

*Hey - you got a bite! John Brantingham, Lara Falberg,
Robert M. Barrows, Holly Day, Jon Wells,
new Best In Show and Dragin comix & The Dream Journal.*

The Blotter

Seventh Anniversary Issue

MAGAZINE



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"Tick-tock"

My college composition and creative writing professor is retiring this spring. This is news both full of joy and a little gloomy, like the sun showing itself late on a cloudy February afternoon. He is a good teacher, and I had always hoped to come back to my old school and either be a colleague or a writing-bum taking up space in a comfortable chair in his office. Now he is going on the road as a poet-singer-songwriter, as Dylanesque (Bob- and -Thomas) as one can be in this twenty-first century.

You see, I struggled to get out of high-school alive, and had an even harder time in the Navy. By the time I was entered as a freshman in college, it was decided (by any and all who cared about such a thing) that this was my make-or-break moment – either I was going to succeed or learn that old saw "would you like fries with that?" Either that or New Jersey's version: "fill it and wipe your windshield, buddy?"

My roommate was a math major, tall, skinny, quiet and smart as paint. He confidently signed up for eighteen hours of math, physics, lab science and other suchlike fare. On the other hand, I was so down on myself and my limited study skills that I could barely imagine passing a course. Twelve hours; freshman comp. being three of same. *Let's see how we do with this*, I told myself. *Then we'll know*. That's how I met Professor Allen.

Back when I was thirteen, poetry was inspiration. I defined it as plucking words from the ether, up high but just in reach. My muse came and went at will, and I wrote my words and when there were no words to write, I set my pen down satisfied. I believed that you couldn't push it any more than you could, could...*manufacture* an elegant metaphor, for heaven's sake. I brought this preconceived notion with me in my knapsack into Allen's classroom

Paul Allen, a round-faced Alabama boy with a neat mustache over a ready smile, shook his head at me, at my lack of work habits. Garrison, you simple-minded Yankee, he said to me, poetry isn't a hill you roll down hoping that the words will stick to you. Poetry is craftsmanship, a well-laid wall of brick with room for a picture-window. Poetry is perfect words in the perfect order. Images so crisp that they crackle as you turn the page. Yes, yes, I replied. I hear you. But that's not how I do it.

I had also come to school with Kerouac, Ginsberg, cummings and Bukowski in that same back-pack. Paul introduced me to Randall Jarrell, Richard Eberhart, Ezra Pound, John Crowe Ransom and Donald Hall. He tossed me volumes by Galway Kinnell and John Ashbery, Adrienne Rich and Richard Wilbur. John Frederick Nims. *Hey, who are these guys?* And for a while, studying was like spilling milk in lemoned tea. An unpalatable accident. Oh, I thought. So *that's* poetry. Then I began to see the

glistening crystals in what at first appeared bland geodes. In time, I better understood the geodes themselves – how they were cast in the fires of the earth's core. I had my *ah-ha* moment. Poetry is the craft, the craft, the craft! Not that Kerouac wasn't a good, fun read, and Alan Ginsberg a fiery preacher. But Kinnell's bear was terrifying. Nims' love story shattered my heart. And Paul's own swim to the lake's shore drowned me each and every time. A poem, I discovered, can occasionally rustle up the storm clouds and bring on the wind and rain. A good poem, Professor Allen taught, always does.

I'm thirty years older and my appreciation of poetry has changed. Nothing tsunami-like. Rather a settling of the sand underfoot, a shift in the foundation that puts a door or window a tad off-kilter. I have seen some of the best minds of a generation, shouting into microphones half-rhymes and skewed meter-feet, but still flaying the flesh of an audience. It's not Donald Hall, but still quite something. Professor Allen the teacher would talk about it in class, his feet up on the desk and glasses down on the tip of his nose above a crooked smile. Paul the performer of songs would applaud like all get-out.

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(again, a 501(c)3 non-profit) is an education concern. Our primary interest is the furthering of creative writing and fine arts, with the magazine being a means to that end. We publish in the first half of each month and enjoy a free circulation throughout the Southeast and some other places, too. Submissions are always welcome, as are ad inquiries.

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CAUTION

*Nothing within to harm
the simple soul, to wound
the faint of heart.*

"Fish Drop"

by John Brantingham

Stanley is awake and up and out of the tent before Harrison can even move in his sleeping bag. Harrison slept outside last night, next to the fire with two sleeping bags zipped up to make one big bag, and he thought that he'd be up with the dawn, but the sun's been rising for a while now. Luckily, Deena's crunched down a little in the bag, and Harrison can pull the edge up enough so that Stanley doesn't notice her head as he passes by.

