

**FREE!**  
issue 1.6



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Ice-T wrote this years ago, when our nation first went to war with Iraq. It was important then, but I think it is even more important now, if only to show how little things have changed in so much time.

- Johnny

### **From his album *OG: Original Gangster***

Before I go, I'd like to say a few things. This album was completed on January 15, 1991. By now the war has probably started and a whole bunch of people have probably died out in there the desert over some bullshit.

There's a war going on right now in my neighborhood, but I can't really determine which one is worse. I think the one that we're all fighting is fucked up, and that's the war inside our brains, you know.

I feel bad about all the brothers and sisters that are getting pulled right out of the neighborhoods, all the cities and small towns in America to go over there an fight for that bullshit, and most of them don't really have anything to do with it. So I have to send peace out to them.

Also peace out to all my homies in jail. Brothers that are dead, locked up, right here on earth. I'm talking about brother in Soledad, San Quentin, all the way up to Pelican's Bay, Tracy, Chino, and all my homeboys in all there in east coast lock down facilities. I'm talking about Clinton, Rikers, Joilet, you know, every prison in the whole fucking world. That's all bullshit, you know?

They say slavery has been abolished, except for the convicted felon. You all need to think about that. It'll let you know what your fucking Constitution really is about. A lot of my homeboys have been locked down my whole entire career, and that's some bullshit. So for them, from the Rhyme Syndicate and Ice-T, I'd like to send out a special shout out:

Fuck the police.

Fuck the FBI.

Fuck the DEA.

Fuck the CIA.

Fuck Tipper Gore, Bush and his crippled bitch.

This is Ice-T. Told you - you should have killed me last year.

## Letter from the Editor

Sorry to interrupt. We've purposefully avoided obtrusive editor's notes and introductions in the past because the creators of *This is not...* have always wanted our magazine to just drop in and kick it! like a good punk rock tune. However, I felt this issue needed a bit of an introduction.

Many of you will not realize that this magazine (in its two forms) has been going strong for over two years on a more or less bimonthly schedule, until this issue. The blessing, and curse, of this town is the turn over, much like skin cells. For those that are reading us for the first time, you can probably skip this self-important piece of crap of an introduction. Those who have seen us before, we apologize for the unforgivably long delay in getting issue #6 out to you and for the few features that were cut abruptly short. (Snake-eyes didn't take being laid off too well.) We've received tons of great feedback about the magazine over the last few months and it has made me feel guilty as hell, if not necessarily more motivated, but it's definitely kept me going.

Anyway, the reason for the intro is this:

*This is not...* will be ending with this issue. However, if all goes well, *TIN* will be continuing. Much like we shed the title *Anthros Ex Machina* when its time was up, *This is not...* needs to make way for the next incarnation. (How's that for melodramatic drivel?)

Over the summer some unavoidable changes have taken place; three people have left the state, one being half the primary creative team, and we've all but lost our printing infrastructure. Although this has slowed us down, we hope this will be a chance to trim the fat and continue putting out a magazine that we love to read and that continues to crack us up.

After this issue we will be changing to a quarterly time schedule with a slightly different format and ideally a larger print run since we are now catering generally to both Northern Colorado and the Greater Keene - Brattleboro Corridor.

Many of the ongoing features will continue, though many changes will likely to occur, as we try to move out of the backyard and into something a little larger in scope. Already in this issue we have two submissions from the East Coast. Now more than ever, let us know if you are interested in helping out in any way; submissions, printing hook-ups, creative input, etc.

Expect to see the next issue after the first of the year (likely near the end of January) and don't be scared to drop us a line, it'll make everything move more quickly. In the meantime kick back with your cup of coffee, hunker down on the toilet, or settle in where ever you're most comfortable reading and enjoy.

- Spackle

We received this submission a while ago from a local writer calling himself Ahriman. It's a little outdated, but hell, so is punk rock, right? Out of respect for Paris and the hard working crew of bastards that made it happen, we'll proudly run it now.

- Johnny

## Paris, the Last Days

By Ahriman

It is the last days before the Occupation and a haze of smoke hangs over the cafe, mingling with the acrid taste of coffee and unease. About half the tables are filled. The patrons dress in black and nurse the ice at the bottom of their drinks, watching the street with a mix of trepidation and quiet resentment. In two days, the Paris Koffee Hauze will be closing its doors.

From the outside, it's easy to dismiss such boding melancholy. Paris is only one of the dozen coffee houses that litter Fort Collins. On summer nights gutter-punks camp out in the neighboring doorways, and in the winter the smoke inside is denser than fog. Property values in Old Town are at a premium, so there won't be any trouble filling the space. And with a new Starbucks within walking distance, there is little that the town fathers could miss.

\* \* \*

Paris the institution began as Paris on the Poudre, a derivative of a Denver coffee house and bookstore. The dirty uncle of Fort Collins coffee shops, Paris on the Poudre closed down when the owner started up a martini bar across the street, an ominous portent of things to come.

It was the mid-nineties and Colorado was in the midst of an economic boom. Old Town needed a face lift. Derelict buildings were scheduled for renovation, sculptures were moved into the plaza, and concert series were scheduled. The rush of new

money brought new tenants, and Old Town's haphazard collection of colors and classes was replaced with diversity-first bumper stickers and ethnic theme bars.

The jobless center went first, and the new police presence insured that those looking for work didn't hang around. The latino bar was next, making the plaza safe for white women looking to browse the art galleries and jewelry stores. And finally Paris.

In their places sprang vile simulacrum and precise mockeries. Walk toward where the jobless center was and you'll find a yoga center. In the place of the latino bar is a restaurant serving up rastafarian pasta. And where Paris used to be is a satellite police station.

A line was being drawn, and the Old Town planners were up on their rhetoric. Ushering in a store delivering third-world wares made under humane conditions, they declared that the color brown was only romantic when it was shipped across one or more oceans. And when bars became the only places open late, they made it clear that anyone under twenty-one wasn't welcome after dark. With the manic frequency of police patrols, no one disagreed too loudly.

Things were quiet for a year or two, until an ugly weed worked its way up through the freshly laid concrete. It wore its petals dyed purple and black and had a safety pin through its stem. Paris, now the Paris Koffee Hauze, was back.

\* \* \*

It's the day before Paris' closing night. Sandy is working the counter, but things are slow, so she cleans. The patrons talk softly amongst themselves, and self-conscious laughter has taken the place of the usual youthful posturing. The foreboding has grown so great it should be buying drinks.

Sandy is one third of Paris, her husband Zack another, and their child Solace rounds out the equation. Sandy has a smile for all her customers, accepting her role as mother to this motley tribe of goths, punks and misfits. Counselor and mediator, she listens to their teen dramas and laughs with self-abasement when pressed about her own life. Today she alternates optimism for the future with a weird sort of shell shock. Even ignoring the brace of tatoos that decorate both arms, you get the sense that this woman is a survivor.

Solace comes in from the street, dragging his father behind, and the couple trade duties, Sandy pouring love over Solace like rain from a good hard storm. Zack steps behind the bar and continues with the dishes.

If Paris were a televised police drama, Zack would be the bad cop. Six feet tall, give or take a mile, he doesn't give a damn if you come into his coffee house or buy his coffee, but the improvised club above the bar gives a fair impression of what he'd do if you threatened his family. A native of Fort Collins, he spent his youth sitting up all night in the 24-hour restaurants, putting piercings in the hard way. Now a father and business owner, he is an example of a punk trying to fight for his place in northern Colorado's city of dreams.

Frustrated but undeterred, Zack harbors plans for another business, this time a non-profit collective. Part coffee shop, part vegetarian/vegan restaurant, part music venue, he dreams of a place where people can work for food, perform their music and sell their art.

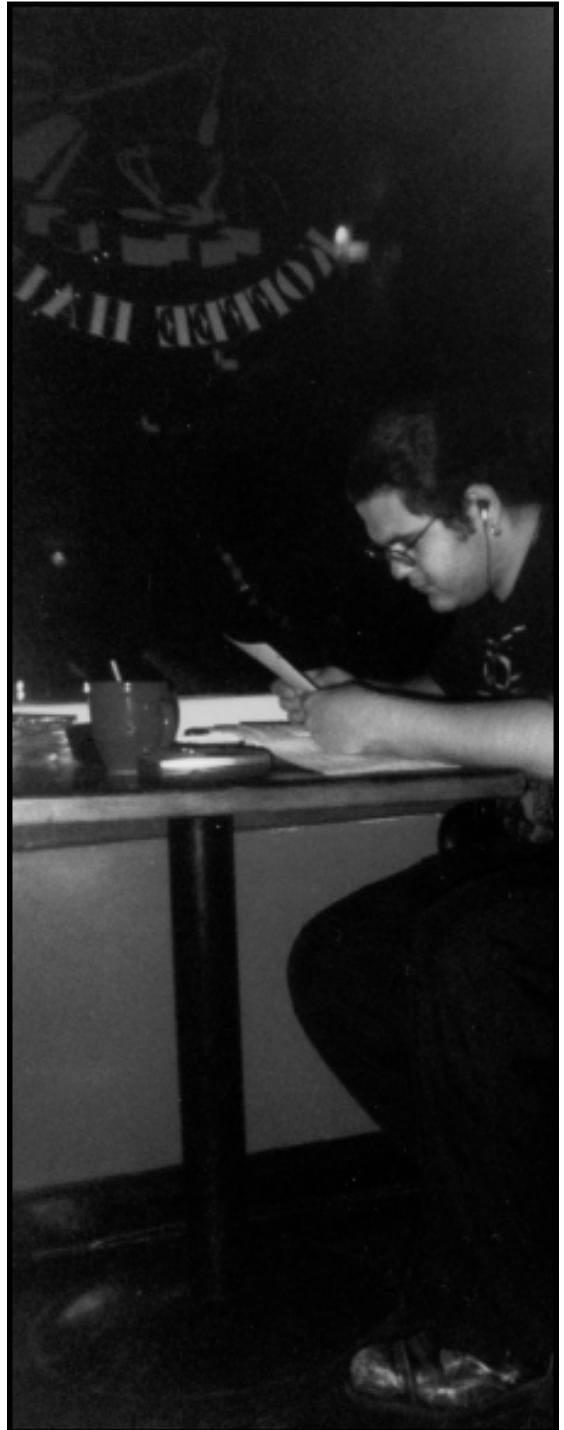
This is more than the bravado of an anti-hero. Before word came that their lease wasn't to be renewed, Paris had plans of expanding, opening up more floor space and offering a more diverse range of services. Even with limited space they already sold t-shirts printed at the local press, held art shows, ran a lending library, and opened up their floor Friday nights for local entertainment.

