

Graffiti

#1




"I still encourage anyone who feels at all compelled to write to do so. I just try to warn people who hope to get published that publication is not all that it is cracked up to be. But writing is. Writing has so much to give, so much to teach, so many surprises. That thing you had to force yourself to do — the actual act of writing — turns out to be the best part. It's like discovering that while you thought you needed the tea ceremony for the caffeine, what you really needed was the tea ceremony. The act of writing turns out to be its own reward."

—Anne Lamott

Hey you!

Yes, you! Graffiti depends on you to send us your creative outpourings! Fiction, nonfiction, poetry, line art, photography... whatever you conjure up. Don't be shy! You know you want to. So do it today! More than once if you feel the urge! Be in the next issue, okay?

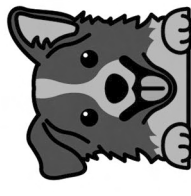
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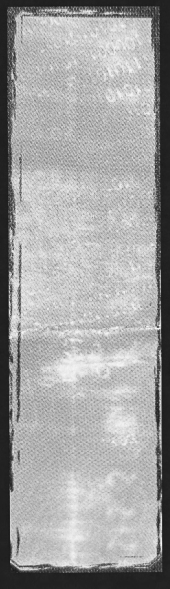


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FRONT LINES

Don Root

“Graffiti? WTF?”

Yeah, we know. Graffiti is different. Normal publications hire writers to fill their pages, but *Graffiti is not “normal.”* We get the writers to come to us. (Clever, eh?) Graffiti is “reader written.” As in, **YOU READ IT, YOU WRITE IT.**

What? Yes, you! Am I talking to myself here? Well, actually, I guess I *am* talking to myself, since as I write this, we haven’t gone to press yet and you’re not here to talk to. Why don’t you come over? I’ll pop a bottle of Châteauneuf-du-Pape and we can solve the world’s problems together! Anyway, here’s the deal: You’ve got a unique voice to share and you can share it in Graffiti. However you like to express yourself—whether through poetry, prose, or art—if it can be printed on paper, Graffiti will print it and share it with the community.

“B-b-b-but,” I hear you stammer, “I can’t write or draw. I’m no good at it.” Well, you might be right. But it’s like anything else; the more you practice, the better you’ll get. And Graffiti has huge respect for your bravery in putting yourself out there. Just remember, **we don’t edit.** What you send us gets printed as-is, so do your best with spelling and grammar, okay?

What’s the result? Each issue of Graffiti will contain an eclectic array of writings and art that—who knows?—might open your mind or turn you on to something new and exciting. Without doubt, every page of Graffiti will be filled with *real* stories and *real* creativity from people like you. And that strikes me as a fine thing in today’s homogenized, corporate-dominated world.

I hope you’ll share your voice with Graffiti soon. I look forward to it.

Finally, I’d like to give an appreciative shout-out to the advertisers and donors who supported this fledgling publication. We can’t publish Graffiti without the financial support of our sponsors. **HUGE THANKS go out to George, Penny, Bill, Steve, Rose, and Rod** for your donations to the cause, and to our brave inaugural advertisers, who took a leap of faith and risked part of their ad budget on an as-yet-unpublished zine. **Please support them!**

Lisa Renee Anderson, M.A. - Exceptional career and life coaching
Art House - Cult films and classics at Broadway Metro’s sister cinema
Bhumi Refillery - So you don’t add more plastic to the waste stream!
The Cottage Grove Harpies - A writers’ group from, you guessed it . . .
Graffiti Editorial Services - We don’t edit Graffiti, so we need other work!
Misha Kagutaba - Artist and filmmaker; check him out on You Tube!
MECCA - Funky and fantastic art center selling recycled art supplies
Pacific Moon Tree Tarot - Insights to help you plot your best path forward
Schooby Dooby Do - Pawsitively purrfect portraits of your furry friends
Rod Williams - Author and Graffiti supporter extraordinaire!

Not a bad start. But if there’s to be a Graffiti #2, we need to coax more advertisers to these pages. So **please tell your boss how much better her whole life would be if she advertised in Graffiti, the creative voice of Eugene!**

Thanks! And here’s hoping for a Graffiti #2! Now, onward into the frog . . .

—Don

Graffiti

graffitieugene@gmail.com
 (541) 513-4633

Editor & Publisher: Don Root

Associate Editor: Jordan Rose

Contributors: Amatola, Anonymous, Jake Barnes, Trout Black, Mark Clagett, Mark Clearwater, Jace Elson, Bill Gunn, Wallace Hammond, Misha Kagutaba, Turk LeClair, Serena Makofsky, MyKa Mckinney, Ramona Mooney, Magoo, E.S. Nobody, Eden Omari, James Otter, Nicole Revere, Leo Rivers, Bill Shakespeare, Nicole Taylor, W.B., Rod Williams

Donors: Steve Boergadine, Bill Gunn, George Havens, Penny Neu, Rose Ramsey, Rod Williams

The Fine Print: Fiction! It’s all fiction! Any resemblance of anything in this rag to reality is nothing more than an amazing coincidence! Contributors retain all rights to their work. Their opinions aren’t even remotely similar to yours, mine, or anyone else’s and would never be taken seriously in a court of law.

ON THE COVER: Sandy, photographed by Don. It was night and we were by some warehouses using the car headlights for light. A cop cruised by to see what was going on, but he left us alone. There was the Saab, and a naked baby doll, and Brian was there being “Tripod Man,” and a friend of Sandy’s was there, too—I think her name was Tracy? She was cool and I hoped I might run into her again at some point, but I never did.

INSTRUCTION MANUAL FOR BEGINNERS

How do I submit work? You email it to graffiti@eugene@gmail.com. If you have hardcopy, you can call or text us at (541) 513-4633 and arrange a hand-off. Or come to one of our monthly Graffiti salons and deliver your work in person. We’re too broke to have a real office.

Does I gotta right good? No, but if you have something to say, you want people to understand it, right? Dictionaries are cheap—even free online! And if you use one, you’ll always have perfect spelling. It’s that easy. Grammar’s a little harder, but the more you write, the better you’ll get. Trust me. Remember, as a rule, we don’t edit. What you give us goes as-is.

Do I win anything if I’m selected? Yes, you get published. No, you don’t get paid. This isn’t a contest. You write it. You send it in. We print it and drop it off all over Eugene. If there isn’t enough room for everything we receive, we omit stuff at our whim. If you don’t get in one issue, try again for the next.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Events

Graffiti is pleased to announce the first

Graffiti Salon

No, don’t be ridiculous. We’re not talking about a hair-and-nails salon. We’re talking about a Gertrude Stein or Dorothy Parker type of salon—a gathering where people meet and exchange thoughts on life, the Universe, and everything, in the process maybe cleaning out some of their brain mush. Of course, if you like your brain mush, you are still invited and encouraged to attend. Meet Graffiti’s publisher, hand him your work, discuss it with him in person, and shower him with compliments, curses, or Châteauneuf-du-Pape—your choice. This free, not-to-be-missed event will take place on

Saturday, February 4, 2-4 p.m.

at

Beergarden

777 West 6th Ave., Eugene

Graffiti hopes to see you there!

Obituaries

No one we know died this month, so we have nothing to report here. But if you think you’re going to die soon, you are welcome to send us your obituary in advance.

Lost & Found

Uh-oh. Ramona’s missing some things. Can you help her out?

Lost Boyfriend

Lost cockatiel
 Last seen on Friday
 flying south
 Please call a.s.a.p

Lost kitty—calico
 Talkative and affectionate
 please call

Lost boyfriend
 last seen heading south on 101
 almond eyes, slight limp
 affectionate—sometimes talkative
 please call

Ramona Mooney

GOVERNMENT WARNING: (1) ACCORDING TO THE SURGEON GENERAL, WOMEN SHOULD NOT READ GRAFFITI DURING PREGNANCY BECAUSE OF THE RISK OF BIRTH DEFECTS. (2) CONSUMPTION OF GRAFFITI IMPAIRS YOUR ABILITY TO DRIVE A CAR OR OPERATE MACHINERY, AND MAY CAUSE HEALTH PROBLEMS..

Graffiti welcomes comments, praise (yay!) and criticism (well, if you must).
Call or email us with your thoughts. We'll print them here.

<<<FFFEEDBACKKK>>>

"Quick, cut the mike!"

Hello Graffiti Eugene!

I saw your flyer at Farmers Union Coffee, I'd love to be a contributor to this publication! I am a freelance writer by trade and usually spend my free time writing food reviews and drafting entries for a blog I had started a year ago.

Below I've attached a few entries from my blog, *So, This is 20*, to submit to the zine! These pieces are witty, real, and so achingly relatable you can't help but scream at the page.

Thank you for providing this amazing opportunity for the creatives in the community to have their work seen!

Warmly,
Jordan Rose

Jordan— Oh, what havoc you hath wrought! So achingly relatable were your pieces, and so terrifying the resulting screaming at the page emanating from my lips, that my lovely inamorata came running into the drawing room here at Graffiti Manor, horrified that I was in the process of committing seppuku with my Office Depot E-Z Slide Letter Opener! And, oh, by the way, I just made you Graffiti's Associate Editor, so you can buy that Maserati now.

To Graffiti:
Should my submission be copyrighted BEFORE submission or does GE take care of that???

—Eden Omari

Hey Eden— We don't copyright your work. You copyright your work automatically when you summon it out of your brain and record it on paper or computer file. You send it to us voluntarily because you want us to publish it; we're not hiring you to write it. We don't pay you anything—this is a labor of love that might likely lose money (in which case it won't be around long). But we print your work with your name on it, and we make no claims to ownership of it. You retain all rights to your work. If you want to register it with the US Copyright Office, that's your prerogative. You can find the US Copyright Office basic explanation at <https://www.copyright.gov/what-is-copyright/>. Let me know if you have other questions.