"Morning, Dad," he says.

It's funny how many things kids his age miss, but on the other hand, why should he even think to check on what his father is doing, has been doing. "Hey, Buddy," Harrison says. "Would you mind checking on something in the tent for a moment?"

Stanley turns to him with that frustrated look that he gets every once in a while now. He seems to be growing into it. He narrows his eyes at the sleeping bag, and for a worried moment, Harrison thinks he's going to figure out what his father has been doing all night, but he doesn't ask about the extra lump in the bag. "Can I go to the bathroom first?" he asks.

Harrison exhales. "Sure, yeah, of course," and he watches the boy walk out of the campsite, mak-

ing his way away from the lake to relieve himself in privacy.

"I don't know why you're so paranoid about him finding out about us," Deena says. She climbs out of the bag and pulls on her shorts and a t-shirt. "You're going to tell him eventually, aren't you?"

"Yeah," he says. "I just don't want to confuse him too much. He's been through a lot in the last couple of months, you know. He doesn't need any more."

"I didn't realize that I could be such a burden on him." But she pulls on her shoes quickly, knowing that Harrison wants her out of the camp. As far as Stanley will know, they spent the night alone, father and son out in the woods under the pines, sleeping in the dirt. Sure, there had been other people in camp, but this will have been their special private camping trip. Harrison has his jeans on, and is pulling on a flannel button down shirt to fight the chill of the morning in the mountains, but she's already dressed and walking over to her own camp. "You know Maeve doesn't bother to hide her boyfriend, and he seems all right with that," she says.

Deena is right, of course. Maeve, his ex-wife, is living with her new boyfriend, who would probably be her husband now if the divorce

were final, but Maeve isn't exactly the model that he wants for his own behavior. He's going to yell something funny to her as she walks away, but Stanley might hear. Instead, he zips apart the sleeping bags and rolls them up, putting his in his backpack and dropping hers behind a tree on the edge of the camp.

When Stanley comes back, he seems to have forgotten that he was supposed to do something for his father in the tent. Instead, he starts gathering wood to start a new fire. "Not this morning, Buddy," Harrison says. "We're going to have a cold breakfast this morning."

"Oh," Stanley says, and Harrison can see the boy's heart breaking. Sometimes he thinks that making things burn is Stanley's favorite part of camping. He'll sit there watching the flames with the rapt attention of...well, of a ten year old boy.

"Remember when I told you there was going to be a surprise on this trip?"

"Yeah?"

"We're going to see it this morning."

As though she's the surprise, Deena pops out of the woods and into their campsite. "Good morning," she calls.

She's waving and smiling, and Stanley waves back. "Deena," he says. There's excitement in his voice and he goes over and hugs her.

"Did your Dad tell you what's going to happen this morn-

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ing?" she asks. She's a short woman with a tiny body that Harrison loves and a blond pony tail.

"No, Stanley says. "He just said there's going to be a surprise."

"Well." She looks at her watch. "If we want to be sure to see it, we'd better go now."

They begin to circle the lake, and as they start, Harrison can see that a lot of people are going in the same direction. These are mostly people who, like him, work for the forestry service, and know from looking at the schedule what's going to happen today. It's not so spectacular, but it's really interesting, and a lot of people come year after year, each time with new people following along. "Maybe you ought to tell Stan what we are going to see."

"Hmm?" Harrison says. They've come to a part of the bank where boulders have been piled up by avalanches possibly thousands of years ago. They have to pick their way across them in a dance where they hop from one to the next, never quite pausing, and never able to look up for long enough to know exactly where they are.

"I said that we should probably tell him what's going on today so he understands what he's seeing." In her voice, there is significance as though she's made some kind of profound point that he's supposed to understand on multiple levels.

He wants to roll his eyes or make a gagging motion to her, but instead, he just stops hopping forward. "This is as good a place as



image by Olivia



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any. Why don't you tell him about it?"

They all stop their dance at once and sit down on their own boulders. Deena points to the eastern sky. "I want you to watch there," she says. "In a little while, a plane is going to come over that ridge you see in the distance and fly down really low over this lake."

"Why is it going to do that?"

