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Wearing A Gifted Dress

...from the French, that was intended for Queen Elizabeth I. Remember that scene where the French sent a dress for Queen Elizabeth as a gift, but because Queen Elizabeth's handmaidens were just a bunch of goddamn Beckys...then they tried her brand new dress on without even asking? But, they got theirs, because the one handmaiden died from dress poisoning.* Okay, so maybe this isn't really going to happen. But, if you live in Portland, then you probably buy most of your clothes at the so-very-trendy vintage resale shops. Shop with caution—these stores do their very best to give you only the cleanest of all the clothes. But, please do not think they are washing, dry cleaning or even quarantining the clothes—they're not. If it smells like Aunt Betty, it's because that's still the same Love's Baby Soft that Aunt Betty used. These items do sometimes come into contact with bugs and whatnot, so, before you bring your new vintage treasure into your home, please check it thoroughly for bedbugs and consider a brief quarantine. I did my research and this is 100% true with Buffalo Exchange, Artifact, Rebels, Crossroads and, of course, Goodwill.

Sleeve Slits

Just kidding, these won't kill you. These are super cute. I have a new jacket—come see it at my next comedy show.

Not Wearing Your Sunblock

I'm obligated, as a mother, to say this fourteen times after the first 82-degree day. That's only eight...nine more times left.

Bicycling Like A Fucking Idiot

I am a car driver, but 67%** of my friends use a bicycle as their primary means of transportation. It's really important that you are paying attention while you are on your bike. Although, I have strong opinions about people who ride the WRONG way on the bike path because it's “safer,” it's very important that you are clear-headed when you are running around. Between the potholes that I've seen launch a rider, and those who aren't wearing helmets while using the bike paths all wrong, it's really hard to argue that you were in the right, if you are in a coma or worse. Please bike unimpaired. It's the law.

Going Barefoot On Any Stage In A Portland Venue

Do as I say, not as I do. If Jack Johnson can perform barefoot, so can I. I also think I've grown a bit of a foot fetish fanbase. Please find me on Facebook, where I post about my upcoming naked-foot comedy shows. But, seriously...this could be gross. Use caution.

Uber/Lyft When You Are Uber Drunk

While we expect a level of security when we pay for a service, please use your brain. When you order a Lyft or Uber, make sure you get into the service that was designated for you. I've heard way too many stories about people who are drinking too much and then try to get into vehicles that are not the service vehicles designated for them. If you get into a car that isn't for you, there is no way to ensure accountability. Also, trust yourself; if you feel unsafe, scam. Anyone who is a real person will respect this. If they are a bad guy, they will try to keep you and convince you that you're wrong. Phone a friend. Facebook their picture and your address...tag me, I will send someone. Be safe.

Platform Flip-Flops

Fuck you. These are fine.

Unrequited Love

Okay, this won't kill your body, but it could kill your soul. Stop loving people that don't love you back—if they don't see it, they don't see it. Your life isn't a Mila Kunis movie-lie of the week. Life is short and your time is fucking valuable. You matter, move on. Being single is nothing to be ashamed of. You're probably more fun single, anyway. Can you imagine what a drag Wonder Woman would be if she had married a Chad or a Rob? GTFO, Wonder Woman. Even the heroine in LA LA Land didn't end up with the leading man...FINALLY. It's cool, she got famous and he got a stupid bar (spoiler alert).

Guns

Stop wearing guns. Jesus Fucking Christ.

Texting And Driving

This is so last year. Stop it. Stop it now. Also, get your face out of your phone when you are walking around. True story, I dropped my debit card on the sidewalk in NW Portland near 23rd Ave and, four hours later, it was still there. You know why? Because, people probably had their faces in their phones. It worked to my benefit, of course, but seriously, it's not safe. Pay attention to your surroundings.

*This is not actually a true fact, as much as I wanted it to be. It's from a movie. So, please don't write me to tell me this isn't a true story, because I already know.

** Made-up fact.

Tiffany Greysen is a stand-up comedian and writer from Portland-ish, Oregon. She is a freelance writer for several humor publications. Her comedy is part advice columnist and part parenting guide...neither of which should be followed. You can find her on Twitter as @TiffanyGreysen or on Facebook by name.
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Summer is here again and everyone’s out, trying to have a good time. In order to help, I have put together a series of handy tips and practical tricks, to make your summer both fun and safe—no matter what you’re doing.

**CAMPING**

We all like spending time in the great outdoors and here are some ways you can improve your experience:

1. Pack your car with camping gear before work, so you can hit the road immediately after your shift. This way, you can be exhausted from waking up early and also be frustrated at being stuck in traffic with everyone else who had the same idea.

2. Consider getting an RV—for the thrilling combination of doing your cooking over an open fire and staying in a shitty, portable motel room.

3. Always hang your food from a tree branch after you set up camp. This will keep the slow kid two campsites over from stuffing his cheeks, with all your toasting marshmallows—like some sort of human/chipmunk hybrid. Seriously, that little bastard will cram half a bag in there as soon as your back is turned.

4. When you’re off to answer the call of nature after a big meal, everyone knows to grab a shovel and toilet paper before heading downwind of the campsite. However, it’s not so well-known that outdoor etiquette dictates you have to make a couched reference to what you’re doing, such as, “I’ve got some work to do on paper;” “I’m gonna leave some chocolate for the wildlife” or “I’m popping my cork and sending some brown underground.” Points awarded for originality.

5. Over the course of your camping excursion, it’s natural that you’ll amass a vast collection of plastic bags, styrofoam cups, soiled napkins and other waste. Nobody wants to pack all that crap back out, and the number one rule of nature is: if you can’t see it, it’s not a problem. Dig a hole and bury your filth, or if that’s too much effort, pile it all in the fire pit and duly soak it in urine to prevent the fire re-igniting. The next campers will arrive long after it’s dry and will appreciate your providing them with free kindling.

**ROAD TRIPPING**

The road trip is a hallowed institution in this nation of highways, byways and freeways. Here’s how to make the most of your journey.

1. If it’s a family outing, be sure to visit one of our nation’s fine truck stops. Have the kids take turns dialing numbers written on stalls in the restroom. This will create lasting memories they will treasure forever.

2. Fountain drink cups are an indispensable item to have on long drives. Not only can they be half-filled with cola and surreptitiously topped-up with rum for a true American driving treat, they can be filled with urine afterward, which can then be pitched at that dickbag in the convertible, who has been riding your ass for the last 36 miles.

3. For the adventurous couple, a “quickie” in one of our nation’s fine interstate rest area toilets can really spice things up. It combines that naughty, might-get-caught feeling with the smell of stale trucker piss and the adventure of introducing your genitalia to spiders.

4. It’s not about the destination—it’s about the journey. No, I don’t mean the CD that’s been in your car for the last seven years...I mean, take the time to travel some of our country’s scenic backroads and appreciate small town life. [ED: Insert comment about small town girls living in lonely worlds here]. There’s nothing like pulling up to an old filling station around dusk and listening to locals with curious features drawl on about “them from ‘aoutside,” how “the stars will be right soon” and that “he is not dead, but dreaming.” A true slice of rural Americana.

5. Remember, if you have refuse in your car, you can just toss it out the window. Our taxes pay for a veritable army of crying American Indians who clean it all up and you don’t want to disappoint them, do you?

Now, get out there and have a grand old time!

-WStM

Wombstretcha the Magnificent is a writer, jazz flautist, edible underwear critic, monkey taunter, pasta sculptor, professor of gravy studies and retired rapper from Portland, OR. He can be found at Wombstretcha.com, on Twitter as @Wombstretcha503 and on Facebook by name.
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How To Grow Exactly One Pot Plant

GREEN ROOM
BY STONED COLD SATIVA AWESOME

So, you cleared out a pile of Insane Clown Posse shirts and finally have adult levels of open closet space, thus allowing you to do adult shit. What’s that, you say? You want to grow cannabis? Well, it’s just as easy as making a baby (and, half the cleanup).

