishes his *Annals of the World*, which dates the creation of the earth to the evening preceding October 23, 4004 B.C.

1656 For attesting that there were men before Adam, Isaac de la Peyrère is arrested, imprisoned and made to sign a retraction before Pope Alexander VII.

1687 Isaac Newton publishes *Principia*, establishing laws of motion. Thirty-seven years later British theologian John Hutchinson publishes *Moses' Principia*, which refutes gravitation.

1753 Theologians at the Sorbonne force naturalist Georges Buffon to recant his *Histoire Naturelle* and publish a statement that reads, "I declare that I had no intention to contradict the text of Scripture."

1833 Geologist Charles Lyell resigns from King's College in London in response to clerical criticism that his lectures undermined accepted biblical chronology.

1859 Twenty-eight years after leaving Cambridge's Anglican seminary, Charles Darwin publishes *The Origin of Species*.

1878 Alexander Winchell, professor of geology at Vanderbilt, is fired for teaching that there were men before Adam.

1925 Tennessee teacher John Scopes is convicted by the state for teaching Darwin's theory of evolution.

1927 Belgian monsignor Georges LeMaître introduces the big-bang theory of the universe's origin, a theory he believed to be compatible with the biblical creation story.

1927 Sigmund Freud publishes *The Future of an Illusion*, which calls for casting off the "burden of religious doctrines." Christians reject psychoanalysis for embracing "the morals of the barnyard."

1967 A Tennessee court overturns a state law that had banned the teaching of theories contrary to creationism.

1987 The Supreme Court declares Louisiana's Creationism Act, which promotes the teaching of creationism in public schools, unconstitutional.

2005 A U.S. district court judge in Pennsylvania rules it unconstitutional to teach intelligent design as an alternative to evolution in public schools.

2006 *L'Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican newspaper, rejects the teaching of intelligent design, saying it "does not belong in science."

—David Pfister

FAITH & REASON

(continued from page 56)

presented in part as a tragedy. Bryan, a man who had devoted his life to the cause of his fellow Americans, a man of tremendous integrity—he resigned from Woodrow Wilson's cabinet because he thought it improperly intent on war—is brought low by his obsession with a crude, Protestant, literalist reading of the Bible. Barred from putting his own expert witnesses on the stand, Darrow calls Bryan as a witness on religion and mercilessly torments him for his theological crudity. In real life Bryan defended his position with far more dignity and understanding—he was in fact no crude literalist and openly allowed that not every claim in the Bible bears a face-value interpretation—but there was something poignant about the encounter. Darrow and Bryan were old friends who had been comrades in arms against what they saw to be the oppressively evil forces in American society. It was a tragedy back then, and still is, that America should be cleft by its idiosyncratic religious currents.

Traditional literalists, known appropriately as creationists, believe in a Genesis-based account of origins: six days of miraculous creation, a 6,000-year-old earth, a worldwide flood and so forth. Intelligent-design theorists like Behe strongly deny belonging to this group, and it is indeed true that Behe accepts a great deal of conventional geology and probably some evolution. Nevertheless, as ID supporters and more traditional creationists agree, considerable continuity exists between old-fashioned literalism and the new movement. Both groups feel that today's science, as epitomized by Darwinian evolution, is thoroughly and grotesquely naturalistic, which means it excludes any place for the Creator. If not explicitly so, it is implicitly atheistic and deeply anti-Christian. It is therefore to be deplored and opposed. Thus, although they would no doubt be unhappy with the label, it is perfectly fair to call intelligent design creationism lite.

Let there be no misunderstanding on this matter. The scientific establishment is rightly united in opposing both traditional creationism and intelligent-design theory. No one pretends that we know everything about origins—there is, for instance, considerable debate about the first organisms on earth—but no conventional scientist is in any doubt that organisms, including humans, are what they are because of evolution. And all think that, however much it may need modifying in light of modern discoveries, Darwin's theory hit on the chief causal mechanism. More organisms are born than can survive and reproduce. There will therefore be a struggle for existence, with some succeeding and some losing. All this adds up to a kind of winnowing process, or as Darwin called it, a natural

selection. Over time this leads to full-blown evolution.

Direct evidence of evolution by natural selection abounds. For example, if you have an infection, you need a lot of penicillin today compared with what you would have needed in the 1940s. Why? Because the bugs you are fighting have evolved; those naturally resistant to penicillin survived and spread, and now we need greater forces to oppose them. At least as important for the evolutionist is the huge amount of indirect evidence we find throughout the living world. Take just one example, which put Darwin himself on his route to discovery. The little birds on the Galápagos Islands, a volcanic archipelago in the Pacific, differ from island to island. They also differ from the birds on the South American mainland, although they resemble them considerably more than they do those of Africa, Asia and Australia. Why do today's Galápagos birds vary this way? Because their ancestors came from the mainland, moving from island to island and evolving into new forms in their new homes. To suppose otherwise is to suppose miracles, and that is simply unacceptable in science.

Darwinian evolution is mainstream science. In countries like the U.K., France and Canada, this is accepted as the norm. I grew up in England; I got evolution. My kids grew up in Canada; they got evolution. The United States is different. Survey after survey shows that intelligent-design theorists are preaching to the choir. More than half the nation's citizens believe evolution is false and that events happened exactly as told in Genesis. Most of the others think God rolls up his sleeves and gets involved every now and then in the history of the earth. Very few believe that an unbroken law—even an unbroken law put in motion by God—did it all. This is an amazing state of affairs. It is truly remarkable that at the beginning of the 21st century, in the country with the greatest scientific establishment the world has ever seen—every year roughly half the Nobel Prizes in the sciences are shared by Americans—people want to push biblically influenced doctrines to young people in science classes. How depressing that the leader of this country thinks this may be a good idea. It is truly frightening that, with the Supreme Court becoming more conservative and more favorable to religion, we could find that ID theory and its friends are given permission to enter biology classrooms.

Evolutionist or not, everyone agrees that to understand the present one must look into the past. The first thing you learn as you dig into the history of Christianity is that its relationship with science is complex and nuanced. Saint Augustine of Hippo, who lived around 400 A.D., is the authority here. He was a man of strong passions about which

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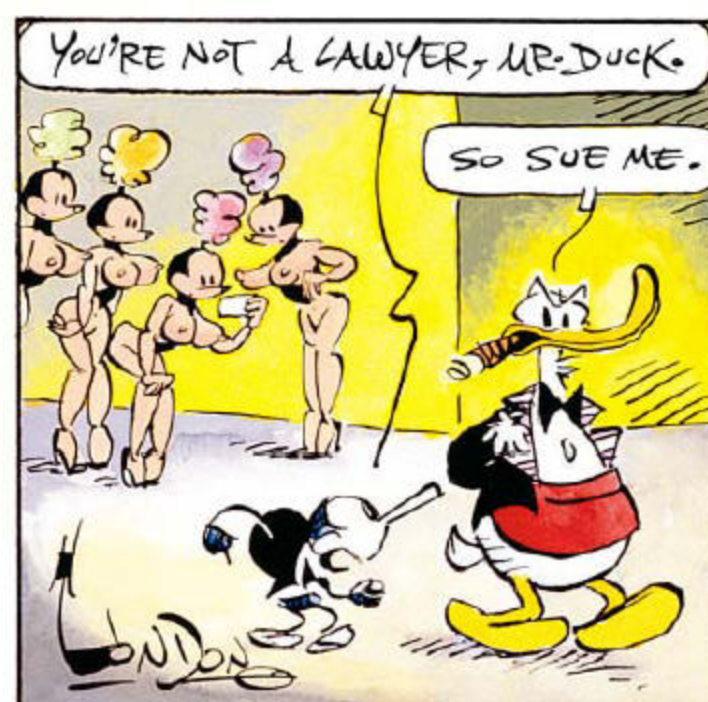
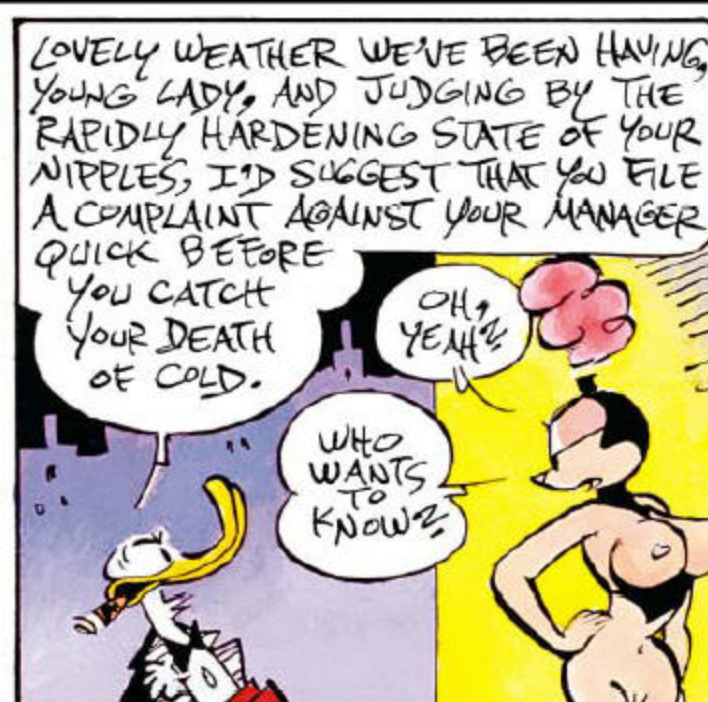
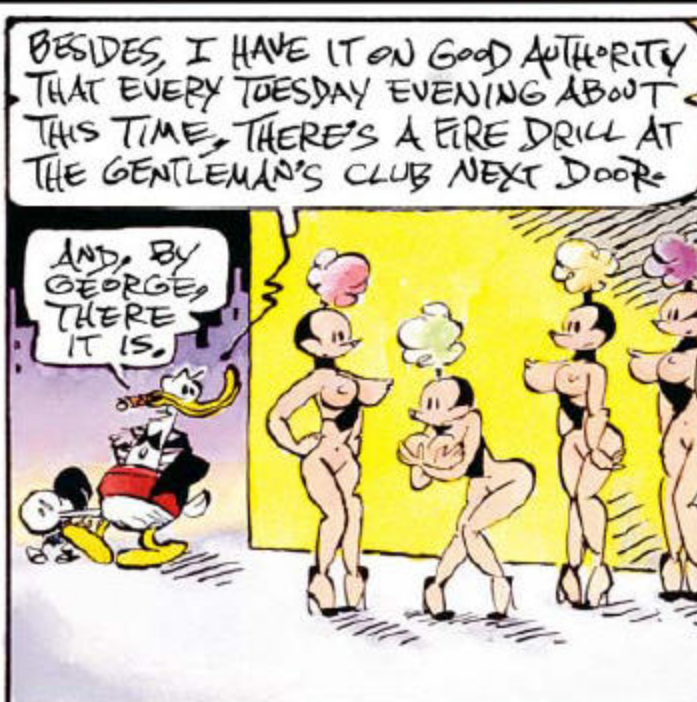
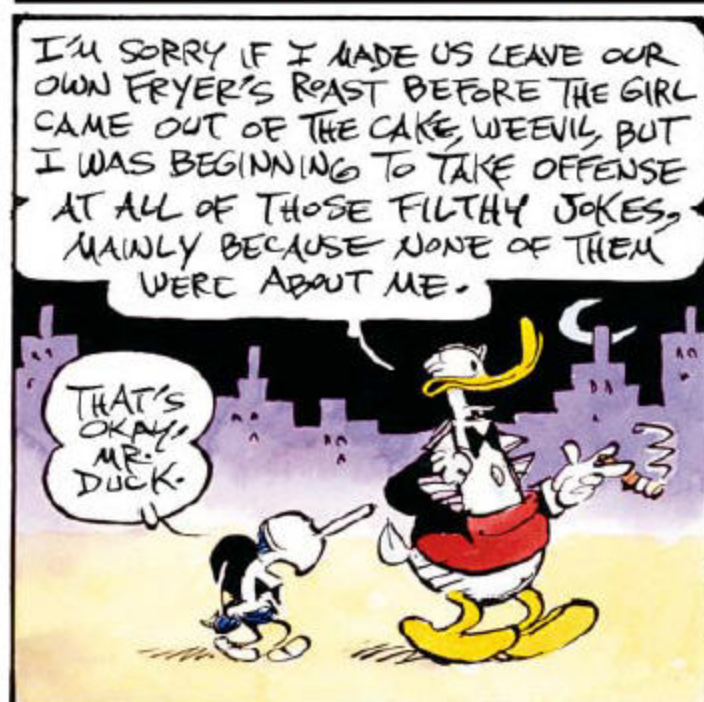
he was deeply conflicted. Driven by his voracious sexual appetite, Augustine had a long succession of mistresses and girlfriends in his early life. He famously prayed, "Lord, grant me chastity and continence—but not yet." When he converted to Christianity, however, he founded a monastery and practiced and preached austere celibacy. Also possessed of a ferocious intellect, the young Augustine was tempted by the Manichaeans, a sect that rejected conventional Christianity and endorsed a belief in two gods, one above and one below, who battled here on earth. As a Christian, Augustine devoted much of his efforts to combating these earlier beliefs and similar heresies. He knew his enemies. The Manichaeans rejected the Old Testament; they were always pointing out inconsistencies in and problems with the text to their Christian rivals. When Augustine became a Christian, he accepted the Jewish part of the Bible—through it he was able to make sense of such things as original sin—but was ever careful to tell his fellow believers that Genesis was not necessarily to be interpreted literally. It is true, he told them, but it often speaks metaphorically or allegorically.

Of course, no one believed in evolution back then because no one had evidence for evolution. But the way was prepared for an accommodation between scientific findings and sacred texts. Move forward to the 18th century, what we call the age of the Enlightenment. Many historians of religion believe this to be a more important time in the story of Western Christianity than the Reformation had been, two centuries earlier. The great founders of Protestantism, Martin Luther and John Calvin, broke with Rome but went on believing Jesus was the son of God and died on the cross for our sins. Thanks to what the Enlightenment brought—philosophy, science and ever greater knowledge of other civilizations, such as those in Asia with their own sophisticated religious systems—people for the first time faced the awful possibility that Christianity might not be true. Essentially there were two reactions to the Enlightenment, and one finds both reflected in North America, which by then had been settled by Europeans and was developing an identity and culture of its own. Some people attempted to reverse the scientific tide. They put their hope in faith and in the loving, trusting

heart. They were not against reason, but for them the ultimate truths about life and the place of humans in it was to be found in sentiment, in feeling, as given in the words of the Creator, the holy Bible. This was the time of the Pietists in Germany, the Methodists under John Wesley in Britain and the First Great Awakening in America, led by the theologian Jonathan Edwards as well as itinerant preachers such as George Whitefield. But others went further down the path of reason, turning more to science and philosophy: France had *philosophes* such as Denis Diderot and Voltaire; in Britain (especially in Scotland) there were philosophers and political economists such as David Hume and Adam Smith. The American colonies had men like Benjamin Franklin who were soon to be leaders of the Revolution.

The idea of evolution was caught up in all this. For followers of reason, the underlying philosophy was one of progress: the belief that humans can, on our own, with our reason and our efforts, make a new Jerusalem here on earth; we can improve education and health in society. Many started with progress in the cultural and social world, found in the

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world of organisms a reflection of this belief—which they cashed out in terms of an evolution in animals and plants from the simple to the complex—and read organic progress back into the social world as justification for their philosophical ideas.

A prime example of such a thinker was Erasmus Darwin, grandfather of Charles Darwin. A caricature of an 18th century man of the senses and passions, he seems to have stepped straight from the pages of a Fielding novel. Grotesquely fat thanks to a gargantuan appetite, he had a semicircle cut into his dining table that he might get closer to his food; eating red meat and dairy in bulk and often, he was a dietician's nightmare. Forswearing wine and beer for other pleasures, he had three children by his first wife and then two daughters by a mistress. He followed this at the age of 49 by marrying a rich young widow, with whom he fathered seven more children. A brilliant physician—poor, mad King George III begged him to come to court—Erasmus Darwin was the best conversationalist of his age, an accomplished poet, an ardent advocate for change and progress and a friend of other forward-looking men. He was strongly in favor of the American Revolution, corresponding supportively on the subject with those at the heart of the action. He was also a keen evolutionist, explicitly seeing this belief as part of his overall world picture.

