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Graffiti

EUGENE'S CREATIVE WRITING & ART ZINE

#20

THE FAREWELL ISSUE



Graffiti

info@graffiti-magazine.com

Athos: Don Root
Porthos: Morgan Smith
Aramis: Rod Williams

Les autres mousquetaires: Jordan Howell Rose, Kevin O'Brien, Lise Eskridge

In this issue: Thomas Avery, Iris Bartholomew, Fergul Cirpan, Dimich, Paul Dresman, Marco Elliott, Lise Eskridge, Peter Fenton, Chuck Finley, Azul Gregorson, Randy Gudeika, Bill Gunn, Hillbilly, Rachael Hillenius, Paul James, Brielle Kesselring, David Koteen, Dan Liberthson, Charles Mattoon, Mary Moffat, Jeffree Morel, Eamon Morris, Jean Murphy, Nemo, James Otter, Amber Pacheco, Jesús Sepúlveda, Stephen Slater, Jim Smith, Morgan Smith, Erica Snowlake, Jeff Southwick, Scott Suiter, Stephen Swiftfox, Marcel Tulloh, Rod Williams, Maxine Wren, John Zerzan. And a million thanks to all the others who contributed creativity to Graffiti over the past two years!

ON THE COVER: Savannah fells the last tree in Graffiti's forest. Photo by Don.

Bear hugs to the outstanding people who walked the walk, contributing cold hard cash to keep Graffiti going!

Barbara Ambler-Thomas
Art House
Bhumi Refillery
Trout Black
Susan Bloom
Steve Boergadine
Mike Bolten
Alexander Bort
Phil Bridler
Claudia Caramelli
Cascades Raptor Center
Cantara Christopher
Trina Cleland
The Cottage Grove Harpies
Cougar Mountain Farm
That guy Dan
John Davis, Realtor
Tom DeLigio
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Lisa DiLuna, LMT
Paul Dresman
Shachar Efrati
Emerald Broadband
Emerald City Pedicab
Equiano Coffee
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Rich Gilman
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Don Heuser
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Hillbilly
It's In the Cards Tarot
Rachel Johnson
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Misha Kagutaba
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Howard Libes
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Mind's Eye Digital Design
Jean Murphy
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Nice Tapes!
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Karen Stingle
Charles Stromme
Stephen Swiftfox
Silvia Theiner
Threadbare Print House
Joel Unger
Terah Van Dusen
Michelle Whitlock
Wild Wet Western Swimwear
Rod Williams
Wordcrafters of Eugene
John Zerzan

and probably a few others
we've regretfully missed but
nonetheless appreciate!
♥♥♥

Our Mission...

...should we choose to accept it (and we do!) is to bugger off to France, eat good cheese, drink good wine, and make great art.

SHAMELESS GROVELING FROM THE PUBLISHER

I'VE SPENT A LOT OF TIME AND ENERGY OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS BRINGING GRAFFITI TO YOU, AND I'VE NEVER MADE A DIME FROM IT. NO PROFIT (A LOSS, IN FACT), NO SALARY, NO BRIBES UNDER THE TABLE. JUST A LABOR OF LOVE. IF YOU'D LIKE TO SAY "THANKS FOR ALL THE FISH," MAYBE SKIP THE FISH AND SEND ME A FAREWELL BUCK OR TWO INSTEAD? THANKS!

— Don

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FRONT LINES

Don Root

"These grapes are not yet ripe."

Obituaries are odd. We go out of our way to celebrate people after they're dead, but we take them for granted while they're alive. Graffiti has been publishing in Eugene for two years, and I suppose after we're gone, a few people might be sitting around a local coffeehouse, taking a cursory spin through Eugene Weekly and thinking, "I wish Graffiti were still around. It was interesting."

Over the past two years, many people told me, "Hey, Graffiti is great! We love it! Keep it up!" But only a relative few ever sent us money. The local businesses? Largely crickets. Seems like a no-brainer the bookstores would support us with a buck or two, right? Nope. Not a one. Coffeehouses? We got one paid ad, from one coffeehouse, once. Brewpubs? We asked one to sell us a keg at cost for a fundraiser. Another nope. Meanwhile, Graffiti gave free ads to a number of local nonprofits, and we received only one post-publication "thank you" in return (from Cascades Raptor Center, so even if you detest birds for some ridiculous reason, send them a check today just for their good manners!). Everyone loves creativity, but few are willing to pay for it. So **HUGE LOVE to our individual donors and all the advertisers you've seen on these pages! THANK YOU!**

I don't want this to come off as sour grapes. Every individual and business has unique issues, and some contribute to the community in other ways—just not to Graffiti. Plus, my marketing skills are feeble (marketing makes me gag). That said, the American public's interest in community seems lacking these days, as evidenced by the recent election. The "American way" is still the Wild West cowboy mentality that's plagued us ever since European immigrants arrived and set about slaughtering and subjugating indigenous peoples. It's the "rugged individualist" griping about intrusive "socialist" government while taking every government handout available. It's our national mantra of "I got mine! Go get your own!" It's our idiotic, arrogant refusal to embrace different cultures, languages, and lifestyles. It's the profound insecurity of macho white men. And above all, it's our worship of the almighty dollar.

Not since, I dunno, WWII maybe, have Americans felt compelled to sacrifice for the community. We've had it too good for too long, so today we're spoiled rotten. We now expect free journalism online, so journalism is dead. We now expect free music online, so live concerts cost a fortune. We accept the constant barrage of marketing bullshit: "Rewards," "Points," "Miles," "Clicks," "Followers," and all the other nose rings capitalism uses to drag us into the corporate coffers so turds like Musk and Bezos can buy yet another yacht or rocket ship. And we increasingly express hostility toward other immigrants who had the temerity to arrive after we did. (Please note: Caucasians are not indigenous to North America.)

I point the finger for much of our current malaise at the successful dismantling of America's public-education system. The corporate-capitalist model triumphed over community, so now college students must either come from rich families or effectively become indentured servants to rich families. From what I understand, UO was once respectable for more than its football team. Today, its president makes around \$750,000 a year! For what, exactly? Thanks, kids, for paying your tuition on time. But that's nothing: Dan Lanning makes an obscene \$7,000,000+ per year, and he was recently hailed as "clever" for an act of poor sportsmanship! What a role model. Go Ducks! Meanwhile, a high-school teacher in town is lucky to crack \$70,000. Think about that. A high-school teacher making \$70k a year would have to work 100 years—a century! a whole lifetime and more!—to make what a football coach earns in just one year. Priorities. Today, winning is more important than integrity, and entertainment is more important than education.

What to do? I wish I knew.

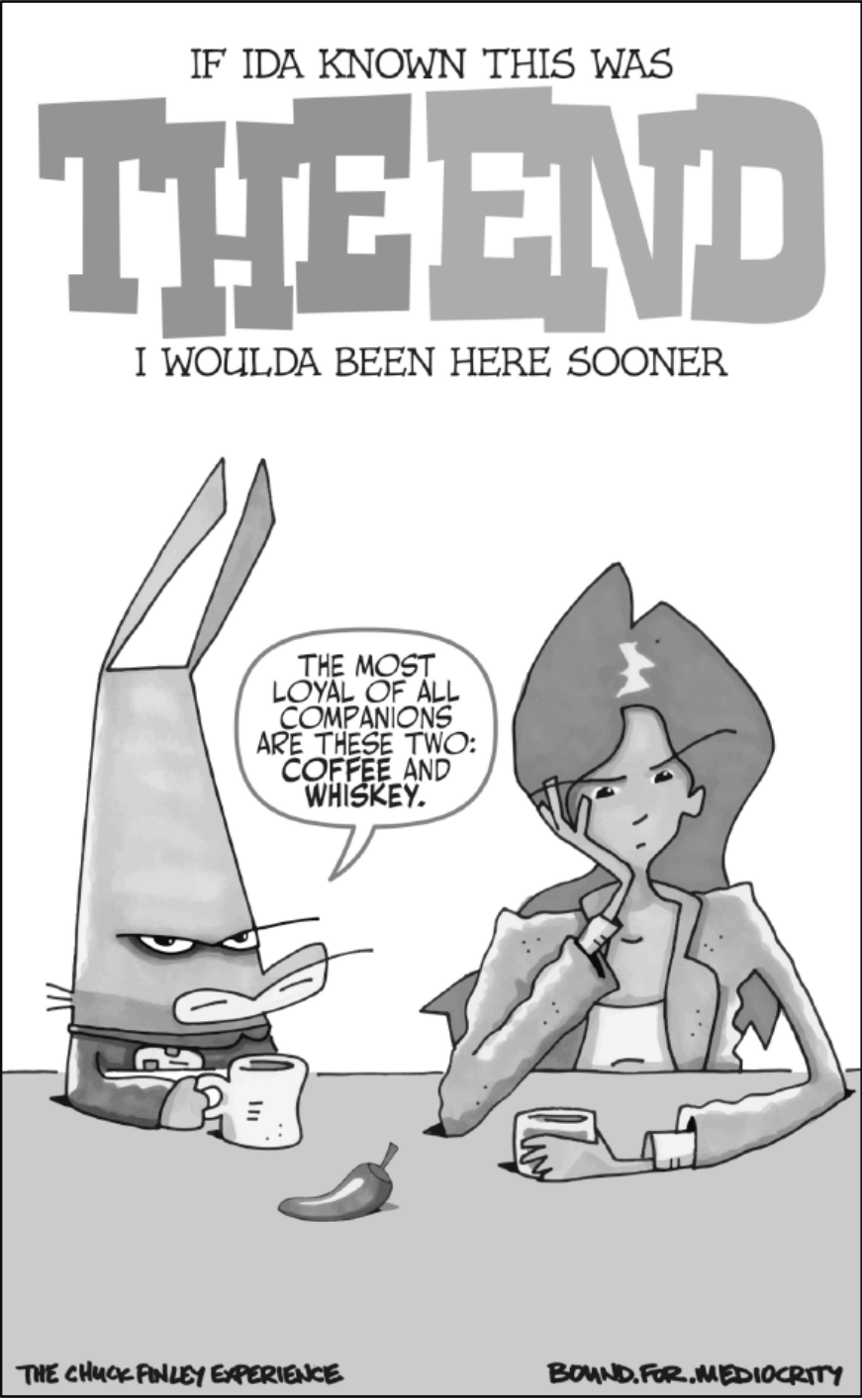
With this issue, Graffiti is officially out of business. Our nonprofit corporation is dissolved. Some of our supporters are talking about starting a brand new Graffiti early next year. It may or may not look like this esteemed rag, but perhaps it will have a similar spirit, I don't know. I wish them luck, and I hope whatever they come up with meets with your approval and support! I'm handing off the existing Graffiti website and Instagram accounts to them to use as they see fit.