In the same breath Zack admits that Fort Collins doesn't have the culture to support this kind of dream. His plans stand in the wings, waiting for a community that can appreciate them.

\* \* \*

It is midnight, and the closing night crowd has spilled out onto the sidewalk in a celebration that is half party, half wake. Leather, black lace, and bared skin are the fabrics of choice. A storm passed through early in the afternoon, cooling the evening air, and now dry-lightening plays from cloud to cloud, sending up cheers from the crowd. The thunder is drowned out by the hammering music coming from inside. A pair of turn tables are set up just past the door and d.j.s take turns spinning records. The songs wind into one another, genres blurring into a chaotic wall of noise.

Everyone has turned out for the show. Aging,



overweight goths who haven't been seen for years pass clove cigarettes with the new guard, rail thin kids with factory-scuffed Doc Martins. A boy wearing a black boa flirts with a girl in a freshly shaven mohawk, and there is enough bondage gear between them to make the Marquis proud.

Behind the counter, Sandy throws up her hands in mock anger, shouting to the one regular barrista, "Josh, you're fired!"

Josh is an enigma. Not quite owner, but more than employee, he hovers in that liminal space occupied by itinerant alcoholic gunfighters and down-on-their-luck ronin. He was here, he did his job, and soon he'll be gone, but you get that nagging feeling that you'll be seeing him again.

"You can't fire me, I quit! This place won't last another day without me." Josh joins a group on the sidewalk and takes a seat, drink in hand.

The barristas fight to keep up with the demands for sugar-laden stimulants. The tip jar is overflowing with bills and fistfuls of coins, and there isn't even standing room in the house. For a perfect moment, Zack's dreams are coming true; every freak and misfit within a hundred miles is in attendance, packed shoulder to shoulder with the music, flesh and smoke. This is how Paris should have always been, this is the Paris they'll remember.

\* \* \*

Two a.m. comes quickly. The need for sleep has winnowed the ranks of the devoted, leaving those too old for a curfew but too young for the bars and clubs. Seats can be had for the asking and the coffee pots are all nearly empty.

Zack takes out the trash while Sandy collects the last of the dishes, hugging her children good night. Teenagers bristling with spikes and leather collect in small groups, exchanging back rubs and embraces.

Billy Idol, tamest of all pseudo-punks, wafts softly over the speakers. One of the girls sings along, another starts dancing, and finally it becomes apparent what is really being lost in the passing of this coffee house. There was never any meaningful rebellion here, no real social change ever fought its way out these doors. But it was a place where the kids could fashion themselves and their world away from the derision of an uncaring city. Here they could be tender to one another, here they had the freedom to be melodramatic, foolish, sexy and

irreverent, reveling in a few hours stolen from the monotony of soul-deadening high schools and minimum wage jobs. All for the price of a cup of coffee.

Zack sits down in back and lights up the last cigarette he'll smoke on Paris time. In a week Sandy will be delivering pizza, he'll be tattooing, and they will both be making more money than they did running Paris. Amongst the patrons there is talk of starting up a new Paris. Zack shakes his head every time. "Time to see what a cockroach this business really is."

Someone comments that every kid in the house worships him. For the first time that night you can see the exhaustion he carries with him, a weariness that has worked its way into his bones. "Maybe it will encourage them to go out and do something."

He finishes wiping down the tables, mops the floors, then he and his wife lock up for the last time.

A handful of kids refuse to leave. These are the ones who have rightfully earned the title of Parisites. They squat on the sidewalk holding vigil with cigarettes.

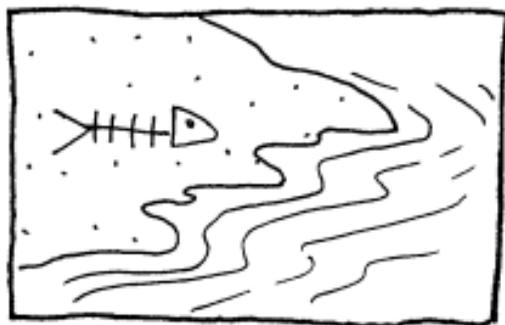
From the outside, it would be easy to dismiss their boding melancholy. But around the corner is the unlit storefront of Starbucks, with its pre-fab decor and empty walls, leaving one to wonder.





# THE ADVENTURES OF MAT OF Pleistocene Fish

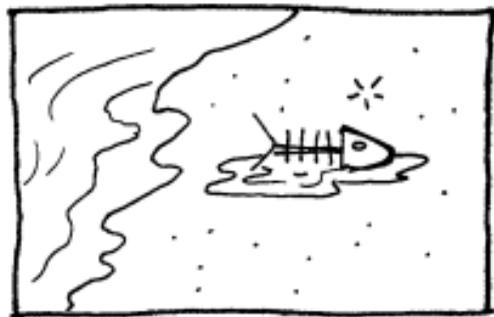
Next came the infamous  
River Styx  
that stole the mind  
of all who drank.



Screw the boatman and  
his obol.  
I'm a fish.



Damn.



some vegan recipes from  
spackle's kitchen

# Dirt, Grass and Very Small Pebbles

*This issue I have recipes for both flour and corn tortillas, plus some general suggestions for filling them with yummy goodness. Also at the end is a chili recipe I just came up with a few days ago. As always, enjoy!*

*- Spackle*

## Flour Tortillas

### Ingredients:

4 cups flour  
1 teaspoon salt  
2-3 tablespoons shortening  
1 + 1/3 cups warm water

### Directions:

Mix the flour and salt together in a large bowl, then "cut" the shortening into them. Next add the water slowly, 1 cup at first and the rest as needed. (Since this recipe is from Mexico and received from my mother who uses it in Upstate New York, you might need to use more water if you're some place dry like say, Colorado.) The easiest way to do this is to roll up your sleeves and dive in with your hands because a spoon ain't gonna cut it. The consistency should end up like bread dough, but since there isn't any yeast it won't be puffy. After it's mixed let the dough rest for at least 1-2 hours. Later, heat a hot dry pan or skillet on the stove. I've found that medium to medium-high worked best for me, but experiment since pros will probably tell you high is the way to go. Then roll out golf ball size balls of dough until very thin and toss them on the dry pan. Let them cook on the first side until bubbles form, then flip them and cook for a bit until the second side gets to be the same color. If you're getting burn spots right away turn the stove down. Repeat until all the dough is gone.

## Corn Tortillas

### Ingredients:

2 cups masa corn flour (a common brand is Maseca)  
1 + 1/8 cups water

### Directions:

Mix the flour and water together by hand for two or three minutes until the dough forms a firm ball. Add a bit of extra water if the dough feels too dry. (Sorry I don't have anything more specific for texture guidelines.) Divide the dough into 16 equal balls and cover with a damp cloth to keep them moist. Make fewer balls if you want larger tortillas, but be careful, uncooked corn tortillas are very fragile. Flatten a ball between your hands then place between two sheets of wax paper and roll flat (or use a nifty tortilla press if you happen to have one) until they are about 5-6 inches in diameter. You might want to roll them all out before starting to cook them. In the meantime, heat a dry pan on medium-high to high. Carefully peel off the wax paper and cook for 15-30 seconds, then flip and cook

for the same amount of time. Again, repeat until all the tortillas are cooked. If you are going to try to make tostadas let the tortillas cool before frying.

*Although the easy route would be to break open a can of veggie refried beans, that'd be sort of shame after all the work you put into making the tortillas. Here are a few suggestions that are hopefully a bit more interesting.*

## Tacos

Fantastic Foods and a few others put out veggie taco mix in a box, but you can also try Morningstar Farms Burger Style Crumbles, or even TVP, mixed either with a bag of taco seasoning or a mix of your own. (The Morningstar Farms Crumbles are great and look fine according to their ingredient list, but as with anything you never quite know what's in the "natural flavors".) Any of these will make pretty good approximations of ground beef tacos; with your favorite extras you're set.

## Burritos

Cook up some Spanish rice from a bag or box, some refried beans and maybe sauté up some veggies. Combine with your favorite extras, stuff them in a tortilla and chow down.

## Fajitas

This one is a favorite around my house. Get a red and green bell pepper and maybe an onion and then slice them all up into thin strips. Heat up a pan with some olive oil and throw in some garlic. Toss in the veggies and sauté a while. Keep the heat lower if you just want them soft or keep it hot if you want them seared, but keep them moving in the pan if you're going for seared. Before they are too cooked throw in some water and a packet of fajita seasoning or a bunch of seasonings of your own. Usually I add in some salsa at the end and finish it off with a good bit of lime juice. As a variation you can also add some fake meat strips. Break out the extras and let people serve themselves.

## Enchilada Casserole

This one sort of mixes bits of the others into one big casserole of joy to either feed a good number of people or is great for leftovers. Cook up some of the fake taco meat, heat up a can or reconstitute some refried beans and start some Spanish rice a cookin'. Maybe even sauté some veggies or at least some diced up peppers. Pour some veggie friendly enchilada sauce from a can into the bottom of a casserole dish and then put down a layer of corn tortillas. The rest you will build like lasagna with a layer of beans, a layer fake meat and a layer of veggies if you have a deep enough dish, with corn tortillas instead of noodles. I usually just do two layers, beans and fake meat mixed with sautéed diced red peppers because my dish is shallow. In each layer spread out some enchilada sauce and some finely grated vegan cheese. Top the whole thing with a layer of corn tortilla, a layer of enchilada sauce and more finely grated vegan cheese. Cover it with aluminum foil and bake for 25 - 30 minutes at something like 300 degrees. When it's done server with Spanish rice and the left over refried beans on the side and top with vegan sour cream and guacamole.