Those on the other side of the divide were neither timorous nor complacent. They fought back with vigor, especially when men like Erasmus Darwin made the mistake of following their approval of the changes in North America with initial enthusiasm for subsequent upheavals in France. Although such people of faith were deeply committed to the Bible as a guide to life, their main complaint about evolution was not that it went against Genesis—traditional Christianity could handle that sort of thing—but that evolution was so bound up with the notion of progress. For these believers, the idea that we tainted humans could make things better without divine aid was ludicrously unchristian. Rather, for future happiness, they thought we must wait for God's saving grace, which he gives and which we do not deserve. We will not build Jerusalem; God will, and if we are lucky, he will let us in. This was the God of Providence.

What happened in America in the 19th century? The country's founders were men of the Enlightenment, men on the side of reason. But this was not the case for most of the new republic's citizens. They were people who worked hard in tough conditions to create a new world, one without the support and traditions European countries had taken centuries to develop and refine. The preachers moved in. The first half of the 19th century, the era of the Second

Great Awakening, saw evangelical Protestantism become the guiding force in American life, the social and moral guide for living. For those in the South, and increasingly in the West as the country expanded, religion became the center of their existence. It gave them comfort and encouragement. Through a careful reading of the Bible, it gave direct instruction for life. How should a master treat a servant? How should a husband treat his wife? How should a parent treat a child? The good book would tell them.

The Civil War, which started just after Charles Darwin published *The Origin of Species*, was a dividing point in religion as in so many other things. The victorious North increasingly used its energies after the battles had ended to create the powerhouse our country is today. With the expansion of the railroad, the United States became the breadbasket of the world. This feat was complemented by the huge factories that were being built—Andrew Carnegie's steelworks in Pittsburgh, for instance. New modern universities were founded. Johns Hopkins in Baltimore was the paradigm of a science-friendly institution that equaled the established academies of Europe. Religion also developed, as theologians took on the sophisticated thinking of German scholars and as pastors tried to make sense of urban living, with its large influxes of populations that were not uniformly Protestant and increasingly not entirely Christian. Progress was no longer seen as the ultimate threat to doctrine; the acceptance of evolution was seen as the mark of a modern thinker rather than a move to the dark side. In the words of the charismatic preacher Henry Ward Beecher (brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* fame), evolution was simply a sign of God working wholesale rather than by miracle or retail.

Crushed by the war, people in the defeated South also developed their religion to accommodate their needs. They turned to the Bible for consolation, finding that God often afflicts those he loves most. Read literally, the Bible justifies slavery. When Abraham makes his covenant with God, he is not told to free his slaves but rather to circumcise the males. When Paul addresses the escaped slave, he does not tell him to go into hiding but rather to return to his master. So in the South and in those areas of America that were not enjoying the North's prosperity, there was a hardening of evangelical Protestantism and a move to a more stringent literalism. This was as much a new theological and religious development as anything happening in the North. As in the North also, evolution became caught up in the changes. It was seen as a mark of all that was wrong and was to be repudiated. It was not simply that evolution contradicted the literal interpretation of Genesis; it

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was seen as a symbol of the oppressors. Dwight L. Moody, the Billy Graham of the late 19th century, preached on the "four great temptations that threaten us today": the theater, ignoring the Sabbath, Sunday newspapers and atheism, which included evolution.

Naturally, and perhaps unfortunately, this kind of talk set off reactions in the North, especially among those who rejected any kind of religious belief. Historians and scientists started to argue that science and religion were natural enemies and that the Galileo episode—when the aged scientist was forced to deny that the sun is the center of the universe—was but the tip of a large iceberg. Typical was Andrew White, the first president of the science-based Cornell University and author of *A History of the Warfare of Science With Theology in Christendom*. If the South wanted to regard evolution as a symbol, some in the North were happy to take up the challenge.

In the North evolution increasingly took on the garb of a kind of secular religion, something that was seen to explain not only origins but also the destiny of human progress. Many started to adopt some form of so-called social Darwinism, arguing that society, like the living world, runs along evolutionary lines. One of the strangest figures in the story, Herbert Spencer, then came into his own. Born into a lower-middle-class family in the British Midlands, Spencer was a nonconformist—that is, a Protestant who isn't a member of the Anglican Church—and grew up both deeply traditional and harboring a hatred of the established forces he believed were strangling his country's ability to move forward; in this he was a forerunner of someone a century later from the same background, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Entertainingly neurotic (he was a lifelong bachelor who lived in drab

boardinghouses so his brilliant thinking would not be disturbed) and ever desirous of attention (he was supported by groupies who catered to his every whim, and they were many), Spencer became the people's philosopher of the age. He was an authority on everything from child rearing (children should wear warm underclothes—not all his advice was entirely stupid) to self-abuse (too much indulgence leads first to headaches and then to insanity) to lighthouses (shipowners, not the state, should pay for their maintenance), as well as a prophet of progress and evolution. Spencer was wildly popular in America, where people from all walks of life took his message to heart. Rich supporters founded museums stuffed with the new fossil finds from Western states. These buildings were the equivalent of the churches' cathedrals, institutions where children and their parents could go on Sundays to look at dinosaurs and receive the message of unfurling progress from our primitive beginnings to the successful men of the day. Not by chance was Teddy Roosevelt—the American president who most personified this philosophy—a childhood chum of Henry Fairfield Osborn, the influential director of the American Museum of Natural History in New York.

The scene was set. In America after the Civil War both sides rightly saw evolution as a symbol of Northern ideology and a counter to Southern thoughts and ways. In a sense evolution served as a litmus test that determined which of the two modes of thinking and two completely different ways to run one's life one subscribed to. This challenge continued unabated into the 20th century. In testimony from the Scopes trial and in letters and newspaper reports of the day, one notices that nobody who opposed evolution was lying awake at night worrying about gaps in the fossil record. The concern was that states like Tennessee were being flooded

with the ideas and ways of the North, and no one much liked this.

What of today? Am I simply saying we still have a battle between two religions—the secular one of evolution and the literalist one of the creationists? The story is more complex than that. The 20th century saw the development of Darwinian ideas into a fully professional science that repudiates simplistic notions about progress. It is properly experimental and fact-based and is no more a religion than physics and chemistry are. Nevertheless, we do still have a popular idea of evolution, the one described in TV shows and by best-selling writers and (often still) the museums. This is an evolution that is more than science; it is something with a message—usually about the necessity of progress and its virtues, and often condemning the reactionary, civilization-slowng nature of religion. Richard Dawkins, author of such best-sellers on evolution as *The Selfish Gene* and *The Blind Watchmaker*, is a paradigm. He detests all religions, speaking of his own "road to Damascus" experience that led to his loss of faith. He proudly calls himself a zealot and speaks of "the dangerous collective illusion of religion." He thinks religion incorporates the great sicknesses of the human psyche. Few speak in terms quite this bitter, but Dawkins is not alone in his hostility. Look at the popular articles published in *Natural History* penned by the late Stephen Jay Gould and you will learn his thoughts about the need to remodel society on science-friendly terms. Watch on television the greatest evolutionist in America today, the world's expert on ants, Harvard professor Edward O. Wilson, and he will tell you that Christianity is outmoded, that its directives have led to a short-term exploitation of nature and that we need an evolution-based ethics to help us preserve our planet.

Turn to the intelligent-design theorists and you will find them doing exactly the same thing from the other side. The writings of Phillip Johnson, the chief organizer of the movement, are highly instructive. Like the anti-Darwinists in Scopes's day, Johnson isn't worried about the fossil record, gappy or otherwise. For him evolution is evil because it represents a naturalistic view of the world. Because it excludes God, it has moral implications. Evolutionists favor abortion on demand, accept gay marriage, reject capital punishment and—a particular bugaboo of Johnson's—tolerate cross-dressing. This is, as I have said, a litmus test for which of two different views of society one shares. I hardly need say it corresponds to the red and blue divisions we saw in the 2004 presidential election: "moral values" versus a far more secular worldview.

Let me clarify that the purpose of this essay is to find understanding. I am passionately committed to the side



of science, reason and progress. The Enlightenment, I believe, was the best thing to happen to Western civilization. I regard Darwin's theory of evolution through natural selection as one of the greatest achievements of humankind, along with Plato's *Republic*, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. I think intelligent-design theory and its companions are nasty, cramping, soul-destroying reversions to the more unfortunate aspects of 19th century America. Although I am not a Christian, I look on these ideas as putrid scabs on the body of a great religion. Like Behe, I have written extensively on evolution, I have appeared as a witness in a court trial, and (although I did not discover it) I too believe I am on the side of a scientific discovery ranking with that of Copernicus.

But if you are going to fight moral evil—and creationism in its various forms is a moral evil—you need to understand what you are fighting and why. As the judge in the Dover, Pennsylvania case indicated, "the citizens of the Dover area were poorly served by the members of the school board who voted for the ID policy. It is ironic that several of these individuals, who so staunchly and proudly touted their religious convictions in public, would time and again lie to cover their tracks and disguise the real purpose behind the ID policy." History shows we are not in a simple fight about science but in a greater fight about life philosophies. This being so, we should fight at this level. We who cherish science should realize what is at stake. We must defend not just our technical theories and hypotheses but the values on which they are based and that they reinforce. We must be prepared to counter those who would repress us and impose a theocracy. Although I cannot honestly confess that I have ever felt the urge to end a long day's work by slipping into something pink and fluffy, the very thought that this might be a moral issue strikes me as ludicrous. To adapt a saying by S.G. Tallentyre, summing up the philosophy of Voltaire, "I may not agree with what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it."

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What does fighting mean in practical terms? Trying to reach an audience that is receptive but needs education. But the way modern research functions, especially science research at universities, is almost perversely directed against helping the general cause. A young scientist who announces to his or her chair that he or she is going to spend the summer fighting creationists rather than doing research in the field would soon be without a job and without tenure. We must sensitize people on our side to what has to be done and

get them to see that rewards come from participation. One should not be punished for efforts directed toward the public good. In the past 20 years, we have witnessed a change at universities with respect to teaching. Taking teaching seriously was once a sign of weakness; now it is both a necessity and a source of pride. This must also become the case for public participation in the debates of the day.

At the same time, we who love science must realize that the enemy of our enemies is our friend. Too often evolutionists spend time insulting would-be allies. This is especially true of secular evolutionists. Atheists spend more effort running down sympathetic Christians than they do countering creationists. When John Paul II wrote a letter endorsing Darwinism, Richard Dawkins's response was simply that the pope was a hypocrite, that he could not be genuine about science and that Dawkins himself simply preferred an honest fundamentalist. This was just plain stupid. Traditional Christians hate biblical literalism as much as atheists do—more, in fact, because it sullies their religion. Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt did not like Stalin and Communism. But in fighting Hitler they realized they had to work with the Soviet Union. Evolutionists of all kinds must likewise work together to fight creationism: Don't ignore differences, but don't make them a reason for inaction.

Finally I urge my fellow evolutionists to think about what they write and say. I am not arguing that someone like Wilson should quit promoting biodiversity and the preservation of the rain forests. I am not saying that Gould was wrong in connecting evolution to issues such as racism. I am not even saying that Dawkins should stop linking evolution to atheism. I am saying that those in the public domain sometimes have an obligation to think more carefully about what they say. If evolution does lead to atheism—although I'm a nonbeliever, I don't think it does—then the links need to be spelled out carefully rather than ignored under a gust of rhetoric. If you want to use science for more than scientific purposes—if you want to move into public discourse and make recommendations—you should realize that this is what you are doing. If you are at the level of general philosophy, your thoughts demand appropriate arguments. Simply falling back on one's status as a scientist is not enough.

These are dark times, and they may well get darker. I am an evolutionist and a progressionist. I invite you to join the fight for the values and achievements of the Enlightenment. There is no more worthy and pressing cause in America today.



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One wouldn't think flies are relevant to more majestic creatures, but that assumption would be wrong.

through which the change occurred. How bodies or body parts change or how new structures arise remained a profound mystery.

The key to understanding form is development, the process through which a single-cell egg gives rise to a complex multibillion-cell animal. Development is intimately connected to the evolution of form because all changes in form arise through changes in development. Darwin insisted that embryology was crucial to understanding evolution, and he knew a lot about the importance of sex—he fathered 10 children. But he and other biologists of his day understood nothing about what transpired after mating, about how each species's eggs developed into a distinct adult form. This amazing spectacle stood as one of the great unsolved

puzzles of biology until recently. In the past 20 years a revolution has unfolded as biologists have learned how animals are made. We have also learned a great deal about evolution. Much of what we have learned has transformed how we think about both animal relationships and the way evolution works.

Advances in this new science of evolutionary developmental biology—or “evo devo”—have enabled biologists to see into the mechanisms that shape the diversity of animal forms. Evo devo demolishes the rhetoric of those who say complex structures and organisms cannot arise through the ordinary processes of development and evolution.

Genes are at the center of development and evolution. After all, butterflies look like butterflies, zebras look like zebras,

and we look the way we do because of the genes we carry. Biologists naturally assumed that different types of animals were genetically constructed in different ways. The greater the difference in appearance, the less animals would have in common at the genetic level. The initial challenge was to figure out which of every animal's thousands of genes shape a body's development and appearance. The first breakthroughs came from a tiny source, the fruit fly. Geneticists discovered the relatively small fraction of genes that control the making and patterning of a fly's various body parts. These discoveries thrilled the very small number of fruit-fly experts and earned three pioneers Nobel Prizes. One wouldn't think flies are relevant to the more majestic creatures we admire or to humans, but that assumption would be dead wrong.

The first and perhaps most important lesson to be learned from evo devo is that looks are deceiving. Fruit flies' body parts don't appear to have much in common with our own. But most of the body-building and organ-forming genes first identified in the fruit fly have exact counterparts that perform similar jobs in most animals, including humans. Despite their great differences in appearance, all complex animals share a common tool kit of body-building genes. That discovery—actually a series of discoveries—vaporized many previous ideas about how animals differ from one another.

Take, for example, the eye. The evolution of eyes has received a lot of attention since Darwin discussed how such “organs of extreme perfection” could arise in many steps over long periods of time. What has puzzled and intrigued biologists ever since Darwin is the variety of eye types in the animal kingdom. We and other vertebrates have camera-like eyes with a single lens. Flies, lobsters and other arthropods see through compound eyes made up of many eye units. Even though they are not close relatives of ours, octopuses and squid also have camera-type eyes, whereas their own close relatives, clams and scallops, have three kinds of eyes: camera, compound and mirror-type. The great diversity of eyes was, for more than a century, thought to be the result of independent invention, from scratch, in various animal groups.

But now we know that the genes for building eyes—that is, for making the kinds of light-sensing cells necessary for vision—are shared among all animals. Despite the vast differences in the structure and optical properties of eyes, their evolution has been based on a common set of genetic and cellular ingredients. Natural selection has not repeatedly forged eyes from scratch; different types of complex eyes have evolved many times from the simpler eyes of animal ancestors.

Similarly, other tool-kit genes take part in building various forms of limbs,



“Putting it another way, Cindy, if you don't give me a blow job, the terrorists win!”

digestive tracts, hearts and nervous systems. Because parts of the genetic tool kit are shared among most branches of the animal kingdom, they must date back to before the Cambrian explosion that marked the emergence of large, complex animal bodies more than 500 million years ago. Evo devo tells us that while we may expect "advanced" animals to require new genes, most body-building genes and many cell types already existed in animal ancestors long before most kinds of modern body forms and complex organs evolved.

"Our ancestor was an animal which breathed water, had a swim bladder, a great swimming tail, an imperfect skull and undoubtedly was a hermaphrodite," Darwin once wrote to a close colleague. "Here is a pleasant genealogy for mankind." The discoveries of evo devo allow us to peer further into our origins to a deep ancestor that makes Darwin's beast seem sophisticated: That earlier animal was probably just a few millimeters in size, with tiny eye spots and a minuscule brain. It looked like a mollusk or marine-worm larva. Be proud of your heritage.

The discovery of this ancient genetic tool kit raises a new paradox. If sets of body-building genes are so similar, how have such different forms of animals evolved? Evo devo's second major lesson is that diversity and novelty aren't so much a matter of the tool kit's contents but, in Eric Clapton's words, in the way that you use it. Feathers, for instance, did not evolve according to new feather genes but emerged from changes in the old tool-kit genes for reptilian scales. Similarly, insects did not invent a wing gene, nor vertebrates hand and finger genes. Rather, innovation is a matter of teaching old genes new tricks.

