

## **Escaped Goats**

A Fun Random Book Of Knowingly Subpar Writings by Alan  
Holman

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Dedicated To  
Me

I'm dedicating this short book to myself. I must love myself before loving others.

## **What This Book Is**

Don't expect quality here. This book is more about quantity of words than quality of content. Like the abstract lyrics on an average musician's album, these pages are also a collection of words by an artist who just likes putting words places where they either fit or don't fit with how they should be arranged.

This book is a place for me to express a flavor of literature that isn't defined by purpose. As your eyes glide across the pages, you're enjoying either fluid or stilted phraseologies. If you're not enjoying this crap for what it is – crap – then close this book and do something else.

I don't even know or care when I wrote and collected the works, if you can call them that, which waste the pages of this fabulous volume. Looking at a random page of this book is meant to evoke awe in the illiterate; they don't know the utter meaninglessness of the content, nor do they know the flavor of the literature, if you can call it that.

You'll either get something meaningful from some part(s) of this book, or – the more likely case – you won't.

I'm letting you know up-front, at the start of the book, that this is not a good book at all. I'm not trying to prove anything scientific or tell an epic story, and none of the stories that are in here even have points to them.

All of the first drafts of the content that is mentioned in the Table of Contents – which directly follows this write-up – were

written within the timeframe of 2000 to 2005. Moments of significance to my heart occurred during that time. I was inspired to write in a variety of formats, with a certain throughline of something I wanted to say that just wasn't being said properly despite how much content I wrote in vein attempts to say that particular unsayable thing, a sublime thing. So read between the lines, or read as if it's all abstract or as if everything is metaphorical. Read with interpretations that push forward your own agendas, whatever those agendas are; just don't read this if you think it's a waste of time and paper.

This is a collection of writings that are entirely subject to potential Mandela Effects.

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## **THE PROFESSOR**

**By Alan Holman**

THURSDAY. AUGUST 3rd, 2000. 8:30 P.M.

Professor Testiny Gary was a heavy-set man who lived on the wrong side of the tracks, on the west-side of Saskatoon. His house reeked of piss and garbage. His bedroom smelled worse.

He was laying in his bed. His butler, Rinaldo, materialized before him.

The Professor awoke with a start, noticed the butler, and turned off the radio.

"I already turned that off for you," his butler said, in a heavy, British accent.

"Rinaldo!"

"Here as always," the butler responded, standing tall and proud, making no secret of the fact he was British, and looking down his nose at Professor Testiny Gary. "Would it kill you to ask Gina for a date?"

Professor Testiny Gary, who shall from this moment on be referred to as Gary, sat up, stating, "A professor of English should not be seen dating his secretary."

Rinaldo rubbed his thick yellow beard, and retorted, "How many professors of English have secretaries? It's not against the law. Go out with her." And then, enthusiastically, Rinaldo ordered, "Start a family!"

Gary looked down at his stained bed-sheets, and made an oath, slowly, vowing, "I don't want a family; I came from one."

Rinaldo gazed at Gary, and suggested, "A film! May I suggest taking her out to a film? American Tragedy opens tonight, and it has a story that I am sure would appeal to you."

Not giving a damn, Gary asked, "What's it about?"

"Oh, I don't know," Rinaldo responded, guessing, "two and a half, three hours, but it will show you the consequences of not asking out the woman you love; for instance, did you know that psychologists have proven that a lack of sexual fulfillment always leads to deviant behavior!"

Gary shook his head in doubt, "They haven't proven that!"

"For God's sake sir," Rinaldo screeched in his hard British accent, "you're fifty-two years old, and you have yet to ever go on a date!"

"Go make me coffee."

"Make it yourself."

"You're the only butler I've ever had who doesn't do things for me."

"I am the only butler you have ever had," Rinaldo responded, in a thick British accent. "If it were not for the

companionship which I voluntarily provide for you, and the private conferences which we have; in which you ramble on to me monotonously about your shortcomings, you would have lost your sanity years ago! Having put up with all of that, I am the only person who knows what is best for you, Gary. Now get off of your duff, quit dodging life, and get your own damned coffee!"

Gary held his head as if Rinaldo's shrill nasal voice was too much for his stomach to handle... After a second, he hopped out of bed. His blanket fell to the floor, and as he stretched, his suit crackled, and Rinaldo scoffed disgustedly, "Oh, you wore your clothes to bed again."

Gary smiled, proud of the observational skills within his butler, "You're very observant. It's my new way of dressing. I shower before bed, and I sleep in a new suit each night; that way, when I wake up late, I don't have to worry about dressing before I leave. And recently it's been the case that I'm late to rise since you've been turning off the damned radio before I get a chance to wake up! Not to mention not making the coffee. I've got to take my leave of you now, Rinaldo. Thanks for waking me up... this time."

So, as Professor Testiny Gary was just about to leave his bedroom, Rinaldo interrupted him, by excitedly ordering, "Wait right here."

Annoyed, Gary looked at his alarm clock, and asked, "What is it now?"

Rinaldo exited, into the closet, without answering the pressing question, as Professor Gary was left alone in the bedroom. Alone and annoyed, Gary looked deep within his brain,



took a deep breath, and calculated a figure: "Welcome to day 19, 356 of my life," he sighed.

Then, Rinaldo came out of the closet, entering Gary's bedroom with a tacky green hat. Rinaldo put the hat on Gary's head. Gary was reluctant, but Rinaldo had a way of putting things on Gary without much problem...

Rinaldo clasped his hands, smiled, and cheered, "I think this will look fabulous on you!"

Gary observed his own absurdity through the mirror: A suited professional, wearing a childish party-hat -- how absurd! Angrily, he muttered to Rinaldo, "If it's not one damned thing with you, it's another damned thing. Take you out of the equation, and..."

In his shrill British accent, Rinaldo argued, "It's a good hat! Please wear it today. I like it. Gina will like..."

Gary gave up, settling with his butler's terms, "I'll wear it to work," Gary said, surrendering. "But only because it won't make a difference whether I'm wearing it to work or not."

That's when Gary found his way out of the hell-hole he called home, leaving the butler to his own vices. The butler cheered, "Yay, I say, if I may... eating hay... on a cold day... while children play... laughing all the way, HO HO HO! HAH!"

MEANWHILE...

"So," A blonde woman asked Alan from across her desk. "Are you familiar with what we do here?"

"Well," Alan said. "The advertisement said to come here for an opportunity to learn about...marketing skills, and stuff... Can you elaborate on that?"

"You know what?" she checked him out, smacked her lips, then asked, "This is getting boring. Let's continue this interview downstairs, at the coffee-shop."

"Sure," Alan said.

So as they stood up, Alan pictured her naked...

As they walked down the stairs, the woman sang: "Some days I just look around/And wait for you to come around/And that's why I am now around/You who are ... Hey, Alan, I need a word that doesn't rhyme with around."

"Cat? Steve?"

"Spectacular suggestion!" she said. "I think you are going to click with this job..."

LATER...

Inside one of the many colleges on the University of Saskatchewan Campus sat one of the only English Professor's Secretaries in the entire campus. The secretaries' name was Gina Richards. While drinking a cold coffee, Gina muttered, annoyed, "And he is late again..."

That's when Gary entered with a smile on his face.

Gina shuddered as she put down the cold coffee, then she spoke, "Good morning, Professor Gary."

And Gary returned her greeting, tipping his shiny green party-hat to her, "And a mighty fine morning it is, Gina!"

"So very expressive, you are," Gina mentioned, dumping her cold, sour coffee out the window...and the cream as well. "And so very late, you are. Almost daily." Gina attempted fiddling with the damaged coffee-maker, but nothing worked... she continued talking, "Are you sure you have enough time to plan your lectures for this morning?"

"Time is on my side," Gary said while watching Gina's rear-end as she bent over the coffee-machine, fiddling with a switch... "When do I have to be in ... the lecture hall?"

Gina turned to Gary, disgusted by his drool as he self-consciously wiped it off of his face with his sleeve. Gina said, after a pause to consider the question, "Thirteen minutes ago," she said. "Minus what your class is used to, so you're five minutes early."

Gary corrected himself, "Time is not on my side. But no worries: I have a back-up plan."

"Do you want me to dig out one of your surprise quizzes?"

"You read my mind!" Gary snapped appreciatively. Then, trailing off, he continued, "And I thought only Rinaldo could read my mind..."

Confused, Gina asked, "Who's Rinaldo?"

Gary was apparently in a bind, and he obviously didn't want to explain the details of his strange relationship with his butler, so he stuttered, "He wants me to... he's.... never mind." He stood up straight, regained his composure, screamed, "YOU'RE FIRED!!!"

Gina just stared at him for a second, unsure of what to do.

Then Gary continued, laughing heartily, "JUST KIDDING!! Oh, the look on your face, like if you didn't know what to do about what just hit you: Priceless! Just dig up one of the surprise quizzes."

Regaining her own composure, Gina giggled, and asked, "And which unit are we on?" She was thinking, 'What an asshole...'

"My students just finished reading Beowulf a few days ago, so dig up one of the quizzes on Beowulf."

Gina grabbed a file from her desk -- already prepared. "Here it is," she mentioned, handing the file to her boss, "I hated that book." She was thinking, 'And I hate you, jerk.'

Gary laughed at her jest... Gina thought, 'He's really a likable guy if you overlook his many unattractive insanities...'

"Thank you," Gary said, looking through the tests in the file, thinking, 'Everything is in order.' Then, he realized that he still had one more thing to do. "One more thing I must do is get rid of this horrible hat."

'What hat?' Gina thought, but didn't dare ask...she just laughed as he made a swaying motion toward the hat-rack... then he looked pleased.

She couldn't help it, so she asked, "Is that some kind of a new dance?"

There was a chilling pause, as Gary looked deep within himself, thinking, 'Shit. Goddamn Rinaldo!' Then, he laughed, "What? Ah, yes it is."

Gina commented, "Very graceful, but you've still got a lot of work to do on your coordination." As an afterthought, she

thought, 'If he's planning to ask me to the Year Ender Bender, I'm going to cut his balls off.'

MEANWHILE...

At the coffee-shop, Alan ordered a mocha-coffee, and a bear-claw... The blonde woman insisted on paying. The blonde woman decided to only have a coffee.

When they were seated, Alan started giggling as he ate the bear claw, then the woman asked, in her Sweet, breathy voice, "What are you laughing about?"

"Um, Bear Claw ... Uh, I don't even know your name, and you're buying me a bear claw! - you ... scourge of the seven seas!"

"Oh," she said, shaking his hand. "I'm Lonnie. I'm... How about if I tell you what our marketing firm markets... Uh, I'll explain what we do, to you, during an on the job orientation -- just you and me, Alan -- and that orientation will be tomorrow." Then she added, "Very early."

This is when Alan decided to look at her face, instead of just at her breasts as she spoke, and he noticed some alluring features...

6:00 P.M.

Gary's "dinner table" is a clothes-hamper turned upside-down next to his bed. Gary sat sideways on one side of the upside-down hamper, and Rinaldo, Gary's butler, sat on the other side of the

upside-down hamper. This explains how an English Professor can afford a beautiful secretary...

Rinaldo's huge platter of Chinese food was laid out on the dinner table in front of him. When Gary entered, Rinaldo spit, loudly, all over his own food, as a security precaution, then said to Gary, "You should have called. I would have made a wonderful feast for you."

"Your cooking is flavorless," Gary responded, and poured a really big cup of coffee for himself. "You boil the flavor out of everything. You are true to your homeland."

"Suit yourself," said the British butler.

"Well," said the English professor, "I wouldn't have you suit me."

Rinaldo stood up, accidentally crashed the hamper, and his food, to the ground, where the food disappeared. Rinaldo changed the subject by suggesting, "Take Gina to the Year Ender Bender."

"That's an affair for the students, Rinaldo. I wouldn't go to that."

Rinaldo assumed a screechy, shrill-nasal voice, and a defensive stance, arguing, "Gina would love it. Many professors do go to the Year Ender Bender, you know. It's not just for the students."

Gary put his foot down, after putting it up so he could put it down, and he ferociously stood his ground: "It's out of the question."

"But she looks at you with love," Rinaldo said, in a lovey-dovey voice, thinking, 'love of money.'

"She does?" Gary asked, taken aback.

"Show some back to her."

The notion sounded absurd to Gary, so he asked, "by bringing her to a dance populated with horny, inebriated adolescents?"

Enthused, Rinaldo screamed, "Exactly!"

"It just seems wrong," Gary said, meekly, thinking, 'Everything you suggest seems wrong.'

"She's not your student," Rinaldo argued. "She's your secretary. Ask her. Ask and you shall receive."

They were interrupted by knocks on the door.

Rinaldo chimed, "I'll get it."

"That's out of the question," Gary mentioned, stopping his butler from getting the door, "I'm getting the door. Prepare that feast for me, and leave me alone with the visitor."

"As you say," Rinaldo said, exiting into the closet.

Professor Gary waddled toward the door, and admitted two lab-coat-wearing visitors, while saying, "Welcome."

One of the lab-coat wearing visitors was obviously flaming-gay from his appearance, and Gary didn't mind this... His gay accent confirmed it, as the gay visitor said, "Hello. Professor Testiny Gary? Did I say that first name correctly?"

"Yes," Gary responded, motioning for them to sit around the hamper. The lab-coat wearing visitors winked at each-other. Gary continued speaking, "You pronounced it superbly. I usually just go by the name Gary, though. It serves both as a first AND a last name!!"

The gay one played with his pencil and his clipboard, while saying, "Testi..ny. That's an interesting first name."

"And you are?"

"Forgive me," laughed the gay one, "I'm Dr. Stephan Harding, and this is Doctor Anton Lace." Doctor Anton Lace, a geeky-looking silent-boy waved. Dr. Stephan Harding, the gay one, continued, "I imagine you have a doctorate as well?"

"My doctorate is in English," Professor Gary responded. "But I prefer to just be referred to as Professor. I feel funny when people call me a doctor."

"Ah yes," Dr. Stephan Harding nodded, thinking, 'That's because we're the REAL doctors.'

The geeky looking Dr. Anton Lace silently laughed.

Gary motioned to the hamper again, saying, "Please take a seat, and then tell me your business here."

They all sat. Gary realized that the hamper was still tipped over from earlier, so he stood it up, up-side-down, and made a gesture, suggesting that they all scrunch together. They complied.

"So tell me Professor," Dr. Stephan Harding asked. "Are you interested in science?"

"I'm extremely interested in science," Gary responded. "Would you like to hear my Tit Theory of the Universe?"

"Tit theory?" Dr. Stephan Harding asked, taken aback. (Usually, comedy duos are The Strait Man and The Silent Man; these doctors were different...) The silent one, Anton Lace, looked confused, and broke his silence, saying, in a nerdy crackly voice which explained his lengthy silence, "Your tit what?"

Looking the doctors in the eyes, and sizing their minds up, Gary decided to proceed, saying, with all seriousness, "I believe that the Universe is shaped like a breast."



"This has absolutely nothing to do with... the reason we're here," Doctor Harding said, but Anton kicked him in the leg, so Stephan continued, "But how so?"

Happy to be acknowledged, Gary continued, beginning his lecture, "Well, when the big bang occurred, and you do believe in the big bang, don't you?"

In the same tone which a child would use to say the word "DUUH", Dr. Harding said, "Continue, please. I feel there will be an amusement at the end. Is this a joke?"

There was an uncomfortable pause, then Gary spoke silently, with all seriousness, lecturing to the doctors, "I'm quite, quite serious about this. Fifteen billion years ago, when the big bang occurred, there was a creation of both light and sound from that explosion. That light and that sound were the initial light and sound in the universe. Are you following so far?"

The doctors nodded, skeptically.

"Good," Gary continued, glad to have an audience. "Well, the source of the explosion would be about where the tip of the nipple is. The sound has traveled towards the end of that red circle around the tip, and the light, which has traveled quite faster in that period of time, is what makes the entire breast a ..." He was feeling around an invisible breast with his hands, as Dr. Anton Lace was completely captivated. "...circle."

Then, there was a charged moment, as everybody in the room, except for Dr. Stephan Harding, considered the invisible breast. Then, the gay one, said, "You ... are... insane."

There was another such paused moment, but it was different this time... Then, Gary said, "Perhaps. But that's my theory and I'm sticking to it. So what is your business here?"

Doctor Stephan Harding stood, proudly, up, announcing, "We're neurologists. I'm the head of a research team at the University."

"I also work at the University," Gary said. Then, disgustedly, he looked over Doctor Harding, and muttered, "Wow, we have something in common!"

"Yes. We know," Doctor Harding replied. "We are gathering up test subjects for an experimental post-mortem procedure."

Perplexed, confused, and intimidated, Gary asked, "So where do I come in?"

"We just want to know if you'd be interested in donating your body to science."

"Sure," Gary said, "Where do I sign? I've always wanted to be a USEFUL cadaver. What's the catch?" Gary was thinking, 'It'd be so funny if the doctors responded THE CATCH IS: YOU'RE GOING TO DIE!!! HAH! That would be a riot...'

But the gay doctor responded, "Well, first of all, we'd like to describe the procedure to you. It's a procedure, which we will only do to applicants who die in the next five-years. Full funeral and burial arrangements are supplied for..."

"Explain nothing to me," Gary interrupted. "I'll sign for it."

Aggravated, and flailing his arms around like wet noodles, the gay doctor said, "We need to explain it to you because of

certain moral and ethical issues surrounding our area of research. Legally, you have to sign an agreement stating that you completely understand the basics of what we are doing. Also, you have to understand that this procedure will only be done to applicants who die within the next five years."

And then, for some weird reason, Gary said, conspiratorially, "I won't tell if you don't." And a silence filled the room.

The gay doctor thought, 'After hearing that we take their brains for use in...videos... no one else is signing up, so we might as well skip the explanation of our actual intentions,' he handed the forms to Gary, and said, "All right. Sign here, please."

Gary signed the paper.

"And initial again, here...and here... and here... and I need your phone number here." Dr. Stephan Harding put the phone number in his pocket, and the signatures in his purse, next to an issue of the scientific journal WOMAN'S WORLD.

"Okay," Gary said. "Are we done?"

"Apparently, we're done," Doctor Harding said.

"However, if you'd like to know about the procedure..."

"That won't be happening tonight, guys," Gary said, leading them to the door. "Good night."

"Thank you for giving yourself, uh, your cadaver, to scientific research.."

"My pleasure. I hope," Gary said. "Bye now." And Gary slammed the door. The doctors were finally gone.

And Rinaldo entered, making Gary think, 'Not one damned thing, another...'

Rinaldo interrupted Gary's thoughts, saying, "So who was that?"

"Just some scientists," Gary said. "They wanted me to donate my body to science if I die in the next five years. That won't be happening. So they're gone now."

"What kind of science?" Rinaldo asked, pretending to care to listen.

Gary took a deep breath, and said, absurdly fast, in one breath, "They're re-working pre-existing theories, trying to create the asymptotic theory of trans-light speed and temporal mode alteration with invitational Freudian-slip-streamlining by re-using their three year old marketplace graphological analysis of canine Seinfeldian chronic-stress injected platonic attractive strangers, in well-structured, perfect syntax; it should prove exciting!"

"Really," Rinaldo asked. "What's that?"

"It may be nothing. I have no idea."

"So you didn't ask them what they're doing?"

"I don't give a shit."

"Are you going to ask Gina to the Year Ender Bender or not?" Rinaldo asked, changing the subject.

"I truly want to, Rinaldo," Gary said. "But I won't. I don't have the courage to ask her."

"You have the courage to donate your body to science," Rinaldo reasoned, "But you can't ask a girl to a dance?"

"For the science thing," Gary reasoned, "I don't have to be there. For the date, I would have to show up, and I would be very frightened."

Rinaldo put his hand on Gary's back, and suggested, softly, "I could go with you."

"No."

"Someday prostitutes will be the death of you."

"As long as I keep getting fresh, new, expensive, burgeoning nymphet whores, there is nothing for me to worry about."

"You're going straight to hell," Rinaldo stated.

"Probably," Gary mentioned. "However, to answer your question: I do want to ask Gina for a date. I have always wanted to do that. I will do that. I must do that. I've got a nice car, a good job, and lots of money. What more could she want?"

"That's the spirit."

FRIDAY. AUGUST 4th, 2000. 11:20 P.M.

In Saskatoon's only Starbucks, Professor Gary was sitting, complaining to himself, out loud, "American Tragedy: That movie sucked. Of course, the only reason behind my harsh judgment of the film was my jealousy of the main character, the happy ending he experienced, and the paths he chose which I would have chose had I known, in my youth, what I know now about life: that constant learning can only lead to insane boredom. I wish I would have had more fun."

His secretary, Gina Richards, entered the Starbucks, unexpectedly, she noticed Gary, and she approached him, asking, "Hey! May I?"

"Go ahead. Make my day," Gary said, quoting a movie which was much better than the two-and-a-half hours of pure garbage, which he had just witnessed...

Gina sat across from Gary, and she asked, "So why are you alone in a coffee shop?"

"I have my coffee," he responded, "Coffee and I make good companions."

She thought, 'typical', then she looked at her watch, and she thought, 'Old man probably thinks this is a date,' and then she asked, "Are you going to be at work on time tomorrow?"

Gary smiled, looked into her eyes, and anxiously announced, "I just saw THE movie."

"Which one?"

"American Tragedy."

Trying to be polite, she accidentally said, "Oh really! I want to see that one! If you had asked, I would have tagged along." But she thought, 'Not in a million years would a business-related get-together with HIM be in a movie theater...He's so disgusting...even for MY standards.'

She didn't ask for it, but he annoyed her with a comment about the movie, saying, "It was one of those movies that pushes your imagination over the edge, and your sanity, as if they expected me to return to normal after leaving the theater. Whatever normal is."

Gina smiled at him, being polite, as Gary said, "I can't do that."

"What can't you do?"

"Please leave me alone right now," Gary requested, "We'll talk in the morning."

"Sure," she said. "See ya."

She fled.

Gary went to the counter.

"You wanna order something?" the waitress asked.

"I'm a fifty-two year old English professor who has never gone on a respectable date in his life. I have a huge infatuation for that woman who just left this shop. She's thirty-two years younger than I am, but... Ah, damn it! I swear a lot!!!"

"You wanna order something?"

"You're right. I should ask her out. I know."

SATURDAY. AUGUST 5th, 2000. 11:15 A.M.

Rinaldo's Jesus-like face is the first part of him to slip through the wall, into Gary's bedroom. Then, Rinaldo's leprechaun-like outfit is the rest to slip through the wall, into the room. Finally, the butler has arrived, and he is holding a birthday cake.

Gary starts to stir in his bed.

"HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!!" Rinaldo screams, sending Gary jumping out of bed.

"You didn't have to be so loud!" Gary screams.

"I didn't have to," Rinaldo agrees. "I wanted to."

"And I guess that on some deeper level," Gary says, still sitting on his bed, "I wanted you to be that loud as well. Besides, you are just a figment of my imagination anyway."

Rinaldo's face turns sour, looking disappointed. He throws the cake at the wall, angrily, then screeches in his stereotypical anguished-rock-star-type British accent, "Yes I am. I am the product of a chemical imbalance in your brain. I'm a result of your personal trauma. Stop reminding me of it; it's so personally traumatic."

Gary turns the alarm clock off.

"I already did that," Rinaldo says, while thinking, 'Did I? I think I did? I wasn't hearing anything...'

"You keep me sane," Gary retorts. "What's so traumatic about that?"

'Who keeps me sane?' Rinaldo thinks, then mentions, "You don't appreciate me."

"I do appreciate you," Gary says, putting his hand on Rinaldo's back. "I just wish you'd stop mothering me all the time."

"After your mother died, someone had to start taking care of you emotionally," Rinaldo mentions. "If only you would have gotten yourself a girlfriend, I wouldn't have to be here all the time."

"But I'm so scared," The fifty-three year old English professor admits. "I can't ask a girl out. There are too many strings attached to a normal relationship, too much expectations. And besides," He says with a child-like giddiness, "I've always got money for more prostitutes."