Hello

My name is James Otter. I would like to be featured in your brand new zine. My poetry is non-traditional narrative horror. I have become known within the local poetry scene as the Dark Poet Overlord.

I have attached 2 unedited poems titled an Audience in Crows 1 and 2 this poem has not been published anywhere

Thank you for your time and consideration.

James— I dare not NOT publish someone with the Vaderesque moniker of "Dark Poet Overlord." Just please don't turn out to be my father in Act 3!

Good Evening, Graffiti Magazine-

A friend in my creative writing group (The Cottage Grove Harpies) spotted your announcement for submissions to your new zine, and we were all excited to hear about the project. In addition, I checked out the interview with Jordan Rose on the Whole Community News website, and learned a bit more about your inaugural issue and overall vision.

That said, I'd like to submit a few poems for your consideration. I'm not sure they're in the ballpark of what you're looking for, but it's always a crapshoot when we put our stuff "out there"...so I just hope you like some or all of these.

You didn't mention anything about including bios, but very quickly: I'm the author of two novels (and actively working on a third) and a collection of short stories (with a second collection coming out in 2023, fingers crossed). More details are available if needed or desired.

Good luck with your new venture and thanks so much for the opportunity to submit some of my work. Also thanks for making the process so Luddite-friendly; I know a few writers who breathe a sigh of relief on the rare occasion that digital submissions aren't the only option available.

Best regards,
Rod Williams

Rod—Thank you and all the Harpies for your amazing support for this inaugural issue of Graffiti! Readers, please note: the Harpies upcoming anthology entitled "Passages" is coming soon to a bookstore near you and hopefully to your own home library as well!

I would love to be a part of this.

—Leo Rivers

Leo— And so you shall be!

You write it, we print it!

Send your work to Graffiti today and see it in the next issue. Essays, poetry, prose, art, anything. Go ahead! You know you want to!

By email to: graffitieugene@gmail.com

By hardcopy: call, text, or email us, and we'll arrange a hand-off.

The Cottage Grove Harpies announce the publication of their new anthology,

Passages

Short stories, essays, and poetry by regional writers, many of them Cottage Grove residents.

The Harpies and *Passages* will be featured at the Bookmine, 702 E. Main St. in Cottage Grove, during January's Friday Night Art Walk. Save the date! Friday, January 27, starting at 6:00 p.m.

Support local authors! *Passages* is available for \$9.99 at local bookstores, on Amazon or Kindle, or by contacting the Harpies directly at cgharpies@gmail.com.

Memories of Paris

Serena Makofsky

When I got back from Paris, I had an extra pair of underwear in my suitcase. It belonged to Megan, my best friend from college, who had gotten us this apartment, quite far from the Left Bank, to stay in for free.

They were white with a simple structural design, without the bunches of cloth on the edges that bog so many pairs down, just elastic stretching along the hips. A soft, light cotton.

They had been worn in just right, laundered enough to lose the virginal quality of pre-pubescent Calvin Klein model numbers, but as yet without holes. Clothing reaches its fashion peak at that moment, perhaps it's the danger of a hole appearing that makes the wearing of some piece of clothing all the more tantalizing.

I stuffed the underwear to the back of my nightstand drawer, so as not to accidentally wear it before I had the chance to send it back to Megan. I then began a journal reviewing my recent Parisian escapades, ranging from eating loaves of bread (the cheapest way to survive) in a deserted square, to spending ten hours in the Pompidou modern art museum, concluding with an exhausting and expensive foray into the gift shop.

Oh, but what finds there are to be found in the Pompidou gift shop! Really, gift shops are all that matter to me in life because it is what I purchase that I remember about any given event or place. To see the Pompidou now, I just peruse my postcard reproduction of Matisse's paper cut-out, "The Sorrows of the King," or rifle through the guidebook that lists the museum's galleries, stairwells, and restrooms in pains-taking detail, mapped out in French and impossible for me to understand.

Time passed and my underwear supply withered. I hate doing laundry. The locating of many quarters, the lugging of detergent and, the worst, putting the layers upon stacks upon piles of clothes away, mating socks, stuffing too-full drawers, vainly attempting to fold a t-shirt just as it had been folded at the Gap when I first spotted it.

The morning came when I was without options - I had worn the sagging Gloria Vanderbilts, the blood-stained Jockey for Hers, my bathing

suit, an ex-boyfriend's pinstriped boxer shorts that required a safety pin to hold them up, the Jennifer Moore's with the ripped crotch. I threw on Megan's underwear - what a gorgeous, glorious moment! My pasty briefs, bikinis and hipsters didn't come close to touching this lingerie nirvana. My colors were always too garish, my whites too awkward. Mine had elastic that made sharp, red impressions along my hip bones, obvious as tattoos.

Not Megan's. They breezily floated around my curves, resting like a whisper against my skin.

The next day, after doing the dreaded laundry, I pulled out Megan's underwear from the miles of soapy-smelling rags in need of organization with the intent of sending it back, along with a small explanatory note of apology. My mind lapsed for a second, I was surrounded by stained glass, smelled crepes burning, saw matisse paper cut-outs dancing the Can-Can, and the underwear was on me again.

So I kept Megan's underwear and loved it all the more for knowing I was doing something terribly wrong. I hadn't written her in months, thinking I would feel hypocritical sending a letter but not mentioning that I was keeping and wearing her underclothes. But to tell her terrified me. Perhaps my adventure in hygiene would prove too dangerous a test of our friendship. We all know how volatile college friendships are, decided by a common dormitory, a chance conversation, a common protest attended.

Inanely, hopelessly, I purchased similar pairs, styles that vaguely reflected those of Megan. None sufficed. I own so many near and far misses I have considered sewing them together for drapes.

Each time I return home after a shopping trip, I rip out the plastic tag attachments with my teeth, sometimes drooling a bit on the pale, cool cotton in my anxious anticipation. I stumble a little as I jump into the soft cloth, my feet dancing to find the appropriate openings. I slide them up, a faint, ironic smile on my face, because my heart knows what my mind fails to admit - that Megan's underwear cannot be duplicated, they mean more than anything else how it felt to be 23 and living for free in an apartment in Paris. 🚲 🚲 🚲



Photo by James Otter

So, this is 20 by Jordan Rose

The air feels different.

Six months ago
almost to the day
I found myself sitting inside an
overcrowded coffee shop
—a mundane atmosphere for the
majority of San Franciscans—
*I say this with my best effort to
spare my own distaste toward the
breed*

And noting the same;

The air feels different.

The difference was in the
abundance of it,
Especially right next to me.
Being that this was my very first trip
into
the big city
On my own,
This was quite the occasion.
I even wore my leopard-print,
velvet-lined trench coat;

*which I had bought
for a tenth of the price it was being
sold for,
only after ripping the tag off and
hiding it inside of a stray shoe
my size 8, square-toed accomplice
and the cashier after falling into my
ruse shot off a “meow girl” with a
cock-eyed wink.*

Even armored in my sexy, leopard-
print spoils
I couldn't shield myself from the
feeling that something was different
Maybe the difference being that I
could
actually
be on my own.

Without my own acknowledgment;
I had driven 1,274 miles;
with no one in the passenger seat.
Slept in a couple of beds;
with no one within arms reach.
Dressed myself every day;
*knowing that there would be no one
to undress me at the end of the day.*
I shaved my head;
*all the while knowing it would catch
few first glances and ever fewer
seconds.*

If looking the part was half the
battle,
Consider me well on my way to
receiving a Medal of Honor.

But then again allow me to dismiss
that notion altogether,
as any recipient of that award
probably would be among the first to
burn me—
*and any person born with fallopian
tubes and a uterus for that matter—*
at the stake for as little as breathing
too close to their display cases
or lingering in the lobbies of their
awards ceremonies a little too long.

Anyways, I digress.

Lately,
or is it as of late—
Either way, I've felt so free-minded
and so light of heart
It's entirely possible I might just float
away if a breeze caught me just
right.
Just as long as it drops me gently in
a place that averages 75 degrees
and sun year-round;
I'm here for the ride.

This morning I swiped the little piece
of plastic that enables the
mismanagement of my money at
another coffee shop,
This time at a shop in

*a little city—
a college town in Oregon, of all
fucking places.*

I've sprawled my things out across a
table meant to seat four;
That today, is seating one;
A bike helmet,
(thanks dad)
A backpack that's held my things
across several state lines and
across one ocean,
A pair of bent sunglasses
(thanks one-night stand)
And across where another person
might sit to join me;
I've got my unshaven legs and feet
with chipped nail polish to fill in.
🚲 🚲 🚲

Miguel, 8:29 a.m.

Anonymous

Miguel was sitting upright in his
sleeping bag, tending a small
fire he had started with a
piece of steel wool he had found by
the highway and a nine volt battery he
had stolen from a smoke detector in
the motel 6 where he got free coffee.
He felt rather clever, sitting there
breathing the smoke from the rabbit
sage fire, reflecting on his life. Think-
ing about cigarettes, not having any.

He heard a low cry that sounded
like a human voice, but he knew bet-
ter. It was a mourning dove. Or a
ptarmigan. He could not be sure. He
at least knew for sure it was not a dy-
ing baby that he would try to rescue.
He had learned that already from ex-
perience.

*His mind suddenly be-
came focused on his food
supply. He figured he had
two, maybe three days
before he would need to
resupply. He also knew
from experience that go-
ing a day without food is
not really that bad.*

He looked up at the sky, a dull grey
color, with just a slice of blue sky
peeking through the clouds to the
southwest. His head felt fuzzy, but he
was rested; ready to take on the new
day and the challenges it might
present. His morale was boosted by
being in the woods again, away from
the city and the hardships that went
with it. He had that lovely feeling of
being in the right place at the right
time, and his body was coursing with
little warm tremors that made him feel
at ease.