We humans have long supposed that we hold a unique place in the animal kingdom. There was expectation in some quarters, right up to the completion of the human-genome sequencing, that we would have far more genes than other species. Yet the reality is that humans' genes are similar in number and kind to those of chimpanzees and mice—in fact, those of all other vertebrates. We are the product of the same kind of evolution that has shaped the rest of the kingdom. No one should expect to trace the evolution of bipedalism, language, speech or other human traits to uniquely human genes. All of us, including Miss April, are just remodeled apes.

New explanations of human evolution will come from understanding how our "old" genes, shared with other vertebrates and more distant animal relatives, have learned new tricks to shape the aspects of our form, such as our impressively bigger brain. Whether we use this remarkable organ to better understand and accept our place in nature—well, that is another matter.



Literalism

(continued from page 57)

not one of them was born again to see the truth from above. This truth came to us neatly packaged and between hard covers. It began with Genesis, a literal description of how the world began in divinely orchestrated stages, and it ended with Revelation, a literal description of how the world would end in a series of disasters. Both parts, beginning and end, were literally true, as was everything in the middle.

In our view, if the Bible wasn't completely accurate in all its parts, it could not be trusted in any of its parts. If we couldn't believe Genesis, why should we believe Jesus died for our sins? Or that a person is made right with God by faith? Or that Christ was returning soon from heaven? (Based on our reading of Revelation, we were sure he was returning soon. In fact, most of us thought he'd be back before the end of the 1980s.)

In the 30 years since I left Moody I have passed through enormous religious transformations, from ultraconservative fundamentalism to open-minded evangelicalism to socially conscious liberalism. Eventually I left the faith altogether and am now simply a happy agnostic. Central to these changes was my understanding of the Bible. My literalistic reading of Genesis began to falter when I realized that God was not opposed to intelligence, that truth from any realm was true and that no one should have anything to fear from learning.

The problem with Genesis begins, of course, with science. Today I still hear people—otherwise intelligent people—argue that the creation story in Genesis coincides with notions of the big bang and evolution. Creation starts with light (the big bang), animals precede humans (evolution), humans are the pinnacle of creation and so on. This view may sound attractive, but as usual, the devil is in the details. In the book of Genesis, light on earth appears before there is a sun, moon or stars. In fact the earth has vegetation before there is a sun. And then there's the problem of the six days. Some literalists have tried to get around the problem by pointing out that "with the Lord, a day is as 1,000 years and 1,000 years as a day" (II Peter 3:8). I suppose that helps some, but 6,000 years is still a far cry from the billions of years required by science.

Like most fundamentalists, though, I was not all that impressed with science. What do scientists know? They're just secular humanists. What mattered to me was the Bible. But then the problem became the Bible itself.

The more I studied it, the more I realized it contained discrepancies. For years I had known about "alleged" contradictions in the Bible, but I was always able, as a good Bible-toting fundamentalist, to

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explain them away. Eventually they came to be too much for me, especially the discrepancies within Genesis itself. The story of creation in six days is in chapter one of Genesis, but there is also the story of Adam and Eve, in chapter two. And between the stories are big differences. Historians now say this is because they come from two different sources. In Genesis 1 plants are created before humans, but in Genesis 2 Adam and Eve are created before any vegetation. In Genesis 1 the animals are created before humans; in Genesis 2 they are created to provide Adam with some companions. In Genesis 1 male and female are created simultaneously. In Genesis 2 Eve is created only after the animals as someone more suitable to Adam's tastes.

An even bigger problem came when I realized that in many instances the words of the Bible, which I took to be inspired, no longer exist. We don't have the original writings of any of the books of the Bible, Old Testament or New Testament. We have only copies made many years later—centuries later. Over those intervening centuries, the biblical books were copied by hand, one page, one sentence, one word at a time. The one thing we know about all the surviving copies of the Bible is that they contain mistakes. Hundreds of mistakes, thousands. Hundreds of thousands.

We know this because we can compare the copies with one another, and none of them agree. We are in better shape with the New Testament than with the Old, since we have thousands of surviving copies of the New Testament—well over 5,000 copies in Greek, the language in which it was written. Among these copies, no two are exactly alike in their wording. We don't know how many differences exist among the surviving copies because no one has been able to count them all. But we can put the problem in comparative terms: There are more differ-

ences in our manuscripts than there are words in the New Testament.

With the Old Testament, the situation is even more dire. Our oldest complete copy of the Hebrew Bible dates from around 1000 A.D. Scribes had been copying this text for many centuries before the earliest surviving version was made. And we know that changes were made over those centuries. With the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls and other ancient manuscripts, we can see what earlier copies looked like. The news is not good for fundamentalists. The faithful copying practices among Jews in the Middle Ages were not followed in earlier centuries. Our texts have been changed, sometimes radically.

Once I realized this, my view that God had given us his words began to make less sense. I came to think that if God made no attempt to preserve his words, he probably hadn't inspired them in the first place. Preservation is no harder (as miracles go) than inspiration. And in any event, saying that God had inspired the words was somewhat immaterial, given the circumstance that we don't have the words but only, in many instances, the changes of the words made by scribes.

If people today want to argue for intelligent design, I would ask them to apply their intelligence to the design of Genesis. Creationists have to ignore not only science but also the history of their own sacred texts, texts filled with internal discrepancies. These words have come down to us in copies that do not always reflect what their authors originally wrote. I'm not saying these facts, these discrepancies and the changes made in the text, should lead everyone to share my happy agnosticism—far from it. But they should at least lead to a view of the Bible worthy of the epithet *intelligent*.



"If they're real, I'm a real king."

Candice

(continued from page 113)

perform, to light up a room. Some people might think it's over-the-top, but it's what comes naturally to me."

In her silk teddy and tight weathered blue jeans, Candice—who's part German and part Costa Rican—is softer around the edges in person than her WWE persona might suggest. She laughs easily, often at her own expense. Talking about her first big night out in the City of Angels, she blushes at how naive she was.

"A girlfriend of mine from Wisconsin and I went to this place called the Key Club, and our jaws dropped to the floor the minute we stepped inside," she says. "The first thing we saw was a dominatrix in a cage in the middle of the dance floor. I thought, This stuff doesn't happen in Wisconsin!"

Since then she has become a dominating force herself. Candice came to the WWE in 2004 as a contestant in the RAW Diva Search. Though she lost to Christy Hemme (PLAYBOY's April 2005 cover girl), she was soon holding her own in pillow fights and bikini contests against some tough competition—Stacy Keibler, Hemme and others. It wasn't long before she was battling bustier a bustier with women's champ Trish Stratus.

Behind the scenes the Divas are more cordial, but the physical aspect of wrestling is serious and unforgiving. "We're on tour four days a week, and we work out five days," says Candice, who joined the WWE crew this past December for a holiday showdown for the troops in Afghanistan. She has also performed for the troops in Iraq. "The pounding on my body is for real," she says. "I get whiplash. I get slammed. I get sore all over the place. Whoever thinks this sport is fake should get in the ring with me."

Ultimately Candice, who's married to a Los Angeles chiropractor and is the "proud mom" of a Maltese named Bam Bam and a little Yorkie named Betty Boop, says she'd like to star in a feature film. We have no doubt we'll be seeing her name in lights someday soon. But for now, when she's not skate dancing on the Venice boardwalk, she's putting everything she's got into the ring.

"I don't do anything half-assed," she says, finally waving off a busboy, "whether it's in wrestling, in my relationship or in bed. I don't want to rub anything in anybody's face, but I know I have certain talents, and when I want something, whatever it is, I know I'm going to get it."



SEX WITH ESTHER

(continued from page 68)

hesitation and even with enthusiasm; but every time my lips approached hers she turned away, a little annoyed.

I got into the car. Whilst moving off down the avenue, a few meters farther on, I turned around to wave good-bye, but she was already on the phone and did not notice my gesture.

•

As soon as I arrived in the Almería airport I understood how my life was going to go in the following weeks. For some years already, I had almost systematically left my mobile off: It was a question of status. I was a European star; if people wanted to contact me, they had to leave a message and wait for me to reply. This had sometimes been hard, but I had stuck to my rule. This time my first action, on getting off the plane, was to switch on my mobile; I was surprised and almost terrified by the violence of disappointment that seized me when I saw that I had no message from Esther.

Your only chance of survival if you are sincerely smitten lies in hiding this fact from the woman you love, of feigning a casual detachment under all circumstances. What sadness there is in this simple observation! What an accusation against man! However, it never occurred to me to contest this law nor to imagine disobeying it: Love makes you weak, and the weaker of the two is oppressed. That's what men, normally, call love. During the first few days I went through great moments of hesitation regarding my phone. I forced myself to separate myself from it, then to respect an interval of two hours before switching it back on. On the morning of the third day I had the idea of leaving my telephone on permanently and of trying to forget to wait for the ring; in the middle of the night, on swallowing my fifth Mepronizine tablet, I realized this didn't serve any purpose, and I began to resign myself to the fact that Esther was the stronger and that I no longer had any power over my life.

On the evening of the fifth day, I called her. She didn't seem at all surprised to hear from me; time for her seemed to have passed very quickly. She happily agreed to come visit me in San José; she knew the province of Almería, having holidayed there several times as a small girl. "*Un besito*," she said just before hanging up. We had stepped up another gear.

•

She arrived in a turquoise pleated mini-skirt and a Betty Boop T-shirt. In the airport car park, I tried to take her in my arms; she quickly moved away, looking flustered. When she put her suitcase in the boot, a gust of wind lifted her skirt, and I got the impression that she wasn't wearing anything beneath it. Once I was in front of the wheel, I asked her the question. She

nodded with a smile, hitched her skirt up to her waist and parted her thighs a little; the hairs of her pussy formed a small, well-trimmed blonde triangle.

As I fired the ignition she pulled her skirt back down: I now knew that she wasn't wearing any panties; the desired effect had been produced; it was enough. We arrived at the residence, and as I was taking the suitcase from the boot, she went ahead of me up the few steps leading to the entrance. As I made out the lower curves of her little ass I grew dizzy and almost ejaculated in my trousers. I caught up with her and embraced her tightly. "Open the door," she said, rubbing her ass distractedly against my cock. I obeyed, but we were scarcely inside when I pressed against her again; she knelt down on a little rug nearby, putting her hands on the floor. I opened my fly and penetrated her, but unfortunately the car ride had so excited me that I came almost straight away. She seemed a little disappointed but not too much. She wanted to change and have a bath.

If Stendhal's famous saying (which was also appreciated by Nietzsche) that "beauty is the promise of happiness" is in general completely false, it can, however, be applied perfectly to eroticism. Since the beginning of the porn film, fellatio has always been the jewel in its crown. It was also the only incidence in which you could occasionally find a bit of real emotion in the act, because it is the only incidence in which the close-up is also a close-up of the face of the woman, where you can read in her features that joyful pride, that childlike delight she feels when giving pleasure. In fact Esther told me afterward that she had refused this caress in her first sexual relationship and had only decided to launch herself into it after having seen a lot of films. She now did it remarkably well and took pleasure in her own mastery; later, I never hesitated, even when she seemed too tired or indisposed to fuck, to ask her for a blow job. Immediately before ejaculation she would back off slightly to receive the jet of sperm on her face or in her mouth, but then she would return to the attack to meticulously lick, right to the last drop. Like many pretty young girls she became ill easily and had a delicate stomach, and she had at first swallowed reluctantly. But experience demonstrated to her in the clearest manner possible that she should take advantage of it, that swallowing their sperm was not, for men, an indifferent or optional action but rather constituted an irreplaceable personal experience. She now gave herself to it with joy, and I felt immense happiness on coming in her little mouth.

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Weeks later spent in Madrid, when I was almost always with Esther, remain the most miraculous in my life.

She was not well educated in the normal sense of the term; the thought never crossed her mind to empty an ashtray or

to clear what was left on her plate, and she didn't mind in the slightest about leaving the lights on behind her in rooms she had just left. (There had been occasions when I, following step by step her journey through my residence in San José, had to flick off 17 switches.) There was also no question of asking her to think of doing the shopping or bringing anything back from a shop that was not intended for her own use or, more generally, to do any kind of favor for anyone. Like all very pretty young girls she was basically only good for fucking, and it would have been stupid to employ her for anything else, to see her as anything other than a luxury animal protected from all cares as from any difficult or painful task so as to be better able to devote herself to her exclusively sexual service. But nonetheless she was very far from being that monster of arrogance, of absolute cold egoism, or to speak in more Baudelairean terms, that *infernal little bitch* that the majority of very pretty young girls are; there was in her a consciousness of illness, weakness and death. Although beautiful, infinitely erotic and desirable, Esther was no less sensitive to animal infirmities, because she knew them. Once I became conscious of this, I began to truly love her. Through her various illnesses, her physical weaknesses, which were real, Esther could arouse an unaffected compassion in me.

And for the first time I felt moved in regard to others by charitable and friendly intentions: I would have liked everybody to be happy like I myself was. In short I was living again, even if I knew that this would be for the last time. All energy is of a sexual nature, not mainly but exclusively, and when the animal is no longer good for reproducing, it is absolutely no longer good for anything. It is the same for men. When the sexual instinct is dead, writes Schopenhauer, the true core of life is consumed; thus, he notes, "human existence resembles a theater performance, which, begun by living actors, is ended by automations dressed in the same costumes." I didn't want to become an automaton, and it was this, that real presence—that taste for life, as Dostoyevsky would have said—that Esther had restored to me. What is the point of maintaining a body that no one touches? And why would you choose a nice hotel bedroom if you have to sleep there alone? I could only, like so many who had finally been defeated despite their sniggers and their grimaces, bow down: Immense and admirable, undoubtedly, was the power of love.

•

Unrequited love is a hemorrhage. Over the months that followed, as Spain settled into summertime, I could have still pretended to myself that all was well, that we were equally in love, but unfortunately I had never been very good at lying to myself. She visited me in San José once again, and if she still gave me her body with as much abandon, as little restraint

WHERE

HOW TO BUY

Below is a list of retailers and manufacturers you can contact for information on where to find this month's merchandise. To buy the apparel and equipment shown on pages 26, 29–32, 96–103 and 154–155, check the listings below to find the stores nearest you.



GAMES

Page 26: *Black*, ea.com. *Daxter*, scea.com. *Doom RPG*, jamdat.com. *Fight Night Round 3*, ea.com. *Ghost Recon: Advanced Warfighter*, ubisoft.com. *The Godfather*, ea.com. *Marc Ecko's Getting Up*, glu.com. *Prince of Persia: The Two Thrones*, gameloft.com. *SOCOM Mobile Recon*, jamdat.com. *WordKing Poker*, digitalchocolate.com.

MANTRACK

Pages 29–32: *Alienware*, alienware.com. *Artisanal*, artisanalcheese.com. *Bulgari Blu Pour Homme*, bulgari.com. *Calvin Klein Eternity Summer*, macys.com. *The Caves*, islandoutpost.com. *Glenfiddich*, available at fine liquor stores. *Kawasaki*, kawasaki.com. *La Aurora*, davidoffmadison.com. *Nautica Voyage*, macys.com. *Oris*, oris.ch. *Vinylux*, elsewares.com. *Wüsthof*, amazon.com. *Z Zegna*, zegna.com.

SPRING AND SUMMER FASHION FORECAST

Pages 96–103: *Andrew Harmon*, available at Maxfield in Los Angeles. *Bacco Bucci*, available at Nordstrom. *Bailey Signature*, baileyhats.com. *Belvest*, available at Stanley Korshak. *Best of Class* by Robert Talbott,

roberttalbott.com. *Bostonian*, bostonianshoe.com. *Brioni*, brioni.it. *Canali*, canali.it. *Dior Homme* by Hedi Slimane, dior.com. *Dsquared*, available at select Saks Fifth Avenue stores. *Fortunoff*, fortunoff.com. *Issey Miyake*, tribecaisseymiyake.com. *Jean Paul Gaultier Homme*, available at Macy's West in San Francisco. *John Varvatos*, johnvarvatos.com. *Johnston & Murphy*, johnstonandmurphy.com. *Joseph Abboud*, 212-209-1340. *Just Cavalli*,

robertocavalli.com. *Leah C.*, leahc.net. *Liste Rouge-Paris*, listerouge-paris.com. *Mezlan*, mezlanshoes.com. *Moschino*, moschino.it. *Oliver Peoples*, oliverpeoples.com. *Ramona LaRue*, ramonalarue.com. *Richmond*, available at Dolce Moda in Royal Oak, Michigan. *Soleil* by Jean Paul Gaultier Homme, available at Claudio Milano in Miami. *Southwick*, available at Lamakers in New Canaan, Connecticut. *Stuart Weitzman*, stuartweitzman.com. *Tat2*, 310-291-1824. *Tuleh*, available at Bergdorf Goodman in New York. *Y's for Men Yohji Yamamoto*, yohjiyamamoto.co.jp.