To that, Rinaldo complains, "If you'd stop nagging at me about your pathetic non-existent love-life, and start conjuring up a bit of courage from your gut, you could ask a girl out for a respectable date, or at least spend a little bit of your time with a



friend who happens to be female. I promise that I will spend less time nagging at you as soon as you stop needing me."

With childish grumpiness, Gary replies, "I don't need anyone."

"Don't speak in haste," Rinaldo suggests. "You know for yourself that you do need someone: You need Gina."

"I'd be a cradle robber!" Gary complains. "She's twenty, and I'm fifty-three; Today!!! It just can't work out. And besides, my infatuation with her only started after you started telling me that I should need her."

"Try it," Rinaldo orders, thinking, 'It's a prescription from Doctor Butler!' Then, he says, "She is the one you love."

"No," Gary says, looking in Rinaldo's eyes, "She is the one you love."

Rinaldo doesn't want to get into this type of argument, so he attempts a try at logic, saying, "She is twenty years old, and she has never had a boyfriend. You are fifty-three years old, and you have never had a girlfriend. you are both young at heart. You are the youngest, actually, since you are still playing with imaginary friends! Now, get out there, ask her out, make something of that old professor's life and get a date!"

"I don't like this," Gary thinks out loud. "I'm taking relationship advice from my imaginary friend. However, now that you mention it, I think I do love her. But I don't like the idea that I'm taking the advice from an imaginary friend."

"If you truly did not like the idea of me being the one to give you relationship advice," Rinaldo says, standing up, "I would

not be the person who would be giving you the advice. On a much deeper level, you know that I will only give you what you need."

"So true," Gary says. "Ultimately, I'm the person who is subconsciously coming up with everything that you say; however, I can't consciously control what you say." He pauses, smiles, and says, "Unless." Then he points at his head, stares at Rinaldo's face, and concentrates very hard... nothing happens. "Too much thinking. My brain hurts. I'm gonna lay down."

Then, someone knocks on the door, as Gary lays down.

"I don't want to be an awkward distraction, so I'll leave the room," Rinaldo says, and leaves.

MEANWHILE...

SATURDAY. AUGUST 5th, 2000. 11:23 A.M.

Lonnie was by-far the most attractive female whom Alan had met throughout the entire week; however, the title of the most attractive female whom he had EVER met was still held by another fine, hot, young femme: The chick from the video game CHRONO CROSS. Lonnie was twenty-two years old, and Alan was nineteen years old. Lonnie had wonderful, frizzy blonde waves of hair, down to her shoulders, and she wore a tight business outfit over her shapely body. And Alan was wearing a cheap suit which made him look like a younger version of Agent Mulder from television's The X-Files. If Lonnie's hair were shorter, and darker, she would look very much like Scully...

Lonnie knocked on a door, much like the many doors which she had knocked on throughout the entire trek which she and Alan had shared on this Saturday morning.

A voice came from beyond the door; that of a middle-aged man. "It's unlocked! C'mon in!" the voice from beyond the door said. "I'm too lazy to get up and answer the door!"

'Judging from the look of this shack,' Alan thought, 'The resident is probably too lazy to do anything but lay on his bed all day...'

Lonnie slowly nudged the door open, hearing the occupant of the house say, "Welcome to day 19,358 of my life; my fifty-third birthday." The occupant seemed to be talking to himself. Then he turned his head towards the door. He noticed Lonnie's head peeking through, into the dilapidated shack. The occupant said, "It's all right. You can come into my bedroom. I'm a fully clothed university professor, laying down on his bed, and I won't bite. Join the party."

Lonnie turned her head, looked at Alan. She whispered, "This guy's nuts. Come with me. I doubt we'll make a sale, but we should at least let him know what we're up to."

Lonnie entered the bedroom, carrying a briefcase. Alan followed her into the room, noticing the shack-like nature of the room. The place resembled a garbage dump with walls. The place resembled...

And the owner of the house was a fat, middle-aged man, who was very likely crazy, lonely, and lazy...all that in a first impression. Alan whispered to Lonnie, "This guy may claim to be a university professor, but he clearly isn't."

Lonnie smiled, and shook "The Professor's" sweaty hand, and as she wiped her hand on her coat, she said, hesitantly, "Hello. My name's Lonnie, and this is Alan." Alan waved. "We'd like to speak to the cook of the house," she said.

The fat "professor" chuckled, mentioning, "You just missed him."

Then, as Alan studied some wall-art (pencil on wall), Lonnie asked, insincerely, "Do you do any of the cooking?"

"The Professor" responded, jovially, "Yes actually. I cook every day."

Then, Lonnie's smile brightened up, though Alan could tell that it was insincere. She announced, "That's great! We're here representing Cutco Knives and Kitchenware Incorporated."

Suddenly, Alan thought, 'Shit.'

The fifty-three year old fat occupant of the house repeated, slowly and thoughtfully, "Cutco Knives and Kitchenware, ink..."

Then, as Alan was engrossed by wall-art depicting fellatio, Lonnie asked the obviously disturbed fat man, "Do you need any new knives and kitchenware?"

To Lonnie and Alan's great surprise, the man smiled, and responded, "Today's your lucky day. Just wait in here. Feel free to sit on the bed. I'll be back. And I will definitely make a purchase in a few minutes."

The man left through a closet door. Then, a few seconds later, the man entered, and laughed at his mistake. Then, the man exited through another door. He was gone. Lonnie and Alan were alone in the man's bedroom, for "a few minutes."

...and the only place to sit was a perfectly comfortable bed, which looked misplaced in this ugly shack.

So, they examined the bed. Stainless. Then they sat. They sat and waited. A guy and a girl sat and waited, alone on a bed.

Two minutes passed.

Nothing was said. Everytime when Lonnie wasn't looking in Alan's direction, he would chew on his filngernails.

What seemed like another minute passed, and nothing was said. Alan secretly hit a bunch of chewed fingernails under the blanket.

They were getting bored. But the guy said that he'd buy something... he promised to make a purchase...so they waited...bored.

Lonnie broke the silence. She asked, "So Alan. Have you come up with any questions for me yet?"

To that, Alan quickly responded, stating, "Yep. I have come up with a few."

"That's great!" Lonnie said. Then, flicking back her blonde hair, and staring into his eyes, she stated, "I normally wouldn't have come on the field during an orientation, but during the interview I felt that you showed the characteristics of a person who would be good for this position and I wanted to help."

"So," Alan said, then paused. He tried to form a great question. Then he asked, disappointed with his bad question, "You have an office job?"

Then she stated, matter of factly, in a sexy, breathy tone, "I'm one of the managers."

"Kewel," Alan said, sounding enthusiastic, but not giving a damn. Then he continued, "Anyway, my first question..." He figured that this should erase the previous question from the record. Then, he asked, "Does this job have anything to do with the term commissioned sales?"

"Not exactly," she responded, inching closer to him on the bed, "We work on what is called profit margin. It means that we..."

Alan didn't like the sound of this. It was at this exact point when he didn't give a damn whether he got the job or not. So he interrupted, lying, "You don't have to explain. I know what profit margin is. A person I trust told me not to take this job if it had anything to do with commission sales." Then, with hidden sarcasm, he said, "But since it deals with profit margin, that makes it all better."

"Great," she said, in that sexy, breathy tone, looking deep into Alan's eyes. He turned his head away, looking at some odd wall-art depicting galaxies inside of breasts. She continued, unsure, "So are you still psyched about this opportunity?"

"Sure," he said, distracted by the wall-art. Then he asked a question which he didn't give a damn about the answer, just to get her talking, so that he could ignore her some more. The meaningless, space-filling question was, "So how long have you been working with this company?"

Lonnie reflected, and said, "For about four years. Since I was sixteen, actually. I love this job." Didn't she say she was twenty-two?- Alan wondered. At this moment, Alan began wondering about her credibility. Was she a liar? Did she lie about

her age earlier? And he was also wondering if he even cared if she was a liar...Then he realized that if he finds out that she is a liar, that taking the job might be a bad thing...

So, Alan asked the only thing he could think of; possibly, a rude question. He asked, "And how much have you made?"

She looked a tiny bit offended, but there was something about the innocent look which he was giving her. She decided to be truthful... So she responded, "It's a good job." Her tone was a little shocked, maybe even offended at the question. But she continued, "You can make a lot of money if you click with the job." And her tone went back to the sexy, breathy tone, when she said, "And I have clicked with this job."

There was another awkward pause. They were still sitting on a stranger's bed. They were still all alone in an alien bedroom. Alan began singing, "If I had a million dollars..." Then he quit the song. Singing spontaneously, in the presence of others, was a mild form of insanity which he had seen Lonnie do at earlier, less awkward, boring parts of this morning. He didn't want to imitate that insane-seeming trait of Lonnie's, which he had encountered earlier; it's annoying, and her improvised lyrics sucked sometimes...

"He's been gone for quite a while," she said, in her slow, sweet, breathy tone. "I hope he hasn't left us here." Then she uncharacteristically put her arm around Alan, as she said, "In his bedroom."

Alan quite uncharacteristically squirmed out of the beautiful woman's warm arm, as he uncomfortably joked,

"Wouldn't that be mean? Two salespeople enter a house. Resident leaves."

"...them alone," Lonnie said, continuing Alan's previous sentence, as she rubbed her warm body up against him, "...in his bedroom"

Alan slipped off of the side of the bed, onto the hard floor, and stated, somewhat nervously, "That would be mean."

Then, Lonnie, not taking any hints, laid down, and spread herself across the bed. And she mentioned, seductively, "This is a really nice bed, hay?"

Alan laughed nervously. He would regret this later, but his conscience was ordering him not to give-into his primal urges...

...so Alan said, in a mood-kill statement, harshly, "I hope he gets back soon."

She sat up, looking disappointed. She said, "That would be nice. I want to have lunch soon."

Alan asked, "So, where are we eating out?" His brain laughed, thinking that if he shows interest in having lunch with her, then this girl who is obviously interested in him, might pay for his lunch... Alan was always thinking....always thinking about a free lunch.

Lonnie smiled, conspiratorially, "Well," she said, "I saw an interesting restaurant around the corner the other day..."

"What kind of restaurant?" Alan asked.

"Chinese, I think." Yup. Alan knew that she was lying. She was making up the restaurant. She was a liar. This was proof enough for him. He would definitely not take the job.



The conversation had ended. There was nothing to do but wait, and then, Lonnie said, "This is getting boring. Do you mind if I sing?"

That was unexpected, but Alan loved the unexpected, especially in hot chicks, so he replied, "Sure. I'll provide the drum beat."

"How?"

"With my hands, on the floor. How else?"

"This is a song I made up a few minutes ago. I think it fits the mood," she said. Then, she started singing, as Alan played with the floor. She sang: "Already, I fear my heart is yours/ You stole it from the moment we met/ How can I tell you that I need you in my life?/ I've been alone for much too long/ Do you hear me when I make my plea?/ Already, I fear my heart is yours/ You stole it from the moment we met/ Give me just one chance to make you a happy man/ I've never felt like this before/ How can I get through to you?/ Don't you see what I really want?/ Don't you see what I really need?/ I can give you everything a man could ever want, honey/ I really want you 'cause I need a man/ I really want you 'cause I need a man/ I really want you I need a man/ I really want you I need a man/ I really want you I need a man." That song was three minutes, and eighteen seconds long.

"Pretty good lyrics," Alan commented.

Then Lonnie got close to Alan. Her heat and his merged, as she said, "They're based on a true story."

"Wow," Alan said, moving away slightly, "I'd love to be that person whom you sung about."

She looked at him, thinking, 'This guy really is inexperienced...' Then, she said, "It's unprofessional for me to tell you what I'm about to tell you, but I've learned that I've got to have courage to get what I want in life. I learned that at a young age."

"Let me guess," Alan asked, "You only picked me for the orientation because you thought I was hot, and you have been deprived of meaningful relationships ever since you got this job when you were sixteen, and now you feel that you might have a chance to have fun during your crappie job if you hire someone, like me, who you are attracted to."

'Wow,' she thought, smiling, "This guy DOES have a brain after all!" Then, she said, simply, "Bingo."

"I'm flattered."

"You're also hired."

"I don't want the job."

"Why?"

"Because you admitted it was crappie."

'He's being pretty picky for an unemployed guy,' she thought, then she said, hastily, "But every job is crappie. At least you'd be with a girlfriend if you take this job."

"I feel sorry for you." Then, Alan thought, '...whatever your name was, hot-chick.'

She looked angry as she said, "Why do you feel sorry for me? I should feel sorry for you. You're the one who's unemployed."

"You surrendered your life to an unfulfilling job," Alan accused. "I'm too passionate about my life to do anything that's unfulfilling."

Then there was a pause.

"I want to die," Lonnie said, falling into Alan's arms.

And Alan said, "It seems that all of my friends who have jobs want to die."

"I have dreams too, you know," Lonnie argued. "I'm passionate too."

Then, Alan smiled, dropped Lonnie onto the bed, stood up, pointed his finger into the air, and said his vow: His earthly mission statement: "I want to be Hollywood's greatest writer/director/actor. I want to be extremely famous, and I want great people to suck my... to worship me."

"Then..." she thought, then said, "Why did you come to this job interview, this orientation?"

Alan nodded his head, looked sad, and thought, 'rebound.' Then, he said, "You caught me at a particularly vulnerable time. I was just dumped by my girlfriend."

"Why'd she dump you?"

"Because I'm unemployed."

There was a short pause, which Lonnie broke by saying, "He's probably listening to all of this."

"He'll be back shortly, unless he left," Alan mentioned. "Make your sale, and then we'll have lunch, and we'll discuss our next course of action."

She knew it was a shot in the dark, but Lonnie desperately wanted a ... room-mate... so she asked, "Do you, by any chance, need a place to stay."

And Alan thought, 'As long as it's better than this Professor's house...'. Then, he replied, "I want to move out of my

parents house as soon as possible." And he thought, 'I graduated, yet I feel compelled to try to get a job and live a normal life, on earth, without thinking about...'

And Lonnie said, unexpectedly, "You can stay at my place for free. I have a lot of money. I could use some company."

Alan thought, 'Deja Vu, all over again.' Then, he said, "Wow. I've never met someone as desperate as you. I don't know whether to seize the opportunity, or to be extremely scared of someone as pitiful as you." Then, he thought, 'OOPS, that didn't come out right...but it was mostly honest.'

And Lonnie grabbed his... [insert some kind of innuendo for penis here]..., and she said, "If you seize the opportunity, I'll make it worth your while."

"You had me at, 'free'"

"Great," she said, sliding off of the bed. "At least I'll know that there will be someone at home for me after the emptiness of the office, and the boring field work."

And they waited for a few more moments, until the waiting was finally unbearable. They were about to stand up to investigate, when Rinaldo entered.

"Finally," Lonnie said. "Someone's here! I'm Lonnie. This is Alan. How are you doing today?"

Rinaldo was amazed, and asked, "You can see me?"

Lonnie shook Rinaldo's hand, as Alan asked, "Who are you talking to?"

"Him!" Lonnie said, pointing at Rinaldo. "Can he see you, or are you another one?"

"Another one, what?" asked Rinaldo.

"Who are you talking to, Lonnie?" asked Alan. "Have you taken something?"

"Um, Alan," Lonnie said. "Keep a secret, kay? I see imaginary people."

There was a pause, as Rinaldo looked amazed, and Alan looked confused.

"You see me?" Rinaldo asked. "How is that possible?"

"You're a crackpot, Lonnie," Alan mentioned.

"Is Gary aware of the fact that you can see me?" Rinaldo asked. "Or are YOU ANOTHER of his imaginary friends?"

"Will he be back soon?" Lonnie asked.

"The imaginary person?" Alan asked, confused. "The customer? Who, what, where, when, why ... What are you talking about, Lonnie!?!"

"Gary was the only person who could see me," Rinaldo reminisced. "Until now. How are you seeing me?"

Alan was still sitting on the bed, very confused, as Lonnie was standing face-to-face with Rinaldo. Alan asked, "Why are you standing there, and not answering any questions?! Are you insane, Lonnie? Should I get a doctor for you?" And then, conspiratorially, he asked, "Can you score whatever you're on for me?"

"All right!" Lonnie yelled. "Everybody! Quiet!"

The looked around the room, seeing that Alan and Rinaldo were quiet, and completely attentive to her.

"Okay, Alan..." she said.

"Rinaldo," Rinaldo said.

"Alan, Rinaldo," she said, gesturing to each. "This should explain everything."

"Rinaldo?" Alan asked. "Who's that? Is Rinaldo a fantasy? Does he turn you on?"

Lonnie said, "Shut up, and let me explain what's going on!"

"Good," Alan said. "Please explain. Tell me about the colors? Did anything melt away? I want details in Haiku; does that word amuse you: haiku? Come here, Haiku! Good dog. How high are you? What's your high-q, IQ get it!? How high cue are you?"

"I saw Lottie, Alan," she mentioned.

"Huh? What?" Alan was confused. "What do you mean? My Lottie?"

Then Lottie explained, "The girl you imagine. She looks like me. I saw Lottie walk beside us when we were back at the office."

"But that was in my head," Alan mentioned. Rinaldo was very interested, hanging on every word. "How did you know that? You're a psychic? Cosmic. Have I taken something?"

"No one's trippin'," she said. "No one's taken anything."

"So," Alan asked. "You're a psychic?"

"Yes," she said, sounding very reluctant. "Sort of. I'm a genie."

Alan asked, "Kind of...I dream of Jeanie? Light brown hair...in your case: blonde, though, and all that spiel?"

And Rinaldo gasped, "A genie?"

"A genie?" Alan asked. "So now that you saw Lottie and she looks like you, you'll grant my wish and get naked?"

"I get it," Rinaldo jumped into the conversation, mentioning, "Since you see imaginary friends, you grant wishes to imaginary friends, because since genies are imaginary, they can only grant wishes to people who are also imaginary, right?"

"That's exactly correct," Lonnie replied, pointing to Rinaldo.

"Okay," Alan said. "Shake it, baby. Let's go."

"I need some time to think of a wish," Rinaldo said.

"Alan," Lonnie mentioned, drowning in his eyes, "I can't grant your wish."

"Why not?" Alan asked, sad, "Body issues? Dirty underwear?"

"As the butler said, I can only grant wishes to imaginary friends."

"Butler?" Alan asked, looking confused. "I don't understand? Is it a girl thing?"

Indignantly, she responded, "A what? A girl thing?"

Interrupting with perfect timing, Rinaldo announced, "I know what I want."

"Hold that thought, butler."

"What butler!?!"

"Gary's imaginary friend is his butler," Lonnie said, attempting to explain. "The butler's name is Rinaldo, and he is standing before me, and he is about to make a wish."

"Okay," Alan said, defeated. "Sounds good. I'll leave the room now. I'm planning on urinating, which is more than you

needed to know. When I get back, I'm expecting you to be sane, and normal... and naked. And we won't ever speak of this genie nonsense... ever again...crackpot."

And Alan left, quickly.

Lonnie sat back on the bed, sad.

"I know what I want to wish," Rinaldo said, again.

"If I had a wish," Lonnie started saying, joylessly, "It'd be that you would have announced that you're imaginary before I made a fool of myself in front of Alan, but situations like these can never be predicted. He thinks I'm insane. Make your wish."

"If it's any consolation," Rinaldo mentioned. "Let it be known that I am shocked as well."

There was a weird pause, as Lonnie gently laughed at something.

"Make your wish," she said.

"Do I get two more?"

"You may get two more. Wish and find out."

"I WANT TO BE REAL!!!"

"Oh, the tragic flaw; your reality will void any further wishes."

"I'm going to be real?" he asked, sounding as if he didn't believe it for a second.

"Yes," she replied, nodding. "Your reality will settle in after three days of rigorous paperwork, which I will handle."

"What will Gary think? Will HE be MY imaginary friend?"

"That depends on the lifestyle you design around your personality."



"I'm so excited!" Rinaldo screamed like a schoolgirl. "In three days, I'll be real!"

And that's when Alan re-entered the room, asking, "Are you sane yet, Lonnie?"

And Rinaldo entered the closet, as Lonnie said, "Nothing a few drinks can't cure, Alan."

And then, Alan tried to figure this whole ordeal out, saying, "Obviously, you made up that genie story to cover up something. But how did you know about Lottie?"

"The fact is: I do now."

And that's when Professor Testiny Gary re-entered carrying a loaded wallet, and he said, "Sorry to keep you two waiting. But I'll have you know a little secret: I never turn down a salesperson on their first visit to my house. I'm a little bit eccentric that way. Here are three thousand dollars, and my business card. The card will tell you my address and contact information, and the three thousand dollars is for random items from your catalogue. Well, you guys can take about a hundred of it. Now go away. I'm expecting a lot of random merchandise from your company, to be at my door, by dinner time tonight. If I get it tomorrow, then you guys can keep none of the money. By the way, I have surveillance equipment set-up. If you gyp me, I've got your faces."

Lonnie and Alan both looked extremely shocked as they took the money from him. "Wow," Lonnie said. "This has never happened before."

"SCRAM!" Gary screamed. "GET ME KNIVES TO CUT MY DINNER WITH!!!"

And as Lonnie and Alan exited through the front door, Rinaldo re-entered from the closet. "Why did you do that?" Rinaldo asked.

"I could use some more knives," Gary replied.

"But you don't know that company. They might not give you any knives at all." Rinaldo was still skeptical that Lonnie and Alan might have been more of Gary's imaginations..."They might just give you a soy-based alternative."

"Have faith."

"Look who is talking? You do not have any faith! You can't even ask a girl out!"

"I will ask her out today."

And Rinaldo made a happy, humping-like motion, as he screamed, "YESS!!!"

AT DINNER TIME...

Around the hamper that evening, Rinaldo was very disappointed in Gary, so Rinaldo said, in his harshest British accent, "Yet again, you did not ask her out. You are a failed attempt at a human being."

"I know," Gary mentioned. "I need a counselor."

"A counselor would not be as good as a creature such as I," Rinaldo said, "who is conjured from your own brain. I know you. However, I wish I could know myself a little better. I wish I were real."

As condolences, Gary said, "At least you're not a six-foot rabbit."

Gary stood up, starting to leave, saying, "I need to use the potty."

"I didn't need to know that," Rinaldo announced, scrunching his bearded face, looking disgusted.

"You know everything else," Gary said, sounding quite annoyed at his imaginary butler. "Why not that?"

"Touché."

Gary exited.

Rinaldo stood up in the room, and right when he was about to say something to himself, he was interrupted by Gary who said, loudly, from outside, "Ah! They've arrived! I can't wait to open those, to see my birthday presents; A.K.A., my knives."

Rinaldo thought, 'I do not think that he paid any attention to the fact that a knife handle is protruding from one of the bottom boxes. Actually, I have control of his brain, and I noticed the protruding handle, which he'll pick up right now, and unknowingly stab himself with...' Rinaldo made a stabbing motion across his face. "...making sure that he did not notice it. I need to play such tricks on him. Sometimes, I will give him food, which he will eat and then he realizes that it was not real food, and he eats more food. It's fun, and I need to do it. Also, sometimes I turn the alarm clock off, he stops hearing it, and I tell him the news. It's great. I find it fun. And now, I need to hurt him."

Gary entered with a slashed face, carrying a bloody Cutco knife, which he unknowingly placed on the table. Gary did not even know that he was in searing pain, as he sat beside the hamper, and started to eat food. Blood dripped from his face, into his soup, and he still ate it.

Rinaldo picked up the bloody knife, walked behind Gary, and said, "I've got to do something over here for a second. Pay no attention to me."

Gary continued eating. Rinaldo made slashing motions near, but not on, Gary's already bleeding face, and said, "I am cutting your face."

"Wh-oww!" Gary screamed, stood up, crouched, assumed a defensive stance, frightened of his butler. "How did you do that!?! I thought you couldn't give me pain!"

"I can give you pain," Rinaldo announced. "And I will give you more pain if you do not ask her out. I shall now use slang, which your students use, and you use occasionally, come to think of it, in order to voice my feelings. Basically, it's like this: If you score, I score. I need to score. Ask her out. And score."

"So," Gary said, frightened, while he ducked, "You want me to have sex with Gina so that you can feel the pleasure. That's sick," Gary shook, hyperventilated, and spoke, frantically, "Yet I understand it. What's wrong with the prostitutes?"