Lots of folks will tell you something along the lines of, “It’s just a weed, it can grow anywhere.” Well, those same people probably don’t have children, pets or an Oedipus complex; in order for something to grow properly, it can’t just be left alone, unattended in the dark. So, you’ve gotta actually care for your pot plants—this is the crucial difference between producing good weed and bad weed (and, remember, you’ll be spending the same amount of money either way, give or take the quality of your nutrients). I’m assuming you’re not starting from seed, but rather, opting to invest a whopping twenty bucks on a clone (baby plant) from a dispensary. Think of it as the difference between adopting versus giving birth to a baby—all of the gory shit that gets your hands dirty is already taken care of, plus, you can drop it and it won’t die. Same thing goes for seeds versus clones.

LET THERE BE LIGHT

Much like putting a baby to bed at the right time or knowing exactly when to kick your ungrateful whore of a daughter out of the house so she can go live on her own (with that asshole, Steve), timing is a very important component of growing pot. It turns out that pot plants need 18 hours of sunlight during the grow phase and 12 during the bloom phase. I learned this while Google searching the phrase “bloom and grow hours” in the parking lot of Indoor Garden Supply (which caters exclusively to weed smokers, right down to the lighters and candy bars being sold at the register). The first few days of trying to remember when to feed that thing in my closet and turn off the light were, well, pretty randomized. I think my plant got 11 hours of light for the first day, then about 22 the next day and, after that, it was whenever the boxed wine reminded me that I have pot growing next to my pile of laundry. I did what any expert grower would do at this point and asked my neighbor if her dad still had all that growing equipment: which scared me a light timer. These are easy to operate, but hard to set (as in, I was able to mess around and get the on/off timers synced up, then I set the thing to “auto” so it would work, but I couldn’t figure out how to change the base time, so my pot plants are on sync with Korea’s sunrise).

FEED ME, SEE MORE...

Again, comparing pot plants to children (which makes me wonder if the woman always takes 80% of a man’s cannabis after a divorce), you’ve got to pay attention to how much you’re feeding your plants. Like kids, it may seem wise to simply fill them up on everything Monsanto offers in boxes decorated with bright colors (which, by the way, now includes Vermicrop and General Hydroponic), but the smart move is to feed your pot plant like a child that would be being held for ransom. Only the bare minimum of organic nutrients should be used and, according to the guy at the store, “the people who own the nutrients companies are here to sell you nutrients, but we’re here to sell you lights, so don’t overdo the nutrients.” I guess the going rate for artificial illumination is much more lucrative than the current price of dirt (remind me to check the stickers for LED and DRT when I get home). Point being, you need to let your plants absorb the nutrients (which are usually dissolved into water, which needs to be pH balanced—whatever the hell that means—and, some people even say that the carbonated kind is best). Keep the water you use at room temperature or it will “shock” the plants. Again, just insert the kidnapped child analogy here—you want that thing living in your closet to be fed just enough to be kept on a steady cycle of damp-versus-dry, fed only by a mixture of water and powder, otherwise it will turn jaundice, start to stink and the cops will get called.

PRETEND TO BE AN EXPERT

Much like the final stages of becoming a parent, you’re going to need to enter your flowering (budding) cycle with a level of expertise that is clouded only by a thick layer of smug arrogance. Go to the mall and buy all the clothing that a Mexican skateboarder would wear. Get into “dabs” and “concentrates” immediately. Buy an expensive hat pin with an insider-only reference to something pot-related (“710,” “Oregon Versus Everybody,” etc.) and make sure to spend half of your day on Instagram, bashing the rest of the marijuana community. Vape...a lot. Don’t forget to tell absolutely everyone that you grow pot, but remember to also inform these folks that they have no idea how hard it is, because they don’t have plants of their own. Rastas, cartel members, old hippies...it doesn’t matter—you’re right and they’re stupid.

Congratulations, you can now list yourself as “cannabis processor” on your LinkedIn and immediately be added to all sorts of wonderful lists. For just $400 in suspicious power bills, you too can grow some bud that will make your friends say, “Nah, I’m good.”

TalesFromTheDJBooth.com
I’ve been in comedy for a decade. I’ve always, for the most part, been what people would call a “blue” comic. For those of you who don’t know what that means, it suggests that I’m dirty—I talk about sex, violence and the things you stay away from discussing at the dinner table. Unless you’re at my dinner table, where I fart during grace (when I’m forced to say it) and my stepdad Jacks my finger off to get me to laugh, while my unassuming grandmother thanks the lord for this bounty. We’re a fun people, my family. My first years were literally smeared in depravity. I was born homeless, in Portland and was babysat by strippers—not the great dancers that frequent your stages today, but strippers. Courtney Love, before she was Courtney Love, danced with my mother and babysat me backstage. This whole article could be filled up with my childhood surrounded by drugs, violence and sex, but I’ll save that for another column.

What I’ve done is set the tone for you. I’m not the guy that gets offended. I love sex, drugs and all things illicit. And, in 2017, as a comedian with that frame of mind, I’m somewhat of a minority. Comedy is an art form built on pushing boundaries. But, sometimes, even those boundaries get pushed a little too far.

Recently, two well-known comedians came under fire for their use of artistic expression: Bill Maher, who has a history of racism-on-the-low, came under fire for dropping an N-bomb on his show during a joke. It was clearly a joke, albeit a shitty one. But, there was no question it was a joke. The bigger controversy came from noted button-pusher, Kathy Griffin. She came under fire for, what she called, a joke. Kathy posted a photo of her holding the severed, bloody head of President Donald Trump (it should be noted that typing those last three words made me want to vomit). Comics all around the Twitterverse and social media came to her defense and barked about free speech. She made a tearful apology, said her career was likely ruined over the stunt and that she had taken it too far.

I have two issues with this entire scenario, to be honest. First, Kathy never should have apologized. That was a pretty clear picture and statement. And, she very obviously feels a certain way about Trump, so just stick by it, instead of backpedaling. But, alas, she apologized and she is likely, as she says, finished. My second issue is that she defended this as “comedy.” Jim Carrey, looking like the Unibomber, stated that comedians should cross the line with comedy. I tend to agree, Mr. Ventura! We should push that line, cross it, jerk off on it and keep pushing it. But, here’s the thing: there was never a comedy line with Kathy’s stunt. There was no joke. There was nothing that said, “this is a humorous expression of outrage” in what she did. What she did was use comedy as a scapegoat for an interpretive expression of art, that got her in trouble—this had nothing to do with comedy. She started a gunshot and wore comedy like a bulletproof vest, in turn making the entire art form of expressive comedy look like shit. Her expression was POWERFUL. It was interpretive expression about Trump cutting the head off of women’s rights, so a woman was cutting the head off of the serpent in an act of defiance. That was a powerful statement and one that, ultimately, I am all for. Powerful it was, but comedy it was not—and how dare she wear the protective cloak of comedy to justify it, then have the gall to apologize for it.

Make powerful art and stick by it 100%. Learn from the greats like George Carlin, Joan Rivers, Richard Pryor, Lenny Bruce and Bill Hicks. These people did prison time to protect their art and apologized for nothing.

What’s next on the “offended” front? That’s my question, at the core of all of this. Sure, Kathy fucked up and called her art something it wasn’t, but at the core of all of this, we need to protect our freedom of expression. Portland is a hotheld of free expression, peppered with meth heads and a cacophony of homeless people—but, a free expression haven nonetheless. We have to fight for these freedoms. Your city, full of sex, drugs, fun, fire, music and art may soon come to the battle line. It seems as though each year that passes, a new thing is taboo...not the fucking awesome sex store in Portland—they’re always the best taboo—but, anything that people decide is suddenly offensive. Are you going to fight, when your swinger’s clubs come under attack? Will you do more than write a stern letter to your city government, when they come for your strip clubs? Are you prepared to be vocal, when they come and try to shut down your performances due to “vulgarity” laws? Or, are you going to be an armchair activist that sends a couple tweets with witty hashtags? That’s my question to you: are you ready to fight? Because, if you are, we need you. We need your art. We need your expression. We need your freedom to be exercised. Just make sure to wear the right bulletproof vest in the fight for your freedom.
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What's good, y'all? Ray is on vacation, so your girl Raquanda is here to take over the column for our first portion, with my sister from another mister, Shawna, dropping some deets towards the end. Enjoy!

