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Master Buddha & the jolly golly fun time gang.

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MASTER BUDDHA & THE JOLLY GOLLY FUN TIME GANG

By

Todd Edward Evans
B.A. The Ohio State University, 2012

A Thesis or Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty of the
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for the Degree of

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Department of English
University of Louisville
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M.A., University of Louisville 2016

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ABSTRACT

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Todd Edward Evans

April 22, 2016

This thesis is the first two chapters of a novel. The novel parodies the capitalist and consumerist United States of the 21st Century in the tradition of Thomas Pynchon, Kurt Vonnegut, and Donald Barthelme.

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PREVIEW ART FOR CHAPTER ONE: THE BOILER

CHAPTER ONE

When Bo said potheads would be there, I was into it. At that point, I wanted to fall in with a bunch of cool cats who'd chill, you know, ones I could spill the shit over with about music and movies and such. You see, I had this problem where I always felt like the loner, loser, outsider kid, probably side effect of having been a military brat.

I wasn't into it enough to sign up just yet, though. "Oh, that right? Potheads are gonna be there?" I asked in a kind of sarcastic tone. In the meantime, the tropical horns and piano of chill bossa nova jazz hipped and hopped through the room. That record was spinnin' "Hot Fudge & Other Toppings," by Al Herbert and the Mexicans.

"Yeah, man. It's this dude's party who I went to high school with, Dirk," Bo talked in a deep Southern accent, typical of most good ole' boys from the state of Kandookie. "Remember I was a hippie back in the day. Smoked a lot of them pots." He chuckled. "Smoked a lot of pots," along with the saying "Good people, good folk," were a few quirky lingos we had, kept us and the rest of our crew from the homestead separate from the others.

Oh, yeah, you know nothing about homesteads. We had grown up on a homestead, Private Park Shire. I remember being a youngin' in Private Park flying down that sterling silver slide and into a sandbox full of cotton puff. Then all the sudden when you weren't expecting it classical music would turn on and out of fucking nowhere came ballerinas in baby blue and pink tutus dancing against a

moonlit backdrop. College was quite different from that. In college, I didn't have the safety of my own family or neighborhood. Or, the company of pretty ballerinas.

Even though I had lecture the next day, I was warming up to Bo's idea: going out, getting buzzed, dip dapping, seeing the scene. I hadn't missed a class all year. They gave us unexcused absences for a reason, right? Anyway, these hippies and their gig did hook me. I smoked the herb every now and then, off and on, day by day, but that wasn't it. It was more of what the herb stood for. I wanted to click with people who were really into mindfulness, living in the moment, who loved the environment, who accepted everyone, and who embodied total peace and acceptance. Who, you know, were Zen Master Buddha types. People like that were out there somewhere, had to be.

Bo pulled open the fridge with a caveman-like tug. He was a big man; was a lineman in high school. "You got any beer in here, man?"

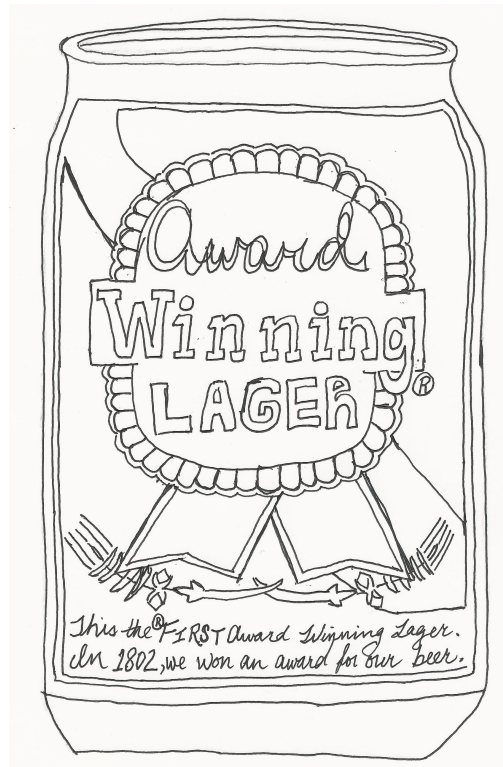
I ignored him; I was knocking myself for not doing the damn dishes. They were piling up every which way, in the sink, out of the sink, on the stove. I knew he'd find the beer at some point.

I asked, "So what are Dirk and his friends like? Are they like super peace, love, and unity shit?"

"Yep. They're all pansy like that, tree-hugging bullshit. If you ask me, it's all a waste of time. People like that are lazy fucks who don't work. You got to work, man. But, it'll be a big party and they're chill dudes and there's going to be a lot of hot easy women there," Bo judged them based on them smoking a lot of those pots.

He didn't tell their story. Their humaneness whatever, who they were really, deep down. He also had had a few; I smelled booze on his breath.

He snagged an Award Winning Lager out of the fridge and popped it's top. "What the fuck is this?" Bo asked and held up the can. Well, this is what an Award Winning Lager looked like:



"Don't hate on a classic. I love that shit."

"They win one award a hundred years ago and all the strapper fags drool over this crap. It doesn't taste half as good as Beer Co." "Strapper" was basically another term for hippie or hipster, just a different term for the same damn social group.

I was a little chapped 'cause I knew he was right. AWL didn't make you go, "Hubba bubba I want anotha." But then again, Bo was one-sided. He worked for

Beer Co. unloading their trucks, getting a free caser every month. He always wore a
tore up Beer Co. hat too, had it on that day in fact.

That company really made you wave the flag, go shoot some guns, and yell
yee-haw. That's one reason I didn't drink that shit. I was all for Capitalist policy,
self-reliance, and Merican individualism and what not. It was patriotism that gave me
a headache. Anyway, here's Beer Co's can:



I said, "AWL is cheap so I drink it."

He took a gulp of beer, acted like he didn't hear me, and said, "Are you going
to the party or not?"

"I'll go. You said they'll be a lot of women there."

"Go paint your nails then and do whatever you do."

I was in basketball shorts and a white T so I wasn't going to strut around like Mr. BMOC in that get-up. Oh shit, yeah, Mr. BMOC meant Mr. Big Man On Campus. "Sounds good, I'll be fast," I said.

I darted down the hallway as Bo flipped on a different record. He was hip to those oldies sing along songs. "Jack Jack Cool Boy Flash" started right up.

A couple Balthazar Maui Maui paintings hung there in the hall, me trying to be King Super Sophistication. I had that painting of his with the swans and elephants, very trippy and out there, and of course his most famous one *The Flatulence of Nobility*. I also had that Flax Seed Hurst painting *L'Ang FuayShoby Dubay Á du Surrealisme*. As you can tell, I totally dug the surreal artists. They'd zonk you out, get you mentally exhausted, to where your brain hurt when you only looked at their shit for a few minutes or so. Made you think, was good for the mind.

I stepped over library books all over the floor, grabbed the clothes I wanted from my closet, and jumped in the bathroom. Took a shower, and strapped on an outfit for going out. I put on blue jeans that were pretty slim, a white long sleeved linen shirt. And then I put on the kicker, no pun intended. My khaki private yacht shoes. They were clean, real clean, and yes, they were real, too, made by Classy's, not by a cheap imitator.

Oh, and I couldn't forget the cologne. Picked up a bottle of that Nay Nay Gray high society scent. I had christened it as mine. That one commercial of theirs just got me. I probably had watched it seven or eight times on DooTube. It was the one where there's a twenty something year old young prof. He types into

DoodleDoo, “How to get women.” Immediately, his phone rings and a sexy smooth voice on the other line. She says, “Smell like a stud.” Then the ad goes to a screen that only shows that bottle. Here it is, Nay Nay Gray:



I was so damn uppity bobbing up and down in front of the mirror thinking yeah, I was looking real fly. So excited to hit the town, I wasn't paying attention where the hell I was spraying my Nay Nay Gray. A spray went in my hair. Then I thought I missed so I sprayed again. That one hit my shirt. Well, I had to make my neck smell good in case I got to dancing close with a lady. I thought I aimed for my torso, neck region but the potion hit my eyes, burned like a mother. I whispered every cuss word in the book: fuck, cunt, clit, shit, motherfucker, assfuck, asshole, cocksucker, and bleep, bleep, bleep. The spray was comparable to bright red fire ants with fangs gnarling holes in the outer layer of my eyeballs. I had never felt anything

that painful, even when a dog bit my arm when I was ten. Fucking Haley's, the goddess of the underworld's, Hellfire is what it was.

I pooled up some cold water from the sink in my palms and splashed it in my eyes. This seemed to do job after repeating it about fifteen times, but something was off. My vision was different. It wasn't worse. No, not at all, in fact. It was as though I was one of those falcons, birds of prey zooming down off a skyscraper and could see everything in my midst. Twenty, twenty vision. One hundred and eighty degrees around. Magnificent Def quality. I blinked fifty times over, but this new power did not vanish. From across the bathroom, I saw a hair follicle resting on top of the showerhead, picked it up with my finger, and flushed it down the toilet.

Even though this change in my vision was a good thing, it still worried the crap out of me. The dark figure, the enigma, the ghoul of anxiety hung over me. The unknown. I wondered and wondered: will my vision ever return to normal? Will my vision change again? I couldn't control what was going to happen. My nerves shook like itty bitty beads rapidly moving with fury. Finally, I just told myself that I should just forget about it. That's all I could do. I took deep breaths, in and out, and back again. I kind of went with it and waited. I stopped worrying and I wasn't going to tell anyone about that shit till I needed someone's help.

Anyways despite the cologne incident, it really didn't take me that long to get all spruced up and ready to go like how Bo teased me for. I cared about my appearance. Bo, could've cared less about his. His attitude was "If you don't like me, then fuck you."

I wanted people to walk away after meeting me and being like, “Damn, this dude is one smooth chipper.” A smooth chipper like Timothy Carmichael. He was in that movie where he played a cowboy and then another one as an all-star pool player. After making his name as an actor, he started his own brand of bug repellent with his face on the bottle. Some folks absolutely hated certain actors, but everyone loved him. There wasn’t a soul out there who didn’t like Timothy Carmichael.