POTPOURRI

Pages 154–155: *Baseball chess set*, areyougame.com. *Giant Toppling Bricks*, mastersgames.com. *Gift wrap*, tshirthell.com. *Jeep Minimoto*, teamminimoto.com. *Mandy maquette*, electricitiki.com. *Mandy sketchbook*, budplant.com. *Orvis*, orvis.com. *Rotating game table*, hammacher.com. *Torchbearer hot sauces*, torchbearersauces.com. *WiseCracker*, chefn.com.

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as ever, I also noticed that more and more frequently she would move a few meters away to speak into her mobile. She laughed a lot during these conversations, more than she did with me; she would promise to be coming back soon, and the idea that I had of proposing that she spend the summer in my company appeared more and more plainly to be senseless. It was almost with relief that I took her back to the airport. I had avoided the breakup; we were still together, as they say, and the following week it was I who made the trip to Madrid.

She still went out clubbing a lot, I knew, and sometimes spent the entire night dancing, but she never asked me to accompany her. I imagined her replying to her friends who asked her out, "No, not this evening. I'm with him." I now knew most of them; many were students or actors, often with longish hair and comfortable clothes. Some by contrast would play the macho, but all of them, obviously, were young, and how could it have been otherwise? How many of them, I sometimes wondered, could have been her lovers?

For a long time she had been planning a party for her birthday on August 17, and she began over the following days to occupy herself with its preparations. On August 15, the day of the Virgin, Esther made love to me with even more lasciviousness than usual. Then she lay down and snuggled in my arms as night fell rapidly on the city, and it was only after half an hour of tender immobility that she told me she had had, for a few weeks now, something to tell me—no one knew yet; she intended to announce it to her friends at the birthday party. She had been accepted by a prestigious music academy in New York and intended to spend at least the academic year there. At the same time, she had been chosen for a small role in a big Hollywood production about the death of Socrates: She would play a servant of Aphrodite; the part of Socrates would be taken by Robert De Niro. It was only a small part, not more than a week's filming, but it was Hollywood, and the fee was enough to pay for a year's study and maintenance. She would leave at the beginning of September.

It seems to me that I stayed totally silent. I was turned to stone, unable to react. I almost suggested I go to the United States to settle there with her, but the words died in me before I could utter them; I fully realized that she had not even imagined the possibility. Nor did she suggest that I visit her: This was a new period in her life, a new departure.

When she knocked on the door of my bedroom on August 17, at about eight in the evening, she was wearing a small see-through top tied beneath her breasts, letting you make out their curves; her golden stockings, held up by garters, stopped a centimeter below her skirt—an ultra-short miniskirt, almost a belt, made of gold vinyl. She wasn't wearing any underwear, and

when she leaned down to relace her high boots, the movement revealed most of her ass; despite myself I stretched out my hand to caress it. She turned around, took me in her arms and looked at me so compassionately, so tenderly, that I thought for an instant she was going to say she had changed her mind, that she was staying with me now and forever. But this didn't happen. We took a taxi to the party.

The first guests arrived around 11 P.M., but the party really got going only after three in the morning. At the start I behaved quite properly, circulating half-nonchalantly around the guests, a glass in my hand; many knew me or had seen me at the cinema, which gave rise to a few simple conversations. The music was too loud anyway, and very soon I contented myself with just nodding my head. There were almost 200 people, and I was undoubtedly the only one older than 25, but even that did not manage to destabilize me. I was in a strangely calm state.

Around 10 in the morning, the house music gave way to trance. I had been regularly emptying and refilling my glass of punch. The alcohol had helped to halt the rise in my anxiety, but I could still feel it there, living inside me. A little earlier a few people had formed into couples; I had observed movements in the direction of the bedrooms. I chose a corridor at random and opened a door decorated with a poster depicting a close-up of spermatozooids. I had the impression of arriving at the end of a mini orgy; some half-naked boys and girls were flopped across the bed. In the corner a blonde teenage girl, her T-shirt pulled up above her breasts, was giving blow jobs; I approached her, but she gestured for me to move away. I sat against the bed not far from a brunette with dusky skin and magnificent breasts, whose skirt was hiked up around her waist. She seemed fast asleep and didn't react when I parted her thighs, but when I introduced a finger into her pussy, she pushed my hand away mechanically without fully waking up. Resigned, I sat back down at the foot of the bed and was plunged for maybe half an hour into a morose state

of excitement when I saw Esther come in. She had bought two bags of coke and knelt down to prepare lines; she had not noticed my presence. She introduced the cardboard tube into her nostril, and at the moment she rapidly snorted the white powder with a well-practiced gesture, I knew that I would keep engraved in my memory the image of this little animal, who was innocent, amoral, neither good nor evil, who was simply in search of her ration of excitement and pleasure. Suddenly I thought of the way an acquaintance had once described a lovely Italian girl: a pretty arrangement of particles, a smooth surface without individuality whose disappearance would hold no importance. And it was this that I had

recognized me. "Hola," she said, smiling before starting to dance again. Then we were separated by a group of boys, and I suddenly felt extremely tired.

I had no special status. This feeling of exclusive attachment I had, which was going to torture me until it eventually annihilated me, found no correspondence at all in her. It had no justification: Our flesh was distinct; we were unable to experience the same suffering or the same joy. Esther did not like love; she *did not want* to be in love. She refused this feeling of exclusivity, of dependence, and her whole generation refused it with her. For most young girls, sexuality was just a pleasant pastime driven by seduction and eroticism, which implied no particular sentimental commitment. The

centuries-old male project, perfectly expressed nowadays by pornographic films, that consists of ridding sexuality of any emotional connotation in order to bring it back to the realm of entertainment had finally been accomplished. What I was feeling these young people could not feel nor even exactly understand, and if they had been able to feel something like it, it would have made them uncomfortable, as if it were something ridiculous and a little shameful, like stigmata in ancient times. They had finally succeeded in tearing from their hearts one of the oldest human feelings, and now it was done; what had been destroyed could no longer be put back together. They had reached their goal: At no moment in their lives would they ever

know love. They were free. Esther, too.

I knew more or less what awaited me. I was evidently now on the home straight. She had been my happiness, but she had also been, as I had sensed from the beginning, the death of me. This premonition hadn't, for all that, made me hesitate, inasmuch as we all have to meet our own death, see it in front of us at least once, and each one of us, in our heart of hearts, knows this. It is, when you think of it, preferable that death, rather than being clad normally in boredom and attrition, should wear the rare robes of pleasure.

Translated by Gavin Bowd.

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AT NEWSSTANDS NOW

been in love with, that had constituted my only reason for living—and, and this was the worst of it, *still* constituted it. She leaped up, opened the door—the music reached us, much louder—and set off in the direction of the party. I rose reluctantly to follow her; when I got to the main room, she had already started dancing again. I began to dance near her, but she didn't seem to see me; her hair twirled around her face; her blouse was soaked with sweat; her nipples were erect under the fabric; the beat became more and more rapid, and I had more trouble following it. I stuck my ass against hers, and she began to move in response; our asses rubbed against each other harder and harder, then she turned around and

KEANU REEVES

(continued from page 52)

PLAYBOY: Does it worry you to get older in a business that reveres youth?

REEVES: No, I don't have that worry. I look at it differently. I look at *Macbeth* and wonder, Do I have the stature yet? Do I look too young? That's one I'd like to do. I want to be able to do it and feel like I know what I'm talking about. I just hope I don't have to age too hard to earn it. [laughs]

PLAYBOY: You have said you stank in Francis Ford Coppola's *Dracula*. What was wrong with your performance?

REEVES: When I went into the picture, I had done a lot of work—three films in a year. I was psychically beat-up, fragile and not so confident. Actually, I saw that film again about a year ago, and it was okay. As arch as all the other performances were, mine was suitable.

PLAYBOY: *Speed* made you a bankable leading man. Did you sense in advance that it would?

REEVES: No. What I saw in the script was an action film and a chance to humanize the action hero. At the time, that type of role was changing after Bruce Willis did *Die Hard*. My performance was in the spirit of the change to more character-based interpretations of the action hero.

PLAYBOY: Why did you turn down *Speed 2*? In retrospect it was a good decision, but the original *Speed* was a blockbuster.

REEVES: Aw, this is all ancient history.

PLAYBOY: But it's not a painful memory?

REEVES: [Laughs] Good ancient history.

PLAYBOY: Why did you say no?

REEVES: At the time, I didn't feel the script and story were things that needed to be made.

PLAYBOY: Because a boat moving through water doesn't visually convey the danger of a speeding bus?

REEVES: That was one of my major points. [laughs] My idea was to have my character traveling through the whole film, trying to propose to Sandra with all these obstacles getting in the way. That would have been charming. But also, when the film came around, I wasn't ready to go run and jump. I was in the middle of finishing *Chain Reaction*. I just didn't feel like running and jumping anymore. So I played *Hamlet*, and that was fine.

PLAYBOY: Years later why did you agree to make *Something's Gotta Give*? It had all the markings of a corny chick flick, though it became a hit and revived the genre of smart adult films.

REEVES: I thought it was a great story, incredibly well written by director Nancy Meyers. And I got the chance to work with Jack Nicholson and Diane Keaton. I liked the humanity of my character, that he was a heart doctor in a story about matters of the heart. There was a nice dignity to him, so I didn't mind not getting the girl.

140 **PLAYBOY:** Were you nervous working

with Nicholson? Were you more nervous working with him than with other iconic co-stars?

REEVES: I was probably most nervous at a rehearsal of *The Devil's Advocate* with Al Pacino. It was in a studio loft in Manhattan, where we sat on a couple of chairs that were substituting for a subway bench. It was the first time I got to roll up my sleeves with a master. Yeah, I was nervous. But Pacino is a very generous actor, a lovely man. That got me past it. This was my opportunity, as Laurence Fishburne always says, to swing.

PLAYBOY: To swing?

REEVES: You know, "Let's swing, man. Let's go. Let's hit it out of the park."

PLAYBOY: You left high school to act. Was it a difficult decision?

REEVES: No, because I'd made the decision to act before I went to high school.

PLAYBOY: Was your mother worried about your quitting school?

REEVES: No, she was very supportive. No one tried to hold me back.

PLAYBOY: While it lasted, were you a good student?

REEVES: I was okay. I went to four high schools in five years. I went to one right after grade school for two years. Then I went to a performing-arts high school for a year. I got kicked out and went to a Catholic boys' high school to play hockey. That's where I did my first play. After that I went to a free school so I could work while getting my education. Then I dropped out.

PLAYBOY: Do you have any misgivings about not finishing high school and following the traditional path to college?

REEVES: No, because I'd started working as an actor. That's what I wanted to do.

PLAYBOY: When did you initially go to Hollywood to act?

REEVES: I was 20. I got a green card, got in my old car and drove across the border from Canada. I stayed half a year with my stepfather, who was a writer and director. He let me stay in his guest bedroom because I didn't know anybody out here. Then I made some friends, and I got an apartment and a roommate.

PLAYBOY: Were you at all homesick?

REEVES: Not at all. I was so ready to leave. I'd moved out of the house when I was 17 or 18.

PLAYBOY: How long did it take you to get established? Were there setbacks?

REEVES: I had the courage of youth. I had done a movie of the week in Canada. By the time I arrived in L.A., I had a manager and an agent. I came out with my head shots and went to auditions. After eight months of hearing no, I got my first break in a TV movie.

PLAYBOY: Now, after being in L.A. for 20 years, are you cynical about Hollywood and the movie business?

REEVES: Absolutely not. Hopefully I never will be.

PLAYBOY: There's probably not much ice hockey in Hollywood, yet you were

an ice-hockey goalie in high school. Do you still play?

REEVES: I played five or six years ago, when my knees were better. I played a lot of hockey. I played in some under-30 and then over-30 leagues in L.A. I got awards for best goalie and best goals against. One year I got a trophy.

PLAYBOY: Your nickname when you played in high school, the Wall, suggests you were a force to be reckoned with. Did you ever aspire to play pro hockey?

REEVES: When I was 17, I was on the edge. I had a tryout for a major junior A team, which I didn't go to because I did a play instead.

PLAYBOY: After *The Matrix*, motorcycle accidents and ice hockey, how bad are your knees?

REEVES: Now it's hard for me even to play. My knees will get swollen. And then there was the neck surgery.

PLAYBOY: For what?

REEVES: I just had two cervical discs removed, but I'm still going to play some hockey. I'd like to get back in the net.

PLAYBOY: Tabloids track most stars' every step. They report rumors, but you generally seem to exist outside their glare. How have you managed that?

REEVES: I lead a very quiet life. I don't get out much. It's kind of sad, but—ah, well.

PLAYBOY: How troubling are the tabloids and paparazzi?

REEVES: No one wants their private life intruded upon by long-lens cameras and flashbulbs. It's more prevalent in Hollywood than it used to be. There are more photos of people going to eat and coming out of clubs. It's unavoidable.

PLAYBOY: Most stars engage lawyers to deny stories and threaten lawsuits as soon as a tabloid publishes something scurrilous. When unfounded reports surfaced that you'd married David Geffen, did you feel the need to defend yourself and refute them?

REEVES: No. When you say defend, in that case it comes down to making a judgment about being gay or not. I try not to live my life by what other people say.

PLAYBOY: Did the report about Geffen make you angry?

REEVES: No, man. To me, it's just bullshit. Like I said, rumors, all that kind of stuff. It's like, whatever.

PLAYBOY: Do you read the tabloids? Do you understand the appeal?

REEVES: People were gossiping about what the king and queen were doing way back when. It's just human nature. We like talking about other people.

PLAYBOY: Do you get drawn in?

REEVES: I get inoculated every year, so I don't.

PLAYBOY: Are you forgiving of the press?

REEVES: I don't think it has the right to peer over the fence or stalk me. It doesn't have a right to my private life.

PLAYBOY: Do you imagine using your celebrity to push politics the way Bono does?

REEVES: I don't have it in me. He's a remarkable man and a remarkable performer. I don't have that kind of scale in me, but I am involved in foundations.

PLAYBOY: Could you see yourself ever publicly backing a political candidate?

REEVES: I like to do things quietly. That's my style. For now.

PLAYBOY: George Clooney has made a series of political movies—*Syriana* and *Good Night, and Good Luck*. Do you ever consider making movies that would push your politics?

REEVES: It's not to my taste. It's admirable and important but not my style right now. My life now is smaller-scale. I get involved in certain philanthropic entities, but I like to go the private way.

PLAYBOY: Can you vote in the United States?

REEVES: No, I can't. I'm still a Canadian citizen.

PLAYBOY: Do you vote there?

REEVES: I don't participate in Canada, either. I guess one can say that, beyond social and human politics, I'm not a political person. I haven't voted. This is something I'd actually like to change.

PLAYBOY: Do you want to vote here?

REEVES: Yeah, and become a U.S. citizen. I realize I want to participate in different ways than I have been able to.

PLAYBOY: According to press reports, you never had a relationship with your father. Is he in your life now?

REEVES: No.

PLAYBOY: Do you know where he lives?

REEVES: In Hawaii.

PLAYBOY: Might you try to establish a relationship with him?

REEVES: I don't know. I just don't know.

PLAYBOY: Are you close with your mother and the rest of your family? Where are they?

REEVES: I have a sister in Italy and one in Seattle. My mother lives here. My family is pretty close. We see each other on holidays, whenever we can.

PLAYBOY: Along with acting, you apparently enjoy rock and roll. Do you still play bass in a rock band?

REEVES: No, I don't. I stopped about eight months ago. The band wanted to go on tour and make records, as opposed to just playing when we could. I felt like I was in their way. I stepped aside.

PLAYBOY: The band got much of its attention—and a record deal—primarily because you were in it.

REEVES: Yeah, but we hard-earned that after, like, seven years.

PLAYBOY: While your fame helped in some ways, did it also put pressure on the band?

REEVES: In the beginning, yeah. But if you're going to play music, shut up and play. If you don't want it to happen, stay home. Still, sometimes it was uncomfortable. We were a new band, and 3,000 people were coming out to see us play.

