

*We are merely players with Paperhand Puppet Intervention,
Michael Anthony, Karen Heslop, Bill Moore,
Phil Juliano, and The Dream Journal*

The Blotter

December 2016

MAGAZINE



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"Time. And puppets"

Time, as the man in the movie said, is not our friend. It remains, however, our constant companion. Untiring and unavoidable, old Father Time – and we choose whether he delights or haunts us. Or sometimes we ride a rollercoaster of haunting delight. It all depends, I suppose, on what you expected from life, what you gave, what you received. It's a bit tricky. And I've been very lucky; I'll admit that without hesitation. It's been ten years gone since John Pence turned to me (not really, it was mostly done by e-mail, but you get my point) and asked if I was interested in handling the reins of this magazine for a while. I've had the time of my life, in almost all ways one can measure such things, if one had the strange bug up one's behind to measure everything. I don't, but time is one of those details that almost demands that you measure, if nothing else, well...*it*. Nine years ago I brought the girls to Saxapahaw, NC, to see Donovan Zimmerman and Jan Burger's warehouse wonderland. They were in the midst of preparing for their summer show – Spring is for creating – and they let us walk around and ask a few questions and take some pictures. My gosh, the girls were so young then - belief is reality when you're that age. Things leaning against warehouse walls and hanging from rafters can come to life with ease.

One of my questions was "How do you make a camel?" (I wanted to create a life-sized puppet to do a Christmas pageant extracted from the children's book *The Last Straw* by Frederick T. Thury and Vlasta van Kampen.) I had visions of poles and chicken-wire and faux fur and many puppeteers in black body stockings.

Donovan's one-word answer was brilliant. "Umbrella." Of course. My camel *became*, out of a papier-mâché head on a stick and a piece of beige cloth over an umbrella. That's what puppets do – they become. Puppeteers help the process along. Even novice puppeteers like me. And now life goes full circle. My daughters are in high school. They are artists, musicians, scientists, mathematicians. And they are part of a project to make puppets, learning to make those puppets become. They're putting on a show. Donovan is helping them. Again. I couldn't be more proud, or amazed. Time is a heck of a thing.

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CAUTION

What's the buzz, tell me what's the haps.

“Violet Flowers”

by Michael Anthony

Still on the run since that bloody Saturday night in the New Jersey warehouse some eight months ago, the last thing Pete Henceforth expected to find in his Kansas hotel room was a woman, a naked woman at that. But, there she sat on the freshly made bed, wearing only patent leather high heels, elbow length gloves and ruby red lipstick.

“You’re in the wrong room, lady,” Pete said warily.

“Four-o-four,” she smiled back. “Right?”

Pete checked the key in his hand. “Some kind of mistake,” he said, while studying her face, her shoulders, her breasts and more. She seemed neither bothered nor shy. Pushing the door open with the toe of his shoe and tightening his grip on the pistol in his jacket pocket, Pete asked, “Who the hell are you?”

“I have a message for Pete Henceforth. You him?”

Before answering, Pete scanned the room, making sure this unexpected visitor was alone. Once he saw she was, he asked, “Who wants to know?”

“Morey LaRue,” she replied while sitting straight as a rail, her one leg crossed over the other, hiding what little was left

to Pete’s imagination.

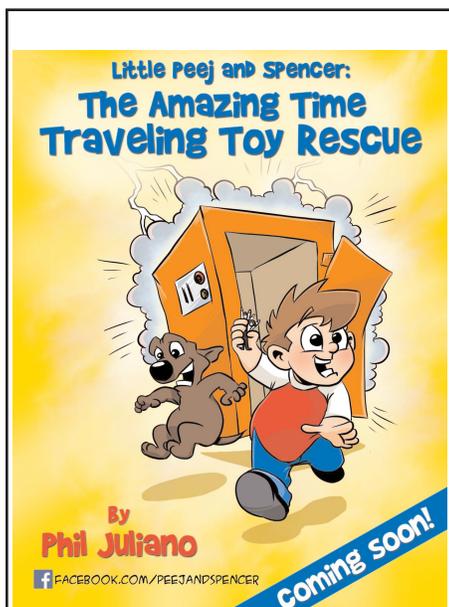
He hadn’t heard that name since Jersey. Word had it Morey was dead; knocked off by some disgruntled partners who didn’t like how that shipment of silver bullion just vanished into thin air from that warehouse.