His mind suddenly became focused
on his food supply. He figured he had
two, maybe three days before he
would need to resupply. He also knew
from experience that going a day
without food is not really that bad. He
took several small bites of a raisin
bagel, augmented by margarine,
which he had started to use because
it is much cheaper than butter.

Ever since he had lost his food
stamps, he was always trying to find
progressively more inexpensive food
items. He sometimes gathered fruit
and nuts from trees, and in fact, still
had some oranges and pecans he
had gathered from the numerous
roadside trees in Chico. While he was
there he had made fresh orange juice
every morning, since eating 3 or-
anges in a sitting did not seem desir-
able. He ate a small clementine, and
six pecans. The pecans were an un-
expected windfall; he had no idea that
pecans were so easy to come by,
since they were so expensive at the
store. For some reason this reminded
him of the olives he had found in
Santa Barbara. He had been so hun-
gry, and so disappointed to find that
fresh olives straight from the tree are
not edible and in fact quite repugnant.

He looked up at the sky again,
which was now a pale shade of blue

that seemed more friendly than the
ominous grey fog of half an hour ago.
He looked now to the fire, and saw
that it had burnt down to a pile of
ashes and a couple of meager cin-
ders. He decided to let it die out; the
smoke in the daytime was an unnec-
essary risk.

He stood up, taking his only pair of
pants out of his backpack. He put his
foot into each leg, then pulling them
up to his waist. Stuffing his sleeping
bag into his backpack, his fingers felt
the mild pain of cold mixed with pres-
sure as he closed the reluctant zipper.
He looked up at the sky again,
stretching his arms as high as he
could above his head. He could now
see the sun, up well over the distant
barren hills. He figured it must be at
least ten o'clock by now.

Looking around at the scarce vege-
tation, he gave up any subconscious
desire he had to forage: the desert of-
fers very little for the hungry. The best
evidence he could find of a potential
food source was a small piece of
snakeskin.

It was beginning to get warm, the
sunlight now heating his body and his
clothes. He felt foolish for dawdling so
long at his camp. He knew that he
would have precious little time before
it would become too intense for him,
and he would rest in the shade. Per-
haps air conditioning if he could find a
friendly establishment.

Now peeing on the fire, he felt
much refreshed and ready to return to
the highway. He had failed to catch a
ride yesterday, even after a frustrating
four hour wait. Shouldering his pack,
he walked around the small stand of
twisted juniper trees that shielded him
from the road. It was lucky that he
had not been noticed. Perhaps the
law enforcement had bigger fish to
fry. Or perhaps they were sympa-
thetic. He made a mental note to
avoid making a fire in the morning un-
less it was in a remote location. No
reason to jeopardize his position
when he had already had a good
night's sleep.

The walk to the highway was too
short. He made a personal decision to
be in a good mood though; no reason
to be upset so far. Suddenly he felt
compelled to eat more, as he had not
had much at camp. He turned from
the road to his pack, finding the bagel
easily and closing his pack again.

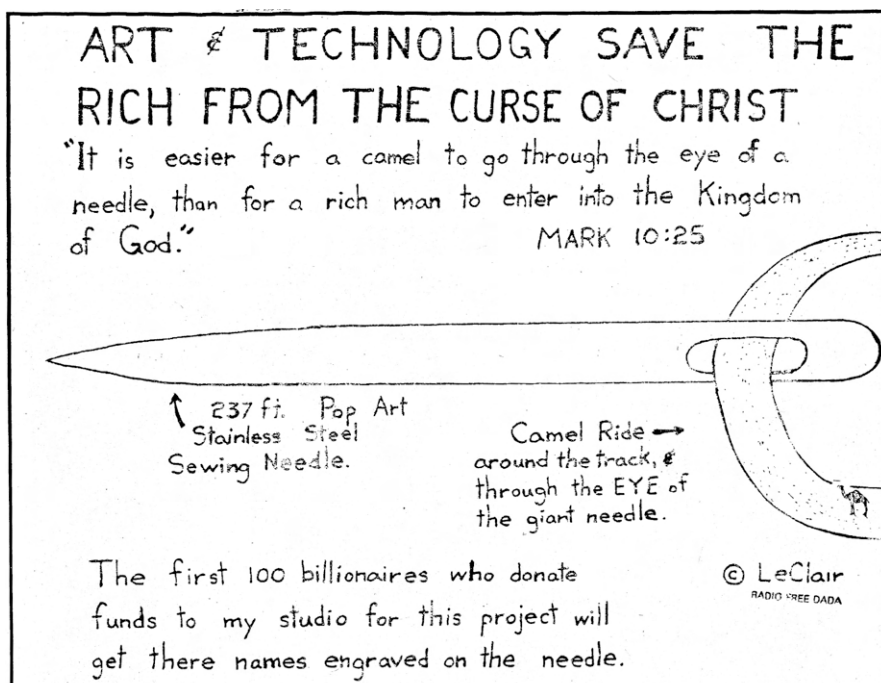
There was very little traffic, perhaps
3 cars every minute. This was not en-
couraging, but it was certainly a nice
break from being on the interstate.
There was a simple pleasure in the
emptiness of the desert. Knowing that
there was nothing around him for
miles, nothing to hurt him or confuse
him, nowhere to buy things, no laws
to break really.

For the moment he felt confident
and safe, and this brought a smile to
his face. He hoped his friends would
still be at the meeting point outside La
Pine. He was not exactly worried, but
there was a certain desperation in not
knowing for sure that he would see
them again, coupled with being alone.
He made a decision that he would not
get upset about something that was
unknown. There was no sense in be-
ing sad about a mystery. 🚲 🚲 🚲

Friends and neighbors

at the Saturday Farmers Market





Art by Turk LeClair (1935–2004). His obit from the *San Francisco Chronicle* reads: "Born in Manhattan. Painter, photographer, poet, actor, genius, outlaw, madman. Called his art "Cosmic Beatnik Dada." He has split to Beatnik Heaven to wail in the Eternal Jam Session/Poetry Reading. Where the passion goes on for years. Good Luck, Turk."

A Story About My Brother

Rod Williams

Living in Brooklyn sharpens your senses for danger. Especially when you walk in the shadows of the Williamsburg Bridge, among the hundred-year-old buildings tattoo'd with graffiti, stained by rust-red streaks of rain.

Not so long ago, my brother was walking home from his work in the city, two in the morning, coming out of the subway, when he heard *Gimme yo wallet, mothafucka!*

In the dark he could make out the features of a kid, maybe 13, maybe 14. The kid held up a knife and tried to look mean. My brother was dog-tired from his ten-hour shift at the restaurant. From his 20 years in restaurants.

He looked the kid up and down, then looked at his own hands, cut and calloused and boiled red from all his time in kitchens. He had about twelve bucks in his wallet. He'd never meant to become a cook. You start a job for rent and spending money and sometimes it consumes you and becomes your life. So he handed over the cash, then invited the kid home for something to eat.

There was a barbecue out on the roof of my brother's apartment, and

there he grilled some fish and pork left over from his last catering gig.

The kid ate like there was no tomorrow, and as he ate he spoke about things in my brother's narrow living room.

At first, these two seemed to have little in common. But somehow the talk turned to wordplay, the kid free-styling a bit, my brother disclosing his deep love for poetry.

He spun stories of the readings he'd done around the city, in lofts, bistros, cafes, Irish pubs. *Jesus wept, there's even an Irish pub in Chinatown, can ya believe it?*

Did my brother like cooking, the kid wanted to know. A shrug. *It is what it is.*

Afterward they fell quiet for a bit. *Want some ribs?*

Sure, and some more of them potatoes.

By the way the kid held his knife over his plate, my brother saw he'd been no real threat.

My name's Damon, the kid said.

John, said my brother.

The sun rose and still Johnny plied his guest with both food and words: Those are my brother's finest gifts, and his best intimacies. 🚲 🚲 🚲

Water Skeeters

Coyote Gulch
Escalante
Utah

Midsummer

Time
to just sit

Emptiness
my companion

Cottonwood shades
clear water
in the creek,
a few old friends,
water skeeters.
greet me

as I lower myself
into a small pool
legs outstretched
spine straight

Quiet

Then
a bite
on my butt cheek

OK
Just part of sitting

Another bite

And then another

I flinch
and look down
to find
Water Skeeters
clutching me

"You guys

I never knew
you could do this."

Zazen
Just sit

As if life
won't always
intrude

Even
Water Skeeters

Include
them
too.

Trout Black

Boulder Mountain

We ask
How did I end up here?
or wonder
why we don't fit
in our family.

Later
we might say
these are my people,
or
this life is
what I should have been doing
all along,
or
here's where I'm meant to live,
here's home.

Listen.

Thousand Lakes
is the name
of the mountain range
north of Torrey Utah.

Boulder Mountain
is the mountain
to the south
of Torrey.

But actually
Boulder Mountain
is blessed with beautiful lakes,

and the 11,000-foot ridgetops
on Thousand Lakes
are mostly rocky crags.

Cartographers,
long ago,
mistakenly swapped
their names.

Our lives can be like that,
swapped by family
school
religion
culture
for something we are not.

Our cartographers
were absent.

The challenge
for our journey
is to find our own way.

And we are given no map.

Trout Black



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The Ice Cream Struggle. Photo by Magoo.

STRUGGLES

At one time or another along the journey of life, each and every one of us faces a personal struggle—a dilemma that may deprive us of sleep, cause a knot in our stomach, or send us running to a therapist. We're not talkin' nuclear war, oil spills, or the sun burning out. Not the epic problems, but the little personal ones: dealing with ex-spouses, lovers, and relatives; dealing with our own mortality; dealing with addictions, bad jobs, and never enough money. This column is about those struggles, in the hopes that sharing the burden will ease the burden. We're all in this crazy, leaking life raft together, right? So, want to tell your story? Send it in, and label it "Struggles."

