



End Game

"Insofar as we conquer the demons who stir up war and disturb peace, we perform better service for our ruler than they who bear the sword."

-Origen, Against Celsus

THE END IS NIGH. READ YOUR REVELATIONS, YOUR NOSTRADAMUS, YOUR EDGAR CAYCE, YOUR HOPI PROPHECY, YOUR NEWSPAPER. THE WAR IS COMING AND THERE IS LITTLE THAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT.

BUT IF OUR BELIEFS ARE AS POWERFUL AS MYSTICS AND QUANTUM PHYSICISTS SAY, THEN PERHAPS THERE IS A BACK DOOR TO — IF NOT AVOID THE BATTLE — THEN AT LEAST MAKE IT SOMETHING WE'D TAKE THE KIDS TO WATCH. CHANGE WHAT WE KNOW, AND THE UNIVERSE CHANGES; CHANGE WHAT WE EXPECT, AND MAYBE THE OUTCOMES CAN BE DIFFERENT AS WELL...

The chill of the autumn air covered the field in a frigid embrace, permeating the brutally cut grass and arrogantly tall dandelions towering over the surrounding monocots. Toward the edge, near a stand of poplars washed out and faded by a light mist, an old bucket stood lonely vigil. Left behind by a forgetful child, its handle askew where the elements had breached its armor and given it cancer, the galvanized grigori sat in silent witness to the trees and grass. Within its pitted and fouled interior, water pooled, offering sanctuary to mosquitoes in the warmer months, and slime as the year progressed. Currently it was the final resting place of a field mouse that had fallen in while getting a drink. For a long time the panicked creature had scratched at the sides, desperately trying to get out of the silent vessel. But the water was too still, the sides too smooth, and now the creature softly floated in the stygian fluid.

It had rained in the night, and water still rolled along the barren tree branches in its winding course to the earth. With metronomic regularity came the plopping sound of water drops captured by the bucket; one more diversion before reaching the soil, the rock, the hidden river far under the land. On the verge of overflowing, the sodden and decomposing body of the rodent gently rested against the side of the bucket, finally on the verge of escaping in death that which had claimed it in life.

From the sky came the clamor of voices like thunder. Great horns brayed and a cacophony of sound assaulted the ground. As the noise grew louder, the bucket began to vibrate. The moist and lichen covered branch which the water filled bucket partially rested upon offered poor support and with little ceremony, the bucket fell onto its side sending the tuberculoidal water across the already sodden earth. Unaware of its freedom, the mouse stay where it lay.

As the bucket stopped its motion, the source of the commotion appeared above the trees from the east and descended to the field. Like men, but greater in size and stature, the beings could be nothing but the focus of any land-



**DRAMATIS PERSONÆ****Publisher:** C. Diablo**Head Editor:**

Joshua French

Layout:

Joshua French

Main Article:

Sean Hammond

Kelly Gunter

Adam Fletcher

Joshua French

Jason Olshefsky

Writers:

Kelly Gunter

Sean Hammond

Edward Heffernan

Don Rider

Sean Stanley

Illustrator:My Sardonic Sense
of Humor**Contributors:**

Michelle Amoruso

Gad Berger

James D'Angelo

Frappaccino

(Mocha Flavored)

BJ Leopold

Clare Terni

A.S. Zaidi

scape. Their very existence made everything around them fade from view, become pastel, less real.

Angels made their way across the open spaces and walked in the world of men unafraid.

If the bucket were sentient, it would have immediately felt kinship for these divinely inspired creatures. In the field before it were the Watchers—those cast from Heaven and bound to the Earth, cursed to always be among, but never of, the world. All about the field, despite what the senses revealed, the impression of eyes and wings in unfathomable numbers was overwhelming.

Legend had conditioned Man to expect leather winged demons with horns and cloven feet, but the Watchers were beautiful to the point of pain. Surely the Army of God would be so much more.

In the distance other angels could be seen in pursuit. Far to the east the Heavenly Host had routed the demons and were chasing them across the globe. The End Time had come and the rebellion would finally be finished. The demons regrouped in the field, their forces in disarray, confused. How best to deal with the coming onslaught?

As their attackers appeared over the trees, the over-riding impression was one of sameness. The Host were so similar to the demons that it became impossible to distinguish between the blessed and fallen. Only their movements betrayed them. The angels moved with fluid grace, assured of their victory, while the demons possessed a ferocity that comes only when one has nothing to lose.

When one is fighting for one's existence.