As for me, my lovely inamorata and I have decided to move back to France, where we've lived before. Is it paradise? No. Pros and cons. But it's more affordable than here and has good social medicine (*we can't have THAT here in 'Murca!*). More importantly, I'm saddened by the wilful ignorance of too many Americans—too many ignorant, racist, misogynist, xenophobic, self-centered, money-grubbing, apathetic, and, worst of all, *armed* American futhermuckers who don't give a damn about other people or the planet. Uh-oh, you got me started. I obviously have a lot on my mind these days, much of it unpleasant.

One plan—or dream, perhaps—I have for France is to start an art retreat, where artists, writers, musicians, and other free spirits can come, hang out, and do their work in a quiet atmosphere free from humanity's constant noise and bullshit. Keep in touch if that sounds appealing to you, and maybe someday we'll meet again over a baguette and a bottle of Bordeaux.

In the meantime, I encourage you all to keep letting your unique creativity pour out of you! To the timid among you who have broken out of your shells and submitted for publication here, I applaud you! Now don't stop! Keep writing! Keep making your art! And always strive to make it better! Study writers. Study artists. Learn more. Create more. Make the next thing better than the last, or at least make new "mistakes" in new directions!

Thanks for supporting Graffiti! I wish you all the best. Long may you run!



Darkness and ?

John Zerzan

The quadrennial electoral racket is behind us. Billions spent and just about zero mentions of homelessness, environmental disaster, AI, the mental health crises, genocide in Gaza, among other major challenges.

I wouldn't have voted even if they had been mentioned. Helping to reproduce and legitimate the reigning setup is not for me. Not that the voting game is the basic setup, or what rules. There is a deeper arrangement that is never acknowledged. That is the rule of technology and capital, the face of a dying civilization. These fundamentals decide and define on a primary level, driven by the control logic of domestication that Freud warned us about in *Civilization and Its Discontents*.

The ever broader and deeper drive to control leads to death: the death of species of life on this planet. This virus, the parasite, consumes the host. All previous civilizations have died, and now there's just one global pathology left, and it is dying. That's the elephant in the room; we all know it on some level.

Things are dark and getting darker, faster. The crisis deepens no matter who is president. But at the same time, I think more people see the great failure that is this totalizing regime which leaves nothing exempt.

There is a feeling of emptiness and isolation that has grown. Robert Putnam's book *Bowling Alone* (2000) outlined this well. The sense of community has waned markedly. People have fewer friends, engage

less in community activity. A great deal of this correlates with the rise of technological mediation: the appearance of personal computers in the early 1980s, social media in the early '90s, and smartphones in the mid-'90s. Life now takes place online. The internet has largely become society. The young have known only this context, and their emotional lives are a train wreck, officially a public health crisis. Some pin a lot of blame for the negative trends on the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020, but every unhealthy and destructive trend was already underway by then.

This mammoth, deep-seated overall challenge requires what passes for politics to change fundamentally. The conversation in society needs to include pivotal questions. So much stands in the way, including gatekeepers on the right and the left. But we may be seeing openings from other than strictly political sources. From academic and literary voices, for example.

The current issue of *Hunter Gatherer Review* carries an explicitly anti-civilization review of Graeber and Wengrow's *Dawn of Everything* defense of civilization by James Van Lanen. *Annihilation*, the latest novel by French best-seller Michel Houellebecq, contains a few pages introducing my own "primitivist" thinking. *Creation Lake* by Rachel Kushner features Bruno, an "anti-civver" radical.

An alternative to this dying regime begins to emerge. 🚲 🚲 🚲

Pitchforks and Graffiti

Jeff Southwick

Flicking ash from his cigar on the railing, Don takes a sip from his drink glass and looks down from the balcony of his office building, thirty floors above Willamette Street, where far below him like ants meandering aimlessly he sees the humanity of downtown Eugene.

A couple blocks away, possibly on Pearl, Don hears someone shouting a protest chant with a bullhorn. "Maybe I'll wait to see if this turns into something interesting," Don speaks out loud, though no one else is around.

As the crowd comes closer, marching west on Broadway, Don notes that some hold up their phone flashlights, while some carry pitchforks. Don recalled that based on the selected country of English in settings, Siri might call the flashlight a torch. Some trivia is useful.

When the crowd arrives at the front doors of the Graffiti Building and stops, Don shouts out, "why the hell do city people have pitchforks?" And then answering himself, "damn urban gardeners."

Don yanks the cigar from his teeth, and grimaces as he tosses the contents of his glass into the empty air over the street, then hurls the glowing stub of his cigar into the mist of his drink. Creating the brief flash of a fireball, the cigar stub falls to the street followed by a meteor tail of orange sparks.

Inside his office, Don presses the intercom button on his desk and hollers at his secretary to send in a couple of his flunkies.

When two flunkies in business suits and numbered lapel buttons enter the room, Don growls, "talk". Flunky number one speaks, "based on the chants and signs, it appears that these people are angry because in the script section of the Graffiti last week, only one scene of the second act of a three act play was published." Flunky number two speaks up, "and there are rumors on the street that there are no scripts for act one or three, and we are just jerking the readers around."

Don stares at the flunkies and then speaks, "well shit, I should've listened to my gut, but the script editor was confident that giving readers only one scene would be welcomed as 'innovative', and 'artsy'." Don cinches up his necktie. "And so now our readers are going to want a sacrifice."

"Flunky one, go get the supply carts ready to roll out to the crowd." "And check the temperature of the tar this time, molten, but not hot enough to remove flesh." "Flunky two, I need my suit coat, leather mask, and whip." Don pauses, and adds. "And my rubber overshoes, you never know what nasty things the creatives have been doing."

Once the flunkies are off preparing supplies for a sacrifice, Don enters his glass elevator and begins his descent through the Graffiti Building. Don considers the glass elevator one of his best ideas, for not only can he see what is happening on each floor while remaining contact free, his employees can see him. So even if there is no one to punish, Don receives pleasure by riding the elevator while wearing the mask and swinging the whip. There is no joy like the joy that comes by stoking fear through intimidation.

Passing down through the printing presses, which are busily churning out the next issue, Don inhales the sweet smell of ink and notes that he's never had problems with the workers on this level, or the workers on the next floor down, who are always grimy and sweating as they shovel coal into the huge furnaces, which belch out the power to run the printing presses. So he gives them a grin with a thumbs up as he passes through, and the thought flashes through his mind, "maybe I should move to Polynesia".

Then Don hears the faint skritch, sketch, scratch sound, which grows louder as he passes through the floor of graphic artists. The scratching sounds remind him of the time when a mouse or bird had fallen between walls and was trapped, daily clawing for release, until one day the scratching stopped, then as time passed, the initial faint stench of death grew gradually stronger.

Below the floors of visual artists comes the cacophony of typewriters and smell of stale urine, which is persistent on the floor of the Prose Department. This pleases Don because it shows that these people need more motivation than a full bladder to leave their desks, however, just in case, he scans the room for slackers.

Then below Prose, Don comes to the floor of Poets, where usually only the occasional one fingered tap, tap, can be heard as these belly button contemplators slowly press down on each key, adding only one or two letters at a time, then sitting motionless as time passes while they decide on the next word and where to break the line.