Still suspicious, Pete asked, “How do you know Morey?”

“He called the club and said he wanted a message delivered. Would give me a C note, no questions asked. So, here I am.”

The woman looked to be no more than thirty, thirty-five tops. Her brunette hair was swept to the side. Penciled brows arched above the darkest amber eyes Pete had ever seen. Her smooth face didn’t need all the make up she wore, especially her lips, which were full. The gloves were odd for this time of day and this out of the way town in the Kansas farm belt.

Pete wondered if she had been sent to lure him out into the light so Morey’s business associates could finish him off as well. “What’s he looking like



New book project from Phil Juliano!!
'Little Peej and Spencer: The Amazing Time Traveling Toy Rescue'. A novelized version of the syndicated comic strip, 'Best In Show'. This story has all the typical issues a seven year old has to deal with: bullies, homework and a little sister. What's different? Our seven year old hero begins his story as a middle-aged comic geek so nostalgic for his prized Star Wars toy collection that he devises a way to go back in time to retrieve them. Of course, things don't go according to plan. Expected release Winter 2016. Follow along with the project at www.facebook.com/PeejandSpencer. and help fund / advance order via <http://www.gofundme.com/peejandspencer>

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these days?" If she really had seen Morey LaRue, she would mention his unique characteristic. Everybody did.

"Like I said, this guy calls; tells me to meet him in Room 11 at the Wellington Hotel on Twenty-third. When I get there, it's dark. Guy's sitting in the corner. So, I only see his shadow. Says come in; shut the door; and, turn around with my back to him. Tells me he ain't no pervert, just doesn't want me to see his face."

"Go on." Pete said.

"Tells me to take off my clothes. Then, he gives me the message for some guy named Pete Henceforth here in Wingate." The naked woman stopped and waited for Pete to react.

"I'm supposed to believe you go to some hotel to meet a guy you never heard of and take your clothes off for him?" Pete asked, though more concerned by how anyone knew he was in this barnacle of a town.

The woman tilted her head and stared. Something in her

eyes told Pete she didn't have any problem taking her clothes off for men. "Look, you want the message or not?" she said. "I got an early show."

"Show?" Pete repeated.

"Yeah, The High Hatter. What? You think I sing in a Baptist choir or something?"

'Ah, a stripper,' Pete mused. *'No wonder it doesn't bother her sitting here naked.'*

"So, what's this message?" he asked.

The brunette pushed off the bed; walked past Pete; and, closed the door. "A little privacy, okay?"

Then, she spun around, exposing a gloriously muscled back. Her spine was a delicate chain of vertebra, each stacked squarely atop the next, not one out of line. Pete's eyes followed the inviting road map to her hips, which were round but not wide. There, on her backside, was a single line written neatly in green ink. Pete leaned close to read, "Words pay no debts." Bent at the waist, his face was inches away from one of the most beautiful asses he'd ever seen.

The woman peered over her shoulder, "What, you memorizing it?" Her wit was not lost on Pete, who snickered. The slight shake of her buttocks said she enjoyed her own joke. Pete straightened, but not before he caught a whiff of perfume mixed with the unmistakable scent of a woman. Pete thought, *'It's been too long.'*

Though succinct, the message was, without a doubt, from Morey. Only he would say it that way. "Now what?" Pete asked.

"You're supposed to sign your name on this," she replied, while handing Pete a five-dollar bill and a pen. The ink was the same color as the message, making Pete wonder if it was the exact pen Morey had used on her ass.

"Here you go." Pete smiled.