As the angels descended, Michael spoke to the legions of demons before him.

"Join me. Together we can end this destructive conflict."

As though choreographed, the demons whined, "I'll never join you!"

"It is your destiny."

"No!" they screamed and went on the offensive.

Bagels, pillows, and sillystring filled the autumn sky that was already whispering of winter. In reply, Michael and his followers opened with volleys of matzo, Nerf weapons, and oompah bands. Above the noise of accordions and banjos, the voice of the Serpent could be heard.

"Apple core!"

"Baltimore!"

"Who's my friend?"

To which the imps shouted as one voice, "HIM!" pointing to Gabriel, blowing his bass kazoo.

Flying true, the core of the fruit flew, smashing into the middle of the Angel of Jazz's forehead, sending his horn flying.

With a cry, the fallen ones rejoiced. Their morale renewed, they advanced on the enemy. Intensifying their onslaught by employing their arsenals of serendipity, random number generators, and lots and lots of hard mathematic computations, the angels fell back. With another cry, the demons closed. But from their



<http://members.aol.com/ZZZIMZZZUM/mangel1.jpg>

flank rose the cherubs. At the front Cupid, a morbidly obese infant with grey, unseeing eyes, began to unleash wave after wave of Conversation Heart tipped toothpicks into the ranks of the demons. The air was filled with flashes of Be Mine, Fax Me, and You're Cute and the demons roared out in frustration at being caught from behind. Other cherubs, ducking to avoid being struck by the randomly shot arrows of Cupid, carried sparklers and bubbles. The winged infants came from on high, bombing the demon's positions with circus peanuts and candycorn. The howls of the wretched reverberated across the land.

On the field, Cupid's weapons were

having their effect. Confused demons cast volleys of Immaculate Conception, pin-wheels, and gyros into the sky, against their enemies on the ground, against themselves. Many suddenly found themselves pregnant with a taste for dill pickles.

Rallying His forces, Lucifer began waving His flashlight in an attempt to make it work. Close behind, Azriel arrived to help his comrade-in-arms with new batteries.

"Work, damn you!" came His cry as He struck the case against His crippled leg. In that instant, the light bringer's million watt bulb burst into life, blinding all around

Him, causing several cherub squadrons to careen wildly off course, crashing into and incinerating nearby trees.

From the forest suddenly burst troops of satyrs and nymphs, led by Pan. Eyes rolling in carnal lust, minds rolling in carnal thought, he and his compatriots immediately leap to the aid of the fallen ones and begin to hump the legs of the androgynous Host of God.

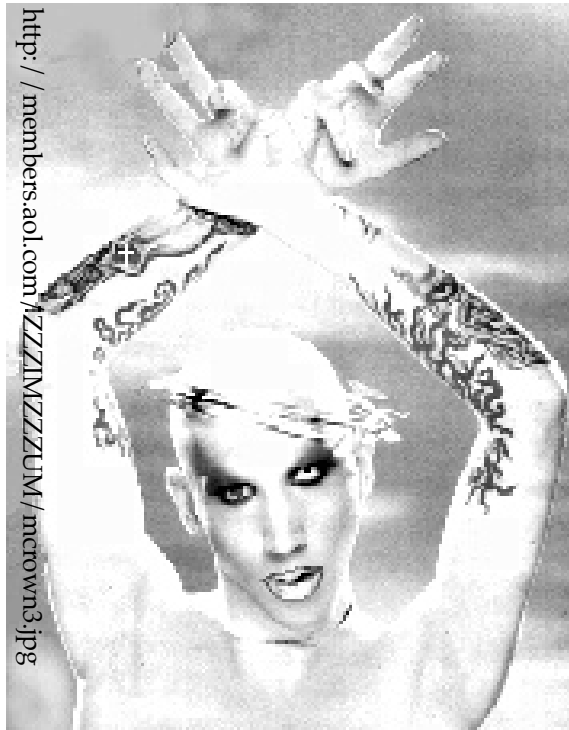
Disturbed by the desperate grunting and grinding of the hairy creatures, along with their all too Earthy fecal smell, the Host fell back into a trap laid by legions of Fae marines. Thousands of spring snakes and Chinese finger cuffs leapt into the sky, incapacitating scores of angels. Seeing his chance, Puck leapt into the fray, fixing the Chinese fingercuffs covering the field to the senseless

fingers of angels. Whole battalions of the Host had to be removed from the field of battle thanks to the bravery of Robin Goodfellow.