Finally deep down in the bowels of the Graffiti Building, Don comes to the floor of script writers, where the floor is covered by wasted paper and rotting snacks. Smoke billows out as the elevator doors open, which was another one of Don's great ideas, and as Don steps into the room he snaps the whip toward a nearby desk, so that the typewriter is flung to the floor, and bellows, "Bring me the script editor!" 🚲 🚲 🚲

OVERHEARD: "Man, get me another beer... Trump, fuck that guy... MAGA asshats. When did it be cool to not think?... Make it a West Coast IPA. Thanks... Mmm, tasty. Eugene, fuckin' Eugene. Everywhere I go.... trash. You wanna be homeless, fine, but put your f'in trash in a bin, right? What'd you get? A hazy? Is it good? Right on. Noise! Noise everywhere. Let's see how loud we can be, because we have no power in our pitiful lives. Blowing people's f'n eardrums out makes us feel powerful. Fucking Reagan. It all started with fucking Reagan. Yeah, I'll take another one. Thanks... People just can't be bothered, am I right? Oh yeah, everyone talks a good game, but nobody is willing to sacrifice their convenience. You seen that traffic on Coburg? Endless! And everyone's, like, one to a car. Lines back into the parking lot at Costco gas. You think that's cool? Fuck those people... Hey, wait! Where ya goin'?' Oh, okay, see ya later."

Turn it up!

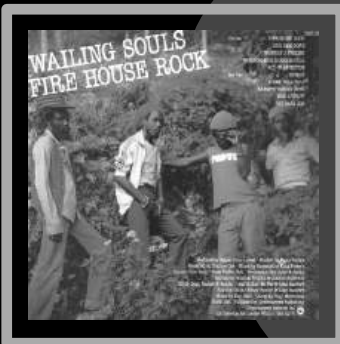
by Morgan Smith



Happy 20th issue! Cheers to everyone involved, for your creativity and support... and for reading. This column is dedicated to the love of music. So, put fresh batteries in your boombox and push play.



Fire House Rock



Wailing Souls

Released: 1980

Tracks: 10

A Jamaican reggae group, they were originally formed as The Renegades in 1966.

I discovered this group earlier this year, which surprised me because I'm a longtime fan of reggae, and the Wailing Souls have been around for more than five decades. The track "Act of Affection" was my introduction and I was instantly captivated. With a length of 2:44, the song flies by with upbeat instrumentals and catchy lyrics. "Run Dem Down," about redemption, is another favorite. Overall, Wailing Souls belongs on the list of the greatest reggae bands of all time.

Spunj



Spunj

Released: October 1, 2019

Tracks: 9

Every band member shares the same nickname. You can call each of them: "Big Hoss."

This is the four-piece band's debut album. Spunj puts on fun, high energy shows which are "always danceable." — *SpunjMusic.com* Being that Eugene is their home, see them live at spots like The Wow Hall and The Big Dirty. I saw them at Blairally to a packed, bouncing house where they mixed in *Star Wars*-inspired riffs. So, on this album, "Kaya" and "Ain't Got Much" are my favorites. I also like "Say To Me" for its extended jam session, loving how it finishes over the last minute, sounding a bit like Metallica. Spunj can do musically whatever they want.

5th Dimension



Stonebwoy

Released: April 28, 2023

Tracks: 17

Livingstone Etse Satekla, stage name: Stonebwoy, is an Afropop musician from Ghana.

I learned about Stonebwoy when planning to attend the '24 Cali Vibes concert, in Long Beach, CA, in which he was among the acts. So, leading up to the event, I created a playlist with at least one song from every performer. Like the story with Wailing Souls, above, there was a particular track that grabbed me: "Into The Future." I listen to it frequently. For the rest of the album, I'm in the process of finding more songs to get hooked on.

Balancing Act

Rod Williams

So this family moved into the two-story house next door: Eastern European-looking, mom, dad, three girls, one boy, and a grandfather with shaggy silver hair and a great drooping mustache. When welcomed to the neighborhood, they ducked their heads and eked out shy smiles. They spoke accented English. All of them had the grandfather's dark eyes.

He was built lean as a whippet, but with wide shoulders and surprisingly delicate feet. His name was Alex. "Me, I'm a hard worker." Understatement of the year. He quickly became our block's resident handyman, doing odd jobs here and there. He mowed lawns, repaired broken sprinklers, unplugged drains, installed garage lights, that sort of thing.

But he seemed happiest when he was up in the air: on a ladder, in the high branches of a tree, on the roof. After a long day of labor, he typically rewarded himself by lighting up a long brown cigarillo and downing a cold Sam Adams, relaxing in the grass beneath the shade of the mulberry in his front yard.

One summer evening, I couldn't sleep. It was hot, and my mind was racing with mundane fears and petty work matters. Cop car sirens were splitting the night into dozens of jagged pieces. I paced outdoors, a little unnerved by my own restlessness and by the huge harvest moon staring down at me and the world.

A small movement out front of my house caught my attention. Then I spied the light, a tiny orange glow like a firefly hovering in the darkness. My eyes gradually adjusted until could make out the silhouette of Alex next door, smoking one of his cigarillos, all alone in the middle of this warm night. He looked so at ease that his presence there at nearly two in the morning didn't strike me as unusual. He smoked and gazed up at the sky, something like longing in the tilt of his head.

The orange light flickered out. I blinked my eyes and Alex was gone. I never saw him move, and didn't hear his door open or click shut. Beads of sweat dotted my forehead. Suddenly I remembered the stories whispered by my neighbors. Rumors about Alex. Who he was and what had happened to him.

He wanted to be a cloud-walker. Something called him to dance in the wild blue, just below the stars. If anyone asked him why, he would say that it was more beautiful than anything anyone could ever imagine in a hundred lifetimes. He practiced his craft ten hours each day, rain or sun, wind or calm. Stretching. Honing discipline. Developing exquisite balance. Always eyes forward, never glancing at his feet. Mastering the treacherous, wobbling rope. Twelve inches above the ground. Six feet up, then twenty. No net. Higher and higher. Like the boy in the Calvino tale, he endeavored to never touch the earth. Like the Leon Russell song he heard on American radio, he felt "the wire seems to be / the only place for me."

He was amazed to learn there was even a word for what he did: funambulism. He was a funambulist. A clumsy term for an act of pure grace. Some bookworm's name for a soaring dreamsong an earthbound clod could never know. Call it what it was: walking with the gods, mimicking flight, breaking free of gravity's oppressive grip.

His name was Alex, Alex of the air.

The circus jobs came later, and then the applause and accolades, the minor fame, and finally enough money to de-

clare his independence and break away from the Big Top where he often felt like another freak show. He created his own performances: walking between skyscrapers, over gorges, above angry rivers. Alex the Acrobat, walking on his hands hundreds of feet up from hard dirt and dizzying black waters. Walking forward and backward on a wire seven-eighths of an inch in diameter. Walking among the birds and the zephyrs and the occasional thunderstorm.

He fell only twice. Once was in a small German town, sightseeing between shows, taking in the countryside and the artifacts of past Allied bombings, daydreaming about walking out of a bomber and feeling the air tug at his body and roar in his ears in the seconds before pulling the chute. His daydreams were interrupted when he spotted a petite strawberry-blonde near the front of the tour group, her arms tan and toned, her mouth made for laughter and kisses. They made eye contact. He became overcome with vertigo. "Yah, that day I fell very, very hard," he told their children years later.

When they married, he invited his new bride to walk the wire with him. Later he trained their children, one by one, to be fearless in the air and surefooted, and daring.

The second time he fell was years later, the entire family performing high above a busy street in Albuquerque, nothing especially dangerous for them, not a cloud in the deep Southwestern sapphire sky, not a breath of breeze to worry about. Someone simply slipped, probably one of his normally sturdy sons, a stupid silly second of carelessness that set the wire to vibrating and sent Alex, his strawberry-blonde bride and their costumed kids tumbling.

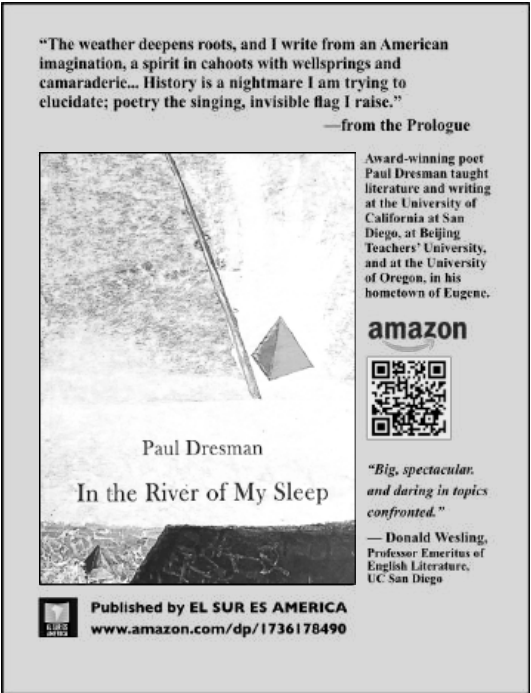
Now, it's another sleepless night for me, another hot and sticky evening. I wait patiently until the familiar orange glow presents itself next door, burning a tiny hole in the suburban dark. I like to think that Alex thinks he's alone with his thoughts and his memories, that he's unaware of being silently observed by his insomniac neighbor. But I think he knows. In reality, I don't think he misses much.

He and his family probably lived here a month or so before I noticed his slight limp, the crooked angle of his right cheekbone, and the look of perpetual sadness in his faded black eyes. Somehow, he survived that terrible fall, he and the son he now lives with.