The woman took the pen, and then said, "Bring that to The High Hatter tonight, at seven." She walked back to the bed, and stepped into a pair of black French cut briefs that Pete watched rise up her long sculpted legs. Then, she pulled an indigo blue dress over her head and smoothed it down her body. "See ya later, I hope." Her smile seemed genuine.

"Nice meeting you," Pete laughed. "By the way, what's your name?"

"Violet Flowers. And no, it ain't a stage name," she added quickly. "Can thank my momma for that."

Pete smiled. "You think I'd pick Henceforth?"

Violet mirrored his smile, then opened the hotel room door, "Later."

A garish red neon sign announced The High Hatter on Marshall Street in the seedier side of Wingate. Although they were strung throughout the Midwest, Pete usually avoided strip clubs. Drinks were often



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watered down and the entertainment was generally not very entertaining. Most of the dancers looked the far side of forty or the near side of eighteen. It wasn't a question of morality for Pete; just one of value for the dollar. He didn't like to waste what little he had.

"What can I getcha?" boomed from the round-shouldered barkeep whose forearms were the size of Christmas hams and heavily blued with old tattoos.

The walk from the hotel had dusted Pete's shoes, hat and throat with soil blown from the harrowed farmland that stretched to the horizon in every direction. "Pilsner, if you got it, otherwise anything on tap."

"Blackwood okay?" came back more as a statement than a question.

Pete nodded, then spun on the stool to check out the stage. Smaller than most, it couldn't be but eight, maybe ten feet from where he sat. If the place didn't fill with standees, he'd have a clear view. Probably could count

a dancer's freckles. His watch read six-forty so there was time for another cold one.

The blare of honky-tonk music and the rustle of the blue velvet curtain at the back of the stage announced the show's start. First a long leg appeared, then a well-rounded hip and finally a torso that a movie star would envy. Spinning in the pink spotlight, she turned and faced the bar where guys stared back through the blue haze; some with drinks in hand, others with cigarettes dangling from rubbery lips.

It wasn't Violet, but a tall blonde with a hairdo that added another four inches to a frame that neared six foot. Her dancing wasn't smooth, but her piercing eyes and angelic face more than compensated. She knew how to work the crowd, intuitively understanding the effect each toss of her head and gyration of her hips had. She fueled the fantasy of every man in the room, including the grizzled barkeep.

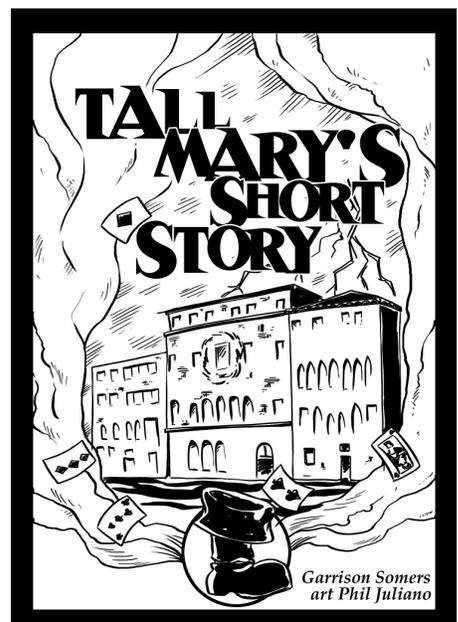
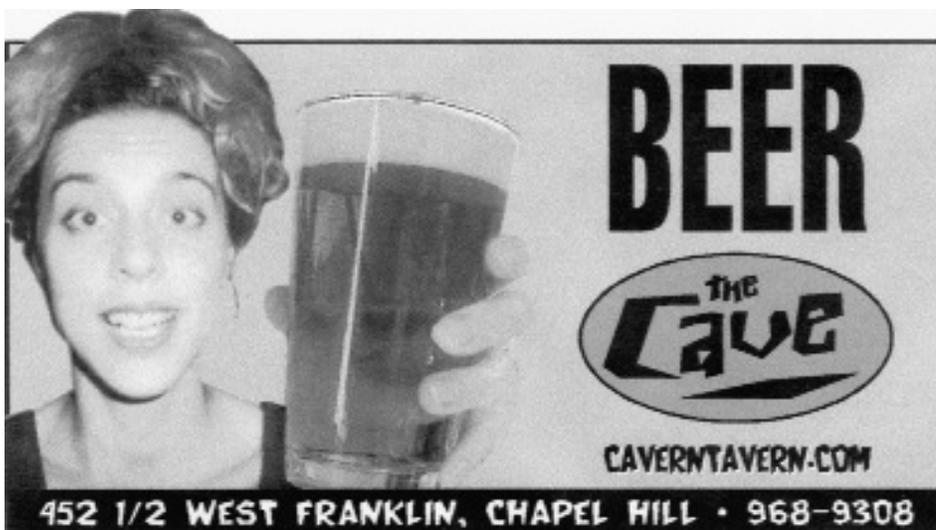
By the time the song ended,