## Extras

- Guacamole (mash some avocado then add some salsa, garlic and lemon juice or buy it at the store)
- Salsa (I recommend almost anything with chipotles)
- Tofutti sour cream
- VeganRella cheese
- Diced tomatoes
- Diced onions
- Shredded lettuce
- ... and anything else that sounds good

*This one final recipe isn't necessarily a tortilla recipe, though it is great with some fresh corn tortillas served on the side. However, I felt it fit the theme of this recipe section well enough to include it and I just made it up the other day and am still excited about it. Plus with the weather being cold it makes for a great "warm you up" kind of meal and is easy enough to make plenty for a group dinner or just for leftovers.*

## Quick and Easy Chili

### Ingredients:

- 2 cans of different chili type beans (kidney, pinto, black, etc.)
- 2 cups vegetable broth
- 1 bag Morningstar Farms Burger Style Crumbles
- 1 big (16 oz) can of diced tomatoes (seasoned if you like)
- 1 packet mild to medium chili seasoning (trust me)
- 1 small can of chipotle chilies (you'll only need a few of them)
- ¼ cup masa flour (optional)
- some frozen or fresh corn (optional)
- 1 lb brick extra firm tofu (optional)
- 1 medium lime (optional)

### Directions:

In a big pot combine the broth, tomatoes and fake meat; then turn it to medium high. Rinse the beans thoroughly in a colander and add to the pot. Read the instructions on the chili packet and most likely ignore them because they're all about browning the meat. Instead you'll probably just need to empty the packet into the pot and mix it up well. You may need to add some water if it seems too thick. Open the can of chipotles and finely chop up 3 or 4 of them before adding them to the pot. The chipotles can make things really hot so you might need to experiment a bit to find what works best for you. It will need to cook a bit before the heat will permeate so don't be impatient and add the whole can or anything. Lower the heat and let it simmer for like 20 minutes. If you are into corn, add like a 1/2 cup or so of the corn somewhere in the middle of the simmering time. When you are too hungry to wait any longer go ahead and add the masa flour and mix it all around. If it's already super thick before you add the masa flour add another ¼ to ½ a cup of water. Serve up with some vegan cheese and maybe a dollop of vegan sour cream.

As a variation to add more texture you can also mix small cubes of tofu in some melted butter, chipotle sauce, garlic, cumin, pepper and what ever else sounds good. After it is mixed all around, careful not to destroy the tofu cubes, spread everything out on a baking sheet and throw it under the broiler until the cubes are browned and a little shrunken so they will be chewy. Be sure to check on them often and turn them a few times. The tofu broiling can take place nicely during the 20 minutes of chili simmering. When the tofu cubes are good and done throw them into the chili pot and mix around. Ideally the tofu cubes should cook for as long as possible in the chili so they soak up more of the flavor, but if they're only in there for a few minutes they will still be good. Careful though, if the tofu is cooked in a lot of chipotle sauce it will spice up the chili quite a bit when you add them to the mix. The first time I made this I added five good size chipotles plus the tofu cubes and the chili was almost unbearable. I ended up adding more fake meat, beans and corn to make it more enjoyably hot. Either way, break out the handkerchief and enjoy.

## Consumption

The babbling gimmick of drone systems

Mesh

With crowded streets of progress

Flickering images of the perfect world

Drown out the cacophony

Of reality

Faustian beauty claims thought

And twists it towards the insignificant

Or the diluted.

Cyclopean landscapes loom

In self-same mockery of the Pagan idolatry

It claims

To have destroyed.

Minute forms crawl through its spine and wind

To a bundle of nerve cords

To be ingested by the mouth at the end,

All the while singing, "The ants go marching one by one..."

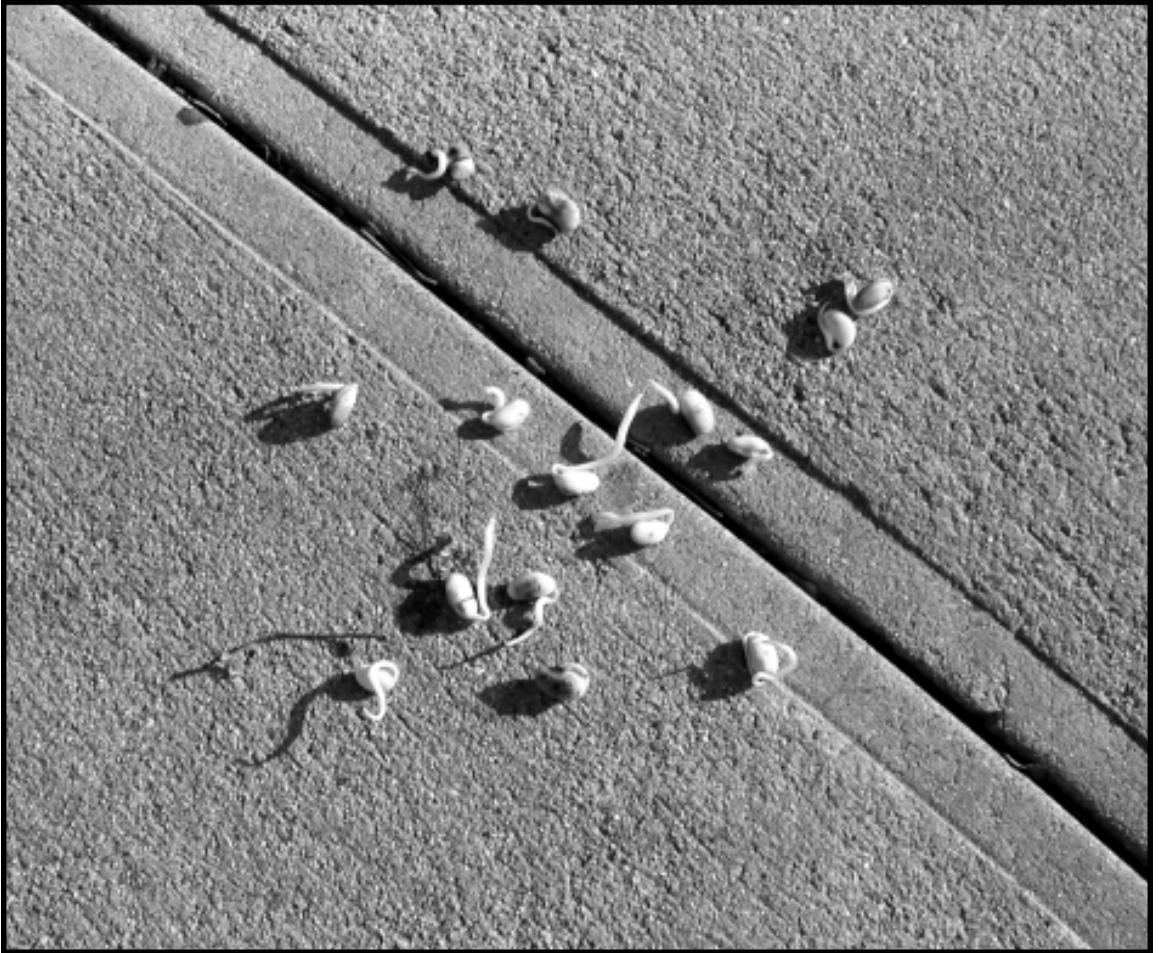
On the corner of Nietzsche and Marx

A man is swooning

Clutching

At the words of the distant chant

And protesting ignorance to the system.



Over the summer before moving to parts Kentucky, our friend and the former head editor of *Anthros Ex Machina*, Melchior spent three months living in Tokyo. He didn't have a job out there, he had just decided about a year earlier that he would save up as much money as he could then move to the Land of the Rising Sun for as long as he could eat. While he was out there he would occasionally send a group of us updates interspersed with random thoughts. Here is one of them, we hope you enjoy.

- Spackle

## The Gaijin in the Rubber Suit, Vol. 4

By Melchior

A couple of nights ago I went to the movies. Now there are plenty of fine cinemas within a block or two of where I've been staying, and they show an eclectic selection of pornography, but that just wasn't my style at the time. All the bordellos, burlesques, and sauna hotels (some faced with polite signs asking foreigners to please refrain from entering) offered nothing that I was looking for. Compare me to Tennyson's Ulysses if you will, once finally home with suitors bleeding in the dining room and Penelope waiting for a good rollicking in the bower, completely and utterly bored. He sailed beyond the sunset, I submerged into the subway.

And I popped out in Shibuya, a nice slice of cozy neon. But this is Japan, and cozy flash gets old really fast--it's cheap too, you can find it at any big train station, or I can walk out my front door and hear the sizzling sign atop the love hotel that I never see anyone enter; but some mornings I can hear the couples leaving under my window talking loudly into the first blush (last blush) of day as if for a dress rehearsal before the real deal at their home where the people they want to keep the night's events from wait.

Ignoring the atmosphere, I tried to orient. However, being that I was in the Orient (ha-ha) everything just got all mixed up. Again. Or what I'm really trying to say is that it took only 30 seconds

for me to get lost. Damn, being lost has become a state of reality these days.

I tried to find a statue of a dog that was outside the station. Dog's name was Hachiko, and his story comes from the Jazz Age. Apparently Hachiko, an Akita by the way, would come to the station and wait every evening for his master to come home from work. Well, the master was an old coot, and like lots of other old coots he bit the bucket, kicked the dust, and never came back home from work. Nobody remembered to tell the dog this though, and Hachiko went to the station the next evening after his master died and waited. And waited and waited. People would feed him, but if anyone would try to take him away, one way or another Hachiko would escape back the station to wait. That dog ended up waiting for ten years at the station for his master to come home. And then the dog died too, sans master (alone). Stupid mutt. Now there's a statue waiting for the master to come home, forever.

Of course I couldn't find Hachiko because I was lost. That's probably what really happened to the master--he got lost in one of the stations around here. He's out there somewhere underground, looking for something familiar, anything that says, "Home, this way!"

There are these Buddhist monks around the busier stations, and they have bells that they ring in acrimonious non-intervals to remind us that nothing is permanent. Whenever I'm lost and I think I've figured out something in my head, one of those bells rings in my ears and everything in my head flees--ask not for whom the bells tolls, but what your bell tells whom. And that ringing covers up Hachiko's master's (Ueno is his name by the way) words, "Hello, please? Do you know the way out?"

Sorry Ueno, I'm lost too. I can't even find your stupid lonely dog.

But being lost isn't really a big deal. Especially if you give yourself an extra hour or two to get to the end of the road. So I actually got to the theater just in time to see the previews, which aren't too exciting--since they're all movies that I've already seen in the States.