**Doxing Masimbaashe: Tortilla Cart Racism Accusations Exposed!**

Unless you've been living under a food cart for the last month, you've likely heard about #TortillaGate. In short, Portland Mercury's Jagger Blaec ran a story about two white girls who ditched Coachella to explore actual Mexico, brought home a recipe for organic tortilla wraps, were instantly successful (trigger warning), positively reviewed by Willamette Week and, like clockwork, outed as being racist, culture-stealing colonizers by The Mercury. As a result, Kook's Burritos was subsequently crushed, their Yelp page turned to shit and, for at least a week, it was fashionable to be mad at white women again. But, also like clockwork, several details printed regarding the Kook's girls’ “theft” of a recipe, were false. So, a retraction was printed—but, only after two small business owners thousands of dollars.

In her attempts to score SJW points and virtue signal, Jagger Blaec directly put Kook's Burritos out of business, costing two female entrepreneurs their livelihood (and, hurt the local economy, as successful small business owners often support other, smaller businesses). However, the real buzzkill is the pathetic retraction posted in The Mercury:

Yup. Go ahead and compare that to an apology given by, say, any celebrity caught up in a bad word scandal (Bill Maher), any politician (including Trump) or, hell, a serial killer on death row. This article wasn’t another opinion piece about how smiling at third-wave feminists is the same as sexual assault or a misprint regarding an event date—in essence, the original piece was a black swan for two progressive, female business owners. “Cultural appropriation” accusations are now more likely to shut a Portland food cart down than a poor review by the health department (remind me to bring marshmallows when this city burns to the ground).

The obvious points are likely floating around in your head already.

First, these women traveled to Mexico to get their recipe. It’s a rare instance that progressives actually get on a plane, visit one of the brown countries that they habitually speak of with disdain, and get an actual representation of said culture. Second, the girls brought back authentic Mexican tortillas, not some random mashup made up by the imagination. And, third, Trump wouldn’t have given two shits about sweet, tasty colonization. Hell, Taco Bell makes up imaginary language using a grasp of the Spanish language that is two “ito-ladas” away from them.

So, in terms of fighting cultural genocide, shutting down the local burrito cart only drives people to eat at Panda Express or Ray's Big Black BBQ Booty Bash (copyright pending). As we’ve seen with recent protests in the Portland area, so-called ‘Nazis’ don’t give a shit to the requests of activists (see page 56), but fellow allies do. No one below the Mason-Dixon line has ever apologized for using the wrong pronoun, because they don’t know what the fuck a pronoun is. Basically, only the people in the same socioeconomic status as you care about this shit. So, by calling out “semi-woke” allies, who happen to provide excellent burritos to a local community, you’re simply shooting yourself in the foot.

But, the final point here, is the one I want to hammer in. If you zoom out and look at this story from a broader perspective, it boils down to a local paper (Mercury) being envious of not one, but two other businesses (one being a competitor, Willamette Week) for raising the bar and making a profit off of something Portland dislikes Republicans, Nazis and nü-metal, but the town fucking hates it when other people are successful. Basically, any SJW argument boils down to “it’s not fair.” Everything from the body positivity movement to feminism has been polluted with an undertone of “accept me at my worst and make me feel like I’m at my best.” Hell, Trump could have come out the gate offering free abortion and mosques, and the left would still hate on the guy, because he’s an entrepreneur. But, since Trump gives no fucks about anything The Mercury publishes, they decided to make the witch hunt local. And, it worked. Sure, Kooks
has re-opened (and, again, their burritos are like eating sex), but this shitstorm probably cost them thousands of dollars (and, almost as many lost hours).

Let’s make a couple things perfectly clear here. For one, The Portland Mercury is a knock-off of a Seattle publication called The Stranger. Yes, the Mercury is to newspapers, what these two white girls were to tortillas; both got their recipe from crossing a river and stealing it. Secondly, the author of the article decided to dox and ruin the professional image of two women, because certain information was public. Well, so is Facebook. And, I did some research on Jagger Blaec, to find out that she is really a woman named Masimbaashe Zvovushe.

Between self-imposed oppression and emoji-filled pseudo-activism, Masimbaashe loves to post photo reviews of the dresses worn by celebrities at award shows (you know, the ones produced for pennies by Chinese kids and sold for millions of dollars). The best part of her public posts (change your privacy settings, girl) is that it appears she is married to a white, cis-male hipster. Oh, and half of her bridesmaids were white. So much for colonization.

So, “Jagger Blaec,” what gives? Are you telling the world that if white girls travel to, patronize, and support and otherwise validate a foreign culture, with purposes of importing diversity into the Portland food scene, that this is somehow worse than compromising your blackness by starting a family with a white dude? How do you plan on feeding your mixed-race kids? Are you going to tell the black part of their digestive system to enjoy grits, but their white part is stuck with vegan hummus tacos? What about schooling? Wouldn’t you be “colonizing” black schools by putting your half-white child into the mix? Aren’t you basically breeding privilege? Seriously, your vagina is doing a better job at “colonization” than a hundred hungry white girls backpacking in Mexico could ever hope for.

And, to the Mercury staff, why let your authors write under a pen name, if they’re using it to dox and destroy real names? Is there literally nothing left to report on, besides the opinion of an echo chamber filled with fresh PSU graduates, holding degrees in Underwater Gender Studies Dance Theory? You’re being outed by a free porn magazine, again. Get your shit together.

This is the real world and it has consequences. As far as everything in this column, I’ve done research and made sure that it’s all within the realm of legality. And, if it turns out that I’ve gotten something wrong here, we can just edit our online version to say that we got our facts incorrect and have retracted that story—long after copies of this magazine are in the hands of Portlanders who, at one time, read your paper and supported your advertisers.

So, if you run a small business, publication, website, burrito cart or private school for biracial vegans, keep an eye out for the name Masimbaashe Zvovushe. Sure, her articles are filled with click-friendly, manufactured rage, but your business may or may not shut down—depending on how Masimbaashe feels about your Irish nacho platter.

Oh, and it is worth pointing out that speaking on behalf of Latinos is, well, kind of an ironic approach to fighting appropriation.

Fuck your outrage, Jagger Blaec. If you want to fight colonization, stop marrying white hipsters and putting entrepreneurial allies out of business.

And, if you’re a real saint, go buy a burrito at Kook’s. Those of us who are actually progressive want a melting pot—we want women to own businesses and, ideally, businesses owned by women that feature actual melting pots. Food is a uniting factor in our divided community.

She will not divide us. She will not divide us. She will not divide us...

**Vegas, Baby!**

You probably see the ads every year and wonder, “What’s this Gentlemen’s Club Expo all about?” It’s been awhile since we’ve talked about it and we want to encourage some of you to attend! That’s why, this year, we are sending our very own staffer, Shawna, to check it out. We asked Shawna why she wants to attend this year’s special 25th Anniversary Expo, and here is what she had to say...

What’s cool is, Exotic was born here in Portland 24 years ago, across the country in Florida, a similarly named magazine. *Exotic Dancer* was just starting off. Contrasted to Exotic, *Exotic Dancer* is an industry trade magazine, highlighting all the best products, services and advice to club owners, management and staff. They also bring our industry together every year, with a trade show full of awesome products, panels and workshops. I was also told there would be alcohol—lots and lots of alcohol...sign me up!

In addition to the convention, *Exotic Dancer* hosts the only national award show for this industry. The *ED Awards* honor the best clubs, employees and feature dancers from across the country (check it out at TheEDAwards.com), where you probably already voted for some of our home clubs–Devils Point, Kit Kat Club and Club SinRock. And, voted for our very own BJ McNaughty! This means, I will get to party with some of my favorite club people from Portland in Vegas!