Not expecting Gaia's children to help the Rebels, the battle had suddenly turned. In a desperate attempt to restore morale and go on the offensive, the angel's grenadiers donned gas masks and launched volleys of allergens into the enemy ranks. The sound of sneezing and nose blowing was deafening, leveling oaks and making willows whisper, while sucking the air out of the lungs of those closest to the blast zone.

In retaliation Semyaza, extracting himself from the swarming pile of mortal women sent to distract him, called down plagues of blueberry candy canes and angel hair spaghetti. Caught unaware, Uriel and Thelesis were buried under torrents of pasta and sugary sweetness.

Unseen by the combatants, four horsemen had arrived from the compass points



http://members.aol.com/ZZZZZZZZUM/mcrown3.jpg

Gracies Dinnertime Theatre Page and bound the field. Pestilence silently picked at acne on his face and absently swatted at flies while Famine busily scoured the field for the Conversation Hearts that had missed their mark.

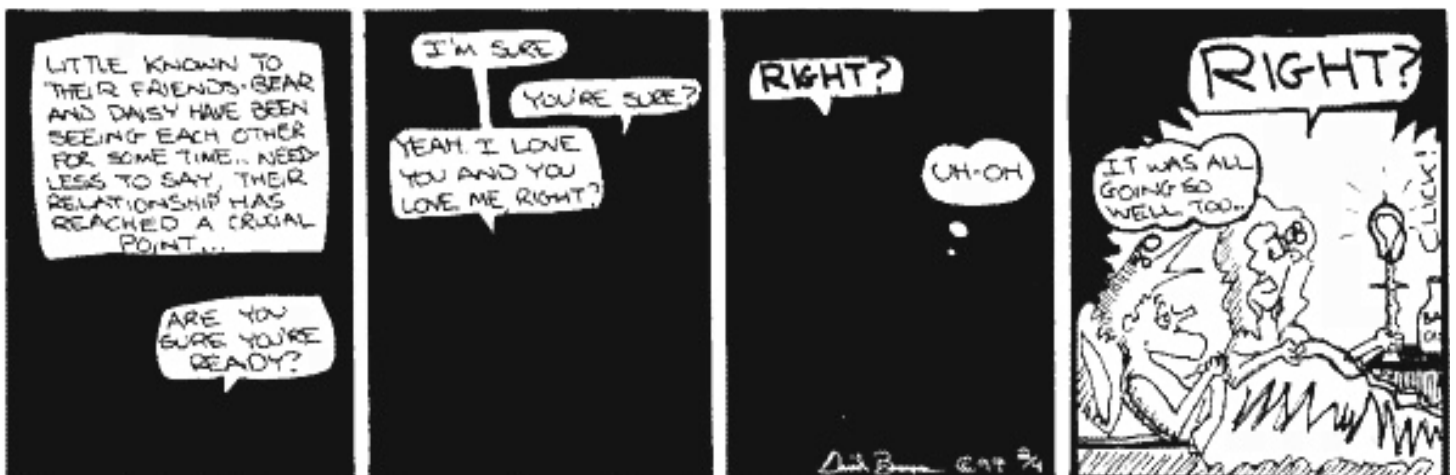
"Mmmm! Cookie good!"

War had brought Athena with him and the two were psychoanalyzing each other by saying the first words that came to mind, and Death was busy discussing the importance of diversifying one's portfolio when investing in the futures market with the translucent spirit of the dead mouse....

AND THE MORAL OF THIS LITTLE STORY? WELL, SUFFICE IT TO SAY THAT IF MAN MADE GOD AND HIS HOST IN HIS OWN IMAGE, THEN MAYBE ITS NOT TO LATE TO CLOTHE THEM IN OUR EXPECTATIONS. EXPECT THE ABSURD AND WAR CAN BECOME ENJOYABLE. SWORDS TO PLOWSHARES IS BLASÉ. SWORDS TO WATERBALLOONS IS SO MUCH MORE FUN.

Bear Bones

by David Berenson, *The Dartmouth*, Dartmouth College





An Editor's Note: Hmmm

Gracies Dinnertime Theatre Page 5

By Sean Hammond

I recently heard the cover of Ani DiFranco's newest album while driving and nearly caused an accident. For your entertainment, I present a little comparison.