"They're going to stock the lake. Do you know what that means?" Stanley shakes his head. She brings up her knees to her chest, and Harrison gets the feeling by the way she's sitting close to the boy that she's always wanted children. He wonders if she thought she was getting too old and that Harrison is her last shot. "There are too many fishermen around. Every year, people come up to these lakes and fish so much that there isn't enough fish for anyone else or the bears or anything. They used to bring them by mules up here, but now they dump them out of the back of the plane."

"Wait," Stanley says. His eyes are wide in disbelief. "They're going to drop fish out of that plane."

"Yeah," she says. "Baby fish. I mean, you're not going to be able to see the fish exactly, but they've got a tank of water, and you'll be able to see the water and maybe some little objects in the water. Those will be little baby fish."

Harrison is happy to see

that the boy is curious, and he and Deena talk about the fish and why they do it for a while, and as she predicted, the plane, a twin engine propeller deal, comes out of the east. Harrison chose the spot on the west side of the lake because he wanted to be able to see the whole approach, but he realizes now that if the pilot or bombardier overshoot the lake, they're going to be covered in little baby fish, to use Deena's phrase.

He could tell them to move, but he doesn't. He'd rather take the chance to be sure that they can all see the whole thing. The plane dips, heading right towards them, and Stanley shifts nervously, but when the plane just seems to be skimming the treetops, it levels off, and while it's over the lake, a spray of water is released from its steel belly. He sees in the mist, or thinks he sees, little flecks of something, and imagines that they're fingerlings, wriggling up there for a moment, knocking into each other, and for a moment free in the air, in full sunshine for the first and last times of their lives.

From every side of the lake come hoots from those who had come up here and assembled for this moment specifically, and the sound works its way into Stanley, who picks it up and screams, "Wooooooo!" Harrison and Deena cheer too, and without realizing he's doing it, he hugs Deena in front of Stanley and breathes in the rich scent of woman.

Back at the camp a half hour later, Stanley says, "You know, we forgot to have breakfast."

"Oh, yeah," Harrison says. "I guess we did."

"Can we have a hot breakfast?"

Harrison knows he's just angling for a fire. "Sure," Harrison says. Fish falling from the sky and now fire. This might be the best day in the boy's short life.

The three of them head out in separate directions to gather wood, but Stanley comes up behind Harrison in a minute. "Dad," he says. "Are you going to ask Deena out?"

"You mean on a date?"

"Yeah," he says. "I think she wants you to. I mean, I think she likes you."

"Would that bother you?"

"No," he says. "Mom goes out with Joey."

He should be happy hearing that Stanley would be all right with him dating, but Harrison feels himself collapse a bit, and he knows what it is. Stanley had been the easy way out up to now. With Stanley, he could put Deena off and still look like the good guy. He's going to have to be honest now. Either that or he's going to have to date the woman, and she'd be a good woman to date, but God, when he thinks of those last years with Maeve, he has absolutely no desire to date anyone seriously ever again.

They go back to the camp, and Stanley has his fire. The three of them are going to stay here today, and Harrison isn't sure what he's going to tell Deena tonight as they lie together under the stars. Maybe he'll put her off and maybe he'll make a decision one way or the other. What he wants though is just to sit with her on the edge of the lake silently and watch the stars reflected in that lake all night and not have to say a word.



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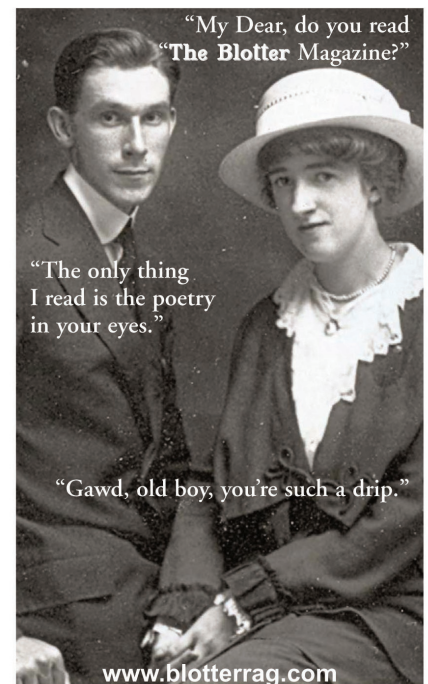
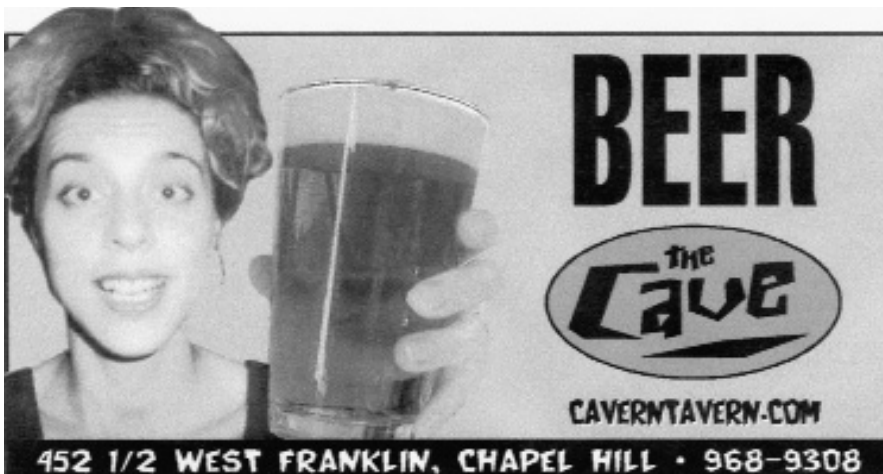
"The Triple Standard: How to Deal"