The movie I went to see was some anime called *Neko no Ongaeshi--The Cat Comes Back*. I caught the discount show, which happens to be at night instead of day around here; however the ticket was



still about \$11 US, but they've got to pay for the ten girls that assisted me in finding my seat, not that I needed any help as it was a one screen theater tucked away on the fourth floor of a department store.

But before the main show there was an animated short, simply called Episode 2 (no, not That Episode 2). Episode two was a series of vignettes--one of which particularly struck me.

In this one segment there's a guy sitting on the train reading. Next to him a woman slowly nods off, coming to rest on his shoulder. I actually had this happen to me too--not a cute woman like in the anime--just some guy sitting next to me on the first morning train out of a bloodshot Roppongi. In the anime the guy just lets the girl rest on his shoulder while he tries to read his book. For me I too just let the guy rest his head on my shoulder, it felt somehow wrong to wake him--but if I had compassion, it was compassion well wadded with indifference.

In the anime when the guy gets to his stop he tries to stand up but finds that the woman has a firm hold on his arm--and he's reluctant to yank himself away as he hears her sigh and sees a smile on her face. Resigned he sits back down, opens his book back up and pretends to read (We see he eventually exits a station as it closes down saying breezily, "Guess I'll take a taxi."). For me, the guy's stop comes before mine. He gets up and leaves, nothing special. And that's really the whole situation--nothing special.

It's amazing how restrained people can be here in Japan. While I may be, "well wadded in indifference," these Japanese are well wallowed in difference. What I'm really trying to say is they've got these most amazing lacquer masks. Not the stuff in the museums, but the face on the person across from you in the subway.

You know, the only sober Japanese people to strike up conversations with me are the rejects that live near my flat--homeless people, gamblers with towels around their necks and broken pencils. There's this midget that waits on a street corner that's on my way to the subway station most everyday. She wears a straw hat with ribbons and she seems to recognize me. I haven't bothered to talk to her--she seems pretty busy waiting, searching every face--which is probably why she recognizes me. She hasn't said anything to me either. Too busy I guess. But

that's fine. I have enough indigents in the park I go jogging in cheering me on with witticisms like, "Hot, ain't it?"

And if no one else talks to me (at least while we're sober; I did have a pleasant drunken conversation one night with a fellow that went something like, "You are a sex machine!" "No, you are the sex machine!" "No, you are," etc. until he got sick) then that's alright. Because we have roles to play too . . .

Some night back in the land of 1954 Japan there was a tag team wrestling match on television--not too many people had televisions then, but they crammed into pubs and lucky households, and street corners where the broadcasting stations set up televisions. It was Rikidozan (the star of our current story) and his partner Kimura verses a couple of crackers that resemble haystacks more than sapiens. For the first thirty minutes the white boys, who each had 6 inches and 50 pounds on Rikidozan, were doing pretty good. Heck, they probably didn't even have to cheat anywhere as much as they did. But it turns out Riki was just being a good sport about the whole thing. At that thirty minute mark Rikidozan released a lightning attack of righteous Nihon fury and felled the cheating foreign wrestlers in no time flat.

There were 20 million people watching that event--about 1/3 of the population of Japan at the time. It was the first time in a long time the Japanese had won against Americans, and boy did it feel good. Who cared that the whole thing was scripted, that Rikidozan wasn't even Japanese (he was North Korean). What mattered was that it felt good to be Japanese, to be yourself--that what was inside could defeat what was outside. It was a battle of archetypes really.

And it spawned so much. That wrestling match brought the television age to Japan--people bought sets just to watch Rikidozan take down yet another cheating foreign wrestler (which by the way, became an actual job title--one I know I'd like to have on my resume). Too bad a few years later good ole' Riki took a Yak knife in the belly in restroom that ended his wrestling days. You should watch out for those cheating natives too, Riki.

You can even draw the link to Godzilla. Who is Godzilla, but an oversized wrestler? He comes



around, having his way with Tokyo, using fire breath instead of folding chairs, until we get that explosion of righteous fury against what really amounts to a gaijin in a rubber suit.

Of course there is some light at the end of the sequels, because Godzilla, in the next twenty films, gets to fight for the Japanese against all the other outside terrors that try to eat up the little boys in short pants who are late for cram school. This is where we see the true wrestling nature appear--goddamn larger than life. The battle of archetypes, the inside fighting the outside in all its guises (from a giant moth to a bad case of the crabs--really! check out Godzilla Verses the Sea Monster), come to your backyard--just don't step on the house thank you very much.

And at the end of each of the sequels Godzilla goes discretely back to Monster Island to hang out, picking his nose until Japan needs him again.

You know that the Japanese constitution forbids any effective standing army? Sure, there's the Self Defense Force, but by all accounts they have problems keeping the turrets on their tanks straight. In the constitution it says: "We have determined to preserve our security and existence, trusting in the faith of the peace-loving peoples of the world." Man, what a bunch of hippies. Too bad they can only relax in their sleep (on the arms on strangers) or when they are drunk up to the "Sex Machine" point--I hear they're pretty lively about karaoke too.

Japan effectively is a protectorate of the United States. While Japan is not, by any means, isolated from the rest of the world its interaction is sharply curtailed. How can a country be effective, forthright, and above all assured when the shadow of Godzilla looms?

There is a mask that Japan wears. The lacquered layers built up by itself and the US (and all sorts of other minor influences--but we're just cheapening it to the stars of the show). Example: 1960, time to renew America's protection treaty with Japan, but there are massive pacifist protests against it. President Eisenhower suggest that renewing the treaty would be a really good idea, especially before he comes to visit. So the prime minister has everyone in the Diet who would vote against the treaty escorted out. The treaty gets renewed, and protest rocks Japan. And so it goes . . .

Not too much later afterwards someone introduces the materialistic rocket sled called the Double Income effort, and hoo-boy! Look at it go! And so it goes . . .

But it really turns out to be a veneer. When the Bubble crashed and recession reared its ugly head, deciding Japan would be a nice place to crash for a while, well, a few people looked around and said, "What the fuck have I been doing? I don't know anyone, or anything. Not really." Not with the practice of having a work nickname and a name for yourself at home. Not with some idea of the "sareriman" to fulfill. Inside and outside baby--we have roles to play after all.

No wonder there are so many pornographic theaters near where I live. It must be so hard to know another person well enough to love them when you play a role. Hard enough just to know another person, while you each wear that mask.

Which I guess is what I've really been trying to say all along. As long as people wear their masks, they will be lonely.

I mean, some stranger fell asleep on my shoulder, curled up by my side, and I didn't give a shit--either good or bad. Maybe being crowded by people and neon makes the indifference so pronounced, but it has been there before. Nothing out of the blue. But how can someone feel so lonely at the same time.

I can't help but think about Hamlet, and all the games he played. The roles he made, and the steep barrier of indifference to action that he could never overcome. Instead, it was all inside and outside. All those thoughts of action inside, but roles fulfilled on the outside. And when he took upon those roles he lost any chance for action--even just stabbing Claudius in the back was gone--and he became a creature of reaction.

And so when you drop the mask (Rikidozan was Korean), inside and outside gone (a man steps out of the rubber suit) and drop the roles (Hachiko died alone) the responsibility becomes all yours. I guess that's really what I'm trying to say after all.

Ass all ways,  
Melchior



# T.I.N. Top 5

## **Scoth** - *Modern Uses for a Trebuchet*

5. A lawn ornament that really makes a statement.
4. Make an excruciatingly dramatic entrance.
3. Avoid long chairlift lines.
2. Save \$\$ on postage stamps.
1. American Terrorist Airlines -- the *only* way to fly.

## **John Wayne's Ghost** - *"Men" I Think Are Pansies.*

5. Clayton Moore
4. Gary Cooper
3. Clint Eastwood
2. Steve McQueen
1. Jack Palance

## **Vaginagirl** - *Favorite Hello Kitty Items I Own*

5. Lookyloo silverware/chopstick set
4. KT Kleenex box cover
3. Nyago coffee mug
2. "Personal massager"
1. Waffle maker

## **BWS** - *Things I'd Do if I Were a Monkey*

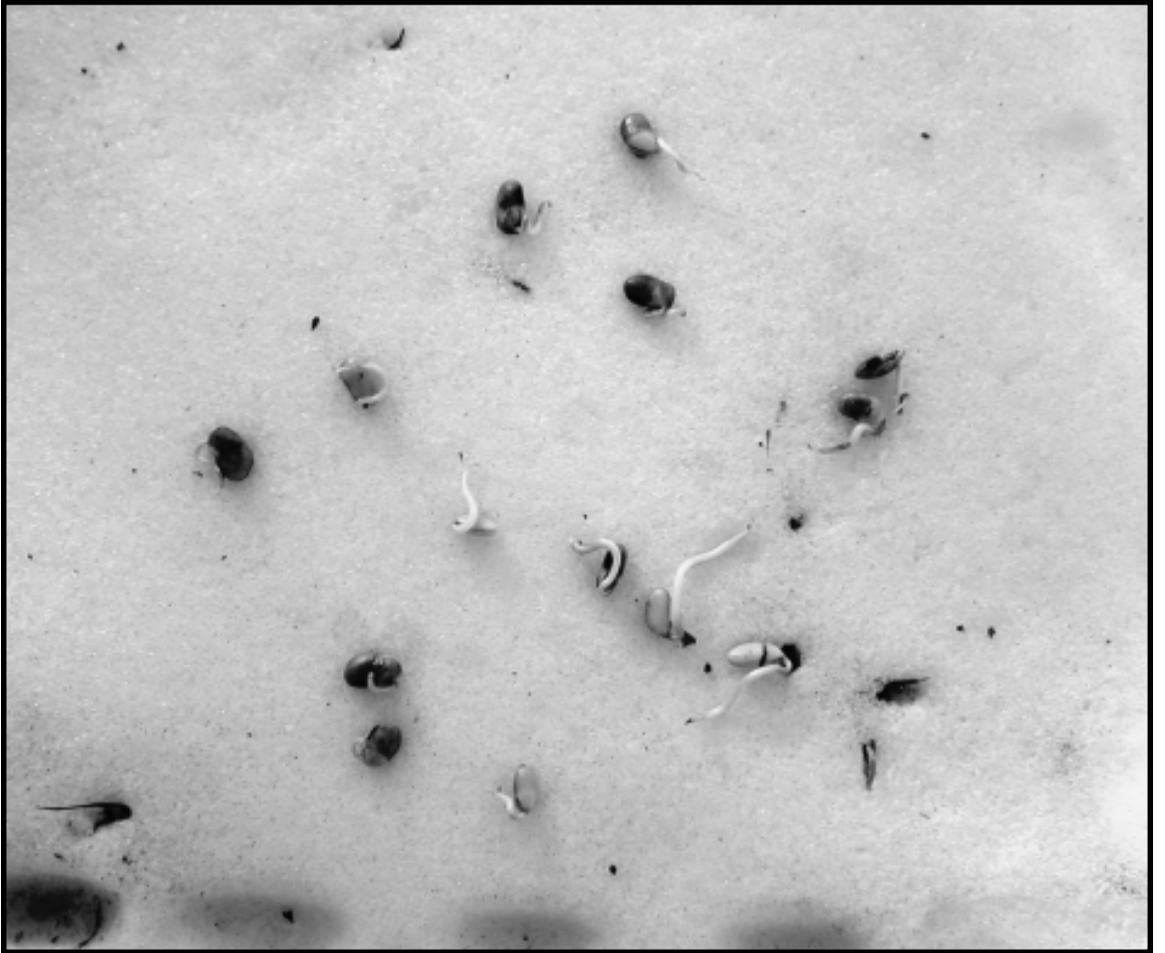
5. Eat all of your lice. Then all of mine.
4. Squeeze banana peels really hard until the bananas shoot out from the end of them. Oh wait, I do that already. Well, I'd still do it.
3. Run around in front of a mirror looking at my tail.
2. Screech and swing from trees.
1. Did I mention lice eating already?