she stood in nothing more than a G-string that all but disappeared between her inviting thighs. After picking up the dusting of singles that littered the stage, she slipped behind the curtain, smiling one last time at some guy a few stools down from Pete. The next two girls were less energetic. Their glazed eyes broadcast a distant stare Pete had seen before at clubs in Kansas City - drugs. The crowd barely clapped and each dancer departed with a few extra bucks.

The next dancer slid out onto the wooden floor in a long purple gown with a slit that ran from ankle to armpit. Obvious to all, she wore nothing, not even a G-string beneath the soon to be loosed gown. It was Violet. Other than the clink of ice in glasses being tipped, the joint went silent.

The music began slowly. Unlike the dancers before, her

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selection wasn't the familiar blaring dance mix. Hers was exotic, a blend of Middle Eastern and Latin American vibes. Violet slithered across the small stage. She was a fluid creature in constant motion, swaying, swooning, spinning. The clang of finger cymbals lifted across the room, while the deep thump of ancient drums pounded an intensely carnal beat. Jaws fell open. And yet, Violet hadn't removed a single piece of clothing. That slit teased with each turn, twist, and thrust of her hip.

Raising her hand to her shoulder, Violet took hold of the gold clasp, which appeared to be the only thing keeping the dress together. Her well-trained fingers undid the latch. She lifted it away from her body in a dra-

matic flurry, offering the briefest glimpse of its beauty. Not a single voice or catcall rose from the hypnotized crowd.

Violet spun on her toes ending up with her back to the audience. Then, she lowered the dress to her waist. Her skin glowed in the purple spotlight. Pete and everyone else awaited the complete unveiling. She paused; and then unfurled her gown like a matador taunting El Toro with his cape. It swung in a grand arc, then drifted to the floor. With her legs slightly apart, Violet stood motionless, a statue of divine proportion; her skin flawless as the alabaster of a Renaissance sculpture. She waited; the crowd waited. Then, she pivoted as the spotlight slowly dimmed revealing herself fully just before the room went black.

Her elegant movements had captivated everyone more than the blatant nakedness of the previous dancers. She had spoken to each man in a way that was intimate, seductive. One by one, they flung fives, and some, even tens, onto the stage before returning to their shots, their beers, their Chesterfields.

Another dancer came out to collect the cash for her, while Pete sipped his Blackwood and peered into the mirror behind the bar.

"Hello, Henceforth."

"Violet," he responded with a welcoming smile. Pete felt the glare of every other guy in the joint wondering why she had chosen him. All he could think about was that message from Morey, the one that was no longer neatly penned in green across Violet's now familiar backside.

"Enjoy the show?" she asked.

"Very much. Never seen anything like it before."

"Thanks," Violet smiled, then sipped her drink. Two swallows later, she pivoted on her stool and looked Pete square in the face. "Two more sets. Then, I get off at one."