by Lara Falberg

There used to just be a double standard to contend with. The man pays for the date, no matter what, but the woman owes him nothing other than the pleasure of her company. This standard has morphed continuously and drastically. For every double standard, there is now a caveat, AKA, *the triple standard*. It works, shut up. So, much to everyone's surprise, it is 2010. Weren't we just freaking out about Y2K? No, we were not; that was ten years ago. Let's move on. Women are edging closer and closer to bridging the gap in the pay difference, plus societal norms have changed enough where a private firm lawyer might/maybe slum it and date a house painter. He has to be really, really hot though. The over-stated point is this: it is not a given that men pay for dates anymore. Unless he doesn't even want to consider trying to have sex with you, he's going to at least pay for the first date. That still seems to be standard operating procedure. Here is the problem: sometimes the woman makes more than the man, so is it really fair that he always pay? And, even if he does make more, why should the 'Y' chromosome dictate that he has 100% of the financial burden in the dating realm? Now, that's just crazy common sense. So,

ignore it, of course. Regardless of what year it is, or how cool and progressive you and your lady of the moment may be, a guy still feels emasculated if you pay. A woman still feels like you don't care about her if you don't buy her hummus and two glasses of Pinot Noir. Here are some scenarios which cause the dreaded triple standard: You are his boss. You know exactly how much money he makes and that he eats Spaghettios for dinner most nights because they are 2 @ \$1.09. You must pay. It is just mean not to; and, he'll get over the emasculation because he feels beyond impressed with himself for banging the boss. In fact, he refers to it as 'banging the boss'. Youth and being a subordinate are always triple standards. The woman pays. In return, he goes down on you for at least twenty minutes before you have sex. You are on a first date. He tells you about how he has to take care of his mom, his two illegitimate children, and that he works three jobs to pay for all of this, plus he can't get health insurance because of a pre-existing condition. You must pay, and then never go out with him again. Financial tragedy will continue to befall him. Or, plan to be his sugar mamma, even if you are eight years younger than he is. Diapers,

Depends, and daycare don't come cheap! You know you are going to break up with him. Always pay for yourself if this is the case. It's just one less thing he can say vindictively behind your sure-to-be stabbed back. He took you to see a Broadway play before dinner. He took you to a movie premiere in L.A. He got box seats to see your favorite sports team. He gave you his extra BMW. At least offer to pay for dinner. If he says no, graciously accept his generosity. He has paid for the first three dates. And taken you somewhere nice. It was not fast food, and it was not a friend's joint where he gets comp meals. He didn't use both a coupon and the balance of a gift card. Basically, go with your instinct. Don't be uncool. Don't be too cool and always offer to pay either. If you find after going out with him two or three times that you can expect a dutch outcome, you are not on a date. You are becoming friends. Unless he already kissed you. Why did you let him? He's cheap, and just trying to sleep with you. If you are just trying to sleep with him, then go on with your slutty self. Kapeche?



"Literary Agents in Love - or - 22 ways to say No to a date like a literary agent says 'No'"

by Robert M. Barrows

Saying yes to a date is easy. Saying no requires a little more tact, and who knows how to say "No" better than publishers and literary agents? They say no to aspiring authors about 99% of the time, so when it comes to saying no, those guys wrote the book on it.