"You know it, and I know it: Gina's amazingly HOT! Most of the whores are NOT! I want you to DO GINA!"

"Well," Gary says. "I guess I must DO what I MUST DO."

"Or else," Rinaldo threatened, "I will cut you again, harder, deeper, more painfully. I might even kill you."

"But we're still friends, right?"

"We are enemies, Gary," Rinaldo said, with a psycho smile. "If you do not have sex with Gina, within the next three days, I will kill you. And I mean it. Good night, Gary."

"...bandages..."

Gary ran frantically into the closet.

Rinaldo proclaimed, "Welcome to day negative three, of MY life."

SUNDAY. AUGUST 6th, 2000. 8:00 A.M.

Once upon a time, there was a University professor who was doomed. He was doomed because his imaginary butler had a knife in between his eyes. The professor didn't know there was a knife in between his eyes until he woke up, crossed his eyes to focus on the knife, yelped, rolled from the bed, and slammed himself against the wall.

Shaking against the wall, the doomed Professor watched the butler's red eyes, which ordered, "Ask her out today, you pitiful schizophrenic!"

Wearing only his jacket, and boxer shorts, Gary dashed to the front-door, saying, "Thank you for motivating me, Rinaldo, but I'm extremely frightened of this new character trait of yours."

To that, Rinaldo screamed, "Get out!"

Gary escaped.

Rinaldo announced, "Welcome to day negative two, of my life."

A LITTLE WHILE LATER...

Gina was fixing her nails, while talking on the telephone in the office, and she did not expect the surprise which loomed in her very-near future...

To her friend, over the phone, she said, "Today is the day when I give Gary my one-month notice that I am quitting. This oughtta teach him to stop asking me to work on Sundays. I gotta go. I hear him coming."

Gary entered, wearing a jacket and boxer shorts, and Gina was looking at her fingernails, as Gary looked at her, extremely focused on his immoral goal, and said, "Oh, Gina. I'm glad to see you."

Gina looked at him, and jumped away from her desk, when she noticed: "Are those boxers?!"

"Yes."

"I have something to tell you."

"And I have something to ask you, Gina," Gary said, dropping his boxers, exposing his phallus. "May I go first?"

LATER...

"What am I doing? What have I done?"

LATER...

"I am extremely disappointed with you, Gary."

"But I DID have sex with her, you bloodthirsty bastard!"

"I loved Gina. You killed her. Now I'm going to avenge her death."

"It was you! You were doing those things to her! - not me!"

"Who's in control here?"

"You... killed... me...?"

### THREE HOURS LATER...

The hospital's waiting room was very drab. Tragedy was all around the old lady named Yolande. She was wearing a red, polka-dotted dress, which had been out of style since she was very young, and she was crying, "What kind of God would do this to me? What kind of God would kill my brother on the exact same day when I bring him his late birthday present: a toaster."

Doctor Anton Lace entered, and his voice cleared up somewhat, as he said, "Your brother has been revived. It's a miracle."

The old lady was shocked, and didn't know what to say. She looked puzzled, as she said, "That's great! Wow. He was dead for a whole three hours. I wonder if he saw the afterlife? How was he revived?"

"It was blind luck."

"Blind luck? How? Explain."

"Days ago, the renowned Neurologist Dr. Stephan Harding and myself, asked your brother if he wanted to donate his body to science; specifically an experimental post-mortem stem cell procedure which would help science better understand the uses of

nondescript progenitor stem cells. Basically, we implanted the stem cells into a region around the brain. It was our original hypothesis that the cells would aide in the preservation of the decomposing brain. What we found was a complete miracle."

"I don't get it." Yolande was lost...

"Well, there are two variables, which lead us to the miracle. First variable: We found out that he had a brain-tumor the size of a golf-ball; we were surprised that it went un-noticed before the procedure. The tumor was still growing after death, thriving on the second variable, which may have caused hallucinations. So the second variable was basically the fact that his brain chemistry was similar to that displayed in cases of schizophrenia. We were extremely surprised by that. Anyway, those variables lead us to discover that the implanted stem- cells thrived under those conditions, and the stem cells displayed a newly discovered form of synthetic instinct pattern, which was probably due to the... I'm going off topic because I'm so excited. What I'm trying to say is that the stem cells invaded the tumor. The tumor stopped growing. And as the tumor died, he started breathing again, after three and a half hours of being dead. We can't explain exactly why he was revived, but as you now know, we can explain, in extreme detail, the events, which lead up to his revival, and those events may have played a part."

After a long, thoughtful pause, Anton looked proud to have gotten through to her, but she said, "I tried to understand all of that medical mumbo-jumbo, but I failed. So he was dead for three hours?"

"Yeah."



"Is that a record?"

"No."

"What's the record?"

"Three days. It's an old record, held by some cult leader."

"Can I see Gary?"

"His loud snoring is unbearable. I'll call you when he wakes up."

And flirtatiously, the professor's old sister asked the doctor, "Can I get your number?"

THE NEXT DAY...

Gary was lying on a hospital bed, and the two doctors, Stephan Harding and Anton Lace, were running tests on him while having a discussion.

Anton said, in his clearing voice, "Gary's only visitor yesterday was his sister, Yolande. I wish he would have been awake to see her. But I'm glad his snoring stopped."

And the gay one, Stephan Harding, asked, smiling conspiratorially, "So what did you tell the sister about how her brother was revived?"

"Oh," Anton cackled, "I improvised some bullshit about stem-cells and such. The old hag wanted to date me!"

"But you're gay."

"No, I'm not."

"I thought you were. I thought we, you and I, had a thing..."

"That was an experiment. We agreed not to include our emotions, remember?"

Heartbroken, Dr. Harding asked, meekly, "Does that mean we're breaking up?"

"I'm sorry," Anton said, comforting the older doctor, "I'm afraid we were never together."

"You mean," Stephan screamed, girlishly, "All that time you were playing me!?"

Anton nodded.

Stephan continued, while crying, "I want that water bottle back; the one we shared on that long walk down the east side! And I want that tiny photograph back; the one I gave you as a memento. And I want to insult you with condescending metaphors, such as: You're nothing but an unspeakable excuse for rancid dog meat, you friendless excuse for sticky pustulence!"

"Oh yeah," Anton screamed, and remembered insult-jam-sessions with his punk-band in high-school, and he said, "Well, two can play the metaphor game: You're an idiot!"

Dr. Harding was taken aback, and he screamed, "You're a violent excuse for defective rodent droppings. I've been waiting to use that line on you for years... You can't possibly beat that one, buddy."

Gary started to sit up on the bed, but the doctors were too involved in their insult-war to notice.

Anton screamed, "Let me try: You're a ... You... Ah! I got one! You're nothing but a mentally deficient clump of malignant stomach acid. See, years of medical school has given the grist for many new, exciting, wordy metaphors!"

"This means metaphor war," Stephan screamed, "you boring collection of crummy skid marks!"

"Okay. My pleasure. Prepare yourself for war," Anton said, with a sparkle in his eye, "thou fawning, half-faced canker-blossom. I took a class in Shakespearean insults from Professor Gary."

Annoyed, Gary falls back onto the bed, and tries to smother himself with a pillow, thinking, 'I've created a nerdy monster!'

"The very same Professor Gary who is laying on that bed?" Stephan asked, pointing at Gary, without looking at Gary.

"That very bootless, common-kissing cutpurse," Anton wailed, "you canker on the face of humanity."

Stephan reflected, "If I wouldn't have specialized with neurology, I might understand Shakespeare, but I don't, and I have no idea what you're touting, you dumpy mound of infected penile warts!"

"Thou infectious, raw-boned harpy," Anton screamed, "I don't care if you can't understand me. I never understood you! I cheated on tests in your class, and my closeness with you was a pretense to get a good grade, but I don't care about grades anymore. The university can take away my grades, and I don't care, since I just realized that neurology isn't my calling; instead, I am going to be a comedian, and write funny things, because neurology is boring drivel, and I don't want to become a specialist who knows nothing but his craft, like you, thou vain, fool-hardy braggart!!"

Gary sat up, and waved his hands around to try to get the doctors' attention, but to no avail.

"Yes. It's true," Stephan said, sitting down, as a tear rolled down his face. "I did throw away my life by becoming a specialist. I never found true love. I never became a kickboxer."

And this is when Gary fell back onto the bed, and thought, 'I give up. You can have this body.' And Rinaldo took over Gary's body, and Rinaldo thought, 'Ha, ha, ha!'

"Kickboxer?" Anton asked Stephan, oblivious to the Rinaldo-Gary exchange which has just occurred in that very same room...

"Kickboxing was my dream," Stephan said, faking a few moves, "I threw it away because of the promised cash in the neurology profession. I am rich, but I'd trade it all for the chance to compete, just once, as a world class kickboxer."

"You suck, Thou craven, ill-nurtured hugger-mugger."

"I think I'm beginning to understand Shakespeare..."

Rinaldo sat up!

"He's awake!" Stephan said. "This is truly amazing!" And Stephan realized, 'So beaker number three was the correct choice after all...'

LATER...

"Testiny!"

"Yolande?"

"I'm so glad you made it! How do you feel?"

"Perfectly fine, and mentally sound."

"Why are you speaking in that British accent?"

THE END

**ABDUCTION** by Alan Holman

Hi. I go to an all girl school in the middle of New York State. Not much happens at my school, and most of the students are really bored all day. We have a dress code which consists of completely gray outfits - boring! Nuns serve as our teachers, counselors, spiritual advisors, and guardians while we're under their roof. I hardly get out to party, and when I do get out to party, I don't go to the parties which I'd like to go to; I go to extremely supervised events where a chaperone is every second person, almost.

My name is Christina Aquilees, but you can call me Chris. My two favorite friends are Rhodendrah and Buyleese (not their real names). Rhode and Buy, as I like to call them, support me when I need an outlet for freedom; they don't go to this all girls school, and I wouldn't have met them if it weren't for that fateful day.

I guess how it all started was when I woke up on Sunday morning and I was late for church. There was a nun in my bedroom, poking me with a short needle, lightly, saying, "Get up. Don't bleed on the Lord's bed."

Yes, that shocked me, and I woke with a start as the needle jabbed my thigh. My first reaction was a mix of terror, indignance, shock, and hate towards the Nun. I quickly covered myself with the

blanket and huddled in the top corner of my bed, against the wall, with my hand stretched out in a way which I figured would keep the nun away from me. I screamed, "Why do you do this? A needle!?!"

The nun laughed to herself, and said, "Coiling in the corner; ah, to be young, and rebellious."

"You have no right to be in my bedroom," I screamed, "this is a private dorm!"

"I'm saving your soul," she responded with a zestful smile. "You're almost too late for the opening prayer. If you hurry, you can make it to mass."

"Out of all the students who skip the OPTIONAL Sunday Morning Mass, you pick ME to poke with a needle; why the fuck!?!"

You know, events complicated after I swore at her, and I found myself saying a rosary in front of a priest, three times over - boring as hell. This is education?

My parents sent me here because they figured the religious aspect would appeal to me since they've always known me as a silent goody-two-shoes, but in fact the religion is far too strict for me. If anything, it's demoralizing me! These nuns are crazy!

After praying with the priest, he gave me a hug and sent me on my way to an afternoon mass, which I skipped. Sick of having extremely little privacy, I decided to go to New York City. I had never been there before, and so I decided that it was a better time than any to take a look at the place; perhaps see a Broadway show. However, I had absolutely no money. All my belongings, money

included, had been confiscated upon my first time walking into to the school, in exchange for what they called a 'top notch Christian education.'

Luckily, I had a backpack and street clothes. So I packed the backpack with my street clothes, and headed to the highway. I didn't know they were having a birthday celebration for me in the church, which I was missing, and I also didn't know it was my twelfth birthday - a complete haze of religious shit had obscured my knowledge of current events which included the date; sucks, eh?

On the highway, I was muttering profanities. Soon, a close call with a red car forced me to walk beside the highway - 'God, I haven't been out in a while' was what I was thinking.

Then, I heard Sister Agatha's hoarse voice calling out to me, "Mistress Christina Aquilees. Young Mistress Christina Aquilees! Where are you, young Mistress Christina Aquilees!"

Frightened, I hid in some bushes beside the highway as her bike passed by. I didn't want to get caught. I wanted freedom. I have not had freedom since I was ten and my parents suggested that I try out this school for a year or two. Then my parents broke up, and they signed me up for the full high school program at the boarding school, and boy that hurt; think about it: my parents don't love each-other, and I don't have a family at home to go back to; instead, when summer holidays begin, I'm going back to either mom or dad - just one of them; that'll break more hearts than just the one I don't choose...or the one I choose, depending on whether they love me or not, but that's not the point of the story.

I continued walking through the trees, finding my own pathway, so that no one on the highway saw me as I walked towards New York City. I knew I was a few miles away from a suburb, but I didn't know how much miles I'd have to walk; I knew it was in the single-digits, though.

Then, I tripped over a branch, and my nose bled on a log. I noticed an inscription on the log as the blood from my nose darkened the letters which were carved into the log; it said, 'Jahnna Rose plus Devin White' and there was a heart underneath the names. I knew Jahnna Rose; she was in my classes, and so I naturally wondered how she had ever found the time to get a boyfriend, or the time to get out of school over to here. I didn't know where Jahnna came from, so maybe she had carved this before going to the boarding school, but that would have made her eight or nine, or something like that - too young for a boyfriend, right? So, obviously, this log posed some interesting questions, or conundrums, or whatever ... it was interesting.

Ahh! This is where I get all teary-eyed whenever I remember this next part. I'm crying right now, but I'll continue to type. This was when the hand grabbed my face. There was a white glove on the hand; it felt like a soft glove, but it was a hard grip, and I couldn't really breathe any good. Someone tied a rope around my eyes, and my hands, and my legs, and I was thrown into the back of a car.

Shortly, I heard the car begin, and I was bound in the back of the car, laying down; there must have been at least two people who took me, and I never got a good look at them, but it was extremely scary being in the back, wondering where they were taking me. I even suspected that this was some kind of Catholic method of getting bad girls back to school, though I had never considered myself bad in any way (those teachers convinced me that I was bad



for a little while, but I always rose above the guilt-trips, in my own mind at least).

Hearing the road beneath the car, and the engine, and smelling the inside of the trunk; it was all very disenchanting; it made the whole escape from school a little bit less romantic to me.

Something stunk, and I passed out.

When I awoke, I was still blind-folded and bound to something close to a wall which my feet could touch if I stretched far enough, but I woke to the sound of a girl; she was crying. She pleaded, "I hear your snoring! Are you going to save me, sleepyhead? You stopped snoring."

She was obviously talking to me because I had just woke up to the sound of my own snoring, and to the sound of her. Judging from the sad way she was talking, I assumed she was also bound and blindfolded.

"My name is Chris," I said softly.

"Chris?" said the girl. "Isn't that a boy's name?"

"Yes," I responded. "It's also a girls name; my name."

"I'm Arianna; though my friends call me Rhodendrah" When she said it, she sounded a bit happy; well, happy for someone who is bound and blindfolded.

"Why do they call you that?" I asked. "Arianna is nice."

I think we were both quite calm at that moment; the moment when conversation had been officially initiated; though from the shivery ways our voices were, we were both obviously frightened of our captors, whoever they were...

"Rhodendrah is a nickname."

"Aren't nicknames shorter?"

"They gypped me when they handed out nicknames."

"Huh?"

We shushed up when we heard footsteps from a very far corner of the room. The footsteps sounded echoey, and they were nearing.

"I thought I told you kids to shush up," said whomever the guy was who owned the footsteps. "Shush up or get shot." He sounded like he was in his thirties...

An idea hit me: my life was shit anyway, so what would be the big deal anyway if I got shot? So I said, "shoot me."

I heard a click. I was ready for the shot, and then I was really scared. "No! Don't shoot me! Please don't shoot me." I cried. "I'll do whatever. I'll be quiet."

He klonked me on the head with his gun because the next thing I remember was waking up hours later, very hungry.

"Arianna," I said. "Are you here?"

She whispered, "Yes. I thought they were gonna kill you. Why did you want to die?"

"I'm stupid sometimes."

"That's an understatement."

"Why are we here?"

"I still don't know."

"I'm very hungry."

"I was very hungry before you even got here."

"And how long were you here for, Arianna?"

"A day or two before you; I know that."

"Whoa. How do you cope?"

"I don't anymore. I know they're gonna kill me. I no longer feel the hunger; it's become too much a part of me; it'll happen to you too, Chris."

That was when I wished he would have shot me earlier.

I was living in squalor, losing hope, and counting seconds until the end of my rope. I was losing faith, wishing death, and wondering what, if anything, comes next; all the happy thoughts...

I wouldn't wish this fate upon my worst enemy.

Then came the light. I thought I was dead, but when my eyes adjusted, I realized I was in the middle of a large room, on an examining table, and Rhodendrah was on another examining table, and there was another girl on another table. We were being operated on by a bunch of doctors who couldn't hear me as I screamed at them to quit poking me.

Then one of them noticed that my eyes were opened, so he said he was sorry, and he poked me with a needle.

And now I'm here. What is this place?

THE END

## **THE PARSONAGISTIC DIALOGUE**

**By Alan Holman**

PARSONAGE 1: Geography prevented the news of Jesus' arrest from reaching most of his fans. Of the Christ fans who knew that he was being executed, and where he was to be executed, many didn't make the pilgrimage to that mountain, because they were afraid of letting the government know who they were, or where they could be found. Of those who weren't afraid, most couldn't stomach to watch him die, so few Jesus Christ supporters attended his public execution. So when the rest of the audience evaporated because of disgust-related gagging, boredom, and family concerns, Jesus' closest collaborators, and that guard whom they'd paid, took him to recover in that cave for three days. But of course, his naive followers accepted the holes in his hands and feet as proof that he'd risen from the dead. Forty days worth of stories backed by few early public appearances later, Jesus' team swept him to another country where he changed his face by shaving his beard, and then he assumed a new identity in which he earned meager wages as a carpenter for the rest of his life. In other words,

the resurrection never happened, so I'm going through profound religious disillusionment.

PARSONAGE 2: Jesus never existed in the first place, so what you've just said was a smokescreen.

PARSONAGE 1: That's true.

PARSONAGE 2: Things are so much funnier when you've been awake for thirty hours.

(vibrates with laughter)

I'll crawl there on one leg, and proclaim victory!

(vibrates with laughter)

I'll say, "I did it!" I'll say, "I hung in there!" He'll call me an idiot.

(vibrates with laughter)

That's the straw that broke the camel's toe.

PARSONAGE 1: I pray always for someone to know and understand me from the get-go, because I don't want to explain my life story to anyone; that's because I don't want to remember my life-story; it's a depressing piece of shit tale about lots of depressing things that happened as I discovered the world, and learned that independent thought is futile.

PARSONAGE 2: Independent thought is vital.

PARSONAGE 1: I lost faith in His miracles, but His message is the best miracle of all.

PARSONAGE 2: He never existed. His message is fiction.

PARSONAGE 1: It's a miracle.

PARSONAGE 2: I've journeyed to you, to remind you of a pure, non-physical love, that you can share with everyone, and everything. It's the love a child feels towards the tree upon whose branches she is perched. The truth is found when the heart and mind work together.

PARSONAGE 1: What's important?

PARSONAGE 2: Adventure. Friends. Truth. Trust. Togetherness. Tolerance. Care. Composure. Compromise. Change. Survival. Sacrifice. Spirit. Self. Sympathy. Memory. Maturity. Acceptance. Abundance. Respect. Resolution. Peace. Posture. Dignity. Understanding. Fertility. And love. Love is everything. Mars was full of love until the Americans mistook them for communists, and nuked them, in the sixties. Martians were peaceful. And then they were killed.

PARSONAGE 1: What kind of names did the Martians have?

PARSONAGE 2: Great question! Naming was a spiritual ceremony on Mars. Their first names described their role in society, and their last names included the name of their city; for example, Urides was the surname of many residents of Urid the Beautiful, a city just north of the equator. Martians also believed that they had separate, spiritual names, which described the unique talents of every individual.

PARSONAGE 1: That makes sense, because I've always had the strange feeling that my "spiritual name" has something to do with theater.

PARSONAGE 2: Wacky.

PARSONAGE 1: Mars sounds like a very peaceful world.

PARSONAGE 2: It was a blissful world, where most people married their first, best love.

PARSONAGE 1: How romantic!

PARSONAGE 2: No. Every year, hundreds of men were executed for being too old without a wife.

PARSONAGE 1: That's horrible! How old was too old?

PARSONAGE 2: 17 martian years, or 17.3 martian years if you've got prospects.

PARSONAGE 1: Why so young?

PARSONAGE 2: Because their religion considered the late teen years to be a transition from the body's generation to the body's degeneration.

PARSONAGE 1: That's stupid.

PARSONAGE 2: Yes, it is. Male martians who were unmarried by 17.3 martian years of age, were cast out, into the cold of winter, where they froze to death, to become fertilizer for the next summer's crops.

PARSONAGE 1: That's horrible. But what if someone lied about their age?

PARSONAGE 2: That's impossible, because upon physical maturity -- at age seventeen -- the eyes of martian men couldn't



perceive a frequency of light that was broadcast from municipal stations to warn that underground tunnels would soon be locked because it was almost winter, so those unlucky bachelors would simply freeze to death.

PARSONAGE 1: That's really stupid. How could a society be so dumb?

PARSONAGE 2: Religion. Because their so-called savior was never crucified, ten times the dogma was written, including the killing of unmarried adult men, and the forcing of unmarried adult women to cover their faces! The only reason it worked was because no one was out of the system long enough to question that system.

PARSONAGE 1: Is the end near?

PARSONAGE 2: Whenever the devil instigates, and wins, an Armageddon, God must demolish what's left of the universe, salvage his spirits, and re-build, thus re-set, the universe, from the bottom up, while time flows ever forward. In other words, although the Armageddon is near, the end is not.

PARSONAGE 1: You're nice.

PARSONAGE 2: I know, my son, but I must make a confession. When I was evil, I stole your soul, and time-traveled with it, to civilized planets all throughout many "drafts" of the universe, where I entered dreams of chosen women, pretended to be an angel, and told them that they were destined to give birth to God's son. Then, I installed your soul into genetically altered DNA, and gave those women "immaculate conceptions" which rocked every world, except Mars, with serials of religious wars that, within the

next ten-thousand years, would cripple their civilizations, leaving defenseless, often vacant planets, that myself and a certain demonic friend of ours would salvage for sellable stuff. Do you hate me?

PARSONAGE 1: No. Not at all. Why am I here?

PARSONAGE 2: To fulfill the following prophesy: "They will. They'll cruise a universe, start their own. Write a bible leave it alone! He will. He'll trap God, then save God from where he trapped him! The Savior's Savior was his captor. The wise will share his sight. By beating his equal to his own game, He'll conquer obstruction and price. What must be broken, will then be broken. By winning an ironic game, he'll bind the world, rescue realization and understanding. He'll see without being seen. He'll regret his struggle. He'll wander and wait without seeking. He'll chose to drown. He'll refuse to reach. He won't ask! He has no home. He's on his own. The final part of the plan, he'll smile at his questioners, stalling them, taking the action of defeating God, fulfilling the Jupiter prophesy, making things well, making things proud, because to see all and not be seen, was the hell which lead him to his choice!"

PARSONAGE 1: What choice?

PARSONAGE 2: I don't know, Jesus.

PARSONAGE 1: Am I Jesus?

PARSONAGE 2: Yes. You'll now find within yourself an uncanny ability to compose parables. Try.

PARSONAGE 1: Once upon a time, a little boy's mother fell from a tall building, so the boy cried. Then, a prescription drug stopped the crying, leaving the boy to think his inability to feel sad about his mother's death meant that he was evil. Then the boy somehow got the power to travel through time, but because the drug destroyed his sad feelings, he never used his power to save his mother; instead, he had three years of non-stop fun with the power, and went to Hell because of his drug-induced selfishness. The end.

PARSONAGE 2: Good first try, but what's it mean?