An oblique invitation, but an invitation nonetheless. Pete



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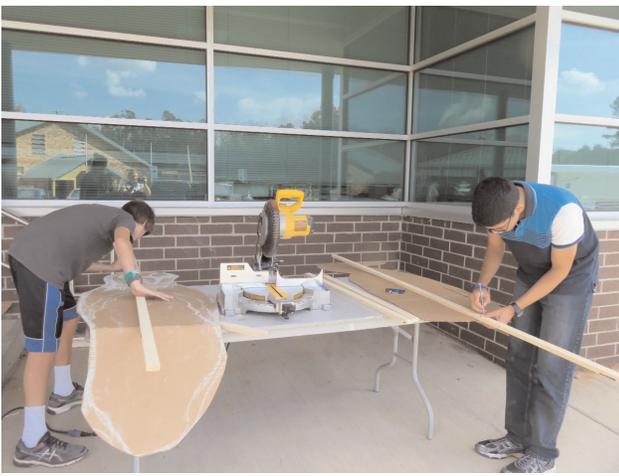
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Northwood High School in Pittsboro, NC, has been busy creating a puppet show to promote Global Awareness. They brought in Paperhand Puppet Intervention's Donovan Zimmerman to help.

For the past month or so, students have had a master class in puppet-making and puppetry, turning bits and pieces and paint into characters, bringing them *alive*.

And getting themselves ready for a show.



Leslie Burwell, visual arts instructor at Northwood for fourteen years, was one of 26 North Carolina Educators selected to travel to South Africa this summer with *Go Global NC*. The Borchardt Fund of the Triangle Community Foundation sponsored her trip. To share her experience, she wanted to involve the school community and local artists.



All of the visual arts classes at Northwood have been learning about the history of South Africa, researching the “human-ness” philosophy of Ubuntu, Apartheid, the Peace and Reconciliation Council, and making comparisons to our own country’s segregation laws and Civil Rights Movement. “After my visit to South Africa, I wanted to help my students understand how connected our two cultures are,”



said Mrs. Burwell. "I was overwhelmed with the generosity of the people we met while touring Durban, Johannesburg, and Cape Town. Their philosophy of education is one of respect and independence."

The puppet show play, written and directed by Mrs. Burwell, starts with the tale of Little Lion, working in a circus in Brazil, who is traveling to South Africa. Sacred Ibis tells a story to Little Lion. She learns about the African San origin-myths of South Africa, the history the two countries share and she discovers that she will have a new home!

Over 300 students and 100 adults have donated time and talent and funding to this project. Northwood vocal music students, under Mr. Hanson, will be singing a South African folk song and Mr. Cox's percussion, and instrumentals groups will join musical artist **Teli Shabu**.



The all-ages puppet show is at Northwood HS, highway 15/501S in Pittsboro - November 18th at 7 pm and November 19th at 3 pm and at 7 pm. Admission is \$10.00 adults and \$5.00 for students and seniors. All proceeds go to Liv Village in South Africa, and Chatham United Way. <http://www.liv-village.com/liv-equity>



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said he would wait. She agreed and poured the last of that drink down. The violet flower patterned satin robe that hung loosely from her shoulders gave Pete a view that rivaled the one back at the hotel. Violet knew what she was doing. She leaned close to Pete's ear. "You got that five?"

Pete nodded, "Yeah."

"Take it through that door over there. I'll see you later." She punctuated her instruction with a quick kiss on his cheek. Pete smiled as she rose off the barstool with a gentle hand on his thigh.

Violet disappeared into the dressing room and Pete went through that door with the five in one hand and the other wrapped around the walnut handle of the .38 in his pocket.

"Hello, Pete," echoed across the small cluttered office from a man seated in a club chair near the corner.

"Morey?"

"Been a while, huh?" the figure spoke from the shadows.

"I thought you were..."

"I know, dead. Obviously,

I'm not."

"How?" Pete asked.

"That's a long story for another time." Morey LaRue grinned as he leaned forward and the yellow light painted his unique profile. "You're one tough son of a bitch to find."

"Really didn't have a choice, did I?" Pete replied.

"Guess you're right. That's yours." Morey pointed to a leather satchel on the floor between them.

Pete opened the bag. Stacks of banded hundred dollar bills swelled the interior. "Really?" Pete asked.