I watch as he finishes his smoke, stretches his arms and legs, points his body like an arrow to the sky. Then he walks over to the fence bordering our properties. He places his hands on top, pulls himself up as if he were weightless. Next thing, he's walking barefoot along the top edge of the redwood planks, toward his backyard. He seems lost in thought. Never looks down. He reaches a post, and at the top of the post I see a guy wire leading to the ledge of an open second-story window. A soft amber light shines from inside.

Alex steps onto the wire and begins to ascend. His movements are smooth and unhurried. He rises on this silvery steel strand, so nonchalantly that he might be strolling on the sands of a beach. He nears the open window, steps off the wire and onto the ledge, then slips into the house. A moment passes, then two. The light switches off. The window shuts. It's nearly two o'clock in the morning and I know I won't be getting to sleep any time soon.

☺ ☺ ☺



FEATURED POETS

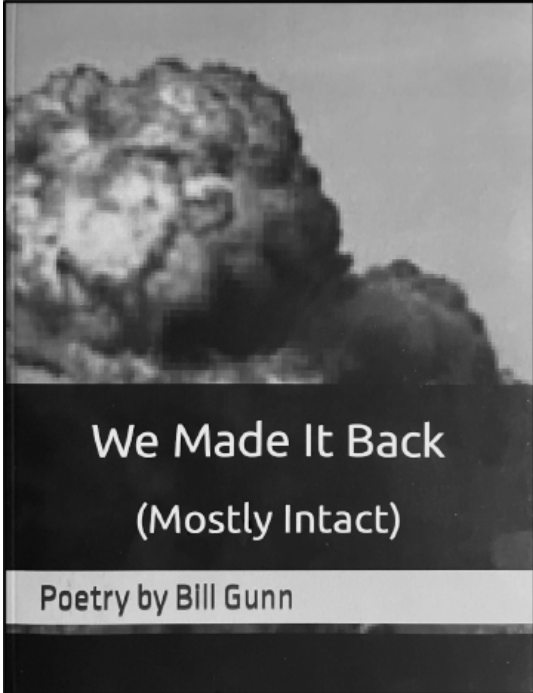
PAUL DRESMAN BILL GUNN

You Kissed Us Both

I once laid idols out for you;
weird, relaxed skulls
growing out of castles
of ordinary clothes.

You kissed us both.
The skulls turned
back into pillows
and we fell asleep
in the grass like stones.

Paul Dresman
published in *Rolling Stone*, San Francisco, February 1971



Available on Amazon in Kindle and paperback editions

Lookout

You once could read enigmatic mysteries
about floods in the Pacific Northwest,
milky water from the glaciers
running dirty brown through the valleys—
the whole journey from the nipple to the sea.

Now, by August, in the heat and the lightning,
stream beds trickle past dry rock and dead moss.
Smoke from wild fires obscures everything.
Backpacking through the mountains,
something is burning, and you can't breathe.

The old fire Lookouts are gone.
The azimuth is a device for divination.
Conflagrations burn through summer into autumn,
all the way until the first rain comes, later every year.
The future isn't pretty.
The past has been pretty awful itself.

Far to the south and east,
the skills rewrite environmental laws
in black oil on ghostly drive-in movie screens,
horror flicks twisted by Texas logic
that fractures the rock below
into earthquakes, profits,
sulphur-fume faucets.
Posada skeletons sit
in their cars, attached to speakers,
dressed in their Sunday best
to recite the scriptures
while tumbleweeds pile-up on fences
and a brazen head blares out blessings.

After I come down from the mountains,
I'll go to Chinatown, hide in an alley
and watch America fall
at the end of the Ming,
the end of the Q'ing,
the end of the bling dynasty.

Paul Dresman

Extinctions

In my other life, I am a resourceful piano tuner
who can adjust the chromatics of rainbows
to tiers of sound and suture holes in the ozone.

In my other life, I am a young girl
in a big city who likes to bike through traffic
and run red lights.

In my other life, I am a pickpocket
who lifts an identity that isn't his
smooth as wind with dark intent.

In my other life, I am a contortionist
who is able to escape from a vision of the future
without grasping the meaning.

In my other life, I am a platonic radio station
that only plays perfect compositions.
Don't listen— you'll affect it.

In my only life, I am an iceberg
drifting further and further alone.
But I am hopeful.

Paul Dresman

In This Room

In this room,
cloistered like nuns,
was a mass of knowledge
and contradictions.
It is almost Christmas
and dread sets in
like fog over a swamp.

In this room
my two little rug rats
rode my back
like pharaohs
riding an elephant,
kicking my ribs
and giggling their
slurred words.

In this room, now,
is a Noble Fir,
newly decorated
and alive with light,
telling secrets of
past holidays,
honing our senses
like leather sharpened razors.

In this room, now,
are grand-kids waiting their turn
to slash my flanks
with their heels
and test my stamina,
screeching funny words
as their dogs make sure
that I am worthy
of the mantle.

Here, now, I live,
and have somehow prospered.

Bill Gunn

Blue Eyes

Today in the A.M.
my son said that he wished
that his son's eyes would turn blue,
so when I die,
he can look into his eyes
and think that I am still alive.

He had no idea
that he just gave me
the greatest compliment
of my life.

Then again—
maybe he did.

His son's eyes
turned out to be brown,
but the daughter—
her eyes are a pale blue,
just like mine.

That's good enough for me.

Bill Gunn

London Springs

A small Oregon burg.
A post office/general store
with black one by fours
for the floor,
pricked with thousands
of caulk boots
from two generations
of loggers bailing out
of the company crummies
to buy beer, cigarettes, candy bars
with brief conversation.

These are the memories
that ache,
that give me fodder
to kindle past fires.

London Springs,
where Calapooya Waters
would generate new life
in old bones.
People clad in black and white
striped bathing suits
would bathe in hopes
of a cure for all ailments.

My fun days as a youth,
my dreary days when older,
were spent in London's shadow,
and sometimes I dream
that I can go back
and capture, hogtie and hold
those distant memories.

Bill Gunn

The Cornerpost

The cornerpost has defined
the property for years.
A right angle border,
in winter it wears a white cap.

As of late, when it is shaken,
it is a bit wobbly
in its firmament.
The wires, both woven and barbed,
are still welded to its crust
with the two supports,
nails dug into its feet
are, in turn, old
and slightly off kilter.

The cornerpost has been touched
over the years, time and again,
and eventually will fall.

Where it has been and stayed
over the years
becomes ever so important.

Bill Gunn

Pandemónium

Cuando el parque de niños se vacía
Anochecer mudo
La mano desparrama el té

Cuando el humo se atraganta en
el cuello de las chimeneas
Zumbido de cafetera
Nombre y contraseña

Cuando se inflama la amígdala de los días
Se cierran los párpados de la casa
La escarcha cubre el ojo que despierta

Cuando el cuerpo malgasta su destello
Paciencia de libros y
ronroneo. El viento sopla las siluetas

Cuando el susurro pierde su aliento
El corazón del presente pal-
pita. Vibra el teléfono

Cuando retumba en medio del pavimento
La flor pronuncia su boca
El viento tala el silencio

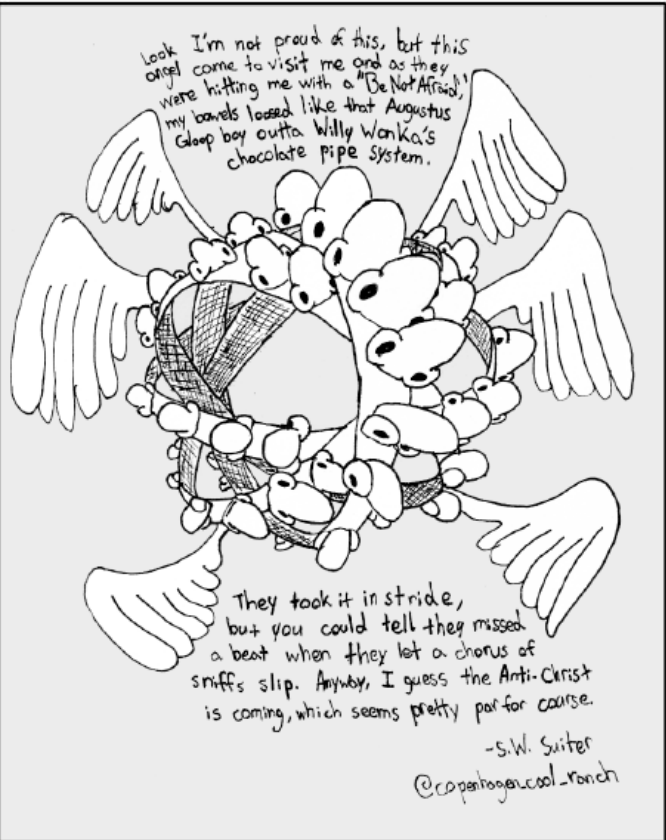
Cuando el ocaso enciende la cabellera
Se repite un mantra de algoritmos
Aullido de calle que acalla las sirenas

Cuando ronda el cuerpo sin cuerpo
El amor cura por dentro. Por fuera
la cáscara madura tiembla

Jesús Sepúlveda



"Christmas Beaver" by rachael hellenius



"Nose Angel" by scott suiter

3 MESES EN EL CONDO VERDE
--OR, JO-SÉ CAN YOU SEE?--

DAVID KOTEEN

MES 1

A veces one becomes stagnated in yr own rigid routines--alarm clock & work... days take shape around coffee cups, Happy Hours & being late... familia(!)r engagements, sleepless noches con hijos. .. tradition y repeticiones... holidays. Fortunately Fate and personal evolución begin to offer signs. After slews of caustic hints José realized it was time to move on. .. leave Eugene and seek his fortune elsewhere.