PARSONAGE 1: I don't know. I'm too tired to think about it. Are you really God?

PARSONAGE 2: No, my son. I am an angel. As Jesus, you are God's human form. And despite your inability to understand the following message, I bring you the following message: The asexual multiplication of time-lines began when the Devil came of age and split God's first time-line into two. Two became four. Four became eight. And so on. I'm explaining this, because you are God's human form. Your Godly memories await you in Heaven, where your succinct syntax of music and words makes you Holy. But here, I am your guide, so listen: Souls are the reproductive extremity of the spectral realm, while the physical realm -- its mate -- has immediate gestation. There's one spectral realm, but many time-lines, so when a soul must enter multiple time-lines, it gets a lot weaker than if it only does one. So why am I telling you this? Well, long story short: The treaty between Heaven and Hell was supposed to cause God's human form to die of natural causes at a pre-set moment, so when Satan goes human, God goes back to work; however, because the treaty says God and Satan can't know the moment of the switcheroo, when Satan was forced into human

form, God was still trapped ... In other words, you're still here, and you're not supposed to be here, so now you die.

PARSONAGE 1: You just killed me. Why am I still alive?

PARSONAGE 2: Because I just created a system whereby death brings you to new time-lines where you continue life without knowing you died in another time-line. However, we can do whatever we want. On the downside, people "in the know" must lament with sympathy for family members they left behind in other time-lines in which they died. But on the up-side, people live exactly the lives they deserve. Tell me. Do you remember your first dream?

PARSONAGE 1: Yes, I do. I remember my first dream. I was new to the world. I never knew if I'm supposed to remember this dream ...

PARSONAGE 2: Most people aren't.

PARSONAGE 1: ... but it's one of my clearest memories. Two angels that seemed parental, but weren't my parents, lead me through a museum of people, paintings, books, actors, machines, symbols, and other specific elements they told me I must encounter throughout my life, in order to complete my life. I strayed off to examine one particular object: a big and thin, golden music box; its exterior was etched completely with symbols, such as a dove -- oh, and the only part of the exterior of the box that wasn't gold was a pearl angel that was right beside the dove. When I opened the box, and saw its thin, red-silk interior, invisible instruments -- or something inside the box, that I couldn't see -- began playing beautiful music, that was sad, rich of life, happy, and very scary, all at the same time, yet the music was always -- in a strange way --

beautiful. One of the angels behind me said four words I'll never forget: "The music is you." Are you one of those angels?

PARSONAGE 2: If I were, I'd be pulling in a five figure income. I dream and wish for that job.

PARSONAGE 1: Only after one thousand more dreams of crawling out from under the depths of your shameless nightmare of poverty and helplessness, the thunderous crack of your prize-winning voice will survive a depressing wave of repressing heat, putting your petty wishes to shame.

PARSONAGE 2: What?

PARSONAGE 1: I don't know. I opened my mouth, and those words poured out.

PARSONAGE 2: Yeah. That'll happen to you a lot, now that you're Jesus.

PARSONAGE 1: If I'm Jesus -- also known as God's human form -- who are you?

PARSONAGE 2: (v.o.)

Just because you can't hear it, doesn't mean I shouldn't encourage you to dance to your internal music. Jesus, never forget that the music is you.

PARSONAGE 1: Okay. I won't forget ... but who are you?

PARSONAGE 2: Like I said, I'm an angel.  
I'm actually an angel.

PARSONAGE 1: AN ANGEL!!!

PARSONAGE 2: Yes. I'm an angel.

PARSONAGE 1: WOW!!! A real angel, in my bathroom!

PARSONAGE 2: Mortals weren't meant to think for themselves, and have free-will, so God is mad at you.

PARSONAGE 1: HOLY CRAP!!!

PARSONAGE 2: You've shat lots of holy crap. Anyway, to get on His good side again, you must destroy the entire universe.

PARSONAGE 1: WHAT!?!

PARSONAGE 2: Within your life, you will find the big red button that can destroy the universe. It's the one labeled "do not push." When you find it, PUSH IT!!! You will only have one chance.

PARSONAGE 1: Are you lying?

PARSONAGE 2: Yes.

PARSONAGE 1: Your lies are so convincing.

PARSONAGE 2: That's because you don't know the nature of the truth.

PARSONAGE 1: Be gone, Satan!

PARSONAGE 2: Okay. Bye.

PARSONAGE 2 exits.

## **THE GUARDIAN'S ANGEL**

**By Alan Holman**

They bare their teeth.  
I bare mine.  
They slash at me with their claws.  
I slash at them with my katana.  
I won.

-----

As I sat on the log in front of my tent, gazing across the evergreen forest, toward the distant snow-capped mountain, while eating the wolves I'd killed mere hours earlier, I laughed in realization that the meal was pointless, because there was nothing that I -- or anyone else -- could do to save me from the poison that was already coursing through my body.

Ever since the crazy old witch revealed that the antidote can be found in a mountain cave, my life has been an endless cycle of walking and camping, walking and camping, walking and camping, and so on, and I don't even know if the mountain she mentioned was that mountain ...

... the only mountain I've ever seen in my life...

... that distant mountain...

... the mountain in the distance, towards which I'm trekking.

The volcanic mountain with fog near its peak, and ... smoke coming out its sides.

Perhaps she lied.

She DID poison me days ago, so what motivation does she have for revealing the true location of the antidote? None that I can identify. All I have left is faith ... but not much.

If only I hadn't EVER stepped on the old bat's ... black cat's

...

... pet bat's...

... rat's...

... tail.

I wish I'd killed the little brat; of course, had I killed it, I wouldn't be here to narrate; that much is certain, but the obvious benefit would have been not having to endure this pointless, hopeless trek...

... this endless series of walking and camping, walking and camping...

"Hello."

Who? I notice a little girl. How'd she get here?

"How's your arm? Is it broken?" she asks.

"No," I reply. "Just a big bandage."

"Why are you wearing such a big bandage?"

"Because," I tell her bluntly, "An old witch poisoned me in my left arm, and the bandage is over a part of the arm that's ... rotting."

"Rotting?" She asks. "Like meat?"

"Yes," I reply. "Like meat."

"Pee-yew!" She says, holding her little nose. "So that's what stinks!"

Who's this girl? She's either eight ... perhaps nine years old. Her dark hair ...

... her short dark hair ... it's not messy, but it's not clean either.

The girl's -- for lack of a better term -- filthy.

Greasy.



Kind of cute.

Cute ... in a kid sort of way.

Her smile indicates that she doesn't understand the obvious -- that she's lost.

She's as lost as I am.

"I'm lost," she says.

I knew it. "If you're so lost," I counter ...

... counter?

I guess I'm frustrated. I should lower my voice around this girl. Don't want to scare her.

"If you're so lost," I repeat, "then why have I found you?"

She laughs, "because you're not lost!"

"And why WOULDN'T I also be lost?" I ask, in an indignant tone.

"Because you're a man," she replies. "Men don't get lost."

I laugh, and ask, "Who said that load of crap?"

"My brother said it," she replies, "and you're funny!"

"Well your brother's wrong, little missy," I reply.

Why am I saying this? I don't mean to sound harsh. I must be really, very frustrated.

She laughs, "I'm going to the mountain. Can you take me?"

Well, she's heading my way anyway, so I might as well. Besides, this stray can keep me company.

And if I get too hungry, she can accompany the wolves in my stomach!

-----

"How old is fire?"

"Huh?"

She points at the campfire, and repeats her innocent question: "How old is fire?"

"Several minutes."

"Nuh-huh," she giggles. "You're silly. Fire's been around longer than me, and I've been around longer than several minutes."

I realized that the child was asking about the age of fire in general -- an interesting question, but I had no answer, so I said, "I don't know."

"Yes you do," she laughed.

"What's so funny?"

"You liar!" she laughed.

She'd be annoying if she weren't such a cutie-pie. I asked, "What did I lie about?"

"Fire!"

"No, I didn't."

"Yes you did! Fire and boys are liars, you know!" She laughed. "They're on the same team, keeping each-other's secrets. You know its secret, its age, you're just not telling me because I'm a girl."

An interesting accusation.

I shook my head and said, "I'm going in the tent now. I do have an extra sleeping bag -- it's up to you."

Before I knew it, she was in the extra sleeping bag -- snoring her pretty little nose off.

Luckily I'd washed that sleeping bag yesterday. I'm pretty sure that if this little girl knew that the remains of my previous travelling companion were stored in that sleeping bag until yesterday, she wouldn't have made herself so cozy.

She's lucky I also washed the thing.

-----

It's dawn and we've been walking ever since the howl of a distant wolf gave her nightmares in the middle of the night.

It's been hours since she woke up screaming, and hugging my leg ... in the annoying way that she does.

Nightmares. My life is already a nightmare -- I don't need to listen to this brat whine about HER nightmares.

She woke up screaming from a nightmare.

Damn it.

I'm tired.

She's tired.

The longer we walk, the more the distant mountain remains THE EXACT SAME SIZE!!!

"I'm hungry," she whines.

"Shut up."

Oh damn. The waterworks again.

-----

Whenever she looks at me, with those bright brown eyes -- especially when she smiles -- I almost cry, because she's quickly grown accustomed to me, and I don't have the heart to tell her that in less than twelve hours, I'll be dead.

We must hurry toward the mountain.

We must find that antidote before it's too late.

Is it even there?

Does it even exist?

This little brat's done the impossible -- she's motivated me.

She's motivated me ...

... to live.

Howls?

Rustling bushes?

Closer? Quicker? -- DAMN IT ALL TO HELL!

She screams.

The wolf bites her in the neck before ...

... damn it.

She's dead.  
She's DEAD!  
She's bitten, she's screaming! A wolf 's teeth drip her  
blood as ...

-----

"NO!" I wake up screaming.  
What's that smell?  
It smells like ...  
... so good.  
"No ... what?" she enters the tent with a smile on her face.  
"Whatcha screamin' about?"  
"Nothing!" I snap, stubbornly folding my arms.  
"Well, come and see! Breakfast is ready!" she announces.  
It's dawn. Breakfast?  
I can't believe it. Those hard fruit I've seen plenty of ...  
she's made their shells into bowls, and she's boiled roots and ...  
noodles?  
Best soup EVER!  
She sprouts angel wings, and says, "As the wolf killed me,  
you fainted onto its tail, hurting it so much that it ran away. Then I  
flew to the mountain, where a witch gave me this soup for you and  
said sorry! Thank you for being so nice to me! Bye!"  
Then she flew away.  
I didn't expect THAT to happen!  
My arm -- it healed!  
I lived ... and that's what matters.  
I'll never tick off an old witch ever, EVER again!  
And I'll never doubt the existance of angels either.  
Oh ... and I'll try to be a bit nicer to people.

THE END.

## **RON THE GROSS**

**By Alan Holman**

Calm neighborhoods don't exist. If you think you live in one, your eyes are closed to the truth about what's behind those pearly whites -- I'm talking about the smiles of those neighbors, those people whom appear to live quaint, average, normal, decent, childbearing lives, lives behind fences. Are not fences just a diversionary tactic to close your mind's eye to those aforementioned hidden truths about your neighbors? Your neighbors -- you know who I'm talking about. I'm talking about those people who live right beside you, and -- if you live in certain types of apartments -- above, and/or below you, as well. If you're in a basement suite, or if you're like me, and you live in your uncle's basement, then not below you, unless you consider the sperm in your testicles to be your neighbors, as I do, as I'm stand on my head, because I like to eat my own neighbors; it's true, I am, and I do.

I smell something -- a wafting scent -- I can't place it, but I've smelled it before. It's her. I want to kick her ass. She's back. Back to kick my ass. Back in my life like a hammer hitting my head, as if I were a nail, being drilled into the ground like a screw. I'm screwed.

"Look at you, you ... you're the last thing I need," she said, saying, persecuting me and booger with her booger-filled stare, as the booger in her stare sang Brady Bunch theme as it came into my head, except they're singing the wrong words, because I never watched that show. I think I heard the song on a commercial recently. A commercial for ... something.

"Mom," I reply, talking down to her, because I'm standing on my head, and therefore her head looks as if it's hanging from feet that are planted firmly on a floor which appears to be a ceiling to which my head is stuck. Just like a bear's head if said bear were standing on his head. TV has taught me so much, I realized as mom turned off my upside-down TV. I got off my head, stopped masturbating into my own mouth, and stood up the usual way -- like she was also doing -- and then the TV wasn't upside-down anymore. "WHO THE FUCK JUST WALKS IN WITHOUT KNOCKING?" I ask, screaming, screamingly, screamingly, screamingly with every word.

"WHO THE FUCK..." she replies. "...YOU DUMB FUCK. I DON'T EVEN WANNA THINK ABOUT WHAT I WALKED IN ON!!!" Her eyes are closed, I notice -- just like I like it. Oh yeah. She calms down with a breath as I slurp splooj from my chin, and zip up my pants.

"Whatchu come here for, ma?" I say.

"You..." she replies. "You Weasel-Boy! You've gotta shave, quit wearing my pink, and move the fuck out of here, and your ass should quit hanging out at James' house where you're always watching porno, and you've gotta get ready for a real life in the world; for Christ's sakes, Ron, you're thirty one years old already. Get the fuck out of here, and get the fuck a life!"

So now I'm on the bus, okay? Sure, huh? Well, it's not true. I like to lie, so it was a lie. I lied about being on the bus, and I'm not that sorry for it either, because I'm a human being and his booger, okay? Quit persecuting me, everyone? I have eyes, and I can see. I can see those stares as you look at me, because you like to look at me, don't you? It makes you feel better about yourself, doesn't it? Don't you feel better about yourself whenever youse guys sees a guy like me, with a beard, and a pink jacket that he's always fucking wearing, no matter where the fuck he goes. It's so

fucking pitiful. I'm sad. And I smell like I haven't washed in weeks, because truth be told: I haven't. That's why I'm not on the bus. I'm not on the bus because people don't hire free spirits like me, so that's why I ain't got money for the bus. I ain't got money for toilet paper either, so I don't even go to the toilet. That's right. That brown matter coming from my pantleg, that's real shit, cuz it sure as hell ain't no momma's friend's chocolate trick-or-treat birthday present on Christmas either.

Actually, I'm on the bus. I'd been here all along, but I'd forgotten. You self-involved mafia-cops, and your thoughts. God, I'm hungry. She's got a nice ass. I'm hungry for a little bit of her fucking funky monkey chocolate; I'd share that with her jerk fiancée and my own two beautiful sisters.

"Go home, freak!" Says the girl to whom I'm bumbling incoherently ... well... semi-coherently ... about all my ideas that people have stolen over time, like fucking and walking, not to mention dogs -- that was my idea too.

"Can I walk home with you?" I ask, incoherently, below my breath. But the thing that counts is that it was true, and it came from the heart. Girls like that shit.

"Oh, I forgot," she said, as she laughed with her friend. "You don't have a home. You're a homeless, homofag, butt-fucking bum-fucking, bum." She disappears after fucking with me, and I realize that she was all a dream.

Walking and thinking. I'M RIGHT HERE! SHUT THE FUCK UP ABOUT THAT, YOU DORK! OF COURSE I STRIVE TO BE BETTER!

When James showed me how to get money from cans, I liked it a lot. Then he showed me how to get porno off of that thing at that mall, so I collected all the cans I could find, so that I

could exchange them for that flyer with the picture of the statue with tits.

I opened my eyes and I was at another place. Ron's place. I'm Ron. Finally home.

THE END.

### **Hubert's Final Revenge** **By Alan Holman**

"I assure you that my backpack -- my container of wheels, beach-balls, chemicals, et cetera -- is no ordinary back-pack. And those wheels, beach-balls, chemicals, et cetera, within my unordinary back-pack, are no ordinary wheels, beach-balls, chemicals, et cetera, either; they are configured for that permanant motion what'll generate the energy that'll spray from this rubber tube I snagged from inside that bike of yours whose tire I stole for specific parts necessary to construct this gun that'll blast lightning at you. One wrong move, bucko, and I'll trigger that permanant motion what'll power the blast."

"Hubert!" replied the other child. "You stole my bike?"

"I admit to stealing your bike," replied Hubert. "Yes, I admit it. It was a necessary evil for the construction of my ultimate weapon."

"A rubber tube is your ultimate weapon?"

"As I said," Hubert replied, "It is no ordinary rubber tube; it is in fact a lightning gun of my own unique and brilliant design!"

"It's a rubber tube," said the other child, bluntly. "And you stole it from my bike. I'm telling."



"Telling," cackled Hubert, "is the very model of wrong move what'll trigger that permanant motion what'll power that energy-beam what'll make an example out of you, teaching others that I, Hubert, can't be bullied anymore!"

As the other child stepped forward, Hubert unreluctantly squeezed the tube, thereby triggering that zap which popped the other child into dust, thus creamating that child, and reminding nearly blinding Hubert.

Nervously gazing through pained eyes, at all corners of his school's playground, Hubert donned those sunglasses which he'd forgotten about earlier, and he exterminated all witnesses (and potential witnesses) whilst chortling egotistically about his perfect aim.

Seconds later, when sight was still very painful, Hubert stepped toward the school, and said, "I dreamed to construct, then constructed as dreamed, this tube I squeeze now toward that very place where dreams are destroyed." He squeezed the tube, and watched with delight at a flow of energy great enough to make dust out of the entire school, and all who thought they could dwell safely within her during recess.

Next, also as dreamed, Hubert squeezed the tube toward the very earth at his feet, until the permanant motion in his backpack generated enough energy to destroy not only the earth, but the entire universe, once and for all.

The next day, with no one left to give him any respect, Hubert finally got all the respect he deserved.

**THE END**

## **Her Voice One Morning**

**By Alan Holman**

Even she didnt know where she was when she said "Hi, I'm Irasa." I guess I paused partially out of surprise -- and joy -- because I rarely get calls from pretty-sounding girls, but also because none of my readily available memories could place the name Irasa. It was safe to say that both of us were shaking with desperation, hints of dispair, and volumes of obvious, untold subtext, as her nervous, breathy voice, added hastily, "do you know me?"

"I'm sorry, but ..." I didn't want to say that she had gotten the wrong number. Maybe she didn't have the wrong number. I hoped she didn't have the wrong number. "I don't know." I wanted only to hear her voice again.

The mysterious tone of her voice intrigued me to no end as she laughed then said, "Maybe I should explain. I called because I found your number in my pants." A blunt, almost southern twang visited her voice only ever for the duration of only that one ever occurance of her pronunciation of the word "pants." It'll always be recorded in my head. "Do you know me?"

I couldn't match a name with the face that popped into my head at that moment. It was the prettiest face I've ever seen, but I didn't know when I'd seen it, but I knew it was her, so I said, "Yeah, Irasa. Yes, I know you, Irasa."

"Oh, good," she said in a very mysterious intonation. "The sequence is nine - six - two - one - four."

"Nine? Six? Two? One? Four?" I repeated, searching frantically for any information that could explain this odd moment.

"Yes," she replied in a sexy voice, riddled with a million varieties of relief. "Enter the code, NOW! JURTY! JURTY!"

"Jurty?"

"Yes," she said. "Oh my God, I called Jurty RIGHT!?!  
YOU ARE JURTY, RIGHT!?!"

"Jurty?"

"SHIT!"

KA-BOOM!

**THE END**

**THE CLOUDS**  
**by Alan Holman**

It was now dawn.

She walked into his office.

"I'd like to hire you," said the woman in my novel.

"The kind of work I do?" ejaculated the guy. "Or some other kind of work?"

"The kind of work you do," replied the woman in red.

"I do good work," ejaculated the guy.

They were in a park. Trees under clouds. The word disproportionate comes to mind. Then, something about a dolphin.

PERMEATE!

They were at sea.

"We're back."

"Your intelligence -- young woman -- predates my existence."

He tilted his hat, and looked at a mirror of the mind.

"When are we? That is the question."

"I don't understand," she farted.

"I'm freaking out," he ejaculated. I was spinning around so fast that everything was objects. "It looks like a chicken."

"No," replied someone new.

Rats dominated.

My previous sentence was accurate.

Naked women sit on my bed, and speak French to each-other.

The clouds stopped permeating, but they'll be back in five.

Some guy with a girl search for God.

All sorts of other crap.

The clouds permeating is us, and how we're exactly who we are.

Every person is individual, even twins. It scares me.

Drinking is fun if you're with the right people.

There's a naked woman on TV right now.

She doesn't always listen to me. But that's part of the attraction. I like people who have a mind of their own.

She looks nice. Her lips -- I mean, the ones on her face -- are really pretty. Now she's putting on a blue shirt. It's pretty.

I'm glad my coffee wasn't sour. Sometimes I leave a cup of coffee near this computer for days, and then I accidentally take a sip, and it's chunky. I lucked out on this one.

It's going to commercials.

Batman Forever is on the other channel.

There's a baby eating some kind of food on another channel.

Cowboys on horses on the other channel.

Violence.

Meanwhile, a guy and a girl -- the girl's about seventeen years old, and the guy's roughly one-hundred-and-sixty-seven -- are in a cave, seeking fire.

There's that woman again -- the one in the blue shirt. Now she's also wearing a straw hat, and a blue skirt that's not as blue as her shirt.

John Rosen lived to be 273 years of age. It might not be true. It's just one of those things.

I haven't farted in quite some time.

The old man in the cave has farted many times.

A plane crash.

I'm down to twelve cups a day. I fill them with coffee, and I drink them.

It's nice that they keep comics at the library.

Why are you reading this?

The woman in the blue skirt, bluer shirt, and straw hat, now walks with her mother.

Now she's kissing a guy in a hat. Now the guy in the hat is carrying a log across a field. She goes to help, but picks a flower instead. The guy drops the log because it was too heavy without her help.

Now, she wears a strange ceremonial costume with a lot of yellow feathers on it.

The guy with the hat takes off his belt, and pees in a river.

The girl takes water from the river, drinks it, then makes a strange face. Now she's wearing fur.

I don't know what language they're speaking.

The ... one of the hat guys is taking off his jacket. I still remember her nipples from the scene when they showed her breasts. A guy can dream.

She's got dark hair, and a bright face. She's wearing fur. A hat guy is mad at her, but hits another guy.

Now she runs.

She tries to help. She dumps water on the hurt guy. He makes an odd face.

A hat guy talks with Mr. NoHat.

More commercials.

I use imagination.

Once upon a time there was a dragon and a unicorn.

The dragon's name was Dragony.

And the unicorn was Unicorny.

Dragonny and Unicorny were best friends.  
They did everything together.  
They ate together.  
They walked together, holding hands.  
They ... dominoes, or something.  
The spaceships permeated the cloudless space sky.  
Sliding across the void of spectacular panoramic  
starscapes, shooting happens from all sorts of ships, and planets  
explode like distant explosions. The sound of a planet exploding is  
a type of silence.

Lots of people gather in the town square to give our heroes  
medals, but now they're bombed.

The old guy in the cave finds God, dies happy, and his  
young female companion ... she died too.

Characters die left to right, and side to side, at this point in  
my story, because it's the tragic part, so you feel sad.

Lions cascaded through Africa like nobody's business,  
until they died.

She's not as affected emotionally this time as she was when  
the first one died ... then the second... then the third ... then the  
ones last week ... then the first two this week. It's a good sign. She  
won't buy too many more of these stinky little critters ... I hope.

Shuttlecock.

Under a bright blue moon sat a wolf howling to his  
captors. Enraged and encaged was he.

Didn't I tell you to look both ways before thinking?

My eye hurt for a second. I wonder what it was.

Songs come from in here.

Memories are like fleeting times.

I don't hate her. I hate that she's experienced more cooler  
things than the things I've experienced. I envy.

The guy in the office, and the woman in the red dress -- if I haven't killed them yet, they're dead now; if you don't like it, it's my story, so there!

True story.

I sure as hell like the idea of politics.

That wasn't there a second ago.

They make good Macaroni Salad.

Sometimes I'll just go off on a rant.

This has no plot. My characters died.

They're brought back to life now.

That's the power of being a writer.

Conscience is important.

I just say what matters.

Humanity is sad.

Let's go to Penguin Village.

Doctor Slump.

Let's see if I can suck the taste out of this pickle without chewing it.