So if you are a literary agent or a publisher in love, and you have already used all of the standard ways to say no to a date like "Sorry, I have to do my laundry on New Year's Eve," or "I think my second cousin is coming into town on Valentine's Day," and you don't want to hurt a guy's feelings by saying "No, no, no, a thousand times no, no way I'd ever go out with you, Bozo," just use your professional training and say no like a literary agent might say no with some very courteous and creative ways to say no to a date without shrinking his manhood too badly.

These new, more delicate ways to say "no," are based on the way publishers and literary agents have always said no to writers, so you can only imagine what it's like when literary agents fall in or out of love and have to say no to a date.

And the next time Mr. Wrong asks you to go out on a date with him for the umpteenth time, rather than just saying, "No, and please don't ask me again," you can say no like a literary agent or a publisher might say no, and you can practice some of these more soothing replies, like...

1) I can't believe how many requests I have received recently, and I'm having an impossible time trying to decide which ones to say yes to, so rather than hold you up for a moment longer, I want to let you know right away so you can continue your search for the perfect date for you.

2) I apologize for taking longer

than expected, but due to the sheer volume of requests I get, I'm afraid I must turn down your invitation. It was a hard choice to make and I know this is disappointing, but please know that it is not a reflection on your worthiness or your character.

3) I can only go out with those guys for whom I feel a real connection. Ultimately, and for purely subjective reasons, you did not spark that kind of enthusiasm in me. Please keep in mind that a person to whom one girl doesn't respond may be met with great enthusiasm by another.

4) I've discussed this with my roommates and my friends, and sadly, because of the intense competition in the current dating market, I'm forced to be highly selective and often must pass up many potentially promising prospects.

5) I'm sorry, but I have a very full list right now and I can't take on any new dates unless they come with a recommendation from someone I personally know, someone whose judgment I respect, and someone who knows what I look for in a man.

6) I'm sorry, but your proposal does not sufficiently engage my interests. Please understand that this is not a statement about your marketability. Others may view you quite differently. But don't feel rejected; as they say, "every no gets you closer to yes."

7) I'm sorry, but I can't say that you're a good fit with the kind of material I feel confident going out with in the current market.

8) I'm truly sorry to say that I didn't like you better, but I'm sure it is quite possible you'll find someone who will find you much more

interesting and attractive than I do.

9) I'm sorry, but I am not quite as enthusiastic about going out with you as I would have to be if I were going to say yes. Of course, dating is subjective, and another girl might feel differently, so I wish you the best of success in finding someone who will go out with you.

10) I get so many requests that I am sorry that I can't even give you a personal reply. Please excuse this e-mail form letter. Best of luck finding another date for the Inaugural Ball.

11) When taking on a new boyfriend, I have to be very selective so I can pay my full attention to him, and can only go out with those for whom I have unconditional enthusiasm and a conviction that my friends and family will share that enthusiasm. So thank you for asking, but no. Of course, it's quite possible that some other girl will see things differently, so keep trying until you find a girl who will say yes.

12) I'm afraid that I'm going to have to pass on your request, but I do hope you find a nice girl and go on to become a zillionaire and tell everyone what an idiot I was for saying, "No."

If you prefer a shorter reply, you can always go with one of these:

13) Thank you for your request, but I am fully committed to my other boyfriends at this time.

14) Thank you for asking, but I have a full list and I will be taking myself off the market soon and I will no longer be acquiring new boyfriends.

15) Sorry, due to the number of requests I get, I have been obliged to institute a policy of not accepting unsolicited requests for dates.

16) Unfortunately, I only accept six to nine new dates a year and I must often reject some very worthy fellows.

But then again, if you feel you need to be a little more to the point, you can always use one of these:

17) While I find your material interesting, and I am sure you must be a charming and dynamic fellow, I have concluded that you are just not right for me. But please don't let this discourage you, I appreciate your effort and I urge you to pursue your other possibilities.

18) Many fine young men ask me to go out with them and it's unfortunate I can't go out with them all.

19) I am sorry that I do not have better news for you, but I do wish you well in finding a date for the party. There are many girls in this state who might love to go out with you.

20) Thank you for sending me your video invitation to the party. However, it is my policy to accept referrals only. Please note that your correspondence has not been read, watched or listened to.

21) I was delighted to receive your request and I have given it my most careful consideration, but alas, and as much as I hate to relay the news with a form letter email, I'm sorry, but the answer is no.

and if all else fails...

