



# Gracies Dinnertime Theatre

Halloween Issue!

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## 1st Place: The Black Cat by Ross Reinhardt

Hello, I am Bill, and tonight I am going to tell you the story of the black cat. It all started on Halloween night four years ago...

A twelve-year-old named Jake went out trick or treating. He passed numerous houses in the neighborhood, but none were scary. Jake liked scary stuff. He walked down the road to his friend's house for a Halloween party. Then he saw it—the scariest house in town. It had cobwebs scattered all over the shrubs, windows, and doors. It was three stories high, had many windows, and there was even a skeleton on the front doorstep! There weren't any lights on though, and the place looked abandoned. That didn't discourage him. Maybe somebody is home he thought. So he walked up to the front stoop. The place looked even worse than it did from the road.

The old white paint was peeling off the dark rotten wood. Most of the windows were broken and the door was open just a crack. The cemetery was behind the old tattered house. But why haven't I seen this house before? He thought to himself, "I walk by here every day after school." The cobwebs swayed in the wind.

Jake knocked once, twice, but there was no answer. "Ah man," he said out loud. The old door creaked open. Well, I guess I could use some adventure," he said and stepped through the door. He found himself inside the first floor. There was a table in the middle of the room and three chairs set around it. There were cobwebs everywhere he went. Through another door to the next room, there was a rickety old typewriter in the middle of a small table tucked into the corner. There was an old yellow sheet of paper in the typewriter. It read: *The end is near.* "This has to be a joke," Jake said to himself.

Jake went to the next room. There was a rickety old staircase in the left corner of the room. In the middle was an old couch all stained red. There was a chair beside it also stained red. Jake walked up the stairs into the second floor. All the rooms were barren—no curtains, no nothing. He climbed up another stairwell into the third floor. There was a lot of old junk up there like chairs and boxes of old newspapers. He picked one up. It was from 1617! Having not found anything interesting, he dropped the newspaper back in to the box and walked back down the stairs and out of the house.

He then jumped the gate to the cemetery and started walking around. Something rustled in the shrubs. It was coming closer! Crash! Jake hit a tombstone. It cracked and broke into two pieces. The rustling became louder, and Jake saw the outline of a black figure. He almost wet his pants. Then, he realized that it was only a black cat. Its green eyes glared at him. Jake's head started to hurt.

The cat walked up to him and gave a friendly meow. Jake's head stopped hurting as he checked the cat for identification, but he found none. He asked the cat, "Are you lost?" The cat replied with a loud friendly purr. Jake pondered for a while and thought about things like, Can I take it home? Will my Mom and Dad let me keep it? "Well, there's only one way to find out," he said aloud, and picked up the cat and rushed home.

He arrived on his front stoop only five minutes later. He opened the door with his house key. His parents weren't home because they were at a late meeting. He stopped inside and marched to the refrigerator to get something to eat. There was a note on the refrigerator that read, "*The end is near.*" He ran to the phone to call the police. He picked up the phone, but it was dead. He ran to the door to get out. It was jammed.

“Somebody is stalking me,” he said to himself. “I gotta get out of here.”

The lights went out. He grabbed for the flashlight in his pocket and turned it on. It wouldn't work. He felt the cat darting about his knees, its green eyes looking up at him as if it wanted to talk to him. Then it happened. In the light of the full moon, through the window the cat's jaw moved. It spoke to him! “Hello,” it said. Jake stammered and said “hello” back in a scared voice. The cat continued. It said, “I am a witch's cat. My name is Saber. I have magical powers. Listen to me. I can keep you from being slaughtered by the zombies that come out on Halloween night if there's a full moon.”

Jake, still afraid of this whole situation, asked, “Are you a good cat?” It answered, “Yes, I am.” Then it said, “Come find me and I will help you,” and disappeared into thin air. Then, the electric generator kicked in and the lights came on and the door swung open, and the TV came back on. Jake checked the news. The reporter was talking about massive power failure and many deaths in his town alone! The reporter continued, “Twenty people were killed in cold blood by an unknown killer, many by numerous stab wounds to the chest.” There was one survivor who was interviewed and described zombies throwing knives at him. Most people thought that he was insane, so Saber wasn't lying about the zombies! Jake thought to himself. Now he had to find that cat!

He walked all around town until he found him hiding under some bushes two blocks away. “Why did you disappear on me?” Jake asked. The cat replied, “I had to, so that the zombies won't find me. If they do, I can't protect anyone,” he said. “What do we do?” asked Jake. The cat replied, “It's worse than I thought,” Saber said the zombies are out again, it will be hard to put them back to sleep, and before Jake could say a word there was a blinding flash of light and they were at the cemetery's gates. They both ran to the surrounding shrubs, from there Jake could see zombies rising from the ground they were gray and old skin was hanging from them everywhere.