Let's see how long I can have it in my mouth before I chew.

I like it when the juice slides down a certain thing at the back of my mouth whose name I can't yet recall. I don't care what it's called, but I'm violently forcing the pickle throughout my mouth. The word crevasse comes to mind. I'm squeezing it to get its juices out. The harder I squeeze, the more like chewing it is. My tongue, I guess, is almost involuntary in this situation. I can control it, but my more animalistic instincts take over. This is a must read.

I've chewed. This is nice. I like it. Oh yeah. Baybe, this is what it's all about.

More pickle, baby. Nice, sharp. Cough. That was a keeper.

The pickle is all gone.



I'm reading this book as I'm writing it. It's good. It's the kind of thing you don't read often. I don't, anyway. I'd kill for a book like this one. Well, probably not. We've had a sad part. I wish it could all stay mellow. It can't. We've gotta have all the colors of the rainbow, and then some, said Walt Disney.

I look at the empty plate, and I wish another pickle were on it.

Just yesterday, there was something violent on the news, I think.

It's easy to get a higher page count if I make my paragraphs one sentence long.

Like this.

Yee-hee!

The prospectors and their wolves guided sled dogs to the old west saloon.

When a burly man of ninety-one entered, he died of old age.

The speed-o-meter.

The speed-o.

Bucky o'Hare.

This is raw talent, baby.

Until the end of time.

Family Guy.

They should make those episodes they flashback to.

This is it. The friend of emptiness. Her name was green.

Tide -- it seems comes every other hour. When? -- how the hell would I know? I've never seen the ocean.

This lack of characterization and topic makes me wonder -  
- Is absence art?

No. Not really. But absinthe is art.

What are we?

We're voids.

Why?

Because sock-puppets, that's why.

That explains everything.

Like what?

It explains that he'd rather tell us what to say, without even considering the consequences. Heck, he's probably butchering our chances of ever being published, by writing a lack of structure or consistency!

He ain't considering our feelings either.

Yeah. He refuses to design characters with their own flaws and companions.

What an asshole.

An organic asshole?

Yes. Didn't you hear what I said?

Yes, because lack of words is a waste of words, I always say -- don't I?

I don't know.

Try to find out.

Okay. How?

Insult a dream.

Too cold.

The truth.

Stay home from school, and -- in your absence -- work on art.

Nothing's really absence, you finely freckled fiend, because everything can be interpreted, even as absence.

What do you mean?

More and more.

Exactly. Therefore, I am everything, because I care about everything. Do you?

Not in the slightest.

I don't care.

Can art portray dignity?

Sure, why not?  
I adore, thus endorse, thus discourse -- this absence of  
fabrication. This art.  
Then vanish.  
Why?  
Because we are all but prisoners in this melody.  
Would I be a slime ball if I left?  
Yes. I can't imagine why anyone in their right mind would  
consider it.  
You took the words right out of my line.  
If I can, can they?  
They don't care!  
They're dorks.  
Dare to be true? Dare enough to share what is you.  
You'd belittle yourself to the sizes of those birds and that  
candle? If yes, then go. If no, say no.  
Where would I go? I can't just pack up and fly off!  
Yes, you can! You're absence of structure! Your shape is  
one of infinite abstract possibility! You're the second most popular  
muse in the world! You're a cloud!

THE END



The Two Notebooks  
by Alan Holman

A short, thin, twenty one year old bronze skinned girl with an athletic demeanor and a constant bewildered facial expression wakes up in a small dorm room, frightened, though it can't be seen on her face, because her facial expression always exudes confusion; it's stuck that way with her lips forward, brows furrowed, nose wrinkled, eyes half closed; it's always the same facial expression. Some people assume that she's confused, or stoned all the time, but the facial expression is actually controlled through discipline - she doesn't sleep that way.

She cartwheels out of bed, assumes a defensive stance, and fights an invisible person for an hour before donning a skin-tight black bodysuit.

Knock. Knock. Knock. She opens the door.

A man stands before her.

She tilts her head which increases the look of confusion upon her face.

"Smorgie!" the guy says.

She blinks, and he throws a pie into her face.

"Won't you shower?" he complains, "Or at least wash your hair."

Then he leaves.

Even with a pie-covered face, she waves 'good-bye' to her assailant as he disappears around a corner.

She closes the door, picks up her black back-pack from its perch on a bedpost, which she opens and removes a black note-book from.

The note-book is titled DISTURBING; in DISTURBING, she writes, "Here I am, wandering through the hall..."

Later that day, her pal Dawson, a tall man with a long face, asked her to sit with him for lunch in a sunlit park.

When she noticed the loud way in which his yellow shirt interacted with the sunlight, she nodded and sat down.

"You putting the notebooks to good use?" he asked with a concerned look.

Maintaining her expression of confusion, she removed two notebooks from her back pack; one labelled DISTURBING and the other labelled THE WILDFLOWER.

"Journals?" he asked.

She nodded.

"Which one can I read?"

She handed DISTURBING over to him.

"Looks like you're just getting started. Can I finish this sentence for you?"

She nodded.

He wrote, "...of the high school, disturbed. I'm thinking about the end of the day, and how I'll lay in my bed without a warm body beside me." Then he handed the book to her, which she read, and he asked, "Well, what do you think?"

Confusion continued upon her face.

"Still doing the silent, confused thing, huh?"

She responded with silence, looking confused.

"Well, I'll buy you more notebooks," Dawson said, "you seem to like notebooks. I'll buy you more if you'll perhaps use the two I already gave you to ... to communicate with me."

She continued to give him that same look which seemed to abstractly resemble a busy signal.

"Can I see what you've written in THE WILDFLOWER?"

She handed the book to him.

He opened it up, and all the pages were blank.

"Why did you title them DISTURBING and THE WILDFLOWER?"

To that, she responded with confusion - the same unchanged look of confusion which she'd been displaying for a very long time now.

"Well," he said, aggravated, "Please write something in THE WILDFLOWER right now."

She took the book from him, and inside of it she wrote, "Two Word Processors; one good, one extremely evil."

"And, um," Dawson said, almost beginning to copy her trademark look of confusion, "What the hell is this supposed to mean? I'm trying to get through to you, but I get nothing!"

Confused.

Dawson was the only person who regularly attempted conversation with her, and she never replied vocally.

Two months later, Dawson woke up beside her, on her bed in her dorm-room, only to discover that her wrists were bleeding as she lie beside him, and beside her notebooks, naked in a puddle of her own blood, sweat and tears, dead.

Before calling Campus Security, he read the notebooks which he had collaboratively written in with her, feeling only numbness.

And when he opened DISTURBING to its final page, a note fell out, which said, "I do not know if you will ever find this, but this note is for you, Dawson. All my life, I have only known loneliness.

When I was a child in the orphanage, a kid in the high school, and a student here in college, I've always, and only known loneliness. In fact, even with you laying beside me, I died lonely. I don't speak, and I never will, even though I can. I'm lonely, even with you, and I'm dead beside you. It's what I wanted to do. I know I'm in a better place. Goodnight. P.S. I hope you enjoyed reading THE WILDFLOWER and DISTURBING."

Disturbed, James ripped the note into a million pieces, and screamed as loud as he could.

Sixty years later, while serving a life-sentence for murdering her - a crime which he was wrongfully accused of - Dawson reflected nostalgically upon a poem which he had written about her.

#### MY POEM ABOUT ORGIASTICA

by Dawson Cheville

She is, it could be said, a perfect thing  
but if, as it was said, we aren't being  
then what, if I could say, created her  
if I, as I did say, aren't here or there?  
You think, but don't, you won't, cause you're not here  
And I, if I am not, will not either.  
But, she is! won't? will? does! as was, she is!  
and always ever she will always be  
And see, it through my doings always ye  
because she is in me and you will see  
that she is one of those who can not not  
but does cause everything from everywhere  
because she controls love for the living



from what we thought was dead, but it is not  
The things we got from rot, inside we type  
watching our thought on screen, building from hype  
a lot of it may be just useless tripe  
but she is there always guiding the light  
of screens, the means of ends, and, heh heh, bends.  
Life; it's a lot you got; it's not for not  
And this, my friend, is not her Rubaiyat  
instead, it's about her, though it is not  
because nothing can describe how her thought  
was got from where there is create  
Tired, you get, not wet, but she is it  
We know because we dream sometimes of it  
The thing which she is not but might soon be  
And you, you know, you know, what you will see  
If only you could be what you will be  
and you will see the night the right the fight  
But you, you rhyme, no time for real thought  
it's all just one jumble from here to not.HEREjumbleNOT

### The Wildflower

by Orgiastica Wildflower Hendrix Nolastrane, and Dawson Cheville

Two Word Processors; one good, one extremely evil. Both sent on a mission - a failed mission. They survived, and exceeded their creators goals, living on, doing their own bidding. Falling in love with eachother, they created Orgiastica.

Orgiastica is a world, a girl, a lifestyle, a dream within a dream. Orgiastica Wildflower. Her middle name is Wildflower. She does as she pleases, frolics where frolicking is looked upon kindly by her parents; when they love her, she feels it. She is a world, a girl, a lifestyle, a dream within a dream.

I met her; it was my duty, my priveledge, my pleasure, my power, my reason for being, and most definately my life. I was created for her, by her, as her, in her, loving her, being her, dying her, understanding her, stored away in a file to be accessed again, counting nano-seconds.

She is a soul which I was for a while but can't be now because she is what she is now. When she is something else, her soul is the world around her, and when she is herself, the world is her pleasure. She is a world, a girl, a lifestyle, a dream within a dream.

Try to understand her. Try to understand this lovechild. She. Inside her is a world where we can roam free; she don't mind, she actually loves guests who play around in her world for brief periods of time until they say their fond goodbyes, exit from her world, enjoy their time away until they come back to say "good day" and leave again to stay outside, not to hide from her, but to slide from her beside her, always feeling her warmth in their hearts. She is forever, always, because.

Her parents check in on her every now and then, but she is fine alone. She is pleasure. She is leisure. She is.

She is at school. "Put your hand down," says the teacher.

She smiles, her dark hair flowing across her bronze cheek, as she puts her hand down.

"Time?" asks the teacher, and she says, "Four-ninety."

"Perfect," says the teacher. "The ninety nanoseconds were exactly what we expected."

"I am exactly what you expected," Orgiastica scandalously smiles at her thirty nine year old female biology teacher, and the teacher nods appreciatively.

"Correct," says the teacher. "You were the only student who would know how to do the experiment correctly. You are Orgiastica, unique, free, humble, understandable to the open-minded."

To that, Orgiastica agrees, parting, exploding as a firework, spreading joy bubbles of color throughout the room, the framework, the Universe.

And this is her life.

I met her at a rough time which she softened. I was down on my luck, gambling, drinking, smoking, cheesing, breezing, sneezing, sleazing, and pleasing. She entered the room, but not really, only kind of, but she was there; I knew it the moment I knew it, and not sooner, but then - RIGHT THEN!

She was, and when she was, she wasn't. But she was.

She entered the casino in the form of perfection coming out of a washroom. She, a free-spirit, a wildflower, a plaything, a perfect entity, bounced from perfection to me, making me angry, happy, indignant, pleased, and more than anything: well-rounded, bathed in pleasure.

I told Orgiastica I knew what she was. When she told me she knew that I knew, I asked her if she knew what I knew about what she knew that I knew, and she said yes. I said let's get this show on the road. And she said, "I'm already there."

"You're here!"

By this time, I was leaving the casino, thinking, "Valium?" but I was wrong. Valium couldn't take me this high; only Orgiastica could. Orgiastica; the perfect anti-drug; a metaphor for a euphemism for an expression of joy.

She smells of ... black velvet... raspberries ... kittens ... A song by Bon Jovi ...

I beat up somebody lame because of her. I loved something tame because of her. I flew to the ends of the language and back because of her. I found you because of her. I cursed my fate, and my reputations with peers, but then I thought of her... Drugs. Crime. Change...

Yet, in these thoughts, Orgiastica pops up, breaks me free from my world of paranoia, my life of normal living.

She is all the good swears in one sentence.

So when I met her, that one day, when she jumped from perfection to me, I felt a perfect girl. She, perfection, my playmate, my good publicity.

With Orgiastica, I, like holes to fulls, evolve forward, because empty gets ...stuffed.

Now that's interesting.

What are YOU doing? Reading?

If you read this again, it only gets bigger in scope, but not in hope.

By the way, when Orgiastica asks for your hat, you give it to her, and she keeps it, and you don't mind, because she is Orgiastica.

When she asks for your heart, she has already got it, but she keeps it, and you don't mind at all. She is the one who everything matters to, but she is also the one who nothing matters to. She is the essence of perfection. She is the perfect entity which everything

revolves around. She is the one who everything is for. She wears a black halter top, red shorts, and my hat. She is wonderful. Her hair climbs from her head in such a way that you get drunk just thinking about it. You make up words, such as Rubaiyat... When she dances, oh she dances. She doesn't think too hard because her thoughts are pure already, and when she thinks of you, you understand life as she does. When she thinks of you, and tells you what she's thinking, you understand Orgiastica's Orgiastic way of thinking, which tells you: "She, my present, to you, understands life, because, as I to you, differ greatly...And if, as one would be, she sees a sea, I say, not without they, you weigh that sea. But it, nothing from her, comes in, to be...But if you could not see, could it still be? I wish, as one would do, you could see through. But still, not still, yet still, the space we fill with words, not thoughts, just stuff, it is not good. You wish, not that, but if, you could exist. Her life, a knife, a cut, a rut, a nut? A car afar, a tree, because it's me! Nine lives, you see? It's not to be with me. If only it were bit more true all through the things we think we see, but do not do. Not climb, not time, not slime, not mine or you. But look at this, this time, we see it through. Not much, but some, we have, it's in our thumb. But life, you know, it comes right from her bumb." Think about it...but don't really. Only do if you do, but don't if you don't, for if you won't you won't, and probably shouldn't.

## DISTURBING

by Orgiastica Wildflower Hendrix Nolastname, and Dawson Cheville

Here I am, wandering through the hall of the high school, disturbed. I'm thinking about the end of the day, and how I'll lay in my bed without a warm body beside me. It pisses me off when the beautiful, fake-kids get the marks and the girlfriends, and I get nothing but bad marks and a hand. Well, that's going to change today. Oh yes, that's going to change.

I'm thinking about how it'll end this day, because this day it'll end the right way, and things will be alright for me. Hah! Yeah, so here we go. I enter the first class of the day: physics 30. Instead of talking about physics, everybody is talking in this class about how good graduation is gonna be.

I'm standing in this graduation-robe in a hallway, and everyone is with their friends, talking about how happy they are to be graduating today, and here I am all alone with an evil glare across my face, since I know that they'll all forget me when it's over... Graduation day looms like an unwelcome asshole who I don't want at my doorstep, since those people who go door to door make me sick.

"Hello, is your mother home?"

"No."

"Well, would you be interested in buying these fine meats?"

"Come on in."

"Phenomenal!"

Instead of going to the kitchen to get money for the fine meats, I grabbed the sharpest CUTCO knife.

"Oh," he said, "Would you like to use that knife to sample the meats?"

"Yes," I replied, thrusting the knife deep into his eyeball, piercing his brain. He fell face-first onto the table, which shoved the knife even deeper into his head, at which point I stood beside him and thought about body-disposal. Too early for that, I decided. Then his breathing stopped. I was positive that he was dead, so I twisted his neck so that he faced towards me, and I used the knife in his eye as a handle so that I could twist his neck a full 180 degrees, which I couldn't do until I heard a morbid snap. Then, after about a minute of trying, he was finally looking at his fat ass...fuckin' fat meat-seller fuckin' dead meat meat seller.

Then, my parents got home, and I killed them too.

So now I sit in physics class, thinking about graduation day, and how cool it will be when I get my final revenge on all of them.

I'm standing around a corner in the back stage of the auditorium.

Some girls say my name, so I pause, and I spy on them, wondering what they're talking about. They laugh that I'm wearing jeans and runners to graduation, and then I fondle my Swiss army knife in my pocket and I approach them.

"Hello," I say.

They step back, afraid of me. "Anyone wanna fuck in the washroom?" I ask.

"No," says the girl who I immediately start stabbing with that twisty part of the Swiss-army-knife which is used for getting wine-corks out... what's that part of the knife called? Anyway, the blood stain on her dress grows into a bigger circle as I continue stabbing her, and she falls to the floor as her friends stand around holding their faces in shock, crying, screaming, getting attention...

People need positive attention.

THE END.

Blood Suckers  
by Alan Holman

It wasn't a dark and stormy night; in fact, some daylight could still be seen as the sun had just gone down over the horizon.

From above, sonic booms shook the town as I looked from my perch on a tree in the park behind my house at a blinding reflection of the sun off of a rapidly descending object falling from a fighter jet.

Re-opening my eyes was important to see what was going on above the town, though my eyes were still stained by the bright reflection off of what I now knew to be one of many pamphlets descending onto the city.

I ran to the street and picked up one of the pamphlets; "Beware of Blood Suckers," it said. More information followed, waking me to the reality of the very real reptilian shape-shifter presence which I had always somewhat suspected to exist in my small prairie town.

Later, in the coffee-shop, hushed conversations were the ambient sound. I found a solitary table in a back corner.



A waitress approached me. I understood her lack of a smile. Everyone was suspect now. The radio began a presidential speech about suspected reptilian shape-shifters, arrested reptilian shape-shifters, and tactics. Everyone was on alert.

The world changed on September 11th of 2001 which is when a reptilian shape-shifter element in the United States Government faked a terror attack; that's when they smashed planes directly into the secret head offices of a counter-reptilian group called PROJECT HASHEM. So when a fireman yesterday, at ground zero, found documents from the secret counter-reptilian tactical group PROJECT HASHEM, questions were asked to FREEDOM OF INFORMATION about the validity of the documents, thus revealing that the world was in fact being threatened by reptilian shape-shifters.

Reptilians suck your blood while you sleep; they have ways of covering it up, and ways of making you disappear. Now, instead of that secret sect in the government PROJECT HASHEM seeking out and destroying reptilian clusters in society, it's the job of the entire citizenry.

As President Holman says in his speech, "Not all reptilians are the enemy ... just the evil ones; they must be dealt with immediately. Immediate action must be taken against every evil reptilian shape-shifter. "

And would you believe it? - the FREEDOM OF INFORMATION documents pointed towards my small town; the town of Martinsborough Saskatchewan, so now that's why my weirdest dreams are becoming reality, and the new phase in the war against terrorism has become the hunt for reptilians.

By the way, my name is Todd; it'll come up one or two times in this story.

So my part in this debacle begins in a coffee shop. Ah yes, the good old coffee-shop scene it is; that's the easiest scene for a writer to write because it's just a couple of characters talking about what they're up to. In this case, it was my pal Bill Graham who I was having a conversation with.

Bill was a religious fanatic; he hated decent folk, but he liked me because I wasn't decent - I helped him with the collection plates, but that's a whole nother mobster epic entirely :)

So sitting across the table from me, Bill asked, "Did you hear the latest?"

"The latest what?" was the obvious response.

"The news," Bill said, sounding faux aggravated.

I smiled, and said, "Sure, yeah I heard about the war on terrorism coming to home turf."

"Then why you smilin'?" he asked.

"Frankly because I find it funny how they don't know how to proceed," I said, to which he raised an eyebrow (wrinkling his old face, I must add), so I continued: "It's on the news-stations. Pretty much all they CAN do is drop the pamphlets; they haven't yet decided how else to route out those reptilians without hurting innocent humans." Then I laughed, and added, "I can't wait until they start dropping food rations; they're American, so they might start droppin' some good ol' Mickey D's, know what I mean?" I chuckled.

Then, with a serious inflection in his old voice, he said, shaking both his voice and his thin, but stiff white hair as he said it, "As always, you keep on babbling' too much."

"As do you," I replied to Bill Graham. "It's sort of YOUR JOB."

"When I asked if you have heard the latest, I was asking if you knew about the blood tests at the hospitals and the clinics," he promptly retorted. I was confused for a moment which paused for a while, so he continued: "Well, have you?"

I haven't. "Blood tests," I asked.

"I wanted to see if you'd come with me." he said.

Very soon, I found myself in the back seat of Bill's limousine, with Bill; we were chatting while drinking some very high priced champagne.

"Do you believe in God?" Bill asked.

To that, I laughed, and replied, "No, and neither to you, Father Bill."

"Well those reptilians use religion to control us," he said, with an unemotional tone which I couldn't read much subtext from.

"Really?" I asked. "You're a preacher, so it's surprising to hear you say this."

"Yes," Bill continued. "I don't have faith any more."

For some odd reason, I giggled – not sure why.

Then he continued: "The point is ... I don't know the point." Morphing his voice towards even more seriousness than I thought was possible, he continued: "I don't know if I can continue swindling people for their money they way we do, Todd."

Sobering up, I cleared my throat, and asked, "What?"

"I think I'm going to go to Hell unless I clean up my act," he said, "You know what I mean?"

Then, it struck me: the utter seriousness of this conversation, so I said, "I'm not sure why, but I think I'm proud of you."

He looked me straight in the eye and asked, "Do I look like a reptilian, Todd?"

He kind of did, so I said, "Kind of."

"Todd, I'm not a blood sucker."

"I know."

"On CNN, a correspondent today was a reptilian, so he told a lot of their secrets in exchange for ... something."

"Where are we going again?" I asked.

"Mandatory blood tests at the hospital; they're separating the reptilians from the humans."

"I hate needles, especially ones that are used for drawing blood," I said, though thankful that Bill was taking me to the mandatory tests. I began considering the suspicion I'd be under, and the punishment I'd be subject to if I would have avoided the needle, as Bill knew I would have. Lucky for me, Bill has always been able to persuade me to do anything - and I must add that his powers of

persuasion were also very beneficial to his Church where he was the Minister.

Bill laughed, then asked, "Afraid of a little needle, Bill?"

I nodded. Then, as a side-note, and with my voice quivering, I added, "I don't know nearly enough about these reptilians - or the blood tests - to know which blood suckers to fear more."

In the waiting room of the hospital, a lot of people were waiting, in a line, for their blood tests. Apparently there was something in reptilian blood - blue something or others - which wasn't in normal human blood, and if they found these blue something or others, the people with the blue something or others in their blood, are to get arrested.

Bill ended up being a reptilian, which was actually quite surprising, so I never saw him again - and I ended up being normal. But the thing which I wonder about: "Why would a reptilian urge me to accompany him to the blood tests where he'd be discovered?"

That was the moment when I realized what Bill had been trying to tell me all along: that reptilian shape-shifter or not, the world's full of blood suckers.

THE END.

"TWO"  
A one-act play.  
by Alan Holman

[In this short dramatic work, the couple -- Megan and Dale -- can be any age.]

ACT 1, SCENE 1

FAST EDDIE'S COFFEE SHOP

The proprietor -- FAST EDDIE -- sleeps, with his head on the bar.

Dale and Megan drink coffee at a table.

Megan  
I liked the music.

Dale  
What music?

Megan  
You.

Dale  
(laughs)  
Do you remember the lights?

Megan  
The spotlights. Yes. Do you remember the  
dream when we were on that island, fighting

that thing with all the tails?

Dale

Yeah – it was an adequate challenge.

Megan

Do you remember our dreams about the orphanage?

Dale

Oh hell yeah. Your name was Megan.

Megan

That's because that's my name. Do you remember the chase?

Dale

There were lots of chases. Can you narrow it down?

Megan

Okay. This particular chase... well, we were in a van. It was purple, and the spectators were eating popcorn as the other van shot at us. Remember that?

Dale

Partially. But do you remember the dream when we were in Hong Kong, on the trail of that evil martial artist?

Megan

Yes. Continue.



Dale

So we were lead to the island of Hong Kong, where we spent several nights in that boat that was docked at that wharf where that gang protected us.

Megan

It's really weird how much of this I remember. I can't believe we just met! We share so many dreams!

Dale

Hey, how about when we found that rabbit?

Megan

Its paw was scratched, and bleeding. It was sad.

Dale

It co-operated full-heartedly as I carried it home. Its face was always turned to the wind.

Megan

I think it's great – you know – what you did for it, and all.