## **Spackle** - *Personal Conversation Starters*

5. "Howsit going?"
4. Noncommittal grunt
3. "So, I've totally forgotten your name."
2. An uneasy tight-lipped smile, a nod and silence
1. "Have you ever considered a career selling advertising in a 'for loss' magazine with extremely limited readership? I can't pay you."

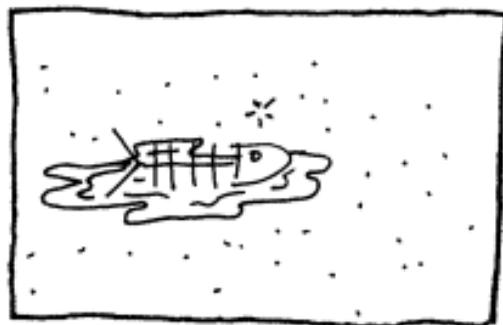
## **Bonegrinder** - *Plain Old Top 5*

5. Stereolab
4. Egyptian Lover
3. Artin on Modules
2. Darts
1. I'm Seein' Robots

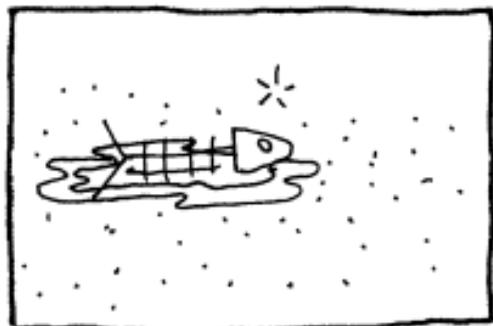


# THE ADVENTURES OF MAX OF Pleistocene Fish

I couldn't remember who I was, how I got to Hell, or why, or what I had meant to do.



Still, dead fish fight their way into **Hell** for one reason and one reason only:



To kick demonic ass.





## TOTAL INFORMATION AWARENESS MADLIBS!

with Johnny and Bagboy

With the creation of the Information Awareness Office, and the appointment of John Poindexter with his publicly avowed intent to spy on private citizens, any American not yet deadened by our culture of titillation and spectacle should have one of two immediate responses:

- 1) I'm moving to Tunisia, or
- 2) Fuck you Poindexter.

Since a mass exodus would imperil Tunisia's already fragile economy, let's focus on #2.

Given that you'll soon be showing up in a file on Poindexter's virtual desktop, and given that it's entertaining to mock public officials, we've created an Information Awareness Madlibs, that can be used as a postcard and sent to Mr. Poindexter.

Instructions: Fill in each space with an appropriate word or phrase, and then place those words in the corresponding spaces on the postcard which can be sent to the Office of Information Awareness. Make copies for your friends, grab a cup of joe, and read them aloud around the toasty fire of a crumbling empire - and don't forget to include a stamp!

1. Something really disgusting. \_\_\_\_\_
2. A barnyard animal. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Another animal. \_\_\_\_\_
4. A disease. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Least Favorite Public Official. \_\_\_\_\_
6. A verb. \_\_\_\_\_
7. An adjective. \_\_\_\_\_
8. A liquid. \_\_\_\_\_
9. A color. \_\_\_\_\_
10. Negative adjective. \_\_\_\_\_
11. Villainous Group. \_\_\_\_\_
12. Your favorite body part. \_\_\_\_\_
13. Violent verb. \_\_\_\_\_
14. A crime. \_\_\_\_\_
15. A worse crime. \_\_\_\_\_
16. An even worse crime. \_\_\_\_\_
17. The name of a porn star. \_\_\_\_\_
18. An adverb. \_\_\_\_\_
19. An adjective used to describe a corpse. \_\_\_\_\_
20. Your least favorite animal. \_\_\_\_\_
21. An insulting name. \_\_\_\_\_
22. Another insulting name. \_\_\_\_\_
23. Your name. \_\_\_\_\_

*The following is a work of fiction intended for amusement only and has no grounding in the real world, where I am a devout patriot of the world's greatest nation. So there.*

Dear Mr. John Poindexter,

I hear you're spying on me. To make your job easier, please include the following in my dossier:

Mr. Poindexter, I think you are a piece of \_\_\_\_\_(1). No, no, that's not quite right. I think you are an amoral, craven, corrupt, spineless \_\_\_\_\_(2), with a face that resembles the disfigured hind-end of a \_\_\_\_\_(3) stricken with \_\_\_\_\_(4) after a particularly difficult defecation. For the record, \_\_\_\_\_(5) is worse.

How do you \_\_\_\_\_(6) at night, knowing that you are destroying the ideological foundations of this \_\_\_\_\_(7) nation? Do you wake up, covered in \_\_\_\_\_(8), crying like an abused \_\_\_\_\_(9)-headed stepchild?

I refuse to be cowed by your \_\_\_\_\_(10) office and its army of \_\_\_\_\_(11). In fact, I'd rather take a red hot poker in my beloved \_\_\_\_\_(12). Twist, Poindexter, twist.

While I am not violent and would never even \_\_\_\_\_(13) a fly, I am enraged by your hypocrisy and arrogance. In a world where \_\_\_\_\_(14) is rampant, where wide-eyed children must resort to \_\_\_\_\_(15) for scraps of food, and cute furry-tailed animals are seen committing \_\_\_\_\_(16) every night on the evening news, what possible rational do you use to justify your existence?

Due to people like you and \_\_\_\_\_(17), my government has grown to a \_\_\_\_\_(18) \_\_\_\_\_(19) corpse of a \_\_\_\_\_(20), that has little drive to represent the common people.

On a more serious note, if you are going to investigate criminals, I'd like to report a \_\_\_\_\_(21) that has lied to Congree while under oath and illegally sold military-grade weapons to terrorist nations. Oh yeah, that's you, \_\_\_\_\_(22)! If you need volunteers I'll be happy to wiretap your house.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_ (23)

John Poindexter  
c/o Defense Advance Research Projects Agency  
3701 North Fairfax Drive  
Arlington, VA 22203

Place  
stamp here  
or this airt  
go in  
nowhere

(fold here)

(affix staple or tape here)

*Having worked at both 7-11 (where we were called "Sales Associates") and Kinko's for a number of years, as well as being a consumer myself I found this submission both hilarious and frighteningly true. Our thanks to Travis for his "East Coast" submission.*

- Spackle

## **We are the Associates: Handbook for the Service Class**

By Travis

### **Us**

We are your every day working man, Semi-Confident, Semi-Charmed. We attempt our separatism from capitalism so we must harvest from the "other's" obvious obsessions and vapid decadence. We differ from the shopper because we possess a human humility and perhaps a morality that is indicative of our retail past. We are the damned salt of the earth.

We sell you pants, shoes and laces to tie them with. We deliver you fish and game with our tools of harvest, and give you licenses to murder them. We spoon feed your babies MRE's and clothe you with fatigues for traversing the dense urban jungle. We give light in the dark night, we give you the batteries to suck dry. We put the hats on your pretty wife's head; ones that wont keep her warm but instead build her flock of fake friends by merely being ornamented. We give you socks to keep your fat feet dry in the cold wet of your basement. Slippers to walk your merely lukewarm carpet with.

When all that is not enough, we sweep the kernels of sweet corn that somehow missed your maw. We clean our glass and windows of your sweaty palm prints, and wipe your fake food breathed smiles from our heads each night. Then we clean and prepare for the next day with some reckless drive, a force that keeps us moving through it all.

We please the upper class enough to keep them complacent.

We are the new bohemians and nearly the third millennium coal miners. We are the intellectuals but the culturally downtrodden. We are the recluse and refused. We are our mothers' fears and concerns. We are the ticking gears of corporate consumerism, we are the cogs in the machine of a humming and bustling global economy.

We are the ASSOCIATES.

### **Them**

They are the "shopper". They are the bourgeois and the imp of a money market. They are the impractical yuppie, and the semi-educated slob. They are sometimes the working man too, but they hide that under egoism and a horrible demeanor.

They are a consumer that lives to consume and extracts the monetary equivalent of their output. They are thrifty and cut coupons, they are wise and accept no substitute to the product that they typically find on infomercials at 4:30 in the morning. The shopper is wizened to your way of selling and will correct you harshly and bluntly when your face fades from a fake grin or when you back is turned to them. They walk with an eye open to scrutinize any passing giggle or trace of sincerity.

The shopper likes us to be the mommy, but doesn't like to be reminded. Don't clean up their messes when they are looking, they expect that to be a behind the scenes maneuver. Don't smarten up to old men and surely don't ask a woman her true size. They are "people" who live whimsical flights of fancy, who believe that their crass consumerist world is reality and that with the correct measurements they can modify their clothes instead of losing weight.