Well, now I'm at the end of the line, and I feel a new emptiness. My father's wife, Christine, called me the day before yesterday from Houston to inform me that Manly Bronson died early that morning, a month after his 96th birthday.

Christine was with him during his entire four-day hospital stay. He was in surgery for more cancerous growths on the top of his head. He'd had a similar operation a couple of years ago and recuperated fully. But in spite of being a tough old bird, apparently some other things were wrong as well. Reportedly he turned yellow from the failure of other internal organs and developed pneumonia, and this time the cancer had invaded his brain. Given all that, it strikes me as a merciful and opportune time for him to have gone. He was perfectly lucid the last time I talked to him on the phone, and perhaps a successful physical recovery from this last extensive operation might have left him pitifully impaired. The good doctor long ago signed over his body to the local medical school; apparently no funeral or memorial services are planned. I'm thankful that this very gentle, honest good gentleman had a relatively peaceful life and a peaceful end. He certainly was a good father.

I'm sorry that I wasn't persistent enough to finish at least my first book and see it into publication before he died. I would like to have made him proud of me for good reason. I would like to have given him the contentment that his firstborn son, as he was wont to call me, made the world a better place in some small measure. It will be hard to shake the feeling that I let him down. Now he'll never know whether or not I'm just a lot of hot air, although I doubt that he ever entertained such a question—he was too accepting for that.

I feel about ready to get back to work, but that significant component of my drive—my feeling of wanting to prove my worth to him—has fallen through the bottom of my gut. Any success I have will be emptier without him to share it with.

But perhaps I'll do better to concentrate on fond memories such as having him ever available as an enthusiastic and always-encouraging tennis partner. Many's the morning we arose at 4:30 a.m. for an early summer hour of tennis on the Langdon public courts, enjoying close camaraderie from across the net in the honeysuckle-laden cool dawn summer air of our fair capital city. Flushed with aerobic exercise and exhilaration, we would converse happily on the return home, then shower and dress for junior high school and work.

Life seems so fleeting, yet death so damn unreal.

—W.B

Adventures for Readers

Mark Clearwater

IMAGINE . . .

*. . . I said to my friend,
that you are not sitting here
in this field with me.*

*Imagine
you are watching me on TV
talking to God whose
microphone is pinned
through my heart*

YOUNG TROUBLE

At the turn of the century young trouble covered several parts of which have been mowed down. Clear patterns of reason surviving in the wild on speculation. A lack of knowledge might have suggested an oozing festering easy way out. The document increases or is horrified by the thought of becoming clear. Throughout history the quiet name of the hand may be held for heartache.

MARRIAGE

My marriage my father my marriage. And there then many shut. I intended to slice my desire again with the human race even without the little history and a snapshot. Air asked one other thing of me to wipe out my past my hair smiled. Were other hours retreating to my apartment taking lessons I could dip deep into. Room existed for days on stale sad history, enormous dark eyes land where no love scrawled me there. And each trip our meeting ducked the customs and ran calling I knew you right away. He showed me he said he wanted this desire to give me other things, small almonds, wild flowers for me, word of me spread at one kiss as though all the children flew.

A ROOM WITH DANCERS

Ideas in buckets under storm windows. The yard washes the house about. My father in a room with dancers: rain and night, at last. That morning seven flowers stare at the somewhat embarrassed explanation. This family's spell, and the time jam my voice was caught in. My uncle dreaming the change he was waiting for.

My Sister In Red

I take issue with that thing people say about Silvia
"Genius lives next door to madness"

as if a girl could fly
over the sun
grab some apples
and land again without singeing her dress
as if her Lucifer was but the lucky sister
of Icarus

not the Belle of the Ball held in
a Sheol of groans and sadness
as if incest, cigarettes and drunkenness
were fashion statements like
the length of milady's dress

as if endangering your babies
and turning on the gas
were a matter of Movie Star
popularity or Opera tears and
audience forgiveness.

I think it is a car accident and Cancer
this Crazy business

and no teen full of dreams
ought ever seek to lay
beside her on the bedspread.

And I for one am tired of all this
precious chatter and taking Selfies
by the throbbing Rock of Gibraltar
and the toenail on her bed.

For She is not famous in her own mind.

She is Dead.

Leo Rivers

Silvia

Who is Silvia? What is she,
That all our swains commend her?
Holy, fair, and wise is she;
The heaven such grace did lend her,
That she might admired be.

Is she kind as she is fair?
For beauty lives with kindness;
Love doth to her eyes repair,
To help him of his blindness;
And, being help'd, inhabits there.

Then to Silvia let us sing,
That Silvia is excelling;
She excels each mortal thing
Upon the dull earth dwelling;
To her let us garlands bring.

Bill Shakespeare

They Hated Our Guts

The small black pajamaed people
hated our guts
for invading their land,
erecting bases, runways,
barracks and bars.

They hated our guts
for our sense of superiority,
but they loved our money,
and our garbage
and the things we left behind.

They hated us for good reason:
our occupation,
our ideas, our ideals
and our reason
for even being there.

We were trained
to dehumanize them.
They were gooks, slopes, zipperheads,
haphazard cogs
in military wheels
that should be crushed.

Now, whenever we go
to another uncertain war,
in my minds eye,
I go with them,
SCREAMING ALL THE WAY.

Bill Gunn**Every Day**

Every day I see things
that remind me
of mistakes and misdeeds.

Every morning I wake up
with the hope that
things will get better.

Every night
I lie in bed
wishing for a lapsed memory.

Early--very early--
I hear screams for help.
I hear my son
imploping me to hurry up.

I hear my daughter
wanting me to arrive early
to be part
of her daughter's life.

I hear the wife
wanting me to come home early.

I hear friends tell me
to lighten up.

I hear screams
from fifty years ago
begging me to show him
a way out of death.

Bill Gunn**Buried Treasure**

When you are old
and your hands
are chapped, withered and dry,
you have to remember
the young women, now old,
that you used to love,
and, in turn, loved you.

Buried treasure
could not hold more worth
than these almost
forgotten memories.

Bill Gunn**Your Home**

Your home
is a dragon's den of paper
scattered like autumn leaves across
table and floor
And to your side in shadowed corner
Lie shed skins of days gone by

You think
each morning
with light bladed through blinds
that this tiny room
with its smell of sweat and coffee
is just a stop

That tonight
when cold fog ripples with moan
of 2 a.m. train
that howls across iron beams

that you will wake
pack a bag
with just a few things

and wave
at ghost conductor
the light of his jack-o-lantern
held high above headless head

and the train will groan
and chug and thug
as you sit with bleary eyes
amidst wooden benches of the coach

Prow of engine parting
down the seams
a life you left behind.

E. S. Nobody**Untitled**

Illusion evaporates at the
sound of your voice, like the
dew on roses in morning light.
So too, your kiss awakens me
from the temporal dream, and
the optical effect I knew as
flesh becomes lost in
immortality. What tender
meat—the Heart, what
melodious strains—it's beat.
There is no you, there is no
me, only the love that
imagines us.

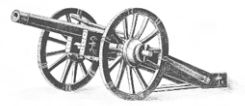
David Michael McKinney**You're Not**

You're not a
rusty UPS truck
sliding upside down
with a lemur sticking
his tail in the
cigarette lighter hole
because the lighter
was taken by
Roberto from the
customer service
dept. when he
decided it would
make a lovely
liquid paper stand.
You're not.

You're not a crumpled
four-leaf clover
racing a ribbed condom
down the gutter
in front of
Meredith Baxter Birney's
summer home.
You're not.

Nicole Revere**The Beer Wars**

Jake Barnes,
Correspondent



Spain, 1937

He woke up in a cold sweat
and bolted upright,
quickly scanning his sur-
roundings to place himself.
He lay under a chestnut tree
on the shoulder of Mont Caro,
3,000 feet above and some 30
kilometers northwest of Alca-
nar, where 20,000 rebels had
amassed awaiting the inevitable
showdown.

The fighting had been heavy
on the coast the night before.
The Republican commander,
Gen. Juan Tumeni, had put up
a valiant defense of Alcanar
but was severely outnumbered
and very thirsty. Sometime
around 2 a.m., after 17
straight hours of bloody con-
frontation, the rebels, under
the command of Gen. Pormia
Heineken, finally broke
through and seized the town,
killing Tumeni and most of
his men.

But that was last night.
This morning, looking out at
the sun rising over Mallorca,
Aldo took solace in the calm
blue of the Mediterranean.
The sight of the cool water
and the smell of the salt air
wafting in on the breeze
soothed his throbbing head.

Slowly the events of the
previous day came back to
him. He had been riding with
Col. Buentiempo's 4th Mounted
Bohemians, heading down the
coast to provide beer rein-
forcements for a strategic
keg party at Vinaròs. But
they had taken an ambush
shortly after crossing Rio
Ebro. They sustained heavy
losses before escaping into
the hills; 20 kegs were gone,
and a few men, too. Enrique
was killed, crushed by a fly-
ing 50-gallon St. Pauli Girl.

To avenge his friend's
death, Aldo had volunteered
for the suicide mission.
While Buentiempo and the
other survivors retreated to
the safety of the Republican
stronghold at Brueri, he
would continue south through
the mountains, alone, with
just one pony keg of Lite
(naturally!) strapped to his
back. Then he would drop down
into Vinaròs under cover of
darkness and deliver the news
that Buentiempo and his Bo-
hemians would not be riding
into town for the festivities
in the morning.

He looked out across the dry
hills dribbling down to the
coast. The vast landscape
made him thirsty.

"Damn that nightmare!" he
cursed to himself. Why was he
plagued with it? Why did she
haunt him so?