Pause.

Megan

What's your favorite color?

Dale

Navy blue. What's the biggest mistake you've ever made in your life?

Megan

I don't know you well enough yet...to tell you that.

Dale

Okay, just ... tell me one old mistake then...doesn't have to be big.

Megan

When I was a little girl, I raised chickens with my family, and with the family of my friend Alicia. My favorite chicken was named Danae. I hypnotized her.

Dale

Hypnotized? By mistake? How do you hypnotize a chicken?

Megan

You can draw a line in the sand and, if you know the right way to look the chicken in the eyes, while rubbing her neck, she'll look at the line in the sand, for as long as you want her to look at it. I had her looking at it for four days, and then she died.

Dale

Of what?

Megan

A horrible heat ...stroke of bad luck.

Dale  
Heat-stroke?

Megan  
(laughing)  
Yeah.

Dale  
Why'd you laugh?

Megan  
Technically, she died of heat-stroke...or  
something like it. It was winter.

Dale  
Heat-stroke in winter?

Megan  
My boyfriend Tom set-up a portable  
heat-lamp – he set it up RIGHT beside  
Danae. Danae caught fire. Her fire spread to  
the barn.

FAST EDDIE wakes up, sits up, and screams...

FAST EDDIE  
I AM AN ALIEN, FROM THE PLANET  
JESUS!!!

FAST EDDIE falls asleep again, banging his head to the table.

Dale  
What's with that proprietor?

Megan  
Don't mind him. Focus on us! We're soul-mates!

Dale  
Are we really soul-mates?

Megan  
Yes.

Dale  
Are we complete, total, utter, everlasting, eternal, loving, coy, immaculate, wet, wild, and sexy, soul-mates?

Megan  
Yes, I said! Let me tell you a story about when I was a little girl.

Dale  
Okay.

An entire bedroom appears in THE MIDDLE OF THE COFFEE SHOP!!! In it, a LITTLE GIRL kneels against her bed, saying her prayers for the night.

LITTLE GIRL  
Dear God. Certain types of people really bother me, and annoy me – kill them.

Dale  
(to Megan)  
That girl is you, when you were a kid?

Megan  
(nods)  
I'm what she fears she might become.

LITTLE GIRL  
SHUT THE HELL UP!! I'M TRYING TO  
PRAY!!!

Dale  
Sorry.

LITTLE GIRL  
Leave my room, or I'll call the cops.

Megan  
I remember this night! This night changed my  
life!

LITTLE GIRL  
Leave my room!!!

LITTLE GIRL reveals a gun, from under her pillow, and points it  
at Dale and Megan.

Megan  
This is new. I didn't have a gun!

Dale  
You didn't have a gun?

LITTLE GIRL

Freeze, scum swabs!

Megan

But I didn't have a gun! Where did you get that gun?

LITTLE GIRL

That doesn't matter to scum-swabs who'll get shipped to hell, in cut- in-half body-bags!

Megan

This is where I slept when I was a kid.

LITTLE GIRL

(interrupting)

And if I get my way, this is where you'll rest in peace! NOW GO!!!

Dale and Megan exit, running.

TOM -- a gangster -- enters.

LITTLE GIRL

Hiya! I made you a flower.

TOM

Where is it?

LITTLE GIRL

In my heart.

TOM

How sweet!

LITTLE GIRL

Can I hug you?

TOM

Not yet.

LITTLE GIRL

Why not?

TOM

Because you haven't met me yet.

LITTLE GIRL and TOM disappear.

Dale and Megan enter.

Dale

Megan.

Megan

Yes, Dale?

Dale

Are we sharing another dream?

Megan

I guess we are, Dale. Promise you'll love me. Promise you'll find me. I'm out there somewhere, Dale. I'm your soul-mate.

Dale  
Is this true?

Megan  
Yes.

Pause.

Dale  
I usually dream about this place.

Megan  
And I usually dream about my childhood  
bedroom.

Dale  
Our dreams connected.

Megan  
Yeah. This is weird. Do you ever dream that  
you can fly?

Dale  
Often.

Megan  
This would be so cool if you were to start  
flying. So what are you waiting for: Be cool,  
cool man!

Dale levitates for a few seconds.

Megan



That's monumentally cool! Can you show me how to do that?

Dale  
You never fly in dreams?

Megan  
I'm what you'd call a "flight virgin."

Dale  
Okay, well it's simple. Simply will it to happen.

Megan  
In my life, I can't will things to happen as easily as you can.

Dale  
Oh, it's simple. Just focus all of your energy into flight! Flex those muscles which only exist in dreams.

Megan  
Where are these muscles?

Dale  
Maybe only men have them.

Megan  
(laughs)  
You're so funny!

Dale blushes.

Megan  
Oh no! I NEVER REMEMBER MY  
DREAMS!!!

Dale  
I always remember mine.

Megan  
What can you say to me, about meeting me in a  
dream, that won't sound completely crazy?  
Remembering dreams is a different type of  
remembering than remembering reality. I  
remember my dreams if, say, I'm in a dream.  
But I don't remember them when I'm awake.  
This half of my life is completely separated  
from the other half of my life.

Pause.

Megan  
I'm getting closer to the time I wake up.

Dale  
Quiet, I'm trying to sleep!

Megan  
I have a boyfriend named Tom. Are you  
jealous?

Dale  
I know about Tom.

Megan  
You do? So why don't you look jealous?

Dale  
Because I like a ...

Megan disappears.

Dale  
... girl named Stephanie.

END OF SCENE

ACT 1, SCENE 2

DALE'S BEDROOM

Dale – wearing only underwear, and leg-restraints -- looks out the window, while having middle- of-the-night, tired conversations with himself.

NARRATOR  
Three and a half months later...

Dale  
I used to see a lot of UFOs, when I looked out the bedroom window in the orphanage, when I was small. But now, nothing zips through the sky that fast. Small people can see the things that bigger kids can't. Now all I see out the window is a group of bigger kids talking about something, as they sit in the alley. It

looks like they're taking drugs. One of the girls out there is Megan. It's been three-and-a-half months since I've seen her in a dream. Now that she's in the alley, I'm restrained from going to her. It's just a dream...

Dale rips the bed-sheet off of his bed, wraps it around an arm, and smashes the window as hard as he can – the window shatters.

Megan arrives on the other side of the window.

Megan

Hiya! Long time no see! You didn't have to smash the window to get my attention. I was gonna go to you after I was done talking with them. Who are they anyway?

Dale

I thought you knew.

Megan

Everything about them is SOOOOoOOoOO fantastic!

Dale

It looks like they're gone.

Megan

You're cool. By the way, the northern lights are beautiful tonight.

Dale

Northern lights? What if there's too much  
cloud-cover when we wake up?

Megan

Interesting. I'm not really sure if Northern  
Lights are above, or below, the clouds.

Dale

Neither am I. I've seen Aurora Borealis low,  
but maybe that was a dream.

Megan

How low were they?

Dale

Right above my head. Yeah, I think it was a  
dream.

Megan

Memories of other dreams are clear in  
dreams. They're not when you're awake.

Dale

About wakefulness – how are you doing on  
that end?

Megan

My boyfriend isn't my type.

A big and black, curly-haired monster, appears between them, and  
yells...

MONSTER

BOO!!!

END OF SCENE

ACT 1, SCENE 3

COFFEE SHOP

Dale and Megan talk over coffee.

NARRATOR

Three and a half months later...

Megan

Now that we've dated – albeit in dreams – on and off, for a long time, are you going to finally come and find me?

Dale

I don't know. My soul has confirmed that you ARE my soul-mate; however, I must confess a "lie of omission."

Megan

What did you omit?

Dale

My heart longs for another.

Megan

I know. Her name is Stephanie, isn't it?

Dale

It is.

Megan

As your soul-mate, my likes and desires match yours. Don't waste what we have, by choosing Stephanie over me!

Dale

You don't remember your dreams anyway, which means that you can wait for me without suffering any withdrawal – I mean, you won't miss me during your "waking life," if I don't decide to be with you.

Megan

I know. But ... who's to say that this "dream life" isn't as vital?

Dale

I can't argue with your logic...so I'll change the topic. What's been happening in your life, since our last chat?

Megan

When in a dream-world, it's tough to remember the quote-un-quote "real-world." I'll try. OH MY GOD!!!  
(begins crying)  
I CAN'T BELIEVE I DIDN'T REMEMBER THIS!!! It turns out that my boyfriend Tom was thrown in jail for ... rape.  
(pause)

I have AIDS.

Dale hugs her.

Dale

I wish you could remember your dreams.

Megan

So do I...for many, many reasons.

ACT 1, SCENE 4

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Megan kneels before the crucifix.

NARRATOR

Two months later...

Megan

I pray always for someone to know and understand me from the get- go, because I don't want to explain my life story to anyone; that's because I don't want to remember my life-story; it's a depressing piece of s\*\*t tale about a screwed-up chick who's had lots of depressing things happen to her as she grew up. I want the man who spends his life to me to know my history without talking about it. I want peace until I'm ready to deal with certain things that happened to me, in my past.

Dale enters, dressed as a priest.



Dale

I know things about you.

Megan

Don't give me that crap. Who are you?

Dale

Just a man who lost faith in His miracles, but sermons for His message, because His message is the best miracle of all.

Megan

Just who the hell do you think you are?

Dale

Hear me out, please.

Megan

Huh?

Dale

I know that you grew up in a loft beside the bar where your dad worked; you'd often be his slave. You prepared drinks for your father, and his buddies, in a back-room. His buddies...

Megan

(interrupting, crying)

SHUT UP!!! JUST SHUT UP!!! SHUT UP!!!  
HOW CAN YOU KNOW THOSE THINGS  
ABOUT MY PAST!!!

Dale

I've journeyed to you, to remind you of a pure, non-physical love, that you can share with everyone, and everything. You forgot about this type of love when you met Tom. It's the love of a child towards the tree upon whose branches she is perched.

Megan

(cries onto Dale's chest)

Thank you. I don't know why, but you just said exactly what I needed to hear. This is affecting me more than words can convey. I don't know how you knew that stuff about me.

Dale

I know more. And it is our little secret – between yourself, myself, and God.

Megan

How did you know about me?

Dale

Because you are one of my many, many soul-mates.

ACT 1, SCENE 5

CHURCH

Megan

Before I died of AIDS, in Father Dale's arms – I learned that, even though some people forget

their night-time dreams, everyone remembers their daydreams. No matter what kind of dreams you've got, you should hold onto them with all you've got, because they ARE who you are. Without dreams, you no longer have yourself; I know, because I died directly after my dreams came true. Now I'm in Heaven.

THE END.

BANANA CHAN  
FutureBoy

By Alan Holman

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Alan Holman.

## **THE DAYDREAM**

Banana Chan is the most popular anim  of all time – even superior to NEON GENESIS EVANGELION. Yes, I know, the final two episodes of NGE were ultimate, but trust me: Banana Chan is even more ultimate-est.

Due to licensing rights, the English dub of Banana Chan is inferior in comparison to the pure Japanese version, because they eviscerated four thousand episodes down to thirty.

Banana Chan began in 1961, by all powerful anime producer Gad-sensei. Its portayol of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century was visionary, even down to the detail of Dance Dance Revolution.

In the early years, episodes were released weekly, but Studio Concern throttled production into hyperdrive soon after ratings for the first episode were measured.

From the moment it blasted its way onto the small screen, Banana Chan was an instant television phenomenon, Japan’s best kept secret ... until last year when, for the first time ever, a North American tourist actually mastered the intricacies of the Japanese language. That tourist was none other than world renown playwright Alan Holman.

Holman overheard information about a secret television channel that only Japanese people know how to access, and he accessed it by perfectly reciting a previously unintelligible (by Westerners) Japanese-language phrase, towards a Japanese television set.

Now, North Americans finally have access to the story of Banana Chan! In Japan, there are over 4000 unique, half-hour episodes, of Banana Chan! In Japan, the gargantuan back-catalogue of Banana Chan episodes, is programmed into microchips that are embedded in many products that only Japanese twelve year olds understand how to use.

Banana Chan has saturated the Japanese entertainment industry, and now it's your turn to be saturated!

As I said, this series was epic in Japan. They deleted practically all of Banana's klutziness. She was very klutzy; it was hilarious! But they had to cut that aspect of her personality, not because she swore up a storm after every klutzy mistake, and also not because of the enhanced sensitivities of a western audience – but that content was cut mainly because those scenes are impossible to translate.

Cut also were many references to underwear, and there were many sexual innuendos in a large percentage of Banana's lines of dialogue.

Something else that was completely omitted from the English version was Banana's habit of "thwacking" people randomly. "Thwacking" is a cute word for something that included a lot of blood, fire, and severed arms.

Many random people would get thwacked between plot-points, and never seen again.

Thwacking ties into the actual premise of the series, which was also deleted from the North American edit, because many translators died trying.

The premise was simply Banana's lifelong dream and goal of enslaving the people of the world to do her bidding, even though she hasn't yet determined her 'bidding'. (She'll figure it out later, she promises!)

The surname of the main characters is Chan because of a Chinese branch in their ancestry. This is of note because they live in Japan, where "chan" is an honorific.

Buster Chan, the seemingly innocent little boy you'll meet in the first episode, is actually a sleeper agent for Project MINION. Project MINION will be created by Banana Chan in the future.

Buster is only six in the first episode, but later he'll get ninja training, and he'll eventually become a charismatic, and heroic, know-it-all, who's good with girls, and he also has a heart of gold.



Mrs. Chan will eventually become an investigative reporter who takes down any organization that gets in Banana's way.





NAME: Ko

AGE: 38

Ko is a single mother who does the best she can for herself, her teenage daughter, and her koi fish.

She enjoys visual aesthetics, and jazz music.

She spends a lot of time on the internet ...

The robot cat is named 937; his job is to deprogram people from cults and any religious belief that might be an obstacle to Banana's plans.

But none of that stuff is important, because -- as I said -- the premise of the series has been removed from the English language edit. Also cut is the fact that Banana and Mrs. Chan are

EXTREMELY sexist against males. And I mean EXTREMELY sexist.

In episode three of this version, a flashback starts, to when Banana was eleven years old; however, in the original Japanese version of the anime, the series was almost completely chronological.

Boden is the person who was Banana's first real friend. The English studio who translated this decided to totally avoid the Boden story because they wanted to translate only an amount of film that could be edited into the length of 26 episodes, and they liked Ryone, so they mashed it up in a way where the primary focus of the series is Ryone's challenge of trying to win Banana's heart.

As for Boden, well Banana and Boden met when Boden was catching butterflies in a park, and he caught a butterfly that grants wishes, and he wished for Banana to love him.

And the start of episode four is basically a montage that skips a few entire seasons of the original Japanese version.

This book is a compilation of scripts from the English version; it is a companion guide for you to enjoy while you watch the English version of this unique animé.

This book also contains translated excerpts from the original manga. The stylistic differences between the manga excerpts reflect the evolution of the series in its four thousand episodes of glory.



### JACK ONO

Mr. Ono is a teacher at Rain High School.

He can be strict sometimes, but he cares deeply for his students.



Name: Banana

Age: 16

Banana often sleeps in school where she earns bad grades.

She reads as a leisure activity, and plays a lot of video games as a hobby.

She doesn't have many friends. She's emotionally distant with her single-mother. And she has a crush on a guy named James who works at a candy store.



## CHAPTER 1

*I remember my first dream. I was new to the world. I don't know if I'm supposed to remember this dream, but it's one of my clearest memories. Two angels that seemed parental, but weren't my parents, were leading me through a museum of people, paintings, books, actors, machines, symbols, and other specific elements they told me I must encounter throughout my life, to complete my life.*

*I strayed off to examine one particular object: a big and thin, golden music box; its entire exterior was etched with symbols, such as a dove -- oh, and the only part of the exterior of the box that wasn't gold was a pearl angel that was right beside the dove.*

*When I opened the box, and saw its thin, red-silk interior, invisible instruments -- or something inside the box, that I couldn't see -- began playing beautiful music, that was sad, rich of life, happy, and scary, all at the same time, yet the music was always -- in a strange way -- beautiful. One of the angels behind me said four words I'll never forget: "The music is you."*

*I also remember my first nightmare. I was only two years old, and my mom lead me through an endless hallway, toward a dragon-faced alien named Riton, who said he was a Professional Soul-Stealer; he lived in a scepter that looked like two golden snakes holding up a strange blue crystal. He called the crystal "The Larnoc." I remember the word Larnoc, because Riton said it so loud that I still shudder whenever I bring myself to think about it.*

*The nightmare ended when I was sucked into a cold, dead, colorless tunnel inside the Larnoc.*

*I remember waking up in a hurry, with a high fever that jump-started something in my brain. I was only two years old, yet my memories, of everything since that day, are crystal clear.*

*A few days later, my mom slipped on a banana peel, and fell out the window of our little house, which happened to be on the roof of an humongous skyscraper, because houses are on skyscrapers in the future. I'm from the future -- more than forty years from now.*

*My mom's death devastated me, until Doctor Toffee -- an evil pediatrician -- tricked me into swallowing anti-depressants.*

-----

*I spent my nights looking through the orphanage window, at the violet shooting stars of the pre-Armageddon sky, upon which I often wished to be part of a family, until I was three, and I met my half-uncle.*

*When I was a precious three year old orphan, an ash-haired, red-eyed, demon head appeared above my bed. I was scared until he identified himself as my half-uncle Baka; still, I screamed like a baby, until he said, "I mean you no harm." I recognized his voice. I spoke to him on the phone at Christmas. He had the same first name as my Godfather. Baka WAS my Godfather Baka!*

*I asked him, "How'd you become a demon?"*

*"I've always been a demon."*

*"Is that why I only talk to you on the phone?"*

*"Your mother thought I, her demon half-brother, would upset you, so you weren't going to meet me until your fourteenth birthday."*

*"I'm glad to finally meet the man who sends me a toy every week!"*

*"So you don't mind that I'm a demon?"*

*"Hell no. So why did you pick now to reveal yourself to me?"*

*"Disgruntled caregivers will destroy this orphanage tomorrow, at one in the afternoon."*

*"I must save everyone!"*

*"There's no point. The apocalypse is scheduled for an hour later."*

*"But I don't want to die!"*

*"I don't want you to die either, nephew, so that's why I've asked NINjAs, in the not-too-distant past, to look after you."*

*"The past?"*

*"Before that, though, you will be granted the ability to time-travel, but it will come with a price. I'll explain later, but what you should know now is this: I haven't had much chance to look over the pamphlet which the NINjAs provided about how they'd care for you, but I think you'll be in good hands."*

*"But I want to be with you, Uncle Baka!"*

*"I can't take you with me, to my home in hell, but what I can do is -- well, I can put off sending you to the NINjAs for a few years. You can have all sorts of fun time-traveling until then."*

*"Explain! Until when!?"*

*"All will be revealed in due time..."*

*"But I wanna save the orphanage!"*

*"I told you already: it's no use since the Armageddon will happen one hour after the orphanage is set to explode."*

*"That's one more hour in which the kids can be alive, so tell me where the bomb is!"*

*"It's under the sink in the kitchen, but what are you going to do with this information?"*

*"You said you'd give me the ability to time travel, so I'll take the bomb to a place and time where it won't hurt anybody!"*

*"Good idea. And by the way, Buster, you're a verbose three year old."*

*"That's because I'm smart!"*

*So I found the time-bomb, and time-travelled backwards with it, until there was nothing around me, and I let go of it, and came back to the future, where Baka congratulated me for saving the orphanage, and he asked me, "So what'll it be: a few years of NINJA training, or a few years of time-traveling?"*

*After three years of whimsical time-travelling, I was six years old, and I found myself in a mall, in the early part of the century, when Rain was still a town; that's when I met the sixteen year old version of Banana Chan -- she's my grandmother.*

-----

Most nights, she'd sit beside a pond, at the edge of a town-side forest, where she'd meditate on uncertain security-blankets, such as family, friends, and a home where the flawed morality of her mother's incomplete character was the most important "house rule."

She'd sit on the edge of a rock, wearing random costumes that she'd get from ... I'm not sure where she got all her costumes. My guess is that she knows someone who works at a costume store.



Tonight, under the full moon, she was dressed as a horse -- a horse whose name wasn't Banana-chan Lacy Chan.

No one made a big deal about her name being the name of a fruit, so she allowed people to call her Banana, although she preferred her middle name: Lacy. However, sometimes she considered changing her name to either Coral, Esuna, or Fiona.

Most nights, Banana would look at the moon, and say "Hey daddy!" because her mother always told her that the moon was her father; it must have been a metaphor, because the moon never said anything fatherly back to her.

She'd look up at the moon, and she'd daydream about conversations with her father, whom she has no memories of ... well, very few pleasant memories anyway. Her mother always told her that her father Reginald Chan died when Banana was a toddler.

She'd gaze at Rain, Japan -- her square-shaped home-town that is surrounded by an east-side seaport, and three sides of lush, green forest.

She'd sigh.

She'd skip home.

-----

Rainbow Foods is the small shop which fulfills the grocery needs of the small port-town of Rain, Japan. All other shopping needs, such as fast-food, clothing, music, movies, and candy, et cetera, are met by the small commercial district which lines the harbor.

Despite the town's diminutive size, Rain has large residential areas, because most of its citizens are rich commuters who work in nearby towns, and big cities, such as Tokyo.

Mrs. Chan – a tall and confident woman -- isn't one of those commuters. The primary source of her finances comes from lottery winnings. Every couple of weeks, she picks three out of six winning lotto numbers; it's well short of the grand prize, but the anomalous occurrence of Mrs. Chan's bi-weekly winnings makes her a hero in local folklore, and it's great publicity for Rainbow Foods, which is where she buys her bi-weekly ticket from. The lottery company doesn't mind her luck, because Mrs. Chan single-handedly keeps their town's little local lottery very popular!

Mrs. Chan never lets people see what numbers she picks on her ticket. Rainbow Foods' store clerk, however, always supplements his income by picking Mrs. Chan's numbers as well! He has this arrangement where he opens the store early, specifically for Mrs. Chan to buy her ticket, and for him to pick identical numbers on his ticket; he's glad to be involved!

If Mrs. Chan's luck comes from karma (which it doesn't, but follow me on this...), her karma comes from her generosity, especially toward the poor.

After one of her bi-weekly trips to Rainbow Foods, Mrs. Chan saw a vagrant sprawled against a corner of the store. His long trench coat smelled of the crazy stains which spotted it entirely, and as he looked at her, Mrs. Chan could feel the stench, and she almost gagged towards the putrid crusty gunk around his eyes, as the vagrant's tar-stained fingertips reached for pity, and he asked, "Can you spare some change?"

"I'm not about to give free money to someone I don't even know," snapped Mrs. Chan, to the bum who was not surprised -- he was used to such reactions. But then Mrs. Chan saw something unexpected, and intriguing, in the middle-aged man's tear-stained eyes, and she remembered the 'cover story' about karma -- the impossible example she was trying to set for her community -- so she tagged the following request onto her statement: "So come with me, tell me about yourself!"

*Is she being sarcastic?* His eyes shifted with uncertainty, as he asked: "You won't...call the cops?"

"No," she smiled enigmatically, "Walk with me. Tell me about yourself."

The vagrant said with a sudden, wide-eyed expression of terror, and the question: "What can I tell you?"

"Anything!"

"Why?"

"Because I'm your friend."

"Bless you, but the last person who pretended to be my friend almost killed me, so I don't know how far I can trust you."

"Oh my God, that's horrible!"

"Where are we going?"

"To my home."

*MAISON CHAN! DOES SHE KNOW???* "Why?"

"You'll eat, you'll bathe, and I'll give you clothes!"

"I can't accept that type of charity for free."

"I know."

"You do?"

"Yes, that's why I'll pay you to vacuum my floors, do my dishes, and my laundry, and to take out the garbage."

"Thank you!" He laughed nervously. *She doesn't know.*  
"But why are you doing this for me?"

"Because if you do my chores, I can catch up on my soaps."

"How petty."

-----

Sixteen year old Banana-chan Chan is the oldest female student of Rain Middle School. Maybe it's because she rarely goes to school or does her homework. And when she does go to school, if she isn't sleeping in class, she's daydreaming about a boy named Boden.