Not only do I get to hang out with my Portland peeps, I’m also excited to meet new friends in the industry from all over the world. Most of all, this includes the...
ladies! From what I know, it's filled with the nation's hottest features, showcasing their talents at sponsored parties nightly and getting up close and personal. There will even be a showdown against the international showgirls. This all sounds amazing!

The Expo is back in Vegas this year, at the Hard Rock Hotel, August 27-30. I suggest all of you Portland strip club owners, managers, staffers and dancers join me. I'm definitely looking forward to attending this giant slumber party! More info at TheEDExpo.com.

So, there you have it. Go to Vegas this summer and hang with the best!

Oh, speaking of the best, Exotic would like to congratulate the winner of Polerotica 2017, the outstanding Nikki Diesel from Kit Kat Club! Please go give her some love and see her in action. Remember that these dancers are just as talented outside of the big events, as they are during the final rounds. Keep Portland tipped!
With Father's Day having passed (and, I'm sure you did a great job, which is why he's still grumbling around the house), I think it's important that we look at what the men in our lives would like, so we don't screw up again next year. Nothing says "Father's Day doesn't matter" like getting another necktie for the fathers in your life; please don't be that person. Show them that all holidays matter (it's okay, I can write that and not get in trouble—my best friend is black...and, so are my parents). Start off next year's holiday by watching dad's favorite movie. If you don't know what it is, that's probably part of the reason your family (and marriage) is failing. You should ask him about it, and if you're lucky (like my wife is), he probably talks about it all the time.

For me, Captain Phillips is a great film that matches up with the likes of Gone With The Wind, Dances With Wolves and Titanic. Some would even argue that it's almost as good as Debbie Does Dallas. The best scene in Captain Phillips happens when the Somalian pirates take over the ship. The pirates kick open the door to the captain's area, one looks him dead in the eyes and says, "Look at me...I am the captain now." I still get excited about that scene today. Plus, black people were winning in that movie, all the way until the last 60 seconds, when they all die (spoiler alert).

Back to what to get for the man in your life (ED: one who is a father, not your father...unless that's your thing...I'm pretty sure Ken is talking to the women out there who are involved with fathers). Be spontaneous, go out and get a sex game. Why? Because we, as men, have no creativity and need rules to follow. Plus, who doesn't love getting their balls licked, even though their wife refuses to do it independently, because you don't clean enough back there? As one of my favorite Exotic writers, Tiffany Greysen, puts it, "All I can think about is your sweaty back and a drip of sweat running from your balls and getting on my vagina. I don't want your fecal sweat anywhere near my pristine vagina..." (except, in my wife's case, it's anywhere near her). So, all I have to do is roll a set of dice and my wife has to do non-preferred sex activities...sign me up!

Sex games are great. In fact, I own a couple. A couple anniversaries ago, my wife packed me up into the car and took me to Taboo, where we looked at lubes, out/f_its, toys and, finally, in the back of the store, I look up to see the sex games, which caught my eye. They really spoke to my inner lazy self. I just do what the cards say and my wife can't yell at me for not being creative enough in her role playing. I really hate role playing—it's just an excuse for your spouse to cheat on you with you in the room, and the best part is that you get to play along with it as she pretends you're her young, white Yoga instructor, Brutus.

We picked up a sex game that seemed pretty cool. There were levels to it: beginner, intermediate and FUCK NO! We obviously didn't make it past intermediate. The game started off great. My wife rolled the dice, it landed on easy, she drew a card that says "rub on his balls and whisper in his ear sweet nothings for a minute." At this point, I'm really liking this game—we're definitely gonna have sex like strangers tonight! My turn. I roll, the dice lands on easy, I pull a card and it reads "lick on her vagina for two minutes or until she grips your head with her thighs and it feels like your head is gonna pop like a grape." I know. I thought that was pretty weird to put in a card game, as well. Yet, when my head almost popped, I was still into it.

Now, it's her turn and she rolls the dice...intermediate. My wife picks up the card and it reads, "stick three fingers in his ass." NOPE! I'M DONE! NOPE!!! I get up and start to walk away. I look up and my wife isn't backing down...she's getting up as well. I start to speed walk around the bed and look back to see she is right there, following me. At this point, I'm terrified and running full sprint in the dark, butt naked through the house. I start to look back and, wham, I start to trip. At that moment, everything is moving slowly. I'm floating through the air and I look back at my wife. She has this look in her eyes and, right as I start to yell "NOOOOO," she looks at me, puts her fingers up to her eyes—very similarly to the Somalian pirate in Captain Phillips—and says, "Look at me...I'm the captain now."
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JADE GRAPES AND MIDNIGHT FLOWERS

by Julia Laxer

The first time I visited Portland, I saw a California poppy growing through a crack in the sidewalk on Alberta St. It was springtime, the season of rebirth. I took it as a sign from the universe, reminding me that I, too, could push through the cement garden, reinvent myself and thrive in this city. In that moment, I dreamed of moving to Portland. A few days later, I met him.

...I usually don’t mention the man who charmed me with snake eyes.

Spring—each year, you come with plum blossoms. Pale pink petals stain the city—like kisses—and skin touches the sun.

The day I met him was the first time I touched the Pacific. We walked the water’s edge together. Sand imprinted our path, yet instantly faded and shifted beneath our feet and felt...everything. We lit a joint on the gray beach rocks of Oswald West State Park.

Staring past the horizon line, I asked him, “Do you think environment affects mood?”

“Yes,” he barely paused. Then, he said, “Definitely.”

I believed him, because I needed someone to confirm that I could believe myself...

The great blue beyond surrounded us, making us small—teaching us a lesson. Mother Nature. Douglas Firs towered behind us, like the fray of a giant eyelash.

I returned to Atlanta, my heart ready for the crystal-line vision I had of my future. A city: unknown. The ocean: beyond. And, a man who charmed me.

We were crazy for each other. Overexcited, late night marathon phone calls—we made big plans. We sent each other carefully made mixed tapes. It was true love style: love with a postage stamp, an envelope, sent by the Post Office—to show that you mean it.

I came back and visited again, later in the summer. This time, we went down to Yachats and spent time on Cape Perpetua.

We were lost on the trail. Our bodies touched while we identified plants together in the woods—drunk on jammy wine and sex, August and heat. We were lost on the trail, careless and laughing, losing clothes. Moss in my hair, cool dirt on our bodies muffled and messed with...sweat and summer. Perpetua.

The sky settled into tangerine silks, glowing on our lips as we kissed. From eaves in yew trees, cougars watched our bodies as he entered me, distant waves as he split my thighs with his cock. I felt opened and pierced with the sky’s deepening reds, inside the sex. Cumming on the moonrise. Lost in constellations—deep wisps of grey sky settling, glowing mint, vignetting the sky, or what I could see—his hair was like a frame on the edge of the sky, softly rocking. The sea beyond us, the sea—the furthest detail I could see....

Tasting sweet lavender light. Sighing and touching, with the forest within us.

Being filled past the point I could take it—breaking, breaking. He softened inside me after filling me past the point—breaths. Dirt sticking to my thighs—the cum, the stars, the cougar’s dark gaze... sighing and touching, the forest within us. Jammy wine and the sea—the furthest detail I could see....

Spring, each year you reveal plum blossoms and unfurl frowns of wild poppies, while the jewelry box of the ocean plays a melody of lost love. It’s a recollection of barely-there, long-ago lost photographs and postcards. Handwriting....

We spent seven months visiting and calling each other and opening up, and I spent countless years afterwards mending my scars.

When I visited him, I fell in love with his garage band records and Rooibos tea. In my alone moments, I savored his fancy soaps and dreamed of his thin hands, touching me, when I washed myself. I stroked his wild tabby cat—he was bruiser of a cat, the way he cruised the neighborhood. I made friends with all the cats in his neighborhood, while I smoked on his skinny porch and wandered the sidewalk—memorizing his life.

I bought him silk scarves in vintage stores. He was more femme than I was. We dressed up just to admire each other. To undress each other. To redress each other.