In a coffee shop in a city
Which is every coffee shop
In every city
On a day which is every day
I pick up a magazine
Which is every magazine
And read a story then forgot it right away

They say goldfish got no memory
I guess their lives are much like mine
The little plastic castle
Is a surprise every time
It's hard to say if they are happy
When they don't seem much to mind

"Little Plastic Castle"

Ani DiFranco, released 17 Feb 1998

Evolution has allowed the domestic goldfish to remain sane by granting them with one of nature's shortest attention spans. It just so happens that the domestic goldfish has the capacity to remember exactly one lap around the bowl. Thus for the goldfish, life is continually new and amazing. During each lap, a goldfish more or less thinks, "This is new! This is new! Wow, this is new!" Those poor goldfish whose attention spans allow

them to realize they are merely swimming in circles simply close their gills and suffocate themselves to escape the boredom of their existence. Thus the fittest survive.

*"The Old-Folk's Home," 7 Jan 1996,
Gracies Dinnertime Theatre*

I've jokingly said to friends that goldfish have been bred to have memories just long enough to recall a single lap around their spherical universe. Those cursed with the skill of memory would live mind bogglingly boring lives and eventually kill themselves.

This explains why many goldfish only survive a few days once brought home. They were adapted for aquariums larger than what they were given.

For the survivors, their life is one filled with fascination and wonder. Every sight is the first. Every exploration of the sunken ship or Atlantian castle is unprecedented. To them, everything is new.

*"Editor's Note: Art of Forgetting"
18 January, 1998
Gracies Dinnertime Theatre*

GDT Countdown

2 issues left to our 100th issue!



Tourist's Movie Reviews

-Sean Stanley

This week: "Great Expectations"

The film "Great Expectations" is yet another attempt to modernize a classic that should have died years ago. There's a reason for things becoming unpopular as the years progress. Just look at "Birdman" cartoons during the Cartoon Network's "Toonami"—that sucks even more than it sucked back in the sixties.

I didn't expect much from this film as I sauntered into the theatre on Valentine's Day. I went to see it as sort of a tribute to how much love sucks and how dumb Valentine's Day is. But, as a "Everything I've ever done, I've done for you..." film (see also "Some Kind of Wonderful," "Miracle Beach," "Say Anything," and other cheezy 80's flicks) it was on the ball, with Gwyneth Paltrow as a fantastic bitch.

Man was she cold! Just what I needed for the dumbest fuckin' holiday of the year... next to Columbus Day of course.

Anyway, the thing that I noticed was its employment of the "can-i-paint-you-naked?" motif, which brings in the bucks by showing some skin, yet remaining "tasteful" enough for all audiences (see also "Titanic," "As Good As It Gets," and "Sirens"). This gave me a nice semi just as the film was getting a bit boring. Thumbs up.

What bothered me was that the film didn't employ the other well known motif of "can-I-make-your-penis-talk?" Let's face it. True love is not dying for that person, or



devotion beyond all rational thought. True love is not roses, or chocolate, or exotic underbriefs. True love is waking up and looking down to see your penis being manipulated like a little fleshy muppet, by someone *other* than yourself. You know the relationship is serious when you're sitting

there, and you have this dying urge to grab your significant other's tweeter and make it say any of the following:

"Ladies and Gentleman. I am the President of the United States. I am not a crook."

"Heeeellloooo! My name is Peter! Hello up there. I would like a salad!"

"It's so cute! Duhdho bubba, duhdho bubba" (similar to when addressing an infant child).

In the film, this proved to be the most obnoxious oversight. If instead of saying "I want you inside me...", Gwyneth had ripped the sheets off the bed and exposed Ethan's flaccid schlong, grabbed it, yanked it, and said,

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. Duhdho bubba," I would have been able to suspend my disbelief easier. Other than that, the film was nice. It was leaps and bounds better than that goddamn book that everyone was forced to read in the 9th grade. But it goes to show you that sex sells. If they ever make "Oliver Twist" into a Turkish prison sodomy film, you know that I'll be the first one at the door.

P.S. I've gotten a bunch of excellent matches for the next Sunday Night Fights. Keep em coming! Its nice to know you're wasting as much time as I have on that kind of shit.

The Buzz from
DONLAND
 donland.base.org

By Don Rider

**MICROSOFT RESPONDS TO DJD SUIT,
 OBJECTS TO DON AS 'EXTRA-SPECIAL MAS-
 TER' FEBRUARY**

Microsoft today responded to the Donland Justice Department's (DJD) lawsuit over the allegedly illegal bundling of Notepad with Windows 95. In a filing with the Donland Superior Court, Microsoft claimed that removal of Notepad from Windows 95 would render over 100 different Readme, log, and other text-based files "virtually unreadable."