"You saved my life and my family's. So, you earned every penny. Besides, makes up for all the dumps you've been staying in since that shit-storm back in Kearny."

"Thanks," Pete said.

"Now, do yourself and me a favor. Take the money and that girl and get the hell out of here. Go to Vancouver. Great city. You'll like it."

"Canada?" Pete said.

"Yeah," Morey replied.

"Think I took care of all those

bastards. But, just in case don't hang around. If I can find you, so can they."

"What about you?" Pete asked.

"Got a place in Maui. Maybe someday you'll come and visit. Bring the girl."

"I got a question," Pete said. Anticipating his friend's query, Morey replied, "The message?"

"Yeah."

"Shakespeare. Figured you'd understand," Morey smiled.

"Didn't take you for the Shakespeare type," Pete laughed.

"We all got secrets, kid."

After her final show of the night, Pete Henceforth brought his car around back of The High Hatter. In minutes, he, Violet Flowers, and that leather satchel with one point six million in cash were headed northwest in search of a dirt road that Morey said crossed into Canada three miles west of Porthill Idaho and some four hundred sixty three miles east of Vancouver. ❖



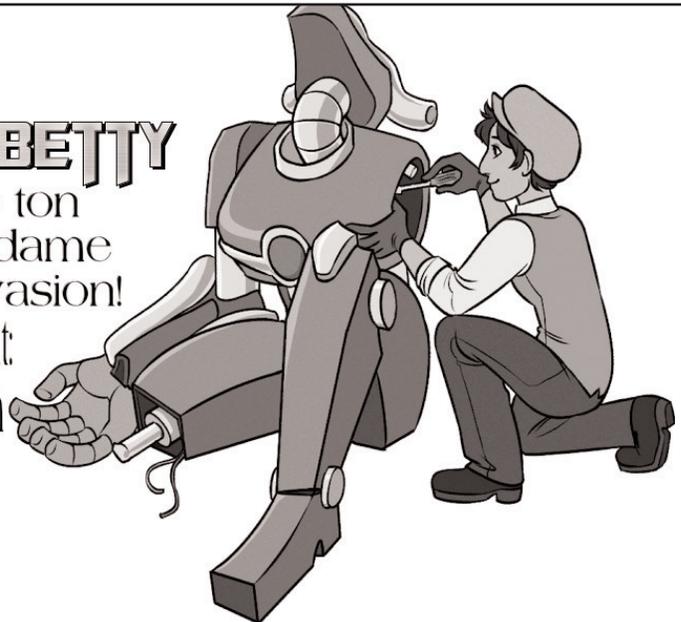
"Edmund"

by Karen Heslop

Edmund lay on the cold slab gasping for breath. The bright light above did nothing to abate the cold spreading through his body. He thought about his family at home and wondered who would take care of them with him gone. How had such a normal day gone wrong? As his chest struggled to pull in and expel breath, he wondered why no-one was helping him. He cried out from the pain racking his body but only a pained yelp escaped his lips. Finally he closed his eyes and his chest stilled. Above the now lifeless body, Judy smiled at Roy before whispering "We finally poisoned the damn rat hun!" ❖

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“Epistemologies”

by Bill Moore

“How do we know?” - Sammy Braun in Saul Bellow’s “The Old System”

Neighborhood Kid

Andy, a few years older than I, was a tubby neighborhood kid with a bunch of chutzpah. He had a habit of trying to impress me with tales of his sexual interests and his toughness. We would hang out in my yard or his, toss a pink rubber “Spaldeen” ball, and chat about life.

His voice would take on a persuasive urgency, as if he were on stage in a play commanding the audience’s attention, instead of just loafing around Long Island’s

suburb of all suburbs, Levittown. He beat off a lot in the shower at home with soap, he reported, and he claimed to beat up kids at school. Once he asserted that his parents still “did it,” mostly on the weekends. I asked how he knew? He said that he could hear them moaning from his room and that he would show me some stuff as proof. They were out grocery shopping, so Andy let me into his house and took me down the shadowy hallway to their bedroom.