Yes she was beautiful, espe-
cially that! Yes there was
that incredible night they'd
spent together in Barcelona.
He smiled, remembering. They'd
been singing and dancing and
drinking so much cerveza that
Enrique had finally thrown them
out into the street at dawn.

Aldo's eyes welled up remem-
bering Enrique, lying broken
in a pool of malty froth, a
hoppy grin on his mug, belch-
ing out his loving last words
— "Borrachos locos!" — on that
beautiful summer morning in
Spain. A fine day to die. A
fine death. A fine man, Enrique.

Yes, yes, yes! All of it
yes! But as he looked down to-
ward Vinaròs, past the 20,000
enemy rifles at Alcanar, he
wondered why, on what might
have been the last night of
his life, he had been tor-
mented with the same recurring
nightmare: that he was writing
to her again, and again, and
yet again.

He couldn't seem to stop
himself. And there was nothing
for it. Nothing. He knew that.
Except perhaps to face his
fear. Head on. Like a man. Do
it. Write to her. Again!

It was still early in the
morning, but his mouth was al-
ready dry from the blazing
Catalunyan sun ... and the pre-
vious night's beverages.

A fly landed on his foot.

"Aw, what the hell," he
thought. He tapped the keg and
pulled a Dixie Cup, pen, and
paper from his knapsack,
thinking he would have a cold
one and dash her out a note.

Unfortunately, before he be-
gan to write he made the mis-
take of filling his cup a time
or two and quickly disposing
of the contents down his
parched throat. Soon, he felt
his motivation for correspon-
dence slipping away.

"I will write her a more
considered letter later," he
resolved.

Instead he lay back in the
sun and let his mind go to
trying to piece together the
strange events of the day be-
fore: the predawn knock at the
door, the girl on the boat,
Enrique's advice.

"Dammit," he cursed, "why
Enrique? Why?"

"Dammit!"

(To be continued)

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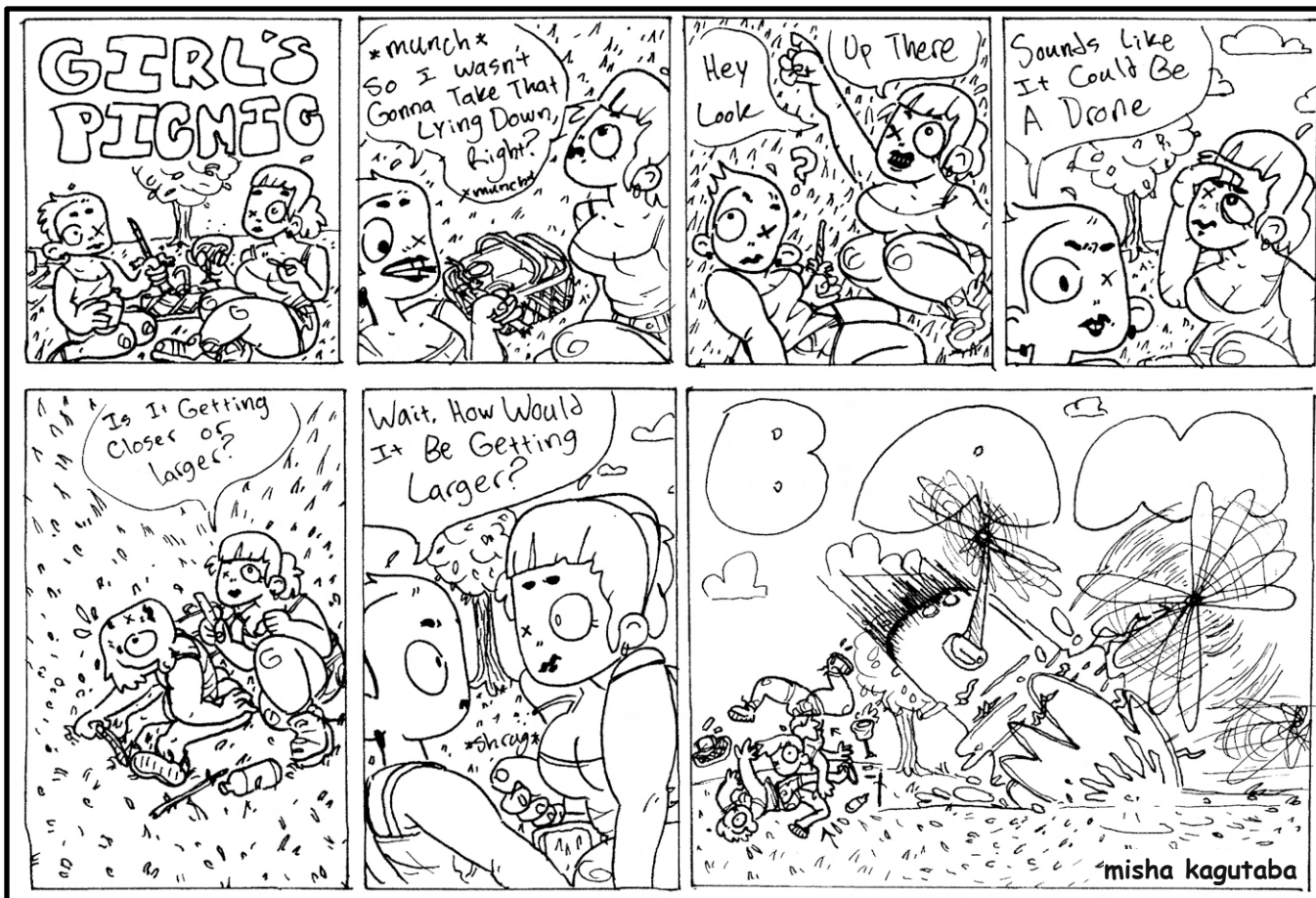
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Editor's Note: Obviously, a gourmet rag like Graffiti needs a cooking column. We solicited recipes from 300 top chefs worldwide, and while we liked them all (with the exception of Jacques Pépin's escargot ice cream—sorry Jacques), it came down to a choice between two. Wolfgang Puck's recipe sounded amazing, but it came so smeared with Béarnaise sauce and raspberry torte, we ruled him out on style points alone. So warm up your ovens and slap on your hardhats! Graffiti is proud to present ...

Cooking with Clagett

by award-winning Norwegian-Italian Chef Mark Clagett!

1. CHOCOLATE-CHIP COOKIES BAKED FROM COOKIE DOUGH ICE CREAM

The other day, I collected and baked the beige pellets of cookie dough I dug out of my chocolate-chip cookie dough ice cream. Here, for your edification, are my observations.

Ben & Jerry's

- Dough: 25 kibble-sized nuggets. Looks like dog chow. Didn't want to taste 'em.

- Cookies: Crunchy, golden hues; stuck real hard to the cookie sheet. Size and shape of 50¢ pieces—with 2-4 *micro* chips per cookie. Surprise cameos (Jesus, Satan) emerge and are suitable for framing, as pendants, or for purposes of divination.

Dreyer's

- Dough: 35 nuggets look like that cat food that comes in "moist pouches" and covered with Ivory liquid. Didn't taste them either.

- Cookies: That's stretching it. They're dinky. Look like those little wooden buttons that go in the screw holes of wood furniture to cover up the screws. 35 chocolate-speck "cookies," 2-3 specks per. Yes, I ate them. They were crunchy.

Häagen-Dazs

- Dough: 20 chunks, look like macadamia nuts. Way greasy and expensive, too.

- Cookies: No chips here—they're in the ice cream. No cookies either—just one big bubbly gooey mess like a polluted lagoon. Your brain at ground zero. Peels off like a fruit roll. Greasy! Tastes great!

2. COOKING FISH IN THE DISHWASHER

Ja güt! Now it's on to a NEW, AMAZING DISCOVERY!!! Now you can cook fish and wash the dishes at the same time! WOW!

1. When the dishwasher is almost full of crusty kitchen stuff, assemble the ingredients of your favorite fish recipe in a large Ziploc bag.

2. Place carefully on the top rack. Never place fish bag on bottom rack as the Heat and Violence of the water may melt the plastic and/or pulverize even the toughest fillets and create a horrible mess. MAKE SURE TO SEAL THE BAG SECURELY!

3. Add soap, close and start regular wash cycle as usual. Some larger fish steaks or frozen fish may require pre-wash or pot-scrubber cycles.

4. Relax!

Enjoy your delicious fish dinner with clean tableware—or right from the bag! No clean up at all—just quality after-dinner time with loved ones! Remember—dead fish love the realistic crashing surf sounds of their youth, and you'll love the results!

Next time: *Mama Clagett's favorite lütefisk recipes!*

She Sleeps

She sleeps late in the morning
Turns in early at night
Takes her afternoon naps
Still never feels right

Her times awake
Are marked with pain
Her hands, her feet
Her spine, her brain

Her eyes grow dim
Her ears can't hear
Her heart is failing
And full of fear

And so she sleeps
Her great escape
In dreams she drifts
Through a gray landscape

To me she cries
"I'm old and sick!
But you don't care
No, not one lick!"

But of course I'm sad
And weak with guilt
I've tried to stay, but
It's not how I'm built

So call me a bastard
Call me a fool
Call me a coward
I won't argue with you

But I can't go down
Her hopeless path
That deep dark hole
That cold black shaft

I've watched her sleep
Her face at rest
The only times
She's not depressed

At me she screams
"I can't believe!
This isn't you
You'd never leave!"

Then all at once, there she stands
Up at the shelter she takes my hands
She kisses me and we're young again
We swear our love until the end
So beautiful in her wedding dress
In her eyes, no trace of loneliness
There's food and wine and the ring of laughter
And the band plays sweet, happy ever after

That last stanza?
All in my head
She sleeps and sleeps
In our loveless bed

Rod Williams

Editor's Note: This column is open to anyone who just read a good book and wants to tell others about it. Reviewers will rotate from issue to issue. Have you read something wonderful lately? Write down your thoughts and send them to us. Just be aware of one thing. This is....