The filing further noted, "There is no way to remove Notepad and enable plain-text reading functionality without also degrading other functionality of Windows 95 because the exact same code provides both types of

functionality." In a second filing, Microsoft objected to the appointment of Don as "extra-special master" in the lawsuit over evidence of an e-mail which shows that Don is biased against the Redmond, Washington based company.

The alleged e-mail, which was sent to a member of the DJD, read "Bill Gates is a ninny. Pass it on."

Microsoft's filing stated that "The position of 'extra-special master' is inappropriate for Don. His unnecessary name-calling of Mr. Gates was uncalled for and unprovoked, and we feel he is no longer 'extra-special.' We request that his title be changed to the more generic 'ordinary master.'"

"What in the world does all that mean?" asked one Donland developer. "It's just more of Microsoft's legalese to confuse the issue. And let's face it, Bill Gates is a ninny."

Don refused to comment on the "ninny" e-mail.

The Religious Wrong:

Out of Context and into your Life

It is interesting that termites don't build things, and the great builders of our nation almost to a man have been Christian, because Christians have the desire to build something. He is motivated by love of man and God, so he builds. The people who have come into [our] institutions [today] are primarily termites. They are into destroying institutions that have been built by Christians, whether it is universities, governments, our own traditions, that we have... the termites are in charge now, and that is not the way it ought to be, and the time has come for a godly fumigation."
 -Pat Robertson, New York, 8/18/86

The Plain Wrong:

In Context and Governing Your Life

State Representative A.J. Spano of Colorado proposed a bill to change the wording being used in the state's air quality scale to downplay the arising pollution problem in Denver.

The federal government's air quality level deemed "hazardous" was to be changed to "poor", "dangerous" to "acceptable", and "very unhealthful" was to become "fair". The final bill, which passed the House Transportation Committee in 1979, changed "unhealthful" to "good" and "moderate" was finalized as "very good."

-Colorado State Legislature,
 Colorado State, United States

“Stop the Noise!” Rube Goldberg Contest

W i n \$ 2 0 0 +

GDT's third, but probably last, contest. In honor of all things crafty & wacky, GDT is sponsoring a Rube Goldberg Contest.

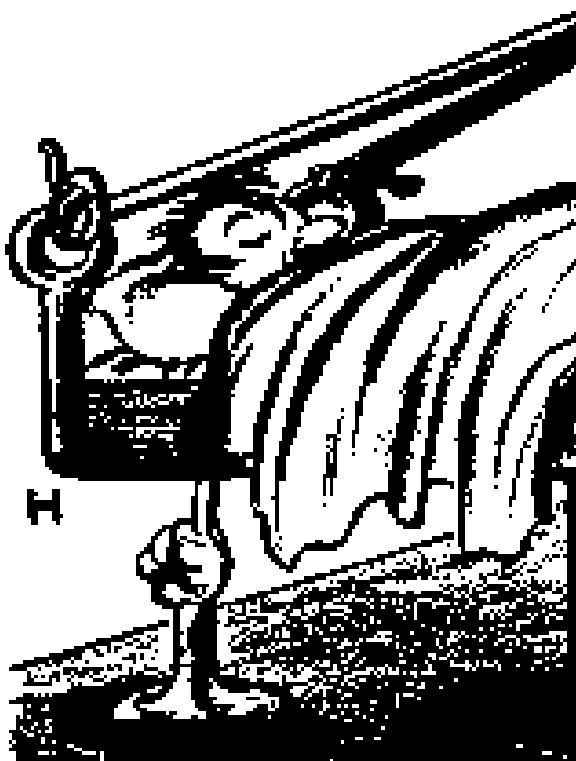
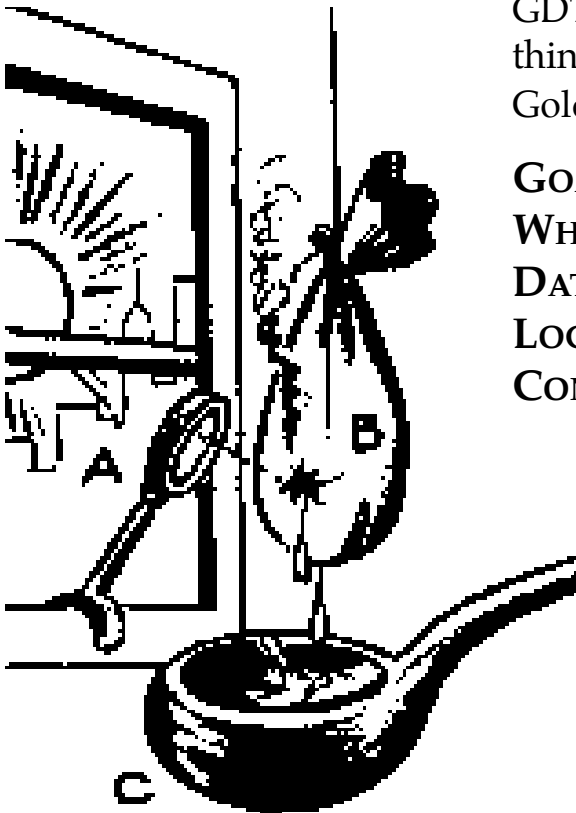
GOAL: STOPPING THE NOISE OF AN ALARM CLOCK.