Fans begged him to run for office, saying he’d be the next Kyle F. Jennabee. Instead, he went another route. In his late 60’s, he was the mastermind behind FairyPlanet, started the company. For all I know, he just came up with the name. Really didn’t have a background in computer processing. FairyPlanet had a computer processing system called Winkey Winkey, a search engine called Bling Bling, a videogame console titled FairyBerry Triple X, a phone – FairyFone, and a database out in the Etherworld anyone could save shit too – FairyDope. Here’s FairyPlanet’s logo:



I wanted to be Timothy Carmichael through and through. I was a junior at The One and Only Bebopo State University and was studying branding in college, majoring in Nom Chicka Nom Nom. I learned how things were named and the

history of language, marketing, advertising, and all that jazz. I studied the greats: William Cumberbund, Geoffrey Wilson-Carter, Edgar Oboe-Faux, Ralph Falco-Woodsmen, Ernest Phlegmingway, and F. Scott On-the-Fritzherald.

I clicked off the record player and we got the hell out of my crapshoot. Even though it was getting dark out, the temp was still nice and warm. Off in the parking lot, three bums sat in a circle and ate crumbled up pieces of wet newspaper. With my newfound sight, I could tell that they were biting into a headline that read, “54 Year-Old Man Found Running Through Forest Naked.” The bums also discussed the presidential election. A power lifter college dude with his shirt off did pushups on the sidewalk, and a fit college girl in a red and white bikini did jumping jacks in the front lawn. It was “Work On Your Beach Bod Day” at the Concrete Villas Apartment Complex, which was a regularly scheduled day for everyone in the building. I had done my workout earlier, used the pull-up bar, did my fifty sit-ups, and ran in place all right outside.

Bo said we should bring brews to the party we stopped at MWCC, Midwestern Cow Company that is, a convenience store headquartered in the state of Bebopo. We stood in front of those big glass transparent doors getting all googly eyed over which beer to dabble in. I said, “It’s whatever. I don’t drink beer for the taste of it. We could get Potty for all I care.” Potty Light was the stuff every college kid would get drunk off of. Upper class young profs out of university would drink brews like Spicy Banana Stout, Catshead Ale, or Grinning Bimbo IPA, the small time

pricier craft brews. College students drank Potty Light, AWL, or BC, but Potty mostly.

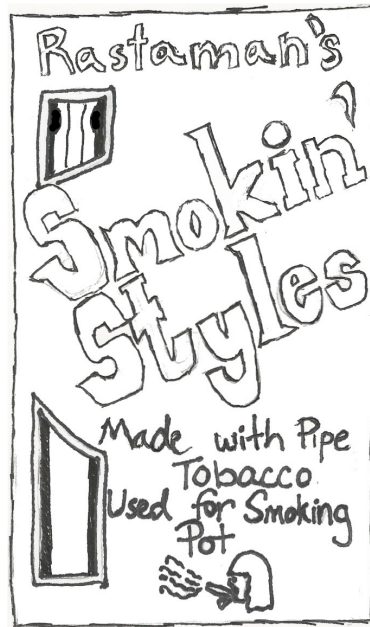
“Yeah, but we’re getting a 30 pack man and we aren’t going to be drinking all of it. We’re buying it for other people, too.” When Bo said the word “too,” a dash of spitty flew out of his mouth and landed on the glass. That messy bastard. I might’ve been the only person who noticed. He spit sometimes when he’d been drinking. Happened to the best of us. Not like it was only him. Besides, those MWCC employees needed to do some cleaning. Specks of sticky syrupy stuff stuck to the shelves of the coolers.

Bo had the final say, “Let’s go with the trusty ole’ Beer Co. That’s good enough for anyone to drink.”

He opened the door and yanked a case of BC, straight BC that is, not the low calorie pussy crap out like he was worried someone was going to take it from him. Held it close to his bosom. We made our way up to the line weaving up and through the aisles. Bo had to look-see look-see at the food they had spread out all over the damn place, that sucker for consumerism. He ate about anything.

We passed stands where they sold BunBuns, Lean Fiends, pork rhines, potato chips, Star Chips, you name ‘em. An assortment of processed fatty foods. I don’t think I ever met anyone who ate pork rhines on the reg. Don’t even know what the hell those were, just knew they weren’t healthy. Guess I could’ve learned more about them on Stat-o’Pedia, an encyclopedia in the Etherworld.

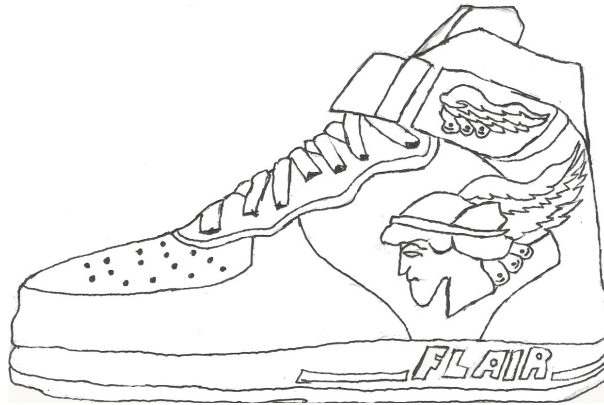
College students purchased beer, plastic cups, snacks like chips, salsa, mixers for their liquor and really any type of tobacco including Spitzers, Smokin' Styles, Night Hawks, every cigarillo in the book. Here's a pack of Smokin' Styles:



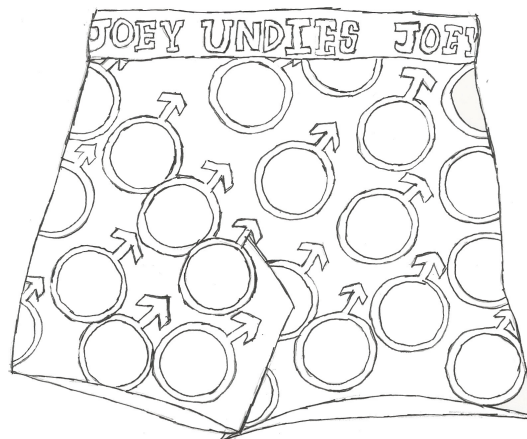
Yeah, no one, or rather very few Jones's went around smoking the actual cigarillos with tobacco in them. They cut the brown leaf, unraveled it, and used it to roll a mean fat blunt. Freshman year cats walked to class smoking those blunts. Breaking the law, breaking the law. No one ever did shit about it.

A short kid stood in front of us, his head tilted up, acting like he owned the joint. We faced the register and I stood off to the side of Bo. The kid wore a New York Steambrenners flat bill with the big N.Y. on the front. Steambrenners were the squad you either loved or hated, winningest team in softball. I personally was an Atlanta Tomturbbers fan.

That kid's hat looked like it was purchased the same freaking day; it had the round gold sticker straight from HatsRUs. He wore long athletic shorts or at first glance they seemed long. They really hung down, had to have been two feet below his waist. And he had a big white T on. Not to mention he had on a pair of Victoria Flair Goddess Ones:



Joey Undies drawers stuck out of the guy's shorts. I assumed he was trying to show off that he was wearing pricey boxers. Yeah, I was real impressed. I'm sure he wouldn't have attracted any lady's eyes had he been wearing briefs. Those boxers got you laid. No, I'm playing. Didn't make a fucking difference. Or, wait a minute, did it?



But the kicker was: that kid's T-shirt was one of those you get in junior high when you swim in a swim meet, golf in a golf tourney, or play chess in the chess club. It said on the back of it: Roman Catholic Parochial Religious School Swim Meet

2011. He had been a swimmer for a white upper class school. Definitely not from one of those lower income yards where people ate fried caterpillar sandwiches, danced the mucho macho mamba and the baby makin' boogie, and drove cars raised ten feet off the ground. Basically, he was a white upper class youngin' letting out a rapper thug vibe identity.

The guy with the Joey Undies on had every right out there to do what he wanted to, to look how he wanted to look. No one could force him to dress different. He was free to dress in whatever way he pleased, but something struck me that he wasn't being real. Yep, that's right. True to who he was, true to the way he grew up. His roots. He wasn't proud of that, and he showboated this fake version of himself. Lost in a dream and couldn't accept reality. Delusional even.

Bo pulled his pack of Dale's out of his jean pocket and opened it up checking how many sticks he had. A pack of Dale's:



He turned to me and said, "I got to get cigs, too. I'll go ahead and charge the beer to my card." He was always generous when it came to the booze. Although

when he'd buy beer, I'd be the next to buy some. We always got each other back. No harm there. It was the exchange economy, man. Capitalism at its finest.

I said, "That's fine. I got cash on me so I'll give you cash for half."

Then Bo noticed the tool, douchie, whatever he was, standing in front of us. He pointed at the guy's shirt and whispered to me, "You see this fuckhead? White boy trying to be black." He laughed and said, "Watch, this."

Bo scooted over to where he was directly behind the kid to where he could basically breathe right on the kid's neck. To onlookers, I bet I seemed confused as fuck. I had no clue what he was about to do. Once Bo drank, you knew you were in for a weird but dapping good time.

I stood there thinking about what mess I'd have to clean up as the black chick behind the register said to the next customer, "Is this all for you?"

Bo yanked his right arm down like he was punching the floor and grabbed the elastic band of the kid's boxers. Then, he stretched that band pulling upward in the direction of his own body. It was as though he was doing curls, lifting those free weights. The boxers suddenly at the kid's shoulders, the dude yelled. "What the fuck?" Kid's face was the color of a freaking stoplight. He was pissed, salty as all get out, bitter as a fritter. His feet dangled above the ground and kicked back and forth, back and forth.

Bo kept him suspended in the air. A little more than five seconds or so, the kid hung up there; it probably felt like eternity for him. It was as though Bo was a big

ole' giant shaking a mini human boy off the ground, sixty stories up, the boy screaming, "Bah, bah, bah, I want my momma."

Meanwhile, everyone in the corner store had turned to see the crazy show. To the far right, a black dude reeled and rolled on the ground laughing. A cute short brunette girl up ahead in line, totally frozen in place, had her hand to her mouth. I noticed everyone around us without having to turn my head, an awesome panoramic perspective. A guy in a beanie behind us held his Duh!Phone taking a video of the action.