These are the slovenly ilk that count our money and reject our credit, audit our tax returns and seize our scared children when the ex calls the state office and says you don't feed the kids. These are your divorce lawyers and O.J. attorneys.

These are the tricksters of our world that will blindly seek you out in order to suck your soul. They will tattle, lie and fake pricing discrepancies. Turn not a blind eye to the shopper, it is your destiny to appease his twisted spirit and send him upon his way to the

ephemeral yet corporeal other world that is the parking lot.

## **Weapons of the Trade**

There are certain weapons that one must possess in order to take upon the grim duties entailed within our guide. There is of course no shortage of need for basic physical violence, but quite often we are simply outnumbered.

### **Tact/Wit**

This skill involves a certain amount of premeditation and subtlety. When presented with tasks by the shopper, one can with practice, talk the consumer out of interest in the merchandise altogether or out of wanting a certain size. Most of this is a good deal of improvisation and can be combined with the following methods to be more effective.

A simple encounter would go as follows;

*"Hi, can I special order this in a size 17?"*

*"Sure Ma'am, our special order policy is a full deposit and it could take up to 12 weeks for delivery, still want it?"*

### **Sarcasm/Facetiousness**

This is the simplest weapon to brandish against the pseudo-educated shopper. When applied tastefully this method can dissuade presence in your department, attention to a specific object, or altogether the expenditure of time in the store. Use wisely because the shopper does tend to snitch on any rude associate and will demand revocation of your job before they shop again. Just use this to stare un-adoringly, look indifferent when they tell stupid jokes, and appear displeased with the actions of their snotty children.

### **Techno-babble**

By far the most powerful tool for the associate is the ability to create impromptu techno babble. This gives you points in product knowledge and also allows you to flip the tables on the thrifty shopper. The psychological advantage is obviously gained by appearing to be the current expert of the given

subject. Bare in mind things like blatant mispronunciations (Chipp-a-paw instead of Chippewa, Vikadin instead of Vibram, or even Carnheart instead of Carhartt). This will immediately cue you into their weak area. Most people can't tell you if Gore-Tex is for waterproofing or for warmth, so it is simple to gain the upper hand.

### **Pawning**

Pawning off the customer is a can of mixed blessings. This must be done in a way that includes the other associates and hitherto does not annoy them. Hell hath no fury like an associate that has been duped into dealing with a retarded soccer mom just because you wanted to skate off to the bathroom. Be considerate and remember what you do can return to you in the way of store Karma.

Coordinate with other associates and make a plan of customer volleying that will benefit you all. Stick to the story that you are not allowed out of your specific department lest you be flogged. This will force them to feel alone and in a sea of information, which is the obvious segue into techno babble. Excrete a hatred for people that ask you for an ice skate in the shoe department and try to return underwear at the sporting good desk.

Once the premise has been established, this should be a wonderful means to extrude people from the store. They feel juggled and manhandled, virtually violated and personally demolished.

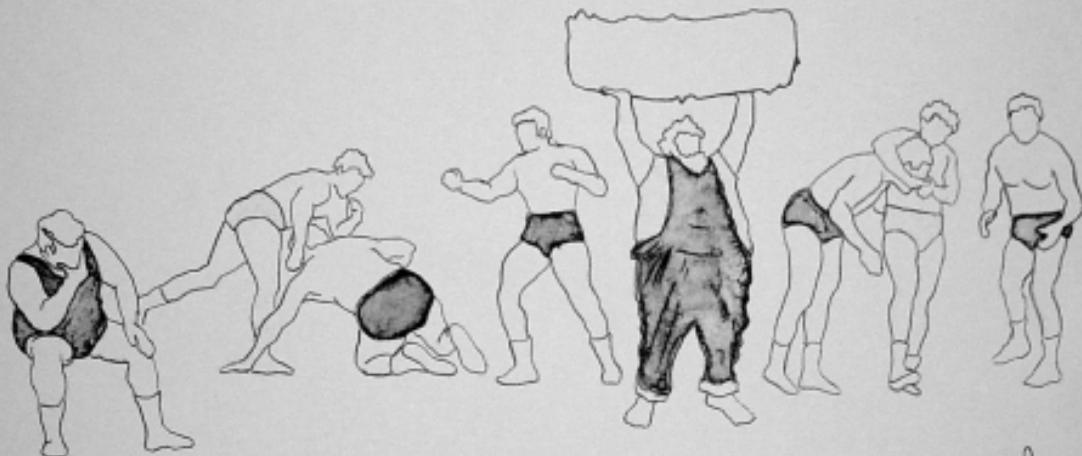
### **Mission**

Only with these tools can we service our obvious conviction to humanity and punish the sludge that ruin our world for profit and the joy of plunder. Only with these weapons can we serve justice and bring down the unholy and corrupted reign of the all mighty dollar!

*Chose your battles wisely. The shopper sees fear in your eyes and loathing in your gaze.*

*There is a plan to extinguish our kind in their hearts. Have strength, and remember your war cry.*





ESTOS NO SON LUCHADORES



LUCHADORES

9/10

R. L. Wolf

# the ~~same~~ **NOT SO** VEGAN re **VIEWER**



by  
*John Wayne's  
Ghost*

After witnessing his own autopsy, lifelong meat eater, John Wayne has returned from the grave to review vegetarian-friendly restaurants in Northern Colorado (though he spends most of his time in Fort Collins). Please send review suggestions to [johnwayne@ssdpres.org](mailto:johnwayne@ssdpres.org)

You might think living the life of ghost is all fun and travel, but unfortunately we're still trapped by some of the same laws of physics as the living. Since it's impossible to book flights as a ghost (especially after Sept 11<sup>th</sup>) and since I'm not about to walk across the state (much less town) I decided to hitch a ride in the back of Spackle's head while he and Vaginagirl went on vacation to the East coast a few months back. (Yeah we all know the issue is a bit late by now.) Anyway, they made me pitch in for half the plane fare (I'm still not sure how they talked me into any more than a third), but the trip was a blast and we ate some damn good food so I thought I'd give a tour of the food we ate and some of the high points of the trip. You might notice that the title is also a little different this issue, don't worry too much though because the real title will be back next issue, along with the question and answer section.

First of all, my condolences go out to anyone else that has family that lives off the beaten path as far as the airlines are concerned. To be able to visit my Grandmother (yeah she's getting up there in age seeing as I died at age 72 over 23 years ago, but she's a fighter and a lot of fun), we arranged for a day and half layover in Chicago before heading on to Albany, New York. Now even though it's the capital of New York and everything, it doesn't mean anyone really flies there directly, so the tickets were a little steep and with a layover it was doubly so. But what's a little money when you're going to have a chance to see a bunch of family all in the same trip. (Hey, some of us love our relatives!)

To get a more reasonable fare we traded off some wacky layovers for a bit of a discount. The first leg of the trip took us from Denver to Cleveland, Ohio (where they have the strangest urinals I've ever seen. They are sort of a cross between standard urinal fixtures and an iMac) before reaching Chicago Midway. We didn't eat at the Cleveland airport but we did take in the sights of one of the local Sausage Kings, or some such processed, intestine packed, meat entitled fast food joint. Luckily we had received a meal on the flight. A word to the wise: if you pay attention and don't forget like I usually do, you can request vegan, or at least strict vegetarian, meals on many airlines. I received hummus, a pita and a vegan spongy cake thing. It sort of sucked, but it was MUCH better than the usual choice of meat or meat that leaves me eating the in-flight beverage.

Unfortunately due to our tightly budgeted time we could only visit Gram



for a day and two halves, but were “lucky” enough to be in town for the memorial service for some non-blood related family. (Though it was good to see a number of relatives I hadn’t seen in years.) The first night we were treated to The Majestic in good ol’ Cicero. The mid-west, if you aren’t familiar with it, is full of restaurants that, sort of like Perkins, serve a whole lot of different, but vaguely the same, food and are filled with people over the age of 65. The interesting thing about the mid-west though is there are millions of these restaurants and most of them are family owned. Also, for some reason, I’ve always had the impression most of them are owned by families of Greek descent. The Majestic, unlike many of these types of restaurants, actually servers a number of vegetarian selections (well maybe four or five) and a couple of those can even be done mostly vegan. This is one of my Gram’s favorite local places because it’s right down the street, so I eat there pretty much every time I’m in town. I don’t know if I would exactly recommend it, but it is definitely not bad at all and does have a good selection for me.

The second night we were there, the day of the memorial service, we all ate at a traditional Bohemian restaurant (I’m related to a ton of Czechs). As you might expect (or maybe have no idea) the meal, which was family style, was all fried meat, sauerkraut, dumplings and steamed vegetables from a can. This is where the not so vegan part of the trip started to take hold. Although I avoided the meat, I ate a crap load of dumplings and sauerkraut (I couldn’t ignore the Czech in me). As a kid I HATED sauerkraut, but somewhere along the way the genes kicked in or something and now I eat it whenever it’s around, ESPECIALLY if there’s dumplings. Mostly I use family gatherings as an excuse to eat sauerkraut and dumplings. Maybe I’ll sick Spackle on finding some vegan dumpling recipes, after all riding in the back of his head does afford me some amount of mental and physical control over the ninny.

The next day we flew out again, headed for Albany. This time we flew from Chicago to Detroit to Albany. Unfortunately this leg we did not receive a meal so we grabbed some grub in the Detroit airport (which had disappointingly normal urinals). We settled for Taco Bell since bean burritos without cheese are supposedly vegan.

The more I fly the more I realize I really hate flying. However, when we landed in Albany and Spackle’s mother and stepfather were waiting at the exit area I knew all was right and good in the world.

We headed back to Spackle’s folk’s place and after some catching up and a short rest we had our first home cooked meal in three days. Spackle’s mom had made a veggie chili with veggie ground beef and some of the chili sauce from Spackle’s stepfather’s family tamale recipe (which Spackle printed a few months back). We ended up making tamales while we were there too; it was all good stuff.



Although the trip was planned on the pretense of visiting Spackle’s mom, we were actually only there for a few days of the trip. During the week we were there, we also traveled up to Montreal for a day and half and down to New York City for a day and a half.