WHO CAN ENTER: ANYONE!

DATE: APRIL 18TH, 52AT (1998)

LOCATION: TBA, RIT

CONTACT: GDT@INAME.COM OR (716) 235-7666



RULES AND REGULATIONS:

- The dimensions of the machine shall not exceed 6x6x6 feet.
- Each team must submit three copies of a step-by-step description of its machine by 10:30am on the day of the contest. The description must be legible and concise.
- Each team is responsible for the security of their machine and for removing their machine and related debris immediately following the contest.
- During the run, each team may assist their machine once without penalty. Any further assistance required will entail a penalty for each occurrence.
- Only two people from each team will be allowed to interact with the machine once activated.
- Machines must not use combustible fluids, explosives, open flames, or overtly hazardous materials. Safety issues will be decided by the judges. The decision of the judges is final.
- Machines must not incorporate live animals.
- A minimum of eight separate steps must be made to complete the task, four of which must be non-electrical. Each step beyond the required eight will represent additional points.
- There will be an upper time limit of ten minutes for the completion of machine's run. Judging will cease at this time. A run includes activation to completion of the task.
- Two separate attempts will be allowed to attain the objective.
- Supply your own damn alarm clock.

Cereal presents...

Icons

By Edward Heffernan

The first thing he became aware of was the pain.

It was an all composing pain, seeping down to the very marrow of his bones, it was the ache of the dead. He felt a tube being forced between his lips, and a warm fluid seeped out of it. He sucked greedily on it like a newborn child. New found vigor flooded into his veins, and he tentatively opened his eyes.

The glare that shone through his cracked eyelids was too strong, and he

quickly shut them again, groaning. He heard a quiet voice speak into his ears.

"Wait a few moments more before you open your eyes," the voice said. "Do you know your name?"

The man thought a moment, and then he croaked in a raspy voice "James Taylor."

Yes, that is who he was.

"Very good" the voice spoke again, "now, can you tell me what 5 times twenty five is?"

"One hundred and twenty five." The answer came to Taylor automatically.

"Very good," The voice repeated. It sounded pleased. "You may open your

eyes now."

Taylor opened his eyes, and it felt like the lids were being weighed down by bricks. The light was there, but it was not as bright, and his eyes slowly adjusted as he gazed around the room. He was laying on a stainless steel table in a white tiled room. Around him stood four or five people, dressed in white operating gowns. Somewhere in the background, a machine hummed a steady tune. One of the doctors spoke into a small box in his hand.

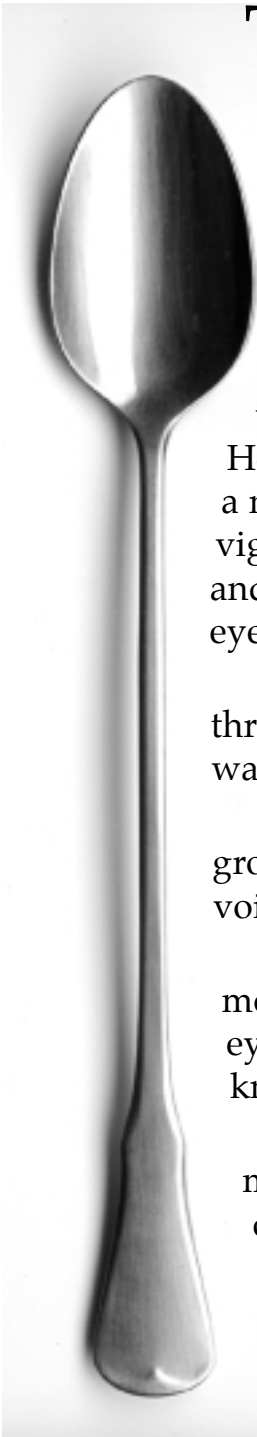
"Reanimation complete."