Duh!Phones were made by Broccoli, FairyPlanet's number one rival. Jabooty Tanaka, a man of Japanese, East-African and Indiana roots started Broccoli right around when FairyPlanet came out. When I was a student, the market was pretty much cut in half between Duh!Phones and FairyFones. Duh!Phones were duh shit, though. People swore by them. With the Duh!Phone, you could check your pulse in case you were worried about that and you could also make sure you had the right eye color on. People changed their eye color back then. The Duh!Phone probably was a little better; it had everything. Here's Broccoli's logo:



I owned the FairyFone; had to stick to my main man Timothy Carmichael.

Back in the corner store, that sucker was getting a wedgie and everyone was into it. Flabbergasted, I said, “Bo, Bo, stop. What the hell are you doing? Put him down.”

Finally, he let him down and Bo had this huge gleaming grin that said to the kid, “Look what I did, motherfucker. That’s right.”

The kid red in the cheeks and with that pissed off look, his rosy baby face drawn tight, immediately turned around and shoved him. Bo stepped back with his left foot keeping his balance but that’s all he needed to do to defend himself.

“You know you can’t do anything,” Bo said with a sly fucking smile.

The cashier ultimately made her way over through the crowd now bubbling and bubbling up. Unlike most of the folks in the store, she did not think this was a joke whatsoever. “Um, I’m going to have to ask you to leave, sir. You can’t do things like that.”

Bo made a grunty sound and said, “All I did was give him a wedgie. And we still want this beer.”

Acting right away trying to not get tensions going even hotter, instead trying to cool them down, to get folks to ease up on the boiler, I said, “I’ll get the beer, man. You can go wait outside.”

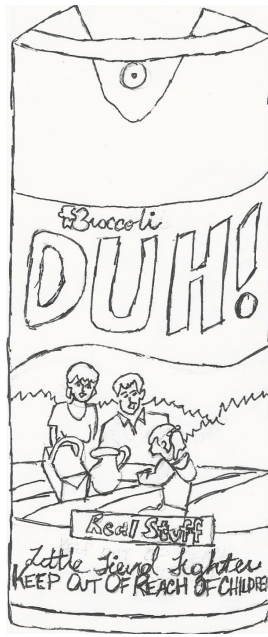
“Okay, okay, okay,” and he walked outside in his confident, head held high, I’m going to kick someone’s ass manner. Well, in actuality, he walked like a Neanderthal.

I paid for the beer and bought the pack of Dale's. Everyone in the store chatted away about the goings-on. "Dude, I've never seen anything like that." "That guy has some balls." "This video is getting shares like crazy." "That kid, he was absolutely humiliated."

The kid was humiliated. After wiggling around and making it so his boxers were back where he wanted them, he stood there silent, still, staring straight. I thought he was trying his best to forget. I was certain he had no idea why that happened to him. Did wearing your pants down low make you deserve to get a wedgie in front of your fellow classmates? No. As it turned out though, kid would be head honcho in the Etherworld.

He became famous and went by the name Wedgie Wilbur, started a rap career, and lived the high life in DillyDallibu outside of L.A., which stood for Las Armpitas, a coastal city in the state of Cowabunga. Was wearing boxers down low worth it? For him it was.

Something caught my eye as I walked out of MWCC that day. A black metal sales rack stood right before the exit. Unassorted miscellaneous junk items sprinkled about: bottle openers, hairbrushes, key chains, cheap sunglasses, lighters, sun tan lotion, and a small bright orange aluminum can of bug spray. The fact that it was bug spray didn't make me stop. It was the brand.



I had no fucking clue Broccoli had bug repellent out on the market, and what do you know? So did Timothy Carmichael with that one with his face on the bottle. And that cologne spray got me in the eyes and altered my vision. Something was odd with this, not quite right. After wondering about Carmichael, Duh!, and Nay Nay Gray for a quick minute, I got back to where I was going and forgot about it. Forgot about it for a few minutes anyway.

When I opened the door and walked out, Bo was posting up against the brick wall smoking a cigarette. He couldn't take his eyes off some chick wearing Booty Pants. Booty Pants was the actual name of the manufacturer. Bo was really looking like a creeper predator transfixed on that young woman's badonkadonk.

"Dude, what the fuck?" I startled him, "You don't know him. A guy giving another guy a wedgie in a convenience store. Really?" But after saying that, I couldn't stop myself. I cracked up joyful high-pitched laughter.

“Man, I don’t know. I mean his boxers were right there in front of me. I couldn’t help it.” His voice showed signs of disappointment but he held back a slight chuckle chuckle.

“Let’s just go to the damn party without anymore altercations. Here. I paid for the pack of cigs and the case of beer. You owe me.”

“You know I’ll get you back.”

We started walking up Seventeenth Avenue to reach the hippie powwow that was four or so blocks away, and the sky was pitch black minus a few stars. The stars lit up more vibrant than ever, a pulsating, swirling kind of light. Street lamps shined light on both sides of the street. We were getting close and the fact that it was quiet gave off this creepy feel like something cray cray was going to happen. I totally spaced out, being a Mr. Space Cadet. I couldn’t stop asking myself questions: why would both Timothy Carmichael and Jabooty Tanaka each have a bug repellent out? Their specialization was in computers and technology. Was there a connection between their repellent and Nay Nay Gray? And what about this fairly recent trend of folks eating insect sandwiches? A connection there? That only came about five years ago or so. Strange. I shook my head and went back to looking forward to the party.

On Seventeenth, A red 90’s M’Lady coupe sat up ahead parked under a tree. It was one of those models with fish eye headlights. Seemed to be moving at the speed of light sitting there. Most likely a hand-me-down from rich parents to their perfect little child. The M’Lady’s logo, emblem, whatchamacallit:



Small duplexes, two-story brick houses, overlooked the street. Mowed lawns and flowers were in front of the dens. This was one of the nicer parts of campus where students and grad students, grads, and a few old-timers lived side by side. It was well taken care of and near an artsy fartsy shop district. As we passed a duplex, a dark cat split from the front yard to the bushes.

A couple raindrops hit the top of my head. “Is it supposed to rain? Did you see a forecast?” I asked Bo.

He stared straight ahead. “I don’t know. I need a beer.”

I said, “We’re almost there. I could’ve sworn the weather man on Channel 3 said no rain for the next few days.”

“That fucker’s full of shit, man.”

He was right. You think we would’ve been a whole lot better at predicting the fucking weather.

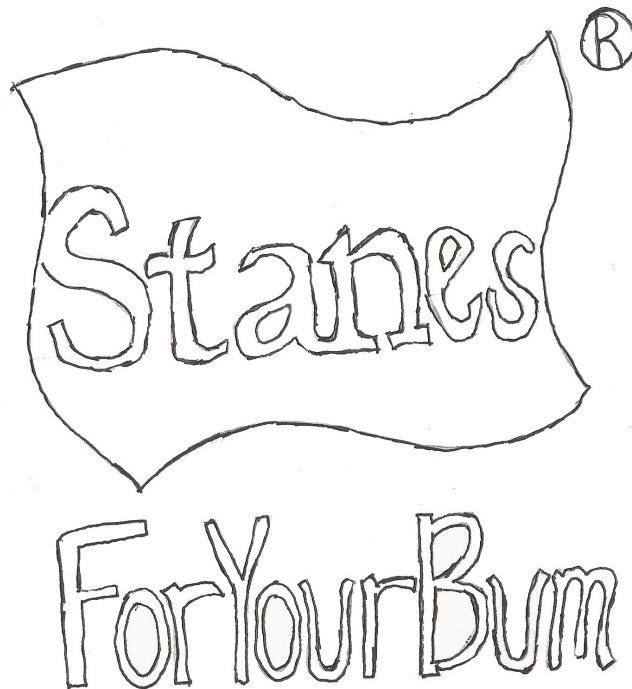
As we reached the shindig, the rain picked up and came down faster, became a heavy mist. House was good size; two stories, and it hung over the corner of

Seventeenth and Indianola. A strobe light blinked on and off in the front room, and the house bumped to some of that pump step; loud bass consumed the whole freaking space. Voices, yells, drunk chatter broke through the walls out to the sidewalk. The yard hadn't been mowed in a long fucking time. It was more like a straw-field out in the country than a front lawn. These hippies didn't give two shits about mowing. Possibly, they were attempting to be *all-naturale*.

A dude sat in a rocker on the front porch and smoked a cig. He was thin, small, had long wavy hair, a scraggly goatee, and a graphic T with the rock artist Ivana GoFar on it. He was a hippie, all right.

The talk of the town was that a number of these hippie kids traveled around from city to city like the Rinkydink Brothers Circus following their favorite bands and that they called themselves the Jolly Golly Fun Time Gang. They only wore clothes that were "made from the Earth," never went into the Etherworld, and ate what they could scavenge up from the trash, the woods, and the farms that they came in contact with. Their life was all about PMS. That's pot, music, and sex. Hey, what can I say? The mysticism hovering over this underground crowd intrigued me. Like I said earlier, I was imagining Buddha Master types.