Montreal is a beautiful city if you ever have a chance to get up there. I’ve only been to Montreal and Vancouver as far as Canadian cities go and both were wonderful, though dramatically different. Montreal is old. Old, old. Well at least parts of it are. After we got lost twice trying to follow the highway into the city (it kept playing the magical disappearing exit sign game with us) we found the hotel we had reservations at and parked the car in their underground parking lot. None of us wanted to have anything to do with the driving after all the getting lost business. (By the way, if you’re ever visiting Spackle’s mom for some reason

I would highly recommend borrowing her Nissan Altima, it's a great car for road-tripping.) With the car parked, the bags in the room and a map from the front desk, we set out to explore the city. The city is pretty big, but if you're a tourist and have a hotel booked within a mile or two of the one concrete destination you have in mind, you can reach ton of stuff in a day and half. Luckily our almost complete lack of planning paid off because their contemporary art museum (the one specific place Spackle actually wanted to go to, the rest was just taking in the general sites) was about a mile and half down one of their main commercial districts so we checked out the culture on the way.

The museum itself was a little disappointing because one of the main galleries was closed between shows, but we had a great lunch at the museum restaurant. A pointer, at least at the museum restaurant, they don't take kindly to stupid Americans asking if it is "seat yourself" after waiting a few minutes without having any of the wait staff actually look at you, and the wait staff will look at you funny with a hint of offense when you ask for your grilled veggie sandwich without cheese. Both Vaginagirl's and our meal was really good though and wine in the afternoon is always a bonus.

After the museum we headed off into the city again, this time in the general direction of the Old Montreal area. On the way there we stumbled upon the Montreal Chinatown, which was really quite pleasant, not as crazy as Chinatown in many other cities. The Old Montreal area is beautiful; all the buildings are super old stone structures with cobble stone streets. It's been converted into a tourist area, but it was still really cool. While we were there, Spackle had a weird occurrence when he realized that he had actually been standing on one particular street about 15 years ago and had completely forgotten he'd been in that part of Montreal. He was all excited though. Simpleton.



That night we decided to go all out and eat real sushi since we were so close to a coast. What we didn't realize is that even sushi can be dramatically influenced by the local cuisine.

We decided on Koji's Kaizen because it was listed in the hotel guide magazine as "voted the best sushi in Montreal". All the "slab o' fish" sushi was great, but all the rolls had different, sort of foul sauces on them, obviously influenced by the French cooking in the area. This didn't stop us from going full on glutton though because we also went for the desserts that were all slightly Japanese variations on classic French desserts. Vaginagirl had a trio of crême brules (standard, chocolate and green tea) and Spackle and I had a fruity torte. We also decided to go the full nine and get after-dinner liqueurs that the restaurant recommended with each dessert. Between the liqueur and the pitchers of sake with dinner it was a less than straight walk back to the hotel. Nothing like being drunk and slightly irresponsible in a foreign city.

The next morning we had breakfast at the hotel, which was your standard continental breakfast, but the croissants were super moist and tasty. Worrying about traffic (well worrying about getting lost), Spackle didn't want to stick around too late, so we went out and grabbed some croissants from a local bakery (as well as some more foofy desserts) then headed home. Since we'd left early we decided to take our time on the way home so we looked for and missed the Adirondack Museum and instead hit famous Exit 21.

If you're ever in upstate New York I believe it is local law that you must stop in Lake George and play some mini-golf (ask Spackle's sister-in-law). We played at a place that had a plaque stating that it was the site of the oldest mini-golf course in the US - it had obviously been remodeled. We also read another plaque that stated Lake George, which is one of the biggest or longest or something lakes on the east coast, was the site of some

crazy naval battles during the French and Indian and Revolutionary Wars. Supposedly a ton of English ships were sunk there, damn Limeys.

After the Montreal trip we spend a day or so at Spackle's folk's place again then headed south for the second big trip.

New York City - this was the definite highlight of an overall great vacation. Worried about Memorial Day traffic Spackle's folks threw down and bought us train tickets to Penn Station so that we wouldn't have to worry about driving. If I haven't already said this, Spackle's folks are the greatest. We hopped the train early in the morning and made it into the city by early afternoon. We had plans to meet two friends that we hadn't seen in forever. One was Vaginagirl's good friend from Junior High, who she hadn't seen in about five years and the other was a good friend of all of ours who had moved to the city about two years previous. (By the time this is printed he will have moved to Florence, Italy, which will probably be the subject of an article next spring.)

We hit the ground running at Penn Station and hopped on the subway headed for Manhattan. After a bit of culture shock and quick transfer along the way we popped out about a block from Vaginagirl's friend's workplace. After a quick visit (because she is an editor for a magazine that was on the last day before print deadline) and an amazing, unobstructed view of Central Park from the roof of a 23-story building we were off for the Guggenheim.

Now, as any vegetarian knows trying to find a restaurant in a strange city can often be a bit of a trick. We all know there is usually something on the menu for us, but if you're trying to do vegan in a strange city your job just got about 17 million times more difficult. After some wandering and some stomach grumbling, we literally stumbled upon a place with a tiny storefront and a sign in Japanese a handful of blocks from the Guggenheim. We figured we'd give it a shot since the menu out front showed that 2 of the 5 items available appeared to be vegan. We walked in off the scorching hot, noisy city street into a tiny air-conditioned storefront with ceramic cups and teapots in blond wood with glass cases and a stainless steel hallway leading to the back. In the back, the restaurant was more or less a glorified ultra-wide hallway with seating on both sides terminating with a huge traditional Japanese floral arrangement nestled in the end of the glass sunroom. I noticed the sign that asked patrons to turn off their cell phones the same time I noticed the only sound I could hear was soft classical music wafting through the cool air. Spackle's body started to finally loosen up as we looked at the menu. (There's nothing worse than spending a week and half in a body that clenches it's jaw 17 hours a day and spends the rest of the time drooling in it's sleep.) We ordered steamed Japanese vegetables over seasoned rice and green tea. It was simple and absolutely perfect.



Since we were running late after looking for a place to eat for so long we decided to skip desert and instead head for the museum. We found out after we got back home that the restaurant, named Toraya, is world famous for their artistic confections known as wagashi, which is a traditional Japanese confection that evolved into an art form in ancient Kyoto. Toraya has been making confections since the 16<sup>th</sup> century and it turns out they only have two locations outside of Japan - Paris and New York. Next time, next time.

After the Guggenheim, we headed for Troy's place on the west side of Central Park to work on dinner and plans for the evening.

Let me interrupt by saying that Troy is the greatest. He had three plans lined up for us before we arrived in case any of them fell through or were lame.

After a QUICK tour of his place we headed out for some more sushi, this time New York style at a place call Tomo on the Upper West Side. (Did mention the title being the “not-so-vegan” reviewer this time around?)

The place was great, good atmosphere and just crowded enough to give you the group think vibe. It was also just a little too warm inside, which made the cold sake an amazing first experience (always getting it warm in the past). As usual we ordered too much sushi and ate it all gleefully, while chatting with our “long lost” friend.

After dinner we passed a bit of time with a tour of the Columbia Campus area and a stroll back to Troy’s place. A quick wash up and we were headed for the subway to meet up with some of Troy’s friends who’d only been living in the city for a few months, having moved there oddly enough from Denver. They also had another friend visiting from Denver, name of Adam.

Here was the plan:

1. Drink some wine while chatting a bit and passing a bit of time.
2. Head to the South Street Seaport to go to a “party” that had a number of techno DJ’s playing. (My bit of mental and physical control over Spackle’s body wasn’t enough to convince them the Duke doesn’t like techno.)
3. Have a good time for an indefinite period of time.



Possibly replacing step number 2 above, the back up plans were:

1. Head to a warehouse in Brooklyn where they have good techno DJ’s spinning on the weekends.
2. Head to a club somewhere else that played what Troy was referring to as Beat Wave or something or other that he said was New Wave music from the 80’s remixed with techno.

Hey, we were in the big city, we were looking to have a good time, so all three sounded like great plans from the start. However, when we finally found the party, which eluded us for about 40 minutes due to it being in wide-open plain sight in the Pier shopping area (Yes, in a mall.), we decided we would pass on the \$40 tickets to attend what appeared to be a junior high school dance. Even though Adam had already paid for 3 tickets for the others, he was damned if it was going to ruin anyone’s fun. Without a pause, we headed for plan 2.

A strange side story, yet again involving urinals, at the Pier Spackle and I hit the restroom to get ride of some of the sake and wine we’d drank earlier and Spackle had this very strange, overwhelming sensation that he’d forgotten to change his clothes that day. Then he realized that it was still the same day he had put them on, but couldn’t shake the feeling.

A subway ride away, we headed under the river and came out in Brooklyn. Now when Troy had mentioned a warehouse I wasn’t necessarily expecting that we would end up literally a half block from the underside of the Manhattan Bridge in an abandoned warehouse district without a soul around but the six of us (well seven if you count Spackle). I should have known better.

After a few block walk to the warehouse from the subway station we quickly discovered that the entire population of the warehouse had actually gone out to Maryland, or somewhere, for an East Coast “Burning

Man" gathering. Troy was actually off to the same event himself, but not until the next day.

The couple from Denver decided to call it a night because it was now after midnight and we'd been working on actually doing something for almost two hours, though most of us were having a blast on the journey. The rest of us turned around in the abandoned warehouse district to find an in service "car service" car pulling up behind us. (For those who don't know, myself being one of you until this trip, a car service is basically a taxi, but since there are only a limited number of actual Taxis allowed in the city and those vehicles are tightly controlled by a few Taxi companies, there are quite a few independent car services.) The rest of us saw this as fate that we must persevere (though in reality the driver was really there looking for the usual drugged up kids that he could overcharge for rides). Hopping in the car we headed for Plan 3. (Troy was on top of it.)

Pulling up in front of a club called The Luxx, Adam, with his amazing powers of charisma says something to the doorman and we get in for something like half the door charge. Then as we walk into the crowded room, which again is a glorified hallway, we shoulder our way past the first bar and to about the middle of the club. Standing there for a moment in the booming rhythm, trying to find a bit of space, we hear Adam's voice call us. Somehow, he has grabbed one of five tables in this crowded club. We stake claim to the table, again seeing this as a sign, then head to bar.