PLAYBOY: Where do you feel more naked: playing a new song live or opening in a play?

REEVES: Both sound pretty good. I like that excitement. I'm most comfortable onstage performing. When I'm acting onstage, I feel very much at home, more so than I do when performing music.

PLAYBOY: What gave you a bigger rush, opening for Bon Jovi, seeing *The Matrix* for the first time or being onstage in a play?

REEVES: Opening night onstage, but opening for Bon Jovi was fun. That was one of our first big concerts. Being amplified in the Forum is pretty awesome. The drums are like, *boom!* The bass. You feel the whole place moving. There's so much sound coming out, your pants are vibrating.

PLAYBOY: Is there more camaraderie between bandmates on the road or between cast members on location?

REEVES: They rival each other. You probably learn more about the personal foibles of the band on the road in a van or bus. You learn what everybody looks like at four A.M. The musician's life is a little more of the pirate's.

PLAYBOY: Will you play in another band?

REEVES: No.

PLAYBOY: Because you know you aren't

likely to achieve in music what you have as an actor?

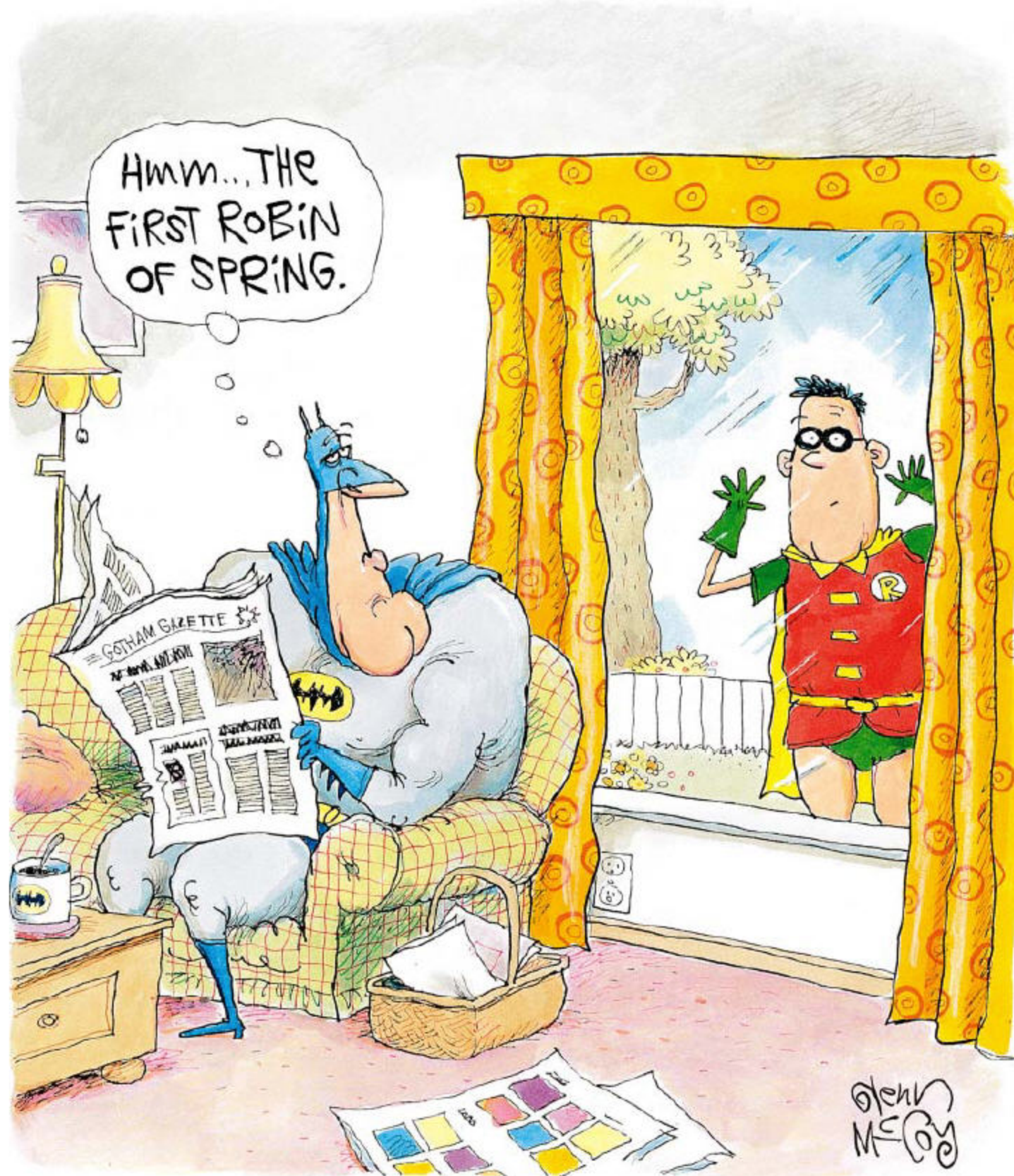
REEVES: No, it's not about that. I enjoyed the creative process. I loved playing shows and making music. There's nothing like writing a song for the first time and having a band come together and play it and then playing it live.

PLAYBOY: Then why did you quit the band?

REEVES: I'm 41 years old. I did the band for about nine years—long enough. It's just about finding time. I have too much else to do.

PLAYBOY: As you think about the future, do you see yourself sitting around the house, with a bunch of kids running around and a gut? George Clooney, a terminal bachelor, says it'll never happen for him. But he has a pot-bellied pig.

REEVES: Well, that goes to show you. We all need surrogates. It's nature. It's Darwin calling. What is it? "Nature is calling a siren song, and not to answer is not to belong. The world must be peopled." Yeah, that impulse is definitely alive and well in me. Yeah. A gut and some kids? Why not?



AUGUSTA

(continued from page 108)

nostalgic idea that its golf-loving patrons will share their badge with family and friends so that the roughly 40,000 daily attendees who come to see the tournament and buy memorabilia are a different group each day. *Share* is the operative term. Get caught selling your badge and you risk a hell hotter than Augusta in August—the permanent loss of your access to this great event. That's the party line, but fundamental economic forces will not be denied. The patron list, bolstered by the National's notorious vengeance toward violators of its precious code, creates the ideal conditions for an absurdly overpriced ticket.

Corporations devour so many of the available Masters badges that it seems ludicrous for an ordinary golf enthusiast even to try to get one. But to my golf-addled mind, the clear financial hurdle only fires my competitive instincts. If you can do Europe on \$100 a day, why not try the Masters on the same budget?

The idea of a pilgrimage to Augusta has a dreamlike pull, like a Dodgers fan's fantasy of being able to step back in time to stroll Ebbets Field. Hundreds of thousands of baseball fans make an annual road trip for spring training, which provides a great excuse to spend a beer-fueled week in sunny climes, watching ballplayers up close and closing down bars. The Masters—the first major of the golf season—is like spring training and the World Series at once. How can a true fan resist?

In the 21st century why must the National block out the modern world and shut its gates to the young and the decidedly noncorporate? With roughly half the competitors of most PGA events, the Masters features only the best players in the world, on the best course imaginable. To see them practice, joke around and compete—why should this great opportunity be taken from us, the true fans, and be spirited away by soulless corporations and patrons in thrall?

Why can't we just go?

MONDAY

My golf cart hums by plain brick homes laced with rental signs and begins the climb up Azalea Avenue, past neighbors holding cardboard \$20 PARKING signs. The modest structures give way to steroid-pumped, freshly scrubbed corporate hospitality mansions. Dozens of American flags flutter over the massive Azalea Club, complete with its own putting green. Cresting the hill, I pass the vast parking lot of the block-long Whole Life Ministries, and to my left are the Executive Club and VIP Partners. A giant Bud billboard looms, with Sergio Garcia smiling: THIS IS YOUR BEER.

Suddenly a motorcycle cop zips toward me. "You fixin' to get a ticket?" he warns, lights flashing.

Zooming down past the hospitality centers, I swing into a yard belonging to a little old lady named Helen Johnson and talk my way past the \$20 she wants to charge me to park. Because her plain white house borders the monstrous corporate hospitality mansions, she hopes to sell it for half a million as a teardown, whereas the same house 200 feet away isn't worth more than \$100,000. During the year, the corporate houses are empty. "It's not a neighborhood," says Johnson. "It's a ghost town."

Back up the hill at Masters Corner, where Azalea meets Washington, the National's main gate beckons. "Tickets! Anybody need tickets?" "Cold beer, cold soda!" "Extras! Anybody got extras?" Day one of Masters week, and all the essentials can be purchased on this corner. A slender black man hawks plastic badge holders and cigars while high school girls sell bottled water for a buck, and every third person streaming down the sidewalk is doing the one- or two-fingered salute, signaling that they need tickets. A man in a soiled T-shirt and with eyes of wood preaches the gospel through a bullhorn; his daughter, wearing a dowdy frock, hands me the day's leaflet, which has a golf ball on the cover and these words inside: "Bad news #1. You are a sinner."

Scalping tickets is legal in Georgia but not here at the National gates. "You've got to be 2,600 feet from the property," says Ronald Strength, sheriff of Richmond County, a law-and-order man to his bones who, I've been told, won't wear the same shirt again till he has worn the other 17 in his closet. Twenty-six hundred feet means the no-scalp zone extends half a mile from the gates of the National. "We're snatching 'em up," Strength says of the scalpers. "We've got plainclothes guys working outside, as well as uniforms. We seize a lot of tickets."

But the sheriff's story doesn't match what's right before my eyes. Masters Corner is a bustling bazaar with more than 50 scalpers and patrons wheeling and dealing in plain view of a laconic deputy leaning on his squad car. Does the sheriff really want to arrest locals? From what I can see, they're the scalpers most likely to sell to a cop (and selling, not buying, of course, is what gets you busted). The professional scalpers are planning ahead. "Wednesdays? Anybody got Wednesdays?" they shout, looking to buy tickets to the popular par-three tournament. Meanwhile fans with extra tickets won through the weighted drawing roam the block, looking to sell their \$31 Monday practice-round tickets for \$350 or more.

The azalea-adorned ticket was worth more yesterday than today, and on Masters Corner you can hear the dollars drain out of it as surely as the sun rises. By 10:30 A.M., the \$300 asking price slips to \$250. Fifteen minutes later it's \$200; then it's like air rushing out of a balloon. A distraught mother wheels up her handicapped daughter, whose head hangs limply. "Hold

on half an hour," a scalper suggests. "I'll give you a couple for free." Suddenly a saintly patron appears, laying a pair in the daughter's lap, an act of random kindness that brings tears to Mom's eyes.

A little after noon any fool can buy a ticket for \$40 to \$60—precisely what the National doesn't want you to do. "Do not try to buy a ticket from anybody out there," the sheriff warns. "That ticket could be stolen. And of course, one cannot get in with that ticket."

I catch a patron exiting who has had his fill for the day. I slap him a \$20 and he slips me his ticket. "Drink it or toss it!" the security guards call out near the main gate. As I gulp down my water, the guard reminds me to have my ticket in my hand. I approach the second security line. What if the sheriff is right? "If a ticket has been reported lost or stolen," he told me, "Augusta National immediately voids that ticket, and you will be stopped at the gate."

I'm inside the main gate, but then... busted. The body scanner screams, and the guard comes over and orders me to spread my legs. His wand rattles around me like an angry snake. The scan has detected my cell phone, and I'm forced to check it at a stand. My ticket presents no problem, however, and I pass through the last checkpoint. I take just a few steps before an official barks at me, "Keep your ticket visible!"

Instinct and economy drive me past the mobbed, cavernous shopping pavilion, where countless fans will spend millions on souvenirs this week, the only authorized time official Masters memorabilia can be purchased. As I walk by the majestic green-rimmed scoreboard, international flags fluttering above, I'm struck by the first truth of the National. More than a golf course, it resembles a park. The course rolls down before me, overwhelming in its openness and stunning vistas. The guys in my house warned me that the greens tilt with the whimsy of a roller coaster and that I'd find it "a lot more hilly than you see on TV." But it's more perfect than I imagined: The rough looks better than most fairways, and the fairways seem like glassy putting surfaces, reminding me of pristine polo grounds, grass so endless and flawless it speaks of wealth.

But the National is no walk in the park. Everywhere you look and everywhere you don't, officials are watching—marshals, volunteers, MiGs (men in green jackets) and undercover agents of the Masters police. Beware. Even if you outfox perimeter security, disaster may await. "Before you step on that course, there is Augusta National signage everywhere about what you can take in," advises the sheriff. "There really is no reason to say you didn't know you couldn't take in a cell phone or camera." And if you slip a cell in, he warns, "it will be seized." The sheriff isn't kidding. I've heard desperate tales of grown men pleading not to have their badge numbers taken down after a cell phone was found in their possession.

How serious are they about all these rules? On an isolated section of the course, I break into a trot to test the “no running” rule, and within seconds a cart appears, the driver saying, “What do you think you’re doing?” Drop a cigarette butt and it’s likely to be still burning when one of the litter boys—squadrons of teenagers in numbered bright-yellow jumpsuits and green-inscribed caps—stabs it with his litter lance.

Warning signs dominate the course: QUIET PLEASE. AUTOGRAPH SEEKING BEYOND THIS POINT PROHIBITED. AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL ONLY. And rules are printed on the back of my ticket: “All Augusta National Incorporated and tournament policies, signs, verbal instructions of tournament officials, and traditional customs of etiquette, decorum and behavior should be observed at all times. Protests of all types are forbidden. Violation of these policies will subject the ticket holder to removal from the grounds and ticket purchaser to permanent loss of credential(s).”

They aren’t kidding about removal from the grounds. Remember that story about “some blacks” getting shot for fishing at the National? That was in 1976, the year after a pro named Lee Elder became the first black player invited to the Masters. Three black kids—two 19-year-olds and a 12-year-old—made the cardinal mistake of fishing in Rae’s Creek in front of the 12th green. Charlie Young, a National security guard, shot all of them: one in the chest, another in the leg and the 12-year-old in the leg and arm. The kids lived. The National said the pump-action riot gun “was discharged quite by accident.”

The extreme order of the National has its advantages, however. There may be no better sporting event in the world at which to take a piss. Tidy concrete bathrooms strategically located about the grounds are so clean as to border on sublime. No stink, no stench, just lovely chemical smells fill the air. PLEASE DO NOT THROW CIGARETTES, TRASH, ETC., IN THE URINAL a sign announces, and amazingly it is obeyed. When I relieve myself in the

massive trough, I feel as if I’m driving one down a pristine white fairway, not a cigarette butt in sight.

Everything works in harmony here, but it is a Kafkaesque exercise to try to understand it. Query the men aiming the GPS ShotLink ball-tracking equipment at the 13th green and they reply, “We don’t know what we’re doing.”

Same with two women in light-blue caps and blue pants, driving big carts.

“What do you do?”

“All kinds of things,” they say in unison.

“What kinds of things would that be?”

They glance at each other and laugh nervously. “All kinds of things.”

The National doesn’t bend, doesn’t talk. “Those are their rules,” the sher-

While I’m walking along the 18th hole, Jack Nicklaus and Tom Watson, the champions of my youth, appear as if in a mirage. Side by side they climb the steep incline, chatting and laughing, a sight that brings tears to my eyes. It’s late enough that the gallery consists of me, another fan and a couple of marshals. Nicklaus pulls out his stick and swings smoothly; the applause by the green registers a worthy effort. The legends playact for the gallery. Nicklaus pockets his par, then strides off toward the clubhouse, so close I could touch him.

The Southern plantation-style clubhouse hugs the ground in an inviting way, its wide veranda and simple white colonnade opening onto the lawn that rolls

toward the famous gnarled Big Oak Tree, the bucolic setting for media interviews over the decades. There I see José María Olazábal and Arnold Palmer heartily shake hands, the singsong cadence of the ebullient Spaniard ringing, “Ar-nee! Ar-nee!” This area is off-limits to ordinary patrons, but a mother with two kids sneaks inside the green rope and corners Palmer for a photo while Dad gushes, “This is the greatest golfer ever.”