It felt weird being in their private place, sitting on the edge of their bed. A tangy smell of adult bodies, mixed with hints of deodorant and perfume and old cigarette smoke, hovered in the

stale air. He opened the drawer of the side table on his father’s side of the bed: glossy gold foil packages, about an inch square, intimate, winked in the light! Andy said that was not all and lifted up a corner of the mattress. A busty naked woman beamed from the cover of *Playboy*, her tits like ample little ski jumps straining against thin cloth, her smile suggesting mysterious delights. He flipped the magazine open to the centerfold, and there she was, everything showing, even her bush. Andy asked if I wanted to jerk off but, disoriented, red-faced, I declined.

Outside again, we stood on his front lawn, shifting from foot to foot, avoiding each other. Andy seemed to have run out of chatter; nor did I have any conversation to share. Suddenly he looked up and cried, “Looka the butterfly!” I looked up, trusting, searching for some relief.

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Andy punched me square in the stomache then, and I buckled over. I could barely gasp: “You bastard... you freakin’ bastard!”

Black Dog

One late night in early December in New York, after studying for finals at Butler Library, staying at the university until closing for four nights straight, I took the subway dozingly downtown to 66th Street, got off, mounted the steps to the street from the miasmic IRT, and hurried across Amsterdam Avenue toward my apartment. The chilly drizzle mixed with a stinging breeze.

I shook the haze from my brain, cautious and alert for muggers, and pulled my cap down around my ears. I walked quickly, leaning into the cold blast. Still a few blocks from W. 69th Street, I paused wearily and adjusted my book bag.

Out of nowhere a black dog leapt up from the sidewalk, ten steps ahead of me, ready to pounce and bite! The cold wind fell and for a moment all was silent. There was no barking, no

sign of an owner.

The beast, a small Cerberus, still strangely quiet, seemed to open its maw, slavering, and then it melted abruptly into the pavement. I slanted away, across the sidewalk, paused, and finally edged forward, a step at a time. I could see the shaggy dark shadow panting, off to the side, waiting.

Then it flapped up again with a SNAP, twisted, discarded, ruined by the wind... a black umbrella.

Just Friends

Post-divorce, I used to sit around my new house over dinner and afterward watching TV, avoiding loneliness. The “Felicity” show drew my freshly solo heart to actress Keri Russell’s delicate blue-eyed beauty, sometimes wet my eyes from the painful screw-ups of young friendship and romance. The drama of it all held me, although I was middle-aged, like sweets for a 6th-grader on Halloween.

Then, on a Friday evening in August, I found myself antsy,

angry with my stay-at-home self, eager for more than eye candy, for real life. I would not let myself grow a night older stuck in my cushy chair in front of the tube, watching the artificial flickering images.

So I met Coral, saying “Hey” to her and her friends that night, at an outdoor concert in downtown Greensboro. She was blonde, wild-eyed, quirky, artistic, beautiful, crazily attractive. We went out for drinks, danced, exchanged phone numbers, and began to hang out, usually in Winston-Salem at her place. We both loved things French: the food, the wine, the language. At dinner we held parts of the conversation “en francais.” Later we made out on the living room couch, tongue-kissing, teasing each other under our clothes almost to orgasm, finally going together to bed.

We had a steamy weekend in a motel room at Wrightsville Beach. There Coral asked me “What would you most like?” and then gave it to me, her warm tongue leaving moist tracks down my belly. She was big-time hot fun.