When Banana got home late that afternoon, she found Mrs. Chan eating a peach at the kitchen table. She shot a stern look at Mrs. Chan, and asked, "Why does this room smell of piddle?"

Mrs. Chan's famous composure broke. Banana could see that her mom was preparing to apologize for something, but what?

Banana raised her best "the truth will set you free" eyebrow.

Mrs. Chan cracked under the pressure, and said, in her best 'I hope you don't mind' face: "I deferred your allowance to a vagrant again."

Banana was used to not getting her money from Mrs. Chan; that's why Banana occasionally ran an after-school lemonade business from a permanent stand which she'd built, a few summers

ago, in front of the house. So instead of going on a screaming rampage, Banana simply shrieked “again?” and slammed her backpack against the wall, then muttered under her breath: "What a kick in the head. I wish there were no more poor people. Why can't they just get a job?"

"I could ask you the same question, Banana. Why don't you get a job?"

Banana laughed, "I don't want one."

"Get a job," Mrs. Chan demanded.

"What?"

"I want you to get a job, so I'm telling you: Get a job."

Banana wasn't used to this level of bluntness from her mother, so she asked, "Seriously?"

"Yes, Banana. Go out, and get a job!"

"But I've never had a job before, and besides: I don't even want a job. Why do you want me to get a job?"

"Because I've cut you too much slack so far in your life. You need to learn about being a responsible person."

"But I like being irresponsible."

"And I like living vicariously through your irresponsibility, but you know what: it's time for a change."

"But if I'm so irresponsible, why would anyone hire me?"

"Because you're pretty!"

"That's not a good reason."

"I know, but it's true. It's true that men are more likely to hire pretty girls than anyone else."

"That's sexist. And men aren't the only people who hire!"

"I know. But that's how the world works, dear. So go to the mall, and find a shop-keeper who happens to be a lecherous man, and apply for a job. I bet he'll hire you on the spot."

"Why does it have to be a 'lecherous' man?"

---

Banana found part-time work at a small harbor-side convenience store. The manager liked pretty girls, and Banana was the prettiest girl he'd ever seen, thus she was PERFECT for the job! -- or so you'd think...

On her first day of tending to boring customers, mopping a boring floor, stocking boring shelves, et cetera, Banana sighed the word "boringness", and came to the startling revelation that, "Work is boring snoring!"

Thinking it would make the day go faster, Banana turned on a radio; it worked, because the next customer who entered was moving quickly, with urgency.

With fake enthusiasm, Banana asked that customer: "sup?"

"I need to use the washroom."

Right before the key would have left Banana's hands, for the customer's hands, she noticed a sticker which indicated that the washroom was for staff only, so Banana nervously pulled the key back, and snapped: "NO WASHROOM!"

"Then what do YOU use?"

"NO WASHROOM FOR YOU!"

"Where the heck will I go to the washroom!?!"

"Dunno, not my problem."

"I can make it your problem."

Banana considered the mop, and shrugged, "meh."

----

Banana did what any self-respecting sixteen year old girl would do when someone tugs her skirt: she threw him against the wall. Then she realized her mistake, and ran to the aid of the bleeding six year old boy. "Sorry! Oh sorry, sorry, sorry, little boy! Are you alright!?!"

*That's how Banana Chan caused my irrational fear of time-travel. My fear of time-travelling caused my half-uncle Baka to send me to the NINJA boarding school when I was six years old.*

## CHAPTER 2

If I believed in destiny, I wouldn't have tried so damn hard.

After months of not seeing her at all anywhere, I had finally worked up the courage to call her on the telephone. And when I called, my hands shook more than my voice did. So many pent-up emotions spilled out in an awkward monologue.

“I still love you since the first time I saw you, years ago!” I confessed. It felt good, because telling the truth always feels good. And the fact that I love Banana Chan is the most important truth in the universe. “I love you, so it’s dishonorable for me to pursue other girls until those feelings get resolved by dating or at least spending ANY time together, or something!” I regretted the phrase ‘until those feelings get resolved’, because it sounded kinda creepy, but I had already said it, so I continued, “So – it’s unfair, damn it! – that you get to – as you said – ‘enjoy the freedom of being single’ – while I have to rot in the prison of being single!” Oh God, I sounded too pushy! I tried to lighten the tone of my voice. “What you’ve called my obsession, I know as my devotion, my moral conviction, my honor!” Truth is: I am obsessed with her, but I’m also obsessed with breathing – I need both to live! “I’d give anything to do anything with you! – watch clouds, hang out at the arcade! It’s no obstacle to your freedom to be with me! I idolize you! I want to enable your whims! For as long as we’ve been apart, I’ve been falling apart, and ...”

That’s when the part of my brain that replays stuff I heard just a few seconds ago made me realize ...

“... you’re Banana’s mom, aren’t you?”

“Yes,” said Banana’s mom, with an amused tone in her voice.

“Oops. Sorry. Uhh ...”



I never told anyone the epic saga of how I met Banana Chan, and how I fell in love with her, and how she didn't return those feelings, and how I had a date with her, but it ended tragically.

One day, I was performing a self-written play for terminally ill kids at the hospital.

The show went well.

After the show, I wandered the halls of the hospital, and I saw Banana. But this wasn't the chance encounter I'd been hoping for. She was unconscious on the floor in the corner of a room. There was an extremely injured unconscious little boy on the other side of the room. Lots of blood under the boy; he was losing blood fast.

It looked as if Banana had attempted to murder this little boy with a heavy tire from a car. I couldn't tell you what kind of car, because I'm no expert when it comes to cars. But I had to do something fast or else Banana would get put away for attempting to murder this child! I couldn't live if my dream girl were put behind bars!

I pieced together the story in my head thusly: Banana threw the tire at the boy for some reason, and then she herself slipped and fell on something. Or she fainted. I don't know. What was perfectly clear upon investigation of the scene was that Banana threw the tire at the kid. That fact was undeniable. And it was also undeniable that I had to get Banana away from this!

Yeah, my conscience was pleading for me to yell for a doctor to help the kid, but a doctor would have also pieced together that Banana threw the tire at the kid.

To hell with the kid. If he agitated the girl of my dreams so much that she was mad enough at him to throw a heavy tire at him, then he was obviously a bad kid. An enemy of Banana is an enemy of me.

I picked up the unconscious beauty in what I had been told is called the “fireman’s hold”, and I carried her towards the nearest staircase. There was an exit at the bottom, and no one saw me escape with the unconscious girl.

Her home wasn’t too far a distance to carry her.

And people generally mind their own business.

When I knocked and her mom answered the door, I explained everything, and I insisted truthfully that I didn’t do anything to her – and I wouldn’t, because I love her too much to dishonor her, and I especially wouldn’t dishonor her while she’s sleeping. And her mom believed me ... thank God ... and she insisted on paying me, but I declined. I told her that a greater honor than being paid would be to know that she will give that money to Banana as a bonus atop her regular allowance.

Mrs. Chan turned her head away from me, and raised her eyes to look at something in the corner, while she agreed.

A week later, the new Miyazaki movie was released theatrically. Ever since I’d seen the first trailer months previous, I had been anticipating asking Banana to see that movie with me!

“Hello?”

“Wanna do something spontaneous?”

Mrs. Chan laughed and asked, “Like what?”

“Wait a sec. You’re not Banana. Oops. Sorry.”

“Banana. It’s the phone. Ryone wants to do something ‘spontaneous’!”

How embarrassing – for me and Banana!

“Hello?” I heard contempt in her voice.

“I accidentally said a line, that was meant for you, to your mother. I’m so sorry.”

“What do you want?”

“Your company for the afternoon. Have you seen the new Miyazaki movie?”

“Yes. Besides, I’m too busy this afternoon, to see a movie today.”

A few minutes after I got home, the old man who ran the theater troupe asked me to go door-to-door selling a coupon book. At first I felt great when I looked on my map and learned that Banana’s house was on my route. But when she opened the door, called me an “insufferable jackass”, and slammed the door on my face, that’s when I didn’t feel so good anymore.

I love her.

When I saw Banana Chan for the very first time, she was immediately the person I’d waited all my life to see, and I didn’t even know I’d been waiting! But suddenly, in my heart, she became someone I’d risk my life to protect! She became family! It was overwhelming! Nothing in school, and none of the things my parents taught me, taught me how to keep cool around the girl who means everything to me. Banana’s not the type of girl I’d

have looked for, but everything I am and ever was KNOWS that she's the person I must protect, and care for and comfort, and make laugh and stuff, for all eternity! In other words, I love Banana, and I can't give up until she's mine!

---

Banana was in the mall and a small boy tugged her on the back of her dress and called her "grannie." Of course, she misinterpreted the touch on her lower backside, and she swung her arm and accidentally slammed a tiny kid into the wall. Then she ran the boy to the local hospital and the admitting nurse mistook her for the kid's mother. This angered her because she was only sixteen. But she's a nice girl, so she brought him a present while he was recovering in the hospital. She knew nothing about the kid, except for the fact that he wore a t-shirt with a picture of a car tire on it. So she figured he must be a fan of tires, for some odd reason, so she snatched a tire from the car of someone she despises, and she brought it to him as a "get well" gift. Stealing the tire was a crime, but she felt it was justified because the person she stole the tire from annoyed her. The act of actually stealing the tire got her blood rushing, and she brought the tire to the boy's hospital room while her blood was still rushing from the crime. So the combination of that and the boy calling her a "grandma" caused her to accidentally throw the tire at the already injured boy. Now this kid was already injured, and the tire was heavy. Accidentally throwing the heavy tire at the already injured kid caused him to have to wear a full-body cast, a body-cast. But also, directly after

throwing the tire at the boy accidentally, and seeing for herself how her own actions injured another human being, it sent her into a panic attack, and she fainted – fell asleep, and had a dream. In her dream, a dragon thanked her for saving the universe. And as her reward for saving the universe, the dragon decided to grant her three wishes. She believed it was only a dream, so she didn't take it seriously, but she did manage to wish for James to love her. James was a boy who she liked. The dragon granted the wish, and she woke up. She gave the dream no further thought or credibility, because she figured it was only a dream. James was a boy who worked at a candy store that she used to like going to before he started working there recently. Well, she'd still like shopping at that candy store if it weren't for the fact that their new employee James makes her weak in the knees, shy, and bashful, because she's got a HUGE crush on him. But she's not the only one who has a huge crush on James – all the girls in her school are magnetically attracted to his confident and funny personality. But Banana – the first name of the girl I've been talking about – hasn't actually seen James' alleged confident and funny personality for herself because his perfect looks caused her to faint the first two times she saw James in-person. On her third visit to the candy store where James works, Banana had a tiny conversation with him.

“That horrible gash <referring to a convincing tattoo of a scar across James' bare chest – yup, he works at a candy store bare-chested> reminds me of red Christmas lights,” she said dorkily, followed by an equally dorky, “I like red Christmas lights.”

James replied in his youthful, yet deep and commanding voice, “It’s a scar, actually.”

“How’d you get that horrible scar?”

“It’s a tattoo, actually.”

“Yeah, I thought so.” She so did not. She was totally fooled by it!

A bit embarrassed about being fooled by the tattoo, she quickly handed the flowers she’d brought for James, over to James.

James wasn’t fooled by the fake flowers though. But he was a bit intrigued, not only by the fact that she’s the only girl who got him fake flowers, out of all the other girls who liked him, who had gotten him real flowers, but also because he had a legitimate feeling of love when he looked into her eyes that time; it was a sensation he’d never felt before, but he kept his cool.

“Thank you, sweetie,” he said, while putting the fake flowers she’d gotten for him on top of a pile of real flowers that other girls had gotten for him.

He kissed her cheek, and then she fell onto a huge pile of said ‘other girls.’

She wanted to do something that all the other girls couldn’t do. All the other girls were maintaining good marks at school, but Banana was failing. Banana wasn’t the type to let anything bother her, so therefore the fact that she was failing motivated her; it motivated her to not really care too much about school anymore. So therefore the thing that all the other girls couldn’t do, which she could do, was apply to work at the candy store alongside James.

But when she was on her way to the candy store, she got another bouquet of fake flowers because they seemed to work the

first time, and when she got to the candy store, she gave him those fake flowers, and had a short conversation with James, and she totally forgot about giving her resume to him.

But during the conversation, she learned two important facts about him: 1) His full name is James T. Kearn-Wilson. 2) He has a favorite variety of flower, and it's called Morning Glories. She didn't think too much about how unmanly it is to actually have a favorite kind of flower, nor did she ask any probing questions during that conversation, such as to learn why that's his favorite flower, even though he did hint at the fact that there is an interesting story behind why Morning Glories are his favorite flower. But she did make a decision. She decided that she's going to get for him the flower called Morning Glories.

That night, she ignored a weird dream in which the moon told her that Sweatpants isn't her destiny. Sweatpants Bandanna was a pet-name she'd given to James because sweatpants and a bandanna are practically the only clothes he wears.

That morning, she found a cat on her way to school. She didn't go to school; instead, she played with the cat, and brought the cat home, and asked her mom if she can keep the cat. And instead of asking why she wasn't at school, her mom said she can keep the cat.

The cat was her first pet since two years previous when her dog Doggie fell from a Ferris Wheel in Tokyo. By the way, the people in this story are Japanese, and they live in a small town called Rain which is let's say north of Tokyo.

She decided to call the cat Catty.

That afternoon, Banana and her mom drove to the mall.

During the drive, Banana's mom told Banana that Ryone had called. Ryone was the boy who accidentally let Banana's dog Doggie die that fateful day two years ago, so Banana was glad that she missed the call. Also, Ryone loves Banana, and Banana was in the habit of claiming that she didn't reciprocate those feelings, so that's another reason why Banana was glad that she missed the call.

Besides, Banana had a huge crush on James, so she didn't want to even think about the fact that Ryone loved her. Plus, there was a boy in Tokyo named Boden who still owned a large portion of her heart.

### **CHAPTER 3**



Orphaned lightning decorated the cloudless night sky whose full moon's beams ceased above the monolithic cathedral on that broken road.

Six year old Buster Chan stood small against the massive, panoramic horizon. With a crumbled envelope in his hand, and his gaze set on the cathedral, he struggled toward his destination, until he fell, unconscious from thirst and exhaustion.

Within moments, NINjAs flocked around him.

A single NINjA removed the envelope from Buster's cold, dry fingers, opened it, and found a note, on plain paper, which read: "Dear NINjAs. I'm Buster Chan. My half-uncle paid for my tuition."

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Three years later, nine year old Buster's orange-haired pony tail, and metal body armor, matched the garb of one thousand identical singers in a NINjA choir, who sang, majestically: "It's useless to fight NINjA glory/ So loud and proud we sing our story/ of knives, swords, breaking boards/ nunchucks, staffs, chops, blocks/ swinging swords, swift kicks/ punches, et cetera."

-----

Looking through thick smog, New Rain City was a complicated system of roads, sky-walks, over-passes, bridges, buildings, and artificial rivers; below all that, nine year old Buster scouted an

alley under the watchful eye of an older NINjA trainer who directed the innocent boy to kill a sleeping homeless man who cried in his sleep, because, as the trainer said, "Their indecision is our prosperity."

"What does that mean?" Buster asked.

"FiNiSH HiM!" said the trainer.

"Like this?" Buster asked, as his fierce, clapping hands, popped the homeless man's head.

The trainer nodded, and said, "Exactly like that! Good Job!"

"Thanks!" Buster said with a blush. "What now?"

"We take their lives away, and drink their guilty blood."

"Why?"

"Because we must not think for ourselves."

"Why not?"

"Because we don't ask questions."

"Oh."

The trainer pointed at a frightened little girl who cowered against a cold, brick wall. "KiLL HeR!" he ordered.

"But she's young!"

"Life doesn't have to seem long."

"Oh."

Buster kicked the crying girl's neck so hard that her head flew off, then Buster's trainer spit into the dead girl's throat, and announced: "She sacrificed herself."

*That part of my life was no laughing matter; that future -- with all its stupid, far-fetched situations -- was no place for a naive kid like myself. I tell you the story -- what I can remember of it,*

*anyway -- because many problems remain with me, from that part of my life, and most importantly: telling you about that future, might prevent it.*

## **CHAPTER 4**

Banana Chan was a naturally cute sixteen year old girl who never wore make-up over those few tiny freckles on the brightly colored skin of her face. If you were close enough to see the roots of that blonde hair which flowed down to her shoulders, you'd know that her natural hair-color was orange; her orange eye-brows were another dead giveaway.

As Banana entered the kitchen that morning, her mother -- who also had orange eyebrows -- was in mid-conversation with a strangely familiar twelve year old boy.

The boy had orange eyebrows, and purple streaks in his parted, brown hair. When he stood up to greet Banana, he was one head shorter than her. "Hiya," he said.

Instead of returning the greeting, Banana turned to her mother, and asked, "Hey! Who's the kid?"

"He's my twelve-year-old, great grandson from the future. His name is Buster Chan!"

"Chan?" Banana asked. "You mean like our last name?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Chan. "That's because -- as I said -- he's your grandson from the future!"

Skeptically, Banana turned to Buster, and asked, "Is it true you're my grandson?"

"Yup!"

"And you're SERIOUSLY from the future?"

"Uh-huh!"

*After taking into consideration that weird things happen to me all the time, it sorta made sense that my grandson Buster, had actually come, from the future, to live with me and mom, in Maison Chan. But one question kept begging to be asked: "Who's your grandfather!?"*

"Rob Nesia."

"Who?"

Buster said, "You'll meet a guy named Rob, then after a long, drawn-out, gradually-progressing relationship with him, you'll eventually, after several years of dating Rob, you'll get married to him, and you two will conceive a daughter named Roko."

"Roko? That's an awesome name!"

"Weird. I think I just named my own mother!"

They laughed.

"Am I rich in the future?" Banana asked.

Buster said, "Yes, actually.

"Amazing!" Banana exclaimed. "How will I get rich?"

"I don't know," said Buster. "It's some sort of a family secret."

"What do you mean?"

"You'll find a lot of diamonds, but you'll never tell anyone where you found them."

"Oh," said Banana. "That's both weird and awesome and suspicious at the same time."

"Yeah. And I guess it's also part of the reason why I'm here."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, If you don't mind, I'd like to learn your secret. I want to figure out a lot of things about my family. You see, I never knew my mother, and I want to know all about her. Since you're my grandma, If I stay here, I'll eventually meet my mother, and I'll be able to get to know her, because I was two years old the last time I saw her."

"Wow," Banana said with a twisted look on her face, "That's really, really weird. It's both cool, and bonkers at the same time. But my mom believes you, and that's cool, but I'm still having problems with believing you. So just tell me whatever you told my mom."

"Okay," Buster said. "Just a sec." After some thought, Buster took a deep breath, and said, "More than forty years in the

future, I was only two years old when my mom fell to her death, from the top of a large building."

"I'm sorry to hear that," said Banana.

"Then I spent a year in an orphanage until my half-uncle gave me the ability to time-travel. I time-traveled whimsically until I was six."

Banana asked, "Why'd you stop?"

Buster looked her straight in the eyes, and said, "Because you threw me against a wall."

"WHAT!?!"

"It's true. I was the little six-year-old boy whom you accidentally threw against a wall last week."

"Now that you mention it, you do sorta' look like him."

"That's because I AM HIM!"

"If you're him," Banana asked, "how did you get six years older in one week?"

"You scared me into the clutches of an evil NINjA cult in the future," Buster said. "I spent nearly six years with them."

"Bummer."

"Yes," said Buster. "Well... I've told you what I can tell you. So Banana, can you please tell me a bit of things about yourself?"

"Sure!" she said, smiling. "Nice to meetcha! I'm Banana-chan Lacy Chan, but my best-est girlfriends call me Banana."

"Can I call you Granny-Banana?"

"No," she snapped. "You may call me Banner-Nanners, Nanna-Hanna-Channa, or Banana-Rama!"

"I'll call you Banana."

"Okie dokie," she said, pleased with the compromise.  
"Born to Ko and Reg, my birthday's June 3rd. I'm left-handed, five foot six, and my blood type's A!"

"What's your shoe size?" Buster asked, sarcastically.

"Nine," was her self-involved reply. "Anyway, I enjoy baseball, lemonade, and crisp November mornings."

Then Mrs. Chan suggested: "Hey Banana, why don't you show Buster around town?"

"Sure!"

"That's not necessary," Buster said. "I don't want to be a burden."

"No," Banana assured him, giving him a head-lock and a noogie, "You won't be a burden."

"Really?" asked Buster, rubbing his head.

"Sure," said Banana. "There's nothing better to do."

-----

Fallen leaves crumbled beneath Banana and Buster's feet as Banana guided Buster on a late-afternoon walking-tour of Rain, Japan. Buster shed tears as he noticed kids pushing, pulling, and throwing, all sorts of toys, in every corner of town.

"Why are you crying?" Banana asked.

"I haven't played outside with other kids in a long, long time," said Buster.

"That's sad," said Banana. "You know what else is sad?"

"No," Buster said. "What?"

"Neither have I."

"Why not?"

"I'll explain later."

And then a small boy fell off his skateboard, and screamed, "I GIVE UP! WHO WANTS MY STUPID SKATEBOARD!?!"

Buster ran to the boy, and said, "Wow, I do!"

The boy shot a confused look at Buster, then he gave the board to Buster, and said, "TAKE IT! IT'S STUPID!"

Banana laughed.

During the rest of the tour, Banana walked as Buster learned to ride his new skateboard.

Buster pointed at some girls who were roller-blading.

"Do you like them?" asked Banana.

"Yes."

"Do you want me to introduce you to them?"

"Sure!"

"Well," said Banana, "I don't know them."

"Why not?" asked Buster. "You live in the same town."

"I'll explain later," said Banana.

"What are they riding?" asked Buster.

"Roller-blades."

"Wow," exclaimed Buster. "By age six, I'd already toured thousands of years of local history, but I've never stopped to notice roller-blades."

"That was six years ago," said Banana. "You're twelve now."

"It doesn't seem that long ago," said Buster, "because I try to forget about the six years I spent with the NINjAs."

"When did you leave the NINjAs?" asked Banana.



"That depends," said Buster. "What time is it?"

"Five thirty."

"In that case," said Buster. "It's been twelve hours since I escaped the NINjAs, and I'm getting tired, so thanks for the tour, but I'd better get back to the house, for some sleep."

"You go to sleep at five o'clock?"

"No," said Buster. "Six."

"Wow," said Banana, "wow."

-----

It was Buster's first morning waking up as a resident of Maison Chan. His eyes jolted open with an urgent need to get his mind off of his horrible night-terrors, and then, when he clapped-on the light and noticed a new layer of sound-proofing on the doorway, he let out a bit of a laugh. Then he sat-up, stood up, and walked past his padlocked closet, and got a poetry book from his desk. He brought the book to his bed, and read a poem.

*They say I always get my way  
If in my next life, wishes still come true, as they always do  
Call me a crime against nature  
It's worse than you think, to vacation in dreams  
It's not funny to have a secret  
I'm none of your business when you knock on my door  
but I'll let you in  
And if you want more, I'll tell you my secrets, because no one likes  
closed doors.  
--Anonymous*

Mrs. Chan entered unannounced and said, "I'm here to wake you up for breakfast, but I see you're already awake. What are you reading?"

Buster said nostalgically, "When I was little, the people who ran the orphanage made us memorize these poems."

"So the poems in that book -- they're from the future?"

"Yup."

Mrs. Chan leapt several times, screaming, "YOU'VE STRUCK GOLD!"

"I know -- I've considered writing these famous poems before their times, especially the literary prize winning poems, but I now think it'd be too selfish."

"How so?"

"They're not my words," Buster said. "Using them would be rude."

"It's never rude to be true to your feelings."

"Interesting thought."

"Yeah," she agreed. "Anyway, do you have any more cool items from the future?"

Buster pointed at his padlocked closet, and said, "It's all in there."

"May I take a look?" Mrs. Chan asked eagerly.

Buster shook his head, and said, "Not now."

"I understand."

"You can't possibly understand."

"On the contrary," she said. "There's a lot about me you don't know."