22) Sorry, you're just not my cup of tea.

Now these have just been some of the kinder, gentler ways to say no when a guy asks you to go out for a date.

If you're already comfortable going out with him, but you really don't want to go to bed with him and he keeps giving it the old college try, try this one on for size. It's an excuse that will generally stop him cold...just say, "I'm sorry, but you should have met me when I was still a nymphomaniac."

So, do you have some favorite ways of saying "No" when a guy asks you out on a date or when he asks you to go to bed with him? Saying yes is easy. Saying no requires a bit more ammunition.

Let us know if you have received some interesting rejection letters and please write us with some of your favorite ways to say no and perhaps we may be able to include them in a future article.

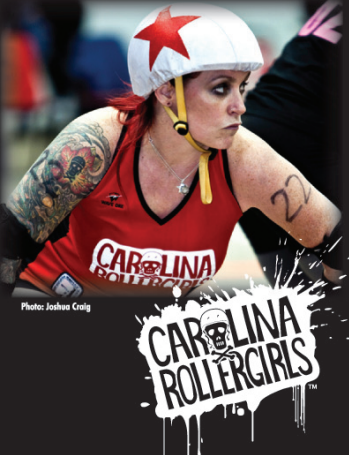
Who knows, maybe a publisher or a literary agent might be reading and they might actually say "Yes."

Author's note: One of the unfortunate things about the publishing business is that many times, most of the manuscripts received are never even read. One of the rejection letters I received on my manuscript "Cemetery of Lies" went something like this: We are sorry but we have decided to pass on your book because of the dark and disturbing nature of its contents. (I said to myself, "Hallelujah! Someone finally read some of it." It doesn't really become dark and disturbing until several chapters in.) Interestingly enough, I received a boiler-plate rejection letter from the same publishing company about a week later. I guess they thought I might jump off a cliff after getting their first rejection letter.

Editor's note: Mr. Barrows recently lined up an agent for his book. His cover letter for this article was very polite, and asked me to let him know if I would publish it. I told him yes. It was easier for all of us.



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"Troll Bride"

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in its small, dark den
forced to cook the bones of children down into paste
for the troll to spread over toast
and eat with coffee

worse, the troll might make her his wife

after months of abuse, of pinching and tugging,
merciless berating,
full-body force-massages of stinging ointments
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"Not As Stupid as She Thinks"

across the street lives
a woman with snakes in
her hair. she watches me
from between the rotting drapes
that keep the sun from
melting her living room furniture

I sit at the breakfast table and wonder
if she has to feed each snake head
individually, or if they're just like hair,
and just need a shampooing
now and then.

I imagine her dipping her entire head
into a cage full of frightened
rats, the snakes in her hair darting
this way and that, tangling around each other
in their haste to catch the fat ones, the ones
with the least demented testicles, tiny bones
crunch in my head
as I close my own teeth on a spoonful
of toasted oat flakes

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The Dream Journal

real dreams, real weird

Please send excerpts from your own dream journals.. If nothing else, we'd love to read them We won't publish your whole name.

mermaid@blotterrag.com

Something to do with being in the French Resistance, only I'm obviously and frighteningly out of place. Too tall, or perhaps too young and certainly don't know the language. And there's a weird juxtaposition of being at the Maginot Line, firing emplaced cannon at a forest in the distance, as if killing trees with loud airbursts of shrapnel is the whole point of war. All I can be is a cheerleader at this event as well, because I know nothing of artillery, not even how to make the shells fire, although I watch the man with the lanyard give it a sharp tug and the explosion out of the barrel, which is quieter than I thought it would be, thinking that the noise is carried away on the wind, not aware or realizing that this is a dream.

Only after the cannon's roar do I begin to put two and two together, breaking the knowledge barrier of dream-logic, and my knowledge of history. An inkling of "uh-oh, I'm in France and the Nazis are coming, or perhaps are already here and don't they do terrible things to people who fight against them?" shifts over my mind like ground fog.

"Stop shooting, stop shooting," I call to the men working the artillery detail, but they all have ear plugs and cannot hear my shouting over the thunder of the cannon. I want to grab someone by the arm, but they are elusive suckers, intent in the rhythm and effort of their task.