I remember the pile of leathers in his basement, from his punk days. The painted and tanned hides reminded me of dead dogs, euthanized and forgotten. He could not let go. He was a dirtier pack rat than me—piled to the beams, the ceilings of his studded past—it was like his heart had no room for heartbeat.

Nothing can make sense with a love like that.

After months of inked-out letters, my first glimpse of the Pacific became a reality. I left. I left everything, even my mind, to move here. I left everything. My long legs kissed Atlanta and my income from dancing at The Cheetah behind. I traded my bank account and emptied my life to fly on metal wings, to sleep in his arms.

It was a deadfall—ready, or not. Lady Luck was off her shift. Tinkerbell didn’t care either. Either way, I boarded that plane with my suitcases and my cats.

Nothing can make sense, with a love like that.

I imagined ocean waves cresting, sands shifting, my wishes like smoke curled up to the clouds—a sacrifice for the ether. I left everything—even my mind—to move here. I left everything. Metal wings. His arms.

When I arrived, he told me he’d had a girlfriend the whole time.

She had the same name as me, just minus a letter. A Julie—not a Juli-A. She was me—or not me. She was me—but different. Me, if I had been quieter, me, if I had been thinner and punker. Portland-all-along.

I met her. She was all these things and I liked her, too. She was too sweet to hate. She was too nice to hate. I couldn’t hate her, though I tried. A Julie—not a Juli-A.

Me, minus a syllable.

I moved here and my name was taken, like the soft spot in his arms. Out of guilt, I invited her to my birthday party, even though I didn’t want him to be there. She came. He did too.

He was enthusiastic, dancing goofy. Life was a joke. Like it always was, for him.

She was brief, like a ghost.

There’s nothing to take seriously, if nothing’s serious. I turned another year older—not at all wiser, to the heartbeat of love’s sour fixation. Desire unsatisfied and the ghost of metal wings...

I loved a man who didn’t love me. He never loved me, though he once told me he did. Love can be one of those things, you know. Snake eyes lie.

I confess: I once loved a man so much that for years, I would leave green grapes, shiny jade grapes on his door past midnight, as I walked the boozy walk home in my heels, my stomping boots, in my jaded
...once, I carried these grapes for you. Desire unsatisfied. The green of envy.

Years passed and now I confess...

Once, I loved a man so much, I made sacrifices: stealing midnight flowers from dark lawns lit by lamplight and streetlight and starlight, with the deep moon, the touch of nothing beckoning—more, more! Picking each steam, like the petals, we kissed and I knew at the moment, if just one more flower...just one more grape...one more. One. More. Left there, on his doorstep, he would know. He would know. It was true love.

But, it wasn't. He never mentioned it. The soursness, the awkwardness... with amber drinks he'd always false "cheers" me when we saw each other...

“Cheers!” we'd say and move on in the night. The fruits of our soursness were never mentioned. Our past was under the executioner’s hood. We were both barflies back then and we’d spot each other at Dot’s or Club 21—whiskey in one hand, cigarette in the other. There was no room for a handshake or a hug. We were taken.

Green, the color of envy and of the forest, his eyes when he was rocking into me, the sea thrusting, deep and warm—he must have known it was me...me, me that brought him these fruits of my desire; the wetness of my cunt, sticky like the warm fruits on his doorstep, as the sun would rise...finding him awake. He must have known these midnight flowers and jade grapes were my poems, my words, my pussy, my heartbeat. I made sacrifices because I couldn't gut myself deeper. This love hurt.

Did it inflate his ego? He must have known it was me. Unless he collected "crazy" ex-girlfriends.

Did his heart have space for heartbreak? I couldn't tell. My name was taken.

In those years, I lost myself. Sighing and touching. The forest, within us. Desire unsatisfied. He was pretty like that.

But, see, I moved here for abstraction.

I moved here for beauty. I moved here for salt, trees, the ocean and for love. Once, I carried these grapes for you. And, for lush roses in the summer and for wet roses in November. And, for jade grapes and frilly poppies pushing through the city’s coarse expectations, the rock of the city unable to tame us...

Everything I said “yes” to. Poppies pushing through concrete—it was a vision of hope. The salt in my eyes was like the sun in the midnight—he blinded me. And, even the rain.

Yet, the rain tamed me.

I fell in love with myself, here, in Portland, while I fell out of love with him.

The rain...yes. Even the rain.

He was right.

Environment affects mood.

Julia Laxer lives for the stories and writes in the afternoons, in a rose-lit room in downtown Portland. Read more at JuliaLaxer.com and send love/hate mail to @JuliaLaxer.
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Once upon a time...

In the Dwarf-kin cubby of Dumpchick, there was, for a while, a terrible curse.

As the legends go, on the opening day of Summer Festival, a storm came, sending a shaft of lightning right down the middle of the great and sacred oak tree, Cancreblast. Rather than leave the wreckage of the tree as it was, the elders elected to cut down what remained of the tree and used the wood to rebuild a deck, not knowing that in doing so, a great curse had descended upon their people. So, it was for many years afterwards, that Dwarf-ladies could only conceive for one week during winter—a condition which slowly decimated the population of Dumpchick. And, so it was, on the day before what seemed to be the last Summer Festival of the ill-fated cubby, a hero arrived...

Wrothbeard winced.

The ale was delicious and light. A seasonal draught, perfect for washing down the several pounds of goat flesh and steak drippings being consumed by the hearty dwarf. Wrothbeard, having traveled afar from the cubby of Hillsboro, was preparing his body for the feat he would later attempt that day, during the opening ceremony of the Dumpchick Summer Festival.

If the stories were indeed true, then in order to lift the curse of a foreign dwarf, Wrothbeard must, on the first day of the Summer Festival, completely coat the cubby stump with his cum in a single session. Like, for example, he couldn’t blow a load on part of the stump, then try a bit later and cover it with more cum—no, it must be a single orgasm. If he failed in this attempt...well, Wrothbeard did not want to think about that. Not wanting to take any chances, the hero dwarf brought Bonchwick—his super hot second cousin.

Hearing a knock on the door of the cabin he and his second cousin were renting, Wrothbeard opened it, to see Bonchwick with a fresh tray of fatty goat meats, booze and cheese gravy.

“Brought some more fuel for your load later, my dear second cousin.”

“Thank you second cousin!” said Wrothbeard.

Bonchwick entered the cabin and set the tray down. “Have you been tugging your scroat like I told you to?”

“Aye, yes.”

“Very good. Noon is almost nigh, thus verily the hour of judgement approaches…”

“Hence my nervousness, hot second cousin. Though I have executed many rodents and some crows with even casual loads, my heart is heavy this morning.”

“Do not worry, Wrothbeard, I have much faith in you. Do you have blue balls?”

“Barely. That fact is akin to my worry.”

“Then worry not and stare hard at my chest, while I play with myself.”

Then, Wrothbeard ate some more goat flesh and tugged on his scrotum, while he watched his second cousin jab her clit with a spoon. Just as his asshole was beginning to clench from the ache of his now ponderous sack, there was heard the bellow of many trumpets.

Bonchwick rearranged her skirts. “Hither now, Wrothbeard, the festival is upon us. Let us fly to the Cummy Bum, the cubby stump of Cancreblast, so that you may please the gods with your load.”

Arriving at the town square, Wrothbeard and Bonchwick came and knelt before the cubby chieftan, Axe-To-Mouth.

“Ah!” bellowed Axe-To-Mouth. “You must be Wrothbeard and Bonchwick of Hillsboro! You do a great honor to Dumpchick cubby with your presence. Tell me, why have you come?”

Staying on one knee, Wrothbeard looked up at Axe-To-Mouth, “Your honor, I have come to try my hand at blowing a juicy load on your Cummy Bum.”

Axe-To-Mouth stroked his beard. “Aye, that’s what I heard. No doubt you have heard that our lady dwarves do not ovulate but once a year, during the coldest week of winter. And, that even though they are super horny, it’s kind of weird, like...they become strangers. And, that banging them gets blood everywhere, which turns some guy dwarfs off, even though it’s fun to make jokes, like, for example, saying it appears as if one has fucked a plate of buffalo wings. The mirth subsides, when you remember that this is a curse. And, I guess there are the cramps to worry about, though I personally wouldn’t know about that.” At this, some lady dwarves muttered and shat in contempt.