Taylor suddenly felt the table beneath him shudder, and it slowly whirled until he was in an upright position. He blinked in confusion as the doctors formed a semi-circle around him. Suddenly a door from across the room burst open and a circus stormed in.

At least, that was Taylor's first impression. Two spotlights on wheels were rolled in and clicked on, and an enormous camera mounted on what looked like a tiny ATV rumbled in, and the little impish man operating it pointed it at Taylor and gave him a thumbs up. Two blondes in strained bikini's with gravity defying bosoms grasped each of his arms, and smiled mightily with astonishingly white teeth into the camera. A dozen faceless attendants in bright smocks and bearing clipboards rushed about as though in some other worldly ballet. And from the center of this gaudy confusion sprang a slight man wearing a bedazzling suit of red sparkles and brandishing a gold microphone.

"And I present to you," the man cried with the highly polished exterior of an experienced showman. "Jaaames Taaayloor!"

The room broke into a polite applause while Taylor gawked in horror.



Suddenly he found a golden microphone shoved into his face and some dim part of his mind registered the fact that the microphone was spray-painted. He suddenly became aware that the man in the red suit was talking to him.

“And that is a fact! So tell me James, are you ready to pay for your sins?” Red Suit beamed at him expectantly.

“What? I don't, I mean..” Taylor blubbered in confusion.

Red suit spun around and gave the camera a hearty “Allll-riiight!” and the room once again cheered. One of the people brandishing clipboards yelled “cut!” and the little red light on the monstrous camera winked off. Red suit walked over to the camera man and spoke to him in quick tones.

“Ok, you know the routine. Keep my stuff, dub my voice with a bit of an echo. Edit the stiff, make him snarl a little, maybe have him cough up something about communism, or maybe a racial slur. You get the idea.”

Red suit pulled an odd color cigarette from somewhere within the folds of his gaudy suit, and lit it with a sigh of satisfaction. He then turned and gave Taylor a baleful look.

“Hey Stiff,” he said. “Welcome to the future.”

Taylor then felt the sharp prick of a needle on his arm, and the world went dark again.

.....

When he next awoke, he was laying on a thin but soft bunk, and he dimly heard chattering voices around him. He opened his eyes and sat up, expecting another rush

of aches and pains, but he felt none. His muscles moved like greased ball bearings and his eyes took in the room with sharp focus. He felt good. Confused, but good.

The first thing he saw was a bunk across the room, identical to his. Leisurely sprawled out upon it was a balding yet fit-looking black man who appeared to be in his early thirties. He was idly reading a magazine, and must have felt Taylor's gaze for he looked up from it. He grinned back at

Taylor, then shouted across the room, “Hey Vinnie! Fresh meat is awake!”

Taylor blinked and surveyed the rest of the room. It was long yet narrow, and filled with rows of identical bunks. About a dozen or so men were idly wandering about, chatting with their neighbors or playing cards, or simply just wasting time. The room had the look and feel of something more military than what would be found in a hospital. One of the men dispatched himself from a group and sauntered over to where Taylor was sitting. He gave Taylor a friendly smile and a slap on the back.

“Welcome back to the land of the living,” he said. “What year?”

“Excuse me?” Taylor asked. Confusion seemed to have become a part of his life, lately.

“What year did you die?” The man (Taylor assumed this was Vinnie) asked again, in a matter of fact tone of voice.

Taylor fell into his memories. That's right, he had died. He dimly remembered the hospital room, the distant drone of the priest reading last rites.

He didn't even know he was Catholic. He recalled his mother's sobs, her mascara

running down her face like little blue veins. Only his mother, he thought wryly, would make herself up for her sons death. And his father, the lawyer turned businessman, standing there stony and silent, confident that this was just another problem that his money could solve. His diseased body feeling more and more numb, and the welcoming grasp of death cloaking him like a velvet blanket before the violet cold of the cryogenics chamber entombed him in ice.

"Nineties," Taylor said. "Early nineties."

Vinnie's mouth opened into an 'O' of delight, and hey chortled out "Hey Paul, did you hear that? We've got ourselves a pre-millie here!"

The eyes of the man sitting across from Taylor widened, and he laughed along with Paul. "A pre-millie? My word, what dusty corner did they find your tank in?"

Taylor had just about enough of being left in the dark. "Would someone please simply tell me what is going on?" he pleaded.