Now, our first priority is to fix that tombstone you broke, Saber instructed, but it isn't going to be easy for if the zombies catch you, you're doomed. Now here's the plan: I will create a diversion while

you sneak around and put the two pieces of the broken tombstone back together. I will then run over to you and freeze the two pieces of it together, we will then run into that house and hide; though we must be quick about it or we may get caught. “That sounds like a plan to me,” Jake replied.

Saber cautiously neared the gates they spotted him and he took off down the street like a bullet from a gun. The zombies perused him Jake knew what he had to do. He kneeled and reached down to pick up the top of the tombstone but it wasn't there!

Jake quickly got to his feet and started looking all around the cemetery for the top half. He finally found it propped up against a tree. Now how could've it moved over there? He picked it up and was apprehended by a zombie! It was a trap! Jake struggled and dropped the top half of the tombstone. Jake was taken to the top floor of the old house and pushed up against the wall to face his attacker, its flesh was peeling off its bones; its face was pale gray, it was missing an eyeball, and its face or what was left of it was expressionless. It was wearing a belt and had a dagger. Jake was frozen in place in fear; he couldn't move or speak.

Meanwhile, Saber was being chased by the mad pack of zombies, and they were gaining on him. Saber was running as fast as he could. But then he remembered he had to get back to Jake, he screeched to a halt and teleported himself to the cemetery. Having not found Jake outside by the gravestone, Saber began searching for him. He walked up to the house's front stoop, slipped through the door, looked around, and finding nothing walked upstairs to the second floor and than up to the third floor. There he found Jake in the corner strapped onto a chair with tape over his mouth. The zombie was standing across the room with a dagger ready to charge Saber quickly took action and pounced on the zombie thrashing and biting until it fell to the floor. The dagger flew through the air at Jake and hit his chest. Fortunately, it didn't hit hard. Saber ran over and pulled the dagger out of Jake's chest, untied him, and took the tape off his mouth.

Jake screamed in pain, Saber got some old newspapers to help stop the bleeding, after a little rest they slowly walked downstairs and walked out into the cemetery. Jake, still in pain, picked up the top half of the gravestone and set it on the bottom section just as

Saber had said to do the two pieces fused together. The gravestone read Mr. Frankenstein 1551-1600.

“How did you do that?” asked Jake. “Magic,” replied Saber. “Now there is one last thing we must do. We have to find my old collar that I lost fifteen years ago while I was patrolling. When I got home I realized that it was gone and I haven’t seen it since.” “I think we should check in the shrubs,” said Jake. “You go look for it there and I will look in the house,” replied Saber. Later they returned. Jake hadn’t found a thing. Saber, on the other hand, had found an old typewriter, but the lid was rusted shut. “Come over here and help me open this,” Saber called to Jake. They both yanked on it and it soon flew open and out fell an old collar with a diamond on it. It was engraved Saber. “Put it on me,” Saber said, Jake did as he was told. The diamond lit up bright red and opened like a door to reveal a

small box on the collar, and out fell a yellow piece of paper Saber picked it up, unfolded it, and began to chant *caream caroom carom*.

Then suddenly the house disappeared; there was a blinding flash of light.

Sunlight came in through Jake’s window. He was in bed. Was it all a dream? Jake reached out to his bedside table to turn off his alarm. There was the collar engraved “Saber” with the diamond on it, his chest hurt, he pulled up his shirt to look, there was a big scar right in the middle of his chest. He then noticed there was an orange and black striped cat at the foot of his bed. Its green eyes stared at him as if it wanted to talk to him...

The End

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**2nd Place: Untitled**  
by Ryan Chafin

“Just what happened to you today?” says an upset Coach Lawrence as his best sprinter mopes off the track, “Your time went up six seconds! That’s inexcusable!”

Alvin remains silent for a few moments to organize his thoughts. He was expected to be 400-meter state champion, but after today’s performance at the qualifying meet, he won’t even be making regionals. Alvin knows exactly why he lost, but he can’t tell his coach.

Covering his right forearm, which is burning horribly, Alvin replays the race over and over in his mind, trying to formulate a feasible excuse. Sure, there was a slight breeze blowing against him, but after he ran a 49.5 second 400 in the previous meet against nearly gale-force winds, today’s shouldn’t have even bothered him. During the last fifty meters, another runner looked back at him, flicking a few droplets of his sweat flying onto his face; Alvin could say that they landed in his eye, or that the kid spit on him, but he doubted Coach Lawrence would believe that either.