Sus amigos began to trash José in extreme liquidly fashion... Why--you may ask? Ciertó, José is righteous through and through. They each brought (José only has/had 5 friends) containers of sundry sizes a su casa, actually garage ("rage" resides inside garage). Symbolism can overcome life's vacuousness. José's best friend forever led group in his ritual scapegoathood. Collectively they knew: José's demise would benefit todo el mundo.

His BFF Amin slowly w/ incantations pouring gasoline in amorphous circle on gray cemented garage floor. Gasoline nurtures vehicles and when ignited... ka-boooooommm! Same coin, dos lados. Because José is modestly perspicacious he understood his #1 friend had been enchanted by whorish sorceress. Which trance-lated meant: their friendship had to go. ka-boooooommm! 20+ anos en una explosión. This has happened before... duets are simple... tríos, more complicado. Maybe you've had similar experiencia?

Entonces José con his modest perspicacity (and ego-exploded corazón), got rid of his hackneyed possessions and moved al norte to Seattle to lick his wounds... and live in 4th floor apartamento de El Condo Verde. Building with elevator and rooftop 30" x 30" garden plots in rectangular plastic containers. Get it--El Condo Verde? También one meets otras personas atop of building. Also, hay dos bbq set-ups and several tables. Occasional fiesta or random gathering up there: multi-utilized roof of El Condo Verde. Dulce!

Enter Destiny Divina and her four Handmaidens. Destiny looks and acts like archetypical french madam... only much thinner. Scarlet-hued hair. She smokes maroon-pack American Spirits. Discriminating madam... speaks incessantly about well, HER story, encouraging people to drink más, smoke más.

Su primera handmaiden Chloe trabaja in Columbia City bakery pregunta: "This guy named Carlos comes in near closing to hang out. We've got good ingredients together. You think I should invite him to come back later and check my oven?" This seems funny to José and he cracks up, spilling his Corazón tequila on Deidre #2... who ninja-like stands, twirls and disperses droplets of agave blood... awesome! Destiny scolds: "You must remember, Deidre-D., fast movements upset my fragile balance." Deidre is ½ Korean, ½ gringa practices Tae-Kwan-Do daily, con dance degree from Cornish. Very adept ninja-like. But still Destiny's Handmaiden. Funny who follows whom.

With gasoline fumes spelunking in José's ex-amigos' nostrils, Quick Willie and his latest babe Millie began dowsing gas puddled garage floor w/ plastic beer-pitcher (each) of Golden Barrel Black Strap Molasses. QW is/was José's best basketball buddy. They played with or against each other for nearly dos

decades. Not to mention that coy Millie--during her quest-&-conquest of Willie--had hung out on José's quaint beige Kelley couch...más que una vez. For his amoros efforts José was getting seemingly ludicrous anger dowsed upon him. For example, QW sprinkled couple of plastic quart yogurt containers of gunpowder atop molasses & gases mélange.

José wondered if sex played role in further humiliation of his garage-artspace-storage room. How conspiracy theories get fertilized. José had been taught since childhood in Guadalajara: "los humildes poseerán la tierra." Naturalmente, the meek shall inherit the earth. He shook his cabeza in non-belief.. Also he was taught (mostly by his tia Yolanda) that absorbing others' pain soothes one's karmic ailments. Buddhism mixed Católicoismo. No pain, no gain... Hence he further believed in his own "modest perspicacity." Give it up... but don't give in.

MES 2

El Condo Verde was okay for José. Weird tho living on 4th floor room, knowing no one, none caring. Este es mi vida?

Destiny frequently mentioned her need for absolute sovereignty. "Never knock on my door! Jamais! Jamais! I shalln't respond. Text me if you need me."

When Aysha (Handmaiden #3 from Ankara) came to his 4th floor apartment José got nervous. She gave him rosemary- scented envelope with invitación. Ah! Tea with her Highness. Unexpected, José immediately saw ominous events unfurling. Puta Madre! Had he inadvertently erred...Should he bring protección? Or maybe cake?

Go back to molasses-petroleumed garage. Why would Amin ever pour any amount of gasoline on any friend's anywhere... porqué?

4th de mi 5 amigos perdidos is Naomi--beauty beyond belief--cross of Natalie Portman & Lauren Bacall. José's historia was lined with Jewish females. Su madre para una. My hair is curly-black but not dense. Naomi was neither heavy nor abundantly endowed with semitic aspects. Just gorgeous. José could not have loved her more.

Pues, they needed to split up...la separación...be angry...porqué?! There she was, Naomi, mi corazón, with her own 6 liter now pickleless jar of Hinkle's Kosher Dills--made with 100% distilled vinegar--cupping out said vinegar & herbage residue along with Amin's gasolina y Willie & Millie's molasses & gunpowder. Un mess grande y fantástico!

Por supuesto in my agony I was aroused. Two children deep Naomi rocked it--even hotter naked. Bacall/Portman,hmmm... Mi corazón...muerto.

Back to my date (cita) con señora Destina. I thought maybe I'd have to go blind-folded (tal vez José wished that?)...but no, just knock on su puerta. (José siempre looking for clues notes that her condo number is 210, half of his 4th floor condo 420.). Destiny awaits. I knock almost inaudibly...but she's already at the door. aahhhh! "Do enter, por favor, Señor José."

(Cont'd on p. 12)



art by thomas avery

On Fuji Mountain August 14/05

A cool subtle breeze caresses me up here above
Waldo Lake far enough away from armies of mosquitos.

The silver lining of cumulus clouds build
their regiments of a storm front over the southeast ridges.

Silence fills the chatter inside my mind and I hear a faint rumble
of thunder to the north where a bolt of lightning
flashes over the Twins.

To the west of Diamond Peak the clear serene skyscape expands
across the lower ranges of the foothills that fade into a blue gray
three dimensional wash like a watercolor painting.

As I look over the other side, a sheer granite cliff drops off
five hundred feet below, reminding me to watch my step in
the loose shale and say a prayer.

Seven thousand and one hundred and forty four feet above sea level
on top of this summit the wind spirit soothes my soul.

The place I came from far down below back in the bowl
of the valley with its hectic pace of life is a long way from
where I am now.

Up here beyond the edge of the forest
I stretch my arms out across
the drifting clouds
and proclaim my freedom.

Thomas Avery

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Circuitous

Stephen Swiftfox

It was always a mystery. My two older brothers and sister were blonde haired, blue eyed. They received preferential treatment at home and people deferred to them in the outside world. I, with my heavy brow, dark eyes and summer skin people mistook me for native. Though a child, I noticed. Couldn't help that. Mother thought it a proper punishment for me to experience the 'catholic experience' in full, and I deserved to be punished.

Many decades later my wife & I abandoned rewarding careers and warm lifestyle of Pasadena for the high desert of NW Arizona. Settling in was a joy. A wilderness like no other. Real four seasons. Swamp coolers, wood stove, generator when needed, no TV, well water, finally alive. Work in a fire department for us both. But one sleeping mystery remained.

Enid asked if I would like some photos of my father. I quickly assented. A 40-plus years mystery was about to be solved.

I received a curious letter. Expensive envelope with embossed return address from an exclusive L.A. address. It was addressed to me with both our physical address and our P.O. Box. No mail delivery here. "Hey Donna, ya gotta see this." I carefully cut the envelope open. It was so foreign and strange. The single sheet of linen stationery was stiff to unfold. The letter was addressed to me. It asked a simple question. Was the first name of my mother Helen. If so, please respond for I will learn something that may be of value to me. Donna and I were baffled. She asked me if my mother's name was indeed Helen. "Yes, it was. But that is buried in the past and has no value."

The strange letter was laid aside while life streamed on. Horses to feed and ride. Burro to feed and hug. Fire calls to respond to. Auto wrecks to respond to. Rescues to respond to.

Slow Tuesday. Off duty. Dogs, horses, burro fed, newspaper delivered, I pick up the letter, unfold and answer it.

Soon, very soon, the same expensive stationery envelope and letter arrive, this time thicker. The woman cannot believe the chain of events that took place on a casual vacation and her subsequent perusing the past.

She introduced herself with 3 names. Let's called her Enid. She said that she took her family on a trip from Los Angeles to Vegas. Then a

planned trip to the Grand Canyon, deciding to take byways. After parties and losing they hit the road. On a two lane highway they saw a lone green sign saying "Tourist Info 4 miles" which pointed east and nowhere in their estimation. They turned off. Discovering this little mining/cowboy town they decided to drive all around. On a far removed dirt road Enid saw a barn, corral, small house, and a long dirt driveway headed up a hill to a larger house. At the base of the driveway was a 2X4 with the name Swiftfox pointing up. Something stirred her memory. It wasn't pleasant yet it asked questions.. They skipped the Grand Canyon and drove home.