The secret of the National is that it’s not about the golf. You can see the same players on great courses half a dozen times a year for small change. The wise fan takes in the National’s setting and inhales the past. The Masters is as much about famous men as it is about golf, and no member sym-

bolizes the history and power of the place more than Dwight D. Eisenhower. Tall tales lend the course weight and stature, and you aren’t getting your money’s worth if you don’t take the time to absorb at least a few of the Masters myths. Talk to enough folks here and you will hear wonderful tales of Eisenhower. It is fact, for instance, that club founder Clifford Roberts kept a toothbrush and pajamas at the White House for his frequent visits there. John Boone, the courtly co-owner of a major golf cart distributor and a frequent National guest, tells a great Eisenhower tale. One evening a member friend invited Boone to putt on the practice green by the Eisenhower cabin, where the general

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iff says. “No, sir. When they set ‘em, that’s what they’re gonna go by.” Like so many in this city, the sheriff admires the National’s ironclad code of silence. “You will not get members talking. It doesn’t happen. I gotta respect that.”

TUESDAY

By around one P.M. on Tuesday, a departing patron wants \$20 for her ticket. “How about \$10?” I venture and hold firm, gaining entrance for the price of a movie. I buy three dainty turkey sandwiches wrapped in green gauze at the efficient food concession. Throw in a bag of chips and a bottle of water and I’ve got my afternoon’s nourishment for about \$6.

and president used to stay during his frequent extended visits.

The subject of Ike's large role in the history of the National came up, and the member said, "John, most people don't realize that President Eisenhower was a member of this club before he became president."

Boone replied, "No, I didn't know that."

It was dusk, and Boone thought he was in heaven. "Sitting out there, looking at the sun setting, looking down across the 18th green, out down by the number-seven tee box and Amen Corner—it just takes your breath away," he says. The clubhouse glowed, the Big Oak Tree in stark silhouette.

"Yeah, he was a member here," Boone's friend continued in a quiet, understated manner. "The story is, it was decided while he was a member here that he was going to be our next president." He gave a little wink and a smile, and that was it.

As the light fades, I fall away from the clubhouse, down the slope, drawn to the belly of the course, the distant hum pulling my eye to another National miracle, a squadron of mowers in perfect Navy bomber formation clipping a fairway in a single pass.

"Time to leave the grounds, sir. Time to exit."

It's 6:30, closing time on practice days. I figure I'm done, so I walk toward the Berckmans Road exit. But as I slowly drift out of the tide of patrons, I suddenly realize I'm invisible, circling the middle of the course, deliciously extending my sojourn. The time is quarter to seven. I've snuck under the radar, outstaying even the marshals, and now I'm virtually alone on the world's most beautiful golf course. It's as though I've slipped into a time warp. Without the crowd it's easy to stroll and dream of Jones, Sarazen, Nelson and Hogan half a century ago and more. Many a visitor has rhapsodized about the rainbow of azaleas and dogwoods that sparkle like precious stones around the 13th green, but I'm more drawn to the sculptural,

elemental purity of Alister Mackenzie's majestic design, the rolling, contoured fairways, the elegant columns of pines, the bone-white sand of the traps, ethereal in the dying light.

There is an Oz-like aura about the National, and if you're plucky enough to remain beyond the official closing time, you may be struck by the rarest of visions, the chance to peek behind the wizard's curtain. Though about 40,000 people can flood the grounds during tournament days, at this hour less than a dozen fans remain, and I might as well be a member, ambling about the course as if it were mine.

I approach the undulating 11th green, where no fewer than four playoffs have been decided. A man standing by himself at the ropes says in awe, "There sure is a lot of history at this hole." Up on the green a masked man in a white suit pushes a wide sprayer on two wheels while a second masked man keeps the hose out of his path. A dark layer settles on the green. Perhaps because it's so late, a man who appears to work here actually bothers to explain. "It's some kind of chemical," he says. "They're required by law to wear the masks."

Nature is not enough. Over the years, the National has dyed Rae's Creek blue for the cameras. My favorite story comes from a friend of a member who once performed the iconic Masters job of painting the inside dirt edge of the holes white for the television cameras. The rumor that the National puts its azaleas on ice to time their bloom is a myth.

It is nearly seven o'clock when I make my way past Ike's colonial-revival cabin just off the putting green. The remarkably peaceful atmosphere suggests more questions: Would the ultimate Masters experience be to burrow as far inside as possible? What would it be like to spend the night at the National? A woman who wishes to be known only as the Southern Lady, someone whose family stretches back nine generations in Augusta, can give you the flavor. "You can stand in

that place and look all around you, and you won't see any neon signs. No Kentucky Fried, nothing. It's like going back to the womb," she coos. "It's so protected. It's pretty swish, I tell you. Somebody rushes out with a golf cart as you pull up, and they snatch out your suitcases and hang 'em up. Why, they would unpack for you if you wanted 'em to. The service is divine—these old-timey black men waiting on you. Most of them have worked there for years, and they call you by name. The cute thing is, every member, when he goes out there, has his coat, his green coat, hanging in the closet."

What few people realize, though, is that even a member has to know his place amid the byzantine rules or the precious green coat can be taken away. The Southern Lady tells a story of members who committed the error of trading access for money, a great trespass in a club in which the members are multimillionaires and billionaires. "Somebody else might have told you," she says, raising one eyebrow, "that a couple of people I've known over the years have been defrocked." Her lips harden into a demure smile. "They don't write you a letter saying you are no longer a member. I think it's so cute—they just clean out your locker. You go out there, your locker is empty, and that's the end of it."

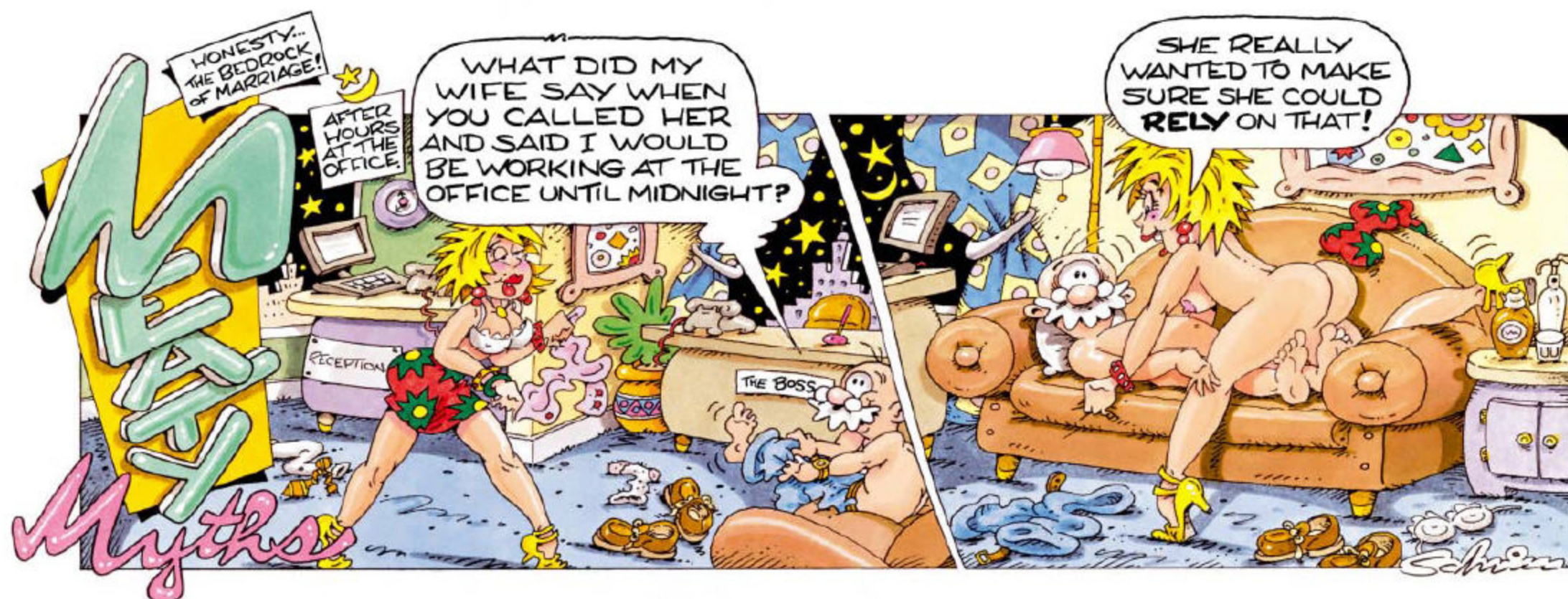
WEDNESDAY

Zippering a cart up to the course in the morning is the best way to start your Masters day—feeling the breeze on your face, smelling the azaleas and dogwoods. When you drive a golf cart on the streets, strangers wave at you as if you're in a parade, and women strike up conversations.

A little after noon, I swing into Helen Johnson's yard, holding an offering of fresh strawberries and a slice of pie. "Where do you want me to put it?" I ask.

Johnson's eyebrows arch wryly. "Do you really want me to tell you?"

Wednesday is the par-three tournament,



what many patrons consider the ideal day to see the Masters. Not surprisingly it's a tough practice-round ticket, costing \$400 in the morning. But by noon patrons are streaming out, and shortly thereafter I pay a scalper \$40—\$4 over face value. My total cost for three days is now \$70.

Of course, you can try your luck at the lottery if you want a cheaper way into the practice rounds. Judging from the folks I talk to, it takes roughly four years for out-of-state applicants to be selected, so the smartest thing to do is to talk every golf buddy you know into sending in an application with the agreement that you'll pool your winnings to cut costs.

Practice days offer little miracles: Vijay Singh at the pristine range behind the clubhouse, standing by two irons he's propped against each other in a gravity-defying triangle, sweeping his arms and hips through a grand arc and blasting one ball after another toward the massive, distant green net; Gary Player playfully skipping a ball over the long glassy pond guarding the 16th and right onto the green, 10 feet from the hole; the top-secret Pin Committee, a clutch of good old boys huddling around on green after green as they test line after line in search of the perfect pin placement for tomorrow's opening round.

Played around two lovely ponds on a quaint practice course just off the clubhouse, the Masters' par-three tournament is a rare spectacle: a competition purely about fun. Children or wives caddie for the players. The jaunty Swede Jesper Parnevik strides by with his two darling little daughters in white caddie suits; he's wearing electric-pink pants and a pink-on-black shirt suitable for clubbing. A bemused middle-aged woman shakes her head and asks, "Is he a wrestler or a golfer?"

The National is known for making it easy for foreign players to qualify—which is a good thing, not only because they dress better and their wives are hot but because they have a lot more fun than the serious, gray-slacked Americans. The par-three tournament is the place for fans to get an autograph. Scenes at the crowd-knotted tees and greens unravel like impromptu comedy skits. On the final hole, Miguel Jiménez grabs a camera, plops on his belly directly before the tee box and aims the lens. Two-time Masters champion José María Olazábal steps to the tee for the long iron over the water. The marshal frets, but there's no time to pull out the rule book; Olazábal draws back without so much as a practice swing, smacks the ball over his friend's head and lands it eight feet from the pin.

Everything beautiful, spontaneous and pure about the Masters can be found on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, the days before the tournament. You can get in for \$50 or less,

snap photos, get autographs, see the golfers in their natural habitat and walk till your legs ache or the guards order you out. The greatest Masters moment is to be virtually alone on the course, and that can happen only during these practice days. They say money can't buy you love. You know what? It can't buy you the Masters, either.

THE TOURNAMENT

Thursday dawns, and rain and economics wash the scalpers away. From here on, the only way in is with a badge, and unless you're on the corporate dole or are a patron or friend of a patron, that's going to cost you not \$10 or \$20, or even \$200, but thousands.

Are Masters tournament rounds worth the price? To get a fair point of comparison I traveled to Pinehurst, North Carolina, site of the U.S. Open. For four straight days I faithfully walked the fabled Pinehurst No. 2 course an average of eight hours, more than seven miles a day.

Compared with the Masters, the Open is downright inclusive; tournament tickets rarely cost more than \$100 or \$150 a day. The Open's field is far larger than the Masters', which produces the serendipitous, crowd-pleasing, late-qualifying wild cards whom the Masters typically shuts out, such as Jason Gore and New Zealand Maori Michael Campbell. What duffer doesn't love the *Tin Cup* fantasy that a pro barely skirting by could duel world champions? The Open also attracts more fans and countless more noncorporate types—families, college kids, senior citizens and, yes, blacks.

Security is so haphazard that you can easily sneak in a cell phone or camera, not to mention walk in free through the main gate without a ticket. No need to worry about someone reminding you to keep your badge visible or telling you to shut up or to stop running. Then again, I find myself itching to tell the beer-sodden assholes to shut the fuck up, or at least beg some official to halt the stampedes that chase the leaders. "I can't see a fucking thing!" yells a drunken idiot, breaking branches in a tree he's clambered up to watch Tiger's climactic putt on 18. At the National he might have been ordered down at gunpoint, and I would have cheered.

Which is another way of saying that just about every true golf fan dreams of the Masters badge. Getting one isn't simply a question of money. The sheriff may warn against buying one on Washington Road, but then again he may not look at this problem the same way we might. (The National provides him with a badge for helping out with security during the tournament.) So how do you get a badge? The Internet is a crapshoot. A few sites may be legit, but it's hard to know which are one-man sham operations run out of somebody's home.

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And there's the fine print on the Masters badge: "Ticket(s) may not be sold or rented through/to ticket brokers, travel agents or scalpers." I find it intriguing that the National appears to be concerned mainly about who profits. The language is designed to prohibit outsiders from dealing in tickets. Locals, meanwhile, seem to fall into the Augusta catch-22. There's nothing in writing or Georgia law that says a patron can't rent or sell his badge to a nonbroker as long as the transaction takes place half a mile from the gates—out of sight, out of mind.

The surest way to get a safe badge is to spend a small fortune renting a house. To see how that's done, I climb into the plush leather front seat of a BMW with a true Southern blonde whose pleasant face graces Augusta billboards: Gwen Fulcher Young not only is the charming wife of the former mayor of Augusta but also happens to be one of the town's top real estate agents. We're headed to what locals call the Hill or Summer-ville—lovely oak-and-magnolia-draped streets and nearly 100-year-old homes with grand porches and million-dollar breezes. Young rattles off the Masters-week rental prices for some of these classic mansions; one went for \$32,000, another for \$37,000. Young prefers not to be quoted on ticket prices, but she, like others, does explain that when corporate guests arrive, more often than not the badges are there on the kitchen table. That is how they do it in Augusta.

Suspecting Summerville may be beyond my means, Young drives me to Westlake, where CBS Sports often rents a cul-de-sac. Young dubs it nouveau riche. There

"fresh and clean" homes rent for \$5,000 to \$20,000 a week. Spicing her tour with social commentary, Young is not a gal to hold back. "Here in the South, we like to be invited. We don't push our way in," she says of Martha Burk's ill-fated fight to get the National to admit women. "What is it that Groucho Marx said? Who'd want to be a member of a club that'd let him in? That's kind of how we thought about the National. If they didn't want a woman to be in, who'd want to be a member? And after all they've said about it, who'd want to be in there anyway?"

Back in the Hill stands another premier Masters housing option, the venerable Partridge Inn, once the site of a gala reception for President Harding. Celebrated for its magnolia-draped balconies and popular bar, the Partridge charges less than \$125 a night in the off-season. During the Masters that price leaps several times to between \$4,500 and \$6,000 for the week. Oh, the tournament package rate gets you lodging, breakfast and a shuttle to the course, but what it really gets you is a local source for a badge. As a gentleman at the hotel explains, "The locals who have access to the badges aren't really selling them to you. They're renting them to you." And as he so aptly puts it, "They trust me."

Translation: To properly rent a badge, you first need a reputable real-estate agent and a mortgage. Dropping five grand on a hotel room may be the safest way to rent a badge with a clean chain of title. The folks at the Partridge will even help you navigate the confusing rental process—lock in your order prematurely and you'll likely pay extra; too late and

it may cost another grand. Reserve your room by November and make "arrangements" through the hotel to secure your badge shortly after Christmas, and your rent will be around \$2,700 instead of \$3,100 to \$3,500 or more.

I've heard a lot of badge stories, and they're all bad. The sheriff's right. Buy one on Washington Road and you may have just paid thousands for a pink slip one of his deputies will hand you as a receipt for your confiscated "stolen" badge. Because the National mails out badges at the same time each year, thieves throughout the region can seize on this quirk and swipe them right from mailboxes. Patrons then report the thefts to the National, which issues new badges and cancels the stolen ones. But mailbox thieves perhaps aren't the only ones doing the swindling. It is thought that some enterprising patrons invent fictional thefts, then sell badges falsely reported as stolen, passing on bum badges to fans and brokers alike while doubling their profits. Neither the National nor the sheriff will comment, but there's little doubt that untold numbers of badges sold are worthless.