“But, a warning to you Wrothbeard Of Hillsboro!” Axe-To-Mouth continued. “If you fail, if your ropes are not juicy enough to coat our cubby’s stump Cummy Bum, then we must honor the forest gods, by cutting off your junk and feeding it to a hag.”

Bonchwick turned to Wrothbeard with worry, “Did you know of this Wrothbeard? That if your load isn’t fat enough, a hag will eat your junk?”

“Aye”

“Then, I have faith in you. May your load be heavy.”

“Then worry not and stare hard at my chest, while I play with myself.”

Wrothbeard got up and approached Cummy Bum, untying his leather pants so he could take out his dwarf penis and massage its base. All the other dwarves watched with their mouths open. Axe-To-Mouth shifted in his seat, “Yeah, get it, get it.”

Thinghole the hag fondled a duck whilst licking her lips—bring to mind her grandmother’s dwarf junk recipes.

Everyone, even a few children, watched as Wrothbeard squatted over Cummy Bum, tugging scroat as his eyes digested Bonchwick’s cans. Eyes rolling back, Wrothbeard gasped and ripped a fat, pearly rope with a good spread. The second rip was bigger than the first, so big, in fact, that it made a noise like a zit being popped. Everyone heard it and got turned on. Rope after rope, it seemed as if Wrothbeard wouldn’t stop cumming—each perfect rope as long and greasy as the last. The round face of Cummy Bum became slimy and entirely covered with Wrothbeard’s masterful load; his hearty jizz penetrating deep into the timeworn cubby stump.

Bonchwick ran behind her male second cousin just as he fainted, catching him. Wrothbeard wheezed, “Wuh...was my load...big enough?”

Bonchwick, crying, cried, “Yea second cousin! You came really hard!”

No one looking at Cummy Bum could deny that the cursed cubby stump was completely drenched in a gnarly load of pearl. A bunch of chicks ran up to the stump and started playing with his cum, making out with each other.

With joy, chief Axe-To-Mouth stood up from his lawn throne, “Hearken dwarves! The curse is lifted! May all the dwarf women of Dumpchick ovulate constantly!”

Then, all of the dwarves started fucking, except for the few child dwarves, who, hopefully, went away and forgot about everything they just witnessed.

As dusk gently descended, the dwarves of Dumpchick gave a round of applause for Wrothbeard, as he ripped a second round out and landed some significant pearl on Bonchwick’s lower back—one rope even making a nice thud. Everyone was there and saw it.

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Be Spontaneous (But Cautious)

Chances are, if you are fornicating in public, you are being spontaneous. But, you still want to keep a lookout for the most ideal spot—one where you won’t be discovered. Obvious places, like a dimly lit street while parked in your vehicle, are great options. But, so are restaurant bathrooms, certain parted bushes, the beach, secluded swimming holes, swimming pools, the roof of a high-rise building and your work bathroom, to name a few.

Be Ready

You could say that planning your outdoor fornication takes away from the spontaneity, but it’s worthwhile to maybe start before you get to your public place. Outdoor sex works best if both parties can finish in a timely manner, so foreplay beforehand (or even continuing the act at your outdoor location) works best. A car with steamed-up windows, parked on a street for 15 minutes, is less likely to be discovered than one that’s been hanging around for an hour.

Be On The Lookout

Constantly looking over your shoulder (or, your partner’s shoulder) can be a hassle when you are trying to get off, but it’s a necessary step to outdoor sex. Of course, some places will offer more privacy than others—car sex is the worst for the anxiety-ridden, but if you are quick and quiet, you can utilize gender-inclusive restrooms and no one will be the wiser.

Be Creative

Not everyone feels comfortable doing something as intimate as having sex outdoors or in public. And, for those who aren’t thrilled with the idea, as well as the more reserved types of personalities, there are other ways to enjoy the excitement of outdoor sex, without being totally committed to it. Slipping a hand inside your lover’s unzipped pants for a quick handjob (or underneath their skirt and inside their underwear beneath a dinner table or darkened bar table), can fulfill your desire and could be a preview of what’s to cum.

Be Flexible

Car sex, pool sex and even bathroom sex will take some physical flexibility. Riding your lover, while the two of you are both squished into the driver’s seat of a small truck, will require some maneuvering. But, you will get the ultimate closeness you are craving, so don’t be afraid to get into your favorite position—no matter where you choose to do it.

Be Respectful

Okay, so you might be within earshot of your neighbors or innocent bystanders minding their own business, and they may or may not be interested in your activities, but you have to be respectful of others. So, try to stay out of sight and, if you have to disengage for a minute to appear as if you’re just hugging super close, then so be it.

Don’t Get Caught

According to FindLaws.com, Oregon has indecency laws—that generally prohibit public displays of sexual acts or private parts, or the act of “flashing” another person with one’s genitals (with intent of arousing the other person). Both offenses are charged as Class A Misdemeanors, which can result in a prison sentence of up to one year.
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A notification dinged at me. The head bubble of a tan, middle-aged man with a gray mustache. Thinking nothing of it, I sipped creamy, chocolate-infused coffee, while I continued to check Facebook on my Android in the morning.

I called this person my cousin since I was in grade school—but, we weren't actually cousins. He was my oldest brother's friend. Him, his brother, sister and mother lived with us in Lake Worth, FL for a little while, when they were going through hard times.

My so-called cousin and oldest brother used to DJ at the local rollerskating rink, The Palace, in Lantana, down the street from the airport where the alleged 9/11 terrorists trained. They'd spin all the best freestyle and electro songs. It was the late 80s.

I'd skate on beats, in forward and backward circles, on the waxed floor to Shannon, Stevie B. and Lisa Lisa. To Afrika Bambaataa, Nucleus and Art Of Noise. My Hypercolor shirt would glow under the black lights. So would my fluorescent socks.

I'd roll up to the DJ booth on the neon commercial carpet that was flat enough to still skate on, just at a slower pace. I'd always have a rotating girlfriend with me, who'd inevitably crush on both my brother and cousin.

"Your brother looks like Jordan Knight," they'd all say with heart-shaped eyes. I'd roll mine, smack chewing gum and pop a bubble in her face. My attitude—coolness I emulated from my DJ relative wearing airbrushed jeans—went from the wheels of my skates, to the crescent of my waved bangs. At least, it did in my mind.

I'd always request "Time After Time" by Timmy T and the occasional Madonna.

Once I hit middle school, I went to The Palace for a new reason—LSD. The music and the lights, to a tween high on acid, produced endless entertainment. My brother no longer DJ'd there, but I'd still see my cousin once in a while. Never did I find out if he knew I was tripping balls.

Years passed and I moved all over the country, from Portland to Pittsburgh. I went back home to Palm Beach County from 2005-2009. That's when I ran into my cousin again.

My full-body tattoo stood out among the other airbrushed strippers at Platinum Nightclub in Lantana. There's not much of an alternative scene in the sex industry there—it's a completely different game in South Florida. This place was one of the seemingly nicer clubs in the area, although it ended up getting shut down after a successful prostitution sting. I knew it!

I danced on stage, giving the last show of the night. I stood near the door and bar, which was the biggest section of stage; the rest of it stretched out like a catwalk toward the end of the room.

I climbed the pole, posed and kicked one leg out, then slid down. Then, I did a flip on the ground and arose, to see my cousin talking to another stripper.

Looking back, he did gawk at me then. My instinctual repulsion had me preoccupied with grabbing my clothes, so I hadn't registered his googly eyes. But, I can see them wiggle back at me now.

I pressed my clothes against my bare skin, to cover myself as fast as possible, then told him to wait for me to get dressed, as I ran to the dressing room.

I returned, fully clothed and caught up with my cousin. We hugged. I was happy to see him, but still uneasy with embarrassment, because we're family. He sensed it.