DMS - cyberspace

PURITAN RODEO with GASOLINE STOVE

FRIDAY
MAY 21



THE CAVE,
CHAPEL
HILL



9 P.M.



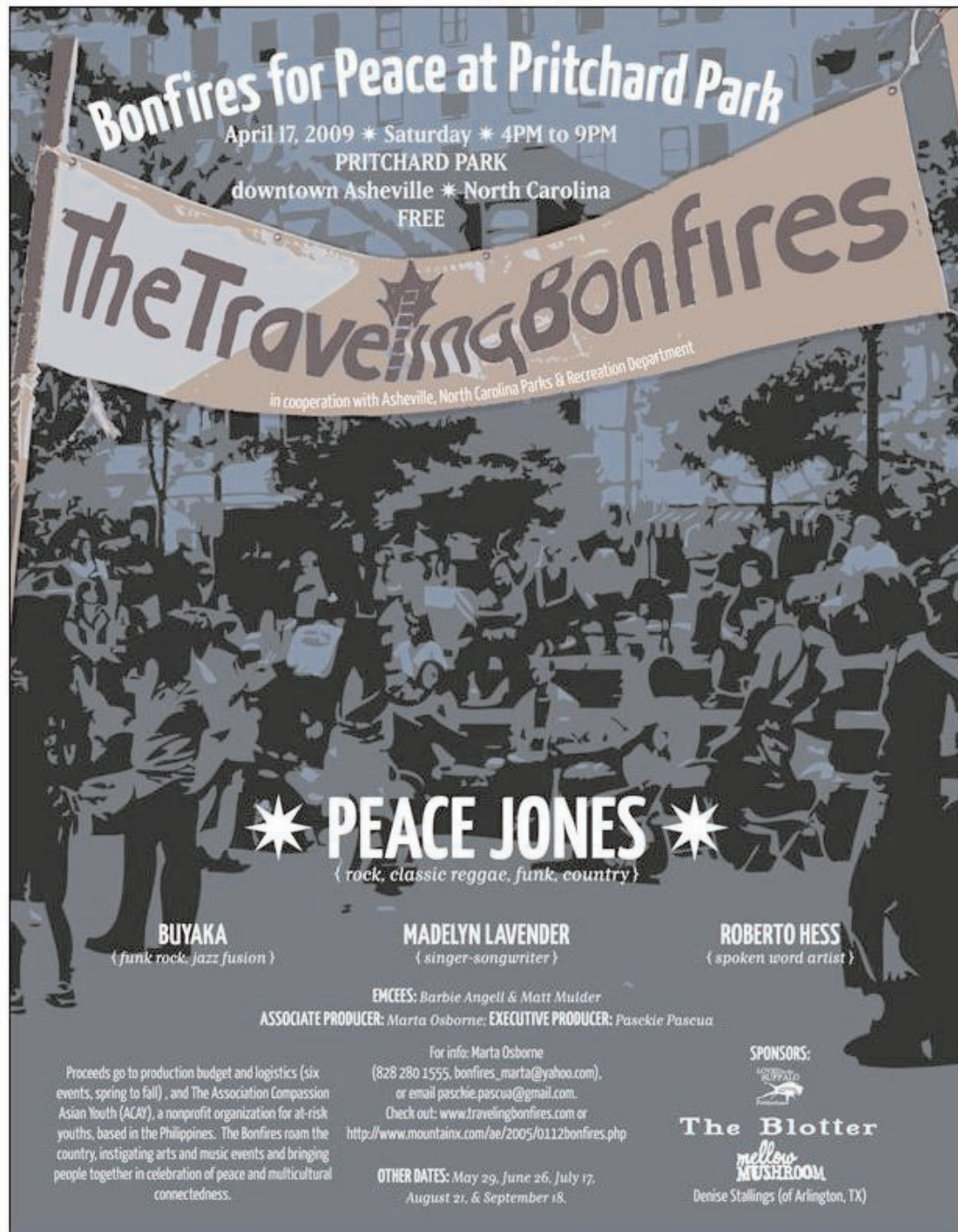
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"In the unfortunate event you catch me stealing glances"

I could have sworn I saw you
on the train
with a short red dress and a slouch
that only comes from too many
Long Islands.
You were reading Sartre and who
am I to interrupt an existential crisis.

And you seemed sad, each eye
meticulously focused as
you questioned your leather shoes
and whether or not herpes
will keep you out of heaven.

My friend Chris with his
plain name said he took you
to an art show and you
vomited on the Dada.
I wish you were that cultured
when I knew you

before you began feeling
speechless and writing
notes on bathroom stalls.
When your mom still
cooked me dinner
and called me honey.