Beware of scalpers, who have been known to sell Monday practice tickets on Tuesday or palm off the past year's tickets on newcomers. Some will walk a fan in with a badge for a few hundred dollars and then release him inside without it like a goldfish into the sea. It's a lousy scam—the Masters police will likely nail the trespasser in minutes. The patient fan waits for Sunday afternoon, when early-departing patrons auction their badges at Masters Corner for a few hundred dollars each.

Here's how I'd get a badge on my own nickel. I'd phone Young and rent a house with seven or eight guys, filling the hours between strolls on the grounds with golf, poker and merrymaking at the local watering holes—a golfer's spring break. I'd advise my buddies to share Thursday and Friday badges, which cost about half the full four-day tournament rate, because the weekend action is on the back nine and you're most likely to be watching the back of people's heads. But you won't catch *me* renting, leasing or purchasing a badge. Three days is a hell of a lot of walking, golf and spectacle. I'd rather apply the thousands I'd save to carousing at other sporting events.

But as fate would have it, I know a guy with a badge who's coming back early Thursday afternoon. As long as I bring it back intact and don't get busted for misbehaving, cell phoning or any other patron malfeasance, I'm free to borrow this almighty slice of paper encased in plastic and walk the grounds.

Thursday and Friday on the rain-sodden grounds of Augusta, I discover a golf tournament can be an awful lot
(concluded on page 149)



"Sorry I'm late, boss. Multiple orgasms again."

PLAYMATE NEWS



With her fiancé in the big game, Lisa had everything riding on the 2005 World Series.

BIG-LEAGUE BABE

Miss July 1998 Lisa Dergan has good reason to be excited about baseball's opening day this month. When the Chicago White Sox won the 2005 World Series in a four-game sweep this past October, breaking their 88-year curse, Lisa was right there with them. The Fox Sports Net broadcaster wasn't there to report on the games but to support her fiancé (now husband), Scott Podsednik, whose impressive performance during the Series included a winning home run in the ninth inning of the second game. "It was so dead silent in the stadium before that hit," she recalls. "When I heard the sound of the bat hitting the ball, I knew

it was out of the park. I couldn't stand up straight—I thought my knees were going to buckle. It was the biggest home run of his career, and he's not even a home run hitter; he's a base-stealing lead-off hitter." Sox fans should make sure to keep Lisa around, since she may hold the key to the team's recent—and future—success. "A lot of ballplayers have superstitions, and I've developed some unusual habits," she says. "For example, when Scott is at bat, I pinch my engagement ring with my right hand. I don't know what it is, but one time I did it and he got a double and stole a base, so that has become my ritual."



10 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

Fittingly, Gillian Bonner was the Centerfold for our April 1996 Women of the Internet issue. The Playmate stable's resident tech visionary was then just getting her interactive company Black Dragon off the ground with the release of her breakout game, *Riana Rouge*, featuring a sensual fantasy warrior played by Gillian herself. A testament to Gillian's looks and brains, *Riana Rouge* is still ranked among the sexiest computer games of all time.



LOOSE LIPS

"A kiss can be very important. I've been known to turn a man down because he's a bad kisser."

—Cara Wakelin



CARPET KITTENS

Playmate mania has taken hold at the hottest clubs and events in the West. From left: **Barbara Moore** seeks Privilege in West Hollywood; **Jaime Bergman** slips onto the Santa Monica Pier; **Lauren Michelle Hill** loiters at Lobby in West Hollywood; **Brandi Roderick** follows the way to Tao at the Venetian in Las Vegas; **Marketa Janska** stops traffic at Hollywood's Henry Ford Theater.



HOT SHOT



CARMELLA DECESARE

MY FAVORITE PLAYMATE

By **Jim Beaver**
of *Deadwood*

It dates me seriously, but **Susan Lynn Kiger** from January 1977 has always stuck in my memory.



Can't say why, unless it's that hint of a cleft in her chin. It's probably not nice for a preacher's kid to have a favorite Playmate, but apparently not every preacher's kid is pure of heart.



POP QUESTIONS: DEANNA BROOKS

Q: So is it true that you like to cook?

A: I love to cook, especially on the holidays. I have a big, crazy family, and I do all the cooking. This past Christmas I made a turkey, oyster stuffing, a sweet-potato casserole, a spinach casserole, broccoli salad, an apple pie, a pecan pie—I think that's it.

Q: You don't mess around.

A: Christmas is one of my favorite times, and Christmas dinner is a favorite meal to make. I soak a turkey in molasses and honey and use fresh herbs that I grow. I have an herb garden with thyme, rosemary and lemongrass. Cooking is all about technique, ingredients and tim-

ing. I must sound like Martha Stewart.

Q: Maybe. And if you ever have your own show, you'll be a much more convincing naked chef than that British guy.

A: Eventually I want to open a breakfast place; I've been talking about this for years. I make the world's best French toast. I just want one of those hole-in-the-wall places that serve great breakfast and that's it. I'll do it eventually, but I have other things on my plate right now. I launched my website, and I'm developing a traveling burlesque show with two other Playmates. But that's a story for another time.



GANG'S ALL HERE

An impromptu Playmate reunion took place at the Mansion when 25 Playmates, including (from left) Miss January 1996 Victoria Fuller, Miss July 1998 Lisa Dergan, Miss May 1990 Tina Bockrath, Miss December 1989 Petra Verkaik, Miss November 1989 Renée Tenison and Miss December 1997 Karen McDougal, stopped by to be interviewed for the upcoming *E! True Hollywood Story: Hugh Hefner and the Playboy Empire*. The biopic is scheduled to premiere on Hef's birthday, April 9.



PLAYMATE GOSSIP

Playmates Stephanie Heinrich, Christina Santiago (pictured below), Jennifer Walcott, Lauren Michelle Hill, Nicole Wood, Courtney Rachel Culkin, Colleen Marie and Deanna Brooks accompanied select Playboy fans for a unique personal shopping experience at Saks Fifth Avenue, followed by a sizzling afterparty at New York City It spot Home.... Congratulations to **Shanna Moakler**, who gave birth to a girl, Alabama, named after Patricia Arquette's character in the movie *True Romance*. Shanna's MTV show, *Meet the Barkers*, is in its second season.... **Shauna Sand** appears in two current music videos, "I've Got a Life" by Eurythmics and "Beverly Hills" by Weezer. Readers planning a move to the Los Angeles area, take note: Shauna also made the real estate pages of the *Los Angeles Times*, which reported that she is selling her Malibu townhouse for \$1.7 million.... **Pamela Anderson** (pictured below) went back to her roots to serve as the grand marshal of the Grey Cup parade, which celebrates the Canadian Football League championship game, held this year in Vancouver.... **Nicole**



LEROY NEWMAN

Christina lends lucky shoppers a hand.



Pam is grand in the Grey Cup parade.

Wood is teaming with **Jennifer Walcott** to open a branch of Nicole's beauty boutique and spa, the Beauty Lounge, in Arizona.... **Pilar Lastra** is a model on the new NBC game show *Deal or No Deal*.

cyberclub

See your favorite Playmate's pictorial in the Cyber Club at cyber.playboy.com.

AUGUSTA

(continued from page 146)

of walking and waiting. On the ninth fairway Phil Mickelson glances at his watch as his interminably slow partner checks the wind and instructs his caddy to step off the distance, which is a lot of steps and about as exciting as you'd expect watching a man in a white jumpsuit walk would be. At the 10th tee Mickelson removes his glove to eat a snack, then slips it back on before settling down to some serious ball juggling on his driver's clubface.

He's still juggling when I can stand no more and begin walking out along the first fairway, where Tiger Woods also waits, hand on bag, then on hip, one foot tucked behind the other, conveying ease, power and confidence even though at the moment he's playing for shit. Only half a dozen fans are out here. Then Woods swings as if he's chopping wood, harder than I would have imagined. The ball pops straight up, caroms down, hits the pin and skids into the bunker.

Woods looks up at the darkening sky as if seeking some golf god. His hand slowly pushes his cap back off his head. He turns and chucks his failed stick at his bag. And then it gets worse. He climbs into the trap, and his ball flies out hard, punctuated by "Shit!" It lands on the back fringe, a long way from the pin. He gets a good look and misses the putt. Bogie.

At the second hole, the crowd hushes, and bodies press forward. Woods draws the club back, and then something horrible and strange happens. His swing goes wild, all arms and muscle. The clubhead smacks dirt first, and the ball flies into the air like a pop-up in a girls' softball game. A weird hush ripples through the spectators. Woods duffed his drive! Swept into the stunned crowd, I walk along the ropes behind Woods, following him to where his ball rests in the cart path, about 160 yards short of where it should be. He takes a drop—once, twice, till he gets it right. Then he hits another crappy shot, and I have an epiphany: Even the greatest player in the world can play like crap.

The funny thing is, the very next day, after more rain and a weather delay, I find myself wandering the second hole, right at the cart path where Woods found himself the previous afternoon. On the right side of the fairway sits a clump of marshals in yellow folding chairs, chewing cigars. By coincidence, when the delay lifts, Woods is on the tee, just where I saw him yesterday. One of the marshals rises, removes his cigar and bellows across the fairway to the corresponding marshals.

"Hey, boys! You may want to move when Tiger gets up to hit!"

The marshals howl, slapping one

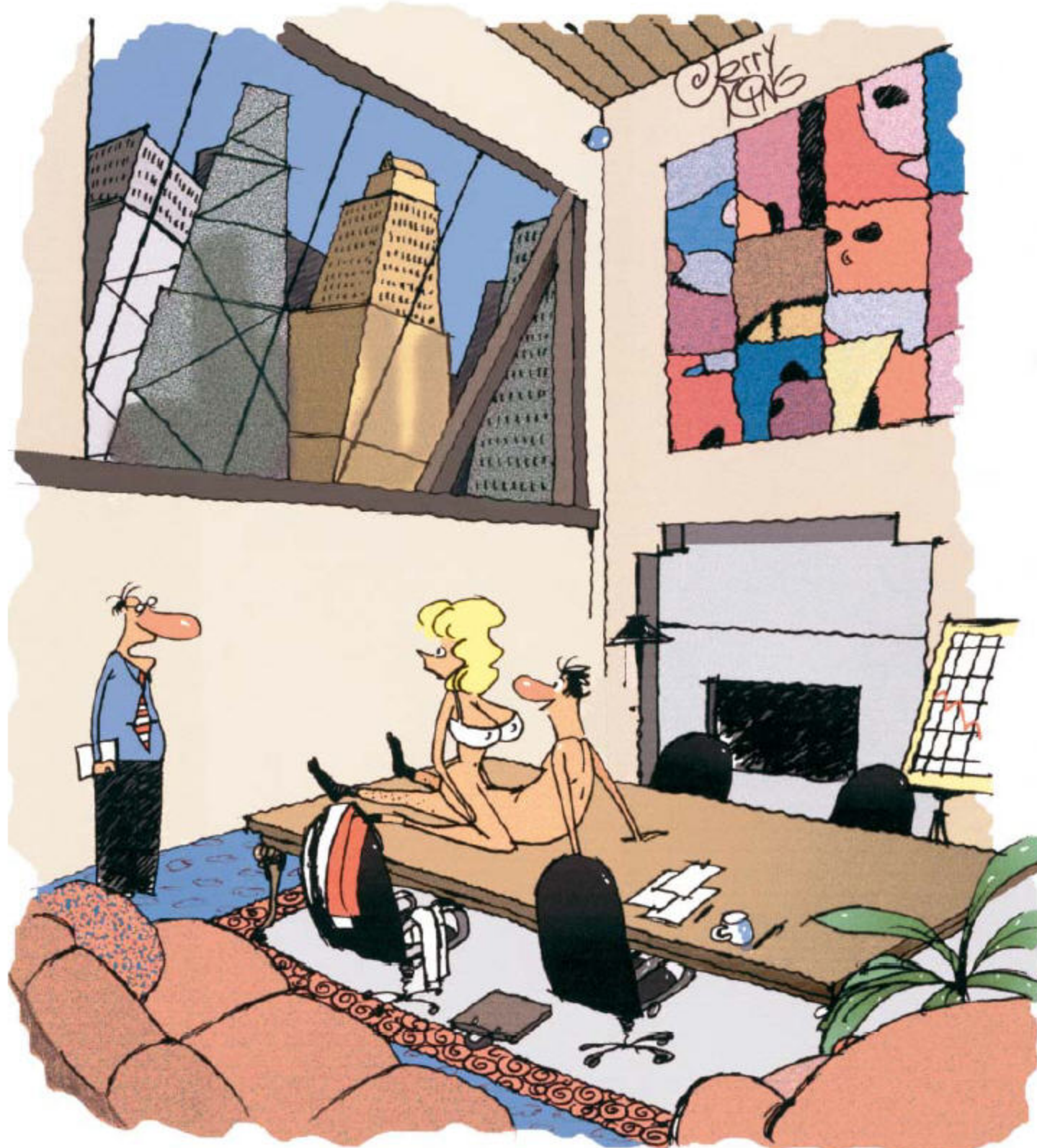
another. But before Woods can prove them wrong, the voice of God comes over the loudspeakers. "Dangerous weather is approaching. Lightning. Play will not be resumed. We ask everyone to seek shelter and leave the grounds immediately."

The man next to me kicks the mud. "How beautiful is that?" he moans. "I had to cut a deal with my wife just to get out here." I too am crestfallen, and I didn't even pay a nickel to get in. "Careful with the weather, folks," a marshal says, guiding us toward the gates. "It's coming on."

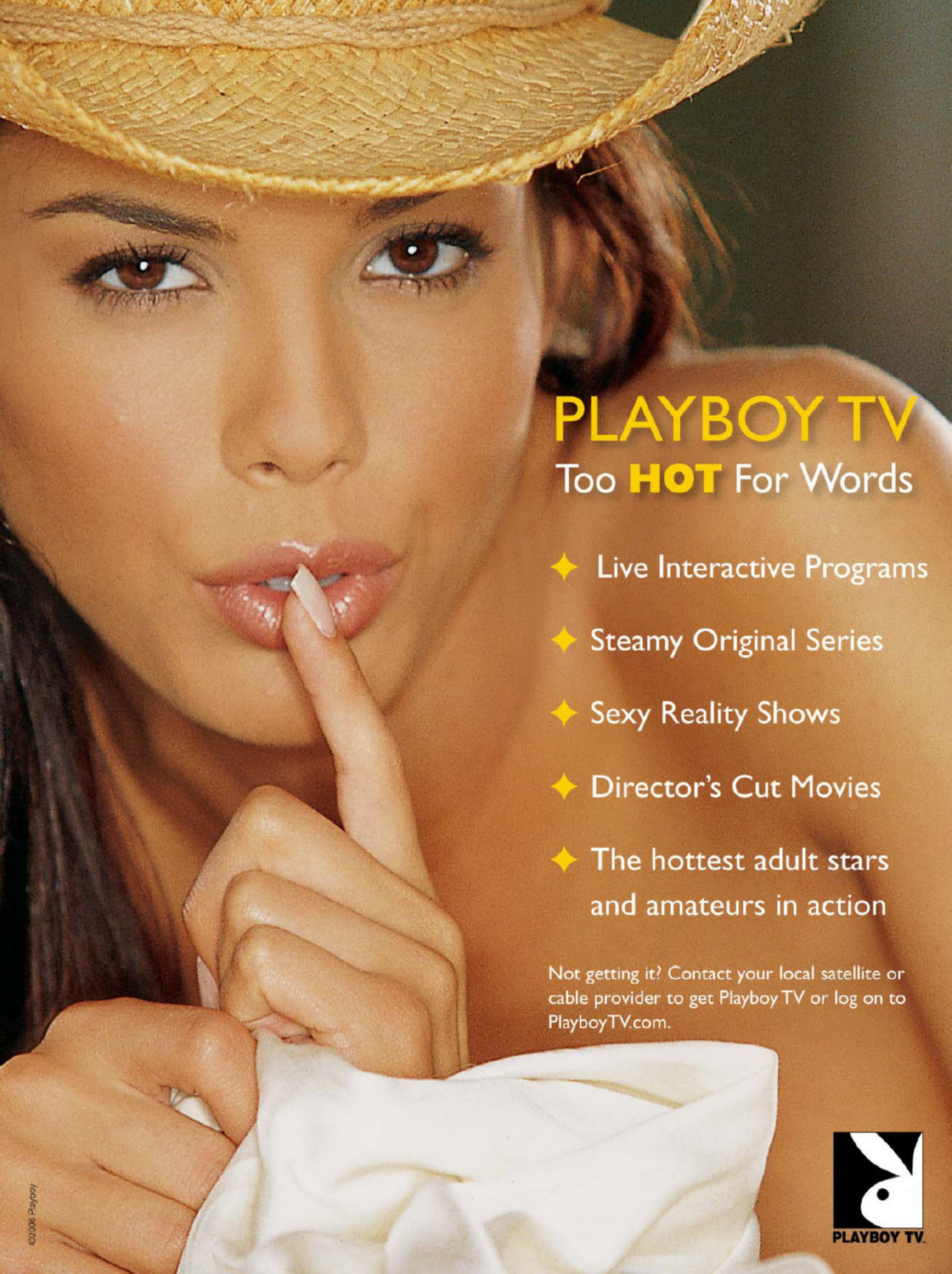
My Masters road trip has come to an end. I have no interest in forking over nearly a thousand dollars for another day at the Masters and can't get an early badge return on the weekend. Saturday morning I settle up with my housemates, my share of the \$3,000 house rental, golf cart and week's food bill coming to \$505. Throw in a Masters shirt and cap, \$70 dollars for practice rounds and a dozen National sandwiches, and my total hits \$694, pennies more than

\$99 a day, all inclusive, for a week at the world's most costly golf tournament.