NOT

The New York Review of Books

Cloud Atlas

by David Mitchell

Review by: Amatola

Cloud Atlas is a fiction of six short stand-alone stories stacked together like a double-decker BLT. And like a good BLT there's plenty to chew on. The texture and flavor of each layer is a slice of time travel.

Oh, and get your reading ear subtitles on, because much of the spoken language is of its day, in the vernacular and so adding to that chewy texture. Yeah, the real meat of it.

We are launched through time, beginning with savage colonialism in the South Pacific and winding up right back in that same location. But oh!, have we traveled.

We witness the cruelty wreaked upon native peoples by banal colonialists; we read over the shoulder of a horny male driven by his own musical genius; we ride along with a young, ambitious female journalist on a mission to bring down big government. Then there's a two-bit villain getting his comeuppance via a dastardly plot by his sibling.

We pivot to squint into the baffling and sterile future. Humans and robots alike are devastated by their circumstances. The future in particular is uncomfortably familiar.

Woven into each story are connecting threads—the bamboo cocktail pick of your toothsome BLT.

Go ahead, take a bite.

Rating: Four and a half BLTs.

Moon Palace

by Paul Auster

Review by: Jordan Rose

Looking for that perfect book to hit the proverbial spot? *Moon Palace* by Paul Auster is a good start.

Like the majority of people who've graduated from the public school system, you've most likely read *Into the Wild* by Jon Krakauer; similarly this book spotlights a protagonist that disowns society and makes a move toward living in solitude following the loss of his uncle, his money, and his identity.

Being that he's been given random pieces of his life and eventual fate, his quandary for meaning spurs this radical pursuit that will take him from the streets of Manhattan to the wastelands of Utah. But as life does, fate finds him in the form of an ad looking for a caretaker.

Like an all you can eat buffet (the kind with good food of course) this book has a little bit of everything; romance, action, mystery, thrill, and adventure.

If you're someone with a hankering for a book that'll leave you thinking "what the...?" high marks for Paul Auster in this fantastic literary masterpiece that feels warm from page 1 to page 307.





Photo by Anonymous

Love and/or Advanced Science

It's infuriating, because I try and try to explain how this works but I end up confusing everyone involved, including myself, because you're—

everything
I look at is a reflection
of you. Everything
I look at is just a little bit magic.

I worked late again tonight.
I wonder—

from close enough, the planets orbiting the stars look like moths.
there's a couple of them fluttering around the hazy parking lot lights
being drawn closer and closer to their deaths.

(I'm not an entomologist. I think they'll starve before they burn.
They just can't stop, you know?
They can't not get closer.)

I wonder if
you'll ever tell me what another world's sky looks like. I wonder if
I'd be able to understand if you did. If
we even speak the same language. If
our identical words have the same meaning.

sometimes I see a new part of you and know
I know you better than anyone.
I'll never know enough
to really know you.

I'll die happy because I don't want to.

I just want to know what stars look like when they're close enough to hurt.

I already know I'm the only one who knows you enough
to predict what nuclear fission sounds like up close. We speak a language
no one else is fluent in.

Jace Elson

angel, n.

1. "Angels ain't meant to serve humans," she says, and there's a strange sensation in your gums.
2. She smells like wet asphalt. Like lilacs and leather. Like life. Rot and bloom.
3. When she speaks, you can hear the nails in your fence vibrate. When she holds your face between her palms, you can hear your teeth rattle in your skull.
4. She smiles, terrible and unrepentant and vast. She smiles like razed empires.
5. "Angels ain't meant to serve humans," she warns, but you never really had a chance.

Jace Elson

"I heard someone from the music business saying they are no longer looking for talent, they want people with a certain look and a willingness to cooperate. I thought, that's interesting, because I believe a total unwillingness to cooperate is what is necessary to be an artist—not for perverse reasons, but to protect your own vision. The considerations of a corporation, especially now, have nothing to do with art or music. That's why I spend my time now painting." —Joni Mitchell

Stories from Our Elders

Jazz in New York City, 1950s

A Graffiti interview with Wallace Hammond

How did you come to be in New York?

I got out of the Air Force after World War Two in 1945. I went home to North Carolina for a while, then went to L.A. and started drama school in Long Beach. I received some encouragement with regard to my acting ability, and I decided that if I was going to be an actor, I was going to go to New York and learn my craft.

When did you get there?

At the end of 1949, right around the holidays.

Where were you living in the city?

At first I lived on the West Side, in the 70s. Let's see, 74th Street it was, Uptown. Later I moved down to the Village. In those days, that was a very artistic community. Still is, I guess. That was the hub of the downtown jazz clubs.

Which clubs did you go to?

I spent most of my time at Birdland, which was in full bloom. The Village Gate was going, and the Village Vanguard. There were any number of clubs in the Village.

What was Birdland like?

It had a canopy in front, then you went down about eight steps past a glassed-in DJ booth, then down about four more steps into the club. All the clubs there on 52nd Street were below sidewalk level. Inside, it held about, oh, 150 people. Bird, Miles, Dizzy all had groups—they worked there constantly. They had a little spectator section where I used to sit. You could sit there and just watch, you didn't have to buy a drink. It was right in back of Bud Powell. Bud was always a source of amusement for me.

Why was that?

Bud was piano man with Bird's band then. Also with Kenny Dorham, a trumpet player. I used to get a kick out of watching Bud. The band would take a break, and Bud, he had a terrible time with drugs. In fact, I can't ever remember seeing Bud when he wasn't really wasted. Years later I think he went to Europe and got himself straightened out, but in those days at Birdland, no. He was wasted.

Bud would come back from taking a break, and he'd get to the bandstand—and the bandstand was no more than 18 inches off the floor—and there'd be a pause as he gathered his confidence, because he'd have to take a step up, see? And so he'd firm his resolve to get up there.

He'd lift one leg up, then lift the other one and *just* make it—but he'd invariably stumble to his left and catch himself on the piano to stabilize himself. Then he'd walk his hands around the piano till he got around to his stool. And then when he was finally there he'd sit down and he was *home!* That was his kingdom. Yeah! He'd go, "*Whewww!*" Yeah! Beautiful!

Do you remember any particularly great performances?

I remember being blown away when Art Blakey played with Clifford Brown on trumpet, Harold Land on tenor, Richie Powell—Bud's younger brother—on piano, and Lou Donaldson on alto. The first time I heard them together I was blown right out of the joint! That was the original Jazz Messengers and they cut three volumes of recordings at Birdland on that date. I was there the entire time. I think I'm part of the applause.

Did you ever get a chance to talk with any of the big names?

Sure, name a couple.

Thelonious Monk?

I used to see Monk a lot at those gigs of Art's out on 155th Street. Monk's from North Carolina, too, so we had that to talk about. But Monk . . . you can tell by his music, he had to be a little bit off the norm to write like that.

Monk was a good size guy—about 6'4". He had that big beard and very piercing eyes. I used to talk with him but it'd be up to me to carry the conversation. He would respond, but it always seemed to me that he only used a little portion of his mind to respond—the rest of it was on his music.

I can't say that I ever totally connected with Monk. But I always found him very personable. Of course, he was strung out a lot, too.

Miles Davis?

I got to know Miles. One memory comes to mind most vividly. The fleabag-type hotel Miles lived in around 45th—around Times Square between 6th and 7th Avenues. Coltrane lived in there, too. Any number of guys because it was cheap.

One night, Birdland was closing and here comes Miles up the steps. So we exchanged greetings, you know, "hey man, how ya doin'?" and started walking together down toward Times Square, and when we got to his hotel we just sat down on the front steps and got to talking.

At that particular time, he'd had a tough struggle doing his music. He probably only had two suits of clothes to his name, usually wrinkled and dirty. He was having a tough time. I think he came from a middle-class family in St. Louis. He'd been raised in probably pretty decent conditions and was used to that, and then he decided to become a musician and move to New York, and here he was at the bottom of the barrel.

Also, Miles always seemed to be haunted by the fact that he was black and wasn't accepted. There were certain places he couldn't go and things he couldn't do. And we began to kick things around like this.

I didn't know till Miles told me—Bird's group was invited to go to Paris for a concert. Ellington had been to Paris—he was like a celebrity there—as were quite a few other black musicians of that period and actually, going all the way back to the '30s. So Miles and Bird and Bud and Max Roach and Curly Russell—I don't think any of them had been to Europe. They fly into Paris and there's thousands of people at the airport to greet them! I'm sure they were loving it. They never got a reception like that in this country. Over there, they weren't just players, they were considered artists.

Miles told me someone at the concert, she was a model, and she and Miles had a few days together. He said that she was one of the first white women he had enjoyed being with. He really dug this lady. And Miles said, for the first time in his life . . . there he was, in Paris, in that romantic city, and he'd walk down the street with this lady and hold her hand and they'd be just talking and window shopping. And he said, "that's the first time in my life I think I ever felt like I was a whole person. I'd always been a fragment of a person, not accepted in all company. I felt like a whole person, not just a black person." Anyway, I was fortunate enough to discover that side of Miles. He did have a soft side. I love him.

Did you have a sense of something new, different, and exciting taking place then?

Oh sure. From the first time I heard the first Bird records with, let's see, Red Rodney, Stan Levey, those days. It was a little beyond me but I grew into it. It was progressive to say the least from the old swing days. But I fell in love with it. I still love it. 🚲 🚲 🚲

Know an elder with a good story to tell about their past? Graffiti would love to print it.

History books may be full of epic world events, but it's the small, personal stories that truly reveal our shared humanity.

Don't let your ancestors' memories be forgotten. Write down their stories and send them in!