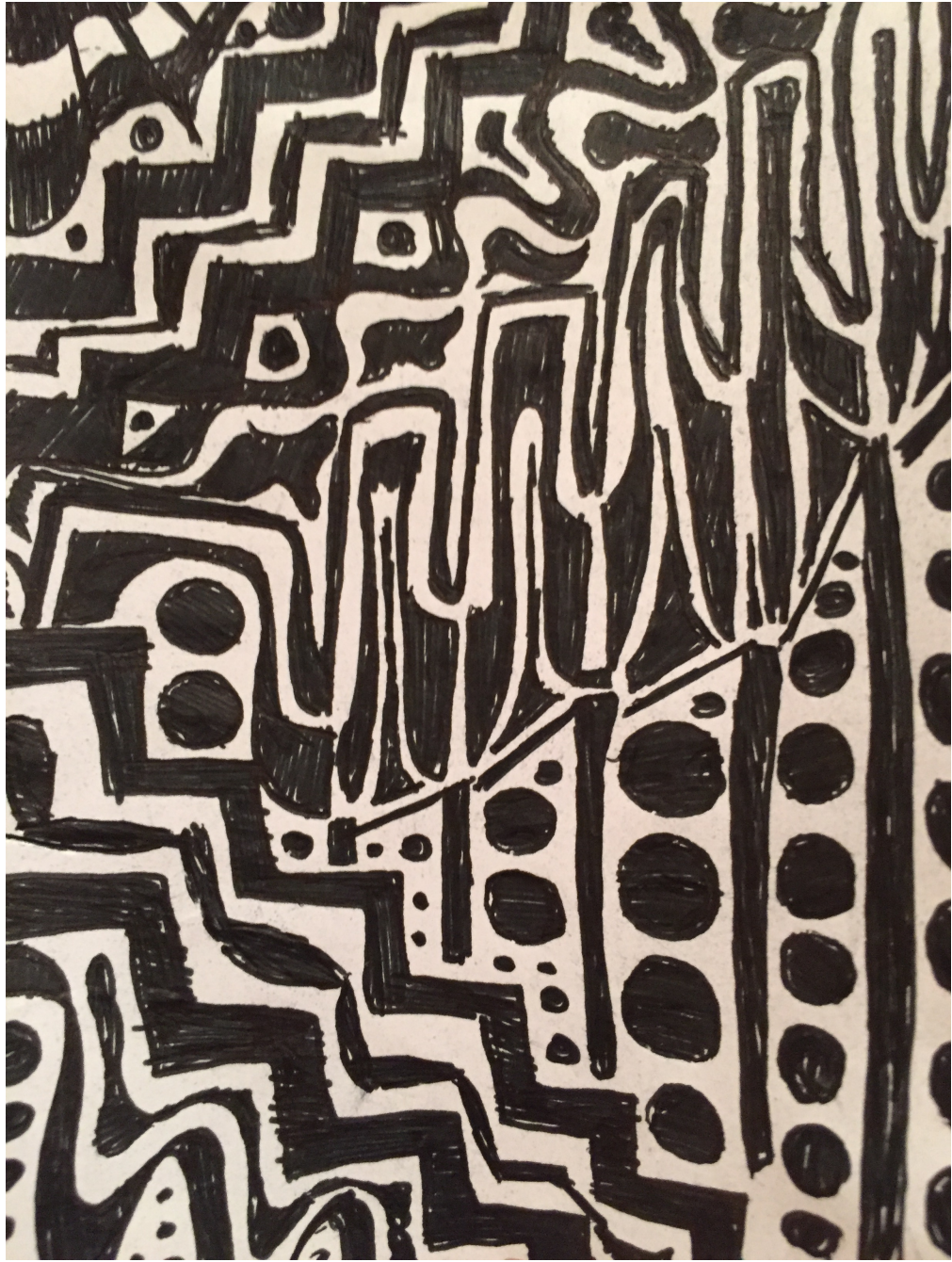
Folks said the Jolly Golly Fun Time Gang never wore brand names, but you can't always believe the shit you hear. Low and behold, I bet this scraggly goatee cat had a small hidden tag in the inside of his shirt, which said Stanes on it. Stanes was originally an underwear brand. Their label looked like so:



We walked up the rickety worn out steps and Bo glanced over to the kid, gave him a head nod and said, “What up?”

The dude glanced over to us like he hadn’t seen us. His eyebrows perked up but he didn’t say anything. His eyes were glazed over, shiny, like that sticker on the wedgie guy’s hat. The kid looked far past us. Dude was most def fucked up on some type of drug. He reached his arms out and drew figure eights in the air with his right pointer finger. He replied to Bo’s question in a scratchy, having smoked way too many cigs voice, “The world, man. The world. It’s the world.”

I didn’t know what I was getting into, was living life on the edge, I guess. Bo grinned and stared at the motherfucker. Bo had an expression on his face revealing he was super weirded out. I shook my head and said, “Let’s go inside.” We didn’t need to repeat the crazy wedgie extravaganza. I used an extra umph when opening the janky front door. The wind wanted it closed.



PREVIEW ART FOR CHAPTER TWO: BOOMBOX STAIRCASE

CHAPTER TWO

From my sort of panoramic bird's eye view, college kids buzzed and shuffled around, in and out and back in again like busy bees learning a new dance routine. The smells of old bong water, liquor, beer seeped out, giving the room a danky, musty atmospheric layer. The pump step banged and banged, no reverberated through the house; ba-bum, ba-bum, ba-bum, and on and on and on, the feeling of four hundred freaking cannons blasting one after the other with the strobe ever so often filling up the room with bright fantastic light.

Bo slammed the front door but no one noticed we had arrived. "Excuse me, trying to get by," I said with punctual gusto. I formed my arms into a point and squeezed through the human blob. A tall, lanky and friendly looking cat with man-tails stood before me and backed up against the wall. His man-tails, pigtails for men, were braided with little plastic multicolored hoop-dee hoop beads. They clicked and clacked as he moved.

Man-tails's girl, wearing a flapping leather coat, glided with him; she was glued to his hip. She seemed to not know we were there, totally oblivious. To her, we were just two more fools walking into this joint who were not interesting like her boy. Who didn't have braided ponytails.

A short cat with a pec-grabbing T-shirt pulled a red cup to his mouth. His shirt: an ad for the movie *Blood, Gutz, & Raw Flesh* by that weird as hell looking film director Stanton Flippinpino. Sick-minded moviemaker, if you ask me. His next

movie was always gorier than the previous, wanting everyone to laugh at dead cats and cut-up bodies, but hey, maybe that's what we needed? To laugh a little.

I said to the kid, "Hey, man. Can we get by?" He glared up but slid over letting us pass. By that point, I pretty much saw everything, well, everything on the first floor. People chitchatted, huddled around the center of the room and close to a raggedy vinyl couch, the vinyl peeling off of it like the skin of an orange. The hosts of the party must've been like most college students dropping up and picking up furniture through the CCXN, the College Community Xchange Network. The CCXN had their own Etherworld social database where folk would note when they'd be putting out their free used crap in front of their homes. Hobos often went by these homes too. They most likely had eaten chewy vinyl morsels off that couch. One person's trash was another person's treasure or another person's snack.

Guys in the room wore beanies, had shaved their facial hair into different styles. Some dude had lightning bolts shaved into his cheeks while another sported that kung fu Manchu look, and another had a neck beard of curly pubic strands of hair. Dudes also had Mary's Little Lamb Chops for sideburns. Place was emblematic of a new age strapper kingdom.

Most of the ladies were pretty damn attractive. Many of them wore those Booty Pants, Booty Pants of various styles and colors. Some were tie-dyed, while one had Jimmy Flanders's face on it, a progressive socialist who was running for president, and then another had little twirly twisty-tongued serpents. Her snake style made me think she was a go-getter, easy and floozy. Brunettes, blondes, redheads,

and black-haired beauties wore bright colored dresses, leather jackets, skintight jeans, beanies, fake nonprescription eyeglasses, and sleeveless tops revealing butterfly and cat tattoos. Real Cute. I dug that strapper look. It gave off a sexy, smart Française sophisticated vibe. Aroused my libido. Shaw-wing!

I tip tapped Bo on the shoulder and pointed toward the telly. “Check it out.” A couple hippie chicks and a dude passed a joint, smoked the kush, but what they were smoking was not what caught my attention. The hippie chicks’ get up, or rather lack their of. That’s what caught my attention. Above flowing flower skirts, nipples peered through multicolored bodypaint. They must’ve been reppin’ the Free the Boobies Movement, a group of women who walked around, went to work, did their day-to-day activities, whatever, without tops on. They even had their own flag:



They yipped and yapped claiming that showing off their boobies to the whole wide world would stop men from jacking it. Yes, they made that claim. They thought the tactic would be successful. Them going around with no tops did not stop me. I

jacked it no matter what. It let out negative energy and blessed me with a lax mindset. My one-a-day method for meditation.

I wasn't about to complain about giving freedom to boobies though. I fought with them to the death. Stood up to the man for free boobies. Boobie Power, yo.

One pair of those boobies were rather small, the pair on the dreadlocks lady. Her long blonde hair twisted up into a ball of dreads and a cloud of mites or dust, a hazy substance emanated from her noggin. She was skinny too, bony like she'd done an insane amount of hard dope.

The other though, now she was downright sexy. Sweet Momma Georgia Brown, if you know what I mean. Her hair curved around her rounded well-shaped breasts reaching past her skirt. I couldn't help it but I was dumbfounded, awestruck, mesmerized. Her body was a beautiful thing. And her face, a wonderful brown ebony hue. Oh, she was gorgeous. I wondered if she was part of the Jolly Golly Fun Time Gang. I yearned for her to be and for the chance to hang with her and her crew. Suddenly, I bumped into someone. Shit, those nips were distracting.

"Dude, what the fuck?" said a guy with a fedora, wayfarer eyeglasses, and a cardigan. He was dead-up the strapper-lad version of Mr. Tooters. That kids show that was on back in the day, Mr Tooters' Neighborhood? Yeah, that one. Maybe Mr. Tooters was the very first strapper. He got the trend going, you know. Hey, parents got to watch out for what their kids be watching on the telly.

"Oh, sorry. I was staring at those girls over there. I was distracted." He replied in an I'm smarter than you and more hip than you tone, "What? Have you

never seen boobs before? Watch, where you're going." He finally scooted away a touch for me to get by. The Free the Boobies Movement certainly had an affect on that chotch.

I tilted my head to the side and said to Bo, "You know someone here, right? Where are they?"

"Back there. Straight ahead. There's Dirk. Standing next to the fridge."