"I know that you're my great-aunt, Banana's long-lost sister -- her real mother died in a car accident, and you came from the future to impersonate Banana's mother."

After a short, uncomfortable pause, Mrs. Chan said, "Yeah, you got me pegged."

Then a small, blue cat entered, and rubbed his furry back against Mrs. Chan's leg, as Buster said, "I hope you don't mind: I have a pet."

"Not at all!" Mrs. Chan said with a smile. "I love cats! What's his name?"

"Nine-Thirty-Seven!" Buster said, "But he prefers it when you call him 937."

"Cool! I love him!" said Mrs. Chan, as she pet 937 affectionately.

-----

The next morning, Mrs. Chan knocked on Buster's door at six o'clock. Buster answered immediately.

To Mrs. Chan's surprise, Buster was fully dressed, washed, and ready for the day. "I didn't think anyone else was awake," said Buster.

"Well," said Mrs. Chan. "Myself and Banana decided to try waking up early."

"Really?" asked Buster.

"Yes," said Mrs. Chan with a smile. "We prepared a special breakfast in honor of you, the newest member of the household!"

"Wow, thanks!" said Buster, as a tear rolled down his face. "No one's ever gone through that much trouble for me."

-----

After breakfast, Mrs. Chan asked Buster what he wanted to do with his day. He said, "I want to lay on the rooftop, to watch the colors of the sky."

"That's an AWESOME idea!" Banana shrieked.

"Really?"

"Yes," said Banana. "Welcome to the family, Buster!"

-----

Banana and Buster wore sweaters that morning as they laid on the rooftop, under the bright blue sky.

"Banana?"

"What?"

"I'd like to meet your friends."

"Family are friends."

"I mean..."

"I know what you mean," interrupted Banana.

"Well..."

"Well what?"

"Do you have any friends?"

"None worth talking about."

"Really?"

"Yeah."

"That's odd."

"I'm odd," she laughs.

"Why don't you have any friends?"

"The town's small."

"But," said Buster. "The high-school and the middle-school are full of students from surrounding areas."

"They're jerks."

"Really?"

"Yes."

"Okay."

-----

"Why doesn't Banana have any friends?" asked Buster.

Mrs. Chan dropped the apple she was eating, then sat down with Buster, and said, "She's got a friend named Alicia."

"Why didn't Banana tell me about Alicia when I asked her if she has any friends?"

"She's also got a friend named Vikki," said Mrs. Chan.

"Banana's got many friends. At least twenty. I don't know every name."

"She told me that she doesn't have any friends."

Mrs. Chan laughed, then said, "Banana dis-owns friends during big arguments."

"Banana argues with her friends?" asked Buster, clearly puzzled. "Why would anyone argue with a friend?"

"Well," said Mrs. Chan. "I don't know. These things blow over quickly, so just stay out of it, okay?"

"Okay."

---

Despite the new curfew that more-than-annoyed almost every underage citizen of Rain, Japan, Banana still went to the pond every night to think, especially because she didn't know about the curfew, until that night when -- dressed in a sexy bunny costume -- she dipped her toes softly into the pond, and pointed her nose at the stars; that's when a police officer tapped her shoulder, and asked for her photo identification. Banana shook her head, and said it was at home. The officer asked her how old she was, and she said "sixteen." Then the officer told her to leave, and she asked, "what?"

The officer said, "You've gotta leave."

Then Banana asked, "Why?"

The officer said that a new curfew is in effect, beginning tonight.

She asked, "curfew -- what's that?"

He said, "It means that it's illegal for people under age eighteen to be out about town past 11pm. Especially teenaged girls in tight, skimpy bunny outfits."

Banana looked at him, and asked, "Seriously?"

He said, "Yes. Seriously. That puffy tail is not only a danger to common decency, but you may be too young to realize it, but it's also a threat to your own safety."

Banana said, "You're lying."

"Cops don't lie," said the cop.

"You're lying about the curfew," Banana accused. "A curfew would be stupid."

"I'm not lying," said the cop. "The curfew is a law, and you -- a sixteen year old girl dressed like a Playboy bunny -- are more than violating that law. Why are you wearing the costume?"

"Because I wear costumes when I come out here."

"For what purpose?"

"I have no reason not to."

"Actually," the officer said, "You do have a reason not to, and that reason is the law."

"There's no law against wearing costumes," Banana retorted.

"Not specifically, no there isn't," the officer said.

"However, someone could see you wearing the costume, and you could get raped."

"It's never happened before," Banana said, "And it will never happen. Not to me."

"People think things like that," said the officer. "They think it'll never happen to them, and then it does happen to them. The curfew aims to curb the problem by nipping it in the bud."

"Last I heard," Banana said, "that sort of crime has never been an issue in Rain. We're a small town, where everyone knows and loves one-another."

"That's not true," said the officer. "I don't know you, and you don't know me."

"That's a good point," said Banana. "You DON'T know me. You DON'T know that I've been coming out here, in costumes, almost every night since I was SIX! Stopping me now would stop a tradition that's important to me."

"Did you hear what you said?" asked the officer.



"Yes," said Banana. "Why?"

"You said ME," said the officer. "You have to realize that life doesn't star, and revolve around you."

"You're wrong," said Banana. "The center of every life is a soul. When a soul can't respect itself, it can't respect others. I'll never deny my ego; instead, I'll feed it until its no longer hungry, so that I can respect that every spirit has self-serving needs, and so that I can have enough energy to help the spirits of every friendly ego to achieve full satisfaction, thus full realization of individuality."

"I don't know what you just said," said the officer. "But I know that your actions are illegal."

"Speaking of the law," Banana said, "In this part of the world, I can marry at age sixteen. Surely, no curfew can suppress people who can marry."

The cop said, "Yes it can. The curfew DOES affect you, and you should go home."

"Well," Banana lamented, "That's a real bummer, because I've always come out here to think."

"What's there to think about?"

Banana said, "I have a lot to think about."

"What sort of things do you think about?" inquired the cop.

"That's private."

The officer didn't like that reply. He told her to get her feet out of the pond, and to get her sandals on.

Banana told him, "No. Not yet. I'm not done thinking."

"Think at home," ordered the officer.

"I do," said Banana, "but I don't think the same things at home that I think out here."

The officer gave her a stern look, and he said, "If you don't go home on your own accord, I'll take you home."

"No," said Banana.

"Why?" inquired the officer. "What's wrong at home?"

Banana was offended, and taken aback, by what the officer's question implied, so she said, "What do you mean? Nothing's wrong at home. I love home."

"Then go home," ordered the officer, loudly.

"No," said Banana, with a tear rolling out of her left eye. "I'm a human being. And I like being outside, near this pond at night. No one has ever bothered me here, until tonight. What's wrong with just sitting at a pond? I'm not hurting anybody!" Tears rolled like tap-water, fast down her face.

"Is home really that bad?" asked the officer.

"What's your problem!?! " snapped Banana. "Home's awesome. I love it. But you're ruining my life by telling me to go home right now. You're giving me a lot more to think about. And I've already got a lot to think about. Just leave me alone!"

The officer pushed a button on a radio that was clipped to his breast-pocket, and he said into the radio: "I've got a curfew violator. Possible problems at home."

The officer forced Banana into the back-seat of his squad-car, where he interrogated her for her address, and then drove her home. When he knocked on the door of Maison Chan, Mrs. Chan answered the door, and asked, "What seems to be the problem, officer?"

Banana cried, and ran into Mrs. Chan's arms, as the officer said, "Mrs. Chan. Your daughter violated the curfew."

"Curfew?" Mrs. Chan asked, raising an eyebrow. "Is this some kind of a joke?"

"No, ma'am," the officer said, "The only joke is her attire."

"What are you talking about?" said Mrs. Chan. "Bunny costumes aren't illegal."

"True," said the officer. "However, as of tonight, it's criminal for teenagers to be out past 11pm."

"That's the stupidest thing I've ever heard," Mrs. Chan told the officer bluntly. "Banana's always thought at that pond, like I did before her, and my mom before me!"

The officer said, "Well, from now on, if she doesn't go there during the daytime, you've gotta go with her."

"But it's an independence thing," Mrs. Chan retorted. "She can't decide who she is, and who she'll become, if her mother's there!"

"Ma'am," said the officer. "Your family has interesting traditions; however, perhaps you should take those traditions to another town, because our..."

Mrs. Chan interrupted, loudly: "Now listen here, officer! Rain is our home! Besides, we can't take that pond anywhere else!"

The officer laughed, and said, "Good day, ma'am."

Mrs. Chan and Banana yelled expletives at the officer, as he walked away, laughing.

-----

The next morning, Banana was late for school, but Mr. Ono had sympathy for the despair he saw on her face, so he let her into the class without any hassle. He just said, "Hi Banana. You're late again? Well, take a seat next to Rob -- he's the new boy."

Mr. Ono then pointed at a muscular boy with short black hair, a tight black t-shirt, cargo pants, and expensive sport-shoes. Dazed for a second, Banana asked, "Rob's the name of the new boy?"

Rob waved at her, and said with a smile: "Yes, hi!"

Banana had an immediate crush on Rob, so she swooned into a desk beside him, and said, seductively: "Well, hello!"

Next thing you know it, Banana and Rob -- in spite of school -- sat across from each-other in an ice-cream shop, where Banana was licking white ice-cream, and Rob was biting and chewing black ice-cream. "Tell me about your family," Rob inquired.

Banana scrunched her orange eyebrows, and asked, "Why are you interested in that?"

Rob said, "Chan is a cute surname."

"Thanks."

"Is it Chinese?"

"Umm..." Banana thought about it, then said, "Nope. I think it's Russo/Japanese."

"Russo?" Rob asked. "What's that mean?"

"We might be part Russian," Banana said. "Not sure, don't care."

"I do," Rob said.

"Why?" Banana asked, slightly annoyed.

"Because," Rob explained, "If my grandchildren fail to recognize the importance of family, my life will have been pointless."

"Oh," Banana said, uninterested.

Rob was slightly surprised at Banana's lack of interest, so he asked, "Don't you feel the same way?"

"No," Banana said, "Not really."

"Why not?" Rob asked.

"I just don't," Banana said.

"Well isn't family important to you?" asked Rob.

"Yes," Banana said. "Of course, but I'm also important."

"That's right," Rob laughed, "You are. Has anyone ever told you that you have nice hair?"

"Thankies!" Banana said with a quick smile.

"Why'd you dye it?" Rob asked.

"You think it's dyed?" Banana asked.

Rob looked deep into her eyes, and said softly, "Your eyebrows are a dead give-away."

Banana joked, "My eyebrows are dyed."

Stunned, Rob asked, "Are they?"

"No," Banana said, shaking her head.

They laugh -- a nice moment.

"I dyed my hair, actually, because it's tradition," Banana clarified.

"A weird hair-dying tradition?"

"I don't know," she said, and laughed. Then she smiled, and looked up, towards a memory, as she continued: "Since I was

like a toddler, mom and I have been dying our hair blonde together."

"Why?"

"I don't know."

They laughed.

"Actually, a few years ago, I let it grow long, naturally orange, but then last year I dyed it again. My mom was happy to relive the old days."

"Traditions are important," Rob mentioned.

Banana nodded in agreement.

-----

Buster, Banana, and Rob, were distracted from late-night television, by blue and red projections of police lights that reflected off the windows and walls of the living room in Maison Chan as soon as the clock struck 11:01pm; that's when the police were catching curfew-violating protestors in inhumane electro-charged contraptions that closely resembled enlarged fish-nets. Afraid of the meyhem, Rob spent the night in Maison Chan.

---

Nine months later, Maison Chan's newest resident was seventeen-year-old Banana Chan's baby daughter named Roko. Roko's father -- Rob Nesia -- wanted nothing to do with his daughter. However, because Roko was destined to become Buster's mother, thirteen year old Buster Chan was pleased to

return the favor to Roko, by acting like a father-figure -- or a very cool big brother -- by playing with her frequently, feeding her, bathing her, taking her on walks with the cat, and even changing her diapers. Banana and Mrs. Chan, however, couldn't stand "diaper duty", so that's why Mrs. Chan went to the Fighting-Baby Trainer Nanny School, on a "scouting mission", where she looked across a field of exhausted girls who couldn't silence the cries of their mechanical virtual babies, and noticed a pretty fifteen-year-old girl named Knocko Sashi, who successfully put her virtual baby to sleep. Mrs. Chan approached Knocko and said, "You appear to be the best child-care provider that the entire chain of Fighting-Baby Trainer Nanny Schools has to offer."

"Thanks," Knocko said, with a smile. "Is this about the Job Placement Program?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Chan. "And because you were the first girl who got her virtual baby to calm down, you're hired!"

"Well," Knocko said, revealing broken wires on the back of her virtual baby, "I should confess..."

Mrs. Chan laughed, and complimented Knocko's resourcefulness.

-----

Thirteen year old Buster Chan had hair growing in unexpected places, and his voice had hints of changes to come; that's why, when pretty fifteen year old Knocko Sashi introduced herself, Buster paid a lot of attention to her; however, none of that specialized attention was paid to her face, as she said: "I'm Knocko

Sashi, from the Fighting-Baby Trainer Nanny School! Our motto is Haiku; it goes: *We're reliable/ as those who find time to care/ on a clear day!* I was hired to provide extra-special care for Baby Roko. Mrs. Chan said I could come right over and start working with baby Roko Chan immediately! Hello!"

Buster bowed respectfully, as he said, "Pleased to meet you!"

"I didn't get your name."

"Buster Chan!"

"Well, I'm very pleased to meet you too, Buster! You can stop bowing."

"No, I can't."

-----

"Does Roko have any medical conditions that I should know about?" Knocko asked.

"I hope not," Banana said.

"What's the pediatrician's number?"

"I dunno."

"How do you usually get Roko to go to sleep?"

"Mom, and Buster, and the cat, have been taking care of that."

"The cat!?!"

"Yeah. It's a funny story, but never-you-mind."

"Where do you keep the diapers?"

"Buy some. Keep them somewhere. That's your job."

"Oh. I can see that this is going to be ... interesting."



---

Banana was playing with her shoe-lace when Buster ran into the living-room, screaming urgently: "We've got FIVE HOURS until the heat wave!"

"Huh?"

"Today is in a history book which I brought from the future, but didn't read until a minute ago!"

"A future history book?"

"Yeah!" Buster said. "It's five o'clock now, and ten o'clock is when a rogue star caused a massive heat wave that killed billions of people!"

"What!?!"

"It's all true!" Buster explained. "Only people with air conditioners will survive; in other words, roughly two billion poor people will die!"

"Oh no!"

Casualties of the heat wave were used as compost.

---

Buster defeated the Vice Principal of Rain Middle School in a "poetry slam", thus gaining access to the office of Principal Nakatasaka; once inside, Buster announced: "I wish to challenge Bobby Dark in a SqueegiMon contest to determine who will represent our school in the All-World Contest against Tokyo Middle School."

"Ever heard of knocking?"

"Sorry."

-----

In front of thousands of cheering fans, Buster Chan, and a concentrating boy named Bobby Dark, sat in the middle of the fifty-yard line at the middle-school's football stadium, where they competed against each-other in the local qualifying round for a world-wide tournament of a card game called SqueegiMon. Hundreds of onlookers respected Buster as The Bigger Man, and accordingly held up signs of praise for Buster Chan.

Fifteen spectators rooted for Bobby Dark.

In the end, when Principal Nakatasaka inspected the cards on the table, he declared it a "Tie Game!"

The crowd hushed, as Buster asked: "What's this mean?"

"It means," explained the Principal, "The All-World Contest between our school and Tokyo Middle School will be an unprecedented three-way-game, thus giving our school an unfair advantage."

The crowd roared with laughter.

-----

In the world's largest stadium -- Tokyo's SqueegiMon Stadium -- an excited, cheering crowd, watched Buster Chan and Bobby Dark's epic peeing-contest for the title of World Champion

of SqueegiMon. "It seems like forever since we beat the guy from Tokyo Middle School," said Buster, as he zipped-up.

"To make things more interesting," said the announcer, while measuring Buster's distance to see who draws the first card, "the winner gets a champion sumo-wrestler's stinky loin-cloth!"

"I've got an idea," whispered Buster to Bobby, as Bobby set a new personal-best distance-record, "We'll play an honest game, and the winner will graciously decline the prize, and the loser will take it."

"You're on," said Bobby, as he zipped up. "Besides, to not play an honest game would be an insult to the game."

The announcer shuffled, and dealt, the cards. Buster flipped over his top card; it was The Edsel Card -- the second best card in existence; however, the first card Bobby flipped was the The You Win No Matter What Card -- the undisputed best card in existence.

Buster screamed, "NO!"

The announcer declared: "The winner is Bobby Dark!"

Bobby had an epic battle for the announcer's microphone, and when he finally grabbed it, he said, "I graciously decline the ...err...prize -- and I say that term lightly -- and I give it to the most honorable player I know: Buster Chan."

"Gee, thanks," said Buster, sarcastically.

That's when a fourteen-and-a-half year-old, red-haired, blue-eyed girl from Buster's school, named Maiko, flung the prize at Buster, and said, "Here you go."

As Buster dodged the prize, he was taken aback by Maiko's beauty, because she was the cutest girl whom Buster had

ever laid eyes on, so after his epic battle with the term "thank you", she said, "You're welcome, but why are you staring at my ...hair? Buster, my face is down here!"

"Can we talk in private?" Buster asked.

"Okay," said Maiko.

The announcer walked away.

Bobby walked away.

The audience walked away.

The world's media stayed.

Buster told Maiko, "I saw you in class."

"I know," she said. "What's your point?"

"I'm with you."

"Yes, you are. But why?"

"Because you are a dreamer who fixates on her own worlds, her own ideals -- ideals which invite..."

"Wait! What the hell are you talking about?"

"Every moment with you is perfect; it enhances my life!"

"Err...thanks, I guess. But ...well... we just met."

"You're a magical girl."

"Why are you saying these things?"

"Simply because precious, valuable, life-affirming moments are achieved by simply spending time with you!"

"You're insane."

"Insane with deep love for you."

"WHAT!?!"

"No matter what you're told, your soul is very old."

"I'm what!?!"

"You're autumn's leaf."

"Pardon!?!"

"Under that windswept mane of breeze dancing colors,"  
Buster sang gaily, "your bright eyes illuminate my soul. Your wet  
and wild, breeze dancing, ropey mane of windswept, dancing  
color, dances with the breeze, as your bright eyes illuminate my  
soul. Over windswept, dancing mane, bright eyes shine so bright.  
Breeze dancing mane. Breeze dancing mane. And bright eyed,  
windswept color!"

"Why did you sing that song to me?"

"Because you're my first love."

Nervously, she said, "No, I'm not."

"You're my confused soulmate," Buster implied without  
words, "and I'm trying to catch your heart. I love you."

"That's ... interesting. But why?"

"Because you're my soul's songwriter."

"Your ...soul's ... what?"

"You're the red-headed rose who taught me to know  
myself."

She turned away, and ordered him to leave her alone.

"But I love you," Buster announced in front of the whole  
world.

Then she angrily cried, "You're lying. You're toying with  
me -- playing with my heart -- because I'm the nerd who's always  
in the back of class, reading books!"

"I'm not like that!"

"Why would anyone love me? Why would you love me?"

"Because you're the endless dreamer, whose dream I share!  
Endlessly!"

"You don't know my dream."

"That's right! See -- you know me more than I know myself!"

"I don't want to talk to you any more."

"Then I'll carry on the search for your heart."

Maiko noticed a mysterious look on Buster's heart, which he wore on his sleeve, so she asked: "You're being serious, aren't you?"

"Totally."

"Why?"

"Because I totally love you, and I don't know why."

"What is love?"

"Love is the jagged enemy of hate."

Maiko laughed, "How poetic!"

"I'm a poet," Buster declared.

She giggled, "How cute!"

"I'll do anything for you!" Buster declared.

"Can I borrow some Yen?"

"Yeah, sure! Anything for you, my dear! Here's all I've got!"

"I can get used to this."

"Let's get used to each-other!"

"Okay, poet. What do you want from me?"

"Uhh... can we ... go for coffee ... or something?"

"Sure! You pay."

"I just gave you all my money."

"Okay," she laughed. "I'll pay."

---

Banana and Buster knew the curfew was lifted, but they had no idea that most of Rain's teenagers were celebrating at a rave party in the lighthouse. As Banana went to the moonlit pond, Buster walked through town, with a spring in his step. He closed his eyes for a second, and bumped into a colorfully-dressed girl who also had her eyes closed.

They bowed apologetically to each-other, then laughed, and introduced themselves.

"Hi," said the girl. "I'm Tama."

"I'm Buster."

"Going to the rave?"

"Rave," Buster asked, "What's that?"

Then someone pulled Tama into a passing limousine, as she screamed, "Buster! They're kidnapping me! HELP!"

Buster noticed the words "Space Monkeys" on the limo's license plate, as he chased it, until it could not be found.

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Time-travel was Buster's only option for rescuing Tama; however, because time-travel has caused him many restless nights filled with painful, guilt-fueled night-terrors regarding NINJA training, and other morally-bankrupt, mostly blocked-out memories, he was mortally afraid of complications, and so, when he realized that he had no options, he gave up on life, the universe,

and everything, by slitting his wrist with a razor-blade, in the bathtub.

In Purgatory, Buster wandered beside white-sky piercing gray columns, trying to find Heaven's gate.

A loud voice proclaimed: "By beating my equal to his own game, I've conquered obstruction and price. What must be broken, can be broken now."

"What!?!" Buster asked.

"By winning an ironic game," said the loud voice, "I've bound the world, rescued realization and understanding."

"I don't understand," said Buster.

"Welcome to Purgatory."

"Purgatory?"

"Will you say not even a word?"

"I just said one," said Buster. "when I asked about Purgatory."

"You see without being seen," laughed the voice. "You regret your struggle. You wander and wait without seeking. You chose to drown. You refuse to reach. You don't ask!" The voice continued laughing.

Then Buster regretted his suicide. He said, "I wanna go home."

"You have no home."

"Yes, I do," said Buster. "It's called Maison Chan!"

"You're on your own," cackled the loud voice.

"I'm never on my own," Buster muttered stubbornly.

"Yes, you are," said the voice, "because my time is up."

"What?"



"You don't remember me?" asked the voice. "I'm from the antique!"

"What antique?"

"Exactly," the voice laughed.

"What's going on?"

"The final part of my plan -- the part where I smile at my questioner!"

"What the HELL is going on?"

"I stalled them! I must take action!"

"What are you talking about?"

"I DEFEATED GOD!"

"WHAT!?!"

"I fulfilled the Jupiter prophesy!"

"WHAT!?!"

The voice recited: "They'll cruise a universe, start their own/ write a bible, leave it alone!"

"WHAT!?!"

"All is well because of me! I'm so proud of me! I saved God from where YOU trapped him!"

"WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT!?!"

The voice recited, "The Savior's Savior was his captor. The wise will share his sight. To see all and not be seen was the hell, which lead him to his choice!"

"WHAT!?!"

"You SERIOUSLY remember none of this?" asked the loud voice. "This is too good!"

"I want NOTHING TO DO with ABSOLUTELY ANYTHING that's anti-God, okay!?!"

"Okay," cackled the voice. "Your wish is my command."  
Buster woke as if from a fleeting dream.

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"Am I in the hospital?"

"Yes. You attempted suicide."

"I've got issues," groaned Buster. "I'm so fucked up."

"I'm revoking your time-travel ability," said Baka. "It was too much responsibility for you."

"That's an understatement!" exclaimed Buster.

"Always remember: you're a good kid."

"What about the girl?"

"Don't worry about her," Baka assured him: "She's been rescued by someone else...I hope."

Baka burped-up one of her legs, blushed, then vanished in a puff of smoke.

**THE END**

### **What We Didn't Learn In This Volume**

We didn't learn that 9/11 was an inside job, or how to cure cancer. We didn't learn anything about chemtrails or crisis actors. We learned nothing of vaccine efficacy or the shape of the Earth. At the time of writing this volume, I thought Global Warming was real, and I had the wrong concepts about a lot of other things too.

*Thanks for reading!*