I want to push the red button
and tell you how well
your writing levels out my
coffee table but
this is my stop.

Two by Jon Wells

"At the Grizzly Man's Funeral"

*"They will have power
over the fish, the birds,
and all animals
wild and domestic"*
-Genesis 1:26

I will give a power point eulogy
paying respect with clips
from Evel Knievel,
references to wax-winged Icarus,
and quotes from St. Francis.

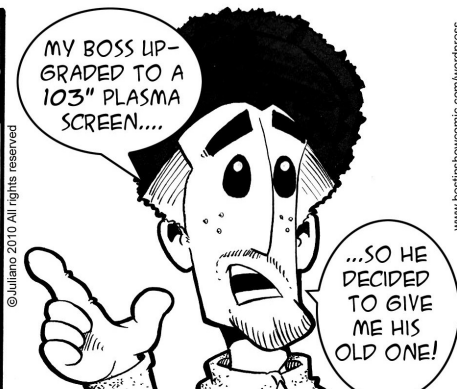
Timothy Treadwell's pieces
fished out of the bear,
have been charred to ash,
and placed in a porcelain urn.

Light creeps to the corners.
Thick spice candles hang halos on everyone,
—even the free food scavengers
who are here at the rumor
of stucco-dry salmon,
pomegranate wine
and post-lapsarian apple pie.

Before I claw at my plate, I pray that
his ashes be spread
over vast and overcast Alaska.

Give his ashes back to that place
where nothing, now, could be
able to confuse his spirit's divine intentions
with food.

Best In Show



by Phil Juliano

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Final Tid-Bits: Interesting news - we'll soon be rolling out "The Blotter Magazine - Live!" on 103.5 FM, WCOM Community Radio in Carrboro, NC, Thursdays from 9:00 to 10:00 AM. Check it out! Laine Cunningham Long Form Fiction Prize update: Judges are judging and we should have a decision in our June Issue! Thanks to everyone who submitted or who threatened to tease their novelist chum for not submitting. I went with the family to Carolina Rollergirls last weekend. Great fun, we all had a blast, and highly recommend it for you and yours. Visit your local independent bookstore, they have plenty of things to read - I don't want to hear any of you saying, "I'm bored." Got it? Good!

CONTRIBUTORS

John Brantingham of Upland, CA has had stories and poems published in American and British magazines such as *The Journal*, *Pearl*, *Nerve Cowboy*, *Tears in the Fence* and *Garrison Keillor's Writer's Almanac*. ** **Lara Falberg** just moved to Columbus, OH from Atlanta. We don't get it either. Her full-time gig is yoga teacher. She has a DVD, *Yoga Dose*, and you can see a wee bit of it at yogadose.net <<http://yogadose.net/>>. She used to be a victim advocate for the DA's office in Decatur, GA. But, she thought becoming a yoga teacher would help her be taken more seriously as a writer. Regardless of her questionable geographic judgment and flexible relationship with logic, on occasion she makes us laugh, so we print her musings. ** **Robert M. Barrows** is the boss of R.M. Barrows, Inc., an advertising and PR firm in Burlingame, CA. He works hard, has a deep voice, takes long lunches but eats vegan, and has a really mean personal trainer at the gym who makes him do lots of crunches and bench-pressing and twisty-things with the medicine ball. Sorry. Yes, I made up everything except the stuff in the first sentence. ** **Holly Day** is a journalism instructor living in Minneapolis, MN, with her husband and two children. Her most recent non-fiction books are *Music Theory for Dummies*, *Music Composition for Dummies*, and *Walking Twin Cities*. Her poetry has most recently appeared in *Bottle*, *The MacGuffin*, and *Not One of Us*. ** Undergraduate **Jon Wells** of Denver, CO writes, "I have been writing poetry for ten years but only recently have had the courage to let others help me edit. I feel that with the direction I have received from other published poets, my work is ready to be published by a legitimate and reputable journal." Legitimate and reputable? For heaven's sake. ** I think that **Michael Cole** is actually one of his characters. Whether it's Dragin, the boy, or George, the dragon, I'm still trying to decide. ** **Phil Juliano** of Asheville keeps this whole world in his comic hands.

DRAGIN

by Michael Cole





May 2010

The Blotter

MAGAZINE

No, - you got a bite! John Brantingham, Lara Falberg,
Robert M. Barrows, Holly Day, Jon Wells,
new Best in Show and Dragin comix & The Dream Journal.

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