Itching through the crowd, I took in my surroundings, up, down, around, and above. I couldn't see the paint on the walls or on the ceiling. Posters, concert flyers, album covers, different kinds of pop culture media mush everywhere. Posters of Georgie Virginia from The Bubble Heads Band, posters promoting music festivals, several posters of Kojo "Lotsa Rasta" Barley, a poster advertising The Big Hair Musical, and others. A cover for a Mr. Cray album hung there:



A flyer advertising the Dobestatica Boombasical Fest:



A large woven rug stapled above me. I tilted my head back checking it out, a mega-trippy, fuchsia color mixed in with reds, yellows, blues, and a weird symbol sat in the center of it. The symbol was spirally and pointed going on and on into empty space, a neverending black hole. I had never seen that sign, which was odd

considering I'd read up on the whole 60's hippie movement and all that revolutionary, free lovey dovey goo-boo. That type of rug though, yeah those things. That's right. Tapestries was what they were called. I'd seen them before just not the symbol. This symbol:



The thing fucking perplexed me. At first, gradually, it spun and spun a slow rotation toward its centerpoint. I couldn't remove my eyes from the fucking thing. They were stuck, glued in place. Yes, my vision was still panoramic-like but at the middle of that panorama was this spiral circle and it grew and grew eventually taking up my whole visual field. Wouldn't stop spinning either, faster and faster till the black and white symbol itself no longer was flat but was a long tube, a melding of lines, rotating into infinitive black space, and I was traveling down a neverending line, road, walkway, slide falling through the tube. Scared and diving headfirst.

At the onset, the sounds of the party were there in the background, but like how the spiral went faster and faster so did the sounds of the party. Faster and faster, more uptempo, out into the forefront until those sounds became a screeching buzzing static like a malfunctioning television, but then from that static they transformed into total uninterrupted silence. Upon reaching this blank silence, joy came over me. Joy at the whole marvelous magnificence of it all, this sensory experience. With my eyes wide, wide open, I no longer was afraid of where I was falling but was excited to enter the unknown.

Then suddenly, the silence broke. My name being yelled over and over again, “Thad, Thad, Thad,” returning me back to the reality of the party. And my little space-out session in the spiral had only lasted a second or two in real time. I shook my head a bit waking myself up out of the weird funk. Even though I had felt super duper joy, I trembled on the inside, having zero clue about what the fuck was going on with my vision, my mind, whatever it was. All I knew was that that shit was most likely tied to the fucking cologne.

A kid pushed through the crowd heading straight for me. His blonde hair curled up underneath one of those bro-man toboggans that have a notch-like bill at the front. He also had a pink and blue tank top, dressed to go hit up the skate park, was a real Cowabunga surfer cat even though he’d probably never been out of Bepopo. I had lived with him in the dorms.

“Oh, shit. Johnny. What up, man? Haven’t seen you in forever.” Attempting to hide my anxiety about what was happening to me, I sounded upbeat but chill.

“Yeah, dude,” he talked quickly, high-pitched, high-energy. “Why haven’t I seen you here, before, man? My buds have parties every fucking weekend at this place. You missed out before, but damn this one’s for sure bumpin.’ We got booze out the fuckin’ ass. Man, come on, man. Let’s take a shot.”

Johnny Crisco was a huge partier, drank a shitastic bunch of booze. He went hard all the fucking time. At that point, I got drunk maybe just Fridays and Saturday nights, but folks like Johnny and Bo, they drank every single night. I was down to take a shot and get sauced though. I believed the alcohol would muster up my guts, get me to make a formal introduction with snake pants lady or the woman with the free boobies. I believed in booze. I also was convinced alcohol calmed my nerves and there was some serious shit going on with my nerves. I was twitchy, fidgety, a spaz. I introduced Johnny to Bo and we headed for the kitchen, our heads up while we tried to stroll through the crowd all badass like.

Liquor bottles and red plastic Yolo cups spread over the black granite kitchen counter, a complete and utter unorganized mess. Cups moved up and off the counter and back down again. People drank at a steady pace, the bottles and cups playing a game of musical chairs. An assortment of liquors: Granderson Irish Whiskey, Limp Dick Janiels Bumblebee Honey, Redneck’s Rot Gut Kandookie Bourbon, Timón, Blownoff Vodka, RumLombardi, Drunk Pirate, and a green bottle with the word Mächenfreunde on the label:



It was pick your poison night at the hippie house.

We squeezed through more folks and passed a hepcat who lurched above us, his skinny frame and brown dreads reminding me of one of those ole' weeping willows. He lingered there zoning out with his quarter size gauges and a small wire hoop pierced to his brow. His droopy eyes nestled between tight wrinkles, proof he had been smoking plenty of those pots. Without a care in the world, he sported pajama pants and a multicolored bathrobe. I asked the dude, "Can we get behind you there? We want to take a shot."

"Sure, m'... an. Do whatchya want. We all free," he said in a quiet, muffled voice and glided forward. He smiled revealing his gritty yellows and held up the peace sign. Upon first seeing the cat, I didn't think much of him; the guy seemed high as balls like the dude on the front patio, but, hey man, he was friendly and chill. He was cool with me, and that's who I was trying to find. Peeps who were cool with me.

Neanderthal-esque Bo went over to Dirk. Johnny and I went to the bottles. Johnny grabbed four small glasses from the cabinet and asked, “So what you want man? Plenty of choices.” He was not normal, he might’ve done some blow, Addie, or Molly, or Susie earlier. Yeah, Susie, you’ll hear more about that drug later on down the line. More than his usual uppity self, Crisco was off the walls. Every couple of seconds he slapped his cheek, even though there was nothing there to get rid of.

“What’s this stuff with the German name? Never heard of this shit before.” We had to talk loud above the chit chatter and pump step.

“Mächenfreunde. Oh, snap. Yeah, that’s shit dope, man. My pops got it for me for my B. day weeks ago. Strong shit. Get you fucked. A-hundred eighty proof. It’s got reptilewood in it too. Turn you into a fucking hedgehog.”

“I’m not sure what you mean by that, but I’ll give it a go.” I had always been into trying new crap, not sticking with the same name brands, went for variety, kept my options open if you know what I mean.

He poured the bluegrass colored liquid. The shot glasses had short phrases written on them from prior Spring Break trips and what not. Phrases such as: “Only Pussies Are Sober. Don’t Be A Pussy.” “Drink, You Mofo, Drink,” “Stay Classy And Throw Back A Shot,” and “Liquor Before . . . No, Liquor Before Nothing. Liquor All The Fucking Time.”

We clicked the glasses together not cheering to anything, more signing to one another saying, “Right on, bro-man.” Shit didn’t taste crag, more different than good

though, like the char on the outside of burnt piece of bread, earthy. But the bite, fucking ‘ay, that was strong. It hit the back of my throat and I immediately gagged. A stomach acid taste arrived, but I didn’t puke. That bite, though. Wowza’s! Strong as that rubbing alcohol stuff if a cat was ever to drink that. What was that saying? Something like if it goes in hot, it’s coming out hot. When the booze came out the other end, I had to go for Martin’s Premium Triple-ply T.P. Martin’s mascot and logo:



Their’s was the best freaking toilet paper.

“Wooh, that’s harsh,” I said.

“Yeah, no shit. I’ll pour us another one. Drunk Pirate. You can’t hate on *The Drunk Pirate*.” Crisco snagged the bottle of Drunk Pirate and poured it, this time pouring one for each of us. We took the four shots over to Bo and Dirk. “Here, you go dudes. To college,” he said to Bo and I.

Of course, I’d had Drunk Pirate before, the standard rum we drank at university. Tasted like rum, nothing special, nothing yuppie, not high class or

anything. Got you fucked up. Did the job. But I also believed that the ladies loved me when there was a lil Drunk Pirate to me. I mean they all adored that Captain Quack Farrow in the movie *Buccaneers of the West Indies*. Wah-la, presenting everyone's fave, Drunk Pirate:



After putting our shots back on the table, Bo pointed me to Dirk. We made the formal intro, chin up in the air and the “What up” question. He was chill, confident, scoped out the party, made sure things went “A okay.” He donned a T-shirt that said “WHATEVA” in huge white letters, had a round face, a buzzed head, and had two white studs on either side of his neck, tried to pull off some kind of Lankenstein look. Beats me, what he was trying to do, probs trying to be badass.

Those two shots hit me like a bottle rocket flying up inside my brain and going “kaboom!” Feeling whoozy, lightheaded, but cranked up, I flew open their fridge and snagged one of our Beer Co.’s. The cold beer streamed down my throat, refreshed my senses. Totally apathetic to that space out sesh with the spiral and with my overall change in my vision, I grew accustomed to the panoramic camera mode

and only cared about getting blitzed. Didn't know what the fuck was coming and didn't care either.

By that point, Bo was pretty fucked up too. His words slurred, swished, and stuttered. He yelled and complained to Dirk, his usual complaint about pro rugby's new rules and regs. "Dur's no hittin' in duh HTeeeeeeeRL no more. You can . . . not hit. They's might as well's switch to tube hand touch. Bull shit's. Dat newb commissioner, Dodger Doodell. He can suck bag a dicks. I's only watchin' callish roogby."

HTRL stood for Human Torpedo Rugby League. Bo spoke the truth. Pro rugby did tighten up the rules making the game safer, but they went too far. Hey, those players signed up to get human torpedoed, right? HTRL's logo:



Dirk agreed with Bo. He nodded and nodded repeatedly ignoring Bo but still scoping out the shindig. I guess he was Mr. Big Bouncer Man. Meanwhile, Johnny talked up a strapper dame. She had big eyeglasses on with the lenses punched out, had platinum blonde hair, and a black tank revealing pale cleavage and tattoos. On her collarbone, a red heart with a battle axe through it. On her shoulder, the face of

that green ogre from the movies *Rex* and *Rex 2*. Wrapped around her neck, a tattoo of a rat eating its own tail. She was definitely out there, an oddball. No one could put her in a square box. But yo, she was hot. Crisco didn't discriminate against weird women. And neither did I.

I stared at the counter being a drunk space cadet thinking, well being dumb, not thinking, only staring at things, had a humongous smile on my face. That's when I saw it. A bottle of Kung Fu Cucaracha. Kung Fu Cucaracha originated in Masalachailand, was a hot red, roasty spicy sauce that you could basically dap on anything and it would make the food instantly scrumptious. Kung Fu Cucaracha cured cheeseburgers that had been sitting out in the sun for several hours. The bottle had changed though since the last time I'd seen it. The writing on it had been altered. The bottle appeared like so:



Being drunk and not giving a dog's ass what folks would think, I grabbed the bottle and showed it to Johnny Crisco and tatted up chick. I said, "You see this? The bottle says I'm sexy and is laughing at me. Fucking hilarious, man. Those Chinese Ching Chong motherfuckers really do have a sense of humor." I cracked up and laughed a thunderous laugh. Instead of receiving a nice warm welcome, I received weird glare after weird glare. It was as though I was an alien from outer space and didn't know that yes, I was not a normal human being. Johnny stopped whispering in the lady's ear and stepped over to me. Bo, man, he kept going on and on about rugby.