That afternoon I wave good-bye to Helen Johnson, hitch a ride to Atlanta and head for the airport and a flight back to California, though not without second thoughts. The die-hard fan in me wonders if perhaps I ought to have stayed. But I'm following the solid advice of patrons who told me that Sunday is the day to watch it on TV. So instead of spending a thousand on a badge, I spend a glorious morning on a pristine beach, dipping my toes in the Pacific, and late in the day, like tens of millions of other Americans, I catch the final holes on television and witness yet another Masters miracle comeback. Tiger's Nike-emblazoned ball hangs on the lip for an eternity before dropping into the cup on 16 for a bird, setting up another historic finish, and I discover too late that my heart hasn't left Augusta.



"Excuse me, Miss Clark, but there's been talk about you using the college interns for reasons that aren't exactly work-related."



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Playboy On The Scene

WHAT'S HAPPENING, WHERE IT'S HAPPENING AND WHO'S MAKING IT HAPPEN

A New Twist

Architect Santiago Calatrava's Turning Torso—the world's tallest sculpture

Few things on earth are sexier than the sight of a woman's bare midriff, half turned, with the muscles stretching from the small of her back as she gives you that come-hither look. Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava translates that look into form and function with his newest creation, the skyscraper dubbed Turning Torso, recently completed in Malmö, Sweden. The second-tallest residential building in Europe, it is based on a sculpture of a human torso twisting in midmotion. Calatrava, one of the world's foremost architects—a title that was confirmed when the American Institute of Architects awarded him the Gold Medal in 2005—has also designed what is set to be the tallest building in the U.S., a corkscrew-shaped residential tower to be erected in Chicago, as well as the new PATH train station at Ground Zero in New York City. But Turning Torso may be his crowning achievement. A sculptor and an engineer, Calatrava first created *Twisting Torso*, a five-foot-high objet d'art in white marble. A developer saw it and hired him to build what you see here: a 623-foot skyscraper version made of nine shimmering, distorted cubes housing five floors each. Supported by an external steel structure, the cubes twist 90 degrees around a central core from bottom to top. Inside the building are 147 apartments and 12 floors of office space. "There was a wish to create something truly fantastic," said a beaming Calatrava at the unveiling ceremony. "It is an astonishing building that still amazes me. It changes when you look at it from different angles. I wanted to deliver a technically unique building, which is a challenge in itself." Challenge met and exceeded, in our book.



Top Speed

Twenty-three-year-old Scott Speed is America's new ambassador to Formula One

While American race-car drivers are basking in the glory of NASCAR, none in recent years has taken a shot at Formula One, the world's most popular motor sport. Our drivers haven't been invited to the party since 1993, when Michael Andretti endured a miserable season with McLaren. (His daddy, Mario, was the last American to take the title, in 1978.) This year Californian Scott Speed (yes, that's his real name) becomes the Great Yank Hope: The 23-year-old will drive for Red Bull's team, Scuderia Toro Rosso. This past season Speed won enough races in Formula One's GP2 feeder series to earn a coveted seat in the big leagues. Formula One cars are designed along the same principles as jet fighters, and their engines can crank out 1,000 horsepower. Drivers like Ferrari's Michael Schumacher have years of experience on the twisty, unforgiving tracks, but Speed is showing up with some good old-fashioned American attitude. "There's no driver out there who, if he got in my car, could do any better," he says. Time will tell: The season kicks off this month with the Bahrain Grand Prix.



Get Up Into That Groove

At 47, isn't MADONNA too old for spandex hot pants? Not according to this ass. Here's to moms who still have it, know they still have it and don't mind showing it off.

DAVE HOGAN/GETTY IMAGES

Dennis Hastert Should Be So Lucky

On *Commander in Chief*, NATASHA HENSTRIDGE plays Jayne Murray, a devious political player who hasn't let her drop-dead gorgeousity stand in the way of her Washington career. She started the season as chief of staff for the devious speaker of the House, Nathan Templeton, until he fired her and she became a lobbyist.

152 Yeah, we know—she could lobby you any day. Back of the line, Senator.

ARALDO DI CROLLALANZA/UMMEDIMAGES



Ringer

Is KRISTANNA LOKEN, the badass beauty from *Terminator 3* and *BloodRayne*, wearing some kind of painted-on bra made of space-age polymers? Dunno. Nice nipple ring, though.

MICHAEL TRANT/UMMAG.COM

How to Stuff a Rubber Catsuit

Fetishists dig the skintight style, but **BIANCA BEAUCHAMP** has substance to thrill nonbelievers as well. Latexlair.com's star is so dangerously curvy, she'd look good shedding a burlap sack.



MARTINP@MARTINPERREAU.COM

How About Wednesday

Love's kinda crazy with a spooky little girl like **CHRISTINA RICCI**. Once *The Addams Family*'s Goth gamine, she's now a 26-year-old looker specializing in the cold smolder.



STEPHEN SHUGERMAN/GETTY IMAGES

Crashers Flasher

Blonde-again **RACHEL MCADAMS** drew a crowd with her passable Heat Miser impression at the *Family Stone* premiere. As paparazzi clamored, the *Wedding Crashers* charmer shot a final winning grin over her shoulder. "Aha," said her nipples, "now's our chance to slip out!"



Undressy Bessie

According to tabloids, model-radio host-columnist **BESSIE BARDOT** is Australia's Queen of the Body Bits. For Americans unsure of what that means, it means this.



THE BIG GAME

The classic brick-stacking game Jenga is wonderfully wholesome. You pull a brick out of the middle and place it on top, trying to keep the whole shebang from toppling over. Just when you thought a game couldn't get more simple or safe—voilà! Garden Games' Giant Toppling Bricks (\$73, mastersgames.com) raises the stakes by increasing the size of the pieces. Now instead of constructing knee-high piles, you can build structures over five feet tall, effectively turning this amusing diversion into a blood sport. Don't come crying to us when you lose a toe.



BUG OUT

Behold the cheapest Jeep you'll ever buy. It won't hold eight cases of beer and a pair of blondes, but the Jeep Minimoto dune buggy (\$700, teamminimoto.com) will go where the Grand Cherokee fears to tread: woody trails, your backyard, your neighbor's backyard. The battery-powered buggy has dual-disc brakes, a roll bar, reverse mode and a full suspension system. Top speed is 18 mph, but it feels a lot faster when you flip this baby on a tight turn. Did we mention the roll bar?



TAKE THE FIELD

A few facts about the greatest rivalry in all of sports: (1) Fenway Park opened on April 20, 1912, with the Red Sox beating the New York Highlanders (soon to be Yankees). (2) Red Sox owner Harry Frazee sold George Herman Ruth's contract to the Yankees on January 3, 1920 for \$125,000 and a \$350,000 loan. Ruth soon became the Babe, and the Sox didn't break .500 for a decade. (3) Newly in pinstripes, Johnny Damon will mop the field with his former team this season—you heard it here. (4) The rivalry is now available in chess form with the Red Sox vs. Yankees chess set (\$30, areyougame.com), featuring 32 players sculpted in action. Each team has a manager king, a pitcher queen, two batter bishops and so on. Play ball!

CAST OF CHARACTER

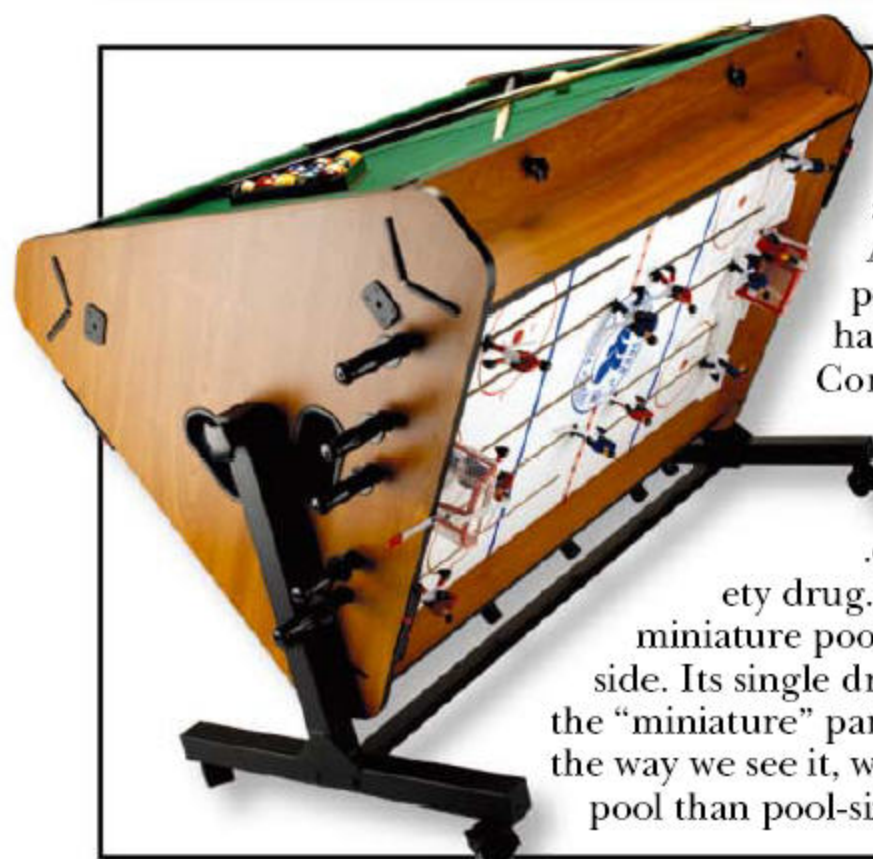
Fly-fishing is not about catching fish. Fly-fishing is about becoming as much like a fly as humanly possible. And the heavier your gear, the harder that is to do. Orvis uses helicopter-blade technology to make its Zero G rod (\$625 and up, orvis.com) flexible, strong and light. Add its CFO reel (\$180 and up) for the ultimate fish-dewatering rig. Contrary to what David Cronenberg would have you believe, becoming a fly isn't all bad.





BREAK A LEG

Put the hammer back in the toolbox, Hank. The WiseCracker (\$15, chefn.com) cracks crab legs and then splits them open to reveal all the tender meat that can be so infuriating to extract. First break the shell with the handle's grip, then slip the metal splitter inside to expand the shell, like using pliers in reverse. Now get crackin'.



SPIN TO WIN

Buying a game table is a major commitment. After a few months of pool, what if you suddenly hanker for a little foos? Consider Hammacher Schlemmer's three-in-one rotating game table (\$600, hammacher.com) your antianxiety drug. Foosball, hockey and miniature pool are all here, one to a side. Its single drawback, of course, is the "miniature" part of the pool table, but the way we see it, we'd rather play foos-size pool than pool-size foos.



A TRUE HOTTIE

Hot-sauce heaven for you is a fire-breathing nightmare for your girlfriend. So stock a range of delicious sauces from Torchbearer (\$7 to \$25, torchbearersauces.com). They're conveniently numbered according to heat, from one (Everyday Sauce) to 42 (Slaughter Hot Sauce), the hottest natural hot sauce in the world.

WRAP STAR

One easy way to simplify your life is to buy a couple of crates of the same wrapping paper and use it for everything. The only problem is finding a pattern that works year-round, no matter the occasion. When we found this beauty at Wrap Hell (\$10 for four sheets, tshirthehell.com), we knew it was the perfect gift to give ourselves. Whether you're presenting a basket of chocolate eggs on Saint Patrick's Day or a bottle of Jameson at Easter, you're guaranteed to be permanently inappropriate.



A BEAUTIFUL TOON

If you don't recognize the work of Dean Yeagle, you haven't been reading your *PLAYBOY* carefully. Yeagle is a cartoonist and regular contributor. His latest creations: the six-inch-tall maquette of Mandy with her dog Skoots, below (\$90, electrictiki.com), and the sketchbook *One Mandy Morning* (\$15, budplant.com). Mandy in the sack, Mandy squirming out of her panties, Mandy lathering her breasts in the shower—we're smitten. You will be too.



Next Month



PARTY GIRLS.



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TRAVELS WITH DICK CHENEY—THE VICE PRESIDENT TOOK SELECT JOURNALISTS ON A SECRET TOUR OF THE MIDDLE EAST JUST BEFORE CHRISTMAS. FOX NEWS'S **JAMES ROSEN** RECOUNTS AN IMPROMPTU JOURNEY TO A VOLATILE REGION WITH THE MOST POWERFUL MAN IN THE WORLD.

EIGHT WAYS TO FIX MEN'S FASHION—A SIZABLE DISCONNECT EXISTS BETWEEN HOW MODELS DRESS FOR THE RUNWAY AND WHAT YOU WEAR WHEN YOU WALK OUT YOUR DOORWAY. BOMBASTIC DESIGNS AND CATALOGS WITH MORE SKIN THAN STYLE HAVE ALIENATED CONSUMERS. WE POSTULATE HOW FASHION CAN LOOK BETTER.

PLAYBOY'S 2006 BASEBALL PREVIEW—LEADING OFF, HALL-OF-FAME WRITER **TRACY RINGOLSBY** PROVIDES A TEAM-BY-TEAM ANALYSIS. NEXT **BILL JAMES**, THE FATHER OF SABERMETRICS, WRITES ABOUT LUCK, AND

THE EDITORS OF *BASEBALL PROSPECTUS* ANSWER BURNING QUESTIONS ABOUT THE GAME. FINALLY, BATTING CLEANUP, WE PREDICT THE WORLD SERIES CHAMP.

OZZIE GUILLEN—THE MOST QUOTABLE DIAMOND DARLING SINCE YOGI BERRA TRASHES THE INDIANS, DISCUSSES UGUETH URBINA'S MURDER CHARGE AND DEFENDS HUGO CHAVEZ IN A BIG-LEAGUE *PLAYBOY* INTERVIEW BY **JASON BUHRMESTER**.

TEACHING THE FAST TRACK TO SUCCESS—**PHIL KNIGHT** OF NIKE REMINISCES ABOUT HIS COLLEGE COACH BILL BOWERMAN, THE QUIRKY LEGEND WHO TRAINED STEVE PREFONTAINE, OVERSAW THE GOLD-MEDAL-WINNING U.S. TRACK TEAM AT THE 1972 OLYMPICS AND TAUGHT KNIGHT HOW TO ACHIEVE HIS GOALS ON AND OFF THE FIELD. THE COACH'S WAFFLE IRON ALSO HELPED GET THE SNEAKER EMPIRE UP AND RUNNING.

SUICIDE WATCH—A MAN HAS LOST HIS SON TO DRUGS, BUT IS IT TOO LATE TO SAVE HIS INFANT GRANDSON? HE HEADS TO A PSYCHIATRIC WARD TO PLAY MIND GAMES IN AN EFFORT TO FIND OUT. FICTION BY **JOYCE CAROL OATES**

PLUS—20Q WITH **REBECCA ROMIJN**; **RACHEL STERLING**, WHO PLAYS EYE CANDY MADAM CARAMEL ON *RENO 911!*; AND A HEY TO MISS MAY, **ALISON WAITE**.



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