Enid was the executrix of her father's estate. My name was distantly familiar. She went through every document that she could find left by her father. She found years of child support checks made to a 'Helen Swiftfox'. Now she learned the root cause of the destruction of her family. I imagine that it was satisfying and yet not.

Enid went on to say that her father had an affair with another married woman and I was the product. After the discovery of this affair both marriages were destroyed. I did find it of value that she told me that her father was a physician. I was buoyed at this. Explained so much. Talents are hereditary. She and her two brothers are surgeons, but no mention of her mother.

Enid asked if I would like some photos of my father. I quickly assented. A 40 plus years mystery was about to be solved. Donna, my wife, was empathetic and glad that something that I hid would see the light of day.

A fat envelope arrived soon after. It was stuffed with black and white photos of my father and a short note. I ignored the note for the time being. I looked at the photos and felt roots. My high school grad picture on our dresser almost matched Bill's med school grad photo. I ran into the kitchen, both photos behind my back. I asked Donna "Who's this" as I showed her my photo. "Well, it's you." I pulled out my father's photo, I asked, "Who's this?" She said "You." I said "No, it's my father." Donna burst into tears. She knew the mystery, the secrets, the stupid secrets.

We pored over the many black and white photos. My face, my skin, my heart were going through something deep and divided. Good news or bad? Am I happier knowing that two families were ruined by a horny couple or was I thrilled at knowing why I have medical skill and have an identity?

Donna asked about the letter. I unfolded it expecting a family. Enid said that she had fulfilled her obligation by informing me of where I came from and requested that I do not contact any of them in the future.

Strange life. ☺ ☺ ☺



NOT

The New York Review of Books

Into the Woods and Back Out Again
— an inspirational guide to writing (and finishing!) your first novel
by Michael Matheny

Review by: Don Root

Heads up, Graffiti-ans! I know a lot of you are serious fiction writers working on realizing your dream of finishing a novel and seeing it through to publication. I also know that this journey is full of obstacles, many self-imposed. Local author Michael Matheny is here to help. This slim, 94-page guide presents common writing roadblocks and ways to overcome them in a storybook format that reads like a novel itself—a great creative approach! His backcover blurb sums it up nicely:

It's the greatest adventure of them all. It's not a movie. Not a television show. Not a video game. It's the adventure to find the Great American Novel that is your destiny to write. Follow Arthur on his quest as he battles the imps of illusion and the demons of doubt to become the hero—the author—he was always meant to be.

I read this book cover-to-cover on the train up to Portland and found it highly enjoyable and enlightening. Matheny, a novelist himself, works into his story effective tools for writers—ways of thinking, really—that I greatly appreciated and will use in my future fiction endeavors. Far from a dry “how-to” slog, this is clearly a work from someone who has been there, facing the struggles we writers all come across at one point or another.

Whether you’re currently struggling with a novel or just contemplating writing one, I highly recommend this book, which is available in paperback and ebook at [Cantarabooks.com](#). ☺☺☺

Childhood Memories

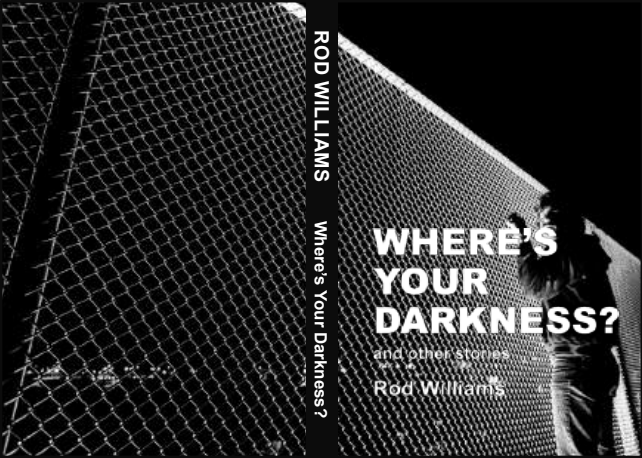
Racking my brain with the obstacles,
Head games, all the illusions are opticals,
Fine lines, pained and scratched
like broken spectacles
Since when does I love you
Translate to I drove drunk to get you popsicles

It's almost like time is replacing
So many lines drawn that don't need erasing
There's holes in the carpet from all of the pacing
Your shoes by the door, halfway to lacing
Keys in your hand, no fears you are facing
Glass placed to your lips, an image you're tracing
Even the cat's heart was racing

Anyone could see that something was done
Heartbeat emphatic, words piercing, a gun
I was so fucking tired of being the one
To pick up your pieces, fix the eclipse of your sun
Anyone sane should've told us to run
Away from the shrapnel of our lost someone
Looking back now, the end of your rope
weighed a ton
The meat of our lives, so underdone
Scraping the barrel, yearning for fun
Every quarter lands heads up when you're spun.

Iris Bartholomew

COMING SOON: New work by local author Rod Williams.
For more info: joyousshambles@gmail.com



Daisy the Flying Dog

I took the Earth underneath me
and sent it into the past. I did it
again and again taking the
future and tossing it backwards,
and soon my eyes were glassy
with cold speed and I was
flying. I broke the speed of the
other dogs.

I entered the speed of sound
and I broke it like a cheap toy.

It was my ability to reach the
speed of light by throwing the
future into the past and
becoming the mechanism that
turns the world and I became
light itself.

In this light my charge
appeared before me and I
illuminated his grey
countenance. I snatched it away
from him and flung it out into
space as I turned and landed by
his feet. He bathed me with his
eye water and buried his face
into my neck. We stopped time
then. Everything halted. The
earth did not shudder nor
screech. It just stood watching.

A thousand years passed. Then
we went home at a human pace,
my light showing him the way.

Stephen Swiftfox

Dried Roses

A boquet of roses
hung upsidedown by chord
on thumbtack

An empty room with plain
white wallpaper
and hard wood floors

I found your energy
detached in a lonely garage
I found you dangling from a
string
above a window

You made me shiver
I didn't meet you in your
prime
you've been drying above
the curtains

I saw you swaying in the
breezless room
you were trying to get my
attention
I wanted you
whats left of you

Dried roses,left behind by
people
I will never encounter in the
physical plain

I came to visit you in your
cold and empty room
you had fallen with the
motivation to have someone
clean you up
a string of roses,sprawled
across the floor underneath
a bedroom window
that has not been awake in
years

wishing someone would pick
up whats left of your spirit
wishing you could move
away to another room
one with light and color
I almost brought you home
I have enough ghosts in my
house
Not cold enough to freeze
the dew
I saw you and I left you
alone
with your thorns and
psychic residue

James Otter

Ghetto

by Paul James



Our History

by the walking historian
Randy Gudeika



In the plaza in front of downtown Eugene's county courthouse stands the statue of Wayne Morse, Oregon's US Senator, 1945-69. He was one of only two US Senators to vote against the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, 1964, the one that deepened our involvement in the Vietnam War.

In one of his frequent anti-war speeches, he stated: "Politicians here at home, safe in the security of their political offices, vote to send American draftees to die in an unconscionable war. I do not intend to put their blood on my hands." 58,220 US boys and men died in the Vietnam War, 1964 through '75.

During the McCarthy Hearings, 1950's, he protested: "I am very much disturbed about the fear psychology which is sweeping America... taking the form of false accusations and smear charges against fellow Americans... the type of campaign of arousing suspicions against one's neighbors which characterized Hitler's Germany."

One for the history books, the kind I hope we can still learn from.

MORE: Visit Morse Ranch Historic Park, 595 Crest Drive, his south Eugene home.

Startled Christmas Carolers Spout Satanic Slogans

by Peter Fenton, Reporter

An eastern European chorale group has cancelled all further caroling until its members stop spouting satanic slogans.

The choir of twenty was gathered on a village street, when, in the midst of O Holy Night, the lead soprano began shouting demonic epithets.

After she was dragged away, the choir launched into the jaunty Jingle Bell Rock. However, during the second chorus, the entire group surprised onlookers by singing “Jingle bell, jingle bell, jingle bell rock, s**k my satanic c**k around the clock.”

Other songs followed with more blasphemous lyrics inserted into familiar tunes, including:
* “Hairy nuts roasted over an open fire...”
* “I saw mommy ***** Santa Claus...”
* “Rudolph the ****-nosed reindeer...”