"I've been working in strip clubs for years," he said. "Don't worry about it."

So, I don't...never did, because he never made it weird.

He's been on my Facebook friends list for a while—at least a couple of years. We message each other occasionally, sometimes leaving comments. Nothing abnormal.

The first message said, "Psst."

I read it and ignored it, because I didn't see it as important. I continued browsing Classical Art Memes and Joan Cornellà art.

His Bernie Lomax avatar popped up again. I opened it.

It's a bird's-eye view of his half-limp, untrimmed, bulbous wang, unfurled from his boxer briefs.

"WTF," I typed. "Don't ever talk to me again."

He not only made it weird—now, he made it absolutely revolting.

"Sorry, wrong Jamie," he sent, misspelling my name. Then he proceeded to tell me it wasn't a big deal, since he's seen me naked.

"Go fuck yourself," I sent.

He told me he could if he wanted, to because it's long enough.

I immediately deleted everything and blocked him in utter disgust. I then turned tragedy into art and told the story on Facebook. My younger sisters—who are twins—wrote me, individually, telling me they knew it was him. I called my mother and she said, "He's a sleazebag. He's worked in strip clubs for a long time."

"Mom, I've worked in strip clubs before," I said.

"I didn't mean that...you're right, that's not why he's a creep, but he is a creep," she said.

How is it that I'm the last woman in my immediate family to know my so-called cousin is now a full-blown freakazoid? Thanks for the memo, loves.

Over time, heavy drinking, that South Florida dirty-dirt and desperate loneliness created an incestuous dick-pic sender. Facebook and the internet lubricated his ego just enough to snap and send.

Maybe, one day, he'll feel bad and apologize. Until then, I won't be calling him my cousin anymore.

Jaime Dunkle mixes the profound and the profane in her prose, with an altruism that stems from her background as a journalist. Her stories range from fiction to personal narrative and often blur between the two. Don't send her dick pix at JaimesDunkle.com or @JaimeDunkle. No creepers allowed.

Love in a Plain Brown Envelope: My So-Called Cousin

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“Do you have to play such misogynistic music?”

The shrewing of a college-aged white girl. I know this sound.

“Ex-CUSE me, mister deeeeee jaaayyy, hell-looo00?”

The corner of my eye strains to acknowledge this woman, as she continues to invade my space. “What do you want?” I ask.

“Well, everything you’re playing is ‘bitch’ this and ‘pussy’ that. You should consider changing the genre.”

“And? We’re in a strip club. There are equal amounts bitch and pussy here. Tip me and I’ll play your Adele, which may put the club to sleep, but it will get you off my ass.” If there is a way to replicate the smile emoji with an actual, human expression, I do my best to do so, while staring back at Triggerella.

The green-haired, would-be-cute-if-she-didn’t-just-eat-fried-food, faux-ironic hipster acts as if I am the first dude from Portland to tell her “no,” ever, for any reason.

“Okay, so, clearly you’re not a feminist…”

I interrupt. “Second wave. I believe in equal rights and equal responsibility. If you want to change the music, go to DJ school and learn to DJ. Come back when you need a job and I might give you a shift. Some of the most successful DJs I know are women. They get along with the dancers and have excellent people skills.”

“Really?” She starts to loosen up.

“Just a fair warning, we pay female DJs seventy-six cents on the dollar.” The joke misses by a mile.

“You’re a prick, did anyone ever tell you that?” She was clearly not used to having her demands ignored.

“Yes, I hear that quite often,” I reply, while grabbing the microphone from under a pile of chicken wing bones. “Aaaand this is Sapphire for round two, ladies and gentlemen….Destiny on standby.” I turn my head back to the angry college girl. “Are we done here?”

“Obviously, you clearly don’t give a shit about treating women with respect. That’s probably why you’re a strip club DJ.”

I set my DJ software to autopilot and turn to this woman, with a smile. “Look, I get it. You woke up with a frown, because you hate yourself. You’ve dedicated your life to fighting imaginary evils and, as a result of not being able to rope everyone else into your negative, hysterical, self-help, victim outlook, you have decided to crusade against anything that remotely resembles fun. Sorry to hear that you have over-invested in your bullshit outlook on the world.”

I turn my head back toward the laptop screen, but resume the “conversation” with increasing intensity.

“Fuck your made-up boogieman, third-wave, men-are-scum, Portland State nonsense,” I continue, while watching the ETH/BTC market on GDAX. “Take it back to college where it belongs. Just like the religious bigots of the-80s, you neo-feminists of today came for our video games, our music and our comic books, fucked them all up and, as soon as we got a good female lead for a comic book movie, you bitched about that, too. I get it. Fat chicks are healthy. Open relationships are empowering. Gender is a made-up construct to keep you working at Whole Foods. War is peace, freedom is slavery and ignorance is strength. But, let me ask you this…why is it that every dancer here trusts me, alone, while nailed in a dark closet filled with black mold and no cellphone service, but she hasn’t even smiled at you since you’ve been here? The patriarchy? Rape culture? Or, because you’re not tipping…maybe that’s why. Communists aren’t tippers. You’re Tippers. Tipper Gores, up here, in my grill, bitching about rap music, because you clearly have never been to a black BBQ, a black house party or anywhere that doesn’t openly accept triggered white women and their problems. You modern SJWs are the exact same people as the religious right, except instead of outlawing the weirdos, queers and freaks, you pretend to be on our side—like a pedophile at the playground. Well, Tumblrina, once I see a dollar on the stage, I’ll play your clap-along indie rock bullshit that sounds suspiciously like the Christian pop music your predecessors tried to force on us. Until then, it’s N-bombs, bitches, hoes, tricks and pussy. So much black pussy, that DJ Quik will manifest out of nowhere and walk you out of our club. Now, what the fuck else can I do for you?”

A quiet, timid, female voice responds, “Umm…I guess I’ll just go with ‘Rack City’ for my first song and you can pick whatever else. Hope your day gets better.”

Apparently, the angry gnome in artificial coloring had decided to walk away halfway through my autistic fit, only to be replaced by a brand new dancer.

I had no idea at what point this poor new hire had decided to approach my booth, but the takeaway is amazing; not only did she stand quietly and listen to me unload on every hipster twat who’s ever tried to police my amazing music selections, but she picked a cut that would clearly ensure that said green-haired woman would never, ever return to our club. I made sure to clarify that I wasn’t talking to her, but she didn’t seem to care.

The dancer, Crystal, became one of my favorites. Respectful, open, willing to do her job, able to appreciate other cultures, natural hair color and minimal makeup. Great with finances, on time to her shift and never once blamed anyone else for her problems. She danced at Bada Bing for a few years, saved up and bought a house for herself and her kid. That is what a feminist looks like.

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Cheyenne sucks face with another dancer on the red leather couch in the dressing room. A mesh of pale flesh, black lingerie and spit. A primal aroma of arousal and marijuana permeates.

I walk to the vanity and sit. Naked, wearing heels, on the counter, I fix my smudged eyeliner and hot pink lipstick in the mirror.

The DJ calls the dancer entwined with Cheyenne. She comes up for air, runs up the stairs to the stage and gangs at her lace bodice and booty shorts.

Cheyenne sits up and lights a joint. She exhales weed smoke into a toilet paper roll stuffed with fabric softener sheets.

“You’re next, Lux,” she says and hands me the joint. I walk over to the couch and grab it with my index finger, then pinch it with my thumb. She tosses the smoke-roll my way.

“For this,” I take a hit.

“Yeah. For that.”

I point at her up and down, with the roll as a wand. “No.”

“Don’t kid yourself,” I say. “But, these dudes keep calling over to the couch. I grab a handful of CDs and hit the stage.

**Bertha**

Bertha squeezes her huge tits on stage. Purple veins run through the nipples and almost reach her shoulder. They sag and swing, because they’re real.

We change in the musky dressing room that’s more like a large closet. Paint peels and hangs from the Pepto-Bismol walls. Bertha steps into a pair of jeans.