Alvin doesn’t tell Coach Lawrence anything; he just shrugs and walks away, gritting his teeth to endure the pain of the sunlight against his arm. He breathes a sigh of relief as he pulls on his long-sleeved warm-up

jacket and then walks down the sidewalk beside the track, looking for the apparel he dropped during the race. Sure enough, there it was, lying on the track right after the last curve. Alvin goes toward it, but a track attendant notices it and picks it up before Alvin can get there. Alvin swears under his breath.

“What in the world is this?” Alvin could hear the attendant say, “It looks like a great, big ripped condom.”

Alvin turns and walks away. It was indeed ripped and now worthless to him. No wonder it fell off! I’m going to beat the dirt out of Mallory when I get home! He thinks.

Marion passes him as she comes back from the broad-jump pit. “Hey Alvin,” she says, putting on her cutest smile, “How’d you do today?”

Alvin grimaces, careful not to show his teeth, as always. He couldn’t just walk away from her like he did the coach; he also can’t tell her the real reason either. He also hates to look anything but macho for the insanely attractive senior broad jumper that seems to like him. “Well, um, I lost,” utters Alvin.

“Don’t worry about it.” she replies, rubbing his shoulder, “Everyone has a bad day once in a while. You just had yours on the wrong day.”

“But I didn’t have a bad day!” Alvin blurts, “The runner in front of me. I, ah, was drafting off of him and

was about to pass him when he turned his head and spit in my eye. I can't believe nobody saw it."

"Whoa!" says Marion, "Last time I checked, that was against the rules. You ought to complain." Alvin nods and Marion walks away. Gosh, she's all that! Thinks Alvin, She'd be delicious.

Alvin keeps walking around the track, watching the high-jumpers jump and throwers toss their respective projectiles. After making a full loop around the outside of the track, he arrives back at the spot where his team left their things. A group of student athletes, including Marion, and Coach Lawrence are talking. When Marion sees Alvin, she mentions to Coach Lawrence what Alvin told her about the fictional race-costing spittle.

"Alvin!" says Coach, "Why didn't you tell me that the leading runner spit on you!"

Again, Alvin doesn't know what to say. He just wishes the day would be over already so he could return to his lair. Alvin stutters as he mentally beats himself over the head for telling two such contradictory stories. Coach grabs him by the wrist and drags him to the officials' tent, and demands that action be taken. Alvin repeatedly tried to get him to stop and just let it go, because his arm was still throbbing from the exposure to sunlight, but he couldn't get a word in. After determining the identity of the sprinter who would have been the spitter, they call him over and interrogate him about the allegation. He vehemently denies, and Alvin is immensely embarrassed.

\* \* \*

"Mallory!" shouts Alvin as he storms into his house and down the spiral stairs that descend into a subterranean den illuminated only by torches. It's a simple place; two cots for Alvin and Mallory to sleep on, along with a bathroom that's tucked in around a corner and a few tables. They have a TV, but they never use it. The portal to the undead was left wide open, so Mallory probably just stepped out for a quick errand.

His blood boiling, Alvin undresses and peels the transparent epidermal sheet of porous plastic from his face and body. Since the lair has no windows to the surface, he doesn't need it anymore.

Mallory pops through the portal. "Hello Alvin." he says to his roommate, "How'd you do today?"

"For starters," replies Alvin, his pale skin glowing eerily in the torch light and his fangs bared, "My PEL fell off my arm today in the last eighty meters and my arm was almost fried off!"

"What?" says Mallory, surprised, "Protective epidermal layers are one piece. It'll only come off if you take it off."

"I felt like an idiot!" exclaims Alvin exasperatedly, flailing his arms in the air as he paces to and fro, "Now I'm the only student vampire athlete in the Infiltrative Surface Schooling Program that isn't a state champion at a sport!"

"Too bad."

"However, I'm pretty sure the only way that PED could have fallen off my arm is that it was torn beforehand," says Alvin, glaring at Mallory.

Mallory gets the message. "Surely, Alvin, you're not accusing me of—" Alvin lunges at him. Mallory bears his teeth and takes the attack; he's never really liked his roommate anyway, so trying to tear him to pieces is no problem.

Fights between angry vampires tend to get pretty horrific; these two brawl for hours.

\* \* \*

Alvin finally sinks his fangs into Mallory's skull, and Mallory goes limp. A battered Alvin staggers to his feet, and the bloodlust subsides, leaving only his usual rational thought. Alvin realizes that he's committed a terrible infraction of both human and vampire law. Human police will come sniffing around after Mallory fails to show up at school for a week or so, and their own people in the undead will start to be suspicious when he fails to return home during spring break.