Johnny put a hand on my shoulder, talked slower than before. Really taking care of me like, but I don't know if he actually cared. Trying to appear all father-like to the future mommas out there, putting on an act. He was good at that shit. "Dude, you okay? That bottle only has Chinese characters on it. It doesn't say that."

"Wait, these are Chinese characters on the bottle?" I rubbed my finger over the letters. I saw the Merican language, not Chinese. And no, it did not say I was sexy in Chinese characters. I felt uncomfortable, even more fidgety than before. With my fingers, I twirled the hair on the side of my head, one of my many nervous habits.

Johnny still talked super fast-like. "Yes, man. That German liquor, that shit is powerful, but it doesn't make you hallucinate. You okay?"

His question did not ease my crazy anxiety. The room and the folks in it were fuzzy, shaking, glowing. Not clear and defined. Most def a side effect of the booze,

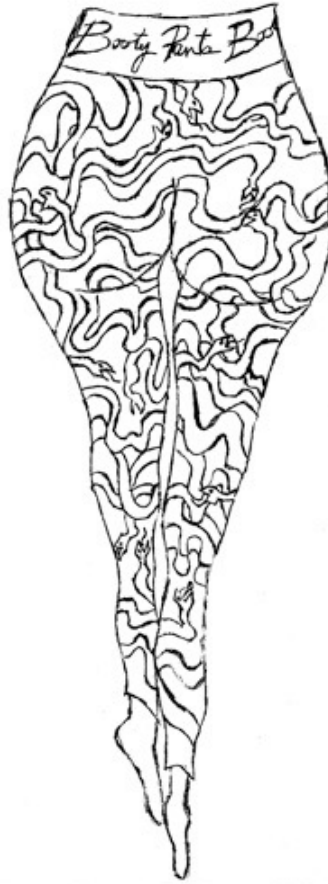
but something else had something to do with it. “Nah. I think I need to sit down.” I felt faint.

Fortunately, a chair was open in the corner, next to where the television was. A big ole’ Lazy Bae overseeing the mob of students talking, dancing, smoking herb, playing on their phones. The company Lazy Bae made the most popular comfy recliners. They swallowed us up whole like we were gumballs inside a cat’s mouth. You knew it was a Lazy Bae by the stitching of the company’s mascot on the ride side of the chair. The Lazy Bae mascot was known throughout the land of Merica:



Johnny showed me to the chair, “Me, Bo, and Dirk are right over in the kitchen if you need us.”

In between sips from my brew, I took deep breaths glancing around observing every mother fucker in the room. My eyes fell upon the snake booty pants lady. In particular, that booty of hers:



Some force was that fucking arrant spray of Nay Nay. It propelled me like I was on top of a V12 engine going full speed ahead, a tiny ball of energy, heading towards that woman's right butt cheek. It took me out of my physical apparatus, body, structure, self, whatever, you want to call it, and my perspective again changed. I saw the room and everything in it from below that lady's waistline, a snake caught in the design of her leggings.

I didn't feel flat or two-dimensional like the design. I wiggled my tail and that wiggle traveled up through my slithery spine until reaching and fizzling out of my neck and head. I wasn't a snake through and through, though. It was very fucking sensual, sexual, libidinous. I still had the mind of twenty year old cat Mr. Thad

Bevins, a dirty, horny, raunchy mind, and yes, I was aware of my surroundings. I wrapped my body around that booty like I was two years old and it was my favorite stuffed animal.

Turning into Mr. Hornymeister, I coiled up tighter and tighter to that cotton firm but soft surface. That chick worked out; must've been the type who rode the exercise bike in bikini bottoms on her front lawn. Hoochie Coochie! Yo-yo ma, yee-haw! I realized an inch or two ahead, over, and down the curve of her buttocks, in between her thighs, and I would be tight close up to the holiest of holies. I imagined rustling up a little excitement in her. Wanted to get her feeling high and mighty, woogly and googly.

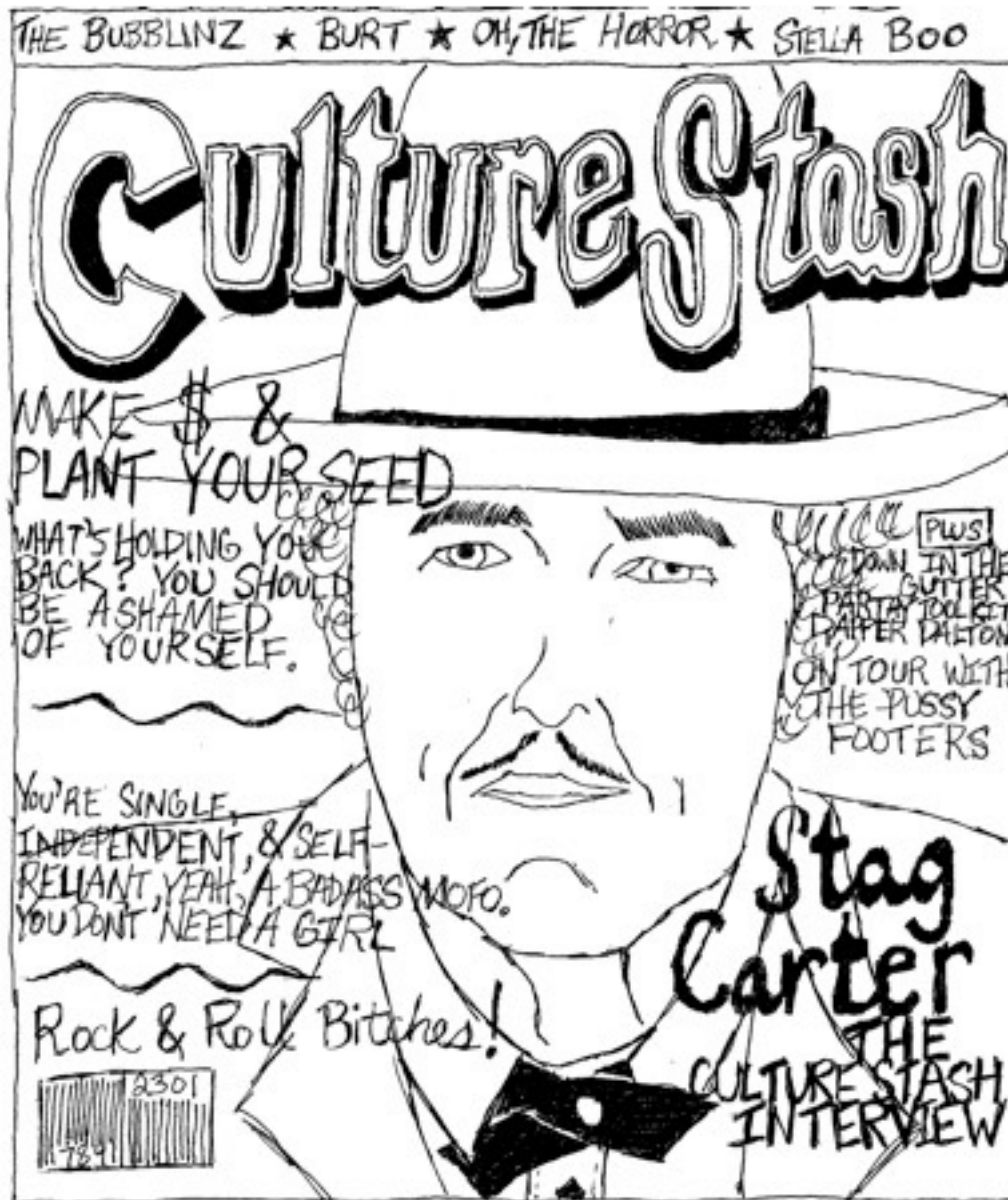
Looking around, I didn't have any other competitors. I was the only three-dimensional snake. I climbed over and around the two D. snakes that looked like me but couldn't do what I was doing. I was the one and only viper, the VIP, the chosen one. After I slipped my frayed tongue out and hissed, trying to be superbadass letting out a battle cry, I jolted down her intergluteal cleft, that exquisitely sculpted canyon.

When I was almost there, almost to my destination, in between the wrinkles of her leggings, my eyes shut, and I couldn't see a thing. A hard weighted pressure pushed on the sides of my head. Something from up above squeezed me. Eyeballs pulled away from their sockets. Oh, shit. The girl squeezed her two fingers together. She squished and squished and applied pressure to my head. She picked at her wedgie causing my snake body to be crushed into obliteration. Apparently, those Booty Pants were too tight for her.