The gleam in Vinnie's eyes turned from humor to pity. Pity and understanding. He sat down on the bunk next to Taylor and started to talk.

"Lets go over a little history here first. Way back in the eighties, people started to get the idea of immortality into their heads. But folks kept dying simply because medical science was not that very advanced. Well, after a while some cheery bloke gets the idea into his head of freezing people. Just stick them in a tank full of liquid nitrogen and wait until medical advancements reaches the point where they can be cured."

A lightbulb suddenly flashed inside of Taylor's head. "Wait a minute, you mean all

the people in this room here were.."

"Dead" Vinnie interrupted. "Yeah, at one point, we were all corpsicles. But let me finish our little history lesson here.

"Now, cryogenics is a rather expensive undertaking. Thus only the wealthy were able to be put under. And cryogenics was never really more than a fad, anyways. For about fifty years people were put under and stored away. Then people simply forgot about them."

Taylor nodded for the man to continue.

"Well, time passed. Quite a bit of it, as a matter of fact. Societies rose and societies fell, like the tides in the ocean. The cryogenics people were filed away and forgotten, as their mates died, their children, great grand children, and so on. Then the earth had some big final war, I mean a really big one. All of us here are kind of sketchy of the details, but apparently it scared the people of earth straight. Peace was made, paradise bloomed.

"There is no more crime, no more enemies, no more war."

Taylor thought about that for a moment. "Well, that sounds pretty good, with no more hate in the world."

"Ah.." Vinnie stated with a smile. "I did not say there was any more hate. After all, its basic human nature to hate. But herein lies a problem, who to hate? No one caused any more ill to their neighbors, countries were at peace. So who was left?"

Taylor shrugged.

"The past, that's who," Vinnie said with a flourish of his hands. "Oh, don't look so shocked, you're a pre-millie. So am I, I was bottled away in the early eighties. Think about it for a moment: what about

Nazis? You were brought up to hate Nazis, and everything they stood against. But there were no more Nazis living in your time, not real organized ones at anyrate. Well chap, that's us to these future people. We're the monster of the past."

"Wait a minute," Taylor protested. "I'm no monster, I never hurt anyone. Hell, I spent half my life wasting away on a hospital bed. I hardly even watched the news."

"Doesn't matter," Vinnie replied. "You are from that era. You are a representation of the people who had racism, homelessness, AIDS, large amounts of crime and murders, all sorts of undeclared war. You are an Icon, a focal point for these people to turn their hate energy upon."

Taylor was speechless. He suddenly found himself in a situation where an entire world hated him. He simply had no way of comprehending it.

"So what happens now?" he asked.

"Well, remember when you woke up and saw that sorry looking chap in that truly ugly red suit? That guy is Licon De'Larnec, and he heads the arena. The entire thing is televised across the world. The bloke is a weasel, and I cant say that any of us down here have any real love for him. But he is good, real good. Every week a new show is put on and televised, where the people of the past 'pay for their sins', and that's us chap. Either were in the arena stripped down like roman gladiators whipping each other asses, or debating modern people, or whatever catches the publics fancy at the time."

Taylor felt his Jaw drop open. "That's barbaric," he said.

It was Vinnie's turn to shrug now. "Is it? Is it really? Most people think like you

when they are first woken up. Even me. But look at the situation. To begin with, we are alive. Hell, I was eighty seven when I was put under, wasting away from colon cancer. Colon cancer, man. That means my asshole was eating me alive. But look at me now."

Vinnie flexed a massive bicep, which was tanned and oiled and solid as a rock.

"Yeah, I know, your thinking about how great you feel too. Medical science is a wonder these days. But most important, you're alive. Its not exactly a second chance, but you're alive. And you're helping world peace. Sure, people will scream at you, hate you, and blame you for any situation that might happen in their honest little lives. But everyone knows you."

The man in the bunk across from them called out "Hell, I got playing cards with my name on it."

Vinnie snorted and called back "Yeah, but so far your rookie card ain't worth shit. My action figures are selling off the shelf." Vinnie laughed as the other man scowled.

He then turned back to Taylor, eyes bright, a smile on his face. "What do you say, kid, give it a shot? Not much else to do around here."

Taylor did not think long. Half a life spent wasting away, when he could have been running or jumping or just screaming out in Joy. Sure, he would give it a shot. After all, he had nothing to lose.

"Lets get some commies." He said with a grin.

The Author would love to hear what you think, you may email him at ejh7678@ritvax.rit.edu