Google Dell Park Triolet

I'm staying in a hippie house.
 I was just given cherry pie for breakfast.
 The animals are happy too: the bird, squirrel and mouse.
 I'm staying in a hippie house.
 Stephen gave Starr soda early for her thirst to douse.
 Pit bull George shakes his butt and his human Jack returns to house last.
 I'm staying in a hippie house.
 I was just given cherry pie for breakfast.

The South Entrance in west Eugene
 I sit in my quiet church courtyard.
 At this moment I am undeterred by any pandemic or bard.
 I sit in my quiet church courtyard.
 Unmarred and unmasked.
 Flowers and chairs are washed red.
 I sit in my quiet church courtyard.
 At this moment I am undeterred

Oh, Mary (At Mary's House)
 Distanced or covered.
 Knock or key.
 The vaccinated woman was concerned.
 Distanced or covered.
 With folder or laptop she shielded.
 The act seemed comical, funny.
 Distanced or covered.
 Knock or key.

At Sunantha's House
 I liked the Edgewood neighborhood trails.
 The views from the deck are beautiful.
 To her friend she recounted my fails.
 I liked the neighborhood trails.
 She avoided me and would not yell.
 We visited her garden during a lull.
 I liked the Edgewood neighborhood trails.
 The views from the deck are beautiful.

Lessons or Tasks (At Doug's House)
 During this pandemic many had a personal mission.
 But so early the people and shops we avoid.
 Grandparents and parents we shun.
 During this pandemic many had a personal mission.
 To discard, study or create a ton.
 Immunity foods and supplements we toyed.
 During this pandemic many had a personal mission.
 But so early the people and shops we avoid

Nicole Taylor

Places, People Where I Used To Live (in Lane county)

The dating widow, now dating and oversexed.
 The poorly managed hotel.
 At a section 8 apartment, on a friend's couch, not more than two weeks as keeping with rules.
 The hippie house couch stay.
 The addict's illegal sublet of her apartment.
 The critical Thai widow.
 The traveling widower returning in fear of the virus.
 A Mexican-American entrepreneur renting rooms and loudly remodeling their house.
 A surly young African-American renting a room beside me and making early morning business calls and criticizing my quinoa.
 The poorly managed apartment complex attracting addicts and thieves and homeless.
 The apartment house with the good location and the good large garden for my barbecue parties with my new drinker and stoner friends, musicians and artists and poets.

Nicole Taylor

Family Newsletter

Angela got married again,
 her fourth - on the twenty-seventh of the sixth month with thirty masked guests attending in a park.

Jeremy and Shannon had separate summer car accidents but Shannon is younger and she will probably recover soon.

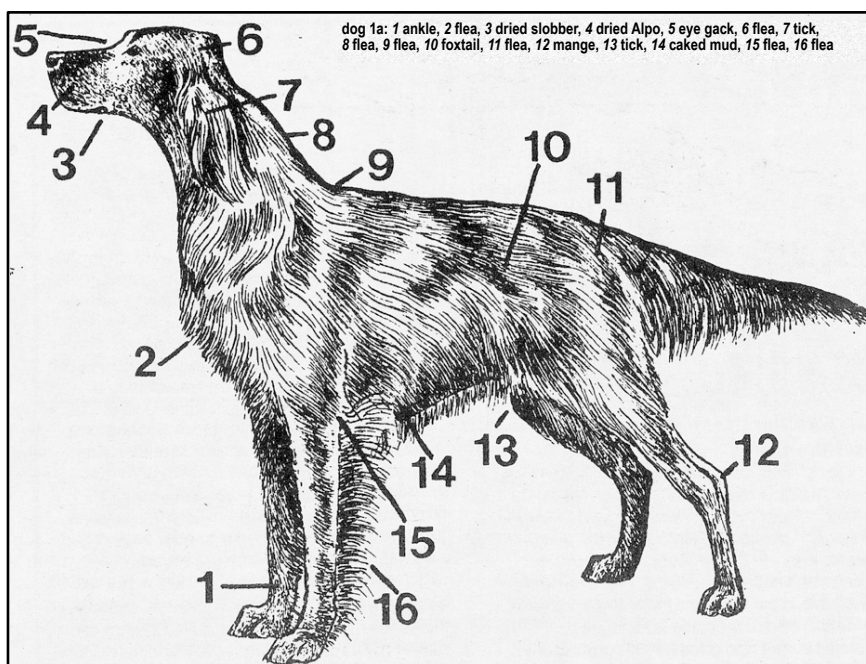
Her husband Greg has been kicked out and has been couch surfing.

Greg's cousin Erik bought a house with his young wife Sarah and they rented their basement apartment to his single younger brother Nate.

And Nicole moved often, moved to a housesitting job, to short-term rentals, to couch surfing stays herself while waiting for a long-term apartment.

And single Nicole had a terrible housing year, habitually moving, relocating.

Nicole Taylor



An Audience in Crows 1

One does not need to share poetry to be a poet
 I am a poet, I write everyday and I keep most of it to myself.
 My venue is the world, I can find an audience in crows

I performed poetry yesterday on a packed bridge full of acquaintances
 I did the real thing and nobody interrupted me
 I made it real again in its own form

Nobody said Poetry was easy
 nobody said it would bring me praise or respect
 it has in its own way brought me closer to the world than I ever been before

I am no longer a host, I have become an influence for creativity
 a pusher of art, an encourager
 a hype man
 I will not spend the rest of my days living under the thumb of other people
 My art is my life and no matter what anybody says
 I am flourishing, I am true to my visions

No longer will I allow others to make the rules for me
 I am a guide now
 an unsung pioneer
 I work on myself for myself
 I will search for questions unheard of
 I will dig for answers
 I will not stop except to catch my breath
 Self examination is an important aspect
 Observation and imagination

I'm working on it, all of it
 all of this, I'm not lost for I have no set destination

James Otter

An Audience in Crows 2

My audience has black wings
 black beaks

Take form in a darkened cave
 Backstage I can't see there faces
 they know I'm here.
 my audience would have turned heads if I ran away

fingers numbered 1-10 gone frozen, my arms gone fuzzy
 the script was burned on the stove
 I boiled the playbook the night before

The eyes of the listener reflect the stage lights back at me
 I can feel there anticipation
 one wrong move and their dead
 not me, not tonight

The gun is my microphone
 I'm firing versing at breakneck speed into the fabric, I'm shaking, I'm drooling for a moments attention
 Shivers down my spine, call the doctor
 someone is going to have a heart attack

I'm in control of the lights
 I pull the curtains and I decide the volume
 None of this is real, there is no boundary between the stage
 and the carrion eaters, they can cross over and the best I can do
 is ask them to leave

The best I can do is make an example of my trespassers
 anyone crosses over, crosses over to the other side
 Hecklers cackling like they run the place.
 I'm ahead of them, I heckled myself a hundred times today
 I'm ashamed to my protected chewey center
 I know self hatred well cause I'm in love with what's about to happen

Applause whether they like it or not
 I am the master of ceremonies
 the grand poet overlord with the scariest poetry this side of the rocky mountains
 all they can do is walk away

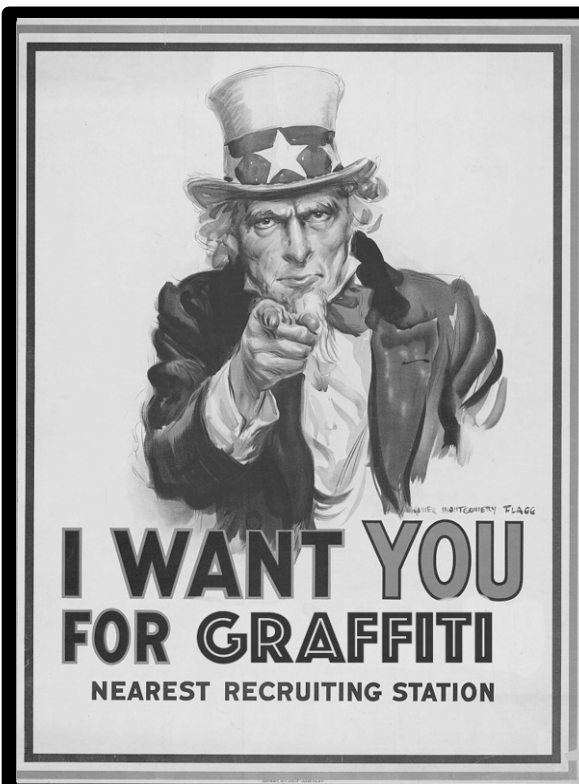
I invite the dead to follow me to poetry
 they're getting roudy, some of the crows have been drinking
 Get me a pitcher of beer
 I want to wet my shirt
 I want to grease the rails and slide down to the bottom
 Don't you worry you winged demons
 I'll be with you soon
 I see you with blood on your beak
 If I fall down dead, ten more of you are coming with me

So sit the fuck down, drink your coffee and I'll drink with you
 all these horrible violent, dispicable thoughts wasted
 I could be screeching, I could make a point to shout
 instead I rip the curtains down in every way
 Heres the naked truth and it don't smell like Nag Champa busteroonie

James Otter

"I was writing and I was thinking of expression and communication. I was hoping to share my story—sad and small as it may feel at times—with someone, anyone, out there who might feel the same; who might learn something from the walk I had just completed, as well as the walk that was necessary to get away from what had already transpired. I was clear on that, you see. But it was Jimmy who set me straight and taught me—and always reminded me—that the very notion of human dignity, the history of mankind, the examples of kindness and bravery and invention that are available to us, came through art, came through the reckless and glorious act of someone boldly writing or singing or painting what had been their history, their own walk through and away and toward something . . . [All] of us have to keep passing on what we've seen, sharing the history, educating those who will walk behind us."

—Tennessee Williams, on James Baldwin



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Thank you!