Again, Alvin is beating himself over the head, physically this time, for his stupidity. The inconsistent stories he told the coach and Marion today were dumb enough; now, what is going to say when the time comes to explain himself again?

**3rd Place: Old Lady**  
**Kenneth Hoffman**

It was nearing dusk when an old lady appeared at the entrance of the aisle set up between the rows of folding chairs. We were at a school function near the end of October. She hesitated a moment, stared left, then right with bird-like movements of her head. A murmur started near the back as she inched her way up the aisle. An old cotton babushka covered all but a hank of iron gray strands. A few unfortunate moles sporting a few lonely hairs were not well hidden by some sallow-looking makeup. Two spots of raspberry cheek lent a carnival air but a sunken upper lip make it clear there was no teeth inside. At least the brave soul tried to dress up for the occasion. She wore a long dress of an indeterminate flower pattern in purple and green, hanging almost to the floor in front and slapping

her ankles in the back as she hobbled forward. Two thin sticks of arms, bent at the elbows, one carrying a cracked leather black oversized bag, ended in gnarled hands covered with a pair of once-white lace gloves. A hunched back like a half watermelon bowed her skinny shoulders. Around her neck hung a ratty-looking mink collar, the preserved mink head swinging pendulously as she steadily worked her way forward. A whiff of old cellar smell mixed with some five and ten perfume overlaid with a suggestion of mothball preceded her. I'm sure some of the thoughts in the audience ranged from "Poor thing, I wonder if she has enough to eat" to "I hope I don't get that old some day" and "She's probably all alone in her room with no-one to take care of her." She finally spied an empty chair in the front row and lowered herself down right next to me. The old lady was my six-year-old sister Diane and she won the Halloween contest two years in a row!

**MEN ARE HIGH MAINTENANCE**

Men are high maintenance  
 This I know is true  
 With an ego like a fireplace  
 that has a log too few

I always stoke the fire  
 I fan the flames of pride  
 I stir the ashes of conceit  
 and from its embers I hide

I nurse that ego fireplace  
 so its flames will last the night  
 I keep a steady vigilance  
 It's not a pretty sight

The flames hunger for more wood  
 The wood of my esteem  
 My own fire fades away  
 It's a relationship—not a team!

Before my fire dies on down  
 I pull myself away  
 And say, "Men are high maintenance!  
 And I don't need one today."

From the book:  
 THE LOVE POEMS OF THE FEMINIST FROM THE  
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Poetry

## Cult Corner

by the omnipotent Sean T. Hammond, on assignment in the frigid wastes of Maine

**P**raise the Lord (and Ladies)! At a recent GDT meeting, I was asked where I get the material for my weekly ascent into the history of holy madmen and blessed whores. Well, I suppose I could say that I suffer from prefrontal lobe epilepsy, making me especially susceptible to feelings of religious euphoria and a desire for oneness with the infinite...but I won't. Can I get an Amen!? Suffice it to say that I read a lot and make connections between ideas that might not really be there.

To illustrate, I thought I'd take one of my favorite Biblical passage—Isaiah 14:12—and point out some interesting connections I've made. I don't claim they are original, but they're still neat.

For those not in the know, Isaiah 14:12 is the part of the Bible where Lucifer is supposed to be mentioned by name. In the King James Version the crucial section reads:

HOW ART THOU FALLEN FROM HEAVEN, O  
LUCIFER, SON OF THE MORNING!

Seems like a straightforward mention of our friend Lucifer the Glow Worm, but if you do a little research, things fall apart a bit. Legitimate Biblical scholars usually divide the Book of Isaiah into sections, because it is believed that, based on differences in writing, style, and content, the book is a composite that reached its present form around 180BC. Chapters 1-39, are believed to have been written by Isaiah himself, and is sometimes referred to as the Book of Immanuel. The section we're interested in, chapter 14, falls in a portion (chapters 13-23), which deal with foreign nations, and their rulers, which were enemies of Israel. Isaiah 14:12 is generally considered satire against a particular king of Babylon. As evidence the little-cited chapter 14:4 lays it all out:

THAT THOU SHALT TAKE UP THIS PROVERB  
AGAINST THE KING OF BABYLON, AND SAY,  
"HOW HAST THE OPPRESSOR CEASED! THE  
GOLDEN CITY CEASED!"

This is all fine and good, but frankly, it's boring. Instead of focusing on the historical aspect of 14:12, I want to take a look at its wording in relation to some implied Jewish traditions of the day.

The Jews, while undeniably monotheistic, had several polytheistic tendencies. Jews living in areas of the world geographically distant from the Temple tended to develop what is collectively referred to as "Wisdom Literature." These writing were especially prevalent in Alexandria and eventually lead to several dualistic Christian heresies.