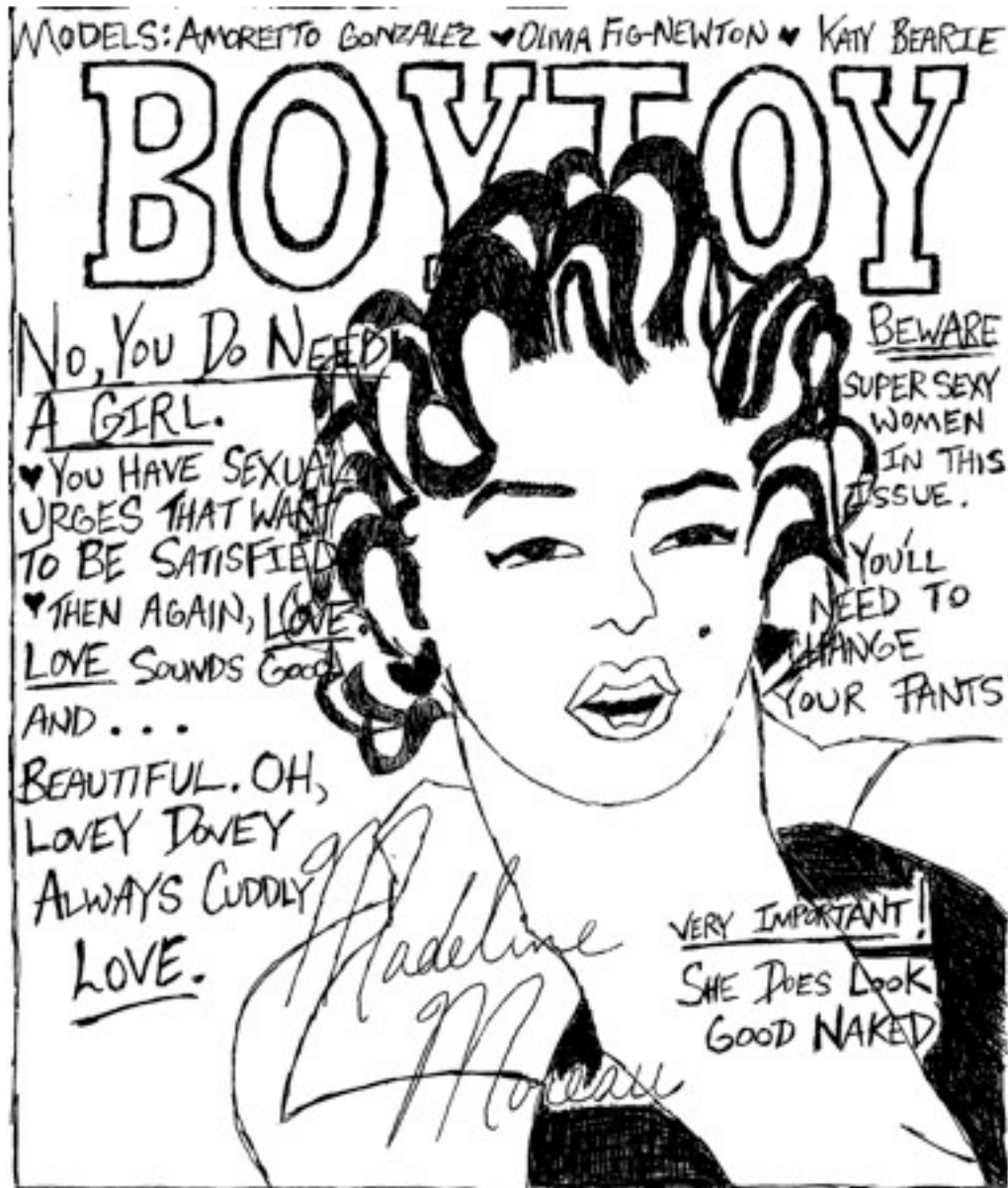
And there went my hallucination. Alive and awake, I sat with a semi-hard-on, alone in the comfy chair with my beer.

An uproar and loud cheering. The pump music shut off and someone changed the music. Changed the music to one of those 80's dancing and getting lucky songs. "Wild and Funky Playhouse" by the 32 Double-D's blew through the speakers and the strobe went faster and faster. Girls and guys jumped and screamed the chorus, "Wild and Funky Playhouse! Woo! Woo! Let's Play! Wild and Funky Playhouse! Woo! Woo! Let's Play!" The floorboards shook underneath. I gripped the arms of the chair to brace myself. I didn't prefer to be wrapped up that rowdy, noisy, busy, craziness.

I got through all that hoopla by drinking more of my brew-ha, was my safety-net, my crutch, and battle ax. I chugged that thing down and was ready for another when I looked down at the mags resting on the table next to me. Three mags sat there waiting to be read or maybe they were reading me. The words on the left side of each magazine spoke to my inner tinkering, nailed the nail on the head, spoke the truth, about my feelings towards getting laid, getting a woman, finding a lady friend, and what not. The first one with the greatest songwriter of all time on the cover, Stag Carter:



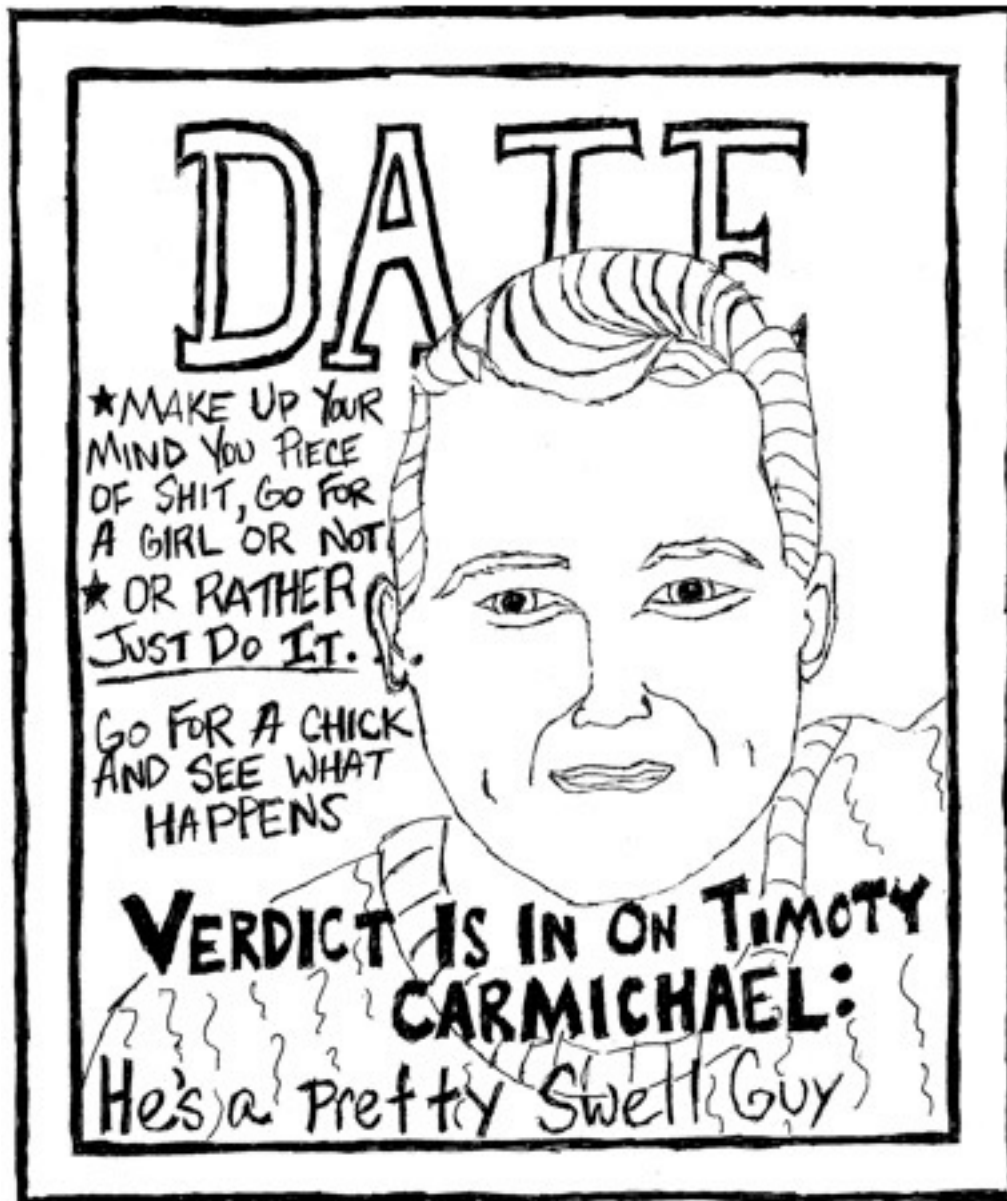
After traveling up and down the badonkadonk of that lady, the left column there expressed my thoughts to a T. It was as if Stag Carter gave me confidence to be a real man, be my own man, and to not be tied down by any woman. To not be tied down by women but to still muster up the go forth to chat those women up, and what I really needed was a lady friend to have regular whoopee with. But then came Madeline Moreau on the cover of *BoyToy*:



Oh, Madeline Moreau, she made my body quiver, shiver, collapse. I sunk in the chair like I was an overgrown candle melting into the fabric. To go back home, back to a mansion on the top of mountain, to return to Madeline Moreau every night for the rest of eternity? And not with sex in mind but for her TLC, her tender, love, and care. Oh, oh, babooshka, mamacita, that'd be the life. I wanted to hold her for

dear life, or any beautiful woman for that matter. I was weak in the limbs and gave up any speck of manly respectability I had.

But then that next mag, upped my spirits, enstilled some pride in me, made me regain my *manness*, if that's an actual thing, someone's *manness*. That real cool boy dapper dude, Timothy Carmichael on the cover of *Date*:



Timothy Carmichael wouldn't have fallen down and begged to be with a woman like I would've have done. He wouldn't have lost his composure. Oh no, he was real smooth but also of course "pretty swell," so he wouldn't do any woman wrong. He went with the flow and trusted his instinct, swam wherever the waves took him. There, Timothy Carmichael told me be a man, talk to a damn woman, see what happens motherfucker. Yeah, and he was right. Too not necessarily have sex or a long term relationship in mind but to dig that present moment.

After receiving the motivational tidbit from Carmichael, there she was. At the far end of the kitchen moving down the stairwell. She floated as the getting lucky song switched off and chill reggae beats bipped, bopped, and bongo-ed about. Wearing a blue and green paisley skirt and a white flowing top, she moved like waves easing into a tropical seashore. Her hips swayed back and forth as she descended and her shiny blonde hair draped over her kind pale but not too pale face. A blue and yellow head wrap hung from her forehead. I couldn't stop staring. Luckily, she paid attention to where she was stepping though and not up into the room. Or else she probs would've seen me staring like a fucking idiot.

She reached the floor and smiled, observing the excitement about the room. People laughed, yelled drunk epithets, lifted each other into the air, did that crowd surfing shenanigans, fist pumped after taking shots of Mächen, jumped, danced, and overall acted like drunken buffoons. I'll never forget her smile, perfectly white teeth. And the smile had this calming nature, in the midst of that chaotic but joyful babble-boo. It made me think, damn right, yep, everything would be a-okay. Made me

remember that these visions, hallucinations weren't hurting me at all. Just making me see weird shit. They possibly helped me learn more about myself. Her smile whispered to me, "Shish, quiet down worried chipper chapper and let it all happen."