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I discovered, too, that she was unbalanced, off her meds. Coral told me she'd been feeling manic, but I hadn't realized exactly how she'd meant that. Now, in mid-October, the depressive part of the cycle set in. She was hard to reach on the phone. I'd show up, and she

hadn't showered. Her eyes looked dead. She wasn't eating. I took her out for soup and salad - but she barely touched her food. She said she couldn't handle a relationship, that it wasn't working. We argued, but I gave in to her request, finally, not to call. A few weeks later Coral rang me

and announced she'd be in Greensboro that evening. Could she come by and visit? "Of course," I replied. I started thinking she'd changed her mind, dreaming about what that meant. We sat on my couch, sipping white wine and talking. "I'm

CONTRIBUTORS:

Michael Anthony is a writer and artist living in New Jersey. He has published fiction, poetry and illustrations in multiple literary journals and commercial magazines. Most recently these include *The Opiate*, *The Birch Gang Review*, *Jonah Magazine*, the *Indiana Voice Journal* and *The Copperfield Review*. The American Labor Museum exhibited Michael's photojournalism essay on the waning of the textile industry.

Karen Heslop of Jamaica, West Indies, writes, "My stories have been published or are upcoming in a *Devolution Z* anthology, *101 Words Magazine*, *Untied Shoelaces of the Mind*, *The Flash Fiction Press*, *Bloodbond Magazine* and *Bards and Sages Quarterly*."

Bill Moore is a writer, photographer, and blues musician living in Greensboro, NC, but he has visited Chapel Hill and Durham enough to find and enjoy *The Blotter*. Currently he hangs out in Chatham County as much as he can.

He taught high school English for a generation at Greensboro Day School, specializing in American Literature, Advanced Placement Rhetoric, and Creative Writing. He edited the school literary magazine, *Letters from the Edge*, for over 20 years, and is proud that a significant number of participants in Creative Writing and the literary magazine - like Nic Brown, Kelly Link, Emily Barker, Maggie Rosen, and Sally Rosen - have become professional writers.

Moore wrote freelance music journalism for *The Greensboro News & Record*, and Triad weekly publications, during the 1980s and 1990s. He was the main writer for the music history book, *AMPEG: The Story behind the Sound*, published in 1999 and *Vintage Guitar Magazine* book of the year then. Recently he was Editor and Staff Writer for *Pryme Magazine* of instant photography.

Recently retired from teaching, Moore decided to begin fiction writing to see where it might lead, starting with a variety of flash fictions, under the general concept and title "Epistemologies." He has been published online by 67 Press of Winston-Salem.

Phil Juliano of Bloomington, MN, is a good Blotterfriend. Follow his adventures on philjulianoillustration.com (and check out his current project on page 4).

feeling better,” she said. She leaned back comfortably, stretching herself like a contented cat. She smiled as she spoke. She looked relaxed and gorgeous and friendly. She smelled good: hints of shampoo and patchouli. I played with her blonde curls; she didn’t move away. I turned to

her and kissed around her lips and tasted her wine-laced tongue.

Coral froze, pulled away. Her eyes blazed wildly. Her mouth frowned. She snarled, “You sunnuva bitch! You promised we’d be just friends... just friends.” As it turned out, not even that. ❖

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

I really hate when this happens. Bit my tongue while I was sleeping - no, not a metaphor for being thoughtfully silent, but actually chomped down on my tongue. Went from REM sleep to wide awake in an instant, groaning at the pain and frowning with befuddlement at the cause of the pain. Truly not sure why it happened - my mouth just snapped shut in my sleep like a very small, enamel-fragile bear trap. And the dream wasn’t apple-fritter related, which would be a big Occam’s Razor clue as to why I suddenly felt like chewing on something in my sleep.

This sort of thing has happened before. I was once in a dream scuffle with an elementary school bully, not much more than that kind of wrestling match that happens when both sides are somewhat leery of casting the first punch. I felt the bully go for a pin-move and bit him on the arm, Woke up, with my teeth gnashing down on my own forearm. Deeply disappointing and remarkably weird, I’ll tell you. Another time I had my own hair in my mouth, dreamed I was chewing tobacco. Well within the definition of “as disgusting as it sounds.”

There’s part of me that wants to blame my eating habits. Froot Loops at 10:30 in the PM may seem like a good idea at the time, but it comes back to haunt you like that strange toucan with the candy-stripped beak. And my tongue is not at all magically delicious. Wait, that’s the wrong cereal...

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