“Are you leaving?” I ask, because we’re the only dancers on shift. I’ll have to cover her rotation on stage until she returns.

“I’m going to blow a guy next door for some extra cash,” she says. “My kid and my husband don’t know how I make so much money.”

Next door is a porn arcade with private rooms. I have no idea how to respond. I don’t want to judge, even if it’s not my lifestyle.

“How much do you make?” I ask, while applying more mascara in front of the stained dressing room mirror.

“Enough,” Bertha says, before shutting the door behind her.

I grab a handful of CDs and hit the stage.

**Ca$h Me Out Carl**

Yesterday’s Big Mac left its mark in his ever-growing beard. A chunk of meat, maybe some lettuce? It didn’t matter—he had money, power, chicks and a Harley. Carl booked numerous bars and everyone kissed his big ass. He could get away with bad hygiene.

But, he couldn’t get away with the smell and he knew it. He relied on an employee he called “friend,” to tell him when he reached the stench threshold—literally and figuratively.

Today, he needs more. He needs a favor, one that was promised, Daniel brings over what he’s dubbed The Gerber.

Ca$h Me Out Carl disappears for a few days and Daniel is stuck booking too many clubs alone, so he hires a dancer to help him.

“Where have you been?” Daniel asks.

“Hey boss,” Daniel says, over the phone.

“Do you still blow glass?” Ca$h Me Out Carl asks.

“Yeah.”

“Can you make...dildos?” Carl asks. The skin under his beard hot to the touch. He rubs it.

“I actually already do,” Daniel says. “Do you have a design in mind?”

“I want one as big as a baby’s head,” Carl says. “For these crazy chicks.” He laughs, kicking his feet down into the mattress.

“I can have it ready this weekend,” Daniel says.

That weekend, as promised, Daniel brings over what he’s dubbed The Gerber.

Ca$h Me Out Carl limps over, his head hung low, sweat on his brow. He clutches a bar stool as he shuffles closer to Daniel, who’s seated at the strip club bar. Peanuts crunch under Ca$h Me Out Carl’s feet. The sound and vibration nauseates him.

“Can I get a bitters, soda and lime, and a side of JD on the rocks?” he asks the bartender, groans and slowly sits down. “Don’t give me that shit,” he says and sneers at Daniel. “I’ve been out sick. Had to get a goddamn colonoscopy.”

Daniel holds images of The Gerber out of his mind, sipping his IPA.

“That sucks,” he says.

“No fucking shit,” Ca$h Me Out Carl says.

They sit at the bar in silence, until Lux, the new agent Daniel hired to help him, arrives.

Jaime Dunkle mixes the profound and the profane in her prose with an altruism that stems from her background as a journalist. Her stories range from fiction to personal narrative and often blur between the two. Ca$h her out at JaimeDunkle.com or @JaimeDunkle. No creepers allowed.
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I’m your friend, your teacher, your classmate. We’ve laughed together. We’ve cried together. We’ve watched games together. We’ve even offered each other advice. Here’s some advice you haven’t asked for, but I hope you find it useful. You care about people’s feelings, that’s why you advocate for social justice. But, have you thought about the repercussions of your jokes regarding the punching and killing of Nazis? What if I told you that I, regrettably, used to be one? I mean, we’re friends. We’re colleagues. We’re co-workers. Teammates. Do you really want me dead?

My dreadful past is probably part of why you like me, honestly and ironically, but you don’t know it. My shameful past has made my present self more mindful of other people’s thoughts and feelings, more diplomatic than the average person and more aware of prejudice and privilege. An unlikely outcome—I know.

I’m not saying that I’m happy about how I arrived at these perceptions. There’s never any justification for bigotry, racism, prejudice or hate of any kind. I don’t even know exactly how it started. I was so mentally and emotionally damaged that, by the time I started reading The Turner Diaries, Tom Metzger and Albert Pike, I was hooked. I was already looking for a way to be violent and offensive 24/7, because, looking back, I was a mess. I hated looking in the mirror at the bruised teen who glared back at me. I hated my life. I hated my friends. I hated my family. I hated my childhood. I hated my history. I hated everyone and everything in the world. So, that’s how it all started...I was a complete misanthrope. I wanted everyone to die. I wanted me to die. White supremacy was a perfect outlet for all the violence that festered inside of me. I’m disgusted with my own weakness and by how impressionable I was back then.

I was the most psychotic, antagonistic and suicidal I’ve ever been in my whole life. I still feel a gravitational pain in my heart and soul for the damage I’ve caused, to the unfortunate casualties I victimized with wrathful hatred. I wish I could tell every one of them how sorry I am. I’ve lost endless nights of sleep over the rotten things I’ve said and done to innocent people. I subjected them to my death-obsessed psychosis. I’ve vomited verbal violence all over their psyches. I cannot take back those spirit-crushing words, no matter how hard I wish I could. I cannot cleanse myself enough, after bathing in the toxic waste of white power ideology. That was truly the darkest, most vile period of my entire life.

I know I deserve worse than night terrors, but do I deserve to die?

I wish I could tell you all of this to your face. I see you threatening to punch and kill Nazis and it makes me afraid to tell you the truth. I don’t want to shock you. I don’t want to hurt you. I don’t want to disappoint you. I also don’t want to relive the utter torment of my deepest regret. And, most importantly, I don’t want you to kill me.

I wish I could come out of the ex-Nazi closet, because I have some useful information for you. I want to give you valuable insider knowledge before you confront, yell at, shove, punch or attempt to maim and murder a Nazi.

Nazis are always armed. Just assume that anyone bold enough to publicly proclaim their white-power identity has a weapon on them, at all times. I never knew a person who didn’t carry a knife or a gun, or a knife AND a gun...or several knives and several guns. Again, this is at all times. Even to 7-11...especially to 7-11. You know why?

Nazis are always ready and willing to fight—often times to the death. A Nazi yearns to fight. In fact, a Nazi actively looks for fights. They start fights (or antagonize people until they lash out, at least). They know they’re armed, so why would they feel threatened? Most of the time they’ll shout racial epithets to instigate a fight, so they can justify an attack—with weapons. When a Nazi fights, they fight to kill—as in, actually murder. They are willing to kill and die for their White Nationalist lie. This is far more common than you realize. Please always keep it in mind.

I’m grateful I got away from the Aryan gang I was in, soon after I realized how serious they were about physically harming people. I once had a pretty close call, when the group I ran with started a fight against a rival gang. Luckily, it didn’t escalate as planned. I was the most pissed and I hate admitting that, as I type this. It makes me sick. The same fists that had itched back then, clenched in shame now. It hurts. I finally came to my senses and escaped soon after. I no longer wanted everyone to die. I no longer wanted me to die.

But, now I worry you do. When I hear you say, “the only good Nazi is a dead one,” I cringe in fear that you’ll find out what I did to myself and automatically hate me and want me dead.

Am I wrong? Do you truly think that people aren’t capable of change? Do you not care about giving someone the opportunity? Would you rather see them die?

I would’ve never changed, if it weren’t for my close friends lecturing me about how I was buying into a cult-like, hateful way of thinking—that I, in fact, wasn’t thinking and needed to start, or else I’d regret it. They were right. I came out of that hole, but not without gashes and bruises. I would’ve never changed, if strangers hadn’t discussed their views with compassion and insight, which later affected me deeply, upon reflection. That’s the thing about being in a gang—you can become insanely loyal, even when it is nonsensical to do so. I had the insight brought to me, but I had a delayed reaction.

I would’ve never changed, if I hadn’t been around the most furious, vengeful hate-mongers on the planet. I saw what these people were really like. I could describe to you their likely demographic, hierarchy, habits, hangouts, literature and evil schemes. That’s not something I’m proud of, but I want to make the information useful and put it out there to help protect people from inexcusable hatred.

I wish I never had to say any of this. I wish none of it ever happened. But, it did. And, I have to live with it. I have to answer to my loved ones about it. I have to apologize to those I’ve hurt, if ever given the chance. Thinking about it already makes me want to die, to this day. But are you really the one who wants to pull the trigger?

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