She walked into the kitchen, glided toward Johnny, Bo, and Dirk. Oh, that was good stuff. She knew those cats. Talked up a storm with them. Chit chatted on and on, but I couldn't hear what they were talking about. I felt better now, well enough to stand up, socialize, talk it up, like the rest of them. We had common friends. That was an easy, breezy convo starter. I needed a new beer so could head to their locale anyway.

Of course, the convo that started out my very first encounter with angelic hippie woman was not about how we knew the same peeps. Right when Johnny Crisco saw me strutting my stuff toward them, he spoke rapid fire, "Welcome back, my boy Thad. You must be feeling better. No longer seeing weird visions are we? Man, you were lime green in the face, super fucked up." Crisco had to have been snorting that Suze when no one was looking, or maybe being young, free, and loose as a goose, these folks didn't give a shit about one of their pals having a drug problem. "Oh, he'll get over it sometime," those undergrads would say when one of their kind had a frostbitten nose because of too much coke or suze. Well, Crisco was straight back to his ole' frantic cheek slapping self.

He turned to my new crush, the beautiful woman I lusted over, who made me freeze in the Lazy Bae. "This dude's the dude who thought the hot sauce bottle was talking to him. He saw some weird shit, heard voices. Dude can't handle his booze.

Fucking wuss is what he is.” He laughed a loud, “Bahaha, Bahaha,” an echoing howl, that evil type that witches and villains laugh in those Fancy Shmancy Fantasy kids movies and cartoons. Wait a sec, you’ve never heard of Fancy Shmancy? Okay, short tangent, here.

A rather tall, well-clad, moustached gentleman by the name of Rupert Clyde Fancy started Fancy Shmancy Fantasy back in the thirties. Rupert Clyde Fancy was the original animator, the first big-time cartoonist, and Finicky Willy was his creation. Finicky Willy was every kiddo’s and every college girl’s favorite toon. Nobody hated on Finicky Willy. If you hated on Finicky Willy you were obviously an idiot. There was nothing bad about Finicky Willy. He was good and healthy for every single one of the little kids out there in the universe. Here, funny Finicky Willy chases after his wristwatch:



I was a nervous fidgety twitch and I most def became red in the face while I stood in the middle of those partygoers. I raised my voice. Due to my drunkenness, I overreacted and yelled, “Fuck you Johnny. At least, I don’t snorts Suzy behind everybody’s back you fucking fuckass.” And subsequently, I tilted my head down

and pointed it at the ground. I was overcome with embarrassment, and said, “Plus, I like my hallucinations.”

Johnny Crisco retorted, “Ha, this kid called me a fuckass. What the hell is that?”

Bo deduced what the hell was going on because he quit his all-consuming talk with Dirk about southern metal music and said to Johnny, “You got’s a probem hur with Thad? If you’s do, then we have a prob’em.” Bo was over him, chest out; his eyes rained down. Then in a wonderful soft, but high-pitched, delicate, but demanding voice, she spoke out. “Okay, boys, now let’s stop this horsing around.”

She nudged up and put her hand on my shoulder. Complete silence. Yep, the sound of bumping reggae beats followed one after the other and everyone at the party yipped and hollered, but it was quiet for me, totally consumed in my convex-like vision of the spectacular room with this beautiful woman at the center of it. In that sweet voice of hers, she said inquisitive-like, “So what’s this I hear about weird hallucinations? Those sound cool. What have you seen?”

I assumed I had made a terrible first impression. Like really, she calmed us down like we were tikes at a freaking daycare. Great effect I had on her. No, it was not. But then again, she was intrigued and interested by my weird hallucinations. Wink, wink. I couldn’t tell her everything right off. Yeah, I played it cool. Tried to save the good parts, to keep her wanting more, to perform that trick. I replied, “Oh, yep no biggie. Just thoughts I could read Chaineese is all. Turn’s out I can’t.”

“So you thought the Chinese characters were talking to you, told you that you’re sexy? Am I wrong?”

Damn it, Crisco must’ve told her the truth. but she was cute in how she was so interested in learning more about my mystery. I couldn’t resist, couldn’t keep the secrets away from her. “Well, okay, yeah, I mean yeah that’s what the bottle told me.” I glanced over to the bottle. “And yeah it’s still telling me that. That hasn’t changed.”

“Really? You got to be kidding? You must’ve done something other than a shot of Mächen.” She got up closer to me. I didn’t know why. Maybe, she thought I was a cutie, or maybe because it was loud and we couldn’t hear each other, or maybe because she was one of those close talkers that talked right up in everybody’s face. Regardless, I liked it. Her getting up right up onto me like that. I smelled her Daffodil perfume. Smelled like blooming flowers in a garden on a summer day where a baby blue sky reached forever and ever and ever.

“I don’t know. I didn’t actually take. I got something in my eyes. That had something to do with it.” I said back, still a tadbit shy speaking to her and a bit drunk. Beer affected my nerves, you see, or at least, I believed it affected them. So possibly, it acted as placebo. Well, I was fidgety around that high-class hippie chick, thirsty for another one. I grabbed another Beer Co., popped it, and took a sip.

With the gal close to me, Johnny Crisco and Bo were over off out of the way, out in the room, chit chatting with new peeps. They had forgotten about whatever had transpired. It was all good.

“I want to hear about it. Here, let’s go over this way where it’s less busy. We might be able to hear each other better.”

We went over next to the screen door off to the side of the kitchen, and my golly that screen door shook like we were taking fire from multiple machine guns. The wind picked up and the rain whizzed by with tenacity, sheets of rain speeding along sideways. Nowhere to go, but I didn’t want to go. Wanted to hang out with this lady for as long as possible.

The storm didn’t bother her. She glanced out the window and kept on going and going with her questions about my hallucinations, or visions, or whatever the fuck they were. “What you get in your eye?” she yelled as rap music came over the sound system. So much for trying to hear each other.

I remember that crappy rappy. That gangster guy, Rub-A-Dub-Dub, who had been in jail eight different times rapped, “All dem hoes, all dem hoes, all dem hoes up in my dro, all dem hoes, all dem hoes, all dem hoes up in my dro.” Many of the girls and a few of the dudes, for that matter, shook their booties side to side, up and down, and in rhythm with the verses. It was though they had something attached to their rear ends they couldn’t shake loose. Their dance was created specifically for that song, “All Dem Hoes.” Another loser who got famous off DooTube came up with the dance.

I smiled and was honest. I had this problem with never being able to hide stuff from others. Basically, I was in no way a decent actor. Wasn’t like ole’ Timothy in that respect. I let out truth without even hesitating most of time so of course I did

it, here. Especially under the influence of booze too, I couldn't help it. Do I regret letting people in on what happened to me? Hmm, I was honest. You got to accept the honest truth and accept the consequences.

“I know it's embarrassing but cologne. I got cologne in my eyes, and it burned and burned. That's really the only thing that could've caused this. I think.”

She leaned back a touch, didn't believe me at first. “What? Cologne? No, way.”

“Yeah. I don't know how, but that's what's causing this. I got wrapped up in that spirally insignia thing-a-ma-gig over on that rug, totally thought I was inside it and couldn't get out.” I let it all out. An anxious hysteria swallowed me up. Worried my hallucinatory experiences would never end, I downed another swig of brew-ha.

“Oh, the Spiral Abyss.”

“That's what that's called. Yeah, I hallucinated that I was inside that thing.”

Standing there, she looked up at me for answers. She was gorgey, a beaut, a cute little fairy sent from high above. I did my best to focus on what she was saying, to actually listen to her, and to not let her dazzling good looks distract me. She asked, “But seriously, it was cologne? What type of cologne?”

“Nay Nay Gray, the good stuff. I only use the good stuff.”

With a brilliant and excited look in her eyes, she said, “All right, let's go find some of that cologne.”



PREVIEW ART FOR CHAPTER THREE: HIPPIE PRIUS



PREVIEW ART FOR CHAPTER THREE: HIPPIE MAN



PREVIEW ART FOR CHAPTER THREE: HIPPIE WOMAN



PREVIEW ART FOR CHAPTER THREE: HIPPIE DEBBIE DOO



PREVIEW ART FOR CHAPTER THREE: HIPPIE LIZARD MAN



END OF THESIS: PAISLEY MAZE

CURRICULUM VITA

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Education

School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois

M.F.A. Writing

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University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky

M.A. English with Creative Writing thesis

Cumulative GPA: 3.9/4.0

The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

B.A., English, minor in sociology

Major GPA: 3.6/4.0, Cumulative GPA: 3.4/4.0, Dean's List

Journalism & Editing Experience

Marshall D. Cohen Co. LLC

Copywriting & Communications Specialist, March 2013 — January 2014

- Researched bankruptcy protection
- Created guides that detail the process for filing for bankruptcy
- Revised forms that clients used to provide contact and financial information
- Used a variety of formatting in Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, and Adobe Photoshop

Triple Crown Publications

Editorial Assistant, August 2012 — October 2012

- Edited full length novels under a deadline
- Communicated with authors about revising and refining their work

Publishing Intern, May 2012 — August 2012

- Worked closely with CEO Vickie Stringer in publishing the company's books onto e-readers

UWeekly

Freelance Writer, April 2011 — June 2012

- Drafted copy for publication for an independent newspaper with a distribution of 17,000
- Prepared and submitted articles on topics ranging from the war in Afghanistan to summer reading recommendations, 13 articles published, paid per article

The Grove: A Creative Writing Journal of The Ohio State University

Head Prose Editor, September 2011 — January 2012

- Oversaw fiction and creative non-fiction submissions and review processes
- Led submission review workshops
- Managed the revision process and oversaw final selections

Honors and Awards

- Member, Sigma Tau Delta National Honor Society — Alpha Pi Iota Chapter, 2012
- Member, Golden Key International Honor Society — University of Louisville Chapter, 2016