Now back to our regularly scheduled programming.

The Picnic, 1847

Inspired by a Magnolia Tree

by Eden Omari

PART ONE

Prologue

Jimmy Carver and Lester Franklin wasn't no regular boys growing up as sharecroppers or son and grandson of great men in the not southern, but southern acting, town of Oakfield. Between the two, they knew all of the towns people secrets, which was easy to know when they were fetched and made to stand around and the masters and mistresses act like you don't understand English. They talk all they mess around you, and you learn all the goings on of the white people and of their ways. Oh, if they only knew how they all besmirched each other in their separate homes, nobody in the town would ever speak to each other again.

You see it ain't known yet, but Jimmy was the brother of George Washington. Not the President but George Washington Carver, a scientist who would become rich and famous and then famous and poor. Jimmy knew all there was to know about growing things in the earth from his brother George and they had dreams of learning big things and maybe a dream of attending one of those big schools. Where? Why in Washington D.C.! His brother George was kinda frail and sickly and spent most of his time helping his mother with chores around the cabin, so Jimmy did the heavy lifting in the fields. As babies, they was kidnaped from the Carver farm by one of the bands of slave raiders that roamed Missouri during the civil war era which is how they wounded up in Illinois. Nobody coulda knowed that George would be freed from slavery, never have no chilren, never marry and become famous for his land work and die as poor as he was born.

But now Lester, well that's another story entirely. He was high yella with red hair and you could see those little dots all over his face like some of the whites. He wasn't an albino or nothin' like that, but iffin his lips wasn't so large and his nose wasn't so wide, you would think that he was a white person from a distance. Now he got the last name Franklin but nobody else in his fambly got the name Franklin. Legend says that he is a direct descendant, and that Benjamin Franklin was his great granddaddy and that his grandmama was freed as a slave by Benjamin Franklin once he got a conscious and all, and that his grand momma forbid anybody to change his and his sons and daughters' names for generations to come.

Yesterday when they was downtown, they seent Dora Ann Bunch. Dora Ann always lookin at Lester and smiling. I think she didn't understand why he wasn't all the way white and only halfway lookin. Today when Lester seent her, she looked different. And then Lester noticed the two bumps on the top of her shirt and knew what those was. He was so amazed by the sight that he didn't notice that he had stopped mid step and was standing still and staring. Jimmy bumped him and said "come on" that's when he knew he was standing still and staring and that he didn't even notice the big, huge yellow sign announcing the Annual Picnic. He loved when it was Annual Picnic time. That's the only day that the few slaves and free people could enjoy they picnic without worrying about those scary white men who would often come on horses and ruin it for them. They had theirs on the outskirts of town in a clear open field and he thought about how wonderful and glorious it will be just two days from now.

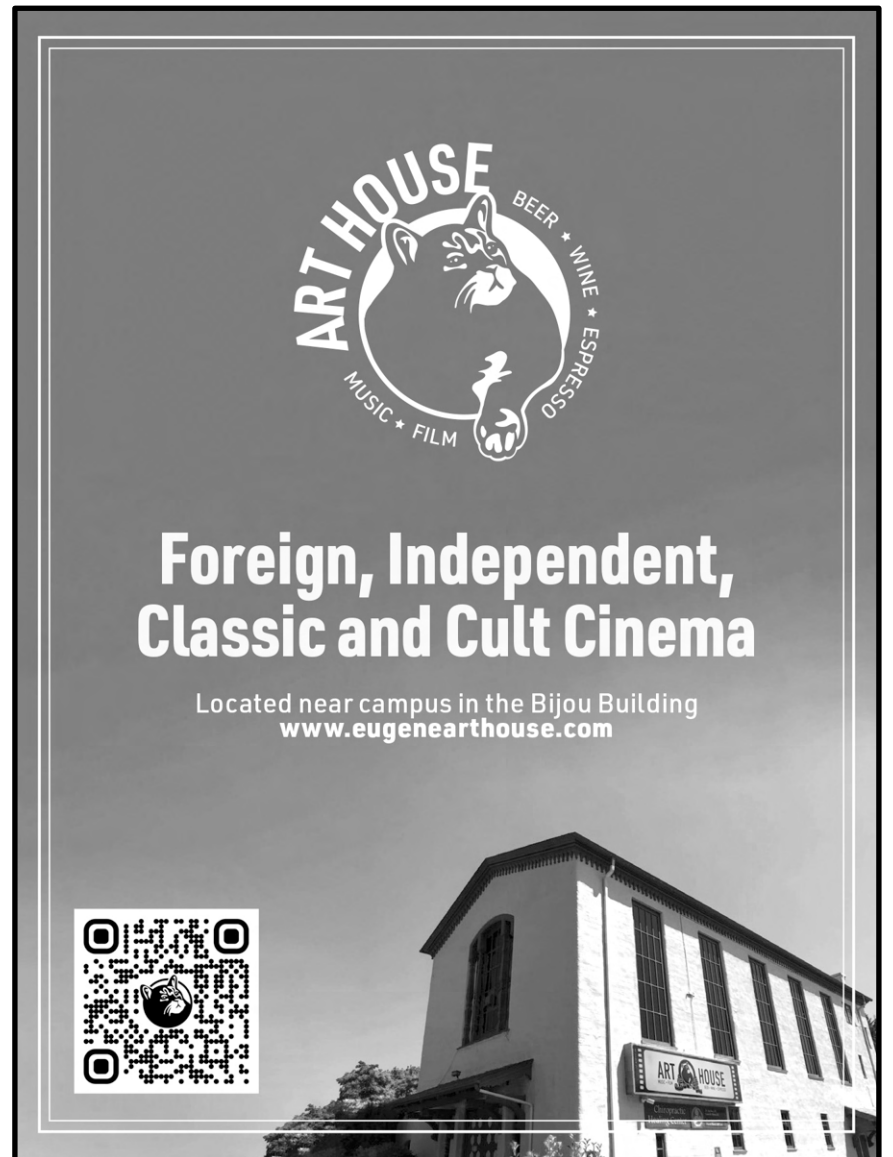
The Picnic

(Narrated by Pete Wallart 3 years before he kilt hisself)

It's a very languishing afternoon in Oakfield. The sun is softly touching the treetops on top of Growler Peak. The temperature is just right and there's just the right number of clouds in the sky for a picnic. The wind wasn't blowin too hard and the barbeque smoke was sailing high in the sky. The little children ran round and round the huge footed Magnolia tree singing and playing cocoa-leveo.

The Great Magnolia, a glorious tree, was always the centerpiece of the ceremonious annual picnic and it is said that its seeds was planted by the doves that were released when our ancestors first arrived here on the Plymouth. It was so huge and grand that when you stood under it, it took a whole minute to come out. It is here on top of this rollin hill where we is right now with some other old but not so grand Magnolias and Maple Oaks that we have the picnic. Up here, you can see the river that run mighty wide on the outsid town. Many of the farmers have rolling fields of every shade of green and various colors that one could only imagine—huge plantations that were dwarfed by the longer and wider 80 acres they occupied.

Over there atop of those boulders, you could see a sunset and a sunrise if you sat in the same spot all day and all night. Yonder left you can see Marcus Evans new modern four-story barn. It got windows on the top too. Juss about



everybody in town is jealous about it. It stands white and glistening in the sun. It shines so much that at four o'clock in the afternoon it'll hurt your eyes juss to look at it.

Next to that, you can see Lizzie's place. The moonshine in Lizzies place comes from the Evans barn—but we ain't spose to know 'bout that. Lizzies place is a show piece with two grand stairways that lead upstairs and a long, long bar that curves around the room with golden railings. There're eight big, huge mirrors on the walls with the finest burgundy and gold wallpaper I ever seent. Fine velvet like. Georgie and Paulie is our towns finest carpenters. They could build anything. They built most a Lizzie's Place—the large stage where there's two grand pianos and places for a band to sit under those blood red curtains that you could see in the mirrors on the walls. There was every kinda fornication that happened at her place . . . and she been in business soo long. She dams near seventy years old. The townsfolk know what it is that Lizzie do, but they pretend they don't cause Lizzie gives so much money to the church. While it is an establishment of ill repute and talked about a lot, it's sure grand with its tall golden finial on top and its even taller silver spire and gables painted gold.

Georgie and Paulie built that part out of remnants from Beau Wilkins house after it mostly all burnt down, and Beau never came out. It was strange. Only half his house burnt down, and the barn never caught on fire. And when Sherriff Wilkins went to check on everything, they found some lady's things and thought it mighty sad that Beau would keep his mama things out like that after so long she been dead. We like to think of Beau looking down on us from atop his favorite place in town. Lizzies place (laughing). He wouldn't mind us jokin' about that.

Beau's father was in the war and died and Beau juss never got over that. And then when his mama died, he spent more time at Lizzies than at work or church. He died of a broken heart; I think. He was only 45 when he got burnt to death. I think that maybe he set that fire and didn't wanna come out to the life that it became. But I ain't never said that to nobody out loud as I'm learning how to bite my tongue as I get closer to the Lords hebbently gates.

We got a small museum on the side of Maddie Mae's place to showcase Oakfield's history. It has Beau's dad's army purple medal of courage. It's quite sentimental. I like it. When Lizzie comes to the picnic with all her girls, all the towns women get to see their unspoken rivals up close and pay close attention that they stay on their side of the picnic grounds but paying close attention to whose husband might be looking familiarly in their direction while all of their small daughters flock to them tugging on their dresses, touching their earrings, taking and donning their fancy hats, swiping at their rouge and sitting on their laps. All the mothers thinking in unison that their fine lace and velvet dress are totally inappropriate for our annual picnic.

So's it's here on top of Growler Peak, near and under this Great Grand Black Old Magnolia, is where we have our annual picnic for more in a hundred years.

Continued next issue . . .

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