Now, while Redbull and vodka might seem like a good idea because you are tired and you know you will be



out until at least 4 am when the bars close in New York City, you really want to take into consideration that when the caffeine and the alcohol reach full saturation in your bloodstream you will feel like you have been awake for a week through low voltage electrification to the entire surface of your body. While not a bad sensation, it is something of a surprise when about 3:30 rolls around and the club is finally starting clear out a little bit.

The music, as Troy had promised, was a blast - fun, up-beat and since most of the songs were somewhat familiar it was easy to sing along and dance. The strangest site by far, next to the drag queen introducing a very strange poet/mc/singer

who reminded of an odd combination of Andy Warhol and Beck, with a touch of a really cheesy "gothy-poo", was this woman, who had to be 65 or 70 and looked exactly like someone's grandmother, dancing up a storm and whooping it up with all the club kids. It was awe-inspiring.

After around 4 am when the lights came up and music went off we walked outside, grabbed a cab and headed for Troy's place. Rounding out a 22-hour day for the three of us, we finally passed out just as the sun was starting to come up - caffeine be damned!

For some reason we all decided to get up at about 9:30 am. While Rachel and I took showers, made coffee, straightened up the kitchen and got ready, Adam and Troy headed out to grab some breakfast for us. I wasn't too surprised by the bagels and fresh cantaloupe, but the mimosas initially seemed more than this little ghost could handle. However, my sleep-starved and worn out host's body ate it all up with joy. The craziest part was that they brought back two kinds of flavored cream cheese, both of which were soy. Troy tells me that a lot of people in that part of town prefer soy "cream cheese" over the real stuff because it doesn't go bad as quickly. Who woulda' guessed?

After a bit of chatting and relaxing the party finally split up. Adam leaving with a cello body strapped to his

back with Ethernet cable was off to meet another friend of his who was living in New York, and the rest of us heading to FAO Schwartz to get a present for Spackle's niece.

After the gift was got and the store explored, Troy also went on his separate way to gather supplies before heading to the Burning Man thing. The rest of us headed back to Penn Station with a short stop along the way at the Hello Kitty Store.

Arriving at Penn Station over an hour early we stopped for our final New York City meal at a place I can't remember, or find online for the life of me. Basically it was a chain burger/sports bar that they don't have out here, but they had a couple veggie selections on the menu. Obviously my lack of sleep and a long few hours of walking around the city that day was also affecting my memory of what I had to eat. I vaguely remember a grilled veggie sandwich, which was deeply satisfying to the soul, but I'm sure soul-satisfying part had much more to do with my physical state than the quality of the food. I'm sure we both looked like shit because I also remember the waiter treating us sort of strangely.

The train ride home was one long nap.

The next day the vacation came to an end, as they always seem to. We had seen a lot, we had eaten almost as much, but we were both ready to head home and sleep in our own beds. Spackle and Vaginagirl have already made plans to visit Europe next spring since Vaginagirl will be study abroad next semester in Wales. I overheard them talking about hitting the Toraya in Paris to get actually try some of the wagashi confections. I'll keep you updated.

## The Highlights

**Majestic Restaurant** - *6150 West Cermak Road Cicero, IL* - The ultimate non-chain Perkins.

**La Rotonde Restaurant - Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal** - *185 Rue Sainte-Catherine West Montréal, Québec* - Semi-fancy and tasty, but a bit snooty.

**Koji's Kaizen** - *4120 Rue Sainte-Catherine West Montréal, Québec* - Great desserts, but funny sauces on the sushi.

**Toraya** - *17 East 71<sup>st</sup> Street New York, NY* - Relaxing, simple, wonderful. Yes, you should go.

**Tomo Sushi** - *2850 Broadway (near 110<sup>th</sup>) New York, NY* - Good atmosphere, good sushi, no funny sauces.

**LUXX** - *256 Grand Street Brooklyn, NY* - No food, just dance, good time.

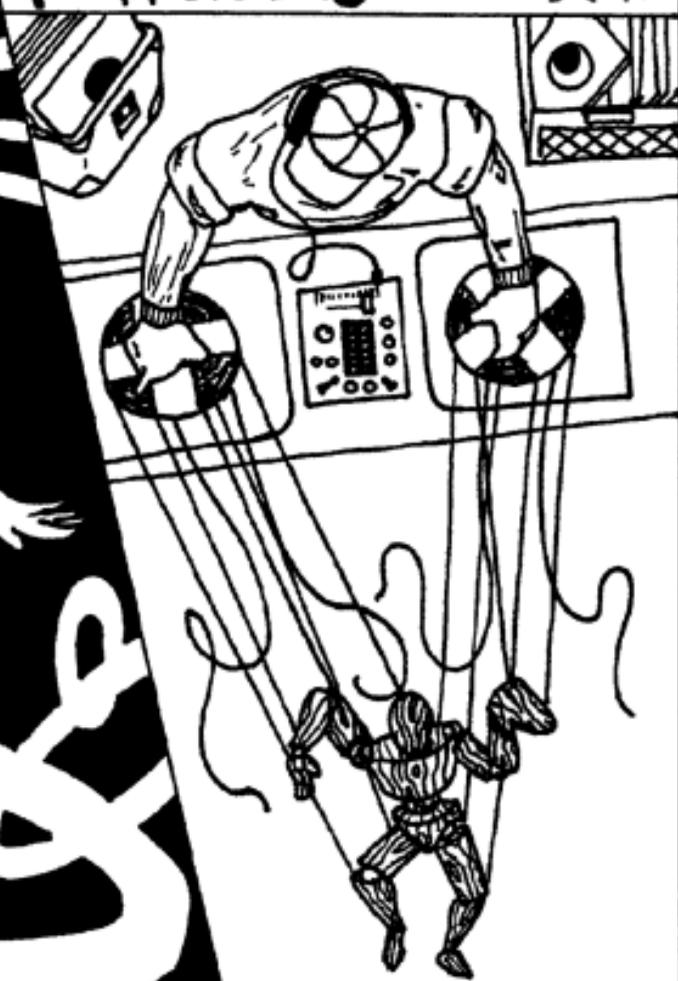
Disclaimer: If you are eating out you are most definitely not eating vegan.

A rule of thumb: If you don't want to know, don't ask. If you do want to know, don't eat out.

FOR THE  
LIFE!

NOT  
JUST!

Keep the  
Video  
Alive



For years life was a  
TOTAL ANNI!

"Friedrich"

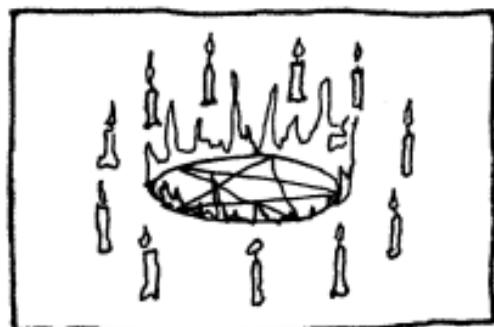


# THE ADVENTURES OF MAX OF Pleistocene Fish

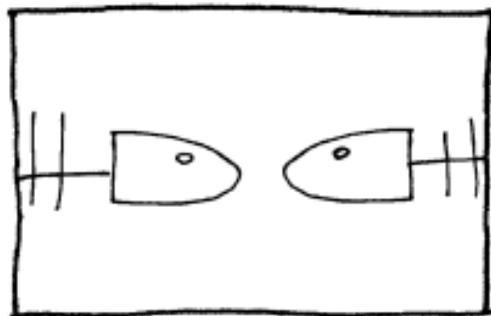
I fought my way past  
demons, devils, and the souls  
of the damned



to the source  
of my suffering,  
the heart of all evil.



NEXT ISSUE:  
THE END?



Giant Spiders Streaming Across the Ceiling<sup>1</sup>



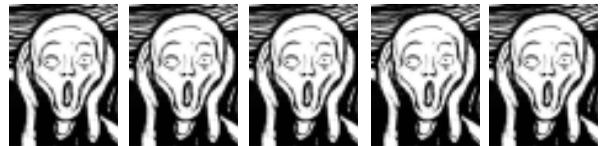
George Bush as President<sup>2</sup>



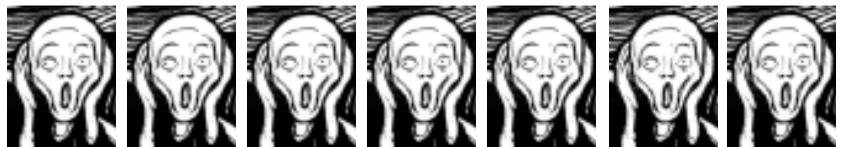
George Bush Having Sex<sup>3</sup>



His Friends Dying<sup>4</sup>



Total Information Awareness<sup>5</sup>



## **The T.I.N. Ballistic Report**

### **This month's tests by Warrior Poetess and Bagboy**

Those readers unfamiliar with Bagboy's sleeping habits may not know that he suffers from aggressive somnambulism. Weekly Bagboy leaps out of bed, still asleep, and proceeds to run outside in all his pasty white glory, intent on beating the crap out of something and thereby saving the world. If and when he returns to bed, he always wakes up exhausted, which isn't so strange when you think about it.

With all the terrors in the world these days, it's not unusual that BB should have such intense walking/running/screaming nightmares. For your amusement Bagboy and I have compiled graphical explanation of what really scares the bejeezus out of BB in his dreams, and gets him up and moving.

<sup>1</sup> Bagboy interacts with some weird shit in his sleep. The usual suspects are: hordes of giant spiders the size of your fist, dead bodies, and hovering orbs.

<sup>2</sup> Bagboy believes Bush stole the election by invalidating half the ballots of black voters in Florida.

<sup>3</sup> Self-explanatory.

<sup>4</sup> For some reason Bagboy has a complex that motivates him to try to save dying friends in his dream. This usually means that he actually puts their lives in danger by following through with his twisted dream logic. Bagboy has put pillows over peoples' faces, charged into occupied bedrooms with axes, and gone for the family ninja-to on more than one occasion.

<sup>5</sup> I caught Bagboy screaming about converting all his dollars to gold and moving to Tunisia. Go figure.

### **Next Issue:**

Bagboy "The Gringo Jingo" Crow and Warrior Poetess square off in an electrifying showdown! East meets West in a debate of stupifying proportions!