The general gist of the wisdom literature was that divine Wisdom was personified. Far from being a marginal concept, wisdom literature exists in Proverbs 8:

THE LORD POSSESSED ME [WISDOM] IN THE  
BEGINNING OF HIS WAY, BEFORE HIS WORKS OF  
OLD. I WAS SET UP FROM EVERLASTING, FROM  
THE BEGINNING, OR EVER THE EARTH WAS.

—*KJV Proverbs 8:22-23*

Having established that the idea of personification wasn't an unknown concept to the Jews responsible for much of the Old Testament, let's take another look at Isaiah 14:12 and break it down:

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the Morning!

A better translation of the passage is "How are you fallen from heaven, O day star, son of dawn." "Day star" comes from the Hebrew "hyll" meaning "to shine." Some scholars feel this is word play on the name of King Helel, but in this case, I don't care. Instead I think it is important to recognize that "hyll" (to shine), "day star," and Lucifer ("light bringer") are all expressing the same concept.

To both moderns and the ancients, the morning star is identified with the planet we call Venus. Now comes the fun part. To the Greeks, a group famous for personifying concepts and nature, the planet Venus was called Phosphore...the same word from which we derive phosphorescence, meaning "The emission of light without heat."

Now, personify "dawn" in Isaiah 14:12, and you get the Greek goddess Eos (Aurora to the Romans). Can you guess who Eos' son is? Yup, it's Phosphore. You all get gold stars this week.

Just to drive the point home, Isaiah 14:12 can be rewritten "How are you fallen from heaven, O Phosphore, son of Eos!" without losing any of the meaning. Rather, such word play opens up new interpretations of the Bible and polytheistic influences on it.

Until next week, *dominus vobiscum*.

**PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact: Andrew Gill**

**TruNatural Unveils New Environmental Initiatives**

Following its success with TruFresh(tm) water, TruNatural PLC has decided to release three new products that will improve your living experience: TruElements, TruDNA, and TruLife.

TruElements caters to those concerned about the ever-growing radiation levels in today's world. You can wear lead vests or tin-foil beanies, but there's still radiation seeping in. In fact, a significant portion of the world's elements are already radioactive. 150 parts per million of hydrogen are "Heavy Hydrogen," the same isotopes that were found in the cooling ponds of Chernobyl's Reactor #4. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration notes that even one part per million of chlorine, an element found in table salt, is hazardous. Some Carbon is so radioactive that it will actually "decay up" into Nitrogen, which is more massive than Carbon. Enough of this carbon has been found in some cadavers that researchers can actually find out when the people died. Even corpses that have remained untouched for millennia are now being found to have this Carbon radiation.

The money you carry, the food you eat, and even the nutritional supplements you take all have these radioactive isotopes. That's where TruElements comes in. TruElements is a service that removes the dangerous radioactive isotopes in your environment and replaces them with natural ones. TruElements is expected to be

available in the fourth quarter of 2001 for an MSRP of \$300,000.

TruDNA is designed for the power user who wants to make the most of his or her body. Now that the human genome project has been completed, we know that a large portion of our genetic code is useless. Some estimates place the useful DNA at around 2% of the entire molecule.

TruDNA removes all of the useless code, and replaces the cells with super-efficient ones. This is done by placing the modified code into a carrier cell (for preliminary tests, we used a specially-created eukaryotic version of Ebola) and letting it do all of the work. We are still awaiting FDA approval for human tests. Contact us if you'd like to participate.

Finally, TruLife is striving to make the world a friendlier place by making life itself better. Those on the TruLife team have seen the excesses of such animals as the infanticidal dolphin and the hypersexual Bonobo Monkeys. TruNatural is creating a task force to deal with this issue; lectures will begin with Albert de Salvo discussing Advanced Natural Selection on December 10 at the Boston Civic Center. Our action plan is expected to be published by the second quarter of 2001.

TruNatural PLC is a Publicly Licensed Corporation created by Chris Condon from <http://www.dumbentia.com>. It is presently suing Compaq Computer Corporation over the nature of their trademark Tru64 UNIX.





STUDENT GOVERNMENT PRESENTS  
PRESIDENT AL SIMONE'S DECISION

# Quarters VS Semesters

4:30 pm, Friday, November 3rd,  
in the 1829 Room of the SAU  
following the  
SG Senate meeting at 4pm

**Free and open to the community!**

The final vote by the  
Board of Trustees is  
November 9 & 10,  
in the CIMS building

sgovt@rit.edu – www.sg.rit.edu – 475.2204



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