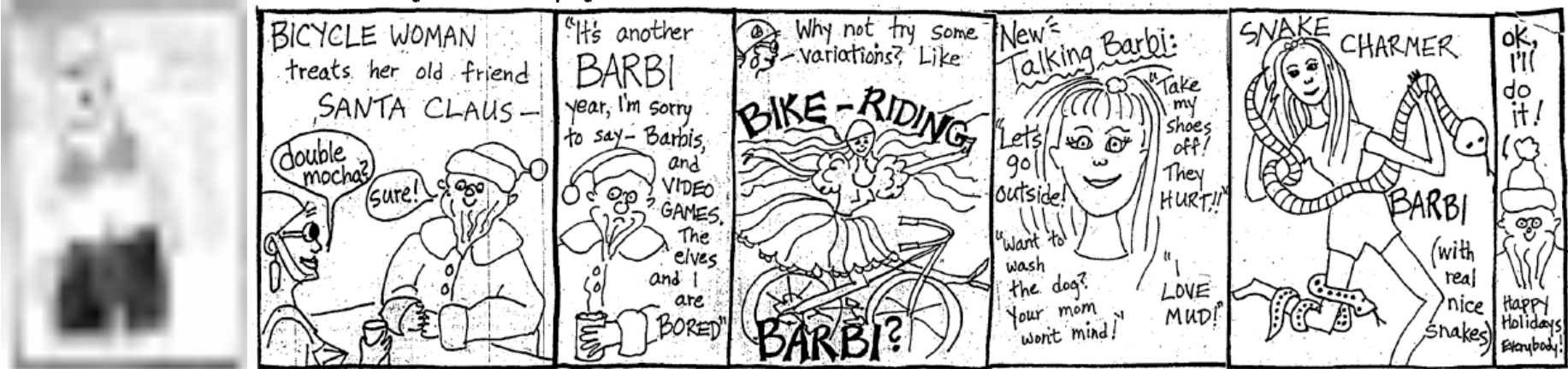
Members of the chorale group began crying and screaming over their inability to control their filthy mouths. Finally, as angry listeners pelted them with inch-thick candy canes, frozen snowballs, petrol-filled vodka bottles and flaming chestnuts that had just been roasted on an open fire, they clambered into a horse-drawn cart and fled.

The choirmaster has cancelled all further public activities until the problem is sorted out. Meanwhile, five of the group's twenty members, all superb tenors, have been burned alive in the village square.

Needy bachelors were rewarded with the singers' wives and homes.

Bicycle Woman

by Jean Murphy



Sacred Woman

There is a reason why our wombs feel the beating of the drum;
its song carried out into the world through our hips as we saunter the earth.
We are made bare, flesh to dirt.
Dancing feet, wild hair and a laughter that could wake the dead.
The divine Mother can be found within each of us, for our howls can be heard and our hearts can be felt.
It's in the way we prepare meals through spirit and make love like volcanic eruptions between our thighs.
Sacred woman.
There is a reason why whole worlds are made by the miracle of your body;
For you were made to bare enough pain to bring a warrior to their knees.
Unearthly woman, your existence casts spells all on its own;
For you're made by the same magic that created the stars.
Flesh, bones, blood, raw power,
Your ethereal beauty but a gift to be seen.

Amber Pacheco

Find What You Love
and Let It Kill You

draw the blade from inside your heart
cut the cocoon
will to surrender
alchemy fire bender boon
be the fuel
abyss dancing fool
no more mister cool
love rules
this is the way
infectious courage play
the rose bursts into flame
germinates new eyes
something ancient
remembered surprise
virgin world wild
blooms another knowing child.

Charles Mattoon

Light/Rose

Softness for her
These ideas
Flights of all kinds
Mysteries

Healing journey
Continues...

Thank you new day
Thank you life
A precious gift

I am a star child
A wild kind
Breathing love
All the way in

A maestro of joy
Frequency, vibration
and all that jazz
Ascending.

Fergul Cirpan

The Wise One

In the presence of the Wise One
I feel infinitely loved
And accepted
A knowing that I am always
Protected and guided
because
I too am a part of All That Is
It's inside me and
I am inside it
Connected in a way that defies words
Indescribable
I search for the words
Of course I search for the words
There are none
Like trying to explain how a butterfly
can emerge fully formed from its pupa
Like trying to explain how it feels
When your 3 year old granddaughter sighs
You are so beautiful Grandma
Like trying to explain how it feels
When a baby falls asleep in your arms
I am that baby
Resting
in the
All
Encompassing
Embrace
of
The Universe

Mary Moffat

The Journey

Release me sweet Enigma
From the pain I have caused others
And from the pain I have caused myself
Let me find trust and joy and faith
Let me find strength in the unknown
Let me lean into the future unwavering
Let me find solace in The Mystery
Let me dream this beautiful dream
Help me let go
Help me fall into the gratitude of wonder
As I wander
Into The Great Beyond

Lise Eskridge

Wishful Thinking

This ordinary morning —
I expect a miracle!
Bring it on, bring it all to me...
Angels, saints, all the lovers!
Bring it all to me!

On a mission of love

A petite journal filled
With all these poems of light

Fergul Cirpan

INTERVENTION-
EPILOGUE

Azul Gregorson

The President of Russia was bold enough to order the arrest of the alien ambassador that had been sent to them, but a flourish of the ambassador's cloak rendered its wearer suddenly invisible. Unable to locate the alien, the Russian President gave the order to seize the ship that had landed in Taynitsky Garden by the Kremlin, and a full squad of commandos rushed up the ramp, only to be trapped inside when the ramp retracted. The ship launched upwards, and the Russian military did not dare to fire on it, lest it fall back down on top of the Kremlin. The President of China agreed to cooperate with the so-called Solar Federation, but secretly had no intention to relinquish power. He ordered his generals to prepare to repel an invasion, and reached out to the leaders of every other nuclear armed country to join them in resisting the invaders.

Almost every non-nuclear armed country agreed to the terms of the Solar Federation, and every tribal government was thrilled to be reunited with their relatives from the stars, knowledge of which had been preserved in their oral traditions.

When the main fleet came, they encircled the earth in high orbit, wrapping around in processions of ships flying in clusters of three. From the night side of the planet, it looked to people on the ground that half the stars were sweeping across the sky.

The Generals of all the great powers of the world watched and waited. Then their instruments showed six million small, fast moving objects launching from the ships. The Generals assumed it to be the beginning of an attack, so every ICBM was launched in a multi-national coordinated strike. As the ICBMs raced upwards, the six million small, fast moving objects intercepted the missiles and attached themselves. The little drones pushed the missiles off-course. The missiles exploded hundreds of miles apart from their targets. The Generals watched in horror as no damage to the fleet was detected.

Then the fleet deployed more drones, which began methodically capturing every satellite, including the spy satellites of the great powers, working from high orbit too low. The Generals shouted at their underlings as their intel displays went dark, one after another.

Then the drop ships came.
Millions of warriors, some in towering suits of armor, some moving unseen under cloaks of invisibility, stepped out of the drop-ships and captured every refinery and fuel depot that fed the machines of the hostile nations. Blackouts rolled across the world and hospitals had to rely on backup generators, but medical ships landed nearby and humanitarian forces secured the hospitals.

(cont'd on p.12)



art by marcel tulloh

The Secret of the 60s

I am not a mechanic
a soldier, a clerk, a poet.

These are things I do,
but they are not me.

Do not reduce what I am
to only what I do.

We learned this hard lesson
some cosmic long ago night.

You cannot buy us unless we are
reduced to a thing, a commodity, a job.

Even now we don't know our true
potential,
but it will not be as a tool.

I am a human being.
I am the Earth.

I am the universe,
turned inside out.

i am nothing
and everything.

Jim Smith
art by Erica Snowlake

Paul G.'s
Favorite Poem in
the History of
Graffiti:

I have a body.
Wow.
I wasn't looking
For this much
Responsibility.

Hillbilly



I Want to be
a Woman

I want to be a woman.
I want the world
to come inside me
and be born of me.
I want to be held
and swelled by a god
hot and without mercy.
I want to be
the blood mystery that drives
all creation all
procreation,
so possessed by radiance,
come in, come out,
that never again will I be
isolate—
dark peak against
black sky.

Dan Liberthson



art by eamon morris

Fair-haired Maidens

How lucky we are
Fair-haired maidens breathing in
Sunshine petals and rose quartz kisses
Promises deep in the puddles of
Blue eyed bombshells

Rebelliousness dripping in our veins
Feet bare to the earth of each other's pain
Our sorrow and suffering the least of our worries

For we have learned to carry our despair like armor
To thrust our swords through the hearts of our anxiety
Warrior queens warding off the sins of our parents

How lucky we are
Fair-haired maidens
To have each other's backs
To have a companion so fierce and so loyal
An unwavering sister in the storm

Brielle Kesselring

(S)he
Enough

You don't see me
You see he
You don't hear me
You hear he
You don't feel me
You feel he
You don't know me
You know he
See she
Hear she
Feel she
Know she

Maxine Wren

Never woman enough
For you, for me, for anyone
Too much scruff
A bulge I can't outrun
No kitty to pet
Small titties, no fun
Considered a threat
To all that is woman
Cry to forget
That I am no man

Maxine Wren

Counting Goats

Long past is the midnight hour
and
Our hero's mood is dour.
This carefree nerdowell's life
has begun to sour.
Even a sleep does tend
to be around some far bend,
and
his troubles of Pisa doth tower,
this melancholy folly
Must end.
Cuz the next line of
Semi-schyncpatic rhythm
ends in flower.
and
that makes no sense atall.

Nemo

We are perfectly
imperfect

Lovely in my brokenness
Daring and bold

About blank/memories
My love - does it offend you?

Broken communication

Know what your heart is about
Embody that
Manifest that

My love - does it offend you?

Fergul Cirpan

Incas Will
Always
Be There

to tell our grand kids about...
Inkers always will here be
so we know what's droppin hot...

Inklings come like ducklings
first time paddlin on pond...

How webbed foots push against
water...and so life proceeds

Incarceration is for our foes...
until we give'm par-don

Ev'ry crime reaps same square cell

May your myriad stars make sensual
constellations...

You enter in to...feel at home

Full moons won't be 'round, rather
more complex configurations

Several sides in shades of dark
shifting.

David Koteen

Good Pup

I am terrorized by the thought
That a sudden move will cost you.
That I mustn't question your love
when it seems so undeniably false
or to express my own,
which is uncomfortably devoted.
Or if the very sound of my voice,
that which you call sweetness,
becomes harsh and resembles your own;
it will be enough to determine your
indifference.

Dimich

Coming of age in a fascist police state will not be a barrel of fun for anybody, much less for people like me, who are not inclined to suffer Nazis gladly and feel only contempt for the cowardly flag-suckers who would gladly give up their outdated freedom to live for the mess of pottage they have been conned into believing will be freedom from fear.
--Hunter S. Thompson, in Kingdom of Fear: Loathsome Secrets of a Star-Crossed Child in the Final Days of the American Century (2011)



art by jean murphy

INTERVENTION

Cont'd from p.10

People were shocked to see the strangers storm the medical centers, carrying strange equipment. The earthing police forces stationed near the hospitals did not know how to handle an invasion of peaceful and helpful doctors suddenly treating patients with advanced medicine.

The Presidents and Generals scrambled to mobilize what remained of their forces, but the front line was everywhere at once. They were outmaneuvered, surrounded, and forced to surrender.

A stubborn insurgency pestered the occupying forces, but many earthlings were eager to assist the occupiers, seeing how miraculous was their medicine and technology.

Not a single government was overthrown by the occupiers. Seeing that their leaders had no power anymore, people organized themselves into communities, mutual aid associations, and kin-groups. The imaginary bubbles of high governance simply evaporated.

A number of individuals possessing large sums of arbitrarily-valued tokens secluded themselves in their enclaves, more fearful of their former employees and customers than they were of the occupying forces.

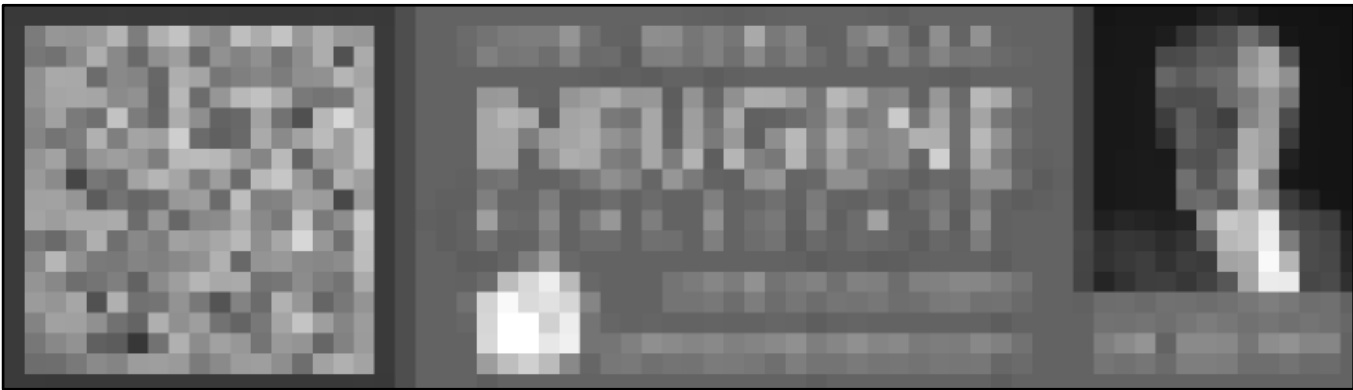
Nobody asked the surviving Presidents and Generals for permission when the retooling of society took full swing. New gardening and irrigating techniques were introduced by ambassadors and technicians, and soon the cities of earth hosted hanging gardens and the countryside was populated by smallholding farms, fed by efficient nutrient recycling systems.

Some leaders from the previous age refused to acknowledge the victory of the Solar Federation, and vowed to fight to their last breath. But their relevance waned as life at large took a different shape, and people found they could adjust. Anyone who wished could depart for the Academies of the star-farers, and travel on ships to other worlds.

Thereby humanity and their relatives from the stars were united, and the nations and tribes of the earth lived in peace as equal members of the Solar Federation.

THE END

DO NOT WRITE
IN THIS SPACE



3 MESES, CONT'D FROM P.7

Destiny's hair is piled Frenchish atop su cabeza. With ebony chopstick thru it's center, Silk scarf (about 33 degrees C outside) & lacy-topped full-length dark-jade crepe dress.

"First we'll sip tea; then, I'll say why I summoned you. This is Organic Mai Bu Dan White Tea. Help wake you from your slumber." She also served small almond butter cookies. With embossed windmills on them.

"José, I invited you here because of your tranquil nature. On occasion I allow someone to brush my hair. It's long and sensual and must be tended to with 'utmost' dignity. I believe you are able to perform this task, with, let us say, maximum sensitivity for hair's owner...moi. Jo-sé, can you see?"

We drank two cups each of Mai Bu. José felt strange kind of buzz. Buzzo de té...porqué no? Destiny's hair brushing took place on black (think psychiatrist's) divan. Small flat bowl of lavender olive oil "to massage lightly into hair prior to actual brush-ing."

Entonces, José massages and brushes, brushes and massages. Comò no. Destiny releases, relaxes, lets go "Harder! José, Fuller! Màs! Màs!"

MES 3

Before we conclude with Destiny's orgasms, let's look at número 5...my 5th soon-gone friend. Chela Jones. Nothing sexual. Pero still not enough flames to continue their creative friendship. It, también, must shatter. Porqué? Waste is love's antidote.

So their own favorite, private art-creating ritual would serve also for their --Chela and José's separación: uno fifth de Chinaco Añejo. Chela poured "our" beverage favorito smack on top of gasolina-molasses-gunpowderrrr!-vinegar-&-herb soup--sopa de ira.

Una cosa de ironía--1/4 inch fissure in my angry garage which began to sip in este bazaar noxious puddle...but only so much. Molasses & herbs & gunpowder creates its own unique mortar, clogging José's garage's

crack.

Tía Yolanda tenía razón: suffering leans one towards freedom. Freedom requires action. I should really transplant my Self to otro estado.

At the end of your historia one arrives at forgiveness--los otros a començar.. .yourself--tú mismo-- ultimately.

To stir his creativity and ego-oriented "perspicacia modesta" José sat en su 4th floor condo #420. In Seattle marijuana is now màs o menos legal. José had bought little packet of Zoot lozenges (from Uncle Ike's Pot Shop) and sucked and sucked until he received un buen idea. He would send all his one-time friends flowers as ritual de libertad.. .and be free of his internal monologue of "why/porqué?"

Say it with dead flowers in my wedding, and I won't forget to put roses on your grave... (Los Rolling Stones)

Sure, that's just. But what flower for which ex-amigo-- Amin, Willie & Millie, Naomi, Chela--? Rare en su vida, José meditated, closed su ojos, and let go into wherever space that is. His lips smiled.. José recuerda su año último de la escuela estudiando Hamlet. Pobrecita Julietta. José had many-times masturbated to her drowning image.. .pobrecita!

ACT IV, sc v: HAMLET

Laertes. This nothing's more than matter

Ophelia. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance. Pray you, love, remember. Perfecto! Romero por Amin. One day he'll remember how pure our relationship was...and not persist with his wife's green-eyed jealousy.

Ophelia (cont). There's fennel for you, and columbines. Yes, fennel for Quick Willie...so susceptible to Millie's praise and flattery. QW gustan las chicas. Leaving columbine--vine which denotes la decepción en sexo. Esta es Millie.

Ophelia...there's rue for you; and some for me: we may call it herb-grace o'Sundays: O you must wear your rue with a difference. Naomi y rue son las hermanas. "pleasantness" is la traducción usual de Naomi. Muy, muy bitter pleasantness.

Ophelia. I would give you some violets, but they all withered when my father died; they say he made a good end... And for Chela las violetas as our trabajo together was built on full-tilt igualdad and consideración and creativity. Friends, como el verano, must all pass.

That wraps it up. 5 amigos 5 bouquets. José found his still current American Express and via Telaflores finalized su separación con ex-amigos de Eugene. Adiós!

MES 3, DÍA 30

Pues bien, José brushes el palo escarlata of Destiny--not so hard as she demanded, but with convicciones. To be truly de servicio José felt he should not get aroused. She invited him...esta bastante. His pleasure was not her concern. Destiny had a date with herself (su mismo)...arriving.. .pronto.

José holds Destiny's hair firmly with his right hand, long strokes con su izquierdo. It wasn't working...his Don Juan began to tilt. Malo, malo, malo! So José willed it down.

Then, he might relax himself...and drift...back, back, back to Guadalajara donde muchas veces he brushed black, thick pelo de su tía Yolanda. "How long should I brush, Aunt Yolanda?" "José, hijo de mi hermana, di tú el Rosario. And so José learned at young age how to brush.

Dios te salve María, llena eres de Gracia, El Señor es contigo, bendita Tú eres entre todas las mujeres, y bendito es el fruto de tu vientre, Jesús.

Goodbye, Eugene. It's been fun! ♥ 🚲 🚲

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